



Validity of college rankings called into question

ILLUSTRATION BY MALIK CLEMENT

BY ELIJAH DE CASTRO

Back in 2018, Ithaca College senior Himadri Seth was a typical high school student navigating the college decision process. Like many other prospective students, Seth referred to the U.S. News & World Report's annual college ranking list for guidance while college hunting. Four years later, Seth feels that the list had an unfair influence over her.

"Looking at where a college stands in official rankings and in terms of the specific program that you want to apply to is a

huge thing for most students — it was definitely a big thing for me," Seth said. "When you're coming out of high school, going to college, [the rankings] play an important role."

Every September, U.S. News releases its college ranking lists, which are highly anticipated by both college administrators and prospective students. Ithaca College has consistently ranked highly on the Regional Universities North list. The college's administration has used its ranking to market the college through social media, its

website and email blasts.

In a Sept. 13 Intercom post to the college community, President La Jerne Cornish embraced the college's No. 12 ranking on the Regional Universities North list. The college's No. 12 ranking is a slip from previous years — since 2016, Ithaca had consistently been in the top 10 of the Regional Universities North list. However, in other categories, U.S. News ranked Ithaca College highly. The college received a No. 2 ranking on the "Best Undergraduate Teaching" list, No. 4 ranking on the Most Innovative Schools list and the No. 18 ranking on the Best Value list.

"These recognitions are a tribute to the tremendous work of our faculty, staff and students," Cornish said in the post. "We remain committed to ensuring that this learning experience is also accessible and affordable to students and their families."

However, a recent report authored by Michael Thaddeus, a math professor at Columbia University, has found a deep lack of credibility in U.S. News' rankings. The report — titled "An Investigation of the Facts Behind Columbia's U.S. News Ranking" — found widespread manipulation of data reported by Columbia to U.S. News. Data from Columbia used by

U.S. News — like Columbia's student to faculty ratio, graduation rate and the amount spent on instruction — had been inflated and taken out of context. Additionally, the report uncovered vulnerabilities in U.S. News' ranking system that colleges can exploit by self-reporting inaccurate information to U.S. News to move higher up in rankings.

Ithaca College sophomore Ben Sterbenk praised Thaddeus' courage for investigating the authenticity of Columbia's rankings.

"With the elite universities, their rankings on those lists is incredibly important to their financial success," Sterbenk said. "There's a conflict of interest when it comes to the accuracy of this data. I really doubt Columbia is the only one doing that type of thing. It's great they have a professor that is brave enough to actually go and do something that would call it into question."

Sophomore Morrison Powell was shocked that there is little scrutiny of the information reported by colleges to U.S. News.

"It's unbelievable," Powell said. "Certainly if you're gonna try and push that this is the pinnacle reference [on colleges] that all students should be looking at, you need some kind of checks and balances on that procedure."

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Annual data on crime out

BY LORIENTYNE

At Ithaca College in 2021, there were increased reports of domestic violence, stalking, aggravated assault and fondling, as well as a decrease in reports of rape and dating violence, according to the 2022 Annual Security & Fire Safety Report (ASFSR).

There were five reports of stalking in 2019, four in 2020 and 12 in 2021. Stalking is defined in the ASFSR as "engaging in a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to (a) fear for their safety or the safety of others or (b) suffer substantial emotional distress."

Title IX Coordinator Linda Koenig said that after seeing an increase in reports of stalking, she and Elyse Nepa, assistant director of the Clery Act and Prevention Education in the Office of Public Safety and Emergency Management, both attended a training session that gave them more information about identifying stalking behavior and helping the community identify that behavior.

Koenig said a major challenge with identifying stalking is that sometimes it looks like harassment, which is not necessarily a crime, although it can be.

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RAs at IC feel overworked

BY OLIVIA STANZL

The responsibilities expected of resident assistants (RAs) at Ithaca College make some wonder if the benefits are enough. While the student employees are given compensation that goes toward room and board, other institutions are paying their RAs more.

Becoming an RA is a way many students lessen the burden of paying for college. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, in 2016, nearly 11,000 students were employed as RAs at institutions across the United States at an average salary of \$15.04 per hour or \$31,290 for the calendar year.

Laura Davis, director of Residential Life and Judicial Affairs, said at the college, compensation for RAs and apartment assistants (AAs) comes in the form of credit. The credit is first applied to room expenses and the remaining balance is applied to boarding expenses. If there is still leftover compensation — for example, if a student has financial aid that also covers these areas — it will go toward a student's tuition and fees.

Students who are in their first or second semesters as an RA or AA get a credit that is equivalent to 80% of the cost for room and board, which is \$12,747.20 for the 2022–23 academic year, and RAs who are in their third semester or higher within the position are compensated for 100% of their

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STUDENTS HAVE A BALL ON THE DANCE FLOOR

Trustees meet to discuss goals for academic year

BY VIVIAN ROSE

David Lissy '87, chair of the Board of Trustees, and James Nolan '77, vice president of the board, visited with Ithaca College students, staff and faculty Sept. 30 in order to answer questions about what the board is focusing on for the 2022–23 academic year.

About 25 people met in the Clarke Lounge for the in-person meeting with the two board members. Some faculty that attended included Bryan Roberts, associate dean for the Roy H. Park School of Communications; Charis Dimaras, professor in the Department of Music Performance; Angélica Carrington, director for the Center of Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Social Change (IDEAS); and Hongwei Guan, associate professor in the Department of Health Promotion and Physical Education.

The board members discussed how philanthropic sources can be diversified, how student retention can be increased and how the college's resources were affected because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Lissy and Nolan began the meeting by discussing how the college receives most of its funds from reserves and donors or from

philanthropic sources, like people who donate money on Giving Day or through the Division of Philanthropy and Engagement at the college. Carrington asked how the college can diversify their funding from philanthropists, since she said it seems that the majority of donors are white.

Nolan said in order for more diverse donors to be acknowledged by the college, there needs to be someone who will open that door for them.

"In my experience, many times it takes a champion," Nolan said. "It takes somebody saying, 'Look, this is the perspective that I have, and I have these kinds of contacts, and I want to champion this kind of initiative.' And that's what makes the difference."

Roberts asked about student retention and what the college could do better in the future.

The college has seen a recent decline in retention rates because of the pandemic, especially a decrease in third semester rates from 84% in 2020 to 83% in 2021, according to the college's Office of Analytics and Institutional Research.

Lissy said this is something that has troubled the college since before the pandemic but has



From left, Board of Trustees chair David Lissy '87 and vice chair James Nolan '77 answer questions about the board's plans for the 2022–23 academic year.

RAY MILBURN/THE ITHACAN

always been high on the agenda for the board.

"For a long time, this has been an issue for [the college]," Lissy said. "We should be better in terms of our graduation rate, our fifth semester retention and third semester retention. For as long as I've been on the board, it's never been where it ought to be."

One final comment from the audience came from Roberts, who said the dynamics between the five deans has grown to a level where all five schools look forward to working with each other like never before.

There are three new deans out of the five schools at the college: Amy Falkner at the Roy H. Park School of Communications; Anne Hogan as the inaugural dean for the School of Music, Theatre, and Dance; and Michael Johnson-Cramer at the School of Business.

"I've never seen such dynamic leadership between every school, and we're committed to working together," Roberts said.

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The 40th Annual Apple Harvest Festival

Ithaca's Apple Harvest Festival was sweeter than ever during its 40th run, with visitors enjoying delicious food and local shop owners getting significant business.



Ithaca College alum hosts 5th Annual Finger Lakes Comedy Festival

Christopher Miree '14, founder of the Finger Lakes Comedy Festival, brought laughter to Downtown Ithaca for its fifth year.

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Corrections

Correction: In "Discussion addresses women in leadership" published in the Sept. 29 issue of *The Ithacan*, both the print and online versions of the article misspelled Amy Falkner's name, dean of the Roy H. Park School of Communications. The online version of the article has been updated to reflect this correction.

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SGC discusses dining with administration

BY EMMA KERSTING

At the Ithaca College Student Governance Council (SGC) meeting Oct. 3, members of Dining Services spoke and members from the student organization Physical Therapy Students of Color (PTSC) attempted to appeal a denied funding request.

Administrative guests included Tim Downs, vice president for Finance and Administration and chief financial officer; Scott McWilliams, director of Dining Services Administrative; and Reginald Briggs, associate director of Dining Services Administrative.

Since Fall 2019, all dining ingredients have been sourced locally and menus are created by the college's dining staff. Briggs said Dining Services had little time to adjust to this change before the college shut down on-campus operations in Spring 2020.

"I think it's important for all of you to know, and really everybody to know, that we too are frustrated by what we're able to deliver," Briggs said.

Briggs said one of the largest challenges in campus dining is the lack of staff. He said the primary focus for improving dining is to increase the culinary staff.

Briggs asked the SGC how to attract more student employees and what incentives would increase interest in dining jobs. Senior Grace Madeya, president of the student body, said she has heard that working in dining is less appealing than other jobs on campus.



From left, first-year student Eleanor Paterson, senior Austin Ruffino, Reginald Briggs, associate director of Dining Services Administrative, and senior Tessa Kurtz discuss dining issues.

KEVIN YU/THE ITHACAN

"One of the big issues I hear from students is — and you can't really stop this — is the dining hall is more like a lot of labor and moving around and standing on your feet for a long period of time ... [than] other jobs on campus," Madeya said.

Downs responded by asking if a pay difference between jobs that are less labor intensive would help increase interest in Dining Services — which Madeya said yes to.

"What about other staff that have frontline workers, student workers?" Downs said. "We want to make sure to find the right equitable balance across all the staff."

The dining halls on campus

have struggled to hire student employees since Spring 2021.

The SGC also heard an appeal against the Appropriations Committee from the PTSC. Juniors Treasure Blackman, vice president of PTSC, and Ikraan Sheekh Nuur, treasurer of PTSC, presented their case, and a representative from the Appropriations Committee, senior Max Powers, explained why the funding request was denied.

"The committee has a long-standing tradition of denying retroactive funding," Powers said. "Very rarely, any organization actually steps in to appeal."

PTSC's first funding request Sept. 20 was denied because their

documentation did not show how much money was being requested. The second request Sept. 24 was also denied because they had already paid for their event prior to submitting the request.

"We took initiative and we met with Max Powers," Sheekh Nuur said. "We were fortunate enough that he would meet with us for an hour and explain the situation."

Afterward, all guests who were not the SGC members were asked to leave the meeting as the senate deliberated. After deliberation, the SGC motioned to deny the appeal.

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Service groups hire students

BY PRAKRITI PANWAR

After three years of limited operations, Ithaca College's paid Off-Campus Community Service Program (OCCSP), which provides paid community service opportunities to students who receive federal work study, is back for Fall 2022 with a full staff.

For the program, the college partners with organizations and nonprofits in the Ithaca area. As of October 2022, 12 local organizations, including Quarter Acre for the People and Durland Alternatives Library, have partnered with the college for the program, according to the OCCSP. Prospective employees can apply through the IC Student Recruitment Cloud.

Jackson Short '21, business process and systems analyst in the Office of Human Resources and Planning, oversees the OCCSP and said it serves as a means for students to earn money that can go toward their financial aid and other expenses, and as a way for them to engage with the community in a professional environment.

"I think ... these jobs tend to be very great experiential learning opportunities," Short said. "I think that there's a real benefit to leaving campus as well, and to being able to see the community that exists outside of [the college] and to engage with that."

Short said in the 2022–23 academic year, the program aims at recruiting about 20 students, but Short said the recruitment process is still ongoing.

For the 2022–23 academic year, The Durland Alternatives Library in Ithaca hired two students for their Prisoner Express Program, a distance learning program for inmates that aims at providing them with a public platform to creatively express themselves.

Gary Fine, director of Durland Alternatives Library, said students work both with the Prisoner Express Program and the library in general by cataloging books, developing the collection and doing other activities, like reading inmates' letters and writing back to them.

"My perspective on [the college] has been generally created by the student workers," Fine said. "The majority of [student employees] reflect [the college] in those positive ways that create incredible programming for prisoners ... and I've been doing this for 20 years. I have a large base of students to refer to when I say this."

Senior Adison Nadler was hired at the end of September 2022 to collaborate with other student employees from the college and Cornell University to build a social media presence for the Durland Alternatives Library.

"I definitely think it's helping me just kind of learn how to acclimate myself into a new work environment without it being facilitated by a professor," Nadler said. "And I'm getting to work with people who I don't necessarily go to school with or take classes with. ... I feel like I'll be able to learn a lot from them."

Quarter Acre for the People, another partner agency, is a program within the Khuba International nonprofit group that is looking for a social media and e-blast coordinator, and a photographer and filmmaker. The organization aims to provide support to farmers of color through the development of farming cooperatives and access to other farming activities.

Christa Núñez, executive director of Khuba International and owner of The Learning Farm, said she believes that students can grow by participating in the program.

"We partner actively with students at Cornell University and departments like the Master of Public Health Program [at Cornell University]," Núñez said. "Students potentially could grow in building their networks across other campuses and creating connections between students at Cornell and [Ithaca College]."

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Peer mentors hired to support film class

BY FARID AHMAD

Five Ithaca College students were hired as course ambassadors in Fall 2022 to serve as mentors and role models for the two hundred students enrolled in Film Aesthetics and Analysis (FAA) in the Roy H. Park School of Communications.

Yolanda Clarke, manager of Tutoring and Academic Enrichment Services, said she developed the Course Ambassadors Program during the 2022–23 academic year and worked together with Patricia Zimmermann, Charles A. Dana professor of Screen Studies in the Department of Media Arts, Sciences, and Studies, to apply it to FAA. Clarke said another set of peer tutors — learning coaches — were applied to FAA in the 2021–22 academic year, but she and Zimmermann wanted to give students more support.

One of the ambassadors, junior Stephanie Tokasz, said course ambassadors run Learning Skills Sessions and drop-in hours where they provide students with test-taking strategies and answer questions and attend the class.

Clarke said the goal of this program is to give first-year students more access to resources that will not only help them with FAA but will also be a guide as they adjust to college academics.

"We know that there's a different population of students that's coming from high school," Clarke said. "We know that COVID compromised probably their opportunities during that time, and so we wanted to give students more."

The course ambassadors are not the first set of peer tutors at the college. Learning coaches preceded them and are still active on campus.

Tokasz said she was supported by learning coaches when she was a first-year student and wants to provide that same support to the current FAA students.



Junior Stephanie Tokasz is a course ambassador for Film Aesthetics and Analysis. Her role includes running Learning Skills sessions and drop-in hours for students.

ATTICUS RUBOTTOM/THE ITHACAN

"When I got the email that they wanted me to do it, I was like, 'Oh my gosh, of course,' because they had an influence on me when I was a freshman," Tokasz said.

Tokasz said she worked as a learning coach for FAA previously and said there are some differences between the two roles. Tokasz said she attended classes as a learning coach but only for one of the two class sections. She said now the class only has one section, making it easier for ambassadors to retain information and answer students' questions.

Another FAA ambassador, junior Guadalupe Fanelli, said she has noticed students' eagerness to engage in the sessions.

"Students are really curious, so they bring

a lot of questions; they're excited to learn and you can tell that they're motivated to study and work for the class," Fanelli said.

Zimmermann said the learning differences between high school and college are significant and that seemingly insignificant studying habits can be vital for academic success.

"They're terrific role models for how one can go to college," Zimmermann said. "They are serious, dedicated students who put their classes first. They work to augment what we're doing; they work to help students transition out of high school."

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FROM U.S. NEWS, PAGE 1

Almost all American colleges — including Ithaca College — self-report data to U.S. News through an annual Common Data Set document. The Common Data Set creates a centralized standard for colleges to report yearly information on faculty to student ratio, graduation rates and financial aid quality, among other criteria.

Dave Maley, director of Public Relations, said the college’s Common Data Set for the 2022–23 academic year will not be released publicly until late 2022. However, the Common Data Set for 2021–22 contains data that the college does not include in its marketing. For example, in 2021–22, students at the college took out over \$16.5 million in need-based student loans and \$7.7 million in non-need-based aid. The college instead references the percent of students that receive financial assistance.

Other colleges on the Regional Universities North list do not include the amount of loans that their students take out on their websites, while reporting that information on the Common Data Set.

Claire Borch, director of the college’s Office of Analytics and Institutional Research, said via email she is confident in the accuracy of the data the college reports on the Common Data Set and declined to comment further. Borch encouraged *The Ithacan* to send further questions regarding how institutions report their data to U.S. News, who did not respond to a request for comment.

Jed Macosko is the president and research director of Academic Influence, a website that ranks colleges, run by



Ithaca College has consistently received positive rankings from U.S. News’ college rankings, however, U.S. News is now facing criticism because of its easily exploitable ranking system.

ELEANOR KAY/THE ITHACAN

academics and digital scientists that uses data technology to create objective, non-gameable college rankings. Macosko said the influence that U.S. News’ rankings have on prospective students and their families creates a financial temptation for colleges to skew reported data in order to achieve a higher ranking.

“If you move up in the rankings, it means new dollars come into your university,” Macosko said. “Students are more willing to go to your university and are so eager to go you don’t have to entice them with financial aid. Donors [also] feel more proud of their alma mater and give more money.”

Powell said he believes ranking colleges is not possible to do accurately and puts unnecessary pressure on students.

“It’s way too binary,” Powell said. “It just generalizes way too much. ... There’s a link between

elitism and ranking colleges.”

Despite the foundational problems in U.S. News’ ranking system, a study by the American Educational Research Association found that colleges and universities that receive high rankings in the U.S. News rankings see a 6–10% increase in enrollment. Correspondingly, colleges and universities that receive low rankings see a decline in enrollment.

Tom Pfaff, professor and chair of the Department of Mathematics, said that when the 2022–23 U.S. News lists were released, the college publicly embraced its No. 2 ranking on the “Best Undergraduate Teaching” list but did not privately thank faculty.

“It seems like the marketing around a No. 2 teaching school would be easy to do and worth touting,” Pfaff said. “And if you have a faculty meeting like we had a week or so ago, you’d think the provost would take a moment

to say, ‘Wow great work, folks, we appreciate it.’ But it didn’t come up. I find that a little bit frustrating.”

Now, in her final year at Ithaca College, Seth said the influence that the U.S. News rankings had over her and continues to have over students and families creates a culture of elitism in higher education. This, Seth said, results in prioritizing the ranking of a college over the quality of education a student receives.

“It’s messed up because I feel like it creates this false perception of what’s important when it comes to education,” Seth said. “For a school like IC, I feel like what needs to be emphasized more is the connections that students make here or the departments and how good the teaching is.”

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FROM RA ISSUES, PAGE 1

room and board.

According to The National Center for Education Statistics, the average cost for college rooming in the U.S. for the 2020–21 academic year was \$6,897 and \$5,335 for meal plans. The cost for a standard double room for the 2022–23 academic year at Ithaca College is \$9,066, a single room is \$10,375 and the resident meal plan is \$6,868.

Junior Molly Hankinson said she started working as an RA in Fall 2022 to strengthen her skills as a future educator and because of the compensation she would receive. Hankinson said she feels there are times when she and her coworkers do more than they are paid for.

“I get 80% off of room and board, but they charge me for a single room and a single room’s already two grand more than a double,” Hankinson said.

The college currently has 91 student staff within the Office of Residential Life, which includes RAs, AAs, senior resident advisers and head residents. RAs are typically responsible for the supervision of a residence hall floor of around 25–50 residents, while AAs are responsible for supervising apartment communities of 120–175 residents.

Sophomore Gabriel De Oliveira Shurmur, who was an RA during the 2021–22 academic year, said being an RA at the college is worth the work because it allows you to save thousands of dollars every academic year.

“I think it’s difficult because when you compare it to what other schools do, it seems like it isn’t worth it,” Shurmur said. “But, when you break it down to an hourly rate, at the end of the day, you’re saving like \$15,000 a year.”

The University at Albany, a State University of New York (SUNY), compensates their RAs with a bed waiver for a single room. SUNY Fredonia compensates their students with a \$4,575 per semester single room waiver, \$200 per semester meal plan allocation and \$600 per semester stipend, paid in four increments.

Junior Sadie Hofford is starting her third semester as an RA and said it is a very unique job because it is difficult to take a break from it.

“You can’t really turn off being an RA,” Hofford said. “It’s kind of like you’re always on. It’s not like I clock in to my job and I clock out.”

Hofford said RAs have night staff meetings and must attend training two weeks prior to classes starting. Other responsibilities include community building and informal peer mentorship with residents.

“I think a lot of things go on behind the scenes that people don’t see,” Hofford said. “We do one-on-ones and we put up bulletin boards and we are around when everyone is here, but we also do a lot of stuff when people aren’t at school.”

Hofford said she and her coworkers have had to express their concerns to get fair compensation for their work.

“Last year we did a lot of feedback and we were really honest about when we felt like we were doing things for no reason,” Hofford said. “On the weekends, we used to go on three sets of rounds at 10 [p.m.], 12 [a.m.] and 2 [a.m.]. So whoever was on duty would automatically be up until 3 a.m. But, we were realizing that really nothing ever happened on those last sets of rounds.”

Hofford said the professional staff in the Office of Residential Life — full-time staff members like residential directors — and management teams looked into the RAs feedback and ended the last set of rounds.

“They’re actually pretty good about listening to us when things come up,” Hofford said. “I think last year was a lot and a lot of people told them that. And when we got back this year, I think a lot of us were kind of hesitant, but they had a totally new engagement plan.”

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“Just from a safety perspective, stalking is a much more dangerous behavior than harassment,” Koenig said. “So, being able to be more effective at identifying the attributes that are attached to stalking will help us have a safer community. That’s why being able to classify it [is important] so that we respond to it appropriately.”

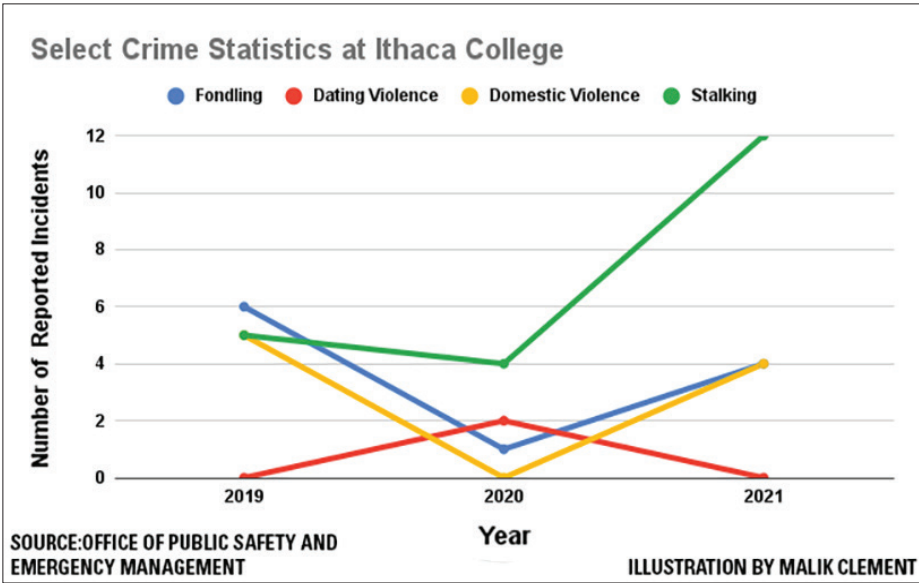
A service provided by the Office of Public Safety to prevent criminal offenses on campus is the Safe Escort Program, which allows a member of the campus community to be accompanied by an officer to and from any campus location.

According to data collected by Crystal Young, administrative operations coordinator in the Office of Public Safety, the requests for escort services by a campus officer have significantly decreased since 2019. There were 215 escorts provided in the 2019–20 academic year, 35 in 2020–21, 48 in 2021–22 and as of Oct. 5, 22 escorts have been provided for the 2022–23 academic year.

Reports of rape were the lowest in 2021 than they have been since 2017 after peaking in 2019. There were 11 cases of rape in 2017, 13 in 2018, 14 in 2019, 10 in 2020 and eight in 2021.

Koenig said less reports of sexual violence are more concerning because that would show not a decrease in the behavior, but decreased understanding or ability for victims to report.

“If we don’t have any reports, like of sexual assault, as an example, I am going to be incredibly concerned, because we know there’s a high prevalence of sexual assault on college campuses,” Koenig said. “If something goes to zero [cases], that would be really odd. It would make me question, like, ‘do we need to refocus



some of our prevention efforts toward this particular topic?” Because maybe people just don’t understand what it is and so they don’t think that it’s reportable.”

Domestic violence was reported five times in 2019, never in 2020 and four times in 2021. In 2019, there were no cases of dating violence, two reports in 2020 and in 2021, it dropped back to zero. Nepa said she understands why the data for domestic and dating violence may be confusing because of the nuance of how they are classified.

The state definitions of domestic violence and dating violence are not differentiated from each other. However, there are separate definitions within the federal Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) — which are both included in the ASFSR.

“New York state doesn’t have dating violence laws, [so] most dating violence will fall under domestic violence,” Nepa said. “However,

when I notice that [the case] doesn’t necessarily rise to the level of domestic violence but we know that there’s violence in the relationship and that it rises to the level of the VAWA definition of dating violence, that is included [in the ASFSR as dating violence]. What I don’t want to see happen is the numbers to be underreported because of these definitions that are hard to fit things into.”

Tom Dunn, associate director and deputy chief in the Office of Public Safety and Emergency Management, said via email that the ASFSR is a good resource to compare crime statistics at the college to other campuses in the United States.

“We encourage our community members to know the policies and procedures for safety on campus,” Dunn said via email.

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Distinguished writer visits college

BY VIVIAN ROSE

“It was a frigid day on February 9, 1984,” began Kristina Gorcheva-Newberry at a reading and Q&A event Oct. 4.

Gorcheva-Newberry, author of “The Orchard,” was invited to the college as a distinguished fictional writer. The novel’s title was developed from Anton Chekhov’s 1904 play, “The Cherry Orchard.”

Based on Gorcheva-Newberry’s life, she described the book and the four main characters as being based off her home city of Moscow.

Gorcheva-Newberry said the book is relevant today because of the ongoing war in Ukraine, with Russian President Vladimir Putin forcing all men in Russia to become soldiers.

The event included readings from Gorcheva-Newberry’s novel, followed by a Q&A led by sophomore August Van Der Werf.

Van Der Werf began by asking to what extent the book was written autobiographically.

“I think that all writing, all fiction, is autobiographical in some ways,” Gorcheva-Newberry said. “All those characters, they grow out of us. My characters, they’re all my children. So in many ways, writing a novel, it’s like giving birth.”

Since Chekov’s play “The Cherry Orchard” was the impetus for Gorcheva-Newberry’s novel, Van Der Werf asked if the manuscript played a role in “The Orchard.”

“I reread the play many, many



Kristina Gorcheva-Newberry delivered a talk about her 2022 novel, “The Orchard,” that included readings of excerpts from the novel and a Q&A session with attendees.

RAY MILBURN/THE ITHACAN

times,” Gorcheva-Newberry said. “I read Chekov’s letters and diary and saw different stagings of the play, just to see if there were any other interpretations. I translated the passages [of the play] myself, because when I read the translation, I was baffled because people were adding their own words.”

Gorcheva-Newberry is one writer among several invited by the college to the Distinguished Writers Series. Each writer teaches a writing workshop within a course associated with the series for a semester.

Fifteen students are admitted into the workshop each semester, which is primarily open to writing majors and minors.

Rajpreet Heir, assistant professor in the Department of Writing and director of the Distinguished Writers Series, said that if a student’s submission is of high caliber, they will be admitted.

“I send out a message to writing majors and minors in November or December, and I have students send in a writing sample, so you have to apply to get in,” Heir said. “The students write

about the writers who visit and I have the students lead the event.”

Van Der Werf, a film major and writing minor, was accepted into the 2022–23 academic year’s workshop.

“I was really determined to make a good impression, and I did a bunch of research before the interview,” Van Der Werf said. “I think the best is yet to come because ... when she breaks big, I can say I interviewed her.”

CONTACT VIVIAN ROSE
VROSE@ITHACA.EDU

IC gives public health updates

BY SYD PIERRE

Ithaca College has updated some of its COVID-19 protocols and is encouraging members of the campus community to get vaccinated for both the flu and COVID-19.

In an Oct. 4 email, Samm Swarts, assistant director for Emergency Preparedness and Response, provided public health updates to the campus community. Swarts encouraged the campus community to get the flu vaccine, which students can schedule through Student Health Services.

Swarts also encouraged campus community members to get their COVID-19 boosters, which are available throughout Ithaca. Monkeypox vaccines will be available on campus soon for students, and Swarts said more details will be shared in the coming weeks.

Swarts also addressed changes to the college’s COVID-19 isolation protocol.

“For the past several weeks we have continued to see a very low incidence of positive COVID cases within our campus community,” the email stated. “As a result, Ithaca College is enacting some protocol changes concerning how it is handling COVID-19 isolation.”

Boothroyd Hall will continue to serve as an isolation housing space for residential students and offer free testing for the campus community for the rest of Fall 2022. However, Swarts said that if COVID-19 cases rise and there is no space in Boothroyd, the college will allow students to isolate in their assigned residence hall rooms.

Swarts also said the college will discontinue its operational status webpage that showed what operational level the college was at but will continue to update its COVID-19 dashboard.

CONTACT SYD PIERRE
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Q&A: Student spends gap year doing community service

First-year student Andres Cintron took a gap year after graduating high school to take an opportunity for self-exploration before beginning his time as a student at Ithaca College.

During his gap year, Cintron joined AmeriCorps, an independent agency set up by the United States government to provide a variety of volunteer services to areas around the country.

Cintron was sent across the country to locations such as Fort McCoy, Wisconsin; Reno, Nevada; and Modesto, California, for service projects, including building houses, making hiking trails more accessible and working with a Boys and Girls Club.

Staff writer Emma Kersting spoke with Cintron about why he joined the AmeriCorps, what he learned during his assignment and how his experiences will affect his future.

This interview has been edited for length and clarity.

Emma Kersting: What inspired you to decide to [join AmeriCorps]?

Andres Cintron: I’ve always liked helping out and building. And since I live in New York City, I get to really experience nature and also urban life at the same time. I really love going to Central Park and Riverside Park with my friends. So this program kind of checked all the boxes for me. And it just seemed like it would have been a perfect fit. At first, of course, I was a little hesitant because I was nervous about joining this whole new program and leaving my parents for the first time and my family. But just from the get go, the whole environment was super welcoming and I just knew that I was going to have a great year.

EK: How would you describe AmeriCorps and

what did you personally do during the year?

AC: AmeriCorps [is] basically, if you ever heard of the Peace Corps, but it’s pretty much just in the United States. ... I was stationed in the Pacific region for California. ... In the beginning, we worked with this conservancy, the Walker Basin Conservancy, and we were helping, basically, plant native species and reintroduce plants that were kind of burned away from the wildfires. ... We were also working with the Boys and Girls Club at the time. ... I sometimes didn’t feel like I was doing much, but then toward the end of the projects, you come to see all the work you’ve done come full circle, the lives you’ve impacted. Our second project, we were sent to a summer camp. I was in Modesto, California. And around that time, we kind of got a call to action. ... If there’s things like emergency deployment, and when they really need a team, they’ll pull you out of your project or send you somewhere else. So our emergency project at the time was dealing with the Afghan refugees that were coming in. ... We were living on a military base in Fort McCoy, Wisconsin, basically just helping the Afghan refugees at the time figure out little things like customs ... that didn’t really click for them, because they didn’t have to worry about that back home. ... It was hard at some points because a lot of them had difficult stories ... saying that they had to leave a lot of family members behind or they had to choose what child that they had to take with them and what child that they had to leave. The last project was where we went to a sleepaway camp that was designed for kids with special needs. So we were helping the camp really get the entire camp accessible for everybody. There were different things like hiking trails to an outlook on the mountain. That would have been super hard for people in wheelchairs and



First-year student Andres Cintron worked with AmeriCorps during a gap year doing service projects, including wildfire restoration and building accessible hiking trails.

KEVIN YU/THE ITHACAN

different physical disabilities to get to.

EK: What are some skills that you had that helped you while you were in AmeriCorps and what are some skills that you learned?

AC: Well, some skills that I had, I definitely would say, is working well with others and kind of taking a team leader position. ... You really had to learn how to work with people and understand what made them happy, what made them sad. I’m good at reading all sides of a situation. But [something] that I learned is definitely how to work with others and their mental health, because you don’t really think about others’ mental health always. But if you’re living with these people, you really got to understand what makes them tick and what they need at certain points. ... [There’s also] a lot of

different technical skills you kind of had to learn and some fun things even, like we got to use a flamethrower to do some fire mitigation as one of my first projects ... in the middle of the desert. That was fun.

EK: How did your service this past year affect you?

AC: It was able to make me mature more and able to find myself and really appreciate the little things, I would say. Appreciate the time you have with people, I would also say. Sometimes if you’re hesitant, just go for it, because it can make all the difference and create one of the best moments of your life.

CONTACT EMMA KERSTING
EKERSTING@ITHACA.EDU

COLLEGE BRIEFS

College hosts business event for interested entrepreneurs

The Center for Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Social Change (IDEAS) will host a business expo for students of color at 4 p.m. Oct. 7 in the African Society Lounge in West Tower on the concourse floor.

The event will feature participating businesses run by Ithaca College students of color, including The Universal Experience, Mali Kutz, Mamaz Boy Entertainment, Wigs by Dams and Dami Love. Attendees will learn about the businesses and business owners and following the event, students can stay to play games and meet other students. Individuals who need accommodations can contact Kerdelma James, program coordinator for the Center for IDEAS, at ideas@ithaca.edu or 607-274-7777.

Employees able to attend expo to learn about employee benefits

The college is hosting an in-person faculty benefits expo from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Oct. 11 in Emerson Suites and a virtual expo from 12 to 2 p.m. Oct. 13 to give employees an opportunity to learn about the benefits available for 2023. At the event, employees can meet some of the benefits providers and learn about them ahead of the open enrollment period for 2023, which begins Oct. 17. To attend the virtual session, a QR code can be found on Intercom.

Students asked to write letters thanking scholarship donors

The deadline for 2022-23 scholarship recipients to write a letter thanking the donors who provided their scholarship funds is Oct. 15. Many scholarships that Ithaca College students receive are provided by individual benefactors and the college asks that scholarship recipients thank these individuals. Students should email their letters in PDF format to Kerrienne Blum, assistant director of donor relations in the Office of Philanthropy and Engagement, at kblum@ithaca.edu.

SGC gets students ready to vote with registration and ballot drive

The Student Governance Council is hosting a voter registration and absentee ballot

application drive Oct. 6 and 11. President La Jerne Cornish has also signed the All In Challenge Commitment — from the All In Campus Democracy Challenge’s initiative — to increase nonpartisan civic learning, political engagement and voter participation.

Lecturer works to improve hiring process by teaching about bias

The Center for Faculty Excellence is scheduled to host an event to discuss unconscious bias in the interview process. The event will be from 12 to 1 p.m. Oct. 11 in the Center for Faculty Excellence and will be facilitated by Belisa González, director of Faculty Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging.

The event, titled “Identifying and Mitigating Unconscious Bias in the Interview Process,” is a training session that will guide attendees through how to identify unconscious bias and accept how it can impact decision making by learning about neuroscience, types of bias and how to mitigate it.

The workshop is open to anyone involved in any hiring process or interested in the topic. Individuals interested in attending should RSVP on IC Engage. Individuals who need accommodations should contact Colette Matisco at cfe@ithaca.edu or 607-274-3734 as soon as possible.

IC course catalog opening soon for winter and spring scheduling

Students can view the course catalogs for Winter 2023 and Spring 2023 beginning at 12 p.m. Oct. 17. The registration times for individual students will be available at 12 p.m. Oct. 19. Registration times can be found on HomerConnect under registration notices.

Because time tickets for students are determined by number of credits completed, students should prepare by ensuring any transfer credits have applied to their account, complete any changes to majors, minors or concentrations and verify that grades from Block 1 are submitted.

Registration will occur Oct. 31 for winter courses and between Nov. 1 and Nov. 10 for undergraduate students and Nov. 30 for graduate students in the physical therapy program.



Cornish inaugurated as IC’s 10th president

On Oct. 1, La Jerne Cornish was inaugurated as the 10th president of Ithaca College at the Athletics and Events Center. The celebration involved a day of events and the School of Music, Theatre, and Dance’s first annual showcase.

XIAOYI ZHANG/THE ITHACAN

Tutorials for registration can be found on Intercom. Students with questions should contact their academic adviser or the advising representative for their school.

College seeks help for February MLK event celebration planning

The Ithaca College MLK Celebration Committee is looking for additional students, faculty and staff to help plan celebrations for Martin Luther King Day. Celebrations will take place between Feb. 6 and Feb. 10, 2023.

Committee members will help plan and organize events and collaborate with other groups on campus. Planning meetings will be held from 2 to 3 p.m. on Wednesdays throughout Fall 2022. Individuals with questions or who would like to join can contact the Center

for IDEAS at ideas@ithaca.edu.

Families invited to Autumn Fest for children of faculty and staff

The Circles Apartments will be hosting its second annual Autumn Fest for the children of faculty and staff from 5 to 7 p.m. Oct. 23. The event will include many activities for kids, including trick-or-treating, pumpkin painting and Halloween tattoos. Upon arrival, families can park in front of the Circles Community Center and check in to learn which apartments will be hosting trick-or-treaters. There will also be a food drive for the college’s food pantry.

Anyone interested in attending should register on Engage. Anyone requesting accommodations should contact Laura Bonerbo at circles@ithaca.edu or 607-274-1474.

PUBLIC SAFETY INCIDENT LOG

SELECTED ENTRIES FROM SEPT. 19 TO SEPT. 25

SEPTEMBER 19

MEDICAL ASSIST/ PSYCHOLOGICAL

LOCATION: Circle Apartments 351
SUMMARY: Caller reported a person intentionally caused self-harm. Officer reported person was taken into custody under New York state’s Mental Hygiene Law and transported to hospital by ambulance. Sergeant Bryan Verzosa responded.

ASSIST NY STATE POLICE

LOCATION: Terrace Dining Hall
SUMMARY: New York state police requested contact information for the owner of a vehicle involved in an off-campus motor vehicle accident. Safety Officer Christopher Gallagher responded to the request.

SEPTEMBER 20

MEDICAL ASSIST/ INJURY RELATED

LOCATION: Eastman Hall
SUMMARY: Caller reported a metal object fell into a person’s eye. The person reported a friend transported them to the hospital. Safety Officer RJ

Petrella responded to the call.

SCC COLLEGE REGULATIONS

LOCATION: Circle Apartments 211
SUMMARY: A caller reported that a guest of their roommate was making them feel uncomfortable. Officer reported one person was referred for violation of college regulations. Sergeant Bryan Verzosa responded.

SEPTEMBER 21

MEDICAL ASSIST/ INJURY RELATED

LOCATION: Whalen Center for Music
SUMMARY: Caller reported a person fell while walking and sustained a laceration to their face and an abrasion to their elbow. The responding officer reported that the person declined medical assistance. Patrol Officer Mayra Colon responded.

WELFARE CHECK

LOCATION: East Tower
SUMMARY: Caller reported a person punching walls and acting aggressively. Officer reported person was located and determined not to be a threat. Master Patrol Officer Sophia Dimkos responded to the call.

SEPTEMBER 22

WELFARE CHECK

LOCATION: Lyon Hall
SUMMARY: Caller reported that a person had made comments about harming themselves. Officer determined that the person was not an imminent threat to themselves. Master Patrol Officer Sophia Dimkos responded to the call.

ACCIDENTAL FIRE ALARM

LOCATION: Circle Apartments 181
SUMMARY: Simplex reported a fire alarm activation. Officer determined the activation was caused by cooking. Master Patrol Officer Sophia Dimkos responded to the report.

SEPTEMBER 23

V&T LICENSE VIOLATIONS

LOCATION: Unknown location
SUMMARY: A person found a wallet and turned it over to the Office of Public Safety. Officer reported the wallet contained a fictitious driver’s license and the owner was referred to the Office of Student Conduct. Patrol Officer Mayra Colon responded.

ACCIDENTAL FIRE ALARM

LOCATION: Circle Apartments 185
SUMMARY: Simplex reported a fire alarm. An officer reported that the alarm activation was caused by steam from someone cooking. Patrol Officer Mayra Colon responded to the report.

SEPTEMBER 24

SCC FIRE SAFETY OFFENSE

LOCATION: Recreation trails
SUMMARY: Officers reported locating people in the Ithaca College Natural Lands who had started a campfire. Officer reported five people were issued conduct referrals for trespassing and violating fire safety regulations. Sergeant Jon Elmore responded.

MEDICAL ASSIST/ PSYCHOLOGICAL

LOCATION: Upper Quads
SUMMARY: Caller reported a person intentionally overdosed on prescription medication. Officer reported person was taken into custody under New York state’s Mental Hygiene Law and was transported to the hospital by ambulance. Patrol Officer Mayra Colon responded.

SEPTEMBER 25

MEDICAL ASSIST/ PSYCHOLOGICAL

LOCATION: East Tower
SUMMARY: Caller reported a person made alarming statements of self-harm. Officer reported the person was taken into custody under New York state’s Mental Hygiene Law and transported to the hospital by ambulance. Master Patrol Officer Sophia Dimkos responded.

ACCIDENTAL FIRE ALARM

LOCATION: Circle Apartments 341
SUMMARY: Simplex reported a fire alarm. Master Patrol Officer Sophia Dimkos reported the alarm activation was caused by a person cooking.

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

KEY

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



ILLUSTRATION BY MADOLYN DONAGHY-ROBINSON/THE ITHACAN

EDITORIALS

Students should destress by exploring local nature

Ithaca College’s Outing Club provides students with opportunities to spend time outside regardless of their experience levels. The club, which has existed since 2018, holds weekly events as well as different outings around the Ithaca area where transportation and gear is provided for students who attend.

The Outing Club’s dedication to providing opportunities for outdoor experiences is admirable, especially since activities like hiking and camping can seem daunting or overwhelming to those who may not have had any previous experience in these activities. The Ithaca area is incredibly beautiful and offers so much in terms of outdoor activities that students should take advantage of.

The Ithaca College Natural Lands offer 560 acres of forest at students’ disposal. Spending time outside can be incredibly beneficial for students’ mental health and well-being; a Cornell University study found that spending as little as 10 minutes outdoors can contribute to higher levels of happiness and can lessen the

effects of stress on the body.

Not only is the club a useful resource for students looking to spend more time in the great outdoors, but spending time outside is beneficial for students’ mental and physical health. College is stressful. There are an abundance of deadlines and assignments that pile on students’ plates and it can be easy to forgo self-care activities.

Changes in seasons contribute to Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) and Ithaca College students are not excluded among those experiencing SAD. The cloudy, gray, dreary days of the Ithaca winter begin sooner than students expect, so it is important to take the limited time that is available to soak up some vitamin D.

Ithaca College is unique in the sense that the campus is surrounded by nature. Between the Natural Lands and local gorges and hiking trails, students have more than enough opportunities to take advantage of the nature around them. It is in the hands of the students to stop and smell the roses.

National college rankings offer skewed perspective

U.S. News recently released its college ranking list, where Ithaca College has consistently ranked high on the “Regional Universities North” list. While this achievement is commendable, many colleges and prospective college students put too much pressure and weight on the rank of a college.

Columbia University is currently in the middle of a scandal surrounding the U.S. News report where the university reported inflated and incorrect information in order to gain a higher ranking.

Once discovered, Columbia fell from the No. 2 to the No. 18 position on the “Best National Universities” list. Columbia is not the only college or university to face backlash for reporting incorrect information, but this knowledge calls into question the validity of the U.S. News report.

Prospective students and families should take things like the U.S. News rankings with a grain of salt. After Columbia, we now know that colleges have the ability to potentially

falsify statistics recorded in the rankings. While Ithaca College has not falsified statistics, self-reported numbers may not always be 100% accurate.

It is important to remember that the college’s rankings, which are posted all across social media, are for the “Regional Universities North” list, not the entire country. Ranking No. 12 on that list does not make the college the No. 12 best college in the country and it is important to remember the context the rankings are in.

The rankings of colleges and universities also contribute to a culture of elitism within higher education. Rather than focusing on the rank of a college, prospective students should focus on the quality of programs offered.

A college may not be at the top of the rankings in the country, however, it may have the perfect program a student is looking for. If we continue to put such heavy weight on college rankings, students may sacrifice their education because of their drive for the college’s ranking status.

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.

ALL COMMENTARIES MUST:

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

LETTER TO PRESIDENT’S CABINET AND ITHACA COLLEGE COMMUNITY

Flu POD is an effective way to vaccinate community

For nearly a decade, Ithaca College students and faculty in the public and community health major have partnered with the Office of Public Safety and Emergency Management, Ithaca College Human Resources, the Hammond Health Center, Tompkins County Public Health Department (TCHD) and the Central NY Medical Reserve Corps to offer annual flu shots to the entire campus community. In 2019, we received a national award as a model program.

In a typical year, we have been able to immunize 1,000-plus faculty, staff and students in a four to five-hour period with an average waiting time of approximately five minutes.

This process provided a quick and easy way to immunize nearly 15% of the campus. Many have come to rely on this point of dispensing (POD) for their annual flu shot.

This program is one of the only programs in the country managed by undergraduates in partnership with local public health disaster preparedness teams and the Medical Reserve Corps.

Our public and community health majors begin preparation early in the fall semester. Even during the COVID-19 pandemic, we were able to run the POD in a modified way.

Given the success of this initiative, we were surprised to learn Sept. 16 that the president’s cabinet made the decision to not support the flu shot POD this year. This was then announced to the faculty through Intercom a week later Sept. 22.

As a department with majors in health sciences and public and community health, we are obligated to ask the senior leadership to reconsider this decision and to work with health center and Cayuga Medical Center staff to make it happen as soon as possible. If not this year, then certainly in years to come.

Our community is not out of COVID-19.

Active COVID-19 cases on campus are very difficult to accurately measure because of factors like home testing, avoidance of isolation and quarantine fatigue.

As people move indoors during the colder months, the Center for Disease Control (CDC) predicts a possible COVID-19 surge. This surge would coincide with the typical seasonal flu.

This year, experts are predicting a severe flu season, partly because during the past two winters, very few people were infected with flu, which resulted in lower levels of immunity.

While no vaccination is ever 100% effective, the seasonal flu vaccination is about 60% effective most of the time. It is still the single best way to protect against the flu.

Easy access is critical. Providing a quick and easy way for students, faculty and staff to be immunized against seasonal influenza is consistent with effective public health practices. This is particularly true for students.

According to the National Foundation for Infectious Diseases Survey conducted by Harris Poll (2016), flu vaccination rates on U.S. campuses currently hover from 8–39%, well below the Healthy People 2020 goal of 70%. Most students believe that it’s important to be vaccinated, however, less than half (46%) say they typically get vaccinated.

When asked for ways to increase the likelihood of getting a flu shot, 61% cited “easy access at low or no cost.” We understand that students have always had the option of making an appointment for a flu shot at the Hammond Health Center, but this is far less effective in terms of campus resources.

Access through local pharmacies and health care providers are other options for the campus community. This requires making an appointment, finding transportation to and from and may require some payment. All these are barriers that affect the decision to be immunized. We also would like to address the communication related to this decision.

Faculty in public and community health have expertise and experience with POD design, management and efficiency.

We also have access to networks within the public health community that could assist with both personnel and resources, the two reasons cited to us for the flu POD cancellation. In addition, there is a standing POD committee on campus that includes faculty, staff from the Health Center, public safety, human resources, representatives from the TCHD, and the Central NY Medical Reserve Corps. This group has been very effective at pulling together our POD annually.

The public and community health faculty and this volunteer committee were both unaware of this decision until Sept. 16 and only after several inquiries. We wanted to be able to bring these resources to the table, to assist in solving the barriers to this year’s flu POD.

The college’s flu POD is something that is unique and sets us apart from campuses like Cornell University and SUNY Cortland who partner with Wegmans. We hope that this can remain a point of pride and that we re-initiate the process next fall.

However, this will only happen by using the existing lines of communication between the final decision makers and the faculty and standing POD committee.

Whether administrators, faculty, staff or students, we all share a commonly held value to promote and protect campus health and safety. This POD is a high-impact, low-cost and effective way to ensure that we as a campus community practice thoughtful, equitable and forward facing prevention strategies that align with best public health practices.

Faculty in the Department of Health Promotion and Physical Education:

Mary Bentley, associate professor; Stewart Auyash, associate professor; Amy Frith, associate professor; Kari Brossard-Stoos, department associate chair and associate professor; Deborah Wuest, professor; Phoebe Constantinou, professor; Raj Subramaniam, professor; Elizabeth Bergman, associate professor; Mary Ann Erickson, associate professor; Hongwei Guan, associate professor.

GUEST COMMENTARY

College students’ mental health deserves attention

BY ALLIEY MAGISTRO

Mental health. Two words that strike deep for all. What is it? “Mental health includes our emotional, psychological and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel and act. It also helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others and make choices,” according to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Specifically, this is something college students struggle with throughout the year. According to the Mayo Clinic Health System, 44% of college students struggle with symptoms of depression and anxiety, and within that

“We never truly know what someone could be going through, so checking in on them whenever we have the chance can truly impact a person.

– Alliey Magistro

44%, 75% are reluctant to seek help. The consequences of this can be poor academic performance, dropping out of college, depression, substance abuse or suicide.

When transitioning from high school to college, students have to learn how to navigate their own physical and mental health

for the first time without parents or friends they have known their entire life. They are completely surrounded by new people and a new environment. Moving to college means much more than going to class, studying and finding friends. It involves taking care of ourselves, doing our laundry, making sure we eat three meals a day and sometimes having to buy our own necessities. It is important to not put too much pressure on ourselves and remember that it is OK to not feel our best mentally sometimes.

“College is a key developmental time; the age of onset for lifetime mental health problems also directly coincides with traditional college years — 75% of lifetime mental health problems will onset by age 24,” Sarah K. Lipson, assistant professor in the Department of Health Law, Policy & Management at Boston University, said.

This reveals how college is one of the most imperative developmental stages of our life. Pushing through the hard times by ourselves, not in our usual bedroom we’ve known since we were born, not in the house we grew up in, surrounded by people we’ve been with every day of our lives until that point — having to struggle through these moments can be vigorous and stressful. The feeling that it will not get better can weigh down on someone. I cannot express enough how necessary it is for college students to have time to ourselves once in a while to check up on our mental health.

College students are sleep deprived because of all the strict deadlines they have to meet, the work that builds up and the extracurriculars they need to be a part of to further their chances for a job/internship in the future. With that said, it is very crucial for students to take a “mental health” day



First-year student Alliey Magistro discusses the relationship between being a student and maintaining good mental health. She says mental health days for students are crucial.

DAISY BOLGER/THE ITHACAN

once in a while, meaning to take the day off from classes to just relax and not be too stressed. I feel as though this is a topic that is important for college students to educate themselves about, if they have not already, because our mental health plays a significant role in our lives.

It does not matter if we are at the happiest point of our lives; our mental health still matters. One thing I truly believe everyone needs to do is to check in on our friends, even the happy ones. We never truly know what someone could be going through, so checking in on them whenever we have the chance can truly impact that person. Being a good friend goes a long way, more than we could ever know. There have been numerous times when a couple of my friends, the ones who are the life of the party, always happy and never complaining, are the ones that need someone there for them and just want to be checked up on. I have offered a helping hand to my friend, even when they did not seem upset, because as friends, we should be checking in on them. Mental health matters. Ours, our family, our friends, even the people we do not like — everyone’s mental health matters.

Alliey Magistro (she/her) is a first year journalism major. Contact her at amagistro@ithaca.edu.

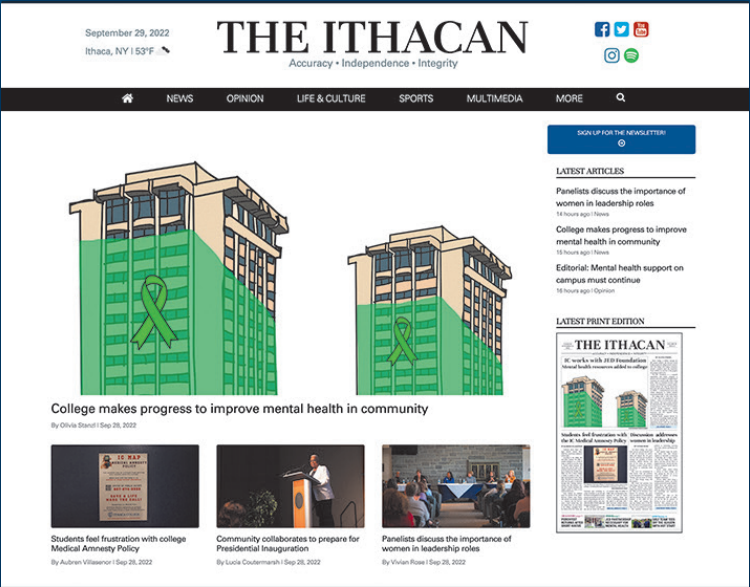
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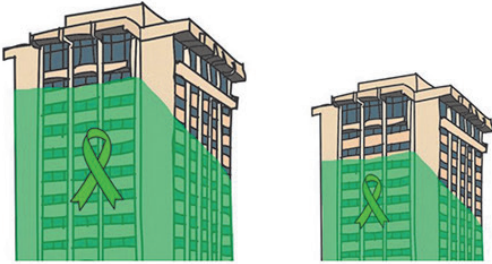


WE'VE GOT A
NEWSLETTER



We've got news. The mental health efforts
at Ithaca College continue.

IC makes progress to improve mental
health in community



The JED campus initiative, a four-year mental health program that Ithaca College joined in January 2020 recently released a [report](#) to note the progress the college has made so far with the program's initiative. The results were, well, probably what you'd expect.

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By Quill Driver Books

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53					54	55					56			57
58					59						60			
61					62						63			

ACROSS

- 1 Misgiving
5 Awry
10 Clammy
14 Earring site
15 Upper leg
16 Range in Asia
17 Academic inst.
18 Vietnam's capital
19 Prince
20 Grant
22 Least common
24 Wind indicator
25 Brand for Bowser
26 Large fleet
29 Chemistry, e.g.
32 Slammer and clink
33 Merits
34 That fellow
36 Increases the number
37 New growth
38 Fries, maybe
39 Estuary
40 Homer opus
41 Intertwined
42 Largest bird
44 Grinding teeth
45 Prohibits
46 Beach toy

- 47 Rectangular
50 Delay (2 wds.)
53 Tumbledown building
54 What "i.e." means
56 Send a telegram
58 Steelmaker's fuel
59 TLC provider
60 Vitality
61 Skippers' okays
62 Hurt at Pamplona
63 Solar plexus

DOWN

- 1 Winter complaint
2 Practically forever
3 Not much (2 wds.)
4 Old plays, restaged
5 Goddess of wisdom
6 Alan Ladd film
7 Compassionate
8 Psyche component
9 Spinning
10 Easy care fabric
11 — vera
12 Bulk

- 13 Clive Cussler hero
21 Floating leaves
23 Zoo attraction
25 Bitterly pungent
26 Almost shut
27 News source
28 Golden-touch king
29 Abraham's wife
30 Girl from Baja
31 Sea duck
33 Huge-cast films
35 Pills and such
37 Hurling
38 Less rosy
40 Oil exporter

- 41 Burglar's "key"
43 Juicy steaks (hyph.)
44 Soda fountain treat
46 Outlaw pursuers
47 Willy or Shamu
48 Nautical marker
49 Similar
50 Man of the haus
51 Send in the taxes
52 Toga party site
55 Batman and Robin
57 Capt.'s heading

last issue's crossword answers

TEMP		KAPPA		ABUT
AXEL		OBIES		VERA
XENA		DEPTH		ARGO
	CUTRATE		KITES	
		OAK	RAVEL	
	ALONSO	PIGSKIN		
SLANG		REINS		ARE
KEYS		CASAS		PROS
ETE		SONAR		KOANS
WARTHOG		YEASTS		
		BUSED	OTT	
AKRON		RECEIPT		
MOON		DEERE	NARC	
BODE		ARSON	GLAD	
OLEES		PASSE	SIPS	

WE'VE GOT MULTIMEDIA



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The Sudoku Source of "The Ithacan".

sudoku

very easy

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

medium

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

answers to last issue's sudoku:

medium

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

hard

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

Meeting with Mother Nature

Club offers students respite in the wild

BY CHELSEA COICHY



Late nights, heavy workloads and deadlines leave many students feeling like a hamster on

a wheel, desperate to slip away from the pressures of school. Nature being one of the best remedies for stress inspired the Outing Club to be that bridge for Ithaca College students looking to escape the confines of campus to decompress in nature.

The Outing Club was established in 2018 by students with the objective of providing access for everyone interested in the outdoors regardless of previous experience. The club's pledge to accessibility has provided students previously unable to reach nature because of geographic or financial barriers a chance to experience the beauty and the joy of participating in outdoor activities.

Senior Ellie Swanson, president of the Outing Club, is originally from Washington and grew up surrounded by the greenery of nature. She joined the club her first year at the college with the desire to be involved with something close to home and to become part of a connected community.

"Anybody who wants to join is welcome to join," Swanson said. "You don't need any experience. ... We've got people who have never been on a hike to people who have done countless backpacking trips."

Senior Morgan Kingsley, a member of the club, said she wants to reassure students that despite how daunting it can seem to participate in outdoor activities, the club is for people of all shapes, sizes and physical activity levels.

"When we think of hikers, it's like these people who are super strong, and they've got these incredible lungs and legs," Kingsley said. "But there's also people [in the club] who haven't gotten to be in nature, and [for them], it's a form of meditation [or] a form of exercise. For me, it's both."

For Swanson, she said it is important students recognize the club's dedication to inclusivity and emphasis on community.

"Our club is a place where people can gather and meet new people, especially for first-year students but also [so that] upper-classmen who maybe had friends but maybe grew apart can build new connections," Swanson said.

The activities offered by the club are designed to give students the opportunity to build these connections. Every Monday from 4 to 6 p.m., the Outing Club hosts their Weekly Hangs in the Ithaca Natural Lands, where students come to chill in hammocks and relax on blankets while basking in nature and chatting with one another. On Wednesdays, the club runs a rock climbing event from 7 to 9 p.m. in the Fitness Center, which Swanson said always produces a large turnout. Bigger events

include hiking in Robert H. Treman State Park, camping trips, a yearly backpacking trip to the Adirondacks and biannual watersports on Cayuga Lake.

The accessibility of planned activities and

"We are not the owners of this world. ... While we're creating these great opportunities for people ... it's vitally important to put the earth first so that future generations can also have those experiences," Swanson said.

the club is mellow. The focus is not about comparing one's abilities to others but about trying new activities and improving on your skills and experiencing the lure of nature.

Newsome said he found his excursions with the Outing Club offered some reprieve from the pressures he felt during the school year.

"I find that if I'm stressed with school or any other outside personal experiences, just going outside and being within nature just helps me put my mind at ease and get in touch with myself," Newsome said.

Being out in nature has also led some students to realize how disconnected humans are from our natural environment.

"[The world] has been around since the beginning and I feel like sometimes we forget that," Kingsley said. "Sometimes you forget to honor the fact that trees are helping us breathe. I think if people are more aware of the earth as a place where we cohabitate with it, they become more empathetic and appreciate its beauty and its purpose."

Swanson also said they want the club to offer students a sense of belonging and create a space for them to explore their own potential.

"The thing I get the most joy out of is [when,] after a camping trip, some participant comes up to me and I was like, 'I've never camped before and it was amazing, thank you so much for that experience,'" Swanson said.



From left, senior Ben Vajdos, junior Juliann Vadney and sophomore Eleanor Wester hold a workshop for the Ithaca College Outing Club about what things to pack for a hiking trip Oct. 4.

JASMINE SCRIVEN/THE ITHACAN

trips are guaranteed by providing transportation and any gear students may need, like sleeping bags, tents and snowshoes, free of charge.

A guiding principle on every trip is the concept of environmental stewardship, which is the idea that humans are responsible for taking care of and maintaining the quality of the environment while enjoying its wide variety of beauties and benefits.

The club follows Leave No Trace, a policy of seven principles of how to conduct oneself in nature. The seven principles are: plan and prepare ahead; travel and camp on durable land; dispose of waste properly; leave what you find; minimize campfire impacts; respect wildlife; and be considerate of other visitors.

The club practices these guidelines by staying on marked trails to avoid impacting wildlife and being cognizant of their place within nature.

Along with acquiring skills, constant exposure to nature can improve a person's mental and physical well-being by improving their attention span, lowering stress, elevating mood and increasing empathy and cooperation, according to the American Psychological Association.

These scientifically proven benefits led to the invention of ecotherapy: the idea that humans have a deep connection to the environment and that health problems like anxiety and depression can be treated by immersing yourself in nature through physical outdoor activities like hiking, camping and outdoor meditation.

Sophomore Ben Newsome said



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The Ithaca College Outing Club set up tents in the woods during a trip. The club goes on trips every week and an overnight trip once a month.

COURTESY OF MADELYN SALVANTE

College rock band prepares for one last show

BY JESS WILLIAMS

Port MacNam, a college rock band of three current and former Ithaca College students, plans to join together for one last show Oct. 29. Formed during the 2021–22 academic year after meeting at the weekly Open Mic Nights, Port MacNam will play during the vocal recital of one of its members, senior Ben Macarell.

Port MacNam is composed of Macarell on bass and vocals; Cameron Narimanian '22 on guitar, piano and vocals; and sophomore Yushi Portwood, who transferred to Purdue University in West Lafayette, Indiana, on drums. Their debut EP, called “Can’t Hold Back,” contains five rock tracks and was released July 15.

The group began in Fall 2021 through the weekly IC Open Mic Nights that occur in IC Square every Thursday from 8 to 10 p.m. Macarell and Narimanian formed the group after working on the executive board for IC Open Mic Night, which showcases musicians, comedians and performers.

Narimanian said the band was formed to make IC Open Mic Night shows more interesting. He and Macarell started playing covers as a duo together after every show.

“[Narimanian] was very much in the mindset of, like, ‘OK, let’s make the show good,’” Macarell said. “My whole thing was just like, ‘I just want to play with this guy.’”

After playing for a couple weeks, Narimanian and Macarell started hanging up flyers around campus

looking for a drummer. These flyers eventually found their way to Portwood, who was interested and showed up to the next open mic night.

From that point on, the full trio was formed, and they decided on the name Port MacNam, which is a combination of their last names.

After playing covers every week from the likes of The Ramones, a-ha and The Police, the band started working on original material that was similar to the rock music they initially covered while performing at IC Open Mic Night.

“We demoed them all at [Portwood’s] house, where we would come Sunday afternoon at, like, 1 or 2 [p.m.] with an idea,” Narimanian said. “We spent four or five weeks probably doing this every Sunday; we’d come with an idea, and then we’d leave with, like, the instrumental piece of a song.”

Port MacNam wrote all four original songs that landed on the EP during these sessions. These songs could broadly be described as rock, but touches of choral arranging and hip-hop also exist on this EP — reflecting the different musical backgrounds of the members. Macarell is a vocal major at Ithaca College, Portwood has been playing drums since he was in middle school, and Narimanian has been playing classical piano since he was 5 years old. This combination of backgrounds blend together, creating a collage often distinct to the college-rock sound.

“It all started off [with], like, instrumental stuff,” Portwood said.



From left, sophomore Yushi Portwood, Cameron Narimanian '22 and senior Ben Macarell practice for their last show coming up Oct. 29. The three make up the college rock band Port MacNam.

KEVIN YU/THE ITHACAN

“And then I decided, I can spit some bars, so I decided I’ll be a rapper.”

Portwood’s rapping is displayed on the second track, “Just Myself in the Sun,” which is an indie-rock/hip-hop fusion. “The Mysterious Old Man” showcases Narimanian’s piano balladry, “The Price That Love Can Pay” has driving pop-punk influence, and the closer “Can’t Hold Back” has some peppy, singer/songwriter elements.

Choosing the fifth song, which they decided would be a cover, took some deliberating according to Narimanian, who claimed the

group spent more time debating than working on the songs.

“I think it got to one open mic where [Portwood] was just like, ‘let’s just do Bon Jovi’s ‘Living On a Prayer,’” Macarell said. “And ... the heavens opened up above me, and I saw the whole thing come together.”

The cover is a slower take on Bon Jovi’s hit song, turning the guitar-driven rock song into a piano ballad with of choir-like backing vocals from Macarell.

After the demos were completed, the band looked for a studio

to record the EP. They eventually decided to work with Chris Ploss, sound engineer and producer at Sunwood Recording.

Despite this, Macarell said that Port MacNam does not have any plans to continue as a band because they lost the convenience of attending the same college.

Port MacNam’s “Can’t Hold Back,” as well as the solo material from each band member, can be found on Apple Music and Spotify.

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Q&A: Professor works to make dance more accessible

BY PATRICK MAZZELLA

Daniel Gwartzman, assistant professor in the Ithaca College Department of Theatre and Dance Performance, has worked on creating accessible dance content for students for upward of two decades.

Gwartzman does this through teaching dance in underserved schools in New York City and making Dance With Us, a free on-line platform to view dozens of dance films and instructional videos. His newest venture, a dance film titled “Charged,” made its premiere at the Thessaloniki Cinedance International Film Festival on Sept. 25 in Thessaloniki, Greece. The film explores the life of a woman who teeters between mundane daily tasks and escapism from routine.

Staff writer Patrick Mazzella met with Gwartzman to discuss how dance served as a source of inspiration.

This interview has been edited for length and clarity.

Patrick Mazzella: Can you tell me a little bit about the film?

Daniel Gwartzman: The film was commissioned by [The Flatlands Dance Theatre], which had a season of filmed dance work during the pandemic. What was noteworthy about this process was I never physically met or worked with the dancer. I had a long process of rehearsing over several months and it was all choreographed through Zoom. I was very much interested in using an interior space that could be transformed in some way and settled on an available space for the dancer, which was the dancer’s kitchen and really wanted, then, to make it more

like an open set.

PM: “Charged” is a pretty intense title—what was the inspiration for it?

DG: This idea of “Charged” came from starting with the idea of coffee and caffeine and what that can do to somebody and really blowing that out and exploring a character that becomes unhinged or perhaps seems unhinged to a viewer. ... There was a director of photography and during the actual shooting, I was also there to help set up the angles, and we had multiple cameras shooting, which I then edited into the final film.

PM: Obviously “Charged” was such a different experience for you, but what is your typical process for choreographing a dance?

DG: For this biannual dance concert being held by [the college] this fall, auditions were open to the entire campus community. I have a cast of nine dancers and am collaborating with [the college]’s Jazz Ensemble. ... So when I’m choreographing, I want to highlight the cast and accentuate their particular idiosyncrasies. At the same time, I’m going to challenge everyone technically and artistically through expression ... which is really meaningful for students, sure, but dancers to be a part of that creation. Something new comes from that, of course, and it allows for the work to be genuine in a way that everybody can buy into.

PM: You mentioned the digital sphere earlier. Can you tell me how the introduction of a more digital environment has sort of transformed that?

DG: Since our inception, we [have been]



Daniel Gwartzman, assistant professor in the Department of Theatre and Dance Performance, works on choreography. His work seeks to make dance more accessible.

KEVIN YU/THE ITHACAN

producing video tutorials and lesson plans and documenting choreo[graphy] that we could use in partnership with our education partners, such as the Department of Education. So we received grants early on in the company[’s] existence to produce these materials that could help augment instruction by thinking of underserved populations. Just before the pandemic, the company received a significant grant from the Rockefeller Brothers Fund to create a digital platform called Dance With Us and we did launch the platform during the pandemic. ... This is a free platform. ... Dance

can be accessible.

PM: Can you speak a bit about how students and others who are interested in dance can view “Charged?”

DG: When a film is on a festival circuit, it’s part of the contract that the film is exclusive for that time. But as the film passes from that statute of time, we’ll be sharing it widely and freely. [It’s] exciting in the way we’re able to share from another continent.

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Lazy writing fails Olivia Wilde’s thriller

MOVIE REVIEW: “Don’t Worry Darling” Warner Bros. Pictures



BY SYDNEY BRUMFIELD

Imagine being promised the best ice cream flavor, but then getting to the ice cream parlor to find it’s sold out. This is what it’s like watching Olivia Wilde’s new film, “Don’t Worry Darling.” With an insane roster of actors, including the phenomenal Florence Pugh, Harry Styles, Chris Pine, Gemma Chan and Nick Kroll, as well as enough drama to set the internet ablaze, this film will ultimately leave viewers with a disappointed taste in their mouth.

“Don’t Worry Darling” follows Alice (Pugh) and Jack (Styles) as they enjoy their picture-perfect life in the community of Victory.

Victory appears to be a newly developed, 1950s-esque community that houses the families of husbands who work for the Victory Project. Alice seems happy being a member of the cult of domesticity, but when her neighbor (KiKi Layne) starts to spiral into insanity as she questions what the Victory Project actually is, so does Alice.

“Don’t Worry Darling” hinges so much of its success on Pugh’s talented shoulders, and it is not a jump to suggest that her on-screen talents saved this film. Pugh has already proved she is a remarkable force in the world of acting with her incredible performances in

“Lady Macbeth” (2016), “Little Women” (2019) and, of course, the cult classic “Midsommar” (2019). In this film, Pugh not only demonstrates her innate ability as an actor, but shows that she can bring to life even the most lackluster material.

Unfortunately, the same cannot be said for Pugh’s co-stars. The problem was not any of their individual acting, but instead the fact that their characters are so horribly underdeveloped and haphazardly written that all of their performances feel like they are overacting. For example, Frank (Pine) had such potential to be an evil, male-manipulator character. Instead, his little screen time is horribly used, feeling more like a one-dimensional villain from a children’s film than a legitimate threat.

The first two acts of “Don’t Worry Darling” are horribly structured and lazily written. The entire premise of the film is that there is something askew in the community of Victory, but this is established so early on in the film that the pacing is thrown entirely off. The first and second acts feel like they are crawling toward the answer to the question “why can no one leave Victory?” Additionally, the stakes in the film are never escalated, thus leading to the film having an intense lack of agency. The film also has



From left, Alice (Florence Pugh) and Jack (Harry Styles) appear to be a perfect couple in Olivia Wilde’s new film.

COURTESY OF WARNER BROS. PICTURES

many narrative coincidences where plot points happen a bit too easily, breaking the world of the film.

Interesting framing and shots are used to try to build up Pugh’s descent into madness. Unfortunately, this easily gets pushed aside by the distracting editing. Shots used for montages and cutaways are used too frequently, leaving viewers bored of them. The viewing experience is also interrupted by some postproduction issues,

especially when it came to audio quality.

“Don’t Worry Darling” is one of the most unsatisfactory films of the year, especially when the raw narrative and eventual third act twist truly had so much potential. This film feels more committed to being a feature film spectacle rather than being a successful and thrilling story.

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Courting’s debut album is inventive and complex

ALBUM REVIEW: “Guitar Music” Teichiku Records



BY JESS WILLIAMS

Black Midi. Squid. Black Country, New Road. Shame. Yard Act. Dry Cleaning. If none of these bands ring a bell, it might be time to dive into the world of post-Brexit British post-punk. Affectionately known as the “Windmill Scene” by its fans, this rapidly growing genre has been increasing in popularity and momentum for the past three years. Even though all these bands are coming out of the same area and have similar approaches, they differ vastly from each other.

With their debut album, “Guitar Music,” Courting is the newest addition to the growing roster of eccentric, speak-singing, musically complex bands in the Windmill Scene. Influences from their contemporaries are easily traced, but the band refuses to be completely backed into that corner.

In all senses of the word, “Guitar Music” is a mess. Look no further than the nine-minute “Uncanny Valley Forever,” which is part noise-collage, indietronica and indie-rock. Just when this blend of sounds starts to become familiar, they throw in an 808 drum machine to continue throwing the listener off. Living up to the song’s name, this method of throwing completely different music styles together haphazardly creates an unsettling effect. What really

displays the talent of this group is their ability to make their unnerving genre-bending irresistibly entertaining.

People who are familiar with the Windmill Scene might already be accustomed to the strange pop-culture references in the band Black Country, New Road (BCNR)’s lyrics, but whereas BCNR’s lyrical style is inward and serious, Courting is more playful in tone. Part of how Courting operates around their hodgepodge of influences is their dryly presented absurdist lyrics that show how the band doesn’t take itself too seriously. Some lyrical highlights include: “You took me to see some movie / I said, ‘You don’t know what niche means’ / ‘Cause you said ‘I’ve never heard of it,’ / But everyone’s on Letterboxd now,” on “Jumper.”

The single “Loaded” is a criticism of life in aging cities. In between verses of lead vocalist Sean Murphy-O’Neill lamenting about gentrification and mocking people who make fun of the appearance of buildings in older, more working-class areas, Murphy-O’Neill, dead-pan, presents one of the most quotable and incessant pre-choruses of the year: “Don’t wanna be a pop star now / Maybe I’ll think about it later.” But he really should think about it sooner than later, because his ear for a good pop hook shows up time and time again on this record. The track “Famous” sounds



Courting debuts their first album, “Guitar Music,” to much success.

COURTESY OF TEICHIKU RECORDS

like it could be a mid-2010s pop-rock radio hit if it weren’t for the harsh mix and spoken-word passages.

“Guitar Music” is a short 32 minutes, and it only has eight songs, making the album feel like just a sampling of what Courting is fully capable of. Most of what Courting presents here is the inventive sound that was presented with the singles leading up to the record. However, the stylistically flat “Jumper” and the tedious, stuttering “PDA” show that when Courting’s chaotic genre mixing is subpar, their songwriting weaknesses get exposed.

Despite the few low points, “Guitar Music” is a powerfully inventive debut album. For a band that is just now taking off, a debut this strong is more than enough of a good reason to keep a close eye on what this group has in store for the future.

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QUICKIES



COURTESY OF ATLANTIC RECORDING GROUP

“THIS IS WHY”
Paramore

Paramore reminds listeners that its indie-rock charm isn’t going anywhere. After a five-year hiatus from releasing music, “This Is Why” is a proper return to form with engaging instrumentation.



COURTESY OF BMG RIGHTS MANAGEMENT

“GET OFF MY”
Julia Wolf

Up-and-coming artist Julia Wolf shows off her vocal talent with an empowering song, pushing back against the people who did her wrong. Wolf is building up to something impressive with her debut album, to be released in 2023.



COURTESY OF ISLAND RECORDS

“BEEP”
M.I.A.

While this new single is far from one of M.I.A.’s most memorable or unique tracks, clocking in at just two minutes, its quick beat and decent lyrics are enough to entertain.



COURTESY OF ATLANTIC RECORDS GROUP

“CHARLIE BE QUIET!”
Charlie Puth

Simply by just reading the extremely unsubtle title of Charlie Puth’s new single, listeners may find themselves cringing on the inside. While the song itself is nothing special in theme or musicality, the rock-anthem chorus is at least one highlight.

Students hit the ballroom dance floor



Senior club president Matt Mahmet and sixth-year student Lochlyn Hejl dance the tango together as an example. MARI KODAMA/THE ITHACAN



First-year students Samantha Guzman Flores and Ashan Chandrasena practice the steps to the swing together. MADDY TANZMAN/THE ITHACAN

BY AIDAN CHARDE

“Rock step, triple step, triple step, rock step, again!” shouted senior Matt Mahmet, president of the Ithaca College Ballroom Dance club, as he watched pairs dance the swing, “Confident” by Demi Lovato blaring in the background.

Mahmet walked around correcting hand positions, giving tips on how to improve, or taking over and showing the dancers how it is done. From the ease at which he performs the moves, it is easy to assume he has been ballroom dancing his whole life.

But Mahmet, like most of the other members of the club, said he had never danced before joining the club as a first-year student. He said the atmosphere and people in the club are what has kept him coming back.

“Ballroom dance is a partner dance, so you’re really connecting with somebody else,” Mahmet said. “Especially non-verbally, you know, to cue moves and to cue specific things ... and you do meet a bunch of new people, you’ve danced with them specifically, and it’s so cool to, like, get to know these people and dance with them.”

Whether it is the tango, jive, quickstep or waltz — just a few of the 12 dances the club practices — Mahmet said there is something for everyone, regardless of their experience.

Before the dancers paired off and started dancing together, they split into two groups: leaders and followers. Although the split

between the parts are traditionally based on gender, sixth-year student Lochlyn Hejl said everyone is allowed to pick either role.

“In ballroom ... you have the traditional ‘male lead, female follower,’” Hejl said. “We’re very much, like, not about that. ... Whatever part you want to dance is totally, totally cool with us.”

In addition, Hejl said dancers are free to switch roles between different dances, or even halfway through one dance. Hejl said she started as a leader but decided following was more fun, so she changed and now teaches the new dancers the follower moves.

Like Mahmet, Hejl also had not done dance before her time at the college. While she mentioned she was a big fan of “Dancing With The Stars,” as were several other members, a big thing she loves about the club is that it does not require any experience.

The club meets twice a week, Mondays and Wednesdays from 7 to 8:30 p.m. in the Fitness Center. The first few weeks of the semester typically consist of learning the new dances step-by-step, according to junior Mackenzie Hale, who is in her second year with the club. That schedule helps new dancers learn their moves but also refreshes the returners on what they might have forgotten over the summer.

“We’ll have a dance in mind that we’re going to work on and we’ll review the basics, maybe teach a couple of moves,” Hale said. “Once it gets later in the semester, we’ll just



Members of the club who take the role of followers learn the steps to the tango. Once they are ready, they will pair off with a leader and practice together. MARI KODAMA/THE ITHACAN

practice dances that we already know.”

The club keeps rehearsing the same dances because, though Mahmet said they just want people to have fun, there is also an opportunity to compete against other colleges, mostly on the east coast. The club is still for people of any experience levels, but Mahmet said competition, which usually happens twice per semester, adds another layer of fun.

“We go all over, a whole bunch of schools come together and we get to show off,” Mahmet said. “We get to see a lot of high-level dancers do their thing, we get to do our thing and we get to be judged for it on a high level. It’s really cool.”

There are different levels of competition for ballroom dance, so the members of the club at the college compete against other dancers who have similar skills in the new-comer division. Junior Vanivy Delaney said she and her partner placed high in three dances at a competition in Binghamton last year, which she said was a great experience.

“We won third in cha-cha, fifth in international cha-cha and sixth in rumba,” Delaney said. “It was cool because I was not expecting to win, but that was fun.”

The semester is only a few weeks old, so new members have not quite gotten into the swing of things yet. Whether or not they know any of the dances, Mahmet said he and the other experienced members will teach them the steps.

While it is beautiful to watch and do, that is not the only reason people keep coming back. First-year student Grace Micheletti credits the energy the leaders bring to the dance floor every practice as to why she wants to stay in the club.

“I think the club is really entertaining,” Micheletti said. “All the club leaders are really fun, really chill. They’re very supportive, and so even if you aren’t a good dancer, you can still learn at least a little bit.”

Although Hejl is not on the executive board, she is one of the oldest members of the club and takes on a leadership role regardless. She said she has met some of her closest friends through ballroom dance and she wants to make sure others can as well.

“The people that I’ve met through this club are literally my best friends,” Hejl said. “They’re people I know are gonna be in my life for the rest of my life. And that is just a really, really special experience to have.”

Whether people come for the friends, the fun or the elegance, Mahmet said he wants to make one thing clear: dance is a workout.

“We are a sports club!” Mahmet said, clapping his hands to emphasize each word. “I’m exhausted at the end of practice. So, you know, that could be a testament to me, or the fact that we’re trying to help them.”



From left, junior Vanivy Delaney, first-year student Gemma Colasanti, sixth-year student Lochlyn Hejl and first-year student Elliot House-Kelly learn the tango. VAN HOANG/THE ITHACAN

Cortaca Jug venue draws mixed reactions

BY EMMA KERSTING

The 2022 Cortaca Jug game is set to be hosted by Ithaca College at Yankee Stadium on Nov. 12 in the Bronx. The stadium, with a capacity of over 50,000 seats, will hold students, alumni, staff and family as they cheer on their college’s team for the “biggest little game in the nation.”

Ben Carlton ’20 said he attended the Cortaca Jug game at MetLife Stadium in 2019. The 2019 Cortaca Jug set the record for crowd size at a Division III football game, with an attendance of 45,161.

“We were all kind of blown away when they told us they’re going to be at MetLife,” Carlton said. “Setting the [Division] III attendance record was really exciting for everybody. I thought it was a blast getting to work; it was really a privilege as well.”

While Carlton said he finds the Yankee Stadium venue to be exciting, he has some concerns about the neutral site game.

“Honestly, I thought the neutral site venue was a one-off type of deal,” Carlton said. “I know there was a lot of discussion over cutting faculty, but it’s a big chance for it to be put on a much bigger stage than they could from just doing it on campus.”

Senior Nick Lubrano is the WICB and VIC radio sports director at the college, producing all football broadcasts on the station. Lubrano said he is looking forward

to the Cortaca Jug game this year.

“I personally am very excited for Cortaca to be hosted at Yankee Stadium for the fact that I think it’s going to give our student media a lot of exposure into a really professional environment,” Lubrano said.

Some students said they wish the college kept the game at Butterfield Stadium. Cortaca switches between SUNY Cortland and Ithaca College each year in terms of who hosts the game, however, the college has opted to move the game off-site during its last two hosting years in 2019 and 2022.

“I think it would have been nice for the student body, at least the seniors, to get a home Cortaca game at some point, just to see what the atmosphere would have been like,” Lubrano said.

Carlton, however, attended the Cortaca Jug game hosted on the college’s campus when he was a sophomore back in 2017.

“The place was packed out, standing room only, everyone’s standing shoulder to shoulder,” Carlton said. “It was super exciting ... for it to be [here] and have that extra buzz on campus.”

The college will provide buses from the Athletics and Events Center lot to Yankee Stadium the day of the game. While in 2019 the buses to MetLife did not have a cost to ride, the buses this year will cost \$20 round trip.

“If you don’t have your own form of transportation, it’s not great,” senior Sam Hefti said. “It’s



Supporters of Ithaca College sat in the cold and rain for the 2021 Cortaca Jug game, the first one held since the 2019 contest at MetLife Stadium. The Bombers lost to SUNY Cortland 28–27 Nov. 13, 2021.

ALYSSA BEEBE/THE ITHACAN

kind of creating a barrier for students that really want to go to the game and maybe they can only afford a ticket.”

Hefti said that traveling so far to watch the game can add another layer of stress to any attendees as the drive to the Bronx from Ithaca takes several hours.

Junior Olivia Celenza said she feels that Cortaca being hosted at popular venues like MetLife Stadium and Yankee Stadium is an inappropriate use of the college’s funds.

“To be quite honest, I feel like it’s an unnecessary expense,” Celenza said. “Ithaca’s always

talking about how we don’t have money, how the school’s in a lot of financial distress, and yet we are able to go to a big stadium.”

However, Susan Bassett, associate vice president and director of Intercollegiate Athletics, said in an email that the college is not paying anything to have the contest at Yankee Stadium, contrary to what some students believe.

“The only expense we have is as a normal host of a home football game, which includes the cost of the officials,” Bassett said via email. “Everything else is fully covered. We also have the potential to get an additional stipend if the game

is a sell-out. ... The College has budgeted for a normal hosting of Cortaca at IC. Those funds are supplementing the cost of the buses for spectators and performers.”

Although junior Molly Hankinson said she does not have any particular interest in football, she still plans to attend the Cortaca Jug game with her friends. Hankinson said she is excited about the spectacle of the event.

“It will be something cool to tell our kids,” Hankinson said. “Especially for the athletes there.”

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First-year student runner speeds into season

Since joining the Ithaca College women’s cross-country team, first-year student Jessica Goode has been making statements in the Liberty League.

Goode has paced the team in three straight weeks to open the season and won Liberty League Rookie of the Week on Sept. 12 and Liberty League Performer of the Week on Sept. 19.

She placed ninth overall at the Hamilton Short Course on Sept. 10 in her first collegiate meet, one of only two first-year students to place in the top 10.

The week of Sept. 17, Goode followed it up with an eighth-place finish at the University of Rochester Yellowjacket Invitational — sixth among college runners and over 30 seconds faster than the next Ithaca College runner. Her finish helped power the Bombers to a seventh place finish out of 25 teams who ran in the meet.

In her third meet, the Paul Short Run at Lehigh University in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, Goode placed 74th out of 1,131 runners and set a personal best time of 22:30.9, which was nearly a full minute faster than her next teammates.

Contributing writer Andrew Roberts spoke with Goode about her reaction to her recent performances and recognition.

This interview has been edited for length and clarity.

Andrew Roberts: What inspired you to run cross country here at Ithaca College and in general?

Jessica Goode: [The college has] a really strong track and cross-country team. I really like the coaches and they know what they’re doing. I come from a family of runners and athletes, especially on my mom’s side, so

sports is a very important outlet to us. My parents put me in sports, and I kept with it.

AR: How was the first couple [of] weeks running with the team compared to your expectations?

JG: I really love it. Everyone is so kind and positive. It has met my expectations; the workouts are tough but in a good way. I just like how everyone cares about each other and lifts each other up.

AR: How have you felt about your own performance?

JG: I didn’t know I would be at this level as a freshman right now. I did look at other people’s times before coming to college, but I guess I never really thought about it. I can’t believe I’m at this point with the help of my high school team and coach, and also right now with my coach and teammates.

AR: What was your initial reaction when you won Rookie of the Week?

JG: I was very surprised. Personally, I did not know these awards existed, so when I saw this, I thought it was so cool. I was very proud of myself, and it just inspires me to keep working harder, stay in a good mindset, and keep doing what I’m doing.

AR: After winning the first award, what was your reaction when you won the second?

JG: After the second one, now I’m really believing in myself. I’m more confident now that I have these things; they surprised me.

AR: How has the confidence boost from these awards helped you to continue to improve?

JG: I don’t think about it all the time, I just run. But I walk on the line knowing where



First-year student runner Jessica Goode has been the Ithaca College women’s cross-country team’s fastest racer in all three races so far this season.

NOLAN SAUNDERS/THE ITHACAN

I’ve come from, how far I’ve come, and I tell myself ‘I’ve got this.’ I came from a very competitive high school team where I wasn’t the No. 1, and I wasn’t as confident back then.

AR: How does it feel to be a leader on this team so early in your college career?

JG: It’s, once again, a very big confidence boost. I wasn’t expecting to be the No. 1 girl and be consistent about it, since certain days, people might feel better than others. I’m glad I’m able to contribute to the team this early on in my collegiate athletic career.

AR: What inspiration have you taken from the upperclassmen on the team?

JG: We work together, work as a pack, feed off each other’s energies and empower each other.

AR: What individual and team goals do you have looking ahead?

JG: This one is very ambitious, but there’s this race at Rowan College called the [Inter-Regional Border Battle] and the individual winner gets a sword. It might not happen this year, but that’s a big thing I want because I’ve always wanted a real sword. Short term, I’m hoping to race smarter and get a faster time. I want to break 23 minutes in the 6K.

Note: Goode broke 23 minutes in her most recent race, the Women’s College Brown 6K at the Paul Short Run on Sept. 30, which took place after this interview.

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From front, senior Erika Elcsisin and sophomore Nicole De La Mota from the Ithaca College sculling team teach first-generation students to row Sept. 30 at the Ithaca College Ward Romer Boathouse. The event was hosted by the First-Generation Center and involved a lesson on the water followed by a barbecue to end the night.

LEILA MARCILLO-GÓMEZ/THE ITHACAN