Artificial turf creates environmental concerns

IC students find belonging through inclusive housing

Faculty Council hash out Title IX report controversy
Flow of migrants drop across the border of Texas and Mexico

A month after President Joe Biden’s administration said it was expanding its humanitarian parole program for migrants from certain countries, Mexican officials warn it is too early to claim success, even as the number of migrants reaching the border has plummeted.

In an interview with The Dallas Morning News, Roberto Velasco, a top diplomat and chief of the North America bureau at the Mexican Foreign Ministry, highlighted the drastic drop — as much as a 97% decline — in the number of migrants journeying through Mexico from Venezuela, Cuba, Nicaragua and Haiti.

Former foreign minister places first in Cyprus presidential vote

Former foreign minister Placestas as an independent compared to 29.6% for Mavroyiannis, than 99% of the vote counted.

End of public health emergency causes a cascade of changes

The Biden administration’s plan to unwind the public health emergency tied to the COVID-19 pandemic will spur a whirlwind of changes related to telehealth, Medicaid, pharmaceuticals and other priorities.

Many Republicans have said the May 11 end date announced Monday is not soon enough, with the House voting this week on a bill to roll back that and three other pandemic policies immediately. Democrats have said the time is needed to weigh which flexibilities and funding may need to continue.

US downs alleged Chinese spy balloon that lingered for days

The U.S. shot down an alleged Chinese surveillance balloon off the South Carolina coast Feb. 4, capping days of waiting as it traversed the country and injected new tension into relations with China.

President Joe Biden said he ordered the Pentagon on Feb. 1 to down the balloon as soon as possible “without doing damage to anyone on the ground.” The military decided the best window was Feb. 4 while it was over the Atlantic within U.S. territorial waters.

MULTIMEDIA
THERE’S MORE MULTIMEDIA ONLINE. VISIT THEITHACAN.ORG/MEDIA

Ithaca College Hits the Mario Kart Track

On Feb. 4, The Ithacan rolled up to Emerson Suites for Ithaca College’s annual Mario Kart tournament filled with video games, virtual reality and Monster energy drinks.

THE ITHACAN

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Mpox worries fade over time

BY KAI LINCKE

STAFF WRITER

Ithaca College added resources for students to mitigate the spread of the mpox virus, formerly known as monkeypox, in summer 2022, but as case numbers have fallen, some students’ concern for the virus has decreased.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), mpox is a viral infection that causes flu-like illness and a rash on the face, chest, hands, mouth, genitals or feet. It is spread through contact with an infected person’s lesions, bodily fluids or close face-to-face contact.

The U.S. Department of Health & Human Services declared the mpox outbreak a public health emergency in August 2022 because of the virus’s rapid spread. The press release said the government would continue to track cases and invite at-risk individuals to receive a free vaccine.

Senior Sophia Roy said she was originally concerned that mpox would become a pandemic in 2022, but she has not thought about mpox since cases first started to increase in the summer.

“I haven’t heard [about it] in class or the college, or not even people that I know,” Roy said. “No one is really talking about it. … I kind of forgot about it.”

First-year student Hope Oliver said she has not heard about mpox since her seminar professor mentioned the increase in mpox cases in class during Fall 2022.

“My professor mentioned it, it was like an uptick,” Oliver said. “That day I was like, ‘Oh, maybe I should wipe down my staff’ but then I feel like that after … I wasn’t too worried.”

The World Health Organization announced in November 2022 that it planned to phase out the name “monkeypox” within the next year and relabel the virus as “mpox” to reduce potential stigmatization and discrimination. As of Feb. 8, Tompkins County has recorded four mpox cases since July 2022, according to the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH). Samm Swarts, assistant director of Emergency Preparedness and Response, said via email that Tompkins County Wide Health meets weekly with administrators from Ithaca College, Cornell University and Tompkins Cortland Community College to provide updates on health topics like mpox.

“We take every public health concern seriously and we actively monitor the latest information to make informed decisions,” said Swarts.

The first mpox case was reported in the United States in May 2022, according to the CDC. Mpox case numbers rose gradually through June. The United States reached a peak of 634 cases Aug. 1. There was an average of 3–5 cases recorded in the U.S. each day in January 2023.

The drop in mpox cases has been attributed to behavioral changes and increased distribution of the two-dose Jynneos vaccine. The CDC identified men who have sex with men as the primary group at risk of contracting mpox. The CDC recommended that men who have sex with men who receive Johnson & Johnson’s vaccine undergo testing in May.

In October 2022, Hammond Health Center started offering the Jynneos vaccine for all students. Jennifer Metzger, director of Student Health Services, said that just under 500 students have received enough doses from the NYSDOH to vaccinate 500 students. The mpox vaccine is free and the vaccine administration fee is charged to students’ private insurance or health care plans.

Metzger said 25 students have received the vaccine through the county’s health department since October. The second dose is scheduled for Jan. 25. Students may receive the vaccine at the college’s Health Center.

“We take every public health concern seriously and we actively monitor the latest information to make informed decisions,” said Swarts.
Mauer said something specific he wants to see the college do is create a system that would help transgender and queer students find residence halls that fit their needs. "A few years ago, our orientation process used to be in the summer, so students would come in June or July for orientation to sign up for classes and that was a great way for queer and trans students to meet each other," Mauer said. "I’d love for us to figure out some additional ways for queer and trans students to meet additional roommate matches before they get [to campus]."

Junior Gwenneth Cole, a co-founder of Open Pages, is a Resi- dence Assistant (RA) for the RLC and said they feel much more comfortable being an RA to transgender and nonbinary students than when they were in the then-School of Music but was not involved with such resistance that, in the meeting, Stein said the provost’s office at the college was the correct one. Dimaras said the survey was the correct one.

"[The report] very specifically singles out the people who identify outside of the binary," Culhane said. For many people who are transgender and nonbinary, public restrooms are a cause of anxiety and discomfort. According to a 2013 study by the Williams Institute that surveyed transgender and gender non-conforming people’s experiences in public restrooms in Washington D.C., 18% of participants reported that they were denied access to a gendered bathroom and 68% reported at least one instance of verbal harassment in bathrooms.

The college posts all the available gender-neutral bathrooms on campus and in residence halls on its website, providing resources for students to find the bathrooms they are most comfortable using. Most student residence halls are equipped with at least one all-gender restroom, but some, including most of the Upper and Lower Quads, only have gendered communal restrooms. Mauer said he would love for the college to invest in upgrades to single-occupancy restrooms in residence halls for all students so the bathrooms would be more like what students have in their homes.

Culhane said that the first semester of Open Pages ran smoothly and that the RLC is so popular there is a waitlist. Cole also said via email that the RLC will be open to first-year students starting in Fall 2023.

Because of the demand from incoming first-year applicants and the people already on the waitlist, the RLC was approved for a second floor in West Tower starting in Fall 2023. Cole said the goal next year is to keep the first-year students together on the same floor to give them the experience of a first-year dorm. "We don’t necessarily have events that are trans oriented, but we went mini golfing," Cole said. "People just walk into the lounge and hang out and do homework together and it just really has a community feel.

Barrett said the RLC keeps a record of applicants and considers their applications by how well the applicants answer the application questions and what applicants can contribute to the community of the RLC. The RLC considers waitlisted applicants at the start of each semester when space opens up from students who study abroad, gradu- ate or leave the college. "Something we emphasize on our application is what Open Pages can do for you," Barrett said. A lot of applicants talk about their safety and their own well-being. Something that we take into consideration is if the student is going to be okay if they are not on the floor."

Barrett said that during the events he feels more comfortable being himself and that Open Pages allows him to not constantly think about gender. "When I am hanging out with a bunch of queer or transgender people it’s like I don’t normally have to be on guard," Barrett said. "I don’t have to constantly be think- ing about gender and processing it and [be] thinking about how other people think about it. It’s just like, we’re all cool, we’re all queer, we can just hang out and have fun.”

CONTACT: RJOHNSON4@ITHACA.EDU
Vacant position on council filled

BY LORIEN TYNE
NEWS EDITOR

The Ithaca Common Council unanimously voted Feb. 1 to hire Kris Haines-Sharp fill the vacant 5th Ward council seat.

The seat has been vacant since Mayor Laura Lewis, the former 5th Ward alderperson, was elected in November 2022. Haines-Sharp’s position will still expire Dec. 31 with the rest of the Common Council positions, which will all be up for election during the November 2023 general election.

Haines-Sharp was one of eight candidates for the position who had each been reviewed by the Vacancy Committee that, for this instance, was comprised of the 5th Ward Alderperson Robert Cantelmo, 3rd Ward Alderperson Rob Gearhart and Lewis.

Each interview conducted by the Vacancy Council with the candidates is posted on the city of Ithaca’s website.

In Haines-Sharp’s interview, Lewis asked Haines-Sharp what she thinks are the biggest challenges facing the city currently and how she would address them.

“I think there is a need for true building, transparency and collaboration,” Haines-Sharp said in the interview. “I think that would be what I would be bringing to Common Council, an intention to communicate well, to work with Common Council members and the constituents I represent as well as all the other offices and committees that we are charged to work with.”

According to The Ithaca Voice, Robert Cantelmo, the other 5th Ward alderperson, is planning to introduce legislation that would alter the selection process in the case of a Common Council vacancy.

CONTACT: LYNNE@ITHACA.EDU

Q&A: Associate professor will publish her first book

Jennifer Spitzer, associate professor in the Department of Literatures in English with a specialization in late 19th and 20th-century literature, modernist texts that originated in Europe and came to the U.S., and gender and sexuality, has written a book that will be released in February.

Her book, “Secret Sharers: The Intimate Rituals of Modernism and Psychoanalysis,” highlights Sigismund Freud’s psychoanalytic thought through the lens of modernists and authors. Staff writer Vivian Rose spoke with Spitzer to discuss the process and experience of writing “Secret Sharers.”

This article has been edited for length and clarity.

Vivian Rose: What was your experience writing this book?

Jennifer Spitzer: I would say it is as much a product of my Ph.D. years as it is of my time as a teacher in the classroom, working with students and teaching classes in modernism, but also just having students… express interest in helping me research. I had one Ithaca College student who helped me with research. One Ithaca College student helped me with footnotes. Another Ithaca College student helped me with editing. So that has also been a major part of the process.

VR: What does this accomplish mean to you?

JS: It feels like the conclusion of something that’s taken years and I very much am aware that it’s a collaborative effort as much as a single author is credited with the book. Not only have students helped me with research and editing, but I’ve had so many colleagues in the college’s Department of Literatures in English. Many colleagues and friends from other institutions read parts of it, edited it and it really has felt like a community project. And then of course it ended up differently than I had conceived of it when I was a doctoral student. So it’s exciting to see how the idea changed over time.

VR: How does this book connect to what you teach at Ithaca College?

JS: Part of my ongoing writing about Woolf inspired my 400-level Virginia Woolf seminar, which I’m teaching for the first time, and while that’s a bit more expansive in terms of its discussions of Woolf, in the class I talk with my students about how she was both interested in the new experiments… [and] how those new ideas about human psychology impacted her writing.

VR: What is your writing process?

JS: [My process was] a lot of haphazardly trying to slip in writing time between teaching courses and parenting, and I would say the single best habit I developed in terms of writing has been to have writing groups… I have a weekly writing group, kind of an accountability group. That really helped me set deadlines. I think with this book, especially in the last few years, having a number of different writing groups in which I both read other people’s writing and respond to theirs and have deadlines for my own, [has been] the most helpful practice I’ve established over the last few years. I would say breaks and summers are the most productive for me in terms of writing.

VR: What do you hope people gain from reading your book?

JS: I’m interested in how literary modernism was in conversation with other movements, including psychoanalysis. What’s also interesting is how these literary experiments in the first half of the 20th century came from freely associated writing and stream of consciousness prose, and how we’re heavily impacted by developments in psychology and psychoanalysis. The friction between these movements helped propel modernist experiments, which were an entangled set of meanings of how authors were reading and not reading and publishing and practicing psychoanalysis themselves.

VR: Are you in the process of writing a second book? If so, what would the book focus on?

JS: My second book is an attempt to write a hybrid, scholarly and creative nonfiction [piece] that talks about grief in the time of pandemics. It does so by examining my own personal experience of loss during the pandemic through rereading Virginia Woolf, who wrote about loss during… the influenza pandemic of 1918.

CONTACT: DIONELLE@ITHACA.EDU

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CONTACT: DIONELLE@ITHACA.EDU
Math department to celebrate Women in Math Day on Zoom
There will be a free virtual event for female high school students and their families to celebrate Women in Math Day. The event will be from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Feb. 11 on Zoom. Students in grades 7–12 are invited to meet with current Ithaca College students studying math and women with jobs that utilize math. Students and family members can ask questions and participate in remote activities.

The event will begin in small groups, where students and family members can introduce themselves to math majors at the college. There will then be a career panel, including college alumni. The event will conclude with discussions in small groups with the panelists.

A registration form is available on the Department of Mathematics’ website. For any questions, contact Galanthay at galanthay@ithaca.edu.

Wellness Clinic to host habit formation and goal workshops
Exercise Behavior Coaches at the Ithaca College Wellness Clinic will host a workshop to help people form habits and reach their goals. There will be three sessions, and each session has two different student participants at different times for people to choose from.

All sessions will be held in the Wellness Clinic located in the Center for Health Sciences, room 302. The first session will be held at 8–8:45 a.m. or at 3–3:35 a.m. Feb. 21. Participants can choose one time to attend. The second session will be Feb. 17 at the same time. The third session will be Feb. 24 at the same time. For individuals requiring accommodations, contact Kohli Robichaud at krobich1@ithaca.edu or 607-274-5737.

Women’s Mentoring Network invites... How will AI affect online classes? How will ChatGPT and other artificial intelligence tools and software impact the future of education? Questions can be submitted ahead of the discussion and during the event for the panelists to answer.

The panelists will share their perspectives on the role AI will play in classroom settings and offer insights on how educators can adapt to this evolving technology. The event will be from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Feb. 11 on Zoom. Students in grades 7–12 are invited to meet with current Ithaca College students studying math and women with jobs that utilize math. Students and family members can ask questions and participate in remote activities.

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A registration form is available on the Department of Mathematics’ website. For any questions, contact Galanthay at galanthay@ithaca.edu.


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Campus community to discuss ChatGPT and AI in small groups
There will be six small group discussions about ChatGPT and other artificial intelligence tools and software. The discussions will be facilitated by the Center for Faculty Excellence. The discussion sessions will be between Feb. 7 and 24, and will be available in person in Gannett 316 or via Zoom. Dates and times for each individual session are available on The Ithacan. Participants must register ahead of time before pre-registration is encouraged. To participate in the sessions virtually, participants need to fill out a form to access the Ithacan in Microsoft Teams. The form is available on Intercom.

The discussions will include:
- How will AI affect online classes?
- How can conversations be made for products created by AI?
- How does AI-generated art impact creativity?

Ithaca College Alumni Awards seeking nominations for 2023
The 2023 Alumni awards are accepting nominations for alumni who have made a significant impact on their community or have demonstrated excellence in their career, community service, or both.

There are seven categories for awards, including one for recent alumni, one for outstanding alumni, one for alums who retired from careers over 40 years, and a humanitarian category. Awards are available for alumni of any age.

Some awards are only for alumni, some are for alumni and non-alumni, and some are for both alumni and non-alumni.

A nomination form is available on alumni.ithaca.edu. For any questions, contact Tgalanthay@ithaca.edu.

Exploratory Program seeks new Peer Ambassadors and Leaders
Ithaca College’s Exploratory Program is looking for Peer Ambassadors and Leaders (PAs). PAs are expected to contribute in organizing events and guiding future and current students enrolled in the Exploratory Program.

Interested students must send their resumes and cover letters to Ellen Chapman at exploratory@ithaca.edu. PAs must be available to attend a minimum of two events during a semester, should be familiar with the Exploratory Program’s systems and structures, capable of engaging students and well acquainted with the college’s learning management system, Homer.

Past PAs have participated in include De-Stress Fest, Registration Night, Mapping Help and Ithaca Today.

OT toy lab looks for volunteer participants between ages 2–5
Occupation Therapy Toy Lab is looking for participants between the ages of 2 and 5 for a Pediatric Evaluation and Intervention course, and the lab is not being used for a research study.

The labs will be 10–11 a.m. and 1:30–2:30 p.m. Feb. 15 in the Center for Health Sciences, rooms 208 and 212.

Children can participate in one or both of the sessions. Parents or legal guardians need to accompany their children in the lab for the entire time of the session, and participants will get a $20 Amazon gift card for each session they attend.

There is a maximum of 24 participants allowed and the first people to sign up will get priority. The lab is being led by Amy Germain and Ashley Mason, assistant professors in the Department of Occupational Therapy.

For questions, contact ograzio@ithaca.edu.

Peer Ambassadors and Leaders Exploratory Program seeks new

For individuals requiring accommodations, contact ograzio@ithaca.edu.

PUBLIC SAFETY INCIDENT LOG
SELECTED ENTRIES FROM JAN. 23 TO 29

JANUARY 23
MOTOR VEHICLE ACCIDENT/PROPERTY DAMAGE LOCATION: College Circle Drive SUMMARY: A caller reported that a moving property damage motor vehicle incident occurred. A report was taken. Patrol Officer Steven Hutchinson responded to the call.

CRIMINAL MISCHIEF FOURTH DEGREE LOCATION: Eastman Hall SUMMARY: A caller reported that an unknown person had damaged a toilet flush plate on Feb. 17. Master Patrol Officer Sophia Dinks responded to the call.

JANUARY 24
SUSPICIOUS CIRCUMSTANCE LOCATION: Academic Quad SUMMARY: A caller reported a person sitting in a vehicle, appearing to be smoked up over the steering wheel. Officers determined that the person was not in distress. Patrol Officer Mayra Colon responded to the call.

JANUARY 25
MEDICAL ASSIST/ILLNESS LOCATION: Bogart Hall SUMMARY: A caller reported a person with a high fever. The person was transported to the hospital by ambulance. Patrol Officer Mayra Colon responded to the call.

JANUARY 26
MEDICAL ASSIST/ILLNESS LOCATION: East Tower SUMMARY: A caller reported a person with a high fever. The person was transported to the hospital by ambulance. Patrol Officer Abdullah Hassan responded to the call.

SCC HARASSMENT/INTIMIDATION/ENGENDERING LOCATION: Rowland Hall SUMMARY: Caller reported unknown people making threatening statements on social media. This is a pending investigation. Patrol Officer Steven Hutchinson responded to the call.

RAPE THIRD DEGREE LOCATION: Circle Apartments general area SUMMARY: A caller reported a person had sexual intercourse with another person without consent in December 2022. This is pending investigation. Master Patrol Officer Robert Jones responded to the call.

JANUARY 27
FIRE ALARM ACCIDENTAL LOCATION: Circle Apartments building 151 SUMMARY: Simplex reported a fire alarm. The activation was caused by burnt food. The alarm was acciden- tal. Patrol Officer Steven Hutchinson responded to the call.

SCC IRRESPONSIBLE USE OF ALCOHOL/DRUGS LOCATION: Tallcroft Hall SUMMARY: A caller reported an intoxicated person. The person was taken into custody under the Mental Hygiene Law and was transported to the hospital by ambulance. The person was referred to student con- duct. Patrol Officer Abdullah Hassan responded to the call.

JANUARY 28
PETT LARGENY UNDER $50 LOCATION: East Tower SUMMARY: A caller reported that an unknown person had stolen an exit sign. This is a pending investigation. Patrol Officer Steven Hutchinson re- sponded to the call.

FULL PUBLIC SAFETY INCIDENT LOG AVAILABLE ONLINE AT WWW.THEITHACAN.ORG

KEY
SCC—Student Conduct Code
V&T—Vehicle & Transportation
EHHS—Environmental Health and Safety

Music fraternity hosts a cozy craft night
Junior Gwyneth Cole works on a crochet project during a craft night held by Sigma Alpha Iota on Feb. 5 in the Terrace nine lounge. The Epsilon chapter for the international music fraternity for women is located in the same building.

AMINATTA IMMANIA JALLOW/ITHACAN

For any questions, contact tgalanthay@ithaca.edu.
Artificial field will bring dreadful consequences

Ithaca “Green” College is planning to use a donation of $3 million to build an artificial turf football field — turf that is full of toxic chemicals, is a source of pollution and increases greenhouse gas emissions. Artificial turf contains “forever chemicals” like PFAs that never break down. All known and tested PFAs are risk factors for cancer and diabetes.

The college claimed in their announcement that artificial turf is better than natural-grass turf, which requires fertilizers and pesticides. The environmental and health risks artificial turf holds are higher than the risks natural turf holds. Every phase of artificial turf’s life cycle is harmful. For natural grass, on the other hand, there are more economically feasible, fossil fuel-free fertilizers. After all, in what world is plastic considered better than natural?

Not only is artificial turf unbelievably harmful, but its industry is the one pushing the idea of artificial turf being better for the environment. They make these claims without citing scientific research. These industries greenwash society for their own income while harming the planet and bringing all of us closer to catastrophic climate disaster.

The artificial turf industry is not the only one that shows no scientific research background, but the college, too, admitted to never speaking to an outside environmental scientist about this decision.

Ithaca College’s decision to replace Butterfield Stadium with artificial turf is an act of ignorance and lacks sympathy toward the environment. The college — which is trying to be carbon neutral by 2050 — must revisit this decision and choose the correct one by listening to scientists’ advice.

Transgender students find sense of community at IC

Over the years, Ithaca College succeeded in its efforts to create a stronger community for transgender and queer students. Having this kind of community depends a great deal on housing that supports transgender and queer students’ needs.

Open Pages — a Residential Learning Community founded in Fall 2022 — provides this sense of community for students that’s better than the Trans and Non-Binary Housing Request, which provides desired housing accommodations. Creating a community where students feel safe and welcomed is much different than simply providing housing that satisfies the basic needs of students. Seeing this improvement at the college is very fulfilling and promising for future changes.

Not only is the Office of Residential Life improving its resources, but the college has various services for transgender and queer students. There are gender-neutral bathrooms around campus and the Ithaca area that soon can be tracked with the Pee in Peace app. The LGBT Center on campus provides resources for legal name change processes and any other name and gender marker changes on identity documents. The college is one of the few that has a Voice and Communication Modification Program, which is dedicated to helping transgender people develop voice, articulation, non-verbal communication, language, voice-related quality of life changes and self-perception.

All these resources and services create an overall safe space for transgender and queer students. Ithaca College has also been ranked as one of the top 10 transfriendly colleges in the United States thanks to all the provided services.

These improvements are praiseworthy and need to be discussed in a larger manner so other colleges and communities can follow our example. Certainly, improvements should not end and the college must keep innovating for a better and stronger future.
Changes in COVID-19 policy negatively affect students

BY BANEET PUKHRAMBAM
FIRST YEAR

Spring 2023 started the new year with a barrage of changes for Ithaca College: the closure of the substation route from Towers to Boothroyd Hall, the reopening of the Towers Marketplace as Towers Eatery and the change of the college’s COVID-19 and Health Policy. At the All Student and Family Gathering that took place two weeks before the semester officially began, students and their family members were told that the college would be significantly scaling back its COVID-19 infrastructure when it comes to resources for the campus community, ending the requirement for anyone who tested positive with the virus to isolate in Boothroyd Hall. All Resident Assistants were asked to convey the same message to the residents on their floors. While it may seem like the ideal next step as more people get vaccinated, boosted and the treatment duration decreases, the stigma around the virus and its symptoms have yet to vanish from the public’s memories.

On a random Wednesday afternoon, my roommate texted me that he had tested positive for COVID-19. His roommate in self-isolation reported to be carrying the virus as someone who has been recorded to be carrying the virus seemed unappealing, to say the least. As someone who holds multiple on-campus jobs, is fairly active in student clubs and interacts with a plethora of people on campus daily, the proposition of exposing myself to more of the virus for an extended period of time is not fair to my friends, coworkers, classmates or professors, many of whom could be considered high-risk for the virus. If I were to choose to join my roommate in self-isolation for the required duration, the burden of falling behind on academics and unearned income will linger on, especially as an international, first-generation student who relies on my on-campus work to earn “pocket money.”

There needs to be better planning and solution making for those diagnosed with COVID-19 virus and their roommates, particularly in a residential college like Ithaca College that requires its students to live on campus until their senior year. The goal of placing this virus in the same box as the flu and common cold cannot be achieved at a time when our community is still reeling from the pain and loss of the past two years. The social elements of the virus’ effect on day-to-day life cannot be ignored in decisions that dictate the lives of more than 5,000 students.

As it turned pitch black and wind chills set in, I still needed to figure out where I planned on sleeping. Do I go back to my room and risk exposure? Try to convince a friend to let me stay with them? Test my chances of sleeping in the common lounge? I did not have the answers to those questions yet. At the end of the day when my body would not let me stay awake for much longer, I ultimately decided to go back to my room. I wore a mask inside, only removing it to sleep so that I could breathe. My situation was still a pretty fortunate one, my roommate did not show any severe symptoms and was asymptomatic for the majority of the time. But not everybody’s situation will be like mine. For those who happen to be suffering from or exposed to more extreme symptoms, options seem much more limited.

All aspects of a student’s physical, mental and social well-being should be taken into account in Ithaca College’s Health Policy as the pandemic is still a way away from reaching its conclusion.

BY BANEET PUKHRAMBAM
FIRST YEAR

Baneet Pukhrambam (he/him) is a Cinema and Photography major. Contact him at bpkhrambam@ithaca.edu.
The State Theatre of Ithaca is joining the Alive Downtowns! theater coalition along with 13 other historical theaters to seek additional financial support from the state. 

BY ELIZABETH KHARABADZE

Co-Life & Culture Editor

For almost 100 years, the State Theatre of Ithaca has stood in the heart of Downtown Ithaca, welcoming performers and guests alike through its doors for concerts, dance performances and movie screenings. In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic put a halt to that. Almost three years after the outbreak, historic theaters are still feeling the impact.

To offset the negative impact the COVID-19 pandemic had on live events, 13 performing arts centers in Upstate New York joined forces in 2023 to create the Alive Downtowns! coalition, an affiliate corporation of the Upstate Theater Coalition. The primary goal of the coalition is to seek an ongoing $20 million in operating support from the New York State government.

“During a normal year, we’re drawing over 50,000 people to our theater,” Levine said. “That’s a huge boom to the economy. And when theaters are struggling, the rest of the cities can struggle too, so we can really use that extra support.”

As a musical theatre major, junior Dexter Conlin said that seeing the effect the pandemic had on theater and live shows caused him to feel discouraged at times.

“Of live performance was really affected by the pandemic,” Conlin said. “I know, as a student, it was difficult to see and feel like I couldn’t connect to our form because I was like, ‘What am I even doing this for?’ If there’s nothing to even perform, there’s nowhere to go. There are no venues that are safe.”

While there are no specific plans for federal relief for historical theaters in the New York State budget for fiscal year 2023, the New York State Council of the Arts was awarded $45 million in grants to help support over 1,200 arts organizations in New York State return to their pre-pandemic capacity levels. Alive Downtowns! is hoping to specifically advocate for aid to contribute directly to the support of its member’s historic buildings.

Philip Morris, CEO of Proctor’s Collaborative, an alliance of art organizations in Saratoga, Albany and Schenectady, New York, is one of the driving forces behind Alive Downtowns!. After realizing that many theaters were struggling to keep afloat during the pandemic, Morris said he decided to bring together a group of directors from many theaters across Upstate New York — which grew into Alive Downtowns!.

Part of the issue, Morris said, was the rapid adjustment theaters were forced to undertake as fewer people went out to see live events.

“I don’t think any of us think we’re going to look like 2019 again,” Morris said. “That doesn’t mean that our buildings aren’t supposed to be and won’t become very, very busy, but it may [look different] because of [streamlining and working from home].” It doesn’t mean our core program is different because people want to hear and see live events, but it does mean a lot of supplemental support things have to adjust for the reality that people might choose to stay home for something rather than go to a public space.

While the coalition is still in the early stages of working to get lawmakers to provide additional support, Levine said he is hoping to continue to build up support for an integral part of Downtown Ithaca’s history.

“There’s still a lot of negotiation that happens between now and when it’s voted on for a final time,” Levine said. “So we’re gonna keep lobbying, keep pushing, keep getting support for it. But, you know, when organizations like museums and zoos get support from the New York City budget because they’re tourist draws, I mean, we are an even bigger tourist draw than those organizations and we feel like we deserve this.

The coalition, Levine said, offers other theater directors the opportunity to connect with one another and rally together toward a common goal: protecting and preserving the theater.

“It’s been really great to strengthen our relationships with other theaters,” Levine said. “I mean, you can see theater and you know where we stand alone in Ithaca. There’s not any other theater like us. So it’s nice to talk to other directors. … They might be two, three, four hours away, but they’re dealing with a lot of the same issues that I deal with, so it’s kind of like a brotherhood … or sisterhood … just like to have some similar issues that we all bounce off each other.”

By joining forces with other theaters, Morris similarly said he is hoping to influence the state to offer more aid.

“We’re more powerful as an archipelago than we are as 13 islands by ourselves. … We are a critical piece of the story of upstate cities. … We are an even bigger tourist draw than museums and zoos. … We are an even bigger tourist draw than those organizations and we feel like we deserve this.

The coalition, Levine said, offers other
Soulful gospel music returns to Ithaca after 40 years

BY JESS WILLIAMS

The Ithaca College Amani Gospel Singers were a prominent choir on campus until they stopped performing four years ago due to the COVID-19 pandemic, has posed many challenges for the film industry at large. According to data that was recently released by Statista, the number of people who prefer streaming increased from 15% up to 36%. Conversely, the number of people who strongly prefer theaters decreased from 28% to 14%. For first-year student Julian Martin, who has been interested in filmmaking since fourth grade, the human connection of going to the movies is important to him. “I wanted to go a couple more times [to the Regal theater] this semester,” Martin said. “People won’t be able to see blockbusters with their friends now.”

As the colleges’ only gospel choir, the Amani Gospel Singers — an Ithaca-based choir dedicated to preserving the tradition of African American spirituals, which came from West African musical traditions and the enslaved experiences of Black people. Spirituals led to the formation of gospel music, as well as blues and jazz, according to the New York Times. The Ithaca Gospel Singers have been working with the Dorothy Cotton Jubilee Singers and will start to hold rehearsals to prepare their concerts. The group’s music director, said that getting the group started up again was difficult, but interest built up quickly following its December 2022 performance at the Spirit of IC concert. “There were really only four of us as members, and we were really close to actually just dropping the whole thing,” Duran said. “But really we were just like, What’s the harm in just trying a little longer?”

The group received advising support from Baruch Whitehead, associate professor in the Department of Music Education, and founding director of the Dorothy Cotton Jubilee Singers — an Ithaca-based choir dedicated to preserving the tradition of African American spirituals, which came from West African musical traditions and the enslaved experiences of Black people. Spirituals led to the formation of gospel music, as well as blues and jazz, according to the New York Times. The Ithaca Gospel Singers have been working with the Dorothy Cotton Jubilee Singers and will be opening the act for some of their concerts. Rahman, a vocal major, said that adding gospel music to her repertoire has helped her grow as a musician. “It’s a very strong and soulful sound, so it really helps to tap into the emotional aspects of music,” Rahman said. “So I think that probably one of the most important things that it brings, for me at least, and probably most people, that the emotional aspect of it is just really, really powerful.”

Durán said the choir gives him a way to work with Black musicians, which is an experience he feels he is missing as a music student at the college. Durán is a jazz studies major, and jazz is a historically Black genre of music, but he feels that it has become white-washed or gentrified, especially at colleges. When Durán was approached by Rahman about joining the revived Amani Gospel Choir, he said he felt inclined to join. BUSINESS INSIDER announced Jan. 19 that the Ithaca Regal theater will be closing its doors. The closure is just one of 39 across the country after Cineworld, Regal’s parent company, declared bankruptcy.

Regal Theater calls it wraps at Shops at Ithaca Mall

BY MATT MINTON

Located at the Shops at Ithaca Mall, the Regal Ithaca Mall has been home to many of Hollywood’s newest blockbusters, independent films and the usual buttery scent of freshly popped popcorn. But on a typical day, audiences who walk in to watch a movie may be surprised to see that the theater, like the mall itself, is nearly empty.

It was announced Jan. 19 by Business Insider that the Ithaca Regal theater will soon be shutting its doors — just one of 39 Regal theaters closing in the country after Cineworld, Regal’s parent company, declared bankruptcy in September 2022. Along with the more main-stream programming provided by the Regal theater, the independent theater Cinemapolis and Cornell Cinema are a large part of the local film scene in Ithaca. Cinemapolis frequently plays recent arthouse films while Cornell Cinema offers specialized programming of both classic and newer films, typically aboard an initial theatrical release.

Ithaca College first-year student Brendan Noone said he has always been drawn to different stories and getting to see them on the big screen at the theater with less distractions. “I wanted to go a couple more times [to the Regal theater] this semester,” Noone said. “People won’t be able to see blockbusters with their friends now.”

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Thursdays, February 9, 2023

BY JESS WILLIAMS

The Ithaca College Amani Gospel Singers were a prominent choir on campus until they stopped performing four years ago for reasons unknown to the current executive board. Now the group is back under new leadership — ready to continue the group’s near 40 years of legacy.

As the colleges’ only gospel choir, the Amani Gospel Singers are open to students of all faiths and denominations without requiring auditions. The history of the Amani Gospel Singers traces back to the creation of the African-Latino Society (ALS) more than 50 years ago at the college. Junior Alexa Rahman, the group’s secretary, said the choir was one of the first groups founded under ALS and because of its extensive history and connection to ALS, the Amani Gospel Singers have a deep alumni network.

“They still get together and sing sometimes, which is really great,” Rahman said. “The outreach that this organization has is just really impressive, so that’s the most important thing about it.”

Part of the group’s mission statement is to make the group more inclusive of religious backgrounds, even though gospel is traditionally rooted in Christianity. Junior Dwayne Lewis, the group’s music director, said the Amani Gospel Singers focus on learning and loving the culture of gospel music. “My role as president was to kind of reinvent the group’s music director, said the Amani Gospel Singers— an Ithaca-based choir dedicated to preserving the tradition of African American spirituals, which came from West African musical traditions and the enslaved experiences of Black people. Spirituals led to the formation of gospel music, as well as blues and jazz, according to the New York Times. The Ithaca Gospel Singers have been working with the Dorothy Cotton Jubilee Singers and will be opening the act for some of their concerts. Rahman, a vocal major, said that adding gospel music to her repertoire has helped her grow as a musician. “It’s a very strong and soulful sound, so it really helps to tap into the emotional aspects of music,” Rahman said. “So I think that probably one of the most important things that it brings, for me at least, and probably most people, that the emotional aspect of it is just really, really powerful.”

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By Julianne Williams

“Soulful gospel music returns to Ithaca after 40 years”

“The outreach that this organization has is just really impressive, so that’s the most important thing about it.”

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Of the group’s music director, said the Amani Gospel Singers— an Ithaca-based choir dedicated to preserving the tradition of African American spirituals, which came from West African musical traditions and the enslaved experiences of Black people. Spirituals led to the formation of gospel music, as well as blues and jazz, according to the New York Times. The Ithaca Gospel Singers have been working with the Dorothy Cotton Jubilee Singers and will be opening the act for some of their concerts. Rahman, a vocal major, said that adding gospel music to her repertoire has helped her grow as a musician. “It’s a very strong and soulful sound, so it really helps to tap into the emotional aspects of music,” Rahman said. “So I think that probably one of the most important things that it brings, for me at least, and probably most people, that the emotional aspect of it is just really, really powerful.”

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The choir reformed in Spring 2022 and performed for the first time since 2018 at the Spirit of IC concert in December 2022. Junior Marcelo Rangel-Duran, the Amani Gospel Singers— an Ithaca-based choir dedicated to preserving the tradition of African American spirituals, which came from West African musical traditions and the enslaved experiences of Black people. Spirituals led to the formation of gospel music, as well as blues and jazz, according to the New York Times. The Ithaca Gospel Singers have been working with the Dorothy Cotton Jubilee Singers and will be opening the act for some of their concerts. Rahman, a vocal major, said that adding gospel music to her repertoire has helped her grow as a musician. “It’s a very strong and soulful sound, so it really helps to tap into the emotional aspects of music,” Rahman said. “So I think that probably one of the most important things that it brings, for me at least, and probably most people, that the emotional aspect of it is just really, really powerful.”

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Horror set-up drowned out by lack of depth

BY GIANCARLO MESSINA
STAFF WRITER

If one thing is clear after watching director Brandon Cronenberg’s newest feature film, it is that, like his father David Cronenberg, he has a strong desire to make the audience as uncomfortable as possible through the use of shocking imagery and body horror. Still, visually speaking, he has been able to create his own unique voice that differs from his father’s in a deeply endearing way of his father. He showcased a lot of his cunning visual prowess in his last film, “Possessor” (2020), a film with a semi-thin plot and thematic elements that felt half-baked but still displayed a massive amount of potential. Sadly, it seems this potential was mostly wasted on his newest film, “Infinity Pool.”

Going to the theater and supporting a smaller film like “Infinity Pool” is always a rewarding experience because Canadian sound artist Tim Hecker, that fits the mood of the film very well. After the shocking cloning element is revealed, the film really could have gone anywhere, but this is the point where the film began to lose its momentum. Seeing James’ descent into the depravity and crude behavior that is relayed from the extremely wealthy group of tourists should have been handled more carefully, as it would have led to a more rewarding conclusion. Instead, most of the runtime of the film is spent watching wealthy people engage in reckless behavior while avoiding any repercussions.

The satirical portrait of the opulent lifestyle of the upper class has been a pretty common theme as of late (with “Triangle of Sadness” and “Glass Onion” being prime examples) and “Infinity Pool” takes a pretty surface-level approach to this topic. The film often uses its grotesque imagery as a way to mask its lack of narrative depth. This would not have been as big of an issue if the film was more tonally consistent. The more satirical and comedic moments take away from the stark horror sequences.

There is definitely a lot to appreciate about “Infinity Pool,” even if most of the story feels like a huge wasted opportunity. Still, with his latest film, Brandon Cronenberg shows that he has the potential and the filmmaking chops to make something truly special. Hopefully, with a better and more balanced script, he can create something that feels less like a complete mess.

MOVIE REVIEW: “Infinity Pool” Elevation Pictures

Quickies

“SAD BITCH”
Anne-Marie

The irony of Anne-Marie opening with “This ain’t another sad girl anthem” is not lost on the listener when exactly what this unypical, genre-bending pop dud tries to be — and fails spectacularly at.

“LIKE A SAVIOUR”
Ellie Goulding

A textbook example of what a fine, average, modern pop song sounds like. Goulding’s voice is certainly catchy but overall, musically there just isn’t much that sticks out.

“A HOLD ON (FROM “DEAR EDWARD”)”
Lizzy McAlpine

A nice, emotional ballad that lulls the listener in slowly and surely to the human desire for connection. McAlpine’s crisp and clean vocals complement the lyrics.

“Gloria” sees Sam Smith embrace who they are, emotionally connecting with listeners.

By JADYN DAVIS
STAFF WRITER

Sam Smith’s latest album, “Gloria,” not only shows Smith’s progression as an artist but how many risks they are willing to take in order to deliver an album that impacts many listeners. In an interview with the Rolling Stone, Smith described “Gloria” as a “lover’s theme” that was inspired by him and Gloria, which they described as their inner voice.

Since their debut album, “In the Lonely Hour,” (2014) Smith has been a prominent figure in the music industry and has represented the LGBTQ+ community with their music. “Gloria” infuses pop, techno and gospel music, making it multidimensional.

The album starts off with “Love Me More,” an empowering track showcasing Smith’s vocal range and challenges listeners to push outside of their comfort zone. The song’s message about self-love is not lost on the listener when that’s the cherry on top. The listener in slowly and surely to the theme of self-acceptance. The lyrics, “You like them crazy, do you / I’m crazy through and through / I wear my flaws like jewels and I’m dripping,” show Smith’s acceptance of their imperfections, which can inspire listeners to do the same. Reyee’s voice blends well with Smith and her adlibs do not take away from the song. However, her verse could have been stronger as it was just a repeat of Smith’s verse with a tiny bit of variation.

A beautiful song, “Glimmer,” has a fun reggae beat with Koffee’s clean verse being the cherry on top. While the track allows for all three artists to shine in their own way, Reyee does a great job of leading this song. Her voice can be addicting as she repeats “Glimmer” throughout the song.

“How To Cry” is a ballad reminiscent of Smith’s earlier songs, like “Lay Me Down” and “Stay With Me.” The song, accompanied by the guitar and Smith’s powerful voice, makes this track another highlight. The lyrics, “I keep secrets from my friends at home / So embarrassed. I’ve been so alone / God, I’m over me protecting you,” clearly show how upset Smith was by this person’s lack of emotional awareness.

While only a minute and 50 seconds long, the song “Gloria” does a great job of taking the listener out of the album to enjoy a vocal masterpiece. Smith does not appear until the last 50 seconds of the song, but when they do, they easily blend in with the rest of the vocals.

“Gloria” allows listeners to see different sides of Smith. The album takes a few risks but does not stray too far away from Smith’s usual work.

Contact: JDAVIS16@ITHACA.EDU

Sam Smith sings their inner heart out in moving record

ALBUM REVIEW: “Gloria” EMI Records

COURTESY OF CMG/INTERSCOPE RECORDS

COURTESY OF UNIVERSAL MUSIC OPERATIONS LIMITED

COURTESY OF EMI RECORDS

COURTESY OF HARBOUR ARTISTS & MUSIC / ANWR

COURTESY OF MALDEN-TOMS / ASYLUM RECORDS
crossword

By Quill Driver Books

ACROSS
1 Sing loudly
5 Evolve the punch
10 Guitarist Clapton
14 Erase butter
15 Incendiarism
16 Change decor
17 Alien site
18 Cast down
20 Puts cargo on board
22 — de-sac
23 Hymn of praise
24 Love dice roll
26 "Oh" neighbor
27 Bounced back
29 Young pigeons
32 Lurch
33 Frau’s adobe
34 Hagen of "The Other"
36 Thickening agent
37 Fridge maker
39 Pedestal support
40 Countdown start
41 Cease
42 Diagonal patterns
44 Consequence
46 Wild T-shirt (hyph.)
47 Land parcel
48 Go biking
49 Put on airs
52 NFC griddle
53 Tower over
57 Courtroom figure
60 Lotion ingredient
61 Black jack
62 Easy-to-find constellation
63 Team cheers
64 Forever and —
65 Secluded valleys
66 Posted a parcel

DOWN
1 Soup container
2 Lamb’s pen name
3 Allow to use
4 At the same time
5 Like some excuses
6 Set a market value
7 Newsstand buy
8 Eyeshadow
9 Flight div.
10 Misprints
11 Nerve network
12 Sudden thought
13 NE state
14 Ersatz butter
15 Incendiarism
16 Change decor
17 Aileron site
18 Cast down
19 Top grade (hyph.)
20 Puts cargo on board
21 Boot or sandal
22 — de-sac
23 Hymn of praise
24 Low dice roll
26 "Oh" neighbor
27 Bounced back
29 Young pigeons
32 Lurch
33 Frau’s adobe
34 Hagen of "The Other"
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52 NFC griddle
53 Tower over
57 Courtroom figure
60 Lotion ingredient
61 Black jack
62 Easy-to-find constellation
63 Team cheers
64 Forever and —
65 Secluded valleys
66 Posted a parcel

answers to last issue’s sudoku:

very easy

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

medium

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

hard

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

sudoku

easy

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

medium

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

hard

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

NEW ISSUE

EVERY THURSDAY
“The project is expected to bring positive environmental and economic benefits,” the announcement said. “Synthetic turf fields conserve water since irrigation is not needed, and the stormwater runoff is cleaner since it will not include the fertilizers and pesticides required for natural-grass fields.”

However, according to oceanographers, ecologists and environmental policy experts, the artificial turf fields have detrimental effects on human health and the environment. These risks are higher than those from natural turf, even when adjusted to take into consideration the fertilizers, pesticides and paint that a natural grass turf requires.

Environmental effects of artificial turf
Sarah-Jeanne Royer is an oceanographer and scholar at the Scripps Institution of Oceanography where she specializes in the way degradation of plastics affects the environment. In 2018, Royer co-authored a study on the life cycle of plastic in the environment. The study concluded that polyethylene — the type of plastic used for artificial turf — emits greenhouse gases, ethylene, propylene and methane into the atmosphere as it breaks down.

Royer and other scientists concluded that because of its composition and surface area, artificial turf has a large contribution to climate change in comparison to other plastics.

“All different types of plastics emit greenhouse gases when they are exposed to ultraviolet light,” Royer said. “Synthetic turf is mostly made out of polyethylene and has a huge surface area with all of the [grass] blades. Synthetic turf is millions and millions of times larger than a flat surface; it’s crazy.”

Both Scott Doyle, director of Energy Management and Sustainability, and Susan Bassett ’79, associate vice president and director of Intercollegiate Athletics, said they did not speak to scientists independent of the college or the synthetic turf industry.

“I spoke with our local resources and experts and read the materials too, but I haven’t connected with folks from other institutions,” Doyle said.

Brenda Bennett is the director of Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility and a former wetlands enforcement coordinator for the Environmental Protection Agency. Bennett said that artificial turf contains many different toxic chemicals that put the health of athletes in danger.

“Are there PFAs [a class of chemicals that occur naturally in fossil fuels] and all sorts of metals, particularly lead,” Bennett said. “There are volatile organic chemicals, carbon black, which is incredibly scary, styrene, and all sorts of canthoxyls and flame retardants. The blades themselves have very toxic chemicals.”

To help hold the blades in place, most artificial turf fields are filled with 100 to 120 tons of crumb rubber. Bennett said crumb rubber contains manufactured “forever chemicals” like perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances (called PFAS) that never break down. PFAS have adverse effects on human health, put athletes at risk of getting cancer and diabetes and interfere with natural hormones.

Megan Wolff is a public health historian and the policy director of Beyond Plastics, a group of scientists and policy experts aiming to end plastic pollution. Wolff said the construction of a fake turf compromises the college’s commitment of going carbon neutral by 2050.

“Not only is [building an artificial turf] in contradiction to net-zero goals, it is so much worse than you could ever imagine,” Wolff said. “It’s made out of a petrochemical feedstock that will last forever and is infused with chemicals. Every single phase of the lifecycle of plastic grass is an environmental problem.”

Wolff said artificial turf also creates enormous amounts of microplastics, small pieces of plastic less than 5 mm in length. This is because of rain runoff, the breakdown of the fake grass and pulverization by athletes on the field.

Claims of environmental benefits
In the college’s initial December announcement, it claimed that artificial turf is beneficial to the environment. However, in interviews, officials at the college had conflicting messaging.

In a statement to The Ithacan on behalf of the college’s leadership, Timothy Downey, chief financial officer and vice president for Finance and Administration, said the college had frequent discussions with industry experts before choosing an artificial turf.

“College leadership is very comfortable with the installation of artificial turf … which includes the use of an innovative product and a proven installation process that minimizes environmental friendliness,” the statement said.

In contrast, Emie McClauche, associate vice president in the Office of Facilities, said there are risks to artificial turf, but the college believes it has made the safest decision.

“There’s some trade-offs,” McClauche said. “Artificial turf has negatives to it, natural turf has negatives to it. … We definitely focused on making sure we got the best turf we could get.”

Bassett said she knows of the links between PFAs and cancer. However, she said it was important to note that Bemino Field at Butterfield Stadium will not be the first artificial field on campus, and the majority of surfaces athletes play on are synthetic turf as well.

“We are aware of it and obviously concerned about all relevant safety and environmental impact, and we’re confident we can mitigate those risks,” Bassett said. “[The athletes] have grown up with it and worked on it and competed on it, probably through their whole athletic careers.”

Doyle said that using artificial turf will reduce the college’s Scope 1 carbon emissions — direct emissions from stationary sources like boilers and water heaters. Since artificial turf does not require lawn maintenance, carbon emissions are reduced. However, natural grass fields absorb carbon dioxide and artificial turf requires carbon to be made and have carbon in the blades that gets released into the environment as the blades break down.

“I felt like there were a lot of things that would help us move forward environmentally speaking,” Doyle said. “I have a great deal of concerns about microplastics too … I think that’s a very real concern about introducing plastics in the environment. But I think in this case we’re trying to manage that as effectively as we can.”

In 2011, Higgins Stadium was installed and is used by the field hockey and lacrosse teams for their regular season, but is also the only surface available for intramural, club or other varsity sports if the weather does not allow practice on one of the natural grass fields. So, Bassett said, a benefit of the synthetic surface is that Butterfield will now be usable for the entire year instead of just the few or no home games the football team plays each season.

Artificial turf industry
The college’s new artificial turf field and the stadium improvements will be serviced by Clark Companies. The manufacturing and installation will be done by Chenango Contracting.

Chris White ’07 is the marketing manager of Chenango Contracting. White said the college will be using a FieldTurf brand of turf, which contains filtration systems and a concrete curb, both of which White claimed help contain hazardous components of artificial turf.

“There’s literally no way for sand and rubber to get through the turf itself and get into the base stone, let alone get into the drainage pipe, let alone get kicked out whatever water system you’re connecting to,” White said.

However, Bennett said that while a filter will help prevent larger plastics from entering water systems, it is not possible for filters to remove smaller microplastics, as well as PFAS.

The artificial turf industry, which was worth $2.7 billion in 2019, has pushed the idea that artificial turf is better for the environment. Many artificial turf companies make claims online that it is good for the environment without citing scientific research, or cite scientists who have worked for the industry.

“Over and over, in towns across the country, we see the same industry playbook,” Bennett said. “It’s really very frustrating. They refuse to admit that there [are] PFAs in the turf.”

While White said there will be PFAS in the turf that the college receives, he said they were a type of PFAs that are safe for humans. However, according to Bennett, there are thousands of different types of PFAS, and most remain untested and the types that have been tested are known to cause cancer. Additionally, the industry has made claims that natural grass fields are not environmentally friendly because they require fertilizer; pesticides and irrigation. Most fertilizers used on natural grass fields are made with fossil fuels and contain nitrous oxide.

However, Wolff said fossil fuel-free fertilizers that do not contain nitrous oxide are becoming economically feasible, and environmental damage from artificial turf is far larger than that of natural grass.

Every scientist The Ithacan interviewed said the college’s goal to be carbon neutral by 2050 is at odds with its announced construction of a plastic turf.

“Plastic grass is the farthest thing from sustainable that you can get, seriously,” Wolff said.

“This is the worst thing Ithaca College can do for the environment.”
As the Ithaca College winter sports teams have resumed the second half of their seasons in the new year, many of them have seen stellar performances from stand-out athletes. Notably on that list is senior thrower Justin Showstead of the men’s track and field team.

On Jan. 28, Showstead set a new program record in the shot put at the Nazareth Conference Challenge Cup by 2.5” with a throw of 15.78 meters (51’ 9.25”), breaking a 40-year-standing program record. The previous record had not been broken since 1983.

In his first year as an Ithaca College student-athlete, Showstead continued to top the leaderboards, earning first place in the shot put at 15.15 meters, or 49’ 8.5”, to win by nearly three feet and earning first place in the weight throw with a top score by 42 points. The score also puts him at the top of the Division III rankings in the event this season, besting the previous top score by 42 points. The score also puts him at the top of the Division III rankings in the event this season, besting the previous top score by 42 points.

Senior diver Karalyn Pawcio said that everyone is an important part of the team’s success and that sticking to the basics will be crucial down the stretch. “Everyone plays a big role in the comradery of the team and to help have a common goal as one,” Pawcio said.

A five-time Liberty League Diver of the Week and Fall 2022 athlete of the Month selection for November, Pawcio said the team needs to stay focused and believe in each other in order to win another Liberty League title.

“We need to keep trusting our bodies and our coaches, as well as working together as a team,” Pawcio said. “Remember … that we’ve put in the work, trusting the process.”

Senior Jane Pfeufer, a freestyle, backstroke and butterfly swimmer, said all of the hard work in practice has propelled the team to new heights this season.

“The team’s performance has been amazing,” Pfeufer said. “Pushing ourselves in a lot of hard practices, that’s one huge reason why we’ve won every meet. With the Liberty League Championships quickly approaching — from Feb. 15 to 18 — Markwardt said the team has to be prepared, but his No. 1 priority is staying healthy. [Injuries are] one thing as a coach you’re scared to death of,” Markwardt said. “When we go to that championship meet, they’re going to be successful. We just have to make sure they are healthy, rested and ready to go.”

Going into what could be her final competition, Pfeufer said she is most excited to push her teammates towards success and that is where she achieves her personal success from. “I’m looking forward to excited, what’s happening on the pool deck and watching my teammates succeed,” Pfeufer said. “That is what motivates me the most to succeed personally.”

Markwardt said. “It’s a long season with a lot of things from the back and lead by example. We need to keep trusting our bodies and our coaches, as well as working together as a team.”

As a senior this year, how do you think you’ve seen yourself change as an athlete from your first year to now?

JS: I’ve definitely been trying to be more positive and relax a little bit more because I used to be super hard on myself when I didn’t do well as well as I would’ve wanted to. Now, I feel like I’m just trying to enjoy it as much as I can because you only have so much eligibility and I’m kind of on the tail-end of that.

TF: Do you think that positive mindset has helped your performance at all?

JS: Knowing that I’m almost done definitely adds a little bit of pressure, but being more positive has definitely helped with that. With the field events, you’re kind of on an island by yourself. Our mental performance coach has been helping us with this, but you have minutes in between each throw where all you can do is think about how your next throw is going to go. Trying not to care as much and sticking more positive has been really important.

TF: I know track and field is pretty individual in nature, but many of the athletes on your team have had really successful seasons so far. What are some of your goals as a group?

JS: Honestly, just trying to send as many people to Nationals as possible and trying to reclaim our Liberty League title because we couldn’t defend that last year. We’re kind of a smaller team this year, so I think a large part of those performances is attributed to our voices being heard, being a loud team and cheering and supporting each other.

TF: As a senior on the team, how has it been taking on a leadership role in your events?

JS: I try to be as much of a leader as I can.

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ATHLETE OF THE WEEK
LUKA RADOVICH/MEN’S BASKETBALL

COMPETITION OF THE WEEK
WOMEN’S BASKETBALL VS. SKIDMORE

From left, graduate student Bomber forward Luka Radovich drives past sophomore Skidmore College guard/forward Alexei Downie. Radovich notched consecutive double-doubles over the weekend, combining for 40 points and 25 rebounds in two wins.

From left, Bombers’ senior guard Natalie Smith fights for the ball with Thoroughbred first-year student center/forward Jazlin Chen during a 52–49 Bomber victory Feb. 4. Smith’s free throw with one second left iced the game in a decisive conference matchup.

EVENT TO WATCH
6:30 P.M. FEB. 15 IN THE BEN LIGHT GYMNASIUM

The Ithaca College wrestling and gymnastics teams host the SUNY Cortland Red Dragons for the sixth annual Rumble and Tumble meet Feb. 15, where both programs will compete in the Ben Light Gymnasium at the same time. At last year’s meet, hosted by SUNY Cortland, the Bombers came out on top in both sports. The gymnastics team won 187.90–184.475, while the wrestling team took a 24–21 victory. The last time the Bombers hosted, wrestling posted a dominant 31–9 victory while the Red Dragons earned a narrow win in gymnastics, 188.150–186.550.

NOTABLE UPCOMING COMPETITIONS
MEN’S AND WOMEN’S TRACK AND FIELD: 10 a.m. Feb. 10–11 at Boston University Valentine Invitational in Boston.

MEN’S BASKETBALL: 7:30 p.m. Feb. 10 at Clarkson University, 4 p.m. Feb. 11 at St. Lawrence University.

WOMEN’S BASKETBALL: 5:30 p.m. Feb. 10 at Clarkson University, 2 p.m. Feb. 11 at St. Lawrence University.

GYMNASTICS: 1 p.m. Feb. 12 at Cornell Invitational

MEN’S AND WOMEN’S SWIMMING AND DIVING: Hosting the Liberty League Championships Feb. 15–18.

QUOTE OF THE WEEK
“When we get to that championship meet, they’re going to be successful. We just have to make sure they are healthy, rested and ready to go.”

- KEVIN MARKWARDT

Men’s and women’s swimming and diving head coach on the women’s undefeated season.
From left, first-year students Gabriella Balano and Mia Emmi decorate wooden hearts during WinterFest, hosted by the Office of New Student and Transition Programs on Feb. 2 in Emerson Suites. The event also offered food, arts and crafts, karaoke, a corn hole tournament, virtual reality painting, board games and various gift card prizes.