



Over 500 reports of mold in student housing filed since 2020, officials say



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Over 530 work orders related to mold in student housing have been filed since 2020, according to the VCU Public Affairs office.

The records themselves were withheld from a Freedom of Information Act Request from The Commonwealth Times due to the presence of identifying information.

Most of the work orders were for kitchens and bathrooms — areas where water is present. These areas either contained no mold or the presence was “minor, addressed by cleaning, and did not raise health concerns.”

On average, 21% of investigations over the time period of 2020 to 2022 uncovered some form of mold, according to VCU Public Affairs.

For minor cases of mold, additional cleaning and other steps were arranged.

Rashel Ferrufino, a first-year nursing student who lives in the Gladding Residence Center, said she suffers symptoms of mold exposure, such as a stuffy nose, coughing and sore throat alongside her roommate.

“We’re stuffy in the morning, sometimes throughout the day,” Ferrufino said. “Some mornings we wake up and our throats hurt — but we didn’t do anything beforehand.”

Ferrufino said the symptoms only showed up while on campus.

“We’re fine when we go back to our hometowns, but it’s here that we feel like crap,” Ferrufino said.

“

They opened the ceiling and there was mold everywhere.”

Gabby Stinnett
first-year forensic science student

Johnson Hall is the oldest VCU dorm with its establishment dating back to 1913 and has gone through renovations dating back to at least 2013, according to a Commonwealth Times article reporting on the hall’s back-to-back renovations.

Johnson was shut down for the remainder of the 2021 academic year due to “elevated mold levels,” according to a release from VCU Student Affairs.

The closure was later extended indefinitely; the ultimate fate of the building remains unclear.

The dorm is currently not open for housing applications for the spring 2023 semester.

VCU has not addressed any issues with Johnson since an update from November 2021.

The update states VCU sent rehousing assignments to the students that were living in the dorm at the time. There is no information by the university on where they were sent to; however, students could be found living throughout buildings on campus, including the 8 ½ Canal Street apartment complex, Gladding Residence Center lounge areas and Brandt Hall.

The additional information listed on the update leads to a “page not found” update.

“I’m afraid we don’t have any information to share at this time about Johnson Hall. VCU is evaluating its options,” Brian McNeill, the university’s director of public affairs, stated in an email.



See **MOLD** on page 2



One of VCU’s freshmen dorms, Johnson Hall, was closed due to mold in November 2021 and has not reopened. Photos by Alessandro Latour

Stories of the week

NATIONAL: The Senate passed the Respect for Marriage Act yesterday, which protects same-sex and interracial marriage.

INTERNATIONAL: Protests have increased in China in response to an apartment fire that killed 10 people and is suspected to be a result of the COVID-19 lockdown.

Grant aims to empower unhoused through improv

VARSHA VASUDEVAN
Staff Writer

VCU professors are teaching empowerment and communication skills to unhoused people in Richmond through a blend of medicine and the arts.

“It’s not so much about being homeless, it’s about being people,” said Alan Dow, assistant vice president of health sciences for interprofessional education and collaborative care at VCU.

The program helps recognize the humanity of the unhoused population and realize there are more similarities than differences between them and anyone else, Dow said.

The program mainly aims to empower those experiencing homelessness while providing students and faculty in the health professions an opportunity to interact with these individuals in a non-clinical “leveled playing field,” Dow said.

“If you’re adding a health crisis on top of a crisis of housing, you get people that are doubling in crisis,” Dow said. “So, understandably people are not at their best.”

Elizabeth Byland is the head of applied improv at the VCU department of theatre. She leads a program called Applied Improv to Impact Homelessness.

The class teaches transferable soft skills like effective communication, self-expression and trust in other people through im-

prov, Byland said. She said the program is the first of its kind as it addresses both the experience of homelessness among veterans and healthcare disparities that may be experienced due to it.

““

It’s a humbling experience, but it’s one that has had a huge impact. I know not only on the participants, but especially on me as a teacher.”

Elizabeth Byland
head of applied improv at the VCU department of theatre

Byland said she hopes to continue the program even after the 18 months of the grant have expired by still showing up to the shelter consistently and that other organizations will take inspiration from it to launch similar initiatives.

“It’s a humbling experience, but it’s one that has had a huge impact,” Byland said. “I know not only on the participants, but especially on me as a teacher.”

Byland said the program fosters “soft skills” for individuals while they are in the process of transitioning from being homeless.

“Soft skills that might be really needed to secure and lock in, perhaps that next job, or even understanding how to handle some of the anxieties that come with waiting,” Byland said. “Waiting for the housing voucher, waiting for, you know, security and comfort.”

Byland said the Association of American Medical Colleges awarded the program an 18-month \$25,000 grant and officially approved it in January 2021; classes officially started in October 2021, Byland said.

The AAMC chose to fund this initiative because it was an affordable hands-on “active experiential approach,” according to Byland.

“What better way to do that than taking improv out into the community and giving those in our community, particularly marginalized populations, the opportunity to use improv as a method of practice for life transitions, and specifically, you know, life transformations,” Byland said.

The program encourages veterans overcoming homelessness and health professional students to be vulnerable, willing to trust others and themselves and participate in group collaboration.

“Especially for someone that is, say, like a future healthcare worker, or even like a

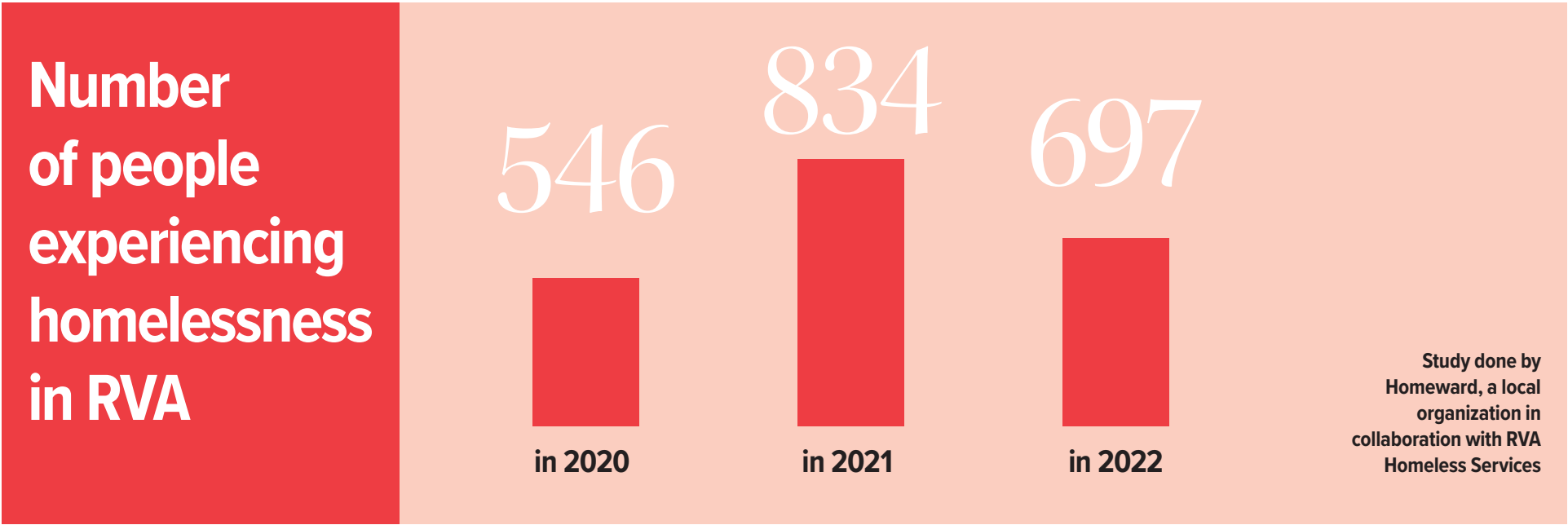
current healthcare practitioner, my gosh, that’s vital to practicing how to be a part of a collaborative and effective healthcare team,” Byland said.

The program has had profound effects on participating veterans by giving them the confidence to be stronger advocates for themselves, according to anonymous feedback given to Byland. The participants’ names cannot be disclosed due to privacy concerns.

“These improv classes have been so great for me,” a participant stated in a feedback to the program. “They’ve given my life meaning and purpose again and reminded me to never settle but truly go out into the world and be great.”

The program partners with the Liberation Veteran Services to host sessions every Tuesday at 7 p.m., according to Byland. LVS is a transitional housing shelter where residing veterans participate in the program alongside VCU staff and students, Byland said.

“It also helped me get through difficult days, gave me a place where I felt comfortable enough to talk about if there was a problem with anything that week,” another member stated. “Yes, it definitely helped me a great deal to getting where I am now.”



Information compiled by Varsha Vasudevan
Infographic by Fiona McMichael

MOLD

Continued from front page

Before and since the closure, mold and general air quality have been persistent topics of discussion among VCU students — especially freshmen residing in dormitories on campus.

Marley Ferraro, a first-year nursing student and Brandt Hall resident, said she did not encounter her symptoms outside of student housing.

“As soon as I go home, my nose clears up. I come back, I’m sick again,” Ferraro said.

Gabby Stinnett, a first-year forensic science student, recalled having her shower in Brandt Hall repaired, and the maintenance team discovering mold.

“They opened the ceiling and there was mold everywhere,” Stinnett said.

What is often called “mold” or “mildew” are fungi that grow and thrive in moist conditions. They release spores, which can cause a variety of symptoms including a sore throat, stuffy nose, coughing, or skin rash.

The spores can induce severe reactions in individuals with asthma or mold allergies, and immunocompromised people can

be susceptible to lung infections, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Indoor mold can be controlled by reducing the amount of moisture, or humidity, in the air. Running the air conditioner during humid months, keeping bathrooms clean, and frequently cleaning fabrics kept in moist areas — such as bathroom rugs — can stop mold from proliferating, according to the CDC.

Mold also grows outside, and in the fall and winter months, seasonal allergies can be triggered by mold after pollen season has

ended, according to the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America.

It doesn’t help that Richmond is consistently ranked as one of the worst cities for seasonal allergy and asthma sufferers, according to the AAFA.

Elizabeth Nguyen, a first-year medical laboratory science student and Ferrufino’s roommate, wasn’t sure if the two were feeling sick because of the air quality or some other reason.

“We’re assuming that because we live here 90% of the time,” Nguyen said.

Richmond sends ambulance to Ukraine with help from VCU Health

KATIE FARTHING
Contributing Writer

With the help of VCU Health, the Richmond Ambulance Authority and Virginia Hospital and Healthcare Association sent an ambulance full of medical and fire equipment to Ukraine.

“It’s really part of our mission, our mission to preserve and restore health, really for all people in the Commonwealth and beyond the Commonwealth,” said Michael Roussos, president of VCU Medical Center.

VCU Health donated over \$20,000 of medical supplies, like suture kits and trauma scissors, according to Roussos.

Donating to U.S. Ambulances for Ukraine is a way for VCU Health to extend aid and admission beyond the border, Roussos said.

“We see international patients here and why wouldn’t we want to support our fellow healthcare workers as part of our own family internationally?” Roussos said.

“

We see international patients here and why wouldn’t we want to support our fellow healthcare workers as part of our own family internationally?”

Michael Roussos
president of
VCU Medical Center

Students are encouraged to find volunteer efforts, through VCU and in the community, according to Roussos.

“Everybody can always use a little extra dose of kindness,” Roussos said.

Christopher Manson, the OSF Healthcare vice president of government relations, is the founder of U.S. Ambulances for Ukraine, an organization that collects donated supplies and ambulances to send over to Ukraine in their time of need.

VCU Health played a large part in filling the RAA’s ambulance with supplies, according to Manson.

“They donated quite a bit and we got that ambulance just packed,” Manson said. “We had pallets and pallets of supplies. So it was really, it was amazing.”

The RAA ambulance arrived in Baltimore on Nov. 14. Once final checks are

done and the other ambulances and one fire engine are there, they will be shipped over to Ukraine, according to Manson.

The ambulances sent over are covered in written messages of goodwill and luck from volunteers, according to Manson.

“I see people in Ukraine cry,” Manson said. “They only touch the words on the ambulance, and they’ll just go around the ambulance. They’ll read everything on the ambulance.”

The next goal for the initiative is to send 10 ambulances and two fire engines by the end of the year. There is no clear end to the mission, according to Manson.

“We’ll just see what happens,” Manson said. “As long as there’s a need and people are willing to donate, I’m happy to try and help collect them and get them over there.”

Manson created U.S. Ambulances for Ukraine in March and three weeks after its conception, the first ambulance was driven to Ukraine, according to Manson.

Manson was motivated by his daughter to help Ukrainians however possible, he said.

“She’s 7, and she could see what was going on enough to realize something bad was happening,” Manson said. “So you know, it really bothered her. And at some point, you know, we’re talking about that there had to be something we could do to help.”

U.S. Ambulances for Ukraine have already sent over 18 vehicles. The ambulance donated by the RAA is the 20th, according to Manson.

The supplies range from bandages and cardiac monitors to fire department gear and self-contained breathing apparatuses. All supplies are donated to the initiative by outside help, according to Manson.

“It’s like a loose confederation of people just working together to try and help out,” Manson said.

Sen. Mark Warner was present on Nov. 10, when the ambulance left for Baltimore. Warner stated in an email that Ukrainians have shown courage throughout the war with Russia.

“As we continue to offer assistance at the federal level, it is inspiring to see communities across Virginia step up to support the fight for democracy,” Warner stated. “I applaud the U.S. Ambulances for Ukraine effort for the key role it has played in getting these much-needed emergency medical resources to Ukraine’s front lines.”

For more information about U.S. ambulances for Ukraine, visit its Twitter profile.



The VCU Health System donated over \$20,000 worth of medical supplies to Ukraine. Photos by Kaitlyn Fulmore



Stat of the week
Sophomore guard Jayden Nunn had a career-high of 24 points in a win against Kennesaw State University, according to VCU Athletics.

‘Optimistic’: VCU basketball player looks to bounce back



VCU redshirt junior guard Jarren McAllister shoots a free throw in a game during his freshman year of basketball. Photo courtesy of VCU Athletics

THAILON WILSON
Staff Writer

VCU basketball redshirt junior guard Jarren McAllister is going through rehab after tearing his ACL for the third time since coming to VCU in the 2019-2020 season. Before ever stepping foot at the Siegel Center, McAllister was a three-star recruit and top 10 Virginia prospect of the class of 2018, according to VCU Athletics. McAllister said when thinking about his past, he remembers how passionate he was for the game. “Before coming to VCU, I was just like everyone else who wanted to play basketball as their dream profession. I had a strong passion for it, and I still do, and I was excited to play for VCU,” McAllister said. He joined the roster to start playing in the 2020 season. McAllister was able to come off the bench his freshman year and as conference play continued, his minutes increased. McAllister ended up appearing in 16 contests, including 13 out of 18 Atlantic 10 Conference games. He averaged 2.7 points and 1.3 rebounds per game,

according to VCU Athletics. In comparison, the average number of points scored per game by the other freshmen was 3.8, according to VCU Athletics. As he was preparing for his sophomore year, McAllister tore his ACL in his left knee during practice and was unable to play for the entire 2021 season, according to VCU Athletics. VCU basketball head coach Mike Rhoades said he was saddened by McAllister’s injury, but the team believes in a full recovery. “I’m devastated for Jarren,” Rhoades said. “He works so hard and impacts our program with his approach. He will come back from this setback stronger than ever. He’s a worker.” Throughout the year, while the team was playing the season, McAllister was going through rehab and working to prepare for his opportunity in the following 2022 season. The redshirt sophomore tore his ACL in his other knee during a practice that took him out for the entire season last year. Instead of being down about it though, McAllister said he remains dedicated to the game.

“God doesn’t give me these types of challenges for no reason. This path that I’m on is not for everybody,” McAllister said. “I’m gonna take it with the most optimistic attitude I can.” He sat out the remainder of the season, while he was still able to act as a leader of the team by making sure the other players knew plays and kept the right mindset during games and practices. “I would say I’m more like another leader on the team as far as like plays and making sure their mind is in the right place, and making sure they’re not getting too down on themselves,” McAllister said. During last season when he was injured, he got particularly close to fellow VCU teammate Jamir Watkins who had also gone through an ACL tear, according to VCU Athletics. McAllister is strong enough to be able to continue working after what he’s been through, Watkins said. “Jarren is really tough,” Watkins said. “I’ve gone through the same injury process as him and it showed me that he is really strong.” McAllister sat out once again, recuperating for the 2023 season. However, he

again tore his ACL in his left knee during a non-contact workout in the offseason, leaving him sidelined for the entire redshirt junior season. Director of Sports Medicine for men’s basketball Joshua Wall said he’s amazed by McAllister’s work ethic and it has helped with his recovery. “It’s frustrating when a player gets hurt, but Jarren has some of the highest work ethic I have ever seen,” Wall said. “He’s attacking the rehab, working hard and setting his own goals, so it’s been very good from that standpoint.” McAllister is currently going through rehabilitation to make sure that he can step back on the court next season. After everything McAllister has been through, he said his motivation for the game and his faith has kept him going. “My motivation is definitely God, my family and my love for the game. I just love playing basketball so much and I know what I am capable of,” McAllister said. “I know it’s all going to work out. No matter when I’m on the court or doing something else. I know I am in good hands.”



VCU redshirt junior guard Jarren McAllister greets the team before a game during his freshman year of basketball. Photo by Alessandro Latour



VCU redshirt junior guard Jarren McAllister celebrates on the bench in a game during his freshman year of basketball. Photo by Alessandro Latour

PICK
OF
THE
WEEK**OLIVIA CLARK**
Contributing Writer

For this week's pick, we're focusing on the NHL as the Washington Capitals take on the Calgary Flames at Scotiabank Saddledome arena in Calgary, Canada on Dec. 3.

The Washington Capitals started off their season with a two-game losing streak while the Calgary Flames were starting off strong with a three-game winning streak. The Calgary Flames are strongly securing their fifth spot in the Pacific division. Washington is now sixth in the Metropolitan division with a two game advantage over the Flames.

Recently, Calgary has been lacking in their game performance and have dropped

their last two games against the Pittsburgh Penguins and the Washington Capitals. On the other hand, the Washington Capitals are currently on a two-game winning streak, and have taken two victories against the Philadelphia Flyers and their most recent game against the Calgary Flames.

Calgary's goalie Jacob Markström has been keeping up with the average saving percentage — the number of shots on goal a goaltender stops.

The average for saving percentage in the NHL is above or at 0.915, and last game he recorded a saving percentage of 0.920 against the Philadelphia Flyers, according to the NHL. Capitals goalie Darcy Kuemper had a saving percentage of

0.913 against the Philadelphia Flyers as well, according to the NHL.

Washington has faced many challenges related to player injuries throughout this season. Tom Wilson and Dmitry Orlov, who are both key players to the team's lineup, were both out with lower body related injuries, according to ESPN. Calgary is also facing an injury regarding Michael Stone, who has an undisclosed injury.

The Washington Capitals face more and more disadvantages involving injuries and traveling to the opponents arena, which is why the Calgary Flames will be taking the win on Dec. 3.

Back in the Stu: Former pep band director returns to VCU

BERSABEH KEMAW
Contributing Writer

Ryan Kopacsi, director of VCU's pep band, has returned as VCU's director after a career in Richmond's fire department.

Kopacsi was previously the director of VCU's pep band, better known as The Peppas, from 1998 to 2016, according to VCU Athletics

"I don't think I ever really wanted to go, but sometimes God leads you on a path you need to go on," Kopacsi said. "The time away was eye opening but coming back seemed like a destiny for me."

Before the Peppas, the jazz orchestra was the pep band for VCU. When Kopacsi was a member of the Peppas, they had about seven to 11 members initially, according to Kopacsi.

"There has been a pep band as long as I know, but it has gone through many different alterations," Kopacsi said. "We wanted to change our name and somebody brought up The Peppas, it was kind of a joke so it just stuck."

Kopacsi began working in the Richmond Fire Department in 2011, but he became a fire investigator, who determines causes of fire, three years ago, according to Kopacsi.

Kopacsi left VCU in 2016 to fully pursue his career with the Richmond Fire Department, according to Kopacsi.

Kopacsi said transitioning from working as a band director for 18 years to working in the fire department and as a fire investigator had its changes.

"It is different because you look at fires all day and show up on people's worst day of their life," Kopacsi said. "Whereas here at VCU, it's sort of like the WWE. We like to put on a show, entertain people and have a good time."

Leaving his position as director of the band was not something Kopacsi wanted to do, but something he felt he needed to do, he said.

Mat Shelton-Eide is a member of VCU's Ram Nation, which is a news outlet that is dedicated to covering and discussing VCU sports, according to the organization's website. Shelton-Eide grew up as a VCU fan and was very vocal about the need to bring Kopacsi back because of his star quality and what he brought to the Stu, according to Shelton-Eide.

"I am stoked about his return because there is just a vibe," Shelton-Eide said. "Obviously we were winning a bit more

back then, but there is just a vibe. The atmosphere in the Stu is different."

Kopacsi has also brought exposure and coverage to the Peppas. He got VCU's pep band coverage on a national level and had VCU's name on ESPN on numerous occasions, according to Shelton-Eide.

Michelle Vo, the equipment manager for The Peppas, was initially hesitant about getting a different director since she was under the previous director, according to Vo.

“

I am stoked about his return because there is just a vibe. Obviously we were winning a bit more back then, but there is just a vibe. The atmosphere in the Stu is different."

Mat Shelton-Eide, member of VCU's Ram Nation

"Changing over is going to be a weird transition, it always is," Vo said. "But I kept an open mind and I learned more about him. I got to know him and so far he is doing really well."

The transition between directors came with some changes, with one of those changes being a more hype atmosphere than the previous years, according to Vo.

Kopacsi has an outgoing and extroverted personality, which adds a fun aspect to the band, Vo said. Kopacsi is also more direct and forward with his way of directing and with his ideals for the band, according to Vo.

"It is a good improvement because coming out of COVID, it was hard to just recover from getting the band back to the size it used to be," Vo said.

The Rams will face the Vanderbilt Commodores on Nov. 30 at 7 p.m., at the Siegel Center, where you can also watch Kopacsi and The Peppas.



Ryan Kopacsi leads the band during a basketball game at the Stuart C. Siegel Center.

Photo by Guy Enkh



The Peppas play during a basketball game at the Stuart C. Siegel Center.

Photo by Guy Enkh

Men’s tennis serves up spring season schedule



Graduate student Charles Bertimon concentrates during practice.
Photo by Alessandro Latour

THAILON WILSON
Staff Writer

The back-to-back Atlantic 10 champions announced their schedule for the spring season after a historic final four run. VCU men’s tennis made it all the way to the final four in the NCAA tournament’s doubles bracket run, according to VCU Athletics. The Bertimon twins, graduate student Charles Bertimon and senior Maxence Bertimon pushed the Rams forward.

“

We have the mentality that we have to be ready to face the best competition at the end of the year, and to get ready for the A-10,”

Anthony Rossi, VCU men’s tennis head coach

This effort by the twins was VCU’s farthest postseason run. Charles Bertimon said the run was both exciting to make it so far in the tournament, but also bittersweet that it ended. “Of course we were disappointed when we lost because we wanted to go all the way

and win a national championship,” Charles Bertimon said. “But looking back at it, it was just such a good experience and it built confidence.” VCU added freshmen Etienne Marty, Romain Gales and Sam Baumgartner as new editions to the black and gold roster. Baumgartner won a International Tennis Federation Junior Tournament as well as three ITF doubles titles before coming to VCU, according to VCU Athletics. Maxence Bertimon said he’s excited about the newcomers’ capability to adapt to college and is prepared to help them progress in any way he can. “When I met them, I was pleasantly surprised with how mature they already were able to integrate into school life. We will be the best assets we can for them,” Maxence Bertimon said. The black and gold started the year going straight to training and participating in invitationals and tournaments during their fall pre-season. This gave time for the players to play good competition like at the University of Virginia Regionals on Oct. 25. Graduate student Rayane Stable and junior Matisse Bobichon won the International Tennis Association regionals doubles bracket and qualified for the ITA national championships. This duo performed well enough to be ranked No. 29 in doubles in the ITA national doubles rankings, according to VCU Athletics.

Stable and the Bertimons try to set a good example for them to prepare them for the new expectations of college life and tennis, Stable said. “We really try to take responsibility to guide them through what college tennis is and what is expected of them here at VCU,” Stable said. As the team is heading on to play the final games of the preseason, the Rams announced their 2023 spring season schedule. The black and gold’s schedule is filled with power five school talent like Clemson University, Michigan State University, Wake Forest University and Virginia Tech. VCU men’s tennis head coach Anthony Rossi said the schedule is set to give the team an opportunity to play competitive teams and to prepare for tournament play at the end of the spring semester. “We have the mentality that we have to be ready to face the best competition at the end of the year, and to get ready for the A-10,” Rossi said. The black and gold have a few games and invitationals left during the fall pre-season and once the spring season begins on Jan. 20. Fans should be excited about the team’s improvement, but prepare to see a lot of heart from the players, according to Rossi. “When you come to our matches, you’ll see the intensity and the passion that those guys have during matches,” Rossi said.

GAME RESULTS

NOVEMBER 16

MEN’S BASKETBALL - VS. ARIZONA STATE
LOST 63-59
Legends Classic

NOVEMBER 17

MEN’S BASKETBALL - VS. PITTSBURGH
WON 71-67
Legends Classic

NOVEMBER 18

WOMEN’S VOLLEYBALL - VS. DAYTON
LOST 3-1
Atlantic 10 First Round

NOVEMBER 20

MEN’S BASKETBALL - AT MEMPHIS
LOST 62-47

WOMEN’S BASKETBALL - AT CHARLOTTE
LOST 55-47

NOVEMBER 20

MEN’S BASKETBALL - AT MEMPHIS
LOST 62-47

WOMEN’S BASKETBALL - AT CHARLOTTE
LOST 55-47

NOVEMBER 24

WOMEN’S BASKETBALL - VS. SETON HALL
WON 62-61
Paradise Jam

NOVEMBER 25

WOMEN’S BASKETBALL - VS. GEORGIA
LOST 68-54
Paradise Jam

NOVEMBER 26

WOMEN’S BASKETBALL - VS. WISCONSIN
WON 75-67
Paradise Jam

MEN’S BASKETBALL - VS. KENNESAW STATE
WON 64-61
Paradise Jam

On this day

Author Mark Twain was born in 1835.



‘PURSUE WHAT YOU WANT’:

Jennette McCurdy encourages students in honest conversation

VCU student Malcolm Small interviews McCurdy for the Zoom discussion. Photo grab by Clare Wislar

KATHARINE DEROSA
Executive Editor

Jennette McCurdy is urging VCU students to forge their own path in life — whatever it may be.

McCurdy starred in the hit Nickelodeon shows “iCarly” and “Sam & Cat” as Sam Puckett from 2007 to 2014, but her talk with student Malcolm Small titled “Taking Charge,” reached well beyond her acting career — delving into advice for young adults, her writing process and finding passions.

“That career had defined me for so long that I needed to define me for me,” McCurdy said. “I needed to really kind of sink into myself and realize what I wanted to do with my own life which was writing.”

“

Life is just too fucking hard if you don’t have a sense of humor about it. It’ll literally just knock you to your knees.”

Jennette McCurdy, author

Her recently published memoir, “I’m Glad My Mom Died,” was a No. 1 New York Times bestseller. The book delved into abuse from her mother, struggle with eating disorders and a path to working on herself.

McCurdy’s mother died in 2013, and McCurdy quit acting after “Sam & Cat”

was canceled. Her mother had pushed her into acting and, while McCurdy became well-versed, the passion was never there, she said.

“I had success as an actor,” McCurdy said. “It felt so unfulfilling.”

McCurdy spoke genuinely with Small, telling him that she takes the time to set intentions before speaking to college students as the age of young adulthood was the most challenging period of her life.

“I’m saying this now because I know that a lot of you ... have parents who want you to pursue something and they are probably very vocal about that and might even be vocal about how much they have helped you on your path to pursue that thing and how you would disappoint them if you didn’t pursue that thing,” McCurdy said.

Find what sparks passion and focus on getting good at it, McCurdy said. Then, a career path can follow the cultivated passion and talent.

“Pursue what you want for you please. I’m begging,” McCurdy said.

Her writing style is distinct, as Small praised her ability to write about trauma with a sense of humor. McCurdy’s number one tip for writing about hardships: time.

“It took a lot of time for me to get there and to be able to see my story for what it could be to an audience versus just what it was to me and it took a lot of unpacking in a private therapeutic setting before exploring it in a public facing way,” McCurdy said.

Though “I’m Glad My Mom Died,” details McCurdy’s journey with a severe eating disorder in the form of bulimia and emotional and physical maternal abuse,

McCurdy writes in a matter-of-fact, almost nonchalant way.

“Life is just too fucking hard if you don’t have a sense of humor about it. It’ll literally just knock you to your knees,” McCurdy said.

Ever since McCurdy quit acting, she has focused solely on her writing career, she said. After dealing with writer’s block, McCurdy discovered she was a “panster” rather than a “plotter,” meaning she approaches writing in a “vomit first draft,” type of way.

“I don’t allow any of my critical mind to come into play. I really just write the thing I try to just let it kind of run through me, as spiritual

as that might sound,” McCurdy said.

In terms of what’s next, McCurdy is currently working on a novel, she said. She reached 30,000 words on Monday before speaking to the university and is excited to share it “very soon.”

VCU’s Activities Programming Board facilitated the event and shared student health resources to supplement McCurdy’s talk, including university student counseling, access to 24/7 mental health services through TimelyCare and physical and mental well being through RecWell. Visit health.students.vcu.edu or recwell.vcu.edu for more information.



Jennette McCurdy spoke to students on Zoom during her ‘Taking Control’ discussion. Photo grab by Clare Wislar

CHLOE HAWKINS
Spectrum Editor

The holiday season calls for many traditions such as baking cookies, creating gingerbread houses, attending the annual parade and listening to jolly tunes. Another tradition is curling up under a cozy blanket and watching all the iconic Christmas movies.

The Nightmare Before Christmas (1993)

This animated movie may seem like it fits Halloween more, but the plot does explore the Christmas season. The film follows a character named Jack Skellington, also known as the king of Halloween. Skellington stumbles upon a place called “Christmas Town” while looking for something more cheerful than his usual spooky city — the rest of the film is a festive adventure to watch with family or friends.

Available on Disney+ | 95% Rotten Tomatoes



Editor’s must-watch
list of
HOLIDAY MOVIES

Home Alone (1990)

Prepare to become a part of the McCallister family in this ‘90s Christmas film. The family is going on vacation for the holidays, but ends up forgetting a key member of the family — Kevin McCallister, the witty 8 year old boy. He is all by himself for the holidays, except for the two burglars that show up on Christmas Eve while he’s home alone. This comedy film has a rollercoaster of events that unfold while Kevin combats these burglars all by himself.

Available on Disney+ | 67% Rotten Tomatoes

The Holiday (2006)

This romantic comedy follows two heartbroken women — Iris and Amanda, played by Kate Winslet and Cameron Diaz, who are trying to heal during the holidays. To help cope with their abrupt breakups before Christmas, they decide to completely swap lives, moving Iris from London to Los Angeles and Amanda from California to London. Throughout this film, you are taken through their process of growth and love.

Available on Hulu | 50% Rotten Tomatoes

The Polar Express (2004)

This children’s film follows a little boy who runs away on Christmas Eve to the North Pole, in hopes of meeting Santa and his elves. The journey is a long one that holds many mysteries, but you have to hop along the Polar Express to see what these are. The holidays aren’t complete without watching this movie with a comfortable blanket and a warm cup of hot chocolate.

Available on HBO Max | 56% Rotten Tomatoes



Single All the Way (2021)

This Netflix original is a classic romantic holiday film. It follows two flatmates named Peter, played by Michael Urie and Nick, played by Philemon Chambers. For the Christmas season, Peter does not want to show up with no partner to introduce to his family once again. To fix this issue, Nick volunteers to be his “boyfriend” for the holidays. This hometown visit complicates things between the two main characters, resulting in one of them catching more than just presents under the tree.

Available on Netflix | 67% Rotten Tomatoes

The Ultimate Christmas Present (2000)

This Disney film follows a girl named Allie Thompson, played by Hailee Hirsh, who desperately wants snow for Christmas in her California hometown. This desire leads her and her best friend Samantha Kwan, played by Brenda Song, to take a snow machine from Santa himself. While Allie does end up getting snow, it is much more than she imagined. This movie brings back all the nostalgia from childhood.

Available on Disney+ | 49% Rotten Tomatoes

Illustrations by Killian Goodale-Porter

PEGGY STANSBERY
Staff Writer

VCU students, alumni and community members push, experiment with and showcase their innovative ideas at Shift Retail Lab.

The Shift Retail Lab provides current and former VCU students a space to test and sell their products and services, according to Garret Westlake, founder of Shift Retail Lab, associate vice provost for innovation and executive director of the da Vinci center at VCU.

“Shift Retail Lab has been my idea and something I have wanted to bring to students for a long time,” Westlake said.

Westlake had worked with student entrepreneurs at a couple of universities and noticed there was no place for them to do business and test their new products and services, Westlake said.

“If you look at the sciences we teach biology and then you have a biology lab. We teach entrepreneurship but there was never a lab for students to practice,” Westlake said. “So I talked to students and heard their feedback. What they really needed was not another pitch competition but what they really needed was a place to sell and test products.”

Westlake reached out to Mark Hourigan of Hourigan Construction in 2019 to help create Shift Retail Lab, according to Westlake. They were the first in the country to build a space for students to practice entrepreneurship, according to Westlake. He said the Shift Retail Lab was built on a black box theater concept so it could be changed into a variety of different configurations. The space’s flexibility has allowed the diversity of VCU students to be reflected, according to Westlake.

A ‘PLAYGROUND’ FOR INNOVATORS:
Entrepreneurs bring ideas
to life at Richmond space

They built Shift Retail Lab on a black box theater concept so it could be changed into a variety of different configurations, according to Westlake. This has given the space the ability to transform into an Iranian festival and a music venue.

The space’s flexibility has allowed the diversity of VCU students to be reflected, according to Westlake.

“The different ideas and backgrounds and experiences of our students really come through in the Shift Retail Lab, and that has been so rewarding,” Westlake said.

Shift Retail Lab’s doors officially opened in January, according to Westlake. Since then 115 different organizations have used the space and 5,910 people have come through the doors.

Director of Innovation and Design at VCU da Vinci Center and Shift Retail Lab Lloyd Young helped co-found and refine the idea for the space, according to Westlake.

Young helps oversee Shift Retail Lab and the brand and communication for da Vinci and Shift Retail Lab as well, according to Young.

Young said she started working with Westlake to create a “playground” for participants to test and present their ideas at any stage.

“Shift Student Storefront is a multifunctional retail space where past and present VCU students can showcase their work to gain insights and test their products, ser-

vices, and ideas with real world customers,” Young said.

Students, alumni and community partners due so through the program called “Shelfies,” according to Young. Participants in the Shelfie program apply for and join a three to four week cohort where they get to network and share insights and co-host a pop up market, according to Young.

“This programming has been so fun to watch the growth of everyone’s ideas and build community,” Young said.

Within its first year, Shift Retail Lab has been named by Fast Company as an honorable mention in the Urban Design category of the magazine’s 2022 World Changing Ideas Awards, according to Young.

Beyond the “Shelfies” program, Young wanted to create a place for all students at Shift Retail Lab, Young said.

“I am passionate about cross-disciplinary experiences and education,” Young said. “While I love what we’ve built for entrepreneurs, I also wanted to create an opportunity for students from all disciplines to engage with Shift Retail Lab.”

Young co-taught Shift Innovation 591 with VCU assistant professor Jessica Collins, where students worked together to create a magazine that celebrates Shift Retail Lab and student entrepreneurship, according to Young.

15 students from different disciplines came together to create a 90 page magazine in a semester, according to Collins.

“It’s a completely brand new course. We all built the magazine together from start to finish,” Collins said. “There was absolutely no example. The first day of class we brainstormed what we wanted to see in the magazine only knowing that the focus would be on Shift Retail Lab and the idea of student entrepreneurship.”

The magazine is having a launch party for the first issue on Dec. 8, according to Collins.

Pre-medicine graduate student Malique Middleton is a Shelfie at Shift Retail. Middleton said he applied to be a Shelfie because he wanted the opportunity to experiment with retail spaces for his skin care line, Gewd Botanicals.

“It was the first time I got to see how my products would look on the shelf, which was one of the best aspects,” Middleton said. “It was an inspiration for me to keep going.”

The Shift Retail Lab helped grow and support his business by giving him the resources to create surveys to get customer feedback and the platform for customers to interact with his products in person, according to Middleton.

Middleton said he enjoys the collaborative, diverse environment at the Shift Retail Lab as well. The Shelfies come from various sectors and paths of the entrepreneurial industry and have the opportunity to network with each other and help each other solve problems.

“More people need to be able to take advantage of this opportunity because it is literally a storefront right there on broad street.” Middleton said. “It’s a prime location for a lot of entrepreneurs to start off their journey and figure out what the next best step is or even to just test out their ideas.”

‘Born creative’: VCU alum opens pandemic-inspired collection

NATALIE BARR
Contributing Writer

WHAT BEGAN AS A CREATIVE outlet during the pandemic turned into bright colors, powerful messages and treasures from the past and emerged into Julia Malakoff’s Paper Jewels collection.

Paper Jewels is a series of three different shows created between 2020 and 2022 on display at the Weinstein Jewish Community Center, according to Malakoff. Peace & Love contains a series of collages of experiences from the pandemic; Good Juju reflects Malakoff’s loss of taste and smell due to COVID-19, and Paper Jewels illustrates the transition into post pandemic life full of brightness and light, Malakoff said.

“

If people look at that [Paper Jewels], they might see there’s joy in things that don’t always seem joyful, but if you look hard enough there’s a silver lining.”

Julia Malakoff, artist

The materials used in the collection come from Malakoff’s month-long stay at her parents’ house during the pandemic, she said. Malakoff collected old books and memories from the basement and created collages to stay busy and create art.

“A lot of the collages have a lot of stories behind it,” Malakoff said. “I think it’s my most favorite collection. I’m really proud of it.”

Malakoff, a mixed media artist, was “born creative,” but never saw herself as an artist, she said. She graduated from VCU’s English and mass communication creative advertising schools.

“I absolutely loved that about VCU, so many of my friends were of different ethnicities and I was able to have those different experiences at VCU along with creative

aspects,” Malakoff said. She used her first passion of writing as a form of expression and a comfort zone, she said. Malakoff thought she would study creative writing in college which influenced her to attend VCU, she said.

“I was always writing, and in creative writing courses, I thought I was going to be a writer one day,” Malakoff said.

Malakoff worked at local advertising agencies and started her own art agency post-graduation before she transitioned to art full time in 2014, she said.

“The way I actually got into making my own art is when I got married and started a family and have four kids, it was very difficult to have that 24-hour type of job,” Malakoff said.

Malakoff missed art and decided to take classes again after she raised her children, she said.

“Mixed media art is combining the way that I see it. It’s kind of like combining all of these different creative arts together,” Malakoff said.

Malakoff has been teaching mixed media art to teenagers and adults for four years now and believes anyone can be creative and learn art, she said.

“That’s something that we can continue to do as adults. It’s therapeutic. It feels good,” Malakoff said.

Malakoff has been working on a mural for a hospital in Woodbridge for over a year, and she hopes to combine her love of art and writing to create a picture book in the future, she said.

Alexander Bostic, associate professor in the art department at Mississippi State University, worked in the VCUarts department as a communications arts professor from 1990 to 2010, according to Bostic. Malakoff was curious and would seek out people to help her succeed with her career, Bostic said.

“You need to have that kind of motivation and self drive to get things that you want and to get to where you want to go. Basically, that’s what I did,” Bostic said.

Bostic has seen Malakoff’s artwork before, but did not know she used her time in the pandemic to create Paper Jewels until the “fantastic artwork” came out, he said.

“Malakoff just says ‘this is what I want to do,’ and she winds up doing it versus ‘Oh,

I need to bounce ideas off my friends, or I need to wait for Professor Bostic.’ She went off her own steam and inspiration,” Bostic said.

Student artists should take every opportunity available even if they fail and figure out the best way to reach their audience to get their artwork seen, Bostic said.

“But the whole trick is getting your work out there and getting people to see it,” Bostic said.

Leslie McGuigan, director of cultural arts and community engagement at Weinstein JCC has worked at the center for over 10 years, she said. Over this time, she has seen the center expand its cultural arts program to include more opportunities to showcase Jewish culture, she said.

“I’m fortunate to be in a position where I’m creating these opportunities,” McGuigan said. “When people tell me directly how much they enjoyed something or a painting that spoke to them, it brings me joy to see that people are appreciating it and that it’s enhancing their lives.”

McGuigan looks for artists several months in advance to showcase at JCC’s art gallery, Sara D. November Gallery, she said. Community members from the center approached McGuigan about Malakoff and suggested the artist be featured, McGuigan said.

“We were looking for Jewish artists that would like to show their work, through my committee and through people that I knew within the community,” McGuigan said. “I thought she would be a good fit for the gallery.”

McGuigan hopes people who visit the Paper Jewels collection at the gallery will be inspired and feel happy from the bright colors used in Malakoff’s collection, she said.

“If people look at that [Paper Jewels], they might see there’s joy in things that don’t always seem joyful, but if you look hard enough there’s a silver lining,” McGuigan said.

Paper Jewels collection will be on display at the Sara D. November Gallery at Weinstein JCC located at 5403 Monument Ave, from now - Dec. 30.



Julia Malakoff’s art on display at the Weinstein Jewish Community Center. Photos courtesy of Julia Malakoff

CT Opinions

Quote of the week

“The story of life is quicker than the wink of an eye, the story of love is hello and goodbye... until we meet again.”

— JIMI HENDRIX

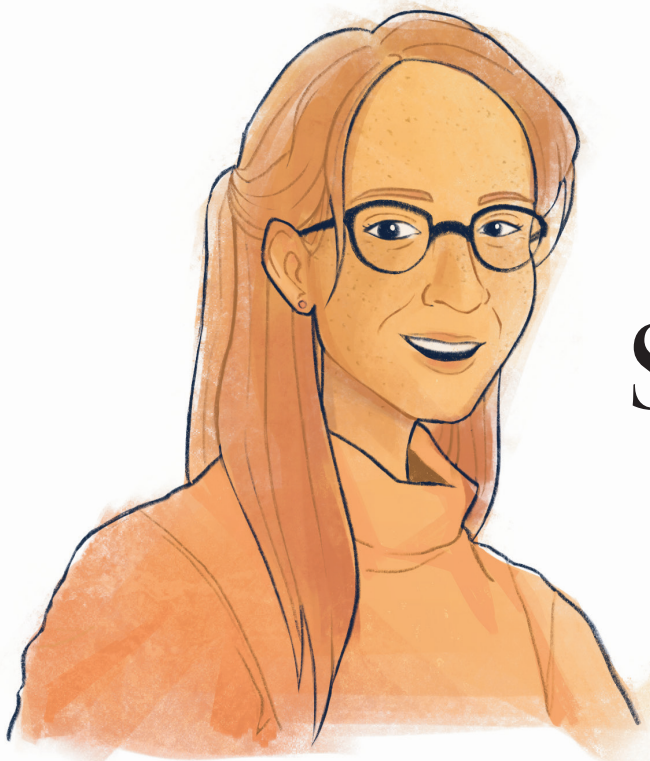


Illustration by Killian Goodale-Porter



THE CT SENIORS SAY FAREWELL

Executive Editor Katharine DeRosa says farewell

KATHARINE DEROSA
Executive Editor

EVERY SEMESTER THE COMMONWEALTH Times allows graduating seniors to bid adieu to the publication. I won't be graduating until May, but as my last action as editor-in-chief, I'm bending the rules to accommodate my early departure.

Leaving a semester early stings — even if it's on my own accord. The honest-to-God truth is that I need a little time to relax before I walk across the graduation stage.

I came to college in 2019 with one goal: I wanted to join the student newspaper. After working as a Contributing Writer for the majority of my freshman year, I was promoted to the position of Staff Writer. I told my parents with glee that I was going to be on the masthead. Nothing could have been more exciting.

I worked hard as a Staff Writer, often working on multiple stories a week to prove myself. I had set a goal to become News Editor by junior year, and by spring of my sophomore year I had done just that.

I didn't care how much the pay was. I just wanted to be a part of the team. A year later, I was offered the role of Executive Editor, and I jumped in all over again.

Leaving the place I call home isn't easy — but I'm proud to put myself first.

I'd love to say I've enjoyed every minute of this place, but just like a real home, that wouldn't be true. Like any long-term relationship, there's been ups and downs. It's hard to process feelings of burnout and resentment when they're paired with feelings of pride and joy about your work.

My biggest accomplishment as Executive Editor isn't any of the awards we've won, or the recognition we receive from the community, though I am proud of our achievements. The thing I will remember the most is the environment I've cultivated along with the help of the staff and our advisors of past and present: Jessica Clary, Mark Jefferies and Mark Robinson.

The CT suffers from burnout and I've put my best foot forward to alleviate that risk. I've seen multiple people quit because of it. College students left a job — that is

supposed to be a fun learning experience — because it was killing them. That's not how any job should be, yet alone a part-time job in student media.

I saw my chance to make some changes to our schedule and expectations when I was offered the role as editor-in-chief. We're still growing, but I'm happy to have been a part of that journey toward a healthy workplace.

I've made the best memories inside the weird-looking yellow building on Broad Street. I spend more time here than at my house, but I get to spend that time with my best friends working on stories I know are important.

I appreciate everyone who's given any amount of their time to The CT, but I want to specifically thank my some of my CT family of the past two years: Grace McOmber, Gabriela de Camargo Gonçalves, Hollyann Purvis, Katie Lee, Arrick Wilson, Anna Chen, Chloe Hawkins, Alessandro Latour, Killian Goodale-Porter, Ishaan Nandwani, Tagwa Shammeth, Rachel Rivenbark,

Kaitlyn Fulmore, Clare Wislar, Madison Tran, Gabi Wood, Bailey Wood, Fiona McMichael, Tess Wladar, Solimar Santoyo, Jayce Nguyen, Sarah Elson, Andrew Ringle, Georgia Geen, Noah Fleishman, Ebonique Little, Enza Marcy, Sahara Sriraman, Meghan Lee, Varsha Vaseduvan and Thai Wilson.

You all have taught me so much and made me the reporter, editor and person I am today. I'm so grateful to have known you.

For now, I'll be around campus. You might catch me as a Contributing Writer sometime next spring, but for the most part I'll be focusing on graduating, trying to relax and getting ready to find a reporting job.

Last but not least, thank you to The CT itself. You may just be the student newspaper, but you defined the last three years of my life. Thanks for giving me the chance to write, learn and lead. I'll miss you more than you know.

KD is signed off.

Opinions Editor Ishaan Nandwani says farewell

ISHAAN NANDWANI
Opinions Editor

WORKING FOR THE COMMONWEALTH TIMES took a leap of faith.

As a Biology and Spanish major on a pre-medical track, I spent much of my time before The CT studying for biochemistry exams and conducting research at VCU Medical Center. Other pre-meds didn't spend their time writing for the newspaper, and with my limited journalism experience and packed schedule, writing for a publication as highly regarded and time intensive as The CT was an intimidating feeling.

What I did know, though, was that I loved to write and had many thoughts about the world. That's why I wanted to work for The CT to begin with. So I pushed my doubt aside, and took that critical leap of faith to be an Opinions

Contributing Writer in August 2020 — this was, without a doubt, one of my best decisions in college.

I spent three semesters as a Contributing and Staff Writer, and two semesters as Opinions Editor. As a writer, I started with a specific interest in covering health care and medicine, but my interests expanded shortly after I began; over the past few years, I've written about the migration crisis at the southern border, Youngkin's administration and Greek life on campus. In the process, I've grown immeasurably in my ability to unpack an issue and effectively communicate a stance in approximately 650 words, give or take.

I've also learned a lot from working as Opinions Editor. Every writer that has contributed to my section has taught me to see the world in a different way, and I'm grateful for the opportunity to have worked with each of you.

One of the most important lessons I've learned has been that although there are times in which proclaiming our voices is essential, there are also times in which we must simply listen. We live in a world in which it is commonplace to interject our thoughts into every situation — even when we don't fully understand it.

However, stepping back when necessary and learning from the experts is a valuable skill. At The CT, I occasionally felt compelled to offer an opinion about a topic — for example, the Russo-Ukrainian War — solely because it was relevant. Upon further examination, I realized that I didn't possess a deep understanding of the dynamics of the two countries' longstanding conflict, and elected not to offer my recommendations to President Joe Biden regarding America's next steps from my platform at The CT — he had plenty of that already.

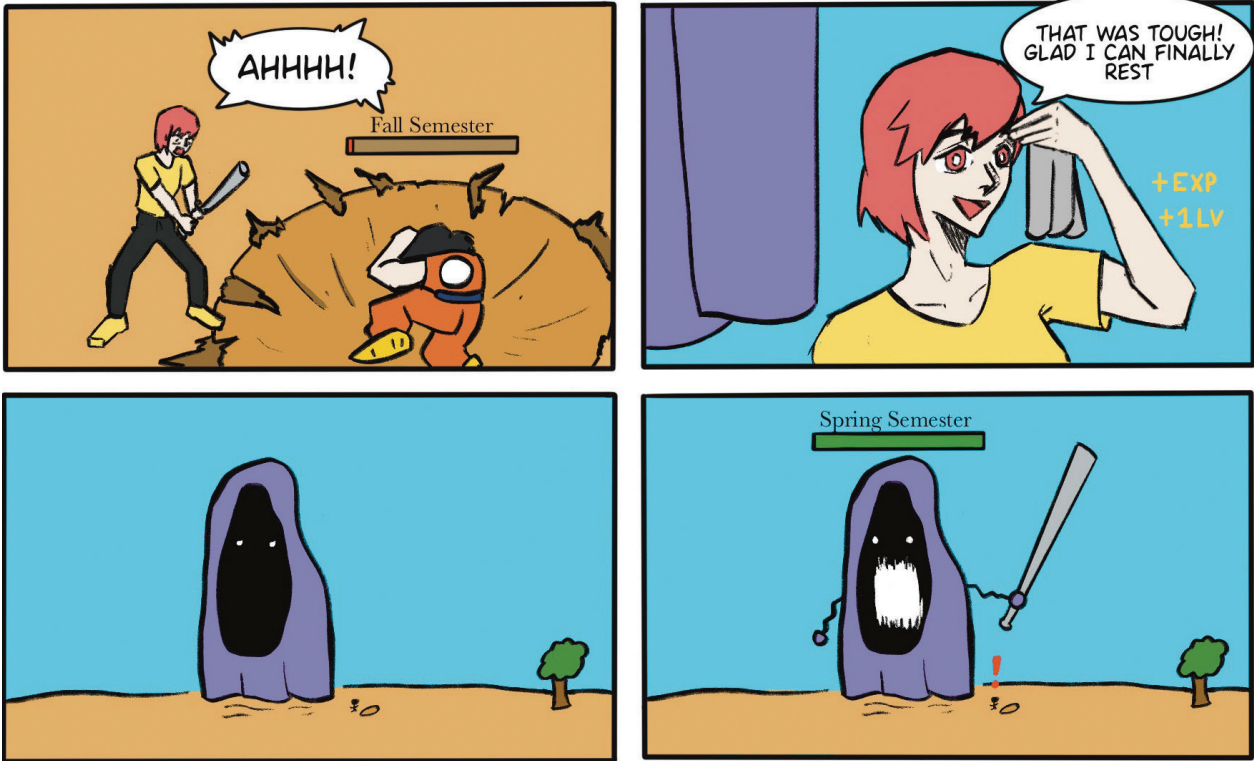
When I consider what to write next, I'm often reminded of advice from my sophomore year high school English teacher: “Write what you know.” Six years later, and I couldn't agree more.

I want to thank all of the staff members at The CT that I've worked with on Opinions — Katharine, Gabi, Hollyann, Killian, Clare, Nick, Tagwa, Grace and Sarah — along with every designer, illustrator and writer who has contributed to the section. You all have made the section what it is, and put up with me even when I was behind schedule.

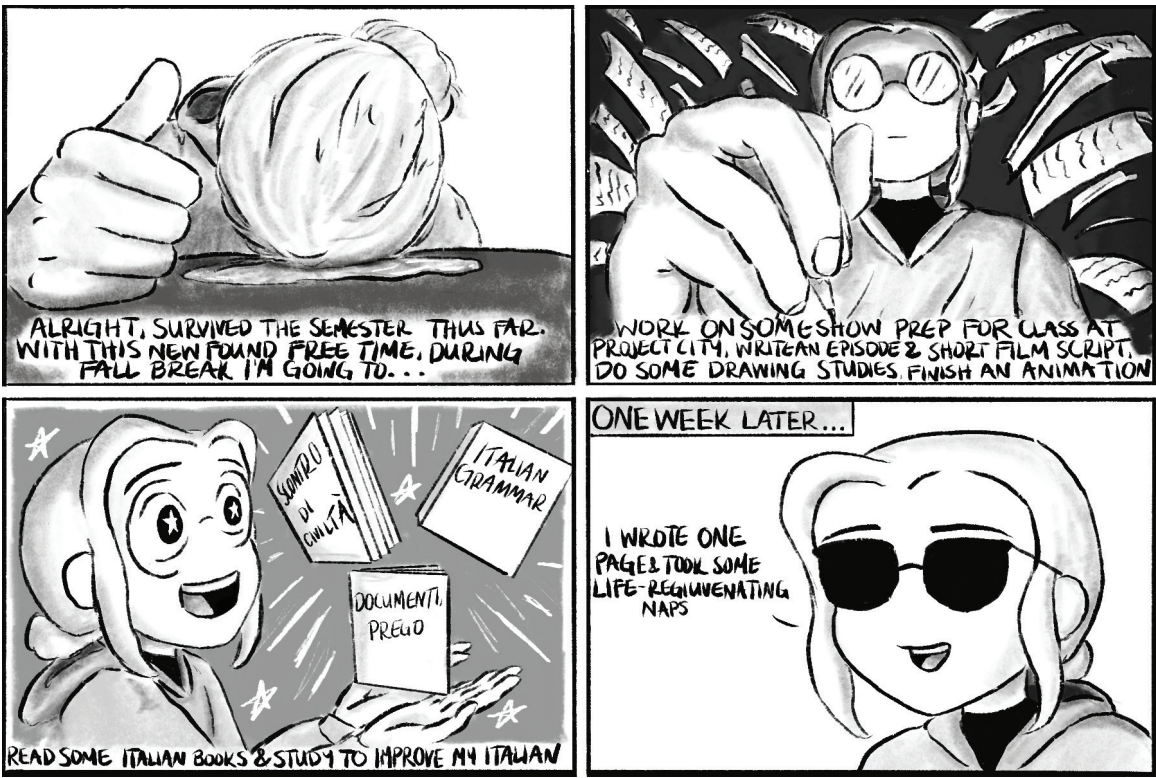
When I think back to August 2020, I think about a boy who loved to write, but was unsure how it would ever fit into his life trajectory as an aspiring doctor. Today, after two-and-a-half years at The CT, I leave with a lifelong desire to cultivate a career that integrates my passion for journalism with medicine.

CT Comics

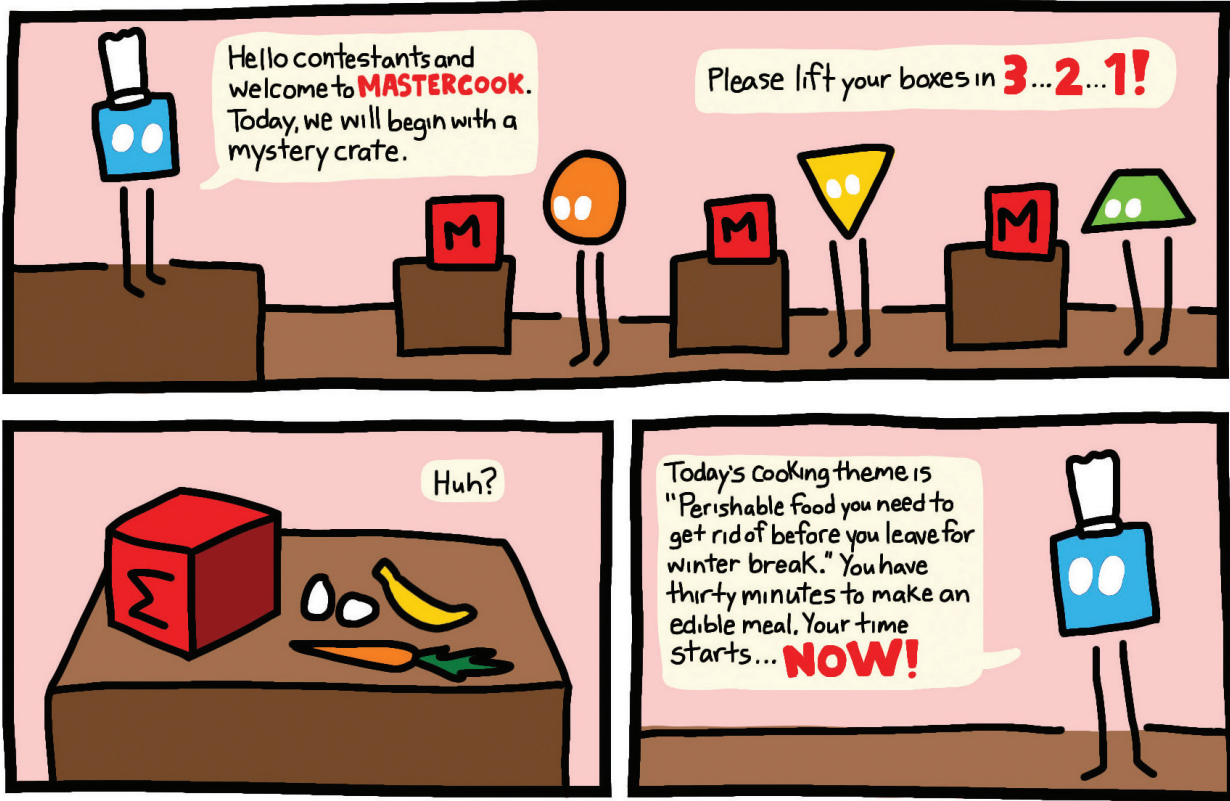
Next Boss by Anthony Duong



Dream VS Reality by Ollie Hoffmaster



Master Cook by Jesse Beck



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CT

Puzzles

Los Angeles Times

Crossword Puzzle

Edited by Patti Varol and Joyce Nichols Lewis

- ACROSS
- 1 Board in a wooden deck chair

5 Continent with the highest and lowest points on Earth

9 Fragile juggling props

13 Tell the teacher

19 Baja resort

20 Remain unsettled

21 Actress Spelling

22 “A Midsummer Night’s Dream” king

23 Ready to move on from reading Beat poetry?

27 Enter with flair

28 Warsaw ___

29 Wobbly, quaintly

30 Some poets

33 Get better

35 “Macbeth” role

36 Would really prefer to use a globe?

43 Netflix’s “The Haunting of ___ Manor”

44 Tag figure

45 Big name in coolers

46 Aim high

48 Uber offer

49 ___ Springs

51 Singer Carly ___ Jepsen

54 Grab

57 No longer interested in fairy tales?

62 18-wheeler

63 Marketing fees

64 Smack

65 “This could be a problem”

69 Bozos

72 The “kid” in “Here’s looking at you, kid”

73 Ski resort hangout

74 Dijon deity

75 Large wardrobe

77 Hush-hush org.

79 Trying to keep cool in a more eco-friendly way?

86 Disorderly protester

87 Bag-screening org.

88 Actress Mireille

89 “Misery” actor James

91 ___ to go

94 Spot for a nap

96 Tempo similar to lento

97 “SmackDown” org.

99 So done with craft beers?

104 With it, once

105 Hideaway

106 2013 Lady Gaga album

107 “And when I love thee not, / Chaos is come again” speaker

111 Step after using a sous vide, maybe

113 Sears partner

118 Feeling too good for the family car?

122 “Hakuna ___”: “The Lion King” song

123 Expansive

124 Latin years

125 Blackthorn fruit

126 Like some patches

127 “Orinoco Flow” singer

128 Diamond corner

129 NASCAR driver Petty

DOWN

1 Flat-bottomed boat

2 9-Down output

3 Cain’s brother

4 Legal wrong

5 Rose garden pests

6 “Not this movie again!”

7 Company abbr.

8 Brouhaha

9 Sicilian volcano

10 “Roger that”

11 Grimm girl

12 Title for Patrick Stewart

13 Talk up

14 Up to it

15 Béret spot

16 “If I’m honest ... ”

17 “Because you’re worth it” cosmetics brand

18 Zip

24 Oily part of the face, to dermatologists

25 Surprise victory

26 Sooths

31 Concern for the “Queer Eye” guys

32 “___ the breaks”

34 Birmingham’s st.

36 Big month for a CPA

37 Handlebar part

38 Verdi opera

39 Treats with a cold pack

40 Technology magazine

41 Church recesses

42 Banking IDs

47 “Midnight Cowboy” role

49 Taro dish

50 Wool source

52 Brody of “Peaky Blinders”

53 Etc. kin

55 Rock climber’s handful

56 Boost

58 Give it a go

59 Nuts and bolts

60 Part of TGIF

61 Treating with contempt

65 Aroma

66 Old 45 player

67 Pre-makeover image

68 “Straight ___ Compton”

70 French friend

71 Stronghold

73 Asian language

75 Hilltop nest

76 Swelter

78 Female sib

80 Marjoram, e.g.

81 Put off

82 Unsuitable

83 Rose Bowl org.

84 ___ Grey tea

85 Fury

90 Lottery ticket picks: Abbr.

92 Hose material

93 State in southwest India

95 “Home Alone” actress Catherine

96 Looney Tunes stinker

97 Question in an identity crisis

98 Home mixologist’s dream

100 Leaf manufacturer

101 Somewhat formal

102 Cook wear

103 Canadian coin, familiarly

108 2008 AL Rookie of the Year Longoria

109 Mother of Artemis

110 Bank offering

112 Naan flour

114 Luxuriate (in)

115 Far from fair

116 “Sounds good”

117 ___-slapper

119 Festive night, often

120 Diner check

121 Food Network host Garten
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- Let It Go by Katie Hale

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- Complete the grid so each row, column, and 3-by-3 box (in bold borders) contains every digit, 1 to 9. For strategies on how to solve Sudoku, visit sudoku.org.uk
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