

Infographic by Solimar Santoyo.

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Virginia Democrats gained control of the House of Delegates and maintained the State Senate.

The Virginia House of Delegates flipped with 51 Democrats and 46 Republicans, with two districts undecided, according to the Virginia Public Access Project. The State Senate stays under Democratic control with 21 Democrats and 18 Republicans, with one undecided district, according to VPAP. HD 71, HD 82 and SD 24 undecided as of 12:30 a.m. on Wednesday.

The Commonwealth Times followed the casino referendum and 13 districts rated “competitive” by VPAP.

Casino Referendum

Richmonders rejected the Richmond Grand Casino referendum with 61.62% of the votes, according to VPAP. 38.38% of

residents voted “Yes.”

The city previously held a casino referendum in 2021, but lost with 49.05% of the vote, according to VPAP.

Richmond Wins, Vote Yes — a referendum committee for the casino — conceded the loss, according to The Virginian-Pilot.

“We are grateful to the thousands of Richmonders who voted for good jobs and a stronger city, especially those in Southside who poured their hearts into this project,” the committee stated.

Paul Goldman, founder of No Means No Casino, stated Richmond cannot be built on “old resentments.”

“For too long, the politics of Richmond has been controlled by politicians and their allies who put their own self interest before the public interest. Today the people of Richmond said clearly ‘those days are over,’” Goldman stated.

Mayor Levar Stoney said Richmond was lucky to have companies willing to invest in Southside in a video by CBS6 reporter Tyler Layne.

“You know what, if that opportunity comes along again it’s my hope that we will actually be able to move forward and say yes to that,” Stoney said.

House District 21

Democrat Josh Thomas won HD 21, which covers Prince William County, with 51.48% of the vote against Republican John

Stirrup, according to VPAP.

House District 22

Republican Ian Lovejoy won HD 22, which covers Prince William County, with 52.6% of the vote against Democrat Travis Nembhard, according to VPAP.

Lovejoy thanked his team and supporters on his Facebook page.

“The hard work is not over- in fact it is just beginning,” Lovejoy stated. “My team will immediately begin working with any current delegates representing portions of HD22 to transition ongoing constituent needs to our office.”

House District 57

Republican David Owen won HD 57 against Democrat Susanna Gibson with 51.16% of the votes, according to VPAP.

House District 65

Democrat Joshua Cole won HD 65, defeating Republican Lee Peters, with 52.61% of the votes, according to VPAP.

“WE DID IT!! I am READY to get back to Richmond to fight for Lottie, Dottie, and EVERYBODY!!” Cole stated on his Facebook page.

House District 89

Republican Baxter Ennis won HD 89, beating Democrat Karen Jenkins, with 51.17% of votes, according to VPAP.

House District 97

Democrat Michael Feggans won HD 97 and beat Republican Karen Greenhalgh with 53.90% of votes, according to VPAP.

Senate District 16

Democrat Schuyler VanValkenburg won SD 16, covering Henrico County, with 54.30% of the vote against Republican incumbent Siobhan Dunnavant, according to VPAP.

“We did it. Thank you, Henrico,” VanValkenburg stated in a tweet.

Senate District 27

Republican Tara Durant won SD 27 with 48.33% of the vote against Democrat Joel Griffin, according to VPAP.

“Now, the real work begins ~ when the 2024 Session begins in just a few short months, it’ll be time to put pen to paper to deliver permanent tax relief, additional support for law enforcement and school safety measures, and solutions to help our students learn and thrive in school,” Durant stated on Facebook.

Senate District 31

Democrat Russet Perry won SD 31 with 52.52% of the vote against Republican Juan Pablo Segura, according to VPAP.

Stories of the week

NATIONAL: Virginia declares state of emergency due to wildfires in Shenandoahs
INTERNATIONAL: Israel bombs solar panels at al-Shifa hospital in Gaza

SELNA SHI

News Editor

JESSICA VIGIL

Contributing Writer

HAN VU

Contributing Writer

Many General Assembly candidates have listed education as one of their priorities, according to a previous article by The Commonwealth Times.

“Education might be one of the most important issues for November,” said Amanda Wintersieck, VCU associate political science professor. “That’s because both of our chambers in the state are up for grabs and a shift in the bodies could impact what legislative policies look like in the next couple of years.”

Wintersieck said education is not just a critical issue in Virginia, but also nationally, as more legislators nationwide are pushing for parental rights in public education.

“The parental rights movement, which is focused on K-12 education and this idea that parents should have a say, what teachers are teaching their kids in the classroom and what books are stocked on the library shelves,” Wintersieck said.

Since Gov. Glenn Youngkin was elected in 2021, his administration has also pushed for “Parents Matter,” which reflects the parental rights movement in education policies such as banning critical race theory, or CRT, the framework that acknowledges systemic racism as part of American society, in K-12 and anti-trans policies, according to reports.

There is also a push against higher education, Wintersieck said.

“This inaccurate narrative that universities are indoctrinating students into liberalism. To be very clear, universities are run by conservatives. If you look at the boards that run universities, those individuals tend to be much more conservative,” Wintersieck said.

Youngkin appointed Rooz Dababhoy this past June to VCU’s Board of Visitors. She has posted against CRT in the classroom saying it has “no place in our schools,” according to a previous article by the Commonwealth Times.

Wintersieck said red and blue states will have a bigger discrepancy based on the different education policies.

“We know that today, going to college still leads to better outcomes to earning or earning potentials,” Wintersieck said. “This is going to have generational effects because banning types of things that can be taught in the classroom, banning types of books on the shelves all the way to discouraging people from seeking higher education.”

Wintersieck said the country is currently in the “pendulum swing” of going backward.

“That is not good for creating an inclusive society,” Wintersieck said.

James J. Fedderman, president of the Virginia Education Association, stated in an email that leaders do not understand the challenges the public education system faces.

“The education policies that affect our daily lives and the lives of our students are, unfortunately, made by elected leaders whose only knowledge of the classroom is their memory of having once been a student,” Fedderman stated. “Elections matter, and the results of this November’s races will reverberate through our schools for years to come.”

Fedderman also stated Virginia still needs to solve the teacher shortage problem. More teachers are leaving the workforce than entering it in the 2021 to 2022 school year, according to a report by the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission.

Virginia ranks 28th in average salaries of public school teachers, standing at \$59,874, according to the Virginia Department of Education.

“We still need funding to stem the teacher shortage, get mental health support into our schools, and provide small group tutoring we know our students desperately need to catch up after the pandemic,” Fedderman stated.

VCU students have also expressed that education is an important issue to them in this election.

Prakhar Mathur, a junior computer science student, said he and his friends started a drive to help collect school supplies for public school teachers. Mathur also said he worries about the teacher shortage.

“I know in Henrico county there’s just not enough teachers,” Mathur said. “I know a lot of people are deterred from becoming teachers because they don’t get paid enough, that I think is the most explicit thing. They don’t have enough resources and sometimes they have to pay out of pocket to provide resources for the students.”

Jaden Davy, a senior political science student, said education is an important issue in the election as Virginia has taken aggressive action against teaching CRT.

“Critical race theory is important as it addresses the past oppressions minorities have faced and how the deep-rooted oppression continues to exist in modern society,” Davy said.

Gov. Glenn Youngkin banned teaching CRT in K-12 public schools in January 2022.

Kiana Pilson, a campus staff minister for InterVarsity at VCU, said the education system should invest in the next generation.

“Education should be accessible for everyone. The teachers who are pouring into education or supporting the education system should also be supported,” Pilson said.

Pilson’s dad is a high school principal, and she said she noticed that it’s been hard to retain teachers post-pandemic.

“If we don’t have teachers in high schools, middle schools and elementary schools in the long run, then what does that say when they become adults and they’re the ones running our country,” Pilson said.

EDUCATION IS A PRIORITY FOR MANY CANDIDATES IN THE NEW GENERAL ASSEMBLY



Illustration by Lily Robinette.

Casinos, gun control and abortion rights: VCU students vote in the General Assembly election



Students cited abortion rights, gun control and casino referendum as their reasons to vote in the General Assembly election.
Photo by Kaitlyn Fulmore.

SELNA SHI
News Editor
JACK GLAGOLA
Contributing Writer

VCU students who voted in the General Assembly election cited the casino referendum, public transportation, gun control, trans rights and abortion rights as reasons why they voted.

Seventy-five point two percent of VCU students voted in the 2020 election compared to an average of 66% at other institutions, according to the Institute of Democracy and Higher.

Betsy Carr ran for reelection in House District 78 and has served in the district as a Democrat since 2009, according to the Virginia Public Access Project. Carr ran unopposed.

In Senate District 14, Lamont Bagby ran unopposed as a Democrat, according to VPAP.

Both the House and Senate district cover the majority of Richmond.

Richmond residents rejected the casino with 61.62% of the vote on the casino referendum, according to VPAP.

Mikayla Lindsey, a third-year communication arts student who plans to vote in Chesapeake, said while she is not sure exactly which candidates to vote for, the casino is a particular issue she has heard the most about.

“Honestly, I’m against it. I don’t think that Richmond really needs something like that, and I feel like they could really use the

money for something much more useful,” Lindsey said.

Besides the casino referendum, Lindsey said community issues like homelessness and food insecurity are important and need more resources to combat them.

“I think there should be an even bigger push for that. Because nobody should have to live on the streets, especially as it’s getting cold outside,” Lindsey said.

Ashish Tiwari, a biomedical engineering student who voted early in Henrico, said his number one issue is mass shootings.

“I think more progressive candidates care more to enforce oversight regarding insanely overpowered guns being in regular civilian hands,” Tiwari said. “I’m going to make a point and say I’m a single-issue voter.”

Tristan Cascio, a second-year graphic design student, said he is planning to vote “mostly Democrat” in Richmond.

“That’s kind of how my mind is aligned right now. Always open to change,” Cascio said.

The city proposed earlier this year to place the annual gaming tax revenue into a trust fund for education and childcare.

Cascio said he is torn on the casino, but believes that education can be supported in better ways.

“I don’t think the casino is a good argument for that. I feel the reasoning behind it is very much trying to appeal to a wide range of people. ‘Hey, if you don’t support the casino, you don’t want your kids to be educated. You don’t want there to be

jobs,’” Cascio said.

Orion Scheuermann, a third-year electrical engineering student who is voting absentee in Chesapeake, said that transgender issues, racial issues and the current conflict in Israel and Palestine are important to them.

“We have a governor who is kind of opposed to the teaching of those issues in schools. As well as in a lot of states, it’s not safe for trans people and people of the LGBT community to be seen or taught about,” Scheuermann said.

Haley Williams, a second-year psychology student who is planning to vote in Hanover, said that women’s rights and reproductive rights are “at the front” of their mind.

“I’m pretty sure Virginia is the last southern state that can offer [abortion] and Hanover is a very red county — so I’m going to try to push it the other way,” Williams said. “I think it’s something that should be available to every woman no matter what.”

Oscar Lujan, a third-year homeland security and emergency management student who plans to vote Democrat in Arlington, wants a higher emphasis on education and public transportation.

“It’s not in the most equitable areas. I guess it doesn’t reach the communities it needs to reach,” Lujan said.

In Richmond specifically, Lujan said voting no for the casino is “super important.”

“I think they’re kind of disguising it and saying it’s going to bring a bunch of

jobs — which it will, for maybe a one-year period of construction — but after that, it’s just going to leech on the most vulnerable communities,” Lujan said.

Lujan said he is hopeful that Richmonders will vote no a second time, saying it is “pretty tone-deaf” of the city to put the proposal back on the ballot. The casino was previously rejected in a 2021 referendum, according to a previous article by The Commonwealth Times.

“I have faith in Richmond. We already made up our minds, so I don’t think it’s going to change,” Lujan said.

Secretary of Young Democrats at VCU Rachel Schmitt said she has been canvassing to encourage residents in Richmond to vote “No” in the casino referendum.

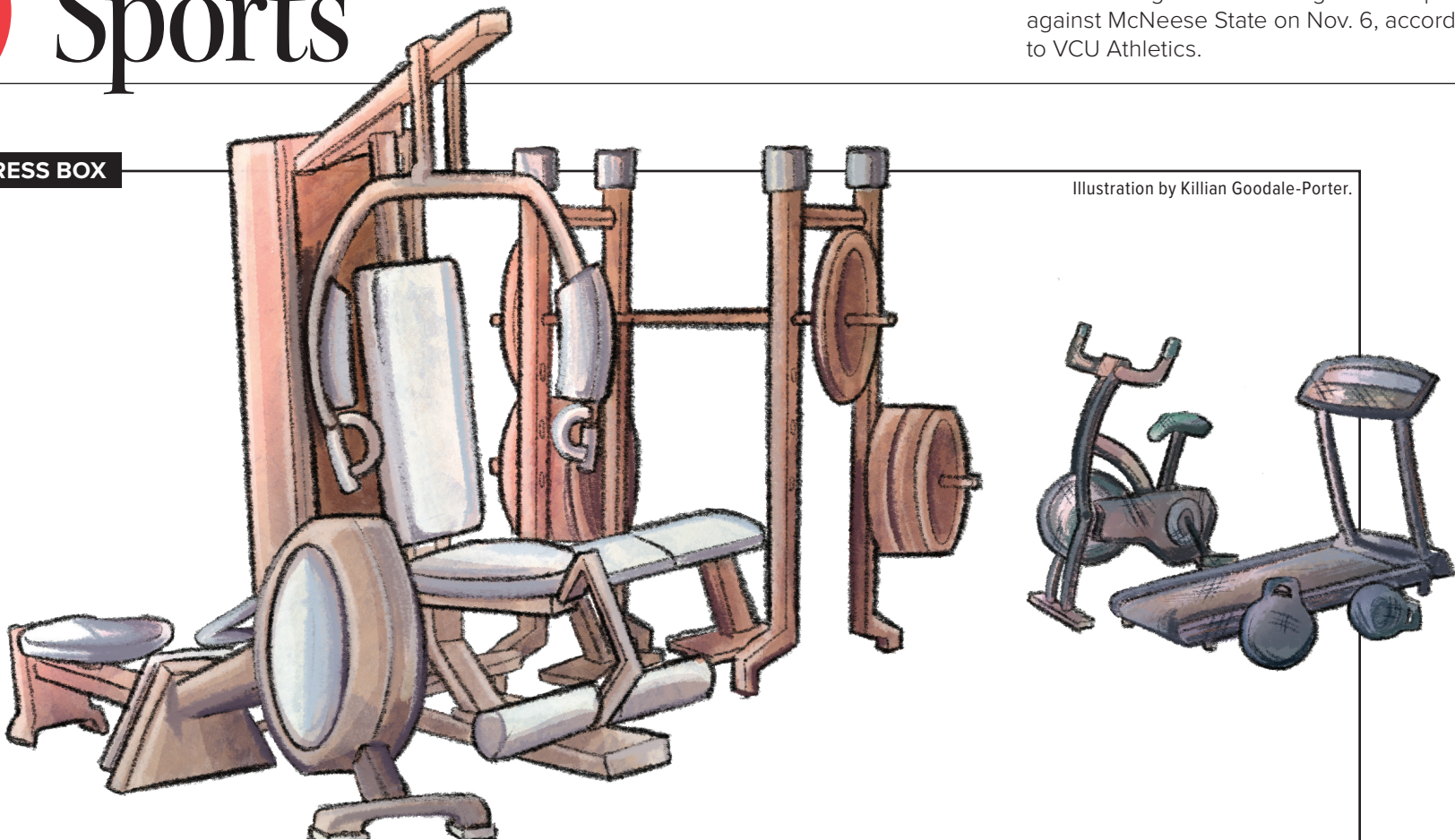
“I’ve been canvassing the past few weeks with a local church against the casino to get that referendum to fail,” Schmitt said. “I’ve been going to Monument Avenue and Grove, the nice neighborhoods, and I’ve been receiving overwhelming support. I honestly think it’s going to fail.”

Young Republicans is no longer active at VCU, according to its Instagram. Turning Point USA at VCU did not get back to The Commonwealth Times in time for publication.

Stat of the week
VCU senior guard Max Shulga had 22 points against McNeese State on Nov. 6, according to VCU Athletics.

PRESS BOX

Illustration by Killian Goodale-Porter.



Privilege is costing our student athletes more than money

VIOLET VELASQUEZ
Contributing Writer

Public school versus private school is a choice parents are burdened with as their child prepares for the quintessential American education. More specifically, the types of education and the results they fabricate for a child and their blossoming sports career.

“

Hopefully one day, we will be able to allocate the public school system funds in a better way and help support our youths’ education and athletics.”

Violet Velasquez
Contributing Writer

It is becoming more and more apparent over the years that a private school education will not only prepare you for college better than a public school can, but also set you apart from your public school peers in the sporting recruitment process. Forty-five percent of the 2019 NBA first-and second-round draft picks went to private schools, according to The Conversation. Private schools have a more competitive schedule, higher-ranking players and well-funded programs. The well-funded programs can be a

direct cause of private schools having very costly and mandatory tuition for attendance. The average cost of a private American high school can start at a whopping \$16,000, according to the Education Data Initiative. Skilled and developing players appreciate the connections and publicity these private institutions have to offer. A college scout’s first step is going to be private institutions to fill their rosters with Division 1 prospective students. At times, public institutions and local high schools are overlooked and neglected. Public schools usually lack the funds to completely nourish their students’ training needs. Which in turn, results in a lack of player development and fewer “looks” received. Anyone can be eligible for college recruitment, though it requires an immense amount of training, dedication and a good work ethic. It’s common to hear professional athletes talk about starting at a public school and note that moving to a more secure or nourished institution aided tremendously in their athletic success. This is not to diminish the unwithering talent found in public school sports but it provides an unspoken advantage. Boys playing high school varsity basketball at a public school have a 17-1 ratio of making any college roster and a 110-1 chance of making a D1 roster. There is a 14-1 ratio to making any college roster and an 81-1 chance of going to D1 for women, according

to Scholarship Stats. Let’s say sports don’t end up working for private school players — they still are better equipped educationally and more prepared for the college process. This can be a complicated process for students who attend public schools for many reasons like lack of information, support and resources. The key factor is funding. From the school itself to the teachers, faculty, coaches and programs, everybody is underpaid, underfunded, and overworked in the public school system. Almost two-thirds of American public schools are experiencing a funding gap, according to KnightCrier. There are clear differences in life after high school for student-athletes who enroll at institutions that prioritize athletics like IMG Academy, OTE Academy, St. Paul VI, Sierra Canyon and so many more. These schools are staples in the athletics community and can almost guarantee a spot on any if not most collegiate rosters and even professional or Olympic rosters. Private school is not realistic for most, especially in this economy. Hopefully one day, we will be able to allocate the public school system funds in a better way and help support our youths’ education and athletics. They are the future.

MEN'S BASKETBALL

loses season opener to McNeese State, 76-65

THAILON WILSON
Sports Editor

After the exhibition win against Mars Hill, VCU men's basketball played their first official non-conference matchup against former VCU head coach Will Wade's McNeese State University and lost 76-65.

The game started with VCU senior guard Max Shulga making a three-pointer to create the first lead of the game, 3-0.

Shulga said he really enjoyed his first game playing in the Stu in front of the fans.

"I loved the energy and it was more than I expected to be honest," Shulga said. "The Stu was packed out, but unfortunately we did not come up with the win."

“

I loved the energy and it was more than I expected to be honest. The Stu was packed out, but unfortunately we did not come up with the win.”

Max Shulga
VCU senior guard

The first five minutes of the game went back-and-forth between the Rams and the Cowboys trading baskets which ultimately led to a tied 6-6 game with 15 minutes left in the first half.

McNeese State went on a 7-0 streak in a minute to give the Cowboys a 13-6 lead.

McNeese State graduate guard Shahada Wells had a team-high 23 points for the Cowboys.

VCU head coach Ryan Odom said Wells is a great player and his speed is hard to deal with.

"[His] pace to the game is really good," Odom said. "He's a good player and he was able to get downhill on us quite a bit."

VCU scraped away at the Cowboy lead but McNeese would continue to hit shots and maintained a 28-15 going into the eight-minute media timeout.

McNeese continued to move the ball

around and scored at will to go up 38-20 with four minutes to go in the half.

VCU went on a 9-3 run to end the half and lowered the Cowboys lead to 41-29 going into the second half.

Odom said he liked that even though the team went down, they were able to still play and go on runs.

"We got down 20 and our guys were shell-shocked, but to their credit they came back and scored," Odom said.

The black and gold continued their momentum going into the second half and chipped away the lead to under 10 at 49-41 with 14 minutes left in the game.

McNeese ran the lead back up with some playmaking and three-pointers which gave the Cowboys a 59-46 lead with 11 minutes left.

The black and gold shot only 30.6% from the arc tonight, according to StatBroadcast.

VCU senior guard Zeb Jackson said he took shots within the style of play of the team, but they weren't dropping.

"I feel like I shot shots that I work on all the time and I feel like a couple of them definitely went in and out, unfortunately," Jackson said.

VCU and McNeese stopped the runs and trends style of play and went into a dogfight of scoring baskets back to back but the Cowboys 64-54 lead remained with 4 minutes left.

Jackson said the team never fell out of the game but McNeese kept making the little shots to keep the game away.

"It was never a point where we felt we were out of it," Jackson said.

The Rams tried to claw back into the match but were not able to do so and the Cowboys beat the Rams 76-65.

Odom said the team is now focused on getting better for the next matchup against Samford on Nov. 10.

"The approach is, obviously, we've got to get better and we've got to understand why," Odom said. "I've got to help them more than I did tonight, to make sure that they understand how good they can be and how good they are."

VCU Rams will play against the Samford University Bulldogs at the Stuart C. Siegel Center on Nov. 10 at 7 p.m.



VCU basketball celebrates a three pointer.
Photo by Kaitlyn Fulmore.

Scouting Report:

VCU women’s basketball will face East Carolina University at the Siegel Center on Tuesday, Nov. 14. The CT Sports staff chose their notable players for this upcoming matchup.

VCU WOMEN’S BASKETBALL

VS

EAST CAROLINA UNIVERSITY

VCU

BERSABEH KEMAW
Staff Writer

Sarah Te-Biasu -The 5-foot-5-inch guard is a senior at VCU and a key player for the Rams. She played in all 28 games her sophomore season and started in 26 of them, according to VCU Athletics. Te-Biasu was selected for the All-Atlantic 10 rookie team her freshman year and was selected for the All-Atlantic 10 third team her sophomore year, according to VCU Athletics. She finished her sophomore season with an average of 12.7 points, 3.2 rebounds and 2.7 assists per game, according to VCU Athletics. She led her team in three-point percentages in both her freshman and sophomore years at VCU, according to VCU Athletics.

BEN REKOSH
Contributing Writer

Mykel Parham - VCU graduate forward Mykel Parham started in 17 of the 21 games that she played for the Rams in 2022-23, averaging just over three points per game and making only 40% of her field goal attempts, according to VCU Athletics. Chosen as the student-athlete representative to accompany coach O’Boyle to A10 Media Day, Parham told the Couch Coach Live Show about the specific skill and work ethic that she’s seen from the team and the excitement around the season. Parham, who is in her fifth year in college and third at VCU, only played two games in 2021 due to suffering a season-ending injury, according to VCU Athletics. As the thirteenth seed, the Rams played the twelfth-seeded Dayton Flyers in the A-10 tournament and lost 61 to 67; Parham amassed 10 rebounds, two points, an assist, and three steals in 31 minutes, according to VCU Athletics.



Illustration by Killian Goodale-Porter.

ECU

FIONA BROWN-JOHN
Contributing Writer

Danae McNeal - This 6-foot graduate student has been playing for East Carolina University for three years as a guard and leads the team with an average of 31 minutes played per game, according to ECU Athletics. In her senior season, she played in and started all 33 games and averaged 17 points per game, according to ECU Athletics. Last season, McNeal had 21 blocks and 97 steals with a free throw percentage of over 80, according to ECU Athletics. She also had 100 rebounds and 49 assists to aid her team, according to ECU Athletics. McNeal has been recognized as the AAC’s “Preseason Player of the Year” with unanimous selection, according to ECU Athletics.

ERICA SIMPSON
Contributing Writer

Amiya Joyner -6-foot-2-inch sophomore forward Amiya Joyner appeared in 31 games with 23 starts during the 2022-23 season, according to ECU Athletics. Her freshman year Joyner obtained eight AAC Freshman of the Week honors, the most ever in conference play, according to ECU Athletics. In a previous game against Tulsa, Joyner had a total of 16 rebounds, the most by an ECU player since 2016, according to ECU Athletics. She finished her freshman year in the top 10 bracket for freshman points, blocks assists, and minutes, and top 10 in rebounds and blocks overall, according to ECU Athletics. Along with her teammate, Danae McNeal, Joyner was recently recognized as one of five Preseason All-Conference First Team players, according to ECU Athletics.

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Sports'

Pick of the Week:

The Bengals will beat the Ravens in their competitive AFC East matchup

MALACHI KEYS
Contributing Writer

The Cincinnati Bengals will defeat the Baltimore Ravens this week going head to head on Thursday night football. Both teams have been hot as of late, especially the Bengals whose offense has started to click within the last couple of weeks. The first few weeks of the season were considerably slow for the Bengals with quarterback Joe Burrow and his calf injury. The connection between Joe Burrow and wide receiver Ja'marr Chase has once again been ignited, and Chase already has 697 receiving yards this season, according to ESPN. Not to mention, Tee Higgins and Tyler Boyd have proven to be additional formidable weapons for the Bengals' offense. As previously mentioned, Baltimore has been hot as well, but I fully expect them to cool off during this primetime matchup. AFC North games are always close and competitive; the last two games played between Cincinnati and Baltimore ended in a one-score differential according to The Football Database. However, this game is going to come down to matchups on both sides of the ball for each team. Although the Ravens always have Lamar Jackson's playmaking ability, Joe Burrow has proven to be 'that guy' in crunchtime and has more reliable weapons that should help Cincinnati secure the win.

GAME RESULTS

NOVEMBER 2

VCU WOMEN'S FIELD HOCKEY-
AT UMASS
LOSS 3-2

NOVEMBER 3

VCU MEN'S SOCCER - AT
FORDHAM
WON 1-0

NOVEMBER 4

VCU WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL
AT GEORGE WASHINGTON
WON 3-2

NOVEMBER 5TH

VCU WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL
AT GEORGE WASHINGTON
WON 3-0

NOVEMBER 6TH

VCU MEN'S BASKETBALL AT.
MCNEESE STATE
LOSS 76-65

On this day
In 1972, Home Box Office, also known as HBO, was launched. HBO is the oldest paid TV channel in the United States



‘For those hungry to connect’: Podcast festival gives students, podcasters chance to learn more

GHAILAH NYEANCHI
Contributing Writer

Be kind. Stay open. Set clear boundaries and expectations. Have grace. Stay curious.

These were the five tips that Christabel-Nsiah Buadi, audio developer and strategist, outlined in her presentation about the importance of mentorship. Buadi’s workshops were one of many presented at the RESONATE Podcast Festival, hosted by the Institute of Contemporary Art and Virginia Public Media on Nov. 3 and 4.

The event was a chance for both old and new podcasters to share their work and connect, according to their website. RESONATE featured a keynote speaker, presentations from other podcasters, special performances and a pitch party.

Most journalism schools don’t have a robust podcasting curriculum, said Chioke I’Anson, founder and director of Virginia Public Media & Institute of Contemporary Art Community Media Center. Many students, hungry for ways to connect, graduate without knowing how to break into the industry, he said.

RESONATE gives students the opportunity to meet industry professionals and refine their skills before leaving campus, according to I’Anson

“It’s the educational resource they need to supplement their learning,” I’Anson said. “But it only works if they know about it, which is why advertising for RESONATE is so important.”

RESONATE also premiered “Audio Trips,” an art exhibition featuring work from sound artists and final projects from students of Level Up Academy, a summer program focused on teaching students how to produce podcasts.

“

You can hear a person’s voice telling you a story. The human voice carries emotion and other subtleties that I just couldn’t capture in print.”

Maya Kroth
Pitch Party! finalist
for RESONATE

Lamp-like structures with bell-shaped glass domes were scattered across the museum. Instead of bulbs, the domes housed speakers that told stories from different creators.

“If we do it right, RESONATE

Podcast Festival will be the place where producers meet their peers, newcomers meet their heroes, and everyone gets better together,” I’Anson said.

Three producers pitched their podcast show to a panel of judges in a room full of attendees on the event’s second day, according to the website. The winner of The Pitch Party!, Ivy Le, received \$10,000 to produce their podcast pilot.

“I started out writing for a newspaper before I got interested in audio,” said Maya Kroth, a Pitch Party! finalist for RESONATE.

Kroth loves the immediacy and intimacy of the medium, she said.

“You can hear a person’s voice telling you a story,” Kroth said. “The human voice carries emotion and other subtleties that I just couldn’t capture in print.”

Podcasts are an important medium because they deliver to an audience hungry for information and entertainment, Kroth said. It’s one of the mediums that people are gravitating toward in growing numbers.

Laughter rippled through the air as Ivy Le, one of the RESONATE finalists, delivered her pitch to the panel of judges. After deliberation behind closed doors, Le was announced as the winner.

It feels awesome and validating winning the award, Le said. There were

not a lot of stand up comics at the festival, according to Le.

Le said she cares about important, dense subjects.

“I went through a phase, like every artist does, where I was making art to prove that I was a human being,” Le said. “Now, I’m over that. I make art because I am a human being and that’s just what humans do.”

Travis Fellows, an attendee at RESONATE, started making podcasts with his friend during the pandemic.

“We would get together and talk for hours and we thought we were pretty interesting,” Fellows said. “So we said ‘I wonder if other people think the same thing?’”

Fellows hopes to use his experience at RESONATE to find motivation to figure out where he is going with podcasting in the future, Fellows said.

Sound check before the show at RESONATE.
Photos by Andrew Hill.





Annual exhibition changes locations each year, presents new aspect of Richmond’s history

EMILY MCCAULEY
Contributing Writer

Attendees observing glowing artwork and meeting artists filled the streets and alleys on Broad Street for InLight 2023. Attendees trailed in and out of the outdoor exhibitions and various art galleries.

InLight 2023 was located along the 200 to 400 blocks of West Broad Street in Richmond’s downtown art district on Nov. 3 and 4 and featured various art forms that utilized light-based platforms, according to the InLight website.

This year’s theme was “Reflection and Refraction” and strived to embrace Broad Street’s history in Jackson Ward and Monroe Ward, according to Emily Smith, the director of the 1708 Gallery.

“I hope that people use the experiences and the artworks presented to think a little bit more about Broad Street as the artery that it is and how important of a street it is in terms of connecting different parts of the community,” Smith said.

1708 Gallery first started InLight as an annual light-based art exhibition in 2008, but it has evolved over the years into an annual event that moves locations, according to Smith.

Every year the event location changes around Richmond to incorporate different aspects of the city’s history into the artwork, according to Smith.

“What we have learned through having InLight at different sights is that every year is different — every year has a different vibe and a different flavor,” Smith said.

The event is a celebration of lights as well as a great opportunity for artists, according to InLight artist Mauricio Vargas.

“

What we have learned through having InLight at different sights is that every year is different — every year has a different vibe and a different flavor.”

Emily Smith
director of the 1708 Gallery

The exhibition changes locations annually so artists can pull inspiration from the immediate geography in order to portray a better, holistic view of Richmond as a whole, Vargas said.

Creating his piece for InLight helped Vargas learn more about the history of Jackson Ward and challenged him in a healthy way, he said.

“That is part of the fun — learning

new things as an artist and always being curious and just persisting,” Vargas said.

InLight 2023 artist Kelley-Ann Lindo first attended the event in 2019 and has been going ever since, she said. This is her first year featured as an artist.

Lindo felt thrilled to be a part of InLight and enjoyed seeing the response to the exhibition, she said.

Lindo presented a multimedia sculpture at InLight that reflected grief and mourning in the Black community as well as a celebration of life, she said.

“I was thinking about the history of Broad Street and thinking about the history of slavery and Virginia being one of the biggest slave ports,” Lindo said.

Lindo’s piece focuses on community and gathering, she said.

“The work being present within that space adds to the entire experience and this idea about reflecting on Black presence and the history within the space,” Lindo said.

InLight always has sculptures and interactive artwork, according to Morgan Carey, a fifth-year InLight attendee.

“It’s always my favorite art event to go to in Richmond,” Carey said.

Events like InLight bring attention to Richmond’s Arts District and show that it has a lot of creativity to offer, whether through galleries, vendors or live performances, Carey said.

“I feel like this shows how public space can be activated and how art can be

brought into different parts of the community, whether it be a park or a neighborhood, so it is really nice to see a space be used in a different way than you would normally see it,” Carey said.

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Morgan Carey
fifth-year InLight attendee

Carey felt impressed with how the various mediums exhibited at the event incorporated light, she said.

“I’m like a moth to a flame,” Carey said.



Attendees viewing InLight exhibition.
Photos by Julia Garrett.

VCU organization allows students to pioneer theater production

LAUREN HALL

Contributing writer

EMILY MCCAULEY

Contributing writer

The Shafer Alliance Laboratory Theater, or SALT, allows students to put on full productions and gain experience they can utilize in the professional world, according to Charlotte Grace Smith, the director of SALT's upcoming production, "The Female of the Species."

SALT presents "The Female of the Species" on Nov. 10 and 11 at 7 p.m. and Nov. 12 at 2 p.m. at the Shafer Street Playhouse, according to Smith. The play "The Female of the Species" is based on a true story turned into a comedy and is an examination of the different waves of feminism. The performances are free to attend.

Smith will host a Q&A talk-back after the Nov. 12 matinee performance of "The Female of the Species" to hopefully bridge the gap between different generations and their ideas of feminism, she said.

"Especially as we're in our fourth wave of feminism, which is really taking into consideration intersectionality and the rise of the 'Me Too' movement and us all coming together as a community to speak about really important issues," Smith said.

SALT is a Student Government Association-recognized theater organization created by VCU students, according to the VCU SALT website.

"It's an opportunity for us to really experience or pioneer our own shows rather than having the professors do it for us who have had years of experience," Smith said.

Both undergraduate and graduate students can participate in SALT, according to Smith.

"What is beautiful about that is I can look at the audition sheet and I won't be able to recognize any names because there's so many people auditioning outside of the theater department," Smith said.

SALT is really important because it allows students to have opportunities that they normally would not have, said Jessica Pain, a VCU senior cast as Tess Thornton in "The Female of the Species."

The cast is full of talented and hardworking people, and the actors have free reign, which allows for personal character development, according to Pain.

One of the main goals of "The Female of the Species" is to have people discuss feminism and what feminism means to them, according

to Pain.

"Feminism is being able to choose and not being forced to do something," Pain said. "I hope that the show can help people realize what feminism can truly mean to them but also how inclusive it is."

The story has six different characters who each have very different ideas of what feminism is, according to Pain.

"We provide the opportunity for people to create passion projects and do shows that they normally wouldn't have the opportunity to do," according to Molly Marsh, president of VCU SALT.

The organization used to put on three shows a semester but now has the ability to put on five, according to Marsh.

"I love all the elements of theater whether it's behind the table or on stage," Marsh said. "Being SALT president was something I came across as a hub for all the things where I can dip a toe in all the different pools that make up theater."

"The Female of the Species" covers many difficult subjects and what it means to be a woman, according to Marsh.

"It hits all the keys of a good show," Marsh said.

SALT is a great place for students to create a production without pressure, according to Lex Cobbinah, a sophomore at VCU and an actor in two previous SALT productions.

"This organization gives

everyone an opportunity, even students who are outside of theater who just want the opportunity to get back into it," Cobbinah said. "That's also why I love it. It's students doing these things. Everything is student-led."

The rehearsal process is usually only a few weeks long, but the cast and crew usually form close family-like relationships, which are helpful to running a smooth production, according to Cobbinah.

"It's almost instant, even after two days or even after one day, you'll have that kind of comradery," Cobbinah said. "Being able to work with so many talented individuals and also just getting to facilitate something that makes you feel good and makes you better as an actor."

One of the most beautiful things about SALT is the freedom for creative expression it provides, Cobbinah said.

"It's nice to feel like you're not pushing against any narrative," Cobbinah said. "You're just working together with a common goal in mind."



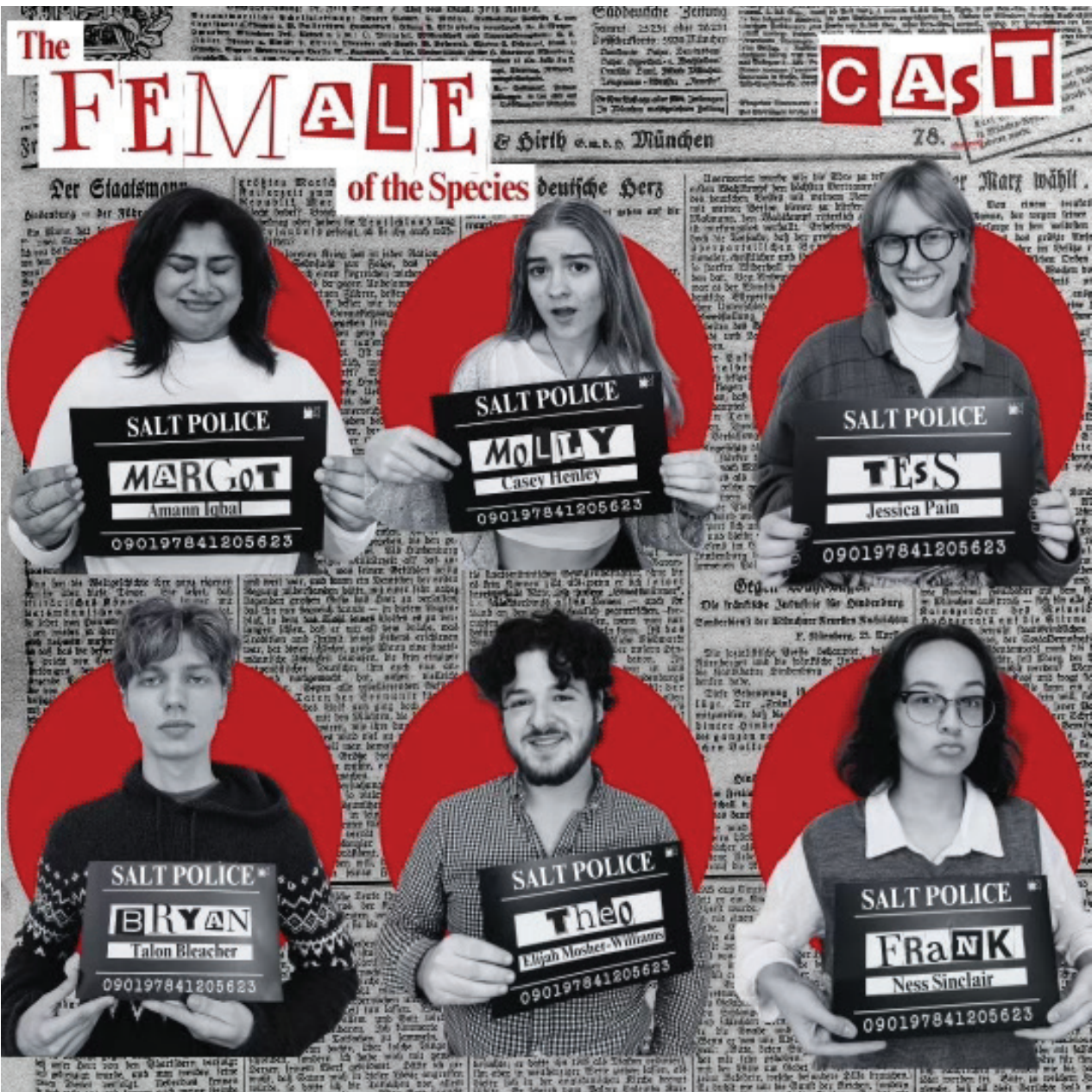
The cast of 'The Female of the Species.'
Photo by Maggie Root.

“It’s an opportunity for us to really experience or pioneer our own shows rather than having the professors do it for us who have had years of experience.”

Charlotte Grace Smith
director of SALT’s upcoming production, ‘The Female of the Species’

“We provide the opportunity for people to create passion projects and do shows that they normally wouldn’t have the opportunity to do.”

Molly Marsh
president of VCU SALT



The cast of ‘The Female of the Species.’
Photo courtesy of VCU SALT.

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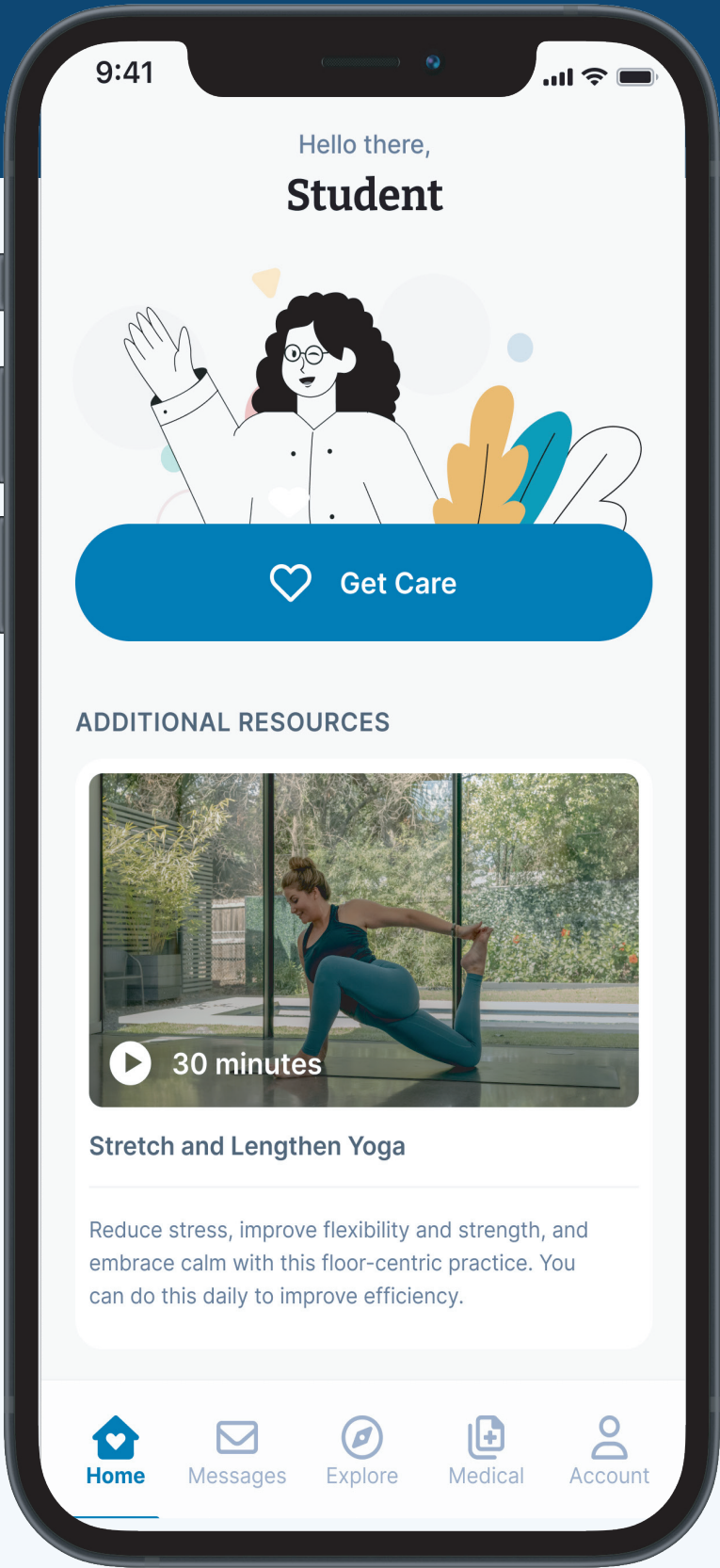
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Quote of the week

"I don't think we have any alternative other than remaining optimistic. Optimism is an absolute necessity, even if it's only optimism of the will, as Gramsci said, and pessimism of the intellect."

— ANGELA Y. DAVIS, AUTHOR OF 'FREEDOM IS A CONSTANT STRUGGLE'



Illustration by Carmina Videna.

WEAPONIZING SELF-CARE IS YET ANOTHER TOOL OF AMERICAN INDIVIDUALISM

KOFI MFRAMA

Opinions Editor

Popular news TikTok account @underthedesknews posted a video on Oct. 12 urging users to “stay off social media for the weekend” after conflict in the Middle East had spurred the week prior.

This post represents an increasingly popular sentiment where people, specifically those in the Western hemisphere, use the preservation of their own peace of mind as a reason to be uninformed on political and human rights issues. Often doing so in the name of “self-care.”

However, using mental health and self-care as an excuse to ignore global humanitarian crises is just another sinister tool of American individualism.

Early European philosophers described American individualism as an inclination towards isolation and an aversion to community — sapping the fruitfulness of public, collaborative life, according to Britannica.

Our forefathers propagated this ideology largely in an attempt to escape the hierarchical social systems of Great Britain. They believed that a supposed “free market” with little to no government or overhead intervention would create a societal fluidity that justly rewards individual prosperity: The hardworking will prevail and the lazy will not.

This is simply untrue.

As capitalism abounds, we’ve been sent into social upheaval and the promises made by those before us — that if we as individuals work hard and put our well-being by the wayside for greener pastures, we would reap the benefits and join the upper echelons of society — have yet to come into fruition.

American individualism forces us to forgo community in our futile attempts at social and economic mobility. When self-preservation exists at the center of all we do, we turn a blind eye to those around us, especially those suffering.

Self-care, as we know it, began as an individual protest against the social strictures that bind us by labor. It has now become a means to justify selfishness and individualism.

So much of the discourse surrounding self-care, particularly in this political climate, makes the preservation of self a seemingly viable excuse for ignorance. Those who weaponize self-care often do so by employing the language of mental health and wellness culture.

They refuse to educate themselves on important issues because they claim watching the news, reading articles or even interacting with posts on social media takes too much of a toll on their person. They position themselves as victims of exposure to hardship and feign oppression whenever they interact with those who truly are oppressed.

The ability to look away when atrocities occur is a privilege in and of itself.

The fact that many in the West only see these atrocities through a phone screen further exemplifies our privilege.

Those in the Middle East who have lost family members and are awakened every night by the destruction of their homeland cannot look away — why should we?

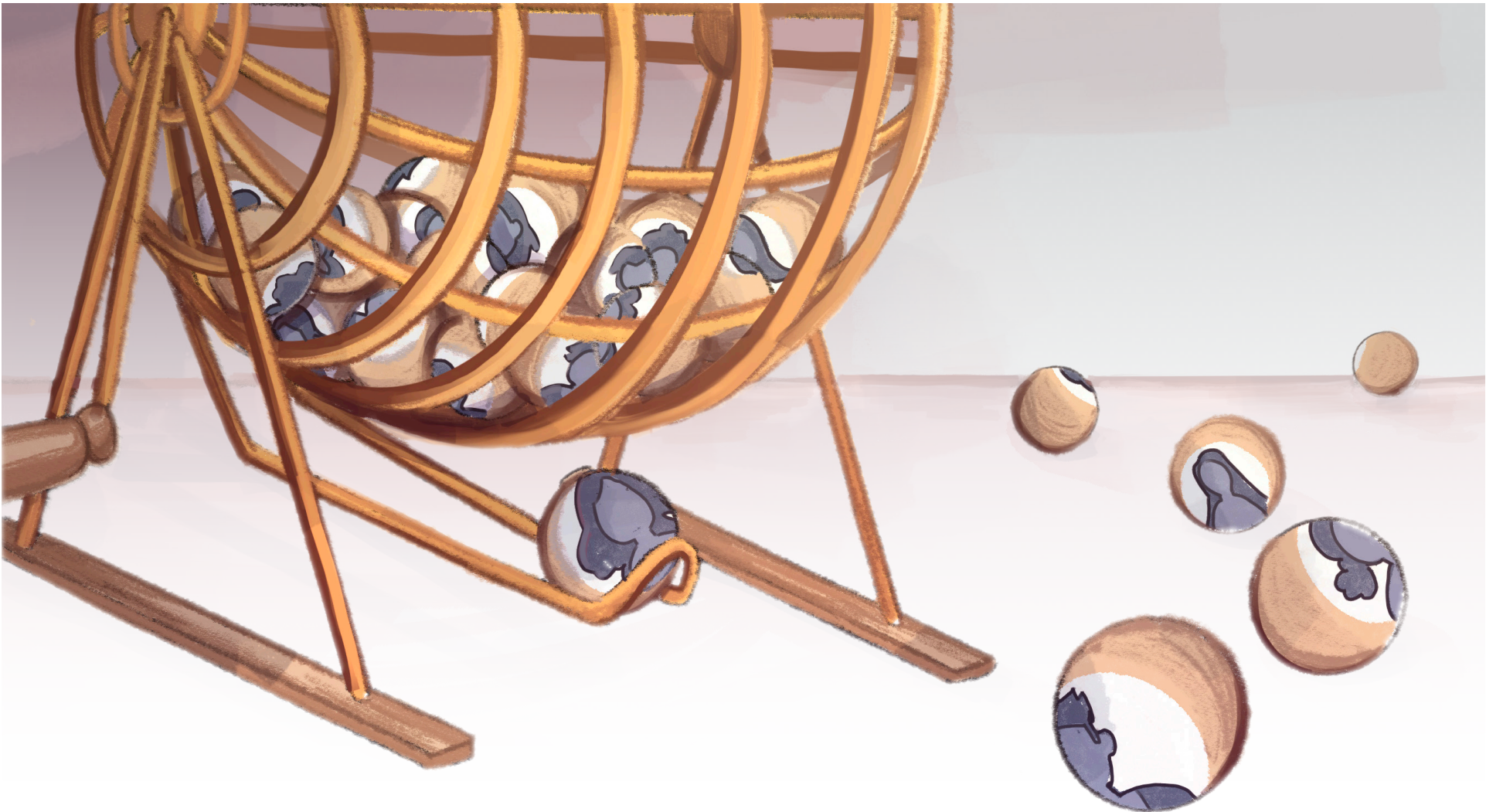
Feelings of hopelessness, anxiety and rage are normal when we’re exposed to injustice. Instead of turning away and letting the despair overtake you, use that righteous anger to support those in need.

The weaponization of self-care doesn’t just stop at politics, it impacts interpersonal relationships too.

We use it as an excuse to disengage from the give-and-take nature integral to building relationships. We’re willing to take but unwilling to give. This prevents us from building any sort of meaningful connection.

Not every relationship revolves around you and your individual needs. The culture of weaponized self-care has made us forget that sacrifice is an integral part of building a community. Empathy has seemingly become a scarcity.

America’s individualist nature is the cause, but we can be the solution. We’re most powerful, and our voices are most heard, when we stand together.



Young Americans are forced to sign their souls away to the military draft

NATI FELICIANO-SOTO
Contributing Writer

The American dream is simple. You are born into the most prosperous country in the world that promises its citizens a democracy. You receive 12 years of education and have the opportunity to pursue higher education to secure a career. As a reward, you are promised a big house with a picket fence.

Being an American has always been a privilege we have been taught to acknowledge. As Americans, we have the ultimate freedom known to mankind.

Yet, when tensions rise between the United States and other countries, the government doesn't leave its citizens a choice as to their involvement.

Instead, the military draft was created. A draft is a national government process where U.S. citizens are randomly selected via a lottery system to complete military services in times of crisis, assigned to citizens ages 18-25, according to military.com,

After these citizens are drafted, U.S. forces will then conduct mental, physical and moral fitness exams to determine whether they shall be deferred or exempted by the draft process, according to the Selective Service System.

In a country that is supposed to be liberated, why is this allowed?

This atrocious law started in 1918, when the U.S. Supreme Court granted Congress the power to exercise a raise of supporting armies, considered in conjunction with the grants of the powers to declare war, according to Justia.

This means that the government can make laws necessary and proper for executing granted powers stated in the Constitution; including the power to compel military service, exercised by the Selective Draft Law.

This law was passed by the judicial branch despite the fact that it directly contradicts the principle notion within the First Amendment, which guarantees freedoms concerning religion, expression, assembly and the right to petition.

The Constitution is picked apart and utilized to fit the advantage of the national government.

If someone refuses to comply they can be charged with a felony of up to five years in prison and/or fined \$250,000, according to the Selective Service System.

In other words, if one refuses to participate in a draft in a representative democracy, they will be punished as a criminalized felon with several of their rights taken away.

This horrid act of "patriotism" we call the draft is now being expanded to women and LGBTQ people.

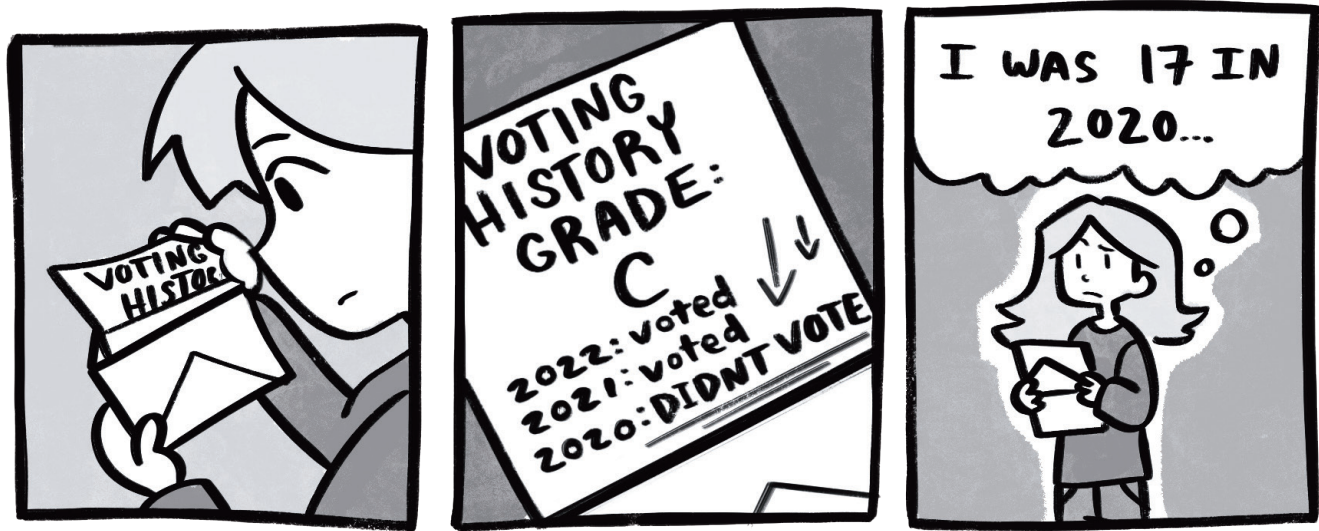
In the worst-case scenario, minorities who have not been considered in previous drafts and who were promised the choice of freedom in their decision to enlist or not will now be forced into the insanity of an American war in order to justify the government's need for a quantity fulfillment of having a powerful army.

In order to let this "free country" fight a war that often prophecies ideas like genocide and greed the United States has a history of taking this approach — directly violating our rights.

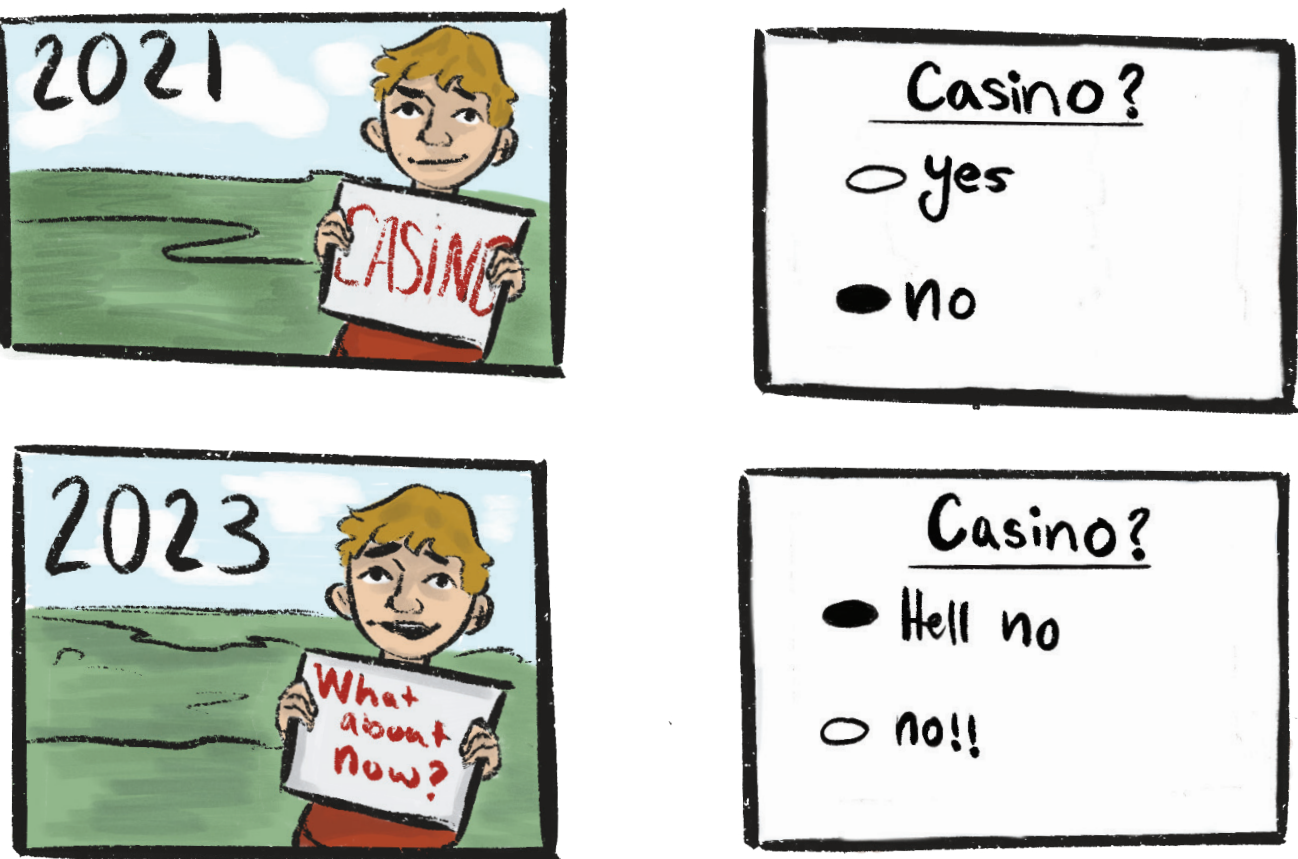
Illustration by Killian Goodale-Porter.

CT Comics

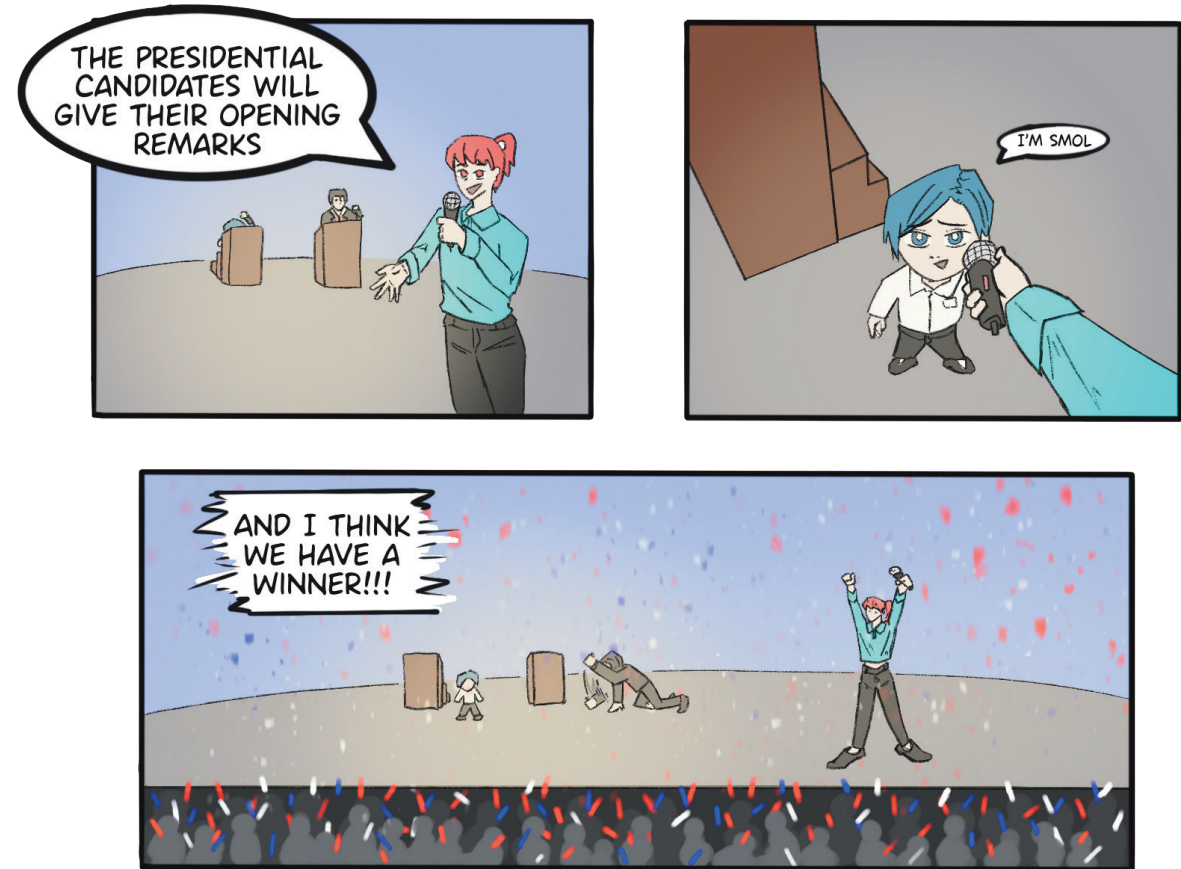
Voting History by Killian Goodale-Porter



Here We Go Again by Reese Cilley



Lesser of Two Evils by Anthony Duong



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CT

Puzzles

Los Angeles Times

Crossword Puzzle

Edited by Rich Norris and Joyce Nichols Lewis

- ACROSS

1

Like bad fried food

7

Recipe smidgen

11

Wrinkly faced dog

14

“60 Minutes” ainer

17

Pumpkin seed

18

Sentimental sort

20

Airport board

21

“__ do you do it!?”

22

Curmudgeonly professor?

24

Snake River st.

25

Period

26

Fashion designer

27

Asks for a meal to be delivered to the penthouse, say

29

Wish one hadn’t

30

Knock hard

33

Rose fruit

35

Sorceress jilted by Jason

36

Lift

38

Sign of sadness from Dumbo?

42

San Fernando Valley community

44

Tomato __

45

Otto in “A Man Called Otto,” for one

46

A-mews-ing memes?

48

Blue man group?

50

College domain

51

Once cost

53

Some accent marks

55

Car roof option

57

Wood stove buildup

59

In real trouble

60

Carve one’s initials, say

63

Verdi opera

66

Panache

68

__ beef

69

Org. with Lightning and Flames

70

Pilot’s scheduling concern?

73

Intel-gathering org.

74

Bride follower

76

Biological copy

77

In __ of

78

Tenant’s payment

79

Make clearer, hopefully

81

Employee’s incentive

83

Sample

85

Private assent

86

Extra 69-Across periods, briefly

87

“Yada yada yada” abbr.

90

“Cheers,” for one

94

Family member

96

“Invisible Cities” author Calvino

98

Nick of “Blackout”

99

Wyoming city

100

Sign of wedding-day jitters?

102

Where to find much 1990s music

104

Divided lunchbox

106

Kuwaiti leader

107

Soup with rice noodles

108

Cheers, for one

109

+

112

Direct jeers toward

115

Huge fuss

116

Come down with something

117

Consequence of a Midwest cold snap?

122

Open __ night

123

Bookkeeping pro

124

Like an ideal situation

125

Vinyl record feature

126

Biblical construction

127

Double curve

128

Heron’s home

129

Pinstripes wearer

DOWN

1

Report card no.

2

“Parks and __”

3

Green org. with a flower logo

4

Lends a hand

5

Escalator unit

6

Kawasaki rival

7

“__ McStuffins”

8

Natural hairstyle

9

Planetarium display

10

Thwart

11

Italian chum

12

Pakistani language

13

Golf rental with a sponsorship deal?

14

Method of tracking down Ben-Hur?

15

Fake

16

“I like that!”

18

British royal staff

19

Just got (by)

23

Job for a bouncer

28

Staggers

30

Gym iterations

31

Many a univ. donor

32

El Misti’s land

34

Hoop alternative

37

Just going through the motions

39

Western Australian port

40

Lift with effort

41

Ostrich kin

43

Applaud

47

Greets and seats

49

__ opera

51

“Law & Order” creator

52

The slightest bit

54

Tuned to

56

Jigsaw unit

58

Buyer’s proposal

59

Prodged

60

Way in

61

Good scores on par fours

62

Collectible earthenware?

64

“The French Dispatch” actor

65

Bring home from an animal shelter

67

Son of a son

70

Under a log or in a pile of wet leaves?

71

Dollar bills

72

Color shades

75

“You’re not going to like this”

78

Chopper part

80

Journey

82

Low-carb diet

84

Basketball Hall of Famer Yao

86

Big brutes

88

Grab

89

“Hop aboard!”

91

Hoofbeat sound

92

Brief “However”

93

Office dispatch

95

Awards for Charlie Jane Anders and N.K. Jemisin

96

Coca of “Your Show of Shows”

97

Bagel flavor

100

Add with a spoon

101

Not quite awake

102

President born in Hawaii

103

Apex antonym

105

“Careful where you open this link” shorthand

110

Kissers

111

“That’s __ to me”

113

Taj Mahal city

114

1982 Disney sci-fi film

118

Clearasil target

119

Jolly good

120

“Now __ seen everything!”

121

Word between surnames

MAKE MINE A DOUBLE by Pam Amick Klawitter

1	2	3	4	5	6			7	8	9	10		11	12	13		14	15	16	
17							18					19		20				21		
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122				123				124						125						
126				127					128					129						

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Sudoku

By The Mephram Group

DIFFICULTY LEVEL

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4

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

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

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