



# ASAP

ALBANY STUDENT PRESS

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TUESDAY, APRIL 25, 2017 ISSUE 9 ALBANYSTUDENTPRESS.NET

## SCIENCE LIBRARY STUDY SPOT COULD BE NO MORE

By TYLER A. MCNEIL

A Science Library study hub could be uprooted as early as summer.

Facilities Management has vetted the building's second floor -- home to study rooms, desks, tables, and periodicals -- to house potential space for Advisement Services and the Writing Center.

Although undecided, Facilities Management has considered opening up study space in the current Student Association office. University Libraries, in coordination with administration, plans to review other potential sites.

"While the second floor space may be converted to office space for other University staff, the Libraries' goal is to make sure that we do not have a decrease in student seating," said Rebecca Mugridge, dean of University Libraries in an email.

Plans also include relocating periodicals to the basement floor, a move intended to modernize library services. Over the last seven academic years, Science Library loans have dropped 38 percent.

"This is why housing them in compact shelving makes sense," said Mugridge. "They're still accessible to our students and faculty, but not taking up as much space."

For months, the shift took some push



Tyler A. McNeil / Albany Student Press

A view from the walkway connecting the Science Library and Campus Center.

back. This semester, some library faculty distributed an undated notice urging those who frequent the space to contact Mugridge.

They hoped that student input could help sway plans: "Although it appears that

the plans are moving forward, there may be some room to compromise to save some or all of the second floor for students to study and collaborate."

"It was a collective effort, but I'd

Please see **STUDY SPACE** page 2

### SEFCU ARENA

## Big Sean Tops ParkFest Bill

By LINDSEY RIBACK

Big Sean will be headlining ParkFest this spring, University at Albany's Student Association announced April 14.

Along with Big Sean, A Boogie Wit da Hoodie and Cheat Codes, will



BIG SEAN

be taking the stage on Sunday Apr. 30 at the Sefcu Arena. This year tickets were distributed online for students, as opposed to having them lineup outside the Campus Center like in the past.

Beginning Monday at noon, UAlbany students were able to begin reserving their tickets via ualbany.universitytickets.com. Ticket prices were \$10 for students and \$20 for guests.

Please see **BIG SEAN** page 2

### SUNY

## Free Tuition Scored In Budget Deal

By LINDSEY RIBACK

Tuition will become free for University at Albany students whose households meet a specific income beginning in Fall 2017, Gov. Andrew Cuomo announced Saturday.

Beginning with the next academic year, all CUNY and SUNY students whose families make less than \$100,000 will become eligible for free tuition. Ideas for the plan were first announced on Jan. 3 during Cuomo's first state of the state address at LaGuardia Community College in Queens. The plan was confirmed April 7 as part of the long dwelled upon state budget, which was supposed to be passed on March 31.

"Today, college is what high school was—it should always be an option even if you can't afford it," Cuomo said in a statement. "The Excelsior Scholarship will make college accessible to thousands of working and middle class students and shows the difference that government can make."

Currently, SUNY tuition is \$6,470, and many students must also bear additional costs such as student fees, and room and board. For University at Albany students, based on the 2016-2017 academic year, these additional costs can still amount to \$15,735. At UAlbany, an estimated 80 percent of undergraduate students receive financial aid.

The budget agreement has made New York the first in the nation to enact a free tuition plan, according to Cuomo.

SUNY Student Assembly President and UAlbany alum, Marc Cohen also welcomed the budget agreement.

"This will work to alleviate the enormous

Please see **TUITION** page 2

### CLASS GIFT

## Monument to Honor Alums Slain in 9/11 Attacks

By MAC BULLOCK

The University at Albany's Class of 2017 in conjunction with the UAlbany Fund is collecting donations for a permanent memorial on campus to honor the 19 alumni who lost their lives in the September 11th terrorist attacks.

More than 200 students and parents have donated roughly \$7,500 in support of this year's gift, according to Ed McGlone, who manages the UAlbany Fund's senior class gift program.

McGlone said that he expects

these figures to rise, as the semester comes to a close and commencement approaches.

"We're looking forward to supporting the 9/11 Memorial Project as it progresses, and continuing to search for more giving initiatives in the future that our students can get excited about," he said.

Student Association Senator Conner Dunleavy, who first suggested the memorial, is satisfied to see his work come to fruition.

"I have been lobbying for the creation of a permanent September

Please see **MEMORIAL** page 3



Tyler A. McNeil / Albany Student Press  
Senators Conner Dunleavy (right), Andrew Cutrone (center), and Brandon Holdridge.

### GREEK LIFE

## Campus Frat Raises Awareness for Sickle Cell Anemia

By JONATHAN PETERS

Brothers from the Phi Iota Alpha fraternity held a Sickle Cell Awareness Brunch on Friday in honor of a member who died in 2002.

The Campus Center Patron Room was filled with supporters of the University at Albany's Phi Iota Alpha chapter's efforts to revive a tradition that they hold dear to them. Roughly 50 students and alumni attended the organization's Sickle Cell Anemia Awareness Brunch, where from 3:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. students ate chicken parmesan and lasagna

while members of the organization gave presentations about the history, symptoms, and treatment of the genetically transferred disease.

According to the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, sickle cell disease (SCD) describes a group of red blood cell disorders inherited from parents to children. People with SCD have abnormal hemoglobin, called hemoglobin S or "sickle hemoglobin," in their red blood cells, which causes red blood cells to form an abnormal crescent moon shape rather than a normal

Please see **SICKLE** page 3



Jonathan Peters / Albany Student Press

Members of Phi Alpha Iota at a sickle cell awareness brunch.

SPOTLIGHT PROFILE

# Janitor Sweeps Barriers Far From Home

By ELISE COOMBS

Almost 5,000 miles and five years separate an Albanian cleaner for the Humanities building from his fiancé.

Uljan Berberi or Uli, as people call him, came alone to the United States in November 2012 for a better life.

But Uli is still waiting for that better life because his fiancé, Esjola, and parents are still in Albania.

"It's more better to come with her, but alone is very hard here," Uli said referring to Esjola.

In the meantime, Uli works the night shift sweeping our golden Lindt chocolate wrappers through the halls of the Humanities building and greeting late-staying students and faculty as they pass by.

Taking a break from his shift, Uli reminisced about his time with Esjola in Albania as he looked at photos of them on his camera roll.

"I did everything with her, but now I am alone like five years," Uli said.

For Uli, this isn't the same as being with Esjola in person. His current means of keeping in touch with her are through Skype, messaging, and Facebook.

They first met at the school Gjergj Pekmezi in Uli's home city, Pogradec. When Uli first tried to pursue Esjola, she turned him down. Nonetheless, they went out for coffee and Esjola told Uli she would have to talk to him more.

From there, "I talked with her more, and more, and more, and she say yes," he said.

They became engaged, and their four-year engagement will turn into a marriage this summer.

In June, Uli will travel back to Albania to marry Esjola, but in July he will return to Albany alone.

This is because Esjola does not yet have a green card, or permanent resident card that would enable her to live lawfully in the US.

Uli is in the process of obtaining the proper paperwork for Esjola, but he noted that becoming a citizen would make the process easier.

Since this November will mark five years that Uli has been in the U.S., he will be able to apply and test for citizenship. As a potential citizen or in his current status as a permanent resident, Uli is dealing with an immigration form—Form I-130—that would establish his marital relation to Esjola. It would allow her to obtain a green card, but she would have to wait for an available visa number before receiving it.

In addition to bringing Esjola to Albany, Uli hopes to bring his parents over.

"I going to take care of my family for coming here," Uli said.

Back in Albania, his parents work making wedding cakes. However, Uli came to Albany because there are "no jobs in Pogradec. It's like for retired people."

Uli ties Pogradec to Albany by comparing the beauty of Pogradec's Lake Ohrid to the nearby Lake George.

Another thing Uli finds beautiful is the sunset. Looking out a third-floor Humanities window, Uli glimpsed the sunset and said, "I love it. It's beautiful."

Turning back to his work, Uli said that his day consists of "work home, work home, home work."

As Uli also works to become a citizen and bring his family to Albany, it comes down to passing the naturalization test.

The test consists of an English test and a civics test, which Uli has been studying for with an app on his phone. Pulling up the app, Uli tested himself on civics questions such as how long people in the House of Representatives serve. With each question, the screen flashed green—he got every question right.

Uli said, "Every day I try, try, try. For November I try, try, try."

However, a person spoke the questions in the app. For his November test, Uli said if "somebody not, it's very hard for me."

In other words, Uli hasn't learned how to read and write English, though he works within the Humanities building.



Elise Coombs / Albany Student Press  
Uli Berberi mopping up the third floor of the Humanities Building.

In the almost five years Uli has been here, he learned to speak English solely by listening to other people like students and faculty.

A challenge for Uli will be the reading and writing portion of the naturalization test. They require that people read and write one of three sentences correctly.

If Uli can't read and write by then, he could fail the test and be denied citizenship.

The University at Albany offers an Intensive English Language Program for non-native speakers, but the course costs \$6,500 and it is not free for UAlbany's maintenance employees like Uli.

In terms of his residency in the U.S., Uli said, "For everything better coming here, I love it here," but that his family is still waiting for him to become a citizen and bring them here.

## SICKLE CELL

Continued from Page 1

abnormal crescent moon shape rather than a normal circular shape.

The highlight of the afternoon was their guest speaker, Hamid Beltre, a 2003 graduate of the university and member of the fraternity from Washington Heights in New York City whose brother Luis Beltre died from complications of the disease in 2002.

"It was a very troubling time for me when that happened," said Beltre about receiving the phone call when his brother had passed. "He was my role model. Everything I did I modeled myself after him. So much so I even pledged the frat."

Beltre pledged in the fraternity on April 21, 2001 and celebrated his 16th anniversary with the fraternity being a guest speaker in honor of his brother.

After Luis' death, the brothers of Phi Iota Alpha at both Union College and UAl-

bany banded together to make Sickle Cell Anemia their philanthropy. This included holding an annual banquet where they collected funds to donate towards research of the disease and treatment for patients.

Many of the brothers are proud to see where the new members stand in their attempt to bring back a tradition with significant meaning to the organization.

"My ultimate goal was to leave this campus with individuals whom I can trust will lead the chapter and will make sure to uphold the ideas that we want to uphold; one of many of them being to make sure to continue on our Sickle Cell awareness tradition," Abreu said.

Beltre is hopeful that the brunch did a good job at spreading awareness of sickle cell and will allow more people to help others. He also seeks to empower those living with the disease to never give up.

"Don't let it get in the way of anything you can do," Beltre said. "Look at it as secondary and just keep pushing forward... Don't look at this as a disability or a sickness, but look at it as something that makes you stronger."



Jonathan Peters / Albany Student Press  
Students, mostly from Phi Iota Alpha, gather in the Patroon Room for a Sickle Cell awareness brunch.

DIPPIKILL

# 'No Immediate Plans' for Potential \$73k Purchase

By TYLER A. MCNEIL

What would happen to roughly 140 acres of land if added to Camp Dippikill?

New trails and lodges could cover some of the property in the future. But as of yet, there are "no immediate plans," Casey Crandall, Dippikill Board chair said.

Crandall expects staff to take a "break" from development as the five-year construction of Julie's Lodge edges closer to completion. Like the Lodge, he said the new land would take years to develop.

As of now, the purchase remains up in the air as price

negotiations continue between board of finance officials and sellers. Crandall expects a decision before semester's end.

Forty thousand dollars were fit into the SA internal budget for a potential purchase. Should the purchase go through, the BOF expects to pay a final installment of \$33,000 next year.

The BOF decision to include property funds in the Dippikill development line met little resistance on the SA senate floor. Critics argued that the money should go to student groups or lowering the price of cabin rentals instead.

"There's this small little land piece that they can build on -- that's fantastic," said Dillon

Asmus, senator, who voted to cut out \$40,000 from Dippikill funding. "They don't have any plans or ideas on how to build on it."

Four acres are considered adequate for cabin development. Remaining space has been long sought to bridge the divide between Lyon's Den Lodge and Dippikill Rd.. Lacking roadway accessibility, said Dale Henderson, director of Dippikill Outreach and Sustainability, has been a factor in the site's low occupancy rate.

Beyond occupancy concerns, Dippikill officials maintain that the purchase would potential buyers from threatening its sustainability mission.

With sellers unlikely to extend an offer, the BOF jumped to snag the land, following advice from the Dippikill board.

"In the midst of these negotiations we discovered quite quickly that it was either now or never," said Michael Spellane, BOF chair. "The sellers -- they wanted the property gone."

Talks over buying the land has been up in the air over the last three years. Before, discussion between the land's previous owners, Sophia and Craig Lyons and SA had been ongoing for over a decade.

## MEMORIAL

Continued from Page 1

11th memorial on our campus since Fall 2014," Dunleavy said. "This year I again picked up efforts to create the memorial, and reached out to the UAlbany Fund to work on the creation of the senior gift idea."

Dunleavy was first inspired to build the monument upon reading a list of the 19 UAlbany alumni killed on 9/11, and realizing there was nothing on campus to commemorate their loss.

"I hope that we can reach out to their families and bring them into this process - to remind every Great Dane that they will never be forgotten," Dunleavy said.

The memorial was one of three class gift options presented by the Student Philanthropy Council to graduating seniors. The other options included donating the funds raised to the on-campus Cancer Research Center, or to the Living Learning Communities program in residence

SEXUAL ASSAULT

# Bystander Program Yet To Meet Training Goals

By KASSONDRA GONZALEZ

The University at Albany's Empowered Bystander Training Program has yet to reach the intended goal of training a quarter of the student population by the end of the academic year, according to a university official.

Carol Stenger, director of the university's Advocacy Center for Sexual Violence, stated that as of the end of the fall semester, 61 separate training programs were offered and the turnout was close to 2,500 people in total, but as of now they have not yet met their goal to train one-fourth of UAlbany students in bystander intervention.

"I know we will likely not meet the goal since it is more difficult to get people to attend in the spring semester, so we're having some issues with that," she said. "If we don't meet the goal, we will look at ways to meet it for next year."

Title IX Coordinator Chantelle Cleary said they are, "very close," to the goal.

The Empowered Bystander Training program, run by Stenger and Cleary through the university's Sexual Violence Prevention Project, is a series of 90-minute training sessions where facilitators teach students how to recognize sexual violence and safely intervene in sexually violent situations.

Despite not meeting their first year goal, Stenger said the program will continue to run on a regular basis due to the difference it makes in terms of reducing the number of sexual violence cases.

"One of the only means or methods that has been proven or shown to make changes in a campus culture, or rape culture if you will, has been training bystanders," she said.

Cleary said she has also seen a difference

since the start of the program.

"We've noticed an increase in students engaging as positive bystanders," she said. "Part of my job is to track all known instances of sexual violence on the campus. As I receive these reports, I'm noticing that our students are intervening more frequently than I have noticed in the past couple of years."

According to the UAlbany website, the training sessions are sponsored by the university's Just Ask Campaign, a campaign, "designed to raise awareness about sexual violence... as well as facilitate a campus-wide conversation about this critical issue affecting college campuses nationwide."

The training is voluntary with the exception of all student athletes, fraternity and sorority members, and other student leaders who are required to be trained under the Enough is Enough Law, a legislation signed into law in July 2015 to combat sexual assault on SUNY campuses.

Changes made to the training program for Spring 2017 concerning the training exercises and time management were small and not significant, according to Stenger.

However, the program allows attendees to provide feedback for improvement and the fall semester evaluations that were sent out received a good response rate, she said.

"We're about to do that for the spring semester for attendees, so we're getting good feedback," she said. "Once we get that feedback, we will sit down and ask what we think is going well, what the attendees think is going well, what the criticisms are, how can we make it better."

The program will be offered four more times this semester between April 13 and May 5.

## STUDY SPACE

Continued from Page 1

really rather not talk about it because I think it really doesn't serve any purpose at this point. Because this thing is going to happen no matter what."

Jose Reyes, a communications junior, learned about potential changes after a friend shared the notice with him a month back. Reyes claims to use the study space five days a week.

"I feel like it's quieter here," said Reyes, describing differences between Science Library and University Library collaborative spaces.

Concerned about the change, some pledges for Theta Tau, a professional engineering fraternity, emailed University Libraries. Pledges regularly use the Science Library to fulfill mandated library hours.

"It's not like we can do physics homework in the main library and actually concentrate," said Sarah Adams, a sophomore Theta Tau pledge. "I'm so mad about this issue. I hate talking about it."

Facilities Management originally con-

sidered repurposing the third-floor of the University Library to make space.

According to John Giarrusso, associate vice president of finance & administration, University Library stacks are less mobile, one key reason for swaying towards the second floor of the Science Library for space. Another consideration: Renovation of the second floor of the Science Library would also include fewer logistical constraints weighing down other pending projects.

Meanwhile, Advisement Services has spotted the space to meet rising operational demands. Either way, the office is expected to move out with Lecture Center renovation in the distance.

The Writing Center has sought a second location in the Science Library to serve non-traditional students during the current office's after hours.

"I think the more time that there is available, the more useful the resources become because it meets more of the total student population of people who can access us during their own schedules," said Steve Madore, assistant director of the Writing Center.



Tyler A. McNeil / Albany Student Press

Students use group study space on the second floor of the Science Library late last week.

## BIG SEAN

Continued from Page 1

Performers for this year were selected based off of data from a MyInvolvement survey that students were encouraged to fill out. The survey was created with the University's Department of Student Learning & Assessment, according to Joey Fambrini, the director of Programming for SA.

The decision to have students vote on a genre rather than last year's method of giving students the option to choose between performers, was that this led to many students predicting who the headliner would be before the lineup was announced.

"This is a problem because it kills

the anticipation of the lineup reveal and because deals can fall through with artists that we are negotiating with if prior to us fully executing a contract, it becomes public knowledge that we are in the process of booking them," Fambrini said.

For the future, SA plans to release a more extensive survey allowing them to select artists that can best accommodate the interests of the student body, while still being able to guarantee the most anticipation as possible for students.

This year's budget for ParkFest was \$280,000, and in the future SA hopes they will be able to bring back FallFest.

"We are always trying to provide as many events as possible for students and we're currently in the process of exploring all options that next year's budget allows," Fambrini said.

## TUITION

Continued from Page 1

burden of college tuition on hundreds of thousands of middle class families in our state and we're thrilled for that," Cohen said in a statement. "... This year was nothing short of a resounding and historic victory for students in the State University of New York."

This is just the first phase of Cuomo's Excelsior Scholarship. When he introduced the plan in January, the second stage included an expansion of the program in the fall of 2018 to include families who make \$110,000 annually, before reaching \$125,000 at the beginning of the fall 2019 semester.

"There is no child who will go to sleep tonight and say, I have great dreams, but I don't believe I'll be able to get a college education because parents can't afford it," Cuomo said. "With this program, every child will have the opportunity that education provides."

The Excelsior Scholarship has been made

possible through the approval of \$7.5 billion in the state budget for higher education, a \$448 million, 6.3 percent, increase over last year, according to Cuomo's office.

Besides for the victory of free tuition, Cohen promised students that SUNY SA will continue to develop "a comprehensive platform and a powerful grassroots campaign to make sure that public higher education is accessible and affordable to anyone who wishes to learn regardless of their race, sexual orientation, or their socio-economic status."

The main caveat to the plan, however, is that students must continue to live and work in New York for up to four years after they graduate, otherwise they may be required to pay back the cost of tuition.

Additionally, the free tuition plan only applies to New York residents who are enrolled in at least 12 credits per term and who complete at least 30 credits an academic year. In order for students to qualify as state residents, they must have resided in New York for at least 12 continuous months prior to when they apply for free tuition.

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## KICK SOME ASP

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## CRIME BLOTTER

### DRIVING WHILE INTOXICATED

4/14/2017  
Liberty Lane  
Report of a male subject driving while intoxicated. An arrest was made.

### DRUG COMPLAINT

4/14/2017  
Alumni Quad- Alden Hall  
Report of odor of marijuana. Nothing found.

### DRIVING WHILE INTOXICATED

4/15/2017  
Western Avenue  
Report of a male subject

driving while intoxicated and with a suspended registration. An arrest was made and vehicle was towed.

### UNLAWFUL POSSESSION OF MARIJUANA

4/16/2017  
Freedom Quad-Northrup Hall  
Report of two male students and one female student in possession of marijuana, marijuana paraphernalia and a stolen ID. Referrals were made for all.

### DRUG COMPLAINT

4/16/2017  
Empire Commons- A Cluster  
Report of people smoking marijuana in public. Nothing found.

### CRIMINAL NUISANCE

4/17/2017  
State Quad- Anthony Hall  
Welfare check on a male student. Student found safe however being referred for odor of marijuana in room.

### RAPE

4/17/2017

Dutch Quad- Van Rensselaer Hall  
Report of a female student being assaulted.

### CRIMINAL POSSESSION OF MARIJUANA

4/17/2017  
State Quad- Whitman Hall  
Report of two female students and a male student in possession of marijuana, marijuana paraphernalia and a forged ID. Referrals were made for all and one arrest was made.

### CRIMINAL NUISANCE

4/18/2017  
Empire Commons D Cluster  
Report of feces in hallway of a dorm.

### FIRE ALARM

4/18/2017  
Alumni Quad- Waterbury Hall  
Caused by burnt popcorn.

### PETIT LARCENY

4/19/2017  
State Quad- Melville Hall  
Report of wireless access points stolen.

### DRUG COMPLAINT

4/19/2017  
Dutch Quad- Bleeker Hall  
Report of odor of marijuana.

### GRAND LARCENY

4/19/2017  
Colonial Quad Cafeteria  
Report of a stolen SUNY Card.

### UNLAWFUL POSSESSION OF MARIJUANA

4/20/2017  
Colonial Quad Grounds  
Report of a female student in possession

of marijuana, marijuana paraphernalia and alcohol. A referral was made.

### STALKING

4/20/2017  
UPD  
Report of a male student being stalked.

### CRISIS INTERVENTION

4/20/2017  
Downtown Campus Hawley Library  
Report of a male subject having ingested a bottle of medication.

**SPEAKER SERIES**

# From Book to Life: Justice Sotomayor Brings Life Experiences to Students, Engages Audience

By **JHOANNA HARO**

Imagine being diagnosed with Type 1 Diabetes, but worse, being told you'll die young because of it? In the 1960's, this was the case for 7 year-old Sonia Sotomayor.

It was my Los Latinos en Estados Unidos (Latinos in the United States) class, where Professor Carmen Serrano pulled out a box full of new books; introducing us to the memoir of U.S. Supreme Court Justice, Sonia Sotomayor, "My Beloved World." Another book I thought, but at least it was free.

After reading the book, I understand who Sotomayor is and where she came from. A Bronx native who, although she came from a poor neighborhood where drugs and crime was common, became the first Hispanic and third woman appointed to the U.S. Supreme Court Justice. I decided to attend the Speaker Series on April 4th, 2017 as she was the guest speaker.

She walked in the arena surrounded by tall and muscular guards while the audience stood up clapping and whistling out of emotion. The language from her memoir was capturing but I was more excited to hear it from Justice Sotomayor herself.

A short dark curly hair and fair skinned woman with glasses, wearing a knee high black coat and white pants stood up from

her seat on stage and decided to walk around the arena. Referring to the audience in a comical matter, she asked people not to get up because her security guards would feel as if she was threatened and would have to bring her back on stage— which she did not want.

Justice Sotomayor stuck out her hand and shook hands with the audience. Everyone became ecstatic; what other Supreme Court Justice has done that? I felt humbled. She showed she truly cares about the people she serves.

Surprisingly, she revealed instances where she too faced discrimination for being a woman, saying this is a male dominated world and that it's going to take time for things to change.

"Most of the workforce is still male dominated and even when women reach high positions, we don't know how they would do or what they would do." Yet, there is no magic formula for how you deal with discrimination, Sotomayor said.

"Every situation requires a different response, because you have to look at people's motives and look at why they're doing things. But what you do have to do is think about what response is appropriate," she advised the audience.

Many may not understand why this was important. Not only for me, but for every



source: ualbanyphotos.com

Justice Sotomayor stood up to walk around the SEFCU arena to shake hands with audience members.

Latino/a that attends UAlbany as well as for women aspiring a dream whether it be law or any other career.

The simple fact is we are minorities and Sotomayor is an example of the accom-

plishments we can achieve. As a matter of fact, Latinos are a fast growing demographic and studies show there are women outnumbering men in college.



## Success Doesn't Stop For Summer.

Albany students, headed home for the summer break? If so, enroll in Summer Session at Suffolk County Community College and get a head start on next semester or even make up a course.

Both the eight-week and first five-week sessions start on May 30<sup>th</sup>, with another five-week session starting June 29<sup>th</sup>.

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**TUITION**

## Excelsior Scholarship



source: ualbanyphotos.com

By **BRAD HERSHENSON**

The Excelsior Scholarship has historic potential to provide students across the state with a quality public education. More students will gain access to an education at the University at Albany, among other SUNY and CUNY schools, tuition free. However, in order to fully grasp the implications of this program, a series of points must be considered.

Under current law, students are expected to fit into a set of financial and academic conditions to qualify for free tuition. The guidelines require students to come from a family with an income of \$100,000 or less, soon to increase to \$125,000. Students must complete their degree by taking 30 credits per year - a feat that may not be ideal for all SUNY students, including those with work responsibilities.

Additionally, students must reside within the state for the same duration in which they receive the tuition scholarship. The application will require students to sign a promissory note with a residency requirement for New York, which could limit the types of opportunities that are made available to students if employment or other opportunities lie outside of the state. If a student fails to meet the conditions of the scholarship then the funds awarded will turn into a loan. The program does, however, allow a student to diverge from the academic conditions presented under certain circumstances. Any student facing hardship is able to pause or restart the program, or take fewer credits one semester.

Graduating on time is a praiseworthy accomplishment.

UAlbany reported that approximately 56 percent of matriculated full-time freshmen from the fall 2011 entering class received a baccalaureate degree within four years of study.

If the Excelsior Scholarship helps more students graduate on a timely basis then that is a positive development. However, is this policy adequate for our students? There are currently many programs that provide tuition assistance for SUNY students. Those must be exhausted before the excelsior scholarship is allowed. If a significant amount of students may not be able to conform to these specific guidelines, a different policy may be needed to aid the growing costs of higher education.

Government assistance in the form of room and board, books and supplies, and student fees may provide a more adequate solution to the growing costs associated with higher education at institutions such as UAlbany.

Housing fees are one of the costs that have consistently increased in recent years at the university.

Additionally the university has expanded its academic outreach and opportunities as well as increased retention rates of students, thus impacting student housing on campus as well as in the Albany area.

The university continues to offer expansive opportunities as a major research institution. For many students the scholarship program puts the world within reach. While aiding some students of New York it is a first step towards a more accessible and well-rounded access program for students to benefit from a high quality higher education.

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CINEMA

# SUMMER FILM GUIDE



Christopher Nolan's first war film, Dunkirk, is shaping up to be the premiere Oscar bait of the Summer.

Source: tvovermind.com

By **ANDREW GALLA**

Summer is a time when American film studios are able to flex their monetary muscles and churn out some big-budget productions. We're all familiar with the summertime blockbuster, and with the end of the year quickly approaching, let's take a look at the biggest movies to watch for this summer.

**Guardians of the Galaxy: May 4**  
Director: James Gunn



Source: m.omelete.uol.com.br

The gang is back for another adventure. The second installment of Guardians will have high expectations after the success of the first, and fans are not very worried, as the film is a simple but flawless formula of action and fun; the two things Marvel does best.

**Alien: Covenant: May 19**  
Director: Ridley Scott



Source: matinecine.tv.com.br

Technically this gang is also back. Somewhat a part of the Alien film world, this is another picture that will have big expectations as a sequel to a mostly successful Prometheus. Though they have lost Charlize Theron, the film still boasts an impressive cast with Michael Fassbender, Katherine Waterston, James Franco, Naomi Rapace, Billy Crudup, Guy Pearce, and Danny McBride. With legendary director Ridley Scott at the helm once

again, this film is unlikely to disappoint many.

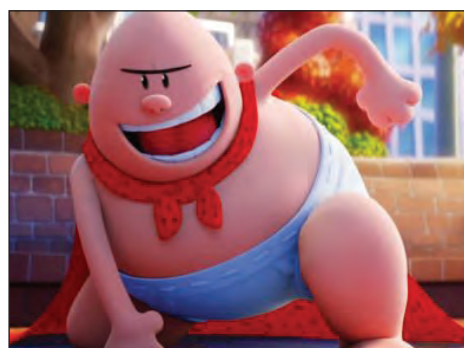
**Wonder Women: June 2**  
Director: Patty Jenkins



Source: cinema.everyeye.it

Warner Bros long awaited final Justice League setup film. With many fans still waiting for Warner Bros to match the success of the Marvel film universe, this film offers a possibly more charming experience than that of the grueling Batman vs Superman: Dawn of Justice, and at the very least should still feature some high-production eye candy. Still, it's hard to get high hopes for this film, especially with unproven director Patty Jenkins at the helm. She's a TV director best known for doing two episodes of both The Killing and Entourage and one episode of Arrested Development. This film could make or break both her career and the Justice League Universe itself.

**Captain Underpants: June 2**  
Director: David Soren



Source: animationsfilme.ch

The childhood favorite boasts a strong cast of comedians with Nick Kroll, Jordan Peele, Ed Helms, Kevin Hart, Kristen Shaal, and Thomas Middleditch from Silicon Valley. The film will doubtlessly offer some cheap laughs but will likely only be remembered as a film for children and those who are desperate for nostalgia. It is tempting

to see though; I loved those books as a child.

**The Beguiled: June 30**  
Director: Sofia Coppola



Source: cinefish.bg

Oscar winner Sofia Coppola writes and directs a talented cast featuring Nicole Kidman, Kirsten Dunst, Elle Fanning, and Colin Farrell. The story is about a school of southern girls during the civil war taking a wounded Union soldier into their care. His presence creates sexual tension and rivalry among the girls as they turn on each other and eventually on him. A remake of a 1971 film starring Mel Gibson, it seems to have potential as a tense period piece.

**Spiderman: Homecoming: July 7**  
Director: Jon Watts



Source: bento.de

The newest Spiderman installment is hoped by many to be the most true to the comic, at least in terms of Tom Holland's portrayal of the iconic character. Michael Keaton also stands to be a strong villain. The film will have to live up to the success of the other Marvel films, and will be trying to be even more successful than the Andrew Garfield and Tobey Maguire versions that are still fresh in our minds. The trailer promises action and classic Marvel goofiness but Marvel films always have a low ceiling. We can only hope it is not a dud like Avengers 2:

Age of Ultron.

**Dunkirk: July 21**

Director: Christopher Nolan  
Tom Hardy, Mark Rylance, and Cillian Murphy star in Chris Nolan's first war film, specifically on the miracle in Dunkirk during World War Two. Nolan has described the film as very close to his heart as a survival story that is somewhat British legend, "one of the greatest stories in human history" as he puts it. He has described the film as a "highly visceral experience" with very little dialogue. It is more about placing the audience "in the story" and experiencing the tension of the situation. "This is a story that needs to carry you through and make you feel you are there." The low-dialogue/high-tension atmosphere of the film sounds perfect to fit Chris Nolan's strengths as a writer. The film will be screened selectively to watch in 70mm IMAX film, arguably the highest quality of film available, and will use real naval destroyers instead of CGI. It may be the biggest and best film of the summer.

**The Dark Tower: August 4**  
Director: Nicolaj Arcel



Source: sinemia.com

Based on the Stephen King series starring Idris Elba, Matthew McConaughey, Abby Lee, and Jackie Earle Haley, the film will likely be hit-or-miss. It sounds very interesting but it also sounds like the type of film you should read a review for before you go and see it, because it may just be another passable Stephen King adaptation.

Honorable Mentions:  
**Baby Driver** (Edgar Wright, June 28)  
**War For the Planet of the Apes** (Matt Reeves, July 14)  
**Transformers the Last Knight** (Michael Bay, June 23)  
**Tulip Fever** (Justin Chadwick, August 25)

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PLAYER PROFILE

# Star Lacrosse Player Shares Rituals and Likes

By ALLEN ENRIQUEZ

University at Albany men's lacrosse player Connor Fields has been making a name for himself since his freshman season. Fields, a junior attackman, draws comparisons to UAlbany alum Lyle Thompson because of his knack for scoring and finding open teammates around the goal. With the 2017 lacrosse season almost at its end, the ASP's Allen Enriquez caught up with the two-time America East all-conference player to find out more about him on and off of the field.

**How old were you when you first started playing lacrosse and how did you get started?**

I was six years old when I started playing lacrosse. I looked up to my brother growing up, so whatever he did I wanted to do, and he decided to play lacrosse. In Canada, they play box lacrosse so I just watched him practice and I got signed up a couple weeks later.

**What were your goals going into the season both individually and as a team?**

Individually, I just wanted to play to the best of my abilities. As a team, I think our first goal is to definitely get the regular season conference title. Then we want to get to the America East in the postseason and we want to win that. Then, we go on from there and hopefully win a national championship.

**You've been named to the America East all-conference first team for the past two seasons. What do those types of awards mean to you?**

It's definitely a team thing--obviously I can't do anything out there without my team. My teammates are always looking for me and always helping me out and it's fun to play with them. To get named to that is cool, but it's definitely a team award.

**It's game day. What's playing in Connor Fields' pregame playlist?**

I play all different kind of things. I'll go from Lil Uzi Vert, maybe some Chief Keef, Migos--something that'll get me going.

**Any pre-game rituals you like to do with the team or individually?**

Every night before game day, me and a couple of the other guys will go to eat and then go to either Kurver Kreme or Cold Stone and get some ice cream. Game day, I do the same routine. I get there, tape my stick before every game, come out to the field before everyone else, stretch before everyone else, sit on the field and visualize how the game is going to be and then go from there.

**You said you looked up to your older brother when you were younger. Would you consider him as**

**a role model both on and off the field?**

Definitely. I always looked up to him and I always looked up to Lyle [Thompson] too growing up and seeing him play at Albany and seeing all the things that he was doing.

**Do you have a second favorite sport? If so, who is your favorite team and player?**

I like hockey. I played hockey growing up too. The Montreal Canadiens are my favorite team and Kerry Price is my favorite hockey player.

**Any thoughts on the Barstool Sports article about your team pictures?**

We all get a laugh out of it and we all get a joke out of it. I was thinking about doing it this year and growing a mustache. But I can't really grow one that well, so I was out of the picture.

**Tell us one thing about yourself that not a lot of people know.**

I really like to play chess.



Bill Ziskin/UAlbany Athletics  
Connor Fields looks for a path to the net.

**Favorite place to eat in Albany?**  
Chipotle. I'm there every day.

**What's one dream vacation spot that you'd like to go to?**

Hawaii, that sounds amazing. The tropical weather will get me out of this cold.

**If you had a superpower, what would it be and why?**

I want to be able to fly so I could get to the places I need to be instead of walking.

**What advice would you give to a young lacrosse player?**

Keep a stick in your hand and keep playing. Get as many touches as you can and get playing as much as you can.

UAlbany fans can catch Fields and the rest of his team in action for the America East Tournament, which will take place at John Fallon Field. The semifinals are slated for Thursday, May 4 and the championship will take place on Saturday, May 6.

FOOTBALL

# Scrimmage Casts Doubt on Fall Season

By TROY FARKAS

It's a good thing football season isn't here yet. Because if it were, the University at Albany squad wouldn't be ready to compete.

In the annual spring game on Saturday at Casey Stadium, the defense pummeled the offense, winning 58-9 in a battle of a veteran-laden defense and a young and inexperienced offense.

"I'm very disappointed in the offense. It was embarrassing," head coach Greg Gattuso said. "Our defense is good, but I don't think they're that good."

In a scoring system that rewarded big plays (two points for runs of 15+ yards and two points for passes of 20+ yards), the UAlbany first and second team offenses struggled to move the ball. Redshirt sophomore Will Brunson led the first team, completing 11 of 17 passes for 113 yards. Jake Thompson and Neven Sussman split reps on the second team, going a combined 8-for-18 for 62 yards. Brunson and Thompson each threw two interceptions.

The offense failed to score a touchdown in the abbreviated game, which ended early after Gattuso had seen enough following a pick-six at the start of the fourth quarter. The only offensive score came at the end of the third quarter when kicker Ethan Stark nailed a 32-yard field goal.

The young offensive line failed to get any push against the strong defensive line, which gave the quarterbacks little time to scan the field. The quarterbacks mostly threw check downs and short routes, which limited the team's ability to score points. The only highlight play came in the fourth quarter from senior wide receiver Jerod Diggs, a JUCO transfer who will only play one season at UAlbany. Brunson completed a 39-yard pass to Diggs, who boxed out the defensive back and made a juggling catch falling to the ground.

Despite the offensive missteps, tight end Brian Dolce is confident his offense will be all right.

"They're very talented. They're young and they've just got to learn the system,"

Dolce said. "We hope to help them throughout camp."

The offense usually doesn't fare well in the spring game, because it doesn't try to out-execute the defense. The spring game simply serves as an opportunity to put on pads in a game-like situation in front of fans.

Based on the results, the fans likely think the offense is in trouble and the defense will be one of the best in the conference, which is certainly a possibility given the amount of experience on that end. Veteran playmakers Julian Cox, Malachi Hoskins, Mason Gray, and Jamal Robinson will return in the fall, along with Penn State transfer Antoine White, who finished with three sacks and a tackle on the afternoon.

Gattuso isn't concerned with the results of the game. He doesn't put much stock in scrimmages nor did he want to keep score; it's something the players wanted. Instead, he is concerned the offense didn't show any resolve.

"My concern was that we didn't fight through some things more than anything. Our heads went down quickly," Gattuso said. "We need more guys to step up and be leaders."

And on the field, leadership starts at quarterback. It's been an unstable position for the Great Danes since Will Fiacchi last played in 2014. Brunson came out with the first team, but it certainly doesn't mean it will be his job come September 2 when UAlbany travels to Old Dominion for the opening game.

Junior Neven Sussman, who opened the 2016 season under center for UAlbany, took third string snaps on Saturday. And then early in the first quarter, Sussman trotted out on special teams.

The former starting quarterback is the team's starting punter, at least for now.

It was an interesting development in a game that lacked excitement. But the coaches never intended it to be exciting; they just wanted to come out and get a feel for a game-like atmosphere again and walk away without any injuries.

So in that regard, the UAlbany spring game can be considered a success.

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ALUMNA UPDATE

# Catching up with Former University at Albany Star Shereesha Richards

By ROBERT LEPELSTAT

Over the course of a four-year career at the University at Albany, Shereesha Richards, who didn't arrive in the United States until she was 16 years old, cemented herself as arguably the greatest basketball player in UAlbany history.

Richards moved to New Jersey at the age of 16, leaving behind friends and family in Rae Town, Jamaica to pursue her dream of a basketball career at the highest level. She attended the Atlantic Christian School-- a small private high school in Egg Harbour Township, N.J. where she quickly made a name for herself as a basketball star. She scored 1,147 points and averaged a double-double during her two years as the heart and soul of the Lady Cougars.

Richards, who graduated in May 2016, left a mark on the UAlbany record books that won't be matched for some time, if ever. She is the school's all-time leading scorer (men's and women's) and the women's all-time leader in rebounds. She won four consecutive America East titles and helped lead the Great Danes to their first NCAA Tournament victory a year ago when the No. 12 Danes upset No. 5 Florida.

She surprisingly went undrafted in the 2016 WNBA Draft. She then decided to

fulfill her dream of playing overseas.

Richards recently completed her first season in Spain. She played with Club Deportivo Zamarat of the Liga Femenina de Baloncesto, the top women's league in Spain. Despite the new country and transition to the pros, a change of scenery is something Richards has dealt with her entire life.

"I always think every year I transition to something new, a new country or different place, which for me it's easy," Richards said. "I came here when I was 16. I have been to other places. So for me, it's basically like going to college all over again--but in a different country."

Richards prides herself on an aggressive style of play, something that had made her a dominant force during her time with the Great Danes. As she looks back at her first professional season, it wasn't the change of scenery that overwhelmed her, but rather the different style of play overseas.

"The coaching and the style of play is different for me over there than it is here in the United States," Richards said. "It's more finesse overseas than it is here. Here it's more aggressive, and I like aggressive."

"You just have to get used to it and adjust to a new coaching style. But overall, it was a great experience just being able

to play overseas and play for the coaching staff that I did," Richards added.

For Richards, who has done nothing in her career but win, her first season overseas came with a unique set of challenges she had never faced before. Besides her teammates and coaches, no one in the small town of Zamora spoke English.

She also had to deal with another unfamiliar challenge: losing.

CD Zamarat finished 9-17 in Richards' rookie year, failing to qualify for the postseason. She never missed a postseason at UAlbany.

The five-hour time difference between Spain and New York made it difficult for Richards to watch the Great Danes live this past season. However, she still followed along and cheered for her former teammates and coaches throughout the season.

Despite the losses of Richards, two-time team captain Erin Coughlin, and head coach Katie Abrahamson-Henderson, Richards was not surprised by the continued success of UAlbany in 2017. It was a little over a month ago that UAlbany won its sixth consecutive conference title.

"Overall, I wasn't surprised that they won," Richards said. "It wasn't going to be easy with a new coaching staff and they had a lot of new players and players that

didn't really play a lot in the past. I knew it was going to be hard, but I didn't think that they couldn't win."



Source: ualbansports.com

As she looks toward her professional future, Richards is only focused on one thing.

"The goal is to get better each and every day and wherever basketball takes me, that's where I'll go. I'll work hard and do what I have to do," Richards said.

For the woman who first mastered her athletic skills playing netball in Jamaica, Richards knows the possibilities for her future are limitless.

LACROSSE

# Laffin's Last-Second Heroics Push UAlbany

By TROY FARKAS

Mitch Laffin stood in front of the goal, waiting for his chance. He wouldn't make a mistake this time.

With just over 34 seconds left, Bennett Drake passed the ball to Laffin, who closed his eyes and let it go.

Eruption.

Laffin's heroic goal put No. 5 University at Albany (11-2, 5-0) ahead of No. 11 Yale (8-4, 5-0) for the first time since the second quarter to give the Great Danes a momentous victory over the Bulldogs Saturday night at Casey Stadium in front of a crowd of 3,209 screaming fans at the annual Spring Stomp.

"It was a relief," Laffin said. "I scored my first big goal. It was exhilarating."

A relief, because with just over five minutes left and UAlbany down one after trailing for most of the game, Laffin scored to tie the game at 12.

Only he stepped in the crease. It didn't count.

Laffin's game-winning goal ended a run of five unanswered goals by UAlbany, who was down 12-8 with 12:07 left in the game. The Great Danes could have mailed it in and let Yale, whose faceoff man outperformed TD Ierlan, and whose defense smothered Connor Fields for most of the game, ride out of Albany with a win. But staying true to character, Scott Marr's team clawed its way back, like it did against Maryland two weeks ago. Except this time, UAlbany came out on top.

"We've been preaching sticking together and playing 60 minutes," Marr said. "All that positive energy, and riding the 'energy bus' and everybody rowing at the same time. They believe in each other. We talk about belief all year. And it came through tonight."

Ierlan and Fields, the nation's top players at their respective positions, were silenced during Yale's six-goal stretch from the beginning of the second quarter until midway through the third. Ierlan struggled mightily against junior Conor Mackie, who won 16 of 29 faceoffs. UAlbany

couldn't get possession of the ball, meaning Fields, the leading point scorer in the country, couldn't continue making the plays he was in the first quarter.

Despite their long lulls, Ierlan and Fields picked themselves back up in the fourth quarter to fuel the Danes' furious comeback. Fields, who had been hounded by Yale's Aidan Hynes all evening, took it upon himself to start the charge. Falling to his left, the junior attack launched the ball past the stick of Phil Huffard to cut the lead to 12-9. Despite the stellar defense against him, Fields still scored five points in the game (three goals, two assists).

Bennett Drake, who led the team with four goals, scored two of the next three. Kyle McClancy chipped in a goal before Laffin's heroics sealed the deal.

Everyone pitched in to get UAlbany a win it badly needed. Troy Reh, the junior defenseman, also played an integral role in the comeback by scooping up ground balls and intercepting errant passes. From top to bottom, it was a team effort.

"The boys had a lot of fun tonight. It was fun to have the whole team going on all cylinders," Drake said. "We were never down on each other, even when we were down a couple goals."

The players rallied together to earn a win their team badly needed. NCAA Tournament seedings were on the line Saturday night. Both teams knew the winner would



Bill Ziskin/UAlbany Athletics

Number 12 Mitch Laffin celebrates his game-winning goal vs. Yale with 34.4 seconds left Saturday night.

likely earn a first round home game with a victory. And Marr, who is in his 17th season as the head coach at UAlbany, knows how important this win will be when the selection committee sits down to form the bracket.

"This gives us a good quality win," Marr said. "A loss tonight would have put us in a position where we would have to win our conference championship."

Marr won't need to worry about winning the conference championship, not just yet. UAlbany has one more date with Hartford on April 29. Then, UAlbany will play host to the America East Tournament, which starts on May 4. UAlbany has already locked up the overall No. 1 seed. Should UAlbany lose in its conference tournament, it is likely UAlbany will earn an at-large berth for the second straight year.

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