



# ASAP

ALBANY STUDENT PRESS

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TUESDAY, APRIL 4, 2017 ISSUE 8 ALBANYSTUDENTPRESS.NET

## 'JUJU' FONTAINE ELECTED FIRST WOMAN TO HEAD STUDENT ASSOCIATION IN 17 YEARS



By TYLER MCNEIL

Jerlisa Fontaine broke down in tears around a huddle of her supporters watching a historic Student Association presidential race unfold.

It was a landslide victory. Fontaine, running with Madeeha Khan, defeated Tiran Koren and Andalib Anwar by a 65 percent margin to become the first female SA president-elect since 2000.

"Honestly, just seeing how far the graph was going in comparison to everyone else, it was just like, 'Wow, I really did a big thing,'" said Fontaine. "I didn't just win, but I established a blowout and that's something really important to feel special about."

She secured an early flood of endorsements including SA presidents, fraternities, and student groups. With a full down-ballot ticket, Fontaine supporters started making a social media footprint days before both other candidates.

Pro-Fontaine campaign efforts later slipped into SA programming.

At Thursday's Purple & Gold Award Ceremony, Abreu asked those in the crowd to vote for Fontaine.

"On my end if I had not made that comment, I would've been letting myself down because I choose to stand for what I believe in and that's something I believe in," said Abreu.

Campaign efforts buoyed most senate candidates under the Fontaine ticket. Anwar's eight-candidate ticket failed to win any senate seats; only one of three candidates managed to make senate gains on Koren's ticket.

While not on a ticket, Nadia Naoum, an applied & natural sciences senate candidate, strategically endorsed Fontaine throughout the election. Despite failing to win office, she hopes that her support will land her an appointment as community engagement and outreach director.

"I supported her 100 percent because I was like 'Oh, director's position, they pick' and was like 'Oh, that's good,'" said Naoum.

Meanwhile, Pi Delta Psi, an Asian fraternity, championed Koren's ticket out

of promises to cease cultural group budget cuts and prevent programming hiccups, chapter President Long Huynh said.

"With the chaos that happened at last year Parkfest regarding tickets, we were happy to see a group that wanted to find ways to change the way it is run currently to make sure it would be more smoothly in the future," said Huynh in an email.

Rey Muniz, SA parliamentarian and former senator, had a different message: Vote for anyone or anything else. In a Facebook post, Muniz called each of the candidates "not competent enough" to lead the organization.

Alexander Terezakis, a 2015-16 presidential candidate, slammed the presidential pool for not pushing to revive Fountain Day. A long-time campus tradition, Fountain Day was cancelled in 2011 after the "Keg & Eggs" incident.

A year away from Terezakis' presidential run, overall voter turnout has been 156 percent higher (roughly 2,500 votes). Danielle, Haft, chair of

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REFERENDUM

## Student Activity Fee To Remain Mandatory

By LINDSEY RIBACK

The student activity fee was voted mandatory on Friday, ensuring funding for University at Albany clubs and events for the next two years.

As part of the Spring 2017 Student Association elections, 27 SA positions were up for grabs and students were also given the option to vote for either a voluntary or mandatory student activity fee. The fee, which was raised to \$110 in December, provides funding to all SA-recognized student clubs and organizations, as well as events such as the Speaker Series, Parkfest, and the Block Party.

Had the fee been voted voluntary, SA would have cut their budget for 2017-2018 in half, therefore cutting funds to student clubs such as WCDB, the Jamaican Student Association, the Project Sunshine, and various club teams.

For students who are not involved in student organizations, a voluntary fee was welcomed. However, others feel the fee is a must. Julian Alban, the hip-hop director for WCDB is one of these students.

For him, college should be more than just school, and extracurricular options are way for people to branch out and make friends.

Another supporter of the fee becoming mandatory is Rachel Eager, the president of the New York State Public Health Association and a former senator.

"It is really important that we have the resources so that students can continue to provide services for students on campus and the community," she said. "We have fantastic organizations that donate meals,

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CAMPUS CENTER

## "Moderate Rain" Delays Auditorium Construction

By ELISE COOMBS

After rain infiltrated underground ducts for the Campus Center auditorium in October, construction has been delayed at least a year, according to a University at Albany official.

The contractor was originally supposed to complete the auditorium in September, but since rain and debris entered the ducts in October, the completion date remains uncertain. However, the university is "hopeful" to have the auditorium ready for students' return this fall, said John Giarrusso, the associate vice president of finance and administration.

As part of the construction, the auditorium needed new ducts to keep the project's quality, according to Brad Bunzey, engineer and project manager.

Since the damage was caused by a "heavy rain event that the contractor did not prepare for," the ducts are

currently being replaced at no cost to the university with the contractor's insurance covering the costs of the damage, Giarrusso said.

When the company completes the auditorium, the university will still have to install audio and video.

According to previous plans that the project would have been completed by September 2016, the AV installation was slated for completion this past January, said Bunzey.

He explained that the rain event in the end of October was "inches in a short duration of time."

However, precipitation data from the end of October do not show intense rain.

Professor Ross Lazear from the Department of Atmospheric and Environmental Sciences stated that during the time, the precipitation was "not especially heavy in a short period of time," and only a few days had recognizable precipitation.

Data from Oct. 20 on Weather

Underground show that there was a total of 0.51 inches of rain and the most per hour was 0.19 inches.

And on Oct. 22, there was a total of 1.21 inches and the most that fell per hour was 0.12 inches.

Lazear described this as a "steady, moderate rain all day."

There were 1.7 inches of snow on Oct. 27. The rain equivalent of this is 0.79 inches, according to Lazear and the National Centers for Environmental Information.

"It could have happened to anybody," Giarrusso said of the rain damage.

According to Bunzey, the entire Campus Center construction project cost \$42.94 million, including the east addition, the renovation, and the west addition.

In contrast, Rivers Casino and Resort in Schenectady was a \$330 million project that opened this February. The casino opened

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Elise Coombs/ Albany Student Press

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

# UAlbany Alum Gives Back with GivDapps

By TYLER MCNEIL

Adam MacDonald has long been interested in charity and mobile technology -- separately. And now both are part of his business.

For years, MacDonald volunteered for Big Brothers Big Sisters, a non-profit child mentor program. Two summers ago, during a Wal-Mart run to buy his "little brother" shoes, he pondered: Why aren't more people donating on cell phones?

MacDonald, then a University at Albany student, set out to start an app that would allow users to support specific community members through select charities. In pursuit of transparency, he envisioned the app to keep donors connected with donees.

"If I just gave \$100 to a homeless person and they now have their own apartment and are doing well, that's the kind of information I think is valuable to a donor," he said.

This wasn't his first dream app. Fascinated with mobile technology after Yik Yak launched two years prior, MacDon-

ald was initially interested in developing an anonymous photo sharing app, Razly.

However, MacDonald faced two barriers with GivDapps: he knew little about nonprofits and marketing. Looking to build GivDapps, he would spend much of his time working to fill learning gaps.

At the time, GivDapps was failing to attract nonprofit partnerships. Nonprofits were hostile towards the app at first, fearing that they would lose money off of donations, MacDonald said. As a result, GivDapps' rebranded their nonprofit outreach to highlight marketing and data collecting incentives.

"I was thinking in my head, 'Of course nonprofits would be interested,'" he said. "And it turns out that I had to market myself very differently because they thought of me almost as competition."

GivDapps began to make headway in January of last year, a result of the Blackstone Launchpad's opening, MacDonald recalled. Prior to Blackstone, he mostly worked on GivDapps alone.

"The Blackstone thing kind of changed everything," he

said. "They brought together all of these minds that were just focused on what might be a good idea and what could be a bad idea."

After Blackstone, MacDonald started running GivDapps out of a Troy office. At the time, GivDapps started to build its current list of partnerships (General Albany Fund, Four Mile Smile, and Joseph's House).

Further ahead, MacDonald anticipates GivDapps to eventually expand to Schenectady and Saratoga Springs. With a greater reach, he plans to start marketing the app to fraternities and sororities across the Capital Region.

MacDonald has yet to profit off GivDapps. In an effort to make ends meet, he works for Ripe, a New York City-based restaurant app. Looking to meet goals, MacDonald works shifts back and forth between both start-ups as long as 12 hours.

"My intention is to really get this going," he said. "Like I tell everybody on the team: I won't get paid until everybody else gets paid."

STUDENT LIFE

# Safety Resources for Study Abroad Program

By MILO VOTAVA

Following the March 22 terror attack on Westminster Bridge, University at Albany students may be left wondering what safety measures are in place if they choose to study abroad.

UAlbany offers two study abroad programs in London, not to mention over 100 programs across the world, yet the safety policies held by both the university and the host universities are not clearly found on the university's website.

For UAlbany, the policies for international student safety go past UAlbany as a singular university. Renée DeCelle, the associate director of the Education Abroad program at SUNY Albany, explained that UAlbany is part of a larger network called NAFSA, an association for international educators, with other universities that all participate in the study abroad program. This network keeps track of all students in the program, regardless of what university they attend.

In the event of a crisis, NAFSA will help monitor the situation, and should any university get in touch with a student of another, they let the student's university know of their status. With the help of an email listserv that connects all the universities participating in the study abroad,

students around the area of attack will get notified. The students will then be expected to check back in with their host universities to let them know that they are okay.

According to DeCelle, the reasoning behind checking in on students within a larger area that the one that was attacked, is that people travel.

"On weekends, on their off days, and we reach out to a bigger group, say, in this case all the students in the United Kingdom, not just the students in London," DeCelle said.

She also noted that within this system, the student's host universities are much more likely to know what they would be up to in their day to day lives, and would be more aware of what would be more heavily impacted, such as traffic and transit changes.

The host universities are also the ones that have events and meetings for the affected students. DeCelle compared this to the events that were hosted by UAlbany after the recent travels ban was first proposed.

UAlbany, as well as the other American universities in NAFSA, hosts an emergency phone line that international students can call if they feel they need to get in touch with someone at the school immediately. In UAlbany's case, this is the hotline sponsored by Middle Earth, and advisors that can consult with international students.



Source: www.cqmun.com  
Westminster Bridge, in downtown London, was the site of a recent terrorist attack that claimed the lives of three people.

## FEE

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help students to get jobs and help to specifically target important political and social issues. We can't stop funding that."

The fee also goes towards vital student services such as Five Quad, Middle Earth and Project Shape which rely heavily on SA funding, and therefore the student activity fee to assist students. If made voluntary, SA would have only be mandated to provide one cent to each SA-recognized group, amounting to a total of less than \$2.

"Unfortunately, we will not be able to provide crucial groups

with funding if we do not have any ourselves, thus our stressing for a mandatory fee," Ryan Maestre, the director of public relations for SA, said. "Groups like Five Quad and Middle Earth are essential in providing safety and resources to our campus and the Student Association is proud and more than willing to support these groups."

Five Quad is the largest funded group on campus, having received roughly \$126,000 for the 2016-2017 year and they are expecting roughly a 20 percent increase for the next year to \$152,000, according to Chief Noah Pilnick.

While that is a large sum of money compared to other groups, the majority of it goes towards things like insurance, capital replacement, maintenance and medical supplies. In some

cases the group must go to the appropriations committee requesting more money.

Recently they had to request money for new AED defibrillators because the ones they had were discontinued, Pilnick said.

If the fee had been voted voluntary, the group would have to rely heavily on donations and fundraising, according to Dan Mehr, the president.

A similar reliance on fundraising and donations would have been met by Middle Earth, the second highest funded club. However, unlike Five Quad, the majority of their budget goes towards salaries for the interns and programs such as Sexuality Month, this year which featured Michael Sam as the keynote speaker.

Besides club funding, the

student activity fee goes towards SA-sponsored events such as the Block Party at the beginning of the year, the Speaker Series which is hosted each semester and Parkfest in the spring.

One concern over the fee becoming voluntary was that regardless of whether a student paid the fee that year or not, they would still be able to attend the events.

Another issue with the student activity fee was Senate's vote to increase the fee by \$10 to \$110 in December, which many students felt like was done behind closed doors with little input from students and organizations.

The fee, which had remained steady for the past three years, was raised only to adjust for the increase in student groups who need funding and inflation,

according to Maestre.

By doing this, SA would be able to avoid raising event prices for students and also allowed for an additional \$260,000 to be added to the current \$2.5 million SA budget.

At the close of the election on Friday, SA revealed that 82 percent or 2,008 out of the 2,440 votes cast regarding the fee were in favor of it being mandatory. Overall, 2,482 students participated in the election, an email from SA said.

This was also the first time in four years that the fee was made mandatory on the first vote.

"We stress a mandatory fee so that the undergraduate students have the opportunity to take advantage of the services they pay for," Maestre said.

CRIME BLOTTER

### PETIT LARCENY

**3/25/2017**  
State Quad-Steinmetz Hall  
Report of stolen money from a wallet.

### DRIVING WHILE INTOXICATED

**3/25/2017**  
Empire Commons Lot  
Report of a male student driving while intoxicated. An arrest and a referral were made.

### GRAND LARCENY

**3/25/2017**

Indian Quad-Adirondack Hall  
Report of stolen items and money from a dorm room.

### DRIVING WHILE INTOXICATED

**3/26/2017**  
Empire Commons Lot  
Report of a male student driving while intoxicated and doing property damage to another vehicle. An arrest and a referral were made.

### UNLAWFUL POSSESSION OF MARIJUANA

**3/26/2017**

### NA

**3/26/2017**  
Dutch Quad-Stuyvesant Tower  
Report of two male students in possession of marijuana, marijuana paraphernalia and alcohol. Referrals were made for both.

### TAKE A CRIMINAL REPORT

**3/27/2017**  
Podium Campus Center  
Report of someone urinating inside Campus Center near an office.

### PETIT LAR-

### CENY

**3/27/2017**  
Podium-Campus Center  
Report of a stolen portrait from the Campus Center.

### UNLAWFUL POSSESSION OF MARIJUANA

**3/27/2017**  
Alumni Quad-Alden Hall  
Report of a male student in possession of marijuana joints.

### TITLE IX REFERRAL

**3/27/2017**  
Dutch Quad-Ten Eyck Hall

### Title IX Referral.

**GRAND LARCENY 4**  
**3/28/2017**  
PE Complex- PE Building  
Report of two stolen bookbags along with their contents by an unknown subject.

### GRAND LARCENY 4

**3/28/2017**  
Indian Quad-Mohawk Tower  
Report of stolen credit card and drivers license by an unknown subject.

### DRUG COM-

### PLAINT

**3/28/2017**  
Grounds Bldg.  
Report of two male students smoking marijuana in public. Referrals were made for both.

### DRUG COMPLAINT

**3/28/2017**  
Empire Commons C Cluster  
Report of a male student in possession of marijuana paraphernalia. A referral was made.

### POSSESSION FORGED INSTRUMENT

**3/29/2017**

Alumni Quad-Alden Hall  
Report of a male student in possession of marijuana, marijuana paraphernalia and a forged ID. Referral was made.

### MEDICAL INCIDENT

**3/29/2017**  
Liberty Terrace Commons  
Report of a male student unresponsive in lobby. Was woken up and refused medical attention.

“Courage.”

- Dan Rather

FB: Albany SPJ



Tyler McNeil / Albany Student Press

Out of three pairs, Jerlisa Fontaine and Madeha Khan were elected last Friday as the president and vice president of the UAlbany Student Association.

## JUJU

Continued from Page 1

election’s commission, contributes the boost to a heavy use of social media advertising.

Koren lightly advertised on social media in comparison to both other presidential candidates throughout the campaign period. Despite this, he was closest to Fontaine with 460 votes (still nearly 1,000 votes apart). Koren has not responded to comment on the election results.

In an email shortly after election results were released, Anwar congratulated Fontaine on her victory. Him, with running mate Emma Benz, lost with 339 votes (about 14 percent of the vote).

Beyond voter turnout, the election carries historic weight throughout SA. Fontaine will be the first in some 40 years to lead the organization outside of its current site. SA officials have put administration to task over the upcoming west addition offices’ lack of rooms.

“It kind of diminishes the value of the other directors and what they do and privacy concerns for that matter,” said

## DELAY

Continued from Page 1

13 months after its license was approved, according to a press release.

Construction on the auditorium started in September 2014 and stopped that winter due to challenging conditions, according to Bunzey.

He also said that construction was taking longer because the university is occupied.

Since people can hear construction on campus, a lot of the jackhammering happened from midnight into the early hours of the morning to not disrupt activities during the day.

Some students noted that the completion dates are uncertain.

Referring to when a completion date is put out, freshman Vanessa Lopez said, “I don’t really believe it.”

Similarly, junior Diamond Cohen said, “It’s

still not done. Why is it taking so long?”

However, some students are not bothered by the construction. Oshame Ainsley, a freshman, said that he did not feel that the construction has influenced him.

“I’m not used to having it [the Campus Center addition]. If I was used to it, that would be different,” he said.

The multi-use auditorium will seat 400 people and house performances and lectures, according to Steve Pearse, Executive Director of University Auxiliary Services.

He indicated it was a multipurpose “smart space” that would hopefully include suitable seats for classwork.

The contracting company working on the project is McTech Corporation, which is based in Cleveland, Ohio.

Noting the construction’s many parts and working with an occupied university, Bunzey said, “It was always going to be at least this long.”

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STUDENT ASSOCIATION

# Why I Voted Against the Mandatory Activity Fee

By PAT GAREAU

The mandatory student activity fee is fantastic for me, but I voted against it. I figure I'll receive over \$4,000 worth of benefits from Student Association (SA) funding this year including a stipend, a scholarship, countless free meals, and preferential treatment for tickets at major events among other things. What a bargain for the \$200 that I paid this year.

This wouldn't be possible without a bunch of students paying their mandatory fee, not participating often in SA activities, and putting their unused fee directly in my pocket.

The distribution of benefits from the fee raises a question of fairness. While almost everyone I know and over 80 percent of voters last week favor the mandatory fee, I think it is a more difficult question than these results suggest.

I acknowledge that there are strong arguments to vote for the fee. SA provides great opportunities and contributes to a more vibrant campus community that benefits every student to some degree. We would lose a lot if there were not strongly funded student organizations and major events like

Parkfest.

At the same time, I'm uncomfortable that we force thousands of students that do not participate in SA activities to pay \$220. It is important to note that over 10,000 students did not vote in the election, and reasonable to think that many of them do not get a strong return on their fee if they aren't willing to take a couple of minutes to reaffirm it. Students that aren't highly involved in SA funded organizations and don't attend major events are likely to receive much less than \$220 in benefits over the course of the year.

Many funding structures work in a redistributive way, but generally reallocating resources aims to help those in need in a progressive fashion. The mandatory student activity fee works much more like a regressive tax, redistributing money to students that are the most engaged on campus and more likely to succeed in and out of the classroom at the expense of students that choose not to participate in the campus community, or are unable to do so.

When the SA Senate passed a contingency budget a couple of months ago that laid out how the money would be spent should the mandatory fee vote fail, it was estimated

that about 1,400 students would choose to pay the fee. I find it shaky ethically to impose a mandatory fee that a little over 10 percent of the student body would pay if given the option.

Generally, I think policy makers at all level should be very careful about forcing people to pay money for things. I doubt many people would support a proposal for the federal government to impose a mandatory \$220 fee on everyone that is primarily redistributed to programs geared toward the top 15% of population.

Making this question more difficult is the all-or-nothing nature of the proposition. The vote is either to retain the status quo or to dismantle it entirely. I would like to see future student leaders seek ways to change the activity fee funding structure to give students greater personal control over their money and more options to pay based on what SA services they use.

Maybe students should have multiple options for how much they want to pay at the beginning of the semester. Or students could have a portion of the fee remain on their SUNY Card and it could be used throughout the year on SA activities.

Higher education largely should charge

students more precisely for the services that they individually use. I'm not sure why I have to pay the same price for a lecture center class as I do for a lab, or why I have to pay the same athletics fee as an athlete. I think students (and people generally in the economy) should be paying for exactly what they consume, or as close to that as is reasonably possible. The mandatory student activity fee fails this ideal for thousands of students.

Being a director in SA and voting against the fee is borderline blasphemous to some. My choice was much less about the overall value of SA than it was about the funding structure itself, which I see as unfair and arcane. It was also somewhat unsettling to me that there was no robust debate on the merits of the mandatory fee during the campaign cycle with a cogent argument against it being prominently presented.

I hope that student leaders on campus don't fall into a trap of groupthink conventional wisdom and fail to consider carefully whether our current funding structure best serves students. I respect those that think it does, but also think a given person can reasonably take either side. Let's not forget that it did initially fail two years ago.

RELIGION

# Spiritual Leaders Host Open Forum on Religion

By NAOMI MCPETERS

Last Tuesday night in the Campus Center Assembly Hall, leaders from three belief systems converged for a 90-minute panel discussion addressing the fundamental questions of life, meaning, and God.

Campus Ambassadors (CA), a non-denominational Christian UAlbany student group, sponsored the multi-faith panel in partnership with the Muslim Student Association. Featured religious leaders on the panel included a Christian pastor, a Muslim Imam, and a Buddhist Lama, moderated by Steve Bugler, campus minister of CA.

"For years we've been trying to have an open dialogue with as many people from as

She adds, "I know what it feels like to practice a religion that is stereotyped so much in the media. I know that there's other religions that have similar stereotypes. I have to listen to them if I want them to listen to me."

Each panelist was given seven minutes to answer questions about the foundational beliefs of their faith and how their faith addresses the topics of salvation and life after death. All three, Imam Yaki, Lama Zopa, and Pastor Joe Shea, exemplified the willingness to be open without compromising their beliefs or faith, all the while addressing some of the deepest questions humanity grapples with.

"Man(kind) has been struggling with 'Who am I?' for a long time," says Imam Yaki. "Man wants to know who he is." Lama Zopa echoes a similar sentiment, saying that the practice of the Buddhist path is, in essence, a way to come to know our own minds and bring to rest the confusion that permeates human existence.

Pastor Joe Shea, who was visiting from Worcester, Massachusetts, kept the focus of his faith explanation on its center, Jesus Christ. "Too often Christians portray that they don't have doubts, that they don't sin, and that they've found everything they need to find. I don't think that's a good definition of Christianity. I've found Christ but I'm looking for a deeper relationship with every breath that I take."

One student in the audience raised the question of how Christianity addresses campus sanctuary movements and immigration policy. "If we're going to err on one side," Shea replied, "we should err on the side of compassion and mercy because that's what Jesus was all about. When he walked the earth he redrew the lines about compassion and mercy. I'm in favor of being like Jesus, not being political."

Comprised of close to 30 students, the audience reflected those of all backgrounds, including Muslims, Christians, Humanists, and Buddhists. Afterwards, the audience mingled and met, asking questions and finding common ground in their identity as students, and simply, as people.

This is just the kind of thing the UAlbany campus needs, a small group of committed Christians who are combining faith with action, those who are unafraid to open themselves up to dialogue and debate. And it is a good reminder to all of us, Christian or not, to remember that most times, folks are a lot less close-minded than we make them out to be.



Naomi McPeters / Albany Student Press

many backgrounds as possible," says Bugler. "There are many horrible stereotypes for Christians in our society, such as that we are close-minded and judgmental. We at CA have tried to break those stereotypes. We want to hold events like this to show that we respect and value everyone—that everyone has a voice that needs to be heard."

The panel is the most recent of a series of events CA has been holding, including discussions about Biblical responses to political issues such as Women's Rights, Black and Minority Rights, and LGBTQ rights. And, it is just one example of how Christian groups on campus are fighting against the culture of close-mindedness that has come to inaccurately characterize too much of modern Christianity.

"It's so important to have these events where you're not debating," says Akeela Makshood, President of the Muslim Student Association at UAlbany. "People who come here are genuinely curious. They're not trying to incite anything or start anything. That's what's good for all of us."

NATIONAL

# Failure of the AHCA



By MATT NOYES

The American Health Care Act (AHCA) was pulled last Friday by House Speaker Paul Ryan (R-WI) after failing to garner enough support, reports CNN. The AHCA, sometimes referred to as Ryan care or Trump care, would have modified the Affordable Care Act (ACA), aka: "Obamacare". Republicans ran on repealing Obamacare due to it causing rising medical premiums, restricting freedom in the healthcare market, and increased mandates. The AHCA quickly became known as "Obamacare Lite" to conservatives because it did not go far enough in repealing Obamacare, and according to the Congressional Budget Office it would continue to cause premiums to rise.

There are several reasons why the AHCA failed. As a bill, it was flawed to say the least. It neither fixed the problems with Obamacare nor did it address the root of health care problems in the United States. It risked causing millions to lose health insurance, higher premiums, a minimal reduction of federal debt in the long run, and it held low approval rating among Americans, as reported by Aaron Bandler of The Daily Wire. As a result, many House moderates opposed it.

As expected, House Democrats opposed the bill due to ideological contentions. The Democratic National Committee recently adopted healthcare as a right to their platform which would increase the federal government's role in health care if achieved. The AHCA did not go far enough in that direction to garner House Democrat's support. Ideology aside, opposing the AHCA gave Democrats an issue to unite against President Trump and Republican leadership which may have won them face among their constituents. However, it was the Freedom Caucus in the House that played the main role in defeating the AHCA. Members of the Freedom Caucus

are conservatives that hold values in higher esteem than party loyalty. Representative Mark Meadows, chairman of the Freedom Caucus, summed up their position in a report by CNN: "I promised the people of North Carolina's 11th District that I would fight for a full repeal of the Affordable Care Act and a replacement with a market-driven approach that brings down costs and provides more choices for the American people". Politicians and the media incorrectly assumed the Freedom Caucus would stand behind the Trump administration simply because they ardently oppose Obamacare. Yet they acted without regard to party politics, by standing for their values and opposing the AHCA. "Rep. Mo Brooks (R-AL) told The Daily Wire: 'I vote on the basis of the merits of legislation. I don't vote on the basis of people — who may be friends or foes — encouraging me to vote for or against legislation.'"

In this writer's opinion, the AHCA would have a net negative effect. It did not offer a solution to the multitude of problems caused by Obamacare. I believe that exceptional healthcare reform could transpire under this administration. There are various alternative healthcare plans in the works. One of the most notable plans in the woodworks is the Obama Care Replacement Act written by Kentucky Senator and physician Dr. Rand Paul. The bill seeks to abolish Obamacare, and allow the most amount of people to get insurance at the lowest cost by unleashing the free market. The bill would create health savings accounts, allow individuals to buy insurance in associations, and erase the mandates of Obama care, Paul told CNN.

I am hopeful for healthcare reform to transpire within the next few years. Particularly reform that empowers individuals, unleashes the free market, and restrains government interference— which I believe caused our healthcare to deteriorate.

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CINEMA

# 'GHOST IN THE SHELL' CAN STAND ON ITS OWN



Helmed by director Rupert Sanders, the film sees Scarlett Johansson, above, playing the main role as Major who is part human and part cyborg.

Source: 20minutes.fr

By DANIEL RUSSELL

Arriving 22 years after the original animated film that spawned numerous sequels and television series, "Ghost in the Shell" has gotten the live-action film treatment.

Part human and part cyborg, Major (played by Scarlett Johansson) works for Section 9 in the futuristic New Port City, which largely runs on the cybernetic enhancements created by Hanka Robotics.

When an unknown enemy seeks to take them down, Major will stop at nothing to eliminate this threat. What follows is a film that not only pays tribute to its source material, but one that stands on its own as well.

More of a reboot than a straight remake, this film is more or less its own story, with some nods to the original animated film as well. Viewing the original film isn't entirely necessary to prepare for this movie; intro credits do a good job of introducing you to the world of

"Ghost in the Shell," and the film's presentation is more viewer-friendly than the original. If you aren't familiar with the animated film or the source material, you'll be able to see and understand this movie with little to no problem.

In fact, the presentation of New Port City is one of the film's most beautiful aspects. Buildings are covered with CGI advertisements, and the music during these scenes is suitably techno-infused. These elements, combined with the cybernetic enhancements found on many individuals, both come together to create an interesting futuristic tone. It's fairly light-hearted, and when combined with some of the darker story elements regarding technology, they make a nice contrast.

While the original film was largely centered around the Major's pursuit of a hacker known as "The Puppet Master," this film mostly focuses on Major's pursuit of a new enemy. Much of the story also focuses on Major herself: more specifically her human

side clashing with her robotic side. The personal crisis she faces includes questions about technology in the future, and questions about her own origins.

It's a shame then that the film never really explores these interesting themes beyond giving us simple answers to advance the plot. The first and second acts of the film are relatively free of this, but the third act is when these problems become noticeable.

There's some interesting ideas regarding the ethics of the technology shown in the film and how it's applied to humans, but this territory goes largely untouched. Instead, we get an action-filled finale that largely ignores these interesting themes. It's not a huge complaint, (the first two acts make up for the third's shortcomings) but when a film goes down an interesting path, only to steer clear into more generic territory, it can be frustrating.

Despite some of the film's

controversy over whitewashing, Scarlett Johansson gives a great performance here. As a rising action star in the past few years, she makes no exception here, and also succeeds at portraying a conflicted woman not entirely comfortable in her own skin. She seems more like a human attempting to discover her robotic side, rather than the other way around. Also great here is Pilou Asbæk as Batou, one of the officers under Major's command. Despite his large demeanor, he often projects a light-heartedness that helps even out the often dark film.

This version of "Ghost in the Shell" made a wise choice by not being a full remake of the original film. While this film strays away from the original in terms of plot, it remains similar in the powerful themes found throughout, despite a shaky third act. The first two acts are enough to make up for it however, and combined with great performance from the two leads, it leads to a film that is able to competently stand on its own.

NETFLIX EXCLUSIVE

# 'Iron Fist' is yet another product of the ever-underwhelming Marvel machine

By TYLER CALLAHAN

With "The Defenders" coming out in the fall, Netflix has released the last show needed to pave the way for it, "Iron Fist". However, that road is paved with quite a few bumps and creates a lukewarm excitement for the team up of the rest of the members.

"Iron Fist" is about the Marvel comic book character Danny Rand (Finn Jones), heir to the Rand Corporation who returns to New York after 15 years of being away learning kung-fu and becoming the Iron Fist. Being back in the city, he tries to find out who was behind the plane crash that killed his parents while dealing with a criminal organization called the Hand. To do so, Danny enlists his friends Colleen Wing (Jessica Henwick) and Claire Temple (Rosario Dawson).

Overall "Iron Fist" is a mixed bag that had the opportunity to be great. The good parts about it are the characters, as well as some of the fighting and the overall plot. For the most part most of the characters were interesting and developed really well with good performances, including Colleen Wing, Harold Meachum

(David Wenham) and Ward Meachum (Tom Pelphrey), who became one of my personal favorites by the end of season. Surprisingly the weakest character is the hero himself, Danny Rand, who, due to the writing, is inconsistent at worst and mostly boring at best. There were quite a few episodes where the other characters stood out more than Danny himself and considering the show is supposed to be about him, that's an issue.

For a show that is based on kung-fu fighting, you would think that the fighting would be exceptional. . . yeah it's not. There are some great fight scenes spread out across the season, but some of them are a bit sloppy and one in particular was so poorly edited that it looked like it came out of one of the later Taken movies. The plot on the other hand was mostly good with some twists and turns and a bit of mystery that makes you want to immediately watch the next episode.

The biggest failing of the show however is the writing which hurts the characters the most. For example, some character's motivations change for no reason and you question why, as it doesn't make sense. While it doesn't hurt the overall plot, it is something



Source: comingsoon.net

that sticks out and takes you out of enjoying the show a bit. Danny Rand is the character that suffers the most as the writing makes him go through a badass kung fu guy knocking out security guards one minute, then panicking the next for no reason. Finn Jones does his best with the script given to him, as when he's fighting or making a joke, it works well but the immediate mood swings the character goes through are just terrible to watch.

"Iron Fist" is a show of wasted potential, with some good mixed in it. If you are a Marvel fan and have watched the other Marvel Netflix series or just want a decent show to kill some time then "Iron Fist" is a good watch. With "The Defenders" coming out in a few months, I do hope Danny Rand's character is better developed and that a second season with these issues fixed is possible.

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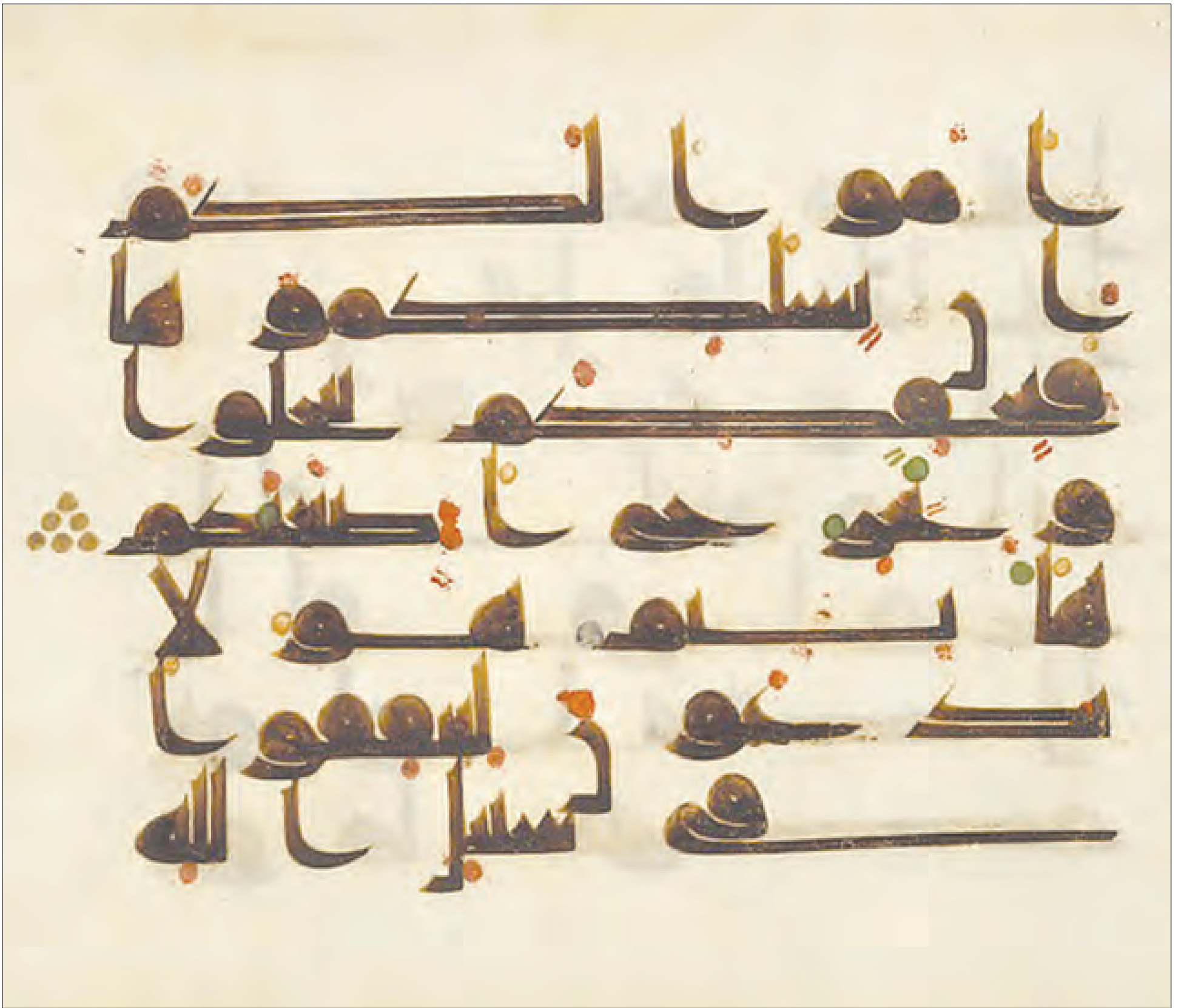


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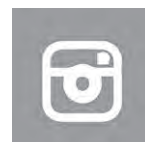
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Jonathan Peters / Albany Student Press

## UPCOMING HOME EVENTS:

- 4/5: Softball - Cornell
- 4/14: Softball - UMBC
- 4/4: Baseball - Marist
- 4/5: Baseball - LIU Brooklyn
- 4/8: M Lacrosse - UMBC
- 4/5: W Lacrosse - Vermont

## NATIONAL SPORTS

# Preview of the 2017 Mets and Yankees

By OMAR NOUJOUR

It may not feel like spring on the University at Albany campus, but baseball season is upon us. As the majority of students hail from the state of New York, the Albany Student Press feels it's appropriate to give a sneak peek of what to expect for the Mets and the Yankees in the 2017 MLB season. The two New York teams are coming off a year in which they combined to play in just one playoff game. It was a major step back from the excitement surrounding the Mets run to the World Series in 2015. This season, both clubs hope to ride their young talent into October.

### Mets

#### Mets Projected Opening Day Lineup

Jose Reyes 3B  
Asdrubal Cabrera SS  
Yoenis Cespedes LF  
Curtis Granderson CF  
Neil Walker 2B  
Jay Bruce RF  
Lucas Duda 1B  
Travis d'Arnaud C

#### Noah Syndergaard SP

Jacob deGrom SP  
Matt Harvey SP  
Zack Wheeler SP  
Robert Gsellman SP

**Mets X-Factor:** Trio of pitchers Zack Wheeler, Robert Gsellman, and Seth Lugo. We all know about the star-studded Mets rotation and its sky-high potential. It wasn't too long ago that Jacob deGrom, Matt Harvey, Noah Syndergaard and Wheeler were supposed to take the league by storm. But injuries and inconsistency derailed that

dream. However, the Mets will be relying on the trio of Wheeler, Gsellman, and Lugo as a fallback option should deGrom, Harvey, and Syndergaard get bitten by the injury bug. It's a rare occurrence for a starting pitcher to make it through a full season without missing a start, which makes pitching depth more important than ever. The Mets are set to open the season with two of the three in their starting rotation (Wheeler & Gsellman). It's also looking like Lugo, who pitched for Puerto Rico in the World Baseball Classic, may earn a spot in the bullpen. These three will need to pitch a lot of quality innings in 2017 if the boys of Queens want to make a third straight playoff appearance.

**Stud of the Year:** Jacob deGrom, SP- Will the real Jacob deGrom please stand up? 2017 will mark the return to form of one of the MLB's top pitchers. The 28-year-old pitcher fell victim to injuries and bad luck in 2016, finishing the season with just seven wins. This spring, deGrom has come out looking fresh and throwing hard, with his fastball sitting at 95-96 miles per hour, as opposed to the 90-91 range we saw last spring. Noah Syndergaard may be the biggest name in the Mets rotation, but deGrom will serve as a dominant No. 2 starter.

**Dud of the Year:** Travis d'Arnaud, C- Once a highly-touted prospect, it's been difficult for the Mets brass to give up on d'Arnaud all together. The 2017 season may serve as the last straw for the 28-year-old catcher. His awful throwing ability has already been in the spotlight during spring training, and if he can't become a more consistent hitter, his roster spot may be in serious jeopardy.

**Prediction-** It's not possible to predict who will get hurt during the long MLB

season. The Mets have the pitching to be a World Series contender, but inconsistency in the lineup could hold them back.

89-73, second place in NL East

### Yankees

#### Yankees Projected Opening Day Lineup

Brett Gardner LF  
Gary Sanchez C  
Greg Bird 1B  
Matt Holliday DH  
Jacoby Ellsbury CF  
Starlin Castro 2B  
Chase Headley 3B  
Aaron Judge RF  
Ronald Torreyes SS

#### Masahiro Tanaka SP

CC Sabathia SP  
Michael Pineda SP  
Luis Severino SP  
Bryan Mitchell SP

**Yankees X-Factor:** Bullpen- Aroldis Chapman is back in pinstripes, once again giving the Yankees the best one-two bullpen punch in the game. Like his setup man Dellin Betances, Chapman is nearly automatic with the game on the line. After a nasty contract dispute in the offseason, Betances will pitch with an added chip on his shoulder. There are question marks about whether the Yankees starting rotation will be able to give these two a chance to shine, however. One thing is for certain: If the Yankees are leading after seven innings, they'll be tough to beat.

**Stud of the Year:** Gary Sanchez, C- Lets be real. Gary Sanchez is not going to hit 60 home runs this season (roughly his pace in 2016 after getting called up in the summer). Still, The Kraken, as he's nick-

named, is going to be one of the most exciting players to watch in 2017. Sanchez burst onto the scene in the second half of 2016, smacking 20 home runs in just 53 games. His swing isn't pretty, but it does the trick. He'll move to the second spot in the lineup this season with the hope of cementing his status as one of the best catchers in the game.

**Dud of the Year:** Michael Pineda, SP- Here we are, still waiting for Michael Pineda to put it all together for a full season. When he came over from Seattle in 2012, he had all the makings of being the next great Yankee ace. Following surgery that same year, he hasn't come close to living up to expectations. He has electric stuff, but can't figure out how to keep the ball in the yard (yielded 27 homers in 2016). Could Yankee Stadium be part of the problem? That certainly could be the case. Regardless, Pineda many not be in pinstripes for much longer.

**Prediction-** There's reason to believe the Yankees can improve on their 84 wins from a season ago. There's also reason to suggest that they could take a step back in 2017. The front office made the decision to get a lot younger through trades, which has set the Bronx Bombers up for dominance in the coming years. The retirements of Marx Teixeira and Alex Rodriguez have also allowed the Yankees to move on. The future is bright, but a lot of their star prospects aren't ready to make it to the big leagues yet. The Chicago Cubs' recent success with such a young team should give the Yankees confidence going forward. But we aren't there yet, and playing in the MLB's most competitive division will hurt the Yankees in 2017. 81-81, 3rd in AL East

## HOME WIN

# Softball Sweeps Rival in 11-3 Win Over Siena

By ROBERT LEPELSTAT

The University at Albany softball team hosted its first home game of the 2017 season, defeating rival Siena 11-3 at Albany Field on Wednesday afternoon in the first game of a doubleheader.

"We were very happy to finally get on our home field today and play," said Chris Cannata, head coach of UAlbany. "We need to build on today and take that momentum into this weekend when we open up conference play."

After more than a month of playing on the road, including two separate trips to Florida and another to Puerto Rico, the Great Danes returned to Albany for their first home stand of 2017.

Siena jumped out to an early 2-0 lead after Madysen Cossack drilled a two-run homer off of UAlbany's Bailey Turner. In the bottom of the inning, junior outfielder Donna Conrad blasted a three-run shot over the centerfield

fence to give the Great Danes a 3-2 lead.

Siena responded with a Loryn DeFalco double to left center field and an Amanda Dodson single two batters later to tie the game up at 3.

After Siena's Amanda Dodson drove in a run to tie the game at 3, the Great Danes exploded for five runs in the bottom of the second inning. After a Mackenzie Cleary walk to lead off the inning, Bump hit a two-run home run. Three batters later, Snow smacked a Maddie McMahon pitch over the fence to clear the bases, giving UAlbany a 8-3 lead on its third homerun of the game.

Snow, one of the most decorated batters in UAlbany softball history, leads UAlbany batting .368 with six home runs and 20 RBIs on the season.

In the bottom of the third, UAlbany put the game out of reach when Conrad blasted another homer. The two homers were Conrad's first two of the season.

UAlbany played the Saints again immediately after.

UAlbany's offense overpowered the Saints en route to a 7-2 victory.

The Great Danes launched three more home runs in the second game off the bats of Bump, Kelly Spear, and Kelly Barkevich. Spear and Barkevich made history Wednesday, hitting the first home runs of their respective careers with UAlbany.

Pitcher Celeste Verdolivo earned the win for the Great Danes, striking out two batters while allowing four hits over five innings.

Wednesday's wins were the first two of nine straight home games for the Great Danes over the next week. Because of field conditions, UAlbany had its Saturday doubleheader with Stony Brook moved to Sunday. UAlbany lost both games to the Seawolves by final scores of 7-5 and 5-2.