



RELIGION

Uproar Over Proposed Religious Holiday Nix



Credit: Shabbos House

Students soon may have to go to class on days like Rosh Hashanah, a Jewish holiday.

By **EMILY AUCOMPAUGH**

University at Albany officials are considering removing all breaks for religious holidays by next year, a change that comes with a long history of debate at the university.

The Office of the Registrar argued that the proposal would

make scheduling classes easier and more in line with state law, while religious groups on campus decried the loss of holiday recognition.

Registrar Karen Chico Hurst said that the calendar committee of the office recently proposed the removal of religious holidays to the university adminis-

tration.

Chico Hurst said the change, if approved, would put the school's calendar in line with the state's government calendar, allowing the school to better comply with state laws.

New York state laws require the university to hold 15 weeks of classes a semester.

When the academic

schedule fails to meet the 15-week requirement, starting and finishing dates of fall and spring semesters must be moved around, which in turn impacts the starting dates of the winter and summer sessions.

By removing all religious holidays from the calendar, the committee hopes to create a more

predictable calendar that aligns better with other universities and colleges.

The decision would remove class suspensions on the holidays of Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Passover, and Easter.

Not everyone is happy with the proposal. "I'm very disappointed for both attend-

See **HOLIDAYS** page 2

FACILITIES

Plans for Greater Campus Access

By **PHILIP DOWNES**

The University at Albany will begin work to make the campus more accessible by installing an elevator and ramps from the Podium to the Lecture Centers beginning next summer.

Long terms plans have been drafted for a multi-year project which includes new ramps and an extension of the current Lecture Center elevators, according to John Giarrusso, associate vice president of Facilities Management.

The project is expected to take up to seven years.

"The university was made to be as accessible as possible when it was built back in the 1960s," said Giarrusso. "These plans will make major advances to keep our facilities up to date."

The stairs and ramps on the north side of the podium will be renovated to bring them up to ADA standards, while the existing elevator will be extended to bring access to the lecture centers from the podium directly.

Under these plans, the most accessible way for students with mobility issues to access the LCs will be right outside the main library, according to Carolyn Malloch, director of the Disability Resource Center.

LCs one and two will go under renovation to start the project next summer.

Some students with mobility issues have noted concerns with the campus' facilities accessibility, including Elizabeth McCormick, a freshman with cerebral palsy.

"I had to try a couple of different routes before I could actually get down to the lecture centers for my classes," said McCormick. McCormick stated that the door-opening

See **ACCESS** page 3

REPORTER'S EXPERIENCE

SA's Fright Night: From Fun to Terror

Reporter recounts being grabbed unexpectedly

By **MICHELLE MULLEN**

Shocked, uneasy, and anxious. These are words that describe how I felt leaving the doors of the haunted house at Student Association's fright night held in Dippikill earlier this month.

As I walked down the dark hallway zig-zagging room-to-room through various spaces of scares and challenges, I was enthralled by the commitment that the students had put into scaring us. Boy did they succeed. I was shaking, my adrenaline pumping through the roof. By the last room, I was shaking for a different reason.

As we moved through the hallway, I suddenly felt someone much larger than I wrap around me from behind. Before I could even process what was going on, I was pulled back into an open closet.

I stood there uncomfortably as someone hosting the haunted house stood behind me, the back of my body pressed against the front of his. His hand was sprawled over my face, covering parts of my cheek, mouth and nose. The other hand wrapped my body from the front, keeping my arms tight, making me unsuccessful as I tried to unfold his hand from my face. Throughout this episode his lips

were inches from my ear, whispering, "Shh" over and over just made it worse.

I was so nervous, I felt like I couldn't breathe. In my efforts to get away, he made it clearer I had to stay, never going out of character, his voice deep and raspy as he told me I had to stay, not once telling me that this was part of the act. Finally realizing I was gone, my boyfriend came back and peered into the opening of the closet, realizing what was going on, and yanked me out of the hold that I was stuck in.

As I stood there, in a moment that lasted over a minute, my mind was forced to flood with a memory that I had pushed and locked away into the deepest section of my mind. Although it did not go further than what I had described, I was forced to face feelings that I was not ready to let free of a moment with a similar beginning but a very different ending.

I have never publicly shared a secret that nine years later I have still not come to terms with. The event that occurred in the haunted house that night forced me to face feelings and facts that I was not ready to let free. I stood there, in that closet, barely breathing, having flashbacks to the moment that as a young teen, I was sexually assaulted.

What occurred to me in the house did

"I stood there, in that closet, barely breathing, having flashbacks to the moment that I was sexually assaulted as a young teen."



Source: UAlbany Student Association

SA and UAlbany's chapter of Iota Phi Theta, Inc. hosted Fright Night on Oct. 12.

See **FRIGHT NIGHT** page 2

SA FINANCES

Extended Debate Over SA's Custom T-Shirts



CHAD ARNOLD/ ASP

ABOVE: The agreed upon senate T-shirts seen from back.
RIGHT: Sen. Shapiro.



By CHAD ARNOLD

Student Association debated whether personalizing \$1,500 in senate T-shirts was unfair to student groups before agreeing on a final design Wednesday night.

The debate set a precedent, according to Jeffrey Shapiro, chair of the Appropriations Committee, who spoke against customizing the T-shirts with the names of each senator.

"We're holding everyone else to a higher standard than we are ourselves," Shapiro said during the debate. "Keep in mind people are upset that we're getting these T-shirts."

Apparel is not prohibited under SA rules, but there are strict guidelines for any student group

looking to purchase uniforms or promotional apparel, especially if said apparel is "being customized for individuals in the organization."

Groups must receive prior approval from the Comptroller's office before purchasing any form of apparel, according to the Treasurer's Handbook, SA's must-know rules for any student groups looking to spend allocated funds.

The office can either approve the purchase, deny with reason, or outright deny the request using the principles of viewpoint neutrality.

Customizing senate T-shirts would make it difficult for SA to deny a similar request from a student group going forward, according to Shapiro.

"It is going to be a double-

standard the second we say no to a student group who wants this," he said.

Several senators argued SA is different from other student groups on campus because members of the organization are elected officials.

"Some instances we should be holding ourselves to a higher standard, some instances we stay the same standard, and some instances we have to have a little bit more privileges to act as a government body," said Brandon Holdridge, SA senate chair, following Wednesday's debate.

Shapiro disagreed. "If anything, we should beholden ourselves to a higher standard since we're the ones distributing this money," he said.

SA's budget is divided into two parts: an internal operating budget and an external budget, which funds over 120 student groups.

Both portions of the estimated \$2.7 million total budget are funded from student activity fee money, a mandatory \$110 per semester fee for students taking six or more credits.

Money to purchase the T-shirts was approved by SA's senate in May along with funding for polo shirts for the organization's Executive branch.

The T-shirts will serve as a uniform for senators during SA sponsored events with the hope of increasing the organization's visibility on campus, according to Holdridge.

"I want to get the word out that

we have senators and that they actually exist, and that they can do good for you," he said. "The biggest thing that you will always hear every single year of your life here is that no one knows what this student government does."

"I would like to set the record straight by having senators actual have these shirts on and going out into campus."

Last year, SA did not purchase T-shirts until late in the spring semester, something Holdridge said "served no purpose."

"We will actually have an opportunity for it to serve what it is actually supposed to be used for, as a uniform," Holdridge said. "We actually have some use for the \$1,500 we're spending."

HOLIDAYS

Continued from Page 1.

ing and prospective Jewish students," said Rabbi Nomi Manon, a leader in the Interfaith Center, who explained Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur are the holiest holidays in the Jewish faith.

"It's a big draw for Jewish students attending this school that they get these days off to observe and be with their families," he said. "It makes a negative statement about how our school campus supports religious diversity."

UAlbany is currently in the minority on the issue of giving students off for these holidays.

Out of all 64 schools in the SUNY system, the only universities who have Jewish holidays off are UAlbany, Binghamton, Oswego, Nassau Community College, and Rockland Community College.

"One of the reasons I chose this campus," said Riva Taksir, a Jewish junior, "was because of the strong Jewish presence. I always felt that I was supported and that the holidays were respected."

Sandy Damhof, pastor of Cornerstone Campus Ministry, agreed with Manon.

She said the proposal was in line with the recent controversial relocation of the Inter-

faith Center into a smaller space on campus.

"I think all of this sends a message to the students about what the school really cares about," said Damhof.

According to Chico Hurst, the problem most focus groups have pointed out is how to tell students of the changes without them interpreting it as administration taking away students' religious rights.

"Students and faculty need to know there are other alternatives that allow them to observe their religious holidays without penalization."

UAlbany currently adheres to section 224-A of the New York State Education Law, under Title IX, which states that no student can be expelled or refused admission due to missing days because of their religious beliefs.

The law also states that students missing class due to their religious beliefs are excused from any examination or work on that particular day or days.

The Registrar's Office has suggested providing faculty and students with a list of all religious holidays and days of observance so that they could know when to excuse students.

Farzana Nazrana, a Muslim junior, already has to attend classes during the 30-day fast of Ramadan.

"I'm against the school taking away holidays from the Jews and other religions," said Nazrana. "They need time to celebrate, and I think Muslims should get time off for this as well."

According to The Instructional Year Calendar of the University at Albany (2012), the practice of suspending classes for Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur and Passover/Easter began in 1980, after being proposed inconsistently for 10 years previous.

The 1980 bill from the University's Council on Educational Policy said holidays were needed because of scheduling conflicts.

These included the need for earlier suspension of classes to allow for travel before Jewish holidays, the need for a later start to classes on the day after Easter, and the necessity, in some years, for faculty to submit grades on Christmas Eve.

In 2004, The University Life Council introduced a bill to suspend classes for two major Muslim holidays, Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha.

This proposal went unapproved by the Council on Educational Policy for the 2005-06 calendar amidst concerns that, "other religious groups would follow suit and request recognition of their religious ceremonies by designating school holidays..."

A similar bill to eliminate the suspension of any religious holidays was proposed in 2005 in response to this issue. However, it was ultimately dismissed by former UAlbany president Kermit Hall due to the "closely divided vote by the Senate," along with a lack of representation in the university's undergraduate population.

Despite the turbulent history, Chico Hurst has made it clear her main goal in this decision is to improve the quality of education for students.

"The first six weeks is vital to a students' academic retention," said Chico Hurst, "and students in different sections of the same class get on unequal footing [due to class suspensions of religious holidays]."

No final decisions have been made thus far.

FRIGHT NIGHT

Continued from Page 1

not go according to the way SA and the Iota Phi Theta Fraternity, Inc. had planned the scene to go. SA president Langie Cadesca explained that the haunted house was supposed to end with a game. A member of the house planned to pull an unassuming guest away from the group in an attempt for

the rest of them to realize later that someone was missing. In theory, it is an interesting plan. In reality, the plan resulted in a much darker fear than they could have imagined.

Not once did SA mention that there would be any human contact in the haunted house. There was

not even a mention in the waiver.

In an effort to find out if anyone felt or experienced what I had gone through, I sent out emails to attendees of Fright Night. Of the five girls that answered back, four asked not to be named. Certain words jumped out at me as I read the emails: "Uncomfortable,"

"shocked," "disorganized." None of them knew that they would even be touched, and all of them who experienced this type of contact were uneasy after leaving the house.

Cadesca confirmed to me that no training session had been held, no do's and don'ts had been

discussed. No one expected what happened to me to happen, but no one prevented it from happening in the first place. I was shocked that in today's age where consent is discussed so widely, we would not be alerted that contact was allowed.

COME TO OUR NEXT NEWS NIGHT
WEDNESDAY 7 P.M.
CAMPUS CENTER 326

STUDENT ASSOCIATION

SA To Fill Vacant Seats in Fall Special Election



CHAD ARNOLD / ASP

By CHAD ARNOLD & NICHOLAS SHERMAN

The Student Association is looking to fill nine vacancies in a special election following a string of resignations, impeachments and a lack of interest from candidates in the fall election.

With four at-large seats to fill and one seat for Freedom, Liberty, off-campus and business, the Nov. 7 election will be the largest special election in the last four years.

The number of seats up for grabs could potentially increase by the time the election comes around.

Senators are permitted to miss just three weekly senate meetings a year without an excuse before being removed

from office, according to SA bylaws.

Attendance records show Carlos McArthur of Alumni Quad, has two-and-a-half unexcused absences while Anderson Solano, and off-campus senator, is up to two.

Senate chair Brandon Holdridge There's a large interest in the vacant seats, according to Brandon Holdridge, SA's senate chair, who hopes the special election coinciding with the midterms elections will drum up "a little bit more energy" from the student body.

Voter turnout in the fall election was down 32 percent compared to last year.

Seats on Freedom, Liberty and off-campus were went unfilled during the election.

Holdridge points to a smaller-than-usual Election Commission as reason for the low turnout.

"We will have a stronger team who will go out and get a higher turnout by increasing advertisement," Holdridge said of the fully restocked Commission. He's also hoping SA will work more closely with ResLife to increase turnout.

Students looking to run in the special election have until noon on Wednesday Oct. 24 to submit their nomination forms.

Voting will take place on MyInvolvement between noon Nov. 7 until noon Nov. 9.

CRIME BLOTTER

BURGLARY 2ND DEGREE: ILLEGAL ENTRY- DWELLING

10/18/2018
Alumni Quad- Pierce Hall
Report of stolen Apple Watch.

DEFENDANT FAILS TO APPEAR IN COURT AFTER SUMMONS SERVED

10/18/2018
Off-Campus- Other
A male subject was arrested for an active Bench Warrant with this agency. Was never stopped, claims false impersonation.

Fire Alarm

10/18/2018
State Quad- Irving Hall
Caused by hair straightener.

POSSESS FORGED INSTRUMENT-3RD

10/17/2018
Indian Quad- Mohawk Tower
Report of two male students

in possession of forged IDs. Referrals were made.

Vehicle Towed

10/17/2018
Roadways- CQ Lot
Report of unpaid parking tickets. Vehicle towed.

CRIMINAL MISCHIEF 3RD:DAMAGE THE MOTOR VEHICLE OF ANOTHER

10/16/2018
(10/11/2018)
Other- UPD
Report of a vehicle being keyed.

FORGERY 1ST: GOVT ISSUED MONEY/ STAMPS/SECURITIES

10/16/2018
Podium- Campus Center
Report of counterfeit money.

PETIT LARCENY

10/15/2018
Liberty Terrace- LT North
Report of a stolen bicycle.

Title IX Referral

10/15/2018
Indian Quad- Seneca Hall
Report of a male student being harassed.

FORCIBLE TOUCHING OF ANOTHERS SEXUAL/INTIMATE PARTS

10/14/2018
Indian Quad- Seneca Hall
Report of a male student being harassed.

AGGRAVATED UNLICENSED OPERATION MOTOR VEHICLE-1ST DEGREE

10/14/2018
Roadways- Washington Avenue
Report of a male subject driving while intoxicated. An arrest was made and vehicle was towed.

CRIMINAL POSSESSION OF MARIHUANA- 5TH DEGREE:PUBLIC PLACE

10/14/2018
Other- Indian Pond
Report of a male student in possession of marihuana and marihuana paraphernalia. A referral was made.

CRIM POSS CONTRL SUBST

10/14/2018
State Quad- Eastman Tower
Report of a male student in possession of a controlled substance, marihuana and marihuana paraphernalia. An arrest was made.

Fire Alarm

10/14/2018
State Quad- Eastman Tower
Caused by hookah smoke.

Crisis Intervention

10/13/2018
Dutch Quad- Stuyvesant Tower
Report of a male student harming himself. Transported to hospital by 5 Quad.

Assist Other PD

10/13/2018
Roadways- Western Ave
Assisted Guilderland PD.

Animal Report

10/13/2018
PE Complex- Field Other
Report of a large animal on campus. Nothing found.

CRIM NUISANCE 2-CREATE CONDITIONS WHICH ENDANGER OTHERS

10/12/2018 Alumni Quad- Pierce Hall
Report of a male student covering a smoke detector and in possession of marihuana. A referral was made.

ACCESS

Continued from Page 1.

buttons in the lecture centers are a problem for her as well, which has led her to feel hesitant when traveling to classes alone.

Malloch reasons that the university can only fix accessibility issues that are reported directly to them, and that repairs are usually completed within half an hour to an hour of the initial report.

Accessibility has long been a con-

cern for students on campus.

Last April, SA senator Chloe Blaise said the university was not adequately accessible to students with mobility issues.

"These plans are aimed to making the campus more accessible for students, faculty and guests alike," Giarrusso said. "We want to have as many people able to navigate the campus comfortable as possible."



PHILLIP DOWNES / ASP

LIBRARY

Printing Pandemonium: Ignoring Student's Complaints

By MATTHEW MIRRO

I have been a student at the University at Albany for more than two years now. Like any school, the university has its issues and, while I, like everyone, have found those issues to be beyond irritating. However, I have never felt more slighted by the school, its policies or its priorities than I was following an incident this past Thursday.

I had gone to the University Library in hopes of printing out an assignment due in a few hours. I specifically went in the middle of a class block to beat the traffic and make my visit as quick and painless as possible. However, this proved impossible when I realized half of the printing computers were completely broken and the other half were seemingly operating at minimum speed. Lines were forming in the otherwise quiet and empty library and no one seemed to care.

For half an hour I darted back and forth between the only three working computers only to exchange stressed,

angry looks with the others waiting for the same service. This wasn't anything new but I was disturbed that the obvious issue congesting the building didn't seem to move the needle whatsoever on the library employees.

At one point, I found myself next to the IT help desk, where students were lined up waiting for assistance. At this moment, I noticed an IT student employee slip away from the desk and towards the doors leading downstairs. A friend of his, evident by their first name basis relationship came up to this anonymous employee and said "Dude the printing computers aren't working." In response to this, the employee shushed his friend, as though the secret wasn't already an open one, and then stunned me by telling him he'd take him to the back of the office where the workers had their own printer. Seeing an employee decide to give special treatment rather than address the issue for everyone I asked "What about the rest of us", and was



MIRRO

ignored.

Moments later, a young woman asked this same IT employee how to use the machine that would put a dollar on her card for printing. When the student began showing her what to do, I informed the women that the printers were not working and that

she was about to waste a dollar that could be put to better use, advice she seemed happy to receive but in the same breath angered the employee who demanded to know what I needed. My response was simple: I told him that when students pay for something, they should expect it to work.

To be clear, I have a printer in my room at home, right next to my bed. It was my own forgetfulness that necessitated a trip to the library in the first place. But when students rely on these services, half the equipment being totally disabled just doesn't cut it, especially when the University makes us pay to use them.

I am also aware that the particular student who I came in conflict with could not possibly be expected to repair the downed technology at that minute. That wasn't what I was asking. I took issue with the library's obvious apathy towards the situation, it's employee's willingness to give a friend special treatment rather

than attempt to fix the problem for everyone, and then its willingness to take money from a student when they knew she wouldn't get what she paid for in a timely manner. The least that employee could have done was inform the young woman that it may be best to wait for right now, or tell her they're experiencing a high volume of students with crippled equipment, which was the case.

UAlbany, like all centers of learning, should exist only for the sole benefit of the student body. Continuous issues with the WiFi, the dorm conditions or the device functions places the students at a disadvantage and, while some professors understand that things happen many will not be lenient regardless of circumstances. When it comes to services we are expected to pay for with money from our own pocket, on top of the astronomical amounts of money each and every one of us have already funneled into the school, the least we can expect is that they be operational when we need them.



JOE HOFFMAN / ASP

Want to take photos of campus for us?

Email our photo director Dalia Yan at photodirector.asp@gmail.com



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SUPREME COURT

About Kavanaugh: Don't Be Dissatisfied. Be Angry.

By **LIAM A. JEFFERIES**

Brett Kavanaugh, the Supreme Court nominee now infamous for sexual assault allegations made against him, is officially a Supreme Court Justice. Despite a personal defense that could have only been dreamt up by an overly entitled white guy and the intense protests that occurred as a result, he's now a justice in a new conservative Supreme Court majority, the worst-case scenario for women and minorities the country over now fearing the loss of their hard-fought rights.

Any astute political observer shouldn't be surprised by this. While, once upon a time, the whims of a vocal majority may have been headed by those in power, the GOP, in the age of Donald Trump, has already shown that this doesn't concern them. Literally every attempt by the GOP over the past two years to pass laws and regulations that hurt those who aren't rich, white, and male shows this apathy, so to expect Republicans like Susan Collins to suddenly turn around and defy the wishes of their own party and listen to constituents is a fool's errand.

People are right to feel disappointed that this is what our democracy has devolved into. But I'd personally be much more than disappointed, for to say you're disappointed implies that you expected a different result. It implies that you expected congressional Republicans to listen to those protesting with all their might when that was never going to happen, for no matter how much Republicans like Jeff Flake grandstanded on giving accusers like Dr. Ford a chance to say their side of the story, deep down, you knew they would completely disregard Kavanaugh's accusers the moment that Republican representatives were out of the spotlight.

With this in mind, don't be disappointed about the possibility of a non-existent result; be angry that congressional Republicans rigged the game so that this was the ONLY possible result. This shouldn't be a case where people look disdainfully at Republican senators and say, publicly or in their minds, "I expected better from you." They were never going to be better than what they are now. The vote was never going to be more than a party-line vote, and the Republican majority was going to make Brett Kavanaugh a Supreme Court Justice whether people liked it or not. The only possible reason that a person could have expected different is if that person had not watched or heard anything political in the past two years, which, considering how much Trump appears in the news, is almost impossible.

So be angry that Republicans rigged the system the way they did. But don't use this anger indirectly or sporadically. While a good protest or Twitter rant may allow you to let off some steam, it won't do much if Republican representatives aren't listening to the people in the first place. So instead of this, keep your anger, for we are only a month away from being able to express it in a more productive way at the polls. Come Nov. 6, we have the opportunity to express our anger in the ballot box and, as a result, vote out the Republicans behind this circumvention of democracy in the first place. Only if we focus our collective anger in this way can we have representatives and senators who listen to the people instead of party heads and, as a result, respond to public protests of "we don't want this" not with belittlement, but with open minds.

So, disappointed by Brett Kavanaugh's confirmation? Be angry on Nov. 6 instead.

VOTING

Millennials Must Embrace Their Political Power This Midterm

By **AARON GINSBERG**

Midterm elections are a time to reassess the state of politics in our nation and reinforce the structure of our government. The focus of political affairs are temporarily refocused on the lesser known, but just as important, federal, state, and local positions. In these times of turmoil, midterm elections are as important as ever. The controversial nomination of Brett Kavanaugh to the Supreme Court has further empathized the dire need for millennial participation in elections, and the push against political corruption and interference. We now have Chad from Barstool Sports as a Supreme Court judge because we allowed twisted old politicians with dated ideologies to make decisions for a changing world.

To strengthen the nation, we must have politicians who are suitable for the times. It doesn't make sense to elect politicians who are coming on 80 years of age to efficiently combat complex

issues like sexuality, religion, and race. Individuals who have grown up in these times and who have experience with these new, daunting issues are perfect candidates for the job, but are being defeated by people who perpetrate the same dated, destructive practices. These individuals have an easier time getting elected because they are supported by people like them who already hold positions in the government. This is why voting is so incredibly important, because it's the only way we can secure a promising future. A large amount of people may believe a certain way and want change, but it means nothing without some political support. We have to have efficient yet fair representatives in our government who can rationally judge a situation and make decisions that benefit the majority.

Luckily enough, these midterm elections are the best opportunity we have to elect quality politicians into office. Instead of using the Electoral College to

determine the outcome of a vote, the popular vote is used. This way, there is no interference from members of the Electoral College who may have hidden agendas and would prefer one candidate over another for unrelated reasons. For these 2018 midterm elections, there are plenty of candidates who represent the millennial population, or the population who will grow to completely shape the nation.

One race in specific that stands out is between millennial Democratic Socialist Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and Republican Anthony Pappas. Earlier this year, Cortez staged an upset against incumbent Congressman Joe Crowley for the 14th Congressional district in New York City. Time magazine called it the, "Biggest Upset of 2018." Now, she is set to face Pappas in the Nov. 6 general election. The odds weigh heavily in Cortez's favor and have instilled hope into the hearts of fellow millennials who yearn for productive change in their nation and

representation in congress.

In Arizona, Rep. Krysten Sinema is running against fellow Republican Representative Martha McSally to replace Sen. Jeff Flake. After winning the Democratic nomination on Aug. 28, she is now the first openly bisexual person to win a nomination for a seat in the Senate. If she wins, she will be the second ever openly LGBTQ person to serve. This is just one example of a race that if won, would promote sexual equality and benefit the standing of millennials as a generation in the world's view. All in all, it is incredibly important that millennials do their research and go out and vote for their favorite candidates. This cannot be a choice made because someone told you so, it has to be one that you have uniquely developed and truly believe in. The world is changing, and must be allowed to grow naturally, without being restricted by ancient politicians who want to ride their term out to the very end.

CELEBRITY

Taylor Swift Was Right to Get Political on Social Media

By **KATY DARA**

Taylor Swift has never been one to publicly comment on politics. Until now.

The popstar, who is currently doing her sold-out world tour, took to Instagram on Oct. 7 with an important message for her 112 million followers:

"I'm writing this post about the upcoming midterm elections on November 6th, in which I'll be voting in the state of Tennessee. In the past I've been reluctant to publicly voice my political opinions, but due to several events in my life and in the world in the past two years, I feel very differently about that now."

She endorsed Democratic candidates and openly opposed Republican candidate Marsha Blackburn. Swift said that Blackburn's voting record "appalls and terrifies" her. Her concerns revolved around the protection of gender equality, LGBTQ rights, and racial discrimination. Swift declared these forms of discrimination to be "sickening and prevalent." The question is, should celebrities involve themselves in politics? In this case, the answer is yes.

Breaking her political

silence is perhaps the smartest move Taylor Swift could have made. According to Vote.org, in the 48 hours following the Instagram post, there was a spike in voter registration. In less than two days, more than 169,000 new people had registered to vote. By comparison, Vote.org added only 56,669 new voters during the whole month of August.

Researchers are now calling this registration spike "the Taylor Swift Effect." In addition, it allowed Swift to straighten out rumors that have been circling around her. During the 2016 election, the singer urged her fans to do their civic duty and vote, although she never specified a candidate or party. This began speculation that she supported Donald Trump. Even more extremely, a popular theory was that she was actually a white supremacist. The social media post shut down all of those rumors quickly.

Many were shocked by Swift's sudden outspokenness. Her fans rallied around the singer, aggressively supporting her decision. Several celebrities also voiced their support for Swift's decision to be



Source: Flickr

political, including her former feud partner Katy Perry and friend Todrick Hall. Rob Reiner praised the singer by saying, "You can single handedly change this country. Impress on your fans how critical and powerful their voices are. If you get them to the polls on Nov. 6, everything you care about will be protected."

Others criticized Swift for butting her nose into things that have nothing to do with her career. Trump Advisory Board member Madison Gesiotto tweeted, "I never looked to Taylor Swift for political advice and I don't plan to start now." President Trump declared that he likes Swift's music "25 percent-less now." Either way, her announcement has encouraged voter registration

amongst thousands of 18-30 year olds. This could prove to be especially prevalent in a red state like Tennessee.

This all comes after the tumultuous ordeal of Brett Kavanaugh's confirmation to the Supreme Court despite sexual assault allegations, as well as Swift being featured in TIME's 2017 Person of the Year issue as a "Silence Breaker" by winning a sexual assault court case in the wake of #MeToo. After totally transforming her image with the release of her album reputation in November, it's no surprise that Taylor Swift has chosen to voice her political opinions for the first time. With the midterm elections on Nov. 6, only time will tell if her efforts made actually a difference.

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WRITING

How to Take Advantage of Grammarly for Writing



Source: Pixabay

By **RAYMOND E. STRAWN III**

When I transferred to the University at Albany, I started using Grammarly Free. I highly recommend it for students. I use it regularly for class assignments, research papers, emails, etc. The grammar and spell check on Microsoft Word, a feature I have been using since high school, for over 15 years, misses a lot of mistakes that Grammarly Free picks up; such as, incorrect tense usage, improper word usage, and missing commas. However, when I tried using Grammarly Premium, more corrections were found, including suggestions for overused words,

word phrasing, passive voice, and using a preposition at the end of sentences. Students should consider using Grammarly Premium to help improve their grades on assignments and papers.

Grammarly is not perfect though. I am unsure for most students, but I write my assignments on Microsoft Word. It is a habit I've had, and I enjoy the formatting options on Word. You can write directly on Grammarly, but I do not do that. The issue becomes copying and pasting from Word to Grammarly. The formatting disappears after recopying the paper from Grammarly and back to Word. Examples are tabs after paragraphs, italicized words,

bullet points, etc. Therefore, I use Grammarly to identify the mistakes and switch over to Word to make corrections when I've used formatting. It is more time consuming this way, so I recommend writing directly on Grammarly if you can.

The other issue I have noticed is sometimes the suggestions can be off. Do not blindly click "correct" for every error. You'll have to read what the highlighted word or section of text Grammarly detected and read the sentence to make sure the suggestion makes sense. One thing I have noticed is, Grammarly hates overused words. However, sometimes your paper is about legal definitions or theories

and changing that repetitive word changes the entire meaning of your sentence. The other issue is, the suggestion for changing the repetitive word does not fit in the sentence. But Word has a thesaurus, or you can look online for another word to use. It is great to highlight overused words, but sometimes you'll have to do your own research on finding a better word to use.

Overall, students should utilize Grammarly Free. The program has a score on your paper; the highest is 100. My rough drafts usually range from a score of 78-94. Often, when I use Grammarly Free, I can get my score up to 88-97. On average, Grammarly Free informs

me I still have about 8-12 errors left. Switching over to Grammarly Premium helps me correct those last mistakes, especially my most common issue, passive voice. For a student with a lot of writing assignments, essays, and papers, Grammarly Premium is a great purchase. In fact, Grammarly has a 50 percent off deal for an annual subscription for students found at <https://gram.ly/HSJd>. Even if you can't afford Premium or don't want to pay and haven't tried Grammarly Free, it is worth trying. It could be the difference from a B paper to an A paper.

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FALL ACTIVITIES

Five Ways to Make the Most of Fall at College



Source: Max Pixel

By **JACKIE LABOUNTY**

Fall has finally come around again! The temperature is dropping, leaves are turning red, yellow, orange, and brown, and they are beginning to fall. Time to pack away our T-shirts, shorts, and sandals and to dig out our sweaters, scarfs, hats, and boots. It's that time of year and definitely one of the best seasons for themed food, events, and activities. Here are five things you can do here in Albany to celebrate fall.

1. Outdoor activities

Apples, apples, apples, it's the perfect time to get them! Some fun activities could be going apple picking. Start baking your favorite fall treats. Make your apples into pies, doughnuts, crisps, candied apples, and more. Get creative and use them for some party fun! How about an apple bobbing station. This will sure liven things up. West Shaker Farm is a great place to go apple picking. It's not too far from campus and it's easy to get there.

Try pumpkin carving; West Shaker Farm also sells pumpkins. It's pretty convenient, so why not get both while you're there? Decorate and design them in any spooky way you can imagine. Cut open the top, spoon out all the guts and seeds, and start carving. Put them around your dorm rooms or houses for decoration to show UAlbany your

Halloween spirit!

2. Fall food

Themed food and drinks are all around! Most restaurants are bound to have a scary special and deadly drinks. Try out the Cider Belly Doughnuts shop. It has the best apple cider doughnuts in Albany. Stop by and take a taste for yourself. Better go soon though, they sell out fast!

3. Costuming

Why not look around for some creepy costumes? Go out with some friends and walk around for candy. It's always best to go with a group of people. It's a lot safer and smarter. You can look scary, funny, creepy, matching or even stupid. On Halloween, there are no judgements! Everyone looks ridiculous, and that's the fun of it. Don't worry about what other people think or how you look, just have fun.

4. Downtown fall events

Albany itself holds so many events for students to go to during the season for some holiday fun. They have the Haunted History Pub Crawl. It's a tour of the history of Downtown Albany, that's followed by a paranormal pub

crawl. Albany also hosts The Murder at Cherry Hill. This is a creative tour showing the history of Albany's last public hanging. The Palace Theatre is also showing The Rocky Horror Picture Show, Hocus Pocus, and Scream! There's also an annual Halloween party at Washington Park Lakehouse. Have some fun with a live DJ, cider, a photo booth, prizes, and costumes.

5. University halloween events

Albany's Law School is holding their 8th annual 'Trick or Treat' Street presented by Phi Alpha Delta. This fraternity holds a fun family event on Halloween for anyone to come and enjoy themselves on October 31 from 5 to 7 p.m.. Here they have candy, games, and fun. You can also join your fellow Danes and come to the 1844 Restaurant in the Campus Center on Halloween, where they will have Halloween themed desserts being served.

Fall is the best time of year! So many great holidays are coming up. Halloween, Thanksgiving, and Christmas: what they have in common is that they always bring people together. Fall is the season where friends and families merge with one another to celebrate.

In the mindset of school, midterms are here and school is getting even harder. However, we need to take some time to enjoy ourselves. We can start by easing some of the stress. Let's go out and get festive!

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HOMEcoming

Homecoming: UAlbany vs. Towson



Below: Wide receiver Donovan McDonald runs a pass forward.
Dalia Yan / ASP



Photos by Dalia Yan / ASP

Above: The Danes prepare to snap the ball in the game against Towson.

Below, left: Juwan Green (No. 4), a junior from Martinsburg, West Virginia.

Below, right: Donovan McDonald (No. 83) evades Towson's offensive down the field Saturday.



PROFILE

A Placekicker Learning From The Best

How the Danes' Ethan Stark Learned To Kick A Football

By **ROB LEP**

The saying goes: to be the best, you have to learn from the best. University at Albany football's place kicker/punter Ethan Stark is no exception.

The redshirt senior was a Bears fan growing up. Fourteen-year NFL veteran and current 49ers kicker Robbie Gould, who spent eleven seasons in Chicago and is the franchise's all-time leading scorer, is a family friend and is actually the one who taught him how to kick.

They've even done some charity golf events together and still stay in touch.

Clearly, the lessons have paid off, at least for now. Through UAlbany's first five games of the 2018 season, Stark has been practically perfect.

9-for-10 on field goal attempts and the only PAT attempt he's missed was a blocked kick two weeks ago vs William and Mary.

At 6-foot-3, 218 lbs, he's hard to 'miss' too. And as the Great Danes senior placekicker, he's been 'not missing' on College Football Saturdays for years now. Just like any great NFL kicker, he doesn't get phased by the pressure either.

"I don't really think about much," Stark said. "...Just



Source: UAlbany Athletics

try to clear my mind, have one clear thought and put it through."

He's learned from Gould, an NFL vet. The logical next step, play on an NFL field.

UAlbany opened up the 2018 season versus Pittsburgh

at Heinz Field, also the home of the Pittsburgh Steelers. For the Eric, PA, native, he described it simple.

"It was pretty cool. Playing in an NFL stadium and all those people in the stands," Stark said.

Two weeks later, he'd have another 'pretty cool' moment — a career-long 51-yard field goal versus Morgan State in the home opener.

That kick was the encore for what he describes as the longest field goal he's ever made, a 58-yarder in training camp over the summer.

"That was the furthest one with a snap," Stark said. "I was excited!"

You'd be hard pressed to find someone who raves about Stark more than his head coach, Greg Gattuso. Now in his fifth year with the Great Danes, he actually recruited Stark back when he was a coach at Maryland.

"Great kid, great student, and great football player," Gattuso said. "We're gonna miss him when the time comes. He makes things really easy."

Watching kickers in big spots now, Stark is able to see where a player may have gone right or wrong on a kick.

He stresses the importance of the where the hip is pointing. If the right hip points right, so does the ball. His position also gives him more sympathy for others in the same line of work.

In the NFL, for every Graham Gano 63-yard game-winning field goal as time expires, there's the flip side — like Green Bay Packers kicker

Mason Crosby missing four field goals and an extra point in their 31-23 loss to the Lions last week.

"It's a tough job," Stark explained. "It's one of those things where if you do your job well, nobody really talks about it. If you do your job bad, everyone knows."

UAlbany currently sits at 2-5 on the year in 2018. They'll play Maine this weekend.

The Danes fell to the Black Bears 12-10 last season. Instead of Stark, it was the opposing kicker Brandon Briggs who played hero, nailing the 37-yard game winner early in the fourth quarter.

After that heartbreaker, UAlbany would go on to lose three of their last four to end the season.

The Purple and Gold are hoping the result will be different this time around, but for Stark, his pregame routine remains the same.

He likes to do the same drills before each game but he's never been very superstitious.

"Nothing crazy," Stark reassured. "I'm not one of those guys who has to put the same shoe on first or something like that.

To put it simply: so far, so good.



ALEXANDER HALSEY / ASP

Coach Gattuso engages a referee at UAlbany's homecoming loss against Towson on Oct. 20.

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WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

Danes Welcome Coach Mullen for Fall Rebound



SAM RUI / ASP

Heather Forster (No. 22) jumps for a rebound in January's game against Vermont. Forster returns to the Danes this season.

By SKYLER HELLER

For the last seven seasons, the University at Albany women's basketball team has done nothing but win. A lot.

Back in March, the Great Danes streak of six straight conference championships came to an end with a 58-56 loss to Hartford in the 2018 America East semifinals.

On top of that, it was announced during the offseason that head coach Joanna Bernabei McNamee, who led the program to a 2017 title, had left the Danes to take the head coaching position at Boston College.

UAlbany also said goodbye to five players including their top four scorers from last season (three graduates and two transfers). Guard Jes-

sica Fequiere graduated after leading the team in scoring one year ago with 17.3 points per game to go along with 6.1 rebounds.

Freshman guard Mackenzie Trpcic, who led the America East in assists with 6.5, transferred to UC Davis, currently in the Big West Conference.

To put it simply, the team that takes the floor for the season opener at the University of South Florida on Nov. 9 will be very different than years past.

New coach Colleen Mullen, who takes over after seven seasons with the Army Black Knights, is well aware.

"We don't know what the future will hold," Mullen said. "We lost 80 percent of our offense. We lost five players, so right now, we are going to

have a balanced attack, but our main focus is just to compete, have fun, and get better everyday."

Mullen joined the Black Knights as an assistant back in 2011 and was promoted to associate head coach after just one season. She led the team to two Patriot League titles, including the 2015-16 squad which set program and conference records with 29 wins.

The Black Knights finished under .500 just once under her tenure.

"Coach is a great leader," forward for the Danes Chyanne Canada said. "I've never met anyone like her. She's very intelligent, she's played the game, so she's been in our shoes. She understands what it's like to be a college athlete and she's a great teacher. She

wants the best for us."

Despite all the changes, the team does bring back a few familiar faces, including seniors Heather Forster and Canada.

Both bring championship experience, having won two conference championships with the Great Danes.

"We work really hard and we learn quickly," Canada said. "We've had a lot of changes. A lot of ups and downs but we're very adaptive. We take something and we can run with it. We can work together, come together and make things great."

Forster was third in rebounds last season while Canada, a Syracuse native, was fourth in scoring for the Purple and Gold.

Mullen wants the identity of the Danes to be defense,

something she is no stranger to from her time at Army. During that record-breaking 2015-16 campaign, the Black Knights had the lowest opponent scoring average with 50.8 points per game.

The 2017 squad led the America East in scoring with just over 68 points per game, while ranking fifth in points-against.

Her number one goal is simple.

"We want to lead the league in rebounding."

Fans will get their first look at the Danes in SEFCU Arena when they take on Manhattan College in their home opener on Nov. 14 at 5 p.m.

FOOTBALL

Tigers Shred Danes 56-28 at Homecoming

By ROB LEP

Before the game, all the talk was about the quarterback matchup - Testaverde vs Flacco.

After the 56-28 blowout victory by the Towson Tigers (6-1, 4-0 CAA) over the University at Albany Great Danes (2-5, 0-4 CAA), the only conversation was the dominance by the CAA's top team and what's next for the Danes after their third straight loss.

Behind four touchdowns by Towson quarterback Tom Flacco (two rushing, two passing), the Tigers compiled 538 total yards of offense versus the Great Danes in front of over 7000 fans at Casey Stadium in Albany on Homecoming Weekend. The 6-foot-1 junior even sat out a majority of the fourth quarter.

"When you put up 56 points, you can't complain," Flacco said. "Our defense played great too... you feel good whenever you win."

Flacco is the younger brother of current Baltimore Ravens QB and Super Bowl XLVII MVP Joe Flacco. Joe played his college ball with the University of Delaware, which joined the CAA conference in 2007, his senior season.

"I grew up a Chuck Noll fan in Pittsburgh," UAlbany head coach Greg Gattuso said. "After tough losses, he always said - and it's what I believe - that after tough losses, you go back to basics, work on fundamentals and get better."

Despite the skid, it won't get easier for Gattuso's team, who face FCS Top-25 op-

ponents in three of their next four matchups, starting with No. 16 Maine on the road next week.

Vincent Testaverde, the son of 21-year NFL veteran and Heisman Trophy winner Vinny Testaverde, finished 10 for 22 passes with 210 yards, two touchdowns and two interceptions.

"Not really," Testaverde said when describing the team's ability to finish drive. "Two touchdowns is not enough."

Testaverde also had a 1-yard TD rush on the ground with 5:55 left in the first half to pull the deficit to 24-14. On the previous play, Testaverde gave the ball to running back Elijah Ibitokun-Hanks, who then flipped it to wide receiver Jerrah Reeves on a reverse. Reeves rolled to his left and found Green 22 yards downfield, setting up the Danes from the 1.

Junior wide receiver Juwan Green continues to impress for the Danes, racking up his second consecutive 100-yard receiving game. He had two touchdowns on 50 and 60 yard passes from Testaverde.

It was UAlbany's fifth straight game with a 100-yard receiver and his second straight, building on his 130 yards versus Richmond.

The Homecoming atmosphere made for one of the Great Danes' best crowds of the season. Once Flacco scored on a one-yard rushing touchdown to make it 49-21 with 6:53 left in the third, the fans started to head for the exits.

Towson takes sole possession of first place in the CAA after their win and the loss by second place Maine.

Towson redshirt sophomore wide receiver Caleb Smith had his own homecoming of sorts. The Albany native who attended La Salle Institute enjoyed his trip back to the Capital District.

"It was a great homecoming," Smith said after the win. "Glad I'm with the right team. The winning team."

Will Brunson, who started all 11 games for UAlbany in 2017, came in relief for Testaverde in the fourth quarter. He didn't have more success either, finishing 4-for-8 with 78 passing yards, no touchdowns and an interception.

Towson put up 38 points in the first half on the Danes, the most allowed by a UAlbany opponent since Old Dominion scored 42 on Sept. 28, 2013. The 56 points they scored for is the most the Tigers have scored in a game this season, besting the 52 they racked up versus Stony Brook two weeks ago.

"We could've played the Giants. Albany.



ALEXANDER HALSEY / ASP

Coach Greg Gattuso talks to a referee at the game Sunday.

The Little Giants. It didn't matter," Towson head coach Rob Ambrose said. "We were gonna play really hard. That's who we needed to be. The habits we need if we want to build something great."