

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 2022  
ELON, NORTH CAROLINA  
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# THE PENDULUM

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# BLACK HISTORY MONTH

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# RECOGNIZING BLACK HISTORY

THE PENDULUM SPECIAL EDITION

# BLACK HISTORY MONTH EVENTS

FEB. 16

## NPHC PANEL

6 p.m. | Moseley 215

Are you interested in learning more about The Divine Nine and Multicultural organizations on campus? Join the NPHC panel featuring Elon faculty and staff, with representation across The Divine Nine.

FEB. 17

## FILM SCREENING: "TWO GODS"

5:30 p.m. | Turner Theatre, 123  
Williamson Ave

Two Gods is a feature documentary film about a Muslim casket maker and ritual body washer in Newark, NJ who takes two young men under his wing to teach them how to live better lives.

FEB. 17, 24

## WOMANIST WISDOMS ON BLACK JOY

6 p.m. | Zoom

This 4-course series will engage the definition of womanism and womanist theory to provide wisdom for the Elon community to immerse in and practice Black Joy as a praxis. This event is hosted by the CREDE.

FEB. 18, 19

## SUBCINEMA: QUEEN & SLIM

8 p.m. | Turner Theatre, 123  
Williamson Ave

SUBCinema is playing movies that are relevant to Black History Month. Queen & Slim is about a couple's first date that takes an unexpected turn when a police officer pulls them over.

FEB. 22

## BLACK HISTORY MONTH DANCE CONCERT

7 p.m. | Turner Theatre, 123  
Williamson Ave

Elon's Department of Performing Arts will do a screening of their Black History Month performance.

FEB. 23

## BLACK TABLE TALK: BLACK JOY

12-2 p.m. | Moseley 217

This is an opportunity for the Black student population to enter into a space and embrace the love for themselves and their community. This will serve as a moment to reflect in a safe space, express a sense of joy and fulfill one's cup and passion.

FEB. 23

## HIGH ON THE HOG: HOW AFRICAN AMERICAN CUISINE TRANSFORMED AMERICA

5 p.m. | Turner Theatre, 123  
Williamson Ave

Join the CREDE and the Office of Sustainability for the first episode of Netflix's four-part series High On The Hog: How African American Cuisine Transformed America. This docuseries is a joyful exploration of the rich history of Black heritage cooking and how it has influenced American cuisine.

FEB. 25, 26

## SUBCINEMA: "JUST MERCY"

8 p.m. | Turner Theatre, 123  
Williamson Ave

SUBCinema will be playing movies that are relevant to Black History Month. Just Mercy is about Bryan Stevenson who heads to Alabama to defend those wrongly condemned or not afforded proper representation.

FEB. 25

## BLACK ALAMANCE COUNTY AWARDS

7:30 p.m. | Mebane Arts Center

The first Black Alamance County Awards mission is to celebrate Black owned and operated businesses, serving as a recognition platform for nominees while encouraging the community's next generation of Black business leaders.

FEB. 25

## BLACK SOLIDARITY DAY: A BLACK JOY LOVE LETTER

12-8 p.m. | Moseley

The Elon University Black Solidarity Conference aims to unite Black-identifying students, faculty, and staff by providing an avenue through which Black identity, Black intersectionality, and building solidarity are explored. This year will offer an allyship, anti-racism, anti-black racism track designed specifically for non-black identified participants who want to learn more about anti-Blackness, oppression, power, privilege, and ways in which they can be better allies with Black communities.

FEB. 26

## MOVIE SCREENING & FELLOWSHIP

6 p.m. | Pleasant Grove  
Recreation Center

Join the Down Home Alamance chapter for a family-friendly event. There will be a screening of "Swing State," a new film directed by Nathaniel Frum and starring, for better or for worse, Alamance County. Food, drinks and crafts will be provided.

FEB. 26

## VIGIL FOR WYATT OUTLAW

6 p.m. | South Side of the  
Historic Courthouse, Graham

A service of prayer and hope that will honor and recognize Wyatt Outlaw, who was the first African American to serve as Town Commissioner and Constable of the town of Graham, North Carolina. He was lynched by the White Brotherhood. Candles available, flashlights welcome.

# RECOGNIZING BLACK HISTORY

Letter from Christina Carr,  
President of Elon University's  
Black Student Union

**Christina Carr**

**T**HIS BLACK HISTORY MONTH, I am celebrating with reflection. I am taking the month to think about the rooms that I sit in, the opportunities I am given and the trials and tribulations I have faced. I am celebrating Black history by challenging the status quo, practicing

resistance and being unapologetically myself.

I am celebrating Black history by learning and expanding my mind. I am celebrating Black history by supporting my fellow peers of color, faculty, staff and the other figures in my life. I am taking the month to give back and to pour into others.

I am celebrating this year as the president of the Black Student Union by inviting you to join me in not just celebrating throughout this month, but every day.

I want to invite you to take this time to be introspective in your own

life and to examine the classrooms you sit in, the places you live and challenge the perspectives. To take time to be engulfed and inspired by the words of revolutionaries from our past and today.

I hope that students at Elon take this as an opportunity to get out of their comfort zone. Take a trip to the CREDE, stop by the BSU office, engage in new spaces on campus and with your peers. Take a look at what's happening in the surrounding area and get more involved. Be inspired to reflect, learn, challenge, embrace and spread joy this Black History Month.



NYAH PHENGSIITHY | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

# TIMELINE ON ELON'S BLACK HISTORY

## 1963 - FIRST BLACK FULL-TIME STUDENT AT ELON

Glenda Phillips Hightower became the first full-time Black student to attend Elon College. "I was not afraid," Hightower said at an Elon University event in 2014. Her graduation was prevented by illness, but she received an honorary doctorate of humane letters from Elon University in April 2019.



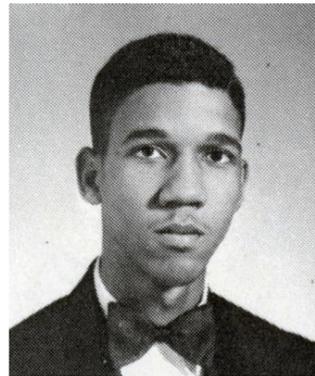
ELON UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES



ELON UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES

## 1970 - FIRST BLACK FEMALE GRADUATE

Gail Fonville became the first Black woman to graduate from Elon. Her legacy is commemorated in the Gail Fonville Parker '70 Distinguished Alumna Award, which honors the achievements of female members of Elon's Black Alumni Network.



ELON UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES

## 1969 - FIRST BLACK GRADUATE

Eugene Perry became Elon College's first Black student graduate. Perry remembers facing exclusion and silence from his peers during his education, according to an interview hosted by L'Tanya Richmond '87 in 2005. "It was challenging, but it was just a goal I had set for myself," Perry said about getting his degree.

## 1974 - CREATION OF THE BLACK CULTURAL SOCIETY

The Black Cultural Society was created in 1974 to strengthen unity, awareness and appreciation among Elon's Black students. Pictured are the members of the 1974 Black Cultural Society.



ELON UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES

## 1977 - ELON COLLEGE GOSPEL CHOIR CREATED

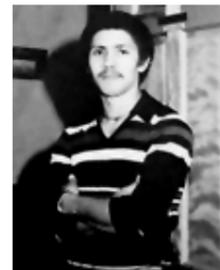
The Gospel Choir was created in 1977 to bring Black students and faculty together through song. According to its Phoenix Connect page, the choir "is a group that unites students who have a mutual interest in music, a love for singing and the love for Jesus Christ."

## 1984 - FIRST BLACK FRATERNITY ESTABLISHED

The Sigma Mu chapter of the Omega Psi Phi fraternity became the first historically Black Greek fraternity chartered on Elon's campus. The fraternity upholds the values of manhood, scholarship, perseverance and uplift.

## 1978 - FIRST BLACK PENDULUM EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Bryant Colson became the first Black editor-in-chief of The Pendulum, Elon University's student-run newspaper. In 1979, Colson would also be named as the first Black student body president. To read more about Colson, see page 7A.



ELON UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES



ELON UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES

## 1991 - FIRST BLACK SUB PRESIDENT

William Walker was the first Black president of the Student Union Board, which provides entertainment to complement, reflect and respond to the University's student community.



ELON UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES

## 2000 - FIRST BLACK FEMALE SGA PRESIDENT

Akilah Weaver was elected president of the Student Government Association in 2000. Since graduation, Weaver received the Gail Fonville Parker '70 Distinguished Alumna Award and has supported the Elon Black Alumni Network Scholarship.

## 1992 - AFRICAN AMERICAN RESOURCE ROOM FOUNDED

The African American Resource Room was established with the goal of providing resources to the Black community at Elon. Founded originally in Chandler Residence Hall, it was moved to Mosley Center in 1994 and became the Center for Race, Ethnicity, & Diversity in 2014.

## 1998 - FIRST BLACK FEMALE SUB PRESIDENT

Sherrika Stanley became the first Black female president of the Student Union Board.

# EVOLVING EDUCATION: TEACHING **BLACK** **HISTORY** TODAY



LUKE JOHNSON | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

English professor Prudence Layne writes notes on the board during her African American Literature Since 1945 class on Feb. 10.

Teaching African American studies and critical race theory proves challenging for some Elon professors

**Caroline Mitchell**  
Design Chief

A professor, a woman and an immigrant.

Those three intersecting identities allow English professor Prudence Layne to tell her life story and teach African American studies at Elon University. Layne's 22 years teaching at Elon have taught her many things, but if there is anything that has stood out, it's that education surrounding African American and Black history is overlooked.

"There is a kind of fairytale construction of the story of Black history," Layne said. "It's a story and a narrative that a lot of people don't know."

Layne said she is often asked the question, "Why is it African and African American?" when students are referring to different types of studies. Questions like these can sometimes lead to discrepancies in the U.S. education system. Throughout her time at Elon, Layne said she has seen firsthand how the education system has disregarded the importance of African American literature and history.

Layne's background — originally from the Caribbean but grew up living between the United States, Faroe Islands of Denmark and Barbados — allowed her to have a diverse education during her secondary and higher education years. Her experiences of living in different communities allow her to have a greater understanding of diversity — something she brings to Elon.

"I felt empowered to talk about race," Layne said. "We make sure

that we don't talk about these as difficult conversations, it's like riding a bike — it's only hard when you aren't practiced."

Layne often encounters students at the university who have little-to-no background in either African American studies or history, primarily because many of their K-12 education systems relegated the study of those histories. A major example of this is when a North Carolina school district banned critical race theory from their classrooms back in 2021.

Unlike Layne, associate professor of education at Elon's School of Education Lisa Buchanan did not experience diversity in her education.

"Prior to graduate school, I had a largely incomplete knowledge of African American history," Buchanan wrote in an email to Elon News Network. "What I did know was things about Black history, rather than learning about the world around me through Black history."

Buchanan wrote that African American history is often taught about rather than taught through. She has seen elements of history censored in the general education system, which is why many students at Elon and other institutions have a lack of prior knowledge about America's history.

Both Layne and Buchanan believe that the collegiate and K-12 education systems fail to teach important details about American history that have a connection to African American history or culture. According to Layne, there are differences between each of the African American cultures, and there are different fields of study for each culture. She said these subjects should be taught individually, but instead they have been intertwined with each other.

An observation Layne quickly

made when she started teaching was that learning about new perspectives is important — early in her career, Layne said she could feel she was "pushing against the tide" when teaching some students. She felt like she didn't have a universal set of open minds to teach to. Layne asks her students to look at their own privileges and experiences as a source of empowerment to make a difference.

“

I FELT EMPOWERED TO TALK ABOUT RACE. WE MAKE SURE THAT WE DON'T TALK ABOUT THESE AS DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS, IT'S LIKE RIDING A BIKE — IT'S ONLY HARD WHEN YOU AREN'T PRACTICED.

**PRUDENCE LAYNE**  
ENGLISH PROFESSOR

"Teaching and learning about African American history has expanded my worldview and developed my understanding of the experiences of other groups and individuals," Buchanan wrote. "African American history is incredibly multifaceted; it includes Black perseverance and agency, Black joy and legacy."

**Bringing in critical race theory**

Critical race theory and African American studies have made headlines in recent years

about placing regulations on teaching Black history in some states. Critical race theory is a cross-disciplinary examination of race and law in the United States. It's a way of understanding how American racism has shaped public policy. In North Carolina, the teaching of critical race theory has led to a debate on what racial concepts can be discussed in the classroom.

North Carolina House Bill 324 — which was designed to ban any teaching of critical race theory — was passed in September 2021 but has since been vetoed, was one recent reason why some teachers struggled to teach African American studies due to limitations in education.

Layne said that although Elon University is a private institution and has different teaching regulations than public universities, professors can still face challenges in teaching a diverse curriculum.

"There are lots of teachers who feel like their hands are tied," Layne said. "They don't teach critical race theory, but they want to be able to talk about the experiences of all of their students, not just any in particular. And so they feel censored ... There are real effects about how and what they teach."

The shift in the approach to diversity education might be the solution for censorship issues such as building into the educational process to foster an inclusive environment, according to Layne. By aiming for inclusivity and representation, students can reach a clearer understanding of African American and Black history.

"We need to expose our students to diverse perspectives from really early and young," Layne said. "That's how empathy, inclusion and acceptance happens."

# AFFIRMATIVE ACTION IN ADMISSIONS TO BE CHALLENGED IN SUPREME COURT

Two cases to be heard by the Supreme Court next term seek to end race-conscious admissions in higher education

**Sophie Rosenthal**  
Chief Copy Editor | @sophierosenthal

Junior Kennedy Boston knew her race was a big part of her identity when she was applying to colleges. At Elon University and other predominantly white institutions, Boston was acutely aware of how race would appear on her applications.

“I knew that they would look at my application and be like, ‘Oh, she’s Black,’” Boston said. “That would be a standout piece of my own application. And inherently, that would change views, or maybe not, but it would at least play some level of consideration in how I was viewed in the admissions process.”

Race-conscious admissions have long been used in higher education as a form of affirmative action — policies or practices used to include minority groups in areas where they have been historically underrepresented. But it is not without controversy. Race-conscious admissions have been challenged many times over the years, going all the way to the Supreme Court on multiple occasions. Now, Students for Fair Admissions, a conservative advocacy group, is taking two universities to the country’s highest court in an attempt to end race-conscious admissions altogether.

Elon Law professor and alumna Tiffany Atkins, who teaches Race Law to second and third year law students, said past challenges — such as University of California Regents v. Bakke, Grutter v. Bollinger and Fisher v. University of Texas — have resulted in Supreme Court precedents that tell higher education institutions in what capacity they can consider race in admissions.

“We know that you can’t just use race to fill a quota. You can’t say, ‘We need 20 Black students, go find me any 20,’” Atkins said. “The court said that’s inefficient, that’s unconstitutional. But the use of race as a factor in admissions and schools, depending on their history — their own history with racial exclusion — can modify that to an extent.”

SFFA filed two similar suits against Harvard College and the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill in 2014. Both cases came up through the court appeals system until 2021, when the Supreme Court agreed to hear them in their next term.

Part of SFFA’s argument relies on the precedent from the 2003 case Grutter v. Bollinger. In Grutter, the court held that the University of Michigan Law School could use race as a soft positive factor in their admissions process — setting the precedent that race-conscious admissions are constitutional when race is just one factor in a process that gives individualized consideration to each applicant.

The two current cases are arguing that the Supreme Court should overturn Grutter and rule that higher education institutions cannot consider an applicant’s race at all in their admissions processes.

Grutter established a “race plus” admissions model; a university can say race is a soft positive, or a “plus,” on an application, but race cannot be the reason the applicant gets in.

Atkins said she thinks when schools acknowledge a lack of representation in themselves, the “race plus” model is the best way to conduct race-conscious admissions.

“If a school knows that it has a history of excluding black students, other students of color, so they prioritize inclusion of those groups, I think that that’s fair,” Atkins said. “And the Supreme Court tells us that you can do that.”



Elon University junior Kennedy Boston stands outside of the Inman Admissions building where she works as a tour guide on Feb. 15.

LUKE JOHNSON | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

But SFFA is arguing that not even a “race plus” model should be used.

The group’s case against Harvard College focuses on a version of a “plus” model that Harvard’s admissions uses. When reviewing applications, Harvard gave positive or negative weight to subjective personality factors. Looking at individual applications, SFFA said Harvard’s admissions officers gave Asian American applicants negative personality factors that offset their academic records. SFFA alleged that doing so allowed them to impose a soft racial quota to limit the amount of Asian Americans they admit. From this, SFFA is arguing that a race blind admissions process would be more fair.

“

WE KNOW THAT YOU CAN’T JUST USE RACE TO FILL A QUOTA. YOU CAN’T SAY, ‘WE NEED 20 BLACK STUDENTS, GO FIND ME ANY 20. THE COURT SAID THAT’S INEFFICIENT, THAT’S UNCONSTITUTIONAL. BUT THE USE OF RACE AS A FACTOR IN ADMISSIONS AND SCHOOLS, DEPENDING ON THEIR HISTORY — THEIR OWN HISTORY WITH RACIAL EXCLUSION — CAN MODIFY THAT TO AN EXTENT.

**TIFFANY ATKINS**  
ELON LAW PROFESSOR AND ALUMNA

At Elon, race is one of a variety of factors considered in an applicant’s profile, according to Greg Zaiser, vice president of enrollment, and Kimberly Romero, assistant director of admissions for diversity and access. They said the Elon admissions office is intentional with its diversity recruitment efforts.

“Per our university values and the Boldly Elon strategic plan, we seek to build a class

of students from different backgrounds, perspectives and areas of the world,” Zaiser and Romero wrote to Elon News Network. “The most important factor in admissions is a demonstrated ability to be successful in the Elon classroom as evidenced by the high school record.”

Boston said she’s not sure how much race is being considered because the population of students of color at Elon is so small.

“There’s so few of us here already that I’m like, ‘Is it even playing a role at all?’” Boston said.

To Boston, the “race plus” system is flawed. The system subjectively attaches a numerical value to an identity, she said.

“I think assigning a value to race and its experiences is just not going to work,” Boston said. “To add a value of how much of a ‘plus’ that is, I think, doesn’t work because it negates so many experiences based on people’s individualized experiences and races.”

What makes one of these cases seemingly unique from previous challenges is that this is the first time the court has considered a challenge to a private institution. Typically, the court does not hear civil rights cases involving private entities, raising two questions. First, whether the Supreme Court has jurisdiction over Harvard, and second, if the precedent set will apply to all private colleges and universities, such as Elon.

The answers go together. The second part of SFFA’s argument is that UNC Chapel Hill and Harvard are violating Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits discrimination in educational institutions. According to Atkins, private institutions that receive any federal funding are subject to the act. Since Harvard receives federal funding, the Supreme Court does have jurisdiction over the school. This means that not only can it be subject to lawsuits, but it is also held to the court’s previous precedents.

Elon, which does receive public funding, is also held to the same standard.

“What the Civil Rights Act of ‘64 said is that we’re no longer leaving it to the states to decide which rules they follow and which they don’t, how they treat people based on race, gender and other identifying demographics or identifying characteristics,” Atkins said.

If the Supreme Court overturns Grutter,

it will set a new precedent that race cannot be considered in higher education admissions at all. But Zaiser and Romero don’t believe that any decision in the case will have as great of an impact on Elon as it would on more competitive private institutions like Harvard.

“Much of the attention on Harvard and other schools is a function of their extremely high rate of selectivity. In a sense, selectivity is juxtapose to inclusion,” Zaiser and Romero wrote. “We’re searching for students who will be successful at Elon and our acceptance rate reflects that.”

The last time the Supreme Court heard a race-conscious admissions case was six years ago, in the 2016 case Fisher v. University of Texas. But Atkins said the court didn’t decide to hear these challenges so soon after because they present a unique or different problem from previous cases. Instead, it has to do with the recent changes in the ideological composition of the justices themselves. The sitting justices today may make a different decision from courts of the past.

“The politicking, as we would say here, is that we now have this super conservative court,” Atkins said. “The balance of power has shifted.”

SFFA took advantage of this, appealing to the ideals of a court that now more widely represents its own.

Atkins recalled a 2003 statement from Justice Sandra Day O’Connor after Grutter, where she had said she believed that in 25 years, higher education institutions would no longer need to use affirmative action.

“Twenty-five years from then will be 2028. So we’re coming up on this date that Justice O’Connor said we shouldn’t need to use this anymore,” Atkins said. “I think she was wrong to put a date on it, because you can’t eradicate centuries upon centuries of explicit discrimination against Black people, and other people of color, with just 25 years of race-conscious remedy.”

No matter what happens to race-conscious admissions in the next term of the Supreme Court, Boston said she thinks the system needs an update nationally.

“I truly believe the intentions were good. And what it was initially doing was positive,” Boston said. “But it has morphed into something that’s a little less positive. ... So I think it is another thing that we tried and it didn’t work as intended, so we either rework it or get rid of it as a whole.”



NYAH PHENGSIITHY | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Burlington resident Seneca Rogers looks into east Burlington as he stands on the property of former Western Electric Company Tarheel Army Missile Plant. During the start of his Board of Education campaign this year, Rogers said that parents and other Black community members expressed concern over not having a voice in the community. As he plans to bring the neighborhood back to the table, he hopes to also find future black spaces to combat that issue.

Burlington residents who are part of the Black community look for spaces for civic engagement, learning areas

**Nyah Phengsitthy**  
Managing Editor | @nyahphengsitthy

Driving down North Graham Hopedale Road in Burlington, Seneca Rogers passes by the former Western Electric Company-Tarheel Army Missile Plant. Rogers, who is currently running for Alamance Board of Education, hopes that the area can one day turn into something else — a Black community space.

The lifelong Burlington resident observed community hubs, such as the Mayco Bigelow Community Center at North Park and the CityGate Dream Center, serving as a meeting place for the many Black community members as he grew up and still does today.

But those spaces aren't enough.

According to Rogers, the need for more meeting spaces throughout Burlington has been a goal for many members of the Black community. These spaces can be used for civic engagement, meetings with personal agendas and, most importantly, a place to express voices. During the start of his Board of Education campaign, Rogers said local parents and other Black community members expressed concerns over not having a voice in the community. These future spaces can hopefully combat that issue.

"You have these parents who might not be able to show up to a board meeting, or show up to an actual meeting at the school because of the fact that they're having to work or they're having to take care of a family member," Rogers said. "It just seems like nobody cares because we're not the ones loud and yelling at the school board meeting."

The goal for more spaces is to also educate Black community members about politics in Alamance County — one thing Dreama Caldwell wishes she had before running for Alamance County Commissioner in 2020. Caldwell said her personal experience in a county race is one she hopes others will never have to go through.

"I was fighting in two fights, of not just running and trying to get parts of the community that are not engaged, engaged, but I also was having to deal with these dog whistles and the other stuff coming from the other side," Caldwell said.

Caldwell faced threats over social media and other in-person issues as she ran. She hopes these Black spaces will help prevent any challenges for other future Black candidates.

“

WE WANT TO BE A SPACE THAT CAN CONTINUE TO GROW. AND AS WE LISTEN TO THE COMMUNITY, THIS IS A SPACE OF SHARED POWER.

**DREAMA CALDWELL**  
EXECUTIVE CO-DIRECTOR DOWN  
HOME NORTH CAROLINA

"There isn't a pipeline of Black candidates to reach out to have experience to talk about," Caldwell said. "One of the things I try to do now is when I hear that Black candidates are going to run, I have conversations and say, 'OK, these are some things you may want to do. These are some things you need to consider.'"

As the executive co-director of Down Home North Carolina, a nonprofit organization created to build multi-racial power for working people in the state's small towns and rural regions, Caldwell hopes to use the organization's space to bring more Black leaders together in the meantime.

Informing community members beyond politics is also a goal for these spaces, especially about Black history, according to Donna Vanhook — the first Black woman to run for mayor of Burlington in 2021. In a study published in February 2022 by the Pew Research Center on Black Americans and where they get their of information,



NYAH PHENGSIITHY | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Rogers speaks with Burlington resident Donna Vanhook about the possibilities for the future of the Western Electric property. Vanhook was the first Black woman to run for mayor of Burlington in 2021.

nearly nine in every 10 Black Americans said they are at least somewhat informed about Black History — 51% say they are very or extremely informed, 37% said they are somewhat informed and 11% said they are a little or not informed at all. Vanhook said these Black spaces will educate others more about Black history.

"Historically, Black spaces have been limited," Vanhook said. "It's not a feeling we have a lot — having that Black space feeling safe."

Rogers said the next steps to creating these safe spaces is to push future candidates running in races in Burlington and surrounding counties to go into neighborhoods more, especially east Burlington.

The idea of turning the former Western Electric property into a community center with classrooms, computer labs, recreation areas, meeting spaces and more, is one area that can bring more Black voices to the table, according to Rogers.

"Some people might not feel comfortable showing up to central office for a board meeting, but if there's a community center, or somewhere right there in their

neighborhood, they might be comfortable there because they're around everybody who they live around, and they're fine with talking about the issues that they have," Rogers said.

And while more areas are needed for more civic engagement, they're also needed to simply uplift the Alamance County Black community.

"Black safe spaces are very important," Caldwell said. "It's so heavy in Alamance, you need a space for Black joy because there's so much going on, so much trauma circulating, and there has to be a space where you can have some Black joy."

As the Black community continues to engage with each other about future meeting spaces, 2022 will also be a year that will seek voter engagement, racial justice and promote Black and minority businesses. Many of these events begin with finding things that bring the community together.

"The goal is to continually find things to hold this community together to do things," Caldwell said. "We want to be a space that can continue to grow. And as we listen to the community, this is a space of shared power."

Q&A WITH BRYANT COLSON

Bryant Colson served as the first Black editor-in-chief of The Pendulum and first Black SGA president

Naomi Washington New Member Coordinator | @NWWashingtonNews

You were the first Black editor-in-chief of The Pendulum and the first Black SGA president; what were some obstacles you faced by making those accomplishments?

“What went through my mind at that time was being able to garner enough votes to get me over the hump. I knew I had the communities in which I hung in ... I figured it was about 150 [Black students], so I can count on many of those votes. But at that time, I guess my senior year, 1980, there were about 2,577 students on campus and there were 214 [Black students]. So now I know those numbers. I didn't know them then. But I sure was counting on those 150 that I thought I had back then. And in my community of athletes, they let me hang with them, though I wasn't an athlete.

I played a decent game of baseball back in the day, as my dad played in the Negro Leagues in Greensboro. But I figured I could count on them ... So ironically, or not ironically, good that I had those votes, because it did get me over the hump ... I wasn't too naive to know that, we had apathy in the student body or disinterested — ‘who cares about student government unless you're putting on a concert’ — but those communities got me over the hump and thankfully, I won and it was fun.”

Can you talk more about the communities you had? Especially because here at Elon, we really value those cohort experiences?

“I had probably about three or so communities that let me hang with them. The Black community of course, the 214 of us. We were a close knit family because we were, as we used to say back then, ‘we were all we had.’ So we were tight. I remember the snowstorm of 1979. The school was telling us ‘if you can go home because we can't assure you that cafeteria workers, professors, administrators would be here and classes are certainly canceled.’ But crazy us, a few of us, especially my athletes circle, we stayed and boy, were we crazy. We thought we were getting warm by going down to Belk Gym and getting in the pool without realizing that we had to get out of the warm pool and walk back to the dorm in the cold.

How — specifically in the roles that you were in SGA president and editor-in-chief of The Pendulum — did you take everything that you learned from those roles into your professional life?

“When I decided to apply for The Pendulum position, I was prompted by the previous editor, Kemp Liles, and the adviser, Dr. Mary Ellen Priestley, she was a sweetheart. But she was always on me, telling me that it was something that I can do. I didn't have all of the confidence that I probably should have. But I ended up with a ton, and I can't be more grateful for Dr. Priestly, Kemp and then coordinator of student activities, Bill Sharp. He was a humongous supporter back in the day for me. Those three talked me into The Pendulum opportunity. That actually all started with my freshman English teacher, who used to always tell me I should consider writing for The Pendulum, because when we had papers to write, mine tended to be about sports. And she asked me, ‘You oughtta consider doing that, Bryant.’ I took that under advisement and, of course, as you can see, I did it.

I was student body president of my school when I was in elementary school, sixth grade. I was into student government in back then junior high school — Paige High School. I was into student government all my years there, so it was just ingrained in me. I don't know how much of a leader I was but it certainly helped me, gave me the confidence even to want to do it here along with being pushed with my SGA community and advisers. So that got me going, especially the writing part ... That was so important: the ability



JOSEPH NAVIN | PHOTO EDITOR

Bryant Colson '80 speaks at the Elon University Black History Month Kickoff event on Feb. 1. Bryant served as the first Black president of the Student Government Association and editor-in-chief of The Pendulum in 1978.

to write. Whether you are managing people, you have employee reviews to write. We didn't have it back then, but emails. And you want to make sense on those, especially to the people that it needs to make sense to. Those were important things to me. Another thing that was really, really good and it was a blessing and not so much a disguise was, after I got in this position, I was not aware that the Pendulum position paid a stipend. I mean they're paying me to do something I like. As I was telling the young lady earlier, find something that you love and call it work and put a little money in the plate at work. I would send, I would send half home to my mother and I'd put half in my checking account here. SGA the same thing — a stipend. I couldn't believe that. So I split it right down the middle, sent half home to my mother and I put the other half in my account here on campus. That was gravy, you know, icing on the cake.”

How do you go about celebrating [Black History Month] each year? And how should we as a campus go about celebrating?

“Well, I actually don't mean this to sound too cheesy, but Black history to me, I celebrate every day. There's something on TV, some person that you meet, somebody that you talk to, that makes you proud to be Black. Abby Phillip, CNN news analyst — smart lady; old school Donna Brazile, chaired the Gore campaign and chaired the Democratic National Committee — smart lady; Laura Coates; I mean, these are smart people I see on TV every day and what's not to be proud about to be Black?

I remember having to tell friends, and my girls when they were younger, I would hear at times, and hopefully they were being facetious, that why in the world did they pick the shortest month to let us celebrate our people? 29 whole days, 28 whole days. Well, you know what? That wasn't the choice, as I tried to explain to them. Ironically, a gentleman by the name of Carter Woodson, the second Black person to get a PhD at Harvard, started a Negro History Week in February back in 1926, where he would tout the accomplishments of Black people and negroes back then. It wasn't given to him. He chose that month because it had the birthdays of iconic people at that time. Abraham Lincoln — February 12. Frederick Douglass — February 14. That's why he chose that month. And fast forward to Gerald Ford in 1976, where he made it a month-long annual celebration.”



ELON UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES The Pendulum archives from 1978 when Bryant Colson served as the first Black editor-in-chief.



CLARE GRANT | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Elon University junior Hunter McIntosh is not only a leader on the men's basketball team at Elon, but in the community as well as he serves on the Black Student Union board and analyzes the culture surrounding race at Elon.

# BEYOND THE GAME

How one Elon athlete fights back against racism, calling for more unity across campus

**Caitlin Rundle**  
Elon News Network | @caitlinr\_21

Junior Hunter McIntosh is an African American athlete and leader. He's broken records, won over half a dozen awards and honors in just two and half years and has become known as a leader on the court. However, his leadership goes beyond basketball. Serving on the Black Student Union Board, McIntosh has been able to serve as an athlete liaison, seeing firsthand the culture surrounding race at Elon.

*This interview has been edited for clarity.*

**Over my last four years here, I've seen policies and changes to the curriculum take place to encourage D.E.I. trainings and just improve the culture on campus in general, but obviously, as a white person, I don't really see those impacts on campus. Have you over your past three years, seeing these policies, seeing these changes, impact the culture on campus in any way, shape or form?**

"I would say at least policy wise, especially last summer, there was a lot of events that within America kind of opened some eyes. So, I felt like, personally, Elon's response to it, I felt

like they got ahead of it ... Actions wise, day to day, I would say maybe not much has changed but at least at Elon I feel comfortable being able to express my feelings, my thoughts."

**Is there anything that you would like to see changed specifically at Elon?**

"There's tons of different groups, tons of different communities, whether it's fraternities, sororities or on campus groups or clubs, I'd probably like to see a lot more mixing of those. I feel like every group or something has something to offer ... I feel like just as people, we have a lot more similarities than differences. Sometimes it happens naturally, but sometimes you need to have spaces and stuff where different types of groups and communities can come together."

**Do you know how we as a community start that process?**

"I think you want to do it more naturally, more organic, so it's not forced upon each other. I think initially, maybe just kind of informal things like a food gathering or a picnic or something where it's kind of a little less [formal], it doesn't feel as forced upon people to connect with others. I think that's where the best kind of genuine relationships are formed."

**Can you talk about the team and your message as a team?**

"As a team we feel like we have a voice. People kind of gravitate toward our team and want to watch us and watch us compete, but we also know

it's bigger than basketball. Life is bigger than basketball. So any point where we feel like we could take a stance against injustice, take a stance against racism, stuff like that, we want to be able to do that."

**Has anything similar to [the meeting with all of athletics about racism] happened since last year? Or has it been on you guys to continue that message of last summer through into this year as well?**

"I think the onus is on us as players and students to continue that message ... The responsibility weighs on us a little more, but I kind of don't see that as a problem. I think that we are the ones who are pushing the narrative forward, and I feel like it's important that the ball should be in our court. If you want to take responsibility of pushing this university forward, it's gonna start with the students."

**I do want to ask if you feel any pressure, not only as a Black man, but also as a student athlete, do you ever feel that you're kind of getting double stereotyped from both of those identities?**

"You can get a sense where other students might have other preconceived notions as an athlete about what type of person you are. I feel like that's just unfair sometimes. We love basketball, but we all have different interests outside of sports ... kind of being an African American male on campus, there is society's pressure on yourself not just to be

able to come here and perform on the court, but off the court, how you carry yourself. There's obviously moments, you're already a minority on campus, you already stick out a little bit whether it's in classrooms, or just walking around campus ... I don't want to say that it's a pressure that is harmful in a sense, but I feel like it can be overwhelming at some points."

**As a campus, what can we do to start to improve relationships with each other, relationships with the outside community, how do we start to make those connections?**

"Any genuine connection, it comes down to just trust and belief. When you want to start new relationships, it's going to be uncomfortable at first, it's going to be something challenging, but I think a little effort could go a long way ... Just keep showing up, I think that's just really the biggest thing. If you're uncomfortable in another group's space, obviously you're welcome, just keeps showing up. It's not going to be the most fun sometimes, but over time when you're growing in a relationship, that's where the real, genuine stuff happens ... Put your pride to the side. I think sometimes, it can be like, 'alright, this is my way or my way of thinking,' but I think if you accept that's how this person thinks or this is how they feel and you genuinely try to understand that and just be open to it. It's tough sometimes, but I think if you really put the extra effort in there, it will go a long way."

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 2022  
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# THE PENDULUM



## CONSTRUCTING CAMPUS CONVERSATION:

### THE STATE OF SUSTAINABILITY AT ELON UNIVERSITY

LUKE JOHNSON | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

People walk past the LEED certification sign that is in the hallway that connects Winter Garden Cafe and Lakeside Dining Hall at Elon University on Feb. 14. LEED, or Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, is the leading green building certification and rating system in the United States.

Building and campus growth at the forefront of Elon University's goals, brings sustainability initiatives come into question

**Samantha Hess**  
Elon News Network

Every morning, the droning beep of a crane backing up can be heard around Elon University's campus as the Innovation Quad construction crew begins its day of work. Students walking past cross to the opposite side of the

road to avoid dirt kicked up from the construction site, and crane their necks to see what's really going on inside.

The new building is just a small part of campus growth the university hopes to accomplish over the coming years. Elon's campus master plan, created in 2016, outlines the projected avenues of campus growth for the foreseeable future and provides a structure for what construction projects the university will work on and when.

This campus growth has serious sustainability implications not only due to the larger student population it will bring in, but also because of the facilities

themselves. Buildings accounted for 40% of the country's total energy consumption in 2020, 30% of which can be attributed to coal-burning power plants, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration.

Elon University's Sustainability Master Plan attempts to solve this, outlining the university's sustainability goals for the foreseeable future, including a goal for a carbon neutral university by 2037. According to Elaine Durr, director of sustainability at Elon, active construction on campus does not get reported as part of the university's net carbon emissions.

"Elon does not include carbon

emissions from construction projects in the annual carbon inventory," Durr said. "The primary way buildings are represented in Elon's annual carbon inventory is through energy consumption."

The sustainability plan also incorporates the Elon Green Building Policy from 2009, which says any new construction or renovations exceeding 8,000 square feet of conditioned, occupied space will achieve LEED certification, preferably at the Silver level.

See **SUSTAINABILITY** | pg. 4B

## Vital Signs holds ninth annual fundraiser concert

Concert aims to raise \$10,000 for the Make A Wish Foundation

**Betsy Schlehuber**  
Elon News Network | @betsyschlehuber

As the sun sets on Spence Pavilion, people walking by can hear the sounds of singing and beat-boxing emanating from within. This is typical of a Thursday night Vital Signs rehearsal, but now the group is not just practicing — they are preparing for a concert.

Vital Signs, a co-ed a cappella group at Elon University, is hosting their ninth annual Make-A-Wish fundraiser concert at 7 p.m. on Feb. 19

in Whitley Auditorium. This is one of three concerts Vital Signs performs throughout the academic year. Their fundraising goal, same as every year, is \$10,000.

According to junior and Vital Signs President Maecy Bischoff the Make-A-Wish fundraiser concert was started by Vital Signs alumnus Nick Cook. Cook's sister, Bella, was very involved with Make-A-Wish. Cook noticed how much of an effect Make-A-Wish had on Belle and decided to start this fundraiser, which has become a Vital Signs tradition.

All nine of Elon's a cappella groups and two visiting groups from North Carolina State University will perform at the

concert. The visiting groups are Ladies in Red, which is an all-female group, and Grains of Time, an all-male group. Elon's groups will each perform two songs and N.C. State's groups will perform three songs.

"It's really probably the biggest and most rewarding concert we get to do, especially with all of Elon a cappella getting involved. It really brings the whole Elon community together," Bischoff said. "It kind of shows Elon what a cappella can really do and what we're about, and it's a really good chance for us to show how much we care about charity and how much we are working toward."

See **VITAL** | pg. 5B



SOPHIE ROSENTHAL | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Junior Maecy Bischoff and senior Miles Carballo sell concert tickets in Moseley.



#### NEWS • PAGE 2B

Professor of political science discusses the current crisis between Russia and Ukraine



#### LIFESTYLE • PAGE 6B

Lumen scholar creates workshops to highlight queer identity within theater spaces



#### SPORTS • PAGE 8B

The sole male member on Elon University's dance team reflects on passion

# THE PENDULUM

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## EDITORIAL POLICY:

ENN seeks to inspire, entertain and inform the Elon community by providing a voice for students and faculty, as well as serve as a forum for the meaningful exchange of ideas.

## CORRECTIONS POLICY:

ENN is committed to accurate coverage. When factual errors are made, we correct them promptly and in full, both online and in print. Online corrections state the error and the change at the top of the article. Corrections from the previous week's print edition appear on this page.

Contact

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## WHEN WE PUBLISH:

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**Elon Local News**  
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**ENN Radio Podcast**  
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## CORRECTIONS

There are no corrections from the last edition of The Pendulum.

## CHEAT SHEET

THE CHEAT SHEET IS AN INTERVIEW WITH A RELEVANT EXPERT TO EXPLAIN COMPLEX TOPICS

# THE ONGOING RUSSIA-UKRAINE CRISIS



CHRIS MCGRATH/GETTY IMAGES/TNS

A member of the Ukrainian State Border Guard stands watch at the border crossing between Ukraine and Belarus on Sunday, Feb. 13 in Vilcha, Ukraine. Russian forces are conducting large-scale military exercises in Belarus, across Ukraine's northern border, amid a tense diplomatic standoff between Russia and Ukraine's Western allies.

Jason Kirk, professor of political science and policy studies at Elon University discusses the current crisis between Russia and Ukraine

**Joseph Navin**

Photo Editor | @josephanavin



**Jason Kirk**

In recent months, Russia has amassed troops on the Ukrainian border with both Russia and Belarus, increasing tensions between Russia and Ukraine. Russia previously annexed the Crimean peninsula after a referendum in 2014. Fighting has continued to occur in Eastern Ukraine for the past seven years between Ukrainian forces and Russian-backed separatists which have occupied the Donbass region in eastern Ukraine since 2014.

Jason Kirk provided historical context on this ongoing situation and is an expert in international relations and politics relating to India and is a professor of political science and policy studies at Elon University. Kirk discusses the current conflict between Russia and Ukraine.

*This interview has been edited for clarity.*

## What events in the past have set the stage for tension between Russia and Ukraine?

"Well this goes back to at least 2014 and the so-called Maidan Revolution in Kyiv in Ukraine ... But that really involved what Ukraine's relationship to Europe would be, and whether it would be really have a pro-Russian leadership or a pro-Western leadership major demonstrations in a really big event that followed was Russia's annexation of Crimea, which had been Ukrainian since the breakup of the Soviet Union. It's something that the United States and NATO Allies were against and really still haven't recognized, but Russia has made it the ground reality ever since. Russia historically was always interested in a warm water port, you have that there [in Sevastopol]. The other thing that began in 2014, and has been going on ever since, is the conflict in the Donbass, which is eastern Ukraine, bordering Russia, where you got pro-Russian Ukrainians, Russian

speaking Ukrainians that you've had from the beginning, you've had Russian support to those fighters, but also you've had Russian forces.

So called Little Green Men for plausible deniability. It's a term that scholars came up with and analysts came up with pretty quickly was hybrid war. There's a way in which Russia is directly engaged, but it also has some elements of what we used to call proxy wars, back in the Cold War, where either of those superpowers would fight through local proxies. That's the hybridization of it, it's got a little bit about both."

## How does the current situation in Ukraine compare to the Russian annexation of Crimea and the separatists in eastern Ukraine in 2014?

"I think it's a significant escalation. It's an even more serious situation, and that was a serious situation at the time. Many analysts have said the stakes here are the highest as they've been in Europe since the 1940s. What Russia is poised to do is potentially invade all of Ukraine."

## What has been the response from Ukraine and the Ukrainian government?

"It's tough for them because their president, [Volodymyr] Zelensky, has been the international spotlight. For a while, he became known to most Americans during the first impeachment of then-President Trump involving Ukraine. And so I think he's just trying to encourage calm among his people. He's trying not to scare international investors and the international community more generally, but it's very tense. I just can't imagine being in this position right now. He doesn't come from a political background originally."

## What is the tension between NATO and Russia?

"I mean, this goes back years. Russia has for long been concerned about NATO expansion. What it sees is NATO expansions were right up to its doorstep and regard Ukraine as a part of the former Soviet Union and Vladimir Putin of course called the breakup of the Soviet Union, the greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the 20th century, but also sort of a buffer area between Russia and the rest of Europe. There's a sense in which part

of what might be happening now, it seems like a long way to go to make this happen. But part of what Putin's strategy might be is to just see if he can weaken NATO just a bit. If he can expose tensions within NATO, particularly between the United States and other major players like Germany that are more dependent on Russia for energy resources, I think ultimately, there's only really one person who knows what's going to happen and that's Vladimir Putin and he may just be making his play for the history books."

## How are western nations and NATO responding to the crisis?

"It's tough because whatever transpired between them, [French President] Macron said he got some kind of guarantee and the Kremlin quickly denied that they had done such a thing. Recently the new German Chancellor [Olaf Scholz] and President Biden stood shoulder to shoulder but the White House press corps asked the German chancellor if it meant that Germany would sort of abandon this pipeline plan that's in development, in order to isolate Russia.

He just said, you know, we have a strong agreement between us and the United States and among NATO; he wouldn't directly answer that question. This is probably happening because among other factors, rightly or wrongly, Vladimir Putin sees Joe Biden as a weak president ... that is sort of the biggest foreign policy testing you face for this. But it looks like the Biden administration is trying to, at least in terms of information and actions taken, seize the initiative on this a little bit.

A big part of Russia's hybrid war strategies is disinformation. And you saw the developments last week where the Americans are saying, well, the Russians were gonna put out this fake video as a pretext for invasion and we have intelligence that has led to briefings with the American press, but also to this, essentially, this evacuation order that Americans should get out. In terms of at least the initial statements and information it looks like the Biden Administration is trying to seize the initiative there, but it's tough ... there isn't a strong appetite among most Americans for significant military action. Should Russia invade, how do we deter? That seems to be a moving target with Vladimir Putin."



Sophomore midfielder Mikaela Buoscio contests a face-off late in the second period in the women's lacrosse season opener against University of Virginia on Feb. 11. The Phoenix lost 20-11.

BENJAMIN MUSE | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER



Freshman Morris Ni helps sophomore Cayla Bellamy write Chinese calligraphy during the Lunar New Year celebration on Feb. 11. The event was hosted by the Elon Asian Pacific Student Association inside Numen Lumen.

JOSEPH NAVIN | PHOTO EDITOR



Senior Chuck Hannah and sophomore Michael Graham rush toward the ball against the James Madison University Dukes during their away game at the Atlantic Union Bank Center in Harrisonburg, Virginia, on Feb. 10, where they both scored six points during the game. The Phoenix beat the Dukes 70-66 and won their first away game of the season.

CLARE GRANT | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER



Elon students play frisbee inside of the Moseley Center during the Spring Organization Fair on Feb. 10.

NINA DEVANEY | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER



Elon softball players watch from the dugout at Hunt Park on Feb. 11 during the game against Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis. The Phoenix won 5-2.

JOSEPH NAVIN | PHOTO EDITOR

# LEED certification seeks to remedy concerns

**SUSTAINABILITY** | from cover

LEED, or Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, is the leading green building certification and rating system in the United States. Implemented by the U.S. Green Building Council, there are four different levels of certification buildings can achieve, from basic certification up to Silver, Gold and Platinum. Each level requires a different set of checklists a building must reach in order to qualify for that certification status, with Platinum certification being considered most sustainable.

“LEED certification provides a third-party verification of the strategies incorporated into the project, which provides credibility,” Durr said. “LEED certified buildings are typically more resource efficient than non-LEED certified buildings.”

Buildings can achieve LEED certification by meeting requirements on the various checklists for buildings, and the more items ticked off, the higher a building’s rating will be. Only specific projects require recertification under LEED, and Elon currently does not have buildings that fall under that ranking, according to The Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education. Even with major renovations within the coming year, it doesn’t necessarily mean they’ll go through the certification process, said Brad Moore, university architect and director of planning, design and construction management.

“If you’re not going in and completely renovating the HVAC system, and if you’re not completely doing things around the site, you won’t get the points in those categories,” Moore said. “In the things that we are touching, we are using those design components, but in which we’re not going through that process. Because we’re not

completely changing out those systems.”

While LEED is certainly a place for commercial buildings to start on their journey toward sustainability, there have been studies questioning the effectiveness of LEED, and whether it serves more as sustainable decoration for commercial buildings. John Scofield, professor of physics at Oberlin College, has conducted multiple studies over the past 20 years regarding the efficacy of LEED in reducing energy use and greenhouse gas emissions in commercial buildings.

“The U.S. Green Building Council has made LEED a sexy thing through marketing and these nice plaques,” Scofield said. “But there is what we call an energy performance gap. You know, the design team puts together a building and brags about how much energy it’s going to save and how little energy it’ll use. And then the owner moves in, occupies the building and discovers it uses a whole lot more energy than the design team said.”

Scofield said while LEED projects make some key changes, such as LED light fixtures, low flush toilets and specific plans for stormwater runoff, as a whole they do no better in energy conservation or greenhouse gas emissions than a non-LEED certified building.

One of Scofield’s articles identifies that LEED certified buildings only reduce net carbon emissions by 5%, which isn’t enough to truly combat climate change or reach any sort of carbon neutrality goal. Another study from the Institute of Labor Economics finds there is no impact — positive or negative — on national energy efficiency by LEED certified buildings.

Additionally, there is often no mechanism for measuring their actual efficacy past the design prototype stage. Connor Leidner, a senior architecture student with a focus in design sustainability at Virginia Tech University, said many universities use LEED as a way to appear

sustainable to their campus community, when in reality, there’s not much occurring behind the scenes.



I GUESS THE MOST SUSTAINABLE THING TO DO WOULD BE TO NOT DO ANY CONSTRUCTION. BUT, WE CAN’T MEET OUR MISSION OF EDUCATING FUTURE GENERATIONS IF WE’RE NOT GROWING.

**BRAD MOORE**  
UNIVERSITY ARCHITECT AND  
DIRECTOR OF PLANNING, DESIGN  
AND CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT

“LEED allows for tax breaks for many developers and companies but does very little to help the environment,” Leidner said. “There are some firms that take LEED seriously and do produce more sustainable buildings, but that’s in their own good nature and not necessarily a benefit of getting LEED certified.”

Some of the struggles behind making these lasting sustainability changes to college campuses are rooted in the finances. Not only is it expensive to invest more in sustainable construction and architecture, but it’s especially more expensive to keep that up once the construction is over and the building is occupied.

Julian Deautremont, director of programs for AASHE, said for the majority of universities reporting to Sustainability Tracking, Assessment and Rating System, their financial situations prevent them from truly investing in sustainable technology that would make those differences on campus.

“Investment and finance come to mind, which have a couple questions about how the endowment is managed, and socially responsible investing, which is a tricky issue in many campuses, right, where historically the endowment has been invested to achieve financial return, and that is the primary or even a sole goal of the endowment management,” Deautremont said. “STARS is rewarding points for social and environmental considerations in that process.”

According to AASHE, at Elon University only 2.6% of the institution’s investment pool goes into positive sustainability investments, and in terms of a committee on investor responsibility and investment disclosure — the two other subheads under the investment and finance section of STARS — there were no points awarded to the university.

In order to grow the university in the way outlined in the campus master plan, sustainability is something that becomes a struggle sometimes, especially with recent supply chain issues due to COVID-19, according to Moore. The struggle towards a campus that is both larger and more sustainable, a dynamic that seems to contradict itself.

“I guess the most sustainable thing to do would be to not do any construction. But, you know, we can’t meet our mission of educating future generations if we’re not growing,” Moore said. “So given that we have to do construction, then we look at how we can limit the environmental impact for the future, even in the smallest ways.”



SAMANTHA HESS | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

A construction worker climbs a ladder on Elon University’s Innovation Quad construction site.



SAMANTHA HESS | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

A construction worker works inside the Innovation Quad site. According to Brad Moore, contractors for Elon University construction sites go through a lengthy process before chosen to work on site.



SAMANTHA HESS | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

The Innovation Quad’s construction site creates a stark contrast to the rest of campus.

# Vital Signs brings back in-person performance for Make-A-Wish

VITAL | from cover

Vital Signs organizer and senior Miles Caraballo put together this event for the third year in a row. Though the concert was to be in person his first year organizing, the COVID-19 pandemic made the concert virtual in his second year, with groups from California, New York and the United Kingdom participating. This year, though Caraballo is still taking COVID-19 precautions, he was able to organize an in-person concert once again.



IT'S JUST A REALLY COOL THING TO SEE A HUGE GROUP OF KIDS COMING TOGETHER TO SUPPORT SOMETHING LIKE THE MAKE-A-WISH FOUNDATION, WHICH IS SO HELPFUL TO KIDS WITH CRITICAL ILLNESSES.

**MAECY BISCHOFF**  
VITAL SIGNS PRESIDENT

"It's been a little bit of a challenge, but it doesn't really take the fun out of it," Caraballo said. "I still get to have fun and communicate with the groups in the ways that I've



Members of Vital Signs, a co-ed cappella group at Elon University, rehearse for the Make-A-Wish Fundraiser concert. Vital Signs has held this concert for almost a decade.

BETSY SCHLEHUBER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

been communicating in the past."

All a cappella groups are required to get tested for COVID-19 within 48 hours of the concert in order to perform without a mask.

Halfway through the concert, young Make-A-Wish recipients will share their stories on stage and express what the organization has done for them. This year, Sarah, who is active in her school's chorus, will take the stage. Bischoff said the concert will inspire both the audience and kids like Sarah, who not only get to hear her story but

see other kids do what she loves on stage.

"For any Make-A-Wish kid, it's obviously inspiring to see older kids like us just doing things in groups in a college setting, whether they have music involved in their lives or not," Bischoff said. "It's just a really cool thing to see a huge group of kids coming together to support something like the Make-A-Wish Foundation, which is so helpful to kids with critical illnesses."

Caraballo said he is most excited for "The Love Medley," the

last song on the entire setlist. This medley is Valentine's Day themed since the concert happens to fall around Valentine's Day. "The Love Medley" ends with "Somebody to Love," where all the a cappella groups sing together from the stage and balconies, creating a surround-sound effect.

"There's over 100 singers singing one song together in Whitley, and it's just a very magical moment ... I'm getting chills thinking about it right now from two years ago, from when I was on stage," Caraballo said. "I was like, 'I'll be fine,' but

then when I started singing it and everybody was singing around me, I couldn't sing just because I was like, 'This is literally crazy.'"

For many Vital Signs members, the Make-A-Wish fundraising concert is extremely touching. It's an opportunity to share people's stories and to bring the community together through a cappella music.

"This is by far one of the best a cappella concerts at Elon ... It's just such a magical event," Caraballo said. "And it really brings a lot of hope and happy thoughts for everybody."

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# LIFESTYLE

## Spotlighting queer theater through a series of interactive workshops



JOSEPH NAVIN | PHOTO EDITOR

Junior Jack Morrill rehearses for a “Queering the Stage” workshop. The Lumen Scholar’s project aims to bring queer artists and theater professionals to Elon through a series of interactive Zooms.

Lumen Scholar’s goal to highlight queer identity within theater spaces

**Jess Baker**

Elon News Network | @jimbakered

Junior Jack Morrill told workshop attendees that this was to be viewed as a safe space — cameras were optional and everything was done anonymously, beginning with a grounding activity. Participants were invited to center themselves by thinking about natural spaces, clearing their minds and breathing deeply before partaking in a 90-minute Zoom call about queer identity within theater.

This was the first of three “Queering the Stage” workshops brought to Elon University by Morrill’s Lumen project. His ultimate goal is to bring queer artists and theater professionals to Elon through a series of interactive Zooms to engage with students and faculty. On Feb. 4, the first workshop, entitled “Breaking the Binary” was presented by theater professionals SK Kerastas and Lisa/August Evans. Both Evans and Kerastas identify as nonbinary, and Evans uses both Lisa and August to represent both parts of their identity.

But in order to break the binary, Kerastas and Evans first had to define it. To facilitate their talk, Evans and Kerastas provided working definitions of such terms as queer, gender, sexual orientation and transgender identity. Kerastas and Evans used the website Padlet to allow for anonymous answers to focus questions throughout the workshop as well as Google Jamboard to create the idea of a “faulty binary,” according to Kerastas.

“To create the space for everyone to be their full selves and supported and honored in intersectional ways, it actually disturbs the system,” Kerastas said. “Which is maybe not a bad thing. It doesn’t have to happen all at once, but that’s actually part of the point. Because

the systems that we operate under now are built to service few, and not everyone.”

The workshop spoke broadly at first about queer identity and experiences before honing in on what it means to be a queer performer in a “traditionally heteronormative” dominant culture, according to Evans.

“

IT’S IMPORTANT FOR STUDENTS BECAUSE IT’S IMPORTANT FOR THEM TO KNOW THAT THERE ARE QUEER ARTISTS OUT THERE. THERE ARE PEOPLE WHO ARE DOING WORK THAT THEY MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN DOING. THAT THEY DON’T HAVE TO START FROM SCRATCH AND THAT THESE ARE NOW RESOURCES FOR THEM TO USE.

**JACK MORRILL**  
JUNIOR

“The goal, always, the primary reason to know all of these things is to be able to interrupt dominant culture and really intentionally build new practices,” Evans said.

These two key themes were exactly what Morrill hoped to achieve with his project.

“Basically, it is using queer practices and looking in different mediums such as rehearsal rooms, in books, in plays, and seeing what are practices that queer artists and queer community members use when either just being in the community with other queer

people or when creating their own work,” Morrill said.

According to Morrill, those practices include, “intersectionality, inclusion in the broadest sense, equity, accessibility, transparency and the idea of futurity” within theater spaces. Each workshop strives to present different ways of implementing these practices and ideas based on the lived experiences of the speakers.

As his Lumen project, Morrill found it essential to bring back these ideas and research to the rest of the Elon community by making the workshops accessible by Zoom.

“It’s important for students because it’s important for them to know that there are queer artists out there,” Morrill said. “There are people who are doing work that they might be interested in doing. That they don’t have to start from scratch and that these are now resources for them to use.”

This point resonated with senior Mercedes Ruiz. A drama theatre studies and arts administration double major herself, she was thrilled to see other queer artists doing the work she wanted to do.

“I went to this event because I’m a queer artist,” Ruiz said. “I was interested to meet other queer artists who were in the professional world and see what they’re up to these days, and how I can get from where I am to where they are now.”

Ruiz encouraged those who don’t identify as queer or aren’t involved with theater to attend the workshops as well.

“It really revealed a lot about the norms that we have in society and that can be applied to any area of expertise, whether it be in the business world, whether it be in the medical field, whether it be in the arts world,” Ruiz said. “The themes that were present in

the presentation can be applied across all of those fields.”

Overall, Morrill aims to see these workshop practices implemented within theater spaces at Elon to give students a chance to find a community before they leave college.

“It’s not that change isn’t happening,” Morrill said. “It’s now that, okay, let’s look at the student body we have now. What do they need? How can we change it for them? And so I think that’s what this workshop series might help inspire.”

For more details about “Queering the Stage,” visit Jack Morrill’s Instagram account “queering.the.stage” for an RSVP link for the next two workshops and details about the speakers for each. They will be hosted on Feb. 18 from 2:30 to 3:30 p.m. and Feb. 25 from 2 to 3 p.m.



CAROLINE MITCHELL | DESIGN CHIEF

# Women in STEM: Elon aiming to connect women from the STEM fields

Elon student organization aims to provide mentors and leadership examples to women in STEM fields

**Alexandra Borda**  
Elon News Network

Women in STEM: Elon — a student organization formed early last spring, provides a community of individuals who aspire to support women in all disciplines within the science, technology, engineering and math fields, according to their president Anna Sheinberg.

WIS:E is a student organization open to women in STEM along with individuals who are interested and support STEM. The executive board encourages campus-wide involvement to not only to network but understand how the world works.

WIS:E adviser and assistant professor of chemistry Anthony Rizzuto specifically focuses on supporting women by providing them with a tangible skill set to assist them in their future endeavors. Rizzuto wanted to guide and mentor a group of women in STEM, who in turn would mentor younger women as well.

“The goal is to support the women and to provide mentors and leadership examples in STEM. There are groups dedicated on campus to supporting people wanting to go into healthcare; that is not the focus of this group,” Rizzuto said. “This is specifically trying to go into science, technology, engineering and math.”

In the past, speakers have virtually met with members of WIS:E to speak about their experiences as a woman in STEM or at Elon. Emily Adams '11, who has a job with NASA and uses satellite imagery to analyze Earth, was a recent speaker. During the event, Adams mainly spoke about how she felt supported as a woman in STEM at Elon and how, in her master's program, where nearly all the people in her labs were men, she faced times when people took credit for her work.

Sheinberg said she's excited about how this club at ELON has been able to empower women in STEM.

“We are a female-dominated school that translates to our STEM departments which is awesome,” Sheinberg said.

Sheinberg also noticed most student organizations were geared toward pre-health but not chemistry or biology.

“We wanted to branch out and bring out speakers from a variety of disciplines and connect our undergraduate women from the STEM fields,” Sheinberg said

WIS:E hopes to host Madeleine Poirier and Cheri Ackermam in the spring. Poirier is an Elon alumna who graduated in 2020, currently working for the Atlantic White Shark Conservancy, a nonprofit organization working toward conserving the white shark population. Ackermam, the first non-Elon alumna to speak, is co-founder and CEO of Concerto Biosciences, biotechnology research focusing on the relationship between microbes and humans.

Sheinberg said she is excited about the



WE ARE A FEMALE-DOMINATED SCHOOL THAT TRANSLATES TO OUR STEM DEPARTMENTS WHICH IS AWESOME.

**ANNA SHEINBERG**  
WIS:E PRESIDENT

future events that will be open to women in STEM and anyone else interested. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, WIS:E has been meeting with speakers virtually. Therefore, allowing students to interact with women in the STEM field outside of a classroom, to gain knowledge and advice on resume tips, internships and what the field looks like post graduation.

“Personally, I like hearing from Elon alumni,” Sheinberg said. She stated that WIS:E has allowed for the increase of visibility and access to what the STEM



CAROLINE MITCHELL | DESIGN CHIEF

Women in STEM's goal is to support women and provide mentors and leadership examples in STEM. There are groups dedicated on campus to supporting people wanting to go into healthcare.

community looks like. Through this student organization not only has Sheinberg viewed how the world works outside of Elon, but she has met friends involved within and outside STEM fields. “It is meant for anyone who identifies as an ally for women in STEM.”

WIS:E hopes to demonstrate what being in a STEM field looks like through the speakers they have hosted. Rizzuto

expressed his support for campus-wide involvement to highlight the female experience in a male-dominated field.

“Everybody makes more progress if everyone is involved in the conversation,” Rizzuto said.

Students can get involved by joining WIS:E through Phoenix Connect or following their Instagram page @elon\_wise to stay updated on any upcoming events.

## ELON LISTENS

ELON LISTENS IS A COLUMN THAT REVIEWS DIFFERENT TYPES OF MUSIC THROUGH STORYTELLING

# The Love Affair that sparked Rumours

**Rex Broussard**  
Elon News Network

When Fleetwood Mac met the couple Lindsey Buckingham and Stevie Nicks, a breakup album was soon born. “Rumours” is hailed as an iconic album featuring classics such as “Dreams,” “Go Your Own Way” and “Don't Stop.” It's not hard to recognize why this album is regarded as one of the oldies but goodies, however, I think most people forget the roots of this album. This was without a doubt an album that displayed, front and center, the tragic breakup of Buckingham and Nicks. Both artists bled much of their pained emotions and feelings of heartbreak into the carefully crafted songs we enjoy to this day.

The phrase “context is key” heavily applies to music and the artists behind them.

We see examples of this raw emotion in the song “Secondhand News,” which is sung by Buckingham. The song carries a happy, upbeat vibe in the sound and music alone, but simultaneously carries a heavily loaded message. The lyrics indicate to us that even though Nicks has moved on, Buckingham hasn't. Funny enough, this message is directly contrasted later on in the album by another song, also written by

Buckingham. His message then shifts to showing Nicks the man she is currently missing out on post-breakup. Examining Nicks' role in the album, and breakup, is crucial as well as it gives us insight into how Nicks perceived the relationship. In her eyes it was a toxic, obsessive romance that she was desperately trying to escape. To Nicks, Buckingham became jaded and focused solely on fame and music, in that order. This forces Nicks to question whether Buckingham was only able to love her during the highs of the relationship and for

## BY THE NUMBERS

# 40

million copies of “Rumours” sold worldwide, making it one of the best selling albums of all time.

publicity.

Buckingham starts off his side of the breakup story in the album with the song “Secondhand News,” mentioned above. He later contrasts the message of having not moved on from his lover, Nicks, to proving she is missing out on a changed man. In “Never Going Back Again” Buckingham pays respect to the woman he loved, while also being able to release he is a changed man

who can no longer be in a toxic romance. Lyrics such as, “She broke me down and let me in, made me see where I'd been,” indicate Buckingham understands Nicks made him a better man. However, the chorus shows he has grown past the relationship, “Been down one time, been down two times, I'm never going back again.” With growth comes wisdom, and he is ready to move on from a toxic romance. Let's not forget that there is another side to this story, and that would be Nicks. “Dreams” shows us that in Nicks' eyes Buckingham became jaded and focused solely on fame and music, in that order.

A part of the song that stands out is the repetition of the word “player” in the chorus, possibly describing Buckingham. However, if we look deeper, the word can take on multiple meanings when applied to Buckingham. “Player” meaning musician could indicate how Nick felt pushed away for Buckingham's love of mosaic and fame. “Player” meaning actor, as they are often referred to as players, suggests their relationship was all an act. Most people assume “players” is used in reference to the fact that Buckingham cheated on Nicks left and right. This is part of the brilliance behind the song and album, it's because the artists create these detailed lyrics that are pieces of a puzzle that is the story they're



The album cover of Fleetwood Mac's Rumours.

FLEETWOOD MAC

trying to tell you.

“Rumours” is an album that forces us to ask ourselves about and examine our current relationships. While doing this, we also get the benefit of listening to classic pieces of great British-American rock that have stood the test of time. This

album is a must listen to for the music and sounds it produces alone, but for the clever writing too. When we really break down the lyrics and meanings behind the words chosen, we get a story. All music does this, the trick is taking the time to stop and listen.

## SPORTS

## FROM DREAMER TO DANCER

Cullen Zeno reflects on his decision to become the sole male member of the Elon University dance team

**Hope Valenti**  
Elon News Network

As the buzzer sounds and halftime begins, the Elon University Flames take the floor. But among the myriad of pompoms and ponytails, one individual stands out from the rest — Cullen Zeno.

As a child in Lafayette, Louisiana, Zeno realized his dreams of dancing at a young age when he began watching musicals. The attraction and awe, he said, was instant.

“I was watching a movie and there was dancing,” Zeno said. “I was like, ‘I need to do this. I need to dance in a movie.’”

Zeno’s obsession with dancing was evident to his parents, leading them to send him to J. Wallace James Elementary Arts & Technology Academy. He continued on to the path to stardom through middle and high school. In the sixth grade, he tried out for the dance team. As the only boy who auditioned, he said the rejection was devastating. It had a long lasting negative impact on his self confidence on and off the dance floor.

His dancing career was put on a pause, and Zeno turned to cheer. Throughout high school and most of college, he began to believe his dream of a dancing career would never become a reality. And when he enrolled in college at the University of Louisiana, he continued cheering.

The fantasies of being the performers he saw on screen at a young age lingered. On a whim, he decided to pursue a musical theater degree. After researching the top colleges for the theatre in the nation, he stumbled upon Elon University.

“Even in my first year and my sophomore year, I didn’t classify myself as a dancer,” Zeno said. “It wasn’t until TikTok happened and I started making TikTok dances and getting good feedback that I kind of started to believe in myself. Junior year is when I was like, ‘That’s what I’m going to do.’”

Zeno now has more than 5,000 followers, creating a variety of content including dance, singing and comedy videos that have generated over 200,000 likes. Since coming to Elon as a musical theater major, his



KATHERINE MARTIN | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Senior Cullen Zeno performs at halftime during a basketball game in Schar Center. Since coming to Elon as a musical theater major, and as the only male member of the Elon University dance team, Zeno’s passion for dance has grown.

passion for dance has grown enormously. Now as a senior, Zeno has big aspirations for the future. He hopes to pursue a Broadway career and let his dream live on in the big city.

Zeno said being a gay, Black dancer is hard, and he still struggles to find reassurance in himself and his abilities. He said though he has always felt safe in his identity and is proud of who he is, he struggles with being typecast in shows. But since coming to Elon in pursuit of his dreams of theater and dance, he has been embraced for who he is.

“Being part of the dance team has opened up a new climate where it doesn’t feel as much as if, like, I should be scared for the way I am and what I look like,” Zeno said.

Zeno recognized fellow Flame Nyla Rivers as a source of inspiration and support. Rivers, the only other member of color, acknowledged Zeno’s effect on the team. She explained that he has acted

as a sense of comfort and light to not only herself, but every other member.

“Cullen is realizing his talent and ability a little more,” Rivers said. “I think that adding this extra group of people to let him know how amazing he really is, has helped him come into that excellence.”

Zeno explained he has found a home on campus and friends he will keep for a lifetime. The bond between the team has increased dramatically, one he never experienced on any other team. Zeno thinks of joining as gaining acceptance, but also gaining 17 new sisters.

“I actually tell them all the time that I feel like they’re my sisters,” Zeno said. “I haven’t really been part of a team where I felt that I was connected in that way with every single person.”

Prior to auditioning, Zeno was hesitant. He had concerns about how he would interact with and relate to a female dominated team. Zeno believes the stereotype that dance is a female sport causes men to disrespect the

work of the athletes. He said the disregard is frustrating, but fortunately he has not fallen victim to ridicule. His initial worries were put at ease when he was quickly welcomed with open arms. Head coach Elly Dirks acknowledged Zeno’s move to join the team was bold, but a long time coming.

“We just see him as a teammate at the end of the day,” Dirks said, “I think that he started something that opened a lot of people’s eyes. Anybody can try out for the dance team, and we accept everyone.”

Zeno said he views his decision to pursue his passion as providing closure to his younger self. He now calls himself a dancer with pride — a dream he long believed was out of reach that now serves as a creative outlet for introspection.

“Dance has allowed me to have a gateway to express how I feel when I can’t speak it anymore,” Zeno said, “If I’m having a bad day or I’m really trying to get through something, I’ll just go dance. Dance is an escape from reality.”

## Elon baseball set to begin 2022 spring season

The Phoenix are looking to build off of last season and continue to improve

**Jack Spalding**  
Elon News Network

Last season ended in disappointment for the Elon’s men’s baseball team with a tough loss to the College of Charleston in May. The Phoenix finished with an overall record of 22-22 last season, finishing second in the South division with a divisional record of 10-8 in the Colonial Athletic Association.

The baseball team looks to build on last season’s tough ending with a strong season and post-season push this spring.

When asked about his expectations for the upcoming season, head coach Mike Kennedy said how important improvement in pitching was for the team with only a few short weeks until the season begins.

“The main thing we’re trying to do now revolves around pitching and trying to get pitch counts up,” Kennedy said. “We’re trying to be consistent with our pitching staff and trying to get pitch counts up to where guys we think are potential starters for us can get their pitch count up to a number that gives them a chance to go five, maybe six innings.”

Like most other sports at Elon in 2022, COVID-19 continues to be a hindrance in how the team prepares and performs. When asked about its impact on the team’s offseason preparation and practices, Kennedy said the team was fortunate enough to not have many problems regarding COVID-19 in their preparation for the season.

“We haven’t had too many issues, we’ve had a few guys test positive in the past — nothing as of lately,” Kennedy said. “I think we’ve been fortunate with guys having the booster which has made it easier but we haven’t had any issues since coming back.”

One of the big names from last season was sophomore first baseman Cole Reynolds, who had a spectacular freshman season last spring — starting 41 of 43 games while batting .292 with an on-base percentage of .398 and totaling five home runs. Reynolds is still early in his career and does not seem to be slowing down anytime soon. Kennedy mentioned how much he has continued to improve over the offseason.

“He’s a terrific first baseman with a good feel for the strike zone,” Kennedy said. “It was a goal of ours this season to cut down his strikeouts and he’s doing that. As a result he’s definitely getting more hits in our inner squads and we need him there’s no question, he knows that.”

The Phoenix face a tough match up in a few



LUKE JOHNSON | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Elon University red shirt sophomore Trevor Kirk throws a short bullpen on Feb. 10, as Phoenix pitching coach Jerry Oakes and the rest of the Elon baseball team watch on at Latham Park.

weeks against the Fairfield Stags. When asked about his expectations for the upcoming match up, Kennedy said it will be a good test for the team to start the season.

“They will be motivated to make last year not appear to be a fluke,” Kennedy said. “They’ll

be ready to play so we’ve got to match up well with them. It’ll be a good test right out the gate for us.”

Elon is set to play Fairfield on Feb. 18 at 4 p.m. at Latham Park to start out the new season.