

The Daily Iowan

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ONE YEAR LATER

How the University of Iowa has fared one year after campus shut down.

PAGE 3A

Katie Goodale/The Daily Iowan
The Old Capitol building is seen on March 6.

Roarin’ again by Easter?

One year into the pandemic, an end is in sight. But the now not-so-novel coronavirus will forever leave its mark on campus, our state, and beyond.



Daily Iowan Executive Editor Sarah Watson poses for a portrait inside Adler Journalism Building on March 3, 2020 , the day Watson was selected as the next leader of the organization. Two weeks later, the *DI* staff packed up their desks and started putting together a paper remotely.

BY SARAH WATSON
sarah-watson@uiowa.edu

One year ago, on March 17, Iowa Gov. Kim Reynolds issued a State Public Health Emergency.

One year ago, on March 18, the University of Iowa shut down campus for the entire spring semester. After heading home for an extended spring break mere days before, the UI told on-campus students to clear out their rooms. Faculty and staff were asked to work remotely if their jobs allowed. We weren’t coming back.

One year ago, our sense of what was normal turned upside down, inside out, and backwards. It’s been a year of covering closures, reopenings, and closures again for *The Daily Iowan*. A year of Zoom, masks, vaccines, lost loved ones, and new hobbies.

On my last day of class before our scheduled spring break, a classmate asked our professor if the rumors were true that we wouldn’t have in-person classes for the rest of the semester. The UI hadn’t yet made the announcement, but we knew we’d be doing online classes for two weeks after the typically travel-heavy break.

Our professor assured us he was planning on seeing us again in two weeks.

I turned to my friend, a public health major, and in a low voice asked the same question.

He chuckled, in the way a lot of us laughed at the absurdity

of thinking about work and class while surviving in a world with a new, deadly virus.

“Nope,” he said.

One year later, more than 5,600 Iowans have died of COVID-19, the illness caused by the coronavirus.

I, and several of my colleagues, mistakenly thought we’d be back on track if not by Easter, as former President Trump maintained, but by the summer. Surely, by the fall, we would achieve some sense of normalcy.

But we continued our checkered Zooms for classes, for interviews, for meetings. Fellow students brought cats, kids, wall decor, Wi-Fi glitches, and invisible struggles at home into our world of virtual connections.

Former *DI* editor Marissa Payne was out grocery shopping — the first time she’d done so in weeks after putting out breaking news updates near hourly — when the UI announced graduation would be moved online.

Payne understood the reasoning behind the decision. The UI had to mitigate transmission for the new virus. But her status as a first-generation student meant the loss of the typical milestone hit home hard.

“My heart wasn’t only breaking for me, but you know, my parents went through so much just to get me to college and to make sure I had opportunities that they didn’t,” she said.

In this edition you’ll find stories of resilience, of hardship, of a path forward one year later.

“My heart wasn’t only breaking for me, but you know, my parents went through so much just to get me to college and to make sure I had opportunities that they didn’t.

One COVID-19 researcher helped resurrect an engineered breed of mice that could develop COVID-19 symptoms. Those lab mice helped lead to the development of a vaccine and COVID-19 treatments.

Higher education institutions are facing drops in college-aged students and a hostile Legislature, meaning at places like the UI, alternative funding sources for its strategic plan seem to have become the only way forward.

New online flexibility for services — such as online supplemental instruction for distance students — and activities — like bringing high-profile lecturers to campus with the click of a button instead of an airplane flight — may stick around post-pandemic.

The Asian Pacific American Cultural Center spearheaded discord hours and online activities. One student is hosting an online event teaching how to make *mochi*, a Japanese rice cake in one event to maintain a “home away from home.”

Facing low foot traffic, one Iowa City vintage store turned to online sales and social media promotion to find a niche

— Former *DI* editor Marissa Payne

for their product.

One area nursing home — having avoided the deadly virus by sheer luck and thorough

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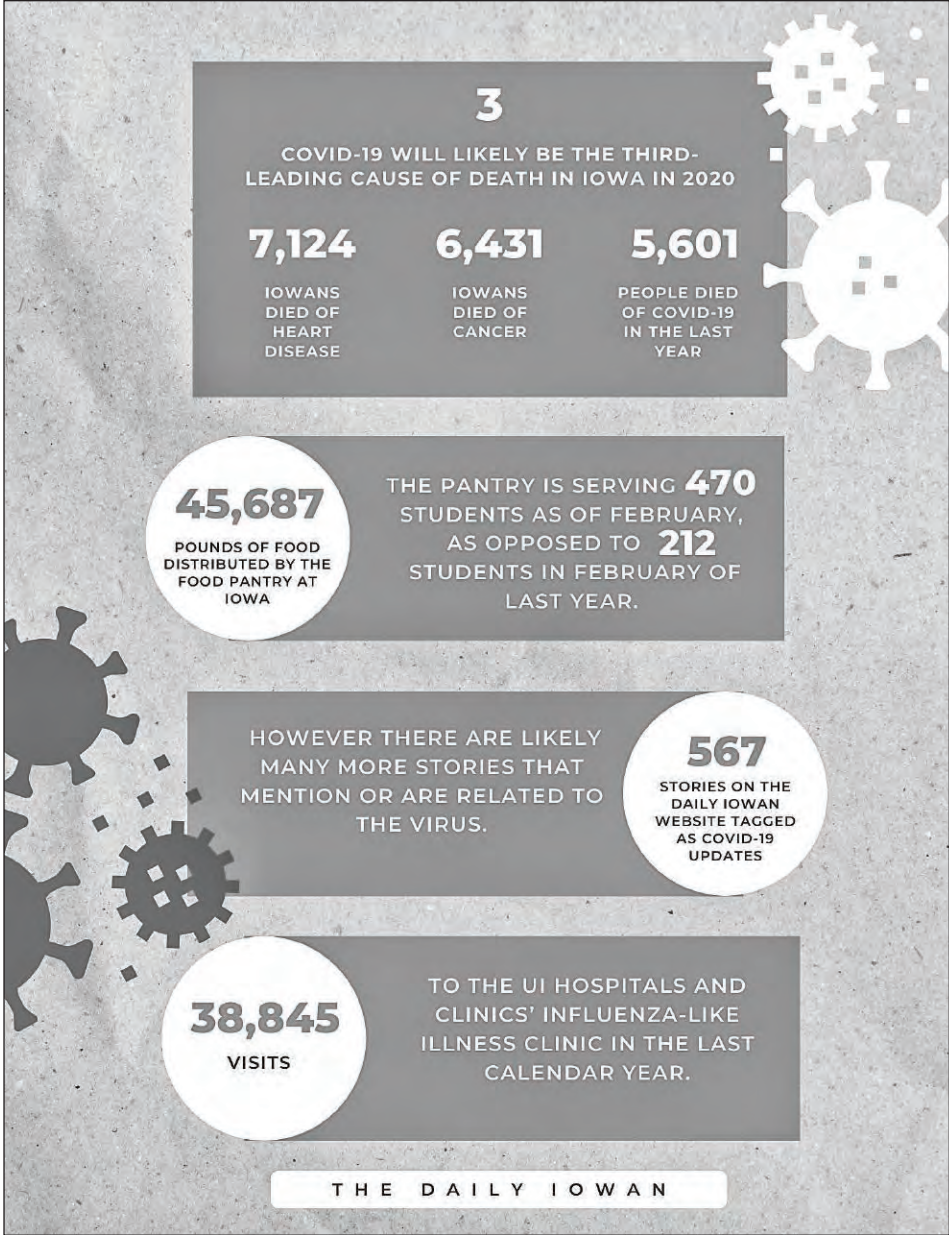
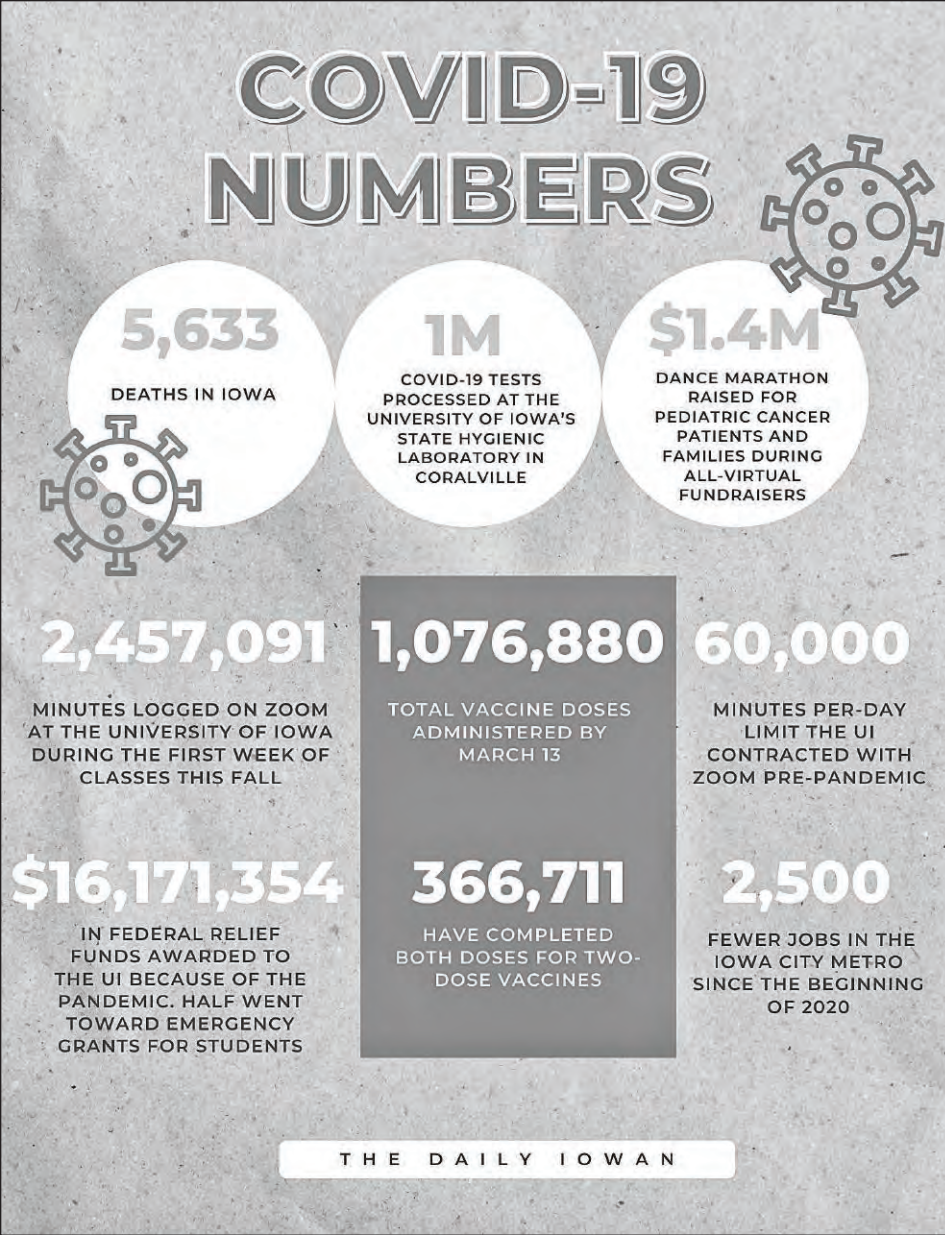
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Hannah Kinson/The Daily Iowan
Employees at *The Daily Iowan* work to publish a print-edition newspaper on Nov. 1, 2020 in *The Daily Iowan* newsroom at the Adler Journalism Building.



Long journey ahead to bridge gaps

The University of Iowa lost hundreds of millions of dollars to the COVID-19 pandemic, which compounds an expected national decline in enrollment. But administrators say the UI is ready to navigate those waters as cases subside.

BY SABINE MARTIN
AND KATIE ANN MCCARVER
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University of Iowa freshman Sarah Grace Hovey was living on campus in fall 2020 until University Housing and Dining sent a campus-wide email offering refunds for housing contracts because of COVID-19. Taking the refund, Hovey said moving home was a financial benefit and quelled her anxieties about contracting COVID-19.

Hovey is among many students who have reconsidered financial decisions because of the pandemic. The university is preparing for a steady decrease in enrollment as it continues to reconcile the ongoing financial effects of the coronavirus.

Nevertheless, UI administrators say the university has made progress almost a year since the first self-reported student case of COVID-19 was recorded on March 19, 2020. From March 12 this year to today, three students self-reported testing positive for the virus.

As previously reported by *The Daily Iowan*, cases trended higher when students returned to campus at the start of the fall 2020 semester, with 1,569 positive cases recorded by Sept. 7, 2020. Data

Undergraduate Student Government Director of Finance Emily Hagedorn was studying abroad when the pandemic began. When the USG executive cabinet and senate came into their positions in April 2020, none of them expected the year that would come, Hagedorn said.

“So, we really had to look at the student experience and what they need and how we can best support that,” she said.

When USG initially realized in spring 2020 it wouldn't have as many events to fund because of COVID-19, she said, the organization redirected many of its student fee dollars into the Dean of Students' Student Life Emergency Fund, which the organization traditionally supported.

According to a report from the Division of Student Life, the student-emergency fund supports UI students who are facing financial emergencies or catastrophic events that would otherwise cause them to suspend their education at the university.

When she assumed her role by April 2020, Hagedorn said USG continued to funnel money into the emergency fund with rollover funds that would otherwise go unspent.

What's the cost of COVID-19 really?

The UI's financial losses from COVID-19 exceed an estimated \$185 million, after rounds of federal funding, according to documents provided by the UI.

Lehnertz said, between the UI's general fund, which primarily takes care of campus, and its auxiliaries, the supportive units that make campus what it is, the auxiliaries were hit hardest by COVID-19. This includes UI Athletics, Housing and Dining, and other divisions of campus.

The UI's largest individual expense from COVID-19 amounted to an estimated \$50-60 million loss in UI Athletics. To mitigate costs, the department announced that men's tennis, men's gymnastics, and men's swimming and diving will be cut after their current season.

Lehnertz said the athletics department will borrow roughly that same amount from the university to make up for these losses, because state law prohibits it from borrowing elsewhere — putting more financial pressure on the UI.

The athletics department will pay the UI back for the money it borrows over a decade, Lehnertz said, adding a \$5 million burden

Education Group, which allows the company to take over operations of the Iowa Hawk Shop's online and retail sales.

He said the current utility public/private partnership will fund the university's next strategic plan, which puts the UI in a unique position because universities traditionally struggle to find funding to support strategic initiatives.

The UI extended the timeline for its five-year strategic plan to allow time to evaluate the impact of COVID-19, according to its website. Kregel said the theme for the UI's new strategic plan, which is slated to start in July 2022, is to build the UI up as a destination university, and hopefully bring more students to the UI.

“And so, what that means, in my mind, is to identify those really strong programs on campus — what makes the University of Iowa unique — to attract students in a variety of settings,” Kregel said.

Enrollment steadily approaches drop-off

The UI's plan to advertise itself as a destination university deals with an impending issue for college campuses nationwide that is now compounded by the pandemic — a steady decrease in enrollment. Data from the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center shows a 4.4 percent decline in college enrollment nationally. In Iowa, a 7.1 percent decline in higher education enrollment was reported.

Kregel said the UI is evaluating how to address this sharp drop-off in enrollment by looking at opportunities to recruit more non-resident students and engage more with in-state students.

“Like every other university in terms of enrollment numbers, it's going to be a challenge for us,” Kregel said.

According to the regents' fall enrollment report, the UI reported a 2.5 percent drop in overall enrollment in fall 2020. Regents' institutions reported a total enrollment decrease of 4.4 percent across its institutions, which amounts to a loss of 3,333 students.

Kregel said application numbers for 2021 are looking strong, however, in spite of projections for a major decline in enrollment because of the pandemic.

Hovey, who took her classes online from home this semester, said she will return to campus in fall 2021 when learning will be mostly “hands-on” and in person.

In addition to decreasing enrollment, Lehnertz voiced concern for the need for retention of already-enrolled students which greatly impacts tuition revenue. Investments from the public/private partnership into student success will hopefully ramp up retention rates, Lehnertz said, as well as other campus engagement efforts.

“We want to develop pride not only in the University of Iowa, but in higher education and what it means for the state,” Lehnertz said. “And so, retention matters not just for the dollar, but for the trajectory of every one of those students.”

As one of many UI students planning to return to campus next year, Hovey said being at the UI will feel different with mostly in-person classes. She said she is excited to experience what she missed out on this year.

“In-person classes are something that I am really nervous for because this whole year has been online for me,” Hovey said. “I feel like I missed out on my freshman year of college, but I made the right decision to move home.”

COVID-19 on campus: the spring

1/23/2020

The University of Iowa issues first message to international students about the novel coronavirus

1/28/2020

The Office of Strategic Communication creates a landing page for COVID-19 updates, general information, and campus resources

1/30/2020

International programs sends a message to all students who may have traveled to China to share information, guidance, and resources related to the virus

2/28/2020

UI cancels CIMBA Italy as the country experiences rapid spread of COVID-19

3/2/2020

The Office of Strategic Communication publishes a coronavirus website to help campus find pandemic information

3/5/2020

Board of Regents institutes ban on university-sponsored international travel

3/8/2020

Iowa Gov. Kim Reynolds announces the first identified cases of COVID-19 in Iowa are in Johnson County

3/11/2020

UI announces move to virtual instruction

3/12/2020

UI recalls students from countries designated a CDC-level 3

3/13/2020

UI cancels events through April 30, closes Recreation Center through end of spring semester

3/14/2020

The state Board of Regents recalls all faculty, staff, and students abroad

3/17/2020

UI directs employees to work remotely following public health disaster declaration by Reynolds.

3/18/2020

UI decides to close all residence halls but two and schedules move out from March 19 to March 29. Virtual instruction is both delayed until March 23 and extended for the remainder of the semester, in-person commencement ceremonies are canceled. UI closes additional campus buildings, including IMU, Hancher, and university libraries

3/19/2020

First self-reported COVID-19 case on campus – a College of Dentistry student

3/25/2020

UI announces pass/fail option for students and tenure evaluation extension for faculty



Ryan Adams/The Daily Iowan
University of Iowa officials speak during a media availability on COVID-19 at the IMU on March 4, 2020.

from Johnson County shows the gradual decrease in COVID-19 cases since then, with a recent positivity at about 3 percent on March 11, compared to nearly 60 percent in August 2020.

“The good thing is the progress that's being made,” UI Senior Vice President for Finance and Operations Rod Lehnertz said. “And having a world class health care system on our campus helps us to be at the front edge of both innovation and advancement on this.”

'A silent World War' for resources

When the pandemic initially reached Iowa in March 2020, the UI wanted to “do the right thing,” and worry about funding any expenses later, Lehnertz said.

He added that the UI had learned from the 2008 flood to take careful, complete records of everything in a crisis, including any costs it amassed. In the summer of 2008, Iowa City was hit with a 500-year-flood that damaged 20 campus buildings and cost the UI around \$700 million in repairs.

In a crisis like the pandemic, he said, the university's initial costs involved a worldwide chase for masks, gowns, and sanitizers.

According to a report from the U.S. Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, the world was facing an impending shortage of face masks by May 2020, when they were slated to increase a possible 10 times more in demand than they had been before the pandemic in countries affected by COVID-19.

“And we were hearing from sources that it was almost like a silent World War — every country in the world was going after the supplies,” Lehnertz said.

Students began moving out of the residence halls in mid-March 2020, and University Housing and Dining refunded around \$16 million to students who left campus for home, according to a UI financial report. This made it a challenge for the UI to cover existing debt from two campus residence halls, Lehnertz said.

By June 2020, the state Board of Regents had announced a tuition freeze for students because of financial uncertainty caused by the pandemic. Lehnertz said tuition revenue and state appropriations provide the bulk of the UI's general fund, so the tuition freeze took a chunk out of the UI's revenue projections, and how the university pays faculty and for student programs.

The UI and the regents wanted to do the right thing in a tough time, however, and avoid increasing tuition to levels that would have been overly burdensome to students, Lehnertz said.

“No one comes to expect that you're going to face something like we faced in COVID-19,” Lehnertz said.

The UI encountered additional costs as it prepared for students to return to campus in fall 2020. This included switching out the UI's air filtration systems to HVAC systems known as MERV13. While the change was expensive, Lehnertz said, it offers a higher degree of protection against the coronavirus.

The UI Critical Incident Management Team, composed of various campus leaders, convened in March to respond to the pandemic and has managed the university's response ever since.

UI Campus Health Officer Dan Fick said in March and April 2020, campus leaders were trying to figure out “what in the world was happening,” and searching for information to help.

Fick, who was interim head of the Department of Family Medicine at the time, said COVID-19 added to existing academic and clinical duties on campus, making for a very busy spring and summer in 2020. He frequently stayed up working until midnight only to wake up at 5 a.m. to get some exercise and start his day again.

to the athletic department each year. It's instances like these, he said, where funding from the federal CARES Act or the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund become incredibly important to the university.

“We won't recover from the costs that happened because of COVID-19 overnight,” Lehnertz said.

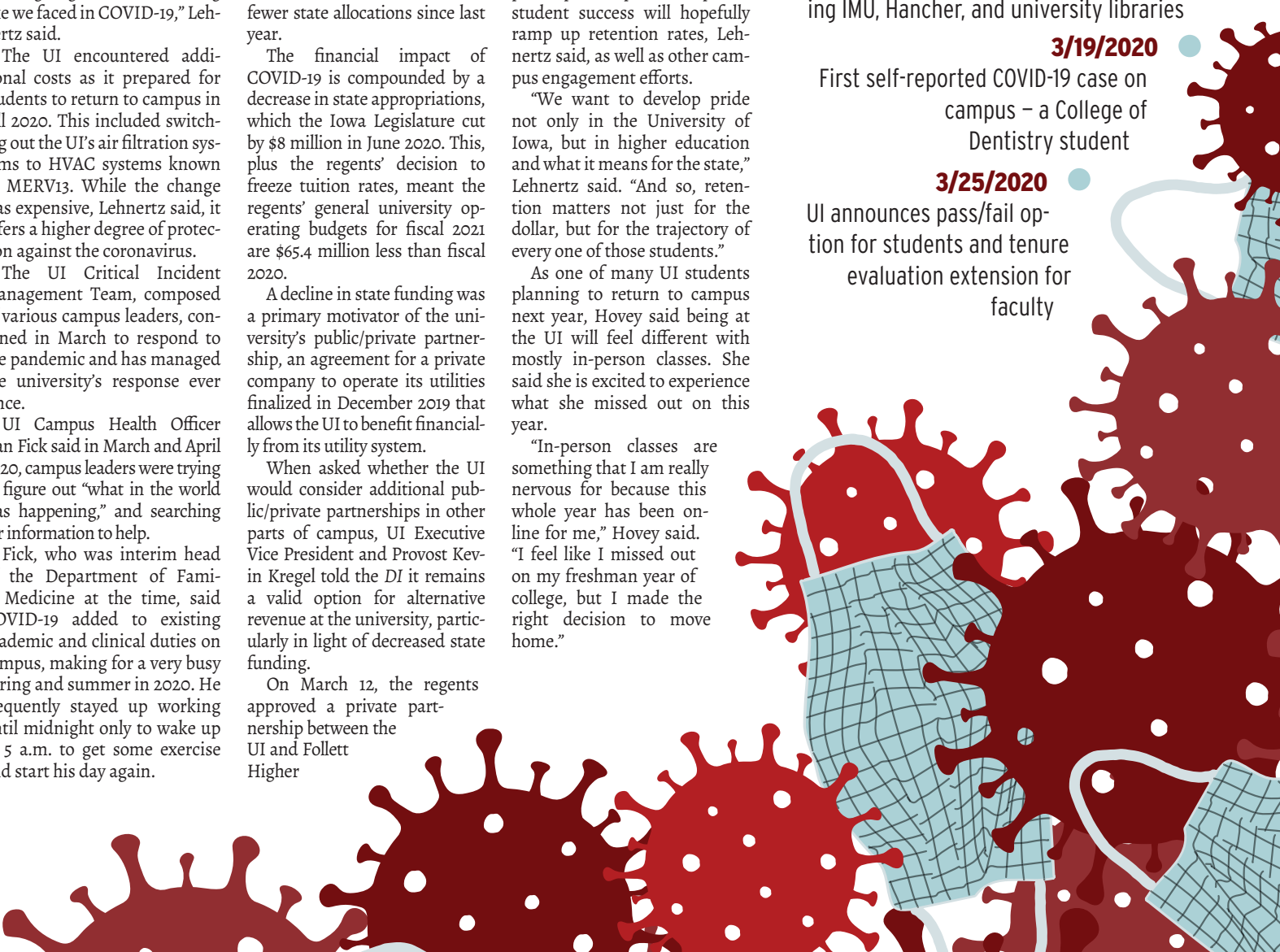
Comparatively, Iowa State University lost an estimated \$90.2 million from overall COVID-19 impact and state reductions, according to documents provided to the *DI*. The University of Northern Iowa lost an estimated net of \$12.03 million because of COVID-19 and fewer state allocations since last year.

The financial impact of COVID-19 is compounded by a decrease in state appropriations, which the Iowa Legislature cut by \$8 million in June 2020. This, plus the regents' decision to freeze tuition rates, meant the regents' general university operating budgets for fiscal 2021 are \$65.4 million less than fiscal 2020.

A decline in state funding was a primary motivator of the university's public/private partnership, an agreement for a private company to operate its utilities finalized in December 2019 that allows the UI to benefit financially from its utility system.

When asked whether the UI would consider additional public/private partnerships in other parts of campus, UI Executive Vice President and Provost Kevin Kregel told the *DI* it remains a valid option for alternative revenue at the university, particularly in light of decreased state funding.

On March 12, the regents approved a private partnership between the UI and Follett Higher



An online campus

A deadly pandemic shifted a normally bustling campus culture online, but after a year, some organizations plan to bring this new virtual flexibility into a post-pandemic world.



Grace Smith/The Daily Iowan
Two students, Nick Fitzpatrick (left) and Kourany Katzen (right) are seen on and near the Old Capitol building on March 3.

BY ALEXANDRA SKORES
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First-year Maddison Smith expected her first Hawkeye college experience to be filled with testing out new eateries and meeting new friends in her residence hall during the fall. After all, her high school canceled the graduation ceremony and stopped spring activities, including a senior prom.

Campus would be the bustling complex of residence halls and stately buildings she remembers visiting, or so she thought. But Smith's first year on campus was nothing like she expected.

"I thought by the time I moved in, it would be fine," Smith said.

The Davenport native moved into Catlett Hall this fall, but traveled home two weeks later after a COVID-19 scare. She said she felt isolated with most of her classes online because of fewer opportunities to get to know her classmates and have one-on-one experiences with her professors.

Feeling hopeful for an anticipated vaccine rollout, Smith came back to campus in the spring. Two weeks into the semester, she caught exactly what she'd moved home to avoid — the coronavirus.

As a music major studying music therapy, Smith said she often feels she's missing out on some crucial parts to her education by not learning in person. Her major has four main focuses — piano, percussion, guitar, and voice. Smith never took piano lessons. So, she said, with technical Zoom mishaps and few opportunities for face-to-face

feedback, she's basically teaching herself the instrument.

"[I feel like] I am not getting everything I am paying for by teaching myself," Smith said.

Smith is one student among tens of thousands at UI that experienced most classes online. Although the UI charted a primarily in-person fall 2020, rising cases and faculty concerns caused previously in-person activities to shift to a virtual format, meaning by Thanksgiving break, 76 percent of undergraduate credit hours were held online. This spring, 72 percent are online.

But administrators say the UI this fall is moving back to what it best offers — a residential campus experience. Navigating student support through a virtual campus when Iowa's history and practice rested in in-person instruction required a shift in approach, said Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education Tanya Uden-Holman. For example, adding a virtual supplemental instruction option could help better equip students away from campus in the future.

"Supplemental instruction in the pre-COVID days, that was at the IMU, and students would go down to the IMU and work on different classes," Uden-Holman said. "Hopefully, we can go back to that being residential, but I can see us possibly having a virtual component as well."

Despite the obstacles she's hurdled in her first year on campus, Smith said she encountered many encouraging professors that provide accommodations to help alleviate the barriers to online learning. Some profes-

sors would offer socially distanced spaces for music or opportunities to meet outside of class for music development.

Smith is not alone in having a first UI experience consumed by the pandemic thus far. Over the course of her tenure so far, Vice President for Student Life Sarah Hansen has overseen the connections between faculty and students done mostly online.

Hansen was announced in March 2020 as the new vice president for Student Life, after former VP Melissa Shivers departed for a role at Ohio State University.

The self-described "COVID-era VP" said the UI took a huge hit financially, challenging the ability to do campus engagement projects this year. As previously reported in *The Daily Iowan*, the UI's estimated \$83.4 million revenue loss stems from a \$50 million loss in UI athletics, \$13.7 million in refunds and lost revenue, \$14.8 million in the General Education for tuition revenue, and a reduction of \$3.1 million in state general fund allocations.

Everything has changed for individuals at the UI, Hansen said, from a virtual Dance Marathon, to online cultural center celebrations, and changes in services such as counseling.

"One of the lessons learned for me is that student engagement is a continuum, not a dichotomy," Hansen said.

Bringing valuable experiences to students on campus is something the Lecture Committee — the UI's committee tasked with bringing "thought-provoking" speakers to campus — has always put as their No. 1 priority. This year, safety of the students, staff and lecturers from a spreadable virus was a key factor they'd never navigated before when lining up speakers for campus.

Co-chair of the Lecture Committee Hannah Shrader said having this role this past year has meant being committed to flexibility. The committee held all its events online and met vir-

tually since cases were first identified in Johnson County in early March.

"Because of the virtual space, we have been able to bring some incredible speakers like Laverne Cox and David Quammen," she said.

Holding lectures online posed new challenges, she said, since none of the committee members had experience with running large virtual events.

But there were some silver linings to the lecture events shifting virtual. Online accessibility attracted larger audiences this year, and allowed the team to host higher-cost speakers, co-chair for the UI Lecture Committee Jocelyn Roof said.

"We have been able to bring incredible and high-profile speakers this year — much bigger names than in a typical year," Roof said.

As the UI moves beyond the pandemic, Shrader said holding hybrid meetings and events is definitely on the table so that everyone can be involved in the way that works best for them.

Learning about opportunities — like serving on the lecture committee — was put on hold like the rest of on-campus life last March. Senior Associate Director of Admissions Thomas Paulsen said the university transitioned overnight from on-campus to virtual visits — the day after campus shut down, Paulsen said the UI hosted a virtual informational event.

"We wanted to make sure everyone could have all the information they needed as if they were to come on campus," he said.

One upside to virtual campus visits was the ability to give families the closest experience to campus free of charge. Admissions was also able to reach students and families from afar more easily.

Since COVID-19 conditions have started to improve on campus and weather has warmed, socially distanced outdoor campus walking tours have begun.

"It is a way for families to come in and do more," Paulsen said. "Virtual engagement is OK, but you cannot really smell and taste and hear the sights of campus and of Iowa City like you can when you are walking through campus and into downtown."

Looking back on this past year, Paulsen has learned a lot not only about his fellow staff members and himself, but students as well.

"I think students are resilient," he said. "I have found strength in my colleagues and working with families who have overcome barriers and who have had challenges."

"It's going to take a while before we rebuild our international-student numbers realistically speaking," Ganim said. "I think it's going to take anywhere from two to three years."

The largest number of international students enrolled at the UI are from China, and the number of students from the country have been declining since the start of the Trump administration. Those declines are expected to continue, Ganim said.

International Programs is optimistic about the applicants and activities they are seeing in other pockets of the world, Ganim said, with encouraging signs from students hailing from Africa and the Middle East.

"So, there are other parts of the world, besides China that we will need to focus on," Ganim said. "And India always presents opportunities."

The process, Ganim said, will require patience.

"Our plan has been approved by senior administration to ba-

COVID-19 on campus: the summer and beyond

6/17/2020 ● UI announces plans for a hybrid fall semester prioritizing in-person instruction with classes of more than 50 online.

7/29/2020 ● The UI began enrolling volunteers in its Pfizer-BioNtech COVID-19 vaccine trial — one of 120 sites worldwide.

8/4/2020 ● UI student government bodies pen a letter urging the UI administration to transition more classes online amid rising cases statewide. The same day, 280 instructors pledged to teach classes online.

8/21/2020 ● Because of COVID-19-induced budget constraints, UI athletics announces it will cut four sports at the end of the 2020-2021 academic year.

8/24/2020 ● First day of classes. A Zoom outage strikes an uncertain tone for the semester.

8/31/2020 ● Bars in six Iowa counties, including Johnson County, are ordered to close after experiencing a spike in COVID-19 cases among young adults.

10/24/2020 ● Iowa plays its first football game after a tumultuous few months when players and fans alike were unsure whether a fall season would continue.

11/17/2020 ● A mandate to wear masks takes effect in Iowa amid rapidly rising hospitalizations, albeit with several exceptions.

12/14/2020 ● UIHC becomes one of the first hospitals in the nation to receive the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine.

1/25/2021 ● First day of second semester. Seventy-two percent of classes are online, compared to 76 percent online near the end of the fall semester.

2/1/2021 ● Eligibility for the vaccine expands to anyone over the age of 65 and people in high-risk workplaces. Appointments at this time are still very rare.

2/5/2021 ● UI sets course for largely in-person instruction in fall 2021, with classes of 150-plus online and smaller classes in-person.

3/12/2021 ● In his first prime-time White House address, President Biden says the U.S. will 'mark our independence from this virus' July 4.

sically focus on new areas, new connections — building deeper relationships than maybe we had before," Ganim said. "And just making sure that we can establish pipelines with trusted partners in order to rebuild our international-student population."

Political uncertainty and a presidential administration that was not favorable to international students and scholars may have exacerbated the challenges of the pandemic. Ganim said now that international programs are seeing a reversal in many of these

policies, he thinks it will bode well for the future.

As for the end of the pandemic, Son said she is excited for social-distancing measures to end, because sometimes as an ethnic minority when people physically step away from her, she wonders if the reason is because she's Asian.

"So, I think that is something that I am looking forward to, and of course, going direct to my home country, and enjoying the food there, and seeing my family and friends," Son said.

A gradual return to global

Experts predict it will take time for international-student enrollment and travel to return to normal.

BY MARY HARTEL
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Last spring, Yeji Son was preparing to go home to South Korea for the summer break, hoping that COVID-19 limitations would dwindle by then. A year later, she's barely left her 750-square-foot, two-bedroom apartment in Coralville.

Son is one of 2,072 international students who enrolled at the University of Iowa this fall. Iowa's public universities have seen significant drops in international student enrollment in the last few years, which was exacerbated by the pandemic.

Although International Programs has offered plenty of support, Son said some international students still feel disconnected from campus in addition to their home countries.

"International students are just struggling in their own cave," Son said. "I think it's better if they have a roommate or partner, but I know some international students have a really difficult time because of the feelings [of] isolation."

Son, a third-year international student in the counseling psychology Ph.D. program, had to stay in the U.S. throughout the pandemic because of a lack of funds. She hasn't traveled home to South Korea since the summer of 2019.

With widespread vaccination continuing across the U.S., UI International Programs is envisioning what the future of international student enrollment and global programming will look like in the coming years.

In an email to *The Daily Iowan*, Michael Bortscheller, associate director of the UI International Student and Scholar Services, said

the future for the program isn't yet clear as the dust settles from the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Nothing is set in stone at this time, both because the situation with the pandemic can change and has changed rapidly and also because we need guidance from Federal Agencies regarding when or whether immigration regulations will go back to the way they were before 2020," Bortscheller wrote.

While the pandemic has created challenges for everyone, Bortscheller wrote, international students have been dealt additional hurdles far away from their home countries.

"Some students had to face a decision about whether to remain in the U.S. and potentially go well over a year without seeing their families or to attempt to travel home and possibly find they couldn't return to the U.S. to resume their studies due to the constantly changing travel restrictions from January to July of 2020," Bortscheller wrote.

Class over Zoom can sometimes make it more difficult to understand English, Son, 29, said, and she has at times had to work harder when communicating with the class and teacher.

Some of her friends that opted to return home have struggled with the time difference, sleeping schedules, and tightened travel regulations, Son said.

Joslin Some, UI sophomore from Burkina Faso studying computer-science engineering had one normal semester in college before the pandemic changed everything.

Some said his experience at the UI has been a lot of fun, especially last year. This year, despite being

cooped up in his apartment for much of the time since most of his fall and spring classes have been virtual, he said "it's all right."

The biggest change in Some's life has been that many of his friends opted to stay home. Luckily, Some said he lives with one friend in an Iowa City apartment. Some wanted to travel home last summer but couldn't because of international travel restrictions, he said, so he hasn't been home since the day he left for college.

"Being away from home still is hard, but I'd be away either way," Some said. "It's just the fact that I never got to go back, that kind of hurts."

Right now, Some is dealing with uncertainty in figuring out his future plans, deciding if he will pursue an internship in the U.S. or try to go home to see family and friends, something he said he's looking forward to once he feels safe enough to travel.

The international programs department is anticipating international-student enrollment to be down again this year and continue to decline even as people are vaccinated, said Russ Ganim, dean of International Programs.

According to the state Board of Regents, international student enrollment has declined 45 percent in the last 5 years — matching national trends that were exacerbated by the pandemic.

International students made up 7.9 percent of the UI student population in fall 2019, but dropped to 6.5 percent in fall 2020, according to UI admissions data.



Jenna Galligan/The Daily Iowan
University of Iowa sophomore Joslin Some video chats with his younger sister on Saturday at his apartment in Iowa City.

Amplify

Home away from home away from home

As the pandemic shut down much of campus life, Multicultural International Student Support and Engagement has continued to engage and connect with students virtually. Online programming — like Zoom and discord hours — have fostered the “home away from home” space as the physical cultural centers remain closed.



Katie Goodale/The Daily Iowan
Michael Warner-Craft poses for a portrait outside of the Afro-American Cultural House on March 12.

BY HANNAH PINSKI
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The Black student population may be small at the University of Iowa, but Michael Warner-Craft makes sure it has representation and that people within it are able to find a community.

Warner-Craft, a junior at the UI majoring in ethics and public policy, serves as president of the Black Student Union and co-president of the National Pan-Hellenic Council. With the struggles Black students are facing, he is passionate about making sure they have a welcoming space.

Like many students, Warner-Craft has struggled with the transition to

an online university structure. He said the lack of consistency within classes, such as lecture formats, makes it difficult to keep track of his responsibilities and schedule.

Warner-Craft also feels that professors are handing out a heavier workload because an online format demands less work. He believes professors think there's fewer pressing matters when, in reality, many students are struggling to connect outside the classroom — especially students of color.

Warner-Craft believes the biggest problem Black students face at the university is a lack of representation on campus, and the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated this issue.

He is tackling this through his leadership positions at organizations affiliated with the Afro-American Cultural Center, however.

Warner-Craft joined the Black Student Union during his freshman year. As a sophomore, he served as the treasurer before becoming president this year.

Prior to COVID-19, Black Student Union hosted events such as a Gala, which he described as “a prom for Black students.” The National Pan-Hellenic Council emphasizes community service and volunteers at charities such as the Ronald McDonald Organization and food pantry.

While the organizations have limited options for events, the National

Pan-Hellenic Council engaged with the community by hosting a panel on Black excellence and survival with six different Black alumni from the UI at the end of Black History Month.

Warner-Craft's experience with these organizations and values drove him to become a leader to provide a needed space for Black students, somewhere they feel represented.

“I feel most represented and taken care of when I'm surrounded by people who look like me and are around me,” Warner-Craft said. “I'm really big on leadership, that's a personal value to me so it was kinda natural for me to step up and lead the organizations.”

Michael Warner-Craft

Michelle Tran-Duong

BY ALEXANDRA SKORES
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In spring 2020, University of Iowa second-year student Michelle Tran-Duong attended a public conversation where a lecturer said there was no need to worry about COVID-19 and masks weren't needed.

Nearly a year later, Tran-Duong can look back and see COVID-19's was minimized toward the beginning of the pandemic, and how it has shaped her on-campus experience and involvement as a Hawkeye.

“There was a different shift

in how I attended classes and had to adjust my study schedule and my meetings with student organizations,” Tran-Duong said. “I had to do a whole 180 with my life and switch it around so I could adapt.”

The Iowa City native is the center programming assistant for the Asian Pacific American Cultural Center, the vice president of service and philanthropy in alpha Kappa Delta Phi, and works closely with the Vietnamese Student Association. She is studying International Studies with dual tracks in East Asian Studies and Global Studies.

To continue the “home away from home” mission of the cultural centers, APACC started hosting chat hours on discord, a messaging and chat platform. March 28, Tran-Duong and a friend are hosting a how-to cuisine session over discord on making *mochi*, a sweet Japanese rice cake. Nutella, red bean, and strawberry are a few favorite additives.

Coming to the UI presented a unique challenge for Tran-Duong, as she identifies as a first-generation college student. Once classes were moved online in spring 2020, however, it was an education format she was not used to.

“I was struggling to adapt,” Tran-Duong said.

Despite the last year of social distance, Tran-Duong has managed to find unique ways to connect in her work with different organizations with online games, Zoom meetings, and holiday-themed online events. She hopes that once the pandemic has reached a place of calm, the “home away from home” feeling at the cultural centers will be maintained for those coming to the UI for the first-time.

“I just hope one day that the first-year students will be able to return to their home at the APACC,” Tran-Duong said.



Katie Goodale/The Daily Iowan
Michelle Tran-Duong poses for a portrait outside of the Asian Pacific American Cultural Center on March 11.



Katie Goodale/The Daily Iowan
Sydney Nguyen poses for a portrait on the Pentacrest on March 9.

BY ELEANOR HILDEBRANDT
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When Sydney Nguyen em-

barked on her journey as the first programming assistant for University of Iowa International Student Support and Engagement, she knew it would be challenging.

Nguyen, a second-year student studying English and creative writing, began her position in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic. She trained for her position virtually, and she is responsible for creating a social-media presence and programming for the department, and community for international students — a task Nguyen said she takes seriously.

While it's difficult to do things virtually, Nguyen said she has embraced online platforms to continue connecting students.

“I was trained over the summer and I don't mind working virtually,” she said. “I have not had the experience to work in person, so I can't compare it, but I can see our programs reaching people.”

When COVID-19 initially appeared in Johnson County in spring 2020, Nguyen said many of her friends who were international students had to make decisions to leave or stay in the U.S. She said there was a lot of confusion when the pandemic began because she didn't know whether she should return home or stay in the U.S.

Fortunately, Nguyen, who's originally from Vietnam, had family in the country and was able to stay in Minnesota. She said this allowed her to continue

classes more normally than other international students who had to deal with different time zone issues. It also helped to be so close to the UI when she began her training online.

“We get fewer attendees compared to in-person activity,” she said. “The differences in time zones for students who are outside of the United States is also difficult ... On the flip side, we are benefitting from programs being online because everyone can attend.”

Moving forward, Nguyen said she can't wait to hold events in person and meet new international students. She said she misses connecting with students inside and out of the interna-

tional student program.

Overall, Nguyen said her goal is to continue advocating for and helping international students. She said it's important for members of the campus community to listen to international students because they have been through so much during the pandemic.

“There's a need for us to look out for our community and I'm able to continue building that community in my position,” she said. “I hope a lot of people will be a little more active in the community. And the easiest thing is for people to hear what international students have to say and keep with us — that's the easiest way to hear and care and support us.”

Sydney Nguyen

Whitney Martinez

BY JENNA POST
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As a first-generation student, Whitney Martinez wasn't sure what to expect from her college experience. To better prepare herself, Martinez attended the Iowa Edge program in 2018. She arrived ready to learn about university life, and left with new friends who would soon help her find her passion for the Association of Latinos Moving Ahead.

Martinez was hesitant to join the Association of Latinos Moving Ahead as a freshman because she

was shy. After some encouragement from the friends she made during Iowa Edge, however, she decided to give it a try. There, she found her home on campus.

“Prior to college, I hadn't really connected with my culture in the way that I have here at the university,” Martinez said. “The respect and support we give each other, it's really beautiful.”

Martinez is currently vice president of the Association of Latinos Moving Ahead. The student organization is for Latinx students who are looking to connect with their peers and embrace their culture. It

also provides students with educational opportunities and skills for post-graduation.

Members would normally meet in person at the Latino Native American Cultural Center. Because of the pandemic, however, they've met over Zoom for the past year.

Martinez said the adjustment was a challenge for members of the group's executive board. At first, they struggled to create the same sense of community that they had in person, but Martinez believes that this has improved over time.

“Losing that physical space

of community was really, really hard,” Martinez said. “I miss laying on a beanbag at the LNACC and seeing everyone in person. But it's coming up on a year. I feel like I've adjusted. I really look forward to sharing our virtual space together.”

Whether in person or virtual, Martinez said she sees the weekly Association of Latinos Moving Ahead meetings as a safe space, where she can be comfortable being her authentic self.

“I probably wouldn't have stayed at the university without ALMA honestly,” Martinez said.



Katie Goodale/The Daily Iowan
Whitney Martinez poses for a portrait outside of the Latino Native American Cultural Center on March 11.



Katie Goodale/The Daily Iowan
Joseph Villalobos poses for a portrait outside of the Pride Alliance Center on March 12.

BY MARY HARTEL
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As Joseph Villalobos transitioned to college, he became more immersed in one identity — but felt further away from another.

A native of Elgin, Illinois, a town that is about 80 percent Latinx, Villalobos said he decided to attend the University of Iowa after a former teacher recommended its English program.

“She also told me that it is like the gay center of Iowa — Iowa City,” Vil-

llobos said.

A reality the sophomore soon realized, Villalobos said. Before coming to the UI, he said he did not know many people with queer identities in Elgin — only about two.

“And I was like, ‘Wow, there are so many people here who are queer and out and proud,’” Villalobos said. “And it's a cool environment to be in.”

At the same time, Villalobos said, he still felt a sense of “otherness,” in his classrooms, mostly based in his Puerto Rican identity.

“It's a little weird for me to be in classes and to have like this — not language barrier — but thought barrier,” Villalobos said.

Things that translate into his queer identity, though, Villalobos said, have helped him find similarities and struggles with people who come from different worlds.

“While I didn't have that same ethnic similarity,” Villalobos said, “I had a new thing to connect with, a new identity.”

This environment is a big part of his work with the UI Pride House

as a center programming assistant, Villalobos said. But virtual programming has created barriers and struggles for Villalobos and his coworkers to maintain community, he said. At the in-person cultural center, you can talk to anyone even if you don't know them.

This “homey” vibe is difficult to replicate virtually, Villalobos said, though the Pride House and Multicultural and International Student Support and Engagement team have been determined to make it a parallel experience.

Joseph Villalobos

A day in the life



Kate Heston/The Daily Iowan
Wall decor in Nolan Roethler's room is seen on Tuesday. Roethler is a student-athlete on the track team at Iowa. Roethler will graduate from the University of Iowa with a degree in economics and finance. He plans to continue his academic career and get his masters at Iowa next year.



Ayrton Breckenridge/The Daily Iowan
University of Iowa senior and undergraduate BSN nursing student, Nick Figuracion (left), eats lunch with fellow nursing student, Rebecca Sandhu (right), on March 11 in the University of Iowa Stead Family Children's Hospital cafeteria. Figuracion said, "We do what we have to do to protect us and our patients because at the end of the day we are taking care of them and they're our first priority."



Jenna Galligan/The Daily Iowan
University of Iowa sophomore and computer-science engineering major Joslin Some on Sunday at his apartment in Iowa City. Some is an international student from Ouagadougou, the capital of Burkina Faso in West Africa.

Daily Iowan photographers spent time with three University of Iowa students — a nurse, a student athlete, and a computer-science engineering major — a year into the pandemic.



Ayrton Breckenridge/The Daily Iowan
University of Iowa senior and undergraduate BSN nursing student, Nick Figuracion, goes through paperwork in his apartment on March 11 before his pediatric clinical rotation at the University of Iowa Stead Family Children's Hospital. Figuracion said, "I get excited every time I have clinical because I get to have that patient-nurse interaction and that's the highlight of my day."



Kate Heston/The Daily Iowan
Nolan Roethler puts on his shoes while he prepares to go to track practice on Tuesday. Athletes like Roethler must test for COVID-19 three times a week, have their temperature taken and wear a mask and designated wristband in athletics facilities. Roethler will graduate from the University of Iowa with a degree in economics and finance. He plans to continue his academic career and pursue a master's degree at the UI next year.

COVID-19: Looking back



Katie Goodale/The Daily Iowan
UI freshman Katie Eganhouse moves out of Currier residence hall on March 19, 2020. The University of Iowa announced yesterday that classes would be moved online and students would have to move out of the residence halls for the rest of the semester because of COVID-19.



Tate Hildyard/The Daily Iowan
A long line of students outside of Sports Column is seen in downtown Iowa City on Oct. 9, 2020. That weekend, the governor lifted the bar closure mandate, put in place in August after a surge in COVID-19 cases among young people. The reopenings caused an upswing in night-life business and added concern of virus spread.

In March 2020, campus shut down, restaurants closed, and Zoom became all too familiar. Now, a light dangles at the end of a year spent apart.



Katie Goodale/The Daily Iowan
Students walk on the T. Anne Cleary on March 11, 2020. That week, the University of Iowa suspended classes until at least April 3, 2020 and later announced it would send students home and move classes online for the rest of the semester. March 11, a Wednesday, was one of the last days students attended classes on campus in the spring 2020 semester.



Jeff Sigmund/The Daily Iowan
Phillips waits for a poke of the needle – her first dose of Moderna’s COVID-19 vaccine – on Dec. 22, 2020. Phillips works in the intensive-care unit at the Veterans Affairs Medical Center.



Jeff Sigmund/The Daily Iowan
Vehicles drive through a Cedar Rapids COVID-19 Test Iowa site on Nov. 30, 2020. Signs give instructions as staff take samples from people to be tested for COVID-19. Health officials feared a post-Thanksgiving spike in cases.



Tate Hildyard/The Daily Iowan
A Burge Marketplace worker serves a line of students on Aug. 26, 2020. Because of health and safety regulations put in place by the University of Iowa to prevent the spread of COVID-19, students living on campus would pick up dining hall meals by registering in advance for a takeout box of food.

Local businesses weather on

One year later, the pandemic has brought financial challenges and new business models to Iowa City's small businesses.

BY CALEB MCCULLOUGH
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When a pandemic required her shop to shut its doors, Kate Dreyer and her business partners had to find a way to keep the lights on.

Dreyer, along with co-owners Kay Boyer and Jessica Meyer, operates The Shop, a rustic artisanal boutique in downtown Iowa City. The Shop's cozy retail space features an eclectic collection of vintage and modern decor and clothing, handcrafted furniture, and other accessories all curated or created by the owners.

When retail stores were forced to close by an emergency order from Iowa Gov. Kim Reynolds a year ago, The Shop's owners turned to social media to stay connected with their customers and keep sales flowing.

"When we realized we had to shut our doors we definitely took advantage of social media platforms, and we started posting daily Insta stories of sales," Dreyer said. "And then every Monday night we hosted a Facebook Live event."

While The Shop had been hosting online sales and using social media before the pandemic, in both its Iowa City location and a second location in Kalona, those efforts shot up in March 2020 as online sales became The Shop's main source of revenue.

The Shop's experience is one shared with countless other businesses across the state and country, that over the past year have faced hardships, difficult bureaucratic hurdles, and have had to adapt to a changing business landscape during an unpredictable pandemic.

While nearly all businesses faced struggles last year, the leisure and hospitality sector — which includes restaurants, theaters, recreation, and hotels — is by far the hardest hit industry a year after the beginning of the pandemic. According to data from Iowa Workforce Development from December, the sector

still has a net loss of almost 32,000 jobs compared to February of 2020. At the peak of Iowa's unemployment, in April of 2020, leisure jobs were cut by more than half, dropping from 146,300 jobs in February to 71,400 jobs in April.

"More than a third of the lost jobs that we're still enduring in the state are located in leisure and hospitality," Iowa State University Professor of Economics David Swenson said. "So, there's no other way to spin it. It's just bad."

Local governments — including schools — and health services are other areas that are still enduring significant dips in employment. While most other industries still haven't recovered from last year, retail and food processing industries have seen an uptick in employment.

Iowa City Downtown District Executive Director Nancy Bird said almost 19 percent of downtown businesses faced serious financial strain during this past year, resulting in either closure or obtaining new ownership to continue operating the business.

Bird said increasing online presence is a common tactic businesses have incorporated to help sales during the pandemic.

"Reaching out to patrons in different ways, getting online, offering delivery of goods and takeout, so all those things and using other methods, getting creative with it, helped sales," Bird said. "I think it was just a lot of innovation that was happening."

Bird said she also saw a correlation between businesses following proper health and safety guidelines and success-



The Shop in downtown Iowa City is seen on Saturday. The vinatage boutique turned to online sales when it saw less foot traffic during the pandemic.

fully engaging with customers and making sufficient sales.

"Businesses that are still operating took the safety precautions seriously," Bird said. "So, they found methods for trying to keep people socially distanced and that whole transparency around hygiene — they did a really nice job with that."

Making ends meet

Co-owner of Oasis Falafel Ofer Sivan said this past year has been financially difficult for Oasis, as the business tries to balance making sufficient sales and also prioritizing the community's health and safety.

Oasis has reduced its operations from 70 hours a week to 21 hours per week, and is down to 20 percent of its original employee base.

"It's been a challenge to stay afloat, financially, so the government programs have been helpful with payroll and

allow us to keep as many employees as we have been able to keep," Sivan said. "We're just trying to improvise and find a way to operate safely with an acceptable level of risk that's acceptable to our staff."

Sivan said he has received appreciative customers complimenting the business for only offering delivery and take out dining options, acknowledging Oasis's commitment to prioritizing the public health of its staff and patrons.

With a new contingency plan each week, Sivan said Oasis has been able to persevere through a year of financial uncertainty and a wavering customer and employee base.

Sivan said he is hopeful that the recent rollout of COVID-19 vaccines across the state of Iowa and the rest of the nation will help Oasis return to a more familiar routine of preparing food and serving community members. President Joe Biden announced last week he was directing states to expand vaccine eligibility to everyone over the age of 16 by May 1.

Sivan recognized the

city's efforts to provide financial support to local businesses this past year.

"I mean one thing about the crisis, the city and community are trying to help businesses," Sivan said. "Those efforts actually do help, you know. So, and there's a lot of small businesses that have benefited."

In February, Iowa City awarded more than \$360,000 to 27 small businesses, coming from the city's CARES Act funding. The criteria included whether the business had received previous financial assistance and focused on businesses operated by women and people of color.

Jennifer Banta, the vice president of the Iowa City Area Business Partnership, said navigating federal relief programs was difficult for many businesses early in the pandemic. When the Paycheck Protection Program opened up after the CARES Act, many local businesses did not know the stipulations and rules that came with the loans.

After several months and multiple relief packages, Banta said the rules for federal relief became more manageable.

"The plane was being built as it was in the air, so rules were changing," Banta said. "I think as we've gone along now, it has gotten a lot better. People know where to go to get the information."

An opportunity for some

While the pandemic has put a financial strain on several restaurants, some people have found an opportunity to start up a new business. Bird said there has been a 7 percent increase in new restaurants opening downtown, and some new retailers opened such as the downtown Target.

Pat and Fran's Irish Pub in Coralville opened in November, and has seen significant support from the surrounding community, co-owner Nick Carroll said. Located at 808 5th St., the bar is in the same location as Tap N' Tacos, a Mexican restaurant that closed early in the pandemic.

While there's an Applebee's and a couple bars in the area, Carroll said the area was missing an "in-between" neighborhood bar with the environment that Pat and Fran's brings.

"This is a little more low key," he said. "More warm and inviting, like, 'We're going to come to relax, not to have a night out or whatever.' That's the vibe we were really going for."

The bar was inspired by Carroll's friend and the son of co-owners Bob and Karin Olson, Bo Olson, who died of brain cancer in August. Before his death, Bo left a "bucket list" of things he wanted his family to do, which included opening a bar, Carroll said.

Opening in the middle of the pandemic brought its own stipulations and considerations, Carroll said.

Although restaurants aren't

required to limit capacity since Reynolds lifted all COVID-19 restrictions in February, the bar has only about a dozen tables with 60 seats in total, though it has a capacity of 139.

As the weather warms up, Carroll said the bar will take more advantage of a patio space outside. Carroll said the bar has an experienced staff that took health and safety into consideration as it operates through the pandemic.

"Yes, we did open in the middle of a pandemic, which isn't ideal," he said. "At the same time, it was eight months into the pandemic so most people do what they were doing already as far as if they'd worked in the service industry."

Moving forward

For The Shop, the adaptations made because of the pandemic will continue into the future. The Shop saw no financial losses over 2020, and Dreyer credits that to its online presence.

116 downtown businesses
8.6% closed permanently
10% changed ownership to stay operational

"We've decided that the 10 percent growth we experienced was definitely due to what we're doing online, and we keep doing that," she said.

Bird said, as the city moves forward, the downtown district would like to continue to implement strategic initiatives that help support with the recovery from COVID-19.

Bird said she hopes to increase the number of patio and outdoor seating options for restaurants and businesses this spring and summer, as this initiative helped attract patrons to the downtown area this past year.

"We want to continue to strengthen the destination of downtown Iowa City and the University of Iowa Pentacrest," Bird said. "We want to create a stronger destination there for people to come and visit. So, I think those are good discussions that we will continue to have going forward with our city and university."

As the economy continues to recover, Swenson said the leisure and hospitality industry will likely be the last to catch up. He said Iowa will likely see excess commercial real estate supply through 2021.

"Basically what we want to do is climb back to where we were, which was sort of at a stasis, just kind of holding on," he said. "And if we can do that in the next nine months to a year, that's about as good as one could hope for here in Iowa."



Stars indicate closed businesses in Downtown Iowa City. (Source: Iowa City Press-Citizen)

Map by Kate Doolittle/The Daily Iowan



A bartender serves a customer at Pat and Fran's on March 9. Pat and Fran's is an Irish pub located in Coralville that opened in November.

Resiliency: A year on the front lines

In the last year, Iowa saw 340,000 COVID-19 cases and more than 5,000 deaths. As health care professionals witnessed the pandemic first hand, a year later many remain resilient in the face of burnout at University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics.

BY ELEANOR HILDEBRANDT
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Jess Shever is exhausted. A year after the first case of COVID-19 was discovered in Johnson County, Shever said there is an added emotional toll on her and her colleagues to do their jobs during the pandemic. Because visitors aren't allowed in the hospital to minimize the spread of COVID-19, the responsibility of supporting patients and contacting family members for an over-the-phone visit adds more daily work and emotional energy, Shever said. Shever is a staff nurse in the medical intensive-care unit at the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics, which has served as ground zero for COVID-19 patients over the last year. "I know several of my colleagues were in the room when patients died at the beginning when we weren't allowing anyone to come in," she said. "The nurses stay in the room and hold their hand and tell them it's OK to die and that happens every once in a while prior to the pandemic, but it was just happening with such increased frequency. It takes a big emotional toll and it's challenging."

“ I applaud the nurses I work with and the other therapists, because we’ve had to pick up more of the emotional load that normally family members would have when supporting their loved ones.”

– Anne Sullivan, occupational therapist

Health care workers have been on the front lines of the COVID-19 pandemic and haven't gotten a break, said Shever, who hasn't taken a vacation in six months. UIHC implemented two-week long furloughs for its employees

to make up for millions of dollars in COVID-19 losses in June 2020. Shever decided to split her furlough in half — taking one week off and working the other — after witnessing the impact furloughs had on her unit. She said she has had to add to her self-care routine to ensure she can continue working — and she isn't alone. Anne Sullivan, an occupational therapist who has worked for UIHC for eight years, said the stress from the pandemic has severely impacted her mental and emotional well-being, so she's also leaning on a routine to help her continue working. "Burnout is real and I see it affecting a lot of my colleagues," Sullivan said. "I've made a point to do as much self-care as possible by resting, exercising, and eating... [COVID-19] hurts your heart. And it adds another layer of exhaustion, so we have to take care of ourselves." Both Sullivan and Shever said they've focused on ensuring they have time to take care of themselves during the pandemic to decrease the stress of their day-to-day jobs. They've seen their colleagues do the same. From June to September 2020, Mental Health Ameri-

and 82 percent said they were emotionally exhausted. Sullivan said she can't believe it's already been a year since Iowa identified its first COVID-19 cases and deaths. She called the beginning of the pandemic terrifying because more questions circled than answers when it came to protection while working in a hospital. At first, she said she didn't know what protective equipment to wear and where the gear would be coming from. Not knowing how to protect herself, her colleagues, and her patients was one of the hardest things she's had to do, Sullivan said. "When the pandemic started, it was scary," she said. "So much was unknown when it came to protocols and what PPE to wear and the availability of protective gear. We were on edge when it came to work safety."

While UIHC is lucky to have enough personal protective equipment for all of its employees, Sullivan said, it is challenging and exhausting when it comes to communicating with patients. She said she often has to yell for patients to understand her. As an occupational therapist, Sullivan works with patients of all ages with any condition to recuperate and recover daily skills. She said she has worked with some hard-of-hearing patients where communication was a barrier even before the pandemic, and it has only gotten worse with the layers of masks and face shields. Health care workers, however, are not only handling the pandemic, but are also dealing with a nursing shortage across the country. Sullivan said several qualified nurses who have spent their lives serving patients have left UIHC during the pandemic. While none have left her unit specifically, she said losing nurses has been difficult for other units.



Ayrton Breckenridge/The Daily Iowan
Senior occupational therapist at the University of Iowa Hospital and Clinics, Anne Sullivan, poses for a portrait in front of the hospital on March 5. Sullivan said, "I'm a proud union member committed to making this hospital a better place for my colleagues and patients."

At a bargaining session with the state Board of Regents in January, SEIU 199, the union that serves health care workers like Sullivan, said there were several underlying factors when it came to nurses leaving UIHC, including scheduling problems and the expense of traveling nurses. As *The Daily Iowan* previously reported, UIHC is using traveling nurses to fill the gaps in its workforce. The UI, however, is working to help combat the shortage of trained nurses through its College of Nursing, said associate dean for undergraduate programs at the UI's College of Nursing, Anita Nicholson. "At the College of Nursing, we're preparing nurses to graduate and get out into the field and help with the shortage," she said. "We graduate students twice a year through two tracks — pre-licensure and RN BSN. Our program is working to navigate the COVID crisis and ensure graduates are prepared to provide quality nursing care and navigate the complex

health care field." Moving forward, Sullivan said she is looking forward to having visitors in the hospital again. UIHC added several precautions at the beginning of the pandemic to nip the spread of COVID-19, including postponing all visitors for adult patients in April 2020. As the spread of the coronavirus slows and more individuals are vaccinated, Sullivan said she is looking forward to seeing more people in the hospital and adding visitor education back into her everyday work. "I'm ready for normalcy and for people to have visitors," she said. "I appreciate the strict visitor policy because it's keeping people safe and I'm glad the university has done that, but a big part of my job is family caregiver education, so I look forward to being able to do that in person." Looking ahead, Shever said she is excited to see her family now that she's been vaccinated. She said that, though the end of the pandemic is

coming, it isn't here yet and encouraged people to continue wearing masks and to get their vaccinations when it's available to them. "The university community overall has been supportive of following social distancing and wearing masks and that's been great," she said. "But it's been a struggle, sometimes, to listen to our governor implement different non strategies to mitigate the spread of COVID... The end is coming, but it's not here yet." While this year has been long and grueling for health care professionals on the front lines, Sullivan said it is an experience she will never forget. "This past year, there has been so much sadness, grief, and heartbreak when it comes to taking care of our patients," Sullivan said. "I applaud the nurses I work with and the other therapists, because we've had to pick up more of the emotional load that normally family members would have when supporting their loved ones."

Oaknoll's optimism: outlasting COVID-19

The Oaknoll Retirement Residence team reflects on how COVID-19 required diligent adaptation to keep residents safe and content.



Contributed/Oaknoll Retirement Residence
An Oaknoll Retirement Community staff member hands a resident flowers on her 100th birthday.

BY GRACE HAMILTON
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When Oaknoll Retirement Center locked down on March 8, 2020, Oaknoll Recreational Therapist Lindsey Reed said she remembered thinking it seemed inevitable that COVID-19 would reach the long-term care facility. "It was scary to think about the potential of it getting in, and it seemed inevitable that it was going to get in," Reed said. "I'm very thankful that was not the case." Throughout the pandemic, Oaknoll's staff and resident case count has remained at zero. Other nursing homes are not as fortunate. As of Tuesday, long-term care facility residents account for 2,221 of Iowa's 5,657 COVID-19-related deaths. But since vaccines have rolled into senior living facil-

ities, just one facility in Iowa currently has an outbreak. After all Oaknoll residents received a COVID-19 vaccine, Reed said the facility started loosening some of its prior resident restrictions. For example, staff members have worn masks and shields whenever they are within six feet of a resident. Now, staff members that are vaccinated aren't required to wear shields on top of their masks within six feet. Reed said that, during recreation time, the Oaknoll staff tries to keep residents socially distanced and encourages them to wear their masks, although most health center residents decide not to. Oaknoll's Environmental Services staff sanitizes every nook and cranny of the common areas and halls every few hours, she added. Taylor Weever, Oaknoll's assistant director of dining

services, said Oaknoll is now allowing communal dining, trying to balance regaining a sense of community with resident comfort-levels. To do so, Oaknoll allows a limited number of residents in the dining room at a time and still requires social distancing. "It's kind of nice having them out of their rooms and allowing some more residents into the dining room because that's always a good gathering place for them," Weever said. Reed added: "A dining room serves as a perfect social outlet for so many residents at all three levels of care." No matter the occasion, Oaknoll's staff did not allow COVID-19 to stop them from planning safe and socially distanced fun for their residents — especially for birthdays. "We had a resident in assisted living who turned 100 on May 8. We tried to figure

out things to do to help her celebrate," Reed said. "Several Oaknoll staff members ended up creating a flash mob for her, and we did it outside so her family could be off in the distance and watch." Retha Haas, Oaknoll's director of resident relations, said that, after resident mental health started to decline and the Center for Medicare and Medicaid released guidelines for allowing visitors, Oaknoll devised inventive ways for residents to see loved ones. "Residents did a lot of FaceTime and Skyping just so they could still visit, but mental health was a big concern of ours, and we were noticing people were just kind of closing in on themselves a little bit," Haas said. "It really became a group effort like, let's start thinking creatively — what can we do to give them as much as we can right now?"

As previously reported by *The Daily Iowan*, Oaknoll Retirement Residence's maintenance crew created a chatterbox contraption — a life-sized plexiglass structure — so residents could see their families. On March 12, the Iowa Department of Public Health announced updated guidance that recommends long-term care facilities allow indoor visits for residents at any time, regardless of the residents' or visitors' vaccination status. The guidance is applicable unless a resident is infected with COVID-19 or in quarantine. The guidance does not extend to unvaccinated residents if the county positivity rate is greater than 10 percent and less than 70 percent of the residents in the facility are vaccinated. Although staff still fear the possibility of Oaknoll picking up the virus, Weever said he's

excited to see the retirement residence to pick up small bits of normalcy. "We're just excited to keep moving forward, and that's the biggest thing here," Weever said. "One thing I will say is that it was actually a lot easier to lock down a year ago than it has been to reopen with so many changes. Taking these little steps toward being a bit more normal is hard to do, but we have to do it." As residents continue to take steps toward ordinary life, Haas said Oaknoll's return to a pre-coronavirus reality feels more probable by the day. "I just have a lot of hope, and so do the residents. On the day most of the residents were vaccinated with the first dose, it felt like old times," Haas said. "There was this spirit of joy and hope, and we knew we were going to make it and that it's all going to be OK."



Contributed/Oaknoll Retirement Community
Residents at Oaknoll Retirement Community hold an outdoor flash mob for a resident's 100th birthday. Staffers wanted to make the day special despite strict precautions to curb coronavirus spread.

Classrooms adapt a year later

After several shifts in the past year of the pandemic, University of Iowa professors and administrators look back at what they’ve learned about teaching in the last year and how they move back to predominantly in-person teaching.

BY ELEANOR HILDEBRANDT
eleanor-hildebrandt@uiowa.edu

When Rebecca Clark began to move her classes online, she didn’t know how to fit everything in.

Zoom and other commonly used forms of online modalities for learning were not created with nonverbal languages in mind, the director of the University of Iowa’s Undergraduate Studies for the American Sign Language Program said.

Whether online or in-person, Clark said her department not only had to seek out better ways to teach the language, but they had to purchase new equipment to make sure their presentations were clear to students on Zoom.

From shifting classes online in March 2020 to hybrid and fully-in-person classes in the 2020-21 academic year, the UI has seen several changes in its education modality a year into the COVID-19 pandemic.

From going to online webinars to learn how to mitigate Zoom malfunctions, to purchasing new camera technology, UI professors and administrators have found various solutions to keeping classrooms functional after classes moved fully virtual on March 11.

In the fall 2020 semester, the UI prioritized classes with less than 50 students for in-person learning. But by the Thanksgiving break, 76 percent of undergraduate credit hours were online. This spring, 72 percent of classes are in a virtual format. As the UI prepares for fall 2021, Tanya Uden-Holman, the associate provost for undergraduate education and dean of the University College, said more classes will be in-person because of lower transmission of COVID-19 in recent months and vaccinations becoming more widely available.

“Our classes that are over 150 will be online,” she said. “Colleges do have the ability to ask their larger classes to be in person. We’ve had several exception requests come through...so some bigger classes that really want to be in person, we’ve made that happen.”

She said some classes that are under 150 people can also be permanently moved online through

the associate dean of a given college. The university, however, is still finalizing its plans regarding the next academic year.

In the meantime, Clark and the ASL department, however, are not alone in needing to get creative with classes during the pandemic. Director of the UI’s School of Art and Art History Steve McGuire said it continues to be difficult to teach and create art without an active environment.

Faculty members in his department are used to being hands-on, he said. While the

move forward.”

While departments all over the university had to determine which classes could be held in-person versus online this academic year, the College of Nursing had to work to create a curriculum that balanced protecting its students from coronavirus transmission and allowing students to get the clinical training they need.

Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programs at the UI’s College of Nursing Anita Nicholson said the college moved classes of more than 80 stu-

to appreciate and truly value in-person teaching after being mostly online for the last year. She said everyone in her department was all-hands-on-deck this year to prepare for COVID-19.

“The teachers and the students adjusted, and they adjusted well,” she said. “It was difficult, but it felt like everyone was ready to do their part. My colleagues worked tirelessly, and it was fantastic. And the students, they made it easy to teach online because they put effort into the transition, too.”

line,” she said. “Now that we’ve been in that system for a year, everything has settled and I’m not as stressed. There are still challenges, but we’ve learned a lot from this.”

Even though the last year strained educators, several UI faculty members told the *DI* they learned new ways of teaching they wouldn’t have sans pandemic.

Spanish Professor Kristine Muñoz said the last year has changed the way she teaches after 42 years as an educator. One of the major differences, she

I will hold onto, like moving classes online when necessary.”

The UI’s School of Art and Art History, however, has run into issues when it comes to allowing its student to have exhibits of their work—something that is mandatory for students in the bachelor’s and master’s of fine arts programs.

This spring, McGuire said the school is going to have video and photographs of all students’ gallery work and will put it on its website since they can’t have the normal festivities surrounding the exhibitions.

“We unfortunately can’t hold receptions for students, which is a big part of the exhibition experience,” he said. “But, now, we’re in the process of installing a virtual exhibition system that will live online and be accessible for two years. People will be able to see the exhibition and get close ups of work. We’ll continue doing that even when we return fully to campus.”

Clark said the pandemic forced the UI’s ASL department to change the way it tests students—something that turned out to be a benefit for students and faculty alike.

“Previously, we had students sign projects for us to assess their expressive language skills and then they would watch a video that would test their receptive skills,” Clark said. “Now, we can do both of those in one exam which is exciting. We can do more in the target language and that’s a direction we’ve always been interested in and going online got us there faster.”

As the UI looks towards the fourth semester of the pandemic in August 2021, Uden-Holman said the university is focusing on meeting students’ needs, especially when it comes to students who have not been on campus as much as students in a typical year.

She said this is on the forefront of administrators’ plans and will continue to play an important part in crafting the next academic year.

“We are thinking about things we need to keep in mind,” she said. “...We’re looking at additional support that either our current first-year or second-year students will need to move into next year.”



Professor Asma Ben Romdhane and students Mahmoud Ali, Schaffer Finney, Jacob Venenga, Lorena Tran, Matthew Galles, Carter Erickson, Addie Brooks, Steve Tammes, and Ana Sidahmed are seen during an Arabic class over Zoom.

Kate Heston/The Daily Iowan

school continued to look for opportunities to improve online classes, they had to ensure students had access to the materials necessary for their classes.

As a solution, the school created tool kits for students at the beginning of the semester, said McGuire.

“The toolkit packets had both materials and tools for students to create work off campus,” he said. “It wasn’t ideal, but it was better than everyone anticipated. We found a creative way to

students online and kept labs and clinicals face-to-face.

“The social distancing and the isolation has been very hard on our nursing students, but I think a saving grace is our students getting to come together in our laboratory simulation center and in the clinical setting,” she said. “That has been a lifeline for our students.”

Some smaller classes were still pushed online, said German and Russian Lecturer Anna Dyer. Dyer said she learned

Dyer said the past year has served as an important educational experience for professors and students alike. She said it not only impacted how she and some of her colleagues feel about online teaching, but it allowed people to work more collaboratively to ensure online learning worked.

“In the first part of the spring semester in 2020, it was emotionally taxing not knowing what was going on and how long we were going to be on-

said, is that she plans to continue using Zoom and online teaching when the university returns in person if there’s bad weather or if she’s sick.

“We had two weeks of dangerously cold weather [in January] and I thought that since everyone was so used to doing classes online that I didn’t see a compelling reason to risk our lives going to campus,” she said. “...When we adjust back in the fall, I would say there are things about online education that

UI researchers at heart of developing vaccine

Of many moving parts to vaccine development, the University of Iowa’s researchers — and their mice — helped jumpstart the process.

BY SARAH WATSON
sarah-e-watson@uiowa.edu



Perlman

A year ago, Stanley Perlman was one of a handful of researchers studying coronaviruses. Now, he estimates coronavirus researchers number into the thousands.

After the SARS outbreak in the early 2000s that infected more than 8,000 people faded, Perlman and his team continued what at the time seemed like relatively low-profile research, developing mice that could develop symptoms from a coronavirus.

Years later, those mice would be used to develop a vaccine now making its way into arms across the globe as one of the most effective tools in bringing the deadly pandemic to its knees.

At the start of the pandemic, researchers realized common lab mice, which don’t develop serious illness from coronaviruses, wouldn’t work for studying the new virus.

But Perlman and Paul McCray, a University of Iowa professor of pediatrics, immunology, and virology, had a solution in their lab—frozen mouse sperm. Perlman and McCray in the early 2000s were able to use an adenovirus gene therapy vector that the mice inhale to deliver the human ACE2 protein into mouse airway cells. Once the mouse airway cells show the hACE2 protein, the mice become susceptible to infection with the coronavirus and develop symptoms, though not fatal, of COVID-19.

Perlman and McCray’s team

shipped their stock to the Jackson Laboratory in Maine, which was looking for mouse models to make available to companies developing COVID-19 treatments and vaccines.

In another wing of the UI research hospital, Professor of Internal Medicine Pat Winokur started enrolling volunteers in a trial to test a new COVID-19 vaccine from Pfizer and BioNtech during the summer.

Now, the Food and Drug Administration has approved that vaccine and two others for emergency use — the Moderna and single-shot Johnson & Johnson.

Of those, Pfizer and Moderna are the first widely used messenger RNA vaccines. The speed at which they can be created safely, Winokur said, will change how vaccines are made in the future.

Messenger RNA vaccines give cells instructions to make a protein to develop an immune response. That’s instead of more traditional vaccines, which will put a weakened or inactivated germ into people’s bodies to develop an immune reaction in case the immune system comes into contact with a real virus.

That’s part of the reason the timeline for vaccine development has accelerated, Winokur told *The Daily Iowan* in an interview, and will likely be used more going forward.

“I think the success of the messenger RNA platform is going to allow us to create vaccines much more quickly,” Winokur said. “I think that technology allows us to adapt and create vaccines for variants.”

MRNA vaccine technology began being tested 15-20 years ago, Winokur said, and this was the first emergency-approved mRNA vaccine. She empha-

sized, however, that despite its speed, it underwent the proper research and testing.

Perlman, who sat on the emergency-use approval committee for each of the three vaccines that came before the FDA, echoed that sentiment.

However, Perlman said rollout and distribution likely won’t see the same sense of urgency that the COVID-19 distribution has employed for non-pandemic viruses. While more mRNA vaccines will likely be made because of the success of the COVID-19 vaccines, the distribution, testing, and logistics likely will not be altered as much.

“It will change vaccine development, for sure,” Perlman said. “Because these mRNAs seem to work very well. And they’re very fast. Making an mRNA vaccine takes like two days.”

Luckily, he said coronavirus is “really easy to make a vaccine against.”

“We didn’t know that when we started,” he said.

At about the turn of 2019 into 2020, cases of pneumonia began surfacing in China. Perlman said he called a few of his colleagues in China to try to see if it could be a new coronavirus—it was.

“I called some of them and said, ‘What’s going on?’” Perlman said. “When I got off the phone, I remember telling my wife, ‘this is a big deal.’”

His days didn’t slow down from there.

On one day in early March this year, Perlman said he started with a 7 a.m. call discussing the origin of the virus, then hopped on a World Health Organization conference at 9:30 a.m., and conducted Zoom meetings with his lab staffers until late in the evening.

That’s a typical day now for

Perlman, who sat on the FDA emergency-approval board for the COVID-19 vaccines, using four decades of coronavirus ex-

pertise.

A year later, Perlman is studying loss of smell and age as a factor in developing severe symptoms.

“I think that we’ve all learned that you have to, we have to respect coronaviruses,” Perlman said.



Illustration by Paige Ho/The Daily Iowan

Opinions

COLUMN

'Dear 2020 self...'

The Daily Iowan Opinions writers reflect on a year since the start of the pandemic.



HANNAH PINSKI
hannah-pinski@uiowa.edu

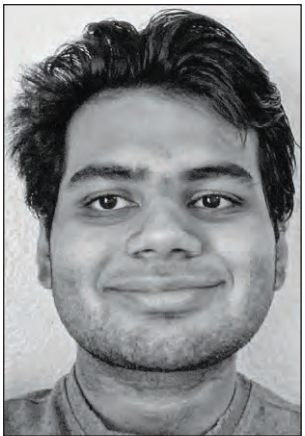
You didn't know this at the time, but Feb. 26 was the last live concert you'll perform for the unforeseeable future. Based on that statement, you already know 2020 is going to be hard. You'll be confused and hurt, and you will reach your breaking point.

But through all the tears and tough times, you'll find new parts of yourself. You'll finally start using your voice, and you're going to grow in ways you can't imagine. It'll be more than a year without live music. But it'll also be a year to discover new passions and what you are meant to do.

Right now, you just started at *The Daily Iowan*. You have no idea how much it will impact and change your life a year from where you are now.

Hold on tight along the ride and to the people you love. You may hit a lot of lows, but you will end up where you're meant to be and grow in a way you can't imagine.

Sincerely,
Hannah Pinski, Opinions Editor



SHAHAB KHAN
shahab-khan@uiowa.edu

Now, I know this may seem shocking, but you are not going to be able to go outside for a solid three months and your dusty Xbox is going to become your new best friend. No, Donald Trump did not end up invading Iran but that virus that you and your friends spent hours memeing on has brought America to its knees.

Now, you may be thinking, "wow well that sounds pretty bad" but you know

Hold on tight along the ride and to the people you love. You may hit a lot of lows, but you will end up where you're meant to be and grow in a way you can't imagine

— Hannah Pinski

what? 2020 is going to remind you of what is important. You are going to lose a lot of people who you considered close and that's OK, because your family and idiot childhood friends are going to make you a better person.

Sending you lots of mon-key noises.

Sincerely,
Shahab Khan, Opinions Columnist



YASSIE BUCHANAN
yassie-buchanan@uiowa.edu

In no way are you prepared for the events that will transpire this year.

You'll have a phenomenal experience studying abroad in Spain. Unfortunately, you'll have to leave the country because of something everyone will become all too familiar with called the coronavirus. Don't wait for it to clear up, it won't. Don't pressure yourself to fill up your time either, sleepless nights will come.

You'll see streets flood with fists held high for Black lives. You'll see the world suffer as our nation's leaders watch the coronavirus conquer our country. Give yourself space to process and heal.

Prepare for a plethora of exciting and novel experiences through writing, schooling, and various organizations.

You are surrounded by incredible people, thank them and yourself for keeping you going through it all. Love you girly.

Sincerely,
Yassie Buchanan, Opinions Columnist



ALLY PRONINA
alena-pronina@uiowa.edu

Keep an open mind. Your mom, sister, and you

will develop a tradition of watching TV every night of the weekend. We finished three shows — a feat we haven't accomplished since high school. You'll be able to make jokes about how, since you watched almost all eight seasons of *House*, you can skip medical school.

Don't let the pandemic stifle your humor. Keep in touch with your friends no matter how busy you get, it will keep you happy. Make the most out of quarantine instead of dreaming about it being over.

Sincerely,
Ally Pronina, Opinions Columnist



SOPHIE STOVER
sophia-stover@uiowa.edu

I know you love history, so get ready to live through it. The next year will bring unprecedented circumstances for everyone. Don't fret though, because 2020 will give you so many opportunities for growth.

Although you'll be socially distanced from friends and family, this year will bring you some of the deepest interpersonal connections you've ever made. As it turns out, connecting with people online isn't impossible.

You'll be amazed at the collective willpower of humanity. Despite physical separation, we saw people around the world rise to the occasion to tackle some of our generation's most pertinent issues.

Take everything in stride. Global pandemic or not, you can do anything you set your mind to.

Sincerely,
Sophie Stover, Opinions Columnist



SIGNE NETTUM
signe-nettum@uiowa.edu

Hey, future you here. You did alright with the pandemic. It is still going on, but you've found ways to cope with the scenario. No. 1, you got a pair of yorkie puppies! Pebbles and Mazie are very cute — not like Roomer, but close enough. You also got your first ever 4.0; all it took was a lockdown to raise your GPA.

What I consider the biggest accomplishment, though, is establishing a student-led literary magazine: *Horizon*. Surrounded by stress and pain, you carved out a space for yourself to fill with hope with people's work, and you are now able to spread it to others.

Keep it up. I love you,

Sincerely,
Signe Nettum, Opinions Contributor



JOSIE TAYLOR
josie-taylor@uiowa.edu

Don't let the pandemic stifle your humor. Keep in touch with your friends no matter how busy you get, it will keep you happy.

— Ally Pronina

The pandemic will last longer than two weeks, so don't make too many plans yet. Life is not going to go the way you think, but don't let that stress you out. You're going to learn a lot about yourself, and you'll be forced to enjoy your own company. Try to keep your mind open whenever you can. You won't stay where you are now, but you'll end up in places that make you happier. Remember that you are capable of more than you think. Keep on doing your best. It will slowly pay off.

Sending you lots of love.

Sincerely,
Josie Taylor, Opinions Contributor



EVAN MANTLER
evan-mantler@uiowa.edu

You are going to spend your 21st birthday in your childhood bedroom. Don't count on having a night out on Halloween to make up for it.

You will miss your friends. Some of them already live across the country, some of them will graduate and move away. Spend time with them while you can.

In 2020, you'll discover that leaning into your interests is not only a coping mechanism, but a long-term happiness strategy. You're

going to be really excited about the *Twilight Renaissance* and laugh at so many memes.

You'll study for hours, take the LSAT multiple times, apply to law schools, and worry that you're making a mistake. Maybe you are, but I don't know yet. In 2021, you're still hoping for the best and dreaming about the future.

Sincerely,
Evan Mantler, Opinions Contributor



PETER ANDERS
peter-anders@uiowa.edu

Dear Peter,

In a year, you'll be baffled at how you took such simple things as going to the movies and hanging out with friends for granted. You'll be confounded at how you took extracurriculars and clubs on campus for granted, and how you even took the dating life for granted.

You'll have become hardened, a bit more cynical, but also stronger for having endured the loss of places and things you held dear. Compared to others you'll have lost virtually nothing, but do take the time to look after yourself.

Sincerely,
Peter Anders, Opinions Contributor



Classroom 105 in the English-Philosophy Building sits empty on Aug. 28, 2020.

Jeff Sigmund /The Daily Iowan

STAFF

Sarah Watson Executive Editor

Hannah Pinski Opinions Editor

Zeina Aboushaar, Yassie Buchanan, Dylan Hood, Shahab Khan, Ally Pronina, Sophie Stover Columnists

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Sarah Watson, Alexandra Skores, Hannah Pinski, and Cesar Perez Editorial Board

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THE DAILY IOWAN which has been serving the University of Iowa, Johnson County, and state of Iowa communities for over 150 years, is committed to fair and accurate coverage of events and issues concerning these areas. In an ever-changing media landscape, the DI realizes that an often contentious political climate - paired with the widespread dissemination of news - can cause contentious discussions over some stories. Although these discussions are essential to democracy - and reiterate the importance of the freedom of expression - the DI takes great lengths to ensure that our social-media presence is free of discriminatory remarks, and inaccurate representations of the communities we ardently serve.

GUEST OPINIONS must be arranged with the Opinions Editor at least three days prior to the desired date of publication. Guest opinions are selected and edited in accordance with length, subject relevance, and space considerations. The DI will only publish one letter per author per month. No advertisements or mass mailings, please.

READER COMMENTS that may appear were originally posted on dailyiowan.com or on the DI's social media platforms in response to published material. Comments will be chosen for print publication when they are deemed to forward public discussion. They may be edited for length and style.

2020

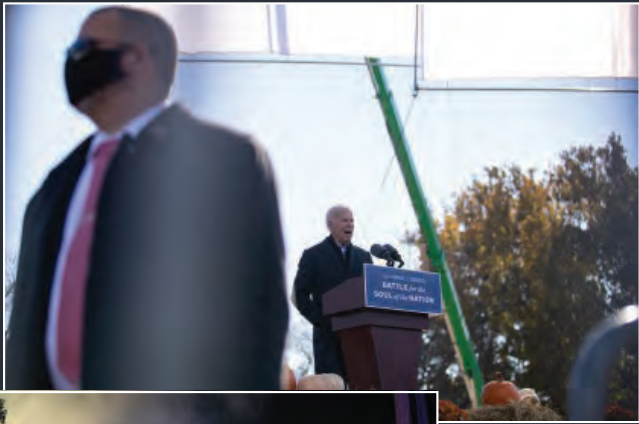
THE YEAR DOCUMENTED

Photo book from *The Daily Iowan* chronicling the historic year



2020
THE YEAR DOCUMENTED

Foreword by Willard “Sandy” Boyd
President Emeritus, University of Iowa



ESSAYS FROM

- Broderick Binns**
Executive Director, DEI for UI Athletics
- Tom Brokaw**
Author and journalist
- Frank Durham**
Associate Professor, Journalism
- Meenakshi Gigi Durham**
Professor, Journalism
- Suresh Gunasekaran**
CEO, UI Hospitals & Clinics
- J. Bruce Harreld**
President, University of Iowa
- Seung Min Kim**
White House reporter, The Washington Post
- Spencer Lee**
Hawkeye wrestler/two-time NCAA champion
- Marissa Mueller**
Rhodes Scholar
- Edith A. Parker**
Dean, College of Public Health
- Andre Perry**
Executive Director, The Englert Theatre
- Jerald L. Schnoor**
Co-Director, Center for Global and Regional Environmental Research
- Wylliam Smith**
Comic book writer/activist
- Chuck Swanson**
Executive Director, Hancher Auditorium
- Laulauga Tausaga**
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- Bruce Teague**
Mayor, City of Iowa City
- Sherry K. Watt**
Professor, Higher Education and Student Affairs
- AND MORE**

Purchase your book at

dailyiowan.com/2020book

Wednesday, March 17, 2021

80 HOURS

The weekend in arts & entertainment

TECH CREW COMES THROUGH FOR
THE YEAR'S FIRST MAINSTAGE SHOW

The technical team of The People Before The Park gave a behind-the-scenes look at virtual theater nearly a year after the pandemic hit Iowa City.

Page 3B



WEEKEND EVENTS

THURSDAY 03.18

FILM

- **BLACK LIVES ON SCREEN: *TONGUES UNTIED***, 7 P.M. ONLINE EVENT, PRESENTED BY THE UI CINEMATIC ARTS DEPARTMENT

MISC

- **MARK MORRIS IN CONVERSATION WITH ALICE WALTERS**, 7:30 P.M. ONLINE EVENT, PRESENTED BY HANCHER

FRIDAY 03.19

MUSIC

- **JB STRAUSS**, 7 P.M., ELRAY’S LIVE & DIVE, 211 IOWA AVE
- **THE BEASLEY BROTHERS**, 10 P.M., ELRAY’S LIVE & DIVE

SATURDAY 03.20

MUSIC

- **JUSTIN GOODCHILD**, 7:30 P.M., ELRAY’S LIVE & DIVE
- **ROOTS RISING SHOWCASE**, 8 P.M., ONLINE EVENT, PRESENTED BY MUSICIAN TAJ MAHAL

SUNDAY 03.21

MUSIC

- **ONE PLANET: ONLINE MINI CONCERT**, 3 P.M., ONLINE EVENT, PRESENTED BY FAMILY FOLK MACHINE

YOUR WEEKEND PLAYLIST



Midterm Misery

One year ago, we were all taking midterms in-person. Now, we’re taking them online. But don’t worry, *DI arts* has your back with an emo playlist as we woefully reminisce on the “before times.”

SONG	ARTIST	ALBUM
When It Rains	Paramore	Riot!
Miserable At Best	Mayday Parade	A Lesson In Romanticism
hope is a dangerous thing for a woman like me to have	Lana Del Ray	Norman Fucking Rockwell!
Nobody	Mitski	Be the Cowboy
High and Dry	Radiohead	The Bends
Sending Postcards from a Plane Crash	Fall Out Boy	Take This To Your Grave
(Nice Dream)	Radiohead	The Bends
maybe i need this	heldclose	maybe i need this
Teenagers	My Chemical Romance	The Black Parade
Sugar, We’re Goin Down	Fall Out Boy	From Under The Cork Tree
Misery Business	Paramore	Riot!
The Kids Aren’t Alright	The Offspring	Americana
Say It Ain’t So	Weezer	Weezer
Where Is My Mind?	Pixies	Death to the Pixies
I’m Not OK (I Promise)	My Chemical Romance	Three Cheers for Sweet Revenge
Sweetness	Jimmy Eat World	Bleed American
All Revved Up with No Place to Go	Meat Loaf	Bat Out of Hell
The Diary of Jane	Breaking Benjamin	Phobia

THIS WEEK IN STREAMING



Godzilla vs. Kong

BY PARKER JONES
parker-jones@uiowa.edu

Like its title suggests, *Godzilla vs. Kong* will be just that: two giant monsters fighting in an epic battle to the death. What more could anyone ask for in a *Godzilla* movie?

With a limited theatrical release beginning on March 24, the action-fantasy film will premiere on HBO Max on March 31.

Godzilla vs. Kong is a sequel to both the 2019 film *Godzilla: King of the Monsters* and *Kong: Skull Island* from 2017. While King Kong and his human protectors undertake a perilous journey to find the titan a safe home, they cross paths with an unusually enraged *Godzilla* wreaking havoc across the globe. In a battle instigated by unseen forces, the two legendary creatures engage in a spectacular fight that will ultimately unravel an even larger mystery.

The film is produced by companies Legendary and Warner Bros. Pictures and directed by Adam Wingard. It is also the fourth film in Legendary’s “MonsterVerse,” a cinematic universe that focuses

on stories based on “kaiju,” a Japanese genre of films featuring beloved giant monsters like *Godzilla*, *King Kong*, *Mothra*, and many more.

Notable cast members include Milly Bobby Brown, who is reprising her role as *Godzilla*’s main advocate and defender Madison Russel, and Alexander Skarsgård as reluctant hero Nathan Lind, a geologist who works closely with Kong. The film will also introduce Kaylee Hottle as Jia, a young girl who has formed an especially close bond with Kong.

Godzilla vs. Kong is the 36th film in the *Godzilla* franchise, the first being the original *Godzilla* from 1954. It is also the 12th film in the *King Kong* franchise, and is far from the first film both creatures have battled in. A film with a similar premise is *King Kong vs. Godzilla* from 1962, however, producer Alex Garcia confirmed that the new film will not be a remake.

Either way, audiences can expect to get what’s advertised — a monumental duel between two iconic monsters of legend — in *Godzilla vs. Kong*.

REVIEW OF THE WEEK: Dickinson

BY MEGAN CONROY
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This review contains spoilers.

The second season of *Dickinson* graced my life with its presence in a time I needed it most. The first episode dropped on Apple TV on Jan. 8, with the final episode premiering on Feb. 26. Starring Hailee Steinfeld as the famous poet Emily Dickinson, the second season of the show cracks the spirit of its female characters wide open.

The story follows Emily as she navigates her thoughts on whether she truly wishes to be published and famous. Her older brother Austin’s wife (played by Adrian Blake Enscoe) and her best friend, Sue (played

by Ella Hunt), introduces her to Sam Bowles (played by Finn Jones), editor of *The Springfield Republican*.

Emily, entranced by the man and the idea of fame, gives him one of her poems which eventually gets published. Viewers see Emily struggle with the idea of fame through a vision of somebody called Nobody, who is based on one of her brother’s college friends, Fraser.

This situation is only one where the viewers of *Dickinson* see Emily’s emotions pour from her almost unwillingly. In episode six, mid-argument with Bowles at the Opera, she tells him “Sometimes when I write, I lose control.”

In a haze of post-publishing excitement, Emily

gives every poem she’s ever written to Mr. Bowles. She comes to regret this decision when the vision of Nobody tells her that fame is essentially going to be the end of her. She begs for her poems back in a heart wrenching scene where he refuses and says she needs him.

This scene brought me back to a moment a few episodes back, where a man plotting out shrubbery for the town walked around with a curious Emily. She falls into a rant about Sam and waiting for his publishing of her poem, in which she compares him to the sun and her to the daisy. The man seated next to her states simply, “refuse to be the daisy, and start being the sun,” which has

lived absolutely rent-free in my head.

Refuse to be the daisy, and start being the sun, reflective of Dickinson’s work, “The Daisy follows soft the Sun” is a narrative carried through each female character in the second season of the show. Emily’s sister Livinia (Anna Baryshnikov) almost marries a handsome, charming man named Ship (Pico Alexander). He wants Vinnie to embody the characteristics of a traditional perfect wife like her mother does for Mr. Dickinson. Vinnie refuses to do so, claiming that she is not the boring Dickinson sister. Ship ends up moving to New Orleans, which he insists on calling NOLA, but Vinnie tells him that she will always be the

most interesting girl he ever loved.

Throughout the season, viewers get tiny tastes of Emily and Sue’s budding relationship. Season one set up their relationship in a beautiful way. But during this season, Emily and Sue drift apart. Sue seems disinterested in her best friend until the very end of the season. In an emotional scene, Sue confesses that she can’t read Emily’s poems because they are the only thing that makes her feel.

At the end of the season, the love the women

share, and the strength all the female characters possessed, left me craving the third season.



People behind the production

A year after the pandemic consumed the world, theater tech crews, including at the University of Iowa's team for *The People Before the Park*, have taken on new responsibilities and challenges.

BY JENNA POST
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In a normal year, a typical rehearsal at the University of Iowa Theatre Building consists of the director working up close with the actors, stage managers and crew members. All of them would move freely about the space to tend to tech and scenery, and to maneuver equipment on and off stage.

Those were the days when everyone was preparing to perform in front of a live audience.

The People Before the Park will be the first full-length mainstage production performed this academic year. Like the season's previous mainstages, it will be streamable from the comfort of viewers' homes.

With COVID-19 continuing to limit the way the Theatre Department normally operates, taking this play on required changes in all forms of technical production.

The show follows a community of free Black New Yorkers in 1856 whose Seneca Village homes are at risk of being demolished for the construction of Central Park.

“You can't go into it with a bad attitude. You just have to be present as an actor, do your best work, and trust each other and yourself to work through technical stuff.

— Kate Anderson, actor in *The People Before the Park*

“putting on a show in basically half the time at the same level of production.”

The team's in-person rehearsal schedule was reduced to the bare minimum because of COVID-19 safety concerns. Many other theaters are also taking a minimalist approach to record their shows.

Changes in Iowa City theater are reflected nationwide, where most productions have shifted to virtual platforms. Locally, City Circle Theatre Company in Coralville and Riverside continue to operate virtually. Hancher hasn't hosted a theatrical performance in a year, mirroring Broadway's closure since March 12.

This is why it came as no surprise that the cast and crew of *The People Before the Park* were given significantly less time to rehearse in person. With only two dress rehearsals, the technical team had to rely on weekly production meetings over Zoom to prepare for the real deal onstage.

Qi-Bell said there was much less time for blocking

include backstage areas separated by plastic barriers for each actor, masks worn during rehearsals, and the team's director, Jade King Carroll, being virtually present on a TV screen while physically in New York.

Kate Anderson, who plays Bridget Donnelly in the production, said that adjusting to a virtual director was a bit strange, but ultimately worked well. She was also surprised to find that performing during the pandemic didn't feel as different as she expected.

“You can't go into it with a bad attitude,” Anderson said. “You just have to be present as an actor, do your best work, and trust each other and yourself to work through technical stuff.”

Many of the technical challenges were taken on by Bryon Winn, the department's director of theatre.

Knowing that it would be difficult to bring in electricians for the lighting needs of each mainstage this year, Winn began working on a Rep Plot—a lighting system that can remotely adjust lights through a computer—in September, with the intent of using it for each show this year.

“We were fortunate to have those technologies in place that allow us to produce differently than even five years ago,” Winn said.

Winn said getting the lighting correct is crucial to show, both in how it shows up on camera and to reflect playwright Keith Josef Adkins' vision.

This isn't the first time Adkins' work has been performed on the UI's mainstage. His piece *A Refugee in Detroit* was commissioned for 6 by 6: *Collected Perspectives*



Tate Hildyard/The Daily Iowan
Actors Steven Willis, Branden Shaw, and Kate Anderson perform in *The People Before the Park* on March 10. *The People Before the Park* is set in the predominantly Black community of Seneca Village as its citizens are being forced to flee so New York City can build Central Park over their land.

tives on Social Justice, which gave a platform to playwrights of color in October.

“When Keith wrote the play, he was very specific about the times of day. There's an arc to them,” Winn said.

Lighting for a camera is a different skill set than lighting for a live audience, Winn said. The Director of Theatre wanted to find a way to make the lighting feel theatrical while still working on camera. To create this effect, Winn experimented with different levels of color and value contrast.

“A shader or video engineer would be terrified of the kinds of color mixing I'm doing onstage,” he joked.

In addition to finding balance between camera and stage lighting, Winn affirmed that the show stayed

theatrical by capturing moments that a live audience would see in a theater.

“We're flying in scenery over a scrim — you see the actors come onstage and offstage during transition areas,” Winn said. “Those kinds of things would be edited out in a movie. We're trying to capture what's unique about a theater.”

The only live theatre moment that viewers will be missing are the scene changes. Since the stage crew had to be downsized to the bare minimum to maximize safety, set changes will take much longer than usual and will be edited out of the final cut, Winn said.

Sound design is also operating differently. To ensure quality sound, sound effects will be added in post-production instead of played

live. During a rehearsal, the sound effects were played to the actors so they know what they're reacting to, but they will not hear the effects during actual filming.

For all to run smoothly, multiple forms of communication were utilized. Winn said the crew was simultaneously communicating with different members through Zoom, text, and phone calls, all while livestreaming rehearsals to King Carroll, the director.

“It's a culmination of a lot of innovation and technical ingenuity to get that communication string together,” Winn said.

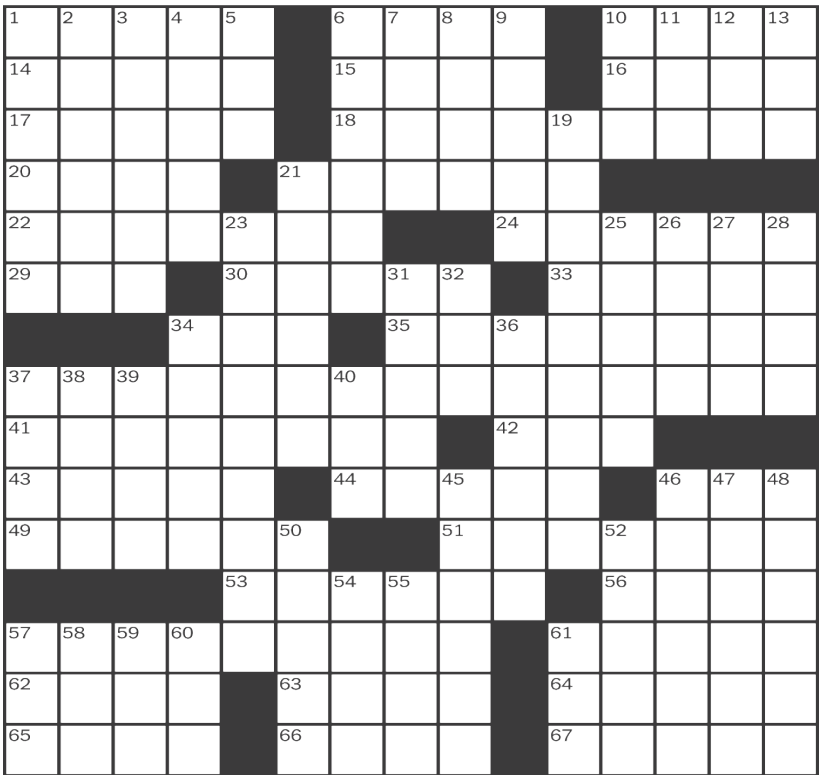
Despite the unprecedented challenges the tech team faced, the show will be streamable from March 26 through April 4. Virtual tickets are required to attend but are free of charge.

The Daily Break

PUZZLE SOLUTIONS ON PAGE 6B

The New York Times Crossword

Edited by Will Shortz
No. 0210



Across

- Hatchling
- Line crosser, of a sort
- Component of a cellphone bill
- World capital that's home to the Temple of Literature, built in 1070
- Show up
- Blue-violet shade
- Crime investigated by an insurance company
- “Strike three!” or “Yer out!”?
- Sit (down) heavily
- Noisy shouting
- Way to catch a conger?
- Alley prowler
- It's used in soapmaking
- Input
- One of four in the human heart
- Mo. with a holiday on its final day
- Loser at Waterloo
- The main characters of “Brokeback Mountain,” e.g.?
- Resisting
- Uno y uno
- Apple centers
- “Darn it!”
- When the Kentucky Derby is held
- Breaks things off
- Drinking buddy?
- Fixate
- Spot
- Gross messages?

- “__ World” (“Sesame Street” segment)
- Princess who says “You're my only hope” in a hologram
- Number of M.V.P. awards won by Wayne Gretzky
- Kind of beer ... or a multi-word hint to 18-, 22-, 37-, 51- and 57-Across
- Rich soil
- Temperance proponents
- Slyly spiteful

Down

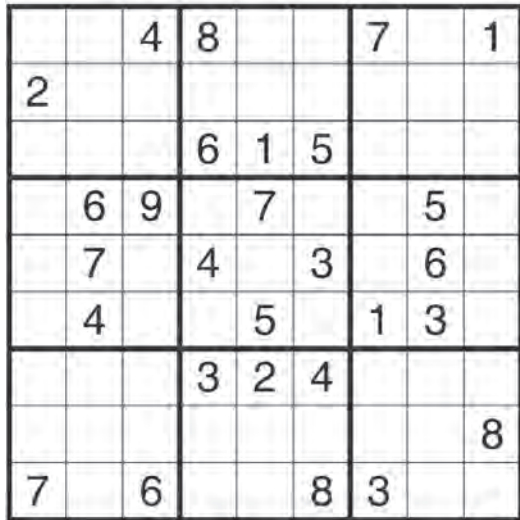
- Place of worship
- Road hog?
- Foot support
- Appropriate
- Clan
- Bulk up, as muscles
- Out-of-it state
- Toggle on a clock
- Make drunk, quaintly
- Run out of juice
- “__ You My Mother?” (children's book)
- Personal quirk
- “Green,” “black” or “white” tree
- Cheese in an Italian sub
- “I refuse to believe that!”
- Economic downturn

- Places to find food courts and kiosks
- Miss __, famed TV psychic
- Profess
- Till compartment
- Furnish with money
- Mil. branch of the U.K.
- Fiona and Shrek, for two
- Cycles
- Speed
- Door-to-door sales company
- Homework lover, say
- Helpful info for a curbside pickup, briefly
- Society at large, with “the”
- Big, bushy-tailed squirrel
- Went to a restaurant
- Like some breads and beers
- Long-term U.S. security
- European country with a cross on its flag
- Tend to the sauce, say
- “__, meeny, miney, mo ...”
- “__ say!”
- Bus. driver?
- Sportage automaker
- Crop item grown in Chinua Achebe's “Things Fall Apart”
- Key that exits full-screen video

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A uniform decision

The Iowa men's tennis team has opted to compete in shirts with non-UI affiliated logos, colors, or images this season to protest one of the permanent pandemic-induced decisions from Iowa Athletics — cutting the tennis team.

Grace Smith/The Daily Iowan

Iowa players chant and cheer on Will Davies during his singles match at the Iowa Men's tennis meet v. Wisconsin in the Hawkeye Tennis and Recreation Complex on March 12. The Hawkeyes defeated the Badgers 5-2.

BY CHRIS WERNER
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A little over a year ago today, Iowa men's tennis picked up one of the biggest wins in the program's history and achieved its highest national ranking.

The Hawkeyes downed then-No. 16 Cornell at the Hawkeye Tennis and Recreation Complex on March 8, 2020. When the Intercollegiate Tennis Association's rankings updated to account for the matchup, Iowa was ranked 20th in the nation. Iowa appeared to be ascending to heights the program had never risen to, with a storybook NCAA Tournament appearance awaiting

them at the end of the 2019-20 season. The Hawkeyes, however, never saw the 2019-20 season all way through, as the Big Ten halted all conference athletic activities March 12, 2020, because of a rapidly spreading new virus. Now, a little over a year later, Iowa men's tennis is back on the

SEE TENNIS, 5B

HAWKEYE UPDATES

Iowa men's basketball coach Fran McCaffery signs four-year contract extension

Iowa men's basketball coach Fran McCaffery has signed a four-year contract extension that will keep him with the Hawkeyes through the 2027-28 season, athletics director Gary Barta announced on Monday.

McCaffery's \$2.3 million base salary for the next two seasons will remain unchanged. After that, the 11-year Iowa coach will be in line for a longevity bonus, according to the UI. How much his salary will increase has not been announced and a records request was not immediately returned. McCaffery took a voluntary 15 percent salary reduction this year to help the athletic department mitigate financial shortages brought on by the pandemic but has earned \$55,000 in bonuses based on his team's performance this season.

McCaffery is Iowa's second all-time winningest coach with 215 overall wins and 103 Big Ten victories.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"Since they don't want our team, we don't want their colors."

- Iowa men's tennis player Nikita Snezhko on social media in February on why the team isn't wearing Black and Gold.

STAT OF THE DAY

The Iowa wrestling program is competing for its

24th

team national title this weekend.

Rewriting history

After they were denied a storybook finish to the 2019-20 season, the Hawks hope to make history at the 2021 NAAs.



Ryan Adam/The Daily Iowan

Iowa's Spencer Lee attempts a takedown against Purdue's Devin Schroder during the finals of the Big Ten Wrestling Tournament at the Bryce Jordan Center in State College, Pa., on March 8.

BY AUSTIN HANSON
austin-hanson@uiowa.edu

On March 12, 2020, Iowa wrestling was robbed of its chance at history.

The Hawkeyes were just five days removed from a first-place team finish at the 2020 Big Ten Championships in Piscataway, New Jersey, and preparing for a run at the NCAA Division I Wrestling Championship in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Nine Hawkeyes earned automatic bids to the 2020 NCAA Championships at the 2020 Big Ten Wrestling Championships, three of which were first-place finishers in their respective weight classes — 165-pound Alex Marinelli, 149-pound Pat Lugo, and 125-pound Spencer Lee.

Now-senior 157-pounder Kaleb Young earned an at-large bid for the 2020 NCAA Championships, ensuring all 10 wrestlers in Iowa's primary rotation qualified for the event.

All 10 of Iowa's starting wrestlers were seeded in the top 11 of their respective weight classes. Seed-based projections suggested the Hawkeyes could win the 2020 NCAA team title 50 points clear of any challengers.

Then, just seven days before the national tournament was set to begin, Marinelli's wife

Moriah walked into the wrestling room while the Hawkeyes were practicing with an email update, according to 174-pound senior Michael Kemerer.

The electronic letter was sent to notify Iowa that the 2020 NCAA Wrestling Championships were canceled because of COVID-19.

At a teleconference approximately two weeks later, Hawkeye head coach Tom Brands said his team was "robbed of history."

Now, nearly a year later, things are beginning to come full circle for Iowa.

Two weeks ago, the Hawkeyes claimed the 2021 Big Ten Championship in State College, Pennsylvania, with Marinelli, Lee, Kemerer, and 141-pound Missouri transfer Jaydin Eierman all claiming individual titles.

Iowa is now just one day away from the start of the 2021 NCAA Championships in St. Louis, Missouri, and once again, all 10 wrestlers in the Hawkeyes' starting lineup have qualified for the national tournament.

"Yeah, it's awesome," Kemerer said at a Friday Zoom meeting with reporters. "I mean, thinking about the circumstances a year ago, obviously a lot has changed. We're really hap-

SEE WRESTLING, 5B

COLUMN

The day sports stopped

Two current and two former *DI* staffers weigh in on the postponement and cancellation of staple U.S. sports events a little more than a year ago.

BY DAILY IOWAN STAFF
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When sports shut down in March of 2020, *The Daily Iowan* staffers witnessed it first-hand.

Then-Sports Editor Robert Read and Pregame Editor Pete Ruden were in Indianapolis to cover the Big Ten Men's Basketball Tournament before it was canceled. Austin Hanson and Kayli Reese, then the Assistant Sports Editor and Managing Editor, respectively, were both in the *DI* newsroom trying to make sense of what was happening.

Here's what they recall from sports shutting down on March 12 of last year.

Robert Read, current Pregame Editor



Read

March Madness was taken a bit too literally last year.

I sat in the press area at the Rutgers Athletic Center shortly after the Iowa wrestling team had clinched the 2020 Big Ten title when my editor told me there were positive COVID-19 tests recorded in Johnson County.

I didn't realize that three days later while sitting at a restaurant in Indianapolis that a cascade of news events would crash around our ears. The NBA would shut down, Tom Hanks would test positive for the virus, and the Big Ten Men's Basketball Tournament I was in town to cover would be up in the air. I had never been as glued to Twitter or been as fixated on the updates scrolling across the bottom ticker on ESPN.

The next morning, I sat in a hotel room with Pete Ruden and two other *DI* staffers as the tournament and all other sports around the country were called off. Pete lunging toward his laptop as the tournament was canceled remains a clear memory from that unforgettable day.

Pete sat shotgun as I drove back to Iowa City that day, trying to put into words what was happening to

SEE SPORTS, 5B

SPORTS

CONTINUED FROM 4B

Hawkeye athletics.

One year later, I covered the 2021 Big Ten wrestling meet (which Iowa won again) in an empty venue in State College and made it back to Indianapolis to cover the conference's men's basketball tournament (which actually happened this time).

Sports certainly aren't back to normal. But March Madness happening this year is a start.

Pete Ruden, former Pre-game Editor



Ruden It's impossible to forget the scene when sports shut down. A little squad of us *Daily Iowan* reporters were in a restaurant in downtown Indianapolis for the Big Ten Tournament when I received a Twitter notification from ESPN's Adrian Wojnarowski.

The NBA had suspended its season.

Meanwhile, on the TVs around the restaurant, Nebraska head coach Fred Hoiberg was on the bench looking sicker than someone who started chugging Fireball at 6 a.m. before an 11 a.m. Iowa football game.

Even if Hoiberg didn't have COVID-19 — he didn't — every other team in the Big Ten Tournament had to use the same locker rooms and same facilities.

That's when we figured there wouldn't be a tournament.

The next morning, after

watching SportsCenter all night and getting ready to head to the arena, it happened. The Big Ten canceled its conference tournament. Then, Duke opted out of the NCAA Tournament. Then, the NCAA canceled March Madness in full. And soon enough, sports were gone for the foreseeable future.

Seniors had played their last game. I had covered my last game for the *DI*. It was such an unexpected way for things to end.

But luckily, I got to see the Peyton Manning statue in front of Lucas Oil Stadium, so the trip wasn't a total waste. And now, sports are back, and life is good.

After having to watch table tennis to get my fix last April, I will never take sports for granted.

Kayli Reese, former Managing Editor



Reese I may have been helping manage things at the time, but I still believe Austin Hanson deserves a medal for what he did last year when the sports world came to a stop.

The first day sports-related events were canceled, things seemed to be announced in shifts — no fans at the NCAA tournament, no fans at any spring sports, etc. I have a fond memory of hearing Austin's exclamation of frustration from across the room as another press release was issued, asking him if he needed any help from me, and him telling me in the world's most polite voice that he had things covered.

When all spring sports and

tournaments were canceled the next day, I told him to lock himself in an editing bay and write a project-length story. I stress-ate Buffalo Wild Wings while I waited for him to finish so I could copy edit the piece. While I like to think Austin and I were able to plan and get out the news quickly, I know we both breathed a sigh of relief when Robert Read came back to lead us.

I also remember feeling nervous about what lay ahead for the sports section; I didn't know how sports-related stories could be written while sports weren't being played. But I shouldn't have worried about it for a second. I remain impressed with the amazing content the team continued to put out the rest of the semester, even under the hardest circumstances imaginable.

Austin Hanson, current Sports Editor



Hanson When the sports world stopped spinning a little over a year ago, my tenure at The *Daily Iowan* had barely begun, as I started at the *DI* just six months earlier as a sports reporter.

In January 2020, I was promoted from Sports Reporter to Assistant Sports Editor.

I had been trained up and had some time to acclimate to my new position, but nothing could've prepared me for my night in the newsroom March 12, 2020.

Obviously, the Big Ten had already determined that its men's basketball tournament would be held without fans.

With that context in the back of my mind, I began to work on the regular sports stories we were slated to run. When I arrived at a gymnastics preview we had budgeted, I noticed our reporter had yet to submit the story to me.

At that time, I received a message from the reporter that explained the gymnastics meet and other upcoming Big Ten events could be canceled or postponed because of COVID-19.

I tried to shrug off what I read, secretly hoping it had no weight to it.

I was wrong, my worst fears were realized just hours later. Emails began pouring into my inbox. Canceled. Postponed, they read.

With then-Sports Editor Robert Read and then-Pregame Editor Pete Ruden hundreds of miles away in Indianapolis, Indiana, for the eventually canceled Big Ten Tournament, I had no backup.

So, I began plugging away, writing a 1,000-word story on the biggest sports news in the last century in an hour's time with less than 10 nights of experience on the sports desk under my belt.

I also give all the credit in the world to Kayli Reese. Not only did she help me get my thoughts straight, but she also edited the jumbled combination of letters and words I turned in.

While the night was horrifying at the time, it made me the writer and editor I am today. In a way, that adversity helped me prove to myself that I had the chops for the job — even if I might not have felt like I was entirely up to snuff at the time.

UI Athletics COVID-19 impact timeline

3/11/2020

NCAA, Big Ten bar fans from winter championships and spring sporting events.

3/12/2020

NCAA, Big Ten cancel winter championships and spring sporting events.

6/1/2020

University of Iowa Athletics resumes in-person activities.

8/11/2020

Big Ten postpones all fall sporting events — including football games — to the spring.

8/21/2020

Iowa Athletics announces discontinuation of its men's gymnastics, men's tennis, and men's and women's swimming and diving programs.

9/16/2020

Big Ten Conference unveils daily rapid COVID-19 testing program for student-athletes, plan for fall football season.

10/19/2020

Four Iowa women's swimmers file Title IX Complaint against the University of Iowa.

10/24/2020

Iowa plays Purdue in its first football game of the delayed 2020 season.

10/25/2020

Big Ten men's and women's basketball seasons begin.

2/15/2021

Iowa Athletics reverses decision to cut its women's swim and dive program after months-long legal battle.



Casey Stone/The Daily Iowan

Iowa's Oliver Okonkwo takes a forehand shot in the doubles matches during the Iowa Men's Tennis match against Minnesota on March 14 at the Hawkeye Tennis and Recreation Complex. Minnesota defeated Iowa 4-3

TENNIS

CONTINUED FROM 4B

court, albeit in a more somber tone and in different uniforms. Next year, the team won't be there at all — the program becoming one of the permanent casualties of Iowa athletics' COVID-19-wallopped finances.

In Iowa's first home match of the 2020-21 season, the Indiana Hoosiers took the court dressed in their typical white-collared tops with "Indiana" in small red cursive lettering branded on the upper right-hand portion of the garment.

The Hawkeyes, however, did not take court in their traditional Black and Gold get-up. Nor were they even wearing white. The Hawkeyes took to the HTRC floor clad in red crew-neck shirts with a small, black Nike swoosh near the left shoulder.

The Hawkeyes have worn those same shirts — which the student-athletes paid for out-of-pocket — at every match since

their home-opener on with Indiana Feb. 21.

Senior Kareem Allaf — the 39th-ranked singles player in the nation — said the team's choice to wear non-Iowa shirts for this season's matches stemmed from the University of Iowa's decision to discontinue its men's tennis program at the end of the 2020-21 academic year.

Head coach Ross Wilson declined to comment on the matter, instead deferring to his student-athletes.

On Aug. 21, Iowa athletics director Gary Barta announced that Iowa would cut men's tennis, men's gymnastics, and men's and women's swimming and diving at the end of the 2020-21 academic year because of financial losses from the pandemic that steamrolled Iowa Athletics.

As recently as Feb. 15, Barta has said UI Athletics is facing a \$50-60 million deficit — even with the return of revenue sports that were paused during the early portion of the pandemic

“Right now, we're making the decision to keep going with it because it's showing that we're fighting for each other. We're still out here battling, no matter what. It's a way for us to identify with each other.

— Sophomore Oliver Okonkwo

ic including football and men's basketball.

Iowa couldn't profit off fans attending games, however. The Big Ten Conference barred its member institutions to sell tickets and host fans at its various athletics contests to help curb coronavirus spread.

The only Hawkeye sport that has been saved from the chopping block so far is women's swimming and diving — which was reinstated by the UI after a months-long Title IX battle in court.

Allaf called the men's tennis team's decision to wear non-Iowa gear “our own statement,”

meant to be a peaceful protest to the UI's decision.

Before deciding on the solid red shirts for the first home match of the season and beyond, in the first two contests of the year at the ITA Kickoff event hosted by Ohio State, Iowa's players wore solid black tops against Virginia and multicolored shirts versus Middle Tennessee State. Both choices were absent of any Hawkeye-specific markings.

All nine athletes agreed to ditch the Tigerhawk apparel and don their own shirts ahead of the Indiana match, Allaf said.

The decision to wear the red shirts was a way for the players — many of whom have played together for years — to show their commitment to their fellow teammates, sophomore Oliver Okonkwo said.

“I think [the decision to wear

non-Iowa shirts] shows the unity and the bond we have between each other,” Okonkwo said in an interview with the *DI*. “Right now, we are making the decision to keep going with it because it's showing that we're fighting for each other. We're still out here battling, no matter what. It's a way for us to identify with each other.”

Okonkwo said he believes his sport didn't deserve to be cut, citing both on-court improvements, and the relatively small monetary commitment it takes to run the program.

“I mean, you look at it from a financial standpoint, we're

a pretty cheap team to run, compared to some of the other sports on campus,” Okonkwo said. “We're a very diverse team. We have two Americans on the team; the rest of us come from different places. Just look at our results as well. We ended the season last year at No. 20 in the country. We had Kareem doing well in singles [ranked No. 51 nationally], me and Will were ranked No. 12 in the country. We were 12-2. We were having the best season Iowa men's tennis has ever had. It's just being stripped away from us.”

Okonkwo, a native of Berkshire, England, also referenced Wilson's work to turn the team into a top contender nationally. Now, in his seventh season at the helm, Wilson has guided the Hawkeyes to four winning seasons, and almost certainly would've led his team to its first-ever NCAA Tournament appearance if last year's season had been completed.

“I feel like it's kind of unfair to stop the growth that we were showing,” Okonkwo said. “Ever since I got here, we've improved every year. I've seen firsthand how much the team has grown. We were seriously doing some real damage, pulling some big upsets. Look at Ross, Ross has turned this program around completely, we're a top-competing team in the country.”

Okonkwo also noted the team's academic achievements. After the 2020 season, six of Iowa's nine players were named Intercollegiate Tennis Association Scholar-Athletes — earning the distinction for a 3.5 or higher

GPA at the end of the academic year.

Five Iowa men's tennis players were named members of the Academic All-Big Ten team in 2020. Three others were recognized as Big Ten Distinguished Scholars.

Iowa men's tennis was honored as an ITA All-Academic Team after registering a team grade-point average of 3.84 during the spring of 2020.

Other Hawkeye players expressed similar frustrations shortly after the UI's decision to cut the team.

Barta and UI President Bruce Harrelld wrote in the open letter announcing the cuts that the decision to cut men's tennis, gymnastics, and swimming, specifically, was made after considering factors such as sponsorship at the NCAA Division I level, impact on gender equity and Title IX compliance, expense savings, history of the sport at Iowa, and engagement level.

Operational expenses for men's tennis for FY 2019 was just over \$857,000

Okonkwo said that he has seen support for the team's decision to wear non-Iowa shirts on the court this year, both from people affiliated with the UI and other college tennis programs.

Although the UI has dealt the men's tennis program the hardest blow imaginable, the Hawkeyes have won 13 of their last 14 matches in Iowa City dating back to last season.

Iowa will continue its farewell season in red Friday at noon as they take on Michigan at the HTRC.

WRESTLING

CONTINUED FROM 4B

py that we can compete. I guess we're thankful that we get this opportunity. Now, we gotta go and make the most of it. We can't just squander, we gotta be ready to go.”

Had Iowa won a national championship in 2020, it would've been the program's first since 2010. With history within their grasp, the Hawkeyes aim to cash in on the opportunity they have in front of them this year before it can get away or be taken from them like it was in 2019-20.

“I'm just glad the NCAA is doing everything they can to allow us to have an NCAA Championship,”

Lee said. “Last year was very hard on every sport that didn't get to compete, not just us. We're ready to go, and we're excited, and we're looking forward to finally getting it done —



“You know, there's a lot of people in the world that don't look at sports as vital, and sports is vital. It teaches a lot, and young people, they need that.

— Head coach Tom Brands

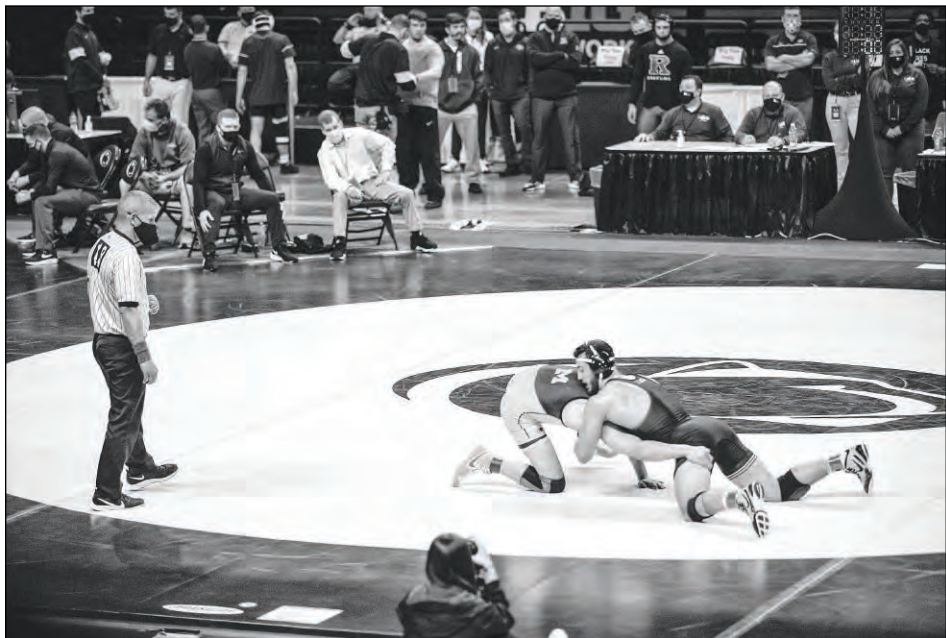
getting ready to win a national title as a team and as individuals.”

Like Lee, Brands is just thankful that the Big Ten Conference and NCAA provided Iowa with an opportunity to compete safely this season with daily testing procedures, safety pro-

ocols, and return-to-competition guidelines.

“Well, first of all, you have to credit a lot of people,” Brands said. “You have to credit the NCAA, you have to credit the Big

Ten, the individual conferences that made this season happen. They did it under criticism ... You know, there's a lot of people in the world that don't look at sports as vital, and sports is vital. It teaches a lot, and young people, they need that.”



Ryan Adams/The Daily Iowan

Iowa's Michael Kemerer defends against a takedown from Michigan's Logan Massa during the Big Ten Wrestling Tournament at the Bryce Jordan Center in State College, Pa., on March 6.

