Women’s tennis player leans on team after earthquake hits her home country
PAGE 5
Pitcher shares his mental and physical journey in preparation for successful season
PAGE 8
TOP ELON PLAYERS TO WATCH

**TENNIS**

HELEN SARIKULAYA | FRESHERN

Rockville, Maryland | Music
C AA doubles team of the week (Jan. 25 2023)
4-2 in singles and doubles and has clinched two matches for Elon this season

**TENNIS**

OSKAR ANTINHEIMO | FRESHMAN

Helsinki, Finland | Undecided
C AA player of the week (Feb. 14 2023) and C AA co-doubles team of the week (Jan. 25 2023)
Has a team-high four singles wins through five matches

**SOFTBALL**

MAURI MURRAY | FRESHMAN UTILITY

Marvin, North Carolina | Business Analytics
Hit a three RBI inside-the-park home run in her second college at-bat against NC Central on Feb. 10
Three-time all district player

**BASEBALL**

KENNY MALLORY JR. | SOPHOMORE OUTFIELDER

Lawrenceville, Georgia | Undecided
First season at Elon after transferring from Vanderbilt University
Ranked by Prep Baseball Report as No. 116 overall prospect coming out of high school

**LACROSSE**

CIERRA HOPSON | SOPHOMORE ATTACK

Villanova, Pennsylvania | Sport management
Scored 23 goals as a freshman to rank fourth on the team and is the team’s second-leading returning goal scorer
Played in all 16 2022 games with seven starts
Elon University’s softball team stepped onto the field for the first time in the 2023 regular season in the Elon Softball Classic tournament Feb. 10 to 11. The team has played four games so far — two against Winthrop University, one against North Carolina Central University and one against Morgan State University — and finished 1-3 with its only win against N.C. Central.

Despite this outcome, head coach Kathy Bocock said that she’s looking forward to this year’s season, keeping in mind that the team still has more work to put in.

“We’ve got to clean some things up, but they were so excited about playing and we ended up having a beautiful day,” Bocock said. “We’ve been ready and I’ve been prepared,” Murray said. “We’ve been working since August, so it was fun to finally be on the field.”

“Especially with the way we played today, it shows a lot throughout the season, and we will be able to accomplish a lot.”

The Phoenix were predicted to place fourth in the Colonial Athletic Association preseason polls. Sophomore pitcher and first baseman McKenna McCard and junior middle infielder Gabi Schaal were named to the preseason watch list, showing promise for the team.

Bocock was pleased with the softball team’s opening for this year’s season, but she’s hoping to tighten up and move the team forward.

“They did a good job of never giving up,” Bocock said. “They stayed focused, they stayed positive with each other, which I like, because I’m a believer that the game’s not over until it’s over.”

The Phoenix also debuted new uniforms in their season opener, which was one way to boost and push the team’s confidence.

“When you have young players, they’re just waiting for that opportunity and they’ve got a lot of good energy,” Bocock said. “So when they’re in that moment, it’s a great opportunity to give them that chance, but knowing that they can do it as well. They bring that energy to you, and good things happen.”

Senior utility Drew Menscer stepped onto the field for her fourth season with the Phoenix. She said she was proud of the team’s resilience against NC Central, winning after an initial four-run deficit. She also said she believes that their winning performance will be able to translate throughout the rest of the season.

“It definitely shows we have some fight,” Menscer said. “We bounced back, we didn’t lay down. Coming back like that, it shows a lot throughout the season, and we will be able to accomplish a lot.”

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Two Canadian women’s golfers find new opportunities

Athletes share their experiences, background, its influence on their golf careers

Audrey Toscano

Senior Annabelle Ackroyd came to Elon University to join the women’s golf team. She began playing the sport at a young age, but she said what makes her golf experience different is where she grew up — Canada.

“It is not as big there, especially because it is a cold weather place,” Ackroyd said. “As a kid, it is harder to get into it than other sports, especially as a girl. There were not many people to play with.”

From Calgary, Alberta, Ackroyd said that playing on a golf course wasn’t easy just because of the limited number of people she could play with but also because of the weather and the recruiting process.

“To a certain point there is no other girls to play with, you play with your dad, your guy buddies, but there are no other girls playing tournaments and pushing you, coming from Canada,” Ackroyd said.

Ackroyd saw an opportunity when she began to take golfing more seriously. “You have to stand out to be recruited from Canada,” Ackroyd said.

Playing tournaments since she was ten years old, the University of Minnesota recruited her five years later. After two years at the public school, she was looking for something different.

She then transferred to Elon University her junior year because she wanted a smaller school and a more structured golf program and the beautiful campus.

During Ackroyd’s recruitment process, head coach Chris Dockrill said she believed it was a good opportunity to take Ackroyd since she could play year-round, something she is unable to do in Canada due to the weather. He said her hard-working and competitive nature made Ackroyd stand out.

An International Experience

Like Ackroyd, sophomore新鲜 Ashley Lafontaine from Ontario, Canada, also emphasized her challenges with receiving recognition in Canada for golf.

Through perseverance and hard work, she was able to earn a spot on the Elon golf team. “I wanted to come here because there are some golf programs in Canada that are good, but in general, it is harder,” Lafontaine said.

Since coming to Elon, Lafontaine has built a great relationship with her teammates and said that the team’s diversity has made each player come together and appreciate their different experiences. She added that she knew she could make a difference on this team.

Much like Ackroyd, Dockrill said Lafontaine has positively impacted the program as a freshman.

“She’s been very tough, and for her age, she is very mature on the golf course,” Dockrill said. “She was a heavily recruited player but a late bloomer as far as Canadian golf goes.”

Dockrill said he has a roster of players from around the world and recognizes the great opportunities that Elon can provide for international students. He also acknowledges the different stages both Ackroyd and Lafontaine are at in their golfing careers.

“We have had a lot of different nationalities play for us,” Dockrill said. “I’ve enjoyed recruiting worldwide.”

Dockrill, a Canadian himself, recognizes that their home country has produced many great players. “I’m very lucky that I have Ash because we can talk about things from an Ash perspective,” Ackroyd said.

As the current captain of the women’s golf team, Ackroyd said she appreciates the opportunities Elon has given her. She adds she’s also happy to have a teammate from home to make her golf experience easier.

“It helps us inspire other people back home that might be wanting to do the same thing as us,” Lafontaine said.

Men’s golf enters season with younger, fresher roster

Youthful roster promotes challenge for men’s golf

Max Wallace

The Elon University men’s golf team faced a 180 degree turn when it returned from a day trip to Scotland. However, Ropero said the team’s bond went beyond the pond: the caliber of opponents increased.

“Another underclassman has come through a unique transition of his own,” Ropero said of Callen Lafontaine. “He will often see a familiar face when the team travels to the United States and return to the same schools as before.”

Another underclassman has come through a unique transition of his own. Right swinging sophomore Juan Carlos Callejo Ropero grew up playing golf across the Atlantic Ocean in Madrid, Spain. However, the difference in playing golf here in the United States extends beyond the dog legs and pin placements of the courses he plays.

“It’s obviously different,” Callejo Ropero said.

From where it started back in the fall, and now looks to take the next leap: securing a national title.

Six underclassmen make up the team this year. Right swinging freshman Oliver Rotermund, said the team’s culture helped him find his comfort zone on and off the fairways.

Rotermund said transitioning from high school to the collegiate level was an adjustment, but the competition and playing with the university team is where he finds his drive.

“I played college golf and chose to do it because I love competing,” Rotermund said. “You’re playing for the university, so it definitely was intimidating at first, but I think the more experience that you have, the better you get.”

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“It’s obviously different,” Callejo Ropero said.

“Not only are the courses different, but the way the tournaments are prepared?”

In Spain, Callejo Ropero said tournaments are usually 18 holes of golf. Contrary, the structure of golf in the United States is that the team forced him to adjust to a two full rounds of golf, 36 holes, in a single day followed by another 18 on the second.

Yet, Callejo Ropero said he did notice one similarity between golf on both sides of the pond: the caliber of the players.

“Golfers are good everywhere,” Callejo Ropero said. “But here, there are more.”

Callejo Ropero said one of the best parts about competing in the U.S is that he gets to match up against some of his former teammates and childhood friends from Spain. He said he will often see a familiar face when the team travels for a tournament.

It’s fun to see them compete and see them in tournaments around here,” Callejo Ropero said. “It’s a real rivalry between us when we go out there. We try to represent Spain, too.”

Earlier this year, the entire team took an eight day trip to Scotland, giving it the chance to learn a lot about the history of golf at St. Andrews. However, the trip also allowed the young team to bond and learn about each other off the course.

The experience allowed Hill to take off his coaching cap at times and get to know the team as young men, not just as players. “It’s a real rivalry between us when we go out there. We try to represent Spain, too.”

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Far from home: tennis player draws inspiration and strength from challenging times

The earthquake hitting Miray Konar’s home country came at a challenging time — the beginning of the 2023 women’s tennis season

Sydney Spencer
Sports Editor | @SydneySpencer

A series of text messages was blowing up sophomore tennis player Miray Konar’s phone on the evening of Feb. 6 — a Friday. Konar was hearing from her friend in Lebanon, asking if her family in Turkey was safe.

Konar, who was unaware that an earthquake hit her home country, was hearing the news for the first time.


A 7.8 magnitude earthquake ripped through Turkey and Syria, resulting in the death poll passing 40,000 people, according to Reuters on Feb. 14. Konar, who is from Izmir, Turkey, said hearing about the earthquake was incredibly frightening.

“I checked my phone and I saw that the earthquake was in Turkey, but it wasn’t giving the specific city,” Konar said. “My hometown is an earthquake center, so it was one of the possibilities that it was in Izmir. It was really scary. I couldn’t sleep that night.”

Konar eventually found out that the earthquake was centered in Ganciantep, almost seven hundred miles from her hometown. When she realized that her family would be safe, she said she felt a weight lifted off of her shoulders.

“I got relieved, but after 10 minutes, I saw the news about how big and awful it was. The city looked like it was bombed,” Konar said.

The earthquake hitting Konar’s home country came at a challenging time — the beginning of the 2023 women’s tennis season. Despite the challenging and scary moments she faced, the recent event is pushing her to work harder and persevere.

Some people waited for days under the rubble without drinking water and without eating anything, “I feel like in those really, really dark awful times, you see the people make a difference, “ Anderson said.

Konar said the biggest takeaway from her will be to live her life the way that she wants to. “Living the life that you want because life is so short,” Konar said. “So I’m going to take that do it now mentality. Don’t plan it, but say something and do something.”

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Freshman tennis recruit inspired by hometown hero

Veljko Krstic hails from Belgrad, home of top-ranked tennis player Novak Djokovic

Max Wallace, Matthew Farina
Ethan Morelli

Freshman Veljko Krstic, tennis player for the Elon men’s tennis team, comes from Belgrad, Serbia. Novak Djokovic, the world’s best tennis player according to the Association of Tennis Professionals, comes from the same city as Krstic.

Krstic said that growing up watching Djokovic play inspired him to make tennis more than just a hobby.

“I started having more interest in tennis because of him,” Krstic said. “I realized that college tennis is a great opportunity to get an education as well as compete at a high level.”

Krstic appeared in the team’s first two doubles matches of the spring season, against No. 14 ranked Wake Forest University Jan. 16 and Rice University Jan. 27, working with senior teammate Nicholas Campbell in both. The duo ended their set against the Demon Deacons due to time resulting in a 5-3 loss, and lost their set 6-2 against Rice.

On the solo side of things, Krstic channeled his inner Djokovic in the team’s first home match against the North Carolina Central University Eagles on Feb. 9, winning his set 6-2, 6-2. His performances capped off a perfect afternoon for the Phoenix, as it went on to defeat the Eagles 7-0 and secured its first match win of the season. Krstic said Djokovic’s ascension to the top of the world rankings was an inspiration to himself not only in his childhood, but as he began his collegiate career.

“He’s the No. 1, in my opinion, the best tennis player ever,” Krstic said.

Krstic continued his solo success in the team’s next match against the Campbell University Camels Feb. 7, as he won his match in a best of three set 6-4. His efforts proved vital to the Phoenix, emerging victorious for the second time.

Seeing Miray, it took her a little while to be able to catch up with her family, and I think dealing with all of that is just incredibly difficult,” Anderson said.

Anderson praised Konar for her abilities on and off the court and said her resilience throughout this period has been powerful to watch.

“I definitely think she’s an inspiration in the way that she’s handled this with so much courage and resilience,” Anderson said. “Her teammates already respected her tremendously, but I think after all of this too, when they’re around, they’re able to hear stories and have conversations as things are unfolding more in the news.”

Konar has also taken to spreading the word about Turkey throughout the Elon community. She is partnering with the American Turkish Association, supporting and raising funds for earthquake relief. Anderson said watching her support this cause has been inspirational for her as a coach.

“The more that she’s kind of shown in these really difficult times, and she’s really been trying to get the word out here to you know, to help her fellow citizens and to really make a difference,” Anderson said.

“I feel like in those really, really dark awful times, you see the people that are helping and you see those people that are trying hard to make a difference, and I feel like Miray is one of those people.”

Konar said the biggest takeaway from her will be to live her life the way that she wants to. “Living the life that you want because life is so short,” Konar said. “So I’m going to take that do it now mentality. Don’t plan it, but say something and do something.”

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# Softball

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SPRING SPORTS

WOMENS GOLF
FEB 25-28 CSU - RIVERTOWNE INVITATIONAL CHARLESTON S.C.
MAR 12-14 UNCW RIVER LANDING CLASSIC WILMINGTON N.C.
MAR 16-19 WOFFORD LOW COUNTRY INTERCOLLEGIATE HILTON HEAD ISLAND S.C.
APR 2-4 MIMOSA HILLS INTERCOLLEGIATE MORGANTON N.C.
APR 14-16 CAA CHAMPIONSHIP SOUTHPORTE NC

MENS GOLF
MAR 27-28 NC A&T - AGGIE INVITATIONAL GREENSBORO N.C.
MAR 31-APR 2 CUTTER CREEK INTERCOLLEGIATE SNOW HILL N.C.
APR 6-8 NC STATE - STITCH INTERCOLLEGIATE CARY N.C.
APR 23-25 CAA CHAMPIONSHIP DATAW ISLAND S.C.

WOMENS TENNIS
FEB 15 LONGWOOD 2 PM
FEB 25 CHARLOTTE 10 AM
MAR 3 MIDDLE TENNESSEE 10 AM
MAR 4 HAMPTON 11 PM
MAR 11 DAVIDSON 2 PM
MAR 14 MORGAN ST 10 AM
MAR 16 SHAW UNIVERSITY 2 PM
MAR 25 CHARLESTON 11 AM
MAR 26 RICHMOND 2 PM
MAR 29 DELAWARE 1 PM
APR 1 WAKE FOREST 11 AM
APR 2 WILLIAM & MARY 11 AM
APR 8 WILLIAM & MARY 11 AM
APR 12 NC CENTRAL 2 PM
APR 20-23 CAA CHAMPIONSHIP WILLIAMSBURG V.A.

MENS TENNIS
FEB 15 LONGWOOD 2 PM
FEB 18 SHAW UNIVERSITY 10:30 AM
FEB 18 GEORGIA STATE 2 PM
FEB 23 GARDNER WEBB 2 PM
FEB 25 NC STATE 12 PM
MAR 4 HAMPTON 2 PM
MAR 5 WOFFORD 1:30 PM
MAR 13 CHARLESTON 2 PM
MAR 21 DARTMOUTH 2:30 PM
MAR 23 DAVIDSON 2 PM
MAR 25 PRESBYTERIAN 1 PM
MAR 30 DELAWARE 1 PM
APR 1 WILLIAM & MARY 11 AM
APR 7 CHARLOTTE 2 PM
APR 11 UNCG 6 PM
APR 14 RADFORD 2 PM
APR 21 NC A&T 2:30 PM
APR 20-23 CAA CHAMPIONSHIP WILLIAMSBURG V.A.
**A different vision: athlete's unique experience with lacrosse**

Senior Rachel Mikolay will always remember the day her life changed. The former goalie for the Elon University lacrosse team was a freshman in preparing for the upcoming season like any other day. After weeks of cardio training, 3K marathons and bike rides, Mikolay lost vision in one of her eyes one day.

“I really started to freak out because I literally could not see through my left eye,” Mikolay said.

Mikolay committed to Elon University for lacrosse with dreams of playing at the collegiate level, but after her vision accident in July 2020, her path to being an athlete on a college athletics team changed. She saw multiple doctors and was never given a diagnosis as to what caused her eyesight issues. Mikolay was forced to medically retire after two and a half years of Division 1 lacrosse after not being cleared to play by her doctors.

“That’s when it kind of set in that there’s a possibility I’m not going to be able to play again, which was always so crazy, because that was my dream, to play college lacrosse,” Mikolay said. “I kind of felt let down by myself because I never got to play in a game.”

Now, she is still part of the active roster, but she’s accomplishing different things in a new role as social media manager for the lacrosse team. Mikolay, who didn’t know where she’d be at, said her perseverance and persistence is what pushed her to continue on a different journey.

**A Different Experience**

Before her accident, Mikolay spent her freshman year spring at home because of the COVID-19 pandemic, training for the fall. Even though she didn’t know at the time that her life would change, she was committed to preparing for her return.

“I made a personal goal for myself that I was going to see the field in the 2021 season,” Mikolay said. “I had nothing else to do because everything was shut down because of COVID. So all I did was train every single day.”

When Mikolay first visited Elon, she said she was impressed with the coaching staff and the campus.

“There was no doubt in my mind that I was going to come to Elon,” Mikolay said.

Head coach Josh Hexter is the one who recruited Mikolay to join the lacrosse team. He and Kennedy are optimistic and hopeful for the upcoming season. “I call it a win-win because we were so positively impacted by Rachel, wanting to still stay on and do our social media, and I know it helped her as well,” Hexter said.

Although she’s not running on the field with her teammates, she’s supporting them from the sidelines. Her role has made her look at the positive side of this experience.

“I’m not just going to quit and give up, I’m going to make something out of this,” Mikolay said. “I’m going to learn and grow. I just hope people understand, when you do get injured and, not even just in just an athletic sense, when things go wrong in life, it happens for a reason. It went wrong, and now you just have to make the best situation out of it.”

Sophomore pitcher Shea Sprague pitches at an afternoon baseball practice on Feb. 10.

Sophomore left-handed pitcher Shea Sprague shares about the batter from the mound. Mumbling the lyrics to “Should’ve Ducked” by Lil Durk, he calms his restless mind. To him, the anticipation leading up to his first pitch is the best part of playing.

“I love the thrill,” Sprague said. “Getting really, really anxious before, and then going out there and having success. I can’t wipe the smile off my face.”

Sprague said he always knew he wanted to play at a collegiate level. Since first picking up a ball in kindergarten, his life has revolved around baseball. Sprague said it came naturally to him. He grew much more comfortable in his abilities and team. He said he faced a lot of uncertainty in the beginning but was just proud to be playing at Elon.

“Last year had a lot of good learning moments and experience,” Sprague said. “Pitching in some big games definitely is going to help out going into this year from a nerve standpoint.”

Head coach Mike Kennedy said Sprague has made significant physical gains, but Sprague is most proud of his mental growth. Sprague said he’s developed an understanding of how to handle his anxiety before a game and has learned to adapt to obstacles. He said development of confidence has been pivotal in building his skills as a pitcher, as he no longer compares himself to his teammates.

“I was trying to size everyone up,” Sprague said. “I just wrote myself off a little bit in the fall, saying, ‘Oh, I don’t throw as hard as these guys, I was limiting myself. But once I found my groove, I really found some success.”

Sprague said escaping that mindset has presented new opportunities to him as an athlete. He and Kennedy describe baseball as a game of failure — one where mistakes are necessary. Sprague said he now uses defeat to his advantage, learning from it and building on his game.

Kennedy also said Sprague’s greatest attribute is his drive. He is always looking for ways to improve and propel the team forward.

“Obviously he was our best arm last year,” Kennedy said. “But he’s got a high level of competitiveness. I think that really sets him apart from most of the guys. He just refuses to lose. He battles. That’s a huge part of being successful at this level.”

**By the Numbers**

| STRIKEOUTS IN HIS ELMON CAREER | 41 |
| APPEARANCES IN HIS ELMON CAREER | 19 |
| ERA IN HIS ELMON CAREER | 1.89 |
| WALKS PLUS HITS PER INNING PITCHED | 1.02 |

**PITCHER REFLECTS ON HIS GROWTH AND GOALS FOR THE UPCOMING SEASON**

Sprague shares mental, physical journey in preparation for successful season

Hope Valentí

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Elon University to increase tuition, housing by 5.14%
Elon University will offer health insurance for students in upcoming academic year

Elon University Student Health Services will be offering health insurance for students and changing their billing process next academic school year, according to Vice President for Finance and Administration Janet Williams.

Students who do not have health insurance coverage will have the ability to pay for the new Elon University BlueCross BlueShield of North Carolina plan. “There is an increase in the cost for the students separate from the tuition increase because not all students will be opting into Elon BlueCross BlueShield plans,” Williams said.

According to Williams, copayment fees will be paid by the university in the new plan. The change that will occur next year allows Elon Student Health Services to file a claim with the student’s health insurance plan for the additional costs beyond a co-pay, according to university spokesperson Owen Covington.

For sophomores Madison and Morgan Williams, opting in to the health insurance provided by Elon depends on what the plan’s coverage looks like and how it compares to their current health insurance.

But Madison and Morgan both said because neither of them are “well versed” in health care, they have a lot of questions. From wondering how easy it is to apply for insurance to where the insurance can be used, both sophomores have more questions than answers.

“...we believe that it’s an ethical and really proper thing to do.”

BY THE NUMBERS

$3,905

The most expensive university health insurance offered out of Elon’s peer institutions is Fordham University. The Aetna Student Health plan has a premium charge of $3,905.

BY THE NUMBERS

$1,846

The least expensive university health insurance offered out of Elon’s peer institutions is Chapman University.

BY THE NUMBERS

9/15

9 of 15 peer institutions require health insurance for full time students.

BY THE NUMBERS

$59,014

The total annual cost of tuition, fees, housing and food for 2023-24 after the 5.14% increase from 2022-23.
Prospective students consider tuition increase

High school junior, senior prepare for undergraduate careers

Miranda Ferrante
Managing Editor of Elon News Network
@mirandaferrante

Cole Clark walked around Elon University's campus on a gloomy day in January. The prospective student toured what he thought could be his future home, especially after being informed about Elon's academics, campus life and post-graduate opportunities.

"You couldn't ask for a much better experience and it was on a rainy day," Clark said. "I think that was what helped — this is on a rainy day, what could it be like if it's sunny?"

The high school junior from Virginia still has one year until he needs to commit to a college. He's considering other colleges, but he knows he still needs to keep in mind future university changes — like Elon's recent tuition increase.

The university announced Feb. 10 that it will increase tuition, lodging and meal plans by 5.14% for the 2023-24 academic year, which will make the total cost $59,014. Indirect costs — including books, transportation and other expenses — add up to $3,500, bringing the total cost of tuition to $62,514.

Clark's main goal is simple. When he leaves college to enter his career, he wants to feel prepared. Clark said he will prioritize resources and facilities when applying to colleges, despite tuition that's on the rise.

"With a tuition increase, the thing that comes to mind is you hoping the university will use it for its students to be able to help them out, give them the advantage in the most successful way possible," Clark said.

Elon University total cost over time

Elon University's cost of tuition, fees, room and board, or the total cost, from 2000-01 to 2023-24.

Chart: Kyla O'Connor & Avery Sloan • Source: Elon University • Created with Databwrapper

Where is the money going?

Current Elon students can see the impact of their tuition dollars in areas such as the university's health and wellness initiatives like HealthEU and the extension of TimelyCare.

In a Feb. 10 interview with Elon News Network, Vice President for Finance and Administration Janet Williams said the university's budgeting process aligns with the Boldly Elon strategic plan.

When current juniors applied during the 2019-20 academic year, Elon's total cost of attendance was $52,756. As seniors, they will be facing a sticker price that is $9,758 higher than it was when they applied.

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During those three years, the campus has seen additions such as opening of Innovation Quad in Fall 2022 and the Inn at Elon in January 2020. The university also purchased three properties on East Kingswood Drive in October 2022 and will break ground on the construction of a new residence hall in June.

Williams said tuition increases support campus growth, as well as merit and need-based scholarships.

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In an email to Elon News Network, Vice President for Enrollment Greg Zaiser said scholarships help students access Elon and allow recognition for academic success and involvement, though scholarships for current students will not increase.

"Two years ago we increased the size of these awards for incoming students and these increases have to be built into the budget for each class," Zaiser wrote. "For example, Presidential Scholarship went from $6,000 to $7,500 annually for new students. That's an increase of $1,500 per student for approximately 15% of the FY class. This will be an annual budgetary allocation for four years until the increase is fully part of the university budget."

According to Zaiser, presidential, and other scholarships such as Elon Engagement, scholars and fellows are generally not renewed scholarships, instead they "are funded by the operating budget of the university".

Aries Falloni, a high school student, said Elon is currently her top choice for college. Falloni hopes the surplus from the tuition increase will contribute to raising the amount of money awarded through scholarships.

"I think for my personal interest in Elon, it would be really cool to see them have diversity-based scholarships," Falloni said. "They have merit and need-based scholarships, but some other schools that I've looked at have specifically leadership and diversity-related scholarships, so I think it could be a focus of Elon, especially since they talk about diversity so much."

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COLE CLARK
PROSPECTIVE STUDENT

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COLE CLARK
PROSPECTIVE STUDENT

Despite her attraction to Elon, Nicole said she enjoyed her time visiting campus during her son's prospective student tour. While she wasn't immediately aware of the tuition increase, Nicole believes funding future facilities at Elon would make the experience worth it.

"In my personal situation, I don't think that it would affect my decision on whether I'd be going to Elon, but that's purely because I have the opportunity to be able to make decisions with minimal financial liability if the price varies," Faloni said.

Considering costs

Clark's mother, Nicole, said she enjoyed her time visiting campus during her son's prospective student tour. While she wasn't immediately aware of the tuition increase, Nicole believes funding future facilities at Elon would make the experience worth it.

"For us to see a campus that didn't have any deficiencies so to speak, you just wonder, ‘OK, what's going on that's causing the drive?’" Nicole said. "What's the push? What other options do we have that Elon could possibly put out there without the student body having to carry the burden directly every year?"

Though Nicole and Cole agree Elon will be a top contender on Cole's college search, he won't begin applying until the fall.

"I think it’s a tuition increase, but I think some things are worth sacrificing," Cole said.
Phoenix Leaders blaze path for future Elon students

Incoming students are given opportunity to grow as leaders, individuals through Center for Leadership program

Hope Valenti

When sophomore Caroline Putman applied for the Experiential Learning and Outdoor Adventures program in her freshman year, she didn’t realize how much she would enjoy the position.

“I applied in my first semester freshman year kind of on a whim, but I knew that I wanted to get involved,” Putman said. “It was one of my goals to come into college and experience the outdoor community because it’s something I really enjoy.”

Within the ELOA program, which is under Campus Recreation and Wellness in the Koury Center, Putman works in Elon Challenge, a team development program that helps promote authenticity, creativity, innovation and community building.

Elon Challenge has many low ropes and high ropes activities that engage students in building new relationships. According to the Elon Challenge website, low ropes activities help build communication, trust, problem-solving skills and relationships. These activities, like the bridge, promote experiential education to bring groups together. The bridge is a low course activity that requires students to stand on a wooden platform and maneuver themselves to find balance.

Meanwhile, the high ropes activities focus on individual and team support. By challenging themselves with activities like zip lining, students learn to accomplish tasks through cooperation and encouragement. Any organization can participate in Elon Challenge, and one of Putman’s tasks is to help people build new relationships with organizations on campus and off campus.

“It’s a great way to connect with the Elon community and something that I love about it is that I wouldn’t interact with a lot of these organizations outside of ELOA,” Putman said. “In the fall, we worked with the Boys and Girls Club in Burlington. Then we visited UNC Greensboro and worked with their master’s students. It’s a great way to meet people from all different walks of life and different work areas.”

Putman said that outside of learning, communication and leadership skills, ELOA values sustainability and accessibility to students on campus interested in exploring the outdoors to deepen their connection with nature.

According to the Elon Challenge website, the benefits of outdoor experiences include reducing stress, easing depression, boosting the immune system, lowering blood pressure, gaining better concentration and improving sleep. They believe that “nature is the best medicine” and allow students to find peace in the outdoors.

“It’s really just a chance for all of us to come together and share this passion within the Elon community,” Putman said.

“We are a stronger leader,” Putman said. “ELOA gives Elon the best nature experience, especially during our trips.”

Elon Outdoors, another program within ELOA, holds outdoor weekend trips that any students are welcome to attend. Its events include, but are not limited to, indoor rock climbing, ice skating, and hiking. During Spring Break in March, they will visit the Great Canyon National Park. Elon Outdoors also offers social events on campus, such as Smores With Outdoors.

Students are given the chance to explore the outdoors and learn more about what ELOA can offer.

“Elon Outdoors offers the opportunity for aspiring leaders to gain experience in leadership, communication, and teamwork,” Smith said. “We’re a group of people who bring in outside leadership opportunities and bring them to Elon.”

Smith said she urged students to get involved with ELOA to experience what Elon has to offer other than academics.

“I think outdoor activities are super fun in such a great way to experience different places and get a sense of the world,” Smith said. “I really love how the outdoors gives me a sense of community at Elon.”

Students can join by contacting Elon Outdoors through PhoenixCONNECT and follow them on Instagram @elnonoutdoors. To register for an Elon Outdoors trip, visit their website.