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Professor Suspended for Saying N-word in Class



HENRY LITSKY / PHOTO EDITOR

By Hailie Higgins
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

On Sept. 21, white English professor David Bleich read aloud from an article containing multiple instances of the n-word in front of his class. Junior Arianna Taylor, who self-identifies as Black, recalled feeling incredibly uncomfortable. “I personally felt triggered,” she said. “I was also angry. I was a little bit shocked. I thought about walking out of the class, but I also felt like I kind of needed to see what else he was going to say.” Taylor recounted that in the first few classes of the semester, Bleich prefaced that the course was going to discuss race, read works from African-American authors, and come across texts that includ-

ed the n-word. He then asked the class their thoughts on saying the word as it appears in readings. “The class was kind of just collectively like, ‘No, that’s very inappropriate, it’s hurtful,’” Taylor recalled. “He made basically a little bit of an argument about it, saying ‘Oh, it’s for pedagogical understanding, and we’re scholars,’ but these words still hurt people [...] They’re still slurs. We shouldn’t use them.” She recalled Bleich saying that he would respect the general opinion of the class, and assumed he wouldn’t bring it up again. A few weeks later, Bleich sent out a supplemental reading in favor of saying the n-word in academic contexts, written by Harvard Law Professor Randall Kennedy. When students next met

for class on Tuesday, Sept. 21, Bleich asked if they had looked at the supplemental reading. She had read the piece, and recalled that some other students had as well. Taylor said she then expected a comment on the paper, or a short discussion at most. “But then he pulled out printed sheets and just started reading,” she said. “And then he was just going and just reading the n-word — like just hard ‘r’, back to back to back.” After his reading, during which Taylor speculates he said the n-word around 10 times, some students expressed anger at his choice to do something the class had already condemned. After class, Taylor filed a bias-related incident report and dropped the course.

Upon submission of the bias report, Bleich was removed from the classroom within a week. Classes on Tuesday, Sept. 28 and Thursday, Sept. 30 were cancelled. On Tuesday, Oct. 5, they resumed under the instruction of Dominique Townsend, a PhD student in the English department. Taylor rejoined the class for their Oct. 5 session upon hearing that Bleich would no longer be teaching the course. On Nov. 15, the Academic Freedom Alliance (AFA) penned a letter to Dean of the School of Arts and Sciences Gloria Culver decrying Bleich’s suspension. “I write on behalf of the [AFA] to express our firm view that these disciplinary actions directed toward Professor Bleich are an egregious violation of his academic freedom,” Chair of the AFA’s Academic Committee Keith Whittington writes. “This interpretation and application of the university’s harassment policy would conflict with longstanding principles of academic freedom embraced by American universities, and it would be in breach of [UR’s] own stated commitment to academic freedom.” The letter goes on to discuss the policy laid out in UR’s Faculty Handbook, stating that “[t]here is no question that this classroom discussion fell within the bounds of this provision.” AFA is a national “alliance of college and university faculty members who are dedicated to upholding the principle of academic freedom [...] [Their] members from across the political spectrum recognize that an attack on

academic freedom anywhere is an attack on academic freedom everywhere,” according to their about page. Culver has not publicly replied to the letter, and said she was unable to comment on the incident in the classroom, citing confidentiality and an ongoing investigation. “[T]he University and the deans in AS&E are firmly committed to the principle of academic freedom,” she said. “This commitment is outlined in the University’s Faculty Handbook. We are equally committed to the principal pedagogic value — also reflected in the Faculty Handbook — of respecting the opinions and contributions of others, which is essential to a successful learning environment.” Taylor expressed concern about facing retaliation for publicly speaking about her role in the incident. “Not necessarily from the student body, but more so from faculty if I’m applying for opportunities,” she said. “But I understand that if anybody who’s impacting my future is going to go against me for coming on record for this, then they’re not an organization that I need to be working with, because they don’t support me [...] The main reason why I came on record is because this is still happening. It happened to me. And students really need to know about this. Especially students of color, Black people, they need to understand, ‘Hey, this is still happening. Speak out if and when you can, if and when it’s productive for you, understand that you’re not alone.’”

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86th Boar’s Head Dinner a Hit

By Sanghamitra Subba
NEWS EDITOR

On Thursday, Dec. 2, Feldman Ballroom transformed into an English great hall for a couple of hours for the 86th annual Boar’s Head Dinner. The first Boar’s Head Dinner took place in 1934 in the Men’s College of the University. Traditionally a holiday feast, the dinner involves caroling, Christmas-themed meals, and the procession of the boar’s head being awarded to the best student group on campus.

The annual dinner was canceled last year due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and this year, to curb the spread of the virus, only 250 tickets were sold instead of the usual 500. Instead of the usual communal long tables headed by a faculty host, there were round tables and no hosts. The dinner was served buffet-style, instead of student servers from various a cappella and performance groups hand-delivering each course. The National Society of Black Engineers, the 2019 recipient of the Boar’s Head

Award, handed the award to the Pan African Student Association in a tradition referred to as the Passing of the Boar. Until 1996, the award had been given primarily to Greek life organizations, until Delta Upsilon broke tradition by awarding it to the Campus Activities Board — the current Student Programming Board — which is responsible for organizing the Boar’s Head Dinner. Every year, one faculty member is invited to give a retelling of the story of the boar. This year, associate Professor of Japanese Wil-

liam H. Bridges IV was selected to share his version of the tale. The original story tells the tale of an Oxford University student encountering a ferocious boar and saving himself by stuffing the text of Aristotle down the animal’s throat and killing him. Senior Ethan Peltier did not know much about the dinner until his friends who had gone as first-years encouraged him to go. “I didn’t know that it was going to be medieval themed, but I thought it was really great,” he said.

Deans, Student Association leaders, and Directors at Wilson Commons, along with the faculty speaker, were dressed in medieval clothing and placed at the high table in the center of Feldman Ballroom. Student servers were also dressed as medieval servers. Sophomore Riley Prewett, the Boar’s Head Chair, led the planning of the dinner in October. “It is the longest tradition at [UR], so it was really cool to be a part of [it].” Subba is a member of the Class of 2023.

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CAMPUS

Boar’s Head Dinner Historically Excluded Women

By SANGHAMITRA SUBBA
NEWS EDITOR

Since 1934, UR students have travelled back to Medieval England for a night to attend the Boar’s Head Dinner. But the festive function that we know today was a men’s only affair until the 1970s. The dinner originated in the Men’s College of UR almost 90 years ago and was exclusively for male students, even after River Campus became co-educational and the female students moved from the Prince Street Women’s College. Although the women had their own Christmas-themed dinners, their own version of the Boar’s Head Dinner was short-lived according to archives at the Rare Books and Special Collections Library. In 1969, an advertisement for the Boar’s Head Dinner declared that the dinner was “FOR MEN ONLY.” The following year, a CT article stated that the dinner would allow women to attend, but only as

“beermaids” who would serve mead “to thirsty singers and guests alike,” according to F.T. Clark, the chairman of the Social Activities Board (now Student Programming Board) that oversaw the planning of the dinner. According to Melissa Mead, John M. and Barbara Keil University Archivist and Rochester Collections Librarian, the presence of women at the Boar’s Head Dinners was limited to the spouses of senior faculty members. It was only after 1972 that female students were explicitly invited to the dinners, and that can be credited to the protests led by the Women’s Caucus in 1971. On Dec. 13 of that year, the Women’s Caucus published a Letter to the Editor at the Campus Times titled “Women Point to Sexist Implications,” regarding the position of female students at the Boar’s Head Dinner. “Last week, in an attempt to find out the history of the Boar’s Head Dinner, we were continually

put off by various members of the Students’ Association,” said the letter. “They were extremely reluctant to divulge any information, even something as innocuous as historical data. They were immediately suspicious of our intentions, imagining all sorts of devious schemes.” The letter clarifies that it’s not necessarily the organization’s intention to have the dinner include women as well, but to examine the implications of having female students dress up as beermaids and serve at a men-only event. The Women’s Caucus peacefully protested at the Boar’s Head Dinner the day after the letter was published by distributing leaflets. “We are not condemning the Boar’s Head Dinner as an all-male gathering,” the letter stated. “The primary role that women have in this dinner is that of barmaid. We find this role degrading because it reinforces a typical stereotype.” Put in context of

the 1970s Women’s Rights Movement, in a time where women were struggling to be seen as equals to men, female students being dressed as barmaids reinforced the notion that women were subservient and expected to serve men. It’s important to note that the servers included men as well but they were not dressed as beermaids. “In a time when women are struggling for recognition as intelligent people and not just as bodies or servants, the Boar’s Head Dinner is a real obstacle to human liberation,” the letter stated. The leaflet concludes with a dry, “Enjoy your pig.” Carol Adams ’72, one of the members of the Women’s Caucus who penned the letter, later reflected on the events of 1971 in her book, “The Pornography of Meat.” “The Boar’s Head Dinner, ostensibly a celebration of the winter solstice, was not, in our view, an innocent enjoyment of male camaraderie,” wrote Adams. “With a ritual carrying

on of the head of a dead boar, it symbolically represented to us male dominance.” That summed up the sentiment of the Women’s Caucus when protesting the position of women at the event. “We did some consciousness raising and we were looking for ways to kind of change the conversation, to change the discussion,” said Adams. Given that the letter was published in the last fall edition of the CT before winter break, there is very little student response recorded. However, the Jan. 7, 1972 CT includes the following note in the “Classified” section: “I WOULD LIKE TO APOLOGIZE to all those people who, like myself, were offended by the Boar’s Head Dinner. Michael Kaye-SAB.” The Boar’s Head Dinner Collection at the Rare Books and Special Collections Library notes that after 1972, female students began to be welcome as guests. Subba is a member of the class of 2024.

Suspended Professor Supported by Academic Freedom Alliance

By HAILIE HIGGINS
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

When asked for comment, Bleich said the following in an email to the Campus Times: “The university is a school. That means that those of us in classrooms should feel free to read and speak about issues that are affecting society. Silencing teachers and honoring all discomforts of students will not contribute to the ending of racism in the United States. Such actions exacerbate racism and public fear. I am grateful for the outpouring of support I have received. I hope the University of Rochester will decide to take a productive path toward the study and understanding of how the uses of language may be a path [t]o ending violence rather than a pretext for re-creation.” “The university is a school. That means that those of us in classrooms should feel free to read and speak about issues that are affecting society.” Unrelated to this incident, the University announced in the Dec. 2 @Rochester email that it has concluded

its year-long review process and “substantially revised” the Policy Against Discrimination and Harassment (PADH), making changes that will go into effect on Jan. 1. Notable changes include developing a panel to “determine responsibility for alleged violations” instead of a single person, and increasing the protections for students to bring them to the level of employee protection. “Members of the University community are encouraged to report discrimination and harassment based on a protected class as well as retaliation.” “Members of the University community are encouraged to report discrimination and harassment based on a protected class as well as retaliation based on a prior complaint of discrimination or harassment,” the @Rochester email read. “Members of the University community who feel that they have experienced behavior that violates the policy, as well as those who witness or become aware of concerning conduct, should file a report using the online PADH report form.” Higgins is a member of the class of 2022.

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UR Baja SAE Challenges Students to Design and Race Off-Road Vehicles



By Melanie Earle
FEATURES EDITOR

Engineering students can expect to be challenged in their coursework, but most likely, the design problems they will face after college won't be as neat as figuring out how fast a box will move down an inclined plane. A place where engineering students can learn to tackle problems they will face in an engineering career and how to manage unexpected challenges along the way, is UR's Baja Society of Automotive Engineers (SAE) team. Non-engineering majors can gain experience through UR Baja SAE as well.

UR Baja SAE is a student organization on campus that designs, manufactures, assembles, analyzes, and then races a single-seat off-road vehicle. Compared to other intercollegiate racing competitions such as Formula SAE, Baja is the only group that works wheel to wheel, meaning their project is timed as it races simultaneously alongside other cars. UR Baja SAE works throughout the school year and part-time during the summer to design and construct its vehicle and is currently working on creating its first four-wheel drive vehicle. The majority of the vehicle is made by the UR Baja SAE team, with tools such as lathes, drill presses, angle grinders, welding, and computer programs like SolidWorks and NX. UR Baja SAE is broken down into teams who focus on a different component of the vehicle, which are each led by a team lead.

In total, there are six project teams. The five original teams include "Frame and Chassis," which focuses on building and testing the frame of the vehicle, "Drivetrain," which works on the engine and gearbox for the vehicle, "Suspension," which focuses on the connection of the

wheels to the frame and is important for ensuring the car has optimal turning and can go over the obstacles it encounters, "Usability," which works on the driver to vehicle systems, like steering and breaks, and "Data Acquisition," which collects data on the car to optimize it and designs different ways to test the vehicle. A new addition to UR Baja SAE is the "Autonomous Vehicle" project. The Autonomous Vehicle project comes from UR alum and former team member Ethan Fahnstock '21, who was working on an autonomous vehicle for his senior design project. The project has been continued under junior Sam Kriegsmann, with a hope to one day participate in an autonomous competition. The UR Baja SAE team as a whole is led by the Chief Engineer, senior Ognjen Bosic, Chief Mechanic, junior Conor McCole, and President, junior Chris Harriott.

'The competition always has a four hour endurance test, which has all the teams try to drive for as long as possible on a large track.'

The team attends competitions across the country. Most recently, the team attended an unofficial competition hosted by Clarkson University called OktoBAJAFest. The team attends official competitions in the spring run by SAE international, this year attending the Tennessee competition and a competition in UR's very own home, Rochester, NY. At competitions, the teams participate in multiple events to test the capability of their vehicle. The first test at competition is a tech inspection that makes sure the vehicle is safe to operate. Then, the team participates in tests that rotate

from competition to competition, like acceleration, a hill climb, suspension, traction, and maneuverability.

The competition always has a four hour endurance test, which has all the teams try to drive for as long as possible on a large track. The track often requires teams to utilize mechanics from previous tests, like suspension and maneuverability. The teams are measured based on how many laps they are able to compete. The vehicles are expected to break, and the teams are ready to fix them. If you ask the UR Baja SAE team about some of the breaks that have happened during competition, they'll respond with a couple of chuckles and stories — it's par for the course and part of the challenge.

The competitions also include a business component, where the teams give a sales presentation. The teams are then ranked based on how many points they have earned over the tests. At their last competition, UR Baja SAE ranked in the top 20. "It's really cool to see everything that you spend your time

working on kind of being tested," Kriegsmann described.

While there are many engineers on the team, UR Baja SAE is open to all majors. UR Baja SAE offers opportunities outside of engineering and wants people outside of engineering to join. There is a need for people to work on the sales presentations for competition, the business side of designing the car, marketing, someone who loves art helping with the aesthetics and graphic design of the car, and people who can help with newsletters. And for non-engineering majors who would like to participate in the building of the car itself, there's opportunity for that, too — despite being Chief Mechanic, McCole does not study engineering at all, and is actually a Classics major. No experience with designing, manufacturing, analysis, assembling, or driving is required at all; the team will teach you everything you need to know. "No one expects you to know what everything is and how to fix it," McCole said. "It's more like, problem solve together and then someone who does know [how to fix it] will tell you what tool to use and how to use it."

For engineering majors, working with the team is a great way to gain experience designing and building, and a way to encounter challenges they might not face in the classroom setting that are important for a career in engineering. "You come out of it knowing when someone says, 'I want to solve this problem,' you not only have the skills to solve that you learn in class, but the people who just go to class and don't do things like [Baja], they don't know the realistic time and money it takes to actually do it," Kriegsmann explained. "It's really easy to design a solution to a problem that you can't actually build, [in the real world]

you [might] have a bolt that actually can't go in, but you don't realize it until you have to make it. Or it might be a good solution, but it's just astronomically expensive. So things like that, I think, are our most valuable skills."

While Baja can be a lot of work, the group doesn't let it deter them from having fun. They work together and hang out on the weekends, but have team traditions such as attending the Boar's Head Dinner together.

"Baja is made up of people; yes it's engineers, and yes we're all dedicated to what we do, but we're still a fun club, and we're still having a great time in Taylor [Hall], and some people kind of forget that," Harriott said. "As cliché as that sounds, it's true."

UR Baja SAE is a way for

'UR Baja SAE is a way for engineering students to learn what engineering may look like out of the classroom, but it's also a way for anyone to learn about design, and the non-STEM side of the STEM industry.'

engineering students to learn what engineering may look like out of the classroom, but it's also a way for anyone to learn about design, and the non-STEM side of the STEM industry. While UR Baja SAE focuses on creating, there's a lot to be learned from the failures and mistakes; it's all part of the design process. "Honestly, it's pretty interesting to see the parts break like you see that and you're like, 'I know why it did that,'" McCole expressed. "You see the failure because there's a lot to be learned from those destructive moments."

Earle is a member of the Class of 2023.



MELANIE EARLE/FEATURES EDITOR

COMMUNITY

UR Responds to Omicron Variant



MICAH BETTENHAUSEN/CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHER

New York Governor Kathy Hochul has declared a state of emergency, which went into effect Friday. While COVID-19 policies are continuing as they always have — masks indoors, social distancing when needed, vaccines, etc. — policies are being analyzed at the state level to see how they can be improved.

At the date of this publication, the University has not formally released a statement addressing the state of emergency or the implementation of new policies as a result of a rise in cases, including the Omicron variant.

According to the Dec. 1 @ Rochester email, Monroe County Executive Adam Bello carried out several new county policies in response to the increase of cases and hospitalizations, particularly in the Monroe County region. The University states it's in accordance with these guidelines and practices by watching the news closely and corresponding with its county executive, public health commissioner, as well as UR's own epidemiologists and public health experts.

UR requires all staff and

faculty to be vaccinated, with the exception of an approved exemption, and offers free vaccines and COVID-19 testing to all employees. Over the summer, the University also added a new remote work policy for its employees.

At the time of publication, there are a total of 49 positive cases among students, faculty, and staff from Eastman Campus, Medical Campus, and River Campus over the past 14 days. In the past 24 hours, there have been a total of six positive cases, including five on the River Campus even though 99% of students are vaccinated and 94% of faculty and staff are vaccinated. This data is updated frequently on UR's COVID-19 Dashboard, and is up to date with data from Dec. 3.

The latest COVID-19 messages and updates page is the same message as the @Rochester email as published on Nov. 30. There have been no specific updates since.

As of this article's publication, UHS Director Dr. Ralph Manchester has not responded to CT about concerns over the Omicron variant or improvement on policies as the NY state of emergency goes into effect.

Worley is a member of the class of 2024.

Orangutans and the One-Health Initiative in Borneo

By SONIA MAHAJAN
STAFF WRITER

In the Malay language, the name orangutan suitably translates to 'man of the forest' — orangutans do in fact share 96.4 percent of our genes. Native to the rainforests of Borneo and Sumatra, these majestic, humble animals spend most of their time in trees, clinging to branches with their long, strong arms.. Borneo, the third-largest island in the world, was once full with dense rainforest. As of 2017, 50 percent of Borneo's original lowland rainforest is gone. Fire, logging, and the expansion of palm oil plantations are the main causes of this unfortunate decline.

Dr. Jeffrey Wyatt is a veterinarian who researches and teaches in UR's Department of Comparative Medicine. Dr. Wyatt also has a position at the city of Rochester's beloved Seneca Park Zoo. In a recent webinar titled "One-Health Initiative in Borneo: Transforming Community Health and Saving Endangered Orangutans," Dr. Wyatt gave a powerful presentation about his holistic work in Indonesian Borneo. He and the Health in Harmony team argued that saving the island's rainforest requires involvement not just in the environment, but with its people and animals as well. In only ten years, the initiative has "reversed poverty, transformed public health, and saved the rainforest home of [some] of the world's last orangutans." The initiative's success suggests that similar methods would transform other parts of the world, too. What exactly made the initiative such a triumph?

Gunung Palung National

Park in Indonesian Borneo covers more than 100,000 hectares of land. That is approximately the size of 100,000 rugby fields. The park is known for its rich biodiversity, with habitats ranging from mangrove forest to montane forest. It's in this region of the world that Dr. Wyatt and the team practiced over 400 hours of "radical listening," where they collected as much input as possible from community members. The team found that 99% of villagers revere the rainforest, and 100% of locals employed as loggers want to stop. People primarily wished for two things: access to affordable healthcare and alternative livelihoods. In 2007, the team opened a medical center in the region with a staff of local medical professionals.

'The team found that 99% of villagers revere the rainforest, and 100% of locals employed as loggers want to stop.'

A fascinating new health-care model was introduced. As an incentive, individuals seeking medical care receive a 70% discount if they come from a non-logging village. The penalty for those who are loggers is only to pay full price for care. The medical center takes more than just money, including even bags of manure, as payment. In addition, the team was focused on coming up with a plan to create alternative livelihoods for the locals. Using methods from the nearby island of Java, the locals began to learn to compost and raise crops without chemicals. Instead of slash and burn agriculture, they

transitioned to reusing farmland. Loggers were taught to take care of cattle as an alternative lifestyle, and widows, who are often marginalized in these kinds of communities, were taught to herd and take care of goats. Did radical listening work? In short, yes, dramatically. 10,000 patients are seen every year at the medical center. An ambulance service is functioning to give medical care to remote, more rural parts. There was a significant decrease in symptoms and illnesses, such as fever and likely malaria, and cough and likely tuberculosis. The child mortality rate decreased. The region was starting to look healthier than Indonesia as a whole. Thanks to the widows, goat herd health got better in the span of just three years. In 10 years, 88% of households became non-logging. A new wild-life corridor was developed for orangutans, and a rare clouded leopard was spotted on one of their cameras. 52% of non-logging households are now merchants, beekeepers, and fishermen. In 2017, the team introduced a chain-saw buyback program. The amount of money that the locals received was equivalent to money earned for half a year of logging. In addition, they were eligible to get small business loans. One local opened up a coffee shop.

Dr. Wyatt explained that the takeaway here for approaching species and environmental preservation is to learn from the local communities about the greater problems causing environmental degradation. Supporting them is a key part of reducing the effects of climate change.

Mahajan is a member of the class of 2025.



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OPINIONS

EDITORIAL OBSERVER

Don't Force People to Fight for Their Mental Health

By COREY MILLER-WILLIAMS
MANAGING EDITOR

Author's Note: There's no shame in thinking maybe you could use psychological help, and then being wrong. The only shame lies in lying to get resources you know you don't need. All of the resources mentioned in this article, as well as UCC, UHS, and anything else you can imagine, are there for you regardless of how certain you are or how "serious" your illness is.

Waiting for someone to help me is one of my top regrets in my life so far. But sitting around hoping somebody will point at you and go, "Hey, you look sad," is admittedly the path of least resistance. Self-advocacy, whether at the University or anywhere else in the world, is impossibly humiliating.

It's not that there aren't resources available. We're hopefully all aware of the presence of the CARE Network as a resource both to get help for a friend and to get help for yourself. If you even think for a second you might need to get in contact with a professional, don't hesitate to file a report for yourself.

Additionally, if you'd like to apply for accommodations, you can do so via the forms for academic accommodations and residential accommodations.

For me, searching for mental health resources, I was surprised by how accommodating the University was. It's not that I knew much about their mental health policy beforehand or that I had UR-specific preconceptions. I just knew and had prepared myself for the fact that mental health resources — like any other resource — are apportioned based on privilege, luck, and how much a particular person likes you on that particular day.

Yet the deeper I got into my search, the angrier I became that the boundaries that do exist are there to stop healthy students from taking advantage of something they don't need. This happens enough to warrant policies being made about it. Which, unfortunately, makes people who actually do need these resources look that much more like a hyper-privileged neurotypical taking advantage of something they don't need.

So many times I've heard people on this campus pause their Clinical Psych

homework to consider applying for a resource they don't need just to enjoy its benefits, right before scoffing at their potentially-struggling peers for being behind in class. I remember introducing my emotional support animal to some students in an elevator after her walk, only for them to wonder aloud whether they could sneak a cat into their dorm without anyone noticing.

These same students who abuse mental health resources and mock their mentally-ill peers, by the way, will soon take to Instagram to bitch about how they're going to "absolutely fail this class" because they got a C on a quiz. That must be hard.

But beyond the fact that academia is filled with awful people who will do anything to benefit themselves, damn the consequences to others, there are people who mental health resources can benefit immensely. Extra time on a test can level the playing field for students who suffer from panic attacks. Guaranteed singles can make depressive episodes less humiliating. There are a million reasons that these resources are necessary, and again, if you have any doubts as to your mental wellbeing, I encourage you to seek them out.

And yes, I'm also frustrated with the fact that the response to the abuse of resources by those who don't need them is usually further restrictions and hoops to jump through. Yes, I think it's dumb that our society is more concerned with stopping people from doing things they shouldn't than with getting people things they absolutely need. Yes, it sucks massively that getting accommodations means getting diagnosed, having multiple conversations with medical professionals, and providing however much documentation to the school — all of which takes time and money that so many people don't have. I don't have answers for those things. I don't know how to fix this system.

I also don't know how to stop people from abusing resources that aren't for them, except for hoping that explaining why it's wrong from a million different angles will somehow get through to them. What I know is how it feels to watch people casually joke about lying to get resources you expended all your energy to earn.

Miller-Williams is a member of the class of 2023.

EDITORIAL BOARD

UR's Minimum Wage Increase is Righting a Wrong

On Nov. 7, the University announced that it will be raising its minimum wage from \$12.50 to \$15 an hour in 2022, a change that will not affect students for the moment but will affect the thousand or so employees working at this income level.

As student employees, of course we want more money. There's no question about that. But what should be questioned about this increase is the fact that the minimum wage wasn't \$15 an hour already. It's insane that full-time adult employees, who are supporting not only themselves but also their families, were expected to live on \$12.50 an hour at an institution that prides itself on being a driving force behind employment in Rochester.

But student employees are in fact students first. Our massive tuition is ostensibly justified by the opportunity for a future increase in earnings as a result of a UR degree. Even if we are taking out loans, receiving financial aid, and/or working to support ourselves through college, we are doing so as a temporary step under the assumption that we will be paid more in the near future.

While many University employees are also pursuing some further education in addition to their staff roles, they are not in a four-year transition period between childhood and adulthood. Some of us have more to contend with than others during our period of growth, but for many

University employees, there is no "after college" for their current stage in life, except perhaps retirement at some point much farther in the future.

As frustrating as it is that we're not included in this wage bump, many student employees will still be getting a small pay increase come Jan. 1, when minimum wage increases to \$13.20 in New York State. And besides, as University spokesperson Sara Miller told the Campus Times last Sunday, the process to raise student minimum wage is also currently underway. While we deserve a fair wage for our work (which will come eventually, as New York state law has mandated a gradual increase in the minimum wage each year until it hits \$15), we don't have to be first in line.

That said, when a student worker and a non-student worker are doing similar (if not the same) jobs, they are absolutely entitled to the same pay. There is no reason a cashier at Rocky's should

make less than a cashier at the Pit. We understand there are a myriad of reasons why the University enacted this increase immediately for only a certain portion of the population, such as the employee shortage in several departments across the University. But that doesn't change the reality that when students are doing the same work, with similar backgrounds and experience, the fact that they are students is not a justification to value their labor less.

This pay raise isn't a win; it's righting a wrong. UR President Mangelsdorf stated in the announcement about the decision to move up the minimum wage increase, "This move to a \$15 minimum wage now is the right thing to do." If the University has the capability to be able to give the people who are the ones keeping this University running, people who are essential, what they deserve, then this isn't a pat on the back for UR: It's something the University should have been doing in the first place.



HENRY LITSKY / PHOTO EDITOR

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Campus Times

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I’m a Big Kid Now

By BAILEY RIKE
STAFF WRITER

Getting old isn’t just about having random aches and pains, paying taxes, and watching the world change around you. For some of us, it’s about moving away from home and becoming our own person. This generally becomes a more pertinent fact when it comes to attending college: We have the room to exist as our own people outside of our family. Here, we’re given the opportunity to explore our interests, passions, life goals, relationships, and most importantly, ourselves. Growing up and becoming more independent can often be daunting; it’s not always easy to answer questions like “Who am I?” or “What do I want to do with my life?”

I have recently come to a realization: While I would normally be going back home for the holidays, I’ll instead be staying up here for most of winter break this year. It’s weird, and I don’t really know how to feel about it. Many others in this same situation may harbor similar feelings to mine, since for many, their family’s support is one of the only constants in a life that is otherwise filled with uncertainty and constant change.

So, what’s the point of going against my norm and not going home? Well, it’s to make sure that I have the space to develop as an individual. During this winter break, I’ll be engaging in some activities that I would otherwise not have the opportunity to.

For instance, this year, I’ll be celebrating Christmas for the first time with my girlfriend. I was raised Jewish and have thus never celebrated Christmas before. Granted, I’m more interested in the cultural aspects of the holiday as opposed to the religious ones, but I’ve always been fascinated by how different people celebrate their

respective holidays. Also, I’ve only celebrated New Year’s Eve with my family and/or family friends, but never exclusively with my own friends. This year, I’ll be spending my New Year’s Eve with my good friends back home instead of my family.

My decision to stay in Rochester for most of the semester will not only be an opportunity for me to develop my individuality, but it will also provide me with the time and space necessary to understand my goals on a deeper level. Since I’m somehow already a junior, I have had to think more about what I wanted to do after I graduated from UR: Throughout the past few years, I have debated whether or not to apply for medical school and if I should take a gap year in between my undergraduate education and medical school. Being more independent during this winter break will allow me to explore my options and establish more connections with doctors so that I may have a better idea about where my intended pursuit of a medical degree will take me, or if that’s even what I want. More importantly, it will give me time to deal with my burnout from this semester.

Changes and growing up are unavoidable. It doesn’t matter if they are “good” or “bad;” they are going to happen regardless. The best thing to do is to try to get something out of them. Have some fun before you start getting random aches and pains and have to pay taxes.

was going to re-purchase Spotify premium for 129 rupees? Fuck it, I can’t pull my wallet out fast enough — but where is my pop-up tab with the exchange rate? I bet that those Bollywood hits you’re baiting me with are total heaters, but your data mining capabilities are truly pigeon-like, if pigeons even know how to data mine. Evidently not.

It’s also a possibility that my browser hijacker thinks it’s 2004 or that I’m an X-er, because that would explain why it keeps giving me Yahoo! News articles about George Clooney “knowing what he wants.” George, I don’t care about you or your half-hand-some face. You mean nothing to me unless you’re reprising your role in “Spy Kids” and apparently also “Fantastic Mr. Fox.” “Fantastic Mr. Fox” is a George Clooney movie like how “Madagascar” is a Sacha Baron Cohen movie. King Julien is the only palatable S.B.C. character. There, I said it.

There was one pop-up that got me a while back while I was preparing a week in advance for my midterm like the hopeful young scientist that I am — bam, all of the sudden I’m booking a one-way ticket to Paris. You know, browser hijacker, you might be hitting on something with this one. I could give myself to science, or maybe I ought to take my dining services refund before my parents see it, chuff a few darts, salt some snails, get back on Duolingo, write a poem, and go live out my Parisian dream. I think I would probably wait until after I got to Paris to write the poem, but the rest stands as written. Browser hijacker, are you actually a French pigeon calling out to me from beyond the sea? Am I really such a fool?

So I’ve become begrudgingly attached to this thing over the course of the year, and like any attachment borne of isolation, it has become somewhat of an unhealthy affair. Sometimes, when things get too one-sided, you have no choice but to put your foot down. So yeah, I’ll be making a trip to the Genius Bar or something. I would consider switching to Safari, but it’s really not that deep.

Rike is a member of the class of 2023.



ALYSSAKOH/OPINIONS EDITOR



Our Labor is Worth More



By RACHEL BREINING
STAFF WRITER

BRIDGET TOKIWA / ILLUSTRATIONS EDITOR

What do you think minimum wage should be? I mean, we’ve all thought about it. In the past 10 years, it’s been pretty constantly debated. Which is, to me, kind of crazy. I guess I get that there could be large macroeconomic implications to sudden minimum wage raises, but the stagnation we’ve experienced as we nationally avoid this increase also seems like overkill.

Big politics aside, UR recently made the decision to raise the minimum wage for non-student employees to \$15. Most student workers are aware that our wages are usually raised annually, but typically our pay is somewhere between \$12.25 to \$14.50 an hour. In response to this difference, an Instagram popped up calling for student employees to strike, in turn sparking debate about whether we all deserve \$15 an hour.

First and foremost, I want to address some of the arguments I’ve heard over the past week or so.

One that I found baffling is that only baristas on campus, or other similarly labor intensive jobs, deserve \$15/hr. The implication here is that desk work is inherently less valuable than physical labor, which is understandable as an argument alone. Not that I agree, but as a student with a labor intensive job, I do empathize with the frustration. The original statement is pretty flawed, though; if you think that the value of labor is tied to its physical intensity, desk workers should be the baseline at \$15/hr, and other labor should just go up from there, no?

In a similar vein, someone made the case to me that non-student workers deserve a raise to \$15/hr more because they aren’t students. The labor we perform is almost no different. There are students and employees working the same jobs in the Pit every day. It’s infantilizing to imply that we also don’t have bills to pay, debt piling up, and the right to fair compensation for our labor. Even then, if you firmly

believe there’s a difference, just start student pay at \$15/hr and pay non-student workers more than that. It’s such a nasty habit of capitalism to pit us against each other in a race to the bottom when we could all benefit from policy change.

Moreover, I’ve seen people arguing about how low the minimum wage is in their home state. And yeah, there are places in the U.S. where you make \$7.25 an hour and you destroy your body doing it. And those places suck; they should raise their minimum wage, too. This, however, is an active issue right now at the University, and we should take advantage of our chance to make change here, where we currently live and are employed. Creating slightly better circumstances in one place doesn’t fundamentally worsen the situation somewhere else, nor does it mean we should avoid change here until those other places get better.

‘On to my personal grievances and thoughts: We deserve \$15. Full stop. We deserve more, frankly.’

On to my personal grievances and thoughts: We deserve \$15. Full stop. We deserve more, frankly. The whole country would benefit from higher wages at the lowest level jobs. I also don’t really care if it inflates the price of things; I think that’s a necessary step. It doesn’t have to be where the money for increased wages comes from, though. Raising minimum wages should be met with cutting back on the largest salaries to redistribute. It’s not just about creating more money; it’s about leveling a currently very unfair playing field in life and equitably distributing a reasonable income across the board. All of that starts with realizing higher minimum wages should, and can, benefit all of us. We need to stop fighting each other and focus on the people making 100 times what we make, not a difference of a few dollars an hour.

Breining is a member of the class of 2023.

Kenosha’s Kyle Rittenhouse is One of Many

By OLIVIA ALGER
MANAGING EDITOR

I grew up in Kenosha, Wisconsin, an industrial town on the shores of Lake Michigan. Once the home of several automotive factories, Kenosha is now characterized by its population of hardworking families and a blossoming artistic community. My grandparents, once both employed by major manufacturing plants, have lived there for over 60 years. My mother grew up attending the local public schools. My brother and I spent the majority of our childhood running through the neighborhoods we knew better than the backs of our hands. My entire family lives there. It is the place I know best. It is the place I love most.

It is also the place where Kyle Rittenhouse shot three innocent people, killing two of them, at a protest over the shooting of Jacob Blake by police in Aug. 2020.

Rittenhouse’s acquittal was announced last Friday, Nov. 19, the day I returned home for Thanksgiving Break. The following afternoon, I sat at my grandfather’s kitchen table and read the verdict in the newspaper while it simultaneously blared on the news channel behind us. Outside, the bitter wind blew trash into the street like tumbleweeds. The sky was cold and gray. Kenosha was eerily quiet.

And it continued to stay quiet over the course of the next week. Protests erupted in several cities throughout the United States, but not Kenosha. The streets were deserted.

This response felt deeply uncharacteristic of a town full of strong-headed and soulful people who have never stayed quiet in the face of injustice before. The protest that took place on Aug. 25, 2020 occurred in response to the shooting of Blake two days prior, when Blake, a Black man, was

shot seven times in the back and subsequently rendered paralyzed by a Kenosha police officer, who was white.

It was a major event of civil unrest that lasted for days and was witnessed around the country. Citizens filled the streets in massive crowds, motivated by another gross display of police brutality. And it was through this crowd that Rittenhouse walked with a rifle and shot three protesters point blank.

So, when Rittenhouse was found not guilty of homicide last week, the silence that ensued was unexpected. The mayor of Kenosha had issued the deployment of 500 Wisconsin National Guard troops to survey the steps of the county courthouse in the aftermath of the news, but by the time the verdict had been announced, the streets were mostly deserted. Where was the passion and the fury that I knew of my hometown so well?

In my opinion, the lack of response to this verdict indicates the absolute exhaustion that permeates the town. The cries of injustice from the people of Kenosha have repeatedly been ignored. No charges were filed against the police officer who shot Jacob Blake; no punishment was faced by Kyle Rittenhouse. According to the justice system, all of these crimes were committed as acts of “self defense.”

In response to Rittenhouse’s acquittal, President Biden said he “stands by” the jury’s decision. “The justice system works,” he said, “and we have to abide by it.” But the murders of innocent people are by no means crimes of self defense, and it’s obvious that the justice system is a deeply flawed mechanism.

Three years ago, a case of actual self defense in Kenosha made national news for its horrific



COURTESY OF LANGDON ALGER

injustice. In 2018, 17-year-old Chrystul Kizer — notably, the same age as Rittenhouse — was charged with first-degree murder after shooting her abuser, a man who sex trafficked and raped her for over a year. She sat in a Kenosha County prison for two years before being released and is still awaiting trial to this day.

The difference in treatment between Kizer and Rittenhouse is just one example of a racist double standard that is evident throughout the United States. Kizer is a criminal; Rittenhouse is a hero. We have seen this again and again. We have seen Black Americans brutally murdered at the hands of white people in power, from George Floyd to Trayvon Martin to Breonna Taylor, and nothing ever changes. Not in Kenosha, not in Minneapolis, not in Florida, not in Kentucky. It happens over and over and over.

The people are tired. We are living in a country that has been built on a foundation of racial violence. What’s happened in Kenosha over the course of the last year is a working part of the destructive machine that is the criminal justice system. It is deeply flawed. It is broken. And it is not getting fixed.

Alger is a member of the class of 2022.



COURTESY OF LANGDON ALGER

CULTURE

Aminé Emerges From Quarantine With ‘TWOPOINTFIVE,’ His Most Exciting Experiment Yet

By KYLE CHANG
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Somewhere during my elementary school experience, I grew curious about what music lay beyond the comfortable confines of Christian car radio. The first time I ventured outside this bubble, what resulted was an unhealthily early obsession with ’00s teenage angst bands and consumption of “Naruto” Anime Music Videos (AMVs) on YouTube. Even as a first grader, I knew enough to understand that if my mom were to catch me listening to Three Days Grace and watching Naruto succumb to the nine-tailed fox demon inside him, it would be the end of me. But perhaps that was what drew me to keep listening. Now, a few years later, my second exploration of the wild would lead me to hip-hop. I have the honor of marking Kendrick Lamar’s decade defining “To Pimp a Butterfly as my first foray into this genre.” This album alone gave me a more than proper introduction to the height of conscious rap, offering intensely personal wisdom wrapped in incredible production.

So, when I came across Aminé’s breakout single, “Caroline,” I was unimpressed by the overtly sexual and pointless lyrics. But I couldn’t stop listening to it. It was unlike anything I had ever heard before and represented what I, a woke middle schooler reveling in philosophy, needed the most: fun. The bouncy chords and ridiculously catchy flows felt authentic to who Aminé was, and this personality continued to shine through on his debut album, “Good For You,” a colorful project with both

‘I was unimpressed by the overtly sexual and pointless lyrics. But I couldn’t stop listening to it.’

wit and introspection. I personally fell for its production, likening “Good For You’s” yellow aesthetic to the orange flavor of Tyler, the Creator’s then-recently released “Flower Boy.” So, I was quite disappointed by the different levels of public recognition that the two albums received: While Tyler was

praised as a one of a kind artist, Aminé was labelled as just another one hit wonder. Though now considered one of hip-hop’s most exciting acts of today, Aminé has since outgrown “Caroline” with a consistent output of creativity and color. Yet whenever I listen to his latest project, “TWOPOINTFIVE,” I can’t help but think of his debut, with both projects embodying his bright and fun personality. This, however, was not what he set out to do with his second album, “Limbo.” As Aminé puts it in an interview with DJ SK Vibemaker, “The real title is to let people know I’m figuring [everything] out just like you [...] So for me, Limbo was kind of a way to face some sort of ego death.” Appropriate, especially for the timeliness of its release during the pandemic. But now, Aminé seems to be enjoying the fast pace of his life after 2020, and it’s reflected in the faster tempos of the songs off “TWOPOINTFIVE.” This project is the sequel to what Aminé calls an “EP/LP/mix-



RACHEL KAMATA / ILLUSTRATIONS EDITOR

tape/album,” titled “ONEPOINTFIVE” and released in 2018. Aminé dedicates this first series to developing his sound in a lower stakes environment, bridging his albums together in a way that his fans could witness in real time. And this second tape is no different, proving to be his most experimental to date — Aminé takes hyperpop and smoothens out its rough edges, taking with him pitched vocals and bubbly synths. What results is a sugary pop rap record that translates Aminé’s eccentricity into music. While songs like “OKWME” and “meant2b” come off as bland and forgettable, the rest of this project is incredibly infectious and catchy, “Yipiyay”

and “Between the Lines” only being a couple highlights that I enjoyed the most. Though sometimes indulging in the habit of relying too heavily on one flow, like in “Neo,” Aminé does a great job switching between various ideas in each song, allowing energy to course throughout the brief 26 minute runtime of this tape. For what it was intended to accomplish, “TWOPOINTFIVE” delivered more than I anticipated. I was not particularly impressed by its predecessor “ONEPOINTFIVE,” and yet, out of it came an amazing record with “Limbo.” Now I can only begin to imagine what music Aminé could be cooking up for his next album. Chang is a member of the Class of 2025.

Tick Tick Boom: Don’t Fear the Passing of Time



RACHEL KAMATA / ILLUSTRATIONS EDITOR

“The fuse has been lit. The clock counts down the seconds as the flame gets closer, and closer, and closer until...all at once...” Andrew Garfield has had a hold on my heart since his time playing The Amazing Spider-Man. And after seeing his latest role as Jonathon Larson, the playwright behind the Broadway musical hit “Rent,” in Netflix’s new “tick, tick...BOOM!” I have officially fallen in love with Broadway musicals. Now, mind you, I have lived in New York for months before, and I’ve never

once thought about going to a Broadway show. But something about this one just clicked with me. The movie is an adaptation of Larson’s autobiographical musical. It’s a story about the eternal struggle with time and the immense pressure that we feel from society as we contemplate the daunting question — what do we want to do with our lives? As college kids, we contemplate this question almost on a daily basis. Did I choose the right major? What am I really good at in life? We often

lose sight of what makes us happy in pursuit of our degrees and are constantly haunted by a fear of failure in our respective fields. Garfield brilliantly and refreshingly enacts the story of a dreamer — a person who did not allow others to dictate his purpose, and a person who did not let failure prevent his visions from coming to life. Larson, played with kinetic desperation by Andrew Garfield, is struggling to finish a dystopian rock musical that’s been eight years in the making. Cleverly, the title of the film refers to the pressure he feels internally and externally from surrounding friends who he accuses of being sellouts to the corporate world, and a girlfriend who eventually leaves him in pursuit of a more stable life. As Larson is on the brink of turning 30, his writer’s block keeps getting the best of him, rendering him unable to finish his first breakout hit and running out of time to make it in show business. However, even as we see him eventually overcome his

block, eight years worth of work still wasn’t enough to earn him a spot amongst Broadway’s biggest playwrights. ***‘I’ve never once thought about going to a Broadway show. But something about this one just clicked with me.’*** Here, we see Larson at the peak of his desperation, contemplating compromising by “selling out to the corporate world” like his friends. This is when, in my opinion, the biggest insight of this whole movie is revealed to the audience. Larson writes again. And again. And as soon as Larson starts writing about what he knows, from his autobiography in “tick, tick...BOOM!” to stories from his experience living in Lower Manhattan’s East Village under the shadow of HIV/AIDS displayed in the 12 year running Broadway musical “Rent,” he experiences true success.

Of course, the irony of life manifests itself in his death on the opening night of his most successful hit. Nevertheless, his legend lives on to this day and forward. My message to those of us who are still trying to figure out their true place in life is to pursue what you know you want to do instead of what society tells you to pursue, and to do so tirelessly and with a blatant disregard to the ticking of time. Because “tick, tick...BOOM!” shows us that the true beauty of pursuing one’s passion in life does not necessarily lie in the product of one’s creation nor the timing of it, but rather in the perseverance of creating despite a lack of constant appreciation and success. To quote Larson’s agent after his first musical’s failure — “You write another one, and then another one, and you keep throwing them at the wall hoping against hope that one sticks.” And eventually, one does. One has to. Eldallal is a member of the Class of 2023.

Spotify Wrapped, 2021, and Me



By OLIVIA ALGER
MANAGING EDITOR

Somewhere during my Every December, in anticipation of the new year, Spotify users around the globe open their music listening apps to see their Spotify Wrapped: the accumulation of songs and artists they listened to the most over the course of the past year. And this week, to everyone’s excitement, was no exception.

On Wednesday, the morning of the release, my phone was flooded with messages from my fellow Spottifiers, asking if I had seen my Spotify Wrapped yet — my friends, my roommates, my cousins, even my father. They wanted to know how many minutes of music I had listened to (59,286), how many times I had listened to my top song (“Hypnotized” by Fleetwood Mac, 51 times), my top genre of music (indie rock). All of this information, and more, is displayed on everyone’s Spotify Wrapped.

‘I also find reflecting on my own musical journey throughout the last 365 days to be one of the most emotional experiences known to man.’

While this is perhaps one of the most excit-

ing events of the year, I also find reflecting on my own musical journey throughout the last 365 days to be one of the most emotional experiences known to man. Every year, I wake up on the initial release and open my Spotify Wrapped in the comfort of my own little bed so I can scroll through my year of music with watery eyes in private. Many things make me cry — indeed, I am a Pisces — but seeing my own emotional state reflected back in a year of music is one of my biggest tear triggers.

My “Top Songs of 2021” playlist reflects a deeply multifaceted transformation through a strange yet exciting year. Nearly the entirety of Adrianne Lenker’s album “songs” is on there, which I listened to repeatedly during my prolonged mental breakdown this summer. Soccer Mommy appears a few times, reminding me of the afternoons I spent scraping my knees while trying to ride my hot pink skateboard last spring. There’s plenty of Erykah Badu, who I played in the bathroom on winter nights while I took scalding hot showers before bed. Snoop Dogg, who played in my ears while I tried my hand at rock climbing in order to overcome my fear of heights.

I have tried new things (Toro y Moi), built an igloo in my backyard (Cat Stevens), turned my camera off so

I could cry during Zoom classes without anyone looking (Cocteau Twins, Beach House), tried to become more confident in myself and my abilities (SZA, Simon & Garfunkel, Mariah Carey). I drove home to Illinois and back to Rochester in my little Honda Fit several times (Joni Mitchell, Big Thief, Grateful Dead). I made new friends (Bob Dylan, Big Thief). I started my senior year of college (Lauryn Hill) and now am halfway through (Megan Thee Stallion).

‘The top 100 songs we listened to demonstrate an intimate portrait of the kind of year we had — whether it be good, bad, or something in between.’

All of these moments, which slipped through my fingers like tiny grains of sand, are accounted for in my Spotify Wrapped playlist. The top 100 songs we listened to demonstrate an intimate portrait of the kind of year we had — whether it be good, bad, or something in between. Listen to yours over winter break with an ear for nostalgia. Until next semester. . . Liv.

Alger is a member of the Class of 2022.

Exploring Local Goods at the Holiday Shopping Fair

By SARAH WOODAMS
STAFF WRITER

This past Friday, Dec. 3, I attended UR’s annual Holiday Shopping Fair for the first time. As someone who loves attending the Lucky Flea Market, I knew I had to head over after my morning class. The fair ran from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and featured 22 local small businesses selling handcrafted goods such as jewelry, woodworking pieces, soap, and adorable crocheted animals.

The first table that caught my eye was adorned with vintage coins from around the world, something I was definitely not expecting to see here. The table was run by two members of the Ontario County Coin Club. They said that the wife of a deceased member donated his collection to the club, and they are now selling them to support their activities, which I can only assume involves buying new (but different?) coins. It was certainly an impressive collection that took up the entire table with coins from as far away as the Solomon Islands.

The other booth I spent some time at was Unstrung Studios, which featured wood burning art, also known as pyrography. Megan, the owner, told me that this has recently become her full time job after leaving her previous role as an occupational therapist. She still puts her anatomy knowledge to good use, though, as many of her designs are centered around different body parts such as the skeleton, brain, heart, and uterus. In addition to her anatomy themed work, she also had a small collection of funny candy heart-esque pins with phrases that she and her husband have said to each other. Sayings include “UR NOT THE WORST,” “U SMELL OK,” and “U OKAY.” She said she didn’t realize until after she started making them that they were

a perfect fit for selling at the University, a culture which, as we all know, is obsessed with including UR in any phrase it can.

I only recognized one vendor from my many trips to the Lucky Flea, which was UR’s student run shop, ShopEmilyEvelyn. It’s run by UR junior Emily Bingham, and she came prepared with a very fun and glitter-adorned table painted in vibrant colors. She was also the only vendor selling clothing items that I saw. I already own a cowboy worm crop top from her store, and it was cool to see how she’s expanded her offerings to include new prod-

‘This was a great opportunity for students to easily access some high-quality handcrafted goods that would make great gifts for relatives and friends.’

ucts, such as decorated mirrors and tumblers.

I only ended up purchasing one item (a pin from Unstrung Threads), but I had fun wandering around Hirst Lounge for about 20 minutes. I’ve already done most of my Christmas shopping, but I think this was a great opportunity for students to easily access some high-quality handcrafted goods that would make great gifts for relatives and friends. One of the challenges of being a student without a car at UR is that it’s difficult to go shopping anywhere besides the two Green Line shuttle stops of Marketplace Mall and Pittsford Plaza. It’s nice that the University made shopping local more accessible to students, especially as UR can be a bit of a bubble. I hope they continue to do so to encourage interaction between non-local students



SARAH WOODAMS/ STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Want to write cool culture articles like these?

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HUMOR

Browser Hijacker...Set Me Free

By FABIAN HALBLANDER
HUMOR EDITOR

There are times when your computer will up and decide to have a poltergeist-style fit. Maybe it's because of that time during quarantine that you thought you were going to start making Pop-Smoke-type beats instead of staring at the ceiling and, in a rush to lay down some 808s, convinced yourself that the link you found for Logic Pro **FREE** didn't even look that fishy. Maybe it's just old. Who knows.

In this fit, your poor, mistreated mechanical friend might briefly hack up some intergalactic computer gibberish, do a funny little computer-man groan, and violently restart just as you were about to hit 2048 during physics. It would reboot to inform you, oh-so helpfully, that "your computer restarted because of a problem." Interesting. Okay. You don't say? I hope it saved my game.

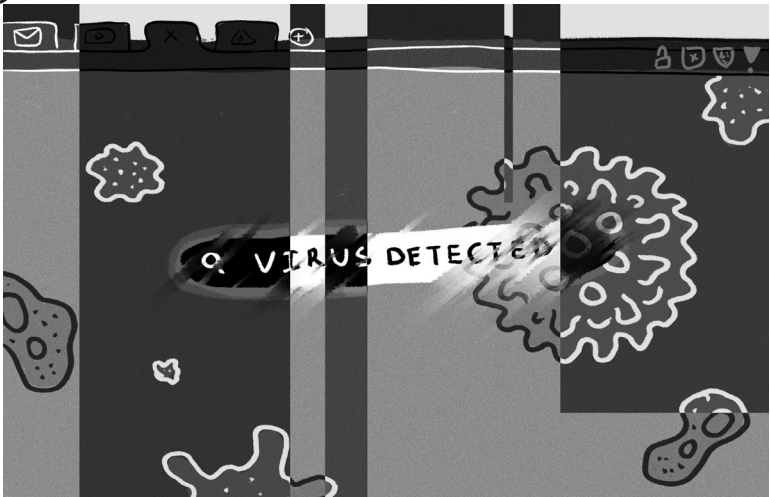
If that sounds like you, what were you thinking? You don't have it in you to make a beat

with the violent intensity of "Dior."

There are many types of virus out there, but I always seem to get the garden variety browser hijacker. . For me, browser hijackers evoke an emotion somewhere between disgust and endearment, like when your dog shits on the carpet and then tries to play it off like nothing happened.

With my browser hijacker, I'll be in the weeds with some lecture, look away for a couple seconds to scribble some notes, and all of the sudden I'm reading, "Nothing improves your day like cheesy garlic bread." After getting the recipe down, I might shake my head, give a pained smile, wave a hand as if to say "oh you," and return to my studies, my day improved.

Sometimes I think maybe I should feel more threatened by whatever hawkish algorithm has its claws in my beloved Google Chrome. But this algorithm is less like a hawk and more like a pigeon — it really does not have the killer instinct that you'd expect of a newfangled browser-hijacker



RACHEL KAMATA/ILLUSTRATIONS EDITOR

in the year of our Meliora 2021.

Like, come on. Browser hijacker, did you really think I was going to re-purchase Spotify premium for 129 rupees? Fuck it, I can't pull my wallet out fast enough — but where is my pop-up tab with the exchange rate? I bet that those Bollywood hits you're baiting me with are total heaters, but your data mining capabilities are truly pigeon-like, if pigeons even know how to data mine. Evidently not.

It's also a possibility that my browser hijacker thinks it's 2004 or that I'm an X-er, because that would explain

why it keeps giving me Yahoo! News articles about George Clooney "knowing what he wants." George, I don't care about you or your half-hand-some face. You mean nothing to me unless you're reprising your role in "Spy Kids" and apparently also "Fantastic Mr. Fox." "Fantastic Mr. Fox" is a George Clooney movie like how "Madagascar" is a Sacha Baron Cohen movie. King Julien is the only palatable S.B.C. character. There, I said it.

There was one pop-up that got me a while back while I was preparing a week in advance for my midterm like the

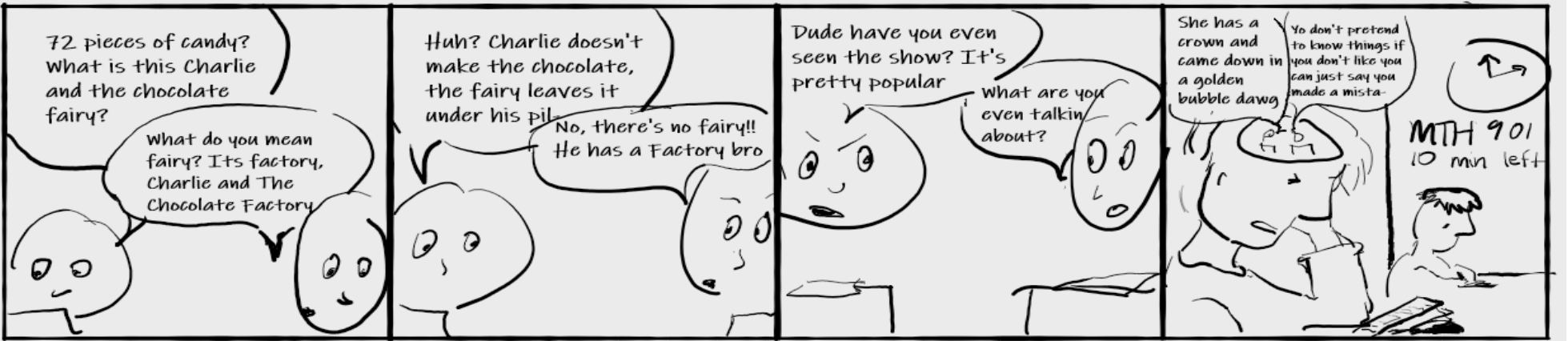
hopeful young scientist that I am — bam, all of the sudden I'm booking a one-way ticket to Paris. You know, browser hijacker, you might be hitting on something with this one. I could give myself to science, or maybe I ought to take my dining services refund before my parents see it, chuff a few darts, salt some snails, get back on Duolingo, write a poem, and go live out my Parisian dream. I think I would probably wait until after I got to Paris to write the poem, but the rest stands as written. Browser hijacker, are you actually a French pigeon calling out to me from beyond the sea? Am I really such a fool?

So I've become begrudgingly attached to this thing over the course of the year, and like any attachment borne of isolation, it has become somewhat of an unhealthy affair. Sometimes, when things get too one-sided, you have no choice but to put your foot down. So yeah, I'll be making a trip to the Genius Bar or something. I would consider switching to Safari, but it's really not that deep.

Halblander is a member of the class of 2023.

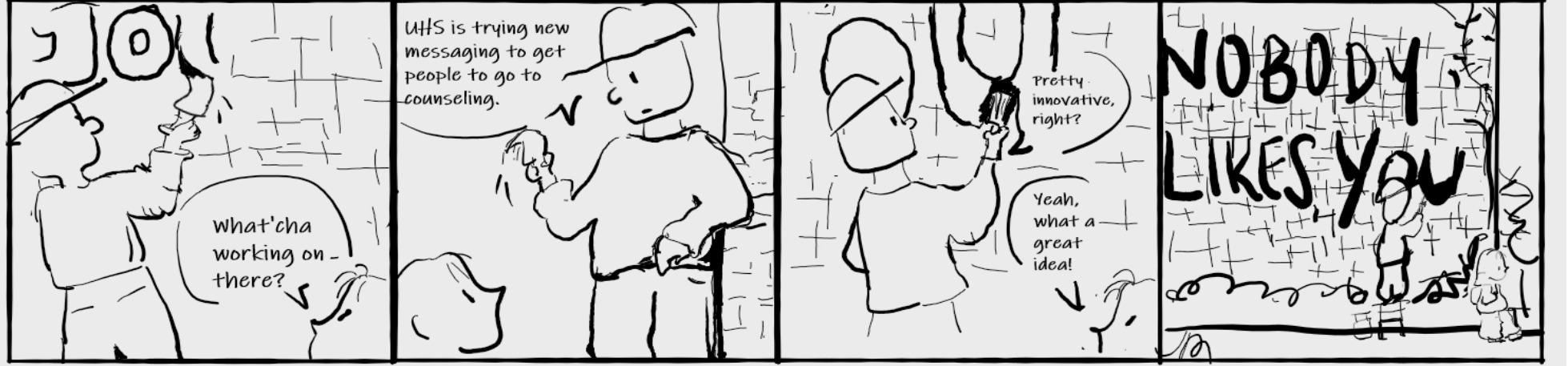
Head Voices

By JOCELYN MATHEW
STAFF WRITER



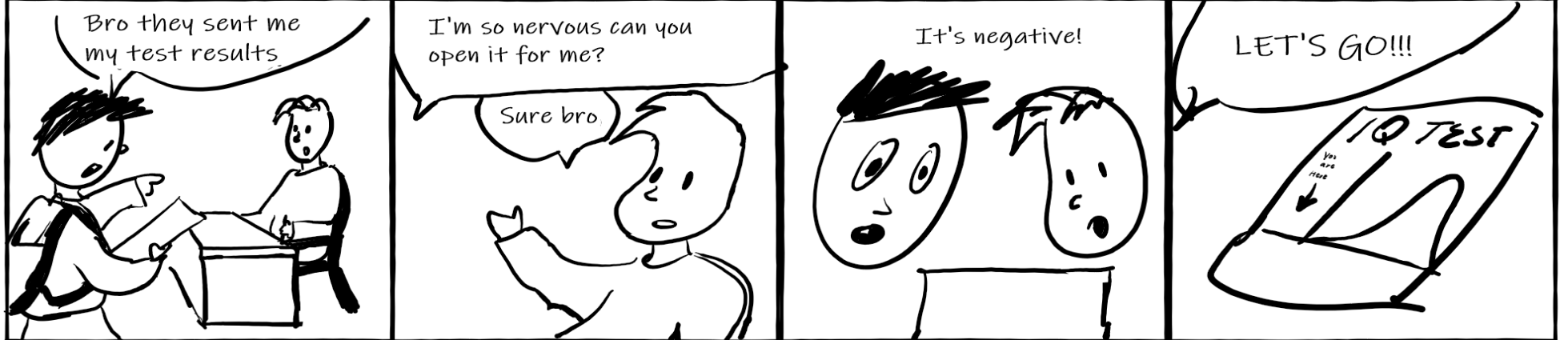
Love From, UHS

By JOCELYN MATHEW
STAFF WRITER



Test Results

By JOCELYN MATHEW
STAFF WRITER



Confessions of a Homicide-Report Hopeful

By BRIANNA LINDSEY
STAFF WRITER

Dear Anonymous,
Hi. My name is Borin Man'chr Achter. I'm 31, I'm a registered home inspector for haunted dollhouses. I live, sadly, alone.

'I'm always the second choice. Or maybe even the last resort. Never the first pick, always the, "Well, I guess you'll work."'

I have a problem, but the thing is, it's an odd problem. I'm worried that people will judge me or think I'm weird. Honestly, you might think I'm weird too. What am I doing...

The best way I can put it is this. I'm always the second choice. Or maybe even the last resort. Never the first pick, always the, "Well, I guess you'll work."

Like in school, for example, I was never (and I'm sorry you have to bear witness to my shame) picked to be line leader. At home, it was always my siblings who were picked to do chores instead of me. And just three weeks ago, I was passed up for a promotion yet again.

'Like in school, for example, I was never (and I'm sorry you have to bear witness to my shame) picked to be line leader.'

They promoted Harold. He's not even good at his job. What's he going to do when he comes across a fire hazard? He's a wooden doll!

But anyway, I digress. Hopefully you understand the severity of my issue. It's been a hard life, but I deal. That was, I guess, until they came into my life. Someone who made me determined to not be a second choice.

They were perfect. I met them at 5 o'clock sitting at a bar. Okay, maybe I didn't meet them per se, but I saw them. Okay, maybe I didn't see them, but I saw a picture of them. They were perfect, beautiful, everything that was right with the world. I fell in love.

I had to meet them. I had to. I just had to. No more being overlooked, I told myself. This was finally the one. I had to be good enough for them.

"Breaking 5 O'Clock News: Body, Second Victim in Suspected Serial Killer Case, Found Under Overpass Outside Abandoned Local Toy Store"

I bought self-help books. I started working out. I went all out, trying to be the best version of myself. A version they would want. I went back there every day to see if they were there again. Nothing for a few days, a week, and then, it happened.

"Breaking 5 O'Clock News: Body, Second Victim in Suspected Serial Killer Case, Found Under Overpass Outside Abandoned Local Toy Store"

I was heartbroken. Another one. The second victim. That was just outside where I worked! I was

right there! Just like that, I was back to square one. Second choice for murder. I wasn't good enough for them.

'I was back to square one. Second choice for murder. I wasn't good enough for them.'

The only person I'd ever truly wanted to impress and here I was, falling short yet again. I did everything I possibly could to be their type. I dyed my hair blonde, started walking home alone at night, even left my doors unlocked.

But then a week later I saw it again, "Fourth Body Discovered." And so it went, week after week. We're up to 69 now. I've never felt like more of a failure.

Am I hopeless? Is it the murder victim #70 shirt I wear? I keep it updated every week, to make sure I'm on top of everything. Besides, they leave the torso intact so it would make everything so much easier.

I swear I'm trying. Please, please, please, I'm begging for help. I'm sick of never being picked. For 31 years I've been waiting to be discovered. So please, give me something. A tip. A trick. A phone number.

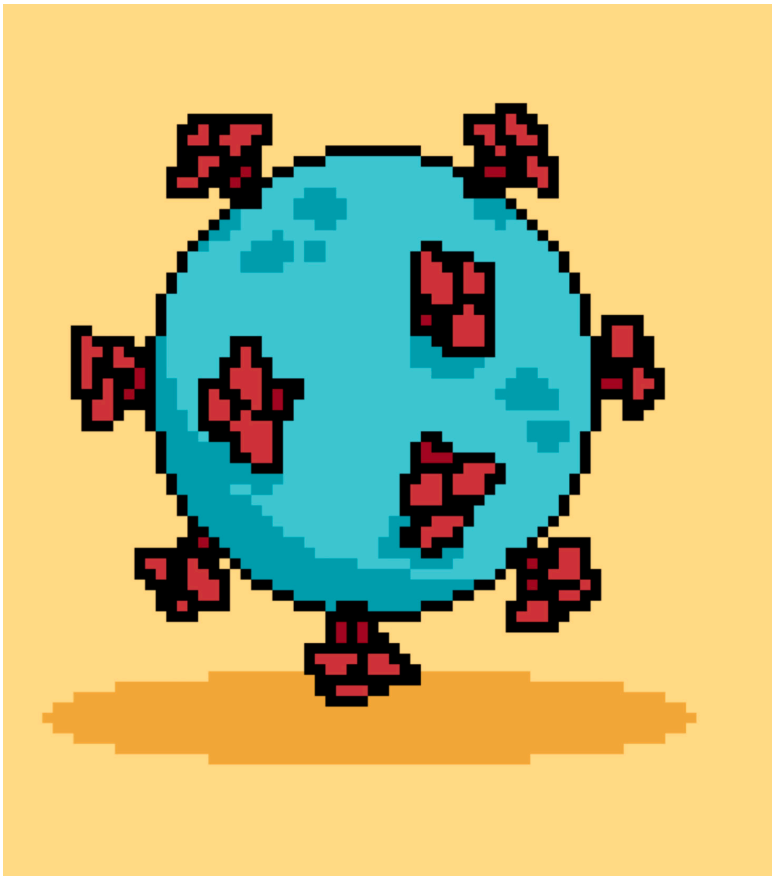
'Am I hopeless? Is it the murder victim #70 shirt I wear?'

Well, that's my issue. How do I get picked (off)?

Sincerely,
Murder Victim #70 (hopefully, fingers crossed!)

Lindsey is a member of the class of 2024.

COVID-19 virus patch notes: 1.4.2 (Omicron update)



BRIDGET TOKIWA / ILLUSTRATIONS EDITOR

By KATHERINE JARVIS
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Fans of the popular illness SARS-Coronavirus Disease 2019 will be excited to hear of the upcoming Omicron update from our South Africa and (secretly) European studio(s)! For gamers patiently awaiting the next features to come to a city near them, here's what we've got in store in the upcoming months.

Fixes

- Decreased the vaccination "grace period" wherein no infections may occur from: 1 year down to 6 months for premium vaccines (Pfizer and Moderna), and down to 2 months for common vaccines (Jansen)
- Fixed bug in Superspreader Events where virus was not spread nearly as effectively as expected. Players will be happy to know that maskless events are now just as dangerous as before!
- Working towards breaking down the "travel ban" glitch which previously blocked cross-platform play. Soon, all your favorite variants will be able to mix, mingle, and interact across all continents.

Features

- The Omicron update is our most infectious yet! Our team has concluded that the new variant is twice as contagious as our last update, Delta, back in mid-2021!
- Vaccine resistance: For players choosing the new Omicron gamemode, vaccine resistance is greatly increased. Inexperienced players will rejoice at their new-found power and ease of transmission.

Other Notes and New Content

- Production Team's note: We are aware that a gameplay bug known as "masking and social distancing" is currently greatly reducing infectivity. We're trying our best to solve the problem but as long as communities continue to wear masks inside and social distance, this will be an ongoing infectivity reducer. We are sorry.
- The Thank You Essential Workers limited-time event has finally ended. The event had a good run, but we here at Covid Studios know that our players need something new. That's why we will soon be rolling out the Automate Essential Workers promotion where players can decide to replace those who got us through the pandemic with more easily-ignored robots!

And as always, thank you. Without our players, we at Covid Studios would be nothing. Through these uncertain and unprecedented times, it is you, the players, who have given us the reason to go on. The Omicron update is expected to roll out in the next few months starting in South Africa, Norway, and greater Europe with possible future rollout to the United States and the rest of the world.

Happy disease-ing,
Covid Studios

Jarvis is a member of the class of 2025.



RITA PEI / ILLUSTRATIONS EDITOR

SPORTS

Men and Womens Ultimate Frisbee Qualify for Nationals, Fundraises Within The Week



By **MEGAN BROWNE**
SOCIAL MEDIA EDITOR

Rarely can the words “Nationals Qualifying” and “UR sports” be said in the same sentence, but both the Men’s Ultimate Frisbee and Women’s Ultimate Frisbee teams have made the impossible happen. As soon as UR finals end, the EZs (women’s) and Piggies (men’s) will be traveling to Norco, California for the national USA Ultimate College Championships to be held on Dec. 17-20.

This will be the first time in Rochester his-

tory that either team has qualified for nationals since their establishment in the mid-to-late ’80s. During a typical season, the Piggies and EZs participated in sanctioned tournaments to get their seeding to advance to sectionals, to then move on to win Metro East regionals. While both teams have made it to regionals, this is the first time they’ve gotten a bid to nationals. Since the Metro East region is one of the smaller ones in the league, there is only one bid offered to the entire division, emphasizing

that both teams had to continue to win in order to secure their bid.

Both teams emphasized the importance of the culture that they have dutifully tried to create and credit much of it to how they did so well in regionals.

“When we beat Colgate, they weren’t having fun,” junior and Captain Ben Kelley, who is in the middle of his fourth year with the team, said. He emphasized that the cheering on the sidelines from their team, which had just took in a large class of rookies who had little to no experience playing, was part of the reason morale could stay high during the game.

‘While both teams have made it to regionals, this is the first time they’ve gotten a bid to nationals.’

Both the men’s and the women’s team emphasized the impor-

tance of rookies on their teams. The Piggies and EZs both have worked hard to make their teams inclusive and welcoming for new players. The EZs talked about their efforts to involve those who might not know about Frisbee by throwing on the quad during orientation and encouraging others to join them in playing. The lingo and nicknames that they use exclusively seem to echo that.

Despite the loss of the spring 2020 championships due to COVID-19, this out of the ordinary winter championship seems to make up for it. Both teams will be heading to California in the next week or so; however, uniform logistics have prevented the Piggies from being eligible for postseason funding, and a rather short notice trip to so close to Los Angeles can be expensive for college kids.

In order to supplement the costs to attend nationals for members, both the EZs and Piggies

started crowdfunding to raise money. Both groups passed their individual goals of \$10,000 in under a week.

In a show of the UR Ultimate Frisbee’s community, alumni who hadn’t played with the seniors currently on the team have contributed to their crowdfunding goal along with friends and family.

‘The Piggies and EZs both have worked hard to make their teams inclusive and welcoming for new players.’

With this unconventional wintertime nationals, the Piggies and EZs will also be competing in their regular spring season, which could mean that this won’t be the only time this school year UR Ultimate Frisbee qualifies for nationals.

Browne is a member of the Class of 2023.

This Month in Photos

“This Month in Photos” is a column dedicated to documenting daily life on campus each month. You can submit your photos to photo@campustimes.org with the subject line “This Month in Photos.”



Fall reflection at Rush Rhees. ETHAN BUSCH/ PUBLISHER



Rochestarians enjoying free ice skating at Roc Holiday Village which runs through Dec. 19. SARAH WOODAMS/ STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER



NJR performs at one of their first shows since COVID-19. HAVEN WORLEY/ NEWS EDITOR



Students walking towards Wilson Quad on a nice fall day. MICAH BETTENHAUSEN/ CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHER