

# Mount Holyoke News

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## Indigenous remains repatriated from College over 30 years later

BY KATIE GOSS '23  
BUSINESS MANAGER & NEWS EDITOR

Content warning: this article discusses violence against Indigenous people.

"It feels good that we got to this place, but it is tempered with [the fact] that it should have never happened in the first place, and [that] it took this long for it [repatriation] to happen," Aaron Miller, associate curator of visual and material culture and Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act coordinator at Mount Holyoke, said.

On Oct. 15, Mount Holyoke College repatriated the remains of an Indigenous body, returning the remains to the Hassanamisco Nipmuc Nation through the Stockbridge-Munsee community.

In 1918, individuals who lived in the Holyoke area donated a set of human remains to the College. This occurred shortly after a 1917 fire, which destroyed the College's natural history museum and most of its biological collection. In the wake of the fire, the College received donations from community members in an effort to re-establish the collection.

"[The donation] ... was a reac-

tion to [the] 1917 ... fire in the Williston building. [The building] housed the natural history museum, [which had] a lot of biological collections," Miller explained. "During that time you see a lot of donations of lots of different types to the College."

The history of the remains before their donation to the College is unknown, including exactly when and where they were excavated.

The remains were thereafter used as a teaching tool in classes, and although the College is not sure when they stopped being used for instructional purposes, according to Miller, they were stored away after federal law NAGPRA was passed in 1990. NAGPRA required that any public institutions, or institutions receiving federal funding, conduct an inventory of their collections that relate to Indigenous items and objects, such as human remains, sacred objects and objects of cultural patrimony.

In light of the mandated inventory checks, it became clear to the College that they had Indigenous remains in their possession, according

to Miller. They began working to find out which community the remains were connected with. Other colleges within the Five College Consortium also possessed artifacts or human remains that belonged to Indigenous communities and began conversations regarding moving towards repatriation, according to Miller. He said that while he didn't know whether Mount Holyoke was part of these conversations, he assumed that the College was likely involved.

"Unfortunately, most of the colleges had collections that had human remains. There was a big initiative, primarily led by [University of Massachusetts] Amherst, to look at [the] Connecticut river valley human remains, and figure out the appropriate way to repatriate them," Miller said.

Efforts to repatriate the remains stopped somewhere in the early 2000s for unknown reasons, according to Miller. In 2015, these efforts picked back up, led initially by College President Sonya Stephens, who was dean of faculty at the time.

Many others joined the project in the following years, and eventually, Miller took over as NAGPRA coordinator to facilitate the final transfer of the remains and the paperwork. Although Miller worked on the repatriation, the Mount Holyoke College Art Museum was not responsible for the remains.

On Oct. 15, the remains were repatriated to the Stockbridge-Munsee community. While the remains belong to the Hassanamisco Nipmuc Nation, NAGPRA regulations require them to be repatriated to a federally-recognized tribe, according to Miller. Because the Hassanamisco Nipmuc Nation are only state recognized, the Stockbridge-Munsee and Hassanamisco Nipmuc communities agreed the Stockbridge-Munsee would take the remains on paper. Once the remains were repatriated, the Stockbridge-Munsee community transferred them to the Hassanamisco Nipmuc.

On Nov. 30, Mount Holyoke College hosted a talk by Larry Spotted Crow Mann, preceded by a reflection given by Stephens, honoring the repatriated Indigenous remains. "Institutions with long histories have much work to do to understand the legacies of their past," Stephens said. "We are deeply sorry to have held

the remains of this ancestor here at the College, and we invite you all in this moment to honor them."

Although the remains have been fully repatriated, the College's Art Museum still possesses objects that they are working toward repatriating. However, as they figure out to whom these objects belong, there is a chance some objects' original communities may not be looking to repatriate, according to Miller. This does not mean these communities may not wish to repatriate in the future.

"The way NAGPRA works is [that] it is never finished. In the case of these ancestral remains, the repatriation part is finished. When it comes to the art museum, there are hundreds of objects and some are believed to be NAGPRA sensitive ... Others, we aren't sure," Miller said.

The objects they believe to be NAGPRA sensitive, whether they are working towards repatriation currently on them or not, are not used in any teaching — nor are they put on display, unless they have specific permission from the community the object came from to do so.

Miller said, "It is a positive moment that this repatriation has happened, and I believe there will be conversations about this history and what took place moving forward."

## Merrill House students to return in spring semester



Photo by Ali Meizels '23  
Students currently living in Merrill House can return to their original room assignments in Mead.

BY ROSE SHEEHAN '22  
MANAGING EDITOR OF LAYOUT

In an Oct. 22 email obtained by Mount Holyoke News, Rachel Alldis, associate dean of students and director of Residential Life, officially announced to all students currently living at Hampshire College that they would be moving to the Mount Holyoke campus for the spring semester. The email confirmed that Mead Hall, the residence hall struck by lightning in August, will open in January for student housing.

Students living in Merrill House who were originally assigned to live in Mead this past fall were given the opportunity to be reassigned to their original Mead room for the spring semester. If a student did not wish to move back into their fall assignment, or was originally in a residence hall besides Mead but had chosen to live in Merrill House, they were required to complete the room change/housing request application on Mount Holyoke's housing selection website by Dec. 1. Students who filled out the room request form will likely receive their assignment in early January, according to Alldis.

Students who were originally going to live in Mead but received on-campus housing were also offered the opportunity to move into their original Mead assignment, according to Alldis. Any student doing so would need to take home or store their items over break.

Any student who is moving from Merrill House to Mead and is staying on campus over December break will have to move more than once. Since Mead will not be ready for housing until January, those students will be temporarily housed in a different residence hall. Boomerang Moving and Storage will move all belongings to a student's temporary room, and the student will be responsible for moving to Mead in January.

Mount Holyoke partnered with Boomerang to move students' belongings from Hampshire to Mount Holyoke. Students will pick up moving boxes, tape and labels at Hampshire, and must pack and label all their belongings before they leave for winter break. Boomerang movers will then move all boxes and labeled oversize belongings, such as fridges or bikes, from the student's fall room to their spring assignment on campus.

"I didn't want people to feel like, 'Oh, my gosh, I [have to] take this all home with me, and then bring it back again, or find my own storage, or do anything like that,'" Alldis said, explaining the choice to partner with Boomerang. "I wanted to make this process as easy as possible."

Multiple students living at Merrill House expressed appreciation that the school was assisting with the moving process.

"Mount Holyoke is home to me," Hannah Dube '22 said. "I definitely feel like this semester, I missed a lot of being with my friends and just that kind of casual, 'Oh, let's grab dinner.' I'm really excited to be back."

Dube will be returning to their originally assigned room in Mead next semester.

At the same time, students were frustrated and confused by communications during the transition process. Olivia Rhodes '22 was in the Merrill Lounge, a room on the third floor of Blanchard Hall designated for Mount Holyoke students living at Hampshire, when the Oct. 22 email came out. According to Rhodes, the energy in the room transitioned quickly from excitement to worried speculation.

"Everybody [was] like, 'What if I want a single again? What if I want to be with this person?' It wasn't clear in the email," she said.

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## Mills College merges with Northeastern

BY HOPE FRANCIS SIMPSON '24  
STAFF WRITER

Mills College was the first historically women's college to be founded west of the Rocky Mountains. Now, it will be the first West Coast HWC to become formally co-ed. Mills agreed to a merger with Northeastern University in spring 2021 that will take effect on July 1, 2022, according to the Mills College website. Discussions of a possible closure or merger at the College have been ongoing since 2020.

Mills College will become the Mills Institute following the merger. According to the college's website, students who are set to graduate before the merger goes through will be granted degrees from Mills College, while those who are slated to graduate after spring 2022 will graduate with degrees from Mills College at Northeastern. The College will no longer grant degrees once these students have graduated. Tenured faculty and those on tenure track will have the same terms of tenure they had before the merger according to Northeastern, while staff members will be considered employees of Northeastern instead of Mills College.

Mills has painted the merger as a positive development, posting on their college website, saying, "Through a historic merger, our beloved East Oakland college is bringing its magic to Northeastern University's global network of campuses."

Sierra West '23 is a fall 2021 transfer student from Mills to Mount Holyoke College. During her time there, the Mills student body was informed that the college would be



Photo courtesy of Wikimedia Commons  
Mills College in Oakland, CA is merging with Boston's Northeastern University on July 1, 2022.

closing just two weeks before their spring break in March 2020. This announcement came from the College's president, Elizabeth Hillman, via email rather than directly. The impact of this announcement on students, West said, was not a positive experience.

"They initially announced that they were going to transfer away from being a degree granting college. I didn't even know what that meant," West said. She mentioned that the college had also been in talks with University of California Berkeley about a possible merger.

West felt this announcement was handled inappropriately, especially since Mills had already accepted students into the incoming class of 2024, even though the College had informed students they would not be granting degrees after 2023. This was after they announced the College would become the Mills Institute, but before the merger with Northeastern.

A letter, addressed to Hillman, from Mills alumni in the classes of 1970 and 1971 expressed understand-

ing toward the merger.

"We were not surprised when Mills' long-term financial crisis reached a breaking point," Kathleen Dalton, Mills College alumna, wrote on behalf of Mills classes 1970 and 1971.

Although not a Mills alum themselves, Phoebe Murtagh '21 is a member of the All4Mills team. This is a group, primarily of alumni, whose goal is to keep Mills from merging with Northeastern and to remain an independent institution.

"Mills could continue to operate, and ... the issue is one of spending, not revenue, ... could be resolved with better management," Murtagh said.

In their letter, the Mills classes of 1970 and 1971 expressed concerns regarding the large LGBTQ+ community at Mills.

"We applaud the fact that Mills has struggled to fight its own past homophobia. We are concerned that [Mills College's] success has moved it to one of the highest percentages

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## College to allow guests in select buildings

BY GILLIAN PETRARCA '23  
STAFF WRITER

A letter sent out to the Mount Holyoke College community on Nov. 19 updated students on new changes regarding guest access to campus buildings. The letter thanked the community for following the College's safety guidelines, such as indoor masking, social distancing and obtaining regular COVID-19 tests. The letter also acknowledged that "COVID-19 does remain an ever-present factor in our daily lives."

The letter stated that the COVID-19 Health and Safety Group has discussed an approach to allow outside guests to use campus buildings and spaces. This access will now include allowing

events not sponsored by the College, which were previously only allowed to be held in the Willits-Hallowell Conference Center, to be held in Abbey Memorial Chapel. Events held in Abbey Memorial Chapel will be limited to 75 percent capacity and all members in attendance must wear masks when not actively eating, drinking or presenting to a group. Attendees must complete a symptom self-check prior to coming to campus and are not allowed to access other facilities beyond Abbey Memorial Chapel. Vaccinated guests who stay overnight at the Willits-Hallowell Conference Center and Hotel will now be allowed to eat breakfast in the Dining Commons; however, they must provide proof of vaccination and wear a mask when not eating or drinking.

Other changes include that emeriti faculty and retired staff may access the Kendall Sports and Dance Complex after Oct. 25 with proof of vaccination and participation in the College's testing program.

On Dec. 1, Kendall will open to spouses, partners and children of MHC students and employees. Guests must register beforehand and pay a fee to use the space, provide proof of vaccination and follow all College health guidelines already in place.

The letter concluded by stating that the COVID-19 Health and Safety Group will assess the impacts the changes above will have on the community as they continue to modify College health guidelines.

# Aimee Salmon FP '23 builds her small business, Africana Dance & Fitness, in Northampton, Amherst and online



Photo courtesy of Aimee Salmon FP '23  
Through running Africana Dance & Fitness, Aimee Salmon FP '23 aims to empower local women.

BY REBECCA GAGNON '23  
FEATURES EDITOR

And one-two-three, and one-two-three and one.

Dancing to the rhythm of the beat isn't only something that people pick up for fun — it's also a way to stay active. These two things — dance and fitness — inspired Aimee Salmon FP '23 to build her own business helping people improve their health by letting their hair down and moving to music.

"My business is Africana Dance & Fitness," Salmon said. "Our mis-

sion is empowering women and supporters of women in the Pioneer Valley to improve their physical [and] mental [health] as well as body positivity through our wellness programs."

Salmon began building her business in 2017, but at that time, she didn't have the clear mission she does today. The idea was planted in her head when she first came to America and decided to take a Zumba class. That class gave Salmon a strong sense of community and belonging which helped her settle into her new home.

"Where I grew up in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, fitness [and] gyms were not spaces for women," Salmon said. "So when I moved here ... I tried a Zumba class and it was just very supportive for my own well-being as a new immigrant in America, so then I decided to start this [business]."

At first, Salmon began by helping teach a dance and fitness class. However, the idea of starting her own business began to grow after she enrolled at Mount Holyoke. She soon declared a major in psychology and a minor in entrepreneurship, organizations and society, or EOS.

"I see this business as part of my education," Salmon said. "[I'm] just implementing what I'm learning in the classroom and bring[ing] it to the real world. It's really rewarding."

Salmon stated that one class in particular, EOS Capstone with Professor Rick Feldman, the entrepreneurship coordinator, helped her begin this business journey.

"That class was a game-changer," Salmon said. "It just inspired me to pursue this, instead of teaching one class. That's when I got inspired to get certified to keep learning more and grow this as a business. The class was just creating the company and [coming] up with a finance structure, things I didn't have when I started ... I didn't have all these credentials I have now. But Mount Holyoke's entrepreneurship minor really taught me, 'what does it mean to be a business owner?' and it helped me gain the confidence that I have."

Salmon teaches several classes with different types of dances and workouts, working most days of the week. She teaches cardio workout, Zumba, Zumba Gold, strong HIIT — a combination of boot camp and martial arts — and afro-cardio. She works as a personal trainer as well.

"Some of the dance classes I teach, I had to get certified, like Zumba [and] Zumba Gold," Salmon explained. "But with afro-cardio workout, I taught that to myself, [it is something] I bring also as an African woman. I want to bring my culture into my business as well, so I taught myself African dance."

Salmon currently teaches at one location in Amherst, where she instructs a Zumba class and functional strength training, and one in Northampton, where she teaches strong HIIT classes. In addition, Salmon teaches afro-cardio and other Zumba classes online for those not yet comfortable with attending in person due to COVID-19.

"I try to give people different options," Salmon said. "People who live close to Northampton can come to my classes in Northampton, people who live in Amherst can go to Amherst and people who are not ready to be in person can join me online."

Africana Dance & Fitness is an officially recognized business in Massachusetts. Salmon currently operates it alone, and thus has a variety of tasks to do throughout the day. "Outside teaching, I have to choreograph [and] I have to do marketing. I feel like I'm wearing different hats running this business," Salmon laughed.

One of Salmon's favorite things about running the business, along with empowering women and building a community, is seeing the impact she has on her clients from

their feedback.

"I'm making a difference in someone's life," Salmon said. "It motivates me to do more ... when they're having their results, when they feel better, [I] realize that ... [I'm] making their bad day better and also making the good day greater, so I feel that sense of purpose."

Salmon's goal for the future is to expand her growing business so she can hire employees to help her and give herself more time throughout her workdays.

"I see this business as part of my education ... [I'm] just implementing what I'm learning in the classroom and bring[ing] it to the real world. It's really rewarding."

— Aimee Salmon FP '23

"I want to delegate," Salmon said. "I want to give some responsibilities to other people ... give other people more power to the business and decision making ... So I can move from teaching group exercise classes to training people and just [work- ing] as a personal trainer, because teaching six classes take[s] a lot of space."

Salmon advised anyone looking to open their own business to "listen to your client[s] because they know your business better than anybody else." She also noted that clients may have a lot of feedback and some of it may not be positive, so it is important not to get discouraged.

Salmon stressed that it is important to be open to learning new things about the business, the clients and oneself. "Knowing your strengths and weaknesses is so important," Salmon said. "Just acknowledge it and never let your weaknesses stop you, but learn from it. Learn from it and keep growing. ... It's okay to not know everything."

# Metaphysical apothecary Blessed Bee brings magic to the Village Commons

BY LENOX JOHNSON '24  
STAFF WRITER

There's something magical brewing in South Hadley. Blessed Bee, a woman-owned metaphysical apothecary, has been bringing witchcraft to the Pioneer Valley, and the Village Commons, since Sept. 2021.

AJ Johnson, founder and sole proprietor of Blessed Bee, was born and raised in the Pioneer Valley. Hailing from Sunderland, Massachusetts, Johnson has committed herself to cultivating a safe and inviting space for practitioners throughout western Massachusetts to congregate.

"[In this] social climate, ... we're all learning that there [are] a lot more male dominated industries out there," Johnson said. "It's important to know when there [are] woman-owned ... businesses [because] there are individuals that want to support [people of] different kinds of backgrounds."

Johnson first found herself pulled toward green witchery as a teenager. As she became more involved in the craft, she was enraptured by its overwhelming beauty and sanctity. Johnson considered herself a full witch at the age of 18.

"I started creating candle magic and doing magic in my everyday life [as a teenager] and it really affected my psyche in a very positive way," Johnson said. "It brought forth a lot of self-love, confidence, caring and humility for not just myself, but for others. ... It's really opened my soul up to a lot more love."

"[Magic has] brought forth ... self-love, confidence, caring and humility ... It's really opened my soul up to a lot more love."

— AJ Johnson

Within a month and a half of Johnson seeing the space for the first time, Blessed Bee opened its doors. Now an integral part of the Village Commons community, Johnson has committed herself to being a resource for witches of all backgrounds.

Blessed Bee is dedicated to the sale and production of sustainable and authentic metaphysical supplies. Respect and care of the earth are central values of the shop. With almost 500 different SKU numbers, products are sourced mostly within the New England, Massachusetts and Connecticut areas, with spe-



Photo by Naomi Jiang '25  
Blessed Bee, a metaphysical apothecary, opened in Sept. 2021 in the Village Commons across from campus. AJ Johnson, a local practitioner of green witchery, owns and operates the small business.

cialty items gathered from farther locations, such as Seattle and California. The shop places emphasis on the dedicated craftsmanship of all products, from fragrances to essences to body scrubs.

"The candles that we carry are pretty much made from seed to jar- ring by one person. I like to support makers that are really putting [in] 100 percent of their efforts throughout the entire process," Johnson said. "[It is] really important for me to bring [them] in because I value that effort a lot."

Johnson aims to cultivate an open, inviting space. Blessed Bee hosts a variety of classes and events to help bring together the wider community. In addition to teaching candle magic and shadow work, Johnson holds consultations for those who consider themselves "baby witches" and may not know where to begin. "I sit down and [ask], 'What are your goals?' and 'What are the things that you want to learn about?' [in order] to create a custom plan for them to

move forward in their community," Johnson stated.

The shop is partnered with tarot reader, teacher, earth mystic and healer Winifred Costello, who currently teaches Intro to Tarot at Blessed Bee. Patrons are able to touch upon various kinds of secular areas of magic based on the goals of their journey. Johnson explores different backgrounds of magic including voodoo, Celtic and North witchcraft, as well as the various cultural practices surrounding honoring different deities.

A fundamental aspect of Blessed Bee's mission is its quarterly donation to honey bee conservation. The contribution is given to varying organizations within the western Massachusetts area. This quarter's donation will go to Warm Colors Apiary, a local honey farm in Deerfield, Massachusetts. Johnson is committed to giving back to the earth by "saving the bees, one practitioner at a time," the shop's website says.

Part of Johnson's inspiration to contribute to honey bee conservation is the work of her family's flower farm, Montgomery Rose Company, which was once located on Route 9 in Hadley.

Blessed Bee is also working to

counteract the stigma and negative connotations associated with witches in broader society. To Johnson, media portrayals of witches as ugly "goblin-type creatures with long noses and warts" and judgments of witchcraft as evil and practiced by sinners is not representative of authentic witches.

"People that are practicing witchcraft are really trying to hone in, honor, protect and support [the earth]. Green witches, like myself, do a lot of avid lake cleanups, town cleanups and cleaning of different rivers," Johnson said. "It's participation in helping the earth [become] better sustained [and] more healthy. I really want people to understand that versus what you see in the media. It's really just helping the earth."

Johnson is particularly moved by the constantly growing witching community at Mount Holyoke College. Johnson describes the interactions she's had with the Mount Holyoke community as positive, warm and welcoming. "It's a beautiful space [and] a really great program for the students that are involved," Johnson said.

Johnson emphasized the importance of proper education of metaphysics and history within the com-

munity. "A lot of [people] don't even actually know the history of witchcraft in western Massachusetts because [they assume] it comes from Salem. [Really], it also comes from here," Johnson said. "For example, the half-hanged woman of Hadley was tried three different times for witchcraft and survived. It's a lot about education, as well as building that small family."

One student expressed that the integration of Blessed Bee into the Village Commons has been a welcome addition to the Mount Holyoke community. Olivia Wissel '24 is thrilled to have an apothecary so close to campus.

"It's so cool to have a metaphysical store in South Hadley. ... I really like that they have events students can drop by and participate in," Wissel said. "I'm going to have to make it a more frequent stop on my way to Thirsty Mind."

Johnson invites all individuals drawn to the witching community to cross the enchanting threshold of Blessed Bee.

"People are ... looking for a space to learn and build a little family," Johnson said. Blessed Bee might be that space.

# International students reflect on November break

BY CYNTHIA AKANAGA '25  
STAFF WRITER

The three-day November break left the campus sparsely populated, but many international students remained on campus.

Ramisa Tahsin Rahman '25, an international student from Bangladesh, was unable to go back home because the flight would take about 24 hours. According to Rahman, "it's just not worth it."

For Sulagna Saha '25, also from Bangladesh, the flight back home was too expensive. Like Rahman, she didn't think the break offered adequate time to travel and also spend at home.

Rahman decided to spend her break on a "two-day trip with friends to Boston." She also took a trip to the mall to take advantage of Black Friday sales and shop for her family. Rahman set aside the last two days for schoolwork.

"A lot of my friends stayed on campus, so I spent time with them," Rahman said. "We all were there [for] each other, which was a good

thing. I'd say it was fun. I wasn't lonely, but I got a little homesick because everyone was going back home to see their families and I wasn't."

Saha chose to spend her break on campus. "Most of the time I spent watching series that I loved. The campus was almost empty, [and] most of my friends were not here because they went home. [I tried] to enjoy my time alone and just walked around campus," Saha said. When she felt lonely, Saha used Zoom to talk with friends back home.

The Office of Residential Life sent out an email with events for those who were staying on campus. On Wednesday, they hosted bowling, on Friday yoga; complimentary movie tickets were also offered to students. Shuttles to CVS and Big Y were also provided on Wednesday and Saturday. Additionally, shuttles were provided between Hampshire and Mount Holyoke campuses.

Although Rahman couldn't attend any of the events, she stated, "all my friends who stayed back for these first two days said they went bowling and it was super fun." Rahman



Photo courtesy of Ramisa Tahsin Rahman '25  
Above, Mariam Fatima '25, Yu Wati Nyi '25, Ramisa Tahsin Rahman '25 and Hayam Daudzai '24 pose in front of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology on a November break trip to Boston.

added how she wished Mount Holyoke "could provide a shuttle service for the Black Friday sale for going to the mall." According to her,

many students had to take an Uber, and "we live in a place where it's [difficult] to get an Uber."

Speaking on the events offered,

Saha expressed a desire for the Office of Residential Life to "ask the students [who are staying during the Thanksgiving break] what kind of events they want because apart from the bowling nothing else really caught [her] interest."

Saha also expressed that for herself and many international students, the "Thanksgiving tradition is not familiar," and urged the school to consider organizing a Thanksgiving dinner for those staying behind.

Both Rahman and Saha took issue with the early breakfast time. Rahman stated that "a lot of people who have 8:30 [a.m.] classes decided to sleep in during this break. But ... breakfast ends at nine, so a lot of them end up missing breakfast and staying hungry until lunchtime."

Saha said she "missed breakfast every day" due to its early 9 a.m. closing, exhibiting Rahman's concern.

Saha also wished Mount Holyoke would keep more "spaces open on campus for us so that we can spend time there because most of the spaces are closed."

## Korean band BTS wins three awards at the 2021 American Music Awards



Photo courtesy of Wikimedia Commons  
BTS, a Korean boy band, was voted by fans to win "Artist of the Year" at the AMAs in November.

BY SOPHIE MACDONALD '25  
STAFF WRITER

Korean boy band BTS took home three awards at the American Music Awards, held at Los Angeles's Microsoft Theater, on Nov. 21, 2021. The group won the coveted title of "Artist of the Year," making them the first Asian artists in history to do so. Their song "Butter," released this past summer, took home the award for "Favorite Pop Song," and together they were crowned "Favorite Pop Duo/Group" for the third consecutive year. In addition, they also performed twice, collaborating with Coldplay for a performance of their joint-release "My Universe" and closing the show with "Butter."

Since first appearing at the AMAs in 2017, BTS has won nine awards in total. However, this year's ceremony was particularly historic, as the group had cemented new records. According to Paul Grein of Billboard, "BTS won artist of the year, becoming the first group to win in that top category since One

Direction won back-to-back awards in 2014-15. The K-pop sensations beat [Taylor] Swift, who has won six times in the category, more than anyone else. This is only Swift's second loss in the category. She previously lost to [One Direction] in 2015." The wins were entirely fan voted, demonstrating BTS' prominence in the American market.

The band's leader Kim Nam-joon, also known as RM, thanked their fans, known as "ARMY," stating, "Four years ago, we had given this first-time-ever TV live performance at this stage AMAs, it was 'DNA.' We were too excited and nervous at the time, and it's been a long and amazing ride since then, but nobody could have ever bet on the odds of us standing here receiving this award. Except y'all, ARMY. Seven boys from Korea, united by a love for music, met the love and support from all the ARMYs all over the world."

Ananda Ravdandash '25, an international student from Mongolia and longtime fan said, "I've been

a fan of BTS since I was in middle school, and they were still big back then, but seeing them succeed on a global scale is fascinating. Although seeing them succeed makes me proud, it also makes me question their current and future music compared to their previous works because now their work is tailored to a vast population, specifically Western media." Ravdandash added, "I do believe that BTS' achievements will open up many opportunities [for Asian artists] because many earlier groups like Big Bang, 2NE1, Wonder Girls, SNSD [and] PSY had previously paved the way for later groups in terms of [the] U.S. and global recognition."

Enbi Choi '25, an international student from Korea, did not expect the group to garner this level of success in America. "It was a big surprise to me. Korea being a small country in Asia, I've never anticipated that a group of singers from Korea who have different backgrounds and speak in another language could be able to influence audiences with their actions, inspire them with their songs and be beloved by them," Choi said. "Since most K-pop songs are not performed in English and have different styles from western music and tradition, it was surprising to see them attract American audiences and win popularity in the western music industry, despite the language barrier and cultural differences."

"I think that BTS not only represents Korea well but also globally spreads Korean culture to audiences," Choi said. "After BTS became popular as a K-pop band, I see that they have worked to expose American audiences to certain cultures of Korea, in an effort to present Korea as a country with its own unique identity and aspects to the world."

## Vietnam readies second vaccine dose for children

BY NGUYỄN ĐĂNG THIÊN AN '23  
STAFF WRITER

Vietnam is launching a nationwide vaccination campaign for children aged 12-17 in Ho Chi Minh City, the epicenter of the fourth wave, according to Việt Nam News, a daily English-language newspaper based in Hanoi. The second doses will be administered between Nov. 22 and Nov. 28. After more than six months of school closure due to the Delta variant, the country aims to reopen schools, the Associated Press reported.

Vietnam successfully curbed three waves in 2019 and 2020, earning global media attention recognizing the public health success. Yet, in late April 2021, due to a new record number of COVID-19 cases, the Vietnamese government enforced restrictions on movement and subsequent lockdowns in many regions.

Educational institutions and schools were closed in May, leaving 23 million students to rely on online learning during the 2021 academic year, according to ABC News. A strict lockdown in the commercial hub Ho Chi Minh city lasted from early July until early October. The lockdown was then enforced in the capital Hanoi on July 23, according to NPR.

Vietnam has purchased 20 million doses of Pfizer vaccines for around 8.1 million children aged 12 to 17 years old, Việt Nam News reported.

As of Nov. 15, 92.8 percent of children aged 12-17 in Ho Chi Minh City had received their first vaccine shot, according to VNExpress International. On Nov. 23, around 2,000 students from a local high school in Hanoi were the first to be fully inoculated.

Celia Tran '24, whose hometown

is Ho Chi Minh City, has a 17-year-old brother who is fully vaccinated. Tran commented on her brother's vaccination experience, saying, "I did not worry at all, since 17 is somewhat considered an 'adult' to me in terms of biological body development," she said. "He did not even catch any fever and that was a blessing."

Because the vaccination plan is still being rolled out, his high school is continuing to conduct online learning. "According to my mom, my brother locked himself in his own room from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. The only time he went out to the common space was just for lunch and dinner. He is grumpy every time the internet connection at home gets shaky so I guess online schooling is annoying," Tran said.

Linh Nguyen '22, a senior from Hanoi, shared that her 15-year-old brother has not yet received his first shot, as his vaccination is scheduled for early December. "Given that Pfizer has recently been approved for children ages 12 and older and their data shows that children typically had mild to moderate side effects, I'm not too worried about him getting the vaccine," Nguyen said.

On Nov. 8, the Hanoi Department of Education and Training allowed students in Ba Vi district, a suburban area in Hanoi, to resume in-person learning, Việt Nam News reported.

Nguyen said, "A few strategies that Vietnamese education institutions can take into consideration include implement[ing] multiple SARS-CoV-2 mitigation such as hand hygiene, develop[ing] a curriculum that can accommodate students who are unable to come to class due to a need to isolate or quarantine and reduc[ing] seating capacity in the cafeteria and repurpos[ing] outdoor space for dining."

## NEWS: Senate presents Student Conference Committee survey

BY DECLAN LANGTON '22  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

On Tuesday, Nov. 30, senate convened in the Great Room to discuss the 2021 Student Conference Committee survey results.

The meeting opened with a land acknowledgment read by Viveca Holman '22, the PR Officer of the SGA Executive Board. The E-Board then updated senate on "Spirit Week" events, namely Small Business Saturday, where students can gather in the Great Room to sell products from their small businesses or their own clothes. This event still has sign-up slots left.

Once introductory business concluded, the group moved to their main discussion on the SCC survey, led by Ananya Singh '22, Sophie Vincent '22 and Juliet Porter '24.

Singh, Vincent and Porter presented data collected from the 2021 survey with additional analysis dating back to 2016. Extra emphasis

was placed on the spring and fall 2020 semesters.

Data relating to demographics revealed that 23.4 percent of the student body responded to the survey. The presenters concluded that the response rate dropped this past year due to the pandemic. Going forward, the goal is to receive above a 50 percent response rate for the data to be more accurate, according to the presenters.

Data from the 2021 survey revealed, among other things, that most students attended Mount Holyoke fully remotely last year, that over half of the student body is white, that over half identify as cisgender women and that most students are middle class.

Each year, the survey draws conclusions about departmental satisfaction — that is, which departments students are most confident receiving support from. This year, faculty ranked the highest, rather than LITS, which is usually the highest, according to the presenters. Residential Life and Public Safety and



Photo by Tzav Harrel '24  
Above, the SGA Executive Board presents updates on "Spirit Week" at the meeting on Nov. 30.

Service ranked the lowest.

When discussing incidents of bias, the survey showed that 12 percent of respondents have experienced incidents of bias in the past year. 20 percent of those students reported the incidents.

The final category discussed was "personal well-being." Overall, personal well-being dropped by five

percent between 2020 and 2021. Academics were cited as the main area of stress, as well as establishing a work-life balance between academics, jobs and time zones.

Those presenting the survey also clarified that student identifiers in the survey, such as sexuality, racial identities and class, are not defined in strict terms.

Following the SCC survey discussion, org and hall senators brought forward upcoming events, including a Hanukkah party hosted by the Jewish Student Union on Friday, Dec. 3 at 6 p.m. in the Eliot House, and the annual Vespers concert, taking place this year in Abbey Memorial Chapel on Sunday, Dec. 5 at 4:30 and 7 p.m.

Senators also raised concerns about the Dining Hall. One asked about the timeline for putting up signs on the Tranquility Room to limit noise in the space. Another senator raised concerns about hair in the ice cream containers. Another raised concerns about the Dickinson House radiators. The senator was encouraged to continue conversations with Facilities Management.

Before the meeting concluded, the E-Board discussed plans for the spring semester, including petitions for feedback, next steps for goals and introducing more town hall events, particularly with different departments.

## Five College art exhibit confronts identity and history

BY TARA MONASTESSE '25  
STAFF WRITER

Much like memory itself, the “Citing Memory: Reimagining Archives Through Art” exhibit is a nonlinear experience that winds through the Williston Memorial Library like an errant train of thought. Crafted by 11 students hailing from the Five College Consortium, the exhibit features collections curated from the artists’ personal lives, as well as collections pieced together from already-existing historical archives. From a vast array of materials, including wood, clay, ink, red hemp cord, ripstop vinyl and acquired miniatures, the artists turned their archive collections into artwork that will remain on display throughout the first two floors of the library until Dec. 3.

“Citing Memory” is the brainchild of guest artist Becci Davis, a lecturer from Brown University who was invited by the Five College Consortium to teach an advanced studio art seminar for one semester. Their personal artistic work uses archival and historical research to challenge the dominant narratives in American history, calling into question the tendency to exclude the damage inflicted on marginalized communities. When given the opportunity by the Consortium to provide their own direction for the seminar, Davis chose the theme of examining archives in order to incorporate research and self expression into their students’ artistic exploration.

“I believe that past, present and future are all connected. They’re not separate from one another,” Davis said. “Using archives and art



Photos by Sophie Dalton '25

Above, two art pieces by members of guest artist Becci Davis’s advanced studio art seminar. Both works will remain on display in the first two floors of MHC’s Williston Memorial Library until Dec. 3.

is a great way to better understand ourselves, to better understand the context that we live in and to make better decisions about how to make a ... more informed future.”

Students in Davis’s seminar had many options for the type of archive from which they would draw to create their projects. Choices included responding to an existing archive or a specific item, as well as compiling an archive from one’s own personal experiences and possessions.

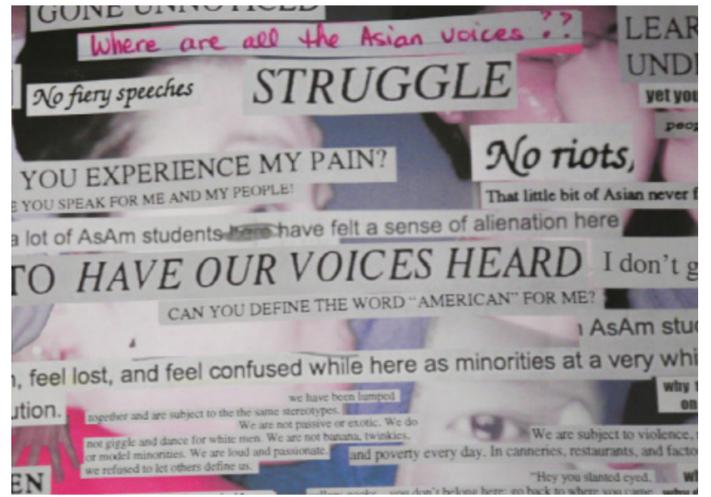
Fred Bird '22 chose to compile their own archive, gathering existing documents that told stories of their family history, gender identity and coming of age experience.

“I’ve always kind of been someone who collects things and who holds on to paper goods,” Bird said. “Creating a narrative, or a complete body of work or item that I have con-

control over and how that gets manipulated and presented, is interesting to me.”

Bird’s final project, “The Fred Bird Archive: Collection I,” includes a variety of items tied to important moments in his life, including a license plate, a postcard and a bandaid. The collection is displayed in two formats: one part of the exhibit is displayed through scans of items pinned to a bulletin board near the library entrance, while the other half is displayed through small zines, folded by Bird, copies of which viewers are welcome to keep.

Throughout the afternoon of Nov. 19, the day of the exhibit’s debut, Sunny Wei '23, another student in the seminar, handed out descriptive booklets in the library atrium to students streaming in and out of the building.



Wei’s exhibit, a series of text and pictures collages entitled “Xeno,” frames the main library entrance on either side; the posters hang on top of and beside the barred gates that close off the stairs from the rest of the room. The text included in her posters is sourced from the Mount Holyoke College Archive and Special Collection, selected from the writings of Asian and Asian American students who attended the College in the 1990s. One of the collages also incorporates statements made by modern Asian and Asian American students at the College, which Wei gathered herself. Staging the artwork in front of the gates was intentional, Wei said, because it ties thematically into her piece’s subject of racial discrimination.

“It’s kind of creating the illusion that they’re imprisoned, they’re not

that free,” Wei explained. “They’re captured there, creating some uncomfortable feelings ... If you turn on the light, you can see there’s some silhouette of the steel door casting through the posters.”

The exhibition and its opening presentation were entirely coordinated by the students who participated in it, including catering, mapping out the exhibits and greeting viewers at their individual art displays.

“It was a very collaborative process,” Davis said, reflecting on student efforts to coordinate the project. “I think they did a fantastic job. I couldn’t be more proud of them.”

Editor’s note: Sunny Wei '23 is a member of Mount Holyoke News; Wei was hired after this interview was conducted.

## Adele’s new album, ‘30,’ has arrived, but it’s not revolutionary



Graphic by Sunny Wei '23

BY ELLA JACOB '24  
STAFF WRITER & COPY EDITOR

After what feels like six achingly long years, Adele’s fourth studio album has finally arrived. Released on Nov. 19, “30” thematically follows in the footsteps of Adele’s preceding albums, wrestling with heartache and the self-acceptance that follows. “30” highlights the type of story that Adele has mastered over her career, focusing on the typical trope of deal-

ing with heartbreak, finding peace and putting yourself back out there. “30,” however, ultimately falls flat, failing to provide anything new from the famed vocalist.

The album’s opener, a short, steady ballad entitled “Strangers by Nature,” sounds like an ominous beginning to a love story set for a tumultuous ride. Adele prophetically declares toward the song’s end, “Alright then, I’m ready.” In an interview with Rolling Stone, Adele

acknowledged that “Strangers by Nature” paints her in a state that she described as a “hot mess,” illustrating an image of her that is not as composed as the media might depict.

She then launches into “Easy On Me,” which was released as a single prior to the rest of the album, and has so far sat at number one on the Billboard Hot 100 list for five weeks. In a woeful piano melody, Adele discusses her emotional pain after her divorce from Simon Konecki and her lost childhood, reiterating that she “Didn’t get the chance / To feel the world around [her]” and asks the listener to “go easy on [her].” This song is eerily similar to “River Lea,” featured on Adele’s “25”; it has the same themes of coming to terms with growing up and being haunted by the past, with lyrics like “I need to lighten up and learn how to be young” and “Sometimes I feel lonely in the arms of your touch / But I know that’s just me ‘cause nothing ever is enough.”

In “My Little Love,” which Adele told Harper’s Bazaar she wrote for her son, Angelo, the singer tells her child that his mother is a multifaceted woman with an identity outside their mother and son relationship. Throughout the song, she reiterates her love for him and emphasizes how much she treasures their bond, expressing how she “is so far gone and [he’s] the only one who can save [her].”

Adele has a similar song on “25,” entitled “Sweetest Devotion,” where she discusses how her son has made her a far better person than she could have imagined, singing “You’re the only / One I never looked for / There is something in your loving / That tears down my walls.”

On “My Little Love,” Adele incorporates voice memos in an effort to invite listeners into her personal life. Drawing inspiration from musicians like Tyler, the Creator and Skepta, Adele explained in an interview with Vogue that she wanted to facilitate a more intimate relationship with her fans. She said, “I thought it might be a nice touch, seeing as everyone’s been at my door for the last ten years, as a fan, to be like, ‘Would you like to come in?’”

The voice memos, arguably one of the more personal qualities of the album, illustrate Adele in a very vulnerable state, crying and discussing her struggles with loneliness and anxiety. In “My Little Love,” Adele begins to cry as she recalls how she has been “out and stuff like that to keep [her] mind off of [her ex-husband],” but she now feels “really lonely” and “a bit frightened that [she] might feel like this a lot.”

“Woman Like Me,” the ninth track on the album, sees Adele coming out of the trenches of heartache and returning to a state of confidence and security in her self-worth. Adele declares that “Complacency is

the worst trait to have, are you crazy? / You ain’t never had, ain’t never had a woman like me.” On Adele’s second studio album, “21,” her song, “Rolling in the Deep” echoes that same confidence seen in “Woman Like Me,” specifically with the lyric “We could’ve had it all (You’re gonna wish you never had met me).”

The last track, “Love Is A Game,” feels like a cinematic pan out, closing out the album with cheery melodies and lyrics that reiterate she will make the same mistakes. Adele leaves the album on a note that implies she will continue to go through heartache but will learn from it, best seen with lyrics like “love is a game for fools to play” and how she’d “do it all again like [she] did then.”

Pitchfork had an overwhelmingly positive review of the album, claiming that Adele “[uses] her voice with newfound multitudes ... bold enough to share it all so vulnerably, with the entire world listening.” However, the album seems like a replication of the singer’s previous albums.

With the same story of heartbreak, acceptance and newfound confidence, this album is what is expected of Adele, as it follows a blueprint that she has made her own. It is a solid album full of powerful vocals and melodies, but it is nothing new. It does not feel like the revolutionary soundtrack that Adele has the capability to release.

## A steely Lady Gaga drives the plot of Ridley Scott’s ‘House of Gucci’

BY SIONA AHUJA '24  
STAFF WRITER

If the American crime film “The Godfather” and the daytime drama “Dynasty” had a high-fashion, campy lovechild, it would be director Ridley Scott’s “House of Gucci.” Filled with a star-studded cast and impeccable costumes, the movie explores the tragic but true past of the Gucci family and their struggle for control of the fashion empire in the 1970s. Based on Sara Gay Forden’s 2001 book of the same name, the film follows the book’s subtitle: “A Sensational Story of Murder, Madness, Glamour and Greed.” While the cast gave a stellar performance, their acting could not save the storyline, which got diluted by the introduction of unnecessary subplots.

The movie revolves around the romance between the awkward Maurizio Gucci (Adam Driver), grandson of the founder of Gucci and inheritor to 50 percent of its fortune, and Patrizia Reggiani (Lady Gaga), an outsider who possesses a Lady Macbethian passion for power. In real life, Patrizia, a woman from humble means, brought Maurizio into a whirlwind love affair; however,

their romance lost its spark when brought to the screen. Gaga’s assertiveness and Driver’s reticence resulted in an awkward dynamic and a lack of chemistry between the two characters. Talks of their marriage lead to a rift between Maurizio and his terminally ill father, Rodolfo (Jeremy Irons), who does not approve of Patrizia’s working-class roots. Upon being rejected by Rodolfo, Patrizia allies with Rodolfo’s more opportunistic, calculating brother, “Uncle” Aldo (Al Pacino). The film shows that his ambitions for the family business were more commercial than Rodolfo’s, which included competing with counterfeit Gucci items in the black market and diluting the company’s exclusivity. After Rodolfo’s death, Patrizia officially enters the family



Graphic by Gabby Gagnon '24

as Maurizio’s wife, and the film dives into a tale of betrayal, backstabbing and murder, as the family members vie for the dynastic wealth.

Much of the movie’s entertain-

ment comes from the introduction of flashy characters who are sidelined despite their powerful acting. An unrecognizable Jared Leto plays Aldo’s son, Paolo Gucci. He is regarded as the “idiot cousin” of the family, who has great dreams of becoming a fashion designer, despite his lack of talent. His relationship with his father, Aldo, is reminiscent of Michael Corleone’s (Al Pacino) neglectful relationship with his brother, Fredo (John Cazale) in “The Godfather.” Leto’s over the top personality and wit as Paolo offer refuge from the ferocity delivered by Gaga and Pacino. However, instead of exploring his character and relationship with the rest of his family, the script delegated Paolo as mere comedic relief. When asked by his father to dress the part as a Gu-

cci, Paolo responds, “But it’s chic,” referring to his gaudy purple three piece suit and gold rings. Covered from head to toe in prosthetic makeup, with a balding forehead and a protruding belly, Leto embraces the eccentricity of his role and gives a stellar performance. Leto, known for his intense method acting antics, said in an interview with i-D Magazine, “I climbed into that creative cave and came out through the bowels and intestines into the oesophagus of the one and only Paolo Gucci.”

In her role as Giuseppina “Pina” Aurriemma, Salma Hayek adds to the already stellar cast playing side characters. Pina has an important role, as she is one of the major catalysts for Patrizia’s actions in the movie. A late night television clairvoyant and confidante to Patrizia, Hayek’s understated but omniscient demeanor pairs well with Gaga’s bold on-screen personality. One of their memorable interactions occurs when Pina offers her sage advice to Patrizia while sitting in mud baths, saying, “When we get back from the Caymans, we can do a nice evil eye on him.” Despite the limited screen

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# The 26th Conference of the Parties results in agreements on climate change, but lacks commitments from nations

BY HELEN GLOEGE '23  
STAFF WRITER

The 26th Conference of the Parties, also referred to as the COP26, was held from Oct. 31 to Nov. 12 after being delayed for a year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The COP was created by the U.N. Framework Convention on Climate Change, a treaty signed in 1992, according to New Scientist. This year's conference took place in Glasgow, Scotland, in partnership with Italy, where pre-COP events were held, according to the COP website. The COP26 is part of multiple larger U.N. treaties, including the COP, the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement, which was created during the COP21, according to the COP26 final briefing. The Washington Post reported that nearly 200 countries were involved in the COP26. It brought nations together to focus on mitigating climate change and preventing warming over 1.5 degrees Celsius. However, from Al-Jazeera to CNBC, many major news publications have expressed that the COP26 failed to develop concrete plans to reach that goal.

According to a recap from CNN, key points of discussion at the COP26 centered around ending deforestation, financing fossil fuels abroad and coal use, reducing methane emissions and determining which countries should pay what amount to address the climate crisis. CNN also reported that the COP26 agreed to "end and reverse deforestation and land degradation by 2030." At least 25 countries have signed an agreement to end financing of all fossil fuel projects abroad, which

"effectively cuts all public funding for coal plants," according to CNN's interview with Christine Shearer of the Global Energy Monitor. This agreement will decrease economic opportunities for future oil and gas projects.

The COP26 also resulted in specific targets to "phase-down of unabated coal power," according to the COP26 debrief. CNN reported that the timeline for this "phase-down" is the "2030s for developed countries and the 2040s for developing countries." According to the article, over ten years ago, "wealthy nations agreed to transfer \$100 billion a year, starting in 2020, to the developing world to address the climate crisis."

This money would help developing nations transition to renewable energy and adapt to the effects of climate change. This year at the COP26, the Adaptation Fund reached over \$350 million, based on the debriefing. In

"We need to continue holding leaders accountable for their actions."

- Vanessa Nakate

an article for The Conversation, a former senior U.N. official wrote that the COVID-19 pandemic has caused economic issues that have prevented the governments of wealthy nations from providing these funds. The article also stated that the U.N. Environmental Program estimated that funds put towards climate change adaptation would need to increase four-fold due to the current magnitude of the impacts of climate change.

The United States and the European Union collaborated on the Global Methane Pledge "to cut emissions by 30 percent from 2020 levels by 2030," according to CNN. Various parties signed onto this collaboration during the COP26.

In addition to the attendance of



Photo courtesy of Flickr

Boris Johnson and Sir David Attenborough, pictured above, launched the COP26 in 2020 before it was postponed due to the coronavirus pandemic.

many countries, many activists attended and protested the COP26. According to CNBC, in the wake of the conference, activists such as Greta Thunberg and Vanessa Nakate have said that the COP26 has not done enough. The article stated that Thunberg spoke at a Fridays for Future event in Glasgow, calling the event "a failure" and "the most exclusionary COP ever" that "has led us nowhere." Nakate joined Thunberg in calling for further action, adding, "We need to continue holding leaders accountable for their actions."

Others have echoed similar sentiments to Thunberg and Nakate, expressing dissatisfaction with the

COP26. CJ Polychroniou wrote in an opinion piece for Al-Jazeera that the results of the COP26 showed "that people should not expect international climate summits or governments to solve the climate crisis." The article pointed to how the words spoken at the COP26 do not live up to actions taken.

Polychroniou specifically called out Biden for speaking at the COP26 about how the United States will lead the fight against climate change, and then, a few weeks later, auctioning new oil and gas leases in the Gulf of Mexico.

However, Polychroniou said there is still room for hope, pointing to the work of cities in Europe, Latin

America and the Caribbean who are developing their own climate plans in addition to individual projects going on across the globe. He sees a benefit in climate activism as "behind the support for green transition programs" and sees activism and smaller-scale actions at the city and town level as the answer to the climate crisis, rather than efforts like the COP26.

The next COP will take place in November 2022 in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, according to The Conversation. Future COPs will likely center around adaptation to climate change and mitigation, in contrast to prior years that centered only on mitigation.

## Climate Activist Spotlight: Lilly Platt, 13, leads global garbage pickup initiatives



Graphic by Sofia Savid '24

BY HELEN GLOEGE '23  
STAFF WRITER

Lilly Platt is a 13-year-old England-born, Netherlands-based climate activist who centers her work around reducing plastic pollution through her initiative called Lilly's Plastic Pickup. According to Global Citizen, in 2015, after Platt and her family moved to the Netherlands, she went on a walk with her grandfather and, in an attempt to improve her language skills, decided to count pieces of plastic.

"We counted 91 pieces of plastic in only 10 to 15 minutes," Platt told Global Citizen. Her grandfather explained to her that the plastic garbage then makes its way into the ocean to become "plastic soup," according to an interview with Earth.org. This led to Platt starting Lilly's Plastic Pickup, through which Platt goes on regular trash pickups, sorts the trash and "take[s] pictures of them and post[s] them on social me-

dia," according to an interview with Global Citizen.

In addition to her plastic pickup, Platt also participates in her own version of Greta Thunberg's "Fridays for Future" movement. She protests in front of the town hall in Zeist, in the Netherlands, for an hour every Friday with a sign that reads "School Strikes for Climate," according to the HuffPost. Platt understands that picking up plastic isn't the end, and, even though she is not old enough to vote, sees a solution in voting and political action, Global Citizen reported.

Platt's work extends beyond the Netherlands, according to Climate Action Info. She held her own "Lilly's Global Clean-up Day" that involved 27 countries and took place on April 18, 2018. Climate Action Info reported that Platt has also Skyped with classes in Canada, India, the U.K. and the United States about garbage pickups, reducing single-use plastic and plastic pollution.

## New COVID-19 variant, Omicron, leads to travel restrictions across the globe

BY CATELYN FITZGERALD '23  
SCIENCE & ENVIRONMENT EDITOR

In a press statement released on Nov. 26, the CDC announced that the World Health Organization has officially recognized a new coronavirus variant called Omicron. According to the press release, the variant was first identified in South Africa and has since spread to regions across the globe.

CNN reported that, as of Nov. 28, the variant cases have been identified in the U.K., Israel, Australia and Hong Kong, among other regions. Discovery of the variant resulted in an explosion of travel restrictions around the world, according to CNN, with some countries, including the United States, putting a halt to incoming travel from several countries in southern Africa.

Aside from its speed in spreading across the world, another potentially dangerous quality of the Omicron variant is the high number of mutations it has compared to other variants, CNN reported. According to Nature, a majority of Omicron's mutations involve the virus' spike protein, which identifies cells to attack in an infected person's body. Similar mutations also occur in the

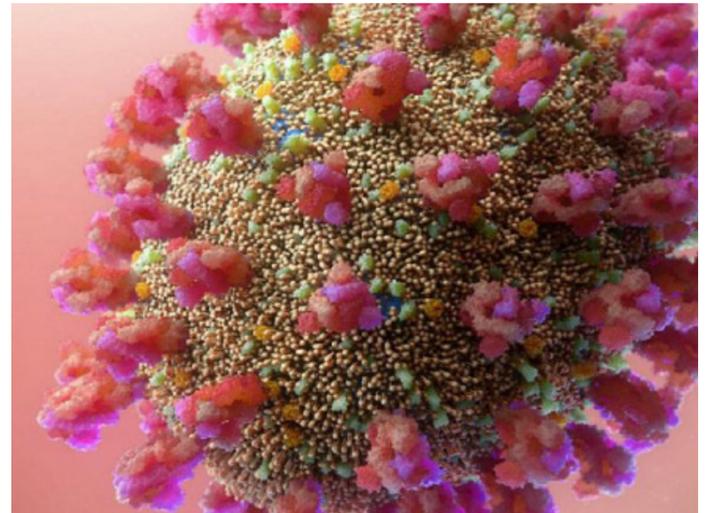


Photo courtesy of Central Coast News

Omicron, a new variant of the coronavirus first identified in South Africa, is spreading worldwide.

Delta and Alpha variants and are the source of "heightened infectivity and the ability to evade infection-blocking antibodies," according to the Nature article. While this has led to increased international concern, Nature reported that the severity of the variant and its transmissibility, including among vaccinated people, is still unknown. The article also

stated that several of the infections in South Africa were breakthrough cases, with infected people having already received their vaccines. However, more research will be needed to determine whether the current vaccines are sufficient for protecting human health or if further improvement in immunizations will be necessary.

## NEWS: Mead opens for spring 2021, cont'd

► CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

In the email, students originally assigned to Mead were told, "You will receive a separate email with your Mead assignment and that will be your spring placement."

Rhodes and her roommate, Georgia Colson '22, said the phrase "Mead assignment" made it seem as if they would be randomly placed into a room. The phrasing added to the stress for multiple Merrill House students, according to Rhodes.

Dube agreed that the plan was unclear, and while they understood that the department was low on staff, they were also frustrated by the limited communication af-

ter the Oct. 22 email.

"They go radio silent for a really long time ... I have emailed [Residential Life] a lot," Dube said. "I think they're really tired of me." Colson received her room number on Nov. 4, nearly two weeks after the initial email.

"As we start to prepare for spring housing, I wanted to reach out to you as a student who was assigned to Mead Hall for the fall semester but is currently living at Merrill House," the email, provided to Mount Holyoke News, read. It then confirmed Colson's reassignment to her original Mead room for fall 2021.

Colson said the email was an immense relief. Her only wish was that she had known sooner.

"They don't really tell us any-

thing," Rhodes said, echoing this sentiment.

"I really do believe the school didn't do enough for the students that are at Hampshire," Dube said. "I know they really tried. Maybe they couldn't have [done more] but ... it just really sucked."

Alldis acknowledged that if they had a chance to do the semester over again, ResLife would have tried to do more for the Merrill students.

"We're short a couple of positions that could have devoted more time to doing more community-building up there, and other opportunities for them," Alldis said. Alldis said that she will be "really, really happy to have [students from Merrill House] back."

# Embrace train travel: public transportation should receive greater support within the US



Photos by Woodlief McCabe '23

The photos above showcase sights from a train ride from North Carolina to Massachusetts. Railway transportation is efficient in CO2 emissions when compared to other forms of long-distance travel.



**BY WOODLIEF MCCABE '23**  
STAFF WRITER

As my Amtrak train rumbled through the striking East Coast fall landscape, I wondered why I'd never traveled by rail before and questioned why train travel isn't more ubiquitous across the country.

The U.S. is so vast, and air travel only lets us touch down in travel hubs. From my window, I got to see swamps and woods. I glimpsed major cities between long stretches of barely populated land. In North Carolina, I saw a town with more empty storefronts than occupied ones. Construction sites and playgrounds flew by my windows. In Virginia, we steadily rolled over the Potomac, where boats were docked and gentle waves lapped underneath. Thin trees in Pennsylvania stood leafless and motionless in contrast to my own breakneck pace. Inside the passenger car, things were still and comfortable. I saw more of the country through dirt-speckled windows than I have ever seen in my nearly two decades of air travel from coast to coast.

The ride between Holyoke, MA and Raleigh, NC clocked in at about fourteen hours. I originally didn't plan to take the train to visit my extended family for Thanksgiving. Looking at flights, though, I realized that the holiday weekend made travel almost prohibitively expensive for me, with long layovers and indirect routes padding the travel time to

around 24 hours. Fourteen hours on a train seemed like nothing in comparison, but I was still daunted by the long day ahead.

As soon as I got settled on the train, it became obvious to me that this was the superior mode of long-distance travel. I had forgotten what it was like to have leg room. The seats were wide and featured leg rests. I could walk freely up and down the aisles and visit the cafe car whenever I got hungry. The necessary comforts of long-distance rail travel feel like a luxury when you're used to the confinement of airplanes. I was able to use the Amtrak public WiFi network to write papers and do research for the majority of my trip. Because the train moves so fast, the dead spots for cell reception didn't last long. It was a revelation to actually be productive on a trip. Most airlines force you to pay for access to their WiFi networks. Travelers end up trying to read in low light or watching a movie on one of the plane's tiny seat-back screens.

A robust and accessible public transportation infrastructure is absolutely necessary in the United States. Economically, environmentally and for the sake of public health, everyone should have access to efficient and comfortable travel that can reach anywhere in the country. Most major cities have public transit networks, allowing residents and visitors mobility that does not depend on individual vehicles. This is not the case everywhere, and

even well-populated areas are underserved by their bus and subway system. Even in the Pioneer Valley, there are limited buses between Mount Holyoke College and Smith College, despite the Five College Consortium allowing students from these schools to take courses at other campuses.

Better public transportation has the potential to benefit our lives in more ways than meet the eye. Allowing all people access to travel is culturally beneficial. It gives people the freedom to attend events and visit friends and family even when they live in a different place. Local bus and subway systems are also crucial for people who may not have reliable access to a car. It makes the process of applying to a job or looking for housing that much easier and assists those who may not be able to drive at all because of a disability. Services like Uber and Lyft are expensive and are often unreliable outside of cities and high-traffic areas. Public transit employees also receive benefits from their jobs, and increasing this infrastructure would provide a multitude of new stable jobs in an industry that will always be needed by the community.

Trains and buses are also highly beneficial for the environment. A BBC article titled "Climate change: Should you fly, drive or take the train?" highlights the environmental impacts of several different modes of transport. It finds that a single passenger car is responsible for one and

a half times as much CO2 emissions as one passenger on a bus. The proportional emissions of a passenger on a domestic rail are minuscule in comparison. Not to mention, when more passengers ride on buses or trains, there are fewer individual cars on the road. This is an incredible relief to traffic. One bus can move much faster when the space taken up by a few dozen cars has freed up.

When it comes to long-distance travel, railway transportation is more efficient than plane travel by a large margin. Planes don't just release CO2. According to the BBC, there are also emissions related to being at high altitudes that contribute to their environmental impact. Amtrak uses both diesel and electric trains, which can vary in efficiency, but even the diesel trains are more efficient than planes. Not to mention, one train can carry several planes worth of passengers.

The U.S. is behind many other countries in terms of accessible rail travel. The European Union and Japan are both known for their high-speed train systems that allow travelers access to thousands of miles and numerous cities.

Train transportation is not just an enjoyable and scenic way to travel — it also has immense potential to help people all across the country travel safely and easily.

Just by adding a few hours to our journey, we can all experience the numerous benefits of interstate rail travel.

## A&E: 'House of Gucci' stalls, cont'd

► CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

company workers, she is electrifying like no other character. Her thick but vague Italian accent, coupled with a permed 1980s hairdo and a fierce persona lent authenticity to the film. The daughter of a transportation company owner, Patrizia Reggiani clawed her way to becoming the heiress of the Gucci family and made it her personal mission to destroy anyone who prevented her from climbing the ranks of the empire. In this family battle, the script by Becky Johnson and Robert Bentivegna did not favor anyone, nor did they show Patrizia in a villainistic light. Whether she is seen as a cold-blooded dynasty, or a wife simply concerned about the family business, is up to the audience.

"House of Gucci" has many components of a cult classic: a mafia-like family, glamor, revenge and murder. However, it is far from being one. The lengthy runtime of 157 minutes was clumsily handled, with too many tangents from the central plot that failed to tie up at the end. The screen time devoted to showing tax evasions, sudden arrests and extramarital affairs was unnecessary and could have been better used in developing the key plot of the family feud. The dialogue, spoken with wobbly Italian accents, edged on corny. "Gucci is like a cake. And you'll have a taste, and you'll want more. And then you'll want the whole thing to yourself," was one of Maurizio's better dialogues.

Despite these flaws, the movie was certainly not a bore, as it was saved by the performances of its star-studded cast. Rather, it was an excess in many forms: Gaga's shrewdness and Leto's over the top absurdism set to the tunes of Blondie and George Michael turned the tragic story into more of an Italian soap opera, characterized by perfect outfits, cigarette smoke and espressos.

## In spring 2021, the College created an environment that drove students apart



Photo by Jenny Yu '24

During the spring 2021 semester, Mount Holyoke College brought a limited number of students back to campus, provided that they follow guidelines.

**BY ALLIE BROWN '22**  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

During the spring 2021 semester, the normally vibrant Mount Holyoke College was a ghost town. Walking across campus, you might've seen one or two other students also making the trek to the Dining Commons. We'd exchange our used plastic containers for new ones, get more food and return to our dorm rooms — the only place we were allowed to take off our masks or eat.

With the benefit of hindsight, man rules and guidelines Mount Holyoke enforced were not necessary or efficacious, even though at the time, we put our heads down and quietly accepted them. In times of crisis, this is common, as institutions and governments can defend almost any edict, arguing it is in the pursuit of health and safety and out of an abundance of caution. Of course, many rules that the College insti-

tuted were justified, like requiring bi-weekly testing and wearing masks indoors. However, some rules, like enforcing that students stay within a ten mile radius, reducing the Kendall Sports & Dance Complex operating hours and, limiting common room usage to one or two students at a time and assigning amenities in the dorms, went beyond scientific guidance, placing unnecessary restrictions on students and failing to consider the mental and emotional impact they created. There is a fine line between defending community health and creating rules for the sake of rules and exercising authority, and I argue that Mount Holyoke crossed it.

Authoritarian regimes throughout history have relied on shared ideologies to maintain control of their citizens. In North Korea, according to Vox, the Kim dynasty developed *juche*, or the idea that the country needed to remain completely sepa-

rate from the rest of the world, lest it go up in smoke. The only way to remain unscathed, they claimed, was to put all trust in their godlike rulers. Last semester, it felt like the Mount Holyoke administration took a page out of the Kim dynasty's book in terms of fostering a culture of complete adherence and scaring students into following rules, even if they didn't make sense.

While the school relentlessly ensured that every last rule was for our own good, some Mount Holyoke students took the enforcement of rules into their own hands. An Instagram page, @mhc\_paycampoforthis, was created where students could anonymously send in pictures of others breaking the College's rules. Most pictures were of South Hadley residents taking walks on campus, which was not allowed, but it instilled the idea in students that they, too, might have their face plastered on social media, even if you

were alone, outside and therefore scientifically posing zero threat. The page has since been deactivated, but it fanned the fire of already heightened anxieties.

This kind of social control through intragroup denunciations has been a historically popular method of control for authoritarian governments. In the 17th century, Russia was in an extremely tumultuous place, wrought with famine, war and political upheaval. To create some semblance of order, 16-year-old Tsar Michael Romanov instituted the Sovereign's Word and Deed, a type of voluntary denunciation where citizens were encouraged to report one another's suspicious activity. There was no direct incentive, but it allowed those struggling during this chaotic time to feel like they were contributing to the safety of the country. At Mount Holyoke, the Instagram page was a side effect of the toxic environment that the administration created, and seemed to offer an outlet for students to gain some semblance of control and latch onto a feeling of order.

Now that we are back on campus for a second time, vaccinated and much better informed about COVID-19, the witch hunt among students seems to have subsided. Because the school insisted on overbearing, draconian rules the first time around, they've lost credibility in the eyes of many students, even those who may have bought into last semester's overreach.

If rules are over the top, people are going to break them. We are seeing that now with the school's prolongation of the no guest policy. On Oct. 6, students received an email stating that, based on an analysis of COVID-19 cases on campus, the policy would be extended until further notice. Yet, two weeks before the email was sent, the COVID-19 dashboard reported only one positive

case out of 4,847 students and staff.

Furthermore, when hundreds of students returned to campus after October break, only four cases came back positive. That's not to say we should stop wearing masks or that COVID-19 is gone, but it instead speaks to the ability of Mount Holyoke students to make smart and informed decisions about their health and safety and those of their community.

With the rule that is in place, any guest who can pass for a student can still be snuck into dorms. Instead of allowing guests to come onto campus in a safe way, like requiring proof of vaccination or a negative test, the school has chosen to drastically over-dictate, driving students to break this rule and other, perhaps more reasonable, ones.

The biggest challenge that authoritarian regimes face is the constant need to scare people into staying in line. However, this constant pressure eventually de-legitimizes the authorities, like we've begun to see at Mount Holyoke. Even supposedly good directives are less likely to be followed by a populace when they've been shoved down your throat and declared to be for your own safety.

Reflecting on the time I've spent at Mount Holyoke so far, I'm frustrated by the toxic culture that developed and the community policing that emerged as a result. During a time when we've needed community most, Mount Holyoke created an environment that resulted in suspicion and divisiveness, driving students apart. The administration might not have realized this, as they were removed from the social impact and mental toll that these rules placed on us. At the end of the day, they either worked from home, or got to return to their families, pets and communities. They had their bubble; we had our dorm room.

## New 'POOL' exhibit illuminates the history of segregated swimming in US



Photo courtesy of Wikimedia Commons  
Above, Simone Manuel prepares for the 100 meter freestyle in the 2015 FINA World Aquatic Championships in Kazan, Russia. Manuel is featured in "POOL: A Social History of Segregation."

BY EMILY TARINELLI '25  
STAFF WRITER

For Cheryl Anderson Chaney, swimming at Fairmount Water Works Pool in Philadelphia was a source of joy. As a teenager growing up in the 1960s, she learned to swim from her father, who worked for the water department, according to an article published by WHYY PBS. Chaney, who is Black, grew up during racial segregation, when restrictive laws made it challenging for communities of color to access adequate public services — including swimming pools.

Chaney's early experiences with swimming were defined by working around these limitations. "You had to come back home and shower and wash your hair, and my hair was long," she told WHYY PBS, recalling that cleaning her hair often became a "chore for [her] grandmother." Despite the work that came with regular trips to a public pool, Chaney maintained her love for the water. Now, the same pool Chaney swam in is the location of a new museum exhibition called "POOL: A Social History of Segregation."

"POOL" is scheduled to open for in-person visitations on March 22, 2022 after its grand opening in September was delayed due to damage created by Tropical Storm Ida. According to "POOL's" website, the exhibit unites "history, site-specific artwork, storytelling, scholarship and place-based learning" to "illuminate a history of segregated swimming in America, and its connection to present-day drowning issues affecting Black communities." It was curated by Victoria Prizzia and funded by the Pew Center for Arts and Heritage and the Philadelphia Water Department.

Karen Young, the Executive Director at Fairmount Water Works Interpretive Center, discussed what made the pool exhibition special in an interview with the Philadelphia Inquirer. "It's the power of place," she said. "[This place] has a pool that stands out in history as one of the first pools ... that served everyone, without question. White families, families of color, swimmers that were competitive, swimmers that were just learning how to swim — it served everyone."

The exhibition spans 4,700 square feet and consists of "an im-

mersive blend of interactive media, site-specific artworks, arresting graphics and powerful stories," according to the "POOL" website. Upon entering the space, viewers will be introduced to the digital artwork "Contemporary Voices," a series of video and audio vignettes featuring the voices of artists, aquatic activists, researchers, scholars and prominent Black swimmers as they discuss how swimming impacted their lives. The presentation, which will be projected onto the floor, will allow viewers to take their seats around the installation, imitating the experience of looking into a pool. The work's notable voices include Martiza Correia McClendon, the first Black woman to win an Olympic medal on a relay team (2004), Cullen Jones, the first Black American to set a world record in swimming (2006) and Simone Manuel, the first Black swimmer in Olympic history to win a gold medal in an individual event (2016).

"I'm humbled to be part of the exhibition," Manuel wrote in a Nov. 12 Instagram post. "As someone who is committed to reducing the drowning rate in the Black community, I've always felt it was important that all people be educated on the entire history of swimming and on the unfortunate injustices Black people faced in and around pools."

One of the video profiles in "Contemporary Voices" features Jim Ellis, a Philadelphia swim coach who was the subject of the 2007 biographical film, "Pride." Ellis was the founder of PDR, the city's first Black competitive swim team. The team's initials formally stood for Philadelphia Department of Recreation, but Ellis referred to them as "Pride, Determination and Resilience." His team boasted numerous swimming champions, including Michael Norment, the first Black swimmer to join the U.S. national team.

"It was my way of finding a way to make a difference," Ellis told WHYY PBS. "We were protesting in the '60s and '70s, it was a big movement of finding something to do to help African Americans in this country. My contribution was through swimming."

Featured artists include Homer Jackson, Cathleen Dean, Calo Rosa, Azikiwe Mohammed, Lowell Boston, Modupeola Fadugba, Ed Accura, Liz Corman and Aubrie Costello. Ac-

ording to the "POOL" website, the artists' work "springs from the historical context to expand the depth and breadth of 'POOL,' while providing multiple — and sometimes unexpected — lenses to reconsider swimming all together."

In addition to "Contemporary Voices," several other historical and artistic media span the space of Fairmount Water Works Pool. According to Black Enterprise, "a historical timeline that stretches along the pool room's exhibit wall explains that in the early 20th century, public pools were open to all races and were segregated by gender." However, it continued, "once it became a realization that Black men and white women might share the same water, it made way for racial segregation."

The exhibit is grounded in historic and contextual information, but is dominated mostly by multimedia artwork. One video, "Reflection Pool" by Liz Corman, showcases the joy found in artistic swimming by teenage synchronized swimmers, Rachel and Brianna Holmes. Like "Contemporary Voices," the video is played on a monitor that is arranged horizontally on the ground, giving the viewer the implied experience of peering into the water of a pool. Another work, "Two Lifeguards" by Azikiwe Mohammed, arranges two Black sculptural figures at the ends of one of the pool's swimming lanes. Light pours onto the figures from above and casts luminous ripples on the surface of the water.

Victoria Prizzia, the white lead designer of "POOL" discussed her inspiration for the exhibit in an interview with Philadelphia Inquirer columnist Elizabeth Wellington. "I wanted to think about my relationship with water and this idea that a segment of the population was excluded from something that gave me so much joy," she said.

Wellington, a Black woman, asked Prizzia in their interview, "Could a white woman effectively tell the story of Black pain through such a privileged lens? Should she?" "The project is a platform to amplify voices of those that aren't heard," Prizzia responded. "As a white woman, (I know) they don't have to talk to me. But they did and it was time well spent. I feel like the voices represented in "POOL" are voices we should all hear more of."

Fairmount Water Works' profile of "POOL" listed national statistics examining the intersection of race and swimming. According to a 2014 report by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, "Black children and teenagers are almost six times as likely as white children to drown in a swimming pool." Additionally, a 2010 study conducted by USA Swimming reported that "69 percent of Black children have little to no swimming ability, compared with 42 percent of white children."

"Racial discrimination at swimming pools, coupled with a general shift of funds away from public pools to private clubs and recreational opportunities, have had a significant and lasting impact on Black communities — an impact that continues today," according to Fairmount Water Works' profile of "POOL."

Discussing the exhibition, Manuel concluded, "[POOL] celebrates the waves we have overcome, but more importantly, it educates and shows all of us how to be a part of the solution."

## Student athletes discuss the physical and mental benefits of playing sports



Photo by Jenny Yu '24  
Several student athletes at Mount Holyoke reported that playing sports improves their well-being.

BY VICTORIA FAULKNER '25  
STAFF WRITER

"I find that playing a sport ... is good for releasing pent-up stress, anger or any unhappy emotions that have been bottled up and brewing under the surface during the week," Nina Sydoryk '25, a club ice hockey player, said.

Sydoryk's observations mirror the conclusions of a 2019 public health study in Sweden, performed by Christer Malm, Johan Jakobsson and Andreas Isaksson, which found that "Participation in sports, with or without competition, promotes healthy behavior and a better quality of life." Sydoryk further observed that the health benefits of playing club ice hockey applied to both her physical and mental health. "Despite being tired after hockey practice, I find that I do have a sense of renewed energy, almost like I got a full body massage — despite my muscles aching," she said. "My mind and body are cleared and a little less filled with stress."

Sydoryk is not alone in connecting her involvement with athletics at Mount Holyoke to her overall well-being. Many student-athletes from across the College's 13 varsity sports and six competitive club sports expressed that they've experienced the benefits of athletics as well.

Mount Holyoke's club sports, which include dressage, western riding, fencing, ice hockey, rugby and ultimate frisbee, compete regularly against New England schools such as Smith College, Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Bowdoin College. Mount Holyoke's athletics overview website further details the non-competitive student exercise-based organizations at MHC, including hiking events through student organizations like the Outing Club and dance teams like Taal, which specializes in Bollywood dancing.

Varsity athletes and club sports players alike stated that athletics also provided opportunities to make friends in a way that aided their mental health. Providing a perspective from a varsity team, rower Ellie Mohn '25 said, "I've noticed I've become more outgoing and my mental health has improved slightly." Mohn elaborated that her "favorite part is spending practices with some of the coolest people ever. They make the sport so fun and inviting. I couldn't ask for better teammates."

Camden Breckenridge '24 noted that they particularly enjoy club ice

hockey because they "really enjoy the friendship element of sports." Breckenridge continued, "It's really great to be able to make friends and spend time together doing something we all enjoy." They also expressed appreciation for the team's culture. "They make you feel like you are meant to be there and they value every effort you make," Breckenridge said.

Jaime Eldridge '25, a member of Mount Holyoke ultimate frisbee, also commented, "Some benefits that I've experienced from sports [are] both how much it's helped me mentally as well as socially. Mentally, I was able to find a community that made me feel like I could be myself, and a place where I felt supported and gave me structure."

The improvement of physical health through physical activity is also a well-documented and highly-researched aspect of sports played at any level. In a 2016 study on resistance training in relation to musculoskeletal disorders, Scientists Emmanuel Gomes Ciolac and José Messias Rodrigues da Silva reported that physical activity notably enhances bone density. Another study, conducted in 2014 by Eduardo Lusa Cadore, Ronei Silveira Pinto, Martim Bottaro and Mikel Izquierdo, indicated that physical activity decreases risk of osteoporosis. Prerequisite symptoms to cancer were also provably counteracted by exercise, as shown by controlled trials of cancer patients performed in 2014 by K. Steindorf, M.E. Schmidt and O. Klassen. Additionally, the 2018 U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Physical Activities Guideline Report noted a 20-35 percent decrease in risk of cardiovascular disease among those who are routinely physically active.

Though several student-athletes spoke of the beneficial effects of sports on their well-being, involvement in sports also presents certain risks. In a 2016 review, Doctors Elizabeth Joy, Andrea Kussman and Aurelia Nattiv reported that athletes of any type are frequently prone to adopting restrictive eating habits, among other dangerous behaviors. Athletes are often also at a higher risk for injuries and other health complications such as joint inflammation. However, as some Mount Holyoke student-athletes have reported, for many, improvement to mental and physical health as a result of participating in sports might outweigh those risks.

## NEWS: Former Mills College student responds to merger, cont'd

► CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

of LGBT attendees among its peers," wrote Dalton, who explained concerns about this community, emphasizing that 58 percent of Mills students identify as LGBTQ+. Some 1970 and 1971 alumni believe this could be harmful for marketing the school, as some applicants may find it "off-putting," as put in the letter.

President Hillman, herself a member of the LGBTQ+ community, did not rebut this remark, according to Murtagh.

"Mills is less selective and has lower tuition than MHC, which means it's more accessible than the Seven Sib[ling]s to students who won't be able to offer perfect

grades and strong extracurriculars, but could thrive in a space where their gender identity is affirmed," Murtagh wrote.

While the Mills classes of 1970 and 1971 are focused on catering to other demographics, Murtagh pointed out how Mills' strong LGBTQ+ community offers a place for those students who are looking for a HWC experience but might not have the academics to get into a Seven Sisters college.

West also described frustration toward the college's lack of transparency, as she said the administration did not give students a clear definition of what the Mills Institute would look like going forward.

These factors, she said, contributed to her decision to transfer to Mount Holyoke.

"[The closure] definitely felt very rushed. It didn't feel like there was a lot of planning to it," West said.

She mentioned that staff and professors also did not seem to have a clear grasp of what was going on. West didn't feel she could trust the College, which made her unsure of how the rest of her time there would go if she stayed.

The timing of the announcement only increased anxiety surrounding the already stressful process of transferring colleges for many Mills students. At Mount Holyoke, for example, this year's fall transfer application deadline is in March.

West described having a professor drop out of writing her recommendation last minute, prompting her to contact a teacher from high



Photo courtesy of Flickr  
Mills College, a historically women's college, will merge with Northeastern University this July.

school who agreed to do it instead. Luckily for West, she was still able to transfer.

In merging with Northeastern,

it seems that Mills College aims to remain open, but as a co-educational institute rather than a college.

## ♈ HOROSCOPES ♎

BY DAVID NEJEZCHLEBA '22 & MAGGIE DONOVAN '23  
COPY EDITOR & HOROSCOPE WRITER | LAYOUT EDITOR & HOROSCOPE WRITER

**Jan. 20 – Feb. 18**  
 Element of wind and air, but water your name seems to bear. Mysterious sign, difficult to define, you wield the power of an unnerving glare.

**May 21 – June 20**  
 Third sign of the nine-degree zodiac, for trouble it seems they have a knack. With proclivities to be untrue, woven with stories they brew, they're still illusively innocent as a lilac.

**Sept. 23 – Oct. 22**  
 Remove the need for convention, and you will find yourself in ascension. Time will tell, if you don't dwell, but for now you'll wait in suspension.

**Feb. 19 – March 20**  
 Ah, dapper Pisces, the token water sign. Your elegant style foretells you will age like fine wine. You draw many gazes of adoration, people look your way without hesitation; know your worth and let yourself shine.

**June 21 – July 22**  
 Blessed to be ruled by the moon, cursed to fall in love too soon; careful with your heart, that it not fall apart, or you might hum a sorrowful tune.

**Oct. 23 – Nov. 21**  
 Your season has come to an end. Things might take a sudden downward trend. But never fear, winter break is almost here, and our outlook says you'll make a new friend.

**March 21 – April 19**  
 There once was a student in the sign of the ram. During finals, they got twisted into a bit of a jam. A week of despair, it's too much to bear, try intensively preparing for your final exam.

**July 23 – Aug. 22**  
 Preceding Virgo, following Cancer, it seems like you've been searching for an answer. Don't lose your mind, results you will find, and with joy you will jump like a dancer.

**Nov. 22 – Dec. 21**  
 'Tis the season, Sagittarius, celestial archer! While all meek others walk, you are the sole strong marcher. This is prime time for a bold love affair, this is the sign you were looking for, we swear. Go hard and fast until your campus departure!

**April 20 – May 20**  
 A noble sign is the Venus-ruled cow, and with great strength they were endowed. This week beware of lies, and deceiving eyes, because fiction can take the form of a vow.

**Aug. 23 – Sept. 22**  
 Lovely Virgo, goddess of wheat; always thinking, and venomous but sweet. Don't be surprised, it could be surmised, you will overcome any recent defeat.

**Dec. 22 – Jan. 19**  
 This week Neptune shines a glow on your persuasive skills. This will result in captivating thrills! Grab all your companions, get up to she-nanigans. Your unstoppable charisma will elicit chills.

## Mount Holyoke News

Mount Holyoke News is an independent student newspaper written by and for Mount Holyoke College students since 1917.

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### Letters Policy

Letters to the Editor appear exactly as they are sent to MHN, except for corrections to spelling, grammar and AP style. Letters cannot exceed 500 words. All letters must include the writer's name and telephone number for verification purposes. Unsigned letters will not be printed. Names may be held upon request with the approval of the Editor-in-Chief. MHN reserves the right to decide which materials will be printed. Email submissions to mhnews@mtholyoke.edu by Sundays at 5 p.m. for publication the following week.

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## Event Highlights

### Friday, Dec. 3

**Hanukkah Candle Lighting**  
Light the Hanukkah candles with the Jewish Student Union!

Eliot House  
5 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.

### Saturday, Dec. 4

**Small Business Saturday**  
Come join us in The Great Room from 10 - 2 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 4 to shop from some MHC student owned small businesses!

Community Center Great Room  
10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

### Saturday, Oct. 30

**Diwali Celebration**  
Come join us for a night of great music, food and company. We're closing the semester off with a bang. Look forward to stunning student performances, delicious Indian food and a live DJ! Food provided includes: vegetable samosa, butter chicken, paneer, butter masala, naan, basmati rice and gulab jamun.

Mary Wooley Hall - Chapin Auditorium  
7:30 p.m. - 11 p.m.

### Monday, Dec 6

**No Study Zone**  
Put down your textbooks for a few hours and join the Office of Student Involvement for No Study Zone! There will be lots of activities to help you relax: mini golf, a photo booth, crafts, board games, food, and more!

Community Center  
6 p.m. - 8 p.m.

### Monday, Dec 6

**Victory Eights Final Jam!**  
Come see the Victory Eights in our final performance of the semester!

Chapin Auditorium  
7 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

### Letter from the Editor

Dear Mount Holyoke community,

Thank you for joining Mount Holyoke News for another semester of reporting, storytelling and fact-finding. We are indebted to all members of our staff for adapting to a new reporting format and thankful to everyone who reads our paper each week.

Our weekly coverage will resume in the spring semester. As always, tips for coverage can be sent to mhnews@mtholyoke.edu.

Have a wonderful winter break and best of luck on finals.

Sincerely,  
Declan Langton '22, Editor-in-Chief

## AUDITIONS FOR: RED RAINBOW

BY AZURE D. OSBORNE LEE  
DIRECTED BY ZOE FIELDMAN '22

### ROOKE THEATRE

Friday, December 3, 4:30-8pm  
Art Building 222  
(for performance March 3-6,  
2022)

Scan the barcode to sign up for  
an audition slot!



This is a new play which follows two protagonists as they are transported from present day NYC to a surreal liminal world which draws heavily from Mayan and other South American cultures to explore themes of connectivity, family, and inter-generational cultural inheritance. Spanish speakers, Latinx, Black, Indigenous, and Trans actors are highly encouraged to audition, no previous experience necessary! This is a large cast with a variety of role sizes with many roles for specifically Trans actors and actors of Color, though everyone is welcomed to audition.

Please prepare a 1-minute contemporary monologue (does not need to be memorized). I will have a monologue available at auditions for those who do not prepare one in advance.

If you are unable to attend auditions but are planning on being back for the spring semester, you may submit a self-taped audition of your monologue which must be submitted by the end of auditions to field23z@mtholyoke.edu.