

THE CONCORDIA COURIER

INVESTIGATE.INFORM.IGNITE.INVOLVE.

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Annual Valentine's concert just around the corner



PICTURED ABOVE: Concordia Men's Chorus at a pre-COVID concert from 2019
Photos courtesy of: CUI Music Dept.

CAITLYN ROWLAND
STAFF WRITER

Whether you want to snuggle up with a loved one, watch with your family and friends, or enjoy some lovely songs on your own, the “Songs for Valentines” concert will offer you enjoyable songs that will give you a sense of peace and joy. Men's Chorus and Donne di Canto are coming together under Director Dr. Marin Jacobson in their annual Valentine's Concert on Feb. 20, at 3 p.m.

This year's annual Valentine's concert will be held live online due to COVID-19. Each year offers new and exciting songs presented by Concordia's talented choir. Megan Chelling, senior and President of Donne di Canto, explained why you should not miss this concert. “It is our favorite tradition! Students are even able to perform original music and arrangements that they have composed,”

said Chelling. She reflected on past performances, “Last year Godesulloh Bawa and JP Aquino were able to showcase their original music accompanied by other instrumentalists and vocalists.” Chelling continued, “This year, there are tons of new music and groups and soloists that have been working on songs throughout quarantine, and are thrilled to be able to perform them live.”

Chelling also offered what the audience can look forward to. “It is a more casual concert in the sense that we have small group numbers, solos, duets and some fun-hearted cheesy dance moves,” said Chelling. “The audience can look forward to a light-hearted performance that highlights the entirety of the choirs, small groups and individual performances that have been worked on rigorously for months.”

Collaboration kept the experience fun for Chelling,

“The Valentine's concert would not be the same without the collaboration Donne di Canto is able to make with Men's Chorus, not only as a choir but with duets and small groups that highlight the many different talented voices in our choirs.”

“We are singing some classic throwbacks this year from Frank Sinatra's ‘Fly Me to the Moon’ and ‘We Go Together’ from ‘Grease,’ which have to be some of my favorites to sing,” said Chelling. “We also sing a German love song called ‘Er ist gekommen,’ which has such a beautiful piano accompaniment performed by our wonderful and talented new pianist, Dr. Julia Oh.”

Dr. Marin Jacobson, Donne di Canto, and Men's Chorus are working even harder than usual and are putting in extra effort to make sure the “Songs for Valentines” concert is just as enjoyable for the audience as past concerts have been, even though they will be

doing the concert online for the first time. Chelling said, “Concordia's Music Department and tech team have been at work for months planning and staging our outdoor concert. All singers are distanced and masked, but the quality of our cameras and microphones produce amazing content that is able to be live-streamed, and also recorded to be posted online.”

Andrew Currie '20 reflected on his four years as a participant in Men's Chorus and explained why the audience should be excited. “The audience should not miss a Valentine's concert because the concerts consist of happy and upbeat performances that will bring happiness and joy to your hearts,” said Currie. “The audience should look forward to a variety of music genres such as pop, jazz and romance.”

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Forward in Faith donations surpass \$100 million

CARLIE CHAULSETT-UTLEY
CAMPUS EDITOR

On February 1, Concordia University Irvine announced the completion of the Forward in Faith campaign. It exceeded the original goal of \$85 million and passed the \$100 million mark, making it the largest campaign in university history.

Forward in Faith was launched in 2013 to focus on bringing new facilities, scholarships and programs to students and on campus. Over 10,000 donors featuring alumni, parents, churches and community members contributed to the campaign.

“We thank God and our donors for Concordia's most successful fundraising campaign on record,” said Tim Jaeger, CFRE Concordia Vice President of University Advancement, Marketing and Communications.

The campaign included completing a brand-new building in fall 2019. The Borland-Manske Center opened its doors to students and is home to the music and choral programs along with Christ College. Modern technology, a professional recording studio and upgraded classrooms adorn the BMC. The recording studio was utilized in December when Concordia's Christmas concert was recorded for its made-for-TV PBS special. Science buildings

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Wellness Week promotes overall health

GABI BECKMAN
ASCUI SECRETARY

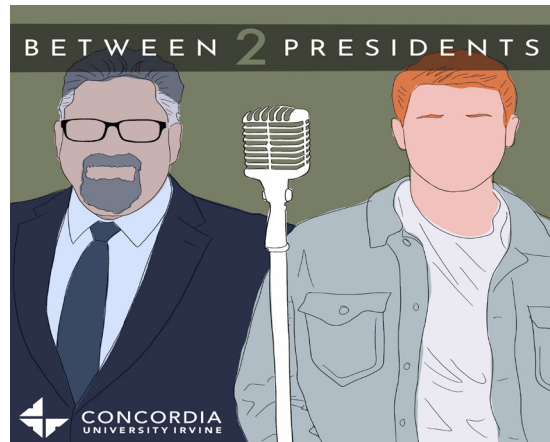
Last week, student leadership groups and students came together to promote a brand-new series of events to Concordia's campus known as Wellness Week. The goal of the week was to get students involved and aware of not only their physical health, but mental, spiritual and emotional health as well.

life. Since not many students have access to a full and working kitchen, the Peer Health team put together "no-cook cookbooks" filled with comfort-food favorites that take as little as five minutes to prepare. And after whipping up their favorite foods, students picked up their own DIY zen gardens to keep the vibes of "Tranquil Tuesday" going after Wellness Week ends.

One of the most well-received events of the week happened bright and early on Wednesday morning as the new Director of CU Fitness and Outdoor Recreation, Michael Ottenad, led a sunrise hike up French Hill. Danielle Schum, senior, was joyful to see so many students come together in fellowship. Schum said, "Obviously this hasn't been the senior year I wanted, but having this little moment gave me a glimpse back to what life was like before the pandemic."

Even though Wellness Week has come to a close, taking care of student health never stops! To check out all of the latest Peer Health and Intramurals have to offer, follow @cuilead on Instagram and download the CU Active app to learn more!

Peer Health also offered resources for living your best



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We want to hear from you.
Write a "Letter to the Editor,"
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Q&A with ASCUI President Tyler Haase



PICTURED ABOVE: ASCUI president Tyler Haase
Photos courtesy of: Tyler Haase

STAFF REPORT

Q: Where are you from and what is your major?

A: I am from Spokane, Washington. My major is Business Administration: Marketing and Finance

Q: Talk about the important work ASCUI is doing during this very unusual school year?

A: ASCUI is working hard to make lasting change at CUI even in this unusual year. ASCUI is treating this year as a way to get students' opinions, and make strong connections with Concordia's upper administration, and make lasting change for future generations.

Q: What initiatives are you particularly proud of?

A: ASCUI is currently advocating for increased printing stations, a student app, and looking at a way for the bookstore to best serve students.

Q: How has working with campus leadership been this year? Have you found new ways to better connect?

A: Student leadership this year has been amazing. This group of student leaders have incredible drive and resolve. The students' leaders

have faced new and unforeseen challenges and each student leader group has performed spectacularly this year. To better connect the student leader group, ASCUI has formed a Student Leadership Committee to unify the various student leader groups.

Q: Talk about the "Between 2 Presidents" podcast. How did that come together?

A: The Between 2 Presidents podcast is an amazing way for Dr. Thomas and myself to know each other better, and have some fun in the process. The Podcast came from talks CUI's Marketing department, and them wanting to start some outreach, and to watch both of us as we begin our new roles as Presidents.

Q: What have you learned about Dr. Thomas in the podcast conversations that you think other students should know?

A: Throughout the podcast experience, I have learned a lot from Dr. Thomas. Whether it is his world traveling, or his many languages, or just his leadership style, I have learned a lot from our

interactions.

Q: When you look at your experience at Concordia as a whole, what memories or moments are most impactful for you?

A: Some of my most memorable moments at CUI are various Midnight Madness, studying abroad in Greece. Also being able to serve the Student body both years as an ASCUI Executive Board member has truly been some of my favorite things I have done at CUI.

Q: We are one year into COVID-19 and "COVID fatigue" has manifested as a real concern. How do you stay positive and engaged?

A: Through all of COVID and our Zoom classes, I stay positive by just remembering that we are able to be here on campus, and it is all possible because the faculty and staff worked tirelessly to ensure that we have a safe environment on Concordia's campus.

Q: Has it been personally hard to serve as a student leader this year? How do you draw strength?

A: It has been a little challenging not seeing an entirely full campus, but I have just gotten strength to know that this is my last semester, and COVID or not I need to make the most out of this opportunity, and truly make lasting change here at CUI.

Looking for a new podcast? "Between 2 Presidents" is well worth the listen! Check it out here: <https://www.cui.edu/aboutcui/president/between-2-presidents-podcast>.

Annual Valentine's concert just around the corner

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Currie loved performing as a student. He said, "Working with Donne di Canto was a fun and unique experience. We always gelled well together when we sang our combined pieces." Currie continued, "It was a lot of fun performing this song on stage, and it was so cool to see how I connected with the audience at the end of the performance."

With hard work and talented singers, Donne di Canto and Men's Chorus plan to offer the audience an unmissable concert that will bring joy to so many.

Visit www.cui.edu/en-us/arts/music/events/songs-for-valentines to get more information and to find the live stream link on Feb. 20, at 3 p.m.



PICTURED ABOVE: Concordia Donne Di Canto at a pre-COVID concert from 2019
Photos courtesy of: CUI Music Dept.

Concordia campus is in safe hands



PICTURED ABOVE: Campus Safety Office
Photos courtesy of: Edward Oliver

EDWARD OLIVER
STAFF WRITER

Students can do their part to be educated and support the work of Campus Safety.

On January 26, Raul Morales, Director of Campus Safety, sent out an email containing vital information regarding safety procedures of how to survive an active shooting event. The guide contains a step-by-step guide on how to avoid getting injured and what students should do if they find themselves in an active shooter situation or encounter a violent intruder on campus. The video can be found at cui.edu/campus-safety/critical-incident-guidelines. The information was provided to help train students on what should be done when the situation does occur, and to ensure they are prepared for the worst case scenario.

Morales has been at Concordia for five years. With 29 years of law enforcement training and experience Morales was a perfect fit for the job in the Department of Campus Safety (DCS) while achieving his passion for protecting others. "My life-long passion for protecting people has been continued in my service to the

CUI campus community," said Morales. Morales sees the same commitment among his colleagues within the DCS, describing them as "dedicated and caring," and making the campus experience safer and more enjoyable.

Even with a dedicated staff, DCS cannot be everywhere at once. With this in mind, Morales and the DCS have provided campus emergency training to Resident Assistants, and also provide students with guides and procedures to follow in order to stay safe until help arrives. Grace Smith, an RA on campus, confirmed she has received emergency training in case it is needed, handling a situation until security arrives. The campus maintains an Emergency Operations Plan (EOP), along with keeping in direct radio contact with the Irvine Police Department and Orange County Fire Authority.

When worse comes to worst an RA or security staff member may not be around to provide help, and sometimes a student may not know what to do. Freshman Robert Camacho admits that he is not knowledgeable of proper safety procedures when it comes to a situation involving a violent

intruder. "I assume I would make rational decisions to get myself to a safe location, but I am not aware of the actual procedure," says Camacho. That said, the DCS encourages students to read and watch the safety procedure guides and videos provided so they may educate themselves on being safer and self-reliant when necessary. The DCS also encourages students to download the TITAN HST app, which sends alerts of any danger around the local area.

If you missed the email sent out to students concerning violent intruders on campus, go to <https://www.cui.edu/campus-safety/critical-incident-guidelines> and watch the RUN-HIDE-FIGHT video provided. If you wish to know more about the Department of Campus Safety or any questions pertaining to safety procedures contact Security Director Raul Morales at his email, raul.morales@cui.edu, or via phone number at (949) 214-3007. The Campus Safety Office is located in the Administration Building Suite 103 and is open 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Now hiring! Writing Studio recruiting 2021-2022 student consultants

CARLIE CHAULSETT-UTLEY
CAMPUS EDITOR

Have you been told that you write well? Do your friends always ask you to give them feedback on their papers? Do you have strong interpersonal skills?

The Writing Studio is accepting applications for Writing Consultants beginning Fall 2021. Consider applying for a position and get paid for helping others improve their writing! The position has flexible hours and lots of benefits.

Senior Kaitlyn Gleeson is a Humanities major and has worked at the Writing Studio for two years. She gets excited every time she gets to help students feel proud about their writing skills. While the Writing Studio is looking for proper writing fundamentals, they are "looking for people who will help contribute to the environment of the Writing Studio in a way that helps students feel more welcome and comfortable."

Working in the Writing Studio provides hands-on experience supporting writers that not only develops communication skills and sharpens your ability to think critically (highly valued in the workplace), but is also a leadership and resume-building opportunity. Writing consultants have the opportunity to conduct research, participate in the President's Showcase and attend conferences in addition to working one-on-one with student writers.

A qualified applicant must be a full-time student at Concordia who has demonstrated outstanding written, verbal and interpersonal communication skills. Past tutoring experience or experience with both native and non-native English speakers

is desired by not required for this position.

Sound interesting? In order to apply, you must complete a checklist including the following: a completed application form, a two to three page literary narrative responding to your growth as a writer, a copy of one research paper you have written as a student at Concordia and two letters of recommendation from Concordia faculty commenting on your writing and interpersonal skills.

Gleeson suggests having fun with your application essay. Her essay was about how she believed she was "the 'worst writer ever' and emphasized having a growth mindset and willingness to admit failure." When applying for a job in the Writing Studio she encourages applicants to "be honest and genuine, because we want to know you for who you are as a writer and a person."

According to the job description, "Writing consultants share responsibilities involved in running the Writing Studio, taking on work related to publicity, data collection, maintaining supplies, training, etc. They may also design and hold workshops about writing during the academic year, as well as engage in writing related research."

If you think you may be a good fit, apply!

You can find the application on the Writing Studio website under Job Application at www.cui.edu/studentlife/writing-studio. If you have questions, email Professor Kristen Schmidt at kristen.schmidt@cui.edu.

The deadline for submitting your application is Monday, March 15.

“The New Works Festival” bows soon



PICTURED ABOVE: (Left) Sam Beeson and Melanie Villalobos during the filming of the New Works Festival. (Right) Sam Beeson and Professor Andrew Sierszyn between takes of the New Works Festival

CASSANDRA CATE
STAFF WRITER

In the fall of 2020, the Theatre Department began producing “The New Works Festival,” a collection of a few short plays performed within one event. After months of rehearsing, filming and editing, the recording is going to be released in late February to early March.

According to Professor Lori Siekmann, Chair of the Theatre Department, the majority of the plays were written by her fellow Spalding University graduates. “I wanted to showcase the work of budding playwrights,” said Siekmann. “Shelby Shwartz, who graduated from Concordia in 2020, also wrote one of the plays. We were supposed to perform it in the spring of last year, but we couldn’t because of the social distancing situation. So it’s bittersweet that her play gets to be performed now.”

Siekmann directed all the plays in the collection, some of which are titled “Caps Off to

Us,” “It Came From the Sea,” and “Killing Bambi.” They are stand-alone pieces ranging from comedy to drama to somewhere between. There is also a devised piece, which is a series of monologues written by the students involved. “I basically challenged their thinking along the way, helped them edit their thoughts, and worked with Prof. Sierszyn, (our scenic designer) and student Christopher Aceves (our costume designer) to come up with the look for the piece which was based on the board game Life,” said Theatre professor and producer Tony Vezner.

Because of COVID-19, it was not possible to perform these plays in front of a live audience. Instead, the plays were filmed in the CUI Studio Theatre using L.A. Film protocols for the pandemic. “That involved filming people in 2-3 person scenes in such a way that the actors were safe,” said Vezner. “The crew stayed distant with masks on



Photo courtesy of: Kacy Redmond

100% of the time. For the actors there was only one actor unmasked at any time. The rest of the actors were masked until it was their time to speak.” Afterwards, the footage was edited so that none of the actors appear to be wearing masks. Due to these precautions, none of the people involved in production tested positive for COVID-19. While the shorts were originally intended to be acted out live, the use of film allowed students to challenge themselves and learn new techniques. Their experiences may shape the educational path of their choosing, since Concordia is adding a film emphasis next year.

“The New Works Festival” will be accessible with a password sent via email, and will be uploaded on the CUI website. Those who are not students, staff, or faculty can purchase tickets online. Check <https://www.cui.edu/arts/theatre> for updates.

Spring musical, coming to a screen near you

KACY REDMOND
STAFF WRITER

Theatre hopefuls no longer have one shot to impress the director. Self-recorded videos have taken the place of in-person auditions and callbacks for this spring’s musical “Bright Star.”

The auditions were the first step in producing a socially-distanced concert, which will be recorded and released for paid ticket holders to view online for a limited time coming mid-spring.

“Bright Star” is a bluegrass, happy ending story where “love conquers all.” It is a show that director, Professor Lori C. Siekmann, has dreamed of doing. Initially written by comedian Steve Martin in 2014, the period rom-com follows the life of a woman growing up in North Carolina’s woods in the 1920s who later realizes her love and life purpose while living as a

successful editor in the city in the 1940s.

Students who auditioned for the show sang a selection from a musical similar to “Bright Star.” They were able to record multiple takes of their audition and post what best suited them for the casting team to view. “Video auditions were challenging because of course, you can’t hear all the nuances that you would hear live,” said Siekmann.

“One good thing about being able to self-record is that we’re getting used to being on camera. Acting for TV and film is different from acting for the stage so it’s a good opportunity to learn how to better ourselves if we ever have online auditions,” said Julia Avila, senior.

The cast will get used to being on camera quickly. After initial rehearsals on Zoom, they will transition to the Borland-Manske

Center recording studio, where they will record the vocals and spoken lines for the show. These tracks will be used to lip-sync when recording the video to reduce the [COVID-19] risk of live singing.

The audition process has been a learning experience for some this year, including freshman Anna Martin. “Whether it be posture, eye contact, projection, you can analyze yourself and learn from yourself, which I think is really cool,” Martin said.

However, having unlimited takes can also be a danger for perfectionists. “A good thing about being able to self-record is being able to do as many takes as we want,” said Avila, who was in Concordia’s last year production of “Xanadu” “I try to limit myself to no more than three takes so that my voice

The art of seeing excellence

DAVID BALLEW
STAFF WRITER

Whether visitors let their fingers do the walking, or they are on campus to view the creative works, there are opportunities online and in-person to see how the students, alumni, faculty and staff of Concordia’s Visual Arts Department have made meaningful contributions to the Arts Department at Concordia.

Every spring, the Arts Department, in a collaborative effort with the English Department, showcases art and creative writing accomplished by students, alumni, faculty and staff. “The Aerie” is a journal published annually that puts a spotlight on the arts and the literary efforts of the contributors. Senior Sami Newport said, “Participating in shows and exhibitions have helped me grow as an artist because they challenge me to create something new.”

“It gives you a boost and lets you know that you are on the right path,” said Susan Eschelbach, senior. Nathan MacGregor ’20 added, “I have participated in ‘The Aerie’ of 2018. I realized my fascination and love of design.” Currently, the spring 2020 publication of “The Aerie” can be viewed online at www.cui.edu/arts/visual-arts/aerie. The artwork of Sami Newport, Susan Eschelbach, Nathan MacGregor and others is a must-see.

Along with “The Aerie,” the Visual Arts Department has other venues for the Arts. The John and Linda Friend Gallery in Grimm Hall enhances campus culture by exhibiting the creative works by students and other special exhibits Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Newport said, “When I see the artwork of others, I see how they differ from my work

and it challenges me to branch out and create something outside of my comfort zone.” Eschelbach said, “It gives you a sense of pride, in a way, when you have your work out and it’s not just you and your family looking at it anymore, it could possibly be the whole school.” Don’t miss the opportunity for a visit to the Grimm Hall gallery.

Another gem that can be viewed during this time of physical distancing is the work named “We Witness Now,” a mural by Lutheran painter Gerald Brommer. The renowned painter’s work that was commissioned in the early 1960s is spotlighted by the Visual Arts Department in a virtual tour at <https://bit.ly/3rH9cuk>. Although Concordia has been the current home of the giant work since 2017, the history of how it came to be installed on campus is inspiring. In its 10 panels, Brommer’s mural is a testament to the arts and is located on campus in the Library Arts building. When possible, students are highly recommended to stop by and see it in-person.

Visitors to the Concordia website can also tour facilities available for students. Newport said, “I chose to study Visual Arts at Concordia because I have always had a passion for the arts, and Concordia’s Art Department had it all!” MacGregor said, “You have the opportunity to create this small tight-knit group.” The immersive artistic environment helps to prepare students to find their place in the professional world with their skills honed by their time at Concordia. To take the tour, go to www.cui.edu/arts/visual-arts.

For online opportunities to see more artwork of students and to find additional information about the Visual Arts Program, visit www.cui.edu/arts/visual-arts.

doesn't get tired and I can treat it as closely to an in-person audition as possible.”

After initial auditions, some students were chosen to sing selections from “Bright Star” and post them to a “callbacks” folder. “We did ask about four students to come masked and sing in-person outdoors because we had not worked with them prior to this and we wanted to hear how they could hold harmonies with someone singing a different part,” said Siekmann.

Siekmann will be joined by Musical Director Diane King Vann, Set and Film Designer Professor Andrew Sierszyn, Producer Professor Tony Vezner,

Women’s basketball posts big wins over Azusa Pacific

MASON METCALFE
STAFF WRITER

The women’s basketball team is currently 5-3 on the season with six games to go. In conference play they’re currently 4-2 and have gotten two big wins over Azusa Pacific University which they haven’t done since 2005. Overall it’s looking to be a successful season for the women’s basketball team.

Freshman Kiernan Camryn said, “This being my first year not only at Concordia, but in college in general has definitely had its ups and downs. COVID has made things change such as our season and I’m just grateful that we get to play games and practice everyday.” Camryn has started seven of eight games and has a field goal percentage of .381%.

This season has definitely been different due to the COVID restrictions that are in place, but it seems that the basketball team has adjusted well. Senior Michaela Vanderklugt said, “We really dove into skill work this preseason, and overall it has made every one of us individually better and overall a better team. It is crazy playing games back to back, but it is nice to play again finally. I am so thankful for the Concordia staff, who have put together a safe protocol to keep us healthy and playing!” The weekly COVID testing has really helped all athletes continue to be safe when playing opposing teams throughout the week.

The basketball team has played in some close games this year and after their recent loss to Biola they’re looking to bounce back. Camryn said, “The game I’m most looking forward to is when we play Biola again. We didn’t give them our best game last time we played them, so I’m ready to play them again and win.” They will play Biola again February 26-27. When asked what adjustments should be made Vanderklugt said, “Overall, I do not think we have too many adjustments to make. We have all the offensive power we need and the strength of defense to hold teams below 60 points. Now we are just perfecting both of those things.” The defense has been very strong this year, and with the tools they have on the court they should be one of the top teams in the PacWest conference. Kennedy Fulcher, a senior for the basketball team, said, “We have put in a lot of hard work on and off the court and I believe that we’re one of the best teams in our conference. There’s still a lot of work to be done and some areas of our game that will improve over time. Once everything starts flowing together smoothly we will be the team to watch out for.”

The women’s basketball team plays their next game this Fri., Feb. 12 at home vs. Point Loma. Be sure to show your support and cheer them on. Point Loma is currently tied with the Eagles with a 4-2 record. A win this Friday will move the Eagles to the first place in the Southern California Conference.

Students, professor share opinions on Super Bowl LV, NFL season

OWEN MILLIGAN
STAFF WRITER

The Tampa Bay Buccaneers defeated the Kansas City Chiefs 31-9 in the big game Sun., Feb. 7 in Tampa Bay, Florida. Concordia students shared their thoughts on the game, the NFL season, and its response to COVID-19 and the league’s racial injustice initiatives.

While celebrations looked different this year, fans still reflected on fond memories. “[My family] all bring or cook a meal to have at our potluck, and we decorate the house with football decorations. It’s a great time to bond,” said Sydney Cayas, senior. Maddie Sauerbreit, junior, “enjoy[s] watching the game as well as the funny commercials... with my dad and friends.” Sauerbreit added, “I was a little disappointed with the commercials. I was expecting better ones especially with COVID as a precursor.”

In a lopsided affair, the Tampa Bay Buccaneers, the first team playing the Super Bowl from their home stadium, held Kansas City’s offense to nine points, with zero touchdowns scored. Tom Brady, who joined the Buccaneers as a free agent quarterback in the offseason, threw for three touchdowns and 201 yards, winning MVP honors. Brady won his seventh ring, more than any other player in league history.

The Chiefs were favored to win by sportsbooks and students alike following a regular season victory against the Buccaneers. Sauerbreit joined junior Spencer Davis in predicting a blowout win for the Chiefs with scores of 35-21 and 38-28, respectively. Senior Christopher Karafotias was rooting for the upset, predicting a Buccaneers victory in a 42-16 blowout. Cayas, who predicted a Chiefs win admitted, “My predictions were way off because

Newport Rib Company Eagle of the Week: 2/12: Paige Johnson



PICTURED ABOVE: Paige Johnson hurdling at practice
Photo courtesy of: Billi Derlith

BILLI DERLITH
ATHLETICS DEPARTMENT

This week’s Newport Rib Company Eagle of the Week is Paige Johnson from the women’s track and field team. Last weekend was Johnson’s first competition as an Eagle. She was a part of the small group that travelled to Maryville, Missouri for the Northwest Open.

At the indoor track and field season opener, Johnson competed in several events. She placed in the preliminary for the 60-meter dash and proceeded to win the event. She also placed third in long jump and fourth in high jump.

Head coach Keegan Bloomfield said, “We’re so thankful to have Paige as a member of our program. She had a nice start to her season. It’s been a long time since she has competed and I thought she came out and performed well. It will be exciting to see how she

and the rest of the team progress through the season.”

When Johnson was asked about how she felt competing in her first meet as an Eagle she responded thoughtfully, “Putting on that Green and Gold was a great feeling. This team is beyond supportive, and I wanted to make my teammates, coaches and myself proud. This weekend, I did not give my best performance, but I know there is only room for improvement.

Coach Bloomfield agrees that Johnson is a great fit on the team. He mentioned that “She’s come in and added spunk to an already great Sprints/Hurdles group.” Bloomfield is “really thankful that she chose CUI as she was looking for a new home.”

When reflecting on her transition to Concordia Irvine, Johnson stated, “My transition to CUI has been overall smooth. I have been so lucky to have a great team and coaches that help

me daily. Although, this being my third school, I couldn’t have asked for a better transition given the circumstances.”

Johnson is a junior pursuing her degree in Business Administration with a focus in marketing. Her dream job for after graduation is to work in New York for a marketing firm that represents top fashion brands.

Something you may not know about Johnson is that she loves art. She is very creative and has an artistic side. She shared that she does “acrylic painting and many forms of other art!”

Johnson also shared her pre-meet ritual. She reports that it’s “Coffee!”

“I am excited to be competing with and for this new team. I cannot wait to make my mark in the record books this year,” Johnson concluded. #CUITogether

uniforms, and the league painted “End Racism” in the end zones at all stadiums.

The NFL has also founded and funded several initiatives to combat racial discrimination, which included a push to further awareness among fans. “It is important for [the league] to talk about because their fans will be more educated,” said Cayas, “I believe [it] is a great step in the right direction.” Others sense backlash amongst fans. “The commissioner’s changing viewpoints on major controversies has upset a lot of people who prefer not to talk about issues at a football game,” said Karafotias. Francis said, “I like what the NFL and sports in general are doing, but they need to do more and make sure the momentum created is maintained and even strengthened.” The NFL announced its pledge of \$250 million to combat systemic racism in a halftime advertisement.

Ignite your inner artist for FREE!



PICTURED ABOVE: Avran Fine Art Studio
Photo courtesy of: Margo Godlove

KATHERINE MOWERY
STAFF WRITER

Established in 1998, First Thursdays Art Walk is a festive cultural evening on the first Thursday of every month from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. This is a FREE event just a twenty-minute drive from campus in Laguna Beach. Attending the event also gives attendees free admission to the Laguna Art Museum. This event celebrates the diverse cultural art scene of Laguna Beach and is open to the public.

Did we mention this event is free?

Since its founding, the Art Walk creates a unique art experience for people of all ages. Whether viewing from a window or walking through an art gallery there is something for everyone. The Art Walk is broken down into three sections. North, Central and South galleries.

Since the event is only three hours long, it is recommended to look up what you are most

interested in and stay in that area for the night. Miss a gallery? This event is the first Thursday of every month so hitting all the galleries isn't a worry.

Senior Janna Woodward said, "The art walk is the best way to observe a variety of art genres and support local artists. It's fun to follow those artists and get to understand the culture of Southern California art. Students are encouraged to learn more about the culture and history of the state of California and art is a great way to do that. For online students or those concerned with the recent spike in COVID-19 cases, Marketing Director at Avran Fine Art, Margo Godlove said "Some galleries may be hosting virtual shows on their social media accounts and that is something to look into as well."

"As a gallery, our favorite part about Art Walk is the extra exposure we get from visitors who visit during our off-hours" Godlove commented. "We usually close up around 6 to 7 p.m. so the event gives

us a chance to stay open with other galleries and invite guests who otherwise may not have been able to visit us during the daytime due to work, etc." Avran Fine Art won the 2020 Best of Laguna Beach Award (Art) and is highly recommended as "the gallery to visit" during the art walk.

Unfortunately due to COVID-19, Laguna Beach's trolley transportation has been suspended until further notice. The art galleries are working hard to make attendees feel as safe as possible. Woodward said, "It has changed because we obviously have to wear masks and maintain a social distance but it is just as lovely! Since most art walks are in an outdoor space already it is nice to be able to continue these events semi-normally." Posted on the First Thursdays event page which is run by the city of Laguna Beach stated, "We recommend calling a gallery or checking their website ahead of time to see if they will be open tonight. It is up to the galleries on whether they will open or not."

Interested but don't have anyone to go with? Woodward said, "It is not awkward to go by yourself. Sometimes I find it more enjoyable because you can take your time and wander at your leisure. I like being alone and being completely enveloped by the world of art."

So grab a friend (or not) and head down to Laguna Beach for an exciting night of color, inspiration and learn about the great State of California through an artist's eyes.

Concordia student in Tokyo compares COVID-19 experience to U.S.

KEI YOSHIDA
STAFF WRITER

In the United States, the COVID-19 infection continues to spread. The number of deaths exceeded 400,000 as of February, while the cumulative death in Japan is reported to be around 10,000.

New coronavirus variants found in the United Kingdom and other countries may further spread the infection, and people are thoroughly implementing infection control measures. There are various restrictions in Japan, especially for international students, and the restrictions are different from the current situation in the U.S.

This serious spread of infection has affected international students in different ways. One of them is Mika Nagaosa who attends California State University Long Beach, and came



PICTURED ABOVE: Hachiko is wearing a mask because of COVID-19. It is located in Shibuya in Japan and remains a popular rendezvous spot for the Japanese
Photo courtesy of: Kei Yoshida

back to her home country, Japan, at the end of March, one day before Japan declared a state of emergency. She is concerned about taking classes in a dramatically different time zone. "Due to the time difference, students will not have a healthy lifestyle because we have to take classes in the middle of the night. Also, because of

this pandemic, I cannot take face-to-face classes in my last semester. So I think there's also a mental fight."

Despite the time challenge, Nagaosa feels more comfortable at home, "I think Japan is safer for me. I feel more comfortable in Japan because I can stay with my family and if I stay in the U.S. I have to be

Asian American heartbreak

CAITIE FULTON
ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT
EDITOR

Dozens of hate crimes have plagued Asian American communities in the past few months across California, notably in San Francisco's Chinatown and Oakland's Chinatown. ABC7 published an article that discussed the attacks among Asian communities across America (Brinkley, Feb. 8, 2021). The article specifically cites that a 91-year-old man was violently shoved to the ground in Oakland on Feb. 4. Please note, if searching for more information online, some video footage may be disturbing for some.

Oakland police have since taken in a suspect in regard to this attack in Oakland. Police are led to believe that this suspect also attacked a 60-year-old man and a 55-year-old woman the same day. Numerous more attacks have been reported around the state. In ABC7's article about the Oakland attack, the news source reported that since Jan. 31, the President of the Chinatown Chamber of Commerce Carl Chan has "collected more than 20 incident reports and videos of small businesses getting robbed and owners and customers assaulted" (Lim, Feb. 4, 2021).

Some students at Concordia shared their thoughts on the incidents. Senior Gabi Beckman said, "I would like to hear more reporting on how Asian Americans have been treated since the pandemic. Being aware of our rhetoric and questioning what we are implying when making certain remarks is what keeps our society in check and out of ignorance."

Senior Breanna Duncan shared a few of her own insights as to why these incidents may be occurring.

concerned about insurance and hospitals. I'm afraid that if I get infected with COVID-19, I'll be trapped in the U.S. and I'll be lonely," she said.

Mohini Mouklick graduated from Concordia in May 2020 and took online classes in the last half of the spring 2020 semester. She stayed in the U.S. and took online classes, unlike Nagaosa. Mouklick cited some challenges facing university students in the U.S. due to COVID-19. "I think that it was alright for the most part, for some classes I actually preferred the online module. However, for science classes, it is pretty difficult because you can't go into the lab! But I did appreciate that we had recorded lectures that we could listen to again and again."

Faith McKinney, Senior Director

"Unfortunately, I imagine that events like this may increase as we approach a year under COVID restrictions and guidelines. People's built up agitation and frustration can turn to violence, and we must have awareness and action to bring an end to it," said Duncan.

Many Asian Americans in the community have since come out with statements following the attacks. Actor Steven Yeun, who was interviewed for the New York Times, said, "Sometimes I wonder if the Asian American experience is what it's like when you're thinking about everyone else, but nobody else is thinking about you" (Kang, Feb. 3, 2021).

Beckman brought up what she is thankful for in this reporting. "Seeing stuff like this happening to minorities (especially the elderly) hurts my heart. I'm glad that the local government is acknowledging both the violence in Chinatown and the greater Oakland community and are not afraid to take abrasive action," said Beckman.

Duncan elaborated how it is crucial that these events are not taken lightly and that they are brought to attention. "We cannot view these acts of violence as isolated or 'out of the blue' events. Discrimination against Asian Americans is rampant and this is an extreme case. There are many cases that occur day to day which are less severe, yet still have a heavy impact," said Duncan.

If you or someone you know is struggling with such events, Concordia's Wellness Center offers telehealth services. Visit their website to learn more information - www.cui.edu/studentlife/wellness-center. To make an appointment or to contact someone, email wellness@cui.edu.

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CU serves

ALEXIS RIOS
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

On Tues., Feb. 9, students and faculty took a break from classes to join others in the Concordia community for CONCORDIA Serves 2021. This relatively new campus tradition was started in 2020 by President Michael A. Thomas. The goal is to engage alumni, students, faculty, staff,

parents, donors and friends in the Lutheran tradition of service.

With COVID-19 guidelines still in place, CONCORDIA Serves offered both on campus and remote activities such as a Blood Drive at Grimm Hall to support the Red Cross. Other on campus activities included tending to Heritage

Garden. Some students served remotely by crafting messages to residents in nursing homes who may be feeling lonely during the pandemic.

From beautifying the campus to brightening the day for local seniors, the second annual CONCORDIA Serves was a smashing success. Take a look!



PICTURED ABOVE: Madison Hergert leading the track and field team in sanding the baseball fences. Hergert is stapling new blocks with sandpaper for the athletes to use to sand. From left to right Madison Hergert, Alyssa Kawata and Samantha Gomez.
Photo courtesy of: Alexis Rios



PICTURED ABOVE: Student-athletes getting creative while crocheting beanies for both babies and seniors.
Photo courtesy of: CUI Athletics



PICTURED ABOVE: Women's Lacrosse working hard while beautifying the campus. The women are building even greater communication and teamwork skills through unifying for campus beautification.
Photo courtesy of: Alexis Rios



PICTURED ABOVE: Concordia Serves Event – CU Center.
Photo courtesy of: David Ballew



PICTURED ABOVE: School of Business and Economics students met with Wing Lam, CEO of Wahoo's Fish Taco, to serve meals to frontline workers with the charity California Love Drop
Photo courtesy of: Owen Milligan



PICTURED ABOVE: The track and field team works hard to smooth out the fences.
Photo courtesy of: Alexis Rios



PICTURED ABOVE: Gunnar Ashmon and Bailey Wade collaborating together on the most efficient ways to sand the fences.
Photo courtesy of: Alexis Rios



PICTURED ABOVE: Concordia Serves Event at Grimm Hall – Blood Drive.
Photo courtesy of: David Ballew



PICTURED ABOVE: The women's beach volleyball team had a blast making phone calls for the telethon.
Photo courtesy of: CUI Athletics

Forward in Faith donations surpass \$100 million

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in Founders Hall were also updated last summer.

“To witness donors place their confidence in our academic tradition and in our Concordia family in this way is both remarkable and historic,” said Concordia President Dr. Michael Thomas. Along with academic advancements, the Forward in Faith has

brought light to Concordia Athletics. Upgraded baseball, track and field, and field lights have been added to campus.

That's not all, future plans include new beach volleyball courts.

Concordia's endowment nearly tripled in size and grew over \$20 million through the work of the Forward in Faith campaign.

The first recipient of the Concordia Dream Scholarship, Joseph Navarro, is a doctoral student in the School of Education, whose life is already being positively impacted by the donations. He looks to use this scholarship to help him reach his goals of becoming a principal and superintendent.

Concordia student in Tokyo compares COVID-19 experience to U.S.

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positives per day, total 117,809".

In Japan, there seems to be no national disagreement regarding the understanding of the infection factors of COVID-19 and the recognition of the need for infection control, such as mask wearing. For the time being, there is a common understanding of public health, but there are differing opinions regarding the prioritizing of economic measures.

In the case of the United States, it has been hypothesized that an insufficient understanding of the mechanism of microdroplets and the danger of closed spaces, crowded places

and close-contact settings remains. Plus, mask-wearing and vaccinations may have political overtones in the U.S. that are not present in other countries.

Given the stresses and isolation that coronavirus have created, students may feel a little lost. McKinney encourages international students to, “Contact us, we are here to help.” Alex Lange works directly with students and “Haeri Chee, Lonnie Lee and Faith McKinney are here to assist.” International students can find additional information here cui.edu/academicprograms/international-students or contact Alex Lange at alexander.lange@cui.edu.

GameStop stock surge a profit for some, pitfall for others

JENNA HOFFMAN
STAFF WRITER

In January, stock-watchers were shocked to see a surge in gaming merchandise retailer, GameStop's stock after the group coordination of online trading by users on Reddit. GameStop was perhaps the most notable “viral” stock surge, but it wasn't alone. 28% of Americans bought GameStop or other viral stocks in January, according to Yahoo Finance.

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to affect many businesses and people financially. So businesses that were already struggling pre-COVID got hit even harder. However, to Gamestop's fortune, their luck turned around, even if only for a short while. They saw a monumental increase in their value in the stock market even though the fundamentals of their company did not change.

“This shows the power of individual investors to move

markets almost as effectively as large hedge funds,” said Concordia School of Business & Economics Professor Christopher "Kit" Nagel, “Many people believe that individual investors are powerless to run with the big dogs on Wall Street; that perception has now changed. [The shares] were trading at crazy values and are a clear example of what former Fed Chair Greenspan called ‘irrational exuberance.’ The shares will again fall to earth.”

The New York Times explained that after finding out that GameStop was being shorted by major hedge funds in order to make a profit, Reddit users from the Wall Street Bets forum decided to stir the pot. The Redditors began placing large bets on GameStop's stock which lost the major hedge funds a lot of money because they were betting that the stock would go down. A lot of people that invested in GameStop made quite a profit and it turned their lives around for the better in the midst of this

pandemic.

ABC News reported a hospital worker from Irvine who turned his stimulus check into \$40,000 to help support his family. Arya Hamzelou, who is a seasoned stock market trader, heard about the surge in stocks and decided to join in to add to his portfolio.

While some were able to get lucky and turn a profit, that was not the case for everyone. Owen Milligan, a Business major at Concordia, said, “I think that the GameStop event hurt a lot more people than it helped,” referring to those who tried to jump on the GameStop train after hearing about its rise in popularity on the market. “While some were able to get rich quickly, others were left with worthless stock they bought way overpriced,” concluded Milligan.

The surge in stock wasn't the only surprising thing about the situation. Many questioned the actions of online trading platforms like Robinhood who

put restrictions on trading after the rise in stock prices. Michael Kinnen, Assistant Professor at the School of Business and Economics, said, “Nobody should have the power to control someone else's use of their own money.” Kinnen added that it is the investor's decision to allocate their money, though investors may have to learn from their mistakes and endure the consequences if things go poorly.

Interested in investing but have a lower threshold for risk? Nagel recommends investing “in Index Funds, which can grow at the rate of the overall market.” Kinnen suggests “an account with Wealthfront or Nest Wealth” with the benefit of “pretty much no fees.” On the other hand, if you have the resources and want to play the market, he suggests finding a stock you're interested in, doing diligent research on the company's financial condition, and making sure the company is in a growing sector then “Enjoy the ride!”

