

# COMMUNIQUE

VOL. 77 ISSUE 5

THE STUDENT NEWSPAPER OF CHATHAM UNIVERSITY

MARCH 2021

## Warm Weather Comes to Campus



News

Opinion

Sports

Lifestyle

Visuals

Forum



Students sit on the quad to get some fresh air and schoolwork done.  
Credit: Lilly Kubit

# EDITOR'S NOTE

Dear Chatham Community,

In the middle of the semester, many students are feeling the pressure of their school workload and burnout associated with the COVID-19 pandemic. This conflicts with the warm weather that is bringing a sense of optimism to campus. However, we can't forget the significant losses and hardships that have occurred during this pandemic and long before.

The stories written by the Communiqué staff in this edition of the paper represent the juxtaposition between the hope that is being spread as an end to the pandemic may be in sight and the monumental pain that certain students are feeling during this time. We hope to inform, and perhaps comfort, with Volume 77, Issue 5. We extend our love to you all and hope you enjoy this new edition of the Communiqué.

Sincerely,  
Alice Crow  
Editor-in-Chief

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# Remembering Chatham sophomore Daniel Plaut

By Haley Daugherty

The Chatham University community feels a great absence following the death of sophomore student Daniel Plaut on Thursday, Feb. 25. He was 21 years old.

Plaut graduated from Winchester Thurston High School in 2018 and spent his first year of college at Carnegie Mellon University. He transferred to Chatham at the beginning of the 2020 Fall semester to study creative writing.

Plaut is survived by his mother Marlene Behrmann Cohen, his father David Plaut and his brother Benjamin Plaut. The Plaut family wishes not to disclose the cause of death.

A funeral service was held over Zoom and was attended by Plaut's family and friends.

Plaut had a deep passion for environmental awareness. He supported the Environmental Defense Fund, which is an organization that works on tackling environmental issues all over the world.

He also actively volunteered for Friendship Circle Pittsburgh. An organization that dedicates its time and effort to strengthening local communities through multiple activities and events.

Plaut also enjoyed poetry. He was featured on



A photo of Daniel Plaut from his high school yearbook. Photo Credit: Daniel Plaut's family

Dr. Carrie Tippen's class podcast "American Writers Pod." On this podcast, he discusses his appreciation for poetry along with theo-

bership to the organization can only be gained through invitation from the local chapter and is recognized as a great accomplishment.

*"He was clearly very loved and will be very missed." -Dean Black*

ries that he has encountered from reading classic writers.

He was also recently recognized for his writing talent by receiving an invitation to join Sigma Tau Delta, an international English honor society. Mem-

Chatham University's Minor Bird literary magazine is working with the Plaut family to include some of Plaut's previous writing pieces in their next issue in an effort to honor his memory.


"One thing that really stuck out to me when I attended his service was how many folks logged in...he was clearly very loved and will be very missed," said Chatham University's Dean of Students, Dr. Heather Black. While Dr. Black did not know Plaut personally, she has remained in contact with the family throughout their time of grief.

Plaut was close with his family and was dedicated to being there for them in anyway he could. His funeral was widely attended by his friends and family all recalling their favorite stories about Plaut.

"I heard stories from his extended family about how they used to play games and have fun together," Dr. Black said. "His brother also spoke at the funeral and he was reminiscing that Daniel always made time for him, always was there for him and how he could always depend on Daniel."

Through his writing, volunteer work and love, Plaut left a mark on those he encountered during his life and will be greatly missed by those close to him.

In lieu of flowers, the family has requested that donations be made to the Environmental Defense Fund or Friendship Circle Pittsburgh.



## POLICE BLOTTER

*All information is provided by Chatham University's Public Safety*

**Feb. 24** – Officers responded to a car accident in Jennie King Mellon Library parking lot. Officers reported no one was injured.

**Feb. 26** – A student reported a damaged lock to an apartment door at Chatham Apartments.

**March 1** – A Chatham employee fell and was injured at the Carriage House. The employee was transported to the hospital.

**March 4** – An officer fell and was injured while on duty.

**March 7** – A person refused to leave Graham Field. When officers arrived, the person left without incident.

**March 10** – A student wanted to be transported to the hospital from Chung Apartments. Officers transported the student without incident.

**March 17** – Traffic accident at Fifth Avenue and the Gate House. Both drivers were transported to the hospital with minor injuries.

**March 20** – Officers requested to assist medics with a student not feeling well at Hicks Estate.

**March 22** – A student reported damage to her vehicle in the Fickes Hall parking lot. Officers reviewed video footage that showed the student's car wasn't damaged in the lot.

## \$1.2 million deficit projected at Chatham, despite cutting costs

*In response to pandemic, Chatham reduced retirement benefits, stopped hiring, deferred projects in Master Plan*

By Gena Carter

Chatham University is projected to have a \$1.2 million spending deficit for the upcoming 2020-21 fiscal year after pandemic mitigation measures resulted in Chatham losing revenue and increasing spending to follow health and safety protocols.

This contrasts with Chatham's spending for the 2019-20 fiscal year, when the University broke even due to federal aid.

Chatham's fiscal years are scheduled from July to June 30 of the succeeding year. The 2019-20 fiscal year documents are currently available through the University's website.

In an effort to cut institutional costs during the pandemic, the University implemented a hiring freeze, scaled back retirement benefits for employees and has deferred campus projects like the remodeling of Anderson Dining Hall until 2022, according to Walter Fowler, vice president of Finance and Administration, and Jennifer Hoerster, associate vice president of Finance and Administration.

### Revenue sources, endowment explained

For the upcoming 2020-



Photo Credit: istockphoto.com

21 fiscal year, 77% of Chatham's revenue comes from tuition, 10% from the University's endowment, 8% from room and board, and the remaining 5% is from Chatham's other property and rentals, according to Fowler. COVID-19 caused Chatham to take a significant hit to its room and board revenue.

Chatham's endowment, valued at \$87.3 million, consists of the donations given to the University since its inception in 1869.

Only \$13.9 million of the \$87.3 million endowment has unrestricted use, according to the latest finan-

cial report for the 2019-20 fiscal year.

Most donations given to the University have a restricted use, and they can only be spent for specific circumstances. For example, if someone donated \$10,000 to Chatham for a student who is from the United Kingdom, that \$10,000 could only be used for that purpose. It sits in the endowment until someone meeting the criteria attends Chatham.

The portion of the unrestricted endowment that Chatham spends is voted on by the Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees

is Chatham's governing structure, and consists of individuals of various professions, educational backgrounds and skills.

The endowment naturally increases in value every year, and the Board of Trustees typically elects to spend 4.5% of the unrestricted endowment every year. This allows the balance to continue growing with interest.

For any costs that the University acquires that other sources of revenue do not cover, the needed money is pulled from the unrestricted portion of the endowment. ►



### Government aid, donor support alleviated burden

According to Fowler, the projection for this upcoming fiscal year is a \$1.2 million deficit, which will be attributed to an endowment



Photo Credit: istockphoto.com

spending of around 6%.

The University is actively trying to reduce that deficit before the end of June.

For the 2019-20 fiscal year, the University was able to break-even because Chatham received \$1.16 million for student aid from the government's Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act.

Since the pandemic hit, Chatham has overall seen less donations from foundations. In the beginning, foundations were generous in supplying the University with funds to buy personal protective equipment, hand sanitizer and plexiglass, but those donations have since slowed.

"Foundations have swung their focus toward more humanitarian aid... job

development, homelessness, food security," Fowler said. "It is a little tougher for us to raise money [from foundations] for academic purposes."

However, according to

Hoerster, Chatham has also seen more individual donors give to the University, especially toward the student emergency fund.

The student emergency fund offers short-term, financial assistance to students who are ineligible for other means of assistance. The fund can cover expenses such as the cost of prescriptions, books, rent and utilities. It also can cover travel expenses to attend funerals, cover the replacement of stolen items or provide students with temporary meal vouchers.

Forecasts for fiscal year 2021-22 show Chatham breaking even again, and increasing revenue onward, providing that enrollment estimates are accurate, according to Fowler.

**Netflix deal brings some**

### financial relief

Netflix's filming of "The Chair" on campus improved the University's financial standing. While the University did not disclose how much Chatham was paid due to contractual agreements, Fowler and Hoerster said that Netflix paid Chatham over \$100,000 to shoot the limited series largely in Mellon Center.

According to Hoerster and Fowler, Netflix approached Chatham about filming; Chatham did not scout this opportunity out.

Chatham, however, continues to add to that over \$100,000 price tag every day. "Everywhere that they could replace our LED [lightbulbs], which we so painstakingly put in to save energy from a sustainability standpoint, well, they

decreased revenue, Chatham cut spending rather than apply for loans. "We have relatively high debt institutionally already, so we didn't want to apply for [any loans]," Fowler said.

In the 2019-20 fiscal year, Chatham spent over \$69.2 million. The majority of Chatham's expenditures go toward instruction at \$26.7 million, followed by student services at \$17.5 million.

Another way Chatham slowed its spending was by implementing a hiring freeze. This has kept some positions vacant and has halted new employees from filling new positions.

"We filled most of the faculty ranked jobs...we have a relatively small faculty trying to cover a lot of bases, and...we really can't afford to not fill those

## *Netflix paid Chatham over \$100,000 to film "The Chair" on campus*

replaced all those with incandescents because LEDs don't film well," Fowler said. "So, now, we have to go back and replace them... We are going to charge them for that, but...there are going to be little things like that [Chatham] is going to have to fix."

### Retirement benefits cut, ongoing hiring freeze

In order to account for the

[positions]," Fowler said. "If someone left, generally, we tried to make do without them."

The hiring freeze is still in effect, with various University positions vacant in order to cut costs.

Chatham also modified its retirement benefits. In typical years, employees put in 5% of their salary, and Chatham matched with ►

10% of the person's salary to serve as the employee's retirement plan.

Now, Chatham is matching 3% of salary for employees making over \$50,000 a year, and 7% for employees making under \$50,000, according to Hoerster and Fowler.

Additionally, no employees have received raises for the past two years.

While tuition and room and board increased in cost for students during the 2019-20 fiscal year, Fowler said that the increase was not a result of the pandemic. "We set the tuition generally sometime in November-December for the following fall," Fowler said. The admissions office is already making offers to incoming students by that time.

According to Fowler and Hoerster, President Finegold and University deans have not taken voluntary salary cuts over the course of the pandemic, but they are still subject to the aforementioned retirement plans and salary changes.

#### **Anderson renovations and other projects delayed until 2022**

Chatham has created a 10-year master plan that details upcoming campus projects and goals to improve campus life for students. These projects include expanding the Athletic and Fitness Center and Buhl Hall, renovating Anderson Dining Hall and increasing campus access to Fifth Avenue.

The renovation at Anderson was originally scheduled to take place summer

2020, but was delayed due to the pandemic. It has since been deferred again to summer 2022, with the reduced demand for increased dining capacity and the uncertainty around COVID-19.

"That project has to be done in a tight construction window," Fowler explained. "If there are any hiccups, we are in a bad position."

The Thompson House rehabilitation project and the process of converting Beatty Hall, currently an office building, to a residence hall is also deferred for summer 2022.

Chatham, however, is still planning on doing its Chapel Hill stormwater management project this summer. Chatham is funding this project in collaboration

with the Pittsburgh Water and Sewer Authority.

On March 9, Chatham's master plan was recommended by the city's planning commission, with the stipulation that an ongoing disagreement between the University and Murray Hill Avenue residents be resolved.

Some Murray Hill residents are wary that further development would destroy historic buildings and increase the traffic on the street. Chatham has no plans to demolish any buildings, but the University will meet with residents to discuss their concerns.

Recent financial reports and the updated master plan can be viewed on the University's website.

## Required Internships

They make students more marketable -- but at what cost?

By Irina Bucur and Elena Woodworth

Some Chatham University students fulfill the undergraduate internship requirement the way they navigate tuition: with financial aid and monetary support from family. Others juggle the added workload of multiple part-time jobs in order to afford living expenses.

With two new scholar-

ships, Career Development is furthering accessibility to internships, though questions about class, labor and the extent of practical support for student interns from the University remain.

During this time of year, students are usually busy filling out their Learning Agreement forms as Chatham typically offers a discounted price for sum- ▶



mer internships. Normally costing \$934 per credit in the fall or spring, the reduced rate per internship credit in the summer used to be \$150. According to the Student Accounts office, the price per credit is listed as \$200 this summer.

The purpose of requiring students to complete an internship for credit is to facilitate post-graduate opportunities and encourage experiential learning. For students pursuing them, Career Development organizes job fairs and networking events, connects students on Handshake (an online networking platform) and provides resume and cover letter feedback.

As stated by a 2015 National Association of Colleges and Employers report, students who have completed an internship are 20% more likely to get job offers than those who have not.

“If you can’t demonstrate that you know how to apply what you’ve learned in the classroom to a professional job, it’s less likely you’re going to get a job and even a smaller percentage that you’re going to get a job in the area that you want,” said Lesli Talley, associate director of Career Development.

Students like Josh Weiland ‘21 and Ava Roberts ‘22 said they benefited from their internships and

developed skills directly related to their majors.

A connection to hands-on experience, professional networks

Josh Weiland ‘21, during his internship with Allegheny Land Trust. Photo credit: Josh Weiland



Josh Weiland ‘21 during his internship with Allegheny Land Trust. Photo credit: Josh Weiland

Weiland, a non-traditional sustainability student, interned for the Allegheny Land Trust last summer, where he assisted in the management of an acid mine remediation site in Washington County.

“It was kind of the perfect pandemic internship,” Wei-

land said. “I was the only intern and I kind of got to hang out at this park for 12 weeks, just taking care of it and implementing aspects of the management plan, and still got to come home every night to my family.”

As a Gateway student,

relationship with a professor that’s really bringing you along, critiquing your resumes, and ushering you in and giving you that boost up, it’s really, really hard.”

Meanwhile, Roberts found her internship with PennEnvironment through the job search website Indeed.com after volunteering with the organization in the past. The opportunity offered plenty of hands-on experience in her field, and Roberts is now using it to grow her professional network in local politics and environmental policy, she said.

Despite these positive outcomes, Weiland and Roberts said some of Chatham’s internship rules complicated their experiences.

### **Stress and financial burdens**

Roberts’ internship, like those offered by most nonprofits, was unpaid. Roberts was also employed as a part-time phone banker for a political campaign during her internship in the fall 2020 semester.

“I wouldn’t have been in a financial position to do an unpaid internship if I hadn’t had that job,” she said.

Weiland had to quit his full-time job working for an environmental nonprofit in order to fulfill the internship requirement. At the time, Weiland and his partner were expecting a ►

he spent five years working in the environmental and nonprofit scene around Pittsburgh before coming to Chatham.

“I’m fortunate that I have the network that allowed me to get [the internship],” he said. “I definitely can see if you don’t have a mentor



child -- it was “non-negotiable” for him to obtain a paid internship, he said.

“We ran into a lot of issues where students have tried to use their current employment as an internship,” Talley said. She explained that the expectations set forth by current jobs often contradict the internship learning objectives required by law and by the University. Learning objectives are established to benefit the student, rather than the employer.

Roberts said the paperwork and check-ins from Career Development seemed to be redundant.

While weekly reflections and discussions with her advisor helped her stay grounded, the surveys and post-assessments assigned by the internship coordinators took time she said could have been used to study for finals or work on other internship tasks.

“It kind of makes it less about my own professional self-interest and it makes it more about scrambling for this deadline Career Development needs,” Roberts said.

### Should internships be required?

Currently, Roberts is completing a second internship, but believes Chatham should ultimately remove the requirement. Roberts would prefer for internships to be optional, she said, in-

stead of students having to complete one to graduate.

“You shouldn’t have to pay Chatham to not get paid by your internships,” Roberts said.

According to former student Terra Teets ‘19, the requirement is here to stay.

“I think it’s very valuable, especially in the humanities, to get that professional experience and develop those connections,” she said.

In Teets’ view, the structure also needs to change to address equity gaps between students. One step would be to offset the cost of internships.

Teets completed a summer internship as a first-year at a nonprofit in her hometown. The position gave her a firm sense of what she wanted to do (teach and help underserved communities) and what she would steer clear from in the future (a high-powered, over-demanding position). She garnered skills she said later helped start her own business and made connections in local politics.

At her internship, Teets made \$150 a week, but her internship learning agreement made no mention of what hours she would be expected to work. At 20 hours a week, this stipend would average out to \$7.50 an hour. Interning for 40 hours a week would have meant she was being paid

\$3.75 an hour.

She worked longer than the typical 40-hour per credit requirement, she said. The executive director, a former White House intern for whom she also worked part-time outside of her internship, would call her during unpredictable times after work.

At the time, Teets envisioned a path in politics. This “D.C. mentality” seemed normal, she said.

“He kind of viewed the people who worked as his personal assistants.”

According to Talley, students who have negative experiences with their internship sites should contact Career Development so the listing can be removed from Handshake. Teets found her internship outside of Handshake, having worked for the executive director in high school.

During the second half of her internship, which drained her savings, Teets

was also homeless.

She did not address her housing situation with her internship supervisors or with Career Development out of fear it would reflect negatively on her professional and academic competencies.

Teets felt that she needed to perform as a “high-classed person,” she said, putting on a “positive face and showing up and doing the work” to avoid potential judgement, which she had faced before.

### Scholarship opportunities and advisor advocacy

Two new scholarships offered this year will potentially help some students pay for these required internship credits. The first, which should be accessible this summer, is a one-time scholarship sponsored by State Farm for two students in need who will be working unpaid internships. The second is a recurring scholarship funded by an alum ▶

## Story tips?

*This story began as a tip from a student!*

Send your story tips to  
[Communique@chatham.edu](mailto:Communique@chatham.edu)  
or  
[Alice.crow@chatham.edu](mailto:Alice.crow@chatham.edu)



donation. It will be made available for student interns tentatively this fall.

At one point as an undergraduate student, Teets tried to form a support group for first generation college students, similar to RISE, where issues like the internship requirement and its implications could be discussed among students from similar backgrounds.

The idea was shot down by a Student Affairs staff member, Teets recalled, who said that such a group could be potentially discriminatory because it would be singling students out. According to Teets, similar groups have been established at other universities.

About being an under-resourced student pursuing an internship, Teets said, “You’re going to be held to the same standard. As if you didn’t need to pay for your living expenses. As if you weren’t working pretty much a second job, that ends up being three jobs. Sometimes you even need to work full time.”

Aside from the logistical and academic information Career Development provided, Teets had no idea if and how the office could help her concretely. She thinks an extra layer of support within the department may be helpful for students, not only to touch base about the professional

aspects of an internship, but also to go over how the position would align with day-to-day living, including students’ work schedule, housing arrangements and budget.

“I learned the hard way to ask those questions. And now it’s something I know how to do. But, at the time, I was a freshman in college, and I didn’t know how to do that,” Teets said.

According to associate professor of history Lou Martin, Ph.D., one of the roles of an advisor is to advocate on behalf of the student and to brainstorm if hours extend beyond agreed-upon expectations, the employer has unreasonable demands or there is a lack of educational experiences.

“If, for example, I hear from a student that their

*“The Chatham community should ensure that students are paid a livable wage...”  
- Terra Teets ‘19*

experiences are not matching what we thought it was going to be, we can make adjustments in the moment,” he said.

The University paperwork is also there as a protective measure.

Martin explained that within the context of labor

laws, interns -- who work temporary, often unpaid positions -- occupy an ambiguous space. Organized labor efforts and collective bargaining offer negotiating power for workers, but most paid interns don’t qualify as employees, with some exceptions existing under the Fair Labor Standards Act. When they do, they don’t stick around long enough to benefit from or participate in labor efforts. This makes it easier, though not always, for interns to be exploited.

“That’s why we have students identify learning outcomes. And that’s why we insist on getting a job description from the organization,” Martin said.

### **The future of internships at Chatham**

Requirement or not, the experience students gain during an internship is critical to their marketability. Martin argued that the internship requirement should not be eliminated. Rather, students should be fully supported to find ways to incorporate the internship in practical ways that work for them, within their four-year college plan.

By keeping the requirement, others argue that some students may feel rushed to complete an internship to graduate in as little time as possible, or struggle to meet the deadlines before the add/drop

period.

“It just kind of felt like it was something I needed to get out of the way so I would have space to complete other things and work to build up my savings,” Teets said.

On the other hand, eliminating the requirement altogether would inherently put some students at a disadvantage.

“I also believe that the students who come out of an upper-middle class background, whose parents and family members already have contacts in professional fields, have a great advantage over these unreached, under-resourced students,” Martin said.

“I think that this internship could be critical to getting that first job, getting that foot in the door, and I would hate to see us deprive a student of that, with the idea that we’re somehow helping them,” he continued.

“The Chatham community should ensure that students are paid a livable wage,” Teets said, “and that students can not only survive, but thrive.”

To find Career Development’s requirements for internships, students can look to Career Development’s page on [my.chatham.edu](http://my.chatham.edu). To view information about the summer 2021 scholarship, students can visit the application page.

## GUEST VOICES

*Guest Voices is an occasional series that invites students and staff to share their views on a topic of importance and interest to them on campus.*

## Chatham's internship policy forwards an unethical standard of free student labor

By Molly Ritter '21

I have been resisting the school's internship requirement since I transferred in 2019 because I believe internships exploit students and workers, drive the value of labor down and further increase inequities between wealthy and struggling students. I have a background in labor activism and union organizing so this is an issue I'm very familiar with and passionate about.

I have met with Dean Motley, Dr. Congleton and various other members of Chatham staff to plead my case and have gotten nowhere. "Well, everyone's doing it, so it must be fine." Usually, I'm just given some answers along those lines.

As a Gateway student, the faculty/staff who I've spoken to have used my age as an excuse for why I'm complaining. They say the internship requirement makes more sense for younger students and that traditional students report positive experiences with



Photo Credit: unsplash.com

their internships, but they "understand" that it must be different for me because I'm older.

This both discredits and dismisses my arguments; they're othering me as an older student and saying that I'm the outlier. The internship requirement negatively impacts students of all ages.

I have also spoken to labor experts in the area who insist that workers "earn while they learn." Why should the burden for producing experienced, well-trained and educated workers—a resource that companies benefit the most from having and schools are paid handsomely for producing—continue to fall solely on the broke,

exhausted shoulders of students?

In my efforts, I have also reached out to fellow classmates to see if others have had negative internship experiences. One recent graduate told me that she was forced to live in her car so that she could afford to finish school while doing the internship. Another told me that she'd been promised a stipend for an on-campus internship and then half-way through, the faculty member told her there was no money (Reportedly, this student did eventually get paid, but it took about seven months. Students will understand how damaging this timeframe is). One of my closest friends was so overwhelmed by everything

that they simply dropped out when it came time to complete the internship requirement. They were one year away from graduating but the internship prevented them from continuing, despite having \$20,000 in student loans.

The other side of this is the broader community. It is not in the community's best interests to have our schools flooding our labor markets with free labor from students who are required to do internships. The requirement essentially turns students into involuntary scabs competing against professionals for jobs that would normally be paid in the greatest economic crisis of our lifetimes. Companies profit from not needing to train their own workers while paying them, and the value of our exorbitantly priced education is further reduced when schools conspire with corporations to funnel free workers into that workforce.

I also think that it is newsworthy that this is happening in Pittsburgh, the cradle of labor history in the US. Pittsburgh—more than any city I know of—is a union town. Unions▶



have been significantly weakened due to deliberate attacks against them by conservative politicians, but it feels important that just across the Homestead bridge—less than five miles from campus—one of the most violent, most iconic struggles in US labor history took place.

Those workers died to protect their right to collective bargaining, to ensure they could support their families. Chatham is pumping out college-educated students and teaching them that their labor should be

given away for free is like spitting on the legacy of the Homestead strikers.

It's the workers and the students—particularly poor and already marginalized students—who pay the price.

This policy has implications for the whole city, not just Chatham students. And just because “everyone is doing it” does not make it okay. The negative impacts of unpaid/low-paying internships are clear.

My hope is to start a conversation among the students at Chatham about

how the school is selling us out to companies who do not want to pay fair wages. Students are paying so much to be in college and earn their degrees. The least the school could do is

to stand behind their own product and communicate to us and the community that we deserve fair compensation for our work, skills and education. This is a fundamental human right.



**Molly Ritter** is a Women and Gender Studies major in the last semester of her undergraduate degree here at Chatham. Her research interests lie in the social construction of women, particularly objectification theory. After earning her bachelor's degree, Ritter plans to pursue a PhD in social psychology to study the impacts of purity culture on self-objectification in women.

## Who does COVID-19 impact the most?

*Reflecting on demographic inequities during Women's History Month*

By Abbey Sullivan, opinion section editor

At the crux of Women's History Month lies the theory of intersectionality, which, coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw, represents the meeting points of one's identity. An individual must not be defined by but one facet; an individual is not just their gender, nor their race, nor their religion, et cetera. Without intersectionality and demographic analyses, a time of powerful remembrance like Women's History Month runs the

risk of becoming exclusive, rather than inclusive.

COVID-19 has thrust communities of all individuals into both painful isolation and danger. It has also shined a light on aspects of identity sometimes subject to discrimination. Thus, in the context of an intersectional March 2021, it behooves those of privilege to examine their peers unfairly impacted by the pandemic. Additionally, we ought to address not just our past but our present and why this “new normal” has stricken certain populations

in certain harmful manners, but not others.

Relegating women into inequitable household and workforce roles is a mode of discrimination that is taking a nuanced form during the pandemic. In the United States, women make up 91% of all registered nurses according

to the 2011 census. Historically, nursing has been prejudicially assumed as an extension of a woman's traditional domestic duties, which many women and mothers are still expected to perform at home. However, in the context of COVID-19, nurses are our front-liners, putting their ▶

**WOMEN'S  
HISTORY  
MONTH**

lives on the line for our safety every day, as women of all backgrounds.

It took formidable work to alter false perceptions of nursing and was often spearheaded by women in times of immense strife. Such women included Mary Elizabeth Mahoney (1845 -1926), who was the second African American to work professionally as a nurse, one of the very first to graduate from nursing school and also started the National Association of Colored Graduate Nurses.

Limited occupational opportunities is another mode of discrimination that does transcend gender during the pandemic. However, statistics show that women earn at or below the federal minimum wage more than men. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, as of 2015, 62% of federal minimum wage earners were women. When compounded with profiles of who is earning that wage, the United States' wealth gap becomes even more egregious.

According to the Pew Research Center (as of 2015), for every dollar a white man makes, a Black woman makes 65 cents. Furthermore, for every dollar a white man makes, a Hispanic woman makes 58 cents, making them the most underpaid minority.

These pay inequities exist



Mary Elizabeth Mahoney (1845 -1926), second African American woman to work professionally as a nurse. Photo credit: National Women's History Museum

solely on the basis of sexism and racism, as the United States operates on the presumption that masculinity and whiteness are the default and that those who are born outside of those bounds must acclimate. This is wholeheartedly false. Combining these bigoted standards with a global health crisis, however, and minorities are faced with unimaginable hardships that have yet to be solved. Efforts like rent forgiveness

and stimulus checks have fallen short, even with the transition of presidential administrations.

There have always been standout figures pushing for labor egalitarianism against the powers that be, specifically within the Latina community. Dolores Huerta is an American labor and civil rights activist who worked with Cesar Chavez to create the National Farmworkers Association, known today

as United Farm Workers. Emma Tenayuca was a Latina organizer in San Antonio, motivated by the Great Depression, who earned workers' rights in the region, with Time magazine running her photo in print when she was only 21 years old.

Healthcare discrimination at large limits the care BI-POC and LGBT individuals may receive, especially as access to COVID-19 care and vaccines fluctuates. These rates are especially high for transgender and Black patients; in a survey conducted by the Center for American Progress, 29% of transgender individuals reported that a healthcare provider refused to see them on account of their gender identity. Meanwhile, 4 in 10 Black Americans know someone who has died from COVID-19, according to National Geographic, which is double the rate for white Americans.

Black women and transgender women are populations that experience regular violence and prejudice in our country. They are also two groups that are regularly stamped out and ignored in lieu of more privileged voices during Women's History Month. But, they are groups that regularly intersect and uplift, with figureheads like Marsha P. Johnson (transgender LGBT rights) ►





Marsha P. Johnson (1945 -1992), transgender LGBT rights activist. Photo credit: Womenshistory.org

activist), Audre Lorde (lesbian feminist/critical race/queer studies theorist) and countless others trailblazing intersectional women's history throughout the 20th century.

Finally, the most recent minority group within Women's History Month facing discrimination during COVID-19 is the Asian community. Specifically, 2020 saw a 150% increase in hate crimes against the community (according to the Associated Press), sparked by racist rhetoric from figureheads like Donald Trump and other hyper-bigoted mouthpieces. Asian women are often bent into sexualized

stereotypes and subjected to racially motivated violence as a result; this March saw a white gunman kill eight victims (six of whom were Asian women) at three massage parlors. Despite the clear intersection of his misogynistic, xenophobic and racist motivations, however, the perpetrator still claims that he was troubled sexually, a sign indicative of male privilege.

In the face of these rampant stereotypes, advocates continue to emerge from this community to push for equality and power. Cecilia Chung is the first transgender and Asian woman to chair the San Francisco Human Rights Commission

and champions LGBT/civil rights work as an individual living with HIV/Aids. Samoan American Terisa Siagatonu won President Obama's 2012 Champion of Change award for her Pacific Island Activism and for her work in the LGBT, education, and climate change communities. Both women are striving to redefine the gender stigmas around Asian women.

History seems disjointed from our present as COVID-19 rages onward, but I believe that Women's History Month offers a time of togetherness, reflection

and opportunity. Broadening our perspective and compassion has never been more crucial. By looking to the past and admiring those who persevered with less, we can glean new routes to persevere forward. History is active, not passive, just as intersectionality is about bridging gaps through action and inclusion.



Terisa Siagatonu, activist and poet. Photo credit: Getty Images/Kelly Sullivan



## What is it like being a student athlete during a pandemic?

By Luke Paulson

No one is a stranger to the challenges that the pandemic has brought to our daily lives. Dealing with this alone is a struggle for many people, though playing a full collegiate season through it carries an even heavier weight.

Through all aspects of every sport, athletes truly understand how much preparation goes into getting ready for a season. The process is demanding both mentally and physically. Some spring athletes at Chatham University -- whose seasons were cancelled last year -- weigh in on this year's guidelines and protocols in order to participate in their sport.

### Ryan Shawley, baseball

Baseball player Ryan Shawley '21 says the hardest part of the season is having no social interaction with teammates outside of practice. Typically, team building occurs during off-field activities.

As far as Shawley's overall outlook on the protocols in place, he said, "It's difficult, but I believe we're going in the right direction."

Many players like Shawley are in agreement that they'll do whatever it takes to step onto the field and



Ryan Shawley '21 plays baseball for Chatham University. Photo Credit: Ryan Shawley



Brielle Rapsas '22 plays lacrosse for Chatham University. Photo Credit: Brielle Rapsas

play a full season. Whether teams like it or not, it's something that they all must adhere to. Most have adjusted to these new norms well and are taking action to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Shawley's confident that all spring athletics can get a full season in as long as teams continue to follow the guidelines the school has put in place. One objection that athletes have expressed is that tested players should be able to have more freedom once they get a negative test. Once a negative test is confirmed, as long as all other rules are followed, some students feel there should be no problem hanging out with other teammates who have also tested negative.

### Brielle Rapsas, lacrosse

One student athlete in particular that's not disrupted by these regulations is women's lacrosse player Brielle Rapsas '22.

Rapsas is thankful that Chatham has these rules in place in order to keep students safe and give teams the best chance at having a "normal" season.

"I hope that we won't have to deal with regulations too much longer, but they're manageable until things get back to normal," ►

Rapsas said.

Something that Rapsas thinks Chatham could do better is to communicate more. If the school were to lay out more clear instructions, then she believes this could help not just her, but all student athletes at

Chatham. Some people are curious about what they can and cannot do during the season. Once student athletes learn more about what is and is not OK, this might help them develop safe coping mechanisms.

Knowing that all athletes

are going through the same thing can help anyone else struggling with the guidelines that must be followed to compete. Playing a sport during this time is challenging for many reasons, however many students feel that if athletes stick to

the plans set forth by the University, this season will be a success.

For returning athletes, next academic year is something to look forward to, hoping that brighter days are ahead.

## Graham Field brings in school spirit, new revenue

By Haley Daugherty

Waivers, permits and the lights -- oh my!

Students may have noticed an added spring in lacrosse and soccer players' steps as they head off to practice on their newly renovated home field. After months of negotiations and working through a pandemic, Chatham University officially has its own NCAA regulated turf field. Graham Field is now open for action in Wilkinsburg, about three miles from the University's Shadyside campus.

The field has been a work in progress since the beginning of fall 2019 and has been a hard-fought battle to build in time for spring sports this year.

"We were probably about 80% complete [with the field] when COVID hit last March ... that stopped all progress. All subcontractors weren't allowed to work," said Robert DuBray, assistant vice president of

facility management and public safety at Chatham University.

As time went on and Pennsylvania reached the yellow phase regarding COVID-19 restrictions, work on the field began again in late May. However, Chatham was soon met with more challenges that further delayed construction.

"The biggest delay that we had to overcome was the slow permit approval by Wilkinsburg City Borough," DuBray said. "Their limited staffing really jeopardized our timeline."

The project had around 10 permits that needed to be approved in order to move forward with construction. With a renovation that large, timely approvals were crucial for meeting the deadline with a finished stadium.

"That permit process probably held us up for about six months on the project," DuBray said.



A sketch of Graham Field created in the planning phase. Photo Credit: Chatham University/ Twitter

The construction of the field was handled as two different projects and were overseen by two different contractors. The first was the renovation of the original field itself and a new parking lot. The second project was the renovations of the stadium, including restroom facilities, the bleachers and the press box. Exterior lighting surrounding the field and parking lot was also included in the second project.

"A lot goes on in a project like this. Like when we put in exterior lighting like that, we had to consider houses around the field and make sure that it doesn't keep

them awake," DuBray said. "The parking lot lights are on [quite often] and you just have to be conscious of your surroundings so you don't interfere with other people's lives."

For those who have not yet seen the field in all of its glory, a row of houses face the field from across the street. Residents near the field are directly affected by any change made to the field.

Due to the position of the field and its conversion from grass to turf, renovations had to include a plan for a runoff system so water would run into appropriate sewers and not damage ▶





Students from the women's lacrosse team practice at the new Graham Field. Photo Credit: Lilly Kubit

surrounding homes.

“I believe that the accomplished work effort has improved the quality of life for all of the neighbors. [The new system] actually reduced the amount of flooding that used to occur,” DuBray said.

The field was finished in February in time for lacrosse and soccer's competitive seasons. Players are happy to finally have a permanent home so close to campus.

“The new field is so incredible to play on, it's full size unlike the varsity one on campus so it allows us to have realistic game play and practices,” said lacrosse player Bailey Donofrio '23. “Rather than borrowing a high school field, we now have our own home field for friends and family to watch, and I think that is way more exciting.”

In previous years Cha-

tham University had to acquire a waiver in order to be able to use the varsity field located on campus. The varsity field is not NCAA regulation sized and was only temporary until Chatham was able to find an area large enough to put in a field that fit requirements. In the past, both the soccer and lacrosse team utilized Ellis high school's field for game play.

The new Graham Field is turf which encourages safety for players as it is more cushioned and there are no hills or holes in the ground that the players could get caught in while running during the game. The stadium also includes new locker rooms and an athletic training room.

“It's a really nice facility,” said soccer player Sam Franke '23.

A new field is an exciting boost for school spirit.

Rather than driving to a local high school, students can now support their cougars in a field that is all their own.

“We hope that the Chatham community will come and support the teams and create a fun atmosphere for both student-athletes and spectators,” said Chatham's athletic director, Leonard Trevino.

Not only does a new field create a fun atmosphere, it creates a more competitive one as well. Having a field for their own use has given athletes a boost in their competitive drive.

“[The field] definitely provides more school spirit and more support for athletes,” Donofrio said. “It's amazing to come back to our own place and play together [as a team] again.”

### **New field, new opportunities**

There is more potential for Graham Field other than an increase in school spirit. There are multiple opportunities to bring in revenue for the school. Teams in the surrounding area are able to use the field for their practices and games, as well. This brings money in with the use of the field and advertising for the University, with the logo being all over the facility.

“The original plan [for the field] was actually a partnership between the city of Wilkesburg and

Chatham University. It was supposed to include things like youth football, the Imani Christian Academy, and I know that our athletic director has worked to include other schools so they can have access to the field as well,” DuBray said.

There are three high schools currently utilizing the field along with Chatham's teams. While University teams have priority, Graham Field is meant to be an added benefit to the surrounding community. The stadium provides a safe field with updated amenities for local teams to use during their seasons.

While there have been whispers on campus of the field's completion opening possibilities of new sports being added to the Chatham Athletic program, there is currently no plan regarding the creation of more teams.

“At this time we don't anticipate adding any sports. Graham Field was built for collegiate lacrosse and soccer,” Trevino said. “The football field is able to host the community youth football program.”

Make sure to stop by the field to support the Cougars in their upcoming games. For more information about Graham Field, visit Chatham's website. For updates regarding Chatham athletics, visit [gochathamcougars.com](http://gochathamcougars.com).



# Gaadge releases its debut album

By Wyatt Cory

It is every musician's dream to sign to a record label and start the process of releasing your first album. This dream recently became a reality for shoegaze's hottest upcoming band, Gaadge.

Gaadge (with two A's), was started by Mitch DeLong in Erie, Pennsylvania back in 2014. In 2016, DeLong made the move down to Pittsburgh, where he added Andy Yadeski (guitar), Ethan Oliva (drums) and Nick Boston (bass) to complete their lineup.

It is here where Gaadge signed with Pittsburgh-based label Crafted Sounds and began working on their first studio album called "Yeah?"

"Yeah?" is DeLong's first experience writing music alongside a full band and label behind him. For some, this is a hurdle that can be hard to get over, but for DeLong, "It came out exactly how we wanted it."

DeLong found that having people share this journey alongside him has proved to be a big motivator to work on creating the best sound the group can.

"It is as much of a support system as it is people contributing to create music," DeLong says.



*Steel Currents is an occasional series in which lifestyle editor Wyatt Cory spotlights Pittsburgh-based bands and musicians that Chatham University students should keep on their radar.*

A major contributor to Gaadge's support has been its label, Crafted Sounds. It's worked with some of the area's best artists and helped Gaadge stay inspired through the album-writing process.

"I was very, very excited when they told me they wanted to put [our album] out," DeLong says. "Having the label to help push our work out has been incredible."

All of this came together once it was time to start writing and recording. Gaadge found a "shattered process," where everyone was doing their own thing that eventually blended together to form a new song. This process opened the doors to experimentation

DeLong described it as the perfect fit. As a high schooler, DeLong and his friends used to take trips down to see shows at venues like Roboto and moving down here has linked the past with the present.

"It is cool to become familiar with all of these places I used to visit," DeLong says.

DeLong has felt such a large amount of support from everyone so quickly that it has really made Pittsburgh feel like home.

Gaadge released their debut album "Yeah?" on music streaming services and online at [www.craftedsounds.net](http://www.craftedsounds.net) on March 19. Be sure to keep your eyes open for more to come from DeLong and Gaadge.

and genre bending, which is highly prevalent in their newest singles "All You Can Absorb," "Do What Now?" and "Twenty-Two."

When asked about how transitioning into the Pittsburgh scene has been,



Gaadge from left: Nick Boston, Ethan Oliva, Mitch DeLong and Andy Yadeski. Photo Credit: Josh Arlington and Zach Pude

## Monster Movie March: The Original King Kong and Godzilla

*Looking for a way to beat the boredom of staying indoors during COVID-19? How about turning on some classic monster movies. Visit our website to read more monster movie reviews from the Communiqué's resident movie reviewer Noah Napolitano.*

By Noah Napolitano

### King Kong (1933)

The story of King Kong is one most people know worldwide. Nine times out of ten, if you asked someone off the street about the story of King Kong, they would probably be able to tell you the basic plot. "King Kong" has had so many parodies and remakes (there was even a Broadway show that I saw a few years ago) that I feel most people, including me, have never seen the original.

This film started off with something I have never seen in movies before - an overture. An overture is basically a piece of music before the actual show. This is common in theater and some movies have the music during the opening credits. "King Kong" just had approximately three minutes of the word "overture" on the screen while music played, I honestly thought my TV had frozen.

One part of the film that really stuck out was King Kong himself. Kong's character utilized stop motion to portray his movement. Another aspect of the film

that stood out was the black and white format. Since the movie was in black and white, the darkness of Skull Island and New York City was very dark, nearing pitch black.

Although the stop motion is good for its time, the movements pale in comparison to effects now. Most old horror movies seem funny rather than scary due to their outdated special effects. The rubber masks and obvious use of green

screens aren't as scary as they were over 80 years ago. But something about the darkness of Skull Island and New York City, mixed with Kong's janky movements makes this movie still kind of terrifying, Kong's movements make him feel like a monster.

Also, in most adaptations of King Kong, the audience is supposed to feel bad for Kong and root for him. In this version though, I found myself actively rooting

against Kong. He genuinely acts as a monster. The natives of Skull Island seem to fear Kong and they try to kill him when he breaks into their village. In this film, the human characters are seen as good. In most modern monster movies, the human characters are seen as boring, when you wanna watch a movie where giant monsters fight each other, you tend to care less on the humans who have their own plotline, but in this film I found myself being interested in the humans and their relationships with each other.

All around, I found this movie to be very good. Although Kong will only be in three movies in this marathon, he is still a pop culture icon that has stood the test of time.

### Godzilla (1954)

In Japan, Godzilla or Gōjira is as much, if not more, of a cultural icon than Superman or Spider-Man. Godzilla is such a well-known figure that going back to his original appearance was amazing. A large part of the film is focused not on Godzilla himself, ►





but the human characters.

According to Google, Godzilla only has eight minutes of screen time and the film is around an hour and a half. The human characters are mostly not that interesting to me. There was a boy who followed the main characters for most of the film and I still don't know how he was related to the other characters. The most interesting character besides Godzilla was Dr. Serizawa (who will come back later in this marathon). He is a doctor who created an "oxygen destroyer" that destroys the oxygen and any living creature in the water within an unknown radius. Serizawa is basically the protagonist, and we see his internal debate about the oxygen destroyer and what it can do.

Back to Godzilla himself, this film was one of the first films to use what is called "suitmation" which is when someone wears a big rubber costume and stomps around a model city. While today suitmation is something that we think of as kind of funny, upon watching this film, Godzilla feels real. In "King Kong" (1933) whenever Kong is destroying "real" structures, it is obvious that it is stop-motion. That does add to the charm of that movie, but seeing Godzilla destroying a city, the lines between obviously fake and real become

blurred.

Another thing that made this film seem real was the framing. Most shots of Godzilla are from a person's perspective, and that makes "Godzilla" feel both so real and so terrifying. This film's importance doesn't come from a giant radioactive dinosaur destroying Japan, but rather because the film is a cautionary tale on the use of nuclear weapons. This film starts off with a boat being destroyed by Godzilla, and this event is based off a real event. In 1954, the Daigo Fukuryū Maru, a fishing boat with 23 men, was contaminated by nuclear fallout by the United States nuclear test at Bikini Atoll. This wasn't the only event that inspired "Godzilla".

Hiroshima and Nagasaki at the end of World War II played a big role in the plot behind the film. When Godzilla attacks Japan on his first big city-destroying walk, we see the horrors people are facing. There is a scene where a mother tries to comfort her children by saying that they will be with their father soon, right before they all die. Even after Godzilla moves toward the ocean we see the fallout from Godzilla's attack, we see a mother die as her infant daughter is crying over her body.

Also I want to talk a bit about the different versions.



I watched the original Japanese version that has the large anti-nuclear message, but there is an American version that was released in 1956 which edits in Raymond Burr and downplays the anti-nukes message. They even cut the scene of a mother dying that I just talked about.

This film truly shows the horror of nuclear weaponry. When Godzilla is killed by Serizawa sacrificing himself, there is little celebration and partying, just sadness. The cautionary tale of nuclear weapons is really driven home when the final lines are "I can't believe that Godzilla was the last of its species. If nuclear testing continues, then someday, somewhere in the world... another Godzilla

may appear." "Godzilla" represents nuclear weaponry and the disasters it would cause the world.

### Which is Better?

Since this entire marathon/article series is leading up to Godzilla vs Kong, let's compare. For Week One, the winner is... "Godzilla" (1954). While I did enjoy both films very much, I think "Godzilla" had superior special effects, and the writing and message made the film better. "King Kong" was still good, and the story of this film and the story of King Kong is something that will persevere for many years from now. I mean there is a Broadway show, King Kong will remain in pop culture for a LONG time.



## Mindfulness: A photo series

By Lilly Kubit

*Let's take a moment to practice mindfulness, shall we?  
Come on a walk with me.*



*Sit on the bench and observe the children shouting with joy while sledding down the hill.*



*Feel the nipping cold wind numb those ears til they're red.*



*Watch the golden sunlight peeking through the clouds.*



*For when the snow melts, we will keep it alive in our memories.*

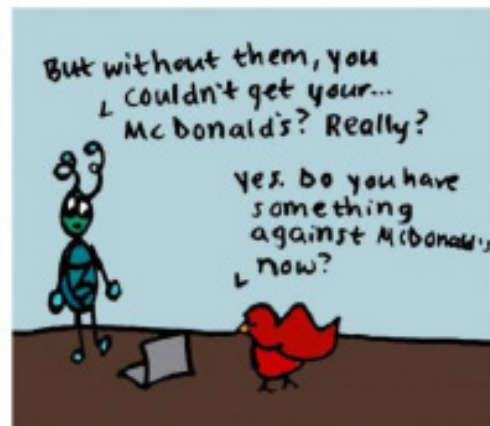




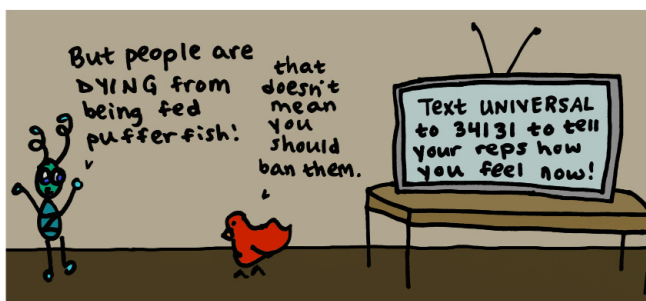
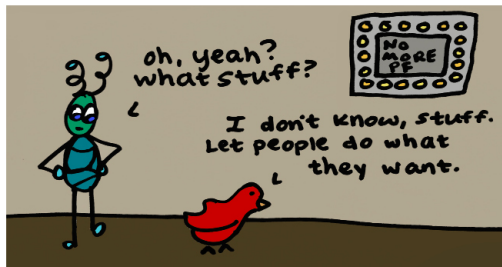
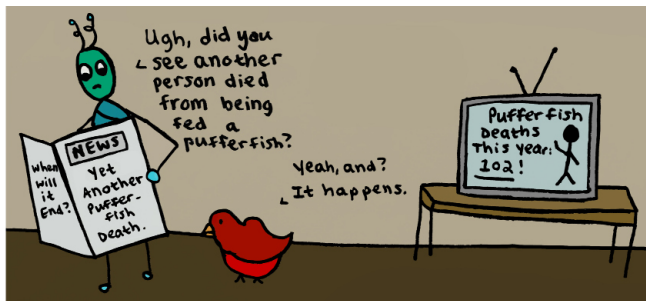
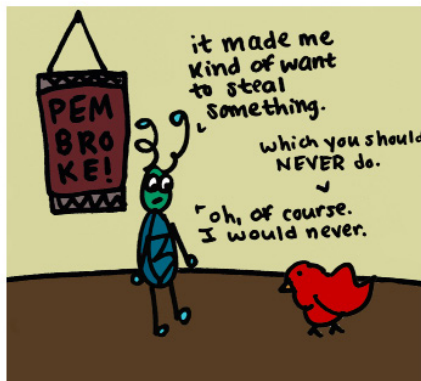
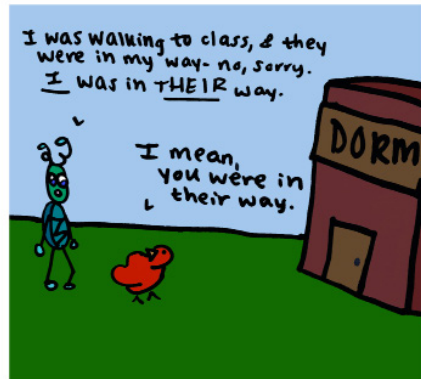
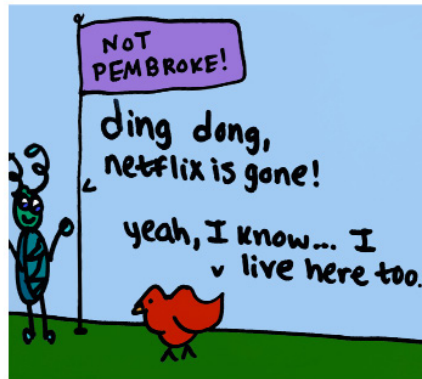
## *Doodlebug and Bird talk about it all*

*Out of Left Field — that's how Doodlebug has been feeling lately. Everything seems like it's happening so fast! He's rebranding with the help of his friends. New experiences, new locations and new ideas! Stay tuned to see how Doodlebug continues his journey through Pittsburgh's and the world's current events.*

Alexis Taranto '24









### Letters to the editor

The Communiqué welcomes readers to submit letters to be considered for publication in print and/or online. Send your reactions to stories, thoughts on Chatham University and whatever else is on your mind to opinion editor Abbey Sullivan (abbey.sullivan@chatham.edu).

## Keep in touch

### Corrections

The Communiqué strives to report the news accurately and fairly. If we've made a mistake, please let us know so we can correct it and learn from it. Email (alice.crow@chatham.edu) or (communiqué@chatham.edu).

### Advertising

Contact business manager Rylee Napolitan (rylee.napolitan@chatham.edu) to learn more about digital advertising opportunities.

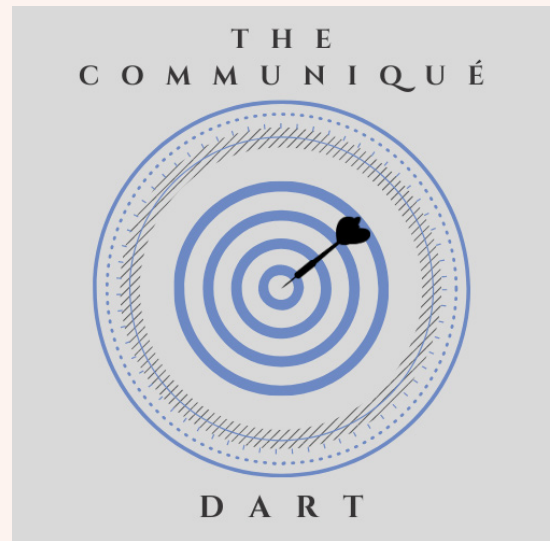
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The Communiqué welcomes writers, photographers, videographers, graphic designers, website and social media editors, artists, and students with interest in marketing and advertising. Email Editor-in-Chief Alice Crow (alice.crow@chatham.edu) for access to the Zoom link.



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Be part of our advice column! Submit a question by sending it to [communiqué@chatham.edu](mailto:communiqué@chatham.edu). For more information on how to submit a question go to our website [chathamcommuniqué.com](http://chathamcommuniqué.com).



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The Communiqué is publishing podcast episodes! "The Communiqué Dart" will focus on diving deeper into the important stories at Chatham. Follow our social media for more information.

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