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Sustainabilibees creates buzz

Michelle Mazzei
TEC STAFF

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TEC STAFF



East Carolina University continues to bring environmental organizations on campus as Sustainabilibees hopes to stir up some buzz about sustainability and pollinators.

Erica Miller, a sophomore environmental engineering major, beekeeper and president of ECU Sustainabilibees, said the organization seeks to raise awareness, ecological sustainability and activism about pollinators, such as honeybees.

Miller said the group was created as an ECU Honors College project and was founded soon after as an organization on ECU's Engage website. While ECU Sustainability had hives and bees, Miller said its resources weren't widely accessible to the student population, which

Sustainabilibees hopes to change. "Honeybees are very misunderstood, and so are other pollinators like wasps and just bees in general," Miller said. "We chose to go from that angle and see how we could bring change to the Greenville community and the (ECU) student perspective regarding pollinators."

Miller said ECU is part of a collegiate honeybee advocate group known as Bee Campus USA, and the university is the home to four honeybee hives. The hives, Miller said, are located near the Health Sciences Campus and near the Carol G. Belk Building off Charles St. in Greenville, North Carolina, behind the conservation pond. Miller said the bees can be viewed 24/7 on a livestream located on ECU Sustainability's website.

The honey that is collected from bees in the campus hives is given

back to the bees throughout the winter months, according to Miller. She said in order to distribute honey throughout the area of Greenville, there needs to be a larger operation of bee hives on ECU's campus, so there is a future possibility of the distribution of honey to the Greenville community from the Sustainabilibees organization.

Through events on campus such as trivia, movie nights and educational activities, Sustainabilibees hopes to increase accessibility, awareness and community interaction with the hives while it educates on the importance of pollinators, according to Miller.

"We don't really have any requirements undergrad or graduate students are welcome," Miller said. "We want to get as many people involved (in Sustainabilibees) as we possibly can, so we're open to everyone."

Haley Whoolery, sophomore art major and Sustainabilibees treasurer, said human negligence has threatened bee populations, whose pollination activities are an integral part in the food production for humans.

Sustainabilibees, Whoolery said, held a beehive box painting event on March 12, where 15 to 20 individuals came to participate. She said this event is the only student-interactive event Sustainabilibees has done thus far, however, the organization plans to complete various in-person events throughout the fall of 2021.

Whoolery said the organization is in search of new members to join the hive. After the organization's beehive box painting event with ECU Sustainability, Whoolery said, the group looks forward to more opportunities to engage with the student population and community.

"Before I came to the group, I didn't know anything about bees and stuff," Whoolery said. "Just by

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Sustainabilibee beekeepers tend to the hives located behind the conservation pond. CONTRIBUTED BY HALEY WHOOLERY

Fees to rise, RAs expect fall return

Chris Young
TEC STAFF

Students at East Carolina University can expect to see an increase in room and board prices from the university as well as a return of resident advisors (RAs) on-campus for the fall 2021 semester.

Director of Housing Operations at ECU Aaron Lucier said the increase in room and board prices for residence halls has to do with the increase in costs at ECU. He said the biggest costs for ECU students include increases in material costs and utilities, which the university has to budget for. Lucier said students will find out how much the room and board prices increased when billing for the fall 2021 semester begins.

"This (room and board increase) was a small incremental increase to match the increase in costs that are going to the department (Campus Living)," Lucier said. "COVID has impacted these material costs and service fees causing them to go up."

While the COVID-19 pandemic has made a noticeable impact on the yearly budget for ECU, the increase in room and board prices weren't solely from the pandemic, according to Lucier. He said the increase in the prices for these material costs and service fees also heavily contributed to



Aaron Lucier

the increase in room and board costs. Lucier said there were also increases in the cost of utilities and other services provided to the university, such as a raise for North Carolina state employees. He said these services could come from outside vendors such as Greenville Utilities, which have increased their prices as well.

"It's (the price increase) part of the natural increase in prices that come along," Lucier said. "Every year we look at our pricing and we come up with a budget and unfortunately prices rarely ever go down so in that sense it's permanent."

Lucier said for a variety of reasons, there were no RAs throughout the 2020-2021 academic year but, for the fall 2021 semester, they are expected to return. He said there were no RAs in the fall 2020 and spring 2021 semesters because of the pandemic's effects on university finances and ECU could not afford to have RAs.

Not only will RAs return in the fall, Lucier said, but

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Pandemic impacts enrollment numbers at ECU

Cayla Menges
TEC STAFF

East Carolina University's Office of Undergraduate Admissions and Office of the Registrar continue to see both positive and negative impacts in enrollment numbers for the summer 2021 sessions and fall 2021 semester due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Assistant Vice Chancellor for the Office of the Registrar Angela Anderson said in an email statement the official enrollment data for the summer 2021 sessions are not yet available. However, she said the summer 2020 and summer 2021 sessions have both been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Course delivery method changes, zoom fatigue and student financial impacts from the pandemic are recognized at the national level as affecting enrollments," Anderson said.

The special grading accommodations offered from fall 2020, spring 2020 and spring 2021 semesters have allowed ECU students to continue to make progress toward their degree, according to Anderson. She said students have not needed to retake courses



Angela Anderson

for a grade change over the summer sessions due to the ability to use the pass/fail option, which has had some impact on summer enrollment rates.

Director for Undergraduate Admissions Stephanie Whaley said the Office of Undergraduate Admissions continues to receive completed freshmen applications for the fall 2021 semester. She said the university has achieved a record number of submitted freshmen applications at 22,837, the most in ECU's history.

"It does look very promising that we'll be able to welcome in a new class and we're very excited to do that in a more traditional way than last year (2020) as we're making plans for the fall (of 2021) to be largely back to normal," Whaley said. "To have our classroom spaces, our in-person classes, very much back to the same way that they were in fall 2019 and before."

Whaley said ECU is on track to meet its goal of 4,227 enrolled freshmen for fall 2021 semester, which will be a 2% increase over last year. She said throughout 2020, freshmen faced disappointment due to classes' shift online due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Office of Undergraduate Admissions worked hard to ensure new students feel they are being communicated with throughout



Students walk outside Joyner Library, located on East Carolina University's main campus. ROSE BOGUE | THE EAST CAROLINIAN

the summer until the academic year starts, with several virtual information sessions, according to Whaley. She said COVID-19 weighed heavily on university admissions for the 2020-2021 school year, as ECU lost more students over the last summer than ever in the university's history.

"Students and their families had to make some tough choices, so last year hesitancy was probably at the top of the concerns of most incoming students," Whaley said.

The Office of Undergraduate Admissions can attribute its success in completed freshmen applications for the fall 2021 semester to ECU colleges and the department's willingness to consistently reach out to prospective students, according to Whaley. She said she believes it takes effort from everyone on campus to ensure students will come to school in the fall 2021 semester.

Whaley said she is optimistic prospective

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ONLINE

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BRIEFS

SGA to hold virtual office hours

Today, East Carolina University's Student Government Association (SGA) will hold virtual office hours at 2 and 4 p.m. Students and other participants will have the opportunity throughout the office hours to ask the SGA representatives any questions they may have. Participants will also get the chance to have open dialogue with those student representatives. There will be another Virtual Office Hours tomorrow at 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. Individuals must register on the ECU Engage website to attend.

'Dishing up Data' to be hosted

Tomorrow, the ECU Department of Faculty Excellence will host "Dishing up Data" from 11 to 11:30 a.m. Participants will have the opportunity to learn how many of the 260 academic programs ECU has approved for online instruction. Individuals will also learn about how students can obtain PhDs in psychology, the University of North Carolina (UNC) systems as well as the Academic Program Inventory (API). Individuals who wish to attend this virtual event, have to register on the ENC Events Calendar website.

'HITT The Ground Running' series to begin

Friday, the Campus Recreation and Wellness will start their "HITT The Ground Running" sessions at 8:00 a.m. The sessions last four weeks and will consist of strength as well as cardio training exercises. As Friday is "Preview Day," participants are eligible to try the exercise session without having the need to sign up for the entire program. Individuals can register for this event on the ECU Engage website.

CORRECTIONS & CLARIFICATIONS

If you feel there are any factual errors in this newspaper please contact Chloe Easton at editor@theeastcarolinian.com

ENC Alliance promotes local jobs

ECU students are encouraged to work locally after graduation

Michelle Mazzei
TEC STAFF

With the help of the Greenville Eastern North Carolina (ENC) Alliance, and as East Carolina University (ECU) and Pitt Community College (PCC) students recently graduated earlier this May, the ENC Alliance continues to work to encourage those graduates to stay local.

President and Chief Executive Officer of the Greenville ENC Alliance Steve Weathers said the organization seeks to increase economic growth in Greenville. He said the ENC Alliance has plans for the future which entail the creation of a website through the North Carolina (NC) Biotechnology Center similar to the dating app, Match. This app will help individuals in the community, but specifically ECU and PCC graduates, find jobs in Greenville.

Weathers said he and the ENC Alliance work directly with businesses in the area to help promote who they are and what they do to help attract those students to work in the area. He said the website the ENC Alliance plans to create is estimated to be completed by fall of 2021.

"Thermo Fisher (Scientific) and Mayne Farma are coproducts, who are looking for employees, and then we have matchups for both either internships or employment for the (ECU and PCC) students, so the students can also go on there and put their background and experiences, so it's like a local version of this matching program to kind of keep them here (Greenville)," Weathers said.

There are job opportunities in the City of Greenville for all majors who graduate from ECU and PCC, according to Weathers. He said one specific major a student has does not define all the opportunities available to them. The more ECU and PCC graduates who stay in Greenville, Weather said, the more economic growth the city will see.

Weathers said he has been in constant contact with ECU Chancellor Philip Rogers as well as PCC President Lawrence Rouse to help keep the graduates in the City of Greenville. He said communication is key in terms of keeping graduates in the area where they went to college.

As of date of publication, Rogers has not returned comments on what he as well as the ENC Alliance and Rouse plan to do in the future in terms of keeping ECU and PCC graduates in Greenville.

"We (ENC Alliance) do work with small companies (in Greenville), but what we find is it's a little easier for smaller companies to find one or two people, because it's one or two people," Weathers said. "It's much tougher for Thermo Fisher (Scientific) to hire 500 people in the time frame, just because you have to go through so



Steve Weathers



JASMIN RUSH | THE EAST CAROLINIAN

Thermo Fisher Scientific, located in Greenville, North Carolina works with the ENC Alliance.

much to get to the 500 qualified people, so what we're really trying to do is help support whatever their (Greenville businesses') efforts."

Weathers said he and the ENC Alliance will continue to provide the Greenville community with various job opportunities and the support graduates need to stay in the city for their careers.

ENC Alliance's Vice President of the Business Development Department Brad Hufford said the ENC Alliance will not only promote job opportunities to college graduates but also to those enrolled in Pitt County elementary and high schools.

There are career services within both ECU and the Pitt County Schools in which students can go to not only find out about the ENC Alliance but also find out about job opportunities and openings in Greenville.

"They'll (students) go through career services and they'll have different events and opportunities, for say, internships and apprenticeship programs through the university," Hufford said. "There's always marketing that is done specifically to East Carolina (University) students and Pitt Community College students."

Hufford said the ENC Alliance constantly provides job opportunities for those who graduate in the Greenville area. He said as of the week of May 16, Thermo Fisher (Scientific) had approximately 134 opening positions for pharmaceutical physicians.

The job opportunities available for Greenville community graduates are good paying occupations, according to Hufford. He said he encourages

graduates to not stray away from the city they attend college in.

Vice President of the NC Biotech Statewide Operations and Executive Director of the Eastern Regional Office Mark Phillips said he works with the ENC Alliance to enhance the technology and economic development in Greenville.

"We (NC Biotech) do technology based economic development, and our goal is obviously to recruit industry to North Carolina as well as assist local pharmaceutical industries of North Carolina with any expansion opportunities," Phillips said. "In this particular case, we're working with the ENC Alliance as a partner as well as working on workforce development training needs for these existing industries in Pitt County."

Phillips said he works closely with the ENC Alliance to facilitate the meetings they have with their Greenville business partners as well as with Rogers and Rouse. He said there are consistent meetings with the ECU community.

Thermo Fisher (Scientific) and Mayne Pharma are just one of the companies Phillips said he works with to increase the economic growth in Greenville. He said it is important for ECU and PCC graduates to engage in job opportunities that are available in the city, so the businesses in Greenville can continue to provide an accurate workforce for all graduates.



Mark Phillips



Brad Hufford

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students will continue to show interest in attendance at ECU as the university returns to a more normal year. She said enrollment numbers are more solid this year because of the university's ability to showcase plans to navigate the COVID-19 pandemic in place for the fall 2021 semester.

In the spring 2021 semester, it was clear prospective students wanted to come on campus and see what ECU offers, Whaley said. She said the opportunity to get prospective students on campus made a positive impact on their decisions to attend ECU.

"I think that (in-person events) has made a big difference because for high school students in their senior year, they really don't want to make a decision about a college unless they've actually walked on the sidewalk, smelled the air, seeing what the culture of the university is all about," Whaley said. "That was really important and a great accomplishment. I think that we were able to host campus tours."

As COVID-19 regulations lessened for the state of North Carolina and the community, the Office of Undergraduate Admissions was able to provide more in-person events throughout the spring 2021 semester and summer 2021 for prospective students, according to Whaley, rather than holding virtual events only. She said campus tours and Pirates Aboard, an admitted students day, were able to be held amid easing COVID-19 guidelines and continue to happen throughout the summer session during the week.

Whaley said in the spring 2021 semester the Office of Undergraduate Admissions was able to host 17 different Pirates Aboard admitted student day sessions.

"Normally we do one big event but because of covid to make things safer we did 17 smaller events based on the student's academic majors," Whaley said. "Again just getting students on campus I feel like made a really positive impact. We heard really good feedback from students and the parents of incoming students."

Associate Director for Transfer Recruitment Erica Hoyt said in an email statement the Office of Undergraduate Admissions has created transfer focused initiatives to encourage transfer applications to ECU.

She said some initiatives include, but are not limited to, call campaigns throughout the summer for incomplete and admitted applications, mailed pirate keychains and a scholarship giveaway from May 18 to June 18 of \$500 for two chosen admitted transfers.

Hoyt said the office has 300 more applications this year than when compared to this time in 2020. She said the office hopes for an enrolled fall 2021 transfer class of around 1,900 students as applications are open to prospective transfers until June 28.

"We continue to communicate the tremendous value of an ECU education and encourage prospective transfers to continue their academic journey with us," Hoyt said. "We conduct targeted communication via text, email and phone to transfer students at all stages of the admissions process."

Hoyt said the Office of Undergraduate Admissions has received success in communication to prospective transfer students through text messaging. She said one on one virtual appointments are also offered with transfer counselors for prospective students.

The Office of Undergraduate Admissions has been able to host one event already off campus, an Admitted Transfer Virtual Event yesterday at 6 p.m. and will host a second, an in-person Transfer Instant Decision Day tomorrow from 1 to 5 p.m. for already admitted transfers and those who have not completed applications, according to Hoyt. She said their goal behind the Admitted Transfer Virtual Event and in-person Transfer Instant Decision Day is to provide various opportunities for prospective transfer students to receive information and guidance to help their transfer process to ECU.

"Our goals is to provide as many options for students to receive information and receive guidance needed to make a seamless transfer to ECU," Hoyt said.

Official enrollment numbers for the fall 2021 semester are still underway as the Office of Undergraduate Admissions continues to receive freshmen deposits. The deadline for incoming freshmen to submit a deposit for enrollment in the fall 2021 semester ends on June 1.

This writer can be contacted at news@theeastcarolinian.com.

HALLS continued from A1

the Neighborhood Service Office, facilities workers, office workers and students will also be back on campus in person this fall. He said the Office of Housing Operations expects everything to be back to normal for the upcoming 2021 semester as the planning team led by Chancellor Philip Rogers continues to meet each Wednesday to reform guidelines to keep the community safe.

"Considering we did not have them (RA's) this (2020-2021) year, I can see why there were questions about them returning for the next year," Lucier said. "Our plan is to return as close as possible to our normal staffing levels in the fall."

While there may be a slight decrease in RA numbers due to residence halls on campus being utilized as quarantine spaces for those who may be infected with COVID-19, Lucier said the number of RA's will remain similar to previous years before the start of the pandemic. College Hill Suites will serve as the university's main quarantine and isolation zone, which Lucier said can be attributed to the loss of a few RA's.

Lucier said he is unsure as to whether the university will change its COVID-19 regulations on masks within the residence halls.

"Once again I think that's going to depend on where we are as a state, and where we are on numbers as we look into fall and I think it's one of those things that might come out a little bit later this summer you know with some more specific guidelines," Lucier said.

Junior child life major Ellie Curtis, who will work as an RA in the fall 2021 semester, said she started as an RA in 2020 in the middle of the pandemic. She said her experience was hectic, but she was able to learn a lot throughout her short time as an RA.

Curtis said she was an RA when Campus Living sent the RA's home in the fall of 2020 unexpectedly. She said she received an email, which told her she had to be sent home because there was no room in the ECU budget to continue to pay them.

"At first they (Campus Living) gave us the option to stay on campus because they originally found room in the budget," Curtis said. "After a month, they said they couldn't afford to keep the RA's on campus and we were forced to move out."

Curtis said the fall 2021 semester's guidelines should be less strict now that the COVID-19 pandemic is almost over and the state is starting to experience eased restrictions on social distancing and mandates. She said while she hopes next semester will be easier for RA's overall, she and all the other RA's have not received information on any new developments on regulations for the upcoming semester as of May 25.

As of date of publication, the rules will continue to remain the same in residence halls as last semester in regards to COVID-19 regulations, such as guest restrictions and the use of face masks indoors, according to Curtis. She said the fall 2021 semester should be a lot more lenient, however, on a day to day bases for students who plan to live on campus in the residence halls.

"In the future, hopefully we won't have to write up students for not wearing masks because the pandemic is almost over," Curtis said. "This next year (2021-2022), our jobs should be easier and a lot less hectic."

Junior health fitness specialist major Kyle Colbert said as an RA next semester, he will have to do additional staff work to make sure students follow whatever COVID-19 regulations are put in place. He said the biggest obligation as an RA is to maintain residence to make sure they're safe for all students who will stay on campus.

Colbert said next semester, ECU students and RA's will have more freedom in the residence halls and on the university's campus. He said as an RA, he will be able to set up more events and entertain the possibility for more family visits.

"I think we (ECU students) will still be distanced and watched, and there will probably still be a (face) mask mandate, even if it is lessened," Colbert said. "This is all speculation, going off of news and current events or what I've been told."

Further information on increased room and board fees for the 2020-2021 academic year continued to be released by ECU's Campus Living. Additional information on the university's COVID-19 regulations for Campus Living residence halls can be found on its website.

This writer can be contacted at news@theeastcarolinian.com.



Ellie Curtis



Kyle Colbert



Stephanie Whaley



Erica Hoyt

EVENTS

TODAY

Cousins Maine Lobster Food Truck

Pitt Street Brewing Company
630 S. Pitt St.
4 to 8 p.m.
252-227-4151

Uptown Greenville Umbrella Market

Five Points Plaza
W. 5th St. at Evans Street
5 to 8 p.m.
252-561-8400

Yoga in the Park with Purple Blossom Yoga

Town Common
100 E. 1st St.
6:30 to 7:30 p.m.
252-329-4567

TOMORROW

Pitt Street Run Club

Pitt Street Brewing Company
630 S. Pitt St.
6:15 p.m.
252-227-4151

Zumba in the Park

Town Common
100 E. 1st St.
6 to 9 p.m.
252-329-4567

FRIDAY

El Jefecito Food Truck

Pitt Street Brewing Company
630 S. Pitt St.
6 to 9 p.m.
252-227-4151



NICHOLAS FAULKNER | THE EAST CAROLINIAN

Before the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, customers enjoyed offerings at a produce vendor's booth at Uptown Greenville's Umbrella Market.

City features farmers, producers

Umbrella Market vendors anticipate increase after regulations lessen

Yasmine Curmon-Ward
TEC STAFF

Local farmers and producers in Greenville, North Carolina, who continue to participate in the Umbrella Market look forward to an increase in businesses due to North Carolina Governor Roy Cooper's COVID-19 executive order to relax face masks and social distancing mandates.

Pure Life Microgreens Owner Ron Cooper said the COVID-19 pandemic negatively affected business. He said his main consumers are restaurants and when many restaurants closed down or cut back on their hours, the business demand went down.



Ron Cooper

"We (Pure Life Microgreens) can pretty quickly produce our products because we sell microgreens that take seven to 10 days to be able to get it from seed to harvest, and that being the case, we require a quick turn around. That's how we make our money," Ron Cooper said.

The Umbrella Market is a great opportunity for farmers and producers to gain more business, according to Ron Cooper. He said he appreciates the opportunity to be a part of the Umbrella Market, although it is still early in the summer to see an increase in sales, he expects to see business increase with the relaxation of safety restrictions.

Umbrella Market Manager Robin Ashley said local farmers and producers had to find new

ways like Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) boxes to do business due to the COVID-19 pandemic. She said families were not able to visit farms and pick their own fruit throughout the summer of 2020, which was a big loss to these businesses.

"Customers who are loyal to their farms also understand what is happening, so they rallied behind the farm to provide that support," Ashley said. "If they (farmers) didn't normally get a CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) box from a farm, maybe they did last year to add that extra support to a farm," Ashley said.

CSA boxes consist of whatever is produced for the week from a local farm and are sent to Greenville customers who subscribe to their delivery service, according to Ashley. She said this service benefits farmers and producers in the Greenville area because they have a constant income and customers can try new meals with whatever produce they get for the week.

Ashley said summertime is peak produce season, so there should be an increase in business for local farmers and producers throughout the summer months of 2021. She said individuals have come out to the Umbrella Market and have supported the farmers and producers there. She said more vendors are able to participate in the Umbrella Market due to

the relaxation of COVID-19 regulations, such as social distance and face mask mandates.

"You can see that people are enjoying being out and socializing," Ashley said. "They (customers) are definitely supporting the vendors at the market. It's very nice to see after such a hard summer last year (2020)."



Ayra Sundbom

Bearadise Farm co-owner Ayra Sundbom said Bearadise farm is a three generation family-owned farm in Greenville, North Carolina. She said the farm was not largely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic because they made home deliveries to individuals in Greenville, Rocky Mount, Wilson and other local North Carolina areas.

Sundbom said their staff is happy to be a part of the Umbrella Market this year to meet new people and build their clientele. She said all Greenville members are welcome to come shop at Bearadise Farm and they will also offer tours at the farm.

"People are welcome to come and see where their food is grown. That's important for us for people to learn how animals are raised," Sundbom said. "All of our animals are pasteurized animals, so they are outside, and they get plenty of fresh air and sunlight," Sundbom said.

This writer can be contacted at arts@theeastcarolinian.com.

ECU alumnus reaches record number views

Yasmine Curmon-Ward
TEC STAFF

East Carolina University alumnus Jacobs Simmons III, also known as Spiffy Jake on social media, has reached over 12,000 views on YouTube with his music video "WHYY" from his recent album "HeartBreakJake," which was released on music platforms on May 12.



Jacobs Simmons III

Simmons said a strategic plan and the right time frame is key in the music business, as he carefully plans out his release dates for his music and the videos which correspond to his songs. He said he credits his family and friends for their support in his music career.

"I couldn't believe it at first. The love and support around me is real," Simmons said. "They (Simmons' close family and friends) are going to tell me what's good and bad, what works and what doesn't. I am glad my family and friends can be consumers and critics to help me manage myself."

Simmons said he graduated from ECU in May 2021 and plans to pursue a master's degree in communication at the University of Houston. While in attendance at ECU, he said he balanced his time as a student and grew as an artist while he pursued his education. Simmons said the extra time he had due to the COVID-19 pandemic allowed him more time to work on his music.

Most of the "HeartBreakJake" album

consists of freestyle raps, according to Simmons. He said the song "Buttercup" is his favorite song on the album and he believes it shows his growth as an artist and a writer.

"It's ('Buttercup') written out, it's perfected to me. The only reason I put it at the end of the album is because it's a hidden gem for people who really want to pay attention to what I have going on," Simmons said.

The "HeartBreakJake" album and more music can be found on Apple Music, Spotify and other music platforms, Simmons said. He said he will plan a meet and greet in Greenville, North Carolina, before he leaves for Houston, Texas, this summer and will announce the place and time at a later date.

Senior criminal justice major Nikkarsia Howell said she met Simmons when they both came in as freshmen at ECU. She said she and Simmons connected right away and she is proud of Simmons' growth.

Howell said she describes Simmons' music as "energetic" and she expects Simmons to grow into an even bigger artist. She said she hopes to see Simmons' music on the Billboard charts and to hear his music on the radio in the future.

"The growth that he (Simmons) has made is incredible and he never stopped working. He never stopped pushing," Howell said. "I really love his videos, they are really creative, he makes sure that he puts in the effort doing what he loves."

ECU alumnus Jaylen Green said he is a close friend of Simmons and describes him as "an ambitious person." He said he enjoyed the "HeartBreakJake" album and hopes to see Simmons get the recognition



COURTESY OF JACOBS SIMMONS III

ECU alumnus Jacob Simmons III takes his graduation pictures outside the Main Campus Student Center.

he deserves for his work.

Green said he is glad to see Simmons' success on YouTube and expects to see more success in the near future from Simmons. He said with Simmons' hard work ethic and dedication, Simmons can accomplish great things in his career.

"He (Simmons) is diligent in his work, he puts a lot of time and his everything into his music. He's an all around entertainer," Green said. "I can definitely see his music

played on the radio."

Some of Simmons' other songs on the "HeartBreakJake" album include "Red Hot," "We Won't Make It" and "Orlando." All of the songs plus more are available on his YouTube channel, Spiffy Jake.

This writer can be contacted at arts@theeastcarolinian.com.

BEES continued from A1

joining this group it has really opened my eyes to how big and important they (bees) actually are, and now I'm thinking of making my own beehives in the future."

Rachael Kluge, a sophomore pre-nursing major, who is also secretary of Sustainabilibees, said she encourages all ECU students to join Sustainabilibees. She said the organization is an opportunity to not only learn about bees and other pollinators, but also a great way to form strong relationships with other students on campus.

Kluge said it was difficult for

her to get involved with on-campus activities and organizations while the COVID-19 pandemic left ECU instruction primarily online. She said the environments of Sustainabilibees' and the organization's atmosphere are what led her to join the organization and her fellow peers in the group.

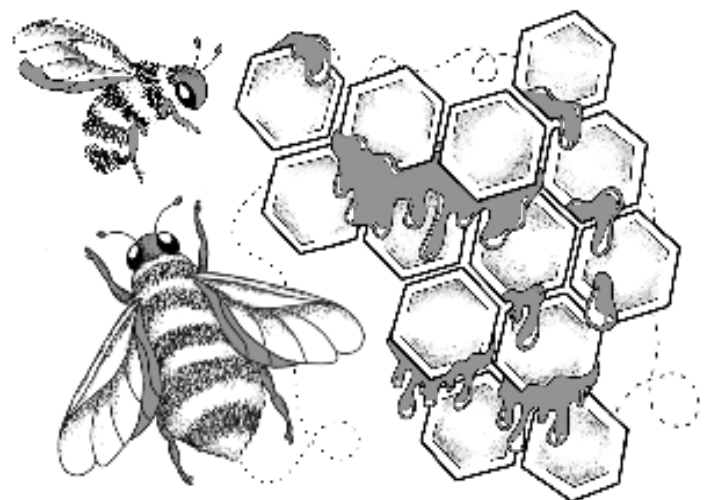
"I've never been a big bug person, but this group has a lot to offer outside of just interacting with bees," Kluge said. "And the environment is such a big issue, and I think it's an issue that kind of connects everyone, and there's so many different avenues that this club can go in relating to pollination and other environmental factors to just connect everybody

in the community."

ECU's efforts to sustain and educate those on bee populations was first initiated by ECU Sustainability in response to the issue of global issue of a decline in bee populations.

Individuals can follow Sustainabilibees' Instagram and the ECU Sustainability page on Pollinator Projects to get more information about the organization, the beehives, as well as further updates and information to join the organization.

This writer can be contacted at arts@theeastcarolinian.com.



ILLUSTRATED BY OLIVIA MAGISTRO

OUR VIEW

OSRR policies need reformation

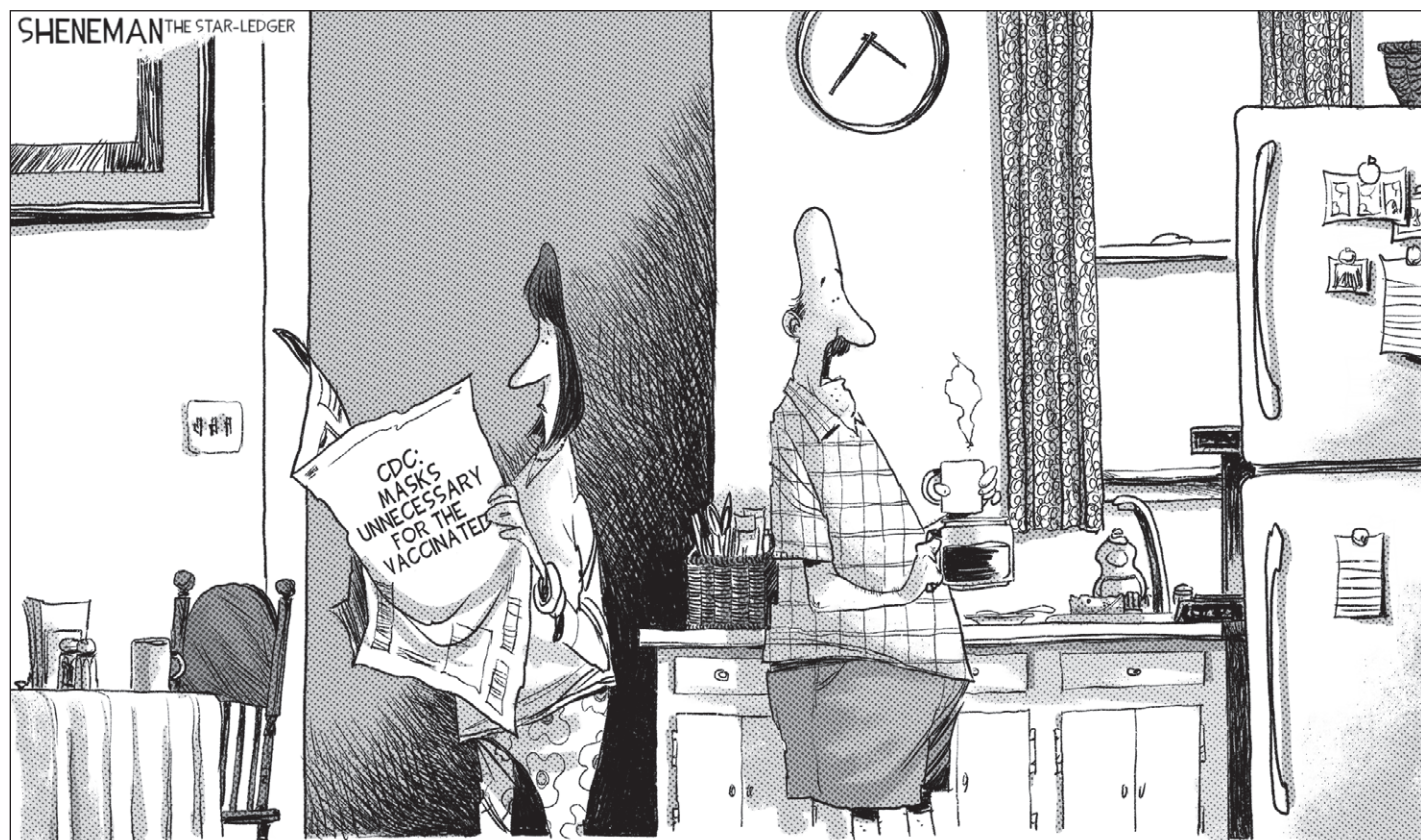
A petition created by East Carolina University students against the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities (OSRR) has received over 700 signatures from members of the ECU community in support of reform of policies within the office. The petition, created on Change.org, addresses various policies listed in the OSRR's Student Code of Conduct which include, but are not limited to, the addition of due process, better education on the code's policies and increased proper representation.

We, the editorial staff of The East Carolinian, believe the OSRR should take the recommendations of the petition into consideration in an effort to reform policies on the ECU Student Code of Conduct. If a student commits an infraction, they should not fear possible suspension or expulsion from ECU, which can ruin a student's academic career. All students who go through OSRR should experience the same procedure and not deal with lengthy drawn out processes.

Any office that handles infractions and punishments will naturally be disliked, but when there are possibly legitimate claims being levied against the office, the university owes it to the students to look into it.

We appreciate the efforts Student Government Association President Chandler Ward is taking in order to get the concerns of ECU students heard to OSRR. Ward has been vocal about wanting to solve the issue and hopes to eliminate the wait time students have dealt with the OSRR.

The OSRR must have more transparency about the policies and procedures students are subject to follow. Education on these policies and procedures is crucial for students who are required to follow the code of conduct upon acceptance to attend ECU.



ECU should trust CDC's word

University's fall semester mask mandate is unfortunate



Morgan Fried
GUEST COLUMNIST

Before I proceed with this op-ed, my thoughts in no way reflect the views or beliefs of East Carolina University.

On May 18, Chancellor Philip Rogers released guidelines clarifying regulations on COVID-19 after North Carolina Governor Roy Cooper lifted many restrictions on May 14. While I am thankful for Rogers removing the social distancing requirement, gathering limits and the outdoor mask mandate, I am still puzzled that ECU has kept the indoor face mask requirement.

"Face coverings are still required on campus indoors for faculty, staff, visitors and students, regardless of vaccination status because of the continued prevalence of COVID-19 and the low vaccination rate in Pitt County and the region," the guidelines said.

As of date of publication, according to Covid Act Now, a nonprofit that provides data for various statistics regarding COVID-19, Pitt County is ranked 47th out of 100 counties in North Carolina with 31.7% of the population being vaccinated with at least one dose, slightly above average. However, looking at the case rate in Pitt County, the data shows that Pitt County has not been in the "critical" category since early March.

Pitt County has 120 ICU beds, 91 of which are filled by non-COVID-19 patients with 10 filled by COVID-19 patients. Suggesting to us that when people are infected by the disease, it normally is not that serious. All of these statistics indicate to us that we are rounding the curve on this pandemic. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) also states



HALIE MILLER | THE EAST CAROLINIAN

Chancellor Rogers has announced that face masks are still required indoors during fall semester.

that once you become fully vaccinated, all activities that one did pre-pandemic are now safe again.

The CDC has found that when you are fully vaccinated, the vaccinated person no longer poses a threat to unvaccinated people and the vaccine is extremely effective at preventing COVID-19 from causing severe illness and death. Given this growing body of evidence that COVID-19 cases are on the decline and fully vaccinated people are safe to resume normal activities, why then does ECU insist on everyone, regardless of vaccination status, continue to wear masks indoors? If big box stores like Walmart and Publix are comfortable with allowing their fully vaccinated customers to shop through their store without a mask, why does ECU not feel comfortable?

I am disappointed in ECU regarding this new regulation. Setting the example this summer shows that ECU is confident in having a normal fall 2021 semester. What ECU should be saying is, "once you are fully

vaccinated, you can come to our wonderful student center without a mask on and enjoy all the great things that we all used to enjoy." This type of regulation does not inspire people to go out and get their vaccines, it only hinders them into thinking, "even if I do get my vaccine, my life will not go back to normal, therefore, I will not get my vaccine." This type of thinking is dangerous and gets less people vaccinated, not more.

I say this, to my vaccinated friends, I encourage you to spread the word to all your unvaccinated friends, encourage them to get their vaccine so they can go to Walmart or Publix and enjoy life mask-free. To my unvaccinated friends, please go get your vaccine so we can finally put this pandemic in the rearview mirror. To Chancellor Rogers, I am disappointed and hope to see a reversal in policy sooner, rather than later.

Fried is a senior majoring in political science and philosophy and a guest columnist. To contact him, email opinion@theeastcarolinian.com.

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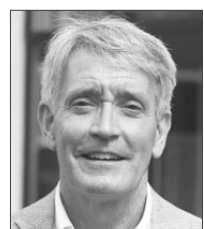
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Hatred of loss needs cultural reform



James Thrasher
GUEST COLUMNIST

The coach angrily paces outside the locker room after losing an early season game. He steps onto the bus and says, "If I hear one word or see even a crack of a smile, you will pay for it in the morning. Practice at 7 a.m. Yes, you heard me, 7 a.m.!"

When we lose, our cultural training dictates that we storm around and be irritated, enraged and left alone to sulk. Kicking and throwing things are good ways to convey to others that we despise losing.

This hatred of losing is overtly taught. You are expected to possess a total disgust for losing.

Tom Brady boasts that he is a pretty good winner, but a terrible loser. One slogan suggests that losing is worse than death because you have to live with defeat. Knute Rockne said, "Show me a gracious loser, and I will show you a failure." Just look to the television documentary "The Last Dance" and witness what Michael Jordan still zealously detests 23 years after retiring from the NBA.

This hatred of losing is a perspective that is universally accepted and pervades our American culture. All of us have succumbed to this way of thinking at certain

" This hatred of losing is a perspective that is universally accepted and pervades our American culture. "

-James Thrasher

points in our lives. But what are the roots of this cultural, man-centered theology of losing?

We have made winning life's ultimate pursuit and individual performance has defined our self-worth and our personal identity. These are the idols that drive this mindset. This cultural norm demands that winning isn't everything; it's the only thing. Most people wink at the phrase but in reality, they have become slaves to it. Parents schedule every minute of their young children's lives so they will win at life. Winning delivers a passionate, productive, purposeful and prosperous life, right? Tiger Woods says that "winning solves everything."

There is, however, a completely different, edifying and freeing way of thinking to consider. In opposition to this cultural norm is the theology of losing, which affirms that God created us as competitors. It follows, then, that competition is embedded in our lives, and it provides an opportunity to glorify the Creator. We are

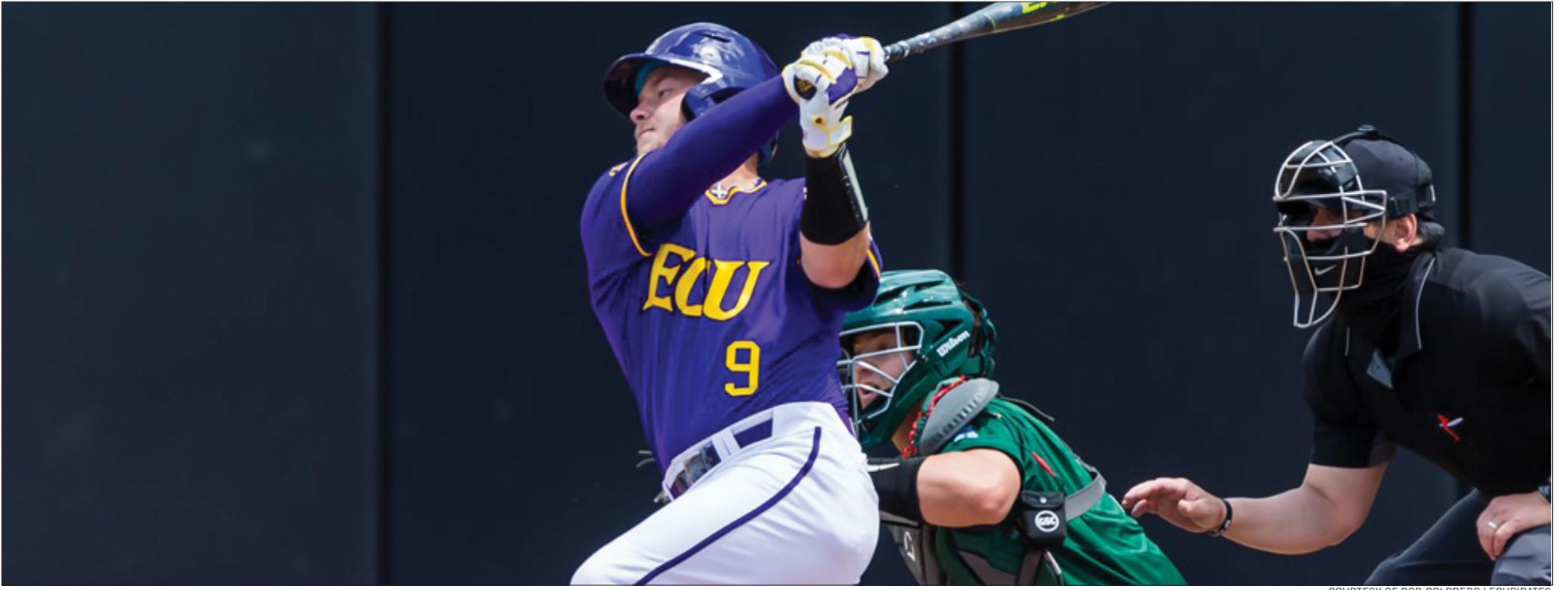
to find our joy and total satisfaction in him alone, in all circumstances.

His view of us, for those called according to his purposes, does not change based on our performance, our winning or whether we are number one. His love for us and our redeemed status never changes. The Scriptures tell us that the Lord is sovereign, and he ordains the minute details of our lives, even the wins and losses. He does everything perfectly, and he has a higher intention and a reason for all things. We are to be fully satisfied in Christ, no matter the score, situation or the state of one's affairs.

Paul's life and words in the New Testament speak to our challenge of handling setbacks and losses. His example can be summed up in the phrase "content, but not complacent." Paul was beaten, jailed, shipwrecked, whipped, starved, rejected and stoned and left for dead.

Thrasher is a guest columnist. To contact him, email opinion@theeastcarolinian.com.

ONLINE | FULL STORY



Junior catcher Seth Caddell takes a swing for the ball from home plate against Tulane University on May 8. Caddell finished with two hits and two runs in this game, which ended with a final score of 7-4. COURTESY OF ROB GOLDBERG | ECUPIRATES

» ANALYSIS

Pirates look toward NCAA Tournament

Baseball expected to make a deep postseason run after a 38-14 regular season

Stephen Babich
TEC STAFF

The East Carolina University Pirates baseball team finished the season on May 22 with a 38-14 record (20-8 American Athletic Conference, 27-4 home, 11-9 away) and a No.11 ranking in the nation.

The Pirates started the season with five straight wins. Those wins were against the University of Rhode Island Rams (27-24-1, 14-6 Atlantic 10) in a three game series, the Duke University Blue Devils (28-20, 16-17 Atlantic Coastal Conference) and the first game of the series against the Georgia Southern Eagles (31-22, 14-10 Sun Belt Conference).

ECU had five series sweeps in the 2021 season. Those sweeps were against Rhode Island from Feb. 19 through Feb. 21, the Appalachian State Mountaineers (20-30, 11-10 SBC) from March 5 through March 7, the University of North Carolina Charlotte 49ers (39-17, 24-8 Conference USA) from March 12 through March 14, the Illinois State University Redbirds (22-32, 12-15 Missouri Valley Conference) from March 19 through March 21, the University of Cincinnati Bearcats (29-24, 18-14 AAC) from April 1 through April 3 and the University of Mem-

phis Tigers (17-37, 7-25 AAC) from April 9 through April 11.

ECU's most dominant series was against the Mountaineers. The Pirates outscored App State 28-6 in the three games played between the two teams in that series.

One of the most surprising losses of the season was against the unranked University of North Carolina Wilmington Seahawks (30-20, 13-8 Colonial Athletic Association) on March 17. The Pirates lost 10-2 after ECU won seven in a row beforehand.

ECU had scored two home runs in the top of the first inning but could not score again after that.

In the final series of the regular season, ECU raised some eyebrows of concern after the Pirates fell 7-0 to the USF Bulls after the team had claimed the AAC title with a 38-11 record on May 20.

On May 22, the Pirates rotated seven pitchers throughout the game in an 8-2 loss against the Bulls to conclude the series and the regular season. ECU got off to a good start when the team scored two runs in the top of the first inning. However, USF scored eight unanswered runs throughout the rest of the game.

It seems as if the Pirates may have taken

their foot off the gas after they won the AAC title on May 20 with two bad back-to-back losses to close the season and enter the conference tournament.

This regular season will absolutely still be considered a successful season. Throughout the year, East Carolina was nationally ranked around the top 10-15 mark.

One big reason for the team's success was because of sophomore infielder Connor Norby's efforts. Norby started every game this season and led the nation in hits with 89 on the season. Norby is also second in the nation in bases with 137, third in hits per game with 1.77, sixth in batting average with 4.26 and No. 14 in runs with 55, according to the NCAA.

Pitcher Gavin Williams also had a successful season this year. Williams leads the AAC in earned run average (ERA) with 1.48, opposing batting average with .177, strikeouts with 98 and wins with nine. Furthermore, Williams is also fifth in the NCAA in wins on the season and fifth in strikeouts per nine innings with 14.46 and eighth in ERA.



Connor Norby

On May 21, the National Collegiate Baseball Writers Association made an announcement that Norby and Williams were named as two of the 42 finalists for the Dick Hower Trophy, which is an annual award given to the best collegiate baseball player.

In 2020, before the season was canceled, ECU had dropped two games in February in the LeClair Classic against the University of Mississippi (16-1, 0-0 Southeastern Conference) and the University of Indiana (9-6, 0-0 Big Ten Conference) which were arguably ECU's toughest opponents last season.

ECU played the University of Memphis Tigers in the AAC tournament in Clearwater, Florida on May 25. The last time the Pirates played the Tigers, the Pirates swept the series on April 9 through April 11.

The Pirates lost to Memphis 11-1. Considering that Memphis was the worst team in the conference, losing 11-1 is definitely not reassuring to fans that the Pirates can do well in the rest of the AAC tournament within the losing bracket going into the NCAA tournament after having a successful regular season.

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Softball to rebuild with new head coach next season

Markayla McInnis
TEC STAFF

East Carolina University softball (16-33, 7-17 American Athletic Conference) ended the regular season ranked No. 6 in the AAC and, while they prepare to rebuild for the 2021-22 season, they will also look for a new head coach.

The Pirates' first regular-season game was played on Feb. 12 where the Pirates began their season in a doubleheader win against Furman University (19-28, 8-9 Southern Conference). Their regular season came to an end on May 9 with a series sweep of the University of Memphis (9-41, 2-22 AAC). In that series alone, the Pirates managed to get in 19 runs throughout four games.

In the first round of the AAC softball tournament, the Pirates opened the first day of play with a game against the University of Central Florida (41-19-1, 16-7-1 AAC). This game took place May 13, but by the end of the game, the Pirates season came to an early

end with a 3-4 loss.

Over the season, ECU played 19 different teams and was able to win seven AAC games. This season, the Pirates totaled 301 hits as redshirt senior utility player Rachel McCollum led the team with 53. ECU also had a team total of 172 runs and 33 home runs. The team achieved a batting percentage of .237.

With McCollum's extra season of eligibility at ECU due to COVID-19, she was able to up her resume. Along with her lead in hits, she also led the team with ten doubles and holds the spot for the highest batting average with a percentage of .353. After the Liberty Invitational, she achieved the AAC Honor Roll award from her two doubles and 56th career home run. At the end of her collegiate career, on May 12 McCollum earned a spot on the 2021 AAC Second Team.



Rachel McCollum

As the softball season officially ended, so did head coach Courtney Oliver's years with ECU softball. ECU was the fifth collegiate team Oliver has helped coach and after six seasons with the Pirates, Oliver resigned May 15. Oliver helped bring the team to their 16-33 season and helped lead three Pirates to All-AAC honors. In her six years at ECU, she led the 2017 team to their first-ever AAC tournament victory.

"I am incredibly thankful to the group of current and former student-athletes and coaches who I have worked with over the past six years at ECU," Oliver said according to ecupirates.com.

Along with Oliver's resignation, the 2020-21 Pirates included eight seniors. The team has now had to say goodbye to senior outfielder Olivia Narron, right-handed pitcher

Whitney Sanford, right-handed pitcher Erin Poepping, right-handed pitcher Kama Woodall, infielder Chandley Garner, outfielder Courtney Layton, infielder Ashleigh Inae and McCollum

This season, Woodall helped the Pirates achieve nine of their wins and got to an earned run average (ERA) of 3.36, which leads the other pitchers of the team. Woodall struck out 103 batters and pitched in 187.1 innings.

After the 9-1 win over Coastal Carolina (21-24, 9-15 Sunbelt Conference), Woodall achieved the AAC honor roll with a 1.62 ERA on February 23. Following the four game series against the University of South Florida (29-18, 16-7 AAC) April 30 through May 2, Woodall received another honor roll spot with a two-hit shutout against the then No. 1 seed.

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Six track and field athletes to represent ECU at East Prelims

Brendan Cavazos
TEC STAFF

Six athletes have qualified to represent the East Carolina University track and field team at the National Collegiate Athletic Association East Preliminary held at Hodges Stadium in Jacksonville, Florida, from May 27 through May 29.

Senior thrower Ryan Davis, junior pole vaulter Sommer Knight, junior jumper Brooke Sith, freshman jumper Niejel Wilkins, freshman sprinter Melicia Mouzoun and senior sprinter Shellbi Chapman all qualified to participate in the prelims.

According to ECU Pirates, Director of Track and Field and Cross Country Curt Kraft gave praise to his athletes and credited their work ethic.

"To be included in this meet is a high honor, taking an extreme amount of work and dedication," Kraft said. "These individuals are very deserving to



Curt Kraft

be competing at this meet to try and get to Oregon. The goal is to advance to the national championships and compete with the country's elite athletes. These individuals had a very good conference championship and are motivated to continue that momentum into this meet."

On May 14 and May 16, Davis dominated the American Athletic Conference at the conference championships in both the hammer throw and the discus. He took home both titles and his mark of 70.77 meters for the hammer throw ranks him fourth in the region. His discus throw of 56.95 meters places him 18th in the region.

Knight also won the title in her event at the AAC Championships with a vault of 4.28 meters. This mark was a school record for the Pirates, and currently, she is ranked eighth in the region. Knight will make her third appearance at this year's prelims after qualifying in 2018 and 2019 as well. In 2018, she placed 13th in the pole vault, however, only the top 12 are selected to move on to nationals.



Senior thrower Ryan Davis winds up to throw the shot put at the Bill Carson Invitational on April 3. COURTESY OF ROB GOLDBERG | ECUPIRATES

Sith qualified for two events in both the triple jump and the 100-meter hurdles. Mouzoun qualified for the 100-meter dash with a time of 11.53, which earned her seventh place in the AAC championships. Wilkins qualified for the triple jump with a mark of 15.70 meters. Chapman was able to qualify in the 400-meter hurdles with a time of 59.25

in the AAC championships.

The top 12 finishers in each event will then qualify to participate in the NCAA Outdoor Championships, which will take place from June 9 to June 12 at Hayward Field at the University of Oregon.

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