

The Trinity Tripod

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Now then-Trinity!

Tuesday, September 8, 2020

Volume CXVI
Number I

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NEWS EDITOR

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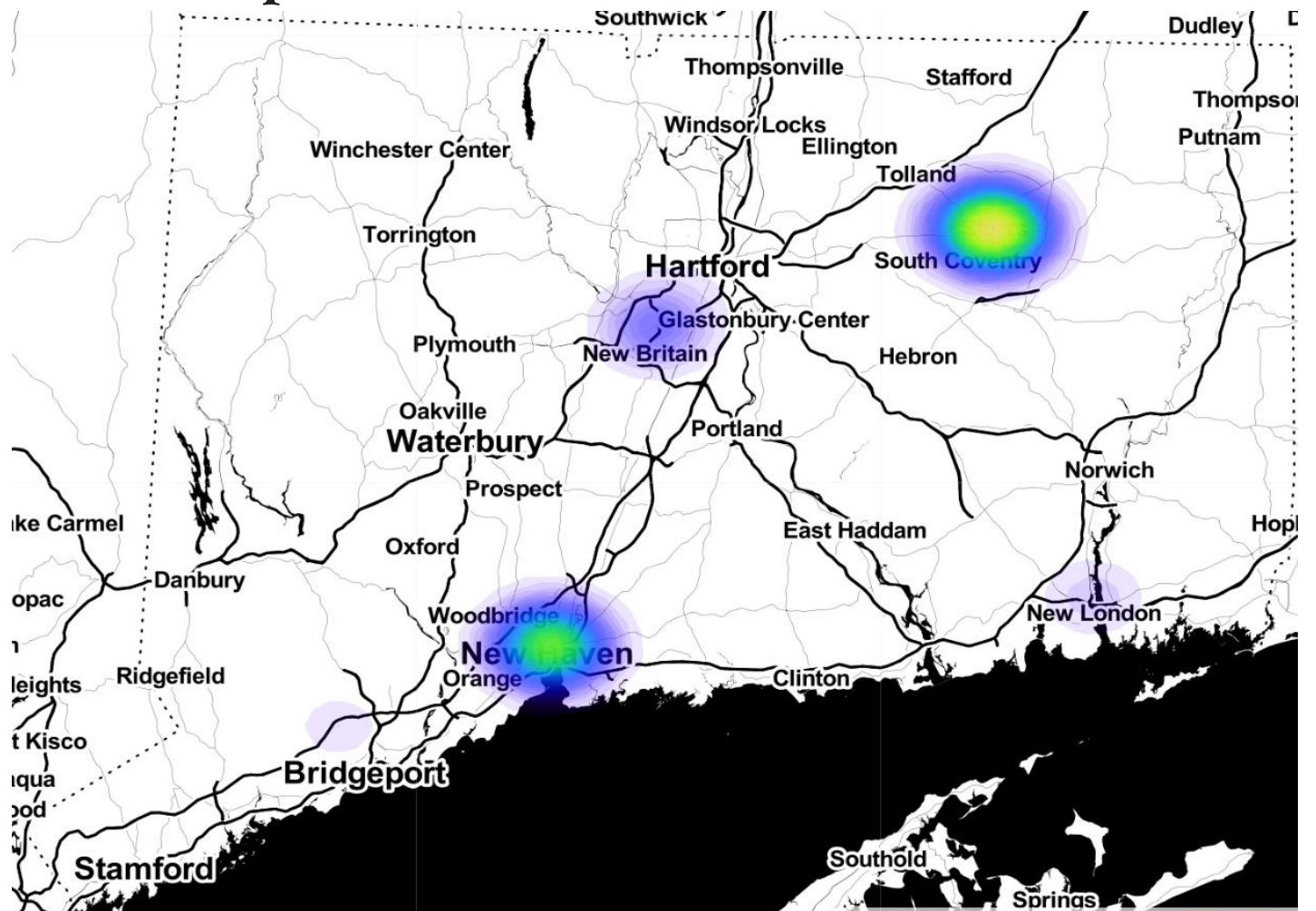
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SARS-CoV-2 at Connecticut's Colleges: The *Tripod* Charts Cases Across the State



DANIEL J. NESBITT '22
MANAGING EDITOR

The choropleth map above shows the relative amount of confirmed COVID cases for nine Connecticut colleges and universities. The data shown were obtained from the *New York Times* interactive page “Tracking Coronavirus Cases at U.S. Colleges and Universities,” and the data are current as of Thursday, Sept. 3. The yellow regions on the map indicate an area with large numbers of confirmed COVID cases, while the lighter, purple regions indicate an area with relatively few confirmed COVID cases at colleges.

It is important to note the limitations of this dataset. First, all these data compiled by the *Times* is all publicly available, meaning delays in reporting by schools could result in out-of-date, inaccurate data. Second, each school has a different, unique plan for re-open-

ing, with varying combinations of remote and in-person learning, which could result in increased or decreased likelihood of infection. Finally, each school likely has a different testing protocol, meaning positive cases could be detected more quickly at certain schools than others, and with varying degrees of accuracy depending on the specifications of the test employed.

The choropleth shows that the University of Connecticut, located in Storrs, CT (yellow region, top right), has the greatest number of cases among Connecticut schools with 186 confirmed COVID cases as of Sept. 3. Yale University has the second-greatest case total with 126 confirmed COVID cases, shown as the large colored region over New Haven, CT. These are the two largest hot spots on the map at present. Central Connecticut State University has the third highest number of cases

see COVID on page 4

Tripod Examines Progress on President's Special Opportunity Hires

BRENDAN W. CLARK '21
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Trinity's faculty Educational Policy Committee (EPC) and the College's senior academic administration have met over the summer to consider the apportioning of new faculty seats for several “Special Opportunity Hires.” The *Tripod* examined faculty involvement in this hiring process, among several objectives outlined by President of the College Joanne Berger-Sweeney in response to demands by student activists in June over ongoing incidents of unrest and discontent over racism and discrimination at Trinity.

The special opportunity hires “will be for diverse faculty members, includ-

ing members of underrepresented groups,” Acting Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of the Faculty Sonia Cardenas told the *Tripod* in July. Berger-Sweeney also told the *Tripod* that the positions would be reserved to “increase our faculty diversity.” This amounts to eighteen estimated positions—six each year, appointed over three years—based on the July email from Berger-Sweeney.

It was not immediately clear when the College expected to begin the hiring process, though an email from Cardenas to faculty in late June noted that it will occur in the 2020-2021 academic year while a general hiring freeze remains in place

see SPECIAL HIRES on page 4

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"Now then-Trinity!"

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
BRENDAN W. CLARK '21

MANAGING EDITORS
LIZ FOSTER '22
KAT NAMON '22
DANIEL J. NESBITT '22

NEWS EDITORS
KIP LYNCH '22
SHAWN OLSTEIN '22

SPORTS EDITORS
ANNA BAUER '23
MATEO VAZQUEZ '21

OPINION EDITOR
SKYLER SIMPKINS '23

A&E EDITORS
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MACIEJ PRADZIAD '22

FEATURES EDITORS
KATIE CERULLE '22
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BAILEY MCKEON '22
OLIVIA PAPP '23

CAROLINE RICHARDS '22

SOCIAL MEDIA MANAGER
ALEXANDRA BOURSICAN '23

BUSINESS MANAGER
DIVYANSH GAUR '22

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300 Summit St. Box 702582
Hartford, CT 06106-3100
Phone: (860) 297-2584

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CORRECTIONS

Tripod Editorial

We Need More Than Assurances

As COVID-19 forces colleges to implement various means of testing, reporting, and protecting their student body from harm, Trinity College has succeeded in providing a comprehensive testing procedure. It is clear that the institution has made a concerted effort this summer to afford the sense of a safe environment and that countless administrators have sought various solutions to the problem the pandemic introduces.

But appearances are only half the battle: the sanitizing stations, colorful "Protect the Nest" signage, and touchless door mechanisms are but a modicum of the most fundamental element of effective leadership in a time of crisis, clear and seamless communication that informs and drives student understanding.

Following the first positive COVID-19 case on campus, announced via email on August 29, students were informed that updates on positive tests will not always be made to the community. This, on its face, seems problematic: students should know when and where positive cases emanate. If that means ten emails in the course of a day, then so be it: the level of communication in large part dictates the degree of seriousness and suggests that we need to change course promptly as they grow out of hand.

As a solution to this intended infrequent updating, the College launched its COVID-19 dashboard. As of Monday evening, the College's alert level stands at "Green" and the dashboard

reflects only one positive case on-campus (others occurred before students returned). But the dashboard is updated only "twice" during "business hours" throughout the week. Only twice a week while students are tested four out of seven days? Twice a week when tests can come back positive one day after an update was issued? The numbers are incongruous. Between Friday and Monday, when the dashboard has yet to be updated,

Trinity could have seen any number of variations in cases. We simply do not know.

On a small campus of 2,000, Trinity's rumor-mill is always turning. With a pandemic on our hands, students cannot afford to be getting all of their information from the alleged tales of what happened on Vernon Saturday night. If this College is to succeed, data cannot be hidden. If the College has good cause to only update its dashboard twice a week, tell the community why. Nothing can be left to chance and honesty remains essential: students should know--at all times--how many cases rest 'neath the elms every day of the week.

The same is true of Trinity's return-to-campus protocols. As students arrived, vague guidelines and expectations abounded, and answers could be found only by scouring the Trinity College website. Rules and expectations regarding social gatherings have not been clearly stated, as many students remain unaware of the "strike" system (it is not easily found in online materials, nor was it among

the multitude of emails sent in August). Our Dean informed us that gathering on the quad and in other public places was subject to prohibition until September 7th. From the day students returned to campus, the quads have been sites of social activity--with and without masks--and to the passerby enforcement seems left to chance. If Trinity's policy has changed, that should be communicated. For now, those who reside on the quad, absent a pronouncement, seem the contraveners of an unenforced law.

Some students believe that if they are seen without a mask, they will be expelled. Others believe that gathering in groups of 25 indoors violates no policy. Many students have had disciplinary meetings this week for incidents that range from a casual hello to friends to being in the wrong place at the wrong time. Countless others party at off-campus residences, another veil that Trinity cannot pierce. When these stories circulate, strong administrative response is needed. We need more clarity on what is acceptable and what is not. Most importantly, violators should be met with consequences: if we expect to make it the semester, Trinity cannot advertise one message yet enact and enforce another.

-BWC, KN, LF, DN

Want to write for
the *Tripod*?

Join the conversation by
emailing tripod@trincoll.edu

NEWS

Tripod Study Abroad Safety Investigation: Faculty Approval and Provider Disclosures

KIP LYNCH '22
NEWS EDITOR

The Trinity Tripod is examining all facets of study abroad safety. Over a series of forthcoming articles, the Tripod will dive into the issue through administrative, faculty, student, and legal lenses.

Managing Editor Daniel Nesbitt '22 examined last year the limited scope of the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act (Clery Act) and noted that this resulted in less than transparent crime statistics. Nesbitt referenced a particular incident unreported under the Clery Act in February 2018 when "the Tripod reported that three Trinity students abroad in Barcelona were mugged in early January of the same year. However, the ASR [annual security report] stated that the Office of Study Away reported zero incidents of any category. When asked about this discrepancy, Heavren clarified that 'in this case, there was a Clery reportable crime but it did not occur in the Clery geography,' thus it was not included in the full report."

Study abroad programs at Trinity must be approved by the Office of Study Away and the College's faculty Curriculum Committee. According to the Faculty Manual, the Curriculum Committee, which includes faculty representatives as well as representatives of the administration and students, is responsible for "the approval, and periodic review, for study away programs and offerings.

To fulfill this responsibility, the Curriculum Committee reviews any newly proposed study away programs and associated materials, often including individual course syllabi."

The Tripod spoke to Associate Dean for Curriculum and Associate Professor of Theatre and Dance Mitchell Polin about the process for approving programs by the Curriculum Committee.

Discussing reasons why a program may be rejected, he stated that "the Committee will often seek advice from associated Departments and Programs whose areas are represented in the study away program. The Committee members need to make certain that any credits earned are equivalent to a credit earned through the completion of a course on our home campus. In past academic years, programs have been rejected for not meeting the criteria of the college." Programs are then typically reviewed annually by the Office of Study Away, which submits its recommendations to the Curriculum Committee.

On whether the faculty have raised questions of concern relative to program safety, he stated that "The Office of Study Away has not received questions or concerns, in recent years, regarding program safety. However, safety reports are available from the Office of Study Away upon request."

Trinity College is not alone both in the popularity of study abroad programs as well as the lack of transparency surrounding crime statistics. In a 2017

article on study abroad programs at Cal State Fullerton, Brandon Pho noted the university "has seen a nearly 100 percent participation increase in a study abroad program that is lacking in safety records." An internal audit by CSU System's Office of Audit and Advisory Services found numerous weaknesses, including the "lack of a documented process for selecting third party-providers of study abroad programs."

The non-profit Protect Students Abroad, founded by Elizabeth Brenner and Ros Thackurdeen in 2012, has sought to address gaps in program safety. Brenner and Thackurdeen have identified that at "campus-hosted study abroad forums, the goal of programs is to recruit students. Thus, program materials have the flavor of marketing, with beautiful photos and captions that promise a life changing experience. Because there are no transparency requirements of the study abroad industry, it can be difficult for parents and students to find both neutral and comprehensive information about student safety." Importantly, study abroad programs and providers "have no obligation to disclose safety information, and we are aware of programs that have not answered safety questions truthfully."

The Trinity Tripod reached out to Director of the Office of Study Away Jennifer Summerhays for comment on Trinity's external providers, but did not hear back as of the time of publication.

SGA Executive Board Election Preview

SHAWN OLSTEIN '22
NEWS EDITOR

Next week, Trinity College's Student Government Association (SGA) will be holding elections for the organization's executive board. Elections will be held online from Monday, Sept. 14 to Wednesday, Sept. 16. Ballots will be electronically distributed by the Student Activities Involvement and Leadership Office (S.A.I.L.). The executive board positions open for elections are the SGA President, SGA Vice President, Vice President of Communications, Vice President of Finance, as well as Vice President of Multicultural Affairs. Beyond these SGA executive board positions, the classes of '21, '22, '23, will be holding their presidential elections. All class senator elections as well as the class of '24 class president election will be held in the coming weeks. Traditionally, SGA executive board and class presidential elections are held at the end of the spring semester, however these elections were delayed until the start of this year due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

Despite a combined total of eight elected offices up for election between the SGA executive board and class presidencies, only three elections are contested. SGA Vice President, Vice President of Communications, Vice President of Finance, as well as the classes of '22 and '23 presidential elections are uncontested. The candidates for these elections are as follows: Jack Stone '22 SGA Vice President, Maddy White '22 and Jordan Lewis '22 Vice President of Communications (serving alternative semesters), Camille Valentincic '22,

Vice President of Finance, Drew Gardner Class of '21, President, Leah Herbin, Class of '22 President.

The three contested elections are SGA President, Vice President of Multicultural affairs, and Class of '23 president. Felicia McDevitt '21 and Giovanni Jones '21 are running for SGA President. Jederick Estrella '22 and Renita Washington '22 are running for Vice President of Multicultural Affairs. Jason Farrell Jr. '23 and Thursday Williams '23 are running for Class of '23 president.

In a statement to the Tripod on his SGA presidential candidacy, Jones '21 stated, "For the longest time, I've appreciated being able to work from behind the scenes. I grew comfortable in positions where one does not hold the title nor receives the credit. Because of this, I've developed a mindset where everything became secondary to ensuring that the work got done." Presidential candidate McDevitt '21 touted her three years of SGA experience as informative to her a "fierce dedication" to serving the interests and concerns of the students. Furthermore, both candidates identified the problems of racial injustices and sexual assault on campus as key issues. McDevitt stated, "As a community, as student organizations, and as individuals, we are met with a critical opportunity to build upon dedicated student activists' work this summer (namely Instagram accounts @Blackatrin and @trinsurvivors)." Jones stated, "As Trinity must navigate through, and address, 3 pandemics, COVID-19, racial injustice, and sexual misconduct, it is imperative that we bring to office an executive board that is committed to working to get to solutions."

College Campus Safety Report: Aug. 31 - Sept. 7

Tuesday, Sept. 1
Library

Fire - Unintentional, caused by a contractor working in the building.
This case is closed.

Sunday, Sept. 6
High Rise

Liquor Law Violation - Four students received disciplinary referrals.

EPC, Special Opportunity Hires

continued from page one

over new faculty positions. Interim Chair of the EPC and Associate Professor of Mathematics Paula Russo explained to the *Tripod* that the EPC is generally responsible for determining the allocation of open lines across departments at the College and “carefully reviews” proposals brought by department and program chairs.

Eighteen new positions, “preferably at the senior/tenured level” per Berger-Sweeney’s email, could constitute a formal increase in the size of the faculty under the Stewart Amendment, a provision in the Faculty Manual which affords the faculty oversight in the process of increasing faculty size. The Stewart Amendment would require a vote of the faculty to authorize the EPC to begin a “formal inquiry” and would require a subsequent vote to change its size as part of a two-step approval process. The Amendment, which originally arose in response to an attempt by the College administration to eliminate the Education Department in the late 1970s, does have a caveat in that faculty approval of a formal inquiry is only “normally” required.

The *Tripod* spoke with Faculty Secretary and Associate Professor of Economics Mark Stater, who stated that the increase in hires may require a vote, “depending on if the number of hires available in a given year exceeds the number of Special Opportunity Hires.” Stater, referencing the “normally” term of the Stewart Amendment, added that the

EPC could be “granted an exception” and have the “formal inquiry requirement waived” if applied for. Cardenas, in her June email, added that positions will be apportioned “consistent with the process outlined in the Faculty Manual for Special Opportunity Hires.”

While the EPC is responsible for bring recommendations on the apportioning of positions across departments, the “Dean of the Faculty makes the final decision” and may “replace one or more of the positions recommended by the EPC” with another, added Russo. The College’s senior administration has not signaled where they expect to allocate existing positions.

Stater noted that while he had not received any notice of an intent by the EPC to begin a formal inquiry or bring a vote, the faculty “would entertain a motion if it came through the proper channels.” For an increase to be successful, 60% approval would be required.

Russo told the *Tripod* that her understanding of the Stewart Amendment, per the Faculty Manual, requires that “any recommendations for overall changes in the size of the Faculty, or for (other) substantial changes in the educational policy of the College, must be approved by the Faculty.” Still, Russo noted that the EPC has “not yet had a formal discussion about increasing the size of the faculty” and added that such decisions of allocation and timeline were among those topics that the “committee will be considering” over

the course of the next year.

Special Opportunity Hire positions will not be the only positions considered over the coming year. Four previously authorized but unfilled positions will be advertised, according to Stater and Cardenas’ June email. While the College did institute a hiring freeze in response to the coronavirus, Stater noted that the “EPC will be allocating some open positions to departments” that had previously been applied for, but those positions will not be “hired this upcoming year.”

The senior administration declined to outline to the *Tripod* in August what criteria would be used in their hiring process, though Russo clarified that the hiring criteria is an administrative decision and that others “determine whether the candidate meets the goals of the College.” The Vice President for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion also “makes a recommendation as to how well the proposed candidate meets the College’s goals for diversity,” Russo added. Recommendations on faculty appointments are ultimately extended from the College’s Appointments and Promotions Committee to the Dean of the Faculty.

Cardenas—in her June email—added that “students of color will be included in the nomination process.” It was not immediately clear whether students would be appointed or if an invitation to participate would be extended to certain community members as part of the process.

COVID Cases at Connecticut Colleges and Universities

continued from page one

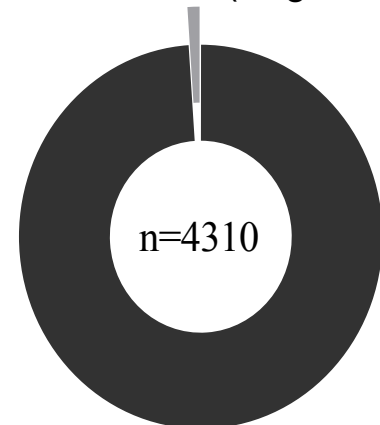
among Connecticut schools with a total of 30 confirmed COVID cases. CCSU is shown in the choropleth map as the purple region near New Britain.

The U.S. Coast Guard Academy (near New London, bottom right), has a total of nine confirmed cases while Sacred Heart University (near Bridgeport, bottom left) has just six total cases. Trinity has had two total confirmed cases (but only one on-campus) as of Friday, Sept. 4, while Connecticut College, University of Hartford, and Wesleyan University each have just one confirmed COVID

case. These four schools are not depicted in the choropleth map due to the relatively low number of cases.

In terms of Trinity’s total testing capabilities and results, the College has reported that 4,310 COVID PCR tests have been completed between Aug. 17 and Sept. 4, with only two positive tests - a promising sign. Additionally, there have been a total of 46 invalid tests. The total test outcomes are shown in the figure below. As of Sept. 4 Trinity has a positive PCR test rate of just 0.02%, however the rate will likely increase as more data is made available.

Trinity Test Results (Aug. 17-Sept. 4)



- 0.02% Positive
- 98.91% Negative
- 1.07% Invalid

Intercollegiate Update: News on Nearby Campuses

Connecticut College

Connecticut College returned to campus this fall with a dashboard for monitoring COVID cases on campus. The dashboard is updated four times a week and tracks both the volume of testing and the number of positive test results. The percentage of positive results is one of the important metrics the College will track in order to determine the campus alert status and to make informed decisions about changes to campus operations. Since Aug. 17, the College has performed 6,153 tests, three of which came back positive - a positivity rate of 0.05%. The College has four alert levels. The College is currently at alert level 3 indicating that on-campus operations must be reduced in response to a rising number of both positive tests and potential exposures. Isolation capacity is decreasing and confidence in the ability to complete contact tracing is moderate. As a result, parts of the College or the entire campus may need to shift into “cautionary quarantine” to limit movement on campus and minimize in-person contact. This alert level is the automatic status of the campus during onboarding quarantine at the start of the semester.

Middlebury College

At Middlebury, student leaders have become responsible for enforcing the College’s COVID-19 policies, according to the *Middlebury Campus*. The *Campus* reported that “nighttime gatherings that exceed 10 participants, sometimes without masks” have become the responsibility of Residential Life workers and orientation leaders.” Student leaders appear to have taken on a role greater than Public Safety at Middlebury, where Residential Life staff have become responsible for collecting “the names, and sometimes the ID numbers, of students who break COVID-19 policies.” Part of this shift in responsibility away from the College’s public safety office was stirred by the protests over the deaths of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor, according to Maya Gee, a Residential Life staff member. The *Campus* also noted that Middlebury has already asked several students “to leave campus” and “more are awaiting appeals for violating guidelines,” according to comments from Dean of Students Derek Doucet. It was not immediately clear how many students had been removed from the campus or what their particular violations were.

Colby College

Colby College returned to campus this fall and, like its peer institutions, rolled out an extensive testing program. The College has conducted more than 6,400 COVID-19 tests (4,700 on campus; 1,700 before arrival) over the past month. Of these tests, they have had five positive cases to date (a rate of .08 percent). Of these five positive cases, two were employees and three students. The two employees were re-tested and received two consecutive negative results. Neither was or had recently been ill, nor had either individual traveled outside of Maine in recent weeks. One had been working remotely from March, and the other was tested early in their process and has since left the college for a position elsewhere. The three students are currently in isolation and not experiencing symptoms according to reports from the College administration. These individuals did not become infected at Colby, but were infected prior to their arrival on the campus in August. These cases are unrelated and contained, and as of Monday, Sept. 7, there is no evidence, according to reports, of community transmission.

OPINION

Waiting to Study Abroad? Remember Otto Warmbier

JACK P. CARROLL '24
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

If there is one skill that any of us have gained from the challenges that the COVID-19 related travel guidelines have imposed, it is the persistent ability to conduct thorough research and strategically plan prior to making any important travel decisions.

As colleges and universities in the U.S. consider the future of their international study programs, it is important for students (my peers included) to use their pandemic-enhanced research skills to make well-informed travel decisions when deciding where to study in a post-pandemic world.

Prior to selecting a country or region to spend a semester, students should take note of the existing laws, political climate, and social norms of the country in which one chooses to study. A failure to conduct such necessary research and act in accordance with the collected information could impose potentially grave consequences to one's individual safety, health, and overall well-being.

In order to truly grasp the severity of the perilous consequences that are associated with poor-informed travel decisions, let us recount the devastating death of Otto Warmbier, a former undergraduate student at the University of Virginia,

who passed away in 2017 after having traveled to North Korea the previous year.

Otto, a particularly adventurous student with a penchant for traveling, decided to make a trip to North Korea, en route to Hong Kong, where he had initially planned to complete a study abroad program. The trip to North Korea was arranged with the highly questionable travel group, Young Pioneer Tours, whose website states that the company offers "budget travel to destinations your mother would rather you stayed away from."

Pyongyang, the capital and largest city of the North Korean dictatorship renowned for starvation, strict national security laws, labor camps, and government-imposed murder, was the destination of travel for Otto and his peers. Despite initially having reservations about the trip, Otto's parents, nevertheless, allowed him to leave. Otto's mother, Cindy Warmbier, highlighted her thoughts when allowing Otto to travel to North Korea: "Why would you say no to a kid like this?"

To his mother's defense, Otto was an intelligent and academically-driven young man whose extensive traveling background made him all-the-more qualified to undertake the trip. Otto, who was once described as a "math whiz," was the Salutatorian of his graduating

high school class and attended the University of Virginia on a scholarship. Pursuing a double major in economics and commerce, Otto was intent on becoming a banker. Furthermore, he had previously traveled to Israel, Cuba, Ecuador, and Europe where he completed a foreign exchange program at the London School of Economics.

Unfortunately, "no" might have been the better answer as, early on in their travels, on the night of New Year's Eve in 2015, only some days after the group had left Beijing for the trip, Otto went missing. That night, after returning from a day of touring and sightseeing, the Young Pioneers split up to drink and bowl at their hotel of choice: The Yanggakdo International Hotel. According to Danny Gratton, a British member of the traveling tour group, it was during this time at the hotel, late at night, when there was a "two-hour window" in which no member of the Young Pioneers could account for Otto. It would not be until 4:30 AM the following morning (New Year's day) that Gratton would find Otto asleep in their shared room. However, the story does not end there.

The following day, Jan. 2, 2016, prior to departure at the Pyongyang International Airport, Otto was arrested by two guards. Over a month after his arrest, Otto, who was still in the custody of North Korean officials,

appeared in a press conference in which he confessed to attempting to steal a propaganda poster from the restricted area of the second floor of the Yanggakdo hotel.

Otto's arrest and subsequent confession were prompted by (albeit low quality) surveillance footage obtained by the hotel, which displays a shadowy and indiscernible figure stripping a poster from the wall on the floor.

Despite the widespread uncertainty and speculation amongst global media as to the figure in the video indeed being Otto, and whether his confession was authentic or given under duress by the North Korean government, Otto was tried and convicted of subversion under Article 60 of North Korea's Criminal Code on Mar. 16, 2016.

In June of 2017, at the command of President Donald J. Trump, former Secretary of State Rex Tillerson secured the release of Otto from his imprisonment in North Korea.

However, from the time he arrived in the US and was evacuated to the University of Cincinnati Medical Center, Otto remained in a persistent vegetative state. There, doctors disproved North Korean claims that Otto had contracted botulism and, instead, found that Warmbier experienced a profound loss of brain tissue

Furthermore, it was determined that Otto did not

suffer from torture and after being removed from a feeding tube, he passed away in the hospital on June 19, 2017 at the age of 22 years old.

While the true recount of Otto's travel to North Korea and his subsequent death remains ambiguous and subject to scrutiny and debate, I believe that all readers can agree that the death of Otto Warmbier was devastating for his family and a tragic blow to the community that supported him.

Hopefully my peers entering and returning to college who, like Otto, are intelligent, ambitious, and eager to build their futures and enjoy their young adult lives, are able to see themselves in Otto and in turn recognize the widespread feeling of grief and tragedy left by his death as a constant reminder to make educated and safe decisions when studying abroad in the future.

While many of us may not be able to prevent the widespread death that continues to become a disturbingly integral part of our lives amidst the continued and rampant spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, we can begin to prevent the loss of human life in a post-pandemic society by encouraging our friends and loved ones to become well-informed, responsible, and thoughtful individuals before making any important decisions in their travels and other life pursuits.

At Trinity, Arbitrary Enforcement Is The "New Normal"

BRENDAN W. CLARK '21
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

AND

DANIEL J. NESBITT '22
MANAGING EDITOR

Quod vanum et inutile est, lex non requirit, "the law does not require what is vain and useless," or so the maxim goes. For Trinity College, on matters of enforcing its new "Community Contract" that students have or will find themselves soon beholden to, it seems that vanity and uselessness shall come to be the guiding principles of administrative enforcement this fall.

Trinity's "Community Contract" will permit the College to "if needed...follow procedures outlined in the student handbook" to enforce disciplinary action on students. How, though, will students know what potential violations and acts may constitute disciplinary procedures? When the potential for punish-

ment runs the gamut from "parental notification" to expulsion, one would expect that students should be duly apprised of the penalties of the "law" on this campus for their actions.

For instance, does a single case of forgetting a mask have the potential to result in disciplinary consequences? Will students be punished for meeting their significant other in a dorm that they do not live in? The possibilities for punishment are seemingly endless.

The *Tripod* sought clarity from the newly promoted Dean of Campus Life and Vice President for Student Affairs Joe DiChristina. Specifically, we sought to understand whether "any and all violations of the Student Responsibility Agreement have the potential to move to disciplinary proceedings?" The one sentence response we received: "the college is certainly able to follow-up on any possible

violations of the community contract and the college will as issues arise. joe [sic]."

Ignorance of the law, then, seems a valid defense at Trinity this fall. Students are left without knowledge of when an act may move to disciplinary action. They have no defense if action is taken and sanctions zealously doled out, nor do they have an outline to point to in an effort to contest proceedings. Arbitrary and capricious enforcement, subject to the whims of whichever dean catches you, seems to be the inevitable outcome of this "any possible violations" policy.

Why Trinity cannot attach specific violations to punishments, or at least speculate as much, is difficult to comprehend. For other types of student behavior, clear expectations have been enumerated in the Student Handbook and possible disciplinary actions are delineated for all to re-

view. Why can the same not be applied during a time of crisis—when, to quote the Community Contract, "there is little room for error in the face of this unforgiving virus." Specificity should be the expectation.

In addition, it remains ambiguous whether this Community Contract functions as a binding agreement that students must follow or a simple set of recommendations that Trinity is asking students to voluntarily follow. For example, the Community Contract states that students "may not travel (leave campus or leave [their] off-campus housing) for non-essential reasons at any time." However, DiChristina himself confirmed to us that the College "do[es] not have a legal basis" to restrict student travel, and that the College is simply "asking students to focus on the health and safety of our community." Is this "Contract" really a con-

tract or just a set of recommendations and requests?

While Trinity's disciplinary processes may not function as a court, it certainly seems as if the law has been suspended. A case of habeas corpus à la Lincoln? Perhaps a step too far, but students should be duly apprised to when sanctions will be imposed and when incidents will arise to the level of disciplinary action. That's the least they can expect for \$75,000 a year amid the risks of a pandemic-ridden world. Trinity students should not stand for this administrative jiggery-pokery.

And, surely, the answer to that complex question of punishment and sanction merits more than a sentence response that, in effect, defines enforcement at Trinity in one word: "arbitrary."

This article was originally published online on Monday, Aug. 31, 2020.

Featured Opinion: How the Absence of Study of Irish Immigration in High School Curricula Leaves a Key Gap in the Study of American History Nationwide

JACK P. CARROLL '24
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

In a historical landmark decision on Monday Aug. 31, the California legislature made courageous and praiseworthy academic progress in becoming the first state to pass legislation that requires all high school students to complete a course related to the study of "racial and ethnic groups that have been oppressed and exploited through U.S. history."

However, as has been pointed out by numerous education policy experts and California state education leaders, the curriculum approved under Bill AB331 misses many meaningful opportunities to promote diversity by forgetting to include a myriad of historically oppressed and underrepresented social groups in the United States--the Irish among them.

Before going any further, I must note that I applaud the decision of the California State Assembly in their efforts to provide students with an acute understanding of the struggles and successes of various social groups whose well-being, for too long in our nation's history, was tragically neglected and left unaccounted for altogether.

Furthermore, by instilling our nation's future leaders with a profound sense of respect and appreciation for different ethnic groups with which one may be initially unacquainted, I believe that our nation can become further unified in our national and global efforts to help those in need and continue to disband the prejudices that have deeply fragmented our society.

It is for the aforementioned reason, with regards to the importance of a high school education curriculum that is ripe in social diversity, that I was disappointed to learn that the cruel and bigoted oppression that the Irish faced when immigrating to the United States in the mid-nineteenth century, as well as their perseverance

and future accomplishments, was not included in California's recently approved curriculum.

However, as disappointed as I was when first

to take place any time in the near future, I believe that all readers could obtain a glimpse of the previously mentioned benefits with a cursory glance

"...The curriculum approved under Bill AB331 misses many meaningful opportunities to promote diversity by forgetting to include a myriad of historically oppressed and underrepresented social groups in the United States -- the Irish among one of them."

reading through the bill, I could not say that I was surprised by the legislature's exclusion of the Irish in their curriculum. The study of the history of the Irish in the United States in modern high school curricula, for whatever reason, has been largely ignored and left unaddressed.

In fact, in my four years of high school, I do not recall ever learning about Irish immigration and their struggles in the United States. The closest I ever came to learning anything about Irish culture was in my senior English course, A.P. English Literature and Composition when my peers and I read the novel *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*; the Irish culture which is deeply embedded within the plot was, of course, not the focal point of our thematic analysis of the text.

Given the widespread disregard for Irish culture and heritage that, as displayed by Bill AB331 and existing curricula across the country, continues to remain an integral component of the study of systemic oppression of various social groups in high schools nationwide, I believe that all readers could further enhance their cultural awareness and understanding of the root causes and effects of oppression in the United States with the study of Irish immigration.

While major national curriculum reform, which extends the study of historically oppressed social groups in America to include the Irish, among a long list of others, does not seem likely

into nineteenth-century Irish immigration--which I have provided below.

The story of the Irish in the United States is one of immense suffering and tragedy; the dark times that many Irish immigrants were soon to face upon their arrival were linked to even darker origins that were most vividly described by one of the most influential Irish historians, Christine Kinealy.

When recounting the famine-stricken landscape of Ireland in the mid-nineteenth-century, which would claim the lives of one million and later motivate the emigration of roughly two million in only a seven year time span, Kinealy, writes in the Great Hunger Museum in Hamden, CT:

No part of the country escaped from the horror of the Famine, and no religious group was exempt from its ravages. Disease and death stalked Ireland, and despair and despondency filled the vacuums. The laughter of children was replaced by cries of pain, and the singing of birds by haunting silences. From 1845 to 1852, Ireland was a society living at the extremes--from callousness to compassion, from brutality to benevolence. Moreover from birth practices to funeral rites and everything in between, nothing was as it had been before.

As further presented at the Great Hunger Museum, the desolate landscape was, of course, facilitated by an unresponsive British government which, amidst the widespread suffering and death that

became a disturbingly integral component of many peoples' lives, further fueled the destruction of Irish civilization.

For example, a law that left landlords responsible for feeding their tenants, who during the famine had little to no money, led to the eviction of approximately half a million people. The landlords then, after removing their tenants, used the land to graze livestock in an attempt to profit, all while disregarding the health and wellbeing of their tenants.

The famine, which began when a fungus-resembling organism called *Phytophthora* led to the plight of potato plants all throughout Ireland, along with the ruthless treatment they received from their ruling government, however, would not mark the end of the Irish struggle.

For the Irish immigrants who were fortunate enough to survive the unsanitary and cramped

as the "Know Nothings." They were a neo-nationalist hate-group disguised as a political party which aimed to combat Irish immigration to the U.S. and declare their Protestant religious views as superior.

It would not be until decades after their arrival that the Irish would begin to gain social footing in the United States, specifically, through their large voter turnout in state and local elections in which they elected leaders of the Irish community into positions of power in government.

Furthermore, it would not be for over one hundred years until the first Irish-Catholic U.S. President, John Fitzgerald Kennedy, would serve in office.

Lastly, and most disturbingly, it would not be for another 150 years from the start of the famine that Britain would take some responsibility for its devastating contributions to the famine.

As a descendant, myself, of the generations of

"Lastly, and most disturbingly, it would not be for another 150 years from the start of the famine that Britain would take some responsibility for its devastating contributions to the famine."

conditions of the "coffin ships"--the flotillas named after the quarter of the 85,000 passengers who did not survive the trip overseas--a life of backbreaking physical labor, employment discrimination, poverty, racial caricatures, and violent confrontations with anti-Catholic and anti-Irish factions awaited.

Indeed, it was not uncommon for one to see anti-Irish job-listing advertisements in newspapers that read "No Irish Need Apply"; as well as the destruction of Irish property, such as the burning of the Old South (Catholic) Church in Maine in the summer of 1854.

It is also worth noting that these anti-Irish efforts, which hardly scratch the surface of the brute oppression that the Irish faced, were mainly driven by the anti-Irish and anti-Catholic group known

brave men and women who sacrificed their wellbeing when emigrating from Ireland to an initially cold and indifferent reception in the U.S., I believe that it is imperative for our nation's youth to closely study the Irish struggle in order to ensure that our students receive a comprehensive understanding of the horrific and degenerating consequences of discrimination amongst all cultures and all societies.

While the decision of the California legislature to incorporate ethnic studies is a needed step in the right direction towards ensuring a rich multicultural education, it should be broadened so that historically oppressed social groups--such as the Irish--that are currently missing from California's curriculum receive the careful study and consideration they deserve in curricula.

FEATURES

Spiritual and Religious Life at Trinity Remains Connected With Students, Even from a Distance

MAURA KEARY '22
FEATURES EDITOR

While the Trinity College Chapel has remained relatively unoccupied over the past six months, students of Trinity's faith-based organizations have begun their return to campus in the hopes of reconnecting with their religious groups. Just as places of worship have in the "real world," Trinity's various faith based organizations have succeeded in creating the welcoming ambience of meetings that are typically held in person despite the move from the physical world to Zoom.

Interim College Chaplain Reverend Trevor Beauford relayed how students can continue to be part of these groups in saying that this fall, "we will be engaging virtually and when allowed, we will offer outdoor services. All faith traditions will have the opportunity to meet for prayers and public worship."

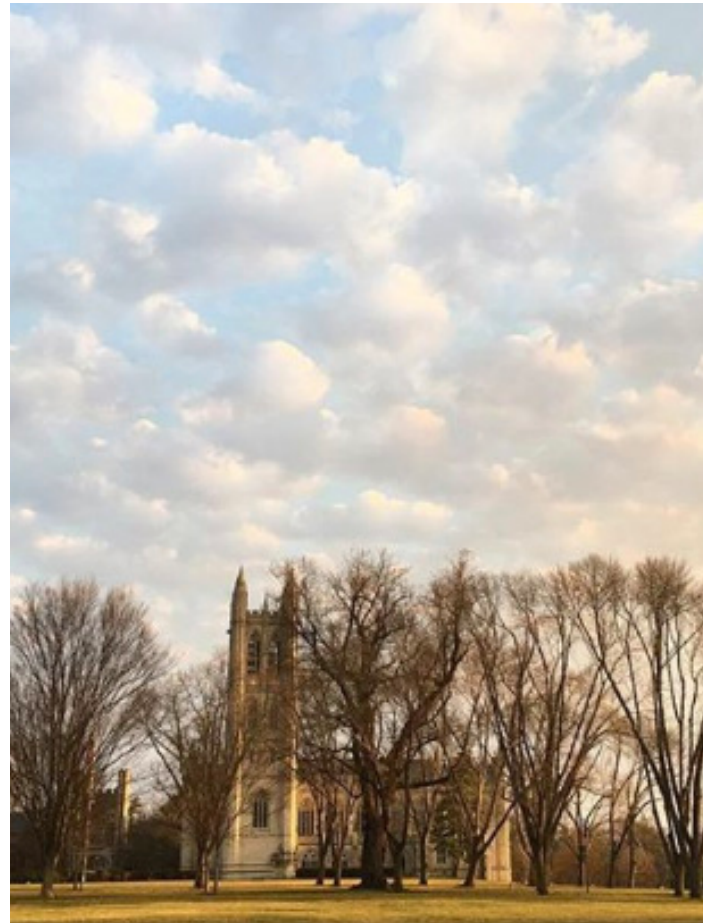
With only a few weeks of "gatherings" under their belts, some organizations are starting to create a new normal, including online religious meetings and services. In particular, Chapel Council, a student-led

Christian organization, has gathered virtually since returning to Trinity. The first Council meeting consisted of student members, including first-year students who had recently joined. The members were able to introduce themselves, discuss ideas, and reflect upon their plans for the upcoming semester.

Trinity Episcopalian and Protestant communities are another group that has gathered online. On Sunday, Sept. 6, Episcopal College Chaplain Reverend Rebekah Hatch led a virtual service for students and the community, preaching on scripture and welcoming students back to campus despite their separation from the College's Chapel. Chapel Council member Alex Chambers '22 explained that students were able to participate as if they were in the Chapel. Though the service took place on Zoom, students were able to read scripture, engage with their community, and listen to recordings of College Organist Christopher Houlihan's music from the Chapel organ. Some services, such as those in the Episcopal tradition, will be offered online un-

til outdoor meetings can be formed in groups not exceeding 25 individuals.

Trinity's current policy restricts gatherings to no more than 25 masked individuals, socially distanced in an outdoor space. Fortunately, technology is being set up to live-stream services, such as Catholic mass, if the number of attendees hits the limit. Associate Chaplain for Roman Catholic Life John Campbell said that he hopes to be able to gather for Catholic mass after Sept. 14. Campbell explained that the Office of Spiritual and Religious Life hopes to utilize the large tent adjacent to the Chapel as a location to hold outdoor services. "There is a lot of anxiety in the world right now," Campbell remarked, "So, the more we can get students to take care of each other, pray, and remain even-keeled, the better campus will be. We can make this a fabulous semester if we step up and take care of ourselves." Campbell also began a "Monday Morning Chaplain" series, where he reflects on God and the world. This program, began over the summer, has allowed Campbell to



remain connected with members of Trinity's Catholic community. The health and safety of Trinity students will remain a priority as organizations continue to reevaluate the structure of their gatherings. Rev. Beauford also explained the plans for several other groups: "The Friday Jumlah Prayers

will be in the new Muslim Prayer Room in Crescent 76. day Shabbat will be virtual for the time being, and Chapel services and mass will be online until further plans develop." plans develop." Thus, despite distance, spiritual and religious life remains strong at Trinity this fall term.

A Virtual Introduction Like No Other: The *Tripod* Speaks With Orientation Leader Maddie Reckner '23

OLIVIA PAPP '23
FEATURES EDITOR

New Student Orientation typically takes up four or five days and is devoted to ensuring that new students can become acquainted with life at Trinity prior to the beginning of classes. Orientation leaders will often aid new students in adapting to the many newfound difficulties of college. This aid can take on many forms such as showing new students around to their classes, answering unresolved questions, or simply being a role model during this unsettling transition period. Orientation this year, however, looks much different than it has in previous years.

The effects of coronavirus have begun to grow apparent on college campuses

across the United States, and the effects are also evident throughout New Student Orientation at Trinity. With much preparation on part of the Trinity administration, mainly through the Student Activities, Involvement, and Leadership team (S.A.I.L.), the Orientation process has still been deemed a success despite the comparative lack of in-person programming.

This year, the majority of events during New Student Orientation were virtual, a significant departure from the tradition of previous years. All introductory meetings between new students and orientation leaders were done over Zoom. Other activities promoted by the S.A.I.L. Team were also done through Zoom meetings, however, new students were still able to claim

their nest t-shirts in person.

The S.A.I.L. team worked hard to find activities for students that could operate online. There were many different activities available for new students to attend, similar to those from in-person years. Although the most substantial setback this year was having virtual orientation sessions rather than in-person sessions, the S.A.I.L. team at Trinity made it possible for students to attend activities such as yoga, bingo, trivia, the annual candle-lighting ceremony, and even Convocation. The entire process went generally well, despite a few technical glitches over Zoom.

"Orientation went as well as it could have gone, given the situation we're in," said Maddie Recker '23, an orientation leader.

"Meeting virtually is not the most ideal way for freshmen to meet their classmates, however, my group showed up to our meetings and we all made an effort to make orientation go smoothly," she remarked. Recker voiced her concern over the fact that there is "nothing we can do about this situation without putting people in danger of contracting the virus. Even still, the whole

process went smoothly." When reflecting on the experience as a whole, Recker commented, "I would have changed the way everyone received their orientation group." In previous years, the orientation group assignments were done through freshmen seminar groups. This year, however, the groups were assigned before class registration was held due to the pandemic.



TRINITY COLLEGE

President Berger-Sweeney speaking at the virtual Convocation for the Class of 2024 this year.

A First-Year's Perspective on New Student Orientation

KATIE CERULLE '23
FEATURES EDITOR

The first days of an ordinary freshman year consist of experiencing nothing but new people – bouncing from dorm room to frat backyard, and occasionally winding up in a classroom with up to 50 of your peers. But not this year. COVID-19 has taken a toll on usual freshman year activities across the country, and Trinity College is no exception.

Teddy Komjathy, a freshman on the lacrosse team from Wellesley, Massachusetts, is making the most of his first few days on Trinity's campus. The check-in process that Trinity students went through upon arrival involved showing proof of a negative COVID test taken no more than three days before moving into campus, taking another COVID test, and completing a packet of documents that lay out the importance of your health and safety and keeping those around you safe. As a freshman, Teddy emphasized that having to complete all of these tests ensured that he felt safe coming into school for the first time.

Additionally, having students take COVID

tests each week shows that the college is "dedicated to having all students remain on campus for as long as possible."

In addition to discussing how Trinity is ensuring the safety of its students, Teddy also spoke about the ways that Trinity has facilitated bonding between members of the freshmen class. "Trinity has given us the time and the place to make new friends while staying within the COVID guidelines," he added. He also touched on the benefit of having outdoor tents, seating outside the cave, and the ability to be on the quad in small groups. These small moments of face-to-face contact with peers has been helpful in the process of acclimating to campus culture.

As a replacement for the usual first year orientation, there have been numerous Zoom meetings with orientation leaders that gave first-years the platform to bond with other students virtually despite the pandemic's restrictions. "It's good for students to have an opportunity to meet others in an organized way," Teddy remarked. In addition to these Zoom meetings held by the orientation leaders, the College also

implemented an online alternative to important freshmen events such as Convocation and Matriculation. These two events are usually memorable experiences that students talk about through their time at Trinity. Completing these two events virtually were valuable additions in an attempt to normalize the Trinity first-year experience.

Coming to college for the first time in the era of COVID, it was tough for Teddy to form expectations about how Trinity was going to achieve a socially distant and enjoyable first few days in Hartford.

"I was hoping that there was going to be a lot of socializing and getting to know people, but I also knew that that would be achieved in a different way," he stated. The emphasis on keeping students and faculty of the college safe and healthy has limited the amount of face to face gatherings, Teddy mentioned, but he is exceedingly grateful to the college for allowing him to have a partial in-person experience and get to engage in some of the friendships and Trinity traditions that make our campus the special and unique place it is during the academic year.



TRINITY COLLEGE

While Trinity's campus may be socially distant, Bants like Teddy Komjathy '24 are making the most of their Trinity experience, knowing that while things are distant now, campus life will return to normal in time.

10 Pieces of Advice for the Bants of the Class of 2024

BAILEY MCKEON '22
FEATURES EDITOR

1. Keep your head up. Your college experience is just beginning. You have a world of opportunity waiting for you that you aren't even aware of yet. No one has "the perfect start," and one might be especially rare in the midst of a pandemic. Don't get down about it. Believe that good things are coming. They are.

2. Don't party. That being said, our promising future here is contingent on our ability to follow proper health and safety protocols and keep COVID-19 cases on campus low. It's not worth engaging in things now that could compromise the rest of our semester here. Trinity historically has an active social scene but there are other ways to engage with your peers and meet new people. As a student body, we need to collectively continue to keep the number of COVID cases low on campus. The better we do this, the more restrictions will be lifted.

3. Please don't party. Enough said.

4. Give it time. It's okay to be unhappy during this period of transition. Adjusting to college is not easy and every returning student this year have similar experiences. But we're all still here for a reason. Be patient. You will find friends. You will find your path here at Trinity. Social circles open up dramatically before you even realize it.

5. Get out of your comfort zone. Take a risk! You are here to grow, and, believe it or not, you are in charge of your own growth. Grab the reins! Take control! Plant your seeds and see how you blossom. Try a club you are unsure about. Email your online classmates and ask to social distance and study. These small things can initiate a whole new community for you here at Trinity.

6. Say hello to the person next to you. It's the easiest way to make a new friend. And it'll bring some light into someone else's day. Especially in a time when we may be feeling disconnected, friendliness goes a long way.

7. Speak up about what you are struggling with. Trinity offers so many resources to support your success. You and only you are responsible for reaching out to these sources. Help will not miraculously come to you. So please don't be afraid to ask for guidance either—it's being offered for a reason. Visit the Counseling Center, engage in a spiritual activity, or seek academic support. Never forget that you are not alone and that so many people on this campus are dedicated to helping and supporting you along your college journey.

8. Learn about your resources. Consequently, in order to utilize your resources, you have to know about them if you are going to reach out to them! Ask others to point you in the right direction, or simply search for help on the Trinity website (www.trincoll.edu) if you are unsure where to turn.

9. Balance is important. Starting a new routine here can be overwhelming, especially during an era where establishing routines is harder than ever. Remember to take time to take care of yourself. Consider virtual self-care opportunities offered through Trinity's Bantams in Balance program or find ways to engage in self-care at a distance by doing yoga on the quad.

10. Practice gratitude. As much as this may not be the start you had imagined or dreamt of, we are all so fortunate to be here. This is a unique opportunity for each and everyone of us to strive to be better humans and take advantage of our beautiful Hartford campus. Be thankful for what you do have. Sometimes a good attitude is all that you need to start the day off right.

Arts & Entertainment

Every Summer is a Hot Girl Summer For Her: How Megan Thee Stallion Stole the Music Season

LIZ FOSTER '22
MANAGING EDITOR

In a world where bars held their doors wide open, strangers clustered in crowds, and brushing hands with someone on the street didn't induce an instant flinch, Megan Thee Stallion appeared as a shining beacon. The Houston rapper leaped onto the scene in 2016 before picking up traction with the release of her mixtape *Tina Snow* in 2018. Her next break out arose in the summer of 2019 which would soon become "Hot Girl Summer"—named after a tweet from 2018. A song followed, featuring Nicki Minaj and Ty Dolla \$ign, the latter of which I still find unnecessary over a year later.

Megan Thee Stallion combines raunchy male bragadociousness (her sex life, her bag chasing, and her use and disposal of sexual partners), with feminine charm and a collection of signature ad libs ranging from her tongue pop "ahh"s and kissy "mwahs." She has the swagger of a rockstar, the sex appeal of a video-girl, and the sensibility of a businesswoman. She plays no games and takes no prisoners. Yet, beneath her beauty and hot-girl attitude, she feels human in a way other stars don't. Megan has befriended a range of celebrities including Beyonce, Kylie Jenner, and Jenner's estranged ex-best friend Jordyn Woods. Her Instagram live streams allow her to speak on pertinent issues such as rapper Tory Lanez's shooting and the recent pass-

ing of both her parents. The rapper is also entering her third year at Texas Southern University as she continues to pursue her higher education. The rapper has thus far balanced school with writing and recording multiple mixtapes and albums, and touring with massive industry names like Future and Meek Mill. She became an industry sweetheart and an icon for sexually empowered women as she dared to match the hypersexual energy so often abused by the men of the Billboard Hot 100.

Megan took over the scene with catchy dances, memes, and other Tik Tok content as the platform rocketed her songs "Cash Shit" and "Freak Nasty" to virality. Megan was even forced to eventually file for a trademark after brands continuously marketed lines with the slogan "Hot Girl Summer." Anyone could be a hot girl in Megan's world. As her songs rose throughout the Billboard Hot 100, Megan solidified that the final summer of normalcy belonged to Thee Stallion.

When COVID-19 arrived in the United States and forced college students home and onto online school, time previously consumed by physical class, socializing, and other on-campus, college-related activities was now free to be spent in a digital facemelt. Quarantine was, for many, months of scrolling through social media as the world crumbled to pieces outside of the shiny screen. Overwhelmed by the newest, most tumultuous event in many young people's lives, Gen Zers

turned to Tik Tok. As days stretched to weeks, Megan Thee Stallion's song "Savage" slowly wormed its way onto users' "For You" pages. For You pages or FYPs are carefully curated by Tik Tok's algorithm as it feeds users new content in a way similar to Instagram's "Explore" page.

The For You page proves itself time and time again as a shortcut for musical success in the internet age. Artists like Flo Milli and ppcocaine, who both boast multiple Tik Tok hit "sounds," have recently gleaned the benefits of Tik Tok domination alongside Megan Thee Stallion. Most recently, ppcocaine, a 19-year-old best known for her raunchy lyricism and sugary, sour tagline of "trap-bunnieBUBBLES," scored a deal with Columbia Records following her overnight success on the platform. Songs on Tik Tok rise to fame in a way unlike other social media platforms. Trending songs on Tik Tok cast a wide and all-consuming shadow over traditional promotional advertisements through Snapchat filters, Instagram ads, or fan-targeted emails. All it takes is a little help from Tik Tok's algorithm to push a song from user to user until someone 1.) choreographs a dance (Doja Cat's "Say So"), 2.) creates a meme template from key lyrics (see Flo Milli's "Not Friendly"), or 3.) snatches the song as a de facto anthem for their community ("XIX" by Kismet became a staple sound for the proudly self-titled "alt Tik Tok" community.)

"Savage" along with "Captain Hook" sparked viral dance routines and led users

around the world to throw it back for a chance at a sliver of clout. Powerhouse influencers like Addison Rae, the platform's highest earner and a member of the popular collaborative house the "Hype House," performed the song repeatedly. As everyday folks copied the app's superstars, Megan's songs climbed higher and higher. Tik Tok's popularity often lands songs on Spotify's curated playlists, leading more listeners to find and stream the songs. Dances and memes trickled onto Twitter and Instagram and soon enough, Beyonce had joined forces with Megan to catapult "Savage" to peak at the coveted number #1 space on the Billboard Hot 100 on May 26th. Even Charli D'Amelio, the app's most-followed creator and de facto mascot, is a fan of Megan, her bio reads: "i am a megan

thee stallion stan for life."

In a summer shaken by coronavirus, a critical upcoming election, and general uncertainty of what the future could bring, Megan Thee Stallion reminded us that we are still hot girls. To close down this COVID-summer, Megan and Cardi B brought the heat with "WAP," an ode to soaking genitalia everywhere that secured its number one spot on the Billboard charts and broke records with 93 million streams in its debut week. Coming as no surprise, the sound has been used over 2.5 million times on Tik Tok. As Hot Girl summer creeps closer to Hot Girl fall, Megan Thee Stallion continues to secure the bag, drive the boat, and rule the charts with her Southern charm, larger than life personality, and endless collection of bangers.



@THEESTALLION

Megan Thee Stallion's bangers never stop, writes
Managing Editor Liz Foster '22

Suicide The Ripple Effect: The Embodiment of Hope

MACIEJ PRADZIAK '23
A&E EDITOR

In honor of National Suicide Prevention Month, I'll be reviewing Kevin Hines and Greg Dicharry's masterful documentary, *Suicide the Ripple Effect*. As some readers of the A&E section of the *Trinity Tripod* may recognize, this review is already vastly different from the other critiques I've written for this publication in that it is unusually informal. In light of this documentary's straightforward and intensely intimate nature, I have decided to reflect its essence and plainly tell you that this film is an extremely vital watch for anyone suffering from any kind of mental illness. "Hope" may just look like a

four-letter word to those who have lost it, but Hines and Dicharry created a piece of art that brings the sense of urgency and importance it once had and gives you proof that hope truly does exist.

Suicide the Ripple Effect tells the story of Kevin Hines' second chance at life after he attempted to take his own life at the age of 19 by jumping off the Golden Gate Bridge. Although his suicide attempt had an immediate negative effect on his close family and friends, Hines pushed forward to internationally tell his story of redemption, strength, and hope to show the possibility of creating something positive out of the seemingly bleak. His story proves that human beings who suffer from men-

tal illnesses are not defined by them and that the proper treatment and care truly can make life worth living.

A noticeable aspect of the film that would, in theory, garner negative criticism is the amateurish cinematography by Steven Higgins and Adan Pulido. Throughout the documentary, there are moments where Higgins and Pulido were unprepared for the lighting of various locations and would change the ISO (what controls a camera's sensitivity to light) midway through the shot and make the image either overexposed or underexposed. In most circumstances, this would make for an extremely distracting viewing experience; however, I found this style to be particularly effective in making the

viewer feel like they're watching a home movie made by a close friend. Having those "flaws" contrasted by the stunning shots of the Golden Gate Bridge, the crashing of ocean waves in San Francisco Bay, and the pink clouds during sunset makes for an experience that is gracefully turbulent. The intimacy one feels watching a film that knowingly has flaws, but continues to be just as beautiful in its presentation, is an excellent metaphor for continually moving forward in your life, no matter how immense the difficulties you may be facing are.

Suicide the Ripple Effect is a profoundly honest and touching documentary that sheds a destigmatized light on the struggles of mental illness to those blissfully un-

aware while giving a sense of genuine hope to those who are painfully aware.

With the film review's conclusion, I want to address the readers who understand what it means to suffer mentally and may struggle with suicidal ideation or have contemplated taking their own life before. I want you to know that your life has meaning. You may not see it, but there are people around you who value you as a human being and accept you for who you are. You may feel like you want to die, but all you want is the pain to stop. Those are two drastically different things. I want you to know that it is possible to lessen the pain and feel like your life is truly your own. You are strong enough, and I believe in you.

Weekly Skylights: The *Tripod* Looks to the Clouds

JOEY CIFELLI '23
A&E EDITOR

(Right) There's something about summer that's hard to describe. The dislikes come to mind first: the heat, the bugs, the bug bites, sweat, sunscreen, sunburn, bug spray. Everything is sticky all the time. I really do not care for it. And the good things, the things that make me love those months, they're much less tangible. Walking in a grass field in the evening, for example, when the sun is going down and the breeze is soft. Trees rustling if any happen to be nearby, and the grass cool on your feet. Or, in the middle of the day, when the sun is beating down overhead, sitting on a flat rock on a creekbed. Your shoes and socks lying next to you and your legs dipped in the sparkling water. It's those moments, whether they appear big or small or frequently or only once, mixed into the terrible things, which are unending, that make summer hard for me to place. **8.8/10.**



August 20, 2020

(Right) Clothes fashioned from the ripe fibers of cloud possess many unique qualities, vain in a way that today's sky has its own sky within itself. By which I mean, typically the sky constitutes the ephemeral part of our world, ever forming and reforming, while the land remains static and defined. Today, there's some acknowledgement of those historic roles, and the clouds have staged themselves in a satirical representation of both spheres. Notice how the bottommost layer of clouds are finely textured. And their shape. Do they not resemble mountains? To find the "sky" of this sky, tradition holds: look up. There's a wonderful, hazy blanket there. That warmer area on the right is especially touching. The way that light blends cozily with its blue-grey surroundings is just great. I think there may be a little cheekiness at play here, between realms outside our own. What a delight that it looks like this! **7.6/10.**



August 24, 2020



September 3, 2020

(Left) There is a bird somewhere that has lost its feather.
A bird who would dare to go out in this weather.
A bird like the birds of which old people speak.
One with wings stretching miles and miles so deep
that it blots out the sun and the moon and the stars and
everything bright on this marble of ours.

So the children stay hushed cuddled under their covers
while surrounded by terrified fathers and mothers.
Every flap of its wings is a thunderous clap and
each shriek from its lips leaves a cavernous gap
in the ground as it glides as it grows as it looks
till it finds that damn feather and swoops down and
hooks the thing up and away and out at last gone.
Back to its home in the land of no dawn. **9.4/10.**

(Right) As the school year kicks back up again, I get to thinking about possibilities, you know. All is blank. What's going to be the thing this year. How will I change? Will I improve? I don't know, it's always hard to tell with these kinds of things. The endless choices can be paralyzing to everyone sometimes, certainly to me. It's ironic that total freedom can leave us feeling more trapped than a limited number of choices. I learned in economics a couple years ago that, for determining the opportunity cost of an action, we only consider the next best option. I think there's something to that. Instead of mourning the infinite loss of possibilities, we should appreciate the solidity of a choice. Who cares how it turns out? Better to fail than do nothing. **6.8/10.**



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SPORTS

National Hockey League Continues Through the COVID Pandemic With the Stanley Cup Playoffs

MATEO VAZQUEZ '21
SPORTS EDITOR

As the NHL season winds down, this year's playoffs are being held under unique circumstances. Disregarding the lack of fans in the stadium and the interruptions in their season, the National Hockey League has safely arrived at round two of the playoffs this past weekend. Game Six resulted in a tied-up series, at (3-3). The most interesting standout thus far coming out of Game Six was the intense match-up between the Philadelphia Flyers and New York Islanders on Saturday.

What should have been an easy sweep for the Islanders turned into a fight for control of the puck very early on in the match. The Flyers came out strong with two goals in the first period and put the Islander's goalie under constant fire throughout the period, which certainly demonstrated their excellent tactical abilities with the puck.

While the Islanders were able to make a comeback later in the period and get a shot on goal, they were not able to recover as well on the defensive end, which resulted in them entering the period down by a goal. Things were not looking up, but they certainly showed throughout the match that they had the spirit to recover strong. During the second period, the Islanders came out in full force and synchronized their attacks on the net, coming one after another to score. They were able to cause havoc on the Flyers net and score a total of three goals taking the lead, 4-3, in an exciting turn of events.

Things took a turn for the worse in the third period as the Flyers were attempting to tie the game up and send it into overtime. While the Islanders were playing excellent defense throughout the third period, the Flyers were able to outmaneuver them in a transition from defense to offense and again demonstrate their control of the puck. In a matter of 15 seconds, the Flyer's center was able to take



NATIONAL HOCKEY LEAGUE

The New York Islanders celebrate their win against the Philadelphia Flyers during game six of the Stanley Cup Playoffs in a major victory by the team. The NHL is one of the leagues continuing during the COVID-19 pandemic.

the puck across the mid while their forward, Scott Laughton, went to the far right side. The Islanders made a push for the center, leaving Laughton open for a pass and a rush on goal for the shot to tie the game up at 4-4. While the Islanders attempted to make a comeback, they could not connect as an offensive front, but managed to hold out on defense allowing Game Six to go into overtime in what would become one of the most exhilarating and thrilling moments of the match.

Overtime saw both sides relentlessly firing shots on the net for any chance to gain a lead and win Game Six. However, much like the first and third periods, the Islanders struggled to come together in attacks on the net which hindered their chances to effectively connect with the net. On the other hand, the Flyers were making the quick plays necessary to get down the rink and set themselves up to score, but just kept coming up empty handed and could not seem to find their center. The Flyers found themselves connecting in one of their offensive pushes and within a few quick passes they attacked the net and were able to push a shot through bringing the score to 5-4. The Flyers sealed the game and al-

lowed them to advance to Game Seven against the Islanders. The celebration and sense of victory for the team was palpable.

Over the weekend, the two teams faced off again and the Islanders came out in full force determined to finish the game and advance strong. In the first period alone, the Islanders were able to hold off the Flyers and land two strong shots on net that sealed off the first period at 2-0. Then in the second, the Islanders once again persisted and landed another shot on net that got inside the pocket, and then retreated to defense to keep the 3-0 lead against the Flyers, who were not able to rally back on offense and make a successful attack on net.

While the Flyers attempted a last-minute push in the third period, they came up unsuccessful and the Islanders advanced with an end game score of 4-0. The Islanders advanced to the Eastern Conference Finals to face off against the Tampa Bay Lightning while the Las Vegas Golden Knights will take on the Dallas Stars. This advancement for the Islanders marks their first Conference Finals in 27 years in what is surely a victory being celebrated by Islander's fans everywhere. It was certainly an exciting re-

sult and a thrilling moment for hockey history.

The match which occurred last night for the Islanders was one in which they had to continue on with their offense. It was clear from the start that the match would boil down to an intense toss up of who was able to have more puck control and which defense was able to limit the minor errors during the match. Last night's face-off between the No. 2 Tampa Bay Lightning and No. 6 New York Islanders took a turn, and by the third period the Lightning were in the lead 7-2. The Lightning took out the Boston Bruins with an end result score 4-1 in their last game, so it was obvious they were not going to let the Islanders off without a fight.

The beginning of the game saw a strong start for the Lightning, who were quick to put up three goals. One of these three was provided by centre Brayden Point, who wasted no time in ensuring the Lightning came out of Game Seven on top.

The Western Conference has also been shaping up to be a good toss-up between the Knights and the Dallas Stars. Particularly for the young Knights team who went to the Stanley Cup during their first season

(2017-2018) and lost to the Washington Capitals. A win against the Dallas Stars would allow them to have a second shot at a Stanley Cup win and a chance to bring home their first win to Las Vegas.

While the Stars already won game one against the Knights by one goal, it is quite evident that these teams are evenly matched and the victory by Dallas can be equated to a slip up by the Knights goaltender, who was not on point during the match. If anything, the takeaway from Game One should be that defense is going to be the key to success in these upcoming games.

The next game of the Stanley Cup Playoffs will take place tonight, Sept. 8, at 8:00 p.m. with the Stars facing off against the Knights. Then, the Eastern Conference continues on Wednesday with another face-off between the Islanders and the Lightning, possibly giving the Islanders a chance to redeem themselves after last night's performance. It will certainly be a game worth fans paying attention to.

However the matches turn out, you can bet that the *Tripod* sports team will be on the case, providing you with the latest up-to-date accounts on the most thrilling moments in the NHL season this year for your reading pleasure.

This Week in Sports At Trincoll...

COVID-19 Rears Its Ugly Head in Trinity Athletics

ANNA BAUER '23
SPORTS EDITOR

The COVID-19 pandemic has complicated just about everything, and Trinity College's Athletic teams are no exception to this. It has already been decided that Trinity will not be participating in any NESCAC competitions or NCAA championships this fall. However, according to the Director of Athletics, Drew Galbraith, the athletic department is doing everything it can so that all sports can have team practices in a safe manner.

This starts with a COVID-19 Education Workshop, with an assigned athletic training staff member, as well as an Athletic Orientation for all athletes before practices begin. The general guidelines are that indoor groups will be limited to ten students and outdoor groups will be limited to 25 students; however, the requirements that each team must adhere to

during practices will vary depending on the sport and the kind of contact that would usually occur.

For example, volleyball will have group sizes limited to seven athletes at a time, and, to prevent close proximity, there will be no blocker when any hitting is done at the net. The football team will be required to split up into four groups of 20 and two of the four groups will practice at the same time, but on opposite ends of the field. For our lacrosse and soccer teams, coaches have the choice of either running multiple practices or dividing the groups as they see fit based on the team roster sizes.

In addition, at least for the first few weeks, no defensive plays or drills will occur during any team practices, and all of the players will be wearing masks under their helmets. This mask rule applies to all athletic teams. In addition, each practice must also have adult su-

pervision, *i.e.* no captain's practices. No close contact will occur throughout practices at the start, and, again, face coverings will be worn. The only exception is speed and conditioning work, but 12 feet of distance will be required between each athlete.

The winter teams have the potential to begin with a more normal start given that their first practice starts Oct. 15, while the spring and fall teams begin Sept. 18 – a full 14-days after the last students have arrived on campus. At the moment though, the close proximity required for winter sports like wrestling, basketball, ice hockey, and squash still leave these teams beginning with small group work and, of course, masks.

Now, while masks may seem like the devil when exerting a lot of physical energy (especially when your own sweat makes you feel like you're drowning), the wearing of masks may allow athletic practices to normalize over the course of the semester. On a separate note, the swim-

ming and diving team plans to utilize the U.S. Swimming guidelines, indicating how to properly distance within the parameters of a pool.

While this may be quite a rocky start, there remains hope that a slow progression to what practices and activities usually look like can be made by mid-to-

late October. However, as one might assume, this is entirely dependent on the virus levels staying manageable not just on Trinity's campus, but within the surrounding community and Connecticut as a whole. So, to all the athletes, keep the faith and hopefully we will see you in games soon.



BANTAM SPORTS

Currently, COVID-19 testing has been taking place in the fieldhouse of Ferris Athletic Center.

Trinity Athletics and COVID-19...

Strength and Conditioning Steps-Up During Phase I

MATEO VAZQUEZ '21
SPORTS EDITOR

As the Bantams athletes return to campus, they are finding numerous ways to adapt to the new challenges that they must face in light of the impact the COVID-19 pandemic has had on athletics. An area of their training that looks quite different during the Phase-1 stage of athletics reopening is the Strength and Conditioning program. One major change for the program includes the reduced number of athletes that are allowed to train per session and utilize the equipment at one time.

The varsity gym welcomes the highest flow of traffic for athletes who are training both during the on-season and off-season. However, changes that were implemented this se-

mester ensure that athletes are ready to take on their upcoming seasons by reducing traffic and high volumes of students utilizing the spaces at one time. Another major change athletes must adapt to includes outdoor Strength and Conditioning, which they will partake in under tents when the weather is not feasible for training. This allows for an easier environment for athletes to safely train and reduces the need to wear a mask, given that each individual has more than 12 feet of space between them and others.

The varsity gym will provide athletes with a diverse schedule including strength, circuit, and wildcard workouts, as well as a variety of bonus workouts if athletes would like to partici-

pate in multiple sessions. The new changes also allow the athletes to work with a variety of coaches that they may not have had the chance to in past years and will be a good way to further familiarize themselves with the staff.

Athletes will notice that there are a lot of advantages for them during this fall season to specifically develop their skills on a personal level. Trainers throughout this week will be conducting a baseline test that allows athletes to have a detailed personal plan that highlights their strengths and weaknesses to further develop themselves throughout the semester.

Then, prior to the end of the semester in the fall, there will be another cycle of baseline testing which will highlight any changes of improvement and of course allow them to fur-

ther focus on different areas of their training over the winter break. A weekly nutrition newsletter that provides tips, workout outlines, and goals to keep in mind throughout the training process has also been added to the resources athletes have

been given this semester. The Strength and Conditioning staff are doing all that they can with their given resources to meet the needs of athletes and provide them with opportunities to grow and remain competitive throughout the semester.



TRINITY ATHLETICS

The Trinity College Strength and Conditioning Program will adapt to social distancing protocols as made clear by the college's COVID-19 guidelines as well as those set by the state of Connecticut.