

President Greene announces the first cross-disciplinary institute for AI at a liberal arts college

By **FIONA HUO**
News Reporter

On Jan. 28, 2021, members of the Colby community, including faculty, students, alumni, and parents logged onto Zoom for a highly-anticipated announcement that President David A. Greene had promised to deliver earlier in the week. Those present soon learned of the College's plan to establish the Davis Institute of Artificial Intelligence (AI).

The Institute was made

possible by a \$30 million gift from Andrew Davis '85, LL.D. '15. The Davis family has formerly given gifts to the College, including \$25 million to establish DavisConnects and another \$10 million for the Davis Science Center.

Emily Riley '23 described her mixed reaction to the announcement: "I was excited for what it would do for Colby and its students, but I've always been a little bit wary of AI. While AI undoubtedly has the power to do amazing things and advance soci-

ety, it also presents a lot of philosophical and ethical issues."

Riley said that she is comforted by the idea of AI being developed in a liberal arts school so that it can be approached from an interdisciplinary perspective.

The center is one of the first of its kind and will change the definition of what a liberal arts institution can do. The AI program at the College reinforces Greene's ambition to make machine learning available to all Colby stu-

dents regardless of major.

In the video announcement, Greene emphasized the prevalence of artificial intelligence in all fields and the need to provide students with the right tools to compete in the job market.

The specifics of how the institute will work are still in development. The College expects a lot of input to come from faculty yet to be hired for the institute. The College is looking to hire six experts in the AI field immediately, including a director.

Staying true to its core liberal arts values, there will be five main areas of studies for AI implementation, including economics and finance, computational social sciences, computational biology, the environment & the ocean, and ethics & society.

In an interview with *The Colby Echo*, Assistant Professor of Statistics Jerzy Wiecek said that although he does not yet know what impact the AI program will have on the statistics department, he is looking forward to the prospect of the program.

"I'm excited for the opportunity to help Colby students think about the foundation of statistical concepts, algorithms, and building things based off data which are all intrinsically tied to AI," Wiecek said.

Provost and Dean of Faculty Margaret McFadden explained how students will interact with the institute. Courses will first be offered in disci-

plines that already exist at the College. This structure is expected to change as the institute develops further.

"Most students will be exposed to AI organically in their areas of study and majors," McFadden added. "The idea is for institute faculty to work with other faculty across all disciplines who are interested in course development support for adding AI-related materials into their curricula."

McFadden explained that the goal is to make AI accessible to everyone regardless of prior experience. Students should not expect the institute to be exclusively coding and computer science.

"It's important to understand that the institute is not just about gaining technology skills," she said. "We want it to reach and include students with expertise from across the curriculum - humanities, social science, interdisciplinary studies - so they can bring crucial knowledge and perspectives to the study and practice of AI."

She echoed Riley's sentiment that this interdisciplinary approach will make the AI program more ethical, pointing out known issues with the technology.

"We all know about algorithms that seem to produce racist and sexist outcomes, or the privacy and civil rights implications of things like facial recognition," McFadden said.

The initial plan is to es-

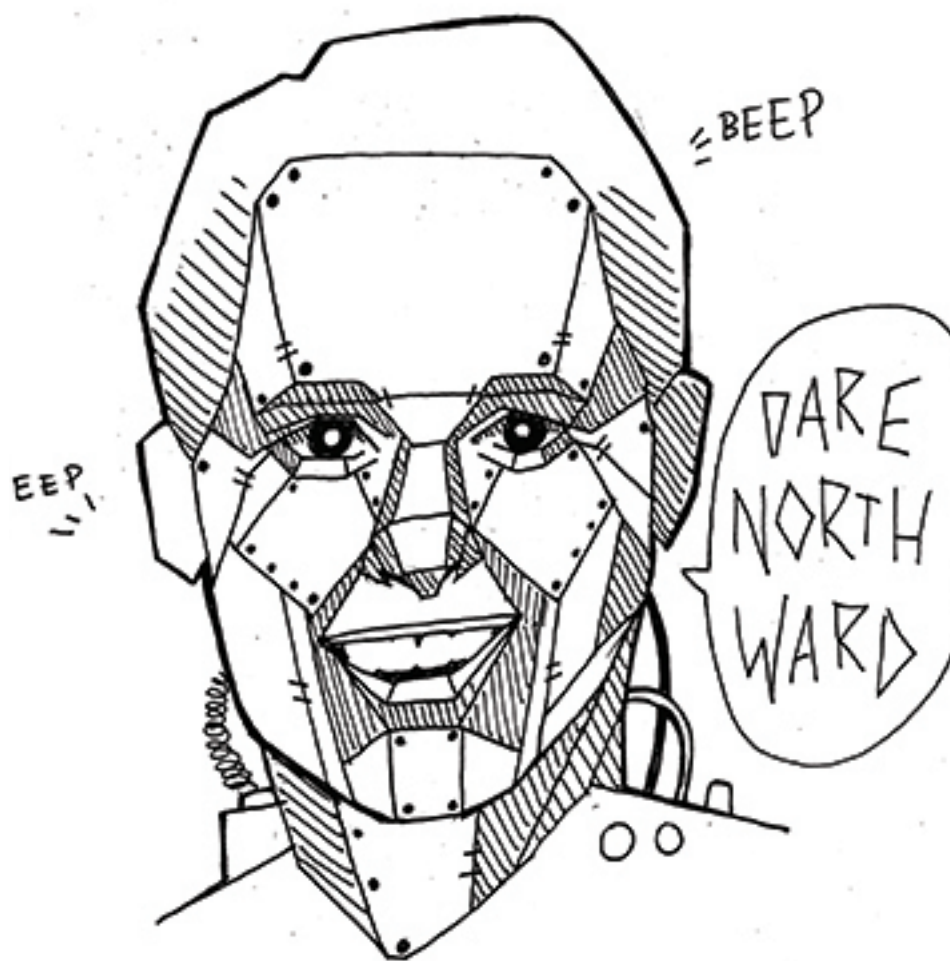
tablish a summer institute through the Davis Center of Artificial Intelligence, where AI students and faculty from all across the country can come and conduct their own teaching and learning through Colby.

Riley, a psychology and history double major, sees AI potentially influencing her studies here at the College.

"History is always important when looking at the future. If we don't learn from the past, we risk making the same mistakes. Psychology could have possible connections as we compare the human mind to AI. Philosophy has obvious connections. What are the ethics of creating artificial intelligence? Where is the line between AI and the human mind? These are just some of the questions that [arise]," she said.

Riley hopes that AI can strengthen her liberal arts education.

On a final note, McFadden noted that "like any new skill, it may take some effort to understand and apply it, but I'm confident our faculty will work hard so that every student succeeds. We have a smart and talented student body, and they will master the tools they need and want so they can be part of a future that avoids the bad outcomes of AI - the liberal arts version of AI, not the giant corporation/defense department version."



Cartoon courtesy of Sarah Warner '21

COVID-19 testing program ushers in second semester, drawing on lessons from the first

By **MATT ROCHA**
News Reporter

During the 2020 fall semester, the College's testing program saw unprecedented success. Of the over 90,000 tests that the College administered, only 34 came back positive. The College quickly isolated these positive cases, preventing a major outbreak from jeopardizing students' on-campus experience. Thanks to widespread compliance with the COVID-19 mitigation protocols and an effective testing regimen, students completed the entire semester on Mayflower Hill.

For Jan Plan, many students returned to campus after visiting home for the first time in months. Compared to the fall semester, there was an uptick of COVID-19 cases on campus the first few weeks of Jan Plan. The College isolated dozens of students and dining was exclusively grab-and-go for most of the month.

Using the lessons of the fall semester and Jan Plan, the College is look-

ing to repeat its success this spring. *The Colby Echo* communicated by email with Stephanie Sylvester, the College's Director of Administration and Chief of Staff, about the COVID-19 and the second semester.

Heading into the spring, Sylvester was cautiously optimistic. She noted the decreasing number of national and local cases, but stressed the importance of protocol compliance.

"The College monitors both national and local case counts. While the daily cases are trending downward, it is important that the campus continues following the health and safety measures that have allowed us to be successful," Sylvester wrote.

Sylvester explained that the College learned from its Jan Plan experience. The administration now understands that the campus is the most susceptible to a COVID-19 outbreak immediately after a large number of students return from being off campus, such as after a break. The week-long quarantine period

during the first week of the semester was designed to prevent an outbreak like the one in Jan Plan.

"The return of students in January brought some important insights about the need for us to be especially careful following arrival. We anticipated positive cases at the start of the semester and the extended quarantine period was implemented to prevent student-to-student transmission in the early weeks," Sylvester said.

Sylvester believes that testing is one of the most important factors in securing a safe, successful spring semester.

"The use of frequent and routine testing proved to be a critical tool in identifying cases on campus. Because testing is so essential to our ability to control the virus, testing compliance is a point of heightened focus," she said.

While the best aspects of the testing process, such as the frequency of testing, will remain the same, the College has added some important improvements.

The College has been

testing three times a week, which it will continue to do through February and March. Testing frequency after that will be determined based on the amount of cases on campus, in the surrounding area, and throughout the country.

Members of the testing program now use antigen tests in addition to the PCR model used in the fall. Sylvester said that this addition allows

the thrice-weekly testing and serves a procedural purpose.

"Antigen testing is a very useful point-of-care screening tool that helps quickly identify if someone may have COVID-19," Sylvester wrote. "Antigen test results are available on-site after 30 minutes of testing while PCR test results are available 24 hours or more following receipt by the Broad Institute."

Sylvester stressed the importance of daily symptom tracking on CoVerified, participating in the testing program, wearing face coverings, practicing physical distancing, and maintaining hand hygiene. If students conscientiously comply with all of the College's COVID-19 mitigation measures, then the likelihood of a rewarding spring semester will drastically increase.



Photo courtesy of Wendy Wei

Testing team member Maxwell McGadney at the intake station in the new Page Commons testing center

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Pay it Northward version 2.0

By SAM LEATHE
Finance Columnist

Following the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in the United States which spurred the College to send students home into remote learning last spring, the College launched a program called: "Pay it Northward" (PIN). This campaign was designed to help the Class of 2020 secure postgraduate employment, research, or internship opportunities. PIN proved especially helpful due to the deeply negative impact of the pandemic on the United States job market.

The results of this campaign were very impressive, and Colby has claimed that over ninety percent of 2020 graduates were assisted by this program in one way or another. This success rate was achieved thanks to the generosity of many alumni of the College, specifically those employed by the partner organizations of the campaign.

Some of these partners include PricewaterhouseCoopers, Market Access, Microsoft, Bigelow Laboratory, Amazon, and Fidelity Investments, yet there are many more companies and firms that worked with the College to help graduating students enter the job market during

these uncertain times.

Overall, PIN was clearly a success, both for the students in the Class of 2020 who found promising entry-level jobs and for the College, as this program was featured by many major news publishers including The Wall Street Journal. The success of this campaign left other Colby students wondering whether or not the College would do this for future graduating classes or just for those who found themselves navigating the job market during the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic. This question, though, was recently answered by the DavisConnects team, who announced in January that a new campaign, "Pay it Northward v2.0" would help the Class of 2021 secure postgraduate opportunities.

Like the original PIN program the second implementation of this campaign focuses on connecting Colby students who are currently searching for postgraduate opportunities with alumni who are looking to hire talented Colby students. The campaign also provides workshops and coaching events, led by the DavisConnects team, which will prepare students for interviews, networking sessions, and the overall process of applying

for jobs.

Specifically, some of the workshops focus on cover letters, resumes, networking, interviewing, and navigating the job market virtually. These will all be very helpful to students who are currently looking for work, as will be the virtual "Career Discovery Day" which is being hosted by DavisConnects on Feb. 22. This event is designed to directly connect employers and graduating

seniors and will surely be a productive event for all those who attend.

For students with interest in working in the financial sector, "Pay it Northward v2.0" is certainly something to consider. Not only will this campaign provide the skills necessary for networking and interviews, but it will also allow students to make meaningful connections with alumni who have succeeded in their fields of

work, especially in finance.

Colby alumni from financial firms such as Goldman Sachs, Bank of America, Citi Bank, and MUFJ have all partnered with the College for this campaign, and by working with these alumni, students will readily prepare themselves to apply for jobs in finance and even to succeed in these applications

For more information on the v2.0 campaign, reach out to DavisConnects or visit



Screenshot courtesy of DavisConnects Website

Members of COVID-19 task force spread the good word to Student Government

By SONIA LACHTER
News Editor

This past Sunday, Feb. 21, the Student Government Association (SGA) held a meeting with members of the COVID-19 Task Force to address frequently asked questions regarding quarantine, testing, and contact tracing.

The meeting began with a demonstration of the contact tracing interview that students who test positive for COVID-19 go through so that the

College can determine their close contacts.

In the demonstration, Billy Parker '16, Assistant Secretary of the College COVID-19 Response Team Manager, asked Chair of Community Engagement Natalie Guarino about her actions over the past 72 hours. Under Billy's direction, Guarino walked through the events of her Thursday through Sunday morning, explaining what her schedule looked like, who she ate with in the dining halls, and how far apart she sat from

friends while socializing.

Parker explained that the College defines a close contact as someone who has interacted with the positive patient for more than fifteen minutes at a distance closer than six feet apart.

In the fall semester, exempting arrival week and students who tested positive during quarantine, patients had an average of 6.5 close contacts. During Jan Plan, this number went up to 8. Parker noted that while this might not sound like

a dramatic change, the significant number of positive cases over Jan Plan stretched his team of four considerably, as the cases "quickly add up."

After a question from Class of 2023 co-president Josh Brause regarding COVID-19 quarantine rumors, Parker elaborated that an important factor of determining close contacts is the patient themselves. This explains how only some students in a classroom qualify as close contacts

when a class member tests positive and how other contacts who do not perfectly fit the definition of "six feet, fifteen minutes" still qualify as close contacts.

Despite this, Parker emphasized that the College does not just place people "willy nilly" in quarantine. While the team wants to ensure they are cautious in their decision making, in the event of grey area, they will follow up with the patient to make sure they fully understand the events surrounding their contact to make an informed decision.

Parker said that there is no written amnesty policy for what he should do with information his team learns during contact tracing, like if a student had attended a gathering of over ten people.

He explained that his team is focused on the health and safety of students with COVID-19 and their close contacts. He said that if he learned of an "egregious" violation, he would pass that on to a disciplinary team.

Parker said the support during this difficult time for his small team from across campus was overwhelming, and he has not found a need to expand his team on a permanent basis. He thanked those who supplement the full-time employees when they are overwhelmed, including those working in testing, Dean Karlene Burrelle-McRae '94, the Vice President of the College, and the General Counsel, who he said have all assisted with contact tracing.

Class of 2023 Senator Silas Gramaglia asked about how the new variants of COVID-19 would affect the College. Dr. Caroline LaFave DO '06, a provider at Garrison-Foster Health Center, said that if Mayflower Hill were to feel the effects of the variants, travel restrictions

may be further tightened.

Chair of Communications Abby Recko '22 asked why the main doors to Cotter Union have been locked. President Ashlee Guevara '21 explained that, because those doors do not have to be unlocked with a Colby Card scan, people outside the testing regimen were able to enter the building. So, those doors are locked and students can scan into other entrances.

In response, class of 2023 Co-President Cat Merkle suggested that Colby card scanners be added to the main doors.

Recko also asked why Dana dining hall was half blocked off. She said that it did not make sense to her because, if the goal was to decrease seating capacity, fewer tables in a larger area would make more sense, as it would allow diners to sit further apart from each other.

Brause asked if the College was lending its refrigeration capabilities to the state's vaccination efforts, to which Parker replied that the school has indeed provided some of its industrial freezers to the state. The current COVID-19 vaccines need to be stored at very cold temperatures: Moderna's between -13°F and 5°F and Pfizer's between -112°F and -76°F.

Guevara asked Dr. LeFave if the College was considering requiring double mask-wearing. LeFave said that the CDC study on double masking was only based on a person with two masks on being coughed on by someone without a mask on and used only very specific kinds of masks.

So, Dr. LeFave said that her team will not be recommending double masking as of now. Rather, she said that wearing a well-fitting mask is the most important thing, indeed, even more than distancing.



Photo courtesy of Sonia Lachter '22

Student Government Association members came together for their weekly meeting, joined by members of the College's COVID-19 Taskforce

The Colby Echo Cartoon Caption Contest

Each week, *The Colby Echo* will post a captionless cartoon on Instagram. Comment or DM us (@colbyecho) your cleverest caption. Our staff will choose two finalists. You, the reader, then get to vote for your favorite caption. The winning caption will be published in print. Happy captioning!

Waterville Humane Society: finding homes for lonely animals

By JENNA BOLING
Local News Reporter

Located on Webb Road, the Humane Society Waterville Area shows that shelters should always guarantee animals the treatment they deserve.

Beyond simply providing a temporary home for animals to stay, this no-kill shelter also implemented several programs to increase pet adoption rates while ensuring that every animal's physical and emotional needs were met. Even during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the animal shelter has kept their programs afloat, improvising whenever necessary to meet its mission.

Though COVID-19 has complicated the stability of the organization, the Humane Society Waterville Area developed better ways to run in spite of the recent challenges. For instance, the Doggy Day Trip program allows Waterville residents to check dogs out from the shelter for a few daytime hours.

"There are so many benefits to the program," Lisa Oakes, the Humane Society Executive Director, said. "A lot of times people will take them out for a hike, or, during the summer, out for a swim. It gives the dogs time out of the shelter, which is so critical. And it also gives us more insight into their behavior outside of

the shelter and some socialization."

The shelter also offers a Slumber Pup program an extension of the Doggy Day Care program, where dogs can be checked out for two nights. On several occasions, participants in these programs grew attached to the dog they checked out, even so much as to permanently adopt them.

"With the Slumber Pup Program, you go 'Oh no, now they're a part of my household! I have to keep them forever,'" Oakes remarked with a laugh.

Pet adoption rates have also increased nationwide, a statistic many have attributed to the continuing pandemic. The Humane

Society Waterville Area witnessed this increase first-hand as more pets adopted from their shelter than ever before.

"We have seen an increase in both fostering and in adopting because people are working from home or they are quarantining. Or they're gonna, for the foreseeable future, be working from home anyways," Oakes said. "And so they see that as an opportunity to spend time with an animal, where they normally wouldn't. It's really been an incredible time for animals."

At the Humane Society Waterville Area, almost anyone can foster an animal.

"We have a group on facebook called HSWA

Foster and we tend to post animals that need fostering in that group. Anybody that has been approved in that group can apply to be a foster for that animal," Oakes said. "We do have some criteria that we follow, like we require any animals in the foster's home to be up-to-date on their vaccines."

Unfortunately, in some shelters, animal life is not always the priority. Some states even mandate animal euthanasia in the event that a shelter is at maximum capacity. The Humane Society Waterville Area, however, identifies as a no-kill shelter because they do not believe it is ethical to euthanize an animal solely for the preservation of shelter resources.

"We are considered no-kill because we do not euthanize animals for space or time. We reach out and we find other options for animals," Oakes explained. "For example, if we have a dog that we know could be placed in a home but we are not finding anybody in this area - well, we actually had a dog like that. We transferred him down to an organization in New York City that helped to rehabilitate him so he could go into a forever home."

Fortunately, laws in the Northeast have more protective regulations in place regarding animal welfare compared to other regions of the country. In southern states, for example, euthanasia mandates are the norm.

"We took in over 500 dogs from the South last year, alone, and found them homes up here. They're highly

adoptable dogs, but they just don't have the space," Oakes said.

It's not always the people in the shelters, but the lack of protective regulations in either the county or state that sometimes mandate unethical practices.

"It's a really tough situation," Oakes explained. "There are some wonderful people who are trying their best to help, and they're saving all of the dogs that they possibly can. Most of the shelters up here do their best to take the burden."

On a more optimistic note, the Waterville shelter made some helpful discoveries during the pandemic that will help refine their future adoption practices.

"Because of COVID-19, we have had to modify that, and it's only adoptions by appointment now, which is what a lot of shelters are doing," Oakes noted. "We found that that has lowered the stress level of all of the dogs tremendously because it can be a lot of stress on a dog in a kennel to have strangers walking by and putting their fingers in their kennels. It's unexpected, but it's been a blessing in disguise for the dogs especially."

Overall, the Humane Society Waterville Area's unconventional efforts to increase pet adoption prioritized animal life from the outset, an ethos which many other organizations could learn from. Even amid a pandemic, this shelter put in the work to prioritize their animals' welfare and made a discovery that could change the future of animal care for the better.



Photo courtesy of The Waterville Humane Society

The Waterville Humane Society runs a program called the Doggy Day Trip that allows Waterville residents to "check out" dogs from the shelter. It has become very popular for allowing Waterville residents access to adorable dogs like the one pictured above. Many participants have ended up permanently adopting the dogs that they "check out" after spending the day with them, proving the Doggy Day Trip program to be a successful endeavor.

New downtown Gorham Bike & Ski Shop renews discussions around reviving Waterville's little-known skiing past

By AARON MILLS
Staff Writer

A new Gorham Bike & Ski, a comprehensive-service shop has nestled itself at 50 Concourse West between The Villager Family Restaurant and Yardgoods Center. This new downtown Waterville location, opened in December, represents an addition to the four other company stores in Brunswick, Kennebunk, Portland, and Saco, and a seasonal store in Jackson, New Hampshire. All of these locations offer gear and equipment for cross-country skiing and outdoor recreation.

Gorham Bike & Ski employs between 25 and 30 people company-wide when fully staffed, with additional part-time workers hired in the summer. The New Hampshire location operates only from November to March according to Dave Palese, the company's general manager.

Adorning the increasingly busy commercial strip, the new storefront directly faces the recently constructed Bill & Joan Alford Main Street Commons dorm. This places the business in a location frequented often by Colby students.

"We're really a true family shop for bikes and skis," Palese said in an interview with the *Morning Sentinel*. "We do everything from kids bikes all the way up to high-end mountain, road and electric bikes, as well. We do everything for everybody, and that's how we built the business over the years."

Palese's reasoning for the company's strategy included its broader aspiration to tap into the local recreation-oriented demographic which he felt was being neglected.

"We just felt that, in general, the area was

underserved for both skiers and bikers," Palese explained in a recent public statement addressing the company's decision to establish operations in Waterville.

According to Palese, the store will be open 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday, and 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday. The 1,800-square-foot store has three full-time employees, including its manager, Paul Denis.

Palese noted proudly that the December store opening coincided with the company's 25th year in business.

"[Founder Jamie Wright] started the business in Gorham with a one-man shop in 1995," Palese said. "He moved the store from Gorham to Portland in 1997 to be closer to a bigger population. He has grown the business ever since."

Palese underscored how he felt the Waterville expansion was well-situated to capture the city's close proximity to both surrounding ski areas and Colby College students. In doing so, he emphasized how the decision to open the shop also enabled the brand to accomplish its larger goals of expansion and facilitating future ventures in Maine's growing recreation market.

Palese also hoped that Waterville could once again become known in the region for its draw among skiing enthusiasts, a reputation now given to surrounding ski resorts and locales further inland.

"We're hoping to kind of help with that as much as we can," Palese remarked. "We've also heard talk about bringing the ski hill back again."

Palese also referenced discussions that have been occurring over several years, led pri-

marily by the nonprofit Friends of Quarry Road, about possibly reestablishing a downhill ski area, between upper Main Street and Quarry Road, immediately off North Street.

Beginning in the 1930's with a rope tow, the recreation area quickly became a hub of activity for local ski enthusiasts. The hill was closed during World War II, then re-opened by veterans and the Colby Outing Club in the late 1940's.

Briefly regaining popularity in the late 1960s and early 1970s when operated by the College, it was subsequently abandoned due to increasingly high operating costs the College was unable to pay.

The ski area was not revisited until 2007 when the City of Waterville and local advocates moved to reopen a year-

round recreation area, known as Quarry Road Trails, near the site of the old Colby ski slope along the Messalonskee Stream.

The shop's arrival in downtown Waterville has brought these conversations back into focus, reviving discussions between the City of Waterville and the Friends of Quarry Road, which date back to a 2017 public workshop about a 1960s potential restoration of a downhill skiing slope at the site.

Friends of Quarry Road has also worked with the city to generate funding for investment in the recreation area. The group is seeking to update the area's master plan in order to reflect development ambitions for the next decade. The defunct ski area once boasted a 1963 Hall T-

Bar lift, which served trails dropping some 235 vertical feet, including the Colby Ski Area, which was located a short two miles away from the Colby Campus.

Also containing a 1200 foot T-bar, the aforementioned rope tow, and a 32 meter ski jump, the site drew ski enthusiasts from in and around Kennebec County and Central Maine and served as training slopes for eager Colby learners.

Currently, the recreation area features snowmaking and grooming on its Nordic trails in the winter. City officials have noted that these trails do see frequent use.

Friends of Quarry Road has recently pledged to create an alpine skiing and tubing facility at the Quarry Road Recreational Area

aimed at recapturing the site's past. If opened, the City of Waterville has agreed to manage the ski area.

"Improving the quality and access for the Quarry Road Trails would be a great plan," Ciaran McEnroe '21 said. "Colby students often hike there and Nordic ski as well, and it can be a great place to get away from campus and get outside. With it being so close, improved trails and management would benefit the school and community well, providing nearby access to excellent recreation."

Palese also voiced the interest that Gorham Bike & Ski has in the project and hopes to see it gain traction as operations begin for the company's first season in Waterville at the newly opened shop.



Photo courtesy of Gorham Bike & Ski

Pictured above is the interior of the recently opened Gorham Bike and Ski Shop in downtown Waterville. The store, located in the Concourse across from Alford Commons, sells biking and ski gear and hopes to cater to outdoor-minded Colby students.

Club Feature: Asian Student Association

By HAE-JUNG KIM
Features Reporter

Club meetings are already challenging enough to organize with COVID-19 restrictions — in-person meetings, while allowed, are subject to restrictions by the administration in the name of health and safety, and clubs that are able to meet in-person find that their usual slew of activities and events are heavily restricted.

These struggles are especially true for multicultural clubs on campus like the Asian Student Association (ASA). *The Colby Echo* sat down with Liya Yang '23 to discover more about how ASA is adjusting to being on campus in the midst of the pandemic.

Yang is the communications chair for ASA. Her roles and responsibilities include sending out club emails, maintaining the roster for the board members, and conducting internal and external communications between the club,

alumni and faculty.

"When we need to reach out to people, I'm the person to do so," Yang explained. "As the communications chair I'm supposed to be developing creative communication and marketing strategies for events."

"I know a lot of people might feel lost on campus, and that's why ASA is here, to foster a community you can feel safe and comfortable in."

Liya Yang '23

In the past, ASA has put on several events promoting Asian culture and interconnectedness on campus.

For example, the month of May is APHAN, or Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month. During this month, ASA typically brings in speakers of APHAN heritage and hosts events to celebrate.

Unfortunately, due to the College closing its doors prematurely last spring, ASA was unable to put on their usual in-person celebrations, but they are hopeful that they will be able to do it again this spring semester.

Another event that ASA has hosted in the past is Night Market, hosted in Foss.

"It's a whole day where different clubs and local Waterville vendors come in and students have the opportunity to try different cultural foods," Yang said. "It's a full-on cultural immersion. It was supposed to be on for last spring, but it got shut down as well."

The ongoing pandemic has changed a lot of these events, since serving food or inviting outside speakers have been

either discouraged or banned by the administration in order to mitigate the spread of the virus. As a result, ASA has had to be creative with the events they have hosted this year.

"Because of COVID-19, it's obviously been really hard for us to get our events approved," Yang said. "Early in the year we really struggled with making sure that the Campus Life Department was able to approve our events because they took a really long time, so that's been a challenge for us. But eventually we were able to have a few events."

We had a pumpkin carving event for Halloween, and then we also had one for mid-autumn festival where we did kite-flying," Yang went on to explain. "We also have a mentor-mentee program which has its own exclusive events, like a make-your-own shoe event."

Yang explained her perspective on the ASA's mission at Colby now.

"We're basically an alliance and trying to

build solidarity based on common experiences of students especially of Asian descent. We're here to build a community and cultivate a deeper understanding of our identities through our events," Yang said. "We're at a liberal arts

college in Maine, and that makes it really hard for us to find people of the same identity. I know a lot of people might feel lost on campus, and that's why ASA is here, to foster a community you can feel safe and comfortable in."



Photo Courtesy of ASA

A photo from one of the Asian Student Association's previous events where they made poke bowls and sang karaoke in a member's apartment.

A year in, professors reflect on trials, tribulations of teaching through a pandemic

By SARAH WARNER
Locals & Features Editor

As Colby enters its spring semester, it's hard not to think about this time last year: everyone nervously watching the news as COVID-19 spread like wildfire from China to Italy to Spain and eventually, to the United States.

On March 13, 2020, after weeks of uncertainty, the College followed in the steps of other schools and universities across the country and closed its doors in favor of remote learning.

"Zoom" became a verb and students were left to complete their courses within the confines of their laptops— but how did the professors make this transition possible?

"It was surreal," adjunct professor of English Erin Spampinato said in an interview with *The Colby Echo*. "At the time, I didn't think the pandemic would go on this long. I thought it would go on longer than what they were saying. I thought maybe three months, but at that point, three months sounded like a lifetime to me."

At the time, Spampinato was not employed by the College but was living in Brunswick with her husband who works at Bowdoin College.

"I remember feeling really bad for the students who were graduating," Spampinato said. "In the beginning, before so many people had died, those were the things that seemed really sad. Now, these other huge griefs have kind of dwarfed that totally."

Other professors who were on campus at the

moment of shutdown echoed Spampinato's feelings of sadness and uncertainty.

Assistant Professor of History Sarah Duff, a faculty-in-residence at Alford Commons, recalled spending the weekend after the announcement helping students pack, many of them reluctant to leave.

"In those last few days before we closed, I thought a lot about the contexts to which students would be returning - that for me was the key challenge," Duff said. "Understanding not only that I would be teaching students in different time zones and countries and often as a result with different levels of access to technology, but also students would be returning to jobs and families where they might not have a space to learn."

With over 250 international students at the College as well as students from almost every state, the switch to online learning seemed an impossible task, one Duff claims was made possible only by the unwavering support of Colby's Information Technology Services (ITS).

"I have to pay tribute to ITS," Duff said. "They're the heroes. They were fantastic, they helped us with the technology - and not only did they help us with the technology but they helped us to rethink what teaching looked like. They, along with the Center for Teaching and Learning, ran a series of workshops over those two weeks that we had to prepare for online learning where faculty could come and ask all their questions about teaching online

and strategies. They were amazing."

Even with the support from the College and ITS, transitioning so quickly from in-person to remote learning was a daunting challenge.

"It's just more work," Spampinato said. "Teaching in-person, you get to know things implicitly, how to do things, but online you have to set things up, set up a forum or a conversation. It might take you five hours to plan an hour of class where before it only took two."

Luckily, thanks to the College's extensive (and expensive) testing plan, students and professors alike - including Duff and Spampinato - were able to return to campus for in-person classes this year.

At the same time, the regulations that keep students safe, such as social distancing and mask-wearing, have caused a major shift in classroom dynamics. If discussion spreads droplets and collaboration can only occur six feet apart, how do you foster a sense of community amongst students?

Visiting Professor of Painting Christie DeNizio, who only came to the College this fall, claimed it takes some serious creativity.

"Social contact is the way I was used to building community so the limiting of that has been really difficult," DeNizio said in an interview with *The Colby Echo*. "I've had to come up with creative ways to break the barriers that are created by masks and social distancing to humanize my interactions with students, especially working in such a hands-on, physical medium. I've had to adapt by using

different forms of critique and demonstration that are a level removed so it takes a lot more planning."

Painting, along with other hands-on disciplines, presents a particular challenge for professors in ensuring their students safety. Visiting Professor of Economics Ben Scharadin shared similar feelings about his lab courses, saying that COVID-19 regulations have majorly impacted how he handles his classes.

"[COVID-19] has made me far more attentive to the individual struggles of students in my classroom... and I hope far more responsive to them."

Sarah Duff
Assistant Professor
of History

"For example, this semester I'm teaching an upper-level course on poverty and food insecurity," Scharadin explained. "We usually have a large civic engagement component where we work with the local food bank or other local organizations. We obviously aren't able to do that so I've had to come up with different makeshift projects to re-

place that time."

Not all the changes professors have made have been negative, though.

"Like most history professors, I teach reading-heavy classes," Duff said. "Due to the stress of the pandemic I have reduced the number of writing assignments I give students and emphasized reading instead which I think is something easier to do when you're stressed. As I have done that, I've noticed the quality of students' writing has improved enormously, and it's just because I'm helping students to manage their time a bit better."

Indeed, many of the professors who spoke with *The Colby Echo* shared similar thoughts, claiming that the challenge of teaching through a pandemic has equipped them to both be better at teaching and better at empathizing with and understanding their students.

"[COVID-19] has made me far more attentive to the individual struggles of students in my classroom... and I hope far more responsive to them," Duff said.

"I think, ultimately, the transition online was a good thing," Spampinato echoed. "I've gotten so much better at meeting the accessibility needs of my students and even just being aware of them. I was a special education teacher before, so I was always aware, but it's really been brought to the forefront now."

"Major shifts, whether it be a pandemic or an economic depression or anything else, allow us to think differently and be more creative," Scharadin said. "When everything's going normally, we stay within our same

paradigm. But when you are forced to change things, you can be more out of the box."

"Major shifts, whether it be a pandemic or an economic depression or anything else, allow us to think differently and be more creative."

Ben Scharadin
Visiting Professor
of Economics

Of course, in talking about the transformative nature of the COVID-19 pandemic, it seems remiss to ignore that much of this change has been for the worse, leaving people jobless, hospitalized, and sadly, for over 500,000 Americans, dead. The impact of this global health emergency will be felt for years to come, including within the world of academia.

"I think everyone, at some level, is struggling and hurting right now," Spampinato said. "But at some point, we'll hopefully come out on the other side of it and will learn from it."



Photo Courtesy of Colby College

Pictured above, students learning and collaborating in the classroom pre-COVID-19— no social distancing, no masks, no regulations.



Photo Courtesy of Colby College

Now, students must socially distance and wear masks in the classroom, providing a challenge for professors as they try to foster the same sense of community as they did before.

The genesis of Roy Lichtenstein: exhibit review

By **MILO LANI-CAPUTO**
A&E Editor

When the name Roy Lichtenstein is uttered, most people think of the artist who became famous for his comic-style pop art in the 1960s. Partnering with the Nasher Museum of Art at Duke University, the Colby Museum of Art has put together an exhibition to tell a lesser-known story: the artistic journey Lichtenstein took leading up to his break-out success. Roy Lichtenstein: History in the Making, 1948-1960 consists of nearly 90 of Lichtenstein's works as he explored subjects like American exceptionalism, mythical archetypes,

“...one of the things Lichtenstein knew is that we understand knowledge through stories.”

Elizabeth Finch,
Lunder Curator
of American Art

and the American West. “I think it’s important to study Lichtenstein’s pre-pop output,” the

Lunder Curator of American Art Elizabeth Finch says in a video component of the exhibition. “Because one of the things Lichtenstein knew is that we understand knowledge through stories. This is a story that needed to be told to understand him... So, we’re drawing that back to a different moment, to a moment when an artist born and raised in New York City actually went west, who did something kind of counterintuitive to what we might expect of the avant-garde, and found new material



Courtesy of Molly George '23

there.” Lichtenstein was born in New York to an upper-middle class family. At the age of 17, he left the heartland of American art to study at the Ohio State University. There, he discovered motifs absent in the New York art world.

His early works were profoundly influenced by his new home, with midwest cultural themes manifesting in “cowboy” and “Indian” themed works. Lichtenstein joined the army during World War II, and his experiences under the G.I. Bill also influenced his artistic themes. He and his family then moved to New York facing financial pressures, where he began to move away from his early “medieval” American western works and towards abstraction. The lower level of the

Lichtenstein gallery displays his works from the later 1950s, in which he experimented with expressionism. He moved from the crude style of his earlier works towards more diverse methods. Several paintings in the exhibition were made

“I think he would be amused that we’re spending as much time studying this as we have been.”

Jack Cowart,
Executive
Director of the
Roy Lichtenstein
Foundation

by brightly coloring a bedsheet with paint and dragging it across a canvas. The exhibition ends on the precipice of Lichtenstein’s pop art movement.

Many of the exhibition’s works were curated with help from the Roy Lichtenstein Foundation. Later in his career, Lichtenstein began collecting his earlier works and consolidating them. The Foundation now possesses about 600 of Lichtenstein’s works.

“What Roy thought about his early work has always been a question that’s amused us over the years.” Jack Cowart, Executive Director of the Foundation says in a video interview included in the exhibit. “I knew Roy for 30 years, so I know he would have probably said numerous things about it. We’re still not quite sure. He was ambivalent, he was loyal to it. He re-collected it during his lifetime, he preserved it during his lifetime. I think he would be amused that we’re spending as much time studying this as we have been.”

For those interested in the pop art movement, the genesis of one of its leaders is on display in the upper and lower Jetté galleries in the Colby Museum. While it is currently only open to staff and students, interested community members can tune in to the Virtual Art & Conversation event online Thursday, Feb. 25 at 1 p.m.



Courtesy of Molly George '23



In Vain (Choral Hymn)

Eat my parables
for dinner. Dear God out my mouth

and on the broccoli. Mary says no I
say no I'd like to think Jesus too. Seeing

crosses in the highway lights. Take my communion
in the gas station wash it down with a

Coke. Wind rocking me rocking a baby in
the manger but baby's got a job to do and

he'd better do it. Holy water down the neck and hands
in zippers. Stain the floor the clothes the glass the

diary the soul. Die for me and do it good. Blood
in our stomachs all vampires the whole lot of us. Scream

the alms off the wall and take the pamphlets too the
testimony take it all down. Fuck Abel and

kill Cain. Crucifixion for cheap thrills. Sin
for sport. Mail order my Bibles. Baby I'm all

Judas don't you trust me yeah I'm sorry you
had to go but that's not on me. Kill you and me

next. Smiting is for suckers but I'll give you
seven days. I'll give you seven for the flood the

plague the locusts the storm. Give you seven
for a little resurrection.



Courtesy of Milo Lani-Caputo '23

Murder mystery at the Cecil Hotel

By **TANVI IYER**
A&E Reporter

There is something incredibly captivating about the unknown. We love to grapple with mysteries and we hope that we may find something that could help bring a case to justice. The case of Elisa Lam in 2013, for example, had many people scratching their heads. Perhaps the video of this young woman with a possessed-like demeanor in a Los Angeles hotel elevator is familiar to you. If not, then the new Netflix docu-series *Crime Scene: Vanishing at the Cecil Hotel* may be worth your time.

The Cecil Hotel has a notorious past for being a hotspot for robberies, drug deals, and prostitution, and is known for housing the infamous serial killer, the “Night Stalker” Richard Ramirez. This hotel is so well known for its gruesome reputation that the TV show *American Horror Story: Hotel* is based on it.

The show connects a “haunted” hotel with one of its most famous tragedies, 21-year-old Elisa Lam’s disappearance and

death. Lam went missing during a solo trip to LA, when her body was eventually recovered from the hotel’s water tank. The case is remarkable for its gaps: no one knows how, why, and when she got there. The series looks into this story and the Cecil’s dark past by bringing together experts, hotel guests, hotel employees, and even internet crime enthusiasts to tell this story.

Crime Scene does a great job of presenting the story from both Lam and the hotel employees’ perspective. All the reenactments were done tastefully, which made the show more palatable. The reenactments were also accompanied well with interviews, making it more engaging to watch.

One of the biggest critiques of this show is the inclusion of and emphasis on the “internet sleuths.” These are people who are so into real-life crime that they attempt to solve the crime or occurrence themselves. While I understand where others are coming from with this perspective, I do believe that it added a crucial part to the story. Considering that Lam’s death occurred in 2013

just when the social media boom took place, it is important to recognize how and why this case received international recognition. The oddity of the event left many people hoping that Lam was safe. I think the show pays tribute to this by including these sleuths and their stories. It also goes to show just how large of an impact cases like this make.

However, I would add that the third episode

did get a bit bogged down by following these internet sleuths and their adventures in relation to the case. The creators could have easily cut some of this, which may have appeased those who opposed the inclusion of the internet sleuths.

While this event was one of the most prominent cases at the Cecil Hotel, I wish the series had covered others as well. A simple Google search produces

a list of the deaths and wrongdoings that have occurred there. While they mentioned a few, they could have easily included more.

One last critique of this show was the way it ended— with a message to raise awareness for mental health disorders. While this made sense in Lam’s case as she suffered from depression and bipolar disorder, the overall message got lost. Content directors

must be fully committed if they want to confront such issues. I think it would have been more beneficial to exclude this message and just focus on the eerie incidents at the Cecil Hotel.

While the tragic story of Lam may not be up everyone’s alley, it makes a fantastic watch for both crime lovers and anyone brave enough to venture into the world of the Cecil Hotel.

Overall Rating: 8/10



The actual Hotel Cecil.

Courtesy of Tanvi Iyer '22

Conall's Conundrum Column

Dear Enlightening Echo Editors,

I've been seeing this guy for the past few weeks. He seems to like me, and I like him well enough, but we haven't made anything official and I'm not sure "what we are," so to speak. I know I should just ask him, but I have a fear of both rejection and commitment. If he tells me that it's just casual, I know I'll be hurt, but if he says he wants a relationship I know I'll chicken out. I think at this point I should just ghost him and be done with it. What should I do?

Sincerely,

Scared to Ask

do something of a cost-benefit pro-con list when you're considering actions that could be met with rejection. These kind of brainstorming sessions can really help crystallize your thinking and bring out what might make you most apprehensive. In some ways, every action you take is done with an unconscious cost-benefit analysis - should you walk on the ice to get somewhere faster? You're really asking yourself if the potential time save is worth the possibility of wiping out. Similarly, when you're considering commitment, you're really asking yourself if the possibility of the relationship and all the benefits it might entail - emotional closeness, physical intimacy, a partner, fundamentally - outweighs the potential ramifications of rejection.

If you see it like that, rejection and commitment are really two sides of the same coin. When you're considering one, you're also implicitly considering the other. The consequences of rejection interface directly with some of the benefits of commitment. However, commitment can also imply a kind of behavioural modulation that exceeds that of rejection. Commitment requires, well, commitment. To be in a relationship means making sacrifices - of your time, of your energy, of yourself. The real question here is whether this person is worthy of those sacrifices, whether you're willing to make an effort and give up things in order to help build your relationship in a healthy and successful way.

To be honest, making these decisions about who is worth it is not as easy as we just made it seem. Sometimes we even make the wrong decisions - many relationships end and people look back and realize they simply weren't worth it. But, some, even those that don't last forever, can also be life-changing in some ways. This might sound like a platitude, but in situations like this, one of the biggest things people can do is help you frame how you make your decision, and, in the end, it's up to you to choose what's worth it. We are fully confident that no matter what happens, you'll make it through!

Love,
The Enlightening Echo Editors

Dear Scared to Ask,

That's quite a bind you've found yourself in. Even if ghosting him might feel like the easiest option right now, in reality you'll only be pushing off the day that you need to grapple with these issues. While it's easy to romanticize a situation where you meet the perfect person and suddenly all your reservations about relationships disappear, that's probably the not most realistic outcome. Issues centering around rejection, commitment, and relationships are inherently thorny and can take a lot of effort to work through.

That said, overcoming challenges in the way you think about relationships can also be extremely rewarding. It can open up new paths for significant relationships and even alter the way you approach life in general. We think an important thing to recognize for your fear of rejection and commitment is what you're truly afraid of. When it comes to rejection, are you afraid that if someone rejects you that they'll see you differently after, or that rejection could destroy the foundations of friendship, or that rejection might have a negative impact on your self-esteem? Knowing what part of rejection you fear most deeply can allow you to begin to work to overcome that fear.

This might also seem overly cold and economical, but it can sometimes also help to

Dear Enlightening Echo Editors,

I have a problem - I think my best friend likes me.

For the sake of the story, I'll call him Pete. A little while, both of us were interested in the same guy.... And we both ended up hooking up with him a couple of months ago. At the same time. I thought it would be fine because Pete was gay and I'm a woman, but soon after he came out as bisexual. Needless to say, it was a major mistake. Ever since, I've felt like he looks at me differently. We live together and it's making me really uncomfortable because he flirts with me. How do I handle this?

Sincerely,

Regrettable Threesome

Dear Regrettable Threesome,

Wow, that's a bit of a sticky situation you found yourself in. While it might be tempting to let it lie and hope it all just blows over, we really feel that some honest communication would be the best way forward here. It probably won't be an easy conversation and will almost definitely be awkward, but the alternative is having it linger and seep into every interaction you have in the future. It takes a certain degree of bravery to have those tough conversations,

If you do have a conversation, we also think you need to be realistic and honest with yourself about what you want to get out of it - and what you can get out of it. Do you want to repair this relationship? If so, you might have to acknowledge first that it may never look like it did before this. Introducing sex into relationships can often fundamentally alter them, and you and Pete may be no exception.

Reimagining what your connection could be also means introducing new and different boundaries into your relationship. While it is important to support friends while they explore and discover their identity, trying to support Pete's sexuality shouldn't come at the expense of your own comfort in your home. And the home is as much

yours as it is Pete's - for you to be able to live together successfully you both need to feel safe there. That's why if you want to continue living with Pete you need to be honest and clear that he's making you uncomfortable with his actions. Beyond this, when you establish new boundaries you need to be very sure that you both understand and agree to them. If Pete really is your best friend, then he will understand and respect your needs.

If you feel like you might not be able to salvage this living situation, it also might be important to reach out to friends and family about finding an alternative sooner rather than later. If you're feeling uncomfortable and unsafe, finding a temporary safe space to live might be a good transition measure between trying to organize a new home. Reaching out now might also make it easier financially as you can plan and try to find other accessible options.

While the situation may seem daunting and impossible to solve, taking little steps is important in making sure it doesn't hang over your head any longer than necessary. People can often fail to realize how draining ongoing situations that include a high degree of uncertainty can be. No matter what happens with Pete, always remember that there are people in your corner who are there to help!

Love,
The Enlightening Echo Editors

BLAST FROM THE PAST:

Prospect of COVID-19 threatens spring break and beyond

BY THE ECHO STAFF
March 12, 2020

The College's Response On March 5, Dean of the College Karlene Burrell-McRae '94 sent an email to the Colby community urging students to reconsider their spring break plans and to remain on campus during the week off. Burrell-McRae explained that the College would remain open to accommodate students who choose to stay.

"Because public health and related travel concerns may cause a significant number of students to avoid travel during spring break, residence halls and dining halls will remain open to accommodate having more students on campus," Burrell-McRae wrote in the email.

Less than a week later, the spread of the virus has escalated throughout the U.S. According to the New York Times, as of March 10 there were close to 1,000 cases in the U.S. More than 100 people have tested positive in California, New York, and Washington. Maine has tested 20 people for COVID-19, and all results are negative.

Maine is also currently the only state in New England with no confirmed cases of COVID-19. However, according to the Portland Press Herald, health officials have warned that it is only a matter of time before the virus reaches the state.

Although there are no reported cases of COVID-19 in Maine, due to its widespread reach throughout the country the College is considering what type of action to take in response to the potential threat of the virus.

According to Head Nurse Judith Whyte, "any member of the community who travels to a country that is designated Level 3 by the CDC for personal reasons will be required to self-quarantine." Whyte went on to describe what a self-quarantine would entail.

"[It would] likely be a result of close contact with a confirmed case. There is no CDC guidance at this time that would suggest persons who are not ill and have only travelled within the U.S. self-quarantine. As the COVID-19 situation changes rapidly this could possibly change."

When it comes to taking preventative measures, Whyte said: "Everyone has a role to play in staying healthy. Practice preventive behaviors!" "Spread from person-to-person is most likely among close contacts (about 6 feet)," Whyte explained. "It's currently unknown if a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it, and then touching their own mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes."

There are three prevailing theories concerning what actions the Colleg might undertake as a result of COVID-19. Colby could continue with spring break as planned and hold classes online for the first two weeks after break, during which students would self-quarantine; Colby could cancel in-person classes for the semester, ask students to go home, and hold classes online; or Colby could cancel spring break and have students remain on campus during the week, ideally reducing the threat of bringing the virus to campus.

In an official notice to the College sent on Tuesday evening, President David Greene updated students about ongoing deliberations. Although no decision was released in the email, Greene stressed that Colby's ultimate goal is safety and limiting the

spread of the virus. "Our academic calendar is currently in our favor," Greene wrote in the email. "While travel is a primary risk factor in the transmission of this virus, our spring break falls later than most, giving us slightly more time to work through these issues than some of our peers."

Greene explained that he is working with many groups on campus like the Student Government Association and is very open to student input. Additionally, Greene had an open meeting with students on March 11 in the Pugh Center to hear their feedback.

Spring Break Travel Professor David Freidenreich, director of the Jewish studies program at the College, had planned a trip to Germany over Spring break for his class JS346: Jews of Germany, Past and Present. Freidenreich announced Tuesday in class that the trip would be suspended.

Freidenreich and his students were planning on traveling to Frankfurt, Lorsch, Worms, and Berlin during the week-long trip. While there have been a limited number of COVID-19 cases in Germany, Colby is suspending any college-funded travel, domestic or international. An official announcement is expected shortly.

In an email to the Echo, Freidenreich said that although he had envisioned the trip as an opportunity for students to experience historical sites and contemporary Jewish life first-hand, he ultimately understood Colby's decision.

"I'm deeply disappointed by the decision to cancel this trip but not at all surprised given current developments. I respect and fully support the college's policies. We're currently exploring the possibility of rescheduling the trip for the end of the semester in the hopes that these travel restrictions don't need to persist," he wrote. Tori Paquette '20, a student in Freidenreich's class who was planning on attending the Germany trip, says said and her classmates weren't surprised to hear about the trip's cancellation.

"Given the responses of other colleges in the U.S. to COVID-19, it seems a reasonable precaution to me - none of us want to get stuck in Germany or in quarantine if U.S. policy changes over the next two weeks," Paquette told the Echo.

While Paquette is now searching for alternative spring break plans, she stressed the importance of remaining calm.

"Of course I'm disappointed, and the whole situation feels a bit surreal and scary, but I also know that fear and panic won't help," Paquette said. "I'm just hoping we all get to come back from spring break without bringing coronavirus to our community."

Other groups on campus had also planned trips over spring break that have been affected by the outbreak. 54 Colby students were planning on driving down to South Carolina to play in a frisbee tournament with about 10 other colleges. Bennett Allen '20 told the Echo that the Ultimate Frisbee team is considering the best course of action and preparing for all possibilities.

"We are anticipating what sort of effects might happen, and who might cancel, whether it be the tournament itself, or if the school tells us not to go," Allen said.



The Colby Echo

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Heather Jahrling Editor in Chief

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Jenna Boling
Hae-Jung Kim
Milo Lani-Caputo
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Mules rally to Sugarloaf to escape restrictions, responsibilities, and ridiculous dining hall lines

By WILL BEDINGFIELD
Sports Editor

Sugarloaf mountain, affectionately termed “the ‘Loaf,” is a safe-haven for all things fun and COVID-19-friendly. With frostbite-preventing face coverings and plenty of fresh air, Sugarloaf is where you wanna be. You better keep six feet away from me when I’m bombing “Kings” for both of our sakes.

Sure, I’m spending as little time as possible inside the lodge, which, in my non-expert opinion, few would call a monument to the latest and greatest in air conditioning technology. Though to their credit and per their website, Sugarloaf has installed new air purifiers indoors. Of course I’ll miss my beloved “Bag Burger” and those chicken wings that you’d never call “good” if you weren’t as ravenous as you were hypothermic, but hey- there’s always next year.

And besides, skiing feels somewhat normal. Normal is good, right? Riding the Super-Quad and Timberline lifts, keeping an eye out for anyone hitting a kicker or—even better—wiping out, fills every skier’s sadistical-junkie-esque hunt for adrenaline. Why else would we drive an hour and a half to often-negative temperatures and ride metal swings that move way too slowly before hurling ourselves downhill at 60 miles per hour? Not to mention showing off a new trick under the lift can just as easily end in hoots and hollers of praise as it can with laughter and

mockery, or the rarely—and guiltily—called out “you okay?”

The mountain has taken several significant steps towards mitigating the risk of COVID-19 spread to ensure a full and successful ski season. Of course, face masks are mandatory—and not those B.S. neoprene ones with nose-holes. In practice, you’ll be hard pressed to find ridicule for an exposed nose, but the policy’s there on the website in writing!

Other highlights from Sugarloaf’s new safety guidelines website tab include a brief “Health Screening” containing the common-sense information you look at on CoVerified every day—because like every other law-abiding member of Colby College holding the Hill, you fill out CoVerified’s symptom report every day.

Of course, it’s impossible to mention Sugarloaf without mentioning the beloved pitstop Rolling Fatties. The famously named burrito shop is pumping out their grenade-like “fatties” at their usual rate with the welcomed safety alterations of an entryless order and pickup station at the door. Just like normal, you’ll find other devotees who made their pilgrimage, now fresh off the ski hill, tearing into their handfuls of meaty goodness without grace, manners, or any regard for their fellow zealots—and why should they have any?

While the quality of the burritos—especially in comparison to their price (\$9.50 for a specialty fatty)—can be tirelessly debated, Rolling Fatties is your

best bet for sustenance between the mountain and Waterville. The acclaimed burrito joint even stands tall among the dizzying array of culinary delights Waterville has to offer (of which McDonalds is my unequivocal favorite).

Although Sugarloaf has stated there are currently no scheduled events in the near future, I think every

proud Loafer and good-timer alike is praying for a Reggaeefest miracle. Reggaeefest is the highlight of the ski season. The perfectly-planned event draws from the best parts of skiing and reggae music festivals to create a one-of-a-kind environment and transform the mountain into a full-weekend bender for all to enjoy.

The event, like all music festivals around the world, was cancelled last season due to the pandemic. It would be naive to expect a triumphant return this spring, but with Maine’s impressive vaccine rollout there’s no ruling out a modified version of the beloved event later in the ski season.

Sugarloaf is check-

ing every box to create a safe and prosperous season for the multitudes of skiers and boarders that rely on the mountain for winter entertainment. COVID-induced cabin fever coupled with the unwavering pain that comes with an ordinary Maine winter makes skiing the optimal pastime for anyone clinging to their sanity.



Photo Courtesy of Avery Rosensweig '23

Colby College’s Isabella Whelan '23 poses before her first run of the 2021 season at the top of the Skyline Lift.

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This is your chance to show Colby your writing chops!



Sustainability

Reimagining how we order

By ADRIAN VISSCHER
Sustainability Columnist

As in-person classes resume, foot traffic across campus and in the dormitories has increased. As we begin moving around the College more frequently, the communal environment becomes more important. After the quarantine period, I have become more aware of my surroundings, and I have taken notice of how the communal trash spaces are used.

Most recently, the overflowing trash and recycling bins with mailed packages have stood out. Obviously, the lack of variety in Waterville stores makes ordering online an attractive option; the exact product one wants can arrive within a few days via popular sites like Amazon. However, there is another side to online shopping that is detrimental not only to local businesses but also to the environment.

Simply put, the shipping industry is not environmentally sustainable. Single-use cardboard and plastics hurt the climate both when they are produced and when they are disposed of. On top of this, using different modes of transportation to ship goods also emits high levels of carbon dioxide.

Same-day and two-day shipping exacerbates the harmful effects of ordering online. Large online retailers are in competition with one another, all offering an array of similar products. To try to make their brand more attractive, they offer quick shipping options. Large retailers are able to utilize their resources to implement these delivery changes.

However, just because the shipping is faster does not mean that the shipping is smarter or better for the environment. A study from CNN recently found that to meet short delivery dates, companies send out delivery vehicles

half full or even less than half full. Not only are companies losing money by speeding up the process and trying to beat competition, they are emitting more carbon through more, less full vehicles.

The shipping process of packages is similar to riding a bus. Utilizing public transportation systems is good for the environment, but if you were to ride on a bus alone, the amount of carbon emissions per person would be very high. An efficient bus needs passengers to minimize the emissions per person. As the bus gets emptier, it becomes worse for the environment; as the shipping trucks become emptier and more frequent, they too become unsustainable.

It should be noted that online shopping can be more sustainable. When checking out online, you may have seen the standard option for shipping. This relaxes the process, having a healthier effect on the environment as companies no longer need to rush their processes but can instead operate on a more efficient basis. However, many people choose faster delivery options instead of these standard options.

Attending school in a remote area means that students are likely to order something online sooner or later. When doing so, we should think about how our purchase will arrive. One could reflect on the importance of receiving an object in a day or two instead of five or six days and think ahead in case they need something in advance. One could also check out the College's bookstore or surrounding shops for what they might need. Choosing a standard shipping method is far greener. Fast-paced shipping should not be thought of as a default but rather as an environmental sacrifice.

Cam in the Woods

What success means to me



Photo courtesy of Eliza Poole '22

By CAM WOODS
Lifestyle Columnist

"I want to be successful," I remember saying once in response to a question about my dreams for the future—as if it were a specific career path that everyone shared a mutual understanding of.

At the time, I likely envisioned myself making partner at a top law firm, earning enough money to comfortably send my children to the same boarding schools that my brother and I attended, and owning a summer home that frequented the covers of lifestyle magazines I would never have time to read.

It was vain, but you would be naïve to believe that I was the only one with this vision of success.

I held this picture in my mind for some time, silently laughing at those who spent their time partying or gathering with friends or doing anything that didn't align with my roadmap. If only they knew which one of us would be successful in the long run, I thought.

But then I met a young couple, only a few years older than I was. They lived with their new puppy in an adorable home in a modest, hard-working town, and they were happy—truly, completely, happy. As I sat in their dining room drinking hot chocolate and feeling so entirely encompassed by love and warmth, I was overwhelmed by the realization that success can—and does—look like this. Exactly like this.

To have a place to call home; to have people who love you and whom you love in return; to work hard; to grow; to extend a hand to others; to take joy in the little things; to try and try again.

Looking back on it, I happened upon this couple by fate and only spent an hour or two in their company, but I can say with the utmost confidence that they are among the most successful people I have yet to meet in my lifetime.

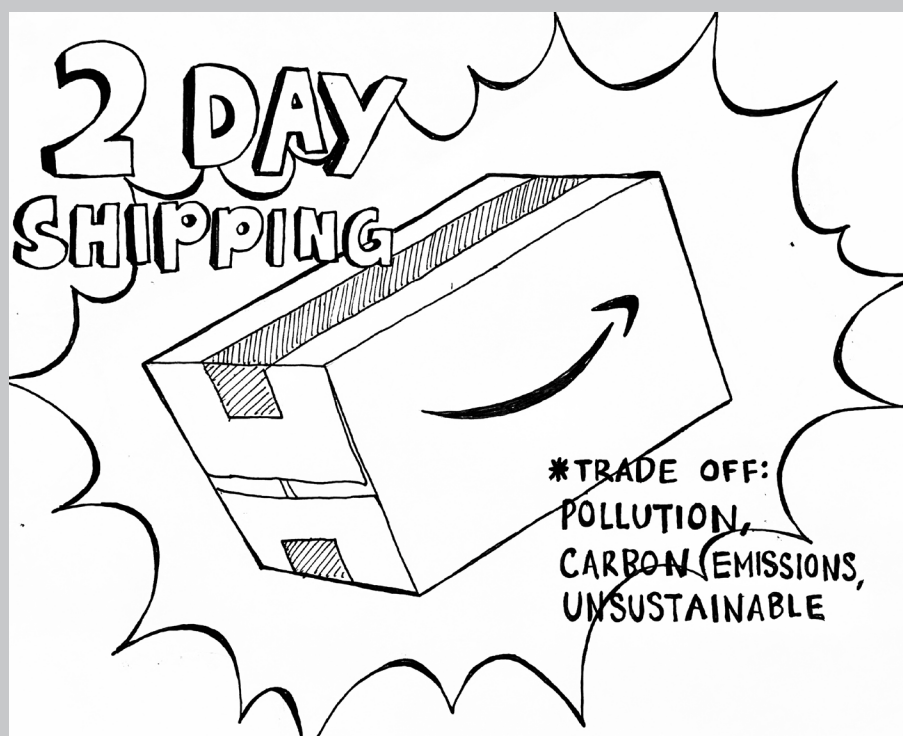
The concept of success is funny like that—it is different for everyone, as it is rooted in personal experiences and expectations for yourself and those around you. Not only is it deeply individual, but our definition of success can evolve — it can ebb and flow as we navigate different phases of life and encounter new people.

I don't need to make partner at a top law firm anymore or own an obnoxious collection of homes to feel successful. If I am lucky enough to experience the intricacies of life with someone I love and am loved by, to raise a healthy and joyful family in a home filled with laughter and music, to have the means to help others, and to be fulfilled by my work, I will achieve far more than success.

Take time to consider what success looks like for you at this moment, recognizing that it may be different from what you had envisioned at this time last year.

Perhaps success looks like a monetary achievement for you, but it could also look like love, expanding your mind, growing internally. Maybe it is getting out of bed every morning, having the courage to let go of something holding you back, or trying something you never have before.

Let this vision guide you forward—and next time you feel as if you are failing or straying off course, consider whose definition of success you are measuring yourself up against.



Cartoon courtesy of Sarah Warner '21

COVID-19 update for February 8 to 23

By SONIA LACHTER
News Editor

Since January 2, 57 positive cases have been identified, made up of 11 faculty and staff members and 46 students. This amount of positive cases stands in contrast to the relatively low number last semester: there were 34 positive cases in the fall, made up of 15 students and 19 faculty or staff members.

At the moment, there are 2 positive cases in isolation and 0 students in quarantine. 55 positive cases have recovered. 56,211 total tests have been administered, 1,019 (or 1.8%) of which have been inconclusive.

The College introduced antigen testing in addition to its PCR tests: so far, members of the testing program receive two PCR tests and one antigen test a week. Anyone who gets an inconclusive result also gets an antigen test the following day. Antigen tests give results in half an hour and are processed at the College whereas PCR tests take 24 hours and are sent to the Broad Institute in Boston.

There are 2,622 cases in Kennebec County as of February 22, according to the Maine CDC.

A few changes have been made to the testing program: students, faculty, and staff are tested three times a week instead of twice as was practice for most of the fall semester, both antigen and PCR tests are used, testing moved from a tent on Miller Lawn to Page Commons, and a week-long quarantine was required for all students moving in.

The academic calendar was adjusted for the semester, replacing the regular week-long spring break with two four-day weekends like Fall Break. Students are expected to stay in Maine for both breaks and the whole semester.

The College has been at the yellow health code level since the start of the semester. This means that classes above 50 students move to remote learning, lower dining hall capacities, face masks required within dorms, and increased cleaning.

President Greene sent an update via email to the college community on February 23. He discussed the potential ways that commencement could play out. The College is planning to livestream in-person outdoor events which can include the whole campus community and seniors studying remotely.

The College is still unsure, however, if it will be able to invite people outside the testing regimen. That decision will be contingent upon the public health situation in the country and Maine's regulations.

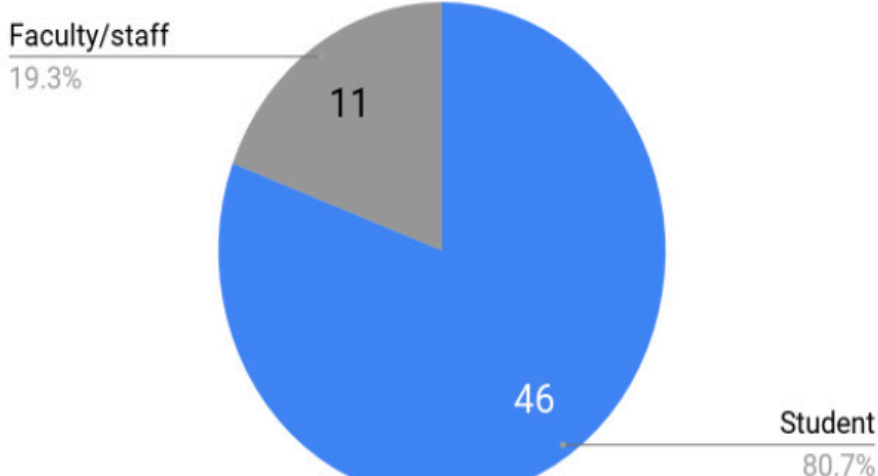
In-person reunions have been cancelled for this summer and the College is considering how to provide a graduation experience for the Class of 2020, which missed out on it when the College moved to remote learning last spring.

In other news, Greene shared that the College has administered over 150,000 COVID-19 tests. He shared his pleasure with the performance of the performance of the over 2,000 students on campus and more than 100 remote students.

President Greene wrote that the downturn in the number of cases in Maine and nationwide made him optimistic that the spring semester will be as successful as the fall.

He also said that the arts collaborative on Main Street will open in April and that he is hoping to provide athletic teams with opportunities to compete, although Colby's athletic conference, the New England Small College Athletic Conference, has not yet decided as a collective what it will allow for the Spring.

Positive case breakdown



Tests type breakdown

