

The Herald

Established 1879

February - March 2021



HOBART AND WILLIAM SMITH COLLEGES

February
March 2021

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The Herald

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*By and for the Students
of Hobart and William Smith Colleges*

www.HWSHerald.com

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Submission Guidelines

The Herald is currently accepting submissions for upcoming issues.

Must include:

1. Name and Class Year
2. Individual phone number or e-mail

E-mail submissions must be made via file attachment.

Common Spaces Closed due to COVID-19

By Molly Matthews '22 and Sarah Lorenz '21
Staff Writers

As of Feb. 22, the upper floors of Warren Hunting Smith Library and the Bristol Field House have re-opened for HWS community use after closing on Feb. 5 for the campus pause. Many students were upset about these closings, as they further limited the services and spaces available to students during the pandemic.

Students were mainly concerned with having access to a study space conducive to productivity. A junior William Smith student, who wished to remain anonymous and regularly uses the Warren Hunting Smith Library revealed that doing work in her room is much harder than one might expect. "My house is difficult to get homework done in," she said. "By closing the library, [the administration] got rid of one of the only places that I can be productive and get work done."

This student elaborated, "When the only space you are allowed to be in is your room and you are supposed to do homework and sleep there, it is not an environment conducive for finding motivation and productivity."

A sophomore Hobart student, who also wished to remain anonymous, expressed similar concerns. He believes that having to do assignments in a dorm room leads to more stress. "Since [the library has] been closed, a lot of people have been doing their work on the first floor [of the library] and a lot of them have been doing their work in their room. I think that a lot of people are stressed out right now. I

think that stems from having to do their work in their room."

As these two students' experiences demonstrate, they have struggled in the

she interacts with, which was further limited by the campus pause.

Robb Flowers, Vice President of Campus Life, and Cathy Williams, Vice President for Marketing and

to enforce proper protocol.

The closures, according to Williams, were a preemptive measure to free up staff, since these two locations were responsible for a considerable portion of the total reports filed on campus. "With those additional complaints about people not following social distancing, we were concerned they could become places of spread, especially if the cases are going up on campus," she said.

Neither student interviewed for this story had reported seeing any violations that would prevent them from using the library or the field house. However, the William Smith student did notice small infractions at the gym: "I would see people go in to other squares at the gym, but everyone would have their masks on." Although students might not view this as a significant problem, this behavior can still be reported. To the contrary, the administration reports that the upper floors of the library and the field house were consistent hot spots for COVID-19 violation report and were preemptively closed to free up staff responding to the outbreak. Flowers and Williams recognize that the decision to temporarily close the library and the gym was a difficult one. While the action was aimed at preventing further spread of COVID-19, many students struggled with the closure, lacking options for workspaces and safe social interaction. Both Flowers and Williams assert that they and their teams are prioritizing students' interests and safety in their ongoing responses to the pandemic.



Photo By Ani Freedman '22

The Warren Hunting Smith Library

past few weeks to separate their workspace from their living space. Other students are likely struggling with the same thing as well.

In addition, the closure of the library and the field house also limited social interaction for students who frequent these spaces. For students living in single rooms, the library or field house may be the only indoor spaces aside from the Scandling Center in which they can interact with others on campus while following COVID-19 guidelines.

A William Smith student stated that her social interactions during the campus pause were even more limited than they were before. "Especially this semester because we are supposed to be limiting our social interactions, both the gym and the library gave me opportunities to see people in passing that I would not normally see." As a student who lives alone, this student already had a small circle of people

Communications, explained that their decision to close the library and field house was motivated by the number of cases on campus earlier in the month.

Flowers emphasized that there was no correlation between the rising number of infections and these two locations. "The choice was about staffing and just having capacity," he explained. "When we were at a point where we had close to 200 people in quarantine or isolation, I'm out of people. It becomes [a question of] 'What is our capacity at this point?' and that's why those decisions were made," he said.

Part of the strain on staffing stemmed from students' failure to follow COVID-19 guidelines in these spaces. Williams pointed out that the administration had received many anonymous tips describing students not wearing their masks or violating other regulations, creating a need for more staffing

What happened to my test?

Covid-19 Recoveries, Testing, Isolation, and Delays

By Russell Payne '21 and Henry Duerr '21
Editor-in-Chief and Managing Editor

In the aftermath of a serious COVID-19 outbreak on campus earlier this year, the Herald was able to speak with Robb Flowers, Director of Student Life, and Cathy Williams, Vice President for Marketing and Communications, about some of the questions that have been on many students' minds.

What constitutes a recovery on campus?

After receiving conflicting reports about what exactly constitutes a recovery on campus, the Herald asked Robb Flowers. He said a recovery is "someone who has tested positive, been in isolation for 10 days, and at the end of isolation has been without [a] fever for at least five days and had improving symptoms or no symptoms for five days. That's the CDC's protocol given that the science indicates individuals no longer have the viral load to spread COVID-19."

Flowers went on to say: "Because we have [a] group living situation here at HWS, we do it immediately. If we think you ought to be in quarantine, we will act on that. The end date for quarantine or isolation is made by the contact tracers with whom the students speak." The contact tracers here are in service of the State of New York.

In response to concerning reports submitted to the Herald about students backdating the beginning of their isolation, Flowers said: "Contact tracers will ask when you became symptomatic. There are often times

4 when a student will show up to the health

center with symptoms so we conduct a rapid test.

We receive a positive so that student goes into isolation that day. That is the start of when isolation would occur, and it would last for at least 10 days assuming they are showing improvements by the end of those 10 days. It could be that students are backdating their isolation

before they received their test results, in order to prevent community spread.

What happens if I skip my test?

"For students who miss testing, we understand that sometimes you forgot. They are then placed into next week's group and given an email update reminding them to attend testing. Anyone who intentionally

antine and isolation?

Williams said, "With quarantine and isolation, you rely on individuals to be honest about their symptoms and when they started, honest about who they've been in touch with, and honest about staying in quarantine and isolation. This is not unique to HWS. This is how its handled across the nation. There's no police force making sure people stay in isolation here or anywhere else. Everyone is relying on the good efforts of individuals to behave in ways that keep the best interests of the community in mind."

In this respect, the HWS community is being treated like the rest of the country. The duty to remain in isolation is in the hands of the student body.

What happens if we surpass 100 cases on campus?

Flowers: "When we started the semester, the state was not enforcing 100 over two weeks due to entry testing. New York State guidelines are changing to reflect the winter months and the subsequent risks such as indoor socialization and decreased ventilation in buildings due to the cold. The state has issued new guidance on Feb. 19 that moved the threshold to 5 percent of the total campus population including employees such as Sodexo workers, so that bar is higher now." The Herald interviewed Flowers on Feb. 24.

The New York State guidelines to which Flowers refers state:

"Commencing February 19, 2021, whenever the lesser of 100 individuals or

2021 COVID-19 DASHBOARD

Information on this page is updated periodically as new data are received.

This chart includes data starting on Jan. 1, 2021, and was last updated on Feb. 14, 2021, at 8:03 a.m. (EST).



Photo By Henry Duerr '21

COVID-19 Dashboard from February 14, the single largest increase in cases so far this academic year

with state contact tracers. It could be a case of you having symptoms and getting a negative rapid test, but we place you in quarantine while we wait for a PCR test back."

Flowers later remarked that in cases where students began quarantine or isolation before a contact tracer contacted them, they would still be expected to fulfill 10 days starting on their first positive test. Students that the school knew were possibly exposed would be preemptively quarantined, even

skipped these tests multiple time was told they have to go home. You cannot study here doing that," remarked Flowers.

He continued: "If an HWS student gets tested at any place in Ontario or Monroe County, we get notified of the test and the outcome." Thus, even students who do not attend their on-campus testing but have sought testing in the community will still have their results reported to the school.

Who enforces quar-

5% of the total on-campus population—inclusive of students, faculty, and staff—of a higher education institution location test positive for COVID-19 within a rolling 14-day period, the location must immediately (1) transition all in-person learning to remote format(s) and (2) limit on-campus activities for a period of 14 days. Provided, however, that a higher education institution location which tests an average of at least 25% of its total on-campus population for COVID-19 each week as part of an ongoing policy of surveillance testing shall not be required to transition to remote learning or to limit on-campus activities unless the greater of 100 individuals or 5% of the total on-campus population test positive using a 14-day rolling average.”

Flowers continued, “My concern is not the state number. It’s not the triggering mechanism. It’s literally what can we safely manage on campus. There is a limited number of us working constantly to endure that students have a place to stay, housing them across three hotels, laundry services, medication deliveries, getting meals, such as they are, delivered. They’re [delivered meals] hopefully getting better; I ask for nicer things in the meals. There is an enormous amount of work that goes into all of it. The real issue isn’t a state shutdown, but rather our capacity to manage things.”

What happened to those delayed tests?

In a normal week, tests are either driven or shipped to the Broad Institute in Boston. According to Flowers and Brandon Barile, Associate Vice President of Campus Life, tests are usually transported by volunteers

from the Hobart and William Smith administrative and athletic staff and arrive in Boston the same night. When tests must be shipped, they are shipped with FedEx Priority Overnight, which guarantees delivery by 10:30 a.m. the next business day. The Herald was able to verify this after reviewing shipping documents that the administration readily shared.

Either of these methods ensure viability, as the molecular PCR tests are viable

ings, safely within the Broad Institute’s viability period, tests shipped on Wednesday the 10 and Thursday the 11 were delayed. These delayed tests would have been collected Tuesday evening, Wednesday, and for most of the day Thursday. Both of these two shipments were delayed up to 24 hours each in Memphis, Tenn. This meant that the tests shipped on Wednesday afternoon, which would have normally arrived on Thursday morn-



Photo By Russell Payne '21

The shipment boxes for on-campus tests

for 72 hours after collection, per the FDA. Although as explained by Brandon Barile, the Broad Institute requires a dry swab test to arrive within 56 hours of collection. Per Broad Institutes FAQ section on testing:

“Specimens must be received within 56 hours for dry collection, 72 hours for swabs in media”.

In a meeting with Barile, the Herald was able to review documentation and discuss the shipping timeline from the week of Feb. 7. This was also the second week of the state testing period that ended on Feb. 12. Although tests from Monday and most of the tests from Tuesday of that week arrived the following morn-

ing, instead arrived on Friday morning.

Further, although the shipment from Wednesday night arrived at the Broad Institute on Friday, Feb. 12 at 7 a.m., the Broad Institute did not process the tests immediately. Thus, the delayed tests from Feb. 10 and Feb. 11 were not able to be processed within their window of viability. According to Barile, it was Friday that the HWS administration learned of shipping issues, when the results for Wednesday’s shipment of tests were not reported. An email was sent on Saturday Feb. 13 and Monday Feb. 15 to students in the delayed testing group informing them of the delay and that their tests were

likely invalid. This group was requested to return for additional testing.

What does this mean for the testing period ending on Feb. 12?

Put simply, it means that tests from Tuesday night and Wednesday morning, which would have normally been reported on Friday, were not processed through no fault of the administration. However, the period in question, from Jan. 30 to Feb. 12, registered 96 positive confirmed cases according the NYS COVID-19 tracker for HWS.

The new guidelines from NYS changing the threshold for review from 100 cases to a 5 percent positivity rate in the total campus population over the two-week period would take effect on Feb. 19. So, the previous regulations governed the testing period from Jan. 30 to Feb. 12. Because the tests were delayed by FedEx and rendered invalid, it is impossible for our investigation to conclude how many tests collected on Feb. 9 and 10 might have been reported positive on Feb. 12 if they had been processed in time.

The 23 positive cases that were reported on Sunday, Feb. 14 would have been a combination of successfully delivered PCR tests from Friday, Feb. 12 as well as antigen tests, which are processed on site and deliver results in 15 minutes. The earliest email that the Herald was able to obtain requesting students whose tests were delayed to return for more testing was sent on Monday, Feb. 15, which was also the first business day that tests could definitively have been confirmed invalid following their delayed arrival at the Broad Institute. ■



HOBART AND WILLIAM SMITH COLLEGES

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Student Employment Opportunities during COVID-19

By Elise Donovan '22 and Ruby Auman '22
Photo Editor and Staff Writer

Since its onset last spring, the COVID-19 pandemic has changed the face of student employment at HWS. Students who used to work at the college store, Au Bon Pain, and Winn-Seeley Gym, among others, had their hours cut entirely. At the same time, other student employees have been given more responsibilities in response to COVID-19 regulations.

Judy Wentzel, Director of the Bristol Field House, noted that student employment has been affected in the wake of new campus and state regulations. "We hired less student staff than in past semesters to mitigate risk and increase the quality of our services," she said. "We also restructured our student staff training sessions for the fall and spring semesters. Both sessions were heavily focused on educating student staff on the changes of our programs and services, and the importance of leadership to ensure the health & safety of the HWS community."

Many student employees find themselves tasked with upholding COVID-19 regulations on top of their regular job duties. Even when enforcing such regulations is not included in students' official job descriptions, students may feel compelled to do so anyway. This has been true for Grace Mongeau '22, who works as an O'Laughlin Ambassador and gives tours for Admissions.

Mongeau says that she "failed in her role" when she neglected to reinform a prospective student's father of the mask mandate when he purposefully removed his

mask upon entering a campus building during one of her weekly



Photo By Ani Freedman '22

tours. "It freaked me out," she said. "Despite having every right and probably obligation to tell him to put his mask back on, it felt awkward."

Mongeau feels burdened in her position as a COVID-19 policy enforcer, despite safety measures put in place by COVID-19 questionnaires, temperature readings, contact tracing sign-ins, and constant sanitization. Due to the nature of interactions between tour guides and families, Mongeau does not feel that she has much of an ability to enforce guidelines, especially those related to social distancing.

Another student working as a Teaching Fellow at the Center for Teaching and Learning shared a similar burden, noting that she feels "uncomfortable" when she notices maskless students taking advantage of her workspace.

"We use a public room, and people who use the room for other purposes, not Teaching Fellow hours,

tend to not use masks, that makes me really uncomfortable," she explained. "But

it's not totally related to my job, so I feel like I can't say anything."

The recent campus pause in response to rising numbers of COVID-19 cases only exacerbated the barriers to success that student employees face. In an email to the campus community on Feb. 5, 2021, President Jacobsen noted that "In consultation with their supervisors, students can work at their on-campus jobs and continue research activities." Many employers decided to use their discretion to help student workers.

Wentzel gave students the ability to continue to get hours both in person and remotely during the pause. Such opportunities included helping with "department development projects, creating promotional pieces for the HWS Rec Instagram page, and assisting with thoroughly cleaning all of our fitness spaces and equipment."

Despite campus employers like Wentzel who attempt to provide student

employees with support during this time of so much change, students still feel burdened by having to shift their schedules to accommodate changing regulations and new expectations for their positions.

A student worker in equipment management at the Winn-Seeley Gym felt "annoyed" by the difficulty in finding a routine because of the irregularity and disruption caused by COVID-19. "We are three weeks into classes and I'm just now aware of my full schedule," the student said.

The student also lamented the inconsistency in their pay as they find themselves spending more on groceries from Wegmans. This trend, which has everything to do with the shift in quality and availability of on-campus dining options, has left many students budgeting more for off-campus meals on top of their dining plan, as well as looking for more hours to accommodate this lifestyle change.

As students struggle to find routine, work, and courage in their roles as student employees, it is clear that many of them feel overwhelmed by the need to constantly balance health, school, and making money.

In her email, Jacobsen claimed that "We [the Colleges] have so much to look forward to this semester..." For student workers having to deal with maskless families, unsafe workspaces, and shifting job expectations, hopefully that future looks like safer and more consistent employment opportunities. ■

The Hour of Power: A Conversation with Fatim Cisse '23

By Steven D'Alterio '21
Staff Writer

The Herald recently got the opportunity to catch up with an amazing leader of love, self-growth, and empowerment here at HWS: Fatim Cisse '23. Cisse hosts a weekly Zoom program called Hour of Power Chats, which she describes as a collective endeavor to save and foster lives that have been lied to and told that they are not as they know themselves.

Hour of Power is an exercise in giving, sharing, meditation, and self-empowerment, open to all ages, colors, creeds, and ethnicities. The meetings are held on Saturdays at 12:30pm. During meetings, Cisse presents research and facilitates discussion on various topics, such as how the Black Panthers defund the police, black motivation, and the black constitution, Ubuntu.

Here is Cisse, in her own words:

First things first, [can you] tell as a little bit about yourself?

Hi, my name is Fatim Cisse. I am an abolitionist, I am a being of light, I am my ancestors' love, I am fierce as the waters, I am a tree, I am Harriet's Prayer. I am stepping out of ego; I am a proud African woman. I am an active poet, I am a light speaker, I am someone that honors authenticity and community, and I am growing into my purpose each and every day by speaking my truth of empowerment, and I am grateful and thankful for myself.

What has inspired or molded you into who you are today?

I would say my ancestors. I give total gratitude and total credit to my ancestors. They are who gives me guidance. I want to give a big shoutout to Harriet Tubman who lives just down the road in her home. She has given me a lot of guidance here in Geneva in times of distress and confusion. I look to the moon, I look to the stars; that has contributed to my journey. My ancestors praying to me has contributed to my journey.

Also, my urge and hunger to be one with [my]self and to know that I can live and be successful without white identities being placed on me. Also, my community: people of color have helped to shape my journey. That urge to be one with myself has really added to my journey. Believing in all my capabilities and my strengths,

knowing that they are not fallacy, even though society tries to say they are, tries to take away my birthrights. I am molded by being open to learn and willing to learn from past trauma in order to not repeat traumas.

What were your first impressions of HWS and what motivated you to start the Hour of Power?

Imma be real with you. I didn't see myself coming to this place, I didn't know about it. I was going to transfer but I changed plans because I changed mindset. That was a want of the past and not a want of now. My ego told me to do it because I had told myself to do it, but it changed.

First impressions, it's quiet. It needs some noise. Needs some voices. Needs some throat chakra. It was very different from the city, but I appreciate the nature. This land is a stolen one, one from the Seneca. When you look at the trees, you can re-

ally see how this is a forest that we are supposed to be in. When I came, I decided to embrace the nature, fall in love with the nature, because I am the embodiment of it. Like I said, I am a tree. But I got the chance for Harriet to show me that even though I felt like I was really far away from home, I was home because Harriet was right there with guidance for me. And she let me know that it's okay, and that she is always here, and very motivational.

But when I first came here, they tried me. I knew I would be tried, tried for my respect of my blackness. I knew I would be tested, that my spirit would be tested. I didn't think it was going to happen so fast, but it happened right when I came.

First you see all this beautiful nature and think, "You're home, you're home," but then people try to make you feel like you're not home. I stood up for myself and was immediately into action. And I am grateful for that, being able to use my voice, because I know that some people don't have that voice as ready as I had it. That is why I push to advocate not only for myself, but for others.

It just kept happening, boom-boom, in Summer Institution, in class, in the Café, in the next class, and the next class,



Photo By Ani Freedman '22

Pictured above: Fatim Cisse '23, the creator of Hour of Power



Photo By Ani Freedman '22

it just kept happening to me. They would say, “You deserve to be here,” and I would say, “I never thought I didn’t deserve to be here, why are you saying that to me?” I don’t understand why they put these thoughts in your head. Even professors, “Ahhh the test is so hard... I know I know...,” and I would ask, “Who said it was so hard? Why are you putting this negativity out there?”

People had a lot of assumptions about how I felt about the institution; they were presenting my displacement before I could even make placement for myself. I chose to live outside of America’s cloud, and instead created a path of clarity for myself. I stayed in touch with my ancestors and fed myself on their Cosmic Vibrations.

What is Hour of Power?

I wanted to answer my question as to why I wasn’t learning about necessary things when it came to em-

powering the Black existence. They want to teach you Black value by teaching you Black pain or Black suffering. Instead, you teach power by showing the beauty and showing the greatness. Teach about our true spirit in an empowering way.

Often you go into classrooms and learn about the slave trade, what happened on the boats, and all that, and the Tuskegee experiment, and so many debilitating things. Then next period you go and eat lunch; after lunch you go to Econ class and learn about how they are stealing your money and creating pollution, then you go to Biology and learn how they murdered you and that the textbook is built on the Black body without any credit to the Black body. All this stuff and nobody is empowering you!

Let’s talk about the relevant things. Let’s talk about Black home ownership, let’s talk about why we aren’t writing the textbooks. We

want to talk about the slave ship, where is that at? Where is that slave ship? It is nowhere to be found. Let’s talk about the things that will really help us to progress, and let’s stop reliving trauma. That’s why they put you in the classroom to relive the trauma over, and over, and over again. Let’s talk about what concerns us right here today.

I also like to talk about how we lived before slavery, about our true nature, about how powerful we have always been. I want to teach in an empowering way, about Kings and Queens, the warmth of melanin, our oneness with nature, in an empowering way. I lead guided meditation; I want to be a reflection of belief in yourself.

Hour of Power is a global space. HWS is not my life as well; Hour of Power is a Global Space that everyone can join in. Black, White, whatever. I want to give people the tools to empower themselves. I want to

prepare people for the revolution. We create solutions. Once you leave Hour of Power, you start thinking, “No Longer.” No longer will I be manipulated into not trusting myself. No longer will I distrust my Blackness, but instead I know how much my Blackness provides for the universe and White people. Blackness is keeping everyone alive right now. It is the truth, it’s keeping people going, keeping them eating...

Hour of Power is all ages. I tell people, bring they kids! The fruitful part of it all is the dialogue we have. I’m not even talking facts, I’m talking feelings, I’m talking enriched in knowing oneself. We are asserting and securing ourselves; everyone must add to the space. Your voice matters to what we do. We are breaking generational traumas each time we meet! We are saving lives; we are fostering lives! ■

Where is COVID-19 Coming From?

By Ani Freedman '22, Morgan Murphy '22
Photo Editor, Staff Writer

Amidst the rumors and uncertainty regarding where exactly COVID-19 is being spread on campus, as well as why certain areas on campus have been closed while others remained open, the Herald sought out clarification through interviews with various campus personnel. These individuals included Vice President of Campus Life Robb Flowers, Vice President for Marketing and Communications Catherine Williams, Buildings and Grounds Director Howard Simmons, and Sodexo Dining Services General Manager Dave McCandless. These interviews addressed relevant concerns about staff and student safety, as well as information regarding COVID-19 protocol.

Going into these interviews, the Herald wished to get a better understanding about where the Colleges are seeing spread, and specifically how this relates to Dining Services locations and interactions with and between Sodexo and Buildings and Grounds (B & G) staff. There have been growing discussions amongst HWS students regarding B & G staff adherence to

proper safety protocol when entering residential buildings. Additionally, students have been concerned about the risks posed by in-person

dining while cases were rising on campus.

According to Robb Flowers and Cathy Williams, COVID-19 spread at HWS is mainly occurring in off-campus gatherings and in residential areas where students do not wear masks or follow social distancing guidelines. The administration receives information regarding these sources of spread by contact tracing officials with the State of New York. Despite the data reflecting spread in residential spaces, the Herald chose to investigate how Sodexo is setting guidelines for their staff during the pandemic and how closely these are being followed.

In-person dining involves the absence of masks while eating indoors, leading

to concerns about how this functions on campus during the pandemic. When specifically asked about the aforementioned risks of dining, General Manager Dave McCandless stated: "Safety for students, faculty and staff

cated that Dining Services provides face coverings for all employees and makes hand sanitizer readily available. Additionally, Dining Services has "reduced or eliminated as many shared touch points as possible, installed plexiglass barriers" where needed, and created spacing between seating where possible. McCandless asserted that there have been "no reports of staff not following protocols." In order to maintain staff accountability, however, McCandless

is our number one priority. Our planning and execution every day is focused on ensuring a safe experience for everyone."

Moving onto staff protocol, McCandless directed the Herald to the Dining Services Plan under the Fall 2020 Reopening Plan published by the Colleges. According to this document, "employees are required to follow the Sodexo and Client Employee Health and Safety Monitoring Checklist and monitor their own health prior to starting work each day to verify they do not have COVID-19 symptoms." This refers to a questionnaire that McCandless said each staff member must complete before their shifts.

In order to ensure staff safety, McCandless indi-

said that "If an individual is observed not following proper protocols, our staff approaches that person and reminds them of the expectations."

B & G staff are responsible for daily housekeeping in residential spaces, often while students are home, so any failure to follow proper safety protocols can put students and staff at a higher risk of exposure. Students have reportedly witnessed B & G employees entering residences without masks, or not following social distancing guidelines, which is great cause for concern.

The Director of Operations for B & G, Howard Simmons, summarized the safety guidelines in place, saying, "Employees will be required to wear a face cov-



Photo By Ani Freedman '22

ering and practice social distancing. Prior to leaving a work location or once work is complete, the work area will be disinfected by the employee.” Simmons also directed the Herald to the Buildings and Grounds Opening Plan.

When asked how frequently staff members are tested, Simmons stated, “Buildings and Grounds employees are tested when required or necessary, and according to guidelines set by the Ontario County Department of Health.” Simmons did not comment on whether any B & G employees have tested positive for COVID-19, but expressed that “if anyone working for Buildings and Grounds were to test positive for COVID,” all isolation protocols set by the Ontario County Department of Health would be closely followed.

According to Simmons, there have been very few reports regarding employees who have failed to follow safety protocols, but in instances where guidelines have not been followed, “supervisors addressed the concern with the employee and ensured that the expectations of the Colleges were made clear.”

The extent to which staff follow safety protocols affects all members of the HWS community, including staff, students and faculty alike. ■

Life as a Student-Athlete During COVID-19

By Emma Lucas '22
Staff Writer



Photo By Ani Freedman '22

Cozzens Memorial Field

As student-athletes make their way through the world of COVID-19, their experiences and lives on and off the field have changed. In March 2020, at the height of confusion and fear, leagues and conferences for sports were cancelled, and athletes lost the ability to compete. This fall, after a summer of quarantine and lockdown across the United States, we again lost our ability to compete. Now, in the early months of 2021, even as cases are continuing to increase on campus, athletes are finally hopeful for the chance to compete again after a year off.

As a current junior on campus and part of the William Smith Field Hockey team, I can speak about how my life and experiences have changed since the start of the pandemic. In the fall of 2019, before the threat of COVID-19 raged across the U.S., my life included countless hours of training and games and lift

sessions. Life was a balance between sports, academics, and other fun activities that the campus offered.

From August 2019 until winter break in December 2019, teams were competing and travelling across states for games. Many smiles and laughs were brought to campus as parents and friends gathered to watch the games and cheer on the Hobart and William Smith athletes. This all changed in a matter of months.

In March 2020, student-athletes got a shock as practices and team gatherings were banned, then eventually cancelled. We lost the ability to practice and compete in a matter of days as HWS was shut down and students were required to move off of campus. At home, gyms and parks were being closed, forcing us to find other ways to work out and practice the sports we love. Instead of gyms and free weights, we used side-

walks and weighted backpacks. Runs in the park became treadmill runs and socially distant dog walks. Working out in groups became single-person activities.

In the fall of 2020, as students returned to college, we faced the demands of wearing masks at all times on campus (even during high periods of exertion), avoiding large group gatherings, maintaining a six-foot distance from others, and online courses.

Our training sessions were cut short, and we could not practice as a full team. HWS took safety precautions and cancelled competitive play against other schools. Our coaches' primary goal for the fall was to maintain a high level of safety that would allow for the continuation of training during the pandemic.

Now in the early months of 2021, as COVID-19 has been around for just under one year, student-athletes are still facing the struggles of living through a pandemic. So far, fall and winter sports have lost their seasons. Spring athletes are fighting for a chance for their season. Trainings have been postponed as cases continue to rise on campus and facilities have been closed. Student-athletes have had to adapt and change their methods of working out and staying in shape. The future for student-athletes, as for the rest of the community, remains uncertain. ■

COVID-19 and the First Year Experience

By Aidan Walsh '24 and Katelyn Oswalt '24
Staff Writers

The HWS Classes of 2024 had long expected a normal college experience going into the fall of 2020. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, however, this class doesn't know when they will experience that "normal," or let alone what that normal is even like.

Although most first-years have experience with online classes from their senior year of high school, they did not expect that their college courses would also be remote. Erin Howe '24, a member of the William Smith cross country team, stated, "It is definitely harder to focus with remote classes. If I were in class, I would have taken notes, and probably gotten a better grade."

Another challenge remote learning brings is a lack of face-to-face interactions with professors. Clare Burke '24 highlighted this issue, explaining how it was difficult for her to ask for letters of recommendations when she had only met one professor face-to-face during her college experience. However, she tries to stay positive with regard to remote learning, noting that "with the opportunities we are given so far, I feel like it works well."

Burke, an intended English and Education double major, also noted disparities between different majors. "I feel like if I was a bio major and having to do lab, or being a math major and having to do math lab



Photo By Lucas Gillsepie '24

Pictured Above: Kylie Rowland '24 once a week, [that] would be a little more difficult," she said.

Other students' experiences seem to corroborate this. Johnson said, "It is hard to learn science and math online, so [remote classes] made me have a different appreciation for being in an in-person lab or classroom."

Students also discussed the impact going virtual has had on their extracurricular involvement. Madelyn Kilmer '24, part of the Mindfulness Club and the Random Act of Kindness Club, said, "I really wanted to do musical groups since I got a music scholarship, but it's not available right now. I get sick of Zoom meetings. There are so many interesting things but they aren't offered because of COVID."

While some clubs are fully remote, others have socially distanced in-person meetings. Kylie Rowland '24, a member of PLEN, noted that social distancing protocols have limited some club meetings. "You have to sit so far away, and by dividers, it's not really a discussion like it used to be," she said.

It has also been more difficult for students to find opportunities during this time. Burke explained, "It's difficult to understand what's out there and what there is to do ... it has been so hard to reach out and find out what there is to do."

Howe has been more hesitant to join clubs recently. "I know the meeting would be virtual, so it would not be as interesting, because normal activ-



Photo By Lucas Gillsepie '24

Pictured Above: Clare Burke '24

ities wouldn't be happening," she said.

First-year students possess different mindsets regarding their experiences at HWS so far. Kilmer expressed that "the Colleges are trying their best to get people involved to experience a somewhat college experience, but I don't think that I am experiencing as much as I want to. I can't blame them because of COVID, but it wasn't what I was expecting."

William Smith soccer player Emily Johnson '24 said, "The pandemic is really hard on everyone in school no matter where you go, so that is keeping me from being like, 'Oh man, I am not happy or this is not fun,' because since everybody is going through the exact same thing. We are going through it together."

Students acknowledge that the school is not at fault for holding classes and events on Zoom, since it is safer than being in person in many cases. Riley

Nash '24, a Hobart cross country runner, said, "When you think about college, you don't think about COVID. A lot of things are taken away. It's not the school's fault, but the world we live in."

The new normal seems to change every day. While it can be disappointing to have hopes and expectations not met, HWS students stay positive by focusing on what they do have, whether that be from resources on campus or at home.

New Writing Colleague Annette Stevens '24 decided to stay home this semester. "COVID's impact on the social scene was definitely considered in my decision not to return in person this semester," she said. "The strain that is put on the balance between meeting people and having fun with friends, and studying and attending classes was difficult."

Despite being fully remote, Stevens continues to



Pictured Above: Riley Nash '24

stay positive and excited for her return to campus. "I am grateful for the efforts of the school, faculty, and students to make the most of this year. It definitely hasn't been ideal for anyone, but the general attitude on campus first semester was of camaraderie and positivity, which is one of the reasons why I love the HWS community," she explained.

Burke also looked back at her fall semester fondly, saying, "In the end, I was very happy with my college experience, between meeting my friends, still getting to participate in my sport, still finding clubs that I enjoy, and getting to know people on this campus."

Most first-years have something they are looking forward to, which seems to go back to hopes of the pandemic being better controlled in the near future. When asked what she will do first once regulations are eased, Rowland re-

plied that she wants to "go downtown to Geneva and be able to eat without being scared of COVID."

Johnson hopes for a "fall season as normal as possible," since she knows how amazing it will feel to finally get to play in games. Howe plans on studying abroad much earlier than she thought, as the pandemic has helped her realize that she wants to focus on "academics and things I can control."

Expressing a shared goal of many first-year students, Nash hopes to "meet more people." Similarly, Kilmer just wants some return of normalcy. "I hope by next semester we are back to normal," even though "I don't know what 'normal' is going to be," she said. No matter what "normal" looks like next semester, first-year students are determined to make it their best yet. ■



Pictured Above: Emily Johnson '24

Discussing Race in FSEM's

By Kayleigh Aquino '24 and Julissa Ramirez '23
Staff Writers

For decades, liberal arts schools have implemented special courses for first-year students to help them adjust to their environment and develop a more holistic understanding of their own education. FSEMs at HWS aim to provide an introduction to college learning for students, with topics ranging from pop music to issues surrounding race and social justice. Recently, in response to the Rising Panthers' demands, there has been a push within the institution to require all FSEMs to explicitly address race.

The idea of an integrated curriculum is not new, remarks Rising Panthers leader Mercy Sherman '22. She rejects the idea that these discussions can only occur in specific classes. "Black history is world history," says Sherman, "and these conversations need to be included within all classes." This is especially because many white students at HWS have not had to think about race, Sherman says. Although it is "not their fault," Sherman notes that many of her white peers are "absolutely not" as informed about race and racism as they should be.

Incorporating discussions of race into FSEMs will "build a foundation" for future classes and the rest of students' time at HWS, Sherman says. If students are not introduced to race in their first year, those living in a "bubble of comfort" will continue doing

so without any push for change. Discussing race in FSEMs, however, will allow students to have more empathy for their peers.

Sherman's entire course load this semester is filled with classes on race, and she can tie this work back to her own FSEM, Metacognition and Social Justice with Professor Susan Pliner. The material from this course, especially work on intersectionality, has stayed with her throughout her years at the Colleges, Sherman says. Unfortunately, that is unique to this specific course.

Litzy Bautista '23, who also took Susan Pliner's FSEM, has similar thoughts. By learning about intersectionality in this class, she learned that she can be both privileged and oppressed, something that she had previously not understood. Bautista and Sherman both believe if these discussions were implemented in all FSEMs, students would be more aware of the ways in which they may contribute to oppression without even realizing it.

Bautista went on to become a Writing Colleague for the same FSEM last semester. She agrees that students are generally not as informed as they should be on these topics. In part, Bautista believes, this is because different groups of people address these issues differently, and because "the people we surround ourselves with" determine the topic of conversation.

This makes exposing first-year students to these

topics all the more important. Bautista believes that "everyone can learn" about these ideas when they are put in classes that will engage them. Before arriving at the Colleges, she thought she knew what she needed to about the subject of race. Looking back, though, she learned much more in her FSEM than she ever could have predicted, and she carried this with her throughout her following semesters.

If all students engaged in these conversations their first year on campus, she says, "everyone [could] learn" and become so much more involved. She adds that if a student is "not taking social sciences, [they] don't learn" these important and essential ideas. Those on a STEM track, and even many who do take humanities classes, are able to "get around" certain goals by filling their schedule with classes that may not actually address the objectives of critically understanding social inequalities and cultural differences.

The general student body's lack of awareness about these issues negatively impacts the experiences of students of color on campus. Zaheer Bowen '23 shares that the small number of students of color on campus makes being at HWS "lonely and stressful." This is only exacerbated by a curriculum that does not adequately address racism and Black history.

With regard to changes in the curriculum, Bowen says he "hopes to see more of the modern his-

tory of racism, because usually [in classes] it ends with the Civil Rights Movement, and then everyone thinks that everything is fine." When most students are not informed about racism and Black history, class discussions become frustrating. Bowen shares that one student in one of his classes "didn't know who Malcolm X was," and that most students had not learned about Black history before coming to HWS.

Mary Coffey, Provost and Dean of Faculty, says that "higher education is at an inflection point surrounding race." It's not easy work, she confesses, and it "raises questions of responsibility." As conversations move forward, though, there is a "desire for fast change," which means that "students and faculty need to be transparent."

Coffey recognizes that specific changes need to be made to the FSEM program, and she agrees with Sherman and Bautista that race should be discussed across all subject areas. Knowing "where we want to be" is just the beginning, she says; figuring out the "best way to get there" is the real challenge. Coffey gets the sense that "faculty and students want to learn more," but are intimidated by the fear of saying or doing the wrong thing. She believes that with training, they would be more inclined to engage in important discussions.

Coffey also admits that there is always personal work to be done on the topic of race. She herself attempts to keep up with

current race literature, such as Ibram X. Kendi's *How to Be an Antiracist*, which is one of the required reading materials for Pliner's FSEM. If books like these were incorporated into every FSEM, she says, first-year students would be "provided [with] the framework" necessary to start having important conversations about race.

Educating our student population on Black history is essential. Before coming to HWS, many students have only learned white history. They have been able to opt out of learning about racism and having conversations about race, which continues a cycle of unawareness that cannot be broken until students are educated about these topics. By implementing discussions on race in all FSEMs, HWS can signal that these issues are of the utmost importance at our institution and take the first step toward breaking this cycle. ■

DEI Leads Effort in FSEM Reforms

*By Roman Vargas Garcia '24
Staff Writer*

Since its beginning, the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion has been organizing efforts that help the Colleges maintain a space for people from minority backgrounds. Many of these events, which are targeted to staff, faculty, and students, are repeated throughout the school year in order to reach as many people as possible. Despite the pandemic, the DEI Office is committed to creating an interactive and encouraging space for everyone in the HWS community and to connecting with the Geneva community.

Most recently, the DEI Office has worked to support efforts to include discussions on race in all FSEMs. Workshops and support for faculty from DEI have enabled over 15 faculty members to prepare teach FSEMs that involve topics such as race and experiences of power and struggle. These workshops mark the beginning of an ongoing effort to utilize first-year seminars to create a more opening and understanding experience for students.

This is especially important for first-years who start their higher education at a predominantly white liberal arts institution, like HWS.

The DEI Office has also joined forces with the National Assessment of Collegiate Campus Climate Survey to gather information about diversity, equity and inclusion on campus. The survey will be announced repeatedly in hopes of reaching every student. By receiving results from students, the DEI Office hopes to gauge the current status of topics like inclusion and diversity on campus.

Most importantly, the outcome of the survey is key to assessing if DEI's efforts have made social change on campus. Khuram Hussain, Vice President for DEI, says that the survey "is for the community, and so I am going to push us to do this because it is the right thing to do and because we care about ourselves." As such, the survey will not have any type of incentive. Instead, it will be sent as a responsibility for students to complete for the better of the community.

Other DEI events taking place in February include the Posse Plus Retreat, an annual event sponsored by the Posse Foundation, which works to support diversity on college campuses. This year, the retreat will discuss leadership and what it means to be a leader, especially in our current moment. The event will feature the voices of current students and faculty about their experiences on campus, so that participants can explore what leadership means. In addition to covering important topics, this event will offer members of the HWS community an opportunity to talk to one another in a time when social gathering is limited due to the pandemic. ■



Photo Courtesy of Hobart and William Smith Colleges

Pictured Above: Khuram Hussain

Behind the Superbowl Star

By Brayton Slusser '23 and Mary Hanrahan '22
Staff Writers

Many people hold misconceptions about college athletes, including the “jock” stereotype of athletes who are heavily invested in maintaining their fitness and athletic talent rather than their academic capabilities.

In contrast to this trope stands Hobart Football alumnus Ali Marpet '15. On Feb. 7, 2021, starting on the offensive line for the Tampa Buccaneers, Marpet became the first Hobart alumnus to compete in and win the Superbowl. The Herald sat down with the Head Coach of Hobart football, Kevin DeWall '00, and former Head Coach Mike Cragg to discuss Marpet's success as a former student-athlete.

Cragg countered misunderstandings about what it means to be a student-athlete and a member of the Hobart football team. “Most people, when they think of football—it's just on Saturdays, it's just about the wins and losses,” he said. “But what it really means is establishing a culture wherein you preach to your players about being in class every day, doing it the right way, doing it the Hobart way.”

Was Ali Marpet, with his exceptional record, an exception to the reality of Hobart football culture? According to those that

academic and athletic realms of the HWS campus, Marpet embodied the “right way” of doing things. Referred to as “the HWS way” by Cragg and DeWall, this concept encompasses leadership, accountability, well-roundedness, and a rejection of compla-

cent have ended. Both Cragg and DeWall maintain strong relationships with their network of Hobart football alumni as mentors, which extends to Cragg's position as Senior Director of Development for Athletics. Regarding Marpet, both coaches are in frequent contact with the Superbowl cham-

ber emphasized the importance of college as a place of growth. “These four years you spend in college can be really influential and a huge part of the interaction and creating relationships with other people.”

As seen in the bond between Marpet and his former coaches, the relationships student-athletes build in college can last for lifetimes and help to propel them toward success. Both DeWall and Cragg discussed this, explaining that “If we've done our job right, then the alumni will want to stay in touch with us.” In some cases, alumni get directly involved with current members of the HWS community. Both coaches refer to the bond between themselves, the current students, and the alumni as being similar to that of “a family.”

The emphasis on a need to form strong familial bonds is illustrative of a network of respect that Cragg sees as paramount to the production of players that embody his vision for the Hobart football program. For Cragg, academic and athletic success are connected: “Typically, if you're lazy and you're not going to class, typically it's going to translate to laziness on the field.”

From the standpoint of the coaches, the balance of classes and sports is imperative to being a great and successful student-athlete. DeWall still follows the ideology of Cragg, his mentor, stating that “How they [athletes] handle a Tuesday af-



Photo Courtesy HWS Office of Communications

Ali Marpet '15 in a game on December 13, 2020

cency.

Describing his coaching philosophy, DeWall revealed, “We hold them [student-athletes] to a higher standard than just being great athletes. Here at Hobart we truly pride ourselves on being great student-athletes.”

Cragg identified a strong system of support and a sense of trust as a priority of his philosophy and a core component of the team's success on and off the field. According to Cragg, relationships with players keep the team strong long after their days of playing for Ho-

pion through phone calls, mid-game texts, and the occasional attendance at Marpet's professional games.

Cragg elaborated, “I tell him when he needs a shave, I tell him when he needs a haircut. We have a great relationship, and I'll always be his coach. He has many mentors, and I am so proud that he has so many mentors, but I will always feel like I'm one of them, and I can say anything to him at any time.”

DeWall also finds significance in these close bonds, stating, “That's why we coach. That's the reason that I am still here.” He fur-



Photo By Ani Freedman '22

ternoon class and how they handle a Wednesday morning workout shouldn't be different."

Accordingly, Cragg requires from his players a level of effort and accountability modeled by the likes of Marpet in an athletic and academic contexts. "If I cannot trust you to go to class, then I am not sure if I can trust you in the fourth quarter when I need you," he explained.

With role models like Marpet in place, the true mission of coaches like DeWall and Cragg can be realized in real time, as attention to successful student and alumni leaders helps them effectively engage with their team. Cragg's focus on student and coach collaboration is centered on creating a lasting system of values shared through team communication. Speaking in reference to the leaders that have emerged from the team, such as DeWall himself, Cragg stated, "when

they leave and graduate, they are to pass the sentiment on to the next generation of leaders. That's how you build a culture."

Cragg attributes individual players' success to personal ambition and a constant drive for improvement, even in times of transition. "When you have a great player coming in at a Division III Program, and they're the person, they're the dude, they're the answer, the star, the stud, by their senior year they've already been all-conference, all-league, all-American, already scored their points. By their senior year they've plateaued off and resting on their abilities." Players like Marpet, on the other hand, reject complacency and find success in their careers beyond HWS.

Marpet's work ethic was key to his identity as a player and a hallmark of his success as a model for the members

McCooey Memorial Field

of the Hobart football team. Cragg emphasized that Marpet, even as a senior, never settled into a state of complacency. "Ali was getting bigger and stronger, and working harder and harder, and he was dominating his position, but he didn't stop, and he just kept trying to get better," he said. "You don't see that very often. He didn't plateau."

According to DeWall, Marpet arrived at HWS "as a quiet kid, but hungry" for success and greatness. "Even now after the Super Bowl, he's going to reinvent himself and find even more ways to keep improving."

With hope for more HWS success stories like Marpet's, Cragg emphasizes that building a well-rounded team requires that coaches and team leaders create and maintain bonds that encourage players to hold themselves and others ac-

countable. "When you've got 89 players on a sideline, it's hard to keep people motivated, happy, content. And as a coach, you always have to keep coming up with ways to keep your players happy. The happier they are, the more they are going to give you. And if you're not showing them love, that you care about them, they're not going to care about what they're doing."

Cragg continued, "It has something to do with the X's and O's, but more so it has you caring for that individual as a person on and off of [the] field. Whether in the classroom, back home with their families, or in the dorms, the more you ask about them, and get to know them to show that you truly care, whether [as a] star or [the] hundredth player, they'll give it back to you." ■

Coaches Help Keep Campus Safe

By Andrew Lynch '23
Staff Writer

As Hobart and William Smith Colleges have entered the spring semester, COVID-19 testing has ramped up. Students and staff are eager to return to a somewhat normal schedule, which requires frequent testing for the safety of the campus community. In order to meet testing needs, athletic coaches have been asked to help conduct COVID-19 tests at the Hubbs Health Center.

With the fall and winter sport seasons cancelled,

coaches have had extra time on their hands. This has encouraged some to sign up to help with COVID-19 testing, which they are now required to do for one to two days a week. Coaches have to fill out a sign-up sheet and mark down their own hours, which makes scheduling easy. Shifts generally range from about two and a half hours to three and a half hours, during which coaches administer COVID-19 tests to students.

Coaches have also been tasked with delivering these tests to Boston,

where they are processed. This has proved productive for many coaches. Stefan Thompson, head coach of the Hobart Men's Basketball team, says, "Delivering tests to Boston has actually been a great opportunity for us. We've been able to do recruiting calls and trips around that area, and get work done during the drive."

Thanks to the tight-knit campus community, HWS athletics staff have been willing to do whatever it takes to help HWS get through the pandemic. Thompson explains, "From

a coach's perspective, we were excited to do what was needed and help everyone on campus stay healthy."

Transitioning into 2021, athletic coaches and staff share high hopes for the return to play. The goal among many is to begin progressing back to play this spring, and then work toward a normal, yet modified season for next fall and winter. With these aspirations in mind, the athletic coaches are doing their part now so the rest of the school can possibly return to a normal schedule next year. ■



Photo By Ani Freedman '22

The Girls Field Hockey Team practices on McCooey Memorial Field

Letter From the Editor

Dear Reader,

In this issue you will find stories from the lives of students whose lives have undergone radical changes over the past year. COVID-19 has come to dominate the life of every American and almost everyone in the world over the past year and we have attempted to reflect a small slice of our campus community's experience in this issue.

Likewise, this issue marks a new era in nearly 200-year history of *the Herald*. Adapting to the times we have become a digital first publication with longform content going to print on a monthly basis. This also marks a historic period of growth for Geneva's oldest newspaper with over 40 students on staff this semester. Among these students include a host of young and ambitious journalists who will be carrying the paper forward for years to come. Our goal in aggressively expanding our team is, as always, to fulfill our purpose of being a voice for the students. Only through the inclusion of more perspectives from more people can we adequately bring the stories of our community to our community.

I would also like to thank my fantastic editorial board for their continued support. Titles like Copy Editor and Managing Editor fall far short of the accurately describing the work that Olivia Rowland and Henry Duerr do for the paper. Their continued commitment and hard work have helped to bring the Herald through to a new generation of students at Hobart and William Smith.

Indeed, this year also sees the addition of Ani Freedman taking her rightful place as Photo Editor as well as Paul Janes joining the board as our new Design Editor. Hrithik Biswas has been instrumental in the building of this team as our new Operations Manager and Olivia Broomes has helped to promote the hard work of our staff as our new Social Media Marketing Coordinator.

As we leave this winter of tragedy behind us, I would like to invite our campus community to take part in something new. A friend and alumni of the Colleges, Matt Bindig, once reminded me that when we see injustice in our community or problems in our institutions, we have only two options. We can either sit idly by, or we can act to change them. I believe our only real choice is to act.

Consider this my invitation to you, dear reader, to participate and work towards a better fairer future. With any upheaval like we have seen in the past year comes opportunity. This is the moment to make your voice, the voice of the students, heard and to be the change that you would like to see in our community and our institutions.

Sincerely,

Russell Payne
Editor-in-Chief



REMEMBER THE PAST. IMAGINE THE FUTURE.

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NO
SMOKING