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## The Current - Volume 31 Issue 15

Nova Southeastern University

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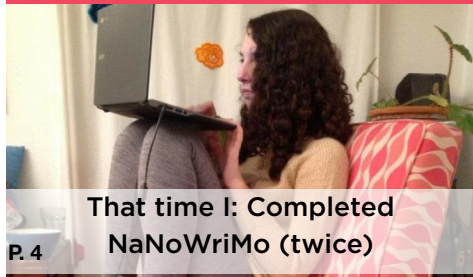
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## The Breakroom offers some normalcy to NSU students

Since October, NSU's RecPlex has offered students the opportunity to attend The Breakroom, a program that takes place Monday through Friday at the RecPlex basketball courts, where students can play games and watch live sports while socializing safely following CDC guidelines to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

According to Christopher Anguita, assistant director of intramural and club sports at the RecPlex, this event idea was conceived in March during the start of the COVID-19 outbreak as Anguita's team projected what the future of RecPlex programs would look like. The goal was to make sure that students felt active and engaged to a point that it sparked unity and a sense of community, despite the challenging times of the pandemic.

"It's certainly trying to network and bring the students together, but how do you do that in a time when you are being told to socially distance? I came to think, 'What can we do to get students engaged physically and mentally?' So, we thought about a breakroom and the type of resources we could provide. We thought of video games initially, but wanted students to still feel active, so Wii gaming provides that. We also came up with Mario Franchise games like Super Mario and Mario Kart as well as live sports and lawn games like cornhole," said Anguita.

As this program is still relatively new, there have been some changes to the times that The Breakroom is available, and potentially, what and where these activities are provided by widening the overall availability. As of now, the hours fluctuate based on participation and interest in the program. Hours are focused primarily during lunch, after class times and prior to study hours.

"We want to provide times that accommodate students during times that they can enjoy themselves, which generally fall between lunch hours, before study times and after class. We're seeing an interest in The Breakroom, but I'm finding that, being more strategic in terms of location, might be more helpful to students. Instead of students coming to [the RecPlex], I'm working with The Office of Residential Life and Student Housing and Greek Life organizations to provide services to them in spaces students are more comfortable with. The idea is to get the students involved in a way that works for them where they are most comfortable," said Anguita.

Marie Adkinson, area coordinator for Mako Hall, explained that their once a month collaboration with The Breakroom is an opportunity to find the middle ground between a fun activity for students to participate in while tying in the required educational programming commitments that residential life abides by.

"We are looking for the most creative ways to program that are the most productive, educational and the safest while also being engaging to students. So, there are all these elements that everyone across campus is trying to navigate, and with the resources that The Breakroom can provide, we can make our programming fun and entertaining," said Adkinson.

Plans for this program next semester have involved conversations about widening the availability to other residential halls and main campus locations as well as the possibility of starting a league competition to spark a sense of camaraderie between students.

"I certainly think The Breakroom will create that connection piece that we really don't know how to [attain] right now... We are trying to find that bridge [between safety and socialized programs]

advisor and counselor.

"We are very proud to be ranked among other KDP chapters as leaders in service learning. This Excellence in Education honor is significant to the NSU Greek life [because] it exemplifies that our contributions are significant and ranked as preeminent to society and world education. Receiving this award is a great accomplishment for our chapter as we continue to enrich Greek life with our presence at NSU's main campus and in Puerto Rico," said Maria Grethel Mendez, chapter advisor and associate counselor for KDP Omega Theta.

The five presentations KDP Omega Theta put together for the award were "COVID-19 'New Normal': Reshaping the teaching/learning platform," "Economic, Entrepreneurial and Educational Perspectives



By: Christina McLaughlin  
Co-Editor-in-Chief

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The Recplex's Breakroom allows NSU students to get together and hang out while following CDC guidelines

and that's complicated. This acts as one of those first steps to creating an idea of how programs can be safe as well as having a nice, social element that is keeping students connected," said Adkinson.

Students are welcome to contact the RecPlex to provide any ideas or thoughts they have for

programs they would like to see instituted in The Breakroom, as long as they are a service the RecPlex is capable of providing. Individuals interested in learning more about The Breakroom or other RecPlex programs can [visit their website to learn more.](#)

## Kappa Delta Pi Omega Theta wins the Professional Development Chapter Program Award

By: Rey Perez  
Contributing Writer

Last month, it was announced that NSU's international honor society in education, the Kappa Delta Pi (KDP) Omega Theta chapter, won the 2019-2020 Professional Development Chapter Program Award.

The award recognizes KDP chapters who have made notable advancements in the field. KDP Omega Theta put together five professional development presentations with participants selected from over 200 participants that included NSU FCE faculty, students, staff and alumni.

"It is a great honor to receive the 2019-2020 Professional Development Chapter Program Award. This recognition goes a long way in supporting the chapter's work to upholding service, one of the pillars of KDP," said Sandra Trotman, the chapter's

in the Pandemic Era Conference," "Professional development for teachers on the management and use of different platforms for virtual classrooms at the time of a pandemic," "Special Education Forum" and "Beyond the book cover."

According to Trotman and Mendez, the presentations highlight the need to strive as an organization, and that these service learning activities involved participants from the U.S., St. Vincent, Puerto Rico (and other Spanish-speaking countries), Jamaica and other countries.

KDP Omega Theta also has plans for how NSU students can help with their future endeavors.

"To continue with our mission of service, we would like to invite all NSU's Greek life members, students, faculty and staff to join us

in fulfilling a literacy project. The 2020-21 Literacy Project provides an opportunity for targeted communities to collaborate to give PreK to six students the opportunity to engage in one hour of reading activities and related science, technology, reading, engineering, arts and mathematics (STREAM)... With this, as you update your technology tools, like smart phones, laptops and computers, please consider donating them to be used for the rural schools where we will be conducting a STREAM program to assist not only the Pre-K-6 students, but also their teachers and their communities," said Trotman.

Anyone interested in donating their used technology tools to the project can drop them off to Trotman on the fourth floor of the Carl DeSantis Building.

# Letter from the Editors

Dear Sharks,

Can you believe that it's the end of the semester already? This semester has been different, to say the least — whether it was taking classes online for the first time, adjusting to new rules and regulations or any of the other factors that come with navigating college life... during a pandemic. Despite these challenges, we masked up and got it done.

Nevertheless, as we finish our last in-person classes and prepare to head home, keep in mind all that you have accomplished this semester. Don't let it get overshadowed by the missed opportunities and struggles that COVID-19 placed in our paths.

This winter break, make sure that you use the free time for some much needed self-care. Sleep until noon and watch your favorite movies. Spend some socially-distanced quality time with family and friends this holiday season. Start that workout routine or try that new recipe you've been meaning to make, or our personal favorite, catch up on some of the articles we have published from this past semester. From recipes and reviews to sports and politics, there's something for everyone -- and it's all conveniently online. While it's been strange not having a physical copy of the newspaper in our hands every Tuesday morning, we're glad we were able to stick it out through this year and all its news — there was certainly no shortage of happenings in 2020.

To you, Sharks, we want to thank you. Thank you for coming along for this admittedly bumpy ride with us and allowing us to help amplify student voices. If there's ever anything we can do to better support you at The Current, let us know. Whether that's speaking to us about your concerns, writing for the paper or finding another way to get your ideas out there, visit us on Instagram, @thecurrentnsu, or our website, nsucurrent.nova.edu, to get in contact. We're here because of you — and we want to do what we can to better your experience at NSU.

As we all ring in the new year on Dec. 31, from all of us at The Current, we wish you a successful next semester and a bright 2021.

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## News Anchor

Stay up to date with national events.

### Georgia begins hand tally of presidential race votes

On Nov. 13, Georgia's 159 counties began recounting presidential race votes. A law gave the state the option of having a hand tally recount if the margin by which the winning candidate leads by is too slim. Georgia will have at least two ballot auditors check each vote and read the name of the selected candidate out loud before handing it to the second auditor, who does the same process. The results of the recount are expected to be announced when the full tally is finished and the new results will be the certified numbers for the election.

### Tropical storm Eta causes isolated flash floods

Tropical storm Eta made landfall in the Florida Keys on Nov. 12. After briefly becoming a hurricane-strength storm, Eta

has remained as a tropical storm. Eta made landfall with 50 mph winds in the Florida Keys and dropped rain across the Florida coasts until it continued up the coast and into the eastern United States. Flash flooding has occurred throughout South Florida and the Keys and more isolated flash flooding is expected to occur as the storm loops back around. The flooding caused by Eta was so severe in North Carolina that it resulted in the death of five people.

### Schools move online before the holidays

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Florida and the Keys and more isolated flash flooding is expected to occur as the storm loops back around. The flooding caused by Eta was so severe in North Carolina that it resulted in the death of five people.

### Legal action taken against the Great Lakes oil pipeline

The governor of Michigan, Gretchen Whitmer, filed legal action on Nov. 13 to shut down an oil pipeline that ran beneath a channel that connected to two of the Great Lakes. The revocation of an easement granted to the Canadian oil company, Enbridge Inc., was cited to explain that the pipeline put not only the lakes' ecosystem at risk, but the thousands of people who depend on the clean drinking water and job availability they provide. Whitmer expressed that she believes the pipeline could lead to a catastrophic oil spill, while Enbridge Inc. stands in the

position that the pipeline remains safe and legally regulated. The pipeline itself carries approximately 23 million gallons of oil between Superior, Wisconsin and Sarnia, Ontario while also passing through northern Michigan.

### Washington D.C. sees protests from Trump supporters

Thousands of people have gathered in support of President Donald Trump on Nov. 14 as Joe Biden remained the projected winner of the 2020 presidential election. Over two dozen Trump supporters were arrested as they clashed with counter-protestors. This mass demonstration came after repeated tweets and statements made by Trump and other federal Republicans, implying that Trump had won the election and would be remaining president for a second term.

## News Briefs

### get the scoop on events happening on campus

#### Computer camp: Shopping online safely

On Nov. 17, from 1 - 1:45 p.m., the Alvin Sherman Library will hold a class on measures that can be taken to shop online safely. The event is open to the public, but requires registration prior to the event and a Zoom link for the discussion will be sent out the day before.

Those interested can log into Sharkhub to register for this event or [follow this link](#).

#### Pita and Parsha

Chabad at NSU, a Jewish organization, will host an event to give students the opportunity to ask questions and learn from NSU's rabbi and rebbetzin while enjoying kosher pita, falafel, salads and treats. This event will be held on Nov. 17, from 12 - 1:15 p.m., in the Library Quad by the cabanas.

#### Black art showcase

The Black Student Union and Open Expressions will host a virtual art showcase on Nov. 18 from 6 - 7 p.m. This event is open to all art forms and creative

outlets that NSU students may express. To register as an artist, click here or to attend the event, click here. The event will be held online and prior registration is required to attend.

#### Roll call

On Nov. 18, the Unified Greek Council (UGC) will host a roll call event in the University Center Spine from 12 - 1 p.m. to learn more about greek life organizations. Visit the UGC Instagram, [@unifiedgreekcouncil\\_nsu](#), for more information regarding this and other UGC Week Events.

#### Career development workshop

On Nov. 19, Collegiate DECA will host a developmental workshop on the "Ability to Make Decisions: Career Development," featuring key speaker Talia Winfrey. This

event will take place in the DeSantis building as well as over Zoom. The workshop runs from 12 - 1:30 p.m. and those interested can [RSVP on Sharkhub](#).

#### Thanksgiving food drive

NSU's Unified Greek Council will host a Thanksgiving food drive on Nov. 19, from 12 - 2 p.m., in the University Center Spine. Canned foods and non-perishables are accepted and donations will enter the student in a chance to win NSU swag.

#### Baskets for a cause

On Nov. 20, Locks for Cause will host an on-campus event to create baskets to give to the children at the Joe Dimaggio Hospital. The event will take place in the University Center Spine from 10 - 11 a.m.



### Global news, courtesy of the current

#### New discovery hiding in plain sight

Myanmar, a south Asian nation, made leaps and bounds in the scientific community on Nov. 11 by discovering a new species of primate with dark brown to black back fur with a whitish abdomen and named it the Popa Langur after the extinct volcano Mount Popa. Scientists discovered the primate by using 100-year-old tissue samples from numerous global museums. However, while the species has been discovered in plain sight, they are considered to be critically endangered, with scientists believing that there is a living population of 250.

#### Typhoon Vamco causes destruction

The north-eastern Philippine region braces for yet another week of uncertainty from Typhoon Vamco with winds of up to 84 mph. Roughly 12,000 villagers have

been evacuated. Vamco is devastating communities that are still trying to recover from the super-typhoon Goni, which struck earlier this month. Despite these circumstances, Philippine Military Chief Gilbert Gapa said, "This typhoon will test once more our spirit, bruised but not broken."

#### Darkest Day

According to pro-democracy legislator Fernando Cheung, Nov. 11 is now known as the "Darkest day in Hong Kong, so far" because of the resignation of 15 lawmakers in protest of the disqualification of four legislators. The protest occurred as the top law-making body in Beijing banned lawmakers they deem "unpatriotic." The country is currently facing a power struggle between democracy and communism.

#### COVID-19 aboard Caribbean cruise

Nov. 12 marks the first five positive cases of COVID-19 on the Caribbean cruise ship, The SeaDream, which set sail on Nov. 7, was the first ship to resume sailing in the Caribbean. There were roughly 50 passengers and 66 crew members on board. One passenger became sick, requiring the ship to turn back to Barbados after departing on Nov. 8.

#### Sudan safe haven

Sudan has seen an influx of up to 200,000 refugees fleeing war torn North Ethiopian Tigray region, experiencing conflicts as of Nov. 12. Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed refused negotiations with the regional government after he announced military intervention on an attack conducted by regional forces. This attack and conflict have left communications severed, people hungry and supply trucks stranded.

## RECOGNIZE OUR VETERANS

ONLINE ARTICLE FEATURED ON  
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## COVID-19 update: Looking back at this semester and ahead to the future

By: Madelyn Rinka  
Co-Editor-in-Chief

*Between the new BlendFlex model, classroom capacities, limited gathering sizes and masks covering the faces of every Shark, it's hard to miss the impact the COVID-19 pandemic has had on NSU.*

As of Nov. 16, there were no active cases of COVID-19 among residential students, although two cases resolved over the weekend on Friday, Nov. 13, and Saturday, Nov. 14. Off campus, there are three undergraduate students who have reported active positive cases, but these students do not live in the residence halls. Additionally, there are 12 students in quarantine -- 10 of which live off campus and the other two live in Rolling Hills and The Commons. The two self quarantines on campus were related to exposures to COVID-19, although both of these cases will be resolved, or no longer active, after Nov. 16. Neither student developed symptoms or cases of COVID-19.

As many students travel home for winter break or for the transition to online learning after Nov. 20, Beth Welmaker, the executive director of environmental health and safety for NSU, stressed the importance of remaining diligent and

proactive to lower the risk of infecting family and friends.

"We all now know what it takes to stop the spread of COVID-19 and it's not expensive. It doesn't require special equipment. It requires us being smart about keeping our distance from others and wearing a face covering," said Welmaker.

Additionally, Welmaker encouraged students to remain vigilant as far as paying attention to any potential symptoms due to the high community spread of COVID-19. After traveling, whether that be home in the coming weeks or back to campus as planned in January, it is recommended that individuals avoid being around others and make decisions that will stop and prevent further spreading of COVID-19.

"We're very social people and I think we're really tired of living this way. It's hard, but when we're around others, we can't pretend we don't know we're rolling the dice and putting each other at risk for potentially getting or spreading [COVID-19]," said Welmaker.

This semester has, in general, been considered very successful, in terms of stopping and slowing the spread of COVID-19 at NSU. Despite some cases of

COVID-19 among students, the university has not had any reported large outbreaks during the fall 2020 term. If the NSU community stays this course, Welmaker said that she expects the same success next semester.

"We are exceptionally proud of our students who are doing the right thing. I would also like to point out that I do recognize that the majority of our students are doing the right thing. [While] we have a couple that haven't done the right thing, I don't allow that to cloud my perspective or appreciation for all the students that are committed and have demonstrated their commitment to containing the spread of this virus," said Welmaker.

Currently, the plans for COVID-19-related rules and recommendations remain unwavering for the winter 2021 semester with guidance from the Department of Health and the CDC. NSU does not plan to make any changes to distancing and face covering guidelines at this time, unless public health guidance is modified. To help facilitate providing up to date information, the university has also developed a new website, [www.nova.edu/coronavirus](#), where members of the university community can

easily access safety guidelines, fast facts on COVID-19 and a variety of resources relating to clinics, coping with stress, prevention tips and more.

*If a student is having any symptoms, they are advised to reach out to NSU's Telehealth line at (954) 262-4100, where they will be connected to a physician who will review their symptoms and, if needed, schedule a COVID-19 test on campus. Additionally, students can email [COVIDcase@nova.edu](#) to provide updates on their symptoms and test results, even if the results are still pending, and to get assigned a COVID-19 case manager to oversee the situation and offer assistance, if necessary. Emailing COVIDcase will also immediately provide students with the Telehealth number, as well as links to employee and graduate/professional student report forms, the undergraduate student form and the form to report exposures. Students, staff and faculty can visit NSU's dedicated website, [www.nova.edu/coronavirus](#), for up to date information regarding COVID-19 at the university.*

## National Book Award Week

By: Ana Maria Soto  
Contributing Writer

Nov. 18 marks National Book Award Day. With that, here are some major awards authors can win and some books to add to your list of books to read over winter break..

### Awards

Booker Prize is a leading literary award in the English speaking world that has brought recognition to outstanding fiction for over 50 years. This award is given annually to the best novel of the year written in English and published in the UK or Ireland.

The Caldecott Medal is awarded to the artist of the most distinguished American Picture Book for Children published in the U.S. during the preceding year.

The Pulitzer Prize, named after a newspaper journalist, Joseph Pulitzer, was established over 100 years ago to honor exceptional achievements in journalism. It has 21 categories that can range from literature to musical composition.

The John Newbery Medal is awarded in January each year by the American Library Association for the most distinguished American Children's book published the previous year.

National Book Critics Circle Awards are awarded each March for the finest books and reviews published in English in the U.S. the previous year for six categories which are fiction, nonfiction, autobiography, biography, criticism and

poetry.

National Book Awards are awarded to the best in American literature. These awards have been announced in November each year since 1950.

Costa Book Awards are the most prestigious book awards in the UK, which were once known as the Whitbread Awards. The five categories for winners consist of the first novel, novel, biography, poetry and children's book. These awards are announced in early January for books published the previous year. However, The Costa Book of the Year award is announced in late January.

Women's Prize for Fiction celebrates excellence, originality and accessibility in women's writing throughout the world.

Now that break is upon us and we are spending more time inside than ever before, be sure to indulge in some reading with a few award-winning books:

"Trust Exercise" - Susan Choi, 2019 national book award winner

"Hello Lighthouse" - Sophie Blackall, 2019 Caldecott medal winner

"New Kid- Jerry Craft" - 2020 Newbery medal winner

"The New Wilderness" - Diane Cook, 2020 shortlist for the booker prize

"This Mournable Body: A Novel" - Tsitsi Dangarembga 2020 shortlist for the booker



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Collection of nationally awarded books

prize

"Burnt Sugar" - Avni Doshi, 2020 shortlist for the booker prize

"The Shadow King" - Maaza Mengiste, 2020 shortlist for the booker prize

Happy Holidays  
from  
TheCurrent



## That time I: Completed NaNoWriMo (twice)

By: Sofia Gallus  
Arts & Entertainment Editor

National Novel Writing Month, abbreviated to NaNoWriMo, is an annual creative writing event that happens every November. The event is fully virtual this year, but in years past, the event makers have hosted in-person writing events where writers can work and motivate each other to keep writing. The goal of the event is to write a 50,000 word manuscript over the course of the month. There's no real winning or losing -- but if you win, you get access to exclusive deals and sales, cool downloadable banners, and of course, bragging rights.

I learned about NaNoWriMo when I was 13 years old from an author whom I adored. I had begged my grandmother to drive me two hours to one of her book signings and it was there where I learned about this event. I was smitten from the first time I viewed the website. I had been writing stories for as long as I could remember, and now, I had access to a whole community of writers that could encourage me to be the best story teller I could be. It was only a few months before November, but I was determined to give it my best shot.

In 2013, I attempted the challenge for the first time. I was determined to complete it, but it was far more grueling than I had thought. I had set a goal of writing approximately 1,700 words per

day. There were some days where I hit that goal easily and some days where I could only manage 100 words and had to play catch-up. Before November began, I had planned the story out as much as I could, taking advantage of planners and storyboards that the NaNoWriMo community provided me with.

As the month came to an end, I did it. I wrote a short story that was 50,019 words titled "Lies Best Kept." It was an adventure romance story and it had just as much teen angst as you can imagine a 13 year old including. I even had one of my friends from school design a book cover for me. Even if the story was mediocre at best, over the course of the month, I had made new friends, connections and took initiative for myself to complete a goal that I had set for myself. It was a taste of independence and adulthood. I was hooked.

Of course, in 2014, I challenged myself again. I had grown a whole year and had far more stories to tell. I was determined to set more challenges for myself than just the word count.

I didn't let myself start planning before Nov. 1. I wanted to write what came to me on a whim and see what I could create. Inspired by author Jodi Picoult, who I had just discovered that year and whose stories I had fallen in love with, I wrote a romance



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Concentrating on wrting 50,541 words

murder mystery titled "She Said He Said." This story clocked in at 50,541 words and had even been set up for a sequel.

While I did start NaNoWriMo the following year, I wasn't able to manage completing it as I was starting my second year of high school. Even so, completing NaNoWriMo two years in a row and being a part of that community was so

beneficial as a young writer. It helped me not only make connections and establish good writing habits for myself, but it also motivated me to work hard for the goals I wanted to accomplish, even if they didn't have to do with school or work. NaNoWriMo has grown a lot since it was established in 2006 and I still remember it fondly.

## Driving safely as a college student

By: Jaden Wilson  
Contributing Writer



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Driving down the Pacific Coast Highway

On a college campus, the student population is split between those who live on campus and those who commute. Whether you walk to class or drive to class, safe driving is extremely important, regardless of where you are going. As college students, our brains are constantly in a state of stress, whether we're worrying about things like registering for classes, homework or tests. After all of that added stress, we'll look to a car as our transportation to get away from campus, whether we're going to a friend's house, the beach or just somewhere that we can relax. With that said, it's important that we get to our destinations in one piece by practicing safe driving.

### Keep your eyes on the road

One of the most important safe driving tips is to avoid distracted driving. According to the CDC, drivers in their late teens and 20s make up 27% of all distracted drivers involved in fatal crashes. Distracted driving is looking at something other than the road. For example, looking at your phone or texting and driving is very dangerous. Sending or reading a text even for just five seconds takes your eyes off the road and makes you very prone to an oncoming car accident that can cause severe damage and even death. Not

only is it extremely dangerous, as of Jan. 1, 2020, it is illegal in the state of Florida to text and drive.

### Take your time

Another safe driving tip is to simply take your time. As college students, we are always on the go. We're always rushing to get to class, rushing to get to work and rushing to get homework done. It's pivotal for us to slow down and take our time when driving. Speeding while driving can lead to a ticket that costs hundreds of dollars. Not only that, but speeding can even cost a life. Next time you have somewhere to go, remind yourself to allow for plenty of time to get to your destination, so there's no rushing or speeding on the road.

### Follow the rules of the road

Lastly, follow the rules of the road. Pay attention and adhere to road signs, always wear your seatbelt, do not run the red light and never drive while impaired. Be aware of the road to ensure a safe driving experience. Cars are supposed to get us to our destinations safely, but we can only do that by practicing safe habits when behind the wheel.

## Help, my family is driving me nuts

By: Lauren DoNascimento  
Contributing Writer

The pandemic has been hard on everyone in many different ways and everyone has begun to learn a new way of living, but something that many people have neglected to learn is conflict resolution.

With the upcoming holiday season and the prolonged pandemic, many people will be spending a lot more time with their immediate family for a lot longer than they originally planned. A good form of self-preservation is learning about conflict resolution and how to diffuse tense situations with family members. That being said, here are some tips and tricks for family conflict resolution as well as some recommendations and thoughts from Judith McKay, an associate professor of conflict resolution and community studies and the director of community resolution services at NSU.

### Take a deep breath

One of the first things that someone should do to diffuse a tense situation is to take deep breaths. This allows you to think before you speak and also gives you a chance to calm down.

"Listen with a new ear, like you've never heard it before," said McKay.

She suggests that we should be

willing to listen, which can be done while we take a breath."

### Resolve problems right away

It's not recommended to let negative feelings fester inside of oneself for too long. If emotions are bottled up for too long, there is a chance of them exploding at the worst times, in the worst settings and on the wrong people.

"Conflict resolution can be positive if people sit down and deal with it," said McKay.

However, that is not always possible.

McKay offered us a solution: "Sometimes, it can't be resolved, but it can be managed."

### Control your emotions

Learning to control your emotions is one way to manage your unresolved conflict. This means not thrusting your negative emotions on others, which might also mean holding your tongue.

"Another tip is to understand that conflict can simply be that you disagree," said McKay.

Knowing this can help you positively control your emotions. Some ways of doing that are thinking before you speak, taking a deep breath or even going somewhere else mentally until you are

calm enough to return to the situation. Once you have better control over your emotions, you might be able to find a solution to plenty of family conflicts.

### Communicate

One of the most important ways of defusing family conflicts is having good communication. Sometimes, you need to speak about what's bothering you, but sometimes, you need to listen to others. Making sure you understand what your family members are saying and feeling understood by them will ensure that you have good family relations.

Remember to always be willing to listen.

"Avoid words like 'always and 'never,'" said McKay.

Her other advice for good communication is to practice.

"Let's practice conflict resolution because the more we practice the better it gets," she said.

### Watch your tone

You should always make sure that your message is being interpreted correctly. That being said, make sure your tone of voice and body language reflect what your words are saying. Sometimes, our words are soft, but our tone of voice

and body language is aggressive and makes our family members feel attacked.

McKay said, "Nonverbal communication is more prevalent than verbal communication," meaning that your body language and tone play a part in your communication.

Making sure that your words reflect your body language is a key way of ensuring good communication in the family.

"Keep an open mind and a neutral face," said McKay.

### Schedule your heart-to-heart

McKay recommends that people schedule a difficult conversation instead of just starting one out of the blue.

"Plan to have the conversation when people won't feel rushed. Schedule it literally and prepare for it by trying to think of it in a different perspective," said McKay.

Family conflict is not fun, but with some of these tips, you might be able to resolve more situations than before. Always remember that communication is key, and conflict resolution is very important because it affects your mental health.

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**EVERY FRIDAY**



## Festive foods for the holiday break

By: Briana Ramnauth & Chloe Rousseau  
Contributing Writers

With the holidays coming up, it is time to get festive. This is the time of year that everyone waits for so they can eat all those special meals and desserts. The holidays may be a little different this year, but you can still be festive with your meals. It is an exciting time of year, so let's keep the traditions alive. Even if you're alone for the first time during the holidays and looking for a little festivity, these two easy seven-step recipes will make the holiday season all the more merrier.

### Apricot and apple pie

#### Ingredients:

4 granny smith apples  
4 ambrosia apples  
4-5 tablespoons apricot jam  
1 teaspoon vanilla extract  
1 teaspoon starch or flour  
Half of a small lemon (juiced)  
2 tablespoons sugar  
premade pie crust dough

#### Directions:

1. Dice apples into 1 inch cubes and add to pot with vanilla, starch, sugar and lemon juice. Mix.
2. Cover and cook on medium heat, stirring occasionally,

until apples are soft, but not mushy. This should take 5-10 minutes.

3. Remove the pot from heat and let it cool completely to room temperature.
4. Prep premade pie crust according to instructions.
5. Spread apricot jam evenly on the bottom of the pie crust.
6. Add apple filling to pie crust.
7. Bake according to crust instructions or until golden.
8. Enjoy.

### Vegan Pumpkin Spice Muffins

#### Dry ingredients:

1 ¾ cups oat flour  
¼ coconut sugar  
2 ¼ teaspoon baking powder  
¼ teaspoon baking soda  
¼ teaspoon salt  
2-4 teaspoons of pumpkin pie spice

3-4 tablespoons chopped walnuts or pecans (optional)  
3 tablespoon mini chocolate chips or cranberries (optional)

#### Wet ingredients:

1 cup and 2 tablespoons pureed pumpkin  
½ cup oat milk  
3-4 tablespoons of oil

PHOTO PRINTED PERMISSION BY C. ROUSSEAU

Chloe's Festive favorite food: Mac N Cheese



1 tablespoon maple syrup

#### Directions:

1. Preheat the oven to 365 degrees Fahrenheit.
2. In a large bowl, whisk the dry ingredients until mixed thoroughly. Mix in nuts and chocolate chips, if desired.
3. Add in the wet ingredients and mix well. Mix pumpkin puree for about 2 minutes so it is combined well. Mix until there are no pumpkin or flour streaks within the mixture. If

needed, add a tablespoon more of oat milk.

4. Transfer the batter into a muffin pan. Top with chocolate chips or pumpkin seeds, if desired.
5. Bake the muffins for about 50-60 minutes or until the toothpick from the center comes out clean.
6. Let the muffins cool for 15 minutes before serving.
7. Enjoy.



## Staff Picks:

\*check out our website for more staff picks

## What are your feelings about snow? Have you ever seen it, or would you like to see it?

By: The Current Staff  
Student Media

"Growing up in South Florida, the only chance I ever got to see snow was the one Christmas I spent in New Jersey. I woke up the first morning to fresh snow on my aunt's lawn. As the day progressed and the snow accumulated, my brother, cousin and I got to work on our first snowman. I was only 6 years old, but I remember it being a magical experience. It has been a while since I have gotten to see snow again, but I know it's in my future. Despite the current state of the world, I am hopeful that I still have a few more snowmen (and snowwomen) to create in my lifetime," said Siena Berardi, sports editor.



"When I was little, my one and only dream was to see the snow. For some reason, even though I have never celebrated Christmas before, I just loved the idea of being cold and 'celebrating Christmas' in the snow. I'd been in the snow when I was very little, but I don't really remember it. My dream of spending winter in the snow came when I was 12 and my family and I went to ski trip to Beaver Creek, CO. I would love to move to a place where I can see all the seasons and to just be in colder weather." said Farhan Shaban, chief of visual design.



"I'm from western Maryland, so while we get snow every year, we rarely get over one foot of snow at any one time. I have very fond memories of snowfall, snow days off of school and building tiny snow sculptures in the front yard. Shoveling snow was a hassle that I hated as a kid, but in recent years, we're completely shoveled out of our driveway in half an hour. Most of the snow will melt by the evening, too. In Florida, I miss the snow and winter season, but when I visit home over winter break, I have my opportunity to build fires on snowy evenings and play snowball fetch with my dog. While I like snow, I can get tired of it quickly, so I'm glad that I only have to deal with it for about one month a year," said Erin Cowan, visual and multimedia assistant.



"The first time I saw snow, I was 14, in Tennessee, and thought it was the most magical thing. Although that day I only saw flurries, it made me excited for all the snow I would one day see in my life. Since then, I have experienced a lot of snow and in different ways. From catching snowflakes and having snowball fights to making snowmen and snow angels, I absolutely love it. Living in South Florida my whole life, I've only experienced snow when on vacation in the winter months in places where it snows. With that, I've been extremely grateful to witness it since we lack seasons here in sunny South Florida. While snow has its beauty, it also has its ugliness, like turning into slushy, making driving difficult and putting a damper on your plans -- although COVID-19 seems to have done that now, too -- but it's all a matter of perspective. At the end of the day, I'd love to experience at least one snowy day every winter," said Flor Ana Mireles, copy editor.

## Action packed games coming 2021

By: **Blake Malick**  
Contributing Writer

Currently, many game releases are getting pushed back, something that is becoming a common occurrence due to COVID-19. As of Nov. 11, the following are the dates expected for these video games that are set to release in 2021.

### Gotham Knights (2021)

Consoles: PC, PlayStation 5, Xbox Series X, PlayStation 4, Xbox One

Revealed in August, "Gotham Knights" takes place in the corrupt city of Gotham. Following the deaths of Batman and Commissioner Gordon, the only people who stand in between full corruption and restoring society are Batman's allies; Robin, Batgirl, Red Hood and Nightwing. Being the proteges of Batman, it's up to them to take down two villains: Mr. Freeze & the Court of Owls. Players can play as any of the proteges in this open world, action-role player game that is set to release in 2021.

### Far Cry 6 (Feb. 18, 2021)

Consoles: PC, PlayStation 5, Xbox Series X, PlayStation 4, Xbox One, Stadia

Another installment of the popular "Far Cry" series, "Far Cry 6" is expected to be released on Feb. 18, 2021. "Far Cry 6" takes place on a fictional island located in the Caribbean called Yara. Ruled by dictator Anton Castillo, the island of Yara is in the midst of a revolution. The player plays as Dani Rojas, a freedom fighter who is fighting to bring his nation back to its former glory. Dictator Castillo is modeled after and voiced by Giancarlo Esposito, Gustavo Fring from "Breaking Bad."

### Halo Infinite (2021)

Consoles: PC, Xbox Series X, Xbox One

Five years after the release of "Halo 5: Guardians," "Halo Infinite" is one of the most anticipated games that's been announced, as many regard the "Halo" franchise as one of the most notable in gaming history. Not much is known about the plot, but Master Chief is said to have a much bigger role than in the previous games. "Halo Infinite" was originally supposed to be released with the Xbox Series X on Nov. 10. Now, it's been delayed until 2021.

### Hitman III (Jan 20, 2021)

Consoles: PC, PlayStation 5, Xbox Series X, PlayStation 4, Xbox One, Stadia

The eighth installment of the "Hitman" series is set to be released on Jan. 20, 2021. The popular third-person stealth game features six new locations in addition to the ones provided in previous installments. The protagonist, Agent 47, must travel around the world to assassinate targets. "Hitman 3" is the third and final installment of the "World of Assassination" trilogy. "Hitman" fans should be excited to see the conclusion.

### Super Mario 3D World + Bowser's Fury (Feb. 12, 2021)

Consoles: Nintendo Switch

An addition to "Super Mario's 3D World," this new video game release contains "Bowser's Fury." Mario, Luigi, Princess Peach and Blue Toad must save all of the Sprixies that have been captured by Bowser. Contrary to former Mario games, this game is in 3D and set to release for the Nintendo Switch on Feb. 12, 2021.

## OFFSHORE CALENDAR

Free Virtual Screening:  
"Changing Seas: Mystery of the Humpback Whale Song"  
Nov. 18 | 3 - 5 p.m.

[RSVP](#)

Free Virtual SoGal Coffee Social  
Nov. 19 | 8:30 - 9:15 a.m.

[RSVP](#)

MUSE Live! - Virtual Arts Event  
Nov. 19 | 8 - 9 p.m.

[RSVP](#)

Virtual Concert: Sons of Mystro  
Nov. 21 | 10 - 11 p.m.

[RSVP](#)

Artists and the Pandemic: Free Virtual Panel  
Nov. 24 | 7 - 8 p.m.

[RSVP](#)

Save Our Seas: Free Virtual Distinguished Speaker Panel  
Dec. 3 | 6 - 8 p.m.

[RSVP](#)

Virtual Screening: "Guardians of Our Troubled Waters"  
Dec. 3 | 5:30 - 7:30 p.m.

[RSVP](#)

A Christmas Carol: The Musical  
Dec. 11 | 8 p.m. & Dec. 12 | 2 p.m.

[RSVP](#)

## WAVES OF THE WEEK: SWEET SINGALONGS

Here's 10 of the best songs for a karaoke night with friends. This playlist features a good mix of genres and types of songs, including solos, duets, ballads and ensembles.

"Wannabe"

Spice Girls

"Barbie Girl"

Aqua

"Ain't No Mountain High Enough"

Marvin Gaye and Tami Terrell

"Just Wanna Be With You"

High School Musical Cast 5

"If I Can't Have You"

Bee Gees

"We Are The Champions"

Queen

"Mr. Brightside"

The Killers

"Somewhere Only We Know"

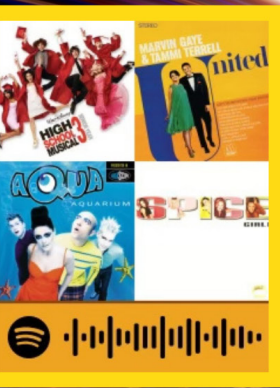
Keane

"Don't Stop Believin'"

Journey

"Bohemian Rhapsody"

Queen



## Bath & Body Works holiday candles for schmucks

By: **Rey Perez**  
Contributing Writer

I've always been a sucker for the holidays. There's just something about it that has always appealed to me. I'll do the gingerbread houses, stockings and the cookies. I've done everything at least once, except for Hallmark movies. I'm not ashamed to march right into a Bath & Body Works and smell the best holiday candles they have to offer. In fact, I did and I'll tell you which ones I wouldn't mind smelling till my eyes started watering.

### Fresh Balsam

The name says it all. It's that pine tree smell you get when you just throw it on top of the car or when you have to stuff your face into it to hang a particularly heavy ornament. A truly timeless smell that appeals to noses of all sensitivities.

### Peppermint Marshmallow

This could be a very divisive candle. If you like having your home smell like, well, peppermint, then this is for you. My God, will it smell like peppermint. However, if your nostrils can only handle as much as your taste buds can of this seasonal treat, then you might want to keep reading.

### Flannel

I guess the idea behind this candle was to capture the logger-type scent. I don't know if they succeeded or failed, but it just smells like someone drenched wax in cologne. I guess it's a great candle for those who enjoy the smell of their grandfather, but really, it's a shame because the smell would work great

as a spray. As a holiday candle, though, I'm not entirely sure of what it's marketing.

### Frosted Cranberry

This candle smells much better than it should have. I expected, like most candles, an intense saturation of an already overbearing scent. This was very different. "Frosted Cranberry" carried that sweet smell in a muted undertone that almost made me spend \$24.50 on it. First it gives, then it takes your money.

### Spiced Gingerbread

A sensitive nose would quake at the scent of "Spiced Gingerbread." The smell hits you at full force and adds an extra curveball: an after-smell. It's hard to describe what an after-smell is like -- it's like an aftertaste, but more fragrant. The downside is that if you don't like the scent to begin with, the after-smell won't do you any favors. However, I do have to give Bath & Body Works props on managing to pull it off.

### Champagne Toast

Another surprisingly good, soft smell. This scent is by no means overpowering and headache-inducing. It's just enough to get its message across. The enticing aroma of champagne is what this candle has to offer and it makes for a simple, but sophisticated, scent to have wafting around your home.

These are just a few of the many candles you will find on the market this holiday season. Hopefully, you'll go candle hunting as well and make me feel less embarrassed. Don't forget to practice fire safety.

PHOTO PRINTED PERMISSION BY R. PEREZ

Get some seasonal candles to get your home's in this year holiday season





# THIS WEEK SPORTS IN HISTORY

November 17

In 1884, boxer John L. Sullivan, also known as The Boston Strongboy, was arrested for a requisition in Nashville, TN during his second round on account of being “cruel.”

November 18

On Nov. 18, 1905, the 10th annual Iron Bowl, which is the name given to the American college football rivalry games was held. The Alabama Crimson Tide beats the Auburn Tigers, 30-0 in Birmingham.

November 19

In 1932, Joe Kershalla of The University of Mount Union scored 71 points in a college football game. For some perspective, the average points scored in a modern day American football college match is 30.

November 20

In 1866, Pierre Lallement, who is considered to be the inventor of the pedal bicycle, obtained the sole rights of the rotary crank bicycle.

November 21

In 1905, the first Australian National Tennis Championship match was played between Australian players Rodney Heath and Albert Curtis. Heath took the title as the winner.

November 22

In 1910, Arthur Knight obtained the sole patent rights to steel shaft golf clubs. These are heavier than graphite and are better for players with a heavier swing.

November 23

In 1892, known as the Father of the modern day Olympic Games, Pierre de Coubertin, for his pounding of the International Olympic Committee, launched a plan for modern Olympic Games at the Union des Sociétés Françaises de Sports Athlétiques AGM (The union society of French sports and athletics AGM).

## On The Bench:

### A crowd of silent fans

By: Emma Heineman  
Features Editor

As someone who doesn't follow sports, my normal interactions with the sports world include brief glimpses of professional and college level games while I switch the channels on my TV or in the headlines of news stories that make the front folds of major news sources. However, even from my passing glances or short reads, it is abundantly clear that COVID-19 has dramatically impacted how we watch sports.

From delayed seasons to players pulled out after testing positive for the virus, nothing speaks to the magnitude of how much has changed like the silent cardboard fans who have replaced the scores of cheering sports fanatics in the stands of every live game.

When I first saw the cardboard cutouts of fans propped awkwardly in the stadium seats in the background of a professional sporting event, I thought it was hilarious. Back in March, when everything spiraled out of control, the thought of sports teams continuing to play despite the pandemic, let alone holding in-person games, seemed ludicrous. However, sports teams made do, adjusting to their new normal.

Cutouts of people propped or taped to the seats began to make an appearance at a variety of live games that otherwise

would have had full, lively stands of people. Some organizations, including the MLB, have even given fans a way to still feel involved. Now, diehard sports fans can call in and have a cardboard cutout made of themselves to be displayed during games, a touching tribute to days passed when a Sunday afternoon could be spent overpaying for hotdogs and cheering on your favorite baseball team.

Perhaps it has been the passage of time or the months of quarantining that have left me contemplative of the world around me, but now, when I think about the silent cardboard fans, I'm stuck with a certain twinge of sadness.

To me, they represent an innate desire for human connection that COVID-19 has made nearly impossible in so many facets of life. Fans want to be involved and crave the exhilaration of being in a crowd surrounded by others who love the game. Sporting events aren't the same without a rowdy crowd to create a fun and competitive atmosphere. If there's one thing that COVID-19 has shown, it is that people yearn to interact with others. While cardboard cutouts may seem silly, they are a physical embodiment of that desire and a form of coping with the new normal that we must all somehow learn to live with.

## Staying fit over break

By: Aliyah Gomez  
Contributing Writer

Winter break is approaching fast. Although, it is a time to relax and clear the mind after working hard over the first semester, it's important to not get too lazy. Staying fit can help not only maintain a healthy body, but maintain a healthy mind set as well. Maintaining efficient exercise routines and eating habits are essential to staying fit over the upcoming winter break.

### Workouts

It's very important to remember that there should be a balance between relaxation time and workout time. There is always time for a workout, even if it's a short one. Consistency is key.

For example, if you are doing a short 10-minute ab workout that consists of a variation of crunches which then transitions into a plank hold for the last minute, make that short workout a daily exercise routine.

Remember, quality over quantity. It's not about how much you do in one day, but about how consistent you are with how much you do because to stay fit it is vital to stay consistent.

If you are looking for short workouts, HIIT (high intensity interval training) workouts are quick, yet have enough intensity to really get your blood flowing and heart pumping. When “HIIT Workout” is placed in the search bar on YouTube, there are hundreds of videos to choose from. Some HIIT workouts are as short as five minutes. However, five minutes can consist of a good amount of cardio such as jumping jacks and high knees. Making a Youtube playlist of top favorite workout videos can help when it

comes to maintaining consistency.

### Sleep

Now, it's also important to note that staying fit is not just about exercising physically, but about exercising the mind. Keeping a healthy mindset is where balance comes into play. It's important to find balance between working out and resting. Both are equally important and there is enough time for both. Practicing early sleep patterns can influence a healthier mind and body connection. Setting a sleep routine can be very beneficial to staying fit, such as setting a bedtime for 10 p.m. everyday. Consistency in sleep patterns and consistency in workout patterns are the perfect formula for a fit mind and body.

### Eating habits

When it comes to eating habits, it's important to be strict, but not too strict. The holiday season is all about delicious food and treats. However, remember that it is okay to treat oneself for a day, but not for the entire season. It is perfectly fine to have a splurge day on a day when there may be a family gathering with a big dinner. Just don't make splurging a daily act. After a day of well deserved splurging, get back to eating healthy and exercising.

Overall, motivation and consistency are key assets when it comes to staying fit during break. Find the best suitable workout, sleeping and/or eating routines and keep motivation and consistency with those choices. Have a great winter break, but remember to not take advantage of it too much.

## Kicking your way into a new workout

By: Aliyah Gomez  
Contributing Writer

I have always been one to pay for gym memberships. Dressing up and going to a workout class after my day is over acts as a stress reliever for me. Once the

was a lot shorter than my normal kickboxing class, I wanted to take a chance at it anyway.

Throughout these 24 minutes, I felt more motivated than I ever have. I let go of that

“ Throughout these 24 minutes, I felt more motivated than I ever have. I let go of that ounce of fear I get at the gym while working out in front of others and let all my energy out.

pandemic occurred here in the U.S. and the lockdown came into effect, it felt as if any workout I had ever done was ripped away from me.

Throughout the lockdown, I attempted to bring my workout classes home. In hopes of some motivation, I searched for at-home HIIT workouts, Zumba workouts and full-body workouts. Although these workouts seemed great, I didn't quite have all the equipment that was needed. As I looked up alternatives to certain equipment that was used in each of the videos, I began to feel unmotivated.

I decided to give one last shot to these at-home workout videos. Prior to lockdown, my favorite class at the gym was kickboxing. I felt it was a fun and safe way to let out any stress that builds up throughout the day.

I went on a search for the best kickboxing videos at home and found one that was around 24 minutes. Although this

ounce of fear I get at the gym while working out in front of others and let all my energy out.

I took a break after the workout and got back to it once I built up the energy again. I noticed that I haven't had this much fun completing a workout since I last went to the physical gym in March.

After completing this kickboxing workout for a week, I noticed how high in energy I was in and motivated to continue going. I was burning more calories faster than I was lifting weights and riding a bike around my block.

Whether you're a beginner or pro at kickboxing, I would definitely recommend getting a start on it when you can.

### For beginners:

Absolutely no equipment is needed. Stay focused on the workout and start off for about 10 minutes. As you complete this workout once a day, your stamina will continue to increase and allow you to last longer.



PHOTO PRINTED PERMISSION BY F.SHABAN

Side kicking a boxing bag

### For pros:

I would encourage you to teach others around you. This workout is fun for all ages and allows time to bond, too.

If you're interested in trying a kickboxing session on your own, [here's the video that I found beneficial.](#)

## Running: It's not as difficult as you think

By: Flor Ana Mireles  
Copy Editor

If you're like me, you've probably never really considered yourself a runner. In fact, you've probably never done much running outside of the required mile to pass your P.E. classes. However, just because you didn't enjoy running back when you were a kid doesn't mean it's something that you can't find joy in now as an adult.

A few months ago, I decided I would try running. After doing one mile and feeling great, I decided this was going to be more than just a one and done thing. I kept running. Now, I can do three miles in under an hour -- a record for me.

With my little experience, I've come to realize a few things. For starters, your mindset is extremely important when you run as well as when and where you run and keeping motivation is a must. Here are some tips that may motivate you to run and help you realize that it's more good than bad.

### Keep a positive mindset

When you are running, you may find yourself thinking, "I can't do this. Why am I doing this? I need to stop." If these thoughts cross your mind, your body is bound to react accordingly. This will make you feel worse and make you stop running. If your mind is in the gutters, your body will follow and you won't be able to finish your mile or whatever other milestones you've set for yourself. When you're running, it's important to keep thinking to a minimum, and if you are thinking, it's important for those thoughts to be positive. Think to yourself, "I can do this. I am doing this." Positivity will take you a long way while running.

### Remember to breathe

Running can be seen as a form of meditation. With that, the way you breathe is crucial to your performance. When you run, it is important to breathe

in through your stomach instead of your chest, keep your head up and breathe in and out through your nose. Additionally, when you are running, taking deep breaths is just as important. This way, there is oxygen flowing throughout your body and you are less likely to feel lightheaded or nauseous. It will also give you more energy.

### Carefully choose when and where to run

I recently had the opportunity to run during a sunshower and it was the best run I've had thus far. The rain helped refresh me and gave me the strength I needed to finish my run. Moreover, I was running in a park, which provided me with beautiful scenery, making the run more enjoyable. Where and when you run is important, especially living in South Florida. I like to run in the mornings or in the late afternoons to avoid the hot sun that can sometimes make running a little unbearable. Additionally, running somewhere with a nice view is beneficial because it takes your mind off the painful aspects of the run.

### Keep motivation

I'll admit, I don't run every day, but eventually, I would like to. Keeping that running momentum and motivation is a great way to not only keep up your running ability, but also discipline yourself. I use the Nike Run Club app to track my runs and this motivates me to keep going. The app is great because it also allows you to go on guided runs, complete challenges and set and achieve different running goals. Apps like these are great motivators to keep up with daily or weekly runs.

Running may not be the easiest task, but it doesn't have to be as difficult as you tell yourself it is. All you need is a little motivation, a good time and place and a positive mindset. Completing a run can make you feel unstoppable, further motivating you to accomplish anything you set your mind to. You can do it.

PHOTO PRINTED PERMISSION BY F. MIRELES

Running at Penny and Larry Thompson Park in Miami, FL



## Use it or lose it

By: Emma Heineman  
Features Editor

As the end of the semester draws near and the final months of what can only be described as an unprecedented year play out before us, I cannot help but reflect on the things I have learned and the lessons I will take away from 2020.

With its share of ups and more downs than I'm sure any of us would like to count, it's clear that no matter your experience, there is a lot to be learned from this year. As I have listened to my friends, family and peers echo an excitement for a fresh start in the new year, I am struck with the gravity of what a "fresh start" means.

While there are plenty of things I want to leave in 2020, when the clock strikes midnight on Dec. 31, I think it's important to remember everything that got us all to this point, good and bad.

Fresh starts are important, but they are only effective and meaningful if you take what you have learned and apply it, not forget it. Like philosopher George Santayana famously said, "those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it."

The notion of a fresh start in itself is idealistic, holding with it the hope that whatever lies ahead is better than what we left behind. Although with much trepidation, I too hold the hope that 2021 can be a better year than 2020, but I think the only way to do that is to remain realistic about what that

"better" world is going to look like.

As 2021 is a symbol of a fresh start for everyone looming in the near future, it's important to remain realistic about what the year will bring. COVID-19 isn't going

“Fresh starts are important, but they are only effective and meaningful if you take what you have learned and apply it, not forget it.”

to miraculously disappear like Cinderella's ball gown when the clock strikes midnight. Racial and political hatred, climate change and other pressing issues aren't going to go away either. No matter how much we want them to, things aren't going to change unless we acknowledge that they still need to. If we pretend that our problems, big or small, can be fixed by a tick of a minute hand, we are in for a surprise.

So when you wake up on Jan. 1, go outside, put on your mask and interact with your friends and families, remember to take with you the lessons you learned and the challenges you overcame during 2020. You can be hopeful that a lot of things change, but unless we all make a conscientious effort to affect change in our own lives, it won't happen.



## Is it right to let politics get in the way of friendship?

By: Jaden Wilson  
Contributing Writer

During this current election season, tensions seem to be extremely high. It feels almost as if the country is divided right down the middle with each side representing their chosen candidate.

This election, of course, is a little different. It doesn't look like it's split between the Republican and Democratic parties, but rather people who want everyone to have rights and people who don't, which is frightening.

I recently realized that a lot of people on social media are posting about how they had to stop being friends with someone because they did not see eye-to-eye on politics, getting several comments saying that they're a bad person for doing that and that it's crazy that these people can't have friends that they disagree with.

Honestly, I do not agree. I think it's perfectly fine and understandable for people to distance themselves from friends that do not share the same political views as them, especially during this climate that we are in right now.

Obviously, it is okay for you and a friend to have disagreements. For example, it's okay to disagree on favorite movies or favorite food, but it is not okay to disagree on the human rights that everyone is entitled to.

As a Black woman in America, I could never be friends with someone who was on the fence about whether or not my life matters. I'm the kind of person that doesn't like discussing politics because it's an overwhelming topic. However, I know the basics of which side agrees with what and it's important to me to share my time and energy with people who care about my well-being and everyone else's.

If you're friends with someone who doesn't agree with the same political and social views as

you, it's definitely up to you on whether or not you want to continue being friends with that person. It all depends on your morals and what you seek in a friend. However, if you believe that that person's morals are just not right, then letting politics get in the way of friendship is totally fine in my book.



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## You need to cut ties in toxic relationships

By: Siena Berardi  
Sports Editor

Odds are, as a college student who has been exposed to college culture, you may have experienced a toxic relationship or two. The good news is, I'm here to tell you that you should never have to experience one if you don't want to.

In simplest terms, a toxic relationship is a relationship between two people where there is conflict, coercion or any sort of unresolved tension. They don't always have to be in relation to dating, it could be a friendship or simply a person you work with. If you are like me, it's the relationships where we are too emotionally invested that blindside us.

To see the warning signs is not easy.

That's why it is important to assess, remove and remember the signs of toxicity so you are sure not to repeat the cycle with others.

To begin, if you think you're one half of a toxic relationship, you might be right. If you're with someone who makes you feel bad about yourself, that's usually a sign that you shouldn't be with them. You may try to justify your partner's negative actions. Everyone gets jealous, right? Everyone lies here and there, right? Many partners hit each other, right?

The truth is no -- not when they care about each other. When a person cares about you, they should speak the truth, respect your boundaries and ensure your well-being. If a person violates any of these concepts, they don't deserve to

remain in your life.

Being in a bad relationship can also have negative effects on your physical well-being. Personally, I experienced stomach pains, nausea, and overall, lethargy. These bodily functions don't occur when you're happy and safe. To remove yourself from your situation, you must identify your issues and decide whether you want to work on them or leave. A great way to cut off ties with a toxic person is to set boundaries. Let them know how you feel, it is not your job to save anyone. It is your job to ensure your own happiness and safety.

Overall, if you are ever unhappy in a relationship, platonic or sexual, you have the ability to change that. Don't ever feel like you

have to stay. Life's too short to spend time with people who don't value or respect you. So, go out into the world and love fully. Find a person who listens, cares and treats you as an equal. You should never settle for anything less from another human being.

If you or someone you know needs help or think they may be in a toxic relationship, call the confidential domestic abuse helpline at 1-800-799-SAFE or contact NSU's Title IX Office for resources and information.

# Now is not the time for complacency

By: Alexander Martinie  
Opinions Editor

Joe Biden is now the president-elect of the U.S. This country finally has a president that believes in science and equal rights again. However, this is far from over.

Just because a Democrat was elected to the most powerful position in this country does not mean that everything is going to get better overnight. We will not wake up on the morning of Jan. 20 to a perfect utopia. We still have to work towards positive change.

Trump's presidency revealed just how deeply the societal ills of this country run. We saw neo-nazis and white supremacists openly spreading hate. We saw the rampant denial of facts and science. We saw widespread misinformation campaigns.

Electing Biden does not fix these

problems, but it is a step in the right direction. Voting Trump out of office does not just make these issues vanish. It just takes them out of the spotlight, but that is how this all got started in the first place. When these groups are enabled to act and think in these ways instead of being educated, their messages of hate just keep spreading and the majority of people just do not realize it. With a Democrat in the executive branch, we can start working to fix what Trump brought to the surface.

Once again we have a president that believes in science. We have a president that realizes that climate change is a major issue and not just claims that COVID-19 is a "Chinese hoax." Now, we have a president with an actual plan for dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic

instead of letting it figure itself out.

People around the world have said that they feel safer with a Biden administration, but right now, I'm not too sure about that. In the long run, yes, but not now.

Far-right groups have made threats of mass murder and violence. We cannot give those groups a foothold today or any day. These groups use the door-in-the-face phenomenon, referring to starting a decision with a ridiculous request, being rejected and coming back with a smaller request that still benefits them and it ends up being accepted, frequently as a way of gaining ground. Over time, they are able to take that inch and turn it into a mile. That's how fascist groups rise to power, and we saw it in 2016. As Trump's presidency went on, there was a rise in

hate crimes and discrimination, to the point that several anti-discrimination laws were repealed.

This cannot continue if we want to see a more progressive era. I have no problem fighting for my rights and the rights of others, but I will not consider your opinion if it is that someone is inherently below you. I cannot even count how many times I have heard the phrase, "So much for the tolerant left," but what am I not being tolerant of? Racism? Misogyny? Homophobia? You are right. I do not tolerate intolerance and hate. To do so is to enable those beliefs and we have seen what happens will you give those groups leeway.

# Ace visibility: What asexuality really is

By: Isabella Gómez  
Contributing Writer

The world of today is practically saturated with sexual imagery, discussions about the ways sex affects society and all types of things that appeal to human sexuality and attraction. Undoubtedly, it is hard for some people to believe that not everybody is interested in sex or feels a sexual attraction. Despite this common idea that sexual desire is a universal human sensation, asexuality exists.

Even though there have probably always been people who have felt little or no sexual attraction to others, the concept of asexuality as a sexual orientation is still relatively recent.

Asexuality is often confused with celibacy or general discomfort with sex, which it is not. While celibacy is probably a result of a person's choice because of a specific life circumstance or religion, asexuality is simply a lack of sexual attraction. Even people who are uncomfortable with sex usually still feel some type of sexual attraction despite not wanting to act on that urge. With all of this being said, people that identify as asexual are not interested in sexual relations with anyone. Of course, they may still get into relationships and even marriages, but these bonds are built foundationally on affection and respect as opposed to sexual attraction.

This stigma has caused asexual people

to be constantly faced with intrusive questions about their "sexual abstinence." Some people even go as far as suggesting that asexual people are going through a "phase" and may later identify as a different orientation or that they became asexual as a result of trauma. Many asexual people don't actually begin identifying as asexual until they've already partaken in sexual experiences. They often feel that they haven't yet learned to consider their own desires because of societal norms.

However, this does not mean that asexuality isn't a valid orientation. Oftentimes, we see that heterosexual people have had to go through their own phases and engage in occasional relationships with various genders to find their true sexual identity, possibly changing their orientation with experience.

Because of all the misconceptions surrounding the label, I want to emphasize the importance and respect of asexuality as an orientation. It is not a temporary choice, a mental disorder or a product of sexual trauma. It is a sexual orientation. Just as any person, anywhere on the gender spectrum, doesn't represent specific "types" of people, asexuality is equal in this sense. They are regular humans with valid feelings.

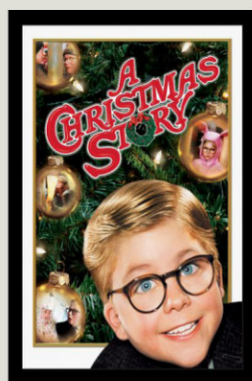
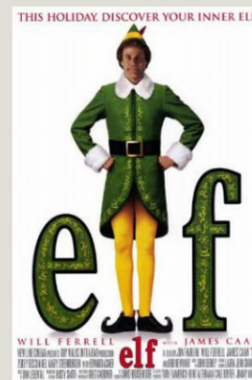
**ALLROMANATIC  
ASEXUALITY**

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Kill the sigma! Asexuality isn't all about sex.


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The top half of the image features a repeating pattern of brown, hand-drawn leaves on a light brown background. The leaves vary in size and orientation, creating a dense, textured effect.

*Stay  
Safe.*

The bottom half of the image features a repeating pattern of blue, hand-drawn snowflakes on a light blue background. The snowflakes vary in size and orientation, creating a dense, textured effect.

*Stay  
Current.*

