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The Current

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2-22-2023

## The Current - Volume 33 Issue 6

Nova Southeastern University

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## President Hanbury connects with students

By: Bryce Johnson

When Avani Kulkarni, freshman neuroscience major, went to the Shark Connect meeting on Feb. 8, she shared her concerns about dining on campus, like the inclusion of beef on an Indian menu.

“Beef was concerning to me,” Kulkarni said to the panel. “Next time you have Indian food, make sure to respect the values of our culture.”

Micole Rivera, senior executive chef, who responded to Kulkarni, said that in the future Shark Dining will listen more closely to the student body and cater to its dietary needs.

After the meeting, Kulkarni felt she was heard.

“[My comments] were addressed. I was able to speak to the senior executive chef. She’s able to work with me on vegan, vegetarian and Indian options,”

she said. “So overall I’m excited.”

Shark Connect is an opportunity for NSU President George Hanbury to hear students’ issues and concerns, as well as to share updates and accomplishments, like student athletes finishing last semester with a 3.5 overall GPA and an upcoming international dental program, which will be the largest in the nation.

Hanbury was transparent and explained reasons for things NSU is unable to immediately fix, such as housing.

“I love having the largest class we’ve ever had, but trying to find more housing is difficult. We need to expand a dining facility and a new residence hall, so it would be around \$100 million,” said Hanbury. “The housing, it’s going to have to remain the same at least for the next year to see what can be done to possibly make arrange-



NSU President George L. Hanbury II and SGA President Lijo Andrews address the student body during Shark Connect. PHOTO BY ASHLEY DIAZ

ments. I really want to.”

Lauren Gray, junior behavioral neuroscience major, appreciated how transparent Hanbury was with each answer.

“I thought it was a good opportunity for students to

receive first-hand reasonings behind the answers to our questions,” said Gray. “There was a reason behind each answer and steps that are being taken to solve our problems.”

## \$3.8 million earmarked for Halmos coral reef research

By: Bryce Johnson

Holly Lynn Baumgartner, dean of the Halmos College of Arts & Sciences & The Guy Harvey Oceanographic Research Center, accepted a check for \$3.8 million to support coral reef research in South Florida.

Congresswoman Debbie Wasserman Schultz presented the check on Feb. 14 at NSU’s Oceanographic Center. Harry K. Moon, NSU Executive VP/COO, gave a speech at the event in support of the project.

Dean Baumgartner acknowledged the significance of the check.

“With less than 6% of our original coral cover left, a rapid response and scientific and community collaboration are key,” said Baumgartner. “The infusion of community project support dollars will propel us into a greener, healthier and more prosperous future. On



U.S. Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz presents the check to NSU leadership. COURTESY OF WENDY WOOD

behalf of NSU, its Halmos College and its National Coral Reef Institute, thank you so much!”

The \$3.8 million will allow the Oceanographic Center to re-

search ways to protect the coral reefs from threats and diseases.

“This is crucial for food supply, hurricane protection, tourist economy, and our Blue

Economy,” said Baumgartner. “A healthy reef is a barometer of ocean health.”



## Letter from the editor

By: Bryce Johnson

Dear Reader,

Hello! My name is Bryce Johnson, and as the new editor-in-chief of The Current, I'm excited to welcome you to Issue 6. The Current exists as an outlet for NSU voices, and I look forward to seeing the paper evolve to encompass every avenue of student life.

Wondering how NSU will respond to universities banning TikTok? Curious about the senior art exhibition in the UC? You can find those topics and more in this issue.

If you have any comments or questions, or if you want to write with us, we would love to hear from you. Our office is inside the UC in room 328. Stop by during the day. We would gladly have you.



Bryce Johnson is the editor-in-chief of The Current.

PHOTO BY CHLOE ROUSSEAU

This issue wouldn't be possible without each of our reporters, photographers, designers and advisers. On behalf of our talented team, thank you for taking the time to read through our stories.

Happy Reading,  
Bryce Johnson



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## OPINION

# Students and professors need an extra week of spring break

By: Suzan Kinran

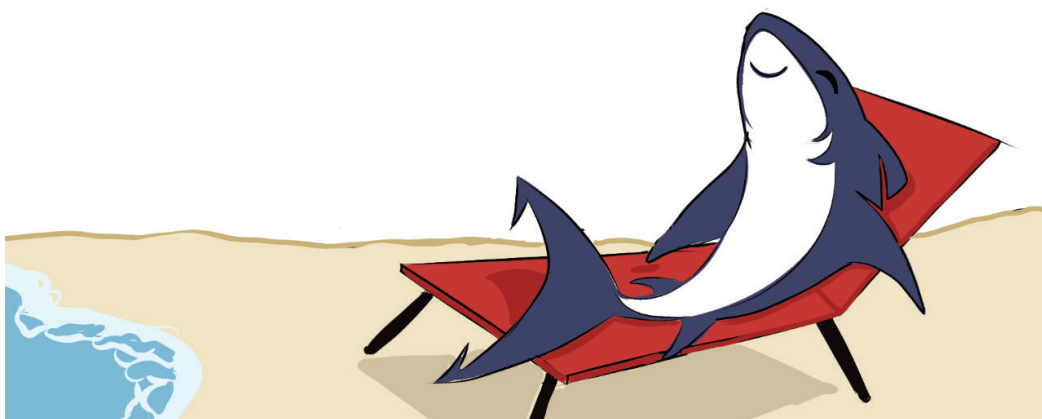
Three weeks into the winter semester, and I was already looking forward to spring break. It is the final break before the academic year ends and a great opportunity to go on a trip, relax by the beach, party and much more. Any break from school is nice, but compared to winter break, where we get three weeks off from school, we only get one week off for spring break, which does not feel like enough time to relax.

It doesn't feel like a true vacation, and it is almost impossible for me to get fully relaxed when I have an assignment due next week. While both semesters are around 16 weeks, there needs to be more time given to students in this semester to motivate them to push through. Even though summer break is just around the corner, only having a week off around the time of the win-

ter blues doesn't feel right.

Also, for students from Florida, it may be easy to just drive down to Fort Lauderdale Beach and have a good time, but what about the students living in other states? It can be extremely hard to find cheap direct-flight tickets, which can get canceled at the last minute. If you decide to go out of state, it is at least two days of travel out of spring break that you can never get back.

Spring break needs to be extended not just for students, but also for professors as well. It is supposed to be a break for them, too. Everyone has a hectic schedule and we do so much in one year. It is important to give some time out from the busy schedule to avoid burn-out. A longer spring break would help reduce the stress on students and professors. A week less of winter break and an extra week on spring break sounds like an amazing idea to me.





# Sharks Speak: What do students think of Shark Connect?

By: Ronald Martinez



"I really liked it, I liked knowing what was going on on campus, I liked how the students were able to ask questions, how their questions were addressed directly, not generally," said Emma De Lucia, freshman elementary education major.



"I thought it was not helpful. I thought it was just information that could've just been sent in a newsletter. I liked that President Hanbury was there, but I think there should've been time for us to ask questions instead of the really long video," said Amaya Kallen, junior speech language pathology major.



"It was good, but I felt that some students weren't asking the best questions. I think there were better questions that could've been asked," said Julia Langman, junior neuroscience major.



"I thought it was really informative. I like knowing what is happening around the university, seeing what's going on, seeing the state of the university, and things that are coming," said Christina Tamchin, junior psychology major.

## Staying safe on campus during an active shooting

By: Ashley Diaz

With the five-year anniversary of the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School shooting on Feb. 14, as well as the Michigan State University shooting on Feb. 13, NSU students are concerned about safety on campus during an active shooting.

"I've thought about taking extra precautions and making sure I know where I can go for safety, so I can protect myself," said Sabrina Solaman, sophomore English major.

When dealing with an active shooter, NSU Public Safety advises students to use the run, hide and fight protocol.

First, run away from the area and then call 911. If running away is not possible, find a safe space to hide from the shooter. Finally, as a last resort, if running or hiding is impossible, fight using any surrounding objects to incapacitate the shooter. This advice is approved by the FBI and is part of the training given to officers.

"Where to hide really depends on where the student is and how many shooters are involved," said Paul Turner, director of Public Safety and Emergency

Management.

Students can also stay safe by using NSU's Blue Light Emergency Phone System. The telephones are silver towers in various locations across campus. If students feel that they are in danger, they can go to a blue light telephone and press the red emergency button on it. When they press it, it puts students in contact with a dispatcher and flashes blue lights, so officers around campus can easily find them.

"We talk to students about the Blue Light system every year during orientation, so they can know how to use it. It is also in the campus safety handbook," said Turner, who added that NSU's campus is safe because there is a blend of public safety officers, Davie officers and allied contract security. These officers train every year to protect students and faculty from shooters.

"Annually we have an active shooter drill on campus and the last active shooter drill was in August," said Turner.

This past August, Public Safety had the annual active shooter drill in the Rosenthal building and University Center. The drill also included 158 law en-

forcement, emergency management and personnel officers on campus from other cities and counties. They train every year during a time where there are less students on campus to get law enforcement familiar with the campus. The Rosenthal building and University Center have more active shooter training because there are more students in those buildings.

Turner said Public Safety trains all new staff.

"Throughout the summer, we trained 1,500 faculty to keep them up to speed on our physical security, like the intruder lock key," said Turner.

Faculty and staff carry with them an intruder lock key, which can lock doors on campus with yellow tape on the handles from the inside.

To report suspicious activity, students can download the SaferWatch app on their phones. By going to GetSaferWatch.com, students can directly communicate with Public Safety about threats on campus.

There will also be a university-wide test of the Emergency Notification System on March 28.

"Over the next year or two we

are going to start rolling out actual active shooter training to students," said Turner.

For future training, students will train one-on-one with an officer on how to use the Blue Light Phone System. They will learn about the run, hide and fight protocol, watch Public Safety's active shooter video and ask questions they may have regarding safety.

"We are trying to get the people to be situationally aware to report things," said Turner. "If reported to us, we will take action because we want to know and to help."

**Scan this code**

to watch Public Safety's training video on active shooting.





# A look back at CommunityFest

NSU hosted the 19th annual CommunityFest on Feb. 4 around Gold Circle Lake. NSU organizations came together to celebrate their community with food, games and prizes.



BC Tacos serves food at CommunityFest.  
PHOTO BY INDAYA BYER



Samantha Rosales, sophomore neuroscience major, and twins Yamini and Yashasvini Kattelu, sophomore computer science majors, have some fun with the Raft Boat at Gold Circle Lake for CommunityFest.  
PHOTO BY INDAYA BYER



Isabella Dos Santos and Carolina Albuquerque, junior neuroscience majors, organize brigadeiro for Brazilian Students Association (BRASA) at CommunityFest.  
PHOTO BY INDAYA BYER



The NSU Drumline plays around Gold Circle Lake at CommunityFest.  
COURTESY OF DANIEL GELBMANN



Nicole Perez, junior marketing major, and Alisha Panchal, freshman biology major, promote their fashion club, Seemly.  
PHOTO BY INDAYA BYER



# Youngest Black pilot to fly solo around the world comes to NSU

By: Bryce Johnson and Brielle Aguayo

Captain Barrington Irving, who in 2007 became the youngest Black pilot to fly solo around the world, recently came to NSU to discuss “Hero of a Thousand Faces,” a documentary about his accomplishments as part of the Black community. It was the first time Irving was actually seeing the documentary, screened with producer Michael Anderson, multiple Emmy award-winning producer.

“The one thing aviation gives me is freedom, where it’s this freedom of peace, it’s this feeling of intense relaxation,” Irving told the NSU community at the Alvin Sherman Library on Feb. 13.

“My office space is between heaven and earth.”

In the documentary, Irving described that to fly across the world, he often flew 12 hours straight for 97 days.



Barrington Irving shares stories at NSU from his life as a pilot. PHOTO BY BRIELLE AGUAYO

He said his biggest challenge was flying through Shemya Island, between Japan and Russia. The weather was unsteady and unpredictable, with only a short window each day to safely fly through it. Other pilots warned him to turn back, and he barely made it out safely.

“I landed in Alaska with 12 minutes of fuel. I landed, and I’ll never forget pulling up. There’s a sign that says, ‘It’s not

the end of the world, but you can see it from here.’ I had one shot, and I made it,” said Irving.

Irving said he came from a low-income family, and mentorship was an important part of his life and success.

The advice he received from his mentor Gary Robinson, a United Airlines pilot, changed his life. His mentor supported his vision and passion for wanting to fly around the world.

“When I told Gary Robinson that I wanted to fly around the world, if he would’ve said no, I would’ve never done it,” said Irving. “Mentorship is absolutely a powerful thing.”

In the documentary, many expressed concerns and doubted Irving’s dreams, yet that did not stop him from achieving his goal of being the youngest person to fly around the world.

“What if I just flew around the world and inspired a bunch of kids?” said Irving.

Now, Irving has a nonprofit organization called “Experience Aviation,” where students can learn about aviation and activities based in STEM. One of the students who applied for the program was Trayvon Martin.

“He was the first student we ever lost in our program. He reminded me a lot of myself,” said Irving. “I felt obligated. As best as I can, I’m not going to lose another kid.”

## Public universities ban TikTok

By: Ronald Martinez and Adam Sadik

Florida Governor Ron DeSantis proposed a Digital Bill of Rights on Feb. 15, which would ban the use of TikTok in public universities. Twenty-five states, including Florida, have already banned the app from state computers and phones.

Bans stem from public security fears that the app, which is owned by a Chinese company called ByteDance, could be used to steal information and data from Americans.

The app is able to gather information on usage of the technologies, including contacts, voices, images, user location, microphone and camera.

According to Brandon Hensler, executive director for the Division of Public Relations, Marketing and Creative Services, NSU has no plans at the moment to ban TikTok.

“The university does not cur-

rently have a policy or recommendation on TikTok like what is being mentioned at other universities,” wrote Hensler in an email to Student Media. “As we monitor the evolving situation and if any decisions are made, we will be sure to be open and transparent with those decisions with the NSU community.”

Some NSU students are against the idea of banning the app, citing it as pointless to remove something that many students use for entertainment and information.

“I think that TikTok is a social media that helps us meet new people and to be aware of, like, the environment and society,” said Kevin Liang, sophomore business management major.

Yet, others believe the ban on TikTok would be beneficial to the university, as it would protect the information of students and the school along with increasing focus in class.

“Even though I use it so much, I think that it would be good if Nova did it,” said Yann Philipps, freshman, finance major. “I definitely think that TikTok listens.”

Meanwhile, pressured from statewide entities, more than 20 state universities, such as Texas A&M, have made the decision to ban the app entirely from their networks. Breaches in security could lead to schools losing funding or being sued.

University of Florida is one of the first institutions in Florida to suggest that students remove TikTok from their devices.

Elias Eldayrie, vice president and chief information officer at University of Florida, shared in a public statement how the university will move forward.

“As the university considers additional future steps, we strongly recommend that everyone discontinue using TikTok and remove the app from their devices,” wrote Eldayrie.

“Taking this action will help protect your personal information as well as university data.”

Marcus Delaney, freshman mechanical engineering major at the University of Florida, is against the decision.

“They are concerned about our privacy, but then they have the audacity to try and control what we see or do on our phones, and I do not think it is fair,” said Delaney.

Missouri Senator Josh Hawley has also introduced a bill with the intention of implementing a nationwide ban on TikTok, claiming health and security concerns for children.

“[TikTok] is China’s backdoor into Americans’ lives. It threatens our children’s privacy as well as their mental health,” Hawley tweeted. “Last month Congress banned it on all government devices. Now I will introduce legislation to ban it nationwide.”

**Are you experiencing food insecurity?**

**Stop by Storyfest for free food provided by Feeding South Florida**

**Location: Alvin Sherman Library**

**DATE: March 5, 2023**

**TIME: 11 a.m.- 3 p.m.**



# Disney Imagination Campus leadership retreat

By: Ashley Diaz and  
Cassandra Stevens

NSU's first annual Disney Imagination Campus Leadership Retreat will take place from Feb. 26 to March 1. The retreat allows students to learn leadership skills while also visiting different parks at Disney World.

Excluding meals, all expenses will be paid for by the Office of Student Leadership and Civic Engagement.

Daren Capirchio, director of Student Leadership and Civic Engagement, has been developing the retreat for at least five years.

"I proposed this program to Gerard Wheeler and Brad Williams because this is something that I've been really passionate about," said Capirchio, who carefully launched the pilot program.

Student Leadership and Civic Engagement advertised the retreat only to the Division of Student Affairs and the College of Undergraduate Studies. Faculty and staff nominated students who have demonstrated leadership qualities or have the poten-



Logo for the Disney Imagination Campus Leadership Retreat.  
COURTESY OF DAREN CAPIRCHIO

tial to be leaders.

Once nominated, students applied for the program and went through the interview process.

The top 20 students were chosen for the trip.

"We want somebody that has leadership skills but is also going to learn something," said Capirchio. "We also know that leadership comes in all kinds of

avenues. So we wanted to make sure that it was open to everybody."

Students will go to Epcot's Disney Imagination Campus to learn leadership and teamwork skills. They will attend two workshops in the mornings, "Leadership the Disney Way" and "Teamwork the Disney Way." After the workshops, stu-

dents will receive a 3-Day Park Hopper Pass and can choose to go to Magic Kingdom, EPCOT, Hollywood Studios or Animal Kingdom.

Students are expected to apply and share everything they learned when they return to campus.

"If students are chosen for the trip, they should go into it wanting to learn, to be a sponge," said Capirchio. "Students should listen, watch, take part and be fully engaged."

For students who weren't chosen or nominated, Capirchio said this year is a test run.

He is excited to see the program become something students look forward to in the coming years.

While the program currently has 20 spots, Capirchio plans to increase the number in the future as the program is expanded to more departments.

"We wanted it to be something that people would want to work toward," said Capirchio. "Maybe you won't go your first year or your second year, but hopefully sometime in your four years here, you could be chosen to go."

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Kelsey Applegarth, freshman doctoral clinical psychology major, gives Copper some love during her walk.  
PHOTO BY INDAYA BYER

# How to celebrate National Love Your Pet Day

By: Sofie Daiberl

William Patterson, freshman marine biology major, is the proud owner of two pet ferrets, who live with him in his on-campus dorm.

“My favorite memory with my ferrets is the day that I brought them home,” Patterson said.

With the recent celebration of National Love Your Pet Day took place on Feb. 20, there is still time for students to show appreciation for their pets.

## Take them outside

One way students can show their pets love is taking them outside. The Quad outside of the Alvin Sherman Library is a great place to walk a pet on campus. Taking pets on long walks allows them to get their energy out while helping the owners bond with them. Make sure to give them extra cuddles and bring a few of their favorite toys to the Quad. Whether it’s a dog, a bunny, a ferret or any other indoor pet, playing with a pet outside is a small action filled with love that many pets will appreciate.

For dogs in particular, Per-

formance Pups Freshwater Dog Beach located in Dania Beach is a great place to go to celebrate your pet. This pet-friendly beach is a 15 minute drive from NSU. It is home to a large freshwater, crystal-clear lake. The area is fenced-in for the pets’ safety, so dogs can be unleashed to fully enjoy the water, the soft sand and the grass. Make sure to call and schedule a visit to this dog beach ahead of time.

Another local dog park is Happy Tails, also a 15 minute drive from campus. It includes three leash-free areas, one for big dogs, one for medium dogs and one for small dogs.

Alicia Phillips, a senior education major, takes her puppy, Kylie, there often.

“I take my dog to Happy Tails almost every other day. It’s really nice,” said Phillips.

## Make homemade treats

Students can also make homemade treats for their pets to make them feel loved and appreciated. Pet-friendly recipes can be found online for any type of animal. Pinterest has a wide variety of treat ideas, ranging from

peanut butter and banana dog cookies to special bunny treats and even mini cookies for pet rats and mice. Students can also watch YouTube or Instagram tutorials for more visual instructions. These treats can be made into all types of creative shapes and sizes suited for any pet.

## Take photos

Students can also direct a photoshoot for their pets to make them feel special. Take some adorable photos of them while they’re scarfing down their homemade treats.

Phillips said that taking photos of her pet on National Love Your Pet Day gave her a “really cute Instagram story.”

Post photos of you and your pet with the hashtag #NationalLoveYourPetDay to share the love with other pet owners.

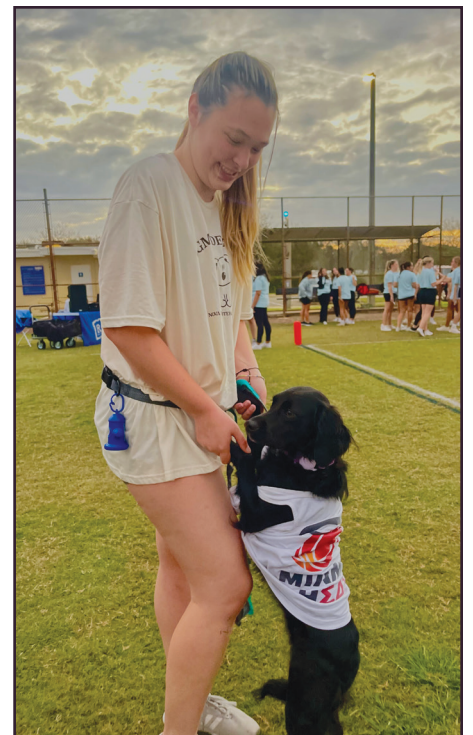
## Rescue a pet

Adopting a pet from a rescue shelter is perhaps the most meaningful way to celebrate this special day, every day. You may turn an animal’s life around for the better.

Patterson’s ferrets were initial-

ly surrenders. Surrendered animals are animals whose owners can no longer care for them.

“I found a place near NSU that had surrenders, so I decided I’d rather rescue them since I had the opportunity,” Patterson said.



Alicia Phillips, senior education major, holds her dog Kylie at Delta Phi Epsilon’s Rose Bowl.  
PHOTO BY BRIELLE AGUAYO



## FOOD

## Get your coffee fix at Cali Coffee

By: Carly Williams

Known for their sweet treats and outgoing personalities, Rose White and Craig Avera spend their days happily serving coffee, milkshakes and homemade energy drinks. They own Cali Coffee, a South Florida drive-thru shop.

“I grew up in Oregon and worked in a drive-thru coffee shop when I was [16 years old] and just fell in love with the business and the idea of opening my own coffee shop one day,” Avera said. “Rose and I ended up meeting in [LA] and then moved here to open the first Cali Coffee in Hollywood [Florida].”

After the official opening of the Hollywood location in September 2018, the store was an immediate hit and had cars wrapped around it for months.

Avera and White pride themselves on making their customers feel satisfied.

“Our customer service is everything to us and is just beyond what you get from any other coffee shop, restaurant or even business that you go to. When you come to Cali, you just get such a fun experience from our

awesome employees,” White said. “We treat you like family and we really care about our customers and genuinely how their day is going.”

Customers have enjoyed their experiences so much that White and Avera opened two more shops in South Florida: The Cooper City location in June 2021 and the Pines location in May 2022.

From starting as a customer to becoming an employee, Lexie Galletta feels it from both sides of the drive-thru window.

“Every time I go in for a shift at the Cooper City store, I hug everybody and get to play the music I want. There are just great vibes all around and we only strive to give that off to our customers,” Galletta said. “On the first day of every month, we do something called ‘Sticker Day.’ We come up with a new unique sticker and customers get it free with every drink.”

Galletta said that these “Sticker Days” bring the most traffic in because customers are genuinely excited to receive free stickers with their drinks. Cali Coffee tends to post each sticker on its Instagram account in advance

to increase the anticipation of these days.

White and Avera launched the Cali Coffee Foundation to help serve their customers and the community.

In 2020, the foundation held a toy drive and gave 352 toys to children at Joe DiMaggio Children’s Hospital.

Two years later, the Cali Coffee Foundation did a hurricane relief drive for those who suffered from Hurricane Ian. “It was beyond successful, and I am so proud of everyone that helped,” Galletta said.

Since Cali Coffee’s original opening, the menu has shortened significantly. This was due to some drinks not selling as much as others, so they reduced the list and combined flavors that were sold together at a popular rate.

“We made room on the menu for some of our best-seller combination drinks like the ‘Infinity.’ This drink came out [May 2021] and now it’s the most popular energy drink. It’s a mixture of blue raspberry and watermelon,” Galletta said.

Although Cali Coffee is predominantly known for its

drinks, lesser-known items are their refrigerated protein bars called “The Perfect Bars.” These come in a variety of flavors like peanut butter, chocolate and hazelnut crisp.

Cali Coffee also partners with other businesses and restaurants.

“Occasionally, we partner with Batch Cookies to sell a themed cookie. Recently, we did the ‘Blueprint Cookie,’ which was a chocolate chip cookie with brownie batter filling in the center, and topped with gold dust,” Galletta said, adding that they strive to build and maintain good relations with everyone. “We try to form personal relationships with our customers and make them last as long as possible,” Galletta said.

Avera added, “We don’t want to be generic. We don’t want to just serve coffee. We want each customer to feel special every time they come by, and to have their experience be a highlight of their day,” Avera said.



Nissipriya Pilli, sophomore biology and psychology major, orders a custom drink and three other drinks for friends, from the Cooper City location. PHOTOS BY INDAYA BYER

## IF YOU GO: LOCATIONS

**HOLLYWOOD**

2650 N. 29th Ave., Hollywood, FL 33020  
(954) 251-3274

**COOPER CITY**

11050 Griffin Road, Davie, FL 33330  
(954) 530-8995

**PEMBROKE PINES**

18420 Pines Blvd., Pembroke Pines, FL 33027  
(754) 232-1109

**WEBSITE:**

<https://www.calicoffee.com/>







An example of plastic that will later be broken down into microplastics and likely ingested by animals.  
PHOTO BY ERIKA FOTI

# Microplastics hidden in everyday life

By: Maya Totev and Adam Sadik

Food containers, rice, beer, table salt, toothpaste, and baby formula bottles all have something in common: microplastics.

“Microplastics are plastic particles smaller than 5 millimeters that are derived from plastic waste or personal care products, which some companies purposefully use,” said Dr. Patricia Calvo, an NSU professor with a PhD in organic polymer chemistry from the University of Florida.

Microplastics are used for their exfoliating properties and are typically found as small beads.

Some NSU students were shocked to find out that the everyday products they use contain a harmful, hidden component that can impact their health and take decades to degrade fully.

“Microplastics can affect our lungs, how we breathe, how our bodies digest, and our systems within, but specifically their toxins,” said Skyler Mayse, freshman nursing major. “It is terrible.”

More than 100,000 microplastic specks are inhaled or eaten each day, according to Albert Koelmans, an environmental scientist at Wageningen University in the Netherlands.

“I knew I was eating microplastics, but not that many. It makes me think that I must move to Europe and get away

from this American lifestyle, which involves so much plastic waste that is not recycled properly,” said AJ Crowley, freshman biology major.

Products, such as body scrubs, mascara, lipstick, and other self-care products, typically contain these tiny particles.

“For example, any of the toothpastes that have blue specks in them are typically the ones that have microplastics, which helps against plaque and surface erosion,” said Calvo. “It is hard to know which products might have microplastics since you cannot see them.”

Questions and concerns have risen among students as to why microplastics would purposefully be in such commonly used products to begin with since the benefits do not seem to outweigh the detriments.

“A lot of companies are not environmentally conscious and would not take extra steps to make products that do not have microplastics,” said Mayse. “It would cost them more money and time to find alternatives. That is how our society works. Companies are just money motivated.”

The potential risks of microplastics have been researched for 20 years, specifically focusing on how they can harm marine life.

“If [plastic] ends up in the marine environment, they get ground up into smaller particles

and eventually into microplastics,” said Calvo.

These microplastics may alter the food chain cycle among smaller marine organisms, like plankton. They grow more slowly and reproduce less successfully in the presence of microplastics.

“Microplastics play a big role in ocean pollution and end up in organisms without necessarily getting excreted from them,” said Matthew Gassman, freshman marine biology major. “It sits inside organisms and resides over time, which is not good at all.”

The effects of microplastics on humans are still being studied.

“The research is not clear at the moment. We are concerned it is a health risk, but there is no definitive proof,” said Calvo. “Sometimes we think materials are benign, and they are until we know more. That is true for a lot of things.”

Plasticizers, additives that make plastic flexible and soft, used in items such as clothes and flooring, are what make microplastics potentially dangerous for people’s health. They can yield negative reproductive, endocrinal and chronic effects.

“It is most definitely the plasticizers that cause the harm,” said Calvo.

These microplastics are increasingly difficult to avoid. They can be even found in drinking water.

“You cannot see them, so you cannot really know when they are there,” said Calvo. “Most government agencies are not testing for them in terms of drinking water quality.”

Efforts are being made to start monitoring microplastics in drinking water, with California being the first state to begin regulations.

It is important that people first become aware of what microplastics are, where they are found, and what it means for their health before any real change can be made.

“It is a topic that is not really discussed. I heard [about microplastics] for the first time just now,” says Pavan Patel, freshman exercise sports science major. “I would not be surprised if other people did not know about it either.”

## Have you been in contact with microplastics?

Some places that microplastics can be found:

- Toothpaste
- Seafood
- Tap water
- Bottled water
- Sea salt
- Honey
- Mascara
- Lipstick
- Clothes





Jodi Hayes, freshman criminal justice major, works out her laterals by doing lateral pull downs with the bar. PHOTO BY INDAYA BYER

## NSU'S RecPlex, more than just a gym

By: Francesca Abarca and  
Cassandra Stevens

When students hear “RecPlex,” many just think of the gym. But NSU’s RecPlex is home to many different recreational activities beyond the gym, all free for students to enjoy and stay active.

At the RecPlex, students can take classes, climb the rock wall on all difficulty levels, check out basketballs during open court hours or lounge by the leisure pool.

Ashianna Trivedi, freshman

neuroscience major, enjoys all that the RecPlex has to offer.

“Going to the RecPlex is a good way to take a break from stressful classes and enjoy doing physical activity,” said Trivedi.

Using the “IMLeagues” website or mobile app, students can sign up for a plethora of different classes, taught by professionals or even other students. These classes range from yoga, spin and High-Intensity Interval Training workouts, known as HIIT, to wellness events such as how to improve sleep and prop-

er nutrition.

Maria Pernia, junior business management major, encourages students to go to events and challenges throughout the month.

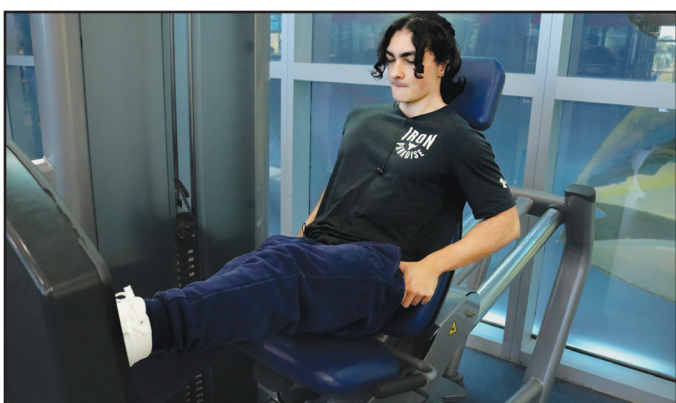
“The best way to get involved in the RecPlex would be to join the challenges. It is geared toward people that are not used to going to the gym and want to stay active,” said Pernia. “Most of the time, students can win gift cards simply by attending.”

Students can also play ping-pong or pool. They get every-

thing they need from the front desk, as the RecPlex staff provides the paddles or other materials needed after students show their SharkCards.

Isaiah Walker, freshman biology major, likes doing these activities with his friends.

“I like to play Ping-Pong with my friends, mostly after classes are done for the day,” said Walker. “Playing with them makes the whole game more fun.”



Ziv Nachmani, sophomore engineering major, exercises by doing seated leg presses. PHOTO BY INDAYA BYER

Scan this code  
to view RecPlex schedule



Lavena Jose, junior biology major, works out her shoulders by doing upright rows. PHOTO BY INDAYA BYER



Joshua McFarlane, freshman biology major, does barbell rows to exercise his back and biceps. PHOTO BY INDAYA BYER



## ONSHORE CALENDAR

Black History Jeopardy  
Feb. 22 - 7 p.m.  
Don Taft University  
Center, Second Floor

Black Excellence  
Showcase  
Feb. 24 - Noon  
Flight Deck Backyard

Real Talk  
March 8 - Noon  
Rosenthal Student  
Center, Room 204

The Haitian Student  
Association Kompa  
class  
March 10 - 6 p.m.  
Mako Multipurpose  
room

## OFFSHORE CALENDAR

Candlelight Fort  
Lauderdale: A Tribute  
to Taylor Swift  
Feb. 25 - 6:30 p.m.  
Savor Cinema

Koffee Concert  
Feb. 25 - 5 p.m.  
Miramar Parkway,  
Miramar, FL

James Taylor and His  
All-Star Band  
Feb. 25 - 7 p.m.  
Au-Rene Theater at  
Broward Center for the  
Performing Arts

We Belong Here in  
Miami 2023  
Feb. 25 - 2 p.m.  
Historic Virginia Key  
Beach Park

Keshi Concert  
March 4 - 6:30 p.m.  
FPL Solar  
Amphitheater at  
Bayfront Park

Greta Van Fleet  
Concert  
March 8 - 7 p.m.  
Hard Rock Live

# 12th annual Senior Art Exhibition

By: Danna Bertel

At the 12th annual Senior Art Exhibition, Desiree Jenkins, senior psychology major, is presenting an oil painting of modern Renaissance art with women as the main subject.

"I wouldn't have had this opportunity if I went to another school," Jenkins said. "I've gotten such a wonderful opportunity to experience art on a professional level and live as an artist through my teachers."

The exhibition is hosted by the Department of Communication, Media and the Arts and displays the work of 10 graduating students. The exhibit is on display until March 8 at Gallery 217 in the UC.

The art displayed includes original pieces such as digital artwork, photographs, paintings and sculptures.

Nicholas Waguespack, senior art and design major and gallery

manager of Gallery 217, said the exhibition differs from others by being curated by the seniors themselves.

"This exhibition is a farewell to graduating seniors and their time at NSU, highlighting their best artwork," said Waguespack. "This exhibition specifically is more of a collaborative effort between all of the seniors. It's not just me making the decisions, it's us as a group."

Tristen Trivett, senior art and design major, also has art in the exhibition. Trivett's art is showcased through different mediums, including painting, sculpting and an assemblage using nails, wood and found materials.

Trivett's work is a culmination of art mediums used while being an art student.

"Each piece has its own conversation," said Trivett. "I've been summarizing the work I'm interested in and made so far,

but there is a kind of dialogue throughout my work that comes from my process of making my art and it's inspired by the subconscious and the mystical."

Students can go see Jenkins', Waguespack's, Trivett's and other seniors' art now in Gallery 217 until March 8.



Jonathan Akabosu, senior art and design major, measures the wall in order to find the right place to install his paintings.

PHOTO BY NICHOLAS  
WAGUESPACK

## Theft at Gallery 217

By: Ronald Martinez

An art piece was missing from the 12th annual Senior Art Exhibition on opening night.

Instead of *Hot as Hell*, guests saw a sign that read, "Art is meant to provoke!" placed by the artist in the empty space.

The art is suspected to have been stolen from the 2nd floor UC art gallery, Gallery 217, between the hours of 7 p.m. to 10 a.m., the night before the exhibit opened to the public.

Sofia Guerra, artist and senior art and design major, created the art piece during her first year in the program. The piece was a packaging concept for a hot sauce titled *Hot as Hell*.

"[It was] my favorite thing I had ever done,"

she said of the piece that had won a 2022 Packaging Award from Graphic Design USA.

"It was the first time I allowed myself to be self-indulgent, the first



"Art is meant to provoke!" read a sign placed in the empty space where the piece *Hot as Hell* was meant to be displayed.

COURTESY OF SOFIA GUERRA

time," Guerra said.

Students from the program report the piece was missing as prepara-

tions were being made for the opening tonight.

The piece was originally on display in a glass case on the second floor but was taken out and placed in the

gallery Sunday. From then, it remained on display until the night before the event.

A friend of the artist reported it missing in the morning on Feb. 15.

When Gallery Director Nicholas Waguespack opened the gallery in the morning, there were tables set up inside the gallery, which students had to remove themselves.

"We had an artist leave at 7 p.m., and it was locked, and then when I came this morning, there were tables in there, so we think there might have been an event that we were not aware of," Waguespack said.

As of now, a report has been filed with Public Safety and the Davie Police, but no further information is available at this time.

### If you go:

**Price:** Free

**Location:** Gallery 217

**Time:** Runs through March 8 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

**Contact:** klopez1@nova.edu





Kennedy Tatum, freshman biology pre-nursing major, Ava Hilgner, freshman psychology major, and Maria Bernal, sophomore art and design major, create tape art in the UC.

PHOTO BY ASHLEY DIAZ

## Students create tape art display in the UC

By: Bryce Johnson

For the first time in NSU's Two-Dimensional Design course at NSU, students participated in a tape art project on Feb. 3. They used colored tape to create art on the second floor of the UC, with some of their designs including a green and white shark and a red parrot.

Sophia Dakkuri, freshman fine arts major, created a giant eye using blue, yellow and black tape.

"I really like drawing eyes. Eyes are like the key to the soul, and I like to show that a lot,"

said Dakkuri.

"Tape art is underrated, and I think it should be shown more."

Other students designed their tape art to represent parts of nature.

Estefania Fajardo, second year art and design major, designed a purple lotus flower.

"I'll put green underneath for the lily pads," said Fajardo. "I have a lotus flower tattoo. I love it."

Kandy Lopez, the course professor, described how the tape art project allowed students to experiment with different elements of design.

"They've already worked with the elements that'll help them with what's happening here. Line, shape, they're working with color," said Lopez. "They're working on an image that captures all three elements."

In future semesters, Lopez is hopeful to see the project continue and expand.

"They're working on it to help them think outside the box," Lopez said. "It's good for them."

The tape art project is currently on display on the windows of the second floor in the UC.



Ava Hilgner, freshman psychology major, creates tape art of a shark in the UC.

PHOTO BY ASHLEY DIAZ

## TikTok musicals help artists

By: Ashley Diaz

TikTok musicals started gaining popularity during the pandemic with "Ratatouille the Musical" in 2020. Following this was "The Unofficial Bridgerton Musical," which earned producers Abigail Barlow and Emily Bear a Grammy for Best Musical Theater album in 2022. More recently, "EPIC: The Musical" was released on TikTok in December 2022, and now has more than 10 million streams.

These musicals gained such recognition that TikTok commissioned "For You, Paige," an official 2022 Broadway musical by Daniel Mertzlufft, creator of "Ratatouille the Musical."

"Sometimes, I just can't believe the stuff people come up with," said Julia Maren, junior theater

major. "TikTok really helps get people's ideas out there."

NSU Theatre Technical Director Calypso Hernandez finds that TikTok has been beneficial for the overall music and theater industry.

"I honestly think TikTok helps theater a lot because I heard the song from a musical from 20 years ago becoming popular," said Hernandez.

People have used songs from "SIX," "Hamilton," "Beetlejuice" and other musicals for their own TikTok sounds.

"In my opinion, part of the reason why 'Beetlejuice' was so successful after the pandemic was because Presley Ryan, the understudy for Lydia, had a TikTok account and filmed behind the scenes," said Maren.

If students are interested in

pursuing a career in theater, Hernandez encourages them to post their own TikTok musicals.

"TikTok is a great way to get recognized. Lin-Manuel Miranda or another producer can see your video and if they think the show has potential, they can pick it up and make a whole production," said Hernandez.

TikTok also has the benefit of posting videos from 60 seconds to three minutes, compared to theater productions that can last 3 hours with 15-minute intermissions.

"TikTok videos are very short, which appeals to the short attention span that people have now," said Hernandez.

Hernandez finds TikTok musicals a helpful pathway for up-and-coming theater students and hopes that it leads them to

an immersive space on stage.

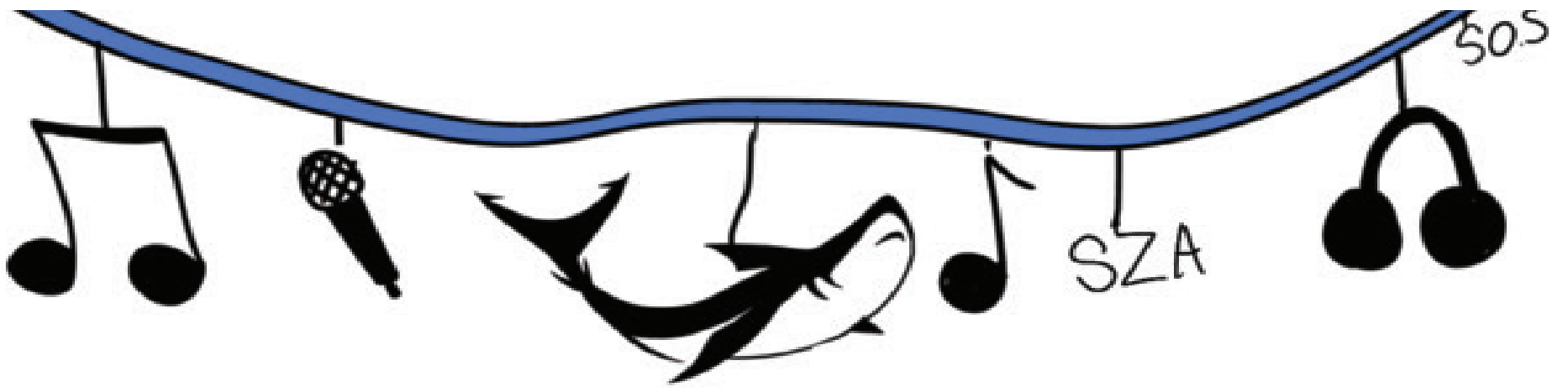
"Plays are more immersive, and I feel like TikTok doesn't have the quality where you're in a space with people and feel like you're in a show," said Hernandez.

Scan this code to watch "For You, Paige"





## MUSIC



## Top charting Black musicians you should know

By: Cassandra Stevens and Ramona Smith

NSU students are celebrating February's Black History Month by listening to music by Black artists.

Tamia McEwen, nursing major and freshman at NSU, recommends some Black musicians.

"My favorite Black artists are SZA, Labrinth and Steve Lacy," said McEwen, adding these artists made it to the top of her list because of their messages.

She said she likes how each artist communicates different views, such as women's and LGBTQ+ perspectives.

Other students' favorites include Kendrick Lamar, Lizzo, Frank Ocean and Louis Armstrong.

These artists have been pillars in the Black community and have a way of communicating the Black experience through their music.

Here is what some students have to say about some of the artists.

### Kendrick Lamar

"He always puts how he feels about the Black community in his music and he's very logistically skilled in terms of his rapping," said Jordan Marriott, freshman biology major and Radio X program director.

He has taken the American Black experience into his music and embodied a socially mindful approach to his lyrics. This earned him a Pulitzer Prize for songwriting in 2018 and he has continued this style into his most recent album, "Mr. Morale & the Big Steppers," released last year.

### SZA

When listening to SZA, "her vocals are very hypnotic and angel-like. It puts me in a relaxed mood," said McEwen.

Her pieces of music communicate a soulful aesthetic that embodies vulnerable emotions. The music encapsulates a twirling style that resembles poetry in some instances.

### Steve Lacy

A soul artist that has intertwined elements of pop and indie rock. His music comes off in feelings encompassing a good time and letting loose. McEwen said that his music gives off a childlike atmosphere that makes it very friendly and interesting.

Marriott said she is grateful to be part of a community that can share so many different recommendations and hopes that mu-

sic can bring people together to celebrate Black culture.

"Music is the one thing that's kind of universal," said Marriott. "It's an open door to those different cultures [to] see how they express themselves. It's definitely important to broaden your music because if you just listen to one type of thing, then you will have one type of mindset."

### Listen to hit songs by these artists!

"Bad Habit" - Steve Lacy

"All The Stars" - SZA, Kendrick Lamar

"Alright" - Kendrick Lamar

"20 Something" - SZA

"Dark Red" - Steve Lacy



Want to be a  
volunteer  
DJ at  
Radio X?  
Scan this  
code!

Want to know The Current staff's favorite songs to play during spring break? Check out Spring Break Vibes, our collaborative Spotify playlist!



## Radio X: evening shows

Tune into 88.5 daily from 6 p.m. to midnight to see what's playing. Here's what you can expect from the lineup of DJs.

DJ @ -Mr.Ë  
Alternative Rock and Pop

DJ Classica  
Classic Latin Music

DJ Luvrfly  
Love Music

DJ Blossom  
Caribbean Music

DJ Sirena  
International Music

DJ Flackie  
Latin Hits

DJ Dream  
Indie Music

DJ JETIX  
1970-present  
Rock

DJ Tranquilo  
Soul and R&B Music

DJ Shorty  
K-Pop Music





Carin Sanchez, sophomore, swims at the Shark Invitational on Oct. 7, 2022 at NSU. COURTESY OF NSU SHARKS ATHLETICS

# Sharks dominate the pool

By: Abraham Velasquez

Laurel Gallaudet, graduate student in Composition, Rhetoric and Digital Media program, was drawn to NSU as a freshman because of the women’s swimming team.

“Ben, the coach here, actually reached out back to me and offered me to come visit and speak with me,” said Gallaudet. “He showed me around and I had kind of an impromptu trip with the team, and I thought it would be a really good fit, and I got along well with everyone, so then I ended up coming here.”

The women’s swimming team is making waves in the collegiate athletics scene.

Led by head coach Ben Hewitt, the Sharks have been dominating the competition and are hav-

ing a season to remember.

In January, it ranked #1 in the CSCAA’s Top-25 Dual Meet rankings, which can be attributed to a combination of hard work, dedication and strong team chemistry.

Gallaudet has had a significant impact on the team.

At the 2018 Shark Invitational, she set two season bests: 58.11 in the 100 free and 2:07.72 in the 200 free. During the 2019 Spartan Invitational, she set three season bests in the 1000 free, 100 fly and 200 fly. She was also selected to the 2019 SSC Spring Commissioner’s Honor Roll.

“I feel like my dad is one of my biggest role models because he was a really good swimmer. He went to the Naval Academy, and he was able to set some records and do really well swimming

wise,” said Gallaudet.

The Sharks have had success in the pool under Hewitt’s direction, with four NCAA national champions and five individual triumphs.

Hewitt guided the women’s team to their best-ever program finish of third in 2018. Hewitt’s commitment to his athletes goes beyond the pool, as both the men’s and women’s swim teams have maintained a GPA of 3.0 or above for nine consecutive semesters under his direction.

“I really like Ben. He definitely has expectations, and he makes them clear, but in a way that makes us feel motivated to reach those goals. And we share the same goals, like with him,” said Gallaudet. “He definitely does a good job of telling us when we’re doing well or motivating

us along, like knowing that we’re trusting the process and the process is rewarding us.”

The women’s swimming team hopes to extend their winning streak as they compete in several conferences. Gallaudet competed in the Sunshine State Conference Championship on Feb. 15 and 18.

“The women’s team has been able to win, I think the past two or three years,” said Gallaudet. “We know every year it’s a fight, like it’s not guaranteed. So, we’re really trying to aim ourselves towards winning and being the best that we can be. So that’s definitely my biggest goal, is to be able to perform to the best of my ability, especially since my last year.”

## FINS UP SHARKS: HOME GAMES

**Feb. 25 : 2 p.m.**  
Women's Basketball vs. Embry-Riddle University  
Rick Case Arena

**March 9 : 6 p.m.**  
Baseball vs. St. Cloud State University  
NSU Baseball Complex

**Feb. 25 : 4 p.m.**  
Men's Basketball vs. Embry-Riddle University  
Rick Case Arena

**March 10 : 6 p.m.**  
Baseball vs. St. Cloud State University  
NSU Baseball Complex

**Feb. 22 : 2 p.m.**  
Women's Tennis vs. Keiser University  
NSU Tennis Complex

**March 4 : 1 p.m.**  
Baseball vs. Palm Beach Atlantic University  
NSU Baseball Complex

**March 3 : 6 p.m.**  
Baseball vs. Palm Beach Atlantic University  
NSU Baseball Complex

**March 4 : 4 p.m.**  
Baseball vs. Palm Beach Atlantic University  
NSU Baseball Complex



# Maasti dances its way to the stage

By: Sofie Daiberl

In 2015, Stacey Illikal and Annie Mohanan founded NSU Maasti, a Bollywood-fusion dance team. What started as a small dance team to celebrate Indian culture has greatly grown and evolved.

NSU Maasti has attended three dance competitions this semester and plans to compete in Philadelphia in March. In November 2022, it won the Diwali Dhamaka competition in Downtown Fort Lauderdale.

“They have competitions all over the U.S,” said Deeksha Kommireddi, one of the dance captains and senior double major in biology and behavioral neuroscience. “We’ve been to Georgia, there are some in California and Texas.”

Kommireddi has been involved with NSU Maasti since she was a freshman and has seen how the team incorporates new dances based on Indian culture.

“Some of the styles that we do are hip-hop [and] Koothu, which



NSU Maasti dance team practices their hip-hop routine. COURTESY OF IKSITA NALLAPANENI

is a dance native to my region in India. We also do bhangra, which is a dance native to North Indians, classical dance and contemporary,” said Kommireddi.

Recently, NSU Maasti started practicing a new form of dance called Dandiya Raas, which incorporates sticks within the dances.

“One of the songs that we have this year is from a really popular Bollywood movie, so that’s usually what the judges like to

see, old school songs from Bollywood movies because a lot of people get hype to it and really like them,” Kommireddi said.

NSU Maasti’s dances are complex, with each dance having a specific story crafted around it. During Kommireddi’s freshman year, NSU Maasti performed a dance based around the movie “Night at the Museum,” where Kommireddi played the villain.

Currently, NSU Maasti is working on a dance based

around the popular Indian film, “Yeh Jawaani Hai Deewani.”

Asha Bhatia, senior biology major, finds that practicing new dances can help strengthen relationships within the team.

“I love dancing, but I also love how it brings the team together and you get to know people you wouldn’t normally meet because of age difference,” said Bhatia.

Bhatia said that a great way to support NSU Maasti is to watch videos of their competitions through the NSU Maasti Dance Team YouTube channel. Students can also send messages for information about dance competitions, tryouts and workshops.

**INFO BOX:**  
NSU Maasti

**INSTAGRAM:**  
@nsumaasti

**EMAIL:**  
nsumaasti@gmail.com

**YOUTUBE:**  
NSU Maasti Dance Team

## Recap of women’s best plays throughout the season



Solana Capalbo, senior, Savanna Best, fifth year, and Estelle Bauer, sophomore, give a Fins Up before their swim meet. COURTESY OF NSU SHARKS ATHLETICS



Elise Eason, freshman, throws the ball. COURTESY OF NSU SHARKS ATHLETICS



Sarei McGill, sophomore, attempts a shot. COURTESY OF NSU SHARKS ATHLETICS



Kyarrah Grant, graduate student, prepares to take her shot. COURTESY OF NSU SHARKS ATHLETICS



Fatima Bizhukova, graduate student, and Natalie Espinal, senior, high five after a tennis match. COURTESY OF NSU SHARKS ATHLETICS



Kerstyn Shaw, sophomore catcher, looks on during a game. COURTESY OF NSU SHARKS ATHLETICS



# THE CURRENT'S CORNER

## WORD SEARCH

L	S	M	B	I	D	M	P	W	Z	M	U	D	I	A
O	H	W	U	W	W	H	W	C	Q	I	P	S	G	C
W	C	L	I	S	T	O	E	P	I	C	S	V	P	L
S	Y	E	V	M	I	T	U	U	N	R	E	U	T	C
P	T	S	L	K	M	C	Y	E	O	O	N	A	I	I
R	R	A	J	E	U	I	A	X	H	P	I	O	K	J
I	E	F	C	U	B	E	N	L	G	L	O	M	T	M
N	C	E	L	P	B	R	A	G	S	A	R	F	O	T
G	P	T	U	D	H	H	A	H	I	S	D	R	K	A
B	L	Y	B	V	M	W	O	T	P	T	Z	E	P	P
R	E	D	J	R	D	K	X	V	E	I	X	T	J	E
E	X	S	B	Z	X	T	J	M	S	C	G	R	J	A
A	C	O	F	F	E	E	L	L	O	S	V	E	P	R
K	S	E	L	R	J	N	H	L	Z	O	J	A	E	T
I	M	A	G	I	N	A	T	I	O	N	C	T	J	G

TIKTOK  
MICROPLASTICS  
CELEBRATE  
MUSICALS  
COFFEE

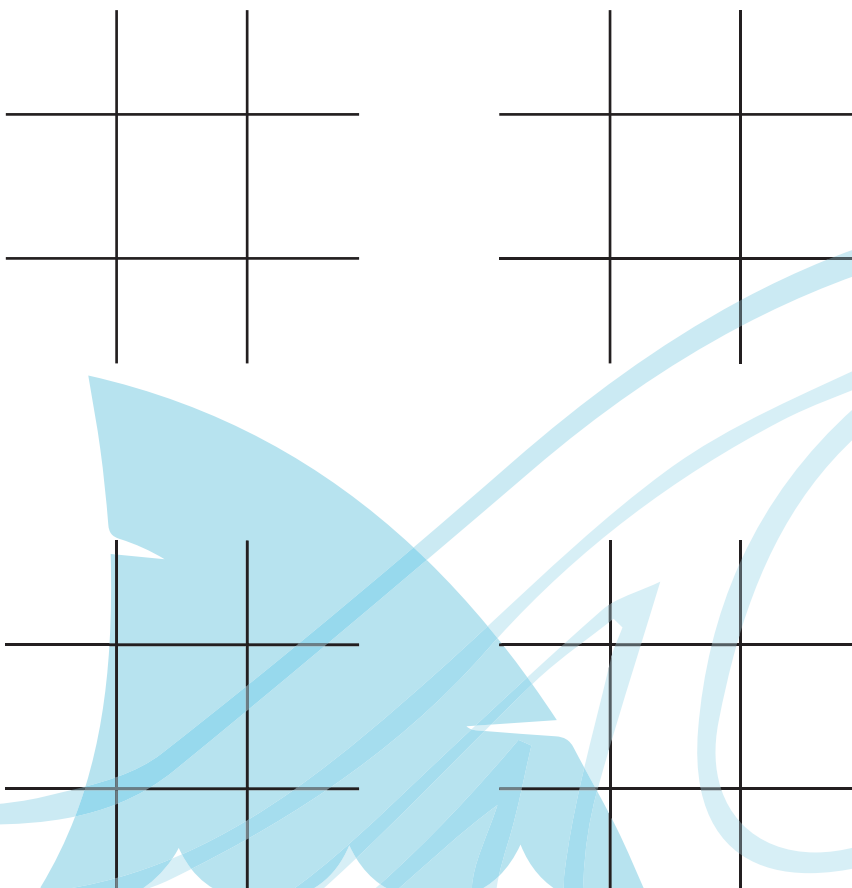
SPRING BREAK  
SWIMMING  
RETREAT  
RECPLEX  
IMAGINATION

TAPE ART  
SAFETY  
SENIOR  
CLUB  
BHM

# STAY CURRENT & STAY SAFE

## TIC TAC TOE

Tic Tac Toe is a game where two players seek alternative ways to complete a row. One player is a circle while the other one is an X. Whoever completes three in a row is the first to win the game.



## DOTS AND BOXES

This is a two-player game where you take turns at joining two dots together (vertically or horizontally) to make the side of a square (a box). When you make a box with a line, write your initials in it and take another turn. The person with the most boxes at the end of the game wins.

