

# alligator



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Victoria Salomon / Alligator

## ON OPPOSITE SIDES

Alfredo Patiño, 22, a UF political science and sociology senior, and Joe Trammel, 22, a law student from Ohio State University and member of the Created Equal organization, shake hands. Patiño, who is pro-choice, and Trammel, who is pro-life, spoke about the images the Created Equal organization placed on Turlington Plaza on Tuesday. See the story, pg. 3.

## RTS Route Changes

Route #	Frequency Change
1	12 to 15 minutes
9	Reduced Hours
10	Reduced Hours
12	15 to 30 minutes*
19	Discontinued
20	12 to 15 minutes
29	Discontinued
34	20 to 30 minutes
35	10 to 13 minutes
38	12 to 15 minutes
40	30 to 65 minutes

\*in the afternoon and evening

### Campus Route Changes

Route #	Frequency Change
117	16 to 32 minutes
125	15 to 30 minutes
126	10 to 20 minutes

### Later Gator Route Changes

Route #	Frequency Change
300 Wednesday	Discontinued
300 Thurs. - Sat.	13 to 26 minutes
301 Thurs. - Sat.	20 to 30 minutes
302 Thurs. - Sat.	25 to 38 minutes

## Gov. Rick Scott approves sweeping education bills

**AMONG THE CHANGES: PERMANENT EXPANSION OF BRIGHT FUTURES.**

By Jessica Giles  
Alligator Staff Writer

Legislation approved by Gov. Rick Scott will make the increases to Bright Futures in the 2017-2018 school year permanent.

Scott signed two sweeping education bills into law on Sunday. One will permanently expand Bright Futures for the top two tiers of award recipients and prevent public universities and colleges from restricting speech to “free-speech zones.” The other is an expansive bill that will provide scholarship funding for bullied students to transfer to an eligible private school and threatens to decertify teacher unions if their membership falls below 50 per-

cent of the employees they represent.

“This is an election year promise to the students of this state that we will provide every single one of you, to the best of our ability, a world-class education — the one that you deserve,” said House Speaker Richard Corcoran in a press conference.

The top tier of Bright Futures, “Academic Scholar,” will have 100 percent of tuition and fees covered, as well as a \$300 stipend for textbooks. In the 2016-2017 school year, about 15,700 UF students received the top award, according to a UF Student Financial Affairs fiscal summary. Recipients can also use their scholarship for summer enrollment beginning this summer.

During the 2016-2017 school year, about 7,500 UF students received the second-tier “Medallion Scholar” award, according to the

SEE BILL, PAGE 5

## Miami Grill to open at The Standard in April

By Sabrina Conza  
Alligator Contributing Writer

Laura Botero is already planning to take her girlfriend to Gainesville’s Miami Grill when it opens in April.

Miami Grill, a South Florida-based restaurant chain, is joining the growing community of businesses at The Standard apartment complex in mid-April, said Jackie Maceda, a Miami Grill spokesperson. The location, at 50 NW 13th St., will be in a spot between Chick-Fil-A and Target.

The 2,500-square foot location will serve breakfast, lunch and dinner, but official hours have not yet been decided, Maceda said. It will also offer delivery to people living in The Standard and possibly other nearby locations.

“We’ll definitely be catering to the community,” Maceda said.

Maceda said the restaurant will hold a soft opening with discounts. A grand opening is scheduled for the Fall.

She said the restaurant will serve signature items like Philly cheesesteaks, chicken wings and pitas. It will also serve beer and wine.

Pricing for the location isn’t finalized, but menu items range from \$2.99 to \$8.99, she said.

Botero, an 18-year-old UF management freshman from Margate, a city about 45 minutes north of Miami, said she’s had wings and shrimp at a Miami Grill in South Florida.

“It’s actually pretty good, and the serving size is awesome,” she said. “I’d go to Miami Grill again any day.”

### FRANKS LOOKING TO MOVE ON

After a difficult 2017 campaign, Florida quarterback Feleipe Franks is excited for a fresh start under new head coach Dan Mullen, pg. 14

Stephen Hawking has died, family member said  
His children released a statement early Wednesday pg. 3.

First female NFL coach visits UF  
Read what shespoke about, pg. 9

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## Today's Weather



HIGH 66° LOW 33°

## Local Events / News in Brief

### WHAT'S HAPPENING?

#### Student Government Spring Housing Fair

Student Government's Spring Housing Fair is 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Friday on the Reitz Union North Lawn. As the largest housing event at UF, students can engage with a wide variety of Gainesville community representatives and gain a better understanding of what off-campus housing communities have to offer. This is a way to get familiar with off-campus living options. UF resources such as Off Campus Life and Student Legal Services will also be on hand to help answer questions.

#### Digital Resources Showcase

George A. Smathers Libraries will hold a Libraries' Digital Resources Showcase from 1 to 3 p.m. Friday on the colonnade outside Library West. The showcase will bring librarians and students together to highlight steps for finding the best research online and organizing your work quickly. The event will also feature the One Button Studio, 3-D printing, video streaming access, digital newspapers and mapping tools.

#### GatorNights Classic Movies

The Reitz Union will hold a GatorNights Classic Movies on Friday. The event will feature James Bond and Indiana Jones escape rooms, a Jaws mechanical shark and Jurassic Park terrariums. "The Shape of Water" will play at 8 and 10:45 p.m. The Club Creole's Fashion Show and Concert will take place in the Rion Ballroom starting at 8 p.m. GatorNights is always Friday, always free for UF students with a Gator 1 Card at the Reitz Union

from 8 p.m. to 1 a.m. Attendees must be current students to participate and are allowed to bring a maximum of one guest to the event.

#### Florida Museum hosts 'Can You Dig It?' on March 17

Dig into geology at a free, open-for-all-ages geology event 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday at the Florida Museum of Natural History, located at 3215 Hull Road. Attendees will watch demonstrations of volcanic eruptions as well as experience an augmented reality sandbox and fossil dig. The event is presented in part by the UF Department of Geological Sciences in collaboration with the Gainesville Gem and Mineral Society. For more information, visit [floridamuseum.ufl.edu/canyoudigit](http://floridamuseum.ufl.edu/canyoudigit) or call 352-273-2062.

#### 'Law in the Library: Restoration of Civil Rights Workshops'

The Alachua County Library District is partnering with the Eighth Judicial Circuit Bar Association to present "Law in the Library: Restoration of Civil Rights Workshops" from 4:30 to 5:45 p.m. March 22 at Cone Park Library Branch, located at 2801 E. University Ave. and 5:30 to 7 p.m. April 5 at Tower Road Library Branch, located at 3020 SW 75th St. Attorneys will provide one-on-one assistance to people who have been convicted of a felony and are interested in applying to have their civil rights restored. These presentations are free and open to the public. For more information, visit [aclib.us/law](http://aclib.us/law) or call 352-334-3900.

#### Fulbright Awareness Month

The UF International Center will hold Fulbright Awareness Month until April 12. Multiple informational sessions for students,



Have an event planned? Add it to the **alligator's** online calendar: [alligator.org/calendar](http://alligator.org/calendar)

scholars, faculty and staff will provide opportunities to learn about the Fulbright application process and to hear about the experiences of past scholars and students. Additionally this year, information sessions will be led by Peter VanDerwater, the director of outreach at the Council for International Exchange for Scholars in Washington, D.C. To schedule an individual consultation with VanDerwater, email [canumba@ufic.ufl.edu](mailto:canumba@ufic.ufl.edu). For more information, visit [internationalcenter.ufl.edu](http://internationalcenter.ufl.edu).

#### Got something going on?

Want to see it in this space? Send an email with "What's Happening" in the subject line to [jtavel@alligator.org](mailto:jtavel@alligator.org). To request publication in the next day's newspaper, please submit the event before 5 p.m. Please model your submissions after the above events, and keep them to 150 words or fewer. Improperly formatted "What's Happening" submissions may not appear in the paper. Press releases will not appear in the paper.

#### Correction:

A story published Monday under the title "RTS to reduce bus service for the rest of the semester" incorrectly stated a background check for an RTS bus driver took two to three months. Instead, the entire hiring process after the initial interview can take two to three months, after which a driver can start.

The Alligator strives to be accurate and clear in its news reports and editorials. If you find an error, please call our newsroom at 352-376-4458 or email [editor@alligator.org](mailto:editor@alligator.org).

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# Anti-abortion group returns to Turlington, North Lawn

By McKenna Beery  
Alligator Contributing Writer

Hannah Smith became so disturbed by the “gruesome” abortion pictures she saw on the way to class Tuesday that she pushed over four signs.

The 20-year-old shook with rage and disgust thinking about the images during class.

“You go on campus, and you aren’t expecting to see pictures of dismembered bodies and blood,” Smith, a UF political science junior, said. “They are not conducive to a learning environment.”

The signs she saw were put up by Created Equal, an anti-abortion training program for younger generations to debate abortion on college campuses around America, said Mark Harrington, president of the organization. The program facilitates Justice Rides, which are week-long events where activists can speak and educate about abortion.

Tuesday and today about 50 student activists with Created Equal displayed large abortion and prenatal images on Turlington Plaza and the North Lawn from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. The activists spoke with students passing by and handed out flyers.

“Some people believe it is con-

troversial because it is hard to deny what you are seeing,” Harrington said. “Once you come to the conclusion that it is killing the child, a lot of folks that believe abortion is okay don’t like that we are showing people.”

The Alligator spoke to the President Mark Harrington and spokesperson Lauren Metz.

Here are five things about Created Equal:

1. Some of the photos displayed on campus were found in a dumpster and photographed years ago. Others were from a doctor who performs abortions who was paid to let a photographer take photos of an aborted

fetus. Created Equal did not pay for the photographing of the photos on campus. The organization did not disclose how it obtained the pictures due to security reasons. Created Equal has possession of signed affidavits from a person who performed abortions and the photographer for its authenticity.

2. Created Equal has made stops at UF at least three times in the past five years. Harrington said Florida is a regular stopping place for Created Equal because it is a key state when it comes abortion politics. Additionally, there are many large public universities.

3. Created Equal partakes in two

Justice Rides a year, in the spring and summer. Justice Ride comes to Florida every spring. The summer locations vary and have included Washington, D.C., Ohio and Alabama. The name Justice Ride was inspired by 1960s Freedom Rides.

4. Both high school and college students from any state can participate in a Justice Ride. Students have to submit an application and go through an interview process. Students are then trained to make cases against abortion.

5. The staff members and chaperones wear GoPros to record, mainly for safety or for notable conversations.



Nate Bustamante / Alligator Staff

Inter-Residence Hall Association Eco-Reps and UF environmental engineering students Gabby Armin, 20, and Marlee Wasserman, 21, plant echinacea seeds as a part of the IRHA Bloom into Spring campaign on Tuesday.

## Family says Stephen Hawking has died

By the Associated Press

Stephen Hawking, whose brilliant mind ranged across time and space though his body was paralyzed by disease, has died, a family spokesman said early Wednesday.

“He was a great scientist and an extraordinary man whose work and legacy will live on for many years,” his children Lucy, Robert and Tim said in a statement.

The best-known theoretical physicist of his time, Hawking wrote so lucidly of the mysteries of space, time and black holes that his book, “A Brief History of Time,” became an international best seller, making him one of science’s biggest celebrities since Albert Einstein.

Even though his body was attacked by amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, or ALS, when Hawking was 21, he stunned doctors by living with the normally fatal illness for more than 50 years. A severe attack of pneumonia in 1985 left him breathing through a tube, forcing him to

communicate through an electronic voice synthesizer that gave him his distinctive robotic monotone.

As one of Isaac Newton’s successors as Lucasian Professor of Mathematics at Cambridge University, Hawking was involved in the search for the great goal of physics — a “unified theory.”

Such a theory would resolve the contradictions between Einstein’s General Theory of Relativity, which describes the laws of gravity that govern the motion of large objects like planets, and the Theory of Quantum Mechanics, which deals with the world of subatomic particles.

His early life was chronicled in the 2014 film “The Theory of Everything,” with Eddie Redmayne winning the best actor Academy Award for his portrayal of the scientist.

His achievements, and his longevity, also helped prove to many that even the most severe disabilities need not stop patients from living.

## Florida Museum researchers name butterfly after Youtuber

By Remi Storch  
Alligator Contributing Writer

Smaller than a postage note, rusty in color and with metallic scales on the wings, a new butterfly species has been named at the Florida Museum of Natural History — after a Youtuber.

The museum officially announced the discovery of the new species, *Wahydra graslieae*, March 8, said Andrew Warren, the senior collections manager of the McGuire Center for Lepidoptera and Biodiversity at the Florida Museum of Natural History. The butterfly is

named after Emily Graslie, Chicago’s Field Museum of Natural History’s chief curiosity correspondent and Youtuber.

In 2013, Graslie started an educational YouTube channel called “The Brain Scoop,” she said. The channel gives viewers a behind-the-scenes look at natural history museums across the country.

“I am really proud and honored for this sort of recognition,” she said. “It’s pretty exciting as someone who has spent the last five years of their life trying to advocate for the importance of natural history research and taxonomy.”

Graslie, who lives in Chicago, has never

seen the butterfly in person, but she said she hopes to make a visit to the museum soon.

Warren said the species, *Wahydra graslieae*, was first collected by Warren’s collaborator Harold Greeney in Ecuador in 2004. But Warren and the team of researchers did not begin studying the butterfly until 2016, he said. The butterfly was officially announced through a scientific paper March 8.

Warren said there have been no other sighting reports of the butterfly in the wild or in any natural history museum collections.

Warren saw Graslie’s YouTube channel during the first year it was active and liked it

so much he showed three other researchers, he said. About four years later, Warren still keeps up with Graslie’s videos. He said they met in 2014 at the North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences while skinning squirrels.

When Warren and his team had to decide on a name for the new species, they thought of Graslie to recognize the effort she’s put into promoting natural history collections, Warren said.

“Our goal was to honor Emily in a professional manner in recognition of her tireless efforts to promote natural history collections,” he said.

## PACE Center For Girls raising money for new center

THE NEW ADDITION  
WILL SERVE AS A  
MULTIPURPOSE ROOM.

By Christina Morales  
Alligator Staff Writer

Tynesha Owens-Vurse said the staff at the PACE Center for Girls, Alachua, used to call her a butterfly.

“They said before we were in PACE, we were in cocoons, and when we came to PACE, we grew up and became a butterfly,” the 17-year-old said.

The facility currently provides education and counseling to 56 girls with troubled histories, such as incarceration, homelessness or family histories of drug abuse. It is now looking for funding to expand, said Becker Holland, the development manager for the center.

A new 3,400-square-foot addition will be named the Butterfly Center. Holland said they’re working to incorporate the symbol into the design and are speaking to groups about adding a butterfly garden around the center.

“That’s kind of the concept

about PACE,” Holland said. “We want our girls to spread their wings and fly away and be fabulously successful in life.”

Holland said the number of girls enrolled at the center had doubled over the last four years and the center outgrew their large communal space about two years ago. The new center will serve as a multipurpose room with a kitchen, bathroom, laundry room, shower, a large space for programming like drama or musical shows, speakers, a yoga and meditation space and more.

Currently, the center has only one bathroom with four stalls that is shared with 55 to 60 girls and a microwave they use to heat up breakfast and lunch from Lincoln Middle School that they provide for the girls. New showers, a laundry room and a kitchen would help students who need them.

A health and wellness clinic will also be added to help with easily treatable health issues like sinus infections, colds or flus and gynecological issues and screenings that may arise.

“The possibilities are endless,”

Holland said.

It will cost the center about \$500,000 to build the new facility, and it is just short about \$100,000 from the goal. Holland said money was raised through donations and grants.

“We’re grateful for every dime,” Holland said. “I don’t care if it’s \$10 or \$10,000. We’re grateful for every cent the community is willing to invest in our mission.”

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# First female NFL coach speaks at UF about career, success

**ABOUT 50 PEOPLE ATTENDED THE TALK.**

**By Rachel Porter**

Alligator Contributing Writer

Jen Welter never imagined she'd be the first female coach in the National Football League.

Welter, who spoke to a crowd of about 50 for the College of Health and Human Performance's D.K. Stanley Lecture Series, said she never saw someone like her in a coaching position.

On Tuesday, Welter gave tips for success and being a woman in sports. Michael Spear, the director of communications, said Welter was paid

about \$1,000.

Welter became the first female coach in the NFL in 2015 when she began coaching the Arizona Cardinals.

Beth Barton, an applied physiology and kinesiology professor, said the department thought Welter would appeal to students even though she wasn't a standard academic.

"I think the main message is to hear someone that's maybe not the traditional academic succeeding in the world and show that success can come in different flavors," Barton said.

Welter spoke about being doubted by coaches when she went to play tennis and rugby and how she made her own op-

portunities. She told her coaches she wanted to go "hit for hit" with men.

"Everything I couldn't, shouldn't, wouldn't do, I did," Welter said.

Tori Burstein, 21-year-old UF psychology and sports management senior, said she attended the lecture because she is interested in pioneering women in sports.

"I'm really big on female empowerment and women in all fields breaking the glass ceiling and paving the way for other women," Burstein said.

*Contributing Writer Amy Weber contributed to this report.*



Rachel Porter / Alligator

Jen Welter was the first NFL female coach with the Arizona Cardinals in 2015. She spoke to about 50 people Tuesday morning about her story.

# GUIDE TO DINING OUT

## BREAKFAST

### Bagels & Noodles

Serving breakfast and fresh bagels 6:30 am - 3:00 pm. Serving Vietnamese cuisine Pho noodle soup and more. **11 am - 9 pm. 1222 W. University Ave.**

## WORLD

### Civilization

Ride the rail trail to its Northern end and discover lots of vegetarian dishes, espresso drinks, house-made desserts, craft beer and sustainable wine. Dine inside the historic Gulf Oil building or outside under the modern portico. 1511 NW 2nd Street. Open for lunch 11-2, Tues-Fri & for dinner 5:30-9 Tues-Sat. [welcometocivilization.com](http://welcometocivilization.com)

## ORGANIC

### Daily Green

Fresh, unique, organic, food! Soups, salads, sandwiches, waffles, savory waffle cones, homemade sweets, juices and smoothies. Vegan/gluten free options. Like us on Facebook. **436 SE 2nd St. w-sat 11-7, sun-brunch 10-3 [dailygreendowntown.org](http://dailygreendowntown.org)**

## COFFEE

### Maude's Classic Cafe

Serving locally roasted coffee and a wide array of desserts and treats made daily. Bring your own cup for a buck off! Free Wireless, lot parking. Indoor and Outdoor seating. Next to the Hippodrome. **336-9649**. Introducing the Side Car Our Gourmet operations has expanded to include a swanky next door bar! Rotating taps, excellent wine selection. **Open Late**

## FROZEN TREATS

### Karma Cream

We serve the only 100% organic ice cream in town! We also have an impressive selection of organic vegan ice cream, baked goods, sandwiches, fair trade coffee, tea, organic beer and free WI-FI. **Mon-Fri 8am-11pm Sat&Sun 10am-11pm**

## ITALIAN

### Manuel's Vintage Room

This family owned restaurant is perfect for dinner any day of the week. Come in and check out one of the best wine lists in town. Ask questions and learn while you wait for the chef to put out nothing but goodness from the kitchen using fresh, simple, and local ingredients. Ask about our Monday Wine Dinners and private parties for lunch or dinner. Open Tues-Sat 5pm-10pm, Sun 5pm-9pm. **6 South Main St. (352) 375-7372**

## SOUTHERN

### The Yearling Restaurant

Since 1952 Gators have been coming to The Yearling Restaurant. If your parents, grandparents, or great-grandparents went to UF they most likely ate here. We serve gator, frog legs, duck, quail + venison + a wide variety of seafood + steaks. Top it off with our famous sour orange pie. Now that is a meal any FL Gator can enjoy. So come on out to the creek + take a step back in time. Only here can you see the legendary bluesman Willie "The Real Deal" Green, playing nightly.





# RESEARCH ROUNDUP



## New device can capture airborne flu to help identify stains

UF researchers created a device capable of capturing airborne strains of the flu virus to help prevent outbreaks for next flu season, which runs October to February.

Chang-Yu Wu, a UF environmental engineering professor, said he decided to work on the project about 10 years ago because the only available devices, called samplers, could only capture between 5 and 10 percent of the virus in the air. Wu wanted to create a device that could capture more and isolate humans' and animals' virus strains.

The team of five UF researchers, with help from UF undergraduate and graduate students, built a device in their engineering school laboratory to capture 90 percent of the airborne flu virus.

The sampler collects more samples by using water vapor to increase the size of the viruses so they stay in the device.

The project received \$418,598 from the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, a governmental agency that funds research on diseases.

Wu said they have tested the sampler in the lab and UF's Student Health Care Center.

"I hope we have a product that can be available to anyone who wants to use it whether that be public locations like airports, homeland security or chicken farms," Wu said.

- Adam Turner

Alligator Contributing Writer

## UF researchers investigate antibiotic combinations for deadly pathogen

UF Health researchers are developing antibiotic drug combinations that will prevent the spread of the world's deadliest superbug, *Acinetobacter baumannii*, or *A. baumannii*. Superbugs are bacterial pathogens resistant to antibiotics.

Juergen Bulitta, associate professor of pharmaceuticals in the UF College of Pharmacy, said the pathogen is commonly found in hospitals, nursing homes and other health care facilities, and it causes high rates of disease and death in patients. *A. baumannii* is among the most challenging hospital-acquired pathogens in the world and on the top of the World Health Organization's list of priority pathogens in 2017 that "pose the greatest threat to human health."

He said the researchers have been working since 2012 to find new therapies by using dosage regimens that are already available and optimizing them based on molecular data researchers find.

Bulitta and the research team, which is made up of experts from different disciplines, are working to combat a serious human health problem.

"By performing research at UF, our students and post-docs can make a significant and tangible contribution to novel antibiotic dosing strategies," he said. "This can save the lives of patients who have serious, life-threatening infections."

- Rosanne Ramraj

Alligator Contributing Writer

## UF researchers use an infrared camera to map magnetic fields in space

UF researchers started using a camera to detect magnetic fields in space in 2012 and will publish more results in May.

Astronomers used the UF-built infrared CanariCam to photograph an invisible magnetic field in the Milky Way's center, said Charles Telesco, the UF department chair of astronomy, who helped build the CanariCam. The mappings of these magnetic fields will appear in the peer-reviewed astronomy journal *Monthly Notices of the Royal Astronomical Society* in May, Telesco said. The research leads to a better understanding of how Earth, the solar system and the galaxy formed.

"The more we know about (what the camera shows), it gives us a better appreciation of the world," Telesco said.

The researchers received two grants — for \$275,000 in 2009 and \$127,000 in 2015 — from the National Science Foundation, Telesco said.

The camera is attached to the Gran Telescopio Canarias telescope on the La Palma island, which is part of Spain's Canary Islands off the coast of West Africa, he said.

The 1.6-foot-tall and 3.3-foot-across hexagonal camera detects how light travels, and that can answer questions about space and humanity's place in the universe, Telesco said.

"We want to control our environment; we want it to serve us, and at the same time we also want to preserve it," Telesco said.

- Christine Skofronick

Alligator Contributing Writer

# UF student places signs around trash cans for study

By Elliott Nasby

Alligator Staff Writer

Daniel Arizaga paused outside of the Hub on Monday night and stood beside a pair of trash and recycling cans.

The UF nuclear engineering senior studied the two white signs framed by PVC pipe fixtures. One sign had an image of a landfill piled high with trash with two sentences above it.

"Your cans and bottles will be sitting in a landfill 5 times longer

than your life expectancy," it read. "Think before you throw."

Arizaga said he wondered about the sign's message and what it aimed to convey.

"The question is why," the 22-year-old said after reading the sign. "I guess trying to go more green... more than UF already is."

Arizaga was not alone in his curiosity. Across campus Monday, the pair of signs hovered over 10 trash and recycling cans, impossible to ignore. Those intrigued enough to glance at the small sticker on the

poster's other side learned that the set-ups are for a student research project led by UF/IFAS first-year PhD student Amanda Brinton in the School of Natural Resources and Environment.

The 31-year-old, along with two research assistants, placed the signs around campus 1 a.m. Monday because they are interested in people's consumption and waste-disposal habits, she said.

Brinton said she expects people throwing trash away will at least pause and reconsider what it is

they're tossing.

"You're giving that trash can your attention for roughly five to 10 seconds," Brinton said. "Why not actually make it educational and informative?"

The second sign, in big, bold letters, declared "Not Recyclable at UF." Under it, a row of several plastic containers were tightly strung — a plastic Starbucks cup next to a plastic top, a Styrofoam cup next to a plastic straw.

Brinton said she received approval from the facilities services

department before she put up the signs. A UF spokesperson could not confirm if UF knew about the study before she began it. Brinton said she wanted to keep the details of the study, like data and research methods, secret until she reveals the results at the end of the semester.

Until then, the red plastic straws and clear cups will face the wondering eyes of passersby until April 20.

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## Funding will cover Summer

**BILL**, from pg. 1

fiscal summary. Following this legislation, "Medallion Scholars" will have 75 percent of their tuition and fees covered, including during summer term.

The bill will help boost the performance of the university as well as its students, UF spokesperson Margot Winick wrote in an email.

"UF is grateful for the Florida Legislatures' commitment to this important investment in state funding for higher education," she said.

Winick said funding to UF would not only directly benefit students but also could be used to hire faculty, enhance graduate and professional degree programs.

The bill also creates the "Hope Scholarship," which will provide vouchers for public school students who are bullied and wish to transfer to a private school.

The scholarship will be funded by motorists who opt to contribute their sales taxes on purchased vehicles to the organization.

Kailey Hart, a UF zoology sophomore, said receiving the "Academic Scholar" award from Bright Futures lifts a big financial burden off of herself and her family.

"It's been really nice because I've had more time to dedicate toward school," the 19-year-old said.

In the past, Hart felt that the state government didn't invest enough money in its education system. Now with the permanent expansion of Bright Futures, she feels that her hard work in high school is finally paying off.

"It makes it feel very much worth it," she said.

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## SG Senate committee chairs chosen

**FOUR IMPACT BUDGET CHAIRMEN WERE ALSO ELECTED.**

By Christina Morales

Alligator Staff Writer

Impact Party senators will chair all UF Senate's committees, including the budget committee, which allocates about \$20 million to student organizations.

Emily Dunson was elected to the budget committee chair, Trevor Pope was elected to allocations committee chair, Nick Adams for judiciary committee chair, and Audra Weeks was elected for the information and communication committee chair during Tuesday night's Senate meeting. Amanda Holloway was re-elected as the rules and ethics committee chair.

Adams said as judiciary chairman, he wants to better communicate with the authors of constitutions and create a code book for them.

"If we detail that process, students will be more encouraged," Adams said.

For the budget committee, Impact senators Sarah Abraham (Business Administration), Cooper Brown (Freshman), Tyson Dunn (Springs) and Will Sandifer (Sophomore) were voted into the committee. Inspire senators opposed these nominations for seats on the budget committee. The committee will start hearings student organizations' request for funding Friday.

"They're qualified, knowledgeable of the 800 codes and have experience in their time at UF and outside of their time at UF," Dunson said.

During a pro and con debate before the members were elected, the party had concerns with the members' knowledge of the 800 codes, the codes that govern the finance law of the budget committee.

"I would be less upset if there weren't more qualified candidates who applied," Minority Party Leader Nathan Morse said. "We must be able to come together and make unbiased decisions as a group."

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## Editorial

# Let them know you're watching.

**W**hether you realize it or not, you benefit from and want there to be open information laws.

When Richard Spencer came to UF, you wanted to know how much the university spent on security.

When student fees increase, you want to know why.

When the legislature is in session, you want to know what they're voting on, why and how it will affect you.

Anyone can file a public records request. But it's the job of reporters to fight for this information and make it public. And the reason we're able to do this is because of the state's open-records laws, called Sunshine Laws.

But these laws are increasingly being restricted. For example, Florida law exempts the names, addresses and telephone numbers of certain government employees. It has expanded over the years, exempting the same information plus date of birth for people who hold or used to hold any of now more than 50 job titles.

This week is Sunshine Week, a national initiative launched in 2005 by the American Society of News Editors, which celebrates open government laws by promoting conversation on the importance of it.

Even in places with open public records laws, many government offices make it extremely difficult for people to get the information they seek. Some hinder the process by citing privacy acts and other laws — even in cases that might not apply. In other cases, they provide the records with large sections blacked out, making it impossible to read.

It's not just Florida. Washington state's legislature recently tried to end public access to information from the legislature, seeking to exempt elected representatives' emails, calendars, receipts and all other government communication from public knowledge.

According to an article by The Seattle Times, Washington Gov. Jay Inslee received about 20,000 calls and emails from constituents asking him to veto the bill, which he did earlier this month. Thankfully, he vetoed it. But would the constituents have known of the bill if the newspaper hadn't published a story about it in the first place?

While we're glad to see access to information prevail, the fact that an entire elected state legislature got as far as the governor's desk to keep the public ignorant is horrific.

Florida enjoys more access to public information than most states, and as students at a public university, we have access to more information than private school students. It lets us hold people accountable. It's why we ask how much people are paid to speak; it's why we send reporters to every Student Government meeting. You have a right to know what is happening in your university, city, county and state.

But it is not always simple. Last Spring, The Alligator reported on what some sources called a "toxic environment" at UF's Multicultural and Diversity Affairs; we received nearly all blacked-out pages after requesting public records.

Government offices can also charge thousands for requests and take months, even years to fulfill them. If a person of low income seeks information, but gets roadblocked with a large bill, is the information really accessible to the public?

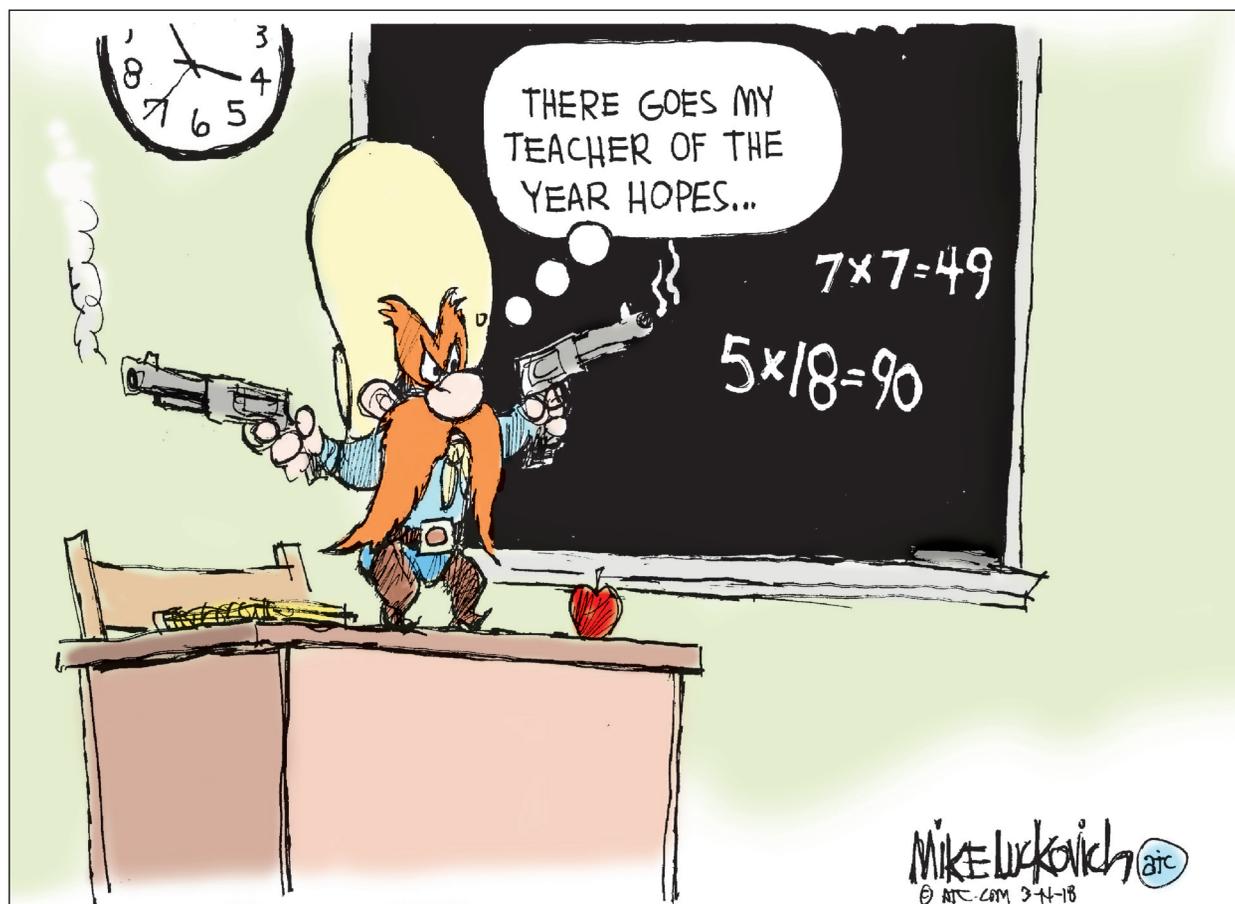
This is why it's important to oppose laws that restrict access to this information while keeping a watchful eye on those who should be complying with them.

Support local newspapers and state organizations like the First Amendment Foundation, which advocate for open records laws. And show up to a government meeting on occasion.

Let them know you're watching.

Melissa Gomez	Abby Miller	Caitlin Ostroff	Jimena Tavel
EDITOR	OPINIONS EDITOR	MANAGING EDITOR, ONLINE	MANAGING EDITOR, PRINT

the independent florida  
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## Column

# Trump's presidency has become reality TV

**O**ne of the main points of criticisms I hear of President Donald Trump is his unseemly and un-presidential behavior. He is not a smooth talker. He tweets more than a teenager does, gives disparaging nicknames to his political opponents and is drowning in scandal. The list could go on for miles. Trump, a reality TV star who once made an appearance on World Wrestling Entertainment, does not fit the position of president of any country, let alone the United States, people often say. And I agree with them.

But we must understand that for those very reasons, Trump is our president. Because he is un-presidential, he is our president.

Those who voted for him appreciated that he was not a lifelong politician, slick and spineless and always smiling for the camera, but that he was brutally honest, mean, defiant and himself. He ran against the establishment and won because large chunks of America want that swamp drained.

There are problems with this sort of logic: whether it is possible for one person in one branch of the government to burn everything to the ground and truly start fresh is a glaring one. The problem I want to discuss, though, is the inevitable dysfunction electing an outsider like Trump brings. The White House has become reality TV: dramatic, scandalized, performative and thus mindlessly entertaining. If it's not the Russian scandal, it's Stormy Daniels, an aide resigning, or an infamous Trump tweet, etc. He called Kim Jong Un "little rocket man." According to The Washington Post, he refused to fire Sean Spicer because "that guy gets great ratings."

Why should any of this surprise us? Trump, at his core, is an entertainer. That's one of the reasons he was elected, because his name-calling and insults and tell-it-like-it-is demeanor made people snicker and confirmed in them their cynical view of government. He has existed in the public eye for decades; he has cultivated a brash, crude and orange persona for the sake of increased ratings. Yet



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we are shocked at what the presidency has become.

We shouldn't be, and I wonder how Trump would respond if we refined our expectations of him. Trump has simply brought his tabloid behavior to the White House. People often scapegoat Trump's voters for this, blaming them for what has happened to America. That is where I break from those people, for the picture is more intricate and interconnected than that.

"Never Trumpers" need to understand their role in the rise of Trump, which is rooted in our entertainment-starved era. Conservatives are not the only ones who watch TV or use social media. In fact, every mainstream late-night comedian — John Oliver, Samantha Bee, Stephen Colbert, Trevor Noah, etc. — lean, if not are, politically leftist in their criticisms and opinions. Late-night comedy, or any comedy, is where many people receive their news today. Why then are these same people baffled at Trump?

Trump is the clearest expression of what these late-night comedians, or the worst of Fox News and CNN, are doing. He blends fact and fiction, comedy and diplomacy, entertainment with maturity, persona with credentials, and slogans with policy. Trump can only exist in a country where the news is shared alongside punchlines. We are like kids who can't eat their vegetables without also eating mac and cheese; we can't absorb news unless it's funny.

Entertainment is the cultural incubator that gave Trump life. Conservatives are not the only ones who feast on tabloids and the E! channel. It is too reductionistic and simple, then, to make conservatives shoulder the blame for Trump's election. Would he have been elected if The New York Times and CNN hadn't obsessively covered his every insult and mistake? I'm not sure. My point, however, is this: Trump's presidency thus far is eerily similar to a reality TV show, and for that, we are all to blame.

Scott Stinson is a UF English junior. His column focuses on popular culture.

The views expressed here are not necessarily those of The Alligator.

Column

# Let's fight for women to be heard – and when the time comes, remembered

**C**harlotte Bronte, Henrietta Lacks and Ida B. Wells: You've probably heard these names because of the notable contributions they gave the world during their lives. However, they were forgotten after they died. At least by one of the country's most widely circulated newspapers.

Until less than a week ago, The New York Times never published obituaries for these three important women — and many others. In an effort to make up for overlooking these women when they died, the editors have created a new series: "Overlooked." Beginning with a special section in Sunday's print edition, the Times will publish obituaries for women (and in the future, men of color and deserving others) whose deaths were not documented in a timely manner.

Other influential women weren't completely forgotten by the Times, but instead were laughably skimped. Frida Kahlo was first referred to as the wife of Diego Rivera in hers. Susan B. Anthony was described by her "firm but pleasing face," according to the Times. Harriet Tubman's was published, too, but at just about 100 words.

The Times continues to forget women. In the last two years, just one in five obituaries were written about women, according to the Times.

William McDonald, the Times' obituaries editor for the last decade, wrote a story explaining why most of their obituaries' subjects are white men. He said it's because obituar-

ies cover the past, rather than the present, and they largely represent the world of the 1950s, 60s and 70s, when gender and racial dynamics were several steps behind where they are now.

Scanning the pages of Sunday's "Overlooked" special edition and reading the obituaries of the 15 featured women, it's almost unbelievable that these women were bypassed by editors at the times of their deaths. How could transgender pioneer and activist Marsha P. Johnson, who at 23 was a key figure in the rebellion after the Stonewall police raid, have been left out of the obituaries? Or Emily Warren Roebling, who directed the construction of the Brooklyn Bridge in the late 19th

century? Or Madhubala, who became a Bollywood superstar despite a hole in her heart?

We can't go back in time, but we can all follow the Times' lead and do our best to right the wrongs of our past. This month — Women's History Month — we can learn about the wrongfully neglected women in our history. Perhaps more importantly, we can make sure to amplify the voices of women who are beginning to make history now. We can all take steps to become better, more intersectional feminists. Let's become people who fight for all women to be heard, believed, supported and when the time comes, remembered.

*Carly Breit is a UF journalism senior. Her column focuses on feminism.*



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Column

# Don't be paralyzed by the unknown, but rather inspired by possibilities

**I**n a culture that worships people who "have it together," it seems as though today's millennials and Gen Zers have been conditioned to fear uncertainty as if it were the plague.

Today's college students are multitaskers, go-getters and just about every other hyphenated phrase in the book. But even with so many opportunities on our plates, we tend to veer away from situations with unknown outcomes. Today's young people are still too easily shut down by the fear of unpredictability.

Why? Uncertainty is a pervasive emotion that roots from different social and psychological factors.

In a society that values the busy, it's not unusual for people to go to great lengths to ensure their daily schedules are meticulous

blueprints laced with set plans rather than blank boxes of opportunity.

Interestingly enough, many people fall back on the comforting and the familiar, especially when it comes to products that help us organize our lives.

For example, although we have seemingly endless options of digital calendar apps and ways to set reminders on our phones, paper planner sales in the U.S. increased by more than \$50 million in the past two years, according to market research organization NPD Group.

Psychologists believe a fear of uncertainty has the power to either threaten or challenge. This means that while some people see uncertainty as a threat to their stability, well-being and goals, others view it as a positive chal-

lenge that motivates them to persevere through the fogginess.

It's the same reason why some students dread open-ended essay questions or projects that lack a right or wrong answer, and why other students love assignments that go against the grain of step-by-step instructions or rigid rubrics.

But many situations and stages in the life are inherently more threatening than the fear that comes with doing a creative project in the classroom.

For example, feeling unsure of where to be in two months or two years, while some people have expertly crafted five-year plans, is a recipe for self-doubt that constantly haunts college students.

Whether it's feeling anxious about post-

graduate life or worrying things won't work out how you envision them, the reality is that everyone battles with uncertainty. And as we go through life, we're bound to encounter more of it.

This is why instead of dreading the (mostly imaginary) ways uncertain situations could turn our lives upside down, I think as college students, we owe it to ourselves to embrace uncertainty and the possibilities it brings.

Let's remember we have the power to turn uncertainty into a challenge that can push us closer to our dreams. Let's not be paralyzed by the unknown but rather inspired.

*Darcy Schild is a UF journalism junior. Her column focuses on sociology and human behavior.*



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## Okeechobee Music Festival Recap: Local performers impress



Photo by Emma Witmer

Flipturn, a local indie-rock band, played at Okeechobee's main stage on Friday, March 2 for a consistently growing crowd.

**By Emma Witmer**  
Avenue Writer

Gainesville's Destination Okeechobee victors kicked Spring Break off right with performances at Okeechobee Music and Arts Festival.

Okeechobee Music and Arts Festival is an annual gathering of artists and music lovers from across the country. Over the course of four days, nearly 300 artists performed for the throngs of eccentrically dressed festival-goers.

These performances, taking place across 12 stages around the festival grounds, included performances from major names like Travis Scott, Halsey, Bassnectar and many others.

Among the many talented artists performing at Okeechobee were Gainesville locals flipturn, The Savants of Soul, and Pearl & the Oysters. Flipturn and The Savants of Soul were the first and second round winners of Gainesville's Destination Okeechobee competition, respectively.

Flipturn's set was Friday, March 2, the second day of the festival. The group seemed to have big shoes to fill as they stepped onto the "Be" Stage, one of the festival's main stages which would also see performances from Slightly Stoopid, Khalid, Snoop Dogg, Arcade Fire and more throughout the weekend.

The response of the ever-growing crowd showed that flipturn's performance was a major success. Each member of the five-piece band was on for the afternoon show, executing their seven studio songs with

high energy and the type of on-stage confidence that one would expect from a much more seasoned band.

"The bigger the stage, the more confident we actually get and the better we play, I think," lead singer Dillon Basse said.

"It's just that energy that's there; we can kind of foster it, I think," synth player Taylor Allen said.

That confidence showed through to more than the crowd, as drummer Adrian Walker recalled a staff member's shock at the realization that such a talented band was performing as a contest winner. Adrian also hoped that this performance allowed flipturn to expand its fan base, especially as the group revealed it is preparing for the release of their second EP.

The Savants of Soul performed later that Friday afternoon at the "Pyramid Palace" stage. The breezy, open-air stage allowed audiences to view the performance from all sides

and get up close and personal with the band.

In the South Florida mid-afternoon heat, The Savants of Soul performed in their traditional style: suits and shades. The large-scale soul band had its audience in a constant state of motion, with an always lively 90-minute set led by The Savants of Soul frontman, Justin McKenzie.

During the red-hot set, The Savants of Soul unveiled their newest unreleased track, "Dead Man Running." McKenzie revealed that the Puerto Rico-recorded single would be set for release in April and would include the release of an accompanying music video.

From flipturn to Arcade Fire and the smallest, most intimate stage to the largest and loudest, Okeechobee's 2018 run was a success on all accounts. Keep an eye out for Avenue's first ever video recap of the event this week.



Photo by Emma Witmer

The Savants of Soul won Round 2 of Destination Okeechobee to play at the festival.

## The best places to spend St. Patrick's Day in Gainesville

**By Natalie Rao**  
Avenue Editor

The biggest drinking holiday of the year, St. Patrick's Day, is just around the corner. Falling on a Saturday for the first time in nearly a decade, this year's celebration of the Irish holiday is guaranteed to be one of the rowdiest to date. With no school or work to worry about, students and locals alike will be out in full force. So break out all the green gear your wardrobe has to offer; here are the best places to spend the holiday in Gainesville.

**Swamppatrick's Day 2018 @ The Swamp Restaurant**

The Swamp Restaurant's St. Patrick's Day celebration may kick off the earliest of all: On Friday, March 16, the bar and restaurant will host their weekly Free Beer Friday with green beer and a green balloon drop at midnight. Along with Irish dancers at 5 p.m. and an annual bagpiper at 8 p.m. on St. Patty's itself, there will be green beer pitchers, \$5 Irish car bombs, \$15 "lucky leprechaun liquor pitchers", Jell-O shots, Irish food and much more.

**St. Patrick's Day @ First Magnitude Brewing Company**

First Magnitude's annual Clean Creek Revival, which benefits cleaning local creeks and waterways, also falls on St. Patrick's Day this year. Starting at noon patrons can enjoy beers

such as Time Out Irish Dry Stout, Irish Red Ale, Green Kiwi Sour, Mint Chocolate Stout and many more for a good cause. Irish bands Scuttured The Bruce and The Resonant Rogues will play from 4 to 7 p.m. and 8 to 11 p.m., respectively.

**Original Gainesville Food Truck Rally @ High Dive**

If you're still going strong by 5 p.m., the Original Gainesville Food Truck Rally also falls on St. Patrick's Day this month. Enjoy food trucks, live music, a silent disco and more, with the event raising money for Habitat for Humanity.

**SOJA @ Heartwood Soundstage**

Trade in Irish jigs for soulful roots reggae

with SOJA, a Grammy-nominated, eight-piece band that's made waves all around the world with smooth releases packed with passion. The show kicks off at 7 p.m. with supporting acts RDGLDGRN and Propaganajah opening. Tickets are available from \$28 to \$62 at [heartwoodsoundstage.com/events](http://heartwoodsoundstage.com/events).

**The Disco Ball - St. Paddy's Day @ The Backyard at Boca Fiesta & Palomino**

If you're somehow able to go through the night after a long day of partying, The Backyard is the place to be. Starting at 9 p.m., the bar will host The Disco Ball, a 70s and 80s themed event with funk, soul, disco and more from DJPFunk. Throwback outfits are encouraged. Entry is \$5 at the door.



Keep up with the Avenue on Twitter. Tweet us @TheFloridaAve.

**Baby Goat Yoga:**  
The viral sensation comes to Gainesville (pg. 9)

**Self-care fair**  
UF Women's Student Association to host free event (pg. 10)

# Flow Space to host Baby Goat Yoga event this weekend

By Gabriella Paul  
Avenue Writer

Fans of the viral YouTube sensation Buttermilk Sky — a young Nigerian dwarf goat that frolics in the grass and leapfrogs over other goat kids — get excited.

Flow Space, a yoga studio downtown, will host its first baby goat yoga session from 2 to 3 p.m. March 17.

In the studio's grassy backyard, with people practicing downward dog with Flow Space co-owner and instructor Maggie Rucker, 10 to 12 baby goats from Whiteacre's Dairy Goats will practice their parkour on and around all the yogis attending.

Catherine Whiteacre, owner of Whiteacre's and family friend of the Ruckers, said she will transport a mix of 12 Nigerian dwarfs and young Nubian goats in big dog crates by pickup truck for the event.

She believes this is the first time Gainesville has seen an event like this. But with it being the first time, she said managing the goats will be interesting.

"If anybody is not behaving, I'm just going to put them in timeout," she said.

Whiteacre said she is trimming all of their hooves and brushing them out before the event.

"So they're nice and clean for the ladies," she said.

Among the goats bounding around the event, Whiteacre said she is most excited for the yogis to meet Pomoji, a five-month-old, solid brown Nigerian dwarf; the four whethers, Salt, Pepper, Olive and Pumpkin; and two Nubians,



Ten to 12 baby goats will travel from Whiteacre's Dairy Goats for Saturday's event, the first of its kind in Gainesville.

Courtesy to The Alligator

Tapioca and Chimichurri.

Nigerian dwarf goats remain miniature their whole lives but still grow to the size of a small dog, while Nubian goats can grow up to around 200 pounds, she said.

For this reason, Whiteacre said it might be difficult to keep around enough baby goats to do yoga events year round.

Although Whiteacre does not practice yoga herself, she said she finds her own kind of meditation in the early and long hours of tending to her goats on the farm.

"You won't find me taking a yoga class and likewise, I'm kind of thinking that these ladies in the class aren't going to be there picking up afterwards and helping de-

liver kids," she said.

Whiteacre believes, in a sense, it is the best of the yoga and the goat world joining together, bringing a little piece of farm life to the yoga mat.

"The (goats) are always upbeat. They're always happy," she said. "The fact that these yoga women are going to be sharing in that much is wonderful."

Rucker, a co-owner of Flow Space and yoga instructor for the event, said she is excited as well.

She assumes the event will be very similar to the kitten yoga that Flow Space hosted in the past.

"Very distracting, but very fun, you know," she said. "For me as an instructor, very distract-

ing because I'm there watching all of the mayhem and laughing so hard."

She said she can't wait to watch yogis try to hold child's pose or downward dog with baby goats jumping all around them.

"It's just healthy, you know," she said, "to just laugh and enjoy nature."

Rucker said her daily motivation is to provide an environment for wellness in the community she is so in love with.

The 24-year-old Gainesville native said her dream was born two years ago.

While working as an instructor at My Yoga Connection, the building that is now her yoga studio, Flow Space, the business

closed down.

Seeing firsthand a loyal yogi community lose the beautiful studio where they loved to meditate, Rucker jumped into action to save the space.

"I needed help; I needed somebody to help me, you know, with this dream," she said.

Enter Hannah Hill, or "Humm", a 21-year-old Gainesville native and daughter of the man who owned the property.

After meeting, Humm and Rucker quickly became business partners and co-owners of Flow Space, opening the doors to the public June 6, 2016.

The space has heart pine floor, brick walls and high arched ceilings, perfect for facilitating meditation and balance, according to the website.

"The space provides an umbrella for so much more than just yoga," Rucker said.

Originally a railroad station identical to the sister building next door, she said the building holds so much history of what came before it.

"It just creates this background of beauty and good vibes," she said. "There have been so many wonderful events that have happened inside of that building even before it was Flow Space."

With upcoming events like goat yoga Saturday, to all of the events in the years to come, Rucker said the mission of Flow Space has evolved and will continue evolving forever.

"We're trying to be, you know, original," she said, "and be whatever we are and trying to continually tune to our own truths."

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**\$3 Craft Cocktail** of the week

**\$ Craft Beer** of the week

Live DJ 9pm - close



**THURSDAY  
LADIES NIGHT**

7pm-12am

**\$5 Flat Breads**  
(Margherita or Buffalo chicken)

**\$2 Premium Wells**

**\$2 Glasses of Wine**

Live DJ 9pm - close

**THURSDAY NIGHT ROOFTOP PARTY**  
All You Can Drink Wells @ 10pm - 12pm  
Door @ 9pm

# Women's Student Association to host self-care fair Friday

## The fair encourages self-love during Women's History Month

By Taylor McLamb  
Avenue Writer

With the semester over half-way over, students of all majors could use some much-needed self-care in their lives. In this spirit, the UF Women's Student Association will host a self-care fair Friday on Plaza of the Americas to commemorate Women's History Month.

The fair focuses on the importance of taking time to take care of oneself and how self-love and acceptance can drastically improve both mental and physical health, something many forget during stressful semesters packed with class, internships, jobs and more. Participating organizations include UF's 3rd Annual Out of the Darkness Walk, Strive UF, UF Counseling and Wellness Center, UF IRHA, Asian American Student Union, Planned Parenthood Generation Action UF and many more.

Alexandra Woodard, a 24-year-old Florida State University alumna, said she was looking for things to do while visiting Gainesville and was drawn to the event's promotion of self-love in a time when society warns women that taking time to focus on oneself is "selfish."

"Society is always telling women their focus should be on men or finding a man or even taking care of their kids," said Woodard. "Women are running everything, but it's still never about us. That in itself makes life kind of stressful for women, so I think we need more time to just focus on our own needs."

The fair will include a variety of activities, with each geared toward the overall goal of self-care. There will be free yoga on



Courtesy to The Alligator

After a long Spring Break, the self-care fair encourages both taking care of and loving oneself.

the lawn at 11:30 a.m., DIY lip and body scrub, learning how to make the perfect sleep kit taught by GatorWell Health Promotion Services and the chance to grab free face masks, tote bags, candles and more.

Makayla Nicholas, an 18-year-old UF business management freshman, said the fact that she was on a tight college budget and couldn't normally splurge on skincare attracted her to the event. She also liked that it was more focused towards self-love and resting instead of just aiming

to achieve nice skin and beauty standards.

"We can be so caught up in our day-to-day activities that we can forget how to take care of and truly love ourselves," Nicholas said. "If we don't love who we are, not just based on how we love or our material possessions, we can't possibly be able to genuinely pour that love into our education, career, communities, families, friends, pets and others we interact with."

Nicholas stresses how, especially with the pressure of classes

and grades, taking just 15 minutes a day to set aside as "me time" can positively benefit our mental health and self-image.

"If we aren't healthy, we won't be able to actively live and enjoy the lives we are trying to build," Nicholas said.

Gainesville's Pace Center for Girls, an organization that strives to provide young women the opportunity for a better future through education, counseling, training and advocacy, will be in attendance collecting hygiene products. For every hygiene

product package you bring, you will be entered to win a raffle.

Nicholas said she's interested in helping out and applauds the organization for the work they do.

"It's important that they are doing this because we need to help our young girls, take care of them, love them, educate them, mentor them and support them," Nicholas said.

The free Women's History Month Self-Care Fair will be Friday from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

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5 Real Estate	10 For Sale	15 Services	20 Event Notices	25 Lost & Found

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								1st Letter Double	
E <sub>1</sub>	I <sub>1</sub>	U <sub>1</sub>	T <sub>1</sub>	R <sub>1</sub>	D <sub>2</sub>	L <sub>1</sub>	<b>RACK 1</b>		
A <sub>1</sub>	E <sub>1</sub>	E <sub>1</sub>	U <sub>1</sub>	N <sub>1</sub>	R <sub>1</sub>	K <sub>5</sub>	<b>RACK 2</b>		
A <sub>1</sub>	E <sub>1</sub>	I <sub>1</sub>	V <sub>4</sub>	T <sub>1</sub>	C <sub>3</sub>	P <sub>3</sub>	<b>RACK 3</b>		
								Triple Word Score	
A <sub>1</sub>	O <sub>1</sub>	Y <sub>4</sub>	K <sub>5</sub>	W <sub>4</sub>	F <sub>4</sub>	L <sub>1</sub>	<b>RACK 4</b>		

**PAR SCORE 145-155**      **FOUR RACK TOTAL**  
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Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions forward, backward, up, down and diagonally

Bottles	Dog	Gun barrel	Suit
Cat	Drums	Hair	Sweaters
Chimney	Fingernails	Pastry	Teeth
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## BASEBALL

# Gators' offense explodes, blows past No. 7 Florida State



Alan Alvarez / Alligator Staff

Florida center fielder Nick Horvath went 3-for-4, notched two RBIs and scored two runs on Tuesday against Florida State in a 12-6 win for the Gators.

**By Justin Ahlum**  
Sports Writer

Nick Horvath stood tall on second base with his hand on his belt buckle. After the Gators center fielder sent a double to left center field that scored two Gator runners, he whipped out some familiar dance moves.

"I've got two wins (in Fortnite)," Horvath said. "It's in the past week, so I'm hot lately."

Horvath, who came into Tuesday's game hitting .315 and playing some of the hottest baseball on the team, went 3-for-4, scoring twice in addition to his two-RBI double.

His final hit of the night was part of a seven run fifth inning that helped No. 2 Florida (16-3) secure a 12-6 win at McKethan Stadium against the No. 7 Florida State Seminoles (14-3). Tuesday night's victory over the 'Noles was UF's 11th win in the past 12 meetings against its in-state rival as the Gators handed FSU its third straight loss.

"I don't really know about (that streak)," coach Kevin O'Sullivan said. "We've just had some really good teams that have played some really clean games."

Freshman Jordan Butler got the nod from O'Sullivan following his heroics on Saturday. Butler provided the game-ending RBI single to complete UF's sweep of Rhode Island over the weekend.

His start Tuesday night came

up short of his actions on Saturday. The young southpaw gave up four runs on five hits in fewer than three innings of work.

The Seminoles started the scoring early in the bottom of the first. Back-to-back solo shots from first baseman Rhett Aplin and catcher Cal Raleigh gave FSU an early 2-0 lead.

Aplin would touch 'em all again in the fourth inning on a two-run blast into the right field netting, doubling the 'Noles lead, 4-2.

After Aplin's second home run, O'Sullivan pulled the plug on Butler's start.

"All in all, we threw three freshmen again tonight. It's a learning experience," O'Sullivan said. "It's just a matter of making a couple pitches here and there to get out of an inning."

But the offense pulled some strings and saved Butler from his second loss of the season.

Third baseman Jonathan India joined the home run bandwagon in the bottom of the second. Florida's third baseman sent a lofty fly ball to the student section in left field that just escaped the confines of Perry Field, giving UF its first run of the ballgame.

UF got another run back in the bottom of the third on an RBI groundout from JJ Schwarz.

After a few scoreless frames, Schwarz came back to the plate in the fifth inning with the bases loaded. The senior sent a deep fly

SEE **BASEBALL**, PAGE 16

## Sweet and Bauer / Opinion

# An honest assessment of bias in today's sports reporting

Long after the Florida basketball team's lifeblood had trickled from its veins on Friday in St. Louis, the Arkansas Razorbacks continued to pound a beaten UF team that just wouldn't

stop trying. That was much to the frustration of one broadcaster on press row, who slammed a table with his open palm and mouthed something under his breath.

The man appeared to be involved with the Arkansas radio broadcast, although his exact role



**Ethan Bauer**  
Twitter: @ebaueri

was unclear. Regardless, his outburst violated one of the cardinal rules of covering sports: No — absolutely **no** — cheering in the press box. Especially when your team has an insurmountable lead.

Casual fans might wonder why this is such an all-important rule. When I started working at the Alligator in 2015, I too wondered why fandom is such a sin in sports journalism, or more specifically why I couldn't wear my Florida hats

SEE **COLUMN**, PAGE 16

## FOOTBALL

# Franks ready for a fresh start in 2018

**By Dylan Dixon**  
Sports Writer

For Feleipe Franks, the start of spring football practice this week brings one thing to the forefront of his mind.

Relief.

Franks, the lanky 6-foot-5, 227-pound quarterback who played in all 11 games for UF last season — starting eight of them — had as disappointing a campaign in 2017 as any player on the Gators' roster.

He completed just 54.6 percent of his passes, the second-worst mark in the SEC among qualified players, and was frequently the target of criticism and blame from

frustrated fans.

But with the Gators' disastrous 4-7 season last fall behind him and first-year coach Dan Mullen providing a new opportunity, Franks is ready for a fresh start.

"It's a sigh of relief, new air in the building," he said. "I don't spend too much time going back dwelling on what I should have done or what I could have did."

Instead, Franks is focused on winning the battle for Florida's starting quarterback job, a competition that begins this Friday when the team kicks off its four-week-long spring practice schedule.

Luke Del Rio and Malik Zaire, UF's other two players to receive time under center last season, left

the program this summer, leaving the inexperienced group of freshman Emory Jones, redshirt freshman Jake Allen and redshirt sophomore Kyle Trask as the only other candidates for the role.

Jones, an early enrollee and the No. 5 dual-threat quarterback recruit in the country, according to 247Sports, appears to be Franks' biggest threat.

He threw for 1,197 yards and 10 touchdowns through the first eight games of his senior year at Heard County High School in LaGrange, Georgia, and also rushed for 494 yards and six touchdowns over those eight games.

Despite Jones' upside and SEE **FOOTBALL**, PAGE 16



Track coach **Mike Holloway** was named the USTFCCA Men's Indoor Coach of the Year on Tuesday, three days after the Gators won a national championship.

## Gators kick off NCAA Championships today

The No. 17 Florida women's swimming and diving team is sending nine of its athletes to compete in the 2018 Division I Women's Swimming & Diving Championships starting today at the McCorkle Aquatic Pavilion in Columbus, Ohio.

## Follow us for updates

For updates on UF athletics, follow us on Twitter at @alligatorSports or online at www.alligator.org/sports



## LACROSSE

# Gators avoid second consecutive loss with comeback victory against Navy

By Tyler Nettuno  
Sports Writer

Despite being tied at 16 with the No. 10 team in the country with just over six minutes to play, freshman midfielder Shannon Kavanagh kept her cool.

With the Gators' abysmal first-half effort that saw the team trailing 10-2 nearly 20 minutes into the game, it seemed unlikely that Florida would ever be in position to win.

But that didn't matter to Kavanagh. She had been held scoreless for the first 49:04 of the game, but when UF was down by one late in the second half, she stepped up and scored the game-tying goal. All of the sudden, the Gators had a chance to take the lead for the first time all day.

With possession of the ball, Kavanagh juked Navy's Jenna Collins. She cut to the right and fired a side-armed

shot in the direction of Midshipmen goalie Ingrid Boyum. Kavanagh's shot snuck past Boyum's left shoulder and found the back of the net.

"Once I started shooting, I thought my stick was hot, and I knew I had to put the ball in the back of the net," Kavanagh said.

The improbable comeback was complete. Kavanagh scored Florida's final four goals as the No. 6 Gators escaped sure defeat against Navy, earning a 19-16 victory.

"(Kavanagh) came in clutch," Gators coach Amanda O'Leary said. "She stepped up when we needed her."

Florida (5-2) narrowly avoided losing back-to-back games for the first time this season, overcoming its poor start to the game.

"They could have quit," O'Leary said. "They could have put their heads down, but they gutted it out."

Florida had no answer for Navy

in the first half. The Midshipmen (5-2) opened the game with five straight goals. With 11 minutes remaining in the half, UF trailed 10-2, the team's largest deficit of the season.

Things went from bad to worse for the Gators, as star junior attacker Lindsey Ronbeck appeared to have injured her knee. She was helped off the field and the severity of her injury is currently unknown.

But Florida then went on a run of its own, outscoring the Midshipmen 6-1 to end the half and cutting the Navy lead to 10-7.

Florida's defense took charge of the game after the first half despite not having its anchor in senior defender Aniya Flanagan, who missed the game with an injury.

UF caused 10 turnovers as opposed to Navy's two. Defender Cara Trombetta caused five of those turnovers, a new career high for her.

"We kept chipping away on offense," she said. "As a defensive unit, we had to back them up and make statements."

Once Kavanagh started scoring, Navy couldn't stop the Gators' offense. Florida finished the game on yet another 6-1 run, sealing the victory.

The team will now prepare for Big East play on Sunday in Nashville when it takes on the Vanderbilt Commodores.

Trombetta said that while the team is trying not to look past its difficult conference opponents, it still has its sights set beyond the regular season.

"We're thinking about right now," she said. "But at the same time, we have playoffs in the back of our head."

## MEN'S TENNIS

# Florida returns home for midweek matchup against TCU

By Dylan Rudolph  
Sports Writer

After a weekend road trip, the No. 12 Florida men's tennis team returns to its home court to play No. 32 TCU on Wednesday. The midweek matchup is set to begin at 6 p.m. at the Ring Tennis Complex.

The Gators (8-5, 3-1 SEC) have won three of their last four matches largely because of their doubles play.

Florida has won the doubles point in four consecutive matches, and the No. 1-ranked duo of junior Alfredo Perez and sophomore Johannes Ingildsen has led the way.

"We are just feeling more comfortable together, and it's showing," Perez said.

Perez and Ingildsen have won all three doubles matches they have finished during the streak.

Florida will look to continue its solid showings in doubles against a tough TCU (7-3) team led by the No. 20 tandem of sophomore Alastair Gray and freshman Alex Rybakov.

The Horned Frogs also have a strong singles squad that includes No. 30 Gray, No. 32 Rybakov and No. 72 Trevor Johnson. Rybakov has won his last five singles matches dating back to Feb. 6.

The Gators' singles play has been unpredictable.

Florida opened its SEC sched-

ule with wins against Georgia and Tennessee, only losing three combined singles matches against the two teams.

However, UF faltered on March 9 and lost all but one point against Mississippi State.

No. 7 Perez was the central focus after he lost in straight sets in back-to-back singles matches before he rallied on March 11 against Auburn to get back into the win column.

"(Perez) got back to the basics," coach Bryan Shelton said. "He was able to stay calm, control his emotions and it resulted in solid play."

Against Auburn, Shelton also restructured the singles lineup. He placed junior McClain Kessler into the lineup for the first time since Feb. 17 and senior Jordan Belga for the first time all season.

Belga made the most of his opportunity and won his match in straight sets 6-2, 6-2.

"You never know what could happen," Belga said. "You have to always be ready to play."

To prepare for TCU, Florida has worked on its situational play. Shelton has expressed frustration in the team's ability to close out matches.

"We need to make sure we're at our best in those big-point moments," Shelton said. "I know we will be."

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Alan Alvarez / Alligator Staff

Midfielder Shannon Kavanagh matched her career high of four goals Tuesday against Navy. "She came in clutch," Gators coach Amanda O'Leary said.

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tnettuno@alligator.org

## SPORTS ISSUES 2018

RUN 5 OUT OF 14 DATES AND SAVE 15%

FRIDAY, JANUARY 12  
Gymnastics vs. LSU

FRIDAY, JANUARY 26  
Gymnastics, Tennis

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 2  
Men's Basketball vs. Alabama

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 9  
Gymnastics, Softball vs. Michigan

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 16  
Baseball, Lacrosse

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 23  
Men's Basketball, Gymnastics, Softball

FRIDAY, MARCH 2  
Men's Basketball vs. Kentucky, Baseball

MONDAY, MARCH 12  
Men's NCAA Basketball Tournament

FRIDAY, MARCH 23  
Baseball, Softball, Tennis

FRIDAY, MARCH 30  
Baseball, Track & Field, Softball, Lacrosse

FRIDAY, APRIL 13  
Baseball, Track & Field, Softball, Tennis

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 25  
Softball, Baseball

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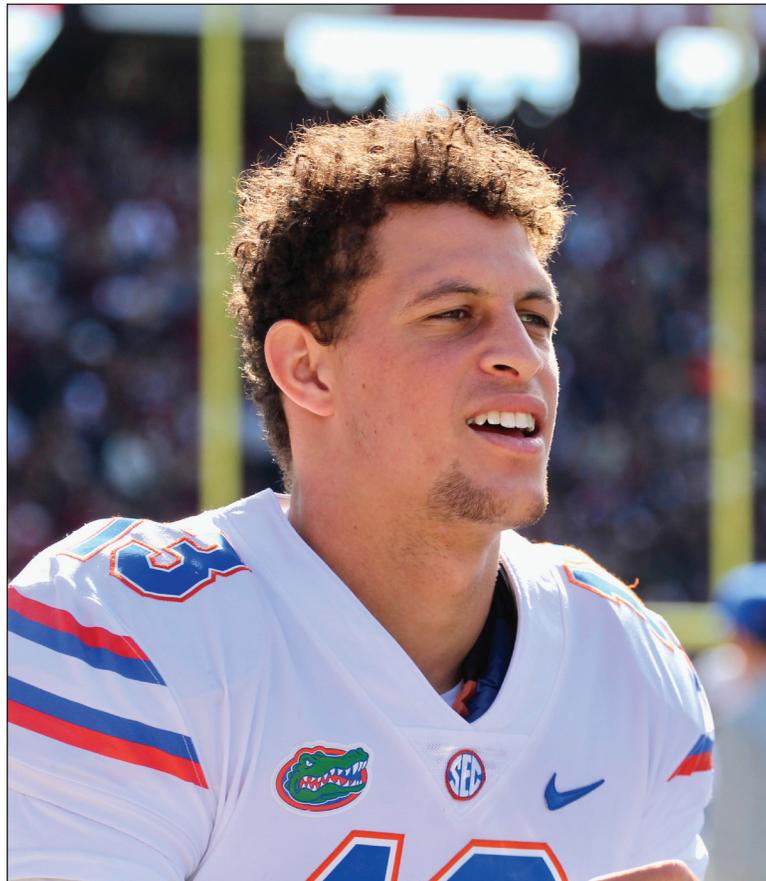
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## Franks: We closed the book on last year



Alan Alvarez / Alligator Staff

Florida quarterback Feleipe Franks is looking to move on from a disappointing 2017 campaign.

### FOOTBALL, from pg. 14

Franks' inconsistencies, teammates haven't backed away from voicing support for last season's starter.

"Even though (Franks) had his ups and downs, he never showed that he was down," junior receiver Josh Hammond said. "That was big for us just as a team moving forward knowing that he would never give up."

And Franks has shown flashes of potential.

He completed 19-of-28 passes against Tennessee on Sept. 16, including a game-winning 63-yard touchdown to receiver Tyrie Cleveland as time expired. He also recorded a 79-yard run against Texas A&M on Oct. 14, breaking the record for longest rush by a quarterback in school history.

"I've always wanted to lead the team and be that guy that can bring us to a championship," he said. "I know it doesn't seem that way, the way last year went. But like I said, we closed that book."

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## Bullpen tossed 6.2 near-scoreless innings vs. 'Noles

### BASEBALL, from pg. 14

ball to left that was caught at the warning track. The shot was deep enough for Austin Langworthy to score from third and tie the game at four. He finished the game 1-for-3 with two RBIs and a walk in his last AB.

In the fifth, an RBI groundout off the bat of Deacon Liput, kick-started UF's seven-run inning, putting Florida on top for the first — and last — time in the ballgame.

In addition to Horvath's double, first baseman Keenan Bell came through with a two-run double of his own. And in his second at bat of the inning, Langworthy sent a single through the left side to score Horvath in the process.

Florida scored its final two runs thanks to India's bat. He hit a sacrifice fly in the sixth, and launched a home run that nearly reached the doors of Gate 2 at the O'Connell Center.

The junior finished 2-for-2, scoring three times and driving in three runs. He collected his fifth and sixth home runs of the season, but said he doesn't consider himself a power hitter.

"If I put a good swing on the ball and square it up, it'll go pretty far," India said.

With the offense in a groove, the Gators' bullpen took control after Butler was pulled, guiding the Gators through 6.2 near-flawless innings. Butler's relief gave up only one hit prior to the eighth inning, when FSU picked up its final two runs of the game.

Tommy Mace hurled 3.1 scoreless innings, striking out four and walking only two batters, as Andrew Baker, Jack Leftwich and Michael Byrne finished the game for Florida.

The Gators will hit the road to start conference play. South Carolina will host UF this weekend, with Florida expected to throw its usual weekend starters. O'Sullivan said the trip to Columbia won't be easy.

"Any time you go on the road for the first time in the league, it's just a totally different atmosphere," O'Sullivan said. "We're gonna have to handle that as well."

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## COLUMN, from pg. 14

and T-Shirts anymore. But while *The Alligator* and other traditional media outlets draw a hard line between journalism and fandom, that line is constantly blurred in the ever-evolving sports media landscape, which has its pros and cons.

The pro side of merging the two is that it allows reporters — and I think fans, to some extent — to have more fun. The most exciting part of sports is fandom, and asking someone who likes sports enough to write about them for a living to give that up seems akin to forcing priests to be celibate. It's arguable that it's necessary, but it's certainly not ideal.

A growing number of voices argue that bias doesn't matter because everyone is biased, so what really matters is transparency. If you're a Florida fan writing about the Gators, the theory goes, then just say so. People will trust you just as much for being honest.

Plus, if the era of "fake news" has revealed one principle above all, it's that people are drawn to writing that promotes their viewpoints and biases. It might not be ideal ethically, but fandom-fueled writing can be lucrative, hence the rise of SBNation sites like Alligator Army or Tomahawk Nation.

But embracing fandom as a sports writer obviously has its pitfalls. If you're open about supporting the Gators as a Florida beat writer, you won't be trusted to provide fair coverage of, for example, the credit card scandal that infected UF's football program in

2017. Or about sexual assault allegations against players, arrests, etc.

That isn't to say it's impossible to be an objective fan, but let's be honest — it's a practical requirement of fandom to abandon nuance and objectivity and root for whatever outcome is best for your team.

The debate over objectivity in sports reporting has reached some of the industry's more prominent figures.

"I'm an old man. An old, old, old man," sports writer Jeff Pearlman wrote on Twitter back in February. "But when I was coming up in journalism, there was no "my coach" or "my team" or "my guy." You were handed a laptop, a credential, a pad and a pen and you covered sans bias, leanings, favorites. You just wrote and reported."

He was responding to a tweet from Master Tesfatsion, a Bleacher Report writer who used to cover the Redskins for the Washington Post, calling Arizona State football coach Herm Edwards "my coach." Tesfatsion is, as you may have guessed, an Arizona State alumnus.

A tame debate between the two ensued, and neither gave any ground. That result pretty much illustrates the point I'm getting at.

The answer isn't really yes, it's OK to be a sports reporter and a fan, or no, you can't combine the two. Depending on your goals as a reporter or sports media personality, you can go either way.

Ethan Bauer is a sports writer at *The Alligator*. Contact him at [ebauer@alligator.org](mailto:ebauer@alligator.org).

## THIS WEEK IN UF SPORTS

### Wednesday, March 14

Women's Swimming & Diving @ NCAA Championships, All Day

Men's Tennis vs. TCU, 6 p.m.

### Thursday, March 15

Women's Swimming & Diving @ NCAA Championships, All Day

Men's Basketball vs. St. Bonaventure, 9:57 p.m., *TruTV*

### Friday, March 16

Men's Golf @ Schenkel Invitational, All Day

Women's Swimming & Diving @ NCAA Championships, All Day

Men's Tennis vs. Kentucky, 5 p.m.,

Women's Tennis @ Georgia, 5 p.m.

Softball @ Georgia, 6 p.m., *SEC Network+*

Baseball @ South Carolina, 7 p.m., *SEC Network+*

### Saturday, March 17

\*Men's Basketball vs. Texas Tech/Stephen F. Austin, TBD

Men's Golf @ Schenkel Invitational, All Day

Women's Swimming & Diving @ NCAA Championships, All Day

Softball @ Georgia, 2 p.m., *SEC Network+*

Baseball @ South Carolina, 4 p.m., *SEC Network+*

### Sunday, March 18

Men's Golf @ Schenkel Invitational, All Day

Women's Golf @ Evans Derby Invitational, All Day

Women's Tennis @ Tennessee, Noon

Baseball @ South Carolina, 1 p.m., *ESPN2*

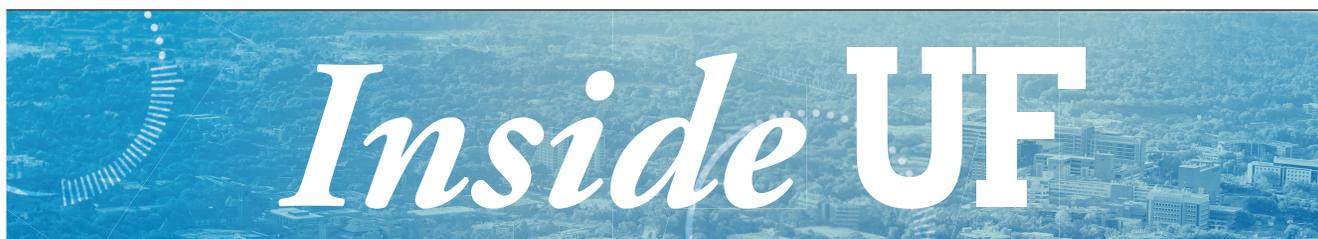
Men's Tennis @ Vanderbilt, 1 p.m.

Lacrosse @ Vanderbilt, 2 p.m., *Facebook Live*

Softball @ Georgia, 2 p.m., *SEC Network+*

\* = If Necessary





Wednesday, March 14, 2018

*Your campus connection for all things UF*

## State Audit of Insurance Dependents Coming This March

If you have a dependent covered under a State of Florida health insurance plan, you may have received a postcard in recent weeks alerting you to an upcoming audit to be conducted by Health Management Systems Inc. (HMS). UF employees with covered dependents should keep a close eye out for dependent verification requests from HMS beginning this March to ensure their dependents do not lose coverage.

Employees receiving requests for dependent documentation must respond promptly and submit appropriate documentation as noted in the request directly to HMS. Failure to submit legible copies of required documents can result in termination of insurance coverage for the dependents in question. For more information, please visit: [hr.ufl.edu/benefits-rewards](http://hr.ufl.edu/benefits-rewards).

## ACCENT Presents: Dan Mullen

ACCENT Speakers Bureau presents Gators football coach Dan Mullen Tuesday, Mar. 20 at the University Auditorium. Doors will open at 6 p.m. and the speaking engagement will begin at 7 p.m. Students with a valid UFID may pick up a maximum of two tickets free of charge from the ACCENT office on the third floor of the J. Wayne Reitz Union on Mar. 19 between the hours of noon and 5 p.m. If any tickets remain, they will be made available to the general public at the University Auditorium Box Office at noon the following day.

Dan Mullen's career as a head coach began in 2009 when he coached the Mississippi State Bulldogs. He coached Mississippi State to an impressive 52-14 victory over Michigan in the

2011 Gator Bowl. Mullen has the second-most career wins of any Mississippi State head coach ever with a 69-46 record. In 2014, he earned the SEC Coach of the Year award and the George Munger Award.

Before becoming the head coach at UF, Mullen was the offensive coordinator at UF from 2005 to 2008. Here, he coached two quarterbacks that each led the Gators team to Heisman consideration. These quarterbacks include Tim Tebow and Chris Leak. During his time coaching at UF, the Gators averaged more than 42 points per game each year. This has only been accomplished one other time in school history. In his final year as the offensive coordinator, the Gators won their second national title in three years.



## Big Orange Festival Brings Music, Comedy, More to Reitz

The Reitz Programming Board proudly presents the 5th Annual Big Orange Festival at the Reitz Union on Friday, Mar. 23 from 7 p.m. – 12 a.m.

The event will feature a concert, comedy show, entertainment, free food, t-shirt giveaway, live DJ, movie and more. Music and comedy artists to be announced soon!

Early ticketing for the music and comedy acts will be held on Tuesday, Mar. 20 and Thursday, Mar. 22 from 11 a.m. – 2 p.m. at the Reitz Union North Lawn Tabling Area.

Free to UF Students with a valid Gator 1 Card.



## One.UF Continues to Grow

ONE.UF continues to evolve as UF's self-service mechanism. The Office for Student Financial Affairs has begun packaging financial aid for students for the 2018-19 award year, and students will soon be able to view their aid packages and report additional aid in ONE.UF. Students will also be able to complete registration prep tasks, view the schedule of courses, and view action items (service indicators and notifications) in ONE.UF. Read more about ONE.UF in the latest issue of the COMPASS Update newsletter at: <http://compass.ufl.edu>.

## UF Vet Med to Host Annual Open House

UF College of Veterinary Medicine is holding its annual open house and community outreach event on Apr. 21 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. The college and UF veterinary students host this fun and educational event for the community to showcase the innovative and exciting work taking place at UF in Veterinary Medicine. It's free and open to the public. For a schedule of events and more details visit: [vetmed.ufl.edu/openhouse](http://vetmed.ufl.edu/openhouse).

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# TIP OFF

## INSIDE

Keith Stone fell into a self-admitted “dark place” earlier this season after receiving backlash on social media for his poor play. Now, the forward is performing at a high level ahead of Florida’s NCAA Tournament opener.

## ONLINE

Visit [alligator.org/sports](http://alligator.org/sports) for coverage of UF’s March Madness run.

# REBOUNDED FROM A DARK PLACE



## Rebounding from a Dark Place:

*Keith Stone has bounced back this season after receiving criticism from fans*

By **Jake Dreilinger**  
Sports Writer

Keith Stone glanced down at his phone as it started to buzz.

Another Twitter screenshot sent from his parents blinked into existence on his screen.

The 2017-18 Florida men's basketball season had just started and Stone — a 6-foot-8, 245-pound power forward — was poised to have a breakout year following a solid showing in his freshman campaign.

But other than a 14-point performance against North Florida on Nov. 16, he wasn't living up to those expectations early in the fall. He began this season averaging 5.8 points per game and shot 36.9 percent from the field through the team's first 13 contests.

Eventually, UF fans took notice and went to Twitter to voice their opinions, which prompted his parents to send him screenshots.

"Honest question: what are the reasons Keith Stone sees the court, much less starts?" Twitter user @RotoGrindersCam tweeted. "He makes poor decisions and lacks coordination and talent. -- Frustrating to watch almost every game."

Another user, @C\_Austin\_3, tweeted, "Keith stone aggravates me on the offensive end sometimes."

Stone's parents sent him the screenshots hoping to motivate their son. However, the messages only made the situation worse.

For the first time, Stone was subjected to the negatives of Twitter. Back in high school at Zion Lutheran, the Deerfield Beach, Florida, native received nothing but praise as one of the top players in the state.

No one is going to tweet about how bad a high school kid

is, after all.

But for Stone — who is near the end of a breakout year for the Gators as they head into the NCAA Tournament on Thursday with a first round matchup against St. Bonaventure — tweets like those began to derail his confidence.

He spiraled into a self-admitted "dark place," one that he struggled to escape at the start of the season.

Stone was down on himself and his level of play. He wasn't as motivated in practice, and his production suffered for it. He held back on shots and failed to crash the boards. On the defensive end, he was frequently in foul trouble by the end of the game. His minutes dipped as a result, and venomous tweets continued to be sent his way by fans.

"I was like 'Dang, that's how they really feel about me?'" Stone

said about the social media backlash. "So I was like 'Alright,' and I kinda lost confidence in doing anything."

The first thing you need to know about Keith Stone to understand why he fell into a dark place is that he is shy. Like, really shy. Like toddler-meeting-a-stranger-for-the-first-time shy. He keeps to himself, minces his words and is very soft spoken.

That's just who he is. It's easy to see that when he's talking to the media. His answers to reporters' questions are never more than three sentences long, and it's obvious that he feels slightly overwhelmed in the presence of those he doesn't know.

"It takes a while for him to warm up to people," said John Guion, Stone's high school coach. "He was never a vocal leader."

The second thing you need to know about Stone is that he wasn't naturally gifted at basketball. He had to work for it.

The future Gator was tall and had a nice-looking shot, but that was about it, something that didn't help him in his first year playing high school ball.

"He was not the clear-cut best player on our team his freshman year, that's for sure," Guion said with a chuckle.

While he wasn't Zion Lutheran's star athlete, he developed the drive to become one. Stone was at the gym almost every day and spent most of his time building muscle.

When he wasn't at the gym, he was at the park practicing his game with Guion.

His hard work eventually paid off. Stone eclipsed 2,000 career points and was the FABC Class 2A Player of the Year his senior season at Zion Lutheran. He was also First-Team All-Broward County his junior and senior years.

"He made me a better coach," Guion

said. "He made players around him better."

With his bashful personality and accustomization to being the star player after years of hard work in high school, the social media vitriol he experienced in Fall 2017 was too much for him to handle.

For Stone to work so hard to rise to the apex of high school basketball, only to make it to the next stage and fail, was not only a bruise to his ego but also personally haunting.

Compounding this effect, when Stone had a bad game at the college level, he was met with virtual ire from thousands of Gators fans. And as shy of a person as he is, having to face those criticisms was overwhelming.

Seeing so much of it through Twitter pushed him further and further into a dark place, where he didn't want to deal with judgements any more.

"I'm just a 19-, 20-year-old kid," Stone said.

So here was Keith Stone, just going through the motions early in the season. Rather than ignore what he saw on social media, he started to believe it.

"I had no confidence," Stone said. "I was worried about what everybody was saying."

He second guessed himself and became limited in his shot selection. He struggled on the boards and averaged 3.2 rebounds per game through the first 13 games of the 2017-18 season. Stone was also turning the ball over. He gave it up 20 times in that 13-game span.

His trust in himself slowly dwindled with every lackluster performance, and the tweets became more frequent.

"People that are die-hard Gators were expecting more of him," Guion said. "They don't see what's going on. They don't know him."

Something needed to change. Just like he did with Guion in high school, Stone decided to start using UF coach Mike White as a resource.

"I just needed to have a meeting with him just to talk to him because we really didn't talk a lot," Stone said.

The thing about White's talks is they tend to work wonders on his players. Case in point, current starting guard Chris Chiozza.

Chiozza was in a similar situation as Stone: not playing up to his potential. But after having a one-on-one meeting with White last season, Chiozza's confidence became rejuvenated.

Stone hoped a meeting with White would do the same for him. He remembers the meeting well. It occurred early in the season, where White reassured the redshirt sophomore and reminded him about the type of player he is.

He told Stone that he needed to focus on the little things, like boxing out on rebounds and limiting his turnovers. But the point that really made an impact was a simple one: go out there, have fun and play.

That was when everything clicked. Stone let go. During Florida's game against Incarnate Word on Dec. 22, that new nirvana became obvious.

"I just played and just didn't think about anything," Stone said. "Even though I didn't play hot, the way people expected me to play, I just went out and played."

He only scored six points that game, recorded three offensive rebounds and reached the charity stripe five times. But there was something different about Stone.

"He felt really good coming out of that meeting and having things cleared up in his mind," Guion said. "He came out of that feeling a lot better about himself."

Now that Stone's confidence was back, it was time for that strong work ethic from high school to return as well.

He started shooting better and taking more shots. He also started playing stingier defense, grabbing more rebounds and recording either a block or a steal in almost every game after the meeting with White.

Stone knew he was playing better, but the fans didn't realize it until the Gators' 83-66 win over Texas A&M on Jan. 2. Stone finished second on the team with 18 points — a then-season high — and shot 50 percent from the floor.

"For about a month now he's just been consistently very good in practice," White said following Florida's matchup with the Aggies. "We're seeing it more and more in games."

Remember those tweets from

the beginning? The ones that questioned why Stone was out on the court or how Stone's offense can be aggravating?

He saw them. He heard the critics. He understands why the fans felt that way.

He just learned to not care. Before making the decision to just stay off Twitter during the season, Stone used to reply to the negative messages.

"Appreciate it!!" he responded to @C\_Austin\_3, the user who tweeted that he became aggravated when watching Stone on offense.

Stone did that two more times to tweets that have since been deleted. This was in November.

Stone hasn't done anything like that since.

"Twitter is kind of bad, because people who have my @ name could tell me anything, so I just stay away from it," Stone said.

As both Guion and White like to say, it's part of Florida's players trying to "eliminate the noise."

"I encourage him never to respond," Guion said. "Stay above that."

As Stone has continued to play better this spring, those negative tweets soon transformed into praise.

Following Stone's team-leading 22-point performance in an SEC Tournament loss against Arkansas on Friday, new messages came flooding at his Twitter handle like water gushing through a broken dam.

"Keith Stone is the only thing that matters tonight," @RealMBB wrote.

"Gators playing like garbage but don't let that distract you from Keith Stone having an amazing night," @AviaGridi wrote.

He's developing into an important player for the Gators and forgetting about his time in the "dark place" ahead of the NCAA Tournament.

"It's pretty great knowing that I can help the team contribute in many ways," Stone said. "Getting rebounds or playing solid defense on the best post player, anything that'll help the team win."

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jdreilinger@alligator.org

## The Madness Begins

**Who:** Florida (20-12) vs. St. Bonaventure (25-7)

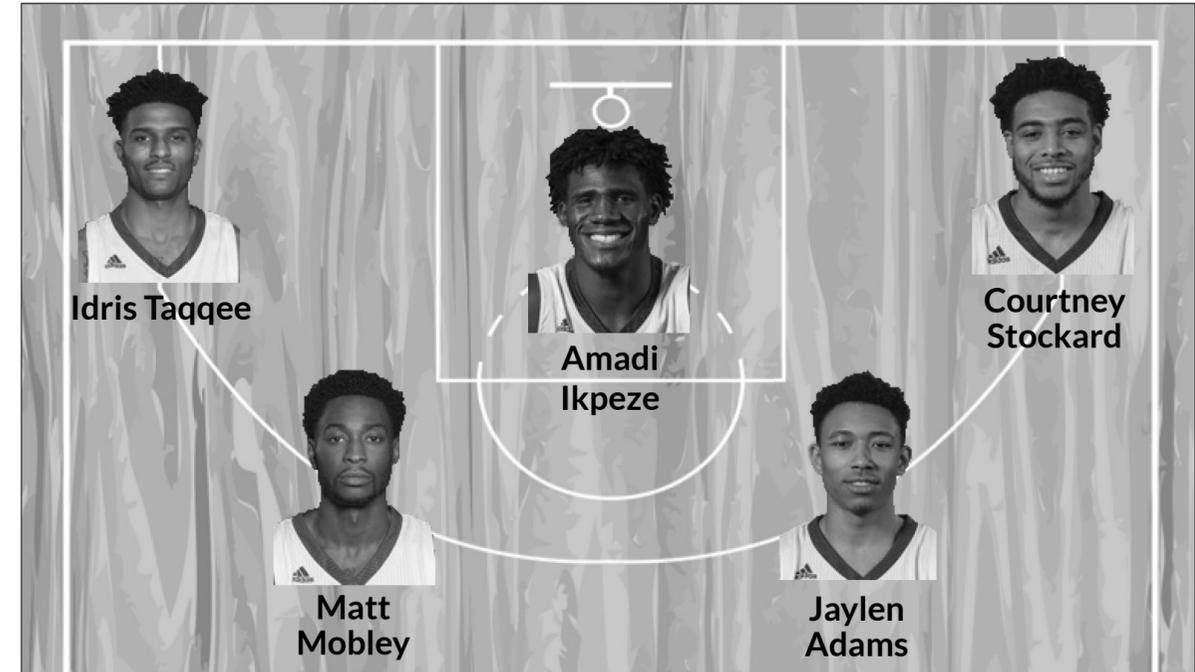
**What:** First Round of 2018 NCAA Division I Men's Basketball Tournament

**Where:** American Airlines Center in Dallas, Texas

**When:** Thursday at 9:57 p.m.

**TV:** TruTV

### St. Bonaventure's Projected Starting Lineup



### Florida's Projected Starting Lineup

