

# alligator



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## UPD to move into portables amid building safety concerns

**THE DEPARTMENT HAS BEEN TRYING TO GET A NEW BUILDING FOR NEARLY A DECADE.**

**By Christina Morales**  
Alligator Staff Writer

Every work day, Sgt. Walter Hamby walks into the University Police building at 5:30 a.m., gears up in his uniform and weaponry, conducts roll call and checks the

police vehicles.

On Nov. 5, Hamby was going through the same routine, searching for radios in room 108B, a weapons storage on the first floor where guns, radios and a wooden podium are kept.

But as he walked toward the radios, Hamby's right foot faltered. In a matter of seconds, the 6-foot officer was knee-deep in the floor. He tried to pull himself up, but was unsuccessful. He called Officer Steve Wilder to help him out. The floor began to

collapse under Wilder as he rescued Hamby, but no one was injured.

"You think you're standing on a firm surface and all of a sudden it disappears from under you," Hamby said.

The UPD building, at 1555 Museum Road, experienced problems with mold, asbestos, humidity and weak flooring over the last few months. There is always someone in the 3,572 sq. ft. building, which 50 employees work out of, but it can no longer support the needs of the department, said

Deputy Chief Darren Baxley.

"It's just not ideal to run a modern police department out of," Baxley said.

The staff will vacate this week and work out of a modular building — of three portables bolted together — near Jennings Hall while the building is assessed for safety and tested by a private contractor, which could take about three weeks. The temporary facility will be about 3,500 square feet

SEE UPD, PAGE 4



Emma Green / Alligator

### SEE YOU LATER, ALLIGATOR

Mascot Albert E. Gator greets a young Gator fan during the Orange & Blue football game on Saturday. The scrimmage, held at Ben Hill Griffin Stadium, had 53,015 in attendance. See the story, pg. 14.

## UF increases funding, resources for DRC

**UF IS SPENDING \$474,926 FOR ADDITIONAL RESOURCES.**

**By Jessica Giles**  
Alligator Staff Writer

UF announced Thursday it will provide more resources and funding for the Disability Resource Center to meet its growing demand.

During the 2012-13 academic year, the center served 1,214 students. This academic year, 3,055 students are registered to receive help from the center. However, only one more specialist had been added in the meantime — bringing the team from four people to five, according to Alligator archives.

To remedy the lack of resources, the Provost's Office will spend nearly \$475,000 on the center, UF spokesperson Margot Winick wrote in an email. Winick

said the decision had been in the works for about a year.

The university will use \$384,030 to make four more residence hall rooms in Cypress Hall accessible for students with severe mobility impairment, according to a news release. The DRC will also hire an additional learning specialist and graduate assistant, which will cost \$90,896 annually, to help with one-on-one mentoring, lead training initiatives and help students transition in and out of college, said Gerardo Altamirano, director of the DRC.

As of now, there are about 620 students for every one learning specialist. The additional specialist will reduce this ratio to 442 students for every one learning specialist, according to the news release.

Altamirano said he hopes wait times are reduced to less than two weeks and appointments aren't

SEE DRC, PAGE 4

## Loblolly Woods Nature Park reopens after wastewater spill

**GRU AND A CONTRACTOR WERE FINED AFTER 600,000 GALLONS SPILLED.**

**By Jessica Giles**  
Alligator Staff Writer

Loblolly Woods Nature Park reopened early Thursday after being shut down for nearly a week due to raw sewage overflow.

The park closed April 6 after two separate spills resulted in about 615,000 gal-

lons of wastewater being released into the area. The Alachua County Environmental Protection Department is fining Gainesville Regional Utilities \$292 for the spills and will fine GRU contractor Oelrich Construction, Inc. \$146, said county spokesperson Mark Sexton.

On April 5, Oelrich Construction struck a main sewer line while working in the park, resulting in about 150,000 gallons of sewage leaking into the area, about 4,000 of which drained into Possum Creek, ac-

ording to a GRU report.

The next morning, GRU was notified of another incident, this time a hose at 2610 NW Eighth Ave. was knocked out of place, resulting in another 465,000 gallons of wastewater being released, according to the report. GRU doesn't know what disturbed the bypass hose.

GRU and Oelrich Construction were responsible for the cleanup and ultimately recovered about 250,000 gallons of wastewater from the site, GRU spokesperson Da-

vid Warm wrote in an email.

GRU anticipates Oelrich Construction will pay for the fines associated with the accidents, Tony Cunningham, a GRU Water and Wastewater officer, wrote in an email. GRU was issued two fines because it owns and operates the wastewater collection system and is responsible for the permit.

In January 2017, a sewage spill affected UF's campus when 2,000 gallons of waste-

SEE SEWER, PAGE 4

### FLORIDA'S QB SITUATION UNCLEAR

After the Gators' Orange and Blue Game on Saturday, not much has changed regarding the team's starting quarterback competition, pg. 14



### Program teaches children problem-solving

Students learn life skills while exploring nature, pg. 10

### UF student wins \$15,000 research award

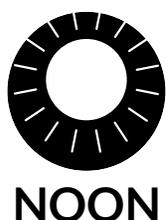
He was one of 211 scholarship winners, pg. 10

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## Today's Weather



HIGH 70° LOW 46°

## Local Events / News in Brief

### WHAT'S HAPPENING?

#### Florida Swing Dancing Club

The Florida Swing Dancing Club will hold a Spring Formal at 8 p.m. Friday with lessons at the Thelma A. Boltin Center. There will be a beginner lesson, food and dance games. Those interested do not need to bring a partner. Dancing will commence at 9 p.m. and last until 11 p.m.

#### 'Hearoes for Hearing' 5K registration

"Hearoes for Hearing" is hosting its 13th annual 5K on Saturday at 8 a.m. at the Commuter Lot. The race raises money for the UF Cochlear Impact Fund and provides patients with profound hearing loss with services that connect them to friends and family. All proceeds go directly to patients at UF Health receiving cochlear implants. To register for the race, it is \$25 for adults and \$15 for children. For more information, contact [ufhearoesforhearing@gmail.com](mailto:ufhearoesforhearing@gmail.com).

#### Dog wash to benefit St. Francis Pet Care

On Sunday at One Love Cafe, located at 4989 NW 40th Place, St. Francis Pet Care is hosting a dog wash to benefit the shelter. The event is free, but donations will go toward the shelter's

new clinic, which is set to open in the fall. For more information, visit [stfrancispetscare.org](http://stfrancispetscare.org).

#### Asian Pacific Islander Desi American Heritage Month

April commemorates the first Japanese immigration to the U.S. on May 7, 1853. It also honors the Chinese immigrants who worked to complete the transcontinental railroad on May 10, 1869. Asian Pacific Islander American Affairs will celebrate Asian Pacific Islander Desi American Heritage Month with events until April 23. The 2018 theme is the Japanese concept of ikigai, meaning "a reason to live."

#### Midnight Fun Run

UF RecSports is calling all superheroes for a Midnight Fun Run on April 25. The event is open to faculty, staff, students and guests. Each participant will receive an event T-shirt and breakfast following the race. Register today on RS Connect.

#### 'What Were You Wearing?' Art Exhibit

The "What Were You Wearing? Art Exhibit" is being displayed until April 30 on the third floor of the Ustler Hall Library. STRIVE at GatorWell and the American Student Medical Association have collaborated with anonymous UF student



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

survivors to show the outfits they wore during their attacks. For more info, call 352-273-4450.

#### Talking Gators Toastmasters

Talking Gators Toastmasters, which helps people get more comfortable speaking in public, meets at 5:45 p.m. every Tuesday in Entomology Building, Room 1031. Meetings are free to attend and open to all. For more information, visit [talkinggators.toastmastersclubs.org](http://talkinggators.toastmastersclubs.org).

#### 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.

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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### NEWSROOM

352-376-4458 • Fax: 352-376-4467

**Editor** Melissa Gomez, [editor@alligator.org](mailto:editor@alligator.org)  
**Managing Editor, Online** Caitlin Ostroff, [costrhoff@alligator.org](mailto:costrhoff@alligator.org)  
**Managing Editor, Print** Jimena Tavel, [jtavel@alligator.org](mailto:jtavel@alligator.org)  
**Beats Editor** Meryl Kornfield, [mkornfield@alligator.org](mailto:mkornfield@alligator.org)  
**Freelance Editor** Paige Fry, [pfry@alligator.org](mailto:pfry@alligator.org)  
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**alligatorSports.org Editor** Morgan McMullen, [mmcmullen@alligator.org](mailto:mmcmullen@alligator.org)  
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**Advertising Director** Shaun O'Connor, [soconnor@alligator.org](mailto:soconnor@alligator.org)  
**Advertising Office Manager** Cheryl del Rosario, [cdelrosario@alligator.org](mailto:cdelrosario@alligator.org)  
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**Administrative Assistant** Ellen Light, [elight@alligator.org](mailto:elight@alligator.org)  
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### ADMINISTRATION

352-376-4446 • Fax: 352-376-4556

**General Manager** Patricia Carey, [tcarey@alligator.org](mailto:tcarey@alligator.org)  
**Assistant General Manager** Shaun O'Connor, [soconnor@alligator.org](mailto:soconnor@alligator.org)  
**Administrative Assistant** Lenora McGowan, [lmcgowan@alligator.org](mailto:lmcgowan@alligator.org)  
**President Emeritus** C.E. Barber, [cebarber@alligator.org](mailto:cebarber@alligator.org)

### SYSTEMS

**IT System Engineer** Kevin Hart

### PRODUCTION

**Production Manager** Christina Cozart, [ccoziert@alligator.org](mailto:ccoziert@alligator.org)  
**Assistant Production Manager** Robert Carroll, [rcarroll@alligator.org](mailto:rcarroll@alligator.org)  
**Advertising Production Staff** Taylor Barker  
**Editorial Production Staff** Jordan Bourne, Adam Turner

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# EXERCISE AND EDUCATION

Photos by Shelbie Eakins  
Alligator Staff



Susan Angenendt, 69, leads a light warm-up before the crowd started its walk on Saturday morning at "Walk with a Doc" at Depot Park. Angenendt, of Gainesville Health and Fitness, also led a full yoga class for those who want to become more active but would rather do yoga in the park than walk.



Gainesville residents gather downtown at Depot Park on Saturday morning for "Walk With a Doc." The event, started by Olga Nadymova, a 33-year-old pharmacy school student, and Alexandra Byrne, a 26-year-old medical school student, is aimed toward members of the Gainesville community who want to become more active and are looking for a supportive group to meet and walk with.

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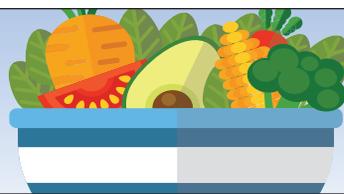
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# The safety assessment could take about three weeks to complete

**UPD**, from pg. 1

and cost \$2,200 to rent per month, said Curtis Reynolds, the vice president of UF's Business Affairs.

"Considering its age and considering its wood structure, there might be other concerns that we're not aware of," Reynolds said. "We're taking this full collapse as a signal to us that there are potential issues inside the building that we may not be aware of."

According to UF Libraries' Historic Sites Guide, the building was first constructed in 1928 to house the WRUF radio station. In 1957, UPD moved in.

In 1989, the building was added to the National Register of Historic Places. Under the special classification, it's hard to get renovations approved for the building.

"That makes it very challenging to do any kind of remodel in there to make it more appropriate for a police department," Baxley said.

The department has been trying to get a new building for about a decade, Baxley said.

Another room in the building, a conference room, was deemed structurally unsound and closed off while the base was filled with concrete. Thomas Ladun, a coordinator for UF Environmental Health and Safety, discovered

the wood trusses that hold up the floor were rotten from rainwater draining under the building over the years. Ladun said when the water evaporates, it goes up into the floor, weakening it.

Ladun discovered the rotten wood after working on an asbestos case in the room. In September 2017, contractors found asbestos floor tile about two layers underneath the conference room floor, which had been covered over the years. He said asbestos appearances are common for older buildings, and the tile was removed in the renovation.

"It wasn't dangerous or anything, but it is regulated," he said.

Ladun said he did a walk-through of the building with the UF Environmental Health and Safety in October. He noted the floor was sagging in the room where Hamby fell. This was eventually pointed out to Facility Services.

Outside consultants also found the humidity on the first floor was above 60 percent in January. In a well air-conditioned building, the humidity is between 55 percent and 60 percent. He said if levels are consistently above 60 percent for hours or days, there might be something wrong with the building.

The pool of rainwater underneath the building could contrib-



Will Clewis / Alligator Staff

The floor of a weapons storage room on the first floor of the University Police building was damaged after Sgt. Walter Hamby fell through it on Nov. 5. UPD staff will move into a modular building — of three portables bolted together — while their building is assessed for safety and tested by a private contractor, which could take about three weeks. The temporary facility will be about 3,500 square feet and cost \$2,200 to rent per month.

ute to the increase of the relative humidity, Ladun said.

"You're relying on the air conditioning to dry out the building and keep that moisture in check," he said. "At a certain point, it's possible that you'd have too much moisture so the air conditioning

can no longer keep the building dry."

Hamby said he knew the floor was weak for at least a year before he fell into it. With the staff of the building moving into the trailers by this week, Hamby, who's been with the department for 30 years,

said he might retire in the modular building.

"It would be nice to have a place where we wouldn't have to worry about that again," he said.

@Christina\_M18  
cmorales@alligator.org

# Cypress Hall rooms will be renovated for students, staff

**DRC**, from pg. 1

rushed after these changes.

"I was very ecstatic and thankful most of all that our upper administration and our provost was so willing to support us," he said.

The four rooms in Cypress Hall will have lift systems, which help students with disabilities move around the room, and a remote that can open the door and control the blinds to help students live more autonomously, Altamirano said. Although 35 rooms in Cypress Hall

can be used for students with severe mobile impairment, UF plans to add the lift systems and other necessary technology in the rooms as demand grows, Winick said. After these four rooms are renovated, the residence hall will have 15.

Some of the students who live in Cypress Hall have personal care assistants who provide service 24 hours a day. With about 43 care attendants who help care for students in the residence hall, the space is relatively small for them, he said. Some of the funding will be used to make a larger space where staff

members wait for their students to need their assistance.

Altamirano said he is excited about adding staff members.

The graduate assistant will lead initiatives like disability advocate training to create more sources of support for disabled students on campus and play a role in transitioning students by explaining what resources are available to them when they enter UF and help them find a job when they graduate, Altamirano said.

Altamirano said he also hopes to develop a career fair where stu-

dents can interact with disability-inclusive employers.

Bradley Minotti, a 20-year-old UF psychology sophomore who has used the DRC since he was a freshman, said he is excited about the additional learning specialist and graduate assistant.

"It's something that we've all been hoping for, for a while now," he said.

Minotti hopes the additional staff will relieve some of the pressure on the DRC as the number of students they serve continues to climb. He's also looking forward to

shorter wait times to see his own learning specialist. He said he currently waits two to three weeks.

The decision to increase funding and resources shows that UF administration prioritizes supporting students with disabilities, he said.

"They heard that we needed more resources and they're going to provide that, which I think is really great because not a lot of universities think like that," he said.

@jessica\_giles\_  
jgiles@alligator.org

# Park visitors should be cautious

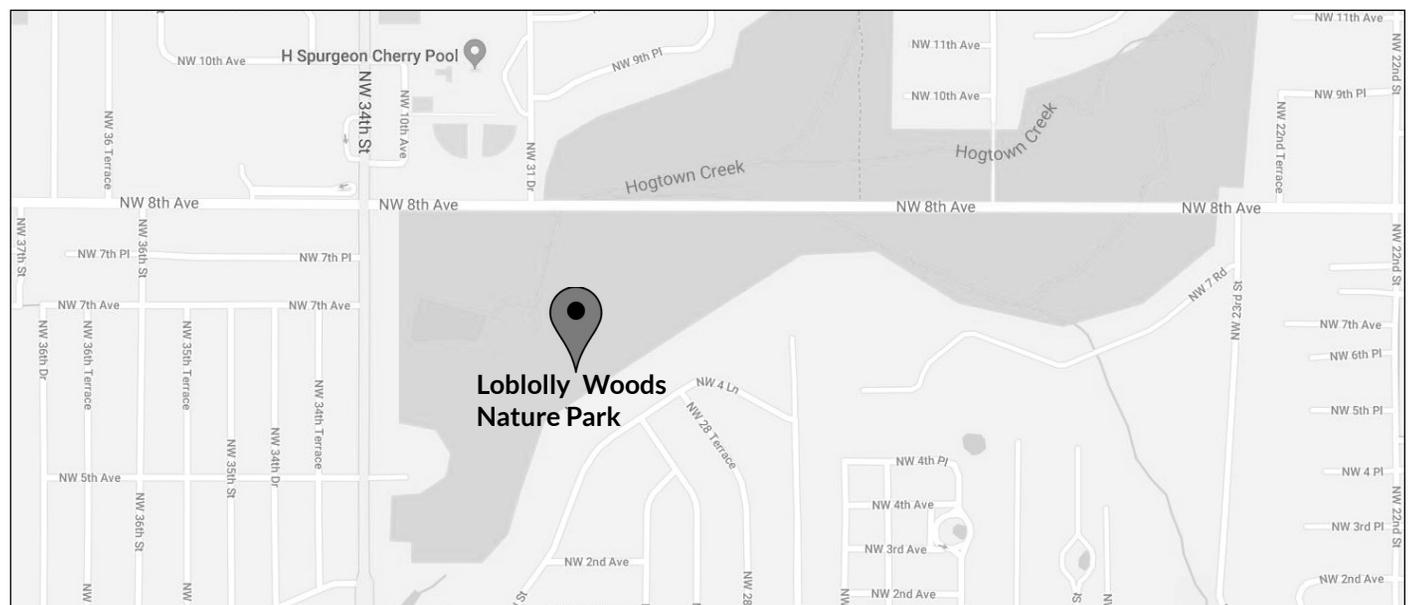
**SEWER**, from pg 1

water spilled into a creek that connects to Lake Alice, according to Alligator archives. The area, which was sanitized by Florida Division of Emergency Management State Watch Office, was affected environmentally, but drinking water was deemed safe.

Linda Demetropoulos, a nature operations manager for the park, said Loblolly Woods is safe for visitors but they should still use caution.

"Normally visitors are instructed not to access the water area, so that has not changed," she said.

@jessica\_giles\_  
jgiles@alligator.org



Courtesy of Google Maps

Loblolly Woods Nature Park is located northwest of UF's campus. The park reopened on Thursday after being shut down due to raw sewer overflow.

## CRIME ROUNDUP

All Stories by Robert Lewis | Alligator Staff Writer  
@Lewis\_Robert | rlewis@alligator.org

### GPD: Gainesville man arrested for child pornography possession

A Gainesville man was arrested Thursday morning after police said he shared and downloaded child pornography.

Christopher Robert Fox, 36, told police who searched his home Thursday he deleted a file containing child pornography he downloaded after he realized what it was, according to a Gainesville Police arrest report. The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children received a tip from the social media website Tumblr on Jan. 8 about three images and one video of suspected child pornography. The tip also included the IP address from the computer that shared the video, according to the report.

GPD said it determined the IP address belonged to a computer that uses an internet plan belonging to Fox's roommate.

Fox told police the Tumblr account was his, according to the report. He did not remember the video but if it was uploaded to his account it would have been by him, he said.

When police searched Fox's laptop, they found a downloaded video of child pornography, according to the report. Fox told police he downloaded the file but deleted it after realizing it was child pornography.

Fox was arrested on a charge of promoting a photo or movie of a sexual performance by a child and taken to the Alachua County Jail where he remains, as of press time, in lieu of a \$75,000 bond.

### GPD: Hawthorne men arrested for possessing drugs, guns

Two Hawthorne men were arrested after police found drugs and three guns, one stolen, in their car, Gainesville Police said.

Earnest Lee Sheffield Jr., 38, and Tabaree Jakeem Lewis, 32, were pulled over by police after midnight Thursday near the intersection of Southeast Hawthorne Road and East University Avenue in a silver Mazda SUV for an improper right turn and overly tinted windows, according to an arrest report. Police saw a marijuana cigarette next to Lewis and asked both men to step outside.

Sheffield, the driver, ran from officers and pulled his arms to the middle of his chest to resist being handcuffed, according to the report. Police caught and restrained him, later finding he didn't have a driver's license.

Police found 19.3 grams of cocaine in small baggies, 34 oxycodone pills, 10 rocks of crack cocaine, one temazepam pill and three ecstasy pills in the car, according to the report. Officers also found three guns, a 0.380-caliber Ruger LCP handgun and 0.410-caliber Taurus Judge revolver, each loaded with five rounds of ammunition, and a 0.380-caliber Hi-Point handgun. They also found \$830 on Sheffield, according to the report.

The Ruger LCP handgun was reported stolen in Gainesville, police said.

Sheffield was arrested on 19 charges, including two counts of possession of a concealed firearm by a convicted felon and four counts of possession of a controlled substance without a prescription. Lewis was charged with possession of less than 20 grams of marijuana, carrying a concealed and unlicensed firearm and possession of a concealed weapon by a convicted felon.

Sheffield and Lewis were taken to the Alachua County Jail where they remain, as of press time, in lieu of \$124,000 and \$32,000 bonds, respectively.

### Deputies: Gainesville man pours hot oil on three sleeping people

A Gainesville man woke up three people with a pan of hot oil Friday morning, Alachua County Sheriff's Office said.

Darian Denard Holmes, 48, heated a pan of cooking oil on a stove in a Holly Heights North apartment and poured it on three people sleeping in the living room, according to an arrest report. Less than 24 hours later, he returned to the apartment and called police to tell his side of the story, Lt. Josh Crews said. He was arrested shortly after.

A woman, who was pretending to be asleep in the living room, witnessed Holmes pour the oil on a man's chest and shoulder; on another man's foot, leg and back and on a woman's neck and face, according to the report. She told police Holmes was upset and believed one of the three people he burned had stolen his money.

The three people Holmes burned knew him as "Rock" and said they were all together the night before, according to the report. Police said he had gotten upset with them throughout the evening but did not say how or why.

Crews said the woman and men injured were treated at UF Health Shands Hospital for their burns, which were not considered life-threatening, and released.

Holmes was arrested on three counts of aggravated battery and for failing to pay child support. He was taken to the Alachua County Jail where he is being held without bond.

# Self-proclaimed '50 Billion Dollar Man' threatens UF student

By Amanda Rosa  
Alligator Staff Writer

A self-proclaimed "\$50 Billion Man" threatened to break a UF student's neck before leaving a speaking event on campus March 21.

Dan Pena, a controversial businessman and speaker, verbally attacked Juan "Verse" Lozano, a 22-year-old UF public relations senior, during a Q&A session hosted by the UF Entrepreneurship Club at the New Physics Building on Museum Road and Gale Lemerand Drive.

Pena's website claims his mentees have garnered \$50 billion in value with his business guidance. The Alligator could not verify these claims.

Lozano questioned the existence of Pena's

companies and called him a fraud. A video published on Lozano's Youtube channel shows Pena approaching Lozano and saying, "Now before I snap your neck, kid, put the f--- microphone down."

Pena grabs toward Lozano's shoulder before the video cuts.

Rachael Bunn, the Entrepreneurship Club president, said Pena's representative sent the club a string of emails in August requesting to speak at the university. About 60 people attended the event, including 40 of Pena's supporters, the 21-year-old UF advertising junior said. The rest of the audience consisted of UF students and alumni.

The club didn't pay Pena to speak, she said.

Before Lozano got to his question, Pena grabbed the microphone from his hand. Pena said he was done speaking and handed the microphone back to Bunn, Lozano said. A group of seven of Pena's supporters surrounded Lo-

zano and began yelling at him, he said.

Lozano left after about 10 minutes with two friends because he feared for his safety, he said. He did not file a report with police.

The club agreed to host Pena to foster an open dialogue, Bunn said. But the night took a turn when Pena referred to the crowd using a slur and said they should commit suicide if they did not work hard, she said.

Pena demonstrated shooting himself in the mouth, she said.

The club expected him to give a speech on working hard to become successful. Instead, he was vulgar and disrespectful, Bunn said.

"It kind of drifted into what his idea of a motivational speech is," she said.

Bunn said she ended the Q&A session and called University Police to escort Pena and his supporters from the building after he threatened Lozano. UPD didn't respond to a request for comment on the incident.

Lozano said Pena's speech was extremely inappropriate. Pena brandished a cricket paddle and told a childhood story about dropping a fishbowl on a teacher's head to kill her, Lozano said.

"Whenever he talks, it's just shock value," he said. "It sounds like he's trying to shock you into believing him."

Pena declined to comment for this story.

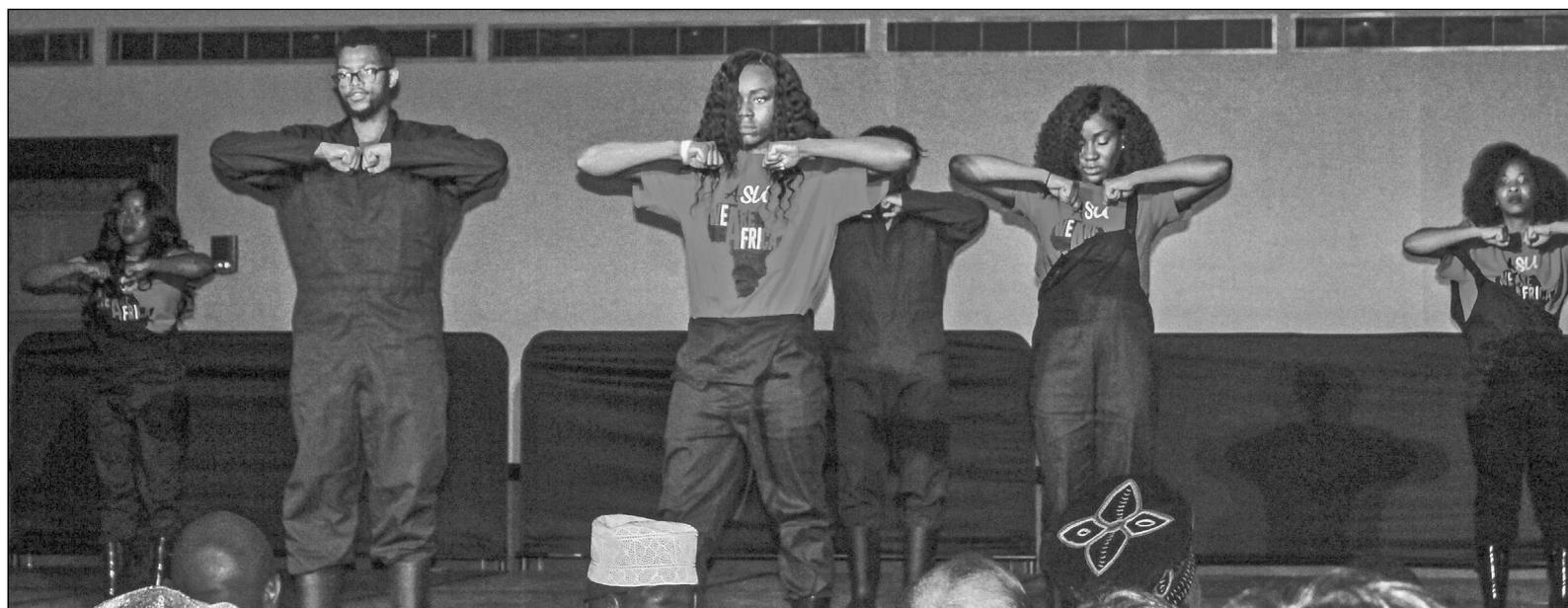
Lozano said he researched Pena and his companies after Pablo Padillo, the club's vice president of external affairs, expressed concerns over the speaker's credibility and outlandish behavior. Padillo and Lozano said they could not find any credible information on Pena's companies.

Lozano said he was particularly disturbed by Pena's Youtube channel and rhetoric.

"I knew that if I didn't confront him head-on, there was nobody else in that room who was going to," Lozano said.

## INTERNATIONAL DANCING

South African Gumboot dancers perform at the 46th Annual African Student Union Showcase in the Reitz Union Grand Ballroom on Saturday evening. The showcase provides an opportunity for the "expression of African music, dance, fashion, art, and cuisine."



Kayla Turner / Alligator

## Editorial

# People are losing faith in police, and they should be

**O**n the evening of March 18, Stephon Clark was shot eight times by Sacramento police officers. According to The Washington Post, he was shot in the neck, back and thigh. The bullets pierced his lungs and broke a number of the 22-year-old's bones. The two officers shot at Clark 20 times. About three to 10 minutes after the attack, Clark died.

Officers were responding to a vandalism complaint in Clark's Sacramento neighborhood when they found him in the backyard of his grandmother's house where he lived. According to The New York Times, in their initial statement, the officers claimed Clark came toward them while holding what they believed to be a firearm. However, fearing the police were trying to cover up misconduct by their officers, the Clark family had their own autopsy conducted. The family's lawyer stated that according to the autopsy reports, Clark could not have been moving toward the officers when he was shot, contradicting the officers' narratives. Sacramento Police didn't comment.

The shooting was recorded by the officers' body cameras and showed the men shouting "We need to know if you're O.K." just after the gunfire ended, and, "We need to get you medics, but we can't go over to get you help unless we know you don't have a weapon."

Once more officers arrived, the two shooting officers muted the audio on their body cameras as they discussed the events that transpired. It is also suspected the officers waited too long after the attack to call for medical assistance.

Protesters have since taken to the streets of Sacramento and Sacramento City Hall. Many are calling for the two officers to be fired. Protesters have said this incident, in a city that is mainly black and Latino, "is a sign of a police force that treats black residents with disdain and unfairly targets their neighborhoods."

Clark's death was not unique. The brutal murder of black men at the hands of police officers is something we have seen repeatedly, especially over the past several years. The frequency and even sheer existence of these cases is tragic. What's more, officers are rarely held accountable for their actions, and forces across the country do not appear to be taking these types of events seriously. If they did, they wouldn't frequent the headlines of every major news outlet every few weeks.

Although Sacramento Police did adjust their body camera policy to prohibit muting of the recording, the two officers responsible for Clark's death have yet to be fired. This not only degrades the entire police force but sets a precedent for officers across the country that brutality is not something to be taken seriously.

As a result, Americans have lost trust in our police forces. The neighbor who originally called in the vandalism complaint in Clark's neighborhood told PBS she regrets making the call and said it makes her never want to call 911 again.

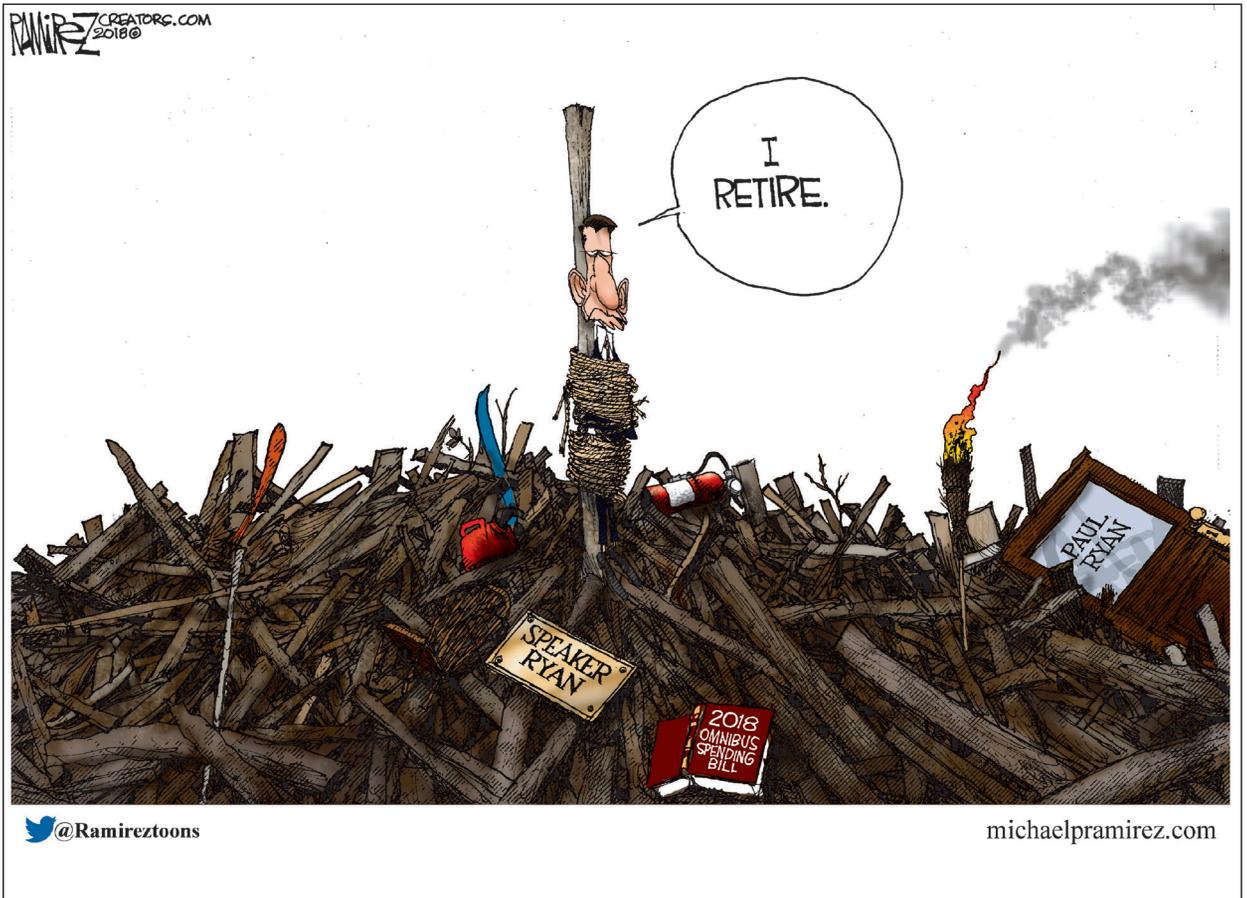
We must make clear that we respect officers and are thankful for the work they do. But all people need to be able to trust our officers, not just a percentage. We need to be able to believe they will not shoot without more justification than "we thought he had a weapon and seemed threatening."

It's time police forces take action against officers who can't control their desire to shoot. Forces that have had these incidents need to set an example for other forces across the country.

How many more black men need to lose their lives before police officers start protecting all of us?

|               |                    |                               |                           |
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## Column

# We learn just as much outside of the classroom

**B**ack in high school, I remember going through the lists of organizations and extracurricular activities I could join, perusing different club banners and posters after school. I wondered what it would take to get me into college, what clubs I would most enjoy and what activities I would actually be good at. Nothing felt quite as serious then; though I knew it was important for me to get involved, I didn't fully understand why.

Now as I enter the final weeks of my senior year here, I understand more clearly why joining student organizations, working part time or participating in research projects and other extracurriculars represent such important parts of an undergraduate education. I've begun to see why and how these elements of my college experience have helped me grow as a person, not only academically but also personally. And I think that's true for everyone.

It's not just because these club memberships and extracurricular opportunities gear us up for job hunts or more admissions cycles at the graduate level. It's not just because they keep us busy. Trust me, I enjoy being busy, but I have seen firsthand at UF how much our schedules can get crammed; involvement is good and healthy, but not just for the sake of filling our weeks with meetings.

No, this involvement is beneficial for more than just that. We learn so much more about ourselves and the world around us when we go out of our bubbles, meet other people and work on shared goals with each other. The times outside of lecture halls and library cubbies have a lot to teach us, too.

I wouldn't say I'm the most involved person at UF by any means. Still, I've observed and celebrated changes within myself as a result of the people I've met and the experiences I've had through my club involvement, work



**Mia  
Gettenberg**  
opinions@alligator.org

experiences and research projects. I'll provide a few examples, and I promise I'm trying to be sincere — as trite as any of it may sound.

Take my work at this newspaper, for example: In addition to writing columns, in the past I've served as an editor in various sections of the paper. For sure, this has strengthened my skills in writing and AP style and enhanced my respect for journalism as a profession and passion. Beyond that, though, The Alligator has demonstrated to me how to care for fellow students and colleagues; how to admit, own up

to and correct my mistakes (and there have been many of them) and how to embody stronger leadership skills.

Even the most academic research projects can show us more about ourselves. When I wrote and worked in my first research study, I made more mistakes and changed more elements of my project than I thought was humanly possible. Indirectly, research helped teach me the value of self-improvement and constantly aspiring to become better. I wanted the end product to be perfect, just right; what I learned from doing research is that sometimes we just have to try and enjoy that journey, rather than simply prioritizing the destination.

The friends I've made at places like The Alligator office, the Phi Sigma Pi chapter room and the philosophy department library have imparted to me more knowledge than a single lecture ever could. I believe the secret to becoming more well-rounded human beings lies in each and every one of us, if only we have the courage and confidence to talk to one another outside the classroom. And that, my friends, is way more valuable than another bullet point on a resume.

*Mia Gettenberg is a UF criminology and philosophy senior. Her column focuses on education.*

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

## Column

# We should all be advocating for the LGBTQ+ community and their rights

At UF, the month of April is more than just the last month of the Spring semester. April is Pride Awareness Month (PAM). Throughout the month, about 20 events address issues faced by the LGBTQ+ community and celebrate its culture. The events are not limited to members of the community — anyone can come to celebrate or learn more.

Just like the rest of the human population, the LGBTQ+ community faces mental health conditions. However, this community is subject to prejudice and other biases. We all have it hard enough in this world without being mistreated or looked down upon simply for who we are. According to the National Alliance on Mental Illness, LGBTQ+ individuals are nearly three times more likely than others to experience a mental health condition such as depression or anxiety.

Their fear of coming out and being discriminated against for their sexual orientation or gender identity can lead to post-traumatic stress disorder, substance abuse

and suicidal thoughts. LGBTQ+ people are forced to confront bias on two fronts: their sexual orientation or gender identity and mental health conditions. Often, they may hide both for fear of ridicule or rejection. Sometimes, they will talk about one or the other.

LGBTQ+ youth are four times more likely to attempt suicide, experience suicidal thoughts or engage in self-harm than straight people. Between 38 and 65 percent of transgender individuals experience suicidal ideation.

This, to me, is heartbreaking. We live in a world where people are afraid to be who they are and love who they want because of societal bias. We live in a world where people are afraid to tell their families about their identity because they fear their family will no longer love or accept them.

People are afraid of heights because they could fall. People are afraid of the dark be-



**Taylor Cavaliere**  
opinions@alligator.org

cause there could be something dangerous lurking within it. But people are afraid of coming out because of society. Because of us.

We need to show the world it is OK to be different and it is OK not to be OK. We need to show the world being who you are is OK. Being who you are is good. Being different is good.

We need to listen when people talk to us. I know it can be challenging to understand something you haven't experienced, including sexuality, identity and mental health conditions. But just remember, as hard as it is for you to understand, it is so much harder to be the person fighting so hard simply to be understood.

So, what can you do? You can accept. You can love. Support one another and be part of the group that supports the LGBTQ+ community. You can be straight, cisgender and not struggle with a mental health condition and still support those who cannot claim

any of those things. You don't have to be the same as another person to be there for them. You can be different and still be an advocate.

It may be uncomfortable. People may wonder why you care or why you're fighting for a community you are not a part of. Here's the thing: You're fighting for a community you are a part of: humanity. Being gay or bisexual does not make you less of a human. Being transgender does not make you less of a human. Discrimination, prejudice, violence and hatred does.

Be part of the group making the lives of those in the LGBTQ+ community easier, not harder. Be part of the group that not only says being who you are is OK, but that being who you are is good. Fight for the most basic right of the human race. Fight to let everyone be who they are.

*Taylor Cavaliere is a UF journalism and psychology junior. Her column focuses on mental health.*

## Column

# Artificial intelligence may do more harm than good for our quality of life

From the steam engine and automobile to electricity and the computer, dramatic paradigm shifts in society have coincided with monumental leaps in technology. Many predict the next leap will be artificial intelligence.

Up until now, almost all scientific breakthroughs have made the world a better place in the long run. Innovation is to improve quality of life, and people continue to work toward new innovations in the hopes of improving quality of life. Today, scientists have hit a crossroads where they have lost vision of the sole reason for scientific development. Although it is hard to believe in a time of sustained economic growth and record-low unemployment, artificial intelligence has a strong possibility of disrupting our current way of life. The problem is not whether artificial intelligence is scientifically possible, but why scientists are trying to perfect artificial intelligence in the first place.

Many have a false conception that job loss from artificial intelligence is limited to repetitive manufacturing jobs. According to a recent survey by 352 artificial intelligence experts, artificial intelligence will be able to do just

about any job a human can within the next 40 years. Software and computers will evolve to the point where jobs in business, engineering and medicine will be performed by computing technology. Google has announced it has already programmed robots to write poetry.

Scientists have proved the point that they can artificially create a machine as intelligent as a human. But beyond the mere knowledge of knowing scientists are capable of creating such machines, society gains very little relative to the negative consequences that will come from artificial intelligence.

As a result of further automation, companies can save money and consumer products will be cheaper, but these minute advantages are irrelevant if people create a world where society can function without humans playing a leading role. From predicting what the future may hold when people no longer have to work, some economists have even promoted the idea of a universal income, where everyone receives a base salary. In fact, Finland is



**Joshua Udvardy**  
opinions@alligator.org

currently undergoing a two-year experiment of having a universal basic income.

In the frenzy and complexity of artificially intelligent technology, people have avoided questioning the real purpose of artificial intelligence. Society would be heading in the wrong direction if most of the population no longer needed to work, losing the main purpose of an individual's role in society since the beginning of modern civilization. Economists can begin arguing on how to best supply income to a world without work, but economists would be more helpful in explaining why society would even want a world without employment being commonplace. Furthermore, I'm not necessarily sure people need poetry and best-selling novels written by robots. Increasing computing technology may have once increased quality of life, but developments in artificial intelligence are moving away from societal benefits and instead toward permanent drawbacks that emerge from scientific achievement.

Avoiding the development of artificial in-

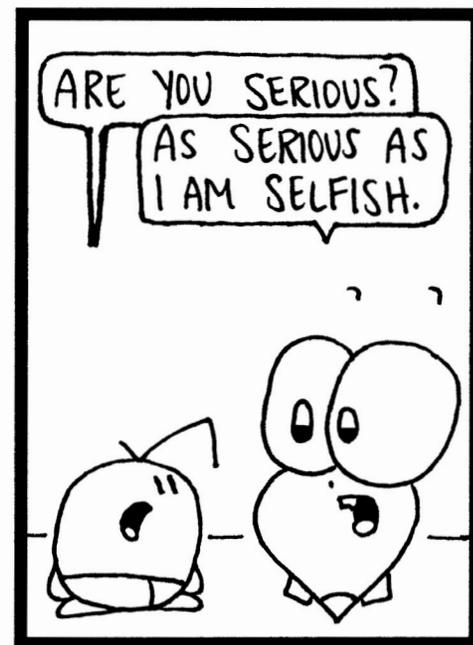
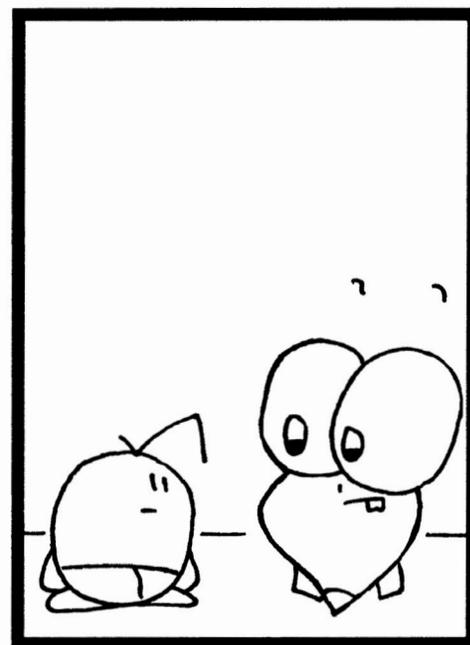
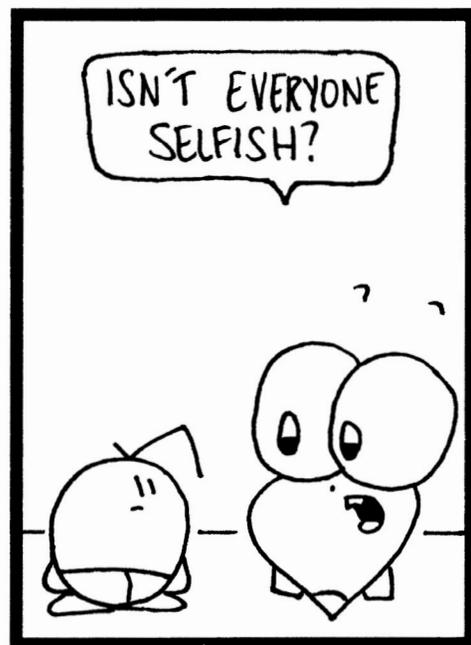
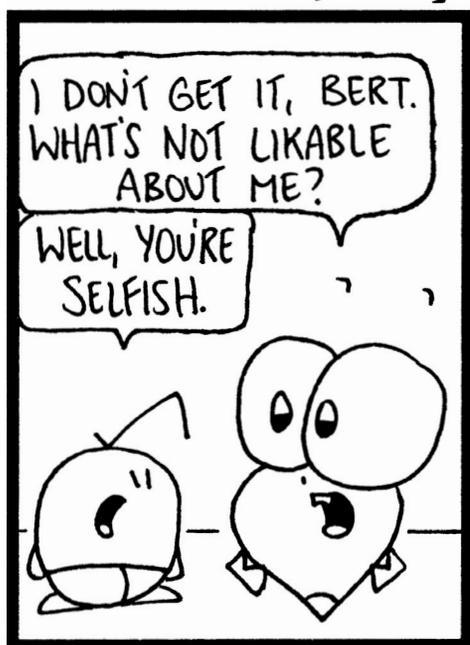
telligence may seem as avoiding progress, but there are other problems the world's top minds can focus on: disease, poverty and maybe even hunger. In his book "The Industries of the Future," former Senior Advisor for Innovation Alec Ross argues we were promised decades ago that the world today would be cured of disease and filled with flying cars. Instead, innovators have created watches that count footsteps and phones that speak back. Scientists should focus first on the most pressing problems that face society and then decide how to scientifically approach effective solutions.

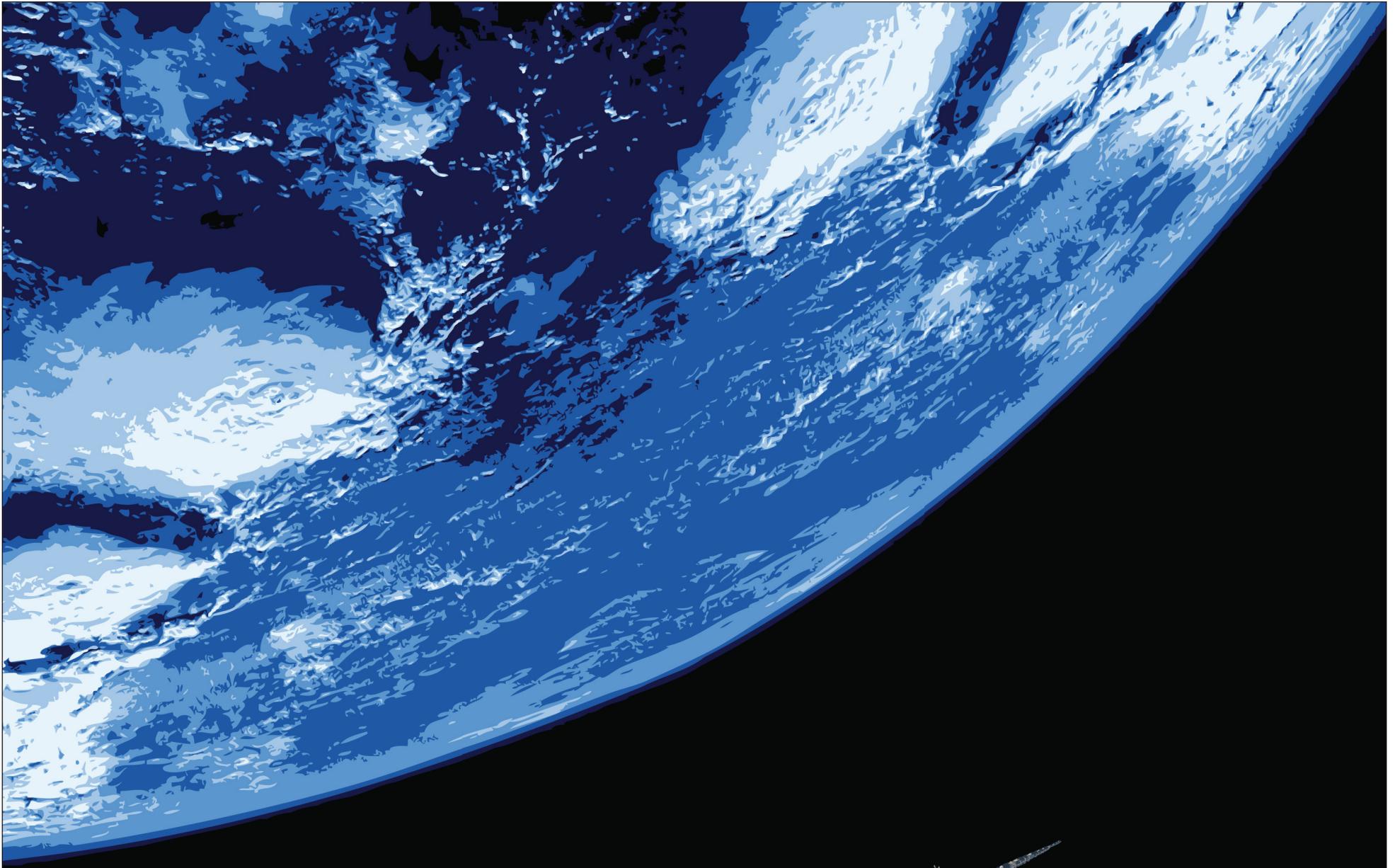
Technological development can improve quality of life. However, scientists are pushing society down the wrong track. The world should not avoid technology and development, but scientists and innovators must keep quality of life as the top priority when pushing the limits of what's possible.

*Joshua Udvardy is a UF environmental engineer junior. His column focuses on science.*

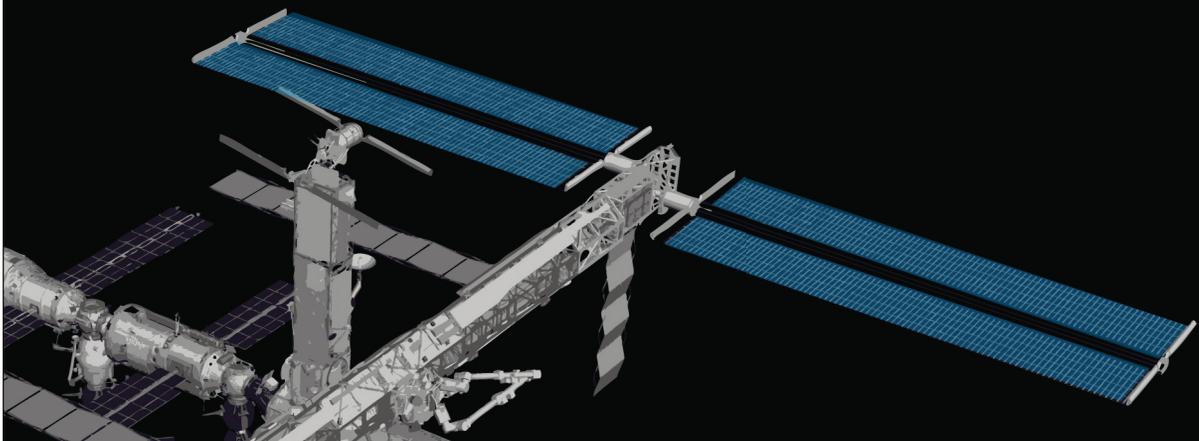
## Lifeless Joey

By Michael Smith





**all over the place.**



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# Annual 5K runs raises more than \$3,000 for veterans

**By Irfan Kovankaya**  
Alligator Contributing Writer

Conner Dowd's grandfather served as a Navy pilot for 26 years and retired at the rank of captain, inspiring his grandson to do the same.

On Sunday, Dowd, a 21-year-old UF applied physiology and kinesiology junior and ROTC student, ran in and helped coordinate the 11th annual Fallen Heroes 5K to honor his grandfather and other veterans.

The charity race raises money to support veterans and their families who need financial help. All proceeds go to the Gainesville Fisher House and the UDT-Seal Association, a nonprofit veteran service organization.

He said the race is about giving back to veterans because "they made the ultimate sacrifice."

The race raised a little more than \$3,000, which came from donations, shirt sales and registration fees, said head organizer Hayden Pfefferkorn.

The event was held at Depot Park for the first time this year to attract UF students and Gainesville residents, as opposed to where it

was previously held at the Com-muter Lot on campus.

"(Military members) give their all so that we can have the freedom to pursue our dreams," Pfefferkorn said. "Events like this are the least we can do to say thank you."

The race began at 8:30 a.m. and about 215 people raced around the Depot Park loop.

The event honored UF alumni Navy Seal James Suh and Naval Special Warfare Officer Thomas Fouke, Pfefferkorn said. Suh and Fouke passed away while serving in 2005 and 2012, respectively.

Dowd said he has volunteered for the past two years but couldn't run last year due to a foot injury. He almost wasn't able to run this year after being rear-ended in a minor car accident and suffering some injuries.

He placed third with a time of 16:29. Isaac Gordon, 19, placed first with a time of 16:04, and Nick Rudnik, 25, placed second at 16:28.

"It's giving back to the community I'm about to go into and that's always been something I've tried to do," Dowd said.



Will Clewis / Alligator Staff

UF students Michael Larratt (center), an 18-year-old information systems sophomore, is flanked by Joe Freda (left), a 21-year-old political science junior, and Beau Butler (right), a 20-year-old nuclear engineering sophomore, as they zoom past the finish line. Larratt said he wanted to help out the cause.

# UF researchers find termites are killing South Florida trees

**By Wyatt Schreiber**  
Alligator Contributing Writer

Six-legged beasts are tearing up under the bark of century-old trees in South Florida, causing the trees to collapse and die.

The beasts in question are dark brown and are measured in millimeters, typically ranging between 13 and 14 millimeters.

Termites living in colonies of more than one million feast on the flesh of trees. Hollowed out, the wind can easily knock them down. Thomas Chouvinc, a UF Institute of

Food and Agricultural Sciences assistant professor of urban entomology, published a study in the March issue of Florida Entomologist about the Asian subterranean termite and the chaos it has brought to Fort Lauderdale.

Chouvinc and Jeremiah Foley, a 2017 UF entomology and nematology alumnus, walked through neighborhoods in Fort Lauderdale in March 2017 and stopped whenever they saw slash pine trees, Chouvinc said. After getting permission from the homeowners, they inspected the trees.

They noticed something strange.

The termites were not eating these trees

from the inside like other tree species, like oak or maple, but they would consume it directly underneath the bark, Chouvinc said.

Foley wrote in an email that the infection caused by the termites prevents the roots from sending nutrients to the rest of the tree. As time passes, the tree can't be sustained and dies.

"The pace at which these termites kill pine trees in an urban system is relatively quick," Foley said.

Landowners have two options: guard their homes with insecticide or use termite bait. However, using insecticide doesn't kill the en-

tire colony, Chouvinc said.

Other trees, such as maple and oak, are also affected by the termite. With hurricane season starting June 1, termites' appetite could cause more damage.

Of three fallen oak trees in Fort Lauderdale that Chouvinc and Foley observed from Hurricane Irma, all were hollowed out by the Asian subterranean termite. One was a 50-year-old oak tree measuring 1.5 meters in diameter that collapsed onto someone's roof and car.

"We're kind of worried because we're losing trees on a more regular basis," Chouvinc said.

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The Alligator will not be publishing from **Friday, April 27<sup>th</sup>** to **Monday, May 14<sup>th</sup>**

The deadline for Tuesday, May 15<sup>th</sup> is Thursday, May 10<sup>th</sup> by 4:00 p.m. for Display & Classified Ads

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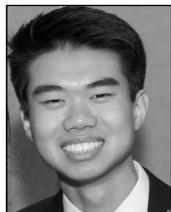
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# UF student receives \$15,000 scholarship for STEM research

By Daisha Peek

Alligator Contributing Writer



Sandoval

Aaron Sandoval was examining a mouse's foot muscle through a microscope in his research lab when he received an email that he won a \$15,000 scholarship.

"Honestly, I didn't think I was going to win," Sandoval said. "I was so excited."

The 19-year-old UF biology sophomore found out he won the The Barry Goldwater Scholarship and Excellence in Education Foundation's scholarship March 30. Another UF student, Andrew Sack, a 21-year-old UF mathematics junior, was an honorable

mention. Both students are in UF's Honors Program.

The Goldwater Foundation gives scholarships to undergraduate sophomores and juniors pursuing research in science, technology, engineering and mathematics fields. According to Goldwater's website, 211 students out of the 1,280 students who applied won scholarships, and 281 were named honorable mentions, who are recognized but don't receive any money.

The scholarship application included an online questionnaire, a research essay and three recommendation letters.

Honors Program associate director Regan Garner said she was proud of Sandoval and Sack.

"The Goldwater Scholarship is one of the most prestigious undergraduate awards," Garner said. "It speaks to the quality of not only our students, but our faculty."

Since 2008, 18 UF students have received the award and 17 have been named honorable mentions. Garner said the Honors Program gives students an advantage because it immerses them in research.

For his application, Sandoval said he wrote about his research on cell regeneration.

Sack said he wrote about his research with math algorithms. This was the second year Sack applied for the scholarship, having not receiving anything the previous year.

Although Sack didn't win, he said he was happy to be recognized and looks forward to applying for similar opportunities for graduate school.

"It's not the same as the scholarship," Sack said. "But my parents and the Honors Program were happy."

# UF scientist names, rediscovers butterfly found 60 years ago

By Hannah Maggiore

Alligator Contributing Writer

Thomas Emmel first stumbled upon the 2.25-inch-wide butterfly in March 1959 as a 17-year-old on an expedition in Mexico. The specimen was later stashed away in one of his collection drawers and forgotten about.

That was until last Fall, when Andrew Warren, a senior collections manager at the UF McGuire Center for Lepidoptera & Biodiversity, found the specimens in a drawer. He noticed something odd about the species.

"He came running upstairs and asked, 'What were you doing in March of 1959?'" Emmel, now 76, said.

The butterfly species is soft brown on its upper side while its underside is marked with magenta stripes and silver dots. No other butterfly has the same design and

colors, which makes scientists think it is a new species of butterfly, Emmel said. When Warren discovered this, he chose to honor the butterfly by naming it *Cyllopsis tomemeli*, after Emmel, who discovered it about 60 years ago.

"I was very thrilled, it's a great honor actually," said Emmel, an affiliate professor and scientist at the McGuire Center.

Emmel said he was on the 1959 expedition with ornithologist, or bird expert, L. Irby Davis to record Mexican bird songs in Chiapas, Mexico. They were driving through a pine forest south of San Cristobal de las Casas when their car needed mechanical repairs.

While staying an unexpected three or four nights in the area, Emmel said he wandered around and found 45 butterfly species, including the previously unknown species.

Emmel said he had forgotten about the collection but had kept it

when he came to UF in 1968. When the McGuire Center opened in 2004, Emmel moved his collection there.

Although Emmel said he couldn't believe it took 60 years to find this butterfly, Warren wrote in an email that it is common to find new species of butterflies and other organisms in museum collections.

"This discovery is an example of the importance of maintaining museum collections for researchers in the future," Warren said.

For now, the specimens remain in the museum collection at the McGuire Center. Warren said he hopes in the next 10 years, scientists will find the food and plants the caterpillars eat.

Emmel said he wants a special display for the butterfly to inform people that new discoveries can happen anywhere.

"New surprises come up, and it's really amazing that materials collected 60 years ago can have great value," Emmel said.



Courtesy to The Alligator

Thomas Emmel, 76, holds onto 13 specimens of the brown butterfly in his collection. After they were recovered about 60 years after his initial discovery, Emmel said he was surprised they were rediscovered. He said he hopes to discover more about the species.

# Tinkergarten teaches problem-solving outside the classroom

By Kayla Turner

Alligator Contributing Writer



Courtesy to The Alligator

Emme, 4, and her friend, Colton, drink hot blueberry tea during snack time at Northeast Park during Tinkergarten class. Tinkergarten is a play-based learning program where groups of parents and children are encouraged to play outdoors, exploring the world around them through guided activities that teach core life skills.

Amy Carson is a teacher, but her classroom doesn't have rows of desks facing a chalkboard or central air conditioning. She believes nature is the ideal classroom.

Carson leads Tinkergarten in Gainesville. It's a play-based learning program where groups of parents and children are encouraged to play outdoors, exploring the world around them through guided activities that teach core life skills. She teaches classes outdoors at Northeast Park and Jonesville Park.

Carson, a 38-year-old Gainesville resident, said she led Tinkergarten classes in Texas for a year. But when she moved to Gainesville in July 2016, she realized the program wasn't offered in the area, so she decided to create it.

The program began in September 2016. Since then, Carson said she has added two additional class leaders to the Gainesville

staff and is in the process of training another.

"It's hard for adults to see the learning that happens when kids are playing because that's not the way that adults tend to learn," Carson said.

The program is geared for children between the ages of 18 months to 8 years old because young kids develop best through play, not traditional classrooms at that age, Carson said. The activities vary from class to class and are tailored to the ages of the children in each class.

The weekly classes are sold in eight-week sessions at \$160 per student. The classes have a maximum enrollment of 12 students.

Tinkergarten classes take place outdoors at a local park in the area, Carson said. The spring session classes in Gainesville are taught at Northeast Park and Jonesville Park.

Nancy Caniff, a 45-year-old Gainesville resident, said her 4-year-old daughter Emme has flourished in Tinkergarten classes since she has been enrolled

for more than two years.

Caniff said her daughter is always excited for classes, which are just over an hour of outdoor time, songs, stories and friends.

On Sunday nights, Caniff asks her daughter, "Emme do you know what tomorrow is? It's Monday."

Emme will respond, "Tinkergarten! After we sleep?" Caniff said.

"And she rushes to bed," Caniff said. "It's just her favorite."

Caniff said she recalls a class when the teacher brought plastic figurines that were frozen in blocks of ice. The children used tools like buckets and shovels to uncover the hidden treasure. The activity encouraged the children to use critical thinking skills and execute a multi-step solution to the problem at hand.

"Every class has a pattern," Caniff said. "You know what to expect — free play, introductions, play, social circle. We regroup, have a snack and head out from there."

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04-16

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## FOOTBALL

# Orange and Blue Game leaves quarterback situation unclear



Emma Green / Alligator Staff

Florida quarterback Feleipe Franks went 8 of 12 for 117 yards and recorded two rushing touchdowns during UF's Orange and Blue Game on Saturday. Franks is fighting to retain his starting role in 2018.

By Jake Dreilinger  
Sports Writer

The uncertainty surrounding Florida's quarterback situation is almost as murky as Jim McElwain's prospects of ever landing another head coaching job.

While fans hoped a leader in the quarterback race would reveal himself during the Gators' Orange and Blue Game on Saturday, there still isn't clear-cut favorite for the starting position come September.

The three likely candidates — Feleipe Franks, Kyle Trask and Emory Jones — each had their shining moment but also had some plays they wish they could have back. Here's a look at how each one did in the spring game.

### Feleipe Franks

While Franks failed to throw a legitimate touchdown on Saturday — he threw a 60-yard bomb to former Gator Travis McGriff late in the second quarter — he did run for two.

The first was on a 60-yard dash where he broke through the grasp of the Blue team's defenders at the line of scrimmage. The second came at the goal line, where Franks faked a hand-off to running back Lamical Perine and ran it in himself.

Aside from his production on the ground, Franks had the highest completion rate of the three quarterbacks. He finished the game connecting on 8-of-12 passes for 117 yards.

But as good as his numbers were, when Franks did miss a pass, it was usually due to poor judgement.

On one play, receiver Van Jefferson was wide open on the right side of the field. Franks noticed him a bit too late but threw the ball anyway. By that time, defensive back Donovan Stiner had caught up to Jefferson and broke up the pass.

Franks is the only quarterback on the roster to have appeared in a college game before and has been using that experience to help further his play.

"I think that's one of the things that has made it easier for me this spring is just being more comfortable," Franks said. "Just being comfortable in the pocket."

### Kyle Trask

Trask's throwing ability was on full display on Saturday.

Midway through the second quarter at the 26-yard line, the red-shirt sophomore threw a 19-yard bullet to wide receiver Rick Wells

SEE FOOTBALL, PAGE 16

## BASEBALL

# Assessing UF's top performers halfway through SEC play

By Ethan Bauer  
Sports Writer

It's so hard to choose.

With the way Florida's baseball team has played so far in 2018, it's difficult to single out a handful of players who merit the title "top performers." There are just too many.

Especially after this weekend, when the No. 1 Gators (32-6, 12-3 SEC) swept the Missouri Tigers to further swell their conference record. Especially when UF has won 13 of its last 14 games.

But Saturday's win over Missouri marked the halfway point of the team's conference slate, so it's worth taking a look at which players among the ones excelling are excelling the most.

"To be 12-3 halfway through," coach Kevin O'Sullivan said, "obviously you've gotta be pleased with where you're at."

But who has helped the team get there the most? Here's a look at two pitchers and two posi-

tion players who are leading the Gators.

### Closer Michael Byrne

Despite boasting a weekend rotation with three potential first-round MLB draft picks, Byrne, a junior from Orlando, has been UF's most consistent — and perhaps most dangerous — weapon on the mound.

He doesn't overpower anyone with a fastball that tops out in the low 90s, and he doesn't have much pitch variety. But what he does have is near-robotic control.

In 32 innings this season, Byrne has walked two hitters and struck out 34. His ERA of 0.84 leads the Gators and places him sixth in the SEC among pitchers with at least 10 innings tossed.

His numbers aren't as remarkable in conference play — he has a 1.84 ERA — but they're still the best on the team.

SEE BASEBALL, PAGE 16

## Off Brandt / Opinion

# The NBA playoffs are here and Ben Simmons is ready to rock the nation

Philadelphia has seen enough sports success in the past four months to last a decade.

To start it off, the Eagles won their first Super Bowl in February and turned the entire city into a madhouse. Then, the Villanova men's basketball team secured its second national championship in three years earlier this month and kept the party alive. Now, the Flyers are playing in the NHL playoffs again after missing the cut last season.

But perhaps the most impressive Philadelphia sports success story this year is the remarkable reversal of fortune for the Philadelphia 76ers. It seems like yesterday that fans in Wells Fargo Center replaced their red, white and blue jerseys with brown bags over their heads, hiding from the third-worst regular season performance



Benjamin Brandt  
Twitter: @bhb1227

in NBA history. In the three seasons before this year's 52-win outburst, the 76ers were utterly horrible, losing 190 of 246 games.

Cue rookie sensation Ben Simmons, seven-foot monster Joel Embiid and their mighty "Trust the Process" campaign. After sitting out his true-rookie season last year due to a foot

injury, Simmons took charge of a floundering franchise and led it to the No. 3 seed in the Eastern Conference.

Embiid has been crucial to the 76ers' success as well, averaging a double-double with 22.9 points and 11 rebounds per game this season. But on March 28, Embiid suffered a facial fracture and missed the latter half of a 16-game winning streak the 76ers rode into the postseason.

In those eight games without Embiid,

SEE COLUMN, PAGE 16



Led by sophomore **Andy Zhang's** final score of 1 over, the Florida men's golf team finished in fourth place at the Mason Rudolph Championship on Sunday.

### HORFORD LEADS CELTICS TO GAME 1 VICTORY

Former Florida forward **Al Horford** scored a team-high 24 points in Boston's 113-107 victory over Milwaukee on Sunday. The Celtics lead the Bucks 1-0 in the seven-game, first-round series and will play again at the TD Garden on Tuesday.

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## SOFTBALL

# UF supports pediatric cancer awareness during doubleheader

By Mark Stine  
Sports Writer

Despite being entrenched in a battle for position atop the SEC standings, No. 6 Florida and No. 11 South Carolina took the field on Saturday united in support of one cause.

For the third consecutive season, UF hosted the “Yellow Game,” a display of support for those affected by pediatric cancer.

Both teams wore bright yellow hats with accompanying sunflowers and yellow ribbons in their hair.

Just before the first game of Saturday’s doubleheader, the Gators and Gamecocks lined the infield to cheer on an inspirational young man.

William Collett threw out the day’s first pitch. Eleven months ago he was diagnosed with leukemia and is actively receiving treatment at Shands Children’s Hospital.

“It’s not just one team against cancer. It’s everyone,” UF pitcher Kelly Barnhill said. “Just seeing William come out and throw the first pitch — these kids have so much fight in them. We want to show that we’re supporting them.”

Thomas Collett, William’s father and a radio broadcaster with the Gator IMG Sports Network, posted a video on Twitter of his son heaving the softball

into the mitt of senior catcher Janell Wheaton. William was also surprised with a softball signed by the entire team and a Florida batting helmet.

In return, William gave every player and coach a yellow bracelet, which reads “Pray For William.”

Third baseman Nicole DeWitt, who hit a walk-off home run in the second game of Saturday’s doubleheader against the Gamecocks, reacted to the video on Twitter.

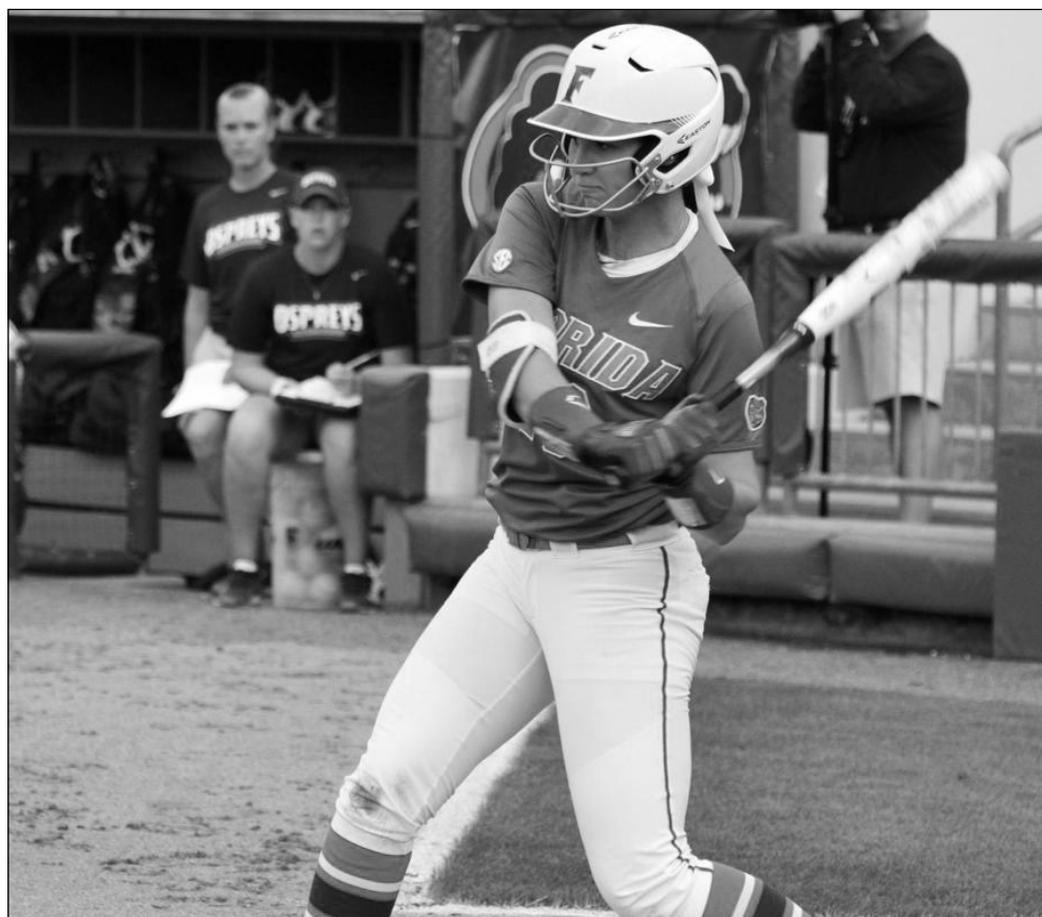
“It’s so amazing that this sport can bring awareness to pediatric cancer!” DeWitt tweeted. “William, you are awesome and will be with the Gators for the rest of our season!”

UF also recognized Heather Braswell, an honorary member of the team from 2009 until 2014 when she passed away due to brain cancer.

A yellow “HB” was scripted into clay down the left-field foul line with the Braswell family in attendance.

“I wasn’t able to know (Heather),” senior pitcher Aleshia Ocasio said. “But the tradition that she carries and the meaning that this yellow day and the sunflower (holds)... it is so amazing that we can reach out to so many people and spread awareness.”

@mstinejr  
mstine@alligator.org



Alligator File Photo

Nicole DeWitt tweeted her support for William Collett, a boy with leukemia, on Saturday night after UF honored him during a pregame ceremony. “William, you are awesome,” DeWitt wrote.

## LACROSSE

## Florida’s bench shining during conference play

By Tyler Nettuno  
Sports Writer

There’s a reason that the Gators lacrosse team was a unanimous pick to win the Big East during the preseason: It hasn’t lost a conference game since 2015.

No. 9 Florida (11-3, 6-0 Big East) is the only ranked team in the conference, and aside from a close call in its league opener against Vanderbilt when it won 11-10, Big East play has been a breeze for the Gators. Of the six conference games the team has played this spring, it forced a running clock in four of them.

The vast gap between Florida and the rest of the Big East field was on full display in UF’s 18-6 beatdown of Marquette on Saturday.

The Eagles (9-5, 5-1 Big East) entered the game tied for the lead in the conference standings, but once again, the Gators left no doubt that they were the better team.

In similar games this season, Florida has taken advantage of every opportunity to rest starters and give its bench a chance to show what it can do. So far, the results have been impressive. Against Marquette, UF’s reserves scored four goals.

“It’s a long week ahead so it was good for some starters to get a break,” Gators coach Amanda O’Leary said in a release. “But it is also good to see some players who typically don’t get in and see what they can do.”

Freshman midfielder Eddy Shoop, who hadn’t scored a goal all season heading into the team’s matchup against Temple on April 4, has found the back of the net in each of Florida’s past three games.



Kittell

Sophomore attacker Madisyn Kittell burst onto the scene in the Gators’ overtime victory over Loyola on February 25, scoring two critical goals late in the game. She scored two goals in the subsequent win over Jacksonville before being held scoreless over the next three games.

However, since the team began conference play, she has scored seven goals in seven games, including two-goal performances against Villanova and Towson.

With only three games remaining in the regular season for Florida, the experience gained by players that don’t normally see the field should prove valuable in the postseason.

With their conference winning streak now at 28, the Gators will travel to Cincinnati to take on the Bearcats at noon on Wednesday.

Florida has won five straight games and will look to continue its strong finish to the season.

@TylerNettuno  
tnettuno@alligator.org

## MEN’S TENNIS

## Perez-Blanco reflects on career after regular-season finale

By Dylan Rudolph  
Sports Writer

As fans filed out of the Ring Tennis Complex on Friday for the last time this season, senior Chase Perez-Blanco, along with fellow seniors Jordan Belga and Josh Wardell, stayed on the court.

With their arms wrapped around each other, the three teammates looked up at the scoreboard, which read 7-0 over Alabama, and reflected on their careers at the University of Florida.

“During the match, I tried not to think about it too much,” Perez-Blanco said. “I knew the nerves would come in, and I would get in my own head.”

Even though postseason play is right around the corner, the senior knew what Friday’s match against the Crimson Tide meant: It was the last time he would play in the Ring Tennis Complex as a Gator.

“I wouldn’t change a thing,” Perez-Blanco said. “It’s just been the best four years.”

No one can blame him for not wanting to change anything about his career. From the start, the team knew he was something special.

Perez-Blanco was exceptional his freshman year, sporting a 25-11 overall singles record and winning two SEC Freshman of the Week honors along with being named to the SEC All-Freshman Team.

As a sophomore, he won a career-high 16 dual matches and 30 overall singles victories.

Perez-Blanco has continued to improve every year at UF, and it culminated in a top-10 winningest career at the school.

With the dramatic 2-6, 7-6, 10-7 win on Friday over Alabama’s Edson Ortiz, the Miami native won his 91st career singles match. Perez-Blanco is now only three wins away from ninth on the all-time list.

“We’ve had some great players walk through these doors,” coach Bryan Shelton said. “For (Perez-Blanco) to be among them, it really shows how much he has accomplished here.”

The senior also has 180 career wins in singles and doubles combined, which ranks eighth all-time at UF. He is one win away from moving into a tie for sixth all-time with former Gators Elliott Orkin and Greg Ouellette.

Playing alongside doubles partner Oliver Crawford, that mark isn’t far out of reach. The two players have won their last six doubles matches together, with the previous two in dramatic, come-from-behind duels to clinch the doubles point for Florida.

Shelton said Perez-Blanco has come into his role as a vocal leader for the team, and his confidence on the court is a big reason why he can come back in matches the way he does.

The senior will have more chances to climb the win ladder when the Gators return to play on April 27 for the SEC tournament.

@dyrudolph  
drudolph@alligator.org



Alan Alvarez / Alligator Staff

Jonathan India's .436 batting average leads the SEC. He also leads the conference in slugging percentage, on-base percentage and runs scored.

## Liput is hitting .301 and has 20 RBIs

### BASEBALL, from pg. 14

#### Reliever Jordan Butler

You probably imagined Brady Singer or Jackson Kowar filling in this spot. Both are solid choices, and both have eerily similar numbers, which made it hard to choose.

But it was always anticipated that Singer and Kowar would fulfill their lofty expectations, and so far, they have. Freshman lefty Jordan Butler was a complete unknown outside the program entering the season, and he's now filled a role that O'Sullivan was concerned about when the season started. For that, he gets the nod.

Butler is third on the team with a 2.38 ERA, and he's thrown more than twice as many innings as second-place Andrew Baker. His numbers in SEC play are even more impressive, with zero earned runs, 14 strikeouts, four walks and four hits allowed in 11.1 innings.

O'Sullivan said that entering the season, he wasn't sure who was going to bridge the gap from Singer, Kowar and fellow starter Tyler

Dyson to Byrne. He didn't have an established eighth-inning guy.

Butler has become that guy.

"He's a very big part of our team," catcher JJ Schwarz said.

#### Third baseman Jonathan India

It's impossible to leave India off this list.

His .436 batting average leads the SEC, and so does his slugging percentage, on-base percentage and runs scored.

His average would set a new UF single-season record if the season ended today, and he's carrying a 23-game hitting streak. Like Butler, he's only gotten better in conference play.

He's hitting .509 in the SEC, and teams have made a habit of intentionally walking him. That speaks to how feared he has become as well as to how influential he has been for the Gators during their successful run.

#### Shortstop Deacon Liput

Wil Dalton, Nick Horvath, Austin Langworthy and Schwarz could

have filled this spot just as well, but because of how he's excelled after a slow start, the nod goes to Liput.

Florida's shortstop opened the year suspended, but since he's returned to the lineup — often in the leadoff spot — he's hitting .301 with 20 RBIs. Had he played during his suspension, those RBI numbers would put him on pace for 30 runs driven in. That would place him second on the team to Dalton.

His return to the lineup also filled a major hole for the Gators. UF hadn't figured out what to do with shortstop, trying out true freshman Brady McConnell as well as sliding India over from third base and leaving freshman Brady Smith at the hot corner.

McConnell and Smith have hit .143 and .267 this season, respectively, so keeping them on the bench and solidifying an already potent lineup with Liput at shortstop has been a major boost for Florida's offense.

@ebaueri

ebauer@alligator.org

### COLUMN, from pg. 14

Simmons shined like a seasoned superstar. He recorded two of his season-total 12 triple-double performances, including a 27-point, 15-rebound, 13-assist outing against the Cleveland Cavaliers on April 6.

Simmons played in his first-ever playoff game on Saturday night and remained unshaken by the atmosphere. The 76ers pounded the Miami Heat 130-103 behind Simmons' 17 points and 14 assists.

More impressive than his flashy numbers across the stat sheet — remnant of point guard greats such as Magic Johnson and Oscar Robertson — is Simmons' unflinching maturity and leadership at 21 years old.

With Embiid injured, the next youngest starter is three years Simmons' senior. But still, Simmons is

the designated playmaker and the man always in control. Compared to the oddities of 2017 No. 1 draft pick Markelle Fultz's rookie year and the quiet debut of the Los Angeles Lakers' Lonzo Ball, Simmons' confidence is in the clouds.

Philadelphia looks better than it has since the days of Allen Iverson at the turn of the century, making the Eastern Conference much more than just LeBron James' personal playground.

Don't be surprised if Simmons and the Sixers make quick work of the first two rounds of competition and threaten to send James home before the Finals for the first time in almost a decade.

Ben Brandt is a sports writer. Contact him at [bbrandt@alligator.org](mailto:bbrandt@alligator.org).

## Trask went 12 for 24 with 178 yards

### FOOTBALL, from pg. 14

that resembled a dart finding a bullseye. That pass set up a 7-yard touchdown run by Jordan Scarlett the next play.

Throws like that came often for Trask, who ended the day with the most completions of any quarterback. He went 12 for 24 on the day and threw for a team-high 178 yards. He also didn't throw a legitimate touchdown — same situation as Franks.

While his throws looked the best of the three quarterbacks due to the zip he had as he released the ball, his inexperience showed on Saturday. He overthrew receivers at times and almost tossed multiple

interceptions.

Despite his struggles with accuracy, Trask believes his performance could be enough to earn him the starting role.

"I feel like I showed a lot more maturity at the quarterback position with my hard work and determination to get better," Trask said.

#### Emory Jones

Toward the end of the first half, fans got their first look at Jones, one of the biggest recruits in the Gators' 2018 freshman class.

The performance that ensued was the textbook definition of inconsistent.

Jones had his moments, like a 58-yard touchdown pass to tight

end R.J. Raymond in the second quarter and a 19-yard touchdown pass to tight end Kemore Gamble in the third quarter.

He also had some plays that showed just how much he needs to learn. Jones threw the only interception of the game, a ball that was tipped at the line of scrimmage and fell into the hands of walk-on linebacker Jahim Lawrence.

At the end of the day, Jones had the most passing touchdowns of any quarterback that played. His accuracy, however, wasn't as strong. He finished going 3 for 7 for 93 yards.

@DreilingerJake

jdreilinger@alligator.org



# FOOTBALL



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