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2019 SPRING SPORTS PREVIEW

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Petition calls to rename LaValle Stadium

By Rebecca Liebson
News Editor

More than 500 people have signed a petition calling on the university to change the name of Kenneth P. LaValle Stadium after its namesake voted against a ban on gay conversion therapy.

The Stony Brook College Democrats, Stony Brook LGBTQ+TA, House of Shade and the Feminist Majority Leadership Alliance posted the petition on Tuesday, Feb. 12.

"If Stony Brook University wishes to be an inclusive community, it must no longer glorify a man who votes for the torture of LGBTQ* youth," the petition states. "Stony Brook University has a responsibility to protect all of its students, especially those who come from marginalized communities. No student should have the name of their oppressor looming over them at graduation. No student should have to see their oppressor glorified in their home."

In a previous statement sent to *The Statesman*, LaValle noted that although he is personally opposed to gay conversion therapy, he chose



GISELLE MIRANDA / STATESMAN FILE

Wolfie high-fiving the Stony Brook Seawolves as they enter Kenneth P. LaValle Stadium for a game in 2015. The stadium is named after the New York state senator who had an instrumental role in securing funds for the building.

not to vote for the bill because he felt it would undermine the current legal process for determining medical misconduct, which leaves it up to professionals on state review boards to decide whether or not to ban the medical practice.

LaValle doubled down on this idea in a letter he sent to SBU President, Samuel L. Stanley Jr., which was given to *The Statesman* by the Republican state senator's director of communications.

"I voted no on this bill because I strongly believe that trained

medical professionals, who across the board have stated that the practice of conversion therapy is archaic and inhumane, should be determining misconduct, not elected officials," LaValle wrote. "I try to thoughtfully study an issue and base my votes on facts to

avoid unintended consequences. While some will use my votes to paint me as anti LGBTQ nothing could be further from the truth. Through

Continued on page 3

USG chief justice confirmed after a year's delay

By Brianne Ledda
Assistant News Editor

The chief justice of the Undergraduate Student Government (USG) spent over a year in office without being confirmed, violating a constitutional requirement that judiciary members be confirmed during the academic year they are appointed.

Aravindh Pushparaj, appointed last year by USG's previous president, Ayyan Zubair, was officially confirmed by the USG Senate Thursday night. Last month, associate justices expressed dissatisfaction with Pushparaj's performance and pointed out that he had not received Senate approval, according to an email that was given to *The Statesman*.

His Senate confirmation was added to the agenda less than 24 hours before the meeting commenced, violating code requirements that require business to be added at least 48 hours in ad-

vance. In another constitutional violation, Pushparaj didn't deliver monthly reports to the Senate during his time in office.

"I am fully aware of that law and the article, but I have an explanation obviously," he told the Senate. "The problem was, we were not fully staffed initially. For a long time, we had a lot of problems. Associate justices were graduated, we were still trying to recruit or nominate justices, during which period we could not hold the meetings."

Sen. Zachary Shaps followed up, saying that it was the duty of the Senate to invite him for monthly updates.

One senator asked why the confirmation didn't happen in the first place.

"We have multiple copies of the USG constitution and code circulating," Pushparaj replied. "We have to work as a unit on rectifying that issue, because different versions of it have different statements."

There is one version of the constitution and code on the USG website, although the link to the code leads to a Google Drive folder with another version of the constitution. Both copies, however, indicate that judiciary members should be Senate-approved within the academic year they were appointed, and that the chief justice should deliver monthly reports to the Senate.

A judiciary member, who asked to remain anonymous to avoid retaliation, confirmed that those are the only versions that exist and explained that the multiple versions referred to are old revisions, explicitly labeled with a date in the document name.

They acknowledged that it's possible people don't look at the newest version, but there hasn't been any change to the judiciary language in the code or constitution for years.

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SBU doesn't run on Dunkin'

By Sara Ruberg
Assistant Multimedia Editor

The Student Activities Center will no longer be home to the long awaited Dunkin' Donuts, according to the Executive Director of the Faculty Student Administration (FSA), Van Sullivan.

"The planned Dunkin' location at the Student Activities Center (SAC) has been placed on hold due to prohibitive construction costs," Sullivan wrote in an email.

In the spring 2018 semester, FSA announced that a Dunkin' Donuts would replace the Seawolves Marketplace by fall 2018. Although that plan has been scrapped, FSA is still considering building the Dunkin' in East Side Dining where East Meets West Deli currently runs.

"Current deli options will still be available within the other stations offered at East Side Dining," Sullivan stated.

FSA is currently reviewing various options to fill the space in the SAC. These options have not been released to students at this time.

Some students, like junior social work major Cristina Guevara, said they were unhappy with the new plan.

"It's better to have the Dunkin' in the SAC because that's like the main area," Guevara said. "Just keep the deli where it's at."

Junior political science major Yusuf Sezgin had a different perspective on the matter.

"I'd rather have a Dunkin' Donuts, I guess. We don't have a donuts place here," Sezgin said. "We already have a deli section in the Student Activities Center so there's no point in having two of those."

If the plan to replace the deli is approved, the construction of Dunkin' Donuts is expected to be completed by the fall 2019 semester.



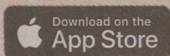
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NEWS

LaValle defends vote in a letter to President Stanley

Continued from page 1

out my tenure, I have been a supporter of civil rights for all groups. That being said our laws have to be workable and satisfy constitutional requirements.”

He then goes on to list several pro-LGBTQ measures he’s supported in the past including the Sexual Orientation Non-Discrimination Act as well as legislation that granted equal bereavement leave for same sex couples.

“It’s an important letter for members of the campus community to read.”

-Lauren Shepro
University Media Relations officer

President of the Stony Brook College Democrats and junior political science and English double major, Cecelia Masselli, said that LaValle’s reasoning for voting against the bill is illogical.

“The legislation includes statements by the medical community affirming that gay conversion therapy is extremely harmful so it’s not as if people in the medical profession were excluded,” she said. “The fact that he claims to not support gay conversion therapy doesn’t mean anything if he used his power to protect its existence. This bill had bipartisan support because Republicans and Democrats alike recognized it is 100 percent the responsibility of our elected officials to enact legislation protecting the LGBTQ community from torture.”

University media relations officer Lauren Shepro responded to requests for comment with the following statement: “The New York State legislature and Governor Cuomo got it right — not only on conversion therapy but also on the Gender Expression Non-Discrimination Act (GENDA),” she wrote. “That said, we have been advised that Sen. LaValle sent a letter to *The Statesman* outlining his concerns about the conversion therapy bill as drafted, along with his history of legislative support for equality for the LGBTQ* community. It’s an important letter for members of the campus community to read.”

Shepro did not respond to questions about the petition or whether Stony Brook would consider renaming the stadium.

Two constitutional rules were broken and one code regulation was violated in confirmation

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About four questions in, Executive Vice President Abdelrahman Salama announced that they would take two more questions.

The USG code indicates that a candidate appointed by the president to the executive or judiciary branches should be interviewed and vetted by an ad-hoc committee appointed by the Senate. The Vetting and Legislative Review traditionally fills that role.

USG Sen. Andrew Machkasov, who came prepared with 16 questions in a Google doc, said that although Pushparaj was interviewed before he was confirmed for associate justice, he was not subject to the same review when he took on the role of chief justice.

“There was no interview this time around, I was forced to sacrifice one question for another, and I felt that all-around the attitude in the air was to conceal information from the Senate,” Machkasov said. “Two years later, I feel as though I know nothing about him.”

Shaps argued for Pushparaj’s confirmation, however.

“I think that the accident of the previous president shouldn’t be reflected today,” he said at the beginning of the meeting.

“It shouldn’t be blamed on the current EC [executive council], it should be, not blamed on the past EC, but viewed as a simple error that can be fixed today.”

He said that he highly endorses Pushparaj, calling him very well articulated.

“I feel like he’s made pretty good strides in the justice department, and I think he has valuable expertise within the department,” Shaps said.

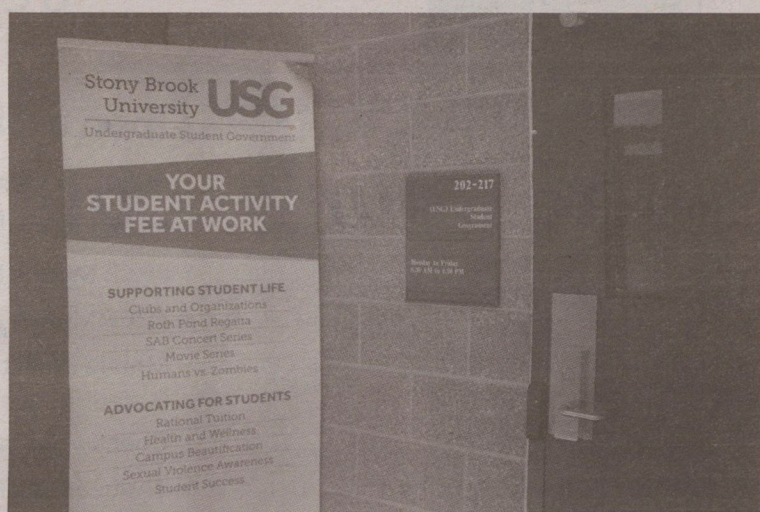
Pushparaj was confirmed with three out of 19 votes dissenting.

Sen. Huntley Spencer voted no because Pushparaj will be leaving

the position at the end of the semester and believes it would be more efficient to train a new justice during the time instead. He also said that the constitution is old, and USG is working to update it with its administration.

“A lot of the rules and code in there are very much left to the interpretation of whatever administration is in charge,” he said.

Pushparaj, Salama and current USG President Justas Klimavicius did not respond to requests for comments before the article was published.



EMMA HARRIS / THE STATESMAN

A picture of the USG office. The chief justice was Senate-approved in a meeting on Thursday, Feb. 14.



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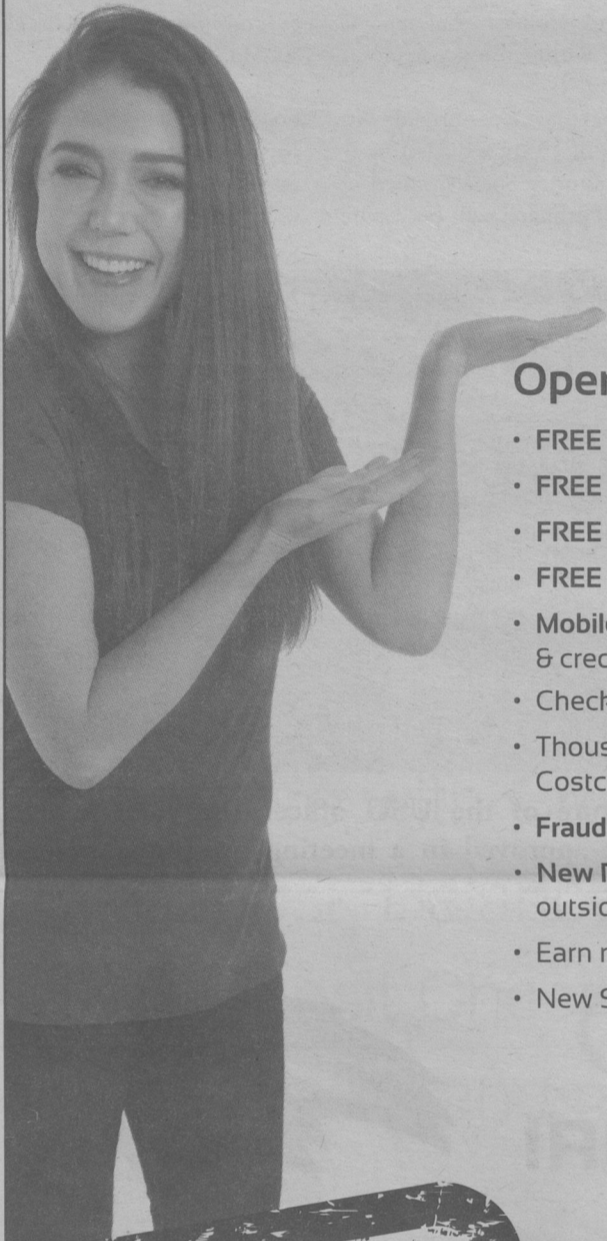
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2019 *spring sports* PREVIEW



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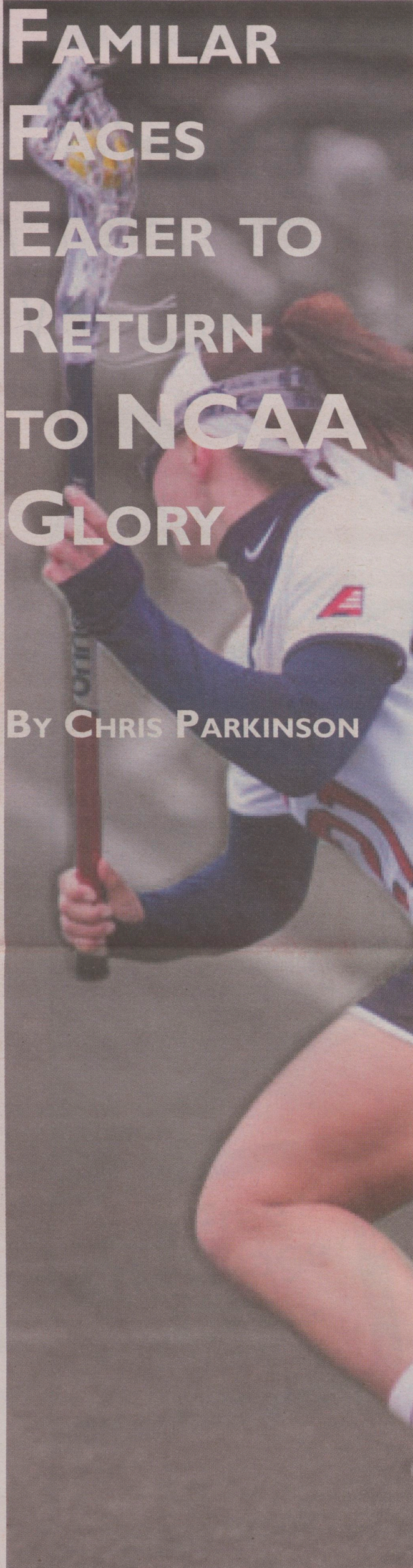
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FAMILAR FACES EAGER TO RETURN TO NCAA GLORY

BY CHRIS PARKINSON



For head coach Joe Spallina's squad, all seems to be business as usual.

Stony Brook Women's Lacrosse enters the 2019 season as the defending America East champion for the sixth consecutive year. The Seawolves received the fifth rank nationally, despite going undefeated in regular season play and defeated No. 14-ranked University of Pennsylvania 18-5 in the second round of playoffs last year. They were unable to capture the NCAA Championship after falling to No. 4 Boston College 12-11 in overtime on the road.

Following the overtime loss last season, Spallina still praised his team's effort throughout the year and expressed his love and gratitude for the team.

"I'm proud of our kids. I'd go to battle with that group any day of the week, I love each one of them," Spallina said. "It stings, it definitely hurts. That said, you can't ask for more. Our defense responded well after a tough start, and I thought we were the better team after the first 10 minutes. I give a lot of credit to Boston College, they're a great team. I love my kids, we just didn't make enough plays today."

Under Spallina, the team has produced 12 Intercollegiate Women's Lacrosse Coaches Association All-Americans, 10 Tewaaraton nominees, three Tewaaraton finalists, six conference championships, six NCAA Tournament second-round berths and two NCAA quarterfinal appearances. Under the coach's wing, the program has established itself as one of the routinely top contenders in the nation.

This start of this season has a different feeling to it, however.

The Seawolves enter this season without attacker Kylie Ohlmiller, who graduated last spring and was a key component to the team's success throughout the years. Ohlmiller is considered one of the greatest Women's Lacrosse players of the generation, holding numerous all-time records including most points and most assists.

Another key player that the team has lost to graduation is attacker Courtney Murphy. Murphy was the Seawolves' second-leading scorer with 95 goals and started in all of the 21 games for the team. Murphy has solidified her mark as one of the team's most dynamic players alongside Ohlmiller, which has left the team in pursuit of filling the void.

Heading into the season, Stony Brook has brought in nine new freshmen, five from Suffolk County, continuing Spallina's recruitment on the Island. The nine will have a big gap to fill, replacing 10 seniors from the last year's championship squad who have graduated.

Stony Brook enters this season with monumental expectations set, per usual. The Seawolves have disposed unrelenting punishment to the America East by winning 29 of their last 30 conference games dating back to 2012.

One of the team's returning members, junior attacker Taryn Ohlmiller, is anticipating the start of the season in order to showcase the team's more aggressive edge.

"We're super excited for our first game and have been working really hard and pushing each other to be the best version of ourselves every day," Ohlmiller said. "We have a big chip on our shoulders and are ready to prove everyone wrong this season."

Ohlmiller ranked third in the conference for scoring with 52 goals and second with 55 assists, finishing behind her sister who finished the year with 69. The junior has scored 117 goals in her Seawolves career along with 208 points. Based on her reputation as a persistent scorer, she has asserted herself as one of the team's key offensive threats heading into the year.

Junior midfielder Ally Kennedy, who was selected for the United States National Team alongside teammate senior midfielder Mackenzie Burns, has always been a catalyst for offensive pressure. As a freshman, she scored 39 goals and 13 assists in her first season and wrapped up her sophomore year by scoring nine more goals and 21 assists.

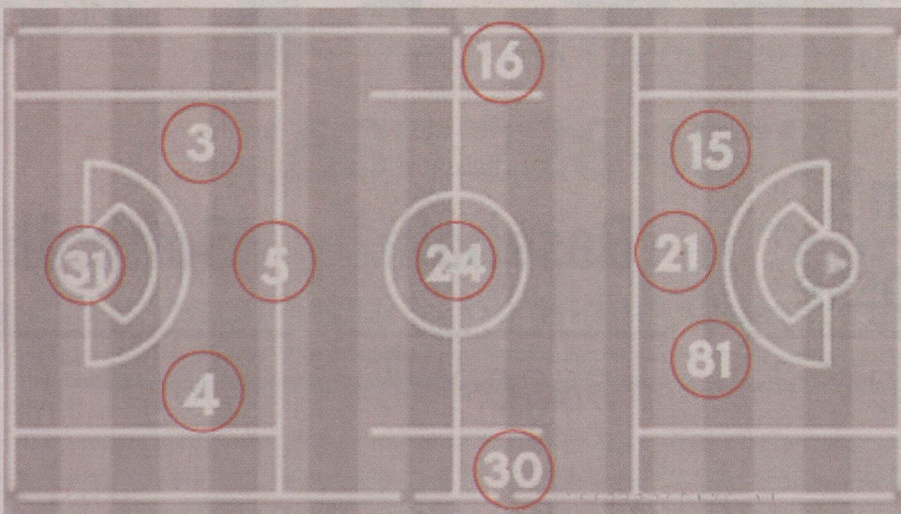
Returning for the team on the defensive end is the 2018 America East Goalkeeper of the Year senior Anna Tesoriero. Tesoriero earned the honor for the second consecutive year after only giving up a nationwide-leading seven goals surrendered per game. The goalkeeper enters her final season having earned the First Team All-Conference award three times and will look to capitalize off her conference-leading 49 percent save percentage.

In the Inside Lacrosse 2019 Face-Off Yearbook preseason rankings poll, Stony Brook was ranked fifth coming into the season, behind Boston College, Maryland, North Carolina and reigning national champion James Madison.

"We are all really excited to get the season going in Colorado next week. We've been working and competing really hard these past couple of weeks," sophomore midfielder Siobhan Rafferty said. "We have a really fast, athletic and determined team this year. We are playing with a huge chip on our shoulder and are ready to take on the season."

The team pursues its journey to a seventh consecutive America East championship when the team heads to Colorado to take on the University of Colorado on Friday, Feb. 22 on 5 p.m. and follows up with a matchup two days later against the University of Denver.

PROJECTED STARTING LINEUP



Defense

- 3- Mackenzie Burns
- 4- Carlee Janelli
- 5- Rayna Sabella
- 31- Anna Tesoriero

Attack

- 15- Kasey Mitchell
- 21- Taryn Ohlmiller
- 81- Nicole Barretta

Midfield

- 16- Siobhan Rafferty
- 24- Keri McCarthy
- 30- Ally Kennedy

Key Reserves

- 7- Kelsi Lonigro
- 29- Jesse Arline
- 36- Sabrina Tabasso
- 40- Sara Moeller

MEN'S LACROSSE LOOKS TO BUILD OFF SUCCESSFUL 2018 CONFERENCE SEASON

BY KENNETH FERMIN

The Stony Brook Men's Lacrosse 2018 season was quickly becoming desolate after starting off with a rocky 1-5 start, in which the average margin of defeat was nearly six goals. However, the Seawolves banded together and instituted the right team chemistry that turned their fortunes around, sharing the America East Co-Regular Season Championship with eventual conference champion UAlbany. Now replete with a heavy mixture of experienced juniors and refining sophomores, the team is striving for championship success that has eluded them since 2012.

The Stony Brook defense will be commanded by All Conference First Team senior long-stick midfielder Ryland Rees. Rees safeguarded the backend of the field aggressively, finishing sixth in the conference with 45 total ground balls and second with 24 caused turnovers.

Rees' authoritative defense ultimately nabbed him a spot on defending champion Team Canada in the 2018 FIL World Championship, alongside 2011 Stony Brook graduate midfielder Kevin Crowley and 21 others, from July 13-21. The long-stick midfielder patrolled the field, forcing several loose balls and even recorded a goal as Canada advanced to the gold medal game against the United States.

"It was a true honor to [play] for Team Canada," Rees said. "Being one of the younger guys on the team, I had to definitely accept that role and just follow the great players that were on that team such as Brodie Merrill and Geoff Snider. Just doing my part of what I was asked for by the team was such an amazing experience, but it was an unfortunate turnout for us."

Rees was named Stony Brook team captain last season and is one of nine active seniors. Despite playing the pivotal role, the captain believes his fellow classmates have stepped into a leadership position as well.

"One thing we really try to capitalize on is senior leadership," Rees said. "We expect the same out of every senior whether you play or not. The leadership role other seniors [have taken on] is tremendous. Being able to watch other leaders grow and lead this team to where we are today is a surreal feeling."

Offensively, Stony Brook returns all 10 top leading scorers and all 12 leaders in assists from last season, including All-Conference Second Team junior attacker Tom Haun. Haun blazed through defenders and ripped shots at the back of the net, leading the team with 22 goals, 36 points and a 75 shot on goal percentage.

Haun will be accompanied on the attack by junior Chris Pickel, Jr. and sophomores Jack Walsh and Mike McCannell, who are all expected to see starting time after successful 2018 campaigns. With a mix of classmates controlling the team's scoring, Haun has smoothly transitioned to being the offensive play caller and catalyst.

"We are a pretty young group on attack ... have tried to be more vocal on the field," Haun said. "It is a bigger responsibility for me because you gotta echo the calls and everyone has got to know where they are supposed to be but it is a good challenge and I am ready to accept it."

Stony Brook wasted no time improving over the offseason, practicing in snowstorms two weeks before classes were in session. The Seawolves focused much of their training toward improving possession amounts and scoring after finishing fourth in the conference for overall goals and points.

"I think [we improved on] our own system," Haun said. "We realize that for us to win games we have to ground balls. We also have to play within the system and we have to play hard. I think that improved from the first day of practice up until now and we are just ready to keep it going."

Stony Brook unsuccessfully opened its new season, falling 17-4 to the substantially commanding No.4-ranked Penn State Nittany Lions on Saturday, Feb. 16.

The Seawolves have upped the ante in terms of competition, facing off against five ranked teams this season as opposed to merely two last year in America East action. They will conclude their season against Albany on Friday, April 26 in a battle between the top two teams selected in the Coaches Preseason Poll.

"We always try to play a tough schedule so if you want to be the best, you got to play the best," Nagle said. "It makes you better in general whenever you face better teams, so we are trying to grow as a team and continually get better over the course of the season."

The formidable opponents will serve as a test for Stony Brook's durability and playoff potential as it looks to improve on a successful conference season.

Player to watch: Ryland Rees

Rees enters the campaign fresh off a stint with the Team Canada at the 2018 FIL Men's Lacrosse World Championship in Netanya, Israel from July 13-21 that almost did not happen.

A dispute over improved insurance between national players and the Canadian Lacrosse Association resulted in players refusing to participate in the games. Players refused giving in to the association's demands to play until a compromise was ultimately met on June 15, less than one month before the games.

"The fact that we were able to stick together and everyone was on the same page is incredible," Rees said. "They tried to find players that would go to play and would say yes, while as a country everyone said 'No, we want to stand behind those Team Canada guys that are holding out.' It made us realize we weren't fighting for the team, we were playing for the country."

Canada cruised to the semi-finals, where a controversial last second goal served the United States the 9-8 victory and gold medal. Dissatisfied with the result, Rees still took in the Championship experience.

"What I was able to grab was the level of respect that players have for each team and each country," Rees said. "On and off the field, you are always with other teams and your own teammates. Just the leadership that some of the other guys were able to show and how close-knit that team got so quickly really brought the team together."

PROJECTED STARTING LINEUP

Defense

- 15- Justin Pugal
- 17- Ryland Rees
- 36- Devin O'Leary
- 47- Michael Bollinger

Midfield

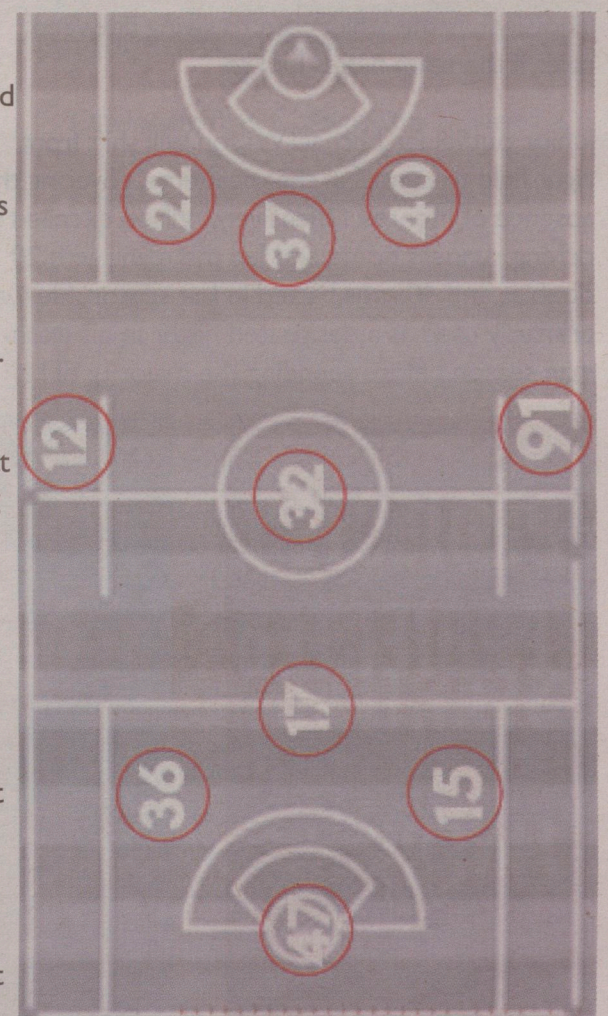
- 12- Wanye White
- 32- Nolan Ennegrass
- 91- Patrick Kaschalk

Attack

- 22- Tom Haun
- 37- Jack Walsh
- 40- Cory Vanginhoven

Key Reserves

- 13- Chris Pickel Jr.
- 20- CJ Trenkle
- 45- Kyle Herbert
- 92- Mike McCannell



RETURNING STARTERS GUIDE THE SUCCESS OF BASEBALL IN 2019

BY RYAN PAVICH

A veteran core, supplemented by a deep class of freshmen is what composes the 2019 Stony Brook baseball team. Seeking a berth in their fifth America East Conference Championship over the past six seasons, the Seawolves will rely on a host of familiar faces.

Seven starters bringing a combined 1,216 at-bats from last season across the lineup will return. Junior shortstop Nick Grande will lead the way for the team, coming off an All-American campaign last season and drawing national attention as the 15th-ranked shortstop in the nation.

The other positions for Stony Brook are up to change, however, as the team will have to deal with the loss of senior outfielder Cristian Montes for the season. Montes discovered an injury over the summer that was found during an MRI scan and is drastic enough for surgery, costing him the upcoming season.

"Montes was penciled in to be our centerfielder, so that's created a couple issues," head coach Matt Senk said. "[Senior outfielder] Dylan Resk has had some experience over his four years playing quite a bit of outfield, and then [senior infielder] Brandon Alamo played some outfield, some first base last year. Brandon will, at least, start in the outfield and we'll see what happens from there."

Senk also said that if they had to make any additional changes, junior first baseman Chris Hamilton could shift over to one of the corner outfield spots, but he prioritized keeping Hamilton at his natural position where he plays superior defense. The coach noted that senior infielder Brandon Janofsky has the athleticism to swing between roles if the team needs him to.

Junior outfielder Michael Wilson will shift from right field to center in the meantime, covering the absence of Montes. Offensively, Wilson excelled at driving runners home and led the team with 20 doubles and 40 runs batted in last season. He was primarily used as a designated hitter in his freshman season before spending the majority of his

innings in right last season and has been working to quickly improve his defense.

"Mostly it was just a learning process," Wilson said of his experience last year. "[I] took a lot of reps out there during practice, being able to read the ball off the bat is a big thing which I learned last year. Just catching the ball really, that's a big step for me."

The only other position up for grabs is third base, where Senk has the incumbent senior infielder Michael Russell. Russell backed up former third baseman Bobby Honeyman last season, batting .282 with six doubles and sending 11 runners home in 26 games played. He could see competition from freshman infielder Evan Giordano, who the head coach said was also in the mix in the early going.

Giordano highlights a list of several freshmen who Senk pointed out as early candidates to contribute right away. Nick Degennaro and Ben Fero are right-handed options that Senk said had strong falls, and Liam Pulsipher is one of the few lefties being carried on the roster, so Senk is hoping for him to hit the ground running.

"I think they all have the potential to give us some quality innings," Senk said.

Another pitcher that stood out was junior Adam Erickson, a transfer from Sacramento City College in California. Erickson was the Panthers' closer and is the leading candidate to fill that role for the Seawolves after former pitcher Aaron Pinto graduated last year.

"He's not your prototypical closer, though," Senk said. "He's not a low-90's guy, coming out throwing all kinds of gas. He pounds the strike zone with a three to four pitch mix, and he really competes. He's certainly somebody that we could have in that position and then kind of take it from there."

Looking ahead toward the potential postseason, Stony Brook is incentivizing finishing in either the first or second seed. The team is projected to

reach that mark, as they are ranked second in the America East preseason poll; but if the Seawolves match that projection, then that would earn them a first-round bye in the tournament. The league's previous two champions, Hartford and UMBC, both entered the tournament with a bye.

For now, Stony Brook will focus on what it can accomplish in the opening weekend. The team opens the new season Friday, Feb. 15 on the road in Miami, playing Florida International. The southern trip will be the first of three road series the team will play to open its schedule.

"I'd just like for us from day one to go out and force teams to beat us," Senk said. "More times than not teams lose games than they actually go out and win games, so go out and take care of the baseball, grind out at-bats, give them 27 outs, limit the errors, all of these are things that we're capable of doing. Frankly, if we do that consistently [it] will give us the best chance of winning not only this weekend but every weekend and throughout the season."

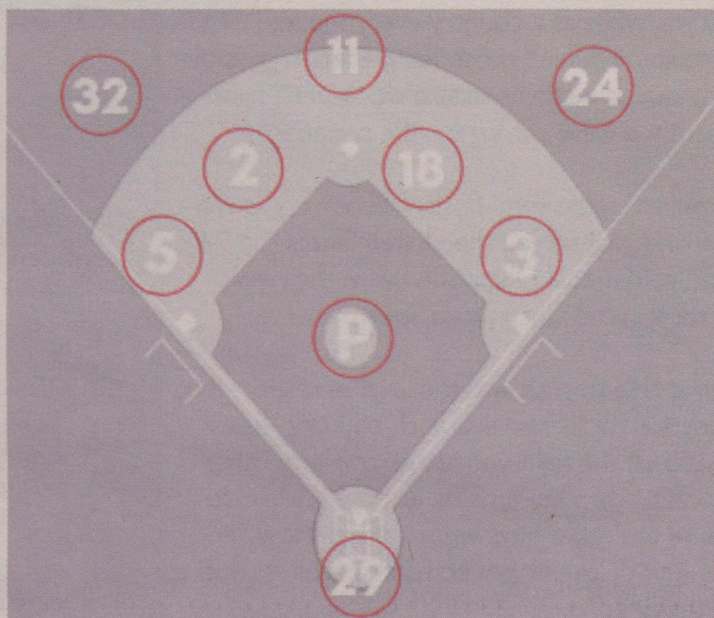
Player to watch: Michael Wilson

Wilson had an incredibly successful 2018 season, and it wasn't just due to his adjustment to playing the outfield. The outfielder's hefty bat took a big leap last year, slugging .498 and leading the team with 20 doubles and 40 runs batted in. He was a big part of the Seawolves run in the AE Tournament, and he was one of three Seawolves named to the All-Tournament team.

"Just trying to be more patient," Wilson said of the improvements he made last season. "Find the pitch I'm looking for, hit the ball hard every time I'm at the plate. This year, I'm trying to cut down my strikeouts, I had a lot of those last year, work more walks, get on base for the team."

The senior was selected in the 15th round of the Major League Baseball amateur draft coming out of high school and is poised to be a draft candidate again by picking up from the strong performance last season.

PROJECTED STARTING LINEUP



Infield/Outfield

- 2- Nick Grande
- 3- Chris Hamilton
- 5- Michael Russell
- 11- Michael Wilson
- 18- Brandon Janofsky
- 24- Brandon Alamo
- 28- Michael Palazzolo
- 32- Dylan Resk

Pitchers

- 16- Bret Clarke
- 19- Brian Herrmann
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PULSIPHER'S SUCCESS DRIVEN BY HIS CONFIDENCE

By **BYRON MAGILL**

**“I WANT TO BE
THE BEST PLAYER
WHO HAS EVER
COME HERE...YOU
ALWAYS WANT TO
SHOOT FOR THE
STARS...”
- LIAM PULSIPHER**



PAUL HADSALL / FLICKR VIA CC BY NC 2.0
Bill Pulsipher, father of freshman pitcher Liam Pulsipher makes his Somerset Patriots debut on July 24, 2010.

The two most important games of the 2018 New York State Class B high school baseball season remained: the semifinal and the state championship. For most athletes, pressure builds like a boiler room with the threat of failure breathing down their neck in these games. Any shred of doubt can ruin most athletes — but Stony Brook Baseball freshman pitcher Liam Pulsipher is not like most athletes.

In the semifinal game, Pulsipher only surrendered two hits on 76 total pitches and ended with two strikeouts, advancing the Center Moriches High School Red Devils to the championship in a 4-0 shutout. The following afternoon, the Red Devils trailed behind Binghamton Seton Catholic Central by four runs heading into the final inning, but the pitcher refused to surrender and rallied the lapsed team together on the bench.

“I was really getting on them — I was yelling at them,” Pulsipher said. “[The] kids' heads were down and I was like ‘Come on guys. We are gonna win this game, we can't get all the way here and we're gonna lose!’”

The pitcher's declaration worked. The Red Devils exploded on the final offensive push, scoring seven runs in the final inning and winning the State Championship, 10-7. Whether it was pitching a gem when facing elimination or rallying the team in the dugout to do the impossible, Pulsipher never lost confidence in himself or his teammates because confidence and baseball are fundamental parts of who he is.

If you were a New York Mets fan in the 90s, you probably recognize the name “Pulsipher” — Liam's father, former Mets second round pick Bill Pulsipher, made one-third of the upstart pitching group dubbed “Generation K,” alongside Jason Isringhausen and Paul Wilson. The game of baseball naturally became a major part of the younger Pulsipher's life.

“It was all I knew,” Pulsipher said. “My dad [is such] a huge factor in my life, even if he wasn't [always] around. Still, baseball was a huge part of my family even before that, too. It was just fun to play.”

Having been “force-fed” the game of baseball from three years old, Liam credited everything from his passion to exceeding expectations to his father. Ironically enough, the freshman even became a left-handed pitcher just like his dad. But while the elder Pulsipher appreciated the sentiment, he disagreed with his son.

“I don't know if I can take all the credit, because he still has to go out there, he has to do it and he has to perform,” Bill Pulsipher said. “I like to think that I helped instill the work ethic and the knowledge that I've given him has helped steer him in the direction that he's in. But he has to be the guy that goes out there and gets the job done. The pressures that people will place and expect

are a lot, but he's done a tremendous job so far.”

Pulsipher attended Center Moriches High School, captaining both the soccer and baseball team in his senior year. After commanding the soccer team to a state title in the fall, Liam turned his sights toward the baseball championship. Dennis Donovan, his baseball coach, observed how the pitcher matured into a natural leader throughout his varsity career.

“He understood as he grew at Center Moriches how to use his competitiveness to his advantage,” Donovan said. “He's one of those kids that had to earn everything. His tools are above average [even if] he's not one of those kids who are just gonna throw it 100 miles per hour and throw it right by people. He really had to hone his skills and kinda mentally understand the game better than anyone else out there.”

Pulsipher committed to Stony Brook as a high school junior, citing his mother's wishes for him to remain local and his dad's desire for him to find his best fit.

The pitcher was also interested in joining the Stony Brook family after watching its 2012 College World Series Tournament run and his interactions with the coaching staff.

“I like his consistency. He has a quiet confidence about him, where he's really the same guy whether he has a dominant performance or he may struggle,” Stony Brook pitching coach Tyler Kavanaugh said. “He's the same kid. That's such an invaluable asset for any player, especially a pitcher. He's gonna have tough innings, he's gonna make good pitches that get hit, and to have that resolve, that emotional intelligence and coping skills to come right back to the next pitch is really gonna help us down the road.”

As he gears up for his first spring season as a Seawolf, Pulsipher has been setting his sights on ambitious goals for his time at Stony Brook University.

“Obviously, that College World Series is looking pretty nice,” the freshman said. “I want to get there and I want to win it. You always wanna shoot for the stars, 'cause you never know, you might end up among the clouds. I don't wanna look too far down the road and talk about getting drafted, but that's everyone's dream to get there and play professional baseball.”

The pitcher concluded the interview, declaring, “I want to be the best player who has ever come here,” with his trademark confidence — the same confidence that sparked and thrived within Pulsipher as he threw his first ever pitch, enabling him to win his high school state championship in the most improbable way and got him into Stony Brook in the years to come. There's no doubt that his confidence will continue to drive him to greatness during his four years here and beyond.



SOFTBALL VETERAN LEADERSHIP EYES AMERICA EAST TITLE

BY JASON BRANCATO

“THIS TEAM IS DEFINITELY LOOKING PROMISING FOR THIS SEASON.” - IRENE RIVERA

The Stony Brook Softball season is around the corner and the team is poised to exceed expectations. With three veteran senior leaders and several new additions to the roster, the Seawolves are determined to reclaim their first America East Championship since 2013.

Stony Brook finished third in the America East last postseason and are projected to repeat that mark once again, according to the Coaches Preseason Poll.

“I think that we obviously can be so much more than just third,” junior pitcher Melissa Rahrich said. “And I think that this team, in particular, has a chance to do even better than that.”

The Seawolves have built up chemistry, spending the offseason practicing together and playing in team scrimmages against each other. The team is led by some confident players who have lofty goals for the season.

“I’d say the goal is obviously to win the America East Championship,” senior catcher Irene Rivera said. “This team is definitely looking promising for this season.”

Overall, the most prominent quality in this team is the chemistry between the players.

“I would say we have more team chemistry on the field and off the field,” Rivera said. “I think we all gel with each other very well.”

Rahrich and Rivera, two of the team’s leaders, are looking to improve upon their impressive performances from last season.

Rahrich, a pitcher and first baseman, led the team on both sides of the plate with a .453 batting average and 164 innings pitched in her sophomore year. Rahrich earned the America East Player of the Year honor and was named to the NFCA All-Region Third Team for her outstanding performance. The junior enters the upcoming season as the No. 45-ranked player in the Softball America’s Top 100 Division I player rankings.

“It came as a really big shock to me because usually Stony Brook is not really on the map,” Rahrich said. “I was surrounded by Alabama, UCLA, Washington and all those top programs and it’s a really huge honor to be able to represent Stony Brook on that list.”

Rivera was also tabbed on the All-Conference First Team with Rahrich. The catcher led the conference with 36 runs batted in, knocked out five home runs and concluded last season with a .301 batting aver-

age. Now a senior, Rivera reflected on her mission of concluding her collegiate career with a title.

“I remember the first day I came in as a freshman and I didn’t think it would go this fast,” Rivera said. “And here I am about to start my final season and it happened in the blink of an eye. I just really want to put everything out there and really try to win a ring in my final season.”

The incoming freshmen are also expected to make an impact on the team right away. Infielders Taylor Juenke and Lindsey Osmer, catcher Chloe Vangorder and pitcher Shelbi Denman are all tasked with making an impact this season.

“This is a terrific class in terms of character, personality, competitiveness and skill set,” head coach Megan T. Bryant said in a press release. “With their athletic ability, experience and confidence, we expect all four players to make an immediate contribution to Seawolves’ Softball!”

The schedule this season features many tough opponents including Towson, Nebraska, Yale and Georgetown through the first four road tournaments. Despite owning a 20-game road stretch opening the season, the Stony Brook team remains enthusiastic at the upcoming challenges.

“Our philosophy has been to schedule quality non-conference opponents to get us ready for the always tough America East,” Bryant said. “This year’s schedule reflects that desire to challenge our team and sharpen our sword.”

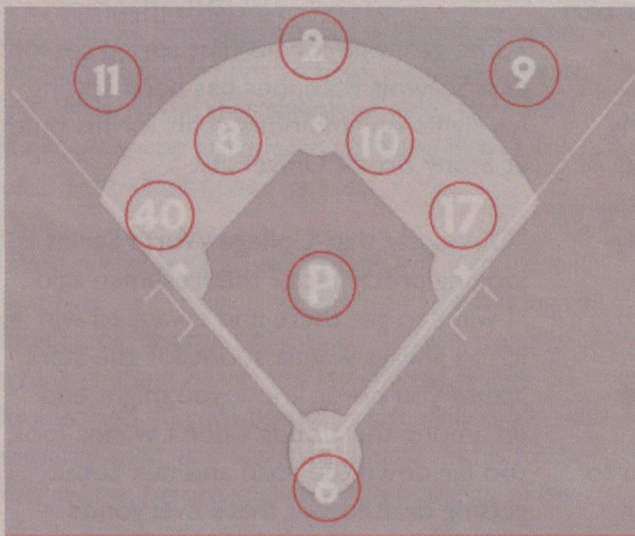
Stony Brook will be doing a lot of traveling throughout the season, with trips scheduled to South Carolina, Colorado, Florida and Washington D.C. Each trip consists of weekend-long invitationals in which the team plays two games on Friday, two games on Saturday and one game on Sunday. Rahrich, a Colorado native, is ready for her return home for the Colorado Invitational.

“I’m very excited,” Rahrich said. “I think that the atmosphere is gonna be awesome, and I think there’s gonna be a lot more people wearing red than expected.”

Through veteran leadership and confidence, this team will strive for the best season Stony Brook Softball has seen yet.

The journey from third in the conference to winning a championship will prove to be challenging, but it seems to be headed in the right direction. The Seawolves will start the season on Feb. 22 against the Tennessee Tech Golden Eagles for the Furman Invitational in South Carolina.

PROJECTED STARTING LINEUP



Infield/Outfield

- 2- Katelyn Corr
- 6- Irene Rivera
- 8- Ally Dabroski
- 9- Jourdin Hering
- 10- Nicole McCarvill
- 11- Alina Lance
- 17- Taylor Pechin
- 40- Riley Craig

Pitchers

- 13- Melissa Rahrich
- 17- Taylor Pechin
- 25- Shelbi Denman

SPRING SPORTS SCHEDULE

MEN'S LACROSSE

Feb. 23 at Brown University

Feb. 26 at Hofstra University

March 2 vs. Marist College

March 5 vs Sacred Heart University

March 9 vs. Bryant University

March 16 at University of Hartford

March 23 vs. UMBC

March 29 vs. Binghamton University

April 2 at St. John's University

April 6 vs. Princeton University

April 13 at University of UMass Lowell

April 20 at University of Vermont

April 26 vs. University of Albany

WOMEN'S LACROSSE

Feb. 22 at University of Colorado

Feb. 24 at University of Denver

March 1 at Towson University

March 3 vs. Stanford University

March 9 at Princeton University

March 13 at UMBC

March 16 at Cornell University

March 23 vs. UMBC

March 29 vs. University of UMass Lowell

April 3 vs University of Hartford

April 6 at University of Vermont

April 9 at John Hopkins University

April 12 vs. University of Albany

April 14 vs. USC University

April 19 vs. Binghamton University

April 23 at Penn State University

April 28 at New Hampshire University

BASEBALL SERIES'

March 1-3- Three game series at No. 12 University of Arkansas

March 9-10- Three game series vs. Wagner College

March 15-16- Three game series at UMBC

March 22-24- Four game series against Sacred Heart University

April 6-7- Three game series at University of Hartford

April 13-14- Three game series at Binghamton University

April 20-21- Three game series vs. University of Albany

April 27-28- Three game series vs. UMBC

May 4-5- Three game series at University of Maine

May 17-18- Three game series vs. University of UMass Lowell

SOFTBALL SERIES'

Feb. 22-24- Furman Invitational at South Carolina

March 1-3- Colorado State University at Colorado

March 8-10- Florida Atlantic Parents Weekend Tournament at Florida

March 15-17- Buff & Blue Challenge at Washington D.C.

March 23-24- Stony Brook Invitational at Stony Brook

March 30-31- Three game series at the University of Hartford

April 6-7 Three game series vs. Binghamton University

April 13-14- Three game series at the University of Albany

April 27-28- Three game series vs. the University of UMass Lowell

May 3-4- Three game series at the University of Maine



Designed by Aleeza Kazmi, Kayla McKiski,
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New stories are published online every day Monday through Thursday. A print issue is published every Monday during the academic year and is distributed to many on-campus locations, the Stony Brook University Hospital and over 70 off-campus locations.

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Wolfie high-fiving athletes as they enter Kenneth P. LaValle stadium. The stadium is named after the New York state senator who had a role in securing funds for the building.

Renaming LaValle Stadium is not simple

By Justin Ullman
Contributing Writer

Kenneth P. LaValle Stadium opened in 2002 with a \$22 million price tag, named after New York State Senator, Kenneth P. LaValle, for his instrumental role in securing those funds.

Since its opening, LaValle Stadium has served as the lifeblood of Division I Seawolves Athletics, and a point of pride and commonality for all Stony Brook students. According to Patch, LaValle was responsible for funding millions of dollars worth of expansions over the ensuing decade. He also helped raise \$21.1 million for a major rehaul of Island Federal Credit Union Arena in 2012 with Stony Brook University President Samuel L. Stanley Jr. Between these grants secured for Athletics and other vital areas, from 2002 to 2018, LaValle fought for at least \$164.8 million in 2018 dollars for the benefit of Stony Brook University.

As a gracious thanks, a petition is now circulating to wipe away his name from the stadium and alter the history behind the senator's enormous contributions.

The petition is based on LaValle's vote on NYS Assembly bill A576, which would ban the practice of conversion therapy — the asinine and harmful practice of attempting to convert homosexual individuals to heterosexuality — throughout New York. LaValle actually voted "no" against party lines, along with two other Republicans and one Democratic colleague, which is the basis for grievance from the petitioners. The alliance of clubs backing it, including the College Democrats, Feminist Majority Leadership Alliance, LGBT Alliance and House of SHADE equivocates LaValle's vote as support "for the torture of LGBTQ* youth." However, this is a huge jump to conclusions about LaValle's reasoning and character.

Let me be clear. I will make no excuse for anyone supporting conversion therapy. It's an antiquated, overt violation of our protection from cruel and unusual punishment. There is not a chance in hell

that I'd vote for an elected official who endorses it.

But, in the original article from *The Statesman* about his vote, a statement from LaValle's office explicitly affirmed that he "personally opposes conversion therapy," but that the bill sets a dangerous legal precedent of violating "the current method for banning a practice, in which professionals on state boards must review whether a practice violates medical standards." This may allow the state legislature to choose which medical practices are "right." Majorities in the legislature could subvert expert medical review and ban vaccinations because they feel the vaccinations are harmful, even if they are very clearly beneficial.

LaValle does not support conversion therapy — one can look into his actual voting record on similar bills. There have been previous versions of the same A576 bill in the past that have come to vote in the Higher Education Committee, such as NYS Senate bill S121, which had nearly the exact same text. LaValle actually voted in favor of Senate bill S121 to ban conversion therapy, demonstrating that his most recent vote was as he said, a statement against the unrefined language and unclear precedent the bill now sets. Where were students thanking LaValle for his vote back then?

I personally disagree with LaValle's vote and many of his policy positions; however, he has legitimate concerns over constitutional reasons for having voted against the bill. I am giving LaValle the benefit of the doubt that he voted for the reason he stated, and not because he's secretly a raging homophobic bigot.

Jumping to extreme conclusions and opting to wipe LaValle's name from the our campus is the epitome of "biting the hand that feeds you." To completely ignore his contributions and his essential role in attaining the stadium in the first place out of convenience is spiteful and hateful. Richard Laskowski, business professor and former dean of physical education & athletics at Stony Brook University, described the school's sports facilities before LaValle's contributions as "an embar-

rassment in so many ways — comparable to a high school's facilities."

Laskowski expressed his gratitude for LaValle's work, saying "I owe him everything, and so does this university — and when I say this university, that also includes the students."

The contributions LaValle has secured for the betterment of Stony Brook Athletics and the student body benefit students of all sexual orientations equally. By cutting our relationship with the senator, we are cutting off a vital ally in Albany. He has immeasurably helped Stony Brook's diversity and campus culture thrive during his tenure by providing incredible outlets like an extraordinary stadium and a basketball arena comparable to Ivy League facilities through Seawolves sports, students of different cliques and interests bond over our pride in athletes like our nationally top-ranked women's lacrosse team who even hit No. 1 last year.

Petitioning to cut relations with LaValle is essentially denying both our athletes and students the opportunity for future improvements to sporting facilities. With the school's current sorry state of deficit spending, we sure as hell won't be paying for upgrades ourselves any time soon. On the other hand, continuing relations and showing gratitude to LaValle, while also acknowledging political differences, would mean that students of all backgrounds can enjoy improvements to campus life that come with tens of millions of dollars in state grants.

I am opting to take LaValle's explanation of his vote at face value. To assume that he secretly supports conversion therapy after he explicitly explained why he voted against the bill is at the very least unfair, but more importantly flat-out disrespectful and will leave a permanent stain on Stony Brook's reputation of how we treat those that try to do us right.

The future harm from removing his name would be irreparable, and far outweighs the short-term gratification of pretending to be doing anyone a favor.

ARTS & CULTURE

Long Island philanthropist Erwin P. Staller passes away

By Rachel Parker
Contributing Writer

The Long Island community mourns the loss of philanthropist, businessman, father and Stony Brook Foundation trustee, Erwin P. Staller.

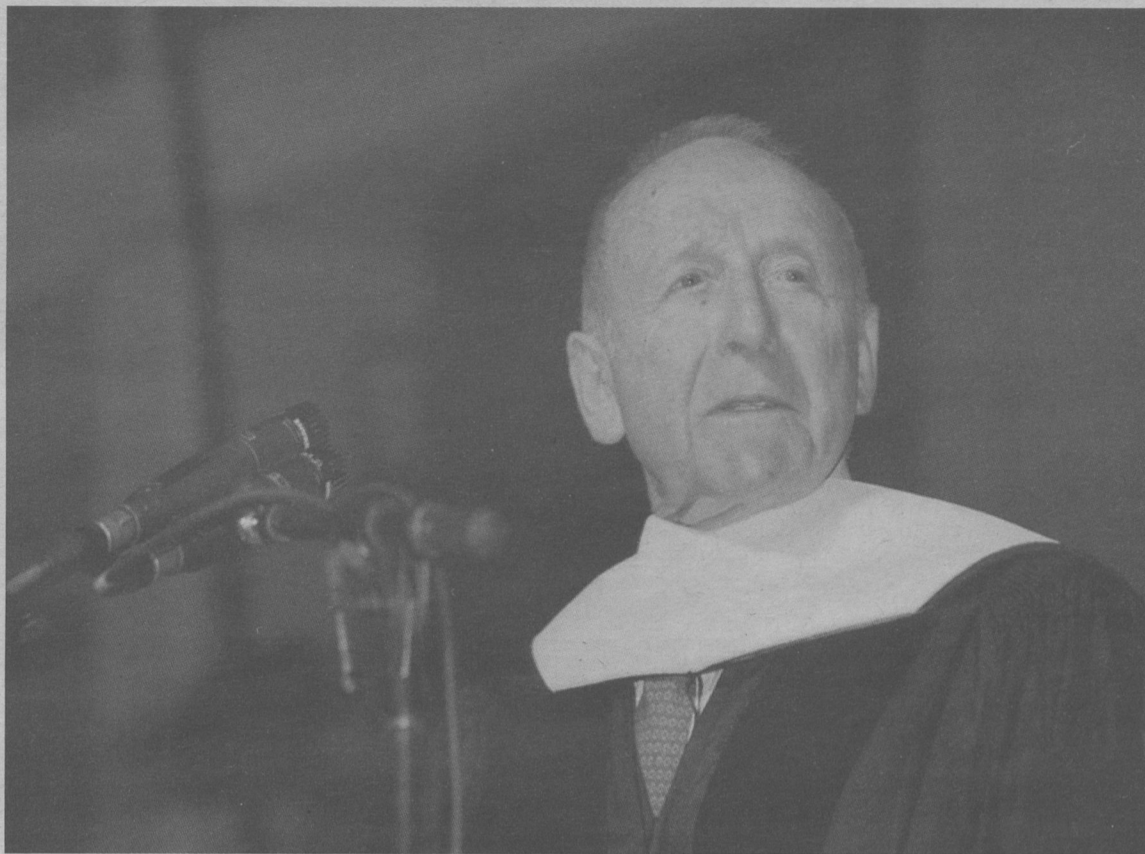
Staller passed away in his home last Monday, Feb. 11, at the age of 97. Seawolves may recognize the name from our very own Staller Center for the Arts, which was named in memory of Staller's parents, Max and Mary.

The Staller family has been a friend to Stony Brook University for decades, having made a monumental donation of \$1.8 million to the school in 1988. Staller was incredibly passionate about the arts and education, and his generosity toward our campus has elevated our campus and community.

"Erwin was a visionary philanthropist, one of Long Island's most admired commercial real estate entrepreneurs, and a loyal and generous friend to Stony Brook University and the Staller Center for the Arts," University President Samuel L. Stanley Jr. in a letter to faculty and staff.

Staller, his wife and their children are responsible for the "Staller Scholars" fund, which provides academic scholarships toward doctorate degrees in music.

In 1989, Staller was given a Stony Brook medal for Extraordinary Service, and, in 2001, Staller received an honorary de-



COURTESY OF STONY BROOK UNIVERSITY

Erwin Staller receiving an Honorary Degree for Doctor of Humane Letters at the 2001 Doctoral Graduation at SBU. Staller passed away on Monday, Feb. 11, 2019.

gree from Stony Brook to commemorate his long-standing relationship with our university.

"Over the years, Erwin Staller's commitment to the Center and to the University was steadfast. He, along with his wife Pearl (Freddie), his son Cary and the extended family, has been true supporters of the arts and have been the foundation of the Center's success," Alan Inkles,

director of the Staller Center for the Arts, said.

A Hempstead High School graduate and WWII veteran, Staller spent his life working in his family's company, revolutionizing real estate and businesses on Long Island since the 1950s. He would go on to serve more than 30 years on the Stony Brook Foundation Board of Trustees, gift over \$16 million

to Stony Brook University over the course of the years and beat the Guinness World Record for "oldest scuba diver" at 93 years old in 2014.

"He recognized early on the importance of a campus hotel to the University and surrounding community, and relentlessly championed this project for over 23 years until it came to fruition in 2013. That is why today, to

further honor Erwin's legacy at Stony Brook, the roadway between the Hilton Garden Inn and Administration is named "Erwin P. Staller Way," Stanley said in the faculty letter.

Between weekly film showings, symphony and orchestra performances, concerts and student productions, there are countless opportunities to enjoy the gift that the Staller family gave our campus. It is because of the passion and philanthropic efforts of Staller and the Staller family that we are able to host musicians, composers, artists and performers from all over the world. The arts can never have enough promotion and support, in a world that never outgrows the need for the creativity, expression and escapism that mediums such as film, music, theatre, and fine art offer to all of us.

Staller is survived by his wife, Pearl Friedman, four children and seven grandchildren. A memorial service will be announced soon to take place at the Staller Center.

"He was a dear friend who always encouraged my team and I to strive and reach for the stars. It was always a pleasure to have him and Freddie in the audience knowing how much he enjoyed all kinds of performances," Inkles said. "As a philanthropist, advisor and friend to the Arts, the University and to the region, he will be greatly missed."

Visiting SBU professor Alan Alda wins SAG award

By Emily Clute
Contributing Writer

At the 25th Annual Screen Actors Guild Awards, Alan Alda, visiting professor in the School of Journalism and actor, was the 55th recipient of the Life Achievement Award, the most prestigious award given for both career achievement and humanitarian efforts.

Though best known for his work on the TV series "M*A*S*H," Alda has an impressively long filmography. Throughout his career, he has played just as many roles on screen as off — he has been an actor, screenwriter, director, author and an activist.

Born Alphonso D'Abruzzo in New York City, Alda gravitated toward acting at a young age. He started acting on stage in the 1950s and would make his Broadway debut in 1959. His father, Robert Alda, was also an actor and he was exposed to acting at a young age. Later, his father and brother would make appearances with him on "M*A*S*H." Alda was struck with a case of polio at the age of 10, but he fully recovered and the illness did not prevent him from continuing with his passion.

In 1957, he married his wife Arlene Weiss, with whom he had three children. He moved to Hollywood acting in 1963, but

his career truly kicked off with the premiere of "M*A*S*H," which ran from 1972 to 1983, where Alda was the only regular character to appear in every one of 251 episodes.

Alda was nominated for 34 Emmy Awards throughout his career. For his work on the series, in which he played Captain Benjamin Franklin Pierce, or "Hawkeye" Pierce, Alda was honored with 25 Emmy Award nominations, of which he won five. He was also the first from the show to win Emmys for acting, writing and directing all for his work on "M*A*S*H."

Alda's successful career continued to blossom after the series ended. He starred in films, such as "Crimes and Misdemeanors" (1989), "Manhattan Murder Mystery" (1993) and "The Aviator" (2004). In television, he's made appearances in shows such as "The West Wing" (2004-2006), "30 Rock" (2009-2010) and "The Blacklist" (2013-2014).

In 1993, Alda agreed to host the PBS series "Scientific American Frontiers," and he remained the program's host until 2005. For 13 years, Alda interviewed hundreds of scientists, eventually developing a passion for communicating science. Thus, the Alan Alda Center for Communicating Science was born at Stony Brook University in 2009.

As part of the School of Journalism, the center uses impro-



COURTESY OF STONY BROOK UNIVERSITY

Visiting School of Journalism professor Alan Alda was given the Lifetime Achievement Award. Alda is the 55th recipient of the prestigious award.

visational theater exercises to teach scientists and students how to connect with the public and those outside of their discipline. The Alan Alda Center, located on the fourth floor of the Melville Library, designs programs and workshops to aid STEM and medical communication and offers an undergraduate course for communicating science.

In 2017, Alda created the Alda Communication Training Company, which works in conjunction with the Alan Alda

Center to train scientists in the field of communication.

On July 31, 2018, he announced that he had been diagnosed with Parkinson's disease three years prior, but it hasn't slowed him down at all — he still takes boxing lessons and often plays tennis. He still starred in two TV series in 2018 ("The Good Fight" and "Ray Donovan") and lent his voice in the narration of the TV movie, "The Emperor's Newest Clothes."

In addition to the Life Achievement Award, Alda has an

impressive collection of awards and nominations behind him. He has been awarded six Emmys in acting, directing and writing, including Actor of the Year in 1974 for "M*A*S*H." He is also a six-time Golden Globe winner. Add in his Directors Guild of America awards, honorary degrees from several universities, an induction into the Television Hall of Fame in 1994 and even more nominations, it's easy to see the impact Alda has had on the world of entertainment.

SPORTS

Garcia powers Men's Basketball to 66-64 win over New Hampshire

By Ethan Tam
Staff Writer

Entering Saturday afternoon's matchup versus Stony Brook Men's Basketball, the New Hampshire Wildcats were ranked 352nd out of all 353 Division I teams according to the rating percentage index.

Yet, with a second left, Wildcats senior guard Jordan Reed launched a three that fell inches from going in, bouncing out of the rim harmlessly as the Seawolves escaped with a 66-64 victory, improving their record to 21-5 and 9-2 in America East play.

"I'm really proud of our guys for finding a way to win a game," head coach Jeff Boals said in a press release. "We feel very fortunate to come out with a win in what became a dogfight."

Coming off a bye, the matchup had all the makings of a trap game, and Stony Brook was lucky to leave without suffering a humiliating upset to one of the lower caliber college basketball programs. For New Hampshire, who had lost nine in a row after their lone Division I victory against UMass Lowell, the season was more of the same for a school

that finished with a winning record just three times in the last 24 years.

With 3:46 remaining in the game, redshirt-sophomore forward Andrew Garcia stripped the ball from New Hampshire sophomore guard Josh Hopkins and dunked it in to give the Seawolves a 63-59 lead. The Wildcats were able to cut their deficit down to one when Hopkins hit a three at the line to bring the score to 63-62. Garcia was then fouled after securing an offensive rebound on redshirt-junior forward Akwasi Yeboah missed a three-pointer, nailing both free throws to bring the Stony Brook lead back up to three.

Stony Brook senior guard Jaron Cornish was instantly fouled on the inbound after a New Hampshire missed layup and a turnover. Cornish made one of two to extend the Seawolves' lead to 66-62 but New Hampshire junior forward Chris Lester was able to drive to the basket for the layup, making the score to 66-64 with eight seconds remaining. Cornish was fouled off the inbound again, but missed both free throws and gave the Wildcats the chance to tie or win. With the chance to knock



EMMA HARRIS / THE STATESMAN

Redshirt-sophomore forward Andrew Garcia drives to the basket against UMass Lowell on Feb. 9. Garcia scored 15 points in the win over New Hampshire on Saturday.

off an America East powerhouse at home, Reed found a look and fired the three, which missed its mark as Stony Brook was able to finally exhale.

Both Garcia and Yeboah led Stony Brook in scoring with 15 points, but Garcia also earned

10 rebounds in his third double-double of the season. The win was the Seawolves' 12th on the road, a statistic which continues to be the highest of any Division I program in the nation.

Stony Brook will return to Long Island for a three-game

homestand with only five games remaining in the regular season. The first game takes place on Thursday, Feb. 21 as the Seawolves takes on the Albany Great Danes at 7 p.m. at Island Federal Credit Union Arena.

Baseball takes two in three-game series against Florida International



ARACELY JIMINEZ / STATESMAN FILE

Junior pitcher Greg Marino in a game last season. Marino pitched five innings in a win against FIU on Feb. 15.

By Ryan Pavich
Staff Writer

Stony Brook Baseball traveled down to Miami to open the season, and the bats took advantage of the warm weather. The Seawolves launched six home runs en route to a series victory over Florida International from Friday, Feb. 15 to Sunday, Feb. 17. The final home run, courtesy of junior outfielder Michael Wilson, was a go-ahead three run shot in the ninth inning that clinched the series for the Seawolves Saturday night.

The opening series game of the series on Friday appeared to

be a blowout game for the Seawolves, but the Panthers crept back in. Junior pitcher Adam Erickson made his Seawolves debut in a seventh-inning jam with the bases loaded and the Seawolves up, 7-5. Erickson defused the situation, striking out the first batter and escaping with just one run allowed on a sacrifice fly.

Stony Brook gathered momentum from evading danger and opened the floodgates in the eighth. The first three Seawolves reached base in the inning, and senior catcher Sean Buckhout delivered a two-run double that put Stony Brook

up comfortably again. Senior outfielder Dylan Resk added a two-run home run in the ninth and sophomore catcher John Tuccillo singled home the final run of the game, giving the Seawolves a slugfest 13-7 victory on opening night.

Meanwhile, Erickson closed out the game with a strong first performance. After allowing a leadoff home run to FIU senior outfielder Lorenzo Hampton, Jr. the pitcher got six of the last seven FIU batters out and collected a three-inning save.

Stony Brook got its early lead on a series of home runs. Senior infielder Michael Russell got the first run of the game with a solo shot in the second inning followed by a solo blast by sophomore Tuccillo, two batters later. Ahead 6-1 by the sixth inning, Wilson launched a home run of his own to join the party.

The Seawolves also got a solid performance out of their top starter, redshirt-junior pitcher Greg Marino. Marino did not allow a base hit until the fourth inning and made one mistake to Hampton Jr. in the fifth inning that became a double down the line in right. Marino's night ended after a leadoff walk in the sixth that came around to score,

but he was very efficient in only throwing 74 pitches throughout his first outing.

Stony Brook survived until the ninth thanks in large part to the job their bullpen did. Junior pitcher Brandon Bonanno took over for junior starter Brian Herrmann in the fifth inning and gave his team 55 pitches over three and a third shutout innings of relief. Sophomore pitcher Connor Clark came in for the ninth inning and induced a ground ball double play and a strikeout to close out the 7-6 win.

Herrmann, however, had mixed results in handing the ball over to the pen. The pitcher did not allow a walk throughout the game, and struck out six Panthers, but was unable to escape several innings after getting the first two outs. The biggest jam came in the fourth inning when five consecutive Panthers reached base with two outs already recorded. Freshman outfielder Jarrett Ford sliced a double down the left.

The finale of the series did not wind up going their way, and FIU dominated early and often. Things got ugly for Stony Brook in the second inning, as FIU rocked junior starter Jared Milch in his Seawolves debut.

Milch began the inning with a four-pitch walk and gave up a double to Hampton which put runners in scoring position. Milch got the next two batters out but surrendered a run in the process on a ground ball to second. Then the FIU hit parade began.

Junior infielder Javier Valdes smacked a double to left-center that brought home a second run, Ford split another ball in the gap two batters later to bring in two more runs and junior infielder Derek Cartaya slapped a single to make it 5-0. The final blow came from junior third baseman Austin Shenton — a two-run inside the park home run that capped off a seven-run inning for the Panthers. Stony Brook's only runs of the game came in the fifth inning. Senior outfielder Brandon Alamo worked a leadoff walk and freshman infielder Evan Giordano collected his first career hit on a single to left-center. Senior infielder Nick Grande ripped a ball to third and the throw to get him out was offline, allowing both runners to come around and score.

Stony Brook will take the series victory back home with them and prepare for their next road trip beginning Friday, Feb. 22 against Southeastern Louisiana.

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