

# THE STATESMAN

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## University Senate reviews independent budget report

By Samantha Robinson  
Contributing Writer

Top university officials faced criticism following the release of an independent report analyzing Stony Brook University's finances at a University Senate meeting on Monday, March 4.

The report concluded that, contrary to previous claims made by higher ups in administration, Stony Brook University was actually in good financial standing.

University officials contested this conclusion. They claimed that the report was missing certain crucial details which skewed the results.

Repeated claims of a structural deficit from the university's administration prompted a group of professors to pool their money and commission an outside assessment of the university's finances. They hired Howard Bunsis, a professor of accounting at Eastern Michigan Uni-

versity who has previously analyzed the finances of Rutgers University, Oregon State University, Washington State University and more.

Axel Drees, co-chair of the Senate Committee on Academic Priorities and Research Activities (CAPRA) and chair of the department of physics and astronomy presented Bunsis' findings to the audience.

"The overall conclusion of CAPRA was that the Bunsis financial analysis seems to be accurate," Drees said. "It does not support the administration's claim that Stony Brook University is or has been in a dire financial crisis."

The report examined the school's net cash flow — the difference between the money the university brings in and what it spends — and its unrestricted reserves — money that does not have a designated spending purpose.

The report showed that Stony Brook had a positive net cash flow for the past 10 years.



SARA RUBERG / THE STATESMAN

Students leave the Port Jefferson-Stony Brook University shuttle bus after its inaugural trip on Thursday, March 7. The bus will run on weekend afternoons and evenings.

According to the report, the university had \$423.6 million in unrestricted reserves in 2017, up from \$375.1 million from 2016.

Bunsis also gave Stony Brook a hypothetical bond rating based on the criteria used by Moody's, a financial services company (Stony Brook does not have an individual Moody's bond rating because the SUNY system is

rated as a whole.) Bunsis reported that in 2017, SBU would have received an Aa3 rating, which is on the higher end of the Moody's scale.

The report found that the university's revenue and expense growths have increased at nearly equal rates. "The expenses were \$1.2 billion in 2017. They have increased by about \$300 million over the

past 10 years. The revenues were similar. \$1.2 billion, and increased also by \$300 million," Drees said.

Kathleen Byington, the senior vice president for finance and administration for the school, expressed skepticism about the results of

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## SBU and Port Jefferson partner on shuttle

By Brianne Ledda  
Assistant News Editor

Stony Brook University's shuttle to Port Jefferson made its inaugural trip on Thursday, March 7, marking the beginning of a new pilot program.

"We think it's a win-win, because we love to see the kids, the staff and everyone come down free," Margot Garant, Port Jefferson's mayor, said. "Hopefully it will be an economic engine for us down there, and bring the students in, and there's a lot of great things to do down port."

The approximately 20-seat bus will run on Thursdays from 3 to 9 p.m., and from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. Friday through Sunday. On campus, the bus will stop at the chemistry loop, the Student Activities Center (SAC) loop and Chapin Apartments. The bus then stops at the Stop&Shop in Setauket on the way to Port Jefferson, where it makes two more stops — one on Arden Street across from Brewology and another at the Port Jefferson LIRR station. Signs mark all the bus stops and students should show their IDs when they board the bus.

Joan Dickinson, Stony Brook's community relations director, said that the shuttle is free to all employees, students and their

guests, but the university is trying to measure the campus's interest level. If the program is popular, it could be renewed in the fall.

Passengers can track the shuttle's current location on its website, or through the Passio GO app. They can also use the app to check if there are open seats available.

"It's a free, safe, easy way to go visit Port Jefferson, and it takes cars off the road," Dickinson said.

Students think the shuttle is a good thing, especially for residents who don't own cars.

"It's just like a good opportunity — especially with people who don't have cars, I think it's a great thing," Sandy Zhu, a senior business and chemistry double major, said.

She was among several students from campus organizations who attended the press conference celebrating the shuttle's kick-off on Thursday morning.

"A lot of people don't have cars, and it's hard for them to get to Port Jeff — there's a lot of attractions there — so this is a great way for them to get there," Nicole Chan, a junior economics major, added.

Port Jefferson Village is covering the operating costs — about \$1,000 a week, according to the mayor.

"We don't want anyone to think this is a student-only bus," Kevin Wood, Port Jefferson's parking and mobility administrator, said. "Students, faculty, visitors, people at the hospital — anyone can ride this bus right now."

The bus was originally Port Jefferson's answer to high tourist traffic during the summer months. It started running between Port Jefferson's LIRR station and Port Jefferson Village between Memorial and Labor Days in 2014. Dickinson said that Garant reached out to her about repurposing the existing vehicle during the off-season as a university shuttle.

Though Garant acknowledged that the shuttle could help Port Jefferson businesses, she said it wasn't all about the dollars and cents.

"It just makes one more connection," Garant said. "It might be somebody who wants to move here, it might be somebody who wants to open another business here, it might be somebody who becomes another faculty member here."

Even so, business owners, like Renee Goldfinch from Origin of Era, said they are enthusiastic about the shuttle's passengers.

"I think it's amazing," Goldfinch, said. "Not everybody has a car, and if they do, not everyone wants to deal with parking. We're all helping each other."

## Professor develops robotics kit

By Ameya Kale  
Contributing Writer

A professor in the department of mechanical engineering, Dr. Anurag Purwar, recently earned a \$225,000 grant from the National Science Foundation for developing an educational robotics kit for young students. The grant falls under the category of Small Business Innovation Research, or SBIR, which was awarded to Purwar's start-up company, Mechanismic Inc.

The kit, called "SnappyXO," aims to inspire elementary, middle and high schoolers to explore creative learning in the field of robotics and mechanical design. Purwar said that existing robotics kits like LEGO and VEX Robotics are well-established and successful, but have certain limitations that SnappyXO will try to overcome.

"Today's kits have a large number of parts, but when you look at them, you cannot really ascertain what their exact function is just by looking at them," Purwar said. "You always have to refer to a manual to build the kit."

With SnappyXO, that is not the case. Each kit comes with a selection of parts that is "sufficient in number to build the design, but no more than that," Purwar said.

The different parts include flat surfaces and plates as well as a variety of connectors that are used to achieve whatever motion con-

straint is required. The different types of connectors can help to achieve perpendicular, parallel and angular connections.

Purwar said the varying types of connectors make the kit versatile and allow for architecture; this means that a person could buy off-the-shelf components and mount them on the parts with ease. Examples include the popular microcontroller Arduino, as well as motors and sensors.

Right now, these kits are in the "Customer Discovery" stage. In this stage, the aim is to visit schools on Long Island and conduct workshops where these kits are introduced to students. They are taught the necessary fundamentals and are given a chance to implement their own creativity by interacting with the kit.

One of Purwar's former students, Agranya Jampala, acts as the chief operating officer of Mechanismic Inc., and is one of the people responsible for the workshops. He interacts with the students during these workshops and hackathons and observes the impact that is created.

"These kits are proving to be a really good tool for children to learn basic robotics," Jampala said. "Not only that, SnappyXO also offers the chance to physically realize and rapidly prototype your imagination and build the product in your head with your hands."

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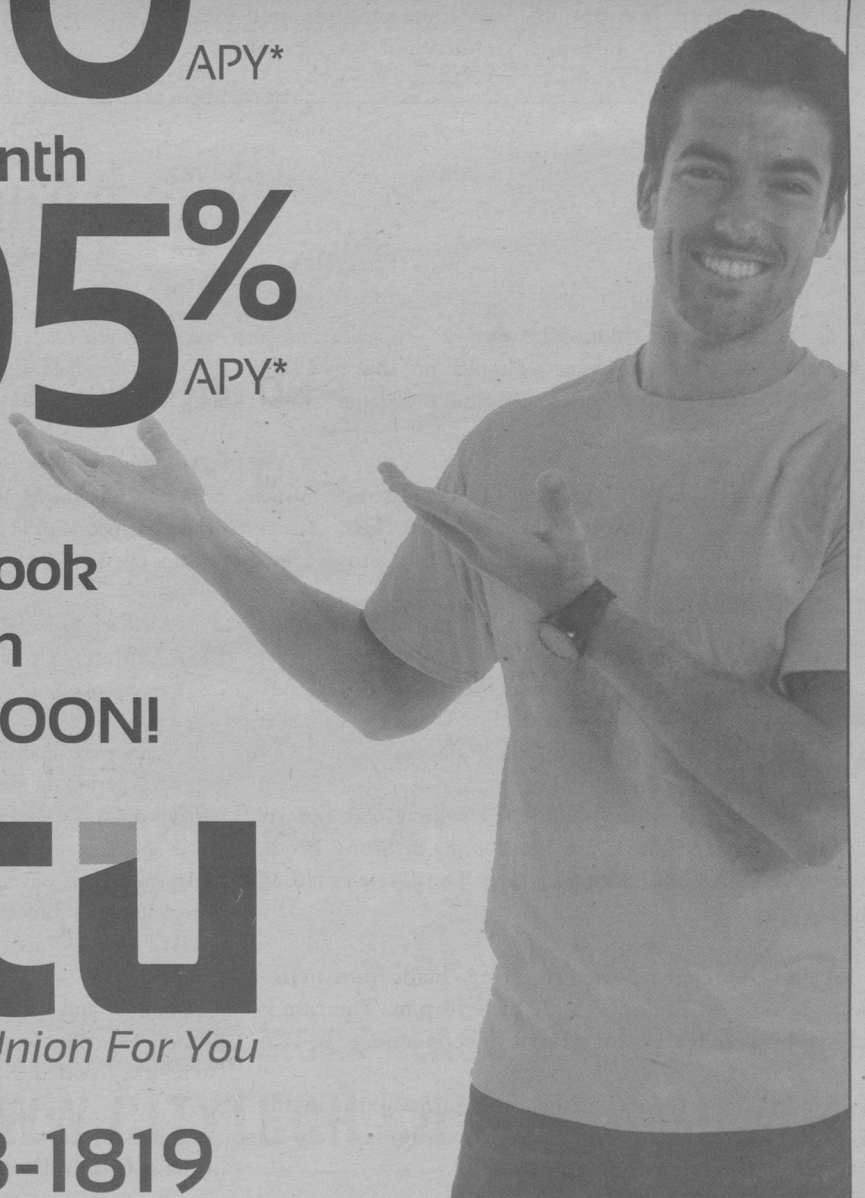
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# NEWS

## Report finds university is financially stable

*Continued from page 1*

the report. She gave her own presentation on the budget and tried to address some of the issues with Bunsis' analysis.

"What we really talk about when we focus on the budget are these two components," Byington said. "It is the tuition and fees, revenue that comes in, and state appropriations."

Byington explained that although Bunsis excluded the hospital's finances in his analysis, he still included the university's total state appropriations, some of which are used specifically to fund the hospital.

"If you're going to exclude the hospital when you talk about the budget of the university, you would need to exclude these appropriations," she said.

Byington then discussed how Stony Brook ended up with a structural deficit in the first place.

"In fiscal year '17, that \$409.6 million revenue that you had? You spent \$8.7 million more than that in that year," she said.

In the '17-'18 academic year, several faculty members were let go in order to reduce overhead. The university also implemented a hiring freeze in hopes of cutting costs through attrition.

Byington said that the next logical step for the university would be to focus less on implementing austerity measures

and more on making sure the budget aligns with its values as an institution.

"You've been in crisis mode for almost two years now," she said. "You've been taking every expense reduction opportunity you could find. You've been holding positions open even if it's work that needs to get done. It is time for us to transition from crisis mode to a focus on planning for strategic allocation of our resources to support our mission."

Byington congratulated the Senate on the hard work it has done to set the university on a path toward financial stability.

Peter Manning, a professor in the English department, took issue with this characterization.

"I find it very hard to be told that you have done hard work when in fact we simply absorbed the set of cuts," Manning said. "The numbers do not show the elimination of departments, do not show where the money went to athletics. The aggregate doesn't help with the decisions, which is what we are trying to get at. I don't feel we've done hard work. I think we've been bludgeoned."

Several attendees, including Thomas Wilson, an instrument engineer in the School of Marine and Atmospheric Sciences, felt that Byington's report did not give the fullest and most accurate picture of the university's finances, since she presented total revenues and total expenses rather

than breaking them down into more specific categories.

"If we're going to have shared governance, shouldn't we have deep transparency into what the money's coming from and where the money's going?" he asked.

Distinguished Professor of History, Kathleen Wilson, chastised the university for misappropriating funds.

"Why are we spending so much money on upper level administrators when the rest of us don't have enough money to make ends meet, from paycheck to paycheck?" she asked. "We want to know why this has happened to Stony Brook and not the other [SUNY] campuses. We want answers."

Byington appeared unfazed by the senators' demands, maintaining a cheery demeanor throughout the meeting. "Those aren't questions that I have the answers to today, so I'd be happy to come back and provide the answers," she told the increasingly disgruntled crowd.

President of the University Senate and Distinguished Professor of History, Nancy Tomes, assured the audience that this would not be the last they'd hear of the Bunsis report.

"If you came today expecting answers about the Stony Brook budget, you're not going to get them by the end of this meeting," Tomes said. "This is only the first of many meetings where we're going to have to have

## Robotics kit developed for kids

*Continued from page 1*

The name is peculiar to hear, but Purwar says it is elegant in its simplicity.

"The parts have holes in them, which are either in an 'X' shape or an 'O' shape, and all the parts snap into place. Hence the name, 'SnappyXO,'" he said.

Purwar was inspired to create SnappyXO after building similar kits with his own son. He said he wanted to come up with a way to simplify these kits and make them easier for kids to use.

Purwar's idea goes beyond just the physical kit. He also developed a software called "MotionGen," which enables users to simulate mechanical linkages and systems virtually. With SnappyXO, you can use the developed robot along with MotionGen to simulate and analyze the behavior.

You can take a snapshot of the robot, draw on it on the software and then superimpose both to compare results.

He pointed out that the parts in SnappyXO kits are relatively thinner than existing kits on the market, and that they're safe for kids to use. "Stepping on them won't hurt as much as a LEGO piece would," he added half-jokingly.

With the distinct advantages of having only the bare minimum parts, being flexible with custom electronics and being relatively safer, Purwar aims to continue his efforts in developing and promoting SnappyXO.

"SnappyXO can be a potential solution for universalizing STEM education in the classroom and outside," Barry Chuang, the chief technological officer of Mechanismic Inc. and SnappyXO's principal investigator, said.



*COURTESY OF SNAPPYXO*

**Children learning about "SnappyXO," a kit created to help students explore robotics and mechanical design.**

## Police Blotter

An altercation was reported between an employee and a patient at Stony Brook University Hospital on Thursday, Feb. 21 at 8:30 a.m. The case is closed because the victim refused to cooperate.

Bed sheets were reported stolen from Stony Brook University Hospital on Thursday, Feb. 21 at 10:22 a.m. The case remains open, but prosecution was declined.

An altercation was reported between two patients at Stony Brook University Hospital on Thursday, Feb. 21 at 12:55 p.m. Prosecution was declined, and the case was closed because the victim refused to cooperate.

A broken back windshield on a vehicle was reported on Thursday, Feb. 21 at 11:16 p.m. in Stony Brook University Hospital Parking Garage. The case was closed by investigation.

A Ph.D. student reported receiving emails from an unknown male on Friday, Feb. 22 at 4:59 p.m. The case is closed because the victim refused to cooperate.

A gray 2004 Toyota Sienna broke a gate arm in the Radiation Oncology Parking Lot Exit on Friday, Feb. 22 at 5:34 p.m. The case remains open.

A student was referred after a report was made about the odor of marijuana on Friday, Feb. 22, at 8 p.m. in Gray College. The case is closed.

A report was made of graffiti spray painted on a utility box at the North Entrance and Circle Road on Monday, Feb. 25 at 2:59 a.m. The case remains open.

Headphones were reported missing from the Campus Recreation Center on Monday, Feb. 25 at 10:28 p.m. The victim believes someone picked them up and left with them. The case remains open.

A Michael Kors jacket was reported missing from Stony Brook University Hospital on Tuesday, Feb. 26 at 7:35 a.m. The case remains open.

Bollards were reported missing from various locations over a two week period on Wednesday, Feb. 27 at 1:58 p.m. The case remains open.

An individual was arrested for unlawful possession of marijuana at Stony Brook's LIRR platform on Friday, March 1 at 11:12 p.m.

A brother and sister got into a physical altercation at Stony Brook University Hospital on Saturday, March 2 at 2:37 p.m. No injuries reported. Neither party prosecuted.

An individual was arrested for unlawful possession of marijuana at Chapin D on Saturday, March 2 at 8:40 p.m.

A report of missing money from a found wallet was made at Dutchess Hall on Sunday, March 3 at 12:13 a.m. Investigation is ongoing.

A report of an odor of marijuana was made at West G on Sunday, March 3 at 9 a.m. The student was referred.

A false report of a fire in Challenger Hall was made on Sunday, March 3 at 11:15 p.m. The fire alarm was pulled by an unknown individual. No smoke or fire was detected and the investigation is ongoing.

A report of a broken window on a door in Melville Library was made on Monday, March 4 at 11:34 a.m. The case is closed.

A damaged gate arm was reported at the Health Sciences Center Garage on Monday, March 4 at 3:32 p.m. The case is closed.

A patient struck a staff member at Stony Brook University Hospital on Monday, March 4 at 9:30 p.m. Prosecution was declined.

A patient scratched a nurse on the neck on Tuesday, March 5 at 3:05 a.m. A field appearance ticket was issued and an arrest was made.

A report of credit cards missing from a wallet at Stony Brook University Hospital was made on Tuesday, March 5 at 3:24 p.m. Unauthorized purchases were made off campus. The case remains open.

A patient at University Hospital stole monitor leads on Wednesday, March 6 at 11:07 p.m. and was arrested for larceny.

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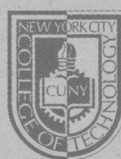
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# ARTS & CULTURE

## Wang exhibit shows the cultural significance of SPAM

By Kimberly Brown  
Contributing Writer

Jamie Sunwoo, an American-Korean artist and playwright, came to the Charles B. Wang Center this past Wednesday to discuss the important history and dishes of the canned meat, SPAM, throughout time in the Asia-Pacific.

Sunwoo investigated the popularity of this canned meat in areas such as Guam, Okinawa, Japan and Hawaii as well as the Philippines. In Korea, Sunwoo's grandfather fought in the Korean War. Although SPAM, also coined as "miracle meat," may just be canned meat to other people, to Sunwoo, this is a product she grew up incorporating into some of her everyday meals today. Her research on this product began to be especially important to her, as it has opened up many unspoken stories from her grandparents relating to the Korean War.

"When I found out my grandma had SPAM for the first time during the Korean War," Sunwoo said, "It sort of became an excuse to talk to her more about her experience during the war. It's something my family hadn't ever really discussed."

Created by the Hormel brothers in 1937 in Austin, Minnesota, SPAM started to gain popularity during World War II. Although many people assume the brand name stands for "SPiced hAM," the product's name does not actually stand for or represent anything. Hormel created a naming contest, awarding \$100 to the person whose name suggestion they liked the best. The contest



SARA RUBERG/THE STATESMAN

**American-Korean artist and playwright Jamie Sunwoo spoke at the Wang Center on March 6 about the history of the canned meat, SPAM, in the Asia-Pacific region.**

ultimately did not transpire, as the chosen winner was the brother of Hormel's vice president.

SPAM started to become a huge hit in America, thus creating the Hormel Girls, a group of women who were musicians before WWII but worked as military translators, typists and even pilots during the war. Jay Hormel was extremely supportive of the idea since he himself, had served in WWI.

They quickly developed into a hit group, performing in extravagant parades and going around to supermarkets to greet people all while promoting SPAM. "Lucky Tickets" were made if a person was fortunate enough to have met a Hormel Girl. The Hormel Girls even had their own program called, "Music with the Hormel Girls." They put on perfor-

mances where they sang and played instruments, but also paused for brief moments to promote some of the Hormel products. The Hormel Girls maintained relevance over a seven-year period, 1946-1953, but after the war ended, they found themselves jobless.

The canned meat, which was conveniently shaped to be stackable, became the foundation of an American soldier's diet during the war. While fighting overseas, the product struck the Asian-Pacific with a bang. Along with other American goods such as Hershey's Kisses, SPAM became one of the most popular American imports to hit the shelves overseas. Another reason as to why SPAM erupted during its time was because "some people actually thought processed

foods were better than regular food," Sunwoo said.

Sunwoo also reflected on her grandparents' experience during the Korean War, and how their involvement in it relates to SPAM.

She told the audience of her grandmother's first experience eating SPAM during the war. At that time, her grandmother was penniless and starving. A young soldier had given her SPAM to eat, and since she had not eaten any meat in weeks, she described it as the most delicious thing she ever tasted. Jamie had the audience listen to a recording of her grandmother talking about her first experience with SPAM, while also helping translate the recording.

"The first time I had SPAM was when we took refuge," Sunwoo's

grandmother said. "When I had SPAM it was because an American soldier gave it to us. When I first had it I just opened the can and scarfed it down."

SPAM went on to dominate other Asian-Pacific countries and created a fanbase for those who loved cooking with it.

The canned meat also became a phenomenon in Hawaii. Fans who loved the product so much began a street festival called "SPAM-JAM" which celebrates the people of Hawaii's love for SPAM. This festival isn't even sponsored by Hormel, it was created solely by the fans who found a love for the product.

Other countries such as Korea still showcase many modern commercials promoting SPAM. They also make giftsets with many different kinds and flavors, even creating limited edition cans for fans to buy as collectibles. Sunwoo mentioned that many Koreans look at SPAM as a luxury product, and don't understand why people in the U.S. hate it.

"I grew up eating SPAM," Rebecca Yin, a junior health science major, said. "When my mom would cook she would always put it in kimchi fried rice and kimchi stew and all of that, I feel like I'm connected to it because it's apart of my childhood."

Although this simple canned meat product may be looked at as taboo to have in your cabinets in the U.S., it certainly has made an impact in many cultures. It connects people back to their roots and serves as a delicious and original taste that millions of people serve all over the world.

## New Pokemon content is on its way in 2019: "Sword" & "Shield"

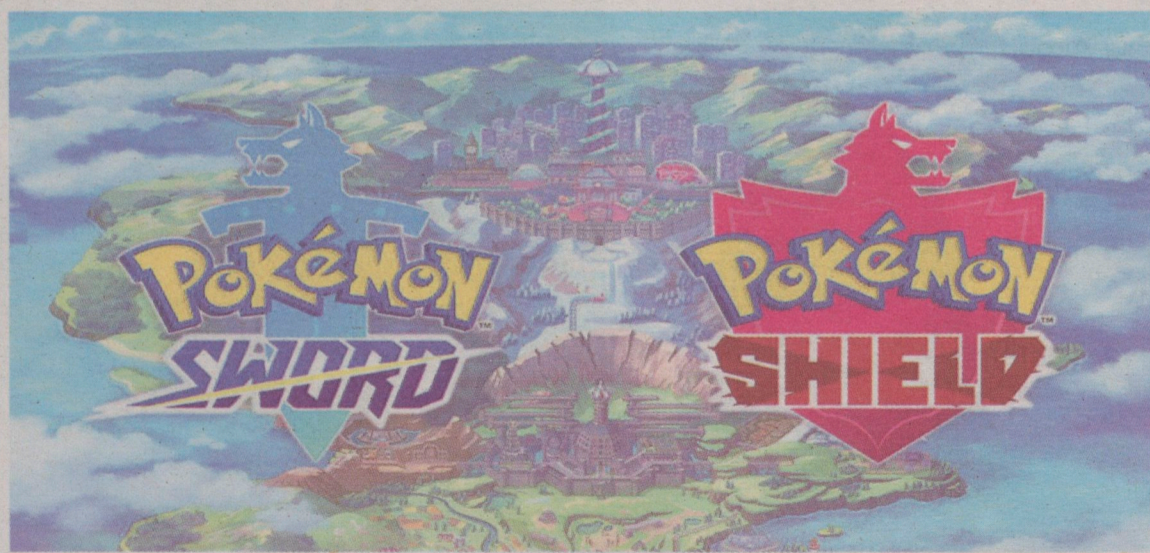
By Emily Clute  
Contributing Writer

This week, Nintendo has finally announced the news that gamers across the world have been waiting for: a brand new "Pokemon" game will be coming to the Nintendo Switch in late 2019.

In a live Nintendo Direct video on Wednesday morning, Feb. 27, Nintendo revealed the first look at two new games in the "Pokemon" family: "Pokemon Sword" and "Pokemon Shield." In the seven-minute video, viewers received a preview of what is to come in the eighth generation (commonly referred to as Gen 8) of the series — a new map, three new starters and animation like we have never seen before.

While the new RPG (role-playing game), "Sword" and "Shield," was announced for the Switch at E3 2017, Wednesday's Nintendo Direct was the first mention of any details from the video game giant in two years.

"Sword" and "Shield" will be the first mainline games to appear on any home console, following the launch of the side series, "Pokemon: Let's Go," which were released on the Switch just last year. Both Gen 8 games will feature three-dimensional, cel-shaded animation, giving the



PUBLIC DOMAIN

**An advertisement from Pokemon for its newest release: "Pokemon Sword" and "Pokemon Shield." It will be released for the Nintendo Switch later this year.**

games a look no previous game has ever sported.

In the preview, Nintendo executives debuted the first map of "Galar," a new region that players can explore in "Sword" and "Shield." True to the game's elemental nature, the region features multiple terrains for adventurers to explore, including "an idyllic countryside, contemporary cities, thick forest, and craggy, snow-covered mountains," according to the Direct announcement. Some have hypothesized that the region's design was inspired by the UK.

Players will conquer each terrain as they gather and train an elite Pokemon team in order to fight wild Pokemon, trainers and gym leaders across the region in an attempt "to be the very best."

A new region is not all fans can expect in the new game. A new generation means all new Pokemon, including the three classic starters — grass, fire and water. Nintendo revealed the Gen 8 starters in a short animation during the live Direct video.

The first starter we are introduced to is Scorbunny — a

fire-type rabbit Pokemon who is "always running about, bursting with energy." The fire-starter easily hopped into players' hearts with his sweet smile, round eyes and little bandaged nose.

The second starter is Sobble, a water-type lizard Pokemon. Sobble is described as "a bit timid," but his anxious guise and wide, teary eyes instantly cemented the water-starter as a fan favorite.

Lastly, we meet Grookey, a grass-type chimp Pokemon. He's a "mischievous Pokemon full of boundless curiosity," according

to the Direct release. Grookey's small, sweet design instantly won fans over.

A few other well known Pokemon of previous generations appeared in the gameplay trailer, including Lucario, Munchlax, Tyranitar and Pikachu.

Throughout the two minute trailer, we are given hints of stadium-type Pokemon gyms, mysterious glyphs carved into stone and hillsides, various city designs across Galar and the familiar sight of random Pokemon encounters in tall grass. The trailer also provided a sneak peek of two playable character designs.

Though little is known about the starters, positive reactions to fanart and designs of the Pokemon filled the internet in just a few hours. With three years between Gen 7 ("Pokemon Sun and Moon") and Gen 8, it is clear that Pokemon fans are eager for a new adventure to begin.

No clear release date has yet been announced for "Pokemon Sword" and "Pokemon Shield," but the games have been slated to release in late 2019. Among two mainline games, the continuing development of "Pokemon GO" and the release of the Detective Pikachu film later this year, it is easy to say that both Nintendo and Pokemon fans will be very busy this year.

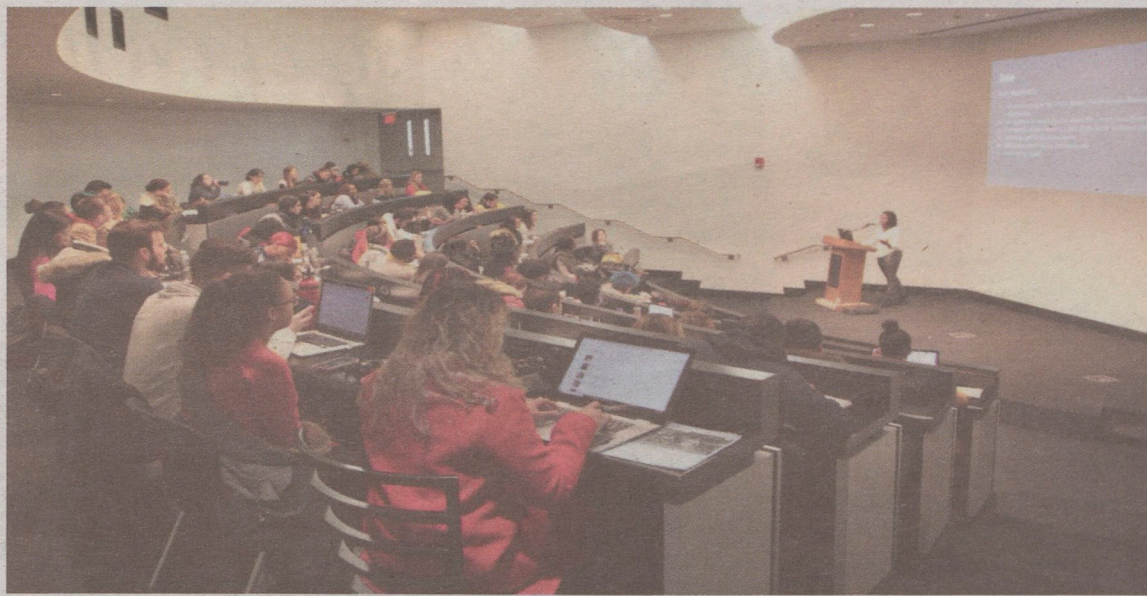
# "RABIA" — giving a voice to the voiceless

By Cindy Mizaku  
Contributing Writer

Alone and detached behind the echoing walls of a hollow house, Rosa, a South American immigrant in Spain, has no choice but to bear the work of her wealthy boss, Sr. Torres, as his housekeeper. Her precarious life is intertwined with the life of José María, a South American immigrant working in construction, who hides out in the dusty attic of the home Rosa tends to and resides in.

"Rabia," Spanish for "rage," is a Spanish film, directed by Sebastián Cordero and released in 2009, that focuses on two Latin American immigrants who were once together, José María (Gustavo Sánchez Parra) and Rosa (Martina García), to encapsulate the unforgiving realities of immigrants in Spain. José María and Rosa's lives clash when José María accidentally kills his boss and escapes the authorities by hiding away in Sr. Torres' house.

In honor of Women's History Month, the Africana studies and Hispanic languages and literature departments at Stony Brook University invited Michelle Murray, an assistant professor of Spanish at Vanderbilt University, to speak about "Rabia" and how



DESHAUN ROBINSON / THE STATESMAN

**Assistant Professor of Spanish at Vanderbilt University Michelle Murray gives a talk about the movie "Rabia," a 2009 Spanish film directed by Sebastián Cordero.**

it voices the alienation and invisibility of immigrant women in contemporary Spain.

"My whole argument about domestic work is that you have these people immigrate," Murray said. "But they're never included. They're submerged into the population as people who are marginalized."

Rosa's compassion and support are in stark contrast with José María's criminal anger coming from being overworked and disrespected as a Latin American immigrant. His rage, which alludes to the name of the

film, consumes him as he dwindles away, cooped up in an attic, where he witnesses the abuse Rosa bears at the hands of her privileged employers.

"The whole house is a microcosm of the nation," Murray said. "Immigrants are living in the shadows; immigrants are ignoring their own care to take care of everybody else. There's a system that will kill you because immigration is the symbol of the poison in the environment."

As Murray spoke about how the film reflects the disparity in immigration, she engaged with

the student audience by raising questions that revealed elusive meanings behind the film.

One important attribute of the film is that it utilizes stereotypical projections of immigrant men and women to represent José María and Rosa.

Murray said that in embodying these roles, the film draws sympathy for tireless domestic workers like Rosa, whose strength persists in the midst of submitting to the demands of Sr. and Sra. Torres and surviving their son's sexual

assaults. José María's "darkness," Murray said, is needed in "understanding the rage and the fury of the oppressed."

"Immigrant women, some who are undocumented, work 60 to 70 hours a week and are underpaid," Dr. Tracey Walters, chair of the department of Africana studies, said. "They don't have the opportunity to speak for themselves because the work that they do is not valued."

"Rabia" speaks about the larger alienating and economic struggles South American immigrants face in Spain, as well as other parts of the world. Murray sheds light on how the film highlights that without citizenship, immigrants, especially women, have no autonomy over their lives, but do the dirty work of Spain's powerful upper class. Without money or any kind of support, their identities are essentially rendered invisible and unimportant.

"There are a lot of parallels between the movie and what is going on in the U.S. with migrant workers of color," Crystal Williams, a junior health science major, said. "The invisibility of their labor is something that still impacts immigrants, like my cousin, who works long hours as a nanny."

# "Captain Marvel": the first female lead Marvel film

By Alexander Bakirdan  
Contributing Writer

"Captain Marvel" is a must-see movie that looks, feels and sounds beautiful on the silver screen with laughs and tension at all the right moments. Don't stress though — I'm going to keep this review as spoiler-free as humanly possible.

You would think after 10 long years and 21 movies, the superhero fatigue would be starting to set in, but Marvel knocks it out of the park again, this time with a badass superwoman from the intergalactic space version of Seal Team Six.

While a very well-written script and a delightful soundtrack ended up being my favorite parts of the movie, the acting done by an incredible cast made the movie into the shining star it is.

Brie Larson nails the lead of Carol Danvers, a.k.a. Captain Marvel, bringing a power and energy to the role that really impresses.

Larson has a commanding screen presence that demands you keep your eyes glued to the screen for every second lest you miss a moment of it. Despite having no memories of her past, Carol Danvers knows who she is and kicks some serious alien butt without ever wavering.

Her strength and wit play nicely against the Nick Fury, played by Samuel L. Jackson, we've all come to know and love over the past 10 years of the Marvel Comics Universe (MCU) as the two fall into what essentially becomes one of the best sci-fi/buddy-cop films I've seen in quite some time.

Those who have seen "Rogue One: A Star Wars Story" might not recognize Commander Krennic (Ben Mendelsohn) as he's had a serious alien makeover; but, rest assured, his acting chops come through as he plays one of the most complex and interesting characters in the movie, the Skrull General "Talos."

Lashana Lynch also managed to tear at my heartstrings with her captivating performance as Carol Danvers' best friend Maria Rambeau, whose moments on the screen will either move you or confirm that your heart is made of stone.

Yet somehow, despite all of this excellent acting and a phenomenal script, every one of these actors is outshined by an orange cat named Goose. Goose stole my heart the second he appeared on the screen, because in a movie about Air Force pilots, how could you not have a "Top Gun" reference?

But Goose wasn't done. Watching Nick Fury, the soon to be fearsome Director of S.H.I.E.L.D., cuddle this adorable feline as it followed him around the movie was absolutely delightful. Even better was watching aliens act terrified of what Fury said was just a common housecat.

Now it wouldn't be a Marvel movie without Easter eggs hinting at the future and referencing the

"Watching Nick Fury, the soon to be fearsome Director of S.H.I.E.L.D, cuddle this adorable feline as it followed him around the movie was absolutely delightful."

-Alexander Bakirdan

past of the MCU and oh boy, did it have some Easter eggs.

I'm not going to just list them out here, but I will say that I think this movie had more Easter egg moments crammed into it than possibly any Marvel movie before it. This makes a lot of sense when you take into account the fact that the movie was set in 1995, 13 years before "The Incredible Hulk" and "Iron Man" take place.

Young Jackson and 90s fashion included, the movie found plenty of other ways to capitalize on the fact that it was set in the mid 90s, including dropping Larson through the ceiling of a long extinct relic of the past, Blockbuster Video.

No Marvel movie would be complete without a Stan Lee cameo, but the tribute in this movie is one that will truly warm hearts and even had the entire audience in my theater breaking into applause.

This movie, like that tribute, felt right. It hit all the right notes and never felt forced or rushed and there was never a point in the two hour and five minute runtime that I felt like the movie dragged. It kept me entertained and emotionally invested throughout the course of the movie and even had audience members letting out loud cheers at the crescendo of the story.

This movie will capture your attention and hold onto it tight, making every second worth your time.

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CAROLINE PARKER/STATESMAN FILE

**Students and faculty in the Administration Building protest 2017 cuts to humanities programs. Three history professors are set to retire without replacements next year.**

## *A weaker history department hurts us all*

By Aaron San Jose  
Contributing Writer

There's been a lot of doom and gloom about the death of humanities in colleges over the last couple of years. Obviously, Stony Brook is no exception to the trend, but things are about to get a lot worse in the history department.

History professors Gary Marker, Michael Barnhart and Iona Man-Cheong, experts in Russia, the World Wars and China respectively, are all retiring next year. Marker himself confirmed he and his colleagues are the first of an estimated eight professors expected to retire from the department over the next two to three years. With a school-wide hiring freeze still in place, there are currently no replacements in sight.

I graduate in the fall. I'm not going to be affected by this problem, but this loss hurts every history majors' chance to learn from knowledgeable scholars.

The history department is already lacking in qualified professors. It's so egregious that the department sent an email out before the beginning of the spring semester telling students there aren't enough classes to satisfy the major's European concentration. All those affected were encouraged to study under a different concentration to graduate on time because this problem is not going to be remedied soon.

I have studied under Marker, Barnhart and Man-Cheong and the knowledge I've gained from each of them is invaluable. The study of history has always had an information problem: there's too much of it. It's a privilege

to have teachers who are experts in their field but can also break down all that information so it's easily digestible. A good professor is a good filter against biased or poorly constructed historical arguments; Marker, Barnhart and Man-Cheong have been those filters for me.

**"It's not just history majors who get hurt by the department's struggles; it's every undergrad who has a desire to learn about the past."**

-Aaron San Jose

It's not just history majors who get hurt by the department's struggles; it's every undergrad who has a desire to learn more about the past. A passion for history exists across multiple disciplines, and I don't see why any undergrads should be denied the same opportunities I had to learn about the stories behind the world we live in.

If history has taught me anything, it's that long-term thinkers tend to solve problems before they ever begin. I know Stony Brook places a lot of emphasis

on its science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) programs, but it's also a state school, and one of the most affordable in New York. Students in every discipline deserve the chance to learn and succeed without spending decades trying to pay off debt. Weakened humanities departments at state schools like Stony Brook help push more and more people without means away from studying their passions.

The prevailing argument is that history and humanities do not build "useful" skill sets, nor set students up for future success. But when it comes to long-term success and earnings, humanities degrees are just as competitive as STEM degrees, it's just a slower burn. A history degree like the one I'm pursuing gives me opportunities in teaching, government, public policy, urban planning and law; the list goes on.

A weaker history department affects the whole school.

We have 26,254 students enrolled here, but just 237 major in history as of fall 2018.

That's about \$1.6 million worth of tuition if we assume for a moment they're all in-state students. Cut the department, and you'll undoubtedly fail to draw as many new students into the major.

Besides money, you're losing people. How is a less diverse campus a benefit? We're all better people for the environment we've surrounded ourselves with and the different people we've had the privilege to interact with. I've grown and changed in ways I never could have pictured since I came to Stony Brook. If all that's left of the university are STEM and business majors, we'll lose a bit of our soul in the process.



# Everybody should have the option to die with dignity if they so choose

By Danielle Arebalo  
Contributing Writer

Julia Brancaccio died on Feb. 15 at 11:17 p.m. after a five-month battle with End-Stage Liver Disease (ESLD). She was my grandmother and an integral part of my daily life for the past 20-odd years.

In the months leading up to her death, she endured a host of health issues that are commonplace among 91-year-olds: urinary tract infections (UTIs), diabetes, depression and bedsores. As her health care proxy, my mother was tasked with the unenviable responsibility of answering some of the most difficult questions about my grandmother's health and well-being. If she stops eating, do you want the medical staff to insert a feeding tube? If she stops breathing, do you want her to be put on a ventilator? Do you want the medical staff to administer antibiotics if she develops an infection?

Luckily, my grandmother had already answered some of these questions by signing a Do Not Resuscitate (DNR) before her cognitive abilities deteriorated. Still, there were so many end-of-life decisions that she had not made. In the midst of confusing medical jargon and stacks of Medicaid paperwork, one thing became increasingly clear to me: she should have been given the right



ARACELY JIMENEZ/STATESMAN FILE

**The exterior of Stony Brook University Hospital. The New York State Assembly is debating passing a law that would give chronically ill patients the right to die.**

to end her life medically and die with dignity.

American men and women are living longer than ever before. The average life expectancy for men and women in the U.S. was 78.6 years in 2016. That being said, rates of chronic illnesses are also increasing across the country, putting a new burden on long-term care facilities.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

estimates that more than two thirds of people who reach the age of 65 today will need long-term care services at some point. Those individuals have roughly a 35 percent chance of spending time in a nursing home, which comes with its own risk of depression from loss of independence.

In cases like these, physician-assisted dying can oftentimes be the most compassionate option a per-

son has in the face of unremitting physical and mental suffering.

As of this writing, six states and Washington D.C. have enacted death with dignity statutes, and more states, including New York, are on their way to passing their own laws. Outside of the U.S., right-to-die legislation has been codified in countries like Canada, Belgium, the Netherlands, Luxembourg and Colombia.

Since the first American right-to-die law was codified in Oregon in 1997, 1,459 patients have died ingesting the medications prescribed under the act. The 249 Oregonians who received that medication in 2018 cited reasons like loss of autonomy, decreasing ability to participate in activities that made life enjoyable and loss of dignity for pursuing death on their own terms. Nearly 80 percent were over 65; nearly 63 percent had cancer.

One of the biggest concerns people have over passing right-to-die laws is the potential for abuse of vulnerable patients. The U.S. health care system values cost-effectiveness, and some worry that right-to-die legislation could be used as a cost-containment strategy, especially in cases where individuals are suffering from costly chronic illnesses. But the states with right-to-die laws have set up strict eligibility criteria. Furthermore, in cases in which physicians are unsure of a patient's motivations to die, they are referred for psychiatric evaluation.

Right-to-die laws give competent adults the ability to decide what happens to their bodies in the face of old age and illnesses. When patients are able to control when and how they die, their family and friends are given the opportunity to say their goodbyes on their own terms. We should all the right to leave this life with dignity if we so choose.

## New York's medical marijuana program needs to be more accessible

By Georgia Papadakis  
Contributing Writer

This year, New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo started directing efforts to legalize recreational marijuana use in the state. This expansion from current state laws around medical marijuana has been justified with projections that new taxes could generate around \$300 million in revenue, which could be used for things like public works projects, opiate addiction treatment and substance-use prevention education programs.

The push toward legalizing marijuana illustrates society's growing acceptance of the drug. But most debates over legalizing cannabis miss a crucial point. While the debate over recreational marijuana use persists, getting medical marijuana to patients who need it is still often difficult.

Medical marijuana use is legal in New York State in cases where patients have debilitating or life-threatening conditions. But there are still too many hurdles for sick patients to overcome before they get access.

First, a qualified physician has to diagnose them with one of the requisite conditions, such as cancer, HIV, Parkinson's disease or ALS. But many doctors are still reluctant to recommend medical marijuana due to the legal risk of recommending a drug that is still outlawed at a federal level. It is not a prescription drug, so it can only be recommended.

Fortunately, Senate Bill S2405 opened the door for online companies like NuggMD to offer physician services over the internet and allow for patients to apply for a medical marijuana card online.

The cost of getting the physician online certification (\$149) and medical marijuana (\$50) card, however, is still a hurdle for many prospective users.

While advancements in technology help to reduce the barriers to access, few patients are aware of these services, especially the elderly, who may not be technologically proficient. Most medical marijuana users in New York are between 50 and 70 years old, and technological issues, as well as questions over the program's legitimacy, harm patient trust in online services.

Once a patient receives their medical marijuana card, there is still the cost of obtaining the marijuana. Medical marijuana can cost upwards of \$100 a month depending on the type and quality of the product. Insurance plans do not cover medical marijuana, despite the fact that for many patients, it can be a safer alternative to prescription drugs with significant side effects and withdrawal symptoms.

There is also a shortage of dispensaries that can offer medical marijuana, which could further stymie severely sick potential us-

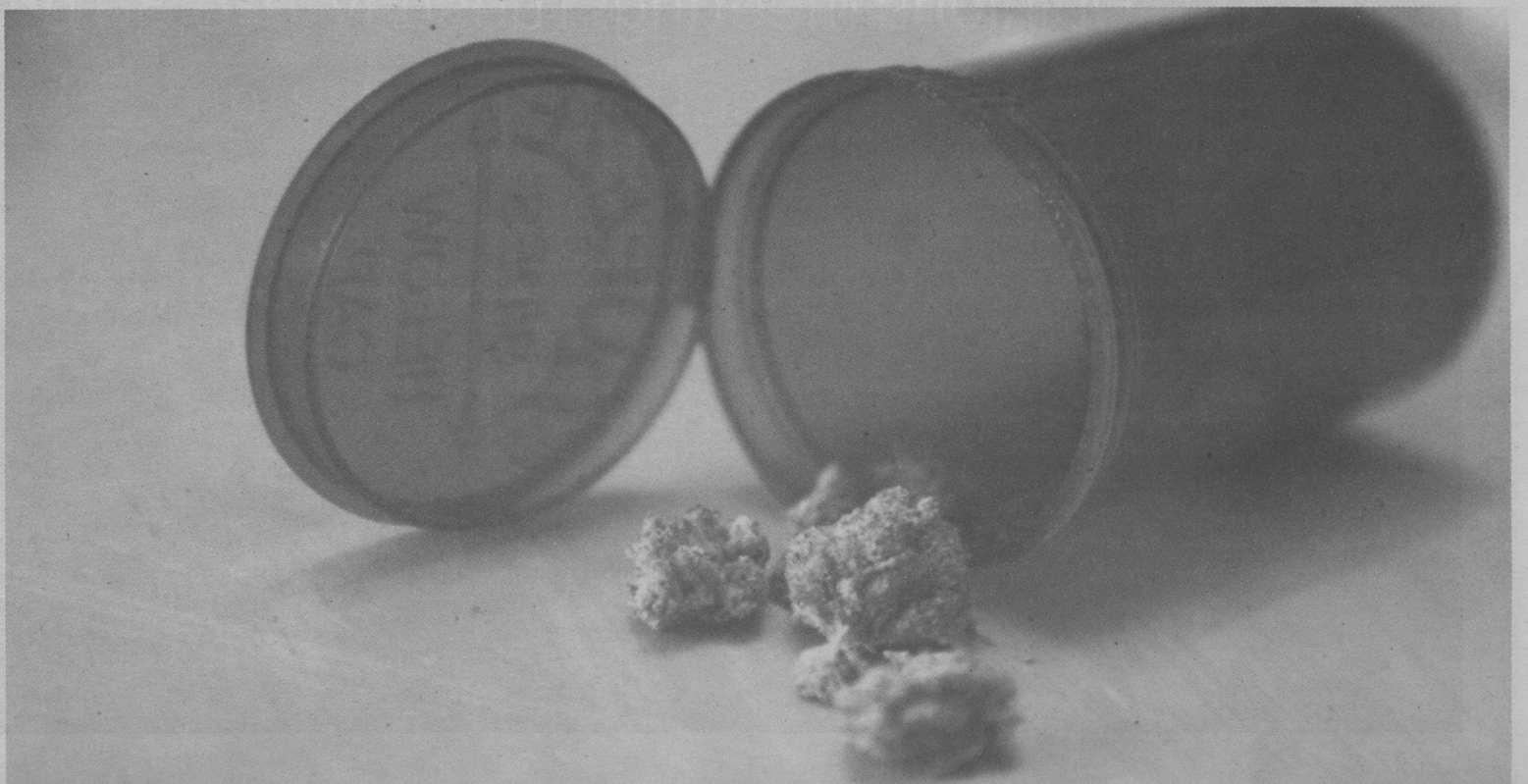
ers who have a hard time travelling significant distances.

The challenge is compounded by the fact that when it comes to payment, once again federal laws are working against the patient. Dispensaries usually cannot take credit or debit cards because the banks are federally insured. This is a cash-only transaction.

Kudos to New York State for getting the ball rolling by making medical marijuana legal and establishing a process to obtain it through dispensaries. But accessibility is still being stymied at the federal level, where

marijuana is still recognized as a controlled substance with heavy criminal penalties, where doctors cannot prescribe it under federal law and where distributors are unable to obtain basic business bank accounts that would allow them to conduct business.

Because of these hurdles, we are asking sick, elderly, immobile and often terminally ill patients to go through a series of complicated processes just to get the chance to relieve their pain. Until there is change at the federal level, access may continue to be limited for those who need it most.



STATESMAN FILE

**Marijuana coming out of a container. Medical marijuana use is legal in New York State in cases where patients have debilitating or life-threatening conditions whose symptoms could potentially be alleviated with the drug.**

# THE STATESMAN IS LOOKING FOR WRITERS AND PHOTOGRAPHERS

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Opinions meeting: Tuesday @ 6:30 pm

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# Tennis rolls for seventh straight victory, sweeps Cornell and Niagara

By Jason Brancato  
Staff Writer

The Stony Brook women's tennis team continued its winning ways with a weekend sweep of Cornell and Niagara. The team defeated Cornell by a score of 5-2 on Saturday and then shut out Niagara in a 7-0 rout.

These wins put the team on a seven-game win streak with an 8-1 record overall, making them one of the prime spring teams to watch. The win on Saturday was the first time in program history that the women's team took down Cornell.

"This was a terrific result for the squad," head coach Gary Glassman in a press release said. "As always, the doubles point loomed large, and the ladies did a great job of keeping their poise and intensity throughout the match. Cornell is a tough squad and competed hard at every spot. It was the first time in school history that we've ever beaten them, and I'm super proud of this team."

Freshman Jamie Wei and sophomore Nolwenn Cardoso led the crucial doubles matchups with a 6-0 win. Sophomore Sasha Bekirova and freshman Elizabeth Pam won the other doubles matchup as well by a final of 6-2. Wei and Cardoso both won their singles matches as well, while Pam and Bekirova fell in singles competition.

The Seawolves have been dominating teams on the road through-

out this season, going 3-0 this past weekend as well. They defeated UConn on Friday, March 1 4-3, Fairfield on Saturday, March 2 5-1 and Sacred Heart on Sunday, March 3 4-0.

But nothing was more commanding than the 7-0 win over

Niagara on Sunday, March 10. The team won both doubles matches and all six of its singles matches. The Seawolves only lost two sets in all the matches played against the Purple Eagles.

"We did a good job of closing out the weekend today," Glassman

said in a press release. It's been a long stretch of matches and travel and I'm very proud of how the squad has kept their intensity and focus throughout."

The Seawolves will finish their long series of away matches and head up north to Rhode Island

to take on Brown and Providence next weekend. The team's 8-1 overall record puts them on pace to have their best season since 2014 and have included victories over Army, Lehigh and St. Bonaventure. The team has only lost to NJIT.



VLAD SKINGER/WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

Stony Brook Women's Tennis defeated Cornell and Niagra over the weekend to improve its record to 8-1 on the season so far. The team's overall record puts it on pace to have its best season since 2014.

# SEAWOLVES SCOREBOARD

 SACRED HEART	<b>MEN'S LACROSSE</b> TUESDAY, MARCH 5 <b>12 - 11</b>	 STONY BROOK	 STONY BROOK	<b>WOMEN'S LACROSSE</b> SATURDAY, MARCH 9 <b>14 - 15</b>	 PRINCETON
 STONY BROOK	<b>MEN'S BASKETBALL</b> TUESDAY, MARCH 5 <b>68 - 63</b>	 HARTFORD	 BRYANT	<b>MEN'S LACROSSE</b> SATURDAY, MARCH 10 <b>8 - 9</b>	 STONY BROOK
 VERMONT	<b>WOMEN'S BASKETBALL</b> WEDNESDAY, MARCH 6 <b>58 - 69</b>	 STONY BROOK	 BINGHAMTON	<b>MEN'S BASKETBALL</b> SATURDAY, MARCH 10 <b>78 - 72</b>	 STONY BROOK
 STONY BROOK	<b>SOFTBALL</b> FRIDAY, MARCH 8 - SUNDAY, MARCH 10 (GAMES) <b>1 - 4</b>	 FAU PARENTS WEEKEND TOURNY	 STONY BROOK	<b>WOMEN'S BASKETBALL</b> SATURDAY, MARCH 2 <b>59 - 64</b>	 HARTFORD

# SPORTS

## Pickel Jr.'s game-winner propels Men's Lacrosse over Bryant

By Kenneth Fermin  
Assistant Sports Editor

Stony Brook Men's Lacrosse needed one final offensive push to overcome the Bryant Bulldogs with 1:17 remaining in an 8-8 tie game. The Seawolves executed a calculated play which saw junior attacker Connor Grippe sneak inside the Bulldogs defense for the wide open scoring attempt. However, freshman goalkeeper Luke Caracciolo read the play perfectly and blocked the shot, keeping the score tied.

Instead of bouncing out of play, the ball was scooped up by junior attacker Chris Pickel Jr.

"We drew up a play for me to go-up the left alley," Pickel Jr. said. "I was going to feed it to [sophomore attacker Jack Walsh] and Walsh is our best feeder and he was going to feed it to someone. Connor took a shot, it went off the goalie's shoulder, and I saw the cage and it was just me and the goalie so I shot my shot and it was nothing but net."

Pickel Jr.'s blast connected with nothing but net and gave Stony Brook the go-ahead goal with 16 seconds remaining. The Seawolves held on to the victory for

the first home win between either lacrosse program this season, and finish their 'preseason' with a .500 record.

"It was a great team win for our guys especially coming off the gut wrenching loss on Tuesday, [March 5]," head coach Jim Nagle said. "We came out of the 'preseason', 3-3, with a lot of lessons learned and I think we are real optimistic moving to league season. Bryant was a very well coached, gritty team and I think our guys were up to the challenge today."

Stony Brook gained its largest lead of the afternoon, 8-5, in the third quarter, but Bryant chipped the deficit away off the goal by redshirt-freshman midfielder Nick Beeson with three seconds remaining. The Bulldogs benefited from compact defense with a clear that produced a goal by junior attacker Jameson Buttafuoco.

The battle in the net often favored the goalkeepers as Caracciolo and junior Michael Bollinger successfully put their bodies in the line of five. Caracciolo finished the afternoon with 16 saves, earning at least 15 in four of his first five collegiate games. Bollinger also gained a career-high

16 and concluded the contest with a season-high 67 percent save percentage.

Pickel Jr. led the game with two goals alongside freshman midfielder Layton Harrell. The junior's first goal cut Bryant's lead down to 4-2, midway through the second quarter and sparked a

four-point run capped by Harrell. The team turned to the freshman often offensively as he finished with a career-high seven shots.

"I think leading the team really just relies on staying composed and staying tough," Harrell said. "Coming together and not being selfish, everything comes together at the end

as long as you stay composed. Everybody is going to get there, [we] just gotta stay unselfish and play our game."

Stony Brook will begin a three-game series in America East action, starting out against Hartford in West Hartford, Connecticut on Saturday, March 16 at 1 p.m.



SARA RUBERG/THE STATESMAN

Junior attacker Chris Pickel Jr. in a game against Marist. He led the team with two goals alongside freshman midfielder Layton Harrell in a game against Bryant.

## No. 2 Men's Basketball upset by No. 7 Binghamton in AE Quarterfinals



EMMA HARRIS/THE STATESMAN

Sophomore guard Elijah Olaniyi dribbles the ball in a matchup against Binghamton on March 10. Olaniyi finished the matchup with 27 points.

By Gregory Zarb  
Managing Editor

Senior guard Jaron Cornish wore his emotions on his sleeve when his layup counted and drew a foul as well with 32.4 seconds left in the game. The crowd at Island Federal Credit Union Arena erupted as the

No. 2-ranked Stony Brook men's basketball team was overcoming a 24-point deficit, and Cornish's upcoming free-throw attempt could have trimmed the lead against No. 7 Binghamton to one.

However, the foul was reviewed by the officials, and ultimately, the basket was waived off.

"I think that's the first time all year that our monitors have actually worked and the call was actually reversed," head coach Jeff Boals said. "It's one of the most difficult calls in college basketball, a block/charge. The way the game was going, you would've thought it was going to go the other way. Disappointed we didn't get it."

The call essentially took the wind out of the Seawolves' sails, as they were unable to cut the lead anymore and the Bearcats pulled away in the final 30 seconds to upset them 78-72 Saturday night.

Sophomore forward Elijah Olayini led all scorers with 27 points, while Cornish and red-shirt-junior forward Akwasi Yeboah each chipped in 13 points. Yeboah was unable to find a rhythm all game, struggling with his three-point shot and was failed to keep himself out of foul trouble.

Meanwhile, the Seawolves struggled to find their shooting form, especially from three. Olayini and Yeboah combined to go 2-14 from deep and the team only made six of its 23 attempts. The first half truly showed their offensive struggles, as they only made eight total shots and were down 18 entering halftime.

"I think it was a combination of everything," Boals said about the first half struggles. "They were the aggressors right out of the gate. They're a team where half their shots are threes, so if they're hitting shots early, they get confidence. The first war was 9-9, the second war we lost and the third war we lost. Once you do that, you give them confidence."

The Bearcats came out from the break still hot, pushing the lead to

24 with 16:21 left in the second half. When it seemed all but over, back-to-back threes from Cornish and Olayini got the crowd right back into the game and the comeback started.

Late free-throw struggles for Binghamton gave Stony Brook even more chances to complete, a thing this team was known for numerous times this season. Cornish's layup was waived off after nearly a 10 minute review, and Stony Brook never scored again until freshman guard Miles Latimer hit a shot at the buzzer.

"Fight," Olayini said about the team's message. "We came out in the second half with the mentality to fight. We've been in this situation before, just wasn't enough."

The senior leaves the program after scoring 508 total points in his two years as a transfer. He recorded 185 assists and grabbed 188 rebounds as well. He scored a career-high 30 points against UAlbany earlier this season.

"Just playing as a team, playing as one," Cornish said about what he was proud of this season.

Stony Brook's season ends with a 24-8 overall record. Cornish is the lone graduate, so a majority of the players from this year's team should be returning next season.

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