

THE STATESMAN

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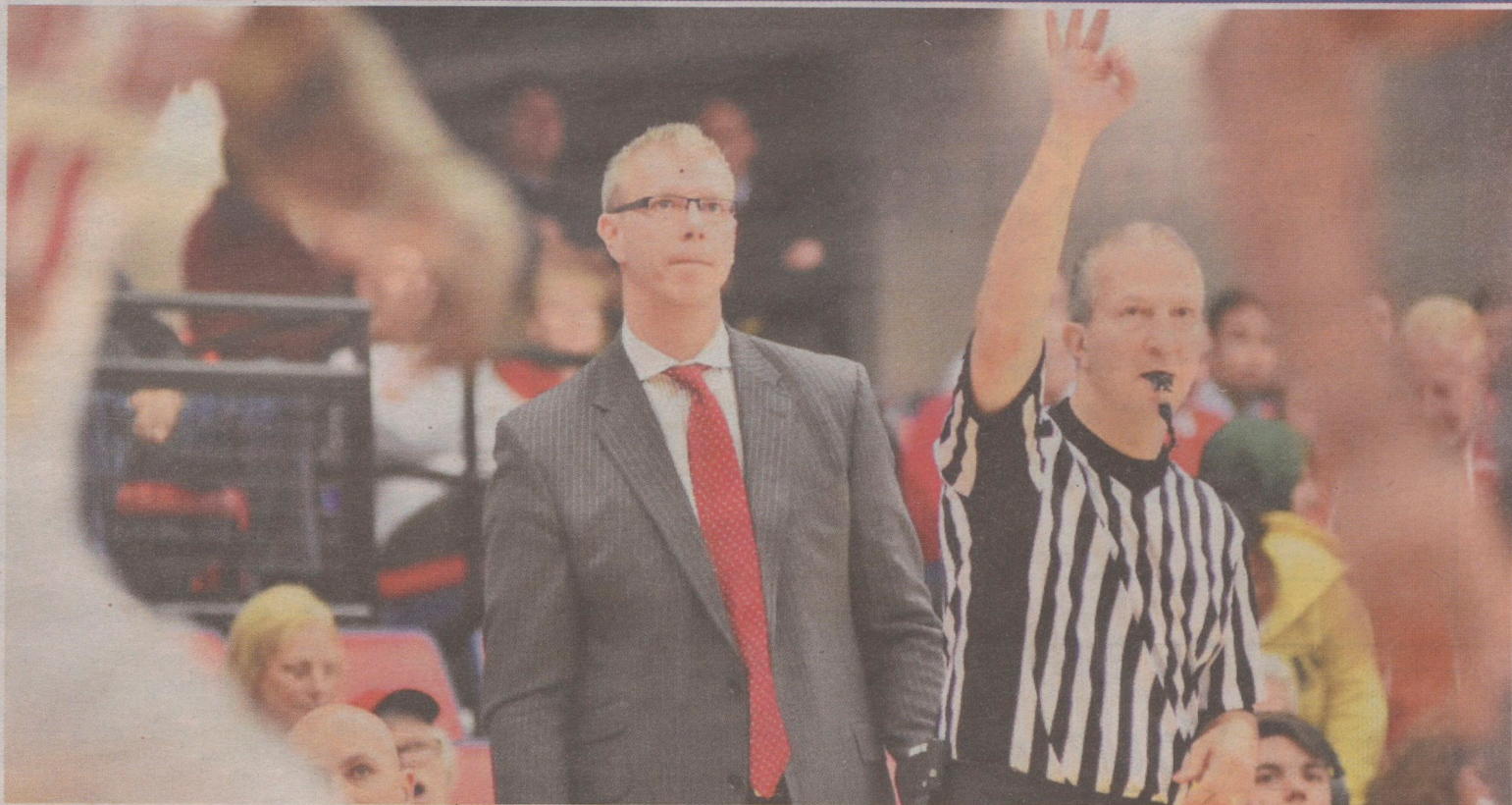
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Former U.S. attorney discusses legal ethics

By Mike Adams
Opinions Editor

Stony Brook University's Mattoo Center for India Studies hosted a discussion on legal ethics between former U.S. Attorney, Preet Bharara and SBU Senior Managing Counsel, Susan Blum, in the Charles B. Wang Center on Friday night.

Bharara served as the U.S. attorney for the Southern District of New York for almost eight years after being appointed by then-President Barack Obama in 2009. In his time as a prosecutor for a federal district that includes all of New York City, he handled cases involving the failed 2010 bombing of Times Square, dark websites like The Silk Road and numerous Wall Street investigations.



STATESMAN FILE

Head Men's Basketball Coach Jeff Boals watches his team play during a game in November 2017. Boals resigned as head coach of Stony Brook's men's basketball team and became the new head coach at Ohio University.

"During his tenure, [Bharara] earned a reputation as one of the nation's most aggressive and outspoken prosecutors," Stony Brook University President Samuel L. Stanley Jr. said while introducing Bharara and Blum.

"He supervised an office of more than 200 U.S. attorneys, who handled a high volume of cases involving terrorism, narcotics, financial and healthcare fraud, cybercrime, public corruption, gang violence, organized crime

and civil rights violations. Under his leadership, the office experienced one of the most productive periods in its history."

The conversation with Bharara began less than an hour after reports surfaced that Special

Counsel Robert Mueller had submitted a report on his department's two-year investigation into allegations President

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NYS to invest \$6 million in CS education

By Joe McQueen
Contributing Writer

New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo announced on Feb. 19 that he would invest \$6 million to allow more participation in computer science education at elementary and middle schools across New York state as a part of the Smart Start Program.

"To keep New York at the forefront of innovation, we must level the playing field for young women and provide them with the tools for success," Gov. Cuomo said in a 2018 press release following the launch of Smart Start. "By expanding access to computer science education, we will close the gender gap and position the next generation of young New Yorkers to lead this thriving industry into the future."

Among other things, Smart Start provides grants to schools for professional development for teachers in computer science and the creation of a task force to develop modernized computer science standards for the twenty-first century.

Senior computer science major, Arianna Chen, said she supports the Smart Start funding because she has personally benefited from similar initiatives. "That is what got me into [computer science,]" she said. "In elementary

school, there's a program called First Lego League and I know in my school, they were really pushing towards getting people into science and tech and even in my high school, which was a science and tech high school, pushed it a lot as well."

The governor's added investment in Smart Start is part of his 2019 "Women's Justice Agenda."

The gender gap has been an ongoing issue within the computer science industry. In the United States, only 18 percent of bachelor's degrees in computer science were awarded to women in 2016, according to a survey conducted by the Computing Research Association.

This issue even extends to Stony Brook University's computer science department. According to enrollment data from Stony Brook's Office of Institutional Research, Planning and Effectiveness, only about 20 percent of current computer science students are female.

Although there is no clear cut answer as to why the number of women in the computer science field is so low, Stony Brook Computer Science Department Chair, Samir Das, said that one reason could be that the field tends to have a bias toward women working in it.

"There is some feeling in the way the industry operates that

it's discriminatory towards women. An example of this is they often have to work long hours and stay up all night to finish up coding and that may not be an enticing lifestyle," Das said.

Chen says that the lack of women working in computer science in the first place makes it even more difficult to attract new women.

"It already creates that imbalance, and from there, women are discouraged from getting into that," she said.

Kamile Demir, a sophomore computer science major and SBUHacks organizer, said that the only way to bridge the gender divide in computer science is by introducing it to women at a younger age.

"There needs to be more balance of what children are introduced to rather than introducing specific things to specific genders," Demir said. "If I was introduced to coding at a younger age, I'd definitely be much more into it and I would have had more experience coming in [to college]."

Stony Brook has a number of different events and programs on campus for female computer science students including Major

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English Pal becomes new club

By Maya Brown
Staff Writer

The Stony Brook English Pal, a program that matches international students with English speakers to provide them with a chance to meet, interact and practice their language skills, became an independent club this semester.

The club started off as a joint project in the fall of 2011 between the International Student Organization (ISO) and the Golden Key Honour Society, an international honor society offering scholarship opportunities and volunteer service.

Freshman English Pal volunteer and women and gender studies major, Pavithra Venkataraman, said the club gives her the chance to experience and explore different cultures through others' firsthand experience.

"My interactions have been great, as I've met two people who are passionate about different things," Venkataraman said. "But both are very similar in that they are excited to be here at Stony Brook and experience new things."

Anna Zavodszky, the vice president of the English Pal program and a biology and anthropology double major, compared spending time with one of the program's pals to total immersion. It's an effective and quick way for non-English speakers to expand their knowledge of the language. Participants are able to learn

words and phrases, such as slang or expressions, that might be overlooked in a classroom.

"While language classes are very valuable and useful, students are often scared to participate or ask questions in a classroom setting," Zavodszky said. "I love this club because I think it's so important to teach languages in a casual, non-judgmental environment."

The club has a specific way of matching native speakers of English with non-native speakers. "The process of matching pals is ultimately determined by corresponding gender and similar academic standing," Itai Flam, president and founder of SBU English Pal and senior computer science major, said.

He explained that the program chose to match based on gender due to the fact that many people feel more comfortable talking to members of the same gender. Similarly, they choose matches based on academic standing because the program hopes that the pals can build a relationship lasting throughout their academic careers at Stony Brook and beyond.

Schedule availability and common interests are also taken into consideration during the matching process.

The program lasts for approximately 10 to 12 weeks, and after

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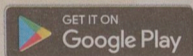
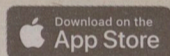
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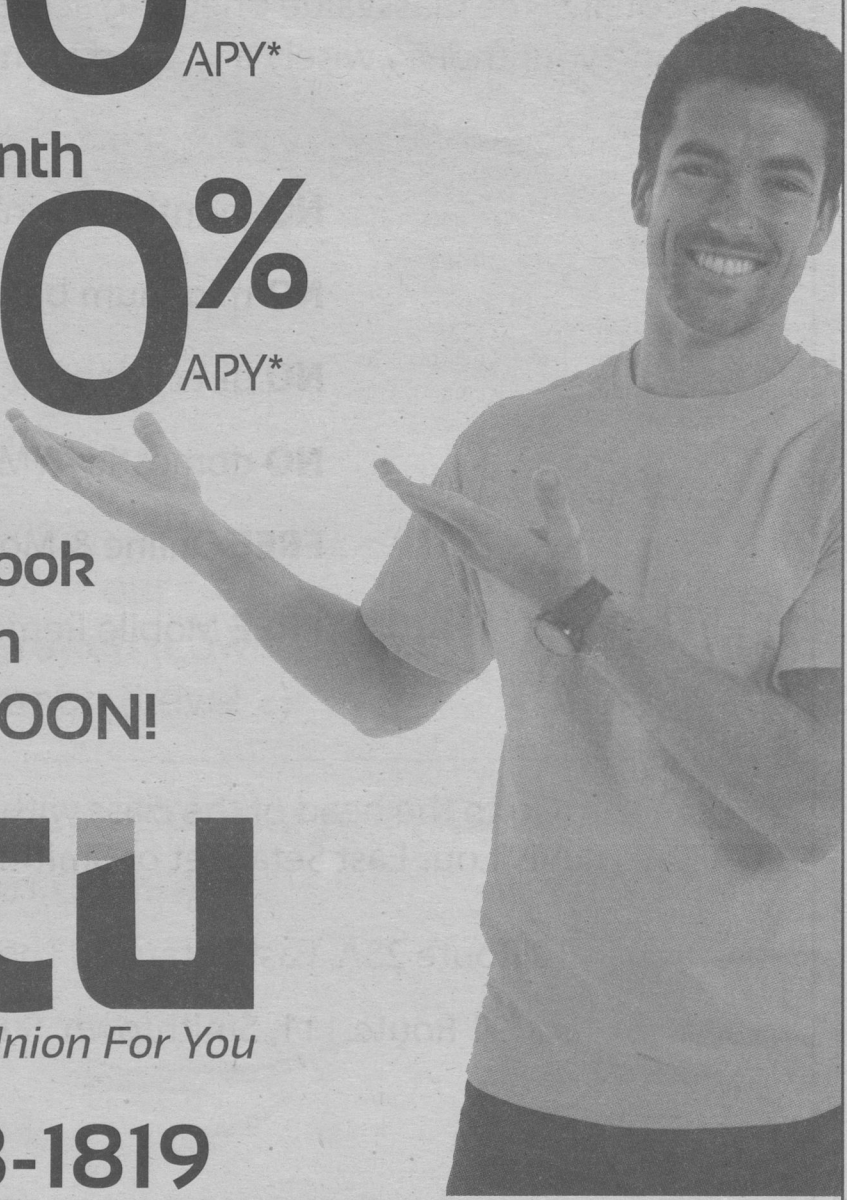
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Stony Brook proposes new fees for 2019-20

By **Brianne Ledda and Melissa Azofeifa**
Assistant News Editor and Arts & Culture Editor

Students could see their fees increase for the 2019-2020 school year.

At an Undergraduate Student Government (USG) Senate meeting on Thursday, March 14, Dean of Students, Richard Gatteau, said the university is proposing to raise fees from \$1,377.25 a semester to \$1,503.90.

A new fee called the Lifetime Career & Alumni Fee was proposed by all four SUNY centers — Albany, Binghamton, Buffalo and Stony Brook — to enhance university career services. Tuition will also be going up \$200 per academic year at all SUNY campuses in the fall.

"The fees increase every year, in part due to inflation, but also based upon the services we need to provide to students in order to ensure a high quality education," Gatteau wrote in an email. "The University works hard to find the right balance between quality and value, given that we want Stony Brook to be as accessible to students as possible. Given that we're the lowest in fees of the four SUNY Centers, and that we live in a very high cost area of the state, it means that we are being very careful with how we spend every dollar of fee revenue. Each fee area noted earlier met with advisory groups during the year which included staff and student representation."

The proposed increase in the Transportation Fee would be used to purchase three new buses, Gatteau said at the meeting. He said that some of the older ones are running

past their life span, and it would be more efficient to buy new buses than to maintain the current ones. The school also plans to purchase a new transit app with better real-time tracking.

Between 45 and 50 graduate students protested fee costs on Wednesday, March 13 with a sit-in inside the Administration Building.

"According to the MIT living wage calculator a living wage for a single person in Suffolk County is \$31,000 a year," Caroline Propersi, the chief steward of the Graduate Student Employees Union (GSEU), said. "Most fully funded graduate students make \$20,000 per year. This discrepancy is so large that many graduate students take second or third jobs to afford to live out here."

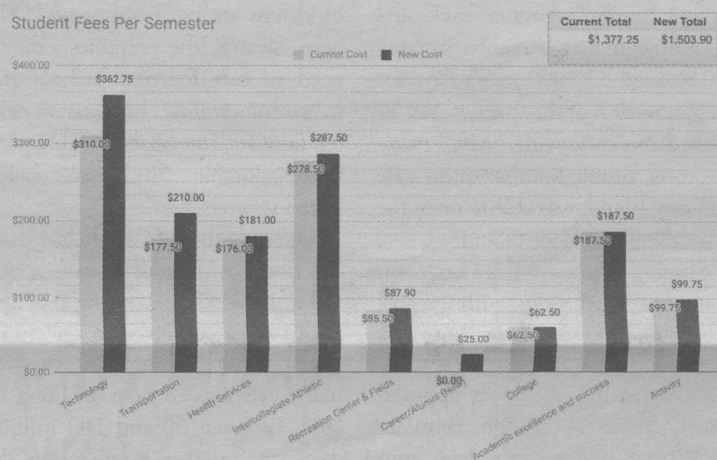
Propersi argued that graduate students pay more in fees than they sometimes get paid. She said that GSEU collected petition signatures and conducted a fee survey in the fall of this academic year to gather data about opposition to the fees graduate student workers pay.

"We are opposed to all fee increases and demand a plan from the university, state, or SUNY Central to first freeze and then eliminate fees for graduate student employees," she wrote in an email. "We should not be forced to pay to work."

Steven Ketchum, chief steward of the Research Assistant (RA) union, said that graduate students gain little benefit from the university's fees in the first place. Their technology needs are mainly covered by their principal investigators' grants, and they mainly use off-campus health services through their employee health insurance plans.

"At this point, it's hard to see what we are even paying for or why we should pay them at all," Ketchum said.

GSEU is encouraging students to join their "F#*K the Fees" Committee to protest the increase in costs. Gatteau said at Thursday's meeting that there will be a student media event about the fees on Wednesday, March 27.



NY aims to close CS gender gap

Continued from page 1

League Hacking (MLH) hackathons, job fairs and campus organizations like Women in Computer Science (WiCS).

The university has also partnered with KidOYO, an organization aimed at teaching coding to grade school kids across Long Island.

Aside from creating programs and initiatives to help increase interest outside of the classroom, some, like computer science professor Anita Wasilewska, believes

"I would put effort into [re-educating] teachers, especially elementary teachers to give them more real knowledge..."

-Anita Wasilewska
computer science professor

teaching computer science in primary school could help bring more women into the field.

"I would put effort into [re-educating] teachers, especially elementary teachers to give them more real knowledge and also high school mathematics teachers," Wasilewska said. "There's no computer science without excellent mathematics."

One issue that has become controversial within the field is the use of quotas aimed at increasing diversity within a company. In 2018, a former recruiter for YouTube, Arne Wilberg, filed a civil lawsuit against the company claiming they had instituted quotas in an attempt to diversify their staff. He argued that recruiters were told to cancel interviews with applicants who weren't female, black or Hispanic.

In Chen's view quotas can often do more harm than good because they give the appearance that women in computer science are less qualified than their male counterparts.

"Companies will come to recruiting events hosted for women in computer science and I think often times there might be lower standards for women to get into the same positions as male counterparts," she said. "For me personally, I like to think that I rightfully earned my spot."

Club helps students explore new cultures

Continued from page 1

the pairs are matched up, the pals will meet for at least 30 minutes each week.

"My favorite thing about English Pal is reading all the check-in forms we send, where people tell us about their experiences with their pal and what they do with their pals on a per-week basis," Flam said. "It makes me very happy to see the vibrant relationships we've been able to create. I've heard from many people that they are really happy with their pal and that they're really good friends, and that's what we're looking for."

Flam said the group tries to match people with different language and cultural backgrounds so that it becomes a different experience for them, rather than potentially falling back into their native language. He hopes the program encourages the students to speak English, and helps to unite the different groups on campus.

"I chose to get involved in English Pal in the last two years, because I really like the idea of helping non-English speakers to get more involved on campus, get them to know more about American culture and also have someone to practice more conversational English," Helena Ge, a volunteer and senior economics and applied mathematics and statistics double major, said.

Attorney discusses new book

Continued from page 1

Donald Trump's 2016 campaign colluded with the Russian government. The announcement elicited gasps from the audience.

"I just want to get the 800-pound gorilla off the table," Blum said to laughs. "That means that there's going to be a frenzy, and our guest will surely be frenzied running to CNN to discuss developments."

The pair used the announcement as a springboard to bring up points about legal ethics raised in Bharara's new book "Doing Justice: A Prosecutor's Thoughts on Crime, Punishment, and the Rule of Law."

The former U.S. attorney cautioned the audience against having high expectations for the Mueller report's impact. He mentioned how prosecutors tend to become, according to his book, "empty vessels into which the public will place their hopes and their hatreds."

"There's lots of people who think he's going to be a savior because he may do the thing that the election couldn't do," Bharara said. "Or if you're on the other side of the spectrum you think he's trying to take down a lawfully-elected president. I have been someone who's been very skeptical given the reporting."

Bharara reflected on the ethical challenges that come with a job that causes people to face heavy fines and prison time. He

said one of the most important and difficult decisions a prosecutor can make is whether to walk away from a case that may evoke moral outrage, but does not fit the bill for legal punishment.

"Criminal law is a very blunt instrument," Bharara said. "The prosecutor's job in criminal law is to make sure beyond a reasonable doubt that someone committed a crime. Doesn't mean the person didn't do bad things, doesn't mean the person doesn't deserve your contempt ... but if those criteria aren't met then you have to walk away."

Following the initial announcement of the Mueller report's submission, some audience members were disappointed Bharara and Blum did not spend more time discussing the particulars of his investigation.

"I was wishing he would dwell more into the happenings nowadays," Dutt Tarigoppula, an urban planner and traffic engineer from Stony Brook, said. "I know it is not possible, but it was still an excellent conversation."

In contrast, other attendees thought the conversation was a refreshing break from a news cycle inundated with Trump discussion.

"He's been on the news a lot lately, so I've heard him talk a lot about other issues," Setauket resident Susan Imperato said.

"It was kind of nice to hear him just speak about his book, which is relevant to what's going on."

She said that she is thrilled that the club spreads diversity throughout the university by pairing pals from different cultures so they can learn more about each other's traditions.

"Having had someone willing to help me during the semester was really helpful to get me into America's customs. Being more comfortable to talk in English improves my ability to make more friends and even talk to professors," Ge said. She was paired with an English speaker when she first entered the program. Before becoming an English Pal member and helping students herself, Ge had a hard time communicating with students who were not familiar with her culture when she first arrived at Stony Brook.

"I joined this club because as a non-native speaker, it's a good way to practice my English in order to prepare for my future in the job market. I know that sometimes I will have to speak English with people I work with and international companies,"

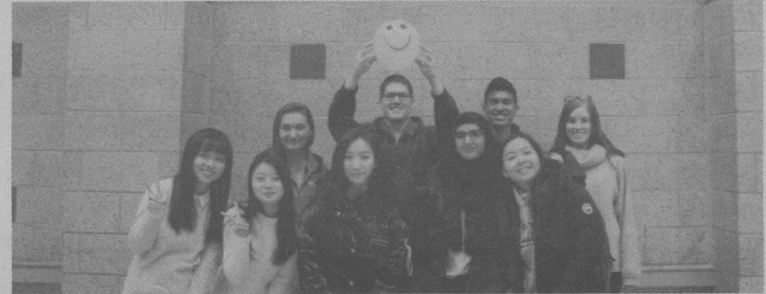
Grace Jin, an international student in the program and a junior electrical engineering major, said.

Zavodsky explained that joining is a great way to help someone out, learn some interesting things yourself and hopefully make a new friend.

"There's no pressure to be perfect and it's very valuable to practice your language skills outside of the classroom," Zavodsky said. "To a native English speaker, I would say join English Pal to have a really unique learning and teaching experience."

The program holds meet and greets, game nights, general body meetings and closing events. Their goals include fundraising to hold higher-quality events with better entertainment and food, more frequently than they already do.

"We are also always looking to increase our participant count, and are working hard every semester to achieve that goal," Flam said.



COURTESY OF STONY BROOK ENGLISH PALS

Some members of the Stony Brook English Pals. The club started in the fall of 2011 to help international students.

ARTS & CULTURE

A second cat cafe confirms a trend on Long Island

By Jawad Hossain
Contributing Writer

A Kitten Kadoodle Coffee Cafe is set to open in Selden at the end of May, making it the second cat cafe, a place where free-roaming cats can be watched and played with, on Long Island.

The owner of A Kitten Kadoodle Coffee Cafe, Jennifer Rose Sinz, is a web and graphic designer who has many animals — 12 cats, six ducks and four chickens — at her Lake Ronkonkoma house.

"I wanted a place that was smack in the middle of Long Island, where many people live, so that people don't have to go all the way to New York City," Sinz said.

The world's first cat cafe opened in Taipei, Taiwan in 1998. It gave people a chance to wind down after a hectic day, but it really took off when one opened in Japan in 2005. Nearly a decade later in 2014, the first permanent cafe in the United States opened in Oakland, California.

The cafe will serve vegan and vegetarian food, the only place in a 15-mile radius, Sinz said. She plans to have 20 cats living in the cafe at a time. People will be able to hang out with the cats for up to three hours by making just a \$2 donation.

"This business is family-oriented, and it is not a competition. The three things I want to accomplish is to educate people on cats, have them relax and get cats adopted," she said.

The Shabby Tabby, the first cat cafe on Long Island, charges \$15



JAWAD HOSSAIN/THE OSPREY

The inside of A Kitten Kadoodle Coffee Cafe, the second cat cafe to open on Long Island. One is set to open in Selden at the end of May, right when classes end.

per hour and fosters 10-15 cats at a time from their partner, the Golden Paw Society in Huntington Station, an exclusively charitable all volunteer-run organization that houses about 50 cats at a time who have been rescued from other shelters that were going to euthanize them.

"A cat cafe is basically a big foster home for homeless cats," Ryan Shea, the owner of Shabby Tabby, said. "[It is] a place where they can roam free, interact with each other, spend some time with us humans and just live a happier life while waiting for their

forever homes." After a Kickstarter campaign that launched in May 2018 raised \$30,000 in 45 days for the renovation of the space at 249 W Main Street in Sayville, Shea, a nurse at Stony Brook Southampton cafe on Long Island, was able to open the first cat cafe on Long Island.

Sharing information is a key component of Shea's vision with the goal of raising awareness for homeless cats, especially during kitten season.

"Cat mating season is approximately January through February and about two months later tons

of kittens are born," Shea said. "To help secure the supplies, they'll need to care for new arrivals and to recruit willing humans as foster families. The Shabby Tabby will host adorable fundraisers called kitten showers."

Opening the cafe will help reduce the overcrowding of homeless cats at local shelters, according to Shea. Shea became involved in cat rescue after her cat died and she saw how many cats needed help on Long Island. Between 60 and 100 million domestic cats are homeless in the

U.S., a 2014 study published by People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) shows.

"It's difficult to find out what cats find rewarding. They like being petted and are receptive to positive reinforcement," Lindsay Mehrkam, an assistant psychology professor at Monmouth University and principal investigator of the Human-Animal Wellness Collaboratory, said. "The main limitation on having cats participate in scientific studies is getting them motivated enough to solve problems."

The collaboratory examines evidence-based assessments and treatments in clinical psychology of nonhuman animals with the goal of improving their relationships with their human caretakers.

Cats calm humans during stressful situations, such as interacting with new people, and may be especially beneficial to people with social anxiety, serving as a sense of security, Kristyn Vitale, a postdoctoral scholar at Oregon State University whose dissertation examines the influence of kitten training and socialization classes on the human-cat bond, said.

"Cat cafes are a great way for people to get to know a cat before deciding to adopt it," Vitale said. "It may help reduce incompatibility between the cat and human and form a stronger cat-human bond which will hopefully retain cats in their homes for the entirety of their lives."

Republished from *The Osprey*.

Long Island art market sees new businesses enter fray

By Alexander Bakirdan and Joshua Spitz
Contributing writers

The Shelf, an artisan store in downtown Port Jefferson, will open in mid-April and will be selling the art of 32 local artists and entrepreneurs.

It took store owner Diane Walker less than 60 days to find the 32 artists looking to sell their work.

These artists face several difficulties that come with working in a mass-produced economy, Jasmine Scarlatos, a St. James-based artisan, said.

"A big problem with getting noticed is basic supply and demand," Scarlatos said. "In theory, it's not the industry. But their consumers generally don't want to pay for artisan-made goods."

The Long Island art market is difficult for young new artists to break into, with many struggling to find places to sell their work. "You can [sell] A piece, you find if you work really hard," Walker, said.

Many art events on Long Island, such as the Art Walk that takes place in May in St. James, require an entry fee of \$25 to \$50 — sometimes even more. The fee comes with no guarantee that the artist will actually sell their work.

The art market is growing, Judith Leavy, executive director of Gallery North in Setauket, said. But, there



JOSHUA SPITZ/THE STATESMAN

A photo of The Shelf's storefront, an artisan store. The Shelf will open in mid-April in Port Jefferson and sell art from 32 local artists and entrepreneurs.

are still not many options for artists to showcase and sell their work.

"I would say that there are a limited number of options right now, however we've recognized that and we have made efforts to change that," Leavy said.

The main goal of the store, Walker said, is to give opportunity and space to young artists at a time when their work might be overlooked. The plan is to have a "revolving contract." Every 90 days, the inventory in the store will

be cycled to give time and space to each artist.

Rather than having the contract connected to the artist, it will be connected to the inventory. This means that artists will write a new contract with the store every time their inventory sells out.

Not paying for art has become so common that a subgroup on the website Reddit, called /r/choosingbeggars makes fun of stingy consumers reluctant to pay for goods or services.

"If it's online a lot of the time [the customer] will be very agreeable at first and then when it comes time to pay they'll delay payment or they'll say 'do you think it's really worth THAT much?' Even if you've lowballed it a bit to begin with," Morgan Richard, another Long Island-based artist involved with The Shelf, said.

Scarlatos and Richard are not the only artists interested in the store's business model, which originally planned to showcase

"You can [sell] piece, you find if you work really hard."

-Diana Walker
Owner of The Shelf

20 artists upon opening. Walker said that she will find a way to display all those who are interested.

The art business and consumers have become obsessed with the traditional, Walker said.

"Most places don't want the current-day creative minds," she said. "They want the picture of the sailboat, or the picture of the sunflower."

That's why artists like Scarlatos are struggling to find ways to get their art noticed and purchased. She says that consumers are weighing the difference between quality and price, and in most cases, they decide that lower prices are more important than higher quality art.

But Scarlatos does not necessarily disagree with the consumer's point of view.

"It's less the industry's fault, and more that of consumers who are willing to sacrifice quality for price. And I can't blame them."

Republished from *The Osprey*.

Amy Schumer's "Growing" is a real take on pregnancy

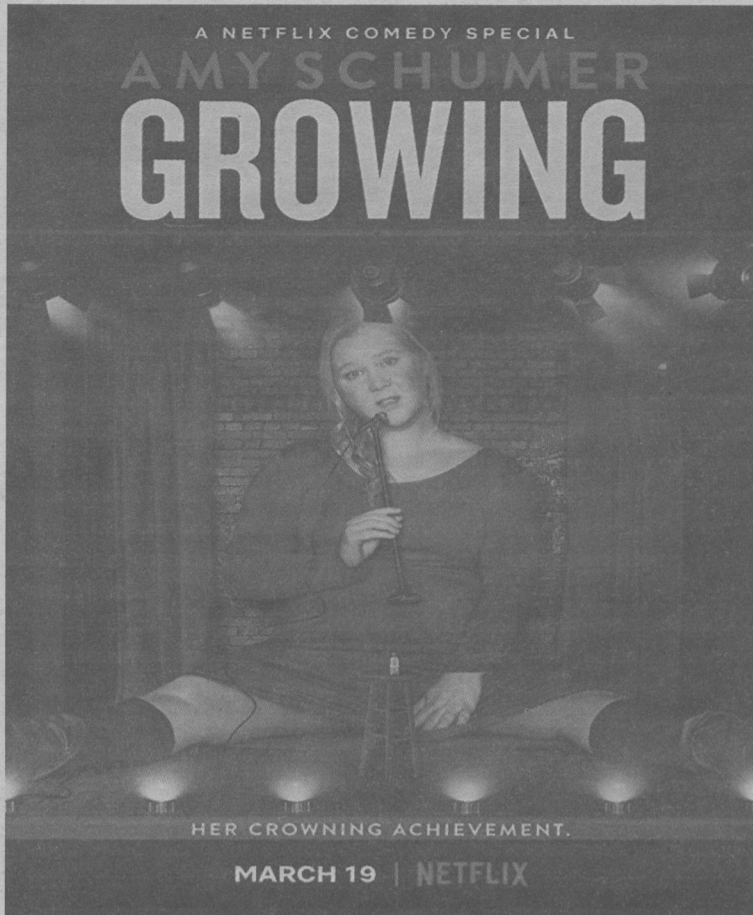
By Karina Gerry
Assistant Arts & Culture Editor

Amy Schumer is back and bigger than ever.

The 37-year-old comedian's new special on Netflix, "Growing," shows the comedian's growth in more ways than one. Shot in Chicago in December while Schumer was five months pregnant, the special sees the comedian making jokes about her rough pregnancy, her new husband — she married American chef Chris Fischer last February — and the political climate.

Viewers may notice a change from her previous stand-up specials — gone are the days of partying and one night stands. Now, her act is all about her married life and pregnancy, highlighting the woman she's grown into while still showing glimpses of the raunchy woman we've come to know.

After being diagnosed with hyperemesis, a severe form of morning sickness, the comedian hasn't shied away from speaking about the difficulties of her pregnancy. She doesn't pretend that pregnancy is this magical experience — from the beginning, she has shared videos on her Instagram of her throwing up and make-up free. In typical Schumer style, she makes jokes that are



Official poster for Amy Schumer's Netflix comedy special, "Growing," which premiered on March 19.

both racy and very real like about her yeast infection and hemorrhoids — topics that most would shy away from, but Schumer embraces. She throws away the

misconception that women need to enjoy being pregnant. You can still love your baby and be miserable during the nine months you're pregnant.

Schumer, who's currently eight months pregnant, had to cancel the remaining dates of her tour because of her hyperemesis which has brought her to the emergency room on more than one occasion. Schumer spoke about one particular hospitalization where her husband and sister left Schumer alone in the hospital while they went across the street to a do-it-yourself paint place. She explained that her sister came running into her room after to "warn" her about the picture her husband made of her, saying he had worked really hard on it and thought it was good. The result, which Schumer put on the screen for everyone to see, was laugh-inducing, and she poked good-natured fun at her husband.

Schumer then lovingly explains to the audience that her husband was diagnosed with high functioning autism spectrum disorder, even noting that the very things she loves about him most are the things that he does because of his autism, like how he always tells her the truth because he can't lie. While she admits his inability to lie does have its benefits, she also notes that it has gotten her into trouble as well because not only can he not lie to her, he also can't lie for her. This made for an awkward

"Gone are the days of partying and one night stands ... now her act is all about her married life and pregnancy ... [it] highlights the woman she's grown into."

situation when he exposed her in front of their friend, for lying to her about an ex-boyfriend and his new girlfriend.

Schumer's special is refreshing and relatable in a way that others have failed. I highly recommend watching for all audiences even those who haven't enjoyed Schumer's comedy in the past. The comedian has come a long way in her personal life and it shows in her comedy.

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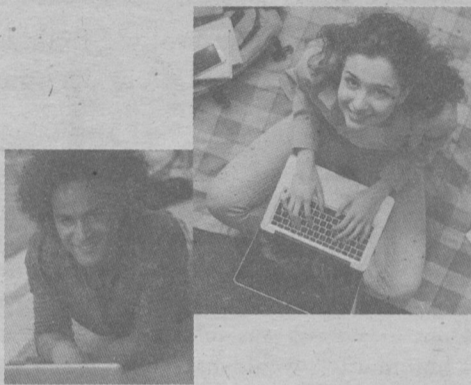
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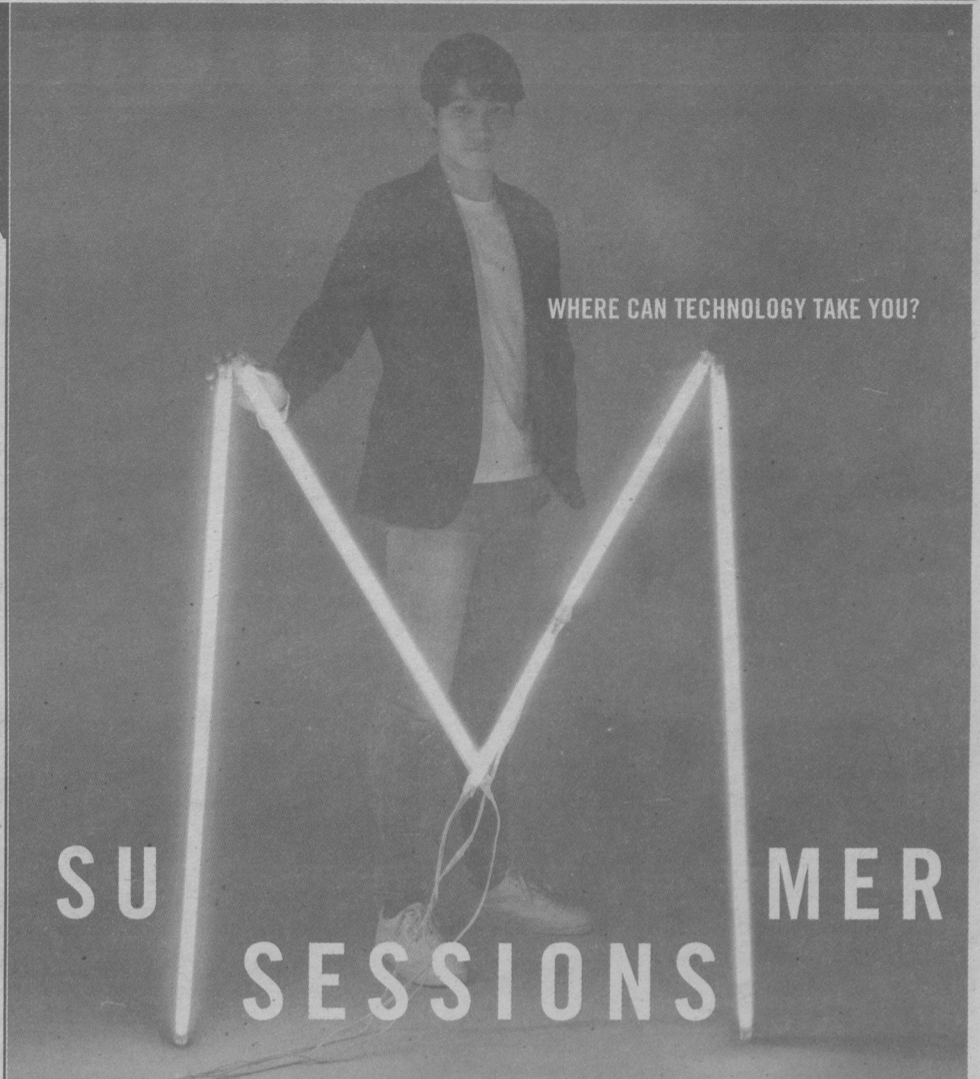
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THE STATESMAN

INFORMING STONY BROOK UNIVERSITY FOR MORE THAN 50 YEARS

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The Statesman is a student-run, student-written incorporated publication at Stony Brook University in New York. The paper was founded as *The Sucolian* in 1957 at Oyster Bay, the original site of Stony Brook University. In 1975, *The Statesman* was incorporated as a not-for-profit, student-run organization. Its editorial board, writers and multimedia staff are all student volunteers.

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.

The Statesman and its editors have won several awards for student journalism and several past editors have gone on to enjoy distinguished careers in the field of journalism.

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First issue free; additional issues cost 50 cents.



SARA RUBERG / THE STATESMAN

A handicapped parking sign near Stony Brook University's Accessibility Support Center. University events often lack clear accommodations, violating school policy.

Stony Brook has a serious accessibility problem

By Allisa Fernandez
Contributing Writer

Last year I found out a very large, very dangerous fibroid was pressing on one of my iliac arteries. After surgery, I had several complications and was left physically disabled for a time.

On April 27, 2018, I received an invitation to the Student Life Awards ceremony after Peer Mental Health Alliance, an organization I founded, was nominated for several awards. I knew if I decided to attend I would need reasonable accommodations, yet nowhere in the email sent to me, nor the flyer attached, mentioned anything about reasonable accommodations. I didn't know what office or whom to contact.

Being a leader at Stony Brook University (SBU) gave me the privilege to speak to people in high positions, but many students don't have this advantage, so I reached out to people I knew in Students Affairs and Students Engagement Activities to see if I could be seated near the front. I even requested a wheelchair, a request made directly to the Student Accessibility Support Center and the Dean of Students.

I knew I was unable to walk long distances or stand for a long period of time, therefore I prepared myself for this journey. I called up my brother to drive me from Queens, NY to SBU. I drank my pain medication an hour before the drive, and my brother dropped me off close to the entrance of the Student Activities Center (SAC) so I would barely have to walk.

Upon entering the SAC Auditorium, I spoke with one of the Dean of Students' staff and I let them know about my condition. They told me they had a seat for me close to the stage, which was perfect. I thought all was great until I was told I would need to walk for about five minutes to receive an award I was being

given. I asked if a wheelchair was provided, as requested in my accommodation email, to which I was told no one made sure I would have one. When I asked who is responsible for reasonable accommodations, I was told they didn't know.

In total, I was on my feet for about 15 minutes as both I and the other students receiving other awards were being called. I cannot explain the pain I felt. I cannot describe how badly I wanted to pass out and how close I was to doing so. In fact, during the subsequent celebration, I did end up passing out at a dinner table. I remember how embarrassing it was to have people staring at me, and I felt ill the entire night.

You would think this was a one-time incident, but stories like mine

counts, you will find little to no mention at all of the reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities.

"I've seen a lack of accommodations at most events at campus," Ava Gurba, a senior biology major with cerebral palsy, said. "I find it discouraging and difficult. Whenever I have gone to events on campus I have to plan out things. I think it sends a message to the disabled individuals in the community that they aren't recognized or accepted."

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 requires that federally funded agencies "provide individuals with disabilities an equal opportunity to participate in their programs and benefit from their services, including the provision of information to employees and members of the public." Title II of the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) prohibits discrimination due to disability in state and local government-funded programs.

This means schools like SBU need to provide equal access to these events and activities. Reasonable accommodations are not perks or special treatments, nor an act of kindness. They are part of our civil rights. Every major event should have proper notice of reasonable accommodations, as per SBU's own policy, and students should be able to talk to someone to see if those reasonable accommodations can be met. Sometimes arrangements cannot be met if it's not within the financial means of the school, which is in accordance with the law, but how can the school know that these reasonable accommodations will cause them any type of hardship if they are not inviting students with disabilities to reach out to begin with?

What is SBU saying to students with disabilities when they don't follow their own policy, let alone the law? It's as if SBU is saying, "If you are disabled, you are not invited. You can't hang with us."

"What is SBU saying to students when they don't follow their own policy, let alone the law?"

-Allisa Fernandez
Contributing Writer

are more common than you think at Stony Brook.

Stony Brook's policy on the use of campus facilities states "availability of reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities must be clearly stated on all brochures, notices, bulletins, advertisements and invitations for seminars and other activities." But major campus events like Brookfest, Homecoming and Roth Regatta don't follow these guidelines. What's more, if you look at USG, Students Affairs and Students Engagement's webpages and social media ac-

Editorial: USG needs to do better

By The Editorial Board

In its own words, Stony Brook University's Undergraduate Student Government (USG) is "the governing body that represents the interests and concerns of the 16,000+ Undergraduate Students at Stony Brook University." USG, which is responsible for things like funding the school's undergraduate clubs and organizations, refers to its members as the "stewards of the \$3.4 million dollar student activity fee."

But for the better part of this academic year, USG's most trusted elected officials have failed to fulfill some of the most basic responsibilities that their own policies require. This student-funded, elected body at New York State's largest public university has simply not been doing its job.

For a week, a team of staff members from *The Statesman* visited the office hours of three USG Executive Council members: President Justas Klimavicius, Executive Vice President Abdelrahman Salama and Vice President of Communications and Public Relations Ian Ouyoung. Out of the 16 sessions we attended, these USG representatives were absent seven times and arrived more than halfway through their designated office hours five times.

If that doesn't alarm you, it should. Your student activities fees pay USG's executive board so they can hold office hours. Although they don't get paid when they don't show up, they are ultimately doing a disservice to you, the constituents, by not giving you the chance to air your grievances.

In all fairness, with midterm season in full swing and spring break, it's possible this string of absences was a rare event. USG officers are students just like the rest of us and even though they committed to these responsibilities, it would be unreasonable to expect perfection. But even if that's true, that doesn't explain the organization's general lack of transparency over the past year.

For starters, the USG website is rife with inaccuracies. The legislative branch web page lists senators in positions they no longer hold and even senators who no longer work for USG. The Executive Council office hours listed online are not up to date either and are inconsistent



A week-long investigation by a team of reporters from *The Statesman* revealed several high-ranking members of Stony Brook University's Undergraduate Student Government often do not attend their office hours.

with the office hours USG staff have recorded internally. The roster for USG's specialized committees is also different from the ones listed on the website.

Although weekly USG Senate meetings are open to the public, if you're unable to attend in person, it can be extremely difficult to find out what transpired. According to the USG Code, minutes from each meeting should be posted to the USG website "no less than 24 hours" before the next meeting, and each meeting's agenda should be posted "no less than 24 hours" before they occur. USG Senate minutes have only been posted five times over the course of the academic year, with the most recent minutes posted dating back to Jan. 31. The agendas have not been posted at all.

One reporter from *The Statesman* has spent the past few weeks trying to gather more information about USG in order to improve our publication's coverage of the organization. They emailed the Chief of Staff for the executive office, Samantha Giuglianotti, to inquire about minutes and agendas three times with

no response. They also emailed the vice president of communications three times, with no response. On three separate occasions, they attended the executive vice president's office hours, but he was nowhere to be found. They were rebuffed by the president when they tried to talk to him.

Some members of USG were more cooperative than others and acknowledged that there are systemic issues the organization needs to rectify. Eventually, the reporter was able to gain access to this year's minutes after contacting USG's parliamentarian, although they were told that it is actually the VP of communications who is responsible for posting the minutes.

At Thursday night's USG meeting, VP of Communications, Ouyoung, said that the website has been difficult to update these past two semesters and that they are working on switching to "a stonybrook.edu kind of website," which he said will be easier to update. He also said that he was planning to work on updating the website on Friday before break started.

At one point during the meeting, a USG senator motioned to move into an Executive Council session so that the meeting would be closed to the public and the reporter from *The Statesman* would have to leave. The reporter was allowed to stay after they pointed out that this move would violate the USG Code, which dictates that Executive Council meetings must follow the New York State Open Meetings Law.

Although we have not always been so diligent in covering USG, as Stony Brook's newspaper of record, it's our job to hold those in positions of power on our campus accountable. We have a unique ability to allocate time toward oversight of the school's authority figures. Most of the university's students do not have that luxury. If *The Statesman* cannot track down USG representatives, how can we reasonably expect that the average student juggling classes, jobs, friends and family would be able to do so? If we get stalled and denied at every turn, what

does that say about USG's ability to remain accountable to the student body as a whole?

In the past, USG has proven that it has the potential to create meaningful change. Last year, under President Ayyan Zubair, USG started a menstrual hygiene initiative and arranged for free pads and tampons to be available across campus. They usually put together two major concerts a year, and they organize events like Roth Regatta. But this year, it seems like USG has dropped the ball. They've shown blatant disregard for decades of well-established decorum, as was demonstrated by their failure to properly confirm their chief justice for over a year. They've focused more of their resources on eating hot wings with President Stanley than they have on making and publicizing important policy changes.

Being a USG representative should be about more than just adding a leadership position to your resumé — it should be about serving your fellow students and helping to make Stony Brook a better place.

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SPORTS

Jeff Boals resigns as Men's Basketball head coach, joins Ohio University

By Chris Parkinson
Sports Editor

Stony Brook Men's Basketball head coach Jeff Boals resigned from his role and has become the new head coach at Ohio University, Athletics Director Shawn Heilbron announced on Sunday, March 17.

"When I hired Jeff three years ago, I believed that Stony Brook was getting an outstanding coach and leader who would position our men's basketball program for long term success," Heilbron said. "With success comes opportunity, and for Jeff, the chance to return to his alma mater as head coach was one that he could not pass up. I wish him, Katie, Sydney and Chase all the best as they move to Ohio."

Boals became head coach during the 2016-17 season and lifted the team to the America East Semifinals. He leaves the team with a 55-41 overall record, including a 24-8 overall record in the 2018-19 season. The Seawolves ranked second in the America East Playoffs, the highest ranking the team received under Boals, but was later upset in the

America East Quarterfinal 78-72 by Binghamton University.

Ohio University is Boals' alma mater, where he was a two-time captain and four-year letterwinner for the Bobcats.

His team later advanced to the NCAA Tournament in 1994 and won the Preseason NIT Championship after wins over Ohio State, New Mexico State, South Carolina and No. 14 Virginia the following year.

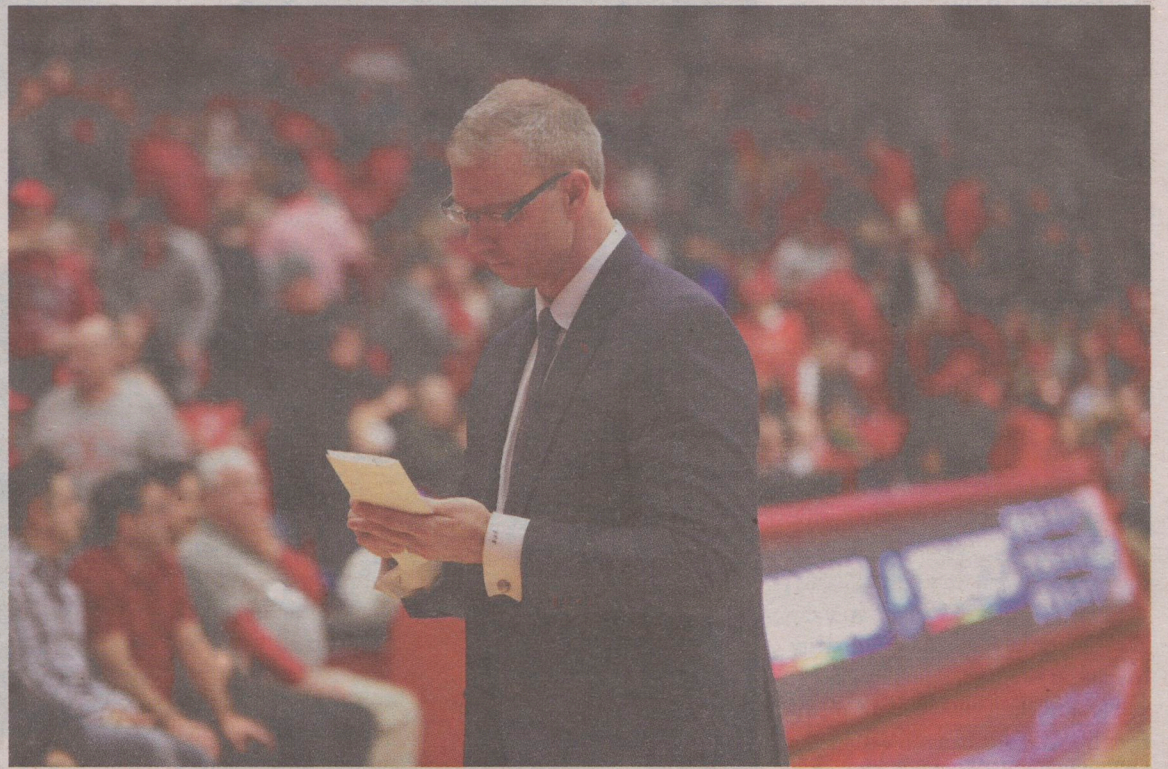
"I am incredibly grateful and honored to return home to my alma mater as the head men's basketball at Ohio University," Boals said in a press release. "My family and I are thrilled to see my coaching career come full circle with this opportunity. Sincere thanks to Dr. Nellis and to Jim Schaus for their confidence in me to lead the young men of Ohio both on and off the court."

Stony Brook Men's Basketball is looking for its 12th head coach in program history. This marks the second resignation for Athletics this season after former head coach Brendan Faherty left the Women's Soccer program to pursue a head coaching gig at Yale University. Assistant coach

Geno Ford will be the Seawolves' interim head coach as the team looks for Boals' replacement.

Stony Brook was eliminated from the 2019 Roman College Basketball Invitational with


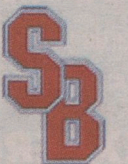
an 82-79 overtime loss to the University of South Florida on Wednesday, March 20.



EMMA HARRIS/THE STATESMAN

Jeff Boals during halftime of his final matchup as head coach of the Stony Brook men's basketball team against Binghamton on Saturday, March 9.

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 UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA	MEN'S BASKETBALL WEDNESDAY, MARCH 20 82-79	 STONY BROOK	 BRYANT	SOFTBALL SATURDAY, MARCH 23 2-8	 STONY BROOK
 SACRED HEART	BASEBALL FRIDAY, MARCH 22 9-12	 STONY BROOK	 SACRED HEART	BASEBALL SATURDAY, MARCH 23 1-4	 STONY BROOK
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