

# Town hall addresses spring semester issues

Kailyn Rhone

Online Editor

Dark clouds seemingly gathered on Florida A&M University's horizon after the sudden announcement earlier this month regarding the cancellation of spring break. The unexpected news from the administration left many students questioning if classes will be entirely in-person next semester. In the midst of the controversy, FAMU held a town hall at 6 p.m. Thursday to discuss plans on navigating the remainder of the semester and the beginning of spring.

Shutting down all the controversy, Provost Maurice Edington announced that the spring semester will not require students to have completely in-person classes. However, the university is increasing options for in-person classes.

"It appears that students have gotten the perception that there will not be remote courses in the spring. That is absolutely not true," Edington said. "We still continue to expect to be able to offer a sufficient rate of courses remotely for those students who have that preference. I want to make sure we clear that up, but we are also adding face-to-face courses to the semester, and so that's the difference compared to the fall."

With Tallahassee COVID-19 cases and cases statewide rising every day, moving to more in-person classes has some professors and students wary of returning to on-campus learning, especially with the recently lifted curfew and the change to a maximum of 30 socially distanced individuals at any one gathering.

However, for those in-person classes, the specific number of seats will be determined by the classroom's size adhering to guidelines established by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Tanya Tatum, director of health services at FAMU, and President Larry Robinson strongly recommend COVID testing at Bragg Stadium, self wellness apps, and following regulated procedures as FAMU recently received \$1.5 million from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to help operate its COVID-19 testing lab.

"Let me first begin by saying that the health and safety of the FAMU community is still our highest priority," Robinson said. "Let me encourage you to continue [following CDC guidelines] as COVID-19 is still with us in your efforts to not only protect you but it also keeps all of us safe. Remember to protect the FAMUly."

Spring semester classes weren't the only controversy addressed Thursday.

Rebecca Brown, assistant vice-president of administrative affairs, talked about the new construction on the south end of campus.

"If you have been on the south end of campus, you have probably noticed a building being constructed adjacent to the Towers," Brown said. "We are excited to report that the HUB facility will open in the spring of 2021. The exact date of operations is contingent upon the construction completion date."

The HUB facility will be a 10,000 square foot auxiliary building that will

house a satellite business center, a second main dining room, a convenience store and a special event dining space.

Although this is exciting news for many Rattlers, some are still concerned about the spring semester and its questionable events. In particular, many students wanted to know if FAMU's homecoming will have a comeback in the spring. President Robinson indicated that there are no plans of having homecoming in the spring; however, he hopes homecoming returns next academic year.

Despite the canceled homecoming, athletic director Kortne Gosha reassured students that spring sports would continue as planned. The basketball season will start on Nov. 25, and the \$10 million Bragg Stadium renovation project is expected to get underway next month.

Gosha also strongly encouraged FAMU alumni and current rattlers to help support the athletic department due to the cancellations of fall sports.

"Many of you may know that because of the suspension of fall sports, our financial situation has drastically changed," said Gosha. "Now is the most important time that we need our Rattlers, new and old, to support our athletic department. Ways that you can do that is giving to the Rattler athletic fund."

All students living on campus are mandated to leave by 7 p.m. Nov. 25 for the Thanksgiving break. For those students who need an extended stay due to unfortunate circumstances, you must make



Photo courtesy [tallahassee.com](http://tallahassee.com)  
FAMU President Larry Robinson

a request through the FAMU's housing website no later than Oct. 30 and will be charged \$653 extra if accepted. However, if eligible, financial aid can cover those added expenses once requested.

Every facility will remain one occupant per room in the spring and traditional residence halls continue to require mandatory meal plans as the costs will be available in December.

As far as academics, FAMU does not plan to have the S/U grading system for students this semester. Fall graduation will continue to be virtual this semester.

Click link to continue: <https://rb.gy/0qfsu9>

# Partnership aims to boost FAMU's COVID testing

Chamarya Roberts  
Staff Writer



Photo Courtesy of the FAMU College of Law

FAMU has been providing free testing at Bragg Stadium since April 25.

FAMU has continued to provide coronavirus testing resources for students, faculty, staff and the Tallahassee community. The Bragg Stadium testing site has been operating since April 25, testing more than 50,000 people to date.

Now FAMU is taking the initiative to go beyond that; the university has partnered with Thermo Fisher to expand its COVID-19 testing services.

The goal of this agreement that was announced last week is to provide testing at no cost during this school year. However, this partnership provides FAMU the ability to do way more than that.

FAMU has volunteered to be a testing hub. Through this partnership FAMU will be able to test people statewide at the three other HBCUs: Edward Waters College, Bethune-Cookman University and Florida Memorial University.

"Florida A&M University is committed

to testing our constituents during the COVID-19 pandemic," FAMU President Larry Robinson said in a release. "This partnership with Thermo Fisher allows us much needed testing capacity to help protect our students, faculty and staff as well as those at our fellow HBCUs in Florida."

The partnership comes from the initiative that Thermo Fisher began, called the "Just Project." It is named after the distinguished African American scientist Ernest Everett Just. Thermo Fisher Scientific has donated \$25-million for diagnostic equipment, test kits and related supplies to a select group of HBCUs. FAMU has received \$2.5 million worth of equipment.

Early this year the FDA approved two types of tests to detect if a person had COVID-19, molecular and antigen. Molecular tests detect genetic material of the virus using a technique called polymerase chain reaction (PCR). The process of a

PCR test is simple: a health care worker collects fluid from a nasal, throat swab or from saliva.

With the testing kits from Thermo Fisher, FAMU will be able to provide PCR-based COVID-19 testing for university faculty, staff and students.

The partnership with Thermo Fisher will help increase FAMU's testing capability and cut the result time to 48 hours.

"We've played the role in helping laboratories scale up their testing for them to be able to determine whether somebody actually has the virus at this moment in time," Marc Casper, president and CEO of Thermo Fisher Scientific, said in an interview with CNBC.

A new laboratory has been placed in the Center for Viticulture & Small Fruit Research in eastern Leon County. The

center was chosen because of the safety measures that will have to be put in place with the increase in testing.

In an interview on WTXL, Student Health Services Director Tanya Tatum said, "With an in-house lab, that time [results] is almost cut in half and add to the number of people that are testing. It will certainly help with our surveillance testing among our employees and students, and still maintain the community safe here so that everybody in the community is able to be tested."

To start FAMU will hire four people to manage the lab, which includes a lab director, manager and two lab techs.

The opening of the lab has not been announced. FAMU is still waiting on some equipment to arrive.



Photo by WFSU/Robbie Gaffney.

Covid testing site signage.



# Students in residence halls relieved of curfew

**Amari Jarrell**

Staff Writer

Payton Williams, a second-year business administration major at Florida A&M who lives in the Palmettos Phase 3 residence hall, was relieved when the university lifted the curfew for students living on campus this past Friday.

"I feel like [the curfew] was put in place for those who don't understand the consequences of their actions. I am happy it is lifted now so I don't have to worry about the consequences," she said.

The curfew had been in place since the start of the semester. In a statement released Friday by the Dean of Students, Bonnie Spells, she said that "the positivity rate has declined to a manageably low level." Students are also expected to continue as wearing a facial mask and practicing

social distancing, temperature checks and notifying Student Health Services if they are showing symptoms or have been in contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19.

Another restriction that has been adjusted is that gatherings are now allowed to have up to 30 people as long as the attendees are still wearing facial coverings and practicing social distancing.

The curfew that was put into effect in August required students to be in their assigned dorms from 10 p.m. to 6 a.m. on Monday through Thursday and from midnight to 6 a.m. on Friday through Sunday.

If you were caught out past curfew and not following the guidelines set by the university, some of the consequences a

student could face would be suspension or even expulsion from FAMU.

The curfew was put in place "to prevent large gatherings/parties on campus or in the Tallahassee community and not to restrict students' movement," according to Spells, but some students believe the curfew didn't stop other students from going out.

Devin Watkins, a fourth-year architecture student who lives in FAMU Towers, said: "The first weekend the curfew was put in was pretty boring. I usually hang out with my friends but I had to report back to my room like I was in prison. The curfew was kind of useless because students still stayed out past curfew and attended parties."



Photo courtesy [tallahassee.com](https://tallahassee.com)

Students living in FAMU Towners and other residence halls had their curfew lifted on Friday.

Click link to continue: <https://rb.gy/uuudta>

# City to audit TPD's use of force policy

**Akilah Winters**

Staff Writer

City commissioners unanimously approved a motion to audit the Tallahassee Police Department's use of force policy during Wednesday's meeting.

Also known as "General Order 60," it was not expected to face opposition from the mayor or commissioners.

The audit would include a review of TPD's use of force policy and its officer training related to response to resistance.

In TPD's General Order 60 the response to resistance states that, "When officers are engaged in any response to resistance encounter, they are responsible for making the preservation of human life their first priority and using only the amount of force objectively reasonable to effectively bring the incident under

control."

This audit was proposed and voted on after TPD and other law enforcement last month arrested 19 peaceful protesters (also referred to as the "Tally 19") at a demonstration against police brutality. The audit was also passed after a TPD police officer shot and killed Tony McDade back in May, the third fatal officer-involved shooting this year involving TPD officers and Black Tallahassee residents.

Many citizens who provided public comment wished that this audit would address the arrests of the peaceful protesters. Some even asked that the city commission aid in dropping all of the charges for the "Tally 19."



Tallahassee Police Department Patrol Car.

Photo Courtesy WTXL Tallahassee.

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# A vote for Amendment 2 is a vote for equal opportunity

Kayla McKinney

News Editor

This election, voters in the state of Florida will be deciding on Amendment 2. This amendment will decide if the minimum wage in Florida should be raised to \$15 per hour. The vote for Amendment 2 should be a unanimous “yes,” from all voters.

Currently, the minimum wage is \$8.56. With such a high cost of living across the state, many workers have protested and struck numerous times over the past five years, urging employers to increase their pay to a “liveable wage.”

Per the new constitutional amendment, if approved, the minimum wage would be increased to \$10 an hour on Sept. 30, 2021. The minimum wage would, then after, be increased by \$1 every year on Sept. 30 until it reaches \$15 per hour in 2026.

Not only is a ‘yes’ vote for this bill crucial for employees, it’s needed to close the poverty gap in the state.

According to a living wage calculator formed by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, the minimum living wage required for a single adult to live in Florida is about \$12 an hour. For a single adult with a child, or multiple children, a living wage is double this amount.

An employee working with the current minimum wage set would have to work two jobs just to meet a decent wage to afford basic necessities such as housing, food and gas. For an employee with a family, even working two jobs would still put them below the poverty level.

Workers shouldn’t have to overexert themselves while they’re helping businesses stay afloat. Employees’ financial needs should be a prime concern for all employers and managers.

A higher minimum wage is needed to help workers support themselves without having to work endless amounts of jobs just to make ends meet. Especially for



Photo by the Orlando Sentinel

Protestors demand higher wages at a rally for increased minimum wage in Florida

workers with families, the children should be considered.

If families are living paycheck to paycheck, basic things like food, childcare and other costs necessary for grade school become more of a luxury item. In this sense, children don’t have equal opportunities awarded to them, simply because their parents don’t make enough hourly.

Voting for a higher minimum wage would allow many individuals and their families to live on a similar playing field as some salaried employees in areas such as education, healthcare and housing.

In Tallahassee, a higher minimum wage would help out a slew of student employees who struggle to work and fund their own education and living costs.

“As a full-time college student making minimum wage, the cost of living comes close to none,” says TyDazjha Francois, a fourth year psychology student attending Florida A&M University.

Francois is just one of the many student employees working in the restaurant industry. For some of these workers who

earn tips on the job, there’s an even lower minimum wage of only \$5.54 an hour.

Seeing as tips fluctuate daily, these workers may not receive the standard pay other employees make daily, placing them further below the poverty level.

“For me to pay my bills, I have to work 5 days throughout the week at the age of 21. That’s ridiculous!” Francois said.

Moreover, since the pandemic took over earlier this year, a higher minimum wage is necessary now more than ever.

Many businesses suffered while the state was in quarantine and encouraging individuals to self-isolate. As a result, many consumers stopped spending money. While business owners were distraught at the loss of revenue, employees who work paycheck to paycheck felt this deficit much worse.

Although 2020 has been a year with unrivaled precedents, we never know what is going to happen in the future. If the next big pandemic hits five years from now and the entire world must shut down for months on end, are employees

expected to just keep their heads up and hope for the best?

Opposers to this bill, mostly being business owners, claim a raise in minimum wage will destroy the state’s economy, as well as ruin businesses.

The National Restaurant Association and the Florida Restaurant and Lodging Association were both top donors to a committee that opposes the bill, according to [Ballotpedia.com](http://Ballotpedia.com).

FRLA CEO, Carol Dover, said, “An increase like this would have disastrous impacts on businesses and individuals alike. Business owners will be forced to find solutions to control costs... The most obvious solutions include reducing the number of employees, reducing the number of hours remaining employees work and seeking labor alternatives like automation.”

The amendment does note on the ballot that a raise in minimum wage may result in an increase in taxes and/or a loss of government services.

Still, a higher minimum wage just might help the economy, since people spend what they have, causing an increase in consumer demand and stimulating business across the state.

Though it is unknown how higher taxes would affect lower income families, the minimum wage should be raised simply because employees should feel cared for and supported by their employers. When workers feel cared for, they tend to be happier.

This, of course, leads to a boost in business since employees are happy to be at work.

Working shouldn’t have to be a miserable experience. Wages should be increased to give workers more time with their families and more time to themselves.



# Jeremiah Nichols: The life of a modern day revolutionary

**Delores Battle**

Staff Writer

Jeremiah Nichols considers himself a revolutionary and a visionary, someone who sees a future and doesn't stop until it manifests. He has always felt the need to fight for the men and women who look like him, but he admits he hasn't always known how. Fueled by the hardships of being a Black man in America and the racial conflict of this generation, he has discovered his purpose with a determination to fulfill it, by any means necessary.

Nichols started his journey with a major academic change. After one semester as a business administration student at Florida A&M, he knew it would not help him better understand the Black community and become an advocate on its behalf. So, he switched his major to African American studies, a decision that was not strongly supported by his family and friends.

"They didn't know the possibilities, so I don't blame them," Nichols said. "But almost everyone told me it was a huge mistake. I responded by following my dream and letting the criticism motivate me to be a better person and prove them wrong."

Despite several people betting against him, Nichols did exactly what he set out to do. He proved them wrong.

In the span of a few months after changing his major, Nichols developed a non-profit organization in Tampa, his hometown, called Ubuntu. The name, Ubuntu, comes from an African saying that translates to: "I am, because we are."

With this proverb in mind, Nichols created his organization with the purpose of uplifting Africans, not only in America, but worldwide.

"Ubuntu is the fruit of my learning," Nichols said. "My organization is built upon my major and what I have learned, whether it concerns politics, economics or history."



Photo courtesy Nichols

Jeremiah Nichols at protest following the death of George Floyd

The goal of Ubuntu, as Nichols describes it, is to educate Africans on their history, improve housing conditions in low-income Black neighborhoods and push for criminal justice reform. Nichols and his Ubuntu organization have successfully made strides toward these achievements in Tampa by starting a community garden that gives back to its residents and partnering with the Hillsborough County School Board to initiate a program to teach African American history in high schools.

He has now brought his organization to FAMU and plans to continue the fight for revolutionary change in Tallahassee. Nichols has upcoming events discussing how women impact the Black Lives Matter movement, African Americans in the LGBTQ+ movement and a few classes on protecting yourself during protests and demonstrations.

Recently, Nichols was able to put into practice one of his self-defense programs to protect a friend in need.

"I had my first encounter with a Talla-



Photo courtesy Nichols

Community garden started in Tampa to give back to residents in the community.

hassee racist and it was so intimidating," Shania Sallye, a second-year bio pre-medicine major, said. "He had a Trump flag and an American flag flying from the back and a Confederate flag license plate. Jeremiah [Nichols] immediately called me to see where I was."

In response, Nichols was able to protect Sallye by sending men from his organization to escort her home safely and then ensure she felt secure and comforted. Protecting Black women has always been of the utmost importance to Nichols and he hopes to continue to ensure the women around him feel safe in such a trying time.

Nichols explained that in the past few months, his entire outlook on life has changed and he has had to completely alter his lifestyle. He now spends most of his time reading and educating himself on how to best approach the injustices he sees in the Black community rather than going to parties or social events like most college students.

"Believe it or not, the modern revolutionary's job is reading, going through

emails, creating plans and starting programs," Nichols said. "It's not always marching and demonstrating. I am basically trying to create a blueprint for the next generation to come."

On average, he reads about 20 pages of material each day from prominent Black intellectuals, writers and psychologists. He also encourages his friends to stay updated on current events and learn from many of his favorite authors.

"I had the pleasure of starting Jesuit High School's first African American Club with Jeremiah during our senior year," Robert Morrison, a longtime friend of Nichols, said. "From that experience alone, he propelled me to learn more about my culture and history just to keep up with him."

Morrison has been a confidant to Nichols for many years but says that he has grown from their friendship and become a better person through their shared experiences.

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# The lingering effects of COVID

Aolani Brown

Layout Editor

While most people who encounter the coronavirus are able to recover in a few weeks after dealing with a set of mild symptoms, cases have been observed in which patients suffer from side effects of the illness long after the initial recovery.

According to a report published by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 35% of symptomatic adults who previously tested positive for the coronavirus had not returned to their normal state of health when interviewed 2-3 weeks after their initial testing.

This report also says that among people between the ages of 18-34 with no prior "chronic

medical conditions," 1 in 5 were not back to their usual health 2-3 weeks after testing positive.

This demographic of COVID patients who seem to never get better has been dubbed the "long haulers" — those who have "recovered" from the coronavirus but still deal with long-term symptoms that accompanied the virus.

The Mayo Clinic describes some of the symptoms that may linger past initial recovery as fatigue, cough, shortness of breath, headache, joint pain, brain fog and heart injuries.

Khurram Nasir, preventative neurologist at Houston Methodist Hospital, said to consider



Photo courtesy Getty Images

COVID-19 has proven to have lingering effects.

the novel virus a "cluster bomb" exploding in one's body, creating a "ripple effect" throughout the organs.

Among these lingering

maladies, those pertaining to the brain, heart, and lungs have proven to be more concerning.

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## Get creative Halloween costumes: COVID edition

Deiana Abdel-Gadir

Staff writer

2020 has already given us a very spooky beginning, and as Halloween comes around this year, you can expect the same energy for the fall. With the outbreak of COVID-19 on everyone's mind this year, it's hard to think of even celebrating the ghostly holiday. However, for many others, this fun, nostalgic night brings out the best in everyone during these hard times.

This year's Halloween brings in much excitement, as many people have mini traditions or matching costumes, but it also brings the fear of going out for the night. Allanah McCann, a FSU student expresses her plans with

her roommate for Halloween, for a small celebration.

"When it comes to costumes, my friend and I decided to coordinate every year," McCann said. "For this Halloween I'm going to be Clover from the Bring It On movie, and she's going to be a Toro. Last year, we went to Ice Skream, (a campus Halloween party), but due to COVID-19 this year, we're just going to throw our little fun with close friends."

For others, this year's Halloween will contain many horror films and various on sale chocolates. For college student Kapriessa Dessalines, Halloween is just another night.

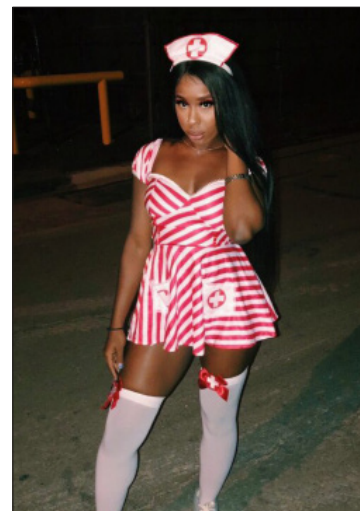


Photo courtesy Pinterest

Nurse costume.

"I believe celebrating Halloween can be a risk this year," Dessalines said. "However, I respect it's a risk that many people are willing to take. The pandemic is making everyday feel like it's just dragging along, so for the sake of their sanity, some people are willing to put their life on the line to simply enjoy themselves."

The majority of people on Halloween are contemplating the decision to stay home or go out, as they see many others partake anyway. BCU student, Shanel Mooror ponders the idea of going trick-or-treating with her brother

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# Relay for Life team spreads awareness

**Jeffrey Dean**

Staff writer

October is the month selected to honor those who battled, conquered or lost their lives to breast cancer. Relay For Life is a nonprofit organization that aims to raise awareness and funds for cancer research. Worldwide, people host relay for life events on behalf of the American Cancer Society.

“Our relay for life supports anyone who has been affected by cancer. That includes caregivers, survivors, people currently battling the disease, and other support systems. It is all about doing what we can to find help in finding a cure,” said Kennedy Groce, representative of FAMU’s Relay For Life.

Due to the coronavirus pandemic, campus activity has decreased so the nonprofit organization had to take a different approach when it comes to advertising and promoting events.

“In order to promote breast cancer awareness and increase funding for cancer research through the American Cancer Society, my committee and I have decided that in order to promote campus engagement for this year’s relay for life our social media presence had to be one of our top priorities,” said Kyra Freeney, FAMU Relay For Life chairwoman.

Ever since this realization, the organization has made attempted to fulfill its goal to not let the coronavirus pandemic hinder it. To kick-off Breast Cancer Awareness Month, they have planned a 10-day photo challenge to trend on Instagram and reach a large number of students while spreading awareness.

FAMU’s Relay For Life plans to feature those who survived breast



Photo courtesy Jeffrey Dean

The FAMU Relay for Life organizers.

cancer and celebrate the lives of those who died from the disease on the FAMU Relay For Life Instagram page. Students will have the opportunity to send

in their loved ones who suffered from cancer.

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# 7 great reads for college students

**Jasmine Butler**

Copy Desk Editor

As college students approach the half-way mark of the semester, self-care and feeding your mind outside of class is essential! After diving deep in the personal libraries of college students in Tallahassee, Fla., here’s a diverse, impelling and rather short list of must-reads! Whether you consider yourself a bookworm or you struggled in elementary school to reach the book requirement, there is something for you.

## 1. Don’t Settle For Safe – Sarah Jakes Roberts

In this piece, Roberts discusses her past mistakes and how she discovered her purpose, passion and completely turned her life around. She focuses on key themes that allowed her to push

past the life she chose to leave behind. As seen on the back cover, Roberts wants to help readers, “view your history with positivity, demolish destructive patterns, connect with true intimacy, and realize your true calling.”

From a Christian point of view, this book promotes self-discovery and encourages readers to exceed expectations, overestimate their potential, and realize that trauma doesn’t shape your future.

“If you’re thinking that this book just took a turn in a direction you’re not sure you can handle, it’s because you must overcome the feelings that you have buried,” she wrote.

“As a Black female Christian in college, this book changed me for the

better. It allowed me to give myself a fresh start and it encouraged me to truly go after everything I set my mind to,” Florida State University student, Dynasty Davis said.

## 2. Oh the Places You’ll Go- Dr. Seuss

While it may sound a little silly, this book has encouraged many from a very young age. As current college student, Jasmine Moody, came across this book this past summer, she found greater meaning in it than she did years ago.

“As a child, I read it because of the nice pictures and because Doctor Seuss was a classic, of course,” Moody said. “But as I get older, the words bring inspiration. Now a graduating senior,

it gave me a bit of motivation. It helped me, in the silliest way, to see that there are so many challenges and milestones out there waiting for me.”

Seuss talks about his journey through life and the stepping stones that came with it. He makes it relatable by using the word, “you” throughout the entire book. To give you a glimpse of what the picture book entails, he writes, “You have brains in your head, you have feet in your shoes, you can steer yourself in any direction you choose!”

## 3. Lolita- Vladimir Nabokov

In a thought provoking and controversial novel, Nabokov takes his readers

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# I cannot take anything for granted

**Diamond Robinson**

Staff writer



Photo by Archie Art

Columnist Diamond Robinson

Balancing motherhood while attending FAMU has become routine for me since last fall.

My son Jai is a one year old. He is extremely playful and friendly, full of joy and oatmeal. His curly brown hair and hazel eyes make him hard to resist.

However, it has not always been a smooth ride. With COVID-19 claiming the lives of more than 210,000 Americans, I've had to adjust my lifestyle for two.

The daycare that my child attends reduced its hours of operation back in May. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines prohibited all childcare facilities from remaining open full time. During the summer, more people were beginning to contract the deadly virus which resulted in case numbers rapidly growing in Florida and in the United States overall.

These circumstances forced me to make some immediate changes. After removing a course and adjusting my fall semester schedule, I was physically available for my son during afternoons.

Instantly, I started to get burnt out. It has been so overwhelming to make deadlines for assignments and manage

my mother duties all at once. Often, I had to wait until Jai would take a nap or go to bed to fully concentrate and complete homework.

Then on August 25 my son woke up at 2 a.m. hysterically crying with a high fever. His breathing began to grow heavier and the crying continued for another half hour.

As a first time mother, I panicked and rushed him to the nearest emergency clinic. I discovered that my son was experiencing difficulty breathing due to him showing early signs of asthma.

I was relieved that Jai's condition was not severe and that I acted quickly that night. Since then, his asthma has been better controlled. However, all of my family remain concerned and want us to return home to Central Florida so that we can be closer.

Life was beginning to weigh down

on me. However, my resilience kept me pushing forward as I tackled each hurdle that came my way.

Recently, my mother shared the news that she has tested positive for COVID-19. She says she is incredibly weak and has multiple symptoms. The news has been devastating for my family members.

Additionally, my mother's age makes her a higher risk factor. Family and friends have made it a priority to have groceries delivered to her doorstep, check on her health daily and keep her in our prayers as she recovers.

Experiencing all of these obstacles has certainly made me stronger and more cautious. I view every day as a blessing. My son, family and health are constant reminders that I cannot take anything for granted during times like this.

# The pandemic saved me financially

**Akilah Winters**

Staff writer

Back in March, the pandemic began to sweep across our nation. We lost many lives over the summer, and continue to see hundreds die daily.

Life as we know it changed and our normal became six feet apart and paper or cloth masks everywhere we go. No one could leave their houses. We were all trapped in our own tiny prisons with the longing fear of catching the virus and dying.

In the beginning of the pandemic, many of us did not know the seriousness of the virus — especially with the president downplaying it. Many experts did not know much about the virus at first.

For me, the pandemic allowed me to attend fall classes and it allowed me to come back to FAMU despite my run-ins with financial aid. Although I was still



Photo courtesy Winters

Columnist Akilah Winters.

stuck in Tallahassee for months due to the growing fear of traveling in the middle of the pandemic and taking the 12-hour drive to get back home to the Florida Keys, I was fortunate enough to continue my studies here.

Without the refund that was given to students for the semester being cut short as a result of the pandemic, I would have had a balance well over the \$500 and would not have been permitted to take classes this fall semester.

In the beginning of the spring semester, I ran out of financial aid and did not have enough money to pay for my meal plan that I had to get because of the residence hall I was staying in. I was scrounging for last-minute scholarships to stay and take fall classes. Even though the reopening plan was not yet developed

at that time, I would have had to take a semester off and then continue my studies. This would have devastated my plan to graduate and I possibly would not have been able to come back to FAMU at all.

For a rising junior who will finally be fully immersed in journalism classes, taking a semester off would have delayed my time to graduate and cost me more money than I had intended to spend on college.

The pandemic has taken so many lives and has cost many hardships. Even though people still fear the virus and are trying to mitigate the spread of it, people are still trying to live their lives as comfortably and safely as possible. Although the pandemic has caused me many hardships as well, I am glad that I was able to return back to the college of love and charity.



# Canceling spring break won't be effective

**Tazjhani Baker**

Staff writer

College spring break is seen as a rite of passage for students at universities all across America. Having begun in the 1960's, it has since become a staple of fun and frolics. It's no secret that college experiences are packed with vibrant parties and wild, nightly shenanigans however, no college experience would be complete without the notorious college spring break.

Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University made the decision to reopen campus. The limitation of face- to- face classes and the lack of on campus events ultimately left everything either remote or removed; the same can be said for the removal of one of the most anticipated breaks of every collegiate experience: spring break.

Recently, President Larry Robinson, Ph.D. and university leadership



Photo courtesy Jeff Greenberg/Getty Images

Thousands of college students congregate on a Florida beach for some spring break fun.

announced the plans for the upcoming spring semester, this included plans for spring break. The announcement came via email, "Dear Famu community, As a result of the global pandemic and the

need to safeguard the health and safety of students, faculty and staff, Florida A&M University has modified the academic calendar for the Spring 2021 semester. Spring Break has been canceled."

Most students feel that their need for spring break is deeper than just socialization. School is tough and now that everything is remote, it can be even more exhausting. Spring break is a way to break away from all the work and exams.

Since the announcement of spring break being canceled, many students have taken to Twitter to express their outrage.

"First no homecoming and now there is no spring break this has got to be the worst senior year ever," @its\_jamielle tweeted. Many others have since shared similar sentiments.

The cancellation of spring break was undoubtedly put in place to ensure safety for campus. It is a known fact that many students both travel and party over the break. However, this decision may be a bit

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# Will Ginsburg's final wish be ignored?

**Courtney Spry**

Staff writer

In the aftermath of the recent death of Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, women's rights remain a political issue despite consistent demands for equality.

Using her entire legal career to end discrimination and defend women's rights as basic human rights, Ginsburg stood firmly behind Roe v. Wade and fought hard to keep it effective.

For those who may be unaware, the 1973 Roe v. Wade Supreme Court landmark decision made it legal for women to have abortions without government restrictions. While it remains controversial, this case also remains relevant because it is under attack in the courts. Many women died from unsafe abortions when they weren't legal.

While the choice to experience a pregnancy should be solely based on the pregnant woman, many Republicans are "pro life" and support an anti-abortion



Photo courtesy [politicailyouthnetwork.org](https://politicailyouthnetwork.org)  
Women's remain rights in jeopardy as death of RBG influences republicans to find a replacement before election.

movement established to discourage and dismantle abortions on religious and moral grounds. They use propaganda to convince their followers that abortion is wrong and they want nothing more than to control the lives women.

It has been reported that Ginsburg told her granddaughter while laying on her death bed, "My most fervent wish is to not be replaced until a new president is installed."

Her dying wish went ignored as confirmation hearings are being held this week for Donald Trump's nominee, Judge Amy Coney Barnett.

As contradicting as it is that women have the audacity to be against abortions, I can understand the misinterpretation if their reasoning is based on religion. Many are raised in churches that emphasize how God hates abortions. Those who don't research beyond what they're told wouldn't know any different.

Other than biased religious reasons it doesn't make sense why women would willingly be against abortion.

There are thousands of children in foster care who no one chooses to take home. Their plight could've been prevented had

abortion did not have such a bad stigma attached to it.

The number of women who get pregnant from rape and have to deal with the consequences is unthinkable. The number of women who were sacrificed in unsafe abortion practices is unreasonable. The fact that this is still a problem years after Roe v. Wade is hurtful and makes women worldwide feel as though our voices were never heard.

Barnett's being questioned on her position in the anti-abortion movement and, like Trump, continues to deny any allegations on how she would rule.

Given the uncertainty of this upcoming election, it seems likely that if Trump gets re-elected abortion will be illegal in all states and protests will most likely be non-stop.

Don't expect these protests to be peaceful when the situation involves the quality and control of one's life.



# This is Apple's world - we're just living in it

Brianna Jones

Staff writer



Photo courtesy The bottom line  
Apple taking over the world.

If you ever visit a college campus you will notice the plethora of Apple products from laptops, iPads, iPhones and more.

Students love Apple products simply due to Apple's forceful marketing to students and its heavy presence in numerous schools.

Having an Apple store — somewhere to take your device if it's acting up or to check out a new laptop — is great. Most urban areas in the U.S. have an Apple store — but not Tallahassee (sigh).

Many college students today grew up with Apple products, from the iPod, iPad, to iPhone. They probably even had a Mac growing up, perhaps in elementary school, and they've known Apple for such a long time that they stick to it and now their products last longer than they ever did before.

"A survey of 880 college students conducted by Chegg found 51 percent named Apple as their preferred smartphone, tablet and laptop brand," according to apple insider.

"Apple products are hugely popular among students. Apple laptops are portable and fast, have a lower risk of malware attacks, and have a longer battery life

compared to other popular laptops," according to mac keeper.

Apple also spends more money on high-quality components, which is why they are most expensive than other brands. But their products are worth it; you truly do get what you pay for in this case.

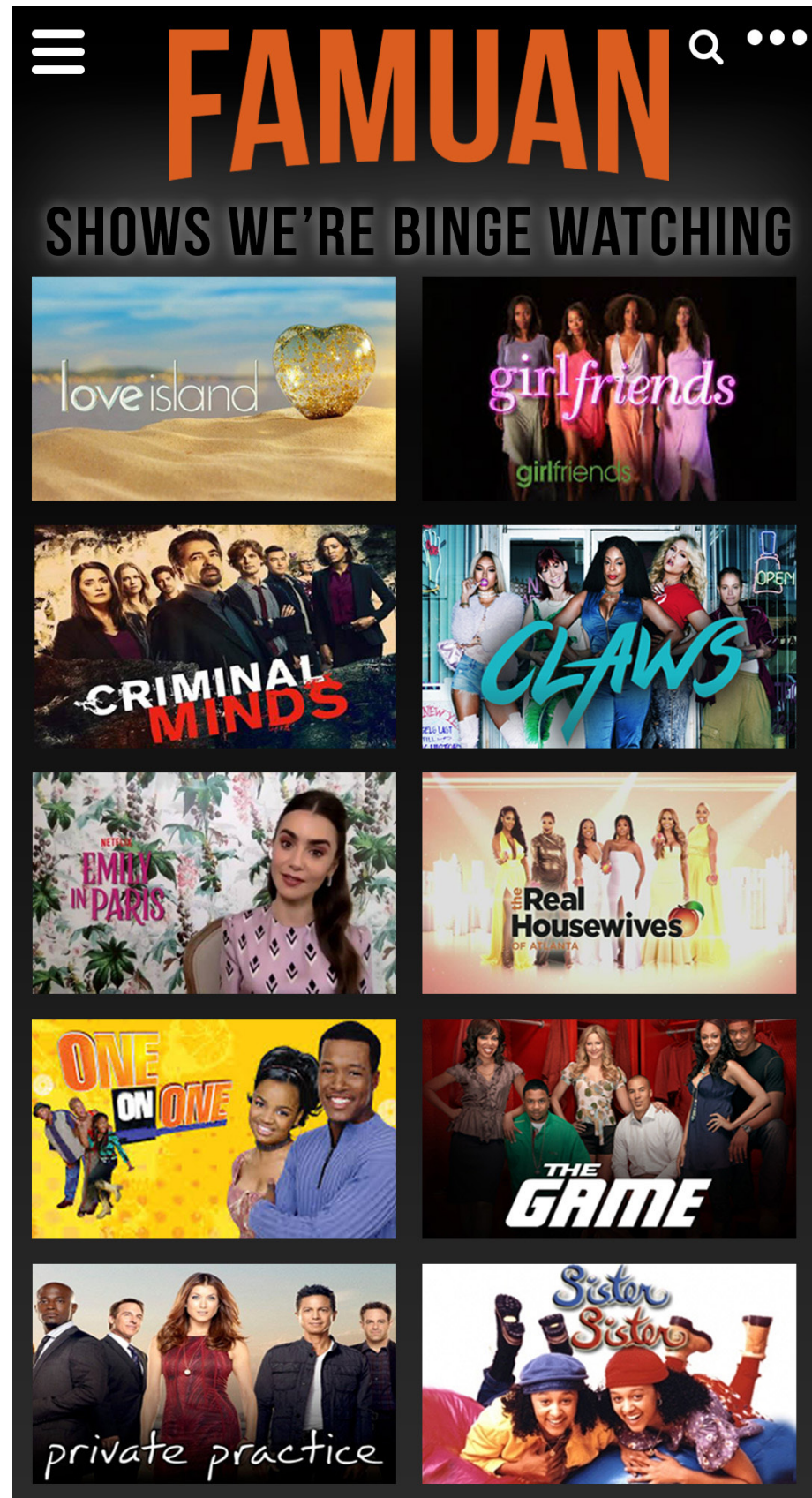
Apple has a reputation for great, high-quality technology — particularly computers — that last for a long time, making it likely that purchasing a single Mac will get you through college and possibly graduate school.

When you first start looking and comparing Mac laptop costs, it may appear as though MacBook deals for college students are not that cheap. However, once you research for the best and most reliable computers on the market, you'll find that many Mac laptops are completely worth their price, due to their exceptional longevity and overall efficiency.

Apple computers are more expensive than the many brands of Windows-ready PCs. Some people see the extra cost as a rip-off, while others see it as worth it. I see the prices as worth it. From having a PC to now having an Apple MacBook Pro, I can do more on my computer and this helps me greatly with my work. Also, different majors and interests require different features. For my audio production assignments, my MacBook Pro is essential.

"College students love the Mac. It's the notebook they rely on from the dorm room to the classroom, and the No. 1 choice among higher education students," said Tom Boger, Apple's senior director of Mac Product Marketing.

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# Rattlers prepare for new season with schedule in flux

**Mariah Wiggs**

Staff writer

The Florida A&M men's basketball team is preparing for an unpredictable season. Constant adjustments have been made in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Following the program's first operations meeting earlier this month, steps are being taken to move forward with a schedule in accordance with CDC guidelines to ensure a safe and prosperous season.

"Safety and health precautions are our priority," Associate Athletic Director Michael Johnson said. "We continue to monitor and abide by CDC guidelines to ensure we are protecting the health and safety of our student-athletes."

Players are required to participate in weekly COVID-19 tests and daily temperature checks.

Safety extends not only to players but Rattler fans as well. Until further notice there will be no fans allowed at any games. While the athletics department is expecting to reopen to the public for viewing in January, only 25% capacity will be allowed in the Lawson Center.

Johnson said that the biggest challenge aside from COVID-19 is adjusting to the "new norm." In an average season, the Rattlers would be getting ready to play their first game in the beginning of November. Unfortunately, constant changes have led to a delayed season.

The Rattlers are hoping to take their 8-0 home winning streak on the road as they are expecting to have very few home games.

With the health and safety of the players at the "forefront" of the program, appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) will be provided for traveling to away games along with social distancing regulations.



Photo courtesy [espn.com](https://www.espn.com)

FAMU Basketball players.

The 2020 roster represents the biggest recruiting class coach Robert McCullum has had during his time at FAMU. The Rattlers are focusing on maintaining a "FAMUly" environment while motivating the team to be disciplined within compliance to ensure the continuation of the season.

Assistant coach Isaac Brown said he is optimistic about the players.

"What I am looking for this upcoming season, are our guys playing consistently well, both at home and on the road,"

Brown said. "We know as a program there is no overnight success. The newcomers have bought into the 'FAMU way' and have made tremendous strides since coming to campus."

The men's basketball program is built on the motto "Think Big." With a new staff and roster, this sentiment is expected to help strengthen team development and work ethic during these unforeseen times. Brown believes this mentality will lead Rattlers to victory both on and off the court.

"During these uncertain times, our student-athletes have spent a lot of time together," Brown said. "The key is that before they experienced this unprecedented pandemic, the bond was already formed on and off the court. The 'Think Big' method is to thank for allowing the guys to see the bigger picture and master any obstacle they face."

No official schedule has been released; however, the Rattlers are expecting to play their first game in late November.



# Dillard, FAMU captain, wins golf tournament

**Nikyya Smith**

Staff writer

Mulbe Dillard IV has got game. The Chicago native and Florida A&M University golf team captain earlier this month won first place at the Championship Flight, Golfweek amateur tournament at TPC Deere Run in Silvis, Illinois.

"The course was set up extremely tough. The conditions that we had for the first day were 100 percent not ideal. We were playing in 40-degree weather, it was raining, and the second day was about 50 degrees with a little bit of overcast and it was pretty windy," Dillard said. "The conditions were not great, but I was able to play well and pull out the win by a pretty significant number of strokes, I ended up winning by 12 strokes."

Dillard has been playing golf for nearly his whole life. He first picked up a golf club at the age of 2. He then started playing in golf tournaments around the age of 6 but he says he really didn't take golf seriously until after a conversation with his dad, Mulbe Dillard III.

"I was probably 10 or 11 and I was talking to my dad and at this time I wasn't playing the best golf, I was always finishing middle to last of my tournaments and my dad actually told me if you want to take this seriously you're going to have to put in a little more effort," Dillard said. "He had been taking off work to take me to tournaments over the summer, after he had that pep talk conversation with me, it was almost like I turned into a completely different person and that's when I started talking golf seriously."

Dillard's father can attest to his son putting more work into his game.

"He would hit and chip balls 20 minutes before practice, practice for two hours, and work on his swing for a half hour with his coach after practice. He did this two to three times per week in the off



Photo courtesy Dillard

Dillard on golf course.

season for seven months and has never missed a practice," his father said.

Dillard was recruited heavily in high school but chose FAMU over other schools and golf programs. FAMU's School of Business and Industry and the school's diversity that helped him make what he calls the best decision he's ever made.

"I chose FAMU specifically for the school of business and also for golf and because I wanted to see a different end of the stick. I went to a mostly white middle school, my high school was a little bit more diverse, so for college I wanted to see all sides of how schooling was. I definitely wanted to go to an HBCU and coming to FAMU was the best decision I've ever made," Dillard said.

FAMU men's golf coach Mike Rice spoke highly of Dillard and how significant his leadership is.



Photo courtesy Dillard

Mulbe Dillard with his first place trophy.

"We are fortunate that he picked FAMU. He works his butt off but more importantly he is such a leader. He's been our captain for the last two years going on three," Rice said. "It was really a role that he decided to take on, it wasn't something where I reached out to him, he stepped up and became the leader and captain of the team. The success that he has had is from how hard he works."

Due to the effects of COVID-19, Dillard's senior season was postponed until spring. But that hasn't stopped him from

competing and staying in golf mode.

"I'm competing in these amateur tournaments just because I love competing and I want to be able to keep that competition in the back of my head for when we do play that I'm ready and still have that tournament mindset in my head," Dillard said.

For more information on the FAMU men's golf team and its upcoming spring season, go to: [www.FAMUAthletics.com](http://www.FAMUAthletics.com).