

Some RAs say curfew should not apply to them

Vincent Jones

Staff Writer

Florida A&M University has decided to crack down on the rise COVID-19 in FAMU's residence halls. Following an increase in cases, the dean of students last month issued a mandate that all residents must get tested for COVID-19 along with a curfew for everyone living on campus. Students must be in their dorm rooms from 10 p.m. till 6 a.m. during the week and midnight till 6 p.m. on the weekends.

This was the third time this school year that FAMU has issued a curfew for on-campus residents.

Every student in the building must sign a university-mandated addendum that states that if they do not comply with the regulations they could face expulsion.

With residents and faculty having to be tested more regularly, it has led to the decisive decision to implement innovative ways to keep the cases as low as possible for the betterment of the university.

The curfew has been criticized by multiple parties. Because resident assistants — upperclassmen in most cases — have to supervise the residents, they have to adhere to the rules and regulations that are associated with the university and the Office of Housing.

Third-year business administration major and resident assistant Azaria Austin says that she knows how the curfew could be helpful, but she believes resident assistants should not have to adhere to the curfew.

"I definitely understand but unless they are holding the residents account-



Photo courtesy famu.edu

able, it won't matter," Austin said. "There will be no point if they walk in and nobody says anything. There are repercussions for them and it shouldn't be for us. I know my job and do my job."

Resident assistant Christelle Haygood says that the curfew is needed but it poses an additional burden on the resident

assistants.

"Some students need regulations to ensure that they are taking heed but for those who are taking heed it is a damper on our schedules," Haygood said. "Resident assistants have a better understanding of the rules and we have our own set of rules that make sure we are doing

what we have to do. We signed up for this job so we know that we have to follow CDC guidelines so there's no need for a curfew."

Resident assistants says they are continuing to follow FAMU's rules as well as enforce the rules on residents.

FSU opens Civic Center for vaccinations

Diamond Robinson

Staff writer

Florida State University opened its doors at the Donald L. Tucker Civic Center this week to distribute vaccinations in the arms of those in the community who were eligible.

Appointments were available Wednesday and Thursday, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The institution has successfully rolled out 4,800 vaccine shots overall to Leon County citizens. Approximately 700 individuals were successfully vaccinated on Wednesday and over 800 during Thursday's immunizations, according to Dr. James Zedaker, an associate dean at FSU's College of Medicine.

"My experience getting vaccinated today was great and very well organized. My husband and I didn't have to wait long. I hadn't had a flu-shot since 1973 because I've been fairly healthy. Now that I'm older I've decided to get the vaccine. It's better to get it than to not be protected at all," said Tallahassee resident Jeanette

McHugh.

Jordan King, a senior at FSU majoring in nursing, enjoyed a similar experience.

"I know there's a lot of misinformation going around, especially concerning side effects. I've gotten all my vaccinations and in the long run it's more safe for the body than the deadly virus that we're up against," King said.

Within the next few weeks, patients will be notified through email about when they will be able to set up their next appointment for their second dosage of the vaccine.

Typically, second doses are administered after three to four weeks depending on whether the individual has received the Moderna or Pfizer vaccine.

"Those people who receive their first dosage and do not come back for the second will be considered partially protected. The second dose is necessary to achieve the full protection. I think the bigger



Photo by Diamond Robinson

More than 1,500 citizens were vaccinated this week at FSU's Civic Center.

concern would be if someone misses that three week or four week date for their second appointment," Zedaker, who is also the director of special projects for health and emergency issues, said.

There were roughly 27 medical workers and faculty assisting patients at the Civic Center at any given time. Nurses, medical school students, university health services, law enforcement and parking services came together to facilitate vaccinations.

"It is so important to highlight how all of these different groups have come together to collaborate and to make sure that we get the county vaccinated. Not just in Florida, but here in Leon County as well. I know that FAMU is setting up a vaccine center and we really welcome that also," Zedaker said.

Lawson Center to be vaccination site

Chloe Moody

Staff writer

Florida A&M President Larry Robinson recently announced that the university will host a COVID-19 vaccination site at the Lawson Center that will be accessible to the community starting sometime this week.

The site will be operated by the Florida Division of Emergency Management and the Florida Department of Health. It will be able to administer up to 200 vaccines daily to people who are eligible. University and state officials said plans are being finalized and the kickoff date will be announced within the next few days.

FAMU director of Student Health Services Tanya Tatum said in the release that the goal for this site is to branch out to African Americans and other people of color.

"We want to reach out to the commu-

nity, which has been disproportionately affected by COVID-19," Tatum said.

"Right now, we have many Black and Hispanic individuals who have not had the vaccine."

Many older residents do not have access to computers or the Internet to register for COVID-19 vaccine appointments. Tatum says they plan to work with community partners to help underserved people get vaccinated.

"This is a targeted outreach," Tatum said. "This is how we're going to start reaching the underserved."

FAMU has hosted a COVID-19 testing site for the community since April 25, administering nearly 250,000 tests to date. Because FAMU enjoys a position of trust in the community, Robinson said hosting a vaccination site on campus makes sense.



Photo by Chloe Moody

The Lawson Center is going to become a vaccination site.

"We will be working to target a demographic that has been underrepresented because of a lack of access and lack of trust regarding the vaccine," Robinson said. "The FAMU site will help remedy these problems."

Robinson was among FAMU's eligible employees and students to receive the first dose at the university's Student Health Center in January. He is scheduled to receive the second dose this week.

"I want to set an example for others," Robinson said. "Let's hope that by doing this, I can convince a few more people to come and get vaccinated."

Tallahassee resident Clara Gaymon received both doses of the Moderna vaccine at Bond Community Clinic. She applauds FAMU for opening a community-based COVID-19 vaccination site.

"That will be great for a lot of people that live in the area and don't have transportation to get elsewhere," Gaymon said. "It looks like it's so hard to get scheduled at other places, so I think this is a good idea."

Virtual campaign week coming to a close

Nadia Wilson

Staff writer

It is campaign week at Florida A&M University, and the stakes are high for all candidates. Campaign season is a highly anticipated time during the Spring semester because of the work shown on campus. However, due to COVID-19, candidates are unable to showcase their campaigns physically, so creativity is required to reach their desired positions.

Candidates indulge in a friendly yet serious competition to become the next Mister and Miss FAMU, attendant of their respective class, Queen and King of Orange and Green, and to hold SGA positions. Students look forward to the creative content, challenges, giveaways and pageants every year.

The virtual campaign has allowed candidates to create fresh and new ideas. Senior industrial engineering student Nehemiah Fields can attest that although students are unable to see the candidates' work physically, the virtual campaign has



Photo courtesy of @Famuelections on Instagram

FAMU Spring Election Schedule.

helped showcase the power of innovation.

"I am not surprised at the candidates' creativity during COVID-19 because being that we all know we are in a pandemic, I expected the level of innovation to take that next step this year," Fields said. "I also believe that the creativity during Erika Johnson, Kimani Jackson and the 2020-2021 Royal Courts virtual reign has been a great influence for the current candidates."

It is not a secret that FAMU candidates always bring the heat with their graphics and distinctive campaigns. Students have become more creative with their incentives, such as allowing students the chance to win a free round-trip, free rent for a month, a free 1-year Amazon Prime membership, and more. According to junior business administration student Josh Brown, they have to continue implementing this creativity during their reign.

"The incentives are appealing to the

student body because candidates created them to be positive, interactive and engaging through social media and other various platforms," Brown said. "However, if they are doing this while campaigning and they are fortunate enough to receive a position, they have to do some of these initiatives while elected."

The candidates are not only appealing to the student body with their creativity but also their chivalry. According to sophomore biochemistry student Brianna Philome, due to COVID-19, some students are not financially stable, so the incentives and giveaways have impacted students' lives for the better.

"Many people are hurting financially right now, and many are losing jobs in light of the pandemic so the fact that candidates are fortunate enough to be in a position to help out their fellow Rattlers is amazing to see," Philome said. "Who

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Frenchtown mural pays tribute to Rosa Parks

Chelsea Arnett

Staff writer

It's no secret: murals make our neighborhoods beautiful.

Local artists are adding color to walls and streets that would otherwise go unnoticed. Buildings around Tallahassee have recently become more vibrant, and that's not because of the shifting seasons. Groups that aim to foster local creativity and involve the community have turned vacant walls into massive civic canvases, and local communities will have a lasting influence on the outcomes of their work.

Kollet Hardeman, an artist, creator, and streamer says she was excited to bring historic icon Rosa Parks to life, since she is a pivotal figure in both civil rights and Black history.

"I was hired to paint Ruth Bader Ginsburg, and the building had a second matching wall that could be utilized with



Rosa Parks mural by Kollet Hardeman Courtesy of Chelsea Arnett

another divine woman of power," Hardeman said. "With input from the Frenchtown community on which civil rights leader would be the best fitting, we agreed on none other than Rosa Parks. My only contribution after deciding collectively was, 'I would not paint Rosa Parks' 1956 mugshot,' because I didn't want to introduce Rosa Parks this way to the younger generation."

The vibrant mural painted last November reads a quote from Parks floating above her headshot, while being surrounded by multiple colors.

"You must never be fearful about what you are doing when it is right."

The quote from Parks is found in her new biography, "Rosa Parks: In Her Own Words," written by Susan Reyburn of the Library of Congress.

Zion Blakely, a student at Florida A&M University, says his father is a Frenchtown native, and the recent local art has become dear to him.

Rosa Parks mural by Kollet Hardeman Courtesy of Chelsea Arnett.

"It shows my roots. I feel like it's a part of my roots," Blakely said. "Rosa Parks is Black history, Frenchtown is Black history and automatically, I am Black history. This mural brings self-empowerment as an African-American, especially here in Tallahassee."

Jenesis Johnson, a student at Florida State University says Rosa Parks is such an inspiration to her.

"She is one of my favorite icons in the civil rights movement," Johnson said. "She did not move even when everyone told her to get up. She saw the bigger picture. Her not giving up her seat changed race relations forever."

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Florida lawmakers introduce bills to protect renters

Paulette Jordan

Staff writer

Two bills that address the growing crisis of COVID-related evictions have been filed by Florida Democratic lawmaker who are looking to assist renters impacted by the pandemic.

The bills are SB 926 and SB 412. Both were introduced by Senator Darryl Rouson, a St. Petersburg Democrat.

“Our state should be utilizing mediation to discuss options for tenants and landlords prior to the eviction proceeding,” Rouson said at a news conference.

The goal for both bills is to prevent landlords from refusing to rent to tenants adversely impacted by COVID-19.

SB 926 asks for independent mediation between landlords and tenants before eviction papers are processed by the court.

SB 412 helps to seal the records of anyone evicted from their home due to

COVID-related issues such as the loss of a job or reduced income.

“This issue about evictions existed before COVID but it has been exacerbated by COVID,” said Tim Dutton, executive director of the community group Unite Pinellas. “In Pinellas County alone, 11 families are evicted every day in court. Statewide, the number is 140 daily evictions filed in court.”

SB 142 is designed to address the disparity between evicted tenants and landlords. While only 10 percent of tenants usually have legal representation, about 80-90 percent of landlords hire a lawyer, according to Dutton.

In Miami, a total of 8,067 evictions [for residential and commercial properties] were filed from March 13, 2020, to Jan. 15, 2021, according to the Clerk of the Courts. An additional 5,146 residen-



Photo by Paulette Jordan

Gadsden County residents move out of their home.

tial-only evictions were filed from Sept. 1 to Jan. 15. A total of 2,259 writs of posses-

sion have been granted.

“Nationally, 16 million families are at risk of eviction,” Dutton said. “Florida’s share of that is about one million people.”

SB 926 was filed on Jan. 28 and on Feb. 4 it was referred to the Senate Judiciary Committee. The bills will be considered in Florida’s upcoming legislative session, which opens March 2.

“Once you have an eviction on your record, it is exceedingly difficult to find another landlord who will rent to you,” said Rep. Dianne Hart, D-Tampa. “This bill will seal your record and give you an opportunity to find a new home.”

When a resident being evicted contests the charges, they are required to deposit all monies owed into a court registry before a judge will hear the case.

Rep. Hart filed a companion bill — HB 657 — for eviction records.

Student leaders plan collaboration with College of Law

Chanelle Brown

Staff writer

Candidates are full of promises and big plans. Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University students can expect to find themselves on the receiving end of these each spring semester during campaign season. However, under the current pandemic and state of our country, implementing change that is visible to students in a primarily remote platform can be difficult.

This is the challenge that current FAMU student leaders are facing.

SGA President and Vice-President, Xavier McClinton and Carrington Whigham ran on the slogan “FAMU FIRST”. Among their platform points was “Advocacy First” which included their hope to improve the relationship between



Photo courtesy FAMU College of Law

the law school and the main campus.

“Our plans were to build a bridge be-

tween campuses, a lot of that tied around campus culture so homecoming, gradua-

tion and football games,” McClinton said. “Unfortunately, because of the pandemic, every one of those options has been closed for consideration.”

Despite the large setback the pandemic has created in original plans, some of which included busing students from the Orlando campus for football games, McClinton assured the administration have started to develop new ways to bridge the gap between both campuses.

Tia Wynn, SGA Attorney General shared her hopes of mentorship initiatives and recruitment.

“To me, a successful collaboration looks like students being more aware of the opportunities that exist at FAMU’s law

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How Tallahassee provides beauty on a budget

Alaijah Brown

Staff Writer

Yves Saint Laurent once said: “The most beautiful makeup of a woman is passion, but cosmetics are easier to buy.”

This wisdom has rung true for beauty gurus around the world, especially here in Tallahassee. Our beloved college town is home to a variety of nail technicians, lash technicians, hair stylists, makeup artists and more. The bustling beauty business here accommodates the local college students’ routine maintenance and budgets.

Dynasty Davis, a full-time student and resident assistant, was concerned about finding a business that would cater to her in a similar way as the treatments she received at home.

“Before I moved to Tallahassee, I was worried about finding a nail tech and hair stylist that I felt would be affordable and do good work. I didn’t want to drive home for services that are available here,” Davis said. “I feel like getting my nails and hair done is important to me, because it feeds my confidence and when I look good that’s a good presentation of myself.”

Manicures have become the ultimate attention grabber and one of the most convenient ways to treat yourself. A fun manicure can brighten your mood and boost your confidence, especially if it was designed in confidence. Nail tech Victoria Brown, owner of Valecia Nailed It and local student, likes to take risks with her jazzy designs.

“I can do all types of nails, and I am always up for a challenge,” Brown says. “My business is student budget friendly. I try to accommodate my target audience as much as possible.”

Brown’s services include short, medium, long and extra-long acrylic sets with prices starting at \$35.

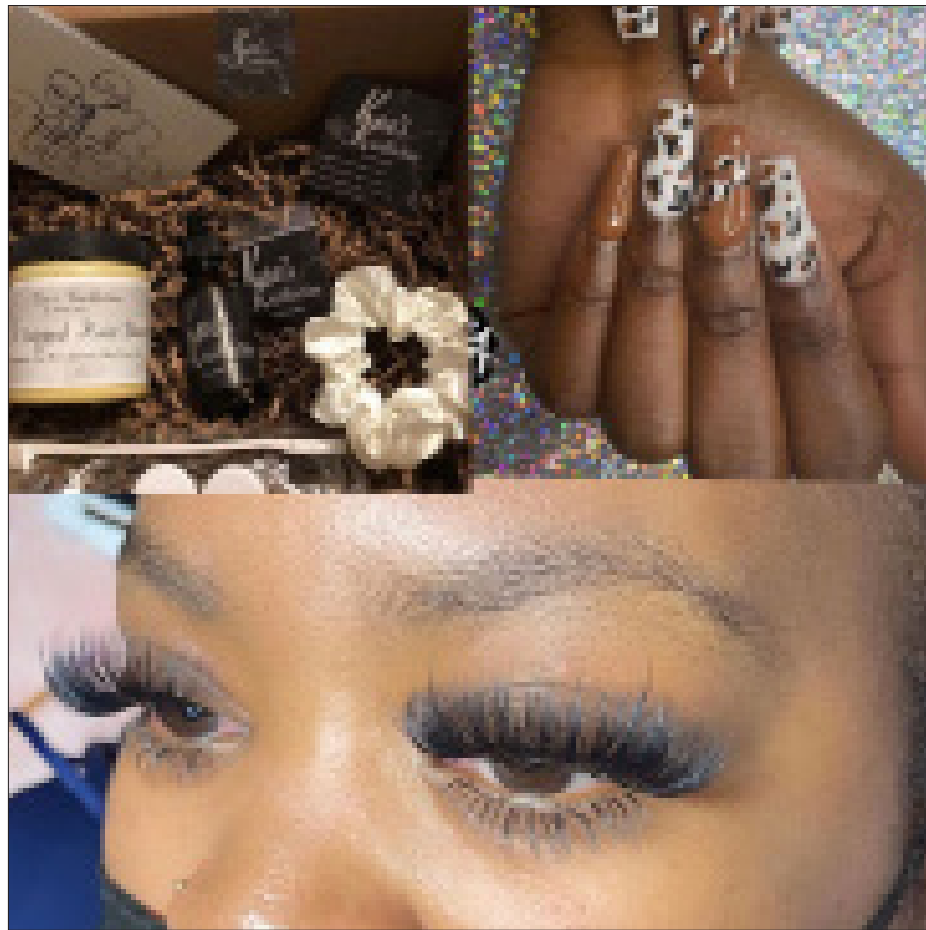


Photo courtesy Alaijah Brown

Local, Black women-owned businesses in Tallahassee.

Wispy eyelashes are sure to turn heads and make you feel like your most fabulous self. Shimere Johnson, a dental hygiene student, is the founder of Golden Beauty Bar in Tallahassee, and she knows how effective a beautiful lash set can be.

“I started this business so women can feel glamorous, feel chic and be themselves,” Johnson said.

Johnson’s business offers lash extension services at an affordable price for students with full sets starting at just \$60.

“I try to keep my prices affordable due to me being in a college town and knowing that the majority of my clients are students. I never want my prices to be too high where I wouldn’t even pay that much for the service,” Brown said.

Brown hopes to one day extend her business beyond lash extensions.

“I want to expand later on down the line and open my own salon and sell lash extension products for both lash technicians and clients,” Johnson said. “I just hope that Tallahassee residents will continue to support me and just show love.”

Since the pandemic initially closed the doors to many beauticians, we’ve begun to normalize self-care treatments at home to follow CDC guidelines. While relaxing at home, you can support a local business by purchasing their at-home beauty products.

Kevina Dixon, the founder of Kae’s Kurllection, identifies the importance of quality and affordability in skin care and hair care products.

“The purpose of my business is to offer quality hair and skincare products at an affordable rate to show that quality products don’t have to cost an arm and a leg,” Dixon said.

Dixon understands the importance of finding affordable products and incorporated that into her business.

“Being a college student myself, pricing was a huge factor in my business. Everyone deserves good products at amazing prices,” Dixon said.

Kae’s Kurllection offers hair products including oils, shampoos, hair butters and hair accessories. She also creates soaps, body scrubs and face masks. All of the products offered by Dixon are handmade to ensure that the quality is exceptional for customers.

“I don’t sell anything I wouldn’t use,” Dixon said. “I sit down and pay attention

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African spirituality in the spotlight

Daniel J. Newton

Staff Writer

Florida A&M University's chapter of the Ubuntu Coalition of Revolutionaries hosted an event Wednesday titled "Man Know Thyself: Intro to African Spirituality."

The event was announced on the organization's Instagram page with a description of what to expect: "The purpose of this event is to address the misconceptions of African spirituality, learn the basic principles of African spirituality and how it can positively impact us today."

The event was facilitated by Jeremiah Nichols, an African American studies student at FAMU, who posed questions for the guest speaker and also brought attention to questions that were posed by viewers in the chat.

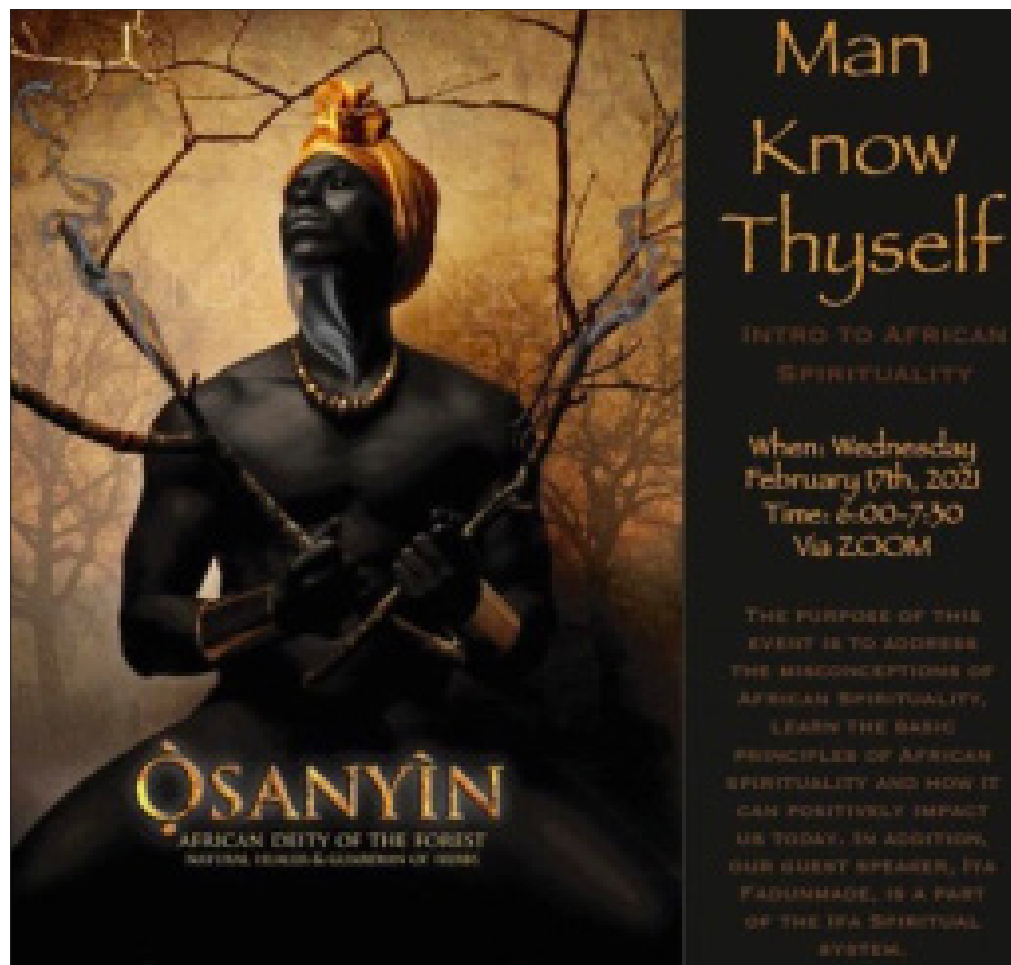
The guest speaker, whose spiritual name is Iya Fadunmade, is part of the Ifa spiritual system. She sounded eager to share with listeners a number of personal stories about her experiences in the practice as the discussion went on.

Fadunmade explained that the history and the culture brought her to the Ifa spiritual system. She explained that it was about understanding her personal identity and what she would have been practicing if Africans had never been separated from their homeland.

One of the questions posed by Nichols was, "What are some general misconceptions about African spirituality?"

Fadunmade responded by explaining that contrary to what the public may believe, they also worship one God and have a creation story similar to the one told in European religions. But they believe in lesser divinities that work with God, she added.

Fadunmade also said that many people think that African religions are like what is seen in television in places like New Orleans. Many people liken it to magic. She also feels that a lack of knowledge causes many people



Promotional flyer for the event.

Photo courtesy @ub.bun.tu on Instagram

to think that they worship a bad God.

As the event progressed, more of the beliefs of the Ifa spiritual system were discussed. Fadunmade explained the religious term, Ori, to one of the viewers who asked about it in the chat. She explained that Ori is your consciousness. Your Ori is with you at all times and directs your behavior.

Toward the end of the informational discussion, Nichols asked Fadunmade how people could learn more about the Ifa spiritual system and potentially become part of it. She said there are books about the practice and also offered herself as a resource.

"If we want to form our own virtual com-

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Peace Corps comes to FAMU

Gabrielle Hall

Staff writer

When you think of the Peace Corps, most students at FAMU think of traveling to a third-world country, volunteering their services and changing the lives of individuals. That vision is true, but there's so much more to this organization.

On Wednesday, the Peace Corps hosted a webinar called "Black American Experiences in Peace Corps" where Black students and alumni shared their experience with the Peace Corps.

The panelists included Chris Lins, recruiter for FAMU, Dani Arnwine, recruiter for FSU, Kyria Louis, Umelo Ugwoaba and Rosey Brown.

Each panelist shared their experiences of being abroad and what made them want to join the Peace Corps.

Ugwoaba, a third-year clinical psychol-



Photo courtesy FAMU Career and Professional Development Center
Flyer for "Black Americans in Peace Corps" webinar."

ogy student, said he wanted to gain more worldly lessons in his field.

"I want to be able to help people of different cultures and creeds so I felt

like joining the Peace Corps would help me achieve just that," Ugwoaba said. "I gained a different perspective on how health is perceived on a global scale."

Ugwoaba says serving in Indonesia made him want to travel more.

The discussion topics included recruitment, preparation, location placement and roles they took on, most of them being teaching positions.

Arnwine, a recruiter for FSU, was placed in Malawi, or the "warm heart of Africa," for three years. While there she lived with a host family and taught math and English.

"This program really helped me discover if I wanted to be a teacher or not," Arnwine said. "It also opened my eyes to a lot of wonderful people outside the U.S."

One of the audience members asked a prime question: "Were any of you dis-

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Video Game Club still going amid pandemic

Chloe Moody

Staff writer

Many clubs and organizations at Florida A&M University have had to host meetings and events virtually due to the coronavirus pandemic. One club has been able to stay connected despite the challenges thrown at them.

The Video Game Club gets students engaged in gaming through a variety of events and opportunities.

"The Video Game Club was formed in 2013 by students in computer science," adviser Jason Black said. "It is a way to get students of all majors interested and excited about gaming through interactive tournaments and game nights, as well as seminars and workshops on design, development, internships and career opportunities in the field. Since that time, the club has grown to include membership in the MEAC E-Sports League, HBCU E-Sports League and the Black Collegiate Gaming Association."



Photo Courtesy FAMU Video Game Club
FAMU's Video Game Club was formed in 2013 by computer science students.

Since its founding, the Video Game Club has held more than 20 tournaments and workshops. They plan to increase visibility and membership on campus through activities and alliances with national gaming associations.

Because of the coronavirus pandemic, Black says they have been hosting virtual meetings and events since spring 2020.

"The Video Game Club meets formally once per month (every third Friday)," Black said. "Additional meetings occur with the executive board between meetings. All meetings and events are virtual and held on Zoom."

Members have been able to use online platforms such as Discord and Twitch as ways to stay connected.

"The club has a Discord Channel used for additional planning, communication and live social events, as well as a Twitch channel for the same purpose," Black said.

Like other clubs, the Video Game Club has dealt with the challenge of adding new members after losing some to graduation.

"The effect of the pandemic has been quite interesting," Black said. "While it has not stopped the club from holding events, it has made it difficult to recruit and process new members. Thankfully, we have been able to keep a steady core set of students and have maintained, and even increased our momentum."

FAMU student Nana Ama Marfo has been an active member of the Video Game Club for three years. Her favorite thing about being a member is the positive environment and passion for playing video games.

"What I do like most about being a member of the club is how close and FAMU-oriented it is," Marfo said. "They're welcoming to everyone. I do like

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Let's celebrate Black history every month

Cirsten Jones

Staff writer

Every year during the month of February — Black History Month — we pay homage to the lineage of our ancestors, our fallen heroes and the generations that continue to pave the way for the Black community.

That's all well and good. But Black history isn't meant to be incorporated into a span of only 29 days.

The Black community deserves its flowers during, before and after Black History Month.

Black History Month is much more than a museum of facts that our ancestors and family members endured in their waking life, but a line of progression that our people — Black people — were subjected to at the hands of a wretched white man.

The handprints of my ancestors are rooted deeply into the core of America, in which we specifically — physically — built

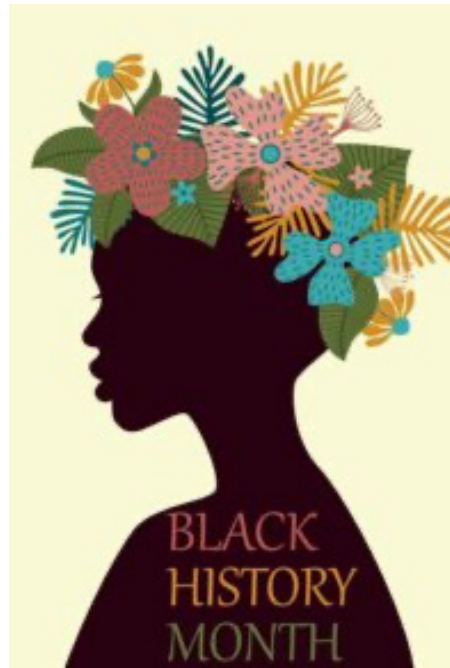


Photo courtesy Vectezy

with our bare hands. We were slaves in a free world. We had no rights, we had no access to education.

We are America, even as a race of minorities.

Black history goes beyond the suffering that the Black community has been exposed to. Yes, during February it becomes a teaching of admiration and respect among the younger generations that have been versed to only see color as a competition rather than a partnership.

Respect the race that gave you — our Caucasian counterparts — your flowers. Specifically, the exact same race that has and continues to give your children's children a legacy to exploit.

Although this tradition began in 1926, by Dr. Carter G. Woodson, a century later the Black community still continues to confront racism, institutionalized enslavement and a biased governmental job

force. We may have come a long way, but we have a long way to go.

As part of the stamp of young Black adults, seeking an elongated form of validation that my bloodlines carried as Americans — America — though requires its accolades not just one month a year but 12 months of the year.

Let's create a world that encompasses the solidarity of the individuals before us who live outside of the realm of history that as adolescents we grew up repeatedly being reminded of.

Incorporate Black excellence in lessons, not just the black and white narrative of what slavery entailed and what media plasters the Black community as. Speak on the Black community in high places.

Speak among the Black community with flowers firmly placed in you hand — every day and every year.

Review: 'Malcolm & Marie' offers lessons in relationships

Shan'T-Erica Pugh

Staff writer

"Malcolm & Marie" is a recent Netflix original film that stars actress Zendaya and actor John David Washington. Zendaya and Washington were also the film's producers.

The black-and-white movie revolves around the effects of the culture of media, music, and film in a relationship.

The film's beginning portrays the couple from the outside looking in, as the camera dollies back and forth outside.

As the movie starts, there is an upbeat song that signifies Malcolm's excitement as he has had a great night at his movie premiere.

This romantic film takes to play in one sitting the house of Malcolm and Marie. The beginning of the movie starts with a long monologue by Malcolm.

An argument surrounds the movie after Malcolm did not thank his girlfriend,

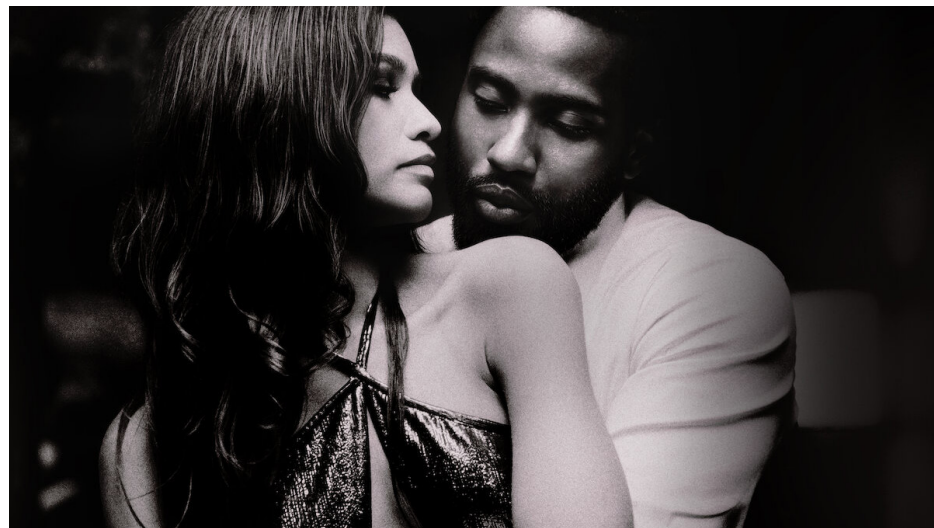


Photo courtesy Netflix

Marie, in the speech that he gave at his

movie premiere. Marie was upset because

she felt that her boyfriend, Malcolm, had not recognized her.

This film gives important reminders to its audience about the deeper part of relationships that happen behind closed doors. I believe that's why it was filmed entirely in the comfort of the couple's house because the movie directors were telling the story of a relationship behind doors — the relationship that no one else sees.

As the film progresses, the argument shows the laughter behind a relationship as well. It doesn't only portray the darkest moments of the connection but also the happy times.

The movie explores the lack of jealousy in the relationship of a Black couple.

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The trans community deserves its own ‘Moonlight’ story

Devin Myers
Copy Desk Editor

“Moonlight,” directed by Miami native and Florida State University graduate Barry Jenkins, told the story of Chiron, a timid Black boy from Liberty City, Florida who experiences the consequences of his sexuality throughout three stages of his life. The film released in 2016 to universal applause, and inspired a generation of Black queer youth—myself included—in ways that no film before it ever could.

For the first time, people like my younger self saw an image of themselves on the silver screen and on the grand stage of The Oscars, where it won the award for Best Picture in 2017. I still vividly recall how ecstatic I felt while watching the ceremony, knowing that Black queer people were finally being represented in Hollywood.



“Moonlight” won an Oscar for Best Picture in 2017

Photo courtesy A24

Over four years have passed since the film’s release, and while none have quite captured the same magic as “Moonlight,”

there has since been a notable increase in films centered around gay characters and their journeys through self-discovery.

However, this rise in representation has yet to be extended to the transgender community, a group that remains vastly misunderstood by people on the outside. Considering how impactful Moonlight was to its viewers, a coming-of-age story highlighting the experiences of a trans person progressing through their transition could bring a much better understanding for viewers of all kinds.

In her article titled “What ‘Moonlight’s’ Best Picture Win Means To Me as a Transgender Woman,” film critic Danielle Solzman writes that “The win gives me hope that any screenplay I write has a legitimate chance now at winning best picture at the Oscars. A film with trans-

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Seniors get vaccine before essential workers

Haleigh Porter
Staff writer

The rollout of the COVID-19 vaccine in Florida has been shaky at best. Gov. Ron DeSantis has emphatically underscored the sense of urgency the state of Florida has had with only vaccinating its seniors 65 years old and older.

Unfortunately, this decision has been devastating for many Florida residents. Thousands of essential workers continue to search for ways to get vaccinated, even if it means circumventing the system.

After putting their lives on the line every day for the past year, many are asking why they would not be among the first to receive the COVID vaccine.

“At my workplace things are exceptionally bad. The store’s managers, owners, etcetera aren’t enforcing the mask policy sign at all. And the other day I counted that I had interacted with at least 60

non-masked individuals. Only three of my coworkers correctly and consistently wear masks.” Hannah Chism said. Chism is an essential worker at Ace Hardware.

“Essential workers and teachers in Florida haven’t even been able to sign up for the vaccine queue. But according to Dr. [Anthony] Fauci we’re about to go into open season? This is governmental failure,” she added.

Chism lives with her mother, a public high school teacher who, like her daughter, has not been able to receive the vaccine. Chism says that while students wearing masks hasn’t been an issue in her mother’s school, teachers are left in the dark when it comes to their own health and safety.

“Because of HIPAA, [teachers] aren’t allowed to know if their students have



Photo courtesy Getty Images

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We are 'white' where we left off

Jahmai' Barrow

Staff writer



Photo courtesy: Emma Satin

George Floyd. Rayshard Brooks. Elijah McClain. Breonna Taylor. Arnaud Arbery. The list goes on.

The Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement has been galvanized by today's social justice movement. Now is not the time for the most privileged to ignore conflict so that they can continue to escape confrontation, as tensions intensify within our communities.

An "ally" is a dominant group that works to end injustice by supporting and advocating for people of marginalized and oppressed communities. While this philosophy may sound admirable, in essence, it has only contributed to injustice.

The silence and negligence of "well-meaning white people" — who may have not committed the criminal act, but are guilty of turning the other cheek — have cost so many black lives.

Unconsciously and subconsciously, white people promote bigotry to the extent that the mere act of announcing "Black Lives Matter" is seen as a political stance rather than an undeniable fact.

On June 2, 2020, #BlackoutTuesday was the most direct and public display of

this global "call to action." About 14.6 million black squares flooded Instagram feeds as genuine commitments and calls to action were overshadowed by a shallow social media trend.

But when opportunities arise where companies can pledge to play a pivotal role in the fight against systemic racism, they often tend to hide in the shadows.

Fashion Nova, for instance, only joined in the #BLM conversation after mounds of public criticism. They provided declarations revealing their contributions to the Know Your Rights Camps, Black Lives Matter, and the NAACP Security and Education funds.

When announcing their donations Fashion Nova said, "our actions speak louder than our words."

However, it does not seem like their thoughts, let alone their actions, have spoken in the months following this announcement. If you look at Fashion Nova's Instagram account and its 600+ photos since June 2, there has not been a single mention of anti-Black racism.

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CAN YOU NAME THESE BLACK ICONS



Bragg renovations set to begin

Aiyana Ishmael

Staff writer

After receiving \$10 million from the Blueprint Intergovernmental Agency board, Florida A&M University is set to begin renovating Bragg Memorial Stadium at the end of the month.

After the board approved this monumental backing in mid-September, FAMU is now ready to begin construction in two phases. President Larry Robinson told FAMUnews.com that these renovations will continue to be a financial benefit to the Tallahassee community.

“The return on this investment will include positive economic outcomes for citizens on Tallahassee’s south side; excitement for persons who attend athletic events in the venue; and inspiration and pride for those who understand the cultural significance of all that occurs inside and around the stadium,” Robinson said.

For Kortne Gosha, vice president and director of athletics, the renovations will be the beginning of a new experience for Rattler fans.

“We’re excited to be able to address the life and safety issues that needed to be addressed,” Gosha said. “We want to create an environment and experience for all our fans, students and anyone who steps foot into Bragg Stadium. Having new bleacher systems and some of the upgrades that will begin later will make it second to none.”

Phase 1 of the Bragg Memorial Stadium renovations will focus heavily on the safety issues in the stadium. Gosha said these fixes will be complete by the 2021 football season.

Phase 2 will cover the remaining issues and upgrades that are scheduled to take place, but these renovations are set to begin at the conclusion of the football season.

“I think these renovations will boost fan turnout and bring out more students to home games,” Nikyya Smith, the Student Government Association athletics liaison, said. “I believe this will also help

in recruiting by having a new facility to offer the players and fans.”

She said the renovations to the bleachers and restrooms will make an impact on student life, being that FAMU students make up a majority of fans at the games.

“I think students just like myself are most excited to get back to cheering on our Rattlers in every sport in the fall and hopefully are able to do that in the crowd at home games,” she added.

Gosha admits while he is excited for all the renovations to come, he can’t wait to see the upgrades made to the press box.

“I’m excited about all of it, but in particular the press box,” Gosha said. “Usually when people look at a football



Photo courtesy Tallahassee Democrat



Photo courtesy FAMU Athletics

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McCollum ready to lead Rattlers

Vincent Jones Jr.

Staff writer

The baseball season is quickly approaching, and one of the Rattlers' strengths is their pitching staff. With depth in arms FAMU is expect to repeat as MEAC champions.

For this to happen, Jeremiah McCollum is a determining factor.

Going in to his third season on the mound, McCollum has maintained a similar level of success while competing for the Rattlers. Before the 2020 season was terminated due to COVID, McCollum had a 1.42 earned run average through five games with 11 strike outs. In 2019 he was named HBCU Pitcher of the Year and First-Team All-Conference.

"The main goal is to win my second MEAC championship and to also become the first Rattler in five years to be drafted by Major League Baseball," McCollum, a native of Houston, said.

"In our upcoming schedule we play the No. 1 team in the country, the Florida Gators, and Stetson University. They're a top 30 team in the nation. I want to perform well but my biggest goal is to beat them."

Playing in the MLB has always been McCollum's dream. This year he has a chance for those dreams to come true. Seeing many of his peers make it into professional sports has pushed him to stay driven. His father played in the NFL, which allows McCollum to have an inside perspective on what it takes to make it into professional sports.

"Jeremiah always had the ability to be a leader, whether it was on the field or in the classroom," said Aquental McCollum, his father. "I truly believe that it is his leadership that allows him to go above and beyond. Me being his parent and coaching him for a little bit I used to tell him you have to have complete knowledge of the game. He now has to be an assassin and can't let anything stand in his way."

McCollum isn't new to being a star. While in high school he was named a 2017 Perfect Game Preseason All-American. While playing at one of the best high school programs in the country, Kempner



Photo courtesy Tallahassee Democrat

High School, he dominated his junior and senior years. The Kempner Cougars were ranked No. 4 in the state of Texas and top 50 in the nation during McCollum's senior year.

"I found out about Jeremiah around the time I signed to FAMU during my senior year," said Rob Robinson Jr., a shortstop for FAMU. "When I first met him he was funny but I could tell he was a leader. Once I found out he pitched I was amazed by the fact that he did that and played the outfield."

With two years of eligibility McCollum is going to do whatever needs to be done to accomplish his goals. The journalism major plans to graduate in December. Alongside his athletic career McCollum plans on becoming a TV sports analyst covering all major sports.



Photo courtesy Tallahassee Democrat