

Is Coleman safe?

Beyla Walker

Staff Writer

Safety on Florida A&M University's campus is a huge topic that many students voice concerns about. One particular issue that comes up time and again is the lack of protective measures at Coleman Library.

The library is a place where students go to study and convene, most of the time during late-night hours. Many students say they don't feel safe at Coleman because there is no way to monitor who goes in and out of the library – and it has many entrances.

Cierra James, a junior sociology major, shared how she feels about the issue.

"It's crazy how we have come this long without better protection at the library," James said. "The issue has come up in many conversations and we have yet to see anything done about it."

James noted that at her universities have been employing safety precautions for years.

"I have always wondered why anyone can just walk into the library, no means of identification, nothing," James said. "It isn't the same at FSU's libraries."

At Florida State University, Strozier library has many ways to keep students safe. For example, students have to present identification to enter the library. There is also a screening to prevent firearms from being brought into the library.

The associate dean of libraries at FAMU, Brenda Wright, insisted that safety measures are in place at Coleman.

"We have security guards in place, they're supposed to be checking student IDs after 11 p.m.," Wright said.



She added that the university is in the process of installing protective measures similar to those at FSU.

Along with there being no way to identify who is in the library, there is also no way to identify if a person has brought a weapon into Coleman.

Students have said that it is imperative that FAMU makes the wellbeing of its students and faculty a top priority to prevent tragedies such as the fatal shooting that occurred at Grambling State University on Sunday.

According to the FAMU police department's website, "The members of The Department of Campus Safety & Security are committed to providing the students, visitors, faculty and staff of FAMU an environment where people can live, visit and work safely."



Photo courtesy Beyla Walker

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Many still refuse to be vaccinated

Tenisha Ferron

Staff Writer



Photo courtesy [Reuters.com](#)

A woman holding a small “COVID-19 vaccine” vial and medical syringe.

Just 63 percent of the nation’s residents have received at least the first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. However, those who remain unvaccinated still leave a huge impact.

There has been a negative stigma around those who are not vaccinated and still choose not to, like professional basketball star Kyrie Irving. According to ESPN, he is currently not able to play in home games for his team, the Brooklyn Nets, and will not until he becomes fully vaccinated. While he still chooses not to do so, he is also said to be looked down on by teammates, coaches and spectators as letting the team down.

In Leon County, there are college students who are unvaccinated — the

percentage is not known — and there are different beliefs as to why this vaccine may not work, some disreputable.

Some students say that the vaccine can create other variants, but the CDC says this is a myth. New variants occur because the virus that causes COVID-19 goes through natural mutation, like any other virus.

Another myth is that the vaccine contains microchips. The CDC also insists that the vaccine is not administered to track movement, but it works by stimulating the immune system to produce antibodies. There are many other beliefs that are constantly combatted socially.

The CDC also says those who should not get vaccinated are people who have had an allergic reaction after receiving

the first dose, or an allergic reaction that would need to be treated with an EpiPen.

Tallahassee resident Jasiah Hayes says he chooses to not get the vaccine because of the chance of still getting COVID-19.

“There is still a high chance of surviving COVID, so there’s no reason of getting the vaccine,” he said. “If I do get vaccinated, there’s still a chance of you getting COVID and passing it on to someone else, if it’s deadly or not, you are still catching it.”

While one can still catch COVID-19 after being vaccinated, the chances are greatly reduced, meaning one could avoid that trip to the hospital, according to the CDC and the World Health Organization.

There is also no set time on how long

the vaccine could last once taken.

Some anti-vaxxers have spread misinformation about the vaccine on social media, which leads to some deciding to not get vaccinated.

FAMU student Yimyra Russell says she has received the vaccine because of the health issues that potentially come with contracting COVID. She noted that at FAMU, if you take the vaccine you can get money or a reward.

“I do not like how it is being forced on us to take the vaccine, if we don’t take it, we can lose our job,” she said. “If you do take it, some places offer a free handgun, gift cards and food. That’s so degrading to our people.”

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A push to rename Tallahassee courthouse

Jasmine Butler

News Editor

The federal courthouse in Tallahassee could be named after Joseph Hatchett, the first Black state supreme court justice, in an effort to commemorate and honor his work and legacy.

The bill to change the name was introduced in Congress by U.S. Rep. Al Lawson of Tallahassee. If passed, the new name of the courthouse will be Judge Joseph Woodrow Hatchett U.S. Courthouse.

Hatchett was a United States Circuit Judge of the United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit. He later served on the Florida Supreme Court, and on the United States Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit.

Hatchett was a 1954 graduate of Florida A&M University and a 1959 graduate of the Howard University law school.

For Dana Williams, a student at FAMU, the possible change is monumental and fitting for the times.

“Naming the courthouse after Hatchett

is such a timely movement. It will not only serve as an inspiration for the Tallahassee community but for FAMU and HBCU students as well,” Williams said.

She says that his legacy lives on beyond Tallahassee.

“My grandfather was inspired by his journey and that helped me to continue on such a great path to law,” she said. “In the 11th grade for my Black History Month project, I had to choose someone that wasn’t family that inspired my career path and weirdly enough, I chose Hatchett. So, to see that the courthouse could possibly be named after him is amazing.”

In a statement, Lawson said Hatchett “continue(s) to inspire the people of Florida.” Lawson is the sponsor of the bill to rename the courthouse and has the support of all of Florida’s members of the House of Representatives, both Democrats and Republicans, during a time when the two parties can agree on almost



Photo courtesy tallahassee.com

The federal courthouse in Tallahassee.

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Flu season begins as COVID continues

Skhai Bennett

Staff writer



Photo courtesy tallahassee.com

Student Health Services is located in the CASS building

Cold weather is on the horizon for the city of Tallahassee, which means students and faculty are prone to get sick.

Flu-like symptoms may prompt Rattlers to get tested for COVID-19. As of Monday, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports 236 COVID-19 cases per 7-day metrics in Leon County. How will campus officials and professors respond when students test positive?

Professor K. Johnson, who teaches an introduction to literature course at Florida A&M, believes students’ health should be prioritized.

“I prioritize your health first. We can always catch up with schoolwork later. Don’t think about the workload, just worry about getting healthy first before

returning to class,”

If a student does test positive, FAMU health officials want students to continue following the same COVID guidelines that were set at the start of the pandemic in March 2020.

“As far as COVID-19 protocol, our response doesn’t change once a student tests positive, even during flu season. Typically, if you get the flu, you’ll be out for 5-7 days. If you test positive for COVID, however, you must follow a 10-day isolation period. We ask students to complete the 10-day isolation period, and communicate with the contact traces in the meantime,” said Tanya Tatum, director of

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Growing field vying to take on DeSantis

Tracy Noze
Staff writer

State Sen. Annette Taddeo will be hosting a Florida governor campaign kickoff fundraiser at 6 p.m. Thursday.

Taddeo joins nine others, including former Gov. Charlie Crist and Agriculture Commissioner Nikki Fried, vying for the Democratic Party nomination and hoping to topple Republican Gov. Ron DeSantis.

Taddeo announced last week that she was entering the state's governor race during a Tallahassee press conference on Oct. 18.

Taddeo, from Miami, serves as a member of the Florida Senate from the 40th District. She was Crist's running mate in the 2014 Florida governor race, and she became the first Latina Democrat elected to the Florida Senate.

Ahead of Florida's Aug. 23, 2022 primary election, Taddeo told the Tampa Bay Times the two major themes of her campaign would be Medicaid expansion in Florida and addressing climate change.

Fried previously worked as a public

defender and lobbyist for medical marijuana. She won her seat as Agriculture Commissioner in 2018 as Florida's only statewide elected Democrat.

Fried said she is running on "the people's platform." She wants to bring more jobs to Florida, adding there are issues to focus on before that can happen.

She wants to make sure the people of Florida are first, building from the bottom up. Fried hopes to be the first Democrat to win the governor's race since Lawton Chiles' 1994 reelection. Fried said she consistently supports Democratic issues.

"I've been fighting for these issues my entire life," Fried said. "I stay true to who I am."

Crist won a seat in the Florida Senate in 1992, serving for six years. On Nov. 7, 2006, he was elected as the state's 44th governor, running as a Republican. During his term, he administered federal stimulus money to help pay Florida public school teachers.



Photo courtesy tallahassee.com

The Governor's Mansion on North Adams Street.

Crist unsuccessfully ran for Florida governor in 2014. Currently, Crist represents the 13th Congressional District in U.S. Congress as a Democrat.

On Monday, Oct. 11, Crist shared parts

of his "Justice for All" campaign. The reform plan includes restoring voting rights and reducing gun violence.

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Tallahassee group home's COVID-19 battle

Tashai Smalls
Staff writer

As the COVID-19 pandemic lingers in Leon County, altering the livelihood of many, Tallahassee's most vulnerable citizens feel the wrath of its effects. Local group homes were forced to adjust to life during the midst of the pandemic to adhere to federal COVID-19 regulations.

"The safety of my clients comes first during these unstable times," said Nathalie Thomas, owner of The Thomas House. "I serve amazing people who are intellectually and physically disabled. Some of my clients are unaware of the current pandemic and it is my job to protect them. They have had to adjust to life indoors which is challenging for some of them. However, their survival is what is imperative in these times."

According to the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC), patients with intellectual and physical disabilities are six times more likely to die from COVID-19 than other people. The coronavirus has a major impact on people with preexisting conditions and people with intellectual and developmental disabilities have a higher prevalence of preexisting conditions.

Clients who live at group homes often rely on programs that teach them basic life skills and get them connected with the outside. Some clients simply relied on basic activities such as walking around in a park to connect with others.

However, after the onset of COVID-19, many clients have been unable to have

those connections.

"I really missed being able to go to Lake Ella and see the birds swim in the lake," said April McMahon, a client at The Thomas House. "Now because of the pandemic, I feel like I am inside of the house more than usual. I like being outside because it helps me feel better when I am depressed. But, I understand that it is safer inside the house and I am scared to die."

Gaming and television consumption have increased among clients as a result of the pandemic.

"The clients used to rely on programs and visitation to get out of the house," said Linda Scott, a caretaker at The Thomas House. "Now they are so bored

they watch TV a lot. I try to keep them engaged with games and fun activities I can think of. We serve some clients that have behavioral problems and if their mind is not occupied they often exhibit bad behaviors. I do my best to cope with the current times and I am proud to say that none of the clients I serve have caught COVID to my knowledge."

Unlike The Thomas House, other group homes in Tallahassee have not been lucky during the pandemic. Tallahassee Developmental Center (TDC) has reported at least 80 positive cases among staff and residents.

Residents in local group homes age 12 and up are now eligible to get vaccinated

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This Rattler is also a single father

Anandah Brandy
Lifestyles Editor

Ke’Voughn Manning defies stereotypes. How you ask: the Florida A&M senior is a single father.

“I try to spend most of my life and my activities around [my daughter],” Manning said. “She pretty much goes everywhere I go. She’s my life and I love her.”

A fourth-year criminal justice major from Pensacola, Manning transferred to FAMU on a track and field scholarship in 2018. He was recruited out of high school to run track at Allen County Community College in Kansas. He then received a scholarship for track at FAMU.

He chose FAMU mainly because he had learned he was about to be a father.

The mother of his daughter, Ne’veah Hollins, was living in Arkansas.

Manning became his daughter’s sole caregiver when she was 4 months old. Manning became Ne’veah’s primary caretaker after her mother, who was also a track athlete, enrolled in a university in Hawaii, her home state.

Ne’veah has been living with Manning in Tallahassee ever since. This was his biggest blessing, he said. “I am like honored,” Manning said. “When her mother first told me that she wanted me to get her, it was a dream come true.”

Manning had missed the first four months of Ne’Veah’s life because her

mother was living out of state attending another college. Manning was already enrolled at FAMU. He was scheduled to hold Ne’Veah in his care for only his second semester at FAMU, but the 3-year old has been living with her father ever since.

He’s set to graduate in April.

Manning has said that raising a daughter while being a student has its ups and downs, but the more he shares his life with professors, the more they understand the young father’s situation. There are days when Manning may have to bring Ne’veah into his exam rooms because he needs to hold her, or nights where he’s studying in the library, and he may be

simultaneously rocking his daughter to sleep.

He showcases his super-dad skills while balancing his academics.

Manning has met many loyal people around him who are able to assist him with the caretaking of Ne’Veah if he’s in need. There are a few trusted women on campus who Ne’Veah already knows well and one who’s an aunt figure in her life. They call her “Little Miss FAMU,” as she is also enrolled in FAMU Child Development Center. Both father and daughter are Rattlers.

Quya Thomas, a junior nursing major,

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Photo courtesy Manning

Ke’Voughn Manning, with his daughter Ne’veah Hollins on the football field.

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Market Monday sets the tone for ths year's homecoming

Jasmine Butler

News Editor

Student entrepreneurs and local vendors set up booths and spread their tables for hours of business on the Quadrangle of FAMU's campus Monday. The event started at noon.

Student entrepreneur Joanna Ozia is the owner of Lovely Beads N Things. She sells waist beads, bracelets, anklets, purses and earrings. Monday, she also had body butters and face masks from her mother's business.

Ozia says that the support she received from her peers was amazing.

"I definitely received a lot of support from my fellow rattlers. It was a successful event for me," she said.

Robert Tucker, a student at FAMU, stopped by the event to network and left with bags filled with items. Tucker says that it was good to see his classmates flourish.

"I had to come and support my friends. Seeing young people like me running businesses and being their own boss is an inspiration. It feels good to show my support to them. I can't wait to see more events like this in the future," Tucker said.

Monday's event was one of the first to kick off FAMU's homecoming week. It was an opportunity for students to showcase their businesses and make sales. The announcements for vendors



Photo courtesy London Averyhart

London Averyhart booth.

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Freshmen struggle to learn about clubs

Kaylah Burns

Staff writer

Some of FAMU's first-year students have been struggling to get involved in on-campus organizations and take part in various activities.

Over the past few weeks student organizations at FAMU have been inviting students to their interest meetings to give them more information on what their club is about. Many organizations are looking for students new to FAMU to get involved outside of their academics.

Although some first-year students are looking to get involved, they are struggling to find where to look for their interests.

First-year psychology major Ryan Oden said he was interested in joining the Chicago Club as well as Big Brother Little Brother. However, he has only heard of these organizations through his peers.

"I heard of the Chicago Club through other people I met from Chicago," Oden said. "But FAMU itself, I don't think they do a good job sharing that information."

Another first-year student, Destiny Rhodes, felt similarly about FAMU's not informing new students of potential clubs they could join. Rhodes said her main interest right now is dance, since

she grew up taking lessons. However, despite the fact that FAMU has many dance clubs, she has heard little information on them since arriving on campus more than six weeks ago.

"I've been excited to get involved because I'm ready to make some friends," Rhodes said. "I just haven't heard of anything from the school. I remember my RA telling me that there would be a lot of dance crews for me to choose from, and that got me kind of excited. But after that I didn't hear much."

Although Oden and Rhodes have been frustrated by FAMU's

effort in helping them make the transition to student organizations, they along with first-year pre-med major Kiana Reign found help through social media. Each student said they had to turn to Instagram, specifically, to look through FAMU hashtags in hopes of finding the page of a club they might like.

Reign said that without Instagram she would have never found out about the interest meeting for the Minority Association of Pre-Medical Students.

"I was getting real frustrated

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Masks pose challenge for hearing impaired students and others

Lyneisha Lewis

Staff writer

With many businesses and universities still recommending wearing masks to fight against COVID, hearing-impaired students have to cope and adjust with the mask recommendations.

Face masks reduce the amplitude of sound and cause it to become somewhat garbled, cutting off one form of communication for those individuals. Speech reading, also known as lip reading, is another way of communicating for hearing-impaired individuals — alongside sign language. Masks make lip reading impossible.

Kayla Iszard, a student at Florida A&M, deals with frustration when she forgets to turn on her hearing aid.

“It’s frustrating when people walk up to me and just assume I can hear and understand them when their mask is on, words sound muffled, and reading lips

is difficult when a mask is covering their lips,” Iszard said.

Sometimes, people realize she isn’t able to hear, so they slightly pull down their mask and start reiterating their words, allowing Iszard to read their lips.

Appreciating the gesture of pulling down their mask, she feels frustrated because this puts people at risk of catching COVID for a quick moment. The Center for Disability Access and Resources (CeDAR) at Florida A&M University provides academic support to students who identify with a disability.

More than 800 students are registered with CeDAR. They are provided with academic accommodations including extra time on tests and quizzes and alternate test sites for those who need fewer distractions. Other services include recorded lectures, copies of power points, reserved



Photo courtesy: Lyneisha Lewis

More than 800 FAMU students are registered with CeDAR.

seating accessible for them, all based on what CeDAR students’ disabilities are and how it impacts them.

Deborah Sullivan, CeDAR’s director,

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Tarot a growing tool used for spirituality

Kendyll Lurry

Staff writer

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been a surge of interest in astrology — more specifically, tarot. Fueled by Instagram meme accounts, venture capital-backed astrology apps like Co-Star, or the live card readings on Tik Tok’s “For You” page, more and more young adults are becoming more accepting of and interested in Western Astrology and seeking new sources of guidance through new forms of practices such as tarot.

Tarot is the practice of divining wisdom and guidance through a specific spread of tarot cards. It is to gain insight into the past, present, or future.

Weslyn Rae Newburn is the manager of Stone Age, a metaphysical shop located

at 708 N. Monroe St. in Tallahassee. She has been with the shop for nearly eight years and has more than fifteen years of experience with cartomancy (fortune-telling).

“Tarot is an excellent tool that can be used by virtually anyone,” Newburn said. “It is not connected to any one religion and can be manipulated to suit a person’s own religion or spiritual path. Some people use it for insight, as a way to connect with their subconscious mind. Others use it to connect with their guides or see possible futures. I think everyone can benefit from tarot reading regardless of how they use it. It provides a way to work through the problems that we face on a regular basis by offering a new perspective that

we may have otherwise overlooked.”

Stone Age offers tarot supplies including tarot and oracle card decks.

“Stone Age has been in business for over 25 years,” she said. “We are an independent, family owned, local business. I’m proud of our extensive deck selection. We have the largest collection of decks in town ranging from new publications, traditional decks, and indie published decks.”

Stone Age will be offering an in-store tarot class Nov. 14th at 11 a.m.. The class will be free for everyone and will cover what cartomancy (the art of divination using cards) is, misconceptions of tarot and oracle readings, the differences between types of card decks, and ways to teach

yourself how to read cards. For updated information visit their website www.shopstoneage.com or follow them on Instagram, @stoneagetallahassee.

While tarot assists as a spiritual tool for guidance, it is not the answer to your break from religion. Tarot is both non-denominational and multi-denominational. It is open to people of any Christian belief or having multiple religious beliefs. It can develop and clarify your understanding of the spiritual path you follow. Come to understand your spiritual journey and enter into a personal spiritual relationship with your higher-being through practices like tarot.

Two Rattlers create one record label

Kimiya Watkins

Staff writer

Blitz The Label is a recording company created by Jaylon Feacher and Christopher Lewis, two Florida A&M University students who found an escape in music.

Feacher and Lewis are from Jacksonville. Feacher is majoring in pre-occupational therapy and Lewis in bio pre-medicine.

They began making music to pass the time while dealing with external issues out of their control.

“With coming up to FAMU and trying to play football, it made me keep pushing because I couldn’t get into football,” Feacher said. “Being in the studio with my friends for the first time was a dope experience. It made me want to go to the studio every weekend, and I just fell in love.”

As Feacher and Lewis have continued to maneuver through college and evolve as musicians, they began to notice a significant issue in the music industry.

They found many musicians near and far were being ripped off by record labels and decided that there needed to be a change. So they set out to do just that.

“Everything about a record label now and you want to have a rap career, or something of that nature is associated with being bad,” Lewis said. “You don’t ever hear any artist thanking labels. Artists like Megan Thee Stallion, Rod Wave and everyone else are going through something. You can create your buzz with your label.”

“Having your label is, of course, a little bit harder, and being with a label, they’re going to back what you have going on as well as give promotion,” Feacher said. “Of course, not all labels are bad. You can find some that are good, but most of them you know you don’t hear anything good about. They’re in control. You can record 300 songs in a month, and none of them will drop if your label doesn’t approve it.”

They created a home-based studio to save money and help other local musicians who may not have anywhere or money to record. This gives them total control over the sound and projects that they release.

Their home-based studio allows for both men to pick up and take their studios with them wherever at their convenience.

“We started recording in our living room, and we got some noise complaints, so we got separate equipment to record in our rooms,” Lewis said. “I dropped my entire stimulus check on my equipment because it’s going to last for 30 years.”

“I was very strategic about what I wanted my sound to be like. I know I don’t have a lot, but I can still make it sound good,” Feacher said. “Your equipment does matter, but at the end of the day, it’s all about what you do in the booth that matters.”

Feacher and Lewis established Blitz

The Label to help each other and other musicians reach their fullest potential as individuals. They have artists from Duval County to Leon County who have contributed to their label and made it what it is today. Their music and artists can be found on Apple Music and Spotify at BLITZ. They can also be found on social media platforms such as Instagram and Twitter @blitzthelabel. Feacher’s and Lewis’ personal Instagram accounts are @jay.boogie @onlyismooosh.

“No matter what route this goes, I know I’m gonna channel it back to the music because, at that point, you can make money from your hobby,” Lewis said. “I like helping people, and if I don’t do that, I’ll fold, but at the end of the day, my money is going towards my music.”

FAMU’s student section goes viral

Skhai Bennett



Photo courtesy [@famufb Instagram Page](#)

Florida A&M University has repeatedly been in the limelight lately, and for all of the right reasons. One of those is the university’s exuberant student section at

home football games.

On Wednesday, Oct. 5, at 7:19 p.m., notable Fort Myers rapper Plies tweeted, “I wanna watch one FAMU football game in the student section this year!!!!.”

The rapper’s claim was supported by the following tweet of a “Top 20 Best/Worst Student Sections” ranking chart.

FAMU ranked No. 20 on the list of the best student sections in the nation, while Florida State ranked No. 6 worst student section. Despite being the final university on the list, FAMU was the only HBCU listed in either category.

The chart, created by @BigGame-Boomer, a social media college football analyst, was reposted by the rapper. Rankings are posted weekly and are sub-

ject to change.

Meanwhile, the Rattlers are confident that the university’s student section will remain No. 1 in their hearts as they welcome Plies — with open arms — into their nest.

Rashaad Cohen, a first-year computer engineering major, believes the Florida rapper should make an appearance at FAMU’s homecoming game a week from Saturday. “If he wants the best experience of how FAMU is, he should actually come. I think we have the most consistent student section; it’s only right that he shows up for the No. 1 HBCU.”

At the home game against South Carolina State on Oct. 9, students were decked out in pink in honor of Breast Cancer

Awareness Month.

“The crowd seemed excited about the game; the entire student section, fans, spectators, everyone was showing school pride and pinked out for breast cancer month,” said Shaniyah Bradley, a first-year pharmacy student.

In addition to the participation of attendees wearing pink attire, the game’s atmosphere was further animated due to the student section.

“The energy was amazing, and everyone was hype,” graduating senior Malila Pool said. “Sitting in the student section makes me proud to be a FAMU student, I’m certainly going to miss this.”

Students are looking forward to seeing

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Dave Chappelle and controversy go hand in hand once again

Jarren Smith
Staff Writer

Dave Chappelle’s latest Netflix comedy special, “The Closer,” is true to form for the comedian: blunt, brash, controversial and subtly comical all at the same time.

In his “last special for a minute,” the comedian used his witty storytelling to address real-life issues and conversations that, to me, wasn’t his best work, but it made me laugh here and there.

However, Chappelle’s sense of humor always comes with a price to pay.

Over the course of his career, Chappelle has always joked about all people and all situations with no filter. “The Closer” was no different.

It wasn’t long after the special was released that tensions arose concerning the contentious subjects that Chappelle touched on.

His most infamous battles throughout his career have been with members of the LGBTQ+ community, and he finally addressed it during the show.

In a portion of the show focused on his trials with the LGBTQ+ community, Chappelle used rapper DaBaby’s career and fairly recent cancellation to assert that in America, a Black man can be killed, but if the feelings of the LGBTQ+ community get hurt, then there’s an uproar.

This correlation may have been his most controversial to date.

The National Black Justice Coalition called for the special to be removed from Netflix immediately after its release.

NBJC executive director David Johns said in a statement, “It is deeply dis-



Photo ourtesy: Los Angeles Times

Dave Chappelle on stage during “The Closer.” appointing that Netflix allowed Dave Chappelle’s lazy and hostile transphobia

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Sexual assault survivors need to be heard

Jarrod Gunn
Staff writer

Eryn Thompson, a third-year public relations major at Florida A&M, was 18 years old when she was sexually assaulted. She said she couldn’t understand why it happened to her.

Thompson said she could never wrap her head around what was happening until it was too late. After the 2017 assault took place, on FAMU’s campus, it changed her life forever.

“It made me feel less of a person,” Thompson said. “Because of it being someone I had just met, I questioned myself a lot afterward as it made me afraid to go out and have drinks or trust men again.”

She decided to get help so it wouldn’t affect her for the rest of her life. When asked about the necessary steps to help

women going through this, she said that each participant needed to be held accountable.

“People first and foremost need to raise their children correctly,” Thompson said. “If the guy who did the action isn’t held accountable, then they will continuously do it until someone stands up to them.”

Other students at FAMU have complained about sexual harassment not being brought to the public eye time and time again. According many to students, it is such a serious topic that top officials tend to shy away from it.

Many female students at FAMU said that they had been sexually harassed, and in some cases sexually assaulted, and they said they were always afraid to report the attack because of the backlash they

believed they would receive.

While other female students did not want their names being published, they all agreed that sexual assault needs to be brought up more.

According to the federal Department of Education, estimates of sexual assault, which vary based on definitions and methodology, find that between 19 and 27 percent of college women and 6–8 percent of college men are sexually assaulted during their time in college.

When you’re living in a college town, sometimes other students’ names may hold more weight than yours, which often scares people away from shedding light on the truth because they may believe if no one knows them, no one will take their story or accusations seriously.

To prevent sexual assaults from happening, females should always travel in large groups, be aware of their surroundings and go with their gut feeling.

One out of every six females is a victim of an attempted or actual sexual assault.

According to the victims I interviewed, nine times out of 10 if you feel like something is off about a person, you’re right.

In this day and age, it is sad to hear students say they don’t feel like they can report a sexual assault.

Victims of sexual assault deserve to be heard. They deserve peace and strength so that they can stand up for what is right and inspire others to speak up. Because you are a survivor.

Student section at Bragg in need of a big-time revival

Iyanna Peoples

Assistant Online Editor



Photo courtesy courtesy: @famu_1887 on Instagram

Students at home game vs. Fort Valley State University

The fall semester is many students' favorite because of homecoming, the Classic, the countless parties every weekend and, of course, football season.

Since this year was Florida A&M University's first football season in two years due to COVID, many students anticipated returning to Bragg Memorial Stadium to cheer on the football team and socialize with friends.

The student section is known for keeping the games hyped with chants, dances and stomping. Senior performing arts and business student Chazriq Clarke serves as King of Orange and Green, and one of his duties is to be a leader in school spirit. He thinks the pandemic has played a role in terms of the students' enthusiasm not being the same.

"When I was a freshman, the energy in Bragg was booming," Clarke said. "Sophomore year it was the same thing, booming. All of a sudden COVID came and we weren't in Bragg for a year and now that we're back, I definitely feel it's

different. There's two classes of Rattlers who haven't experienced football season to know how we have fun at games."

Aside from his title as KOG, Clarke truly enjoys attending games to support the football team.

"School spirit is different for everyone but to me it means loving FAMU with everything within you," he said. "Serving FAMU, loving the orange and green and striking in whatever way you can."

First-year pre-nursing student Cydni Dariso is a member of the STRIKE team, the university's spirit club. She says her expectations of excitement in the student section were not met at the first home game.

"Before arriving at FAMU, I always knew that the football games are where students show the most school spirit," Dariso said. "When I went to my first one, it was a little less than I thought it

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MENTAL HEALTH CHECK-IN

i need to reach out for support ☐

i am doing pretty good ☐

i am having a real hard time ☐

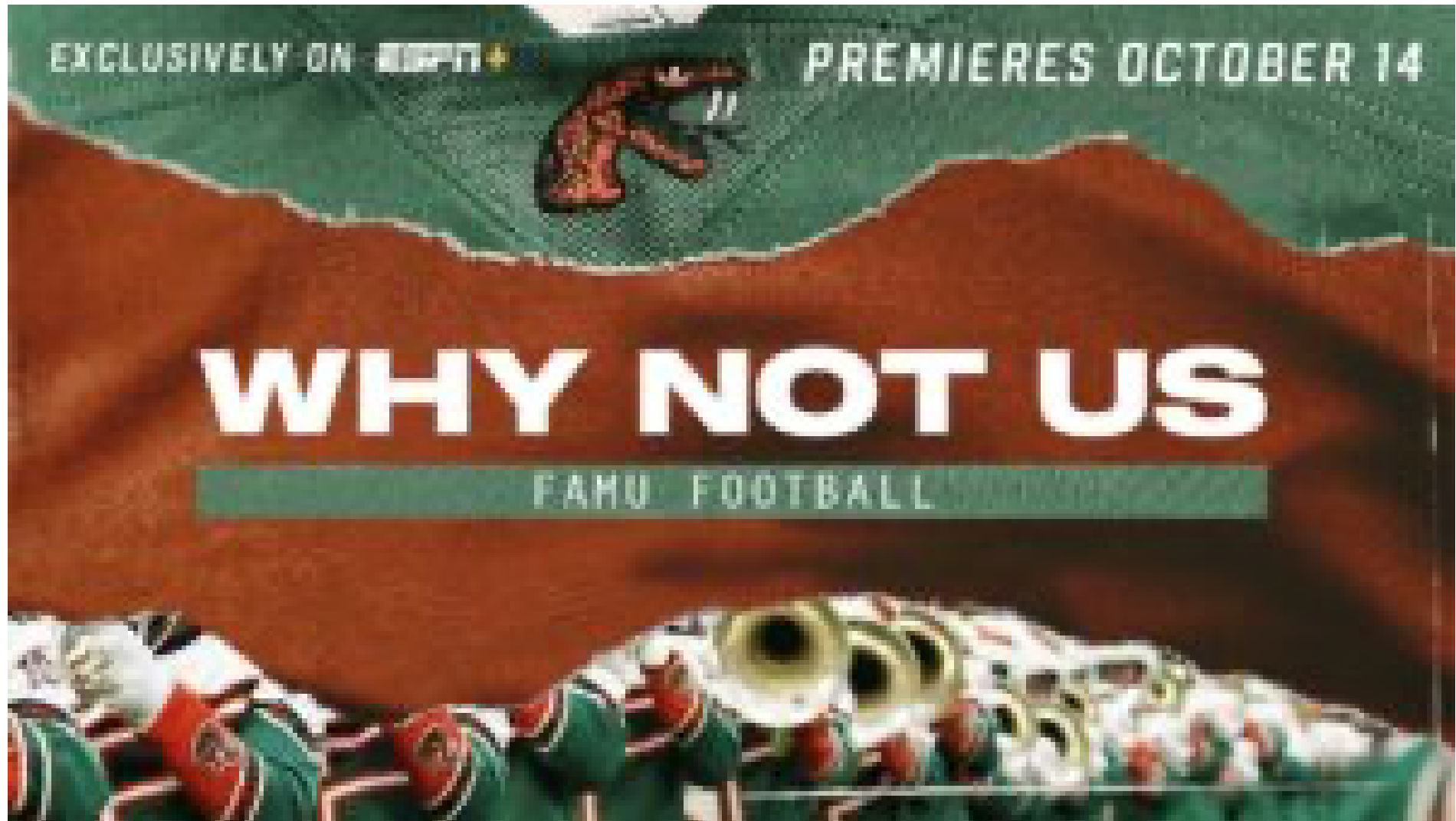
I am doing okay ☐

I am unsure ☐

Rattlers in spotlight in docuseries

Malcolm Harvey

Staff writer



ESPN's docuseries Why Not Us: FAMU Football available now on ESPN+

Photo courtesy [Edmedia.disney.com](https://www.edmedia.com)

From packing Bragg Memorial Stadium on Saturdays to traveling hundreds of miles to cheer for their team, there is no question that Rattlers show their school pride through supporting FAMU's football team.

FAMU, ranked the No. 1 public HBCU in the country by U.S. News & World

Report, has helped the university attract considerable attention from outsiders.

ESPN is the latest "outsider" to set its sights on Florida A&M with the production of a new documentary series, "Why Not Us," focusing on the football team. The eight-episode docuseries gives viewers an inside, exclusive look at the football

team's 2021 season, while also highlighting some of the players' personal stories.

Phoenix Suns point guard Chris Paul, producer of the series, shared on ESPN's morning show, "First Take," the significance of shining a spotlight on HBCUs.

"It's part of my upbringing, so to tell these stories is huge because you get to

see what a lot of these kids are going through, their struggle and what it looks like for them to try and level the plane field," Paul said.

Some might think being followed around by ESPN's camera crew can cause a lot of unwanted attention or added distractions for the football team's coaches

Rattlers' Land leads nation in sacks

Skhai Bennett

Staff writer

Isaiah Land, a redshirt junior linebacker for FAMU, set the new school record with five sacks in a single game earlier this month. He's also the sack leader in the NCAA Division I Football Championship Subdivision.

Born in Buffalo, N.Y., and raised in Gwinnett County, Ga., Land is a sociology major. He decided to attend FAMU because the schools and the coaches had faith in him.

"FAMU was the only school to offer me because I was underweight," Land said. "Being overlooked and counted out because of my weight makes me play with a chip on my shoulder and it also makes me want to give my best performance for my coaches since they believed in me from

the jump," he said.

The linebacker has always known what he's wanted to be, and he's hungry to achieve greatness. With just five regular-season games left, Land plans to continue to "apply pressure".

"I've always wanted to be a great pass rusher," Land said. "Leading the country is something I've always dreamed of and talked about so I just have to continue to apply pressure and finish the season strong."

In Land's last five games he has made at least one sac, per game, his total so far is 10. He had one sack against Fort Valley State University on Sept. 11, one against University of South Florida on Sept. 18, three against Alabama State on Oct. 2,

and a record-breaking five sacks in the home win against South Carolina State on Oct. 9.

Orlando McKinley, Land's former FAMU teammate who's a graduate assistant coach, described Land's important role on the team.

"Being that I am a former teammate of his I know from experience that he has a great relationship with his brothers," McKinley said. "He's taken on the leader role and he's doing a great job being the example that the guys need to see daily."

McKinley said that Land breaking the record wasn't a shock at all.

"Him breaking the record and holding the title didn't come as a surprise at all. From personally knowing him you see the

work that he puts in day in and day out," McKinley said. "He has transformed his body, he's taking care of the little things off the field. So to see it carry over to the field is no surprise at all. It all comes down to those little things and the work that coach Patterson, Smith, and Sharp have been putting in to make it all easier."

With just five regular-season games left, Land and the FAMU football team plan to "finish strong." He hopes to graduate in December 2023 and wants to play on Sundays in the NFL.

Freshmen football players adjust to new lifestyle

Jarrod Gunn

Staff writer

After years of living with their families, first-year student-athletes at Florida A&M University have had to adjust to living on their own while keeping up with their responsibilities.

Football players come from all over to play or the Rattlers, but only the ones who keep their heads on straight secure a spot on the team.

Carl Nesmith, a first-year sociology major from Jacksonville, is new to the area and has been trying to get used to his new way of life.

"The transition was hard at first, but I've gotten used to the flow of college with the help of the ASB program," Nesmith said. "It isn't easy keeping up with homework when you get out of football practice around 6 p.m."

The freshman football players interviewed for this story said that their transition was challenging at first — but also rewarding as they have been putting

in countless hours of study time and hard work to achieve their goals.

Jacory Jordan, a first-year business major from Jacksonville, has been star-struck with the lack of time and how he must balance his time management.

"I primarily focus on making sure I get enough sleep so that I can focus throughout the day," Jordan said. "It hasn't been too bad with me adjusting to feeding myself with me being able to have a car on campus."

De'Andre Francis, a first-year architecture major from Miami, said that even though the transition from high school to college has been easy for him, he still tries to stay caught up with his classwork.

"Coming to college has taught me how to become more independent," Francis said. "We have to have five study hours per week which kind of helps me with catching up on my work. Fortunately, I haven't needed any tutoring yet but if I



Photo courtesy famuedu

FAMU freshman Carl Nesmith.

did need it I know where to go for it."

Freshman football players on FAMU's

campus have had mixed emotions about

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