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The Distance: A newsletter from the Carletonian | November 15

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Welcome to the seventh and final fall edition of *The Distance*, brought to you by the *Carletonian*. We hope you have a safe and joyful winter break! But before all that, let's dive into this past week! In News and Features, we cover the **college's increase of its COVID-19 Action Level to "Level 3: High"**. Then, we have a piece on the **persisting post-election political divides on campus**, and an update on the **Carleton Presidential Search Committee membership**. After these articles, read about the continued activism of **Carleton's Sunrise Movement Chapter**. Then, Julia details **Post's (Malt-O-Meal's parent company) work in fighting local food insecurity**.

But wait, there's more! Read Arya's interview with evolutionary geneticist **Dr. Nels Elde**.

He's a 1995 Carleton grad and recent recipient of a MacArthur "Genius Grant". Next, you won't want to miss Hannah and Sophie as they teamed up to write about **Carleton's waste production during the pandemic** – and the oh-so-famous Green2Go boxes. Oh, and Lindsay wrote a piece about **beloved LDC employee Frenchy, who is retiring after 29 years at Carleton.**

In Sports, Zak covers how **coaches and teams are adapting the recruiting process.** And Viewpoint is loaded this week: News editor Maya writes about the importance of **selecting the next president**, Alé writes about **why voting isn't harm reduction**, Dane **vibe checks the American political parties**, and Bald Spot editor **Nicole writes about her encounters with the Carleton bureaucracy.** Speaking of Bald Spot: Bald Spot editor **Nicole updates us on her co-editor Jack's unfortunate concussion**, Frances **shares a prescient comic she made a few years back**, Ben **More** gives us **more electoral satire**, and, of course, **Arb Notes.**

Thank you all for joining us on this most unusual Fall Term journey. Newsletter readership is at an all-time high, so keep up the good work. We will be back for Winter Term, and maybe even during winter break!

Happy end-of-term,
Sam and Amelia, Editors-in-Chief

To the Carleton administration: be more transparent – we know what happens when institutions aren't

Carleton Editorial Board

With the decision to bring students back to campus in the middle of a pandemic comes a responsibility to keep us informed about the status of our community. We've seen what happens when government does a poor job of [reporting data](#) and combines inconsistent messaging with wishful thinking. We expected better from the Carleton administration.

Carleton's established channels of communication provide only a dribble, not a stream, of information. The [dashboard](#) on the website is so delayed that it often captures the state of campus more than a week ago. Weekly emails from Dean Livingston come off as restrained, clearly aimed at projecting an image of control over the situation and letting as little slip as possible. Furthermore, the two sometimes present conflicting messages, as when the most recent campus-wide [email](#) said that there were "seven additional positive cases" detected through SHAC

rapid tests—additional to the six positives mentioned earlier in the email—that are not posted on the dashboard.

[Read the full article >>](#)

This past week

First, here's the latest in News and Features:

Campus COVID-19 action level increased to "Level 3: High"

Amelia Broman

On Wednesday, November 11, Carleton's COVID-19 Core Team sent [an email](#) to students, faculty and staff announcing that the college's virus action level had been increased from "Level 2: Medium" to "Level 3: High."

A key factor in the decision was the "significant" rise in cases in Rice County, according to the email. Preliminary county data now suggests a 14-day case rate of 77.4 cases per 10,000 residents, up from 40.3 cases for the October 18-31 period, according to the email and the [county's COVID-19 dashboard](#).

Testing conducted between November 1 and 7 found six positive cases on campus, while rapid tests conducted at Student Health and Counseling (SHAC) between November 7 and 11 returned seven additional positives, the email said. In contrast, the three previous weeks each saw only one confirmed positive, according to [Carleton's COVID-19 dashboard](#).

[Read the full article >>](#)



Green in a global crisis: a look at the effects of the pandemic on waste production

Hannah Davis and **Sophia Quast**

For the past couple of decades, Carleton has worked to promote environmentally responsible practices throughout campus. However, in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, the administration chose to prioritize health and safety over sustainability by introducing more disposable and single-use products.

According to Alexandra Miller, Carleton's sustainability program coordinator, in many cases, this increased waste is unavoidable when considering community safety. "Right now, it's my opinion that we are all in emergency mode and have had to pivot significantly in the way we work to adapt to the new normal we are in. It will take some time to make tweaks and readjust as new information comes out about the virus. I also think that winter break will give us all a very needed break to reassess and start anew for Winter Term," she said, adding that she is open to suggestions about improving sustainability.

[Read the full article >>](#)

After Biden's win, political divides persist on campus

Ellie Zimmerman

After five days of anxiously waiting for definitive results of the presidential election, when the news finally broke on Saturday, November 7 that former Vice President Joe Biden had won, the majority of Carleton students were all too happy to see the start of a new era.

"I was on a walk with my A&I group and my phone wasn't getting any signal, but some others' were and they all heard at the same time. We all cheered. It was exciting," said Julia Nicholson '24. Kennadi Hairston '22 said that she cried out of sheer relief when she heard the news. Though campus was quiet, the mood was light as Carleton students, an overwhelmingly left-leaning group, rejoiced at the promise of a Democrat in the White House.

[Read the full article >>](#)



In conversation with Dr. Nels Elde '95, evolutionary geneticist and MacArthur "Genius Grant" recipient

Arya Misra

What stood out most about Nels was his imagination and willingness to take risks. Whether it was deciding to make bacon and eggs on a hot plate for lab snacks, or troubleshooting an experiment for his research project, Nels was always comfortable pushing the envelope and trying new approaches to solving problems,” said Biology Professor Stephan Zweifel, who taught Nels Elde '95 while he was at Carleton.

Often donning thick shades and a baseball hat while driving around Utah, Dr. Elde is an unassuming figure who is changing the face of microbial research. The recipient of a MacArthur “Genius Grant” for his groundbreaking work in evolutionary genetics, Elde spoke to The Carletonian about what this award means to him and how his work in evolutionary biology is impacting the way we live.

[Read the full article >>](#)

Beloved LDC employee Frenchy retires after 29 years at Carleton

Lindsay Boettiger

If you have ever eaten a meal at LDC, chances are good that Frenchy Jacob swiped you in. Arguably the face of LDC, Frenchy is retiring at the end of this term after twenty-nine years of working with Dining Services at Carleton College.

Although Frenchy has been visible from the front of LDC for the past few years, that is not

where he began at Carleton. “Twenty-nine years ago, I was out of a job,” Frenchy said. With plentiful food service experience, he received a job offer from Dining Services at Carleton, where he “did all different jobs; the salad bar, dishes and a grill cook.” Behind the salad bar, Frenchy began to form relationships with students, who made his work enjoyable. After some time at the salad bar, Frenchy moved locations within the kitchen.

[Read the full article >>](#)

Carleton presidential search committee members announced

Ray Xu

On Friday, November 6, Carleton’s Associate Vice President for External Relations Joe Hargis sent out an email requesting feedback to inform the work of the Presidential Search Committee. The committee began meeting after all seventeen members were confirmed in late October.

The search for the next Carleton president began in August after President Steven Poskanzer announced his decision to step down in July 2021. The committee was created by the Board of Trustees shortly after the announcement. Student members of the committee—Lucas Demetriades ’22, Andrew Farias ’21 and Molly Zuckerman ’22—were selected in the following two months. Other members of the committee include five trustees, four faculty, two staff and three alumni.

[Read the full article >>](#)



Sunrise Carleton marches for climate justice

Maya Hilty

On Saturday, November 7, around 80 students marched with Sunrise Carleton through campus and downtown Northfield. Participants were separated into six waves of marches that spanned nearly the entire day, advocating for—among other things—the passage of the Green New Deal.

Sunrise Carleton is a chapter of the national Sunrise movement, which was founded in 2017 to organize youth around climate justice. Specifically, members organize to make climate change a priority across America, create green jobs, combat the political influence of fossil fuel executives and “elect leaders who stand up for the health and wellbeing of all people,” according to the Sunrise [website](#).

[Read the full article >>](#)

Post donates 5,700 pounds of cereal to Northfield Action Center

Julia Luljak

This past October, Post Consumer Brands, Malt-O-Meal’s parent company, donated a whopping 5,700 pounds of cereal to the Northfield Community Action Center (CAC), a nonprofit serving Northfield residents in need. Because it was such a large amount, the cereal was initially stored at Bethel Church, and then was moved to the CAC, where it will be distributed. Carleton students and CAC volunteers assisted in the move.

Julia Braulick ’20, an AmeriCorps VISTA member at the CAC, said, “The mission of the CAC is to provide basic necessities to people in Northfield, although we now have some arms that go into Rice County as well.” This includes things like food, utilities and help with access to educational materials.

[Read the full article >>](#)

And now for an athletics update:

Sports



Recruiting during COVID-19: a novel test for Carleton coaches

Zak Sather

Recruiting student-athletes to Carleton has been a major challenge for varsity athletic teams throughout the coronavirus pandemic. Traditionally, Carleton's athletic programs host prospects from across the nation during the fall and winter months, when recruits have the opportunity to explore campus, attend classes and spend a night with their potential future teammates.

This year, however, due to campus health guidelines, such visits are rare, and when they do occur, coaches and players must refrain from meeting directly with recruits and their families on campus. To prevent the spread of COVID-19, recruits are allowed to visit campus, but they must avoid contact with others, and are encouraged to refrain from entering buildings. As the November 15 Early Decision 1 deadline rapidly approaches, teams are doing their best to fill roster spots with quality talent.

[Read the full article >>](#)

Here's what students are thinking about:

Viewpoint

Why you should fill out the
Presidential Search Survey

"too often
well-

Maya Hilty

I want people to have three takeaways from this article:

(1) Go fill out the Presidential Search Survey emailed to all faculty, students and staff by Joe Hargis last Friday and express support for diversity goals if you believe they're important. The survey must be completed by next Thursday, November 19.

(2) Read Chapter Seven of Beverly Tatum's book "Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria?"—all students and everyone with access to Carleton's library resources have access to the online version of this book.

[Read the full article >>](#)

intentioned search committees find the 'best' person is yet another member of the dominant group."

Voting is not harm reduction

Alé Cota

The timing of this article is a bit late, but nonetheless it must be said. Whether or not your electoral, or uninformed, heart can take it, voting is not harm reduction. Thus, your centering of voting in your "activism" or organizing, which inherently pressures, harasses, and scapegoats voter-suppressed marginalized communities, is violent. It is violent in the sense that it does not recognize that this country is founded upon systems and tools of extermination: genocide, slavery, concentration camps, white supremacy, transphobia, homophobia, ableism, capitalism, settler-colonialism, prison-industrial-complex, prisons, and many more.

[Read the full article >>](#)

The difference in "vibes" of America's political parties

Dane Swanser

The office of the President of the United States finds itself facing a unique transferral of power. The chair of the President is an embodiment of our national values and determines the respect that our country deserves. Joe Biden and Donald Trump represent two parties with two very different attitudes towards their preferred leader. Joe Biden, a President-Elect who inspired the greatest voter turnout in a century, finds his support to be conditional among many progressive voters. Their support is conditional on the level of urgency Biden has promised to bring to very contested issues. Donald Trump, a man who has awakened a new voice within the Republican Party, finds himself in a very different

position. The difference between the types of authority these two men hold among their respective parties is a testament to the growing volume of progressive voices among young Americans.

[Read the full article >>](#)

My medical leave of absence: a tale of bureaucracy at Carleton

Nicole Collins

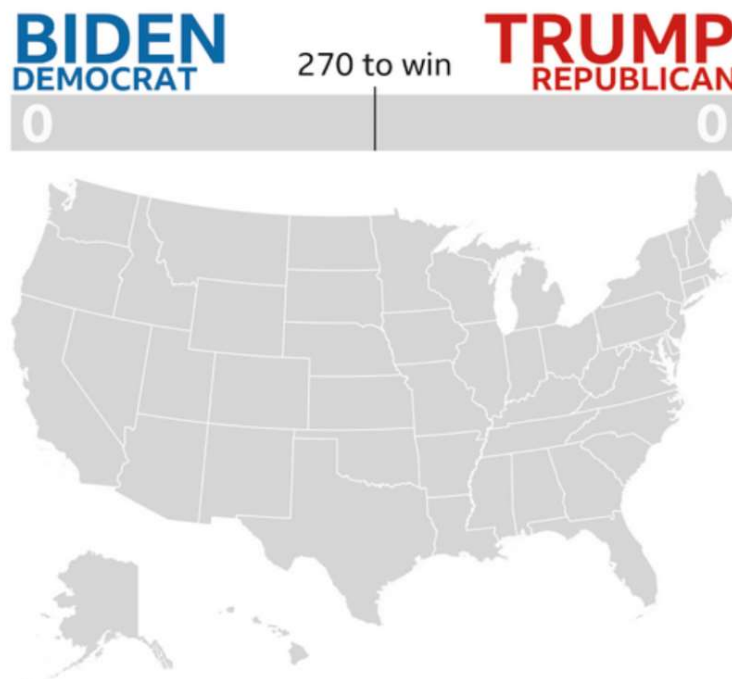
Like most things at Carleton, my decision to take a medical leave of absence—and its aftermath—was fraught with difficulty. It's not so much that the decision itself was tough to make; in fact, the relevant college administration was delightfully helpful in working with me to figure out the logistics of taking my Fall Term of sophomore year off.

The real difficulty ended up being everything after. Which, in the grand scheme of things, doesn't necessarily amount to a ton, life-or-death-wise, but it reached a certain threshold of mild inconvenience that, to me, necessitated my writing about it. I have heard similar stories from many other people.

[Read the full article >>](#)

Now for a few laughs:

The Bald Spot



US government falls after nobody votes in presidential election

Ben More

FiveThirtyEight forecasted that Joe Biden would win the presidency. Several mysterious pundits heralded a surprise Trump victory. Alas, no outlet, pundit, or model could have foretold the 2020 presidential election's outcome.

At approximately 7:01 PM, every single state went gray after certifying their unanimous winner—no one. For the first time in American history since the Lay's Potato Chip Flavor Bracket, not a single United States citizen cast a vote. A visibly shaken Wolf Blitzer announced a surprise 3-day marathon of The Office instead of election coverage.

[Read the full article >>](#)

Bald Spot announcement: Jack Brown is concussed

Nicole Collins

Jack Brown
What a clown
He got concussed
He lost our trust
He's now a Libertarian.

Bald Spot
Brain rot
If not before
Then surely henceforth.

Then it's official, now:
We're having a cow
The Bald Spot's lost its leftist lean
It's achieved a capitalist gleam:

Arma virumque canō, Trōiae quī primus ab ōris
Italiam, fātō profugus, Lāvīniaque vēnit
litora, multum ille et terris iactātus et altō
vī superum saevae memorem Iūnōnis ob Iram;
multa quoque et bellō passūs, dum conderet urbem,
inferretque deōs Latīō, genus unde Latīnum,
Albāniq̄ue patrēs, atque altae moenia Rōmae.

How now, brown cow,
How was Jack Brown smacked on the brow?

Mayhaps he was doing his laundry
And in quite a quandary
As he penned the following,
Conscious not of his doom impending:

*The clothes spin,
I put them in the bin,
A lonely smile,
I wait a while.*

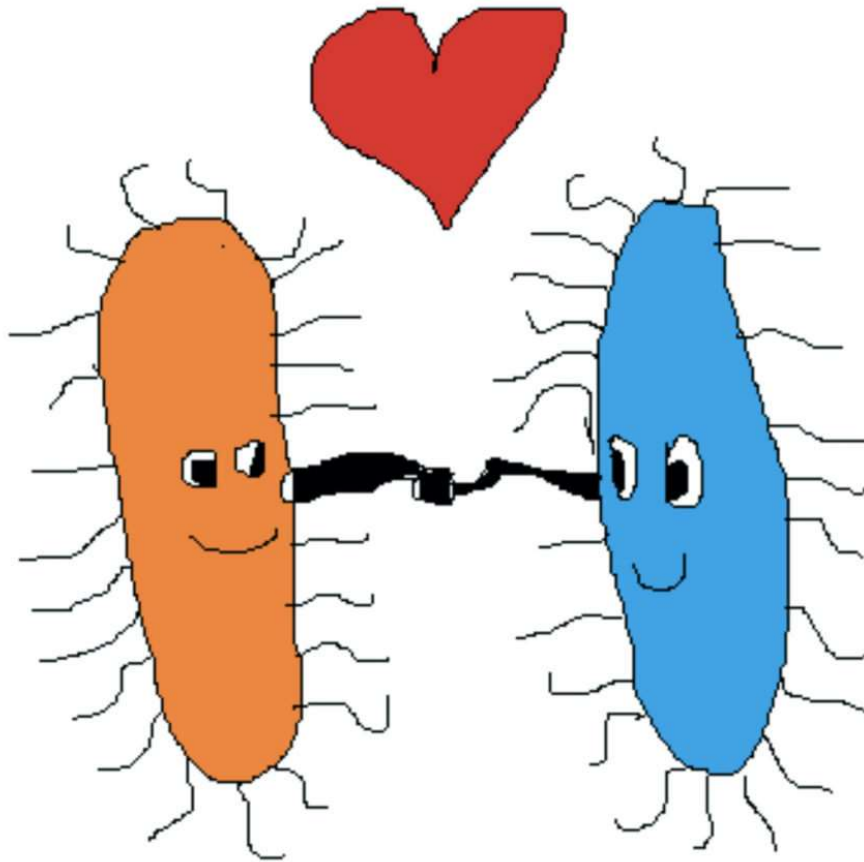
Mayhaps as his pen left the paper,
Only realizing much later
That a horde of mice
Didn't think twice
Before sweeping him off his feet
And making his forehead laundry machine meet.

Le smack. Concussèd.

Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?
No. We don't have time for that.
Jack Brown is concussed.

Germophiles

Frances O'Grady



And finally, Arb Notes!

Parsnips are forever - invasive species in the Arb

Alac Leonetti

With winter weather finally on its way, many herbaceous invasive plant species in the Arboretum have died back, but the woody invaders remain. In the summertime, the Arb Crew works almost tirelessly to help eradicate invasive species in their prime to make the Arboretum ecosystem more diverse and safer for Arb users. In the US and across the world, invasive species threaten the balance of the natural environment: often these species are not native to the ecosystem they have invaded, and outcompete native organisms. If not kept in check, invasive species can severely reduce the biodiversity of a particular habitat. The work in the Arboretum is critical to keeping our natural lands in balance.

[Read the full article >>](#)

A note to confused readers: *Arb Notes* is published in our Bald Spot section, but is not itself satire. *Arb Notes*, unlike other Bald Spot material, is earnest. But because it is a break from our more

traditional pieces, we publish it in the "fun" section!

Filling out Thanksgiving dinner Google forms since 1877

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Photos by Isaac Crown-Manesis '23, Maya Hilty '21, Lane Maitland '23, Harper Brooks-Kahn, Matin Yazdi '24,

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To the Carleton administration: be more transparent—we know what happens when institutions aren't

BY [CARLETONIAN EDITORIAL STAFF](#) ON NOVEMBER 16, 2020

With the decision to bring students back to campus in the middle of a pandemic comes a responsibility to keep us informed about the status of our community. We've seen what happens when government does a poor job of [reporting data](#) and combines inconsistent messaging with wishful thinking. We expected better from the Carleton administration.

Carleton's established channels of communication provide only a dribble, not a stream, of information. The [dashboard](#) on the website is so delayed that it often captures the state of campus more than a week ago. Weekly emails from Dean Livingston come off as restrained, clearly aimed at projecting an image of control over the situation and letting as little slip as possible. Furthermore, the two sometimes present conflicting messages, as when the most recent campus-wide [email](#) said that there were "seven additional positive cases" detected through SHAC rapid tests—additional to the six positives mentioned earlier in the email—that are not posted on the dashboard.

In the absence of clear communication from Carleton leadership, rumors have dominated students' awareness of the virus's presence on campus. When rumors take the place of information, the potential for false perceptions of the danger grows. At the end of September, there was a post in the Overheard at Carleton Facebook group, which includes over 5,000 Carleton students and alumni, accusing members of the football and volleyball teams of having a party that violated the Covenant. Students were left to investigate wrongdoing on their own, or to defend themselves against allegations that administration, days later, claimed were false.

Students should not have to take on the responsibility of being COVID-19 vigilantes. Instead, we need transparency from the administration on what events are taking place that could impact the virus's spread on campus. The only thing they have served us with to this point is a vague sense of fear and mistrust of our peers, an endless blame game, without knowledge of what is really happening, and when, and where.

In addition to a lack of transparency, Carleton has failed to provide students with consistent protocols. We [reported](#) in September that the vagueness of the [Community Covenant](#) makes many of its policies effectively toothless. In one section, students agree to “strive” to stay six feet away from “any other person” except roommates or housemates—but later in the document, they are simply asked to keep their close circle “as small as possible.” The onus is on students to decide how to interpret that, and RAs are left as the primary enforcers of these policies. The Covenant’s warnings to “avoid travel when possible” and “limit off-campus excursions” similarly lack the clarity needed to be enforceable—as evidenced by [recent news](#) of a batch of cases “believed to be contracted through off-campus exposure.”

That news was delivered in [an email](#) announcing that Carleton had increased its COVID-19 action level to “Level 3: High” as [case rates skyrocket](#) in the surrounding community. Carleton leadership, however, declined to institute major steps prescribed under its own Level 3 action plan, including moving classes and programs online and instructing students to “shelter-in-place” in campus housing. The justification was that Carleton has “not experienced transmission through program and classroom settings.”

But how can the college be so certain of this—certain enough to disregard its own Level 3 guidelines? Indeed, why design these response scenarios at all if the college does not follow them when the time comes? Administrators assure us that classroom transmission is “not likely” since distancing and disinfecting protocols are in place. We can’t help but remember their naive shock when, earlier this term, [two cases at LDC and Sayles](#) sent a total of 19 close contacts from the work environment into quarantine. With distancing rules in place, close contacts within Dining Services were not supposed to exist.

But there is a difference between intentions and reality, and that is exactly why the Level 3 guidelines prescribe an abundance of caution. With only a week left of classes and students soon set to disperse to locations worldwide, the very least Carleton could do is move in-person classes online if they do not include hands-on work. Instead, in contradiction with the college’s own Level 3 plan, Wednesday’s email felt like it was practically encouraging faculty to continue their in-person offerings. It is hardly a consolation that end-of-term COVID tests, which must be returned by mail, are not expected to arrive on campus until the last day of classes—leaving students wondering if they will even receive their results before traveling home.

We have no doubt that college administrators are trying their best to deal with this pandemic as safely, equitably, and carefully as possible. We can only imagine how difficult managing this pandemic on campus must be, and it is unfortunate that college administrators now have a job

description similar to that of Anthony Fauci. COVID-19 transmission on campus has been [quite low](#) until recently and the administration deserves credit for this. But going into Winter Term, we urge the college to be more forthcoming with information and more consistent in its protocols. The more information and guidance that Carls have, the better decisions we can make. Just receiving the headlines leaves much to be desired, especially when there is so much value in the details.

There is increasing evidence that COVID-19, even among young people, can impart [long-lasting damage to one's physical health and cognitive function](#). As we finish Fall Term on a fearful note, we know now, more than before, that young people are not being spared by this virus. So to the Carleton administration: please tell us what's really happening—regardless of how it makes the school look.

Published in [Viewpoint](#)



Carletonian Editorial Staff

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Action Level 3: High

The current action level of the Carleton College campus based on the college's identified threshold measures. Action levels, threshold measures, and campus impacts are described on this page [below](#).

14-Day Infection Rate: 0.32%

Rate of lab-confirmed cases of COVID-19 among all students, faculty and staff who are living, learning or working on campus over the 14-day period spanning Sunday, Oct. 25, through Saturday, Nov. 7.

A screengrab of Carleton's COVID-19 dashboard on Saturday, November 14.

Campus COVID-19 action level increased to “Level 3: High”

BY [AMELIA BROMAN](#) ON NOVEMBER 14, 2020

On Wednesday, November 11, Carleton's COVID-19 Core Team sent [an email](#) to students, faculty and staff announcing that the college's virus action level had been increased from “Level 2: Medium” to “Level 3: High.”

A key factor in the decision was the “significant” rise in cases in Rice County, according to the email. Preliminary county data now suggests a 14-day case rate of 77.4 cases per 10,000 residents, up from 40.3 cases for the October 18-31 period, according to the email and the [county's COVID-19 dashboard](#).

Testing conducted between November 1 and 7 found six positive cases on campus, while rapid tests conducted at Student Health and Counseling (SHAC) between November 7 and 11 returned seven additional positives, the email said. In contrast, the three previous weeks each saw only one confirmed positive, according to [Carleton's COVID-19 dashboard](#).

The seven positives from the SHAC rapid tests are not currently listed on Carleton's dashboard. SHAC offers the Abbott ID Now test, according to a [September 3 message](#) from Dean of Students

Carolyn Livingston. These tests return results in 15 minutes, but are less reliable than the PCR tests that Carleton uses to conduct 300 surveillance tests each week.

Under the Action Level 3 plan listed on Carleton's dashboard, all classes and programs would be moved online and students instructed to shelter in place. Those changes will not be implemented at this time, the Core Team wrote in the email, "because we have not experienced transmission through program and classroom settings."

"Recently identified cases within our campus community were believed to be contracted through off-campus exposure," the Core Team wrote.

"Because the classroom, studio, and laboratory settings are currently operating with six-foot or greater physical distancing and other recommended public health protocols, they are not likely contributors to disease transmission," the email continued. Faculty may still choose to transition in-person activities online, they wrote.

About 60% of courses are [entirely online this term](#). Only 10% are entirely in-person, with the remaining 30% consisting of both online and in-person activities.

The college did announce several new steps in light of the heightened action level. Students were told that they may not leave campus except to buy necessities, attend medical appointments and go to work, while Northfield Option students were told to limit travel to and from campus.

Students are now "strongly encouraged" to get tested before returning home, the email said. The college has ordered self-administered saliva tests for all students. Livingston had previously said in a [November 5 update](#) that Carleton would not provide testing prior to departure. At that time, she wrote that widespread testing was not warranted due to low rates of community transmission.

According to the Core Team, the tests are expected to arrive by Wednesday, November 18—the last day of classes. They are free to students and must be returned by mail. It is unclear how soon students could receive their results. The last day of finals is Monday, November 23, but students frequently make plans to travel home sooner based on their own finals schedules.

In her November 5 update, before the saliva tests were announced, Livingston wrote that any student testing positive would need to isolate on campus before traveling to avoid exposing others in transit. The Core Team stated that more information on the saliva tests is forthcoming.

On November 12, the Star Tribune [reported](#) that the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) is asking all Minnesotans ages 18-35 to get tested for COVID-19. Health officials believe this group is disproportionately spreading the virus, the article reports. An MDH commissioner interviewed in that piece focused specifically on students returning home from college.

Carleton has experienced delays in receiving surveillance tests results from the Mayo Clinic, according to the email. Results are supposed to be returned within 48 hours, but that window has lengthened as Minnesota's testing burden increases. The college is moving to conduct additional targeted testing in addition to its weekly surveillance testing.

Apart from the new testing initiative, the Core Team email announced that varsity, club and intramural practices would be suspended on Friday, November 13 through the end of the term. [Group 2 employees](#), many of whom have had a hybrid of in-person and remote work this term, are being asked to work from home if possible.

Minnesota has experienced a [sharp increase](#) in COVID-19 cases in recent weeks. The state is currently reporting the [eighth-highest case rate](#) in the nation, according to data from the CDC.

This is an updated version of the article originally published in our Friday, November 13 print edition.

Published in [News](#)

featured

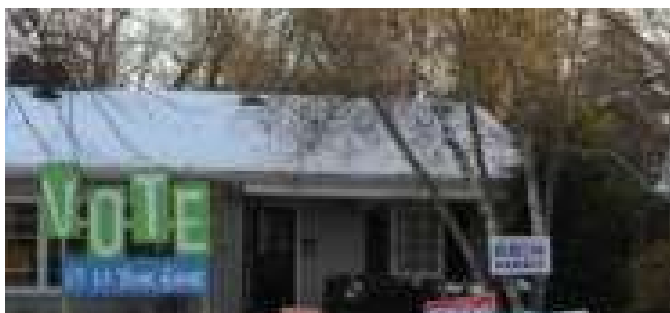


Amelia Broman

Editor-in-chief.

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Carleton presidential search committee members announced



Green in a global crisis: a look at the effects of the pandemic on waste production

BY [HANNAH DAVIS](#) AND [SOPHIA QUAST](#) ON NOVEMBER 14, 2020

For the past couple of decades, Carleton has worked to promote environmentally responsible practices throughout campus. However, in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, the administration chose to prioritize health and safety over sustainability by introducing more disposable and single-use products.

According to Alexandra Miller, Carleton’s sustainability program coordinator, in many cases, this increased waste is unavoidable when considering community safety.

“Right now, it’s my opinion that we are all in emergency mode and have had to pivot significantly in the way we work to adapt to the new normal we are in. It will take some time to make tweaks and readjust as new information comes out about the virus. I also think that winter break will give us all a very needed break to reassess and start anew for Winter Term,” she said, adding that she is open to suggestions about improving sustainability.

The main increase in waste since the start of the pandemic has been due to higher usage of compostable to-go clamshells for food distribution. Last spring, with 300 students on campus, dining halls were going through 12,000 clamshells per week, according to Bon Appetit. With the introduction of Green2Go, this number decreased to nearly zero.

The Green2Go initiative, spearheaded last year by the Sustainability Office and Sustainability Assistant Andrew Farias '21, has played an integral role in pandemic safety measures. Green2Go containers are available at all dining locations to give students the option to take their food out of the dining hall, decreasing the density of students eating inside. The containers are reusable and can be used up to 300 times, lowering dependency on disposable clamshells.

While the Green2Go initiative was not directly inspired by the pandemic, the program's timing was seemingly perfect as it provided more environmentally friendly options in a time when single-use containers would have been overused. The program will continue to help the campus decrease waste far into the future, though single-use containers are still used in quarantine and isolation houses to decrease risks of transmission.

While the Green2Go program is a significant change to dining hall routines, much of the food production and food waste minimization efforts in the dining halls is the same as it has been in previous years. Bon Appetit Sustainability Ambassador Ella Hein '23 said, "Luckily the pandemic has not had a negative impact on food waste behind the line. We are still able to order food in bulk, cook meals in small batches and utilize stem-to-tail cooking, all in an effort to minimize waste as we always have."

As far as waste from increased building sanitation, Custodial Manager Patti Sabrowski said that "disinfectant wipes deployed around campus are really the one additional waste item. Otherwise all the other supplies are the same things that [the] department has always used. Additional disinfecting is not generating a notable amount of additional waste."

With fewer students on campus due to this term's remote option, Martha Larson, manager of Campus Energy and Sustainability, reported that the college is producing less waste on the whole. "We went from daily waste pick-ups at most waste sites to on-call pickups on an as-needed basis. We expect to see reductions in our fiscal year 2020 reporting data, which is coming out soon," said Larson.

Looking into the future, Miller explained that she has two main projects planned. She hopes to streamline waste data collection in order to "quickly respond to changes in the waste stream,

something we are only guessing at now without any sort of dashboard,” along with making waste collection more efficient by “exploring ways in which we can move or combine waste sites as well as how we can reduce waste altogether.”

Miller also noted that the 2011 Climate Action Plan will undergo a review in either Winter or Spring Term by the Environmental Advisory Committee and take into account the challenges COVID presents to sustainability efforts.

Reflecting on the pandemic’s effect on sustainability, Miller said, “I can’t be critical of the changes that have been made. While I always hope we can do what is most sustainable all the time, there are other items to consider. Cost, time to implement, supply chain, staffing and labor, planning effort, safety, are all things that were part of this maze being navigated by the college’s core teams. We can’t be critical of each other in this time of emergency, but rather show grace and humility.”

The Carleton administration, along with the Sustainability Office and Bon Appetit, continue to navigate the challenges of running a college during a pandemic and hope to work collaboratively to find a balance between safety and sustainability.

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January 13, 2021



Photo by Isaac Crown Manesis

After Biden's win, political divides persist on campus

BY [ELLIE ZIMMERMAN](#) ON NOVEMBER 14, 2020

After five days of anxiously waiting for definitive results of the presidential election, when the news finally broke on Saturday, November 7 that former Vice President Joe Biden had won, the majority of Carleton students were all too happy to see the start of a new era.

“I was on a walk with my A&I group and my phone wasn’t getting any signal, but some others’ were and they all heard at the same time. We all cheered. It was exciting,” said Julia Nicholson ’24. Kennadi Hairston ’22 said that she cried out of sheer relief when she heard the news. Though campus was quiet, the mood was light as Carleton students, an overwhelmingly left-leaning group, rejoiced at the promise of a Democrat in the White House.

“I was actually surprised that people at Carleton weren’t being more celebratory, just compared to what was going on everywhere else,” said Allie Fridkin ’23. “My parents were sending me videos from Atlanta. Everyone was going crazy.”

Celebrations on campus were subdued, and the prevailing sentiment of the day seemed to be relief followed by tempered optimism rather than joy. Even among Democrats at Carleton, Biden gained a [small minority](#) of the vote during the primary, and few students expressed genuine enthusiasm for a Biden presidency. Fridkin, who did not support Biden in the primary but ultimately voted for him in the November election, said, “I’m not incredibly excited. I’m just more relieved that it’s not another Trump presidency, I guess.”

For Hairston, the choice not to celebrate was intentional because electing Biden “is just one piece of the puzzle. I was happy that he won and super thrilled that we are going to fight for more things and better things, but I was like, ‘there’s a long way to go still.’” She also warned against growing complacent after a small victory. “We have to keep donating to bail funds, and keep signing petitions, and keep having conversations with our peers, because there were still [more than] 70 million people who voted for Donald Trump,” she said.

Among those millions were several Carleton students who were not celebrating a victory on Saturday. James Craig ’21, who voted for President Trump, said that while “most of his [Biden’s] policies are very wrong,” the thought of a Biden presidency doesn’t upset him too much. “It’s the politicians’ job to convince us that this is the end of civilization if you don’t vote for them, but I don’t really buy into that,” he said. “I found out that Biden was probably going to win and was like, ‘Okay, cool. Whatever. Go back to work.’ It’s subpar, it’s not ideal. I think there are some unfortunate things that could happen, but I don’t see it as an existential threat to my life, and I’m confident that in 2024 the Republicans can take back the presidency and flip the House and Senate, so I don’t have a huge emotional reaction for it.”

Though Biden paints a picture of healing and unity during his time in office, claiming to be a [“President for all Americans,”](#) the Trump years left bitter political divides at Carleton that may not go away with a new president. Hairston said that she would find it difficult to be friends with a Trump supporter, even after Trump is out of office, because of the moral choice that a vote for Trump represents for her and the effects that choice can have on her life as a woman of color. “I don’t think I can be friends with someone who would rather see me hang from a tree than thrive and live,” she said. “KKK people have walked up to my dad, who’s a Black man, and I’ve been there for that. That’s traumatizing, and I don’t want to have other little girls go through that. So why would I ever support or be friends with someone who maybe doesn’t condone it outright but is still in that group of Trump supporters with other people who are like that?”

Jonathan Singleton ’23 said he generally keeps his support for President Trump quiet because he fears backlash from the Carleton community. “I feel like some people, if they knew who I voted

for, they would look at me differently, so that kind of hurts in a way because they don't know my viewpoints or anything like that. They just see that I voted for Trump. People may not look through that to see who I am as a person," Singleton said.

One thing the two sides do seem to have in common is a lack of confidence in Biden's ability to enact change on a large scale. For Craig, that might be a good thing. He thinks that "if the Republicans still have the Senate, then he'll be a fairly ineffectual leader. I'm not concerned that he's going to overthrow the medical system or gun rights or my freedoms of speech or anything. I don't think much is going to happen."

For Biden's supporters, who expressed their hopes for such policy initiatives as rejoining the Paris Climate Agreement, expanding public healthcare and bringing an end to the coronavirus pandemic, a roadblock in the Senate may bring disappointment. After perusing Biden's campaign website, Fridkin concluded that "it was all very vague and not actually concrete action steps, so I feel like he's probably not going to get as much done as he says he is," though she added that she still feels "optimistic about it" at this point.

Carls on both sides of the aisle said the best thing to come out of the decision on Saturday is the end of an unusually tense election season. For most, a Biden presidency is a tolerable result, neither devastating nor particularly inspiring. It represents a step toward the changes Democratic students want to see in the country, not the end goal.

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Carleton presidential search committee members announced



January 13, 2021



Photo courtesy of the MacArthur Foundation

In conversation with Dr. Nels Elde '95, evolutionary geneticist and MacArthur “Genius Grant” recipient

BY [ARYA MISRA](#) ON NOVEMBER 14, 2020

“What stood out most about Nels was his imagination and willingness to take risks. Whether it was deciding to make bacon and eggs on a hot plate for lab snacks, or troubleshooting an experiment for his research project, Nels was always comfortable pushing the envelope and trying new approaches to solving problems,” said Biology Professor Stephan Zweifel, who taught Nels Elde '95 while he was at Carleton.

Often donning thick shades and a baseball hat while driving around Utah, Dr. Elde is an unassuming figure who is changing the face of microbial research. The recipient of a MacArthur “Genius Grant” for his groundbreaking work in evolutionary genetics, Elde spoke to The

Carletonian about what this award means to him and how his work in evolutionary biology is impacting the way we live.

The MacArthur Foundation aims to “celebrate and inspire the creative potential of individuals through no-strings-attached fellowships,” according to the organization’s website. Through a confidential nomination process, the \$625,000 award is presented annually to between 20 and 30 Americans working in any field.

Elde, an associate professor at the University of Utah, said that the news of the award “was a big surprise, a great surprise,” and, in fact, “a little bit of a trick.” The MacArthur Foundation reached out to him via email requesting he set up a phone call to provide support to some other MacArthur fellows, but when he answered, it was revealed that *he* was in fact receiving a MacArthur Fellowship.

Twenty years earlier, Elde was in a biology class with Zweifel, who remembers him being a fun-loving, creative student. “The spark you see in all successful scientists, that curiosity, was always evident in him. His time commitment, the type of questions he asked and his dedication to solving a riddle speaks volumes about who he is,” said Zweifel.

Elde remembers Zweifel—who also coaches Carleton Men’s Tennis—from his time on the staff of *The Carletonian*, writing articles about the tennis team. “I would make up kind of fanciful quotes, not always exactly what the players and coaches were saying. I think Stephan thought it was pretty hilarious actually and that is really how we met, and I ended up working for him even after graduation.”

“Even though sometimes we think about science as sort of a recipe book, there’s really a lot of room for creativity and fun. Stephan’s incredible advice [to me] was having fun and I think that has really served me well at Carleton and beyond, from grad school to opening my lab in Utah,” Elde said.

From viral mimicry to bacterial iron piracy, Elde has published articles on evolutionary genetics that focus not only on microbes but also on human cell evolution. Dr. Brenda Bass, who is currently collaborating with Elde on a Transformative Research Award, said, “The goal of our Transformative Award is to find ways to trick cancer cells so they will kill themselves with their own immune response. We’re working on viruses themselves, some distant form of coronavirus, and we’re interested in how they evolve to build new tools. We know already that [COVID-19] is

the third big one [pandemic] in recent times. Can we take an evolutionary view about how these things adapt and change and move through populations?”

Elde said, “I am really curious about the outcomes of evolution—how is it that our cells are organized and how will they be impacted by microbes? In particular, how past pandemics influenced, based on Darwinian evolution, who survives and who has kids and how that has shaped our own biology down to the cellular level.”

When asked about how the current pandemic has influenced his work now and further down the line, he said, “I think what the current pandemic does is really put a sharp focus on the impact that viruses and other microbes can have on us and in fact, even though [this pandemic] has changed our lives in all corners of the globe, from an evolutionary perspective, this is just kind of a minor blip in the radar. And I say that because our species is in no danger of, say, an extinction-level event.”

The importance of creativity in Elde’s work is evident in his MacArthur acceptance video, where he mentions his background of coming from a family of scientists, artists and ministers as one factor fueling his creative and interdisciplinary thinking. Bass echoed this passion that Dr Elde shows in his work. “As you might imagine, Nels is a wealth of creative ideas, and further, he is always up for an “out-of-the-box” party! You state your own wild idea, and he happily and immediately takes it to the next step, lending substance to the wild idea and paving the way to discovery.”

Reminiscing on his time at Carleton, Elde mentioned the impact a liberal arts education had on his work. Speaking of his freshman year writing seminar called “Health, Healing and Religion”, he said, “the foundational framework of learning was bigger. At Carleton, there’s this community where you have professors and advisors who become friends and they care about you and your professional development and your path in education, and to have that kind of support is what nurtures the creativity and the curiosity. It builds the space to take chances, to think bigger, to build bigger.”

Thanking his professors including Zwiefel as well as Mark McKone, who teaches evolution at Carleton, Elde mentioned that he is still connected to them today. “These connections are not just for four years, this is part of the community that stays with you. That is almost the magical part of being at Carleton and liberal arts, you don’t just take classes in different disciplines, but it means you are part of this community of people who care about each other. That echoes an impact that you can’t imagine, it turbocharges our education, it’s like rocket fuel. It is a great

reminder in these fun times, when you win an award like this, that it is not an individual thing. It is built on the shoulders—in almost these concentric rings—of staff, professors and other students that are lifelong companions in the process.”

Now a professor himself, Elde tries to bring the excitement and fun he felt at Carleton into his own labs. He remembers a former professor warning him that lab science isn’t always great fun, depending on who you’re working with, and said he “took that as a challenge to find fun connections in work,” as well as to mentor others to do the same.

Despite his focus on research-based learning, he keeps the connections to his liberal arts education by teaching a seminar in critical thinking to his first-year students in the University of Utah’s microbiology program. “We are able to have these liberal arts style discussions and dialogues in what it means to advance science. And these are even PhD students who are working toward their dissertations.”

While laughing about Zweifel’s request to invest in an indoor tennis court at Carleton, Elde mentioned his plans to build a bridge between University of Utah and Carleton College using the resources provided by the MacArthur Foundation. “There is definitely some ongoing investment between Carleton and Utah to kind of echo the great opportunity I got at Stephan’s lab. We are in this win-win situation where all of us who are faculty [at the University of Utah] from Carleton are hoping to express our appreciation for the training, the connections and relationships we have—but also hoping to build new ones and provide new opportunities as well.”

“It is definitely a little selfish too, because we know how great Carleton students are, and we would love to have them working in our labs, advancing our science projects. And so a prize like this only helps us to build those connections even stronger,” he added.

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Arya Misra

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Beloved LDC employee Frenchy retires after 29 years at Carleton

BY [LINDSAY BOETTIGER](#) ON NOVEMBER 14, 2020

If you have ever eaten a meal at LDC, chances are good that Frenchy Jacob swiped you in. Arguably the face of LDC, Frenchy is retiring at the end of this term after twenty-nine years of working with Dining Services at Carleton College.

Although Frenchy has been visible from the front of LDC for the past few years, that is not where he began at Carleton. “Twenty-nine years ago, I was out of a job,” Frenchy said. With plentiful food service experience, he received a job offer from Dining Services at Carleton, where he “did all different jobs; the salad bar, dishes and a grill cook.” Behind the salad bar, Frenchy began to form relationships with students, who made his work enjoyable. After some time at the salad bar, Frenchy moved locations within the kitchen.

Throughout all this time, Frenchy was a student favorite. He also quickly became known for his music. While cooking, Frenchy never failed to bring along a large speaker. He played music loud enough for all to hear, and began a suggestion list for students to add song requests.

During his time at Carleton, Frenchy said that “there is not one experience or one event that is the best.” Instead, he appreciates his collective time at Carleton—from conversations in passing with new and different students every day, to bigger moments like the year he DJ-ed at Spring



Frenchy Jacob pictured in the Winter 2011 edition of the Carleton Voice.

Photo: Kayla McGrady Berger '05.

Concert. There is one thing for sure that Frenchy has made clear—his love for the students cannot be overstated.

This year is actually Frenchy's second retirement. "When I turned sixty-five and a half, I retired, and then the director offered me a job as a checker, because I loved the students," French said. Since taking the job, "I loved it ever since," he added.

Before working at Carleton, or even living in Minnesota, Frenchy lived in Germany, where he was born and raised. So this begs the question: why does everyone call him Frenchy?

At age fifteen, Frenchy moved to the United States and started high school. "I couldn't speak any English when I moved over here," Frenchy said. He was an avid language learner, so while he was learning English he also took introductory Latin and French at school. He stuck with these languages and, he said, "the next year I took second-year Latin and second-year French and Spanish." From there, the path to his nickname was relatively straightforward. Simply because he was taking French, "some students in high school gave me the name Frenchy," he said. It caught on, and soon his whole French class was using the name. Needless to say, Frenchy stuck; and he's been going by the nickname ever since.

Checking at LDC is the ideal situation for Frenchy because it puts him right at the front of the dining hall where he has an opportunity to connect with students and experience the energy they bring into the dining hall every day. And although seeing so many students every day brings Frenchy joy, unfortunately, COVID-19 has had an effect on this job. There were few students on campus during Spring Term, and interactions are limited now. "Ever since COVID-19 started I can't connect, get close to the students no more," Frenchy said, "and that's why I'm leaving soon."

Frenchy's optimism and the joy he derives from his job is tangible. For years, when swiping into LDC, students have always known that they will be greeted kindly. Frenchy says that he does not have any specific plans for retirement, but he is excited to relax and have some more free time, especially once the end of the pandemic comes.

The print edition of this article incorrectly stated that there were no students on campus this past Spring Term. About 300 students remained on campus in the spring while classes moved online due to COVID-19.

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Lindsay Boettiger

Staff Writer

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Green in a global crisis: a look at the effects of the pandemic on waste production



In conversation with Dr. Nels Elde '95, evolutionary geneticist and MacArthur “Genius Grant” recipient

Carls embrace a different pandemic reality in Denmark



Student artist Ondine headlines first Live @ the Record Libe show of the year



Carleton presidential search committee members announced

BY [RAY XU](#) ON NOVEMBER 14, 2020

On Friday, November 6, Carleton's Associate Vice President for External Relations Joe Hargis sent out an email requesting feedback to inform the work of the Presidential Search Committee. The committee began meeting after all seventeen members were confirmed in late October.

The search for the next Carleton president began in August after President Steven Poskanzer announced his decision to step down in July 2021. The committee was created by the Board of Trustees shortly after the announcement.

Student members of the committee—Lucas Demetriades '22, Andrew Farias '21 and Molly Zuckerman '22—were selected in the following two months. Other members of the committee include five trustees, four faculty, two staff and three alumni.

Farias, the president of the Carleton Student Association (CSA), said he was “reached out to by committee chairs [to] bridge the connection between students and the administration [and] connect with varying groups on campus.” Farias’s goal as a committee member is to “uplift student voices” and “reach different parts” of the student body.

Farias and other student committee members are working toward greater engagement with the student body. A schoolwide email said community members can get involved by providing feedback on institutional priorities through a previously emailed survey that closes on November 19.

The survey asks what traits and experiences people are looking for in the incoming president, what distinctive aspects of Carleton might attract someone to the presidency and what presidential responsibilities people see as most important.

Farias hosted a Zoom meeting that was open to the entire student body on November 12, and will host “office hours over the next couple of weeks” to “listen to what people are saying.”

Farias said that the committee is “lacking in Black voices” which makes it important to “do outreach more than ever,” especially in “bring[ing] qualities and ideas” of underrepresented voices like first generation students and students of color. He plans to achieve this through discussions with “individual student organizations [involved in] cultural, environmental and political advocacy.”

After these rounds of feedback, Farias said members of the committee will put together a “job description based on [desired] characteristics and qualities.”

He revealed that one of the challenges in navigating this process is “balancing transparency [toward students] and privacy of applicants.”

On Carleton’s [presidential search website](#), co-chairs Cathy Paglia ’74 and Wally Weitz ’70 wrote that the committee has agreed to abide by the search process for Carleton’s twelfth president and “maintain strict confidentiality.” All members are not permitted to disclose information about individual applicants.

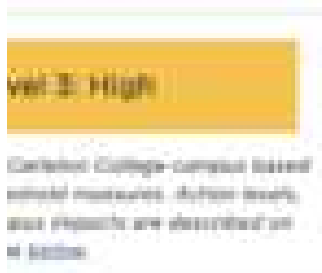
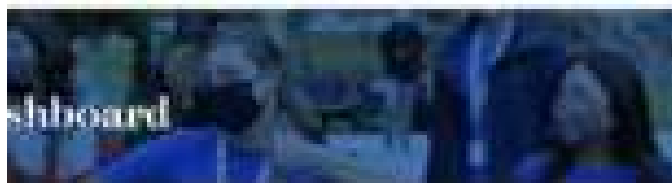
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January 13, 2021



Sunrise Carleton marches for climate justice

BY [MAYA HILTY](#) ON NOVEMBER 14, 2020

On Saturday, November 7, around 80 students marched with Sunrise Carleton through campus and downtown Northfield. Participants were separated into six waves of marches that spanned nearly the entire day, advocating for—among other things—the passage of the Green New Deal.

Sunrise Carleton is a chapter of the national Sunrise movement, which was founded in 2017 to organize youth around climate justice. Specifically, members organize to make climate change a priority across America, create green jobs, combat the political influence of fossil fuel executives and “elect leaders who stand up for the health and wellbeing of all people,” according to the Sunrise [website](#).

“What inspired me to join Sunrise was their intersectional approach to climate justice and willingness to work with other movements to achieve our collective goals,” said Liora Newman ’23. “What inspires me to keep working with Sunrise is that I continually see demonstrations of the collective power of the movement. Sunrise National as a whole is massive—there are hubs all over the country fighting for the same goals.”

Newman, along with Oren Lieber-Kotz ’21, is a lead on the Action Team that organized Saturday’s “March for a Just and Liveable Future.” Sunrise Carleton has two student hub coordinators—Rebecca McCartney ’21 and Maya Stovall ’23—and about 14 leads across various teams, which include Action, Community and Outreach, Communications, and Justice, Equity, and Anti-Oppression. The organization’s impressive leadership capacity was clear on Saturday, as multiple leaders guided each march, providing signs and matching t-shirts to participants. Sunrise Carleton has over 100 members of varying levels of activity.



Photo by Ben Lowry ’21

Each march made several stops to chant, sing, chalk and allow speeches by both organizers and participants alike. Because Biden’s victory was announced on Saturday morning, organizers attuned their messages to what current political changes will mean for the path ahead. “If young people sustain pressure, we can force the Biden administration to begin the decade of the Green New Deal,” said Jeremy Fleishhacker ’23 at the start of one wave of the march.

“Even though voting Joe Biden into office is a great step towards fighting the system that is destroying what we love and the planet we live on, it absolutely by no means is the end goal. He will eventually just become another obstacle to getting what this world needs,” said Adam Kamp ’24, during another speech.

During the march, participants chucked phrases about both what they voted for and what they imagine a just and livable future to look like. Responses included tribal sovereignty, reparations, housing for all, open borders, belief in science, healthcare for all—including mental health care, equality in education with inclusive and diverse curriculums, reproductive rights, intersectional feminism and solutions, representation, LGBTQ rights, celebration of Black queer lives, abolishment of prisons and ICE, labor rights and better wages, democratic norms, a circular economy, carbon-free institutions, renewable energy use and green jobs. In addition, many people wrote that they voted for love, kindness and compassion—and for their lives.



Photos by Ben Lowry '21

Speeches also stressed the urgency of the need for climate policy and climate justice in the United States. Aashutosha Lele ’23 condemned the failure of people in power to address the “climate justice crisis that we’ve known about since literally the 1980s... which is why now we don’t have the option to say things like incremental change. If they wanted incremental change, they could have started four decades ago, but they didn’t.”

“The time for change is now, it’s not 20 years from now, it’s not 30 years from now, it’s this year, next year, this month, and today,” reiterated Ella Stack ’22. Several people at the march emphasized that the path to climate justice is a long, long road, but reflecting on the day, Newman said, “I think we activated a lot of Carleton students to take action for climate justice. While we were marching in small groups because of COVID, we had so much energy that it didn’t

matter.” Sunrise leaders encouraged students to continue to speak up and engage in activism because, as Fleishhacker said, “Electing Biden was a start, but it certainly is not enough.”

Sunrise Carleton has a full hub meeting on November 19 to welcome any new members and discuss post-election strategy.

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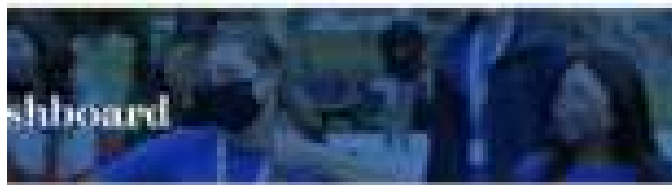


Maya Hilty

News Editor

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Level 3: High

Carleton College campus listed critical measures. Action levels, and impacts are described on a scale.

14-Day Infectio

Rate of lab-confirmed cases of faculty and staff and are in campus over the 14-day period through date.

Campus COVID-19 action level increased to “Level 3: High”



After Biden’s win, political divides persist on campus

Carleton presidential search committee members announced

Post donates 5,700 pounds of cereal to Northfield Community Action Center

Be First to Comment



Post donates 5,700 pounds of cereal to Northfield Community Action Center

BY [JULIA LULJAK](#) ON NOVEMBER 14, 2020

This past October, Post Consumer Brands, Malt-O-Meal's parent company, donated a whopping 5,700 pounds of cereal to the Northfield Community Action Center (CAC), a nonprofit serving Northfield residents in need. Because it was such a large amount, the cereal was initially stored at Bethel Church, and then was moved to the CAC, where it will be distributed. Carleton students and CAC volunteers assisted in the move.

Julia Braulick '20, an AmeriCorps VISTA member at the CAC, said, "The mission of the CAC is to provide basic necessities to people in Northfield, although we now have some arms that go into Rice County as well." This includes things like food, utilities and help with access to educational materials.

Post has partnered with the CAC before, but this is the largest donation they have made so far. Braulick helped unload the cereal initially and said, "It was a lot." It came on pallets in a semi-trailer, and volunteers from Carleton and the CAC helped unload it.

One of the students who volunteered was Sarah Allaben '21, a program director of the Food Recovery Network. This Carleton program works to reduce food waste on campus and fight food insecurity, primarily in Northfield and Faribault. Allaben helped move the cereal from Bethel Church to the CAC, and said, "It was a very impressive amount of cereal. Just boxes stacked really high." The cereal was loaded into cars and driven to the center. The move was done in two days—originally, it was supposed to be only one day, but there was so much cereal, it was decided that another day was needed.

The donation has been beneficial to the Food Shelf, the branch of the CAC that works to combat food insecurity, although they are still deciding how they will distribute all of it. So far, some of the cereal has been distributed at various pop-up distribution centers. These centers are set up in parking lots, and because of the pandemic, food is put directly into people's cars. Allaben helped

at one of these distributions, saying, “I saw the cereal that we had moved go into people’s cars. It was great to actually see that cereal put into the hands of people who needed it.”

Braulick was unsure why Post was able to donate this much cereal, but said, “It’s great that they can redirect it to be used somewhere else.”

Jordan Gaal, a senior communications associate at Post, echoed this sentiment, saying when they have excess, “instead of sending that cereal to a landfill or having it turn out to be waste, [they] send that cereal to a community partner or a food bank because that cereal is still a good and edible product.”

Post frequently has excess cereal as a result of their sales process, Gaal said. Customers, which are primarily large stores like Walmart, place orders for certain amounts and if those orders are changed, Post ends up with the extra. Gaal emphasized that they always try to donate it, as “it’s a lot better than having it go to a landfill.”

Gaal said Post works hard to “create positive change for people and our communities. This includes product donations to organizations like the Northfield Community Action Center,” but is not limited to this organization. Besides the CAC, they support the Channel One Regional Food Bank, a food bank in Rochester; Second Harvest Heartland, a branch of Feed America located in Minnesota; Northfield Public Schools and other local groups. Gaal said Post tries to minimize the amount of miles the product travels so they are “impacting communities the most where we live and work.”

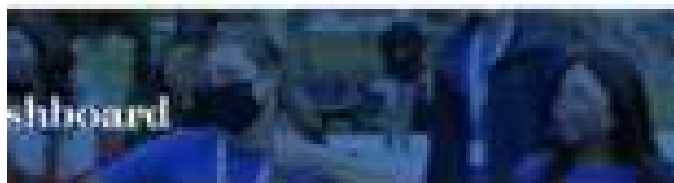
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Recruiting during COVID-19: a novel test for Carleton coaches

BY [ZAK SATHER](#) ON NOVEMBER 14, 2020

Recruiting student athletes to Carleton has been a major challenge for varsity athletic teams throughout the coronavirus pandemic. Traditionally, Carleton's athletic programs host prospects from across the nation during the fall and winter months, when recruits have the opportunity to explore campus, attend classes and spend a night with their potential future teammates.

This year, however, due to campus health guidelines, such visits are rare, and when they do occur, coaches and players must refrain from meeting directly with recruits and their families on campus. To prevent the spread of COVID-19, recruits are allowed to visit campus, but they must avoid contact with others, and are encouraged to refrain from entering buildings. As the November 15 Early Decision 1 deadline rapidly approaches, teams are doing their best to fill roster spots with quality talent.

With opportunities for in-person recruiting sapped, coaches have had to get crafty with how they navigate virtual recruiting and Carleton's COVID-19 health guidelines.

"To make up for the lack of in-person visits, we have done quite a bit via Zoom," said Swim Coach Andy Clark, "including virtual tours hosted by current team members, virtual Q&A panels and a virtual 'game night.' We're hoping these experiences can have a positive impact on our recruits in terms of how Carleton and our team would be a great fit for them, but as good as the virtual experiences can be, they don't measure up to connecting with our recruits in person," Clark added.





Photos by Harper Brooks-Kahn

Similarly, the women's soccer team has shifted its recruiting efforts to a virtual setting. "We touch base with our recruits on the phone and via zoom, as well as outdoors with masks on in downtown Northfield when possible," added Women's Soccer Coach Jessica Mueller, explaining how coaches are allowed to meet with recruits in downtown Northfield while maintaining social distance. From there, coaches can provide directions to recruits and their families for an outdoor walking tour of campus.

"I've been lucky enough to work with some amazing faculty members who have stepped up and conducted calls and Zoom meetings with our recruits to speak more about the academic side of the college," added Mueller. "In my opinion, our faculty are a huge component of what makes Carleton special, and the experience in the classroom is everything. Still being able to showcase that to our recruits has been a game-changer for us."

Carleton's exceptional professors are undoubtedly one of the college's biggest recruiting draws. However, small discussion-based classes don't translate as well to a virtual setting as large lectures do, which may put Carleton at a slight recruiting disadvantage when compared to larger universities that are less affected by the shift to online learning. Traditionally, one of Carleton's main selling points to recruits is the accessibility and quality of its professors, and recruits almost always leave impressed after sitting in on a class or lecture during a recruiting visit.

"I accepted my coaching position at Carleton because of the academic reputation for undergraduate teaching," said Women's Cross Country Coach Donna Ricks. "Our professors are among the best in the country, and for recruits to no longer have the opportunity to observe our professors directly in their element, to meet with them after a class, or to see the inside of our academic buildings and athletic facilities, has undoubtedly hurt our recruiting efforts. Not many students are going to attend a college sight unseen. They want to feel the vibe in person to get a sense of whether or not Carleton is the place they would like to spend their next four years."

Ricks relayed her frustration with the inability to connect with recruits in-person. "Families are cautious about flying out to Carleton, and our location in the Midwest makes it difficult to drive out for a weekend visit," she mentioned. "And even when a recruit and their family decides to drive out, they can no longer spend the night with a student in the dorms, eat a meal in the

cafeteria, study in the library for an evening vor make cookies with future teammates at the Dacie Moses House.”

In spite of Ricks’ understanding of the necessity for strict health guidelines, she nevertheless expressed concern. “Of course I’m concerned for the future, not just for our team, but for education overall.”



Photos by Harper Brooks-Kahn

A common theme expressed by multiple coaches is that recruits have changed what they’re looking for in their college experiences. Unfortunately, some of these shifts in attitudes don’t fit well with an expensive residential liberal arts college like Carleton. Swim Coach Andy Clark addressed these changes:

“There are so many new things our recruits are now considering which weren’t necessarily there before the pandemic, like concerns over college costs in an economy where job security is less certain, questions of personal safety and wellness in and the prospect of remote learning are all things recruits have to deal with in this day and age.” Clark also expressed the increased desire among athletes to choose a school in close proximity to home should public health issues worsen again in the future.

Carleton has put in place some of the most stringent – and effective – COVID-19 safety measures in the country. While this is better for the health of its students and faculty (competitor schools such University of Wisconsin La Crosse are sporting up to 35% positivity rates), schools with laxer restrictions now enjoy a leg up in athletic recruiting.

Strict restrictions mean that coaches are limited in their ability to hit the road and recruit. While the internet may boast player statistics and film of high school competition, a coach's in-person eye for talent is an essential part of the recruiting process. Coaches need to watch competitions to understand how a certain player will fit into their team. Unfortunately, attending high school athletic events in person has proven to be a risky endeavor during the pandemic.

"Within the MIAC, many schools conducted face-to-face campus visits all summer long, and their coaches are now out at high school meets recruiting," said Men's Cross Country Coach Dave Ricks. "I considered going to a high school sectional meet, but decided against it because I thought that I should play by the same rules that our student body is playing by."

Thankfully, the NCAA has been nimble in its response to the pandemic by lifting restrictions so that coaches may effectively adopt new recruiting strategies. Prior to the pandemic, video conferencing was limited to independent meetings between a single player and coach. To accommodate recruiting efforts, the NCAA is allowing for video interaction between coaches and recruits to accommodate multiple prospects at a single time.

"This has been a life-saver for us," said Head Football Coach Tom Journell. "As you know, it's hard to visit Carleton for most people during normal times. Now all of a sudden we've had over 750 virtual visitors since May, which has really allowed us to narrow our focus and recruit certain players earlier on in the recruiting process than in previous years."

With seven sought after football recruits already committing Early Decision I to Carleton, Journell and his staff are optimistic about the incoming recruiting class that is beginning to form before their own eyes. Ironically, the football program has enjoyed a lot of success this recruiting year with thanks to new opportunities made possible via Zoom. Throughout the summer and fall, coaches and players hosted weekly recruiting sessions on zoom with upwards of 20 recruits per session.

Thanks to aerial drone footage of campus attractions such as Willis Hall, Laird Stadium and Goodsell Observatory, the team has managed to put together an attractive virtual presentation to recruits, who only need to log on to their computer to feel like they are on campus and interact with current players.

"We've been getting an amazing turnout at our new virtual information sessions, which were not an option prior to COVID-19. It's been really exciting to see our program connect with student athletes all over the country and the world," said Assistant Football coach Brian Erickson.

Overall, Carleton coaches remain relatively optimistic about recruiting prospects for future seasons. After all, Carleton competes with a relatively small group of schools for the small fraction of students smart enough to gain admission, athletic enough to compete at the Division III level and strange enough to want to come here at all. While Carleton's appeal may not always shine as bright on Zoom, Carleton's innovative coaches and the school's academic reputation are strong enough to support a bright athletic future.

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Zak Sather

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A (socially distanced) look at Carleton practices this fall

Athletes say goodbye to much-loved strength coach

Carleton cancels in-person sports competitions for Winter Term 2021



A photographic look at sports practices around campus

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Why you should fill out the Presidential Search Survey

BY [MAYA HILTY](#) ON NOVEMBER 14, 2020

I want people to have three takeaways from this article:

- (1)** Go fill out the Presidential Search Survey emailed to all faculty, students and staff by Joe Hargis last Friday and express support for diversity goals if you believe they're important. The survey must be completed by next Thursday, November 19.
- (2)** Read Chapter Seven of Beverly Tatum's book "Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria?"—all students and everyone with access to Carleton's library resources have access to the online version of this book.
- (3)** Follow the email updates of Carleton's Presidential Search Committee and continue to speak up about what criteria should be used to select Carleton's next President.

I don't claim to be an expert on affirmative action after reading the chapter in Beverly Tatum's book called "White Identity, Affirmative Action, and Color-Blind Racial Ideology," but I don't need to be an expert to see that we are right now at a critical stage in the search for Carleton's next president. I think that a lot of noise from the Carleton community **within the next week** has the opportunity to significantly shape the Board of Trustees' choice of Carleton's next president.

Here is, briefly, why we should be invested in this. For one, statistics tell us that after President Poskanzer, we will probably have another white, male president. College presidents are overwhelmingly white men. [Inside HigherEd](#) explains that the demographics of college presidents have changed little over the past 30-40 years and, surprise, continue to be older white men with a doctoral degree in education. In 2016, 70 percent of presidents were men, and 83 percent of presidents were white, while only five percent of presidents were women of color, [Inside HigherEd](#) reports.

We as a Carleton community need to not only counter this trend, but also advance the diversity goals of Carleton. Do you remember the resounding [call from 2,000 Carleton alumni](#) over the summer for a 10-year strategic plan to address racial equality and equity on campus? It is Carleton's President who will have the option to create new strategic visions for the college (this is part of a question on the email survey!). Poskanzer is vacating a key administrative position that we can fill to continue to advance change on campus, and if more students and faculty really have opened their eyes to systemic injustice after the nationwide 'racial reckoning' we have seen in 2020, it doesn't make sense to choose a (white male) president who does not prioritize diversity, equity and inclusion.

Shaping the search committee's selection criteria is how we push Carleton to have a fair hiring process for our next President and at the same time advance diversity goals at Carleton. I pull heavily from Tatum's work to illustrate this. The key is what constitutes a "fair" hiring process: "Despite attempts to ensure a fair process, without the clarity of a clear set of institutional diversity goals to guide their decision-making, too often well-intentioned search committees find the 'best' person is yet another member of the dominant group," Tatum writes. In other words, when employers like Carleton rely on a process-oriented approach to affirmative action (a.k.a. equal opportunity employment practices), they often replicate the same discriminatory practices they are seeking to avoid; even with processes in place such as standard interview questions and evaluation criteria, racial bias still consistently and significantly affects multiple stages of the selection process (see pages 217-219 in Tatum's book).

The solution is not for members of Carleton's Presidential Search Committee to commit to reducing their implicit bias—which just may not be possible—but rather follow Tatum's and others' suggestions for how to set up a process in which committee members' subjective judgements about candidates can't affect the hiring decisions being made.

Tatum writes, "In a well-conceived and well-implemented affirmative action program, the first thing that should be done is to establish clear and meaningful selection criteria. What skills does the person need to function effectively in this environment? How will we assess whether the candidates have these required skills? Will it be on the basis of demonstrated past performance, scores on an appropriate test, or the completion of certain educational requirements? Once the criteria have been established, anyone who meets the criteria is considered qualified."

In addition, Tatum writes, "If one candidate meets the criteria but also has some additional education or experience, it may be tempting to say this candidate is the 'best,' but this one may not be the one who moves us toward our diversity goal. Because the systematic advantages that

members of the dominant group receive, it is often the case that the person with the extra experience or educational attainment is a person from the majority group. If our eyes are on our organizational goal, we are not distracted by these unasked-for extras... If it is not part of the criteria, it shouldn't be considered."

According to the process outlined by Tatum, once selection criteria have been established, candidates either are or are not qualified for the position—there are no “moderately” versus “highly” qualified candidates. From there, an institution’s top priorities should guide the process of selecting a final candidate.

This means two things for the Carleton community: we must unambiguously prioritize our diversity goals going into the presidential search process, and we must express support for selection criteria that are likely to be met by people of color as a way to fulfill such diversity goals. This can include criteria such as “experience working in multicultural settings, the experience of being supervised by managers of color, experience of collaborating in multicultural workgroups, of living in racially mixed communities, fluency in a second language, or substantial college coursework in the study of multicultural perspectives.”

The desired experiences listed on Carleton’s current survey include one or two, but not very many, of the above criteria; in addition, the survey contains many criteria which I do not feel are particularly important for our future president to fit, but which may present a barrier for people of color (who experience systematic disadvantages in our society) to meet the selection criteria. For instance, a question about desired experience on the survey asks respondents to check their top five desired experiences for candidates, but only includes two characteristics related to experience in multicultural settings (“Record of supporting inclusion, diversity, and equity efforts and initiatives” and “Experience in a global setting”), while it goes on to list about ten characteristics that are explicitly or implicitly concerned with a candidate’s previous leadership experience.

Essentially, there are many places to add comments on the survey, and it is vital that the Carleton community engage with this: go create the criteria that you think is important for the next President to fulfill. The survey is open to faculty, staff, students, alumni, parents and community members. This is our opportunity to speak directly to the search committee, and it matters: the criteria that the search committee establishes after this phase of work should ideally guide the entirety of the hiring process, up to selection of the final candidate—so spread the word and speak up!

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Maya Hilty

News Editor

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Voting is not harm reduction

BY [ALÉ COTA](#) ON NOVEMBER 14, 2020

The timing of this article is a bit late, but nonetheless it must be said. Whether or not your electoral, or uninformed, heart can take it, voting is not harm reduction. Thus, your centering of voting in your “activism” or organizing, which inherently pressures, harasses, and scapegoats voter-suppressed marginalized communities, is violent. It is violent in the sense that it does not recognize that this country is founded upon systems and tools of extermination: genocide, slavery, concentration camps, white supremacy, transphobia, homophobia, ableism, capitalism, settler-colonialism, prison-industrial-complex, prisons, and many more. Beyond that lack of recognition, however, exists the literal contradiction that happens when you center voting as the panacea when in actuality, it is reinforcing and perpetuating these systems. How so, you may ask? It is because you are working through liberalism, and at times rebranded as a multiculturalist framework. Liberalism makes you strongly hold that through more diversity and inclusion into these structures of power, we will be liberated; but I ask you to reconsider who is this “we”? It certainly will not be Black undocumented trans sex workers – one of the most marginalized communities ever, but also the ones doing the most work in regards to abolition.

In addition, we can see your hypocrisy and your lack of understanding of what it means to actually liberate and support the most marginalized as your efforts are not even reflected when current peers require assistance. Let me ask you: did you donate to the Ujamaa Collective, did you vote on the cultural fund initiative, did you open your wealthy, white purses when it came to mutual aid projects or reparations for Black, indigenous queer and trans folx, or was that one Black Lives Matter rally enough for you? Did you find satisfaction in performatively placing ACAB or BLM in your bios, in posting “quirky” photo ops, or perhaps in signing petitions for the Carleton administration to have a taskforce on anti-racist training? The point is, these actions do not amount to much, especially if you are non-Black, white, cishet, able-bodied, a citizen, etc. when you have not taken the time to sharpen your mind as a way to uncover the carceral, anti-Black violence that is inherent in our existence.

Many of you will posit that it does not have to be a binary choice, and I agree, for having a goal toward abolition is not binary at all; it is imaginative and deeply grounded in a rich history with

tangible solutions that do not rely on this imperial core state (the United States). However, you cannot honestly tell me or any of my fellow colonized communities that your phone banking, canvassing, and campaign tactics for the Biden-Harris 2020 ticket is doing “both” when in actuality you are providing a stamp of approval. You are perpetuating and approving not only the process of de-radicalization but also the literal violence that will happen under this administration (which is already happening). Further examples include the enactment of more drug criminalization policies, which will then massively increase prisons (much akin to slavery continued) and the concentration camps at the border because we have Miss KKKopmala as VP, and the king-of-domestic-and-international-war-crimes Biden as president. This does not even scratch the tip of the iceberg when it comes to the horrendous U.S. foreign policy on Latin America, Africa, and other colonized occupations like Palestine. Therefore, you cannot claim sustainability or plans for climate change if it does not include decolonization (as per Frantz Fanon’s definition: “Decolonization is always a violent event.”), which is at least returning the land to indigenous communities. Some of you then will read this sliver of violent policies I have listed and bark at me with “so you would rather Trump be president?” That to me, is a clear indicator that you have not understood what I am communicating whatsoever. If that is your go-to ace to shut down grassroots abolitionist or communist organizers who have been putting in the work to free their communities through creative methods that center community-care, then you need to sit down in your little corner of liberalism, prop open some books, and read.

You do not have the lived experience that grants you the ability to effectively speak on this subject. It does not matter if you have taken political science courses at Carleton. It does not matter whatever your Ph.D. white professors in Political Science, Economics, or any other harmful discipline claim. The people who are having their communities ripped apart and massacred for the utter and total accumulation of capital probably have a better grasp of what these structures are, and what solutions there should be.

For my fellow colonized people who may feel the same and argue for a “lesser-of-two-evils,” my emails are open for a good-faith basis conversation because I will always hold space for you.

Now I do not have the space to run you through a crash course on political education that is vital to the liberation from these dreadfully violent socioeconomic conditions; however, I can break down long-term and short-term solutions and attach a reading list to start.

Long-term: abolition of the state (if this sounds scary, I invite you to research the 8 to Abolition movement)

Short-term (that doesn't require complicity with the colonizer): mutual aid projects such as GoFundMe, Venmo-ing, community-based housing projects for unhoused gender non-conforming and trans people, political education for the masses, radical zine-making, protests (which cannot be peaceful or at least palatable to the state!), and listening to the needs of the community.

For more information on any of these complicated, interdisciplinary topics here are some brilliant, accessible scholars who have also done organizing and have written about their lived experiences of marginalization. If the communist texts put you off – that is for you to sit with why you feel that way. I will not be unpacking your U.S. imperial core propaganda. So before you get all up in arms about what has been said thus far, please I urge you with all the love in my heart to read Assata Shakur, W.E.B. Du Bois, Franz Fanon, Angela Davis, Karl Marx, Audre Lorde, George Jackson, and any other communist or abolitionist organizer. And if it is hard for you to read due to living with a disability or neurodivergence, there is a lot more material out there that is accessible and across mediums: from interviews, to music, to art, and anything else that is creative.

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The difference in “vibes” of America’s political parties

BY [DANE SWANSER](#) ON NOVEMBER 14, 2020

The office of the President of the United States finds itself facing a unique transferral of power. The chair of the President is an embodiment of our national values and determines the respect that our country deserves. Joe Biden and Donald Trump represent two parties with two very different attitudes towards their preferred leader. Joe Biden, a President-Elect who inspired the greatest voter turnout in a century, finds his support to be conditional among many progressive voters. Their support is conditional on the level of urgency Biden has promised to bring to very contested issues. Donald Trump, a man who has awakened a new voice within the Republican Party, finds himself in a very different position. The difference between the types of authority these two men hold among their respective parties is a testament to the growing volume of progressive voices among young Americans.

Biden leads a party that is beginning to accumulate young, diverse, and ever more progressive members. With the Democratic Party beginning to move against the grain of Joe Biden’s more moderate values, we are shaping up to see a presidency that is much more demanding in its expectations. Joe Biden’s voters have expressed their intent to hold him accountable for the urgency he has promised to bring to important issues of racial justice, climate change and health care. This represents a core difference in his position among party members when compared to Trump, whose supporters have facilitated a culture of defense against fake news. With this difference comes the hope of a Biden presidency that prioritizes the voices of the unheard. This is not to say that the Democratic Party is without issues, but instead to acknowledge that the new president represents a party that seeks to “restore the soul of America.” Even so, young progressive voices have made it clear that he does not represent the future of the Democratic Party, but a moderate version of progressive policies.

The Republican Party’s future is more uncertain now that Trump, assuming he will concede the election, will become a private individual. Trump has established himself as the loudest and primary voice among the new Republican Party that has molded around his image. With Joe Biden as President-Elect, the question of how Trump’s absence will affect how the party leads itself must be raised. The chance that the more moderate, anti-Trump Republicans will assume

control is possible, but not likely. More likely is the chance that Trump continues to inspire the Republican Party from the sidelines, holding on to power. His Chief-of-Staff has mentioned his desire to run again in 2024, suggesting that he intends to hold a prominent position in the party's leadership.

The difference in how these leaders hold authority within their party suggests the trajectory of polarized America. In the history of this country, not often have we seen the hijacking of a party's beliefs on such a large scale, and it is uncertain how these two parties will interact now that the Republican Party's loudest voice is no longer in power. America has experienced extreme internal conflict in recent years, and this transfer of power is the beginning of how its two parties will continue to work together within a very different relationship.

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Staff Writer

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My medical leave of absence: a tale of bureaucracy at Carleton

BY [N. MALTE COLLINS](#) ON NOVEMBER 14, 2020

Like most things at Carleton, my decision to take a medical leave of absence—and its aftermath—was fraught with difficulty.

It's not so much that the decision itself was tough to make; in fact, the relevant college administration was delightfully helpful in working with me to figure out the logistics of taking my Fall Term of sophomore year off.

The real difficulty ended up being everything after.

Which, in the grand scheme of things, doesn't necessarily amount to a ton, life-or-death-wise, but it reached a certain threshold of mild inconvenience that, to me, necessitated my writing about it. I have heard similar stories from many other people.

What perhaps was the first issue I encountered—after taking the time off itself for the term—was the prompt refusal of the Career Center to let me apply for externships my sophomore fall given I was taking a medical leave that term. Despite my (as far as I know) being on the campus directory, I was still (so far as I was told) prohibited from applying to the program given that I was, at that time, taking a medical leave—though I had informed the Carleton administration long before application deadlines that I intended to return to school the next term. To bar a student taking a medical leave of absence from applying to a career-helping program which all other on-campus Carls have access to felt extreme to me. Almost stigmatizing... sure, bar the people struggling with mental illness from important career opportunities—wonderful idea. Very Foucauldian...

Toward the end of Winter Term this year came the time for major declaration, as well. Since I'd taken the leave of absence, I wasn't yet able to declare my major until much later. This made sense to me until I realized that, because I was now off-cycle, I wouldn't be allowed to declare my major until the beginning of Fall Term. That felt weird. Why couldn't I declare essentially at the same time as on-cycle sophomores could, just one term later? Why would other off-cycle

sophomores have to wait an extra six or so months to do so? I was never given a clear answer. As a result of all this, I wasn't able to really, properly meet other students in my major, and I missed almost all the communications among the majors between April and September this year. I was also, because of my off-cycle status, passed from advisor to advisor in the interim. Especially because of the ongoing pandemic, this only increased my sense of isolation from Carleton and made an already atypical college experience even more so. That waiting period felt arbitrary and—again—unjustly isolating and hoop-jump-requiring given that the decision to take a term off had been the result of serious and pressing mental health issues, not just because, say, I felt like taking a break from school.

On top of all this, since students cannot accelerate their graduation until they declare their major, I was unable to get back on-cycle until I went through all the aforementioned bureaucratic rigmarole of declaring my major. While I am now back on-cycle and up to speed finally, it was immensely frustrating that it took over a year since deciding to take a term off to get back on-track graduation-wise.

While, again, these aren't the biggest possible issues that could have (or already have) arisen during my time at Carleton, they have for me (and I'm sure for others, too) combined in a kind of Gestalt-ish way to make me almost regret taking the term off—even though it was, for me at the time, almost literally a life-or-death decision. Overall, the decision to take a medical leave ended up requiring much more time, emotional energy and labor from me than I expected or should have been subjected to. And I attribute that all to bureaucracy.

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N. Malte Collins

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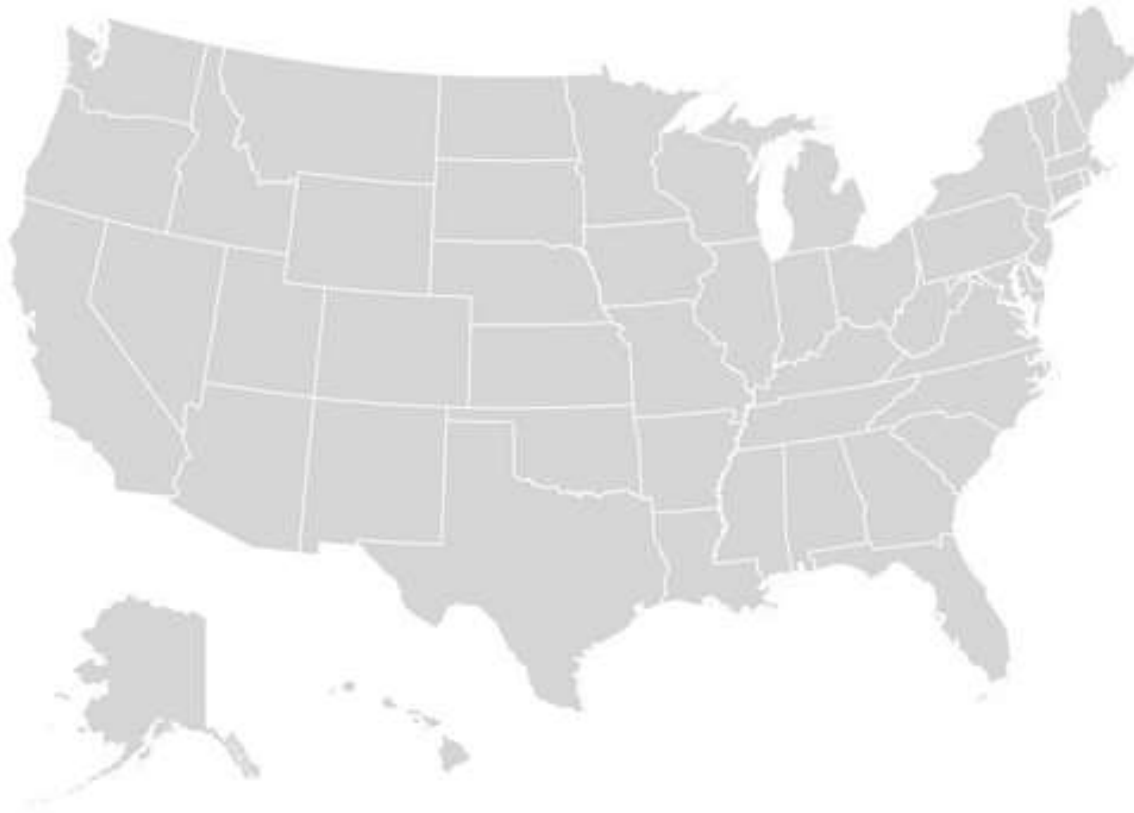
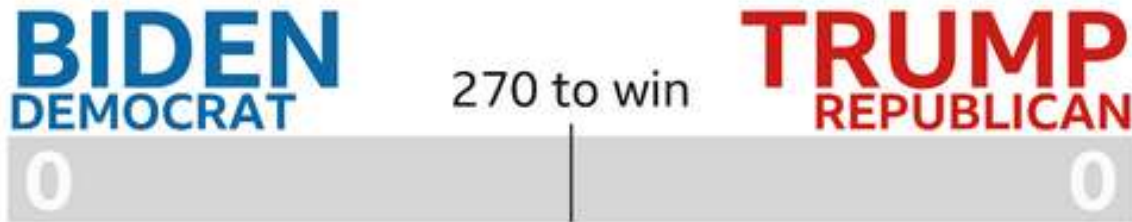
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January 13, 2021



US Government falls after nobody votes in presidential election

BY [BEN MORE](#) ON NOVEMBER 14, 2020

FiveThirtyEight forecasted that Joe Biden would win the presidency. Several mysterious pundits heralded a surprise Trump victory. Alas, no outlet, pundit, or model could have foretold the 2020 presidential election's outcome.

At approximately 7:01 PM, every single state went gray after certifying their unanimous winner—no one. For the first time in American history since the Lay’s Potato Chip Flavor Bracket, not a single United States citizen cast a vote. A visibly shaken Wolf Blitzer announced a surprise 3-day marathon of *The Office* instead of election coverage.

As the United States government collapsed upon itself, the Bald Spot’s team of political reporters took to the streets to make sense of this impending catastrophe. For some non-voters, such as Northfield resident Omar Cochran, the free world ends not with a bang but with a laugh:

“Man, really? You serious? That is crazy. You know, I was gonna write in Bernie. Can you imagine? [laughs] But, yeah. Just didn’t wanna have to choose between the lesser of two evils.”

Next, we visited Cochran’s neighbors, the Bellamys, who have a Biden-Harris sign in their yard. “What? No, no, you can’t be serious,” Carina Bellamy said, a glass of iced tea trembling in her hand. “He was supposed to—GERALD! Why the hell didn’t you vote? You had three months!”

“I thought you said you was gonna vote!” a kitchen-bound voice thundered back.

“No, Gerald! You know, I really wish you would listen to me more often. I ask you to do one darn thing, and now the government has fallen!”

“So what about the damn government? You wore that same skirt with the flowers on it to the Birnbaums’ three nights in a row!”

One anonymous student we passed on the way to town told us, “I saw all these get-out-the-vote posts all over Instagram, so I was like ‘Yeah, okay, our democracy’s gonna live to fight another day.’ I guess—I guess it’s not gonna, huh.”

“I didn’t even go to the Electoral College. My SAT was too low,” another student chimed in.

Putting the public behind us, the Bald Spot’s election analysis team embarked on the long drive to the heart of Washington D.C., where the mood was stoic and, in fact, non-existent. It was out behind the Capitol where we encountered a moving sight: a dark-suited procession, its members disproportionately wealthy, white, male, and elderly, standing before a solemn bonfire.

Slender flames—rendered sour by the kindling of campaign contributions—cowered before Mitch McConnell’s hollow eyes. “Without the votes that sustain me, it is only a matter of time before I

am called back to the earth that rejected me,” he stated grimly.

Newly-former House Majority Leader Nancy Pelosi concurred. “Come, join us,” she intoned, “for Congress is adjourned, and a Congressman separated from his Congress is driftwood separated from its stoic tree. So let us drift downstream into the great beyond.”

At that, the Congress uprooted itself and marched into the distance until they became indistinguishable from the lobbyists they once were. We heard the Potomac River gurgling angrily down the drain and the Washington Memorial retracting, with a grumble, into the earth.

A prison-stripped man cackled through the National Mall with the Lincoln Memorial riding piggyback. Who could stop him? There were no more democratically-elected county sheriffs.

President Trump, for his part, has not been seen in public since Election Night, leading some to speculate that he intends to exit public life.

The only clue he has given us was a tweet from 12:38 AM early this morning: “OVAL OFFICE DOORS CAN FIT HOSE BUT NOT INNER TUBE? PRESIDENTIAL HARASSMENT, VERY SAD!”

If you glance out the window just as the sun completes its descent, you may very well see the procession of 535 marching onward—free from their dark money into the darker night.

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Bald Spot announcement: Jack Brown is concussed

Germophiles



Arb Notes: Parsnips are forever — invasive species in the Arb

BY [ALEC LEONETTI](#) ON NOVEMBER 14, 2020

With winter weather finally on its way, many herbaceous invasive plant species in the Arboretum have died back, but the woody invaders remain. In the summertime, the Arb Crew works almost tirelessly to help eradicate invasive species in their prime to make the Arboretum ecosystem more diverse and safer for Arb users. In the US and across the world, invasive species threaten the balance of the natural environment: often these species are not native to the ecosystem they have invaded, and outcompete native organisms. If not kept in check, invasive species can severely reduce the biodiversity of a particular habitat. The work in the Arboretum is critical to keeping our natural lands in balance.

One such invader is Wild Parsnip (*Pastinaca sativa*). This species is native to Europe, and has caused significant problems in the US. This plant also produces a dangerous chemical: increased contact with the skin makes it very sensitive to UV radiation, and severe sunburns can develop if you are outside for a long time after initial contact. The Arb Crew spends a lot of the summer digging up these plants, armed with spades and protective gear, and collecting any seeds produced by the plant to further decrease chances of any more growing. Data on this species is collected every summer at many locations throughout the upper and lower Arb, and needs to be controlled for the safety of the public.

Two other problem plants are Honeysuckle species and European Buckthorn (*Rhamnus cathartica*), both of which are woody plants. These two species have taken over a considerable amount of the Arboretum, and are very difficult to control, as they have nothing keeping them in check.

These plants must be cut down, as their root systems are very difficult to pull out from the ground, and then killed with herbicide. This work is slow and tedious, but it is necessary for the sake of the ecosystem.

The work of eradication of invasive species is an ever-ongoing project, and there is still so much to do. Educating yourself about invasive species affecting your area is one of the best things you

can do. Community efforts and understanding is necessary to protect our natural habitats against invasive species.

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