

# The Delphian

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The Voice of the Students

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*See Inside: Special Holiday Coverage!*

## Veterans and ROTC Students at Adelphi Balance Studies with Service

BY HUSSEIN ALI RIFATH

Many students enter college intending to pursue white-collar careers. But Mina Fofana, a junior health sciences major, originally sought to attend medical school and serve the country as a combat medic. Participating in the US Army's Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) program inspired her to take a different path as an army officer.

ROTC programs allow students across the country to pursue a college education while receiving military training to become officers in their chosen branch of service. Those who participate without entering a contract to serve have no obligation to do so; contracted students are offered academic scholarships that cover either their college tuition and fees or their room and board costs.

On account of the size of campus, Adelphi University does not have its own Army ROTC unit. Hofstra University Army ROTC's Culper Battalion hosts students from Adelphi, LIU Post, Molloy University, Nassau Community College, St. Joseph's University, Suffolk Community College, SUNY Farmingdale and SUNY Old Westbury who are interested in participating as crosstown cadets. Students from these visiting institutions take the same military

science classes and receive the same training, but any credits earned from this are usually not factored into their grade-point



**Mina Fofana, an Adelphi junior health sciences major, participates in an ROTC unit at Hofstra as a crosstown cadet.** Photo by Hussein Ali Rifath

average. For Fofana, this has meant waking up earlier than most Adelphi students living on campus and spending a lot of time at Hofstra's campus early in the morning.

"I go [to Hofstra] on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays around 5 am. Around that time, it's like an eight-minute

drive; there's no one on the road. It's not a hard commute. There are even people in the program who will give you rides

if you need anything. If you have no transportation, they'll bring you there—they'll help you out," Fofana said.

But undergraduates aren't the only ones who can both serve the country and attend college as a Panther. The university began as an all-women's college, but became coeduca-

tional after World War II, when many veterans began studying at Adelphi using the G.I. Bill. This tradition continues today: the University offers a tuition discount to veterans, their spouses and dependents and the Center of Professional & Continuing Studies houses a veteran student lounge at Levermore Hall.

According to Francesca Romagno, an academic advisor at the Veteran Support Department in the College of Professional & Continuing Studies, there are over 40 veteran students and close to 90 spouses/dependents of veterans at Adelphi pursuing undergraduate or graduate degrees.

Meanwhile, undergraduate students can join an ROTC program anytime between the beginning of their college career and the end of their sophomore year. Fofana began during her second year at Adelphi. The commitment has encouraged her to adopt responsible working habits.

"I always do my homework like the weekend before so I don't have to worry about doing work the night of," she said. "I don't have any late classes so I'm always in bed by 8:30 and I wake up around 4. I still get a good eight-plus hours of sleep."

Throughout her experience, she has enjoyed camaraderie with her fellow cadets.

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## History Class Hears Firsthand Experience from Formerly Incarcerated Speaker

BY JOSEPH D'ANDREA

Humanizing people past and present is essential to understanding history, as well as how we can move forward by being mindful on a case-to-case basis. On Nov. 11, students in Professor Cristina Zaccarini's US History of the Family II class heard from NahShon Jackson, who was incarcerated for 25 years, and who brought this mindset to students, using his own experience to highlight parts of the curriculum.

Learning about modern issues to connect what the class teaches to current events was Zaccarini's goal when inviting Jackson, who inspired thought on the role mindfulness plays in our criminal justice system.

Jackson is the community outreach director at Network Support Services, a nonprofit in New York State that supports incarcerated people during their imprisonment and parolees during their reentry into society. He said he believes that learning institutions such as Adelphi are advanta-

geous settings to get through to people because their minds are constantly being challenged, making them more open-minded to finding out solutions and, in the case of Jackson's initiative, why the concept of criminal justice is being introduced to them.

"We want to get students' minds open to the realities of what justice-impacted individuals face, growing up in their community: poverty, being exposed to relatives who may have been caught up in the criminal justice system and had an impact on them to make irrational decisions," he said. "I want to bring these individuals to the students so they have a better understanding of how the system operates."

An open book, Jackson explained his life story to the class and pointed to the importance of giving youth more attention and providing them with positive role models early on in life, especially if they suffer from poverty or if the situation at home is not ideal. From his experience, during one's formative years, it's easy to get involved with the

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## Alumni Share Career Tips at Expo



**Five alumni of the Communications Department offered career search advice and spoke about their job experiences to an audience of about 50 students and faculty at the 11th Annual Media Career Expo on Dec. 3 in Blodgett Hall room 109. The free event, which was hosted by the department and *The Delphian*, informed current Adelphi students about their job prospects and steps they can take now while still in school. The panel featured (from left): Janine Perez-LaSala '14, a freelance marketing and advertising specialist for Abrams books; Alexandria Faith '15, vice president and global marketing lead at Citi; Stephen Levine '13, an award-winning media producer currently working at News 12; Olivia Franks '20, '21, hockey operations office manager for the New York Islanders; and Rebecca Farina Levine '14, a film and video producer.** Photo by Joseph D'Andrea

## A Word from the Editor

It's that time of year, Panthers — the weather's getting colder, finals are looming, but at least we have the winter break to look forward to!

When December comes around, *The Delphian* always tries to make the most out of the holiday season. Our holiday issue this year continues that tradition with articles that highlight how our campus celebrates and how you can best get into the holiday spirit.

On page 3, you can read about the colorful winter wonderland that's been lighting up the Flagpole Lawn since Dec. 2. Still clueless about what to gift your loved ones? Flip to page 4 to read our annual gift guide so some ideas start brewing before it's too late. Page 5 has an article about the year's best video games so that might help out in your gift-buying process, too. But why do we even exchange gifts? If you want to dive into this psyche, go to page 6. Our paper always makes sure to include a variety of student voices, so on that same page, you can learn about how Panthers from different backgrounds celebrate this time of year.

Our front page has a story that looks back on Veterans Day to give a spotlight to a current ROTC student, as well as a piece about a speaker who used his life experience to help others through mindful teachings. For a dose of current events, head over to page 7 where you can read political editorials post-election.

Returning to the winter trends, page 5 has an article about what your wardrobe should look like this season. And to continue with fashion, a piece on page 7 looks at the "fast fashion" phenomenon.

If you find yourself eating on campus often, the article below might interest you; Adelphi's Dining Advisory Committee wants to hear your ideas. And on page 8, we continue to highlight our athletes and coaches.

Thank you to our writers and editorial staff for their work as we close out the year, and thank you for reading! Make sure to follow our Instagram, @the\_delphian, for updates about the paper. Have a happy holiday, Panthers, and we'll see you in 2025.

Joseph D'Andrea '25  
Editor-in-Chief 🐾



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## Dining Advisory Committee Provides a Forum for Student Ideas

BY MATTHEW WENZ

If you're one of the 1,103 students on the Adelphi meal plan—or any one of the commuters, faculty and staff who eat on campus each week—then you might want to have a way to share your opinions and ideas about campus dining. The Dining Advisory Committee (DAC), which is in its sixth year, aims to engage with people across campus to ensure that dining services meet the needs and expectations of the entire university community.

According to Angelo Gagliano, the associate director of Operations and Event Services in the Office of Auxiliary and Event Services: "The goal of these meetings is to amplify the voices of those on campus so that we can better understand their needs and offer the best possible service to the university. Not only does it allow us to communicate with the Adelphi community, but we also get to know individuals on a more personal level at these meetings."

Gagliano explained that through the DAC, there is a platform to review dining programs, explore new menu options and actively solicit feedback from members on various aspects of dining.

"A key component of the DAC's work is Dining's We Heard You program, which specifically focuses on

gathering and addressing student requests," he said. "This initiative allows Dining to share what students have voiced as important, and more importantly, demonstrate the tangible changes that have been based on that feedback. The DAC ensures that students have a direct role in shaping the dining experience, and it allows Dining to continuously improve services in a way that aligns with the community's preferences."

This committee will meet six times throughout the year on Zoom for about an hour. The DAC will collect feedback about dining on campus and take suggestions for new meal ideas. It will include members of Dining Services, faculty, staff and students. Many campus organizations, such as Greek Life, the Student Government Association, Res Life, Athletics, and other student-led clubs, are invited to send representatives to the monthly meetings and provide feedback.

Christopher Leonard, a junior on the cross-country team, is among the new members. "I am extremely excited for this new opportunity to help increase the partnership between Dining and Athletics," he said. "As a SAAC [Student-Athlete Advisory Committee] member and dining intern, the opportunities for collaboration are immense, and I can't wait to share what we have in store for this year."

Leonard entered his second year as an intern for Dining Services this semester. "With athletes primarily consuming the most food on campus, I see my position as an opportunity to better not only the student-athlete experience but the dining experience as a whole for all students," he said.

The DAC is encouraging all students, faculty and staff to attend as many meetings as possible and take part in this unique and fun opportunity, as you can connect with different people across campus and have a voice in what the dining landscape is like on campus.

"Overall, the DAC plays a vital role in making campus dining more responsive, inclusive and reflective of the diverse needs of our student body," said Gagliano. "We believe that by working together—students, faculty and staff—we can create a dining environment that enhances the overall university experience."

Gagliano said that DAC is looking for students to join the committee. "It is a great way for students to get involved and collaborate with other members of the campus community," he said.

Email him at [agagliano@adelphi.edu](mailto:agagliano@adelphi.edu) or Dining's Instagram account at [eatingatadelphi](https://eatingatadelphi). Follow the Instagram account for the most up-to-date information regarding any news and events happening in the future. 🐾

## Innovation Kitchen

**The campus eatery has expanded significantly since the end of last semester, most notably turning Innovation Kitchen in the University Center into a place where you can grab a quick sweet treat while on campus, like an ice cream bar, pies, cookies and pastries. A favorite treat for Christopher Leonard are the chocolate-covered strawberries. "Freshly made every day? Doesn't get better than that."**

## Admissions Office Holds Winter Wonderland Tours

BY ARPAN JOSAN & SARA HELD

Adelphi University's Office of Admissions will be hosting its first Winter Wonderland tour this month. The Office, which advertises the university's academic programs and supports prospective students throughout the enrollment process, intends to bring holiday cheer into its work on campus with this new initiative.

The idea was created by the members of the Office's Specialization Tour Committee, which planned other holiday-themed tours on campus, such as October's Spooky tours. The committee consists of student employees of the Admissions Office, including Gabriella Baccari, Joanna Jordan, Rashmi Vankundre, Emilia Karpel, Aani Mehta and Grace Wayar.

The first Winter Wonderland tour,

which was hosted on Dec. 5, featured a wide range of holiday-season staples. Shannon Jones, the visit experience team manager at the Office of Admissions, said she is "very excited for our hot chocolate bar and to see all of the lights and decor that our CSCE [Center for Student and Community Engagement] placed all around campus." She added that there will be "some treats, some great music and a few appearances from PAWs."

Wayar, a senior majoring in history, shared how she participated in preparing for these tours. "I attend a biweekly meeting going over how we will be decorating for the event as well as who is participating so that we have enough people," she said. "I helped to decorate the front desk area as well so that it was welcoming for the guests."

Mehta, a junior psychology major, was asked about what she is most look-

ing forward to with this event. She said she is "most excited to see the visitors' reactions to this unique tour."

Karpel, a sophomore biology major, said that planning these tours needed more



**The campus was lit up with holiday lights in celebration of the season.**

Photo by Hussein Ali Rifath

imagination. "When you think of a spooky campus tour, you can think right away that there would be jump scares, candy and Halloween decor. But with Winter Wonderland we had to think a little more outside the box for the entertainment aspect."

Employees in the Admissions Office were asked to loan or donate holiday-themed decorations to set the scene in their lobby. Those working this event will be dressed up in festive attire such as ugly sweaters as well as snowmen and reindeer costumes. Families who will be attending these tours have the opportunity to view the campus as it gets ready for holiday festivities. On Dec. 2, the university hosted its annual tree lighting, meaning that individuals attending the Winter Wonderland Tour were able to experience the holidays on campus. ❄️

## Mindfulness and the Justice System Highlighted in History Class

*Continued from page 1*

wrong crowd because young minds are more impressionable. These connections can possibly have detrimental effects down the line, which is what Jackson experienced. Having been imprisoned for 25 years for a crime that he explained he neither committed nor was indicted for, students were exposed to the faults of the criminal justice system firsthand.

Influenced by the injustices he and others faced, Jackson began helping fellow community members at Otisville Correctional Facility prior to his release from prison in May 2017, and soon after, he became the community outreach coordinator for Network Support Services after reentry. In this role, he assesses and researches their legal issues, and helps with parole and rehabilitation, including mindfulness exercises. With Network Support Services, he works with such individuals to ensure they have the necessary documents of identification and medical issues taken care of to make their transitional process back into society and enrollment into programs smoother.

As the course's name suggests, Zaccarini's class tackles the history of the American family, ranging from Confederate fathers to those on the frontier to modern-day mothers, fathers and children. Jackson has spoken to Zaccarini's past classes several times but this case was special. A majority of the students in the class are future teachers and history majors, and Zaccarini's appreciation of the students' questions and comments encouraged her to make sure Jackson had an opportunity to drop in sometime this semester.

"Since the class is framed through

the subfield of the history of emotions, student questions were likewise geared toward eliciting responses that highlighted NahShon's experiences from a humanistic perspective," Zaccarini said.

In addition to teaching history at Adelphi, Zaccarini is a certified mindfulness instructor and co-founder of the Mindfulness Resolution Project along with Jackson,



**NahShon Jackson (left) and Cristina Zaccarini (right) in the short documentary "Prison Reform and Mindfulness 101," about their efforts to bring mindfulness to students.** Photo by Great-Jones.com and Vimeo

a program that enables transforming lives, changing society and giving individuals a second chance at life after imprisonment. Her passion for assisting justice-impacted individuals led to her meeting Jackson in 2017.

As Jackson puts it, the Mindfulness Resolution Project promotes awareness among students that "allows us to have

conversations so that students get a better understanding that anybody can make mistakes and that justice-impacted individuals are human beings who have compassion."

"NahShon teaches us that not only can we move past our worst moments, but do so with eloquence, confidence and tremendous power, and be an inspiration to all," Zaccarini said. "He works tirelessly to help those

returning from incarceration, helping with housing, work and all vital resources needed. Through Network Support Services, he works to improve the circumstances of those in dire need so that they not only refrain from committing further crimes, but also become a source of uplift for others, just as NahShon is doing."

Sophomore history major Michael Fevo-

la said that Jackson's story helped him understand how tough the US justice system is on incarcerated and formerly incarcerated people.

"It's important to hear from NahShon so we can stop de-humanizing incarcerated people and labeling them simply as terrible people because we don't know what went through their heads at the time of a crime, if they were mentally ill or if that person even committed the crime," Fevola said. "In America, there have been stories of people who were executed after being found guilty, just to be found not guilty after the fact because of DNA evidence by officials who didn't want to correct the mistake. Stories like NahShon's are important to tell so we can explain to students now and in the future that our justice system has made some wrong decisions."

Zaccarini said that connecting the past to the present through the understanding of human experience is her core teaching goal, and that speakers can bring personal experiences to the classroom that connect the course's readings to real life.

"NahShon allows students to understand how profits from the incarceration of individuals, and generational familial circumstances related to incarceration and lack of resources, contributed to his experience, rather than just reading about it," she said. "While most history classes teach students how to understand the human experience woven into events that have already passed, a great, dynamic speaker like NahShon can link the past to a positive dynamic for helping to correct the mistakes of the past. ❄️"

## AU Veterans and ROTC Students Balance Studies with Service

*Continued from page 1*

"You meet a lot of new people and they're like my closest friends," she said. "Most of them live in New York and I live in Massachusetts. A lot of them have driven out to Massachusetts just to see me. I've driven down here on breaks just to see them; they become your family."

Fofana continued, "You're with them three days out a week. Sometimes we have three-day weekends where we're

sleeping in the woods together and you just get close to them. The people at the program will help you if you need anything. I know a lot of people; they'll stay in our [Hofstra ROTC] lounge over there for hours helping you study for chemistry or any classes you need help with."

At the same time, she said she feels closely connected to the Adelphi campus. "I still go to classes. I still have normal friends. And I still do normal things every

other college student does. I just wake up earlier than most college students do on Monday, Wednesday and Friday," she said. "But then I just go back to my regular life. I'm only there [at Hofstra] early in the morning and it's before any of my friends on campus even wake up. There will be times that I'm leaving to go to ROTC and they'll just be going to sleep."

There are times when ROTC activities might conflict with a student's academic

schedule. Fofana has found her Adelphi professors supportive during such circumstances. "You just let your professors here know you need a break or anything like that or an extension. They'll give you a break and they'll help you," she said.

Reflecting on her time studying at Adelphi while participating in Army ROTC, Fofana said, "I just love the program. It's with good people, you'll have fun and it's a good opportunity." ❄️

# The Only Gift Guide You'll Need This Holiday Season

BY KURANA DOOBAY

Regardless of what holiday you celebrate, we are officially in the season of giving. Don't know what to give? Here are some ideas of gifts your loved ones (or you) might appreciate. Don't forget to take advantage of those student discounts!

## For Your Mom

They can be hard to shop for because they're always saying they have "everything they need." But what about these two options for Mom?

Is she punny? Are you always butting heads? Here's her last nerve—to actually set on fire—the Mom's Last Nerve lavender-scented candle for just \$10 on Amazon. It comes in other colors and sentiments too.



Is she always cold, no matter how many blankets are on the couch? Maybe get her one she can wear. And since it's so cute, you can even "borrow" it from her. But that's what moms are for. It's only \$29.99 on Amazon.



## For Your Dad

How can you shop for your dad? He's supposed to be the one carrying all bags while the shopping is being done. But dads like to be appreciated too. Allow him to embrace his own inner childhood with these Legos of his favorite superheroes starting at just \$9.99 on the Legos site. They will be perfect for his desk or his outdoor workshop that you aren't allowed in.



Men typically ignore their self-care, but it's still important for them. Maybe sneak the \$26 Kiehl's Rare Earth Deep Pore Minimizing Clay Mask from Sephora into your dad's stocking this year. It will encourage him to pay attention to his pores. Just be sure to tell him he's in charge of restocking on his own.



## For Your Significant Other

Whether you've been dating for six months or six years, your partner deserves a gift this holiday season. Here are two suggestions:

The first gift is simply an experience. This could be a show on Broadway; a weekend trip away to somewhere you both enjoy; a concert to an artist you bonded over; sports tickets to your partner's favorite team; or even just a nice dinner. Do something you don't usually do together, something you've

been putting off, or something you've been wishing for. Now's the time!

The second gift is something handmade. Whether it's just a card or an entire scrapbook, handmade gifts are one-of-a-kind and so are relationships. You don't have to be particularly crafty or creative; your partner loves you for you. And whether you write a letter or crochet an entire blanket, they'll treasure it simply because it came from you.

## For Your Bestie

If they're trying to become a social media influencer, and you're sick of being a photographer for them, get your bestie and OCTOBUDDY phone case so that they can film their own TikToks and be their own photographer. It's only \$13 on Amazon. Just make sure you like all their posts!



Make your bestie a plant parent. Head over to Home Depot and grab them a succulent ranging in price, starting as low as \$5. The great thing about these, is they are very low maintenance and last year round, so they are perfect any time of year.

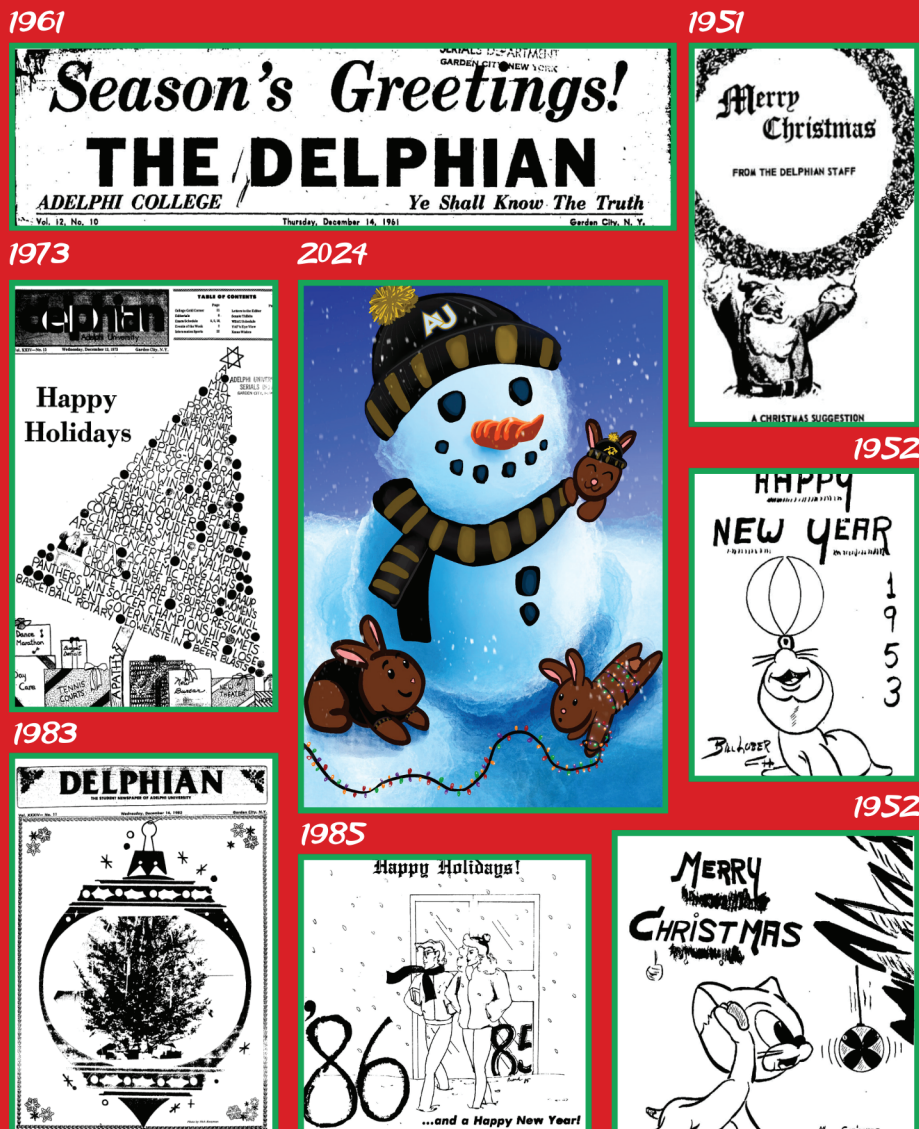


## For Yourself

Whatever you want! After a long, hard semester, you deserve it. Treat

yourself to whatever you've been holding back on. There's no time like now! 🐾

Since 1951, *The Delphian* has been an outlet for students of the university. When its first issue was published, Harry S. Truman was president; Nat King Cole was towards the top of the music charts; the paper included notices for "Adelphians [to] give a pint of blood for a fighting man in Korea;" and our campus was known as "Adelphi College." For this year's holiday issue, we looked back at our past issues, graciously preserved by University Archives, and picked out some images from past December issues to see how we've celebrated the holidays throughout the decades. Also included is a new drawing by senior art education major Gary Solorzano-Ruiz. Enjoy this festive look into the past! 🐾



# Fortnite Reigns Supreme: The Top Video Games of 2024

BY TAYE JOHNSON

In a year that has been brimming with innovation and creativity, the video game industry has continued to outdo itself, offering experiences that not only entertain but also push the boundaries of storytelling, graphics, and interactivity. Among these, a selection of titles have truly set themselves apart, capturing the hearts of gamers worldwide. We'll take a closer look at the top video games of 2024, including a phenomenon that has continued to evolve and dominate: Fortnite.

**1. Fortnite: Chapter Infinity - The Evolution of a Phenomenon** Fortnite has once again reinvented itself in 2024 with "Chapter Infinity," introducing a groundbreaking physics engine, vast new worlds to explore, and even deeper customization options. This is not just the game millions fell in love with in the late 2010s; it's an ever-changing universe that continues to redefine what a persistent online experience can be. Its key features include:

- Revolutionary physics engine adding unprecedented realism and fun
- New worlds that expand the Fortnite universe, encouraging exploration

- Enhanced customization for both characters and environments, giving players unparalleled control over their experience

**2. Cyber Odyssey 2077-A Dystopian Masterpiece** Returning to the list, "Cyber Odyssey 2077" has captivated players with its rich narrative and breathtaking visuals. Based on a dystopian future, this game offers a level of depth and interactivity that has set a new standard for RPGs, merging cutting-edge graphics with a complex story and immersive gameplay. Its key features include:

- Expansive open world with intricate detail and dynamic weather systems
- Deeply customizable gameplay and story influenced by player choices
- Trailblazing technology that brings characters and the world itself to life

**3. Echoes of the Ancients: Revival - Myth Meets Machine** In this action-packed RPG, players are transported to a realm where mythology and technology intersect. Echoes of the "Ancients: Revival" has not only delivered an exhilarating combat system but also a compelling narrative that bridges ancient lore with futuristic elements, making it a

standout title in 2024. Its key features include:

- Seamlessly integrated combat that's both strategic and visceral
- A unique blend of mythological elements with sci-fi aesthetics
- Expansive world-building that invites exploration and discovery

**4. Virtual Gridiron League - The Future of Sports Gaming** Sports simulations received a breath of fresh air with

"Virtual Gridiron League," offering unparalleled realism and player control. This title has taken community feedback to heart, delivering a sports gaming experience that is both challenging and rewarding, capturing the essence of the game like never before. Its key features include:

- Advanced technology that adapts to your playing style, offering a dynamic challenge
- Realistic physics engine that accurately simulates player movements and game dynamics
- Deeply immersive career mode, allowing players to live out their sports fantasies

As I reflect on the year 2024 in gaming, it's clear that innovation and creativity know no bounds. From the evolving landscapes of Fortnite to the new narrative depths explored in RPGs and the strategic complexities of empire-building titles, this year has been a testament to the industry's ability to captivate and surprise continuously. These games not only exemplify the technological advancements in gaming but also emphasize the importance of engaging storytelling and immersive gameplay. 🎮



2024 marked the year of advanced technology blurring the lines between reality and virtual worlds.

Photo by Freepik

# Chill Vibes: Your Hottest Winter Fashion Trends

BY LAURA STEINFORT

As the air gets crisp and the temperature plummets, your wardrobe must undergo a change. As gloves and scarfs begin to be unpacked, one can wonder how to look fashionable while still keeping warm during this chilly season.

**Chelsea Boots**

Besides normal high boots, another all-time staple in the boot section are Chelsea boots. They're classy and can be combined very easily with a high number of different pieces. The best advantage of Chelsea boots in this wintry season is the opportunity to wear thick and cozy socks, keeping you warm and healthy.

**Big Shawls**

A necessity this winter in order to look perfectly fashionable and prevent you from freezing are large scarfs. Here especially advantageous are basic colors like grey, brown tones or blue shades since this will allow you to style your winter fashion item in various settings and combinations. Besides, these colors are great if you want to keep your style a bit classier. But more colorful pieces and patterns can be equally fun and even brighten this dark season. If you want to go for more color in your scarf selection, pastel colors like light pink or baby blue are very popular choices.

**Burgundy Red**

No matter the season, red is a real trendsetter. But this time of year we're taking on a darker shade of red: burgundy red, a very elegant, opulent and bold color, but perfect to make this cold season just a little warmer. It can be a nice scarf, a clutch, a sweater or just a hair accessory. To make the burgundy pop even more, it seems sensible to pair this color with rather basic shades like grey or black.

Also fitting to this season's new color palette, we embrace different shades of

brown and beige, just like Jennifer Lawrence effortlessly and elegantly debuted the new trend color on the red carpet just a few weeks ago. Brown is the new black.

**Satin Items**

The most important and trendy item in this category are long satin skirts. They are perfect if you are looking for a nice option to keep you warm and cozy since underneath the skirt you can layer thick stacks of tights—still, letting you look sophisticated and very fashionable. It can be paired with a nice sweater, T-shirt or chic cardigan. On the rise are also vests and blazers in combination with long satin skirts, working as delicate business attire.

But besides skirts, dresses are a nice choice as well as your satin fashion items, fitting for fancier occasions.

**Long Coats**

The longer the better is the motto here; we want to be wrapped up fully. Who doesn't like the feeling of coming straight out of a movie scene with the coat still waiving in the wind behind you? Long coats are great to keep you warm from head to toe and still give you a classy look. But to keep it stylish it is important not to choose something to puffy, especially on the upper part of the coat. Maybe even look for a piece with a belt to highlight your waistline and bring a bit more dynamic into your fit.

**Textures**

To amplify your winter look go for different textures. This can be for instance seen in your jacket, when you choose a fluffy optic or something with fur. But be cautious; a balance is crucial. Still textures like fur are great to keep your outfit interesting and eye-catching.

**Going from Ugh to UGGs**

Lastly, we have an old-time staple: UGGs. We all love them, they are extremely fashionable, look cute and are super comfortable. But we are not going

back in time, as a few years ago the boots were trendy. We are now looking more at their new slipper collection, with special

highlights on the Tazz and Tasman selection. Still both options, the boots as well as the slippers, are great for this season. 🐾



**BOGO**

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# AU Students Celebrate Christmas Traditions Reflecting Their Culture

BY LAURA STEINFORT

Some may say the best season of the year has started and we are already counting the days until Christmas. For those who celebrate, traditions are influenced by their cultural backgrounds. We asked some Panthers, including international and exchange students, how they celebrate the holidays. Through conversations with Tara Finn, an exchange student from Australia majoring in psychology and criminology; senior exchange student Federica Murgolo from Italy, who is studying English literature; Mariam Dzadzamia, an international student from Georgia majoring in fine arts; and sophomore Ryan James Donovan, who is majoring in psychology and is from New York, we uncovered the rich diversity of the Christmas spirit.

Unlike America and most other parts of the world, Australia celebrates the festive days in their hot summer. So instead of snow with hot cocoa, they have beaches with refreshing cocktails. The holiday season usually starts Dec. 20. On the 25th Australians have their main celebration at lunch, featuring seafood, a roast and for dessert a summery pavlova is served.

Finn said to stay hydrated in this hot weather Australians reach for refreshing cocktails while cooling down in the pool. On the 26th they celebrate Boxing Day, enjoying time with friends and family, while playing some backyard cricket or watching some other sportive activities.

The Christmas tree is decorated with ornaments, tinsel and twinkling lights. While Finn said she usually celebrates Christmas in a small family circle with her dad and brother, they extend the festivities with “family friends down the road.” Gift exchanging is typically limited to the close

family whereas the extended family enjoys Kris Kringle, also known as Secret Santa.

In Italy, Christmas is a festivity of faith, food and the loved ones. The holiday is a deeply rooted celebration of traditions and the Catholic religion. Murgolo explained that she starts to celebrate the holiday on Christmas Eve.

“I usually have dinner with my family and friends. We play games and we wait until midnight together to exchange gifts, marking a very important tradition,” she said. “I’d say it wouldn’t be Christmas without them! Christmas Day the 25th is



**Christmas at the beach is possible in Australia where holiday traditions can incorporate their summer climate.**

*Photo by Adobe Stock*

more intimate, centered with a family lunch. Whereas, the second Christmas Day, the 26th, which in Italy is also known as St. Stephen’s Day, is more centered around friends, while enjoying the time together with some games like tombola, food and Secret Santa.”

But for Italians the holiday season extends well beyond the Christmas days until Jan. 6, which marks the epiphany. On

this day the children eagerly receive stockings filled with sweets, or if the children did not behave, they receive coal instead.

Besides the Christmas tree that is prepared on Nov. 21, the day of “la Bambinella,” a holy day in Catholicism, Murgolo stressed the importance of the “Presepe” (nativity scene) as a staple in Italian homes.

Food also plays an indispensable role in Christmas traditions in Italy, with dessert like Panettone, pandoro and regional delicatessen like cartellate (a honey-coated pastry). Murgolo is very invested in the season.

“I love Christmas. It’s my favorite celebration and I get very excited when the season approaches,” she said. “Usually I prepare by helping my parents set up the tree and the ‘presepe,’ cooking for when we have guests over for Christmas dinner or lunch, visiting local Christmas markets, picking out gifts for relatives and friends.”

In Georgia, Christmas also has roots in ancient traditions, following the Orthodox Church with a blend of modern joy in a month-long of celebrations. Christmas is celebrated twice, on Dec. 25 and Jan. 7, following the old Julian calendar. Still most people celebrate on the 7th. But the general festive season lasts from mid-December to mid-January, making it a month full of festivities and customs, including many “Supras,” which are traditional Georgian feasts an essential part in their celebratory holiday. Featuring many signature dishes like Khachapuri and lots of red wine and on New Year’s Eve, the Georgians start the new year celebration with a very special dessert only made on this day, Gozinaki (made with walnuts and honey).

Dzadzamia said, “Preparing these traditional dishes makes the season even more special. My favorite part is how the celebrations stretch from December to mid-January, giving us plenty of time to

reconnect with all our relatives, friends and their families. The frequent Sufrad dinners bring everyone together, creating a sense of community and joy.”

This also includes Fate Day, on Jan. 2. Families believe that this day reflects the year ahead and gather with their loved ones to ensure positivity.

The Christmas tree selection is very unique in this country, since traditionally they choose a “Chichilaki,” a white wooden tree symbolizing hope and renewal. Also, the gift exchange is not as important in their culture; they’d rather exchange meaningful presents throughout the whole year.

In America the Christmas bells are ringing on the morning of Dec. 25. But for Donovan, the celebration begins on Christmas Eve “when at least me and my family go out for dinner and it is always fondue.” The big celebration takes place at his grandmother’s house with the rest of the family and a big feast, where they usually head to after they spend the Christmas morning together exchanging gifts. The meal typically includes a roast, chicken parmesan, mashed potatoes, carrots and peas while enjoying drinks like eggnog, American beer and sodas.

In Donovan’s family the Christmas tree decoration is deeply personal. “We have ornaments that are meaningful to us (...) they all have some sort of meaning behind them.”

While gift exchanges are nice and a common custom, Donovan emphasized that the true meaning of the holiday is “to be together and the gifts are a sub point.” One of his favorite parts of the holiday season is experiencing the Christmas magic in NYC, where sparkling lights and decorations transform the city into a hotspot for a bright holiday spirit. ❁

## The Psychology of Gift Giving is One That’s Shared

BY KARLA PENA

By now our Thanksgiving leftovers and post-turkey slumps are long gone as we are switching to a full-gear festive month. December marks a joyful time of year when people from many cultural backgrounds share celebration and cheer. Even if you aren’t following any religion or spirituality, no one is exempt from the contagious content that both loved ones and strangers emit. With this merry season approaching, another season has already arrived: the giving season. Giving gifts invokes all sorts of positive emotions, and a few reasons behind those notions are backed by science. Although the glory of giving can sometimes add to the already heavy mental loads from the hectic holidays, have no fear, because there are other authentic ways to show thanks without having to break the bank.

Have you ever given a holiday gift before? Chances are you have done so multiple times – and you’re not alone. According to the National Retail Federation (NRF), 92% of Americans plan on celebrating winter holidays such as Christmas, Hanukkah or Kwanzaa, with over half of them planning to shop for gifts this month,

rather than earlier. Consumer spending for these holidays is expected to reach a record \$902 per person on average across gifts, food, decorations and other seasonal items, according to a study by the NRF.

This shows how significant the gifting culture is in the US, as well as the prepping that leads up to it. From deciding what to get and for whom, and when the best time for them to receive it is, it’s a no-brainer that exchanging gifts is popular this time of year. Despite the undoubted pressure from preparations, it’s a winter staple to give, give, give!

However, why exactly do we like to give gifts if it’s so stressful? Well, that’s because it makes our brains happy. A psychology professor at the University of Arizona, Jessica Andrews-Hanna, stated in an article that “giving gifts and receiving gifts activate core areas of our brain associated with reward and pleasure. These brain regions also stimulate the neurotransmitter dopamine.” Dopamine is a chemical messenger in our bodies that plays a major role in determining mood and implementing a “reward system,” which stems from the act of repeating behaviors that result in pleasurable and positive outcomes.

So the next time you give your family member that one-of-a-kind sweater they’ve been eyeing or a limited edition candle, the reason why the hassle of searching for it was worth it is seeing your loved one’s smile because of your present, opening the flood-gates for that feel-good hormone.

In addition to granting us elated moods, gifting also improves interpersonal relationships and strengthens social connections. Aside from the evident glee surrounding presents, they also symbolize a message. Giving gifts is one way to show appreciation and thankfulness to whoever receives one. Expressing gratitude is significant when maintaining healthy relationships and is a principle within positive psychology, a conceptual study made popular by psychologist, Dr. Martin E.P. Seligman. Positive psychology focuses on the study of how the optimal state of mind operates and the favorable actions driven by it. When gifting within personal relationships, you are showing that you care about this person whatever that gift may be, increasing that bond and making that relationship long-lasting. Presents have a place in professional settings as well, because organizational gifts for employees

can lead to workers who feel more valued. This can cause increased work satisfaction and create a productive company culture with higher retention rates.

Coupled with all the pros of gift giving comes its cons as well. It would be ignorant to deny the perceivable anxiety the giving season causes. This may originate from budgeting, feeling obligated to gift items, and finding the “perfect” gift. Although these are perfectly valid reasons to dread this supposedly delightful December, there are other ways to go about showing appreciation. Before anything, focus on what makes your recipient the happiest then work from there. Making homemade gifts such as fruit baskets, letters or arts and crafts projects is always appreciated, and even more so since you’re putting actual time and effort into it. Additionally, don’t be afraid to offer experiences and services instead of materials, because a day trip to the museum or offering to look after pets can offer much more relaxation and remembrance than store-bought gifts can.

In the end, it doesn’t matter how much you spend or what you give. You and I, along with everyone else, will benefit from some gratitude this giving season. ❁

## Where the Harris-Walz Campaign Fell Short

BY KYLE ARJOONSINGH

The 2024 presidential race concluded with former President Donald Trump securing the 270 electoral college votes needed to win, making him the 47th president-elect. Vice President Kamala Harris, along with her running mate, Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz, ultimately lost both the popular vote and the race for the White House. Despite early optimism for the Harris-Walz campaign, many voters were left questioning what went wrong.

A major factor in the campaign's struggles stemmed from President Joe Biden's delayed decision not to seek re-election. Though Biden's exit was understandable from both personal and strategic standpoints, it left Harris and Walz with little time to establish themselves as the clear frontrunners for the Democratic nomination. As a result, Harris, who gained national recognition as Biden's 2020 running mate, faced challenges in distinguishing her platform from his. Her hesitation to critique Biden's policies—driven by loyalty—led to confusion among voters about her vision for the future. Additionally, Biden's declining popularity cast a shadow over Harris's campaign, with many voters attributing the struggles of the Democratic Party to his leadership, raising doubts about whether Harris could overcome those perceptions.

In addition to these internal struggles, Harris's selection of Tim Walz as her running mate failed to energize key voter blocs. While Walz was widely praised for his charm, his appeal didn't extend far enough to galvanize the Democratic base or secure crucial swing states. Many argued that Pennsylvania Gov. Josh Shapiro might have been a more strategic pick — particularly given his popularity in a key state. Although the world may not need more male representation in leadership, men remain a significant voter bloc, one that the Harris-Walz ticket struggled to engage effectively. In contrast, the Trump campaign placed a strong emphasis on targeting male voters, particularly in key battleground states. By not addressing the concerns and

priorities of such a large demographic, Harris and Walz missed an opportunity to broaden their support, which could have helped solidify a stronger path to victory.

Despite high-profile celebrity endorsements from figures like Beyoncé, Jennifer Lopez, and Taylor Swift, Harris's campaign struggled to connect with a broader, more diverse electorate. These endorsements undoubtedly boosted visibility, but they also contributed to a perception of elitism, distancing Harris from the working-class voters she aimed to represent. While many Americans admire celebrities, it can be difficult to relate to their lifestyles, especially when a candidate is expected to address the concerns of everyday people.



**As the 2024 election unfolded, Vice President Kamala Harris and Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz worked to rally support amid mounting challenges.** Photo by Wikimedia Commons

This sense of disconnect, combined with Harris's tightly controlled media appearances, further alienated voters who felt she was out of touch with their realities.

Although the campaign's setbacks delayed Harris from making history as the first female president, the future may still hold promise. The lessons learned from her 2024 campaign could serve as stepping stones for growth — paving the way for a potential comeback in future election cycles. 🌱

## Slowing Down Pace of Fast Fashion

BY KARLA PENA

Fast fashion is a term that has gained attention in recent years, especially regarding companies who utilize this gluttonous approach to the manufacturing of clothing. Clothing within fast fashion is produced abundantly at an alarmingly speedy rate, from design to fabrication, as a marketable system. Companies value quantity over quality to increase profits. Although it offers a cheaper option for shoppers, fast fashion also contributes to the inhibition of global sustainability and ethical labor practices. Owing to modern fast fashion, consumers can make more conscious financial decisions and promote awareness to help alleviate the adverse effects of this disposable cycle of mass consumption.

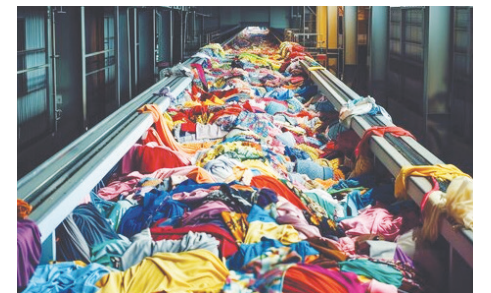
There is no doubt surrounding the dominance of major fashion companies such as Shein, H&M and Forever 21. These corporations offer thousands of stylish apparel items with close-to-nothing price tags, tightening their grip on consumers. Shein, for example, adds over 10,000 new items to its catalog daily, according to an article by Alina Selyukh on NPR. In this numerical example of astonishing mass clothing production, one must question how companies can accomplish this and whether these methods benefit the world.

Like Shein, companies convert fashion designs into tangible garments in less than 10 days. This approach differs from higher-end clothing brands, in which designs can take two years before hitting the market (or runway in some instances). While marking trends and modes, fast fashion has also created an enormous environmental footprint. Factory emissions contribute 10% of global carbon emissions. Since it takes 2,700 liters of water to produce one cotton shirt, it makes sense why the fast fashion industry is responsible for its criminal mass consumption of 93 billion tons of clean water, as stated in bigreuse.org. In addition to its adverse impacts on nature, fast fashion companies are known to follow unethical labor practices. Even though they are overworked, underpaid and often operating under dangerous circumstances, fast fashion factory workers in China are paid an average salary of 1,000 Chinese Yuan per month (equivalent to \$138.25 in US currency).

Several companies have tried to improve working conditions after facing harsh media backlash. However, factory employees still earn less than livable wages, with an annual salary of 12,000 yuan falling short of China's national yearly average of 350,000 yuan.

What can we do to address the unforeseen consequences of fast fashion? We can focus on harm reduction rather than ceasing consumption altogether. One popular tip is to purchase used clothing. Thrift shopping, either at local stores or chain thrift shops like Goodwill, promotes sustainability by reusing clothes that will last longer than cheaply made fast fashion garments.

Another tip is to buy less. While avoiding fast fashion entirely may be difficult, we



**What can you do to alleviate the harm of the fast fashion industry? Buy used clothing through thrift shopping and reuse what you already own.** Photo by Adobe Stock

still have autonomy over how much we buy. When purchasing, check the materials used and read reviews to assess durability. Opting for versatile pieces that can be worn multiple times for various occasions is another way to reduce the need for new, disposable clothing.

There are numerous repercussions of humanity's desire to constantly acquire new things; however, we don't need to fully reject or accept fast fashion companies. Instead of focusing on completely stopping the unfavorable effects left by them, we can slow them down as a more realistic expectation.

Finally, one of the best ways to help is to reject ignorance and be aware of the impact fast fashion has. Educating others on these detrimental effects, advocating for sustainability, and pushing for better labor practices can shine a brighter light on the industry and promote change. 🌱

## My Experience as a First-Time Voter in the 2024 Election

BY KYLE ARJOONSINGH

As a first-time voter in the 2024 presidential election, the experience was more than just casting a ballot—it was a moment of clarity and recognition of the importance of my vote. Voting had always felt like a distant civic duty, something others did while I simply observed from the sidelines. But this election cycle was different; it marked the first time that I, along with fellow students, could step into that larger process. The journey turned out to be far more meaningful than I had anticipated.

My polling site was an elementary school in my neighborhood, just a short walk away from my home. It felt strangely comforting knowing that my vote was going to be cast within a space that was so familiar and local. The building, which I had passed countless times throughout my childhood, was now the

setting for a decision that would shape my future. It gave me a sense of ownership in the democratic process — knowing that the very place where young minds were shaped was also where my voice could help shape the future.

On election day, I was very nervous — as was most of the country. I left my home with a mix of nervous excitement. Walking to the polling station, I reflected on all the issues that had shaped my decision — the walk itself oddly represented the long journey to this moment. While it was only a few blocks, it was also a reminder of the accessibility and privilege I had to simply just step out and vote.

When I arrived, the process was smoother than I had imagined. There was a line, but it moved quickly, and the volunteers were helpful, guiding first-timers like me through the steps. After waiting to be assigned to my station, I was handed a complimentary

pen and an "I Voted" sticker. As I stood there, I couldn't help but notice the mix of people around me — all sharing the same purpose. The line wasn't long, but it felt significant. Each person there was taking part in something bigger than pen to paper. When I finally reached the booth, I was handed my ballot, and for a moment, there was a brief pause before I realized just how much responsibility and power were in my hands. Casting my vote was more than a simple action; it was my permanent stance on who I wanted to see in office and what kind of future I wanted to be a part of.

The election cycle itself had been taunting, with tensions running high as Vice President Kamala Harris and former President Donald Trump, the respective Democratic and Republican nominees, clashed in the race for presidency. The intense divisiveness created an atmosphere of uncertainty, making the cam-

paigning period nerve-wracking at times. But as I scanned my ballot, I felt a sense of satisfaction. I had participated in something larger than myself, a key moment in a long-standing democratic tradition. It was also humbling. While my individual vote might not have changed the outcome, it was part of a collective action — a reminder that each vote contributes to the bigger picture, especially as we face changing times.

While the result was not what I anticipated, I still feel accomplished. Young voters are the future, and a result should not discourage us. Our voices, though sometimes overlooked, play a crucial role in shaping the direction of our society. This election was just one moment in a long journey, and the work to make our voices heard is far from over. Democracy requires ongoing participation, and as young voters, we have the power to influence future elections and create meaningful change. 🌱

## Athletics Collects Multiple Nominations for Best of Long Island

BY MATTHEW WENZ

Adelphi University has secured eight nominations in the education category of the annual Bethpage Federal Credit Union's Best of Long Island Awards, with AU Athletics leading the way as the Best College Sports Program on Long Island.

The awards, which are in their 17th year, started on Oct. 1. They are voted by residents and patrons of Long Island businesses and institutions. The Athletic Department was nominated for its overall success last year, bringing home a national championship, four conference champions, and count-



**Pat McCabe, head coach of women's lacrosse.** Photo by Adelphi Athletics

less individual honors for athletes, coaches and administrators. The department also won the Northeast-10 Conference Presidents Cup, for overall athletic excellence.

"It's an honor to be nominated for the Best College Sports Program on Long Island," said Athletic Director Danny McCabe. "We are proud of our accomplishments and our commitment to the community. So many of our student athletes, who achieved record success on the fields of play this year, come to us from Long Island. Additionally, our coaches and student athletes make a concerted effort to give back to the Long Island community throughout the year."

Leading the Athletics nominations was the Best College Sports Coach category, with five Adelphi head coaches put on the ballot. Bill Ianciello from baseball; Sade Jackson from women's basketball; Gordon Purdie from men's lacrosse; Pat McCabe from women's lacrosse; and Danielle MacKnight from volleyball were all tabbed for their efforts during the 2023-'24 academic year.

Ianciello, in his fourth year as the skipper for the baseball program, led his program to its fourth consecutive postseason appearance in 2024. His squad was selected for the American Baseball Coaches Association Team Academic Excellence Award, as the team posted a 3.299 grade point average.

Jackson, a former Panther who graduated in 2014, completed her second season as head coach in 2024. Her team was recognized for numerous achievements, both athletic and academic, most notably an All-Met Team selection from the Met Basketball Writers Association.



**Danielle MacKnight, head coach of the women's volleyball team.** Photo by Adelphi Athletics

Purdie, another former Panther turned head coach, completed his 17th season as head coach in the spring, which saw the team win the national championship for the first time since 2001. In one of the most successful seasons in the history of the department,

Purdie had a plethora of players who garnered All-American, All-Region and All-Conference status, as well as an NE10 crown.

McCabe, in his 10th year at the helm, led his squad to the national championship game, but came up just short in the chase of the program's 10th national title. McCabe had many of his players recognized for their achievements both on the field and in the classroom.

Rounding out the coaching honors, MacKnight and her squad had one of the best seasons in program history. She was named the American Volleyball Coaches Associations East Region Coach of the Year in 2023 and had one of her players reach All-American status. As conference finalists, the program secured the top overall seed in the NCAA East Regional tournament last fall.

Outside of Athletics, Adelphi was nominated for Best College or University on Long Island and President Christine Riordan was nominated for Best College President on Long Island.

To vote in the Best of Long Island 2024, visit [bit.ly/3U0n2su](http://bit.ly/3U0n2su) and select the Education drop down. You are allowed one vote per person per day for each category. For more information about the Best of Long Island, please visit [www.bestoflongisland.com](http://www.bestoflongisland.com). Voting ends on Dec. 15. 🗳️

## Freshman Ethan Lager Plays AU Soccer with Resilience and Heart

BY ARINA MARIIA POLISHCHUK

This season, the Adelphi soccer men's team gave a warm welcome to Ethan Lager, an 18-year-old freshman from Midwood High School in Brooklyn. Growing up in Brooklyn's Sheepshead Bay, he watched his Ukrainian immigrant community rebuild their lives after Hurricane Sandy devastated the neighborhood. Now, as a freshman center-back and member of the Honors College, Lager channels those lessons into his dual passions: excelling on the soccer field and preparing for a medical career.

Lager started his soccer career at just three years old. His Ukrainian immigrant parents signed him up for a soccer club in South Brooklyn that Eastern European families managed. Dynamite Youth Soccer Club provided Lager not only with athletic skills but also with the community.

In middle school, Lager switched to a Dutch Total Soccer Club to elevate his play level. Even though another company bought out the club, the coaches remained. Lager has now been playing with them for eight years.

However, his soccer path became professional when he joined Football Club Copa Academy in New Jersey. "They introduced me to a pre-professional pathway called the USL Academy. And that was really where I made the jump," said Lager. "And I decided, okay, I want to play at the next level. I want to play in college."

Lager chose Adelphi University because he could play soccer, study to become a doctor and be close to his family. "I fell in love with the school once I did the visit," he said. "Once I got offered to play on the soccer team here, I knew that this was somewhere I could succeed."

Lager has been a center-back since early childhood. Center-backs prevent the opposing team from scoring by defending the goal. This position requires skills in tackling, positioning and reading the game to neutralize the attack. These are skills men's soccer head coach Gary Book said Lager has.

"Ethan has tremendous athletic, raw ability. His height, strength, speed are all towards the top of the percentiles. He's very technical. He's good with the ball, which suits our style of play that we have here at Adelphi."

Book added, "But I think the major asset which stuck out against literally so many thousands of other players that we



**Ethan Lager showcasing his defense skills during an Adelphi soccer match on Aug. 27.** Photo by David Patolano

look at was he's a very intelligent young man. Sometimes academic intelligence doesn't transfer to athletic intelligence. But in Ethan's case, he's very perceptive about what's going on around him, how he fits into that. And we play what could

be described as an intellectual brand of soccer. And Ethan is very quick with his intellect and will become a strong asset."

Although Lager is dedicated to being a student athlete, he said his primary goal is to become a doctor. "I played soccer, but I always knew that I wanted to be a doctor. That's always been my thing," said Lager, who is majoring in neuroscience.

His dream is to become an orthopedic surgeon with a specialization in sports medicine. Lager said that he is also interested in pain management because he had long-term injuries. He has broken his ankle, and on two separate occasions, torn multiple ligaments in the same ankle. Even though it doesn't directly affect his soccer career, he still must take care of it and be attentive. Additionally, Lager knows a lot of athletes with chronic pain. Because he experienced it firsthand, he wants to help others to treat the pain properly in the future.

"It can be so mentally debilitating to the point where you fall out of love with the sport that you were so passionate about," said Lager. "If you're not able to play the same, if you're not able to be a part of it [sport] in the same way because of the injury."

Working in a team and helping others is natural for Lager. He grew up with six siblings in Sheepshead Bay, Brooklyn. This neighborhood is home to a higher concentration of people with Ukrainian and Russian ancestry than almost any other neighborhood in the US. For Lager, community and family always come first. He said these people were always there for each other and it had a tremendous impact on Lager's upbringing.

In 2012, hurricane Sandy destroyed Lager's house in Sheepshead Bay and left thousands of other people from his communi-

ty homeless as well. They lost everything but their faith. The then 6-year-old boy quickly learned how important it is to help each other. He saw how his parents were helping to rebuild the neighborhood and support people from their surroundings, even though his family had no place to live for a long time.

"It just made me want to be a part of the community and especially help with the communities that I'm in...it's everybody from my culture, it's everybody from my family, basically," said Lager of his Ukrainian community.

Team sports is his other community and it requires compromises and communication between the team members. Lager thinks that putting his team's performance above his own is important to achieve the common goal.

His Adelphi soccer teammate Brandon Carchipulla, a freshman finance major, said, "Ethan shows many leadership qualities, especially for the position he plays, which is very important for his aspect of play. I can probably speak for the whole team that we believe Ethan will be a very influential player."

Carchipulla added, "He shows a lot of ability within his playstyle, as well as in our training sessions, and he really tries to show a big leadership aspect within the team, setting an example of what other freshmen and players should be doing."

For Lager that entails three values that are most important to him: resilience, community and education. He said that means pushing through obstacles; surrounding himself with community, family and friends; and keeping an open mind. 🗳️