



THE NUTMEG MAGAZINE

HEALTH & WELLNESS

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HEALTH & WELLNESS EDITION

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EDITORS NOTE



What does health and wellness mean to you? Is it going to the new Rec Center to work out? Being mindful of your mental health by practicing yoga? Utilizing UConn's counseling and mental health services? Going to the health and wellness fair to learn more about ways to navigate college life? The fall 2019 Nutmeg Magazine is all about health and wellness, focusing on events, people, and clubs that incorporate the idea of health and wellness at UConn. This issue has something for everyone and even highlights transformative athleisure outfits and the topic of food insecurity. Be sure to read on to find out more!

This edition of Nutmeg Magazine is my first as Magazine Managing Editor! Although my background as a designer helped me create this magazine, I couldn't have done it without the Nutmeg Staff! Especially Aniqa, Rubina, Kailee and Pato! In the future, I hope to continue to create informative and fun content to share with all of you readers!

-Meira Tompkins

CONTENTS

4	10	18
NEW RECREATION CENTER	SUNSET YOGA	HEALTH AND WELLNESS FAIR
6	12	20
ATHLETES MENTAL HEALTH	PROJECT FASHION	FOOD INSECURITY
8	14	22
ATHLETES MENTAL HEALTH	PROJECT FASHION	WHITNEY RENOVATION
	16	
	FOREST BATHING	

WRITER: SHIRA TALL

PHOTOGRAPHER: MADISON BUSICK

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NEW

RECREATION CENTER

After much anticipation, the new Student Recreation Center finally opened its doors the weekend before classes started for the fall semester. Scheduled to be completed in the spring of 2019, the opening for the three-story, 191,000 square foot building had been pushed back until the end of the summer. Before opening remarks began at the event, there were a variety of activities laid out for students. Music played from speakers, t-shirts with the building blueprint were handed out, the Dairy Bar truck scooped ice cream, and photographs were taken for commemorative magnets.

Cyndi Costanzo, the Executive Director for UConn Recreation, welcomed students, faculty, and staff to the opening, taking time to recognize all the work that was put in by the Undergraduate Student Government, Graduate Student Center, student body, and workers.

UConn President Thomas Katsouleas made his entrance on a skateboard, joking that there was a skate park inside. During his speech, he noted the importance of education that embodies the whole person and lifts the mind and spirit. He remarked, "The learning you do in the classroom and the lab is critical for your life of the mind, but it is as important as your physical and emotional wellness and what this recreational center exists to support." This sentiment was echoed by junior diagnostic genetic sciences major Rachel Mufson. She articulated, "Health and fitness, especially mental health, is so crucial on a college campus and a gym is a really good place to get away and clear your mind and do things that are good for your body."

Alessandra Bassani, a freshman studying biological sciences, wanted to see and experience being part of the UConn community. She expressed, "I wanted to come experience some traditions and see what UConn has to offer, and the rec center is one of the new things that is on campus. It's great to be a part of the community and see why everybody gathers for such great things."

Undergraduate Student Government President Priyanka Thakkar noted this sense of community when she mentioned UConn Recreation's slogan, Where the Student Body Develops. She said "I would go one step further and say Where the Student Body Develops Together. Like the Student Union, this is a remarkable place where students can develop personally, professionally, mentally, and physically together."

After cutting the ribbon, students rushed inside eager to get a glimpse of the new amenities. Boasting an indoor track, four fitness zones, an aquatic center, a cycle studio, body and mind studio, climbing center, space for equipment checkouts and rentals, a gymnasium, and three racquetball courts, the center very much so aligns itself with UConn Recreation's mission to "offer safe and quality programs, facilities, and services to the University of Connecticut community in order to foster personal growth and wellness."

VIVI BIEL

SOCCER & MENTAL HEALTH

What does mental health mean to you?

Mental health means that one is emotionally, psychologically, and socially stable. It means that one is able to remember that there is always a blue sky behind the clouds no matter how overcast it may be. The clouds symbolize the stress, obstacles and tough times one can experience, but no matter how many clouds there are, there is still the blue sky. Mental health means knowing that the blue sky is always there.

Are there many pressures that come with being a student athlete and how do you overcome these?

As a student athlete you have to perform in the classroom, on the field and are still trying to have an intact social life. As there are so many demands a student athlete has to face, time management and balance are two things that I value very much. I personally try to not see pressure but rather a challenge. I love challenges. I always want to improve and get better at what I am doing. This is true for all aspects of my life. However, it is very important to let loose sometimes and just be. I like to just read a book for leisure, meditate, play guitar, or watch Netflix with friends. These things take me away from my intense striving for success for a little bit and are very important to recharge.

PHOTOGRAPHER: PATRYCJA JERZAK

DESIGNER: KAILEE COLLINS

Do you think your mental health correlates to your physical health? Why or why not?

I don't think my mental health correlates with my physical health; I know it! I have always been extremely interested in psychosomatic medicine which is looking at a physical illness or injury as being caused by a mental factor. I believe that every illness or injury has a deeper underlying mental basis. I have always looked at my own injuries and illnesses that way and it has helped me to find meaning in these challenging times. Furthermore, it helped me grow as a person and I was able to help others look at things from a different perspective as well.

Tim Grover, a trainer and author who has worked with many sport legends, once said: "Your ultimate power source comes from the neck up, not the neck down".



WOMEN'S SOCCER STAR



CAMRYN WONG



ICE HOCKEY & MENTAL HEALTH

What does mental health mean to you?

I think mental health is a blend of balance and awareness. We as individuals are constantly adhering to the high demands our competitive society has brought upon us that we often forget to check in with ourselves and our mental state. Taking a day, a few hours, or even just whole moment to yourself has become both recommended and proven to be effective. Finding a healthy balance in life and being aware of how you feel emotionally in a moment can be extremely difficult and does not come easy for anyone. That is why Mental Health Awareness Week is so important – it's a gentle reminder to put yourself first which sometimes isn't a bad thing.

Are there many pressures that come with being a student athlete and how do you overcome these?

Definitely! Being a student-athlete we naturally have that competitive nature that forces us to push ourselves and excel academically in our classes, athletically through performance, while striving to be a better person and teammate each and every day. There is an overarching pressure in all that we do because we feel we can't let anyone down, however, sometimes failing is how we learn and become better. Having a positive attitude and being constructive in my actions is how I overcome pressures; it's not a matter of what did I do wrong, but rather what can I do to be better or do better.

PHOTOGRAPHER: PATRYCJA JERZAK

DESIGNER: KAILEE COLLINS

SUNSET YOGA SUNSET YOGA



Over 500 members of the UConn community participated in Sunset Yoga on Horsebarn Hill. Hosted by UConn Rec, Student Health and Wellness, and Week of Welcome, the event featured poses for all skill levels.



WRITER: SHIRA TALL
PHOTOGRAPHER: PATRYCJA JERZAK
DESIGNER: KAILEE COLLINS



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TRANSFORMATIVE
OUTFITS



PHOTOGRAPHER: PATRYCJA JERZAK
DESIGNER: MEIRA TOMPKINS

PROJECT FASHION

“In order to promote a healthy lifestyle through fashion, it’s important to wear the right clothing for you,” said John Bertenshaw, fifth semester communications major and model for the Health and Wellness photoshoot collaboration with Nutmeg Publishing and Project Fashion. The words “health” and “wellness” do not end with choosing a proper diet or creating a workout routine; they expand tremendously into promoting a healthy lifestyle, making suitable decisions that reflect your mental health, and self-expression as a form of therapy. Fashion serves as a way for an individual to define who they are as a person and how their wardrobe reflects exactly that. In some instances, health and wellness are two key concepts that deal with good physical condition, but for many they express said concepts by merging fashion and fitness.

Athletic wear on campus is important, as many students engage in some form of physical activity. Whether it’s hitting the recreation center for a workout or something as simple as walking across campus from class to class, all students partake in some sort of exercise. With this being said, athletic wear doesn’t have to be just for the sake of the gym; students can flaunt their style in their favorite pair of sneakers and joggers. The beauty of athletic wear is that it combines an outfit that can not only be worn to class, but to the gym as well. To Project Fashion, there is a fun factor that goes into creating an outfit to wear. It’s an experience going through your closet and picking specific pieces to pair together. The possibilities of an outfit are endless and, if it’s an outfit that can be used for a multitude of occasions, it makes them all the more exciting to create. Fashion is subjective and should always be something that promotes the wellness that is your personality.

For the photoshoot, Project Fashion was in charge of the outfits and the posing, whereas Nutmeg Publishing was in charge of the vision and the story that the photographs entailed. Implementing subtle cues of UConn school spirit with symbols of health and wellness such as a bicycle or basketball blended the idea of health, wellness, and fashion into one. Dressing up for a photoshoot served to be a fun experience for Project Fashion, as they got a kick out of creating the specific outfits and being a part of the experience as a whole. Their fashion interests served as a great opportunity for other students to realize and acknowledge what fashion means for not only their self-image, but for their health and wellness as well.

WRITER: AINQA ISLAM

PHOTOGRAPHER: PATRYCJA JERZAK

DESIGNER: MEIRA TOMPKINS





FOREST BATHING

On a beautiful fall day, around 30 UConn students assembled outside the Dairy Bar to attend the third annual UConn Forest Bathing. Originating in Japan, forest bathing is the practice of immersing into nature to meditate and unwind. This practice was designed to help overworked employees in Japan de-stress and relax. As students were starting to feel the pressure of midterms and quizzes, forest bathing was the ideal mid-semester affair.

The event was hosted by the Asian American Cultural Center and Student Health and Wellness. Matt Cheng, a student employee at ASACC, described the event to be “a short hike through the UConn forest and a guided meditation that focuses on helping students imbibe the atmosphere of the forest.” He added, “The guided meditation is intended to calm the soul and to help students become more aware of their surroundings.”

Students slathered on bug spray and grabbed their water bottles before starting their hike across Horsebarn Hill. At the mouth of the Red Trail at the UConn Forest, students paired up with a buddy and entered into the brush. The serenity and peace of the forest had a calming effect as they made their way up to a bonfire spot.

WRITER: NIDHI JAYAKUMAR NAIR

PHOTOGRAPHER: ERIN WU

DESIGNER: MEIRA TOMPKINS

On the way, Amanda Waters and Erin Cox, employees at Student Health and Wellness, encouraged participants to be cognizant of the chirping of the birds in the trees and the crunching of the twigs. As students sat around the bonfire remains, Cheng asked them to close their eyes and began a guided meditation that focused on the rhythm of their breath and the soothing sounds of the forest around them. For ten minutes, students took deep breaths and focused on the expansion and contraction of their diaphragms. They cleared their minds and tried to concentrate their attention on the surrounding nature. Following the meditation, students were asked to form groups of five to discuss their thoughts and emotions after the exercise. Many students commented on the stress of college life and the difficulty of finding a moment of peace and quiet. They found it especially hard to dispel anxiety and worry, and reconnecting with nature helped them feel a sense of calm.

After this relaxing experience, students hiked back to the Dairy Bar and enjoyed some free ice cream. As Erin Wu, a first semester undecided major, excitedly remarked, “The semester was starting to get stressful and hectic, but this really helped me calm down and focus on the beauty of the world I live in.”



Fairfield Way was sprinkled with various blue tents emitting a positive energy as students enjoyed one of the first days of genuine fall weather at the Health and Wellness Fair. Crowds flocked towards booths promoting personal well-being, community outreach opportunities, and valuable information regarding student health. Students were greeted by outgoing and passionate individuals from UConn Dining Services, health services, and first responders. Even Tildy, the UConn PD Community Outreach dog was enjoying the much anticipated fall weather. The annual Student Health and Wellness Fair is dedicated to providing students with helpful resources and community outreach opportunities, as well as keeping our Huskies healthy. Many amazing UConn clubs set up booths to promote wellness and camaraderie. Booths provided risk awareness and even helpful tips on navigating college life, like how long the leftovers in your refrigerator are really safe to eat. The Health and Wellness Fair is a fun way to educate the UConn community on healthy college habits in addition to providing opportunities to get involved on campus.

The American Red Cross club is a service-based club that works to set up blood drives in the UConn community and raise awareness of the importance of donating blood. The club is the number one supplier of blood in the state. Their impressive hard work directly saves the lives of individuals in need. The Red Cross club hosted five different blood drives in the fall semester alone. According to third semester physics major Joe Riberty, the club has had an amazing year in terms of donor turn out and blood donations. He said, "The work our student volunteers do for the UConn Red Cross club is really important. This year the Red Cross doubled our per drive blood volume quota, and we're getting it done because of the volunteers."



HEALTH &

UConn's Spring Valley Student Farm was also hosting one of its weekly farmers markets as part of the event. Baskets were filled with stunning purple eggplants, tomatoes harvested at the peak of ripeness, and many other colorful veggies. According to seventh semester landscape architecture major Moisés Hernández-Rivera, it had been a bountiful year for SVSF. He stated, "We had 79 pounds of cucumbers in one-week harvest!" All produce harvested from the student-run farm is organic and frequently served at dining halls on campus.

Many UConn clubs and organizations that concentrate on themes of physical, mental, and emotional health came out to spread awareness and provide outreach. Kidney Disease Screening and Awareness Program, a club run primarily by undergraduates dedicated to supplying education on the prevention of kidney diseases, was giving free blood pressure exams and even had their mascot, a gigantic kidney, attend. Other student clubs and organizations included UConn Recovery Community, Nutrition Club, Disability and Diversity, and the American Red Cross club.

WRITER: RACHEL GRELLA
PHOTOGRAPHER: ABOLI GHATPANDE
DESIGNER: KAILEE COLLINS

WELLNESS FAIR

BE WELL.
FEEL WELL.
DO WELL.

WRITER: ANIQA ISLAM

PHOTOGRAPHER: PATRYCJA JERZAK

DESIGNER: MEIRA TOMPKINS



UConn Access to Food Effort, or UCAFE, initially came about from a conversation that encompassed a situation far too many students have encountered at one point or another: food insecurity. Food insecurity in education is a serious topic that required immediate response and action from not only the students facing it, but also from the higher officials who were not properly addressing it. UCAFE stood as a coalition of multiple UConn organizations which included UConnPIRG, USG, SUBOG, EcoHusky, and SOS Food Recovery. Seventh semester civil engineering major Xinyu Lin and seventh semester environmental studies major Wanjiku Gatheru, or Wawa, discussed their involvement with the coalition and the goals they were working towards. Sustainability was one of the biggest elements desired in the coalition and, because of recent climate crisis conversations, the food crisis was ultimately tied into it. UCAFE worked to ensure a decrease in food insecurity and one of the bigger projects that the coalition tackled was their on-campus food pantry. UCAFE wishes to work with partnerships in order to make the pantry permanent, thus ensuring sustainability. A food pantry on campus would provide emergency resources to a wide span of people who may need it at any given time.

Another project tackled was the creation of a food insecurity survey. UCAFE wanted as many people as possible to respond in order to obtain the most diverse representative responses. The survey was created by the university in response to Connecticut mandating schools to survey their population on food insecurity and the resources that exist for students. This data was used to analyze the gaps in the programs at the time, allowing the university to ensure a safety net. The survey proved to be an excellent way of bringing awareness to the issue as food insecurity wasn't exactly a word many people were familiar with. Giving the common concept a name and calling it out was extremely important to raise awareness.

An issue that UCAFE hoped to address in the near future is how well students are feeding themselves in terms of quality. Nutrition workshops run by dining halls and providing transportation to local grocery stores were just a few ideas that had been brainstormed to provide relief to students who may not be receiving adequate nutrition. Overall, UCAFE utilized every resource they could in order to promote positive health and wellness through food. Without feeding your body properly, it cannot serve properly. Taking care of yourself means something different to everyone, but we know when we're feeling great and when we aren't; we must make sure we engage in nourishing practices like eating healthy to remain happy both physically and mentally.

FOOD INSECURITY INITIATIVE



A key element to every college student's experience is none other than the all-you-can-eat encounter that comes with eating at the dining halls. With that being said, it's no wonder that UConn students were pleasantly surprised by Whitney Dining Unit's renovation to not only its building space, but to the food and environment as well. Upon entering Whitney, the ID swiping station was in a beautiful foyer with printed graphic walls and glass sliding doors to the main dining area. The entirety of the roof was replaced by a skylight with several inspirational quotes adorning the edges. Sleek hanging light bulbs overhead made for pleasant mood lighting. Towards the rear of the building, a cafe was created with comfortable seating and even a fireplace. A plant wall, similar to that of South Dining Unit, was installed in front of the dish return. The food received a major upgrade, with the recipes implementing more vegan and vegetarian options that students could eat.

One of the biggest style concepts that went into the Whitney renovation was "farm-to-table," where the overall look of the dining hall transitioned into a more natural, relaxing setting. A lot of the food preparation was derived from local items, which was previously uncommon. Whitney also featured brand new apple cider vinegar-based drinks that no other dining hall could boast. Packed with several different fruits and nutrients, they were yet another healthy option Whitney had to offer. "I love how modern-feeling the area is. When I first heard about Whitney being renovated, I couldn't wait to see the outcome. They definitely exceeded my expectations. The renovation was so aesthetically appealing and I really liked the design changes," said Aman Malhotra, a third semester biomedical engineering major.

WHITNEY RENOVATION

Students found themselves more drawn to Whitney post-renovation because of how casual the setting had become. The designated cafe area with its soft seating and cozy atmosphere served to be an excellent place for students to come by, sip on some coffees, and hang out. The new, sleek bar seating that was implemented across from the action bar accommodated for students who may be eating on their own or with an additional friend.

The biggest plus to the renovation had to have been the recipe upgrades, as it's extremely important to fuel your body with the necessary nutrients it needs. Without a proper diet, health and wellness to the student body can't be properly maintained. However, with Whitney's newly improved dining experience, students from all over campus can dine in and encounter all the nutritious foods it has to offer.

WRITER: ANIQA ISLAM

PHOTOGRAPHER: MEIRA TOMPKINS

DESIGNER: MEIRA TOMPKINS

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