



NUTMEG MAGAZINE

Going Full Circle

fall 2021 | edition 17 | designed by Brunna Louzada

Featuring:

Project Fashion &
Homecoming Insights!

Photo by Neal Krishna



6 For the first time in over a year, Fairfield Way was packed with students exploring table after table of clubs and organizations.

10 Nutmeg Publishing is one of the University of Connecticut's Tier III organizations. Since 1915, Nutmeg has been producing UConn's yearbook. In 2015, Nutmeg began producing a...

14 Nutmeg Publishing interviewed Serena Riback, a seventh-semester computer science major and president of TEDxUConn, and Sumeet Kadian, a fifth-semester molecular and cell biology major...

18 University of Connecticut students traveled "Around the World" at this year's annual Homecoming Lip Sync battle, which made its return after last year's COVID-19 restrictions prevented...

CONTENTS



20 Surrounded by sprawling farmlands, forests, and solar panels, the University of Connecticut attracts many students who are passionate about sustainability.

22 On the night of the Fall A Cappella Rush Concert, the Jorgensen Center for Performing Arts bustled with life.

24 When UConn's new recreation center was first unveiled in the fall of 2019, its four floors were packed with...

26 As part of a collaboration and photoshoot with Project Fashion, Nutmeg Publishing spoke with Gabriella Crean...

32 This fall, Nutmeg Publishing interviewed Katie Nguyen, a fifth-semester UConn student who works for the information...desk

Editor's Note



Hi Readers,

Nutmeg Publishing's fall 2021 magazine, *Going Full Circle*, is all about focusing on the University of Connecticut community coming back together and working in person. We showcase some of UConn's most popular fall events like the Homecoming Lip Sync, the Fall A Cappella Rush concert, and the Involvement Fair, now back in person. The magazine also showcases several UConn organizations and the future endeavors of each group, student job spotlights, and other fun activities students can get involved in.

Enjoy reading,
Meira Tompkins

Editor in Chief
Neal Krishna

Magazine Managing Editor
Meira Tompkins

Creative Director
Brunna Louzada

Copy Editor
Hollianne Lao

Photo Editor
Caleb White

Yearbook Managing Editor
Caroline Strapp

Business Manager
Alex Kim

Marketing Coordinator
Maddie Giglio

Photographers
Wesley Nyambi
Elisabeth Helmin
Brandon Chain
Chloe Parsell
Tyler Pereira
Tyler Washington
Haley Kozlowski

Designers
Haydn Kerr
Jailyn Murphy
Karli Vare

Writers
Sydney Fournier
Colin Sullivan
Eileen Sholomicky
Mary Lasley



INVOLVEMENT FAIR

For the first time in over a year, Fairfield Way was packed with students exploring table after table of clubs and organizations. UConn's largest free event was hosted in-person once again, giving students of all years the opportunity to come together as a community and experience the Husky spirit. This was the first time most freshmen and sophomores experienced such a large event. Last year's involvement fair was hosted online, featuring separate Zoom calls for each club. While the online event was still a great way to get to know the organizations on campus, it was not as energetic as past years.

This year's in-person fair was a completely different experience. The air was filled with excited chit-chat as students interacted in-person for the first time in a while at such a large event. Organizations set up their poster boards and freebies in the early afternoon and stayed through dinner time, allowing students with even the busiest of schedules to attend. They drew attention to their tables by giving out candy and stickers, bringing in large props – such as a giant Pikachu blow-up costume – and showing off past projects – such as Formula SAE's student-built car.

Divided into several different categories including academic, performance, sporting, and volunteer clubs, there was plenty to explore. The academic section featured organizations that were tailored to specific academic interests, such as the Math Club, Future Educators, and Empowering Women in Law (EWIL). Each of these organizations gave students the opportunity to interact with other students in their field of interest. For example, EWIL seeks to connect and educate women in the legal field. They host speakers, hold fundraisers, and provide resources for the Law School Admissions Test.

"EWIL is an incredible resource for anyone aspiring to go into law," said EWIL Secretary Joanne Biju. "We bring in speakers, do workshops, and have lively discussions about our aspirations and the happenings of the world. I love being a part of EWIL because through the highs and lows, we're always lifting each other up."

If students were looking for a more hobby-based club, they could check out the performance organizations, such as the various a cappella groups, Page to Stage Productions, and Tap Club.

Tap Club welcomes students of all levels to participate in weekly rehearsals for their final showcase at the end of the year. “We take everyone who is willing to learn, from people that have been tapping their whole lives to people who have never tapped a day in their life,” said Tap Club Social Chair Emma Rhynhart. “We also do group bonding activities, such as Blaze fundraisers and cleaning the ice rink on campus. The people in Tap Club are like a little family, despite having known each other for only a few years or less.”

These organizations allow students to practice their craft outside of a major-based program. With over 400 organizations to explore, any student could find a way to get involved.

After a long year of Zoom meetings and virtual interactions, the in-person involvement fair was a breath of fresh air. This was hopefully the beginning of more large, free, in-person events that will be offered again to students on campus. With the return of in-person classes and meetings, the student body was excited for the future, hopefully leaving other challenges of the pandemic behind.



NUTMEG PUBLISHING

Nutmeg Publishing is one of the University of Connecticut's Tier III organizations. Since 1915, Nutmeg has been producing UConn's yearbook. In 2015, Nutmeg began producing a semesterly magazine. The staff consists of three groups of employees: writers, photographers, and designers.

Sydney Fournier, a third-semester digital media and design major, is a Nutmeg staff writer. In order to write pieces for the yearbook and magazine, she attends events in the community, interviews different people around campus, and features clubs and organizations.

"I love how Nutmeg is involved with all parts of campus, from sports to student government," Fournier said. "I applied to Nutmeg as a way to get involved and have a chance to write outside of classes. [One of my favorite assignments was] writing about Greek life on campus. [I had] the opportunity to meet with all the sororities and fraternities."

Elisabeth "Liz" Helmin, a third-semester landscape architecture major, is a Nutmeg staff photographer. As a photographer, she showcases student groups and organizations and their work. Helmin photographs events on- and off-campus, such as productions at the Jorgensen Center for Performing Arts.

"I love being part of a team. I find that when I have the opportunity to share ideas and similar interests with others who feel the

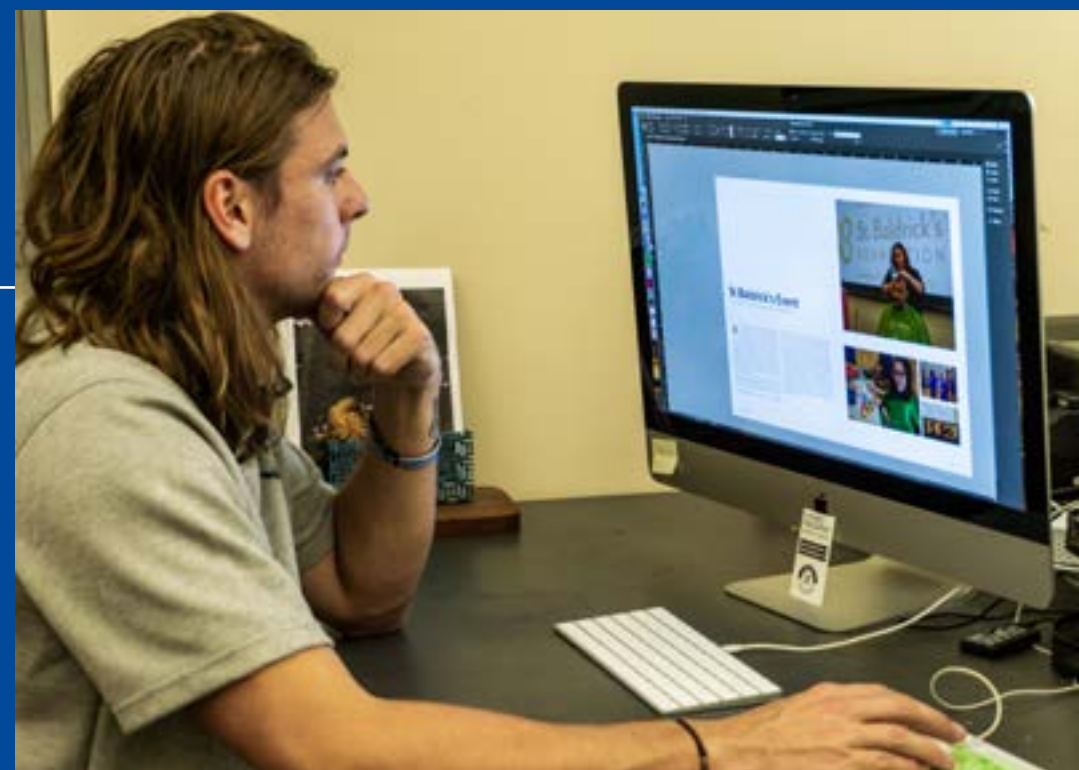
same, it is beneficial for myself and the greater goal of the collaboration," Helmin said. "When [I joined] Nutmeg, I hoped I was given [the] opportunity to share my photos and inspiration not only with the other members of Nutmeg, but the greater community at UConn as well. The Nutmeg community allows everyone on the team to share their ideas and work in a safe and supportive environment."

Helmin describes the inability to edit the photos she takes for Nutmeg as the most challenging part of the job.

"My favorite part of the [photography] process is sitting down at my computer and looking at my work," Helmin said. "Knowing that editing is not primarily my job and that I can't edit and finalize my images hurts just a little!"

Haydn Kerr, a first-semester digital media and design major, is a Nutmeg staff designer. Kerr's work involves collaborating with Nutmeg writers and photographers in order to create visually appealing page layouts for the yearbook and magazine.

Kerr agreed that the Nutmeg staff is one of his favorite parts of the job.





“[Being a part of Nutmeg] allows me . . . to meet amazing people outside of my circle that I otherwise would have never met,” he said. “[One of my favorite moments with the staff was] a particular meeting in which we all got together and made gingerbread houses. It was a fun way to get to know the other staff [members].”

All of the employee groups are led by Nutmeg’s executive board. Neal Krishna, a fifth-semester physiology and neurobiology and English major, serves as Nutmeg Publishing’s editor-in-chief. The executive board coordinates assignments for their respective teams, keeps the staff and the other executive members accountable for their work, and leads the overall production of the yearbook and magazine.

Krishna cites the most challenging thing about working on the executive board as remembering everything.

“There is so much to remember, and you write it down, and then you end up having five different notes of things to write down . . . [so] it’s nice to have other people on your team to help you remember things,” said Krishna. Like Kerr and Helmin, Krishna enjoys working with his fellow staff members. “The people

are so rewarding. [Nutmeg] is one of the oldest and biggest yearbooks in the country, and it’s so hard to put that into perspective when you see . . . how big our school is and everything [that] everyone is doing. [But] then you take a step back and look at the end goal, like the 2020 [yearbook]. It’s incredible that we made that. For me personally, it’s also rewarding to see what everyone else produces, because I helped them make that. Like, I’ll conceive a spread sometimes, and Brunna [Louzada] and the designers [will design it], and I . . . can’t believe [that] we had people from all different parts of life working on [something like that]. It’s crazy how all these things come together into something so beautiful.”

Nutmeg is dedicated to documenting life at UConn for this generation and the generations to come. Many of the staff’s efforts are documented in their photographs and writing for the yearbooks and magazines, while their passion, drive, and friendship from the organization will similarly last a lifetime.

Designed by Brunna Louzada Photo by Chloe Parsell Copy by Eileen Sholomicky

TEDxUConn

Courage to Persist

Nutmeg Publishing interviewed Serena Riback, a seventh-semester computer science major and president of TEDxUConn, and Sumeet Kadian, a fifth-semester molecular and cell biology major, about the TEDxUConnSalon “Courage to Persist” event on Sept. 25.

Nutmeg Publishing: How and why did you get involved with TEDx?

Serena Riback: I was really involved with technical theater [in high school], and our auditorium coordinator would stage-manage TEDx events in the state. He brought me along to one of them as sort of an apprentice assistant stage manager. I really enjoyed it, and when I was walking the club fair here at UConn, I saw the TEDx letters and thought, “Oh, this would be a fun club to join, I would get to do some more [technical theater stuff].” I started off with the design committee, running their website, and worked my way up.

NP: How did the TEDx committee decide on “Courage to Persist” as this year’s theme?

SR: All of our themes are kind of decided by group brainstorming [where we write down ideas] and decide which ones we like best. Picking the theme is always interesting because you have to pick something that’s specific enough where you’ll get people who relate to it, but broad enough where you can get a lot of different speakers that still correlate to the theme.

NP: So what does “Courage to Persist” mean to you?

SR: One of the reasons that I liked the “Courage to Persist” theme was because we were going through the pandemic, and it was uncharted territory for everybody. It was amazing to see classes, other clubs, and our organization make things happen even in the online environment. I thought that [it] would be a really good talk for the UConn community after going through that and coming back to campus for the first time.

NP: What was your takeaway from the three talks that were given on this topic?

SR: I think that the main takeaway for everyone was just remembering our mental health, taking care of ourselves in challenging times, and listening to others’ perspectives and keeping an open mind about certain things. Pauline [Batista] spoke first about the importance of diversity and inclusion, then Sumeet [Kadian] talked about the importance of mental health in the medical industry, and finally, Tamika Blackburn spoke about both of those things at once.



Nutmeg Publishing spoke with Kadian further about his talk for the event.

NP: Why did you decide to do a TED Talk?

Sumeet Kadian: I've watched TED Talks since I was a young kid. What I found interesting was how they memorized a 17-minute talk, how diverse the topics were, how nuanced they were, yet how detailed they got and how passionate the speakers were when they presented. When I saw that Serena and her team were putting together a UConn TEDx event, specifically on the "Courage to Persist" and how it related to COVID-19, I thought, "Huh, my experience as a healthcare worker ties pretty well into this based on what I've seen." [I wanted] to convey something that I'm very passionate about, which is mental health in medicine, to a broader audience.

NP: What does the theme "Courage to Persist" mean to you, especially in relation to mental health?

SK: When I hear "the courage to persist," I think it means that, especially during the [COVID-19] pandemic, people are faced with a ton of hardships. We saw people's mental health completely plummet. [I wondered], "How do people in conditions they have never experienced before keep moving forward?" [I] talked to some of the people I work with, and the people who seemed to [cope] the best were those that first cared for themselves. How well can you expect to care for other people without caring for yourself first?

NP: Why did you join Medical Minds Matter?

SK: My first two years at UConn were brutal: I took a lot of credits and maxed myself out because I thought that was the norm, and I almost burnt out. I thought that

[Medical Minds Matter] was addressing a problem that's so prevalent in [the medical field]. I joined because I could stand by their mission, and I thought it resonated well with me based on my experiences in the past.

NP: Does your membership in Medical Minds Matter inform how you approach your studies and your career? How did joining the organization change your approach?

SK: When I first started out in pre-med, I would ask my friends, "Hey, what can I do to stand out to admissions committees?" They would say, "Oh, you have to do [these things], join these clubs, take this many credits." So I did all that, and [it was a lot, but] everyone said that [it was normal]...I don't think it should be this way. So I cut down on things I was involved in, really focused on some things I was passionate about, and learned to prioritize myself first. [If you] do what you're passionate about, the rest will come to you naturally.

NP: Do you have any ideas for changing the way mental health is approached in the medical field?

SK: Yeah. Undergrads have this notion that you need to be doing a hundred different things just to please the admissions committee. At the medical school level, it's just the amount of stress and the workload. You have to tell [these students] that it's okay not to know everything. It's okay to be stressed, it's okay to be worried. You have to make mental health a priority. At the residency level and beyond, [it's] addressing the really long work weeks and stress that residents have . . . So normalizing these conversations and making admissions committees understand that it's normal and okay to have problems, [and then providing the resources to deal with these problems,] that's critical.



LIPSYNC

University of Connecticut students traveled “Around the World” at this year’s annual Homecoming Lip Sync battle, which made its return after last year’s COVID-19 restrictions prevented the event and others from occurring. The 2021 Homecoming festivities further demonstrated the UConn community adapting and coming together.

Homecoming, hosted by the Student Union Board of Governors, is a revered UConn tradition that features several exciting events leading up to the Homecoming football game at the end of Homecoming Week. The student teams are categorized by clubs, cultural centers, or Greek life pairings of fraternities and sororities. At the beginning of the week, the teams, the marching band, and various other student organizations participated in the traditional Homecoming parade, followed by a carnival for all students. Perhaps the most anticipated event, however, was the Homecoming Lip Sync battle, which took place on Tuesday night of Homecoming Week.

“This was my first time at Lip Sync, and I was so impressed with how much energy each team brought to their dance,” Sophie Fenn, a seventh-semester civil engineering and Spanish major, said. “It was great to see everyone gathered together to cheer on other students. Next year I definitely plan on dancing because it looked like so much fun!”

Each student team represented an assigned country and created a five-minute dance routine to perform on a stage constructed in Gampel Arena. The crowd was buzzing with energy leading up to the performances, with almost half of the arena packed with students. Although ineligible to win the actual competition, the



UConn Dance Team opened the festivities with a performance of their own, cheered on by the crowd.

One of the highlights of the night was the Asian American Cultural Center’s performance. Representing Japan, the team performed a narrative dance with Japanese-inspired moves, music, and an inflatable Pikachu en route to winning first overall in the cultural center category. The Puerto Rican/Latin American Cultural Center won second place in the cultural center category, performing to Cardi B and representing the Dominican Republic. In the Greek life category, the Alpha Chi Omega sorority and the Sigma Chi fraternity won first place performing as the United States, using hit songs like “Party in the USA” as part of their routine. Team Colombia, represented by the sorority Alpha Omicron Pi and the fraternity Sigma Phi Epsilon, finished in second in the Greek life category.

“It was a great event and I had a great time dancing with my brothers,” William Dwyer, a third-semester accounting major, said. He performed with Sigma Phi Epsilon in the Lip Sync battle. “I look forward to doing it again!”



Written by Colin Sullivan | Designed by Karli Vare | Photos by Tyler Washington

SPRING VALLEY FARM EVENT

Written By Mary Lasley Designed By Haydn Kerr Photos By Brandon Chain

Surrounded by sprawling farmlands, forests, and solar panels, the University of Connecticut attracts many students who are passionate about sustainability. One of the organizations that heavily contributes to UConn's eco-friendly reputation is Spring Valley Student Farm, located about 4.5 miles off campus. At the farm, students tend the fields to grow organic produce that goes straight to UConn Dining Services. However, growing food isn't the only role of the farm. Spring Valley also prides itself on being an inclusive place where the UConn community can learn about sustainability. Spring Valley accomplishes this by hosting Farm Fridays, a weekly open-house — or more aptly, open-farm — event where students can spend an afternoon planting, harvesting, and mulching.

During the fall semester, every Friday from Sept. 3

through Oct. 29, UConn students left campus on shuttle buses at 4 p.m. and returned two hours later with muddy boots and expanded knowledge of sustainable farming practices.

"The intent of Farm Fridays is to provide a way to get students onto the farm to learn about and help out with sustainable farming," said Phoebe Mrozinski, a seventh-semester



environmental science major and student farmer at Spring Valley. Mrozinski has been involved with the farm since 2019. "We're hoping to bring an inclusive place for students to escape campus for an afternoon and connect with nature."

Spring Valley originated as a Residential Life project in the spring of 2010. According to their website, the farm currently exists as a shared effort by UConn Dining Services, Residential Life, the EcoHouse Learning Community, the College of Agriculture, Health and Natural Resources, and the Office of Sustainability. Students can work on the farm during the school year or over the summer. Those who wish to spend even more time tending the farm can apply for one of eleven student farmer positions.

Those student farmers live on the farm year-round, tending to the farm and learning the ins and outs of sustainability, organic farming, and the business side of agriculture,

all while providing fresh fruits and vegetables for Dining Services. However, for students who can't make such a commitment, Farm Fridays are a perfect opportunity to spend an afternoon learning more about the farm while simultaneously helping to keep it in shape.

For students who can't make the commitment of working for or living on the farm, Farm Fridays are the perfect opportunity to spend an afternoon learning about the farm and its operations. Farm Fridays' final meeting of the semester — a garlic planting event — was celebrated with a roaring campfire and a chili dinner for the volunteers. Though the farm does not host events over winter break, Farm Fridays are scheduled to kick off again after spring break, and students can resume planting seeds and clearing weeds right where they left off.



A CAPELLA RUSH CONCERT

On the night of the Fall A Capella Rush Concert the Jorgensen Center for Performing Arts bustled with life. Masked UConn students and outsiders alike streamed into Jorgensen's main auditorium, directed by event staff wearing black and yellow jackets. They were free to sit wherever they liked, so long as they adhered to social distancing guidelines. Overhead, screens cycled through messages reminding attendees to wear their masks at all times and to sit in seats marked with green-and-navy "Maintain Distance" stickers. Friends and family chatted and milled about the house. In the balcony overhead, the evening's student

performers waited eagerly for the show to begin, while some waved back to the audience.

Then, the lights dimmed.

Upstage, the white backdrop turned blue and turquoise.

Zachary Kenney, the president of the UConn A Cappella Association (UCACA), a member of the Rolling Tones, and the evening's master of ceremonies, emerged from stage right to much fanfare. Thus began UCACA's first in-person concert since the onset of COVID-19. The Fall A Capella Rush Concert kicked off UCACA's fall 2021 audition season before a sold-out audience, with 10% of the ticket proceeds going to HuskyThon.

The Fall A Capella Rush Concert was not only a way for UConn's 10 a cappella groups to showcase their talent, but it was also a chance to show prospective auditioners exactly what each group was looking for. Each group performed two songs, ranging from classics like Frank Sinatra's "I Love You Baby" to Billie Eilish's edgier, more contemporary "All the Good Girls Go to Hell," while the backdrop changed color



to match each group.

Husky Hungama, UConn's only South Asian fusion a cappella group, were decked out in all-black against a vibrant red-orange backdrop. They were followed up by bright pink Drop the Bass, the first of UConn's three all-female groups. Rolling Tones performed next in dramatic black-and-red ensembles.

By contrast, the following group in the lineup, the all-male Conn-Men, wore simple plaid jackets and jeans for their high-energy performance. Co-ed group A Minor kept up that high energy, emerging in light, summery attire as the members bantered amongst themselves.

The all-female Chordials, UConn's first established a cappella group, performed next, wearing all-black and hitting impressive high notes. Notes Over Storrs, another co-ed group, took the stage next and spent about a minute or so prior to their

performance trying to untangle microphone wires. During their second song, they began a clap, which the audience took up with fervor. While making their exit, a few members remained behind to give the microphone knot one last go, to no avail.

Another one of UConn's all-male groups, A Completely Different Note, brought some old-school vibes to the stage, dressed in business casual blazers. They were followed by Extreme Measures, who arrived to loud cheering as audience members called out the names of friends and relatives on stage. Finally, the last of UConn's all-female groups to perform, Rubyfruit, closed out the show. Dressed in black and pink, they struck powerful high notes to match Ariana Grande's, earning roaring applause from the audience. At the very end, Kennedy took to the stage one last time to bid the audience good night and remind auditioners about audition forms. Overall, UCACA helped to breathe new life into the UConn community after a year of remote performances, in a stunning show to welcome these singing Huskies back home.

Written by Eileen Sholomicky | Designed by Karli Vare | Photos by Brandon Chain

CLIMBING CENTER

When UConn's new recreation center was first unveiled in the fall of 2019, its four floors were packed with shiny new features, from the aquatic center to the indoor track to the rows of untouched treadmills and stair machines. One of the rec center's most impressive boasts — at the opening, and to this day — is the new climbing center, visible through a tall glass window that stretches from the ground floor to the top of the building. At 58 feet, the climbing center's rock wall has the unique honor of being the tallest collegiate climbing wall in New England. However, its stomach-dropping heights aren't all the climbing center has to offer. There is also an area for bouldering, a type of climbing that is performed on smaller walls without ropes or harnesses. In total, the climbing center boasts over 5,000 square feet of climbing space.

At the entrance of the climbing center is



the front desk, where students can borrow climbing shoes, harnesses, and bags of chalk. Past the front desk is the bouldering area, a smaller wall pockmarked with rainbow-colored holds. To complete a climb, a climber needs to follow the holds of a certain color until they get to the end — which sounds like a simple enough task, except for the holds that wind around doorways and mark the undersides of steep inclines. After traversing through the bouldering area — taking care not to walk directly under anyone, for fear of being landed on — one can view the top roping area, home to the famous 58-foot wall. The wall has different climbing paths of varying difficulties and features a station with six belay ropes and four auto-belay stations. Belaying involves one person climbing while another person holds their rope from the ground, whereas the wall holds the rope for climbers with auto-belay stations.

For the average person, staring up a 58-foot rope or watching someone dangle upside down at the bouldering area can make the climbing center seem more than a little intimidating. However, students don't have to be seasoned mountain climbers to enjoy what the center has to offer. The climbing center is beginner-friendly: All climbers, regardless of prior experience, must complete a basic orientation in order to climb. Students interested in top-roping must complete an additional course about safety, technique, and proper use of equipment. The climbing center has plenty of different climbing tracks in each area, marked with different colors that correspond

to different levels of ability. Whether you want to challenge yourself with a tougher climb or stick to what you know, there is space to do whatever feels right.

In addition to the orientation courses, the climbing center offers frequent classes for climbers of all skill levels. For beginners, there are movement clinics, which teach techniques in footwork, balance, and body positioning. More ambitious climbers can take a course in lead climbing, a style of climbing where the climber has to clip their own rope into bolts on the wall. This class is not for the faint of heart, as climbers are recommended to have approximately six months of climbing experience and comfort with more difficult climbing routes.

The climbing center also hosts plenty of competitive and noncompetitive events. One of these is a bouldering competition open to all skill levels in which climbers can challenge each other. However, the event is not solely competitive — though top climbers win prizes, the climbing center stresses that the point of the bouldering event is creativity and self-improvement. Around the time of Halloween, the center also hosts a "costume climb": costumed climbers take to the walls and enjoy a night of spooky revelry. For the climbing center's costume climb, prizes are given not to the best climbers, but to the best costumes — after all, it's one thing to put together a wild Halloween costume, but to wear it while climbing a 58-foot wall is something else altogether.

For UConn students who have peered through the rec center's tall window and seen

tiny

climbers clinging to the top of the wall, the climbing center can seem like an intimidating place. Although scaling the climbing center's tall wall may not be an everyday event for most, students don't need to be daredevils in order to enjoy what the center has to offer. With multiple difficulty levels, free orientation courses, and supplies to borrow, the climbing center is more than willing to help you defy gravity in whichever way you find the most comfortable.



PROJECT FASHION

“The inspiration for this outfit was fall, a preppy. The sweater is pretty big, so I thought I should do a French my belt added some ju... ..”

As part of a collaboration and photoshoot with Project Fashion, Nutmeg Publishing spoke with Gabriella Crean, a seventh-semester journalism and communications major, and Daniella Green, a third-semester communications major, about PF's inner workings, their favorite events, and how they have adjusted to being back in person. Crean and Green serve as president and treasurer of PF, respectively.

NP: Can you tell me a little bit about Project Fashion?

GC: Project Fashion is a fashion club at UConn. What we strive to do is create an inclusive, fun, creative environment for our members to use our club as an outlet, inspiration, or just to meet people with similar interests. We'll talk about topics regarding fashion, personally and globally, and how that impacts us as individuals and as a society.

NP: What are some of your favorite Project Fashion programs/events?

GC: Some of my personal favorites are the thrift trips and photoshoots. Social media is super fun nowadays, and everyone is always looking for more content. [It's fun] to get pictures in your favorite outfits, and it's a great bonding activity for our members.

Some of the other activities that I really like [is the] pins and patches sale, which is a little fundraiser for our club. I really like other collaborations that we do with different organizations on campus, like [Nutmeg Publishing] or the Benton Museum. Usually a collaboration with [the Benton Museum] might look like, if they have an art exhibition, we might create outfits that are inspired by their art collection, and we might put together a two to three minute video with our members and the outfits that they create, which I think is really fun.

DG: I really like the general body meetings

when we talk about different topics because I like putting in my input and also hearing the other members. I also really like when we do collaboration with photoshoots because it's always fun to put together outfits and see the different possibilities and how it relates to what we're doing.

NP: Do UConn students need fashion experience to participate?

GC: Not at all. We have [had] this saying for a few years: "Do you wear clothes? Join Project Fashion."

I actually prefer it if we have a wide variety of interests and backgrounds, because that definitely adds more to the conversation, and I love seeing people come to the club, learn something new, learn personal style... It's fun seeing our members transform and you can see that in their style throughout the year.

NP: UConn's organizations have been dramatically affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. What are some ways that Project Fashion has adapted the return to campus to continue providing students with a valuable experience?

GC: I think the transition back to in person only helps the club, because we can not only have discussion-based meetings but we can [also] have these events that people can go to, interact with each other, and make friends, and [that] was something that we were really missing when we were online.

NP: What was the process of picking out outfits for the models in terms of the theme of transitioning from online school fashion to in-person fashion?

GC: Considering that we were only able to ask three models to participate, we wanted to make sure that the rest of the club had some kind of participation with this collaboration. We held [a general body] meeting

and talked about the transition from online back to in person and how that affects what we wear and our decision making when it comes to school and clothing. We had our members create their own slide in the [slideshow] so that they could put outfit inspiration for the models. We ended up choosing randomly from the members who signed up.

We talked about bringing comfort back into clothing... loungewear is super popular now. Also, we talked about how it could be the opposite; some people could be going all-out, bringing up their style game...They really enjoy putting together outfits, and it can be hard when you're locked away for a year and no one can see that. Mainly, I pushed for the models to choose an outfit that they feel comfortable and confident in and something that expresses who they are. I think, even moving back in person, fashion will always be a form of self expression, and that was something that was really important to come across in our model's outfits.

*This interview has been edited and condensed for length and clarity.

“I’m wearing a leather jacket as well, and I feel like it’s a good go-to because UConn needs a lot of layering because it is very cold out.”



“I thrift a lot of my clothes, so that is often my inspiration in what I decide to wear everyday.”

“I am wearing red on my jacket on the inside, and then green pants I felt like was very fall-y.”

“A while ago I went to the Jonas Brothers concert, and I remember I was thinking about pops of color, color blocks, pink, bell bottoms, and Doc Martens.”

“A while ago I went to the Jonas Brothers concert, and I remember I was thinking about pops of color, and I love color blocks. So I found this pink shirt, and I got bell bottoms, and I’ve had these Doc Martens.”



SU JOB SPOTLIGHT



This fall, Nutmeg Publishing interviewed Katie Nguyen, a fifth-semester UConn student who works for the information desk in the Student Union. Nguyen is majoring in speech, language, and hearing sciences and human development and family studies.

Nutmeg Publishing: How long have you worked at the Union?

Katie Nguyen: I've worked at Union for three years now, including COVID.

NP: What was it like to work at the Union during the pandemic?

KN: It definitely was an adjustment. [We had] to accommodate a much smaller student body. As a staff, we had to figure out how to keep ourselves safe and our community safe, and on top of that, we still wanted to provide as many events for students as we

could. For a lot of people working at the U, there was a lot of leaning on each other for teamwork when one person was sick or there was an outbreak. So [the Student Union] was just a really good place to know that people had your back.

NP: So, you're still connected to the whole Student Union staff, even though you only work in one part of it?



Student Union

job spotlight



SU job

KN: Yeah. We all kind of work together as one big unit, and we're always calling different departments for help.

NP: What's something a lot of people don't know about what goes on behind the scenes at the Union?

KN: I would say that a lot of people don't know how many different departments work together to ensure that an event runs smoothly. Normally people only see the event services part – when they register for the event – but there's so much that goes on. There's a setup crew, there's AV tech, there's all the people who do technical support for the events, people like me at info who are there to answer questions...so I think people don't really know how involved we all are in ensuring that an event runs smoothly. We care so much about the service that we give to our customers, and we want to make sure that there are ample resources for them during an event.

NP: What do you do aside from working at the Union?

KN: I do a lot. I'm in HuskyThon, I'm in NSSLHA – National Student Speech Language and Hearing Association – the UConn Kids Internship, and next semester I'm in research for HDFs. And I work 15 hours a week, so it's a good balance of always being busy.

NY: What's the most interesting thing about your job?

KN: I think the most interesting thing about my job is meeting all the different people at UConn. I think it's super cool – like, on the first day of school, I usually get tons of questions. I get [asked,] "Where is this class?" "What can I eat today?" "Where can I get my OneCard?" So it's just really cool to see the different stages of life that everyone's in. Sometimes I get freshmen, and sometimes I get seniors who are like, "It's my last day here, what should I do?"

NP: What would you recommend for a senior on their last day?

KN: I don't know! Walk on the seal, I guess?

NP: Overall, do you think working at the Union has been a valuable experience?

KN: One hundred percent. I think working at the U has been the best part of my time here at UConn. I've met so many great friends through it, and I think it's such a great way to connect to other people. It allows me to see events and activities going on that I normally wouldn't get to see – it kind of just lets me see UConn in a different perspective. I think the most valuable thing that I've gotten out of it is the people that I've met, the connections I've made.

*This interview has been edited for clarity.

Student Union

SU job

Student Union

NM