

Tennis teams close out fall season



EAGLE hosts Haus of Emerson Ball



Challenging the culture of civic duty



The Berkeley Beacon

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Junior Veronica Alberts (left) celebrates the winning goal with Seniors Paige Hailey and Jess Frost. • Anissa Gardizy / Beacon Staff

Women's soccer wins first NEWMAC home playoff game

Kyle Bray, *Beacon Staff*

Emerson's women's soccer team claimed the first home conference playoff win in school history by beating the Babson College Beavers 1-0 on Tuesday.

Junior forward Veronica Alberts scored the game's lone goal in the 18th minute to secure Emerson's spot in the semifinals of the New England Women's and Men's Athletic Conference playoffs. Senior forward Jess Frost played a long ball over the top of the Babson backline, which Alberts let bounce before chesting the ball down and firing her first touch past the Beaver's goalkeeper Kayla Salmon. Alberts said the goal resulted from practicing with Frost.

"It's funny because when we've been practicing, I love getting balls on the ground and Jess loves playing them in the air," Alberts said. "She played one in the air, and I somehow just felt so calm and composed, just settled it and then just shot. [It's] definitely something we've been practicing on—composure in front of the goal—and I'm glad it paid off."

Following Alberts' goal, Emerson increased the pressure on Babson, with Alberts and senior forward Paige Hailey both making dangerous runs into the penalty box.

See Soccer, page 8

Student gives face to ballot referendum

Annika Hom, *Beacon Staff*

While canvassing Massachusetts' ballot Question 3, freshman TJ Coste encountered a woman who feared using a bathroom stall next to someone with male genitalia. Coste responded by sharing their experience as a transgender person and convinced her to vote differently.

"I've really held on to that conversation for months, because if she had talked to the opposition, she would've went to the other side," Coste said.

Coste said last summer they signed up to canvass Question 3 during the midterm elections because they believe the results would directly affect their life as a gender nonconforming transgender person.

Voting yes on Question 3 maintains an existing Massachusetts law that restricts public spaces like bathrooms, restaurants, locker rooms, and hospitals from discriminating against transgender people.

The summer before Coste started college, representatives from Yes on 3: Freedom for All Massachusetts approached them at Boston Pride and asked if they wanted to canvass the question.

Keep MA Safe, an organization that helped gather signatures to put the referendum on the ballot, argues that people reserve the right to privacy and safety within public spaces.

See Question 3, page 6



The Red Sox rode through campus on duck boats Wednesday. • Anissa Gardizy / Beacon Staff

Investment Committee votes "no" to fossil fuel companies

Andrew Stanton, *Beacon Staff*

The Board of Trustees Investment Committee agreed to withdraw, or divest, part of the college's endowment from unknown fossil fuel companies in an October meeting with the environmental organization Earth Emerson.

Only the Committee who oversees the college's investments, agreed to the divestment—the rest of the Board of Trustees is yet to vote on it.

Last year, the Beacon reported the college invests 7 percent of the endowment into fossil fuel companies indirectly. The endowment is a collection of money donated to the college for investment and spending purposes.

Emerson operates on a \$150 million endowment, according to previous Beacon reporting— seven percent equals approximately \$10.5 million.

President M. Lee Pelton said the committee will make a recommendation to the rest of the board, who will vote on whether or not to divest. Then the Investment Committee will implement the board's decision.

Earth Emerson co-president Kayla Burns said the school faces a long process for total divestment.

She said the Committee wants to ensure they reinvest the funds in a way that allows the school to generate the same amount of money it did during its investment in the fossil fuel companies.

"It's kind of cloudy, like exactly what is going to happen, but they said to take this meeting as a yes [to divestment]. They said that like three different times," Burns said.

See Divestment, page 2

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news

ELA applications no longer first-come, first-serve

Stephanie Purifoy, *Beacon Staff*

The Education Abroad and Domestic Programs office changed the Emerson Los Angeles application and selection processes for students with financial challenges, according to college officials.

Director David Griffin wrote in an email sent to students on Oct. 21 that the college increased the amount of essay prompts in the application and introduced a selection committee to consider applicants. This caused a two-month delay in the application release.

Griffin's email said the software company Simplicity encountered unforeseen technical problems with their software, Horizons, when they made the application changes in August.

In previous years, the ELA application was open from Sept. 1 to Nov. 1, but due to the delay, students can apply from Oct. 21 to Dec. 9. This cut the application window from 62 days to 50.

Griffin said the applications would take longer to process because the new selection committee must evaluate them. Despite this, he said he hopes to tell students the results before the spring 2019 semester.

Previously, one person from the office sifted through the ELA applications and accepted students on a first-come, first-serve basis, meaning a student who sent their application earlier had a better chance of acceptance.

ELA Academic Director Mikhail Gershovich said they haven't decided the eight members for the new selection committee, but it will consist of officials from both Boston and LA campuses.

Gershovich said the college wanted to make the application process more fair to students who may need more time to consider their financial situations.

"Our goal is to create a reasonable, fair, and ultimately transparent process, and one that's pedagogically sound," he said.

Emerson requires ELA students to live on campus unless their family lives in the area. Tuition for classes on the LA campus mirrors the price of the Boston campus. However, students must secure an internship off-campus and attain transportation, in addition to the expense of moving themselves and their belongings to LA.



The college changed the Emerson Los Angeles application process to be more considerate of students with financial challenges. • *Beacon Archives*

According to the application page, students pay a \$300 program fee upon acceptance.

If a student comes from a lower socioeconomic status, Griffin said, they may need more time to assess these expenses. A first-come, first-serve selection process may lead to more accepted students from upper-class backgrounds, he said.

Junior visual and media arts major Brian Sweeney said he is applying to ELA for the fall

2019 semester. He said he approves of the adjustments to the application.

"The changes to the application only sound to me like a good thing," he said. "Acceptance should be based on merit, even if that means I don't go. It just makes sense."

Griffin said the sheer volume of applicants also inspired the changes. In 2017, he said over 500 students applied for both the fall 2018 and spring 2019

"Acceptance should be based on merit, even if that means I don't go. It just makes sense."

semesters. The LA campus capacity sits at 200 students per semester.

"Now that we have a larger number of students applying, it was clear that we needed to have a more robust application process that wasn't dependent on just one person," Griffin said.

The application now includes one 1,000-word and one 250-word essay instead of last year's four short essays. The committee will grade the applications based on a rubric created by Gershovich. The rubric grades students on a scale of 1 to 5 in the following criteria: GPA, professor recommendations, essay clarity and style, and essay content.

According to Griffin's email, the longer essay prompt asks students to explain why they are applying, what experiences prepared them for the program, what the student's plans to do in LA, how the program will help them, and what the applicant can bring to the ELA community. The shorter essay is about the school's goal of diversity and inclusion and what this means to the student.

Gershovich said he wanted to make the application process more fair for students and for the selection committee. He said the rubric eliminates subjectivity from the process and helps the committee make decisions about each candidate by detailing what each application's criteria should look like.

Sweeney said he heard about the application delay through friends and not through communication with the college. He said there was some initial frustration among students because they weren't told when the application would open or if the deadline would be pushed.

"Even though it was a bit stressful, this ended up being a very big blessing in disguise. If the ELA application was on top of [midterms, the BFA application, and course selections for next semester], this month would've been completely overwhelming for a lot of people," Sweeney said. "So honestly, I'm pretty happy it worked out this way."

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Fossil fuel divestment vote awaits the Board of Trustees

Continued from page 1

Burns said the Committee made it seem as though the vote will not become an issue, and the committee's recommendation will carry weight with the rest of the board.

Pelton said he believes the board will most likely vote to divest from the fossil fuel companies.

If the rest of the board votes against divestment, Burns said Earth Emerson plans to keep working towards convincing them to do so.

It is unknown which companies the college invests in since the Board of Trustees invest in companies indirectly. To maximize profit, the college invests the endowment in fossil fuel related stock or funds rather than a particular company—a strategy called indirect investment, according to previous Beacon reporting.

Burns said she does not yet know the specifics as to how the school will divest. She said the next step is to research and understand how schools like Syracuse University divested \$1.18 billion from fossil fuel companies in April 2015 to ease the Investment Committee's worry about whether or not the school will lose money.

Pelton said divesting will not impact scholarships because the school will reinvest the money—but he does not yet know where it will be reinvested.

Earth Emerson members hope the reinvested funds go towards companies that work with renewable energy, Burns said.

The Committee said they will provide Earth Emerson with a written statement explaining their commitment, Burns said. She said the committee did not yet provide a timeline of the process, and it remains too early to understand exactly what may happen.

"We're waiting on that written response from them because we just want to know for sure what they're committing to at this point," she said.

In spring 2018, Earth Emerson decided to

take action against Emerson's investment in fossil fuels.

"We found that to be completely dissonant with the college's message and with our own well-being as students," Carrie Cullen, student sustainability ambassador and former Earth Emerson president, said.

Pelton said the Committee maintained investments in fossil fuel companies to ensure endowment returned the highest return.

"I think that their principle preoccupation was making sure that the endowment portfolio was ... producing the highest returns in order to support the academic mission and student life," Pelton said.

Earth Emerson members began a campaign to convince the school to divest from these companies. They tabled in the Dining Center, spoke to classes, and started a petition—which about a quarter of undergraduates signed, Burns said. She said they also met with administration and addressed the Faculty Assembly in April.

According to Cullen, Earth Emerson met with administration five times.

Sophomore Thea Farber, green space chair for Earth Emerson, spent her first semester as a member of Earth Emerson working on the campaign and tabled every other day in the Dining Center for hours last spring.

"I think it's just really important that students know what happens when their trash goes to a landfill or what Emerson does with their money," Farber said.

Burns said she did not expect the board to agree to divestment as quickly as they did, the semester after the campaign began.

"I just didn't think we would get the yes from them this soon," she said. "I really thought that it would be a lot of us trying to persuade them. But luckily for us—and this definitely isn't the case for a lot of other schools—they were really receptive to it."

Pelton said the Committee agrees the college's investments should reflect the college's



The Board of Trustees Investment Committee voted to withdraw the college's holdings in fossil fuel companies in October. • *Erin Nolan / Beacon Staff*

support of sustainability.

"The investment committee appreciates the students who spoke to them about this issue and that the investment committee is supportive in principle," he said.

Cullen emphasized the power and importance of student-led movements.

"I've seen a general tide of jaded cynicism that's kind of going through campus," Cullen said. "I think this is a really important milestone

to prove the power of the student and to prove that if you're unhappy with something, you're capable of making change."

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Red Sox parade overflows Boylston with students and fans

Ziqi Wang and Yiwen Yu, *Beacon Correspondents*

Twenty-five duck boats passed through Emerson's campus on Boylston and Tremont streets around noon Oct. 31 to celebrate the Boston Red Sox's World Series victory.

Thousands of people sporting Red Sox caps and jerseys packed the sidewalk in front of campus buildings. Dining Center workers stood on chairs to wait for the champions' arrival. Construction workers at the Little Building stood on the edge of each floor looking down at the crowded street. People chanted "U.S.A! U.S.A!" as duck boats passed the street and red, white, and blue confetti rained from the sky.

Emerson College Police Department Chief Robert Smith said in a community-wide email that pedestrian traffic on Boylston sidewalks returned to normal levels around 12:30 p.m. ECPD stationed security forces on campus, including 12 Hemenway residence hall. The department brought its night shift workers from 7-2 p.m. to handle the large parade crowds.

ECPD Deputy Chief Eric Schiazza said extra ECPD officers guarded all building doors to guarantee only Emerson students and staff could access the buildings. Campus doors required ID cards for entry.

"This is the 11th parade we had since 2011," Schiazza said in an interview. "Nothing that wouldn't happen during other times ever happened during the parades."

Some Emerson students and Red Sox fans began to gather outside the school buildings around 10 a.m.—hours before the parade reached campus.

Sophomore Declan Berkeley stood outside with his camera taking videos of the parade. As a Red Sox fan from Massachusetts, he said he had faith the team would pull through and win the World Series.

"We've got great men throughout this season, and I knew they were gonna take [the World Series] home," Berkeley said. "I'm so proud of them."

"In today's world, especially in such divisive times, baseball allows us, regardless of politics, to come together."

Sophomore and native Chicagoan Rhegan Graham said she wanted to join in on the celebration although she roots for the Chicago Cubs.

"I admit it—I'm not a huge Red Sox fan, but I'm really excited to be able to partake in the festivities," Graham said. "All my classes are canceled, so I get to catch up on studying for midterms, which is nice."

Chair of Communication Studies Gregory Payne still came to work despite his canceled classes. Payne said his department served hot dogs for the Red Sox Celebration Grill on the second floor of the Walker Building.

"You know, sports unites people when politics and culture and religions sometimes [are] not the best," Payne said. "In today's world, especially in such divisive times, baseball allows us, regardless of politics, to come together."

Students, faculty members, and their families gathered on

almost every floor of Emerson buildings facing the street to watch the parade.

First-year graduate student Laura Metter said she enjoyed the experience even though she does not care about baseball. However, Metter said she expected more crowds.

Senior Lecturer Keri Thompson watched the parade from Walker Room 231. She considers herself a Boston sports fan and lifelong Red Sox fan. She said she felt ecstatic when the Red Sox won the World Series.

"This year is also special because the team relied on teamwork to win. Everyone did their job," Thompson said.

Thompson said her love for the Red Sox runs in her blood and goes back many generations. She said this World Series victory came not long after the last—the Red Sox won the 2013 World Series against the St. Louis Cardinals.

"I felt spoiled to have a team winning so many championships," she said.

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Fans cheer on the Red Sox World Series victory parade as it rolls down Boylston Street. Cullen Granzen / Beacon Staff



A Boston Police Department Officer stands guard as the Red Sox victory parade passes by. Cullen Granzen / Beacon Staff

Parkland survivor argues for inclusivity with gun reform

Stephanie Purifoy, *Beacon Staff*

Freshman Robert Shinder grew up five miles from Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School where 17 people were murdered in a mass shooting.

In the wake of the Parkland shooting, Shinder joined March For Our Lives, a movement that started as a student-led demonstration in support of tighter gun control and turned into an organization focused on voting rights. In August, he contacted both the MFOL Boston chapter and school officials at Emerson to organize a panel.

The March For Our Lives panel drew around 100 students and faculty to the Cutler Majestic Theatre on Oct. 30. The five-person panel included MFOL members from the Boston chapter, the Milwaukee chapter, and a student from Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School to speak about gun violence in America.

Shinder said the Parkland shooting galvanized him to make a change in America.

"I was politically aware, but never really politically active. This was really the moment that defined me," he said in an interview with the Beacon.

During summer 2018, Shinder joined MFOL on Road to Change, which took the movement's members around the country to raise awareness and encourage people to vote in the midterms. Shinder traveled throughout Florida and five other states, taking photos and videos to document the tour.

Shinder said he wanted to host the panel at Emerson to help educate the community.

"A lot of people are not fully educated about this issue," he said. "People need to know more about gun violence that is not frequently covered by the media and they need to know about how they can help."

The panelists discussed how different ethnicities and regions are affected by gun violence. They discussed how the national media doesn't cover gun violence's impact on people of color in impoverished neighborhoods.

Director of the MFOL Milwaukee chapter, Bria Smith, spoke about her experiences with police brutality and the effects of guns in her

neighborhood

"It's not just about school shootings in white, affluent, suburban neighborhoods. It's not just about a white man who's mentally ill going into a school with a gun. It's about inner-city kids being shot and murdered on the streets every day," she said during the panel discussion. "I think it's very important for a movement like [MFOL] to

be inclusive and bring every possible perspective to the table."

Marjory Stoneman Douglas senior Aalayah Eastmond, who participated in the panel, was in one of the classrooms targeted by a shooter on Feb. 14. Six of her classmates were shot and killed. Eastmond only avoided the bullets by hiding underneath the body of her friend Nicholas Dworet.

During the discussion, she said the MFOL movement works toward inclusivity, but still has a long way to go.

"We still need to include people of different races, religions, and regions. We need to talk

about domestic violence, police brutality, suicide, and everything else," she said. "There's always somebody who wants to share their story, and so it's so important that there are others reaching out to them and giving them a platform to speak."

In an interview with the Beacon, Jason Meier, director of student engagement and leadership, said he saw this as an opportunity to encourage students to vote in the midterm elections on Nov. 6. He said barely 11 percent of the student body voted in the 2014 midterm elections.

"Anything we can do to help students actually be civically engaged instead of just saying they're civically engaged is very important, and Robbie did a fantastic job getting that message across," Meier said.

Shinder said he wanted this event to inspire people to vote.

"Emerson students are totally politically aware. They know what's going on in the world but they aren't incredibly active about it," he said. "That's something that needs to be changed."

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Incident Journal

The Emerson College Police Department provides the Incident Journal to the Beacon every week. Beacon staff edit the Incident Journal for style and clarity, but not for content.

Monday, Oct. 22

The Office of Housing and Residential Life turned over marijuana confiscated from a student in the Piano Row residence hall to the Emerson College Police Department.

Wednesday, Oct. 24

ECPD and Facilities Management freed two people from

an elevator inside the Tufts Performance and Production Center. Neither were injured.

Thursday, Oct. 25

A student reported the theft of a wallet at the Copley station. The Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority Transit Police were made aware.

Friday, Oct. 26

ECPD responded to a car accident at the corner of Boylston and Tremont Streets. The involved vehicles were damaged, and the pedestrian barriers were removed by the impact of the accident. The

Boston Police Department and the Boston Fire Department were notified.

Saturday, Oct. 27

ECPD and Facilities Management freed a staff member stuck inside an elevator in the Tufts Performance and Production Center.

Sunday, Oct. 28

An ECPD officer found the doors of the Print/Copy Center unsecured. They completed a check of the building, found nothing unusual, and secured the center.

editorial

Be woke, especially when you vote

At issue:
**The approaching
midterm election**

Our take:
**Educate yourselves—
then vote**

Editorials are written solely by Editor-in-Chief Shafaq Patel, Managing Editor Kyle Labe, Opinion Editor Hannah Ebanks, Deputy Opinion Editor Katie Schmidt, and Assistant Opinion Editor Diti Kohli without consultation from other staff members, and does not influence any stories. Op-Eds reflect the views of only their authors, not The Berkeley Beacon.

Despite our activist culture, most Emerson students did not turn out at the polls during the last midterm election. In 2014, approximately 1 out of 10 eligible Emerson students voted, according to the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement. In other terms, only 11 percent of Emerson students voted while 65 percent were registered to vote. With the current political climate, we can't depend on that 11 percent.

Going to the polls and voting is undeniably important. However, voters must inform themselves. Ilya Somin, a law professor at George Mason University, found in his book, *Democracy and Public Ignorance: Why Smaller Government is Smart*, that only 34 percent of Americans can name all three branches of government. This dismal statistic represents a larger mask of political ignorance. Many citizens do not understand the workings of the government and the platforms of those within this system.

Nonetheless, this ignorance does not equate apathy. With campaigns like the Parkland teens' #VoteThemOut, the percentage of registered voters is actually rising, according to political data firm TargetSmart. Before these new voters flock to the polls, they should not only become educated on Congressional

candidates, but judges, commissioners, and ballot questions as well.

A breadth of information lies virtually everywhere on phones, laptops, and TVs. A Pew Research Center survey found 75 percent of Americans are better informed on national news because of the Internet. Now is the time to extend this knowledgeability to political issues and candidates. One way voters can ensure their vote represents their voice is to educate themselves on issues important to them.

For example, if you're a Massachusetts resident—according to Emerson's website, 20 percent of first-year students are from New England—there aren't just electoral races to consider. While major races include that of governor, attorney general, state treasurer, U.S. senator, and U.S. House Representative, there are also three ballot questions.

Question 1 proposes a limit to how many patients are assigned to a nurse, with the limit depending on the hospital department. Voters are split on the issue—a vote yes supports the limit, a vote no opposes it. Unions claim it'll improve nurses' well-being and safety, while many hospital groups allege the limits are so rigid and expensive that it may affect daily functioning and even cause smaller hospitals to close. Question 2 proposes the formation of an

unpaid, nonprofit citizens' commission to overlook political spending and corporate rights with the intention of overturning the controversial Citizens United Supreme Court decision. Question 3—arguably the most contentious—is a veto referendum on a 2016 anti-discrimination law ensuring access to public spaces regardless of gender identity. A vote yes would keep the current law in place, while a vote no would repeal it. Opponents claim the law's current language is too broad and opens up the chance for crime, while supporters argue it's a basic guarantee of human rights.

One's political party affiliation should not discourage them from voting in this midterm election. Nothing and no one should dissuade a student from voting, even if their political ideologies don't align with other Emerson students. During a time of fervent political polarization, some may feel their views aren't valid or worth projecting in a heavily partisan environment. This mindset is dangerous, as it assumes one's voice is dependent on its accordance to others. A healthy democracy can only prevail when individuals of all political parties and viewpoints participate in the most fundamental civic duty—voting.

Letters

If you want to respond to, or share an opinion about, an article in the Beacon, you can write a short letter to the editor. Email it to letters@berkeleybeacon.com.

Please note that letters may be edited. Submissions for print must be shorter than 250 words.

The Berkeley Beacon

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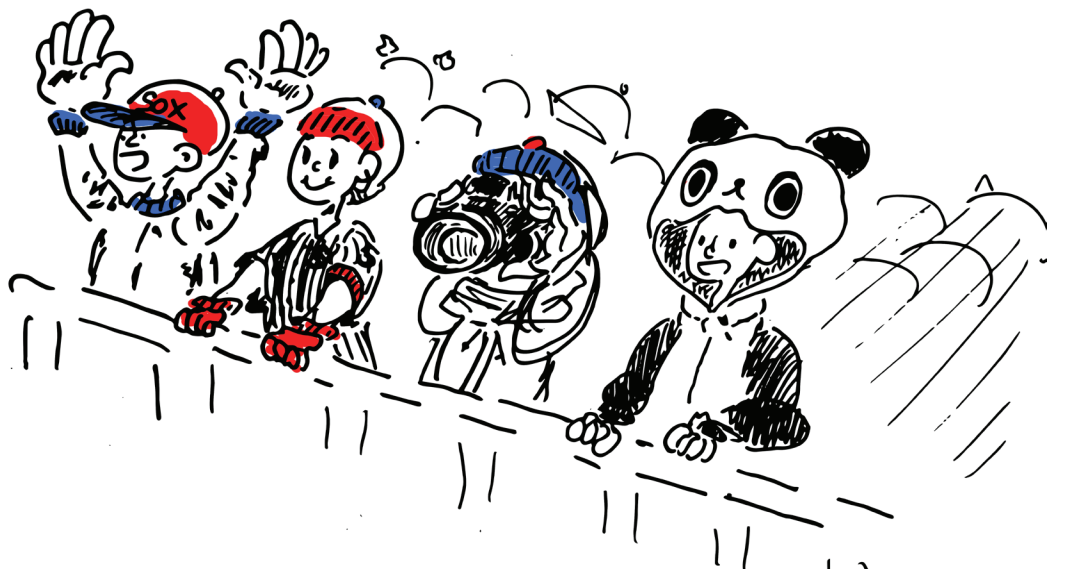
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illustration by Ally Rzesza

Students had a
hard choice deciding
what to wear on Oct. 31.



opinion

Taking civic duty from the textbook to the real world



In China, I seldom see or hear the phrase “civic duty.” However, it seems like civic responsibility is indispensable in the United States. • Illustration by Ally Rzeska / Beacon Staff

Jiachen Liu

Liu is a freshman journalism major & Beacon correspondent

I stood in the crowd, witnessing citizens of different ages, all yelling and hoisting signs above their heads. I could feel my heart beating fast. The impressive scenario made me weirdly excited. It was my first time around a protest. I went to interview the attendees of the Jeff Flake protest as a freshman journalism major. When I asked two protesters why they attended, I did not expect their unanimous answer—it was their “civic duty.”

In China, I seldom see or hear the phrase “civic duty.” However, it seems like civic responsibility is indispensable in the United States. My American friends told me civic duty is a concept taught to them in childhood, and that it is their mutual responsibility to help make their nation better. At the Kavanaugh protest, both college students and adults worked together to meet their common wish to help the nation.

In Chinese moral education classes—courses designed to shape values and ethics—we learned the definition of civic duty. According

to the textbooks, it is something that, once fulfilled, leads to freedom and civil rights. For me and many other Chinese students, we did not understand what rights we had. In some cases, citizens were not granted their rights. We were given nothing more than these fancy big words in textbooks, and they only appeared on tests. We never thought about it in terms of discussion or the political climate.

When my moral education teacher mentioned civic duty in classes, she said that the most specific embodiment of it is patriotism. But what does it truly mean to love our country? No one ever taught me that. And this unclear definition leads to irrational behavior.

Many Chinese citizens, especially young ones, would turn civic duty into radical patriotism. During the 2013 Senkaku Island territorial dispute between China and Japan, some angry Chinese citizens smashed Japanese-made vehicles, boycotted Japanese products, and cursed those who traveled to Japan. They would often label themselves as responsible citizens prompted by civic duty.

Out of the Chinese population—1.4 billion—

only small amounts of citizens participate in civic engagement and political movements. In June 2017, the government withdrew the rights of citizens living in commercial and residential houses to legally reside under the housing contracts. Around 120 people marched into East Nanjing Road in Shanghai to earn their houses back. On the evening the protest occurred, several videos and pictures were posted on Chinese social media. The next morning, they were all deleted. In this case, some citizens protested in terms of civic duty, but unfortunately, they did not get their granted civil rights to protest, albeit allowed under the Chinese Constitution.

Two weeks ago, a helicopter hovering over a street distracted me. A strike transpired near Emerson as Marriott Hotel workers protested contract negotiations. Several policemen stood in the proximity, blocking streets and diverting vehicles away. They were present to ensure the protesters’ safety, a civil right in America.

Things are entirely different in China. At the start of this year, many Chinese people, including myself, participated in the Chinese #MeToo movement. We shared our own experiences

with sexual assault, some of which dealt with a wide range of government officials. As a result, many posts got deleted. Some girls were even threatened by authorities.

As Americans fight for social improvement through civic duty, the country’s founding documents protect their human right to do so. Americans can fulfill their responsibilities as citizens without the worry of losing their rights. They can debate the nomination of a Supreme Court candidate accused of sexual assault, and can even protest their president’s administration.

However, for Chinese citizens, civic duty and civil rights seem to only make sense in textbooks. Only when we know that our right to protest is protected can more people stand up and contribute to their communities. This is what I hope for in China—that civic duty can become as indispensable there as it is in America, and this requires all the nation to realize the importance of civic participation and take action when needed.

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Letting instincts shape my education, not my major



Now is the time for us to take advantage of our education and to not limit ourselves.

Illustration by Ally Rzeska / Beacon Staff

Kaitlyn Bryson

Bryson is a sophomore communication studies major & a Beacon correspondent.

At 2 a.m. one morning, I broke down and called my mom. Frantic about my decision to change my major, I told her how scared I was because journalism was all I ever thought I could do—it was all I ever planned for.

I thought I couldn’t change my major because, as a sophomore, I am too deep in the curriculum. My journalism peers would disparage me for veering from the pack. My anxiety took over; it forced me to believe I was stuck, but this couldn’t have been any farther from the truth. All students should feel they are able to change their major without fear of falling behind or being judged, because during college is the time to

develop and change our minds.

I wanted to be a reporter since the age of 12, when my middle school’s newspaper published my work for the first time. All of my endeavors after that revolved around becoming a journalist. In high school, I led the initiative to resurrect the school newspaper. I quickly became known as “the crazy newspaper girl.” It was my identity. I wore it with pride. I recently became embarrassed to tell people that I wasn’t this person anymore, that I was wrong about what I wanted. I have always struggled with anxiety, and during my first year at Emerson it got worse as I adjusted to college life in the city. As time went on my general anxiety lessened. Because of this, I believed my doubts about being a journalist would disappear. But they didn’t. My anxiety continued to get worse.

Anytime I got an assignment, my anxiety grew. I didn’t want to scramble all the time to get information from people. I didn’t want to be on call at anytime to finish edits. I simply just didn’t care anymore, and this feeling scared me. I have never been someone that didn’t want to climb the ranks or push myself, but now I was. The more articles, videos, and audio pieces I produced, the more I lost my passion.

This year I watched my peers climb the ranks of the journalism field. I watched them land internships, editorial positions in the paper, and become lead anchors on screen at WEBN. While they were finding their individual and professional identities, I was losing the only distinguishable identity I had: “the crazy newspaper girl.”

After an honest conversation with myself, I realized that I wanted a career with a more sustainable work-life balance. Being a full-time reporter comes at a price of being a slave to the endless news cycle, which is something I am not suited to do. I am someone that needs to be able to clock out for the day, to have time to take care of myself, or else I am not able to produce good work. I want a future with equilibrium and stability, something our society does not teach us to aspire to.

A report from the Education Department’s National Center for Education Statistics shows that 33 percent of students pursuing a bachelor’s degree change their major at least once in their four years of undergraduate education at larger universities. Another study shows that students who change their major graduate at a higher rate than those who don’t. Although these statistics are from universities with a wider range of majors than Emerson, they still show how common changing majors is among undergraduate students.

Unlike these large universities, students at Emerson take courses relating to their major during their freshman year. Due to the small population size, the departments at Emerson can feel like impenetrable factions—once you

are in one, you’re stuck. This is not true. Although Emerson may be smaller and have less major options than other colleges, we still have a wide variety of majors in communication and the arts. I will start the process to switch my major to Communication Studies, which teaches a variety of skills that offers students options into public relations, digital strategies, and social media campaigns. Students even have the ability to create an interdisciplinary major if they want more options, too.

As college students, it is easy for many of us to feel like we don’t have much agency over our lives—we’re stuck in an uncomfortable stage between adolescence and adulthood. If anything, we have the most flexibility to change our minds now than we will have once we get careers, mortgages, and maybe children of our own to care for. Now is the time for us to take advantage of our education and to not limit ourselves based on preconceived notions of who we are.

I also realized I cannot live an objective life. I want to go out and be apart of the change, not just write about it. I decided I want to pursue communication studies with an emphasis on public relations, in hopes to one day represent nonprofits and organizations I support such as Big Sister Association and various animal anti-cruelty companies.

Now is the time to listen to our instincts and reshape ourselves. I urge all students to not base their self-worth off of their major, ranking in class, or number of published articles. Our identities go beyond these superficial accomplishments. I implore every student who feels a loss in passion to be honest with themselves about what they want. Contact your academic advisor and look at the course descriptions before registering for spring semester—don’t mindlessly follow what everyone else is doing. Follow your gut—it is rarely ever wrong.

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living arts

RuPaul's Jujubee brings the Haus down for Drag-tober Fest

Soleil Easton, *Beacon Correspondent*

The drag queens and kings of Emerson lip-synched and danced their way to the crown at the 21st annual Haus of Emerson Ball on Oct. 27 in front of drag queen superstar Jujubee, a contestant on season two of *RuPaul's Drag Race*.

Haus of Emerson began in 1998 to bring awareness of drag culture to Emerson. Emerson's Advancement Group for Love and Expression President Christopher Henderson-West renamed the event Haus of Emerson Ball, previously known as Drag-tober Fest, to highlight New York's LGBTQ+ ballroom culture.

Henderson-West and Vice President Rachel Gaudet started planning this year's event in April. Around 100 people attended the ball to cheer on all eight contestants.

"I have waited two years to do this, and it finally happened, and it could not have gone any better," Henderson-West said.

EAGLE wanted a professional drag star to host the event. Henderson-West said they chose Jujubee because she inspired the contestants who all watched *RuPaul's Drag Race*. Henderson-West and Gaudet sent an email to Jujubee's agency who told them she could host the event for a fee. They followed up once a month with Jujubee to provide updates or confirm schedules. Earlier this month, EAGLE appealed to SGA for \$4,992, which helped fund this and 22 other events planned for Queer History Month.

"It was a long, yet satisfying process," Gaudet said. "We had to make sure everyone was comfortable and that we were not diluting the drag culture. Seeing the reactions of the audience and the reaction of the kings and queens after the show is all I ever needed to feel satisfied."

Junior marketing communication major Joey Sweeney took home the crown this year as Alexa Pro. Sweeney said the antidepressant Lexapro inspired his stage name in hopes to make the audience happy like the drug does.

Sweeney drew praise from the crowd as he lip-synched and danced to "Freakum Dress" by



Jujubee, a *RuPaul's Drag Race* contestant, helped host and performed at the Haus of Emerson Ball. • Cullen Granzen / Beacon Staff

Beyoncé. Sweeney said he enjoyed Jujubee as a host because of her humor and infectious energy.

"After the show, Jujubee told me that I looked like Regina George and [that] I would have sex with everyone's boyfriends," Sweeney said.

Junior Sarah Anderson-Krim performed as drag king Phil Atio. She said she wanted to embody a sexy, masculine character since she usually dresses feminine.

"Phil Atio is very exuberant and loves to have a good time—especially on the dance floor," Anderson-Krim said.

Anderson-Krim performed at Drag-tober Fest last year and wanted to step up her game this year. Even though she did not take home

the crown, she said she had fun throughout the show and enjoyed seeing the crowd's participation.

"I am going to enjoy my time here tonight with all the fabulous royalty," Anderson-Krim said.

Freshman Skylar Zhao thought Phil Atio's lip sync to "Animals" by Maroon 5 prevailed as the best of the night.

"It was crazy, I have never seen a performance like this before," Zhao said. "I thought she did a really great job with facial expressions and trying to communicate with the audience."

Sweeney said the win, while shocking, sparked a new interest to continue drag.

"My spirit was on a high. I was completely

overjoyed, and it felt too good to be true," Sweeney said.

Sweeney said he hopes to participate in Haus of Emerson Ball next year but not as a competitor. He said he would love to make the event bigger and better.

"I would add workshops where contestants can learn how to style wigs, learn how to do makeup, and learn basic dance moves," Sweeney said.

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LGBTQ+ students advocate 'yes' for Question 3

Continued from page 1

They urge a "no" vote on Question 3, which means repealing the law and removing the gender identity category from state anti-discrimination laws.

According to Ballotpedia, Keep MA Safe issued a statement that said, "This is not progress for our Commonwealth. We should not require

women to sacrifice their privacy for the sake of sexual charades."

Boston Globe's polls from last month projected 73 percent of Mass. voters will vote yes and 21 percent will vote no, and six percent to be undecided.

As a canvasser, Coste said they travel door-to-door to inform voters about the issue.

They said the law's nickname, the "bathroom

bill," misleads voters into thinking this affects only bathrooms. If the law is repealed, doctors could deny transgender people medical attention that requires patients to identify with their biological sex, according to Ballotpedia.

"Libraries, restaurants—it's all of that. There's a lot more at stake than just bathrooms," Coste said.

Coste said they often tell voters how living as transgender affects them personally and daily.

"I can pass as a trans woman—I've gotten that a lot. I've gotten trans man; I've gotten drag," Coste said. "I've definitely encountered people every day where they will encounter me and be visibly upset for how I look."

Coste said giving the issue a face prompts voters to think about it more critically. According to Coste, the most memorable instance happened when they changed a voter's mind after speaking to her for 20 minutes.

"She asked me immediately, 'Why do you care? Is it because you're trans?'" Coste said. "And I said, 'Yes, I care about this because it affects me directly.'"

Coste said they also recruit volunteers. Coste speaks at classes and Emerson organizations and passes out information for people interested in volunteering, which they turn into senior Rija Rehan. Rehan, who works as a Field Organizer for Yes on 3, then contacts those interested and tells them how to officially volunteer.

So far, Rehan said they received 10 postcards from Emerson.

"They were so down—they were so enthusiastic," Rehan said. "I'm just really lucky to have [Coste] and not to have to search through the crowd of Emerson folks."

Rehan, who identifies as queer, said they work as a field organizer for Question 3 because of their identity and the identities of their friends. Through their own efforts and conversations, they hope to pass Question 3.

Coste and Rehan both said few people know about the question. The two said they believe there is a scarcity of information because they did not know about the existing law or the question on the ballot until this summer.

"I don't think many people are informed about it. I wasn't at all," Coste said. "It's not information that's actively available, and that's definitely on purpose. If you don't inform people about what decisions they're going to be making, then they won't think much about it."

Despite the college's renown as the most LGBTQ+ friendly campus nationwide, some students pointed out how others lack knowledge on these issues.

Senior Jeremy Delgadillo, another transgender student, noted almost no Emerson students attended the Rally for Transgender Rights at the City Hall Plaza on Sunday, Oct. 28, despite several RSVPing on Facebook.

"I feel like Emerson actually puts up this facade of being 'woke,' but in reality, they don't do anything. A lot of Emerson students are from wealthy background, but they're all talk," Delgadillo said.

Rehan said the public deserves the rights and protections Emerson strives to give its students. Rehan said they encourage Emerson students to stay involved, even if they plan on voting absentee.

"Just because you're not from Massachusetts, doesn't mean you can't help with Yes on 3," Rehan said. "I've talked to so many students who say, 'I'm not registered in [Massachusetts]!' and I'm like, 'Yeah, I'm not registered in Massachusetts either, but I still want to be a part of this because we all live here.'"

Midterm elections start Nov. 6. Rehan said they will campaign for Question 3 in Jamaica Plain, and Coste said they will vote somewhere else in Massachusetts.

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Freshman TJ Coste holds volunteer contact sheets to canvass for question three. Erin Nolan / Beacon Staff

"There's a lot more at stake than just bathrooms."

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Junior jumps into cheer squad as male cheerleader

Kyle Bray, *Beacon Staff*

When Ryan Rinaldi transferred to Emerson from the San Francisco Art Institute, he did not anticipate becoming a cheerleader. But after attending the organization fair in his second year at Emerson, the junior signed up for the Emerson Cheer Squad.

"I kind of have a background in some kind of flips, and I knew that if I made it, I'd be able to bring something to the team," Rinaldi said. "And that's where the seed was planted. I decided to eventually sign up and go to tryouts."

Rinaldi said he made the squad despite having no experience in cheerleading or dance. He said he gained his skills for cheerleading from doing parkour with his friends and his black belt in the martial art Tang Soo Do.

Rinaldi features as one of the first male cheerleaders to join the Emerson Cheer Squad since its creation in 2009. He said his teammates helped him settle into his new position.

"I would consider my skill set very rough, so they've been really patient," Rinaldi said. "They've been accommodating to try to work me into what they want to do instead of trying to force me into things that I probably wouldn't be very good at."

Cheer Squad co-captain Hannah McEachern said she was surprised to see Rinaldi show interest in joining the team.

"We're usually always surprised to see any guy come up to our org-fair table," McEachern said. "We always say that we want guys to come but usually in the past, there have been guys that have been like, 'Oh, yeah, cheerleading—sounds cool,' but then never show up, so we were pleasantly surprised to have Ryan come out and really give it his all."

McEachern said that not only is Rinaldi



Ryan Rinaldi (center) poses after completing a routine. • Anissa Gardizy / *Beacon Staff*

adapting well to the sport, but he also endeared himself to the team early on with his dedication. One moment that stood out to McEachern, she said, was when Rinaldi decided to decorate a hair bow at one of the team's new member welcome events, despite the fact he does not wear one when the team performs.

"I thought that really signified how [into the team] he was," McEachern said. "He's so committed. He's always at practice giving it his all, and I think it's a great leadership quality that he brings to the team."

Vanessa Malouf, the other captain for the Cheer Squad, said Rinaldi impressed her early

on with his dedication to the team.

"He is an amazing teammate. He is one of the most dedicated people to the team," Malouf said. "He comes to every practice and has a smile on his face, and he's energetic. He's just a happy, genuine person who is here to support the team. He's so engaged and that's something we like to see from our team members."

Rinaldi said his favorite part of being on the team is the people he's met.

"We have two great captains right now. All the girls on the squad—they all have great personalities," Rinaldi said. "They're really into making sure everything comes out well in the

end. I think the cheer squad goes heavily unnoticed but nevertheless, they put in the work."

Rinaldi, a visual and media arts major, said he originally decided to transfer to Emerson because he found his old school underwhelming, both academically and creatively.

Off the field, the Waterbury, Conn. native is a huge New York Yankees fan and enjoys playing the popular baseball video game MLB the Show in his free time.

McEachern said Rinaldi's presence on the team helps open the door for more men to join in the future.

"It really opens the floodgates for guys that maybe have thought about cheerleading just to come out and try it," McEachern said. "He has never cheered before and never danced before, and he is such a change-maker for us as well. When we get new uniforms soon, hopefully, we'll definitely be getting more men's shirts because [having] him on the squad is a great beacon for others that might want to join."

As far as advice for people interested in the joining the squad goes, Rinaldi said it's all about having an open mind.

"I'd say that no matter what your skill set is, you can always bring something to the table for the squad," Rinaldi said. "I think my story is more applicable to the general idea of wanting to be open-minded when you come to college. I didn't go to the org-fair thinking I would be joining and I just gave it a shot, and it's been something that's been a highlight of my year. I think just keeping an open mind, and don't think that you have to be experienced to try something out."

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Tennis teams target conference success after fall season

Domenic Conte, *Beacon Correspondent*

The men's and women's tennis teams await their regular seasons following a strong fall season.

The men's team finished with a 2-1 record during the fall preseason with victories over Johnson & Wales University and Regis College. The women's team defeated Suffolk University and Salem State to finish a 2-2 record. Both will play regular season matches this spring.

Junior Alex Weingarten said the women's team displayed growth as a program during their fall matches.

"We did very well during the fall season," Weingarten said. "There is a big difference between where we are at now and where we were when I started here. Now we're actually able to win matches, which gives us confidence going into the spring season."

Last spring, the team secured their first two New England Women's and Men's Athletic Con-

ference wins with victories over Clark University and Springfield College.

Head coach Aaron Bergeron, who manages both teams, said the women's squad can add more wins to their total this season.

"We got a couple freshman on the women's team that'll help us round out our lineup," Bergeron said. "I think we have the pieces to make a run at the playoffs this year."

Bergeron said the team is skilled enough to reach full potential.

"Fundamentals are big. We have a lot of raw ability, but we need to be sharper in order to beat the teams that we are talented enough to beat," Bergeron said.

As for the men's team, an encouraging preseason improves their chances of winning a NEWMAC match for the first time since joining the conference in 2014.

"We have a couple guys coming in that are giving us a boost, and the rest of the team is bought in on improving," Bergeron said. "We

have to have a strong mentality because we have a solid team that can win some matchups."

Senior Daniel Okin, the captain of the men's team, said the fall season brought more promise than years before.

"Right now we're 2-1 overall, which ties our win total from last year," Okin said. "Skill-wise, this is the strongest team I have been a part of. We're deeper than we've ever been and have more players overall."

Okin said a goal for his last season is to prepare Emerson for future tennis success.

"I'd be happy to have a winning record that helps make Emerson an attractive place for competitive tennis players," Okin said. "Coach [Bergeron] is already doing a great job of recruiting players, especially players who might not have known they wanted to play tennis."

The tennis team's new venue at St. John's Prep gives them their first dedicated home court in program history. Prior to moving to St. John's, the home games were played at various loca-

tions, such as the Winchester Tennis Club and the Charles Watt Tennis Courts at Stonehill College.

"Hopefully we can get some people to come to some of our matches," Okin said. "Even for one game, if we could get 20 to 30 people in attendance, that would be very cool."

In addition to boosting the program's reputation and drawing a crowd, Okin said the team's main objective this spring is to win their first conference match.

"The big goal is to get that first NEWMAC win," Okin said. "I feel like this is the year for us to get it. I don't want to call out any teams, but Springfield might want to watch out."

The women's team will begin the regular season on March 3 against King's College. The men's team kicks off their season on Feb. 15 versus St. Michael's College.

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Women's soccer advances to semifinals with historic win

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Babson came close to equalizing in the 34th minute but came up short after sophomore defender Amanda Benavente cleared a shot off the goal line and freshman goalkeeper Megan Rose scooped up the loose ball after a rebound shot by the Beavers.

Babson came out much stronger for the second half on the offensive side and dominated possession throughout the half. Despite the Beavers earning two corner kicks and four offensive free kicks in the second half, the Lions managed to hold on with several strong defensive clearances and up close saves by Rose—who ended the night with five saves.

Head coach David Suvak said his team did a great job withstanding Babson's late onslaught.

"I'm happy that they withstood the storm that they were throwing at us—it looked a little frantic to me—and that storm is important to withstand," Suvak said. "I think we've learned to do things like that because our two halves were totally different halves. We played an excellent possession game of soccer in the first half and then it switched over—Babson had more of the

game flow and we were holding on."

One pivotal moment in the second half came when senior defender Alexandra Hanson left the game with a head injury after being hit in the face with a ball from teammate Rachel Lord. Freshman defender Cameran Cruz replaced Hanson on the left side of the defense, a crucial area in the game as Babson's Jessica Fernandes—who scored seven goals this season—gave the Lions trouble on the left flank throughout the game. However, Cruz—who only featured in five games prior to this match—shut down Fernandes for the remainder of the game and even managed to make some offensive contributions. Suvak said Cruz was the perfect match for Fernandes.

"[Fernandes] is an excellent, super-dangerous attacker for Babson," Suvak said. "I feel Cameran has the ability as a young player to compete at this level, and I felt really confident that she could match her speed, and I think she had the

"We played like it was our last game because we didn't know if we were going to have another."

right aggressiveness to meet the challenges with that player in particular."

After the final whistle, the women's soccer team celebrated with fans—including Emerson President M. Lee Pelton. The Emerson Athletics website listed the official attendance of the game at 200. Suvak expressed how important it was to have a solid turnout at the home game.

"I was concerned that we weren't going to have that excitement around this type of game and that we might have the Babson fans overwhelming our own home field," Suvak said. "Listening to our own home fans root our team on and I think it was very motivational for the players. I think it was amazing."

Suvak said he was proud the team achieved the goal of earning its first playoff win after having such a successful regular season.

"This team has worked really hard at competing and learning to compete at a high level and we were trying to earn ourselves a home field

playoff match and we were all really excited to do this," Suvak said. "Beating Babson tonight, which are a very good team, we all knew it was going to be hard doing it twice in one year, and they are a very talented group of players, I'm glad we were successful in the end."

Alberts said she's excited the team earned the historic win.

"Everyone wanted to go past the first round and it's awesome to give our seniors," Alberts said. "I thought we all just hustled until the end, and we didn't let those last corners go through which was awesome. We played like it was our last game because we didn't know if we were going to have another."

With this victory, Emerson advances to the semifinals of the NEWMAC playoffs and will face No. 2 seed Springfield College—a rematch of the women's soccer team's first NEWMAC playoff appearance the 2016 quarterfinals. The game will take place on Nov. 1 in Springfield at 7 p.m., with the winner advancing to the conference championship.

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