

## R.E.A.L Royalty: Newly crowned Mr. Pirate and Miss Hampton University

NICOLE PECHACEK  
STAFF WRITER

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic canceling many large events at Hampton, the Greer Dawson Wilson Student Leadership Program and Student Activities were able to host both the Miss Hampton University and Mr. Pirate pageants virtually. Instead of Ogden Hall's stage, Hampton students gathered online to cheer on the pageant contestants, who competed from their homes around the country.

Inspired by Beyonce's recent film, the "Black is King" 19th annual Mr. Pirate pageant streamed Sept. 27 on YouTube between contestants Jordan Thomas Ray and Elias James Fambro. After various segments, Ray was announced the 19th Mr. Pirate by five guest judges at the end of the video stream. Despite the lack of spotlights and cheers from students, Jordan said that he still felt the energy when he found out he was the winner of this year's pageant.

"I worked extremely hard for this," Ray said. "When I won, I just jumped up in excitement because it was a lifetime goal that was achieved."

Jordan Ray, a senior liberal studies major with an emphasis in community reform, had been dreaming of winning Mr. Pirate since his first year. His Project Royalty Platform is still planned to start this year as a virtual way for students to connect and network as well as tutor to help empower Black youth.

"My plans are to create a connection board with all the students through Zoom calls around two to three times a month," Ray said. "That's what I'm going to use to connect us, and I plan to encourage people to step out into the community and be a part of different things. I'm going to create a committee for all Hampton students as a part of a community outreach program where we're going to go out and empower our youth by tutoring them online."

Later on that weekend, the "Black is Queen" 63rd annual Miss Hampton University Pageant had eight contestants aiming for the crown, but Christian Peterson was the one to win it all. Peterson, a senior business management major, learned to love pageantry from her sister and was inspired to compete for herself.

"My sister is one of my biggest influences as far as pageantry goes," Peterson said. "She's always been very involved in pageants and dancing. A lot of people have this misconception that pageants are kind of superficial, but once you get into them, you realize that a lot of those women that compete in pageants are very educated. They're really about what they stand for as far as their platforms go and they're really committed to it."

Peterson's platform, Raising Excellence in African American Leaders, also known as R.E.A.L, is a mission to enhance leadership in college and the workforce in the Black community. She has started implementing her program in her hometown of Columbia, South Carolina, despite the pandemic's hindrances.

"I began the R.E.A.L program at my high school, and I started talking to my old guidance counselor and people at home about it," Peterson said. "I began with schools, churches and even small community events. I realized I could reach a wider group of people, so I began thinking of what kind of events I could do, not only for people who are coming into college but also college-aged people who are about to start going into the real world. I began thinking, OK, we can do different types of series where we highlight careers, so not only is this showing the career but it's also showing kids out of high school you can be a young African American and still be successful in the world."



Photo courtesy of HU Student Activities

Peterson was officially crowned the 63rd Miss Hampton University during Hampton's Coronation ceremony Oct. 7. During this event, Peterson gave a speech where she thanked President Dr. William R. Harvey, and the first lady, Norma B. Harvey, as well as SLP and many others for allowing her to become their new Miss Hampton University.

In addition to showcasing these sacred traditions of crowning both Mr. Pirate and Miss Hampton, these pageants show how large-scale campus events can still be done virtually and safely. Hopefully, many other campus celebrations use these events as an example to still be able to enjoy the things HU holds dear.

## Harris and Pence face off in only vice presidential debate of election season

WILLIAM PAUL ELLIS  
STAFF WRITER

Vice President Mike Pence and Senator Kamala Harris, the Democratic candidate for vice president, met in Salt Lake City, Utah, on Oct. 7 to debate topics ranging from the COVID-19 pandemic to racial injustice.

The 90-minute debate was moderated by USA Today journalist Susan Page and was the second of three debates scheduled before the Nov. 3 election.

The debate was notably less combative than the previous debate with President Donald Trump and Former Vice President and the Democratic candidate for president Joe Biden, but the debate still featured moments of contention between Harris and Pence.

When asked if she would take a COVID-19 vaccine, Harris took the opportunity to highlight the division in public opinion between National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases Director Dr. Anthony Fauci and President Trump.

"If Dr. Fauci, if the doctors tell us that we should take it, I'll be the first in line to take it. Absolutely," Harris said. "But if Donald Trump tells us to take it, I'm not taking it."

Pence responded by reassuring the audience that the Trump administration was effectively handling the response

to the pandemic, and then he scolded Harris for her statement.

"The fact that you continue to undermine public confidence in a vaccine, if a vaccine emerges during the Trump administration, I think is unconscionable," Pence said. "Senator, I just ask you, stop playing politics with people's lives."

The debate also discussed the current nomination of Judge Amy Coney-Barrett to the Supreme Court. Controversy has arisen from Trump's nomination of Coney-Barrett due to the

proximity of the election.

When asked by Pence if Biden would pack the court if nominated, Harris responded by reiterating that the nomination should be left to the president-elect during an election year, drawing on precedent that dates back to the Lincoln presidency.

"Joe and I are very clear: The American people are voting right now. And it should be their decision about who will serve on [the court]," she said.

Harris went on to criticize Trump for the lack of racial diversity among

his nominations for federal judges. More than 85% of federal judges nominated during the Trump presidency are white, according to the Pew Research Center.

As the election nears, many voters are closely watching the series of debates in support of their chosen candidate, or to make an informed decision.

Trevor Hutson, a senior at Hampton University, believes that the vice presidential debate provided essential information for prospective voters.

"The vice president is a very important position," Hutson said. "So, I think understanding their positions on policies and other plans is crucial for voters."

The second presidential debate was scheduled for Oct. 15, but on Oct. 8, President Trump refused to participate in the debate that would be held virtually after Trump's diagnosis with COVID-19.

The final presidential debate is scheduled for Oct. 22 in Nashville, Tennessee.



Morry Gash | Associated Press



# OPINION

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 16, 2020

## Is Daniel Cameron a sellout?

MILES RICHARDSON  
STAFF WRITER

Tamika Mallory spoke at a press conference in order to address Kentucky Attorney General Daniel Cameron, who recently announced his decision to charge only one officer involved in the Breonna Taylor case. During the conference, Mallory had this to say: “Daniel Cameron is no different than the sellout Negroes that sold our people into slavery. We have no respect for your black skin.” This is an opinion that many African Americans hold. According to senior Theatre major Kayla Harrison, “The attorney general should be ashamed of himself.” While I do not agree with these women, I can respect their opinions. With that being said, I hope you can give me the same courtesy, even after I tell you that I believe the decision in the Breonna Taylor case was ultimately the right one.

The New York Times reported that on the night of March 13, 2020, Louisville police officers Jonathan Mattingly, Brett Hankison and Myles

Cosgrove broke down the door of Taylor’s apartment, attempting to serve a “no-knock” search warrant. The officers, as corroborated by Kenneth Walker, Taylor’s boyfriend, stated that they knocked several times anyway. However, Walker says he never heard the officers identify themselves. Once the officers entered the apartment, Walker picked up his legally owned pistol and shot at the officers. Once Mattingly was hit by Walker’s bullet, the three officers responded by firing several rounds, hitting Taylor six times, and killing her.

Now, according to a report given to The Courier Journal by the Jefferson County coroner, the only fatal shot came from detective Cosgrove, who was in the doorway and could clearly see Walker’s gun being aimed at him. Detective Hankison, who fired 10 rounds blindly into the apartment from outside, was the only officer charged. It is also important to add that none of Hankison’s bullets were found to have struck Breonna Taylor.

While these facts could be used to highlight this incident as simply another example of a Black person being

victimized by a racially unjust police force, I choose to see a much more complicated narrative.

Kentucky is a stand your ground state, meaning citizens have the right to use deadly force to protect themselves if they feel their life is being threatened. So when Walker had his door kicked open at 12:40 a.m., with no way of knowing the intruders were police officers, he most likely saw this as a legitimate threat to his well-being, and therefore, was within his rights to respond with force.

However, let’s put ourselves in the officers’ shoes for a moment. They have arrived at the address of an alleged drug dealer to serve a no-knock warrant, according to The Courier Journal. Although they are well aware of the violent nature of the drug business, they have decided to knock anyway, knowing that they could be giving possible drug dealers inside time to arm themselves and wait for them to make their entry. After knocking and identifying themselves several times (as they claim they did), they broke down the door and were immediately met with gunfire, and responded by returning

fire.

Some may see the 10 rounds unloaded during the shooting as excessive. I would challenge anyone of this opinion to seriously consider how many shots they would’ve liked to be fired if it was their life on the line.

But beyond this, there seems to be another elephant in the room here. Isn’t it reasonable to presume the officers could’ve identified themselves, but Walker simply couldn’t hear them from his bedroom? I don’t know how big Walker’s apartment is, but I do know there were at least two doors and an entire living room between them. Given this insight, I think that it’s safe to say that there is a strong possibility that this could have simply been a misunderstanding.

As I examine the facts of this case, I cannot help but come to the conclusion that Breonna Taylor, God rest her soul, was not a victim of systemic oppression, but of unlucky circumstances. But then again, maybe I’m just another sellout Negro.

## The president isn’t a role model

RYLAND STAPLES  
STAFF WRITER

With the election just weeks away, the United States is preparing for one of the most pivotal moments in recent history. With the way President Donald Trump has handled relationships with other countries, systemic racism in the United States, his villainization of Mexican immigrants and his response to the current COVID-19 pandemic, people have been very thorough in calling for eligible voters to go and exercise their rights.

Even since Trump won the presidency in 2016, there has been consistent rhetoric on social media from users saying that they want four more years of the previous president, Barack Obama. Scroll Twitter long enough and you’ll see posts like, “I want Obama back,” or people in President Obama’s mentions begging him to make a comeback of some sort.

In all honesty, President Obama didn’t really help push the country forward like most people think.

Don’t get me wrong, I understand President Obama getting elected was a momentous occasion that should and will be celebrated throughout history. But I feel like people try to overlook or sweep under the rug the bad things that President Obama did while he was in office. Two things that I want to focus on are the amount of deportations that took place under the Obama administration, as well as the drone strike campaign in the Middle East.

I understand that people really don’t associate large scale deportation when it comes to President Obama’s administration, but he certainly did his fair share while he was in office.

According to The Washington Post, “Though President Trump has made cracking down on immigration a centerpiece of his first term, his administration lags far behind President Barack Obama’s pace of deportations. Obama — who immigrant advocates



Alyssa Pointer | Associated Press

at one point called the ‘deporter in chief’ — removed 409,849 people in 2012 alone. Trump, who has vowed to deport ‘millions’ of immigrants, has yet to surpass 260,000 deportations in a single year. And while Obama deported 1.18 million people during his first three years in office, Trump has deported fewer than 800,000.”

When people try to claim that Americans were better off under Obama’s administration, I always think about all of those people who were deported. Do you think they share your opinion? You also have to think about the innocent people who died during that drone strike campaign that President Obama spearheaded during his time in office. He mainly used drone strikes to target people suspected of terrorism in countries such

as Pakistan, Yemen and other Middle Eastern countries.

According to The New York Times, “...the Obama administration revealed its estimate of the number of civilians killed since 2009 in counterterrorism airstrikes outside of Iraq, Afghanistan and Syria. In a three-page report that offered little insight into the government’s secret drone campaign, officials said they had concluded that between 64 and 116 civilians died in 473 strikes.”

It’s important for United States citizens to realize that just because presidents are elected to office doesn’t mean they should be looked up to as role models. President Trump isn’t a role model in any kind of way. So why should someone who has deported more people than President Trump be

looked at positively in the public eye?

I feel like there are better people out there to look up to who have actually done more positive things for the community than President Obama.

## Why you need to set boundaries

KAILAH LEE  
STAFF WRITER

Ever wonder why every relationship you had has just gone south? Or that it has violated the dream that you had for it? Well, this time, maybe it is on you. You see, many people make the mistake of lowering their standards or expectations because they do not want to seem “too difficult,” but you are not actually asking for that much. You are just asking for appropriate respect. Trust me, in the end, being difficult is the least of your worries.

Let’s take this issue back a few steps; the core reason for your possible lack of self-respect may have begun in the home. The way your parents set or did not set boundaries profoundly affects your ability to respect and maintain them yourself. In some families, parents teach that you have no say in advocating for healthy individualism because it is disrespectful. While this parenting method may have worked in many households, it stems from a place of mental manipulation.

A parent should respectfully keep

a child in their place. However, parents should not restrict a child from communicating things that make them uncomfortable. “Talking back” to your parents is rude if you’re doing it “rudely,” but standing up for something that is just is not. Which is why “talking back” is highly misconstrued. Unfortunately, in homes—especially in black families—we learn that standing up for ourselves is harmful. But this issue goes both ways. Parents should also practice setting appropriate boundaries with their children. A lack of maintained limits in children can lead to them failing to set their own boundaries and struggling with relationships because of not practicing boundary setting.

Well, you are grown now, and you must reverse this way of thinking because it trickles down into friendships, romantic relationships and even professional relationships. You do not want people crossing the line, but other people will not know they are crossing the line if it is not established.

There is a way to set a boundary without coming across as rude. You just need to be straightforward, but not harsh. Express the things that make

you uncomfortable in the most genuine manner and be consistent. People will try to test you and, in doing so, establish their ability to infiltrate your peace. Once you fail your own test, it becomes a slippery slope of making exceptions for things you are not OK with. “I was always a ‘yes’ person, but that mess drives people crazy, I just wanted to do what I wanted to do,” said Richelle Gregory, a working mother from Richmond, Virginia.

The idea of setting a boundary might seem rude, but believe me, it is not—it is actually hot!

“I used to think that setting boundaries made me a crab, but girl, I’ve been manifesting real men ever since I started catering to my needs,” said Michele Parks from Chesterfield, Virginia.

If you are in a relationship, giving yourself the respect to set standards attracts the right people into your life. And if you find that you are losing people you hoped would be around after a boundary building— well, you have just saved yourself some stress, trust me. Setting boundaries can also be a road sign of healthy self-esteem. Nothing is more attractive than a person

who is wholly content with themselves (within reason).

“You weed out the bull when you set some rules,” said Darrell Lee from Richmond, Virginia.

Think about this: Say you have a welcome mat which reads “Welcome.” This is inviting but maybe too inviting. Anyone could just step all over it and wipe their nasty shoes all over it. However, if there was a welcome mat that read, “Watch your step,” people would proceed with caution. Granted, some might step on it anyway, but that is on them.

This same rhetoric applies to life and how you get treated with respect when you stand up for yourself.

So set boundaries, voice discomfort and value yourself enough to know you deserve respect.



# LIFESTYLE

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## Crocs: The transition from past to present

SHIRMARIE STARKS  
STAFF WRITER

What is your go-to shoe for comfortability? Nike slides? Converse? Those fluffy Ugg slippers? Socks and Birkenstocks? Or do you own a pair of Crocs?

Crocs, Inc. is seen as the go-to brand to find comfy shoes, but the company's journey to worldwide fame in the shoe industry was not as comfortable a fit.

Crocs were originally developed as a boating shoe by three avid boaters: Scott Seamans, George Boedecker, Jr., and Lyndon Hanson. Scott Seamans wanted a comfortable, floatable, ventilated and slip-resistant shoe. In particular, Seamans wanted to create an odor-resistant shoe, a feature that other boating shoes lacked. With these requirements in mind, Seamans produced a lightweight, thirteen-holed, unique clog to fit his desires.

In an interview with *Edison Nation*, Hanson recalls the origins of Crocs, Inc. During a boating trip with Hanson and Boedecker, Seamans decided to bring the design for his colleagues to test out. Like most people today, Lyndon and George quickly told Scott that the shoes were ugly. However, Boedecker and Hanson ultimately agreed with Seamans: although the shoes were ugly, their functionality outweighed the looks. As a like-minded trio, these men quickly shifted their focus to the mass production, investor

relations and financial operations of the shoe.

Under the leadership of Ronald R. Snyder, a newly appointed CEO in 2005, the brand went public on February 13, 2006. In 2006, The Wall Street Journal reported that the Initial Public Offering (IPO) plan of Crocs, Inc. consisted of 9.9 million shares with an asking price between \$13 and \$15. Business was going so well that the brand expanded to other countries including Austria, Sweden, and the United Kingdom. But like Sir Isaac Newton once said, "What goes up must come down," and Crocs had started to reach the end of their era.

A report done by Money Insider in 2008 shows when the recession hit the economy, much of Crocs' business faded. Many consumers did not need to buy more pairs as they were able to reuse their current pair during the recession and a result, Crocs' stock dropped more than 68%. For the next few years, the Crocs brand worked behind the scenes as they attempted to reimagine and revamp the brand. Between March 2009 and April 2014, the company went through two CEOs and they both experienced constant fluctuations in sales and net income.

In January 2014, the brand started to gain some serious attention from investors again. Money insider reported that The Blackstone Group, a private equity investment management firm, made a \$200 million investment into the Crocs, Inc. company. Alongside this investment, Greg Ribatt, a seasoned

shoe vet, was appointed as the Chief Executive Officer in January 2015. The changes seen within Ribatt's tenure served as a turning point in the Crocs, Inc. brand and helped shape the brand as we know it today.

During the early stages of the current COVID-19 pandemic, Crocs, Inc. decided to donate 10,000 pairs of Crocs per day to health care workers until the stock ran out and donated an extra 100,000 pairs of shoes to numerous healthcare facilities.

In 2020, Crocs, Inc. reported that there are now over 600 million pairs of Crocs sold in over 90 countries due to the successful continuation of the plan implemented by Ribatt and Rees. Crocs are still considered ugly to some just as they were to co-founders Lyndon Han-

son and George Boedecker, Jr. However, with the founders' vision, "We work hard to make you comfortable in your own shoes," in mind, Crocs still serve their comfortable, floatable, ventilated, odor-resistant, slip-resistant and unique purpose in 2020.

Today, Crocs come in an array of styles such as the classic clog, boots, flats, sneakers and wedges. They also come in a wide assortment of colors. To top it off, you can customize your shoes with Jibbitz to really make them your own and express your personality. Crocs, Inc. has truly shifted into one company for all shoe needs. If you are looking for a sign to get a pair of Crocs, this is that sign!



Unsplash User Mihaly Koles

## Vitamin D: The essential vitamin

TIGIST ASHAKA  
STAFF WRITER

Vitamin D this, and vitamin D that. Because early research has linked vitamin D deficiency with the probability of more severe COVID-19 symptoms, vitamin D seems to be all the news talks about.

Unfortunately, the National Institutes of Health concludes that "there are insufficient data to recommend either for or against the use of vitamin D for the prevention or treatment of COVID-19." However, NIH does acknowledge a correlation between over-represented populations of COVID-19 and vitamin D-deficient groups, such as Hispanics and African Americans.

Indeed, the AARP reported in 2016 that "41.6 percent of Americans overall were vitamin D deficient, but the deficiency rate was 82.1 percent for African Americans."

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported that African Americans are more likely to develop health problems such as stroke, high blood pressure, and diabetes at a young age due to a lack of vitamin D. With that in mind, if COVID attacks the immune system, and people already have a pre-existing condition, it could

potentially result in more severe symptoms or even death. This is one of the many reasons why taking a vitamin D supplement is necessary to protect a person's health.

Furthermore, African Americans should take vitamin D seriously not only because it builds up people's immune systems but because it also helps with mood stabilization. Maintaining one's mental health is crucial during a pandemic, but for many our access to the outdoors—and, thus, an outlet for the natural production of vitamin D—is now often limited.

"I feel sad and unmotivated when it is gloomy outside compared to when it is a sunny day out," said HU student Imani Porter.

Seasonal Affective Disorder is a

seasonal depreciation meaning the less sun there is outside, the more they go into this depression state. Researchers Partonen, Vakkuri, Lamberg-Allardt, and Lonnqvist (1996) studied the importance of people exposing themselves to the sun. They found that the people with "one hour of light therapy significantly decreased depressive symptoms more so in the group with SAD than the control group" (Penckofer, Kouba, Byrn, Ferrans). If people think an hour is a not long time compared to the amount of time people spend on their social media. Think again!

If people have not learned anything from 2020, it is crucial to slow down and take care of themselves. If a person cannot spend an hour outside, take a supplement so that they won't be

a victim, they can also eat food such as salmon, liver, and oatmeal, since they all contain the vitamin D nutrient.

Lastly, vitamin D is essential for bone strength and skeletal integrity. The best way to get vitamin D is from the sun, but now that people are spending so much time in their homes, it might be challenging. If people have the time, they should wear their mask and go outside (6 feet apart, of course) to get fresh air. 2020 has been hard for everyone but the big takeaway is the importance of taking care of oneself. Doing what is necessary to be the best person an individual can be and taking vitamin D supplements can help them to become as healthy as possible and live a long life.



Unsplash User Jonathan Borba

## TELFAR'S rise to prominence

MIA CONCEPCION  
STAFF WRITER

Living in a time of crisis and social isolation has paved the way for a resurgence of creativity and innovation amongst Black businesses.

More Black entrepreneurs are pushing their products and gaining support for them. This type of success within such unprecedented times has proven the importance of helping our Black businesses to thrive and shine. TELFAR, a major Black-owned company, which started in the streets of New York City, is leaving a global imprint in the fashion industry.

TELFAR, a unisex clothing line best known for its top tier handbags, is located in Queens, New York. Established in 2005, the company has been making international sales that have since skyrocketed. Although the bag has become popularized in both mainstream media and the world of fashion, the road to success had some unforeseen trials and tribulations.

Telfar Clemens, the fashion mogul responsible for the well-renowned bag, initially introduced his luxurious purses in 2014 during the Autumn/Winter

runway show. The TELFAR handbag was fresh and new, but still needed improvements to increase revenue. In an interview with *Dazed*, Clemens highlighted how the company utilized \$400,000 collected from the CFDA/Vogue Fashion Award in order to revisit his original design to see what adjustments could be made for profitability and variability. The TELFAR bag was then relaunched and made available in multiple colors and sizes in 2018.

Some may wonder how this particular item became popular so quickly. First, it started with superstars representing the brand. From singer Solange, to ASAP Rocky, and Kelsey Lu, big names began to publicly support TELFAR through their own outfits. Fans have also seen these fashionable bags appear at grandiose events like the Met Gala, thus showing that it is a legitimate product worth the buy and the wear. Not only is it worth the buy, but many fans also deem it to be affordable compared to other fashion companies demanding way more in money.

These bags range in prices from \$150 to \$275, whereas others exceed the \$500 mark. These prices do not make the item exclusive to only a

particular bracket of individuals, but all who wish to live life in style. TELFAR's top-of-the-line bag also became popular due to its circulation on social media. The company further branded itself by making memes of people's reactions to its latest drop of the shopping bags. Memes circulated on various social media platforms, including the infamous Twitter and Instagram.

Aside from branding, Telfar has ensured that customers will be able to safely purchase products. Due to the unexpected website crash on July 23rd, TELFAR had to find a way to compensate its supporters who lost their money and the items they anticipated purchasing. As a result, the Telfar Bag Security Program allowed customers a full day to purchase any bag they desired. Pre-ordered items are expected to arrive between December 15 and January 15, 2021. Items are always high in demand and tend to run out quickly. However, the company always ensures to restock as soon as possible.

Despite its fashionable look, TELFAR has more to offer than just style. TELFAR offers inclusivity and a community for Black boys and girls to immerse themselves in. Not only is

this company representative of African Americans, but also Black queers who do not receive the recognition they are deserving of. TELFAR has proven that it is anti-exclusive and wants all to be a part of their journey and their story.



# LOCAL & WORLD/SPORTS

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## A look into the shooting of Breonna Taylor and the aftermath

SYDNEY MCCALL  
STAFF WRITER

Louisville Metro Police Department on Oct. 7 released the 4,470-page investigation file on the shooting of Breonna Taylor. Additionally, Daniel Cameron, Kentucky’s Attorney General, released 15 hours of recordings of the case that explain what led to the controversial verdict.

In the officers’ body camera footage from the night of Taylor’s death, Kenneth Walker can be heard distressingly talking to a dispatcher after his girlfriend was shot.

Taylor, a 26-year-old Black woman, was shot and killed in her apartment on March 13. Police officers Jonathan Mattingly, Brett Hankison and Myles Cosgrove were serving a no-knock warrant when they forced entry into her home.

Believing the officers were intruders, Walker fired a warning shot which struck Officer Mattingly, resulting in the officers firing 32 shots in return. Taylor was hit by six of those bullets and passed away.

Taylor received no medical attention until 20 minutes after she was shot, The Courier Journal reported.

Affectionately called “Breeaway” by her loved ones, Taylor worked as a full-time emergency room technician for the University of Louisville Hospital and was working as an essential worker throughout the pandemic.

“She was a better version of me. Full of life. Easy to love,” said Tamika Palmer, Taylor’s mom, to the New York Times.



Maria Oswolt | Associated Press

Taylor’s shooting quickly fueled outrage in her hometown of Louisville, Kentucky, and eventually gained attention worldwide. The news of her death broke around the same time as the unfortunate death of George Floyd, a Black man who died after Minneapolis police officer, Derek Chauvin, knelt on his neck for nine minutes. Chauvin was fired the day after Floyd’s death.

Protestors gathered in masses around the world, chanting phrases such as “Say her name,” “Justice for Breonna” and “Black Lives Matter.”

Many Black women saw themselves in her and felt it their duty to fight for the officers who shot her to be

arrested and charged.

“I look at Breonna Taylor and see me,” said Jade Ford, a first year kinesiology major at HU. It scares me to live in a place where I am not seen as human or equal. Her death was a huge disappointment for Black women.”

Taylor’s family received a settlement of \$12 million in a wrongful death lawsuit against the city of Louisville Sept. 15. The settlement is the largest in history for the death of a Black woman by cops, according to lawyer Ben Crump. In addition to the payment, the settlement included changes in policy with respect to police conduct in Louisville.

## Los Angeles Lakers win NBA championship

CAMERON CROCHERON  
STAFF WRITER

The Los Angeles Lakers won their 17th NBA championship after Sunday’s 106-93 victory over the Miami Heat in Game 6 of the NBA Finals, taking the series 4-2.

LeBron James led the Lakers with game-highs in points and assists en route to his fourth career Finals MVP Award while finishing with his 11th career triple-double in the Finals, the most in NBA history. Anthony Davis had a double-double, totaling 19 points and 15 rebounds as he made his defensive presence known once again by holding Jimmy Butler to only 12 points.

“We just want our respect, Rob [Pelinka] wants his respect, Coach [Frank] Vogel wants his respect, our organization wants their respect, Laker nation wants their respect and I want my damn respect, too,” James told television reporters during the NBA Finals trophy ceremony.

Capping off the longest season in NBA history, the Lakers have now tied the Boston Celtics for the most championships as a franchise in league history.

“For me to be part of such a historical franchise, it’s an unbelievable feeling not only for myself but for my teammates, for the organization, for the coaches, for the trainers, everybody that’s here,” James told TV reporters.

The Miami Heat exceeded many people’s expectations, walking into the playoffs as the 5th seed in the East and



Associated Press | Mark J. Terrill

having had 60-to-1 preseason odds to win the NBA Finals, according to the Wall Street Journal.

“So what that nobody picked you to be here, that’s OK, I’m sure pretty sure nobody’s picking us to win either,” Butler said in a news conference. “We embrace that.”

Throughout the playoffs, the Heat put on a show, defeating two-time MVP Giannis Antetokounmpo and the Milwaukee Bucks in five games and Jayson Tatum and the Celtics in six games. Yet, going into the Finals,

many people didn’t even give the Heat a chance against the Lakers based on their lack of experience and the team’s build.

“To upset the Lakers, I give them a 0 percent chance, it’s not happening,” NBA champion Kendrick Perkins said on ESPN’s “First Take.” “The depth of Miami’s bigs is not enough to overpower the Lakers.”

The Heat managed to steal two games in the series as both stemmed from outstanding performances by Butler, but injuries proved to play a major role in the series. Ultimately, two of the

Despite the settlement, none of the police officers involved were charged until Sept. 23, when a grand jury indicted Officer Brent Hankinson with three counts of wanton endangerment in the first degree for endangering Taylor’s neighbors the night she was shot.

Mattingly and Cosgrove, the other two officers involved, faced no charges, but all three officers involved in the shooting have all been terminated, according to the Louisville police.

Cameron has received backlash for the way he handled the case. In a press conference, Cameron stated that John Mattingly and Myles Cosgrove were justified in returning shots to Taylor’s boyfriend. Because of this, he decided not to recommend homicide charges against any of the officers involved.

Activists demand more serious counts of charges for the officers as demonstrators have come together in Louisville to protest.

“We’re going to keep marching, keep stepping, but we’re going to do it together as one,” said Chris Wells, a local activist in Louisville.

## Coronavirus impacts NFL games

JESSICA COLEMAN  
STAFF WRITER

The National Football League is dealing with the repercussions of its inability to implement an effective plan to combat the spread of the coronavirus among players and staff throughout the league.

Some spectators, players and staff earlier this year thought the NFL would construct a bubble-like environment, similar to the one brilliantly cultivated by the National Basketball Association. The success of the NBA bubble was astonishing. Following the arrival of 22 teams to Orlando, Florida, only two players tested positive for COVID-19. The NBA implemented a 100-page safety plan to ensure the health and wellbeing of players and staff throughout their stay at the bubble. Unfortunately, the NFL is not experiencing the same success.

The NFL administers COVID-19 tests to players and other essential employees daily except on game day.

Since players do not receive tests on game day, they are not permitted access to team facilities on the day after the game. The only two exceptions include the need for medical attention or if the team is operating on a short week.

With daily testing and strict guidelines, many were optimistic that the 2020 NFL season would go uninterrupted. However, the fact is, daily testing does not prevent the spread of the virus before detection. No players tested positive for the coronavirus within the first two weeks of play. However, in Week 4 things took a turn for the worse, beginning with the Tennessee Titans.

A total of 23 players and staff members have tested positive for COVID-19 since September 24. The Titans and Steelers game that was scheduled for October 4 was postponed until October 24. Also, the Titans’ game scheduled for October against the Buffalo Bills was moved to October 13.

Several players and staff members across the league are frustrated with the Titans’ decision to not follow protocols.

Ultimately, the postponement of games is not just affecting the Titans but their opponents as well.

“Of course, we got the short end of the stick,” Pittsburgh Steelers quarterback Ben Roethlisberger said in a news conference.

The positive COVID-19 tests are causing shifts throughout the league. The New England Patriots and Kansas City Chiefs matchup was postponed from Sunday to Monday in Week 4 as a result of positive COVID-19 tests from both teams. The rescheduling created a rarity of two matchups for “Monday Night Football.”

In efforts to control and deescalate the current predicament the league faces, NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell sent a memo to all 32 clubs last Monday regarding COVID-19 protocol compliance. The memo introduced new measures for increased safety and repercussions if they are not followed.

“Protocol violations that result in the virus spread requiring adjustments to the schedule or otherwise impacting

other teams will result in additional financial and competitive discipline, including the adjustment or loss of draft choices or even the forfeit of a game,” Goodell said in the memo, obtained by NFL Network’s Tom Pelissero.

In the environment in which the NFL is operating, it is unrealistic to expect the league to eliminate positive tests. Yet if teams do not follow protocols and guidelines, the number of positive tests could increase, and more teams could have their seasons affected.



# ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 16, 2020

## SAVAGE X FENTY: A star-studded socially distant event

NOAH HOGAN  
STAFF WRITER

Robyn Rihanna Fenty opened the second volume of her Savage X Fenty special with a beautiful quote:

“Storytelling is the last part of any journey. There’s experience and there’s that emotion that’s connected to the experience. Whether it’s a scent, whether it’s the sound, that emotional connection to that particular moment is the thing that makes it worthy of telling in a story.”

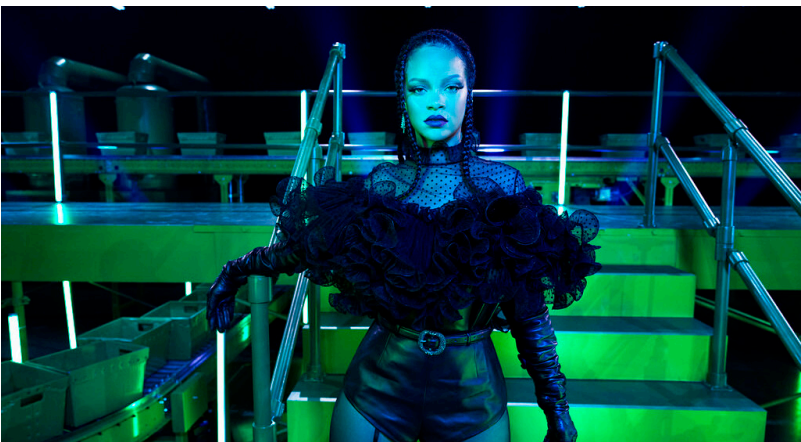
Rihanna did just that with her follow-up on the Amazon Prime streaming service.

Packed with celebrity appearances, distinct set designs and stellar choreography, Volume. 2 was more than a worthy successor to the first show at New York Fashion Week.

What is most intriguing is that Rihanna and her team understand the need to create a story of Savage X Fenty without forcing the need to focus on the actual garments. Instead, she uses different mediums such as music and choreography to set a mood using the clothes to be nothing more than what they are, clothes.

From the very beginning, we are introduced to some of Fenty’s creativity in the most obvious role that most associate her with, her music. More specifically, her music taste.

She uses songs from artists that her base can easily identify like Kendrick Lamar and Roddy Rich. However as a woman of Caribbean



Dennis Leupold | Associated Press

descent, Rihanna takes the opportunity to make her audience aware of artists in the Latin and Caribbean markets with performers like Rosalina and Bad Bunny. Although Riri does not stick to the conventional rap or pop genre, she finds a way to weave in elements of R&B and house music to give each scene its own identity.

“The scenes were perfect for the clothing pieces that she showed and the music made it better. I liked the dances in Volume 2 more than the first,” said Monique Smith, a Hampton University biochemistry pre-dental major, leadership studies minor from Atlanta, Georgia.

The Savage X Fenty show allowed Rihanna to take on other personas and blend them to create the best version of herself.

We see her wear many hats such as the creative, the businesswoman and the leader.

If you listen to the way she describes in great detail something so trivial like fabrics, you would think she was a graduate of a fashion design school. Savage X fenty is proof that Rihanna has taken the time to be fully invested in her craft.

Design Director Emily Whitehead describes Rihanna as having the eye to figure out not just what pieces are going to work best but how to best utilize them. “That kind of steers us and makes it better but also makes it hers,” Whitehead said.

Contrary to popular belief, it is not just Rihanna’s brand name recognition that made the show feel special. She allowed for others to shine and show

case their talents on a major scale, not taking into account celebrity status or prominence.

Rihanna and company did a great job incorporating models and dancers of all shapes, sizes and walks of life.

From a multitude of frames, there were many different women and men who were able to express themselves through fashion. Citing that inclusivity is something that is “second nature” and that “there is no need to think about it.”

“I love that she’s doing that,” Smith said. “It made me want to buy and support her even more. Many people are insecure about their body, and lingerie is supposed to be ‘sexy.’ So Rihanna’s show highlighted a diverse group of models and told people that all body types are sexy and be confident and love yourself.”

Overall, Rihanna chose to tackle themes of sexuality, inclusivity, mood and inspiration within a 56-minute time frame.

Opting for the lingerie garments to serve as background images to complement the bigger themes at play, she also completed a goal of creating something that surpasses the boundaries of fashion and enters the space of great art.

The only question left unanswered now is, if Rihanna is so invested physically and emotionally to her clothing line, will she have the necessary time or energy to uphold the other big obligation in her life, music?

## Bryson Tiller drops new album: *Anniversary*

ANYAE JOHNS  
STAFF WRITER

For years, fans of Bryson Tiller were concerned if the Kentucky artist could revive his career and be the musician they first fell in love with. Three years since the R&B artist released his second album True to Self, his new album *Anniversary* is finally out.

The new project dropped on the fifth anniversary of his debut album, *Trapsoul*. *Anniversary* contains 10 songs and a feature with Drake on the *Outta Time* track.

The album received a lot of mixed reviews from fans and critics. Listeners are still stuck on his debut album, and it’s up to Tiller to get them hooked on something else.

“Old Bryson Tiller is still better than new Bryson; it just doesn’t give me the same feelings as the Trapsoul album did,” said Tayliour Martin, a senior journalism major. “I personally liked ‘Always Forever’ and ‘Keep Doing What You’re Doing.’”

If you’re expecting Bryson to be in his *Trapsoul* bag, you may be disappointed. He’s matured and is bringing new vibes.

If you’re familiar with Bryson Tiller’s work, you’ll be able to see his growth as an artist in this album.

“I feel like this album was really overdue. I personally expected more from him, but I still loved it,” said Aniyah Oberlton, a Hampton University strategic communication major.



Flickr User Jamie Drew

“*Anniversary* is a mood from the lyrics to the album cover. The cover is an eccentric blue with him looking to his left. It is similar to the Trapsoul cover, which is in red and he is looking to the right.

The album starts with the track “Years Go By.” Another man is talking to Bryson, saying, “With what the young generation’s doing and I’m like, yo, man, you really just got to do this, worrying about or trying to figure out what they need to think or like it or not. Aw, man, you going to have about five years go by...next thing you know, you ain’t going to want to do this no more.” The lead single, “Always For-

ever,” sets the mood for the album. The beat is hard, and the lyrics are relatable. Ready for You and Things Change paint pictures of relationships that many listeners may have been in before. The lyrics speak to real-life situations in today’s social climate.

The track “Timeless Interlude” slows the mood down. It speaks on growing and becoming wiser. It also speaks on how life is flashing by and reminds listeners to be mindful of that.

The chorus of *Inhale* contains a sample of SWV’s “All Night Long.” The sample, in conjunction with the reverb vocals and spacy drums, creates a sound incredibly reminiscent of the late ’90s R&B sound that still asserts its influence today.

“Outta Time,” featuring Drake, drives the album home. Hearing Drake and Bryson Tiller on a track is something soothing and something our generation needed. Their voices together blend well and make the song dynamic.

“Keep doing what you’re doing” opens with a voicemail from Tiller’s grandmother, who passed away early in 2020. Dedicating the song to her, the sentimental aspects of this record become apparent. This track really inspires the listeners to believe in yourself and to keep going no matter what. *Anniversary* concludes with “Next to You”, which includes a sample from the Flight Facilities’ “Heart Attack” record on the chorus. Bryson really showcases his vibrato and style throughout the song.

The album will put you in your feelings and is perfect to listen to on a late-night drive. This album was personal and spoke to the highs and lows of relationships. Tiller did what needed to be done for R&B.

In a recent interview with Genius, Bryson Tiller confirmed that he has another album coming out called *Serenity*, a three-part series. Volume 1 will consist of R&B, Volume 2 will consist of hip-hop, and Volume 3 will consist of pop.

Fans are hoping that Serenity is just the project they need to restore their initial feelings of Bryson as an artist.

## TikTok: A game changer for social media influencers

JAMEL ROGERS  
STAFF WRITER

TikTok is the new wave for future generations. The app helps publicize lots of media influencers, especially those specializing in comedy, singing and dancing.

According to a YouTube podcast titled 1422, a teen nicknamed Swag-BoyQ is a dancer and entertainer on the app. Claiming that TikTok has opened a lot of doors for him, he noted that he used to tease TikTok users on the app until his friend encouraged him to try it out.

The role of corporations in this outcome is to sell more of their products to new faces. Over the past few years, TikTok has gained more than 50 million users and played an integral role in creating large platforms for a lot of users such as SwagBoyQ.

TikTok has a vast amount of challenges, songs, dances and even original work put into each user’s timeline. The great thing about this app is that it’s free, and being an influencer on the platform leads to a lot of great exposure. Any influencer on the app can withstand a lot of marketing advertisement in their 60-second-or-longer video. The app is particularly popular

with young users, but people of all ages can share their creativity with the world.

According to a CH Tech article, TikTok profits in the months of May, June and July totaled up to \$102.5 million. Considering this amount of revenue, TikTok affords all users the possibility of one day becoming influencers to reap immense social and economic benefits.

Jayla Daniels, senior psychology major from Houston, Texas, has a deep appreciation for TikTok.

“TikTok is a unique platform,” Daniels said. “I think the reason TikTok is so popular is because of the algorithm. Millions of people can see the same thing at the same time. The algorithm allows others to connect and exchange ideas faster than any other social media platform.

“I love the app, and I’m learning more about the world’s current events through a first-person perspective when people post. It’s like the news except that I can ask questions in the comment section, and I’ll receive a direct response.”

With the rise of new users, TikTok generated \$88.1 million in August. The app has contributed tremendously to



Unsplash User Kon Karamplas

artists in genres like gospel, R&B, hip-hop and more. Famous YouTubers also utilize TikTok to expand their streams of income.

Users encourage anyone to try out the app to see new trending music and advertisements. There is also a live

feature on the app where celebrities can connect with their fans anytime they want. In the coming years, you can expect to see even more revenue generated from TikTok as the app becomes increasingly popular.



## ARTS &amp; ENTERTAINMENT/CAMPUS

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 16, 2020

# Creative block: The impact COVID-19 has on artists

NYLE PAUL  
STAFF WRITER

As coronavirus cases increase nationwide, more and more artists find themselves having to forcefully adjust to the restricting nature of the virus. The financial, mental and physical restrictions that the virus imposes result in the risk of art equipment becoming harder to access and artists having little to no motivation to continue their craft.

At Hampton University, there are many artists who specialize in different styles of art. With the coronavirus running rampant throughout the nation, here is a glimpse at how one artist is maneuvering through this “new normal.”

Gabrielle Tazewell is a senior journalism major and a liberal arts minor. She is a blogger and specializes in creative writing.

As the pandemic continues to worsen, the financial burden gets heavier as it is drawn out. Since physically going out in public spaces exacerbates the risk of catching the coronavirus, the artistic capabilities of many artists are challenged. With money being tight and accessibility of equipment being restricted due to store closures, it has been a hassle for artists to continue their work. Gabrielle shared her experience with the difficulties she ran into and how they have affected her craft.

“This pandemic is taking a lot of opportunities, career wise, from me within the whole freelance blogger industry,” Tazewell said.

“But I think within my own platform, for this year, I was actually planning on going on my own, taking my own pictures and actually collaborating with more people in person. But because of the pandemic, I’m unable to really do that. I am still able to collaborate with other people, which is cool virtually. But otherwise, I have

been really affected by this in terms of my own platform and progressing my career in general.”

The ongoing limitations that the pandemic has brought upon has either encouraged people to become more disciplined in their craft or left them lacking motivation to continue their craft. To help maintain her motivation, Tazewell touched on a few things she has implemented into her routine.

“Creating a consistent routine is the biggest thing,” she said. “Prior to the pandemic, when I was blogging, I kind of had a set schedule after classes. I was already doing work, so afterwards, I jumped into the blog.”

“But in terms of motivation, it’s really been a struggle to just get up and stay consistent with it. Something that has helped me is finding other bloggers and aspiring writers who are motivated and want the best for themselves. I’ve just been trying to surround myself with more of those people so I can stay motivated and on top of my stuff.”

If there’s one thing that all artists can relate to, it is their collective dislike for the dreadful creative block. Referencing her familiarity with creative block and the strain it can put on one’s creative process, Tazewell discussed how dealing with creative block in the pandemic has personally affected her writing.

“With the motivational standpoint that I was talking about previously, everything we do now is digital,” she said. “So, usually I would get my content on Instagram or I would just find an influencer or a blogger similar to me and just write about them, so I wouldn’t say it’s really affected that aspect.”

“In terms of creative block/writers block, it is a really big issue when you’re going off of your own perceptions within writing, especially now. All in all, I would say that it would really affect the way that I perceive the

content and how I spin it to become my own thing.”

With the mental, financial and physical challenges that the pandemic has brought along, it brings about the question of how some artists have been able to keep focused on their art during this difficult time. Tazewell shared how she has been able to remain focused on her craft and encouraged creatives to practice discipline, especially in a time like this.

“Surrounding myself with fellow creatives and connecting with a lot of people on Instagram has helped me a lot with breaking out of creative block,” she said. “It also helps me to be more consistent because I’m seeing the way that they’re working and I’m seeing the progress they’re making, so that inspires me.”



Courtesy of Isaiah Taylor

## A different world: Hampton’s adaptation to online learning

NOA CADET  
STAFF WRITER

With midterm exams fully out of the way, we are rapidly approaching the final stretch of this crazy semester. 2020 has been full of new experiences for everyone and due to the threat of COVID-19, our lives as students have been altered dramatically with our shift from the in-person college experience to virtual platforms. However, Hampton University has made an ongoing effort to mimic the on-campus experience by taking several steps to ensure that Hampton students are still being supplied with the same quality of resources and support that we would get while at our Home by the Sea.

Under the watchful eye of the Student Support Services, Hampton has updated several resource platforms to assist students in being able to seize an opportunity as it comes. For academic assistance, Hampton has gone completely digital, allowing students to register for tutoring online through huachievement.org. On this website, students can register for tutoring help through an online application, in which they can scroll through a list of available tutors, complete with biographies depicting majors, academic accomplishments, available times, and the classes for which the tutors are suitable. This site allows for students in need of assistance to select

the best tutors suited for their specific needs, separated by class. In addition to free online tutoring, the website offers faculty-published workshop guides designed to aid student readers. The selections available range from tips and guides to successfully complete the semester, to drafting resumes and cover letters.

While extremely beneficial, free tutoring and short “how-to” guides aren’t the extent of Hampton’s mission to keep student life from being altered too drastically. With campus closed off to students, and activities such as in-person career fairs and company interest meetings postponed indefinitely, the prospect of securing internships, or even being aware of who is hiring, can seem daunting. To maintain a connection to students, Hampton University’s Career Center has resorted to email as the primary method of ensuring any internship opportunity that they become aware of is passed along to the rest of the Hampton student body. Representing a variety of companies, the Career Center ensures that their emails touch upon a wide array of majors, from theater to the sciences.

“It’s definitely benefited me in many ways,” said HU student Gabriel Lewis, a graduating senior and business management major from Mansfield, Texas. “In fact, for my senior year during this virtual fall semester, I am

doing an internship with Mercy Corps, an internship non-profit, as a business development intern. This is all due to a blast from the HU Career Center letting me know they have an opportunity available to Hampton students.”

By redoubling efforts to make as much available to students as possible, Hampton University has made its best effort to recreate the campus experience to foster an environment of academic and professional excellence. Despite this effort, however, the transition to virtual learning has proven to be a tough roadblock to transcend. In a brief conversation, Daelin Brown, a third-year journalism major and writing tutor from Pennsylvania, shared her concerns regarding the effectiveness of online tutoring in comparison to in-person classes.

“I think with virtual tutoring, the sessions take much longer because trying to explain things through a screen is not easy,” said Brown. “Making comments on Google Docs is a nice element. However, so much more explaining comes with not being able to see the student and the document at the same time.”

Brown is most certainly not alone in her concerns. The struggle to achieve the same kind of efficiency and thoroughness through an online interface is felt by all. While Hampton University has done plenty to lessen the burden of

trying to make up for the consequences that come with maintaining a safe environment in regards to COVID-19, there is undoubtedly longing for the day in which we return to campus. However, until that day comes, use the resources available and try to finish this school year out strong.

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