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Student Voices For Equity Release Student Demands

1. The resignation of Connecticut College President, Katherine Bergeron.

2. Conduct a transparent Presidential search immediately, along with the restructuring of the review and appointment process for Presidents.

3. Strengthen DIEI by guaranteeing salaried pay for all full-time professional staffers and increasing its staffing/programming budget to competitively hire and compensate additional qualified personnel, prioritizing transparency and the implementation of effective institutional spending reviews.

4. Immediate prioritization of hiring more BIPOC faculty and staff throughout all offices with the inclusion of mandatory DIEI sensitivity, mediation, and equity training.

5. Establish greater and distinct resources for BIPOC, LGBTQIA+, undocumented, international, first-gen, Disabled, and low-income students.

6. DIEI offices and affiliated identity-based spaces should be ADA-accessible and fully equipped to support the populations they serve.

7. The maintenance of a consistent curriculum and retention of the courses necessary to complete an education within Africana Studies, East Asian Studies, Hispanic Studies, Global Islamic Studies, Jewish Studies, and Arabic Studies.

8. The implementation of SVE as a lasting body comprised of student representatives in communication with administration and the Board of Trustees to ensure the implementation of current and future institutional equity and inclusion needs.
An Open Letter to President Bergeron from the Editorial Board

Dear President Bergeron,

It has been nineteen days since Dean Rodmon King resigned in protest of your decision to hold a fundraising event at the Everglades Club, a historically and presently racist and antisemitic country club and, more broadly, your bullying of faculty and staff who work tirelessly to support the students of the College you represent. Since then, we have received minimal response from you and your administration. Rather than taking responsibility for your actions, you have chosen to distribute blame among your staff by weakly using "we."

In the past two weeks, our faculty, students, and staff have shown that they represent a community of compassion and advocacy. They have spoken up for one another and reached out in vulnerable times. You, however, have shown that you do not share those values. The Connecticut College community is at odds with your behavior.

A leader takes responsibility for their actions and apologizes. A leader listens to their colleagues and collaborates with them in decision-making. Over the past few weeks, you have shown that you do not listen to your senior cabinet members, you intimidate your staff, and you do not prioritize the needs of the student body. We deserve better.

Throughout the history of Connecticut College, The College Voice has served as the voice of the student body. Our past editions, available in the archives, preserve the College’s long history of student activism and reveal the similarities between outdated structures and campus life today. We continue to stand by that mission and we will amplify the collective voice of the current student body throughout these protests. Over the past two weeks, we have been hard at work reporting and publishing articles that express the frustrations of the collective campus community. We ask that you listen, learn, and internalize the words of student journalists as we continue to cover the events unfolding on campus. We also ask that you encourage your colleagues on the Board of Trustees to do the same, in order to better educate themselves on the life of students at the school they represent.

We stand with the students of Connecticut College. We stand with Student Voices for Equity and their list of demands, including your resignation. We stand with faculty who have advised us in our academic endeavors and continue to support us beyond the classroom. We stand with staff who ensure our health and safety on this campus and who go above and beyond their job titles to support all students. Your “we” is weak and deflective; our “we” is strong and united.

We implore you to ask yourself: what kind of legacy do you wish to leave behind? Accept the calls for your resignation with grace. Take ownership and allow the student body to begin to heal. It is time for change. It is time for renewal. Most of all, it is time for equity.

Signed,
Members of The College Voice Editorial Board (alphabetically):

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Madeline Cho, Layout Editor
Catja Christensen, Co-Editor-in-Chief
Zoe Dubelier, Layout Editor
Lucie Englehardt, Managing Editor
Hannah Foley, Sports Editor
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Students Occupy Fanning for the Fourth Time in Connecticut College History

On Sunday, Feb. 26 at 10:25 p.m., around 30 students entered Fanning Hall to occupy the building in protest against the current administration's handling of Dean Rodmon King's recent resignation. Fanning holds administrative offices, including that of President Bergeron, and various classrooms. Students entered the building equipped with supplies to last up to five days, including sleeping pads and bags, suitcases filled with necessities and limited food supplies.

As student activists entered Fanning, campus security attempted to stop the protest, entering buildings and banging on locked doors. Students quickly moved upstairs and barricaded themselves on the upper floors. Campus Safety chased students around the area; a student said that one officer called out, “You've got to be f*cking kidding me. Stop. Stop.”

While student activists locked themselves in Fanning, large crowds of students gathered across campus, attempting to divert the attention of campus security away from the academic building. Students drove around campus, honking horns and blaring music. Others gathered in the MOBROC Barn to play music as loudly as possible. Various songs, through speakers and the voices of hundreds of students, rang out across campus. Students in South Campus screamed and chanted for change. One student even blared a trumpet while walking alongside Tempel Green.

In accordance with Student Voices for Equity's list of demands, "Should the BOT fail to meet our demands, SVE is devoted to advocating until they are met. This alliance is not temporary and will remain persistent for the improvement of Connecticut College.”

Students have occupied Fanning Hall three times in the past: first in 1971, then in 1986, and recently in 2016 during President Bergeron's tenure. Fanning has once again become a symbol of student dissent at Connecticut College.

A Tribute to Judy Heumann

Judy Heumann, often fondly called the mother of disability rights, passed on March 4th. Judy contracted polio at age two when her doctor told her parents to institutionalize her because she would never walk. When she tried to enter kindergarten, the principal denied Judy access after being labeled a fire hazard. Her mother did not let this stop Judy from getting an education, fighting school districts to allow her daughter to get an education at a special high school. During this time, Judy attended Camp Jened — a summer camp for disabled people — where she went on to become a counselor. The story of Camp Jened and Judy is featured in the critically acclaimed documentary Crip Camp.

When Judy attended college, she attempted to gain a teaching license, but the New York Board of Education denied her because they feared she could not help evacuate herself or her students from a fire. She sued the New York Board of Education to become the first teacher in the state to be a wheelchair user. With a fire for activism lit inside of her, Judy staged a 26-day sit-in at a federal building in San Francisco to get Section 504 included in the Rehabilitation Act. This act required public school districts to provide education to disabled students across the United States. From there, Judy was instrumental in forming the ADA act and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. She served under the Clinton administration as the first advisor on Disability and Development at the World Bank as well as the first Special Advisor for International Disability Rights under the Obama administration.

This year Conn's freshman class read Judy Heumann's autobiography Being Heumann as part of the One Book One Region scheme. Connecticut College was lucky enough to host Judy Heumann in September. During her visit, Judy met with a panel of Disabled students and students from the Disability Justice seminar. She ran a session for first-year students as well as interested staff and community members where she talked about disability rights are her book. Afterwards, students were able to meet Judy and have their books signed.

Judy is an inspiration to the disabled community for all she did to better the lives of disabled individuals and provide disabled children with access to public school education. Her work inspired disabled students at Conn to be involved in the current SVE Fanning protest movement. Her legacy will live on at Conn as, through liaising with SVE, the disabled community continues to fight for equal access to education and experiences on campus.
“The excitement to participate in radical change.”

- Professor Petko Ivanov

“Just seeing all of the behind-the-scenes work is really inspiring and as a black student that has experienced a lot of racism here and not a lot of change, it has been very inspiring. All the DIEI staff that I began with made a huge impact and they are all gone and so it is hard to see that cycle continuing.”

- Anamarie Sogade ‘23

Photos courtesy of Robbie Lynch '24
“I’m personally here because I think it’s time for change. The recent incident with the fundraising event, for me, is personally offensive as a Jewish faculty member. I think that kind of decision making shows that we have a fundamental problem at the College and our leadership, and I’m hoping that we’re going to see a change in leadership and an actual long-term commitment to our values. Definitely, as an interim DIEI [Dean] last year, I got to see the failure for us to institutionally take seriously the needs of that division and for that responsibility to be shared across the college, right? DIEI work should be everyone's work here.”

- Professor Ariella Rotramel

“As a POC, we have always been pushed or turned away when we address situations and I feel like that’s not fair anymore and we shouldn't be putting up with it. Especially, since we provide so much for the school and we are what makes the school so them not helping or providing for us is very messed up”.

- Alejandra Romero-Sanchez ‘25

“I want to express my opinion of what has been happening on campus and about where we are right now and I want to make sure the community on campus now is that this is an issue that affects us across the board. The issues that were dealing with that are spelled out here in part are something that impacts the experience of students, but the faculty are not just here to support students. We are here as part of this community that has been impacted by issues certainly with DIEI and across the board with the issues of the way our facility are addressed, the way our staff is leaving this place and not being replaced and faculty as well.”

- Professor Nadav Assor
"As an alum and a long-term staff member, I really feel that the staff are together in needing to have their voice heard. And this is a long-term history thing, the College has been around for over 100 years, and this, too, will move forward the history of the College. But it's really important that people understand that this is the staff's livelihood, that we're invested in the College, and there's a lot of really passionate people who work here. So there's equal parts. I would never put the staff, faculty, or students above each other. But staff, faculty, and students are equally committed to this college. I personally have an office in Fanning, and I am personally committing to coming to campus during this protest and not remote/staying at home. It's not business as usual for me. And I want to be here, present on campus, to be part of it."

– Dean Libby Friedman ‘80

“My main motivation is that we deserve better as a college community. We have people constantly feel like they don't belong, constantly feel like their experience is devalued or not important, whether that's on the faculty or all voices need to be heard. What Dean King's statement showed to us moving forward as an institution. So that's what I hope to see deeply care about them and we care about this place and we certainly care about the students who are in that building right now."

– Anonymous

“When my students get passionate about something, I can't help but get passionate. I want my students to take the education they are getting in the classroom and apply it to the real world. I think this is an educational experience that you need to have the kind of support from the administration that can make you feel like this is the least that I could do, to come out and support you guys and to create a better learning and living environment. I saw your Board of Trustees meeting the other day, the kind of dorms you guys live in. I knew about the DIEI issues, I knew about professors, faculty, and staff, but I had no idea the kind of conditions you all were living in here on this campus... What does success look like for me? Well it looks like fully funding this DIEI program, it looks like doing whatever we can to promote retention of faculty and staff of color, and frankly after hearing that meeting the other day, it looks like giving you guys some renovated dorms, for god's sakes. So you're not four people squished into a double. It looks like creating a more equitable learning community for all of you. I am proud of you guys and will support you in whatever way possible. The best part about being at Conn has been watching you guys grow over the past few years and seeing you year and year becoming better and more educated students. I am just so proud of you guys.”

– Professor Taylor Desloge
community. We deserve better than this. We deserve better than to feel like they don’t have any power, constantly feel like their exper-
er on the staff side. If we’re going to have a functional community,
I was that all voices are not being heard, and that’s going to be key
see and I also want the students to know that we as faculty really
cefully care about the students who are in that building right now.”

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see and I also want the students to know that we as faculty really
care about the students who are in that building right now.”

- Professor Taylor Desloge

“The faculty met yesterday, and we want to do more than rhetoric, so we wanted to put our bodies on the line the way you all are doing and show support, but in a different way. Support is easy to put on paper or to put in words. It’s important, but it’s easier than actually coming together. Community only exists in the moment with deeds, not with speech that doesn’t happen. So we’re wanting to make things happen, so the least we can do is be here with our bodies.”

- Professor David Dorfman

“The faculty met yesterday, and we want to do more than rhetoric, so we wanted to put our bodies on the line the way you all are doing and show support, but in a different way. Support is easy to put on paper or to put in words. It’s important, but it’s easier than actually coming together. Community only exists in the moment with deeds, not with speech that doesn’t happen. So we’re wanting to make things happen, so the least we can do is be here with our bodies.”

- Professor David Dorfman
At 1:15 p.m. on Wed. March 1, Connecticut College faculty and staff congregated in front of Fanning Hall in a historic show of support for the student activists who occupied the building on Sunday night. They were accompanied by a large throng of student protesters who cheered on their professors as they took to the stage to verbalize their commitment to the activists in Fanning and the protesters in the crowd. The atmosphere was infectious; the faculty’s eagerness to stand in solidarity with students speaks volumes to the scope of the movement. Silence fell only when a microphone was passed to a faculty member at the front of Fanning Hall.

The general sentiment of the faculty was steeped in career-long frustration and exhaustion, culminating in a desperate plea for change. Professor Suzuko Knott of the German Department bluntly stated that “I can’t be at this institution any longer if we don’t have substantive change. So, this is it for me. Like, we change, or I’m done. That’s why I’m here.”

The demonstration in itself was momentous as it marks the first time in Connecticut College history that faculty have joined students in protest, despite three previous occupations of Fanning. Professor Derek Turner of the Philosophy Department was particularly impressed by the turnout: “I’ve been here since 2001 and I’ve never seen anything like this.”

During the past occupations, faculty communicated their dissatisfaction with the treatment of minorities by composing letters to the President and administration and providing moral affirmation for students from afar. This organized showing of solidarity, however, is unprecedented.

Various professors expressed displeasure with President Bergeron alongside their support for the students occupying Fanning. Professor Rachel Boggia of the Dance Department aptly offered that “the most important structural change is investment within DIEI…we have this extractive relationship with DIEI where their goodwill is used until it’s used up.”

“For nine years, we have put up with an administration that has dismissed our concerns. For nine years, we have witnessed our colleagues leave while the president stays,” said Professor Afshan Jafar, who chairs the Sociology Department. “The Board would have us believe our concerns are new and shocking, but we know better. We know what these nine years have been like. And so now we say enough. Nine years is long enough.”

Many faculty at the protest were tenured, which added a sizable cushion of job security and more protection for them to share the breadth of their disappointment with the institution. Assistant Dean of the College for Connections Libby Friedman later addressed the importance of including the voices of staff in the movement: “As staff members, and as an alum myself, we are standing in solidarity with the students in this building, we are standing in solidarity with the mission of this protest. And our reputation is deteriorating every day that change is not happening. So I just want to say that our support is with you. There’s a lot of staff members at this meeting right now, and I want to make sure that staff are counted as well.”

Professor Taylor Desloge of the History Department gave a powerful statement endorsing students working to affect positive change: “When my students get passionate about something, I can’t help but get passionate about it as well. I want my students to take the education they are getting in the classroom and apply it to the real world. I think this is an educational experience for you guys… I feel like this is the least that I could do, to come out and support you guys and to create a better learning and living environment.”

Dance Professor David Dorfman, who holds a commitment to the College as both an alum and longtime professor, provided insight into recent conversations among faculty: “The faculty met yesterday, and we want to do more than rhetoric, so we wanted to put our bodies on the line the way you all are doing and show support, but in a different way.”

While much of the focus of the past few weeks has been on the students’ side of the protests, it is important to remember that the issues also affect professors. Professor Nadav Assor of the Arts Department stated that, “The faculty are not just here to uplift students. We are here as part of this community that has been impacted by the issues, certainly with DIEI, and across the board with the issues of the way our faculty is addressed, the way our staff are leaving this place and not being replaced.”

Expressions of both the faculty’s disappointment in the administration and their enthusiasm for the students were manifold. Their stance on the matter is clear: the empty promises of the administration have them just as fed up as the students, and they are moved by the tireless, transformational work that student leaders have done throughout the past few weeks since news of Dean King’s resignation first broke.

Zoe Stapp ’23 voiced her admiration for the faculty: “I think it’s really inspiring. It’s great to see them merging forces with the student body and I like to see that the whole campus is involved.” Another student echoed this assertion, “I think this week has been stressful and overwhelming so to have them out here helping us is just really beneficial and makes us feel really supported by them.”

Shamar Rule, a student leader of Student Voices of Equity, spoke shortly after the faculty speakers to remind the crowd of SVE’s demands, including the immediate resignation of President Katherine Bergeron and the strengthening of DIEI on a holistic level. Rule went on to introduce MOBROC for an intermission of music and mingling before the students separated from faculty to embark on a walk through campus that included student testimonies and a variety of chants such as “Kathy B has got to go” and “Conn is a catfish, admissions is deceitful.”

On behalf of The College Voice, as both students and journalists, we would like to express the deepest gratitude for the show of unity demonstrated at the faculty rally today. Your actions and words of encouragement help to keep this cause alive. It is because of your commitment to education that we are here. Thank you for moving forward with us.
Faculty Release Statement in Support of Student Protests

Statement from Faculty in Support of Student Protests
March 3, 2023

We stand united with and for our students who engage in any and all forms of peaceful protest, whether visible, invisible, voiced or silent.

We stand united with and for our students who have demonstrated the courage to make their voices heard.

We stand united with and for our students who have shown extraordinary leadership in this time of crisis.

We stand united with and for our students who teach us and push us to be better and to do better.

We stand united with and for our students who risk personal safety and comfort to fight for the ideals of equity and justice set forth in the college’s mission. And we will not tolerate that any harm or injury comes to them in their struggle.

Signed (in alphabetical order),

Joe Alchermes
Virginia Anderson
Nadav Assor
James Austin
Robert Baldwin
Chris Barnard
Joyce Bennett
Sunil Bhatia
Rachel Black
Rachel Boggia
Tristan Borer
MaryAnne Borrelli
Leslie Brown
Ana Lilia Campos-Manzo
Penny Carroll
David Chavanne
Sheetal Chhabria
Stanton Ching
Christine Chung
John Clark
Chris Colbath
Jeff Cole
Shani Collins
Maria Cruz-Saco
Jane Dawson
David Dorfman
Michelle Dunlap
Josh Edmed
Simon Feldman
Denis Ferhatovic
Julia Flagg
Ronald Flores
Marc Forster
Noel Garrett
Rae Gaubinger
Robert Gay
Luis Gonzalez
Karen Gonzalez Rice
Isaac Gottesman
Anthony Graesch
Ruth Grahn
Karen Buenavista Hanna
Cherise Harris
Heidi Henderson
Kris Klein Hernández
Candace Howes
Yibing Huang
Mays Imad
Petko Ivanov
Ozgur Izmirli
Afshan Jafar
Chad Jones
Eileen Kane
Suzuko Knot
Hisae Kobayashi
Priya Kohli
Eva Kovach
Mónika López Anuarbe
Emily Kuder
Andrea Lanoux
James Lee
Andrew Levin
Rashelle Litchmore
Karolyn Machtans
Nina Martin
Timothy McDowell
Ed McKenna
Sonia Misra
Jeff Moher
Purba Mukerji
Michelle Neely
Jason Nier
Sabrina Notarfrancisco
Tina O’Keefe
Carla Parker-Athill
Denise Pelletier
Karen Pezzetti
Sharon Portnoff
Ken Prestinini
Sarah Queen
Lisa Race
Ric Ricci
Julie Rivkin
Rosemarie Roberts
Maria Rosa
Ariella Rotramel
Jennifer Domino Rudolph
Kate Rushin
Caroleen Sayej
Mike Seifert
Paola Sica
Jefferson Singer
Peter Siver
Rachel Spicer
Kristin Steele
Chris Steiner
Mark Stelzner
Jacob Stewart
Catherine Stock
Jeff Strabone
Jurate Svedaitė-Waller
Matthew Swagler
William Tarimo
Midge Thomas
Doug Thompson
Derek Turner
Sufia Uddin
Anna Vallye
Larry Vogel
Eric Vukicevich
Abbe Walker
Summar West
Lina Perkins Wilder
Dale Wilson
Andrea Wollensak
Audrey Zakriski
Marc Zimmer
Plus 38 faculty signing anonymously.
"Wired but Tired": Life Inside the Fanning Occupation

On Day 2 of the fourth Fanning occupation, The College Voice had the privilege of speaking with six occupiers via Zoom during the snowy afternoon. With students constructing snowmen and snow-camels right outside the building, the protest had a different feel to the prior sunny day. Nonetheless, nestled in their new classroom-turned-living space, Annika Brown ’23, Aria Mendhekar ’23, Beatrice Voorhees ’23, Harry Steinharter ’23, Jordan Barbagallo ’23, and an anonymous junior opened up about the start of their occupation.

The six students were careful about only discussing their individual and small group experiences, avoiding speaking on behalf of all approximately 30 occupiers. The College Voice will not reveal an exact number of occupants for their safety and at the request of student protesters, including Student Voices for Equity leaders.

In the cover of darkness on the evening of Feb. 26, students and supplies entered Fanning in small groups. Brown recalled, “The initial plan was to move in at midnight, but I think we started moving around 10, 10:30 p.m,” ahead of schedule. This decision worked out in their favor, as Campus Safety arrived on the scene just as students began locking themselves on the fourth floor, chaining and barricading the doors. The students quietly hid in classrooms and bathrooms as officers entered the building; simultaneously, students across campus began honking horns, shouting, and making as much noise as possible in central and western sections of campus to create a diversion for the officers. Barbagallo remembered, “We were crouching behind windows, lowering blinds, and whispering […] so no one could find us. [Campus Safety] probably knew we were there at that point.” Brown added, “My fear was that campus safety would find what room we were in and tell us to leave, but they couldn’t physically make us do that.”

When the night settled, diversion cacophony dispersed, and officers left the premises; the occupiers were still processing the high-stress move-in process. “That first night […] everyone’s adrenaline was pumping and we were also simultaneously amped up and exhausted,” said Steinharter. Voorhees added, “It was really hard to sleep,” and Brown concurred: “I was wired but tired.” The six friends share a classroom living space, and they said that despite not knowing many of the other occupiers, they bonded quickly during that first eventful night.

The next morning, they awoke with varying degrees of restfulness. Brown only got about four hours of sleep before a check-in meeting with SVE at 9 a.m. on Feb. 27. When protesters, including hundreds of students with some faculty and staff, arrived outside Fanning in the late morning, for the first time, the occupiers saw their impact on the greater campus community. “I think that morale definitely went up when the protesters were outside,” said Barbagallo. “I feel personally, and I think other people in the group would agree, that it felt safer in here having everyone out there. During the night it was really scary. [I was] freaking out. I know I thought that [campus safety] was going to come rush in. But when I woke up and all the protesters were outside and friends were walking by and waving at us, it felt like, ‘ok, we’re here. They’re not going to kick us out.’”

Brown said, “It was nice to see the support between the concert and the protest yesterday. It felt good that the outside world cared as much as we cared. So I think for as long as the protests on the outside and everyone stays involved on the outside, our spirits — well at least my spirits — will remain pretty high because I feel supported.” She added that when a friend texted asking how they could get involved and help, Brown advised, “Just make sure support stays going, because I will lose some steam otherwise.”

“There’s only 30 of us, so it looks like only 30 people are doing anything, although we know that’s not the case. But it’s nice when you see [that] it’s not just 30 people, it’s everyone and the campus,” said Barbagallo. The group recalled a glittery sign held up to a window that read, “Staff supports you.” Mendhekar said that faculty and staff support has “been really meaningful, at least to me and I think the people in this room, that we’re supported not only by students but also by people who work at the school.”

Staff have also bought snacks for students in support. In general, food deliveries have been well-received by occupiers. Lunch and dinner, cooked and delivered by fellow student protesters organized by SVE, have been deemed “better than Harris,” with highlights including a delicious “burrito-noodle-salad thing” and pizza. In their shared room, they stocked up with boxes of Kraft mac-and-cheese and hundreds of instant oatmeal packets, which they prepared with a kettle and microwave they brought into the occupation.

The College Voice MARCH 8, 2023

Catja Christensen Co-Editor-in-Chief

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Article continued on page 11.
"Wired but Tired": Life Inside the Fanning Occupation

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Article continued from page 10.

Despite claims on YikYak that occupiers must smell and that Fanning will have to be aired out for weeks, Brown says that they have kept up basic hygiene and use Febreeze often. An avid outdoor adventurer herself, she said, “It’s like backpacking with running water and heat!” Voorhees added, “We’ve been taking a lot of sink showers, and Mendhekar chimed in: “Baby wipes and soap!” Voorhees concluded, “It’s like a little adventure, but honestly, I’m quite clean at this moment.”

The group has been playing card games, board games, and video games to help pass the time, but they imagined that occupying the building without internet, like in past Fanning Protests, would be challenging. They are grateful to be able to keep up with work, communicate with professors, and stay in touch with family and friends. “We’ve been doing some homework, catching up on things,” said Steinharter. “Most professors have been very lenient, like extending deadlines or delaying projects.”

Brown shared that she, Steinharter, and Voorhees are each also completing honors theses, and they said the time away from regular classes and homework helps them progress with their research.

More importantly, what does one binge-watch during a protest occupation? “Flo-ribama Shore!” BV and AM excitedly said in unison. As they discussed watching the reality TV successor to Jersey Shore together on the classroom projector, the group marveled in wonder about the underclassmen occupiers who would potentially return to the same classrooms they currently inhabit. What will it be like to go to class in their former living spaces?

Overall, the students feel safe and have their basic needs met to safely continue protesting. Brown said, “I am very grateful for our leadership of SVE. They make us feel so safe. They are always checking in with us asking our opinions [and are] very responsive. I can text someone and know I’ll get a response. They’re always on call, 24/7.” For example, during their first night in Fanning, they realized that the heat was significantly lowered at night, so SVE spoke to facilities to ensure the building was kept at a healthy temperature. The anonymous junior also remarked, “We had concerns last night for whatever reason, and there were five people instantly at the door [saying], ‘How can we help? What do you need?’”

The occupiers fill out daily questionnaires from the Archives to document their experiences. Minnie Madden ’26, currently the Archives Liaison for The College Voice, has ensured, along with other student workers, that this occupation is well documented.

In addition to this group of six, two other occupiers provided The College Voice with comments.

Alex Kowal said, “Night one was extremely stressful because we had to move way faster and way earlier than we originally thought we did. We heard that campus was chasing students away from their planned buildings, so we were even more on edge. After packing everyone in, we slapped the locks on and began organizing all of our supplies. We have designated floors and rooms for class work, zoom, food, entertainment, and meeting space.

The biggest issue we have faced so far is that many photographers and journalists have been extremely disrespectful toward members of the protest. On several occasions we have been photographed and posted without consent. Certain news outlets have also made claims about us that are certainly untrue. This is, and will continue to be, a student organized peaceful protest. We are not breaking into anyone’s office. We are simply occupying the Fanning building until the demands are met. We have immeasurable hope.”

Leo Franceschi ‘26 also said, “It felt really great to see students yesterday interacting with us through windows and doors. I’m super grateful for the constant coverage from TCV giving us info from outside that I normally wouldn’t have known from social media. So far all my professors have been completely understanding and in support, some directly telling me they’re attending the rally tomorrow and giving credit to students who also do so. As far as moral boosters, the MOBROC show was a blast and we are all getting along inside too, watching movies and playing board games!”

As the occupation continues indefinitely. The College Voice will work with SVE to continue checking in with the occupiers wellbeing and lifestyles on the inside of the protests.

Sewing for Change

Jocelyn Lewis
Copy Editor

A midst students chanting, making signs, and chalking in protest around Fanning Hall, a handful of students were carefully and quietly crouched over in the sunshine with a needle and thread, meticulously sewing fabric letters onto shirts.

Kazi Stanton-Thomas, a first year student, organized the sewing project as an act of protest. Their goal was to create a piece of art that could either be held or hung in support of the Student Voices for Equity movement. The project consists of five shirts, sewn together by the wrists, that read “No Justice, No Peace” in red fabric letters. “Each shirt is a muted color in a variety of colors to represent the diaspora of people around the world,” Stanton-Thomas shared. The idea was to create an art project that would represent how our college community has come together in this moment to demand action and fight injustice.

In their first year seminar, Quilting: Art, Reuse, Protest, Stanton-Thomas learned about quilting as a form of activism and was inspired to incorporate the craft into Conn’s protest movement. In the past, quilting and sewing have been a major part of social justice movements for marginalized people. While Stanton-Thomas enjoys other forms of crafting, it was not until the FYS that they learned how to sew. The class left a substantial impact on them, and they are now bringing people together in collective action for change through crafting. Professor Heidi Henderson, the instructor of the quilting FYS, gave Stanton-Thomas access to the Dance Department’s costume closet so that they could obtain appropriate materials for the project.

The small group of students were able to finish one project on Monday, the first day of demonstrations, but Stanton-Thomas hopes that they will be able to create more projects with the community in the coming days of protest. While the project is community based, sewing is an individual activity, and Stanton-Thomas spoke about their internal experience with the craft: “I think I go into a sense of mindfulness that other people go into when they meditate. It’s really how I relax; I put on some music and I sew. I’ve made a bunch of pieces since I’ve been here at Conn, it’s just how I pass my time.” Incorporating daily personal practices into the protest movement is how Stanton-Thomas and other students are staying grounded in this tumultuous moment.

Finding engaging and sustainable ways to protest is what will allow for the longevity of the Occupy Conn Coll movement. Joy, care, and mindfulness need not be absent from moments of collective outrage. In fact, it is joy, coupled with intentionality, that will fuel this movement. By implementing what they have learned in the classroom into this moment, Stanton-Thomas’ mindful individual and community practice is just one example of the ways students are practicing protest and cultivating change.
“Let your work have its lights”: KB Encourages Musical to Continue Despite Occupation

The cast and crew of Into the Woods sent a letter on Monday, February 27th at 8am to Katherine Bergeron and the Board of Trustees to announce our solidarity with Student Voices for Equity (SVE) and the cancellation of our production until the SVE demands are met. Our letter was answered by Katherine Bergeron in an email received on Tuesday, February 28th at 3pm. It was the first significant, direct address from Bergeron to a student group in protest since the start of the occupation.

In the initial letter to Bergeron, senior cast member Mia (MJ) Lowy, along with the 40 cast and crew members that added their signatures to the letter, explained that we would not “bring something so close to our hearts to a stage owned by an administration that does not care about our wellbeing.” In response, all Bergeron could offer was a plea for us to “consider the significant legal, financial, and institutional complexity of the demands that have been put before the College, demands that the administration and the Board are working to resolve at this very moment.” With all this concern for finances, we cannot help but wonder if she’s aware of the over $20,000 spent to produce this show, including the cost of licensing rights. Her response went on to urge Into the Woods to find “other meaningful ways you can support Student Voices for Equity without canceling the production…I hope you will consider them and let your work have its lights this weekend.” While our peers are locked inside Fanning Hall receiving food through windows, sleeping on the floor, and having no access to showers, we are expected to smile under the lights of the newly-renovated Palmer Auditorium and perform for our arts-loving President.

Bergeron’s response was patronizing to the mission of the SVE student organizers, who are working to put pressure on the administration and the Board of Trustees to accept their demands. Bergeron wrote, “by their nature, colleges and universities work through such issues with deliberation—it’s one of the reasons institutions like ours have been around so long—which means that certain demands cannot be met overnight.” SVE remains fully aware that some of these demands take time to fully put into practice, but what they are looking for is recognition of the demands and active steps towards implementing them. It is also important to note that not all of these demands take “planning, review, reflection, and deliberation” like Bergeron stated in her response — her resignation can happen immediately, with just one more email from her. The “desire for immediate decision-making and action” that Bergeron referred to in her response patronizes and delegitimizes the longevity of SVE’s fight for clear concrete steps from the administration towards the demands.

We are shocked and horrified that Bergeron’s first true recognition of the occupation is in regards to the musical — something so insignificant in the grand scheme of unrest on this campus. As important as we feel the story of Into the Woods is to tell, the cast and creative team felt it would be inappropriate, inconsiderate, and insensitive to proceed with a “show must go on” attitude, on a stage and opening night funded by this administration.

Bergeron has long preached an unyielding support of the arts at Conn, however, she has made it impossible for us to uphold our art without sacrificing our values. We will not perpetuate the structure of racism and inequity that Bergeron has allowed and further embedded into our arts.

We stand with SVE in the hopes that the next email Bergeron drafts is her resignation.

Musicians Organized for Band—and Student—Rights on Campus

“Music is protest, music is love, music is community”
GRACE CONTRENI-FLYNN  Opinion's Editor
Farrah Najjari, lead singer for The Reapers and MOBROC Executive Board Member
Around 30 Connecticut College students locked themselves into Fanning Hall on the evening of February 26, 2023. These students decided to lock-in in coordination with protests against the current President Katherine Bergeron, the underfunding of DIEI programming, and support of the demands outlined by the student alliance for institutional, structural, and social change, Student Voices for Equity.

Students gathered outside Fanning the following morning with signs, bullhorns, and several sizable speakers. From 11 am to around 2 pm, chants included “What do we want? Change! When do we want it? Now!” and songs by artists from Kendrick Lamar to Childish Gambino rang throughout campus.

David Garcia ’25 and Eli Prybyla ’24 were in attendance at the protest as participants. Both students are executive board members with Musicians Organized for Band Rights on Campus or MOBROC and were also present to assist with the speakers on loan from MOBROC. Amidst the cacophony of music, chant, passing car horns, and bullhorn announcements, they began discussing potential ways to use their roles within the music community on campus to provide a moment of respite and a sense of continued support for the students occupying Fanning. They both took note of the MOBROC tech already in front of the building and promptly decided to reach out to fellow Executive Board members about organizing a show in front of Fanning that night.

Additional members of the Executive Board are Farrah Najjari ’25, Abby Dawson ’25, and Phil Chandy ’23. For the past two years, Chandry, Prybyla, Garcia, and alum Nico Severino ’22 have made up a group named ‘Mung Bean’ specifically designed to perform on short notice during breaks at MOBROC shows.

Naturally, then, Garcia reached out to all five board members with the phrase ‘Mung Bean,’ and the team recognized that they were experiencing a moment when a short notice performance was needed. After the protest dispersed, all five students quickly gathered to meet and discuss plans for the impromptu show.

Although the artists slated to perform started rehearsing around 1 pm that day, the hours leading up to the concert were not without feelings of hesitation. Dawson cited receiving some critique online throughout the day claiming that “it seem[ed] inappropriate to host a concert during these dire times.” Yet, Dawson’s response was “Look, we’re being intentional here like this is about fanning this is not about me wanting to put on a spectacle.”

Najjari, in particular, worked to lift the Executive Board’s spirits as they deliberated throughout the day. Upon reflecting on her resolute support for the show, she expressed “we can’t lose faith in moments like this, and we shouldn’t let any factor defeat anyone’s purpose here. We’re all one and like to find unity in times of adversities to like hold each other’s hand and walk through it, and that’s kind of what I had in my mind when trying to fight for this.”

By 6:00 PM, an amalgamation of groups belonging to MOBROC had arrived in front of Fanning. At first, a small group of students–mostly friends of the musicians–had gathered around the North-facing doors. However, as the first few notes of ‘Come Together’ by The Beatles floated across campus, a crowd began to fill the space between New London Hall and Fanning. Students swayed and shouted, using the concert as an opportunity to let out anger and move freely without abandon.

Throughout the set, Dawson and Najjari repeated the phrase, “Music is protest.” When asked to elaborate on this sentiment, Najjari expressed “Historically, like you can’t have a solid protest [without music]. You can’t have a movement without a chant. You can’t have a movement without poetry, you can’t have a movement without *** Article continued on page 13.
Musicians Organized for Band—and Student—Rights on Campus

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Article continued from page 12.

and student protest. Performances and protests began outside of Fanning at 1:15 PM. Rufino made another appearance; however, this time, he was accompanied by fellow artist and occupier Ian Hopkins ’25 as the two performed a piece they had written the previous night while inside Fanning. Both occupiers pressed their faces and microphones up to Fanning’s doors. While they rapped a few choice words for President Katherine Bergeron, whose resignation is the first demand outlined by the activist group Student Voices for Equity. While discussing the writing of the song, Rufino said “it’s a song that came around when we realized that there’s no way we’re gonna make music in here and not make it about the protests.”

While watching the concert, the singer for the Milk Carton Kids, cara zoe, emphasized the importance of music in activism, “punk is rebellion, in the end, it just matters that we’re making noise, […] as long as you’re screaming and people are screaming right along with you.”

Meanwhile, the only response The College Voice has received from Bergeron has been regarding the cancellation of Into the Woods this coming weekend, another music-oriented event. Bergeron urged the cast and crew to find “other meaningful ways you can support Student Voices for Equity without canceling the production… I hope you will consider them and let your work have its lights this weekend”. This quote was part of a wider letter addressed to senior Mia Lowy and the Into the Woods cast and crew which was obtained by The College Voice on February 28, 2023.

While Bergeron may be missing the musical, students remain steadfast and empowered by the music they have been thundering throughout campus this week. As the second concert came to a close on March 1, students prepared to yet again use their voices and “make noise” at a 7 PM protest in the Crozier-Williams Student Center. The sentiment across the student body that evening is best summarized by Dawson, “this is a very dire situation like we need, we’re begging, for KB to resign. We’re begging for resources so that students can like, feel happy and safe on campus. Because of this, music holds power.”

words. And I think everything that we perform comes back down to that, music is also poetry, and it’s also a way of using our words and sound to put out a greater message.”

The most notable performance of the night included guitarist Fernando Rufino ’25. Rufino was one of the around 30 students who locked themselves into Fanning the night prior. MOBROC moved his bass into the building only a few minutes before the performance. So, while his fellow musicians rehearsed in the designated MOBROC performance Barn, he had spent time experimenting with the technology needed to amplify his sound from the lobby of Fanning. Rufino, who performs under the name Ferufy, could only hear a whisper of sound from his bandmates during the performance and relied on fellow occupiers to help him remain in time with the songs played.

On his experience performing, Rufino stated, “at the beginning, communication was difficult. I was talking through the very edge of the door, [using a] very little gap […] I mean, I didn’t even want to touch or open the door at all, so it was really as little as I could keep it open to get the amp cord through.”

The artists performing grounded themselves in the common goal of supporting the students occupying Fanning and bringing protesters together through angry, energetic, and powerful music. Fans certainly resonated with and understood this message. Garcia recounted, “towards the end, the crowd just started doing a chant ‘Get KB Out.’ I was part of the little last group and we were able to like jam out to that chant. And that became just another little song just in the moment.”

Between sets, fans inside the building shouted their collective thanks from upper-level windows. Occupiers also flooded MOBROC performers’ direct messages that night with continued gratitude, with one saying “thank y’all so much for playing in here, us occupiers rly needed and appreciated it.” Another conveyed their genuine excitement at witnessing the show, “bro that show was so lit, i appreciate that sh’t so much.”

At the core of the performance was a deep desire to not only uplift the students inside Fanning, but to live up to MOBROC’s original mission. MOBROC’s full title, Musicians Organized for Band Rights on Campus, is rooted in advocacy. Prybyl explained, “that show was the first time where I really felt like mob rock lived up to its name of being politically motivated, not explicitly arguing for bans rights on campus, but for students’ rights.” Garcia, then, illustrated the idea that “even though it says band rights on campus, the students are the bands like I’m a student, Abby’s a student, Phil’s a student, Fernando is a student. We all share the same objective.”

MOBROC organized a second concert on March 1, 2023, as a part of the faculty
The Tour of Testimonies and Truths

SAM MAIDENBERG
Co-Editor-in-Chief

Following the faculty-led rally, which saw the largest single-event turnout of the week, students marched across campus to continue voicing their opinion. This walking protest was a style not yet utilized during this movement, a style that allowed students to direct frustrations at the places in which they stood. The protest started at Fanning and included stops at Admissions, President Bergeron’s house, Blaustein, Cro, and Becker House.

Students outside of Admissions chanted, “Conn is a catfish, admissions is deceitfulness!” This outlined a general feeling that the College is performative by nature, promising prospective students a slew of amenities that it is not able to provide. This sentiment has been a hallmark of the ongoing movement, and focuses on the general lack of support for minority students at the College.

Conn admitted 661 students for the class of 2026, making it the largest class in the history of the College. While more students could have led to a more diverse group of people and perspectives, it instead exposed many deficiencies at the College. Common rooms were converted into large dorm rooms, which, alongside the Manwaring experiment, exposed a lack of adequate housing. More students also require more staffing and support systems, which have crumbled at the College in recent years. Along with the fundraising event at the Everglades Club, Rodmon King resigned due to a general lack of support across all offices of DIEI, which are understaffed, underpaid, and physically decaying. The massive size of the class of 2026 continued to put pressure on DIEI, as an increased population leads to increased needs, weighing down many of its offices until they literally and figuratively cracked.

Students then moved across Chapel Green from Admissions toward Bergeron’s house. This property is owned by the College and is often used to host events involving the president, though it is widely doubted that she lives there on a regular basis. Immediately upon arrival, a balloon reading ‘Happy Retirement’ was strung on the fence directly in front of the house. Multiple shirts from Monday’s sewing protest project were hung on the fence surrounding the arboretum that borders Bergeron’s residence. Next to each other, the shirts read “No Justice No Peace.” Students lined both sides of Williams street while chanting, “Whose streets? Our streets!” Cars timidly drove by, some of which honked their horns to the delight of the student body.

One student, a senior, gave testimony calling back to their sophomore year. During the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic, Bergeron mysteriously announced an event to be held on Tempel Green in which she would proclaim the biggest announcement in college history. Ignoring the College’s social distance regulations for the event, Bergeron announced, among much pageantry, a $50 million donation to the College. This money was to be used across four sectors: financial aid, athletics, career services, and campus improvements. The student speaker questioned why students who struggle to afford Conn’s tuition are, in turn, working multiple jobs and scraping by with constant holds on their accounts, resulting in the inability to choose classes in a timely manner and the exclusion from social events. The community questioned where this money has gone, and the lack of support for its diverse group of CISLA students.

The final testimony at Blaustein was given by an international student, a group that has largely been silenced during this movement due to their lack of protection regarding the right to protest and concerns over their scholarships and student-visas. This fear speaks volumes to the culture of the College. This student expressed their gratitude to the College for the opportunity it provides, but was critical regarding their treatment of international students. From the very first day at Conn, this student lacked the basic dorm room needs that they expected to be there, like bedding. During the pandemic, international students, under great fear of deportation and the frightening xenophobic comments of former president Donald Trump, felt like a forgotten group. They concluded by sharply criticizing the College’s performative act of lining Tempel Green during invocation and commencement with the flags of each of its international students, another symbol of unsubstantiated pride.

The next stop, the quickest of the day, was at Cro. Students took time to highlight the amazing things that happen in the student center, including the official headquarters of The College Voice, the SGA office, and the Holleran Center. They next highlighted the offices of Title IX Office and Sexual Violence Prevention and Advocacy (SVPA), both of which have seen a revolving door of overworked and underpaid staff members. They chanted, “Community, diversity, and equity, but all we see are disparities.”

Finally, students stopped at Becker, home of the advancement office. While lots of attention has been focused on Bergeron herself, she likely did not plan the event at the Everglades Club; the details of fundraising events fall under the jurisdiction of the office of advancement. Becker was also the site of an attempted lock-in on Sunday, Feb. 26. This attempt was prevented by campus security, who’s presence at the building made it unsafe for the group of student occupiers to enter. One testimony focused on that night, in which a student described their experience being chased by campus security, who did not identify themselves as such. Students gave further testimonies about their experience working in advancements, while praising two BIPOC staffs who actively work to promote forward-thinking change at the office.
BoT Claims Their Hands are Tied, but Bylaws Say Otherwise

On Friday, Feb. 24, the Board of Trustees (BoT) met with students, faculty, and staff in open forums to discuss current issues on campus. During the latter half of this meeting, students spent time sharing their experiences with the BoT members who were surprised by the lack of staffing in DIEI offices and the state of dorm rooms on campus. Many students questioned why the BoT members knew so little about student life, to which the BoT members noted that the Board generally deals with higher-level administrative problems. Although the Board does typically work on finding solutions to more broad issues on campus, this response does not match the sentiment expressed on the Board’s webpage. The first paragraph discussing the role of the Trustees reads, “It is the responsibility of each trustee — to understand the current needs of the College.” To us, it is unfathomable that issues like high staff turnover in DIEI, lack of staff in the Title IX and SVPA offices, and black mold in dorms across the campus that has made current students physically unwell, would not be included in understanding “the current needs of the College.”

To that end, we were curious how many of the Student Voices for Equity demands could be directly addressed by the Board of Trustees.

SVE Demand 1: “The resignation of Connecticut College President, Katherine Bergeron.”

As has previously been established, the BoT has the power to fulfill this demand. Article I, Section E of the Connecticut College Bylaws states that the Board has the power to “appoint and remove the President, who shall be the Chief Executive Officer of the College, in accordance with these bylaws.” This power is solely granted to the BoT and they are the only group who could fulfill this demand.

SVE Demand 3: “Strengthen DIEI by guaranteeing salaried pay for all full-time professional staffers and increasing its staffing/programming budget to competitively hire and compensate additional qualified personnel, prioritizing transparency and the implementation of effective institutional spending reviews.”

As can be seen in the first statement on the BoT webpage, the BoT is the “steward of the financial, physical and human resources of the College,” meaning that the changing of salaries and the process for hiring falls under the control of the BoT. Further, Article I, Section D of the Connecticut College Bylaws reads, the BoT has the power to “approve important changes to College policies that significantly affect the terms and conditions of employment for staff, faculty, administrators and other employees of the College.” Shifting DIEI employment from hourly to salaried would most likely fall under “the terms and conditions of employment for staff.”

SVE Demand 5: “Establish greater and distinct resources for BIPOC, LGBTQIA+, undocumented, international, first-gen, Disabled, and low-income students.”

In Article I, Section G of the bylaws it states that the BoT has the power to “approve and oversee the budget of the College.” With this in mind, the demand for resources for specific groups of students can be delegated from the budget with a decision from the BoT. However, what may occur at the moment is a quick stamp of approval rather than a careful consideration of where the budget is going which would have to change in order to meet the demands.

SVE Demand 7: “The maintenance of a consistent curriculum and retention of the courses necessary to complete an education within Africana Studies, East Asian Studies, African Studies, Global Islamic Studies, Jewish Studies, and Arabic Studies.”

Article I, Section B reads, “Establish, upon recommendation of the President, the academic programs of the College consistent with its mission, and review and approve changes as necessary.” Members of the BoT have the power to change the way programs are structured in order to ensure they match Conn’s mission statement, which reads, “The College promotes understanding by offering a variety of academic and social experiences and is committed to building greater access, opportunity, and equity.” In this vein, the BoT has the power to change programs like Africana Studies, East Asian Studies, African Studies, Global Islamic Studies, Jewish Studies, and Arabic Studies, which all work to fulfill this aspect of the mission statement.

Although the following statement is not an official demand laid out in the document provided by SVE, it is a concern raised by students during the open forum with the BoT and in the current protests. The statement is written on a banner hanging from the third floor of Fanning Hall.

“No more racist money”

Article I, Section I states that it is the responsibility of the BoT to “establish policy guidelines for major fund-raising efforts.” Therefore, the Board has the ability to create policies for who and where the college accepts donations from when necessary. The BoT could change or create a policy that would ensure events at locations like the Everglades Club or other locations that have discriminatory practices would never be allowed again.

We have also heard around campus the idea that BoT members are “appointed” by Katherine Bergeron. In order to better understand the process of appointment and nomination to the Board, we reached out to a former President of the Alumni Association Board, a position that comes with a seat on the BoT. They told us that the BoT has a specific committee where nominations take place. When nominating a new member, the committee takes into account a variety of factors including class year, race/ethnicity, sex, gender, geography, skills and knowledge “to create a board that is truly representative. Nominations to the Board can come from alumni, faculty, staff, or members of the community more broadly. Our source stated that nominations from alumni are the most common. Most importantly, they noted that they had never seen Bergeron suggest or advocate for nominees. In other words, Bergeron does not appoint or nominate candidates for the Board and thus members of the BoT do not hold allegiances to her in this manner.

We contacted John Cramer to see if we could get a list of the members on each committee, including the committee in charge of nominations, and he replied with a link to the BoT webpage and said, “Can you help me to understand why you’d like a list of the committee members?” He has yet to respond to our follow up email.

Nonetheless, money can paint us a picture of how effectively Bergeron has swayed BoT members. Members Vig, Stalling, Rosen, and Adegbile all went from donating up to $1,911 in 2015-16, the early years of Bergeron’s tenure and the earliest annual report available on Conn’s website, to donating between $25,000 and $49,999 in 2021-22. Similarly, McBride, Preston, and Crawford went from donating up to $1,911 in 2015-16 to donating between $50,000 and $99,999 in 2021-22. Others had an even larger jump, with Archibald starting at $1,911 in 2015-16 to donating $1,000,000 to the waterfront renovations. Alvord and Terry also started at $1,911 in 2015-16 and increased their donations to between $100,000 and $999,999 in 2021-22.

Additional examples of donation jumps include: Skapertas who donated between $10,000 and $24,999 in 2015-16 to between $100,000 and $999,999 in 2021-22, Linehan who donated between $25,000 and $49,999 in 2015-16 to between $50,000 and $999,999 in 2021-22, Handy who donated between $50,000 and $999,999 in 2015-16 to between $100,000 and $999,999 in 2021-22, Faloon who donated nothing in 2015-16 and donated between $25,000 and $49,999 in 2021-22, and Zilly who donated between $100,000 and $999,999 in 2015-16 to between $100,000,000 to $499,999,999 in 2021-22.

Zilly also backed up these donations in an interview in 2017 saying, “Katherine has an idea a minute— it’s breathtaking and inspirational.” These enormous jumps in giving show how confident trustees are in Bergeron and her ability to run the College.

In contrast, other trustees have donated lower amounts of money consistently since Bergeron’s tenure began. The major exception being Quint who donated between $25,000 and $49,999 in 2015-16, then increased to donating between $100,000 and $999,999 in 2020-21, but back down to between $25,000 and $49,999 in 2021-22.

As outlined in the bylaws, the BoT has the power to make the changes students are demanding. However, many of the BoT members are clearly supportive of Bergeron as can be seen by their growing donations, and thus may be more hesitant to do so.
Students Show Solidarity at SVE Organized Testimonies

After a relatively calm Thursday morning and afternoon following a busy, energetic Wednesday, Student Voices for Equity announced a town hall style testimony reading from 6-8pm in Evans Hall. On March 2, 2023, faculty, staff, and students were invited to share their stories, anonymously or not. The testimonies were also live streamed on Zoom to be inclusive of and accessible to the occupying students along with the general public.

Adrien Prouty ’25 and Niamani David ’25 started by reading a letter in response to President Katherine Bergeron’s email. They reiterated that SVE explicitly demands her resignation, along with the seven other demands. The SVE letter is published in full on The College Voice.

After the reading, Lyndon Inglis ’24 invited speakers to come to the empty microphone to share their experiences. Even in the safe, familiar space of Evans, the silence was daunting, as was the bold, black-and-white projection of “Occupy Conn Coll ’23” just behind.

Alex Reyes ’23 bravely walked up first to a round of applause. She shared her experience of being “no stranger to whiteness,” especially as the daughter of Filipino immigrants growing up in a predominantly white town. “As much as Conn is a place that I have grown, it has also broken my heart,” she confessed. “Was I simply a statistic? A diversity point?”

Reyes’ testimony opened the floodgates as more students bravely took the mic. A theme for the following speakers was the idea of Conn “choosing” students. Owyn, sitting with their service dog Delia, spoke about their experience at the admission office before coming to Conn. Owyn stated that they felt Conn “would be choosing me and my disability altogether.” Owyn ended their testimony by saying, “We deserve a president and a college that chooses us… over their own bank accounts.” An anonymous speaker followed, expressing confusion over “why did Connecticut College choose me to be here?” if they were not willing to provide the resources necessary to support them.

Another anonymous speaker reflected on their experience being “chosen” by Conn but being told to transfer if they wanted more accessible spaces on campus. There was a clear connection between many students, despite their differences, feeling “chosen” by Conn, but unsupported upon arriving on campus.

This lack of support and a feeling of isolation was further explored in depth by many speakers. Owyn continued their testimony, sharing a story of being bullied online by other students. As a result Owyn felt isolated and alone until other students began to reach out to them. They noted, “I choose those students like those students chose me.” An anonymous student shared this feeling of isolation by sharing that Conn’s lack of support for Muslim students made it difficult to practice their faith. Saying, “I don’t know if I can celebrate my faith or be the best Muslim possible because of the lack of support from this school.” In response to these feelings, both students shared quotes of resistance. Owyn addressed the BoT declaring “stop choosing her” and the anonymous student stating “At least I’m not gonna let Conn tell me who to be or…tell me to bleach my skin and be quiet.”

Going hand-in-hand with isolation was a collective necessity for self-advocacy in order to survive. When Owyn was left behind by the administration and struggled with a vast lack of support and safety for both themselves and Delia, they admitted, “I had to go by myself” to various health appointments and meetings. “I did it alone.” Other anonymous students concurred with this sentiment, including several queer students of color who collectively shared experiences with microaggressions, racist comments and actions, and exhaustion with having to constantly self-advocate when others didn’t.

One speaker began by asking the live audience, “Which people of color are tired? Which queer people are tired? Which religious minorities are tired? Which disabled students are tired? Which people with multiple intersecting identities are tired?” After each question, there was a pause for listeners to raise their hands and see that they were not alone.

Another speaker opened up about their experiences having to call out their peers on offensive language and activities because they would not learn on their own: “It always takes a gay person to tell you what’s homophobic, a black person to tell you what’s racist, a disabled person to tell you what’s ableist [… ] what does that say?”

Another significant grievance with the College was how much time it takes for the administration to fix pressing issues, such as the bathrooms. One student spoke about voyeurism, which has been a recurring problem on this campus. Although since the seniors’ first year at Conn incidents of voyeurism have happened twice, it took the administration three years to build full privacy bathrooms, which are still not in every dorm. Additionally, the insufficiencies of the Title IX process were also emphasized, especially how traumatic, long, and ineffective it is to experience a case, whether as a victim, witness, or other.

Many speakers shouted out important faculty and staff members who were vital to their survival both in and out of the classroom, including Noel Garrett, Dean Erika Smith, former Director of Sexual Violence Prevention and Advocacy Rachel Stewart, and more. Others also called out directors and staff members who perpetuated problematic systems at Conn, including the Office of Study Away. One international student expressed their struggles with international visas and other hurdles specific to international students. They also shared experiences of macroaggressions, including racist stereotypes and accusations, as well as the Office’s problematic centering of European study away programs.

Although many people confidently and courageously shared their own stories of which we have shared here, we want to recognize that some members of our community are unable to share their stories publicly. A student shared experiences of staff members, who felt they could not come forward, but wanted to express support. Other students, because of their status as undocumented or international students, had to share their testimonies privately in order to remain safe on this sanctuary campus.

Niamani summed up the general sentiments expressed through the testimonies stating, “I’m learning that they’re hurting too.” Through this statement Niamani recognized the departments, divisions, and people who shared their perspectives that all connected on the theme of being hurt. Niamani passed on this connection urging the BoT to open their ears and learn about the hurt experienced by so many students on Conn’s campus. Going along with this feeling, another speaker, Pluto, noted at the beginning of their testimony that they “have never felt more seen and heard.” This feeling has been expressed by many students across campus and as Niamani said SVE is serving as a “megaphone” to share these sentiments with the administration and the BoT.
Underpaid and understaffed, unheard and unseen: The neglect of dining workers and other staff by the Connecticut College Administration

**Suleman Saleem**

**Contributor**

**Isabella Amaro Varas**

**Contributor**

**Benjamin Murphy**

**Contributor**

There is an air of tepid urgency here: dirty dishes keep piling on and sent out, food trays are emptied and attempted to be quickly replenished, and a line trails behind the only grill cook on campus. This is the scene at Harris Refectory at approximately 6 p.m. on any given day; the sudden influx of students has left the 30 or so Dining Staff workers incapacitated. The often complained about broken dishwasher is manned by one person and workers are brought over from Oasis — the on-campus snack shop — to contend with the Refectory’s rising demands. All of these problems are only visible at very specific instances, however, when it becomes clear that Harris is more than just a dining hall. It is where students, faculty and staff congregate to become part of this broader sense of security, comfort and home without which the whole school would collapse. But at whose expense is this sense of security coming from?

It is those Dining Staff workers, mostly immigrants or first-generation Americans from minority demographics, who keep the school running and its students part of this larger family. Besides from maintaining the dining infrastructure on campus, they build important relationships with the student body, especially the school’s BIPOC and international student population who feel an immediate sense of comfort in their presence. Yet they remain underpaid and overworked — which are just a few examples of institutional problems that Conn’s administration has not prioritized fixing. Testimonies collected from students and staff illustrate the overlooked difficulties faced by the Dining Staff, valuable members of our community that Conn students so cherish and upon which the institution relies.

**Wages**

When talking to members of Dining Staff, low wages were one of the main concerns we heard. Workers were promised by the Bergeron administration an increase of $2/hr in their wage for every year they remain employed — a promise that has not yet come to fruition. Some have worked here for more than 10 years and have only seen a 2-3 dollar increase in their salary. The highest paying workers make $19.00/hour, which, according to Salary.com, is within the bottom 25th percentile for dining/hospitality staff in the New London area. Even when promoted, workers barely see an increase in their salary.

Looking at the average cost of living in the area, the wages of Conn’s Dining Staff are insufficient to make a decent living. Over the past 3 years cost of living in the New London area has risen, for example the average rent for a single bedroom apartment is now $1,100 (CT Insider). Additionally, the meager possibilities for growth within Dining Services leave workers with no other options but to work a second job or go somewhere else in an attempt to advance their careers.

**Understaffing**

Over the past 10 years, many workers have opted for the latter and left Connecticut College. However, as Dining Services have continued to lose staff, the administration has failed to hire more workers to fill the absences. Currently, the dining halls are severely understaffed and as a consequence, those who remain are overworked. As one worker testified: “There used to be 3 workers to look over each station, now we only have one per station.”

When speaking about their experience in general another staff member said, “10 years ago we had less students, more employees. We were happier and the food was better. Now, many people have been fired or have quit, but they are not getting replaced. We are overworked and tired. It may even seem like we are in a bad mood, but it is not the students fault and we hope they know that.”

Given the problem of understaffing, some staff have been offered additional roles without the appropriate training and salary that reflects the increase in responsibilities. Additionally, over the past 10 years, the College has continuously closed down other dining options available on campus, such as the dining halls in Knowlton, Freeman, and Smith. Isa Amaro ’23, who served on the Dining Committee and worked at Harris in 2019, shares that “The Management of Dining Staff has continuously advocated for the idea of closing JA in the future.” How can a school that’s accepting more and more students, cram all of them into one understaffed dining hall?

**Negligence**

These grievances have been expressed to Human Resources, but have been ignored. Our conversations with Dining Staff revealed that this is a consistent problem. Requests for paid time off go unanswered, questions are often neglected, and complaints are disregarded. This makes Dining Staff feel invisible, despite the vital role they play in keeping the college running.

Compounded with this ignorance, Dining Staff often must work with broken equipment. Supply chain issues are understood by everyone, but many are familiar with how long it took to replace the display heater in Oasis, or the grill in Harris. Oasis is particularly problematic: as a student employee who worked as an aide there, Suleman Saleem ’25 was personally witness to key equipment in the kitchen, like fridges, freezers, ovens, the dishwasher and the ice machine being in a state of disrepair.

This situation of negligent neglect, it seems, has lingered, making it difficult for Dining Staff to do their job. Morale is currently at an all-time low. One staff member states, “All of this is why the food tastes the way it does now.”

**Conclusion**

Low wages, lack of opportunity, and neglect of employees at Connecticut College represent an institutional problem that goes beyond dining. Not only do Custodial and Maintenance staff experience many similar challenges, but so do workers across different offices including the Holleran Center and DIEI. In fact, many staff in these offices barely make above $20.00 an hour. We cannot call ourselves an equitable and inclusive community when our own staff is overworked, underpaid, and ignored. While we devote ourselves to fixing long-standing issues across campus and the school is in the process of conducting a salary review, we urge the administration to take the situation of staff members seriously and give them the pay raise they deserve.

If the kitchen is the heart of the home, then Harris is the heart of our campus. The people that work there are the ones that keep it pumping. The Dining Staff pledges their complete support behind the student led movement for equity on campus and we, as students, must pledge our support for them too.
In her email to the campus community on Mar. 1, President Katherine Bergeron linked a 28-page document that outlines the College’s Equity and Inclusion Action Plan, published in 2016 and revised in 2018. An analysis of Bergeron’s email itself has been done, but this article is to dissect the Action Plan.

After messages from Bergeron and former Dean of Institutional Equity and Inclusion John McKnight, the plan is broken into “Plan Overview,” “Strategic Priorities, Goals & Action Items,” “Implementation Plan,” and “Tracking and Reporting.” At the end of the document, there is a list of 21 members of the President’s Council, DIEI Staff, and Ex-Officio Council Members who presumably read and signed off on the plan, including Bergeron and several representatives of staff, faculty, and students.

The plan outlines several actions that the College has successfully implemented:

- Connecting with New York Posse Scholars
- Establishing the LGBTQIA+ and Womxn Centers
- Creating the SDP academic requirement for graduation starting in 2024
- Forming the Center for the Critical Study of Race and Ethnicity
- Offering American Sign Language as a language option
- Develop a curricular initiative that serves the needs of students who excel in their work on racial justice and equity
- Activate the Creating Connections Consortium (C3) New Scholar Series
- Allowing staff to serve as advisors/collaborative partners with faculty in designing and teaching First-Year Seminars

However, there are several action items that have made no progress, and an unbelievably number of unrecordable action items.

Amongst the other action items listed, a few in particular stick out. One action item reads, “Create a formal ally development program for White students, men, cisgender people and others who want to increase their effectiveness as allies.” As a Predominantly White Institution (PWI), Conn does not need more organizations exclusively for privileged students. It would be more productive to create opportunities for students from different backgrounds to come together.

Another action item is “Leverage athletics recruitment to increase diversity,” implying that BIPOC students only come to college for sports. This is an outdated and incredibly racist stereotype that Conn should never have implied, especially in a plan to make the college more equitable and inclusive.

The action item which states that the college intends to “significantly increase proportion of native and indigenous students” directly contrasts the latest Faculty, Student, and Staff Demographic Data, which shows 0% indigenous students and faculty.

Another action item promises to “revitalize and enhance Unity House as a functional and stylish, student-run multicultural house,” in addition to the Chapel. Unity House and the Chapel (especially the Chapel basement, home to the Muslim prayer room) have been in poor condition for years.

The Action Plan also vows to “install lactation rooms on campus,” which apparently manifests in an vaguely labeled “wellness room” located in Fanning Hall. This item is listed under “Women and LGBTQIA students.” Nowhere in the Action Plan is there a promise to have free menstrual products in every bathroom on campus. This would serve significantly more students than lactation rooms.

Several other promises are made in this document, including mandatory faculty training programs for Title IX and ADA compliances, creating alumni networks for BIPOC alum, locating non-work study options for international students, identifying
Covering Conn’s Takeovers Through the Years

Minnie Madden
Archives Liaison

Ellie Wagner
Opinions Editor

On Sunday, Feb. 26, the fourth Fanning takeover began. Since then, and for many days beforehand, your The College Voice staff has been hard at work in the office making sure the Conn community and beyond remain informed. However, we are not the first group of student journalists to cover a Fanning takeover. A look into the archived editions of TCV gives us some insight into how editorial boards of the past covered their respective takeovers.

1971 Takeover

The first Fanning takeover was in early May of 1971. The events of this takeover were not covered by TCV. In fact, TCV did not even exist yet. The student newspaper of the time had been renamed Pundit from Satyagraha earlier that semester, and the last edition of that school year was published before this protest occurred, as it started in May of 1971.

1986 Takeover

The 1986 takeover was the first to be covered by student journalists in TCV. An issue of TCV found in the archives was published on May 6, 1986, 5 days after the takeover. It began at 4:55 am on May 1 with 54 students occupying the building and concluded that evening at 11:15 pm. At the conclusion, administrative senior staff and protestors signed a statement that had been negotiated over the day outlining how they would improve minority life at Conn. It took three revisions and several concessions to come to an agreement with 8 senior staff going into Fanning to meet with 12 students. This issue of TCV featured five different articles about the takeover, expressing many different opinions on the situation. However, not all writing about the ’86 protest is in favor of the Fanning lock-in. Students wrote to the editor with stories like “Fanning sit-in a mistake?” and “Group Protest Unnecessary.” Anti-lock-in reasoning included breaking the Honor Code, believing that those who locked in should not receive punishment immunity for protesting, and arguing SGA should not have supported the protest. Students wished they had been kept in better communication during the protest about what was happening.

2016 Takeover

This was the first takeover to occur in the era of the internet, starting occurring on May 12, 2016. One would assume that there would be plenty of online information from TCV. However, because this takeover occurred during exam week, there was not much material. The only material to be found was an article published in September 2016 to reflect on what happened. Starting with flyers talking of Connecticut College Students in Solidarity with Palestine (CSSP) in dorm buildings discussing the injustice of the Israeli occupation of Palestine, the displacement of Palestinian people and the unlawful demolition of their homes.

The administration, specifically the interim DIEI, responded to the student body calling these flyers a “bias incident.” The protest initially against this bias report spiraled into students advocating more grievances with administrators and the college structure. Instead, the students used an Occupy Fanning blog to gain perspective on its evolution. This blog beginning with the article “Why We’re Here” talks of motivations of the occupations soon gained no less than 24,000 views sharing with the greater community what was happening.

2023 Takeover

In 2023, advancements in technology allow TCV to cover the Fanning takeover closer than ever before. Student journalists are constantly communicating via group text to cover developing stories. A website plugin to deliver live updates has been added to the website, as well as a breaking news ticker on the home page. Additionally, a print edition will be published next week containing many of the articles we have already posted online. Most of the time, your faithful TCV staff can be found working hard in the office at all hours of the day. Additionally, you may be able to find us in our satellite location, affectionately referred to as the “press box” on the second floor of New London Hall. You can also find us on Instagram at @the_collegevoice, where our social media managers are publishing shareable content multiple times a day. From live updates to daily recap articles, The College Voice is committed to keeping everyone informed.

Minnie Madden ’26

Ellie Wagner

Archives Liaison

Opinions Editor

Photo courtesy of Minnie Madden ’26

Photo courtesy of Minnie Madden ’26

Photo courtesy of Hannah Foley ’23
The Rhetoric of Refusal and Retaliation

Follow-up article to “The Rhetoric of Resignation and Resistance” and “The Rhetoric of Ruthlessness and Rebellion” by the same author

President Katherine Bergeron once again addressed the campus community in an email on March 1 at 10:23 a.m. She claims to have been “reflecting deeply on our current moment” and hopes to “speak candidly on two matters under intense discussion at the College.” Every past email from Bergeron has been the exact opposite of candid; guarded, avoidant, and insincere. Bergeron writes, “One [matter] has to do with the College’s and my own commitment to equity, inclusion, and full participation.” The phrase “has to do with” elicits a sense of vagueness and creates distance between Bergeron/the College and the “matter.” Her language is not exact; she dances around the true point.

Bergeron continues, “The other has to do with allegations about the culture of my senior administrative team. On the latter, I am grateful for the review that the Board of Trustees has undertaken, and I intend to take to heart and with humility whatever steps they may advise as a result.” The constant use of the word “allegations” to describe Former Dean of Institutional Equity and Inclusion Rodmon King’s truly candid letter to the Board of Trustees, in which he explicitly recounts Bergeron’s “bullying” of him and his colleagues, suggests that King’s word is not enough. Bergeron did not take King seriously when he warned her about hosting a fundraising event at a racist and antisemitic social club, and she still appears to doubt his expertise. “The culture of my senior administrative team” does not acknowledge that Bergeron is the one who fosters the culture. Does Bergeron actually feel grateful that the Board is supposedly investigating her leadership? Does she really “intend to take to heart and with humility whatever steps they may advise”? Is she confident that the Board is completely on her side and would never ask her to resign? Or would she actually resign with grace and humility?

“The question of our commitment to full participation, the past few weeks have thrown into sharp relief the ways our institution has fallen short of our collective aspirations,” Bergeron writes. Finally, she admits that Conn’s diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts fall short. “As president, I have been profoundly moved and humbled by the outpouring of frustration, anger, and disappointment from all quarters and by the overwhelming demand to bring our practices into alignment with our vision of Connecticut College as a more inclusive and equitable community,” she continues.

Has Bergeron been “profoundly moved and humbled by the outpouring of frustration” directly aimed at her? Photos of her face with the captions “Resign” and “Bergeron” are currently all over campus.

Bergeron takes the opportunity to promote the College’s Equity and Inclusion Action Plan but then recognizes, “The campus, national, and global contexts have now changed, and I am determined to redouble our efforts in transforming our practices, policies, and campus culture.” This is probably the most promising sentence Bergeron has written to the campus community thus far. The question is, will the administration follow through and practice what they preach? Clearly, Bergeron sees herself as part of the future of Conn College. Although, much of the student, staff, and faculty body does not.

Next, Bergeron lists the steps that “are now underway” to make a change at the College. In comparison with the Student Voices for Equity group’s own list of demands, Bergeron’s list falls short. She prefaxes her list, “Specifically, I have…,” taking full responsibility for the points to come.

First, Bergeron says she has charged the Vice President of Human Resources and the Interim Vice President of Finance “to review the personnel and operating budget of the Division of Institutional Equity and Inclusion so that we can ensure that the division is properly staffed and supported.” In contrast, SVE’s third demand reads, “Strengthen DIEI by guaranteeing salaries paid for all full-time professional staffers and increasing its staffing/programming budget to competitively hire and compensate additional qualified personnel, prioritizing transparency and the implementation of effective institutional spending reviews.” Bergeron’s statement appears weak and unpromising next to SVE’s strong and detailed demand.

The second item on Bergeron’s list reads, “Restructured student emergency funds in the office of the Dean of the College to better meet student needs.” SVE did not ask for the restructuring of student emergency funds, which are only available at the discretion of the Dean of the College. According to the College website, students can apply for emergency funds for “urgent needs, such as medical and dental emergencies not covered by insurance, prescriptions or medication, and some unanticipated events, including travel emergencies.” Right now, the focus should be on funding DIEI and repairing the several buildings on campus that are severely outdated, falling apart, and inaccessible.

Third, Bergeron writes that she has “identified new resources to support student programming for affinity groups and other student organizations in the Division of Equity and Inclusion.” What are these resources, and where will they come from? Simply identifying them is not enough. SVE’s fifth demand reads, “Establish greater and distinct resources for BIPOC, LGBTQIA+, undocumented, international, first-gen, disabled, and low-income students.” Students are not asking solely for resources to support affinity group/club programming; we are asking for resources for all marginalized students on campus.

Fourth, Bergeron claims to have “begun building a web presence about resources for BIPOC, LGBTQIA+, undocumented, international, first-gen, disabled, and low-income students so that students, faculty, and staff can more easily access these resources.” Bergeron’s response almost exactly mirrors SVE’s demand printed above, suggesting that Bergeron has, in fact, read their list. However, Bergeron focuses on a web representation of the current resources that exist, rather than promising to expand the available resources. This is just another performative action.

Bergeron’s fifth item is that she “approved immediate repairs of Unity House and charged Interim Vice President of Facilities Justin Wolfradt to work with the Director of Accessibility Services Jody Goldstein on addressing ADA compliance of Unity House and other DIEI spaces.” This corresponds with SVE’s sixth demand, “DIEI offices and affiliated identity-based spaces should be ADA-accessible and fully equipped to support the populations they serve.” These statements are similar enough to sound promising, although it sounds unlikely that the LGBTQA+ Center and Women’s Center will be relocated from Smith/Burdick House. Also, there is a difference between ADA compliant and ADA accessible; Bergeron does not promise to make DIEI spaces completely accessible.

Lastly, Bergeron claims to have “worked with the Dean of the Faculty Danielle Egan to identify potential interim leadership for the division of Institutional Equity and Inclusion.” Aside from her inconsistent capitalization, this claim is insufficient. SVE demands full-time professional staffers in DIEI. Further, the faculty outline their expectation that the new Dean of DIEI position is filled “with a tenured faculty member” in their letter with 162 signatures.

Above is the extent of Bergeron’s list. She writes, “Other demands will require further deliberation, and I will provide additional updates as information becomes available.” As you know, the Board of Trustees and I are prepared to make significant additional investments in our DIEI division, programs, and practices, informed by the campus community and outside experts so that those investments are impactful and lasting.” Once again, she justifies the use of “outside experts” and places herself in Conn’s future.

Bergeron does address SVE’s seventh demand: “The maintenance of a consistent curriculum and retention of the courses necessary to complete an education within Africana Studies, East Asian Studies, Hispanic Studies, Global Islamic Studies, Jewish Studies, and Arabic Studies.” She writes, “The Dean of Faculty is planning to engage those associated with Africana Studies, East Asian Studies, Hispanic Studies, Global Islamic Studies, Jewish Studies, and Arabic Studies to develop strategies for more robust and consistent course offerings.”

SVE’s fourth demand is the “immediate prioritization of hiring more BIPOC faculty and staff throughout all offices with the inclusion of mandatory DIEI sensitiv-

Article continued on page 21.
The Rhetoric of Refusal and Retaliation

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Article continued from page 20.

ity, mediation, and equity training." On this, Bergeron writes, "The Vice President of Human Resources is examining opportunities to resume training for staff and faculty on equity, cultural humility, and anti-bias. And the senior leadership team as a whole is discussing new approaches to search practices across all divisions of the College to improve our ability as an institution to hire and retain BIPOC faculty and staff." The passivity of "examining" and "discussing" does not provide a sense of urgency or any real timeline.

In her email, Bergeron fails to address SVE’s remaining demands: her resignation as president, an immediate presidential search "along with the restructuring of the review and appointment process for presidents," and "the implementation of SVE as a lasting body comprised of student representatives in communication with administration and the Board of Trustees." Bergeron cannot claim to speak candidly if she neglects the fact that the majority of the student, faculty, and staff body calls for her immediate resignation. She promises to write about the "culture of [her] senior administrative team," yet she never does.

The rising un-popularity of President Katherine Bergeron (KB) and the Board of Trustees has been brewing for the past month and finally boiled over with the fourth official Fanning occupation in Conn’s history taking place on Sunday night. The following day, crowds of students gathered outside of Fanning to support the lock-in and to protest against KB’s actions and to fight for more DIEI support and resources. The Students Voices of Equity (SVE) have stated that they will continue to protest until their demands are met. In the midst of the student activism, the Admissions Office is getting ready to bring in the new Conn class of 2027.

Despite the negative press that the protests have shined on KB and the College, the Admissions Office has been encouraging tour guides to be transparent towards prospective students and families about what has been going on. “I approached tours by being transparent about the situation on campus and staying ahead of what was happening by telling families what was going on at the beginning of tours,” explains tour guide Jocelyn Lewis ’24. “Most of the time the families don’t have additional questions but appreciate being told what is happening. The admissions office has not given us talking points and don’t want us to hide the situation.” In a previous The College Voice article, the Dean of Admissions and Financial Aid Andy Strickler was seen and quoted at the student protests on Monday, stating “I am a fervent purist when it comes to the constitution. This is what democracy looks like. I support the constitution when it comes to all sides. I’m a purist when it comes to free speech. This is democracy in action.”

Despite the lock-in, tours are still proceeding this week, but tour guides were given a choice to skip out on giving tours in solidarity with the students protests without any consequences. “Tours are still happening this week, but tour guides were told that we do not have to give tours if we don’t want to and there will be no consequences. We were still even paid if we chose not to give tours,” says tour guide Davi Schulman ’25. “From my understanding, a lot of tour guides are not working this week in solidarity with the movement,” says Lewis. Both Schulman and Lewis have opted out on giving tours this week.

One tour guide who wishes to be anonymous gave a tour on Monday during the Fanning lock-in. “I really went back and forth about whether I should give it. Contributing in any way I possibly can to this movement is really important to me, and I decided that giving a tour was a really good way to bring more outside awareness and publicity to what is going on within the Conn community.” In regards to how families were addressed about the protests they stated, “I was fully honest with them on what was going on campus. I showed them all of the chalking, posters, and flyers as we walked around campus. I shared my opinions on KB and how I thought it was best for her to resign. I also shared how proud I am to be in a community who is taking this event so seriously, and is working extremely hard to make meaningful change.”

In regard to if there were any changes to the tour, the only main changes were that the group could not go inside Fanning and the tour met at Cro instead of Horizon House due to the building being locked. “I walked them to the door of [Fanning] and let them take a look through the doors to see what was going on. They found it very exciting, and were happy to see the amount of support the movement had garnered. One family already knew classes were being boycotted as they had been following along online, and were very supportive of the movement.” When asked about how the prospective families responded to the protests, the tour guide responded that there were no negative reactions to what was happening. “[Families] found it very exciting, and were happy to see the amount of support the movement had garnered. One family already knew classes were being boycotted as they had been following along online, and were very supportive of the movement.”

Overall, every student shows solidarity with these protests in different ways. For tour guides, showing support could be to take off the rose-colored image that KB and the BoT have constantly pushed for Conn to look like. “I wanted to have the opportunity to show prospective students what is going on, as I am sure it is something that the President and BoT do not want. If I could push back against the administration and their policies even if it was in a small way, I wanted to.”

Want to Be a Camel? Camels Don’t.

Keri Krasnoff
News Editor

The rising un-popularity of President Katherine Bergeron (KB) and the Board of Trustees has been brewing for the past month and finally boiled over with the fourth official Fanning occupation in Conn’s history taking place on Sunday night. The following day, crowds of students gathered outside of Fanning to support the lock-in and to protest against KB’s actions and to fight for more DIEI support and resources. The Students Voices of Equity (SVE) have stated that they will continue to protest until their demands are met. In the midst of the student activism, the Admissions Office is getting ready to bring in the new Conn class of 2027.

Bergeron then writes, “Over the past few weeks, members of the senior administration have been in meaningful dialogue with many different groups across campus.” According to SVE, this statement is likely false. “[The dialogue] definitely hasn’t been [going on for] a few weeks, it definitely hasn’t been ‘meaningful,’ and we don’t think it has included ‘many different’ groups,” said a member of SVE. While it is possible that senior administrators have been in conversation with other students, no one in SVE has heard about these conversations. SVE also does not believe that Bergeron has “met individually with students,” as she writes in her email.

To conclude her email, Bergeron writes, “It is my sincere hope that these collective efforts, especially the current vigorous engagement of many members of the community, will help open dialogue, restore trust, and advance the work we need to do to create the Connecticut College we envision.” We have been doing the work “to create the Connecticut College we envision” for years, and especially within the last few weeks. It is time for Bergeron to do her part, meet student demands, and resign. We are waiting.

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February 25th

5:00 PM
SVE hosts organizational meeting with students in Cummings

February 26th

8:00 PM
Admissions Building deemed too risky for occupation

11:00 PM
Supply & Occupations teams for Becker and Fanning move in. Becker fails around 11 p.m. but Fanning is successful

11:30 PM
Students across campus drive, honk their horns, chant, and make a diversion from the occupation

February 27th

12:00 AM
Students are officially locked inside Fanning

February 28th

SNOW DAY

8:00 PM
The Into the Woods cast and crew declare they will not perform until the demands are met in their entirety, regardless of whether the occupation itself ends

8:00 PM
MOBROC holds concert in front of Fanning for occupiers and protesters, occupier plays guitar from inside

11:00 PM
Admissions Building deemed too risky for occupation
Connecticut College: A Week at a Glance

March 1st - 8:00 PM
SVE leads students on a walking testimony tour, stopping at Admissions, the President’s house, Blaustein, Cro, Becker, and back to Fanning
1:00 PM
Faculty and students meet between New London Hall and Fanning for a joint

March 2nd - 6:00 PM
SVE reads their response to the President’s email to kickstart two hours of powerful student testimonies in Evans Hall
9:00 PM
SVE meets to decide to continue to occupy Fanning beyond Day #5

March 3rd - 8:00 AM
CC Amaltheia wears jerseys supporting SVE at the ultimate frisbee tournament
2:30 PM
SVE sends email update encouraging clubs to host protest events while they focus on negotiations

March 4th - 5:30 PM
SVE hosts a celebration outside Fanning
9:00 AM
SGA president meets with Dean Norbert and Dean Arcelus, much progress made toward making demand working groups happen (to be announced soon)

8:00 PM
40 Thieves and Shaking Crab host fundraising events, including a MO-BROC show
Protesting Pups

In the thick of chants being yelled and signs being waved, a couple of four-legged friends hovered at the knees. While it was surely their owners who brought them, the dogs at the most recent protests in front of Fanning Hall have brought a smile to people's faces. Thank you to the goodest of doggies (and their owners) for joining the movement and bringing a little extra joy to these gloomy days.

If you have photos of a protesting pup not pictured, send them to thecollegevoice@conncoll.edu to be featured!