

4-8-2020

The Observer

Central Washington University

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Stay-at-home order affecting local businesses

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CWU connecting Alexa to canvas

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Senior athletes discuss returning next year

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Vol. 116 NO. 1 | April 8 - April 14, 2020

The Observer

By the students, for the students

COVID-19 update:

Where are we now?



Mariah Valles
Orientation Editor

A longtime and respected Kittitas County resident has died from COVID-19 complications, according to the Kittitas County Public Health Department (KCPHD). This is the first COVID-19 related death in Kittitas County. The person tested positive on April 3 and died at the University of

Washington Medical Center on April 5. "We know this person had friends and loved ones, a strong religious community, and is missed by many," KCPHD Health Officer Mark Larson said in a press release. No further information is being released about the individual out of respect for loved ones.

KCPHD launched a new data dashboard, displaying the COVID-19 outbreak in Kittitas County. As of April 8 there are

15 confirmed cases with a single death in the county. There have been 426 negative tests with 34 tests still pending.

With more than 8,600 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Washington, Gov. Jay Inslee's stay-at-home order has been extended until at least May 5. The order bans all gatherings and requires nonessential businesses to close.

Essential businesses include grocery stores, food banks, gas stations and other similar locations. The Centers for Disease

Control and Prevention now recommended everybody who leaves the house should wear a face mask.

"We have taken dozens of steps under my emergency powers to help people in this time – including moratoriums on evictions, mortgage forbearance, utility ratepayer assistance, unemployment extensions, flexibility on tax payments and cash assistance to families," Inslee said in a press release.

Some spring quarter fees waived

Bailey Tomlinson & Austin Lane
News Editor & Sports Editor

An email was sent to the student body from President James Gaudio detailing which fees the university would be waiving for the upcoming spring quarter. This information was sent out 11 days before the April 14 deadline for fees to be paid.

"We've been talking about fees for a long time ... with the goal of minimizing the amount of fees to the greatest extent possible," Chief Financial Officer and Vice President of Business and Financial Affairs and Board of Trustees Treasurer Joel Klucking said.

The email breaks down fees into categories of waived and continued.

Waived Fees

Fees that have been listed as waived are as follows:

The athletics fee, the Central Transit fee, the dining contract cancellation fee (for students who have purchased but won't be able to use a meal plan), the

housing contract cancellation fee (for students not residing in Ellensburg campus housing), the late payment fee, the late registration fee, the library fee, the parking fee, the online course fee and the wellness fee.

Continued Fees

Fees that will continue to be charged to students for spring quarter 2020 were broken into three categories as follows:

Student Services Fees

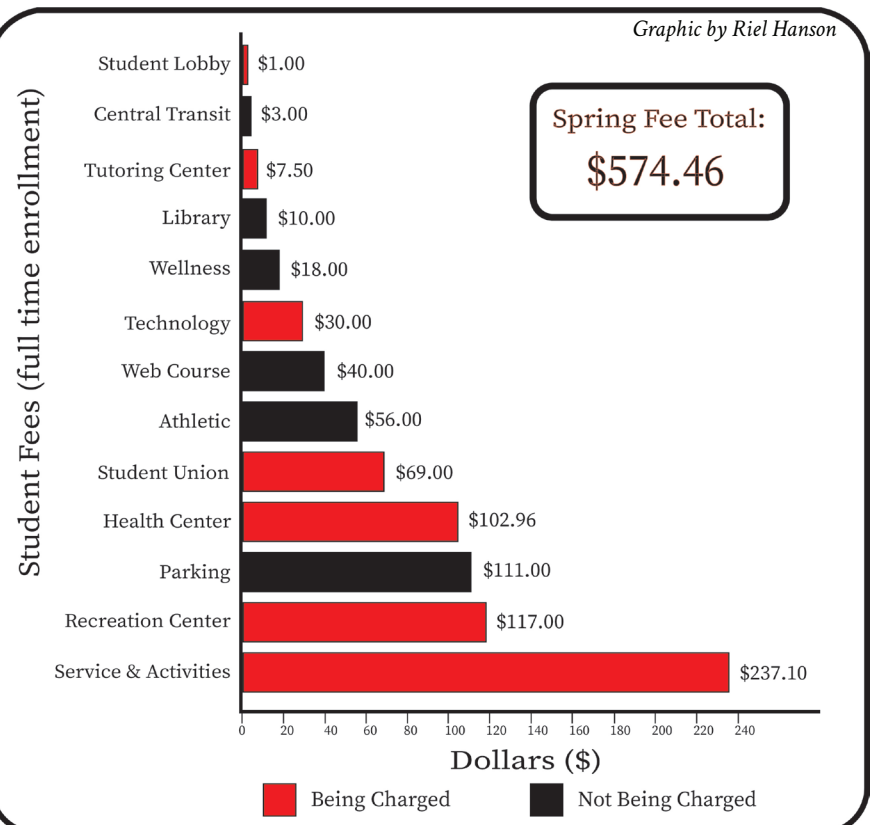
Student Health and Counseling Center Fee support important student services and will remain operational both in Ellensburg and in a web-based format.

Fees that Support Instruction

The Technology Fee will provide critical support for moving all instruction online.

Tuition Fees continue to be the same for online and in-person instruction.

Continued on Page 3



Observation Deck

Nicholas Tucker
Editor in Chief

What a time to take over the paper, huh? Here it is, the first issue of a redesigned paper both under my tenure as Editor-in-Chief and which has been designed entirely remotely. The staff has worked diligently to make this happen and keep the paper going, and none of it would be possible without the amount of dedication and innovation that they've shown over the past weeks.

The news goes on. Stories keep unfolding. Call it the hyper-romanticization of journalism, but I hope we can remind the public of what's still out there in our neighborhoods. I see the same view outside of my office window every day, and as I leave my house less frequently, it's easy for me to forget what's out there. It's easy to get into the pattern of friends existing through an instant messenger or a blurry video chat. Maybe it's just me, but reading the stories that my reporters have found has been a breath of fresh air. I'm reminded of how strong and caring this community is.

Optimistic words can't obscure the fact that this all really sucks. Big events of people's lives are going to be missed. Many "lasts" for CWU seniors passed by without us knowing. I didn't get to say good-

bye to my Palace coworkers before it closed and I know my Abuelita was looking forward to my graduation for a long time. Spring break, for many of us, didn't provide much more than a bit of time to be upset. We'll have to keep taking breaks for that here and there throughout the quarter, for the sake of our emotional well-being. It wouldn't be right to try and convince ourselves that everything is fine. But for myself and the staff of The Observer, passion for the craft can't be the only thing driving us right now. We have a job to do, and we'll do it.

People can't get enough accurate and up-to-date information right now, and for the residents of Ellensburg, the students of CWU living all over the world right now and those connected to them, The Observer is here to provide what we can. We're adapting to our changing environment the same as everyone else, but the news never stops, and what we can no longer learn with face-to-face interviews dressed professionally, we'll learn over the phone in our pajamas.

My goals for the upcoming quarter haven't really changed. Over the past few years, The Observer has seen an incredible amount of growth as a publication, and I will be striving to solidify that growth so it doesn't slip away with the changing of the guard after many of us grad-



Apollo Whyte/The Observer

uate. I don't have much to worry about, as much of our current staff will still be there to keep the paper going and improve it in ways I can't imagine. However, it's best that they don't have to start from scratch.

We've got a rough quarter ahead, and probably a rough many months

beyond that. We'll keep living and doing our jobs though, to the best of our ability, knowing that we have each other to lean on. The story of history shows that the darkest times often lead to the finest hours, so let's get through them and meet for a drink on the other side.

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Editorial Policy: The Observer is a public forum for student expression, in which student editors make policy and content decisions. The mission of The Observer is two-fold: to serve Central Washington University as a newspaper and to provide training for students who are seeking a career in journalism. The Observer seeks to provide complete, accurate, dependable information to the campus and community; to provide a public forum for the free debate of issues, ideas and problems facing the community at large; and to be the best source of information, education and entertainment news. As a training program, The Observer is the practical application of the theories and principles of journalism. It teaches students to analyze and communicate information that is vital to the decision making of the community at large. It provides a forum for students to learn the ethics, values and skills needed to succeed in their chosen career. If you have questions or concerns, email us at cwuobserver@gmail.com.

ASCWU calls for Trustee Resignation

Bailey Tomlinson
News Editor

“We need to set our concerns about employee welfare aside and maintain the priority of university welfare,” said Board of Trustees (BOT) member Gladys Gillis at the livestreamed March 31 meeting.

The comment was made following discussion of CWU’s financial resources diminishing in the foreseeable future. Joel Klucking, the BOT treasurer, explained that normally, CWU is “effectively a breakeven institution,” depending on student enrollment and staff employment numbers. This can bring challenges, such as a financial deficit if enrollment drops significantly.

Josh Hibbard, vice president of enrollment management, said enrollment for spring quarter was facing a drop for what is projected, but that he can’t predict how severe it will be.

Klucking said over the past 29 years, CWU has been building a reserve fund. The university may choose to use funds from that reserve to cover expenses that are difficult to cut, such as infrastructure and staff pay.

According to Klucking, 80% of the university’s expenses goes towards staff pay. All staff, including “most” student employees, have remained employed by the university.

Gillis, who was appointed by Gov. Jay Insee to serve on the Board of Trustees in 2019, encouraged her fellow BOT members to cut university costs by laying off employees.

“We’re two months into this problem in Washington state,” Gillis said. “And ... I was astonished to hear that we haven’t started taking firm action, that we have not laid off people.”

Gillis said the Washington state un-

employment program would support laid off employees, and that the Washington Apple Health program would provide them with medical insurance during any time they spend unemployed.

“There are payroll protection efforts ... open to replacing salaries up to \$100,000. So it isn’t like you’re asking people to go home and live on \$700 a month,” Gillis said. “I think Washington state needs to be applauded, and we need to set our concerns about employee welfare aside and maintain the priority of university welfare.”

Gillis reiterated a need for “firm, clear leadership,” and that action must be taken as soon as possible for layoffs to be an effective means of cutting costs.

“We do not have time to call everyone into the room and discuss the actions that we need to take, because these actions that we take are still reversible. But getting your rainy day fund back, or replacing funds that have been spent, that is not reversible behavior,” said Gillis. “We have a mission redefinition in front of us right now. We’ve long known the mission of the university. In a state of emergency that we’ve found ourselves in, I think the mission redefinition is to stay alive as a functional enterprise.”

President James Gaudino said that prematurely laying employees off would not leave the university with the amount of staff it needed to effectively close down. However, he added that moving forward it would be something the university would have to think about.

The decision was made by the board to meet again mid- to late next week to assess options and plans going forward.

On April 2, In response to state-

ments made by Board of Trustees (BOT) member Gladys Gillis calling for the university to lay off employees as a cost saving measure, ASCWU members have signed a letter rejecting her statements. The letter also requests her immediate apology and resignation as a BOT member, and requests that CWU “maintain continuous employment for all CWU employees.”

“In these hard times, we must do everything in our power to ensure the well being, financial security, and overall safety of everyone in the CWU community,” the letter states. “These kinds of actions are counterproductive to the mission of Central Washington University and would have disastrous effects on our community.”

Hours earlier, an email signed by both the chair and vice chair of the BOT was sent to the student body stating that the board values CWU’s staff and students and will act “responsibly and in concert with the values of this great institution.”

The letter acknowledges the option to utilize a cash reserve that the university has been preparing over the past 29 years.

“These are difficult times, and the university should use all of it’s available resources to support university employees, students, and the community,” the letter states.

The email states that despite the measures the university has already taken to reduce spending, they are not enough to remain financially sustainable.

“We find ourselves, like so many other public institutions, in the position to examine reduction in support areas, and exploring all viable options to reduce costs,”



Board of Trustees member, Gladys Gillis

the email states.

The letter does not accept Gillis’ statements as viable options for the university at this time.

“[Gillis’] statements are not how the university should be addressing the COVID-19 pandemic,” the letter states. “As the largest employer in the region, Central Washington University has an obligation to the community, employees and it’s students to provide continuous employment to all of it’s employees.”

University announces some fees waived

Continued from Page 1

Fees linked to Contractual Obligations

The Student Union and Recreation Center Fees support bonds that were used to build the facility and cannot be waived.

The Service and Activities Fee supports bonds that were used to construct student mandated projects, as well as paying for direct student services and student programs.

Construction on some buildings, like the SURC, isn’t paid for up

front according to Executive Vice President of ASCWU Alejandro Alcantar. It’s paid over time with bond payments. This is why there’s a legal obligation for CWU to still charge these fees.

Alcantar also addressed the distinction between voluntary and mandatory fees. He specified that voluntary fees are not voluntary in the most literal sense. It means they are not fees required by the state. The SURC fees are voluntary fees in this sense.

Students who may not be able to pay their fees can apply for a fee waiver from the Dean of Student Suc-

cess’ office, which Alcantar says are evaluated on a case by case basis.

“I think they anticipated that a lot of students were going to request fee waivers, especially since they weren’t going to be on campus,” Alcantar said. “I think the university made the right choice in waiving a lot of the fees already.”

Klucking said that waiving fees may put departments into difficult situations. For the athletic department, much of the money has already been spent on uniforms and equipment, and it could face a \$400,000

deficit this year.

“When we charge a fee, it’s because we have a cost, and because we’re providing a service,” Klucking said. “And just because a student can’t participate ... doesn’t mean we don’t have all the costs associated with that.”

Some fees were not addressed in the email, such as the grad fee. ASCWU President Jasmin Washington posted to Twitter on March 25, “Your grad fee is allocated to the processing, printing and mailing of your diploma, so this fee does not include commencement and is not refundable.”



Teagan Kimbro/The Observer

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Comprehensive sex ed bill passes

Abigail Duchow
Senior Reporter

Gov. Jay Inslee signed a bill on March 27 requiring comprehensive sexual education to be taught in public schools in the state of Washington.

Requirements of SB 5395

According to the bill, new sex ed curriculum must be evidence-informed and medically and scientifically accurate. The bill also states that the curriculum taught must be age-appropriate.

The bill requires that public schools teach sex ed that teaches students how to prevent sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and unintended pregnancies. The bill also requires instruction that promotes healthy relationships, identifies and responds to sexual violence and emphasizes the importance of consent.

The bill states abstinence cannot be the only method taught for preventing STDs and unintended pregnancies. Abstinence can be taught as a method of prevention, along with teaching about contraceptives and other disease prevention.

Schools will be able to choose which curricula they feel is best for their community. Schools will also have the option to develop their own curricula, as long as it meets the requirements of SB 5395.

Parents and guardians can choose to have their children excused from any sex ed taught in school. They may also

request to review the curriculum that is going to be taught.

ASCWU Lobbyists

Zackary Turner, ASCWU VP for Legislative Affairs, has lobbied for the bill in Olympia from January until March. Turner thinks the bill will be helpful not only for grades K-12, but for everyone, including college students.

"The way we think it impacts higher education is by teaching consent and healthy relationships," Turner said. "We really believe that our students need to know about these things by the time they get to college. It's something that will really help lower numbers of sexual assault and domestic violence on campus."

Turner shared his experience with sex ed when he was in middle and high school.

"I'm a gay man. When I was in middle school, my sex ed teacher told me that gay people don't exist ... when

she would address what sex for queer people looks like, she would make a lot of homophobic remarks." Turner said, "I think that was really not helpful for me as

a person, being told that being gay wasn't normal."

Turner said that his school district was among those that don't teach students about condoms, abortions and other contraceptives and safe sex practices.

ASCWU Legislative Liaison Nancy Canales-Montiel also lobbied for the bill. She thinks the bill will help with keeping people safe and informed on how to stay healthy.

"Studies show repeatedly that sexual assault, violence and other things like teen pregnancy are linked to poor or abstinence-only sex education," Canales-Montiel said. "By implementing this and teaching children at a young age, they will grow up with a safer and healthier culture."

Canales-Montiel said although these conversations may be scary for some, they are necessary for having a healthy and informed society.

"It's medically and scientifically accurate data that we must teach our society and our people so that we can live healthier lives," Canales-Montiel said. "I don't see a difference between a doctor telling you 'eat healthy and exercise everyday' and a sex ed teacher telling you to use preventative methods."

I don't see a difference between a doctor telling you 'eat healthy and exercise everyday' and a sex ed teacher telling you to use preventative methods.

- Nancy Canales-Montiel,
ASCWU Legislative Liason

Grades K-3 Curriculum

According to the Washington Office of Superintendent of Instruction (OSPI), curriculum for K-3 will not involve anything about sexual contact. Schools will be required to provide K-3 social emotional learning (SEL). SEL will teach students how to build skills in managing emotions, setting goals, establishing relationships and making decisions that support success. According to the OSPI's website, most districts are already providing SEL.

Grades 4-5 Curriculum

According to OSPI's website, grades 4-5 will be taught about affirmative consent and bystander training. Affirmative consent is suggested to be taught in the context of hugging or horseplay. Bystander training will teach students how to safely intervene when they see sexual harassment or other similar instances. HIV and STD prevention must be taught starting no later than 5th grade. By the 2022-23 school year, public schools will be required to teach sexual education no later than 5th grade.

Grades 6-12 Curriculum

Beginning in the 2020-21 school year, public schools will be required to teach 6th-12th grade students about affirmative consent and provide bystander training. In these grades, teaching about affirmative consent is suggested by OSPI to be focused on hugs, physical and sexual contact. STD prevention will also be taught.

Stay home order impacts local businesses

Mitchell Roland
Senior Reporter

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues, Ellensburg businesses are learning to adjust to a new reality.

Gov. Jay Inslee issued a stay at home proclamation for the state on March 23 in an effort to prevent the spread of the virus. Under the proclamation, all nonessential businesses must temporarily close unless their employees can work remotely.

Restaurants in the state have been closed since March 15, when Gov. Inslee announced the temporary shutdown of bars and dine-in restaurants.

Zoe Zhuo, the owner of Oyama Japanese Steak House, said the shutdown is having a major impact on her restaurant.

"We've been closed for two weeks. There's no income. This is our livelihood right here," she said. "You feel lucky to own your own business until a situation like this."

Zhou said she worries about more than just the financial impact of the virus. Zhou said an Oyama employee had rocks thrown at them while grocery shopping and were told to "go home."

"It scares me," she said. "We have an additional concern on top of the virus."

Zhuo said that the safety of her employees is most important during the pandemic.

"The virus does not pick race," she said.

Zhuo said Oyama closed the day Gov. Inslee banned dining in at restaurants. While Gov. Inslee's declaration still allows takeout and delivery, Zhou said closing altogether was easier.

Zhou said she's heard restaurant owners



Casey Rothgeb/The Observer

Signs like the one at the Dakota Cafe can be seen in windows around Ellensburg following the Stay Home, Stay Healthy order.

who remained open for takeout have had little business, meaning it might not be financially worth it to partially reopen. If the ban on dine-in continues, Zhou said she will have to consider all options, including reopening for takeout.

Since the closure began, Oyama's phones have rung often, which Zhou said gives her hope that "[they] might have some business there if [they] end up coming back."

Molly Jones, the executive director of the Ellensburg Downtown Association, said this is uncharted territory for business owners.

"We are all going through this for the very first time, so the impacts will be seen as we move forward," she said. "Obviously, the closing of a small business has immediate impacts on the business owner's livelihood, as well as the staff."

Jones said CWU students leaving will have a large impact on Ellensburg businesses.

"Students are an important part of our local economy as they shop and dine downtown, so we understand that with them being home or unable to venture out, we will see the sales they normally drive struggle to become a reality this year," she said.

Jones recommended people shop online, order takeout and purchase gift cards as ways to support businesses currently closed.

"Share a throwback picture of you at that location to promote them, or let them know you appreciate them with a nice

message," she said.

Jones said the more people follow the stay at home order, the quicker businesses can reopen.

"We need everyone who can stay home, to stay home so we can get back to business sooner," Jones said.

The uncertainty in the situation is what worries Zhou.

"It's scary at this point," she said. "Not knowing when we can come back is the big issue right now."

Even if Oyama were to reopen during spring quarter, Zhou said with less students, they would be without a large portion of their customer base.

"A lot of my clientele are the students and professors and parents visiting," Zhou said. "There's a big difference with students being gone."

You feel lucky to own your own business until a situation like this.

- Zoe Zhuo,
Oyama Owner

How students are staying active

Amy Morris
Scene Editor

With gyms and the rest of the CWU campus closed, students have to find other ways to work out. Whether it's doing crunches, going for a run or doing yoga, getting a workout in has its benefits.

Caitlin Wilhelm, a sophomore majoring in business, thinks it is very important to attain a physical regimen, especially when having to stay at home.

"Getting outside and moving your body in some way is really important," Wilhelm said. "Even if it's not a full-blown workout with weights and gym equipment because a lot of people don't have that now."

Wilhelm said she does a lot of different workouts at home such as boxing, lifting weights, yoga, pilates and stretches. Being cooped up inside isn't great on someone's mental health and getting a workout in can help, Wilhelm said.

"I try to work out for my mental health and my anxiety," Wilhelm said. "That's kind of why I work out but also just to keep

my sanity in this insane time right now. Just to have endorphins flowing and just to feel good."

The biggest benefit exercise provides is maintaining overall health, according to Drew Moore, a senior majoring in clinical physiology.

The more sedentary a person is, the higher risk they have of increasing their chance of getting a respiratory disease, infection or risking their own cardiovascular health.

If someone is not staying physically active, they are not moving their body and their blood is not going to be flowing as much, according to Moore.

Even though people are supposed to stay inside for the majority of time, going outside for a run can still be beneficial, Moore said.

"You can still go on runs, you can still workout outside in the park and everything," Moore said. "If you need some sunshine, open your door, open your window and look outside for a little bit. Make sure you are staying healthy and active."

Another big thing is it can be easy to get depressed when staying cooped up in your house for long periods of time, according to Moore.

"Some people who are really going through it with their families who may have [COVID-19] or their families who have small businesses who might end up going under because of this could be stressing out or [they] could get anxiety about that," Moore said.

Weightlifting or finding other forms of exercise could help with releasing tension built up from stress. Moore said fiddling with things around the house to work out with can be effective.

"The other day I was doing curls with my chair," Moore said. "The best way to do it is understanding that if I'm lifting it further away from the center of mass it's going to be heavier than if I am lifting it right at the center of mass."

Moore said since the stay-at-home order has been in place, he has been working out a lot more.

He used to be on a very strict exercise schedule with work and classes but now has more time to fit in yoga and other exercises he wouldn't normally do. Yoga helps a lot with mental health, physical



Graphics by Riel Hanson/The Observer

health and staying mobile, Moore said.

"[I] wake up in the morning, do some yoga, eat some food and maybe in the afternoon watch a movie and do another workout and the rest of the night I'm just chilling," Moore said.

The more someone stays sitting down, the worse it's going to be on their joints, Moore said.

According to Moore, if you're standing and playing video games, it's a lot better than sitting because if you're sitting you are not weight-bearing.

"I love video games just as much as the next person... if I'm going to be out there playing video games hours on end or watching movies ... I need to make sure my body has been moved at least for thirty minutes, hopefully an hour, before I am going into those activities where I'm sitting [for] hours on end," Moore said.

Tim Burnham, a professor of clinical physiology and the director of exercise science, said the number one benefit of trying to get some exercise at home would be the psychosocial benefits, which is how people interact.

Under that psychosocial category is a reduction in stress. Exercise is very effective in reducing someone's stress and improving their mood, according to Burnham.

A person is going to feel more energy when they work out, Burnham said. There is evidence it can decrease anxiety and depression as well.

"So all those things taken together are going to improve somebody's quality of life. So I think ... improvement in ... mood and a decrease in stress and ... in depression and things like that. I think that's really beneficial right now," Burnham said.

Exercise can have an influence on your immune system as well.

COVID-19 can cause someone with a compromised immune system to have a more complicated outcome, according to Burnham.

If someone does low to moderate levels of exercise, both in duration and intensity, it will improve someone's immune function and they'll be better able to repel viruses, according to Burnham.

On the other side, if someone works out too much then their immune system will decline and they are more likely to get sick, according to Burnham.

Another benefit of working out is cognitive function.

Exercise independent of everything else keeps the brain and people's thinking abilities in top function, according to Burnham.



Different activities

- Yoga
- Running
- Weights
- Pilates
- Boxing
- Bicycling

Different exercises

- Crunches
- Squats
- Lunges
- Plank
- Burpee
- Push-up



Out for Delivery: Where do we eat now?

Written by Nicholas Tucker

April 8, 2020

Designed by Bekah Blum

In mid-March, Gov. Jay Inslee announced the prohibition of in-person dining at restaurants across the state. The effects of this order on the \$13.5 billion dollar industry have yet to be fully seen, but with over 300,000 employees potentially affected, Washington's restaurants have had to adapt quickly.

"I didn't really believe it at first," Mario Alfaro, owner of The Red Pickle said.

Due to the transition to delivery orders, The Red Pickle had to temporarily lay off many of their employees. Alfaro said he is looking forward to when the order is lifted and he can hire all of them back again.

In addition to affecting the number of customers The Red Pickle gets, the order has had an effect on the supply side of business as well. Dominique Addison, The Red Pickle's head chef, said the order prevented the restaurant from getting the locally-grown microgreens and other produce they use.

"It just gave our food a connection to the community and gave a punch to the taste. We've had to go to other suppliers for now but we're looking forward to when we can go back to getting things locally," Addison said.

The change of ingredients hasn't kept The Red Pickle's most loyal customers from enjoying their food. Addison said they still get large orders to feed families, including one which had a meal delivered from Ellensburg to Seattle. The Red Pickle is currently open on most days from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m.. However, according to Dante Palmisano, one of the two owners of Ano Delivery, on Friday April 3 The Red Pickle closed at 5:30 p.m. due to the sheer amount of orders they received throughout the day.

The Red Pickle has been working closely with Ano Delivery throughout the shutdown. Ano was started by two CWU students last year, Palmisano and Juan Zamorano, who have seen their business booming recently.

"Our goal for this year was to be averaging 30 deliveries [per day]," Palmisano said. "The past two weeks, we've been averaging 30 to 40 a day, and then we hit 50 on Friday."

Since the shutdown, the two students went around Ellensburg to different restaurants, asking if they would be interested in a partnership. While many of their app-based competitors have a limited radius of operation, Palmisano and Zamorano say their willingness to deliver anywhere has given them a great increase in business, and that they regularly drive to Yakima and Cle Elum to bring customers the Ellensburg cuisine they enjoy.

"There's this blind guy that we deliver food to and he got the chicken and waffles from The Red Pickle, and he explained exactly what was going on the whole time he was eating it," Zamorano said. "He was like 'the waffles and the syrup man, holy shit!' telling us both on separate times about his experience."

Since the COVID-19 outbreak, Ano Delivery has implemented multiple measures to keep themselves and their customers safe. They have encouraged their customers to use contactless payment, using services like Cashapp to avoid the potentially risky exchange of bills, and have also begun wearing masks when delivering to those in at-risk populations.

Some Ellensburg restaurants haven't had to adapt their businesses much to keep their operations going. Josie Williams, owner of Campus U-Tote-Em, always wanted a bigger dining area. The lot that Campus U-Tote-Em is on doesn't have enough space for expansion, which disappointed Williams until she heard the announcement from Gov. Inslee.

"80 percent of our business goes through the drive-through anyway, so we were really lucky that we didn't have to change too much," Williams said.

This means Williams has so far been able to keep her staff employed. However, she said she understands the impact that the shutdown is having on other restaurants in Ellensburg, and has been making a conscious effort to patronize their fellow local businesses more often.





“

There are restaurants that me and my husband had never eaten at before the shutdown,” Williams said. “But many of them don’t have a drive-through and are having a rough time, so we’re just trying to give them our business whenever we can.

”



'Alexa, Open Canvas'

Photo by Amy Morris/ *The Observer*

This Alexa device is one of prototypes that has the Central connect feature enabled. This device was used for testing to make sure the Central connect feature worked properly. A group of five computer science students worked on this project.

Amy Morris
Scene Editor

Envision being able to log into Canvas without having to lift a finger. Imagine having all of CWU's events and clubs listed to you with just one command. Well, this will soon be a reality with a special Alexa device.

A group of five computer science seniors have been working on this project. While creating this special Alexa device may seem like a challenge, the computer science students did it in 10 weeks.

According to Emily Bodenhamer, one of the students working on the project, the purpose of having a special Alexa device is to make it easier for first year students to navigate campus and their classes.

While the initial budget for the project was \$500, the students only used around \$50-60 total.

The device is finalized for the student's project but it will still take around 2-5 years for CWU to implement them.

The students are now handing off the Alexa device to the business department for further testing and implementation, according to Riley Kral, one of the students on this project.

The Alexa device will first be implemented in Dugmore Hall but the final goal is to have Alexa devices placed in all dorm rooms.

When a computer science student becomes a senior, they have to do a Capstone project, which is a big project requiring work for two quarters.

The Alexa project was first introduced by Andreas Bowman, the vice president of operations. He wanted CWU to be more voice accessible.

"I mean, you are paying so much in tuition, you want [administration] to do something good with it," Bodenhamer said.

The students were assigned the Alexa project the last two weeks of the fall 2019 quarter.

At that time, they were just getting a basic idea of what Amazon products they were going to use.

The students officially started working on the project in the beginning of winter quarter. That is when they started doing all the coding and talking

about all the design aspects. The first step in creating the special Alexa device was doing the front end and the back end development.

The front end is just where you ask Alexa questions and the back end means Alexa will process the question to be able to answer it.

Bodenhamer said they wanted to start with the easier things first, so the next thing they did was implement web scraping.

When putting the information in the database the first things that were inputted were building hours and clubs. Those were the easiest to do, according to Bodenhamer.

Bodenhamer said after they got the easy stuff out of the way, they went into implementing Canvas and the calendar system the school uses.

The calendar system has any CWU event you can think of, such as Monday Movie Madness and PolyFest.

Implementing Canvas into Alexa took the longest. Bodenhamer said they had to make a website in order for the students to have their Canvas information saved in a database.

Alexa is already connected to the database, so when students use the website, they send all the information to the database.

What Alexa will do is connect to the database and search for the student's information. So students will say their CWU ID and their PIN.

Alexa will go to the database and find the student's ID and PIN.

Then Alexa will take that information and use it to get into the student's Canvas account and give information on their assignments and classes.

For students who may not know what to ask Alexa, on the website there is also a list of possible questions students can ask.

Bodenhamer believes moving towards becoming more technologically advanced and having voice-enabled devices will make it easier for students to use Canvas.

Tyler Huson, one of the students on the team, thinks there is a bit of a misconception with voice-enabled devices.

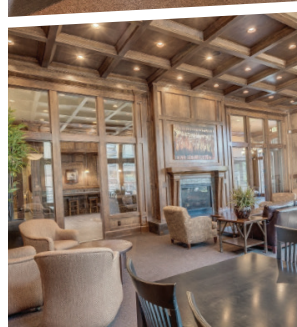
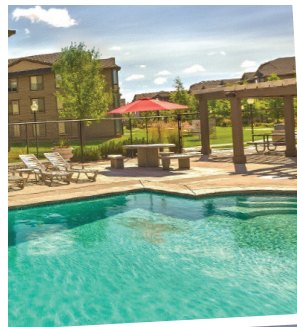
Huson said a lot of people believe the devices are recording at all times but that is not exactly the case. They are listening at all times and waiting for the right words to start recording, Huson said.

Krall, who worked on the Amazon web services backend, said they wanted to create a tool that made it easier for students to figure out information about the school.

To test the Alexa device, they went into Dugmore Hall and asked students to participate in the testing, according to Krall.

Students asked questions to the device to make sure it worked properly. They were able to connect to their own student accounts which was the authentication testing.

"We are very content with this product," Krall said. "We are actually very happy with how it came out. It kind of proves what we can implement for the school."



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CWU: Postpone commencement

Mariah Valles
Columnist

During freshman convocation, students were told the university would be there for them when they needed it. No matter if it took four years, five years or more, the university would be so proud to announce your name at commencement.

It's clear a commencement ceremony cannot happen under the current health orders put in place, but

CWU needs to stand behind the senior class of 2020. When the health orders are lifted, CWU must honor its graduating class with an in-person commencement ceremony.

Seniors will not get to spend their last three months of college surrounded by friends. They won't get to attend grad kick off or award ceremonies. For some, their final quarter of college will be spent in a bedroom, trying to figure out how to complete online

courses for the very first time, just in order to graduate.

CWU should not hijack such a monumental day from students.

As a first generation college graduate who should graduate Summa Cum Laude (3.9-4.0 GPA), it's deeply disappointing that the university would outright cancel such an event instead of postponing it. The health order cited for the cancellation of commencement doesn't say events can't be postponed or rescheduled.

While the university has said it's looking into ways to still honor graduates, anything less than postponing the in-person ceremony is not good enough. Washington State University has scheduled a virtual graduation ceremony in May and two possible dates for in-person ceremonies. CWU should follow suit.

The Associated Students of the University of Washington at Bothell (ASUWB) sent out a survey to students asking their preference about commencement plans. The survey listed different possibilities for commencement, making students a part of the process, a brilliant and respectable way to handle the situation.

CWU should be more like ASUWB and send out a survey to graduating seniors, requesting input and preference. How can such a decision be made without the voices of students being involved?

Even though commencement is a year-long planned event and there are dozens of small details, the university should continue to plan for it, even in such uncertain times. The university has said if a commencement ceremony is planned last minute, it won't be as extravagant.

But seniors don't need big-name speakers at commencement. We need an opportunity, when it's safe, to walk across a stage and hear our names be called, loud and proud for our friends and families.

We've earned it.



Say 'no' to N-95s: donate your masks

Aeryn Kauffman
Columnist

The best way to protect yourself from coronavirus is to stay at home. If you aren't in a position to do that, though, the next best way is to wear a face mask.

On April 3, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) issued a new recommendation for people to wear face masks in public. Before recent studies, it was believed face masks did little to stop the spread of coronavirus unless you were symptomatic. Now, we know that isn't true.

A "significant portion" of those with coronavirus can be asymptomatic, according to the CDC. In a March 31 National Public Radio (NPR) interview with CDC Director Dr. Robert Redfield, it was revealed up to 25% of people with coronavirus remain asymptomatic. For those who are symptomatic, they can spread the virus before symptoms show.

"Of those of us that get symptomatic, it appears that we're shedding significant virus in our oropharyngeal compartment, probably up to 48 hours before we show symptoms. This helps explain how rapidly this virus continues to spread across the country," Dr. Redfield said.

This is why the CDC advises us to use face masks when grocery shopping or, for those of us still required to, while working. The primary way the virus is spread is through respiratory droplets produced by coughs and sneezes, and face masks protect against this, according to Dr. Daniel Griffin at Columbia University.

However, there's one major problem with the public's need for face masks: medical staff need them much more. Medical masks are in extremely short supply. Some hospitals are so



Graphics by Teagan Kimbro/The Observer

desperate for supplies, one UK hospital received a donation of medical scrubs from a fetish site, MedFet UK. Another adult entertainment site, Pornhub, donated 50,000 medical masks to New York City nurses, doctors, paramedics, emergency medical technicians, fire inspectors and firefighters. Yeah, things are getting weird.

At the grocery store, I can't help but notice most people are wearing medical masks such as N-95 masks. We need to donate these to hospitals

so medical staff can treat critically ill patients. According to the Wall Street Journal, hospitals sanitize donated masks before using them, so even if you've used your mask already, it can still be donated for medical professionals who need them.

If you absolutely must go out, try your hand at using homemade masks, which are surprisingly easier to make than they seem. The CDC recommends multiple easy guides on how to make your own masks, including a "no sew"

method involving just an old T-shirt and some scissors.

In true World War I fashion, craftier Americans are sewing homemade masks and donating them in droves to hospitals around the country. One of my mom's friends is making masks for her friends and family. Even if you don't know how to sew, though, there are always bandanas and T-shirts. It's a simple way to make a difference to everyone around you if you aren't able to practice strict quarantine.

Track and Field athletes sent home from Alabama day before national championships

Austin Lane
Sports Editor

Seniors Erykah Weems and Samantha La Rue woke up early on March 11, got on a bus to SeaTac and flew to Birmingham, Alabama for the NCAA DII Indoor Track and Field National Championships.

The event never happened.

The national championships were scheduled to take place on March 13-14 featuring DII track and field athletes from all over the country competing for prestigious national placement. Weems qualified for the 60-meter hurdles race and La Rue qualified for the shot put.

After landing in Alabama, getting to the hotel, and even getting in some pre-meet preparation, the two women were notified they will not have the chance to become national champions.

On March 12, the NCAA announced they would be cancelling the remainder of all winter and spring championships.

Instead of competing in day one of the championships on March 13, Weems and La Rue flew back to Washington with feelings of confusion, disappointment and disbelief.

"My first reaction was actually that it was a joke," La Rue said. "I totally thought people were just pulling our chains... after that wore off I was just really, really sad and very worried about how we were able to get home."

COVID-19 has made an unprecedented impact on athletes around the world. All professional sports have been cancelled and many fans have been living life without anything to watch on TV for the past couple weeks.



Photo courtesy of Brittany Aanstad

Left to right: assistant coach Brittany Aanstad, senior Samantha La Rue, assistant coach Wyatt Meyring and senior Erykah Weems explore downtown Alabama, not knowing the National Championships were going to be cancelled.

While many athletes have more years of eligibility, senior athletes usually don't. Weems felt like the national championships were going to be her last chance at competing during an indoor season.

"It was a little emotional because it's my senior year and running that week was going to be my last time running indoor," Weems said. "I didn't really know how to

express my emotions but just hoped for the best."

With the outdoor season cancelled as well this year, both Weems and La Rue had to explore options for continuing to compete at the collegiate level.

Weems was granted an extra season of availability as she pursues her master's degree next year at CWU. Originally, she

was going to pursue her master's degree in 2021-22, but thought it would be best if she altered her plan and began pursuing it next year due to receiving an extra year of athletic eligibility.

However, La Rue said she can't compete next year.

"I know for me personally in my journey, I'm probably done. I probably have nothing else left for me to go back to," La Rue said. "Even though athletes have been granted that season back, I academically cannot make it happen so I know that I'm just done."

In a previous interview with The Observer, Weems said going into the event that as long as she trusts the process, she will accomplish all she wants to accomplish. Even now, after her season was cancelled, that belief never wavered.

"I 100% believe in the process. I believe that God has a purpose and he's opening doors and shutting others," Weems said. "I do believe there is a purpose and I still trust in the process to see where I will be next."

Also in a previous interview with The Observer, La Rue said before the flight to Alabama that her main goal was to walk away from the event knowing she did the absolute best she could.

"I had all these goals laid out and things I wanted to do and knowing that it can't happen... it's a really terrible feeling knowing I did have these plans and they were cancelled and it's not working out," La Rue said. "I just have to accept it and I can't put any regret on it because it's not my fault, it's just the way the world is turning right now."

Tweets from athletes



LeBron James
@KingJames

Man we cancelling sporting events, school, office work, etc etc. What we really need to cancel is 2020! 🙄. Damn it's been a rough 3 months. God bless and stay safe 🙏

10:24 PM · Mar 11, 2020 · Twitter for iPhone

223.8K Retweets 991.2K Likes



JJ Watt
@JJWatt

This tweet was ahead of it's time.



These are truly wild times.

11:54 AM · Mar 16, 2020 · Twitter for iPhone

10.6K Retweets 107.1K Likes



Shawn Kelley
@kelleytime27

Im booking all my flights for the rest of my life this week ! Finally the #coronavirus is giving back 🙏

6:19 PM · Mar 11, 2020 · Twitter for iPhone

1 Retweet 20 Likes

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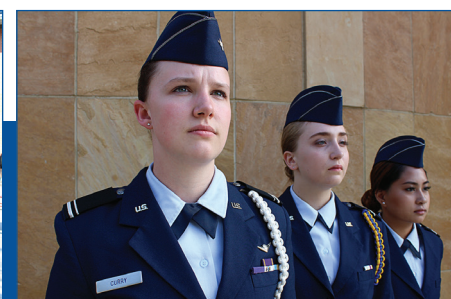
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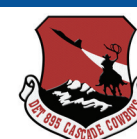
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Senior baseball players weighing option whether or not to return next year

Mitchell Roland
Senior Reporter

With their season ending early, some members of CWU's baseball team are still processing that they may have already played the final game of their collegiate career.

Their season came to an early end on March 12 when the GNAC suspended all spring competitions due to the COVID-19 outbreak.

Senior outfielder Jaden Hassell said players have reacted to the news differently.

"A lot of my teammates are just figuring it out," Hassell said.

The team learned their season was cancelled while preparing for a series against Montana State University Billings. Hassell said as players saw other leagues being postponed, the team realized the GNAC would soon be next.

"It felt inevitable," Hassell said. "I think we were all really crushed."

Senior outfielder Justin Hampson said when players received the news that their season was suspended, they were unsure of the next steps.

"We didn't know what to do, we didn't know how to react," Hampson said.

Hampson and Hassell both said the team was playing their best baseball of the season just before the cancellation. While the team had gotten off to a slow 6-12 start to their season, they split four games against Western Oregon, which ended up being their final series of the season.

Hassell said splitting a series against a team like that showed they were just starting to reach their potential as a team.

"We were coming into our own," Hassell said. "It's the one year where you want everything to go right."



Photo courtesy of Jacob Thompson/Thompson Sports

Senior Cameron McGrath runs towards first base after hitting a ball earlier this year against Western Oregon University. McGrath is one of 15 seniors on the baseball team that received an extra year of eligibility from the NCAA. The seniors get to decide whether or not they want to come back and play their final season next year.

With all gyms in the state closed for the foreseeable future, both players have found creative ways to stay active. Hassell said he has been running and filling buckets with water "just to lift something heavy."

Hampson said he has been doing home workouts and is just trying to stay as active as possible.

"It's real tough being locked up," Hampson said.

Hampson said he is still trying to figure out exactly how he feels about their season

being cancelled, and that he can't really put it into words.

But this season may not be the end to either athlete's collegiate career. An NCAA ruling gave spring sport athletes an extra year of eligibility, meaning both Hampson and Hassell could come back next year to play.

Hampson said he plans on returning to Ellensburg next season.

"I made a decision I want to come back next year and do it right," Hampson said. "It

doesn't feel like it ended right."

Hassell said he is still debating whether to return for another season and has yet to make a final decision.

The team is considering heavy decisions and everyone is trying to navigate what has become a new normal for athletes around the world.

"Sports teaches us we're going to get knocked down and struggle," Hassell said. "Sports has prepared us for something like this."

Opinion: With no other options, WrestleMania was a light in the dark

Austin Lane
Sports Editor

Yes, ESPN is constantly airing classic games. Yes, the NFL draft is still going to happen and is right around the corner. But there's something different about live sports.

There's something special about knowing you're reacting to a major event at the same time as millions of other people. Sure, rewatching the Cubs win the World Series in 2016 is something to watch. But I already watched it live, screaming at my TV even though I'm a diehard Mariners fan. Rewatching it now takes away that special feeling.

Needless to say, as a baseball fan and March Madness fan, I am going through basically a mid-life crisis.

There's something that helped out though in these tough times, even if for a little. And that was WrestleMania 36.

I usually don't watch wrestling anymore, but I used to with friends when I was in high school and I remember watching a little bit of WWE in middle school as well. Since around my senior

year of high school, I haven't kept up much. However, WrestleMania is one of the events I try to watch every year.

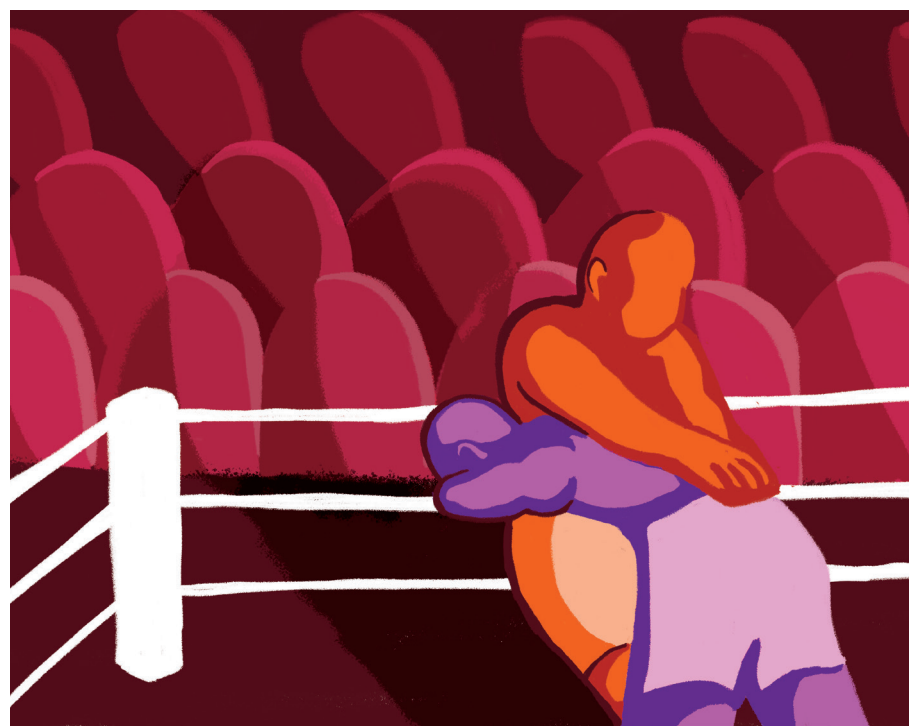
This year it was obviously different. Having no fans in the crowd was weird, but an obvious drawback that was going to happen with all the current circumstances.

It reminded me of the hopes I had for nearly all sports just a short three weeks ago. Nearly all sports fans were hoping that sports could continue at least on TV with no fans in attendance of MLB, NBA and NCAA basketball games. But as things became more clear, so did the decision to outright postpone sporting events.

So here we are, waiting until the day an MLB game is on our screen. Waiting for the NBA playoff seeding to be finalized. Hoping the NFL season isn't postponed.

I have come to accept that I will have to wait for professional sports to hit my airwaves again. Until that day comes, WrestleMania gave me everything I had hoped for.

The event gave me something to watch, laugh at, be amazed by and at



Teagan Kimbro/The Observer

the end of the day, be entertained by. It was a live sport in a time where live sports don't even exist. I didn't care about the crowd not being there, I didn't care that it wasn't actually in the Tampa Bay Buccaneers football stadium like it was originally supposed to be.

It entertained. The matches were fun to watch. The acting was good and

the directing was even better. People are going through tough times right now, and I think Wrestlemania did a good job of taking things off the mind of a lot of people, even if it was just for a weekend. And for a sports fan like myself, waiting for the day I can enjoy sports again, WrestleMania was a spark of light that shined brightest even on the darkest days.

“ I have come to accept that I will have to wait for professional sports to hit my airwaves again. Until that day comes, WrestleMania gave me everything I had hoped for. ”

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Here are our Staff Favorites:



AERYN RECOMMENDS **BETTER CALL SAUL (NETFLIX)**
GIRLS INCARCERATED (NETFLIX)
TREMORS (NETFLIX)



AMY SUGGESTS **LA CASA DE PAPEL/MONEY HEIST (NETFLIX)**

CASSIE BINGED **SCHITT'S CREEK (NETFLIX)**



BAILEY SUGGESTS **SWEENEY TODD: THE DEMON BARBER OF FLEET STREET (NETFLIX)**

ABBY RECOMMENDS **SOUTH PARK (HULU)**
BOJACK HORSEMAN (NETFLIX)
RICK AND MORTY (HULU)

MITCHELL SUGGESTS **JOHN MULANEY: KID GORGEOUS AT RADIO CITY**

AUSTIN RECOMMENDS **THE WALKING DEAD (NETFLIX)**



CASEY SUGGESTS **THE LEAGUE (HULU)**

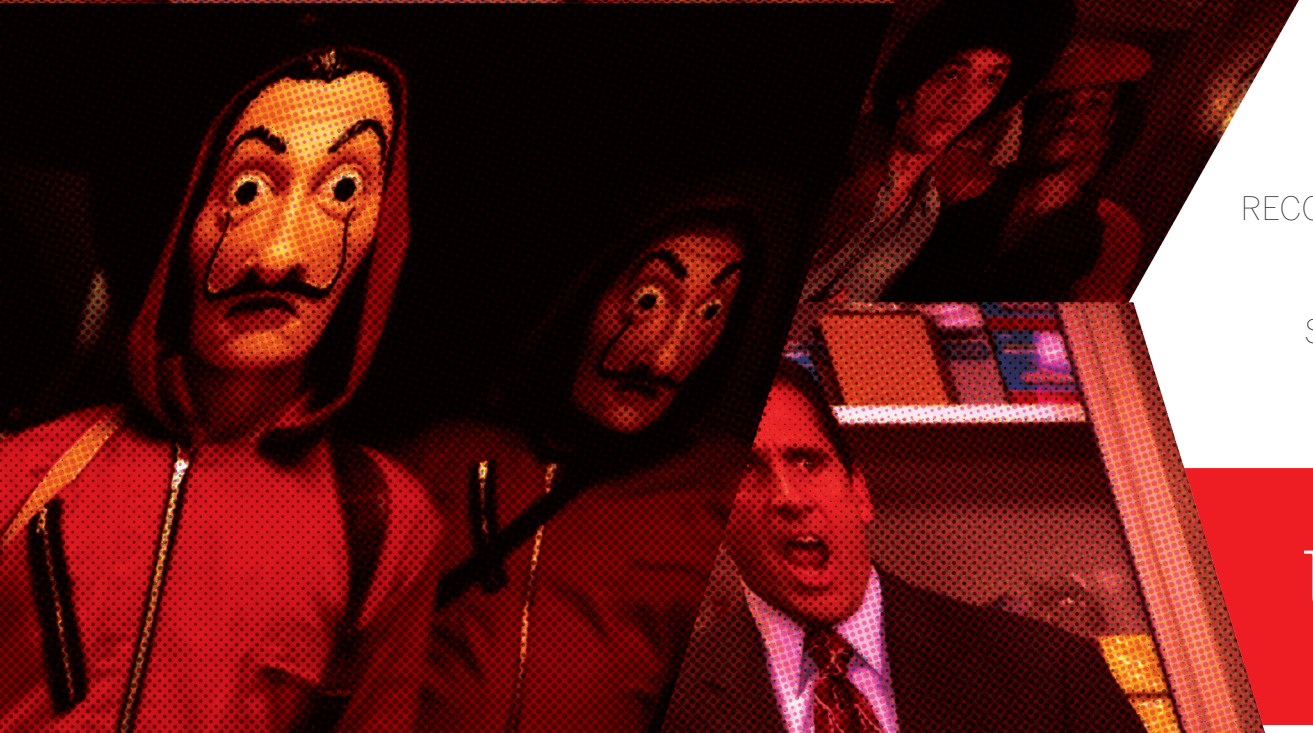
NICK BINGED **THE GET DOWN (NETFLIX)**

RIEL BINGED **MY HERO ACADEMIA (HULU)**

BEKAH BINGED **THE OFFICE (NETFLIX)**

MARIAH RECOMMENDS **90 DAY FIANCE (HULU)**

TEAGAN SUGGESTS **FOREVER (AMAZON PRIME)**
BIG MOUTH (NETFLIX)



Until next time