The News Record

BEST OF UC

2024 Edition

come alive!
Letter from the Editor

Within walking distance of campus, there is a unique blend of restaurants, small business and bars that make Clifton and CUF such a unique place to live and work. Whether you are looking for a smoothie shop, tattoo parlor, or late night bite, there is something for everyone.

Each year, the Bearcat community votes for the Best of UC to highlight and celebrate their Clifton favorites. The News Record is proud to present this year’s winners in the pages of this magazine who were all selected by you, our campus community.

Thank you for taking the time to vote over the past weeks and share your voice. Best of UC is one of my favorite magazines that The News Record creates every year because I love finding new places to grab dinner with friends or a new spot to study. I especially look forward to checking out this year’s winners and exploring everything Clifton has to offer. Though we cannot feature all of the amazing businesses near campus, I hope that you too can discover a new hidden treasure from this year’s Best of UC winners.

Best,

Allison Kiehl | Editor-in-Chief
HIV Testing &
Birth Control &
Preventive Care &
Gender Affirming Care &
IUDS/Implants &
Pregnancy Testing &
Vasectomy Services &
STI Testing/Treatment &
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2314 Auburn Ave, Cincinnati, OH 45219
Known for free hotdogs and popcorn, the ever-expanding Hall of Jame(son), and the strictest ID check in Clifton, Murphy’s maintains its top ranking as the preferred bar for University of Cincinnati (UC) students.

An intimate Irish pub settled in the middle of bustling Clifton Heights, Murphy’s has something for all to enjoy. For 55 years, the bar has been a staple in the campus area, and is still going strong thanks to its welcoming atmosphere and alluring appeal. With two bars, two patios and tables in every room, there is plenty of seating to ensure a comfortable experience for guests. To keep visitors entertained while they drink reasonably priced drinks, they offer 5 dartboards and a pool table. They also have multiple weekly events, such as karaoke on Mondays, a spelling bee on Wednesdays, trivia on Thursdays and a beat the clock double well drink special on Fridays.

Unfazed by the calendar, Murphy’s keeps its doors open 365 days a year until 2:30 a.m. every night. And as a gem for the trivia enthusiasts: Nirvana played there back in 1989. Murphy’s stands not just as a bar but as a living piece of Clifton history, inviting those 21 and up to experience the legacy that it has crafted over more than half a century.

The Upside Brew, located on 329 Ludlow Avenue, offers a cozy place for those who love a good coffee, as well as those who are looking for something a bit stronger.

Open 7 a.m. - 9 p.m. Sunday - Thursday and until 10 p.m. on the weekend, The Upside Brew offers comfort drinks such as tea, smoothies and coffees.

They also offer a plethora of food options including grilled cheese, flatbread sandwiches, avocado toast and more, all for a good price.

The “Coffee Classics” section of the drinks stay under five dollars. They also offer individual flatbread sandwiches for eight dollars or under, and the 12-inch sandwiches are no more than $12.

The variety and the prices are just one reason to go to the Upside Brew. One thing that makes this coffee shop so different from the ones closer to campus is the full bar, where you can get craft beer, wine and cocktails.

For art lovers, not only do they do latte art, but all over the coffee shop customers will see art pieces available for purchase, or they can bring their own art to be displayed and seen by those around the city.

The Upside Brew offers an inspirational space for all types of people. Whether it’s to grab breakfast or lunch, relax and study or grab a drink, The Upside Brew is the perfect place for students who want to explore other coffee shops.
HangOverEasy

HangOverEasy is an intriguingly fun breakfast spot that mixes that old diner feel with a modern and rejuvenated breakfast restaurant.

Located on West Charlton Street, dividing the two sides of Short Vine, HangOverEasy is the perfect place to both deal with your Sunday scaries and have a reliable breakfast to bring your parents too when they come and visit.

HangOverEasy is phenomenally close to UC’s campus making it the ideal breakfast place for students. Just take a short walk from campus and you are greeted with smells of breakfast foods being cooked up and your day will become undeniably better.

The staff are all very kind and foster an experience for the customer that is highly enjoyable. HangOverEasy offers a large menu, with options that range over nearly everybody’s palette. You want to wash your breakfast down with a refreshing beverage? HangOverEasy has you covered. Their menu includes a variety of different drinks that include a spectrum of different alcoholic drinks, coffees and milkshakes.

The Clifton is open from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. on weekdays and 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturday and Sundays.

Drunken Bento

Drunken Bento is a staple for any UC student for anything from a quick lunch in between classes to a perfect late-night bite. As a consistent Best of UC winner, Drunken Bento offers a wide variety of half price sushi rolls as well as savory appetizers, delicious Korean entrees and make sure to leave room for dessert – you don’t want to miss the fried ice cream.

Drunken Bento also offers a wide variety of specialty rolls with inspiration from Cincinnati such as the Bengal roll and McMillan roll, there’s no doubt there’s something for everyone.

Drunken Bento began their legacy in 2008, after founder and owner Inho Cha graduated UC with a degree in performing arts, Cha is originally from South Korea and planted his roots here in the Queen City after feeling like he found his home away from home. Since their foundation, Drunken Bento has been named Best Sushi four year in a row.

Drunken Bento is open seven days a week: Monday through Thursday from 11 a.m. to midnight, Friday from 11 a.m. to 1 a.m., Saturday from noon to 1 a.m., and Sunday from 12:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. They also have carry-out options available for a perfect on-the-go meal.
Bogart’s is a staple of not only Clifton, but Cincinnati as well. Providing live music for the past 119 years, Bogart’s is one of the most popular concert venues in the city.

Some notable performances that have grazed the Bogart’s stage include Kid Cudi, Twenty-One Pilots, Walk The Moon and more. Bogart’s has two levels inside the venue; a pit, and a balcony which is open for larger events.

Capacity sits at 1,500, and though the venue is not the largest, this makes concerts more intimate and personable. In Bogart’s career, the early years consisted of providing ground for many up-and-coming metal bands.

Today the venue is home to many different shows and truly has something for everyone. From smaller, more underground artists to a “Shrek” themed rave, there is always a show to go see and enjoy.

Tickets are usually affordable to college students, ranging from $25 - $48. Considering the venue is smack dab in the middle of the Short Vine District, it is also accessible to those who don’t have a car on campus opposed to other venues in the city.

The venue also offers a private event option that anyone can rent out the space for. Bogarts is an extraordinary venue that has proved itself year after year.

For the third time, Puff Smoke Shop has claimed the title of ‘Best Smoke Shop.’ The original location first opened on West McMillan Street in 2014, and has since expanded to eight locations in the greater Cincinnati area. Three of these locations are within walking distance to the University of Cincinnati (UC), two on West McMillan Street, the other on Short Vine Street.

Puff Smoke is open every day, from 10 a.m. to 11 p.m., and specializes in different styles of smoke-wear including glass pieces, gadgets, vapes, E-Juices and more. They pride themselves on stocking something for everyone who enjoys smoking. With one of the largest humidors in the city, Puff Smoke also carries cigars of varying calibers.

For those who look for an alternative for cigarettes, Puff Smoke offers vaping products, e-cigarettes and flavorful e-liquids. They also stock glass pipes, grinders and more, for the more traditional forms of smoking.
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Once again reigning supreme among UC students, Drunken Tacos has solidified its status as the go-to spot for Mexican food near campus.

After opening in 2017 and rapidly becoming a favorite restaurant on University Square, Drunken Tacos has upheld its reputation as the perfect place for a quick bite to eat, a cheap and delicious lunch or dinner or even for a snack after a night out.

Its popularity is clear, often seen in the form of long lines extending out the door. The restaurant’s notoriously quick service ensures that the bustling queues serve as a testament to its appeal rather than an inconvenience for their hungry patrons.

Their menu features authentic Mexican dishes and specialty margaritas, all at a reasonable price. Some of the most popular dishes include any of the 10 varieties of tacos (with a special shout out to the Baja Fish taco), the chips and queso and the loaded nacho appetizer.

The restaurant is open at 11:30 a.m. during the week and at noon on the weekends, closing at 11:30 p.m. Sunday through Thursday and at 12:30 a.m. on Friday and Saturday, making it a fantastic option for those late-night cravings.

The restaurant is located at 200 W McMillan St., conveniently close to UC campus and walking distance from a significant portion of student housing.

If you’re looking for a delicious Curry or Chicken Tandoori, Ambar India is the place to go. The UC community voted the restaurant “best indian food” in 2024. The restaurant has been a long-time favorite of the Clifton community, though prior to this year, its last appearance as a winner of the Best of UC poll was in 2011.

Ambar is located a few blocks north of the University of Cincinnati campus at 350 Ludlow Ave where they serve up a large variety of dishes including all types of samosas, rice dishes, and currys. Ambar is specifically known for its famous savory “tandoori” oven dishes. The restaurant also offers around 16 vegetarian dishes that are authentic to northern India, according to its website.

The restaurant is open for lunch and dinner on weekdays from 11 a.m. until 10 p.m. On Saturdays and Sundays, Ambar is open from 11 a.m. until 10:30 p.m. It offers takeout and dine in options, as well as catering services.
In its first-year of use after an $11 million renovation, MarketPointe was voted UC’s best dining hall. The dining hall got a top-to-bottom makeover that began in May 2022 and took just over a year of construction to complete.

Now, MarketPointe has a sleek and modern interior with all new cooking equipment, furniture, a roof, and finishes, according to a Board of Trustees report. Additionally, the dining hall now connects directly to Calhoun Hall, which has added convenience for on-campus residents.

MarketPointe features a wide variety of cuisines for students to enjoy including pizza, gyros, tacos, sandwiches and more. A fan favorite feature of the dining hall is the new pasta bar, which allows students to customize their noodles with different sauces and ingredients.

The dining hall is located between Calhoun Hall and Siddall Hall. It is open from 7 a.m. - 8 p.m. Monday through Friday and Marketpointe is open form 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. on the weekends for lunch.

Next to one of the most popular dining halls at the University of Cincinnati sits Calhoun Hall, voted this year’s best dorm. Calhoun Hall is home to the newest traditional-style suites that students can choose from at UC.

Inside the hall, there are single rooms, two-person rooms, and four-person rooms available for students, with a communal bathroom for students to utilize. Calhoun also has a modern, freshly furnished lobby and balcony where students can study and socialize with each other as a group or individually.

Not only is Calhoun Hall known for its proximity to on and off campus activities, but it is nothing but a short walk for students to travel to MarketPointe or any of the restaurants and businesses located on Calhoun Street and West McMillian Street.

With beautiful architecture and glass frames that provide one of the best views on campus, Calhoun Hall provides a sense of community and accessibility for students at UC.
The University of Cincinnati offers students the opportunity to partake in intramural sports through the Campus Recreation Center. One sport available is 11 v 11 intramural soccer. Intramural teams are a way for students to practice their favorite sports, while exercising and socializing in a fun and safe environment.

Intramural soccer in particular has gained traction in the last few years after the university’s cut of the collegiate sport.

In 2020 the Athletics Department announced that it would be discontinuing the men’s soccer program at UC due to budget implications. “This was a difficult decision, but one made with the long-term interests of UC Athletics at the forefront,” Director of Athletics John Cunningham said in a letter to the university.

Since then, intramural soccer has gained popularity as it is currently the only UC-affiliated soccer league. UC offers three leagues: fraternity, mixed gender and open. These leagues are open to students, faculty or staff with a valid and active membership to the Campus Recreation Center.

Since 1971, Langsam Library has been a crucial place for students to kill time in between classes, research and study. As the central library on campus, it contains more than 1.2 million titles to look through. Surrounded by all the books, the space is the perfect quiet spot to get in the study mindset. There are plenty of public and private study areas to do individual or group work, with the fourth floor being almost entirely dedicated to desks, tables and quiet areas, and the fifth and sixth floor offering first-come-first-serve study rooms.

For those in need of a quick pick-me-up during marathon study sessions, Langsam Library’s Starbucks cafe adds an extra layer of convenience whether it’s for a midday recharge or a late-night study fuel.

In terms of library services, there are Wepa printing stations and computer workstations available for visitors. The help desk also offers assistance with finding specific titles and resources, answering questions and checking out library materials. With the recent addition of accommodating areas such as a gender-neutral bathroom, a lactation room, a prayer and/or meditation room, and adaptive technologies for visitors with disabilities, Langsam Library is dedicated to being as versatile as possible.

These inclusive features, along with the assistance available at the help desk and the large amount of study spaces, reinforce its reputation as the best study spot on campus for all students, faculty and staff.
Jillian Hayes, senior forward for the women’s basketball team, has set many records personally and within the basketball program. In her 2022-23 season, she started all 30 games, averaging 12.8 points, 8.6 rebounds, and 1.6 steals.

The Cincinnati native led her team in starts, minutes, points, rebounds and steals. She started 78 consecutive games, dating back to her first start during her freshman year. Hayes posted 10 double-doubles during last season, the most by a Bearcat since 2016-2017. Hayes was also selected to the AAC Preseason All-Conference Second Team.

In her 2023-24 season, Hayes continued to break records. During the game against Howard University, Jillian surpassed 1,000 career points. Hayes is now the 30th player in program history to surpass 1,000 career points.

During each game, Hayes also continues to be a top scorer averaging at least 12.4 points a game. With seven blocks over the past three games against Texas Tech, UCF, and BYU, the forward has moved into third all-time at UC for career blocks.

Hayes also moved to fifth all-time at UC in career rebounds with 767 boards. She also places sixth overall in free throws (348) and eighth in steals. (173). Jillian Hayes is the only player in UC women’s basketball history to record over 700 rebounds, 300 free throws, 170 steals and 120 blocks in their career.

Corey Kiner was a star at local Roger Bacon High School. So, most Bearcat fans likely already knew his name when he announced he would transfer back home to Cincinnati to play for the Bearcats. He received little playing time his first season in 2022, carrying the ball only 81 times for 362 yards and five touchdowns.

This season, after the departure of former starter Charles McClelland, Kiner was given the keys to Cincinnati’s backfield. He took this opportunity and ran with it, rushing for over a hundred yards in his first two games to start the season, with a season-high 153 yards against Pittsburgh in Week 2.

Kiner would not find the 100-yard mark again until Week seven against Baylor. He ran for 129 yards on only 15 carries, good for 8.6 yards per carry.

He would finish off the season strong, going for over a hundred yards in three of his final four games, including leading the team to their first Big XII win, defeating Houston. In the game, Kiner ran for 129 yards on 23 carries and two touchdowns, accounting for almost a third of the team’s 368 yards.

Kiner is also renowned as a leader within the Bearcat locker room. He chose to stay with the Bearcats following the season amidst NFL draft hype and a mass exodus among the rest of the team. He also works with the university’s NIL collective Cincy Reigns, contributing to multiple charity efforts in the city.
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Then they won’t have to ask, “What’s new on campus?”

THE NEWS RECORD
BEST CORNER STORE

Joey’s Delicatessen

ALLISON KIEHL | EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Joey’s Delicatessen is UC’s most well-loved corner store located a few blocks south of the University of Cincinnati at 315 W McMillan Street. While the store itself is a small space, Joeys Delicatessen sells a wide variety of goods. This community staple offers snacks, frozen goods, nonalcoholic beverages, paper products and more. It has everything that college students expect from their local corner store: Convenience and reasonable pricing.

For many students, what sets Joey’s Delicatessen apart from the multitude of other Clifton corner stores is its extensive selection of alcohols, spirits, and cigarettes. It’s a go-to spot for students and residents alike because of its 250 options. The back room of the shop is dedicated exclusively to beer.

You can visit Joey’s Delicatessen seven days a week. Monday through Thursday, the shop is open from 10:30 a.m. to 11 p.m. and on Friday and Saturday, it is open from 10:30 to midnight. On Sundays, Joey’s Delicatessen is open from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m.

BEST SMOOTHIE SHOP

Smoothie King

EMMA HELBLING | FEATURES EDITOR

Smoothie King has taken the crown as the favorite smoothie stop for University of Cincinnati students. Located in the heart of Calhoun Street, the smoothie shop is a short walk away from many campus buildings, dorms and off campus housing – a perfect morning or afternoon “treat yourself” or pre and post gym stop.

And it’s no surprise why it’s a favorite. Smoothie King features an easy to navigate menu with different categories to help decided what kind of food fuel you’re looking for such as: Feel Energized, Get Fit, Manage Weight, Be Well, Enjoy A Treat and even Kids Blends, there is something for everyone on the seemingly endless menu. And if you don’t see what you like, there’s many different customizable options.

Not a smoothie fan? No problem. Smoothie King also features a new variety of eight smoothie bowls perfectly curated. Starting with an açai or Pitaya base and packed full of fresh toppings such as granola, chocolate hazelnut drizzle, shredded coconut and Goji berries.

With perfectly curated flavors and mixes that keep students coming back, Smoothie King also offers a rewards program for its returning customers to earn points on every purchase and skip the line options by mobile ordering.

Smoothie King is open Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m., Saturday from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. and Sunday from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.
Phi Delta Theta, a brotherhood founded 175 years ago at Miami University, was voted best fraternity amongst the student body at UC. Phi Delta Theta is a social fraternity founded in 1848 with a mission to cultivate friendship among its members, promote moral and intellectual excellence, and assist its members in achieving their fullest potential.

The fraternity emphasizes the development of leadership skills, academic achievement, community service and personal growth. Asher Martin, a second year exploratory major and president of the UC chapter was thrilled their fraternity has climbed the ranks and made a positive impact on campus.

“Phi Delta Theta is committed to breaking the stereotypes associated with Greek Life, cultivating inclusivity in our chapter, and serving as the primary men’s leadership organization on campus,” Martin said.

As their community only continues to grow each year, Martin, alongside other members, will continue to create connections with other organizations both inside and outside Greek life, and recruit men with values that align with our chapter’s vision.

“I would like to thank the student body for recognizing that Phi Delta Theta is returning back to UC to stay, and that this chapter is making massive efforts to be better than ever before. We appreciate that our efforts have been recognized by the student body,” Martin said.

Not only is Kappa Kappa Gamma one of the largest sororities nationwide, but they are also the first to break ground at UC. Starting up in 1885, the Beta Rho Deuteron chapter has been dedicated to campus involvement, community service, academic success, and strong sisterhood.

The sisters of Kappa Kappa Gamma pride themselves on their philanthropical endeavors. The sorority focuses on two main philanthropies; The Kappa Kappa Gamma Foundation and Reading Is Fundamental.

The Kappa Kappa Gamma Foundation supports sisters in need through scholarships, education and emergency aid. Reading Is Fundamental, is supported through the donation of thousands of books and volunteer hours to Boys and Girls Clubs, elementary schools and hospitals.

Located on the corner of Clifton Avenue, the Kappa Kappa Gamma house is home to 30 active members: as well as their house mother – Susan. Sisterhood events are something that Kappa Kappa Gamma emphasizes largely.

Some of their past events include roller skating, laser tag, movie night, “Galentine’s Day” and many more fun events. The sisters of Kappa Kappa Gamma have a bond that can only be described as admirable. This group of women are intelligent, hardworking and talented.
For over ten years, DuBois Book Store has won best UC spirit wear amongst the student body. Located at 321 Calhoun Street, DuBois has been serving UC students, staff, fans and alumni since 1955.

Beyond textbooks, DuBois is well-known for its assortment of collegiate clothing, gifts, school supplies, dorm supplies and souvenirs. They take great pride in their standing as an informed and supportive resource for academic staff and students.

DuBois bookstore was opened as a family business over 75 years ago and has stayed that way, with now its fourth generation running operations at this location.

This special aspect of remaining family owned is what some believe gives DuBois its uniqueness and comforting space. “I really love that the story has remained family business. I feel like it causes more customers to come in because we always treat everyone like family,” Olivia Soloria, front desk supervisor at the bookstore said.

As the store continues to bring smiles to the UC students and family, they have realized a certain factor that is keeping them in the top spot of best spirit wear on campus.

“We always ask the customers and students what they want to see and what they are in need of. We are doing all of this for them so it’s important that their priorities are our priorities,” Soloria said.

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DuBois has served Bearcat students, fans, and alumni for over 65 years! We take pride in providing the best selection of Bearcats merchandise at unbeatable prices with outstanding customer service. Your Gameday experience isn’t complete without a visit to DuBois!

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