

Inside: 2021-22 Basketball Preview



Vol. 34, Issue 10  
Oct. 26, 2021  
NINERTIMES.COM



**GLT**



---

# ***A NEW CHAPTER***

---

Read more p. 6



# NINERTIMES

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF  
April Carte  
editor@ninertimes.com

## EDITORIAL

Vasiliki Gkoulgkountina MANAGING  
EDITOR

Tyler Trudeau COMMUNITY EDITOR

Madison Dobrzanski NEWS EDITOR

Hiral Patel OPINION EDITOR

Emily Kottak A&C EDITOR

Bradley Cole SPORTS EDITOR

Max Young COPY EDITOR

Niyathi Sulkunte PHOTO EDITOR

María Solano VIDEO EDITOR

Brandon Mitchell LAYOUT EDITOR

## ASSISTANT EDITORS

Jessica Ceballos NEWS

Isaac Naylor OPINION

Jake Pierce A&C

Bryson Foster SPORTS

Isabella Perryman COPY

Elizabeth McGuire VIDEO

Sunnya Hadavi LAYOUT

Zoya Zalevskiy LAYOUT

## CONTRIBUTING STAFF

Lorenza Medley, Matt Porto, Cameron  
Williams, Gabie Stanfield, Lesly Santos

## COVER DESIGN

Brandon Mitchell

## COVER PHOTO

Chris Crews

## MARKETING DIRECTOR

Megan Reid

mktdirector@uncc.edu

## ASST. CREATIVE DIRECTOR

Megan Rice

## MARKETING STAFF

Olivia Lawless, Nina Cherry

NEWSROOM 704.687.7150

NINERTIMES.COM/STAFF

TWITTER @NINER\_TIMES

LOCATED ON THE LOWER LEVEL OF THE STUDENT UNION

Niner Times • Uptown Audio  
Sanskrit Literary-Arts Magazine  
Media Marketing • Technical • Midas  
Magazine

THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT CHARLOTTE

Kelly Merges NINER MEDIA ADVISER

Laurie Cuddy BUSINESS MANAGER

Joshua Wood GRAPHICS &  
PRODUCTION

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## NEWS

**PAGE 3** Homecoming at UNC Charlotte is quickly approaching

**PAGE 4** The Native American Student Association

## OPINION

**PAGE 5** Pressure of the pandemic

## SPORTS

**PAGE 6** A new chapter

**PAGE 8** Brotherly love

## ARTS & CULTURE

**PAGE 10** TV review: 'Star Wars Visions' season 1

**PAGE 11** Explaining Día De Los Muertos

NINER TIMES

@niner\_times



UPTOWN  
AUDIO

@uptownaudio



SANSKRIT  
LIT ARTS  
MAGAZINE

@sanskrituncc



NINER MEDIA

@UNCCMEDIA



Photo by Niyathi Sulkunte

READ + WATCH MORE ONLINE AT  
**NINERTIMES.COM**

# HOMECOMING AT UNC CHARLOTTE IS QUICKLY APPROACHING

2021 Homecoming week will be from Oct. 31 to Nov. 6

by Lorenza Medley  
Staff Writer

Photos of "Niner 9" courtesy of Homecoming  
of UNC Charlotte



Ana Risch (2022) is majoring in Exercise Science and Dance. She is President of the Women's Rugby Club and is a member of Leadership Fellows STARS and Minority Association of Pre-Medical Students.



Danyal Mahmud (2022) is majoring in Psychology. He is involved on campus as the president of the Diversified Greek Council, a member of the Lambda Upsilon Lambda Fraternity, a LEAD Team coordinator, a student coordinator for New Student & Family Services, and a peer advisor for University College.



Lily Burns (2022) is majoring in Finance and Management. She is chapter president of the Alpha Chi Omega sorority, a group fitness instructor at UREC and a Student Involvement ambassador.



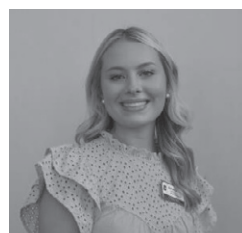
Ben Shackelford (2022) is majoring in Operations and Supply Chain Management. He is a Niner Guide, a member of the University Honors Program and part of Leadership Fellows STARS.



Campbell Medders (2023) is majoring in Marketing. She is involved on campus as a resident advisor, marketing director of the Chi Omega sorority, Greek Village Office Assistant, Emerging Leaders mentor, on the Campus Outreach Leadership Team and a Panhellenic Recruitment Counselor.



Gabi Hitchcock (2022) is majoring in Political Science and Sociology. She is the president of the Panhellenic Association, Student Body Vice President in the SGA and a member of the Alpha Chi Omega sorority.



Mackenzie Jane Amberg (2023) is majoring in Spanish and Biology. She is president of the Junior Class Council.



Ryen Boleware (2022) is majoring in Psychology and Criminal Justice. She is involved in the LEAD Team, co-captain of the Charlotte Cheerleading COED, vice president of the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority and Chief Justice of the Judicial Branch in SGA.



Chloe Nicola (2022) is majoring in Spanish, Political Science and International Studies. She is involved in Model UN and a Millennium Fellowship, as well as a UCAE Tutor.

The 2021 Homecoming will be from Oct. 31 to Nov. 6 across campus and will feature games, special guests and the chance to win merch.

Homecoming will also be on the week of Family Weekend and Niner Nation Week. Dejah Wallace, the marketing coordinator for the Homecoming Committee, spoke with the Niner Times about the events taking place. This Homecoming, the "Niner 9" is the most recent change made to the event.

Recently, more schools have been making a switch to more inclusive Homecoming courts. As a result, the Niner 9 will replace the original "Homecoming Court," and the "Golden Niner" will replace both the "Homecoming King and Queen."

"They wanted to get away from the king and queen because they wanted everyone to be included and exemplify the values of Niner Nation," Wallace said.

"Meet the Niner 9" will take place from Oct. 27-Nov. 4. Students can meet the Niner 9, learn more about them, and ask them questions. A summary of the Niner 9 can be found at [homecoming.charlotte.edu](http://homecoming.charlotte.edu).

This year's Niner 9 will comprise two men and seven women.

Students can vote for this year's Golden Niner at [vote.charlotte.edu](http://vote.charlotte.edu). Voting starts Oct. 28 at 8 a.m. and closes Nov. 4 at 5 p.m.

The Golden Niner will be announced at the Homecoming game on Saturday, Nov. 6, and will receive the Golden Niner Pickaxe and a \$500 reward. They will have the chance to be featured in promotional campaigns for the university, design a Golden Niner jacket, participate in noteworthy departments across campus, such as athletics. They will pass on the Golden Niner Pickaxe at the next Homecoming.

The rest of Homecoming will stay traditional in sticking to the layout of previous Homecomings.

The first event of Homecoming is a Kickoff Student Pep Rally on Oct. 31 in the Star-Quad from 10:30 p.m. to 11:30 p.m. The pep rally will feature special guest appearances, free food and music.

There will be a field day from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. in the West Quad on Nov. 1. Students must pre-register to join the event.

A flag football tournament will be held on Nov. 3 and a trivia night will be held in the Student Union at 6 p.m. on Nov. 4. On Nov. 4, CAB will be hosting Aux Cord Wars at 7 p.m. All students are encouraged to wear green on Nov. 4.

A Friday Fest will be held on Nov. 5 from 6 p.m.

to 9 p.m. in the CHHS plaza. There will be music, performances, food trucks and vendors. The annual Stroll Contest will also be held on Nov. 5 from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. by the National Pan-Hellenic Council fraternities and sororities on campus.

Nov. 6 will be the last and busiest day of Homecoming. There will be a tailgate with a Spirit Tent at 1:30 p.m. for students to get dressed head to toe in niner pride. The football game will be held at 3:30 p.m. between Charlotte and Rice University.

For more information about all of the Homecoming events, visit [homecoming.charlotte.uncc.edu](http://homecoming.charlotte.uncc.edu).





## NOW HIRING

- servers
- busboys
- cooks

Flexible hours, No tip sharing.

arsalco@aol.com  
or apply in person at  
230 East WT Harris Blvd.  
(Behind Walgreens)

## UPTOWN AUDIO



LISTEN AT  
UAPODCASTS.COM

# THE NATIVE AMERICAN STUDENT ASSOCIATION

## The Native American Student Association president talks Indigenous People's Day, organization's past and present

by Vasiliki Gkoulgkountina  
Managing Editor

The Native American Student Association (NASA) is geared towards spreading Indigenous culture at UNC Charlotte.

On Monday, Oct. 11, millions of people came together to celebrate Indigenous People's Day and shed light on the culture and history of Indigenous people. UNC Charlotte third-year and President of NASA, Page Freeman, is dedicated to spreading Indigenous culture and appreciation throughout the UNC Charlotte campus.

The University held a small service for land acknowledgment for Indigenous People's Day. Freeman states that "the purpose of this holiday is to shift focus away from Columbus and pull the focus back on celebrating and appreciating Native American history and culture."

NASA was founded in 2014, but the organizations' activeness has been rocky since then. The organization was inactive in 2018, then active in 2019. Freeman expressed her goal to make NASA a permanent feature at UNC Charlotte when choosing her executive board members. "My executive board right now consists of our vice president, who is a fourth-year, and the rest of the executive order are first-years," said Freeman.

With the resurgence of NASA, Native American students have been able to reconnect with each other and create a safe space for their cause.

The organization focuses on spreading Indigenous culture and creating awareness about Indigenous people on campus. "We want to provide a safe space for Native students to come together and just be students because sometimes these they can be seen as the token native, so I want this to be a space where Indigenous students can be themselves," Freeman said.

Freeman grew up in Pembroke,

where more than 90% of the population is Native American, the home of the Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina.

"Going from a place where I was one of about 5,000 Native Americans to one of 30,000 students, it was a culture shock," Freeman said. Her transition to UNC Charlotte "ignited a fire in her" to share Indigenous culture with her peers and her community.

NASA aims to spread Indigenous culture across UNC Charlotte. "From powwows to beadwork to books to podcasts, to traditional foods that we eat, to gathering things, and just everything. I want to inform, because I feel like across the board, there's a lack of information when it comes to Native Americans and people often view us in a past tense," Freeman said.

According to Freeman, a powwow is a large gathering of Native American people where there is dancing, vendors, food, a master of ceremonies. It aims to celebrate the essence of being Native. During these gatherings, people will dress in traditional Native regalia. One example is the jingle dress, a cloth dress with 365 jingles on it to represent each day and is worn to celebrate new beginnings. The Lumbee tribe holds two powwows a year, while the Gathering of Nations is one of the biggest powwows in the United States.

For Native American Heritage Month in November, NASA plans to hold one consistent event throughout the entire month. "We're going to have a weekly talking circle every Monday night in November. A talking circle is essentially a less formal version of sharing circles which elders often use during meetings which are considered sacred by Native American communities," Freeman said. These talking circles aim to provide a safe space for students to share their thoughts and emotions without the fear of being

judged. Freeman states, "In the circle, everyone is equal, everyone belongs, and everyone's points and opinions are valid. The intention of it is to come in with open hearts and understand and connect with one another."

The consecutive talking circles will each focus on a different topic. The first night is going to be about being indigenous at UNC Charlotte and the impact that has on Native students being away from home. "The second night is going to be about the murdered women and girls epidemic that has taken over the nation and Canada," Freeman said. The third night is about Native American mascots and their impact on Native youth and their mental health.

The fourth night is about mental health in Indigenous communities and creating a safer space for Native people to express their emotions.

According to Freeman, most people identify with the tribe that they have a registered card with, but Freeman herself identifies with three Indigenous tribes: Coharie, Waccamaw Siouan and Lumbee. "I see myself as a mixture of these three tribes, and I feel like they represent a different part of me individually," Freeman said.

NASA's motto is "We are Strong. We are Resilient. We are Still Here. We are Indigenous." which lends itself to representing Indigenous culture and history. "I feel like as Native Americans, it's something that we've developed over time because we've faced so many challenges for just being who we are. And yet we pick up and carry on regardless of what people throw at us to hurt or hinder us, we continue," Freeman said.

For more information about this organization and its events, visit their Instagram @uncnasa.

# PRESSURE OF THE PANDEMIC



How the pandemic is impacting new grads in the modern job market

by Matt Porto  
Intern

Graphic of "City Job Market"  
by Zoya Zalevskiy

For any U.S. graduate, they will be sure to tell you that the scariest time of the college experience is graduation. The boding feeling of facing the reality that (barring those that go on to graduate school) the period of their life dedicated to institutional education is over, and the time to enter the workforce has arrived. This will thrust you into "real life" with limited working experience, big dreams and a chip on your shoulder to be successful. What 2020 and 20201 college graduates face is that same pressure, but doubly applied in light of the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on the U.S. economy.

According to CNBC, graduates from universities in the class of 2020 saw "a bigger decrease in labor force participation than those who graduated during the Great Recession." Thus, the pandemic has taken the U.S. economy in a momentarily poor direction and harmed staple institutions like universities and small and large businesses.

Some have actually taken a 'glass half full mentality in the wake of the depressive last few years of economic

development. The offset of telework has made a positive impact on the labor market. A lot of businesses were able to continue their productivity through hybrid methods of work. Visual Capitalist, a publication focusing on the global economy, says that Covid-19 has positively impacted collaborative efforts and communicative abilities, with corporations, universities and government entities utilizing applications like Zoom and WebEx.

Social media also helped the labor market. The need for social media has never been clearer before. During the pandemic, when shops were closed, had limited occupancy or went online, social media helped with sale promotions. Businesses heavily relied on sponsored social media posts on different platforms to advertise new products, discounted sales, membership programs and even employment opportunities. Job positions regarding marketing, social media and influencing expanded and is engrained in an everyday business agenda.

However, I find it difficult to look past the devastating effects that the Covid-19 pandemic has had on the progression

of the economy and the availability of work opportunities for recent college grads. Recent Charlotte graduate Avani Nippani said, "I'm feeling grateful right now to have had an opportunity to get a full-time position with the company I'm with right now because I know friends that are really struggling to find worthwhile employment, mostly because of the fluidity of this Covid situation and how things lockdown and open up and lockdown again." A lot of people are losing their jobs. The competition and demand for corporate work are immensely high for those in the workforce their whole lives, so you could imagine how hard it is to navigate those graduating college and who don't have enough work experience.

According to Statista, the national unemployment rate of recent graduates in the U.S. peaked at 13.6% in July 2021. This is quite a concerning number, considering that this statistic was as low as 3.6% in January 2020. On top of a skyrocketed unemployment rate, there is also the mountainous amount of student loan debt that has been nationally accumulated, with these typically taking

decades to pay off. This hindrance to the fluidity of the labor market makes for stalling in the economy and the personal lives of recent grads around the country feeling trapped by their debt and unable to move forward with their lives. They can't start building a foundation of individuality by moving out, starting their own businesses, purchasing a vehicle, starting a family and so much more. There are an estimated 43.2 million student borrowers in the U.S., with an average loan debt of \$39,351 each, equaling a whopping \$1.59 trillion worth of total national student loan debt.

There is no glass half full but near empty. The fact that in such a transitional time in a person's life, finding your footing in a career is impeded by something out of anyone's control is frustrating. This leaves the U.S. with a job market as limited as ever and an entire graduating class of students having a harder time than ever finding a job. Covid's impact on the economy leads to the rapid increase of our unemployment rate and uncertainty for the future.





## WHAT THE MOVE TO THE AAC MEANS FOR CHARLOTTE

by Bradley Cole and Cameron Williams  
Staff Writers

Photo of Florida Atlantic vs. Charlotte game by Chris Crews  
Logos courtesy of UNC Charlotte and AAC

The moment Texas and Oklahoma announced their move to the SEC in July, the college sports landscape forever changed. And just a couple of months later, the Charlotte 49ers program benefited from that move. Once Cincinnati, Central Florida and Houston headed to the Big 12, the door to head to the American Conference was wide open for the 49ers.

Yahoo Sports reported that the 49ers were one of six schools to join the American Athletic Conference (AAC). On Oct. 21, it was confirmed that Charlotte would be joining the AAC and that the speculations are coming to fruition.

“I am confident that both collectively and individually these teams will have success in the American Conference,” commissioner of the American conference, Mike Aresco said in a press conference last Thursday. “They have had success where they have been and I think they

have a chance to elevate that and will add to this conferences’ legacy of success.”

### How did we get here?

The journey to the AAC has been a long time coming for Charlotte, as they spent considerable time in different conferences. The 49ers were charting members of the Sun Belt in 1976 and didn’t leave the conference until 1991. Then, they moved to the Metro Conference in 1991, where the 49ers were once again charting members. However, the membership-only lasted four years with the Metro Conference.

After leaving the Metro in 1995, Charlotte joined Conference USA for their first stint, where the 49ers basketball program made a name for themselves. They were able to regularly play schools such as Memphis, Louisville, Cincinnati and Marquette.

One thing was missing for a long time for the 49ers: a football program. It

wasn’t until 2013 when the 49ers added a football program after not fielding a team since 1948. In two short years, Charlotte made the jump from the FCS level to FBS, where they joined the rest of the 49er teams in Conference USA.

### Why does the move make sense?

This makes sense from many angles. First, you can look at the revenue perspective as each school will make two million dollars a year from the conference. This revenue will be gained from television deals.

The AAC targeted schools that are in metropolitan areas, which the 49ers fall right under. However, in his press conference, Aresco stressed many times that the conference wanted schools in bigger areas with high potential.

“These schools make great sense for us in many different perspectives,” said AAC commissioner Mike Aresco. “[A]

geographical sense, clearly. By virtue of their location in major cities that add to our intensive media footprint.”

Aresco added how the conference has seen past success in bigger cities such as Memphis, Philadelphia, Dallas and Houston.

UTSA, Rice, North Texas, FAU, UAB and the 49ers all fit under that profile and are willing to invest in their athletic programs, especially the football department. For Charlotte, since athletic director Mike Hill came onto the scene in 2018, the football program has skyrocketed.

With the addition of head coach Will Healy in 2019, the 49ers made their first-ever bowl game and set a record for wins (seven) in a single season. In addition, the program was rebranded in the summer of last year, which gave the 49ers a fresh new logo.



Football isn't the only sport that has helped launch the school into the spotlight. The baseball and men's soccer teams both made the NCAA tournaments last season. In addition, the women's basketball team made the NIT in 2021 and is projected to win C-USA for the 2021-22 season.

### Moving Forward

Now that the move is official, the anticipation begins for fans and even the media, as this will likely be a beneficial change from multiple aspects. With the teams not likely starting competition in the conference until 2023-24 according to reports, there are still questions surrounding Charlotte regarding facility upgrades. Additionally, a lot of speculation around a football stadium seat number expansion has been stirring lately. This change will be sure to start new rivalries as well. "We look forward to the renewal of

old rivalries and the development of new rivalries," said Aresco. "We've done very well with the development of new rivalries."

This means Charlotte will play East Carolina University every year in sporting events. This in-state rivalry promises to deliver, especially in sports like football and baseball. The 49ers and Pirates met in the NCAA tournament in baseball last season and will challenge each other in the regular season in the future.

"We are thrilled to be in a league with East Carolina," 49er Athletic Director Mike Hill said. "To have an in-state rival matters a lot. For us to be positioned in a conference with a great program like ECU matters a lot to our fanbase."

There is a lot to look forward to for the program as a whole, and the support of the alumni, fans and student body along the way will be key for the success of the program moving forward as Charlotte makes its way to the new conference.



Photo of Coach Healy by Chris Crews

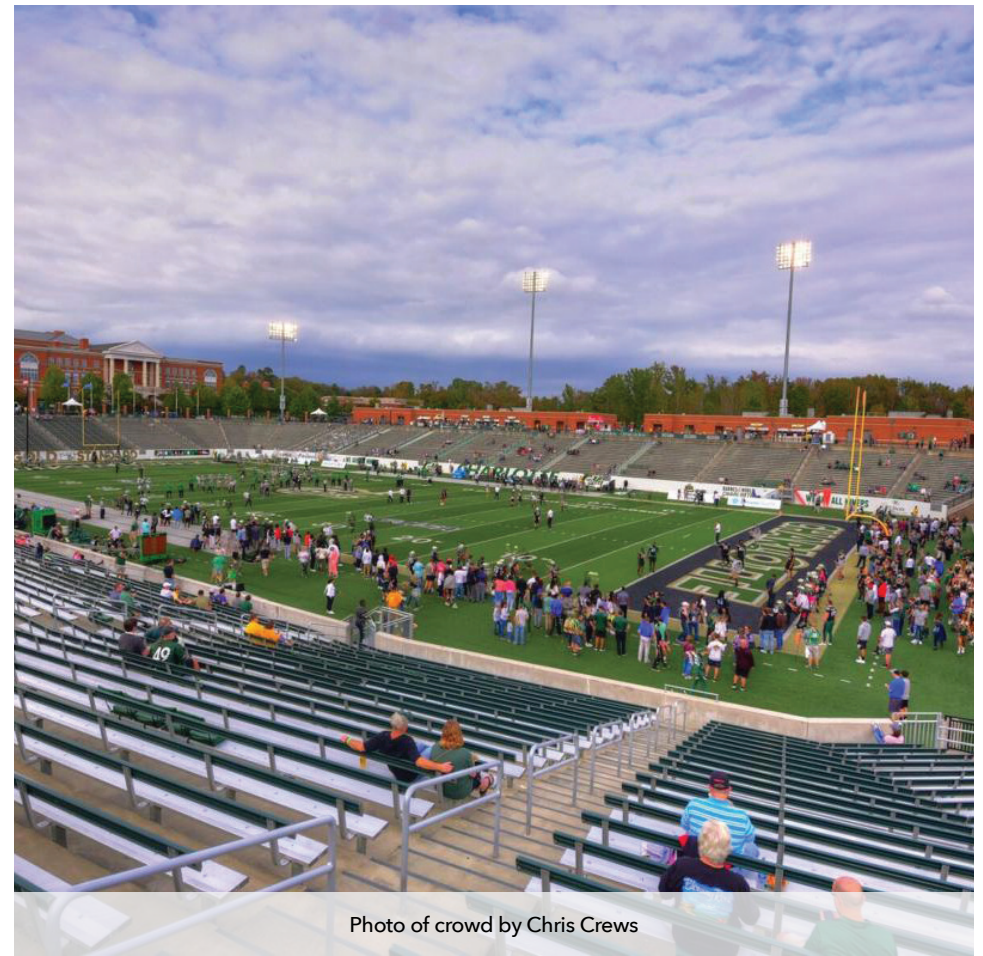


Photo of crowd by Chris Crews

# WE'RE HIRING!

Full time and Part time  
**POSITIONS AVAILABLE AT UNC CHARLOTTE**  
Kitchen Crew • Cashiers • Baristas

Free meal for each shift worked

Direct Deposit & competitive starting wages

Flexible scheduling and hours

**TO APPLY**  
TEXT **UNCC** TO **75000**



# BROTHERLY LOVE

## REYNOLDS BROTHERS GET A UNIQUE CHANCE TO SHARE COLLEGE FOOTBALL EXPERIENCE

by Gabie Stanfeild  
Staff Writer

Brothers Chris and Jack Reynolds both attended Davie County High School, but with the five-year age gap, they never got the chance to be a part of the same team.

As a walk-on freshman, Chris Reynolds started his football career at Charlotte back in 2017. His brother Jack Reynolds

followed in his footsteps by joining the team as a walk-on this past summer.

Chris, a red-shirt senior at Charlotte, made his way to become the star starting quarterback. He led the Davie County War Eagles during his time to a record of 12-2 and a Central Piedmont Conference Championship. Jack Reynolds was a four-year varsity starter and two-time all-state performer.

For the two of them, playing together has been something that the brothers awaited.

"I've been looking forward to it forever," said Chris Reynolds. "I've been thinking about it since I was a freshman. I knew one of my goals was that I wanted to play with my brother because we were never able to do that in high school."

Jack's opportunity to learn alongside his big brother and practice with him has helped him push himself that extra step. In addition, he has been able to watch Chris and study his leadership role on the team, which is one of the reasons that playing with him in practice has been so special.

"When you can get those reps in with each other, it's definitely cool," said Jack. "I'm probably going to go 1% harder to try to get open and kiss that ball. But I think it's more about off the field, just seeing him every day and seeing what he does as a leader. He's always that guy who goes that extra percent."

Jack Reynold, with a stacked roster and the age gap between the two, the brothers haven't been seen on the field together for games. Regardless, the experience

of being on the same team has been entirely sufficient for the two brothers.

"We're family-based. Family is going to come first, no matter what. That's how we were raised, and we were raised to work hard," said Chris. "No matter what we do, we support others, help those who can't help themselves and always fall back on family."

**"Some days it is tough, you're doing the same thing five days a week, but I never see Chris [Reynolds] walking in a slouch. He's always got his coffee in hand, walking in with shoulders high and a smile on his face asking people how they're doing. His attitude and how he comes in every day is something you don't see a lot."**  
- Jack Reynolds

With family being so important to the two, the act of playing the game together isn't always the most important part when it comes to being on the same team. Something more important to them is that they are able to rely on one another when times get tough.

"When it comes to being on the same team, when you do have a rough day and things aren't going the way you expected, being able to go into the locker room and see your family, someone who has been

doing this thing with you since you were in diapers, that's special and not many people get that opportunity," said Chris Reynolds.

Jack Reynolds kept an eye out on his older brother's progression at Charlotte while putting in work back with his high school team. Finally, at the end of



Photo of Chris Reynolds by Chris Crews



Photo of Jack Reynolds courtesy of Davie County Athletics



his freshman year, he started thinking about the possibility of playing in college with his brother. Some might see it as a coincidence that the two ended up playing for the same team, but Jack Reynolds knows that isn't quite the case.

"Ultimately, if I got the chance to come here, I was gonna come here," said Jack. "There was nowhere else I'd really rather go. There's not many people around the country where you get to hear, 'I get to play college football, or I more or less, get to catch passes from my brother.'"

**"But, the whole family picture 10 years from now, I bet you'll find us on a Friday evening, smoking a cigar on the back porch, with a couple of beers in hand, listening to good music. We'll be outside; me, Jack, Danny, Abigail, Amanda, and our parents will be coming over, the kids will be running around—we're all gonna be sticking together."**  
- Chris Reynolds

When it comes to being a leader of the team, Chris is that guy. He encompasses the capability to understand his teammates and help them through their difficulties, being a veteran on the team and having that sort of credibility. But, with his younger brother on the team, the strategy toward that leadership alters a bit.

"Having your real actual brother here means a little something extra," said Chris. "There's definitely more to it. There's a difference between being a leader in football, being a leader in the family and helping your younger brother. There are similarities, but because we know each other on a different level, it can be really real with him. You can't do that with certain people."

With Jack on the team watching his brother's leadership qualities, it isn't hard to imagine what he can become when he gets to be his age. He's already looking ahead and watching how his brother leads the team and observing what unique qualities about him he can utilize to help him down the road.

"He's always upbeat," said Jack. "Some days it is tough, you're doing the same thing five days a week, but I never see Chris [Reynolds] walking in a slouch. He's always got his coffee in hand, walking in

with shoulders high and a smile on his face asking people how they're doing. His attitude and how he comes in every day is something you don't see a lot."

Growing up, the two didn't always see eye to eye, just like any other siblings. But as they grew, they became closer and stuck side by side. Through their bond, they were able to learn a lot from each other as they grew up. Jack spoke on the advice that his older brother has given him regarding being a walk-on freshman.

"Coming here, I had to understand. It may not be my time right now," said Jack. "That does kind of bring you down some, but at the end of the day you have to keep pushing through. Your time will come...you just have to keep your path."

Chris has learned just as much from his little brother as he has taught him.

"I tend to be an overthinker, and sometimes I'll sit down with Jack [Reynolds], and he can tell that I'm overthinking, and he'll tell me, 'Dude, stop thinking so much. Don't care about what anybody thinks, you know who you are, just play football,'" said Chris. "Having a family member there means something else because he knows me better than anybody in the building. I may have some good friends, but he knows me better. He knows how I tick. The best advice [he's given me] would be, 'Just go do it, man.'"

Chris and Jack Reynolds can't predict the future, but they have a pretty good outlook on what their lives will be as a family 10 years down the road - the ultimate dream.

"One thing is you're probably gonna find us playing church league softball," said Chris. "But, the whole family picture 10 years from now, I bet you'll find us on a Friday evening, smoking a cigar on the back porch, with a couple of beers in hand, listening to good music. We'll be outside; me, Jack, Danny, Abigail, Amanda, and our parents will be coming over, the kids will be running around—we're all gonna be sticking together."

"After our dinner at O'Callaghan's," Jack added, or as he's informally referred to, Jackiemoon.

The two brothers have an irreplaceable bond and know how to make the most of their limited time on the team together. They look forward to that first game where they will be playing together on the field and for that special moment where Jack Reynolds gets to catch a pass from his older brother Chris.



Photo of Jack and Chris Reynolds  
by Gabie Stanfield



TV REVIEW:

# “STAR WARS VISIONS” SEASON 1

*Expanding into anime as nine short films explore the space opera franchise in a diverse new perspective*

by Tyler Trudeau  
Community Editor

Official art of “Star Wars: Visions”  
Photo courtesy of IGN



The following contains minor spoilers for the nine short films of “Star Wars: Visions.”

Originally conceived by George Lucas back in the 1970s, the Star Wars franchise has grown into a multimedia tycoon of films, television shows, books, and comics. It has brought something to nearly every corner of its vast fandom. Its latest project in “Star Wars: Visions” has done nothing short of that, sparking new interest in a side of storytelling myself and many others probably aren’t very familiar with. An anthology series of short films produced by a collection of renowned Japanese animation studios, the series of nine films envision the science fiction-fantasy world through the diverse palette of anime. With the freedom to explore any corner of the galaxy at any point in the franchise’s century-spanning timeline, the stories presented in these nine films blur the line between what we know of the Star Wars universe and the potential it can have to become something more profound and visually captivating.

While “Visions,” as a whole, tells unique stories set within the aesthetic of the Star Wars universe, with elements like the Force, lightsabers, Jedi and Sith populating much of their runtime, no story is like another. They each work to introduce characters we have never seen before in spectacular and dramatic new situations. Themes of good and evil, destiny and fate, kindness and ruthlessness exist at the heart of each story, but each has its own set of lessons it brings to the forefront. While each film is wholly unique, I wanted to discuss each film briefly to give an overview of the series for anyone eager to check it out.

**“The Duel”:** The first film in the line-up of “Visions” is perhaps the one that would first come to mind when you think of a Star Wars anime. Acting as a primer to the series for fans who might be wary of the sci-fi franchise leaping into the world of anime, Kamikaze Douga’s “The Duel” envisions an alternate history of the galaxy far, far away as we have never seen before. Set in Feudal Japan, the established symbols for good and evil, the Jedi and the Sith, exist as sects within a world of lords and samurai. A wandering former Sith known only as “Ronin” roams the galaxy seeking out red Kyber crystals and protecting villages trapped in the clutches of evil. The film, breathtaking in its black-and-white animation and efficient introductions to Ronin and the vicious Sith warrior he confronts, is the perfect way to preface what the rest of the eight films will portray. Stories that look and feel like something else but represent the thematic principles that Star Wars has always strived to push forward.

**“Tatooine Rhapsody”:** While “The Duel” was a clear reference to the traditional Samurai films of Japan and their immediate Western counterparts, the musical short from Studio Colorido situated itself closer to the aesthetics of Japanese animation today and closer to a more familiar galaxy. With the members of a rock band called Star Waver targeted by bounty hunter Boba Fett under the assignment of crime lord Jabba the Hutt, the Jedi Padawan Jay must work to rescue his captured friend and bandmate Gee through the power of song. Even with a lightsaber at his disposal, Jay finds that his band’s music is where he draws his power and that through song he

may be able to save Gee from the clutches of the vile gangster. While “Tatooine Rhapsody” might have the lightest tone out of all the “Visions” stories, its fast-paced storytelling and lovable characters make it an enjoyable entry point for younger Star Wars fans approaching the series.

**“The Twins”:** With a story centered around a pair of twins guided by the Force yearning to leave behind a legacy in the galaxy, it’s easy to see parallels to other Star Wars characters and their stories when watching Studio Trigger’s “The Twins.” Once we are introduced to twins Karre and Am, however, we realize they are drastically different from the likes of Luke and Leia or even Rey and Kylo Ren. Born of the Force’s dark side to enact the Empire’s will, the brother and sister are clad in black armor and hold immense power in the Force. While their power is matched with one another, their ideologies are not, as Karre seeks to end his sister’s reign. As a kinetic and hyperactive space duel unfolds, the lore of established Star Wars elements like Star Destroyers and Kyber crystals is quickly subverted. The tension between the two warring siblings, as well as the film’s stunning visuals, easily made “The Twins” one of my favorite stories of the bunch.

**“The Village Bride”:** While nearly all of the “Visions” stories were visually compelling in their own right, not all the stories landed for me as far as leaving behind something genuinely memorable. I don’t say that to take away from the efforts of Kinema Citrus and their story “The Village Bride,” it’s just that this one and a few later entries in the “Visions” line-up didn’t have as much to offer when it came to introducing stories and characters I

would like to see again. With that, “The Village Bride” presented a story that felt very much removed from the Star Wars galaxy, aside from a handful of nods to the Jedi and the Clone Wars-era battle droids. When Separatist forces take a village chief’s granddaughter and her fiancé hostage, a mysterious duo of masked warriors step in to rescue the couple, leading to an intense stand-off between a former Jedi and a band of merciless bandits. While the short gave me similar vibes to the likes of Studio Ghibli’s “Princess Mononoke” in its beautiful animation and overall aesthetic, “The Village Bride” unfortunately fell to the bottom of my list as far as producing memorable characters and thought-provoking storytelling.

**“The Ninth Jedi”:** Although the primary intention of these short films was to introduce fans of the franchise to a new side of storytelling regardless of their connection to the established lore of the Star Wars universe, the most compelling stories came from the ones that showed promise as to where the galaxy far, far away was going next. “The Ninth Jedi” from Production I.G. did just that, offering up a vision of where we might find the Jedi generations after the fall of their order. Acting as the most expansive of the nine stories, the tale finds a cryptic Jedi ruler named Margrave Juro rallying together some of the remaining Jedi of the galaxy to receive their lightsabers. All while, the daughter of a saber-smith escapes the clutches of the Sith as she works to deliver the Jedi weapons to the margrave at his aerial temple. Even as a 20-minute short film, “The Ninth Jedi” had all the makings of a new saga of cinematic storytelling,



from a promising young hero in the sabersmith's daughter Kara to a new age of Jedi and Sith conflicts that could easily set itself apart from the conflicts we have seen up to this point. "The Ninth Jedi" also managed to reinvent themes and concepts that have persisted throughout the franchise, from an individual's connection to the Force to the last ounces of hope that can spark a new age of heroism.

**"T0-B1":** In a Star Wars-themed cross between Astro Boy and Pinocchio, the tale from the studio Science SARU situates the hallmark theme of following one's destiny into a light-hearted narrative of a droid who desires to become a Jedi. A wholesome and fun addition to the "Visions" line-up, with a bit more depth to it than the similarly-toned "Tatooine Rhapsody," "T0-B1" felt very much in line with the narrative of the franchise's first outing in 1977's "A New Hope." It followed a young boy seeking adventure who stumbles into a whole new world of lightsabers and shadowy villains clad in black. A constant sense of hope made me want to keep rooting for the ambitious droid hero and his quest to become something more than what he is told to be.

**"The Elder":** Another favorite short of mine was found in Studio Trigger's "The Elder," telling of a Jedi Master and his young apprentice who must embark to a mysterious village to confront an ancient threat closely tied to the dark side of the Force. The relationship between master and apprentice is not uncommon to most Star Wars storytelling, which made "The Elder" feel all the more familiar and accessible to long-time fans like me. Keeping the narrative centered mostly around the chemistry of teacher Tajin and his naive yet courageous student Dan, as well as the lessons Dan learns as his compassion and innocence is tested, the short balanced its evocative themes and its brilliant action, all while wearing the tenets of Star Wars on its sleeve.

**"Lop & Och?":** Much like "The Twins" explored familial ties and the conflict that comes with them, Geno Studio's "Lop & Ochō" took its focus on not only the importance of heritage but also the creation of a found family. Seen through the eyes of a rabbit-like being named Lop, the short unfolds the conflict between a clan leader Yasaburo and his daughter Ochō as the Empire occupies their planet. As Yasaburo sits on the side of the rebellion, Ochō sees the potential for the Empire

to help them and joins their cause. At the center lies Lop, who Yasaburo adopted as his daughter, and now stands firmly against the oppressive hand of the Empire. As tensions mount between Yasaburo and his daughter, Lop must take a stand against her adopted sister to save the family she has created. While this story might sit at a middle point in the "Visions" line-up for me, the kinetic animation mixed with the heart at the center of its familial conflict made for an enjoyable entry.

**"Akakiri":** Somewhat of a spiritual companion piece to the first "Visions" short film "The Duel," Science SARU's second short "Akakiri" follows the journey of a wandering Jedi named Tsubaki who reunites with his old love Misa, a princess who has been overthrown by her dark-side-wielding aunt Masago. While at first, I didn't see any connection between this story and "The Duel," due to the two films varying in animation style and not featuring any of the same characters, they both function similarly in introducing the audience to mysterious warriors set on a quest to thwart an evil presence. Taking inspiration visually and thematically from classic Japanese samurai films and American westerns, "Akakiri," much like "The Duel," presented a taste of what matters to its lone central warrior and what each is willing to do to complete their respective journeys.

Fairly ambitious and eclectic in its diverse collection of nine short films, "Star Wars: Visions" ended up being an exciting and easily accessible dive into Japanese animation, whether you are a fan of anime or completely new to it. Even while some stories might not have landed as well as others for me, the ones that did work managed to leave me wanting more like them to exist in the Star Wars universe. Presenting characters and situations both familiar and new to audiences in one way or another, "Visions" works as a fantastic primer for those looking to broaden their love for animation and their love for Star Wars. If you appreciate either of those things, I would highly recommend checking out these films.




**Overall Rating: 7/10**

All nine short films of "Star Wars: Visions" are now available to stream on Disney+. In addition, all of the films feature full Japanese and English casts for you to enjoy dubbed or subbed respectively.

**OCTOBER**  
28 - 31

# MOVIES

AT THE  
**UNION  
THEATER**

**FREE WITH UNC CHARLOTTE STUDENT ID • \$2 ALL OTHERS**  
SHOWTIMES: [studentunion.charlotte.edu/movies](http://studentunion.charlotte.edu/movies)

## CAN'T DECIDE WHERE TO LIVE ? COME CHECK OUT UT AND UT NORTH

**University Terrace North 4BR 4BA**



Starting at **\$475/month**

**University Terrace 4BR 2BA**



Starting at **\$415/month**

**WALK TO CAMPUS • RENT/OWN • FREE PARKING**  
**NEXT TO CIRCLE K, BESIDE UNCC • CALL TODAY 980-226-1071**

## ARE YOU INTERESTED IN WRITING ABOUT IMPORTANT EVENTS ON CAMPUS AND IN THE COMMUNITY?



## THE NINER TIMES MIGHT BE FOR YOU!

Email [editor@ninertimes.com](mailto:editor@ninertimes.com) for  
information on how to get involved





# EXPLAINING DÍA DE LOS MUERTOS

My experience with the tradition and the culture

by Lesly Santos  
Staff Writer

Photos of Día De Los Muertos by dat7, Amber\_Avalona,  
allisonfaithsulock, & darvinsantos courtesy of Pixabay

Día De Los Muertos, Day of the Dead, is rooted in Mexican culture. It has remained an honored tradition in my family even though we are no longer in Oaxaca, Mexico. Traditionally in Mexico, grand event plans such as parades are organized to honor the deceased more cheerfully. It is meant to create days when you remember funny anecdotes with those you lost and lessen the pain. I learned long ago that the veil between the living and the dead is thin, and on November 1 and 2, it breaks long enough for our loved ones to visit us. The night of October 31 is when our ancestors are traveling back to the physical world, so the altar is placed by midnight so they can arrive home.

The Day of the Dead dates back about 3,000 years to pre-Columbian Mesoamerica. A person, after passing away, is believed to progress to Chicunamictlán, the Land of the Dead. The calacas (skeletons) and calaveras (skulls) are prominent Día De Los Muertos symbols.

Pan De Muerto, a sweet egg-based bread, is a traditional bread that is consumed during this time along with spicy dark hot chocolate or atole, a corn-based drink. Although the celebrations vary from town to town, they all hold the same concept of remembrance and honor for our ancestors. Families will often take the time to visit and decorate the tombs of their loved ones to prepare for their arrival.

The altar can be made of different materials to construct the arch, such as styrofoam, chicken wire or wood. Cempasúchil, Aztec marigolds, are essential for the altar because the flower's scent and bright color are said to guide our ancestors back to our home. The flowers create a path to the ofrendas, offerings that are placed on the altar. The ofrendas vary based on the age of the deceased and the individuals themselves. If children are being remembered, it is typical to put a few toys for them to play with upon their arrival. We also include the person's

favorite foods and drinks, it is believed that the spirits can "consume the spiritual essence" of the foods offered. Even though the physical food remains on the altar, it no longer has nutritional value or substance.

Typically in my family, we will use the candy the children collect on Halloween to include it on the altar. Thread or wire is sometimes used to puncture a hole through the candies to create a string of them to place on the shrine. We will often use animal cookies because our loved ones enjoyed them with their coffee, so it's something we like to include. Fruits, candies or traditional Mexican foods will be placed as an ofrenda. We take the time to bond with our ancestors by offering them food but also eating alongside them.

The photographs of loved ones serve as a reminder of who they were in life. After all, el Día De Los Muertos honors the dead by remembering how they were in life. Photographs are placed on the altar creating a shrine along with the

religious figures. La Virgen de Guadalupe, the Virgin of Guadalupe, is a prominent Catholic icon and is almost always included on the altars. Alongside the Virgen de Guadalupe, you will often see other patron saints such as San Judas Tadeo and rosaries. Some candles have patron saints printed on them, and they are lit the entire time and accompanied with prayers.

It is a common misconception that the Day of the Dead is a celebration of death or a "Mexican Halloween," but that is not the case. We celebrate the dead, the loved ones we lost, and still mourn. Death is inevitable, and we have no say when it happens, but we do get a say in how we honor and remember our loved ones. It's a way to keep their memory alive and not let them fade with time. We feel the emptiness that our loved ones left when they departed from this world every day, but El Día De Los Muertos is the only time throughout the year that our ancestors are allowed to cross between realms to visit us.

