

NINERTIMES



Student-driven news since 1947

Nov. 28, 2023

**A festive lineup of popular 2023
Charlotte events for this holiday season**

MORE ON PAGE 14

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Student-driven news since 1947

The Niner Times is UNC Charlotte's student-run news publication founded in 1947 and has received both state and national recognition.

The Niner Times aims to provide accurate and fair news to the UNC Charlotte community. We cover campus happenings, news and events in the city of Charlotte and North Carolina and topics that are important to students. We publish written, photo and video content online (ninertimes.com), on social media and through our weekly email newsletter (sent every Tuesday at 9:30 am). We also produce a supplemental bi-weekly (every other week) in-print newspaper that hits stands on Tuesdays.

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NEWS

NINER TIMES SURVEY FINDS 32.1% OF STUDENTS ARE UNSATISFIED WITH THEIR ACADEMIC ADVISORS 3

KASA STUDENT ORGANIZATION HOLDS CHARITY BALL TO RAISE MONEY FOR KOREAN KIDS AND ORPHANAGE OUTREACH MISSION 4

UNC CHARLOTTE NPHC MEMBER ADIRA ABDULLAH APPOINTED VICE-PRESIDENT OF NPHC BOARD OF DIRECTORS 4

SPORTS

CHARLOTTE CROSS COUNTRY'S MADDON MUHAMMAD LETS MOTIVATION GUIDE HIM TO SUCCESS 5

ICE HOCKEY, TRAGEDY AND THE DISCUSSION OF PLAYER SAFETY 6

RECAPPING CHARLOTTE MEN'S SOCCER'S HISTORIC 2023 SEASON 7

PHOTOS

LOOKING BACK ON THE FALL 2023 SEMESTER 8

GAMES, P. 10

ARTS & CULTURE

MULTI-DISCIPLINARY CONCERT BRINGS MUSIC TO UNEXPECTED CORNERS OF CAMPUS 11

704 SHOP SETS THE STANDARD FOR FASHION COLLABORATIONS IN CHARLOTTE 12

DANCE AND MUSIC STUDENTS PERFORM A RING SHOUT, A MEANINGFUL AFRICAN AMERICAN TRADITION 13

A FESTIVE LINEUP OF POPULAR 2023 CHARLOTTE EVENTS FOR THIS HOLIDAY SEASON 14

OPINION

PHYSICAL SHOPPING FOR BLACK FRIDAY IS GOING OUT OF STYLE 15

SATIRE: IT IS TIME FOR MARIAH CAREY TO DEFROST FROM HER ICY ENCLOSURE 16

Niner Times survey finds 32.1% of students are unsatisfied with their academic advisors

Olivia Fey | Staff Writer

Following class registration for spring 2024, the Niner Times surveyed 53 UNC Charlotte students across 24 majors regarding their advising satisfaction.

According to the survey, 32.1% of students said they are unsatisfied with their academic advisor, and 92.5% said they created their own schedule instead of using their counselor. A few students have even been set back a semester because a counselor recommended the wrong classes they need to take; 15% responded they would graduate late because of an advisor.

“When I was undeclared, my advisor made my time here miserable. I was already behind after transferring, and she put me further behind with her lack of knowledge regarding the process,” said an anonymously polled student. “This has since caused me to give up on applying to Belk College of Business and switch to a History major instead.”

Advisors are not necessarily trained professionals. They are professors who have taken the role. Professors take on the position of an academic advisor in addition to teaching classes, even though each department an advisor oversees can have hundreds or thousands of students.

Charlotte does not publicly announce that their advisors are also professors with other responsibilities, unlike UNC Chapel Hill.

“Teaching Professor Advisors are faculty members in some of the largest departments on campus whose primary responsibilities are teaching and advising majors and minors within the department,” UNC Advising said.

Stephanie Bird, overseer of professional development and training of advisors at Charlotte, discussed the processes behind hiring advisors.

“The training is determined based on the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA) Academic Advising Core Competencies Model, which gives insight to the understanding, knowledge and skills needed for academic advisors. These competencies are shared in depth in the onboarding process,” said Bird.

As the University is rapidly growing with over 170 majors and upwards of 30,000 students, each student requires an advisor to schedule classes and graduate on time. According to the survey, 32.1% of students said that an advisor had told them to take a course they did not need, which can result in graduating late.

Students have different opinions of their counselors.

“I can do it myself just as easily,” one anonymous student said.

“My advisor has been good about getting things done,” another student said.

Of students surveyed, 81.1% rated their advising experience as a five or above, while 18.9% rated it a four or below on a scale of one to 10.

“The training continues within each college and major with supervisors and co-workers to ensure the advisors understand the nuances of the particular major and college,” said Bird. “New advisors are also paired with a mentor, which

they meet with monthly to continue their understanding of the University, the student population and their role.”

Monthly training sessions are also available for advisors to join and discuss upcoming changes in curriculum, departments and technology.

According to Bird, each semester, advisors are welcomed to participate in a variety of conferences for training such as Incorporating Coaching Conversations into Academic Advising,

Building a Trauma-Informed Advising Practice for Racially and Ethnically Diverse Students, Understanding & Supporting Adult Students, An Examination of Academic Help Seeking Process & Its Role in Academic Advising, When Black Girl Magic Isn't Enough: Supporting Black Women College Students through Advising & Coaching and Academic Advising & Trans Equity: Building our Tomorrow with NACADA.



Student meeting with academic advisor | Kate Russell/Niner Times

KASA student organization holds charity ball to raise money for Korean Kids and Orphanage Outreach Mission

Sofia Distefano | Staff Writer

On Sunday, Dec. 3, at 5:30 p.m., the Korean American Student Association (KASA) hosts the Mother of Pearl charity ball in the Popp Martin Student Union.

There is a \$5 entry fee and a \$3 food ticket. This event is KASA's first charity ball, and the fund-raising will go to the Korean Kids and Orphanage Outreach Mission (KKOOM), a non-profit organization based in Georgia that aims to help Korean youth. The donations made at the charity ball will provide more resources to these children.

President and founder of KASA, Andrew Lee, spoke on behalf of the organization to provide insight on the upcoming event and information on the organization.

"I started from scratch; prior to starting KASA, I had experience in organizational life. I was an intern for ASA [Asian Student Association] and VSA [Vietnamese]. So I already saw some of what goes on internally with these orgs," said Lee. "So when I started the org, I did have some external help from friends who have been part of orgs. All the original board members were my friends, and some stayed. Some of them had to leave, but that's how I started it."

Lee explains how having a presidential role in a

student organization has taught him a lot.

"It definitely taught me a lot of time management and also taught me a lot about myself too, just as a person," said Lee. "It also taught me the difference between being a boss and being a leader."

Lee emphasizes the importance of teamwork when being a part of a student organization, especially when wanting to succeed and grow.

"Understanding that this stuff does take sacrifice. It's not supposed to be easy, but at the same time, your team members and your board members are also there to help you. So that's one of the biggest things," said Lee.

KASA has 14 board members: four interns and 10 executive board members. The organization started with only six board members at the start of last year.

"When I first got to campus, as a freshman, there were a lot of cultural organizations. Especially in the Asian community, which is pretty big, there was no Korean representation. And the only Korean representation that was here kind of misrepresented," said Lee. "One thing that I've noticed as a Korean American is that many people generalized Korean culture as K-pop, kimchi

and all that stuff. So, for me, I kind of want to create something where we touch base on every single aspect of Korean culture, not just the typical K-drama and the iced coffee. We want to kind of dive deeper more into the Korean culture, and by doing so, we want to teach, have these events, and inform your the community [and say] 'Hey, this is important,' but also doing it in entertaining ways."

According to Lee, KASA aims to raise around \$1,000 at the Mother of Pearl charity ball.

"This money will help 22 children in South Korea, and basically, the organization is going to throw a Christmas party and buy gifts for these children, so that's basically like our purpose behind it. The charity gala itself is going to be more of a big event where everyone gets together," said Lee.

Lee expresses how one of the main focuses of KASA is to create a welcoming environment for not only students who identify with the Korean and Asian community but also everyone.

"I always want to keep true to our mission statement, spread awareness of our Korean culture, and create a diverse and welcoming community for all. I know as a freshman, it can be

very hard coming to college because of new experiences and a new environment. It can be hard to make friends," said Lee. "So I want to have [our] events create community. We're not just Korean people or Asian people in general who feel comfortable. I want everyone to be comfortable, and even at our events, we have a very diverse group of people. We have people from all different kinds of backgrounds from all over the world."

Another main focus of the KASA organization is mental health. The board prioritizes having at least one general body meeting on mental health each semester.

"I feel like mental health is very important. And in the Asian community, just specifically, a lot of people don't talk to touch base on mental health," said Lee. "And I feel it's important for orgs like us to show the community that we're open to having events like this. We're not just a shallow org; we want to talk about these deep topics."

KASA has a monthly newsletter posted through NinerEngage that displays upcoming events and information. They also have an Instagram page, which is used as the primary source of advertisement, where all their updates and events are posted.

UNC Charlotte NPHC member Adira Abdullah appointed vice-president of NPHC Board of Directors

Emely Valasquez | Staff Writer

Adira Abdullah, a fourth-year student at UNC Charlotte, was installed to become the second vice president of the National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC) Board of Directors. On Oct. 29, Abdullah was officially appointed vice president at the Chicago NPHC conference.

"I have a lot of ideas on the regional level," said Abdullah. "Outside of my sorority on a national level, I would love to see even more unity across all the organizations and show love and support; we are all equal, we are all important, we all matter and just because your colors and your letters are different, it does not make you better or worse."

The NPHC Board of Directors comprises individuals appointed by the International Council of Presidents, which consists of presidents from each D9 organization. The board is set to assist their organizations with anything that they may need internationally. They must uphold and

abide by the NPHC constitution of bylaws and ensure that each organization does that.

"With my position, I can provide an undergraduate perspective and always implement new ideas that I hope to see across all of D9 internationally," Abdullah said.

"I want to have more collaborations, especially at the undergraduate level. I will also say just trying to get more involved in the community," said Abdullah. "All of our organizations are very heavy on community service and positively impacting our communities, and so [NPHC is] trying to find more opportunities so that we can provide to people."

As well as being a part of the Nu Rho Chapter of Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc., Abdullah has a regional position within her sorority. She is the highest-ranked undergraduate within the North Eastern Region and presides over several states and focuses on regional youth programs as a Youth Services Coordinator (YSC).

"I served as the president for two and a half years, and while in my term, I was elected for the Youth Services Coordinator position," said Abdullah. "So now, I am currently serving in that position for two years, and there will be some overlap between that position and my new national one."

Abdullah is also the president of the University Honors Program and an intern for Charlotte's Honors College. She is a part of the honors fraternity Phi Sigma Pi, the Africana Studies Honors Program, the Criminal Justice Honors Program and the Greek Honors Program (Order of Omega Honors Society). Outside of honors, she is the secretary of the Black Law Society and a communications consultant.

"With everything that is worth time and energy, there is going to be a little bit of pushback because you are giving up some of your time, and it can be stressful, but it's very rewarding," said Abdullah. "Yes, it has made me very busy, but I

love to be busy, and it is allowing for a lot of traveling opportunities where I can go to conferences and learn even more about D9."

Abdullah is double majoring in criminal justice and Africana studies with a minor in women and gender studies. She plans to law school and become a civil rights leader and a criminal defense and police misconduct attorney.

To get the NPHC Board of Directors position, Abdullah had to have a good community standing, GPA standing, letters of recommendation, connections and networking. She also had to turn in her sorority resume and personal resume, a letter of intent explaining why she wants that position and what ideas she has to implement.

"I always tell my parents my goal is to represent the underrepresented," said Abdullah. "So I want to come back to Charlotte and help those minority groups that we see on TV that don't have people to advocate for them and provide for them."

Charlotte cross country's Maddon Muhammad lets motivation guide him to success

Bryson Foster | Outreach Coordinator

In the American Athletic Conference Championships, Charlotte's cross country and track & field junior Maddon Muhammad took home a No. 26 place finish at 22:56.7, helping the 49ers secure a No. 2 spot behind the University of Tulsa. Muhammad's motivation to succeed comes from working hard to achieve his goals.

"My dad always says that hard work beats talent when talent fails to work hard," said Muhammad. "The only thing that pushed me forward at first was my talent, and I was able to get by, but once you reach the highest level, you realize that talent doesn't mean everything."

With the cross-country season over, Muhammad said he wants to build off his success going into the indoor track season.

"The biggest lesson I can take from cross this year is that we don't have anything figured out yet because there is room for improvement," said Muhammad. "If you put your head down, keep working and have some confidence, you can always do better than you think you can."

Where it began

Muhammad, originally born in Ethiopia, was adopted with his sister Journey in 2007 by Christa and Muhsin "Moose" Muhammad II.

Maddon was adopted into a family of athletes as his father, Muhsin, was a Carolina Panthers great who got inducted into the team's Ring of Honor on Sunday, Oct. 29. Muhsin demonstrated greatness for his son as he recorded 860 catches for 11,438 yards and 62 touchdowns over 14 years.

It did not stop there, as his siblings have experience in college sports.

Jordan Muhammad played for the Princeton University women's basketball team, Chase Muhammad played for the Johnson & Wales University women's basketball team and Journey Muhammad played for the Southern Wesleyan University women's basketball team. His older brother, Muhsin Muhammad III, is a junior wide receiver at Texas A&M University and was named to the Pro Football Focus Second Team All-SEC in 2022.

Muhammad said he was always motivated to compete in cross country and track & field.

"It was a wild journey to where I am right now and how I originally got into the sport during elementary school," said Muhammad. "We had the Fitness Gram PACER Test at my school, and the

first time I ever did it, I broke the record for my school. In middle school, I started AAU track in sixth grade, went to the Junior Olympics, and won."

Muhammad said he did not fall in love with running until his junior year of high school.

"I did outdoor track in middle and high school, but I was never focused until my junior year when I started to do cross country and fell in love with it. It was the team aspect, and the coaches being more involved, that allowed me to start to love running," said Muhammad.

Muhammad said his grandfather Bob Holtz motivated him to hone his craft.

"If I had to give credit to someone who made me want to keep doing this, it would have to be my grandfather," said Muhammad. "He trained me in every sport I have ever played, and he never really trained me in cross country but was always on my side. He would say, 'If you want to do it, then do it, but if you do not, you can always focus on other stuff.'"

Choosing Charlotte

After his time at Myers Park High School, Muhammad received offers from North Carolina State University, the University of Alabama, the University of Mississippi, Appalachian State University and UNC Charlotte.

Muhammad said he ultimately chose Charlotte due to the state of the program.

"The biggest thing that drove me to Charlotte was the program," said Muhammad. "My incoming class was a big factor because I wasn't the top recruit, so I wanted to go into a place where I could get competition and good work. Going into an up-and-coming program is intriguing because you can help be the foundation of what the program can be."

Staying motivated

During his time at Charlotte, Muhammad has racked up awards.

As a freshman, he was named to the Third Team All-Conference USA(C-USA) Team for

indoor track & field. Then, in 2022, he was named to the Second Team All-C-USA team in cross country and outdoor track & field. Muhammad

said his most significant achievement came after an injury he sustained his freshman year.

"The biggest award would be from my freshman year indoor mile. I came in third," said Muhammad. "That is the biggest motivation because, before that, I was injured during the first practice of the cross-country season. It gave me a lot of reassurance that I could come out of anything to succeed."

The awards motivated him to keep going, but the grind of a season can often wear down an athlete. When that happens, Muhammad said he leans on his teammates for motivation.

"After sixth grade, I quit running track because I never felt that team aspect. There are people now who I am happy to be around at practice," said Muhammad. "At Charlotte, we push each other to keep getting better, and it helps me to get over my mental fatigue and do what I am doing."

Muhammad said that the mental strain of being a student-athlete can determine performance on the track.

"When it comes to cross-country, 95% of the sport is mental, and the other 5% is your ability and training," said Muhammad. "If you get into your own head, no matter your training, your brain will always beat your body. That is something that I had to learn this year. What keeps me motivated is that if I don't do my best, I hurt myself and the team."

Building a legacy

Muhammad said that once his time at Charlotte is over, he hopes his legacy will be based on what he made others feel.

"My biggest legacy is through my interactions every day with my teammates," said Muhammad. "I consider myself a positive and outgoing person and try to be like that daily. I always come into practice with a smile, and I can talk to anybody on the team."

Muhammad said that being a 49er means a lot to him.

"As Charlotte 49ers, we have gone through a lot," said Muhammad. "Being able to wear that C on my chest and beat some big-name colleges shows the hard work and grit we have. That is what we are; we keep our heads down by grinding it out and showing others what we can do."



Charlotte men's cross country sophomore Maddon Muhammad racing in App State's Firetower Project Run in 2022. | Courtesy of Charlotte Athletics

Ice hockey, tragedy and the discussion of player safety

Logan Allard | Staff Writer

Content Warning: This article discusses sensitive topics, including gruesome injury and death.

On Oct. 28, Nottingham Panthers Center Adam Johnson suffered a cut to the throat in a game against the Sheffield Steelers.

Moments after crossing the blue line, Steelers Winger Matt Petgrave collided with a Panthers player and had his skate come up towards Johnson, ultimately cutting Johnson in the neck.

Johnson, at just 29 years old, tragically passed away as a result of the injury.

Suspicious surrounding incident

On Tuesday, Nov. 14, the South Yorkshire Police announced that Petgrave had been arrested on suspicion of manslaughter following the death of Johnson.

Chief Superintendent Becs Horsfall said authorities began the investigation after an autopsy confirmed the death of Johnson, and despite making an arrest, the police commissioner asked that citizens respect the presumption of innocence of Petgrave:

“Adam’s death has sent shockwaves through many communities, from our local residents here in Sheffield to ice hockey fans across the world. We know these communities will expect us to handle this investigation with the same professionalism, fairness and sensitivity as any other and request that members of the public refrain from comment and speculation which could hinder this process. Our thoughts remain with all affected by this devastating incident as enquiries continue.”

A day later, South Yorkshire Police announced on their official Facebook page that Petgrave was released on bail and that the investigation had not concluded, but added that they would “provide further updates as and when we can”:

“The man arrested on suspicion of manslaughter yesterday (14 November) in connection to death of Nottingham Panthers player Adam Johnson has been released on police bail. Our investigation continues and we will provide further updates as and when we can.”

A similar story

Johnson’s passing is not the first example of a player being severely cut by a skate.

Going back to March 22, 1989, Buffalo Sabres goaltender Clint Malarchuk would be cut in his

neck by the skate of St. Louis Blues Winger Steve Tuttle after Tuttle and Sabres defenseman Uwe Krupp collided while crashing the net.

Malarchuk would survive the incident, in large thanks to Sabres athletic trainer Jim Pizzutelli, a Vietnam veteran and combat medic.

Despite surviving, however, Malarchuk spent the years following the incident struggling with post-traumatic stress disorder.

An inherent risk

“It’s certainly been discussed,” said Charlotte Club Hockey defenseman Sean Roach when asked if the team has had any discussions on the usage of neck guards. “I think the risks are always there, and I feel like when you play the game, you take on the risks just because you love the game.”

Charlotte forward Eric Sheehan further discussed the use of neck guards and how the discussion of comfort is where the issue lies.

“I know a lot of times in the past couple of years, whenever someone discusses the use of neck guards, a lot of it is just comfort,” said Sheehan. “A lot of guys just think it’s uncomfortable, so I think that’s the main deterrent of wearing one. There’s a lot of public support for the increased usage of neck guards, so we’ll see as we go into next semester. Everyone has a month or two off; maybe a couple of guys will get one, but there hasn’t been any major group discussion about [neck guards] one way or the other.”

Roach also spoke more about the risks of hockey.

“When it comes to the risks of it, I think you just take the good with the bad; everything is dangerous,” said Roach. “When you do anything physical, like football, baseball, basketball, anything, there’s a risk of injury, and I think when you have the love for it and the pride in it the pros outweigh the cons.”

Freedom of choice and player safety

Neck guards in hockey have been a topic for years. There is a recognition amongst everyone involved regarding the dangers and the benefits of equipment like neck guards.

“We are in the process right now of trying to talk to our players about some protective equipment in those vulnerable areas,” said Pittsburgh Penguins Coach Mike Sullivan. “That could be one of the positive things that might come out of this terrible tragedy.”

Amongst many players across differing skill levels, the prevailing reason for not wearing the guards is the same. As mentioned by Sheehan, many find that neck guards are largely uncomfortable and can impact a player’s range of motion.

The mandate of neck guards across competitive hockey, if it ever happens, understandably should not be done overnight. Athletes are creatures of habit; even small changes can throw off their game.

Furthermore, while Johnson’s death was likely preventable, the likelihood of being cut by a skate blade is remarkably low for professional players.

In a 2020 article by The Athletic, forward David Backes spoke on why he didn’t wear cut-resistant accessories. Backes was cut by a skate in 2018, the first such incident in his over 800 NHL appearances at the time.

As with many other players, Backes would attribute the discomfort to his lack of cut-resistant accessories.

A potential benefit of the increased attention on neck guards may be a greater effort being made towards developing the technology and finding a way to protect players without sacrificing comfort and mobility.

Following the death of Johnson, NHL teams have experimented with cut-resistant equipment more. According to ESPN, the Hurricanes practiced with some of the equipment, and the Pittsburgh Penguins, with whom Johnson played his 13 NHL appearances, mandated neck guards for their minor league affiliates and strongly encouraged their players to wear the guards.

According to Tampa Bay Lightning left wing Cole Koepke, not everyone has put comfort over safety.

“I actually knew Adam,” said Koepke. “A lot to take in ... boom. Shock. Just terrible. It doesn’t bother me to wear the neck guard, so I don’t see a reason not to wear it. It just seems like the right thing to do.”

Looking forward

While it is unlikely that neck guards are mandated overnight by the NHL, it could be more likely that the NHL will eventually require them and grandfather in players without neck guards the way the league grandfathered players who did not wear visors when the usage of a visor was mandated beginning in the 2013-14 season.



Charlotte’s ice hockey club player skating during a practice in 2022. | Jacob Scannell/Niner Times File Photo

Recapping Charlotte men's soccer's historic 2023 season

Billy McGee | Staff Writer

The Charlotte men's soccer season has ended after a 3-0 loss to the Clemson University Tigers in the second round of the NCAA tournament.

Despite the second-round loss, the 49ers had a successful season, winning the American Athletic Conference (AAC) tournament, their first conference championship since 2013, and an NCAA tournament for the first time since 2019.

Conference champions

After being projected to finish No. 6 in the AAC, the 49ers finished the regular season 10-3-1 and earned the No. 2 seed in the AAC, earning a first-round bye in the AAC tournament.

The 49ers took care of the No. 6 seed Florida Atlantic University Owls 3-1 in the semifinals to advance to the conference championship game against the No. 1 seed and No. 2 nationally ranked Southern Methodist University Mustangs.

The 49ers avenged their 1-0 regular season loss to the Mustangs by defeating them 2-1, with the Mustangs' only goal being a penalty kick from Jeldrik Dallmann. With the 2-1 win over the Mustangs, the 49ers were crowned confer-

ence champions for the first time since the 2013 season.

En route to winning the AAC tournament, the 49ers had five players named to the All-Tournament team, with Ian Pilcher being named Defensive MVP of the tournament.

Return to the NCAA tournament

After a disappointing 2022 season saw the 49ers go 9-5-2 and miss the NCAA tournament after four straight appearances, Charlotte returned to the NCAA in the 2023 season. The 49ers finished the year with a 13-4-1 record, including their first NCAA tournament win since 2019.

The 49ers' tournament victory came at home in the first round against the High Point University Panthers. The 49ers defeated the Panthers 1-0, with Filip Jauk scoring the 49ers' only goal to send them into the tournament's second round, where they would eventually lose 3-0 to the Clemson Tigers.

Strong defense

The 49ers defense played well throughout the season, allowing just 15 goals in their 18

matches with eight shutouts.

The 49ers played two goalkeepers during the season, with Sebastian Cutler-DeJesus starting the three matches in goal, keeping two clean sheets. Leonard Stritter started the other 15, keeping six clean sheets, including the first-round NCAA tournament victory over High Point.

Pilcher, Lasse Laursen and Daniel Moore all played in and started all but one of the 49ers' 18 matches.

Accolades

The 49ers had five players named to All-AAC teams. Senior forward Jonathan Nyandjo and junior midfielder Riyon Tori were both named First Team All-AAC, junior forward Brigham Larsen and Pilcher were named Second Team All-AAC and freshman forward Natsuki Ogata was named to the AAC All-Rookie team as a unanimous selection.

Nyandjo appeared in 17 matches for the 49ers, starting in 16, with four goals and four assists.

Tori was the only 49ers to start all 18 matches, scoring one goal and recording two assists.

Larsen appeared in all 18 matches for the 49ers, starting in 17, scoring five goals, the second most on the team and leading the team with five assists.

Pilcher played in and started 17 of the 49ers' 18 matches, scoring three goals as a defender.

Ogata played in all 18 matches for the 49ers, starting in seven, while scoring four goals and recording one assist.

Seniors and graduate students

The 49ers featured four seniors and two graduate students on the roster. The 49ers seniors are Abubacarr Fofana, Matthew Kirk, Nyandjo and Nick Scott. The graduate students are Brandon Morales and Logan Frost.

A look at next season

Three of the 49ers All-AAC players, Pilcher, Larsen, Tori and Jauk, with the 49ers leading goal scorer, will be seniors next season.

The 49ers AAC All-Rookie selection, Ogata will be a sophomore next season and could take on a more significant role after being tied as the third leading goal scorer on the 49ers with four goals.

CLT CHARLOTTE 49ERS SCOREBOARD

RECENT GAMES

NOV. 13 - NOV. 25

FOOTBALL

Nov. 25: Southern Fla. 48, Charlotte 14

Nov. 18: Rice 28, Charlotte 7

MEN'S SOCCER

Nov. 19: Clemson 3, Charlotte 0

Nov. 16: Charlotte 1, High Point 0

MENS BASKETBALL

Nov. 15: Charlotte 62, Utah Valley 45

Nov. 19: Charlotte 54, George Mason 49

Nov. 20: UCF 74, Charlotte 71

Nov. 25: Charlotte 65, Georgia State 57

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

Nov. 14: Charlotte 67, UNC Asheville 51

Nov. 17: Charlotte 93, Gardner-Webb 43

Nov. 23: Southern Illinois 55, Charlotte 52

Nov. 24: West Virginia 84, Charlotte 56

Nov. 25: Charlotte 50, George Washington 38

VOLLEYBALL

Nov. 22: Tulsa 3, Charlotte 1

Nov. 18: Charlotte 3, East 2

Nov. 17: East Carolina 3, Charlotte 0

OVERALL STANDINGS

Football, 3-9, 2-6

Men's soccer: 13-4-1, 6-2

Volleyball: 11-20, 4-15

Men's basketball: 4-2, 0-0

Women's basketball: 4-3, 0-0

UPCOMING GAMES

Men's basketball:

Vs. Davidson on Wednesday, Nov. 29 at 8 p.m.

Women's basketball:

Vs. Mercer on Wednesday, Nov. 29 at 5:30 p.m.



Charlotte men's soccer Daniel Moore (3) dribbles the ball against High Point University in the first round of the NCAA men's soccer tournament on Nov. 16. | Chris Crews/Niner Times





LOOKING BACK ON THE FALL 2023 SEMESTER

- A. 2023 Golden Niner Keenan Moore posing with 2022 Golden Niner Ra'Quan Leary at the UNC Charlotte homecoming football game on Oct. 14, 2023. | Jordyn Phillips/Niner Times
- B. Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., performer at the NPHC/DGC Yardshow on Aug. 25, 2023. | Cairo Smith/Niner Times
- C. Charlotte football players running onto the field for the game against South Carolina State on the Sept. 2, 2022. | Jordyn Phillips/Niner Times
- D. The International Festival was hosted on Sept. 23, 2023. | Megan Bentley/Niner Times
- E. Charlotte men's soccer player Brandon Morales during the NCAA Tournament First Round game on Nov. 16, 2023. | Chris Crews/Niner Times
- F. UNC Charlotte's second annual Powwow on Oct. 28, 2023. | Megan Bentley/Niner Times



CHECK THE NEXT ISSUE (1/9) FOR THE NEXT CROSSWORD AND SUDOKU!

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11/7 ISSUE ANSWERS

6	1	3	5	2	9	7	8	4
9	8	5	4	7	3	2	1	6
2	7	4	8	1	6	5	9	3
4	5	1	3	6	7	8	2	9
3	6	2	9	5	8	1	4	7
7	9	8	1	4	2	3	6	5
1	4	7	2	9	5	6	3	8
8	2	6	7	3	4	9	5	1
5	3	9	6	8	1	4	7	2

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Multi-disciplinary concert brings music to unexpected corners of campus

Sunnya Hadavi | Editor-in-Chief

A typical day in EPIC is quiet. Engineering and computer science students go between classes or do homework, and many are there for the entire day.

On Nov. 14, civil engineering students dressed in green polos and shirts lined up in the EPIC (Energy Production and Infrastructure Center) Atrium and began to sing, first in German and then in Japanese.

The performance, “Music from the World: A Multi-Disciplinary Student Concert,” was a collaboration between UNC Charlotte’s Sophomore Design (CEGR 2154) for civil engineers, The Charlotteans Women’s Glee (MUPF 1123) and Prominent Chinese Americans (CHNS 1512) classes. Each class sang songs in different languages from around the world. The concert was a scheduled event in Charlotte’s International Education Week.

For civil engineers, the concert aimed to build collaboration, a global mindset and other necessary skills for the field.

“Everyone is surprised with the concert because engineers don’t sing. But, the reason we do this is to build teamwork,” said Dr. Shen-en Chen, professor of sophomore design. “Since the last time we did this concert, I noticed that our engineering students are better able to make teams and work together. And after my class, I also noticed many of my students sitting at the tables [in EPIC] talking and working with each other, which is good to see. They all take the same classes together, so this is important for them for more than just my class.”

The sophomore design class began practicing for the concert at the start of the fall semester and received guidance from other faculty and exchange students to learn “Die Gedanken sind Frei” and “Aiwa Kazu.”

November 2023 was the second-ever concert with civil engineering students, the first being in spring 2023.

The idea for the concert came from Chen and Ginger Wyrick, professor and director of The Charlotteans. Dr. Yongling Gorke, assistant director for international education in the Office of International Programs, joined the second concert with her Prominent Chinese Americans class.

“This is actually the second time that the two of them [Chen and Wyrick] are doing a concert and the first time for me,” said Gorke. “This time, our three courses are going to join hands and present this mini-concert called ‘Music from the World.’

I feel very fortunate and honored to be able to work with those two because, on the one hand, they’re very experienced, and on the other hand, they’re very encouraging and motivating.”

Gorke’s prominent Chinese Americans general education class introduces students to culture and language through engagement with Chinese culture in the United States. Gorke chose three Chinese songs for her class to perform, each in a different dialect (Mandarin, Cantonese and Hokkien).

“So unlike Dr. Chen’s class, where he focused on different regions because he’s trying to convey the importance of having a global mindset for engineers, my course very much focuses on one type of culture: Chinese culture,” said Gorke. “But I try to demonstrate that there is a lot of diversity within Chinese culture. And I want my students to see through different dialects.”

Gorke, a Mandarin and Cantonese speaker, helped her students pronounce the lyrics of “Rose, Rose, I love you” (Mandarin) and “Happy Every Year” (Cantonese). The Hokkien song “Strive to Win” was the most difficult to perform, but it had an important meaning.

“The third song is called ‘Strive to Win’ or ‘No Pain, No Gains.’ That song originated in Taiwan, and it’s very popular in the Southeast Asian region like Singapore, Malaysia and Indonesia, where there are a lot of Hokkien speakers,” said Gorke. “Then, the meaning, you can probably guess from the title of the song, is about hard work and the significance of hard work in order to become successful. And I also tell my students that, you know, this song very well illustrates the spirit of the early Chinese immigrants, like other immigrants, who came to the U.S. with practically nothing. And they worked very hard to build a life here.”

The Charlotteans are UNC Charlotte’s student Women’s Glee group and focus on vocal technique and sight singing. The group is open to all female students and performs music from the Renaissance through contemporary composers.

The Charlotteans performed three songs: “Hotaru Koi” (Japanese), “Bashana Haba’ah” (Hebrew) and “Bonny Wood Green” (Irish). Wyrick conducted the Women’s Glee and organized the performance of “Sarasponda,” an Irish song, where all three classes came together to sing.

Wyrick has previously worked with the Office of International Programs to teach music in cross-cultural environments.

“[Wyrick] taught one of our music residential

programs for Tohoku University in Japan, I believe, in 2021,” said Gorke. “At that time, Tohoku University wanted to do a music program, and we invited Professor Wyrick to teach for us. And so since then, she’s, you know, very supportive and very committed to cross-cultural learning. It’s not a coincidence that these two very dedicated, very motivated faculty members [Wyrick and Chen] joined hands in creating this concert.”

Chen, Wyrick and Gorke met at the Global Learning and Internationalization Institute (GLII), where Chen and Wyrick participated in the 2022 inaugural cohort. Gorke serves as a member of the GLII organizational committee as a part of the roles within the Office of International Programs.

GLII is an annual faculty development initiative focused on supporting faculty in the internationalization of their teaching and curriculum. Faculty involved in the initiative are encouraged to create “international/global learning experiences and opportunities for all students on campus and abroad.”

“It is essential to provide our faculty with development opportunities and resources that support them in integrating global learning and intercultural competence considerations in their teaching and course design. UNC Charlotte is incredibly fortunate to have such engaged faculty

committed to advancing the internationalization of their teaching, engagement and research,” said Joël Gallegos, associate provost for international programs at the Office of International Programs, following the inaugural GLII initiative in May 2022.

While GLII does not directly interface with students, the goal is to reach students through the work done by faculty.

“A lot of our faculty have an interest in wanting to be more global. They want to internationalize their teaching,” said Gorke. “Some of them already have an international footprint, like they go to conferences and have collaborators across the world. But one important aspect is how you can turn your international experience or relationship with different academic colleagues into your classroom in a way that benefits the students. This is one very important aspect of GLII. We give faculty members some tools and theoretical framework, but also homework to think about how their course can be internationalized. What module would you change, or what content would you add?”

GLII came out of the Office of International Programs to support the University’s Strategic Plan 2021-2031, “Shaping What’s Next,” and working towards becoming a top-tier research institution.



Sophomore design (CEGR 2154) for civil engineers performed two songs in German and Japanese at their second-ever concert | Sunnya Hadavi/Niner Times

704 Shop sets the standard for fashion collaborations in Charlotte

Sneha Nalluri | Contributor

A small business in the center of Charlotte is making waves in the fashion industry as well as in the field of university partnerships. Established by former UNC Charlotte students Scott Wooten, CEO, Jerri Shephard, co-owner and inventory manager and Christopher Moxley, co-owner and business relations, 704 Shop has emerged as a representation of innovation and community spirit, addressing a gap in Charlotte's fashion scene.

while before he presented us with the opportunity to be a licensed partner to the University."

The recent homecoming merchandise partnership between 704 Shop and UNC Charlotte demonstrates this synergy.

"We want to do for our clients' brands what nobody else is doing," Moxley said.

The University is marketing and showcasing the products on @704Shop on Instagram and their website, which sets this collaboration apart

“

"BUILDING GENUINE, AUTHENTIC, ORGANIC RELATIONSHIPS WITH PEOPLE ARE THE THINGS THAT HELP PUSH YOUR BUSINESS FORWARD."

- Christopher Moxley, co-owner and inventory manager

The journey started when it became clear that Charlotte didn't have a standout clothing line, unlike other cities that celebrated their hometown pride through specialized fashion brands. The three longtime friends decided to close this distance.

"There was nothing like that in Charlotte," Moxley said. "In Charlotte, the only thing you could wear to represent Charlotte was the Charlotte Hornets jersey or the Carolina Panthers jersey or the Charlotte Knights paraphernalia. There was no fashion brand serving that need."

The relationship with UNC Charlotte was crucial for the entrepreneurial endeavor.

"You have to be connected to the community to succeed as an entrepreneur," Moxley said, underscoring the significance of community engagement. Their service on foundations and boards at the University resulted in a successful collaboration. Before offering the 704 Shop the chance to become a licensed partner of the University, Mike Hill, the current athletics director, was a customer.

The partnership has developed into a vibrant team effort, particularly at homecoming festivities.

"The University has been hugely reciprocal of that energy," Moxley said. "Our current athletics director, Mike Hill, was a customer of ours for a

from a standard licensing arrangement.

Moxley emphasized the favorable reaction from the University's community and alumni when reflecting on the collaboration. The success of the merchandise has been attributed to UNC Charlotte's engagement strategy, which includes participation in Niner Nation Week events.

"The products do well because we build the hype for it," Moxley said. "People are eagerly awaiting it, which helps."

The success of the 704 Shop is evident in their second drop in October, which included long-sleeved t-shirts, tracksuits and crewneck sweatshirts. In addition to the quality of the products, Moxley credited the joint marketing initiatives with the University for this achievement. His approach to business and collaboration has been shaped by lessons from successes and challenges, inspiring a commitment to community involvement and relationship-building.

"Building genuine, authentic, organic relationships with people are the things that help push your business forward," Moxley said, emphasizing the value of fostering relationships.

The story of the 704 Shop is not limited to fashion alone; it is a monument to the strength of teamwork, involvement in the community and the persistent spirit of entrepreneurship nurtured at UNC Charlotte.



Dazia Lawrence, Charlotte 49ers women's basketball redshirt junior guard, is a brand ambassador for 704 Shop. Lawrence is pictured wearing the newest 704 Shop x Charlotte 49ers collaboration Gilded Track Jacket and Pant | Courtesy of 704 Shop

Dance and music students perform a Ring Shout, a meaningful African American tradition

Maylis Pickering | Staff Writer

On Nov. 3, UNC Charlotte dance and music students performed a Ring Shout at the Historic Rosedale house in Charlotte. The performance, “A Time to Shout!” explored Black American music, dance and history.

Ring Shout is a cultural African American tradition that uses movement, singing and instruments to honor enslaved ancestors.

Tamara Williams, associate professor of dance, and Dr. Sequina DuBose, assistant director of classical and contemporary voice, collaborated on this project after receiving the New South | Global South Project Grant offered by the College of Arts + Architecture. The professors took their two courses and developed this performance, teaching the cohesion of music and movement.

Three different stations held a variation of Ring Shout for the audience to experience. At each station, there were unique characteristics of Ring Shout on display, such as the natural elements.

Williams and DuBose chose the Historic Rosedale plantation because of the memories that it holds. The plantation is tucked away in Uptown Charlotte and had enslaved people who worked the land centuries ago.

“Having Ring Shout practiced on this land was significant since, in most cases, the tradition was practiced in secrecy on plantations to honor the deceased,” said Williams. “It is an ancestral remembering, and we wanted to have this connection to the African American Legacy Project at Historic Rosedale in honor of those who cared for and were forced to harvest the land.”

Before the performance began, an ancestral ceremony honored the enslaved people who had worked on the plantation. The audience participated in this time of remembrance, setting the tone for the rest of the performance. The names of the enslaved were spoken, and after each name, the audience would repeat the phrase “Iba se” to honor each ancestor. This phrase comes from the African language Yoruba and roughly translates to “We honor you.”

“Ring Shout is the manner in which I honor and bring forth the narratives of my ancestors that may not have had a platform to tell their stories,” said Williams. “Ring Shout allows for collective memories to be shared and celebrations of those memories.”

This tradition impacts both the audience and the performers. Bria Bunch, a fourth-year political science and music major, performed in Ring Shout and resonated with the tradition.

“It has a personal connection to me because, as an African American, I love to think about my heritage and be thoughtful and respectful of it,” said Bunch. “I like the duality. It’s personal in that so many people are connected in different ways.”

Bunch notes that the collective experience is meaningful to African Americans in addition to the deeply rooted connection to one’s individuality. African Americans feel connected to the Ring Shout tradition because it is derived from many different tribes.

“It was brought to the U.S. and the Caribbean by enslaved Africans from multiple nations, including the Bakongo, Yoruba, Ewe, Fõn, Ashanti, Igbo, Fulani and many others,” said Williams. “Today, it is well known in Geechee Gullah communities and African American communities.”

The performers sang traditional Ring Shout

songs, which were typically call-and-response.

Call: How did it feel when you

Response: Come out the wilderness (3x)

Call: Did you feel like dancing when you

Response: Come out the wilderness (3x)

Call: Did you feel like shouting when you

Response: Come out the wilderness (3x)

The dancers were clapping, spinning and singing songs of praise. Williams said the performance captured an uplifting spirit through the songs, movements and attitude of the performers, having an overall theme of having joy through suffering.

“The performance expresses peace, expresses joy, expresses perseverance, challenges and setbacks, and I think that is really important,” said Bunch.

Over the years, Williams dedicated time to re-

searching Ring Shout and purposefully chose the title “A Time to Shout!”

“My research involves investigating the movements and gestures of the Ring Shout. This practice is not considered a dance but instead a message of reverence to those who have passed away,” said Williams. “‘A Time to Shout!’ was inspired by my personal research and community experiences of Shouting.”

This Ring Shout performance was just one of the performances sponsored by the New South | Global South Project Grant. Other performances are planned, such as the Department of Theatre’s “New South: Part 1—How We Got Here” performance in February 2024.



Participants performing a Ring Shout at the Historic Rosedale house at one of the three stations | Courtesy of UNC Charlotte College of Arts + Architecture

A festive lineup of popular 2023 Charlotte events for this holiday season

Olivia Fey | Staff Writer

With the holiday season upon us, there are many activities for UNC Charlotte students in the Charlotte area, from light shows to Holiday markets to Hanukkah Shabbat.

Light the Knights Festival

Nov. 22-Jan. 1 | 324 S Mint St., Charlotte, N.C.

The yearly Light the Knights Festival will be open through Jan. 1. The festival has activities such as ice skating, snow tubing, a walkthrough light show and a Holiday market selling handmade gifts and baked goods.

The Knights baseball field is transforming into an ice skating rink available to attendees of all ages. Tickets are \$40, offering access to both ice skating and tubing activities. For those attending just the light show and holiday market, tickets are \$10.

Speedway Christmas

Nov. 17-Jan. 7 | 6-10 p.m. | 5555 Concord Pkwy. S., Concord, N.C.

Speedway Christmas at the Charlotte Motor Speedway occurs between Nov. 17 and Jan. 7. Cars can drive on the race track to admire the light show featuring five million lights and spanning the four-mile course. Attendees can tune their radios to 101.3 FM to watch the lights synchronized with the music. The show will take place 6-10 p.m. each night.

On Thursday-Sunday nights, there will be a lit-up walking trail, food, beverages, fire pits for roasting s'mores and drive-in Christmas movies.

The schedule for movies is as follows:

- Nov. 30-Dec 3: Classic Christmas shorts presented by Food Lion
- Dec. 7-10: "White Christmas" presented by Cook Out
- Dec. 14-19: "Elf" presented by Autobel
- Dec. 20-23: "Polar Express" presented by Cook Out
- Dec. 26-27: "Nutcracker"
- Dec. 28-31: "Home Alone"

Monday-Wednesday tickets are \$35 per carload, while Thursday-Sunday is \$75 per carload.

Mistletoe Market

Dec. 2, 9 and 16 | 3-8 p.m. | 300 Camp Rd., Charlotte, N.C.

Camp North End is hosting its annual Mistletoe Market on the Saturdays of Dec. 2, 9 and 16 from 3-8 p.m. There will be shopping, fire pits and live music to enjoy. They are also hosting the Reindog Parade on Dec. 9 starting at 4 p.m.

Hanukkah Shabbat

Dec. 2 | 6 p.m. | Cone University Center Rooms 111 and 113

Hillel at UNC Charlotte and the Office of Identity, Equity, and Engagement (IEE) will host Hanukkah Shabbat on Friday, Dec. 2, at 6 p.m. All are welcome to attend and enjoy matzah ball soup, latkes and donuts.

Holiday Light Spectacular

Dec. 7-30 | 5:30-10 p.m. | 11611 N. Community House Rd. Charlotte, N.C.

Ballantyne's Backyard is presenting the Holiday Light Spectacular Dec. 7-30. The light show consists of a half-mile walking trail with over a million lights displayed. There will be a Holiday Village with shopping, food trucks and performers.

On Monday-Thursday, general admission is \$15 from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. and \$10 from 8:30 to 10 p.m.

Friday-Sunday general admission is \$20 from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. and \$15 from 8:30 to 10 p.m.

'The Nutcracker'

130 North Tryon St., Charlotte, N.C.

"The Nutcracker" Ballet will be performing at Belk Theater in Uptown. The music will be performed live by the Charlotte Symphony Orchestra. Ticket prices will depend on the night and seat selected.

Christmas Town U.S.A.

McAdenville, N.C.

McAdenville, N.C., transforms into a Christmas wonderland every year that people travel from all over the country to visit. Located about 20 miles from Charlotte's campus, students can drive or walk through the historic town decorated head to toe in Christmas lights. Every house and building is decorated, and the fire department hands out hot chocolate. Be aware of heavy traffic due to its popularity.



People walking through holiday lights | Maya Hutagalung/Niner Times

Opinion: Physical shopping for Black Friday is going out of style

Jaden Hartfield | Staff Writer

With the holidays fast approaching, so is Black Friday shopping. However, shopping at stores and malls is going out of style this season.

Black Friday has always been a time for individuals to take advantage of major sales the day after Thanksgiving, with many believing that the day was born to help stores get out of the red (losses) and into the black (profits). While it continues to be an event participated by active and hungry buyers, the method of shopping has changed drastically these past couple of years.

While it used to be common for people to browse brick-and-mortar stores to fight for the newest TV, people are now taking a different approach to online shopping. With online shopping seeing a surge of activity every time Black Friday approaches, people and businesses have even taken advantage of Cyber Monday to generate quick purchases and sales.

"I think online shopping has a huge impact on brick-and-mortar companies because it's easier for people to just order online instead of having to go out and deal with traffic and large crowds," said Samantha Jackson, a second-year student.

Jackson considers herself an active Black Friday shopper, taking that time to shop online for holiday gifts.

"I think the online shopping method for Black Friday is great. It's an easy way for people who aren't able to physically go out and shop to buy gifts. It's also good for last-minute shopping," said Jackson.

While many see the value of online shopping, not so many individuals are keen about the method. Brandon DeLuca, a full-time supervisor at the Lego store, thinks online shopping has impacted the sales of brick-and-mortar stores.

"Online shopping has easily had a massive impact on sales, as being in the comfort of your home in an online shopping environment where it's much safer and convenient makes it more difficult to bring consumers to the stores," said DeLuca.

With online shopping taking over retail, brick-and-mortar stores are asking themselves how they can compete and keep their customers. DeLuca, using his position as a full-time supervisor, offers some advice.

"The only way to combat online Black Friday events really just comes down to either being a better deal or being a different deal," said DeLuca.

He also believes that customer satisfaction and experience will help a brick-and-mortar store keep its consumers and have them back for more.

"Most of our top regular customers come back specifically for our knowledge and service they can't easily get online," DeLuca said. "The guest experience in the store through interaction, information and independent attention is one of our biggest driving factors to bring people back into the store over staying at home for the holidays."

Regardless of how people choose to shop during the holidays, all the key players involved in this issue will continue to play a prominent role going forward. There will continue to be Black Friday deals, online shopping and brick-and-mortar stores.

With a variety of options available to them,

people can shop however they choose during the holidays. As retail continues to grow and evolve, there will eventually come new shopping methods that will cause this topic to be revisited and studied once again.

However, while that is still years into the future, individuals can choose how to shop this Black Friday, whether it is by ordering their goods online or trekking through the aisles of a brick-and-mortar store.

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Target on University City Boulevard | Dan Rice/Niner Times

Satire: It is time for Mariah Carey to defrost from her icy enclosure

Kierra Sunris | Staff Writer

One of the most festive times of the year, the holiday season, is upon us. Or is it? Mariah Carey is a singer, record producer, songwriter and actress. Recently, every year on Nov. 1, Carey posts a video of her declaring “it’s time” for Christmas.

Many argue that Nov. 1 is too early to celebrate Christmas, given that Thanksgiving is another holiday many celebrate, but this is the perfect time to start celebrating, even if it is just for a meme.

According to Dr. Jason Black, a rhetoric, culture and social change professor, a millennial and Gen Z meme has ended up shaping the culture of America.

Carey has become a symbol of Christmas and the winter season.

“It’s just so funny that we’ve started to mark time, to mark the season of winter, and to mark the cultural season of Christmas and in the Western world, with one note. The first time you hear it, you go, ‘She’s defrosted!’” said Black.

Her hit song “All I Want For Christmas Is You” was first released on Oct. 29, 1994. Since then, it has become a cultural phenomenon among all ages, especially Gen Z.

Many Christmas fans post on X, formerly known as Twitter, to celebrate Carey’s defrosting.

They also post on Instagram, Facebook and other social media. However, sometimes these posts are satire, meant to be jokes and not taken seriously. The conflicting opinions about Carey’s defrosting can be confusing as everyone agrees that she should not defrost on Nov. 1. However, deep down, everyone wants her to defrost.

But, if someone is not a Christmas fan, like Black, there can be some exceptions.

“You’re hopping over two holidays, Halloween and Thanksgiving, to get to Christmas,” said Black, an avid Halloween fan. “If you decorate early for Halloween, you’re not jumping over any holiday.”

Josie Perdue, a first-year Charlotte student, partially agrees.

“If you’re having Thanksgiving at your house, for all of your family, I think you shouldn’t decorate for Christmas because that’s just disrespecting Thanksgiving and the turkeys,” said Perdue.

But for those who do not celebrate Thanksgiving, Black’s issue with “All I Want For Christmas Is You” is that it overshadows all of Carey’s other hits.

“I think it’s kind of a shame because she’s got a large corpus of music that dates back to, I want

to say, 1990, ‘Vision of Love’ was the first track I remember hearing from her and seeing the video on MTV,” said Black.

Unfortunately, most Gen Z-ers can only name one Mariah Carey song, the one they hear every holiday season.

“A lot of the newer generation, and even my generation, has kind of forgotten about Mariah Carey’s multiple hits. And the whole metaphor, the literal and figurative part of the freezing, is that we put her away for 10 months, and it’s like ‘Dirty Dancing.’ No one puts baby in the corner, right?” said Black.

Indeed, Black. Carey has one song that is a constant hit every year, and unless one is a die-hard year-round Christmas fan, she is kept in the freezer until Nov. 1.

Meanwhile, Perdue thinks that the Christmas hit is a year-round deal.

“I love it so much. It’s my go-to jam. It doesn’t even matter,” said Perdue.

Black even agrees that despite his personal feelings on the matter, the song can bring positive things once it has ‘defrosted.’

“The idea of humor and lightheartedness in a world that oftentimes can be dark and dreary, something like this is light and fun to talk about,” said Black

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Mariah Carey frozen in ice cube | Ava Weaver/Niner Times