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“I’M STILL GOING TO PRACTICE MY FAITH”

SIKH STUDENT SPEAKS WITH NINER TIMES FOLLOWING KIRPAN INCIDENT

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A kirpan overlayed with a quote from the Sikh
student from the events of Sept. 22.

Layout by Zoya Zalevskiy

Photo courtesy of Wikimedia Commons

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UNC Charlotte handicap ramp
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'Firebird' sculpture in Uptown
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UNC Charlotte's Filip Jauk (15)
Photo by Chris Crews

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MANFREDI OR NOT

Sikh student speaks with Niner Times following the kirpan incident

by NT Editorial Staff

Note: This interview has been partially paraphrased and made anonymous out of respect and protection for the student.

On Sept. 22, a student was detained by campus police for wearing a kirpan in the Student Union. The Niner Times reached out to the student to hear his perspective and how he is dealing with the aftermath.

The student does not have any anger toward the school or the officer who detained him. He does not encourage the hate speech directed at UNC Charlotte and believes that we should embrace interfaith tolerance as a community.

He hopes that Charlotte and other universities will start working towards amending the rules regarding religious articles on campus so that Sikh students can carry their kirpans on campus safely.

"I'm just as much of a student as everybody else," he said. "So I wanted to voice my regards towards the school, the officers and the students at Charlotte that I'm okay. I'm still happy. I'm still going to practice my faith. And while doing so, I'm going to take whatever steps I need to promote awareness of my faith just because there is an evident lack of understanding."

The student expressed how many individuals do not know the difference between Islam and Sikhism.

"I think this is a good time to raise awareness for not only Charlotte but within the nation, on religious tolerance and identifying that Sikhs are a community, and we're an established, legitimate faith," said the student.

He is in contact with the University but is also open to further discussion with the police department and faculty members about Sikh culture and potential

accommodations for Sikh students.

"And this has happened to me now, so I think regardless of what people believe in, this is something that many Sikh see as unalienable," he said. "And I feel like as diverse of a school as we are, we need to exhibit that sort of equity for all demographics at the school."

The student recalled the incident and gave more context for the now-viral video.

Before the incident, the Charlotte student was sitting with a friend in the Union when a campus police officer walked past them. The officer returned about five minutes later and asked if the student had a knife; he explained that it was a religious artifact, a kirpan.

The video begins after this brief discussion when the officer asks the student to put his hands in the air. According to the student, the police officer immediately resorted to physical

contact and reached for the kirpan attempting to unsheath it. In the midst of that, the student reached for the police officer's hand.

The student offered to take the kirpan off, but the officer detained the student instead. The student felt anxious as the officer grabbed him and put him in handcuffs. He was detained for a few minutes until other officers arrived, one of which was involved in a similar incident that his brother had experienced at UNC Charlotte three years ago.

Officers instructed the student to remove the kirpan, but he was not able to with his hands bound. The officers uncuffed one of the student's hands so that he could remove the kirpan. The student removed the kirpan peacefully without unsheathing it. After he removed the kirpan, the officers completely uncuffed the student.

The kirpan was given to the officer

who had dealt with a similar situation with the student's brother. This officer was described as understanding and gave the student a chance to explain what the kirpan is. The student says he did nothing wrong but practice his religion peacefully, correctly and strictly.

The officers confiscated the kirpan to document the interaction, but as far as the student is aware, they followed the student's requests to handle and store the kirpan properly. The student got his kirpan back on Saturday, Sept. 24. The officers were "professional and empathetic" when he received the kirpan from the station.

The student initially only shared the video of the incident on a private Snapchat. After sharing the video on his Snapchat story, some did not recognize it was him. Someone with access to the story saved the video and shared it without his awareness. Other Sikh pages then shared the video through social media.

The online discussion prompted the student to post the video on his own Twitter account so that people could hear the story from him, not just what others were sharing online. The student was not expecting this much attention and is overwhelmed by online and media attention.

"I've barely slept because of the phone calls, talking to family. They're really concerned because it's just me over here," the student said. "My brother and I are the only ones on the East Coast. We're the only family we have here."

"I'm practicing my religion correctly and strictly," he said. "But I'm not putting anybody else's life in danger."



Kirpan hung with gatra strap
Photo courtesy of CBC

What we know so far about the Sikh student's detainment for a kirpan at UNC Charlotte

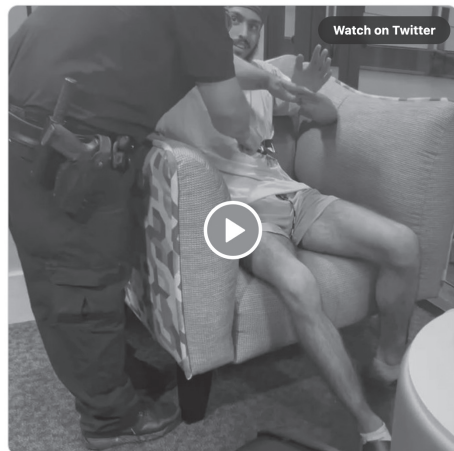
BREAKING NEWS UPDATE AS OF SEPT. 26

by Sunnya Hadavi & AJ Siegel
Editor-in-Chief & Copy Editor

Note: The individuals involved in this incident have requested to remain anonymous.

A Sikh student was detained by UNC Charlotte Police on Thursday, Sept. 22, for wearing a kirpan in Popp Martin Student Union. The incident was brought to light through social media and the student's tweet the following day, containing a video of his interaction with the police. The tweet went viral in less than 24 hours and has amassed over 3.3 million views since. The video has been retweeted at least 22,800 times and shared on various Instagram accounts.

I wasn't going to post this, but I don't think I will receive any support from @unccharlotte. I was told someone called 911 and reported me, and I got cuffed for "resisting" because I refused to let the officer take my kirpan out of the miyaan. @CLTNinerNews



5:22 PM · Sep 23, 2022 from Charlotte, NC
Tweet detailing student's detainment experience
Courtesy of Twitter

What happened

The student was sitting inside the Union when approached by the UNC

Charlotte Police Department. The police responded after receiving a 911 report describing a student with a knife.

The reported knife was a kirpan from the Sikh faith. The kirpan is one of the five articles of faith (the 5 Ks) that initiated Sikhs are expected to wear at all times. The kirpan is worn strapped to the body, symbolizing the freedom of spirit and fighting injustice.

In the video of the incident, the police officer can be seen reaching over the student, as he is seated, in an attempt to take the kirpan. After struggling to remove the kirpan out of the miyaan—the sheath holding the kirpan—the officer has the student get out of the seat and proceeds to handcuff him. At this point, the student appears to be cooperating with the officer.

Video transcript:

Police Officer: "You can not have this... [obstructed]."

Student: "Okay. You can't take it off me. You want me to take the whole thing off? [repeats] Do you want me to take the whole thing off?"

[Police handheld transceiver goes off]

Police Officer: "If you would stand up for a second."

Student: "What are you doing to me, bro?"

Police Officer: "So right now you're being detained."

Student: "Okay."

After the events of the video, the student was detained for roughly an hour, and the kirpan was confiscated.

The student tweeted about the incident

at 5:22 p.m. on Friday, Sept. 23, which includes the video and a description of the incident.

The student tweeted an update at 10:28 a.m. on Saturday, Sept. 24, sharing that he received his kirpan back from the police.

Update for the masses: I received my kirpan back 🙏 thank you all for the continuous support.
10:28 AM · Sep 24, 2022 from Charlotte, NC
Tweet about student retrieving his kirpan
Courtesy of Twitter

The aftermath

Since the incident, multiple Sikh community Instagram pages have reposted the video. These pages include the California Sikh Youth Alliance (CSYA) and the Sikh Press Association (Sikh PA).

In an Instagram post shared by the CSYA (@the_csya) and the Sikh PA (@sikhpa), the student's brother said, "This exact same incident happened to me twice at his school [UNC Charlotte] when I would drive down to visit. Three years of this treatment and nothing has changed."

As of 12:30 a.m. on Sept. 26, the student's original tweet has received 3.3 million views, 22,800 retweets, 1,869 quote tweets, and 84,500 likes. On Instagram, the video and posts regarding the incident have been reshared on Instagram stories by Charlotte students, members of the Sikh community and more.

The University's response

At 8:50 p.m. on Friday, Sept. 23, a day after the incident occurred, Chancellor Sharon L. Gaber and Chief Diversity Officer Brandon L. Wolfe sent an

official message to the UNC Charlotte community addressing the encounter.

After describing the incident, Gaber and Wolfe said, "We will use this as a learning opportunity by engaging in constructive dialogue with Sikh students and employees. Together, we are confident we can find reasonable measures and educational opportunities that both protect the safety of our campus and the religious practices of our community members."

Gaber and Wolfe apologize and are "committed to ensuring it doesn't happen again."

The Student Government Association (SGA) also released a statement at 6 p.m. on Sept. 24. Student Body President Tatiyana Larson also featured the statement on her Instagram page. The SGA said, "We are doing everything within our power to address this issue with the Administration at Charlotte. We are also dedicated to ensuring reasonable policies are implemented that will safeguard and prevent every student from being wrongfully discriminated against."

According to their statement, the SGA is in contact with the student, University Administration and the Department of Police and Public Safety. They also invite members of the Sikh community to share their insights and voices surrounding the incident.

The Niner Times is committed to keeping UNC Charlotte and the greater community updated as more information is available.

WHAT IS SIKHISM?



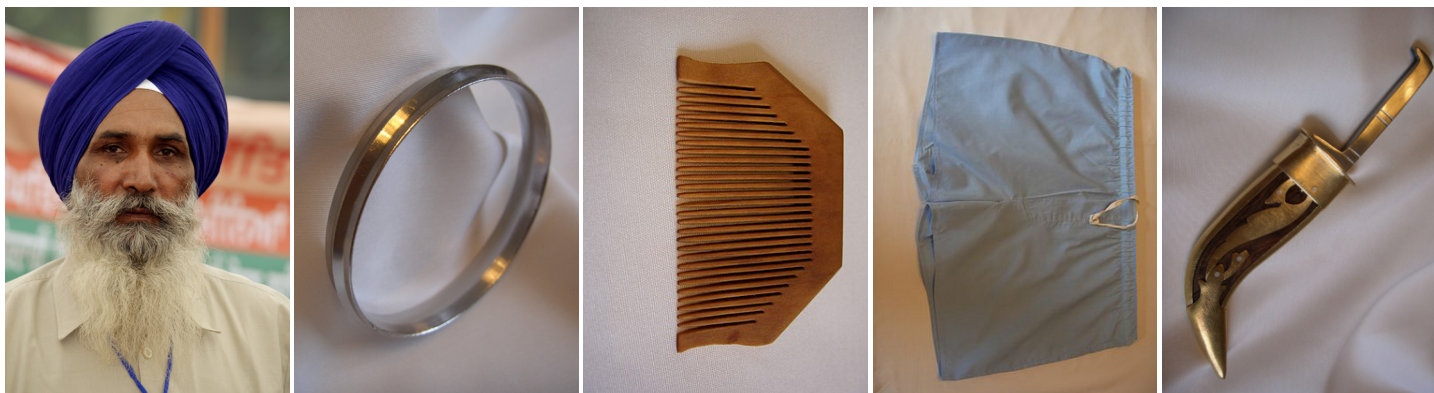
Sikhism dates back to 1469 where it was founded by Guru Nanak. Nanak rejected the caste system and declared all human beings as equal. According to Britannica, Sikhism is the sixth largest religion practiced in the world and has over 25 million followers.

Sikhs believe in one God. Sikhs follow three basic principles; meditating (praying) in the name of God, earning a living through honest means and sharing the fruits of one's labor. Sikhism rejects caste and class systems and emphasizes service to humanity while following these principles and maintaining the five articles of faith.

THE FIVE ARTICLES OF FAITH (THE 5 KS)

The five articles of faith signify commitment to Sikhism and represent love and service to humanity. Initiated Sikhs are required to carry or wear these items at all times. The five articles are the kesh, kara, kangha, kacchera and the kirpan.

Kesh is unshorn hair, tied into a simple knot (a joora or rishi knot) that is then covered by a turban. The basic kara is a simple unadorned iron bracelet that must be kept clean. The kara is not to be removed unless it is completely necessary. The kangha is a small comb, traditionally wooden, that Sikhs use to care for their hair. It is usually tucked behind the rishi knot and tied under the turban. Kacchera are an undergarment for the lower body with a tie-knot drawstring. This is worn by both men and women in the Sikh faith. The kirpan is a curved, single-edged dagger used for ceremonial purposes.



The 5 Ks from left to right: kesh, kara, kangha, kacchera and kirpan

WHAT IS A KIRPAN?

The kirpan is a mandatory article of Sikh faith and are carried by Amritdhari (initiated) Sikhs at all times. "Kirpa" means an act of kindness or a favor, and 'Aan' means honor and self-respect in Punjabi. The kirpan serves as a reminder to the Sikh that it is their duty to "protect the weak and promote justice for all." Kirpans have no specific guidelines for length or sharpness of the blade, it is left up to the wearer. They are typically sheathed and worn with a gatra (strap) to hold the kirpan close to the body. Kirpans are often used in ceremonies and major life events such as religious initiation (amrit sanchar), marriage (anand karaj), and death (antim sanskar).

The following information has been collected from The Sikh Coalition's 'Sikhism and the Sikh Kirpan Fact Sheet' from 2018. All photos are courtesy of Wikimedia Commons.

Students are upset Student Body President is not active on Reddit

by Allyson Parsi
Contributor

Student Body President Tatiyana Larson faces criticism from UNC Charlotte students on Reddit due to a perceived lack of communication on the platform.

This criticism arises after a campaign promise to maintain communication on Reddit, similar to former Student Body President Dick Beekman.

At the start of Larson's campaign for student body president (SBP), she posted her campaign's goal on the Charlotte Reddit page.

"Our administration would focus immensely on communicating actively with the student body and its leaders."

This goal was met with excitement from students on Reddit after the election of Larson and Vice President Tife Olusesi. The students looked forward to the attentive responses similar to the former student body president.

When students did not see activity on Reddit over the summer and at

the beginning of the school year, they outwardly expressed their emotions toward the president.

"Honestly, I'm rather disappointed. When you [Larson] started your campaign, you told us that you would keep in touch with us via Reddit," Reddit user EveningSkies said. "What we expected were weekly or monthly updates (a post this like, essentially) about what's going on around campus and the efforts that the SBP and SGA [Student Government Association] are attempting to address, as well as occasionally helping students who needed it. That was something you ran on. This campaign promise was not kept and now has been broken."

When Larson entered her presidency, the circumstances were different than Beekman's.

"Dick was the president during pretty much the entire pandemic," said Larson. "He had the chance to be at home a lot and wasn't running between classes to

go to meetings. It's just very different in time management, and I wasn't able to personally get on Reddit as much as I had hoped."

Beekman made a post on Reddit coming to the defense of Larson. "I didn't have to worry about the sheer number of issues Tatiyana currently faces," Beekman said.

Beekman highlighted how posting to the Charlotte subreddit is not an easy task and the "time and work it takes to maintain this page."

Beekman and Larson mentioned that communication on Reddit did not exist before Beekman's presidency.

Over the summer, Larson recognized publicity and outreach was a bigger task than she had anticipated and tried to regroup a team across SGA.

"We were a little bit in over our heads when it came to Reddit," said Larson.

Olusesi put out a piece of legislation called the Press Office Act. This act would

have delegated one director in charge of publicity and outreach. However, the act was rejected.

"Unfortunately, it just didn't get the support we had hoped for. So, we kind of had to start back at square one," Larson said.

Larson's student body president Reddit page is no longer used for SGA updates "because of the counterproductivity and the time it has taken away from actually getting student issues resolved," according to the last post on the subreddit page.

Instead, SGA has moved to an SGA page run by their new publicity and outreach team at reddit.com/user/UNCC_SGA/. The page will be for updates on on-campus issues and the general assembly minutes.

"We have people monitoring the page and seeing what questions arise," Larson said. "They then bring that information back to myself and the rest of our cabinet that we can address on our side."

N.C. Trusted Elections Tour speaks at McKnight Hall

by Kathleen Cochrane
Asst. News Editor

The N.C. Trusted Elections Tour held a panel in McKnight Hall on Sept. 13. The panels explained to citizens the electoral process of government officials, the voting process, and the technology behind how people can vote.

The panel was made up of three different groups of officials from Mecklenburg County.

They started with a chief information security officer. Then, a group from Mecklenburg County's Board of Elections with their county director spoke. The panel ended with a group from the election law office.

The second group answered questions from the moderator Michael Bitzer, professor of politics at Catawba College, and the audience about how the board of elections works on a county level and explained how the voting season is run.

"We administer the voter registration and all the precincts and voting locations," Director of Elections Michael Dickerson said. "Yes, we're looking at a site on [UNC Charlotte] campus for this November. We administer Election Day and all voter registration. I've got a staff of about 26 on full timetable and another 10 to 15 daily taps. And we administer about 2,500 Election Day workers. And we've got another 500 early voting workers. So it's a process of handling all of those things so that we can provide you with a great election process."

Dickerson and his board are responsible for 800,000 voters in Mecklenburg County. They have 195 precincts for people to vote at, and most of their voters do early voting. They also have to run same-day voter registration tables at each precinct.

"When someone comes to the early voting location and says they want to register and vote, we send them off to a separate table where they are given a voter registration application. Once they complete the application and prove who they are, through this identification documentation, the whole work scans that application directly to the Board of Elections Office," Electoral Board Member Carol William said.

Chief Information Security Officer Torrey Cross started the panel and talked about how each state has a different system when it comes to electronic voting. Cross also answered questions about how safe electronic voting is and if people should be able to vote on their phones.

"Websites do get hacked all the time. Thankfully, I can say that we've not had

that problem at this point. We have a good crew of people within the board of elections and North Carolina. In general, watching all of the agency websites to include board of elections on a day-to-day basis," Cross said.

The panel ended with three lawyers from the state's election law office, including Dena King, the first woman of color to be elected as a U.S. Attorney in the western district of N.C.

King and her colleagues were asked questions about the court's involvement in elections and voter safety.

"Everyone has a right to vote, and that right to vote needs to be without threats, harassment, fear, intimidation," King said. "No one should go to a polling place and feel that their actual vote is not their vote."

Getting rid of the garbage is in our hands

by Benjamin Greenzaid
Contributor

An empty Starbucks cup, crumpled Bojangles containers, and discarded candy wrappers all sound like they should be found in trash cans. Instead they are found on the floors of lecture halls, by bike stands, on stair railings and countless other places around campus. These items are big enough to be seen and easily picked up but are left by peers for other students to find and discard. When trash is left behind, it is the student's responsibility to clean it up.

Outside, a trash or recycling bin is always close by. In fact, "there are hundreds of outdoor recycling bins throughout UNC Charlotte's campus," according to Facilities Management's website. There are also countless bins inside different buildings to drop off trash. In addition, each floor in every

residence hall has a designated trash room with a large recycling bin and multiple trash containers. Yet, even with these measures, people leave litter all around campus.

Sometimes trash isn't the only thing left behind. Items found include old beverage cups and wrappers—but also more valued items such as valuable coins, backpack pins, jewelry, mechanical pencils and drawings. These objects can hold sentimental or economic value and are often not discarded lightly. Now, these things are in trash cans or someone else's pockets instead of being with owners.

As global environmental issues worsen, garbage pickup has become even more critical. Last year, North Carolina's Department of Transportation broke a state record and reported that over 13

million pounds of garbage were collected in North Carolina. This cost the state 19 million dollars, according to a recent article from Fox8. Other UNC system schools have also written on this issue. Such examples include cigarette littering at UNC Asheville, roadside littering at NC State, spring break littering at UNC Greensboro and dining hall garbage at UNC Chapel Hill. Since other schools have begun uncovering and solving the problem, we should too.

Students are busy and are under constant stress from classes, friendships, club activities and much more. All students share this stress, but we also share something else: a desire for respect. Leaving trash behind disrespects the students who will be in that space after you. All students pay to be here,

whether with money or hard work in sports or academics, so let's respect the places we paid for. We all deal with so much: deadlines, drama, personal and interpersonal upkeep, so we shouldn't have to deal with dirty surroundings as well.

If you can and have the time to, pick up the trash around you. Take the smoothie cup to the trash can, bring the discarded papers to the recycling bin and pick up candy wrappers. Check your space for personal belongings that could be unconsciously left. Leave all public areas the way you found them—the way you would want someone to leave them for you.

Campus needs more accessible entrances

by Ruhshona Soledjonova
Contributor

What makes UNC Charlotte a diverse campus? A majority would say the students and faculty. UNC Charlotte takes responsibility for providing resources to this diverse population. Students with disabilities come to this campus with a promise that their needs will be met.

During the fall 2022 move-in, students with disabilities expressed concerns about the accessibility entrances in dorm buildings. Some said that it was difficult to get into their dorms without the assistance of other students.

The demographic of students with disabilities enrolled in higher education is rising. Although this campus has a variety of accommodations and handicap-accessible entrances for students with disabilities, that does not mean it is enough.

Charlotte third-year, Bradley Tepper, said he chose this school because of its beautiful campus, clear signs for accessible entrances and newer dorms. Tepper, who uses a mobility scooter,

expressed that going through the Office of Disabilities to receive accommodations was relatively smooth.

Tepper also said that Charlotte has limited accessible entrances in dorms and dining halls. "The dining halls don't have a great system," he said. "After you put your dishes away, there's not an accessible handicap door to lead out of the exit." Furthermore, he said that neither SoVi nor Crown Commons dining halls have enough accessible seating. There is a level of difficulty and inconvenience getting in and out without the assistance of others.

Tepper said he is using a remote clicker for the first time this year to get into his dorm hall. The doors at most residence halls require a remote control button to open doors, and students must go through the Charlotte Office of Disabilities to get verification and documentation of their disability to receive the button. "The clicker hasn't failed me yet," Tepper said.

According to a September 2021 study by the Postsecondary National Policy

Institute, "In the 2015–2016 academic year, the most recent data available, 19% of all enrolled undergraduate students reported having a disability." If the University makes accommodations for new students enrolling each semester, they must also consider the number of students with disabilities attending Charlotte.

"The good thing about UNC Charlotte is that it is one of the more accessible campuses that I toured when choosing a college," Tepper said. This reputation should be a norm rather than an achievement, and there is always room for improvement.

Student inclusion in a diverse campus begins with fulfilling basic human needs. "This lack of accessibility creates physical and academic barriers for students, some of whom have to change classes or drop out because the school won't accommodate their needs," according to an October 2021 accessibility.com article. College students deal with enough stress from class responsibilities, and the

frustration of limited accessibility creates a hurdle for students with disabilities.

An alternative that students with disabilities are discussing is to be able to open campus entrance doors by using Niner IDs to scan them. It would be a productive step for this campus and utilize new technology.

Some of Charlotte's current accommodations include handicap Niner Paratransit, Personal Care Attendant, assistive technology and more. The Office of Disability Services, located in Fretwell, room 230, provides contact with staff to answer questions and information sessions. Office hours are Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

As a community that celebrates uniqueness in every member, we must inform ourselves of the concerns and challenges of our peers. As this campus's population and diversity rate grow, we need to accommodate the needs of our students. An open campus should mean a sufficient amount of accessible entrances for students with disabilities.

How music enhances video games

THE IMPORTANCE OF STRONG SOUNDTRACKS IN GAMING

by Cat Beck
Contributor

Some of my earliest and fondest childhood memories are of watching my brothers play video games. I'm the youngest in my family, so growing up, there weren't many things we could do together. But video games were one thing we all had in common. I didn't start playing them myself until I was a bit older, but video games were a communal activity for everyone.

When it comes to storytelling, video games play by their own rules. And in many cases, rule number one is immersion. You don't just want the player to see the world you've built – you want them to live in it. One of the most powerful tools to accomplish this is music.

Music in a video game is part of the environment. It lives in the setting and speaks for the story. It fights alongside the player and celebrates their victories. An excellent example of this (and one of my favorite games) is "Hollow Knight."

"Hollow Knight" is entirely structured around exploration. There's a vague narrative outline made up of clues and cryptic messages, but its setting holds the game together. As the player delves deeper into Hollownest, the sprawling network of caves where

the game takes place, the ambient music communicates where you are and what you've discovered.

You spend the first section of the game in a series of passageways peppered with crumbling columns and the shells of long-dead creatures. In the tunnels, you can hear stringed instruments that grow and subside like echoes off the stone walls. Dark, drawn-out chords tell you that this place has a long and troubled past, but since then, it has settled into a melancholy state of peace.

You spend some time wandering this place, thinking you understand what Hollownest is. Then you find yourself somewhere new. The gloomy caverns are left behind, and suddenly a bloom of green emerges in front of you. Before you even have the time to take it in, the life and vibrance of the next area make themselves known through the music. A harp's gentle, shimmering notes set up a much livelier rhythm, and following it is a new melody. Whatever this place is, it's an entirely different side of Hollownest.

As you continue to explore, each new part of the map brings a unique sound. The music carries you through sunken cities and glittering crystal mines. It brings you into the world and makes you a part of it.

"Hollow Knight" was released in 2017, but video games have been using music this way for far longer. "The Legend of Zelda" series has some of the most beloved soundtracks among game music fans, and for a good reason. The franchise has featured some iconic tracks that brought the game's setting of Hyrule to life. Many of these were composed by Koji Kondo, the Nintendo legend who also composed the earliest Mario games. Kondo is responsible for the soundtrack of one of the Zelda series'

most well-known games: "The Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time."

There's nothing I could say about "Ocarina" that hasn't been said already. It's an absolute classic. But one thing that's unique about it is how it directly incorporates music into the gameplay. The ocarina, the instrument from which the game gets its name, is a key part of the story. By playing certain melodies, the player can prompt certain magical effects. But these aren't just any melodies – they're taken straight from the game's soundtrack. As the player learns them, they actively engage with the music they've heard throughout their travels. The music invites them into the world.

That is the real power of video game music. It forms a connection with the player directly. The more time you sink into a game, the more meaningful the music can become, and this is especially true when the game is already special to you. This leads me to the one game whose soundtrack means the most to me.

"Super Mario Galaxy" is one of those games I used to sit on the couch and watch my brothers play. A sweeping orchestra catapults you through the orbits of strange planets. A single piano greets you softly like the light of distant stars. From the title screen, the music communicates that this is a vast and bursting world with life, and it's a world that you get to explore – well, you and your little sister, of course.

As an interactive medium, video games have their ways of immersing an audience. I love film scores, but video game soundtracks have always been special to me. Because when you play a game, the music isn't just telling a story; it's telling your story. It's inviting you into a different world and bringing the environment to life every step of the way.

DEAR NINER TIMES,

How do I get involved with sports on campus?

by Sylvia Srinivas
Staff Writer

College is the perfect place to explore new interests and venture outside your comfort zone. If you enjoy being active and want to join a student organization, joining a sports team may be a good fit. There are three different levels of sports teams at UNC Charlotte: varsity, sports clubs and intramural.

Varsity

UNC Charlotte is a Division I school with 18 varsity men's and women's sports teams. To join a varsity sports team, you must be recruited or selected during tryouts.

Sports clubs

Sports clubs are student-managed and are open to all currently enrolled students in good academic standing. These clubs are a good opportunity to keep up with a beloved sport or try a new one. There are three different categories of sports clubs:

Competitive sports clubs, such as baseball and lacrosse, are part of a regional or national league or a governing body and compete against other schools.

Instructional sports clubs, such as the Tae Kwon Do club, primarily serve the purpose of teaching a skill.

Recreational sports clubs are not a part of any league or governing body, nor are they primarily instructional, such as the Lady Lifters club.

Intramural

Intramural sports are recreational sports organized within UNC Charlotte. They compete only against Charlotte peer teams. Intramural sports are split into three divisions based on the skill level of the team:

The recreational division is geared toward beginners and focuses on enjoying exercise and the sport.

Intermediate intramural sports are a step above; the season culminates with a single-elimination playoff to declare a winner.

The competitive division is geared towards players with more experience in the given sport and culminates in a single-elimination playoff tournament.

In order to join, reference and get in contact with the different sports teams through Niner Engage.



"Hollow Knight" video game
Photo courtesy of Hollow Knight

A guide to public art in the Queen City

FIND SOME TIME THIS FALL TO GO OUT AND EXPLORE CHARLOTTE'S BEAUTIFUL WORKS OF PUBLIC ART

by Annie Turk
Contributor

As UNC Charlotte students, we are lucky to live in an ever-evolving city filled with amazing artistic talent and creative expression. The great thing is that so much art is widely available for us to view in public.

Some pieces you may already be familiar with include “The Firebird” in front of The Bechtler Museum of Modern Art and “Ascendus,” located by the airport at the intersection of Josh Birmingham and Billy Graham parkways. However, many hidden gems are located throughout the city. So take a break from campus and create your own art adventure throughout the Queen City with some of our recommendations.

1. ‘Metalmorphosis’

A masterful mix of form and design, “Metalmorphosis” creates a focal point in Whitehall Corporate Center. Originally conceived by Count Arco and created by Czech sculptor David Cerny, the sculpture is made of abstract stainless steel shapes that, when aligned, form a gigantic head with water pouring out of the mouth.

2. ‘Pillars of Dreams’

Commissioned by Mecklenburg County, N.C., and designed by Marc Fornes, “Pillars of Dreams” creates a playful atmosphere that encourages curiosity and interaction from the public. Located in Valerie C. Woodard Center, the cloud-like structure with protruding colors is not something you will miss.

3. ‘Ainsa III’

If you're ever in uptown at the UNC Charlotte Center City Building, look out for “Ainsa III,” a sculpture commissioned by Queen's Table, an anonymous group looking to fund projects to enhance our city. Inspired by the idea of universal language, the sculpture is made of die-cut stainless steel letters from nine different alphabets from around the

world. These letters all conjoin to form a seated figure.

4. ‘Color Forest’

Lining both sides of the Rail Trail near Bland Street in South End, “Color Forest” was created by local artist Ivan Toth Depeña, who is responsible for many public designs throughout Charlotte. The installation was a collaboration to add public art to the area. This work of art is made up of 100 brightly colored steel poles that vary in height along the path.

5. ‘The Writer’s Desk’

Created by Larry Kirkman and located outside of ImaginOn on E. 7th Street, “The Writer’s Desk” is a tribute to former chairman and publisher of the Charlotte Observer, Rolfe Neill. The installation features life-sized typewriter keys that you can sit on while surrounded by sculptures of writer's tools like a quill and ink, books, pencils and large rubber stamps that encourage the viewer to “Seek the Truth, Speak the Truth, and Hear the Truth.”

6. ‘The Four Corner Statues’

Located on each corner of the intersection of Trade and Tyron, you will find four massive statues representing the culture and history of Charlotte. Artist Raymond Kaskey built the sculptures so that three figures symbolizing commerce, industry and transportation look towards the fourth statue representing the future of Charlotte.

7. ‘Camden Wall Mosaic Frieze’

Walking down Camden Road is where you will see the mosaic frieze spanning over 360 feet, composed of the thirty-three cog, gear and belt-shaped mosaics that help to tell the unique narratives of Charlotte's history and community. Created by local artist, Thomas Thoun,

using donated and handmade materials, each piece tells a different story. Various mediums like shells, pottery shards and arrowheads all blend together to form a unified art structure.

8. ‘Balancing Act’

This interactive installation located in First Ward Park encourages people to connect and can make music by sitting, standing or even dancing on the disks. Made up of three colorful plates, each one of the disks plays a musical note. When balancing all the discs together, you can play a tune in perfect harmony. This sculpture is fun for kids and adults alike.

9. ‘Cascade’

Hung from the ceiling in the lobby of the Carillon building in Uptown Charlotte, “Cascade” is a 40-foot-tall kinetic sculpture made up of an assemblage of found objects from the area. Commissioned by the Bechtler family, this work was one of the last of world-renowned kinetic artist Jean Tinguely. The choreographed balance of moving parts while playing with light and color creates a fascinating and satisfying to-watch sculpture.

10. ‘Nested Hive’

As the name suggests, “Nested Hive” is inspired by the idea of a bee's nest after falling from a tree. This play sculpture,

located at the Eastway Regional Recreation Center, features a variety of floral-inspired colors, organic shapes and dimensions. The piece's overall composition invites the viewer to explore or sit in one of its many nooks.

Some more suggestions of Charlotte's public art that you need to check out include, but are not limited to:

- “II Grande Disco” at Bank of America Plaza
- “The Green Literary Art” and “Charlotte - The Center of the Known World” at The Green
- “Spiral Odyssey” inside of Romare Bearden Park
- “Wanderwall” at 400 East Stonewall St.
- “Exclamation Point” outside of 109 East Tremont Ave
- “Aurum” on 1220 South Tryon St.
- “Pepsi Cube” outside of Eight+Sand Kitchen
- “Sky Architecture” in the plaza of City Coliseum/Arena
- “Embrace” off of Monroe Road

Charlotte's public art helps to create an accessible environment for art education while beautifying and adding character to our city. This list of Charlotte's public art installations is the tip of the iceberg, so grab a friend and explore our beautiful city!



“Balancing Act” installation in First Ward Park
Photo by Emma Toney

Six essential midwest emo albums pt. 1: 1994-1999

by Nick Caceres
Contributer

During the mid-1990s, a new branch would form on the emo tree called midwest emo which would almost overnight establish itself as one of the main subgenres of emo for the second half of the decade. This emo style is usually characterized by twinkly guitar sounds and balanced alternations of loud and soft instrumentals. Instead of screaming like other emotionally dependent genres, the vocals of midwest emo were strained and, dare I say, whiny. Aesthetic-wise, the bands did and still continue to separate themselves from the mainstream emo aesthetic by sticking to casual fashion and focusing exclusively on expression. In the genre's early days, many of these bands originated from cities and towns that were in the Midwest; however, this classification is not always true with bands originating outside of the region, which would continue to increase in the following decades.

American Football - 'American Football' (1999)

Probably the most well-known and mainstream album within midwest emo. Formed in Urbana, Ill., in 1997 with their oddly specific name, American Football captures the genre in a more relaxed tone. Removed from their punk roots, they aren't trying to be variable in sound and tone. But instead, they emphasized melody. This sound, while it existed before, would become synonymous with midwest emo largely thanks to this album. If one has little or no experience with listening to this style of music, this album is a good place to start when it comes to easing into it. In fact, the house featured in the album cover has become a historic site for fans of midwest emo which can be found right next door to the University of Illinois.

Sunny Day Real Estate - 'Diary' (1994)

One of the earliest full-length releases to be considered midwest emo. Formed in 1992 in Seattle, the band would release this album in particular through indie

record label, Sub Pop, in 1994. It was an instant hit and even dripped into the mainstream. More importantly, the album represented a separation from the emo sound of the previous decade by using elements of alternative rock that is unique to the 1990s, such as grunge and post-hardcore. An interesting connection is that a few of the members of this band joined Foo Fighters after their first disbandment in 1995.

Mineral - 'The Power of Failing' (1997)

A spectacular melodic release within the height of '90s emo. Texas band, Mineral, seemed to have paid close attention to the trends of soft sprinkled pop rock that topped the charts at the time and reworked them into their highly emotional and vulnerable style through guitar and vocals. A truly representational piece of the state of emo at the time.

Cap'n Jazz - 'Burritos, Inspiration Point, Fork Balloon Sports, Cards in the Spokes, Automatic Biographies, Kites, Kung Fu, Trophies, Banana Peels We've Slipped On and Egg Shells We've Tippy Toed Over' (1995)

An album that helped pioneer certain aspects of the genre that still exist today. Cap'n Jazz was formed during the beginning of the 1990s when the members were merely high school friends in Buffalo Grove, Ill., unaware of their future influence on the genre. The dissonance, messiness and overall pop-like but abrasive instrumentation and vocals of midwest emo were fully established through Cap'n Jazz in their only full-length release in 1995 on Man With Gun Records. While the original album is available on cassette, all tracks can be found on streaming services and vinyl within a compilation album titled "Alphabetapolothology." A final fact about this band is that the drummer, Mike Kinsella, would go on to form "American Football."

The Promise Ring - 'Nothing Feels Good' (1997)

One of the first midwest emo releases to serve as a branch or precursor to the slow wave of pop punk in the following decades. Formed in Milwaukee, Wis., in the mid-1990s, The Promise Ring dabbled in pop and midwest emo which helped them create a short and sweet listening experience. Overall, this is a fun album that sounds like a melancholic spring getaway.

Jimmy Eat World - 'Clarity' (1999)

Before they exploded into the mainstream in 2001 with their hit single "The Middle," Arizona-based band, Jimmy Eat World, was first and foremost midwest emo. "Clarity" was their sophomore release which utilized the rough edge of post-hardcore combined with the softness of pop rock through the vocals. Many consider this album to be their most mature, which is often

overshadowed by their follow-up, so give it a listen.

Honorable mentions

- Sunny Day Real Estate - 'Sunny Day Real Estate (LP2)' (1995)
- Joan of Arc - 'How Memory Works' (1998)
- Modest Mouse - 'This Is A Long Drive For Someone With Nothing To Think About' (1996)
- Jets To Brazil - 'Orange Rhyming Dictionary' (1998)
- Texas Is The Reason - 'Do You Know Who You Are?' (1996)
- Modest Mouse - 'This Is A Long Drive For Someone With Nothing To Think About' (1996)
- Jets To Brazil - 'Orange Rhyming Dictionary' (1998)
- Texas Is The Reason - 'Do You Know Who You Are?' (1996)



Cap'n Jazz performing at Sheboygan Eagle's Club
Photo courtesy of Tumblr

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Similar but different

THE BOND BETWEEN TWO OF CHARLOTTE'S NEWEST TRANSFERS MATTHEW KIRK AND FILIP JAUK

by Bryson Foster
Sports Editor

The Charlotte men's soccer team is off to the best start in program history as they boast a 7-0 record. The 49ers added seven transfers in the offseason who come from programs all over the world. Two additions that stand out for the team are Matthew Kirk and Filip Jauk.

Both players have similar backstories as they come to the United States from Europe to play collegiate soccer. Kirk and Jauk played at other universities before transferring to Charlotte. Their experiences are similar, but their journeys to Charlotte have led them down different paths.

Humble beginnings

Kirk, from Derry, Ireland, attended high school at St. Columb's College before transitioning to the club level. He played with Newbuildings and Colerain FC before coming to the United States. Kirk said there is a significant difference between club and college soccer.

"The biggest difference between college and club is that club is a man's environment," said Kirk. "Everybody here is the same age, and we are in the same boat."

The Maribor, Slovenia native Jauk dominated at the club level playing for NK Aluminij. He scored 20 goals in 40 matches in the first Slovenian youth league while appearing in eight games in the Slovenian

senior league.

Jauk wanted to come to the U.S. to focus on his education and sports.

"I wanted to combine studies and sports together," said Jauk. "It is impossible to play soccer at a high level and study in Slovenia."

The move to Charlotte

Kirk decided to come to the U.S. in 2019, where he committed to play at Cal State Monterey Bay. He spent two seasons with the Otters before heading back home. A call from Charlotte Head Coach Kevin Langan changed his career trajectory.

"I had one conversation with coach [Langan], and I knew Charlotte was the place for me," said Kirk.

"Kevin asked if I wanted to give the college experience another go, and I said yes. I saw how much he loved the game, and I knew I could come here and improve as a player while having a plethora of opportunities after."

Jauk committed to Florida Atlantic and played with the Owls in 2021, earning an All C-USA second team honor. Over the summer, he entered the transfer portal. Jauk said he felt it was the right time to transfer.

"I wanted to get to a program that is ambitious and wants to win," said Jauk. "I thought it was the best program because it is the full package of what I needed."



Matthew Kirk (6) looks to dribble around a defender
Photo by Chris Crews

Top performers

Kirk has recorded three goals, three assists and nine points in 404 minutes played this season. Kirk said he helps the team in many facets.

"I am trying to help the team in whatever way I can, if that's scoring goals or getting an assist," said Kirk.

Jauk has started to catch fire with goals in the 49ers' last two games. He's recorded three goals and seven points in 227 minutes played. Jauk said he gives his all every time he steps on the field.

"I want to give everybody the best of me," said Jauk. "Trying to help the team win is my main goal."

A brotherly bond

Kirk and Jauk have created a close bond as they are away from their families. Both players feed off each other and bring a mature attitude to the team. Kirk feels that Jauk is always there for him.

"There's a close bond between international players. He [Jauk] is one of the guys that I am closest with," said Kirk.

"Being on another continent has its challenges, like being away from family. Having that common ground with Filip [Jauk] is great and makes life easier."

Jauk said they know what is required of them as leaders, which has brought them

closer.

"He is one of the guys I have the best relationship with," said Jauk. "We are almost the same age, so we know what is required of us."

Impactful moments

Kirk has scored three goals this season, but the one that sticks out to him most comes from Charlotte's exhibition match against Virginia on Saturday, Aug. 13. After a slow first half for Kirk, he journeyed back onto the field, scoring the game-winner in the 87th minute.

"Four days after my grandmother passed, we played Virginia," said Kirk.

"I didn't have a good half, and I scored when I got on the pitch. That goal won the game for us, and it was a special moment."

Jauk's top moment was the goal he scored in Charlotte's first American Athletic Conference (AAC) game against the University of Alabama at Birmingham.

"One of the goals I scored was in the first conference game, which is the best moment for now," said Jauk. "I look forward to making more moments for the rest of the year."

Kirk, Jauk and the 49ers will be back in action on Friday, Sept. 30, as they take on the South Florida Bulls in AAC play at Transamerica field.



Filip Jauk (15) fights for ball control against a defender
Photo by Chris Crews

Manfredi or not

BAILEY MANFREDI EMERGES AS A STAR PLAYER FOR THE 49ERS WOMEN’S SOCCER TEAM IN HER FRESHMAN SEASON

by Kameron Roach
Staff Writer

Success is nothing new to the freshman midfielder and forward, Bailey Manfredi. The 5’6” Greenville, S.C., native tallied 99 points in three full seasons and became a two-time Regional and State Champion at St. Joseph’s Catholic School.

Manfredi has continued her success as a freshman for the Charlotte 49ers this season. She scored her first career goal on a game-winner against Coastal Carolina on Sept. 8. In her third game with the 49ers, she scored her second goal and assisted on Tash Hudson’s score to level the match against Gardner-Webb and bring her point total to five in the two games that week.

On Sept. 12, she was named Conference USA Offensive Player of the Week (POW) for her efforts. She is the first Niner to win a C-USA weekly award since Abby Stapleton was crowned Goalkeeper of the Week last season and the first Charlotte Freshman to accomplish the feat since Julia Patrum in 2019.

The midfielder did not realize she was the first Niner since Stapleton to receive a POW award until one of her teammates told her.

“When we went to practice, everybody was just so supportive and happy,” said Manfredi. “Piper [Biziorek] told me I was the first one to get it since then [last season]. It was surreal.”

Manfredi credits coming in during preseason and staying with her upper-class teammates for some of her early success.

“They were always there for us,” said Manfredi when referring to her veteran teammates.

She was adamant about asking the upper-classmen many questions to gain knowledge and an edge. It was helpful to her once she realized she could bond with her teammates, knowing the coaching staff was new to them just as they were to her.

Manfredi also credits 11.11 Training, a training facility in her hometown, and her training with the Greenville Liberty soccer club for her success. In her training with 11.11, they focused on strength and conditioning and “the technical side of soccer.” Because of those two resources, she was able to train every day and sometimes twice a day which helped her with fitness and grew her confidence on the ball.

“Playing with those Power Five players and asking them as many questions as I could before I got here,” said Manfredi when asked how playing with the Greenville Liberty players benefitted her.

Even with all the success Manfredi has shown in her career thus far, she has several areas she seeks to improve upon to become a more promising athlete.

“Definitely my speed and my one-on-one attacking,” Manfredi said when asked what she looks to improve upon. “I think I can do better at being confident on the ball.”

Manfredi admits her team has had a “rough start” in conference play, taking losses to North Texas and UTEP before winning two straight C-USA matchups. However, she is hopeful that the team will continue to develop together and with the coaches.

“As a team, I definitely think we’re still



Bailey Manfredi during 2-0 win against LA Tech
Photo by Jacob Scannell

just trying to grow together,” said Manfredi. “I think confidence all around [is what the team can benefit from improving upon]. We’ve been pretty set back in a defensive shape, but I think if we can learn how to piece together the attacking side of the game, it would benefit us really well.”

“One team, One Standard” has been the focus for this Charlotte team to help them find their way. Manfredi believes it means to play for each other, and that is what she intends on doing going forward. Bailey has also honed in on a saying that head coach Brandi Fontaine often says, “Never say die.” She explained that it means to “give it all you got, leave it out on the field and never give up.” She stated that she and her teammates have all adopted this motto.

On the other side of her transition, as a student-athlete, she admits to adjusting to

balancing soccer and her fall classes. Her mother, Alissa Manfredi, played volleyball at Emory on a pre-med track, so she is no stranger to what it takes to be a student-athlete.

Manfredi says her focus is to continue improving and serve as an example from whatever position she holds on the team, whether on the sideline or in the game.

“So far, I’ve been sticking in the mutual frame, knowing where I stand whether it’s as a non-starter, I’m on the bench or anything like that. As long as I’m working hard to benefit the team, that’s my role.”

Following the 3-0 victory over UTEP, Manfredi and the 49ers have a week-long break from matches before facing Florida Atlantic on Sunday, Oct. 2, for a conference road game.

SCOREBOARD

MEN’S SOCCER	WOMEN’S SOCCER	FOOTBALL	VOLLEYBALL
Sept. 21: Charlotte 6, Coastal Carolina 1	Sept. 22: Charlotte 2, Louisiana Tech 0 Sept. 25: Charlotte 3, UTEP 0	Sept. 24: South Carolina 56, Charlotte 20	Sept. 23: Louisiana Tech 3, Charlotte 0 Sept. 25: UAB 3, Charlotte 0