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THE COLUMBIA CHRONICLE

FEB
01
2021

WELCOME BACK

» SAVANNA STEFFENS/CHRONICLE

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Isaiah Colbert discusses the transphobic legacy of former U.S. Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos

Editors' Note: New year, same passionate philosophy

» KENDALL POLIDORI
» MARI DEVEREAUX
CO-EDITORS-IN-CHIEF

AT THE BEGINNING of a new year, it is typical to look toward the next chapter with a renewed mindset and resolutions.

But the year did not begin with much promise. Many hopes of a fresh start were dashed in the first few weeks, with COVID-19 still taking lives, riots erupting at the Capitol and the president of the U.S. being impeached for the second time.

Last month, however, there was an aura of change in the air with a new president and vice president, the promise of vaccines finally being distributed to the public and restaurants anxiously awaiting the green light for steps toward reopening and a return to normal.

Since March of 2020, Chronicle staffers have been resilient in adapting to the tumultuous times—whether it be the pandemic, political tensions or mass civil unrest.

At the beginning of the pandemic, we found ourselves creating the framework of a “new Chronicle” that worked remotely and was entirely online. In our last semester as co-editors-in-chief, we hope to develop a working definition of what it means to be a Chronicle staff member during these times and what steps must be taken to serve the Columbia community promptly and transparently.

Our main goals are still to serve as a critical source of information, to amplify diverse voices, to act as a collaborative learning environment for both our staffers and readers and to hold the college accountable.

As the Spring 2021 semester begins, we will continue working toward these objectives. Instead of starting a brand new list of resolutions, however, we plan to stay on course while adding these additional goals:

- Develop a larger digital presence by expanding our multimedia content and social media outreach.
- Work on more in-depth stories that cover a wider breadth of the Columbia student, faculty and staff experience.
- Stay positive despite the circumstances and provide necessary information that lends a hand during troubled times.

- Break down complicated information about vaccines, the pandemic and other safety guidelines or regulations in order to make the subjects easier to digest and understand.
- Engage with our audience more on issues that matter to them.
- Foster a strong, albeit virtual, newsroom and leave a solid foundation when we and other seniors leave at the end of the semester.
- Report on and tell diverse stories.
- Be ready to pivot and adapt when necessary, with the hope of producing a print publication before the end of the semester.

While our time at the college is coming to a close, our careers are just getting started, and we want to leave a foundation for future generations of Chronicle staffers to learn and grow in the same ways we have.

We have already learned 2021 will be a year that will keep us on our toes, and as we have done in the past, the Chronicle will remain diligent and dedicated to providing factual information and stories in an empathetic and honest way.

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Views expressed in this publication are those of the writer and are not the opinions of The Columbia Chronicle, Columbia’s Communication Department or Columbia College Chicago. Letters to the editor must include full name, year, major and phone number. Faculty and staff should include their job title. Alumni should include year of graduation, or attendance, and major. Other readers should note their city of residence and occupation or employer, if related to the letter’s subject matter.

All letters are edited for grammar and may be cut due to a limit of space.

The Columbia Chronicle holds the right to limit any one person’s submissions to three per semester.

Campus testing requirements explained

» **PAIGE BARNES**
AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENT EDITOR
» **RACHEL PATEL**
STAFF REPORTER

WHEN STUDENTS, FACULTY and staff return to official on-campus classes and activities Monday, it will be after a winter break and first week of remote learning filled with mixed messages about the new COVID-19 testing procedures. With certain requirements unclear, the Chronicle sought clarity about how to access residence halls and in-person classes in the coming weeks.

Amanda Burris, a sophomore journalism major, said she is commuting to campus from the Gold Coast for one hybrid course and has been confused with the college's emails about testing requirements. She said it has been unclear as to how she could get her results from on-campus testing, or how she would be able to access the on-campus testing sites without violating the new rules.

"I wish [the college] would have been a little more clear off the bat about what you had to do to get a test," Burris said.

The college has begun using [CareStart Rapid Diagnostic Tests](#) by Access Bio to give patients results within 30 minutes, [as reported by the Chronicle](#) Dec. 11. A separate [polymerase chain reaction](#) test will still be used to confirm a positive COVID-19 test.

Lambrini Lukidis, associate vice president of Strategic Communications and External Relations, said in a Jan. 22 email to the Chronicle that the two tests are similar because of how they are administered, but that it can take up to two days for the college to receive test results from PCR tests.

The college is now offering appointment-based testing at 1312 S. Michigan Ave., in addition to 618 S. Michigan Ave., for asymptomatic students, faculty and staff. Hours for testing are Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Lukidis said the college will try to give people preference over which location they are sent to. There is no walk-in testing, according to the college's website. To schedule an appointment, call 844-766-3775.

RESIDENCE HALL STUDENTS

[In a Dec. 23 email](#) to students living in residence halls, the college instructed those returning to their dorms after winter break to upload a negative COVID-19 test result to their MedProctor account within the span of three days before they return to campus. This is

in addition to quarantining for 10 days prior in their homes.

Acceptable tests include PCR and antigen tests. Antibody tests, which tell if a person has previously contracted the coronavirus, are not acceptable. The email stated residence hall IDs would be turned off until the "test upload requirement has been fulfilled."

However, in a Jan 22 email in response to questions from the Chronicle, Lukidis said the college is not deactivating IDs. So, residents can access their dorm even if they do not upload negative test results prior to their arrival. But, students will need to get a COVID-19 test immediately after they arrive on campus, or else their card will be deactivated until a test is uploaded.

[A Jan. 21 email](#) to students stated that requirements can be met if students get "tested on campus no later than 72 hours after [their] return to Chicago."

Columbia's Daily Pre-Check requires one to attest they have not been to an orange state in the past 10 days before entering a Columbia building. An orange state is one that has recorded more than 15 average daily cases per 100,000 residents, according to the City of Chicago's Emergency Travel Order. Lukidis said students can go to the college's testing site at 618 S. Michigan Ave. if they have visited an orange state and are asymptomatic.

The Pre-Check results will indicate the student is not cleared to enter, but they will be permitted to enter the testing site, she said. Students with COVID-19 symptoms will need to be tested at the Student Health Center, 918 S. Wabash Ave.

Students cannot quarantine in their dorms and must do so at home or elsewhere in Chicago before coming to campus.

Those helping students move into the dorms are not required to submit a negative COVID-19 test. Still, they must abide by rules outlined in the City of [Chicago's Emergency Travel Order](#), such as quarantining for 10 days prior to their arrival and monitoring any symptoms, Lukidis said.

Students with "extenuating circumstances" should email the Dean of Students Office if they cannot get tested before arriving in Chicago. Lukidis said the Student Affairs Office will review each situation on a "case by case basis."

"The requests we've seen so far tend to fall into similar categories, for instance, students who are unable to test in their home state," she said. "We are telling them to come back and plan to get tested at Columbia as soon as feasible when they get back."



» KAYLIE SLACK/CHRONICLE

COVID-19 TESTING IS AVAILABLE TO STUDENTS AND EMPLOYEES MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY FROM 9 A.M. TO 4 P.M. INDIVIDUALS SHOULD CALL 844-766-3775 TO SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT.

The college is exempting students who have tested positive for COVID-19 in the past 90 days from retesting if they have already been cleared by the college. Those who have not informed the college of their positive result will need to provide "medical evidence" to the Dean of Students Office to be excused from testing.

ON-CAMPUS WORKERS

[In a Dec. 23 email](#) to faculty and staff, the college said employees must be tested during the week they return to campus, meaning an employee is allowed on campus while they are awaiting their COVID-19 test results.

Employee IDs will also not be deactivated, but ID scanning records will be checked weekly to ensure employees follow testing guidelines.

But there has also been confusion regarding employee testing. A Jan. 26 email to employees stated "employees testing off-campus can send their negative test to humanresources@colum.edu."

But later that same day, employees were sent an [email](#) stating: "In a message sent earlier today it was stated that employees could test off-campus, however employees are required to test on-campus."

ON-CAMPUS CLASSES

Since campus IDs are not being turned off automatically, students have access to on-campus buildings. Lukidis said the college is checking card swipes against a list of students and employees who have uploaded their test results. Those who are violating testing policies will receive a warning or be subject to having their ID deactivated.

"We know there could be some situa-

tions where a person may not have been able to get tested," Lukidis said. "Those individuals will receive reminders as card swipes are being cross-referenced. If a student does not comply after receiving a reminder, then their ID will be turned off."

In a Jan. 4 email to current students, the college said students with in-person classes or those who plan to be on-campus—for any reason and any amount of time, as Lukidis later confirmed to the Chronicle—must be tested within the span of five days before their arrival on campus. They can upload a negative test result or be tested on campus to have their results automatically uploaded to their account.

A one-time negative COVID-19 test also might not suffice.

For example, she said if a student uploads their test Jan. 11 and has an in-person class Feb. 1, they will need to upload another test result closer to the course start date because of the five-day rule. But, if a student uploads their negative test Jan. 28, they will not need to be tested again for their in-person class since it will fall within the five-day testing period.

Some students will be required to test periodically to attend classes based on their area of study, Lukidis said. Voluntary testing will continue to be available throughout the semester.

"Everyone in the campus community is expected to provide truthful information," Lukidis said. "Anyone found to have lied or to have circumvented the process, putting others at risk will be subject to a disciplinary process."

Columbia student makes some 'dough' with homemade baked goods

» MENGSHIN LIN/CHRONICLE



IN 2012, MCDOWELL'S FAMILY PUT TOGETHER "THE GERKE FAMILY COOKBOOK" WITH RECIPES FROM HIS GREAT GRANDMOTHER, IDA GERKE, AND HER DESCENDANTS.

» AMINA SERGAZINA
STAFF REPORTER

ASH MCDOWELL HAS baked his entire life. He developed the passion as a child while spending time in the kitchen with his parents.

"My parents have always been my inspiration and support with all my culinary exploits," said McDowell, a sophomore filmmaking major. "My dad taught me to cook; my mom taught me to bake; and they both encouraged me to keep getting better."

In December, McDowell opened Hestia's Homemade Hearth, an online shop for homemade baked goods.

The idea to start his own business came to fruition near the end of 2020, after McDowell began receiving compliments on his baking from high school classmates and colleagues back home in the Quad Cities area of Iowa.

"I found myself going through a rough time. ... I needed something to occupy my thoughts and my time and my energy," McDowell said. "I had this idea I could sell baked goods in the back of my mind for a while, and it was a spontaneous decision."

Since its launch, McDowell has managed the baking store on his own, while also being a full-time student.

"So far I've only had a few orders, so it's easy to find the time," McDowell said. "Plus, I really enjoy baking, so it ends up being a bit of self care for me as well."

On the baked goods' website, you can purchase a whole-wheat bread loaf, classic baguettes, oatmeal scotchies, chocolate chip cookies, peppermint pinwheel cookies or a custom cake. McDowell adds new treats to his website every two weeks.

A loaf of bread costs \$5; cookies are \$3 for a dozen; and a custom cake starts from \$15. McDowell offers a free pick-up option or \$2 delivery for customers within three miles of the South Loop. If you are not located in that radius, there is a U.S. Postal Service shipment option for \$23.

McDowell said when buying groceries for baking, he tries to adhere to cost-friendly, yet quality options, by shopping at Jewel, Target, Mariano's or Bob's Red Mill for vegan and gluten-free ingredients.

"I budget using an excel spreadsheet," McDowell said. "Basically, I find the price by weight of my ingredients and plug those into my recipes to find out how much each batch costs me to make, and then I decide on a price to charge."

Natalie Brandy, a junior arts management major and McDowell's friend, was one of his first clients outside of his family. She ordered the oatmeal butter-scotch cookies for Christmas and had them shipped to her house.

"It's a great price. ... The packaging was great. ... Everything looks professional. I was really impressed," Brandy said. "The cookies were great; I ate them within two days."

» MENGSHIN LIN/CHRONICLE



MCDOWELL MAKES STAMPS TO DECORATE THE PAPER BAGS FOR HESTIA'S HOMEMADE HEARTH.

» MENGSHIN LIN/CHRONICLE



MCDOWELL CURRENTLY SELLS A VARIETY OF FLAVORS OF COOKIES AND TYPES OF BREAD.

McDowell can make vegan, gluten-free and allergy-sensitive versions of each of the baked goods. He encourages people with a special request to message him directly on Instagram and said he is not limited to the items listed on his website.

"I have plans to add both vegan and gluten-free options for the cookies and for the bread on my website, [and] I do have the recipes already figured out for those," McDowell said.

Kaelan Tonjes, a sophomore musical theatre major, bought chocolate chip cookies in December when the online store had just opened.

"They were a little smaller than the

average chocolate chip cookie, more bite-size, and it was perfect. They were really easy to munch on," Tonjes said. "The delivery was quick. It was the same day [and] really affordable, especially considering how good it was."

McDowell plans to continue growing Hestia's Homemade Hearth and perfect his baked goods.

"I'm just happy to be able to offer something to friends and students specifically," McDowell said. "I know that having homemade baked goods in this area—so close to campus—is a really nice thing to have. I'm just glad to be able to provide things to friends and fellow students."

ASERGAZINA@COLUMBIACHRONICLE.COM

Prolific audio engineer, producer, teacher Joshua Shapera dies at 49

» SAVANNA STEFFENS/CHRONICLE



» MATEUSZ JANIK
SENIOR REPORTER

KNOWN AS AN innovative audio producer and engineer and a renowned educator in audio arts, Joshua Shapera, 49, led all aspects of his life with the utmost assurance and care for what he was doing.

“He [was] a super-confident guy, but also very smart about his decisions and just a total guru in the studio,” said Don Bates, 2013 audio design and production alum and freelance recording engineer. “You probably don’t see so many people with Josh’s level of mastery.”

Shapera, a best friend and close colleague to many, died on Dec. 18, 2020, at the University of Chicago Medical Center due to complications with lymphoma, a form of cancer commonly seen in transplant patients.

Shapera, who graduated from Colum-

bia in 1993 as a sound engineering major, was known for working with artists like David Murray, Aaliyah, The Flaming Lips and Liam Hayes, as well as sharing his experiences and knowledge as a part-time faculty member in the Audio Arts and Acoustics Department from 2006 until October 2020.

“We all felt like we had a niche and that we were all working to make a good recording community in Chicago,” said Benjamin Kanters, an associate professor in the Audio Arts and Acoustics Department and a close colleague. “We were just a really closely-knit group, and we shared ideas in the interest of building a good program.”

Nicholas Eipers, an adjunct faculty member in the Audio Arts and Acoustics Department, said in a Jan. 14 email to the Chronicle that he had known Shapera since the late 2000s when they both worked in the same building but at different studios.

Eipers said over the years the two of them had hundreds of conversations about improving curriculums, concepts, facilities and the student experience throughout the Audio Arts and Acoustics Department.

“While the ‘personal’ side was a much smaller percentage of our interaction, I certainly considered him a friend,” Eipers said in the email. “I know it’s going to hit me really hard, the first in-person meeting we have without him. I won’t be the only one.”

Outside of Columbia, Shapera continued to work independently with other musicians and producers on several projects until he met Patrick Sansone, a multi-instrumentalist in the rock bands Wilco and The Autumn Defense.

Sansone, who first met Shapera in 2008, said the two of them hit it off immediately. When Sansone was planning on finishing an album for The Autumn Defense, Shapera offered his studio space in Pilsen to use free

of charge in the evenings and on weekends.

“That really made an impression on me because this was still pretty early in our friendship, and I didn’t know him that well yet,” Sansone said. “I was just really touched by how generous he was with his space and the studio.”

Soon after, Sansone said they created a new private studio space in an old convenience store in Humboldt Park called the Mix-in’ Administration. He said they converted half of the space into a soundproof recording studio, while Shapera designed, framed and lined all the wiring needed.

Even after Sansone had moved to Nashville in 2015, he said they continued to work on multiple projects, including some of the more recent albums from The Autumn Defense.

Sansone said in more recent years Shapera had enrolled in a master’s program in cyber-

security at DePaul University, while the two of them occasionally collaborated on projects together and regularly kept up with each other.

“Josh was my best friend, though this is new territory for me to lose someone who was very close to me personally and... who made such an impact on the way I do my creative work,” Sansone said. “That’s a big hole in my life that no one will be able to replace. But on a creative level, as long as I’m making records and as long as I’m doing anything in the recording realm, he’s always going to be there... guiding me.”

Shapera is survived by his wife, Alexandra Pataky, and children, Levi and Sophie. For those wishing to support his family during this time, there is a GoFundMe page with more information.

MJANIK@COLUMBIACHRONICLE.COM

Look at this instead of doomscrolling: Meditative views from the Chronicle's multimedia team

» CAMILLA FORTE
DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY

BETWEEN [an attack on the Capitol](#) by pro-Trump insurrectionists, [new strains of the coronavirus](#) being discovered around the world and an [uncertain economic climate](#), 2021 is hardly a fresh slate.

While the start of a new year can often feel promising, the effects of a particularly chaotic 2020 did not magically vanish when the clock struck midnight on Jan. 1.

We've gone through a lot in the past year, but doomscrolling your way into the new one is hardly good for your mental health.

To combat the news blues many of us are already feeling, the Chronicle's multimedia team has created a mental health checkpoint of relaxing images for you to browse before you click on the next breaking news notification.

Take a moment to relax, recharge and picture yourself somewhere calmer.

CFORTE@COLUMBIACHRONICLE.COM



01



04



02



03



05

01 THE WILLIS TOWER, 233 S. WACKER DRIVE, REFLECTS THE COLORS OF THE SUNRISE IN THE EARLY MORNING HOURS OF TUESDAY, JAN. 18.

02 JAVA, AN 11-YEAR-OLD GOLDENDOODLE, BARKS AT ONGOING CONSTRUCTION OUTSIDE OF HER HOME IN SUN PRAIRIE, WISCONSIN.

03 RESIDENTS OF VENTURA, CALIFORNIA, GATHER ON THE BEACH TO ENJOY THE WARM WEATHER ON THE EVENING OF JAN. 16.

04 THE SUN DIPS BEHIND A CLOUD OVER CHICAGO'S EDGEWATER NEIGHBORHOOD LATE IN THE AFTERNOON ON JAN. 15.

05 A DESERTED PLAYGROUND ON WAGNER'S VINEYARD TRAIL IN SUN PRAIRIE, WISCONSIN, IS BLANKETED IN SNOW ON JAN. 16.



- » ABBY MCFARLAND/CHRONICLE 01, 10
- » CAMILLA FORTE/CHRONICLE 04, 09
- » KAYLIE SLACK/CHRONICLE 02, 05
- » SOFIA FELINO/CHRONICLE 03, 06
- » SHANE VERKEST/CHRONICLE 07
- » VALENTINA PUCARELLI/CHRONICLE 08
- » ZACHARY CLINGENPEEL/CHRONICLE 11



- 06 SURF BREAKS AT SUNSET ON SAN BUENAVENTURA STATE BEACH, 901 SAN PEDRO ST., IN DOWNTOWN VENTURA, CALIFORNIA.
- 07 COLORFUL STAIRS PROVIDE AN ARTISTIC SPLASH IN DOWNTOWN MOUNT CLEMENS, MICHIGAN.
- 08 A DELTA CANADAIR REGIONAL JET FLIES OVER CHICAGO'S TRI-TAYLOR NEIGHBORHOOD ON JAN. 15.
- 09 APARTMENT TENANTS BEGIN TO TURN ON THEIR LIGHTS AS THE SUN SETS BEHIND ONE OF THE MARINA TOWERS, 300 N. STATE ST., IN CHICAGO'S RIVER NORTH NEIGHBORHOOD.
- 10 BRIGHT STARS ILLUMINATE THE NIGHT SKY AROUND 11 P.M. ON JAN. 15 IN OMAHA, NEBRASKA. THE STARS CAN BE SEEN IN THE AREA NEARLY EVERY CLOUDLESS NIGHT DUE TO THE MINIMAL LIGHT POLLUTION PRODUCED.
- 11 A RAFT OF MALLARDS — A SPECIES OF WATER-FOWL COMMONLY FOUND IN CITY PARKS — FLOATS THROUGH WALKER LAKE IN KIRKWOOD, MISSOURI.



Columbia says goodbye to three genre-specific journals and hello to Allium: A Journal of Poetry & Prose

» BROOKLYN KIOSOW
MANAGING EDITOR

WITH THE MASTER of Fine Arts program changing at Columbia, a conversation to create a new literary journal that encompassed all genres followed soon after.

Allium: A Journal of Poetry & Prose will replace Hair Trigger, Punctuate and Columbia Poetry Review as a multi- and mixed-genre journal.

It is a journal that “crosses genre boundaries,” said Pegeen Reichert Powell, chair of the English and Creative Writing Department.

According to Allium’s [submissions page](#), the name comes from a “flower that includes hundreds of species ... [that vary] in size, shape and color.” Allium hopes to “create a similar resistance by publishing diverse creative voices, recognized and emerging writers and a variety of forms and genres.”

Reichert Powell said MFA students entering Columbia next year will be allowed to work across all genres and will no longer be required to declare a specific genre to study, which

influenced the department’s decision to create Allium.

“The departments have moved around, and we are back [to being] one big department now ... and it felt like a good time to unify our efforts behind a single journal that we could all claim as part of our identity,” Reichert Powell said.

Allium, a print and online publication, plans to have an online fall and spring issue, as well as an annual winter print issue, according to Kenneth Daley, associate professor in the English and Creative Writing Department and editor-in-chief of Allium. Allium’s team hopes to have the first edition of Allium available by this summer or early fall.

While Hair Trigger, Punctuate and Columbia Poetry Review will no longer accept submissions, previous work published through these three journals will remain available on Allium’s archives page once it is active. The editing and production courses associated with those journals will still be available for undergraduate and graduate students to take.

Undergraduate students are hand-selected by faculty for the “Literary Magazine Editing” course based on their demonstration of leadership skills and exceptional writing, according to Alexis Pride, associate professor in the English and Creative Writing Department.

Trevor Templeton, a 2020 creative writing alum, took the course last spring and was able to read student submissions and vote on what would make the cut for Hair Trigger.

For Templeton, taking the course and being able to read for Hair Trigger was a beneficial experience that he said will continue helping students as they read for Allium.

“[Hair Trigger] definitely gave me a stronger sense of narrative and how to recognize that and how to say what’s working and what’s not working in a much more objective way,” he said.

Only a few things will change for the course. Instead of editing only fiction submissions, there will be a focus on editing both fiction and nonfiction submissions, and there will be a companion course for poetry.

Pride, who has taught the course for

nearly five years and is teaching it again this semester, is excited about what the change may bring.

“As with every experience where you are at the precipice of change, there is always the sentiment and deep appreciation of what past experiences have offered,” Pride said. “But at the same time, there is the expectation and the excitement as you look toward the future and what the potential of growth and change can also afford you.”

Allium will accept submissions nationally and internationally from published authors while making room for Columbia students.

Pride said she and other faculty members were adamant the production of the magazine remain student-centered and allow students to grow their professional skill set, give them an opportunity to get published and grant them experience working on a literary magazine.

Delia Rainey, a graduate student in the nonfiction program in the English and Creative Writing Department, read for Punctuate during the Spring 2020 semester. Rainey said she hopes Columbia continues to prioritize student submissions like Punctuate did.

“It builds community ... to all be in a magazine together,” she said.

Allium is currently accepting submissions, and Daley said they already have a few hundred submissions ready for students in the “Literary Magazine Editing” course to review.

While Hair Trigger gave Columbia students a better opportunity to get published, Allium has the potential to heighten the magazine as a whole by having contributors from all over the world, Templeton said.

For Daley, the most important thing about Allium is the multitude of student opportunities it offers.

“First and foremost is the experience that our students have,” Daley said. “Some of them will be published in the journal, and it may be their first publication, and many more students will be involved in editing and reading through these submissions, which I think is a really educational and important experience for [students] ... interested in creative writing.”

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Irazu gains massive community support after receiving Barstool Fund

» KAYLIE SLACK
PHOTOJOURNALIST

FOLLOWING A YOUTUBE announcement that Chicago's self-described first and only Costa Rican restaurant was struggling amid the pandemic, Chicagoans flocked to the business to show their support. On Jan. 11, Irazu was selected as a recipient of Dave Portnoy's Barstool Fund.

The restaurant, located at 1865 N. Milwaukee Ave., was opened in 1990 by Gerardo and Miriam Cerdas. After immigrating from Costa Rica in the 1970s, the two began raising their family in Bucktown, only a few blocks from where the current restaurant stands. Around 14 years ago, their son Henry Cerdas took over ownership of Irazu.

In a [YouTube video](#), Henry Cerdas applied to the Barstool Fund—a fund sponsored by Barstool Sports for small business owners in need of help due to the impacts of COVID-19—expressing that the restaurant needed “a little bit of extra help to continue the legacy.”

In the video, Miriam Cerdas gave her own message asking Barstool Sports for assistance.

“Serving food from Costa Rica is my American dream,” she said. “Please help us to keep it alive.”

Henry Cerdas got the idea to apply for the Barstool Fund after a customer brought it to his attention in December. Cerdas, who said he has a “shyness about asking for help,” had not asked for any support prior—not even governmental assistance. Cerdas eventually reached out to Barstool after his own funds were running low.

“There didn't seem to be a light at the

end of the tunnel,” he said. “Hours would go by without any orders ... [and] my own rainy-day fund was dwindling.”

Cerdas submitted his application the morning of Jan. 11, and that same afternoon he said he received a FaceTime call from Portnoy, the founder of Barstool Sports, awarding him the fund.

The fund has raised more than \$27 million and received contributions from celebrities including Tom Brady, Aaron Rodgers, Kid Rock and Elon Musk, according to an article in the [New York Post](#). Portnoy has not said how much he has given recipients of the fund, but said that small business owners usually request between \$3,000 and \$50,000, according to the Post.

Cerdas, who did not disclose the amount of his award, said he plans to use it for property tax relief, promotion and advertising and to keep his staff on payroll.

Irazu has been featured in a multitude of local media outlets since receiving the fund, including NBC Chicago and [Block Club Chicago](#). The restaurant has also gained significant support from social media including Twitter, with many Chicagoans encouraging people to place orders.

Irazu has also received positive support from the surrounding Bucktown neighborhood.

“I did not know the reaction would be so immense. They have come out in droves,” Cerdas said. “The city has risen to the challenge.”

Cerdas even had to deactivate the web platform where people can order food online on certain evenings due to an overwhelming amount of orders.



BETO RUIZ HAS WORKED AT IRAZU FOR 14 YEARS AND CURRENTLY WORKS IN THE RESTAURANT'S KITCHEN.

While Cerdas is proud of and grateful for the Barstool Fund, and the neighborhood's subsequent reaction, he acknowledged that the momentum will be hard to maintain.

“The fund will only work if orders come in,” he said. “We can't operate without orders.”

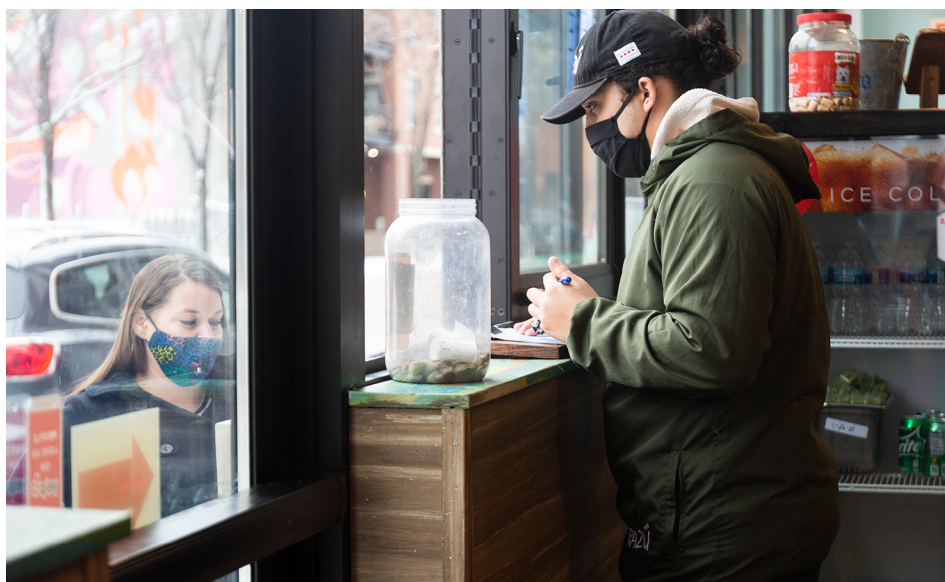
Irazu is currently closed for dine-in despite the city's new allowance for 25% indoor capacity in restaurants and bars. Cerdas said his first priority is the safety of his staff, and he hopes his employees can all receive vaccinations before customers are allowed back inside the restaurant.

“Mitigating the risk for my staff, who [have] been with me for so long, is very important to me,” Cerdas said. “We are an absolute family.”

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GERARDO AND MIRIAM CERDAS NAMED THEIR RESTAURANT IRAZU AFTER THE FAMOUS COSTA RICAN VOLCANO.



ROBERT MERCADO TAKES ORDERS FROM THE GROWING LINE OF CUSTOMERS AT 11:30 A.M.



IRAZU'S TORTILLA CHIPS ARE MADE FRESH, THEN PACKAGED AND PAIRED AS A SIDE WITH ORDERS.

» KAYLIE SLACK/CHRONICLE

Loop protesters stand in solidarity with farmer demonstrations in India

» ZACHARY CLINGENPEEL
PHOTOJOURNALIST

THICK, WET SNOW covered the colorful turbans and green and yellow banners of Southeast Asians living in Chicago who chanted “No farmers, no food” during a demonstration in the Loop.

The same day farmers in India rode into New Delhi on Indian Republic Day, protesters gathered in the Loop Tuesday, Jan. 26. Amid freezing temperatures, they expressed their solidarity with Indian farmers who are angered by “three contentious bills that will change the way India’s farmers do business,” [according to the BBC](#).

The agricultural laws were passed by the Indian government last September and have caused disruption within the country’s parliament, with protests taking place outside of New Delhi for months. The bills allow private companies to buy produce directly from farmers, causing concern about the possibility of big corporations eventually taking over small farms.

Protesters in Chicago gathered outside of the Daley Center for the Chicago Solidarity Protest for Farmers in India. The demonstrators, organized by the group Chicago Stands With Farmers, came together to provide moral support for the protesters in India.

“Many of the people here have family that are impacted directly by this,” said Parminder Singh Mann,

one of the speakers at the event. “I’m first generation, [and] there are people here who are recent immigrants. They actually have family members that are at the protest site.”

Some Indian farmers fear reduced government protections, including guaranteed minimum prices for certain crops, could leave farmers “at the mercy of greedy corporations,” [according to The New York Times](#).

In New Delhi, on the same day as the Chicago protest, tens of thousands of farmers showed up at India’s capital on tractors with Indian flags, “overshadowing a traditional military parade on a national holiday,” [according to NPR](#).

The local gathering Tuesday was the second of its kind organized by Chicago Stands With Farmers, and Mann said the organization will support Indian farmers for as long as the protests in India continue.

One of the primary goals of the event was to raise awareness about the protests in India. Another goal was to get local politicians to voice support for the efforts in India. Ald. Rossana Rodriguez Sanchez (33rd Ward) expressed support for the protesters via a statement read by organizers at the demonstration.

A majority of the crowd was Sikh, a religion that is common in the Punjab region where the striking farmers come from, according to Harvir Singh, a key organizer of the demonstration. The event began



KJ SINGH LEADS PROTESTERS STANDING IN SOLIDARITY WITH INDIAN FARMERS THROUGH THE LOOP WITH CHANTS ON JAN. 26.

with a traditional Sikh prayer to bless those demonstrating.

According to Mann, most of the Punjabi community is closely tied to agriculture, and the industry employs 60% of the Indian population. Many of the protesters at the demonstration voiced concern about the possibility of family members losing land as a result of the bills.

Despite gathering during the first major snow storm of the year, the event was attended by around 200 members of the Chicago Southeast Asian and the Midwest Southeast Asian communities, Singh said.

Several community members delivered speeches in English, Punjabi, Hindi and Urdu, includ-

ing Mann, Junaid Ahmed and Pushkar Sharma.

Protesters at the event wore green armbands and flew green banners, the color used by the farmers protesting in India. Banners at the event read “No Farmers, No Food, No Future.”

Mann said the protests in India and Chicago have remained peaceful, although it was reported that “many protesters were injured” at the protest in New Delhi, [according to The New York Times](#).

“As we bring this to the global stage, then it puts a pressure on India and its government that the world is watching,” Mann said.

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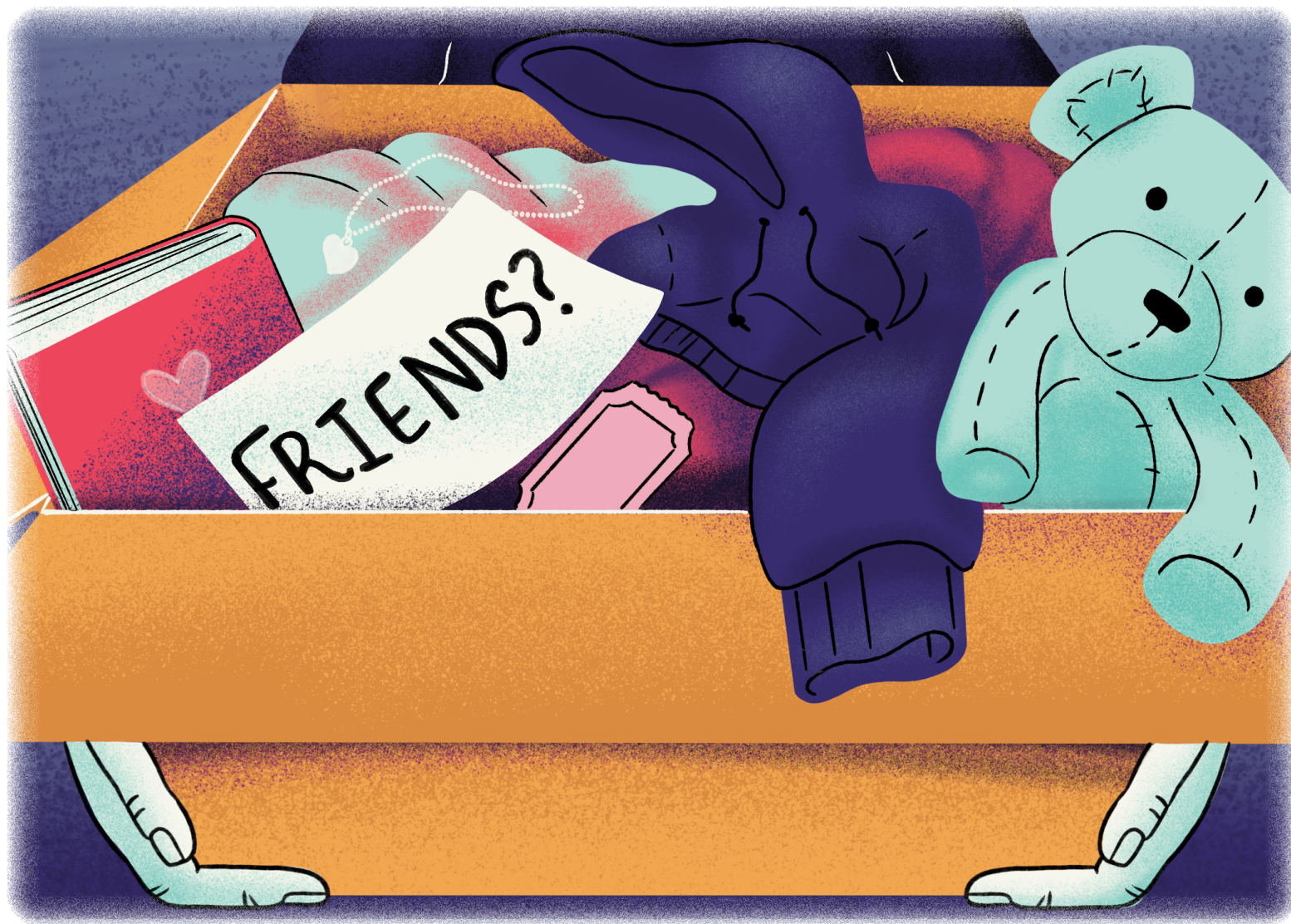


ORGANIZERS WEARING REFLECTIVE VESTS LEAD THE CROWD IN CHANTS



PROTESTERS WEAR GREEN ARM BANDS REPRESENTING FARMERS IN INDIA OPPOSING RECENT AGRICULTURAL LEGISLATION.

Awkward: How do you stay friends with an ex?



» SAVANNA STEFFENS/CHRONICLE

» SUMMER HOAGLAND-ABERNATHY
COPY CHIEF

YOU ARE SNUGLING up next to your partner, ready for a cozy Friday night in, when your phone lights up. Shining bright in the notification bubble is the name of your ex, attached to a friendly text. After a polite back and forth for a few messages, the conversation leads to a platonic Zoom chat to catch up a few days later.

Your last breakup was—in a word—rough. But you and your ex were friends before you were dating, so why not after?

The Chronicle asked experts for advice on how to get back on good terms with your ex—without getting back together.

ASK YOURSELF THE TOUGH QUESTIONS.

[Alexandra H. Solomon](#), clinical psychologist at The Family Institute at Northwestern University, said the question you should be asking yourself is why you want to be friends with your ex.

“That clarity has to precede any

decision-making because very often the desire to be friends with one’s ex is really complicated,” she said. “Some of the motivators for maintaining friendship are really unhealthy.”

She said if the person who broke off the relationship is initiating contact, it could be an attempt to minimize their grief or guilt. But if the person who was broken up with is initiating, they may be hoping the other person will change their mind and want to get back together.

COMMUNICATION IS A MUST.

Hollie Schmid, marriage and family therapist at Relationship Reality 312, said she would not recommend being friends with an ex because of the potential difficulty in differentiating boundaries between a romantic relationship and a friendship.

But if you find yourself already in this situation, she said a conversation with your ex about boundaries can be a big help. Continuing this conversation is important if you’re in a relationship and

your friendship starts to affect you and your partner, Schmid said.

“If it’s something that my friend—which is my ex—is doing, I would communicate what the boundaries are and make sure that they know ... they’re not allowed to have a say on my current relationship,” she said. “But if ... your current partner is not happy with you being friends with your ex, then ... I would encourage making that decision once you know that this is a relationship that you confidently see yourself moving forward in.”

In a Jan. 17 email to the Chronicle, psychologist and friendship expert [Irene S. Levine](#) said if your partner is upset with your friendship with your ex, talk to them to see what is troubling them. Are they feeling jealous? Are they feeling left out of this intimate relationship you have with another person? Are they insecure about your relationship with them?

If both you and your ex are in new relationships, it is important you both communicate you are in a

relationship up front, said Bonnie Tsai, founder and director of [Beyond Etiquette](#), a social and business etiquette consulting agency.

WHAT IF YOU’RE SINGLE?

But if neither of you are in a relationship, Tsai said creating boundaries is still important. Ask what both of you are here for: fortifying friendship, romantic relationship rekindling or something else.

Making sure you’re on the same page and respecting each other’s boundaries, she said, is the most important aspect of maintaining friendship with an ex.

“Unfortunately, when we break up with someone and we’re no longer with them, we kind of lose a best friend,” Tsai said. “We get to know them so well over the course of our relationship, but because we broke up, they’re kind of now a stranger or an acquaintance.”

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OPINION: TRANS RIGHTS SHOULD NOT BE UP FOR INTERPRETATION

» ISAIAH COLBERT
OPINIONS EDITOR

SINCE THE ATTACK on the Capitol and the second impeachment of former President Donald Trump in the first few weeks of 2021, 10 members of his administration jumped ship in the form of resignations.

This act of putting in their two weeks' notice served as an attempt for government officials to distance themselves from Trump and absolve any guilt from having associated with him.

However, Betsy DeVos, former U.S. secretary of education, stuck to her guns and took one last petty shot at LGBTQ+ rights on her way out in a pitiful memo.

DeVos submitted her letter of resignation on Jan. 7, a day after the attack on the Capitol. She stated in her letter to Trump that instead of celebrating his accomplishments for the American people, his administration was left to clean up the mess from violent protestors, according to the [Wall Street Journal](#).

DeVos seems to have a mirror-less house, as she clearly has not looked at how her own actions and rhetoric have

negatively impacted LGBTQ+ and, specifically, trans people.

On Jan. 8, the day DeVos' resignation was to take effect, the U.S. Department of Education Office of the General Counsel released a [13-page internal memorandum](#) that sought to invalidate [previous Title IX discrimination protections](#) for trans people.

LGBTQ+ and trans advocates clearly saw DeVos' fingerprints smudged all over the memorandum.

The memo features archaic yet familiar language from Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972.

In the memo, categories of biological sex are used to discriminate against trans people, urging schools to deny them access to compete on sports teams and use gender-affirming bathrooms.

In reference to trans students joining athletic programs, [the memo states](#) athletic teams should "separate participants solely based on their biological sex, male or female, and not based on transgender status or homosexuality, to comply with Title IX."

When encouraging schools not to al-

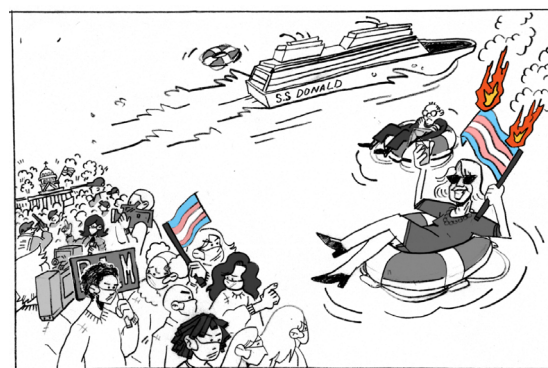
low trans students to access the correct bathrooms, the [memo states](#): "The term 'sex' in this regulation clearly means 'biological sex,' or sex assigned at birth. Thus, it asserts that dividing restrooms by sex assigned at birth—requiring transgender boys to use the girls' restroom and transgender girls to use the boys' restroom—cannot be discriminatory."

For a person who has claimed to believe the federal government should not be heavily involved in education, DeVos is displaying heavy-handed micromanagement of trans people with this memo.

The memo is a stingy death throw from the Trump administration and will be remembered as the crab in a bucket concept brought to life: "If I can't have it, neither can you." The previous administration would rather have the rights of trans people go down with them than bow out in disgrace.

This latest memo will undoubtedly be hit with an Uno reverse card in the form of executive orders issued by the newly-inaugurated President Joe Biden.

Biden issued [26 executive orders](#) within his first two days in office—one of which reversed an order put in place by the Trump administration al-



» CHLOE MCMULLEN/CHRONICLE

lowing the federal government to discriminate based on sexual orientation or gender identity. Biden also issued the banning of combat discrimination based on gender and sexual orientation, [according to a statement from White House communication officials](#).

The Biden administration has a low bar to jump, simply by not being the Trump administration. But undoing previous actions against trans people will not be enough. Biden should make it impossible for so-called originalists to use Title IX to exclude trans people and prioritize their explicit protection.

Trans people should not have to be patient onlookers to the on-again-off-again life cycle of legislation that protects them under each administration.

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