



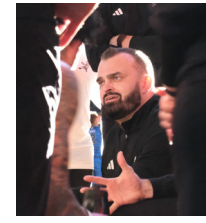
Students raise concerns at town hall

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USFSP students prepare for BTS's dynamite return

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USF hires new basketball coaches

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# THE CROW'S NEST

THE STUDENT NEWSPAPER AT THE USF ST. PETERSBURG CAMPUS

Volume 62 | Issue 10 | April 13th, 2026 | Online at [crowsneststpete.com](http://crowsneststpete.com) @CrowsNestStPete @USFCrowsNest @USFCrowsNest The Crow's Nest at USFSP

## SENIORS IMPRESS AT GRAPHIC ARTS SHOWCASE



Senior graphic design major Montana Smith presented her piece "Print is Alive." PHOTO BY MARÍA JOSÉ SOLÍS

See **SHOWCASE** on p. 4

## USFSP SG REFLECTS ON CHALLENGES AMID ELECTIONS

BY JASMIN PARRADO  
CROW'S NEST STAFF

General elections for Student Government made headway across all campuses at the University of South Florida this spring, and uncertified results on March 10 narrowed down the race of almost 100 candidates, who led brief campaigns promising student resources and representation just weeks prior.

The Election Rules

Commission will look to new leaders to fulfill those promises. Elections come at a time when SG faces recurring financial challenges like the A&S budget, which has been cut by 50% for the 2025-26 fiscal year, slashing budget allocations for upwards of 250 student organizations across all campuses.

"That's about hundreds of thousands of dollars in cuts," USFSP SG Governor Prophete said. "But something we're really prioritizing, obviously,

is students as Student Government, and also the livelihoods of people."

Prophete, junior in political science and sustainability studies, decided not to run for re-election.

She said the decision was difficult, but important — and it models civic changes beyond academia.

"I think it's really important to be able to step away from power that you have and trust that other people can do it and will do it and will do an amazing

job at fulfilling the role that I've been in for two years," Prophete told *The Crow's Nest*.

Six years into its tri-campus consolidation, "representation and budgets are a continuous battle" for SG, Prophete said.

"I think just being able to have St. Pete representation or Sarasota representation from local execs in a federal executive cabinet, where it's mostly campus students, is a little bit difficult," Prophete told *The Crow's Nest*.

Prophete believes that with the intersection of campus-specific needs and funding setbacks, the A&S budget is often a "scary conversation to have," and it will be a vital topic for future student leaders to tackle, especially with a consolidated SG.

"But that's the point of government," Prophete said. "So, I think it's a battle that will be fought with every administration each year."

See **USFSP SG** on p.2

# 2 NEWS

## USFSP SG

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

Prophete said she believes “having a more collaborative spirit” will be helpful in navigating those conversations and ensuring that “they’re actually conversations and not just one-sided decisions.”

She hopes to see the incoming president and vice president embody that spirit.

Candidates campaigned extensively for their SG roles earlier this month, and political student organizations either opted to endorse candidates or pull away from electoral support.

In a Feb. 28 Instagram post, USF College Democrats declared that it had decided not to endorse any candidates in the election.

Its statement was shown beneath a photo of a digital sign in the University Student Center that previously displayed its initial endorsement of Williams — the organization’s president — and Mahesh.

Meanwhile, USF Tampa’s College Republicans endorsed Esmeraldi and Martins, Mayer and Jacomini and Lucio Bagulho, who ran for senate, in an

Instagram post on March 2.

Williams — whose campaign alongside Mahesh came shortly after he stepped down as SG’s senate president — told *The Crow’s Nest* he wanted to address controversial administrative actions such as the Sarasota-Manatee bill proposal, which would facilitate the New College of Florida’s purchase of the 51-year-old campus.

In addition to mental health struggles, the political science junior said he chose to exit his senate president position to avoid facing “baby politics,” which he alleged is common in smaller SG circles, alongside current leaders’ lack of initiative to advocate.

During his campaign, Williams told *The Crow’s Nest* he’d also aim to represent USF St. Petersburg and Sarasota-Manatee to his “fullest ability” and that he felt “muted” from doing that in his previous role, which he said is designated as a neutral arbiter in SG senate matters.

Prophete said the student body president role may face certain limitations on its own, since the president resides in the cabinet as opposed to her own position, in which she feels



Students will have the chance to vote for the campus council, governor, and lt. governor tickets on April 21-22.

PHOTO BY MAKENNA WOZNIAK

she “speaks up all the time.”

“I’m not sure how navigating that will be with whoever the next student body president is, but I think they should just know that their position is not in jeopardy if they’re advocating for students,” Prophete said. “That’s the entire point of their job.”

Prophete believes that if the president feels “empowered” in their role and has agency in it, then they should not have any issue speaking up about what they believe in and what students need.

Prophete recalled that during her term, she advocated for inter-campus

transportation — and SG should pursue it going forward.

With high gas prices and the university tuition’s transportation fee, she believes the solution is essential if USF wants to reach its consolidation objective, which is otherwise stunted largely by the issue.

“I just feel like it’s still kind of ridiculous, and it’s a battle that is gonna take a while to solve,” Prophete told *The Crow’s Nest*.

Amid funding, transportation and representation, Prophete also hopes that future SG leadership can also prioritize the USC’s art

gallery, primarily to restore representation lost years ago with the removal of its international flags.

“Being able to show student representation — student artwork directly — especially with our wonderful graphic arts program, and just to show the culture of the St. Pete campus is something I’d really love for SG to continue with after I’m not the governor anymore,” Prophete said.

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# STUDENTS TALK DIVERSITY CONCERNS

NEWS 3

By JULIA FERRARA &  
ALISHA DUROSIER  
CROWS NEST STAFF

University of South Florida St. Petersburg students and faculty from various departments met in the atrium of the University of South Florida St. Petersburg Nelson Poynter Memorial on April 2 for the annual town hall — an opportunity for students to ask campus administrators questions and voice their concerns.

Hosted by the USF St. Petersburg student government, students addressed their questions to a panel of campus faculty and student employees.

The panel consisted of Interim Regional Chancellor Thomas Smith, campus Governor Elise Prophete, Lieutenant Governor Victoria Drews, Assistant Director of Housing Stephen Harris, Assistant Director of Residential Education Amy Pounders, Regional Chief of Police David Hendry, Facilities Director of Operations, Parking and Transportation Director Scott Fox, USF Dining's Marketing Coordinator Rachel France and USF Culinary Director Antonio Garcia.

The event touched on a number of topics from housing cost to censorship. Here is what you need to know.

Much of the concerns brought forward by students referenced diversity and representation on campus.

Diversity in higher education has been a point of contention for Florida universities since 2023, when Gov. Ron DeSantis signed SB 266.

Tensions spiked for USF St. Petersburg students a year later, when the identity and multicultural flags once adorning the ceiling of the campus university student center were taken down after a visitor complaint.

Interim Chancellor Thomas Smith and Dean of Students Jacob Diaz took the lead in responding to questions regarding representation.

Smith took a more



**The panel heard from students on a myriad of topics ranging from expanding dining options to accessibility concerns.**

PHOTO BY  
MAKENNA WOZNIAK

academic approach with his response, noting the importance of intellectual diversity within the classroom.

Alternatively, Diaz touched on diversity from a more political standpoint.

"I think we live in times right now where there still exists this hierarchy of human value. And I think for me, what keeps us awake at night here is this idea that we still have a lot of work left to do about addressing that gap. And I think that systemic oppression, systemic racism, gender, class, it still impacts the environment. And so, I think for me, it is about having a discussion about ideas, about who's represented, who isn't..." he said.

Students agreed with this sentiment but also emphasized wanting something tangible.

"I do agree that the multicultural organizations provide a beautiful community for our diverse population. But as a Latin American student, I don't feel like that's enough representation for me on this campus," marine biology sophomore Emilia Wrucke said. "I would like to see some change in that."

However, Smith and Diaz said that multicultural flags and other non-USF signage cannot be permanently displayed on campus and without approval or purpose in compliance with USF policy.

"So, any non-USF flags, one must be run through our process for consideration, but the other is it can't be permanent. So, if we're having an event, like Thomas just mentioned, we can certainly have flags that reflect the purpose and spirit of that event. They can't be permanent. And that's what we're following right now," Diaz said.

The panel didn't clarify the exact policy they were referencing; however, they may be referring to USF's Activities, Signage, and Use of Public Space-Policy 6-028.

Another student brought up a concern regarding the integrity of multicultural student organizations.

"Something...I think a lot of us have been concerned about, is the integrity of multicultural orgs on campus. There have been a lot of changes to how we operate recently," English senior Julia

Birdsall and secretary of PRIDE Alliance said. "The words that we use in our marketing, the way that our windows in the OMA (Office of Multicultural Affairs) office have been fogged over, the way that we can use that space."

Diaz led his response saying that the windows of the OMA office were fogged over at the request of students.

According to Birdsall, students requested curtains to open and close at will.

Diaz also said that faculty have had to adjust to the restrictions enforced by SB 266.

"I think we're trying to operate within the context of restrictions imposed that all public institutions are wrestling with," he said.

Both Smith and Diaz referenced a list of words that multicultural organizations on campus were reportedly told not to use in their marketing last year.

The list originated from a report by the Committee of Science and Transportation led by senator Ted Cruz conducted into National Science Foundation (NSF). The report looked into NSF-funded research proposals

and the common keywords deemed "woke".

This list included words like marginalized, women, LGBTQ+, ethnicity and more.

"... That certainly had an effect — no question about it — on federal research. But that should not filter down at all to student organizations," Smith said.

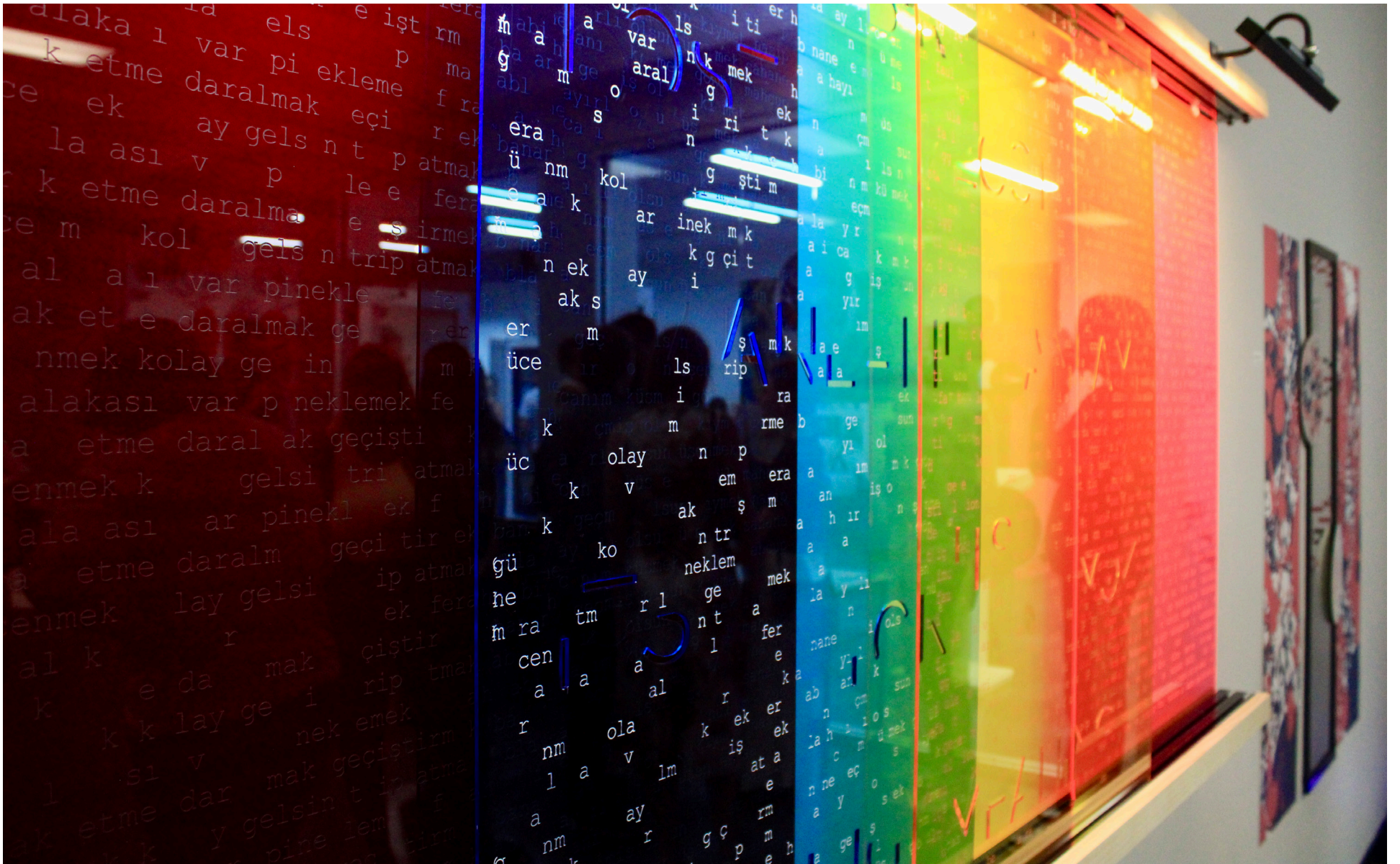
According to Birdsall, the list was "explicitly enforced" onto multicultural organizations last year, though organizations are no longer required to adhere to the list.

"Our main concern is just ensuring that students feel safe and protected on campus," Birdsall said. "Because while a lot of these things you say were put in place to help us and protect us and uplift us, it feels like we're being pushed out."

Read more online on  
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# GRAPHIC DESIGN IS (NOT JUST) THEIR PASSION



Graphic design senior Irene Eymur, whose piece portrays some of the difficulties of being speaking multiple languages, encouraged classmates to “be more expressive and...include their cultural background into their projects to show who they actually are.”

PHOTO BY  
MARÍA JOSÉ SOLÍS

BY ALISHA DUROSIER, ZARIYA BANKSTON, REGAN HASKELL, & JULIA BIRDSALL  
CONTRIBUTOR & CN STAFF

There is only one place on the University of South Florida St. Petersburg campus where students’ stories, cultures and passions are brought to life: Harbor Hall during the annual senior graphic arts showcase.

On April 10, students and community members filed into Harbor Hall’s

gallery space to see the graphic arts seniors’ work. Their installations serve as their thesis, a final project before graduation.

“Senior thesis is not for the faint of heart,” graphic arts senior with a concentration in graphic design, Lauren Gaubert, told *The Crow’s Nest*.

Gaubert’s thesis project, titled “Something Blue,” pays homage to the inextricably linked histories of computers and fabric arts, along with women’s

contributions to the development of technology.

“The first computer was made out of a Jacquard Loom and the first computer programmer was a woman. She was the one who helped turn the loom into the analytical engine,” Gaubert said. “And I think art and STEM disciplines are so deeply intertwined; there’s not a lot of conversation about it.”

Gaubert experimented with fabric arts for her project, creating a quilt out of cyanotyped pieces of fabric. Gaubert doesn’t see herself venturing into fabric arts post-graduation but wanted to take advantage of all the resources the graphic arts program has available.

Senior graphic design major Montana Smith combined woodwork and screen printing for her final project — interactive wooden mechanisms titled “Print is Alive.”

The project, Smith said, is inspired by the common idea that the art of printing is dead and her desire to challenge that notion.

“I wanted to figure out how to physically make print alive,” she said.

Her process involved photographing organic and inorganic materials under microscopes, including ink, emulsion and mesh screens—all materials used to produce silkscreen prints. She then combined these images to create textures, which she printed onto wooden and paper mechanisms that audience members could interact with.

Smith also live-screen-printed posters for the event.

“[The need for audience interaction] ties into the idea that in order to keep print alive, you have to interact with it, and you have to engage with it,” she told *The Crow’s Nest*.

2026 graphic arts seniors were not assigned a theme for their thesis, which Gaubert and Smith both appreciated.

“I enjoy that there’s no through line. There’s no conclusion to be reached,” Gaubert said. “It really is just an exploration of our own individual passions, talents, [and] directions we want to take in our career or completely the opposite.”

Smith also pointed out that every project looked unique.

“I liked it because I got to do whatever I wanted with it. It kind of led to more experiments,” she said. “I got to experiment with a lot more things because I didn’t really have any guidelines.”

Graphic design professor David Watts told *The Crow’s Nest* that he wanted the seniors’ gallery to create conversation and spark curiosity.

“I want them to ask questions and [leave] unsure to the point where they start thinking about the work an hour later, a day later, a year later,” he said. “I don’t want to come in and say, ‘That was pretty.’ I want them to come in and say, ‘What was that?’”

Graphic design senior Alexis Okla said that audience perception was always something she and her peers considered.



Illustration senior Alexa Arostegui used her senior thesis to bring her story to life. The story is heavily inspired by Latin American culture and features themes of anti-colonialism.

PHOTO BY  
ALISHA DUROSIER

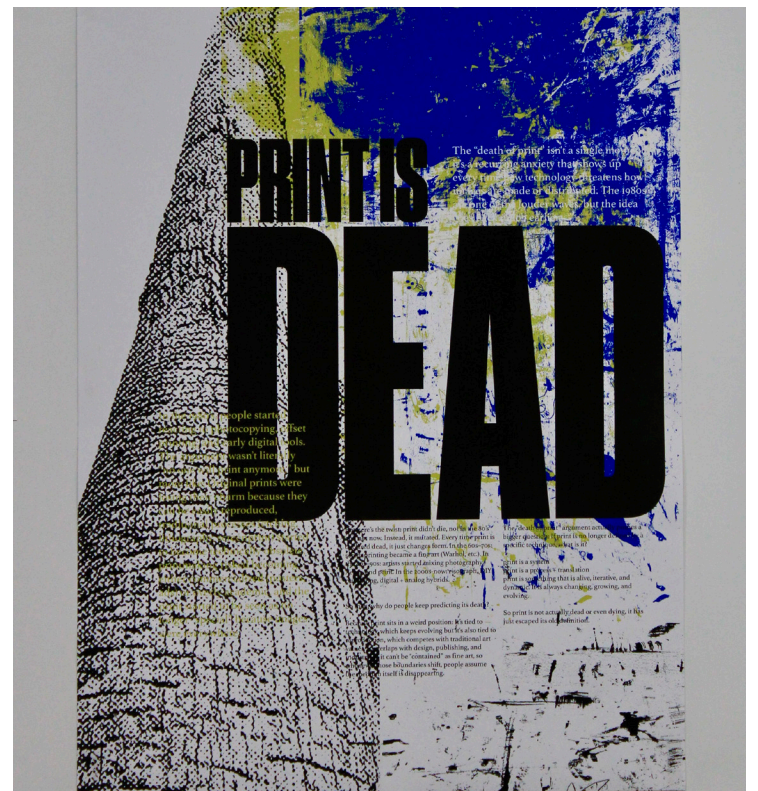
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Illustration senior Kaila McEwan created her piece, "Game Changers," to highlight the growing number of women in sports.

PHOTO BY  
MARÍA JOSÉ SOLÍS



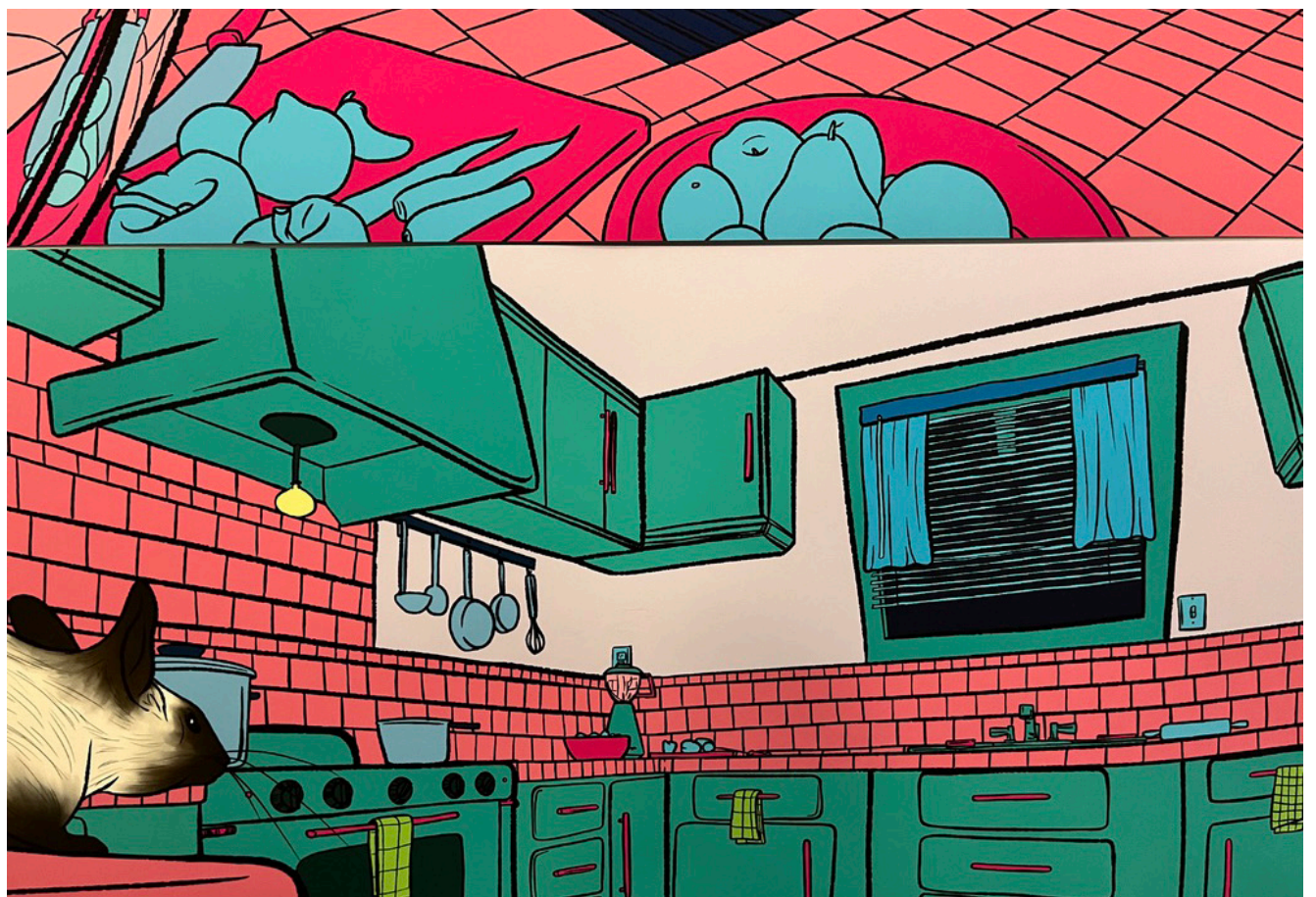
"I got to experiment with a lot more things because I didn't really have any guidelines," Montana Smith, senior graphic design senior, told *The Crow's Nest*.

PHOTO BY  
MARÍA JOSÉ SOLÍS



Gaubert's thesis project, titled "Something Blue."

PHOTO BY  
ALISHA DUROSIER



"I wanted to take this opportunity to sort of merge my illustration background and...character design with trying to get into that game development space," illustration senior Elizabeth Kurtz told *The Crow's Nest*.

PHOTO BY  
ALISHA DUROSIER



Graphic design senior Alexis Okla wanted to explore the ideals that are often disregarded in the modern portrayals of cowboy and western culture, like labor and integrity.

PHOTO BY  
MARÍA JOSÉ SOLÍS

# SUSTAIN-A-BULL? STUDENTS & FACULTY WEIGH IN

BY JULIA FERRARA  
CROW'S NEST STAFF

The University of South Florida has not had a functional Office of Sustainability since 2022 and in the midst of demands for USF to reinstate the office, students are calling into question how the university is progressing in its sustainability efforts.

The last person to hold a position in the Office of Sustainability was Winnie Malumba, a 2019 USF graduate who was the executive director.

She led two sustainability collectives, Florida For Good and B Tourism.

Christian Wells, a professor of anthropology at USF, served as the Founding director of the Office of Sustainability from 2009 to 2012. He shared that many of the office's activities ceased in 2012.

During his time there, he was responsible for helping the Provost's Office and the Graduate School launch the world's first School of Global Sustainability, helping the university to gain national recognition, including Second Nature's national Climate Leadership Award in 2012 and incorporating sustainability values into the University System Strategic Plan.

Wells also helped create a \$1 million annual Student Green Energy Fund (SGEF) to overhaul energy infrastructure on campus and raised over \$100k in gifts and other revenue.

Andrew Hargrove, a faculty member in the Judy Genshaft Honors College and the Director of the Climate Teach-In, said that the Office of Sustainability, ideally, would serve to ensure that USF is meeting its pledged goals of being



The Office of Sustainability operated for several years before running out of grant funding to continue its mission.

PHOTO BY JULIA BIRDSALL

net zero by 2070, by reducing its emissions by 70 percent by 2025.

"Ideally, the Office of Sustainability would be in charge of making sure that we are on track to reach those goals," Hargrove said.

Some of these responsibilities would include taking inventory of our carbon emissions, directing the university towards initiatives, projects, infrastructure, and improvements that would move us towards the goal across all three campuses and bring together different individuals, departments, and student organizations that are already doing sustainability work.

Oliver Lackzo, a senior environmental science and policy major and the vice chair of SGEF said that the Office of Sustainability was intertwined with the facilities services.

"Oftentimes [sustainability] is infrastructure, conservation, landscaping, architecture and planning," Lackzo said. "They operated out of the facilities office, and they helped push for renewable energy

infrastructure, waste reduction initiatives, policies and measures and conservation efforts."

Hargrove added that the Office of Sustainability has served as a resource for connection, bringing together groups working towards sustainable futures.

"The Office of Sustainability would kind of be the backbone of all the great sustainability work that's already happening on campus, but that's currently being done in these isolated pockets, in spaces where they don't know about each other, in spaces where they don't have institutional funding or institutional support," Hargrove said.

Hargrove added that the office existed when the university started its Climate Action Plan in 2010 and closed when their funding ran out and they couldn't afford to renew Wells' position.

What used to be an office of people working together was reduced to just one, making it harder to complete their work, Lackzo said, citing the 2016 Climate Action Plan, which listed

multiple team members from the USF Office of Sustainability.

Julianna Parisi, a senior environmental science and policy major and a chair for SGEF, said that SGEF was told by administration that the goal was for the St. Petersburg campus to be the hub for sustainability.

"We were then told there was no funding for the position and therefore no way to fill it," Parisi said.

The lack of an Office of Sustainability puts a strain on SGEF and its progress — an experience that's been exacerbated by SGEF's consolidation in 2025.

As of last July, the funds from the Student Green Fee that fund SGEF projects was consolidated into one pool. Along with this, members on the St. Petersburg campus had to start reporting to greater council to access their budget.

Read more online on [crowstestpete.com](http://crowstestpete.com)

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## THE CROW'S NEST

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The Crow's Nest is committed to providing its readers with news relevant to the University of South Florida St. Petersburg campus and its surrounding community. The Crow's Nest abides by the highest ethical standards and focuses on stories that help readers make informed decisions on current issues. We take seriously the public's trust in our news reporting and strive to uphold the highest standards of reporting as defined by the Society of Professional Journalists. Opinions in this newspaper do not necessarily represent those of the administration, faculty or student body.

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# USF STUDENTS ANTICIPATE BTS RETURN

ARTS  
& LIFE

7

By SECILIA RUIZ

CONTRIBUTOR

**K**-pop fans around the world shrieked in their bedrooms when the popular K-pop boy band BTS announced on Jan. 4 that they would not only be releasing their fifth studio album, “ARIRANG,” but that they would also be going on a world tour for the first time since their three-year hiatus.

“I saw a notification from “Weverse,” which is the app that BTS's company made to connect with fans... I checked and it said that they were going on tour – and that they were coming to Tampa – and I lost it. I completely lost it,” said junior environmental science major Adriana Santos.

BTS, which is an acronym for the Korean phrase “Bangtan Sonyeondan” (Bulletproof Boy Scouts), is a beloved K-pop band that has been in the international limelight for many people’s entire childhood.

Sophomore studio arts major Chaziah Parker has been a part of the BTS fandom, or “Army,” since sixth grade.

“[BTS] was different than what I was raised on... the aesthetic, the music videos. At the time of where I was, it was different and it was new and it was happy and bright,” she said.



**While students may be fans of BTS, many dislike the group’s company, HYBE. They have been accused of exploitative and toxic behavior towards their performers.**

COURTESY OF HYBE

USF alum Karin Woodbury agreed, highlighting a unique aspect of BTS’s music videos.

“They were one of the first artists that I found [where] their music videos were actually creating an overarching story. It wasn’t just random vignettes with the members in it. I liked the kind of story or lore aspect,” Woodbury said.

Santos pointed out how the band’s discography includes a multitude of different genres.

“I just really like how

diverse their music is,” they said. “The fact that they have everything from R&B to like electro-pop... it’s beautiful to me.”

At the height of their popularity, BTS went on a three-year hiatus during which the members embarked on solo careers while each completed the mandatory military service that is custom in South Korea.

Parker hopes this time apart will influence BTS’s new releases as a group.

“I’m excited to see what kind of music they

make again – if it’s altered because everyone’s touched into their own things, if they’re going to bring that together now,” she said.

Woodbury echoed a similar sentiment.

“...For the last few years as they’ve been in and out of the military, it’s mostly just been solo acts, but I think it’ll be good to see them trying to work together as a group again, because we haven’t really seen that in a while,” Woodbury said.

Santos argued that the blossoming of the members’ solo careers means that BTS as a group may become a thing of the past.

“[The members are] becoming different people, and I really don’t know how long they’re gonna still be making music together,” Santos said. “They’ll always be friends, but I think they’re enjoying the solo music more.”

With a combination of uncertainty and excitement present in the BTS “Army,” students were excited when a tour date was announced in Tampa.

“I felt the most able to participate just because it’s so close. I’m like an adult now, so I could go,” Parker said.

Luckily, Santos was able

to get tickets.

“As much as I didn’t want to give the company money, I caved because I just wanted to see them. I’ve been a fan of them for so long that I can’t not [see them] ... I think it would have broke me,” Santos told *The Crow’s Nest*.

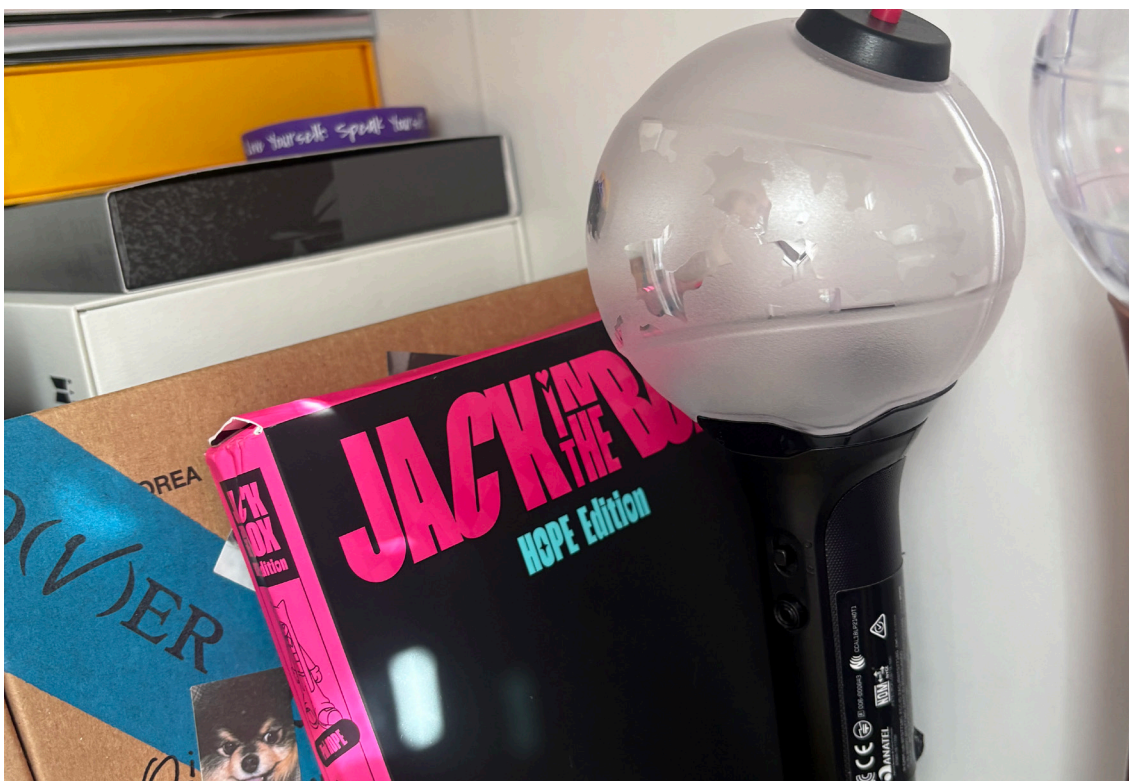
Reflecting on the impact of BTS across their career, Woodbury brought up the significance of an international group gaining such popularity in the United States.

“They were kind of another stepping stone in that when other international groups or artists have been trying to break into the Western market for a long time, and they were the most successful with it, I think,” Woodbury said.

Santos added that the group has brought her a lot of friendships.

“So having that similar interest and having places to go to like [places] hosting birthday cup sleeve events and card swaps” Santos said. “It just provided a community for me and that was really monumental to me when I was 13-14 and even now it

*Secilia Ruiz is an English freshman with a concentration in creative writing*



**“There’s something called the seven-year curse where most groups don’t make it past seven years because their contracts are [traditionally] seven years long. [BTS] broke that curse,” Santos said.**

COURTESY  
OF ADRIANA  
SANTOS

8 SPORTS

# NEW COACHES FOR USF BASKETBALL

By **DOMINIC FEO**  
CROW'S NEST STAFF

Three days after University of South Florida men's basketball ended its first NCAA March Madness appearance with its 83-79 loss to Louisville University on March 19, head coach Bryan Hodgson departed from Tampa Bay to accept the same position at Providence University.

In his sole season at USF, Hodgson led the Bulls to the NCAA Tournament with a 25-8 record and an American Conference Championship. Now the New York-native will attempt to match that success in Rhode Island.

"I'm incredibly grateful for the opportunity to lead South Florida Basketball," Hodgson said in a USF Athletics press release on March 22. "Deciding to leave is not easy. This place, these people, and this program means a great

deal to me. My hope is that we left it better than we found it, that we delivered on the vision we shared, and laid a foundation that will continue to grow. South Florida will always hold a special place in our hearts."

Now a former Louisville head coach will attempt to pick up where Hodgson left off, as Chris Mack was announced as the team's 13th head coach on March 25.

In his 15-year head coaching career with Xavier University (2009-18), Louisville (2018-22) and the College of Charleston (2024-26), Mack has coached 12 seasons with 20 plus wins.

Taking charge of a team that just reached the NCAA Tournament for the first time since 2011, Mack has a laundry list of postseason experience. Mack coached Xavier to the NCAA Tournament eight times, and Louisville to one in 2018-19.

USF women's team finished its first season in 25 years without former head coach Jose Fernandez with a 20-15 record led by interim Michele Woods-Baxter. The team's record earned Woods-Baxter consideration for the full-time role, but former Alabama head coach Kristy Curry was named the team's next play-caller on March 24.

Curry coached the Crimson Tide to the NCAA Tournament nine times in 13 seasons and five of the last six. Curry began her head coaching career at Purdue University, and Texas A&M, where she won over 100 games at both programs.

"A strong foundation is in place, and I look forward to building on it as we pursue conference championships and NCAA Tournament success. Rob and the University's commitment to competing at the highest level—along with the clear vision and alignment at



**Bryan Hodgson took over USF mens basketball last March.**

PHOTO BY GABRIEL BALLESTER-RIVERA

USF—are truly exceptional," Curry said in a March 24 press release. "I can't wait to meet Bulls Nation

and experience a rocking Yuengling Center."

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"I truly thought it was the end of the Trop. Today means SO MUCH to not just Rays fans..." one fan said on X on April 6.

PHOTO BY MARÍA JOSÉ SOLÍS

# RAYS RETURN TO TROPICANA FIELD

By **DOMINIC FEO & MATTHEW MCGOVERN**  
CONTRIBUTORS & CN STAFF

The Tampa Bay Rays returned to Tropicana Field on April 6 after Hurricane Milton shredded the field's roof in 2024 and forced a temporary relocation to George Steinbrenner Field in Tampa.

In their first game back

at the Trop, the Rays defeated the Chicago Cubs 6-4 in front of a sellout crowd of 25,114. The Rays dropped their next two to Chicago before opening their next home series on April 10 against the division-rival New York Yankees with two wins.

Tampa Bay scored five runs in both wins, while holding the Yankees to three runs in Game 1 and

four in Game 2.

Former Ray, José Caballero opened the tenth inning with a single to bat in his teammate for a 4-3 lead. Tampa Bay's scored two runs during the inning's bottom half without the ball leaving the infield.

Left fielder Chandler Simpson opened the half-inning with a bunt to first before stealing second. Shortstop Taylor Walls

bunted next to bat in center fielder Cedric Mullins.

After a Yandy Diaz intentional walk and Hunter Feduccia strikeout, first baseman Jonathan Aranda chopped a ball to first base. A fielding error from the Yankees infield let Simpson glide to home, for Aranda's second career walk off.

"It feels really good, to do it in front of all these

fans feels great, even more." Aranda commented postgame about securing the team's first series win at Tropicana Field since 2024.

The Rays now sit third in the American League East behind the Yankees and Orioles with a 7-7 record.

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