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Issue III

The Profile



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Agnes' CAPS Neglects the Vulnerable, Some Say

BY: DARCY FAHEY
STAFF WRITER

Over the course of the past few years, Agnes Scott's Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS), a part of the Wellness Center, has undergone extensive changes that have threatened the care provided to students. Many students, especially those who feel marginalized by CAPS, utilize another community resource.

"I have had five different counselors over the course of just one year," said one student.

"The only parts of the Wellness Center I find valuable are the dogs and the chiropractor"

Dr. Michelle Hamm, the Wellness Center director, admits that there has been a lot of turnover lately. She has only been here since March, but she believes that this complete administration replacement has made the center more stable since they all have a mutual understanding from arriving at Agnes together. Additionally, two therapists now are women of color.

Hamm admits that she "can't predict life circumstances," so there is no definite answer as to why the therapists who work at the Wellness Center have circulated at such a high frequency and whether this will continue to happen.

The Wellness Center is a free service open Monday through Friday from 8:30 to 4:30 and insurance is not billed for sessions. According to Hamm, there are appointment plans devised between a therapist and the client in their first meeting so that the client can be involved in planning out the number of sessions they need.

In terms of confidentiality, if a student is worried about their parents finding out about their therapy sessions, Hamm maintains that "Nothing is released to anyone."

All therapists are required to go through updated sensitivity training every two years that includes cultural diversity. Counselors start out meetings asking about preferred pronouns and attempting to discuss the importance of adhering to an individual's chosen gender pronouns with faculty whenever presented with an opportunity.

Some of the newest members of the center allegedly have been a source of danger for many students, particularly the psychiatrist who is available once a week.

"She didn't tell me about any of the side effects I would have or what to do in case of an emergency," said Jordan Keesler '20.

Meanwhile, often those who suffer from chronic illness can find CAPS and the general Wellness Center to be an added stressor.

"The only parts of the Wellness Center I find valuable are the dogs and the chiropractor," said Brittany Gilliland '18.

Hamm asserts that the Wellness Center does try to accommodate everyone for therapy, but in cases where the issue is outside of their expertise, they will refer a client to at least three vetted sources with which they are familiar.

For those who are curious about how a therapy session might go at the Wellness Center, Hamm says, "We don't give advice... this is a no-judgment zone. This is not about fixing people."

When controversial acts of violence become breaking news, particularly acts toward people of color or LGBTQ+ folk, the Wellness Center offers additional walk-in hours. They understand that in this time, not everyone wants therapy but instead other forms of support.

A recent example was on Sept. 18, 2017, when Scout Schultz, an intersex student

at Georgia Tech (GT) who went by they/them pronouns, completed what has been referred to as "suicide by cop" when they reportedly called GT's Campus Police about a student wielding a knife that would later turn out to be Schultz themselves. Ultimately, Schultz's depression ended in suicide.

"One thing we will never do is pathologize grief," said Hamm, meaning they do not treat the feeling as if it needs to be cured.

The other source that students should be able to trust in such situations is ASC Public Safety. However, if faced with the same situation as Georgia Tech, it is unclear if the officers would be prepared.

"We do not carry tasers," said Henry Hope, Director of Public Safety. "There's no reason for or against it."

However, officers go through twenty hours of community policing and de-escalation training each year.

"Community policing gets at the intimate level of the people we serve and develops a positive relationship to where people are more comfortable engaging with the police," said Hope.

The Center for Global Diversity and Inclusion has a similar philosophy of providing for the community, particularly for students facing systemic oppressions.

"We [the staff at the center] are very open about taking care of ourselves and there is no shame or stigma around mental health," said Kristian Contreras, Director of Diversity Programs. "We see needs and accommodations as normative."

Examples mentioned included meditation, breathing breaks and check-ins every few hours at longer retreats and conferences. She emphasized that "everyone in the office makes it possible" and that "students in the office are equally invested and teach us when we're being ableist."

The Problematic History that Haunts Agnes Scott

BY: GINNY HUDGINS
BEYOND AGNES NEWS EDITOR

If Agnes Scott College's mission statement reflected the college's past, the new mission would be "Committed to educating women to think deeply, live honorably, and engage the intellectual and social challenges of our time...if you are White, Christian, and straight."

The history of the institution would give those prospective students ogling the diversity of the admissions pamphlets and student organizations something to stop and think about. With the help of History 290 and McCain library, the history of Agnes Scott College unfolds, revealing what some would call problematic historical practices.

In respect to queerness and sexual diversity on campus, Agnes Scott historically was a very hostile place toward students who did not identify as heterosexual. When the college discovered Katherine Killingworth, a student of the class of 1968, was in a romantic relationship with another female student, the college demanded that she leave the school. Refusing to leave campus, she compromised with the college and agreed to attend therapy sessions for the rest of her time there. She was institutionalized after graduation on request from the college.

Discrimination against Black students is endemic to the history of Agnes Scott as well, clear through the resistance of the community to finally accept the first Black student in 1965.

Agnes Scott College did not even receive an application from a Black student until late 1961 and the first Black student did not graduate until Edna Lowe in 1971. Official integration was not proclaimed until 1965 by the college, coming after the peaceful example of Georgia Tech's admittance to three Black applicants.

While a Black student did apply in 1961, the admission committee alleged the necessity of preparing the community for the decision. It was said by the president of the college at the time, Dr. Wallace Alston, that it was the faculty's obligation to inform the student and alumni community on their decision, therefore Black applicants would not be accepted for the 1962-1963 school year. This student was officially denied admission for an "incomplete application."

It was argued by Ethel Gilmour in the Agnes Scott News of 1962 that denying institutional integration would directly conflict with the college's mission to educate their students honorably if their practices upheld racism and prejudice. This was only one of many perspectives given by students and alumnae at the time. Many believed that integration would lead to an economic downturn for



Edna Lowe '71 sits for her senior portrait as the first Black student to graduate from Agnes Scott College. Image from Vol. 68, Year 1971 Silhouette yearbook.

the college with the potential loss of their conservative Southern backers, while others firmly believed that integration paralleled the welcoming, Christian morals of the college.

In 1965, the first Black student admitted, Gay Johnson, came to Agnes Scott as a part of a civil rights campaign aiming to integrating Atlanta and other Southern colleges. It was clear from before she stepped foot on campus that she would not be a welcome member of the community. She received hate mail weeks before she arrived, as well as a letter from Alston stating that she would not have a roommate because they could not allow the White students to have a Black roommate. Johnson describes her two years at Agnes Scott to be a "profoundly lonely experience," and negative feelings coming from both students and faculty affected her time at the college.

Religious discrimination has also played a major role in the college's history. A strong Protestant background was assumed amongst the faculty and student body.

Agnes Scott's affiliation with the Presbyterian Church has had much historical

importance, especially with the integration of the college heavily influenced by the inspiration of Christian morals. Yet with this strong religious background came an exclusion of those from other religious backgrounds.

Until 1967 the college held a discriminatory hiring policy in stating that any faculty in the running could be refused a job if they were not Protestant Christians. Agnes Scott students protested for the change of the hiring policy to become more accepting of applicants regardless of their religious creed or sect.

It was not until the mid-1970s that the policy officially changed, yet even into the 1980s, there was residual tension regarding faculty with a background in Judaism.

The history of an institution, especially of higher-education, creates an important context to understand the current innerworkings. This history of Agnes Scott's discrimination is not exhaustive, and your own research into the college is encouraged. Visit History 290's website at <http://agnesscott.omeka.net/> to learn more.

The Profile

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Rebekah Renovations Strive for Accessibility Standards

BY: NANNETTE MATTHEWS
MANAGING EDITOR

Most who have been on Agnes Scott's campus this past year have seen the blue, tarped fences around Rebekah Hall and heard the occasional sounds of metal-on-metal. Students and faculty alike have long waited for air-conditioning in the residence hall and for the office to be restored; however, the changes are exciting for a much more important reason: accessibility.

"I think it's going to be great," said CJ Montgomery '20 and Student Government liaison for The Office of Accessible Education. "It will be a lot more accessible than the other residence halls on campus."

The changes to Rebekah include everything from a new elevator to a wheelchair accessible ramp and wider doorways at the entrance facing the main loop, which were some of the biggest challenges to maintaining its historic integrity.

"Trying to preserve the historic nature like the trim (finishing pieces surrounding the doors) work mostly has to do with the outside of the building," said Patrick Paige, the architect for the project. "Porch modifications are done in a way



Rebekah Waltz unfurnished during construction. Photo courtesy of Karina Leung '18.

that makes it look like the ramp is part of the building and not tacked on, and the actuator and key scanner that mechanically open the door are easier to put in with a newer building. For Rebekah, it is an extra layer."

There are also two rooms that receive audio-visual notification from a small doorbell connected to a device inside that

flashes for the hearing impaired. The bathrooms saw big changes as well. There are new restrooms throughout the building, including gender neutral restrooms. Each floor will have two private showers, separate from the communal bathrooms.

"The coolest thing are the bathrooms, which will actually meet ADA requirements," said Montgomery. The question arises of when other buildings will be brought up to the same standard.

"There is a college commitment to improve accessibility on a more comprehensive basis," said Marti Fessenden, Special Counsel to the President and Title IX Coordinator.

The college is currently working on hiring a consulting firm to examine Agnes Scott's facilities.

"In the interim, the college addresses accessibility issues as they are raised," said Fessenden.



The gutted first floor staircase. Photo courtesy of Karina Leung '18.

All Academia, Big and Small: Why Size Matters for ASC Departments and Programs

BY: DARCY FAHEY
STAFF WRITER

Small and intimate, Agnes Scott College furnishes an academic experience that is meant to be distinct. Although, lately the narrative around students' choice in academics at Agnes Scott appears to resemble that of other educational institutions: the college is carving out humanities and less developed academia on campus in exchange for majors that lead to professions more easily accepted in society, such as English, Biology, etc.

There are academic alcoves on campus that seem to be overflowing with resources that allow them to host more events and supply post-graduation possibilities for alums. Admittedly, some of these benefits are because of outside donors, but ultimately, Agnes Scott's financial backing determines the breadth of possibility for all educational corners of campus.

"One thing that would make a difference would be faculty that would be housed in Africana Studies... If we were to get a position that were clearly dedicated to the program, then we could ask for it to be a department," said Tolliver.

The longing for a new permanent professor seems to be a shared sentiment across a lot of the small academic fields at Agnes Scott. Dr. Elizabeth Hackett, director of the Women's Studies program -- which often has many students enrolled in Women's Studies classes but no professor trained in this speciality -- argues, "What will make [Women's Studies] great is when we have a full-time, tenure-track professor in Women's Studies with a Ph.D. in Women's Studies to complement the wonderful interdisciplinary support that we already have."

Programs tend to be interdisciplinary, so they are cross-listed with other academia. As such, they can be taught from a vari-

The Harvard Business Review reports that the liberal arts are starting to be realized as the best educational preparation for the technology industry, which has not been able to manage ideas that exist outside the vacuum of their calculations. Now they are seeking broader expertise and human understanding from their employees.

"I think if you look at places where [the humanities] have been gutted, I don't think they end up with what they hope to do, which is surviving," said Dr. Jared Millson, Kirk Postdoctoral Fellow for the Philosophy department.

Still, some question if arbitrarily chosen "elite" academic subjects are unduly favored over others in the decision-making processes at Agnes Scott, perhaps because of an attachment to science and math-oriented studies and more mainstream disciplines in the face of outside economic demands.

From an administrative position, Dean of Academic Affairs Kerry Pannell, believes in the stability of the liberal arts at Agnes Scott. She explains that there is a curriculum committee that ranks proposals from academic departments, such as searches for new professors.

According to Pannell, while student interest is the largest factor in deciding faculty employment, the applicability of an academic proposal to Agnes Scott's curriculum is also heavily considered. This would suggest little bias in the allocation of size and funding for academics. Yet how do



Buttrick houses the majority of small departments at ASC. Photo by Joann Lee.

What then becomes of the less resource-endowed academic subjects? Are they being stifled from growing? A number of faculty members from smaller programs and departments discuss some of the effects of limited funding.

"We have a miniscule budget... but if we had a larger [budget] we could do more programs, bring in speakers, and have a film series," said Dr. Willie Tolliver Jr., director of Africana Studies and Film and Media Studies.

He added, "We did ask for an increase in our budget about four or five years ago and it was granted, but there was a change in the administration. I guess that fell through the cracks of that transition... [but the money we requested] wasn't that much."

ety of perspectives. Unfortunately, that also means that programs are generally not allowed to have faculty lines at Agnes Scott like that of departments. However, Hackett asserts that Women's Studies is not actually lacking in power because it is recognized as having departmental status for hiring purposes despite being a program.

Nonetheless, it does seem ironic that a historically women's college with a proud assortment of backgrounds in its student body would offer such a cramped space for gender and race studies to be pursued.

In the wider world, including Agnes Scott, there is mounting concern over the future of less popular academic subjects and their relevance to today's computerized landscape.

popular programs like Women's Studies remain so restricted if student interest is the driving force behind funding distribution?

"[Agnes Scott has not] had increases in interdisciplinary program budgets since the reforms that happened in 2011 because our priorities have been on hiring" said Pannell.

However, to further defend Agnes Scott's promise to the liberal arts, Pannell maintains that incoming president Leocadia (Lee) I. Zak will continue to uphold their place at Agnes Scott, "She's not going to take us to a radically different direction."

THE INDEPENDENT STUDENT NEWSPAPER OF AGNES SCOTT COLLEGE

THE PROFILE

LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

by Samira Shabandy '20 and Virginia Hudgins '20
Co-Editors-In-Chief

Independent. Student-run. Opinionated. The Profile has been running this way since 1926. We are dedicated to being the platform for student voices at Agnes Scott College, as we have been for the past ninety years.

We are here to represent you. To interview you, write about you, photograph you. We want to know what you are thinking deeply about, what living honorably means to you, and finding out how you are engaging meaningfully and thoughtfully about the intellectual and social challenges of our time.

As we navigate these times of accelerating political controversy as students at a small liberal arts college, we have found it difficult to step back and truly see everything that is going on around us. We all carry complex and endlessly interlocking identities that can feel too heavy to hold sometimes. Making sense of it all, with what seems like neverending turbulence around us, has seemed impossible.

Here enters in The Profile. As staff writers for the last two years, we have been given the opportunity to write intensely about our passions, laugh endlessly with everyone on staff, and develop a deep understanding of what student journalism can really mean: stories from students, about students, and for students. The stories we have told in the past have been informative and opinionated--bringing light to issues for students, faculty, and staff. We hope to be a space where we can begin to make sense of the world around us, even when it feels impossible.



Back: Samira Shahbandy and Eve Barrett
Front: Joann Lee, Abigail Cox, Ellie Davis, Isabella Barbuto
Laying flat: Virginia Hudgins

We have found great meaning in working on The Profile since our first years, and are so proud to be co-editors-in-chief this year to an amazing staff that sees value in words, photos, and the overall Agnes Scott community.

We have many plans for this year, including publishing an actual, hard-copy newspaper for you, the Agnes Scott community, to read. Our goal as a student publication is to print our newspaper with you in mind. We want you to enjoy the pieces as much as we do writing, photographing, and editing them. As co-editor-in-chiefs, we look forward to being your source for news. On and off-campus. Online and in print.

The Profile Staff

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Scotties Supporting Stacey

A group of Agnes Scott students took to the streets knocking on doors in support of Stacey Abrams on Saturday, October 6th after a briefing in Lower Evans by campaign volunteers about what the day would hold.



Photo by Joann Lee '19. A group of Scotties pose for a picture with the seasoned volunteers for the canvassing event



Photo By Eve Barrett '21. Stella John '22 with her local campaign volunteer as they just finished a successful canvassing interaction.



Photo by Joann Lee '19. Amira Daughtery '19 knocks on a door of a Oakhurst neighborhood home.



Photo by Joann Lee '19. Eve Barrett '21, makes an enthusiastic point about "why be racist, sexist, homophobic, or transphobic, when you could just be quiet" whils: in the midst of neglecting to take any pictures for this event.

Check out the full photo story and so much more on our website ascprofile.com!

Keep an eye out for more print publications throughout the year!

Check out these stories on our website now!

The Future of Women's of Healthcare in Georgia
and
The Magic of Harry Potter: Decatur Book Festival's Kidnote
and
Tough Love In the Philippines