

THE SOPHIAN



PHOTO OBTAINED FROM DUCLOS' CAMPAIGN WEBSITE

Jillian Duclos, Local Mayoral Candidate, is Advocating for a New Way of Doing Local Politics

CASSANDRA LOPEZ-WARREN '27
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

For Jillian Duclos, running for mayor of Northampton goes hand in hand with being a parent. Duclos, who is challenging incumbent Mayor Gina-Louise Sciarra, can often be seen with her son participating in standouts and door-knocking to get the word out about the upcoming election on Nov. 4.

In a small city like Northampton, where politics may be especially intertwined with interpersonal relationships, and amid a national political climate many view as increasingly polarized, Duclos emphasized

her commitment to broad community involvement and grassroots movements. Describing her campaign — led primarily by door-knocking and one-on-one conversations with residents — to *The Sophian*, she said, “It’s about what the people who live in this community need, not necessarily what I see. My approach is, ‘what’s working, what’s not working, and what would you like your mayor to do for you?’”

Duclos’ experience working in the service industry and local politics are central to her campaign. Her resume is wide-ranging: Duclos said she has worked

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Mayor Gina-Louise Sciarra '96 Reflects on Her Time at Smith Ahead of Elections

EMMA LOUISE SWOAP '28
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Northampton Mayor and Smith alumna Gina-Louise Sciarra '96 is seeking reelection to address her key issues, including increasing education funding and protecting immigrant residents amid recent U.S. Immigrations and Customs Enforcement (ICE) activity.

Speaking to the *Sophian*, Sciarra credits Smith College with sharpening her passion for politics and commitment to public service. She emphasized deep political engagement during her undergraduate years, organizing LGBTQ-centered events and ad-

vocating for reproductive rights.

“It’s a really amazing opportunity to be with women from all over the world and to hear how their life experiences shaped their points of view,” she said.

Now, Sciarra’s connection to Smith is personal as well as professional. For her, it has been “interesting” to experience the college from multiple perspectives: as a Smithie, a community member and now, as mayor.

“I appreciate all that Smith has done with the city, and I really believe that it is a symbiotic relationship,” she said. “I would like to strengthen that relationship and



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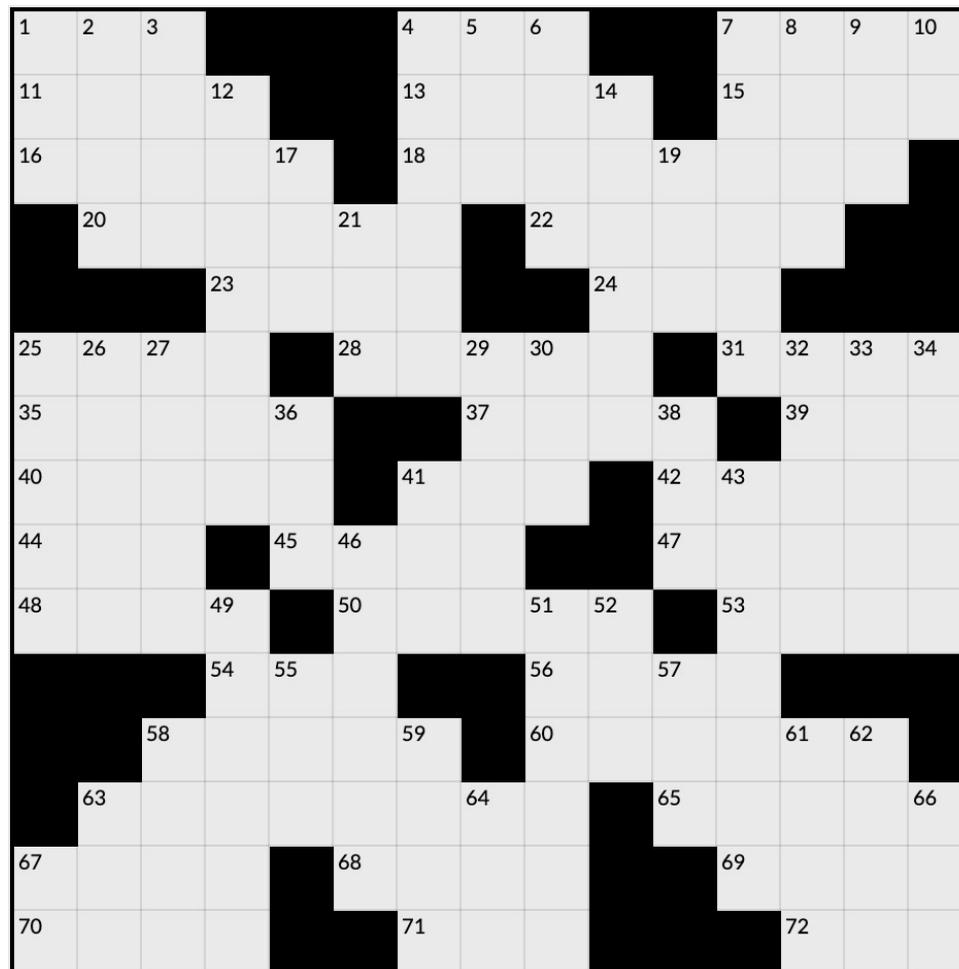
Crossbones and Crosswords

LILY ALTAMIRANO '27

GUEST CROSSWORD SUBMISSION

Across

1. One unit to measure noise abbr.
4. Southern slang for your mom
7. Cool style or major abbr.
11. Assist
13. Beware the ____ of March
15. Lend a helping ____
16. Scalar quantity of how fast an object is moving
18. TWICE's English single featuring Megan thee Stallion
20. Along with 60 Across, an American holiday celebrated in November
22. Large nest of an eagle
23. Cheese named after its region in France
24. Sick
25. Club at Smith that sounds like a tool for a cowboy
28. Prefix for "-onym" or "-oscience"
31. Opposite of a gentleman, in Spanish
35. Avoid or escape
37. Pingu makes this noise
39. ____ Vegas
40. Might need a record player for this
41. Popular alcoholic drink
42. Sends an envelope to an address
44. Most populated zone in the U.S.
45. Slang acronym when you feel like you're missing all the fun
47. To permeate with feeling
48. ____ to success
50. Word in Korean for Chinese Characters
53. Before someone shoots and fires
54. This kind of meal is eaten for breakfast
56. Illinois and Arizona abbr.
58. No permanent humble abode
60. See 20 Across
63. Black and white tile game popular among Puerto Ricans
65. To make law or act out on stage
67. Creative inspiration
68. Ninth letter in the Greek alphabet
69. Rapid flow of liquid
70. Lived many years
71. Uncooked meat, say



72. Dad's name of the Formans in "That 70s Show"
- ## Down
1. Typically said after "oohs"
 2. Short for a distinct part of a larger organization
 3. Exclamation for finding something particularly nasty
 4. Longs
 5. Company selling home security systems
 6. Different meaning when you put an apostrophe in the middle
 7. Captain America uses this not only for protection but as a weapon
 8. Fixed payment
 9. With no preference for an option, say "____ will do"
 10. Acronym for the leader of BIG BANG
 12. Museum name both Yale and Harvard have in common
 14. If you really want to get married, you should do this
 17. Museum name both Yale

- and Harvard have in common
19. Type of measurement system used to assess the maturity level of a particular technology
21. Unit equivalent to 1,000 lbf
25. i.e. Seesaw or crowbar
26. Spanish word for notice or warning
27. He breaks into your house during winter, but doesn't steal anything
29. Org. of individuals joining for a common purpose
30. Unit informally describing a really long time ago
32. Having this means you've got valid proof of where you said you were
33. Latin word for "apple" or "evil/bad thing"
34. To evaluate or judge a situation
36. Maybe on the shelf
38. Acronym for oversharing
41. Slang for your parents'

- mom, maybe Southern
43. "Awesome!" or "wow!"
46. Nicknamed "Shotime"; Player for the LA Dodgers
49. "____ for eternity" often refers to going to Hell
51. Puzzle or horror movie
52. Arguably the greatest boxer of all time
55. French for a male friend
57. St., Rd., Blvd.
58. Tell a toddler to touch this if you want them to stop grabbing things
59. "Knocking on" object
61. Australian way of rejecting something
62. Like the SATs, but for UK students
63. Dog name in Up
64. New Jeans' song asking when you'll get to your destination
66. Smith HCA student-lookup forum
67. 2019 horror drama starring Octavia Spencer

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Guillermo del Toro's 'Frankenstein' Breathes New Life to Mary Shelley's Creature

SADIE MCRAE '26

ASST. ARTS & CULTURE EDITOR

Guillermo del Toro's newest undertaking "Frankenstein" is a mostly-faithful, frequently heavy-handed, but successfully heart-warming adaptation of Mary Shelley's seminal novel, relying on gothic aesthetics that make it a fitting Halloween watch.

"Frankenstein; or, the Modern Prometheus" by Mary Shelley has a complicated history of film adaptation. The first "Frankenstein" is a 16-minute silent film released in 1910. It is most notable for the liberties it takes when instead of depicting the deaths that occur at a certain moment in the novel, Victor looks into his bedroom mirror to find the Creature staring back at him as his reflection.

The next film adaptation in 1931 created much of the visual language that we now associate with the story of Frankenstein, including the Creature's indelible neck bolts, his silent-but-grunty demeanor and his physical build, taken from horror legend Boris Karloff. Frankenstein's Monster became a spearhead of the Universal monsters, which forged his relevance in popular culture at the expense of the book, in which the Creature is an articulate and complicated being.

While some film adaptations have attempted to rectify this erasure — like Kenneth Branagh's frequently hated but fairly accurate 1994 adaptation "Mary Shelley's Frankenstein" — this film feels determined to completely change public opinion, cementing Victor Frankenstein as the complicated villain to the entirely sympathetic Creature, his victim.

Guillermo del Toro, known for his big budget monstrous tales, uses grandiose set pieces, distinct costume choices and character design to achieve his gothic aesthetic. While del Toro's style can sometimes feel too artificial to completely land, he creates a few visuals here that are genuinely striking. It is difficult to forget this is a Netflix production, and therefore falls into form with their homogeneous style, but some moments successfully surpass it. The montage of the Creature's creation, filled with Victor severing limbs while standing in pools of blood, filled my go-

re-loving heart with a sense of pride.

The Creature's character design is excellent, paying homage to the novel while adding new flair and a unique physicality, supplied by Jacob Elordi's height and build. This design helps to overshadow the lesser monstrous figures of the film that are plagued by CGI.

"Costuming shines most in the film's two female characters, both played by Mia Goth, but finds compelling pieces for the main characters as well, such as Victor's blood-red tie and the Creature's leather jacket."

Costuming shines most in the film's two female characters, both played by Mia Goth, but finds compelling pieces for the main characters as well, such as Victor's blood-red tie and the Creature's leather jacket. Frankenstein's tower is an incredible feat reminiscent of, though much grander than, the set of the 1931 "Frankenstein" film. The lab, fitted with glass vats of faux "Re-Animator" serum, is like the science of the film. It works, if you don't think too much about it.

Oscar Isaac and Jacob Elordi approach their iconic characters, Victor Frankenstein and his Creature, with the care and specificity they deserve. Isaac disappears into Victor's obsessive, maniacal spirit with ease, forging a new interpretation of the character as a dangerous man child with severe parental trauma. Jacob Elordi feels born to play the role with his gigantic figure and child-like facial expressions as he properly sells the Creature's youthful curiosity, empathetic spirit and learned rage. Together, the two paint a successful portrait of parental abuse, a theme that is heightened in this film over any previous adaptation.

As is the case with most modern adaptations, "Frankenstein" attempts to write a new female character in the narrative with Mia Goth's Elizabeth. Though she shares a name with the

novel's love interest, they are two completely different characters. Del Toro's Elizabeth is Victor's brother's fiancée with a passion for reading and science (as a woman!). Her role proves most compelling in the film's spin on the gothic romance trope?, more comparable to 2024's "Nosferatu" than any "Frankenstein" adaptation, and provides a meta interpretation of Elizabeth as a subjugated woman similar to the book's author Mary Shelley.

The issues with "Frankenstein" lie in its insistence to tell instead of show. This is partially a result of the film's narration by its two protagonists. Instead of allowing visuals to speak for themselves, the narration and even the in-scene dialogue feel insistent on over-explaining each key moment. This leads to a simplification of the main themes of the film, as the screenplay repeatedly emphasizes the Creature's purity and Victor's abuse.

While the character dynamics could have led to a different but powerful conclusion, the ending feels like a bow tied loosely around a half-finished script. I found myself yearning for the 1910 silent film's ending; at least that left me with something to think about. Del Toro approaches this film with mainstream sensibilities about "Good vs. Evil" and resolves conflict in a way that does not do justice to the narrative. Even the film's most powerful moments are undermined by its heavy-handed dialogue.

Guillermo del Toro's film is a compelling adaptation of Mary Shelley's "Frankenstein", creating newness within a classic narrative while still paying proper homage to the original. It is decidedly modern in both positive and negative ways, making it impossible to forget its grand budget and the sympathetic doe eyes of Jacob Elordi. There is even a gay headcanon available, if you are looking for it. At the least, "Frankenstein" makes great use of its two and a half hour long run-time and is a great film to get you into the Halloween spirit.

Frankenstein is currently being screened at Amherst Cinema and will be released on Netflix on Nov. 7.

Mayor Gina-Louise Sciarra '96 Reflects on Her Time at Smith Ahead of Elections

EMMA LOUISE SWOAP '28 have Smith contribute more to the city.”
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

After graduating from Smith, Sciarra worked as a political consultant in San Francisco then for the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) in New York City. She returned to Northampton with her husband ten years later.

Despite knowing just a handful of people in the area, Sciarra said she quickly became involved in community work by volunteering in a historic church restoration project and in other local political campaigns.

“I actually never had any intention of being a candidate myself,” she said.

That turning point came in 2013, when Sciarra’s friend on City Council retired and no one stepped up for the job. Hoping for a way to give back to her community, Sciarra decided to run. She held her seat on the City Council for six years before being elected council president.

“I felt a real sense of responsibility to my community that’s given me so much,” Sciarra said, citing Northampton’s broader support to her and her family. “The best way that I can imagine to give back has been to serve in this way.”

Sciarra was council president during the COVID-19 pandemic, and played a central role in the city’s policing reforms in the years following the murder of George Floyd. Sciarra said she worked with then Mayor David Narkewicz to create the Northampton Policing Review Commission, the first majority Black and Brown commission in Northampton’s history. The commission recommended forming a department to assist unarmed people in crisis. As mayor, Sciarra established the Division of Community Care within the Health and Human Services Department.

“Out of the many communities that have explored alternative policing, we are the only one that’s embedded it into public health and recognized a lot of these issues are public health issues as opposed to public safety issues,” Sciarra said.

When Narkewicz didn’t seek reelection in 2021, Sciarra decided to enter the mayoral race. She advanced from a four-candidate primary and

won about 70% of the vote against Marc Warner in the general election with a platform focused on affordable housing and climate resilience.

As mayor, Sciarra spearheaded a community-led climate movement by establishing the Department of Climate Action and Project Administration, the first of its kind in Massachusetts, to integrate climate goals into every city initiative.

The department aims to implement carbon neutrality in municipal operations by 2030 and achieve citywide neutrality by 2050.

“A project, any procurement, any initiative — we view it through a climate action lens and measure it against our decarbonization goals,” Sciarra said.

Securing 47% of the vote in the four-candidate primary in September, Sciarra will face Jillian Duclos in the general election on Nov. 4.

Sciarra said she is focused on the Picture Main Street Initiative, a project intended to improve safety and accessibility along Northampton’s Main Street. The road is ranked in the top 5% of “crash clusters” in Massachusetts, and the state has allocated \$26 million to Northampton to redesign its crosswalks, sidewalks and underground infrastructure.

“If a city doesn’t evolve and change with the times and economic situations, it atrophies. So we really need to evolve and address safety,” Sciarra said.

The project will also double the number of trees downtown, widen sidewalks for pedestrians and outdoor dining, and expand the city’s “First Amendment space” by creating a plaza in front of City Hall for rallies and protests.

Another priority for Sciarra is education funding. As the Department of Education withholds funds and cuts programming, school districts are experiencing financial strain, particularly with respect to their obligation to provide special education.

“All of these different factors have created deficits in districts all across the country,” Sciarra said. “But, I’ve done everything I can do to direct as much sustainable funding as I can to

our public schools.”

As mayor, Sciarra increased funding to public schools by 32%, which she described as a “historic increase.”

Reduced federal aid under the Trump administration has tightened city resources, raising funding issues across municipal services. Sciarra stresses the importance of reserve funds to address these challenges.

“We need to be prepared, particularly in a place like Northampton, which is an incredibly progressive city,” she said. “But we are not going to shy away from our values.”

To help address some residents’ concerns, Sciarra extended a Northampton executive policy to protect privacy rights for those seeking gender affirming care, something she worries will be threatened under the new administration.

“I want to make sure that we can weather this storm, which hopefully will be short-lived in this administration,” Sciarra said.

Residents have also voiced concern about the presence of ICE in Northampton.

Under the Trump Administration, ICE typically does not notify local law enforcement of their operations. However, Northampton has developed protocols to respond to ICE activity at schools or public buildings.

“I’ve worked very hard to try and protect people’s rights,” Sciarra said. “We are considered a safe city ... and want to protect folks who could be in jeopardy as best we can.”

To achieve this goal, Sciarra assembled a coalition of local organizations supporting immigrants to coordinate response protocols in the event of ICE activity.

As she looks toward the upcoming election, Sciarra remains focused on guiding Northampton through political uncertainty, drawing on the values of community collaboration and service that motivated her to run for office.

“What’s driven me all along to stay in public office is that I feel so incredibly fortunate to have settled into this community that has given me an amazing sense of joy, friendship and community,” Sciarra said.

Jillian Duclos, Local Mayoral Candidate, is Advocating for a New Way of Doing Local Politics

CASSANDRA LOPEZ-WARREN '27 every level of
CONTRIBUTING WRITER the restaurant

industry, from barista to business owner, interned for Sen. Elizabeth Warren, D-Mass., worked in public relations, conducted community outreach for a prison rehabilitation nonprofit and lobbied for addiction recovery legislation, ultimately leading to her most recent role as executive director of the Downtown Northampton Association.

Much of this success, Duclos said, can be attributed to the support she received from peers and teachers while attending public schools and Holyoke Community College. After taking a break from school and organizing a local grassroots political campaign, she attended Mount Holyoke College as a Frances Perkins Scholar. This, Duclos she said, is where she established some of her political connections and gained organizing experience.

In Duclos' view, a primary concern for many Northampton residents this election season, as well as one of the reasons she decided to enter the mayoral race, is the perceived lack of transparency and cooperation between the mayor's office and the community. She described a frustrating sense of distrust and confusion among residents, particularly regarding issues of school funding, capital projects, taxes and public services.

"There's a lot of talk about 'Oh, just trust the mayor, the mayor is leading and has the answers,'" Duclos said. She believes that right now, there is "a small group of people who don't always necessarily have the expertise, and they have an inability to confront that."

This rift between city leadership and residents has resulted in a broad coalition of forces advocating for greater transparency, a more democratic process, and a reorientation of political and fiscal priorities.

The Support Our Schools (SOS) movement, a grassroots organization of teachers, parents, students and community members was founded in 2022 in response to what members describe as chronic underfunding of public schools and city services.

The coalition and its political action committee (SOSSPAC) have endorsed a slate of candidates running for mayor, city council and school committee. Originally, Duclos decided to join the mayoral race separately from SOS, but has since accepted the organization's endorsement.

Duclos connects the struggle for adequate public school funding to what she sees as the general erosion of communication and cooperation between the community and local government. "We have become a community that has become very comfortable with competing with one another. Taking from one to give to another, pushing others down to allow others to rise," she said. "Capitalism in general breeds that kind of environment."

"We have become a community that has become very comfortable with competing with one another. Taking from one to give to another, pushing others down to allow others to rise."

Mayor Sciarra and the majority on the Northampton City Council have stated that the city lacks sufficient funds to meet all budgetary demands, and properly funding public education would require cuts to other budget items, such as the repair of roads and sidewalks. Some residents, including candidates running on the SOS platform, dispute that claim by pointing out that the \$12 million budget surplus from the last fiscal year.

Sciarra has also approved millions of dollars for "rainy day" funds and capital projects, including the Community Resilience Hub. Meanwhile, according to Northampton residents who have spoken with the Sophian, the city government has neglected both the schools and roads, and many worry about the long-term affordability of living in Northampton.

Residents and SOS-aligned candidates have criticized the current administration for prioritizing major capital projects over basic community needs, as well as for making these decisions behind closed doors.

As Duclos said, "We have a very educated community that's very hands-on, that really wants to be part of the solution and help us all work together to put forward better ideas around some of these hurdles that we're hitting. And they have found that (when) reaching out to the mayor's office, they're not being let in."

Duclos said she sees the role of local government as a body that can protect the community from the broader pressures of federal mandates. She said these ideals are inseparable from the practical aspects of city governance.

"It's roads and sidewalks, it's public education," she said. These are issues that might not be as visible as state or national politics, but are integral to a healthy community.

"To me, this work is really about the best step forward," she said. "There is no right or wrong or good or bad, it's just 'where are we, what are the realities, and how can we put our best foot forward to get through?' And we need to do it as a community and we need to do it together."

This is one part in a series of interviews with the candidates endorsed by the Support Our Schools PAC. Jillian Duclos is running for mayor against incumbent Gina-Louise Sciarra.

ELECTION INFORMATION

Smith students registered to vote in Massachusetts based on their Smith College (Ward 2) address are eligible to vote in the upcoming Northampton municipal elections. The deadline for voter registration was on Oct. 25. The deadline for mail-in ballots is Oct. 28 at 5 p.m. Smith students can cast their ballots in-person on Nov. 4 at the Smith Vocational School at 80 Locust Street from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. Voters may be asked for identification.

Skims Faux Hair Thong: Can Trends Be Empowering?

SWATI ERNST '29 Skims, a shapewear and clothing company co-founded by Kim Kardashian, released the “Faux Hair Micro String Thong” this month. The product follows a TikTok trend “bringing back bush.” An effort to empower women has instead culminated in a product, affirming the tendency of capitalism to dictate standards for women’s bodies.

Recently, new trends appear to defy typical standards for female bodies. Last summer, the phrases “bush is back” and “full bush in a bikini” echoed across TikTok, introducing a rhetoric of empowerment surrounding visible body hair on women.

Similar trends have appeared on TikTok before. For instance, bralessness resurfaced through social media platforms in 2023. That year, Skims released their “nipple push-up bra,” which promised a “bra-less” look while still providing support. Somehow, Kim Kardashian managed to turn enthusiasm for wearing less bras into an opportunity to buy more of them.

Trends breaking norms for women’s bodies seem productive in forwarding inclusive thinking about beauty standards. But can a trend really sustain empowerment for women?

No, it cannot. While social media can foster public discourse and is, in a way, a reflection of the opinions of our society, the ephemerality of trends prevents them from producing lasting change.

By nature, trends feed a capitalistic cycle through their foundation in consumption. Take the internet’s new obsession with matcha, a Japanese green tea. Its popularity has been so intense that prices for matcha have increased by 170%, according to Food&Drink Digital. But when cycles of consumerism revolve around women’s bodies and “empowerment” are co-opted by brands, the stakes grow higher. Women’s bodies — in particular, how they look — are critical to mass consumption as new trending products introduce and enforce beauty standards.

Trends concerning physical appearances

are often tethered to material goods, such as makeup and workout products, that require a purchase to participate in. A new lip product emerges almost weekly, and the expensive “necessities” to becoming a pilates-loving “it-girl” are seemingly boundless. As Lululemon leggings and de-bloating gummies flood social media platforms, the emptiness of such trends becomes increasingly apparent, as they blatantly feed consumerist culture.

However, becoming pro-bush and anti-bra does not require a purchase. They imply the opposite, that bras and hair-removal products are no longer needed. This sounds ideal, but we shouldn’t forget that trends inherently rely on commodification. Skims products serve as an expensive reminder of this contradiction.

The ethos of the pro-bush trend is to embrace the diversity of women’s bodies and reject the narrative that women must alter themselves to appeal to others. Kim Kardashian’s faux-bush thong directly opposes this ideal. It encourages women to purchase a product in order to appear

natural. There is no empowerment in a commodified version of authenticity.

Social media cannot yield meaningful change through trends as long as they remain dependent on a fast-paced economic pattern of supply and demand. Instead, it creates ridiculous products like fake-pubic hair thongs.

This is not to say that there is no hope for finding empowerment in the diversity of women’s bodies through online spaces. Empowerment must be achieved through other means and driven by a willingness to embrace open-mindedness rather than meet an objective standard.

True empowerment stems from authenticity, as opposed to adhering to standards placed by others. Trends may have a role in opening minds to new ways of being. The normalization of existing without bras and hair-removal is a step towards long-term change.

Fake bush thongs and nipple bras are not the answers — genuine acceptance and resistance to commodification are.



ILLUSTRATION BY SARA STILLITANO '26

Self-Care and Saplings: Schacht Center and Botanic Garden Collaborate on Mental Health Event

LILAH BARTHOLOMEW '26 On Oct. 9 at 4:30 p.m., Smith's Community Health Organizers (CHOs) teamed up with the Botanic Garden Center staff to host a workshop at the Lyman Plant House designed to help students better understand their own experiences with mental health. The calming environment of the botanic garden helped students feel at home as they visited stations to learn what observing plants can teach us about self-care.

After brewing a cup of tea, students explored the various greenhouses of the botanic garden. They visited four stations that compared the characteristics of plants to different mental health topics.

The first station discussed self-care, which connected ideas of interdependence to epiphytes (plants that grow on other plants for support, but aren't parasites).

The second station focused on how to recognize when you are doing well, whereas the third focused on identifying the signs that you may need help. For example, plants are doing well if they are vibrant colors, have strong roots and are evenly growing on each side of their pot. For humans, this can look like being able to express themselves, staying healthy, having a support system and balancing the different parts of their lives.

The last station helped students generate strategies to help them overcome struggles with mental health in the future. These strategies included prioritizing rest, finding creative outlets and spending time outdoors or with friends.

However, the workshop emphasized that everyone's self-care techniques look different. Caitlyn Brabo '27, one of the station leaders, said, "I think it's important for people to know that mental health differs from person to person and can have a specific impact based on race, class and other types of marginalization. 'Tending' to yourself is highly personal, and I would encourage everyone to think about what it means specifically for them." After visiting each of these stations, students reconvened to decorate

pots and choose a plant to take home with them.

At station three, the conversation turned to variegated plants. Humans designed variegated plants to have multicolored leaves which, although beautiful, makes it harder for them to photosynthesize.

Sunny Windorski, the Director of Wellness, said, "This made me and some of the participants reflect on masking and neurodivergence — like how having to mask is exhausting and draining but people do it because society shapes them to." Masking, like these variegated plants, may be what society prefers, but it is more difficult to function this way.

The Tending to Your Roots Workshop has run for several years now. Windorski said the goal is "to help students think about their mental health in a proactive way, because when someone is having a really really hard time, it can be even more difficult to draw upon skills and resources for support."

In addition to this workshop, the Botanic Garden holds extended hours for students on Tuesdays from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. and a new, exciting series of events. Anjali D'Souza, the Botanic Garden's Manager of Engagement, said, "On Oct. 21, Sofi Packard, Engagement Intern, and I will launch our Food as Medicine series, where we'll feature one plant each month to get to know who they are, where they're native to and what cultural and relational significance the plant has among different communities and meaningful practices."

Tending to Your Roots offered a unique perspective into mental health and helped students get to know the resources available to them on campus. Astro Ovalle '29, a student attending the workshop said, "It gave me reassurance that I will find and make an environment that will nurture me and I will nurture it here at Smith." Events such as these not only inform, but help build community on campus and increase awareness of mental health.



PHOTO TAKEN BY OF MORGAN JONES '28



*“Cush-Em is gone.
Cush-Em isn’t coming back.
... come on, you have to say it
with me for this to work.”*



*“MAHA said stir fry is unpatriotic,
so now Haynes has build-a-burger.”*

ILLUSTRATED BY PHOEBE BOYCE '26J

EDITORIAL STATEMENT

Dear Readers:

We, the 2025-26 Editorial Board, are proud to present our October Print Edition.

With midterms in full swing, The Sophian remains committed to reporting on the issues most relevant to our campus and community. Municipal elections are just around the corner across the country. The Sophian is dedicated to covering the Northampton mayoral and city council races from a wide variety of perspectives, as supported by our diligent staff and guest writers. Local journalism is a central tenet of civic engagement, and serves as a record of community life. Wheth-

er Smithies realize it or not, they have a responsibility to engage with Northampton politics due to the reciprocal relationship between the college and the city.

This month, Smith announced their decision to waive tuition for students from households earning under \$150,000 annually. As we have reported, “The Next 150 Pledge” will redefine affordability for future classes. We commend this step toward addressing barriers that limit access to higher education, and commit to reporting the concerns Smithies have regarding the pledge.

Finally, we are pleased to announce that The Sophian has welcomed two interns to our

newsroom through our new collaboration with the Journalism Concentration. Until now, our student-run model and adherence to editorial independence from the college has meant that writers and editors on The Sophian could not receive internship credit for their labor. This year, the Journalism Concentration recruited Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Laura Crimaldi to strengthen the paper’s output. We are honored to work with Laura.

With gratitude,

Olivia Petty '26 - Editor-in-Chief

Karen Colmán Martínez '26 - Managing Editor