

Department of Design Hosts Fall Fashion Show During Family and Friends Weekend

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Last Saturday, the Department of Design hosted their annual Fall Fashion Show for Family and Friends Weekend. It was put on in the Performance Hub in the Artis Center Atrium. The show opened with a welcoming from **Dr. Holly Cline**, Chair of the Department Design. “Now you are about to see some amazing student work, we teach our students how to be successful – garments you see today were designed and constructed by fashion design students in the department,” Cline shared. **The fashion show consisted of around 30 outfits, designed and shown off by students.** In an interview with a few of the fashion design students who worked behind the scenes, **Ethan Tickle**, a junior shared, “they have been preparing for the fashion show since the beginning of the semester.” Collectively, the students shared that a lot of the work that happened behind the scenes includes measuring the models, fitting them, and getting enough models to sign up. One student shared that one of her outfits, a jean dress with a sweater on top, which was made during her sophomore year, was showcased on the runway. During Cline’s closing remarks, she introduced and showed gratitude towards **Kathy Mitchell**, a retired faculty member, who helped put on the



Left to right students Sydney Tate, Madison Burks and Nora Lester posing during the show Photo Credits: Brandon Whitaker

fall fashion show. In an interview with Cline, she shared that “the beautiful thing about this event is that it showcases our student’s work, it showcases the talent of our students, but then it also brings together so many students that are not our majors, where they model.” Cline also added, “it is great to see the student progression. It is also great for students to see their stuff walking down the runway.”

The Department of Design prides itself in showing off its student’s hard work and dedication to the program. **Check out the CVPA calendar at radford.edu to stay up to date on future events like this one.**

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The Future of Accessibility: A New Role of AI-powered Technology for People with Disabilities.

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There have been many recent advancements in technology, but many overlook the emerging AI-powered possibilities related to accessibility. Recently, there has been breakthrough innovation when figuring out how to incorporate AI into assistive technology. Not only is there more technology available than ever, but there is also more opportunity to improve and produce tools that can assist and create more independence for disabled people. Assistive technologies like screen-readers, captions, and voice recognition have only been improving in accuracy with the incorporation of more AI-powered technology.

AI can also offer personalized support, like predictive text or language processing tools to those with disabilities that make it difficult for them to communicate, or offering assistance to people with limited mobility through the ability to control devices with voice recognition. Assistive technology being created specifically for people with certain disabilities is a crucial aspect of advancing the field, but sometimes, technology designed for general assistance and functionality can be used in more inclusive ways. Recently, one of the most controversial items on the technology market has made an extreme positive impact on the blind community with a design catered specifically towards creating independence for those with limited or impaired eyesight.

The AI glasses made in a collaboration between Meta and Ray-Ban include features such as camera and video access through the glasses, as well as audio feature that allow users to take calls, listen to music, or hear Meta AI responses through the open-ear style speakers.

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The process is completely hands free and meant to be discreet & stylish. Members of the blind community have found new ways to utilize the eyewear to create more independence and accessibility for themselves. **“The glasses make my life easier,”** said Emeline Lakrout who was declared legally blind at 8 years old in an interview with CBS. The original design is centered around the ability to film and interact with the world using the AI-powered technology, but Meta placed many more accessible features within the design of the glasses. Users can connect the glasses to the “Be My Eyes” app, a software that helps visually impaired users with recognizing objects & completing tasks in real time. **The glasses also have OCR (optical character recognition) that can read text information aloud.** These features are extremely innovative and potentially helpful to the visually impaired community; however, the glasses are relatively new and still a “work in progress” according to Mark Riccobono, President of the National Federation of the Blind. While the glasses may not be at their full potential in accessibility yet, the existing features do make an impact and will hopefully be further improved upon in the future to help create inclusive environments for even more disabled communities.

There are many more recently developed assistive technologies that have made a positive impact on many disabled communities, and most were improved or enhanced with the use of AI. **The Xander Glasses by Xander are another design of AI-powered glasses,** however, these are designed to help hearing impaired individuals by displaying captions on the



Models wearing the “Ray Ban - Meta Wayfarer” glasses Photo Credit: ray-ban.com

lenses that reflect conversations in real time. The projection of the captions onto the lenses is discreet and designed to allow users to maintain eye contact in discussions while reading the captions simultaneously. There are a few more examples of recently developed/improved assistive technologies, one being the **Smart Glove by Neofect, which is designed to help individuals who have experienced injuries or neurological conditions that create difficulties relating to hand function.** The gloves can help these people to regain their hand function using a sensor that tracks hand movements. The data is used to create real time rehabilitation exercises, seen via an app, for the individual to engage in. Another example of an enhanced assistive technology is the **Oticon More hearing aid.** This hearing aid is one of the most innovative on the market so far, using AI to improve the processing of speech so users don’t have to put as much energy into listening. The aid is designed to mimic the way the brain naturally processes sound, and even adapts to different environments, offering clear sound even in noisy settings. These recent innovations, as well as the assistive features of the Meta AI glasses illustrate how AI can be used to create independence for disabled individuals and offer more inclusive options when it comes to assistive technology.

Compass at Radford University: New Program Providing Support for Students

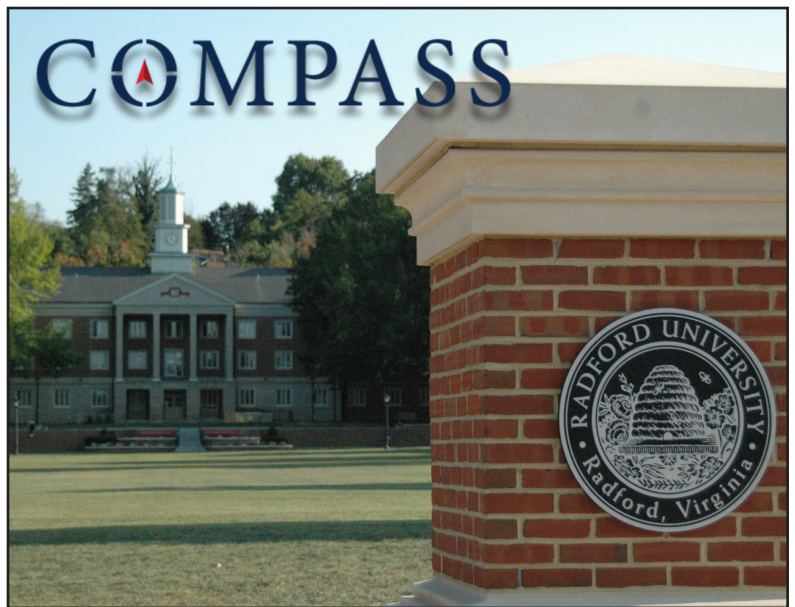
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Compass, a newer program on campus is defined as “a complimentary benefit for select students based on their financial aid package offering holistic support, advocacy, and specialized programming.” However we wanted to know more details about this program and therefore met with Bruce Hayden, the Associate Vice President, Student Affairs/Dean of Students and the overseer of the Compass program- to answer the question: What is Compass and how is it helping students?

Firstly the basics of Compass, it’s an offshoot of the Dean of Students office and is composed of 7 dedicated Student Success Advocates, SSAs, and 1 admin staff- that are there for students in need. One important note is eligibility, in order to find out if you are eligible for the program simply visit their website by searching “Compass Radford University” and do a short form to inquire.

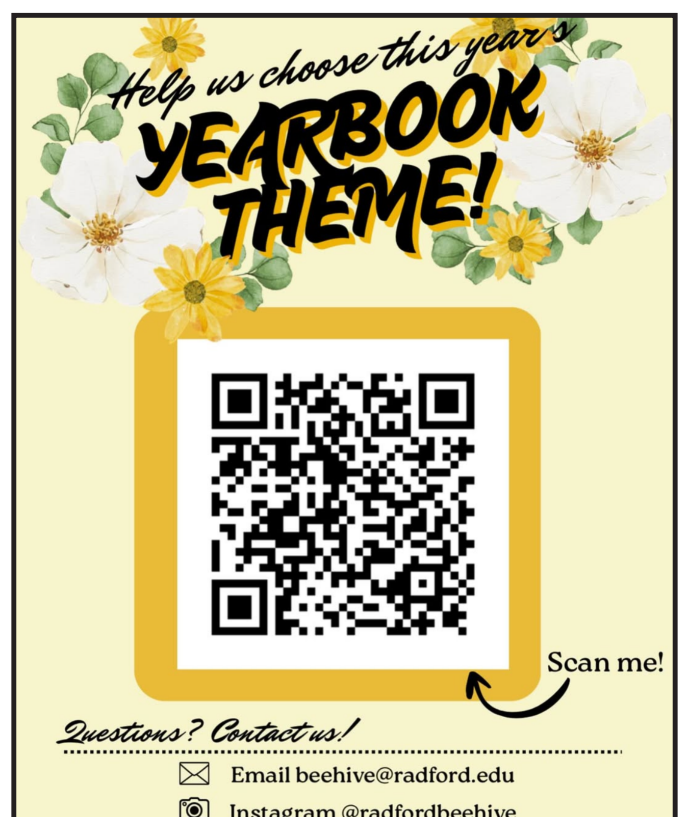
Continuing, one of the main goals of Compass is to “offer any assistance that students may need to remove obstacles in their path.” according to Hayden. This can include but is not limited to students experiencing financial aid emergencies, students having trouble adjusting to college, and students in need of a resource but unsure of where to turn. Furthermore the Compass brochure mentions they assist in “accessing resources, learning essential skills, and navigating every aspect of their collegiate journey.” Next, when asked what students they target, it was mentioned that past the eligibility of financial aid they work with a “myriad” of students, including transfers, freshmen, and returning students.

So what can a student expect when meeting with an SSA? Well Hayden shares that he believes “it’s open to the student and what the student is telling us what they may need.” meaning that students have the say when it comes to how meetings are directed. For example if the student needs help with a certain problem or multiple problems they can come in prepared to discuss those. This type of freedom with meetings is going to encourage



Compass logo edit Original Photo and Edit by: Brandon Whitaker
students to take charge and address their issues head on.

Overall Compass is continuing strong on its path to help students and is becoming an integral part of the Dean of Students office. Its message of holistic support is welcomed and a comforting support resource for students who are unsure of where to turn. If you need support on campus I would personally encourage students to find out if they are eligible via the website. That’s on Compass, helping you to navigate the college experience, so you don’t have to do it alone.



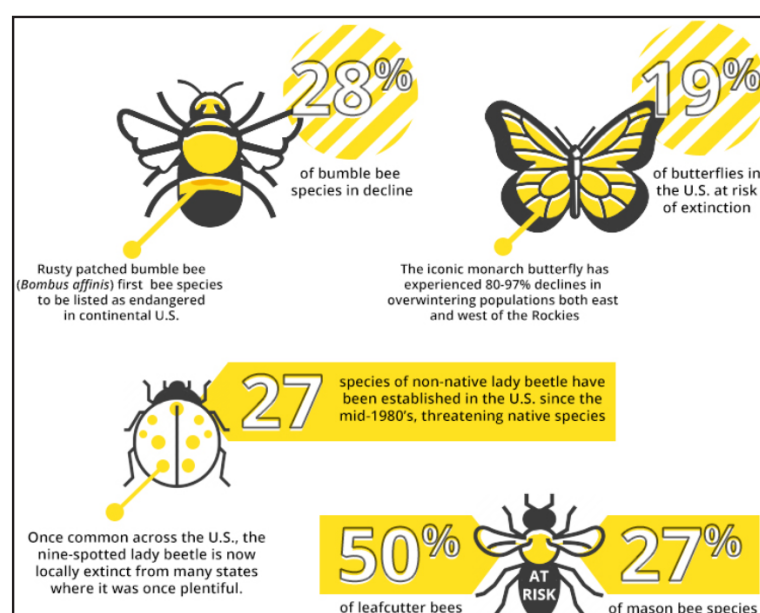
Speaking for the Bees: Why Are Bees Facing Extinction?

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Bees are nature's fuzzy pollinators. From the busy honey bees, to the chunky bumble bees these adorable, hardworking critters have been nestled in our hearts ever since we learned that they occasionally take power naps in flower petals. However, these buzzy buddies have been threatened and forced into near extinction for the past 300 years. **Studies have shown that nearly 40% of invertebrate pollinator species face extinction.** A research study in 2019, deduced that one in six bee species globally are regionally extinct and an additional 40 species are vulnerable to extinction.

This is heartbreaking news to our world's delicate agricultural balance. Approximately 20,000 species of bees are the most crucial to the reproduction of flowering plants, fruits and necessary seeds that make up our world's biodiversity. Without our pollinators, the world's agricultural balance will be thrown off its axis and millions of ecosystems will be in threat of complete collapse. As the threat of habitat loss and damaging pesticides become a widespread issue for countless species. The scale has been tipped to deadly odds for the past few years with no solution in sight. Until a recent study, conducted by the University of Oxford, provides a cost-effective and sustainable solution to help tackle the devastating decline in the honey bee population. Pollen makes up the majority of their diet, it introduces important lipids called sterols that are essential for bee's development. Recently, beekeepers have introduced artificial pollen to feed their colonies but these artificial substitutes contain ingredients like flour, sugars, and oils that do not give these pollinators the nutritional substances they need to properly buzz their way through life. In the new study, carried out in collaboration with Royal Botanic Gardens, University of Greenwich, and the Technical University of Denmark scientists have successfully engineered a yeast, *Yarrowia lipolytica*, that contains six of the necessary sterols that bees need in a balanced diet. Through a three-month feeding trial, the results were overwhelming.

Colonies that were fed the engineered yeast produced 15 times more larvae than colonies that were fed the controlled pollen substitutes. They also came to the conclusion that the colonies that were fed the engineered yeast would continue to reproduce at a rapid rate up to the end of the three-month period, whereas colonies fed the sterol-deficient diets discontinued reproduction after 90 days. Lead author Dr. Elynor Moore states that, **"For bees, the difference between the sterol-enriched diet and conventional bee feeds would be comparable to the difference for humans between eating balanced, nutritionally complete meals and eating meals missing essential nutrients."** Pollinators are essential for 70% of leading global crops. Without these busy buzzers, both human and animal's major food sources would be threatened severely. **Scientists hypothesize that this new supplement will be available to farmers within the next two years.** Our world has now become a dangerous place for our animal kingdom as they face challenges like global warming and habitat eradication. Positive studies to nurture our neighbors have become increasingly important. The human footprint has devastated these delicate ecosystems into near extinction but it is our responsibility to ensure the safety of every organism on Earth.



Pollinators in decline graphic Photo Credit: xerces.org

Trump vs. Tylenol: The White House Briefing Confusing Health Specialists Across the Globe

By: AMANDA FARLOW
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Last week, President Donald Trump held a press conference to express his concerns that acetaminophen might cause autism in children, and that vaccinations might also be linked. Acetaminophen is the active ingredient in the popular over-the-counter pain reliever Tylenol.

Autism spectrum disorder is a highly complex neurodevelopmental disorder, with a variety of symptoms and characteristics. Donald Trump's accusations about Tylenol seem to be false, as scientists have pushed back against these claims, citing a lack of evidence for his claims. World Health Organization spokesperson Tarik Jašarević stated during a press briefing that,

“There were some observational studies that have suggested a possible association between prenatal exposure to acetaminophen, but the evidence remains inconsistent...several studies done after that have found no such relationship. So this lack of replicability calls for caution in drawing causal conclusions about the role of acetaminophen in autism.”

Donald Trump did not have any factual evidence to back up his claims, and stated that it was his own opinion, not any doctor's. Tylenol responded by stating that acetaminophen is ‘the safest pain reliever’ choice for pregnant women. However, they also expressed the importance of talking to a doctor before taking any kind of over-the-counter drug. The suggestion that taking tylenol is to blame for their child's autism, risks piling guilt onto pregnant women and new mothers, many of whom already face challenges such as postpartum depression.



Donald Trump Photo Credit: Mark Humphrey/AP - Tylenol Photo Credit: Justin Sullivan/Getty Images

In a separate post made by the President on Truth Social he said,

“Starting October 1st, 2025, we will be imposing a 100% tariff on any branded or patented pharmaceutical product, unless a company IS BUILDING their Pharmaceutical Manufacturing Plant in America. “IS BUILDING” will be defined as, “breaking ground” and/or “under construction.” There will, therefore, be no tariff on these pharmaceutical products if construction has started.”

He claims this will lower drug costs, though economists warn it may instead drive prices up for many patients.

Trump's attack on Tylenol is more than a health concern for pregnant women. It's pushing false rhetoric on members of the Autism community, and it only further pushes the misguided idea that Autism is a ‘disease’ in need of a cure. These stigmatized claims are quite distasteful, as he continues to spread misinformation through his social media posts. This type of rhetoric is harmful because it spreads misinformation, fuels fear and diverts attention away from what really matters: supporting autistic individuals and their families through acceptance, resources, and inclusion.

Opinion: American Norms are Weird

By: NICOLAS LEON GUZMAN
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There are things in American culture that are pretty cool, being able to talk to strangers freely, being so nice to one another, and treating a pet as a member of the family. However, there are some things that I find odd in American culture. For starters, everyone is always eating on the go or all alone. Back in my home country of Mexico, meals are a bonding experience. It's a time when we come together to talk about our day and share food together. However, in America it's becoming more uncommon for people to eat together at a table. Often times I see people eating all alone by themselves, and sometimes that's nice, every now and then I like some alone time, but I couldn't imagine doing it every day for every single meal. That's why I started hosting a dinner every Saturday night. I get my friends together to cook a meal, have some beers, and talk about stuff we're looking forward to in the coming week.

The one bad thing about hosting those dinners was buying groceries because the price is so deceiving. Which is another norm in America that is weird to me. You see outside America if the price of a product shows \$20 that's the actual price. The sales tax is already baked into the price that's displayed on the shelf. I go to Walmart and a product price shows \$19.99, but it's not that actual price. It's a LIE because when I go to checkout they add the tax. That should be considered a scam.

Also, why is everything, so spread out in America? Do y'all love driving that



Photo Edit by Brandon Whitaker

much? You do realize that the reason most people outside the US aren't experiencing an obesity epidemic is because they use their feet to get around due to everything being closer. My 70 year old grandmother, god bless her soul, lives right next to a store that she can walk to, hold on, read that again...yes, she walks to the store, that is owned by a small family, not some monopoly corporation. If we do want to get around we have things like mopeds and motorcycles that don't need to go 70MPH because 25MPH is enough to get around a dense community.

Speaking of monopolies, why are there barely any small businesses in the U.S. Mom and pop shops are a billion times more common in other countries. That's the U.S.' problem is that they don't put those massive corporations in check and they let them just come in and cream the locals out of business. Big corporations have their hands in everything, they come in and admittedly give a good product at first, but as competition dies out they jack up the prices and then companies like Netflix or Ubisoft start producing a worse product.

Highlander Highlights: Women's Soccer Starts 2-0 In Conference Play, Cross Country Teams Dominate in Lancer Pink Invitational

By: BRANDON WHITAKER

Women's Soccer Lilly Shorts' Offensive Onslaught Leads Highlanders Past Lancers 1-0

On Wednesday the Highlanders hosted Longwood for their second Big South Conference matchup of the season, winning 1-0 for their second straight shutout of the season. Senior **Lilly Short** was aggressive all throughout the first half, accounting for five first half shots with the fifth shot being the go ahead score for the Highlanders. Coming out of half up 1-0, the lights came on and dark clouds rolled over Cupp Stadium, drenching the players and fans for the next 45 minutes. Despite the slippery conditions the Highlanders maintained their composure and withstood seven second half shots from Longwood and secured the win. Junior goalkeeper **Lexi Radvanyi** was the main catalyst of the shutout, playing all 90 minutes and notching four saves on the night. The Highlanders will be back at Cupp Stadium for their third conference matchup taking on USC Upstate on Saturday October 4th at 6:00 p.m.



Lilly Short smiles at her teammates after a goal in a previous game vs. Campbell Photo Credit: Brandon Whitaker

Cross Country Women's team wins in Farmville, Men's team places second in Lancer Pink invitational

On September 20th the Radford Men's and Women's Cross Country teams traveled to Farmville Virginia for the Lancer Pink Invitational hosted by Longwood University. The women's program took home their second straight first

place finish as a team, with six Highlanders finishing in the top ten in individual scores. Senior **Sophie Magson** placed second in individuals with a time of 17:56.40 and sophomore **Sienna Bailey** placed third with a time of 18:39.30. The men's program finished second in the 8k. Senior **Charlie Dance** earned the top individual spot for Radford with a time of 26:35.60. Next up for Cross Country comes a trip to Boone North Carolina for the Firetower Project Run hosted by App State.



Photo Credit: Radford Athletics