

SENIOR COLUMN: FARE THEE WELL, UCONN

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by Dan Stark

OUTGOING CAMPUS CORRESPONDENT
AND FORMER LIFE EDITOR
HE/HIM/HIS

My time at The Daily Campus can best be described, echoing the words of the Grateful Dead, as a long, strange trip. It certainly didn't go how I thought it would, but I'm incredibly happy about how it turned out.

I came into college knowing I was going to be a journalism major but had no clue what kind of writing I wanted to do. When I found the DC's table at the involvement fair, I signed up to join the email lists of the News and Opinion sections. To this day, I still don't know why I signed up for Opinion, as I detested the role of opinion in journalism.

A few days later, I went to my first Opinion meeting and walked out with the goal of becoming a weekly columnist. Being the political nerd that I am, I loved the idea of having a column where I could talk about whatever I wanted. By December 2022, my columnist application was accepted — and thus, “The Stark Tank” was born.

By sophomore year, I moved up to Associate Opinion Editor, as well as taking on roles as a copy editor and

joining the board of directors.

In these roles, my eyes were opened beyond the realms of the Opinion basement,

as I got to learn about the hard work that goes into producing a daily newspaper. I loved going to editors' meetings and

spending the bulk of my Sundays around people who were as passionate as I am about journalism.

But a lot changed by the end of the year. I made the decision to run for editor-in-chief, a bold move as a sophomore, and I didn't get the job. At the time, I was absolutely crushed. My goal had been to move into the big seat at some point and that was the single biggest thing keeping me motivated through my struggles that year.

After that, my initial plan was to move up to Opinion Editor since my co-editor was graduating. But when I was taking a shower before heading to the DC one Sunday, I started to

think that I needed a change. I loved what I was doing, but I wanted to tackle something different. So I made the tough decision to not run for Opinion Editor, but also end “The Stark Tank” and leave the section altogether. I felt

scared leaving behind everything I did here for two years; I still remember breaking down in my dorm after the end of year banquet in May 2024, unsure of what was to come.

But as fate would have it, not getting editor-in-chief was the best thing that could have happened to me — and for the paper too, since my dear friend and colleague Sara Bedigian did a much better job than I ever could have. As a new writer for the Life section, I quickly embraced covering campus events and anything else interesting I could find, but I quickly found my niche covering the local music scene. I soon launched my second column, “The Music Never Stops,” where every week, I would feature someone from the Connecticut music scene and tell their story. I'll forever be grateful to my editors, Ben Lassy and James Fitzpatrick, for giving me the greenlight to do all my music-related writing.

By senior year, I became Life Editor and fulfilled my goal of becoming an editor again after leaving Opinion. It was a lot more demanding than being Associate Opinion Editor, as for the first time, I had to assemble a budget of stories for my writers to take. But getting to lead section meetings, be in editors' meetings and, most of all, help new writers with their work, were all things I missed and was so glad to be doing again.

Though I stepped down from my editor role after the Fall 2025 semester to start working remotely

as a reporter with The Express News Group, my hometown news outlet on Long Island, this newspaper will always have a special place in my heart. I've probably spent more time in this building than anywhere else on campus. I can't imagine what my Sundays would have looked like without going to meetings. It's because of this place that I got my start as a journalist, and I'll never forget the stories I wrote and the memories I made here.

To The Daily Campus, the University of Connecticut and anyone who's ever read my writing: fare you well, I love you more than words can tell.

