

Editor-in-chief says goodbye

By Solé Scott
Editor-in-Chief

My time at Southern News is coming to an end, and the experience has been glorious, bittersweet and full of challenges and growth.

I started here in the newsroom my sophomore year after being a contributor for an article with the previous News Editor, Destene Savariau, during my freshman year. I shook with excitement when I found out that I got the job of Features Editor. I knew I had to make my name known for years down the line. The first thing I created was "Owls Decide" after I pitched it to the Editor-in-Chief at the time, Jaylen Carr.

At the start of my junior year, I became the Editor-in-Chief of Southern News and was, quite frankly, clueless.

The plan I had for the first production of the year swiftly changed before my eyes, and all I could do was rake my hands across my face and pace the room. I did not leave the building until 7 p.m. that night, a little over 10 hours after I had entered.

The transition was not easy. There were long days, moments of doubt and times when I questioned whether

I was doing enough. I often felt pushed beyond my boundaries, and that pressure made me a better leader.

Every Monday, I would walk in and say good morning with a smile on my face to set the mood of the day. I pride myself on being readily available for my staff members in and out of the newsroom.

There were moments where I had to assert my voice more firmly to be heard, even when I was providing the same guidance as my colleagues. Those experiences challenged me to be more intentional in how I communicate.

In a position like this, mistakes are expected, and growth comes through learning from them. Over time, I came to understand the importance of extending myself that same grace, even in moments of pressure.

I had a few heart-to-heart moments with Professors Cindy Simoneau and Jodie Gil that I will take with me on my professional journey. They were one of the reasons I did not quit, and for them, I am eternally grateful.

In my senior year, I made sure to come into the semester confidently after having a conversation with my mother discussing my goals

before the semester started.

I can proudly say that since I have been Editor-in-Chief, we have won awards for the Connecticut SPJ College Contest and have been finalists for Mark of Excellence Awards.

Three years later, Southern News still runs "Owls Decide," and I am proud to have created something that continues to be a staple of the publication.

I must give thanks to my current staff members Brianna Wallen, Valentina Toro, Jay'Mi Vazquez, Lily Rand, Will Gagné, Wade Barillaro, Julian Markese, Draven Dabrowski, Hannah Graham and Mackenzie Byerlee. Thank you for the conversations about TMZ, reality TV and our Dunkin' runs.

Thank you to Professor Frank Harris, Jaylen Carr, Ali Fernand, Sophia Rositani, Sarah Shelton, Lexi White, Brandon Cortés and everyone who helped in my journey. Also, a shoutout to Tyvonn Thompson, for delivering the paper each week.

Congratulations to the new and upcoming staff, and I leave here a quote from the incomparable Whitney Houston.

"I believe the children are our future. Teach them well, and let them lead the way."



PHOTO | JAYLEN CARR

Journalism major Solé Scott, a senior and Editor-in-Chief, receiving Southern News Journalist of the Year at Honors Convocation.

Managing editor says his farewell



PHOTO | JAYLEN CARR

Journalism major Jay'Mi Vazquez, a senior and Managing editor, with various awards from the Journalism Department at Honors Convocation.

By Jay'Mi Vazquez
Managing Editor

As I get ready to turn the page on this chapter of my life, I keep returning to the places that provided me meaningful memories I will forever carry: Southern News and Crescent magazine.

It feels strange trying to sum up something that has meant so much to me in just a few paragraphs because, to me, it was never just a club or a class. Both student organizations became a space where I found my voice and a version of myself I did not know existed when I first walked in.

I still remember that first day stepping into the newsroom. It was hot, and I did not know exactly

what to expect.

What I did know was that I wanted to find a place where my creativity was not only accepted but valued, and the stories I cared about could matter to others.

Somewhere along the way, without me even realizing it most days, the newsroom became that place. It became my home away from home, and I will forever be thankful to call it that.

To my mentors, Professors Cindy Simoneau, Frank Harris, Jodie Gil and Thea Moritz, I truly do not have enough words. Thank you for your patience when I was still figuring things out, for your honest feedback even when it was hard to hear and for always pushing

me to be better than I thought I could be.

You saw potential in me before I saw it in myself, and that belief changed everything. Because of you, I am not only leaving a stronger writer, but a more confident person stepping into the next chapter of my life.

To the current team of editors, thank you for being the heart of this experience. The Monday morning edits, the last-minute deadlines and always laughing during stressful weeks — those are the moments I will miss the most. You made me feel like I never had to do this alone, and that made all the difference.

I also cannot leave without acknowledging those who walked this path before alongside me. Jaylen Carr, Alison Fernand, Carly Russell, Lexi White, Brandon Cortés and so many others — you were more than just teammates.

Your belief in me helped shape my journey in ways I will never forget. You all hold a permanent place in my heart.

Saying goodbye is not easy. It feels like leaving behind a version of myself that grew within these walls — my computer with the messy desktop, the bulletin board with our inside jokes and the constant reminder to fix the printer.

My final request to you is that you do not call me to fix it next year. But I leave with a sense of pride in the work I have done and gratitude for everything this experience has given me.

More than anything, I leave with hope and excitement for the students who will come next. I know they will continue to build something meaningful here. In the words of Kurt Vonnegut, "So it goes."

Crescent magazine and Folio Magazine release this week



Folio Magazine's newest edition releases all around campus this week, with the rollout party scheduled for Friday, May 8 at the Adanti Student Center Fireside Lounge.

Folio has been released since the 1940s. Since around 1970, there has been roughly one edition released each year.

The cover of the upcoming 120-page edition features art by art history major Rashell Xicohtencatl, a junior. This issue of Folia will feature various works of art, poetry and prose from undergraduate students. The visual artwork ranged from painting, drawing, photography and ceramics.

Congratulations to graduating senior students on the staff: Editor Aedy VanHouten and Associate Editor Kyle Bleakley.



Award-winning Crescent magazine's 16th edition releases this week. Magazines will be available on newsracks around campus.

The cover story within this 48-page edition features history major Will Fyke, a junior, who restores gravestones with the Stonington Cemetery Commission.

The edition also highlights many interesting stories, including student-run businesses, campus leaders and student organization initiatives.

Congratulations to the graduating senior students on the staff: Editor-in-chief Jay'Mi Vazquez, Managing Editor Avery Martin, Online Video Editor Domenick Sollima, Co-Features editors Brandon Cortés, Peter Schmitz and Melanie Vargas.

SOUTHERN NEWS

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