

New Police chief arrives Page 2



BSU ‘Soulful Social’ event Page 4



Owls loses to Shepherd 23-0 Page 8

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Class of 2028 makes their way to campus

By Briana Wallen
News Editor

As the summer wrapped up, it was time for the launch of a new fall semester. On Aug. 24, the class of 2028 spread their wings onto campus.

At “New Owl Convocation”, the university welcomed 1,136 students for the class of 2028, resulting in a 2.48% increase in enrollment from last fall.

594 of the new Owls are first-generation college students and 55% of the incoming class are students of color.

For full-time undergraduate students, there are roughly 5,573 Owls at the university.

The add/drop deadline has been extended to Sep. 9.

According to Alicia Carroll who works for the registrar office, Faculty Senate extended and improved the add/drop in the spring of 2024`.

“This policy change will greatly enhance students’ academic experience at Southern by reducing bureaucratic hurdles and giving them greater flexibility in managing their course schedules,” Carroll said.

By simplifying the process for adding and dropping courses, students can better tailor their academic journey without unnecessary barriers while positively impacting their academic record and overall experience.”

Starting from 9 a.m., the freshman halls, Chase Hall, Farnham Hall, Wilkinson Hall, Hickerson Hall and Neff Hall welcomed the new class.

Many freshmen packed their lives and memories from home with them in storage containers and bags. Volunteers from various fall sports teams loaded their items into bins and wheeled them into their respective halls to make the move-in process easier.

Marketing major Tony Salerno, a freshman who moved into Chase Hall, said his move-in experience went smoothly.

Salerno said. “I met my RAs, and I like it here so far.”

Computer science major Renei Hester, a freshman, said that departing from her parents was a “bittersweet moment.”

“I now have the ability to establish myself on my own,” Hester said.

Although freshmen are away from their families, they are not alone. Interim President Dwayne Smith was making his rounds, visiting each freshman hall. From floor to floor, the president was introducing himself to the new freshmen.

“I want them to know that they have a new welcoming environment,” Smith said.

This has been a longstanding tradition for Smith. The president said that his tours are an expression of what he himself needed during his undergrad years.

“We just showed up and felt disconnected,” Smith said. “Now as an administrator, I think it’s important to establish that connection.”

Nursing major Ngam Le, a freshman, said that she is excited to create unforgettable memories.

“I am excited for the ‘New Owl Welcome Week,’ and I look forward to new experiences and meeting new people,” Le said.

Many other freshmen are also open to sparking new connections and attending events.

“In the little bit of time I’ve been here, there’s already a lot of stuff going on, so I’m looking forward to all the events,” Salerno said. “I’m also excited to meet more people in my hall and on my floor.”

With a new and exciting chapter in front of them, these freshmen have endless opportunities to meet and connect with new people.

“I’m looking forward to the ability to be involved as much as possible,” Hester said.

As the new Owls fully transition to college, the president said he hopes that the class of 2028 takes full advantage of their freshman year and the experiences they will have.

“I want them to be transformed by their experiences,” Smith said.



PHOTO | BRIANNA WALLEN

Interim President Dwayne Smith and students assisting with move in.



PHOTO | CARLY RUSSELL

Move-in team made up of students helps freshmen move into the dorm halls.



PHOTO | CARLY RUSSELL

Sgt. Peter Mckoy and physical education major Elijah Lewis, a freshman, with his family.

Alexis Holmes wins gold for USA

By Solé Scott
Editor in Chief

Alexis Holmes has cemented her name in households and history books.

The 2024 Summer Olympics were held in Paris for the second time and were watched all over the world.

The university’s own director of university access programs Dawn Stanton was in Paris cheering on her daughter, track and field Olympian Alexis Holmes.

Stanton described the energy of the Stade de France stadium.

“Electrifying, it was absolutely incredible. I think there were 80,000 or so fans,” Stanton said.

This year’s Summer Olympic saw 592 athletes from around the country, including Hamden’s own Holmes.

Holmes took part in the Women’s 400-meter final in which she placed sixth.

Holmes saw much more success when she and Team USA Women’s 4x400-meter relay team won gold.

Shamier Little started, then passed the baton to Sydney McLaughlin-Levrone, who then passed the baton to Gabby Thomas for the third leg. Thomas passed the baton to anchor Holmes, who secured the gold medal for Team USA.

“My time in Paris was surreal. To be able to fulfill a childhood dream of competing in the Olympics, with both my parents there to watch in person, it meant everything to me,” Holmes said.



PHOTO | NBC CONNECTICUT

Gold medalist Alexis Holmes at the Paris Olympics.