Creation and connection at 'Snap and Stick'

By Mackenzie Byerlee
Features Editor

Memories were captured and frames were decorated in the North Campus Community Room on Oct. 13.

Hosted by North Campus, "Snap and Stick" brought students together to meet new people and make crafts. Healthcare studies major Decontee Nimely, a junior and president of North Campus Hall Council, came up with the idea for this event.

"I did a girls night with my friends last year to de-stress before finals, and I thought it would be fun to bring it to North," Nimely said.

The event had students take Polaroid pictures in front of a backdrop that would be printed out for them to put in magnet frames.

They then were able to decorate the frames with puffy paint, gems and charms in order for students to give them a personal touch.

Allowing students to tap into their creative side is something that secondary education and biology major Michael Mack, a junior, really appreciated about the event.

"It is calming for me to decorate the frame," Mack said.

Mack also got creative in his picture, and held up an N and a C in sign language to stand for North Campus.

This truly showed his appreciation for the building in which he lives.

North Campus Hall Council provided drinks, snacks and all of the supplies necessary to create the perfect frame.

There was a variety of different colored paints and gems for students to customize their individual creations to their liking.

Another aspect that made this event unique was the Polaroid portion.

Getting to take photos with friends and having something physical to commemorate this time in their lives is not an opportunity that is presented to students often these days.

With phones and social media, a lot of people only have access to photos online.

So being able to have a physical photo that they can use as decor and put in a magnet frame is something that truly sets this event apart from others.

"Seeing everyone be here and enjoying themselves and having memorabilia is my favorite part," graphic design major Jocelin Torres, a freshman and public relations for North Campus Hall Council, said.

"Snap and Stick" is just one event that is held by North Campus Hall Council.

In addition to their weekly meetings, they hold events every other Tuesday.

These events are determined based on student opinion as well as that of the executive board.

This allows interactive events to be decided by students for students.

While these all occur at North Campus, they are advertised to all students.

This also encourages people to engage in a variety of activities and meet new people in the process.

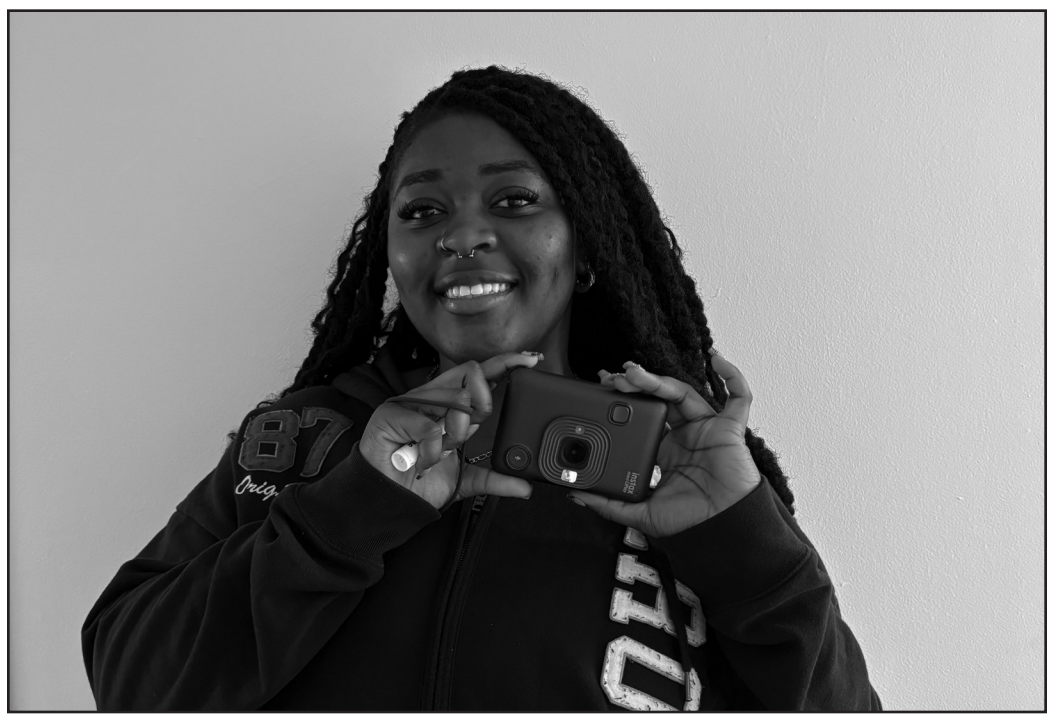
"I just like socializing with my peers," communication major Nasir Anderson, a junior, said.

Nimely wanted students, in North Campus specifically, to feel as though they had somewhere that they belonged.

"Just because we're upperclassmen doesn't mean that you have to be all by yourself," Nimely said.



PHOTOS | MACKENZIE BYERLEE
Supplies for the 'Snap and Stick' event in the North Campus Community Room.



Healthcare studies major Decontee Nimely, a junior, on Oct. 13.

Art professor brings new perspective to campus

By Jessie Galvan
Contributor

What began as a passion for art, jewelry and natural stones has grown into a creative business for Marie Murphy, founder of Silver Raven Studio.

Through her jewelry, Murphy brings together metalsmithing, lapidary and design, drawing on years of experience to create bold, distinctive pieces that allow customers to express their individual style.

"I've always been interested in art, jewelry, stones and design. I began learning the art of metalsmithing in the early 2000s, and it brought all of those interests together," Murphy said.

Murphy is an instructor for ART 233, Jewelry and Metals I, at the university.

Originally from Massachusetts, just outside Boston, she studied metalsmithing at Massachusetts College of Art and Design.

Before becoming a full-time metalsmith and jeweler, Murphy worked in interior design, where she developed an appreciation for craftsmanship, functionality and thoughtful design —principles that continue to shape her work today.

In craftsmanship, art and design, practice is essential to developing skill. Murphy is no exception.

Her career serves as living proof that dedication, persistence and practice can lead to mastery.

"Metalsmithing takes patience, practice and then more practice," Murphy said. "I knew I wanted to become good at it, so I committed myself to the art and continued working at it year after year. Like anything worthwhile, developing your skills takes time."

More than a decade ago, Murphy made a decision that would shape her career: she opened her own studio in her Connecticut home.

The space gave her the freedom to focus on what brings her joy — creating intentional, handcrafted jewelry.

"It's rewarding and challenging at the same time. It requires much more than making jewelry. I also handle photography, marketing, my website, customer service, bookkeeping, and shipping," Murphy said. "You have to be self-motivated, disciplined, and willing to continuously learn and evolve."

Silver Raven Studio, launched in 2014 and offers bold, handcrafted jewelry made with intention for those who enjoy expression through wearable art.

"Some of my most memorable experiences have come from the relationships I've built with my clients and seeing the personal connections they form with the pieces I create," Murphy said.

In her home studio, Murphy creates handcrafted pieces using traditional metalsmithing techniques.

Fire and stone are among her key sources of inspiration, influencing both her creative process and the character of her work.

"I'm inspired by gemstones and minerals, nature and ancient adornment. I often begin with a stone and create the design around it," Murphy said.

Throughout her career, Murphy has taught metalsmithing classes at local community art centers and attended numerous trade shows.

Fall 2026 marks Murphy's first semester teaching at the university.

"After more than a decade as a professional metalsmith, the opportunity to teach metalsmithing at Southern felt like a natural progression," Murphy said. "I'm grateful to be part of the program and to work with Professor Terrence Lavin."

Murphy's time so far at the university has exceeded her expectations.

Murphy comes to her class eager to inspire and teach young minds the discipline of craftsmanship.

"I hope to help students build a strong foundation in metalsmithing, become comfortable with the tools and materials, and develop confidence in their own ideas," Murphy said.

Owls Decide: Silver or gold jewelry?

By Mackenzie Byerlee
Features Editor



PHOTOS | LILY RAND
"Gold because silver washes me out sometimes."
- Nursing major Bella DeRenzo, a freshman



"Silver; I think it looks better with my skin tone."
- Nursing major Olivia Gagnon, a freshman



"I like both because it depends on the day and the outfit."
- Health science major Ashley Aucul, a senior



"Silver because it looks better."
- Physics major Aidan Chittenden, a junior



"Gold jewelry because it matches better with my fraternity."
- Sport management major Chance Lewis, a sophomore



"Silver because I'm a cool tone girl."
- Sport management major Valerie Suprenant, a junior