

COVID-19 cases reach 26

Brevard College returns to in-person classes after boom in positivity

By Margaret Correll
Editor in Chief

Brevard College's COVID-19 dashboard reached a high of 26 positive cases for the spring semester this past week after a surge in testing revealed 11 new cases. Testing from Monday, Jan. 25 to Saturday, Jan. 30 garnered the highest amount of positive cases in one week at BC.

After only three weeks of testing, Brevard College's COVID-19 positivity for the spring has reached higher than expected, the number of positive cases surpassing that of the entire previous semester. Many students and faculty have expressed their concerns over the increased number of cases and the college's insistent attitude to return to in person classes, which are planned to commence on Feb. 1.

Brevard College's Dean of Students, Deb D'Anna and Dean of Faculty, Scott Sheffield collaborated on a response to questions regarding the return to in-person classes and how the college plans on easing concerns from the students, faculty and the surrounding community. "Our current number of cases can create anxiety and doubt about returning to in-person classes. We have had more positive cases

this semester than the entire fall semester," said D'Anna. "This can be attributed to an aggressive testing protocol."

Brevard College, according to D'Anna, has tested more than 1,000 students and staff in the short three weeks after returning to campus. This is significantly more than last semester, only reaching this number at the end of the fall. This strategy, she said, is to keep the campus safer and target those who are positive, whether they are symptomatic or asymptomatic.

While the college is trying to keep COVID-19 under control, reassuring the community with emails and updating the dashboard as often as needed, this still does not keep those who have access to the dashboard from worrying. With in person classes starting this week, everyone at Brevard College must continue to do their part in stopping the spread of COVID-19 on campus. It is encouraged by BC and The Clarion to get tested regularly, wear a mask and practice social distancing.

To keep up to date with COVID-19 positivity, visit the [Brevard College COVID-19 dashboard](https://my.brevard.edu/ICS/COVID-19_Updates.jnz) (online at https://my.brevard.edu/ICS/COVID-19_Updates.jnz).



Photo from Jonesday.com

Increased testing at Brevard reveals an increase in COVID-19 cases, most among students.

Road closures in Pisgah

As winter bares its teeth and the southern NC mountains settle into a freeze-thaw cycle, the Pisgah Ranger District has temporarily closed several roads until weather and road conditions improve.

The following Forest Service Roads (FSR) are currently closed:

- Headwaters FSR 475B
- Avery Creek FSR 477 (from horse stables to Hwy 276, the lower section is open)
- Yellow Gap FSR 1206
- Bent Creek FSR 479 (from Ledford Branch to Blue Ridge Parkway)
- Pilot Mountain Road FSR 229
- Wash Creek FSR 5000
- Courthouse Creek FSR 110

If you are yearning for an excursion in the forest, fear not! Many paved and even a few gravel roads still remain open for those looking for a wintertime adventure. For updates on road conditions, call the Pisgah Ranger District at 828-877-3265 or email at sm.fs.pisgahrd@usda.gov

—Duncan McWilliam-Grench



Photo from WLOS

Check in with the Pisgah Rangers before venturing out into the forest.

New tomb discovered belonging to Egyptian queen

By Aia Andonovska
Copy Editor

According to Smithsonian Magazine, archaeologists in Egypt have unearthed a variety of priceless historic artifacts. These items include more than 50 wooden sarcophagi, a funerary temple dedicated to an Old Kingdom queen, and a 13 foot long “Book of the Dead” scroll. They were found at the Saqqara necropolis, which is an expansive burial ground south of Cairo.

Egyptologist Zahi Hawass and his colleagues discovered the coffins. They date back to the New Kingdom Era, which occurred from 1570-1069 B.C.E. The coffins were found in 52 burial shafts that measure 33 to 40 feet deep. Paintings of ancient Egyptian gods and excerpts from the “Book of the Dead” were also found with the sarcophagi.

Hawass told CBS news that researchers started excavating the site next to the pyramid of King Teti, first of the Sixth Dynasty rulers of the Old Kingdom (2,680-2,180 B.C.E.), in 2010. At first, archaeologists were struggling to identify who the tomb belonged to because there was no name inscribed inside. Now, experts have identified the complex as the tomb of Queen Naert, wife of King Teti. Around a month ago, her name was found etched into a temple wall and a fallen obelisk.

“I’d never heard of this queen before,” Hawass said to CBS News. “Therefore, we add

an important piece to Egyptian history, about this queen.”

The other coffins found in the burial shafts most likely hold the remains of followers of a Teti worshipping cult that formed after the pharaoh’s death. Experts think the cult practiced for more than a thousand years. Members of this cult would have considered it an honor to be buried next to King Teti.

Other discoveries at the site include a set of wooden masks, a shrine to the Egyptian god Anubis, bird-shaped artifacts, ancient board games, a bronze ax and hieroglyphs.



Courtesy of the Egyptian Ministry of Tourism and Antiques

One of King Teti’s worshippers.

THE CLARION

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Trapt drummer leaves band due to political divide

By Jackson Inglis
Staff Writer

Trapt is a very fascinating character study in rock. They had two #1 Billboard hit songs in 2003, then faded into obscurity for about 17 years and then gained media attention in 2020 for all the wrong reasons.

Most of the attention came due to Trapt vocalist Chris Taylor Brown using Trapt's official social media accounts to harass and throw childish insults at people who dared to suggest that Trapt isn't the greatest rock band of all time. Brown also used the band's accounts to spread his political opinions that no one asked for; these include: blaming George Floyd for his own death, refusing to believe that Joe Biden won the election and claiming voter fraud, supporting the Proud Boys, denying the existence of systemic racism and claiming that a 15-year-old boy having sex with an adult female teacher is somehow not pedophilia.

In Nov. 2020, Trapt was banned from Facebook and Instagram for sharing a Proud Boys post; later, they were banned from Twitter after Brown defended statutory rape.

Recently, the band's drummer Michael Smith stated that he was leaving Trapt due to Chris Taylor Brown's antics on social media. Smith stated: "The stances taken and publicly received as a result are not representative of myself." There isn't a single person in the world that blames him for his decision, but the questions remain: what took so long, and why haven't the other members followed in his footsteps?

While Trapt has had the same singer and bassist since 1995, they've gone through so many guitarists and drummers over the years that they put Red Hot Chili Peppers to shame. It's important to note that all the stuff said under the Trapt official accounts were only on behalf of Chris Taylor Brown; the musicians behind him had nothing to do with it.

With their Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook gone, Trapt resorted to Parler for their main source of communication with their fans. If Chris Taylor Brown continues with his antics, Trapt may not be around in the next five years. 'Tis a shame; Trapt makes pretty good music.

Trail Review

Fryingpan Lookout Tower

The Fryingpan Mountain Lookout Tower is a historic fire tower with a panoramic view, located off the Blue Ridge Parkway. Originally built in 1941, the tower was used for the extensive views it provided to spot fires until the 1990s. It is the tallest USFS lookout tower in Western North Carolina.

To access this hike, park at the entrance to the Forest Service Road 450. The road gate is always closed, so walk around the gate and walk up the gravel road to the summit. The hike is relatively short, only a 1.5 miles round trip, however, I found it quite steep. I found myself slightly unprepared for this aspect, but overall, it was not a strenuous hike and viewing the top

of the tower was ultimately worth it.

The cab and top deck of the tower are locked to prevent people staying overnight and vandalism, but you can still climb the five flights of stairs. You can see Looking Glass Rock and a close up of Cold Mountain and Mount Pisgah. Dogs are also allowed, which I only learned after I went to see it.

Overall, this was a beautiful hike that lets you see some cool sights of Brevard and the surrounding area without needing to drive somewhere too far. It also doubles as a stellar photo opportunity, so make sure you visit while you are here!

—Anna Ervin



A view of Fryingpan Tower, located on the Blue Ridge Parkway.

Coming soon for BC Theatre

Theater is a big part of the Brevard College campus and COVID-19 has restricted much of what the program has been able to do. Last semester, the Brevard College theatre department was able to have their performance of "Little Shop of Horrors," but their performance of "Grace for President" was cancelled due to COVID-19. "Little Shop of Horrors" was presented in a drive-in style at the Brevard Music Center to match the retro theme of the musical. This semester, the theatre department plans to present three different shows with safety as their number one priority.

The first play that the BC theatre department is performing is "The Drowning Girls."

"The Drowning Girls" is a true story of three women who were drowned in the bathtub by their husband. Sarah Hajkowski, a sophomore at Brevard College, who is deeply involved

with the theatre department, said: "As of now, there is a plan to share the production with BC campus in the form of a livestream the final week of February." The schedule for shows will be released to the BC community towards the end of the month.

The second performance of the semester is "The Last Five Years," which is a musical about a doomed marriage. The last performance to end the spring semester is "She Kills Monsters," a comedy drama about love, loss and Dungeons & Dragons.

Hajkowski was asked if she is excited to perform during COVID-19 and she said: "We have a historical record of performing art during a pandemic." Everyone in the Brevard College theatre department is very optimistic about how the semester will go.

—Caroline Hoy



The Batman Who Laughs cover art.

Comic Review

DC Universe faces the Batman Who Laughs

By Kellen McGeorge
Staff Writer

The DC Universe is filled with great heroes; these heroes have dealt with the biggest threats that have threatened their universe, but what happens when the enemy is a dark representation of yourself? How do you stop something like that?

DC's "Dark Nights Metal" is one of the latest event comics released by DC. This comic once again changes the comic multiverse by an introduction of a new side of the multiverse, the dark multiverse, a place where the worst thing that can possibly happen, does happen.

The story focuses on the Justice League investigating a mysterious organization that

believes that Batman will act as the doorway for the dark multiverse to enter the main multiverse. If the dark multiverse enters, it will cause the end of all creation. Spearheading the invasion are the dark knights; corrupted versions of Batman who have stolen the powers of their justice leagues for them to use.

The story follows the discovery of the dark multiverse and follows through to the invasion of the multiverse. There is a lot of action and tension in the story and every scene makes you wonder if the Justice League will be able to hold off a dangerous invasion.

As with all event comics, there are tie-in

comics that help show the scope of the invasion and what the many other heroes are dealing with to stop this. There are also comics that help explain the origins of the dark knights, explaining what made them into what they are and what they have to gain from invading the main DC universe.

I recommend this series to anyone who just wants to see dark versions of the justice league. There are always people who like to see this type of story and they will definitely enjoy the story and like seeing the Justice League dealing with another universe ending threat.

Is it all worth it?

BC Athletics causes concern with questionable COVID-19 testing protocol

By Margaret Correll
Editor in Chief

While Brevard College is gearing up for all the BC Tornados sports seasons to start, simultaneously, COVID-19 cases are beginning to increase on campus. The past week, starting on Monday, Jan. 25, BC positive COVID-19 cases increased by 11, making the total number of cases for the semester hit a high of 26. With concerns from students and faculty and a return to in person classes, a question arises: Is it all worth it?

Brevard College made a statement in a campus wide newsletter regarding the testing of athletes before the spring semester started, ensuring that they are doing more than required by the NCAA and other colleges in the conference, which are requiring only a 25 percent rate of testing. "Our athletic conference requires that all members of the football and men's and women's basketball teams test weekly. The requirements for the other sports are twenty-five percent of the rosters every

other week. We felt this was not adequate for our campus. We have decided on the following testing protocol for our student-athletes. We think the protocol below will provide the best opportunity to prevent an outbreak among our teams." After stating this, it detailed that football and men's and women's basketball will be tested at a rate of 100 percent per week and all other sports will be tested at a rate of 50 percent, alternating weeks between each half of the team.

While this is all and good, it seems that this effort to test at a rate of 50 percent is useless when trying to locate COVID-19 among BC athletes. Only testing half of a team does not produce an accurate look at who is sick, since not everyone is being tested. This seems to be an idea rooted in common sense.

Another concern among student-athletes is the idea of travelling for games and matches out of state. Combining this with only testing half of some teams creates an atmosphere that may cause more harm than good. This is something

that Brevard College and the NCAA may want to reconsider, since travelling to highly concentrated areas that have more COVID-19 positivity may affect players.

This idea of criticizing the actions enforced by the college, the athletic department and the NCAA does not mean that players do not want to play. Some athletes, especially seniors, do not want a repeat of the 2020 spring season. When thinking about it, however, is it worth risking the health of athletes?

The only alternative that BC Athletics is offering is to sit out for this season if concerns are too high, which is an okay answer. But when the college could be doing more than what they are, testing everyone at 100 percent to guarantee the safety of athletes, this answer may not hold enough ground.

This year and this season mean a lot to student-athletes around the country, but potentially jeopardizing the health of young people does not seem like it is worth playing a season.



Photo from WLOS

Brevard College and BC Athletics make questionable decisions regarding COVID-19 testing protocol.

Eleanor's Political Corner

Biden rolls out executive orders as Americans continue to combat COVID-19

By Eleanor Flannery
Opinion Editor

It is out with the orange and in with a new president and fresh administration inside the White House. As President Joe Biden inherited the reins from Donald Trump on Jan. 20, he signed several executive orders on day one, working to dismantle the damaging regulations set in place by the Trump administration. Biden signed in various orders on his first day in office, starting with coordinating a government-wide COVID-19 response effort.

The COVID-19 related orders will enforce mask-wearing and social distancing policies on all federal property, as well as creating the position of a COVID-19 response coordinator. According to the official White House website: "The Federal Government must act swiftly and aggressively to combat coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). To that end, this order creates the position of Coordinator of the COVID-19 Response and Counselor to the President and takes other steps to organize the White House and activities of the Federal Government to combat COVID-19 and prepare for future biological and pandemic threats."

Essentially, the COVID-19 response orders will effectively reverse Trump's actions as president to erase the pandemic response strategies set into place under the Obama administration. As the United States surpasses over 439,000 COVID-19 deaths, it is paramount for the Biden administration to create an efficient response team and elect a top coordinator fit to "advise the president and oversee the distribution of vaccines, tests and other supplies." Biden has also signed into law an order that will establish climate regulation by placing the United States back in the Paris Agreement.

From NBC News: "Fulfilling one of his top campaign promises, Biden committed to putting the U.S. back in the Paris Agreement on climate change — an international pact aimed at curbing emissions that cause global warming. Trump withdrew from the agreement in 2017, citing costs to American

taxpayers." Trump originally stated that withdrawing from the Paris Agreement was both "in America's economic interest and won't matter much to the climate." Of course, the scientists and leading experts disagreed.

Biden signed in an executive order that aims to promote racial equity by conducting assessments of agencies and reallocating resources to "advance equity for all, including people of color and others who have been historically underserved, marginalized and adversely affected by persistent poverty and inequality." Biden passed an order to pause federal student loan payments, writing that "too many Americans are struggling to pay for basic necessities and to provide for their families."

Biden also signed multiple orders pertaining to the U.S.'s immigration policy and regulation, first by reaffirming DACA, "an Obama-era program that Trump had long sought to dismantle that shielded undocumented

immigrants who arrived in the U.S. as children from deportation," according to NBC News. Undocumented immigrants will be incorporated and counted in the national decennial population count, which Trump tried to prevent in the 2020 census. The Biden administration will also revise immigration enforcement policies to better prepare for and "address the humanitarian challenges at the southern border," and end the ban on U.S. entry from majority-Muslim countries.

Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris have a lot on their plate for the foreseeable future, as the country continues to combat COVID-19 and the Biden administration works to clean up after the last four years. To see a complete list of President Biden's executive orders with their descriptions, visit www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions



President Joseph R. Biden

Photo from New York Magazine

Big Tech Censorship

By Jake Moore
Staff Writer

Whether you agreed with Donald Trump's rhetoric or not, the role that big tech companies are playing by censoring his tweets should scare you. The actions taken by these companies in the past few weeks show how much power these monopolies really hold. These companies have the power to turn off alternative viewpoints at any time that they want with no chance for rebuttal.

Yes, these companies are private and have the power to do what they want on their platform, but the issue here is that they are only censoring conservative opinions.

Today, platforms like Facebook, YouTube and Twitter remain banned to people in Iran, mainland China, North Korea and Syria. With the removal of Parler from the Amazon Cloud, Apple App Store and Google Play, these tech monopolies are creating a shockingly parallel line of banning speech online in the United States.

Banning accounts of conservatives on a platform such as Twitter, which averages around 330 million active users around the world each month, deserves some kind of immediate action. As Florida's senator Marco Rubio said on Fox News Jan. 10, "We are now living in a country where four or five companies, unelected, unaccountable, have the monopoly power to decide, we're gonna wipe people out, we're going to erase them, from any digital platform."

After the Jan. 6 riots on Capitol Hill, Democrats are considering some conservatives to be terrorists. After an interview with MSNBC, former CIA director John Brennan stated "domestic violent extremists" in the form of far-right supporters of President Trump are more of a challenge to catch before they commit a violent act than foreign terrorists such as Al Qaeda. Tucker Carlson commented on this by saying, "The former CIA director has isolated the real problem—it's you."

According to Carlson, "Anyone who disagrees with [top Biden adviser] Susan Rice is worse than Usama bin Laden; and

more dangerous. These people, meaning you, 'have the weapons. These terrorists.'" This outrageous belief about American conservatives is leading to many accounts on multiple social media platforms to be taken down when they express their opinion.

Twitter has even come out saying they have removed more than 70,000 accounts that, in their words, were "primarily dedicated to sharing QAnon content." In a Jan. 12 blog post, Twitter defended their decision, stating, "These accounts were engaged in sharing harmful QAnon-associated content at scale and were primarily dedicated to the propagation of this conspiracy theory across the service."

But if you look back to 2016, a lot of Democrats were very open to posting their thoughts on Russian interference with the election, and none of these accounts were censored for this.

It doesn't matter where you fall in line politically. I think everyone has the right to voice their opinion and that what's going on with Big Tech companies needs to be looked into.

Why I wear a mask

By Ann Farash
Staff Writer

Everyone in the world has been impacted by COVID-19 in their personal and work lives. As a pediatrician for the last 35 years, I have scarcely thought about Corona viruses. Now I am consumed with testing for COVID-19, counseling about quarantines and ruling out COVID-19. Overnight the waiting room vanished. Overnight I started seeing patients by telemed. Overnight I wore a protective space suit to see sick patients. Nimble, flexible and resilient. Yes, I am seeing horrific comorbidities associated with COVID-19; rising anxiety and depression, increased housing and food insecurities, huge educational slides. These comorbidities are a more common burden for our neighbors who live at or under the poverty line. Yet mercifully the children I care for have done medically better with COVID-19 than virus outbreaks from previous years; Flu, RSV, Herpes, HIV, Polio, Mono, LaCrosse, HPV, CMV and Zika (to name a few).

I wear a mask as a courtesy to my fellow citizens, as an act of patriotism. Gone are the

days of fist bumps, hearty handshakes, hugs and kisses. When I wear a mask, I make a statement of civility for my neighbors. I follow rules. I care about you. I smile with my eyes and give a nod of acknowledgement when I pass people on the street. We will get through this together.

The science is behind us. The CDC and WHO recommend face masks as a way to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Watch YouTube videos on sneezing and face masks and you'll be convinced. Face masks successfully block respiratory droplets and societies where face mask use is mandated have lower COVID-19 deaths. The next best thing will be improving the quality of face masks for the general public. 22,000 fans will attend the Super Bowl next week. All in attendance will be wearing N95 masks.

I was trying to coax a single mother into the office during a telemed visit last week. She and her children were in a self-imposed strict lock down since March of 2020. Her children are being schooled virtually and that isn't going well. The mom has some health issues that would put her at an increased risk of getting serious COVID-19. She won't budge. She is convinced if she contracts the virus her children

will be orphaned and separated. She is fearful for her life as our county numbers are soaring. A vaccine for her is months off and maybe years off for her children. I could do nothing to appease her distress, but fully realize how terrified some of my fellow neighbors are of this illness.

I have senior friends who are very vulnerable. They are tethered to oxygen hoses in their homes. Their lungs would not withstand any respiratory infections, especially COVID-19. They too have been prisoners in their homes for nearly a year. Death seems too near to them. It is the unspoken fear during the grocery exchange that occurs behind masks and social distancing in their garages.

I'll be wearing my masks during in-person classes. As a leader of my medical team and as an example for the children I care for and to keep single moms, the elderly and those at risk, I will continue to wear my mask. To honor an anonymous friend who died this week due to COVID-19, I will continue to wear my mask. She was peppy and full of life. Her death has made this scourge all too real and close to home.

'Blinding Lights' in Tampa Bay

By Brady Penn
Staff Writer

The biggest sports spectacle in America will be on full focus next weekend in Tampa Bay, Florida. The 55th annual NFL Super Bowl will be played Sunday, Feb. 7, 2021 at 6:30 p.m. on CBS. The game will be played between the Tampa Bay Buccaneers and the defending champion Kansas City Chiefs.

The stars will be out in full force on the field Sunday night at Raymond James Stadium. Some stars who could be seen there are Quarterbacks Patrick Mahomes and Tom Brady, or other superstars such as Mike Evans, Tyrann Mathieu and Tyreek Hill.

One particular star on Sunday night will

not be in pads and a helmet. Instead, he will likely be sporting his now unmistakable Red suit with a Black tie and bloodied face in reference to his most recent and extremely successful March 2020 album, "After Hours". This star, of course, is Abel Tesfaye, famously known as "The Weeknd". Tesfaye burst onto the scene in the mid-2010s with a plethora of hits, such as "Can't Feel my Face", "Starboy" and "Earned It".

Tesfaye was informed that he would be performing at the Super Bowl Halftime Show in November. Since then, he has been preparing to put on a great show for the estimated 22,000 person crowd in a reduced capacity Super Bowl, thanks to COVID-19. Tesfaye has

reportedly spent \$7,000,000 of his own money to ensure a stellar show on Sunday night.

Performers in a Super Bowl Halftime Show have about 12-13 minutes of stage time every year. This will make it interesting to audiences to see which of Tesfaye's hits he would like to perform. Tesfaye is likely the most up to date performer at the Big Game in nearly half a decade. The past 5 years have featured, in order; Shakira and Jennifer Lopez, Maroon 5, Justin Timberlake, Lady Gaga, and Coldplay.

The fans are definitely in for a treat in South Florida on Sunday night. Between seeing two of the greatest quarterbacks duel it out and one of the best performers of this generation, Super Bowl 55 is bound to be a spectacle to behold.

BC cycling team bike room gets upgrades

By Simon Donnaway
Staff Writer

The Brevard College cycling team began a new partnership with the tech-fitness company Wahoo. They have taken about updating the cycling room and turning it into a new training area for cyclists on the team. Now student-athletes will have the opportunity to train with state-of-the-art equipment year-round to ensure their ability to compete at the highest level.

So far the cycling team has implemented six of Wahoo's KICKR smart training systems and two flat-screen monitors (provided by Dodd RV). These will allow athletes to compete virtually through an online platform called Zwift. Zwift turns indoor training into a virtual experience where you can ride, train and compete with others all around the world using a smart trainer like the Wahoo KICKR systems.

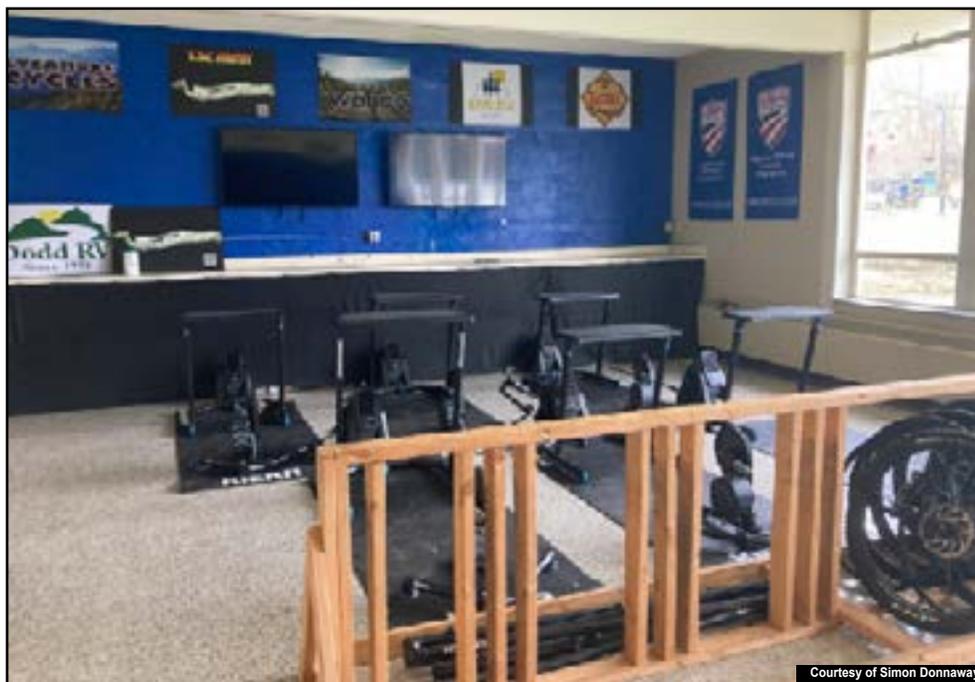
Using this system will help keep BC cycling athletes in shape even when the weather is not conducive to riding outdoors. It could also serve as a means for competition during the era of COVID-19 and help injured cyclists throughout their recovery.

As of right now, the schedule for competitive cycling is looking bleak. There is still a chance that events, such as road nationals, can occur but right now the team is preparing for the reality of COVID-19. A backup plan is being drawn up if the traditional competition is not an option.

One BC athlete, Caleb MacAskill, a road cyclist who has taken advantage of this new training area had this to say about the new equipment: "I think it is really awesome that we have access to more indoor training and support behind us from Wahoo," said MacAskill. "We can train year-round and I think this will help

our team see more success in the future."

This new training room is a big step for Brevard College cycling. Team members will be able to take advantage of this training room for years to come and the cycling team now has one more aspect to attract potential recruits.



Courtesy of Simon Donnaway

Some of the new equipment for the BC Cycling team, provided by Wahoo