



Construction of the new student center started Monday, Feb. 23. Photo courtesy of Credo Design Architects.

Dining Services director speaks on construction of new student center...and what to expect now

Zoie Stiller
Contributor

The construction dust at Brevard College is doing more than just clogging the air; it's fueling a lot of questions about where—and how—everyone is going to eat. To cut through the noise, I sat down with Erik Sandstedt, General Manager of Dining Services, to see if the payoff is actually worth the current headache.

It's no secret that the transition has been a bit of a bumpy ride, but Sandstedt remains focused on the big picture. Regarding the new student center, he is clear about its value:

"It's necessary, and I think it's going to be a fantastic thing for Brevard College."

While students might be feeling the friction of temporary dining setups, Sandstedt insists that the team is doing their best to buffer the blow. He noted, "I think everybody has tried to make it as easy as possible, even if it doesn't feel that way."

If you're tired of the "scavenger hunt" for your next meal, there is some movement on the horizon. While we don't have a calendar date yet, the reopening of Coltrane is currently waiting on final approvals. Additionally,

digital menus are in the works, meaning you'll soon be able to check the day's options directly on your phone.

When asked about the day-to-day chaos of construction, Sandstedt's primary focus is simply "making sure everything is working well."

The "one big line" era is coming to an end. The new layout is designed to prioritize flow and variety. Sandstedt shared some details on what the finished product will look like:

- **Refreshed aesthetics:** "Everything's refreshed, the layout is going to be very nice. I think everybody is going to be happy and feel good about it."
- **Better logistics:** "I think it's going to be more efficient because we have the right tools to do a good job."
- **Station variety:** "We're gonna have more stations, so that will be more spread out instead of having like what we have now, where everything is in one line. It's going to be spread out a bit more."

Change is rarely comfortable, and the current dining situation is a test of campus-wide endurance. However, if the goal is a more efficient, modern space with better tools for the staff, then a little patience is the price of admission. Something great is emerging—we just have to survive the "construction phase" to taste it.

New Chemistry Club aims to de-stigmatize science through hands-on fun

Autumn Jones
Editor in Chief

Chemistry often gets a bad rap. For many, the word invokes images of lab reports, complex equations, and academic stress.

But on Feb. 19, a new student organization led by co-presidents junior Zoe Herber and sophomore Casey Wampler set out to prove that chemistry is less about memorization and more about the “magic” of the world around us.

The club’s first meeting kicked off with a literal hands-on approach, as members experimented with the gooey physics of slime and the art of invisible ink.

The mission of the club is simple: take the intimidation factor out of the periodic table. When asked about the “spark” that founded the group, Zoe Herber noted that the goal was to show students that chemistry is approachable through creative, collaborative activities.

“By presenting chemistry as approachable and fun, we hope to expand the program by inspiring students to add a chemistry major or minor to their education,” Herber shared.

To combat the reputation of chemistry being one of the “harder” majors, the club focuses on the “why” behind the fun. By participating in well-known experiments, students get to see

the underlying chemical reactions that drive the world—without the pressure of a graded lab manual.

One of the biggest misconceptions the leadership wants to clear up is who belongs in the lab. The Chem Club is not a “majors only” zone. “ALL students are welcome!” Herber emphasized. “Participating in Chemistry Club is a chance for outside majors to obtain well-rounded experience. There is zero pressure to come with foundational chemistry knowledge.”

Unlike a standard classroom, the club offers a friendly environment where curiosity is the only prerequisite. It’s a space where a poet and a physicist can both enjoy the satisfaction of a successful reaction.

If you missed the first meeting, don’t worry—the “reaction” is just getting started. The club has a lineup of future experiments that promise to be both spectacular and, in some cases, delicious.

Upcoming highlights for future meetings include the creation of elephant toothpaste and liquid nitrogen ice cream.

For Zoe Herber, leading the organization has been about more than just managing meetings; it’s changed her own relationship with science. “Leading this organization has inspired me to



Members who showed up to the first meeting pose with the slime they made—photo by Zoe Herber.

share my interests with those around me in the hope that people stay open to learning new things,” she said.

If you are interested in joining or attending any meeting, email Zoe Herber at herberze@brevard.edu or Casey Wampler at wamplercb@brevard.edu.

Whether you’re looking to boost your resume or just want to see something change colors, the Chem Club has a beaker waiting for you.



Club co-presidents Zoe Herber (left) and Casey Wampler (right) stand with the materials for their first meeting—photo via Zoe Herber.



Some of the final results of the club’s invisible ink experiment—photo by Zoe Herber.



Senior Mya Dixon (front) and junior Ava Thrift (back) pose with their successfully made slime—photo by Zoe Herber.

Littering around campus and its effects on quality of life

Zoe Hughes
Managing Editor

Brevard College is incredibly lucky to be located in an ecological wonderland, so it is especially important for us as Brevard residents to do our due diligence in keeping our campus clean and beautiful.

Brevard, NC, is one of the most biologically diverse places on Earth, but despite this, Brevard College has a littering problem. After just a brief stroll around campus, one can see litter everywhere: empty beer and seltzer cans in the village quad, food wrappers in the creek, or cigarette butts on the ground. According to explorebrevard.com, Brevard is home to over 10,000 species, but that could change if the littering problem continues.

There are many ways that littering can negatively affect the environment. According to environment.cenn.org, litter is often blown into nearby waterways and leaks toxic materials and chemicals into the water. In Brevard College's case, these harmful contaminants end up in King's Creek. The creek is connected to a large

system of waterways, so these substances flow out of our creek and into other major rivers and oceans. Litter also emanates a putrid smell and toxic/chemical vapor, reducing the air quality of the region.

Local wildlife often face the consequences of our littering practices. If an animal consumes contaminated water, it can lead to many different water-borne diseases. Many animals mistake litter for food as well. This can be incredibly harmful because the trash cannot be digested and will reduce their stomach capacity, the litter may be sharp, causing damage to their internal organs, or the materials may simply be poisonous for wildlife to consume.

Littering doesn't just affect the natural environment, but the human ecosystem as well. Taxpayer money can be used to fund litter cleaning programs, but those are often costly, and that money could be better spent elsewhere. Visible litter in an area also decreases tourism and home values. According to cityofbrevard.com, Brevard utilizes its assets in outdoor recreation and natural resources to attract new business investments, residential growth, and tourism.

By spoiling the landscape with garbage, these industries will be less effective in propping up Brevard's economy because many may be put off by the litter and seek other places out.

The best way to combat littering is through personal responsibility and awareness; however, if there are enforced laws, there must also be appropriate waste disposal systems available.

Brevard College would benefit from some kind of anti-littering laws. According to research conducted by the 2011 "Keep Britain Tidy" campaign, individuals who have seen or heard about penalties being issued are less likely to litter. This could mean punishment for those who are caught littering, but it could also look like rewarding someone for doing the right thing when it comes to waste disposal.

Raising awareness and educating locals is an integral part of making our community cleaner. Using a combination of positive and negative reinforcement may be a good way to make real change at Brevard College to protect the exceptional and unique habitat that we share with local creatures and critters.



A plastic wrapper on the ground by the track fields



A red solo cup next to a drainage creek.

Is love written in the rocks? Exploring Brevard's romantic reputation

Kenneth A. Thomas
Contributor

Brevard, N.C., has a reputation for being a magnet for romance. Some attribute this to the massive crystal deposits buried beneath the mountains, while others attribute it to the natural environment. We sat down with two locals to find out why so many people believe love is "in the air" in this mountain town.

For our first interviewee, the connection between Brevard and romance is deeply metaphysical. Having met his wife at Brevard College, he believes the town's unique geography facilitates a deeper self-awareness that leads to lasting partnerships.

When asked if Brevard is the place where true love is found, he shared: "To be honest, it definitely seems like it. See, I'm a very spiritual person, and I feel Brevard is a very spiritual place. I feel that up here, people start to remember who they really are, which attracts people to each other. I found my wife up here at the college, to be specific."

He further explained how the town's history and geology play a role in his personal journey:

"Yes, I believe that due to the crystals under the mountain and just the beautiful history and wildlife of Brevard, it helps you vibrate higher, and the higher you vibrate, the more present you are, and the more the memory comes into play. That memory can help you find your soulmate and who's

really for you. To be honest, I feel Brevard has helped not only find my wife in this lifetime but others, too."

Our second interviewee offers a perspective based on the town's social "setup" and its calming energy. While she is still searching for her person, she remains a firm believer in the town's romantic potential.

On whether Brevard is a great place to find a soulmate, she noted: "I haven't found mine yet, but I most definitely do feel like there's something in the air up here."

She elaborated on the social climate and the physical beauty of the area: "I've really met some amazing, kind-hearted people in this area. Plus, in general, it's just beautiful. I also have friends who have been married around here, and some still are. The energy around here is just great, it's amazing. Usually, everyone is pretty chill here, and there's not too much to do. I feel the setup is perfect, especially for dating and taking people to nice areas, as there is plenty around here."

Regarding her own experiences with local connections, she added: "I most definitely have most of them I'm still friends with till this day. One I almost married, but it just didn't work out. In general, though, Brevard, I do believe them when they say this is the place to find true love, the setup is perfect, and the energy here is calming and nice."

Whether it is the quartz under your feet or the "chill" atmosphere of the town, Brevard continues to hold a special place in the hearts of those looking for a soulmate.

THE CLARION

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Senior spotlight: Seth Robinson

Jordan Ramey
Staff Writer

Senior Seth Robinson has enjoyed quite the undergraduate experience here at Brevard College. He is wrapping up his time by interning at Gaia Herbs, a herbal supplement manufacturer, while finishing a couple of classes to earn his bachelor's degree in exercise science and health science.

Robinson was a dual-sport athlete for the College's football and track and field teams. He competed in multiple events for the track team, and on the football team, he played linebacker.

"It was a very busy schedule, but I have pretty good time management skills and knew where to put my focus when I needed to," Robinson said.

At Gaia Herbs, Robinson works for the stability and quality control team. He analyzes products and takes notes of changes. After graduation, he plans to enter the medical field and hopes to get into a medical school. Robinson said his favorite memory at Brevard was "last season on the football team, winning the Spirit of the Ole North Bowl was pretty cool."

Good luck, Robinson, we're all rooting for you!



(above) Seth Robinson stands with his family for football senior day.
(left) Robinson, far right, gets silver in Gaia Herbs' olympic style competition.



A photo from North Carolina Voter Guide of people casting their ballots.

North Carolina's primary election to take place on March 3

Madeleine Pollock
Copy Editor

North Carolina's primary election will take place on Tuesday, March 3, and voting in the primaries is arguably one of the most important things an American citizen can do to uphold democracy in the United States.

Most people act like the General election on Tuesday, Nov. 3, is the day that matters most, and sure, it does matter, but Primary elections allow voters to have a say on who will appear on their Nov. ballot.

What is a primary election?

The primary election is a nomination process

before a general election; it essentially picks which politicians will face off on the ballot in the general election.

No one is elected during the primary, but the results of the primary have the power to vastly shape and change general elections.

Choosing political affiliation

The primary election forces voters to choose a political party, at least temporarily, as they can only vote on either a Democratic or a Republican ballot.

According to the North Carolina State Board of Elections, "Voters affiliated with any political party may vote on the ballot of candidates for their party only. Unaffiliated voters may choose to vote on any one political party's ballot or a nonpartisan ballot (if available). A voter cannot vote in more than one party's primary."

For example, if a person is a registered democrat, they can only vote on the democratic ballot, unless they change their party affiliation.

Why does it matter?

For a candidate to appear on the ballot of the general election, they must have the most votes in the primary, by receiving at least 30 percent of the vote, and by being approved by the political party. If a candidate does not receive more than 30 percent of the vote, a second primary may be held.

Primary elections are often downplayed in the news de-

spite having a direct effect on a person's voting choices. Voting in your primary election allows you to tell your party which candidate you think would best represent you and your party in the general election.

This primary election will allow the public to weigh in on who they think should be nominated for the U.S. Senate, the U.S. House of Representatives, and the N.C. Court of Appeals Judge, among other things, varies by county.

The general election in the fall could reshape both the Senate and the House of Representatives, which could either give President Donald Trump more or less political power.

Where can I vote, and what do I need to bring?

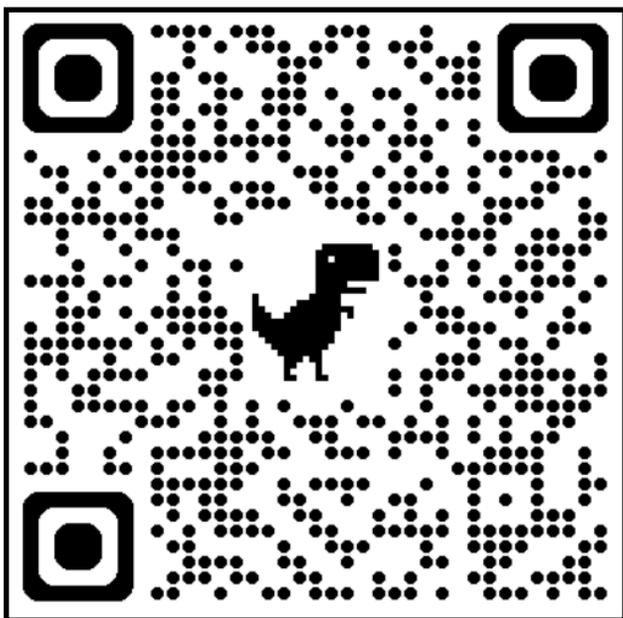
Voters must cast their ballot at their assigned polling place. To find your assigned polling place, visit the attached QR code. Some residents of Brevard will be able to vote at the polling location at the Paul Porter Center.

If you plan to live in Brevard after graduating, you can register to vote in Brevard, but this means you will no longer be able to vote where your parents live.

If you are not currently registered to vote, you have until Saturday, Feb. 28, to visit an early voting location. At early voting, you can complete your registration. This will not be available on the March 3 election day.

To vote, you must bring photo identification, such as a passport or a driver's license, and know which ballot you will choose.

In a tumultuous time for the United States, voting is an easy way to exercise your rights and stand up for what you believe in. By voting in the primary elections, you can shape who will represent your party during the general election in Nov.



Scan the QR Code to find your polling location.

Softball opens 2026 season in dominant fashion with doubleheader sweep

Ivelysse Leighton
Staff Writer

Brevard College softball opened its 2026 season at home in dominant fashion, sweeping Johnson and Wales University Charlotte in a Sunday doubleheader and setting the tone for what looks to be an exciting spring season.

Despite chilly conditions, the Tornados' bats stayed hot. Brevard combined for 29 hits, 10 extra-base hits, seven stolen bases, and 19 runs across the two games, showcasing both veteran leadership and an impressive freshman debut class.

In game one, the Tornados wasted no time getting on the board. Junior Andrea Furr launched a solo home run to left field for Brevard's first run of the season. After JWU Charlotte briefly tied the game, junior Alyssa Boris responded with an RBI double to reclaim the lead.

The Wildcats evened the score again in the fourth inning, but Brevard erupted for four runs in the bottom half. Sophomore Anna Graves drove in junior Kayleigh Marr with a double down the third-base line, freshman Emma Payne delivered a two-RBI single, and senior Regan Winker added another RBI knock to push the Tornados ahead for good.

Brevard sealed the 10–2 run-rule victory in the fifth inning with RBI singles from junior Hayden Moody, Payne, sophomore Addison Smith, and Winkler. Senior left-handed Elizabeth Auciello

earned the win in the circle, striking out seven in a complete-game performance while the Tornados tallied five extra-base hits and three stolen bases.

The momentum carried straight into game two. Infielder Moody cleared the bases with a three-RBI triple to spark an early offensive surge. Payne followed with a sacrifice fly, and Winker added an RBI single to give Brevard a commanding early lead.

When JWU Charlotte trimmed the deficit, the Tornados answered immediately. Smith crushed a two-run homer to left field, and junior Rylee Locklear added an RBI single to extend the advantage.

Freshman pitcher Victoria Phagan impressed in her collegiate debut, tossing a complete game to secure the 8–3 win and her first career victory.

Opening weekend also featured milestone moments for Brevard's freshman class: Phagan earned her first win, while Payne and Hill recorded their first collegiate hits and RBIs, signaling a strong future for the program.

The Tornados' powerful start earned conference recognition as Moody was named Player of the Week, while Payne received Rookie of the Week honors following her standout debut.

With momentum on their side, the Tornados now turn their attention to Saturday's road doubleheader in Lookout Mountain, Georgia. If opening weekend is any indication, Brevard softball is ready to make noise this season.



The team poses before their game—photo by Isabella Zambuto.



Photo by Isabella Zambuto.

Inside softball opening weekend: player highlights

Ivelysse Leighton
Staff Writer

After a dominant opening weekend sweep, the Brevard College softball team is carrying more than early-season momentum; the Tornados are fueled by confidence, trust, and the excitement of both individual milestones and team success.

Junior infielder Hayden Moody, who earned USA South Player of the Week honors, described the recognition as both meaningful and motivating. “It means a lot,” Moody said. “It shows that I’m working hard and that everything we do pays off, even when we least expect it to.”

Freshman Emma Payne also received conference recognition, earning USA South Rookie of the Week after a breakout debut. Payne said the honor felt surreal and rewarding. “I thought

it was really cool and was just really proud to represent Brevard softball,” she said.

Before stepping into the batter’s box during her standout performance, Payne focused on confidence and belonging. “I just told myself that I was meant to be here,” she said, adding that the dugout energy helped her stay relaxed and enjoy the moment.

Opening weekend also marked important firsts for Brevard’s freshman class. Outfielder Emily Hill recorded her first collegiate hit, a moment she said reflected the payoff of hard work and preparation. Leading off with a strong hit helped set the tone early and gave the team an immediate spark. “It always feels good to know that hard work is paying off,” Hill said, noting that starting strong helps build energy and a positive mindset for the team.

She added that the dugout energy plays a major role in helping players reset and stay focused, even when things don’t go as planned, reinforcing the team-first mentality that defines this year’s squad.

For Payne, her first collegiate hits and RBIs reinforced the confidence she has built through preparation and trust in her teammates.

Freshman pitcher Victoria Phagan experienced multiple milestone moments in her collegiate debut, including her first strikeout and win.

She described the experience as both exciting and deeply meaningful. “It was a ‘I made it’ moment—living what my younger self always dreamed of,” Phagan said.

Phagan emphasized that trusting her defense helped her stay composed in the circle and pitch with confidence. Knowing her teammates were making plays behind her helped ease the pressure and let her focus on executing each pitch.

She also credited the dugout’s energy and support for helping her maintain composure, saying the encouragement around her made it easier to settle into the moment and compete.

Across the roster, players echoed the same themes: trust, energy, and enjoying the moment. Whether it was veterans delivering in key situations or freshmen achieving their collegiate milestones, the weekend reflected a team unified in purpose.

As the Tornados look ahead to the rest of the season, players say they are most excited about continuing to grow together, building new memories, and seeing their hard work translate into success.

If opening weekend revealed anything, it is that Brevard softball’s early success is not just about runs and wins—it is about a culture built on confidence, connection, and belief in one another.

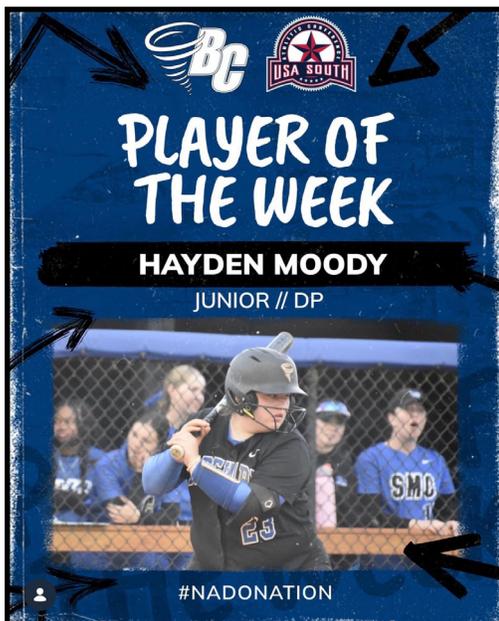
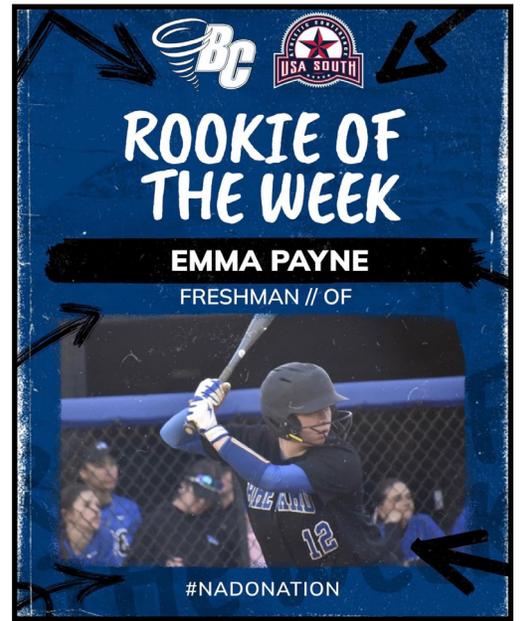


Photo by Isabella Zambuto via Flickr.



2025-26 USA South regular season women's basketball champs start their tournament run, storming by Meredith in the first round

Tyler Mabry
Contributor

The 2025–26 regular season had come to a close for the women's basketball team in the best way possible, being crowned regular season champions for the first time in the NCAA-era.

While a regular-season championship meant the conference tournament championship would run through Brevard, the job isn't finished yet for the women's basketball team.

The Tornados would be put up against the eighth-seeded Meredith College Avenging Angels in the first round. Many students on campus thought this would be a blowout.

That, however, was not the case on Tuesday night.

Brevard struggled to get going in the first half, only shooting 30.6% from the field in the first half. They would find themselves trailing Meredith 29–30 at halftime.

After halftime was over, the Tornados found their rhythm, exploding for 31 points in the third quarter alone to Meredith's 13. The explosion of offense was highlighted by sophomore guard Analee Morris, who scored 21 points in the third quarter alone.

After the third quarter, it was smooth sailing for Brevard, as they would be en route to an 83–61 win. As for

Analee Morris, she would go on to set the Brevard College NCAA-era single-game scoring record with 39 points in the contest, while shooting an efficient 15-for-25 on the night.

Also for the Tornados, sophomore forward Kayden Johnson recorded her fifth double-double of the season with 12 points to go along with 10 rebounds. Senior forward Olivia Miller filled out the stat sheet as well, notching seven points, six rebounds, and six assists.

With this victory, Brevard captures their eighth straight win, matching the program's NCAA-era record for consecutive wins, which was set earlier this season.

The Tornados dominated in multiple ways, including 12 made 3-pointers and forcing Meredith into turning the ball over 21 times. Those 21 turnovers would lead to 22 points scored by the Tornados.

Brevard also finished with 20 assists in the contest, marking the 11th game of the season with 20 or more assists in a game.

It has been a commanding season for the Tornados; this win marks Brevard's 16th victory in the last 17 games. BC has also won 19 of its 22 games this season by double digits, and won 14 of them by 20 or more points.



Photo by Alecia Janeiro via Flickr.



Photo by Chris Fortman via Flickr.