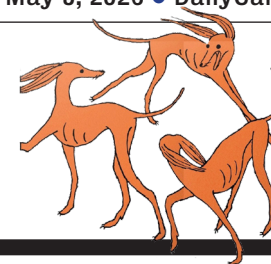


Outgoing Life Designer

she/her/hers

Christina Roby



I joined the Daily Campus last semester, not knowing what a mistake it was...

to not have joined sooner.

(Does everyone make that joke? Probably. But I felt it was worthwhile.)

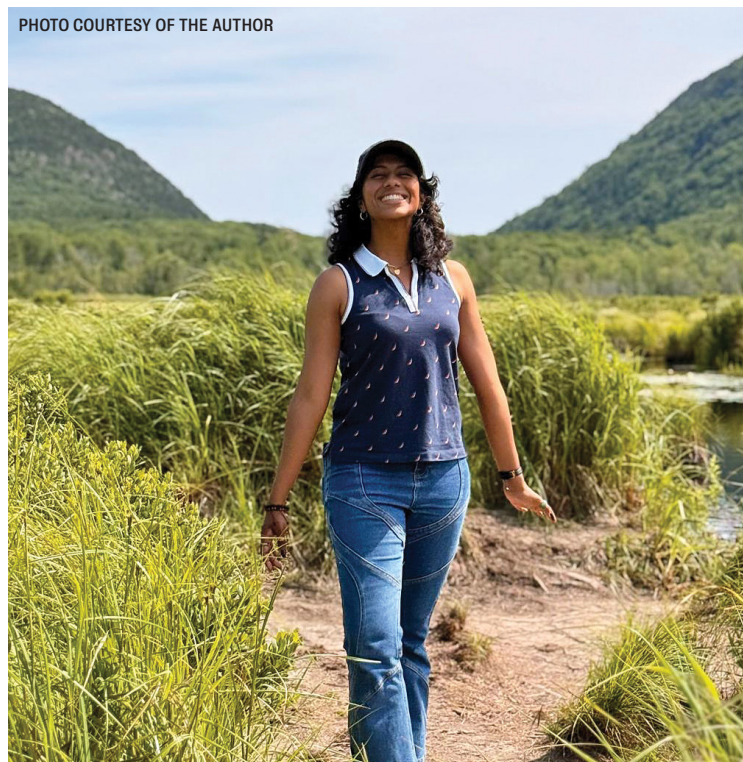
I came to Storrs' windy campus during fall 2023. People always diss the Storrs campus, saying it's in the middle of nowhere, total cow country and much like the small towns many yearn to run away from, not arrive to. But you have to understand — I come from the quietest town possible. No sidewalks, no lampposts, no stores and often not a person in sight. For me, coming to the bustling atmosphere of Storrs was the most exciting thing that's ever happened to me.

It was stressful. There's a popular illustration by Anna Haifisch of a dog looking sullenly through a gap in a fence at a group of dogs playing. The text underneath reads, "Here's the life I've always longed for." It was very popular on Tumblr and on the yearning sides of the Internet.¹

Everything I had dearly wanted surrounded me, but try as I might, I couldn't get through. I came in as an excited computer science major, but I dearly missed the art and writing and community that had filled my life in high school. I was a part of our literary magazine, our yearbook, robotics, mural club... and here, at first, I didn't feel like a part of anything at all.

Why didn't I join any clubs? UConn boasts over 700 student clubs, but I didn't do much more than attend a few meetings here and there. There's a lot of reasons I could give — that I was burnt out from all that I did in high school, that I was too busy with schoolwork, and even though they're

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE AUTHOR



true, they read a lot more like excuses than I'd like to admit.

To be honest, I think I was scared.

College felt like it was time to be serious. Time to mold myself into the Employable Adult™, time to strip myself of embellishment and become modular like a beige IKEA table. I was so unsure of my future that I felt I needed to become someone else to succeed.

Three years later, I'm much prouder of who I am.

I picked up a Cognitive Science minor, merging my computer science courses with my love for linguistics and how minds work. I'm a proud Writing Center tutor of two years, and I can thank the WC for helping me become more comfortable in my language and self. I'm also a proud Computer Science TA of two years, and through it, I've discovered a newfound love of teaching. I've gone on so many side quests throughout my years here² and met so

many great people, but it still felt like something was missing.

Within myself, I missed the creativity of art and design. So, I applied to be a designer at the Daily Campus in my last year, expecting that to be the final piece for my college journey.

I couldn't have imagined the community that I would also gain.

Production nights tend to keep a record of when they finish, a lighthearted ongoing competition. My Thursday production team has never broken that record, and we never will.

We fill the night with music and laughter and gasping for air at something ridiculous one of us is doing. We play Just Dance videos on YouTube and the ground shakes with our stomps. A computer crashes and suddenly everyone is over your shoulder looking to help. Even though shifts went from 6 p.m. to... much later than the printing deadline at 10, I felt so energized.

I still have a Daily Campus

sticker on an old water bottle from freshman year, when I got it at the Involvement fair. Even though it took me much longer than I thought, I finally made it to the DC. And it was amazing.

The original illustration by Haifisch captured hearts everywhere, and one such person molabuddy created a follow up to the piece. In their continuation, the dog, previously on the outside, joins the group of playing dogs. The text reads "I will make it mine."

DC, we made it.

Some thanks:

Tomas Hinckley and Connor Lafferty, for introducing me to the Daily Campus.

Isabella Kulawik, Sarah Cartagena, Camille Kiang, Sarah Turner, Vangmayee Upadhyay, Mikayla Bunnell and Sam Brody for an amazing Thursday production night.

The Life section writers, for being a joy to design for every Thursday.

Liam Smith, Erin Appelson, gosh, everyone from the Writing Center for being so amazing. I'll miss being a permanent fixture in the center.

Kit Bray, my best (and only) roommate of three years. Thank you for all the late nights and early mornings. We'll finish that GBBO season someday.

Caroline Roby, my twin. I'll miss not always being within a mile's radius of you ("Freedom at last!" You say). Enjoy your senior year!

Lila Voytek and Mariam Naranjo Castaño for always picking up my call (or at least sending a voice message).

And you, for reading.



SENIOR COLUMN

Making it Mine

ART BY ANNA HAIFISCH AND MOLABUDDY ON TUMBLR

¹ If you recognize it, what were YOU doing at the devil's sacrament?

² If you're looking for some awesome electives, take Japanese with

Krista Rogers, Introduction to World Puppetry with Jungmin Song, and/or

Plant Propagation with Mark Brand. All super fun!