

Adopt-a-Family inspired student generosity

By Brianna Wallen
News Editor

As the holiday season approaches, students are turning their attention to one of campus’s most heartfelt traditions: Adopt-a-Family.

Political science major William Moroz, a senior and the president of the student government association, is encouraging the campus community to get involved.

“Together, we can uphold this long-standing tradition and bring holiday cheer to families in our community — all while showing the power of student leadership and generosity,” Moroz said in an announcement to the university on Nov. 10.

The long-standing initiative asks the university community to come together, decorate boxes and fill them with food to support local families who need it most.

While the tradition stems back to over 20 years ago, Moroz said this year, the tradition carries a new wave of urgency.

With SNAP benefits reduced as of Nov. 1 and the federal government shutdown disrupting services nationwide, many families throughout New Haven are facing food insecurity.

“It’s just good for the community and fundraising money helps families in need as well,” Moroz said.

Campus community

partners shared that families are most in need of everyday essentials this season, from pantry staples like pasta, cereal and canned goods to comfort items such as snacks, fruit cups and baking mixes.

Household necessities including baby supplies, toiletries, dish soap, laundry detergent and feminine products are also in high demand, making every donation both meaningful and impactful.

Although Adopt-a-Family is a longstanding university tradition, Moroz said that student involvement has not historically matched the participation rates of faculty and staff. This year, SGA set out to change that narrative.

“Historically, it’s only been really participated in by offices, so like, staff, and it hasn’t really been as big as I would like to see it be on the student side,” Moroz said.

To increase engagement and donations, SGA introduced new incentives to encourage friendly competition among student organizations.

“Our thought process was to figure out some form of incentive to get students engaged,” Moroz said. “So, we’re offering fundraising money in response to student orgs helping out with adoptive families.”

Every student

organization that donates at least one box will be entered into a raffle for \$500 to be deposited into their fundraising account, and the organization that donates the highest total weight of goods will also be awarded \$500.

SGA hopes students take advantage of this initiative and will meet this moment with generosity and leadership.

Student organizations can pick up boxes in the Student Involvement Office, located in Room 212 of the Adanti Student Center.

After picking up a box, groups are encouraged to decorate it with creativity and care.

Members can spend the next two weeks collecting non-perishable food items from the family’s customized shopping list.

Each contribution helps fill the box with essentials that will support the family through the holiday season.

Once the box is complete, it should be delivered to the designated campus drop-off site before the deadline, Thursday, Nov. 20.

With Adopt-a-Family underway, SGA encourages every student organization to play a part in making the holiday season brighter for a family in need.

“Anything helps, and don’t think you’re wasting time. Just try to get engaged and try to help out,” Moroz said.



The 2024-2025 Student Government Association e-board participating in the Adopt-a-Family food drive on Nov. 22, 2024.



Interdisciplinary Studies Office promoting the Adopt-a-Family food drive.

Military boat strikes stirred student discussion

By Valentina Toro
Contributor

As federal officials continue carrying out military strikes in international waters, students and faculty say the government’s limited explanation has raised concerns about transparency and the justification behind the operations.

The U.S. has carried out multiple military strikes on suspected smuggling boats near Venezuela, prompting national debate over whether these actions are necessary, lawful or clearly explainable.

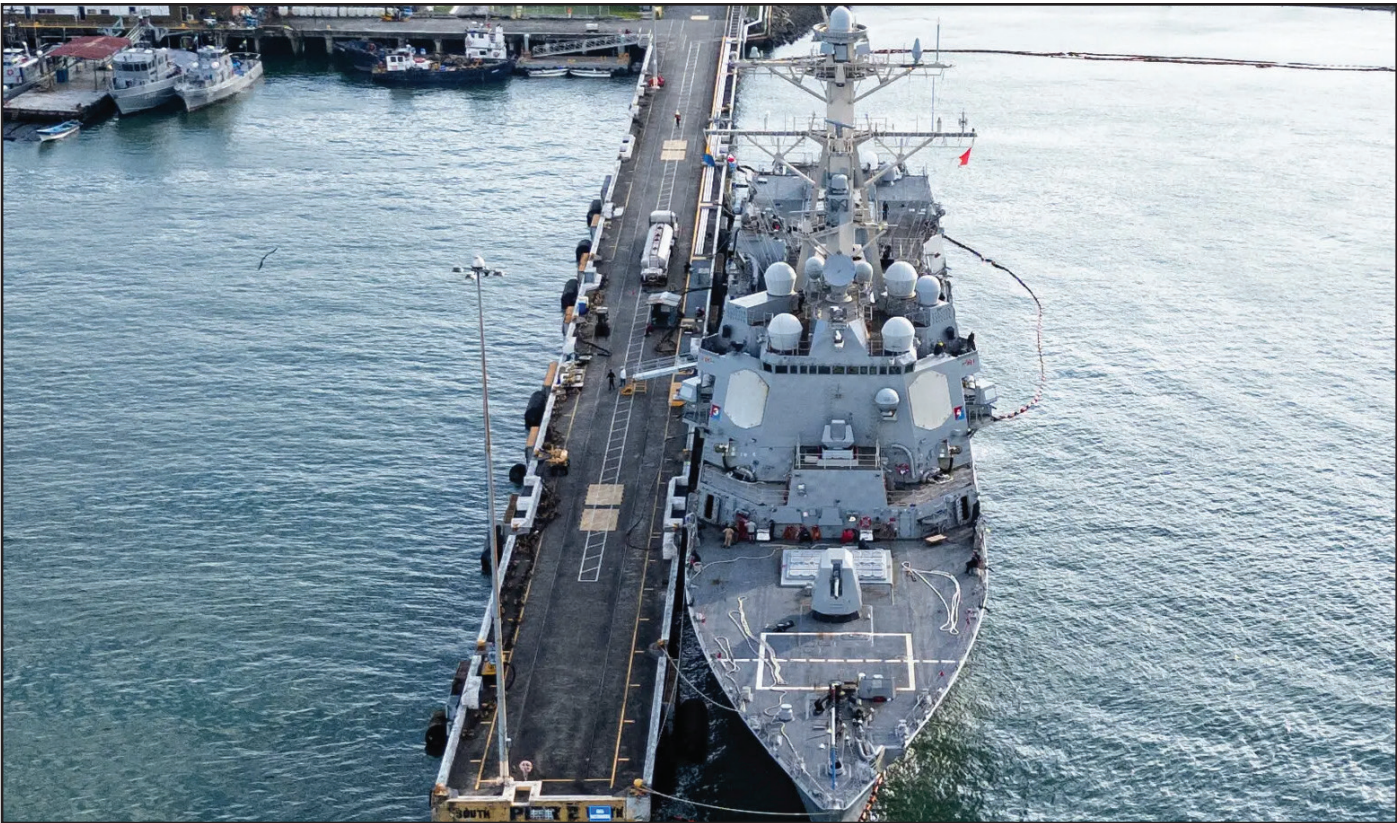
“Now more than ever, young people are paying attention to this simply because the information is so easily accessible,” psychology major Benjamin Berube, a sophomore, said.

While the operations have been described by federal officials as efforts to curb drug trafficking, students and faculty said the government has not provided enough information to reassure the public about the purpose or impact of these strikes.

Joey Merly, a graduate, said many students who were not previously engaged in foreign policy are becoming more curious about U.S. actions abroad.

“Social media and just news are everywhere and so easily accessible. People are seeing through the cracks and seeing through all the flaws,” Merly said.

Professor Kevin Buterbaugh, who works within the political science department, said the strikes raise



A U.S. Navy guided missile destroyer docked near the entrance to the Panama Canal.



Kevin Buterbaugh, a political science professor, in his office discussing the recent boat strikes and the ramifications they may have.

legal questions that have historically surfaced during presidential uses of force without a formal war declaration.

“There needs to be more congressional

and public debate before lethal force in international waters is used, but Congress has a hard time asserting its authority when presidents act outside a formal

declaration of war,” Buterbaugh said.

He added that the U.S. government has framed the operations as anti-drug missions, but the decision to

target Venezuela raises concerns.

“I’d say just out of hand, the government is acting. The public position is about stopping drugs, but Venezuela is

not a drug country. Lying to us is going to harm trust,” Buterbaugh said.

Students and faculty expressed concern about how the U.S. is perceived internationally. Berube said the strikes could reinforce a negative global reputation for the country.

“In recent history, we’ve been a bit of an embarrassment on the global stage, which is definitely disappointing,” Berube said. “I’m hoping that when we’re on the other side of all this, it will be easier to rebuild that trust with the rest of the world.”

Buterbaugh also stressed the importance of public oversight, even when decisions must be made quickly.

Buterbaugh noted that transparency helps maintain trust and ensures that urgent actions remain accountable.

While Congress faces challenges in intervening in fast-moving operations, the public deserves to understand the rationale behind military actions, ensuring citizens remain informed.

“A much larger national conversation is needed about when and how lethal force is employed, particularly in international waters,” Buterbaugh said.

Students said that real-time access to news through social media makes it harder for officials to justify secretive operations and increases the demand for government accountability.

“If the government is lying to us, that’s going to damage trust in a major way,” Merly said.