

## NEWS

*"If the Sun and Moon should ever doubt, they'd immediately go out."*

WILLIAM BLAKE ENGLISH POET

## McInnis solicited donors as ROTC students met with policymakers

BY ISOBEL MCCLURE AND ASHER BOISKIN  
STAFF REPORTERS

University President Maurice McInnis traveled to Washington, D.C., last week to attend a Tuesday For Humanity event, as the fundraising campaign enters its final stretch.

Her visits to Washington, now monthly, come as the University increases its lobbying presence amid increased political scrutiny of elite colleges. The For Humanity event featured remarks from Jackson School lecturer Jimmy Hatch '24 and was attended by a group of Naval Reserve Officer Training Corp, or ROTC, students. During the trip, Hatch and the students visited "a number" of lawmakers on the Hill, McInnis said in a Friday interview.

"We should probably do more of that," McInnis said, referencing the students' meetings with lawmakers. She noted that "there is no doubt that they can tell Yale stories in ways that I

think are more personal and perhaps even more meaningful."

Federal filings released on Oct. 20 show that Yale spent \$370,000 on lobbying between July and September, surpassing every other Ivy League university. The filings list the University's priorities as student aid, endowment taxation and federal research funding.

McInnis described the students' meetings as a way for lawmakers to "get to know Yale in a different way from meeting with" herself or a representative from Yale's Office of Federal and State Relations.

During her trip to the capital, McInnis attended the biannual Association of American Universities' meeting of presidents. McInnis, who serves on the organization's board, said that the AAU meets with U.S. Secretaries of Education and Energy and others "who are doing the policy work that relates to higher education."

"We like to have an opportunity for both us to hear from

them and for them to hear our questions, and then we talk about other things that you know are issues in common for higher education," McInnis said. She did not specify who gave remarks at the recent AAU meeting.

In June, the University provided financial support to students that organized a rally in the capital against the Republican-backed "One Big Beautiful Bill," which raised the endowment tax on wealthy universities like Yale from 1.4 to 8 percent. During the spring, the University solicited statements from Yale students about their Yale experience to use in its lobbying efforts.

Asked whether lobbying efforts align with the University's year-old policy on institutional voice, McInnis said she sees no contradiction between the two. The policy, adopted last fall, advises Yale leaders to avoid commenting publicly on political or social issues except in rare cases.

When lobbying, McInnis said she aims to "defend and speak to Yale's mission" with lawmakers whose decisions directly affect higher education funding and policy.

"What I believe I am doing is opening up a conversation about the impact that through our education, research and clinical care missions, the impact that we are having on all Americans and the importance of preserving that partnership for the good of the United States," McInnis said.

Legislation about indirect research costs remains a "very alive and unsettled issue," she said when asked about this lobbying area. Alongside other universities, Yale has advocated for the Federally Allocated Indirect Rate, or FAIR model — a proposal to reform how the government reimburses institutions for indirect research costs like lab maintenance and equipment.

McInnis said the reform would make the system "more transparent" and "understandable to the public."

Universities and agencies are "building a lot of support" among lawmakers for the reform, McInnis added. According to McInnis, final decisions could be incorporated into Congress' upcoming appropriations process, which has been delayed by the ongoing government shutdown.

When asked about the government shutdown, McInnis said that "for now, there have not been major impacts," although noting that fewer lawmakers are currently in Washington.

"In past government shutdowns, if there have been any gaps in funding, it's always been later restored," McInnis said. "We have always just covered any places there are gaps."

McInnis was inaugurated as the president of Yale on April 6.

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## Civics center hosts Trump policy advisor to discuss compact offer

BY SASHA CABRAL  
STAFF REPORTER

The Yale Center for Civic Thought on Monday hosted recent Yale alum and current White House policy advisor Daniel Wasserman '19 for an off-the-record discussion about the compact sent by President Donald Trump to various universities and the role presidents should play in reforming universities.

Bryan Garsten, the faculty director and founder of the center, said that the Center for Civic Thought strives to facilitate "a more thoughtful public sphere" along with "a more responsible intellectual life." Garsten also said that President Donald Trump's recent pressure on universities makes the views of a young graduate employed at the White House "interesting."

"He was chosen because he's a pretty recent Yale alum who finds himself in the position of being

close to the White House working on university issues," Garsten said in an interview. "He and I have spoken once or twice, and I thought it would be provocative and useful for him to come to campus and he agreed."

Garsten added in an email to the News that Wasserman spoke on his personal views and was not acting as a representative of the Trump administration.

The 25 attendees in the audience consisted of students, faculty and staff, according to Garsten and Anna Stroinski, the center's program manager. Attendees leaving the event declined the News' requests for comment.

"Some people were sympathetic to some of the recent criticisms of universities but skeptical of the administration's methods and proposed solutions; some approved of the administration's approach to universities; others rejected the administration's diagnoses alto-

gether," Garsten wrote in an email after the event.

"Some participants shared concerns about intellectual diversity and violations of civil rights law. Some raised questions about the administration's approach, including why research funding was an appropriate response to violations in other parts of the university," he added.

Wasserman declined the News' request for comment about the event.

Wasserman, who was in Davenport College as an undergraduate, graduated from Harvard Law School and studied political thought and intellectual history at the University of Cambridge. At Yale, he wrote a News opinion article arguing for the necessity of "civil" and "concrete" arguments.

In June, the New York Times reported that Wasserman served as a "cooperating witness" in a Justice Department investigation

into alleged claims of discrimination against white men at the student-run Harvard Law Review. In letters to Harvard sent in May, the Times reported, the department disclosed that Wasserman had provided information about the publication and accused the Law Review of retaliating against Wasserman and asking him to destroy evidence.

Wasserman began working for the White House on May 22, the Times reported.

In a confirmation email to the Monday event attendees, Stroinski provided copies of the Trump administration's "Compact for Academic Excellence in Higher Education," a Wall Street Journal article regarding the compact being sent to universities and Harvard's response to the Students for Fair Admissions v. President and Fellows of Harvard College ruling.

"We gently encourage you to read the attached pieces in

advance of the seminar to help prime the discussion. Please note that the event is structured as a small seminar, so it is designed to be an engaged, conversational session for all participants," Stroinski wrote in the email.

Referring to the future of the Center for Civic Thought, Garsten elaborated on the center's immediate goals for growth and inclusion of a diversity of people that are "different parts of Yale."

"Although we've been doing similar work for years, we're brand new as a center," Garsten said. "So we still want to find our way into more and more parts of the university."

Wasserman's undergraduate senior essay on political theory won the Philo Sherman Bennett Prize, according to the webpage advertising the Monday discussion.

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## 'Olympics' between opposed groups seen as sign of Law School civility

BY HENRY LIU  
STAFF REPORTER

Members of Yale Law School's conservative Federalist Society and liberal American Constitutional Society put aside their ideological differences last month for an afternoon of friendly competition at Wilbur Cross High School in East Rock.

The groups came together in early October for the inaugural "FedSoc-ACS Olympics," consisting of seven athletic competitions held between the two groups. Student organizers characterized the event as a fun opportunity to meet classmates outside their usual circles and to build connections across political and legal divides.

"We're delighted to see our students taking the initiative to cross ideological lines, have some fun, and build relationships. Such connections foster the respectful dialogue that sharpens legal reasoning and deepens mutual understanding," the Law School's interim dean, Yair Listokin LAW '05, wrote in a statement to the News.

The Federalist Society is a conservative-leaning legal organization, while the American Constitutional Society is a progressive legal organization that has been described as a "counterweight" to the older Federalist Society.

Listokin linked the Olympics to the Ronnie F. Heyman LAW '72 Crossing Divides Program, which encourages dialogue and cooperation among students of differing viewpoints.

Tobias Johnson LAW '27 — in email obtained by the News that was sent to the Window, an internal email list server for the Law School — highlighted the event's significance in light of past tensions at the Law School.

"It's not lost on any of us that such an event may not have been

possible in years past at YLS, and it's a tradition we hope continues for years to come," Johnson wrote in the email.

Colin Dunkley LAW '26, who participated in the Olympics, told the News that while relations between liberal and conservative students broadly have been positive during his time as a student, he has heard that that relationship was "far more fraught" before he arrived, when there would be a "really intense social ostracization" of Federalist Society members.

"I do not think that if you were going to Yale Law School, let's say six years ago, and if you were a liberal, I don't think it would be common or even especially acceptable to have a friend who was in FedSoc," Dunkley said.

Hannah Terrapin LAW '26 also described the "leftist vs FedSoc divide" as "a lot less contentious" than previous years. Terrapin attributed that shift to tighter policies the Law School has adopted regarding campus free demonstrations.

Terrapin added that while she thinks some Federalist Society members hold views she finds "abhorrent," there is a diversity of viewpoints in the Federalist Society and it would be a mistake to not engage with its members.

Ilani Nurick LAW '27, who is the vice president of community engagement for ACS and was an organizer for the event, spoke to the News about the value of the Olympics for him.

"It's important to do things that aren't political and are fun, and humanize each other," Nurick said. "In many instances, we live in these bubbles where you don't necessarily get these kinds of interactions and it's really easy to demonize people or not understand those people when you're in these kinds of isolated situations.



COURTESY OF TOBIAS JOHNSON

The conservative Federalist Society and the liberal American Constitutional Society won praise from the interim Law School dean for crossing ideological lines last month in an afternoon of athletic competitions.

This is just a very low stakes way of at least giving people the opportunity to chat."

Johnson ended his email about the Olympics by referring to the Crossing Divides program.

"To (actually, for the first time since the inception of the program) crossing divides and to many more FedSoc victories," Johnson wrote.

At the Olympics, according to Johnson's email, the two groups competed in seven events: capture the flag, flag football, kickball, basketball, dodgeball, relay race and tug of war.

While ACS won in basketball and tied in tug of war, the Federal-

ist Society won all five other events, taking home the "Byron White Award for Supreme Excellence."

"Even though ACS recruited from 90% of the law school's population, FedSoc posted a dominant showing, winning 5 of the day's 7 events and tying in another," Johnson wrote.

David Haungs LAW '26, the president of the Yale Federalist Society, wrote in a statement that he was proud of the Federalist Society's win.

"Based on the strong performance of the Federalist Society 1Ls and our ongoing recruiting efforts, I expect that trophy to remain in conservative hands for years to

come," Haungs wrote, referring to first-year law students.

Organizers said they hoped the event would mark the beginning of renewed cooperation between the two groups, who have co-sponsored Constitution Day events for two years in a row.

"I super hope so," Nurick said when asked if the event would foster a better relationship between the Federalist Society and ACS.

The Federalist Society was founded in 1982 at Yale, while ACS was founded in 2001 at Georgetown University.

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