



Image: Andrew Slay, *The West Georgian*

The American Red Cross Tests for COVID-19 Antibodies

By Terrion Newton
Contributing Writer

The American Red Cross is now seeking individuals who previously tested positive for the coronavirus. The Red Cross encourages all donors to stay informed about their antibody test results. Donors can expect to receive the results of their antibody test within one to two weeks. Of the donations we tested, approximately 2% showed positive through the Red Cross Blood Donor App or online at redcrossblood.org.

Ronnika A. McFall, pler terms, that is 24,000 In the most recent External Communications people. As more people be- years, the organization has Manager for the organiza- come infected, the amount endured extreme shortages tion, briefly explains how of antibodies will certainly of blood. The Red Cross the testing came about. increase. Some may won- encourages donors specif-

“Beginning June 15, the American Red Cross will begin testing all blood, platelet and plasma donation centers will not change,” McFall stated. “This provided do-McFall stated. “Blood, All questions and concerns insight into whether platelet, and plasma donations will be tested using by visiting the Red Cross to this coronavirus.” samples obtained at the website or calling the num-

In the U.S., the number of individuals with a testing laboratory where COVID-19 is growing steadily, but also, there is a routine screening and rising number of those with infectious disease testing.” and nearest blood drive.

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NEWS



Photo courtesy of the Associated Press

U.S. Senate Candidate Rev. Warnock Holds Press Conference with Students

By Alma Beauvais
Contributing Writer

U.S. Senate candidate Rev. Raphael Warnock turned to young Americans to consolidate support in his campaign for Georgia’s upcoming Senate election.

Warnock held a press conference with several student media outlets across Georgia on Sept.15, where he established himself as a student-driven candidate who plans to fix college students’ struggles when elected.

Warnock’s devotion to fighting for access to quality education comes from his own personal journey as a college student. For him education has been the key to unlocking achievements.

“As a United States Senator, I will be fighting to fully fund Pell Grants because I know the difference that a Pell Grant made in my life,” said Warnock.

Born and raised in Savannah, GA , Warnock is the 11th child out of 12 and the first college graduate in his family. He explained how he struggled with finances during his first semester at Morehouse College. He also discussed that if it were not for the Pell Grant, he would not be where he is today.

Warnock wants to encourage low-interest student loans, fight to decrease student debt and make sure that student loans are payable.

Wanting to use his education to make a difference in the world, Warnock attended Morehouse College in an attempt to follow in the footsteps and achievements of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., including his fight for workers.

According to Warnock, essential workers should have access to essential wages and quality health care. Having a fair minimum wage and quality health care are critical concerns for young Americans and college students entering the professional world.

“I’ve been standing for health care because I do believe that is a human right, and it is something certainly the richest nation in the world can and should provide to all of its citizens,” said Warnock.

Health care reform will be Warnock’s main priority if elected. In the press conference, he addressed how the COVID-19 pandemic and its challenges have called attention to the need for healthcare for all.

“We need our neighbors to have health care,”

said Warnock. “We should have known that before the pandemic, but now that we have a deadly airborne disease, my neighbor can cough and it endangers me. I should want that person to have coverage.

“It’s an issue that I’ve been focused on all along, but I think it’s critically important as we make our way through a pandemic,” continued Warnock. “We’re going to have a lot more people than we already have with pre-existing conditions. We have to make sure people have coverage that people with pre-existing conditions can access health care.”

Aside from healthcare, Warnock also spoke about social justice, the prison system, climate change and voting rights during the press conference. He pointed out the dangers of voter suppression in the upcoming elections.

Warnock was recently endorsed by Fair Fight and the Voter Protection Program. He also received endorsements from former Attorney General, Eric Holder and most recently, former President, Barack Obama.

Warnock will be on the ballot against current Republican U.S. Sen. Kelly Loeffler on Nov. 3 for the Senate seat along with Democratic candidate, Matt Lieberman and Republican candidate, Rep. Doug Collins. If one candidate does not receive 50% or more of the vote, the top two candidates will compete once more in the runoff election on Jan. 5.

As a result of his past, Warnock has the ability to relate and connect to the college students on a deeper level. He understands how essential the votes of college students are and plans to represent them in his fight to win the Senate seat, flipping it blue.

“I want you to recognize the power of your vote and your voice,” said Warnock. “It is so incredibly important that you not diminish the importance of your voice.

“Young people can make a major difference in this election,” continued Warnock. “We need college students to show up and vote—to recognize that it’s not so much the candidate who’s on the ballot but that student loans are on the ballot, the cost of a college education is on the ballot, health care is on the ballot and the planet, quite frankly, is on the ballot.”



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A LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Life During Wartime: Uniting the Divided States of America

By Brittany Shivers
Editor-in-Chief

First note of business: I'm a Republican. What was your reaction to that statement? What if I replaced it with the word Democrat or Independent. No matter your ideology, it's likely you had some sort of reaction. That reaction is based off of the policies and issues that you associate with each political party. Constant bias can become a problem when it leads to destructive arguments. This contributes to the political division of a country, one that is supposed to be united. So are people just jerks when it comes to politics? It isn't that simple. In fact, when we consider the social psychology behind an election year, we can begin to understand others more clearly, and, in turn, we can mend our country to once again be the **United** States of America.

So no... I'm not going to tell you my political stance, but it isn't because of fear of judgment. Rather, it is to demonstrate that this isn't about my political view. It's about the grander purpose of uniting a nation.

Let's go back to the point I mentioned earlier. Everyone associates certain policies with certain political parties. This is because our brain operates through schemas, which are developed through life experiences, often in childhood. Schemas are cognitive outlines in our brain that help us categorize information to better

Photo courtesy of the Associated Press

understand, process and recollect that information. For example, one may incorporate pro-life, gun rights and lower taxes into their schema of a Republican. However, schemas are extremely resistant to change according to Dr. Pam Hunt Kirk, UWG Professor and Sociology Program Coordinator.

"Once they are developed, schemas influence our learning about all subsequent related events," said Hunt Kirk. "Sometimes we update our schemas, but most times this doesn't happen, and instead we assimilate the new information we learn to our existing knowledge."

Because our schemas are resistant to change, confirmation bias can occur, and it often does. Confirmation bias is the tendency to favor and seek out information that confirms our beliefs and to ignore evidence that disconfirms our beliefs. If someone truly believes that COVID-19 is a political sham, they will believe it, despite the majority evidence to the contrary. This is a direct result of confirmation bias. This social psychological occurrence mixed with today's biased media is a potent combination causing political tension.

"Some scholars argue that the rise in political polarization is due largely to the increasing likelihood that people on both sides of the divide are spending an increasing amount of time in communication with people who are politically like-minded and increasingly less in communication with people on the opposite side," said Hunt Kirk.

By constantly consuming media that only agrees with our own opinions, our brains process that as repeated confirmation that we are right and the other group is wrong. Many of our biased news sources were created solely to divide people on politics, and they are purposefully using confirmation bias to their advantage in order to increase their ratings. It is a vicious cycle, in which every time we try to unite as a nation it is torn down as a result of biased media and the way our brains are wired. Just because someone is a part of a certain political party it does not mean they agree with every stance within that party. It also doesn't necessarily mean they agree with everything their party's candidate says or does.

The answer to solving the political divide is right within our grasp. All we have to do is stop making assumptions based on our personal schemas, stop hiding behind a computer screen and start having constructive conversations. After all, we all want the same thing—the best for our country. Through civil political conversations, you may find that you have a lot more in common with the other political party than you initially thought.

We all see the world through a different lens. For some people it's a red lens, for others it's blue, and there are various shades of purple in between. One thing we can't forget is that we are all looking through the same camera—the camera of humanity and hope for America's future.



NEWS

UWG College Democrats Gear Up for the Upcoming Election

By Lily Head

Contributing Writer

The UWG College Democrats are gearing up for the upcoming general election by hosting informational events on political issues and voting this semester.

Samuelle Walker, president of the organization and Aiy'Anna King, vice president, are working hard this year to ensure students are educated and prepared for the election in November. The organization also has plans for the months following the election.

For the first event of the semester, the College Democrats plan to have a voter registration drive on Oct. 5, which is the last day to register to vote in Georgia. Right after the voter registration drive, the College Democrats will be hosting a panel discussion to talk about vice presidential candidate Kamala Harris along with presidential candidate Joe Biden.

"People do know more about Biden because he was our vice president at one point, so we are focusing the discussion on Harris because a lot of students don't know as much about her," said King. "We plan to give students the proper information on Harris so that they are able to make educated decisions."

Preparing students for election day is the College Democrat's top priority this semester. Some students had issues with not knowing where or how to vote during the presidential primary election in March and the College Democrats are trying to avoid that this time around.

"We really want to give students everything they need in order to get to vote on election day," said King.

Another upcoming election the College Democrats are currently focusing on is Georgia's U.S.

Senate election, which will also be held on Nov. 3. The College Democrats are assisting organizations that endorse Democratic candidate Jon Ossoff.

"We want to make sure that students know that national elections are not the only important ones," said King. "Local elections affect us just as much as national ones."

Students can find the information they need about election day on the College Democrats Instagram and Twitter pages. The organization is also encouraging students to work the polls for the upcoming election as poll workers are in high demand due to COVID-19.

Since the presidential election will be over by the time spring rolls around, the College Democrats plan to keep educating students on relevant political issues and gear them towards local elections. They also plan to hold discussions throughout the school year that focus on whoever is the sitting president at the time.

UWG students can join the College Democrats any time during the year. The organization will be giving information to students about the elections both on campus and on social media.

"I want to tell students to make sure you do your research on the candidates for the upcoming elections before making any decisions," said Walker. "There are people that are running both locally and nationally that have good agendas and know what they are doing."

"I feel like we have a very important duty as the College Democrats right now with the election coming up, especially since we are in a red state," continued Walker. "Students need to know that it is okay to have their own political views."

Image: Hannah Keown, *The West Georgian*

VOTER REGISTRATION ENDS OCTOBER 5!



NEWS



Photo courtesy of Rickia Stafford

Leading the Pack: Rickia Stafford Gets the Job Done

By Taylor Jackson

News Editor

Time management is a skill that is difficult for many college students to master. It requires a lot of focus and dedication especially for individuals who are not used to managing their own time. Joining clubs, organizations and/or sports in early education helps students develop a schedule preparing them for attending college. Students who perform in extracurricular activities are more likely to easily adapt to the new college environment taking on courses, internships, jobs and volunteering.

Rickia Stafford is a Political Science major who is working towards attending law school upon graduating from UWG. Before becoming a full-time student here, Rickia was a dual enrollment student in high school for two years. She played softball, basketball and ran track. Not only was she actively involved in school, she was actively involved in her community.

Members of her community would say she is a smart, humble and driven young woman. From a young age she has had a general idea of what she wanted to pursue in life. Knowing her purpose gave her the ability and skill set to adapt and overcome stressful and overwhelming situations, preparing her for a tedious profession.

“My plan after UWG is to attend law school and use the degree to focus on policy reform and analysis within juvenile justice,” said Rickia. “My brother is my inspiration for wanting to go into this focus. He has been incarcerated since he was 14 and it has been 11 years since.”

“I am a strong believer that our system for juveniles is the way it is because we believe more in punishment and retribution,” continued Rickia. “There are people in power who believe that certain individuals deserve to be in jail and not on the streets just because of particular characteristics.”

Everything that Rickia has experienced has and will be of significant benefit to her. She understands how the system works and will be better suited to actually make changes regardless if it’s big or small.

“I always say that our system really does not need reforming because it works exactly the way it should,” said Rickia. “We say reform when we speak to people because that’s what resonates.”

“I am trying to undo the harm that has been done to juveniles in the south,” continued Rickia. “Not only juvenile detention and

adult prisons, but also in school, the community and through both mental and physical health.”

In addition to focusing on classes that really mattered, Rickia was also required to take courses outside of her major. Like many other students when taking a course outside of their concentration, they dedicate more time to the subject. This is because it is not something they often think about or have to really apply themselves.

“The hardest class I have taken so far has been astronomy, believe or not,” said Rickia. “I have never been good at science, and I had to really apply myself to get an A in that class.”

“I studied more for astronomy the semester I took it than I did for my actual major classes,” continued Rickia. “It was literally eat, breathe, sleep astronomy.”

Individuals perform their best when they feel their best. Even though Rickia is busy the majority of the time, she tries hard to upkeep her physical and mental health. To maintain structure in her life, Rickia makes sure to get some rest and workout whenever she can. Not only does it translate well in her everyday life but her profession as well.

Studying political science is not really hard, but it is different from other disciplines. It does not allow one to guess or experiment with different things. Instead, it focuses on being an active participant in whatever situation.

“One thing I can say about the political science major that might be different from other majors is the culture in which the professors develop to be inclusive to all ideologies and perspectives,” said Rickia. “Since my time here in 2018, politics has been heavily prevalent, and a lot of things have become political.”

“But I can say the majority of the time, no matter how hard the topics were, the students were respectful of each other no matter what,” continued Rickia. “I think that is due to the culture created by the faculty within our department.”

All in all, Rickia manages every area of her life in a well-balanced manner. The fight behind what she is doing is not only for herself or her brother, but it is also other individuals out in the world that may not have role models or figures in their lives to steer them in the right direction.

“I just put forth a lot of effort to get the job done,” said Rickia.

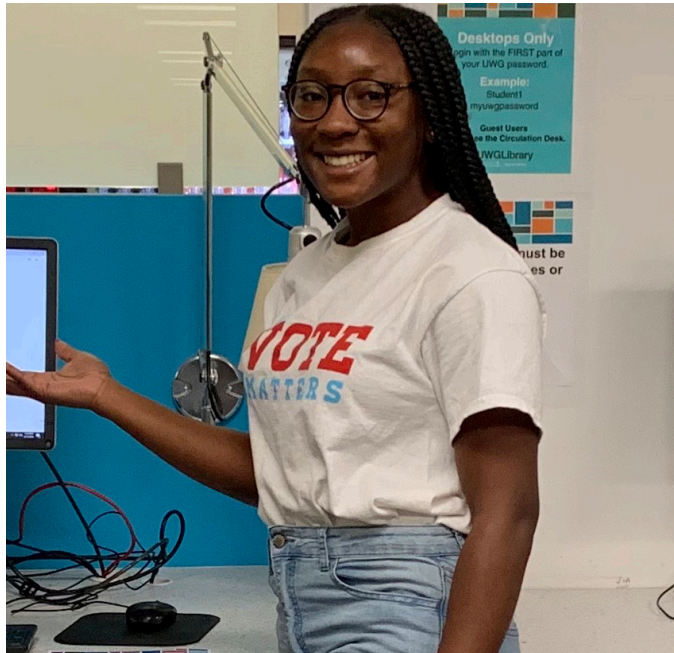


Photo courtesy of Rickia Stafford

NEWS



Photo courtesy of Indulge Salon & Day Spa

From McLarty to Hanscom: Indulge Salon and Day Spa

By Reilly Robbins

Contributing Writer

A popular Carrollton salon has a new owner. Indulge Salon & Day Spa, located one mile from Adamson Square on Rome Street, was recently sold to Michelle and Randy Hanscom of Marietta. Previously, the business was owned by Stacy McLarty.

McLarty started Indulge Salon & Day Spa in 2004, when she was 21 years old at a location on Trojan Drive. After three years, McLarty expanded and Indulge moved to its current location on Rome Street. Indulge offers massages, facials, manicures, pedicures and make-up services.

“We [Michelle and Randy Hanscom] really fell in love with the brand Stacy created,” said Michelle. “Indulge’s mission statement really stood out to us.”

Michelle is a business veteran when it comes to the esthetics industry as well as a licensed esthetician. Her husband, Randy, has been a business owner in the flooring industry since graduating from college. The couple plans to bring many different trends to the West Georgia area.

“I have a lot of plans and dreams about what I want to see offered,” said Michelle. “The first thing I want to do is come in the door, meet clients and get to know the lifestyle at Indulge.”

Since moving to Saint Si-

mons Island in 2018, McLarty said Indulge was maintaining effectively, but she really had a desire to grow and continue the brand. However, with the distance she felt unable to do so on her own.

“I feel like I was doing an injustice to keep it,” said McLarty. “But after seeking someone who is super inspired and ready to give it the same energy it deserves, it can now grow and further the brand I created.”

Although the COVID-19 pandemic postponed the sale for months, the transaction was recently completed, and the Hanscoms are now the active owners of Indulge Salon & Day Spa.

“We plan to continue providing superior service and exceptional quality like in the mission statement,” said Hanscom. “I am really excited to learn more about Carrollton and our local clients here. We plan on relocating to the area soon and are very excited about our future.”

Indulge spa director, Becky Preston, is looking forward to continuing Indulge’s image with the Hanscoms.

“I’ve witnessed a lot of exciting changes at Indulge over the years. This is by far the biggest and most exciting,” said Preston. “I can’t wait to see what the next chapter holds for our Indulge family.”

ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT

Why Netflix's *Cuties* isn't as Bad as Many Think

By **Madeline Wilbanks**
Copy Editor



Photo courtesy of Netflix

The Netflix film *Cuties* received controversy this month over its provocative tone and poor choice of movie poster. The film was originally made in France and directed by Maïmouna Doucouré. Doucouré's original intent when making the film was not only to share her experience as a refugee when she was younger, but it was also to gain awareness and shine light on some of the issues many young girls may be experiencing.

The film follows main character Amy as she starts to fall in love with being like the girls around her. She views the culture she was raised in as sheltered and boring. In the start of the film, Amy is the primary caretaker of her younger brother, while her mom takes care of the new born baby. Amy's father has been living abroad the last few months and chooses to bring home another wife, which is common practice within her Muslim culture.

Because of this, Amy's mother becomes distant in her daughter's life as Amy struggles to welcome a new family member.

As a result of Amy's complicated home life and having no one her age to hang out with, she befriends the popular, dancing girls her age at the local school. In the process, she gets engulfed in the world of online media, dancing for online views, showing off her skin and acting in a sexual manner.

After Netflix purchased the rights to the film and translated it into English, there was controversy for the film's poster, description (which Netflix has now changed) and "promotion of sexualization among young girls" which many people online argued was happening through Netflix's promotion of the film.

As a result, I watched the film to see what all of the controversy was about. However, I viewed the film through Doucouré's view-

point and original message when she made the film. At the end, I whispered to myself "that film was amazing," and here's why.

I do not think anything done in the film is right by any means. No young girl should have to go through the same journey and challenges that Amy faced in the film. However, looking at it from a director and film lover perspective, everything is perfect. The dialog, shot composition, lighting and stage is set up wonderfully. Throughout the film we get beautiful shots that have zero dialogue, yet the film moves as if the dialogue is present. The music in the film is phenomenal as well with the music being perfectly chosen for each scene.

Looking at the message of this film, Doucouré did a wonderful job at making the message clear and emotional. Towards the end of the film, we see Amy come to terms with what she has done and learn that it is not right. She doesn't go completely back to the culture she grew up in, but she does leave the culture she had put herself in.

Many people online were quick to blame Netflix and its advertising team for presenting such a sensitive film to the point that individuals boycotted Netflix and signed petitions to get the film taken down. But is Netflix really the one at fault? The presentation of the film definitely should have been different, but I don't think that Netflix is the only place young girls can see this happening. Currently, there are many young girls close in age to the girls in the film that are present on social media. Online they are exposed to all of the same factors, not by other girls their age but by society. We constantly think to ourselves "they should not be doing that, it's too young for them," but in reality no one is telling them no online. Young girls are constantly being fed messages

that it is okay to dance in front of a camera, show off some skin and even say derogatory things because that's what they see online.

In order for change to happen within our society, we have to stop blaming societal problems on big corporations who are "corrupting our youth" and ask ourselves "what am I doing to promote, or go against this practice?" Doucouré's film was not only to show that this was happening, but to show how it was happening and how easily it was happening.

Amy in the film was influenced by other girls her age, but her friends were the ones looking up to older girls as examples. Throughout the film we also see that Amy could hide what she was doing from her parents for days on end without them having any idea. Doucouré used the family dynamic, as well as the relationships between characters, to highlight how easy it is for someone to hide something right in front of our noses.

Often in today's world, we see this happen so much that we become blind to it. Doucouré uses her film to open our eyes, take off our veil and ask ourselves some tough questions. I encourage anyone who views the film to watch it through the lens of what it could be and what it was originally meant for. Pay attention not to just Amy, but watch the other characters very closely. See what they are and are not teaching her. See how they react when they learn of her whereabouts, and see how she describes her parents and her family. Then ask yourself deep questions. Figure out if you are contributing to the cause or contributing to the solution.

Overall, the film brings viewers to examine themselves and their lives. It causes us to question what we are promoting among our children, sisters, friends and peers.

ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT

Where Science and Art Converge

UWG Professors’ Astronomical Project

By Amanda Clay
Contributing Writer

Two associate professors of sculpture and photography, Casey McGuire and Mark Schoon, are combining art and science to create an intersectional experience. In 2015, they embarked on a project they call, “The Great Moon Hoax: Science and the Recreation of the Artificial.” The project and its name were inspired by Astronomer John Herschel who created sculptures based on what he saw through his telescope. This occurred prior to the era of modern space satellite pictures.

“I had been teaching a history of photography course, and Herschel was a major figure in the early history of photography,” Schoon said. “I became interested in it, and Casey and I have had other conversations about our interests in space. The creation of



Photo courtesy of Casey May McGuire, Mark Schoon

this project was an organic process.”

The goal of their work is to produce images that refrain from the use of digital media. They create pieces that are realistic through the manipulation of lighting and use of everyday materials such as cocktail balls, glitter and fishing lines. The images of the moon were created using cement, a material that McGuire found incidentally.

“I was casting some concrete arbitrarily for something non-art related, and when I poured the concrete into a bucket it puckered just like the moon’s surface,” McGuire said. “Since that moment, it’s been a lot more about play, looking at images and researching to ask ourselves how we can recreate with the materials we have.”



Photo courtesy of Casey May McGuire, Mark Schoon

SCENE BUT UNSEEN

This is the third photo in our series *Scene but Unseen*, where we feature art, objects and strange things around the UWG campus. This globe can be found in the lobby of the Callaway Building. These photos are also posted every Thursday on our Instagram @the_westgeorgian.

Photo: Richard Shah, *The West Georgian*

Art and science are more related than what may be apparent at the surface. People love captivating images, and this can act as a common denominator to bring science to people where it otherwise would not be accessible.

“One way to approach this is to think about the image and how vital the visual image is to everyone,” Schoon said. “Science often relies on that as the bridge to communicating with the general public. If you publish an article in a science journal, those people who read the article are scientists. It’s not very accessible to other people.”

Another mission of the project is to get people to question images that they see firsthand to have a better understanding of the world around us.

“One of the goals is to get people curious,” Schoon said. “The other is to get them to think about what they are taking in when they look at images. Second guess your first assumption when you look at a picture. At whatever level of knowledge you come to the image with, don’t assume you fully understand it.”

Schoon and McGuire’s work has been displayed in multiple galleries and they have given lectures around the United States. When they first began the project, they had no idea they would still be working on this collaboration together five years later.

“We keep making work that we like and are excited by,” McGuire said. “We have new ideas and we’re excited about making new work together and seeing where this goes.”

ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT

The Show Must Go On Performing in a Pandemic

By Ashley Moore
Contributing Writer

Despite the restrictions COVID-19 has imposed on academics, UWG's Theatre Department says the show must go on. In preparation for their 2020-2021 season, the department has enforced several new production and performance methods to keep all cast members, directors and producers as safe as possible.

"Theatre folks are adapters," said Alan Yeong, Program Coordinator for the UWG Theatre Department. "We identify a problem, and then we adapt and come up with a solution."

Before deciding to move on with the season, Yeong says the department knew that they only needed to host intimate shows that respect the coronavirus restrictions. He added that theatre normally plans out the season almost a year in advance. Therefore, when the department found out about the pandemic in February, they immediately began preparations for the fall.

"We already figured out this would be bad, and we are embracing it," said Yeong. "Collectively, we chose a season where we could practice social distancing."

The department plans to create a high artistic standard for their shows and wants to make the most of this season. Yeong says they strive to meet the needs of their majors and staff while remaining cautious about the pandemic.

Theatre instructors and professors are working to transfer



ideas that are normally taught in a live theatre setting to a more safe environment, through dual modality learning. These ideas are essential in mentoring and training theatre majors and are used to teach them about the industry.

During rehearsals, only two actors are allowed in the room at a time. Therefore, the shows for this season only have a few actors in an effort to help prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Yeong says the department selects rehearsal spaces that allow cast members to practice social distancing and follow COVID-19 health guidelines.

"We follow the safety protocols rigorously, because our discipline is so touchy feely," said Yeong. "We communicate through our eyes and touch. We have to be very cautious about health issues."

Performers complete routine health checks before the show, wash their hands repeatedly and wear masks. However,

their masks are not only used as a safety precaution. Yeong says that the actors' masks are now a part of their costume. In addition to acting in their new costume accessory, performers are tasked with learning their characters differently. They are now learning to act for a camera instead of a live audience, since all performances are now done virtually.

The process has become more tedious, especially when it comes to figuring out what angles and shots look best on camera that magnify the performance.

Yeong says the department has limited resources, which has definitely been a challenge when it comes to putting on a virtual production. However, they are striving to make the best use of what they do have.

"We are all learning and discovering things that did not work," said Yeong. "It's a learning experience as a whole. I'm really grateful that the kids are really embracing the challenge."

