

The Daily Iowan

MONDAY, AUGUST 23, 2021

THE INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER OF THE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA COMMUNITY SINCE 1868

DAILYIOWAN.COM 50¢

Class of '25 in person, but COVID looms

The University of Iowa Class of 2025 will experience more in-person education, which began with a week-long On Iowa! celebration. But students are also coming to campus as COVID-19 sees a resurgence.



Jerod Ringwald/The Daily Iowan

First-year students wave their phone flashlights during the class of 2025 photo during Kickoff at Kinnick at Kinnick Stadium on Aug. 19.

Sabine Martin
News Editor

After a senior year of high school that primarily took place online, the University of Iowa's class of 2025 spent its first week experiencing UI traditions in person.

Director of Orientation Services and On Iowa! Tina Arthur said On Iowa!, a first-year and transfer student week-long immersion program, looks different for the 2021 UI incoming class compared to last year.

"We know that our freshmen class is coming to us with

all different types of experiences," Arthur said. "We have some seniors in high school that spent their entire year in person, and we have others who spent their entire senior year online. And so we certainly want to help everyone feel comfortable with what their experience is going to be like in their first semester here at the university."

The UI moved the OnIowa! program to hybrid events in 2020, its tenth year, because of COVID-19.

Arthur said On Iowa! had a lot of health guidelines for events which restricted in-person activities last year, but this year's celebration had more food crawls, a comedic

juggler, the President's Block Party, and Kickoff at Kinnick.

The UI offered some virtual events or options for students to attend things virtually for individuals who might be uncomfortable with an activity's COVID-19 measures, Arthur said.

"Most of those guidelines have changed back when the Board of Regents lifted the emergency declaration for all of the state schools," Arthur said. "And so our events are looking pretty similar to what they did in 2019."

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INSIDE



From Suwanee to Iowa City: Tyler Goodson's path to becoming Iowa's All-Big Ten running back

All-Big Ten running back Tyler Goodson, who calls Suwanee, Georgia home, was questioned when he chose Iowa as his college destination. But the always Hawkeye answered the "Why Iowa?" question during his recruitment process with the same answer: It felt like home, too.

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UIHC participates in COVID-19 booster vaccine trial

A year after beginning participation in Pfizer's trials, University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics is continuing to participate in COVID-19 vaccine trials, including a booster shot trial. Now, it is helping three companies at different stages of vaccine trials attain data to bring to the FDA.

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DITV

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Day cares and K-12 schools brace for fall without mask mandate

As Johnson County experiences a high transmission rate of COVID-19, day cares and K-12 schools prepare for the new school year without the ability to mandate mask-wearing.



Jerod Ringwald/The Daily Iowan

The St. Mark's United Methodist Church sign is seen on Aug. 22. The church hosts Loving Arms Early Learning Center.

Megan Doster
News Reporter

Johnson County is experiencing high levels of COVID-19 transmission, leaving educators and parents concerned about how to keep young students ineligible for vaccination safe as the school year starts.

Michelle Beninga, the head of Willowwind School, said the main concern for the new academic year is the inability to require masks.

While the school strongly encourages teachers, students, and visitors to wear masks, it cannot require masking on school grounds because of a law signed by Iowa Gov. Kim Reynolds in May that bans schools from mandating masks.

Most students who attend Willowwind School, a K-6 private school in Iowa City, are not eligible to receive a COVID-19 vaccine. COVID-19 vaccines are currently available to only those ages 12 and older.

Sam Jarvis, community health manager for Johnson County Public Health, said the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention currently recommend universal masking inside schools.

Beninga said she hopes people follow the recommendations set by the Academy of Pediatrics, which recommends that everyone over the age of two, re-

gardless of vaccination status, wear a mask.

"We are excited for the school year, and we believe that we have safe measures in place to our multi-tiered approach to tackle the pandemic," Beninga said.

Willowwind's safety measures state that the school does not envision the use of a hybrid learning model for this school year and hopes to stay in person.

Jarvis said, with 61 percent of Johnson County fully vaccinated, it is hard to say whether the pandemic is better or worse than it was a year ago.

"We know how important it is for in-person schooling — kids receive so much support," Jarvis said. "Certainly, their education is predominantly one of the most important things at school—among so many other benefits, whether it's socialization or emotional support as well."

Loving Arms Early Learning Center, an Iowa City day care, is strongly encouraging its 3- to 5-year-old students to wear masks. The day care uses the app Brightwheel to monitor if children in its care show symptoms of COVID-19.

"If you have a child or staff member that tests positive, we have a specific exclusion policy that we're using,

Q&A with public health expert: the delta variant

As COVID-19 cases rise, public health experts are encouraging vaccination and a return to mask-wearing.

Lillian Poulsen
News Reporter



Christine Petersen, director of the Center for Emerging Infectious Diseases in the University of Iowa College of Public Health

Iowa is experiencing a surge in new COVID-19 cases as the highly transmissible delta variant of the virus rapidly spreads through the state and the nation overall.

In recent weeks, Iowa has seen a steady increase in the number of COVID-19 cases, hospitalizations, and deaths — despite having seen a decline previously.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, most of Iowa's counties — including Johnson County — had high levels of community transmission of COVID-19, as of

Aug. 18. Only one Iowa county, Appanoose, had a moderate rate of transmission.

"All of us are worried about delta because of this high level of transmission — it makes it that much more likely that we are going to start seeing changes that could lead to less effectiveness against the virus," said Christine Petersen, director of the Center for Emerging Infectious Diseases in the University of Iowa College of Public Health.

The Daily Iowan sat down with Petersen to ask her about the delta variant.

Q: Why has the delta variant spread so quickly?

A: The delta variant arose in India during spring 2021, spreading to over 60 countries by the beginning of June, according to CNBC.

In early reports, researchers found that the variant was more transmissible in people who were infected, Petersen said. Delta doubled the ability of one infected person to infect more people, from about two to five people per one infected.

Petersen said this level of infection is about the same as that of chicken pox — which is highly infectious. Along with this discovery, she said, researchers learned that people are spreading more virus particles than before.

"A person who's infected has between five and 10 times more virus coming out of their airway

MASKS | Page 2

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Wilson welcomes class of 2025



University of Iowa President Barbara Wilson greets new students in front of Burge residence hall on Aug. 16. Wilson spent time getting to know where first-year students are from. **Jerod Ringwald/The Daily Iowan**

ON IOWA!
Continued from front

The UI strongly encourages students to use face coverings at any in-person events, Arthur said.

The state Board of Regents, which governs the UI, won't be requiring masks at Iowa's public universities. On Aug. 19, Iowa City Mayor Bruce Teague instituted a mask mandate that applies to university buildings, but UI spokesperson Jeneane Beck said the UI is governed by state law and will continue to follow the regents' policies.

"The nice thing is that we have outdoor venues for all of our large events, so I think that that's definitely where I feel a little bit more comfortable providing those bigger opportunities, because we don't have any indoor experiences happening," she said.

Arthur said the On Iowa! staff and faculty volunteers expected similar numbers for On Iowa! participation as the last few years.

Lexi Phelps, a first-year business student from Iowa City, said she felt uncertain about COVID-19 mitigation measures on campus. She said she'll get a better feel for whether to wear a mask in class or not once classes start.

"I think the university is doing a good job and doing what they think is best," Phelps said.

Arthur said the On Iowa! campus classroom tours to acclimate the freshman class were popular this year because of increased



Beth Schuckert poses for a portrait on campus in Iowa City on Aug. 20. **Jerod Ringwald/The Daily Iowan**

- **Beth Schuckert**
- **Hometown:** Iowa City
- **Major:** Nursing
- **Why did you choose the University of Iowa?**
- "It was close. And it was really good for my major because of UI Health Care. I was hoping maybe I can get in there and be a nurse."
- **How do you feel about going into your first year of college during a pandemic?**
- "Kind of uncertain about it. I know, I mean, I like that the lectures are online. I think that's really good because there won't be a lot of people in your classes. And I think 25 students is a lot smaller class size."

in-person classes during the fall semester.

The UI plans to have mostly face-to-face instruction, excluding classes with more than 150 students enrolled.

"We offered them last year, but I think so many people had classes online, they didn't really take us up on them last year," Arthur said.

The UI also planned a

vaccination clinic on the ground floor of the Iowa Memorial Union.

"If students want to get vaccinated, we want to make sure they know that they have the opportunity to do that," Arthur said. "We, with our student leader training, have just tried to walk them through scenarios that might come up because of the pandemic

that you know, obviously, we didn't really talk about in 2019."

Nathan Inches, a first-year political-science major from Wheaton, Illinois, said he chose to have an all-online senior year of high school, but she is ready for an in-person semester of classes.

"I've been pretty comfortable with everything," Inches said. "I haven't really felt uncomfortable at all with COVID. I like how there's hand sanitizer everywhere."

Inches' roommate, Cameron Westphal - a microbiology major from Washington, Iowa - said he's not "inherently" worried about in-person learning because he is fully vaccinated.

"But, with the delta variant, I don't want it," Westphal said. "I do like in-person classes, and I like hands on stuff, so I'll probably wear a mask in class."

Westphal said other students he's spoken with in the class of 2025 are "unsure" and "50/50" about wearing masks in class on Monday.

Arthur said the Vice President for Student Life Sarah Hansen and Office of the Dean of Students have a separate committee looking to plan an event for the sophomore class in the fall, because it missed out on some classic in-person UI traditions, like taking a class photo during Kickoff at Kinnick.

"We have said that all of our sophomores can come to any of the events that they are interested in," Arthur said. "To be honest with you, with Kickoff at Kinnick and the President's Block Party, that really is

The Daily Iowan

VOLUME 154
ISSUE 9

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Phone: (319) 335-6030

Email: daily-iowan@uiowa.edu

CORRECTIONS

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PUBLISHING INFO

The Daily Iowan (USPS 143.360) is published by Student Publications Inc., E131 Adler Journalism Building, Iowa City, Iowa 52242-2004, Mondays and Wednesdays during the fall and spring semesters (plus Fridays of football game weekends) and Wednesday during the summer, except legal and university holidays, and university class breaks. Periodicals postage paid at the Iowa City Post Office under the Act of Congress of March 2, 1879.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Email Juli Krause at

daily-iowan-circ@uiowa.edu

Subscription Rates:

Iowa City and Coralville:

\$30 for one semester,

\$60 for two semesters,

\$5 for summer session,

\$60 for full year.

Out of town:

\$50 for one semester,

\$100 for two semesters,

\$10 for summer session,

\$100 all year.

Send address changes to:

The Daily Iowan,

100 Adler Journalism Building,

Iowa City, Iowa 52242-2004

BUSINESS STAFF

Business Manager | 335-5786

Debra Plath

Advertising Director/Circulation | 335-5784

Juli Krause

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Heidi Owen



Alexander Saint-Victor poses for a portrait on campus in Iowa City on Aug. 20. **Jerod Ringwald/The Daily Iowan**

- **Alexander Saint-Victor**
- **Hometown:** Woodbridge, Virginia
- **Major:** Political science
- **Why did you choose the University of Iowa?**
- "I wanted to get away to a nice quiet place."
- **Did you attend any On Iowa! events?**
- "I went to the liberal-arts fair today. The professors here are really friendly."

aimed at the new class in the class of 2025."

Rylee Wilson contributed

to this report.

sabine-martin@uiowa.edu

MASKS

Continued from front

which has been difficult since the governor passed that new

law," said Kayla Jordan, director of Loving Arms Early Learning Center. "It's up to the individual organization to develop their own exclusion policies."

Loving Arms' exclusion

policy is not specific to COVID-19, but excludes children from care if they show symptoms of illness such as rash, fever, or vomiting, until a doctor says that the child is healthy. According to

the parent handbook for the day care, this is to ensure a healthy environment for all children in its care.

Because of their inability to mandate masks, schools and day cares are limited on

what they can do to prevent COVID-19 outbreaks in their buildings.

"We want kids in schools, but we would prefer if we were able to do all of the mitigation measures," Jarvis said. "It is

difficult, right there. I'm sure many feel like their hands are tied behind their back in terms of what could be done to keep people safer."

megan-doster@uiowa.edu

DELTA

Continued from front

when they cough, sneeze, or breathe," Petersen said. "That person is putting a lot more virus out into the air and the environment, leading to more people getting infected."

Q: Who is most at risk for infection?

A: People who aren't vaccinated are at a much higher risk of getting infected anytime they are in a room with people who are shedding the virus, Petersen said.

Additionally, people who are more susceptible to contracting the virus, regardless of vaccination status, are more likely to get infected with the delta variant.

"Some people, perhaps who don't have as good an immune system or have as good of an immune response, shed enormous amounts of virus," Petersen said. "People with delta are very infectious and that's who can lead to a super spreader event."

Q: Who should get tested for COVID-19?

A: If someone had signs or symptoms of COVID-19, regardless of whether they're vaccinated, they should get

tested, Petersen said.

"You should definitely get tested because then you know if it's the virus or another respiratory illness," Petersen said. "It also helps set up health practices like isolation and quarantine and tracing the people that you've been in contact with to let them know that you're positive and that they should be watching for signs and symptoms."

If someone is exposed to the virus without being vaccinated, they will have to quarantine, Petersen said.

Q: What is the treatment for the delta variant?

A: Treatment isn't any different for the delta variant, Petersen said.

Treatments for COVID-19 include monoclonal antibody treatment, different types of ventilation, and intubation, Petersen said. She added that these strategies help prevent severe illness and death.

"Depending on your symptomatology, you could either be the worst cold of your life or you could have mild symptoms if you have a breakthrough infection when you're vaccinated," Petersen said.

Q: Should everyone be worried about delta, even if they're vaccinated?

A: The high level of transmission of the delta variant makes it much more likely that the vaccine would be less effective against the virus, Petersen said.

"The vaccine does work quite well against the delta variant," Petersen said. "It might have slightly less efficacy than against the original types of virus that it was originally made for and tested against, but it's hard to know by how much."

The original effectiveness rate of preventing severe disease and hospitalization in the vaccine, about 95 percent, is down to 70 to 80 percent in the delta variant, she said.

Researchers in Provincetown, Massachusetts, found that people reported symptoms even when they were vaccinated, according to NPR.

"People, regardless of their vaccination state, had equal amounts of virus in their bodies," Petersen said. "When we look at whether or not the vaccine works, the vaccine was proven to work to prevent clinical disease, hospitalization, and death."

Q: Who should wear masks?

A: Everybody should wear masks, regardless of vaccination status, Petersen said. People should also avoid

gatherings where they might be encouraged to take off their masks, she said.

"It's highly encouraged not to eat or drink in front of a lot of people, so you don't have to take your mask off," Petersen said. "Going out to bars is not a good idea."

It's especially important for people who aren't vaccinated to continue practicing health and safety measures, Petersen said.

"If you're not vaccinated, you should be doing all the measures we were doing a year ago, which are social distancing, staying away from crowds, and always wearing a mask in any sort of crowded condition—even if that's outside," Petersen said.

Q: How do these measures, like vaccination and wearing masks, prevent the transmission of this virus?

A: These measures decrease the chance of severe infection and the rate of infection within the community, Petersen said.

"They decrease the rate of infection that you're going to have overall, creating a phenomenon called herd immunity—you have less people in a population who can spread the virus, making the amount of spread within the community less," Petersen said.

Social distancing and avoiding crowds also help,

she said.

"Social distancing makes it harder to have an interaction that can lead to viral particles moving from one person to another," Petersen said. "Being cognizant of the people you're around and not mixing with too many people or having a bubble also help decrease the amount of sharing of viruses through a community."

Despite these precautions, nothing can completely stop

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the virus except for staying home, she said.

"No one precaution is 100-percent foolproof," Petersen said. "In order to best protect you, your loved ones, and the small kids who are younger than 12 and not vaccinated, you are going to want to use the multi-layer approach so the chances of the virus entering is very limited."

lillian-poulsen@uiowa.edu

Motorcycle Tips: Parking

• University motorcycle permits allow motorcycles, mopeds and scooters to park in all University motorcycle lots.

• Always park in motorcycle lots; not bike racks or other areas.

• Going home for the summer? Take it with you or get a summer permit.

transportation.uiowa.edu

UI Greek life continues modified recruitment

While some University of Iowa FSL councils are adopting hybrid recruitment models, the Panhellenic Council will proceed with virtual recruitment this fall.

Anthony Neri
News Reporter

Students hoping to join a sorority typically endure long days traveling between chapter houses in the sun, but potential new members will partake in the University of Iowa recruitment process from their dorm rooms on Zoom this year, for the second recruitment season in a row.

The UI Panhellenic Council, made up of 14 sororities, announced a fully virtual fall recruitment plan per the most recent guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Panhellenic Conference, and increased reports of COVID-19 in Johnson County as of Aug. 12.

In the council's announcement, it cited the high transmissibility of the delta variant of the coronavirus, and the difficulty of isolating exposed individuals or groups, as reasons for its decision.

Allyson Farley, a member of Panhellenic sorority Alpha Epsilon Phi, said she supports the council's wholly virtual model. She said she believes it would not be safe or inclusive to restrict recruitment to in-person interactions.

In her experience with virtual recruitment, she said she has "lost none of the experiences of sisterhood or Greek Life at the UI throughout my recruitment."

According to an email sent on July 30, about 373



The Alpha Phi sorority house is seen on Aug. 1. All 14 sororities in the Panhellenic Council will be conducting recruitment virtually.

Jerod Ringwald/The Daily Iowan

students were signed up for fall 2021 recruitment. Around the same time in fall 2020, about 700 members were signed up.

As of Aug. 20, 687 potential new members are signed up for fall 2021 recruitment, according to information provided to *The Daily Iowan*.

The UI's Interfraternity Council will use a hybrid recruitment model this year as well, with both

virtual and in-person components, according to Will Hochman, the council's acting president.

The Multicultural Greek Council, made up of nine chapters representing Latinx, Asian, and LGBTQ+ communities, also moved to a hybrid model, according to the council's website.

Fall 2021 recruitment for the council will begin Aug. 30, according to the

council's website.

"Having a virtual option for members creates more accessibility for potential new members," Hochman said.

He added that the council's decision is based on a concern for the health and safety of its members.

COVID-19 has not kept students from joining the recruitment process, however. Hochman said

enrollment for Interfraternity Council recruitment has increased since the pandemic began.

At this time last year, 92 students were signed up for fraternity recruitment. In August 2019, 53 students had signed up, compared to 177 students signed up for recruitment this year.

Hochman listened to student feedback on the virtual recruitment model, he said, and found

the hybrid option more friendly to people who are anxious about the spread of COVID-19.

Jacob Olson, president of Phi Kappa Theta, part of the Interfraternity Council, said he understood why the changes were implemented, but does not find them necessary, given high vaccination rates and the decision to reinstate full capacity at Kinnick Stadium and in the university's dining halls.

Olson added that it has been difficult to keep recruitment events popular, describing the virtual experiences of potential new members as being "like listening to a really short, boring lecture."

Virtual recruitment "was really hard," Olson said, because people didn't necessarily want to sit in a Zoom call.

Hochman said he predicts that a virtual recruitment model may remain an option for years to come.

"It's a lot easier to meet members and talk to people from the computer in the comfort of your home rather than going to in-person recruitment events and feeling a little bit intimidated and having a lot of social pressure surrounding that situation," he said. "...I would also say that, when we offer virtual aspects of recruitment, this really opens up how many chapters a student can meet."

anthony-neri@uiowa.edu

UIHC tests COVID-19 booster shots

The University of Iowa's Hospitals and Clinics are currently participating in three COVID-19 vaccine trials that are all at different stages.

Eleanor Hildebrandt
News Editor

After over a year of participating in COVID-19 vaccination trials for various pharmaceutical companies, the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics is contributing to a vaccine booster study among other vaccine research to provide more knowledge and data.

UI Carver College of Medicine Executive Dean Patricia Winokur, who oversees vaccine trials at UIHC, said the university is very proud of its contribution to these "historic trials."

"To be part of the knowledge base that has brought a trial and to begin within a year is due a moment of pride, I think, for all of us here at the University of Iowa," she said. "On a more practical side, I think it was an opportunity for us to learn firsthand about how well these vaccines were tolerated and to understand how comprehensive the follow up was."

Winokur said this helps her and others involved in the trials mitigate concerns from the community about the vaccine, since she saw the work first-hand.

UIHC has been involved with the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine trials since summer 2020, when Cedar Rapids City Councilor Ashley Vanorny joined as a participant. Vanorny enrolled in the booster shot trial for the company and received either a placebo shot or a shot with a booster dose on Aug. 6, 2021.

While she doesn't know which she received, she said, she is currently in the same position as people who are not participating in the trial and is excited to see what happens next.

"I'm just waiting, like everybody else, at this point in time to see how the science comes out, to see what gets approved through the FDA," she said. "And if I received the placebo, then I would get caught up with that third



A Pfizer vaccine is drawn up during a vaccination clinic on April 14. The clinic was held at the Radisson Hotel Conference Center in Coralville.

Jeff Sigmund/The Daily Iowan

shot."

Vanorny started as one of 270 participants in the Iowa City area. Winokur said 80 of the initial participants were selected for the booster shot trial. She said that trials should be wrapping up soon.

"The data is accumulating," she said. "That tells us we need to consider boosters."

The Food and Drug Administration approved booster doses for immunocompromised people on Aug. 13. Last week, federal health officials strongly recommended everyone get a booster shot eight months after their initial shots, and recent Centers for Disease Control and Prevention studies suggested vaccine effectiveness may wane over time.

The two-shot COVID-19 vaccine from

Pfizer is currently looking to receive full approval from the FDA. Vanorny said she is staying vigilant as a participant in the trials, as guidance or information can change daily regarding the vaccines.

"Some of this can be confusing and frustrating," she said. "Certainly as the science changes, as the circumstances change, so do the mitigation strategies ... It's really important for us not to get frustrated, to realize that the health care community is trying to get the best information out as soon as they have it, so that means information may change."

As a participant, Vanorny keeps a digital diary on an app to log potential symptoms. She said the only difference between the initial trial

and the booster shot one low-up currently, and

"I absolutely think that [the trials] has been one of the reasons our vaccination rates are higher in Johnson County than in some of the other counties.

— UI Carver College of Medicine Executive Dean Patricia Winokur

is that she had to re-log in to the app to continue documenting her experience.

Alongside Pfizer, Winokur said UIHC is participating in trials for the Novavax vaccine, and recently put out a call for participants in a trial for Sanofi's vaccine.

Since most people who want to be vaccinated already are, she said it is becoming difficult to find participants for new trials.

Winokur said the Novavax trials are in fol-

low-up currently, and UIHC is pushing the company to begin a booster shot study.

The Sanofi trial is looking to use messenger RNA in a different way than other vaccines, she said. Both Pfizer and Moderna's vaccines use messenger RNA.

"They are trying to get studies of a new messenger RNA platform, using COVID-19," she said. "... I think these platforms are here to stay. They've been very successful."

Winokur said she knows the Pfizer vaccine

process did not skip any steps and wasn't rushed — something she's heard as an excuse for why people don't want to get the vaccine.

However, Johnson County is the most vaccinated county in Iowa, which Winokur attributes to UIHC's participation in various trials.

"I absolutely think that [the trials] has been one of the reasons our vaccination rates are higher in Johnson County than in some of the other counties," she said. "I think our marketing and communications team has worked very hard to keep people updated and having that practical experience and being able to deliver that to the public has been very helpful."

eleanor-hildebrandt@uiowa.edu

Opinions

Editorial | Regents are failing the community

Thousands of students have returned to campus. To combat the rise of COVID-19 cases that may come with it, the UI and Board of Regents must enact stricter COVID-19 guidelines and vaccine incentives.

DI Editorial Board

The people in charge of keeping us safe are failing.

While Hawkeye students are ecstatic about the return of a “normal semester,” we may instead see a replay of 2020 under the veneer of normality.

The state Board of Regents’ and University of Iowa’s fall COVID-19 policies are dangerous, and they will inevitably lead to spread of the virus — spread that could have been prevented.

As the semester begins, the UI faculty and the Iowa City community are worried about the return of thousands of Hawkeye students, with no clue of their vaccination status and no mask mandate in sight — and they’re right to be.

Enforcing smarter COVID-19 policies

With the rise of the delta variant, Johnson County has experienced an increase in community transmission. According to the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention, the variant is more contagious, and while breakthrough infections in fully vaccinated people are rare, infected people can still spread the virus just as easily.

The chance of infection rises when thousands of students enter university buildings, passing one another in narrow hallways or crowding into lecture halls. The responsibility for this fully preventable disaster lies at the feet of the regents. The regents need to implement a mask requirement in university buildings now, and the UI needs to listen to the concerns of its faculty.

It is no secret that the current policies endorsed by the regents are negligent. They have the authority to require masks on campus, yet are taking cues from the governor’s office and lawmakers in Des Moines, not public health experts on their own campuses.

Our leaders cannot ig-

nore the concerns from faculty who don’t feel like their work environment is safe. Why should we wait for an outbreak to occur when the regents could implement safety measures to prevent one from happening in the first place?

In a letter addressed to UI president Barbara Wilson, faculty pointed out that the UI is the only school in the Big Ten to not mandate masks. They strongly encouraged the regents to enforce one, arguing that universal masking will protect students and faculty alike from the threat of the delta variant.

However, UI administration said they would not change current COVID-19 guidelines despite the faculty petition and concerns.

To be fair, the UI is certainly in a tough spot. It is governed by the regents and gets its policies from them. And the regents don’t seem interested in budging on their position that flouts all notions of public health.

But we’ve seen what happens when local leaders decide to prioritize public health over politics — last week, Iowa City instituted a mask mandate, seemingly in direct opposition to state law.

We’re no legal scholars, but the UI should explore all options to require students to follow that directive. What’s preventing the UI from saying that members of the community are expected to follow city law when on university premises? The responsibility ultimately lies with the regents, but the university can and should be more aggressive about keeping its students and faculty staff.

Vaccinations and vaccine incentives are key

Our first line of defense against the virus is vaccination. When leadership has failed at every level, we as students also have a responsibility to protect our community. If the regents won’t implement a mask



Iowa Board of Regents President Michael Richards sits alongside President Pro Tem Patty Cownie during a meeting at the Iowa State Alumni Center in Ames on June 6, 2019.

mandate, and claim a vaccine mandate goes against state law, students need to take it upon themselves to do the right thing and get vaccinated. Otherwise, we will put not only the UI population at risk, but the entire Iowa City community.

Increasing the vaccination rate among the student population is key to ensuring a safe return to Iowa City this fall. Many students are itching for a return to pre-pandemic college life, and getting vaccinated is one of our best tools to further this goal. We have ample evidence that the COVID-19 vaccines are both safe and effective, even against the delta variant.

We often forget that our actions as students do not only affect us, but every Iowa City resident. It’s no coincidence that the first major COVID-19 spike in Johnson County coincided with the start of class last August. If they have not already, students should

make a plan to get vaccinated to protect fellow classmates and other residents of the city. Johnson County is currently classified as a “very high risk,” area for unvaccinated people, but there is an opportunity to lower the positivity rate if students get vaccinated.

Although many universities across the country have implemented vaccine mandates, the regents have made it clear that this will not happen in Iowa because of a law signed by Gov. Kim Reynolds that banned vaccine passports in May. If the UI were to require proof of vaccination to attend school, the regents claim that the institution would be violating state law. The implications of defying this law would result in denial of “grants or contracts funded by state revenue.” Because lawmakers have taken away this option for cheap political points, the responsibility falls on us as students to get vaccinated.

On top of that, the UI has

a duty to aggressively encourage vaccinations and proactively implement policies conducive to raising the student vaccination rate. While the current vaccine incentive program offers \$10 Iowa City Downtown District gift cards, the university should explore further options.

Universities across the country have set vaccine incentive programs that seem to be much more convincing than the opportunity to obtain a measly \$10 gift card. Missouri State University has opted to give away \$150,000 in a prize raffle. Students can win iPads, laptops, and even free tuition, housing, and parking.

Some schools have chosen a different approach, instead charging a fee for students who are still unvaccinated at the beginning of the semester. The jury is still out on which vaccine incentive program works the best, but it’s hard to believe that a \$10 gift

card could be more convincing than a chance at free tuition or a new laptop.

We’re in this together. Students must take it upon themselves to get vaccinated for their own best interest, as well as for the safety of the entire community. If administrators are even somewhat serious about curbing COVID-19 on our campus, UI should take the simple step toward bolstering the vaccine incentive program.

Government officials and institutions at every level in Iowa have failed to keep us safe. And despite the limitations imposed up the ladder, the UI is not doing enough to care for the health of Iowa City.

By requiring masks in whatever way possible and providing stronger vaccine incentives, the UI could not only help stop the delta variant, but also allow us to return to normal faster and safer.

daily-iowan@uiowa.edu

COLUMN

IC mandate sets example for other cities

Iowa City’s decision to implement a mask mandate was in the best interest of the community, and others should follow suit.



Hannah Pinski
Opinions Editor

Iowa City prioritized the health and safety of residents and took COVID-19 protections into its own hands despite state law that supposedly bars local government from doing so.

On Aug. 19, Mayor Bruce Teague declared a state of civil emergency in the city, and read in a live address via Facebook that every person must wear a face covering in public places such as stores, restaurants, public schools, and University of Iowa academic buildings.

City Councilor Janice Weiner said the goal of the mandate is to try to follow the best public health guidelines for

community safety.

“This community has demonstrated more than any other in Iowa that we want to be safe and healthy,” Weiner said. “We are by far the most vaccinated city and county in the state, and it’s not enough because kids aren’t vaccinated yet.”

But what may appear as defiance against state law may not actually be so.

Over the past two weeks, Weiner said she talked with Teague and the city attorney to see if there was any wiggle room in state law, and Iowa City may have found a loophole.

In May, Gov. Kim Reynolds sent parents, students, and leaders into turmoil when she signed a law that stripped local governments and schools of their power and banned them from implementing mask mandates.

But with the rise of the delta variant and the start of the new school year, Iowans raised concern about how it would affect

the safety of students. Since children 12 and under can’t get vaccinated, and state law doesn’t allow schools to enact mask requirements, there is almost no defense system against the virus in classroom settings.

The law states, “a city shall not adopt an ordinance, motion, or use any other means that requires the owner of real property to implement a policy relating to the use of face coverings that is more stringent than a policy implemented by the state.”

Unlike last year’s mask mandate, this one only directly applies to people, not businesses. Iowa City’s order states, “every person in the City of Iowa City must wear a face covering when in a public space.”

So, if the order applies to individuals and not businesses, is Iowa City actually breaking state law? Weiner doesn’t think so.

“What should be clear

while delineating a lot of indoor circumstances under which we want people to wear masks, we are not telling any real proper-

ty or business owner you must enforce,” Weiner said. “Right now, I would say we are following the letter of the law.”

Iowa City is facing the return of thousands of Hawkeye students — who aren’t required to be vaccinated — which sparked outcry from UI faculty for the COVID-19 policy, or lack thereof, set by the UI administration and state Board of Regents.

Despite the proclamation claiming that it applies in UI academic buildings, administration is still not requiring masks on campus. As previously reported by *The Daily Iowan*, UI

spokesperson Jeneane Beck said the university follows state law and the Board of Regents haven’t implemented a mask

mandate on campus.

Weiner emphasized that she hopes that students follow the mandate and view it as a protection instead of a punishment.

“I hope a lot of students will listen and understand we’re doing this to help our whole community stay safe and healthy, and they are part of our community,” Weiner said.

With Reynolds’ track record of her lackadaisical COVID-19 policy, it’s clear she was never going to make decisions that were going to protect Iowans. Although Reynolds has encouraged

vaccinations, Weiner said she hasn’t seen her pay attention to public health guidelines and the flexibility needed when circumstances change.

Therefore, it’s on local leaders to take charge and act in the best interest of their communities. And if Iowa City didn’t really break state law with this order, there’s nothing keeping other local governments from taking similar actions.

“I believe as elected officials, our primary responsibility is to keep people safe,” Weiner said. “It’s to look out for the safety and security of our residents, and that’s what we’re trying to do.”

It’s up to the rest of the state to follow Iowa City’s example to take matters into their own hands and protect our communities — something that Reynolds will never do.

hannah-pinski@uiowa.edu

STAFF

Caleb McCullough Executive Editor

Hannah Pinski Opinions Editor

Yassie Buchanan, Peyton Downing, Dylan Hood, Shahab Khan, Luke Krchak, Ally Pronina, Sophia Meador, Columnists

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Coronavirus still a concern in Johnson County

Despite having the highest vaccination rate in the state, COVID-19 cases are still high in Johnson County.



Jerod Ringwald/Daily Iowan

The Johnson County Administration Building is seen in Iowa City on Aug. 1.

Emily Delgado
News Reporter

Johnson County leads the state of Iowa in vaccination rates, but rising cases are still a cause for concern among local health officials. As of Aug. 20, 72 percent of adults ages 18 and older in Johnson County are fully vaccinated.

“Johnson County has the highest vaccination rate in the state due to our amazing partnerships across all sectors,” Community Health Manager Sam Jarvis wrote in an email to *The Daily Iowan*.

Jarvis credited Johnson County as a “health care hub” in Iowa, writing that county residents have understood the importance of getting vaccinated to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

“Having some of the first persons to get vaccinated in the state also played a part because all of those persons were then able to speak to their experience,” Jarvis wrote.

Iowa Gov. Kim Reynolds signed a law preventing government entities from mandating masks in May, but Iowa City Mayor Bruce

Teague announced a city-wide mask mandate on Aug. 19, as previously reported by the *DI*.

Susan Vileta, public information officer and health educator for Johnson County Public Health, said she has watched social media and news reports and noticed that — in other areas around the state — public input on vaccination efforts is harsher than what she has seen in Johnson County.

As of Aug. 10, Johnson County has an 82 percent vaccination rate in adults ages 26 and above and 72.5 percent in teens 12 and above, Vileta said.

She said people ages 26 and older are the cut-offs for vaccination data because some UI students’ vaccine records were sent to their hometowns instead of Johnson County.

“We’re not super confident about the data on those 18 to 24-year-olds,” Vileta said.

While the county’s vaccination rates are high, so are positive COVID-19 cases.

As of Aug. 5, Johnson County became a high transmission area, according to the Centers for Dis-

ease Control and Prevention COVID-19 Data Tracker.

“The amount of people that were positive for COVID at about this time last year was very similar to this year,” Vileta said.

Vileta added that the delta variant is much more transmissible, so it could more heavily impact communities with the lowest vaccination rates.

Iowa reported that cases per 100,000 people went up 6 percent the week of Aug. 13 compared to the previous week, according to the CDC. Data reported by the CDC also shows that 50 percent of the population is fully vaccinated.

Jarvis wrote that, while Johnson County is seeing high numbers of cases reported despite a higher vaccination rate, there could still be a drop-off in cases. Johnson County Public Health is recommending individuals follow CDC guidelines.

“We’ll be recommending the recent CDC guidance for universal masking in indoor public settings while we’re seeing substantial transmission,” Jarvis wrote.

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The Daily Break

Puzzle solutions on page 2A

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The New York Times Crossword

Edited by Will Shortz No. 0719

- Across**
- Printer paper problems
 - Respected person in a tribe
 - Included in an email, in brief
 - Wax-wrapped cheese
 - Way overcharge
 - “O __ Night!” (Christmas song)
 - Summery quip, part 1
 - Relaxation
 - Love or hate
 - Pinnacles
 - Decorates with bathroom tissue, as in a Halloween prank
 - Musical note that’s a step and a half below A
 - Trio of Greek goddesses
 - Auto
 - Grandmothers, informally
 - Pizazz
 - Quip, part 2
 - Vice president Gore and others
 - Venture to declare
 - Opus __
 - Quip, part 3
 - Liqueur flavor
 - Total bargain
 - Clean air and water org.
 - What balloons do when you prick them with something 46-Across

- Pointed, say
 - Little bit, as of ointment
 - Computer whiz
 - JetBlue or Delta
 - Native of Glasgow, e.g.
 - End of the quip
 - Opera solo
 - Tanker from the Mideast
 - Opening on a schedule
 - Step on a ladder
 - Oneness
 - Scarce as __ teeth
- Down**
- Ballet leap
 - “Madam, I’m __” (palindromic greeting)
 - Relative of a great white
 - In love
 - Breakfast items in a toaster
 - Money you have to pay back
 - Total flop
 - What’s all about me, me, me
 - Kingly or queenly
 - Large cat you shouldn’t trust on a test?
 - Encourage with sweet talk
 - “What __ is new?”
 - Easter egg colorers
 - Puppy bites
 - Showy garden flower
 - Words With Friends, for one
 - Coca-Cola soft drink brand
 - Outstanding accomplishments

- Apportion
- Aesthetic judgment
- __ counseling (aid for job-hunters)
- Consumer advocate Ralph
- Geometric calculations
- Garment below a blouse
- Catch in the act
- “Zip-a-Dee-Doo-__”
- Indian megacity
- #, in social media
- Issue a book or magazine
- The __ of Avon (Shakespeare)
- Group of five to which is added “and sometimes y”
- Writing you might keep away from prying eyes
- Old Russian ruler
- Sandy hue
- Penny or nickel
- Help in wrongdoing
- Keep an engine running without moving
- Like some advertising lights
- Has dinner
- Break one of the Ten Commandments
- Boxer who floated like a butterfly, stung like a bee

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- **Storm Large, Holiday Ordeal** - Saturday, December 4, 7:30 pm
- **Roomful of Teeth** - Wednesday, February 16, 7:30 pm
- **Mark Morris Dance Group, Pepperland** - Friday, February 18, 7:30 pm
- **Castalian String Quartet** - Sunday, February 20, 3 pm
- **Damien Sneed, A Tribute to Aretha Franklin: The Queen of Soul** - Thursday, March 10, 7:30 pm
- **Danish String Quartet** - Friday, April 1, 7:30 pm
- **Kronos Quartet, At War With Ourselves – 400 Years of You** - Saturday, April 30, 7:30 pm
- **Las Cafeteras** - Saturday, May 7, 7:30 pm

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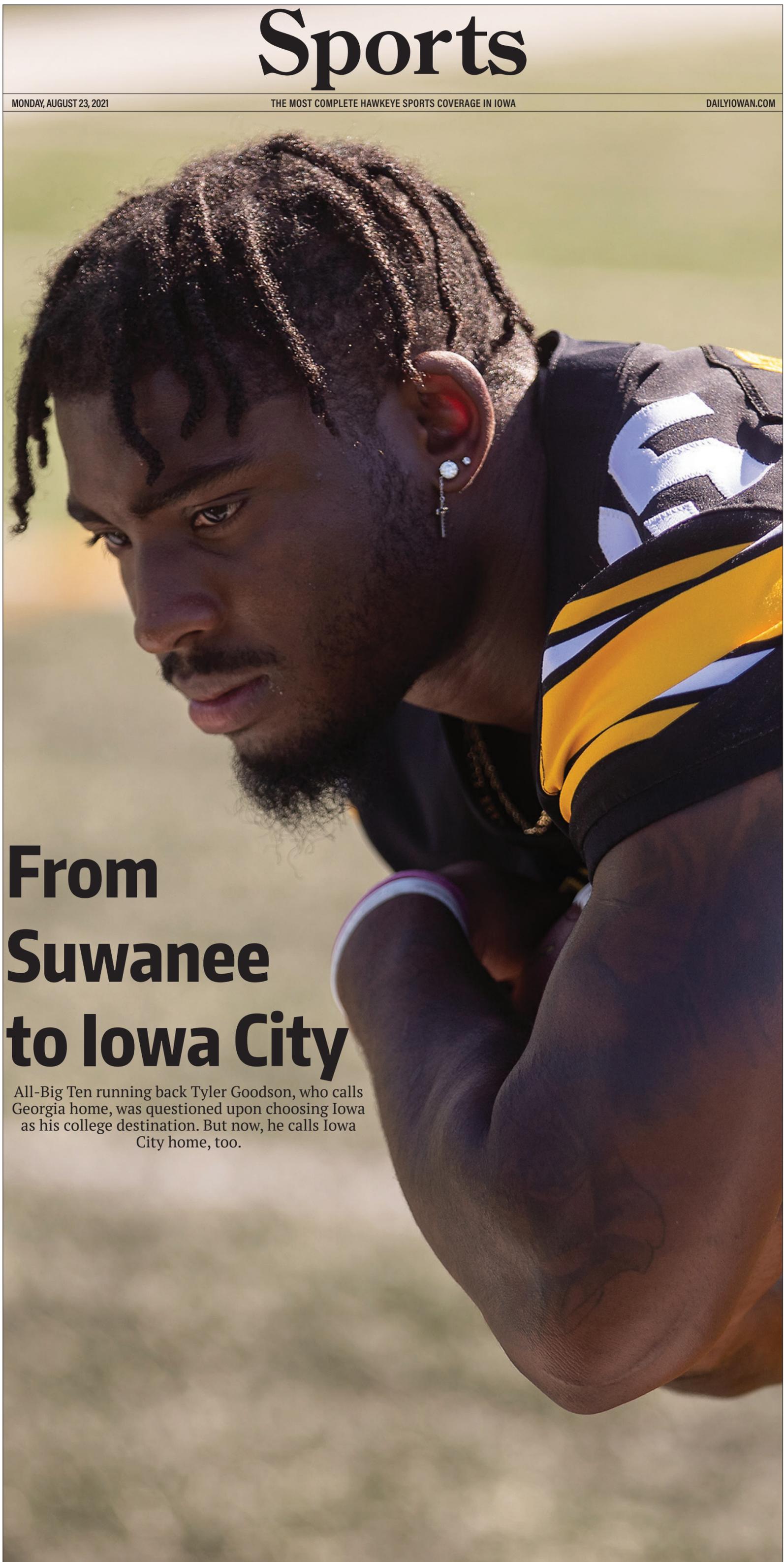
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IOWA



From Suwanee to Iowa City

All-Big Ten running back Tyler Goodson, who calls Georgia home, was questioned upon choosing Iowa as his college destination. But now, he calls Iowa City home, too.

Tyler Goodson poses for a portrait during Iowa football media day at the team's practice field on Aug. 13.

Jerod Ringwald/The Daily Iowan

Robert Read
Pregame Editor

SUWANEE, Ga. — Football practice for a local youth team is winding down on an early August afternoon at George Pierce Park, a youth facility located in Gwinnett County, just north of Atlanta. A handful of parents dot the bleachers, watching their children on the field.

Waves of heat can be seen rising off the green turf as the temperature climbs well above 90 degrees. The stretch of pine trees wrapping around one half of the field doesn't provide much respite from the midday sun.

There are five players on the field. None of them are any older than 13. A middle-aged coach instructs them all on how to line up in a three-point stance. He barks

at them in his southern drawl.

A group of three approaches and the attention shifts to them. No wonder. It's local idol Tyler Goodson — who not too long ago was practicing on this very same field. He stops to watch practice with his parents.

Iowa's All-Big Ten running back leans on the fence, watching the young athletes go through drills. He dons a pink Champion shirt and black athletic shorts. Two gold

chains hang around his neck and silver crosses dangle from both ears. He seems oblivious to the parents glancing at him and whispering.

Tyler arrived at this field nine years ago as a sixth-grader when his parents, Maurice and Felicia, relocated from North Carolina. But now this Georgian also calls



Iowa running back Tyler Goodson poses for a photo on the North Gwinnett youth football field in Suwanee, Georgia, on Aug. 1.

Jerod Ringwald/The Daily Iowan

GOODSON

Continued from Page 1B

Iowan. And Iowa City has been his home for the past two years.

Tyler grew up in SEC territory. He was named the 2018 Georgia Player of the Year as a high school senior. Friends and family questioned why he'd want to head 834 miles northwest of where he grew up to continue his football career.

But to Tyler, Iowa felt like the obvious choice.

"Why Iowa?" Tyler recalls being asked, before answering his own question. "Because it felt like home."

A football family

Hours before Tyler showed up at his youth football field, the Goodson family sat down for lunch at the Central City Tavern in downtown Suwanee, an upscale sports bar that opened before the start of the summer.

Tyler is seated between his parents on one side of the table, his back against the cushioned booth. He's with his brothers, too. Taylor, a sophomore defensive back at Mercer University, sits across the table from his older brother, and Tavien, who is entering the 12th grade and attending an arts school this year, is at the end of the table.

Tyler and Taylor's eyes wander to the handful of televisions in the bar playing the Summer Olympics and an Atlanta Braves game. Felicia and Tavien are posing for selfies together.

Food orders had just been taken when the first competitive football conversation of the meal started to heat up.

"Oklahoma is gonna get smacked," Maurice said of the early reports of Texas and Oklahoma joining the Southeastern Conference. Apparently, Texas didn't warrant a mention.

"Oklahoma and Texas could beat Missouri, Vanderbilt, the bottom of the SEC," Tyler added. "They're not gonna be able to compete week in and week out."

"You don't think Oklahoma could beat Auburn?" Felicia asked.

"No," Tyler responded.

"So you're saying Oklahoma would not be competitive in the SEC? I'm not buying it," Felicia continued later in the conversation. "I believe Oklahoma would be competitive in the SEC."

"No way," Tyler said. "You want to put your first NFL check on it?" Felicia taunts.

Tyler smiled and laughed off the comment as the argument settled down.

"This is how football conversations go in our family," Felicia told me as I was spending the better part of two days in Suwanee with the Goodsons earlier this month.

"We're all about football," Maurice added.

From what Maurice and Felicia recall, Tyler has been all about football since he started playing at the age of 5.

Tyler later played baseball and basketball, and competed in track and field, standing out in all of them. Tyler still thinks he could take his good friend, Iowa point guard Joe Toussaint, in a game of one-on-one. But no sport was quite the same to Tyler as the first one he fell in love with — he even used to sleep with a football.

Tyler eats his two hot dogs and takes sips from water and lemonade while another football conversation — or, more accurately, argument — starts.

Taylor, jokingly, claims that Minnesota's Mohamed Ibrahim — the conference's leading rusher — is a better running back than Tyler. Then he takes it a step further.

"I was a better running back than you," Taylor said, looking at his brother straight-faced.

"No you weren't," Tyler said, claiming his brother is exaggerating. "So that's why you play [defensive back] now?"

The Goodsons are just as competitive with subjects other than football.

One year at a shopping mall around Christmas, Maurice challenged Tyler to a race after his son ar-

Goodson's HS senior stats

159

Rushing attempts

1,180

Rushing yards

25

Rushing touchdowns

2018

Georgia Player of the Year

since two of her sons are playing college football, she starts getting butterflies days before a game even starts, hoping Tyler won't fumble or that Taylor won't get burned in the secondary.

Maurice flies to all of Tyler's Iowa games. Felicia goes to most of them, too, just not the cold ones ("I love you, man, but it shows well on FOX, ABC, whatever you're playing on," Felicia tells her son). If there's a magazine or preseason watch list that comes out

area's dominance. North Gwinnett High School is one of 25 high schools in the county, and many of those schools are packed with future college football players. Maurice said the local high school football environment is the closest thing you'll see to college football at the high school level.

"We have so many kids in Gwinnett that get overlooked because there's just so many of them," Gerald "Boo" Mitchell, one of Tyler's high school coaches

And that's what they did. "I don't think I really knew he was special, special until we got here," Felicia said. "Because this atmosphere really forces you to pay attention because it is so intense... I knew he was good. But as a parent you can always think more of your kid than they really are because you're the parent — you tend to not be objective. Then his junior year, I was like, 'Woah. Here's onto something here.' I think that's when I really realized he could go a little further than we anticipated."

'The SEC of high school football'

Just after 8 a.m. on a muggy Monday morning, Tyler and Maurice, both wearing black Hawkeye crewnecks with gold Tigerhawk emblems, walk into North Gwinnett High School, just a few miles from their Suwanee home.

They pass a framed 2017 7A State Champions poster in the hallway, which displays two photos of the team celebrating after the victory. Every player's name from that championship team is listed on the poster. Tyler's is there.



The Goodson family relaxes on their couch as they recall stories from Tyler's journey from Georgia to Iowa.

Jerod Ringwald/The Daily Iowan

gued he was faster. Fellow shoppers started pushing tables and chairs out of the way and chanting as Tyler, at this time early in his high school career, beat out his father as they ran through the clear path created in the food court.

"I had on the wrong pants, I had on the wrong shoes," Felicia said, mimicking Maurice, as Tyler points out they were both wearing jeans for the race.

Tavien is the only Goodson who doesn't care for sports. When attending Tyler's high school games, Tavien didn't know what number his brother was wearing, and his only hope was that Tyler wouldn't do anything to embarrass him — not that he ever did.

The rest of the family will still sometimes watch Tyler's high school games, which they have recorded. They're easier to watch now for Felicia. Especially

involving Iowa or Tyler, his parents can't help but read, especially if he's on the cover.

"We have all the magazines," Felicia said. "I'm probably worse than all of them [at collecting]."

Even the family dog, Del-

“I want the ball. I like scoring touchdowns. Why would you want to make a tackle when you could score a touchdown?”

— Tyler Goodson, Iowa running back

ilah, a bichon frise and shih tzu mix that the Goodsons brought home about three months ago, has a small football chew toy by her bed.

Gwinnett County, where the Goodsons reside, is often referred to in the state as the "SEC of high school football" because of the

and a former All-American wide receiver at Vanderbilt, later said to *The Daily Iowan*. "There are kids out there right now who are working at Walmart who just graduated who should be playing ball somewhere."

Taylor's is, too.

Outside, the school's football field is in the middle of a remodel. New turf is being placed down only a few weeks before the new season is set to begin.

Bill Stewart's face looks up from the play cards in front of him at his desk and he perks up as the Goodsons walk into his square office with white brick walls. Stewart was Tyler's head coach during his junior and senior years of high school. Gerald "Boo" Mitchell, who still serves as a strength trainer for Tyler and was featured on an episode of his YouTube documentary series "Dreams 2 Reality," is in the office as well.

A framed newspaper clipping from the state title game Tyler's junior year hangs right by the doorway into the office, and an enlarged photo of a championship ring can't be missed on the back wall.

"It's a big deal to have him around," Stewart told the *DI*. "And it's always good to have him back."

Stewart recalls realizing pretty quickly after watching Tyler practice that he was going to be the team's featured back. Before Stewart's arrival, Tyler split reps at running back for North Gwinnett's varsity team as a sophomore, the same season he scored his first varsity touchdown.

Maurice said high schools in Georgia usually only want players to play on one side of the ball. There was never any doubt that Tyler was going to play running back. It's the position he had always played.

"I want the ball," Tyler said. "I like scoring touchdowns. Why would you want to make a tackle when you could score a touchdown? That makes no sense to me. That's the greatest feeling in football for me."

The conversation in Stewart's office quickly turns to Tyler's junior year as a Bulldog, when he ran for 1,437 yards and scored 25 touchdowns.

Midway through that season, and with then-Samford assistant coach and future Iowa running backs coach Derrick Foster in attendance, Tyler suffered a high-ankle sprain and a turf toe injury. As the team neared the playoffs, Tyler didn't know if he'd return at all the rest of the year.

"The whole time we're waiting to get him back," Stewart recalled. "And we didn't know when we got him back how that thing was going to work. When you're dealing with a toe, that's a big deal for a running back especially. It was touch-and-go there. Uneasy."

Tyler's injuries mended, though. After missing four games, he returned for the playoffs. And he excelled.

In four games, Tyler rushed for 898 yards on the team's way to a title.

"As far as a playoff run, I don't think I've seen anybody have one as good, to where basically every game he'd make some critical run," Stewart said.

The team couldn't repeat in Tyler's senior year. But Tyler ran for another 1,180 yards and 25 touchdowns to earn Georgia Player of the Year in 2018, an honor he didn't even know existed until receiving it at an end-of-the-season banquet.

It's now approaching 8:30 a.m. in Stewart's office. Stewart has to run to a coaching staff meeting, but not before telling Tyler he needs to talk in front of the team sometime. The Goodsons and Mitchell stay behind in Stewart's office. Athletic Director Matt Champitto is in the office now, too.

Champitto, a Buffalo Bills fan, chats with Tyler about the hype surrounding former Hawkeye A.J. Epenesa in training camp. Then, Mitchell points out that Tyler's attributes on the field are similar to New Orleans Saints running back Alvin Kamara, who he used to train.

Maurice emphasizes that this next season at Iowa could be the launching point to a professional career for Tyler. Maurice said eight to 10 NFL agents have already reached out to him inquiring about Tyler's future as a professional. In May, ESPN NFL draft guru Mel Kiper Jr. ranked Tyler as the No. 4 best draft-eligible running back in the 2022 draft class.

Tyler was appreciative of the attention, but not overly impressed.

"It's cool to be top-five, but I know I should be No. 1," Tyler said.

"If I feel like there's a running back better than me, then I'm not working hard enough," he added. "I'm always going to think I'm the better running back, no matter who it is. It could be LaDainian Tomlinson, Reggie Bush — I'm the best running back in the world. That's just how I feel. That's how confident I am in myself."

Maurice tells Mitchell he has to visit Kinnick Stadium for a game this season. Maybe the Penn State game, they decide.

Mitchell has yet to watch Tyler play in college from the stands.

"I just go to SportsCenter because I know he's going to be on the highlights somewhere," he said.

Mitchell always anticipated that he'd watch Tyler play college football — just not at Iowa.

"When he first told me about going to Iowa, I was like, 'Why?' Why are you going there?" Mitchell said. "He said, 'Coach, I'm telling you, I feel like that's where I'm supposed to be.' I was trying to talk him out of it. Big Ten? I was on his butt about that. And I hardly ever do that to a kid. But he had no doubt that's where he wanted to go."

'Why Iowa?'

At breakfast later in the morning after catching up in the coaches' office, a folksy song by Uncle Kracker plays over the speakers at IHOP.

"This is the type of music they play in Iowa, right?" Mitchell teased Tyler. "I asked them to put this on for y'all because this is Iowa music. This is what I expect to hear when I'm in Iowa. As soon as I land in the airport, they've got this playing on a track that just keeps playing."

Laughter followed as the group poked at the pancakes and omelets at the table.

"He's gonna come downtown and be like, 'Man,' Maurice said to Tyler.

"There's a downtown?" Mitchell asked as the back and forth continued.

Tyler is used to the kidding and questions relating to his decision to go to Iowa. He never really anticipated playing in the Big Ten, either.

After his playoff run junior year, dreams of one day playing college football were starting to become a reality. Colleges started reaching out the day after the state title game.

The Goodsons spent most of the gap between the end of Tyler's junior year of football and the start of his senior year going across the country on recruiting visits, at some points making trips five or six weekends in a row.

The Goodsons recall these recruiting stories back at their two-story home in Suwanee. Tyler, Taylor, and their parents are spread out along the couch in the living room.

Although they live in Georgia, the Goodson home is very much a Hawkeye house. Highlights of Joe Wieskamp's college career had just been playing on the mounted television. In the ottoman in the center of the room, there are multiple copies of this year's Athlon Sports college football preview, which features Tyler on the cover. Tyler's alternate gold and Holiday Bowl jerseys are kept in a nearby room. Maurice is working on getting them framed.

Taylor, sitting right next to his older brother on the couch, makes fun of the fact that Seton Hill, a Division II school, was the first program to offer Tyler.



Iowa running back Tyler Goodson poses with Gerald "Boo" Mitchell in Suwanee, Georgia, on Aug. 1. Mitchell, a former All-American wide receiver for Vanderbilt, is Goodson's former high school coach and current personal trainer.

Maurice, sitting next to Felicia on the other end of the couch, initially confused it for Seton Hill.

Smaller schools like Appalachian State, Ball State, and Georgia State were some of the first Division I schools to make offers to Tyler, a three-star recruit by most recruiting outlets.

Eventually, schools from the Power 5 conferences joined the hunt for Tyler's commitment. Well, at least four of them did. The SEC? Not so much. In the entirety of Tyler's recruiting process, Kentucky was the only one of 14 schools in the SEC to offer him a scholarship.

Georgia head coach Kirby Smart, the leader of Tyler's home state's marquee program, did have conversations with the Goodson family, though. Smart visited North Gwinnett Tyler's junior year to speak with some defensive backs on the team. Those players suggested Smart also look into recruiting Tyler.

"I'm going to come back to see you this spring and I want you to gain like 10 pounds," Felicia recalled Smart saying to Tyler.

"Which is stupid," Maurice said without missing a beat.

Tyler weighed 185-190 pounds in high school. But a common theme among SEC schools was wanting Tyler to bulk up to become a more downhill power back capable of surviving 30 or more carries each week. At Iowa, Tyler's comfort zone is 15-20 touches per game.

"I'm a small back," said Tyler, listed at 5-foot-10, 199 pounds on Iowa's roster. "Everybody wanted me to be 6-foot-3, 6-4, 200-

some pounds."

"That would have taken him out of his natural gift, his element," Maurice said. "We told [Tyler], 'Don't let nobody change you.' You conform to their college system, of course, because that's the system you're in. But keep that same recipe the way you've been doing, just enhance it."

Tyler describes himself as a versatile, do-it-all type of running back. That's not the bruiser some SEC schools were looking for, but it's exactly what Iowa wanted.

By that time, Derrick

and punishing linebackers with a lowered shoulder, Wadley was shifty, making defensive players miss with his quickness and agility.

"We knew the skill set that he would bring to the table, that they saw and they were wanting now that Akrum was leaving," Maurice said. "They said they wanted to change the whole running back game. They wanted to move away from the power type run. They brought Coach Foster in to put an emphasis on that, and Brian [Ferentz] was like, 'Hey man, we need someone who can put their

the field right away.

"I think their pitch was that I had a chance to play early if I worked hard," Tyler said. "And that's what I wanted as well. That was basically their pitch the whole time — you can play early if you work hard."

That wasn't going to be difficult for Tyler, who by then was used to doing what it took to stand out on the field. He stopped drinking soda in sixth grade when his fourth-grade coach Brentson Buckner, now an assistant coach in the NFL, told him elite athletes don't drink it.

One of Tyler's mottos is that games are won in the summer, not the fall, indicating how devoted he is to bettering himself in the offseason. In addition to the strength and nutrition staff at Iowa, Tyler still has four personal trainers with different specialties — lifting, track, agility, and football. John Lewis, brother of former NFL running back Jamal Lewis, started working with Tyler in sixth grade, right after Felicia saw him working people out on "The Real Housewives of Atlanta."

Tyler took an official spring visit to Iowa City in April 2018. Ferentz, the Goodsons said, was hesitant for Tyler to visit in the spring, when there was no football game to serve as a backdrop.

But Tyler wanted to sign before his senior year started, so he made the trip anyway.

The first impressions weren't great, though.

"When we landed in Cedar Rapids and we started on the way, I was like, 'Bro, no. There's no way we're

coming here,'" Tyler said, looking at his mother as he recalled the empty fields he saw after arriving at the airport.

Felicia, the only person accompanying him on the trip, told her son to at least give the Hawkeyes a chance.

"We got to Iowa City and it was like, 'This place is actually dope,'" Tyler said.

Tyler liked the smaller, tightly knit, college town atmosphere Iowa City provided. Felicia connected with the vibes of Iowa City and appreciated the Bluebird Diner grits she ate on the visit. Finding grits can be difficult up north, so she was pleasantly surprised.

Felicia reveals an inside joke she has with Iowa defensive line coach Kelvin Bell. She told Bell that Iowa City is America's best kept secret — a cool little college town.

"And he was like, 'Yeah, and don't go telling anybody because it only takes me like five minutes to get to work,'" Felicia said. "Don't bring your Atlanta traffic here."

Tyler's final eight schools came down to Kentucky, Washington State, Michigan State, Iowa State, Iowa, Wake Forest, West Virginia, and Nebraska.

Nebraska didn't want Tyler to visit in the spring, either. But unlike Iowa, the Huskers refused to see him then, taking them out of the race. Felicia didn't care for West Virginia coach Dana Holgorsen, which made the Mountaineers an unlikely destination.

Wake Forest, located in North Carolina near extended family, was appealing to

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“When you go to all these places, they show you the glamour of the program — how many titles they've won, the facilities, but everyone has that. So it was just about who's being real with me. Iowa was one of the main ones who was being real with me.

— Tyler Goodson, Iowa running back

Foster had accepted the position as Iowa's running backs coach, and picked up his recruiting of Tyler where he'd left it off at Samford.

According to Tyler and his parents, Kirk Ferentz and his staff's pitch came down to two key elements — a chance to play early and to play a role similar to that of Akrum Wadley.

Wadley, with a similar build to Tyler, played running back at Iowa from 2014-17 and surpassed 1,000 yards rushing and 300 yards receiving in both his junior and senior seasons.

Instead of the traditional Iowa running back, built on running through tackles

foot in the ground and take it to the house."

But Iowa's offense would still be built around running the ball, which was appealing.

"We told him, you've got some big boys [up front], two tight ends, a fullback, you've never had that," Maurice said. "You have a higher chance of being successful there than going to the SEC."

And if Tyler approached his freshman year correctly, he could have a chance to play that role right from the start.

Kirk Ferentz didn't promise Tyler playing time, but told him if he worked hard enough, he could see



The Goodson family poses for a portrait in Suwanee, Georgia, on Aug. 1.

Jerod Ringwald/The Daily Iowan



Shivansh Ahuja/The Daily Iowan

Iowa running back Tyler Goodson hurdles MTSU's Gregory Grate, Jr. during a football game between Iowa and Middle Tennessee State at Kinnick Stadium on Sept. 28, 2019.

GOODSON

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Tyler. But not appealing enough.

In May 2018, Tyler told Iowa's coaching staff he wanted to become a Hawkeye, but he didn't publicly announce the decision yet. By July 3, he officially committed to Iowa.

"The main thing for me about Iowa and the recruiting process in general is just who was being real to me," Tyler said. "Who would tell me what it was straight? When you go to all these places, they show you the glamour of the program — how many titles they've won, the facilities, but everyone has that. So it was just about who's being real with me. Iowa was one of the main ones who was being real with me. It felt like home. It was an easy pick."

Felicia described Tyler as loyal, which was good for Iowa. Because some power programs were seeking to snag Tyler away from the Hawkeyes.

"One of the things he told us was, 'When I commit, I'm not decommitting,'" Felicia said.

Tyler said Clemson quietly offered him on National Signing Day. Michigan coach Jim Harbaugh, who had just lost out on another running back commit, also encouraged Tyler not

Upon his signing, Tyler was met with the question: Why Iowa? Friends asked him, as did teammates and some relatives.

And for every question, Tyler gave the same answer:

"It felt like home."

Taking the reins in Iowa's backfield

A collage of photos hanging in the living room of the Goodson home contains one of Tyler, Maurice, and Taylor attending the Iowa-Wisconsin football game at Kinnick Stadium in September 2018.

The game was Tyler's first impression of an Iowa City game-day environment. It didn't disappoint. And it wasn't what he was expecting.

"Especially the fans," Tyler said, still sitting on the couch. "It was crazy. Out of all the games I had been to, not one [fanbase] knew who I was except when I went to Iowa. They were out there shouting my name. When the game started, the energy, I was just like, 'The SEC is not like this.'"

"We'd been to some pretty big SEC games," Felicia said.

"Nothing like Iowa though," Maurice responded.

Despite visiting Iowa City on Tyler's recruiting trip, Felicia didn't know much about Hawkeye fans

drove off. I was like, 'Wow, there's Hawkeyes here.'"

Felicia and Maurice are now fully acquainted with Hawkeye fandom. Both have thousands of followers on Twitter and are among the more well-known Iowa football parents.

"When fans approach me, they don't talk about me, they talk about them," Tyler said, pointing at his parents. "I love your mom and dad, they're so awesome. And I'm like yeah, yeah."

Tyler gets his fair share of attention, too. Fans send footballs, trading cards, gloves — anything they can think of to the Goodson home seeking his autograph. On campus, it's common for a fellow student to approach Tyler in the middle of a lecture and try to make conversation.

If Tyler played everything right, he'd be playing in Kinnick in front of thousands of these devoted Hawkeye fans soon after joining the team as a freshman. But as he was working to earn his spot on the field, Tyler also had to adjust to living in Iowa City.

Tyler estimates it took him about a year to acclimate to life in the Midwest. Living through four changing seasons was different.

Felicia mentions she still has a picture from Tyler's freshman year that he sent during the winter when it was below zero. Tyler snapped a shot of himself bundled up and simply wrote, "SOS."

"It makes no sense how cold it is," Tyler chimes in.

But other parts of Iowa City have been easier to adapt to. Yes, Tyler still prefers Georgia to Iowa (largely because of the weather), but he doesn't mind his seemingly daily trips to the Get Fresh Cafe in Iowa City, where he gets an acai bowl. Pizza at Airliner isn't bad, either.

Felicia interrupts the conversation with laughter when asked how to describe Tyler's personality.

"Definitely not quiet," Felicia said of Tyler. "Outgoing, never meets a stranger. Life of the party,

Always laughing, joking, fooling around. Fun to be around, even as a kid. But when he doesn't want to be bothered, he doesn't want to be bothered. And you know that because he goes to his room and shuts the door."

When Tyler got to Iowa, he figured out that shutting his door wasn't always going to be enough.

Tyler points out that in the dorms freshman year, he had to take his name tag off his door and stick on a nearby room to prevent people from barging into his space and talking to him all night.

Tyler's freshman year was full of learning experiences — on and off the football field.

When asked about his "welcome to college football" moment, it took him about two seconds to blurt out the name A.J. Epenesa.

"I ran up the middle and I was running high — I don't know why because I never do this — and A.J. just completely like flipped me," Tyler said grinning. "I was like, 'Woah. I need to watch out for you, buddy.' That was my wake-up call."

It must have worked. In the first college game of his career, Tyler touched the ball 10 times. In Week 4 of that 2019 season, he fell three yards short of his first 100-yard rushing performance.

But Iowa went 2-3 over its next five games after a 4-0 start. Tyler didn't exceed eight rushing attempts in any of the three losses.

"I knew there was a chance for me to play," Tyler said. "But at times it would get frustrating because I could have been making plays and getting my momentum, but I'd get taken out so the other guys got their reps."

Tyler's coaches told him he was playing his role, which would get larger as the season went on. Tyler knew he had to earn the trust of the coaching staff over the course of his freshman season.

By the 10th game of the

season, he had.

On the Monday ahead of Iowa's game at Kinnick Stadium against No. 7 Minnesota, at the time 9-0, Foster pulled Tyler aside and told him he was starting. But he couldn't tell his parents until the day of the game, per the coaching staff's request. They didn't want word to get out.

"That whole week I was nervous," Tyler said. "In practice I would mess up plays, miss a protection I normally wouldn't miss, drop the ball. I was like, 'Bro, I'm starting this week. This is real.'"

Maurice was Tyler's only parent in attendance for his first start. Felicia, not knowing Tyler was starting, was staying in Georgia to go to Taylor's senior photos scheduled for that same day.

Wanting his mother to see his first start, but unable to tell her it was happening, Tyler started to implore Felicia to make the trip to Iowa City, telling her she'd probably want to be there for this one.

After Tyler denied that he was starting, Felicia attended Taylor's pictures that Saturday, then went to the movies with Tavien. She might miss the start of Tyler's game, she thought, but he wouldn't be playing anyway, she figured.

"How do you miss the whole first quarter?" Maurice asks, interrupting Felicia's story.

After leaving the theatre with Tavien, Felicia tuned into the Iowa game on her phone while getting gas and wondered why she was seeing Tyler on the field so much so early in the game.

"He's playing?" Felicia remembers Tavien asking her.

Then, Felicia saw a text from her husband from earlier in the day informing her that Tyler was starting for the Hawkeyes. Tyler called Maurice as soon as he landed in Cedar Rapids that morning, and Maurice immediately texted his wife as he sprinted to his rental car.

"I got to campus in like 15 minutes, going 100 [mph]," Maurice recalls, only slightly exaggerating.

Felicia sped home, trying to listen to the game on the radio. She had to watch most of Tyler's first college start on DVR.

"Mom, I couldn't tell you because you would have put it on social media and they didn't want anybody to know," Tyler said, still trying to rationalize not telling her. Moments later, Felicia found out Taylor knew the entire time.

With Maurice watching from the stands and Felicia catching up back in Suwanee, Tyler had quite the first collegiate start, even though he was shaking when he walked out of the tunnel. Displaying his dynamic running style, Tyler ran for 94 yards and his second college touchdown in Iowa's upset win over Minnesota.

On Iowa's first drive of the game, Goodson took a quick pitch to the left on a third-and-short, bursting outside for a 26-yard gain. On the second drive, Goodson bounced another run out to the right, stiff-armed two defenders, and powered his way into the end zone, reminding his parents of a similar run from North Gwinnett's state championship game.

"Freshmen don't do that," Ferentz said at Big Ten Media Days, recalling Tyler's runs from his first

start.

By season's end, Tyler became the first freshman to ever lead Iowa in rushing (638 yards). Last season, as a sophomore, Tyler was the primary back, compiling 914 total yards and seven touchdowns in an eight-game season shortened by the pandemic. Tyler earned first-team all-conference honors for his performance in 2020. But to him, that wasn't good enough.

Individually, Tyler has his sights on the Doak Walker Award for his junior season, an award which goes to the best running back in the nation. He suggests that 1,500 rushing yards and 20 touchdowns should be enough to earn that honor.

"I know I can do more," Tyler said, sitting up on the couch as his voice gets more passionate. "I know I can do better. [762 rushing] yards is OK, a good number. But it's not good enough, especially if you want to go to another level. I always feel like I can do more. That's why I can work so hard to be the best that I can be."

"This upcoming season is going to be different."

Home away from home

Back at George Pierce Field in Suwanee, Tyler walks down the metallic steps of the bleachers onto the turf and roams the field with his parents.

"This is where it all started," Maurice said.

Instantly, the Goodsons start recalling plays from Tyler's youth football days. Tyler reminisces over a one-handed interception — from when he still played defensive back — even pointing out the hash mark where it happened. Maurice brings up Tyler's 80-yard scoring run from last season's game against Wisconsin and compares it to a scoring scamper of the same distance that saw Tyler zig-zag all over the field and into the end zone.

Felicia grins as she tells the story of Tyler arriving in Georgia on crutches after hurting his knee on the side of a swimming pool back in North Carolina. Still, when Tyler showed up for a youth tryout, he was picked over most of his other teammates. He had the look of a football player.

Tyler went from being the best player on this field to being one of the best players at his position across all of college football. If you ask Tyler, he is the best.

Tyler walks off the field and through the gate of the fence onto the pavement that leads to the parking lot. He remembers out loud the clicking and clacking his cleats would make on the cement while playing for his youth team.

"I always knew I wanted to play football," Tyler said. "I didn't know how far it was going to take me, but I wanted to play football."

It turns out, football took Tyler to a state he never imagined living in, and a school that plays in a conference he didn't know much about. Tyler heads to the parking lot, talking to his parents about leaving for Iowa in a few days for the start of training camp. A look of excitement takes over his face as he talks about the upcoming season.

For Tyler, Iowa City isn't home. But it feels like it.

robert-read@uiowa.edu

“I was at a stoplight coming from work. And the lady did a honk-honk and yelled, ‘Go Hawks!’ And then she drove off. I was like, ‘Wow, there’s Hawkeyes here.’”

— Felicia Goodson, Tyler Goodson's mother

to sign before visiting the Wolverines.

"Coach Harbaugh asked him to not sign on signing day," Felicia said. "He said, 'Can you just hold off on signing and let us get you on campus?' And we're like, 'No.'"

"I'm gonna stick with my decision," Tyler recalled saying.

when her oldest son committed. But shortly after Tyler picked his school, Felicia wore an Iowa shirt while driving in Georgia and realized that Hawkeye fans are everywhere.

"I was at a stoplight coming from work," Felicia said. "And the lady did a honk-honk and yelled, 'Go Hawks!' And then she



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