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# THE PENDULUM

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## 'Hands Up, Don't Shoot' unites Elon



Led by brothers of Alpha Phi Alpha, Elon University students rose hands in solidarity against the shooting of Michael Brown in early August. JANE SEIDEL PHOTO EDITOR

Kaitlin Dunn  
Assistant News Editor

Nearly three weeks after unarmed Ferguson, Missouri, teenager Michael Brown was fatally shot by police on August 9, the "Hands Up, Don't Shoot" movement has arrived at Elon University, in the form of more than 100 people posing for an awareness-raising photo on Phi Beta Kappa Commons Tuesday during the first College Coffee of the new school year.

The brothers of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity (APA) brought the movement to Elon's campus, beginning at College Coffee on August 26. Alpha Phi Alpha President Justin Pierce spoke about the issue and students, faculty and staff posed for a group picture with their hands in the air.

"Michael Brown, an 18-year-old male who had recently graduated from high school was planning on attending his first day of college two days after his death. To Elon's class of 2018 — Michael Brown could have been your classmate," Pierce, a senior, said.

Freshman Kara Rollock participated and drew parallels between the shooting and other inequalities in society.

"It's such a social injustice, and the shooting really exemplifies that even though we've come so far in our society, there are still so many injustices we face today," Rollock said.

When Michael Brown was shot by police, he allegedly called out "don't shoot" while holding his hands in the air. This event triggered a mass of protests and riots

in Ferguson, Missouri, where Brown was shot, and raised questions about the state of racial equality and police brutality in the nation.

In Ferguson, violent riots have broken out, in addition to peaceful protests, causing tensions to simmer in other urban communities elsewhere throughout the country, leading to a spill-over effect in less populated areas, such as Tuesday's demonstration at Elon.

People all across the nation were inspired to start movements, prayers and discussions about the events still taking place in Ferguson, including at Elon University.

Senior Lahaun Nunnery also participated in the photo and said his outrage was less

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## Faculty takes on Ice Bucket Challenge

Kaitlin Dunn  
Assistant News Editor

Almost two-dozen Elon University students, faculty and staff members joined in the fight against amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) Aug. 24, by dumping buckets of water on their heads in front of Koury Business Center. Dining Services will be donating money to the cause for each person who participated.

Aramark Resident District Manager Pulkitt Vigg spearheaded the event. Coming into his new position several weeks ago, Vigg thought this would be a good way for dining services to interact with students.

"I think this is the beginning of the evolution of dining," Vigg said. "We had lots of fun and engagement."

The challenge is simple. Post a video of yourself being doused with ice water and nominate a few friends to partake, or donate \$100 to the ALS Association. Many participants have done both.

ALS, also known as Lou Gehrig's disease, "is a progressive neurodegenerative disease that affects nerve cells in the brain and the spinal cord," according to [alsa.org](http://alsa.org). Individuals with ALS eventually lose all motor functions, including muscle movement and speech. Approximately 5,600 people are diagnosed with ALS each year.

Vigg challenged University of North Carolina-Wilmington as well as the rest of the Elon faculty and staff for the ice bucket challenge.

"It was awesome, much better than I was expecting," Vigg said. "I'm so grateful

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## Cross Country brings in new coach, keeps culture running

Kate Murphy  
Senior Reporter

The philosophy of new Elon University cross country coach Nick Polk is deep, but simple.

"A culture of confidence: knowing and believing in your training so that when you get to your starting line, you know exactly what you need to do," he said.

Polk was hired the same day the athletes reported back to campus for pre-season.

Just days before preseason training was scheduled to begin, the Elon cross country team lost head coach Christine Engel when she left for a head coaching job at Duke University. The runners were left not knowing if they would have a coach when they returned to campus.

"We were all shocked," said sophomore Kimberly Johansen. "It was like, 'what are we supposed to do now?' It made us think more about how we go about things and our program values. We see that and pass that down to our freshmen. That dynamic and culture doesn't change."

Heading into preseason, the team didn't know what was to come or who would fill in that gap, but the team captains knew they had to step up and address the team.

"We went from knowing what to expect all the time to not even knowing if we had a coach and we had to think, 'how are we going to approach this season?'" said junior captain Elyse Bierut. "We were going to carry on with a positive attitude no matter how much unknown

was there."

The team recognized this was a great opportunity for Engel, but hearing the news didn't come without some concern.

"It was really unexpected knowing her all these years, and I was really saddened by the news," said senior Luis Vargas. "After the announcement it was definitely hard to gather our thoughts. I was nervous coming in, but Elon always looks after us."

The process to hire a new coach moved quickly, and just a week after Engel's official resignation, Elon hired Polk.

"The potential on the roster is very high. The incoming guys and girls on paper should take the program to the next level," Polk said. "And this was a chance for me to become a head coach, so I wanted to take on that challenge as well."

As a three-time All-American runner and national champion at Grand Valley State University in Allendale, Michigan and assistant cross country and track and field coach at Grand Valley State for the last three seasons, Polk has experience. He was also a competitive runner for ZAP Fitness, a professional running team in North Carolina.

Polk said running at an advanced level and the experience of competing for a national championship has prepared him for the opportunity.

"It's being able to coach developmental runners and top-tier runners at the same time," Polk said.

With any new coach, a new style of coaching is inevitable.

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