

THE PENDULUM

SHREDDING the narrative



Students still lack knowledge of mental health resources and initiatives on campus despite marketing push by Elon

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JUNIOR CHLOE HULTMAN'S FIGHT with mental health began at a young age with depression, followed by a battle with anxiety in high school and college. "My own personal ties [to mental illness], as well as seeing my friends in high school who had depression and anxiety, just made me realize how important it was and how much it's not really talked about," Hultman said.

Hultman's experiences align with troubling mental health factors for college-age adults. In 2016, a National Institute of Health (NIH) study found people aged 18-23 had the highest prevalence of serious mental health issues compared to other age groups. While the scope of those conditions is broad, anxiety and depression are the most frequent on colleges campuses. Elon isn't an exception. Hultman says everyone at Elon struggles with mental health, whether they want to acknowledge it or not.

Turning her pain into inspiration, she decided to become an advocate for something she calls "the elephant in the room."

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Elon students connected to Parkland tragedy enact their own change

Two students connected to the Parkland, Florida, shooting find their own ways toward healing

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Junior Brendan Duff's brother, Daniel Duff, hid in a closet at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School as shots were fired on Feb. 14, 2018 as a school shooting unfolded in Parkland, Florida.

MASS SHOOTINGS
 Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School was the site of the 19th mass shooting in 2018 alone, according to gunviolencearchive.org.

Almost 800 miles north at Elon, Brendan watched the events unravel at his old high school, Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School, where his brother was a freshman at the time.

"I was freaking out," Brendan said. Daniel stayed hidden in a closet, leaving his phone unattended and unanswered. Seventeen students and teachers were killed that day, and while a country mourned for the loss of yet another group of innocent



(Left to right) Brendan Duff, Alex Wind, Bradley Thornton, Kirsten McConnell and John Barnitt participate in a voter registration party in St. Petersburg, Florida, as part of the Road to Change tour.

people become victims of gun violence, two Elon University students were mourning their friends and classmates.

Lending a hand and stepping in

Daniel survived, along with Brendan's "re-

ally close friends" who still attended Stoneman Douglas.

"I just went to bed feeling completely helpless," Brendan said.

After speaking with his mother who was a substitute teacher the next morning, she told Brendan he needed to come home.

"She was like, 'You just have to come back, you just have to be here for at least the weekend.' That's the only push I needed. So, I drove down immediately. It was a full 12 hours, but I just went for it."

During his drive to Florida, Brendan spoke to friend Cameron Kasky, who is one of the faces of the March for Our Lives movement, of which Brendan is a co-founder.

The movement's goal, outlined on their website, says "The mission and focus of March For Our Lives is to assure that no special interest group or political agenda is more critical than the timely passage of legislation to effectively address the gun violence issues that are rampant in our country. We demand morally-just leaders to rise up from both parties in order to ensure public safety."

Kasky had just secured an interview with Anderson Cooper - it was barely two days after the shooting, and Kasky was overwhelmed.

Brendan said that Kasky felt uncomfortable with all the interview opportunities because of the subject matter, but he felt that people were starting to pay attention because of the proximity of Parkland.

"It seems like every couple months or so, another mass or school shooting pops up, and

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