



Bergen’s “One Card” in the Works

JENISE BURWELL
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

*The Bergen OneCard will become a staple in the coming years.
Jessica Rodriguez/The Torch*

One of the greatest conveniences for young students is the ease of carrying debit and credit cards for purchases opposed to using cash. As hectic as student life can get, eliminating the trip to an ATM to withdraw cash would be ideal. Current students may feel that their current IDs are useless, however Bergen’s new One Card which began last month offers a new innovative way for students and faculty that makes campus life much easier and secure.

Bergen will introduce the One Card this semester. The card will be equipped with the new smart chip that is found in all debit and credit cards today. This chip provides a more secure card for cardholders and helps prevent security fraud. One of the features on the new card will be its prepaid capability. Students will be allowed to have funds placed on the card which they can use at the vending machines, the cafeteria, the bookstore and Dunkin Donuts. Financial aid funds can also be placed on your card. If you happen to misplace or if your card is stolen, Bergen will be able to deactivate your card immediately.

For Bergen faculty members, they will be allowed to swipe their cards for entrance into their offices and other rooms in the building. This is one of the main focus points for security. This feature will keep a record of who was entering offices and at what time. When events are held on campus such as basketball games, theater shows and so on, you will be asked to swipe your ID card and this will allow Bergen to see a record of how many persons are in the building to make sure fire code rules are followed.

Vice President of Facilities, Planning, Operations and Public Safety, William Corcoran is hopeful that the new card system will be a great improvement and provide better security for all persons on campus. He states that although it may be a few years before we see all these features available on the new cards due to budgets and the expense of such a program, he is optimistic that it will be a great attribute for the entire campus. He also hopes that in the future, the new IDs will be mandatory and all students will be required to wear their IDs while on campus.

Brookdale Community College in Lincroft, New



Jersey has a very similar card. Students are able to use the prepaid card for any purchases on campus. It allows them access to the swimming pool, gym, and other student facilities. Passaic County Community College has not caught up quite yet, their student IDs however are mandatory on campus. Each student must wear their IDs and your card must be swiped in order to enter the building and other buildings on campus. Corcoran doesn’t find this feature necessary for Bergen, given that our campus is an open one where local residents can

come to use the library.

Technology is always changing and evolving and it is no wonder that establishments like colleges are steadily trying to keep up. The One Card will definitely add a sense of ease for students and a bit of convenience for most that do not often use cash. For budget reasons and the high expense of such a program, these features will not be available for some time. Hopefully, the One Card will be up and running with all features available in three to five years.

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BCC #1 in NJ Graduates

GABE WANISSIAN
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Bergen Community College has more students receiving associate’s degrees and certificates than any other community college in New Jersey, according to Community College Week. There were 2,519 graduates this year, a 13 percent increase from 2014, high enough to rank first in the state, and 26th in the nation.

“For two years in a row, our students have accomplished something that other institutions have not accomplished,” said BCC President B. Kaye Walter in an interview with the Torch. “We’re very proud of them, we’re proud of the faculty and staff for the work that they do for the students,” added Walter.

On September 18, the college held “We are one” themed celebration to recognize the accolade on the campus, a press conference, along with amenities, music and food were made available to the public.

“I thought about all of the people who contributed to the statistics, primarily I thought

about our students who made Bergen number one,” said VP of Academic Affairs William Mullaney.

Bergen’s Phi Theta Kappa, Student Government Association and The Torch, were touted for their successes over the course of the year, including recognition of former Bergen Student Rhonda Richardson being ranked in the top 20 two-year college students by the All-USA Community College Academic Team.

“I see the challenges students encounter first hand, but I also see their achievement, I see their ability to rise up,” said VP of Student Affairs Nadine Gonzalez-Dejesus.

Back in 2014, Bergen’s Cerullo Learning Assistance Center tutoring service was named the best tutoring service of its kind for two-year colleges.

“Project Graduation” was also created to aid students in their progress to

*BCC faculty and staff are pictured above at the celebration event which was held on September 18, 2015.
Photo credit to Jessica Rodriguez //The Torch*

reach completion. “We knew that our students had the ability to achieve success, but sometimes the process of reaching the end of your Bergen career would present its own set of challenges,” said Dejesus.

While the college’s graduation rates have gone up, the college faces potential issues due to enrollment rates declining this year. The college also cut of 64 lecturers and 150 part-time positions over the summer, President Walter feels that the cost-saving cuts will not affect the college’s performance.

“I would hope not because our teachers care about the students and they will focus on that first,” said Walter.



Obama Awards BCC \$2.6 Million Grant

GELBER CASTILLO

SPORTS EDITOR

BCC was one of six community colleges in the nation chosen for the First in the World (FITW) \$2.6 million grant by the Obama administration. The grant will be used exclusively to research ways to combat the rise in student remediation in math. This is the second round of the program, where \$21.9 million was split between six community colleges. A total of \$60 million was given to 17 higher education institutions. There were more than 300 applicants this year. Bergen was the only institution in New Jersey awarded this grant.

“To stand as one of only six community colleges receiving a ‘First in the World’ grant has once again placed Bergen in an elite group,” said Bergen President B. Kaye Walter, “I am proud of the staff that helped deliver this award and remain excited about the grant’s prospects for supporting student success. Grants play an increasingly critical role in bridging gaps for community colleges and their students.”

FITW grant recipients are chosen from an application process in which institutions propose a program which the grant would fund. The money can only be used for the program the institution proposed.

Bergen will use the grant to kickstart “Alternatives to Math Placement, an Unprecedented Program (AMP UP).” The AMP UP program will research new methods that will help combat student remediation in mathematics.

“The purpose of this program is to research,” said Bergen spokesman Larry Hlavenka. “It’s basically to combat remediation. It’s just a study, it’s just a pilot, it’s not permanent, but it’s a research study that we can now conduct to judge the effects of what some different intervention strategies for remediation can have on students.”

AMP UP will increase tutoring support and will start a bridge-program, which is meant to prepare incoming freshmen for college-level coursework.



First in the World Program

The First in the World program awarded 17 institutions a total of \$60 million. Logo courtesy of spellmen.edu

AMP UP also aims to increase the two semester retention rate among first time students and to decrease time to completion for students placed into developmental math programs.

According to Hlavenka, AMP UP is expected to use the grant to fund its study over the course of four years.

Bergen will also partner with Union County College and a combined total of 2,400 students from both colleges will be included in the study. “In order to create a study that has some teeth to it, we are branching out to make sure we are capturing students from everywhere, not just in Bergen, but in Union as well,” said Hlavenka.

The Department of Education released a report which recorded an increase in students enrolled in remedial math classes. It has risen from approximately 1 million to 2.7 million over the last 10 years.

In the study, Students will be separated into different focus groups, one of them will bypass developmental math courses, which has been met with criticism by several faculty. “Why try to fix something that is already working well?” said head of Faculty chair Dr. Alan Kaufman.

At the May Board Of Trustees meeting, The Developmental math team presented measurable improvements in the courses MAT-130 (2.8 percent), MAT-150 (4.1 percent), and MAT-160 (2.1 percent) comparing passing rates from the spring 2013 semester. “I don’t believe it’s in the best interest of students,” said Kaufman.

“The First in the World grant competition is a key part of President Obama’s agenda to foster innovative ideas that help keep college affordable, increase quality and improve educational outcomes for our students,” said U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan. “The Department is proud to support the wide range of innovation at colleges and universities across the nation that can dramatically enhance student outcomes.”

VAWA Mandates Class for New Students



CHRIS CARTER
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Student, Melissa Perez takes new Moodle course entitled ADV-001-160. Jessica Rodriguez/The Torch.

Many students beginning their first semester at Bergen Community College have been wondering about a class that has shown up in their Moodle entitled, “ADV-001-160,” for which they were not previously registered.

This brief online course has been set up by the Violence Intervention Prevention Center (VIP) here at Bergen Community College to educate students on the issues of sexual assault, stalking, dating violence, and domestic violence. It consists of a 2 part reading and 10 question quiz that takes no longer than 15 minutes to complete. “The purpose of the course is not only to comply with federal requirements but more importantly to empower students with knowledge about their rights and options,” said Suzana Romero, coordinator of the Violence Intervention Prevention Center.

The course has launched to comply with the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act (VAWA) that was signed into law in 2013 by President Obama. VAWA mandates that all first semester students and new faculty at every college and university across the nation have access to education about these issues. “The thing they have to understand is that all colleges

and universities are required to do so,” said Romero, referring to students who have complained about taking the course.

The VIP feels that Moodle is the best way to reach students, as it is a helpful way to keep track of participation rates. “This is a mandatory requirement by the government, so we’re doing our part but we need the students to do their part too,” said Romero. 1424 out of 3817 new students have completed the course as of September 21st. Full participation from all new students is urged by the VIP as it is necessary to comply with a grant they are receiving to fund their program.

Students who feel they are victims of abuse, sexual or not, can seek help with the VIP in room A-126D or call them at 201-879-5462. Their staff has access to advanced resources on and off campus and can put students in touch with personal counselors, medical assistance, shelter programs, emergency services, and support groups. The readings found in the online course are available for anyone to access at bergen.edu/vawa.

Faculty Contracts in Progress

NOURA DAKKA
NEWS EDITOR

For the past two years, the College’s faculty has been working without contracts but currently they are negotiating a new contract that suits both faculty and administration. The main stumbling block to getting closer to a settled contract is the health care premium.

However, an agreement “could settle anytime” said Dr. Alan Kaufman, professor of English and Chairperson of Faculty Senate. “Negotiations have been more amicable and productive since the new board negotiator has been in place,” said Dr. Kaufman.

“Giacobbe seems to understand the process more than the former college negotiator.”

Attorney Matthew Giacobbe was appointed his position as the college’s “Board Negotiator” in 2014. Previous negotiating lawyers of Schepisi and Goldstein were paid almost a million dollars during their year of employment and yet they did not provide a contract. Goldstein alone was granted \$36,603.61 for the months of March to May 2013 just for the discussions that were being held.

“Giacobbe seems to understand the process more than the former college negotiator,” said Ron Topham, New Jersey Education Association Field Representative. Dr. Kaufman expressed that negotiating with Giacobbe was more “civil” and “amicable” compared to prior years, and he hopes that negotiations will be wrapped up by November.

William P. Mullaney, Vice President of Academic Affairs said that it cannot be estimated when the contracts will be settled but that negotiations are still underway and making incremental steps.

Corrections from September 2015:

For “BCC Slashes Lecturer, Part Time Positions” article, Professor Schikler’s name was misspelled.

Page 13, part of the last paragraph of the article on Isra Eldosougi was dropped. It should read: “You can be happy now,” she added. Anyone interested in more information about the CLS scholarship should contact Professor Amparo Coddling, the International Student Counselor and visit the CLS website at clsscholarship.org.

Page 11, part of the last sentence in the article on Dean Rachel Lerner-Colluci was dropped. It should read: “I love going to work every day, helping students achieve their dreams and their potential, and then going home and spending time with my family.”



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NEWS

The Torch

New Trustees Bring Stability to the Board

GABE WANISSIAN
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Amidst budget shakeups and teacher cuts, the newly appointed members of the Board of Trustees look to bring stability to the college. Back in August, Bergen County Executive James Tedesco appointed Dorothy Leung Blakeslee for another four-year term on the board; Germaine Ortiz was reinstated after previously having a stint as college trustee from 2004 to 2012.

"I'm excited to be back," said Ortiz, "In my prior stint, I saw different [college] presidents and different leaderships, I also saw the school grow, now I'm looking forward to this new group."

Lowered enrollment, monetary setbacks and the recent 64 lecturer cuts are but one of many obstacles facing the college going into the new fiscal year. "It's going to be interesting to see what the outcome of that is going to be, of course right now the teachers and students are upset," said Ortiz.

The current teacher to student ratio averages at 19-1, a number Ortiz says the college will keep an eye on, and react accordingly if needed. "There's not one answer to this. It's hiring good personnel and getting more money from the state or county," added Ortiz.

"The objective has always been to deliver the best college education at the lowest cost, unfortunately this gets challenging year

after year," said Blakeslee, who is also a part of the NJ Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency Board.

Studying trends and anticipating the economic and educational landscape is something Blakeslee feels is paramount for the future. "One of the nice things on being a community college board compared to a four-year school is we can move a little quicker," said Blakeslee "but we really have to study what's close on the horizon."

Derwin, who graduated Bergen this past semester with a Liberal Arts degree was appointed Alumni Trustee on July 7, after winning the the election sanctioned by the Student Government Association. "Representing the student body, my main focus to make sure that the students are in mind." Derwin, along with the SGA and administration worked on finding a resolution to the original Pay-to-Print Initiative that would have had students pay 10 to 15 cents a page. After student disapproval, administration agreed to reevaluate the proposition by allowing SGA to conduct a survey that involved over 600 students.

A Board Reorganization will occur at the next BoT meeting on November 2, with James Demetrakis and James Napolitano's terms being up for renewal.



Alumni Trustee Derwin (Top Left) and Trustee Ortiz (Bottom Right) are 2 of 5 women on the Board of Trustees // Photos courtesy of Larry Hlavenka Jr.

Bergen Unveils New Fashion Program

SAMUEL MCLAUGHLIN
COPY EDITOR

From the science degrees to the business degrees, BCC has proven to be a school where students can prioritize their interests as well as their required classes. This opportunity has expanded even further with Bergen's new Fashion Apparel Design program. Fashion Apparel Design is a two year associate's degree program specializing in women's apparel design.

This brand new program is more than just an extracurricular interest, but a designated major at BCC. The fashion program has students explore the different areas of the industry and further discover what might be a career pursuit for those already interested in fashion. With over 14 different classes catering to fashion studies, fashionable minds can explore areas of the industry that they might not have known to exist.

Everything from textile science and construction, draping, sewing techniques, computer imaging to different drawing classes are available, among many more. The classes that the program offers are very hands-on in their education style. Students studying fashion will be able to experience first hand what it is like to put pieces of fabric together in their own



ways to make their fashionable vision come to life.

Professor Anne Rutter teaches basic sewing in the new program. Her class is full of students who are either experienced sewers or those who have never touched a sewing machine.

"They're learning hand-sewing, and I am teaching them to do it professionally. I want them to understand the practices of the professional industry," said Rutter. "It is intimidating to sit down at a machine. It can be frustrating as a beginner, but patience is key." Students are encouraged to look into this brand new program as a possibility for their concentration of study. Dr. Carmen Martinez-Lopez is the Dean of Business, Art, and Social Sciences, and is more than happy to answer questions about what is, and what's to come of this new and exciting program. "Our program is the underdog," said Rutter, "but I've always rooted for the underdog".

"I cannot count my day complete 'til needle, thread, and fabric meet" -Anonymous // Flickr

SGA President's Letter: "Voice Your Opinion"

Dear Student Body,

The semester is finally in full gear, yet the year has only just begun! With the Student Government Association electing our Student Senators, I encourage everyone to take advantage of the new senate and speak to them about your concerns throughout the school year.

Recently, the Student Government Association has been working on the Pay-to-Print initiative that has been in development for some time. A compromise has been made as we, the students, understand that our current printing situation is a problem while the administration understands our financial needs as students. We print approximately 3,000,000 pages of paper a year and the cost to maintain this matter is not included in the Technology Fee in our tuition. After surveying 647 students, we were able to use the results to determine a reasonable free limit of printing before students have to pay. The set limit will be 150 pages per semester. There will be informative workshops planned to help transition everyone into this change, so keep an eye out for them and feel free to voice your opinion.

On October 25, the continued tradition of the Walk to End Alzheimer's will take place at Bergen Community College. Last year, our location for the Alzheimer's walk received so much support from the students and community members that we were able to be in the top 30 of the participants throughout the country that raised the most money. This is an extremely good cause that the community, the students and college members can donate online or in person. Volunteers are also needed on the 25th to help run the event. Students can pick up a volunteer registration form at the SGA office.

As the Student Government Association works on more initiatives to address concurring student issues, we hope that everyone can continue to lead with passion, act with confidence and embrace the journey whether it be on or off campus. Our search for senators may be over, but the search for Justices to be a part of our Judiciary Branch is now open. Stop by the SGA office in room A-101 to pick up an application. Once again your opinion matters, let it be heard and known by addressing it in our office.

Sincerely,
Laura Zottarelli



Genesis Fuentes//The Torch



BCC Visits U.N. to Mobilize Zero Hunger

GABE WANISSIAN
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Irish President Michael D. Higgins and Brazilian Soccer player Kaka called upon the youth to uphold the push to end world hunger by 2030 at a UN conference on September 26. BCC's Phi Theta Kappa attended the "Mobilizing Generation Zero Hunger" meeting at the UN Headquarters in New York City.

Ambassadors from around the world discussed ways to globally provide food and nutrition through collaboration of both a collective effort of citizens and governments alike.

"It is simply unacceptable that 800 million people are hungry in a world of plenty [nutrition]," said Irish President Higgins. "And it is appropriate that this event focuses on empowering the youth," added Higgins, to the group which consisted of many young adults.

"There were leaders there who are not even in their thirties yet but started in their teens as far as creating organizations to end world hunger, which is why [PTK] felt like we needed to be there as today's youth," said Bergen student and President of PTK Natalia Gonzalez.

According to the UN, 70% of the population is under the age of 30 in Africa, a number in which President of the International Fund for Agricultural Development Kanayo F. Nwanze put emphasis on the current generation's responsibility to improve conditions for developing countries.

"[Government] needs to focus on maximizing resources, but further development is something that youth has to take into their hands and not expect someone to develop you," said Nwanze.

One of the ambassadors, Mpho MacChambers, was selected out of 3,000 nominees for the South African Strong Girl youth representative of ONE Advocacy. She shared that African government needs to follow through with the policies put forth to enable educational and agricultural rights for the young, but specifically women as well.

"How do we make things like water accessible in people's daily lives? How do we shine light on how empowering African women makes that a possibility? Conventions like this provide that kind of dialogue," said 28-year-old MacChambers in an interview with The Torch.

According to the UN World Food Programme, the number of hungry in the world could be reduced by up to 150 million people if women farmers had the same access to resources as men.

"When you invest in a rural woman you invest in a community, when you invest in a rural man you invest in an individual," said Nwanze.

Starvation in children was also a hot button topic; 45% of deaths in children under the age of 5 occur due to malnutrition according to the UN.

"That statistic is what struck me the most, and led me to become an ambassador," said soccer star Kaka.

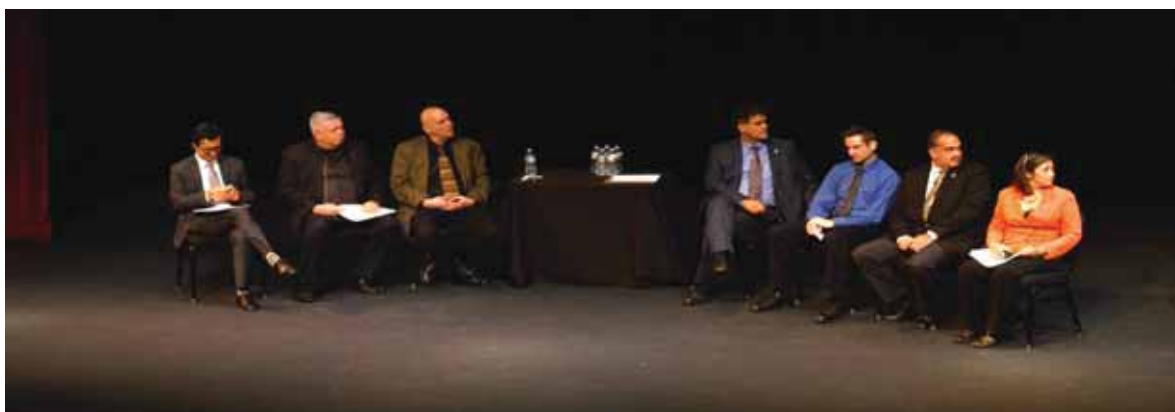
"Soccer players are responsible not only for entertainment but to bring awareness for social causes."

Ending hunger is one of the 16 other Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's) developed by the United Nations earlier in July, after similar humanitarian objectives planned in 2000 were not successfully achieved by 2015.

"I think the goals in 2000 were the foundations for the first 15 years; now it's the young people's turn to actually achieve them in 2030," said BCC Academic Counselor Win Win Kyi.



(Top Left) Several Bergen Students Posing by The Golden Globe Statue by The UN HQ.
(Bottom Right) UN Representatives listen in to Irish President addressing the youth attendees
//Samuel Desind



Latino Panel Kicks Off Heritage Month

BRENDAN DALY
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

“We being latinos, we don’t know the power we have,” said The President of the Colombian Education Fund, John Moreno-Escobar at the Latino Heritage Panel in the Maria Ciccone Theatre. October being Latino Heritage month, Bergen Community College is holding many events to celebrate the heritages of latino cultures, the first of which being a panel to talk about The Growth of Latino Population and Its Impact on the economy, political processes and educational patterns.

The panel featured seven panelists and a moderator, all of whom are well respected individuals and hold jobs that are either directly or indirectly affected by Hispanic cultures. Three of the seven panelists were some of Bergen Community College’s own professors; moderator Alejandro Benjamin, a professor of sociology, Michael O’Donovan, a professor of criminal justice and a part of the UN International police force, and Andy Krikun, a professor in the music department.

The panel was asked several questions from either the moderator or from the crowd, and each panelist was given the opportunity to weigh in on the question. Questions ranged from “What practical recommendations do you have for the faculty and students to continue to make positive contributions?” to questions about whether the process of getting a green card was affected by economic or political problems. All of the panelists gave answers that not only answered the question but provided additional information relevant to the question asked. For example Moreno-Escobar was asked, “What percentage of the hispanic communities are entrepreneurs compared to the rest of the population?” and he responded by saying the percentage is growing so much that New York has the biggest number of small businesses owned by Hispanic entrepreneurs.

Towards the end of the panel, the panelists were all asked to make closing remarks. Greg Fenkhart, who is in charge of event planning for student life and the budget for those events at BCC, said “Make some noise...if the infrastructure isn’t fair whether you’re at Bergen or elsewhere, you gotta tell somebody,” and Professor George Abounza, Dean of the School of Arts & Sciences at Felician College said “Do your work, and work hard. Luck is when preparation meets opportunity.”



The panel (upper left) listens to moderator Benjamin’s question. (Right), Escobar speaks on Hispanic entrepreneurship for youth.
Henry Fowler//The Torch

Taxi drivers around the world respond to Uber’s taking over the industry.
Carolina Estrada//The Torch

Taxi Drivers Fight Against Uber

CAROLINA ESTRADA
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Uber is one of the fastest growing personal car service technology companies in the world. It is a cheaper alternative to taxis in the United States and Europe, as well as a safer option than taxis, requiring background checks before one can become a driver.

However, Uber is facing strong opposition with taxi drivers locally, in the U.S. and all over the world. In New York City there was a lawsuit against Uber from Credit Unions who have most of their loan portfolios in taxi medallions, saying because of Uber, many taxi drivers are unable to pay their loans resulting in defaults. Queens Supreme Court Justice, Allan Weiss, ruled in favor of Uber and dropped the case on September 9. “Any expectation that the medallion would function as a shield against the rapid technological advances of the modern world, would not have been reasonable.”

This is just one of the many lawsuits Uber has had to face in the United States since its launch, but the United States hasn’t been the only place where Uber has faced issues. In June, there were anti-Uber riots in Paris, where taxi drivers were seen attacking cars suspected to belong to Uber, attacking Uber drivers, as well as blocking roads. Taxi drivers have complained and have gone on strike over the competing low-cost Uber service and feel they are taking away their business. There have been more but less severe strikes all over Europe.

The anti-Uber sentiment among taxi drivers has also been catching on in places now in Latin America. Colombia, for example, has gained some traction. Ministry of Transport in Colombia considers Uber to be an unauthorized transport. “Uber remains the same, the government hasn’t done anything to remove them,” said Orlando Camargo, 38 year old, taxista from Cali, Colombia. Though Camargo believes the government



couldn’t make Uber disappear so easily, “Services like Uber have gained a lot of strength and to try to make it disappear from one night to the morning, I’ll say is impractical.”

Most taxi drivers in Colombia believe Uber is an unfair competition because they do not have to pay the same high fees and taxes taxi drivers must pay. “We pay taxes to offer these services because Uber is using the internet, it’s illegal, they offer the same services but don’t paid the same taxes as us,” said Camargo. And some taxi drivers say they have lost business in other areas. “We used to work with the hotel districts and with the airport a lot more, now Uber has it. They dispatch Uber now. The work in that area has gone down a lot,” said Dubian Ollos, 33 year old taxi driver from Cali, Colombia.

A change.org petition was created to regulate and permit the use of Uber in Colombia, which currently has almost 30,000 supporters. Even some taxi drivers recognize that people are attracted to Uber because the service might be better. “The service with Uber, more than anything is personalized, which means the service

isn’t bad, I’ve had some clients say, Uber’s service is good, and cost more but you know the people use it to get better customer service,” said Camargo. Ollos agreed, “In some places cities don’t give a friendly service, and they argue with people, I personally treat people good because many people look for that in a service and if taxi drivers treated me badly I would look somewhere else where they would treat me better.”

While many taxi drivers in the U.S and Europe feel Uber and similar applications can be the end for the taxi industry, Uber might have a harder time in Latin America, like in Colombia. There are many taxi based applications which rival with Uber. These apps which provide the same, easy to order, information as Uber, has expanded all over Latin America, the Middle East, Africa and Asia. Taxi drivers are keeping up with this technological advances and despite their protest with Uber and Uber-like applications, using these new applications specifically for taxis which has been argued to actually improve the taxi industry in Colombia.

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ALWAYS ON

Syrian Immigrants Cause Strain on European Nations



Boy and his family uprooting their lives and migrating from Syria. //Flickr

BRENDAN DALY
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Since the beginning of the Syrian conflict over 4 years ago, hundreds of thousands of people died trying to escape while millions of others are struggling to find a host country. The world has not seen a refugee crisis this bad since the early stages of World War II. With the pressure of ISIS capturing cities, over 9 million people have fled the country. The question is, where are these people going to go? Thousands of refugees have taken to the seas to try and reach bordering countries but recently, bodies have been washing up ashore on the coasts of many Mediterranean countries.

Many nations across the European Union have agreed to take refugees into their own countries. Turkey has taken in over 1.9 million refugees. Turkey is the leading nation for refugees since it shares a border with Syria. Of the 1.9 million seeking refuge in Turkey, over half are under the age of 17, according to a UN Refugee Agency figure. Turkey has spent over \$6.5 billion on this humanistic endeavor.

(continued on pg. 9)



Arrowhead passing through the red crowd representing solidarity. //The Examiner

Catalonia Moves Along the Freedom Path

IVET ANORO
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

During the Catalan National Day known as "Diada," more than one million people took over one of the most important streets in Barcelona to claim for Catalonia's independence from Spain.

For the fourth year in a row, hundreds of thousands of Catalans were willing to turn the "Diada" in the largest democratic mobilization in Europe's history. It was a demonstration of determinism and a clear sign of the will of a nation to move towards its own freedom.

One of the main goals was to be heard by the international press and to achieve it, the coordination was vital. The Catalan National Assembly (ANC), a popular association of citizens, organized the demonstration known as "Via Lliure" (Freedom path). They divided the street in 10 sections; each one had a different color that represented essential traits that the hypothetical independent Catalan State would have. They also had a webpage where all the participants must have been registered in advance in order to be assigned in one of the sections. Every person in the march had to wear a white shirt and a hold colored cardboard matching with the section they were assigned to.

This lead to a multicolored human mosaic covering more than 5 kilometers (3.1 miles) heading towards the Catalan parliament to symbolize the power transfer from the people to the gates of the Parliament where the next elections will take place on September 27.

Elections, on the other hand, that are special because Catalonia's main separatist parties have left their political and personal differences apart to create a coalition in favor of secession. "We've won the street, we will not accept claudication,"

said Raül Romeva, leader of the pro-independence alliance: Together For Yes.

It was not until the end of the march, though, that the current President of Catalonia, Artur Mas, appeared to express his pride and to reaffirm that "the process is not against Spain, but in favor of democracy, dignity and respect."

From the other side, Mariano Rajoy, President of the Spanish government, is strongly opposed to any moves for an independent Catalan region.

Nevertheless, the Spanish Court has declared invalid all the initiatives of referendum previously proposed by the Catalan parliament.

Catalan citizens wanted to be heard and they did their best on the march, but despite the magnitude of the event, the real truth will be seen after September 27 with the results of the election.

"Catalan issue," stems back to 1714, where king Phillip V won the Spanish Succession War against Catalonia. From that moment on, Catalonia became part of Spain as we know it today. Since then, multiple kings attempted to impose the Spanish language and laws until 1931, when they accepted and restored the The Catalan Government known as "Generalitat."

However, in 1936 General Francisco Franco started a Civil War planning to exterminate the Catalan separatism. He forbade the Catalan language to take control of the region and killed more than 3,500 people. In 1977, two years after Franco's death, democracy was recovered and so was the Generalitat.

Nowadays with the Spanish economic crisis, the separatism has grown significantly due to the contribution system from Spain.

Davis vs. Gay Marriage: Round Two



Kim Davis, with son Nathan, a deputy clerk, reads a statement to the press outside the Rowan County Courthouse. //MCT Campus

FLORENCIA LLOSAS
STAFF WRITER

Kim Davis, the county clerk for Rowan County, Kentucky, was released from jail on September 8 after being detained for denying to issue any marriage licenses in order to avoid same sex couples from getting what is now legally theirs: Marriage under the law. On Monday, September 14, Davis went back to work and was found issuing licenses that might not be complete, and therefore could be voided by Kentucky state law.

The terms set for Kim Davis' release were made simple and direct by US District Judge, David Bunning, when he released her from federal custody.

"Defendant Davis shall not interfere in any way, directly or indirectly, with the efforts of her deputy clerks to issue marriage licenses to all legally eligible couples. If Defendant Davis should interfere in any way with their issuance, that will be considered a violation of this order and appropriate sanctions will be considered," said Bunning.

Days after her release, Davis was accused by co-worker Brian Mason of modifying old documents and only approving licenses that were written differently than when she was in jail, Mason's attorney told the court of the incident told to him by the clerk, "Kim Davis came to the office and confiscated all the original forms, and provided a changed form which deletes all mentions of the County...there is now a notarization beside his initials in place of where otherwise signatures would be," said Mason.

Modifying same sex marriage documents to exclude that it was issued from the county clerk's office and even making Mason's initial under 'Notary Public' instead of signing under his position as county clerk, could be argued to be a form of interference on a court of law. The recently freed clerk could be potentially violating the order by the Judge by issuing licenses in the before stated way, which would lead her right back to jail.

Amidst the storm of conflicted accounts, the recent meeting between Pope Francis and Davis on September 24 has left a new line of inquiry to be solved. On a video news clip provided by the New York Times, Kim Davis' lawyer, Mathew Staver, publicly said that the Pope had a personal meeting with both Mrs. and Mr. Davis, saying that "it was just a private meeting just between the Pope and the Davis's...Pope Francis held out his hands when he asked her to pray for him and she clasped his hands and she said she would."

When the Vatican was asked for clarification, they stated that the only 'real audience' Francis gave, was to a former student of his, Yayo Grassi. Rev. Thomas Rosica, an English-language spokesman for the Vatican, told the Associated Press, that the Davis family met the Pope by means of the U.S church ambassador.

"[They were] very brief greetings," said Reverend Rosica, "and in the Pope's characteristic kindness and warmth and hospitality, he shook people's hands and gave them rosaries. We should understand it as that. In terms of why this person was invited, you have to ask those questions of the nunciature."

College Students Weigh in on Bernie Sanders



ROSEMARIE FELICIANO
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

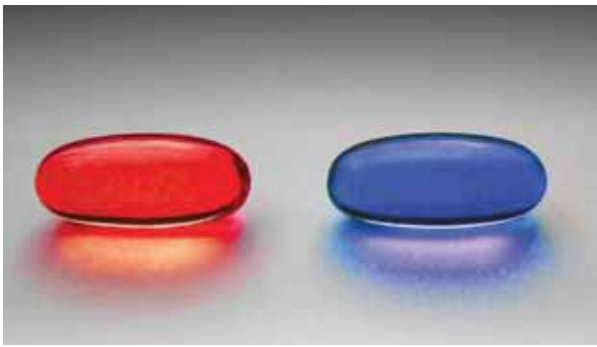
Bernie Sanders' supporters raise their banners at his sold-out campaign event //MCT Campus

It is hard to find a student that is not "pro Bernie" considering his progressive views as the Vermont senator and past participation in the Human Rights Movement during the 1960s. Other than his prior experience, Sanders wants to provide free medical care and free education for U.S. citizens. 27-year-old Bergen Community College student, Marko Pergola who majors in Biology said, "This false sense of freedom has limited us and the American dream I feel hasn't been relevant for a couple decades now. Bernie wants to take us in the direction of the more successful countries in our world." In the presidential elections during 2009 socialism or any similar "far left" views of candidates were considered taboo. The evolution of such ideals has changed and broadened our generation's view of basic human rights.

Sanders has been in the public eye recently for all things humanist and with elections rolling in less than a year, dozens of mainstream articles have been centered on such ideals. Brian Kobylarz, a 29-year-old graduate student of Philosophy at William Paterson said, "I wouldn't consider his views 'far left'. I do think that he is 'far left' in the sense of where American politics have been for the last 60 or so years (both democrats and republicans are/have been far right)."

Sanders recently spoke with Christian students who attend Liberty University and expressed how it is easy to speak with people who "agree with you." Students like Dan Fellner, 21-year-old, attends Essex County College said "He [Sanders] hasn't laid out a plan as to how he plans to seek congressional approval to tax the upper 1%." There are multiple spectrums on how one decides whom to vote for in the coming months, but what is clear is that Sanders will have the majority of college student's votes. "The way we treat education is ridiculous in this country. We're in so much debt, for just one year back in the 70s you could pay your way through college with a part-time job. Now you can't even pay half of a semester with that rate. Education should be a right not a privilege and maybe that's the problem," said Pergola.

Now the question still remains will Sanders be the change Americans have been fighting for? "I think he does stand a chance of winning, but I don't expect him to win as I don't think he'll get the democrat nomination," said Kobylarz. Only time will tell if Sanders will get Republican supporters for his campaign.



The Voting Matrix
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Question Everything
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*Big
Bergen Welcome*
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OPINIONS

The Torch

La Esquina Latina: El Inmigrante Latino Mejor Recibido: El Papa Francisco



El Papa Francisco no solo dió discursos, también visitó a víctimas de abuso sexual, y bendijo a gente en correccionales.
//MCT Campus

FLORENCIA LLOSAS
STAFF WRITER

El 25 de Septiembre, las ciudades de Washington DC, Nueva York y Filadelfia se llenaron de los famosos "selfie sticks," policías y como se dice en Argentina, una "bocha" de creyentes. Todo, porque el Papa Argentino Francisco Bergoglio vino a visitar los Estados Unidos. Es el quinto Papa que viene a visitar el país, el primero en dar un discurso al congreso estadounidense y el presidente Barack Obama, el primer presidente Norte-Americano que lo fue a recibir al pie de su avión.

El Papa despertó el amor de muchos seguidores (creyentes y no creyente) gracias a la forma en la cual ha cambiado como se operan las cosas en el Vaticano: Eligió la humildad sobre el confort, la pobreza sobre la angustia, y el 'hagan lío' como diría él, sobre la imagen popular sitiada para un Papa.

En los días a seguir, discutió el problema de la inmigración y el maltrato a los Latinos en tres discursos, el dirigido a las Naciones Unidas en Nueva York, otro dirigido a la comunidad Hispana de Filadelfia y el más famoso dirigido al Congreso, el primero de su tipo. Estos discursos produjeron furor en no solo la

comunidad latina, pero entre todos los inmigrantes, y vergüenza en el partido Republicano.

El Papa Francisco se convirtió en el primer Papa en dar un discurso, bastante político, en el congreso Americano, ya que expone la problemática cultural que los Estados Unidos está teniendo en contra de los inmigrantes, y recordó a todos los presentes que la realidad es: somos todos extranjeros buscando mejorar nuestras vidas:



"In recent centuries, millions of people came to this land to pursue their dream of building a future in freedom. We, the people of this continent, are not fearful of foreigners, because most of us were once foreigners. I say this to you as the son of immigrants, knowing that so many of you are also descended from immigrants" y continuo a decir "Let us seek for others the same possibilities which we seek for ourselves. Let us help others to grow, as we would like to be helped ourselves. In a word, if we want security, let us give security; if we want life, let us give life; if we want opportunities, let us provide opportunities."

En luz a lo recientemente dicho por el candidato Republicano, Donald Trump, en contra de los inmigrantes, principalmente mejicanos, lo dicho por el Papa fue como una lanza en el costado-metafóricamente- y dejó a muchos quienes comparten su ideología con rencor hacia la figura católica.

El Papa no paró ahí, luego se movilizó a las Naciones Unidas, donde volvió a tocar el tópico, recordando que todos tenemos el derecho a la justicia, confirmando que: "Dar a cada uno lo suyo... significa que ningún individuo o grupo humano se puede considerar omnipotente, autorizado a pasar por encima de la dignidad y de los derechos de las otras personas singulares o de sus agrupaciones sociales," devolviéndole el poder a las minorías sociales que tantas veces sufren al ser sus problemas ignorados.

El tercer discurso fue dado en el Independence Hall, en español también, y fue especialmente dirigido a la comunidad hispana del estado. En él, Francisco le recordó a todos los que traen un poco de su cultura al país, que no deben asimilarse- sino festejar esas diferencias, ya que enriquecen a la cultura Norteamericana, y los hace especiales, repitiendo "no se avergüencen nunca de sus tradiciones."

Y al terminar incluso dejó unas palabras de ánimo para aquellos que se sienten perdidos o desanimados con las recientes acusaciones a la comunidad Latina por parte de los candidatos Republicanos:

"Muchos de ustedes han emigrado a este país con un gran costo personal pero con la esperanza de construir una nueva vida- no se desanimen por las

Why Are We Keeping Syrians On Hold?



Syrian boys take a look at what has become their new "home" //MCT Campus

NOURA DAKKA
NEWS EDITOR

Syria has been at war for almost five years now. Besides their civil war, The Islamic State has been running around the country for two years butchering the citizens of Syria and destroying everything in their path. So what are the Syrians to do? Exactly what anyone would do in a situation like this; flee.

Bordering countries, Turkey and Lebanon have been hosting the most Syrian refugees since the war began. Jordan, Egypt, and even Iran have their borders open to Syrians. Many other European countries like Germany, Sweden, and Denmark also taking in refugees. 264,000 asylum applications have been received from Syrian refugees in 38 European countries, according to the UN Refugee Agency. I cannot help but wonder what is to come of everyone else. Lately, migration has been an issue that, in my opinion, should concern us all. Germany has increased their terms for asylum due to the huge amount of refugees heading over, and Denmark is already overcrowded with refugees. You would think that the Syrians' struggles are inspiring more countries to open up their borders for them, but instead it is causing conflict between neighboring countries.

Hungary has put up razor wire fences around its border and has Hungarian military police guarding it. Not to mention, its railway is now blocked. Any migrant caught is immediately sent to collection points or detention camps, where they are not even allowed to continue their journey onwards. Croatia has also closed its border, making it impossible for migrants to reach Serbia. So now what? Are we just going to leave these Syrians to die between borders? What ever happened to morality? I understand some countries are overcrowded with Syrians and they have done the best they can, but there is over 196

countries in the world. Where are they?

Remember 25 years ago when Hungary helped bring down the Berlin wall and reunited Germans, and now today they are the ones putting up fences. Our nationalities should not separate us.

Let us put religion aside; now is not the time to be thinking about these Syrians being Muslims or not. Now is the time to actually put our humanity to work; we are confronting a matter of life or death. These refugees should not be running from border to border, each country should do its part in providing shelter and support. There should not be any country overcrowded with refugees. France agreed to admit 24,000 refugees over the next two years and the United Kingdom has agreed to admit 20,000 refugees over the next five years. The U.S wants to take in at least 10,000 refugees in the next year as well. Great, now if only we can get the rest

“So now what? Are we just going to leave these Syrians to die between borders? What ever happened to morality?”

of the world to actually be part of this then we can save more refugees and we would not have to worry about where are we going to cram all these people.

The United Nations' job is to "maintain international peace and security, promote sustainable development, protect human rights, uphold international law, and deliver humanitarian aid." If so, why has the situation gotten so out of hand that bodies have washed up on the Turkish shore? The war in Syria has been persisting for years now. The U.N had plenty of time to plan aid and support during Syria's time of turmoil. This issue is not something we can take our time with; there are people's lives at risk. The UN says that they are taking action but honestly, it is not enough. If The UN were actually doing their job, we would not have bodies washing up on shores.

They have enough power and resources to gather all the refugees and bring them to safety. It is not something that can happen in a day or two, but the process can surely begin.

Right now, we are failing as humans. For the countries that are sitting back and not interfering, they should just think about how they would want to be treated if they were refugees of war. In the end, we are all made from the same flesh and bones. There are families with young children and infants on the move day and night with no food or shelter. We do not know if one day we will be the ones seeking refuge or asylum. If there is any speck of humanity or justice left in us, then we should lend both of our hands to help their cause.

European Refugee Crisis

(continued from pg. 6)

Sinan Ulgan, chairman of the Istanbul Center for Economics and Foreign Policy has said, "Turkey's response has been very much more humane than Europe, and far more in line with what Europe claims to have as universal values."

Other countries have taken in refugees, such as Lebanon (1.1 million), Jordan (629,000), Egypt (132,000), and lastly, the United States vows to take 10,000 refugees.

While the majority of the countries bordering Syria are allowing all the refugees to come in without any difficulties, countries in the European Union are only allowing a small amount of refugees to immigrate into their country, otherwise forcing refugees to apply for asylum. Critics of this action say that many people are left in limbo while waiting to hear back an official response, which will lead more and more people to be forced into other countries or worse yet, die.

To aid the country, Russia has been sending military equipment such as weapons, armored vehicles, and air support. Russia has urged other nations to join in and send more aid, but the U.S for example has said that the support for President Bashar al-Assad will deem to be "counter-productive." Russia again says that without its military aid to Syria, the amount of refugees would be much more. Russia believes that in exchange for

its military aid, Syria will allow Russia to build a military base on the coastal city of Latakia.

This base gives Russia a clear strategic advantage over the whole Mediterranean region. Many officials in the U.S. suggest that President Vladimir Putin's advances in Syria are a little alarming. The conflict in Syria has not only caused a mass migration of people, but caused to increase the tension in the middle east region even more.

With the large influx of Syrian immigrants, some of the aforementioned countries are taking extreme measures to control the flow of people. At the Hungarian border, police are ordered to shoot on sight if anyone crosses without the right permissions.

To try and ease the burdens of other nations in the European Union, Germany has erased an EU rule stating that in order to receive asylum, you must apply in the country you first entered in the Union, then apply to the country in which you want to live. That rule being erased allows for all immigrants to apply for German asylum the second they enter Europe. Germany pledges to accept over 800,000 refugees in 2015. German Interior Ministry spokesperson, Johannes Dimroth said that allowing Syrian immigrants a passage to Germany is not only humanitarian but also bureaucratic.

El Papa Francisco

(continued from pg. 8)

dificultades que tengan que afrontar, les pido que no olviden que al igual que lo que llegaron aquí antes de ustedes, traen muchos dones a esta nación." Lo cual conmovió a muchos, quienes gritaron con alegría "¡Viva el Papa!"

Con lo dicho en los tres discursos sobre la inclusión de los inmigrantes, el no hacer asimilar al que proviene de otra cultura y sobre todo la esperanza que le dio a los miles de latinos que lo fueron a ver a Filadelfia,- el Papa dejó a muchos miembros del partido Republicano con las manos vacías de excusas y justificaciones para sus prejuicios; ya no podrán decir que lo hacen para el bien del país ni que lo hacen al seguir lo enseñado por su religión.

Lo que se ha de ver en el futuro, es si algo cambiara. ¿Podrán las palabras de un hombre tan poderoso finalmente cambiar lo que es debido? O volverá cada casilla a su lugar una vez que el furor de lo nuevo y lo excitante siga camino- y la enseñanza que vino con ello, ¿será perdido nuevamente? Y con ella, la justicia necesaria para mover al país adelante en cuanto se refiere a los problemas culturales y migratorios sufridos por los refugiados tanto como la gran cantidad de latinos.

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Meetings every Tues., 12:30 p.m., SC-111C-D

The Torch

THE TORCH, a member of the Associated Collegiate Press and the College Media Association, is the official student newspaper of Bergen Community College. The purpose of THE TORCH is to report on the events at BCC and the local community, and to offer the BCC community a forum for expression. The opinions expressed in THE TORCH are not necessarily those of THE TORCH. All the materials submitted to THE TORCH become property of THE TORCH.

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Dear Students: Question Everything



GABE WANISSIAN
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Will Continuing to Accept Half-Truths as Gospel Better our Society? //Imgur

Our generation has seemingly become indifferent to all of society's woes. While social issues continue to grow rampant at both a large scale and personal level, we seemingly turn a blind eye; inane hashtags, glutinous media consumption and technology fill the deepest depths of our mind.

How ironic, when it was the people on this very soil centuries ago, that stayed vigilant and defiant against the red coat monarchy that led to the birth of this nation - Is our generation capable of such feats? I believe so, but it must first start with embracing the very thing this country is founded on; the ability to question.

Question Society As a Whole

It starts by questioning the governing bodies that you live under. Look around you and ask if you are satisfied with the institutionalized racism, severe wealth inequality and various prejudices that still exist in 2015? Sure, we have made strides as a society, but the spirit and vigor of the Civil Rights movement, and the innovative, forward thinking of the European Renaissance is sorely missing, as the United States ranks 120th out of 169 eligible countries in voting turnout. So much of today's youth claims to have lost faith in the two party political system- perhaps rightfully so - but until we put our money where our mouth is, how can we claim that we take our Democracy seriously? We must take advantage of the social connectivity we currently have to educate, and criticize damaging ways of thinking in the world. Sharing posts on Facebook is not enough, we must vote with our ballots, vote with our dollars, and vote

with our voice.

Question Friends, Family and Local Leaders

Critical thinking should not stop at the large scale; pay attention to the way your family and friends go about things. Sometimes, our closest loved ones could be the largest contributors to hardship in our lives and their own, and if that's the case, say something. It may be difficult for them to hear it at first, and they may even resent you for it, but a reality check from an outsider is just what the doctor ordered.

But why stop there? We must go on further and evaluate local government, law enforcement and even school administration. The youth seemingly overlook this as town hall, and college board of trustee meetings are mostly attended by middle aged folks.

Case and point, BCC President B. Kaye Walter held a meeting during this summer with the registration department about not being able to register students due to insufficient funding - even though the county returned our budget to the highest it has been since 2010. The Board of Trustees had not been made aware of this issue until a student informed a trustee member, and it was then that the necessary steps were made to mitigate the problem. What would have happened if that student was not vigilant enough to look between the lines and ask questions?

Back in March, the Pay-to-Print Initiative was almost in place for students pay 10 to 15 cents for each page of printed paper. It wasn't until enough student outcry on campus throughout the spring and summer

lead to Administration to reevaluate the proposal. Currently, a compromise is being met between Administration and Student Government in which students will have a page "allowance" before having to pay - much better than the original plan, don't you think?

Question Yourself

Perhaps the most important one of them all, is to hold yourself accountable for your actions. Ask yourself just exactly who you are, what are your beliefs and what is it exactly that you want to accomplish in life? Sometimes, looking in the mirror and giving oneself a personal progress report can be a grueling task. But in that honest examination, a true sense of individuality arises.

"Nothing strengthens authority, more than silence," said Leonardo Da Vinci, but that "authority" does not just relate to corrupt government, it is our warped sense of ego as well. If anything, that is the biggest "conspiracy" that we face the most, and when left unchecked, destructive ways of thinking will manifest. At one end of the spectrum, it can let us settle for mediocrity, but on the other hand, we start to "drink our own kool-aid."

So give yourself time to be reflective, contemplate your actions, and go forth with the lessons you learn from that. If we as a student body, moved in the direction of becoming questioning individuals, perhaps a much needed renaissance would occur not only in our personal lives, but our school campus, our neighborhoods - and dare I say - the whole world.

The Voting System Provides Limited Choices

CANKAT DEYER
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

As the presidential elections begin to appear on the horizon, the American public begins to tune in to the potential candidates and their campaigns. This time, however, the hype seems to have begun a bit earlier than usual. Election Day is more than a year away, and the primaries have not yet taken place, but the topic is receiving an immense amount of media coverage. A key reason for this seems to be the potential candidates in this particular upcoming election.

Donald Trump, Hillary Clinton, and Bernie Sanders are the most talked about potential candidates. Although Clinton seems to have the edge over Sanders for the Democratic candidacy, Sanders does not look like he is prepared to give up so easily. Trump, on the other hand, is receiving non-stop publicity, from news sources to internet memes. He seems to have ostracized the Latino community, but frankly, the Latino votes were never the strong point of the Republican Party to begin with. Upon examination, the hype is not surprising considering we have the stock face of the archetypical ruthless businessman, and the former first-lady among the candidates along with a perceived socialist.

As the process progresses and we have candidates, it will become clearer as to what kind of a race this particular one will be and who will gain the greatest support, but one thing is clear: Whoever has the highest amount of financial backing and funds for their campaign will win. While we do have the choice to vote between the two final candidates, it is apparent that in order to even stand a chance in the election, a candidate must have the support of the ruling class. To gain this support, a candidate must be willing to look out for the interests of the ruling class, so in November 2016, we will vote, and they will win, yet again.

We, as the American public, have been very unobservant to the choices we have. We have been blinded by the immense amount of insubstantial and meaningless options we have been presented,



*The political choices presented may indeed both be inactive "sugar pills".
//Wikipedia*

that we have lost sight of the immense lack of options regarding important issues that have a very direct and substantial impact on our lives. We have access to hundreds upon hundreds of TV channels, yet nearly all of them are owned by six media companies who also own nearly all of the radio stations and newspapers. We have an endless choice of fast-food restaurants where we have an immense choice of different chemically processed foods which slowly kill us. Yet the money, with which I pay for the food, can only be stored in one of just a handful of banks.

The case remains the same with political elections. To be sure, we can vote, but what are we voting for? In our current two-party system, we have a party which looks out for the interests of the ruling class, or the one percent, and has not shown much support or even sympathy for the plight of the economically struggling American public. And, we have another one, only with a different mask and a different colored banner. Maybe at the end of the term, we will be granted a basic human right that should have been legal to begin with, just to placate us. However, income inequality will not improve, we will still be the world leader in police brutality and incarcerations, and our military forces will continue to wage war and capitalize on death and human suffering, because those are not the choices we get to make.

Maybe, just maybe, we should demand some basic changes that the citizens of other western countries get to enjoy. Such as something even remotely resembling socialized health care, so that people who are seriously ill don't have to make a choice between their lives and their entire life savings, or a police force that is more distinguishable from a standing army and less racially motivated. Who knows, maybe one day the top one percent will dissolve and form a state that is more concerned with the well-being of its citizens.

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First Place Awards: General Excellence, Layout & Design, Editorial Writing, Biography/Personality Profile, Enterprise/Investigative Reporting, Photography, 2014-2015
Winner for News Writing, Arts and Entertainment/Critical Writing, Features Writing, Sports Writing, Overall Website, 2014-2015
New Jersey Press Foundation Better College Newspaper Contest

First Place Awards
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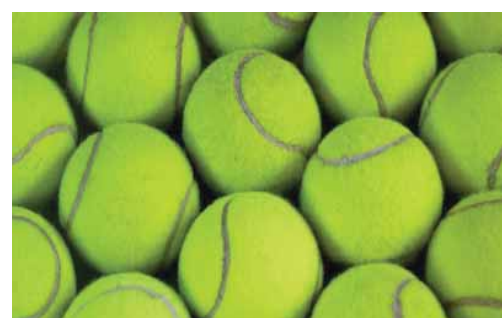




Mortal Kombat
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“One Night” Play
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Tennis Team
Disbanded
pg. 20



FEATURES

The Torch

As Time Goes By: Obstacles Students Face Approaching Graduation

NOEMIE BROUSSOUX-COUTARD
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Another year, another set of caps, gowns and the almost opaque smell of a vanquished set of students will soon be haunting the halls of Bergen Community College as graduation is quickly approaching. Although the odds are on their side, these soon-to-be graduates cannot help but face a great fear of moving on, of transitioning to their next step; whether it is jumping directly into the workforce, or transferring to a four-year university. When questioned on the topic of transitional adaptation, a few students admitted that they felt as though they had uselessly planted their seeds in the school, and that deserting it now would feel more like a culture-shock than a path to success. They feel as though the two years spent in the comfortable Bergen cocoon were simply useless.

One student, Vladislav Saburov, even stated that he does not believe his associate's degree will be useful when transferring out to a university, a mindset incredibly common within community college students. However, the truth lies elsewhere. In 2014, the Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that students who obtained their associate's degree were 1.5 percent less likely to be unemployed than people that had not earned another diploma after high school. They were also only 1 percent more inclined to become unemployed than persons who had received a bachelor's degree.

Moreover, a large majority of BCC students fear the unclear transfer process. As the school only employs a few transfer advisors, scheduling an appointment with one of them is sometimes utterly impossible. Isaac Alejo will be graduating in the Spring, but remains confused about the transfer procedure, "I do not even know how to go about the whole process. It is not made clear by the college, and that can be very



The road towards graduation is a long and strenuous one as students face many obstacles along their journey.

//Illustration by Jessica Rodriguez//The Torch

detrimental to soon-to-be graduates," he said. Thus, the transfer confusion buzzes around last-year students as an infectious plague.

Questions like "when do I apply?", "how do I apply?", "will my school of choice accept most of my credits?", emerge from the panicked mass, unclear of the next step to take. Nonetheless, there exist plenty of resources on campus to facilitate the process. For example, the International Honor Society Phi Theta Kappa organizes transfer workshops every semester, and these events are open to the public. The next one will be held on October 20, from 12:30 to 1:30, in room C-313 at the Paramus campus. These particular events held by organizations and groups on campus are not promoted college-wide, and therefore do not receive the proper attention.

With this anxious banter suffocating the school, it is crucial to ask oneself if the reality of things is really that stressful. When inquired about his feelings regarding the 2015 honor graduate Kevin Calle stated that, "yes, it can be quite overwhelming at first, but it really isn't that bad. It just takes a little getting used to."

Six months later, I can honestly say that I am at a very good place in my academic life," Calle added. He transferred to the Rutgers School of Business after graduating from BCC. These incommensurable obstacles are sometimes a mere optic illusion for apprehensive students, but just like Calle affirms, "it really isn't that bad."

Audience Blown Away by Tony and Tina's Wedding

CHRISTOPHER MOLINA
STAFF WRITER

The Friday night play of Tony and Tina's wedding was performed by a cast which included Goodfellas movie actor, and cast from the so Tony Darrow. The performance took place at The Terrace, a hall connected to the Biagio's restaurant in Paramus. The audience was included in the performance, and like the cast, was dressed as if actually attending a wedding. In the opening ceremony of the show, the audience sat in the gallery watching the bride and groom as they were married by a comedic priest. The audience was very amused with the play.

The performers made the environment as energetic and open as possible.

Once the opening ceremony was over, the audience moved into the main plaza where music and dancing were included. The audience was joyful to be a part of the show, especially with it being a Broadway level performance.

"I think it's great. It's nice to bring a little of Broadway to Paramus," said Joyce Becker, employee Community and Cultural Affairs and the Ciccone Theater at Bergen Community College. When asked about the process of putting together the show, she replied that it was "a lot of moving parts, but with everybody's help and collaboration, it worked out for everybody very well."

Many people in the audience and



crew, including herself were very proud on how the show played out. They were most proud that they were "able to make people laugh, smile and be happy," said Becker.

Later in the night the audience had been invited to the dance floor with the performers. When asked about his thoughts on the night, BCC Professor Seymour Labarre said, "so far so good,

it's very funny and it's a very different type of show because it's part reality. I always wanted to see it, [because] it's been around a long time."

Aside from the performance including loud music, dancing and waves of people, a great addition was actor Tony Darrow. Darrow is also known for his roles in famous films like Analyze This, and TV series, The Sopranos. Darrow was regarded as a talented actor throughout the 80's and 90's. In his performance, he gave something the audience to remember, by telling jokes and singing well-known songs from Frank Sinatra. In the end, the audience was very pleased with the entire show, including with Darrow's performance.

"It's a different kind of venue, people seem to be loving it" said Darrow.

Although he was not technically part of the show, he was treated as special guest star. "They put me in to help promote business and also help it get off the ground because it's a very big venue," he said. When asked if this could be more of his act he said, "yes and no. If I could come in and do 20 minutes or a half hour - if it's lucrative



enough, I will do it."

Despite working on films, he explained that he's happy about his performance. "It's nice to get back in front of a live audience and do what I did tonight," he said. He explained that doing films and doing a live performance are two different environments. "It's much different from film, you can actually touch the people and be with them." The audience was excited with Tony Darrow and the whole performance, "[I enjoyed] the fact that the people were receptive to me, that the people enjoyed what I did, and that they reached out to me," said Darrow.

Darrow delights the Biagio's crowd (Left) The Wedded couple during the performances (Above) Henry Fowler//The Torch

big bergen

John Rush, the human ipod

LUCIA RUBI GODOY

STAFF WRITER



John Rush after his performance in BCC's Student Center.
Luis Ari Lopez Wei // The Torch

Through the Office of Student Life, John Rush - AKA "The Human iPod" came to Bergen Community College on September 8 and performed a number of popular songs on his guitar and voice, all of which were played by memory. After his performance, to an almost full Student Center at the college, "The Human iPod" gave The Torch a background to his career.

Although he had been playing guitar and singing since he was 12, John Rush didn't start touring until he moved to Nashville, TN, after attending a university in Georgia. He admits that although he never had a really bad experience with an audience, some of them are more skeptical at the beginning of his performance, since they don't know what to expect.

"I can always find something that they would normally hear, it just depends on where I have to go. If I'm in Oklahoma, I might have to go a little bit more country. If I'm on the East Coast, I get away with a little bit more variety," he explained.

Rush particularly enjoys playing anything with cool guitar parts and blues, even though the second one is not exactly the most played genre on the radio.

When asked if he's always done this on his own, Rush admits to have been in bands on and off, but that he prefers to work on his own. "Keeping a band is really hard to do. Everyone has their own agenda," he said.

Besides the complications that working with a band implies, Rush said that the monetary gain is much more significant when working alone. "You make a lot more money solo."

After growing up in Alabama, going to college in Georgia, and moving to Nashville, his tours took him to visit different parts of the country, and even Canada. "Canada is a lot like the US. They like different music depending on the city," he told us. Rush's favorite parts of touring are to travel, and getting paid for playing the guitar, which is something he loves to do.

Yankees fall to Orioles

student life visits the bronx

ADAM GRASSANI

STAFF WRITER

Around 30 students and friends were lucky enough to get their hands on \$20 tickets to Bergen Community College's Student Life trip to Yankee Stadium and were treated to see the most successful franchise in all of sports play America's national pastime once again. The New York Yankees took on the Baltimore Orioles in the final game of a three game series, with a chance to catch up to the division leading Toronto Blue Jays.

On September 9, all students and guests y boarded the bus bound for the Bronx and received their tickets for entry into Yankee Stadium.

Students were free to enter the stadium and had many options before finding their seats. They could explore the stadium, purchase food (although some opted to buy food outside the stadium to avoid the high prices), and visit the many gift shops and stands.

Along with everything the stadium had to offer, the night it was used to promote The Peanuts Movie; all game attendees got to take home an exclusive Yankees The Peanuts Movie bobblehead. Could you have possibly asked for a better free souvenir? After all of the shopping and exploring was done, students found their seats to enjoy the pregame festivities and the game itself. Students sat in the middle or main level seating on the first base side, just outside the foul pole in foul ball territory.

"The experience was great," said student Robert Mansmann Jr., who was

one of the many attendees on the trip. "I liked that we got the bobblehead that night, that was awesome."

Unfortunately, The Yankees weren't on their A-game that night, as they lost the game 5-3. Carlos Beltran gave his team an early lead, driving in all three of New York's runs in the first three innings, including a two run home run in the

first. Struggling starter CC Sabathia pitched well in his first game back from injury, going 4.2 innings pitched with five strikeouts and allowing only one earned run

This is when things started going downhill for the Yankees. 2B Stephen Drew made a humongous error, letting a throw by Orioles' 3B Chase Headley which could have ending the inning, go underneath his legs, allowing the Orioles to tie the game up at 3-3.

It didn't get much better after that, and then a shutdown performance by reliever Zach Britton closed it out for a disappointing loss for the Bombers.

"I think we were just saving our energy for the Toronto series," said Robert. "I had a good feeling with [Sabathia] on the mound despite the loss. It was nice to see him back."

Despite seeing their favorite team lose, students were satisfied with the experience they got at the ballpark.



Bergen takes a trip to Yankee Stadium to watch the Yankees play the Orioles.
Luis Ari Lopez Wei// The Torch

welcome

club day embraces student body



CHRIS CARTER
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Whether you are looking to share your passions with like-minded people or want to explore a new field of interest, there is a club for you here at Bergen Community College.

Two Club Days were held during the first two weeks of the fall semester. Representatives from each club set up stands outside the Student Center to show students what their clubs are about and to give them a chance to sign up. The turnout was great, as there was a constant flow of students drifting through the area, making friends and engaging in discussion with club ambassadors. It was a great way to welcome students back for the fall semester as the event showed students that there are so many great people to meet and such a wide array of programs to join.

The 30-some-odd clubs spanned fields such as intellectual ideas, the arts, ethnic groups, religion, philanthropy, advocacy, healthcare and

hobbies. The student body here at Bergen is so intellectually and ethnically diverse that every student is able to find a club that sparks their interest. From the Environmental Club to the Bards and Scribes Club to the Video Games Club, there is something for everyone.

Walking from booth to booth, students saw that all these great clubs have positive goals they can achieve with the help of any who will sign on. The Animal Care Club is all about raising awareness of animals and the tough living conditions in which many have to survive. "We have an adoption day where we work with the shelters," said Shamar Gill, the events coordinator and treasurer for the club.

Many of the clubs offer programs to give back to students. Bethany Kazimir from Dental Hygiene



club explained that her club offers teeth cleaning and X-rays right here at Bergen three days a week for under \$20. "Imagine what you would pay if you went to an actual dentist for a teeth cleaning," she said. With a program

like this, dental students can get the practice they need while students can receive quality care at a very low cost. These programs are funded by donations and fundraisers, so the more student involvement, the better.

*Students take part in Bergen's Club Day outside of the Student Center.
Bulldog graphic//Twitter
Luis Ari Lopez Wei //The Torch*

ADRIANA CARABALLO
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

9/11 Day of Remembrance

September 11 is a somber yet significant day for many. Bergen Community College has not forgotten that day and has honored it with the Day of Remembrance event. The event, held on the fourteenth anniversary of the 9/11 attacks, offered a variety of speakers from the school staff who shared their experiences. These speakers included Dr. Naydeen González-De Jesús who is the Vice President of Student Affairs, Professor and Counselor Win Win Kyi, and Rachel Lerner-Colucci, the Dean of Student Conduct and Student Life.

The event started off with a few opening words from Dr. González-De Jesús, followed by a moment of silence. "Life is short, you can wake up one day and be gone the next," said Dr. González-De Jesús.

BCC student Stephanie Bermeo was a young girl when the attacks happened.

"I was in second grade. The announcement came on saying that due to an emergency, the school would be closing down early and I didn't know what was going on. Five minutes later all the parents came."

Bermeo explained that at the same time, the school where her aunt was employed allowed everyone to leave school early and she was the only driver on the highway.

"She thought that there was going to be a war going on. She was so scared that she might die."

Returning to her own perspective, Bermeo talked about how she turned on the TV when she got home and saw the



first man jump off the building.

"I had no idea what was going on, I only saw people jumping off buildings and running away from the buildings." Bermeo also addressed the amount of the neglect that there is of this horrific event.

After the speakers of the school staff finished their pieces, the floor was offered to anyone who wanted to share their personal experiences. Many people in the room were hesitant to speak at all; most of the chairs were empty and many who attended the event gathered in the back. Dean Lerner-Colucci filled the silence with her own personal significance of this day. She revealed to the audience that although it is a day of remembrance, it is also her daughter's birthday. She described it as also being "a day of celebration for her," as ironic as that may sound. While traveling to the student center for the event, as there were two security guards, one carrying the flags for the memorial event while the other was accompanying him.

Military enlistment has boosted since the tragic events of 9/11. In 2001, 74,577 people enlisted in the military and Montgomery is one of the 79,585 people who joined in the year following the attacks

"Serving is one of the best things you can do in a time like this," said Public Safety Officer and army veteran, Joquann Montgomery. Montgomery comes from a military family. He served seven years in the army and his mother was deployed in Afghanistan when the towers were hit. Many Americans feel the same way as Montgomery and have joined the military to fight against terrorism.

Military veteran Joquann Montgomery along with two other public safety officers hold the Bergen, American, and New Jersey flags throughout the day of remembrance event. | Adrianna Caraballo//The Torch

Why Students Should Be Involved On Campus

LUCIA RUBI GODOY
STAFF WRITER

One of the best pieces of advice a student can receive when entering college is, “stay involved.” In order to know why it is important to stay involved, The Torch interviewed some students and members of Student Life.

“Lots of studies have been conducted about students who get involved on campus,” said Juhi Bhatt, Coordinator of Student Conduct and Student Information. “Students who feel more of a connection to their campus, as well as their actual school community end up doing better in their courses and actually graduating.” When asked what are the changes they experience when becoming involved, students had nothing but positive answers.

“I believe that students that are engaged are putting themselves in an environment unlike any other, especially at Bergen, where you have such diversity, we have students who are veterans, students that are parents, and we have international students,” said Anthony Tellez, Treasurer of the Student Government Association, and Speaker of the House of Representatives. “You put yourself in an environment where you would not have expected yourself to be otherwise. You get to meet so many people that are extremely diverse,” added Tellez.

Besides the evident social benefits of school involvement, students who stay engaged know the benefits that this brings to their academic transcripts, and that it provides to their development as people. “I think it’s important because obviously it gives you new chances to make a good transcript,” said Nadia Vaso, who re-opened and became president of the Italian Club during the past spring semester. “It also shapes you as a person. You explore your skills, you learn what you can do, what you can’t do. It makes you mature and grow into an adult individual. And you meet friends,” added Vaso, who besides running her own club, is an active member of Phi Theta Kappa, and plays for the women’s volleyball team at BCC.

Thankfully for the students, Bergen Community College has around 60 active clubs, organizations and teams available on campus that offer students a wide range of activities and topics to discuss and perform.



Getting involved on campus “The choices for the aspiring student are endless, Take advantage!”
Illustration by Jessica Rodriguez//The Torch



MY WEEK IN MEDITATION PRISON

The Statue of Buddha that watched me for my week of solitude. //Dharma Drum Retreat Center

GABE WANISSIAN
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

It was the fourth meditation session on the third day of observing my inner anxieties when the most profound thought had arisen; I could really use a beer right now. Seemingly inane at the surface, my five day stay at the Dharma Drum Meditation Retreat Center would reveal to me that it was a mental defense mechanism from facing something much darker.

With its lineage rooted in Chan Buddhism located in Pine Bush, NY, (63 miles north of Bergen Community College’s Paramus location) the rural location of the center would provide a contrast to the hectic cluster of Bergen County.

After taking a shuttle bus all the way from the Grand Central Bus Terminal, the nearly two-hour bus ride filled with mostly older Eastern Asian people gave myself a chance to quietly contemplate the (surprisingly) grueling week that was ahead of me. A week that would involve eight to 10 hours of daily meditation while maintaining a promise of noble silence. For a loud and frequent speaker such as myself, that sounded like I had a better chance of reaching insanity than enlightenment.

But I had known what I was getting myself into, and it had been something that I was drawn to do. My one day field trip to this very retreat center through my Buddhist Scriptures class that I had taken a year prior at BCC with Philosophy Professor Peter Dlugos laid the seed interest.

This personal pilgrimage would be a different beast. The class trip gave me a scenic view of my mind, but the upcoming week would be like traversing the Grand Canyon.

Each hurdle, whether it be one of the several 40 minute meditation sessions, waking up at 4 a.m. every morning, not being able to speak, read or write, eating a strict vegetarian diet, or having to do the daily cleaning chores - every single obstacle brought me closer to clarity on each day.

The retreat was chaperoned by Buddhist Monk Chang Xiang Fashi, and meditation teachers Rebecca Li, and Simon Child; collectively bringing 46 years of mindfulness instruction for people across the globe. They would give daily sermons in between our meditation sessions about the nature of the mind,

and while they would only speak twice a day, their words of assurance were great morale boosters that would convince me to continue on my quest for stillness.

However, that coveted “quiet mind” did not come so easily, as I had learned that trying to capture the beast known as my mind would be impossible. It was through the act of maintaining awareness on the breath and body the first two days that the raging bull eventually tired itself out. It was then that the true work had began.

The moments of tranquil bliss came sparingly, but the deeper I dove into the practice, the more internal worries, memories and struggles would rise up to the surface like a spiritual detox. At first I wondered if I had conjured up the thoughts myself, but it became clear that they merely rested at my subconscious, and here I was face to face with childhood fears that I thought had been dead and gone.

By the end of day three, old wounds that I had neglected brought forth emotional pain and gave way to a catharsis of grieving and tears. It had hit me like a freight truck on Interstate 80, but it was the last meditation session of

the day where I had seemingly reached it; stillness.

It may have lasted for a few minutes, but a sense of unity with all things around me occurred. “New Age-y” was the best way to describe it, and then the timer went off, and just like that I had returned back to a normal state of consciousness. I was not able to sleep that night, as I was literally left dumbfounded after the experience.

The last two days of practice, the usual busy mind filled with song lyrics ranging from Pink Floyd to “Numa Numa” ran through my head, although the “harsher” memories seemed to be easier to face. That taste of stillness was like a glimpse behind the curtain into the possibility of meditation, but it would never reveal itself to me again for the duration of the retreat.

Eventually the retreat came to an end, and by the next week, so to did the Zen-like calmness that I had acquired from the trip. No, I didn’t gain the answers to life, and in a way, the trip made me have more questions; but the map needed to maneuver through life’s roads makes a lot more sense.

The “F-W.O.R.D.”



Layla Shatursun, The F WORD club Secretary (left), and Melissa Riemann, club member (right), manning the table on Club day.
Luis Ari Lopez Wei//The Torch

LUCIA RUBI GODOY
STAFF WRITER

The Feminist Club, also known as The “F-W.O.R.D.”, has been one of the most active clubs since they began meeting unofficially during the middle of Spring Semester under the supervision of Dr. Christine Eubank, the club advisor. The Torch interviewed members from the F-Word and got some information about the meaning and purpose of the club.

“Feminism is a taboo kind of word,” said Melissa Riemann, Vice-President of the F-WORD, when she was asked why they had chosen the club name.

She explained that the word has many negative connotations, and people tend to think that feminist women hate men, or think that women are better. The W.O.R.D. acronym stands for Women Obtaining Rights and Diversity.

“There’s actually a lot of guys in the club, so we talk about issues that girls and guys deal with,” said Layla Shatursun, secretary of the F-W.O.R.D. “Some people said that the movie Fifty Shades of Grey had some violence in it, so we wanted to talk about that too during a club meeting.”

Collaboration between clubs is important; Riemann stated that being part of the P.R.I.D.E. club as well, she will assure a collaboration between the two clubs. “In countries like Uzbekistan girls are forced into arranged marriages, and they marry very young,” said Shatursun.

She further explained that the club wanted to collaborate with the Muslim Association to inform people about problems that Muslim women face all around the world. The students told The Torch that the main purpose of the club is to clear the misconceptions about feminism and educate people on issues like domestic violence, gender inequality, rape on campuses and abortion.

The meetings are held every Monday from 12:30 to 1:30 in room C-319.

ANGELICA FLORES
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Tables Turning in New York

Fashion Week is one of the busiest times in the hectic New York City. Fashion Week began its tradition in 1943 during World War II and continues today.

From September 10 to 17, fashion icons from all over the world gathered at different venues across Manhattan to see the latest clothing trends and collections being displayed by other fashionistas such as Lauren Conrad, Alexander Wang, Victoria Beckham, Michael Kors, Calvin Klein, Tommy Hilfiger and others.

But what was it that made this year’s Fashion Week any different than the previous years? The strict and intimidating world of fashion is slowly but surely opening its runways to more diverse models. In the 2015 New York Fashion Week, Madeline Stuart, an Australian teen model with Down Syndrome, was given the opportunity to walk on the runway. While Stuart is not the first model with Down Syndrome to participate in this event, it is proof that the fashion industry has come a long way.

Along with Stuart, “bionic” model Rebeka Marine, strutted down the runway with a prosthetic arm. Born without a right arm, yet born with a dream to be a model, Marine faced countless rejections due to her disability. Now, with the warm welcoming of diverse models, the fashion world is promoting change and individuality in its industry.

While the industry has been setting the standards of how beauty is defined, these models are demonstrating that there is no set of guidelines to follow, but rather an opportunity to embrace one’s own uniqueness.



Models in the ‘Big Apple’ showcasing the latest in fashion trends
//Miguel Flores

“ONE NIGHT” PLAY TEACHES THE DANGERS OF ACQUAINTANCE RAPE

Jess realizing the aftermath of Will’s actions.
Matt Alford//Equalogy Inc



CAROLINA ESTRADA
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

The “One Night” play performed by Equalogy, Inc., raises the serious issue of acquaintance rape. The play demonstrates the reality that even someone you know can rape you, and the idea that only strangers can rape you is a misconception. In fact, approximately 90 percent of rapes are committed by somebody the rape

victims knew, and this type of rape is better known as acquaintance rape.

The play starts off with four friends, (Will, Jessica, Calvin, and Hannah) who are high school seniors about to graduate. In celebration, the friends go over Will’s house to drink and hang out. As they are drinking, talking, and joking around, Will, the funny guy of the group of friends, used his sarcasm and humor as a way of flirting with Jess, who admitted that during a drunken night, her and Will slept together. Throughout the night, Will brags about his ‘skills’ in bed and makes several comments regarding how women can’t resist him. Hannah, Calvin’s girlfriend, is a bit more sensitive to Will’s comments but loosens up throughout the stay there. As the night progresses, they run out of drinks and Will asks Jess if she’d like to go get the ‘wine’ that’s in his room. Of course the characters hint at the implications that there is no wine. She goes with him and what transpires between them while they are alone isn’t revealed until the end of the show.

In the end, Jess changed her mind about sleeping with Will, but he rapes her anyway. He claims that he didn’t rape her and she went with him.

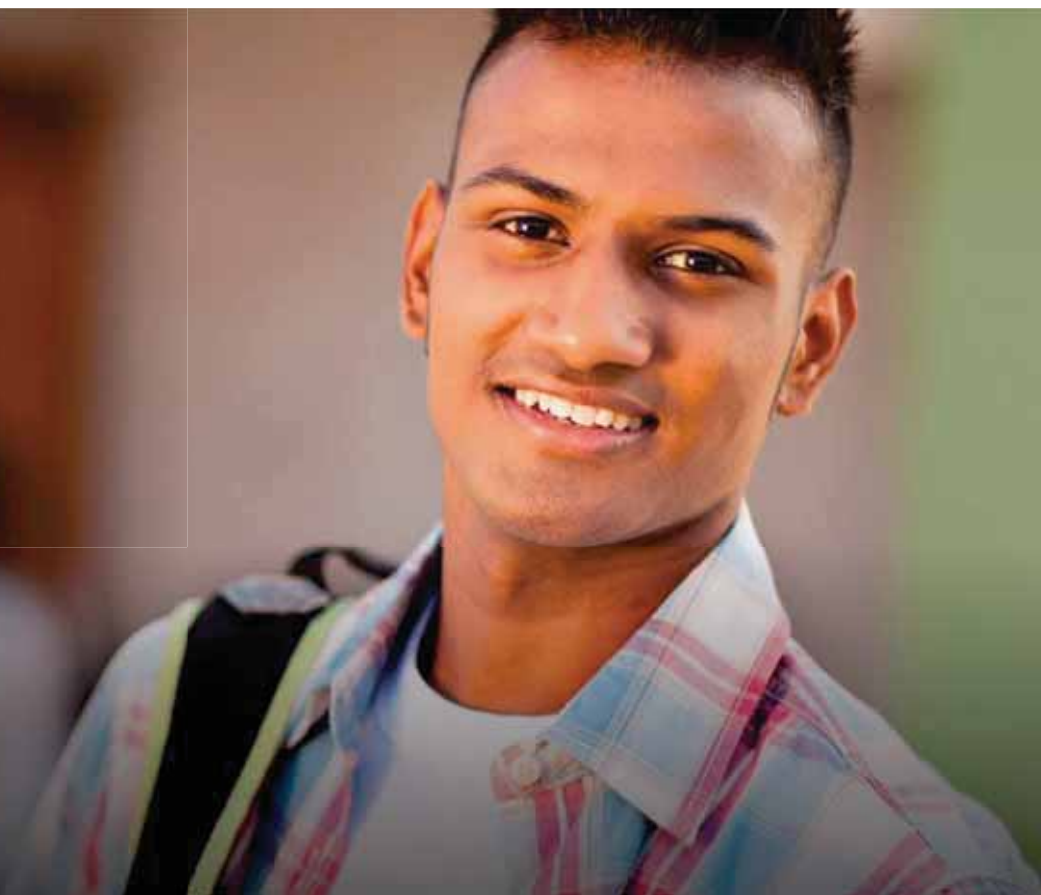
“How could I have raped you,” he asked. We’ve slept together before and you’re the one who came to the room with me!”

Jess had said no and Calvin and Hannah agreed that he should have stopped no matter how she was dressed or if she was flirting with him.

The actors ended the play with statistics about rape; how 1 in 4 college women will be victims of rape or attempted rape, or how acquaintance rape is more common than left-handedness, heart attacks or alcoholism. It is a sad reality men and women will face in their lifetime. The play effectively demonstrates how rape among friends or even boyfriends can occur, no matter the level of seemingly good friendship or even how well you might know someone. In Jessica’s case, she’d known Will for four years and was still raped. Developed by Equalogy Inc., a non-profit organization, which are dedicated to promoting awareness of issues of equality, as well as experience in the sexual assault field.

There are many resources available to you if you are a victim of sexual assault or/and domestic violence in Bergen County. YWCA Bergen County’s healing space; A sexual violence resource center. They provide a 24-hour hotline: 201-487-2227, short-term crisis intervention center, and medical and legal accompaniments among other information. Visit ywcabergen.org for more information and resources.

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Video Game Review: A 'KOMBAT' WORTH FIGHTING FOR



RAY CIESZYNSKI
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

*Scorpion Vs Sub-Zero in Mortal Kombat X, who won and who's next?
//Flickr*

The video game *Mortal Kombat X* is the tenth installment of the *Mortal Kombat* Franchise. The story of the game has you playing as one of the classic characters, such as Raiden, Johnny Cage, Sonya Blade, Jax, Scorpion or Sub-Zero.

The story mode can be played as Cassie Cage, Jacqueline Briggs, Takeda or Kung Jin, to name a few. However, this game is different from the games of the past, because, after selecting a character, the player can choose from three different variants to play as. Each variant has a unique set of attacks, special moves or weapons that are exclusive to that variant. For example, if you want to be a grappler, then you would pick Commando variant for Kano. The best variants for Kano are either cutthroat or commando. In cutthroat, Kano gains brutal knife attack and a power up move that allows him to cause extra damage to his opponent. In commando, Kano gains parries and a power slam that also lets him cause more damage. Players can not pick variants in the story which is a pain.

The classic way to end a match in the game is through the iconic Fatality finisher.

Each character has two or three fatalities. Another way to end a round is brutality, of which each character has five or six. Each character can end a fight with style and grace.

There are also five factions to pick from: The Black Dragon, Special Forces, The White Lotus, Lin Kuei and The Brotherhood of Shadows. Each one of them has their own kills that are unique to each faction.

The downloadable content (DLC) is good, but could use some work. A DLC was released, featuring Jason Voorhees, Tanya, The Predator, Tremor and Goro, one the bosses from the previous game. In my opinion, they should have featured Smoke instead of The Predator, which would have been better if he was a classic character from the series. Overall, the gameplay is excellent and needs no improvement. The graphics are great, and the controls are bearable. You have to master every special attack across the variants. The key is to find the right combo of variants that work for you and you are set. the Torch gives this game an 8/10.

Book Review: WE WERE LIARS

YOMARIE LLANOS
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

We Were Liars is a 2014 contemporary young adult book by E. Lockhart. The book has received many awards, one of them being the Goodreads Choice Award for Best Young Adult Fiction. The book itself has a very dark theme that surrounds it, but it is definitely a good read.

The book is based on a wealthy family, the Sinclairs, who spend their summers at a private island off the coast of Massachusetts, which is owned by Cadence's grandfather. Even though the story mostly focuses on Cadence Sinclair, we get to see a lot of other members of the family in those summer trips - her two aunts and their families. During these trips is where we see how torn apart the family actually is.

Lockhart's book mostly focuses on the Sinclair family's problems, self-acceptance, and finding yourself as a teenager. "You're going to want to remember the title of this book," says Breia Brissey of Entertainment Weekly.

E. Lockhart is known for her amazing symbolism and this book clearly shows her skill when it comes to emotional personification, metaphors and symbols. One part from the beginning, sets the mood for the whole book, "then he pulled out a handgun and shot me in the chest. I was standing on the lawn and I fell. The bullet hole opened wide and my heart rolled out of my rib cage and down into a flower bed." This is simply a metaphor for the pain she felt as her father left her, this is something that happens a lot in the book. Lockhart made us relate to Cadence's pain in such a beautiful and deep way, that it takes us a couple moments to understand what's happening exactly.

The Sinclairs always made sure to be seen as perfect, not one little mistake must be shown in public. "Be normal now. Because you are. Because you can be," said her mother, following Cadence's breakdown when her father left, a which is a recurring phrase throughout the book.

During the course of the story, we see the Sinclairs continuously lying to themselves to keep up appearances, but soon enough you find out that they are all slowly falling apart. In the story there are four liars, hence the title of the book, which are Cadence, Johnny, Gat, and Mirren.

It follows the relationship between the four liars and how they grow extremely close throughout all those summers, but also leaves you guessing page by page. The book falls under the category of mystery and is for anyone that enjoys a good, contemporary novel. It's a nice one sit book that will leave you thinking about it days or weeks after.



The Visit: Another Scary Senior Citizens Movie

MELISSA PEREZ
STAFF WRITER

The *Visit* trailers had people at the edge of their seats with anticipation, but when it premiered in theaters on September 11, 2015 it left audiences bored and in fits of laughter. Every second of the 94 minute film ticked by painfully slow, and there was no real horror or action until the last 20 minutes.

M. Night Shyamalan's *The Visit* is about two grandchildren recording a documentary of what it was like to meet their grandparents for the first time. As they stay with the old couple for a week, the grandparents slowly go mad. Through the lens of Becca's (Olivia DeJonge) camera, the audience sees every cringe-worthy family bonding attempt. During the day, the family would bake cookies, and Nana (Deanna Dunagan) and Pop Pop (Peter McRobbie) acted the part of a stereotypical old couple; forgetful, senile, and old fashioned.

As their visit furthers, the grandparent's behavior gradually becomes unsightly. Nana starts projectile vomiting, and Pop Pop hides a stash of soiled adult diapers out back in the shed. The week continues and the odd behavior escalates, but not one hair on the grandchildren's heads are touched. "It dragged on, it took about an entire hour for the plot to finally get interesting. My best friend, and I actually fell asleep," local movie-goer, Sophia Rosario told the Torch.

The grandparent's odd behavior was more laughable than scary. Every attempt at jump scares and suspense were just hilarious expressions and bare butt cheeks (literally). Besides dull scenes and pathetic horror, the most terrifying aspect of the movie was the grandson Tyler's rapping. The documentary style point of view is awkward, a little distracting, and does take some getting used to.

The Visit is cinematic trial and error, and puts shame to the genre that produced so many legendary movies. Not scary at all, *The Visit* is a five out of 10. Do not waste 94 minutes of your day by going to see *The Visit*.



Roving Reporter: Who will have a better season, Jets or Giants?



"Giants. I've always been a Giants fan and I like their players better."
- Devin Ortiz

ADRIAN YLLATOPA
CO-EDITOR



"I'm a Giants fan but the Jets will have a better season. They have a better defense and they are a more complete team."
- Nick Walker



"The Jets have a new QB and my dad is a Giants fan."
- Dan Mercante



"Jets. Their defense is better than the Giants. Also I don't like Eli Manning."
- Brandon Bolanos



"The Giants. I just like the Giants and support them."
- Mariah Curet

Jessica Rodriguez/The Torch

Volleyball Victorious in September



Volleyball team makes their presence known in September games.
Jessica Rodriguez/The Torch



GELBER CASTILLO
SPORTS EDITOR

Bulldog Volleyball has had a successful September run. The squad paved their way to a 10-2 winning record through concise teamwork and coordination. Veteran coach Helene Liaci, in her 5th season, has ambitions to lead the girls into the Regional Tournament.

"The team works hard and if we fine tune our passing and make aggressive plays at the net, we will have a very successful end of the season," coach Liaci said. "We need to focus on staying positive and becoming more consistent with our defence."

Nadia Vaso, Setter and a team captain, hopes to make it to the coveted tournament. "We expect to grow and grow, and we want to go to Regionals," said Vaso. "We know that when we go to Regionals we will have to face tough competition. The goal is to get there and do well there."

The girls' chances are not slim. In their Sept. 22

game against Union, they decimated their opponents (25-10, 25-22, 25-8).

"Our team came out strong," said coach Liaci. "We worked on attacking off the serve and the girls came out and did that. We stuck together as a team and kept our energy up."

The energy was proportional to the thunderous serves that boomed throughout the court. The thunderstruck Union opponents had no response to how Nadia connected with Rhonyelle Sowell and Arlene Espinal.

The start of the season wasn't perfect. In their game vs. Union, the Bulldogs had undoubtedly made mistakes, but it was their way of quickly recovering that earned their victory with many points to spare.

"We didn't have a lot of players in the beginning of the

season," said Vaso. "I guess the hardest part was working together as one team. We lost a game [vs. RCGC] and that was the reason, because we weren't playing as one team."

Coach Liaci also recognizes that the team has evolved. "We have better communication than when we started, we stick with the play and our overall court awareness and knowledge of the game has improved," said the coach.

The team, however, acknowledges that there is a long road in front of them before Regionals begin. The team comments that their Sept. 12 game against Ocean was their toughest opponent yet. The Bulldogs are expected to face them again on Oct. 3. If the girls come out victorious, we can expect them to make their presence known in the Regionals.

MALIK SCORES TWICE: BERGEN WINS 2-0 IN RAINY HOME OPENER



ADAM GRASSANI
STAFF WRITER

*Mother Nature couldn't hold the Men's soccer team back from a 2-0 shutout victory
Luis Ari Lopez Wei/The Torch*

It's that time of year again, Soccer fans! The soccer team kicked their season off to a great start on September 10, defeating Sussex County Community College by a shutout score of 2-0 at home in their first game of the 2015 season. They ended September with an 8-2 record with 2 ties.

Bergen was aggressive in the first half; attacking on the offensive rather than playing a defensive game. They had excellent possession of the ball, limiting the amount of time Sussex spent on offense, giving their defense plenty of breathing room, and keeping up the pressure on Sussex.

Eventually, all of Bergen's efforts paid off, as they finally scored with just 10 minutes left in the first half. Malik Stewart finished off an offensive surge by putting a shot right past the Sussex goalie to send his team into halftime with a 1-0 lead.

Mother Nature wasn't kind to anyone at the game today, as it rained for the entire game, sometimes to the point of a downpour. The rain clearly had an effect on the game. Not only were there multiple shots that entirely missed the net, players tripped with a lack of footing.

"The ball rolled really fast and was slippery," said Stewart, commenting on the weather conditions. "Our touches weren't that bad though. We were able to make it work otherwise for us."

In the second half, Sussex began to take more possession of the ball than they did in the first half and was more on the offensive. Despite this, Bergen remained in

control of the game thanks to their excellent defensive game. Bergen goalkeeper John Gutierrez, not only made some great saves, but was very vocal during the game, often directing and helping his teammates.

Halfway into the second half, Stewart scored yet again to give Bergen a 2-0 lead. Unlike his last goal, Malik was able to get on a breakaway, which allowed him to score easily.

"It feels good," said Malik. "I heard Sussex was a top team. We were expecting a harder game physical wise. We just stuck to our gameplan. Oswaldo gave me the assist on the top of the box and I put it in."

Bergen would take that insurance goal and go on to close out the game, winning their season opener 2-0. Malik came close to scoring yet again when he got on another breakaway to complete the hat trick, but barely missed the net.

"[It]Feels good. I don't know what else to say. I'm just happy right now," said Malik

Bergen's men's soccer team fought hard for a well deserved victory in their home opener. The season has only started, but if this game is any indication, we shouldn't expect anything less than great things. And indeed, by September's end they stood with a 8-2 record.

ESPORTS, THE WAY OF THE FUTURE?

BRENDAN DALY
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

eSports (electronic sports) and online video game competitions are taking the world by storm with live streams viewed by over 5 million people and prize pools of millions of dollars for every competition.

Throughout the years, teenagers and young adults have always seen video games as a source of friendly competition to see who can beat their high score, but now, for a lucky few, playing video games have become a source of pride and income.

eSports have been around for over a decade, but in the last couple of years, with the help of social media and live streaming sites like Twitch.tv, eSports has been brought into the international spotlight. While there are thousands of video games that people play on a daily basis, only a few are played competitively.

The three main games being played are: Starcraft II, a game based on quickly managing a player's army and protecting their home base while planning to attack the other player, Counter Strike: Global Offensive, an incredibly competitive first person shooter game which is played with well thought out strategies, and finally, Defense of the Ancients 2 (Dota 2), a 5v5 game where the objective is to break through enemy lines and destroy their base.

The appeal of eSports is that, for many, it's almost like watching a game of baseball or football, but instead of watching an athlete score points on a field, one watches one's peers play the video games they love.

In a competition held in Cologne, Germany, the prize pool for the Counter Strike tournament was over \$250,000, the winning team walked away with \$100,000. Even more impressive is The International, a Dota 2 championship tournament, where the prize pool



Players for Team Fusion getting into the game. / Courtesy of MCT Campus

is currently at \$18,429,613, and grows day by day.

The people who play these games at the "professional" level are recognized the same way we recognize Derek Jeter or Eli Manning, but they don't go by their real names, they use screen names such as "Flusha", or "Freakazoid". But not only are they recognized like normal sport stars they are even given sponsorship deals, depending on how good they are in-game.

The world of esports is viewed as a sport because of the effort these players put into their game. People view it just like they view football or baseball because the fans believe that the same amount of training and effort goes into training for a big Starcraft II tournament, that

why these games have grown huge player bases all trying to achieve the goal of playing for or against their favorite team.

Unlike Dota 2 or Counter Strike, Starcraft is a game played completely by yourself relying on your own skills and intuitions. Starcraft draws the largest viewer base. When matches are played in Asian countries, stadiums are rented out just to fill the demand of people wanting to watch these players go toe to toe with each other.

Whether being a viewer or a striving player, this new trend of professional gaming is on the uprise with no end in sight.



SPORTS



TENNIS TEAM DISBANDED, INTRAMURALS GONE, GOLF REDUCED TO CLUB STATUS

GELBER CASTILLO
SPORTS EDITOR

The athletic department has eliminated the women's tennis team and restructured the men's tennis team and golf team into a club-level sport. Clubs do not compete with other teams in the athletic region.

Tennis is known for being the last team in recent BCC history to win a championship, with

the Men's team winning the regional championship in 2013 and finishing in second place in 2014.

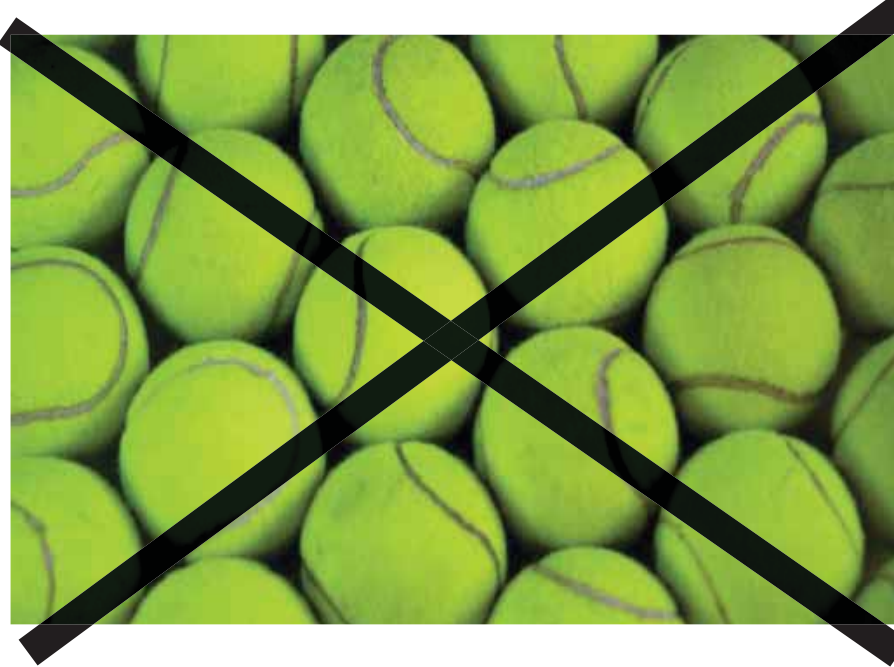
"Both men's and women's tennis teams are not going to run intercollegiately this year," said Bergen spokesman Larry Hlavenka Jr. "And that was mainly because there was unfortunately a lack of interest."

"For women's tennis we tried making a club team. It would play intercollegiately, but in that meeting only one person showed up, so the tennis club didn't run. For men's tennis in the spring, they are going to try to run a club, athletics is going to promote it and try to get people involved, so there still may be a club team in the spring for men's tennis," Hlavenka added.

Melissa Saenz was the sole athlete to try out for the women's tennis club. The first-semester student was promised a spot in what was then the tennis team by the athletic department before the fall semester began. Without a tennis team, she's currently playing for the women's soccer team.

"I went to try out in hopes to see other people but it only turned out to be me. I was hoping returning players would be coming at the start of the season but that never happened. I messaged them in hopes to get people but they were told since last year that tennis would become a club sport, not an actual division sport," said Saenz.

Tennis coach Sal Guillen is a two-time state champion coach, has been a BCC



Returning Women's Tennis players were informed that the team would become a club since July. //Flickr

employee for 22 years, and played a crucial role in creating the women's tennis team in 2012. He was the most vocal about the new changes.

"I'm very disappointed with the school," Guillen said. "It's a punch in the gut, they turned their backs on the students."

The athletic director informed Guillen late July that there would be no tennis team. After spreading the news to his players, he was then informed that it would become a tennis club.

They would only play friendly home games, but the news discouraged any returning players. "My players don't want to play, they want to compete," Guillen said.

Apart from being the tennis coach, coach Guillen also used his influence in helping create the women's soccer team in 2001. He served seven years as assistant coach for men's soccer prior to his eight years as head coach. Guillen has also supervised intramurals for the past 20 years, and open gym for the past 4 years.

"Intramurals is dead. Open gym is dead," he informed The Torch. "Today tennis is cut, tomorrow could be softball or something else."

Despite no intramurals and open gym not being available to students, the

athletic department nonetheless advertised it in the most recent athletic pamphlet.

"Golf is unfortunately not going to run inter-collegiately due to, again, low interest... It's a sport with a low number of students with a very high cost to finance matches," said Hlavenka. "That's basically what it comes down to. How might we serve students best with the budget and finances we have available to us?"

"If there's a sport with low interest and only a handful of students, we ask how we can use that money to serve a greater number of students... The other sports have much bigger rosters, there's a lot more students that are getting the opportunity to play."

"The economic situation? It's not true," coach Guillen said. "Look at the new building. How many millions did that cost? In reality, they [administration] protect their salaries." He refers to the recent hike in administration's salaries.

Despite lacking a tennis team to run, coach Guillen continues teaching classes and was optimistic about keeping his job.

"At the moment I'm still coach," he said. "We're still waiting for spring to come to work with the great candidates we have for men's tennis. At the moment, I don't think my job is in danger. Jorge [Athletic Director] told me that if we form a good team, we won't be a club anymore."

BCC's Athletic Director provided no comment.

"Being an athlete has opened many gates to me as a student and that was taken away when I was lied to," said Saenz. "Tennis has been a sport where if I was having a bad day just some hits against my team members would cheer my day."

"[BCC] has to realize that being an athlete is so much more than just being an athlete, it's creating a bond between a sport and brand new family members. You should never take that away from someone."

PROMISING SEASON AHEAD FOR GIRLS SOCCER

HENRY ORTIZ
CONTRIBUTING WRITER



The women's soccer team starts the season off strong with win against the Borough of Manhattan Community College. Henry Fowler/The Torch

The Women's Soccer Team faced the Borough of Manhattan Community College Women's Soccer Team on September 3rd, on what was their first game of the 2015-16 season. Our girls came to this game hoping for a boost start to the season and sure enough, they found it. The game opened early with a fifth minute goal by Amanda Kneppel, followed up by Bianca Torales' a 10 minute direct left strike.

A few minutes later, the opposition reacted when their forward created some trouble for our goalkeeper, who defended the attack well. At the 24 minute mark, Kneppel again surprised the opposition's goalkeeper from far, unfortunately hitting the crossbar. 10 minutes before the end of the first half Glorimar More dribbles from the left getting past a defender to then curl a beautiful low right corner goal, making it 3-0 for the Bulldogs.

Right after the third goal, the Manhattan attempted to goal with a powerful shot once again, which our goalkeeper was able to control with no problem. At the 39 minute mark was when the opponents created their most dangerous play of the first half. Center midfielder Marisa Santo, however, stopped it with authority, who minutes later worked her way up the field on a solo play which then ended on a very powerful long shot in the back of the net to put our girls 4-0, ending the first half.

In the 68th minute, the Bergen girls took advantage of an open player up the field with Kneppel connecting the ball to Morel who then beat the opposition's right back to send a cross to Bianca Torales, getting her second goal of the afternoon. 73 minutes in, our MVP, Kneppel scored the last goal

of the game earning herself a hat-trick. The game then ended with high possession and plenty of goals for our girls who also managed to get a clean sheet.

"This was a very important win because we came from a tournament where we lost and I didn't want their morale to be low, but now after a win they can go on to the regular season with a little bit more confidence knowing that they're strong together," said Coach Jollyn Dilenno in a post-game interview.

The girls were recently knocked out of the Herkimer Tournament, leaving them with many doubts that were quickly resolved after their excellent opening performance. Based on the six goals scored by the team, when asked if she specifically focused on offense, Dilenno replied, "Not really, actually we focused more on defence because that was our recent weakness, we did have a strong offense though, but that's just natural talent out there."

Kneppel, the most valuable player on the field during the September 3 game after scoring 3 goals said "I love scoring, If I don't score I get upset even if we do win." Showing her importance and how ambitious she is for wanting to score goals, a very essential trait in a key player for the team like she is.

Kneppel also mentioned that they did not give their strongest performance at the Herkimer Tournament, but later stated that, "this win is encouraging for every one of my teammates and I, [and] towards the beginning of the new season." This win has undoubtedly removed the bitter taste of defeat from their last tournament participation.