



BCC Swears in Five New Trustees

LESHAY JONES
NEWS EDITOR

The Bergen Community College's Board of Trustees welcomed five new members to the board: Joseph Barreto, Patrick Fletcher, Mark Longo, Carol Otis and Sheetal Ranjan.

The new trustees took the oath of office on Feb. 7 and each will serve a term of three years, with the exception of Mr. Barreto, who will be filling in for Germaine Ortiz. Mr. Ortiz has been elected as a Bergen County freeholder and his term will end on Oct. 31, 2017 according to the BCC website.

Board members James Demetrakis and Irene Oujó also took the oath of office to renew their terms.

Each new trustee brings their own set of unique qualifications in education and trade to the board. Barreto, of Hackensack, has 30 years of experience in working as a high school guidance counselor in East Harlem. His dedication to the field paid off and he received the Manhattan High School Counselor of the Year award. He is also currently serving as the president of the Latino American Democratic Association of Bergen County, as well as treasurer/secretary of the Bergen County Board of Social Services.

Fletcher, of River Edge, started off as the superintendent of schools in the River



Carol Otis.



Patrick Fletcher.



Sheetal Ranjan.



Mark Longo.



Joseph Barreto.

Dell Regional School District in 2006. In 2014 he won the New Jersey Association of School Administrator's Northern Superintendent of the Year award.

Longo, of Cresskill, is currently working as the director of the Engineers Labor-Employer Cooperative. He previously worked as the executive director of the New Jersey Building and Construction Trades Labor Management Council.

Otis, of Teaneck, previously served on the board from 2007 to 2012 and has returned for another term. She co-edited a textbook entitled "World of Food" that won the National Family, Career and Community Leaders of America Distinguished Service Award.

Ranjan, of Teaneck, is currently a criminal justice professor at William Paterson University. She also is strongly involved in research on domestic and campus violence and has helped the University in receiving a \$600,000 federal grant in order to implement the Campus Violence Prevention Program.

All of the new members of the Board of Trustees bring some promising traits to the table.

Five New Trustees// Courtesy of Larry Hlavenka

Bergen Gets its Wings

DAVID PEREZ
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

A 16 foot long single seat Onex was obtained by Bergen Community College via the College's foundation.

The plane was independently appraised for \$65,000 and will be used by those in the Aviation programs and potentially be used by STEM students.

The plane's previous owner was Woody Saland, who spent 1,500 hours building it. After 40 hours of flight time Woody thought it was best that his plane be used for another purpose and then sought out for a non profit organization that can use his plane.

With this in mind, he eventually came across the Bergen Community College Foundation and donated his plane. The plane was officially accepted at the main campus in December.

The Onex's home will be in the TEC building at the main campus. The TEC building also has two flight simulators.

The plane itself has its engine effectively "fixed." However, the instruments in the cockpit still function properly. Students may even be able to look at the engine if not the entire plane itself for mock repairs or maintenance.

Since the plane's engine has been disabled it won't be flying anytime soon. There won't be any major maintenance; if anything there might be small time maintenance to make sure the plane can be used for class. This may cause someone to ask how the college may show off the plane if it chooses to.

The original owner, Woody, has donated the trailer to the college as well. This allows the college to throw some logos on it and take it to a fair or something of that nature. This allows for an interesting conversation starter when one brings a plane to a fair. This is yet another thing the college has added to stand out in the crowd when it comes to colleges of a similar caliber.



From left to right, Bergen CC Dean of Math, Science and Technology PJ Ricatto, Ph.D., builder and donor of The Onex Woody Saland and Bergen Vice President of Academic Affairs William Mullaney Ph.D. //news.bergen.edu



White House Website
Removes LGBTQ Page
pg. 5



The Importance of Real
News pg. 6

NEWS

The Torch

BCC Staff Organizes Hate Has No Home Here Peace Rally



FERNANDO VAZQUEZ
STAFF WRITER

Graphics show unity and love. // pixabay.com(left) hatehasnohomehere.wordpress.com(right)

It's been more than four weeks since the new president of the United States, Donald Trump stepped into office, which put flame to a fuse.

His election into office began the serious controversies, controversial remarks, and signature policies. The first official week of Trump in office began with an enormous worldwide support of the Women's March through the intolerant and abhorrent Trump administration policies.

The demonstration took place in the eleventh-hour with a steady crowd, people supporting, some people walking by and others looking with curiosity but with support.

"I didn't know this happened. Now I have to focus on this class. I would have supported" the march, said Daniel Jones, a General Science major running late for class.

People held wonderful posters of anti-hate and support for unity and with great

hosts from former and current students and the professors of BCC organized a wonderful rally "Hate Has No Home Here" on campus.

It was originally intended to be outside, but due to the inclement weather, the demonstration took place in the Pitkin Student Center.

BCC student Tristan Anderson gave a great speech that ended with a grand applause and cheers.

"I'm standing here to let you know

that I don't stand for hate. I don't stand for prejudice, instead for compassion and love," Anderson said.

Professor Mark Weiner, a professor of the Math Department, stepped up to the podium before a growing crowd and advised the faculty, students, and staff who gathered that their school stands in solidarity.

"We are not here to protest people. We are not here to protest ideas, We are here to remember that we are one community."

Safety in Unity for Immigrants



JASON RAMOS
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Bergen Community College is a safe place that builds extraordinary men and women for the success of the future. //Rebecca Karpinski

Each person has the right to feel safe going to school to learn and better oneself. But President Trump is stripping people of these rights and has signed executive orders to deport illegal immigrants.

These strict orders are destroying peoples' lives by tearing families apart and destroying them financially, and it is upsetting America. Students and school administration, however, have stepped up to the cause to counterstrike these orders.

"The senate executive committee, including Brian Cordell, is working with the administration on this important initiative" Stacey Balkan, a professor at BCC, said.

She introduced that safety is needed in Bergen Community College. She feels

that everyone deserves to feel safe coming to this institution. She also doesn't want any student to feel uncomfortable

"A student of mine shouldn't have to worry about whether she is safe. No student should be subjected to illegal searches of their records. We are not breaking the law, we are upholding the Federal Law. We can't necessarily control what happens beyond our campus, but we ought to make every effort to prevent hate and discrimination at BCC," Balkan said.

She is making it known that Bergen Community College isn't going to stand by and let these things happen. Professor Balkan brought this to the Faculty Senate in November. Deans Victor Brown and Ilene Kleinman and Academic Affairs

Vice President William Mullaney unanimously agreed to start the process to make Bergen Community College a sanctuary, according to Balkan.

Our sister school, Rutgers University, started their movement only on an symbolic level that shows compassion towards religion, race, and human rights. But the movement has changed to make the school a sanctuary that guarantees its students' safety by upholding the individual's right to refuse police requests for records.

Creating places that show unity and love is a great feeling that should be passed to every single soul.

Rutgers student Courtney Davenport has attended a rally at Rutgers and has

been in an ongoing fight against racism and religious discrimination. Davenport describes the No Ban No Wall protest at Rutgers, saying, "It's powerful but I want more to be done for Muslims and other targeted communities."

On January 31, hundreds of students and New Brunswick residents rallied at Rutgers University and even put out a blue plastic sheet to give as much comfort to those who wanted to pray. Balkan has worked to bring this movement to Bergen Community College.

April Adams, founder of the movement, has encouraged other facility members Brian Cordell and Balkan to get involved in HHNHH (Hate Has No Home Here) movement.

New Articulation Agreement with Bellevue University

HEINEKEN QUEEN

STAFF WRITER

In addition to more than 40 transfer partnerships with colleges and universities in- and out-of-state, Bergen Community College has recognized a new articulation agreement with Bellevue University.

Articulation Agreements make it easier for community college students to transfer to four-year schools, providing opportunities such as transferring all credits earned when graduating with associate degree, receiving scholarship opportunities, and many more.

Located in Nebraska, Bellevue University is a private, non-profit university focused on skills to performance. The university offers approximately 75 undergraduate and graduate degree programs, offered in campus and online.

Out of the 13,000 students enrolled, about 10,000 are online students. Programs are focused mainly on working adults and are geared to establish cyber-active learning to customize the educational experience for more flexibility.

On campus, their student-to-faculty ratio is 10-to-1. There are also a lot of international students on their campus, and they have a partnership with Guangzhou College of Commerce in Guangzhou, China.

Bellevue University is for students who are looking for a more catered approach to their academic learning experience. They will have

their own dedicated financial and academic advisor, called a Student Coach, who will guide them throughout their academic journey in Bellevue.

Students will also have their librarian who will mail required textbooks to their house. The university also offers Skype tutoring for different subjects such as science, mathematics and writing, done by professional tutors who have already earned their degrees.

Because Bellevue is an open access university, meaning they don't require testing, and there is no in- and out-of-state tuition and fees. It is based on what kind of program a student will be enrolled in.

"Part of our performance metrics and our goals are to graduate as many students with as little to no debt as possible," said Erica James, Bellevue University's representative on Bergen Community College's campus.

Transfer students who attend Bellevue University with their Associate's Degree in hand will have already completed at least the 60 credit hours out of 127 required to get a Bachelor's Degree. Bellevue accepts all credit hours earned, including Ds.

"It's an opportunity for students who may have had some challenges academically and looking for a chance to build their academic record," James said.

Transfer students who did not earn their associate degree



Students of Bellevue University. //Wikipedia Commons

may do a transfer audit where the classes they've taken will be reviewed and considered based on their area of study.

Students who already obtained their bachelor's degree and are gearing toward a second degree may still transfer.

Bellevue also offers the Accelerated Cohort program to those who have their associated degree or have earned at least 60 credits. In this program, students will join colleagues who have the same degree track as them, and will go through the entire academic program with the

same peers.

The main advantage of this program is that students only need to register for their courses once; they won't have to worry about classes filling up and being waitlisted for the next semester.

To earn a Bachelor's Degree at Bellevue University, transfer students will need to complete 40 credit hours under their major, 18 credit hours of electives, and nine credit hours of Bellevue's Kirkpatrick Signature Series.

The Kirkpatrick Signature Series is a requirement for all Bellevue University

students, and it focuses on the institutions and traditions of Western Civilization, which Bellevue considers an essential learning for adults in America today.

Since Bellevue is an accredited university, transfer students are eligible to receive financial aid and scholarships. Students who have a 2.5 GPA or above may be eligible for a \$1,500 transfer scholarship, while Phi Theta Kappa members may receive up to \$2,500. Additional scholarships are available to admitted transfer students.

Asian Club Offers Scholarship

PURNA SAHA

STAFF WRITER

The Asian Club at Bergen offers unique educational opportunities through their scholarships, which celebrate students of many cultures, including Japanese, Filipino, Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese, Indian, and Muslim. International students who are either part-time or full-time are eligible, as are Bergen students of any background or location, including Africans, Hispanics, and Asians.

College loans are no joke; the national average for student debt is close to \$40,000. Even at Bergen, paying back loans can be a years-long hassle. That's why scholarships are essential to students. They can be used to pay for any or all courses that are required for your program. Some scholarships require a personal essay and application while others are specific to certain majors. Some even allow students to study abroad.

However, some eligible students can skip the application and compete in an art contest sponsored by the Asian Heritage Committee.

"This scholarship is allocating part of the Asian Heritage Committee's budget, which was coming from Multicultural Affairs Office and this is the first time that this contest is held," said Mina Ahn, associate professor in the department of psychology and the advisor of Korean club.

Have you ever been asked, "Where are you from?" We live in a world where we are often judged by our appearance. Many of us are defined by external factors, sometimes superficially, by country or ethnicity. However, our identity is much more prolific and complex. Along with visual and primary identification, we have many secondary identities that are internal or not visually recognizable. We may develop multi-layered experiences and identification, while adapting to the local culture. In fact, we might adapt to the local culture even more successfully than the native residents. In this art contest, show us through creative expression what the theme "I am Local: Multiple Layers of Identity" means to you!

Entry criteria
All Bergen students are eligible to submit entries. You may submit more than one entry. Original art work must be two dimensional and the maximum size is 24x35". Entries must be submitted in JPG format. Please email your entries to mahn@bergen.edu.

Deadline
All entries must be submitted by February 15, 2017, at 5:00 p.m.

Award recognition
First Place: \$300
Second Place: \$200
Third Place: \$100

Winners will be notified individually by email by February 25, 2017. Submitted art work will be displayed around the Paramus campus and winners will be asked to be present at the annual Asian recognition luncheon on April 18, 2017. Contact Professor Mina Ahn at mahn@bergen.edu if you have any questions.

Bergen Community College | Office of Multicultural Affairs
HACKENSACK | MEADOWLANDS | PARAMUS
Bergen Community College is an equal opportunity institution. For disability accommodation, please contact the Office of Specialized Services at 201-612-2269 or osv@bergen.edu.

Flyer of the event. //Bergen

Students were encouraged to take part in the art contest through posters around campus, and through advertisements in the Bergen Daily news. Ahn also personally spread the word through faculty, staff members and students on campus.

There were no specific talents required for this scholarship; students must simply present a creative and artistic expression of who they are.

The scholarship's purpose is to explore the whole identity and to inspire creation through ethnicity and culture, reflecting the theme of this year's contest: "I am Local: Multiple Layers of Identity."

Students could submit more than one entry of original artwork. Each piece had to be two-dimensional, with a maximum size of 24 x 35 inches and be in a JPG file format. As long as there is funding available in the Asian Heritage Committee, the contest will be held annually.

Based on the masterpieces they submit, students were notified individually by e-mail on Feb. 25.

There were three separate levels of recognition. The first-place winner was awarded \$300, second place \$200 and third place \$100.

"The students are to be awarded on April 18 at the annual Asian recognition luncheon, in which many

students are invited to celebrate and recognize their talents," said Ahn.

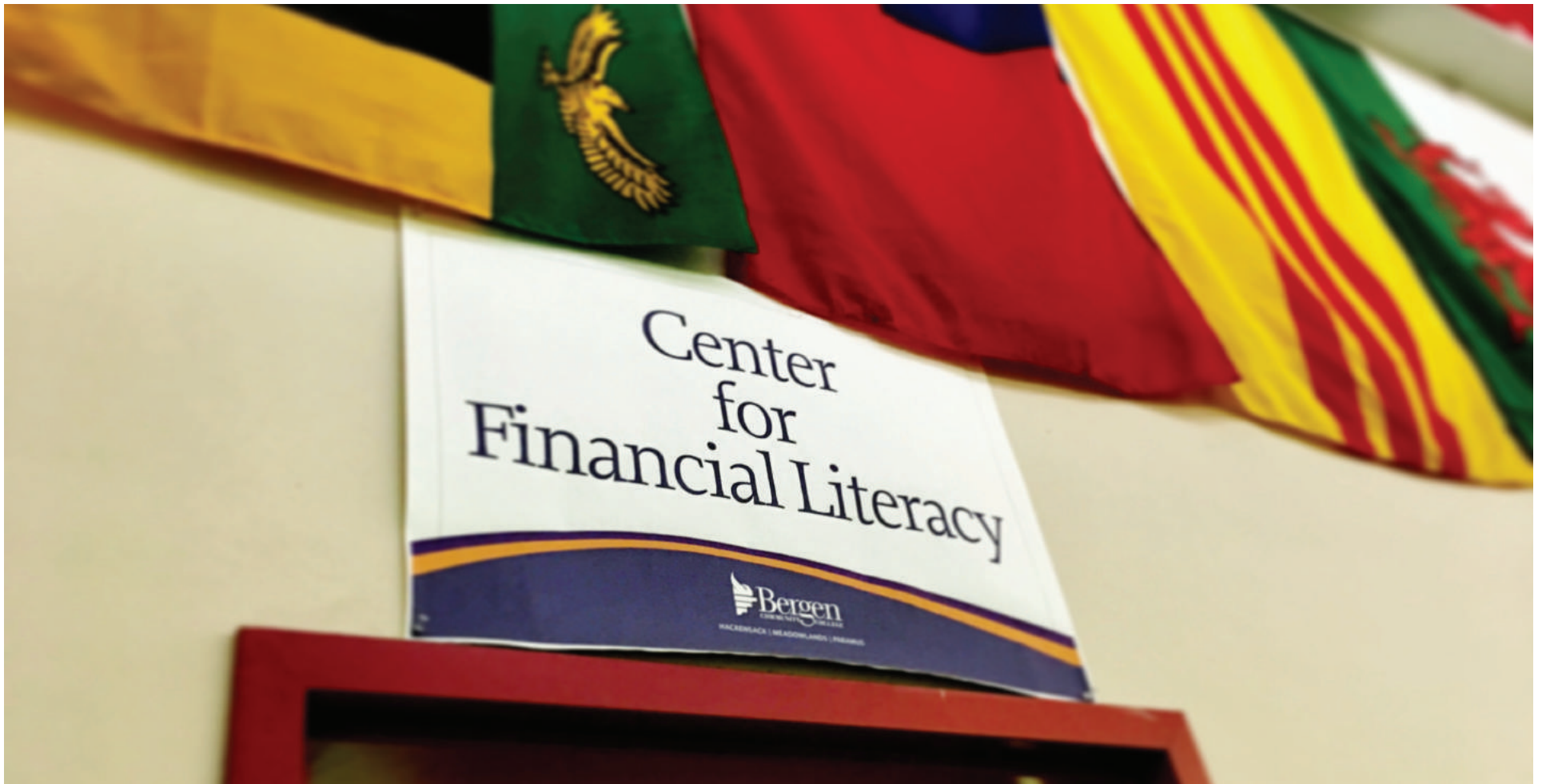
The audience will also include Board members of BCC who are either staff or faculty members. The student who is awarded first place for the contest is set to give a speech at the luncheon, while James Dao, the op-ed editor of the New York Times, will be the keynote speaker of the event.

Scholarships can come in all sizes and forms. Students should be on the lookout for opportunities like the one the Asian Club presents each year. The student artwork that was submitted is now up in the halls of West Hall's third floor.

Beyond the prizes, contestants could gain multi-layered experience and a deeper understanding of their background. This is a major avenue for students to learn and express their ideas, show off to rest of the campus and also pick up a few extra dollars for school.

Those who are interested in general scholarships can visit the Bergen Community College Foundation page and use the search tools. Once directed to the scholarship website, students have to login with their BCC IDs and fill out the general application describing necessary skills and aptitudes. They will then get confirmation through their e-mail.

Financial Literacy Center Opens for Business



The entrance to your financial needs. //Rebecca Karpinski

YASMEEN BROWN
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

It seems that the quote “a new year new me” doesn’t only apply to individual people, but to the staff here at Bergen Community College as well. With the recent opening of the Financial Literacy Center, located in room A111, the college is looking to teach students financial responsibility.

Michelle Anders, who works in the office, said, “Financial literacy is not a

life skill that’s being taught,” meaning that students aren’t being given the proper foundations to help them build financial security as young adults.

Anders went on to elaborate how understanding finances as a student is important for the future. If a student takes a loan out for school, there must be an understanding that it will need to be paid back in full.

Anders further went into how students need to budget themselves by jotting down their “needs versus their wants.” Budget yourself with the things you need in moderation.

The literacy center also emphasizes the topic of credit.

For example, Anders feels “some students don’t know how credit cards work. They assume it’s free money

but it all has a fee. So yeah, you got everything you wanted but now you ruined your own credit and without credit, you can’t own anything.”

The Financial Literacy Center will most certainly help students understand finances and the importance of knowing what and why they are spending.

BCC Mock Trials Club Shows Their Spirit

CHRISTOPHER MOLINA
STAFF WRITER

After busy days at Fordham University in New York City, Bergen Community College’s Mock Trial Club has returned to BCC after winning an award granted them by fellow contestants.

The club focuses on a delicate blend of wanting to win every case they receive and enjoying their time in the mock courtroom. The competitions are sponsored by the American Mock Trial Association, an organization that presides over all collegiate mock trial teams in the country.

The club generally competes in one tournament every spring. An interesting quirk of the mock trials is that not every club member acts as an attorney or prosecutor. Club members must also be witnesses, making some trials seem almost like a play.

Until now, BCC’s mock trial club had little success in competing against institutions over the years. This year, the Mock Trial Club won an award for being the most spirited group at the competition, even though it was the club’s first appearance in this kind of environment.

A lot of work and preparation went in before their arrival. Groups made up of eight students pushed each other, competing against some of the best institutions such as Ivy League and other state universities.

Along with the tournament comes fierce competition, which many of the club members were already aware of.

“I think pretty much everybody who was there thought it was one of the most stressful competitions ever,” said Bergen student and club member Kate Columbo.

Despite the fierce competition coming from the tournament, the club pulled through earning them their biggest award yet, the Spirit of AMTA.



This year’s Bergen Community College’s Mock trial club. //Courtesy of Mecheline Farhat

The award is given out to the team who is the most friendly and most fair played out of all the teams competing in the tournaments.

The way Spirit of AMTA was not awarded by the organizers but by the other teams, who voted on which team who lived up to those expectations. Although it may not be a first place trophy, it’s considered one of their biggest achievements for the club and for BCC.

“This is the first team that ever competed outside of Bergen before, so this award is a really big deal for us,” said Columbo.

This achievement is also seen as beneficial for the students who are credited for their performance at the tournament.

“For the student, it means that their hard work and effort paid off because these students pushed [themselves] to compete,” said Mecheline Farhat professor of criminal justice and supervisor for the Mock Trial Club.

However, since it was their first appearance in this kind of tournament, it took time for the club to be able to go, gathering funds and getting approval from the college, many intuitions had time since August compare any by the

time when the mock trial had already gathered enough funds along the approval from the college with it in late December.

This led the club to have a month and a half worth of preparation. However, Farhat felt that she had done her job well in teaching these students how to handle themselves in well in harsh environments.

It means a lot to them because the very least, even though this is the first time ever competing and they didn’t have enough time to prepare, they were prepared enough to make an impression,” said Farhat.

White House Website Removes LGBTQ Page

NICK COWLING
Contributing Writer

The page dedicated to the president's policy and position on LGBTQ activism has been removed from the official website of the White House.

The section tab simply labeled "ISSUES", features several problems and challenges deemed noteworthy by newly elected President Donald Trump. However, the site makes no mention of the previously acknowledged civil rights issue.

Outrage from gay rights activist groups followed this purging with great concern. In a nation still experiencing division on this subject, the removal of a pivotal human rights concern alarmed supporters of gay equality.

Also removed from the site was a statement made by former Secretary of State John Kerry detailing regret made over the department's past history of removal of employees based on suspicion of sexual orientation.

This remorse was in response to actions taken in the 1950s known as the "Lavender Scare." These actions were pervasive dismissals of homosexuals from government positions that were deemed as a safety measure against what was considered sexual delinquency.

The apology read, "On behalf of the Department, I apologize to those who were impacted by the practices of the past and reaffirm the Department's steadfast commitment to diversity



The pride flag is the most prevalent of LGBTQ imagery. /Wikipedia

and inclusion for all our employees, including members of the LGBTQ community."

This removal is consistent with positions held by Vice President Mike Pence regarding the gay community. In March of 2015, Pence, the governor of Indiana at the time, signed into effect a measure known as Indiana's Religious Freedom Restoration Act.

LGBTQ organizations sharply opposed this signing, feeling a potential for increased discrimination against the demographic.

Concerns over other issues, such as gay adoption and transgender bathroom rights, remain high. Exit polls showed that those who identified themselves as part of the LGBTQ community voted overwhelmingly against Donald Trump in the 2016 election.

During the Republican National Convention, in the wake of the mass shooting at a gay nightclub which left 49 dead, Trump spoke briefly on the community:

"As your president, I will do everything in my power to protect our LGBTQ citizens from the violence and oppression of a hateful foreign ideology. Believe me."

Whether this protection extends to threatening domestic ideology remains to be seen.

BAY PATH
UNIVERSITY
1897

Finish What You Started!



Transfer Information Sessions

Wednesday, May 10 5:00 pm - 8:00 pm

Don't Just Transfer to Bay Path, Transform Your Life.

BAYPATH.EDU

588 Longmeadow Street Longmeadow,

MA 01106 413.565.1235 transfer@baypath.edu

SUMMER
SESSIONS 2017

MAY • JUNE • JULY • AUGUST

earn summer credits your way
every day, with time to play

9 sessions to choose from
online, on-campus and hybrid courses

Montclair State University
IT'S ALL HERE.

view course schedule at montclair.edu/summer

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.

ADRIANNA CARABALLO
Editor-In-Chief

ADAM GRASSANI
Co-Editor

THEA OH
Copy Editor

LESHAY JONES
News Editor

ALYSSA BLUNDO
Features Editor

ANTHONY KHELIL
Sports Editor

JONATHAN OROZCO
Online Editor

KARINA QUINTERO
Layout Editor

FOREVER HOLMES
Ad Manager

REBECCA KARPINSKI
Photo Editor

PROF. LEW WHEATON
Advisor

CORRECTIONS

The Torch strives for the highest journalistic standards and accuracy. Readers are encouraged to contact us if they find any mistakes in any edition of the Torch

EDITORIAL AND OPINION PIECES

As an open public forum, The Torch welcomes guest opinion pieces and letters to the editor from any member of the Bergen Community College community. Materials should be submitted to eictorch@gmail.com or delivered to The Torch office, SC-111. Such submissions must include the writer's name, contact information and affiliation with the college. Students should include their major; faculty and staff should include campus title or position. Opinion pieces are limited to 600 words and letters to the editor to 200 words. The Torch reserves the right to edit and to refuse publication of any submission.

The Torch offices are located in Room SC-111D, 400 Paramus Road Paramus, NJ 07652-1595 201.493.5006/5007 eictorch@gmail.com

FOLLOW US



FB.com/bergentorch

The Importance of Real News



Trump only believes in his news.. //Rebecca Karpinski

ADRIANNA CARABALLO
EDITOR IN CHIEF

It is no secret that Trump has described the media as being “the enemy of the people,” a very totalitarian statement. He later cleared up his statement by saying “I called the fake news the enemy of the people and they are.”

You can always count on Trump to backtrack what he said and blame the other person, and in this case that other person would be the media.

It shouldn't be a surprise that Trump is at odds with the media, since the goal of the media is to uncover the truth, while the goal of Trump is often to sweep his indiscretions

under the rug with alternative facts and strong rhetoric.

Oh, you better believe it's working. The media and the people of America hold onto every word he says, even if it's obvious what he is saying is untrue.

He is the king of discretion and he is terrifyingly entertaining, which is probably why the media covers him 24/7. I can't look at my phone without seeing some sort of news alert that both scares and amuses me.

Even before his presidency, Trump was constantly covered by the media and received more coverage than Hillary Clinton and Bernie Sanders.

The media might have served Trump his presidency on a silver platter.

If that is the case, then why does he dislike it so much? It's simple: he loves it when it's helping him and hates it when it isn't. All he can do in turn is damage the reputation of the media by calling it fake news.

The term fake news is being thrown around now for fun and is being repeated by citizens, like a lot of what Trump says. We need to understand that there is a big difference between deliberate fake news and honest mistakes.

There are tabloids that put out lies daily, but president Trump is not complaining

about tabloids. The news organizations on his naughty list include CNN, The New York Times, Huffington post, BuzzFeed, and many more.

These are established and respected news sources that Trump dislikes. Now, I am well aware that at one point or another these news sources had an issue with integrity, but we need to ask ourselves why?

Is the misinformation deliberate or just human error? As a reader, I urge you to be aware of what you read. From Trump to the media, never take word for word what is said. Verify, and then make judgment before calling something “fake.”

CORRECTION

The Torch reported erroneously in the February 2017 edition that Gov. Chris Christie had attended the swearing-in of Bergen County Prosecutor Gurbir Grewal at BCC in January.

Public Safety informed our editors and reporters that Christie and more than 300 guests were coming for what would be a private ceremony we were not permitted to cover. The Student Center and our adjacent newsroom were closed.

We failed to call the governor's office following the ceremony to get his remarks, which would have disclosed that he cancelled his appearance at the last minute.

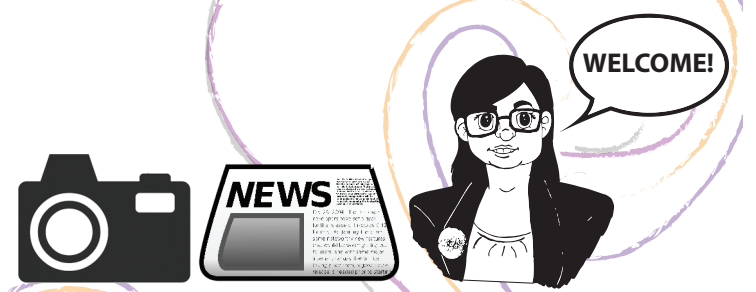
The Torch regrets the error.



JOIN THE TORCH

MEETINGS ON TUESDAYS AT 12:30 P.M. SC-111

NOW SEEKING WRITERS, CARTOONISTS, AND PHOTOGRAGHERS



ALL MAJORS AND SKILL LEVELS WELCOME!

GOT QUESTIONS?
EICTORCH@GMAIL.COM



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 Society of Professional Journalists: Breaking News Editorial, Editorial Writing, Best All-Around Non-Daily Student Newspaper





*Transgender Veteran
inspires BCC*
pg. 10



*History Behind St.
Patrick's Day*
pg. 13

OPINIONS

The Torch

Bergen Has a What?

BRANDON LANSKI
Contributing Writer

You may be surprised to hear that Bergen Community College has not one, but two TV studios. They're both fully equipped for live broadcast with a dedicated TV channel to complete the setup. What's mind blowing is that we've had all this since the 70's, according to Jim Quimby, supervisor of media technologies. So, why haven't you heard of it?

Firstly, BCC's programming is nowhere to be found upon a Netflix search. This being a television station means it's becoming progressively less relevant to incoming students.

There's also the issue of content. If you were to tune into the BCC channel, you would likely either find coverage of the county freeholders' meeting or a rather dreary informational program, and who under the age of 100 wants to watch that?

You could be forgiven for believing that the school is simply out of touch with what the students want. It's true that the palette of content is dry. However, this wasn't always the case.

The channel started out as an extension of the library and was meant



Standard definition broadcast studio at Bergen Community College. //Brandon Lanski

to offer videos relating to courses offered at Bergen, Quimby informs. A fairly "cutting edge" idea for its time, it was called "Distance learning telecourse."

The studios were also used as a duplication center. The distance learning telecourse videos, for example, were duplicated to be re-broadcast through other New Jersey community colleges.

There also used to be many sports broadcasts, which were eventually killed off due to coaches' concerns about other teams studying the films.

Still, some good content is surviving through Studio Bergen and another program offering highlights from Bergen Stages productions. Even still, the station feels as though it's missing something.

What the station needs is more content and for it to be produced better. The challenge lies in the manpower required, as video production takes a lot of people and a lot of time.

The relatively small staff simply can't be expected to keep up. Because of this limitation, independent BCC productions are becoming an

increasingly rare occurrence.

This is upsetting, since Bergen's television setup is a real, multi-million dollar setup. The idea it's seen it's best days before anyone really knew the station existed is a terrible shame.

So, you may be wondering how you can get involved in the media club. Well you can't, because it doesn't exist. Or at least not anymore.

There was, at one time, a media club helping out with the short staffing problems. They worked on projects for the BCC TV station until the club disbanded.

Students should not feel discouraged. The media department is always looking for students who want to help out and get their hands on some very cool equipment, such as broadcast grade cameras, live video switch boards and a plethora of other equipment.

Getting experience with this stuff isn't only cool, it will almost certainly launch you ahead of the curve if you're looking to get into any kind of video production.

So if you're interested, you can speak with anyone in the media technologies department in the West Hall on the lower floor.

Surviving Emotional Abuse

REBECCA KARPINSKI
Photo Editor

Emotional abuse is any kind of abuse that is emotional, rather than physical, in nature. It can include anything from verbal abuse and constant criticism to more subtle tactics, such as intimidation, manipulation, and refusal to ever be pleased.

Emotional abuse is like brainwashing in that it systematically wears away at a person's self-confidence, sense of self-worth, trust in perceptions and self-concept. Whether it is done by constant berating and belittling or by intimidation, the results are similar. Eventually, the abused person loses all sense of self. Emotional abuse cuts to the very core of a person, creating scars that may be deeper and longer lasting than physical ones.

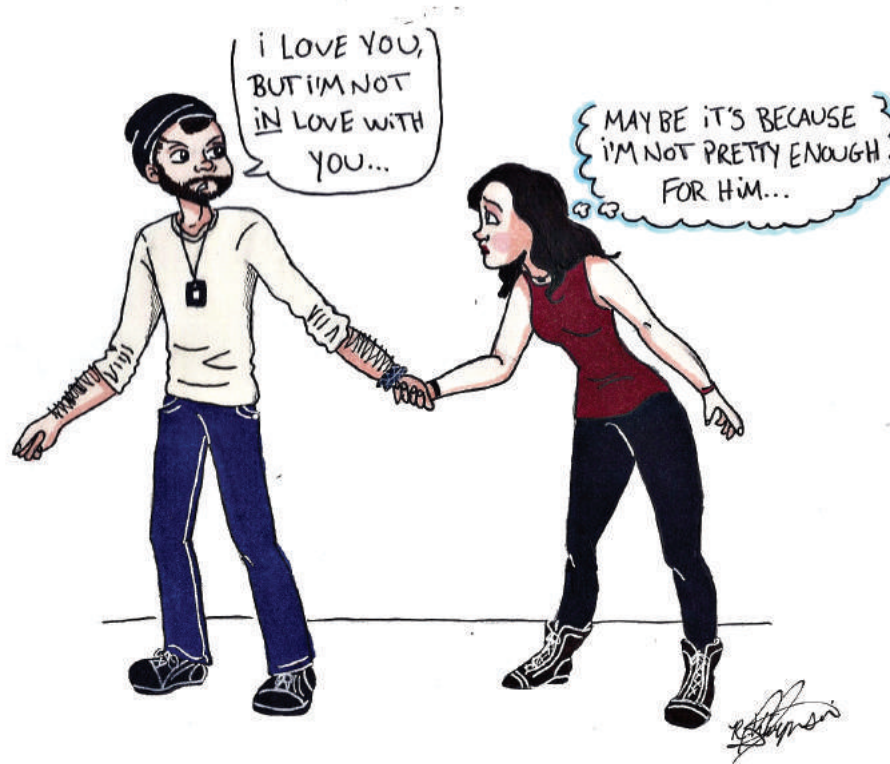
Back in 2012, I met a boy by the name of Billy, on a popular blogging site at the time. We both shared similar interests and we fast became pretty good friends, but as time went on, I developed feelings for him.

I eventually built up enough courage to tell him how I felt, in hopes that he'd like me back. This boy flat out told me that I was not pretty enough for him.

I then went online and saw that he commented on another girl's picture, saying she was stunning. I thought that maybe if I looked like that girl, then maybe he'd like me. I changed my entire appearance for him in hopes that he would notice. Surely enough, he did.

That was when I developed a self image problem. I thought that no boy would ever look my way or want me unless I was made up like a Barbie Doll and dressed to the nines. I still struggle with these thoughts today.

In 2014, I ended up joining the same performance ensemble that Billy performed in and feelings grew as time moved on. I guess you could say we were a "thing" during this time, but it



Sometimes it's easier to let go than hold on. //Rebecca Karpinski

fluctuated over a period from August to February.

One day we were "a thing" then the next day he changed his mind. He'd kiss me and treat me like a queen another day, then regret it. Because of how on-and-off these events were, I developed trust issues.

I didn't know what was going to happen the next time I saw him, whether he was going to be the sweet and kind boyfriend he was half the time, or if he was going to break my heart by rapidly changing his mind again.

We ended up dating for 4 months, which, in hindsight, is really not that long and I should have seen it coming.

Throughout the entire relationship Billy would put me down and make me feel horrible about myself. He would tell me how much more educated he was because he was a college graduate (and how he was borderline "genius") and how I was nowhere near his intellect because I was still just a senior in high school at the time.

He also compared the knocking down of his elementary school in

Garfield to be far more worse than the death of my own father, for whom he attended the wake.

By this time, not only did I have a self image problem, I now had a self confidence problem and it was affecting my performance in school with my grades, with my peers, and how I carried myself in general.

I kept to myself and was more reserved towards the end of the relationship because I didn't want to say something that may either offend him or have him say something to make me feel less than I actually was. I just let Billy do all the talking while I just stayed silent.

We broke up via Snapchat on Feb. 23, 2015, with him telling me that he loved me, but wasn't in love with me, and that he was going to stay with me but probably not for much longer.

This boy gave our relationship an expiration date. I broke up with him right then and there because why wait when you know it is inevitable anyway.

Because of how poorly I was treated in the relationship, all I could think was "What did I do that was so wrong?"

To this day I still remember what Billy has said to me and has treated me and it has seriously affected me mentally and emotionally. It's been pretty difficult trying to build up the courage to ask another guy out in fear that my past is only just going to repeat itself.

A lot of people don't realize that what you say and how you treat people can seriously affect how people think and feel about themselves especially if you treat someone a certain way constantly.

Watch what you say and how you treat people because you never know whether you are causing emotional damage or not. Billy didn't know.

Rock the Socks

A Local Baby's Struggle Sparks Charity



CHRISTOPHER MOLINA
Staff Writer

Residents from far and wide are coming together to help a baby girl born with a rare and incurable skin disease. Mackenzie Cadmus, of Teaneck, who's close to a year old was born with a disease called Dystrophic Epidermolysis Bullosa, or DEB, that causes her skin to be extremely sensitive.

"Obviously we were in shock, but we knew from the moment of her birth she had absent skin on her leg and her hands, so we knew something was dramatically wrong," said Liz Cadmus, mother of Mackenzie. Despite her troubles, Mackenzie is not alone in this fight both of her parents, Liz and Nick Cadmus have taken upon themselves started their own campaign called "Rock the Socks."

This campaign aims to raise money and spread awareness of the disease in hopes that it will get the media's attention and the funding it needs so they can

get the research they need to find a cure. The campaign aims to spread awareness by having many people post photos of themselves with socks covering their hands on their Facebook page. Over a thousand photos were posted onto their pages ranging from relatives, friends, and even the Jacksonville Jaguars, an NFL football team.

What started out as something small later received a much larger audience, bringing in thousands of dollars each month, something that Liz and Nick Cadmus were surprised about.

"Initially it started out as an idea where we wanted to bring some awareness or some attention to the disease, and it has grown dramatically since then" said Liz.

The Rock the Socks campaign has brought in over \$140,000 with help from the special needs trust and individual donations made through online, which

aims in reaching \$200,000. The donations will help fund Mackenzie's bone marrow transplant, along with bandages and ointment that are needed in her daily life.

The DEB causes the skin to blister and become increasingly fragile. With the skin being in such a fragile state, it can be injured easily, causing painful blisters to form and inflicting serious problems if infected. The National Library of Medicine, operated under the federal government and the world's largest medical library, said 6.5 per million newborns are diagnosed in this country alone. And like cancer, DEB has no cure. However it has said that mild forms may improve with age. Treatment for the disease focuses on addressing the symptoms, such as infection, itching, internal blistering, and difficulty swallowing.

For Mackenzie's parents, Rock the

Socks is more than just a name: It originated from their time spent at the Columbia Presbyterian Medical Center in New York City, where they learned how to wrap the bandages around Mackenzie's infected arms. However, bandages would always come off due to Mackenzie's continuously rotating her arms.

The nurse soon pointed out that socks would help keep the bandages in place. While wearing her colorful socks she would receive attention from many of the nurses, who said, "go rock those socks, girl." From that point on, people would ask questions behind the sock on her hands, which the parents saw as spreading awareness of the disease.

Despite what all has been done for Mackenzie, the pain certainly hasn't gone

away. To take care of a child like Mackenzie requires hours of maintenance. With all that, her attitude hasn't changed.

"Mackenzie is a trooper. I think Mackenzie is probably one the strongest people I ever met in my life," said Nick Cadmus. And even the tough times proved no challenge for her. "When it's a really bad week, if she has blisters in her throat or she's throwing up blood and missing a lot of skin on her leg and is just really sore, she smiles through it all."

With the help and support from other people, the parents want their daughter to live a life full of confidence and strength and the courage to never slow down; in hopes that she will overcome this disease.

For additional information go on

www.facebook.com/RockTheSocks-Mackenzie/

and for donations, go on

<https://www.gofundme.com/25qu8us>

"initially it started out as an idea where we wanted to bring some awareness or some attention to the disease, and it's grown dramatically since then"

-Liz Cadmus





*Study Abroad
Broadens Horizons*
pg. 11

*Giants Part Ways
with Victor Cruz*
pg. 15



FEATURES

The Torch

Transgender Veteran Inspires BCC

LESHAY JONES
News Editor

The LGBTQ community has come a long way over the years and now, more than ever, people show their support.

At a BCC PRIDE meeting on Feb. 14, Jennifer Marie Long told her heartwarming story about her transition from male to female during a time where people were not as accepting as they are today.

Long was previously known as Sergeant Major Edward Long and served more than 30 years in the United States Army. Throughout many of those years, she was in the middle of transitioning from male to female.

"I remember when I decided to start taking hormones. I sat there and looked at the bottle, thinking to myself 'this is a new beginning,'" Long said. He described taking hormones as "going through a second puberty as a grown adult."

During her 30 years of dedication and service in the U.S Army at the highest rank, Long struggled with hiding who she was, until one day she decided to stop hiding and be who she felt she was; a woman.

"There was so much ugly in my life, but I finally realized that I cannot not be myself, and eventually I stopped hiding," said Long.

A lot of times when soldiers serve



Jennifer Marie Long Talks to students about living as a transgender. // Brandon Lanski



for as many years as Long did, they get some kind of honorable recognition for their service. However, after her 30 years of service and surviving four combat tours, Sergeant Major Long was asked to retire quietly.

"No one really even wanted to talk to me after they found out, but it did not matter to me because I was happy. I was me," Long said.

Coming out to one's family is no

easy task, and for Long, it was just as hard. She had the hardest time coming out to her mother, Marie Long.

"When I told her, she thought I was just gay," Long said.

After a long, intimate talk, her mother finally accepted that this is who she is and welcomed her daughter with open arms.

Being different is never easy, but when you are determined and strong,

no one can stop you from achieving your dreams and being who you're meant to be. Jennifer Marie Long is living proof of that.

Long closed her story with some inspiring words of wisdom to students and faculty.

"My message to you is to follow your heart because it will lead you to happiness."

Hate is History

ALYSSA BLUNDO
Features Editor

March is Women's History Month; a month of celebrating all women that have made a difference in today's society as well as back in the day. This has helped shape the person we are and because of what they instilled in us, we can fight for our rights. This rally was formed so that BCC can be a safe place for all students, no matter what race, religion, or orientation they may have, and to make sure they cannot be targeted because of their skin tone, ethnic background, or religious affiliations. Hate Has No Home Here took place Feb 7, 2017, in the Student Center of the Pitkin Building.

When asked about how the College prepared for this peaceful protest, Sara Mastellone, Mathematics professor at Bergen Community College, who spoke at the rally said the following.

"Dr. April Adams sent an email to the faculty of the college suggesting that a group form to help support members of our community adversely affected by the current political climate. 61 people responded. A meeting was held on Thursday, Feb 2."

"The details that needed to be addressed were identified in the Tuesday meeting. Participants at that meeting volunteered to take responsibility for the identified tasks." She explained. "The tasks included writing a statement for the press (Bergen Daily), procuring safety pins and Hate Has No Home Here pins and posters, reserving the rally space, making the College President and the

Office of Public Safety aware of the rally, managing the finances of the rally, and organizing the speakers."

There were also issues that concerned faculty and staff, such as those pertaining to Muslims, Jewish and the LGBTQ Community. When asked about messages addressed specifically towards women, Mastellone told The Torch,

"While women were not particularly mentioned in the rally, every issue is a women's issue," Mastellone said when asked about messages addressed

specifically towards women safety, economics, health care, issues of immigration and the travel ban. All effect women and therefore, are women's issues."

Mastellone was also asked if it is important for women of different backgrounds to be recognized. She explained that,

"Women's History Month highlights the contributions of women, including Black, Muslim, Jewish, and those involved in the LGBT community to events in history and

contemporary society. More so, the International Women's Day, which is celebrated on Mar. 8 throughout the world, is a day for recognizing women's achievements while at the same time recognizing that, in many ways and in many places, women do not have equal rights."

By linking Women's History Month and Hate Has No Home Here, the rally has brought awareness to Bergen Community College and has defined its culture as one of acceptance.



Hate will not be tolerated. //Flickr

Study Abroad Broadens Horizons

SUNG BONG KIM
Contributing Writer

As Wendell E. Berry said “Nobody can discover the world for somebody else. Only when we discover it for ourselves does it become common ground and a common bond and we cease to be alone.” Studying abroad may be one of the most beneficial experiences a college student can. By studying abroad, students have the opportunity to study in a foreign nation and take in the allure and culture of a new land. You can create the experience that fits your needs, schedule, budget, and major.

There are several benefits to studying abroad. Firstly, one of the biggest reasons you should consider a study abroad program is the opportunity to see the world. Secondly, hone your language skills. Chances are if you’re planning on studying abroad, one of the major draws is the opportunity to study a foreign language. Thirdly, when you finish your study abroad program and return home, you will return with a new perspective on culture, language skills, a great education, and a willingness to learn. Fourthly, one of the biggest benefits of studying abroad is the opportunity to meet new lifelong friends from different backgrounds. Last but not least, for most students, this time may be the only opportunity they ever get to travel abroad for a long period of time.

I attended a Study Abroad information session on February 6. There were general explanations, vivid examples, and several Q&As. It is highly recommended that students who are interested in Study Abroad should attend this session. If students prepare

their needs, schedule, budget, and major in advance, it will be better chance for getting information. Above all, you should start planning at least a year in advance. Of course, you must check BCC’s requirements to participate in Study Abroad.

As we see last participants, in Spring 2017, one student went to Spain, in Fall 2016, three went to Japan and one went to Italy, and in Summer 2016 one went to Spain and three went to Italy. I would like to introduce the participant testimonial of Cassandra Borchers who studied in Tokyo, Japan as the KCP International Program for a 3 month Fall semester 2016.

“I stayed in a single apartment-like dorm provided by the school. I chose to study abroad because I knew it would

be a great opportunity to expand on my life experiences and the timing was right,” said Borchers.

Brochers continued to explain her destination of choice and her experience in it.

“ I chose Japan because I enjoy the language and Tokyo happens to be known to be one of the most interesting cities in the world. An interesting part of my semester was the trip to a rural town very close to Mt. Fuji. During the overnight stay, a traditional and regional meal was served by the staff and traditional dress called yukata was provided to sleep in,” said Brochers.

As much fun as it can be going to another country, it is important to educate yourself with where you’re going.

Study anywhere in the world. //Wikipedia



Bergenstages Presents: The Duprees

ADAM GRASSANI
Co-Editor

It was yet another Saturday night performance at Bergen Community College’s own Ciccone Theater. However, this night was more special than the rest as, performing in part with Bergen’s own Curtain Up series, the famous romantic singers “The Duprees” took the stage in front of a sellout crowd, their first performance in one and a half months.

The Duprees are world-renowned for their interpretations of love songs; making old songs good as new. The group originated in Jersey City in the 1960s with their first major hit being Jo Stafford “You Belong To Me” in 1962. It was the group’s first hit to sell a million and one of the highlights of the show. More of their major hits made an appearance in the show as well, including “My Own True Love” and “Why Don’t You Believe Me?”

One worry that one could possibly have going into the show was if the music would be too romantic, to the point of being overly cheesy. Turns out this was not the case at all as none of the songs gave off this feeling; they nailed the romantic aspect of the show perfectly. Furthermore, there were non-love songs to, such as “Somewhere, Beyond the Sea.” The song selection is definitely one of the strongest points of the performance.

The biggest issue with the show comes in the quality of the audio;



Top Middle: Tommy Petillo, Left: Jimmy Spinelli, Right: Phil Granito, Bottom Middle: Tony Testa //www.duprees.com/

it’s very inconsistent in terms of clarity. Sometimes, the audio is completely fine and you’ll be able to hear all songs clearly. However, other times it can be very difficult to understand what lyrics are being sung, which made the show hard to follow at times.

On the other hand, probably the most entertaining part of the show actually comes in between each song, where lead singer Tony Testa, as well as the rest of the band would talk and interact with the audience, providing some entertaining adult humor which is guaranteed to get a laugh out of you. Furthermore, during one of the songs, Phil Granito went front stage to sing and do some crazy dances moves, which got the full energy out of the crowd.

However, the highlight that came out of this was when Testa went down into the crowd to interact and talk with the audience directly; he would ask questions with folks who would answer them into the microphone so everyone can hear. He even invited former Bergen Community College student Laure up onto the stage to assist in a song.

“A little bit, but I got over it right away.” Laure said when asked if she felt nervous heading onto the stage “It was wonderful! I felt like I belonged there. I was very comfortable.” The performance ended with the Duprees receiving a near standing ovation from the crowd, with Laure describing the show as “fabulous.”

GOING GAGA FOR GAGA

REBECCA KARPINSKI
Photo Editor

From a bullied high school student performing in dive bars, Lady Gaga has made her mark on Earth as one of the most influential superstars to ever hit the music industry.

Born Stefani Joanne Angelina Germanotta, now mostly known by her screen name, Lady Gaga. The inspiration for her name came from the Queen song. She was raised by Italian-American parents Joseph and Cynthia Germanotta with her younger sister Natali, in a duplex on the Upper West Side of Manhattan. Gaga is known for her hard work and it started because her parents cared deeply about education from a young age and enrolled Gaga at Convent of the Sacred Heart, an Upper East Side private Catholic school.

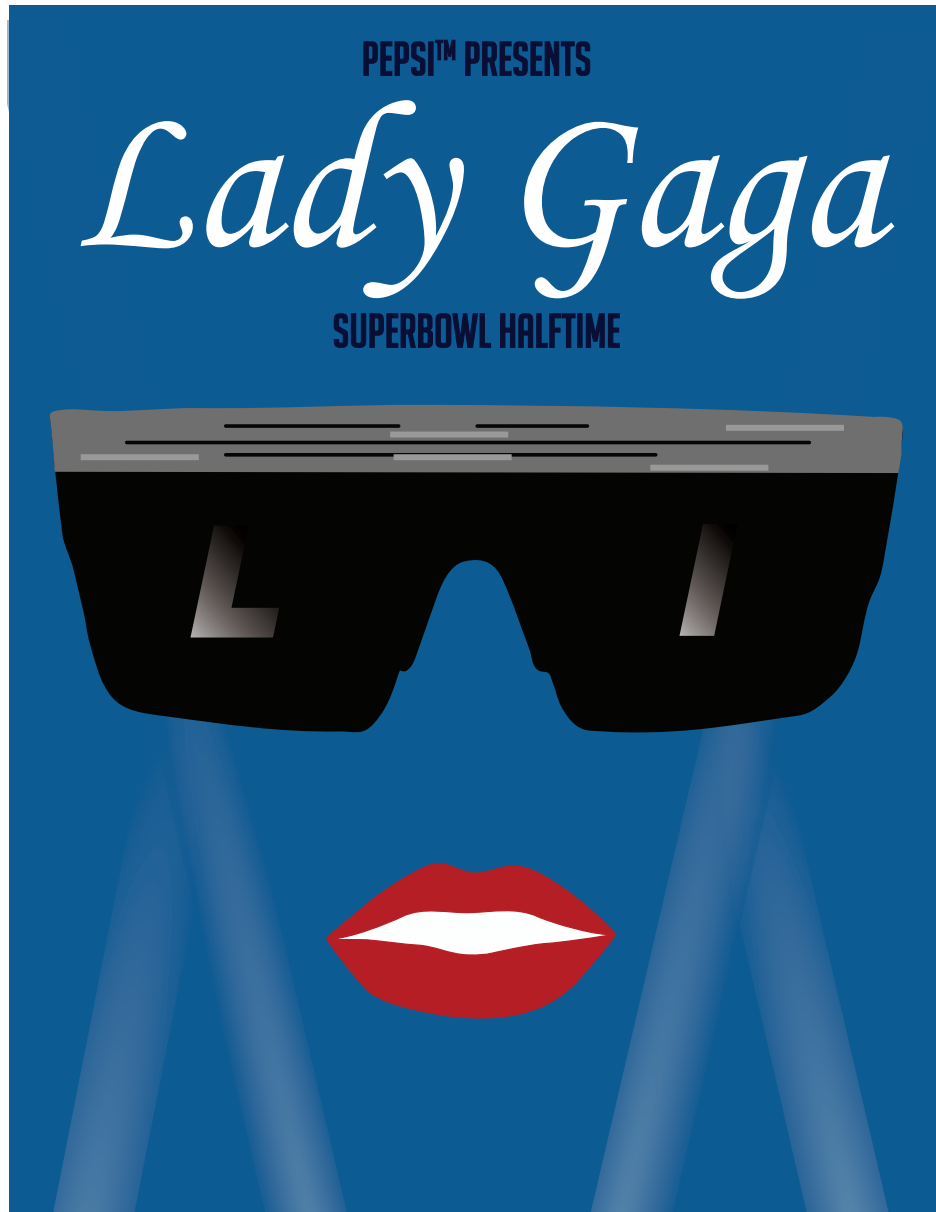
She's had that drive since she was a young girl. When Gaga turned 11, she started taking vocal lessons from Christina Aguilera's singing coach, Don Lawrence. As a kid, she learned classical piano and took full days of acting classes.

In school, Gaga had to deal with merciless bullying. People would always ask her 'Why are you so orange, why do you do your hair that way, are you gay? Do you really have to look like that for school?' She was constantly slut-shamed and many times, she didn't even want to go to school.

But Gaga gives credit to those bullies. For better and for worse, she overcame those harsh words, stating that, "Bullying really stays with you your whole life and it really never goes away. I was never the winner, I was always the loser. And that still stays with me."

Though always grateful for her education and the bullies she had growing up, Gaga wasn't afraid to take risks. After surviving high school, Gaga enrolled in NYU Tisch School of the Arts, but it wasn't long before she dropped out to become a pop star.

It seemed like she was about to become very successful very quickly.



Lady Gaga Performs at the Super Bowl. // Karina Quintero

At 19 years old, Gaga signed to Def Jam records. But after three months, the label dropped her.

To her father's dismay, Gaga had moved to the Lower East Side, where she dabbled in cocaine and danced in burlesque dive bar shows, performing onstage in nothing but a bra and a thong, lighting hairsprays on fire, go-go

dancing to Black Sabbath and singing songs about oral sex.

But in 2008, Rob Fusari, Gaga's boyfriend at the time, brought her to Interscope records as a songwriter, where she wrote songs for New Kids on the Block, Fergie, the Pussycat Dolls and Britney Spears. While singing a reference vocal for a song

she had written, Gaga caught the ear of Akon, an acclaimed R&B songwriter, who signed Gaga to his own label. Within the year, Gaga had released her first album, *The Fame*, to critical and popular acclaim. Thus came the start of her superstardom.

On February 5, 2017, Lady Gaga headlined the Super Bowl LI halftime show. She started her performance on the roof of the NRG Stadium in Houston Texas, singing parts of "God Bless America" and "This Land is Your Land" and reciting an excerpt of the pledge of allegiance before diving through the air suspended by wires to the stage. Her halftime show included a medley of her iconic songs including "Edge of Glory," "Poker Face," "Born This Way," "Telephone," "Just Dance," "Million Reasons," and "Bad Romance."

Gaga has been many things in her career; fashion icon, sex icon, and provocative pop artist. But she has been, most importantly, a singer and a resilient star. Her latest Super Bowl performance earned her hard-won praise for being a fantastic musician. The performance proved that Gaga doesn't need anyone's approval to be a superstar. That's something she does for herself.



Lady Gaga smiles at audience. // Flickr

A Historic Adventure Through Texas

PURNA SAHA
STAFF WRITER

Texas is a big state--in fact, it's bigger than the entire country of France. And all those 268,000 square miles are filled with history.

Let's start with Dallas, the heart of oil country, located in the northeast part of the state. Downtown Dallas is the site of Dealey Plaza, a city park and National Historic Landmark that marks the site where President John F. Kennedy was assassinated. Right next to it is the Sixth Floor Museum, which is where Lee Harvey Oswald is thought to have taken the shot from. A concrete monument of John F Kennedy is also displayed in the city.

The capital city of Texas, and currently the most popular among out-of-state transplants, is Austin. The capitol building rises 300 feet above Texas A&M University. It's open to visitors, with guides leading free daily tours. The museum of Lyndon B. Johnson is also located in the city of Austin. Johnson was the 36th president of the United States, holding office from 1963 to 1969, after the death of Kennedy. He was born in central Texas on Aug. 27, 1908; his first house is preserved in Fort Stockton as part of the Lyndon B. Johnson National Historical Park. This outdoor attraction is located about an hour outside of Texas. The park also includes Johnson's presidential ranch, car museum, schoolhouse, and family cemetery.

Further east is another fascinating region of Texas: Big Bend National Park, which is located along the Rio Grande on the U.S.-Mexico border. The

landscape is a mix of limestone canyons, cottonwood forests, and spiny scrub. It's one of the biggest, and protected desert areas in the country, and is perfect for camping, wildlife watching, hiking, and floating lazily down the river. There are three major canyons that fall in between the park boundary and the Chihuahuan Desert, named Santa Elena, Marsical, and Boquillas. The northern part of the Rio Grande mostly includes rocky and arid surface. There are various plant life species that are found in the national park, including over 60 species of cacti with unique looking spines. The Chisos Mountains, which consist of a huge, angular range of the cliffs, is why most people visit this national park. El Paso is the closest major city to Big Bend. Also nearby is Marfa, which has an intriguing history with UFO sightings that date back to the 1950s.

The Caverns of Sonora are located on the long route between Big Bend National Park and San Antonio. This is the largest cave in Texas, measuring to 20,000 feet long and 150 feet deep. There are a variety of minerals that are found there, including rose-colored calcium stalagmites and stalactites that resemble different forms. Chandeliers, french fries, bacon, and butterflies are a few of the shapes that can be seen during the sweltering cavern tour. But the focal features are the soda straws, which are long, thin, fragile, hollow stalactites. The underground wonder was created by geological processes about 5 million years ago. But it wasn't discovered by humans until the early



A beautiful view for a great adventure. /commons.wikimedia.org

1900s, or opened to the public until a few decades ago.

San Antonio is the second biggest city in Texas. It's a sprawling, quaint metropolis, with miles of walkways that curl along the banks of the San Antonio River. People can also tour the downtown on mini cruises or horse-drawn carriages. During the holiday the banks are lit up with colorful lights every night. The city's historical importance lies in The Alamo, however. Missions National Historical Park also offers a look back on the crusades that converts Native Americans to Christianity. It comprises of four preserved churches; each one has a distinct architectural flavor. The park has free admission, but bikes or a car make it easier to explore all the grounds.

Houston is the next stop after San Antonio. The Gulf-side city has a rich museum district, but its biggest attraction is the NASA Johnson Space Center, which houses some of the original rockets used to send astronauts into orbit and the moon. The center also highlights achievements in science, engineering, technology, and math. Visitors can explore exhibits on space by walking or by riding the tram. They even get a behind-the-scenes look at Mission Control, which is open 24/7, along with the astronaut training facility.

All of these fascinating attractions, plus the comfortable weather and fun cuisine, make Texas a top winter vacation spot. Each city tells a story and sets a beautiful, memorable scene.

History Behind St. Patrick's Day

CHRISTOPHER MOLINA
Staff Writer

Most people don't know the history behind St. Patrick's Day. A lot of people know this holiday by watching parades, going out for drinks, and partying. Every year on March 17, the Irish and the Irish-at-heart across the globe celebrate St. Patrick's Day. What started as a religious feast day for the Patron Saint of Ireland has become an one of the largest international festivals, that involves celebrating Irish culture with parades, dancing, special foods, drinks and a whole lot of green. Besides the holiday being celebrated in their native origins, the Republic of Ireland, and Northern

...the holiday has reached as far as north and south America, in countries like Canada, Great Britain, the United States, Argentina, and New Zealand. This religious holiday can be traced back to as far as the feast day of St. Patrick and the day he was believed to be died in 460 A.D.

which the Irish have been celebrating this religious holiday for thousands of years. St. Patrick which he was commonly known was a fifth-century Romeo-British Christian missionary and bishop in Ireland, which earned him the title among the Irish as the "Apostle of Ireland". In the early 17th century, Saint Patrick's Day was made an official Christian feast day and that is observed by the Catholic Church, the Anglican Communion including the Church of Ireland.

This holiday commemorates Saint Patrick's arrival to Ireland along with converting that land to Christianity and celebrates the vibrant culture and heritage of the Irish in general. The Celebration usually involves public parades, festivals, and wearing a lot of green.

Aside from that, the holiday is more than just a celebration. It is also for a time of attending church services. In a recent poll, conducted by Behavior and Attitudes for RTÉ on



Traditional and history of the Irish culture.. //Pixabay

Election Day, questioned people on their religious affiliation and church attendance. In Ireland 79% identified as Catholic, while 9% described themselves as "not religious other responses included Protestant (3%), atheist (4%), and agnostic at (1%). This celebration has greatly influenced the

world particularly in North America. However in recent year with all the excessive partying there has been criticism of Saint Patrick's Day for having it become too commercialized and creating negative stereotypes toward the Irish.

LA LA LAND REVIEW

ALEX CENTENO
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

La La Land is a 2016 American musical drama written and directed by Damien Chazelle and starring Ryan Gosling and Emma Stone as Sebastian and Mia, a musician and an aspiring actress who meet and fall in love in Los Angeles.

The film starts off with a traffic jam on a freeway. As people begin to flutter with frustration, all of a sudden, commuters begin to jump on their cars wearing colorful clothing and begin to dance and sing Another Day Of Sun (An original music score for the film). The colors of the dresses imply that there is a theme of fairy tales.

The film displays how achieving a dream can become an obstacle. Sebastian and Mia both go through many obstacles to achieve their dreams. Sebastian's dream is to open a jazz club, while Mia's is to become an actress. But both characters begin to go through multiple setbacks. Are there throwbacks in life? Yes, there are! Mia

and Sebastian are both examples of that.

Most of the emotions within Mia and Sebastian are displayed through musical and non-musical themes. For example, when Mia and Sebastian go on their first date, a musical dream sequence appears, showing how they typically imagined how their date turned out. That is where the theme of fairy tales comes into play because normally fairy tales are all about "happily ever after." But La La Land shows that sacrifices must be made in order to achieve one another's objectives. The film typically displays the message of "Hello. This isn't Disneyland." In other words, things won't always turn out the way you'd want them to turn out.

The film displays a good message on how a lot of people wants to view life as fairy tales. The real tension of the film is the conflict between ambition and love. It keeps its foot on reality despite its melodrama.



Ryan Gosling and Emma Stone dancing in La La Land. //Flickr

Logan is a Beautiful End Note of the Wolverine Trilogy



Hugh Jackman waving at a crowd. //Flickr

TREVOR GIOIA
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

The best "X-Men" movie ever, with a western feeling and a road trip movie combined to make a film that is an awesome ending; Logan is about the Wolverine in a world where there are no more mutants and him dealing with the character of X-23 who is much like Logan.

It takes place in a future that was reset by Logan in the end days of future past. This film has a great story, really good dialogue and character moments that will actually make some people cry.

A theme throughout the film is the importance of family and that what a person makes can be what person needs. This is felt though the relationship between Logan and Charles Xavier feels like a father-son relationship. And

with X-23 being a lost person with no home, Charles takes a liking to her.

If you like a movie that has a last ride to it, or if you have seen all the X-men movies this is one movie I would suggest to go and see.

This movie feels like an ending for a trilogy of Wolverine movies that were hit and misses, but thankfully it leaves Hugh Jackman on high a note.

The director James Manigold conveyed a film that felt real and interesting about old man Logan and X-23.

In my opinion I thought this movie was amazing and well written. So I would give this movie a five out of five stars.

This movie feels like an ending for a trilogy of Wolverine movies...

MICHAEL VICK ANNOUNCES RETIREMENT

NICK COWLING
STAFF WRITER

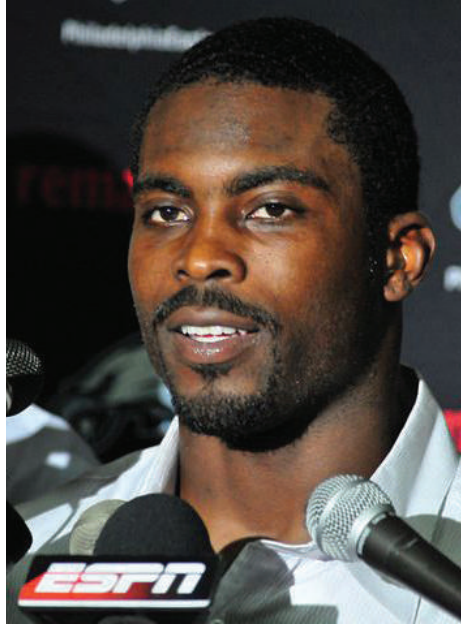
After a 13-year career, quarterback Michael Vick is set to officially retire from the National Football League. A former first overall pick in the 2001 NFL Draft, Vick spent most of his career with the Atlanta Falcons but also found himself playing for the Philadelphia Eagles, New York Jets and Pittsburgh Steelers.

One of the most physically gifted players in the history of the position, Vick revolutionized the way in which the sports world defines a mobile quarterback. Incredibly elusive and possessing unrivaled speed, Vick amassed over 6,000 rushing yards reaching its crux in 2006 with a record breaking 1,039 rushing yards in a mere 123 attempts. Complementing his gift of speed, Vick also had admirable throwing talent and was considered to have one of the strongest arms of his generation. Humorously considered the most unfair player in sports videogames due to his speed and cannon arm, Vick was responsible for the fracturing of many friendships.

Injuries plagued Vick's career but nothing found itself more damaging to his employment in football than the dog fighting ring that he ran, known as "Bad Newz Kennels." The ring was deemed responsible for both gambling and the inhumane treatment of dogs in a show of combative betting. Vick was found to have been personally involved in the killing of several dogs.



Michael Vick at a game. //Wikipedia Commons



Vick speaking to the press. //Wikimedia Commons

Vick was offered a plea bargain and pleaded guilty to several charges. He was sentenced to 23 months in a federal prison. Upon Vick's release, he returned to the NFL to maligned criticism.

In 2009 he signed with the Eagles and found himself in a backup role. The following season saw Vick overtake the starting quarterback role as he started in twelve games, leading the Philadelphia to the postseason and garnering himself a position in the Pro Bowl.

His career trajectory slowly dipped as he saw his starting time diminish and he was eventually regulated again to a backup role by the end of the 2012 season. Following his departure from the Eagles, Vick was primarily used in a depth role for the Jets and Steelers. Between his final two seasons, he only conjured a 3-3 record and less than 1,000 yards passing. Vick was not signed to any team for the 2016 season and announced his retirement on Feb. 3rd of 2017. Though his playing career is marred by a terrible crime, Vick expresses remorse and has worked with the Humane Society of the United States to tackle the issue of dogfighting.

How history will treat Vick is up in the air. Regardless, his talents were something to behold and the standard of the quarterback position has been greatly influenced by his presence. He finishes with over 20,000 passing yards, 175 total touchdowns and a 63-54-1 record.

CHARLES BARKLEY VS LEBRON JAMES: TRASH TALKERS GO HEAD TO HEAD.



Charles Barkley representing the 1992 Dream Team. //Wikimedia Commons

TREVOR GIOIA
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Words are powerful weapons. Sometimes, we can say things that have unintended consequences.

Last year, the Cleveland Cavaliers won the NBA championship. This season, however, has been rocky for Cleveland. Their record is nowhere near the expectations of three-time champion LeBron James.

James said regarding the Cavs recent struggles, "We're not better than last year. From a personnel standpoint, we're a top heavy team." On the TNT NBA tip off show, James's comment sparked a comment from Charles Barkley. Barkley, on LeBron James's comment said, "Whiny. Inappropriate. All the above. The Cleveland Cavaliers have LeBron James and spent a lot of money on him, this notion of him being the best player and not wanting

to compete." Charles Barkley believes James does not compete as hard as he should. This comment has caused a rift between Barkley and James.

LeBron James came back at Charles Barkley saying, "He's a hater. What makes what he says credible? Because he's on TV? I'm not going to let him disrespect my legacy" LeBron went onto comment that he would never do the bad things Charles Barkley has throughout his career, like spitting on fans and accruing Las Vegas gambling debt.

On the following TNT NBA Tip Off, Charles Barkley defended his words, saying that they were more about the basketball game, not the player. He went on to say, "LeBron is great player, probably the greatest. If I see LeBron I will hold nothing against him and shake his hand." Could this statement from Barkley prove that he realized he was in the wrong?



Lebron at cavs game. //Simple Wikipedia

Astros compensated for Cardinals hacking scandal

ANTHONY KHELIL
SPORTS EDITOR

The St. Louis Cardinals will finally be punished for their involvement in the hacking scandal of the Houston Astros proprietary Ground Control base. After nearly two and a half years of being punishment free, the St. Louis Cardinals have been fined \$2 million, and must forfeit their two top draft pick in the coming Major League Baseball draft.

The MLB has yet to see a punishment of this magnitude, as it is unprecedented for strip a team of two draft picks. The picks the Cardinals will be handing over to the Astros will be at slots 56 and 75.

The commissioner of Major League Baseball, Rob Manfred, recently discovered that Cardinals employee Carlos Correa, acted alone in the hack. Carlos Correa had access to the Astros database for nearly two and a half years. In addition to the charges that Correa faced a few months ago, he is permanently banned from the MLB.

Although the rulings benefit the Astros immensely, many fans and analyst involved with the MLB wonder if the punishment fits the crime. There are many who believe

that the punishment dished out to the Cardinals was strict enough. Should there have been a heavier fine? For a successful and profitable team such as the Cardinals, \$2 million will not have much of an affect on them in the long run. That type of money will not get a team a utility player because of the sky high salaries in today's game. The Cardinals also will not be picking in the top 50 in the draft because they have to surrender their first round pick as a result of signing center fielder Dexter Fowler. The draft picks do have value, but do not carry the same weight as a mid-tier first rounder.

The positive to come out from this is that the MLB can finally put this scandal behind them and focus on improving the game and making changes they hope will speed up the game. There are still many questions that have and will be left unanswered. Did the commissioner do a thorough enough investigation to assure no other Cardinal employee was involved? And is the penalty strict enough to keep future teams from trying to attempt something similar?



Astros compensated for Cardinals hacking scandal. //Wikimedia Commons

GIANTS PART WAYS WITH VICTOR CRUZ

ADAM GRASSANI
Co-Editor

It's the end of yet another ERA in the vast history of the New York Football Giants; they have officially released Pro Bowl wide receiver Victor Cruz. The 30-year-old veteran receiver was signed by the team the day after the 2010 NFL Draft, as an undrafted free agent.

Cruz has played in five seasons with the team, 67 games to be exact. He had 303 receptions for 4,549 yards and 25 touchdowns. Most of all, he was beloved by Giants fans for his salsa touchdown dance honoring his grandmother, who loved salsa dancing and touchdown dances. He was a local guy as well, growing up in Paterson, NJ.

"I pretty much grew up in front of the eyes of this entire organization," Cruz said as part of a statement released by the team, according to ESPN. "The Giants fan base, the community, my hometown, my family. I grew up there. It's very much a family atmosphere and it's very much like leaving your family. That's what it feels like. I did some great things there. There are so many experiences, times and moments that I shared in that building with that team in that jersey. Those can't be replaced or forgotten. I'm happy I have those moments to look back on."

What Victor Cruz will be remembered for most,



Cruz will be remembered as one of the best receivers in Giants history. //staticflickr.com

however, is the role he played during the Giants playoff run in 2011 to Super Bowl XLVI, where they once again defeated the New England Patriots to earn their fourth Super Bowl championship in franchise history. It was also Cruz's best season with the team, as he finished top 10 in receptions (ninth with 82), yards (third with 1536), and touchdowns (sixth with nine).

Without a doubt, the biggest play of Victor Cruz's career came during the Week 16 game in 2011 against the New York Jets. The Giants

were just coming off a devastating Week 15 loss to the Washington Redskins, giving them five losses in the previous six games and a 7-7 record. Then, nearing the end of the second quarter with the ball at the Giants one yard line, Cruz caught a short pass, broke two tackles, and took it all the way down the sideline for a 99 yard touchdown, one of only 14 in NFL history. This play lead the Giants to get the win on Christmas Day and ultimately sparked a six game win streak to their eighth NFL championship.

Unfortunately, the past three years have not been kind to the now 30-year-old veteran. During the Week 16 game of the 2014 season against the Philadelphia Eagles, Cruz tore the patella tendon in his right knee when he awkwardly fell after attempting to catch a fourth down touchdown pass. He would have to have season ending knee surgery. As if thing couldn't get any worse, he tore his calf in the 2015 preseason and missed the entirety of that season as well.

Adding insult to injury, when Cruz finally returned

in 2016, he simply wasn't the same player. He recorded just 39 receptions for 586 yards in 15 games. Furthermore, he only caught one touchdown pass, in Week 1 against the Dallas Cowboys, which ended up being the game winner.

Nevertheless, there simply isn't a true role for Cruz in the Giants offense anymore, with superstar Odell Beckham Jr and rookie standout Sterling Shepard overshadowing him. As melancholic as it is, cutting Cruz was the only option the Giants had, as they can now use the money they've freed up elsewhere, such as possibly re-signing defensive end Jason Pierre Paul, extending Odell Beckham Jr, and improving a suspect offensive line and running game.

"He came in here and earned everything that he's gotten," Reese said in the same statement from the Giants, according to ESPN. "It has been amazing to see him grow from an undrafted free agent to a Pro Bowl player and one of our go-to guys during the Super Bowl XLVI run. He will always be one of the great Giants." Reese also described Cruz as "one of the great stories in the National Football League."

All Giants fans really have left to say is simply thank you. Thank you Victor Cruz for the memories, the salsa dances, and for helping bringing the New York Giants a fourth Lombardi trophy. Salsa on.

Can Conor McGregor vs Mayweather happen?



Conor McGregor. //Wikimedia Commons

TREVOR GIOIA
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Place your bets. The fight for boxing bragging rights between two giants of their sports in this decade, Conor McGregor and Floyd Mayweather may actually happen. Conor McGregor is the current UFC lightweight champion and the former UFC featherweight champion. On the other hand, Floyd Mayweather is a professional boxer with 49 wins and no losses over the span of his career. These two athletes are considered the best in their perspective sports.

Conor McGregor and Floyd Mayweather consistently trash talk one another as this fight has been rumored for about three years. Back in June of 2015, Conor McGregor on

the Conan show when asked about the possibility of fighting Mayweather said, "Duh! If you're asking would I like to fight Floyd Mayweather, I mean, who would not like to dance around the ring for \$180 million?" These words by McGregor sparked many rumors in the sports world, of whether or not what would be a highly anticipated fight could possibly end up happening.

This would be a rarity for a cross brand fight between a boxer and UFC fighter. The anticipation for this fight is high on the list of many avid sports watchers, basically to see the outcome of these two getting in the ring.

Floyd Mayweather has put up a offer to make the

fight happen. He threw out an offer of 15 million dollars. This was taken as joke that Conor McGregor was offered that price. Dana White the president of UFC stated in interview with Colin Cowherd on this offer saying, "Listen here is my offer, we pay Floyd Mayweather \$25 million and Conor McGregor \$25 million. And then we'll talk about pay per view prices."

This shows how much potential money would be involved with a fight of this magnitude. The fight has been two years of rumors, heated words, and backstage offers who knows when it's going to happen.



Floyd Mayweather. //Flickr



The Torch

SPORTS



BCC's OWN AMANDA DURAN WINS NAGWS AWARD

ANTHONY KHELIL
SPORTS EDITOR

Bergen Community College's own Amanda Duran of Hackensack was honored at Seton Hall University on Jan. 28th, as she was chosen to represent Bergen Community College's athletic program at the 2016 National Association for Girls and Women in Sports.

The National Association for Girls and Women in Sports (NAGWS) honors one female athlete of all high schools, two year and four year colleges in New Jersey each year. All of the chosen athletes were honored at halftime during the Seton Hall's women's basketball game.

Amanda Duran is a sophomore at Bergen Community College. She is a multi-sport athlete who has not



Amanda Duran represents Bergen at Seton Hall. //BergenCCbulldogs.com

only excelled in the classroom but for her team as well. Duran is the Co-Captain of the Women's Cross Country team who recently won their first region title since 1989. She was awarded with First team All-Region honors as well as Second Team All-Conference after placing seventh in the Region XIX Meet last fall. Duran will certainly look to bring her success and experience to the 2017 Women's Track and Field team.

Not only has Duran impressed as a member of her team, but she has excelled in the classroom, receiving All-Region and All-Conference Academic honors in 2016.

Men's Basketball Ends in Disappointment

ADAM GRASSANI
CO-EDITOR

Yet another season of basketball has come to an end for the Bulldogs men's basketball team. Unfortunately, it was not exactly a season that the team would like to remember, as the men went 7-21 overall and 6-14 in their conference, going from making the semifinals of the 2016 NJCAA Region XIX tournament last year, to not even making the playoffs this year. Adding insult to injury, the team was blown out in their final game against Sussex 89-61 at home. Head coach Bobby Morgan was disappointed not necessarily by the record, but mostly by the effort from his bulldogs.

"It was a disappointment, not because of the win-loss record," coach Morgan said on the season. "The team as a whole has to give a better effort every night. We didn't get that. We didn't get that all season so that's what was disappointing. Not even the record. After a 19-20 win season last year, it's very disheartening that (the team is) not really working hard towards winning basketball games."

Neither the offense nor the defense is more or less to blame for the Bulldogs losing season; both had their faults. The Bulldogs scored only 72.4 points per game, good for only 78th in the nation, while allowing opponents to score 81.6 points per game against them, 83rd in the nation. Bergen was outscored by a total of 9.2 points per game, which typically results in a losing record.

Furthermore, the team also had an issue making their shots, shooting only 41.2 percent from the field, 81st in the nation. On the other hand, opponents shot 48.2 percent, 97th highest in the nation. Lastly, rebounding wasn't a strength either, only grabbing 36 boards per game, 72nd in the nation, 10.9 offensive and 25.1 defensive.

"We had more talent last year," said Morgan. "Kids that were supposed to come back; I was supposed to have



Matthew Ospala taking a free throw shot. // www.bergencbulldogs.com

10 players back from that team. Our best player transferred cause he got a scholarship. You know we don't give athletic scholarships here. My second best player had to leave school for work. So, you know, life gets in the way. Basketball is not end-all-be-all for a lot of kids. Our kids have jobs. They have families. Some of them have children. So, you know, the talent level was different from last year to this year."

That's not to say there were no positives to take away from the season. One key positive was the team's ball control and movement; they were 35th in assists, with 16.5 per game, and had the 27th fewest turnovers with 12.9 per game. However, the biggest was the play of sophomore guard Matthew Ospala. He led the team in points (17.7 per game), assists (4.4 per game), and free throw shooting, (81.1 percent). Speaking of, he was 21st in the entire nation in free throw shooting.

"The positives that I take from the season are some of the relationships I built with the players," said Morgan. "Matthew Ospala has interest from New Jersey City University, and Robert Williams III has interest from Malamata Centenary College."

Coach Morgan, along with assistant coach Robert Glover, plan to "pound the pavement;" That is, to recruit heavily to add some much needed talent to the roster. Despite this only being his second season as head coach of the men's basketball team, Bobby Morgan is getting comfortable in his role fast.

"It feels good," said Morgan. "I'm getting a lot of traction. I'm knowing the region inside and out. But you need talent to compete here, because there's no nights off and the region has so many good teams and you have to have players every year that can compete if you don't wanna be in the bottom of the standings like we were this year."

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