2018 Flu Epidemic: What to Know

JEREMY NIFRAS
Staff Writer

The 2018 flu season has statistically been the worst in recent years, with many Americans dying from the virus nationwide. Compared to past seasons, this year’s flu virus is a strain with an irregular resilience to the current vaccine, which the Center for Disease Control (CDC) says is only 36 percent effective.

As of February 2018, 97 children nationwide have died from the flu, and 48 states altogether have experienced widespread cases. The main culprit behind this recent epidemic is the H3N2 influenza strain, which is known to cause a strong reaction in the body’s immune system, and can even lead to severe breathing problems and inflammation of the lungs.

These cases may prove to be deadly if medical care is not received quickly. The H3N2 strain notably caused problems for many Australians during their winter season in 2017.

To make matters worse, this flu season has both influenza A and B strains going around simultaneously. Typically, the A strain dominates earlier in the season before B takes over later on, but the presence of both the A and B influenza strains creates a highly problematic situation for many Americans at risk.

So the question remains: how can one prevent getting sick?

The most obvious method of flu prevention is getting vaccinated. Although this current vaccine is not nearly as effective as in past years, skipping the shot is a risk you shouldn’t want to take. More ways to avoid contracting the flu are frequently washing your hands, avoiding sick people around you and cleaning your work/study environments on a regular basis. Although all of this sounds scary, there’s evidence the deadly epidemic may be slowing down.

According to the CDC, deaths relating to pneumonia and influenza fell nearly 9.5 percent in the week of February 3 compared to the previous week, and flu-related hospitalizations have steadily decreased in recent weeks.

Despite these facts, you should still take certain precautions to make sure you don’t get infected.

DACA and its Effects on Immigrant Youth

FARAH ALHABLAWI
Contributing Writer

In June 2012, the Obama administration introduced the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA). This immigration policy protected those who came into the United States illegally as minors and were in jeopardy of being deported. The policy also made these immigrants eligible for a work permit.

DACA gives those who applied for an extended permit a renewable two-year period of deferred action. This deferred action does not grant legal status, but means the applicants have an indefinite delay on their deportation.

Over 800,000 immigrant youths are protected by DACA, and plans to slowly get rid of the policy are being implemented by the Trump administration. According to DACA terms, those who can apply must have come to the United States before their 16th birthday and were under 31 years of age as of 2007.

Applicants must also have a high school diploma or equivalent. These requirements make approximately 1.7 million people eligible, including many Bergen Community College students.

The policy came into life on June 15, 2012 when the Office of Homeland Security announced that certain people coming into the United States illegally as children would be protected from deportation for some time.

As of September 5, 2018, President Trump has ended DACA, meaning the administration will not be accepting new applications, and those protected by DACA will start losing their status and work permits come March 5, 2018.

While March is the deadline, it was in September that the program ended. The six month period was meant to give Congress time to come up with a permanent solution for the immigrants living here illegally.

In June of last year, many right-leaning states, such as Texas and Arkansas threatened to sue the Trump administration unless steps were taken to end DACA before the end of the year.

Many senators and advisors felt that helping undocumented immigrants find jobs, and protecting them from deportation hurts the “America First” agenda that the Trump administration has promised.

Trump so far has used the ending of DACA and the amount of people it has protected as leverage to build the wall on the Mexican border.
Republican Tax Plan Widens Wealth Gap

OWEN MCCLOSKEY
Copy Editor

The news of the new tax plan, which passed over two months ago, has been completely shrouded by recent events.

In the wake of the Parkland shooting, a gun-control debate needs to take precedence, but we must not let it distract us from the fiscal policies spearheaded by our Republican-controlled Congress.

The passing of the tax plan seemed like a win for Congressional Republicans, who promised higher wages and cuts for the middle class.

In an interview with NPR’s Steve Inskeep, Speaker of the House Paul Ryan argued that the average family would get an average tax break of over $1,000.

However, this is not the case. Lily Batchelder of NYU looked over the Joint Committee of Taxation’s review of the plan, and noticed that nearly 100 million American households would get either no tax break, or actually pay more income tax.

This is in a stark contrast to the corporate tax rate, which is cut from 35 percent to a measly 21 percent.

Many Republicans would argue that the lowering of a corporate tax rate would make the American market more competitive, thus drawing corporations back to the U.S. economy — but data from the U.S. Department of Labor’s Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Program found that since Trump took office in 2017, more than 93,000 jobs moved overseas, a slight increase of the past five years’ 87,000.

So why cut the corporate rate? It seems that it has done nothing for increasing business and has given less tax breaks to middle-class families.

In fact, families with large estates will see a significant decrease in taxation. The GOP wants to keep the Estate Tax, which taxes 2 in 1,000 American households, of whom make a very significant amount of income.

The Republican Tax Plan is going to put more money in the pockets of wealthy individuals and is going to make life harder for most Americans, and they have already passed it, right under our noses.

Students will get a richer learning experience with cultures as it is done firsthand by speaking, and will gain credentials that look very good on a college transcript.
Apple Slows Down Phones

DERRIAN DOUGLAS

Demi Lovato has a lot in store for her fans, especially once she kicks off her Tell Me You Love Me Tour. She’s also planning something else for fans - free therapy before the show.

Lovato spoke with Robin Roberts on Good Morning America late January about her upcoming tour, which starts on February 26 in San Diego, CA. During her interview, she revealed that she’ll be giving back to her fans in a big way. The Grammy-nominated singer will be offering free therapy, speeches and wellness workshops preceding her concert.

This isn’t the first time she has offered these services. In 2016, Lovato teamed up with CAST Centers for the Future Now Tour, her shared tour with Nick Jonas, to precede the concert with the same counseling.

Bergen Community College Professor of Philosophy Peter Dlugos believes that Lovato’s involvement in mental health awareness is extremely beneficial.

“There is still so much stigma surrounding mental health problems, and as a consequence, we tend to avoid learning about them and acknowledging them or helping them out of our own experience. “She is not just talking about the issue, she is taking a step further and actually providing the services,” he continued.

However, Lovato isn’t just helping her fans to recognize their struggles, she is also helping them to recognize the struggles of others: their family, classmates and neighbors.

But why is it important for students to be subject to the benefits of therapy and wellness?

Although some may argue that elementary school children shouldn’t be subject to the thoughts of mental illness, others will note that mental illness awareness begins at an early age.

“Children should start learning about mental illness needs to be broken. They need to know that it is okay to share my story in hopes that it inspires any care for themselves,” Dlugos said.

“Talking to Robin on January 24 Lovato said, “I think that it’s important for me to use my voice for more than just singing.”

The singer and activist has been more than open about her own diagnosis with bipolar disorder and an eating disorder.

“I just know how important it is to use my platform to help others and to share my story in hopes that it inspires people to either get into recovery or better themselves. Whatever it is, I just want people to know that I’m here alone and I’m here for them,” Lovato said.

She told Roberts that the stigma of mental illness needs to be broken.

Professor Dlugos offers meditation practice every Tuesday from 12:30-1:15pm in C-315.

Demi Lovato’s Tell Me You Love Me Tour kicks off on February 26 in San Diego with guests DJ Khalid and Kehlani.
The Torch

More Security at Bergen

TIFFANY MARIE VELEZ
Contributing Writer

On Valentine’s Day, a day dedicated to spreading love, the news broke across the nation that the eighteenth school shooting in the United States occurred in Parkland, Florida. “Congress needs to do more,” said Melissa Falkowski, a teacher at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School, “not only do we need stricter gun laws, we need more security on school campuses.”

There are more mass shootings in the world today than Kylie Jenner lip kits. Gone are the days of being innocent and naive for children. Sadly enough, safety isn’t promised anywhere, so hug your loved ones and tell them how much you love them while you have them.

Taxes should be taken out of every person’s life in the United States to provide a secure campus. After a few days, less conversations are had about the tragedy and nothing ever changes. There’s always a routine that follows after a school shooting: thoughts and condolences are given to the victims’ families from across the world, the government stays silent and refuses to mention guns but will bring up mental health.

After a few days, less conversations are had about the tragedy and nothing ever changes. American schools should be a safe haven for students and teachers.

There’s so much work that needs to be done! At the same point, but as a country we are eager to see that happen.

The United States of America is home of the free and land of the brave.

The Torch

Let’s Talk About Feminism

LESHAY JONES
Editor-in-Chief

I am going to be completely honest here. I have not always been a feminist and I did not even know what it really meant about two years ago. Yes, I said it. There were times when I would claim to be a feminist and I didn’t fully understand what it meant. I used to just think, “I’m a woman. Feminists are women.” Therefore, I am a feminist.

However, I quickly learned that this syllogism of mine was very flawed. I had a vague idea of the concept of feminism. According to the dictionary, feminism is “the advocacy of women’s rights on the basis of the equality of the sexes.”

It seems simple enough, right? Women should be equal! We want equal pay! We can be CEOs, doctors and presidents, too! However, I learned over the years that feminism is much deeper than that. Not all feminists are men-hating crazy women. Feminism is not just about equality for women; it is equality for ALL of the sexes.

So, yes, women want equal pay, we want to be recognized for our hard work, we want to rid of the stereotypes of women in the kitchen and, most of all, we want respect.

I shouldn’t be afraid to walk home at night with the fear of being assaulted. I shouldn’t feel uncomfortable walking down the street past a group of men catcalling. I shouldn’t be objectified.

With that being said, as a feminist, it is important to take into consideration that, believe it or not, these things happen to men, too. I am more than willing to admit that many women do objectify men.

Another common misconception is that men cannot be feminists, which I believe is complete nonsense. The goal is for women and men to be equal in most aspects, and if a man supports this idea and is an advocate, then he is a feminist.

Now, I said that women want to be equal in most aspects, and I cannot stress this enough. Most, if not all, women want to be equal to men when it comes to pay, job opportunities and so on. However, there are some traditions and stereotypes that women carry with them. One example would be marriage proposals. Traditionally, men propose to women, and though there are some cases where the roles are reversed, it is very rare.

Would women at BCC propose to a man?

I wouldn’t only because of traditions. In Spanish culture, the men propose,” but I am not going to be a feminist just because I am Spanish.

What about when it comes to bills? I am not going to be a feminist just because I am Spanish.

I had a debate with my older sister a few months ago about this situation. To her, the man should be responsible for the mortgage while she takes care of some of the smaller bills and housework, such as cooking and cleaning. I, on the other hand, completely disagree. When you are living with someone, and when you are married, it is a partnership. Everything should be equal.

Let’s come up with a compromise to split the expenses evenly. Whoever gets home first cooks dinner, or let’s cook dinner together.

I feel like if women want equality, it has to be in every sense of the word. We can’t want to be equal in some areas and not in others.

Feminism does not have to be a negative thing. We can all strive so that we are equal in all aspects of the word no matter our gender, race, ethnicity or whatever else you can think of.

At the end of the day, we are all human and we all deserve to be treated with the same respect.
Safe Spaces: A Blessing or a Blight?

According to Merriam-Webster, a safe space is “a place (as on a college campus) intended to be free of bias, conflict, criticism or potentially threatening actions, ideas or conversations.”

While some have lauded the concept, there are others who abhor it. I stand on the side of the latter, because the concept of a safe space on a college campus is not only immature, but also detrimental to a student’s college education and transition from adolescence to adulthood.

I feel that the University of Chicago worded my stance best in its letter to its incoming U.C. Class of 2020 stating, “Our commitment to academic freedom means that it is your responsibility, as educators, to give students the necessary tools to create a more civilized and more educated world.

To students who wish to cover their eyes from reality.

After those four or more years end in college and a student has to take the first step into the working world, how resilient and mature will one be if one spent time seeking escape rather than stepping forward onto new ground?

While I may not be in the position to make a statement to college authorities, I heavily implore, as a college student and as a person living amidst a confused and constantly changing generation: abolish safe spaces from colleges and universities.

Give students the tools to progress intellectually and maturely through situations, not sanctuaries that will only limit students’ drives to manifest. Do not silence voices merely for the fact that they sing different tunes to others.

Show students worlds outside of the ones they live in and let them explore and inhabit them.

It is your responsibility, as educators, to give students the necessary tools to create a more civilized and more educated world.
Do you remember growing up and going to the store to play with the toys? Or maybe when your parents went to the store to get something and you saw the toy section, you would run to it and say, “5 minutes please, I’ll be quick?” Who doesn’t remember a time when toys were all the rage?

That’s something I remember with clarity; watching all the infomercials on TV just to see what the latest toy was. Or waiting for the weekend to come around to get the newest Toys R Us booklet just to see what was in it and circle my favorite things to add to my list for when Christmas or my birthday came around.

Those are things that many kids nowadays don’t really get to experience, and probably never will. Toys R Us, one of the most well-known toy stores amongst adults and kids of all ages, filed for bankruptcy back in September of 2017 and is now closing down 182 of their locations nationwide, including 14 in New York and 12 in New Jersey.

This is devastating for many people – adults and children – because this was a place where adults would go and buy their gifts for kids and where the “little kids” could have their “toy heaven” experience. Although not all locations are closing down, it will make it hard to find one close by for some people.

Hearing this just adds to the realization of how the world is changing, and how the newer generation is losing all that fun interactive stuff that our generation had. It seems that kids are turning to electronics more and more for entertainment.

It’s sad to see how the newer generation is losing time and potential compared to how we spent ours.

I was born at the very end of the 90’s, but I still go to experience what it was like to play with toys and go outside and play with other kids. I feel old when I say it, but seeing how things are in this generation, I really do believe that those were the golden days.

I can say that I spent more time outside enjoying everything around me than inside stuck on technology. Growing up, cellphones really weren’t a thing, and if you had one you had a flip-phone which you can call from and at most send a simple text, and we were fine. We had landlines where we would get our calls from, huge brick-sized computers that took ages to load and barely had any storage.

Back then, we didn’t have the ability to log on to our computers, go on Netflix and watch the movies that we wanted. You had to go to the store and rent the movie for a certain amount of time and then return it. We didn’t have YouTube, where we could look up how to do things or watch hair or makeup tutorials.

This is why many women have those horrible “when I first started wearing makeup” stories, but they’re great stories you can now tell.

We didn’t have as many things that kids in this generation have now, and we survived. And quite frankly, they were better and easier times.

If things had to be said they were said face to face and not behind a screen, we actually talked to one another rather than just sending a text with a bunch cute emojis to have a conversation.

This is why stores like Toys R Us are closing down, because kids nowadays would rather be behind a screen playing games, watching videos, listening to music, etc. than go outside and get some fresh air.

Not too long ago, I went back to the place where I grew up. A place where when I was young, was a buzz of joy and laughter of kids playing outside, catching fireflies at night. But now, it was nothing but isolated front yards and an empty park.

Not only that, but back in September I remember going to my 5-year-old niece’s Back-to-School night for kindergarteners and having to hear the principal tell the parents to make their kids leave their cell phones at home because it was a distraction in class.

At 5-years-old I was thinking about the new regular Barbies at the store, not the newest cell phone on the rack.

It’s sad to see how kids at such a young age become so reliant on technology that they don’t get to experience the real world childhood they have is based off a screen. And because of this, stores like Toys R Us are beginning to close because kids aren’t having that “let’s go to Toys R Us to look at the new toys” craze anymore. Rather it’s “let’s go to Apple to look at the newest phone.”

Whether or not you’re a parent of young kids, you have probably heard a younger kid say “that was in your time, you’re so old school.” We even do it to our parents nowadays, but we probably don’t mean it versus ours it means a whole lot more because there was a huge leap of improvement and advancement.

It’s sad to see that these kids never really get to experience that childhood we did growing up and see how you didn’t need all the latest technology to have fun. You had a fall and great group of friends, and you were seen.

Technology is great, don’t get me wrong, but when it’s used for advancement not backtracking.

How do we expect them to make this world a better place when we are doing this to them? Is this the world and sticking them in a virtual one?

Music as a Commodity

OWEN MCCLOSKEY Copy Editor

I’m a musician. I play piano, sing, write, and produce a ton of music. From McCoy Tyner to Radiohead to Anderson paak, I love it all, and music is providing me with the resources to do it. Songs and music, but my interest in music has since subsided.

Recently, I’ve taken an interest in journalistic writing and editing, because the music industry is no longer merit-based, nor is it talent-based.

An increase in technology has brought a newfound necessity for instant gratification, and I believe this is reflected directly in all types of media, not just music.

However, this is not going to be an opinion piece that chimes “all new songs are terrible,” and not saying else gives me a warmer feeling than listening to a perfect song.

I’ve released five studio albums and I’ve spent years practicing, playing shows and creating music, but my interest in music has since subsided.

Music is dying, so please, if there is an artist you want to support, buy their album instead of streaming it.
The sport. What people don’t see is criticism for the pageantry aspect of the longest. If a dancer has perfect to who can hold the judges attention doubt that every dancer competing has high level of competition, there’s no up the entire width of the stage, and cameras are often broadcasting on stage with at least one other

Dancers have all of two minutes

Ms. Jackson, a 27-year-old mother of two, was such a horrific past is not a closely engaged story.

Ms. Jackson’s story is just one of thousands but she truly represents hope, and the thought that with willpower and someone who cares, a tragic ending could be a happily ever after.

Eventually found herself on the streets. She couldn’t seem to find a way to pull herself out of this deep, dark pit.

In 2012, she relapsed and decided to get high again. Ms. Jackson said that was the lowest point in her life. She couldn’t wake up in a hospital two days later.

The main question that dancers always have for the individuals who at competitions, dancers are on stage with at least one other dancer, sometimes two. At major competitions it is the traditional and international championships, stages are large and elevated with hundreds of lights pointed directly at competitors.

Five judges sit below, taking up the entire width of the stage, and cameras are often broadcasting competitions on monitors to ensure that the audience can see. With that kind of stage on that high level of competition, there’s no doubt that every dancer competing has the skill and technique to be the best. When that happens, it comes down to who can hold the judges attention the longest. If a dancer has perfect

Dancers don’t necessarily

lives could’ve been the ones to cure cancer or the next all-star basketball players, but we will never know because they didn’t know that they had someone out there to simply listen to them.

life. She couldn’t seem to find a way to pull herself out of this deep, dark pit.

After seven months of working the street corners in New York, she ended up pregnant with her second son. She lived in a shelter until her second son was born and ended up getting clean in her first trimester.

Suicide is the 10th leading cause of death in the United States of America. Just about 45,000 Americans of death in the United States of America. Just about 45,000 Americans

Dancers in the 2-13 year old age group, at the All Ireland Championships in Killarney, Ireland, competed for the 2018 World Championships in Glasgow Scotland. // Katty Temple

“From 1999 through 2014, the age-adjusted suicide rate in the United States increased 24% from 10.5 to 13.0 per 100,000 population... - the National Center for Health Statistics

No one ever likes to address the elephant in the room, but we need to talk. We need to talk more about suicide and how it’s an epidemic not only throughout our country, but suicidal thoughts are a national epidemic.

According to the National Center for Health Statistics, “From 1999 through 2014, the age-adjusted suicide rate in the United States increased 24%, from 10.5 to 13.0 per 100,000 population...” and the rate is still rising.

Miss Jackson was born and raised in the Bronx and go out at church in the Bronx and go out at church in the Bronx and go out at church in the Bronx and go out at church in the Bronx. She was raised and brought in the Bronx and lived her whole childhood under the poverty line with no father figure in her life. Her mother was the one who essentially introduced her to heroin when she was at the young age of 16.

I see my boys every week and we need to start right now. We need to talk about suicide.

Suicide and the culture of Ireland while doing so, just with a little more sparkle.
When you hear the word plants, you immediately think about the old tree in front of your house or those things you water to keep alive and green.

Aside from the aesthetic environment that plants establish, many people are unaware of the beneficial factors of growing and handling plants, not just in their homes but as well as in their workplace.

In the world where some live only on a dollar a day, so much produce and fruits become in demand and without the branches of agriculture and horticulture, it would not be possible to supply.

If you didn’t know it already, horticulture is the science of cultivating and handling vegetables, fruits, nuts, flowers and ornamentals.

Bergen Community College offers a Horticulture program, ranging in a variety of classes. The horticulture program began 40 years ago alongside Dr. Birnback, a Botany professor.

Over the course of four decades, the Horticulture department located at Ender Hall has provided students a state of the art computer controlled greenhouse on campus that has given students the opportunity of hands on labor with floral design, botany, landscaping, etc. that not only has enriched the minds of the students but provided the hands on experience that has helped many find jobs straight out of BCC.

The Greenhouse on campus was installed to serve two purposes; to house a collection of plants for both Botany and Horticulture classes, and to provide the school a source of plants.

While the Horticulture department offers a number of classes for its students, it stands out for its weekly participation in providing the school with various arrangements for different events held on campus and source of plants for the interior decor of the school.

Every student at BCC is required to take a natural science course to graduate, and while many enjoy the traditional Biology lecture, many others don’t and Bergen’s Horticulture Departments offer students a people plant relationship class Botany course that satisfies a natural science course.

The class is taught by professor Dr. Fischer and Dr. Birnback as a natural science class on Campus that provides two professors in the classroom at the same time, a psychologist and a horticulturist.

As Dr. Birnback, Psychology professor stated, “you get a science that is practical for everyday behavior”.

This is a course that redefines interdisciplinary skills for people and teaches you how to be a person.

During the spring semester, the greenhouse at Ender Hall located in room E-186 hosts an annual spring orchid sale and Herb sale where students and staff members are allowed to hand pick from a number of beautifully healthy and pocket friendly plants.

The Horticulture Department has been super beneficial for Bergen Community College the past 40 years, serving as a fundraiser and laboratory for classes.

While you’re at Ender Hall, Dr. Fischer permits students to visit the greenhouse with the guidance of Landscape technician Garrett Planten and student Interns located at E-186.
JCPenney has closed down 138 locations, and closed on March 10, 2018 at Westfield Garden State Plaza after sixty years. The company will try to help retail storefronts are expected to close by 2023 and 1200 of the 1200 malls across the US are expected to close by 2023 and 1200 retail storefronts are expected to close in 2018 alone.

According to the New Jersey website, like most brick-and-mortar stores, JCPenney has been hurt by online competition, especially from Wal-Mart Inc. and Amazon Inc. In 2014, JCPenney began closing stores nationwide. The company announced that it has plans to close down 31 more stores across the country. Retail stores are going out of business because online shopping is easier than in-store shopping. The explosion of online sales allows customers to shop easily. Customers have an in-depth understanding of their goals, fears, frustrations and desires. Shoppers know their products and why it’s better to buy from one online outlet instead of a competitor. Online shopping is friendly and competent support and continues to expand. This changing e-commerce for the better.

Convenience is important for customers; they don’t have to wait on long lines, especially during the holidays when parking is also a huge issue.

On-line merchants offer discounts, promotions and rebates. Free shipping is becoming more common, and gifts can be sent directly to friends and family no matter where they live.

Shopping online rids of the temptation to spend more money at a mall, restaurant or a fast food place. Many students at BCC offered different opinions on their feelings about JCPenney closing and their reaction toward online shopping.

“Whenever I need something, I would go to JCPenney and see the department store. I feel that it’s a loss to retail since a lot of people shopped there. Online shopping depends on what I need,” said Daneiah Nasser, a writing tutor at BCC.

Brenda Vonlenger used to shop at JCPenney as a child with her mother and there were a lot of brands that she could choose from.

“Online shopping has its parts. Some companies, such as Sephora, could sell free items and I feel excited for the closing sale at JCPenney” said Maitte Lugo.

“Online shopping has its parts. Some companies, such as Sephora, could sell free items and I feel excited for the closing sale at JCPenney” said Maitte Lugo.

Maitte Lugo saw on Facebook that JCPenney is closing down, where her mother would always go shopping for the sales.

I feel a little upset because there were good deals and it was a good store. I feel excited if a customer needs anything, just order online instead of feeling stressed by standing by a long line.

Before JCPenney closes down, it will probably be extremely busy due to the promotions that will be offered, so if a customer needs anything, just order online instead of feeling stressed by standing by a long line.
CONTINUE ON YOUR TRACK TOWARDS A HIGHER DEGREE AT A LOWER COST.

BCC + FDU

Bergen Community College and Fairleigh Dickinson University are partnering to offer you a more affordable path to a bachelor’s degree. Graduate with your associate’s degree from BCC, and you will be eligible to transfer to a FDU bachelor’s program at a significant tuition reduction. BCC-FDU Scholars Program benefits include:

- 40% tuition reduction for undergraduate programs, which may also be applicable to some master’s degrees at FDU
- Additional grants may be available for resident students, NJSTARS and students graduating with a 3.0+ GPA

Questions? Visit Almida Hernandez, FDU’s on-site advisor, Monday-Friday at the Pitkin Education Center, Room A126-b alhernan@fdu.edu or BCC-FDUScholars@fdu.edu 201-493-4088

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Mental Health Help: Hope in Medicine

Prescribed medications were scientifically created for multiple reasons, like depression, anxiety, PTSD, bipolar disorder, ADHD, ADD and many more mental health disorders. Many people nowadays are against taking medication, but little do they know that most people need medication to simply stay sane and survive.

Not everyone needs medication, some might resort to medical marijuana, meditation, praying or other forms of “healing,” but those who need medication will continue to use it. Often times, young adults or pre-teens who are prescribed medication are embarrassed but, just like water, medication can be an essential part of one’s life. It’s okay to not feel okay. Everyone needs help at one point or another in their lives so mental health and prescribed medication are nothing to be ashamed of.

Brilliant and famous people have battled mental health issues for hundreds of years. Abraham Lincoln was diagnosed with clinical depression and anxiety, yet he became the sixteenth president of The United States of America. Vincent van Gogh, a Dutch painter in the top five of the world’s most famous painters was believed to have depression, bipolar disorder, epilepsy and schizophrenia yet he is in every single art history textbook and created amazing masterpieces.

Having a mental health disorder is not embarrassing nor should it prevent one from succeeding his or her full potential and goals. Mental illnesses are extremely serious and should not be taken lightly. Suicide and suicide attempts are one of the tragic events that stem from mental health issues.

Medicated with Harmony

A Different Kind of Pleasure in Technology

For many years now, technology has been at the forefront of many of the greatest discoveries in science. It has taken us on a ride through history’s greatest achievements that have shaped and changed the way we view and use technology, not just in the work environment but also in our everyday lives.

Over 90 percent of Americans who own cellular devices fall into the 77 percent that own smartphones. 69 percent own televisions, and 77 percent own desktop computers or tablets, the other percent own idiosyncratic and strange technological devices. While Apple releases their new iPhone and Samsung releases their virtual reality consoles, companies like Realbotix have invented a sex robot that now provides the user a different kind of pleasure in technology.

The cultural phenomenon in the world of technology derives from the influence of society. While the influence of selfies led companies to create tools like tripods, selfie sticks and drones in order to obtain better quality selfies, increased over the past few years due to the fact that the technology manufacturing has continued engineering of more sex robots will be placed on the pedestal of advancements like Harmony rise, the robot yourself as opposed to the buyer performing all the work. As new technological advancements like Harmony rise, the continued engineering of more sex robots will be placed on the pedestal of technology.

Music and Lyrics by Frank Loesser Book by Jo Swerling and Abe Burrows

Directed by Professor Jim Bingham Choreographed by Anastasia Kopen April 6, 7, 13, 14 and May 4, 5, 11 @ 7:30 pm (April 7 and May 10 in 3:00 pm). Bergen Community College, Roofer Theatre. *Special sign-interpreted performance.

Tickets: $15 general admission, $10 seniors (65+) and the College community, $5 students.

Tickets available at: ticket@bergen.edu or the Office in Rooms A-400.

For information or reservations, please call 201-440-1767.
The Benefits of Traveling Abroad

DERRIAN DOUGLAS

It's so easy to talk yourself out of traveling internationally when you're young. You think you'll have a lifetime to visit the Sistine Chapel, or see Big Ben in person or take a canal tour through Amsterdam. But your youth is actually the perfect time to travel.

During your youth, you're still learning to navigate the world while simultaneously trying to find yourself. Deadlines are knocking at your door; the uncertainty of your younger path is breathing down your neck.

Even though traveling may seem like the last thing you want to consider right now, when you're young, you have some natural advantages you might not realize that you even have.

The most obvious benefit is that traveling internationally will uproot you from your comfort zone.

You were forced to learn your regular routine that they rarely venture out to experience something new and different.

Your ability to navigate yourself around a foreign country will bring you a new sense of confidence in yourself. Amparo Coddin, a BCC International Student Counselor and Study Abroad Advisor, says it's important to travel because you need to learn how to resolve problems on your own.

While abroad, you'll be faced with everything from different languages, to street signs, to public transportation schedules, and you'll need to navigate yourself through those obstacles.

When you've overcome that hurdle, you will learn to appreciate the cuisine, the manners, the norms and the customs of the country you're visiting. Embrace the discomfort. Explore the lessons of the country you're visiting. The mannerisms, the norms and the culture of which they're experiencing.

You also need to have a sense of cultural sensitivity.

Wherever you are traveling, be aware of the cultural norms of that community. Understand why they do what they do, dress the way they do, speak the way they do, hold the roles that they do.

In high school, American students are rarely taught of international news and affairs, whereas American history and current affairs are embedded into the curriculums of international schools.

By being sensitive to another country's culture, you'll gain a better understanding of international affairs and conflicts.

Traveling will most definitely teach you more than that World History class ever did.

Finally, having traveling experience is extremely appealing to employers. Employers look for well-traveled employees with an understanding of international affairs and business.

You get bonus points for knowing more than just your native language as well.

No matter what field you wish to go into, employers enjoy having someone who has witnessed the customs of other countries. Learning to travel is mostly likely to travel at least once no matter what your job description is.

Globalization is a large part of a company's expansion, especially now in a world that is so technologically-driven.

As a potential employee with a background in travel and the ability to speak another language that is not your own, employers will be beggaring your work for you.

This past winter break, I traveled to England by myself for three weeks. I've wanted to go to England my whole life, and I decided a year ago that I was going to transfer to a school in the UK after leaving BCC.

As someone who has never traveled internationally, doing it for the first time alone was a huge test for me.

I wondered how I'd learn the tube system, if I'd get lost, if I'd have to breathe down the bustling streets of London and if I'd make it obvious that I was a tourist.

No matter what, I went to London alone. I wanted to prove to myself that when I got into a school abroad, I would be able to hold myself. I didn't understand how much I'd gain before leaving.

Traveling from the north of England to the south was the most eye-opening experience of my life. I proved myself wrong, I went to London solo, without knowing a place that I thought was so similar to my native country.

Spoiler alert: it’s not.

England is unlike anything I could have imagined. I came to England head-space, a broader understanding of international cultures - England is a massive melting pot rich in different cultures - and the confidence in myself that I knew would stick with me for a lifetime. When I ended up studying abroad or not.

A month after returning from England, I was accepted to Cardiff University in Wales, UK. I can't wait to become a Cardiff University Dragon this fall.

When I spoke to both Professor Coddin and Professor Kyi, they both advised that students “be the observer, not the observer.”

With that advice, I encourage everyone to venture out of their comfort zone, to observe the locals, ask questions, be curious.

Dive into the beauty of the unknown, you won’t regret it.

Fifty Shades of Predictability

YOO RA KIM

Fifty Shades Freed was incredibly predictable and hilariously overdose in terms of the sex scenes.

I tried to view the film with an open mind, seeing as I already watched the first film. But, you must remind yourself to think with an open mind even before you arrive.

The Fifty Shades of Grey series is known for its overly sexual and BDSM-themed plotline. I knew I was about to witness a ton of cliché scenes when the movie started off at Ana and Christian's wedding.

Before I began to dissect the film, I tried to enlighten those of you who may not be familiar with the Fifty Shades movies.

They are essentially about a young, brooding billionaire named Christian Grey with a traumatic past. He meets Christian, her life takes a kinky turn when she realizes that the man she is fond of actively partakes in the BDSM lifestyle.

BDSM stands for bondage, discipline (or domination), sadism and masochism. From there, the pair's unusual and unrealistic romance takes off.

The first scene at Ana and Christian's wedding was sweet, but unusual and unrealistic romance takes off.

Christian's wedding was sweet, but unusual and unrealistic romance takes off.

unimaginable.

Without giving away the ending, there is an intense showdown at the end of the film that only bolsters the couple's love for each other.

If you're looking for something that will make you laugh and cringe all at once, Fifty Shades Freed is the movie for you.

Jamie Dornan’sunchangingstarch features and Dakota Johnson’s poor acting skills definitely make the movie-watching experience less enjoyable but if you don’t want to watch something too serious, I would recommend this film.
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Korea United at 2018 Olympic Games

Olympic fans from around the world were excited to finally witness North Korea and South Korea compete together as one team in the 2018 Winter Olympics. Despite the fact that most North Koreans were able to view the competition, South Korea spent around $2.5 million so that North Korean Olympians could participate.

Combined, both nations had 35 competitors for only one event — ice hockey. South Korea had 23 Olympians compete, while North Korea only sent over 12.

The unified women’s ice hockey team lost to every team in the preliminary round, and finished bottom of the table, unable to make a quarterfinal appearance.

With this being the first time North Korea has been in the Winter Olympics, it is a first for the regime to combine teams for the games in his combination with his neighboring country in the competition.

An interesting showing by North Korean “cheerleaders” was displayed as the women all wore the same clothes and were synchronizing the movement of flags to near perfect harmony. This could be a political move from Kim Jong-Un to show the rest of the world the power and unity of North Korea.

If this is the case, South Korean president Moon Jae-in would rather combine teams for the games in his own country and let North Korea flex their muscles in order to have a peaceful 2018 Winter Olympics in Pyeongchang.

According to BusinessInsider, in an exclusive interview with Suki Kim, a Korean-American writer, who went undercover in North Korea, these women did not volunteer to cheer on the Korean Olympic team.

“They’ve been chosen because the regime put some selection criteria, which has to do with young age, looking pretty, and most importantly, from a good family, having loyalty to the party and of a certain height, about 5-foot-3 at least,” said Kim.

She then went on to compare the selection process of these “army of beauties” to a beauty contest.

The women are not even in the beauty industry, in fact most of them are young students who just happened to fit the specific criteria made by the regime.

Vince McMahon Revives the XFL

Vince McMahon CEO of WWE, and co-founder of the XFL. // Wikimedia Commons

As Manager

Vince McMahon, CEO of WWE, and co-founder of the XFL. // Wikimedia Commons

The XFL is returning after a 19-year absence. In 2020, Vince McMahon, the co-creator of the XFL, is bringing the league back.

The original XFL was a league owned by the WWF and NBC, in 2002, when the original league debuted and the ratings were very strong.

According to Ronald Blum of ABC Sports, “the XFL debut game was watched by 54 million people.”

Ratings after the debut game declined fast, and the league ended after one unsuccessful season.

This new version of the XFL will be owned by Vince McMahon’s new company, Alpha Entertainment. The reinvisioned XFL will begin during the spring of 2020 and will have eight teams.

During the announcement event, McMahon said, “We’re going to give the game of football back to fans.”

He didn’t specify how he is giving football back to the fans.

The market for the new XFL isn’t entirely clear. The viewership for the NFL has been trending downward for years now.

In an article from Sports Illustrated, writer Richard Deitsch said, “When it comes to viewership: The numbers are heading in the wrong direction.”

With NFL viewership on the decline, there could be an audience for the XFL. McMahon doesn’t want the XFL to be involved in politics.

“As far as our league is concerned, it will have nothing to do with politics and nothing to do with social issues,” said McMahon.

In the current political climate this could dissuade some players from joining the XFL. For a new league in a sport struggling to retain viewership, they shouldn’t be narrowing the pool of potential players.

The pool of potential XFL players was again narrowed by McMahon.

“If you have a DUI you will not play in the XFL,” said McMahon.

According to USA Today, as of February 11, “881 NFL players have been arrested since 2000.”

While most of those players have retired, there are still plenty of active players that have arrest records. When starting a new professional sports league, limiting the pool of players is risky.

It should be very interesting to see how the league preforms in 2020. The original league was unsuccessful, and with the NFL’s ratings declining in recent years, it’s hard to see the new XFL being successful.

Powerful Players for the Potential FIFA World Team?

PURNASREE SAHA

September Edition

Between June 14 and July 15, the 2018 Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) World Cup will take place in Russia. 32 squads from around the globe will compete in football’s most notable competition.

According to the article “Revealed: When all 32 World Cup 2018 Squads will be Announced” from the Goal website (goal.com), 26 teams will make back-to-back appearances; and this includes the reigning champions from Germany. This is the first World Cup in which Iceland and Panama are competing.

Rafa Marquez, a Mexican defender, qualified for Mexico during the Confederations Cup last summer and then entered the World Cup tournament for Russia 2018.

Coach Tite of the Brazil team announced the fifteen starting players of the team. According to the article, “Brazil Coach Tite Reveals 15 players of his World Cup’ from the ESPN website (espn.com), Tite took the unusual step in an interview with UOL Esporte, revealing a partial squad led by four players from Paris Saint-Germain: Daniel Alves, Marquinhos, Thiago Silva and Neymar.

Luan, who was an Olympic gold medalist at Rio 2016, has since focused his efforts for the World Cup in Russia. At age 18, he started to enjoy sports and desired a future in football.

According to the article “Luan: We’ve Got Every Chance of Winning The Trophy” from the info webstate.info, there was a competition that Luan had a memory of and it was helping Brazil climb to the top of the podium and then earn the gold metal. This was considered to be surprising, because Brazil never won the gold medal in the Olympics.

According to ESPN, Marquez was accused by the U.S. Treasury Department on August 9 for links to drug trafficking, which he has since denied. Marquez has since changed his focus from soccer to fighting the charges. He viewed himself playing on the national team and visualized that it was going to be important to his career.

According to the article “Luan: We’ve Got Every Chance of Winning The Trophy” from the info webstate.info, there was a competition that Luan had a memory of and it was helping Brazil climb to the top of the podium and then earn the gold metal. This was considered to be surprising, because Brazil never won the gold medal in the Olympics.

Luan received a runners-up medal that appeared during the FIFA World Cup. With all the effort and hard work that Brazil showed during the game, Luan thinks that his team will win the trophy.

Toni Kroos, a German player, leads the team’s midfield position. While he was working pretty well as a young player and is part of the team going to the World Cup.

Kylian Mbappe, a French player who is eighteen years old was considered to be a talented player in the FIFA World Cup. During the UEFA Champions League last season, Mbappe scored six goals. These talented people are hoping to succeed by making it to the final game and winning the trophy.
**Chief Wahoo No More! Are There More To Follow?**

**Jelson Montero**

**Staff Writer**

The Cleveland Indians have recently made news around the baseball world, announcing that the team will no longer wear the Chief Wahoo logo or sell team merchandise that has the chief logo printed on it. The Cleveland Indians have been around since 1915, and have always worn the Wahoo logo on their caps and jerseys.

Not to the surprise of many, the logo will finally be discontinued from use in 2019 because of the offensive meaning it has behind it. The logo is a caricature of a painted red face that is supposed to represent the team name, which is the Cleveland Indians. However, with great push back from Native Americans and sports fans, the logo has been classified as a stereotypical mark towards Native Americans.

The elimination of the Chief Wahoo logo can have a huge impact on other sports teams and universities with offensive team names and logos. In fact, the Washington Redskins and Florida State Seminoles have two of the most offensive team names and logos towards Native Americans.

The Florida State Seminoles football team acquired their name from the Seminole tribe that originated from Florida. Although the Seminoles have tried to honor the tribe and stay away from offensive terms, their mascot does not seem to grasp the concept. The Seminole mascot rides around on a horse with white and red paint around his face portraying a Native American from the Seminole Tribe.

The University’s mascot remains offensive, and it would remain to see what the type of initiative the university takes. The Washington Redskins have had a long lasting battle with the public and Native Americans regarding their team name.

The term “redskin” is a slang word that inappropriately represents Native Americans because of their use of paint on their faces.

The question remains to why it has taken so long for this football team to change their name, but it seems that the Cleveland Indians actions to eliminate their Chief Wahoo logo will impact the decision for the Washington Redskins.

Many students at Bergen Community College feel that the Cleveland Indians made the right choice by taking action.

Mariah Calvano, who is a student in her first semester at BCC said, “I don’t know much about sports, but I do know that this was long overdue. The team logo was offensive and should have been taken down years ago. Having a logo that has a painted face and certain color to portray a race or group of people is simply wrong.”

The Cleveland Indians are the first to take action; however there can be more to come.

The Washington Redskins and Florida State Seminoles are now on the clock and have an easy choice to make from the eyes of students, sports fans and Native Americans.

The decision made by the Cleveland Indians should not only impact those teams, but any other team or school across the country with an offensive name and logo attached to them.

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**Overwatch League Stage 1 Closes, Shanghai Dragons Sign First Female Player**

**Nicholas Contreras**

**Contributing Writer**

Blizzard Entertainment’s latest gaming phenomenon, Overwatch, is a purely online team-based FPS that draws elements from other genres.

Launched in 2016, Overwatch has had a meteoric rise in popularity since, hosting 35 million players online daily, according to Blizzard Entertainment.

With previous promotional hype, constant content updates on top of an incredibly well-done base game to always better the overall experience, the Activision-owned company clearly designed the title to take the gaming community by storm and to keep them engaged for as long as possible.

A competitive scene was inevitable. Seeing not only its global success in sales, but also large eSports organizations like Cloud 9 and Team Solomid beginning to form rosters, signing prominent and in-game ranked Top 500 players to compete, the Overwatch team themselves formed a Blizzard-sponsored competitive league.

Composed of the best players of every respective server region (many who formerly competed for eSports organizations prior), the Overwatch League is made up of 12 city-based teams that battle for in-game dominance over a course of several games of varying game modes.

As the five-week Stage 1 came to a close on February 10th with a victory for the London Spitfire, spectators and analysts expected team roster changes and announcements in the downtime before the competition would commence to Stage 2 on February 21st. Unexpectedly, but receiving much praise and positive reaction, the Shanghai Dragons signed Kim “Geguri” Se-Yeon into their team.

Geguri (both her in-game moniker and social media username) is a South Korean professional player who originally competed for a minor team called UW Artisan, has consistently topped in the Korea region’s rankings, which is nearly a league in itself and whose incredibly technical ability even became a point of controversy.

When Overwatch first launched in 2016, Geguri’s performance with not only a non-meta character at the time, but ability overall was so good she was accused of hacking and using third-party services to give herself an advantage. The claims, however, were very quickly found to be false, and her accusers even resigning their pro-careers in shame after.

A statement around her introduction into the Overwatch league is due in part to her unbelievable skill, her triumph over false accusations following her debut into a pro circuit and more simply because she’ll not only be the first female competitor in the Overwatch League, but a professionally signed female competitor in the realm of eSports.
**American League East**

The American League East will be the most competitive division in the AL this season. The division has three teams that could make the playoffs. The American League has teams that dominate their divisions, the NL teams are closer together in the standings.

- The Yankees and Red Sox have one of the oldest rivalries in American professional sports, and the team that doesn’t win the division will have a really good chance of playing in the wild card game.
- The Yankees have drastically improved their team though.
- The National League will be much more competitive in 2018. While the American League has teams that dominate their divisions, the NL teams are closer together in the standings.
- The National League West is the best example of the competitive National League. The NL West had three of the five teams make the playoffs in 2017.
- The Dodgers won the division and the Diamondbacks and Rockies played in the wild card game and this could easily happen again.
- The San Francisco Giants have made trades for Andrew McCutchen and Evan Longoria, which makes them another possible playoff team from the NL West.
- The Cubs have dominated the NL Central since 2015, the Brewers and the always playoff relevant St. Louis Cardinals could also win the division.
- If the Cubs do win the division, the Brewers and Cardinals have a chance of taking one of the two wild card spots.
- The final division to predict is the NL East. The Nationals won the division the past two seasons and another good chance of repeating in 2018.
- The Braves, Marlins and Phillies are still rebuilding, but the Mets have a chance at winning the NL East.
- With the Mets, it all depends on the health of their pitchers. Noah Syndergaard and Jacob DeGrom are regarded as two of the best pitchers in the sport.
- If they can stay healthy and the offense preforms, they have a good chance of winning the division or the wildcard.

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**Bergen Wrestling Update**

ROBERT C. MCDERMOTT

As Bergen Community College wrestling team competed in the NJCAA Championship at Council Bluffs, Iowa. Anthony Romero qualified at 133 pounds during the National Championship and went 1-2. The team is looking solid this year with a variety of competions already finished that took place in many locations.

The team currently has six athletes on the roster. This is a small, but tightly knit group of players who consider each other family.

Wrestling coach Chris Disanto believes the athletes are driven with the will to succeed.

“Bergen has a long tradition of wresting. The program has been around for over 25 years. Each year has to step up and down pertaining to the roster. We are a community school, so kids aren’t here to specifically wrestle. The kids that do wrestle have been committed to the sport during their years at Bergen and after they graduate from school. As coaches do our best to make practices fun as well as have a serious attitude during the season,” said Disanto.

Coach DiSanto stresses the importance of conditioning and technique as the most important aspects of the team. The team does not have a special diet, but are encouraged to eat healthy foods and have daily workouts outside of training.

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**2018 MLB Season Predictions**

STEPHEN MIGNANELLI

With every Major League Baseball team currently in spring training, it’s time to predict the season.

Last season concluded with the Houston Astros winning their first World Series against the Los Angeles Dodgers. Both the Astros and Dodgers could make it back to the World Series, but teams in their divisions have improved.

The Astros will probably win the American League West. The Angels are the most improved team in the AL West and pose the biggest threat to the Astros,” They signed highly touted Japanese hitter and pitcher Shohei Ohtani. He helps solidify their offense and pitching staff. The Angels should be in the AL wild card hunt this coming September.

The next division is the American League Central. The AL Central is a very weak division.

The Cleveland Indians are probably going to win the AL Central. They had the best record in the American League last season with 102 wins.

The second best team in the central was the Minnesota Twins, a team that was 17 games behind the Indians in the division. The Indians didn’t make any major roster changes during the winter, but they are still a very good team.

The American League East will be the most competitive division in the AL this season. The division has three teams that could make the playoffs.

The Boston Red Sox, New York Yankees and the Toronto Blue Jays could all win the AL East.

The Red Sox won the division last year, and could repeat winning the division. The Yankees have drastically improved their team though.

Chase Utley in the batter’s box during spring training. // Wikimedia Commons

The National League will be much more competitive in 2018. While the American League has teams that dominate their divisions, the NL teams are closer together in the standings.

The National League West is the best example of the competitive National League. The NL West had three of the five teams make the playoffs in 2017.

The Dodgers won the division and the Diamondbacks and Rockies played in the wild card game and this could easily happen again.

The San Francisco Giants have made trades for Andrew McCutchen and Evan Longoria, which makes them another possible playoff team from the NL West.

The National League Central got better this offseason. The Chicago Cubs added Japanese ace Yu Darvish.

The Milwaukee Brewers added Lorenzo Cain and Christian Yelich, two of the best outfielders in baseball.

While the Cubs have dominated the NL Central since 2015, the Brewers and the always playoff relevant St. Louis Cardinals could also win the division.

If the Cubs do win the division, the Brewers and Cardinals have a chance of taking one of the two wild card spots.

The final division to predict is the National League East. The Nationals won the division the past two seasons and have a good chance of repeating in 2018.

The Braves, Marlins and Phillies are still rebuilding, but the Mets have a chance at winning the NL East.

With the Mets, it all depends on the health of their pitchers. Noah Syndergaard and Jacob DeGrom are regarded as two of the best pitchers in the sport.

If they can stay healthy and the offense preforms, they have a good chance of winning the division or the wildcard.

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