

BERGEN COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENT NEWSPAPER IGNITING STUDENTS TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Vol. 27... No. 6



Professor Kelly Keane and Professor John Findura // via Studio Bergen

Take the Stress out of your Transfer Essay John Findura and Kelly Keane win innovation of the year

WESLEY JOYCE CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Formulating a College transfer essay can be a highly strung and anxious procedure. The meaning of a college transfer essay is to reveal to the college a little more about the person behind the application.

Your first impression of such a task might be heartwarming and wholesome. The college that I wish to attend wants to know more about me? Amazing! Sadly, that is not the reality. The truth is, writing a college transfer essay can be an immensely stressful and a demanding chore. No need to fear, however. Buried in the depths that is the hell of college transfer essays rose a hero; that hero's name is John Findura. John Findura, along with Kelly Keane, an associate professor who also serves as faculty in the college's writing center, has created a college essay transfer program that has been running unofficially for years. However, due to the increase in exams, a lot of students began asking for help. The goal of the program, which launched officially in 2017, is to aid students that are working on the written component to the transfer process into four-year institutions for absolutely no charge.

"We are supporting students who would not have otherwise received assistance," Keane said.

Our dynamic duo, Findura and Keane, along with other tutors have held over 12 workshops accumulating over 120 students helped by their program. Findura's valiant quest to rescue transfer students and their essays didn't go unnoticed. The program located at Bergen Community College has won the "Innovation of the Year Award" which was a pleasant surprise to Findura and his band of tutors. Despite all the attention the college transfer essay program is receiving. When it comes to what students actually know about the program, it is surprisingly sub-par. When admission season begins there are workshops that students are able to attend. Students are even able to set up and schedule oneon-one appointments with tutors.

"Students doubt that their story is unique to get into a four-year school," Findura said. "We want to help them find those moments that set them apart," Keane added.

The only issue the program suffers is the lack of students who attend similar programs outside of BCC. Specifically, students who don't attend Bergen Community College and are in need of assistance, but even students who currently attend Bergen are clueless about this program. Findura wishes to share his program with the students attending Bergen and even expand it to students elsewhere. The New York Police Athletic League has also given recognition to the program. In fact, in December 2018, Findura, Keane and three professional tutors visited the Bronx PAL site to hold a writing-intensive session for seniors in high school who are looking for more preparation when it comes to producing college essays.

@thebergentorch

MARCH 2019

Findura and Keane will also be presenting information on the transfer essay initiative at the Association for the Coaching and Tutoring Profession conference in Orlando, Florida in March.

If you or others are plagued with the inconvenience of a college transfer essay and looking to improve your writing, visit John Findura at Bergen Community College and get started on the college transfer essay program and see what you can accomplish in room L-125 across from the Bursar.

News

Administration Tackles Curriculum



Features

Women's History Month



Opinion

The Great Vape Debate



Sports

Athlete of the Month



NEWS

Dr. Redmond Tackles Tuition and College Curriculum with SGA

DANIEL CURRIER STAFF WRITER

On January 30, College President Dr. Michael Redmond addressed SGA senators during their senate meeting. In his briefing, Redmond discussed changes to the college regarding the undecided student curriculum and tuition.

At the start, Redmond announced that the college has hired two new staff members for the executive team. In order to aid the President, the college has hired Brian Agnew as the Executive Vice President and Ronald Miller as the Director of the Foundation Fund, which consists of about \$9 million.

Redmond discovered that approximately 39 students burned through their financial aid by the start of their last semester, leaving them without funding. After helping these students regain their financial aid, Redmond spoke to the Foundation. He made two requests: "To start building up some reserves" and "to start using those monies more strategically with students." With this direction, this issue will likely be resolved.

Redmond then moved on to discuss 60-credit degrees. He told the senate that the school is currently working on reforming the curriculum to meet these new requirements. He stated that the Faculty Senate has approved of the initial 40 percent of the A.A and A.S programs, and is looking forward to the approval of the remaining 60 percent. Some of these approved changes include six credits worth of free electives, and a permanent place for the Success 101 course.

During this time, the topic of AS.PS. GEN arose and he updated the senate on their efforts. AS.PS.GEN is the most popular program at the school, and is used primarily by undecided students. However, due to its lack of structure and other key factors, it has the lowest retention and graduation rates of any degree program in the college. At this time, roughly 4,000 students occupy this program.

Redmond asserted that Phi Theta Kappa had recently collaborated with the college administration on creating a new default curriculum to alleviate this issue. "It will not go into place this fall," he said. "It's going to be a two year project." Redmond is currently working with the faculty senate to finalize this project.

There's also been talk about whether or not the AS.PS. GEN program will be an A.A or A.S- an A.S having more flexibility in terms of coursework and an A.A being more concrete and definitive. The templates that have been approved to allow six credits for free electives, which Redmond calls "a win for students," since this is twice the amount of previous free elective credits.

Redmond also discussed the consequences of the newly mandated



President Redmond with SGA // Daniel Currier 60-credit requirement. The four to six credits that have been taken from Bergen's degree requirements haven't just disappeared. According to Redmond, they've "shifted from the two-year sector to the four-year sector."

Bergen Community College will suffer a loss of \$1,460,000 by next year as a result of the new legislation. Another casualty of this mandate was the previously promised banded tuition, which would provide students with a sizeable discount by taking four or more classes. According to the president, the institution of banded tuition will be delayed by another year.

There will be a 1.5 percent increase in tuition and fees, meaning that the cost per credit will jump from \$144.25 to \$146.50.

To offset this, Redmond plans to eliminate what he calls "nuisance fees." One of which is the \$10 it costs to change registration at the beginning of each semester. Redmond stated that the charge served no educational purpose.

For example, if a student dropped one class in the morning, added one in the afternoon and then dropped another one at night, the student would be charged \$30. However, if the student were to make all of those changes at once in the same session with an advisor, the student would be charged \$10. Redmond sees this as "fundamentally wrong," and will be eliminating the fee.

The second fee getting eliminated will be the reinstatement fee-the one students pay when returning to BCC after being on probation or being dismissed.

Despite financial losses, an additional \$5 million deficit has been closed, and more funding has been restored by the county.

Karl Lagerfeld Dead at 85(ish)

KATY TEMPLE EDITOR IN CHIEF

On February 19 the creative director of Chanel, Fendi and his own label, Karl Lagerfeld, passed away at what is presumed to be age 85 (he often lied about his age and the year he was born).

Lagerfeld is credited for saving the House of Chanel and rebranding the line when he accepted the position of creative director in 1983. While staying true to staple Chanel pieces like pant suits and the iconic shoulder bags, he added his own signature twists that helped the brand stay relevant and modern. While most media worships the ground he once walked on and models post reminiscent photographs on social media of themselves with the recently deceased innovator, there are a lot of people forgetting the controversy that surrounded Lagerfeld. The man was talented and revolutionary by definition, but often made statements denouncing the #metoo movement and inclusivity in the fashion industry. In 2009, Lagerfeld told Focus Magazine that those who were against thin models were "fat mummies sitting with their bags of crisps in front of the television, saying that thin models are ugly." He labeled Adele as "too fat" and stated that Pippa Middleton "should



Karl Lagerfeld in 2008 // Wikimedia Commons

only show her back."

This is quite different from the man who is defined as someone who, according to a profile published in the New York Times, "is an intellectual designer (who) tends to admire women not so much for their shape or how they look so much as for their way of being."

The fashion industry has certainly lost an icon, but the world can hope that more major fashion houses will continue to push for more inclusivity without major creators and designers going against that initiative.

Lagerfeld's cat (yes, his cat) is set to inherit a portion of his \$300 million estate to ensure that she can continue to enjoy her daily meals of caviar and chicken pate. Because that's illegal in France, Lagerfeld used his German citizenship as a loophole, as Germany allows animals to be beneficiaries.

Lagerfeld's creative genius and ability to offset brilliance with questionable morals is part of what makes him so intriguing. Fashion is a Fendi Store Opening // via Flickr

way to express, so how can one express such beautiful ideas while clutching onto medieval dispositions of gender and worth?

The entire fashion industry eagerly waits to see which way the Lagerfeld empire will go. Will the next creative director shift it as drastically as Lagerfeld did when he inherited the Chanel label? Or, will Lagerfeld's iconic snowy white hair, tailored suit and indoor sunglasses remain the norm for all of his empires?

Animals are Dying to Warn us

DANIELA GOMEZ CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Animals such as the polar bear and the amur leopard are on the verge of extinction. February 20, 2019, marked the first recorded animal to vanish due to climate change. A tiny brown rat, known as the bramble cay melomy, was found on a small island located in Northern Australia.

The bramble cay melomys first settled on the island of Torres Strait, close to the coast of Papúa New Guinea. They were first found in the 1970s. Scientists claim it has been 10 years (as of 2009) since the bramble cay melomys have been seen. Its population has decreased ever since it was discovered.

In 2016, both the Australian government and the Queensland State government came to an agreement and listed the animal as extinct. The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) recognized Australia as a country with one of the world's highest rates for extinction. A report was issued from the state government explaining how these rodents became extinct due to an overflowing of low cays. This eventually lead the bramble

cay melomys to lose their habitat. The loss of these animals has caused great sadness to Australia, even if they weren't as known until today.

Scientists believe the effects of climate change started in the early 1830s and began to show serious signs in the 1960s. It has impacted our economy and the air we breathe throughout the years. More than 93 percent of heat from global warming is being transferred to our oceans.

Another animal that is close to extinction is the polar bear, that relies entirely off of sea-ice. The water temperature is continuing to rise rapidly and the arctic ice packs, which are located in open areas between sea ice, are melting and make it difficult for polar bears to hunt. They depend greatly on these ice patches because that is where seals, their main source of food, are mainly located.

Due to climate change, the patches melt and cause the polar bears to become helpless and starve. Studies predict polar bears could become extinct in the next 50 years or sooner if necessary actions aren't taken for them to live.

Polar bears are just one example of the 16,306 animal species that are endangered. To name a few, there are



News

// via Wikimedia Commons

also snow leopards, giant pandas, monarch butterflies, green sea turtles, African and Asian elephants, cheetahs and mountain gorillas. About 41,415 species, including both animals and plants, are on the IUCN red list and only 65 animals are found in confinement.

500 years later, about 800 species will become extinct because of climate change and other human activities, being the burning of fossil fuels and

more. Countless elephants are dying due to the urge of humans wanting their tusks for ivory. Tigers are being killed and skinned to be used as rugs for furniture accessories.

Animals don't have voices. It is predicted that if no human cares enough about these animals to take action against endangerment and animal cruelties, they will soon die off.



// Kuenstlerhaus via pixabay.net

Homeless Youth Task Force

KARISSA ROSEN STAFF WRITER

Whether it's unemployment, natural addiction, alcoholism, disasters, no support, mental health issues or affordable housing , there are so many young adults facing homelessness. 'Young people are often considered the 'invisible homeless' - and there are fewer statistics for this group as they don't normally engage with services, said The Medium. Bergen County leaders created the Homeless Youth Task Force, targeting homeless individuals between the ages of 18 and 24. After conquering U.S. veteran homelessness to functional zero, Bergen County is paying more attention to the younger people living on the streets. The county aims to provide support to young adults in mental and physical health, job training and affordable housing. The task force is made up of representatives from the Department of Health, Human Services, Christ Church, New Bridge Medical Center, Bergen Community College, The Center for Food and Action and others.

Bergen Community College itself has improved its efforts to support the homeless in recent years. The college now offers more counseling while also helping students pay bills (including rent) and partnering with the Center for Food Action pantry.



The most recent search for homeless youth was Tuesday, January 23, 2019.

"Volunteers holding flashlights and carrying bags with toiletries and clothing started the count at 9 p.m. at Garden State Plaza and finished at 1:30 a.m. at Bergen Community College. They walked through classrooms, drove around parking lots and looked under the college's stairwells, where Cynthia Rivera, a public safety officer at the school, found a homeless veteran," said northjersey.com.

To get involved in helping Bergen County and their homeless youth initiative, one can get in touch with Bergen Volunteer Center, a nonprofit organization, at 201-489-9454. They are located in Hackensack, New Jersey. One can also contact the nonprofit organization, Family Promise of Bergen County, at 201-833-8009, located in Ridgewood, New Jersey.



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News

Gov. Phil Murphy signs bill into law that will require schools to teach students about LGBT history and disabled persons.// Sopa Images via Getty Images

LGBT History to be Taught in Public Schools

KARISSA ROSEN STAFF WRITER

New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy (D) signed a bill in late January that will requires schools to teach about the societal, economic and political contributions of the LGBT community. New Jersey will now be the second state (after California, in which the FAIR act was instituted in 2011) to implement LGBT history into its classrooms.

The law will be implemented in the 2020-2021 school year. It does not apply to private schools. The new bill will also require teaching students about disabled persons and their contributions to society. The new learning material will be included in social studies and history class curriculums.

"The Governor believes that ensuring students learn about diverse histories will help build more tolerant communities and strengthen educational outcomes," Murphy's office said in a statement.

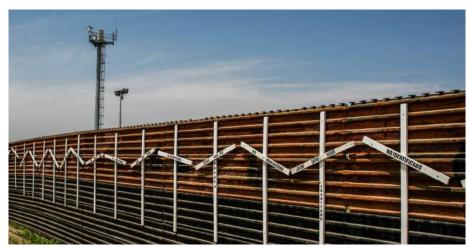
New Jersey Assemblywoman Valerie Vainieri Huttle (D) said on her Twitter account, "It is my hope that with this legislation signed into law we can foster new generations of students that understand the importance of tolerance and equality."

The bill has also garnered opposition. Opponents have said that teaching gay and transgender history may lead children to question their sexuality.

Len Deo, president of the New Jersey Family Policy Council, told NorthJersey.com, "We believe it further erodes the right of parents to discuss this sensitive issue with their children, if in fact schools are going to be promoting and making the claim that this particular person was an LGBTQ member."

He went on further and said, "Individuals should be included in lessons based on achievements without discussion of sexual orientation."

The new law was modeled after the FAIR act in California that was passed in 2011. It was one of several things that the Murphy administration has supported in favor of LGBT rights, such as giving transgender people the legal right to alter the sex on their birth and death certificates in July of 2018.



Border Wall at Tijuana and San Diego Border. // via Wikimedia Commons

ACLU vs. Trupp MIKE MULLIGAN STAFF WRITER Mike MULLIGAN

President Donald Trump is in hot water again as he is being sued by the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) over the state of emergency he declared. This comes after 16 other states have filed lawsuits against it, including our own state of New Jersey.

The state of emergency was put in place because President Trump believes we have a serious issue with our border control and that sex and drug trafficking is becoming a major problem. He even anticipated the backlash as he stated in his announcement, "We will have a national emergency, and we will then be sued."

The ACLU believes that Trump is using this state of emergency in order to get the the funding he needs to build a border wall between the US and Mexico in an unconstitutional way. He is not getting the votes to pass his bill. In a state of emergency, he can use one of the 136 new powers he's been granted to try and force the construction of his wall.

President Trump will be looking to use the support of the Title 10 U.S Code, which means if the president puts out a state of emergency, "that requires use of the armed forces," the defense secretary "may undertake military construction projects ... not otherwise authorized by law that are necessary to support such use of the armed forces."

This is the path that President Trump looks to be taking in order to build his wall after failing to get it done through Congress. The ACLU is not happy about this.

President Trump is trying to build a wall that America has voted against, and the ACLU sees this as an abuse of power. Cecillia Wang, the ACLU deputy legal director, said, "The president is using a bogus declaration of a nonexistent emergency to undermine our constitutional system of checks and balances."

With Trump pushing so hard for this wall and all the backlash and legal response that has come from the state of emergency, this case will almost certainly go all the way to the Supreme Court. Last time President Trump was in the Supreme Court, it was for his administration ban on travel to several Muslim populated countries. His ban was upheld and he won the case.

Either way, no matter how this all plays out, this will be another blip on Trump's presidency, as there has been a continuous trend of disagreements between him and Congress.

Bergen STUDENT LIFE TRIPSESPRING 2019

EVENT	DATE	TIME	PRICE			
To Kill A Mockingbird	03/07/2019 at Shubert Theatre Tickets go on sale: 01/28/2019	Bus departs from Ciccone Theatre at 4:00pm Showtime at 7pm	\$40 for students \$70 for faculty, staff and guests	AT A AND		
American Museum of Natural History	03/23/2019 Tickets go on sale: 02/04/2019	Bus departs from Ciccone Theatre at 9:45am	\$10 for students\$20 for faculty,staff and guests			
2019 Student Leadership Weekend	03/29/2019 -03/31/2019	Applicatio Details	YOUR GET INVOLVED AT BERGEN			
New York Mets vs. Phillies	04/24/2019 Tickets go on sale: 03/01/2019	Bus departs from Ciccone Theatre at 4:30pm Gametime at 7pm	<pre>\$15 for students \$25 for faculty, staff and guests</pre>			
New York Yankees vs. Orioles	05/14/2019 Tickets go on sale: 04/01/2019	Bus departs from Ciccone Theatre at 4:30pm Gametime at 6:35pm	\$20 for students \$40 for faculty, staff and guests	Origina VS Carper		

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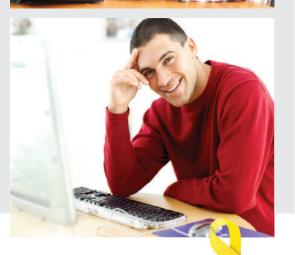
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FEATURES

The Power of CBD

Features

KARISSA ROSEN STAFF WRITER

The power of CBD oil is a game changer in the world of medicine. Cannabidiol, commonly known as CBD, is a natural remedy with numerous benefits according to medical studies.

Unlike tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), CBD is not psychoactive. It is a chemical compound extracted from the marijuana plant that serves as a relief to many illnesses and diseases without the mind-altering effects of THC.

Studies on CBD have been linked to treating chronic pain, anxiety, epilepsy and many other illnesses. It has helped reduce symptoms related to cancer and the terrible side effects related to cancer treatments.

CBD holds anti-inflammatory properties and the best part is that it does not get you high. Tests have shown strong results in treating neurological disorders due to its neuroprotective properties and has shown that treatment improves the lives of those with Parkinson's disease.

CBD treatments have shown to reduce psychotic symptoms and help people with schizophrenia and other mental disorders. On top of all that, studies have shown that CBD has helped users overcome substance abuse and withdrawals.

There are several ways one can consume CBD. There is CBD oil,



CBD products// via Flickr

which is the purest and strongest form. There are also capsules, topicals, tinctures and even gum. According to medicalnewstoday.com, "Cannabis is legal for either medicinal or recreational use in some American states. Other states have approved the use of CBD as a hemp product but not the general use of medical marijuana."

With all the benefits of CBD, there have been some cases of minor side effects such as changes in appetite, fatigue, drowsiness, and/or diarrhea.

The power of CBD has and will continue to change the medical world as we know it.

Financial Aid Made Easy

MIKE MULLIGAN STAFF WRITER

Bergen's Financial Aid department deals with a lot of students on a daily basis. Students have a number of questions that they may not always get answered. The Assistant Director of the Financial Aid department here at Bergen Community College is Patricia Pappas-Juliano. She let The Torch know about resources available to students who may be struggling to figure out everything that is needed when applying for financial aid.

I first asked what advice she would give to any students having trouble figuring everything out. The biggest piece of advice she gave me is that Bergen offers a workshop that gives one-on-one help for FAFSA. The staff is trained and experienced to help with whatever questions you may have and anyone can find out when these workshops are just by going on Bergen's website.

The second thing that we discussed was the biggest issue she sees with miscommunication between the financial aid department and the students. She told me that the best thing that students can do is check their Bergen emails daily so they can see if they have anything from the financial aid department.

Also, the financial department does call students when needing more



// Jennifer Park

information so they should always be looking out for those calls.

We also talked about how to make the process go smoothly. Students can get nervous or anxious over these matters, as it may be essential for them to attend school. I was told to just communicate with the financial aid department. They want to get everything done as well and are trying to get it done as fast as they can for students.

The last thing we discussed that day was if the government shut down had affected the financial aid department. She told me that it did, as Bergen students weren't able to get their tax transcripts, which forced them to use their tax returns instead.

Hopefully, this information is useful to students and they can use these resources to get any help they need. Financial aid can be a tricky thing to figure out so it's always great to use all the help you have available to you.

Press 'Unwind' with Games in this Club

CHRISTOPHER GAGLIARDI STAFF WRITER

Growing up, Julian Campillo enjoyed playing Super Smash Brothers and every Thursday, at 3:15 PM. He and a dozen other students come into one of the classrooms to attend a ritual on one thing: the power of video games.

That's because it is a special kind of club called the video game club, and Campillo decided that he wanted to join the club because he not only was a big fan of video games, but he also



// Christopher Gagliardi

The president of the club, Michael Trouwborst, says that next to breathing. video games are the second best thing. He revived the club since it was inactive after the last person who ran it graduated. "I made an excuse," he says 'and I just said that I wanted to start the video game club to make friends." His first video gaming console, the Atari, also helped him get through everyday life by making him more responsible. Trouwborst also mentions, "We have met some of our best friends that we've had ever made at the college." He says also that those who want to join the video games club must speak with him directly. So, if you have a zest for games and want to really unwind from all the madness of class and relax and meet new people, the video game club is the place for you. You don't need tokens or change to come to the video game club, all you need to bring is yourself and passion to video games. The video games club takes places on 3:15-5:00 pm in Room L-150.

The Benefits of Bergen's Health Center

DANIELA GOMEZ CONTRIBUTING WRITER

From a headache to a bad stomach ache, if you are a student at Bergen Community College you don't have to break the bank and stop by your local clinic.

There is actually help here on campus! Here at BCC, there are many health resources a student can benefit from. One of them being the RN staff, who is trained to provide aid if a student has a sprain, burn or even



// via Wikimedia Commons "Students usually come in if they aren't feeling well, are dizzy, lightheaded, have a headache, stomach ache or earache. The office is pretty busy

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wanted to associate with people.

Since taking up the video game club, he has said it changed his life. "It has made me a different person and I used to never really associate myself with people and doing something I like and enjoy and has helped me just be more social," he said.

Many people come from all walks of life to be a part of this unique club. Students come in to play video games as a form of relaxation and entertainment to unwind from the stresses brought by their studies. There are many people who have joined this club. Some did so because it has helped them to get away from having challenges - be it a physical or mental challenge, or to simply find friends. In 2013, Ted Locarro was one of those who had the same passion and just as much fun playing the video games of his youth. He mentions, "I could say that it has changed my life. I definitely have more friends now in college."

allergic reactions.

Dania Huie-Pasigan, who is an RN BSN and the head college nurse at BCC, said, "The Center for Health, Wellness, and Personal Counseling offers first aid, emergency medical responses and health care maintenance to all members of the campus. Not only does the RN staff offer that, but they also provide on-campus workshops and sports and health profession clearance throughout the academic year. Personal counseling can also be set up for any student that has a personal issue and wants to speak with someone confidentially."

The Health Department provides these services to all students and there are no qualifications that one must complete. Anyone can simply walk in. The office is required by the state of New Jersey to keep track of statemandated immunizations on all fulltime students and for those majoring in nursing and other health majors. throughout the day," Huie-Pasigan said. In a day, easily 30 to 40 students come in to visit the health clinic.

Students who have higher blood pressure or diabetes visit normally every day. Pains such as chest, abdominal and respiratory would require the RN staff to call an ambulance. Wheelchair transportation, if necessary, is available to anyone on campus suffering from seizures, fainting, and falls.

If any student ever feels the need to stop by for a consult, the office of health services is located in the Pitkin Education Center, room HS-100. Their phone number is (201)- 447-9257 and their fax number is (201)-447-0327. You can also reach them by email at, healthservices@bergen.edu. Their office is open from Monday to Thursday: 8:30 A.M. - 6:00 P.M. Friday: 8:30 A.M. - 3:00 P.M.

KATEY JOHNSON NEWS EDITOR

Music has always been a type of influential art that most find comforting, helpful, entertaining and beautiful. All the time, people like to broaden their taste in music and step out of their comfort zones when listening to it. Some do this by going to local shows in their area to get a taste of how music a certain type of music is like and what genres of music are being portrayed or hyped up in their area.

In the northern New Jersey and New York area, you see a lot of local bands playing in common clubs_or bars such as Dingbatz, Clash Bar and Dingo's Den. A well-known local band based out of Bloomfield, New Jersey (or Essex County, where they like to say they're from) is Alive in Fiction.

They are made up of members Jed Valencia (vocalist), Anthony Corbo (guitarist) and Jose Lopez (bassist). They formed in 2016 with Valencia and Corbo being the original members but went through many temporary members until Lopez joined in 2017.

Alive in Fiction is a post-hardcore band with subtle influences from the genres of pop punk, metalcore and even emo. The first song that the band ever released is a song called "Paradox", which the band claims is their most popular song. At shows, though, they play newer songs, one of them being called "Last Love," which seems to get a lot of attention as well.

At their shows, Alive in Fiction hypes up the audience as much as possible by going out into the audience and playing their instruments with the fans, as well as jumping around everywhere and getting the audience to sing the lyrics as loud as possible. Any Alive in Fiction show you attend will be fun, loud and memorable. Any fan of loud and heavy music will have a blast.

Since forming, Alive in Fiction have performed with bigger bands such as Alteras (Revival Recordings), I Set My Friends on Fire (Tragic Hero Records), The Funeral Portrait (Revival Recordings), Eyes Set to Kill (Century Media) and Convictions (InVogue Records).

You can find Alive In Fiction's music anywhere that you can get music like Apple Music, Google Play, Spotify and YouTube. If you're into the heavy music scene or want to branch out with your music taste, then Alive In Fiction is the band for you. Alive In Fiction currently does

Alive In Fiction currently does not have any upcoming shows but are working hard on writing and recording new music. Be on the lookout for that as well as any show announcements by following their socials: facebook. com/aliveinfictionnj, @aliveinfiction (Twitter) and @aliveinfictionnj (Instagram).

Alive In Fiction Spotlight on a Local Band

Bergen PRIDE Makes Bergen Proud

CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Thanks to the efforts of Bergen PRIDE's co-advisors, Linda Seidman and Jim Bumgardner, Bergen Community College is continuously working towards, according to Seidman, "creating a safer and more welcoming environment for all of our diverse community."

Seidman and Bumgardner conduct Safe Space'' trainings and LGBTO+ 101 workshops on campus to ensure that LGBTQ+ individuals have a place to go where they feel "welcome and respected." There are Safe Space Stickers on doors and work areas across campus to indicate certified safe spaces with one of the over 300 staff and faculty trained by Seidman and Bumgardner. There are approximately 40 students who attend the Bergen PRIDE meetings, BCC's official LGBTQ+ Alliance, but there are even more who are a part of the Bergen PRIDE mailing list and who attend events. Bergen PRIDE events and fundraisers vary from guest speakers to film screenings, but they always support topics of importance to the LGBTQ+ community, including equality, HIV/AIDS awareness and suicide prevention. The Alliance also hosts at least two social gatherings



For Love of Ping Pong

MIKE MULLIGAN STAFF WRITER

This Valentine's Day at Bergen Community College, the athletic department hosted the For The Love Of Ping Pong Tournament in the Student Center from 12 to 3 p.m. It cost five dollars to play and winners were able to stay at the table until defeat.

If a player could string together five wins in a row, the winner would receive two tickets to a Brooklyn Nets vs Boston Celtics game. That was not all though. If the person could win ten games in a row they would get four tickets to that game. The winner's game should be highly rated as both the Nets and Celtics make their push towards the playoffs, the Nets first time since 2015. The Barclays Center will certainly be loud on that day. The games of ping pong were simple, as players got time to warm up before the match and then each player would get five serves each before switching. The game was played to the score of eleven. The money from this event was used to purchase food for the Bergen Community College food pantry, which helps students, faculty and staff fight off hunger. The event also brought out a good amount of people with no lack of people to play. Joseph Esteves, who is in his last semester at Bergen, went on a ten-game win streak to win the four tickets.



Alive In Fiction rocking out at a show // Kris Khunachak (@kriskhunachakmm on

Instagram)

// Bergen PRIDE

per year, once in the summer and once around the holidays.

Even for those students not on campus, the Virtual LGBTQ+ Center on the BCC website is the one-stop source for locations of certified safe spaces and gender neutral restrooms on campus, LGBTQ+ physical and mental health resources and information about provisional name changes, as well as contact details for allied faculty and staff.

Interested students can attend a Bergen PRIDE meeting in room S-253, every Tuesday from 12:30 p.m. to 1:30 p.m., or visit Bergen PRIDE's own social media pages on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Links can be found on the Virtual LGBTQ+ Center. // Mike Mulligan

"I was able to win it all on my on first try," Esteves said. It was impressive, as students were already signing up to play again. Even those who didn't play seemed to be standing around watching or even keeping an eye on the game from their seat.

This event gave students waiting in between classes or even those just into ping pong something to come together for and do in the Student Center.

HOROSCOPES

Aries - (March 21 - April 19) - This month is going to be a doozy for our fiery friends. With the New Moon on March 6, this is the time to let go of anything that has been holding you back. Whatever/ whoever it is has run its course and you have gained everything you possibly could as of now. By releasing yourself from these burdens, you'll make room for something new and thrilling! This exciting new venture will also be accompanied by some well-deserved recognition.

Taurus - (April 20 - May 20) - At the moment, it would be best to take a step back and focus on your work, home, and financial situation. This may make you feel defensive but precious bulls, trust that this reflection will only bring you some much-needed clarity. By redirecting your energy, you will encourage improvements in all your personal relationships and in your bank account as well.

Gemini - (May 21 - June 20) - Twins, you should expect this month to bring on many fresh ideas. As a sign of intellect, this sounds exciting BUT fair warning, with all these unfamiliar plans you may feel a bit overwhelmed. Don't panic, you will be able to use this new information to not only improve yourself but also invite new opportunities to come your way. So, take a deep breath, trust the process and trust yourself.

Cancer - (June 21 - July 22) - Directed towards all our caring, crabby readers, THIS IS YOUR TIME TO SHINE! March will be a month full of inner reflection and contemplation that will pay off immensely. With the Super Moon on March 21, your self-confidence will be at an all-time high. This may seem intimidating but remember, the moon is always on your side.

Leo - (July 23 - August 22) - To all our lions and lionesses out there, this is a period of love and passion. You will be at your peak when it comes to creativity and enthusiasm, so be prepared for new flings to gravitate towards you. This is an exciting time that will allow you to freely express yourself and embrace your affectionate side.

Virgo - (23 - September 22) - You will experience an immense amount of energy at this time. You need to focus this new power on finishing old tasks, getting organized and committing to your priorities. The time for procrastination is behind you. Allow this period to help you meet your full potential earth child.

Libra - (September 23 - October 22) - It's time to throw caution to the wind and use that extroverted charm to your benefit. March will place you in many situations that will encourage you to communicate with those around you. This will restore meaningful bonds and make room for much healthier relationships in your life. There will also be an increased amount of creativity coming your way so get ready to be inspired.

Scorpio - (October 23 - November 21) - The New Moon will allow time for much needed healing water child. Dive deep into your psyche and eliminate any bad habits you come across. Making these efforts will equip you with the strength you'll need towards the end of the month Though you may be hesitant, it's time to give your protective barriers a break. Make way for deeperemotional connections to enter your life.

Sagittarius - (November 22 - December 21) - This is going to be a long month, my friends. Though the beginning of the month may seem quite dull and leave you wanting more excitement in your life, this time will pass. Staying true to your positive nature will allow emotional con`nections to prosper. It will even entice new flirtations. Keep your head up, archers.





Features









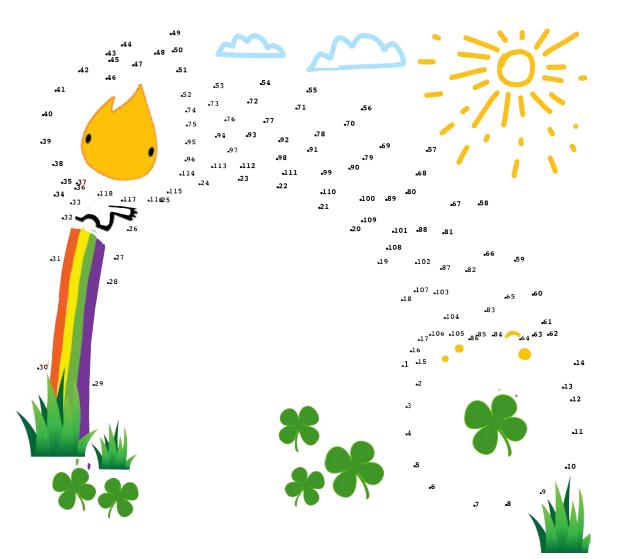
Capricorn - (December 22 - January 19) - March is going to be the perfect time for some change. It will bring on improvements in both your work and home life. This month will also present fun, new social activities. But heed my warning, earth child, these positive changes will only arise if you separate yourself from old habits that no longer suit you. Confidently take back the wasted time and energy you've been blessing these things/people with.

Aquarius - (January 20 - February 18) - This month is the perfect time for some spring cleaning. Out with the old and in with the new! I know change may seem a bit scary but by breaking free of old habits, you will invite positive impacts to form around you. With the promise of a full moon on the horizon, be prepared for some overdue recognition from the people in your life.

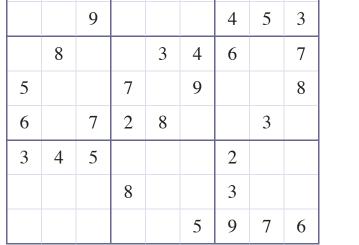
Pisces - (February 19 - March 20) - Generous Pisces, it's time for some self-care. With your self-sacrificing nature, I know this concept may seem unfathomable but trust me, some "Me Time" will help you prepare for what's coming next. Don't worry, all the people who NEED you will understand if you take some time to focus on your own needs. If they don't, just remind them of all the times you were there for them.

Puzzle Corner

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VOLUME 27 ISSUE 6 MARCH 2019



10 Women to Celebrate this Women's History Month

Amani Al-Khatahtbeh 1992~

KATY TEMPLE | EDITOR IN CHIEF

Amani Al-Khatahtbeh is the founder of Muslim Girlan online magazine for Muslim women- and the very first Muslim Women's Day. As a member of the Forbes 30 under 30 list, Amani uses her platform to create content for an often ignored audience.

Her journey began as a young woman living in New Jersey during the 9/11 attacks of 2001. She often hid her heritage and religion in fear of being attacked or treated differently than other students. Her family's fear of the rise of Islamophobia in the United States is what led them to move back to her father's home country, Jordan.

Amani's time in Jordan led her to begin falling back in love with her religion and re-defining herself as a muslim woman. Upon her mother falling ill, Amani and her family moved back to the United States, where Amani chose to wear a hijab to show loyalty to her culture and defiance of Islamophobia. She noticed that there was no space in mainstream media sphere for Muslim women, so she decided to carve some out herself and thus Muslimgirl.com was born.

With 1.7 million hits last year, Muslimgirl.com covers a huge array of topics relating to life as a muslim woman. Violence, sexual assault and lack of access to politics and social institutions are covered all throughout the site as well as lighter fashion tips, listicles and reviews. Amani found an audience that needed a voice and then gave them a platform, all before turning 30.

Miss Major Griffin-Gracy 1940~ JENNIFER PARK | LAYOUT EDITOR

Miss Major is a trans elder and a former leader at the Stonewall riots where the organized fight for LGBT rights ransitioned from denial and integration to liberation and acceptance. Throughout her lengthy career of activism, she has supported incarcerated transgender women, worked with HIV/ AIDS support groups during the height of the AIDS epidemic, and fought against criminalization and police brutality.

She continues to work to empower trans and gender nonconforming people, particularly those of color. She has fought consistently for legal protections for transgender people in hiring and education that would free them from having to live outside of the law. She serves as the Executive Director of the Transgender GenderVariant Intersex Justice Project, where she continues aiding gender non-conforming people who are disproportionately incarcerated and abused.

She also serves as a voice of institutional history and wisdom in a community where so few members survive to old age. Her advocacy extends to the personal where she has given love and affirmation by serving as a mother figure to countless transgender and gender non-conforming people. She has framed her activism, not as being framed by the desire to start a movement, but by a desire to protect her girls.

The groundwork that she laid down for trans visibility and rights has helped to elevate new voices like Laverne Cox to a household name. In a community rife with justified fear that may lead individuals to hide and stay quiet, Miss Major serves as a cornerstone of courage and outspoken advocacy.

Alice Paul 1885-1977

KATY TEMPLE | EDITOR IN CHIEF

Alice Paul was an American Suffragist who played a huge part in the passing of the 19th Amendment in the twentieth century. Paul had a quaker background but her parents were supportive of gender equality and her mother often brought her to women's suffrage meetings.

Paul graduated from Swarthmore college with a degree in biology and later went on to what is now Columbia University for a degree in sociology. She went to England to study social work and earned her PhD from the University of Pennsylvania. Paul's first and largest organized protest occurred on the

day before Woodrow Wilson was sworn into office. About 8,000 women showed up to march while half a million showed up to watch; some in support of the movement and some to heckle and harass participants.

Rather than being protected by the first amendment, Paul as thrown in jail for "obstructing traffic." In jail, Paul staged a hunger strike and law enforcement threatened to send her to an asylum to be force fed. When newspapers picked up and published stories on her treatment in jail, Paul and the suffrage movement gained more supporters and public sympathy.

Upon her release, Paul played a role in the creation of the Equal Rights Amendment- a guarantee to protect women with constitutional rights from discrimination. The Amendment was short of ratification by 3 votes, and has yet to be added to the Constitution.

Emmy Noether 1882-1935 **JENNIFER PARK** | LAYOUT EDITOR

Emmy Noether worked in the field of Mathematics in en women were generally excluded from the field an era w entirely. After completing her dissertation at the University of Ernlagen, she work unpaid for 7 years at the Mathematical Institute of Ernlagen before her talent was finally recognized by David Hilbert, a titan of his generation.

With his invitation, she joined the Mathematics Department at the University of Göttingen, a global center for mathematical research. Objections to her gender from the philosophy department at the University forced her to lecture under Hilbert's name for 4 years until she was finally allowed to teach on her own.

She quickly became a leader of the department where she developed cutting edge research until a Nazi policy dismissing all professors of Jewish heritage forced her to leave. She then took up a position at Bryn Mawr in the United States before she died only two years later to surgical complications.

Throughout the course of her difficult and relatively short career, she made important contributions to her primary fields of abstract algebra and theoretical physics. She has four eponymous theorems to her name including her first theorem which did the incredibly important work of explaining the relationship between symmetry and conservation laws.

She is widely regarded as the most important woman in mathematics in history and one of the most important mathematicians of the 20th century.

Elizabeth Hamilton 1757-1854

KATY TEMPLE | EDITOR IN CHIEF

Elizabeth Schuyler, more commonly known as Eliza Hamilton, has recently been been brought to the forefront of American consciousness by her role in the hit show Hamilton. However, her role in shaping the beginnings of the United States extend beyond what was covered in the musical.

The Schuyler family was considered to be social royalty in the early days of America. Elizabeth's family was no exception, being the union of two of New York's wealthiest families. She grew up in a household whose wealth was maintained by slave labor. They also stood firmly on the side of the Revolution.

Hamilton treated Eliza as one of his closest confidants. They discussed matters of grave political importance such as the betrayal of Benedict Arnold. She also revised his drafts of the Federalist Papers as well as Washington's Farewell Address.

After the death of her husband and parents, Eliza put herself to work and founded the first private orphanage in New York, the New York Orphan Asylum, which still operates under a different name to this day.

Eliza threw herself in to other charity work and fought to preserve her husband's legacy in history. She collected all of his letters, hired writers to write biographies on her husband and defended him against critics for the remainder of her life. She also worked alongside revolutionary wives Dolley Madison and Louisa Adams to raise money for the construction of the Washington Monument. She outlived her husband by 50 years, and during those years, continued her work as a philanthropist, patriot, and historian.

Harriet Tubman 1822-1913 JENNIFER PARK | LAYOUT EDITOR

Harriet Tubman is mostly remembered as a prolific freer of slaves at great risk to her own personal safety. It is estimated that over the course of her life, she personally led over 300 slaves to freedom on the Underground Railroad.

However, she was also an important spy for the Union during the Civil War. She volunteered to work as an armed scout and spy. She infiltrated plantations, organized resistance, and gather information on the placement of confederate mines.

She devised a well researched and complete raid that was approved by Union military leaders without previous military training. Under her guidance, on June 1, 1863, Union forces sailed over 25 miles down the Combahee river in North Carolina under the cover of night, deftly avoided defensive confederate mines, burned down multiple plantations, and freed over 750 slaves.

The strategy devised by Tubman for the Combahee Ferry raid would be replicated by Union forces for its incredible success rate.

The Combahee Ferry Raid was the first United States military operation planned and executed by an American woman, and Harriet Tubman accomplished all of this as a former slave who could not read or write. After the war, she fought for women's suffrage until her death in 1913. To this day. she shines as a symbol of courage, liberation and ingenuity.

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THETORCH

Sophia Bush 1982~

KATY TEMPLE | EDITOR IN CHIEF

Mostly known for her role as Brooke on the early 2000's hit "One Tree Hill," Sophia Bush is using her platform to push for social and political change.

She's a known member of Connie Britton's girl gang and co-founder of a scent company- "I Smell Great."

Bush also had a starring role on "Chicago PD," which she recently left due to unfit working conditions and abuse. Bush has used her experiences in television, both good and bad, to stand up for the #metoo movement.

She's also an advocate for animal rights, animal adoption and basic human rights. Bush makes a conscious effort to be aware and fully informed of what's going on in our country, and she encourages others to do the same.

Bush's instagram stories are often filled with positive messages, resources for those affected by sexual assault, news articles that may get swept under the rug and the perfect amount of dog pictures in between. Bush also emphasizes the importance of fact checking and reliable sources by always linking to where she finds her information and makes corrections promptly when needed

Bush sets a positive example for young women around this country and always reminds us that our voices are valid.

Lyda Conley 1869 – 1946 JENNIFER PARK | LAYOUT EDITOR

Lyda Conley was not only the first woman to be admitted to the Kansas Bar, but also the first Native American woman to argue before the Supreme Court. She was also the first plaintiff in recorded legal American history to argue that Native American burial grounds were entitled to federal protection.

When the Wyandot Nation of Oklahoma to which she was affiliated decided to sell its burial ground in Kansas City for development, Lyda and her sisters protested. Not only were hundreds of their ancestors buried there, it was also the final resting place of their grandmother, mother, and sister, as well as a multitude of other family.

Lyda filed an injunction against the sale. The courts consistently ruled against her, but she appealed the case all the way to the Supreme Court. Ultimately, they ruled against her too.

However, in the time and publicity bought with her legal challenge, she and her sister were able to mobilize public sentiment to defend the burial ground and many organizations opposed the development of the land. Then, a Senate Bill declared the land a national park, officially protecting it from development.

This struggle for preservation coalesced an unofficial Wyandot Nation of Kansas which is now recognized by the state, though it is not recognized federally. It also formalized the struggle of Native American groups to preserve sites significant to their spiritual and cultural history. Lyda Conley may have lost in the Supreme Court, but she won a major battle in the preservation of the history of not only her tribe, but also the many other Native American tribes who have been able to preserve their history working from the base she established.

Mary Wollstonecraft 1759-1797 KATY TEMPLE | EDITOR IN CHIEF

Mary Wollstonecraft was an English feminist writer in the 1790's. Her most renowned work is A Vindication of the Rights of Women, in which Wollstonecraft argued that society trained women to be weak and inferior.

While this work didn't yield any initial results in her time period, Wollstonecraft's work paved the way for future feminists and planted the seed of educational reform and social reform in people's minds.

After her passing, people were more concerned with Wollstonecraft's controversial life rather than her revolutionary writing. Wollstonecraft had two children with two different men, and was married twice; a scandalous concept given the time period. Wollstonecraft also relocated to Paris to observe the revolution, and formed her own radical group that mostly consisted of men.

Annie Jump Carson 1863-1941 **JENNIFER PARK** | LAYOUT EDITOR

Annie Jump Carson was born to a well to do family in Delaware. The usual trajectory for girls of her station was to marry and raise children. However, Annie's mother encouraged her to follow her own academic passions. Her love of observing stars and constellations from the attic of her home ultimately led to her study of physics and astronomy. At the age of 33, she became a Harvard Computer, one of

a team of only women who worked on calculations for the head of Harvard astronomy department. She catalogued over 350,000 stars and developed the system for classifying stars that is still widely accepted today- albeit with a variant.

At the height of her career, she could catalogue a star every 20 seconds. She attributed her outstanding abilities to her deafness which she developed after contracting scarlet fever in college. She claimed it allowed her to focus on her work. It only hampered her in that members of the National Academy of Sciences claimed to vote against her membership on the grounds that she was deaf. However, the National Academy of Science admitted its first woman in 1978.

She accumulated a number of recognitions throughout her life. She became the first woman to receive an honorary doctorate from Oxford University in 1925 and the first woman to be awarded the Henry Draper Medal of honor from the National Academy of Sciences in 1931. In 1938, she was named the William C. Bond Astronomer at Harvard and given a regular appointment.

Carson was also an active suffragette. In addition to being a member of the National Women's Party, she became an ambassador for professional women. She also defended female astronomers from the accusation that they engaged not in science, but astrology.

Today, the American Association of University Women presents the Annie J. Cannon Award every year in her honor which awards excellence in contributions to astronomy by a woman who received her PhD in the last 5 years. However, this isn't simply a tribute to Carson. The award is paid out of a fund established by Carson herself. Even decades after her death, she continues to encourage the work of female astronomers.

Features

OPINIONS

Don't Tell Me What to Wear

EDITOR IN CHIEF

12

In the little amount of downtime I have, I usually find myself scrolling through social media like any other 22-year-old. My feed consists of pageant friends, school friends and the occasional political post, but every once in a while, I see an absurd headline that is equally shocking as it is infuriating and confusing.

Just last week I stumbled across an article entitled "Women Need to Stop Wearing Workout Leggings to All the Places that Aren't the Gym." This article was written by Midge Benes and published on PuckerMob: a website that is trying to be Buzzfeed but lacks social and political awareness.

I made the mistake of clicking on the article, only to be baffled by how many contradictions could be made in a mere 350 words.

Benes starts out with a rather logical thought. She writes, "it takes a lot more for a woman to reach success than it does a man" and without diving into an entire history of gender relations and the feminist movement, she's right.

It's difficult being a woman in a patriarchal society that has institutions in place that thrives off of female suppression. The pink tax for example - paying extra money for a pink razor instead of a black one or having feminine hygiene products deemed "non-essential goods." That's something women deal with just for being born. We shouldn't also be dealing with people telling us how to dress.

There's a common misconception that feminism and the feminist movement is about rejecting gender norms and traditional gender roles. For one faction of the movement, that's true. But we need to remember that "feminism" doesn't have a concrete definition. It's intersectional,



different women have different goals and that's ok.

Benes misses this point completely. She writes "some of the things women want to do away with due to 'feminism' like skirts, dresses, and heels, actually makes you look professional and confident." The first issue with this statement is that skirts and dresses aren't actually the problem, nor is the feminist movement trying to eradicate them.

The actual problem is the judgements and assumptions people make of a woman who is or isn't wearing a skirt. If you're wearing one, you're stuck up or vain and if you aren't you're sloppy and don't care about yourself. If it's too long you're a prude and if it's too short and you're a slut. That's the problem.

Benes equates athletic wear to "sluggish and sloppy" and business casual to "successful and thriving" but whose right is it to dictate what type of apparel makes women feel one way or another? I might feel as confident as ever in workout clothes after hitting the gym, or maybe I bought a new pair of shoes, or jeans, or a top, that makes me feel confident. Or maybe (stay with me on this one, it's a little crazy) I just want to be comfortable while I run errands?

Confidence isn't one size fits all and there certainly isn't a dress

code for it.

Some women might want to burn bras and throw heels at the patriarchy. Some might want to hang onto their heels and dresses and climb the corporate ladder or stay home with their kids or just take it easy one day and throw on a pair of leggings to run errands. The point is, and always has been, a woman should be able to choose without fear of being seen or treated any differently.

This doesn't stop at clothing selection either. Women should choose whether or not they want children, choose if they want to work after giving birth or not, choose if they want to wear makeup or not, you get my point. Feminism is about choice. It's about supporting the woman who does pageants and likes makeup just as much as you support the woman who doesn't.

I'm not anti-feminist because I wear makeup and do my hair and enjoy typical "female" things. Someone isn't a "feminazi" because she's the exact opposite of that. I'm not saying the feminist movement is perfect either. There's a lack of inclusivity and diversity a lot of the time, but writing and publishing articles that contribute to the narrative of what women should be isn't going to help any cause. What we should be doing is building each other up, not tearing each other down..



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 neccessarily those of THE TORCH. All the materials submitted to THE TORCH become property of THE TORCH.

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ASHLEY SMITH Online Editor

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PROF. SUSAN TOTH *Adviser*

Remember Your Parents

CAITLYN CONVILLE



you ordered, your parents can tell you all the family gossip that you were too young to hear before.

CONTRIBUTING WRITER

As responsibilities pile up and you gain more independence as you transition into adulthood, it's easy to forget about your parents. Unless you don't have a great relationship with your parents for personal reasons, there's no excuse to ignore the two people who love and care about you more than anyone else. Plus, child-you made them suffer through "Yo Gabba Gabba!" You owe them.

You can hang out with them one-on-one or as a trio. If you have siblings, bring them along for some quality family time. Parents like to have fun just as much as their children do, but don't necessarily have the time for activities like they used to. Go on a trip with your parents so they can have that fun that they miss so much.

Together you can explore new

Blue the Dinosaur Scares the Conville Family // Caitlyn Conville

places and try new activities and laugh as Dad's face twists in disgust after eating oysters for the first time. If you're of legal age, then you can party with them too! Come on, aren't you the least bit curious to see what Mom is like on the dance floor? In the evening, when all of you are full from the room service If a vacation is too much for you to handle, you can still pamper Mom at the spa or treat Dad to lunch. Now that you make your own money, you can spoil them for a change. That said, you don't have to blow your entire paycheck on them. The amount of free activities you can enjoy with your parents are myriad. Have a movie night on the couch or go for a walk, dust off that old board game or puzzle box shoved in your closet for some wholesome fun.

At the very least, ask them how their day went. If you live far away from home, shoot them a text or drop them a call if they still haven't figured out how touch screens work. You don't need to travel the world with your parents to make them happy, because you are already their world.

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-

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BCC Hot Takes: The Great Debate

To Vape or...

ANARGYROS COLE MANTIS STAFF WRITER

Bergen Community College has been committed to maintaining smoke-free environments for years. I fully support banning a significantly unhealthy process of taking in nicotine as well creating a healthier educational environment; however, vaping as the safer and less offensive smelling method for former cigarette smokers should not be thrown out like a baby with the bathwater.

With a large population of nicotineaddicted students, colleges that prevent these students from vaping can create exponentially stressful environments. Students also need to understand that their need to vape isn't more important than the comfort of other students.

Students can be respectful of one another, avoid blowing clouds in the faces of their teachers and step outside or go to a designated area set up by the school for people who need to vape in their free time between classes and extracurriculars.

As a school that cares for its students' comfort, rules should be made for the benefit of students, not at the cost of their stress levels. While vaping on campus has some flaws, the benefits of allowing vaping over cigarettes are beneficial for the students and the campus.

Cigarette smoking has proven to be a problematic issue on campus, like when a small fire was started when a lit cigarette was put out in some dry leaves. Events like this create dangerous situations for other students and are good reasons to ban cigarettes from campus.

Additionally, the butts are littered on campus when students are not near trash cans and the smell often lingers on everybody who finds themselves standing around smokers. Cigarettes are far more of a detriment and distraction to the environment at BCC and can't be ignored by other students. I see the need for their restriction on campus, but whether or not adults want to use nicotine shouldn't be decided by their educational institution because it is their choice and their health.

Students at BCC appreciate the fact they come here from different walks of life, from various backgrounds and for multitudes of reasons. They enjoy their abilities to make their own decisions and vaping is a decision to be made by individuals of the legal age, not the governing body of the school they attend.

BCC is comprised of a large amount of well-educated adults who are capable of making their own decisions and are attending to learn more or become better qualified. I feel BCC should respect their students' choices as long as those choices don't endanger or distract other students. As far as I can tell - from a student's perspective - vaping isn't a plague to BCC's campus.

Seeing students around campus vaping isn't odd at BCC, but I've never seen it be problematic to others. Students hit their vapes outside, share some social interactions with their friends and then return to what they need to do at school.

I haven't witnessed an epidemic of students hiding vapes in various pieces of clothing just to hit it in class, and I haven't seen people vaping in any manner that would make another student uncomfortable.

I see vaping as more of a benefit to student social life here at BCC than a burden on the well-beings of students. I have these assumptions based on my personal experience with vaping on campus, but I dont think I'm alone in my opinion on this topic. Vaping is a choice we're entitled to as adults and I'm not encouraging or discouraging anybody. I simply believe it should be a decision we make elsewhere.

...Not to Vape

DANIELA GOMEZ CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Did you know while the amount of teen cigarette smoking is going down, the amount of teen vaping is going up? Most teens have dropped the oldfashioned way of smoking for a new and improved version of e-cigarettes, such as Juuls or Vapes.

No one can fully understand the health risks when it comes to vaping. Vapers simply believe it's just water vapor. In reality, one cartridge carries 200 to 400 puffs of nicotine. This is equivalent to smoking two to three packs of regular cigarettes every day. One Juul pod also carries 200 puffs of nicotine, which is equivalent to smoking 20 cigarettes.

Not only are there so many vape and e-cigarette brands out there, but college students, high schoolers, and even middle schoolers own some type of e-cigarette.

A 2017 study done by the Center of Disease Control found that 50 percent more high schoolers and middle schoolers vape than smoke actual cigarettes. When putting smoking and vaping together, the nicotine found in both substances are doubled.

Nicotine can increase blood pressure, heart rate levels and is linked to cancer. Because they are starting at an early age, it is more likely for teens to have drastic health issues in the future, such as respiratory and heart disease.

Most vapers or e-cigarette users do not want to admit they have addictions, but it begins to show through their bank statement or how many times they've stopped by a gas station to refill their vape or Juul. A pack of Juul pods retails for about \$15 and a vape cartridge, depending on the milliliter, starts around \$6 and ends at \$20.

For someone who is not as addicted or has just started to smoke, these cartridges or packs will last longer than for someone who is already hooked. Someone who has been consuming it longer will tend to smoke it all in a couple of days and spend more money than someone who is less addicted. Regardless, if you're a consumer of these products, you're basically purchasing an early death pass.

E-cigarette users are less likely to feel the nicotine because of the flavors that are in the product. Flavors such as cotton candy, mango, mint and watermelon mask the actual taste of the nicotine and invite the buyer in. Aside from flavors, the product is accessible and easy to hide.

Most teens uually begin to vape or smoke due to peer pressure. They see everyone around them do it including their friends, so they begin to buy it off of a local shop that does not check ID or from someone who is older.

Vaping and e-cigarettes also hurt non-smokers through second hand smoking. Teens hide their vape or Juul in their pocket or backpack and smoke it during class, lunch, in the bathroom and anywhere in school. Teachers and professors normally don't notice it because it's odor is not as strong as a regular cigarette. Once a puff comes out, it vanishes in an instant.

The more you buy a vape cartridge or a Juul pod, the more you reel yourself in. It then becomes a tendency of needing it rather than wanting it.

E-cigarette smokers use this as a way of relieving stress, but don't challenge the idea of quitting or finding other ways to relieve stress. Spending time with positive and supporting people and drinking less caffeine are healthier alternatives. Even by exercising, finding a hobby to do, giving yourself time to relax and getting the right amount of sleep are all ways for you to stop the addiction and turn your life towards the right direction. There is always a way to end smoking, but it starts with you.

The Importance of Fashion

ESMERELDA LOREN CONTRIBUTING WRITER

There's more to fashion than what is assumed. In the words of George P. Fox, "Fashion is and has been and will be, through all ages, the outward form through which the mind speaks to the universe." Fashion has a way of influencing our world through interior designs, foods we eat, cars we drive and music we listen too. Fashion has allowed people to make a change in history, innovate new fabrics to better improve the environment and allow us to express ourselves regardless of if you are following a trend or not. Just like politics, there is a cycle of history repeating itself. Designers create new styles by researching what has been done before us as well as keeping in mind new trend alerts that are present in our culture. Keep in mind that for designers, creating new designs is important as we progress to improve our modern culture. Through fashion, we are allowing people to see us for who we are internally. For example, the way we feel about ourselves and the importance we have in our well being carries out with



Toni Maticevski's catwalk show during New York Fall Fashion Week 2007 // Art Comments via Flickr

the choices we make in how we dress for ourselves. Fashion is as much as physiological as it is having a sense of personal style.

Think about jobs and the emphases that are put on what we wear. Many jobs have uniforms that some people may hate because they feel that uniforms kill individualism. At the same time, there is a feeling of honor and unity belonging to a group of people and a job we all work hard in.

Clothes can be a religious honor to people who use fashion in modest ways. The great thing about it all is that fashion ties people together. Living my whole life in America, I can say that I have accepted other people's choices of styles, even if it's not for me.

Keeping an open mind as we evolve in fashion allows us to explore the greater inventions that amazing people are creating for our personal use, style and health. We all want things to look appealing to our own eye, perhaps even attractive for others, and fashion is doing this for us. It is accessorizing our life to better suit our personal selves. Life is what we make out of it and fashion is an art and it is all around for us to see life in colors. 14



the Small Pox Vaccine which eliminated the disease in the dveloped world// James GathanyContent Providers(s): CDC [Public domain]

When Ideas Matter More Than Life The Growing Anti-Vax movement

DAVID JOO CO-EDITOR

The movement against vaccinations has always been prevalent, stemming as far back as the early 1800s, when widespread smallpox vaccinations became a common practice. Those who were against inoculation described it as being "unchristian" and "unsanitary". However, many of these intellections were the products of mistrust in medical practices and a notion of violation of personal liberties as England and the United States ordered mandatory vaccinations for infants and children.

loday, there is an uproar among medical professionals and people against inoculation - commonly known as anti-vaxxers. In 1998, Andrew Wakefield, a former medical practitioner in England, and 12 of his colleagues published a case series in the Lancet that suggested that the MMR (measles, mumps and rubella) vaccine had a connection to behavioral regression and pervasive developmental disorder in children. The study was flawed according to an article from the Indian Journal of Psychiatry in 2011 that stated "Despite the small sample size (n=12), the uncontrolled design, and the speculative nature of the conclusions, the paper received wide publicity, and MMR vaccination rates began to drop because parents were concerned about the risk of autism after vaccination." Wakefield received backlash from multitudes of medical groups as they

discredited him and published studies of their own, refuting Wakefield's research. The Lancet retracted Wakefield's study in 2010 and excised him and his colleagues under the pretenses of ethical violations and scientific misconduct. when he was found to have been "funded by lawyers who had been engaged by parents in lawsuits against vaccine-producing companies," according to the article.

Additionally, through investigative journalism, Wakefield was found to be guilty of deliberate fraud (hand-picking and choosing data and falsifying facts) for financial gain described by a series of articles published by the British CDC, 2018 had the largest spike in measles cases of 372 since 2014's 667 cases. Funnily enough, multitudes of news articles and medical papers were published throughout 2018 about the rise of an anti-vaccination movement.

Not quite a quarter of the way through 2019, and the year has more cases of measles outbreaks than in 2010, 2012, 2016 and 2017. The CDC also stated that from January 1 to February 14, 127 individual cases of measles have been confirmed in California, Colorado, Connecticut, Georgia, Illinois, Kentucky, New York, Oregon, Texas and Washington.

That said, a growing number of parents are opting for nonmedical exemptions and putting their children at risk due to suspicions and flawed notions of the effects of vaccinations. While their intentions may be in the right places, it should be a tacit agreement that avoiding vaccinating should be considered child neglect. In November 2018, 17 cases of children with measles ranging from seven months to four years were confirmed in New York City. Three of these infections were acquired by children who visited Israel during a large measles outbreak resulting in communities in Williamsburg and Borough Park being affected two places known for having large Orthodox Jewish populations that hold ideologies against vaccination. Considering that these came from the New York State, it should be noted that according to NYC's Administration for Children's Services

website, the Family Court Act of the State of New York defines child neglect or abuse as "the act, or failure to act, by any parent or caretaker that results in the death, serious physical or emotional harm, sexual abuse, or exploitation of a child under the age of 18."

While these people are practicing their faiths, should this not be considered child neglect? Is the endangerment of a child's life worth less than a religion being practiced? With a plethora of research papers refuting Wakefield's studies with plausible evidence and tireless experimentation and studying only a Google search away, is there really a shred of doubt in parents'

g Medical Journal.

However, the damage that Wakefield caused was irreparable, and history is currently repeating itself as concerned and doubtful parents are once again mistrusting vaccinations while putting their children in danger of ailments that should not be concerns today.

According to the CDČ, measles outbreaks are still present due to "an increase in the number of travelers who get measles abroad and bring it into the U.S., and/or further spread of measles in U.S. communities with pockets of unvaccinated people."

The CDC also reported that, "The U.S. experienced 17 outbreaks in 2018, including three outbreaks in New York State, New York City, and New Jersey, respectively. Cases in those states occurred primarily among unvaccinated people in Orthodox Jewish communities."

According to a bar graph from the

to use?

In many communities, parents continue to opt to have their children go unvaccinated. When a pocket of antivax people begins to form, outbreaks are bound to happen as a result. Children are affected by their parents' choices and often bear the burden of enduring an illness that could have easily been prevented.

Choosing not to vaccinate children should be seen as child neglect and actions should be promptly taken. It does not matter what reason a parent has for opting not to get their children vaccinated. If those ideologies or intellections matter more than the lives and well-being of their children, what loss would be incurred if those children were taken away from those who choose to sacrifice those very children and endanger other children because of harmful ideas?

IGNACIO LEON CONTRIBUTING WRITER

What if I were to tell you that there is a way you could reduce stress without the need for pills or prescriptions? What if there were a way to feel energized, creative and have the necessary drive to get through the day? I'm here to tell you that there is.

I became interested in learning about Transcendental Meditation (TM) after reading David Lynch's book, "Catching the Big Fish" (a must-read for anybody who considers themselves creative). In it, he describes how meditation has not only helped him with catching new ideas, but has also aided with managing the stresses of being a film director.

Given that my goal in life is to direct movies, I wanted to give TM a try. I wanted something that could help my intuition become sharper and clearer.

I did some research, and it turns out that this was something much bigger than I'd imagined. Everybody from the Beatles to Oprah has talked about how TM has changed their lives, improved their abilities to work and created and helped them to discover "the Self".

Founded in 1955 by Indian guru, Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, TM went international in 1958. Since then, nearly 5 million people worldwide practice it on a daily basis.

The meditation consists of reciting a mantra, given to the individual by a certified TM teacher, for twenty minutes twice a day, normally once after waking up and again before dinner. Once relaxed, the mind begins



//via publicdomainpictures.net

to dive deeper until it reaches what science calls the "Unified Field," the area of unbounded consciousness.

For those interested in learning the technique, reach out to a local TM center and meet with an instructor. At my center, I was able to learn through a four-day program. The first day consisted of acquiring the mantra and getting used to the practice. From there, days two to four consisted of detailed explanations of what goes on during transcendence. After completion. I was ready to begin meditating on my own. It is recommended that those new to TM meet once a month with their teacher to help fine-tune their mantra and practice.

Given that Transcendental Meditation is a non-profit organization, costs for the program are tailored based on annual house income. Thus, this allows easy access for anybody wishing to participate in learning.

Evidence-based research that has gone into the program makes this different from other meditations. From the American Heart Association to the Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine, TM has been shown to reduce blood pressure, treat individuals with mental disorders such as PTSD and improve creativity and intelligence.

Most importantly, TM is a nonreligious practice. The organization itself emphasizes that it does not adhere to any specific religion or philosophy nor enforces it upon its students.

After having meditated for nearly two weeks, I can most certainly say that I'm starting to feel a bigger pep in my step. Things that I would normally get stressed out about now seem clearer and organized.

I'd recommend anybody with an open mind and a willingness to try something new to give Transcendental Meditation a go. In this day and age with how fast things are moving, sometimes we need to stop and give ourselves a moment to relax and destress. This also allows us to unwind and get in touch with ourselves.



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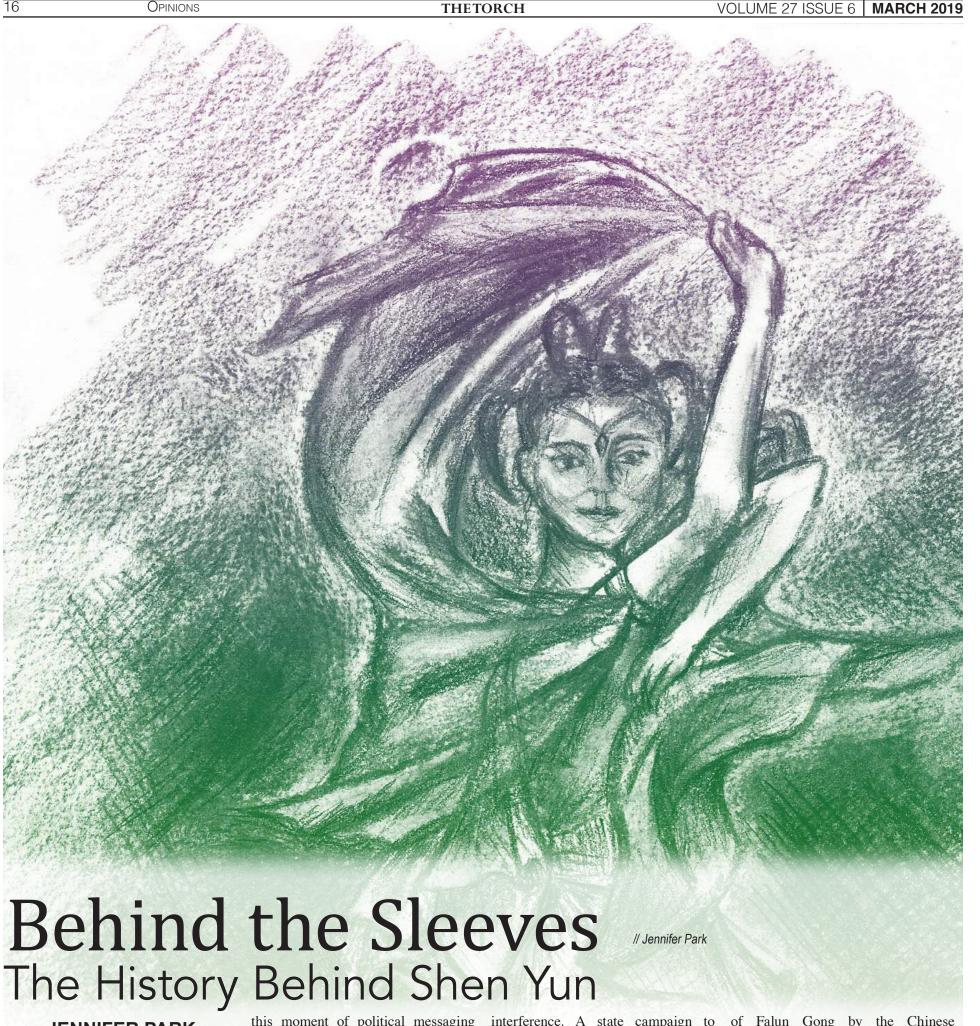
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JENNIFER PARK LAYOUT EDITOR

Anyone who has paid attention to the billboards on the highway or has gone to a vaguely Asian restaurant or hair salon is surely familiar with the image of a beautiful Chinese woman gracefully floating across promotional material. Advertisements for Shen Yun have become so inescapable that they have been elevated to meme status. Shen Yun markets itself as a performance celebrating 5000 years of traditional Chinese Arts through a night of dance in the form of a series of vignettes across China's history. According to Nicholas Hune-Brown of Hazlitt Magazine, the pattern of a scene of ancient life in various regions of China interpreted through dance is interrupted by "a scene from Contemporary China" titled "The Power of Compassion." Unlike the previous spectacles of highly coordinated traditional dance, this performance depicts the persecution of incredibly kind and peaceful meditators by brutish communist thugs. Without context, this break could confuse audience members. An understanding of the origin of Shen Yun, however, makes

this moment of political messaging totally expected.

According to the Shen Yun website, Shen Yun was founded in 2006 by "a group of Chinese artists... in New York with a vision: to revive the best of China's cultural heritage and share it with the world." However, it doesn't actually reach as far back as you think. No, not to ancient China whose legacy they claim to preserve, or even to modern China before the cultural revolution. It all originates in the era of frosted tips, girl groups and rising Chinese nationalism: the 1990s. Within the context of a secular China, a plurality of meditation based wellness practices rooted in Tai Chi and Buddhism emerged in what is called the qigong boom. Of these, Falun Gong (or Falun Dafa) gained particular popularity and notoriety. It stood apart from its contemporaries in its lack of membership fees and how its founder, Li Hongzi, crafted a spiritual worldview that came uncomfortably close to being a religion. Falun Gong enjoyed institutional support for a short time. However, by 1999, it was being smeared in state media. Over 10,000 Falun Gong practitioners demonstrated in Beijing for legal recognition, fair coverage in state media, and freedom from

interference. A state campaign to eradicate Falun Gong followed.

Falun Gong was outlawed and labeled a dangerous cult. Tens of thousands were arrested. Practitioners were tortured to death and sent to reeducation camps. In 2006, a report was published claiming that practitioners of Falun Gong were systematically killed organ harvesting. After half a decade of incredibly sympathetic western media coverage, the West's compassion seemingly ran out. In the years since China's rise as an economic power, criticism of their human rights record has dwindled, especially for practitioners of Falun Gong While the persecution they face is extreme, they are not the easiest group to sympathize with. Frankly, Falun Gong is strange. Founder Li Hongzi has claimed that he has delayed the apocalypse and is capable of levitating. He also warns of alien invasion and grand cosmic battles, in addition to claiming the Holocaust was caused by a cosmic event. None of this offsets the struggle they face, but it makes coverage easy to sensationalize in all of the wrong ways.

of Falun Gong by the Chinese government aside from news reports. Art is far more palatable than statistics on torture. Through dance and heavyhanded parables, Shen Yun preaches both the virtues of Falun Gong and the urgency of protecting its practitioners.

The Chinese government continues to label Falun Gong as a dangerous cult. It claims that Falun Gong poses a danger to public health as it advocates for refusing professional medical attention in favor of spiritual wellness practices. It also holds that Falun Gong pushes its practitioners towards suicide, self-harm and murder. Thus, they consider Shen Yun a fundraising propaganda arm of a dangerous dissident cult. Of course, the Chinese government also claims that Shen Yun's accusations of persecution are baseless when they are very well substantiated. Patronizing Shen Yun isn't simply a matter of consuming art from history. It's also supporting a group of artists who are making a strong political statement criticizing the regime of the Communist Party. It positions itself as the true keeper of Chinese culture and history. The struggle of Shen Yun is a struggle to define the very nature of China.

Shen Yun was devised as a method to expose persecution of practitioners

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Superb Owl Take over Superbowl

RYAN TORRENS CONTRIBUTING WRITER

The English language is a confusing and mystical thing. Knowing many people who speak English as a second language, it has been expressed countless times how confusing it is to learn. "Let's eat grandma." Sorry grandma, I was trying to tell you that we're eating food, not you.

Along with mistakes that can make a conversation about Thanksgiving take a dark turn, there are also little mistakes that happen much more often than one would expect. The Superb Owl. Yes, you read that correctly. This typo for the (so I'm told) most popular sporting event of the year, The Super Bowl, has gained its own following, and has resulted in a series of memes and far fewer innocent grandmothers being eaten than my previous example.

Rushed and panicked football fans run to Google the current score of the game, or maybe go to refresh their memory of what number Super Bowl it is. Instead, they are greeted with an owl wearing a very elegant top hat and monocle. In my personal opinion, I think this is much more pleasant to see than some "athletes" throwing a ball around. However, as it often does, the internet became slightly obsessed with this odd phenomenon over the past three years.



// edited by Ryan Torrens

Although it only recently gained traction in a substantial way, Reddit, a popular website that curates information from all around the internet, has been in on this joke for over eight years. This is according to an article by Techly.com.au. Reddit has subsites of the main website created for specific communities to join together. These are called subreddits. "Seven years ago, a subreddit called 'r/superbowl' (Superb Owl) was created to troll the NFL's strictness while simultaneously celebrating the grand majesty of the fine, feathered creatures." (Kostarelis, Techly)

And celebrate they did. There are almost 250,000 readers on this subreddit all gathered to bask in the beauty of the elegant creature while simultaneously messing with people expecting sports updates.

You, the reader, may be asking yourself, "What is the point of all this?" The answer to that is absolutely nothing.

In my eyes, the internet often does amazing things. These things include solving mysteries that have been given up on by mainstream media, finding episodes of television shows over the course of several years just to satisfy one person's memories, or banding together to start movements against parts of society that are unjust.

Often times, however, the internet decides collectively to mess with people. This is just a part of the beauty of the internet. The vastness of users result in huge communities of like minded people being able to find company in one another.

When you have all these different groups, there's bound to be conflicts, just like in life outside of the internet. Occasionally, a group needs to put the conflicts aside and stop taking everything so seriously. People are mad about something all the time; politics, war, religion or whatever it may be. These are all topics I'm not going to touch with a 10 foot poll in an article about a meme, but there are plenty of places you can find conflict on all of these topics and more.

We get caught up in life way too much. It becomes hard to find joy in things anymore because there's always people going against what you believe. There's so much to be stressed about. so the internet should be able to offer an escape for people from the seriousness of everyday life. When people take themselves too seriously, it's the duty of the people around them to keep their ego grounded.

Yes, Superb Owl is a silly meme that is irrelevant almost the entire year, but it also may represent something else unintentionally that I think the internet does amazingly well: putting people in their place. When you're getting caught up in all the nonsense in the world, sometimes you need a Superb Owl to put everything in perspective.



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Student Athletes of the month Anira Calamir and Brett Fiore with their teams// Bergenccbulldogs.com

Student Athletes Of The Month A Look At Fiore and Calamia Off the Court

FRANCISCO CAMACHO SPORTS EDITOR

Meet Brett Fiore and Anira Calamia, your February Student Athletes Of The Month. Fiore is a 19-year-old sophomore from Oakland, NJ and captain of the basketball team and Calamia is a 20-year-old Sophomore From Garfield, NJ. They sat down with me to tell me about themselves, what inspires them and how BCC has helped them become the players they are. Growing up in Oakland, NJ, Fiore was actually a baseball player before he took up basketball. He started basketball in 4th grade after he was told by his mother to try something new. Initially, he was a little hesitant to continue, as playing time was not there for him and it was an adjusting period for him, being that he was somewhat of a baseball star already. His mother and father continued to spur him on and and convinced him not to give up. He took a moment to thank his parents for everything they've done for him. "They come to every single home game. They've traveled. I really appreciate everything that they do." "My parents always push me to do my best and like give it 110 percent... they told me to keep trying and I'd get

the hang of it" Fiore said.

Anira started in a local 2 team recreation center league when she was 11 and her team went undefeated that season. She's the only basketball player in her family, as she said most of the people in her family were "football players"

From the moment she stepped on the court she was able to put the ball in the basket and she knew it too, stating that "at one point I felt so bad for the other team I wanted to join their team... because I knew if I would've joined their team we would've won" memories are related to basketball. "Meeting the kids on team. I still remember when I first met them," he said. The camaraderie he has been able to establish with many teammates is something he values.

He won a championship in 7th grade and still has the trophy. "I remember when I first got the trophy it wouldn't leave my sight L was a horny."

ever had.

Calamia's loves her coach's attitude, as she is "a very headstrong woman and very honest and she expects that from all of us as well. She is always willing help if you're honest with her as well"

Both players also have a lot of love for their teammates and consider them to be an extended family. They love the competitive drive that their teammates bring to the table.

She then went on to play for her middle school and when she was in 8th grade, she was already playing with highschool players. Once she hit the high school scene, she was immediately thrusted into varsity competition and hasn't looked back since.

Calamia is a tremendous athlete who also plays softball with the Bulldogs, which is actually her first sport. She tries to balance out both worlds by not doing too much at once.

"Coach Tracy doesn't want me to do softball while basketball season is happening" says Calamia "she doesn't want me to get injured while it's our season" she adds.

Basketball has opened up plenty of doors for Fiore. Some of his fondest

leave my sight I was so happy."

He's also been able travel because of basketball. For two years in a row, Fiore got to travel to the Barclays Center in Brooklyn and play on the home court of the NBA's Brooklyn Nets with the BCC Bulldogs.

"Being able to play on an NBA court and be in the locker rooms creates unforgettable memories," Fiore said.

Both Fiore's and Calamia's time here at BCC has been an integral part in their development not only as players, but also as a people. They're thankful for everything they have been able to learn while being part of their respective basketball teams.

They hold their head coaches in high regards, with Fiore stating that, "Coach [Osbourne] always emphasizes grades before anything...he cares about everyone on this team, he takes the time to hold study halls for us, he'll always have our backs." Fiore had more praise, as he believes he is the best coach he's While not in school you can catch Fiore at the popular restaurant Juicy Platters and playing NBA 2k with his teammates and listening to rapper Drake while Calamia goes to her job and spends her free time watching the syndicated Cartoon Network show "The Amazing World of Gumball" and loves Beyonce.

After they conclude their time here at BCC, both players will try to play at 4-year institutions. Fiore hopes to get some sort career in business and Calamia wants to go to John Jay College of Criminal Justice.

Both of these students exemplify the commitment and leadership that it takes to not only be an athlete but also a student here at BCC. Hopefully they succeed in all of their future endeavours.

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THETORCH



The team at a game in 2016 // Bergenccbulldogs.com

Bergen Softball Team Back and Better Than Ever

NOAH SANCHEZ

STAFF WRITER

"I think this is the start of a really good program," first-year softball coach Jorge Hernandez said, believing that this year can be special for the Bergen Bulldogs softball team.

After disappointing seasons in recent years and a frustrating season riddled by injuries which led to the team only being able to play one game in 2018, the Bulldogs are set out on silencing any non-believers and bringing excitement back to Bulldogs Softball.

Injuries are part of the game. When you play, you hope for a healthy season but ultimately expect to deal with the unfortunate reality of losing players due to injuries. When you only have a nine player roster, you can't afford any injuries.

This reality came to a head when one of the women on the team sustained an ankle injury at first base, resulting in the end of the game and effectively ending their 2018 season as well.

With a replenished roster throughout the infield and outfield, the Bulldogs look to change the narrative surrounding Bergen Softball from an afterthought to the thought in Bergen sports.

Returning sophomore Anira Calamia is at first base as freshman pitcher Madison Heck comes onto the field, who also received honors for her play coming out of Bogota High School in 2018.

Other notable additions include catchers Tatiana Fermaint and Hannah Christensen, who transferred to BCC from Rutgers University, giving the team a "strong" battery, in Hernandez's opinion.

"Nobody is inexperienced. I think we're going to have a very good year." Hernandez has a lot of praise for his team just ahead of its spring break trip to Myrtle Beach. The trip before the season allows the team to bond and develop a chemistry off the diamond that will carry onto the diamond as well.

The trip is a first for the team in its history. Hernandez believes that the trip will not only be good for the members on the team but for the future of the Bulldogs softball as well. "I believe the trip will bring a lot of recruits and a lot of excitement to the team."



Anira Calamia posting up on the block // Bergenccbulldogs.com

Lady Bulldogs Fight Until the End

FRANCISCO CAMACHO SPORTS EDITOR

The BCC Women's Basketball team season came to a disappointing end on February 21 while hosting the Sussex County Skylanders in the first round of the Region XIX DIII Championship Tournament. Our lady Bulldogs went down swinging as they lost in overtime 46-51.

This was a nail biter throughout, as BCC kept on coming back from behind with Liz Vargas hitting a big three with 18 seconds left in regulation to tie the game and take the game into overtime. The wheels came off the wagon during the final minutes when the team lost most of its player due to foul trouble and injuries.

With less than two minutes left in the game, the team's leading scorer, Liana Martinez, hit the floor hard after she tried going up for a rebound and was not able to return to the game. During overtime, Nicole Gaito and Amy Culhane both fouled out. Heading into overtime the team only had two players on the court- Liz Vargas and Anira Calamia.

According to Head Coach Tracy Green on BergenCCBulldogs.com, she stated that "They finished out tough, it was unfortunate that we ended with only two players on the floor, if we had five I truly believe we would have won that game." She went to say she very proud of the girls and they did a great job.

This is coming off the heels of a great 16-7 season by the lady Bulldogs

with a depleted roster all season long. The team lost players due to injury and academic reasons. The team saw themselves playing 4 on 5 at certain points throughout the season.

The team did a good defensive job throughout the entire game as they only gave up 51 points and had 11 steals along with 5 blocks. It's truly a heart wrenching loss for this team as it seems they've been fighting an uphill battle the entire season dealing with a diminished roster.

Another big cause for this loss could be summed up into two words: offensive inefficiency. The lady Bulldogs shot a underwhelming 20 percent from the field and going 6 of 24 from behind the arc.

That's a staggering 14 percent lower than their season average field goal percentage. Those are numbers that are not going to get it done on the biggest game of the season.

There is still a lot to look for going forward for this team with a lot of players coming back next season like Liana Martinez, who was the team's leading scorer this season with 17 points per game. She's proven herself to be a reliable scorer at the point guard position.

Hopefully the team can ride the success of this great season onto next year. Also, team will most likely look to have a deeper roster to relieve some pressure from the starters as everyone this year played over 30 minutes a game.

As the season comes to an end, there are many things to be excited about for the future of this program.



19



TRACK AND FIELD TBA



NOAH SANCHEZ STAFF WRITER MIKE MULLIGAN STAFF WRITER

One of the most successful seasons in Bulldogs history ended in shock and disappointment when the Men's Baseball Team lost in extra innings to North Hampton in the first round of the Regional XIX tournament in 2018. Now, The Bulldogs are back and looking to build on arguably the best season in the team's existence.

Going 30-15 and posting schoolrecords for wins in a single season, runs scored and several other categories made 2018 one of the most "successful" seasons the team has had according to Head Coach Steven Mimms.

Going into his 7th year as head coach and his 10th year overall with the program, Mimms has developed a positive attitude and a winning culture in the Bulldogs locker room, which propelled the team to its first 30 win season while also being ranked in the top 10 in the country for over five weeks and ranking as high as the number 3 team in the country.

Clearly, the accolades and numbers are not the main objectives for Mimms, who looks to improve on the recordbreaking season and viewed 2018 and ultimately the loss in the playoffs as a learning experience.

We lost in extra innings, it was a close game. It's one of those situations where we know our young guys are looking to redeem themselves.'

One of those young guys is Sophomore Outfielder, Adrian Alarcon, who broke out in 2018 averaging over 400. at the plate while driving in 34 RBI's. Alarcon received All-Region 2nd Team honors for his play and looks to carry his offensive surge into the new season.

While a high octane offense is a key component to any winning team, it is often agreed that pitching wins championships. A player who intends on contributing to that is Sophomore Pitcher Trey Fracassini.

Fracassini, who pitched for the Bulldogs last year, is a stretch reliever who made spot starts. He made a name for himself coming out of the bullpen, and could be considered one of Bergen's most versatile arms on the team.

Viewing himself as a starter since coming out of high school, Fracassini wants to pitch as much he can, but understands ultimately it's about the team

"Obviously I wanted to be a starter but it didn't work out because we have other really good starters. I'm not the type of person to complain about or demand a job. I step in and do my role."

Confidence is not a trait that this Bulldogs roster lacks. This is evident with Freshmen Pitcher, Adriel Correa, who realizes that confidence in yourself is important, but confidence in your team is essential.

"Honestly I like to have a lot of self-confidence because I do think I'm a good player but I also learn a lot from the Sophomores who were here last year. They tell me how games go and so I try to feed off of that and work towards my game so that when the time comes I remember what they told me and I stick to that plan. College Baseball is a lot different from high school so It's always good to learn from people that have been there before and take that with you when you go onto



Baseball Team // Trey Fracassini

the field."

With every year, every team is different. Different players, different personalities, but the message stays the same: "Hungry."

This is a mantra that is flooded throughout the Bulldogs social media platforms and has embodied the team's spirit through Coach Mimms tenure at BCC

"We want to run this like a Division 1 Program. We're not saying we're here to yell down their throats but we want to make sure expectations are high" said Coach Mimms

The team is far from perfect but Coach Mimms sees talent in the team.

He said, "The talent is there it's just the IQ and training the brain, especially for the younger guys who are not used to a playbook and that's our job as coaches to develop the talent in these kids.

With the rejuvenated roster and improved coaching staff, which includes pitching coach Jonathan

Dominguez, who comes over from Rutgers University. The Bulldogs set out for a revenge tour in 2019.

The Bulldogs start off their season in Maryland before making a quick pit stop home and then going down to Myrtle Beach for their annual Spring Break trip, where they will have a 10 game stretch.

The Spring Break trip for the team is "huge" for several reasons in the eyes of Mimms.

"You know we're a commuter school so we don't get a chance to spend much time together so that overnight trip is huge chemistry builder for our team... Every year we've gone down there we've done very well and we came back with a winning record and it set the tone for the season...It's a great experience and our guys' love it."

The Bergen Bulldogs return home to meet Bucks County Community College Saturday, March 23, after completing their Myrtle Beach trip.

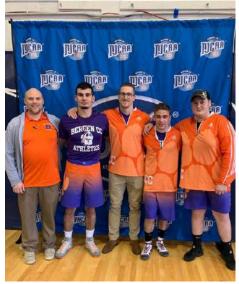
Wrestling Team Headed To Nationals

SPORTS EDITOR

that this is "well deserved," and that Miller said. "[Miller] wrestled his best two matches

FRANCISCO CAMACHO on Bergencebulldogs.com, he states seven minutes against someone else"

Cutting weight for these guys can



It's a great time to be a fan of Bergen Bulldogs Wrestling. as two of their starstudded wrestlers have earned berths at the national tournament. The qualifiers were held in Lackawanna, New York, where sophomore Rey Miller and freshman Corey Eyer both qualified.

To qualify, one has to finish in the top 4 in the athlete's weight class, which is exactly what Rey Miller did, finishing third in his class (184). Ever qualified as a wildcard and was voted in by the judges. Now they will have to prepare for nationals, which takes place on the first and second of March at the Mid-America Center in Council Bluffs, Iowa.

According to BCC's Managing Director of Athletics, Jorge Hernandez,

of the year."

Eyer has adjusted to the college wrestling competition well, stating, "The transition from highschool to college has been my biggest challenge. Rules are different, the competition is different" Eyer has also had to adjust to learning "different moves" and "focusing on the basics"

The coaching has had a great impact on how Eyer has developed. He said. "I like the coaches. They help me focus on my strengths and how I can implement that in a match."

Miller spoke about the grind that it takes to prepare for an event like this. "It takes a lot physical dedication in

order to get ready to be on the mat for

also be difficult. As Miller pointed out, "your body plateaus at a certain point but with the right coaching to steer you in the right direction you can achieve it."

Both Miller and Eyer believe it comes down to discipline and sticking to your diet and saying no to temptations.

"Keeping and eye on your weight is a job within itself. While your other friends are out eating whatever they want, you have to stick to your diet," Eyer said.

They're going in to these matches with a positive outlook and they hope to snag a win or two. "I'm just going to try and push through," said Miller.

(Left to Right) Coach Chris Disanto, Rey Miller, Assistant Coach Michael Fenner, Corey Iyer, and Randy Napolitano //bergenccbulldogs.com

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