Caps Will Be Thrown and Tears Will Be Shed at 2019 Graduation Ceremony

Montclair State graduates celebrate their accomplishments at the 2018 commencement ceremony.

Rosaria Lo Presti
Staff Writer

Montclair State University students are counting down the days until commencement while preparing to ace their final exams. While their college experience has been filled with hard work and stress, it has also been filled with lots of memories and fun times.

Even though the seniors are moving on from their time as an undergraduate student, most are going the extra mile to achieve their Master’s degree at Montclair State.

Graduating senior Lucas Biel is an exercise science major who believes that Montclair State is one of the most underrated schools in the area. “I believe that people can receive a great education here, especially if you make a connection with the professors,” Biel said. “I also just had an interview here for the Master’s program to continue studying exercise science.”

Several seniors praise their professors as well as university staff for a successful career at Montclair State. They have helped many students receive a proper education and achieve the grades needed to succeed.

Graduating senior and nutrition major, Amanda DeCandia, has described each individual year of college as “unique” and different. She also agrees that her professors have directed her to follow the right path in order to achieve her goals. “I’ve been here for three years, and it’s been very different each year. I’ve developed close relationships with my professors and they’ve helped me figure out which direction I want to go in,” DeCandia said. “Montclair State has been a bit of a roller coaster, but I don’t regret it at all and I’m excited to graduate.”

Montclair State offers many programs that encourage students to experience different work categories of their chosen major.

Graduating senior Anna Kwiatek is also a nutrition major and she believes that Montclair State has offered her “life-changing experiences.” “I took every opportunity I could to get here. Whether it was participating in clubs or working at them with the fitness programs, I’ve used nutrition and health in all aspects. This has helped me develop the connections I need in the future,” Kwiatek said. “I’m super excited to graduate. I’m definitely going to be emotional but it will be the greatest thing ever.”

The undergraduate seniors at Montclair State have had a great college experience, and they are excited to graduate on May 24 at Prudential Center in Newark, New Jersey.

Galia Hernandez | The Montclarion

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Crossword puzzle & more on p. 15

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Red Hawk Rap Sheet

Monday, April 22
Feliciano School of Business: A female student reported the theft of her earbuds. This incident is under investigation.

Tuesday, April 23
NJ Transit deck: Student Nicholas Cojocar was arrested for criminal mischief while in the area of the NJ Transit deck. Mr. Cojocar was processed at Police Headquarters and released pending a follow-up court day in the Passaic County Superior Court Family Division.

Tuesday, April 23
Richardson Hall: A male faculty member reported that several hundred dollars in pre-paid parking passes were stolen from his office. This incident is under investigation.

Tuesday, April 23
Dinallo Heights: A male student reported that several items of his clothing were stolen from the first floor laundry room. This incident is under investigation.

Friday, April 26
On Campus: A female student reported being harassed by a known male Montclair State University student since March of 2019. The student was advised of her rights to file a citizen-on-citizen complaint against the individual, but declined to do so at this time.

Monday, April 22
Morehead Hall: Two offices were reported to have been unlawfully entered and a faculty member’s purse was reported stolen. This incident is under investigation.

Tuesday, April 23
CELS building: A male faculty member reported that on Tuesday, April 16, 2019 he found pry marks on his office door and several electronic items were stolen from his office. This incident is under investigation.

Friday, April 26
Kasser Theater: A female student reported an incident of harassment in the past, whereby she was physically assaulted by an employee of the Kasser Theater. The student was referred to the Montclair Municipal Court and advised of the procedure to follow for citizen-on-citizen complaints. Nothing further to report.

Sunday, April 28
Fenwick Hall: Patrol Officers responded in regards to a report of animal cruelty. This incident was forwarded to the Passaic County Prosecutor’s Office Animal Cruelty Division for further.

Anyone who has information regarding these incidents is urged to call the police station at T-I-P-S (8477).

All calls are strictly confidential.
The Montclarion Wins 6 First Place Awards in NJPF College Newspaper Contest

Haley Wells
Former Editor-in-Chief

February saw the Grammys and the Oscars, but March is reserved for the New Jersey Press Foundation (NJPF)’s NJ College Newspaper Contest.

New Jersey college newspapers select their best articles and news stories during a one-year time period. Anything published between March 1, 2018 and Feb. 28 was eligible for nomination. Winners were announced on March 18.

The Montclarion saw numerous awards in this contest, landing six first place awards, one second place award and two third place awards. First place awards were given to The Montclarion in the news writing and feature writing categories with “Cold Consequences: The Aftermath of Montclair State’s Snowy Nightmare” and “Tales of Hijabi Women: How a Scarf Can Impact Everyday Life” respectively. The Arts and Entertainment/Critical Writing and Web Project categories also won gold for The Montclarion with “Orson Welles’ ‘The Other Side of the Wind’: A Great End to His Cinematic Career” and “Juul: The Flavored Flash Drive Frenzy” respectively. “Student Artist Profile: Joe Baez” also won third place for Web Project. A second place win was given to “Moldy Montclair State Makes Mighty Mistake” for Editorial Writing. The awards did not stop at just writing for The Montclarion. The Photography and Online Video categories also saw first place wins. “From Belmar to Team USA” won first place for Photography and “A Mother’s Loss” grabbed the first place spot for Online Video. “Coca-Cola’s Blind Tasting Event Offered the Classic Refreshment with a Fresh New Twist” took third place for Online Video.

Staff members that nabbed wins include Editor-in-Chief Haley Wells, Assistant Entertainment Editor Sharif Hasan, Video Editor Mackenzie Robertson and video team member Adrian Maldonado. Contributors to these awards include News Editor Heather Berzak, former Opinion Editor Sunah Choudhry, former Entertainment Editor Robert O’Connor, Opinion Editor Rebecca Serviss and more.

The Montclarion would like to thank every member of their staff for contributing and working toward publishing stories for the multiplatform news organization. Special thanks also go out to Faculty Adviser Tara George for always believing in The Montclarion and pushing its contributors to do their best.

Staff members attended the NJ Collegiate Press Spring Awards Luncheon on Saturday, April 13, where plaques were given to the winners of the contest.

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Former Montclair State Employee Pleads Guilty to Distributing Child Pornography

Adrianna Caraballo
News Editor

Samuel LaSala, a former Montclair State University Information Technology (IT) department member, is set to be sentenced in January 2019 for child pornography.

According to the United States Attorney’s office, LaSala had a laptop that contained videos of child sexual abuse. He shared these videos with others over the internet, making the videos available to download using an online peer-to-peer file sharing network.

LaSala admitted that he had over 100 videos on his laptop depicting child sex acts, and he was in possession of those videos between May 2017 and January 2018.

Pleading guilty to the distribution of these videos guarantees LaSala a maximum penalty of 20 years in prison or a minimum five years as well as a fine of $250,000.

On May 23, Montclair State was informed by LaSala that he was being investigated by the United States Department of Homeland Security for distribution of child pornography.

“The university suspended Mr. LaSala, cooperated fully with the Department of Homeland Security investigation, and simultaneously commenced its own parallel forensic investigation of university equipment to which Mr. LaSala had access,” said Director of Media Relations, Communications and Marketing Erika Bleiberg.

No pornographic imagery was found on the campus computers, since LaSala used his own laptop to store and share the videos he collected.

“We feel it’s important to clarify that the images were found on Mr. LaSala’s personal computer, not on any equipment belonging to the university,” Bleiberg said.

According to Montclair State’s University Police Capt. Kieran Barrett, there was administrative action taken to ensure that the computers were clean, but the main investigation on LaSala was handled by the federal government.

“Because this matter is still ongoing and my client has not yet been sentenced, I can not comment on the matter,” Rotella said.

On-Campus Vigil Brings Tears, Songs and Hope for Change

Hailey Wells
Former Editor-in-Chief

A vigil on campus allowed students to talk and have a moment of silence for recent tragedies and the lives lost within them.

On a cold Tuesday night, students, faculty and Montclair State University employees shivered and gathered together for a vigil. Everyone formed a vast circle of about 50 people in front of the Student Center and united to commemorate lives lost in recent tragedies in the news.

Tragedies have been scattered across the latest headlines, most prominently, Saturday’s shooting at the Tree of Life synagogue in Pittsburgh, which resulted in 11 deaths and multiple injuries. Just last week, two African-Americans in a Kentucky grocery store parking lot were shot and killed, and a dozen packaged explosives were sent to political officials including former presidents Barack Obama and Bill Clinton.

Undeclared freshman Corinne Podolski believes that highlighting these tragedies brought the campus together.

“I think it’s important to bring attention to these events happening and to bring everyone together,” Podolski said. “Bring love together versus hate and anger.”

Rev. Jim Chern, director and chaplain of Newman Catholic Center, attended the event along with students from other religions and backgrounds. Different speakers led the vigil, urging people to vote in the aftermath of these tragedies. People handed out tissues for those that were weeping and LED tea lights for those who wanted to display them in their windows at home.

Patrolwoman Amanda Rus
ticus of the University Police Department thinks unifying on campus is a good way to show support for the community. “I believe it’s important to come together in this moment to allow our community to see that we are here for each other and everyone,” Rusticus said. “We need to provide support and make sure we start making positive changes by working together. We are here to keep all the families in our prayers.”

Assistant Director of Residence Life Hamal Strayhorn gave a speech about “the light” being the force of change for allies – something he said people should seek.

“Tate it’s important for all of us to realize that we are part of humanity and that we’re all interconnected,” Strayhorn said.

Cantor Meredith Greenberg sang songs and played slow melodies on her guitar to fit the tone of the vigil. The crowd sang along with her and learned the meaning behind her songs.

On Aug. 23, LaSala informed Montclair State that he entered a plea agreement related to the criminal charges pending against him. The next day, he resigned from his position in the IT department.

As a part of the plea deal, LaSala will have to register as a sex offender. His MacBook Pro along with his 500 GB hard drive used to store and share the videos were also confiscated.

On-Campus Vigil Brings Tears, Songs and Hope for Change

During the period of his employment at the university, no complaints had been raised in regard to Mr. LaSala,” Bleiberg said. “His responsibilities did not involve any interaction with minors.”

Senior IT major Christopher Chu, an employee at the IT department, knew of LaSala but never met him.

“I was just shocked that someone working at the same office I work at was involved in distributing child pornography,” Chu said.

“Hate cannot drive out darkness,” Strayhorn sang during his speech. “Only light can do that.”
Montclair State PD Under Fire After Campus Arrest

Video Goes Viral on First Day of Classes

As the first day of classes began bright and early, Montclair State University found itself in the midst of a controversy by the afternoon after a video circulated on Twitter of an arrest made by Montclair State police officers.

A fight broke out near the NJ Transit lot at Cleve Road and Village Road around 4:30 p.m. on Wednesday. Multiple University Police Department vehicles showed up, guns were drawn by officers and two men who mutually entered the fight were arrested.

Senior history major Jaffer Mehdi recorded the scene while inside of the NJ Transit parking garage once the police arrived. His video soon went viral.

The video shows the first officer yelling at the young men to put their hands up as a second cop car, an officer questioning the compliant and officers removing the handcuffs from the other vehicle occupants, questioning them as well.

Some people took to social media to say the officers were properly doing their job. Others think it was an example of police abusing their power.

Junior finance major Melissa Cepera believed that people still used excessive force beyond the initial stop. "The stop was procedure, but he did not know the nature of the dispute." Mehdi said before he started filming, he heard a verbal dispute that lead to physical contact, but he did not know the nature of the dispute.

As the first responding officer arrived at scene, the men stopped fighting, unlike Montclair [State says] in their statement, "Mehdi said. "From that point on is on the video."

While Mehdi thought the police department’s stop procedure was appropriate, he believes they still used excessive force beyond the initial stop. "The stop was procedure, but to have three guns pointed at these men is not right," Mehdi said. "There were ten plus police and three out of four men complied and still had guns pointing at them. A police officer instructed the passenger to get out of the vehicle and the man complied with his hands up, but yet he was thrown from the car and had a gun pointed at him."

According to a statement from the Director of Media Relations at Montclair State Erika Bleiberg, nonstudent Bruce Allen was arrested for simple assault. The two other students in the car were later released.

Joe Biden and Mikke Sherrill made an appearance on campus that day as well to promote Sherrill’s campaign run for New Jersey Congress. However, police were playing more roles than just security and escorts for the event at University Hall.

Mehdi said he’s been told to take down the video by friends of the officers and students satisfied with how the police handled the situation. He even has received messages suggesting the video changed prospective students’ decisions to apply to the university.

The officers then removed two remaining men from the vehicle and took them to the ground with another gun drawn, handcuffing them as well. The video ends with police taking the resistor to a second cop car, an officer questioning the compliant and officers removing the handcuffs from the other vehicle occupants, questioning them as well.

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Cold Consequences: The Aftermath of Montclair State’s Snowy Nightmare

The walkway between Cafe Diem and the School of Communication and Media is now plowed and clear of any snow.

Anthony Gabbianelli  The Montclarion

Haley Wells
Forme rEditor-in-Chief

Students and faculty were stuck in traffic for several hours following the surprising snowfall on Thursday night.

Jaclyn Hartwig gathered with her friends in Machuga Heights Thursday night. The crew lounged around and chatted with each other about how bad the snowstorm was outside.

However, the reality of the storm set in when she received an email notifying her that her building’s heat was not working.

“I went to [my friend’s] vent and it was coming out cold, said the junior family science and human development major. “I went to my dorm, and it was still coming out cold. That is when I knew everyone lost heat.”

Hartwig mentioned that going to a warm hotel was not an option because Uber rides were charging over $100 and the roads were stalled.

“The heat thing I’m just annoyed with,” Hartwig said. “I don’t want to stand in a cold dorm, but where else are we going to go?”

Lack of heat was just one consequence of the terrible snowstorm that hit New Jersey on Thursday night. Roads were backed up for several hours and students/faculty were stuck in traffic for long periods of time.

Weathers reports forecast 2 to 4 inches of snow but increased their predictions to 6 to 8 inches as the night went on.

University public relations detailed in an emailed statement how police and facilities personnel regularly observe weather reports on a hyperlocal level, with expert consultants at WeatherWorks as well as the Essex County Office of Emergency Management.

“Yesterday, however, our meteorologists and their colleagues across the region got it very wrong,” said university public relations in the email. “We suddenly found ourselves dealing with a storm that came quickly and dumped considerably more snow than expected. The precipitation didn’t turn to rain, but rather accumulated on the ground and roadways as snow and ice.”

Montclair State’s University Police Department helped direct cars in the stalled traffic. Campus roads were not able to be plowed because of the heavy traffic. Salt was not sprinkled on the roads either. Police Capt. Kieran Barrett explained the reason behind the traffic jams.

“This was an unprecedented statewide impact snowstorm that also greatly affected our traffic here at MSU,” Barrett said in an email. “As a hub connected to artery highways that were also at a complete standstill, traffic was backed up on campus because cars couldn’t get to and on the highways.”

Barrett also mentioned a fire in Montclair that created more traffic for people leaving campus.

“In addition, Montclair town traffic was disrupted by a house fire that diverted traffic to roads close to the campus. Cars couldn’t get off campus because everything around us was stopped,” Barrett said in the email. “Officers also responded to numerous motor vehicle accidents and emergencies. Our recommendation to any person stranded was to move their car to a safe location off the road and find warm shelter on campus, as there was no remedy to solve the chaotic off-campus traffic that left us locked here on campus.”

The university sent out emails and text message blasts during Thursday to update students about road conditions and class schedules. The shuttle services were suspended around 3:30 p.m., and classes starting at 3:30 p.m. and beyond were later canceled as well. The university encouraged students to remain inside until the roads cleared up.

Most dining places on campus closed early at 7 p.m. on Thursday night, but Freeman Hall closed at 8:30 p.m., Red Hawk Diner at 9 p.m., Sam’s Place at 9:30 p.m. and Blanton Plaza at 10 p.m.

The Student Center stayed open all night and gave out free ham and cheese sandwiches to hungry students stuck on campus. Natascha Komarnicki, a senior double majoring in Spanish and German, was one of the students who stopped in the Student Center to find food.

“It was a really nice gesture,” Komarnicki said. “We were all actually really excited to get food because everything else was closed.”

Commuter students, like freshman fashion studies major Fatou Amar, were stuck on campus because roads were backed up. Amar was hanging out on campus after a fashion show rehearsal for the Native African Student Organization. She was supposed to take a NJ Transit bus home, but the bus did not come and Uber rides were around $100.

Amar and her three friends walked back to their friend Amanda Idong’s apartment in Hawk Crossings, as they were stuck on campus and needed a place to sleep.

“I have back pain [from sleeping on the floor],” Amar said. “But it wasn’t that bad though.”

Other commuter students left campus to try and beat the storm. Senior journalism major Tiffany Baskerville left during the early. Unfortunately, she ended up waiting for 2 hours at the Montclair Heights train station for a train to show up.

“There were about a hundred or so people in the cold waiting for the train,” Baskerville said. “When I finally reached the Orange train station, it is close to West Orange where I live, all the buses were out of service. The cars were at a standstill in the streets. I had to walk about a mile to get to West Orange.”

Students were not the only ones affected by the delayed transportation conditions. Some professors chose to camp out in their offices or wait it out. Journalism professor Jennifer Lazarus was stuck on campus for 2 hours and could not make it to New York City for her foundation’s charity event.

“The commute to the city was 2+ hours and accidents everywhere,” Lazarus said in an email. “Our CEO [of the foundation] never even made it. It’s our biggest fundraiser of the year.”

The university opened at 11 a.m. on Friday morning. Classes at 11:30 a.m. and later were held on schedule. Residence Life also emailed students about when dining options and shuttle services would be available throughout the day.

“This storm, as is often the case with weather, was not in anyone’s control,” said university public relations in the emailed statement. “We ask that the university community recognize the administration’s primary concerns are always driven by the well-being of our community. In this case, we were all victims of the fickleness of nature. Last night, we did our best to make the best decisions possible, given the information we had.”
Congratulations Study Abroad Alumni and Graduates!

“Wherever you go, Go with all your heart.”

Confucius
Daniela Vega, a 22-year-old Montclair State student, holds an LGBTQ flag in her hands as she poses for a photo on Monday, Feb. 18.

Daniela Vega, a 22-year-old Montclair State student, holds an LGBTQ flag in her hands as she poses for a photo on Monday, Feb. 18.

#GirlsWhoLikeGirls: Montclair State Student Reveals the Struggles of the LGBTQ+ Community in Peru

Chanila German

When 17-year-old Daniela Vega decided to uproot her life in Peru and move to the United States, she did it for three reasons. First, college was an unlikely possibility for her since she lacked financial support in her native country. Second, she believed an American degree could open doors for her both domestically and internationally. Third, the idea of being allowed to love who she wanted and be herself intrigued her.

Vega, now a 22-year-old Montclair State University student, discovered she liked girls while attending a private Catholic school in Lima, Peru. Her school, according to Vega, was conservative and tried to “keep the heteronormativity” among students. Vega explained how her only formal introduction to same-sex relationships was through media, which portrayed more gay men than lesbians.

“People are so into religion that it is hard for them to understand that being gay is not a problem,” Vega said. “They base all their beliefs on what the church, God or ‘The Bible’ tells them. And a lot of people say that being gay is a sin because it is in the Bible, and it is really not.”

Flavia Arana Cisneros and Esteban Arias, both political science majors in Peru and friends of Vega, agreed the country is not ready to legalize same-sex marriage yet.

“It’s dangerous being part of the LGBTQ+ community in Peru. They don’t respect you, from looking at you badly, [to] hitting you or forbidding you to enter certain spaces. It is obvious that there is a lot of discrimination here.”

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#FOCUS

IMMIGRATION

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Staff Writer

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 Chanila German

The Montclarion
Defense of Sexual and Reproductive Rights (PROMSEX), hate crimes have only gotten worse.

A graduate coordinator for the Multicultural Center at Montclair State, Charles Simonson, explained that the LGBTQ+ community faces a lot of discrimination and hate crimes.

“I do think that we face a lot of bashing, especially if you are not passing as a cis-gender or masculine person,” Simonson said. “If you are someone that identifies as a woman, and you are not passing as a feminine woman, then you are more accessible to become a target to people. We do live in a world [where there are] hateful people that don’t understand us or who we are. They take that and they act upon it, so we do face a lot of discrimination, bashing and even physical [violence].”

Vega explained that she enjoys living in the United States because she can wear her “loose jeans and flannel shirts” and not be stared down or called a “dyke” like in Peru. Still, she admitted she loves her country and hopes to live there again regardless of whether or not same-sex marriage becomes legalized.

“I am ready to kind of deal with it and be like, ‘Yes, I am gay, I’m Peruvian, I’m living in Lima, and I am going to be myself.’”

-Daniela Vega

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The average woman spends around six years of her life total shedding the lining of her uterus. It sounds as uncomfortable as it often feels. Many women deal with acne breakouts, menstrual cramps, back pain, mood swings and other inconvenient monthly complications.

We use Midol, chocolate and feminine hygiene products to ease the continuation of our fixed routines. Depending on the individual, periods last between four and ten days and 70 percent of American women use tampons to remain active, according to CNN.

This means most women buy an average of 11,000 to 16,000 tampons within their life time. However, not all women have equal access to feminine hygiene products and access is only half the battle.

Women at Montclair State University make up 61 percent of the undergraduate student body and 71 percent of graduate students, according to Montclair State’s website.

This is not reflected by the limited stock and nonexistent variety at the on-campus locations where pads and tampons are available. For a female population of over 13,000 students, there is little to no thought about the products that our sisters, mothers, daughters and friends use at least 11,000 of in their lifetime.

According to a Montclarion article from January of this year, the Red Hawk Pantry’s most popular items include feminine hygiene products. Campus restrooms often have tampon and pad dispensers. Some dispensers charge a quarter a tampon and some are free. This sporadically varies building to building; additionally some of the machines on campus are empty, jammed or broken. These containers and campus stores are stocked with Tampax tampons, Always pads and Maxithins pads.

The University Health Center has free Maxithins pads, which are the same as those in the free bathroom dispensers. Feminine hygiene products can also be found at the bookstore, the Blanton Outtakes Market and in one vending machine on the bottom floor of the Student Center.

At nearly double the retail price, all period products on campus are costly. However, we live in one of 12 U.S. states that doesn’t tax tampons and pads.

Senior communication and media arts major Kristin Perretti is disappointed that more than half the country continues to tax products that should be considered a basic necessity.

“It’s frustrating and really makes no sense,” Perretti said. “Our country treats periods as this inconvenience. I mean, even the president has joked about that once. It gets old.”

Perretti expressed further frustration about stigma of going through periods.

“It’s a naturally occurring thing that all women have to go through, and the stigma is obnoxious,” Perretti. “The fact that capitalism takes advantage of the stigma is even more frustrating.”

Most tampons today are composed of rayon and fluff pulp and hardly any cotton is used in modern mass produced tampons. Rayon is associated with increased likelihood of toxic shock syndrome, the fibers are bleached for appearance and can end up stuck to the vaginal wall.

The organization, Women’s Voice for Earth (WVE), works to remove harmful chemical exposure from American households. WVE tested a variety of Tampax, Always and U Kotex pads and tampons, and found the products contained varying levels of carbon disulfide.

According to the study performed by Krzysztof Sieja, Jarosław von Mach-Szczypiński and Joanna von Mach-Szczypiński, their results “detected carbon disulfide emissions from all four tampons that contain rayon, but it was not detected in either of the all-cotton tampons.”

The two brands most widely distributed on Montclair State’s campus are full of chemicals that can cause hormonal disruption, early menopause and chemical imbalances in young women.

Senior business administration major Elaina Dzirko appreciates that Montclair State provides access to low-cost feminine hygiene products, but is also concerned about the potential health risks of their ingredients.

“I’m flabbergasted,” Dzirko said. “I’m glad that there are free products provided on campus because you might not be able to afford it or may forget to bring your own, but I’m going to have to do more research on what I was exposing my body to.”

The quality of feminine hygiene products makes a world of difference. Companies like Cora, Lola and Natracare sell feminine hygiene products made from pesticide-free organic cotton.

“These brands are built on a holistic-ly safer menstruation experience with the human body and environment in mind. Cora’s founders were appalled by dirty cotton, thus their products are made with Global Organic Textile Standard (GOTS) certified cotton from Slovenia.”

Senior communication studies major Lindsay Slaff believes that it’s important to choose organic products for several reasons.

“It definitely makes a difference whether feminine hygiene products are made out of organic products,” Slaff said. “Chemicals are constantly being ingested or put onto our skin, such as food and makeup, and the only difference is that the ingredients must be shown to consumers.”

Slaff suggested that if the government cared more about women’s needs, ingredient lists would be mandatory.

“I think if the government made it mandatory to include the ingredients on boxes of pads and tampons, more people would choose an organic alternative,” Slaff said. “Aside from benefiting the human body, organic alternatives make a difference on the environment as well.”

For every month’s supply purchased, Cora donates a month’s supply to young women in need in India, Kenya and the United States. Upon discovering Cora, I was skeptical. Organic tampons sounded like a plot established by the bourgeoisie to scam me out of four extra dollars a month.

Before Cora, I was simply using the brand my mother had chosen for me when I began menstruating. I never questioned it, assuming that in her 40 years of living with le crampe, she had discovered the pinnacle of feminine hygiene products.

Last year, I made the switch to organic products only, and I never looked back. Everyone deserves to live free of harmful toxins. It’s time that we work to educate and advocate for a healthy change. Periods are organic, and the products we use to cope with them should be, too.

Visit themontclarion.org to view a video of student reactions.
Erin Webb will stab you with a needle and be happy about it

Kristen Milburn | The Montclarion

Russ Hall opened in 1915 as the first residence hall at Montclair State University. It housed students studying to be teachers, was used briefly as an administrative building and now serves as the makeshift tattoo parlor for Erin Webb, whose brightly colored hair and heavily tattooed arms might differ slightly from the appearance of Russ’ first residents.

Webb, a senior English major who prefers the pronouns “they” and “their,” lives on the renovated fourth floor of the building where the angled walls and exposed water pipes make it hard to forget that their room was once an attic. Nestled between the pipes and Polaroids of their adored nephew, Killian, Webb gives themselves and their friends stick and poke tattoos.

Webb first gave themselves a tattoo when they were 13 after watching “Foxfire,” in which Angelina Jolie’s character gives herself a chest tattoo. Webb grabbed a ballpoint pen and a sewing needle and gave themselves a tattoo of an asterisk, without doing any additional research about proper tattoo methods. Jolie must have been a good first teacher because it didn’t get infected. However, Webb has used better tools ever since, especially when tattooing others, a now common occurrence.

Their soft-spoken nature and excellent tattoo skills have made them a go-to for other students looking to get tattoos.

Webb has given over 20 people tattoos in one evening. People gathered to talk and listen to music as Webb sat on their desk chair and gave people permanent tattoos as calmly as if they were drawing on their friends with a Sharpie marker. Clare Miller, a junior dance major, received her first tattoo that evening.

Miller was nervous and gripped her friend’s hand to distract her from the pain. Webb told her jokes and asked her questions about her interests while etching a puzzle piece on the back of Miller’s neck. Miller winced with each stab of the needle, but Webb’s calm and friendly demeanor helped her remember she was in good hands.

Not many bosses would trust their employees to give them a tattoo, but that’s exactly what Rebecca Mungiole, Webb’s service assistant coordinator, did. Mungiole has a number of professional tattoos, but went to Webb for a tattoo of the “Harry Potter” glasses and lightning bolt.

Mungiole said that her experience getting a tattoo from Webb was unlike any of her professional experiences because Webb was friendly and made it a fun experience.

Webb refuses to accept payment for tattoos, insisting that they started giving themself more tattoos when they couldn’t afford to get them professionally done, so they want to keep it cheap for other people as well.

“I don’t like asking people to pay me, because what if they don’t like it?” Webb said. “I have a weird barter system if people really want to give me something. I have been paid in pizza, vanilla Coke and Jager. I will also accept herbal refreshments.”

One of Webb’s coworkers, Kaitlyn Kirgan, emphasized Webb’s unexpected kindness.

“[Webb is like] Baymax, but with tattoos and hair they dye a new color every other week,” Kirgan said. “People look at them and think that they might be mean or scary, but they’re the sweetest person I’ve ever met.”

It is clear from Webb’s freely-given hugs and smiles that they genuinely care about the well-being of others and do their best to be a positive impact on other people.

Webb takes the assumptions other people make about them in stride.

“People have told me that they judge people who have tattoos or piercings, and they should work on that,” Webb said. “Some of the nicest and friendliest people I know have a lot of tattoos. Having tattoos doesn’t mean anything other than that you wanted to get a tattoo.”

With their changing hair colors, piercings and affinity for tattoos, Webb might not be what the Montclair administration envisioned a typical resident would look like when they built Russ Hall. However, Webb embodies the generosity, kindness and creativity institutions of higher education strive to instill in all of their students.

“Don’t forget to mention that I’m gay,” Webb said. “Otherwise, I’d be pretty boring.”
Montclair State University students waited in line as their taste buds screamed with excitement to try out the new Diet Coke flavors. Montclair State Coca-Cola Campus Ambassador Nicole Fidalgo held a blind tasting event in the lobby of the Student Center. Students had to put a blindfold on to taste and guess five of the new Diet Coke flavors.

Two of the flavors – strawberry guava and blueberry acai – were recently announced in January while the other three – ginger lime, twisted mango and feisty cherry – were announced back in January 2018. At first, many students were hesitant to try out the flavors since a lot of them don’t drink diet soda. However, their minds were changed as soon as their taste buds had the first sip. Michelle Ramires, a senior majoring in marketing, assisted Fidalgo with the event and shared that she was surprised by how much she enjoyed Coca-Cola’s new flavors considering they are all diet options.

“Taste was never really a Coca-Cola lover until I tried out the new flavors,” Ramires said. “They are all so refreshing, and you can’t even tell that it is diet soda.” The Coca-Cola team spoke to over 10,000 people from all over the world for new flavor ideas. From the feedback they got back from their fans, Coca-Cola and their research and development team made and tested over 30 new flavors. However, they only launched the ones that received the most positive response from their consumers. Amy Sheridan, a freshman majoring in nutrition and food science, was impressed by the branding of Coca-Cola’s new flavors as well as their taste. “The twisted mango and the feisty cherry were my favorite ones,” Sheridan said. “The flavors were so smooth, and I really like the cool, unique and original names they gave their new flavors.”

After 35 years, Coca-Cola redesigned their packaging to a sleek new look in 2018 to appeal to their new thirsty audience and for their old fans. It’s still the same bold flavor they love just with an updated modern look. Junior psychology major Daniel Brea felt that the new packaging made the flavors stand out. “I definitely like the cans a lot better,” Brea said. “The different colors makes them pop out more and I’m sure that if those were seen on shelves customers would want to grab them right away. I know I would.”

This very successful event couldn’t have been possible without Fidalgo, a senior majoring in marketing who landed an internship during the summer of 2018 to be a campus ambassador for Coca-Cola. Fidalgo got the job thanks to one of her marketing professors at Montclair State, who would give her internships to apply to every week. Eventually, she was interviewed and got this internship. Coca-Cola flew her out, all expenses paid, to the Coca-Cola headquarters located in Atlanta. There she trained for a week, got to meet other campus ambassadors from different universities and top leaders from the company, including the president of Coca-Cola of North America.

Her internship consists of partnering with Montclair State Dining Service Marketing Manager Lindsey Anderson to set up different sampling events throughout the semester to promote Coca-Cola and receive students’ feedback and their insights on the products. Fidalgo has held many different events on campus. She had a Fanta event in October 2018 where students got to try out Fanta’s newest flavor, green apple, and watch the popular spooky movie “Hocus Pocus.” She also did a Christmas event where students had the chance to win prizes and take pictures with Santa Claus. In 2019, she kicked off the year with the Diet Coke blind tasting event to introduce the new flavors to the campus. “I’ve been so lucky to be given this opportunity to work with such an amazing company,” Fidalgo said. “I really look forward to keep on sharing my experience with [Montclair State] and hoping students and faculty get excited for future events that are being planned.”

Fidalgo hopes to be a creative director and continue working with social media or online marketing one day. She sees herself as a team leader in a management position or, hopefully, as her own boss. Visit themontclarion.org to view a video of student reactions.
The painted mirrors were displayed in an exhibit, bringing students together to share their perspectives and talk about body acceptance.

Annabel Reyes | The Montclarion

During the busy week leading up to spring break, while many college students rushed to pack their swimsuits and escape to a sunny beach for a few days, Montclair State University’s Office of Health Promotion caused students to stop and think.

From Monday, Feb. 24 to Friday, March 1, the Office of Health Promotion hosted Body Acceptance Week, a series of events from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. located in Student Center Ballrooms B and C.

Students participated in and admired the contents of the Mirror Project, an art exhibit where students painted on mirrors their answer to the question, “What do you see when you look in the mirror?”

The responses ranged from humorous to self-deprecating and were displayed on tables for all students to see.

Elena Lymbouras, a graduate coordinator for the Office of Health Promotion, served as a driving force in the event’s success. Along with distributing free T-shirts with the body positive phrase, “Lookin’ Sharp,” Lymbouras shared the Office of Health Promotion’s purpose for making the Mirror Project an integral part of Body Acceptance Week at Montclair State.

“We just wanted to challenge students to think about how they perceive themselves,” Lymbouras said. “Since many students struggle with mental health, the Mirror Project is a way for them to see that they’re not alone.”

The Mirror Project showcased the mirror art of dozens of students from different majors, ethnicities and backgrounds.

Aneta Ostasz, a junior majoring in communication and media arts, was impressed by the Office of Health Promotion’s efforts to spread mental health awareness.

“I think this art exhibit pushes people to recognize the good in themselves and what they like about their bodies because once you start thinking positively, the mental health benefits will start piling up,” Ostasz said.

Many students who painted answers like “self-love” and “happiness” on their mirrors brought to light the way people see themselves in a mirror affects their mental health.

Television and digital media major Gary Brown commented on his initial shock when seeing the diverse answers painted on the mirrors.

“I saw that some people painted the words ‘fat’ and ‘not good enough,’” Brown said. “That was difficult for me to see, but it shows that a lot of people are dealing with self-inflicted body issues and yet here at Montclair State, we are all accepted.”

The Office of Health Promotion has been hosting Body Acceptance Week, including the Mirror Project since 2008. This organization offers a variety of services open to all students as a way of establishing a mentally healthy community.

Their mission is to eliminate the common misconceptions associated with mental health among the student population, increase the amount of culturally aware health services on campus, promote the best practices of health promotion and disease prevention, teach the importance of fostering healthy relationships that lead to academic success and support mental health awareness with theoretical research.

Visit themontclarion.org to view a video of student reactions.
Help Wanted

LEARN TO DRIVE!

Before/After School Sitter Needed for two Montclair Preschoolers. Our much loved, long-time sitter is graduating and we’re looking for a responsible, creative, energetic go-getter to help care for our almost 3 and almost 5 year old son and daughter in Montclair. Approximately 30 hours/week: Monday – Thurs. 7:30 a.m. and 3:30 – 8:00 p.m. Perfect for a college student as we have some flexibility with the hours and opportunity for occasional date night/weekend hours, but applicants must have early morning and early evening availability. Responsibilities will include: school drop off and pickup, transportation/supervision for after school activities, light meal prep for breakfast and dinner, packing lunches, getting kids ready for bed, kids laundry, etc. We are a casual, fun-loving family and are looking for someone who is imaginative, caring and truly loves young children. Must have clean driving record, at least two references and prior experience with toddlers and elementary schoolers (preferably in a nursery school, camp or other academic environment). Please contact Devin at Montclairfairfan@gmail.com

Female sitter for one girl (age 7) start date flexible, $15/hr. in Upper Montclair. Flexible schedule, 1-2 days a week after school (pickup at school at 2:30), end time flexible / can vary by week. I can work with your schedule). Responsibilities include picking up at school, transporting to and from after school activities in Montclair, helping with homework, preparing dinner & bath. More hours available if desired on an as needed basis. Ideally someone who can do an occasional morning as well (6:30am-8:15am) and/or someone who would be interested in an occasional overnight (private bedroom & bathroom on 3rd floor). Also ideal if someone is looking to pick up additional hours over the summer (avg 20-30 hours a week). Could also discuss providing housing over the summer if you are looking to stay in town for reduced fees. Prior experience with children, strong references and own reliable vehicle are required. CPR certified preferred. Must be comfortable with a cat and in a pool. If interested, please email: rsvp2796@hotmail.com

S2Y/ Childcare, UPPER MONTCALIR. Looking for childcare for two teens (girl, 14, & boy, 16). Responsibilities include some shuttling to & from after-school activities (our car or yours), dog walking, light shopping, & dinner preparation. Children are easy-going & independent (eg, will help with dinner prep, clean-up, & their own chores, including pet care). Hours are Thursdays, 5-10 pm, with some variability. Prior experience preferred, references please. If interested, please email: davidamarel@yahoo.com.

Sea of Flowers: Job Available at Ramapo Summer Camp!
For teachers. You’ll gain valuable “classroom” experience with a specific age group. We are looking for people who see camp as something they “get to do”, not “have to do”. Email: briann@ramapocamp.com

JOBS AND CLASSIFIEDS
Seeking Babysitter Week of 4/29. Rate per hour: $14 – $17 Mon., Thurs. and Friday Afternoon 3 – 6 pm. Experienced babysitter for 11 year old son in Nutley for after school hours next week. Monday, Thursday and Friday from 3 – 6 pm, some local driving needed. Occasional sitting in future. Please contact Linda at 973-508-8868, leave message on voice-mail.

10-15/hour / NANNY NEEDED, LITTLE FALLS
Looking for a nanny for two high school age kids (age 15, boy & girl) starting ASAP. Responsibilities include picking up at Paramus Catholic High School, transporting to and from after school activities and nearby towns, helping with homework until dad gets home. Two to four days during the week. Some weekend hours. Prior experience with children is preferred, but not necessary; use of own reliable vehicle driving needed. Occasional sitting in future. Please contact Linda at 973-521-7070.

Devin at Montclairfam@gmail.com.

HELP WANTED

evolution
ỊS EVERYTHING IN ART AND WRITING

LOVE TO DRAW?
Submit your comics/cartoons to The Montclarion at MONTCLARIONPRODUCTION@GMAIL.COM

CLASSIFIEDS

Page 14 • May 24, 2019 • The Montclarion

Help Wanted

Help Wanted

Help Wanted

Help Wanted/Other

thumontclarion.org
The Montclarion Crossword Puzzle and More!

Summer Edition

Across
2. A common summer activity involving grilled food.
4. A state that basically has summer year-round.
5. The month summer starts in.
6. What a lot of people go on over summer break.
7. What you always have to remember to put on in the summer.

Down
1. What month we celebrate Independence Day in.
2. A popular place to go in the summer.
3. What the seniors attend before they leave Montclair State.

Word Search

Sudoku

*For answers to the puzzles, please check The Montclarion Facebook page every Thursday.*
Every student becomes excited to depart from their parents’ arms and to finally call their dorm room home. Let’s not forget to remind ourselves about how much money parents and students have to fork over to live on university campuses. But what happens when you start getting sick from mold that you did not even know was there and the university shrugs it off?

As students reside in residence halls, it becomes a second home for them. Students invite their friends over, do homework and overall just live there while school is in session. With mold growing in certain dorms here at Montclair State University, the student on-campus living experience becomes a health risk.

When falling upon the University Facilities website, Montclair State University has an entire section dedicated to mold, which is somewhat concerning. The guidelines are provided by the State of New Jersey’s Department of Health, which also makes people worrisome. It makes one wonder if this is a common problem in colleges around the state.

For those who are not familiar with University Facilities, the newly built facility sits in Lot 60. This facility is grouped with a bunch of other services offered at Montclair State, which include the shuttle and postal services, maintenance and engineering along with many other departments. Regarding the mold situation, the sector of University Facilities that students would deal with is Environmental Health & Safety.

On the website, it lists what mold is, the description of the fungi and where and why mold can occur. As there are health risks listed too, Montclair State uses the excuse that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) does not have any guidelines or limits for this type of issue and that they can not determine if the mold is necessary for testing. This also falls on the EPA for not protecting students from mold by not regulating any standards for colleges.

If a student were to find mold in their dorm, Montclair State recommends that they report any mold issues to Resident Assistants via email. If I were to find mold in my dorm room, I would not just wait for someone to email me back. I would pick up the phone and complain as every student should with the amount of money we are paying.

Once the student files a complaint, the next step is for an inspection, then cleaning the area and sanitation of the area. When looking at the resources provided by Montclair State, there are a few links listed. One of them is provided by the EPA and the other is supposed to be a website about if there are regulations for universities, but the website does not match the link.

Once you click the second link, it automatically directs you toward the official Microsoft website. Since there are old resources online, that shows that the university has not updated their website in quite some time. This leads people to believe that the website is no longer updated with the correct information and may cause an issue for students and parents when following procedure.

As this is a process, imagine how much time the entire list of things to do will take by the Resident Assistants and the university. The amount of time the student has to reside in the dorm while the mold is still present is unsettling because this also affects your health in big ways, such as wheezing, difficulty breathing and maybe even hives.

Mold is also airborne, which means you might not even know that mold is in your living space. Imagine how much mold is not found in dorm rooms on campus because students are unaware of it. Are they suffering without even knowing mold may reside in their dorm rooms?

Montclair State students have even complained on social media regarding the mold. Other news stations have reported on Montclair State and even William Paterson University for having mold in dorm rooms. As this seems to be a problem with New Jersey universities, it makes one wonder when the EPA and other universities will push the change to make regulations for mold.

With the ongoing problem, it puts students who dorm at risk. Regulations need to change before it is too late.
Our accomplishments this year almost brighten my day knowing I have people who look up to me. The Montclarion has made me blossom into an outgoing and upbeat individual compared to the shy and anxious person I was four years ago.

This staff has supported me, made my time with this organization and the Montclarion feel impossible to sum up in one sentence. I, of course, would never have been able to do any of this without the support of my fellow staff. I have been with the Montclarion since I was a freshman. This organization has made me bloom into an outgoing, creative, and confident person on this staff has touched my very tiny heart in some way, despite the heartless reputation I have tried to build for myself.

I wish I could make a special thank you to every staff member, but alas, this is the last article we will write, and everyone on this staff will have trouble living without. This article will be the hardest I will ever have to write.

I leave the SCM with two things. First, please find more times to schedule colloquiums. The Montclarion has general body meetings at 2:30 p.m. and production day on Wednesdays. Second, writing is the foundation of good journalism. No future in journalism is a promised one without superb writing/editing skills. Editing should be a required class and it should be the prerequisite to all other writing classes (which there should be more of).

Print might be on the global decline, but based on those trusty distributor sheets such as myself are proof of that. When Susan Cole, the president of the university, told me she has been able to give her red pen a break with the 2018-2019 editorial board, I felt a sense of pride in my work that is indescribable. My only hope for the future staff is that they can maintain this.

We can say for the experiences we have in our lives. I know that what I am walking away with at the end of my time at The Montclarion is so much more than what I started with. This publication has made my college experience.

From changing positions and starting a video team all the way to winning several awards, these achievements are all a part of what has made my senior year unforgettable.

I am a better learner, thinker and teacher thanks to this publication. I’ve never felt prouder to be a part of a team and I am lucky to say I’ve spent the last three years working with some of my best friends.

Dominique Evans, an English major, has been with the Montclarion for three years and will be graduating with the class of 2019.

For our junior year running the editorial board. I want to leave it in the hands of anyone else. Just like your time as video editor, I want to leave it in the hands of anyone else.

Mackenzie Robertson, the former Chief Copy Editor. Without you and your bubbly happiness, I don’t know if I would have stayed on this staff all these years. You were the first person who talked to me at The Montclarion and we immediately clicked, sharing our “Harry Potter” houses and favorite Disney princesses. You are always there to brighten my day, and I will forever appreciate that.

I also want to shoutout professors Tara George, The Montclarion’s faculty advisor. You have seen my best and worst moods and have always been there to give me advice. You helped me become a better writer and a better leader. You were always here to encourage great writing.

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‘Farewell The Montclarion’
Graduating editorial staff share their favorite memories and say their last goodbyes

Hale to the Chief

Despite having spent hours transcribing long interviews and figuring out how to write stories within going over word count, this article will be the hardest I will ever have to write.

I have been with the Montclarion since I was a freshman. This organization has made me blossom into an outgoing and upbeat individual compared to the shy and anxious person I was four years ago. The memories and friendships I have created here are ones I will never forget.

While I wish my degree left room for me to contribute to it. Two years later, I found myself in the bathroom of the Student Center Annex talking about our hopes for this organization and how much we thought we could contribute to it. Two years later, we found ourselves in the bathroom of the newly built School of Communication and Media about to spend our senior year running the editorial board. I am still baffled that the universe lent us the hand we requested.

To our success, Mackenzie Robertson, the managing editor job is what you make it. Because of this, I wouldn’t want to leave it in the hands of anyone else. Just like your time as video editor, I know you will make the most of it. I am forever your cheerleader.

To my successor, you must be a fan of a journalism background, I wouldn’t have pushed myself to move past the copy desk without the endless support from you and Haley. OG copies for life.

To our faculty advisor Tara George, thank you for teaching me that journalistic writing is equally the art of developing your own voice as it is lending that voice to others. You have always been such a support to this organization as well as the journalism program at Montclair State University. Both of which have grown so much with your guidance. You have seen my best and worst moods and have always been there to give me advice. You helped me become a better writer and a better leader. You were always here to encourage great writing in a world that feels like no one cares about that anymore.

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Dominique Evans, an English major, has been with the Montclarion for three years and will be graduating with the class of 2019.
to catch up on others.

It wasn’t until an email – which I con- sidered my miracle – from the English department that said that the university’s newspaper was looking for new people. I took a journalism class in high school so I figured it was some experience, but I was wrong in the best way.

I walked into the little annex in the Student Center and was sure this was the first and last time I would enter that room. I was asked what I wanted to do, and as a scared little freshman, I said “anything.”

I now look back with gratitude be- cause that’s how I ended up as a copy editor for four years.

I had no idea what I was doing my first day, but I faked it till I finally made it to senior year, learning on the way.

After getting involved in The Mont- clarion, I never felt like college was such a terrible thing. I became a part of some- thing more than a newspaper – I became the little family. For the first time, I didn’t hate college.

Wednesdays became my busiest yet favorite day. I got to do a job I loved, and hang out with people I grew to love. My favorite part was getting to read all of the stories before anyone else got their hands on it.

Even though there were changes along the way, whether it be the editing pro- cess or moving into a new building, the passion put into the newspaper was the same.

The Montclarion not only gave me a better college experience, but also gave me growth and opportunity. I went to new states, and became closer with the staff, which made our working environ- ment open and friendly. I became a jour- nalism minor shortly after joining, and took a different path than what I imag- ined I would do as an English major.

If I became a journalism minor I would have hid behind editing and never would have written. I’m so glad I was pushed by many people, such as our adviser Tara George. Thank you, Tara, for believing in the newspaper staff when we didn’t believe in ourselves.

Thank you to The Montclarion news- paper for watching me grow into a bet- ter writer and editor. My 18-year-old self would have never imagined that this newspaper was going to change me for the better. I’ve had many obstacles in col- lege, but the newspaper was always my safe haven.

I’ve watched many assistants, edi- tors and writers come and go since my freshman year. I always had to meet a new staff, but the two that will always hold a special place in my heart are my for- mer Editor-in-Chief Haley Wells and former Managing Editor Dominique Evans. Ladies, thank you for starting your journey as copy babies when I needed help the most, and blossoming into your own positions. Thanks for always ticking around, you’ll both do great things.

I’d also like to thank my assistants, Jen Losos, Brielle Wyka, Priscilla Cart- agena and Olivia Paez, who I never wanted to like my assistants, but my equals. Thank you ladies for mak- ing Wednesdays better and trusting me in my AP Stylebook. I will never update it, but the best for you all and your en- deavors.

Thank you to the AP Stylebook for saving me numerous times when I didn’t know what I was doing, and for being a backbone for late night ed- its. Thank you for teaching me better grammar.

Last but not least, thank you to the whole Montclarion staff for always be- ing my family and for not letting the camel and ostrich race. I will miss you all and I know you’ll do phenomenal.

Please remember the oxford comma isn’t allowed in a simple series.

#CopyOut

Fiorella Medina, an English major, has been part of the Montclarion for four years and is graduating with the class of 2019.

Anthony Gabbianelli, a journalism major, has been with the Montclarion for three years and will be graduating with the class of 2019.

#CopyOut

My Bottom of the Ninth

I told you after my first semester in high school that I would be working with some of my best friends at a newspa- per, I wouldn’t have believed you. If you told me that I also would’ve been doing what I love each and every week in very own section of that newspaper, I probably wouldn’t have believed you either. Now, I can’t be- lieve it’s all over and I didn’t start earlier.

My freshman year was the complete opposite of where I am now. I was a com- muter student who didn’t really know exactly what I wanted to do as a career. I liked sports and I liked writing, so maybe my future was in sports journalism.

I learned about The Montclarion and knew that commuting from Wayne, New Jersey wasn’t how I was going to grow and become the writer and reporter I am today. I moved into Sinatra Hall the next September and joined the newspaper. That was the best decision I have ever made.

Interesting story: I was never a staff writer for The Montclarion. I wrote two articles before the former Sports Editor, Emma Cimo, asked me to be her assis- tant. I immediately told her “yes” and the rest was history.

In my junior year, I became the Sports Editor of The Montclarion, and a dream of mine came true. When that year’s staff took over, we were still in the basement of the Student Center, leaving the office at midnight with sore eyes and aching backs from being hunched over our desks.

Now we have our new office in the School of Communication and Media with the best view of New York City, and I even had my own nameplate (thanks Mom!).

Since then, I have had the pleasure of interviewing a World Series Cham- pion, an Olympian, an ultra-endurance athlete and everything in between. In my two years as Sports Editor, I laid out the sports section by myself twice, have writ- ten for every section of The Montclarion at least twice and I even helped shoot the first video for our website earlier this year.

I also got married, like, three times, so those will be interesting stories to tell af- ter I graduate. If you told me after I graduated high school that this was going to be the next four years of my life, I still wouldn’t have believed you now. I would never want anything more.

I want to thank The Montclarion’s fac- ulty adviser, and my academic adviser, Tara George. I still remember the day you interviewed me to enroll in the journal- ism major.

You have helped me so much along the way, and I could never thank you enough for helping me become the journalist I am today, along with introducing me to the wonderful people I’ve worked with for the last three years.

I want to also thank the entire city of Louisville, Kentucky for bringing me closer to my four coworkers, who I can now call some of my best friends at the newspaper.

Fiorella, Dominique, Haley and Rob, you four have helped me so much in- ways I can’t begin to describe over the past years, and I can’t stand the fact that I will probably never work with you again. It was a thrill to work with you all and
Thanks For the Memories

Although my time with The Montclarion was brief, it was filled with fun memories that I will not soon forget. Every meeting, I would learn something new, surrounded by some incredible people who would make that experience immensely enjoyable.

When we began to say our goodbyes, I did not think that this feeling of sadness would affect me the way that it has. But, I have built a connection with those brilliant people at The Montclarion and I wish it didn’t have to end so soon.

The most impactful part of this experience for me was when my awesome replacement, Adrian Maldonado, became ready to take my position as Web Editor. I know he will do a good job. I taught him well. Also, he might secretly be Thanos, so everyone should watch out for that.

For everyone else, I wish you all goodbyes, I did not think that this feeling of sadness would affect me the way that it has. When we began to say our goodbyes, I was surrounded by some incredible people who would make that experience immensely enjoyable.

Perhaps this passage of time is a testament to just how impactful The Montclarion has been on my life. It’s been an incredible experience, and although it’s hard to say goodbye, I know that we will never lose touch.

I’m excited for whatever comes next. For everyone else, I wish you all goodfortune. Thank you so much for everything.

I carry the memories I made at The Montclarion for the rest of my life. It’s been an incredible experience, and although it’s hard to say goodbye, I know that we will never lose touch.

I’m excited for whatever comes next. For everyone else, I wish you all good

Always, 3000

Wait, how did I get here?

This is a genuine question, because the last two years have flown by at such a suspiciously fast rate, that I am almost certain there has been some sort of divine mistake.

Until I submitted my pitch to write this article, it had not completely dawned on me that this was it; I am a senior. I am leaving. This is, indeed, the end.

Perhaps this passage of time is a testament to just how impactful The Montclarion has been on my life. Two years ago, before Babee Garcell — the Entertainment Editor at the time — had stirred my interest in the paper, I wasn’t exactly in the right state of mind. Sure, I liked to write a bunch of words in my spare time, so joining a newspaper only made sense, but things were weird back then.

At the time, I was alone, and even more pressingly, I was fairly depressed. I was quite good at keeping everything bottled up inside without a real care in the world about what was actually happening to me. I wasn’t sure if I was deserving of even being on this little planet we call Earth. Then I started to meet people.

I became a small part of a team that was brimming with talented and passionate people. I’m not going to pretend that joining The Montclarion magically flipped a switch in my head that instantaneously “cured me” of the mental funk I was in, but it definitely helped. When I became the assistant to former Entertainment Editor Robert O’Connor, I felt that it was a real turning point in my life. I was officially part of something, it turns out that might’ve been what I had needed for so long.

I got to do some awesome work while I was here, too. My first article was a review on the video game “Cuphead,” and that was especially fun because I was able to honestly tell my mom that I was playing a video game for work-related reasons. I wrote about Montclair University Gamers, the on-campus student group dedicated to, well, video games.

Opinion Editor Sunah Choudhry somehow allowed me to write about “Mario Party.” Current Opinion Editor Rebecca Serviss, who is definitely thrilled by how long it has taken me to submit this goodbye piece, allowed me to write about what the Oscars could learn from The Video Game Awards. Entertainment Editor Thomas Neira let me write about Nintendo.

While I am certainly proud of all the work that I have accomplished, it means nothing compared to how proud I am that I got to meet such incredible people along the way. I mean that more than anything, and my only regret is that I didn’t get to spend more time with The Montclarion in my final semester. Hopefully, nobody takes that as a sign that I didn’t care, because it was the exact opposite. I can just be one of those seriously dumb kids who have trouble expressing how much they care about people sometimes, what can I say?

So to all the people at The Montclarion, all the people that are thinking of joining (you obviously should, duh), and to anyone who has even once enjoyed being in my company: I love all of you, 3000.
### President Trump’s Rhetoric and Silence Fuels White Supremacist Terrorism

**A response to the shooting in New Zealand**

Terrorist motivated by white nationalism had been gunned down peaceful Muslim worshipers last Friday. This sort of white supremacist attack is nothing new, and neither is its relation to President Donald Trump.

On the evening of Sep. 17, 2015, Donald Trump, in his usual manner, listened to concerns at a town hall meeting in Rochester, New Hampshire. “We have a problem in this country, it’s called Muslims,” one supporter said.

As Trump nodded along, the supporter asked, “When can we get rid of em?”

Rather than telling the man that he had nothing to fear, Trump said, “We need this question,” and assured his supporters that, “We’re gonna be look- ing at that and a lot of different things.”

I am not so blissful about this attack because the terrorist made his own decision to kill 50 people. However, Trump needs to be aware that his outspoken beliefs and constant vitriol of Islam and immigrants have an effect on both his supporters and white supremacists around the world.

When Trump tweets lies about American Muslims celebrating the 9/11 attack, or when he pushes for the surveillance of mosques and Muslims, or when he reiterates, time and time again the need for a Muslim ban, there are people out there listening and thinking to themselves, “I agree with this, and I’ll take matters into my own hands.”

Three and a half years later, a terrorist entered two mosques in Christchurch, New Zealand and decided to look into the problem that Trump described by taking the lives of 50 innocent Muslims.

The shooter released an online manifesto moments before the attack, filled with anti-Muslim and anti-immigrant language. The terrorist describes himself as a Muslim convert, those who convert to the religion, and even defines his attack as “revenge” against Islam.

The manifesto describes how, “we must deal with both the invaders within our lands and the invaders that seek to enter our lands.” Overall, the shooter wants us to know that he committed this attack for “[his] people, [his] culture, [his] culture, [his] RACE.”

The shooter even made sure to put “race” in all caps, just in case we didn’t grasp the idea that he was racist.

This type of rhetoric in the manifesto seems to resemble words from Trump. In February 2016, Trump recounted a false story to a group of his supporters about U.S. Gen. John Pershing and how he executed 49 Muslims with bullets dipped in pig’s blood and Muslims are prohibited from consuming swine. Trump said that this solved the terrorism problem for 25 years and that, “we better start being tough, or we’re not gonna have a country.”

The shooter mentions in his manifesto how he praises Trump as “a symbol of renewed white identity and common purpose.” Trump has a position as the leader of our nation to condem white nationalist behavior and to actually put an end to it. Muslims are not welcome. If Trump refuses to take responsibility, then these people will continue to think their minds are acceptable because they share it with their president.

In response to the attack, Trump gave his “warmest sympathy and best wishes out to the people of New Zealand.” He played it safe with this response, but his “warmest sympathy” and “best wishes” just do not cut it.

When asked if he saw white nationalism as a potential threat, Trump replied with, “I don’t really I think it’s a small group of people that have very, very serious problems.”

This was the perfect opportunity for a leader to condemn these terrorists, but Trump decided to quickly move past the subject.

Trump needs to open his eyes and acknowledge the rise of white supremacy. As president of the United States, Trump has a responsibility to look at the Charleston church shooting, the Charlottesville attack, the Pittsburgh synagogue shooting and the New Zealand mosque shooting and condemn these terrorists. He needs to put an end to his xenophobic rhetoric that acts as fuel to white nationalist beliefs and take action to help stop them from happening again.

Sharan Hassan, a communication and media arts major, is in her first year as an assistant entertainment editor for The Montclarion.

### Wanted: Bagels at Montclair State

When eating a bagel from a corporation or carnival foods, such as funnel cake or carnival foods, which are named the Shawrma Spot and the Stuffed Libby, the quality of bagel makes it difficult to lay out my options. I strive to find time to eat even to get and find something to eat that does not make me gag or throw up. On some days it becomes harder to eat a full balanced meal in the morning, which makes it difficult to lay out my options on what to eat. Knowing that I have to drive to campus to get a bagel makes you eat something in order to function.

When deciding on what to buy for breakfast on campus, it also becomes a stretch because there are only a few places I can decide from that carry breakfast foods. I can either go to Dunkin’ Donuts, Au Bon Pain or the dining halls on campus. These places are not great for my diet, which makes it difficult to lay out my options for breakfast.

When walking up the steep steps of Car Park, every student notices the food trucks that supply Mediterranean food or carnival foods, such as funnel cake or fries in brown paper bags. Instead of getting a bagel from a corporation such as Dunkin’ Donuts, Au Bon Pain or even Starbucks, you do not get the same quality of bagel. The bagel that comes from a bagel shop carries Jersey’s famous bagels.

When someone who was born and raised in New Jersey, you start to learn what the staple foods are and which part of Jersey they pops into everyone’s head. “What am I going to eat for breakfast?”

Whether you are from New Jersey or not, you learn that the bagel is a staple to our breakfast here in the Garden State. This leads me to wonder why a bagel place that carries Jersey’s famous bagels is not making their way around the university.

I know that many students have been waiting for a bagel shop that carries Jersey’s famous bagels.

When I first thought of social media, I thought of sharing selfies and people tweeting about what they’re currently eating, the stereotypical things opinion writers love to harp on in order to make fun of our tech-savvy generation. Little did I know that I would form friendships on Tumblr, YouTube and Instagram all because of our collective love for books and pop culture.

Through social media I found my niche and I thought that because there are millions of us on social media, we have very, very serious problems. I was wrong.

Through social media I found my niche, as others can, too. There is an endless ar-ray of communities that you can join to chat about books online, I have met others through social media who have very, very serious problems. I was wrong.

Social media provides us with communities and friendships that have the potential to change our lives for the better. I’m not embarrassed to say that I love social media. It has allowed me to make more friends than I ever imagined and I am forever grateful for that.

Olivia Paez, a journalism major, has been with The Montclarion for two years and will be graduating with the class of 2019.

**Connecting the World Through the Power of Social Media**

I never understood why older generations consistently wrote articles complaining that social media is making us more an- cient. We have been bombarded with photos of younger generations with their necks craned down as they type away on their phones, which people claim isolates them from one another.

I’ve never resonated with this opinion. For me, social media has allowed me to make more connections and friendships than I could have in real life or offline.

Back in high school, I felt utterly alone. I didn’t connect with students around me who were into cheerleading, football, mu- sic and other things that didn’t interest me. Instead, I turned to social media in hopes of sharing my interests with others online. I created a Tumblr account and quickly found a community of people updating others on their current reads, posting photos of books they’ve recently bought and debating about other literary topics. I was immediately hooked.

As someone who has spent most of her life reading, I created a blog called “the book who’s read it.” I cre- ated a blog called “the book who’s read it.” I created a blog called “the book who’s read it.” I wanted to share my thoughts and ideas with others who are interested in the same things.

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The United States of America thrives on its success from the many backsof immigrants who were forced into migration and the millions of people who wanted to pursue the American dream in hopes of a better future for their forthcoming generations.

My parents, both from El Salvador, knew nothing about the American dream when they were younger, but they were inevitably obliged to pursue it in order to survive.

Between 1980 and 1992, El Salvador was in a devastating civil war that robbed millions of their safety, broke apart cities and financially damaged the economy of the entire nation.

My father, Benjamin Henriquez, at the age of 24, left the country after rea- soning there was no employment that could sustain him and his 11 siblings. Since he was one of the oldest siblings, it was his responsibility to take over the position as the head of the family.

However, at the age of 18, he lost his neighborhood, his house and his miscellaneous items due to the mass raids from the soldiers. During this time he needed to take his family on a 3-hour quest, barefoot into a safe city, spending the little amount of money he saved up only to survive a couple of nights.

The civil war truly left a scaring mark to the civilians of the country. My mother, Sonia Henriquez, grew up having to cautiously walk to school because there were hidden land mines everywhere placed by the soldiers.

She grew up in extreme poverty and primarily in the countryside with several of her farm animals. My mother was always an outcast by society and treated poorly because the attitude she wore was always always clothing, and she only had one pair of shoes for the entire school year.

When growing up she, too, realized there was no sustainable future for her since her family was unable to afford to take her to high school, which devastated her. At 21 years old, she decided to mi- grate over into the U.S. in order to find better living and working conditions to maintain herself.

Typically when people think of im- migrants, society associates them with either trespassers or illegals trying to take jobs from hardworking Americans, or people trying to freeload on the benefit the system has to offer.

Neither of my parents were ever handed a job with any health benefits, salary compensation or any financial stability. They created their own work opportunities and through their own means, they were able to prosper.

I am a proud child of two hardwork- ing immigrants who were placed at an awful disadvantage in life, but they re- lentlessly pushed for a better outcome for themselves and now they continue to push for a better outcome for their children. My parents are the reason why I constantly strive to do my best academically because they were never given the opportunity to do so them- selves.

As a Latina U.S.-born citizen, I will represent my heritage and continue to proudly embrace my roots through my academic work as well. There is a lack of representation of Latin minorities in the journalism and communication-related field, according to an article writ- ten by The Atlantic called, “Where Are All the Minority Journalists?”

There continue to be several hun- dreds of thousands of other Latino sto- ries that resemble my parents’ struggles that get swept under the rug both in the media and in society. However, telling my parent’s story can inform a larger audience that they are people who only want to survive.

The ‘So Called’ All American Girl

Students dig deep into their families’ history to find connections to immigration
**The Shorts Epidemic**

Most students prepare for the cold as anyone would. Winter coats, jeans, bigger socks and even hat and gloves to boot, it was absolutely necessary. What is not necessary is what I have been witnessing on this campus for the last four years, and it’s completely unacceptable. Shorts.

There are people out here wearing shorts during the coldest part of the semester. I’m in utter shock whenever I see one of these heathens walking around campus like it is a warm spring day. It’s barbaric, and it needs to be recognized as an actual problem.

Considering the last week we had weather-wise, there is no possible logical explanation as to why these people wear basketball shorts when the high of the day is 9 degrees.

We also go to school on top of a mountain that is in a wind tunnel, so it feels even colder than that. I can barely stand being in the cold, most people are wearing coats, and it feels even colder than that. I can barely stand being in the cold, most people are wearing coats, and it feels even colder than that.

I see one of these heathens walking around campus like it is a warm spring day. It’s barbaric, and it needs to be recognized as an actual problem.

**The Shorts Epidemic**

How is he not cold?

I sweat very easily.

Rebecca Serviss | The Montclarion

**I Don’t Want to Hold This Beetle’s Hand!**

Before break, a beetle was found in a student’s broccoli at Sam’s Place. At first, I feared for the effect this incident would have on the already-skeewered reputation of broccoli. I do not understand why broccoli has such a bad image. I find broccoli to be quite enjoyable, whether it be steamed with melted butter, freshly squeezed lemon, by itself or what have you.

Montclair State University Residence Life sent out a campus-wide email regarding the Sam’s Place incident.

The email stated, “We uphold high standards of food handling practices when washing and inspecting fruits and vegetables prior to cooking and serving to ensure quality assurance. Montclair State Dining is proud to serve a campus community of over 24,000 people on a daily basis. Montclair State Dining Services will continue to be vigilant about our sanitation practices.”

Now I do not think it takes a Jimmy Neutron to realize this message is simply a giant crocodile of horse manure. If food safety was of paramount importance and they really upheld high standards of food handling when inspecting, this incident never would have occurred.

“Montclair State Dining Services will continue to be vigilant about our sanitation practices,” the statement said. If this is them being vigilant, that means those stray hairs I always find in my mac and cheese are up to protocol.

Later in the email, Residence Life identified the culprit as a produce beetle. After doing some research, I found there is no such thing as a produce beetle. I, however, did learn that there are many different types of beetles, such as the Japanese beetle, the striped cucumber beetle, the Colorado potato beetle, the golden tortoise beetle, the Hercules beetle, the Eastern Hercules beetle, the American carrion beetle, the Asian-long horned beetle, the green June beetle, the Eastern-eyed click beetle, the spined soldier beetle, the grapevine beetle, the elm leaf beetle, the varied carpet beetle and of course Cryptocephalus montezum- 

In fact, the only information I found when I Googled produce beetle was that Volkswagen will be discontinuing production of the iconic car model in 2019. I guess I will have to come up with another excuse to sucker punch my Uber drivers.

I understand mistakes like these are made in food service and I am sure the Sam’s Place staff is working to improve their process to help minimize accidents like this from happening in the future. However, instead of sending out a public relations stunt to cover their rear-ends, I would much prefer that the university responds by telling it like it is, which is follows:

Since 2006, Montclair State tuition has increased by over $4,000. This increase may not seem like much considering the nearly 29 percent state funding cut that has occurred over the same time period. However, we have now realized the effect that lack of funding could have on an aspect of student life as important as healthy and safe dining. So where exactly is that $4,000 increase in tuition going toward? Well, at least $455,000 contributes to President Susan A. Cole’s 2.7 percent salary increase she was given in 2018. That is not including the $88,000 she received as her future compensation.

The last article I wrote included a joke about how Sam’s Place would never receive a five-star review by the evil food critic from “Ratatouille.” Now we know why.

Brian Rooney, a communication and media arts major, is in his first year as a comedy writer for The Montclarion.
COME HELP US OUT

SPORTS

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Olivia Paez is a senior studying journalism at Montclair State University. She is the creator of “Stories for Coffee,” a book and lifestyle blog. In addition to her blog, Paez also runs a successful YouTube page, where she reviews different books and talks about art. Additionally, her Instagram, @storiesforcoffee, has over 11k followers. Entertainment Editor Robert O’Connor sat down with Paez to talk about gaining a following, running a successful blog and book recommendations.

Q: What made you want to become a book blogger?

A: I’ve always been in love with reading and getting lost in a fictional world, but I didn’t have many people to discuss that interest with. In high school, I had the idea of creating a blog with my best friend. Originally this blog was a website to share short stories that we’ve written, but then we began to share our book reviews and it grew from there. I’d say that my undying love for stories and my need to share it with the world was what really pushed me to create a blog. I wanted to find a community of book lovers to share my thoughts and feelings with.

Q: How have you managed to get such a big following?

A: Over the course of the years I’ve been blogging, I’ve been lucky enough to make a lot of friends and connections with other bloggers around the world. We have bonded over our shared love for novels and commented on each other’s photos in order to support one another. Occasionally these friends would also shout me out on their Instagram stories or photo captions which has helped me grow my following throughout the years. I am so grateful for their support. I also think that I grew a large following over time by constantly changing up what I was photographing. I have many interests that I’ve incorporated into my photography and captions, and I think people enjoy that.

I’m still surprised that I have over 10,000 followers on Instagram. I keep thinking to myself, “11,000 people care about my photos, my thoughts and me,” and that brightens my day. It’s so surreal to have so many people enjoying my content, and I’ll always be grateful for their support. I just want to change people’s perspectives on art.

Q: What’s been the most influential book you’ve ever read? In what ways did it influence you?

A: As I just read this book a few months ago, actually, and it is called “Next Year in Havana” by Chanel Cleeton. I won this book in a giveaway on a well-known book website called Goodreads, and this was the first novel that I truly felt myself reflected in. It is the first novel that I read that centered around two Cuban women and their connection to Cuba in two contrasting times in history.

This book changed my life because it took me de- cades to find a story that represented my identity in an accurate and beautiful way. This is something that the book community is continually advocating for, actually. We are all advocating for diverse stories written by diverse authors because it’s important for minorities to have their stories shared with the world. I finally connected with a novel that celebrated Cuban heritage in a way that didn’t trivialize the strife my people have been through. I even made a YouTube video chronicling my journey as I read this book and I was so emotional because I’ve never had my family’s history shared in a book, and I finally felt seen. I was finally able to see my history, my Cuban-ness, and my culture highlighted in such a well-written story. That novel will always hold a place in my heart.

Q: Is there anything about running a successful blog that you found surprising? Were there any challenges you didn’t anticipate?

A: I never expected to work alongside publishers when I first began blogging about books. I never even knew that publishers would send me advance reader copies, which are uncorrected copies of novels for bloggers to read and review before the book is officially published. It’s still exciting to open mail that was sent to me from Scholastic or Penguin Random House. I’ve always looked up to Scholastic as a little bookworm in elementary school. They often hosted their infamous book fairs throughout the year and now I’m able to work with them. I never imagined that ever happening.

As for challenges, I never expected the expecta- tions that would be set upon my shoulders, thanks to blogging. I never expected to be glued to my phone, posting photos on Instagram in order to gain followers. I never expected to spend hours trying to shoot photos for my page. I don’t think people realize how time consuming being a blog- ger is. Even if it isn’t a full-time job, it feels like one. Bloggers spend hours taking photos, film- ing and editing videos, writing posts, and I don’t think people truly appreciate the work and effort that goes into creating, essentially, free content for others to consume.

Q: Do you know you also have a pretty successful You- tube channel? Any tips for someone thinking about starting a YouTube channel?

A: Lighting. Lighting. All I can really stress is having good lighting in a video. Sit your- self in front of a window and just start filming. You can film a book review, a photo haul or a book tag. Just put yourself out there. I think it’s also im- portant to keep in mind that you can start filming videos on your phone. You don’t need a fancy camera in order to make videos. That’s how I be- gan my channel, and I always think it’s important to stress that you can make great content on your phone. Don’t feel discouraged if you don’t have fancy equipment. Not everyone needs it.

Q: Does attending Montclair State help you with your blog?

A: Attending Montclair State helped me learn so much more about blogging than I realized. Being in a journalism major, I’ve been able to strengthen my professional writing skills, which I believe has improved my book reviews. Being a student in Montclair State’s journalism program has also taught me to put myself out there, even in my blogging life and it has pushed me to try out new opportunities that I maybe wouldn’t have strived toward before.

For example, thanks to Montclair State and my professors who have taught me how to do read-a-thons that many people host throughout the year. It’s all about pushing yourself to start blogging — that’s the hardest to do, but once you do it, it’s such a fun journey to be on.

https://storiesforcoffee.wordpress.com/
Punay goes through his project notebooks and explains the plans for his project.

Punay points to his blank map, explaining how he plans to place his fabric.

An artist? A: I have this idea of appropriation because I find appropriation a funny subject. Where it’s like, only one culture can do this kind of thing, only you can do this kind of thing because you are that culture, so I want to play with this idea of, ‘Well, it’s human culture, so why can’t we share it all for us?’ If it’s like, only one culture can do this kind of thing to do with how the first president ‘of the Philippines’ sold out the Philippines for 400,000 pesos. I wanted to replace the pesos with rice because you can feel the weight of that when you wear the object, so I want to try to use regular objects and re-imagine them into art pieces.

Q: What is your personal connection to the Philippines? A: I was born there and I lived there until I was 7 years old, because that’s when my mom immigrated to this country to become a nurse. She was already a nurse but she wanted to get a better job for her family. This thesis is a way for me to learn more about my history that I missed because once I left, I didn’t know anything about Filipino history, so this is like a chance for me to revisit that.

Q: What is the symbolism behind the objects in your work and their placement? A: I’m still trying to figure that out, to be honest. That’s why it’s still a work in progress, but I want to try to use regular-looking objects and have some kind of narrative about them that relates to the history of the Philippines. I have this idea of having this straw hat that rice planters wear, and have bags of rice hanging from it and then it’s like you could wear it and it has something to do with how the first president ‘of the Philippines’ sold out the Philippines for 400,000 pesos. I wanted to replace the pesos with rice because you can feel the weight of that when you wear the object, so I want to try to use regular objects and re-imagine them into art pieces.

Q: What are your thoughts on cultural appropriation? A: I have this idea of appropriation because I find appropriation a funny subject. Where it’s like, only one culture can do this kind of thing, only you can do this kind of thing because you are that culture, so I want to play with this idea of, ‘Well, it’s human culture, so why can’t we share it all for us?’ If it’s coming from the same root. That’s, I guess, a reason. That’s why I like to juxtapose things, because it shows you that we are all the same. We all have commonalities, but it is the differences that make us who we are. And I wanted to emphasize that.

Q: When did you know you wanted to be an artist? A: I had an inkling when I was about maybe eight or nine when I drew an anime head and I was like, ‘Oh that looks good.’ But what really fed me was in high school. That’s what I was really into in high school, and then it was the praise people gave you.

So I kept dialing it in and I was like, it’s the only thing I’m good at so, I got to do something with it.

Q: What brought you to the Montclair State Art Department? A: What brought me here was my teacher. My English teacher senior year of high school recommended this place because his sister went here, and he said it has a good program. So, I was like, ‘Alright, sounds like a good place to go, so I’ll go.’ And it’s not William Paterson, so I went here.

Q: Can you define what ‘Balikbayan’ means? A: ‘Balikbayan’ literally translates to ‘back to your country,’ so the concept, or the idea of balikbayan box, is taking stuff from the United States or any foreign country that the Filipino diaspora spread them out to, and send everything that they have, like clothes, food, toys and stuff, sending it back to the Philippines, so that everybody benefits from it.

Q: Why did you choose to name your work that? A: I chose to use ‘Balikbayan’ because that’s what I want to do with this work, is try to go back to my country and see what I can learn from it, what I can show people, that makes the Philippines unique. I guess that’s a reason why I chose that title because I have been going back and forth about the title, but I guess it works for what I want it to be.

Q: What are your plans for the future? A: Try to find a job? Not starve? I have no idea to be honest. The dream is, or the goal at least, is to become a painting professor or something to do with curating or, what’s it called, conservation? I am working on stuff that’s already been made, if that makes sense. That’s an aspect of conservation I love, which is like, it’s already there. It’s already almost perfect, you just have to make it perfect. That’s the reason why I like conservation, doesn’t make sense why I’m a painting major. But you know what? Two more semesters.

Q: What do you want people to take away from your work when they look at it? A: I want them to take away some history of who the Filipinos are, what they are about and a deeper understanding of global politics in a way. Because it’s like, this may just be one country, but this topic applies to loads of other countries that have suffered from colonization and imperialism, so I want them to learn that this situation isn’t entirely unique to one place and it’s something that can be applied everywhere.

Q: Dealing with all the issues with immigration in America right now, is your art work making a statement toward those kinds of issues? A: I don’t think so. I’m more focused on education rather than trying to say a specific message, in a way, because I don’t want to berate people with like, ‘This is my political philosophy, blah, blah, blah.’ If it’s more of like, ‘This is what I learned from this and I hope you guys learned from it, too.’ So, I guess it’s the educator in me.

Punay talks about his hopes for his current project.

Punay poses in his traditional Filipino inspired clothing he designed.
Stan Lee: Remembering an Icon

Stan Lee posing with his creation, Spider-Man.

Thomas McNulty
Staff Writer

Stan Lee, famous Marvel Comics writer, editor, publisher and figurehead, recently passed away on Nov. 12. Beloved for his outspoken communication with fans, his frequent cameo appearances in Marvel television shows and films, and his hyperactive imagination, Lee was a staple of American pop culture.

Stan Lee rose to prominence in the 1950s, when he led a wave of exciting new characters being created within the pages of Marvel’s comics. His preference was writing flawed, human characters contrasted with the typical concept of superheroes. This led to the creation of beloved characters such as Iron Man, the Hulk, the X-Men and most famously Spider-Man, who is widely regarded as Lee’s most famous creation and the one whom he held most dear.

Within the pages of Marvel Comics, Lee loved to interact with his fans through his monthly column, “Stan’s Soapbox.” In these columns, Lee would inform readers about upcoming stories, answer fan questions or concerns and often speak out against injustice. The intimate way in which he communicated with fans, such as giving himself and fellow Marvel workers nicknames, using a heavy amount of alliteration and coming up with phrases like “Excelsior!” and “’Nuff Said,” is attributed with greatly increasing the popularity of Marvel’s brand.

The loss of Lee was mourned worldwide, with artists, writers and actors offering their tributes, with street murals quickly popping up in Los Angeles and London.

Marvel Comics’ longtime rival, DC Comics, offered their acknowledgements via Twitter, posting, “He changed the way we look at heroes, and modern comics will always bear his indelible mark. His infectious enthusiasm reminded us why we all fell in love with these stories in the first place. Excelsior, Stan.”

Many Montclair State University students were saddened by the news of Lee’s passing, many of whom have been inspired by Lee’s work within the fields of writing, illustration and communication.

Brian Hernandez, a sophomore animation illustration major, talked about the passion Lee had in his work.

"It's amazing to be able to see someone devote their entire life to one thing," Hernandez said. “It genuinely convinces me that working toward your passion can make you the happiest you can be.”

Artists around the world have been inspired by the work done by Lee and his partners at Marvel Comics, and Lee always held the belief that the unlikeliest of people could become heroes. His catchphrase, “Excelsior,” exemplified this idea, being a Latin phrase meaning “ever upward.” While he had retired from Marvel Comics in the ‘90s, Stan Lee remained the face of the company up until his death. He made frequent cameo appearances in Marvel films and television shows, his first appearance being in 1989’s “Trial of the Incredible Hulk,” based on the character who he personally created. His most recent appearance was in Sony’s “Venom,” which was released just a month before his death.

Sophomore communication studies major and staff writer of The Montclarion Sharif Hasan talked about Lee and his absence from future Marvel films.

"Stan Lee was someone who helped create an entire comic book universe of amazing characters,” Hasan said. “Marvel has always been a part of my life ever since I was young, and it’s great to see Stan’s world constantly expanding. The Marvel movies just won’t be the same without his cameos.”

Lee was often regarded as a major proponent of representation within the comics industry. Within the pages of “Fantastic Four,” Lee and partner Jack Kirby created the character of Black Panther in 1966, who is considered the first black superhero. In 1969 Lee went on to create the Falcon, together with artist Gene Colan, the industry’s first African-American superhero.

“At the time it probably would’ve been much easier to just ignore those issues,” said senior English major Wendy Faria. “Speaking out against bigotry could’ve been very harmful for him and his company, but I guess he felt it was something he really had to do.”

In a video message released two days after his death, Lee says, “I love my fans. I cannot tell you how much I love my fans. Sometimes at night, I am sitting here thinking, ‘What’s it all about?’ And then I get a letter from a fan or I read something or I see something or I remember something. And I realize, it’s so lucky to have fans, fans who really care about you.”

With his passing, Lee leaves behind a massive legacy. The characters he created will continue to thrive within the pages of comics, on the big screen and in the minds of the fans who he cared about so deeply.

Stan Lee at the Arizona Comic-Con.
Actor Geoffrey Owens Speaks About Actor Life and Using Speech to Invoke Creativity

On a cold snowy day, walking up the ramp to the Feliciano School of Business, carrying Dante Alighieri’s “The Divine Comedy” in one arm and James Joyce’s “Finnegan’s Wake” in the other, Geoffrey Owens made his way to a class of starry-eyed students to speak about writing, presenting and techniques for delivering speeches.

Owens, a humble man with countless talents, agreed to take time and share his life experiences with the students of Montclair State University’s fundamentals of speech class led by adjunct professor Linda Thomas.

Thomas, after watching Owens’ Screen Actors Guild Award speech, was inspired to write a handwritten letter to Owens. The letter Owens received was inspiring and prompted the actor to accept an invitation to speak to a class of aspiring young orators.

“The moment he entered the classroom, happy and cheerful, Owens greeted the starstruck students,” said Carlissa Auguste, a junior biology major and student in the fundamentals of speech class, expressing her gratitude for Owens’ words of encouragement and literary methods to help guide the class.

“Not giving up on my responsibilities, not quitting, and persevere,” Owens said. “Today I was encouraged to persevere, no matter how hard life gets. Owens’ testimony was a good boost of motivation for all the students today, and his knowledge in speech and communication in which he so graciously shared today was special and for that I am thankful.”

Leaving the students with optimistic views on life, Owens expressed that through it all, he never gave up.

“Not giving up on my responsibilities, not quitting Trader Joe’s and hanging in there was one of the greatest decisions I made,” Owens said. “The best advice I can give anyone is to hang in there and persevere.”

Guest speaker Geoffrey Owens speaks to a class in the Feliciano School of Business on Wednesday, Feb. 20.
The Sun’s Coming Out, but it’s ‘Hoodie SZN’ at Montclair State

Students filled the barricades outside Memorial Auditorium last Wednesday night, hours before the highly anticipated spring concert featuring rapper A Boogie Wit Da Hoodie.

Hosted by Student Life at Montclair (SLAM), the spring concert is one of the biggest events of the year. With last year’s failed attempt at a successful spring concert when musical guest T-Pain cancelled at the last minute, SLAM needed a hit.

SLAM built up the anticipation to the concert with a five-day countdown on their Instagram page, eventually revealing that A Boogie Wit Da Hoodie was going to be performing at Montclair State University on April 17.

On the day of the concert, students lined up outside Memorial Auditorium hours in advance. Sophomore student Catalina Gonzales was one of those eager concert-goers.

“We’re just extra, so we planned [to come early] like a week in advance,” Rosario said.

While the crowd was waiting outside in excitement, the road to getting a ticket wasn’t easy.

“I had to leave class just to focus on the ticket,” said sophomore Nahja Joseph. “When I first signed on I got wait-listed, but after a few tries it finally went through. I got my ticket around 10:30 a.m.”

Many students were not even able to get a ticket. Eventbrite immediately started waitlisting hopeful buyers as early as 10:03 a.m. SLAM’s Entertainment Chair Rayane Yamout said they sold out in two minutes, so it seems like only a few late stragglers were successful.

“I woke up late by accident,” sophomore composition and theory major Jahmai Person said. “By the time I got on the site, it said the tickets were sold out.”

SLAM’s Instagram comments quickly filled up with angry students complaining about how they could not secure a ticket and that they should change the location to Lot 60 so it could house more concert-goers.

“Any outdoor venue (i.e. Lot 60) has strict regulations,” SLAM wrote in a post on their Instagram page. “A Boogie would literally not be allowed to curse in his songs, and no one wants to listen to the clean version of ‘Startender.’”

Although they attempted to do damage control, SLAM eventually turned off the comments on that post.

Students in line were friendly with one another. Fan interaction included holding spots for bathroom breaks, sharing food and taking turns charging cell phones.

“I want a lit show,” Gonzales said. “I want it to be rowdy.”

Once it was 6 p.m., students were allowed in the venue and “Hoodie SZN” really began. Since it was general admission, there was no assigned seating. It was a free-for-all.

DJ Bake hit the stage first, playing banger after banger to get the crowd’s energy up to prepare for the main event. A Boogie also had three other rappers open for him, including Booka Banks, Ovee and Trap Manny.

By the time DJ Q. Minaya – A Boogie’s official DJ – came out to set up, the crowd was beyond hyped and ready for the “Swervin” singer to take the stage.

The rapper performed songs mostly from his newest album “Hoodie SZN” but threw in some older songs for his “day one fans.” He even hinted to new music dropping soon, but he jokingly said that fans needed to get his debut album “Artist” to platinum first before he releases anything new.

Fans were battling the rapper by trying to scream his lyrics even louder than him. There was not a single quiet person in the room. Everyone was jumping around and recording videos on their phones.

Sophomore Emily Reese enjoyed the show but had a favorite song that A Boogie performed.

“My favorite song he did was ‘Drowning,’” Reese said.

Paulina Subczak, a sophomore nutrition major, also shared her favorite song in his performance.

“I liked his throwbacks, like ‘Jungle,’ a lot,” Subczak said.

Once the concert was over, fans poured out of the auditorium with smiles on their faces while still singing along to their favorite songs. Groups of people had campus police officers taking their pictures with the marquee in the background.

“Honestly the whole concert was bomb. I thought he was going to take off his shirt, but I guess not,” said student Mayra Ventura. “I just love A Boogie. I wish the concert was longer.”

A Boogie thanks fans and says goodbye as he finishes his last song, “No Promises.”
Orson Welles’ ‘The Other Side of the Wind’: A Great End to His Cinematic Career

Sharif Hasan
Assistant Entertainment Editor

After more than a decade of long self-imposed exile in Europe, legendary filmmaker Orson Welles returned to Hollywood in 1970, ending his hiatus with his brand new film, “The Other Side of the Wind.”

Production for this film spanned from 1970 to 1976, and editing took place during the 1980s. Dealing with the burden of legal and financial issues, Welles was never able to finish the film and passed away soon after.

Forty years later, those who originally worked on the movie, along with other producers and filmmakers who wished to see this picture available to the public, used Welles’ notes and his edited scenes to finally release the film on Netflix.

Welles tells the story of a movie director named Jake Hannaford, played by Academy Award winner John Huston, who returns from his time away in Europe to create a film also called “The Other Side of the Wind.” Although this film is not technically autobiographical, it is without a doubt extremely meta.

The film follows the last day of Jake’s life, which is also his 70th birthday, after he is tragically killed in a car accident. Jake invites producers, actors, press and friends to attend his birthday party and view his semi-completed final film. Welles tells the story of a movie director named Jake Hannaford, played by Academy Award winner John Huston, who returns from his time away in Europe to create a film also called “The Other Side of the Wind.” Although this film is not technically autobiographical, it is without a doubt extremely meta.

The film follows the last day of Jake’s life, which is also his 70th birthday, after he is tragically killed in a car accident. Jake invites producers, actors, press and friends to attend his birthday party and view his semi-completed final film. Jake is portrayed as a larger-than-life filmmaker, both loved and hated by those around him. The mystique created around Jake, along with the intimidating performance by Huston, results in a character that is so compelling and magnetic.

“The Other Side of the Wind” is shot in a sort of mockumentary fashion, being told through the cameras of the guests recording during the party. This style, although intriguing and exhilarating, can many times be jumpy and confusing.

The dialogue is used in this film makes it seem as if the audience is witnessing actual events; characters converse and argue in ways similar to what is witnessed in real life. The dialogue also captures the hectic environment of Hollywood during the 1970s in an honest way.

However, the dialogue can often times be hard to follow. Viewers need to actively listen and pay attention to what characters are saying to fully grasp the plot.

“The Other Side of the Wind” is not a film for casual moviegoers. It seems more fit for cinema fanatics or those who appreciate Welles and his work. If you are looking for a Netflix movie to enjoy on a Saturday night, I do not really recommend this movie.

This film is a strange and dazzling piece that has life imitating art imitating life. “The Other Side of the Wind” acts as a mirror to the fascinating life of Welles, and it is a captivating ending to his cinematic career.
‘Marvel’s Spider-Man’ is the Perfect Tribute to a Historic Icon

Javier Reyes
Assistant Entertainment Editor

PlayStation 4’s exclusive “Marvel’s Spider-Man” just might improve on Spider-Man games of the past. It completely shatters the mold for what licensed games are capable of. With exhilarating and equally rewarding gameplay, a remarkable level of presentation polish and heartfelt storytelling, developer Insomniac Games – the minds behind the “Ratchet & Clank” and “Resistance” series – delivers a masterpiece that Spider-Man fans have always dreamed of.

The game tells an original story that follows the anti-Spider-Man, who has had his powers for eight years and has finally been able to take down one of his greatest enemies, Wilson Fisk, also referred to as The Kingpin. With Wilson now in prison, a series of events begin to transpire as many of New York City’s criminals seek to fill the void left with his arrest. This includes a new gang called the Demons, headed by a mysterious and powerful new foe named Mister Negative.

The plot features a litany of other famous characters from the Spider-Man universe like Mary Jane Watson, Aunt May and Miles Morales. It also has an assortment of other surprising villains you will discover over time. Spider-Man is certainly the star of the show, but this is also a story that emphasizes the dual lives of both the superhero and regular side of the character. Peter Parker has his own issues separate from fighting super-powered enemies that are profoundly ordinary and, most importantly, relatable. It is this contrast that has made the character so special. The game delivers a surplus of moments that are emphasized, like Peter having to deal with talking to girls or his troubles with paying rent on time.

This large-scale and equally humanistic story makes playing through the game a truly cinematic kind of experience unlike most. It is in the gameplay that “Marvel’s Spider-Man” shines the most. The game boats a massive open-world New York City for you to explore at your leisure. Doing so with the game’s web-swinging mechanics is some of the most satisfying and mindlessly addictive experiences I have ever had while playing a video game.

Even when not progressing through the game’s lengthy story missions, I found myself spending copious amounts of time aimlessly web-slinging across the city just for the fun of it. The game is just that good and makes you really feel like Spider-Man.

When it comes to the combat mechanics, the game feels eerily reminiscent to the “Batman: Arkham” series from developer Rockstar Games. Like that series, Spider-Man employs both a fast-paced fighting system and more meticulous and strategic stealth sections. Both of these gameplay styles work terrifically. There is an astounding variety of ways for you to deal with enemies and obstacles thanks to a plethora of skill upgrades, different gadgets and

more than 25 different costumes with each containing special abilities.

There is a constant sense of feeling rewarded when playing “Marvel’s Spider-Man,” which helps keep gamers entertained no matter the task. Even if they focus exclusively on the story missions, there is still tons to play through with side missions, computer puzzles, discovering famous locales, hidden backpack collectibles and much more. It all helps to culminate a package that will keep players happily busy for more than 20 hours. Spider-Man is now beginning to look up again for the collective as they begin their next era. As they say at the close of the project, “It’s the best years of our lives.”

‘Iridescence’ Washes In a New Era for Brockhampton

Thomas Neira
Entertainment Editor

In a year that brought hardships and negative attention to Brockhampton’s new label, “Iridescence” is a much needed breath of fresh air that proves itself to be yet another strong entry in the group’s discography.

Brockhampton is a hip-hop collective and is commonly referred to as a boy band. They are based in California, made up of 13 members, comprised of several vocalists that do not just improve the sound of a manger, graphic designer, photographer and web designer.

Brockhampton began their rise to fame last year, with the release of their acclaimed albums “Saturation I,” “Saturation II” and “Saturation III.” These albums respectively, they managed to find it in their latest project “Iridescence,” which sees the band continue their great run and signals a substantial change of pace for the collective.

Brockhampton has a history of starting their albums off with strong, aggressive songs, such as the tracks “Heat,” “Gummy” and “Boogie” that started out each of their “Saturation” albums respectively. “Iridescence” is no different. The album throws the listener straight into “New Orleans” complete with a quick, driving beat, great verses from each member and a surprise Jaden Smith feature. This track serves as a great preview of what else is to come.

The album manages to set itself apart from the group’s other projects by sounding more intense and melancholy than what fans may be used to. Both traits perfectly complement each other throughout the length of the album. The fast-paced, frenetic sound of songs like “Where the Cash At” and “Fabric” balance out with the emotional tracks such as “Tonya” and “San Marcos.” Some songs even manage to perfectly blend both characteristics, like the track “Weight” which features slow, personal rap verses from members Kevin Abstract and Dom Mccrenn, separated by a quick and lively instrumentals.

Vann’s departure from Brockhampton was not completely negative for the group, as it gave lesser known members of the group opportunities to step up and take their chance in the spotlight. The epitome of this is “Jouvert,” one of the standout tracks on the album. Vanna, known for his unpredictability, continues to experiment with different flows in his verse in this song, which gradually becomes more ecstatic and louder as he continues to scream at the listener. Merlyn, known for normally yelling simple yet powerful rap verses in the past, delivers a calmer and more substantial verse this time around. Bearface, a singer who was scarcely included on previous albums, has a much more prominent role on this project, having his own rap verse to close out the track.

Brockhampton noticeably continues to improve their production skills, as each project ends up sounding even better and more mature than the last. “Iridescence” continues this trend, featuring some of Brockhampton’s best production work to date. An example of this would be the opening track “New Orleans” and its seamless transition into the following track “Thug Life.” It can’t even be described with words. You have to listen to it for yourself.

The world seemed to be pitted against Brockhampton just mere months ago. The group had much to prove moving out of their “Saturation” era. Despite all of the bad press, Brockhampton’s “Iridescence” proves to be a much needed triumph for the boy band. They manage to keep moving forward with their music and find new avenues. They are now beginning to look up again for the collective as they begin their next era. As they say at the close of the project, “It’s the best years of our lives.”

Several members of the Photo courtesy RCA Records boy band Brockhampton pose for a photo.
Come Join Us!

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Photo courtesy of wikipedia.org.
## Men’s Lacrosse

### Men’s Ice Hockey

The Montclair State University men’s ice hockey team won 8-10-0-3 this season. As it was not the season they particularly wanted, a strong performance from the freshmen class gives them hope for a better season in the fall. Some key wins for the team were against Siena College 3-2 in overtime, and against Sacred Heart University 4-3.

Forwards Michael Buckel, Lucas Prospero and Matthew Diner, as among the five seniors on the Red Hawks that will graduate this year. Diner, are among the five seniors of the Red Hawks that will graduate this year.

The Red Hawks had no trouble defeating the Cougars in the first round 20-7, and are looking to win the conference championship.

Montclair State breezed past other CSAC opponents including Rosemont College and Key- stone College. The Stockton University Ospreys are the only CSAC opponent the team has lost to, and is who they will be playing in the finals.

The team put 11 players on the CSAC all-conference team this season. The senior attack Matt Haemmerle and junior defender Tim Kirm on the first team. Haemmerle scored 138 goals in his time on the team, including 72 assists. Kirm picked up 17 ground balls and caused turnovers this season.

In addition to Haemmerle, the Red Hawks will graduate nine more seniors. Although they are graduating 10 players, the team seems as if they will have no trouble next season with a strong performance from underclassmen such as freshman attack Jesse James West and freshman midfielder Christian Boyle. West already has 35 goals for the Red Hawks and Boyle already has 18, making the future look bright for the team going forward.

## Men’s Basketball

### Men’s Basketball

The Montclair State men’s basketball team started off extremely hot at the beginning of the season, but fell off towards the end of the season as they finished with a 17-10 record in the New Jersey Athletic Conference (NJAC).

The Red Hawks kicked off their season winning eight of their first nine games. This hot start included a huge 95-75 upset victory over Final Four finalist Ramapo College on Nov. 26.

However, Montclair State would go 9-9 for the last 18 games of the season as they lost several key conference games. Those losses ended up dropping them from first place.

Despite their trials, there are plenty of reasons to believe the Red Hawks will be contenders again next season for the conference title. Although the team graduates standout forward center Jordan Robertson, the all-conference scoring duo of junior guard Akbar Hoffman and sophomore guard Mitchell-White will be back.

## Softball

### Softball

The Montclair State University softball team began their first 10 games of the 2019 season in Florida for the Spring Games, playing other teams from around the United States. The Red Hawks went 7-3 and started a two-week, 16-game winning streak that ended on Saturday, March 30, after suffering a loss to the Stockton University Ospreys in Galloway, New Jersey.

Fortunately, the Red Hawks did not falter in the face of failure. They were quick to regain their composure for the remainder of the regular season, finishing with a record of 28-12. This was the fourth consecutive season that the team ended with a record over .500, which is something that the team’s seniors, athletes, infielders Ali Walek, Sam DiClementi, Kaylee Powers and infielder/outfielder Lia Stamile, should be proud of.

DiClementi started in all 40 regular season games and put up career high numbers across the board, including 28 runs, 42 hits and 10 doubles. Stamile had a career-high four home run season.

Honorable mentions include infielders Blake Saperstein and Taylor Brown, as well as pitcher Valentina Cuoci, who all had a fantastic season. In addition, Anita Kubicka, the head coach of the Red Hawks for the last 29 years, led the organization to its 900th win under her control.

With a slew of young talent and an exceptional coaching staff, there are high expectations for the future of the program.

## Women’s Ice Hockey

### Women’s Ice Hockey

Women’s Ice Hockey season, head coach Dave Solomon said that they are talking to different coaches in an attempt to recruit more players to bulk up the roster for next season.

If there was one story to take away from the season, it would be the final season for senior goaltender Kawarne Ferguson.

What makes Ferguson’s story so special is how she had never played goalie before to start the year. She had to try to put the position for two years ago, as the team did not have a goaltender.

Ferguson would go on to get better and better at the position over time. Her story of becoming a starting goalie for the Red Hawks women’s hockey team with minimal experience was without a doubt a highlight of the season.
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2018-19 Sports Recaps

Women’s Basketball
Corey Annan
Assistant Sports Editor

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Despite the loss of senior captain and forward Domonique Wising, a major staple of the Red Hawks’ last three NJAC championships with the team does return McKinnon and Calloway, who will play major roles next season. Other key returners include sophomore guard Taylor Brown and freshman guard Julia Sutton.

Men’s Soccer
Adam Grassini
Staff Writer

The Montclair State University men’s soccer team made the 2018 New Jersey Athletic Conference (NJAC) tournament as the first seed. They were able to secure home field advantage throughout the entire tournament, as well as a first round bye.

The Red Hawks faced the Rowan University Profs in the semifinals, and held on in the final minutes to secure a 4-3 victory, punching their ticket to the NJAC championship game against the Ramapo College Roadrunners. Montclair State won the game in dominant fashion, blowing Ramapo out 5-0 to secure their seventh NJAC championship.

Baseball
Priscilla De La Rosa
Contributing Writer

The Montclair State University Red Hawks baseball team finished their season on Sunday, April 28, against the William Paterson University Pioneers with a score of 6-4.

During the game, freshman pitcher and infielder Donald Gonnelli hit a solo home run, which helped the Red Hawks’ chances of getting on the scoreboard. The Pioneers quickly responded by putting six runs on the board, leading the Red Hawks to end their season with a record of 12-24. Undoubtedly, this season was a tough one for the Red Hawks. They had a strong start to the season, but somewhere along the way things went downhill. By midseason, the Red Hawks were on a 14 game losing streak, making it one of the longest losing streaks the team has had in the past two years.

The Red Hawks will graduate two seniors, infielder Nick Martinez and pitcher Max Maarleved. The senior players on the team may not have had the season that they hoped for, but the freshman that make up the majority of the team will have a shot at redeeming themselves next season.

Volleyball
Samantha Impaglia
Sports Editor

The Montclair State University women’s volleyball team had quite the successful season. The team made it to the New Jersey Athletic Conference (NJAC) finals, looking to secure their second championship in three years. Although they fell to Kean University during the game, their season was still one to remember.

Freshman outside hitter Carly Waterman led the Red Hawks this season, earning 316 kills and being named NJAC “Rookie of the Year.” Waterman averaged 3.19 kills per set, while also getting 233 digs. Right side Natalie Majkut and setter Ashley Griffith were also key players, and are among the five seniors the team will graduate this season. Majkut totaled 195 Kills this season, while Griffith had 832 assists, totaling over 3,000 for her career. The other graduating seniors include right side April Diangelo, outside hitter and defensive specialist Danielle Murray and outside hitter Andrea Martorana.

The Red Hawks look to continue their success next season and possibly get another NJAC championship under their belts. Their 2019 record this season, as well as key NJAC wins over conference rivals Rutgers-Newark and top seeded Stockton University, prove that they have the potential to make it far next season.

Football
Corey Annan
Assistant Sports Editor

For the past three seasons, the Montclair State University football team had been stuck in a state of mediocrity. They were essentially bottom feeders in the New Jersey Athletic Conference (NJAC), which had gotten stronger in recent years.

That all changed this season when Montclair State raised several eyebrows as they finished with an 8-2 record, 7-2 in conference play and finishing third in the NJAC.

Montclair State opened up the season with five straight victories. One of those victories included a huge 17-15 overtime win against Christopher Newport University.

The Red Hawks dreams of winning a conference championship were dashed with two heartbreak losses to Salisbury and the eventual NJAC champions Frostburg State. However, the Red Hawks would end the season with three straight victories, including a 10-9 victory over Wesley College.

The Red Hawks had many standout athletes as they placed return seven players on the all-conference team. One player who particularly stood out was NJAC Defensive Player of the Year, senior linebacker Mauro Altamura, who finished the year with a jaw-dropping stat line of 92 tackles as well as four sacks.

Montclair State will have much higher expectations next season as the return seven starters such as sophomore quarterback Ja’Quill Burch, junior wide receiver/returner Kason Campbell and junior safety Jaier Garrett to lead the team next season. The team will graduate a class of 11 this year.

2018-19 Sports Recaps

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Five years ago, the Montclair State women’s rugby team stepped out into the Student Center Quad for their first ever practice. With no official field access, these women had to make do with what they had. Despite this, the team still became the first Montclair State women’s club sport to play at the Division II level in their first few years as a team.

Although the Lady Revelers are now back playing at the Division III level along with the other Montclair State club sports, they have grown tremendously since the club started. Just this past year, they became Tri-State Central Division champions and recruited 18 new players, one being an exchange student from England. The team currently consists of about 28 girls with only three having prior rugby experience. They practice four times a week, which is more than any club sport on campus. With the help of experienced coaches and a lot of teamwork, the team has worked through all of the hardships that have come their way. The Lady Revelers have come a long way from the mere 10 players the team consisted of in the fall 2018 season.

Sophomore Andrea Esquilber Berniz describes the rugby team as being part of a sisterhood. “On and off the field, we support each other in numerous ways,” Esquilber Berniz said. “This sport has lifted all of our burdens up and has strengthened our minds and body. With this type of energy and attitude, we know we can conquer anything together.”

With majority of the team having never played rugby before, one of the main issues was teaching these girls a sport completely foreign to them. Esquilber Berniz as well as sophomore Montclair Concepcion contributing writer Zoe Gleason are among the many players that have never played a rugby match prior to college.

“I was always interested in rugby because I was always an aggressive energized person,” Gleason said.

I know this sport can be my outlet anymore I needed to let stress or anger out,” Esquilber Berniz said. “I have never tried playing rugby a day in my life until freshman year of college. However, it ended up coming from playing soccer, softball or track.”

The establishment of the women’s rugby team has created new opportunities for so many students looking to try something new. “I signed up my second week of freshman year and fell in love,” Gleason said. “I didn’t expect what I found and the rugby community is incredibly diverse. We have people of all orientations, all lifestyles, all cultures.”

Gleason and the rest of her teammates have been through struggles, as a lack of players forced them to forfeit more than half of their games during the fall 2017 season. They were the smallest team when going to compete in a tournament, but it did not stop their determined attitudes.

“Our team is stronger, bigger, and better organized than it ever has been,” Gleason said. “One of our collective goals is to grow as a team in skill and numbers and to play at the Division II level one day.”

It is hard to believe that even with the success the Lady Revelers have accomplished this year, they started the fall 2018 season with only 10 active members. They went undefeated in their past four games, including a complete turnaround from the previous one. The women’s rugby team has proven to the Montclair State community that hard work does pay off.

“One thing that I can say about rugby players as a collective is that we are resilient,” Gleason said. “If we are knocked down, we get right back up.”

Gleason continued to talk about the rugby team and their dedication.

“The Lady Revelers have a history that proves with hard work, passion and determination you can do anything,” Gleason said.

Samantha Impaglia
Sports Editor
His skills only grew as he became taller and more confident, even though he was not able to play basketball for his sophomore year due to injury. Despite his troubles and the extra hard work he had to put in while doing nothing else, Obertan found a way to make a comeback and continue his college basketball career for his sophomore season.

"It was extremely tough taking a year off due to injury because I couldn’t be out there getting better with my teammates," Obertan said. "As a competitor and a lover of the sport, not being able to play basketball for an extended period of time was really hard because I spent the majority of my days doing that and it was taken away from me. All I could do is trust the process and continue to get better day by day in the summer." Obertan started building his basketball skills early, playing on his first team in the sixth grade. His tall and broad appearance gave him the perfect body shape that a basketball player needs. His skills only grew as he continued to play the sport all throughout middle school, high school and now into college. "I think my size and mobility give me an edge when it comes to basketball," Obertan said. "I can spread the court with my shooting, and I can move well for my height and position." Standing at 6 foot 8 inches tall, it seems like Obertan was born to play basketball. Although he does not have a lot of stats due to his injury, it is still easy to tell that Obertan makes an impact on the court.

He helped bring the Red Hawks to a win against City College of New York in the Oke Gelston Classic with a three-point play late in the second half of the game, giving Montclair State a 99-72 lead. Only playing in three games so far this season, Obertan took advantage of the opportunities he received. "Personally, I’m still coming back from my injury and working hard to get back to where I was prior to taking the year off," Obertan said. "My overall goal is to go in and make an impact wherever needed and however possible." Proof that Obertan makes an impact both on and off the court comes from teammate and friend Joseph Radi, a sophomore forward from Monsey, New York. As a close friend of Obertan’s, Radi knows first-hand the impact Obertan makes.

"Obertan is a great team mate. He knows the game and he brings a sense of humor to the team and is a great locker room guy as well," Radi said. "He works and plays very hard. He is the definition of a tough player." Obertan was off last season gave Obertan the opportunity to really understand his strengths and weaknesses when it comes to basketball. Being able to pinpoint what you are good at and what needs work is key in becoming a versatile player. He talked about how shooting and rebounding are at top notch right now, while his speed and agility need some work. Another factor in Obertan’s success when it comes to basketball comes from good morals and being inspired by his parents. Having a good head on your shoulders is essential for being a successful student-athlete. With Obertan coming from a family whose parents immigrated from Slovakia as well as being born there, he sees how hard work and persistence help you reach your goals in life. "My parents inspire me when it comes to basketball because it instills hard work, responsibility and discipline into my daily life," Obertan said. "That helps me work hard off the court and make sure I’m getting everything done to the best of my ability."

Overall, Obertan has had a great experience being on the Montclair State men’s basketball team. Team chemistry is key for having a successful team and that aspect is present with this team. "Being on the basketball team is an amazing experience because of all the great people I met because of it," Obertan said. "They have truly turned into my family away from home." The team is now 8-2 this season and will get the chance to continue their great start during break on Dec. 30 against Williams College and Dec. 31 against Virginia Wesleyan University. Obertan is excited to keep his sophomore season going strong and looks to help the team out as much as he can. "I’m feeling really good about this season for our team," Obertan said. "We truly have become a family, and we have great chemistry together on the court because of it. We’ve had a great start to the season and are looking to keep that success going."
Before Lazaro Valdes was breaking records for the Union City High School swim team and a top swimmer for the Montclair State University Red Hawks men’s swimming team, he had to figure out a way to reach the United States.

Growing up in La Havana, Cuba, Valdes’ father left him for Spain when he was just a baby. For most of his time in Cuba, he was raised by his mother, who was a doctor. Despite not having a father figure in his early childhood, Valdes stated that he had a very pleasant childhood growing up.

“Since we didn’t have computers or smartphones like that, for me I always liked to go outside and play baseball at the park and be around my friends,” Valdes said.

Valdes also said the education he received growing up was very advanced, especially in mathematics. It even helped him when he eventually came to the U.S.

Outside of that, life for Valdes and his family wasn’t always easy. Communism in Cuba made life hard for their family, as they never enjoyed the same freedoms that are enjoyed in noncommunist countries. To make matters worse, travel restrictions at the time between Cuba and the U.S. meant they couldn’t immigrate directly here.

However, an opportunity arose. His mother was able to negotiate with the Cuban government to allow her go to Haiti to aid in the humanitarian crisis in Haiti in 2008. She spent the next few years in Haiti to help rebuild the country, which was extended due to the 2010 earthquake that destroyed much of the country. As soon as she was finished with her work in Haiti, she broke her contract with the Cuban government by going to Jamaica and later settling in the United States.

During those three years, Valdes did not see his mother. He lived with his grandparents in Cuba. Valdes credited his grandparents for raising him during this time and explained the reason why his mother was gone. His grandmother always reinforced that he would eventually see her again.

Valdes and his grandparents knew they had to eventually reunite him and his mother. Unfortunately, the Cuban government punished the family by banning him and his family from leaving the country after finding out about his mother’s escape.

Valdes’ mother sought out her friend to write up “documents” claiming that Valdes was mentally insane and needed to leave Cuba to see his mother. The documents were able to allow Valdes to immigrate to Spain.

Although he was only meant to stay in Spain for a year, as his mother was planning to fly Valdes back to the U.S., Spain was a tough transition for Valdes, who had to learn a complete dialect in his short time there.

“Moving to an area in Spain where they actually spoke Catalan, which was a different dialect,” Valdes said. “I wasn’t even allowed to speak Spanish in school, only the dialect.”

Despite this, Spain gave him the opportunity to reunite not only with his dad but with his sisters in which his dad had taken with him to Spain.

Valdes and his mother finally reunited in the U.S. in 2012 after she settled in Miami. He explained the feeling he had when he had first reunited with his mother at the airport.

“I was one of the happiest days of my life for sure, we cried and hugged for a good five minutes,” Valdes said. “It’s one of those things that people who are immigrants can understand.”

Valdes again had to adjust to a completely new country. His mother eventually remarried, giving him a more active father figure in his life. He also had to learn English, despite having taken basic English courses in Cuba. He maintained that he really hadn’t been properly taught the language, and it took him a while to become fluent.

The adjustment of learning a new language would also affect his schoolwork. He was even in danger of repeating a grade in middle school but was able to pass with the help of his mother.

Things would turn around in high school as his parents moved from Miami to Union City, New Jersey. During his freshman year, he was asked to join the Union City High School swim team.

“I have always known how to swim, and I was told to swim for Union City High School so I could stay in shape for soccer, which was the sport I was playing at the time,” Valdes said.

Although Valdes struggled his freshman year, he continuously dropped time every meet. By the time he was a senior, Lazaro had numerous swim records for Union City and was one of the top swimmers in Essex County.

“It was the best experience of my life [being a swimmer],” Valdes said. “I didn’t really have experience with the sport, so it was nice to see the hard work pay off.”

Outside of swimming, Valdes was able to grow close bonds with several of his classmates. However, Valdes particularly mentioned his high school best friends, Abraham, Anthony, Alex and Jeanne, for being the ones who really helped him get through any challenges he had.

Valdes would eventually commit to Montclair State, and like how many things have gone for him for most of his life, he had another challenge ahead of him.

“This season was really hard, having two practices a day and also having weight room,” Valdes said. “These were things I never experienced at the high school level.”

Valdes was able to eventually adjust to the rigorous schedule and his times improved tremendously throughout the season and is now seen by many as an up-and-coming swimmer for the Red Hawks next season.

“I wasn’t really confident going into the season, but eventually that confidence grew,” Valdes said. “I was able to have the best meet of the season at the [Metropolisian Championship], in which I dropped times in all of my events.

Senior Mick VanOosten has seen first-hand how quickly Valdes has developed into a quality swimmer for the team.

“He’s a great kid, and whenever he struggles, he always finds a way to push through it,” VanOosten said. “He’s always looking to learn something new.”

Valdes also believes that his composed has helped him get through a lot of the struggles he had in his life.

“I think I have that workhorse mentality with everything that I do when it comes to swimming, or even school,” Valdes said. “I always want to work hard in whatever I do.”

Corey Annan
Assistant Sports Editor