The Montclarion February 3, 2022

The Montclarion

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Black History Month at Montclair State

Black History Month was celebrated at Montclair State University on Feb. 1 with a procession led by university police and members of the Black community. The Pan-African flag, sometimes known as the Afro-American flag or the Black Liberation flag, flew alongside the American and New Jersey flags from Susan A. Cole Hall to the Student Center flagpole.

Following the procession, Dr. Saundra Collins, the psychology cooperative education coordinator at Montclair State, listed notable Black leaders. She further expressed the immense change Black pioneers brought forth and how people should honor their legacy. "Mary McLeod Bethune left us with this lesson; we are heirs and custodians of a great legacy," Collins said. "We must hear that burden with dignity, strength and determination. [We must honor] Fannie Lou Hamer in remembering her uncompromising stance against discrimination at the National Democratic Convention in 1964. It is in her memory that we must, we must go out and vote."

After highlighting notable Black leaders who have paved the way, Voices of Unity, Montclair State’s gospel choir, sang "Lift Every Voice and Sing," the Black national anthem, as the crowd rejoiced with them.

Montclair State President Jonathan Koppell honored the history of Black people and acknowledged many accomplishments they have made in the nation. He then expressed how Frederick Douglass was one of his role models in life. "What I find fascinating about [Douglass’] evolution as a thinker and a leader is that he emerged from slavery and somehow embraces the very constitution and laws that established the legality of owning slaves," Koppell said. "He accepts the words of the Constitution, the laws and all the ideas that have been articulated, and [says] ‘OK, you say all these things, just make them real,’ which I find to be remarkable."

Following Koppell’s message, students from different Black organizations expressed how Black pioneers’ perseverance gleamed in the face of adversity, no matter how much people tried to dim their light.

Jordan Stewart, a senior political science and African American studies major and the vice president of The Brotherhood La Hermandad, an on-campus organization that aides Black and Hispanic males from an academic, professional and social standpoint, spoke about Fred Hampton and what he taught him. "My older brother used to tell me all the time: '[The] responsibility of the educated [Black person] is to educate, empower and inspire,’ and those were the three things that [Hampton] did in his short life of 21 years,” Stewart said. "And it hit home for me [because] I’m 21, so I see myself, and he was revolutionary. I truly believe all of us in this room have unique qualities and God-given gifts that empower us to be revolutionary."

Tyler Anderson, a senior business administration major, reflected at the end of the event and explained that it is imperative to have events like these for the Black community on campus because it shows that their voices are being heard. "I feel like this event was very necessary and very appropriate for Black students [and] students of African descent here on campus," Anderson said. "I feel like we need an opportunity to be heard, to be seen and to be represented and honored. And I feel like this event did exactly that.”
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Executive Board

Editor-in-Chief
Sam Nungesser
montclarionchief@gmail.com

Managing Editor
Emma Caughlan
montclarionmanaging@gmail.com

Business Manager
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Editorial Board

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Jenna Sundel
montclarionnews@gmail.com

Feature
Sam Bailey
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Opinion
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montclarionentertainment@gmail.com

Sports
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montclarionsports@gmail.com

Photography
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montclarionphotography@gmail.com

Production
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Writers & Contributors

Amanda Aliche
Anaïs St Amant
Emma Barber
Maxwell Best
Joni Mae De Los Santos
Crystal Duram
Monica Fernandez-Prato
Adam Kaunfer
Alexander McParland

Avery Nixon
Ryan Nussbaum
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Red Hawk Rap Sheet

Tuesday, January 25
Dinallo Heights: Officers responded to Basilone Hall in regards to a report of a theft from the laundry room. This incident is under investigation.

Wednesday, January 26
Fraud: A student came into Police Headquarters to report an incident of fraud and theft by deception. The student reported that she was deceived into depositing fraudulent checks into her banking account and sending funds to unknown parties. This incident is under investigation.

Thursday, January 27
Freeman Hall: Officers responded to Freeman Hall in regards to a report of cyber harassment. Officers were met on scene by a student, who advised that an unknown individual demanded payment from them using Snapchat, and threatened to share explicit photographs of the student if they refused to pay. This incident is currently under investigation.

Anyone who has information regarding these incidents is urged to call the police station at T-I-P-S (8477).
Professor Kelly Whiteside Named to College Football Selection Committee

Jennifer Portorreal Assistant News Editor

Kelly Whiteside, an associate professor at Montclair State University’s School of Communication and Media (SCM), has been named to the College Football Selection Committee. The group selects the top 25 NCAA Division I teams in the nation and the four teams who play for the national title in the annual College Football playoff.

Whiteside spent 14 years of her career working at USA Today as the national college football writer and also dedicated her time to covering the Olympics and the World Cup before joining Montclair State. She has covered seven Olympic Games, nine World Cups, the NFL, NBA, MLB, NBA, NFL, and numerous college sports. Whiteside was also the first female president of the Football Writers Association of America.

Whiteside says this is a huge achievement in her career and she feels honored to be part of the committee.

“I covered national college football for 15 years, so it’s really an honor to be named to the College Football Selection Committee,” Whiteside said. “It ranks right up there in terms of career highlights. It’s a sport I love, and it feels good to give back to a game that has been a big part of my life.”

Jon Kociban, a senior sports communication major, says he was not surprised with Whiteside’s selection for the Football Committee.

“I was surprised, but I also wasn’t,” Kociban said. “You’re blown away for a moment, [but] then you think about it and you’re like, ‘Of course.’ Whiteside is involved in something like that. It’s such a high honor, but she is so accomplished in her career that it just makes sense. I’m very impressed and happy that she has this super cool opportunity.”

Kyle Forcini, a senior sports communication major, says this is a great chance for Whiteside to keep expanding her connections and providing more opportunities to her students.

“This gives her a ton of credibility, not just that she needed more of that anyways,” Forcini said. “But it just kind of gives her a new avenue to make connections in that world as well. I know for one of my assignments we did last semester, she knew people who were able to get us to go to a Devils game, like actually cover it and sit in the press box. So, she already has a long list of opportunities you can participate in based off of her [connections] and experiences outside of being a professor. Whiteside believes it’s significant to incorporate this type of experience into her courses and is also planning to provide more meaningful opportunities like this to students in the future.

“I think it’s important to bring this type of experience into the classroom,” Whiteside said. “I would love to bring groups of students to cover high profile events, such as the College Football Playoff or Final Four in future years. We just launched our new [sports communication] major and we expect the program to grow quickly. Plus, the Red Hawk Sports Network (RHSN), also in its infancy, is doing a terrific job broadcasting our home games and producing two weekly shows.”

For some students, Whiteside serves as an inspiration to keep fighting for their goals.

Trevor Giesberg, a sophomore sociology major, serves as an inspiration to keep fighting for their goals. “I would describe her as very passionate,” Giesberg said. “She, along with many of the professors here on campus, has had a lot of experience in the professional sports world. It has been amazing to see what she has done, and [how she has] inspired me to continue working hard.”

University Senate Holds First Meeting of the Spring Semester

Erin Lawlor Assistant News Editor

The Montclair State University Senate had its first meeting of the spring 2022 semester on Wednesday, Jan. 26 to discuss some questions and concerns they have as the semester begins.

The meeting opened with a discussion about masks being worn on campus. The main focus was on students not abiding by university rules like wearing masks in buildings. Stephanie Spitz, the department administrator for art and design, had another concern.

“I have seen many faculty and staff in Cole Hall not wearing their masks,” Spitz said. “They are supposed to be setting a precedent for students. If they’re not wearing masks, students will think, ‘Why should I?’”

Others inquired about what kinds of masks should be worn. Arnold Korotkin, a social work and child advocacy professor, mentioned that across the state Walgreen’s and Rite Aid will be giving out free KN95 masks to anyone who wants one, and thinks the university should strongly advise students and staff to go out and get one.

Dawn Souferis, the vice president for student development, said the campus life, had a different view. She said the university should not be policing the kinds of masks students wear and that she would never want to put in writing that only a certain type is allowed.

Along with the discussion of masks, Jessica Brater, an assistant theatre and dance professor, touched on current quarantine guidelines and possible adjustments going forward.

“As of now, the procedure and timeline for quarantine is 10 days,” Brater said. “This cannot be revisited until the end of the semester when all students have had their booster shots.”

In addition, professors will receive a notification from the dean of students when a student is in quarantine. If the professor does not receive that email, that student can reach out to the dean asking for confirmation.

At the end of the meeting, the university senators voted on the Land Acknowledgment Statement. Their goal is to decolonize the campus and bring more attention to Lenapehoking are QR codes around campus that bring you to websites with more detailed information, a dedicated landscaped garden with a bench and framed prints in high traffic areas of Cole Hall. The Land Acknowledgment Statement will also be read at most university events including performing arts events, Senate meetings and more.

In addition to this, the Senate intends to collaborate with local tribal leaders and indigenous experts to continue this mission.
Victor Cruz Volunteers at Paterson Community Kitchen

Monica Fernandez-Prato
Staff Writer

For many people in need in Paterson, New Jersey, lunch on Friday, Jan. 28 had the taste of a warm touchdown. Victor Cruz, former American football wide receiver for the New York Giants, continued his long-time partnership with Eva’s Village to provide around 350 nutritious and freshly prepared lunches for Paterson community members who currently experience or are at risk of homelessness.

Cruz, a Paterson native, took this opportunity to also give back to his community through the Victor Cruz Foundation. His nonprofit made a contribution of $5,000 and 100 women’s coats that will strengthen the serving message of Eva’s Village.

Cruz explained why he is committed to community service.

“My mother was always encouraging me to go out into the community and give back to whatever capacity,” Cruz said.

Since 1982, Eva’s Village has been assisting the Paterson community to meet the needs of adults and children who are vulnerable to food and shelter insecurity, substance abuse, mental health disorders and healthcare and employment barriers.

With the pleasant smell from Eva’s Village kitchen announcing lunchtime, Eva’s Village staff, volunteers, church members, the Giants administration and Cruz got to work getting lunches safely packed and distributed to the community. Just a few hours before the snowstorm arrived on the East Coast, the lunch line started to form on Jackson Street and the first snowflakes began to fall.

Campbell Soup Company donated soup to be distributed to the community in recognition of the Giants’ commitment to community service. Ashley Lynn, the director of player engagement at the Giants, was named a Community Champion by the company for organizing annual Thanksgiving dinners at Eva’s Village.

Howard L. Haughton, the CEO of Eva’s Village, said he is grateful for the donations from Cruz and Campbell’s.

“[Cruz’s] generosity, combined with Campbell’s wonderful donation of soup, will not only warm the bellies of those we serve today, but their hearts as well,” Haughton said.

Loaded with many boxes of packed lunches, warm Campbell’s soup and bottles of water, Cruz and the Giants formed a production line to ensure everybody received every item for their meal.

One of the many people who benefited from the lunch is Eric Nunez. Nunez said once his unemployment benefits stopped last year, he has struggled to make ends meet.

“I don’t have any means of income, so I don’t have money to spend on food,” Nunez said. “Paterson is good in the sense that there will be helping hands. Nobody will starve.”

At the end of the lunch line, things started getting collected and cleaned. The hard work from the team was rewarded with warm lunches from Eva’s Kitchen.

For this Giants legend, having the ability to give coats away, organize drives and bring people together with the NFL team is beyond his dreams.

“I’m excited to be in a position to give back,” Cruz said “That’s what it is all about.”
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BACKGROUND IMAGE BY SVSTUDIOART
Jajone Cuff, a senior television and digital media major, has an artistic life outside of campus. Cuff grew up in Brooklyn, New York and was eager to dip her toes into various styles of art. She expressed the familiar concern that racial representation was lacking in media and art while she was growing up. As a result, she decided that she herself would be the representation that was missing from her life as a child. She quickly became inspired by Virgil Abloh, Rihanna and Daymond John. These three moguls helped Cuff realize that everything from fashion to photography was meant for her.

In high school, she started her own clothing brand called TheKidInTheStorm, a custom clothing brand that specializes in designing denim clothing along with creating original canvas paintings. Her brand is not only filled with her passion for painting, but it allows her to grow as an artist as well. Although she loved what she did, making time for it became a struggle.

“My brand has taught me that being an entrepreneur at a young age is very challenging, especially with school in the mix, which took up the majority of my time,” Cuff said. “It’s hard to balance between creating and being a full-time student.” Despite the obstacles, Cuff didn’t stray off her path to building her brand. Since its launch, she has come out with multiple collections like “The Heart Break Club” and “The Eye of The Storm.” These collections mirror the vision of her brand while allowing her to create with no limit. The success of these collections has sparked clientele around the Montclair State University community.

Imani Monet, a senior medical humanities major, is one of Cuff’s customers and has had a positive experience with her. “I absolutely loved [working with Cuff],” Monet said. “She really made sure to listen to what I wanted, [and was able to] execute the products.”

Cuff went on to explain that being a business owner is a constant learning lesson. “I have to learn about marketing, budgeting and networking,” Cuff said. This led her to expansion and exploration into the world of photography. She started a photography business back in 2021 called Stormzeyeview, with the intention to capture the Black person’s experience. “My mission is to produce profound images that capture not only Black culture and the beauty within it, but themes of love, family, spirituality and sexuality,” Cuff said.

Since the start of her business, she has been booked and busy for the New Year, shooting all over the tri-state area.

Raven McGleese, a model and photographer who has worked with Cuff, also enjoyed her experience. “Working with [Cuff] on her photography projects is always a blast,” McGleese said. “She is open to your ideas for the shoot, such as style, poses and location, and will literally make your vision come to life.”

Cuff’s fashion and photography have also given her the tools to discover new layers about herself and what she likes. “Since starting, I’ve learned a lot about myself,” Cuff said. “In fact, I think tapping into my art has shaped me and allowed me to discover who I am and who I can become.” Cuff is more than excited for the future. She will leave Montclair State with not only a degree, but a bright future ahead — and, in the field she is most passionate about.

“I found what I want to do for the rest of my life,” Cuff said. “I learned a career shouldn’t feel like work because I genuinely enjoy creating and learning about my craft, to the point where it has become my lifestyle.”

You can find more information about Cuff’s clothing brand through her website at www.TheKidInTheStorm.com and her photography page on Instagram @Stormzeyeview.
Jamie Lynn, Say Less Next Time

Maddye Below Boxer
Opinion Editor

Full disclosure: I am not a fan of Jamie Lynn Spears, for reasons that are probably obvious if you have been awake for the past two years. When I learned she was writing a book that was due to come out in the midst of Britney Spears’ struggle for independence, I rolled my eyes so far back in my head that they almost snapped off of their stems.

That being said, I am also a glutton for punishment. I not only resolved to read “Things I Should Have Said,” formerly titled “I Must Confess,” I also decided to write as objective a review of it as possible. And let me tell you, neither have been easy tasks.

First of all, yes, this book, which is meant to be Jamie Lynn's autobiography, was originally titled after her superstar sister's song lyrics. Make of that what you will.

Before the book even begins outright, there were some small details that caught my critical eye. As far as I'm aware, Jamie Lynn has been free to write an account of her own life at any time since becoming an adult; making her claim that she has “now...been freed to share mine [her truth]” seems dramatic. It also runs contradictory to her earlier proclamation that she has, seemingly willingly, “re-mained quiet and kept to [her]self.”

As far as celebrity autobiographies go, it’s no secret that many of them are the work of ghostwriters. It is actually somewhat difficult to discern if this is the case for "Things I Should Have Said."

If it is the work of a ghostwriter, that explains the patently impersonal and distant tone of the narrative content itself, but not the poor writing and awkward syntax. If it is, however, actually the work of Jamie Lynn, then at least the unpolished style makes sense, but the lack of intimacy and familiarity does not.

The first few chapters of “Things I Should Have Said” map out Jamie Lynn's rise to childhood stardom in halting prose. The few anecdotal moments that appear are so sketchily detailed, they may as well not be there at all. From the moment it starts, the narrative feels rushed, skimming over huge chunks of what could be moments for introspection and stopping at strange points to reflect on a random instance that never comes up again.

There is so little emotional investment in much of the book's beginning that the hardest parts to read are Jamie Lynn's self-aggrandizement of her child self. This actually starts from the incredibly awkward opening sentence of the first chapter: “The beginning of my story is well known.” Why on earth are you telling it then, Jamie Lynn?

“‘The beginning of my story is well known.’ Why on earth are you telling it then, Jamie Lynn?”

Arguably the strongest section of the book is chapter five, which recounts Jamie Lynn’s first pregnancy at 16. Having a baby when you’re still a child yourself is never an easy set of circumstances, especially under such a spotlight, and perhaps it is more the scenario itself than the fact that it happened to Jamie Lynn that makes this arc sympathetic.

The other most effective chapter deals with her daughter Maddie’s near-death experience, which is frankly harrowing. Clearly, Jamie Lynn has gone through a lot and I do not doubt that she has her own trauma from both her dysfunctional parents and this particular event. But the rest of the book doesn’t even approach a similar level of depth, which is necessary for a memoir.

One of the public’s biggest gripes with “Things I Should Have Said,” besides the timing of its release, is how often Britney is referenced in what is supposed to be Jamie Lynn’s memoir — 315 times, to be exact. Having read it myself, I can officially say Britney definitely gets the raw end of the deal.

Britney is generally characterized in one of three ways in Jamie Lynn’s memoir: an overworked pop superstar, a “second mom” figure to Jamie Lynn or an unstable, mean-spirited inconvenience who has to be dealt with rather than helped. The second is frankly the most infuriating to me, as Jamie Lynn seems to romanticize this “second mom” behavior rather than fully recognizing how wrong it is for her older sister to have to act as her parent. There are even multiple pictures in the book’s photo section of Britney doing Jamie Lynn’s hair or painting her toenails.

The second to last chapter of the book, dedicated solely to what Jamie Lynn feels is the aftermath of Britney’s conservatorship, is a mess of contradictions, defense and things that definitely should have been said — in private and with no provocation. Suffice it to say you should do your own research if you want to come to a satisfying conclusion because you won't get one from Jamie Lynn.

Overall, “Things I Should Have Said” is a slog, with long stretches of cyclical thought dotted by self-congratulatory nods. It picks its moments, then promptly sabotages its own efforts to appear genuine and down-to-earth. I did say I would try to be objective. But “I must confess,” this book was a waste of time.
A Start to End Mass Incarceration

Two Professors Study The Release of Juvenile Lifers

There are many professors at Montclair State University who go above and beyond to research on the subjects they are passionate about. They dedicate years to their research, travel out-of-state and have a much larger goal than just obtaining information.

Dr. Tarika Daftary Kapur and Dr. Tina Zottoli did when studying juvenile lifers. Specifically studying people who were convicted of a crime before the age of 18 and sentenced to life in prison without the chance of parole in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania back in 2019.

Kapur, an associate professor of justice studies and the principal investigator of “Resentencing of Juvenile Lifers: The Philadelphia Experience,” began her research when the Philadelphia District Attorney (DA) Office started resentencing juvenile lifers under the new administration of District Attorney Larry Krasner in 2018. Kapur and Zottoli went into the project intending to understand how the Juvenile Life Re-sentencing Committee decided to resentence offers, the differences between previous and current DA administrations and the results of juvenile lifers re-integrating into society.

“Our initial interest was in plea-bargaining practices in the District Attorney’s Office,” Kapur said. “So we had gone down to Philly to propose a project on plea bargaining and given that my interest and my background is in adolescent development, we just started talking about the juvenile lifers issue with District Attorney Krasner and that’s how it began.”

Since both professors were able to meet with Krasner, they were able to compare the two administrations in greater detail and found certain differences in what was considered when resentencing juvenile lifers. While both administrations compared similar factors, the previous administration considered the age of the defendant at the time of the original offense as well as whether the original offense was planned or not. The Krasner administration differed in considering prior convictions and the juvenile nature of the crimes.

“It was an exciting opportunity to be able to study the process and procedures of the Philadelphia DA’s office and be able to look at a change over time between a more traditional administration and a so-called progressive administration,” Zottoli said.

Despite being able to meet with Krasner, Kapur and Zottoli spent the majority of their time looking over the case files of the juvenile lifers that were being resentenced or were previously resentenced under the former district attorney administration. Both professors found that out of the 459 juvenile lifers resentedenced, the average age at the time of the offense was 16 years old and about 90% of juvenile lifers participated in rehabilitative activities during incarceration.

Releasing juvenile lifers has stirred controversy amongst other states in terms of maintaining public safety. What might seem like a reasonable concern is countered by their positive, “The majority of them had reconnected with at least one family member or close contact and about 80% of them had secured housing for themselves.”

Zottoli spoke about what it is like for those who are released, “It was a bit of a culture shock for many of them,” Dr. Zottoli said. “You go into prison, the world has changed dramatically in terms of technology and in other ways.”

With Philadelphia successfully resentencing over 88% of its juvenile lifers, it calls into question the benefits of continued incarceration. Despite many states considering and practicing resentencing juveniles, they are not as up to speed as Philadelphia.

“A lot of states are looking at this and it is being talked about across the country,” Kapur said. “It is because it’s expensive, it costs a lot of money to incarcerate individuals. We have a mass incarceration problem and now we also have a mass incarceration problem with geriatric incarcerated persons.

“The movement is coming from this realization that it’s really expensive and that’s taxpayer money.”

Releasing juvenile lifers in Philadelphia will save around $9.5 million in correctional costs in the first decade, especially since most of them are considered elderly. Annual costs of incarceration for elderly people double that of a younger incarcerated person.

“I do think it’s possible that many states will come to understand that the benefits might outweigh the negatives of considering opportunities for parole for individuals who commit crimes as young people,” Zottoli said.

Both Kapur and Zottoli have a publication coming out soon which focuses more closely on the reintegration of these released juvenile lifers as well as a look at public perceptions of life without parole sentences for juveniles.

**AVERAGE AGE OF 459 JUVENILE LIFERS AT TIME OF OFFENSE:**

16 YEARS OLD
COME HELP US OUT

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Room 2035 School of Communication and Media in Upper Montclair, NJ 07043

Phone 973.655.5230
Fax 973.655.7804
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If you were a candle, what scent would you be?

By John LaRosa, Photo Editor &
Hannah Effinger, Production Assistant

“Champagne Toast from Bath and Body Works, it’s just my favorite.”
Luz Perez
Senior
English major

“Apple. I like apples.”
Silas Wu
Senior
Economics major

“Vanilla, it’s sweet, but calming.”
Elise Kohler
Senior
Music Therapy major
“Versace eros cologne scent with a hint of vanilla, just a hint.”

Mike Rodriguez
Freshman
Music Education major

“Lavender. It’s the only scent I can think of, and it’s the prettiest.”

Summer Thompson
Junior
Music Education major

“Linen, like dryer sheet scented.”

Gabriela Zamora
Junior
Communication and Media Arts major
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PUZZLES

Winter Olympics Edition

By Kayla Carlamere

Across
1. The winter sport, treated like a race, that combines cross-country skiing and rifle shooting.
2. This country has hosted the Winter Olympic Games more than any other country, with a total of four times.
5. This Olympic speed skater, now retired, is famous for being one of the American Winter athletes with the most medals, a grand total of six.
6. This country has earned more medals than any other from the Winter Olympic Games, collecting a total of 368 medals since the first Winter Olympics.
7. This place in France was home to the first Olympic Winter Games in 1924.

Down
1. The official mascot for the 2022 Winter Olympics is a cute cartoon panda in a spacesuit named __________.
3. This winter sport – involving sliding stones across ice toward a target – will be kicking off this year’s Winter Olympics on Feb. 4.
4. This city will be hosting the opening and closing ceremonies and all of the ice rink events for the 2022 Winter Olympics, becoming the first city to host both the summer and winter Olympic Games.

Word Search

Sudoku

Skiing
Ice Hockey
February
Athlete
Slope
Gold Medalist
Puck
Sporting Events
Bobleigh
Nordic

Gold Medalist
Puck
Sporting Events
Bobleigh
Nordic

Snowboard
Skating
Alpine
International

Skiing
Ice Hockey
February
Athlete
Slope
Gold Medalist
Puck
Sporting Events
Bobleigh
Nordic

Snowboard
Skating
Alpine
International

u h m g n i t a k s l w q x y d h p m u
m f y n h g i e l s b o b y e u s m p f
q g e i p j d h u z m m n e b i n a x x
t g i t a h l e t e n k l w o e t s
c t g i t a h l e t e n k l w o e t s
o c e k l u d n n j e s n e c g q w r l p
k h u s w w w e j q l u z o u o b n n o
k o g b c t n k c t k l h f m o x c r
v q n w p i n k q t p d r e c y a g k t
i p s l t c u n r e q u u i q l d d o n
e m a r f t u f s d e l w m g y i o b m g
v c q l v p l a v r p n o r d i c p j e
j x g d a l l u s i a p j y r e v
k q x q a i r o s p a u b d x m n k t e
l m g r s l v k r a r s w j y c b f i n
f b t t p x j u b s i f l u t x w c t
y c c y l e o g e n t n u y g g y a c s
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Snowboard
Skating
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International
Protect Your Students, Not Hate Speech

Montclair State University students were surprised with the return of radical self-professed Christian protestors in front of the Student Center. Nice surprises are birthday celebrations or a pizza party when you are eight years old, not men and women holding signs saying you are going to Hell.

The protest by the Key of David Christian Center caused quite the disruption. Members of the group yelled at students for hours trying to provoke a response, and the noise could be heard from the other side of campus.

Many of those students identify with groups that were included in the Key of David Christian Center’s list of people who are “doomed to Hell.” They called out Muslims, the LGBTQIA+ community, feminists, gamers, emos and many other completely arbitrary identities.

Some students found amusement in the signs’ ridiculous persecution of “manly boys” and “women MMA fighters.” Others were subjected to the same cruelty they have faced their entire lives.

Glady, most students laughed it off and retaliated by chanting “Krusty Krab is unfair” in mockery of the extremist group. The issue remains that these people were not only allowed on campus but were protected by campus police.

Where was the protection for Noor Alalwan, a freshman psychology major, who was pointed at and told “Muslims are going to Hell” by protester Pastor Aden Rusfeldt?

Students were subjected to hours of yelling by two male protestors calling women “whores” and saying they are “more likely to get an STD dates, harasses or threatens another person, even if words are used.”

Students of Montclair State cannot thrive in an environment where they feel unsafe and targeted by hatred.

It is understood everyone has the freedom of speech, and that technically hate speech is protected under the First Amendment, but students also have the right to feel safe and accepted on the campus they pay thousands of dollars to attend.

Public campus or not, hate speech and harassment can be illegal. If Montclair State really wanted to show their support for their students, they would take action.

The American Civil Liberties Union, a nonprofit organization founded “to defend and preserve the individual rights and liberties guaranteed to every person in this country by the Constitution and laws of the United States,” claims that “at the same time, freedom of speech does not permit punishing conduct that intimidate, harasses or threatens another person, even if words are used”.

The Key of David Christian Center’s vile words have the power to reinforce any hatred already brewing and encourage others to treat people inhumanely.

The Holocaust Center for Humanity provides lessons on the Pyramid of Hate. The pyramid begins with the at the base with biased attitudes, then escalates to biased actions and discrimination, and progresses to violence. After violence, genocide begins.

With that in mind, clearly, the key of David Christian Center should not be tolerated by the university any longer, and those protestors should face the repercussions of their actions.

Montclair State, this is a call to end the years of harassment students face on your campus and stand up to hate speech.

If you or a loved one was subjected to a hate crime, please look at the United States Department of Justice’s resources on how to report and prevent a hate crime.

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Campus Voices:
How did you feel about the protestors on campus? What should be done about them in the future?

By Hailey Mayewski

“Protect Your Students, Not Hate Speech.”

-They deliberately espoused this extremely hateful and disgusting propaganda to just annoy people. I mean the best course of action [for] us as a campus is just to ignore it. Like, if they’re going to go to a certain area to protest, we should have our own event there so that they can’t physically move in and then essentially just push them out of campus.

Rocco Julian
Mathematics
Freshman

“I think they’re really on the wrong campus. This is a liberal arts campus, and at least the people I’ve met, are majority very liberal. Everyone can do their own religion, and that’s fine. But forcing your opinions on someone else is not how it should be. I think that the campus has the right to kick them out because they’re being really offensive.”

Shayna Martins-Krasner
Television and Film
Junior

“I understand that freedom of speech is a thing, so they do have the right to speak their voice. That is what makes this country go ‘round. I am openly gay so I don’t necessarily agree with them, but I understand that everyone has their own opinions. It’s not like they just disagree with us, it’s that they wish to make us feel lesser than they are.”

Joshua Burd
Jurisprudence
Senior

“I feel like we should have more security around for them. Just be cause of the fact that when I walked past, I had only seen, like, one cop car and he’d seen how violent it got. So, I feel like we should just have more security around.”

Keiarah Miles
English
Freshman

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Spotify Should Silence Joe Rogan’s Misinformation

I f you watch the Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC) or love mindless conspiracy theories and white men commenting on racism they’ve never experienced, you probably know Joe Rogan.

Rogan is a comedian, UFC commentator, podcast host and second cousin to Gerard and Mikey Way of the famous band My Chemical Romance. That last fact is not as important, but if I am burdened with that knowledge, so are all of you.

In one of Rogan’s many controversies, he found himself stuck in the middle of an ultimatum from singer Neil Young. Young demanded Spotify either remove Rogan’s podcast, “The Joe Rogan Experience,” or remove Young’s music catalog. Spotify announced they would remove Young’s discography instead of Rogan’s podcast.

I believe Spotify refuses to remove Rogan’s misinformation filled podcast because he makes the streaming platform more money than Young, however, according to an article released by The Verge, Duster Jenkins, Spotify’s head of global communications and public relations, claims that a review by an internal team didn’t show sufficient grounds for removal of “The Joe Rogan Experience” from the platform.

Jenkins allegedly stated in the company Slack that Rogan’s podcast “didn’t meet the threshold for removal.” The Verge also contributed a leak of Spotify’s healthcare guidelines and what they prohibit on the platform. It said they do not allow messages such as “denying the existence of AIDS or COVID-19” or “suggesting that consuming bleach can cure various illnesses and diseases.”

Ashley Carman, the author of The Verge article, writes, “These guidelines seemingly allow podcasters to say the vaccines cause death — just not that they are designed to cause death.”

There seems to be a lot of protection for those who are causing chaotic revolts against science and enabling the spread of falsehoods around the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Jessica Malaty Rivera, an infectious disease epidemiologist and research fellow at Boston Children’s Hospital gave insight about Rogan’s antics, “People who don’t have the scientific or medical background to recognize the things he’s saying are not true and are unable to distinguish fact from fiction are going to believe what [Rogan’s podcast guest] is saying, and this is the biggest podcast in the world,” Rivera said. “And that’s terrifying.”

We as people need to recognize that the First Amendment should function to protect the truth, not justify harmful lies.

Rogan is a comedian, not a medical professional by any means, and is spewing misinformation without any credible evidence. He is causing hysteria and unrest as he defames actual doctors who are trying to save lives.

I stand for people’s freedom of speech and for those who want to speak their truth to the world. People need to speak freely to criticize oppressors, tyranny and the powers above.

However, I do not stand for the protection of liars, especially when that liar is using his enormous platform to discredit those in the medical field. Even within anti-vaxxer coalitions, this kind of rhetoric could result in fatalities.

Doug Kuzma, a 61-year old anti-vaxxer and right-wing podcaster caught COVID-19 at a rally in December. While he was sick, his Facebook posts reflected his staunch refusal to even get tested, seemingly out of fear of receiving medical care.

“There’s no way bro,” Kuzma said. “I’ll die at the house before I go to the hospital.”

He died on Jan. 3. As of now, Kuzma is amongst at least seven conservative high-profile personalities to have lost their lives after contracting COVID-19.

Rogan is using his enormous platform to contribute to an unhealthy environment where people who don’t know any better could put the lives of themselves and their loved ones at risk. Spotify, do the responsible thing and cut him off.

Avery Nixon, a freshman television and film major with a minor in creative writing, is in her first year as the assistant opinion editor for The Montclarion.
If You Stopped Caring About Politics, You Never Cared At All

In November 2020, the nation saw young adults and teenagers make their beliefs known for the world to hear. Now, Generation Z has gone quiet. If you know me personally, follow my social media or have heard me go on a loud tangent in the Student Center, you probably can tell I am extremely opinionated. I will argue with high school freshmen in my debate class or full-grown adults on Facebook, it does not matter.

With that being said, I cannot say the same for some of my peers who seem to have abandoned their political beliefs and now choose to not pay attention.

I understand their choice, to a degree. Politics can be frustrating, defeating and a battle to participate in. However, we don’t care about politics because it is convenient for us. We participate in politics because people’s lives depend on it.

Life is hard, ruthless and draining. That doesn’t mean we can give up on the people who need us.

I often engage in political conversations, and by that, I mean I talk for 20 minutes on end and the other person nods in agreement. However, I see very little passion from others my age. This doesn’t apply to every teenager, but it’s quite a lot more than it was during the last presidential election.

I believe people no longer felt like it was “trendy” to be politically active and post about social justice awareness. People who once had the chance to prove they care about something other than themselves have given up after caring went out of style.

One could argue that they no longer pay attention because President Joe Biden is in office and they believe he is going to fix all of our problems. However, we are seeing things like the Texas abortion ban eliminating women’s reproductive rights and healthcare still being inaccessible for everyone.

It has been a year of the Biden administration and we still have our rights, safety, health and lives being threatened. If people have stopped caring by now, they never cared at all.

Everyone wanted to jump on the train of activism and social justice, but if they remained true to what they said, they would’ve never leaped off. Maybe people pretended to care to save themselves from scrutiny online or they wanted to seem cool and edgy. Frankly, either way, it displeases me.

Why with a different old white man in charge means every issue of the past is immediately resolved is beyond me, but apparently, that’s what the general consensus is.

If people genuinely cared, their moral would not fade away at the first sign of progress. Progress is made by a continuation of victories that fix many problems, not the very first step.

You don’t take the parts out of the IKEA box and say you have a bed. You have to keep assembling it or you’re going to end up sleeping on a pile of rods and wood planks. Technically, it could be a bed, but it’s not a good one.

Let’s keep building that racecar bed so that we can have a soft and plushy place to sleep peacefully at night. A weird anomaly, but I think it works.

We still have a lot of work to do to fix America, especially right now. There’s been a rise of hate and prejudice not just in our country but in our own government, and we can’t let these people continue to be lawmakers.

Take action, stand up for your beliefs and find ways to make life in America a little less miserable.

If you want to make the world a better place, please consider spreading awareness on social media platforms, donating your money, voice or vote to causes like the Black Lives Matter movement or anti-Anasian violence awareness.
Stephen Breyer’s Retirement and the Importance of Fighting for the Judiciary

Supreme Court Justice Stephen Breyer announced his decision to retire from the court at the end of its 2021-2022 term, setting the path for President Joe Biden to appoint his replacement. Breyer made his decision during his 2020 presidential campaign to appoint the first African American woman to the Supreme Court. His nomination is due at the end of February.

Of the names that have been floated for the replacement, the most prominent is Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson, of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Washington D.C. Circuit. Jackson was confirmed to the Circuit Court last June with 53 senators in favor, including all Democrats, and Republicans Susan Collins, Lindsey Graham and Lisa Murkowski. Given this, it seems likely Jackson would be able to make it through a vote in the Senate, as she would only need 50 votes in favor, with Vice President Kamala Harris being able to cast a 51st tie-breaking vote. If appointed, Jackson would land solidly on the liberal wing of the court, as seen by rulings during her time as a judge of the U.S. District Court for Washington D.C.

In 2019, Jackson filed an injunction to halt the expansion of the Trump administration’s fast-track deportation policy, which would have allowed the federal government to deport any undocumented immigrant while bypassing immigration judges. However, Jackson, or whoever is eventually confirmed to the seat, will not shift the partisan balance of the court, as Breyer was one of three of the court’s liberal wing.

Breyer’s retirement and replacement is significant for its circumstance, signaling Democratic willingness to play hardball with the Supreme Court after nearly a decade of judiciary battles under the Obama and Trump administrations.

This modern fight for the judiciary first started during the Obama administration, when Republicans in the Senate stonewalled appointees to a vacant seat on the Court of Appeals. This led to the late Harry Reid, then the Democratic majority leader, to invoke the nuclear option once again, this time eliminating the filibuster for Supreme Court nominees.

The most recent fight over the Supreme Court came just prior to the 2020 election, when liberal Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg died, allowing Trump to appoint a conservative replacement to tilt the balance of power of the court to favor conservatives, 6-3. Now, after nearly 28 years on the court, Breyer is retiring after an extensive pressure campaign for him to step down.

Ginsburg faced a similar situation during Obama’s second term but ardently refused to retire. This refusal to recognize the partisan football over the court and retire led to the appointment of a stalwart conservative, Amy Coney Barrett.

Perhaps seeing Ginsburg be replaced by a justice with a judicial philosophy completely opposite hers, combined with the pressure campaign mounted at him, pushed Breyer toward a decision. Whatever the reason for his retirement, we should be grateful he recognized the court as something bigger than himself.

The concern with tradition and procedure held by liberal justices such as Ginsburg, and those who believed she was right not to retire, was and is completely misplaced.

When the conservative wing of the court is pushing to overturn Roe v. Wade, ending the federal right to an abortion, and its justices still signal opposition to Obergefell v. Hodges, which allowed for the nationwide right to same-sex marriage, there is no time to be concerned with precedent.

Republicans surely aren’t concerned with precedent, given they set a rule that vacant Supreme Court seats should be held open in presidential years, then proceeded to tear that rule down in 2020 when it benefited them.

This hypocrisy shows that conservatives would be willing to do whatever it takes to stack the judicial branch with judges favorable to them, and why shouldn’t they?

The Supreme Court, with its lifetime tenure and ability to strike down policy from the other branches of government, is quite clearly the most powerful political force in the country.

Breyer’s retirement, allowing Biden to place a liberal on the court that could serve for decades, shows that liberals are willing to play hardball with the Supreme Court as well, and it’s all for the better.

After all, Republicans set the field for this battle over the judiciary branch. It’s only fair that Democrats play by the same rules.

Want to be part of something greater? Write for feature! Fashion writer wanted
He turned around. “Brian?”

“From my professional perspective, a diagnosis of generalized depression seems adequate. We’ll run more tests to determine whether or not I think so, but I don’t remember. I was in and out of consciousness from the pain.”

"Brian," he said, "with the right effort, and a bit of help, anyone can heal from any harm. My years of psychiatric practice have taught me that one's mindset is always more important than one's physical circumstances."

Brie gripped the open gunshot wound on her shoulder.

She dug her knuckles into that horrible cavity, eyes white, face creased with pain.

"Please, I need a doctor."

"Well, you're in luck! I'm a doctor of psychiatry. Would you have a seat now?"

She hesitated, then shuffled towards the couch. The back window was covered by vertical blinds that clattered as she sat down. The setting sun rendered the whole room in a pattern of thin bars.

Dr. Michaels stopped typing and scooted his chair around to face Brie. The chair dragged against the floor, a screech, screech, screech for each small movement. He offered Brie a handshake.

Still gripping her shoulder, Brie swung her limp, injured arm, and flopped it into Dr. Michaels' hand. Michaels shook it vigorously. Brie shrieked in pain.

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Have a thought about on campus or off campus matters?
Write for Opinion!

Email: montclarionopinion@gmail.com

Room 2035, School of Communication and Media in Upper Montclair, NJ, 07043

Parking and Fees

Campus Activities
Multimedia Artist Jiwon Choi Comes to Montclair State’s Film Forum

Megan Lim
Entertainment Editor

With her projects already shared in places like Germany, Korea and France, multimedia artist Jiwon Choi is now set to bring her award-winning work to the Montclair State University Film Forum on Feb. 8 from 6:00 to 8:30 p.m. in the School of Communication and Media’s Presentation Hall.

A series of lectures and presentations by some of the most influential film and video professionals, the Film Forum allows anyone interested to hear guest speakers discuss their medium and the creative process that accompanies it. These events generate conversation about the political, societal or artistic themes within the creator’s work, which Choi’s pieces have an abundance of.

Choi has a particular interest in using the K-pop music genre to explore ideology. “Parallel,” a half-hour video in which an interview with Choi’s grandfather, who served in the Korean War, is contrasted with the rise of K-pop, received an honorable mention for Best Experimental Film. The story was brought alive through video art and the performative elements, sounds and visuals that exist within it. Choi feels through multimedia art, there is no limitation on the technical elements of art as opposed to the creativity behind it.

Choi was prompted to move to the United States at the young age of 15 because of struggles with the competitiveness of Korea’s education system and its focus on the technical elements of art as opposed to the creativity behind it.

She went on to attend the School of Visual Arts in New York City, where she studied fine arts and graduated in 2013, followed by earning an MFA in Photo, Video and Related Media in 2016.

According to Choi, her job as a videographer, video editor and producer is to create content for their social media. She has also worked with “Vogue Korea,” “ELLE Korea,” Coach and Bobbi Brown, as well as “Harper’s BAZAAR” to create a video editorial story for the K-pop boy band Stray Kids. Choi has a particular interest in utilizing this point of view, Choi now creates her own projects in addition to helping produce creative video assets for clients, whether they be editorial, commercial, musicians or artists. Just recently she worked as a videographer for Netflix Korea to create content for their social media.

“It is bold, creative and substantial, combining documentary and fiction. And, K-pop is in the air right now,” Choi said. “I hope every audience of mine will have their own experience and take as much as they receive from my works.”

Choi’s visit with the Film Forum is free and open to the public. All masked individuals are welcome to hear her speak and watch the screening of her videos, which Choi emphasized she is grateful for.

“My works are built in layers,” Choi said. “I want to acknowledge the potential of a conversation and change that K-pop could bring.”

One of Choi’s works that does exactly that is her graduate thesis, “Parallel,” a half-hour video in which an interview with Choi’s grandfather, who served in the Korean War, is contrasted with the rise of K-pop. “Parallel” introduces viewers to Korean history and culture as it explores how ideology prevails across generations, individuals, illusion and reality. It has won several awards, such as the International Young Filmmaker Award, a Red Carpet Image Award and an honorable mention for Best Experimental Film.

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Choi is a multimedia artist who combines documentary and fiction to explore the socio-cultural and political aspects of K-pop. Her works, such as “Parallel,” have won several awards and have been recognized for their bold and creative narratives. Choi’s visit with the Film Forum is free and open to the public, allowing anyone interested to hear her speak and watch the screening of her videos. Her works are built in layers, and she hopes to acknowledge the potential of a conversation and change that K-pop could bring.

“Parallel” introduces viewers to Korean history and culture as it explores how ideology prevails across generations, individuals, illusion and reality. It has won several awards, such as the International Young Filmmaker Award, a Red Carpet Image Award and an honorable mention for Best Experimental Film.

Choi’s passion for multimedia art has been recognized by professor Roberta Friedman, who was drawn to Choi’s work when selecting her to be a guest speaker for the forum. “I loved her work,” Friedman said.

Choi is interested in using the K-pop music genre to explore ideology. She has worked with various clients, including Coach and Bobbi Brown, and has also worked as a videographer for Netflix Korea. Choi has a particular interest in utilizing K-pop as an ideology itself and propaganda. As a fan and professional in the industry, she wants to acknowledge the potential of a conversation and change that K-pop could bring.

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From a young age, JC DeMaria has had a love for singing and theater. He is classically trained and considers the former a primary passion of his. DeMaria, the president on the E-Board of Montclair State University Players, is a third-year political science major with a minor in musical theater and pre-law.

When he arrived at Montclair State, he first joined the Players on campus, participating in their Montclair Improv League and Friends (M.I.L.F.) group, which he continues to act in to this day. He loves the group, as it allows him to express his humor.

“I think comedy is my biggest strength,” DeMaria said, citing Kristen Wiig and Julia Louis-Dreyfus as his biggest comedic inspirations. Since joining, he has been assistant director on “The Odd Couple (Female Version)” and directed the virtual production of “Clue (Stay-at-Home Edition).” He will also be assistant director of the Players’ upcoming cabaret, “ABBA in Concert.”

DeMaria also has great ambitions in his role as a political science major. Although he is a third-year student, he will be graduating a year early, with intentions of attending law school.

“I have been politically active throughout my entire life,” DeMaria said. “Whether that be with the March for Our Lives, which I was associated with heavily in high school, or working on voter outreach projects like I’ve been able to do in the past.”

DeMaria hopes to one day become chief of staff on Capitol Hill. Being president of Players, he is no stranger to leadership positions such as these. “I like overseeing people,” DeMaria said. “I enjoy these types of leadership positions.”

DeMaria has found that translating skills from his theater background into his other endeavors proves incredibly beneficial. “I’ve met many lawyers who say that one of the most important things for them in going to law school was the fact that they went to theater camp as a kid,” DeMaria said. “Most of the things we do in our lives are very performative.”

Other members of the campus community can attest to DeMaria’s character.

Julie Fleming, associate director of student involvement at the Center for Student Involvement and a former advisor to Players, praises DeMaria’s commitment. “As the former advisor, I have found him to be dedicated, persistent and eager to contribute to the improvement of circumstances,” Fleming said. “I am most impressed by his genuine care for the organization and by how much he wants to make it the best organization possible, not just for current members, but for future members as well.”

Junior theater studies major Maggie Aube, who serves as the secretary on the Players’ E-Board, says DeMaria knows how to handle a task and take on leadership. “[DeMaria] is one of the most hard-working people I’ve ever worked with,” Aube said. “He is extremely reliable and an excellent delegator as well. He knows how to give out work when it is needed, but he can also tackle the hard stuff like nothing. He bounces back so fast.”

This shows in how much time and effort DeMaria puts into Players. “I work anywhere between 20 to 30 hours a week on Players,” DeMaria said. “I love seeing people succeed, and having such a crucial leadership role has been so formative for me. I cannot wait to see what I can do with this in the future.”

You can follow JC DeMaria on Instagram: @jc.demaria, and the Montclair State University Players @msuplayers.
No holiday or birthday is necessary to put a spotlight on the charming Adonis that is actor Andrew Garfield. His existence has put a spotlight on the charming Adonis that is actor Andrew Garfield. His existence alone is enough reason to celebrate his kind, quirky aura, both on and off screen.

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‘New Girl’ Cast Members Reunite for Weekly Rewatch Podcast

Jenna Sundel
News Editor

“New Girl” alumni Zooey Deschanel, Lamorne Morris and Hannah Simone are reuniting to produce a weekly rewatch podcast called “Welcome to Our Show.”

The first two episodes were released on Jan. 24, and new episodes are released every Monday. “New Girl” ran for seven seasons from 2011 to 2018. The sitcom follows a group of hilarious and relatable friends, including Jess (Deschanel), Winston (Morris) and Cece (Simone), through a variety of zany adventures.

Fans of the show will be delighted to know Deschanel, Morris and Simone have remained friends throughout the years, and their chemistry comes across through their witty banter and heartfelt exchanges.

Each episode of the podcast begins with a light, upbeat theme song written and performed by Deschanel. Upon listening to it, fans will immediately be reminded of the show’s original theme song, which was also performed by Deschanel. The tune is nostalgic and sets the tone for the fun that lies ahead.

The style of the show is loosely structured, allowing the hosts plenty of space to see where the conversation takes them. It feels like you’re listening in on a conversation with your friends, which echoes the central message of friendship within “New Girl.”

The first episode of the podcast, “101: The Pilot,” features tales from the audition process, a look behind the scenes and insider secrets about the making of the pilot episode of the show. Listeners will learn why Morris was not in the pilot, the show Deschanel almost starred on before becoming a part of “New Girl” and how Simone managed to put her own unique spin on Cece’s character.

The end of the episode features a new take on the show’s fictional drinking game, “True American.” The game is known for having vague rules and is chock-full of American history references.

This week’s challenge was called “Barack and Michelle’s Romantic Comedy Date Night,” and the hosts tried to name as many rom-com movies as possible in honor of the pilot’s strong ties to “Dirty Dancing.” It was refreshing to see the cast play “True American” once again, and the theme was on-point.

Episode two of the podcast, “A Conversation with Director Jake Kasdan,” is the perfect complement to the cast’s perspective on the pilot of “New Girl.” The hosts interview Kasdan, who directed the first two episodes of the sitcom, to get a deeper look into the early production and development of the show.

Kasdan commented on the casting process, the renewed interest in the show during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and whether he would direct a reunion in the future. The interview showed how important the collaboration between cast and crew is, and how it all came together in this instance to make “New Girl” magical.

The third episode of the podcast, “102: Kryptonite,” was released on Jan. 31. Deschanel, Morris and Simone share some of their favorite moments and memories from the second episode of the series. Morris discusses his debut on the show, Simone argues why Cece was always wearing heels and Deschanel addresses the rumor that she was kept apart from one of her costars for having too much chemistry.

The hosts played “True American” once again in this episode. This week’s theme was “Choose Your Fighter,” and the hosts had to decide which superhero would win in a fight with no powers. While the game was fun and did fit the title of the second episode, it doesn’t really link to the historical theme typically associated with “True American.” However, it’s all worth it to hear Simone argue why she thinks the Care Bears could win in a fight.

Following a strong start, the third episode does not disappoint and may actually even exceed the first two quality-wise. The hosts seem to be reestablishing their natural chemistry and getting more comfortable with the podcasting medium as time goes on.

The three episodes give listeners an idea of what to expect from the podcast: a look back at the show’s iconic episodes, behind-the-scenes secrets and conversations with “New Girl” insiders.

While it is exciting to see three of the show’s original cast members reunite, one can’t help but notice the two who are missing. Hopefully, Jake Johnson, who played Nick, and Max Greenfield, who played Schmidt, will guest star on the podcast at some point, giving fans the full reunion they’ve been waiting for.

“Welcome to Our Show” can be found on Apple Podcasts and iHeart Radio.
New Gymnastics Club Continues To Make Major Leaps

The team has thrived in the midst of a pandemic

Lynise Olivacce
Assistant Photo Editor

Starting something new can be intimidating to some but at the peak of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, a new endeavor could be even harder to take on.

Hannah Goldhaber knew something was missing from her life. The junior exercise science major tried diving, cheerleading and other sports — but they didn’t satisfy her desire for taking on a new sport. Once the pandemic hit, she felt the urge to express herself even more, which led her to her first love — gymnastics.

It was the height of the pandemic and the beginning of the fall 2020 semester when Montclair State University’s gymnastics club was created.

“Once [COVID-19] hit, I needed to get something going and I didn’t want to leave gymnastics behind,” Goldhaber said. “So I wasn’t going to stop and I was going to work my butt off until I got this team started.”

Goldhaber, the president of the team, kicked started it by finding the current vice president, Katherine Margolin, a junior chemistry major, through social media and was amazed by her background and talent in the sport. Margolin was interested in joining the team and they have been a dynamic duo ever since.

The coed team started during the peak of the pandemic in September 2020. This deterred them from competing regularly and making a name for themselves. Despite the gymnastics team being one of the newest clubs on campus, the Red Hawk gymnasts worked exceptionally well.

The club recently competed in a virtual meet held by the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics Gymnastics Club (NAIGC). Margolin placed second on the vault and bars events as well as a third-place finish on the floor exercise. Goldhaber placed second on the floor exercise.

Goldhaber and Margolin emphasize the importance of inclusivity. The team welcomes everyone regardless of their skill level. Gymnasts like Curt Lorico, a junior computer science major, picked up on routines very well as a beginner. On his first day, he had made the right decision.

“Everyone has to start from somewhere,” Goldhaber said. “No one’s (going to) come in because we want to.”

The people were very welcoming and everyone helped me go along and they don’t rush you or expect you to be very advanced when you just join,” Lorico said. “They had me explore all the different types of events that you can do and I enjoy being on the rings and bars.”

Goldhaber encourages us to keep going.”

Everyone has grown so close over both years and I see so many friendships that were formed,” Goldhaber said. “So it’s almost like coming home to a family when you’re away from home.”

The team continues to compete in meets, but their devotion to gymnastics brought them to regionals in Pennsylvania and nationals in Wisconsin coming up this spring.

“It is very exciting,” Margolin said. “So right now we’re prepping for that and we’re trying to make sure everyone has their routine solid.”

Though the pandemic brought its burdens, the team showed consistency, resilience, bravery and used gymnastics to express themselves freely. Margolin says she sees this through floor exercises. She emphasizes that people’s personalities shine and each routine is curated differently for each gymnast.

“You have the most freedom to express yourself on the floor and just seeing myself and others come out of [our] comfort zone and really have fun with it makes me realize the whole reason why we’re here,” Margolin said.

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‘Play To May!’

Montclair State Softball Hopes For A Major Postseason Run

The Montclair State softball team finished with a 13-9 record last season. Ryan Nussbaum

Staff Writer

Last week, Montclair State University’s softball team opened up training camp as the team aims for yet another impressive season.

Montclair State had a strong regular season in spring 2021, finishing third in the New Jersey Athletic Conference (NJAC) with a record of 13-9. The team was led by powerful bats, with four players finishing with a batting average of over .300. The offense was supported by solid pitching as well.

That effort required an incredible amount of perseverance, as the team faced many game cancellations and postponements early on due to the ongoing coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. However, when the team was on the field, the Red Hawks more than impressed fans.

Despite a season of solid play, as well as a first-round bye, their postseason ambitions were cut short during the NJAC Softball Tournament, after being swept in two games by Stockton University in the quarterfinal round.

Fortunately for the Red Hawks, multiple impact players are returning in 2022.

Leading the pitching staff is sophomore Ali Cavallaro. In 2021, she finished with a 3.01 earned run average (ERA). The highlight of her season was a double-header against New Jersey City University (NJCU) in April, hitting a perfect five for five, propelling the Red Hawks to two wins. She finished with a .315 batting average, 17 hits and eight runs batted in (RBIs), which should provide consistent offense for the team.

Joining her is senior outfielder/pitcher Alyssa Borozan, who was one of the team’s most exciting players last season. She provided 20 hits, 19 RBIs, along with 12 runs. Borozan has proven to be an elusive baserunner as well, leading the team with six stolen bases.

Cavallaro said the team is focused on taking the next step this season.

“Everyone understands the pressure on us,” Cavallaro said. “But everyone has been super dedicated, and I know that we’re going to be a good team.”

The team is led by Anita Kubicka, who is entering her 32nd year as head coach. Her accomplishments at the helm speak for themselves, as she ranks within the top 10 among active coaches in Division III in both winning percentage and victories. She has taken Montclair State to 14 NCAA Tournament appearances, five national championship tournaments as well as several conference titles. Kubicka’s experience will again be a critical factor this season.

The most profound challenge of this season will be replacing NJAC batting champion Kayla Gallo and shortstop Amber Powers, who both graduated after last season. Both players earned First Team All-NJAC status in 2021. Kubicka said a major focus during training camp this year will be getting back to the fundamentals of softball.

“We’re a work in progress right now,” Kubicka said. “But I’m a firm believer in the fundamentals and having a good strong base to start the season. [We want to] strive each day to become better and better.”

Kubicka also emphasized that their rigorous off-season training program will be key to developing and improving the team’s athletes.

“We focus on athletic movements with our lifting program, our agility program and all of the drill work that we are doing,” Kubicka said. “[We want the players] to be the best that they can be in terms of defense, offense and pitching.”

With a solid core of both offensive and defensive players, along with strong leadership and a historic program, it should be no surprise if this team can pull together another strong performance. Kubicka said she expects Montclair State to put together another postseason run in 2022.

“We want to ‘play to May,’” Kubicka said. “It’s one step at a time, and there is a lot of progression in this sport, but ‘play to May’ is always our mantra.”

Montclair State will take the field for the first time on March 3 at the Fastpitch Dreams Spring Classic in North Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, before their home opener on March 17.
“I was always an Aaron Rodgers guy, but the older I got, the more I started to appreciate [Tom Brady’s] greatness. He’s the definition of what a winner really is.”

#3 Makai Mickens - Sophomore Running Back

“His impact on me made me never want to be satisfied with where I am. Although he won seven Super Bowls, he always wanted more, to be the best [player] he could be.”

#24 Robert Sutton - Sophomore Defensive Back

“I grew up watching him and he was my favorite player in the league. It is sad to see him retire cause I’ve never watched an NFL game without him being an [active player].”

#0 Mike Ramos - Senior Defensive Back
Baseball Team Looks To Reclaim Championship Success In 2022

After NJAC Tournament appearance in 2021, Red Hawks hope for more success

For the Red Hawk baseball team, the 2022 season marks a year with high ambitions and plenty to prove.

Head coach Dave Lorber has plenty of reasons to be confident this season with strong leadership from two of their star players: senior first baseman Peter Consentino and junior pitcher Patrick Cuccurullo, who hope to bring a New Jersey Athletic Conference (NJAC) title back to Red Hawk country for the first time since 2001.

Though individual success is great, it’s not a priority for this upcoming baseball team. Lorber’s baseball portfolio is impressive: as a player at Central Connecticut State University, he was part of their Division III World Series run in 2005. As a recruiter at George Washington University, he coached nine soon-to-be professional athletes.

With all his past triumphs, Lorber indicates how bringing a championship to Montclair State University would be at the top of his resume.

“It’s not just important for me, it’s for our alumni and everyone who has been involved in the program,” Lorber said. “[This is] to get back to the pinnacle of Division III baseball, to winning championships in the NJAC and competing in the regionals.”

Lorber emphasizes that to achieve those goals, a tradition has to be reestablished for Montclair State’s baseball team. In the coronavirus (COVID-19) shortened season in 2021, the Red Hawks finished 20-10.

After one of their best seasons in recent memory, Lorber has all the confidence in his players to reach their full potential after last season’s disappointing ending in the NJAC quarterfinals against Kean University.

During game three of the NJAC quarterfinals, at the top of the seventh inning, Kean ran away with the game, scoring eight of their 14 points while only giving up one point to Montclair State. This defeat however had no reason to faze the third-year head coach as it was the first time in six years that the team had been to the NJAC tournament.

“We didn’t have a player in that dugout that had experienced NJAC championship baseball,” Lorber said. “I give credit to our players for putting themselves in a game three, win or go home situation.”

Kean returns to Yogi Berra Stadium on April 28 in a game that may be pivotal in terms of how the season goes for Montclair State. Although every fan has that date circled on their calendars, Lorber and his group want to handle business with discipline for their first game on Feb. 19 against Swarthmore College.

Since it’s the start of the new season, expect the Red Hawks’ best player Consentino to make his impact as soon as he’s on the field. He led Montclair State in nearly every batting statistic last season, including a .426 batting average, 49 hits, 10 home runs and 32 runs batted in (RBIs) in 2020.

Consentino looks to make Montclair State history this season, as he can become No. 1 all-time in career batting average, sitting at a .416 batting average, which is only behind Gary Banta (0.419, 1975) and tied with Joe Giacomazzi (0.416, 2003). The senior infielder gives all the props to his coaches for developing his phenomenal batting style.

“It’s a nice honor to have, and thinking about it is awesome,” Consentino said. “But, I have to attribute all that to coach Lorber and coach Pat Knight. Without them, that [batting average] isn’t possible.”

History-making was cut short last season, as Consentino would have entered Montclair State’s top five all-time batting average for an individual season behind Ralph Yezza (1994) by .001%.

Though he didn’t come away with that record, Consentino’s exhilarating ball skills named him to First Team All-NJAC last season with several other selections for the region. Though he acknowledges his success on the field claims these awards, Consentino is thrilled to have his recognition be shared with his teammates and the future of this program for recruiters.

One of those teammates who looks to be part of that journey is Cuccurullo. After an electrifying season in which he led the team with 43 strikeouts, Cuccurullo aims to solidify himself as the starting pitcher the Red Hawks can rely on.

“I think I’ve proven myself last season, and that the guys on the team put [their] trust in me,” Cuccurullo says. “The better I do, the more the team succeeds.”

The Montclair State baseball team is approaching this season with the heart and dignity to win a championship. No amount of in-season accomplishments or rivalries can distract this team from reaching its goal, given the program’s rich tradition and desire to reach the pinnacle of Division III once again.
Climbing the Ranks in the UFC

Ryan White
Staff Writer

The Ultimate Fighting Championship’s (UFC) flyweight division has a new face to worry about as Erin Blanchfield has turned some heads in the Mixed Martial Arts (MMA) scene.

The 22-year-old, who is originally from Elmwood Park, New Jersey, has a black belt in Brazilian jujitsu. Blanchfield recently attended Montclair State University, but has since then stepped away from the classroom to shift her focus onto her mixed martial arts career.

“I enjoyed my time at [Montclair State], but I decided to focus more on my fighting career and moving up in the ranks in UFC,” Blanchfield said.

With an 8-1 (2-0 UFC) record, Blanchfield has quickly made an impact in her respective division after two dominant victories in her early UFC career.

Blanchfield was able to get back into the octagon this past December against Maverick, who is also viewed as a young star, at UFC 269.

Once again, Blanchfield shined under the bright lights. She showed off her elite wrestling as she set a new take-down record in the flyweight division with eight. It was clear early on that her grappling skills overmatched Maverick. Blanchfield dragged the talented Maverick around and mauled her for much of the fight.

Blanchfield described what it felt like to win at a prestigious event like UFC 269.

“[With] every fight I go into, I kind of expect to win,” Blanchfield said. “So, once I do, it’s not that big of a surprise. I feel like after every fight, win or lose, I want to cry because I know how much it means for my future. But honestly, it was a good feeling.”

Many big names involved with the sport recognized Blanchfield’s performance, including UFC commentator, famous comedian and podcaster, Joe Rogan.

“She’s dangerous everywhere,” Rogan said. “With [Blanchfield’s] wrestling and jujitsu, Augie Matias believes Blanchfield is ready for a step up in competition.

“I’ve been watching the top 15 fighters and they are striking heavy – I think they will all have a hard time with [Blanchfield’s] wrestling and jujitsu,” Matias said. “[Blanchfield’s] striking can pretty much keep up with them as well. I really think she can take on anybody, including Valentina [Shevchenko].”

Shevchenko, the current UFC flyweight champion, has ruled the flyweight division as of late. However, many believe that it is only a matter of time before the younger generation starts to catch up.

Blanchfield talked about what sets her apart from the rest of the flyweight division, including Shevchenko.

“It’s a weird answer, but I feel like I just move better than some of the other girls,” Blanchfield said. “When I watch them fight, they kind of look stiff and awkward, and their game doesn’t flow well. I feel like when I fight, I just know how to transition better than so many of them.”

With now two impressive wins in the UFC, Blanchfield is turning her attention toward the rankings extremely confidently.

“I’m very confident in my abilities, especially against the top 15,” Blanchfield said. “I hope my next fight is against someone that’s between 10 and 15. I feel like most of them won’t be able to deal with my style.”

Blanchfield hopes to get back into the octagon by April, and by the looks of it, she’s on her way to soaring to greatness. Just like the Red Hawk she once was.