3-17-2022

The Montclarion March 17, 2022

The Montclarion

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.montclair.edu/montclarion

Recommended Citation
https://digitalcommons.montclair.edu/montclarion/1560

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the Student Newspapers at Montclair State University Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Montclarion by an authorized administrator of Montclair State University Digital Commons. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@montclair.edu.
On March 1, President Joe Biden delivered his first State of the Union address in a joint session of Congress. His speech was impassioned and, for many, provided desperately needed reassurance in a time of intense turmoil.

The president’s yearly address serves as a nationwide update on how the country is faring on multiple fronts. This makes it a perfect opportunity to check in on how much progress the president has made on fulfilling their campaign promises.

According to PolitiFact’s Biden Promise Tracker, after a little over a year in office, Biden has kept 17% of the promises he made during his campaign. The most recent one of these was the nomination of a Black woman to the U.S. Supreme Court. Ketanji Brown Jackson was nominated by Biden to succeed retired Justice Stephen Breyer and will likely serve as a liberal Justice. While it is too early in Biden’s presidency to confirm how many campaign pledges he has broken, PolitiFact also reports 24% of them have stalled. Unfortunately, many of these stalled plans are pertinent to college students.

One of the most promising and important pledges Biden made to the country was to eliminate all student debt in the world could do. Instead, it was deemed an expensive roadblock and was stripped from the Build Back Better plan, the revised version of the legislation.

Yet another provision for tuition-free public universities, as well as private historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) and minority-serving institutions (MSIs) for families making less than $125,000 annually, didn’t even make it into the American Families Plan. This is disheartening, given how the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has made affording college even harder for millions of students and families. With higher education almost completely inaccessible to so many people, relieving that burden should have been a priority for the Biden administration.

To be clear, Biden came into office at one of the most stressful times in recent history, and he hasn’t gotten much of a break since. If the financial and emotional destruction left in the wake of COVID-19 wasn’t enough, the recent attacks on Ukraine by Russian President Vladimir Putin rocked the world just over a year into Biden’s presidency.

President Biden’s poignant opening remarks on the plight of the Ukrainian people were met with thunderous applause. It was invigorating to hear him rebuke Putin and allude to the heavy economic sanctions placed on Russia. But it’s hard to determine how much of the positive response was genuine versus how much stemmed from hearing a State of the Union address that didn’t come from Donald Trump’s mouth. And as nice as it was to have a much-needed moment of unity and support on behalf of Ukraine, Biden still needs to be held accountable for what he has yet to do. He knew what he was getting into when he ran for office, and he made promises to young Americans that are too important to break.

At the beginning of Biden’s presidency, people were diligent in reminding their peers to keep the new leader on track through petitions, protests and letters to their representatives. This needs to continue throughout Biden’s stay in office if any real change is going to be made.

With a little less than three years to go, Biden still has time to keep the promises he made to the next generation of Americans. After all, the fate of this nation rests in their hands.
The Montclarion is a publication of Montelican Publishing, Inc., published weekly, except during the 2020 fall and 2021 spring semesters, examinations, summer and winter sessions. The Montclarion is funded by student fees distributed by Montclair State University and incoming advertising revenue. The views expressed in the Opinion section, with the exception of the Main Editorial, do not necessarily reflect the views of The Montclarion.

The Montclarion has a commitment to accuracy and clarity and will print corrections or clarifications if information is found to be incorrect. To report an error of fact or a Letter to the Editor, email the Editor-in-Chief at montclarionchief@gmail.com.

Executive Board
Editor-in-Chief
Sam Nungesser
montclarionchief@gmail.com
Managing Editor
Emma Caughlan
montclarionmanaging@gmail.com
Business Manager
Cam Wade
montclarionbusinessmanager@gmail.com

Editorial Board
News
Jenna Sundel
montclarionnews@gmail.com
Feature
Sam Bailey
montclarionfeature@gmail.com
Opinion
Maddye Belov-Boxer
montclarionopinion@gmail.com
Entertainment
Megan Lim
montclarionentertainment@gmail.com
Sports
Corey Annan
montclarionsports@gmail.com
Photography
John LaRosa
montclarionphotography@gmail.com

Social Media Manager
Rose Kershner
montclarionsocialmedia@gmail.com
Chief Copy Editors
Nathaly Martinez
montclarioncopy@gmail.com
Ariel Rogg
Web Editor
Michael Banovic
montclarionweb@gmail.com
Video Editor
Hailey Mayewski
montclarionvideo@gmail.com
Production
Ian Long
montclarionproduction@gmail.com

Assistant
News
Jennifer Portorreal
Carley Campbell
Erin Lawler
Feature
Sal DiMaggio
Opinion
Avery Nixon
Darian Mozo
Entertainment
Sekhena Sembenu

Sports
Matt Orth
Photography
Lynise Olivacce
Julian Rigg
Production
Hannah Effinger
Graphic Design Intern
Crystal Durham

Faculty Advisor
Tara George

Ad Sales Manager
Caroline Marinari
montclarionadsales@gmail.com

Faculty

Lauren Bentivegna
Stephanie Cadet
Aidan Callari
Sophia Caparros
Vanessa Diaz
Terry Dickerson
Crystal Durham
Jonathan Edmond
Patrina Geiger
Matt Gomez

Adam Kaunfer
Beatrice Kimata
Victor Muñiz
Luis Nietro Jr.
Alex Pavljuk
Sofía Acevedo Valencia
David Venezia
Kelly Weckstein
Ryan White

Red Hawk Rap Sheet
Monday, March 7
Assault: Police Headquarters received a call from the Clifton Police Department, advising that an MSU student had reported an incident of sexual assault while on campus. This incident is under further investigation.

Sunday, March 13
Harassment: A student reported an incident of cyber harassment. This case is under investigation.

Anyone who has information regarding these incidents is urged to call the police station at 1-718-8477.

Did You Know?

“Every spring, young shrimp in the Mediterranean Sea turn from male to female... due to an abundance of a certain type of microalgae.”

Sourced from Smithsonian Magazine

Check out our Newsletter!
Parking Services is giving students, faculty and staff the opportunity to pay for their parking citations by donating to the Red Hawk Pantry.

The Inaugural Spring Parking Citation Food Drive started on March 1 and will continue through March 25. Each unopened can, non-perishable item, dry good or necessity item is worth $10 toward an open citation. For more information on what to donate, visit the university website.

Parking Services will be collecting donations at the Parking Services Office, located on the first level of the Red Hawk Deck, Monday through Friday from 12-4 p.m.

Only one citation can be dismissed through donations and some citations are ineligible for this program, including tampering with university equipment, shared permit or boot violation, parked in a fire lane or persons with disabilities space violation and parking in reserved space, grass or sidewalk.

Parking Services has recently come under fire after The Montclarion reported that Montclair State made over $1 million in parking tickets over the past three years. However, Ben Omuya, director of parking services, said the drive was not in response to the recent controversy.

“We had the plans to introduce the food drive every semester prior to this semester,” Omuya said.

Omuya also explained why Parking Services issues citations.

“Allowing vehicles to illegally park inconveniences the majority of the legitimate users and in some cases, might impede vehicles such as fire trucks and ambulances from accessing specific areas in case of an emergency,” Omuya said.

Briana Ampadu, a senior public health major, shared her support for the food drive.

“I think it’s a good idea,” Ampadu said.

“It’s helping the food pantry.”

Nick Vecchione, a senior English major, said the food drive is a good alternative to paying for parking citations.

“The canned goods [drive] sounds like, maybe not permanent, but a nice temporary solution to this problem,” Vecchione said.

While Vecchione supports the food drive, he also voiced concerns about Parking Services policies.

“If they want to stop handing out so many parking tickets, they should first [make] more parking spaces itself because CarPare Diem is hell,” Vecchione said. “They should also make the parking [permits] themselves more affordable.”
Back in February, the Montclair State University community celebrated Black History Month along with the rest of the country. One Montclair State student, however, wanted to take the celebration one step further by sharing the Black History festivities of Montclair State with the youth of his community.

Senior political science major Jordan Stewart planned and executed a Black History Month assembly for the students of his old school, David Brearley Middle and High School (DBHS) in Kenilworth, New Jersey on Feb. 24. At his time in DBHS, Stewart felt there was a lack of representation for the small but prevalent community of people of color attending school. Stewart wanted to change that.

“I've always tried to be who I needed when I was younger and when I was at DBHS, I needed to see representation,” Stewart said. “I needed to see people that looked like me, so that way I could see myself in them. So after graduating in 2018, I grew into who I was as a Black man, and talking to [Dr. Janice Marsili], we knew it was our responsibility to provide that inspiration to the students.”

Marsili, Stewart’s former teacher at DBHS and a Montclair State alumna, aided Stewart in setting up the assembly and she is thrilled with the outcome.

“This was a monumental achievement on the part of [Stewart], who helped us organize the entire event,” Marsili said. “It was also noteworthy because nothing like this has ever taken place in Kenilworth. [Those involved] provided much-needed visibility to our students of color and broadened the awareness of our entire school community.”

The assembly consisted of presentations from student representatives from several Montclair State student organizations like The Brotherhood La Hermandad and the Montclair State chapter of the NAACP, as well performances from the Montclair State Voices of Unity Choir and Complexions Dance Troupe. There was even a saxophone solo performance.

Following the assembly was a reception for the DBHS students to ask a few of the Montclair State students some questions, which eventually led to a discussion between both parties.

DBHS is a predominantly white school, according to Marsili. “Several of our staff members asked me if the program presented to us by the students and alumni of Montclair State University was something available to all New Jersey school districts,” Marsili said. “I told them it was not, but that I certainly could see that as a possibility. As a proud alumnus, I would love to see the talent and insights of our Montclair State students used to inspire as many New Jersey students as possible.”

Stewart was just proud to spread awareness of his heritage and to celebrate Black History Month in such a colossal way.

“There is no history without Black history,” Stewart said. “Sometimes when we hear the word history, we think old and ancient, and we forget that history can be made every single day. I reminded everyone when we arrived on the bus that this is the first-ever Black History Month assembly and that we are in fact making history.”
Montclair State University sent out an email to students on March 9 informing them that the mask mandate will remain in effect on campus until further notice, despite Gov. Phil Murphy lifting the statewide school mask mandate two days prior.

Other colleges and universities across the state of New Jersey, including The College of New Jersey, Seton Hall University, Rider University, Princeton University, Rowan University and several other schools, have already lifted their mask mandate for students, regardless of their vaccination status.

During the week of March 3, Montclair State recorded eight new coronavirus (COVID-19) cases, down from its early January peak of 168, when the omicron variant was rampant.

The university announced that they are exploring a variety of options and recommendations and if there are any changes to the mask mandate, they will inform the community later in March.

Students shared a variety of perspectives about how they would feel if the mandate was lifted.

Kelsey Nyman, a junior computer science major, said enough is enough and Montclair State should lift the mandate.

"Even though we have gotten [used] to the idea of wearing masks everywhere we go, [that] doesn't mean we don't miss that face-to-face connection with our peers," Nyman said.

Nyman said students are not getting the same college experience they deserve while the mask mandate is in place. She feels breaking this barrier could create a whole different academic and social experience at the university.

"Students have missed out on a lot during these tough times, from not being able to attend classes in person to not being able to properly hear the professor in classrooms," Nyman said.

Courtney Hardy, a junior business administration major with a concentration in sports, events and tourism marketing, said she feels comfortable with the mandate being lifted and doesn't understand why it hasn't been lifted already.

"The rest of New Jersey raised the mandate so why do we still have to wear them?" Hardy said.

Hardy understands the concern and need for the masks, but feels the masks should be an option rather than it being mandatory.

"I understand that some people may not feel comfortable with the lifting, but I believe at this point and where we stand in the pandemic [it] should be a personal preference," Hardy said.

On the other hand, Emmit Arlin, a sophomore English major, said he likes the idea of lifting the mandate, but because of the new variant, he thinks the mandate should remain in effect for now.

"If the mask mandate was lifted, it would be convenient," Arlin said. "However, with the new variant and many more issues, it is a bit concerning at the same time."

Arlin said he is also concerned for himself and his peers' health.

"While it would be nice for the mask mandate to be lifted, I still worry for the health and safety of my fellow students here at [Montclair State],' Arlin said.

Andrew Mees, the university spokesperson, did not have any additional updates to share with The Montclarion.
When beginning your journey as a student at Montclair State University, you can face many challenges. Montclair State is known for its campus architecture and beautiful skylines but no one tells you about the ever-changing weather conditions.

One morning you can find yourself traveling through the snow to class and the next day the sun comes out like nothing ever happened. Many forget that the campus is built on top of a mountain, causing all weather conditions to hit 10 times worse. This causes many students to be perplexed by the idea of what to wear to class.

In 2022, many individuals want to stay on top of fashion trends and keep their style fresh. Still, the question remains: How can students dress for Montclair State’s crazy weather conditions?

Many are still trying to find ways that were suited best for them. While dormers have the luxury to go back and change their clothes if the weather doesn’t suit their look for the day, commuters are somewhat stuck.

Mike Miller, a commuter majoring in physical education, laughed because he can attest to that “stuck” feeling. “Honestly, [the weather is] a toss-up,” Miller said. “[I have to] have an extra shirt with me [and I have] a big puffer jacket in my car and [I] just go from there honestly.”

When first looking at Miller’s outfit, his Muhammad Ali sweatshirt immediately stands out. His pairing of the infamous cargo pants and his red Philadelphia Phillies hat matched perfectly with his Air Jordan 1’s. His outfit gave an old-school feel as he carried himself with confidence.

Miller said he also loves styling his outfits for his music taste. “I love 90s and 2000s rock music and going thrifting,” Miller said. “Eminem, Tupac and Biggie. Seeing their style inspired me to dress like them.”

Miller isn’t the only one who loves using his inspiration heavily in his style. Narendra Singh, a sophomore television and digital media major, is inspired by fashion icons who have an obvious impact on his style and how he carries himself.

“The majority of this outfit is thrashed. A lot of neutral tones,” Singh said. “This guy I follow on Instagram is a fashion model in Paris and pretty much all his outfits are neutral tones. I try to go for the London and Paris look or the City of Manhattan look.”

On this particular day, the weather on campus was bearable without a coat. But, it was interesting to see how students take on some of the coldest temperatures at Montclair State.

Davin Budich, a sophomore psychology major, is a fan of layers. “At this point, I have to layer every outfit I wear,” Budich said. “When it gets more towards spring I can just wear a jacket, but [layering is] what I go for these days.”

Budich’s style seemed a little too familiar. After I pointed out his Tyler, The Creator varsity jacket, he got excited. “90% of my outfits are inspired by Tyler, The Creator,” Budich said. “This is the jacket from his brand and he is a huge style inspiration.”

Sara Sines, a junior dance major, has found different techniques for taking on the weather conditions.

“Lots of layers honestly, like hoodies and coats, since it’s so cold.” Sines said.

In 2022, many individuals want to stay on top of fashion trends and keep their style fresh. While dealing with these weather conditions may be a challenge, it only helps students find more ways to stay stylish under such fickle circum-
The Brotherhood Empowers Men of Color

“We bring everybody together,” Foster said. “We unite and we have living-room conversations, and we just talk about the issues that affect us in society.”

One important issue that is discussed is mental health. “Although there weren’t a lot of people there, the people who were there shared stories about things they go through that they don’t open up about,” Stewart said. “And that was a good time to see what that safe space is all about for men of color, [since] we feel like we can’t share those things.”

Jeronimo Valcarcel, an Educational Opportunity Fund (EOF) counselor and the faculty advisor to The Brotherhood, said he sees the impact the group is making in the Black and Latino male communities. “There’s this narrative that Black and Latino men are unprofessional just in our natural ways, in a sense,” Valcarcel said. “Whether it’s with our style, the way we dress [or] the way we present ourselves. So, The Brotherhood is an organization that takes that narrative and tries to show that as Black and Latino men, we are professional.”

The Brotherhood is planning to empower men of color off campus as well. They, along with other groups on campus, spoke at Stewart’s old high school during Black History Month. “The Brotherhood [came], The Voices of Unity [were singing] and the president of the [Montclair State] NAACP, Kevin Bernard, [was there as well],” Stewart said. “We [had] a good time and put on a show for the students that basically encouraged them and educated them.”

Valcarcel said he is impressed with how the group is achieving its goals. “They speak about topics that are really important, like current events [and] history,” Valcarcel said. “And they’re educating the Black and Latino men on this campus and the students on this campus. To be honest, every time I go to one of their meetings, they’re having a very intellectual, insightful conversation.”

Being a part of The Brotherhood has made Foster recognize how lucky he is to be able to break cultural stereotypes and rise above them. “I remember when I was in middle school and I needed somebody to help push me on and give me advice,” Foster said. “[Now], we’re in these positions of leadership. However far we come, I’m always willing to look back on where I came from and help somebody.”

Stewart had similar sentiments. “It’s all about building our community, our brothers and the connections that we make in networking,” Stewart said. “The more and more we do that, [the more] I can definitely see [The Brotherhood] extending outside of Montclair State University.”

You can follow The Brotherhood on Instagram at @msubrotherhood, and go to their general body meetings on Wednesdays at 5:30 p.m. in the Red Hawk Nest in the Student Center to learn more and get involved.

Tommy Foster, president of The Brotherhood, leads the club in uplifting men of color.

Sal DiMaggio
Assistant Feature Editor

“I never forget where I came from; I’m always willing to help somebody. So wherever I end up when I graduate, I’m going to come back to this same organization that I’m in right now in college and I’m going to help that person get to where they have to be.”

That statement by Tommy Foster, a junior television and digital media major, emphasizes what it means to be part of The Brotherhood.

The Brotherhood, also known as La Hermandad, is a student-run organization on campus led by Foster, the club’s president, and senior political science and Spanish major Jordan Stewart, the club’s vice president. The Brotherhood trains their members to be educated about social topics that affect people of color and to also carry themselves with a high degree of professionalism.

“The Brotherhood is about community building with one another, educating one another [and] empowering one another,” Stewart said. “[It’s also about] just encouraging more Black and Hispanic leaders on campus.”

To accomplish their goals, one of The Brotherhood’s flagship initiatives is Necktie Tuesdays, where members meet in their most professional clothing and often bring in someone high up in their respective industry to speak to the group.

“We dress up in our ‘Sunday best’ to get rid of the stigma that Black and Hispanic males have of not being professional,” Stewart said.

That stigma is especially important to overcome, as only 9.8% of total employed Black or African Americans are in management, professional and related occupations, as are 10.4% of total employed Hispanics in America as of 2021, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. The Brotherhood aims to increase diversity in those high-up positions by preparing its members to score interviews early on and stand out as job applicants.

In addition to the Necktie Tuesdays, The Brotherhood also empowers its members through their general body meetings.

Jeronimo Valcarcel, an Educational Opportunity Fund (EOF) counselor and the faculty advisor to The Brotherhood, said he sees the impact the group is making in the Black and Latino male communities. “There’s this narrative that Black and Latino men are unprofessional just in our natural ways, in a sense,” Valcarcel said. “Whether it’s with our style, the way we dress [or] the way we present ourselves. So, The Brotherhood is an organization that takes that narrative and tries to show that as Black and Latino men, we are professional.”

The Brotherhood is planning to empower men of color off campus as well. They, along with other groups on campus, spoke at Stewart’s old high school during Black History Month. “The Brotherhood [came], The Voices of Unity [were singing] and the president of the [Montclair State] NAACP, Kevin Bernard, [was there as well],” Stewart said. “We [had] a good time and put on a show for the students that basically encouraged them and educated them.”

Valcarcel said he is impressed with how the group is achieving its goals. “They speak about topics that are really important, like current events [and] history,” Valcarcel said. “And they’re educating the Black and Latino men on this campus and the students on this campus. To be honest, every time I go to one of their meetings, they’re having a very intellectual, insightful conversation.”

Being a part of The Brotherhood has made Foster recognize how lucky he is to be able to break cultural stereotypes and rise above them. “I remember when I was in middle school and I needed somebody to help push me on and give me advice,” Foster said. “[Now], we’re in these positions of leadership. However far we come, I’m always willing to look back on where I came from and help somebody.”

Stewart had similar sentiments. “It’s all about building our community, our brothers and the connections that we make in networking,” Stewart said. “The more and more we do that, [the more] I can definitely see [The Brotherhood] extending outside of Montclair State University.”

You can follow The Brotherhood on Instagram at @msubrotherhood, and go to their general body meetings on Wednesdays at 5:30 p.m. in the Red Hawk Nest in the Student Center to learn more and get involved.
Book Review: ‘Be a Work in Progress’

John Cena’s first illustrated book was published for new readers and fans alike last April. Cena comes from an industry filled with dedication and hard work. He is the face of the World Wrestling Entertainment (WWE) and he is filled with power to wow the masses.

Cena’s book “Be a Work in Progress” was created with illustrator Valeria Petrone and the combination between the two is shown greatly throughout the book. Cena’s words and thoughts are displayed perfectly and the illustrations by Petrone fulfill a visual representation to its readers as well. What I enjoyed most about the book has to be the seamless-ness of how the words and illustrations are blended so well.

The way Cena knows how to cater to not just his fans but also newcomers is also great to see. Cena would like to tell a younger version of himself. He shows that success comes in many different forms, it just depends on how you look at it.

There are some days that I deal with a sense of shortfall in terms of motivation, and for others who want the motivation and confidence in their abilities to do it, too,” Thompson said.

Thompson gets the majority of his materials from tapestry blankets found in local thrift stores, such as Udelco, located in Hawthorne, New Jersey. A close friend of Thompson, Jillian Patino, a sophomore exercise science major, talked about how this tied into Thompson’s creative process.

“Thompson’s creativity is something that stuck out to Miriam Loubia Pierre, a sophomore exercise science major, who models for Lee’s bags. “[Thompson] is one who thinks and creates outside of what many individuals would call ‘the norm,” Pierre said. “I think each of the bags displays their own form of character and individuality—from the brightness of the color to the [shape of it].”

One of Thompson’s tote bags is one of his most recent works and is also a sneak peek into what is to come. The bag is reversible with two opposing textures, one of the sides being completely covered in pink fur. Thompson strives to make his tote bags not only an accessory but a statement—a piece of art that complements the outfit.

Another good friend and a model for Lee’s bags, Jezz Venida, spoke on what she liked about the design of Thompson’s bags. “One thing I really appreciate is the availability of several patterns, silhouettes and sizes ranging from big to small, to essentially cater to each and everyone’s functionalities,” Venida said.

Before starting his first collection, Thompson remembers talking to his friends and church family, who were extremely supportive the entire way through. Patino was one of those supporters.

“Creating clothing, creating accessories, modeling and the way he grows his faith in God—I’m always so proud of him and grateful to have him in my life,” Patino said.

Thompson has shown massive dedication ever since he started working on this collection at the beginning of November. His passion grew so large for fashion designing that there would be days when he worked on his tote bags until 4 a.m.

“I put so much time into this … it’s crazy,” Thompson said. “It’s a blessing to see.”
#FOCUS
DISRUPTION

WANT TO BE PART OF OUR SPECIAL #FOCUSDISRUPTION EDITION OF THE MONTCLARION?

PITCH AN IDEA TO OUR SECTION EDITORS ON HOW COVID-19 HAS AFFECTED CLIMATE, MISINFORMATION, EDUCATION, WORKPLACE, AND/OR MENTAL HEALTH.

NEWS
MONTCLARIONNEWS@GMAIL.COM

FEATURE
MONTCLARIONFEATURE@GMAIL.COM

OPINION
MONTCLARIONOPINION@GMAIL.COM

ENTERTAINMENT
MONTCLARIONENTERTAINMENT@GMAIL.COM

SPORTS
MONTCLARIONSPORTS@GMAIL.COM

YOUR ARTICLE CAN BE FEATURED IN THE SPECIAL EDITION OF THE MONTCLARION IN SPRING 2022!

BACKGROUND IMAGE BY SVSTUDIOART
When was the last time you cried?

By John LaRosa, Photo Editor

“Two weeks ago – I had a bad class; it was an overwhelming, stressful class. It was a class called ‘Styles’ where you get up and do a scene and a song, it was just a lot.”

Hannah Fink
Junior
Musical Theatre major

“Six months ago – Back in September, that’s when I lost my grandfather. He had lung disease.”

Teo Piedra
Freshman
Nursing major

“Three days ago – I was back home driving around; I drove past this house that belonged to a mentor of mine. She donated stuff to my Eagle Scout project, she passed away from cancer a few months back. I always remember going and helping her garden and stuff because she was too ill to do it herself. It was a little cry.”

CJ Estevez
Freshman
Environmental Science major
“Four months ago – I lost my baby. I was pregnant, but you know, I have to start being able to say it, so that’s why I told you, but it’s still hard to say it.”

Natali Roldan
Senior
Education major

“Five years ago – I’m gonna be so honest I don’t even remember. It’s been that long, the last time I can remember is when my mom took my phone in 8th grade.”

Ayrton Evora
Freshman
Computer Science major

“12 hours ago – Last night I woke up with really bad anxiety.”

Jenessa Reed
Junior
Computer Science major
**Help Wanted**

**DAY CAMP COUNSELOR & TEACHER**

Ramapo Country Day Camp is seeking college students who have an interest in working with kids in their future. Perfect fit for education, psychology, sociology, and nursing students. Group counselor & teaching jobs available. Camp runs from June 27-August 19. Monday through Friday, 9am-4pm. Located 30 minutes from MSU, next to Mahwah, Ramsey, Ridgewood and Montvale.

If interested, visit www.ramapocamp.com and www.ramapocamp.com/staff-application or contact 845-356-6440.

**PART-TIME DEVELOPMENTAL SPECIALIST**

Start here, build a career! Want an environment where you can grow in your career while making a difference in the lives of others? Positive Development is looking for individuals with a passion for helping children with developmental differences to join their team. Multiple part-time entry-level positions available, up to $26/hour. Paid training provided.

Apply now at www.positivedevelopment.com/careers.

**PART-TIME BABYSITTER**

Seeking a part-time after-school sitter Mondays through Thursday in Wyckoff, NJ for one preteen. Hours are 2:30PM – 5:30/6PM. The child participates in swimming activities once a week. The perfect candidate is punctual, communicative and a strong leader. We are looking for someone fully vaccinated and with excellent references. Must have a valid driver’s license and reliable transportation.

Please reply to 201-394-0873 if interested.

---

**BECOME A**

**SPORTS WRITER**

*The Montclarion*

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

Phone 973.655.5230
Fax 973.655.7804
E-mail Montclarionsports@gmail.com
PUZZLES
St. Patrick’s Day Edition
By Kayla Carlamere

Across
1. Although the patron saint of Ireland had been celebrated prior to this, the tradition of a St. Patrick’s Day parade began in America in 1601, predating the founding of the United States. The parade was held in a Spanish colony, in what is now the state of _______.
5. The original Saint Patrick was born in ________, although at the age of 16 he was kidnapped by Irish raiders and forced into slavery in Ireland.
7. Shamrocks, a symbol of Ireland, were used by Saint Patrick to teach and explain the concept of Christianity’s ______ ________: The Father, The Son, and The Holy Spirit.
8. The St. Patrick’s Day tradition of wearing ______ was popularized by Irish immigrants in the U.S. who believed it would make them invisible to a certain mischievous mythical creature.

Down
2. This mythical creature found throughout Irish folklore is said to hide a pot of gold at the end of a rainbow for mortals to find.
3. The St. Patrick’s Day tradition known as the “________ of the shamrock” takes place at the end of the night when the shamrock is dunked into a glass of whiskey and drank during a toast to the saint, then tossing the plant over one’s left shoulder. Alternatively, this can also refer to simply drinking alcohol on St. Patrick’s Day.
4. This city in Ireland—the capital—holds a grand festival for St. Patrick’s Day and extends the celebrations for the holiday over five days, creating a vibrant cultural scene.
6. Finish the saying: “Kiss me, I’m ______.” The same word can be used to complete the phrase “Luck of the ______.”

Sudoku

Word Search

Bagpipes  Jig  March
Maewyn Succat  Tradition  Magical
Four Leaf Clover  Gold Coin  Parade
Celtic  Holiday  Corned Beef
Shamrock Shake  Potato  Blarney
Insecurities are problems many people deal with throughout their lifetime and it’s no secret they’re a lot more prevalent during the teenage and young adult years. Insecurities come in many different forms. People can be insecure about their house, financial status, grades and anything that draws comparison. Yet it appears that amongst young adults, insecurity around physical appearance is the most common struggle.

Insecurities come in many different forms. People can be insecure about their house, financial status, grades and anything that draws comparison. Yet it appears that amongst young adults, insecurity around physical appearance is the most common struggle.

With the presence of social media, comparisons have become more common, most notably with TikTok. What makes TikTok stand out compared to other social media apps is its seemingly endless content.

When you see someone else with physical features you believe look more attractive than your own, it’s natural to ask yourself, “Why don’t I look like this?” and compare yourself to them.

What’s interesting to note is how people deal with their insecurities on the internet specifically. While many people internalize their insecurities and don’t make them known to others, there are also a lot of people who take a different, angrier approach.

There’s been a pattern of behavior on TikTok where a girl will post a video of herself doing something simple, such as showing her outfit, dancing or lip-syncing to music, and the comments will be filled with other users harassing her simply because she’s attractive.

These people go beyond just comparing themselves to others. In their minds, they’re in a contest based on attractiveness with random people on the internet who don’t know them, and what makes them angry is they believe they’re losing.

With the rise of many people seeking plastic surgery, a lot of TikTok users seem to automatically assume the only way for someone to be more attractive than them is through plastic surgery. While this is true in some cases, most of the people they’re talking about are teenagers, and it would be a lot harder to get a cosmetic procedure done if they’re under 18 years old.

Attacking someone’s appearance is a horrible thing to do, but doing it out of jealousy because of your insecurities is its own paradox. If you’re insecure about your appearance and you know someone commenting on it would upset you, then why do it to someone else?

Learning to love yourself for who you are is a tedious process, but there are steps you can take. First, since social media is a big factor in this issue, it’s important to start taking time off of it.

In addition, every time you look in the mirror, take the time to repeatedly tell yourself how beautiful and confident you are instead of tearing yourself apart. The more you repeat it to yourself, the sooner you’ll start to believe it.

Insecurities are problems many people deal with throughout their lifetime and it’s no secret they’re a lot more prevalent during the teenage and young adult years. Insecurities come in many different forms. People can be insecure about their house, financial status, grades and anything that draws comparison. Yet it appears that amongst young adults, insecurity around physical appearance is the most common struggle.

Beauty is subjective, and one person may find something attractive that another person might not. However, you should never identify your facial features as your only means of self-worth.

Basing your value around what physical features someone might find attractive or unattractive and having their opinion dictate your life is unhealthy.

Until you put in the work to start loving and appreciating your features, it’s important to realize harassing someone online because of your insecurities won’t make your insecurities go away.

Stop Projecting Insecurities on Social Media

Beatrice Kimata, a freshman psychology major, is in her first year as a staff writer for The Montclarion.
Dear Americans, the Russia-Ukraine War Isn’t Funny

What some would consider being the most sensitive generation in America, Generation Z has reached a whole new level of heartlessness.

The Russia-Ukraine conflict started in February of 2014. It has since escalated to a full-blown war that has rocked the whole world. People are expressing concerns over nuclear destruction, World War III and being drafted to fight.

Yes, the fears the world has are valid. In an AP news article from earlier this month, Russian President Vladimir Putin is described as such: “For two decades, [he] has struck rivals as reckless, impulsive. But his behavior in ordering an invasion of Ukraine — and now putting Russia’s nuclear forces on high alert — has some in the West questioning whether the Russian president has become dangerously unstable.”

War is never a small pill to swallow, especially when it’s incited by a hot-headed maniacal dictator. Despite the rising anxiety over the world’s fate, let’s not forget one very important thing: Americans are not the victims.

American soldiers are not fighting in the Russia-Ukraine War. Russian soldiers are not invading American cities with armed weapons. Americans are not leaving their pets to die while heading to an underground bomb shelter.

So, that begs the question: why are Americans making jokes about it? Either they’re just insensitive bigots or they’ve claimed to be joking to help “cope” with the situation. But that’s the thing: it’s not their situation to cope with.

A TikTok video went viral with the text, “Me when I get an email from the army [saying] I’m getting drafted into war” with the caption, “Call of Duty but real.” If anyone ever decides to start up the ol’ noggin and read for once, maybe they would know that we won’t get involved because Ukraine is not a North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) ally.

So, we’ve established there’s no rationality to concerns about being drafted or fighting in Ukraine. Now, let us recognize the truth of the matter: Americans think they are the victims in every situation.

It took less than a day for Americans on social media to make their voices louder than those of suffering Ukrainians. American Gen Z’s immediate response to the war was commenting on Putin’s Instagram jokingly asking him to stop, and voicing their fears while they sit comfortably in their bedroom without a missile in sight.

It’s pretty ironic for the people who fueled the fire for cancel culture and ruthlessly attacked people for insensitivity. Don’t get me wrong, I love a good calling out of someone’s idiocracy and offensiveness, but the problem here is the hypocrisy.

Our generation has become too desensitized to understand the gravity of certain situations. It’s not Gen Z’s fault, but at some point, we have to take accountability for that and learn to be empathetic once again.

We have hardships too, however, Gen Z must realize we are extremely privileged to live in America. While America may not be the best place on Earth, living in a country that is a military superpower makes it very unlikely we will see the same destruction as that in Ukraine.

If you have any compassion in your heart, stop posting your unoriginal and unfunny TikToks and maybe start raising awareness of the hardship of those who need aid for survival. If you want to take it a step further, donate to UNICEF or CARE to help Ukrainians survive in these deadly circumstances.

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.
"Penance" - Alex Pavljuk

"Bless me father for I have sinned. It has been," he lingered on that last word for a moment, and then uncomfortably sighed, "fifteen years since my last confession." He could feel the glare of the priest sitting behind the wicker barrier of the confessional.

"You may proceed," the father announced, very ready to hear what brought this character into his confessional.

"I suppose I haven’t done anything wrong father, it’s just…uh." Shaun tried to gather his thoughts. "Last fall, I caught my wife cheating on me. We had a big blow-up about it and I nearly killed the guy." The priest didn’t seem amused at the insinuation of murder but only cleared his throat in contestation.

"May I ask if you are religious? Perhaps a social worker would be a better fit? I know things happen but it’s been fifteen years son, why are you here now?" the father asked sincerely.

"Not particularly anymore," Shaun admitted. "It’s just that we tried therapy, we tried all of it and it’s not even that I hate her, she just has this visceral disgust towards me and I don’t know why?" Shaun pondered for a moment, beginning to now take the father’s advice. Why was he here?

"Can I ask when it started to fall apart? The marriage I mean," the father inquired. Shaun sat there contemplating.

"We met in the city. I was working at this upscale French bistro and she came in one day with her friends and ordered this gorgeous steak confit that I was so lucky to make. I looked out to see who I was making it for because the busboys were going crazy over her, and when I looked out into the dining room, I mean, I just melted, melted." His voice started to shake. "I thought, that’s her. If love at first sight exists, that’s it. So I walked out and introduced myself, we went out for drinks and I bought her this huge bouquet of flowers, and the rest was history.”

Shaun smiled reciting the memory, but loneliness filled the room. “I suppose it all came apart slowly. I worked a lot and she didn’t, so date nights became scattered, our apartment was often empty, I just kinda became distant and I guess I didn’t notice until there was another man in my bed.”

The priest could feel the guilt in his voice.

"Do you still see her often?" the priest asked. Shaun paused as he rubbed her wedding ring.

"Not often anymore, but hopefully soon. We need to clear the air a bit and talk," he paused momentarily, "among other things." Those last three words were quieter than the rest.

"Can you say that last bit again?" asked the priest. Shaun thought long and hard about his next words.

"Other things, we have some other…things, that’s all," Shaun said somberly with shortness, almost as if time was now against him.

"I don’t know what sins I have to absolve you of other than maybe your temperament in the heat of passion?" The priest was unsure of where to take this quickly shifting conversation.

"Heat of passion?" Shaun repeated rather frantically. Sweat was building on his brow. The priest could sense his discontent.

"Is there something I missed, son? Did I say something?" the father asked fearfully.

Shaun’s outline was phantom-like in stature. He quickly arose and in his haste, the ring fell from his grasp. It clinked against the thinly laid carpet covering the concrete floor the confessional sat atop. Shaun lunged towards it, falling out past the shade that kept out the tinted light of stained glass. He hit the ground, letting out a guttural groan.

The ring continued to roll, circling around as it danced away from Shaun’s grasp. The priest too stepped out into the light and as he placed his foot down the ring collided with his polished shoe. The father glanced towards it and noticed the shine reflecting off a very specific spot of the wedding band. Shaun lunged towards it, falling out past the shade that kept out the tinted light of stained glass. He hit the ground, letting out a guttural groan.

The ring continued to roll, circling around as it danced away from Shaun’s grasp.

The priest too stepped out into the light and as he placed his foot down the ring collided with his polished shoe. The father glanced towards it and noticed the shine reflecting off a very specific spot of the wedding band. Shaun lunged towards it, falling out past the shade that kept out the tinted light of stained glass. He hit the ground, letting out a guttural groan.

Shaun leaped onto the ring and scooped it into his pocket as he wormed his way back to his feet to scamper off as fast as he could from the house of the holy.

The priest would read in that Sunday’s paper that a police cruiser picked Shaun up a block away from the parish. He was charged with double homicide.

"Miranda" – Stephanie Cadet

-Mackenzie Reeves-Mason
WANT TO BE A SPORTS WRITER?

Cover all the touchdowns, goals, and everything in between.

Contact MontclarionSports@gmail.com for more information.

“Ms. Yerushalmy’s work melds daring ideas with lush movement that makes space for nuance and detail.”

—THE NEW YORK TIMES

WORLD PREMIERE MOVEMENT
Choreography by Netta Yerushalmy
Dance, USA
MARCH 17 | 18 | 19 | 20

Tickets: 973-655-5112 | PeakPerfs.org
Alexander Kasser Theater

Contact the Montclarion at MontclarionSports@gmail.com for more information.
‘The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Nighttime’: Family and Neurodiversity

Terry Dickerson
Staff Writer

Disclaimer: As said in a joint statement between Montclair State University's Department of Theatre and Dance and the Center for Autism and Early Childhood Mental Health. “This production is based on a fictional character, whom the author does not identify as an individual diagnosed with autism. Although some of his tendencies align with the diagnostic characteristics of an autism spectrum diagnosis, he is not representative of all people with this diagnosis. People with this diagnosis are more likely to be victims of violence or bullying than perpetrators.”

As the Department of Theatre and Dance collaborates with the Center for Autism and Early Childhood Mental Health to open its spring production of “The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Nighttime” on March 18 at Memorial Auditorium, Montclair State University’s BFA theatre majors with concentrations in acting, reflect on the emotional weight of playing the family of a neurodivergent son.

“The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Nighttime” tells the story of 15-year-old Christopher Boone, a neurodivergent teen with an inquisitive mind and a love for mathematics, and his journey navigating a neurotypical world. His journey begins when the neighbor’s dog is unexpectedly murdered. He takes it upon himself to investigate the crime and find the culprit. As Christopher embarks further into his investigation, he discovers life-altering secrets about his family that he must learn to cope with.

Linden, who is in his junior year and plays Christopher, noted the challenges of portraying his character. “Playing Christopher is genuinely the most demanding role I’ve ever had in my entire life,” Linden said. “There are so many ups and so many deep, deep lows that this character experiences throughout the run of this less than two-and-a-half-hour show.”

He has allowed this aspect of his role to push him as an actor. “The whole dilemma of being an actor is learning how to separate all of that emotional baggage that these characters come with from yourself,” Linden said. “As draining as it can be, it’s just as rewarding if not more.”

Key, a senior, plays Judy Boone, Christopher’s mother, who she describes as a dreamer. “She kind of has an idealistic world in her head about the way she wants to be treated romantically,” Key said. “I think she fantasizes a lot about having that perfect world in her head.”

Judy’s world is far from perfect, which is an aspect Key is constantly reminded of while getting into character. Embodying Judy has also taught Key an insightful lesson about love. “She’s taught me how to love people in a way that they need to be loved,” Key said. “My character is suffering a lot because she’s not getting that from the person she loves most. So she’s trying to figure out a way to get Christopher the love that she feels for him without trying to hurt him in any way.”

On the other hand, Metz, who is also a senior, plays a character who does not tend to romanticize the world as Judy does. Ed Boone, Christopher’s father, is characterized by Metz as very protective and paranoid due to his own experiences. “[Ed] has witnessed a lot of uncomfortable and depressing situations in his life that he doesn’t want Christopher to go through,” Metz said. “It’s him doing his best to shield Christopher from traumatic and depressing experiences.”

Both characters display complex personalities which affect the way their son feels loved by them. Linden provided ed his perspective on how Christopher wants to be loved by Judy and Ed. “In Christopher’s perfect world, he would be loved by Judy and Ed exactly how he wants to be, at a distance, but enough of a distance that he is still protected, loved and needed,” Linden said.

With Ed being a character with a significant amount of emotional trauma, Metz must channel those darker emotions while playing him. “I have these monologues that are very emotionally taxing to go through,” Metz said. “Why I do the things that I do to Christopher, explaining myself to Christopher, not getting through to him and then we’ll go on break for 15 minutes. I’m just there with those thoughts, and I have to try to calm myself down.”

Despite the challenging nature of their roles, Linden, Key and Metz have been able to take their respective roles and make them their own. In their time with this show and the Montclair State University BFA Acting Program, Key and Metz have learned valuable lessons on what it means to embody a character, which they leave for future actors to learn from.

Metz has learned that if any actor can authentically relate to the role they’re playing, they will always find a way to be that character. “It’s not about your own idea of who the character is, it’s who you are and what you bring to the character that develops it,” Metz said. “So not ignoring where you came from, how you grew up, your parents and what they’ve taught you. If you ignore all those things, you won’t be able to fully grasp who you are playing.”

Key feels it helps to be your truest self with that character so it becomes less of a challenge to tap into. “It’s easier to connect with others that way because you’re just being yourself as well as another character,” Key said. “So it doesn’t feel like we’re putting on a mask or costume. It’s just easier to get into it that way.”

Senior acting major Alex Key (middle) stars as Judy Boone, Avery Nixon | The Montclarion

Christopher’s mother.

Montclair State University’s production of “The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Nighttime.” Avery Nixon | The Montclarion

Andrew Linden (left) and Ethan Metz (right) star in Montclair State University’s production of “The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Nighttime.”
Ye, commonly known as Kanye West, played his newest album, “Donda 2,” on Feb. 22 at LoanDepot Park in Miami, Florida which was live-streamed at select IMAX theaters in an event called “Donda Experience Performance 2.22.2022.”

With controversy surrounding the artist after his public divorce with reality star and businesswoman Kim Kardashian and his feud with Kar-dashian’s current boyfriend comedian Pete Davidson, many were anxious to see what was going to happen, including Montclair State University students who attended the IMAX screening in Paramus, New Jersey.

Nicholas Vidal, a freshman visual communication design major, and Myles Haywood, a freshman filmmaking major, thought it was a must-see production.

“It felt it was like a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity,” Vidal said. “I saw this experience with a whole bunch of [Ye] fans in a movie theater, in IMAX.”

Haywood added that he was curious about how the event was going to go.

“With everything going on [with Ye], I thought it would be interesting to see the ‘Donda 2’ listening party,” Haywood said.

After entering the IMAX Theater at the AMC Garden State Plaza 16 and hearing the roar of Ye fans in the audience, they were ready. But they had to wait approximately two hours. The sound of a heartbeat surrounded the screening room while the masses were on standby for the rapper to pop up.

Vidal was not expecting the long wait time.

“It was the sound, sharing it with friends, seeing it on the big screen,” Haywood said. “It was everything that a theater is, and I was happy to be able to experience it in IMAX rather than watching it in my dorm room.”

Everything was going great as the fans listened to new material from one of the most renowned artists of the last decade. However, things went south when he started singing old material from his previous album, “Donda,” and artists like Playboi Carti, Fivio Foreign, Alicia Keys, DaBaby and Marilyn Manson joined him with apparent audio problems around the production.

“It was a little annoying to see that happen,” Vidal said. “Maybe he should have stuck with ‘Donda 2.’”

Haywood argued the sound issues in the performance were handled professionally.

“It’s unfortunate, and as a person who has worked backstage, I can tell how stressed everybody was,” Haywood said. “They put so much work into something, and the day of the event, something happens like the mic going out.”

An ever-changing album, “Donda 2” represents Ye going through arduous situations. Songs like “Get Lost,” “Sci-Fi” and “Broken Road” explore heartbreaks and the struggle to see a loved one with another person.

We also see the Chicago-native paying homage to two well-known men in the art world. One of them being the late Virgil Abloh, artistic director of Louis Vuitton’s menswear collection, in the song “Louie Bags,” and the other was rapper XXXTENTACION who was featured in “True Love” and “Selfish.”

The question stands: is “Donda 2” a good Ye album?

Vidal says yes but hopes for change soon.

“I believe it is okay,” Vidal said. “There are specific songs that need work. Some are close to being done.”

Haywood feels similarly.

“I think [it] is a good album for [Ye] fans, but I would not add it to my playlist because I’m not in tune with the hip hop genre,” Haywood said. “I’m more into R&B.”

“Donda 2” is available exclusively on the Stem Player after Ye said in his social media that streaming services only give 12% of the money the music industry makes to artists.

Ye, commonly known as Kanye West, played his newest album at the “Donda Experience Performance 2.22.2022.”
Daughtry’s Night to Remember at Montclair’s Wellmont Theater

Chris Daughtry delivers powerful rock vocals for Daughtry’s Dearly Beloved Tour.

Avery Nixon  
Assistant Opinion Editor

From the quaint but electric Wellmont Theater in Montclair, New Jersey comes a rock show to remember for ages.

One of the mid-2000s’ most memorable rock bands, Daughtry, gave Montclair a show anyone would kill to see on March 2.

Founded by season five “American Idol” finalist Chris Daughtry, Daughtry is a chart-topping, post-grunge-pop-rock band that has produced smash hits such as “Over You” and “Waiting for Superman.”

Not only did the headliner give an explosive performance, but so did their two openers, LYEULL and Tremonti. All three acts had their own unique sound, but the performances blended together beautifully to give us a great show.

Usually, I’m never a fan of the open-er acts or feel the need to look into them after the show. However, LYEULL made sure none of us were leaving without remembering her set.

A natural-born performer and a charming personality are the qualities LYEULL has to be a star. She gave us outstanding vocals, a couple of good jokes and a stage presence to bring the house down.

If you’re in need of some new rock music, LYEULL has you covered. She currently has only two songs out on Spotify but has new music coming soon like her single “Eraser” and a mix of new music and the classics, the audience saw from the band. With a connection with the audience that only a few artists can attain, Daughtry proved time and time again they will put you in a trance with their top-tier instrumentals and vocals.

“Dearly Beloved,” the title track to their recent 2021 album, was one of the most exciting songs to see live.

It’s always nice to see artists not stray from their roots or the genre that made them just to trade it in for cheap, saturated rock-pop music that can never compete with the classics.

Just like the other artists, Daughtry shined both while playing and not playing their music. The lead singer was surprisingly hilarious as he sat alone onstage with dim lighting and just an acoustic guitar.

He sat on a stool and poked fun at how he “used” to get recognized, sadly not anymore he claimed, by his “biggest fans” who only knew the band’s hit song “Home.” So, he treated us to an acoustic version of the song with his angelic voice.

Even funnier, he spent roughly 30 seconds strumming his guitar singing “waiting for more phones,” saying “it’s 2022, I know you have more phones than this,” urging the audience to sway their illuminating flashlights while the ballad was played. It was such a personal and funny moment that really connected the fans to the artist on a deeper level.

Connections were a common theme of the night. Each act made a connection with the audience that only enhanced the experience for the fans. All of the acts were incredibly kind and charming, which made those in the audience feel more appreciated and loved.

Daughtry himself is a spectacle in his own because he showcases the power of his voice with the perfect genre to accompany it.

One of the best examples of this is Daughtry’s 2006 hit, “It’s Not Over.” Even with their newer music, Daughtry proves time and time again they put real passion into their music. Each act made a connection with the audience that only a few artists can attain.

Connections were a common theme of the night. Each act made a connection with the audience that only enhanced the experience for the fans. All of the acts were incredibly kind and charming, which made those in the audience feel more appreciated and loved.

Daughtry and their supporting acts gave fans a night to remember for the rest of their lives.

Daughtry himself is a spectacle in his own because he showcases the power of his voice with the perfect genre to accompany it.

One of the best examples of this is Daughtry’s 2006 hit, “It’s Not Over.” Even with their newer music, Daughtry proves time and time again they put real passion into their music. Each act made a connection with the audience that only a few artists can attain.

Connections were a common theme of the night. Each act made a connection with the audience that only enhanced the experience for the fans. All of the acts were incredibly kind and charming, which made those in the audience feel more appreciated and loved.

Daughtry and their supporting acts gave fans a night to remember for the rest of their lives.
THE MONTCLARION

Write for Entertainment!

Reviews ♦ Music ♦ Video Games ♦ Movies and TV ♦ Theatre ♦ Student Artist Profile

E-mail: montclarionentertainment@gmail.com

ROOM 2035, SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATION AND MEDIA IN UPPER MONTCLAIR, NJ, 07043
The Batman,” the newest adaption of the Batman character from DC Comics, follows the famous superhero-vigilante in his second year of crime-fighting when an internet personality and serial killer, The Riddler, leaves clues at crime scenes that lead Batman on the trail to Gotham City’s corruption.

Whenever anyone discusses the Batman character in live-action, it is near impossible to not mention the lasting legacy of Christopher Nolan’s “Dark Knight” trilogy, which brought Batman into the modern-day, gritty world. Everything those movies did right, this movie takes and runs with. Robert Pattinson’s Batman is the most grounded and comic-accurate to date. The way he silently walks around crime scenes and slowly emerges from the shadows on the streets of Gotham is commanding and terrifying unlike any other version of the character ever put to screen. He is quiet, and whenever he speaks, it is in an intense whisper. We follow the mystery from his perspective and put together the pieces as he does, making the journey of the film easy to become invested in and exciting to follow along with.

And to meet Pattinson, Paul Dano’s Riddler is a true force of nature. Within the handful of days his reign of terror spans, he brings panic to Gotham and digs up skeletons from nearly everyone’s closet. Dano rarely ever shows his face, mainly performing from behind a green mask, but when he’s out of the mask, he delivers a brilliant and manic performance as Batman’s most egotistical antagonist. The rest of the ensemble is also great. Zoë Kravitz’s Catwoman is very practical, independent and plays off Pattinson’s Batman excellently. John Turturro plays mob boss Carmine Falcone with equal charm and menace. The most fun member of the ensemble is an unrecognizable Colin Farrell who is caked with makeup as The Penguin and delivers several scene-stealing moments of levity.

But the real star here is co-writer/director Matt Reeves, who previously directed “Dawn of the Planet of the Apes.” Reeves directs the film with immense intention and skill. Though the runtime is a mighty two hours and 55 minutes, not a single frame is wasted.

In addition, the mystery his and Peter Craig’s screenplay brings to life is a breath of fresh air. Inspired by famous Jeph Loeb’s graphic novel “Batman: The Long Halloween,” Riddler’s string of clues and riddles bring Batman through a long line of corruption, lies and secrets that are as engaging as they are surprising.

The action here is surprisingly sparse for a big-budget cape flick, but every punch and strike hits hard. Batman’s wails on a street thug echo through the theater, and the action is over as soon as it begins, making the violence feel real and brutal. The best action sequence, though, is a car chase in the second act that features a muscle car Batmobile and a gloriously hammy Farrell performance.

Technically speaking, this is one of the better-made blockbusters in the past few years. Greg Fraser’s cinematography beautifully captures the filthy Gotham City and lights the dark interiors and exteriors with great drama. Michael Giacchino’s score booms in the big moments of the film and gracefully navigates the more quiet and impactful scenes. This superhero reboot hits the ground running, creates a fascinating world, fleshed out heroes and villains and lays the groundwork for a trilogy that could rival the best films in the genre. Though the wait for a sequel will not be short, there are enough great things in this film to enjoy in the meantime.

‘The Batman’ Crafts a Brilliant Mystery for the World’s Greatest Detective

Aidan Callari
Staff Writer

The Riddler (Paul Dano) leaves the finishing touches on his first victim.

The rest of the ensemble is also great. Zoe Kravitz’s Catwoman is very practical, independent and plays off Pattinson’s Batman excellently. John Turturro plays mob boss Carmine Falcone with equal charm and menace. The most fun member of the ensemble is an unrecognizable Colin Farrell who is caked with makeup as The Penguin and delivers several scene-stealing moments of levity.

But the real star here is co-writer/director Matt Reeves, who previously directed “Dawn of the Planet of the Apes.” Reeves directs the film with immense intention and skill. Though the runtime is a mighty two hours and 55 minutes, not a single frame is wasted.

In addition, the mystery his and Peter Craig’s screenplay brings to life is a breath of fresh air. Inspired by famous Jeph Loeb’s graphic novel “Batman: The Long Halloween,” Riddler’s string of clues and riddles bring Batman through a long line of corruption, lies and secrets that are as engaging as they are surprising.

The action here is surprisingly sparse for a big-budget cape flick, but every punch and strike hits hard. Batman’s wails on a street thug echo through the theater, and the action is over as soon as it begins, making the violence feel real and brutal. The best action sequence, though, is a car chase in the second act that features a muscle car Batmobile and a gloriously hammy Farrell performance.

Technically speaking, this is one of the better-made blockbusters in the past few years. Greg Fraser’s cinematography beautifully captures the filthy Gotham City and lights the dark interiors and exteriors with great drama. Michael Giacchino’s score booms in the big moments of the film and gracefully navigates the more quiet and impactful scenes.

This superhero reboot hits the ground running, creates a fascinating world, fleshed out heroes and villains and lays the groundwork for a trilogy that could rival the best films in the genre. Though the wait for a sequel will not be short, there are enough great things in this film to enjoy in the meantime.
With her feature directorial debut, writer/director Domee Shi decides to draw on her own experiences as a Chinese-Canadian woman, and the result, “Turning Red,” is absolutely delightful.

As the 25th film by Pixar Animation Studios, the story centers on Meilin “Mei” Lee (Rosalie Chiang), a middle schooler in 2002 Toronto, who is dealing with everything connected to puberty while also trying to remain loyal to her mother, Ming (Sandra Oh). Alongside all this, Mei has the ability to turn into a red panda when her emotions run too high.

Since Shi draws on her experiences growing up in Toronto, the film as a whole has a real authenticity to it. Mei is a great lead, and one gets the impression she represents a lot of the director’s feelings growing up. Her story arc tackles themes of succumbing to high expectations and the effects of generational trauma, not unlike the recent Disney animated hit, “Encanto.” The fact that much of the movie centers around the relationship between Mei and her mother might also bring on comparisons to another Pixar film, “Brave,” which also focuses heavily on a mother-daughter relationship.

That said, Mei is still a child, one who is scared of the changes she is undergoing and how they will affect her and her family. Her father Jin (Orion Lee), her four aunts and her grandmother, also play roles in helping Mei discover what she wants to be.

Mei’s friends, Miriam (Ava Morse), Priya (Maitreyi Ramakrishnan) and Abby (Hyein Park) also tag along for the ride. Their own relationships with Mei and her mother add a lot to the proceedings. Quite a bit of winning humor comes from Abby who is rather excitable.

Allerick Chen), a classmate who bullies Mei and her friends. The movie does attempt to give him some development, but it does little to nothing in making him endearing.

The artists at Pixar have been testing new art styles distinct from their classics with their past few films; “Turning Red” continues with this experimentation. In a Los Angeles Times article, Shi and production designer Rona Liu are said to have taken inspiration from various anime Shi watched as a youth, including “Sailor Moon” and “Pokémon,” for the look of the film. This allows for some hilarious facial expressions. The animators also do a lot in representing Mei’s culture, with the temple her family runs being a nice set piece. In keeping with the early 2000s setting, the girls are fans of a boy group called 4 Town. The group’s songs, written by Billie Eilish and Finneas O’Connell, sound in tune with what NSYNC or the Backstreet Boys might have sung back then.

Pretty much everything about “Turning Red” works. Shi smartly takes inspiration from her youth to create a relatable story with the right amount of heart and humor. The cast is solid and worth spending time with. The animation is excellent with plenty of inspiration taken from other sources to distinguish it from other animated films, including Pixar’s own library.

If this is any indicator of what Pixar and Shi have planned for their future films, then their futures are looking bright.


Lasing four seasons on Netflix, “Atypical” takes viewers along for the day to day life of teenager Sam Gardner, who is on the autism spectrum. The series follows Sam (Keir Gilchrist) as he navigates everyday challenges related to high school, college, relationships and personal triggers.

Along for the ride is his sometimes over-bearing but always well intentioned family, consisting of his sister Casey (Brigette Lundy-Paine), mom Elsa (Jennifer Jason Leigh) and dad Doug (Michael Rapaport), as well as his best friend Zahid (Nik Dodani) and girlfriend Paige (Jenna Boyd).

Viewers become attached and invested in Sam and his loved ones’ growth throughout the entirety of the comedy-drama series, making the last episode of the final season one to both laugh and cry at.

- Megan Lim
Entertainment Editor

‘Superstore’ on Peacock

If you’re looking for one of the most underrated sitcoms of the past 10 years, look no further than “Superstore.” The show follows the employees of a fictional store called Cloud 9. Most episodes depict a typical workday for these employees, from stocking shelves to break room meetings. While this may sound boring, this show’s antics are far from typical.

Aside from being absolutely hilarious, the show features a diverse cast and does not shy away from difficult topics like layoffs and healthcare. The series walks the line between an enjoyable comfort binge and a meaningful commentary on working-class America, but it never feels overly heavy or forced.

The show’s central romance between Amy (America Ferrera) and Jonah (Ben Feldman) is also a fresh take on the typical sitcom love story. It’s easy to see why the series lasted six seasons on NBC and is still popular on Peacock today.

- Jenna Sundel
News Editor

Top Picks to Stream
Sitcom Edition

‘Atypical’ on Netflix

The new “Texas Chainsaw Massacre” film, now streaming on Netflix, is something you should not waste your time watching. But if you do decide to watch, heed this warning: make sure you have an empty stomach first.

Directed by David Blue Garcia, “Texas Chainsaw Massacre,” released on Feb. 18, revolves around Melody (Sarah Yarkin), Dante (Jacob Latimore) and Ruth (Nell Hudson). Alongside the group is Melody’s younger sister, Lila (Elise Fisher).

The visionary group is looking to bring a new start and community to a forgotten ghost town located in Texas. Little do they know, this town is home to the infamous killer, Leatherface.

The visionaries disrupt the “peace” in town, they unleash the crazed serial killer and are now fighting to escape and save their lives.

The abandoned town filled with only dust and run-down buildings located in the deep southern part of Texas is a perfect setting for a horror film. There is something about knowing there is little to no chance for the characters to get help that makes the movie a bit scarier. There is nowhere to run; their only option is to hide from Leatherface and hope he doesn’t find them. But of course, with their obvious hiding spots, he does.

The amount of gore the film includes is on point. Compared to the original “Texas Chainsaw Massacre” released in 1974, the 2022 version is a lot more blood-filled and brutal.

The bus scene will leave you especially traumatized. So, if you are not a fan of gore or if you have a weak stomach, I suggest watching another film.

However, even with its positive traits, this film still received 34% on Rotten Tomatoes. And for good reason.

Vanessa Diaz
Staff Writer

While being introduced to the characters, you don’t see enough great characteristics in them. Instead, you’re left not liking them as they come off as quite annoying.

In addition, the deaths, which are usually the part of the film that both scare the viewer and hit them emotionally, happen way too quickly. You are not given enough time to mourn the losses and sympathize with the characters.

“Texas Chainsaw Massacre” also had the problem of using basic horror movie clichés. If you have watched the recent films “Halloween Kills” or “Scream 5,” you will notice the similarity to those movies. For example, “Texas Chainsaw Massacre” took the opportunity to bring back an original character, Sally Hardesty (Olwen Fouere), the final girl from the original film.

There are many repetitive horror movies and this was one of them, which made it extremely disappointing. There were many chances for this film to be better, but Garcia went in a completely different direction.

“Texas Chainsaw Massacre” will leave you bored and unentertained. It never evokes true fear. Even if you are typically afraid of horror movies, this one will still be watchable for you, which is not a good thing. Though the violent scenes do make it a proper slaughter film, it lacks vision.

It is best they put down the chainsaw and let the “Texas Chainsaw Massacre” series die.

(Left to right): Lila (Elise Fisher), Melody (Sarah Yarkin), Ruth (Nell Hudson) and Dante (Jacob Latimore) stand in Harlow, an abandoned Texas town.

Photo courtesy of Netflix

Leatherface (Mark Burnham) is an infamous killer.

Photo courtesy of Netflix

‘Texas Chainsaw Massacre’ Will Have You Reaching For a Barf Bag
Oftentimes, living with a complete stranger is a subject that hits close to home as a college student. “Worst Roommate Ever,” a true-crime Netflix docuseries released on March 1, covers four cases in which seemingly harmless individuals made the lives of those they lived with a living hell.

Dorothea Puente was a sweet old lady adored by her community in Sacramento, California, but not everything that shines is gold, which we see in episode one: “Call Me Grandma.” K.C. Joy adored his roommate and her welcoming family when he moved to Orange, California — that is until she declined his romantic advances (episode two: “Be Careful of the Quiet Ones”). Youssef Khater was an upcoming athlete who needed monetary aid to race for his home country in Santiago, Chile, but his intentions proved to be much darker (episode three: “Marathon Man”). Jamison Bachman moved to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania to start fresh and anew, but his roommate soon realized what trouble she had unknowingly gotten herself into (episodes four and five: “Roommate Wanted”).

As a true-crime enthusiast — a documentary junkie, if you will — I was excited to delve into this. One thing Netflix does decently well is true-crime media. And yet, it was a disappointing watch.

The main problem I have with “Worst Roommate Ever” is the way it is portrayed. The docuseries provided animated recaps during each episode on what had happened as the people involved narrated their experience. For the life of me, I could not take it seriously.

It is so silly that the docuseries would opt for cartoon-style reenactments like the average adult isn’t completely desensitized by violence. Turning people’s traumatic life events into a very poorly made animated horror series to soften the blow is unnecessary. I don’t need a lighthearted idea of what went down when you are telling me most of these people were convicted for murder. It’s simply ridiculous.

The main problem I have with “Worst Roommate Ever” is the way it is portrayed. The docuseries provided animated recaps during each episode on what had happened as the people involved narrated their experience. For the life of me, I could not take it seriously.

The tone and setting in which these sorts of heavy topics are discussed are supposed to provide a safe space in which the victim can share at their own pace. It felt like the trauma, pain and suffering of these victims and survivors were overlooked to add shock value as if reminding the horrific people that terrorized them wasn’t enough. The nature of the questions asked by the interviewers, along with the over-the-top jump-scares coming from the animation, make “Worst Roommate Ever” a hard pill to swallow.

Another thing that’s important to highlight is the development of each criminal’s story. For example, Puente was a prolific serial killer whose crimes and victims expanded over decades. As a viewer with no knowledge of who this person was beforehand, I was underwhelmed with the information I was given. All of Puente’s crimes were laid in front of me like some sort of puzzle, undermining why she was able to get away with her heinous crimes for so long.

True crime as a concept attempts to look at a person’s past and figure out what it is that made them capable of committing such acts. It’s shameless curiosity, I agree. But the nitty-gritty details, the psychological study of a criminal and their response to the crime afterward are what define a compelling true crime story.

Despite being a tolerable docuseries to binge-watch, “Worst Roommate Ever” left an overall bad taste in my mouth. Putting the responsibility of storytelling on the victims and survivors, as well as adding dramatic value to a true-crime docuseries without compassion for the innocent people that fell prey to inhumane individuals is unacceptable.
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
In America, the President reigns for four years, but Journalism governs forever.” – Oscar Wilde

WANTED FOR:
NEWS
FEATURE
ENTERTAINMENT
OPINION
SPORTS

Come Help Us Out!

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

Phone 973.655.5230
Fax 973.655.7804
E-mail Montclarionchief@gmail.com
Baseball’s Historic Offensive Performances Are Leading To Wins

The Red Hawks currently lead the NJAC in runs scored per game

By Ryan White

Baseball season is well underway and through 14 games, Montclair State University’s baseball team’s red hot hitting has put the entire New Jersey Athletic Conference (NJAC) on notice. Sitting at a 10-4 record, the Red Hawks have gotten off to nothing short of a historic offensive start.

In just a handful of games, the Red Hawks have put up a tremendous amount of runs. They have scored 19 runs twice, both in wins against The Catholic University of America, 17 in a win against Bridgewater State University and 15 against Stevens Institute of Technology and Eastern Nazarene College which led to victories for the Red Hawks.

Led by senior first baseman Peter Cosentino, the Red Hawks rank first in batting average, runs scored and RBIs. Cosentino is feeling confident up there right now.”

Cosentino, who is putting together yet another stellar season, leads the NJAC in almost every major statistical category with five home runs, 26 RBIs, seven doubles and 19 runs scored, all while batting .415. Cosentino is feeling as confident as ever but credits the coaching staff for much of his and the team’s success.

“Coach [Dave] Lorber, coach [Pat] Knight and all the other coaches in our coaching staff have done a great job preparing our hitters,” Cosentino said.

Other notable Red Hawks who are having success at the plate include sophomore outfielder/catcher Jorden Jurkiewicz, who is batting .442 with five homers along with 20 RBIs. Senior infielder Joe Norton is also having a stellar start to the season, batting .400 with 22 hits and a team-leading 11 stolen bases.

During Monday’s doubleheader against Trinity College, Norton became the newest member of the 200 hit club, claiming the 13th spot on the Red Hawks’ all-time hits list.

Even though it’s been a small sample size, if the Red Hawks do want to reach new heights, Lorber believes they are going to need more consistency and success on the mound. The Red Hawks rank sixth in the NJAC in earned run average (ERA) and they have given up the most walks by a wide margin with 81.

“As far as areas for improvement, I’d like to see our middle bullpen take a step forward,” Lorber said. “I think we’re looking for some pieces to really step forward to solidify that and then other than that, I think we’ve got some pretty good defensive pieces in place and I’m pleased overall.”

With baseball always seeming to be a long and grind-it-out type of season and without any conference matchups just yet, it is very difficult to tell how the NJAC will play out. As of now, however, the Red Hawks have made themselves hard to ignore despite their competition.

As the season gets more difficult, Lorber believes this team will be ready.

“We are going to start to see some more consistent arms that are going to challenge us,” Lorber said. “I think we’re ready for the task and I’m excited about [it] for these guys. I think they can handle it.”

The Red Hawks’ first NJAC matchup will be on April 2 as they take on Rutgers-Newark in a two-game set.

Although scoring a surplus amount of runs is great, it is important to know that in order to perform at the highest level, everyone must be on the same page and perform at the highest level, even more so during the past three years is that we all literally want the same goal,” Angelo said. “To get here, be at this high pedestal and win an NJAC title, possibly get here, be at this high pedestal and win an NJAC title, possibly

Senior infielder Jason Moore takes a swing at a pitch during a 2021 contest against Kean University.

David Venezia | The Montclarion

L. 13-8

Softball vs. Penn State

W. 21-4

M. Lacrosse vs. FDU-Fordham

L. 1-3

Baseball vs. Trinity

W. 8-6

Baseball vs. Trinity

L. 11-12

W. Lacrosse vs. SUNY Geneseo

David Venezia | The Montclarion

Red Hawk Recap
**Star-Studded Hurdling Team Makes Noise For the Men’s Track and Field Team**

During the 2021-2022 indoor track and field season, one of the biggest success stories from the men’s track and field team is their star-studded hurdling team that consists of junior Cameryn Martin, freshman Kimani Carrington and freshman Vance Thelemaque.

Considering a mentor and “the big brother of the group,” Martin has been the centerpiece behind this award-winning hurdling group, qualifying for regionals in the 2019-2020 indoor season and placing fourth in the 110-meter high hurdles at the New Jersey Athletic Conference (NJAC) Outdoor Championship last season.

Going into the NJAC Indoor Track and Field Championship in February, Martin suffered a hamstring strain and a sore ankle that he had the opportunity to rest upon but instead challenged himself to race.

“I felt all of it when I went to go race the first time,” Martin said. “My coach asked if I wanted to drop the race, I told him ‘No, absolutely not … Whatever it takes I’m finishing this race.’”

Fighting through the pain, Martin placed fourth in the 60-meter hurdle final with a time of 8.68 seconds, just shy of his personal record of 8.49 which he recorded in his first meet his freshman year.

“Getting top three was really an accomplishment and I’m proud of myself for it,” Carrington said. “I just have to stick to myself and stay focused on what I need to accomplish.”

During the 2021-2022 indoor track season, Carrington and Thelemaque will be a dominant trio capable of racking up several team points for the Red Hawks all season long.

At the NJAC, Thelemaque placed a strong time of 8.76 for the 60-meter hurdle but wasn’t able to qualify for regionals. However, considering the adjustment that hurdlers have to make from high school to college, Thelemaque’s season should be considered a success.

There’s a big difference coming into track here,” Thelemaque said. “The height of the hurdles and the number of meets we have in college, it’s spread out a lot more … The freshman hurdler is not phased by finishing one place short of being top four in the finals. He has already impressed his team and himself by being able to place the times he does as a freshman.

“I want to be [number] one, I have to put the grind in and work hard,” Thelemaque said. “I work together with [Carrington] and [Martin] and we all go at it … If we could all place first, second and third that’d be even better.”

After an impressive start to their indoor season, Carrington and Thelemaque should be considered rising stars for the men’s track and field team. They have a strong connection on and off the field and push each other to do better. Both athletes see each other as brothers.

“He’s like a twin brother to me and our relationship grew quick,” Thelemaque said. “We want the same things for track and our futures.”

As the outdoor track and field season approaches, the hurdle group of Martin, Carrington and Thelemaque will be a dominant trio capable of rattling up several team points for the Red Hawks all season long.
THE MONTCLARION

SPORTS WRITERS WANTED!

E-Mail: montclarionsports@gmail.com

Room 2035, School of Communication and Media in Upper Montclair, NJ, 07043
Meet three different women who are making an impact for the university’s sports network

Matt Orth
Assistant Sports Editor

Ever since its inception, Montclair State University’s Red Hawk Sports Network (RHSN) has usually had male figures in front of the camera, whether it is the on-camera talent covering a basketball game, or a player from the football team being interviewed for a feature story by a broadcasting intern.

While women’s sports do get their time on social media and the weekly show “Inside the Nest,” we never get to see the women that put in the work behind the scenes, and now, in front of the camera as well.

The camera work done at a multitude of sports games throughout each semester, the detailed setup of certain segments of the weekly show and the social media posts promoting the content — all of this is mainly done by Emily Struble, a senior television and digital media major; Meghan O’Neill, a senior communication and media arts major and Gianna Daginis, a freshman film and television major.

Struble spoke on the importance of the RHSN structure and how that helps get everyone involved.

“The program throws you right into the action and gives you the creative freedom to make pieces in your own style,” Struble said. “Everybody involved is there to help and it creates a welcoming and encouraging environment.”

Struble is known to always be behind a camera shooting game footage, making sure shoots for features and interviews go as smoothly as possible and also helping Bush out ideas for “Inside the Nest.” A lot of what is done for that and the network would not be possible without her assistance along with the other key producers and members.

Struble explained the impact women can have in sports media and spoke about who she specifically looks up to here at Montclair State.

“I look at professors [Kelly] White-side and [Stacy] Gitlin as role models,” Struble said. “Their long list of achievements and work in the field pushes me to pursue my goals. Honestly, without all of their hard work and encouragement, this program would not be what it has grown to become.”

Like Struble said, having two female professors help to run the whole program only emphasizes the importance of how much women mean to sports media here on campus.

O’Neill also means a lot to the RHSN, not only because of her hard work behind the scenes but because she will also be featured as a studio host in the next iteration of “Inside the Nest” in honor of Women’s History Month.

O’Neill spoke about the message being sent out during this month and how the RHSN is helping to spread that message.

“I think the women that are a part of RHSN are giving it a chance to show that it is not only a male-run network,” O’Neill said. “Women are a part of it well and we are going to show younger girls out there that they can do this, too.”

O’Neill also recently did studio hosting for Montclair State’s radio station 90.3 WMSC alongside freshman Emily Szurkowski. She also helped handle the madness of the recent RHSN live show as the stage manager and shoots social media for the program.

She even has some close people in her life who want to follow in her footsteps.

“Ever since coming into [RHSN], I’ve had so many young girls including my nieces ask me about this and wanting to be involved when they are old enough,” O’Neill said. “That’s been my goal since joining the network. I want to help young women and girls to show that we can talk sports, too.”

One of these women who have been doing a lot in sports media ever since coming to Montclair State is Gianna Daginis. Whether commenting on games alongside fellow interns and members or shooting social media posts, Daginis is proving she is in the future of the sports media program.

Daginis talked about the chemistry she has with the RHSN members and how that helps her in the work she does.

“The best part about being on a call is that you tend to forget you have viewers listening to you,” Daginis said. “Because of the connections I have formed with other members of RHSN, it feels like you’re talking to a friend about sports, which makes the pre-game nerves and the awkwardness disappear.”

Daginis also is involved in different films with other students within her major, and the productions are similar to something out of Hollywood. To her, it’s great to see women break through barriers and stereotypes in this field.

“I have so much respect and admiration for the women who have made it to the top,” Daginis said. “I love seeing female reporters or hearing that a woman is ‘the first woman to ever’ do something. Sometimes outside noise can mess with your head, but these women haven’t let the doubt or disrespect interrupt their hard work and success.”

With the spring 2022 semester quickly flying by, Struble and O’Neill will be graduating at the end of it, while Daginis will go into her second year. The program will be losing a lot of its key members but with the future being bright and more women being accepted into sports media, there is no stopping these inspiring women and those in the future from doing great things in and out of Montclair State.
Former Red Hawk Coach Lives Out His Dream
O’Neil Holder joins Atlanta Hawks coaching staff

O’Neil Holder (left) helps NBA All-Star Trae Young warm up before the game.

Jonathan Edmond | The Montclarion

O’Neil Holder poses with head coach of Montclair State University’s basketball team Justin Potts.

Photo courtesy of O’Neil Holder

Jonathan Edmond
Staff Writer

Take every opportunity when it comes because it may not come again. Former Moravian College basketball player and former assistant coach of Montclair State University O’Neil Holder got the opportunity of a lifetime earning a spot on the Atlanta Hawks coaching staff.

After having a remarkable career at Moravian College and being one of the main focal points of a great basketball program for four years, his college career came to an end. Holder had an everlasting love for the sport and didn’t want to disconnect from it, so he sought out coaching.

“I always dreamed of playing basketball, but I’ve also dreamed of becoming a coach because eventually the ball stops rolling,” Holder said. “It doesn’t matter if you’re in the highest level. You’re going to retire at some point and have to find something else you love to do.”

Holder’s love for the game came from watching all the basketball greats on television and wanting to be exactly like them. But growing up, he found interest in coaching because of his former high school coaches and college coaches Sean Rossi and Justin Potts.

After working numerous summer camps and staying around the game he loved, he got a call from Potts, who is the current head coach of Montclair State’s men’s basketball team. Potts offered him his first official coaching gig as his assistant.

“When I was looking to make the move to Montclair State, I liked building a staff of guys I know and I’m comfortable with,” Potts said. “I was very comfortable with him, so it was kind of a no-brainer that I wanted him on the team.”

When Potts started his Red Hawk journey in August 2019, he took Rossi with him and later on added Steve Weiler to the coaching staff, but he also needed someone who played in the system, understood the style of play and could relate to the guys on the team.

“He was just recently in their shoes, and he played against some of them in scrimmages,” Potts said. “He was a great coach. He’s one of those guys that are very quiet at times, so he did much of his coaching giving instructions, guidance and advice on the side. He would just grab a guy and tell them, ‘If you get to this spot —and this spot— this is what is going to happen.’”

After only two years of being an assistant coach for the Red Hawks, Holder got a chance to take his young coaching career to new heights when a long-time friend of Potts, former NBA player and current assistant coach of the Atlanta Hawks, Chris Jent, reached out about him to a job with the franchise.

Jent had the responsibility a few summers ago to add video interns to the Atlanta Hawks video room. Holder and Jent met in Holder’s first year as an assistant coach with the Red Hawks in Portland, Oregon, when the Red Hawks were playing in a tournament.

Jent gave the Red Hawk basketball team tickets to the Atlanta Hawks game versus the Portland Trailblazers, and let Holder know during one of their talks that there may be a job opening up later on down the line.

On Aug. 16, 2020, Holder’s dream became a reality. Jent reached out to Potts and told him he needed someone to fill the video assistant role. Before they knew it, the former Moravian basketball star’s name came up in conversation.

“I called college coaches that I knew, and I spoke to a number of people,” Jent said. “I really respect coach Potts’ opinion, the judgment of character, work ethic and all those things. So, getting a group of names, talking to [Holder] and just getting a good feel of him and obviously, coach Potts’ recommendation, put him toward the top of the list.”

It wasn’t only Potts who had given Jent the recommendation, but a former classmate did as well. Scott Davidson rented out the Montclair State gym this past summer for workouts and Davidson marveled at the way Holder was such a big help.

“When I received a call from [Davidson] and the way he spoke of [Holder] and the type of person he was, in addition to his willingness to help them out and be there for them, I kind of got that vibe talking to him on the phone,” Jent said. “[I also got that vibe] from his interest in coaching, wanting to be on the floor and always willing to chip in. The fact that he spent a lot of time on the floor with the guys demonstrating or being the rebounder and just doing a lot of things on the court was kind of a clincher.”

Holder landed the video assistant job over the summer. His job details in player personnel notes, scouting players and assisting in player development coaching. Player-developing is one of Holder’s favorite things to do because he works with the assistant coaches who help guys develop their game and help out in practice.

Holder knew he was coming into the team as a video assistant, but was also aware that he would be pulled into different directions and he was ready for the challenge.

“You’re not just one title,” Hold- er said. “You pick one status, but your role is many; there are multiple job roles in one title. You just have to be there and be present and everything will work itself out.”

Several times throughout his day, Holder takes the time to soak in how surreal working for an NBA team has been.

“My first couple of times going through the experience was surreal,” Holder said. “And even now, after going through it for a whole season, you still look up sometimes and [think], ‘It’s still a surreal feeling that I’m here sometimes.’ It’s just a blessing and you don’t take it for granted.”

Working in the sports industry is a very hard place to break into. Sometimes it’s about the people you know — but it’s also about the hard work you put in that builds the connection with people.

“One thing is to work hard, and a lot of people don’t understand that,” Holder said. “It may seem very cliché, but hard work pays off man, it really does. I was grateful to know a lot of people that kind of steered me in this direction. [As] for the next generation and group of young guys: just take it every day and continue to work your tail off.”