Administration Addresses Title IX Concerns

Emma Caughlan
New Editor-In-Chief

The Montclair State University Student Government Association (SGA) inaugurated the upcoming 2022-2023 executive board on May 1 after a three-year hiatus. “Our mantra was the ‘revival’, bringing student life back and making sure the students are heard by any means. And I gladly say we’ve accomplished that.” -Ashon Lanada, former SGA executive board member and president of SGA who is also a senior business administrator.

Lyline Olivacce
New Photo Editor

“Their mantra was the ‘revival’, bringing student life back and making sure the students are heard by any means. And I gladly say we’ve accomplished that.” -Ashon Lanada

Student Government Association Inaugurates New Executive Board

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“Sometimes there’s misinformation out there and that’s why I’m so glad we had the opportunity to speak.” -Yolanda Alvarez

Title IX is based on federal law and Gender-Based Discrimination are the two different processes that handle instances of sexual misconduct at Montclair State. Title IX is based on university policies. Other solutions are in their early stages of planning. One is hiring more people to aid Alvarez and Connor. “There may be a different setup in terms of an extra person or persons that will have roles in the process that will be helpful to making people feel that there’s support,” Soufleris said. “[Alvarez and Connor] do an unbelievable job, but they’re two people at a very large institution.” The hope is to announce additional support over the summer.

Sexual Misconduct continued on Page 3

A woman twerks in another woman’s face on the dance floor.

John LaRosa | The Montclarion

SENIOR GOODBYES
Starting on Page 18

The Montclarion
#MSUSStudentVoice Since 1928
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Information reported in the Red Hawk Rap Sheet comes directly from sheet unless information directly from the police report is incorrect. We can print an update to the events only if the newspaper is given access to relevant documents to corroborate the information.

Check out our Newsletter!
Sexual Misconduct
Continued from Page 1

Soufleris attributes the rise in sexual misconduct incidents to the pandemic and thinks education is the first step towards a solution. “I can’t believe the impact of the pandemic and particularly for our younger students, our first-year students and our second-year students and I think this incoming class, what they missed is their social interactions in high school and early college that we just all take for granted,” Soufleris said. “We’re also going to be utilizing our new orientation process [which will be in-person again] to get that information and have conversations with our brand new students.”

In addition to this, there is discussion of mini-town hall meetings between a small group of students and the Title IX coordinators. “[Alvarez and Connor would] go out and [do this presentation] for smaller groups, collect information, have good dialogue and maybe it has to be done 10 or 15 times to reach a lot of students,” Soufleris said.

SGA Inauguration
Continued from Page 1

But he also acknowledges those individuals who have helped him throughout the year. One of those people is Pamela Mitchell, the Bookkeeper, whom he presented an award to.

“When times were really tough in my life you really helped me through,” Estrada said. “From all of the work to losing my father. Thank you so much for all that you do and for all that you’ve done [and] thank you for rocking the SGA.”

The executive vice president of SGA, Karla Farfan-Miguel, a senior justice studies major, also presented the award to Mitchell. “Freshman year [I was] a legislature and I worked alongside [Mitchell] my freshman year,” Farfan-Miguel said. “The advice she gave to us in times of conflict and times of misunderstanding and times when we just didn’t know which way to look and which way was up. I always refer back to the words that she says to us and the advice that she’s given us on how to treat each other and how to treat the job [and] on how to present ourselves.”

As the ball came to an end, candles were lit to officially inaugurate SGA’s new 2022-2023 executive board. The current executive board, which is also the first Latinx board, lit the candles for the upcoming board.

Richard Steiner-Otoo, the upcoming executive president of SGA and a sophomore earth and environmental science major, expressed how he is looking forward to a successful year. “I am incredibly excited, it’s an honor to be in this position and it’s an honor to serve the students,” Steiner-Otoo said. “I can’t even put into words how excited I am. I’m looking forward to building relationships with administrators and the student body.”
Reporting From the Field class poses for a photo in New Orleans.

Student Journalists Report From New Orleans

Erin Lawlor
Assistant News Editor

Montclair State University journalism students had the opportunity to go to New Orleans, Louisiana during their spring break to get the ultimate hands-on experience and report on current issues that impact the city, such as climate change and racial justice.

Montclair State University journalism students had the opportunity to go to New Orleans, Louisiana during their spring break to get the ultimate hands-on experience and report on current issues that impact the city, such as climate change and racial justice.

Students produced investigative and feature pieces for the Reporting From the Field class that focuses on teaching valuable skills to produce content in the field, led by professors Steve McCarthy and David Sanders.

Bernice Ndegwa, a junior journalism and digital media major, said this course allowed her and her classmates to challenge themselves not only personally, but also in the professional aspect.

“I think the best way to learn sometimes is to just do it,” Ndegwa said. “That’s exactly what we did during this trip. I know for [a fact] that we all did something that we had never done before during the trip and we all left as better journalists because of it.”

Before departing to New Orleans, students got the chance to plan their stories ahead of time during class. For some, this was very challenging because interviews would fall through and they needed to find an entirely new story before leaving.

Ryan Breyta, junior journalism and digital media major shared how difficult it was to stick to a specific story and how he ended up reporting on Tuba Skinny, a local band that plays in some New Orleans bars.

“That was not my first choice at all,” Breyta said. “I wanted to do a piece on garbage in the city and how trash was there and how no one [has] picked it up since Hurricane Ida. I wanted to do another piece about the environment, but everything fell through.”

Breyta also explained that he found his Tuba Skinny piece idea just a week before leaving for the trip and it allowed him to explore a different area of journalism.

“I was sitting there the week before like ‘oh my God, I am not going to have a piece,’” Breyta said. “I am a huge news person, so this is not the kind of piece I am usually accustomed to, but I am glad I did it because I got to do a piece I’m not used to doing, a feature story about a band that was a lot of fun to do.”

Michelle Coneo, a senior journalism major, said she always wanted to do print journalism, but during this trip opened her eyes to more parts of the journalism field.

“I have always been biased in the sense that I wanted to do print journalism since the moment I started at Montclair [State],” Coneo said. “But this gave me the opportunity to explore a wider opportunity when it comes to TV and it gave me more in how to shoot, lighting, interviewing and a lot of minus-cule things that go into video and TV that I never realized.”

Coneo also added that her piece was the only crime story in the NewsLab special.

“We got to ride along with a breaking news reporter from New Orleans,” Coneo said. “This is kind of something not to be excited about but I was very excited about it, we got to go to a homicide scene and my adrenaline was pumping. We were able to see firsthand what the people do on a day-to-day basis in the job that we want to do.”

This is exactly the experience McCarthy and Sanders wanted the students to get out of this trip.

“What journalism is about is getting out the door,” McCarthy said. “You have to get out the door, there is a trend in journalism now to sit behind a computer, you really need to go to the place where it is happening. You need to talk to the people in person to practice really good journalism.”

Sanders explained regular classes go on three to four shoots a semester, but in the case of this trip, they were working 18 hours a day.

“We were setting up, doing a shoot, packing up, getting ready for another shoot,” Sanders said. “So the students are getting in one [week's] time more experience shooting than they would have gotten in their four years.”

Both professors have been teaching together for the last 10 years and have taken students to Malawi, Greece and many other places.

“When director [Keith Struddler] got here he guided us to create a course to do this,” McCarthy said. “The great thing about that is we have more students and also we have this pre-production time where they search for stories, search for characters, book them [and] create a schedule for when we are down there.”

To learn more and witness the hard work that these journalism students have put in for their segments, Montclair NewsLab will be hosting a special screening on May 11, called “New Orleans | The Raging Storms” in the Presentation Hall of the School of Communication and Media.
The Montclarion • May 5, 2022 • PAGE 5

Transportation Mask Mandate Lifted

Erin Lawlor
Assistant News Editor

Two weeks ago, Gov. Phil Murphy announced face masks are no longer required in public transportation per a federal judge eliminated the mask mandate. For some Montclair State University students who have access to a car, the new regulation may not make a difference, but other students who rely on public transportation are concerned.

Charlotte Molter, a junior animation/illustration major, is one of those students who rely on public transportation and shared how she feels about the new rule. “I feel a little hasty,” Molter said. “Some transportation, you’re not even there for that long and it’s very [close quarters] with a lot of people. And at this point where we are in the pandemic, it’s not uncommon to hear people still getting coronavirus (COVID-19) so it’s weird to make that cut back now. I believe this decision will increase the cases since people have to use transportation all of the time.”

Given that she now has full freedom to unmask on transportation, Molter also said she stands by her decision of leaving her mask on, no matter where she is. “I feel it’s a little hasty,” Molter said. “Some transportation, you’re not even there for that long and it’s very [close quarters] with a lot of people. And at this point where we are in the pandemic, it’s not uncommon to hear people still getting coronavirus (COVID-19) so it’s weird to make that cut back now. I believe this decision will increase the cases since people have to use transportation all of the time.”

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The average human being would scowl at the idea of being packed into an unfamiliar vehicle and transported to an unidentified location. Many would run away at the proposition. However, combined with cash-only booze, a decent banquet, Brooklyn drill music and a Moulin Rouge-themed dress code, one may receive several hundred enthusiastic nods of approval instead.

This was precisely the case at Montclair State University last Wednesday, April 27, when Student Life at Montclair (SLAM) held its 2022 edition of the Spring Bash. March into University Hall with a CDC-approved vaccination card or a negative test and a legal ID, sign your rights away to SLAM and you can be herded into a coach bus to be driven two minutes down to Valley Regency in Clifton.

Located conveniently on Valley Road, the Valley Regency is the event space and banquet hall that was selected as the site for SLAM’s Spring Bash. Upon passing through a red balloon arch, one would find themselves in a massive banquet hall dotted with black-tuxedo-donned servers dishing throughout the room. With the words “MOULIN ROUGE” spelled out in massive, illuminated lettering.

For the banquet, there was a modest salad with a balsamic vinaigrette as the appetizer. Followed by an attempt to appease the event’s carnivores by serving both grilled chicken and roasted veggies.

For dessert, there was a grab-bag of Italian cookies that seemed to go untouched by most throughout the night.

From dancers with tasseled dresses and feathers perched atop their heads to the slip-n-slide-spilled-drink dance floor, the night remained at a classy and lavish level. And between couples sharing publicly intimate moments and testosterone-fueled mash-pits, the night seemed to be a success as well for most.

It was a time for revelers to celebrate the end of the spring semester and a sluggish return to their regularly-scheduled academic careers.
Have a thought about on campus or off campus matters? Write for Opinion!

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When Sergeant 1st Class Scott R. Smith was killed in 2006 in Iraq by an improvised explosive device, Garilynn Smith, the Sgt.'s widow and a current senior jurisprudence major at Montclair State University, was overwhelmed with grief, as any military widow would be. Gold Star families give the ultimate sacrifice and they are viewed with great respect and dignity.

But when Garilynn Smith started looking into what happened with her husband’s remains the next year, she was treated with anything but respect and dignity in the next 15-year process that unfolded. When Smith finally got the answers she was looking for, what she found was truly shocking and abhorrent. After her husband was cremated, his partial remains were sent to a landfill in Virginia, grouped with medical waste.

The remains of soldiers who were killed in action must be dealt with respectfully. A Department of Defense directive even orders it. But that would suggest spreading ashes out at sea or Arlington National Cemetery or sending them back home with the next-of-kin if possible. But mixing American heroes along with trash is anything but respectful.

She was first told this information through a phone call with the military mortuary in Dover, Delaware a year or two after her husband’s death after much effort was spent trying to get answers. At first, she didn’t believe it.

“The man on the phone] cut me off again and said, ‘No one wanted your husband, so he was cremated with the rest of the medical waste from the hospital and thrown in the trash,’” Smith said. “So that was my initial information that I found out. I obviously didn’t believe that. I thought the guy was just being rude and I thought he was pissed off.”

But when she continued to ask questions, she eventually realized that the man on the phone hadn’t been lying. A few years later in 2011, after more digging around, she received an informal letter from one of the managers of the Dover mortuary confirming that her husband’s remains were sent to a landfill in Virginia.

At the end of the letter, it read: “I hope this information brings some comfort to you during your time of loss.” It did not for Smith. And to add insult to injury, the letter had the wrong first name of Smith’s husband and the wrong date, with the year 2008 instead of 2011.

Outraged, Smith went to a representative near where she lived, Congressman Rush Holt Jr., and told him what was going on. Once they started to ask more questions, they found out that the partial remains of at least 274 confirmed fallen soldiers, and possibly more had been treated the same way as Smith’s husband’s.

Smith then shared this information with The Washington Post once other whistleblowers came forward about other mishandlings of fallen service members. The Post published an article exposing the situation on Nov. 9, 2011.

At the same time, Smith was also a civilian Army employee. After a brief time working for the Navy civilian service, a job opened up at her former Army arsenal in 2012 that Smith was interested in. A co-worker told her about the position, so she applied. However, it was well-known among the higher-ups at the Picatinny Arsenal she was working at in New Jersey that she was looking into what happened to her husband’s remains. She had shared her story with The Washington Post who then exposed the Army. She was a whistleblower.

First, the job application closed. Smith had a funny feeling about what was going on, but she applied again when the job application reopened. She still didn’t get the job. Smith was on the top list of candidates both times she applied, but she was passed up for an applicant who had forgot-
ten to attach certain documents the first time.

Smith challenged the decision, saying that the Army had violated a law that prohibited discriminating against whistleblowers. But she got nowhere. After over two and a half years, the investigation by the Office of Special Counsel ended. It was then that she decided to go to court in 2015.

At first, she fought the battle alone, without a lawyer. That’s where Graig Corveleyan, a lawyer working for Smith on other legal matters, came in.

Smith had told Corveleyan that the case probably wouldn’t get that far, that the Army would probably settle.

“I thought, ‘Okay, [this will] be a way to keep client contact and maybe get something in and quickly completed,’” Corveleyan said. “Little did I know that seven years later, I would still be dealing with this case.”

The first hearing for the case took place in October 2016. Seven months later, the administrative law judge gave his ruling: the Department of the Army had violated whistleblower protection law when they had passed over Smith back in 2012. As a result, the judge ordered the Army to give Smith the position she had applied for, as well as back pay.

However, the Department of the Army appealed this ruling. The department claimed the judge “was sympathetic” and “considered hearsay evidence” in his ruling. It wasn’t quite over for Smith just yet.

In fact, it wasn’t over until five years later. The administrative court that had jurisdiction over this matter, the Merit Systems Protection Board (MSPB), is typically made up of three members and needs at least two to make legal decisions. From the time of the appeal to just before it was decided in April 2022, there were either one or no members on the board.

Why? The President appoints members to the board as they do to any other court, and the Senate must approve them. But no matter how many judges, both former President Donald Trump and President Joe Biden nominated, none were ever called to a vote on the Senate floor.

That was from January 2017 to March 2022. Smith had been passed up for the job 10 years ago. She had found out the news about her husband’s remains 11 years ago and had lost her husband almost 16 years ago.

“How much more time of my life are they going to tie up and are they going to take from me? Because I feel like 15 years of my life [have] been robbed fighting these battles. I’m 42. I’ve given up my career. I’m starting completely over again.”

-Garilynn Smith

However, on March 1, 2022, two appointees were confirmed by the Senate. A month and a half later, on April 17, they denied the department’s appeal and decided on Smith’s side once again.

When Corevleyan texted her about the decisions, Smith was overwhelmed with relief.

“I just broke down,” Smith said. “I was just like ‘finally.’ For 15 years of grief built up in one moment to come out in 28 pages. [The judges] summarized my entire 15 years in 28 simple pages.”

Smith and Corevleyan were so overjoyed at first that they didn’t realize something else. Their case wasn’t just like any case; it was precedential, which means it will be used as a basis for similar cases in the future.

“I think that the reason that it was made precedential was [that] the court was concerned with the upper-level stuff, with the whistleblower stuff, ‘Is she a whistleblower?’” Corveleyan said. “And if she is a whistleblower, did she experience this prohibited personnel practice?”

The Department of the Army has 60 days since the court decision to appeal again, but Smith and Corevleyan don’t expect this to happen. Instead, Smith is focused on graduating with her bachelor’s degree this year and then moving on to law school, inspired by her own case.

“I’m very proud of this case obviously, but I feel like all of this work was worth it,” Smith said. “And I hope that this is the case that will show other people that they can make a difference, just one voice can encourage people to come forward and cancel bad management.”
Montclair State Alumni Establishing Entrepreneurial Careers

Amaya Graham
Guest Writer

Some Montclair State University alumni have taken what they learned in college and applied it to their careers, creating brands they plan to expand upon.

Junior A. Morel, an alumnus who graduated in 2020 with a degree in television production, created his brand, Morel Publishing, in 2021. Morel Publishing is a multifaceted brand that allows people from different creative backgrounds to express themselves. “I look at it as a house for creators where it’s not unsafe to say how you feel or express it differently, whether it’s art, writing, acting or producing,” Morel said.

Morel’s passion for writing is one reason why he began Morel Publishing. “During the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, it was tough to express my emotions because nobody was really going out or talking to people, so I started writing,” Morel said. “I do it all the time now.”

Although Morel realized the influence that his writing has during the pandemic, he also enjoyed writing while attending Montclair State. He credits his creative writing professor with giving him topics here and there but he would allow us to come up with the actual story; Morel said. “I feel like I use that every day when I [want to] write something.”

Although Morel Publishing is currently a side hustle for Morel, he plans to expand upon it through film production. “One of the big ideas I have for this summer is to have a big film, a short film,” Morel said. “That’s definitely the next big step for the brand. It’s not something that’s been done before in the brand.”

Another student who began her journey in entrepreneurship after graduating from Montclair State is 2020 alumna, Sharese “Shay” Sumter. While at Montclair State, she majored in sociology and minored in journalism.

Sumter created her podcast, titled “Young, Boujie, and Black,” in August 2020 with her “long-distance best friend” and cohost, Nomblé J. Tanner. The podcast focuses on topics such as relationships, spirituality and sexuality.

Sumter explains how she and Tanner met while attending Montclair State. “I was an orientation peer leader the summer [after] my freshman year and she was actually in one of my orientation groups,” Sumter said.

Although they were friends while attending Montclair State, they grew closer after Tanner transferred following her freshman year in 2018. Sumter speaks about how distance strengthened their friendship. “Once [Tanner] moved back to Connecticut, we got closer,” Sumter said. “I just don’t understand how but I literally talk to her every day.”

Sumter spoke about how she and Sumter’s bond influenced them to start a podcast. “[Shay and I], being long-distance best friends, talked often over FaceTime,” Tanner said. “And we were having so many interesting conversations [and we thought] that maybe other people would find [what we were saying] interesting.”

Sumter uses the marketing skills she gained being on the social media team for The Montclarion to help expand her podcast’s audience. Some skills include using search engine optimization and hashtags.

Sumter spoke about how these skills helped her and Tanner gain traction when starting their podcast. “I thought we were going to get like five listeners,” Sumter said. “I wasn’t expecting a lot when we first started the podcast, but when I saw it was forty, I was like ‘You guys like us?’”

Sumter and Tanner have massive visions for where they see the podcast going. They aspire to grow their audience, begin creating revenue and have a podcast deal. As people who are working to expand their brands, Morel, Sumter and Tanner have meaningful advice for college students who have similar goals.

Morel stresses the importance of following your dreams. “Don’t let anything like likes, comments or social media pages influence you to not do what you [want to] do,” Morel said.

Tanner spoke about the importance of strong marketing skills. “Market to your friends and family but also open your mind to all the possibilities that could occur,” Tanner said.

Sumter advised those who want to enter entrepreneurship to just go for it. “Whenever you feel like you wanna venture into making a YouTube channel or making your own business, just do it,” Sumter said. “More than likely, everything will work its way out.”
The Montclarion • May 5, 2022 • PAGE 11

The Student Life At Montclair State University hosted a Y2K Fashion Show during their Spring Week events. The organization celebrated its Spring Week by hosting a different event every day from April 13 to the 29.

The festivities consisted of a Dave & Busters trip, Spring Concert, SLAM Channel Games, a Breakfast Bar event and so much more. While this was just the beginning of the fun, the organization decided to show its love for the Y2K fashion era with the Y2K Fashion Show.

The fashion show featured seven categories where models had the opportunity to show off their own personal style to different central themes. Models were asked to create looks based on their favorite heels, air forces, jewelry and hip-hop artists.

Jasmine Bullen, a senior dance major, noticed this personal touch to the SLAM’s Y2K Fashion Show.

“I’m really loving it,” Bullen said. “It’s really nice to see everybody in their different styles of fashion and really show off their individuality.”

The fashion show featured seven categories where models had the opportunity to show off their own personal style to different central themes. Models were asked to create looks based on their favorite heels, air forces, jewelry and hip-hop artists.

The fashion show also showcased three designers from across the tri-state area. Alicia Lavette Fashions, Prophecy Clothing and Tashii Couture all brought a unique flavor to the runway.

Alicia Lavette Fashions showcased hand-sewn designs that played with colorful patterns. Prophecy Clothing brought a streetwear vibe showing off pieces like varsity jackets, graphic tees and rhinestone velour pants.

The show ended with Tashii Couture’s evening wear, which specializes in hand-sewn garments.

It’s no surprise that the Y2K era of fashion is coming back. With the new generation welcoming back nostalgic moments through time, this era was bound to grace the fashion scene once again.

The 2000s, the era of Y2K, seemed to be obsessed with two-piece sets, low-rise jeans, mini pleated skirts and bedazzled crop tops. This era of fashion has built its starter kit with the infamous Juicy Couture tracksuits.

It seems to be one of the comfiest and most playful eras of fashion. Looking back, many celebrities experimented with different patterns, textures and overall aesthetics.

Students who came out to the fashion show were asked to embody what they felt Y2K fashion was all about. After some time, the host of the show asked a member of the audience to model on the runway. Other students also got up on stage to show off their style.

Dayah Abdullah, a freshman undecided, was excited to come out and show off her style as well as support her friends.

“I loved the show,” Abdullah said. “I literally live in the 2000s, everything about me, even the music I listen to. Just because we can’t see each other more doesn’t mean we have to stop texting.”

Rana Rezk, a senior business administration major and event coordinator behind the show, was happy with how it turned out. Rezk put together multiple model practices and meetings to make sure the show ran as smoothly as possible.

“I honestly think it came out fire,” Rezk said. “I think it looked really good. I’m really proud of all the models. They really rocked it. It was amazing.”
Editors: Where do you see yourself in 10 years?

By John LaRosa
Photo Editor

“In 10 years, I’d love to be established in the journalism industry. But really, I just hope that with whatever I’m doing, I’m happy, surrounded by awesome people and loving life. I also hope I get the chance to travel all over the world by then.”

Sam Nungesser
Editor-in-Chief

“My dream job is to be a senior editor for a major sports publication such as ESPN or Sports Illustrated.”

Corey Annan
Sports Editor

“I hope I’m happy honestly. I also hope to be an Oscar winner living in my Newport Beach mansion, but happy nonetheless.”

Sam Bailey
Feature Editor
“If I’m not being posthumously described in an incredibly poetic way by Keith Morrison on ‘Dateline,’ then I see myself as a successful author who teaches creative writing. Financial stability, good friends, a vegetable garden, some animals—I think I could be happy with that. Oh, and please no loss of any of my limbs, I really like them and I would hate to lose my tattoos.”

Maddye Belov-Boxer
Opinion Editor

“I see myself hopefully working for a magazine, non-profit or government organization either writing, doing PR or digital marketing. I honestly just want to be in a position where I can be happy and continue to help people!”

Ariel Rogg
Co-Chief Copy Editor

“Living in a city apartment with lots of windows and a dog while working as an artist, and to be a best-selling author with my book ‘Shrimp Facts: What the Media Won’t Tell You.’”

Ian Long
Production Editor

“I’m not sure but hopefully I’ll be having fun somewhere, probably New York.”

Rose Kershner
Social Media Manager

“Living in a city apartment with lots of windows and a dog while working as an artist, and to be a best-selling author with my book ‘Shrimp Facts: What the Media Won’t Tell You.’”

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There are 57 Species of Shrimp that date back to the Lower Jurassic and Cretaceous eras. Several ports on the coasts of the United States claim to be the "shrimp capital" of the entire world. Though "shrimp" is often used to refer to something small, there's no indication of how that correlation began.
Across
1. This 2019 film follows two best friends who realize they have missed out on the special moments of their teenage years, taking place over a 24-hour period on the eve of their high school graduation, as they are determined to pack four years of fun into one night.
4. The third movie in this Disney Channel Original series follows the cast of characters throughout their senior year, including basketball games, college worries, prom, and graduation.
6. In this Rom-Com, a teenager that is forced to work at her family's diner has an ongoing anonymous relationship with the cutest boy in school in the weeks leading up to graduation.
7. This installment of a book-based fantasy romance series, includes the main protagonist's high school graduation amidst being threatened by enemy vampires and getting engaged to her immortal boyfriend.
8. This award winning film follows a young man, returning home after freshly graduating from college with no idea what he wants to do with his life, as he is seduced by his neighbor—a bored housewife—and falls in love with her daughter.

Down
2. The 2014 sequel to this superhero film begins with the titular character being late to his high school graduation due to his heroic duties, making a memorable entrance by pulling his valedictorian-girlfriend into a kiss.
3. This 1998 Rom-Com follows the events of a graduation party attended by the entire graduating class—from jocks to popular girls to nerds—as they try to accomplish individual goals desired throughout high school and interesting developments unfold.
5. This early 2000s adventure drama follows a recent graduate, as he rejects the path laid out for him, “throwing away” his future in favor of a journey to the Alaskan wilderness.

Word Search

Sudoku
As the year comes to a close, it is once again time for Assistants to become Editors, and to send Editors out into the world. It’s been an exciting year, and though we will most definitely feel your absences in the office next year, we will always cherish the times we spent making elaborate Instagram reels, among other things.

I’ve always found goodbyes to be extremely difficult, so I’ll just leave you all with a thank you. Thanks for all the laughs, Taylor Swift songs, and pizza. Wishing you all the best of luck in the future, even though I know you all won’t need it.

Sam Nunguesser is passing on her headache to Emma Caughlan, who will become Editor in Chief.

Avery Nixon will take on the responsibility of constantly having opinions for Maddye Belov-Boxer.

Emma Barber will uphold @themontclarion on all social medias for Rose Kershner.

Hannah Effinger will replace Ian Long as The Montclarion’s human sacrifice to Adobe Indesign.
John LaRosa will pass on his tendency to take pictures of everyone in the office mid-bite to Lynise Olivacce.

John Josephsen will hold themontclarion.org together for Michael Banovic. Emma Caughlan will make Jenna Sundel her minion as Managing Editor.

Katie Lawrence will take over as resident Instagram Reel planner for Hailey Mayewski.

Megan Lim will take over for Megan Lim as Entertainment Editor.

Megan Lim will take over for Megan Lim as Entertainment Editor.

Matt Orth will uphold the sports section and its small army of writers for Corey Annan.

Kim Lamparello will take over as Copy Queen for Ariel Rogg.

Sal DiMaggio will replace Sam Bailey’s Gourmet Bailey with Dishin’ with DiMaggio.

Jennifer Portorreal will take over for Jenna Sundel as News Editor.

John Josephsen will hold themontclarion.org together for Michael Banovic.

Emma Caughlan will make Jenna Sundel her minion as Managing Editor.
To My Montclarion Family

We often talk about that first production day and how awkward and silent it was — and let's not forget we worked on the paper until midnight and thought for a moment the printer might have gone home. I truly believe it was our Halloween potluck where we all came to production day in costumes that fully broke the ice (and it was also the start of our Instagram reels, another big bonding tactic). From there, it was an endless stream of laughs, Megan Lim and Jenna Sundel throwing stress balls at everyone on late production nights, weekend gatherings at Emma Caughlan’s apartment and the ever-famous Corey-oke (aka Corey Annan singing everything from Taylor Swift to Kesha for everyone).

Whenever I get asked what I love most about this paper, my immediate answer is always the people. Yes, it’s given me the editing practice, the writing practice and the leadership practice. But none of that matters without being around some of the most talented, bright and wildly hilarious group of human beings I could ever imagine possible.

To mention each of them and what they mean to me would require a novel. However, I will say this: I have been able to make the best memories, completely topping any college experience I could have imagined as the 18-year-old filling out that transfer application, and it is all because of them. I am beyond grateful to have crossed paths with each and every person in this organization whether they were there since the beginning of this school year or just joined this semester. We are all so different, yet click so well.

To my Montclarion family: I love you all and you are all going to do the most amazing things in your life. For those who aren’t graduating just yet, I can’t wait to see everything you do with this paper, it is absolutely being left in the best hands.

Thank you for giving me the college experience I always wished for. And also for dealing with my insane deadlines and prioritized sleep schedule. Okay, no more sappy. See you guys Saturday?

Sam Nungesser, a senior journalism major, was the Entertainment Editor her junior year, and Editor-In-Chief her senior year.

Now Sending to Print

Honestly, I never saw myself as a large part of The Montclarion team. For a long time, I kept myself in the background quietly illustrating articles and experimenting with layout design. That was until the position of Production Editor opened up.

I figured I would give it a shot, being that I was already familiar with how the newspaper functioned and could finesse my way through InDesign. Luckily, I was the editor-in-chief of a newspaper and made an easy transition from intern to employee.

As I made minuscule edits to the section layouts each week, I found myself becoming more and more intertwined with the team. The Montclarion workplace allowed me to be more than just a coworker. I could balance work and play, logging hours while dancing to Taylor Swift and cackling over jokes being thrown around. Leading through the papers, I realize how much time I’ve put into this amazing organization that is such a staple to the campus community. This job has helped me solidify my love for design and journalism and learn how to combine the two effectively.

The most unbelievable part of this whole year has been the people. I couldn’t have asked for a more amazing group to work with. Talented, hard-working kind people who I can rely on for support at any given time. Now, in my last week at the paper, I’m glad to say everyone on the team from editors to interns has become people I would consider friends.

I’ll miss having Wednesdays dedicated to eating grotesque amounts of pizza and screaming over Mario Kart. Though, I don’t think I’ll miss the tragedy that is the Adobe Suite or being the unofficial doorman for the office. I’m wishing the best of luck to the future team, I know our newspaper is in great hands.

Shoutout to Hannah for being the loveliest assistant and friend I could have had during this time.

Slay, boats the house down, geek out, etc.

Ian Long, a senior animation and illustration major and was Production Editor their senior year.
I have thought a lot about what I wanted this piece to be like. I wanted it to be funny, memorable, and unique. All things I never really felt I was. Growing up I never pictured myself being this old. As a child, I never saw my life past high school. Anything beyond it was simply unthinkable. Not that I was suicidal, but I just didn’t see the point in existing past that point in your life. Wouldn’t that be the best life you would get for me?

As a freshman at Montclair State University, I had no friends. I went to school, sat alone in the Venture Cafe in the School of Business most days, watched Friends on my laptop while I ate lunch and put headphones in as I rode the shuttle. The one organization I did join, though, was The Montclarion. Due to my crippling self-doubt, I never actually wrote anything for the paper my first year. I was just a sports photographer. Photography was something I was completely secure in.

In the fall of 2019, my sophomore year, I decided to start writing. I needed something for my resume and I loved cooking. That’s when I started @Gourmetbailey’s Just a Bite, my recipe column in the paper. I finally felt like I was good at something. Even with writing for the paper consistently, I still didn’t have any friends at Montclair State. I don’t know if it’s because I have a certifiable “resting [expletive] face” or because I was afraid of opening up to people. Maybe it was a bit of both.

It stayed that way until this past fall when I found the friends I had been longing for.

In the final few months at this paper, I became close with a number of people. These people have given me something I hadn’t found yet at this school, genuine love. A feeling like I would do anything for them and vice versa.

I have never laughed as hard or smiled so big as when I would spend time around them. I’m eternally grateful to these people.

As my time at Montclair State ends I’ll look back at my experience here incredibly fondly. I went from hating it here to hating the thought of leaving.

I know we’re leaving our paper in the best hands and the people who will be in charge are all so talented and I’m thankful I got to know a lot of them very well. I’m also grateful for our 2021 to 2022 E-board. They are some of the best people I’ve met in my life and I’ll miss them significantly.

Despite my previous notion, being involved in this organization has given me the confidence and love I need to not only picture my future life and career but work toward it. I finally see a future where I can be funny, memorable, and unique in whatever I choose.

I owe a lot of that to this paper, this community college was to drop out and be a vendor at Coca-Cola because I hated school so much. Three years later and here we are.

Journalism is something I stumbled upon completely by mistake. I applied for a general communications degree, but my advisor accidentally put journalism (shoutout to Stephanie Wood).

It goes to show that you’ll never know where life is going to take you. That’s the lesson I’ve learned while being here. Maybe it’s true that you do find yourself being here. That’s the lesson I’ve learned while being here. As a child, I never pictured my future life and me the confidence and love I need to not only picture my future life and career but work toward it. I finally see a future where I can be funny, memorable, and unique in whatever I choose.

I owe a lot of that to this paper, this school and these people.

Sam Bailey is a senior television and digital media major and was Feature Editor her senior year.
I have always been scared to grow up, and have not written an article in two years. We will see how this goes.

I didn’t join The Montclarion my freshman year because I missed the first meeting and was scared to come late. I went to the Video Production Club meeting instead and met some of my best friends who have watched me sing Big Time Rush, cry in Blanton Hall and gradually learn to start cursing.

Luckily, I followed those same friends into a Montclarion meeting my sophomore year and joined the social media team as an “Instagram minion.”

I was having a lot of fun and even wrote three feature articles to earn the coveted staff writer swag bag. After I secured a Montclarion hat, I stopped pitching articles and focused on promoting other people’s work, and I eventually became the Social Media Manager. I love getting to read every article we publish and helping students share their ideas. Watching people fight in our comment section was always fun. Though, I did have to learn some self-restraint while reading through them. I’ve learned more about sports and parking regulations than I ever would have expected and am honestly so impressed with all of The Montclarion writers for putting their words to the page even after they got the swag bag. I don’t spend as much time in the office as the editors, but they are always so welcoming and fun to hang out with whenever I do stumble in.

Jenna Sundel taught me how to jerk, and Maddye Belov-Boxer and Emma Caughlan introduced me to the Mediterranean bowl at Panera, which is a pretty big step for a mac and cheese girl.

My favorite part about these last semesters with The Montclarion has been watching our Editor-in-Chief Sam Nungesser be an amazing leader and TikTok director. Sam became one of my best friends last year and I got to see her love for Paris Hilton and vacuuming while laughing on her living room floor. It is crazy to think we used to mumble ourselves during The Montclarion Zoom critique sessions to giggle and this year she ran the meetings like a pro!

Watching Sam go above and beyond for this paper makes me so proud and excited to see what she does next. I’m hoping I get to be that crazy friend on her real housewife show someday. I can’t become any more sentimentally right now, so happy Montclarion to all, and to all a good night!

Ariel Rogg is a senior journalism major and was Co-Chief Copy Editor her senior year.

Thankful to Have The Montclarion in My (Copy) Corner

Ian Long | The Montclarion

The one singular regret I have from my Montclarion experience is that I didn’t join the team sooner. Coming into college, I was so eager to take on any and all leadership positions that would have me. High school wasn’t the best adventure for me and I’ve always been determined to make this university my second chance, my second home. It’s safe to say I’ve learned more about who I am and what I have to offer, and it’s been nothing short of fulfilling.

Being a journalism major, I’ve always been passionate about learning others’ stories and playing a role in telling them. But for a while, I felt like I didn’t deserve my place in the program. I applied and interviewed just like everyone else, but I felt behind or not as advanced, and I thought that made me lesser than.

In reality, everyone moves at their own pace and has something special to bring to the table, whether you have all the experience in the world or none at all. Comparison is the thief of joy. There’s a place for everyone as long as you’re willing to seek it. It took until my senior year to realize it, but better late than never.

I think my insecurity kept me from joining the Montclarion team for such a long time, with the feeling that I wouldn’t belong, but I couldn’t have been more wrong.

I can’t help but imagine what college could have really looked like had I been at The Montclarion earlier in my college career.

I never in my life have felt so welcomed, accepted and appreciated by a group of people in such a short amount of time. It’s easy to feel anxious or nervous about coming on board with people that you don’t know because you don’t know what to expect. I definitely didn’t expect to instantly add such genuine and supportive people to my life as soon as I stepped into the room.

Everyone here wants you to succeed and you can feel it when you’re around them.

Even though it might seem like I’m hiding in my little copy corner, I’m so immensely grateful to have been in this position and gotten the time that I did. Because of my experience with The Montclarion, I feel more empowered and excited to try new things and put myself out there, even if I don’t have it all figured out.

Corey Annan—thank you for nudging me for several years to get involved with the paper. It took way too long but I’m glad I finally took that leap. Thank you for absolutely everything, for being in my corner and for always hyping up my abilities even when I didn’t think I had them. Also, thank you to my co-copy queen Nathaly Martinez for having me on the team and being the best to work alongside this semester. You’re the sweetest and the greatest thing.

Thank you to the entire editorial board for welcoming me with open arms and making me feel so valued, it means more than you can know.

Good luck to next year’s copy queen Kim Llamparello, you’re gonna kill it!

Ariel Rogg is a senior journalism major and was Co-Chief Copy Editor her senior year.
Why The Montclarion Will Forever Be My Saving Grace

corey annan
sports editor

With tears in my eyes at the moment of writing this, it's time to say goodbye to the organization that developed me into the man I am today. To recap my time at The Montclarion in a short article feels impossible. This organization means everything to me. And at one point, it was the only thing I had going for me. Let me explain.

Like many students, the adjustment from high school to college was pretty rough for me. My grades in high school barely made the cutoff for Montclair State University and it prevented me from declaring my major until the Spring of 2019.

Furthermore, I was an insecure 18-year-old who lacked a backbone. But I had a chip on my shoulder—nobody was going to stop me from reaching my potential. I had no ties with yet. But I had a chip on my shoulder—nobody was going to stop me from reaching my potential. Having a byline in the most viewed stories later, I can say that I gave my very best to this organization.

Having a byline in the most viewed article in The Montclarion history was pretty sweet. Being named the sports editor in January 2021 after nearly three years of being an assistant editor was even sweeter. Winning two state media awards during my sophomore and junior year was an honor of a lifetime.

But no award will come close to the memories I’ve made with the people I’ve met at The Montclarion.

There are very few people in my life who I can totally act completely goofy and unconditionally myself around, and this year’s executive board was that group.

The amount of times I screamed Taylor Swift’s “All Too Well” song or danced to some frat party jams in The Montclarion office is most likely insurmountable. Shoutout to Megan Lim for being my biggest hater and motivator.

For everyone in the office to replicate that positive and light-hearted energy I brought every Wednesday allowed me to grow close bonds with so many of you. I’m entirely grateful for that.

The memories don’t stop in the office.

I will miss our gatherings at Emma Caughlan’s "traphouse" and our off-campus adventures such as Tommy’s Tavern for Christmas dinner and the 2022 College Media Association Convention in New York City.

For so long, I’ve felt like I had to put on a different persona around groups of people to fit in, but this organization taught me to truly appreciate the person I am.

There are so many people I can (and will be) thanking for my growth here at The Montclarion, but I can’t help but shout out a few.

Two people that I am incredibly grateful for are former sports editors Anthony Gabbianelli and Sam Impaglia. Anthony, you saw potential in a motivated, but inexperienced freshman sports writer, but you chose to stay patient with me. Thank you for teaching me that it’s not always about covering the X’s and O’s of a sporting event, but finding the powerful stories through these athletes and coaches that have been untold.

Sam, your leadership skills are second to none. You’ve instilled discipline and tough love in me whenever I may have fallen short while also uplifting me at my highest points, something I needed as a developing journalist.

Samantha Nungeesser, you truly were The Montclarion’s real MVP this year. Your ability to command respect from your peers and inspire others to create award-winning content is undoubtedly impressive. However, you’re more than just an editor-in-chief; you are one of the most kindhearted and uplifting people I’ve ever been around.

To my successor, Matt Orth, our team revitalized the sports section this year and that is primarily due to your tremendous growth all year. From the first week of the school year, you consistently came out with well-reported stories and have always been receptive to any critiques that came your way.

The results have shown. You are now an award-winning journalist and the next sports editor of this paper. I’m proud of you.

Finally, thank you to every writer, photographer, editor and more who I’ve had the pleasure of working with, conversing with, laughing with, etc. You have made working for a campus newspaper the most rewarding experience of my college career.

As Taylor Swift once said, “I remember it all too well.”

Corey Annan is a senior sports media journalism major and has been Sports Editor since his junior year.
On the day I met the rest of The Montclarion’s e-board in person, I had no idea I was meeting the people who would become like family to me. All I knew was it was too hot outside and I was woefully awkward from two years of little to no human interaction.

My training for the position was completely virtual, as made evident by the fact that I had to Google “how to turn on an Mac” on my first day in the office. I felt deeply unqualified and out of place, especially as an English major.

What on earth was I doing in a room full of budding journalists? Before I became the opinion editor, I had been indulging in a favorite pastime: beating myself up over the direction my life had taken. I felt like a failure for dropping out of one college halfway through and taking a gap year, which put me behind my peers.

What if things hadn’t played out exactly as they did? I wouldn’t have had the experience I did. Sure, I might still have been a part of The Montclarion, but I would have been a part of the greatest, funniest, most incredible group of people I have ever met in my life.

For years, I told myself it was better to be in self-imposed exile than to risk the pain of being rejected. Now I know it would have been so much worse to pass up this kind of opportunity. It sounds dramatic, but I don’t know who I would be or what I would have done without the certainty of pizza on Wednesdays, extremely lowkey gatherings at Emma Caughlan’s apartment, the stomach cramps from laughing at pictures of Phil Murphy, even the weekly reeks I pretended to be annoyed about.

I’m not the person I was before this year, and I say that in the best way possible. Everyone I met at The Montclarion has left a profound mark on me as a human, as a friend and as someone to look up to. Years from now, there are many things I may not remember about this time in my life, but nothing could make me forget the all-consuming joy these people have made me feel.

I knew my time at the paper would be over someday, I just didn’t know how soon the end would come. To the upcoming e-board, you are all outstandingly capable and I know you’re going to kill it. Avery, I am so proud of you, may you slay eternally.

I came to The Montclarion as someone who felt as though they had lost a part of themselves they couldn’t get back. I’m leaving it as an award-winning journalist, a changemaker and someone my 18-year-old self would be in awe of.

It’s funny for someone who made it their business to tell everyone exactly what they thought for eight months, I’m kind of at a loss for words.

I don’t think anyone could say I would have thought this would be enough to describe how much all of this has meant to me.

Maddye Belov-Boxer is a senior English major and was Opinion Editor her senior year.

Before I became the opinion editor, I had been indulging in a favorite pastime: beating myself up over the direction my life had taken. I felt like a failure for dropping out of one college halfway through and taking a gap year, which put me behind my peers.

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Maddye Belov-Boxer is a senior English major and was Opinion Editor her senior year.

I guess what I’m trying to say is that I am eternally grateful for The Montclarion. Picture this: You are back in high school. That could be good or bad, depending on what your experience was like, but let’s pretend for the next five minutes that you didn’t enjoy high school much.

So naturally, you look forward to college.

You can’t wait to make a new name for yourself — no more “shy” girl; no more “quiet” girl; no more “what’s her name-again?” girl; no more anything associated with being a loner girl.

Here’s the thing: You get to college, but before you know it, you can’t bring yourself to come out of that bubble.

You know, that bubble you use to protect yourself from social interactions. You wish you didn’t have it, but alas — it must have developed on its own from so many failed attempts at social interaction which really only ended in utter awkwardness and embarrassment.

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THE WORLD WITHOUT NEWS WOULD BE...
WMSC, Montclair State University’s radio station, is one of many unique clubs on campus. The various and diverse groups of students that make up this organization are unlike any other, especially those in “The Morning Buzz.”

“The Morning Buzz” is a student-operated talk show that takes place every weekday from 7:9 a.m., and each day features a different group of students. The show is broadcasted on 90.3 FM as well as live-streamed on Facebook and YouTube. Aside from focusing on current events and state-wide updates, students also share jokes, engage in entertaining stories and have competed in the inaugural “Battle of the Buzz.”

Seniors set to graduate this spring reflected on how they felt WMSC and “The Morning Buzz” had brought them to where they are today.

Kyle Pepitone, a senior animation/illustration major and host on “The Morning Buzz,” is one of them. “Overall, it’s been a very welcoming environment,” Pepitone said. “It’s very fun and loose in that you can do whatever you want to make a good show. It’s in the morning, so it’s a little difficult to get the day going so early, as not many college students are used to that. But to have different experiences within the radio is really versatile and is going to help me a lot in the real world.”

Pepitone also hosts two of his own shows, “King’s Chaos” and “Heav Is The Crown.”

Other seniors who host their own shows and had experience on “The Morning Buzz” also shared how being a part of WMSC shaped their past four years. Tara Cicchetti, a senior sociology major, shared how being a part of “The Morning Buzz” elevated her potential.

“The Morning Buzz was a chance for me to step outside of my comfort zone because doing breaking news stuff was never really my thing,” Cicchetti said. “So, being in a position like I had to be on every day was a challenge, but I put us in some really dynamic positions because we got to tell stories ranging from serious news to the most funny and ridiculous things.”

Along with Cicchetti, Nate Williams, a senior communication and media arts major, commented on how keeping his schedule busy licensed him to grow at WMSC.

“Although this spring semester has been short, every time I step onto this campus and into this school, it feels like I’ve been here my entire life in the best way possible,” Williams said. “The experience of getting to know the friends that I need; the memories I make every single day — my schedule is chaotic to start with, but managing my time to work with my friends is definitely worth it, and I believe it will pay dividends in the future.”

“The Morning Buzz” also involves posting regular YouTube recordings of weekday episodes, interviews and skits. Mari Zuniga, a senior communication and media arts major, shared how editing for the group was a vital starting point for her. “My time with WMSC has been wild,” Zuniga said. “I went from being an editor who wasn’t even seen by most people to witnessing 24 hours of Kyle Pepitone. I have my own show and I’m so proud of it. College radio made me the confident person I am today, and I’m going to miss everyone here and the great experiences I had. But I’m going to cherish the time I have left before I graduate.”

WMSC has its weekly meetings in room 1020 of the School of Communication and Media where all teams, including “The Morning Buzz,” share updates and upcoming events. WMSC station manager, Kaya Maciak, a senior communication and media arts major, talked about her time with the group and her next steps.

“I would say it’s been exhilarating,” Maciak said. “But also a bit nostalgic because you know you’re in your final step. Your goodbye year and everything comes together. Starting out as office manager to being a ‘Morning Buzz’ host and then programming, it’s been incredible seeing everyone grow and delegating tasks between departments so they can create the best content.”

Maciak also shared what she felt to be her favorite part of working with WMSC.

“I think my most favorite part has been creating meaningful relationships with your peers who you could eventually see in the industry years later,” Maciak said. “Building a close-knit family I haven’t experienced in any other organization or club in school has helped me mentally throughout stressful times in college.”

Graduates of the past few years also stopped by WMSC to keep the Montclair State radio community close. Kenny Horn, class of 2022 with a bachelor’s in television and digital media and a concentration in TV production, emphasized how WMSC has changed since he graduated.

“What I have noticed is people have gotten closer,” Horn said. “And when I used to be in charge, that was one thing I wanted to push. When I come back here, I just see people talking, getting along and that’s really something I wanted. I may not be able to do anything now; it’s not my time anymore. But I’m happy I had an impact on what people decide to do with the future of this station.”
Shane Fleming, a freshman film major, will be featured in an A24-produced film, “Funny Pages” by Owen Kline.

Shane Fleming (center) and friends (left to right) Ben Bratter, Vick Gonzalez, Zachary Abbruscato and Peter Di Prospero at the 2022 MSU Players banquet.

Director Owen Kline (center) and Fleming (right) watching monitors during a take.

Photo courtesy of Zachary Abbruscato

Photo courtesy of Shane Fleming. Taken by Geoffrey Duncanson.

Student Artist Profile: Shane Fleming

Shane Fleming has already achieved what so many of us dream of, and he hasn’t even concluded his freshman year of college. Fleming, a Montclair State University freshman BFA filmmaking major, has found himself a role in director and writer Owen Kline’s A24-produced feature film “Funny Pages.”

Before we get into Fleming’s achievements, he would like to put on the record that he is in fact not pretentious.

“Funny Pages” is set to debut at the Cannes Film Festival in France in May 2022. The synopsis says the film is, “a bitingly funny coming-of-age story of a teenage cartoonist who rejects the comforts of his suburban life in a misguided quest for soul.”

Fleming plays a comic book store customer named Gabe who has a couple of scenes throughout the film.

“I have a few bits that come in and out throughout the movie,” Fleming said. “All these people are [going to] see it, and I hope I get a good laugh. I’m really proud because I’ve seen the film, and I really like it. I’m really proud for this to be my debut in a feature film. Even if my role is small. I don’t really care. It’s because it’s a great movie.”

He even aided the crew by being a production assistant on set after he was done filming his scenes.

Starting as a movie buff and a filmmaker at the age of seven, Fleming has a lifelong passion for filmmaking. It’s no surprise he has made it this far at such a young age.

Coming from his comedian parents, Manhattan-raised Fleming first got his taste of success at age 10. After winning a contest to announce a film on the Turner Classic Movies television channel, Fleming has become a recurring face in between showings of films.

During his upbringing, Fleming was constantly surrounded by actors, comedians and fellow film lovers. He was even an intern for the Safdie brothers. Insider secret: they love drinking La Croix sparkling water.

Now, Fleming finds himself in the hands of Montclair State.

“I liked that the program was very hands-on,” Fleming said. “I liked the fact that in the first year, you actually do make films and you actually do learn equipment. A lot of like bigger schools like [New York University], which rips people off, you don’t touch a camera until your junior year, which is crazy.”

Despite his success, Fleming has managed to have quite the normal college experience. He’s involved in his own and other students’ films as well as Montclair Improv League and Friends (MILF).

One of Fleming’s fellow MILF members, Ben Bratter, a freshman earth and environmental science major, describes what it’s like to work with Fleming.

“Fleming is one of the oldest souls I have met,” Bratter said. “His humor always makes me chuckle.”

Fortunately, his peers haven’t treated him much differently than any other student.

“With A24 people either go ‘really?’ Or they go, ‘what is that?’” Fleming said. “People either think it’s really cool, or they don’t know what it is. And I’m fine with either.”

Fleming’s roommate, John Bruno, a fellow freshman filmmaking major, weighed in on Fleming’s talents.

“He has a natural talent for filmmaking that’s only amplified by the environment he chooses to surround himself in,” Bruno said. “He’s the kind of person you know will go far in the film world.”

Fleming is one of many successful Montclair State students who have done great things in the industry. The student body and filmmaker community here are proud to have Fleming represent us in France, and then in Hollywood.
Hulu's newest queer rom-com, "Crush," has finally dropped after months of anticipation.

Hannah Effinger
New Production Editor

Hulu's newest queer rom-com, "Crush," has finally dropped after months of anticipation following the scandal around lead actresses Rowan Blanchard and Auli'i Cravalho's public TikTok beef.

The movie revolves around Paige (Blanchard) who is framed for the schoolwide vandalism attributed to "KingPun," who leaves (very good) pun-themed graffiti around their campus. In an effort to not be suspended, which would ruin her chances at getting into CalArts Summer Program, she offers to join the track team (which doesn't really make sense) since that would also mean spending time with her longtime crush, Gabriela (Isabella Ferreira).

However, Paige ends up spending more time with Gabriela's sister, AJ (Cravalho) and well, for the sake of being spoiler-free, you'll have to watch and see if you're curious as to how that plays out.

Now, I hate to tell you this, but Paige is not getting into CalArts either way. Paige's drawings are just about as bad as Blanchard's performance, which is just so so bland. Every single word she says comes out flat, even if we were attempting to blame it on the script, which isn't too terrible but blatantly steals jokes from other popular queer movies and at times sounds like a dramatic reading of viral tweets. Her costar, Cravalho, does not suffer the same fate. Cravalho outshines pretty much everyone in this film, except for the hurdle that Paige wipes out on at the beginning of the movie. Now that was an Oscar-winning performance.

My favorite part about this movie is its soundtrack. So if you're looking for something to add to your summer playlist, check out "Kerosene" by McClenney or "Heavenly Maybe" by Gengahr. I will give it the fact that it is kind of cute, albeit in a nauseating-please-make-it-stop-I-hate-every-character-except-AJ-and-Gabriela-kind of way.

"Crush" lacked the kind of cutey emotion that makes us love rom-coms.

"Crush" lacked the kind of cutey emotion that makes us love rom-coms. I genuinely got more from Addison Rae in "He's All That." The most believable acting was in any scene where Blanchard and Cravalho are supposed to dislike each other.

Honestly, I was disappointed by this movie. Hiring two ex-Disney stars to play love interests made my expectations pretty high, but it just did not deliver the way I expected it to. It felt incredibly rushed in the way important plot points kept happening but were swept under the rug in order to keep the movie under two hours. There just wasn't enough time to flesh out a solid relationship. Emphasis wasn't placed on the right moments, making it seem like Paige's life-changing love story happened over the course of a week.

My last complaint about this movie lies in the fact that even though it is a rom-com centered around two women, we only actually see them kiss two or three times. Sure, there are a few background character references to queer relationships, but the majority of the physical contact made in the movie is between a straight couple. It kind of felt like their relationship was being shoved in my face to compensate for the fact the stars barely touch each other.

For what it is, "Crush" is an okay movie. I didn't like it, but I'm also very critical of movies like this because I think it's important to give queer kids good, well-written representation - rather than having them settle for an hour and a half of Blanchard gritting her teeth at biphobia jokes and saying random animal facts.
The premise of a group of stereotypically scary animals banding together to commit crimes and trying to turn themselves around is one with plenty of potential. Author Aaron Blabey tapped into this idea with the book series, “The Bad Guys,” in 2015, and now, DreamWorks Animation brings it to the big screen.

The resulting feature film has some of the slickest animation in the studio’s history and some fun moments courtesy of the voice cast. However, the humor and pacing are a little inconsistent, leading to a heist movie that almost works but falls slightly below expectations.

Pierre Perifel, a French animator making his directorial debut, and the talented artists at DreamWorks give the film a stylized look. This continues a recent, welcomed trend of computer-animated films taking on a 2D aesthetic, following in the footsteps of films like “The Peanuts Movie” and “Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse,” as well as Disney shorts like “Feast” and “Far From the Tree.” The 2D look comes primarily in the use of outlines on the characters and the occasional effect. Another winning aspect of “The Bad Guys” comes from the voice cast. Sam Rockwell (pickpocket Mr. Wolf), Marc Maron (safe-cracker Mr. Snake), Craig Robinson (master of disguise Mr. Shark), Anthony Ramos (the short fuse hacker Ms. Tarantula) all work off of each other pretty well. They give a ton of energy to their characters, and their line deliveries offer some laughs.

Alex Borstein is the standout of the cast, as the voice of an officer who’s been waiting to put the gang behind bars for years. Borstein sells the character’s temper and eagerness.

The film has plenty of fun moments. The opening car chase gives the audience an idea of what to expect. A real highlight comes from a scene where the gang attends a charity gala. As they attempt to pull off a heist, they start to enjoy the feeling of being good, all set to a fun song sung by Mr. Piranha, al-

However, the humor and pacing are a little inconsistent, leading to a heist movie that almost works but falls slightly below expectations.

where the movie falls somewhat flat is in the story and humor. While the characters are likable, their journey is not entirely engaging. It follows the expected beats, and the pacing feels off as well. The first hour or so goes by at a decent speed, but the third act and climax feel slightly long.

While there are good laughs to be found, it seems like the best jokes were in the trailers for the film, including Mr. Shark enacting one of his disguises and the team trying to rescue a cat. Other attempts at humor can elicit a smile or a small chuckle but never the same hearty laughs the two aforementioned scenes did in the trailers.

“The Bad Guys” is ultimately one of those films with a lot to admire, like its animation, cast and some of its humor. However, it is unfortunately brought down, even if only slightly, by an underwhelming story and several of the laughs falling flat.

As we approach the end of the school year, whether we are spending the summer at the beach, securing that internship or getting ready to graduate and enter the real world, “High School Musical 3: Senior Year” is a universal film for any end to a perfectly good era.

In the classic franchise’s third film, Troy (Zac Efron), Gabriella (Vanessa Hudgens) and the rest of the gang come up on their high school graduation. Will Troy choose basketball? Or will he follow his newfound love for musical theatre? With some of the best hits from a Disney movie and the perfect end to a beautiful run, “High School Musical 3: Senior Year” will have any graduate — high school or college — in their feels.

“The Bad Guys” Is Slick but Underwhelming

The Bad Guys wonder how they could turn good. Photo courtesy of DreamWorks Animation

“The Lizzie McGuire Movie” starts off just how it should — with Lizzie, played by Hilary Duff, making her way across stage for her junior high graduation, only to fall and take a curtain down with her in front of a large crowd.

The rest of the Disney film follows with a post-graduation class trip to Italy, where Lizzie lives her wildest eighth grade dreams. From a whirlwind romance with Italian pop-star Paolo and riding on the back of his scooter to eventually meeting her dark-haired doppleganger, Lizzie’s experience falls nothing short of the adventure any graduate hopes to experience after years of being in school.

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- Sam Nungesser

Editor-In-Chief

“The Lizzie McGuire Movie” starts off just how it should — with Lizzie, played by Hilary Duff, making her way across stage for her junior high graduation, only to fall and take a curtain down with her in front of a large crowd.

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- Megan Lim

Entertainment Editor
'Blue Water Road': Healing And Self Love at Its Finest

Summer is right around the corner, and you can't help but imagine driving your doorless Jeep Wrangler down a winding mountain road with a 360 view of the ocean as the wind blows in your face. But the only thing that's missing is that perfect playlist. Ladies and gentlemen, R&B hitmaker Kehlani has you covered.

Just two years after her sophomore album, Kehlani is back and better than ever with her third studio album, “Blue Water Road,” which was released on April 29. And let me make it known that it does not disappoint.

Consisting of 13 songs and features from Justin Bieber, Jessie Reyez, Blxst, Syd, Thundercat and Ambré, this album aims to highlight a new chapter in Kehlani’s life permeating with self-awareness, healing and self-love. Compared to its predecessors, it takes a completely different approach to production and lyrical creativity.

Before the album, Kehlani gave her fans a preview with the release of her lead single, “Altar,” on Sept.15, 2021. Infused with an 80’s funk twist, a steady tempo and hints of a ticking grandfather clock, “Altar” is a unique tune that touches on the unfathomable subjects of grief, death and the journey of continuing a relationship with an ancestor even after they’ve transitioned to the other side.

“If I set a flame and I call your name / I’ll fix you a plate, we can go to dinner / We can share a meal your way / And I’ll play you the songs that you used to play / So I put you on the altar,” Kehlani sings.

This melody accentuates her range and striking vocals. It would be an indication of the brilliance that was to come from the rest of the album.

The third track, “Shooter Interlude,” is a soothing yet raw, straight-talking two-minute message revealing all the demands Kehlani has faced since fame.

“Can I borrow some money? Can you call me an Uber? / My mama needs surgery and my son needs a scooter / Can you start up my start-up? Can you move my maneuver? / I think you need Jesus, I think you need a shooter,” Kehlani sings.

It’s truly an anthem for all successful individuals.

“First they’re sour, then they’re sweet,” Kehlani knows exactly how to switch it up.

“Up at Night,” a passionate and flirtatious track featuring Bieber, incorporates Soul II Soul’s 1989 “Fairplay,” which provides a groovy and ethereal twist. A smooth, relaxing beat and hints of guitar assist to outline a new, hot summer romance that consumes one’s every being.

“You wonder why I love you / There was never pressure / Easy as I want to / There’s just no one better / You think it’s calculated / Baby, I’m just not that clever, never / And what could I say? / I knew that it would go this way / Of course you blamed it on fate (fate) / Couldn’t let it just escape / Now at the end of our days (days) / I run back thoughts of you,” Kehlani sings.

After Kehlani’s infectious verse, Bieber takes the ropes to delve into his romantic obsession.

Any song with Bieber never disappoints, but a collaboration between these two stars is just a blessing to our ears.

With the aforementioned songs, there’s no doubt “Blue Water Road” is a force to be reckoned with, but there’s one song that frankly stands out. “Ev- erything” is a delicate, warm melody that explores the journey of accepting one’s sexuality.

“From the moment we fell in, I knew we could fall back / Knew I’d always crawl back, ooh,” Kehlani sings.

This is followed up by the chorus. “Cause, baby, it’s the everything for me / For me, oh, for me / This is such a different thing for me,” Kehlani sings.

Emotional and spiritual, “Blue Water Road” is just another reason Kehlani sits at the top of the R&B world.
Aidan Callari  
Staff Writer

The best pieces of science fiction writing often add a simple element to our world and explore how that one thing changes everything else. “Severance” on Apple TV+ does just this. The element being the “Severance” procedure, a brain chip that splits one’s work life and personal life, effectively creating two different people inhabiting one body depending on location.

The series follows Mark Scout, played by Adam Scott, who for the past few years has worked at a mysterious job for Lumon Industries that required the “Severance” procedure. When a friend from work greets him while he’s at home, warning him his job is not what he thinks it is, his world is turned upside down.

The workplace satire, using Lumon Industries as a stand-in for any terrible cubicle day job, is stark and pointed. The employees have no idea what they actually do, but they do it anyway, all for the inconsequential rewards of erasers and finger traps.

But this all leads to the great critique of conglomerates and how little they care for the employees that work for them. Sure, the idea of not having to actually experience your job may sound appealing at first, but once you realize this procedure is just creating an alternate personality within yourself designed to suffer, that raises a multitude of ethical and moral questions that make the series as a whole fascinating to watch.

First off, Scott gives his best dramatic performance yet. He essentially gets to play two roles, Mark at home (his “outie”) and Mark at work (his “innie”) are two different people. He brings equal skill to the awkward, unconvincing performance yet. He essentially experience your job may sound appealing at first, but once you realize this procedure is just creating an alternate personality within yourself designed to suffer, that raises a multitude of ethical and moral questions that make the series as a whole fascinating to watch.

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Hidden Gems on Streaming Services

Ian Miller
Guest Writer

With the popularity of streaming services nowadays, it's possible that people, specifically college students, have seen the most popular options on those platforms. And because of that, they are desperate for new movies to watch, including ones they had no idea even existed. Those types of movies can be best described as "hidden gems."

Through Netflix, HBO Max, Hulu and Disney+, I have found the best "hidden gems" on these platforms that are secretly great and well worth the watch.

1. "Down with Love" (HBO Max, 2003)
Runtime: 102 min. Rating: PG-13
Starring Ewan McGregor ("Star Wars" Episode I, II and III) and Renée Zellweger ("Chicago" and "Bridget Jones's Diary") and directed by Peyton Reed ("Ant-Man")

This unfortunate box office disappointment is a hilarious love letter to goofy romantic comedies of the 1960s, featuring wondrous production and set design that makes for an amazing visual experience. It takes place in 1962 New York City and is about a chauvinistic, playboy journalist who falls in love with a feminist author. And despite the 1960s time period, this movie is surprisingly progressive and forward-thinking, which is a pleasure to see.

Runtime: 94 min. Rating: TV-MA
Starring Rafe Spall ("Black Mirror: White Christmas")

If you are desperate to find something actually scary, I have the horror movie for you. The movie features four friends who are hiking in the Scottish woods when they decide to take an unfamiliar shortcut. This horrifying journey into the unknown features incredibly disturbing imagery bound to be the scare-fest you are looking for. Don't go in expecting an easy time.

3. "Hustlers" (Hulu, 2019)
Starring Constance Wu ("Crazy Rich Asians") and Jennifer Lopez

This wonderfully different and interesting take on crime features strip club employees who decide to steal money from Wall Street clients. There are some great twists and turns in the story that makes for an incredibly fun ride. It also features Cardi B and Lizzo in small cameos.

4. "American Animals" (Hulu, 2018)
Runtime: 116 min. Rating: R
Starring Evan Peters ("X-Men: Days of Future Past")

This crime movie based on a true story is absolutely hilarious throughout most of its running time. It's about four college students who decide to steal priceless artwork from their college's library. Inter-spliced with interview footage with the real-life participants, this movie offers an interesting question of what causes people to commit crimes.

5. "Igby Goes Down" (HBO Max, 2002)
Runtime: 98 min. Rating: R
Starring Kieran Culkin ("Succession")

"Igby Goes Down" is about a young kid from a rich family, who after essentially getting kicked out of his house learns he is completely unable to grow up and live on his own. It's a very funny film that is also surprisingly touching in a lot of ways. The performances are excellent and feature a number of stars in the side roles who do a terrific job with their well-developed characters. And if you're a "Succession" fan, you'll find something to like in this, as the main character is very similar to Roman Roy.

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PHOTO: MARIA BARANOV

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ALEXANDER KASSER THEATER

PHOTO: MARIA BARANOV
Annalesa DiLaurenzio Is Making Her Baseball Legend Dad Proud

Former championship player Rob DiLaurenzio is always cheering on her daughter

Evan Diaz
Guest Writer

Montclair State University softball’s Annalesa DiLaurenzio continues a proud family tradition of Red Hawk Athletes. Being a collegiate athlete is something special. Playing for the same university your father attended, even more so. When your father is a former national champion at said university? It’s a dream come true.

For Montclair State University softball’s senior center fielder Annalesa DiLaurenzio, this dream is a reality. The outfielder from Hazlet, New Jersey, is in her second year as a player on the team and has maintained her presence in the classroom and maintained the starting job at center throughout her time at Montclair State. She might not have ever come to Montclair State if it wasn’t for her father, Rob DiLaurenzio.

Rob had his own time in the spotlight at Montclair State. A member of the baseball team from 1991 to 1994, he was an integral part of the 1993 NCAA National Championship team.

In the championship final in Battle Creek, Michigan, Rob batted in the leadoff spot and caught the final out as Montclair State defeated the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh 3-1 to claim their second ever National Championship. The Montclarion was there in 1993 to cover the baseball team winning the championship and Rob catching the most important baseball of his collegiate career. Even now, in 2022, he remembers the game like it was yesterday.

Rob also had some significant marks during his time at Montclair State with the baseball team. He earned 197 career hits, and in that championship game, he earned two walks. What’s so significant about that? DiLaurenzio is fourth all-time in Red Hawk history in walks, with 125 to his name.

Even after all these years, he still sees a little bit of his own game through his daughter’s.

“I was never the best athlete on the team, but I always worked hard and worked for everything I got, and I see a lot of that in Annalesa,” Rob said.

It shouldn’t be a surprise that Annalesa inherited the work ethic of her father, as her dad is a major reason why she decided to play softball.

“Just watching him play baseball and hearing all the great stories he has, it made me want to start playing too,” Annalesa said.

Annalesa also added that softball was something she considered to be a “bonding thing” between the two of them. You could say it literally runs in the family.

While her passion was always with softball, Annalesa’s direction toward Montclair State had some pit stops. She originally committed to Ursinus College, spending a year there before transferring to Brookdale Community College. Eventually, there was one place left to go: the same university her father went to.

“We were always Red Hawks,” Annalesa said. “I didn’t come here originally, but now it was always where I was meant to be.”

Annalesa has been consistently improving since 2021, when she joined the team. This season, she has 13 hits and 17 runs, almost doubled in both categories from last season. She also has a double and a triple to add to nine RBIs, another improvement from her first season at Montclair State.

Annalesa has been a key factor for the Red Hawks in the past two years as she has started every game since then and hopes to continue that heading into the playoffs.

For her dad, seeing his daughter in “Montclair [state] red” was a moment to remember. Just like the Montclair State red he used to wear back in his baseball glory days.

“That first day when I came here at Montclair State and saw her in a Red Hawk uniform, I was so proud as a dad,” Rob said.

Rob also added that there was nothing better than that feeling. Not only seeing his daughter succeed, especially in sports but for her to do it at his alma mater is a priceless moment.

It’s a moment and feeling Rob has every game, as he’s consistently at games cheering on Annalesa and the softball squad. With this being her senior year, the number of times she will be putting on that uniform is quickly flying by. Annalesa is looking to enjoy every second she still has at Montclair State.

“I’m just looking forward to winning some more games, having a great time with my teammates and just making happy, positive memories with them,” Annalesa said.

There will be at least two more games on the schedule in Annalesa’s softball career. The softball team clinched the sixth seed in the New Jersey Athletic Conference (NJAC) Playoffs and will play at Rowan University on Tuesday, with another game on Friday guaranteed, no matter the result.

Rob has always been supporting Annalesa’s softball career from the beginning. Now, her career is hitting its tail end. But with top-seeded Rowan to look forward to in the NJAC playoffs, expect to see Rob cheering on his daughter with every step she takes on that field.
Anthony DiMaulo has leapt into the top of the track and field team

When it comes to long jumping, Anthony DiMaulo is in a league of his own. Literally.

Ryan White
Assistant Sports Editor

Many collegiate athletes have the luxury of being able to rely on teammates in times of need. However, in track and field, it is very different. Unlike other sports, track and field is almost completely individually based. Whether it is jumping hurdles, launching a javelin or racing alongside runners from other schools, athletes in track and field have to find it within themselves to push for the first-place prize.

Senior and long jumping specialist Anthony DiMaulo believes there is a different mindset needed in order to compete.

“I’m just competing against myself,” DiMaulo said. “I try to do better than I did last time and even if that’s not a further jump, it could be in a jump of averages, it could be being more consistent in the long jump. Whatever place I get, I get. I can’t control somebody else.”

For DiMaulo, the success did not start at Montclair State University but rather before college, at his high school in Rutherford. There is where he accomplished all-league, all-group and all-section in track and field. The individual dominance has clearly translated over to the collegiate side with Montclair State.

Most track and field athletes participate in a few different events but for DiMaulo, it’s primarily just the long jump. And when he does compete in an event such as the 100-meter, it is to help his performance in his main event.

“Speed is a big component of the long jump and running live 100-meter races is good for developing speed,” DiMaulo said.

DiMaulo is considered to be one of the best all-around athletes on the track and field team, and head coach Ian Carter thinks that there are some advantages and disadvantages in only competing in the long jump.

“[DiMaulo] is probably, if not the top athlete, a top-three athlete I’ve had since coaching here,” Carter said. “I think he kind of limits himself with the number of events he can do, but because he is so committed and so passionate about his event, the long jump, I kind of just let it rock but he could honestly be one of the top decathletes in the nation, not just our conference if he wanted to.”

During DiMaulo’s freshman season back in 2019, he was named Second Team All-NJAC in the decathlon as he scored 4,743 points and won the 100 (12.07), long jump (6.25 meters) and high jump (1.87 meters).

After a very promising freshman season, DiMaulo would ultimately lose out on his entire sophomore season due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

After a year away from competing, DiMaulo didn’t miss a beat. He picked up exactly where he left off and, in 2021, he placed first in the long jump (6.85 meters) at the Stockton Invite #2 on April 2, won the long jump (6.84 meters) and was fourth in the 100 at the Ramapo Mini Meet on April 23. He also placed third in the long jump (7.05 meters) at the Rowan Last Chance Meet on May 20.

DiMaulo's senior season has been nothing short of great as he competed in many competitions and placed first in the long jump at the Widener Invitational (6.71 meters) and the Osprey Open (6.97 meters). There is still work to be done as the Red Hawks still have the New Jersey Athletic Conference (NJAC) Championships on May 7 and May 8.

DiMaulo also participated in the preparations for the NJAC Championships in early May. He ran the 100-meter and the 200-meter, and for someone who only does it to help with his long jump, he placed fairly decently in the end. In the 100-meter he placed 18th with a time of 11.51 seconds, and in the 200-meter he placed 19th with a time of 21.30 seconds.

Both the indoor and the outdoor track and field teams at Montclair State look to make strides in the final event of the season, and DiMaulo is sure to perform his best, launching himself over a field of sand as far as he can go. Bettering himself as much as he can through every trial.

With DiMaulo’s track career, unfortunately, coming to a close, he reflected on what it means to be a Red Hawk.

“Being a Red Hawk is about representing more than yourself,” DiMaulo said. “Every time you go to a meet you’re representing the school or on social media, a high school athlete could see you [and] say, ‘I don’t really like that school’ or ‘oh that’s a nice school, I like what they are about.’”

If any aspiring athletes see all that DiMaulo has accomplished, they would feel inspired to take a look at the track and field team here at Montclair State.
Women’s Lacrosse Falls Short of Playoffs but Seniors Shine Bright

The senior players brought stellar play, even with the ending result of the season

The result was not what they wanted, but the seniors of the women’s lacrosse team broke milestone after milestone. Emmi DeNovellis  
Staff Writer

After coming off one of their most successful seasons in program history, the Montclair State Women’s Lacrosse team came into the season with high expectations. Overall, the Red Hawks finished the 2022 season with an overall record of 7-7 and a conference record of 3-3. Their season ended heartbreakingly on Saturday, April 30, falling short to the Rowan University Profs 18-7.

Even though they did not meet their team goal of qualifying for the New Jersey Athletic Conference (NJAC) Tournament, some of the key players reflected positively on this season and held themselves accountable for the program’s future success.

One of the 12 graduating seniors on the team is All-American goalkeeper Allyn Lilien. She conveyed how not only was her tough out-of-conference schedule a lesson for the team but how this season overall was something they can learn from.

“The beginning, I think that tough schedule was good to have to try and challenge us, and it really did show us what we needed to change for the rest of the season,” Lilien said.

Graduate student attacker Rhiannon Brown notes that this season was not just about wins and losses and numbers.

“For our schedule this year, we played a lot of hard teams in the regular season outside of our conference, and we knew that going into it was going to be hard,” Brown said. “We knew that our record [doll] not [refect] who we were as a team and that we are better than what that record says.”

Lilien mentioned how different players stepped up throughout the season, even though they were not titled with being a captain of the team. It was clear their contributions did not go unnoticed. Lilien explained how leadership was exemplified among the Red Hawks.

“We have three captains, but I do not think that leadership has to have a title,” Lilien said. “Throughout the season people have stepped up, but it was very nice that on any given day, a different player could be our leader or our strongest player out on the field. So, it was nice to have many different leaders playing in different capacities and maintaining those roles. Whether it was motivation or connecting with the teammate next to them in order to give us that fire for that day.”

A huge loss to the Red Hawks was senior midfielder Amber Gonzalez, who had a career-ending injury tearing both of her meniscuses in her right knee. From both the attacking and defensive standpoint, Gonzalez was missed from this team. She was on pace to top her career-high of goals.

Brown acknowledged how the loss of Gonzalez had both a positive and negative effect on the team.

“It was definitely different because personally, I felt like there was a hole in the attack because I am so used to having [Gonzalez] by my side on the field,” Brown said. “I am extremely grateful that we had ‘Coach Amber’ on the sidelines because she saw things we as players did not see, and it was perfect, but obviously I wanted her on the field more.”

Gonzalez, aka “Coach Amber” immediately adapted to her injury and took on a different role of helping out her teammates from the sidelines.

Having Gonzalez’s player expertise alongside head coach Nicol Pareluzzi and assistant coach Sarah Burkarth was monumental for the Red Hawks. However, it was frustrating for the senior midfielder to be watching on the sidelines.

“Obviously it was very frustrating because I wanted to be out there playing with all my teammates,” Gonzalez said. “There were moments where I was saying to our trainer to put me in and just let me just go in, but I obviously could not do that.”

Gonzalez reflected on her four-year career as a Red Hawk, and what she values most about this team.

“Something I value is definitely the people,” Gonzalez said. “I’ve had my best friends playing with me for four years now. With each other, these bonds that we have, you really do not find that often in life, especially with them having your back. Just being able to have that opportunity to play on a team and learn all these values and meet all these friends is such a great opportunity, and that is what I’m going to miss the most.”

Lilien, along with 11 other players, will be graduating at the end of this semester. But with their collegiate careers coming to an end, the goalkeeper does not want the team to harp on their mistakes.

“Regardless of what happened this season, we did accomplish so much together,” Lilien said. “When we get together, we will talk about how much we meant to each other, not that ‘practice was not intense enough.’ This season provides that opportunity to have all of us take a step back, and say ‘yes, this may not have been the same success that we had last year, but through it all, we did learn.’”
All Montclair State University undergraduate students get (1) one prepaid ticket per production for PEAK Performances, MSU Theatre & Dance, and John J. Cali School of Music. Students need to arrange for their ticket in-person at the Alexander Kasser Theater Box Office window (Tuesday through Friday, 12 noon to 6pm) by showing their MSU Student ID, providing an MSU email address, and phone number. MSU prepaid student tickets cannot be secured over the phone or online currently.

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SPORTS
Baseball Coach Dave Lorber Helps Return Program to Winning Ways

Red Hawks enter the NJAC Playoffs with 30 wins for the first time since 2000

Jack Barteck
Staff Writer

It was a move that was years in the making.

After continuously turning around baseball programs at every level of the collegiate baseball landscape, Dave Lorber was in his garage when he got the call from athletic director Rob Chesney, offering him the position of head coach at Montclair State University.

“I had already made up my mind what my answer would be,” Lorber said. “It’s a very special place and one that has so much rich tradition and history that’s hard to pass up.”

A rich history indeed, the program’s 16 New Jersey Athletic Conference (NJAC) championships, and 14 NCAA Division III World Series appearances speak for themselves.

However, in the last decade or so, the program has struggled to return to the mountaintops that once seemed so familiar. They haven’t won the conference since 2001 and haven’t advanced to the Division III World Series since 2006.

Lorber, now in his third season as head coach, was determined to come in and rebuild the program the right way. Fifth-year senior outfielder Andrew Ollwerther reflected on how Lorber has connected with the team since then.

“The first time we met, we all spoke as a team first, and then he had a meeting with everyone individually for 10 to 15 minutes, just kind of getting to know us and what our goals were,” Ollwerther said. “From day one, we knew he had our backs no matter what.”

To this day, Lorber still keeps the black and white marble notebook that he used to take notes from those conversations, right on his desk, readily available to be referenced at any time.

Maybe that attention to detail was the difference-maker, or maybe it was the energy that Ollwerther says his coach had. “From everyone individually for 10 to 15 minutes, just kind of getting to know us, and what our goals were,” Ollwerther said. “From day one, we knew he had our backs no matter what.”

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Whatever it was, it was exactly what the program had been missing. After his first season was cut short due to the coronavirus (COVID-19), Lorber has helped the Red Hawks to back-to-back winning seasons for the first time since 2011-2012.

Heading into the NJAC playoffs, Lorber has guided the team to a 30-9 record. It’s the first time since 2006 that they’ve hit the 30-win mark, and the first time it’s been reached in the regular season since 2000: the last time Montclair State won a national championship.

“It’s been great, to get these guys going and let them feel winning,” Lorber said. “And I want them to feel what it’s like to win at the highest levels. And there is a process to getting there. I actually think we’re ahead of where we should be, and I’m proud of our guys because of their resiliency and their desire to get us there.”

The process is nothing new for Lorber, as almost every job he has taken during his coaching days has required some sort of uphill climb.

Prior to Montclair State, Lorber was the head coach at conference rival Stockton University. In his only season, he doubled their win total from the year prior. From 2013 to 2018, he served as an assistant coach at The George Washington University, where helped end a six-year playoff drought.

In 2012, he made a pit stop at Stony Brook University and helped them to a school-record 52 wins and a run to the College World Series. Before that, he spent time at Felician College, as a pitching coach, and led the Golden Falcons to some of the best pitching marks in the nation.

He helped turn around Eastern University and Brookdale Community College in short stints there and even made it to the NJCAA World Series as a player at Brookdale Community College back in 2005.

Success has followed Lorber everywhere he has been. Now, three years after answering that phone call in his garage, look into the Montclair State dugout, and you may just find the NJAC Coach of The Year.

“The program is definitely in good hands,” Ollwerther said. “I’m excited to see where it goes and the talent he’ll bring in from all over the country as we continue to chase that fourth national championship. They develop players well and they get the most out of everyone. And they not only develop you on the field, but they develop you off the field, teaching you how to be a man, and have good character and be professional.”

There is plenty of baseball left to be played this spring, and the job is not finished yet. But, the Montclair State program seems closer to the pinnacle of Division III college baseball than they have been in a long time, and it is largely thanks to Lorber, who doesn’t plan on going anywhere.

“I mean, this is hopefully my last stop,” Lorber said. “You know, I think we’ve got some good things going. I think we’ve got great people in place. I don’t want to be anywhere else. This is a special, special job for me and my family. And this is where I’d like to ride it off.”

Lorber hopes his tenure at Montclair State is his last stop in his coaching career.

Trevor Giesberg | The Montclarion

Photo courtesy of Montclair State Athletics

Thursday, May 5, 2022

Community College in short order.

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