1-26-2023

The Montclarion, January 26, 2023

The Montclarion

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

Recommended Citation
https://digitalcommons.montclair.edu/montclarion/1580

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the Student Newspapers at Montclair State University Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Montclarion by an authorized administrator of Montclair State University Digital Commons. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@montclair.edu.
BURST PIPE DISASTER

Flooding in residence hall displaces almost 80 students

Debris piled up in Williams Hall's first floor lounge.

Emma Caughlan
Editor-in-Chief

A pipe burst in Williams Hall, located in The Village Apartments at Montclair State University, on Dec. 25, 2022. Displacing almost 80 students at the start of the Spring 2023 semester.

As many residents were not present in their on-campus housing over winter break, most found out from an email from Residence Life later that evening that their apartments were damaged. The next day, the affected students received another email to collect their personal belongings and valuables.

Students were told their apartments would be ready for move-in by Jan. 15, the day before the first day of the Spring 2023 semester, over a week later. But on Jan. 11, 79 students received an email that their apartments would not be ready in time and that they would have to relocate to another on-campus residence, either temporarily or permanently, while repairs and remediation take place in their apartments.

Carly Delucca, a senior sustainability science major and one of the affected Williams Hall residents, was relocated to Freeman Hall with one of her roommates but it wasn't an easy process for her. At first, she was placed in Dinallo in The Heights. “My housing assignment was switched at the very last minute from a single [in Dinallo] with my [friend and roommate] to a double with a stranger in [John Hall],” Delucca said. “Not only was I uncomfortable with that but I was told to move everything out and did not have the capacity to move all of my stuff to a double.”

Delucca was eventually switched back with her friend to a double in Freeman Hall but there were moments of uncertainty that were very stressful for her. “There was a brief period of time where all of my stuff was in bags to go grab our things and did not give any leeway for those who live [far away] or work.” There have also been reports of damaged and stolen belongings found by students while moving out of their Williams Hall apartments, raising concerns and questions about who had access to their rooms and why there was so little care for their belongings.

Kat Fitch, a senior humanities major and another affected student, has been completely overwhelmed over the last few weeks. “As someone who has been impacted by housing instability throughout my life, this incident has deeply affected me,” Fitch said. “Seeing my belongings handled so carelessly and going weeks without updates on the status of a space that I considered home has dredged up so much trauma and has made it honestly difficult to function.”

Fitch is unhappy with Montclair State's handling of the situation. “Regardless of whether or not the pipe burst itself was preventable, I believe the mess that followed certainly was,” Fitch said. “The lack of communication between [Residence Life] and affected students, between [Residence Life] and the remediation/ construction teams and even between individual members of [Residence Life] as a department is absolutely unacceptable especially given the fact that incidents like this have occurred in the past.”

Cailey Menulla, a senior communication and media studies major and Williams Hall resident, is just happy that the proper precautions are being taken.

Where laundry machines once stood on Williams Hall's 3rd floor.

Hannah Effinger | The Montclarion

Adrian Zerbe, a sophomore computer science major and Williams Hall resident, was relocated to Bohn Hall with one of her roommates but it wasn't an easy process for her. At first, she was placed in Dinallo in The Heights. “My housing assignment was switched at the very last minute from a single [in Dinallo] with my [friend and roommate] to a double with a stranger in [John Hall],” Delucca said. “Not only was I uncomfortable with that but I was told to move everything out and did not have the capacity to move all of my stuff to a double.”

Delucca was eventually switched back with her friend to a double in Freeman Hall but there were moments of uncertainty that were very stressful for her. “There was a brief period of time where all of my stuff was in bags to go grab our things and did not give any leeway for those who live [far away] or work.” There have also been reports of damaged and stolen belongings found by students while moving out of their Williams Hall apartments, raising concerns and questions about who had access to their rooms and why there was so little care for their belongings.

Kat Fitch, a senior humanities major and another affected student, has been completely overwhelmed over the last few weeks. “As someone who has been impacted by housing instability throughout my life, this incident has deeply affected me,” Fitch said. “Seeing my belongings handled so carelessly and going weeks without updates on the status of a space that I considered home has dredged up so much trauma and has made it honestly difficult to function.”

Fitch is unhappy with Montclair State's handling of the situation. “Regardless of whether or not the pipe burst itself was preventable, I believe the mess that followed certainly was,” Fitch said. “The lack of communication between [Residence Life] and affected students, between [Residence Life] and the remediation/ construction teams and even between individual members of [Residence Life] as a department is absolutely unacceptable especially given the fact that incidents like this have occurred in the past.”

Cailey Menulla, a senior communication and media studies major and Williams Hall resident, is just happy that the proper precautions are being taken.

Hannah Effinger | The Montclarion
The Montclarion is a publication of Montelican Publishing, Inc. published weekly, except during the 2020 fall and 2021 spring semesters, examinations, summer and winter sessions. The Montclarion is funded by student fees distributed by Montclair State University and incoming advertising revenue. The views expressed in the Opinion section, with the exception of the Main Editorial, do not necessarily reflect the views of The Montclarion.

The Montclarion has a commitment to accuracy and clarity and will print corrections or clarifications if information is found to be incorrect.

To report an error of fact or a Letter to the Editor, email the Editor-in-Chief at montclarionchief@gmail.com.

All submissions to the newspaper become property of The Montclarion. We do not print articles from anonymous contributors.

The first issue of The Montclarion, then named The Pelican, was published on November 28, 1928.
Williams Hall
(continued from page 1)

“The situation is what it is, honestly. My father is a firefighter and they’ve been getting many calls for broken pipes this winter because it’s really something that can’t be prevented,” Merulla said. “Water is almost more dangerous than fire because it seeps into the walls and can cause lasting damage so I’m glad the university is taking the time to properly remediate the building.”

However, she does wish, like the others, that she was more in the loop.

“I just wish that the communication could be a little better because no one really knows what the current situation is besides what they’ve told us and that’s changed multiple times now,” Merulla said.

University spokesperson Andrew Mees said the university is aware of the difficulties the students are facing due to the burst pipe.

“We know this is an inconvenience, and we appreciate everyone’s cooperation as we remediate these issues. The student experience is at the heart of everything we do, and we look forward to having students back in their respective residences as quickly as possible,” Mees said. “We will continue to communicate status updates to the impacted students as we have them.”

He is hopeful that the temporarily relocated students will be able to return to their apartments soon.

“We are working to ready the building for occupation as quickly as possible, and anticipate the remaining 50 students being able to return to their rooms within the next few weeks,” Mees said.

In the meantime, the affected students will receive a credit for their housing as well as a meal plan free of charge to the students. Students are also encouraged to report any damages to the university to receive credit.

Fitch is not convinced.

“The least [Montclair State] could do is provide us with some sort of support system on top of reimbursement for damages,” Fitch said. “But instead we’ve received little to no communication and vague promises of compensation in the supposedly near future.”

Open walls and sheets of drywall are all that is left of Williams Hall’s 5th floor.

Blocked off section of third floor.

The view of a student’s bed, covered in dust.

Debris and dust on bedroom furniture.

Tarp tossed on top of a closet.
University Urges Masks

Erin Lawlor
News Editor

The university is strongly urging its community to wear masks for the spring 2023 semester for a safe return. Montclair State University’s Community Health Advisory Team (CHAT) sent an email to students, staff and faculty on Jan. 13 highly recommending the use of masks for the upcoming semester to keep the community safe. Although wearing a mask is still optional, CHAT suggests wearing a mask until transmission rates of the coronavirus (COVID-19) subside, especially in highly populated areas such as classrooms, and meeting outdoors when possible.

Andrew Mees, university spokesperson, explains the university is monitoring the pandemic the same as when it first started. "As we have done since the beginning of the pandemic, our group of on-campus experts and university administration monitors and assesses the situation," Mees said. "Our Campus Health Advisory Team offered this recommendation because respiratory illnesses such as COVID-19 or the flu typically increase during the winter months. So, in an abundance of caution, we wanted to remind the campus community to take precautions as we return for the spring semester."

The COVID-19 dashboard is updated every Thursday. The week of Jan. 19 there were 14 confirmed cases on campus.

"The health and safety of our community members will always be our most important priority," Mees said. "So, we will continue to monitor and assess the situation, and will make policy changes to ensure the safety of our community as needed." Some students think that the email was unnecessary. Madyson Garthly, a senior education-al foundations for elementary teachers major, is one of them.

"I don’t really care if they send an email or not," Garthly said. "Everybody is going to do what they want anyway.”

She said the university is doing a good job at keeping their students safe but doesn’t think an email will persuade them to wear a mask again.

"I personally am not going to wear my mask again but if somebody else wants to, that’s fine," Garthly said. "I get that it’s the school’s job to keep the students and faculty safe. But the thing is, if somebody wanted to wear a mask again, I don’t think an email is going to convince them to do so.”

Senem Hilal, a sophomore sports communication major, will also not be participating in voluntary wearing a mask again.

"I haven’t really heard many people talking about wearing masks again," Hilal said. "I don’t think I’ll wear one unless it’s mandatory again.”

However, Peter Guziejewski, a sophomore social media and public relations major, said he believes this is the best way to go about masking.

"By recommending [wearing masks] you encourage people to do it but also aren’t forcing it," Guziejewski said. "Which, in my opinion, leads to less pushback about it.”

Guziejewski added that the university leaving the option in the hands of their students could keep the campus safe.

"Personally don’t wear a mask on campus anymore because I feel relatively safe," Guziejewski said. "But in many situations, I do still wear a mask since my mom is in the immune-compromised category."
SPORTS WRITERS WANTED!

E-Mail: montclarionsports@gmail.com

Room 2035, School of Communication and Media in Upper Montclair, NJ, 07043
Write for Entertainment!

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

E-mail: montclarionentertainment@gmail.com

ROOM 2035, SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATION AND MEDIA IN UPPER MONTCLAIR, NJ, 07043
Canvas Login Makeover

Kamil Santana
Staff Writer

Safer security changes are being made to various Montclair State University pages. In case you missed it, the Canvas login page has changed.

Once bearing a high-angle shot of the campus landscape as its background, the page is now blank with the Montclair State University logo and name at the top left corner. However, the way students log in has not changed.

Over winter break, Montclair State’s Information Technology (IT) Division made the switch to ForgeRock Access Management for secure campus-wide logins. Speaking on behalf of the IT department, Andrew Mees, university spokesperson, said the decision to make the change was made by the IT department. The IT department wanted to clarify that there was no incident that sparked the decision.

"Our Information Technology Division continuously makes upgrades to all solutions used by our community whenever new and more robust technologies become available," Mees said. "This change was simply part of moving to a more reliable, more secure single sign-on platform."

On Jan. 4, the Canvas login page layout officially changed. Emails were sent out before the start of the spring 2023 semester about the expected change. Despite the outreach, some students did not take notice of the change to the Canvas login page this semester.

Ashley Sanchez, a freshman educational foundations major, did not notice the change or catch the email announcement. "I don’t check my emails over break," Sanchez said.

Daniela Spero, a senior communication and media arts major, did not notice the change either, especially since she doesn’t access Canvas on her laptop. "I haven’t been on [Canvas] on my laptop," Spero said. "I have the app and just go on my phone [to use it]. I didn’t kind of see [the email], I just didn’t check to see what they were talking about regarding Canvas."

Spero described having problems with Canvas before. "I’ve had issues with it not loading or directing me to another page," Spero said. "But, if it’s a concern of security and safety and your personal information, I think it’s important."

On the other hand, Maria Deleon, a psychology graduate student, checks her emails a handful of times a day and was aware of the forthcoming change. "I did notice the change," Deleon said. "I read the emails about it. I like that IT considered making this change because it makes me feel safer using the technology provided by the school and that it is protecting my information on a more reliable system."

On top of the Canvas login page, the way students sign into Google to access products such as Gmail and Google Drive will require a two-step verification. Faculty have already started following this routine; students will need to do so as well.

"While students will not yet need to do this when logging on to Canvas, the process is similar to the two-step verification via cell phone required of students to access Google Email and Drive beginning Jan. 31," Mees said. "Communications were sent to students on Dec. 12 and Dec. 20, and are also being currently sent to students who have not completed this process to date. They include detailed instructions to activate Google two-step authentication by Jan. 30 to avoid losing access to email."

The IT department is providing this link for students to access instructions on how to activate two-factor authentication: https://tinyurl.com/Google-2-step.

Students who are having a hard time navigating this change or if issues arise, they may contact the IT department at itservicedesk@montclair.edu or 973-655-7971.
Students Aren't Sold on Required Textbooks

Aidan Ivers  
Staff Writer

With college starting up again and inflation on the rise, Montclair State University students are giving feedback on a longtime complaint: professors requiring them to purchase textbooks to do well and get credit for their courses.

According to Educationdata.org, the average college student spends between $600 and $1,400 annually for textbooks and supplies alone. That’s in addition to the almost $14,000 they are paying in tuition and fees per year. However, some professors have been reluctant to require such material for their students, much to students’ delight.

For many students, buying a textbook may seem like a nuance to purchase a textbook to take an already expensive class, depending on its length, price and use of digital media major, gave insight into purchasing his required textbooks.”

Brianna Badalato, a sophomore psychology major, also explained the expectations of the textbooks are outrageous, especially for psychology which can be well over 100 dollars,” Badalato said. “I still have books from classes I never really opened or frequently used for my electives. We’re already spending upwards of $13,000 to take these classes, and [if] not include textbooks is frustrating.”

Badalato also brought up other course requirements for her other classes.

“I’m taking an American Sign Language course, and we have to use this specific program where one option is $25 and the other is $15 to use, and there is also a membership option for $40 but that’s on top of buying textbooks and being enrolled as a full-time student, it’s just a lot of money,” Badalato said.

Joel Penney, an associate professor at the School of Communication and Media, spoke about what goes into constructing courses from semester to semester and requiring material for them.

“Like most professors, we definitely are very focused on quality readings and having our students engage in those readings,” Penney said. “I do pay attention to the costs, some are more pricey than others, and it’s definitely something we have to keep in mind. In many cases, we have to have the students buy the book and engage in the in-depth readings.”

Penney did note that there are some exceptions to this, depending on what direction the professor decides to take for their course.

“Last semester, I actually assigned a free online textbook and the reason for that was it was the textbook I felt would be best for the class from the most updated and relevant information,” Penney said. “If it was in a format where they had to pay, it might have been worth it even with a cost consciousness.”

Penney also explained his process for incorporating his published work into his courses.

“This semester, I am teaching a senior seminar course on the topic of the instructor’s expertise so that’s why I’m focusing on what I’ve done research on,” Penney said. “I know there’s sometimes concerns with professors assigning their own books to their students as a way to get royalty money.”

But Penney explained why students shouldn’t be worried about that due to a New Jersey state law.

“We are a public university, and under the state of New Jersey, if a professor assigns their own book to their own students, all royalties they collect from that have to be donated to charity, and they cannot profit off of that,” Penny said. “That’s actually an ethical regulation in response to concerns that have been raised before. Rather than go through the accounting issues of getting the royalties donated, I just put my research together as PDFs to make it logistically easier and to be mindful of costs adding up.”

Sal DiMaggio | The Montclarion

Textbooks like these can end up costing students around $200 per book.
Montclair State Alumna is Leaving Her Mark on NJ

Tiffany Perez stands in front of the Ink Gallery signage at the new Fairfield location. 

Walking into Ink Gallery seeing the string lights and faux foliage decorating high vaulted ceilings indicates to any visitors that this is no ordinary tattoo studio. Owned by Montclair State University alum Tiffany Perez, Fairfield’s newest – and New Jersey’s largest - tattoo studio is a place where all are welcome to express themselves through any art medium they see fit, most notably through the art of tattoos.

Perez chose to name the shop Ink Gallery for this very reason, saying that she wanted the judgment-free shop “to feel almost like an art gallery, but more connected with tattoos.” She creates a welcoming environment for her customers, but she also strives to do this for her employees as well.

“I always knew that I wanted to be in and create a shop that would feel like a family, like a home, a place that would encourage inspiration and creativity,” Perez said. “So here I like to call it my Ink Family.”

Her Ink Family didn’t come out of nowhere though, as Perez has spent years perfecting her craft and growing her customer base. After being gifted a tattoo machine by her dad during her junior year at Montclair State, Perez fell in love with the art.

“Tattooing was something that was not in the plans for me, it just kind of fell into my lap, so once my father gave me that machine, I grew this passion for it,” Perez said. “And I said, ‘I want to be a tattoo artist.’”

Since then, she has done hundreds – if not thousands – of tattoos, and worked on countless celebrities, including the Jersey Shore star, Nicole “Snooki” Polizzi. Perez has also appeared as an artist on the TV shows “Best Ink,” “Black Ink Crew” and “How Far Is Tattoo Far?”

Perez graduated from Montclair State in 2009 with a BFA in art with a concentration in drawing, additionally spending time studying art education during her degree. She says her time at Montclair State has helped her as not only an owner but a tattoo artist and mentor.

“I’m using what I learned from Montclair [State] and teaching that to my apprentices, a.k.a. my students,” Perez said. “So it’s funny because when they’re in this program, they have a whole binder and every week they have homework assignments and things that they have to do.”

One of her apprentices, Jordan Tinitigan, attended Montclair State from 2020 to 2022 and is thankful for the opportunity to be mentored by Perez at Ink Gallery.

“She’s teaching me how to tattoo, teaching me ways to pull a line and shade – but also seeing how she runs the business and manages the 20-plus people working here, and how she became the biggest shop in New Jersey,” Tinitigan said.

As an apprentice, Tinitigan has just started accepting clients. One of which, Bailey Zrebiec, is a senior mathematics and education major at Montclair State University. She spoke about her experience with Tinitigan.

“[Tinitigan] was very professional, mindful of my comfort level and easy-going,” Zrebiec said. “[Tinitigan’s] mentor [Perez] gave a lot of good feedback and advice to [Tinitigan]. I’m super happy with how my tattoo turned out, and I can’t wait to go back.”

Ink Gallery’s original location in Woodland Park sported three shared booths within its walls, but at its new location in Fairfield, NJ, the two-floor studio holds 12 artists and three apprentices, along with a piercer and space for guest artists.

In the future, Perez hopes to use the space to host more events for the community.

“I can throw more events, more connected to the arts, whether that’s like, you know, painting nights or poetry night or live music,” Perez said. “Just bringing all the arts together in this place, I think it is a great way for the community to get involved.”

Their next event will take place on Feb. 22, and will be a fundraiser for Lyme disease, with a portion of proceeds from its dedicated flash sheet going toward a foundation benefiting people with the disease.

You can find Ink Gallery on Instagram at @inkgallerynj, and online at https://inkgallerytattoostudio.com.
Rebecca Bienskie Jackson shares her perspective on “Conversations with Friends” by Sally Rooney.

“Conversations with Friends”: Not a Romance, But Will Still Make Your Heart Throb

Rebecca Bienskie Jackson | Staff Writer

It is easy to compare author Sally Rooney’s 2017 novel “Conversations with Friends” to Rooney’s very popular “Normal People.” A lot of her fanbase joined after reading the latter with high expectations (myself included). “Conversations with Friends” did not disappoint. It premiered with a series of the same name in May of 2022, with a show debut on Hulu starring Alison Oliver and Joe Alwyn. Rooney followed this up with her most recent novel, “Beautiful World, Where Are You?” in 2021.

With a main setting of Dublin, Ireland in the early 2010s, the story centers around Frances, a 21-year-old bisexual college student who has a close relationship with writing. She and her ex-girlfriend turned best friend Bobbi do slam poetry together on the weekends. Her world completely changes upon meeting famous photographer Melissa and her husband Nick. Frances is captivated by Nick and his life with Melissa and upon spending more time with them, she begins to form feelings toward Nick that she does not know what to do with.

Frances is written beautifully and is a very complex character. As the book is written in first-person point of view, readers really get to see inside her head and understand the motivations behind her actions. She goes in-depth on her views and relationships with Bobbi and Nick. She is quite blunt and cynical as well and really hard on herself.

As a reader, you are rooting for her and only wish for the best but she has a tendency to self-sabotage situations with school and her relationships with others. Her passion for writing stays with her through personal struggles. Two examples of her personal struggles include problems with her father and her health. Her father had been distant since she was a child and Frances struggles with her love for Bobbi and Nick at the same time. She never fully pulls away from Bobbi even when she is invested in her relationship with Nick (while he is simultaneously married to Melissa.)

While this book has many themes and discussions of love I wouldn’t describe it as a romance. Her relationship with Nick is not only questionable but messy. Other than it being an affair, Frances struggles with her love for Bobbi and Nick at the same time. She never fully pulls away from Bobbi even when she is invested in her relationship with Nick (while he is simultaneously married to Melissa.)

While this book has many themes and discussions of love I wouldn’t describe it as a romance. Her relationship with Nick is not only questionable but messy. Other than it being an affair, Frances struggles with her love for Bobbi and Nick at the same time. She never fully pulls away from Bobbi even when she is invested in her relationship with Nick (while he is simultaneously married to Melissa.)

Throughout the novel, Frances tries to reconcile with her father and grapples with the fact that it is harder to connect with him than it seems.

About halfway through the novel, Frances suffers a reproductive health problem that hinders her life experiences as well. She has to deal with the physical pain and also the implications that this illness might have in the future. She also fears she will be viewed as a “sick person” meaning she would be treated differently from her peers. As a result, she avoids telling people about her condition.

Despite this book being called “Conversations with Friends” there are many themes of love. Can one person love more than one person at a time? Frances struggles with her love for Bobbi and Nick at the same time. All three of them handle love differently and go about it in their own way. Bobbi doesn’t believe in relationships and yet finds herself still drawn to Frances. Frances, being in the middle, seems to be hyper-aware of both of them at the same time. She never fully pulls away from Bobbi even when she is invested in her relationship with Nick (while he is simultaneously married to Melissa.)

While this book has many themes and discussions of love I wouldn’t describe it as a romance. Her relationship with Nick is not only questionable but messy. Other than it being an affair, Frances struggles with her love for Bobbi and Nick at the same time. She never fully pulls away from Bobbi even when she is invested in her relationship with Nick (while he is simultaneously married to Melissa.)

While this book has many themes and discussions of love I wouldn’t describe it as a romance. Her relationship with Nick is not only questionable but messy. Other than it being an affair, Frances struggles with her love for Bobbi and Nick at the same time. She never fully pulls away from Bobbi even when she is invested in her relationship with Nick (while he is simultaneously married to Melissa.)

Two examples of her personal struggles include problems with her father and her health. Her father had been distant since she was a child and Frances struggles with her love for Bobbi and Nick at the same time. She never fully pulls away from Bobbi even when she is invested in her relationship with Nick (while he is simultaneously married to Melissa.)

While this book has many themes and discussions of love I wouldn’t describe it as a romance. Her relationship with Nick is not only questionable but messy. Other than it being an affair, Frances struggles with her love for Bobbi and Nick at the same time. She never fully pulls away from Bobbi even when she is invested in her relationship with Nick (while he is simultaneously married to Melissa.)

After halfway through the novel, Frances suffers a reproductive health problem that hinders her life experiences as well. She has to deal with the physical pain and also the implications that this illness might have in the future. She also fears she will be viewed as a “sick person” meaning she would be treated differently from her peers. As a result, she avoids telling people about her condition.

Despite this book being called “Conversations with Friends” there are many themes of love. Can one person love more than one person at a time? Frances struggles with her love for Bobbi and Nick at the same time. All three of them handle love differently and go about it in their own way. Bobbi doesn’t believe in relationships and yet finds herself still drawn to Frances. Frances, being in the middle, seems to be hyper-aware of both of them at the same time. She never fully pulls away from Bobbi even when she is invested in her relationship with Nick (while he is simultaneously married to Melissa.)

While this book has many themes and discussions of love I wouldn’t describe it as a romance. Her relationship with Nick is not only questionable but messy. Other than it being an affair, Frances struggles with her love for Bobbi and Nick at the same time. She never fully pulls away from Bobbi even when she is invested in her relationship with Nick (while he is simultaneously married to Melissa.)

While this book has many themes and discussions of love I wouldn’t describe it as a romance. Her relationship with Nick is not only questionable but messy. Other than it being an affair, Frances struggles with her love for Bobbi and Nick at the same time. She never fully pulls away from Bobbi even when she is invested in her relationship with Nick (while he is simultaneously married to Melissa.)

The main aspect of this book that bothered me was the ending. Frances chooses to go back to someone rather than being independent or pursuing her relationship with Bobbi. It goes against her character development. Yet again, Rooney is known for unresolved endings because that’s exactly how life is.

I previously wrote a review of Rooney’s “Normal People” for The Montclarion. What I stated still stands for the fantastic aspects of this book. The writing style is refreshing, the character work is great and very genuine as well. The plot had good pacing and kept me engaged during this story.

Like Rooney’s other works, there are no quotation marks included in the dialogue of this book. Some readers feel as though this makes it more challenging to read but I disagree. I feel it is quite easy to catch on to and follow. I’d recommend this book to college students as well as people who feel lost. This book has a lot of really fun moments and memorable conversations between characters. But it can also get very serious and it deals a lot with Frances’s personal struggles. She is a character who is lost and needs to find her own way in time, a feeling that a lot of college students can relate to.
Have a thought about on campus or off campus matters? Write for Opinion!

Email: montclarionopinion@gmail.com

Room 2035, School of Communication and Media in Upper Montclair, NJ, 07043
What do you want to achieve for the upcoming semester?

By Lynise Olivacce  
Photo Editor

“I just want to be able to network with people in my classes.”

Nicole Rosales  
Sophomore  
Social Media and Public Relations

“For me as an English major, I struggled last semester with Shakespeare. So I just want to get a better understanding. Kind of getting an easier way to look at Shakespeare and his works. As well as networking with people in the teacher education program because that’s what I want to get into.”

Jayda Dizon  
Junior  
English

“I just started an internship this semester sponsored by Montclair [State] so I hope for that to kick off my career. Be more prepared to go into the world after college and raise my GPA. I really want to focus on finding a job or internship so I can really put myself put there.”

Liam Ahern  
Senior  
History
“One thing I wanted to stay on top of was definitely time management. Just because I have a lot of different [things] happening all at once. To also stay on top of things since this is also my last semester. I want to gain as much experience in my field as possible. Especially, in my internship at the Bureau of Criminal Investigation. It’s easy to lose track of everything and get overwhelmed, but I think I can handle it.”

Christina Hart
Senior
Justice Studies

“To pass.”

Jeremy Malabuyoc
Junior
Illustration

“Something that I get to look forward to in April is going to Daytona Beach, Florida with my cheer team. Last year and the year prior we got second place. To compete and perform is like an achievement that I have had the privilege to do already, there’s always something new every time. Working and being a full-time student and employee at a law firm is also a lot to handle, so I want to work on how to manage my schedule.”

Heather LaRose
Graduate Student
Law and Governance
**Horoscopes**

**Capricorn**
Dec. 22 - Jan. 19
If you identify as a girl, gay, or bi/rag. You're beautiful. I hope that every time you have to find a parking spot it's in the front row, that your Dunkin' Donuts is always right, and that the shuttle bus is always there as soon as you walk up to it. Everyone else: I hope every showing of Pass in Boots is full, and that when you try to stream it illegally - the recording is set for VP headers.

**Cancer**
Jun. 21 - Jul. 22
If you have a mental breakdown this week, please do not start referring to yourself in the third person and calling yourself Binge. It's weird and you're scaring your roommates.

**Aquarius**
Jan. 20 - Feb. 18
Happy New Year, Aquarius! Make sure your resolution is useful, okay? Maybe put less of a focus on “diversifying your music tastes” and more of a focus on “washing that pile of laundry that has cartoon steam rising over it.”

**Leo**
Jul. 23 - Aug. 22
How does it feel like to be the relationship coach to your best friend after being in the friendzone for two years, Leo?

**Pisces**
Feb. 19 - Mar. 20
We are less than two weeks into the semester, Pisces. How much of your flex have you spent, and of that flex, how much was JUST on mozzarella sticks from Bistro 62? You can tell us, The Montclarion is a safe space.

**Virgo**
Aug. 23 - Sep. 22
Virgo, this is the semester of senioritis. Take a light course load, nap a little longer, have time to nap! If you’re not a senior, I’m sure you’ll take this advice anyway, but beware.

**Aries**
Mar. 21 - Apr. 19
You should do the thing you keep thinking that you shouldn’t. You know what I mean Aries.

**Libra**
Sep. 23 - Oct. 22
Libra, a little piece of advice. Please don’t randomly text your friends you love them because they will get worried and shower you with affection. Also, a buzzcut does not stop a man from looking bald.

**Taurus**
Apr. 20 - May 20
Already spent a hundred dollars of flex on Diet Coke’s? It’s only been two weeks. What’s wrong with you? Drink some water. Maybe you should finally replace that Brita filter.

**Scorpio**
Oct. 23 - Nov. 21
Scorpio! This week you should watch some more Bluey with your roommates. It could be very relaxing, and possibly healing for your inner child. You also deserve a silly little treat after all the hard work you did last semester.

**Gemini**
May 21 - Jun. 20
Hi Gemini! Long time no see. I see you’ve been putting in the work and if you keep it up, you will be rewarded. Though your obsession with wings and cedar is concerning, you deserve a silly little treat.

**Sagittarius**
Nov. 22 - Dec. 21
Did you see M3GAN in theaters? No? You should get on that before the real life M3GAN civil suit in the Montclairian Office gets out and we have to destroy it. Be prepared.
The Montclarion Crossword Puzzle and More!
Oscar Nominations Edition
By Jenna Sundel

Across
3. This biopic starring Austin Butler and Tom Hanks is nominated for Best Picture.
5. This Pixar movie is nominated for “Best Animated Feature.”
6. Steven Spielberg is nominated for Best Director for his work on this film.
7. She is nominated for Best Supporting Actress for her role in “Black Panther: Wakanda Forever.”

Down
1. She is nominated for Best Actress for her role in “Everything Everywhere All at Once.”
2. He is nominated for Best Actor for his role in “The Banshees of Insherin.”
4. Her song “Hold My Hand” is nominated for Best Original Song.
8. This movie received six nominations, including Best Picture.

Sudoku

Word Search

Film
Costume
Actor
Cinematography

Movie
Chanukah
Actress
Nomination

Score
Documentary
Director
Oscar
Pipe Burst In Williams Hall, Worst Christmas Gift Ever

CI was the night before Christmas, when all through Williams Hall, not a student was studying, not even a Zoom call. The students were mostly home and relaxing with self-care, in hopes that their dorms would be safe until they got back there.

The students were nestled all snug in their beds, while visions of Rocky the Red Hawk danced in their heads. But little did they know a pipe had just burst. Now they were damaged if they will be reimbursed. Montclair State has good systems in place to worry about leaving their property in university housing when a disaster occurs? Hopefully, all of these will be answered with a sincere "yes." But until then, we await to see what steps Montclair State will take to right its wrongs.

ResLife stated, "At this time the building remains closed to all residents. We will update students once we are able to allow them to return to their room and be able to occupy it." Williams Hall occupants then patiently waited for an email detailing their housing situation. Students heard back on Jan. 6 saying that they anticipate students being able to move back in on Jan. 15. However, that was only what they hoped, not the official word.

Then, just only two days before the anticipated move-in date, students received another email stating that construction will take another three weeks and occupants will be relocated throughout campus. Some were even permanently relocated.

Seniors and juniors who lived in student luxury and their belongings were damaged due to the pipe burst and maybe things got out of control while construction was happening, but to leave people’s apartments with broken items is unacceptable.

And to have students’ property go missing such as jewelry and a Marcel the Shell figurine is absolutely ridiculous.

Even if they were damaged by the water, they should have been left there for the residents to decide whether they wanted to throw them out or not. Residents should not have to worry about their items being messed with or their rooms being a disaster when repairs were being made.

Montclair State, will you fully reimburse students who have lost or broken personal belongings? Will you fully reimburse students’ housing bill for the time lost in their apartments as they are paying to live in a nice on-campus apartment and not a freshman dorm in Freeman? And lastly, will you promise that in the future students don’t have to worry about leaving their property in university housing when a disaster occurs?

Hopefully, all of these will be answered with a sincere ‘yes.’ But until then, we await to see what steps Montclair State will take to right its wrongs.

Kaley Fitzpatrick
Senior

Visual Communication Design

No, because they’re not very good at alerting the students of what’s going on. And they don’t know how to handle or compensate us for all our belongings because they expect us to just already own insurance for stuff that we wouldn’t expect to have issues with living on campus in a place where they’re supposed to be responsible for us.

Kaley Fitzpatrick
Visual Communication Design
Junior

"No, because they’re not very good at alerting the students of what’s going on. And they don’t know how to handle or compensate us for all our belongings because they expect us to just already own insurance for stuff that we wouldn’t expect to have issues with living on campus in a place where they’re supposed to be responsible for us."

- Kaley Fitzpatrick
Visual Communication Design
Junior

“Honestly I don’t know enough about it, in terms of fire safety and stuff there is but like in terms of that flooding! I would say no because if it was kind of a mess then that’s kind of the answer.”

- Lauren Denton
Elementary Education
Junior

"When I lived in Dinallo it was kind of chaotic when there would always be fire alarms and such and it would feel like where do we go? I know there’s like a class everyone’s supposed to take on Canvas but I think maybe enforcing that more or making the safety and regulations known would be helpful.”

- Amanda Gaudiosi
Communication and Media Studies
Senior

Do you think Montclair State has good systems in place to handle on-campus incidents, such as floods or fires?

By Katie Lawrence & Hannah Eflinger

Campus Voices
I Survived the Great Williams Hall Flood

Hannah Effinger
Production Editor

A little over a week ago, I, along with 78 other residents of Williams Hall, was told to vacate my space before the semester even had a chance to begin. Blindsided by promises that the building would be ready for occupation by Jan. 15, most of us were shocked by this seemingly sudden decision.

After receiving the call from Residence Life (ResLife) on Dec. 26, my roommates and I had been told that our apartment had sustained minimal damage from the reports building staff had done prior to the phone call, and that we could come into the building that day or the next to grab any valuables and personal belongings we may have needed. And so, my roommate and I hopped in the car and made the two-and-a-half-hour trek back to Williams Hall.

Initially, our apartment looked fine. Like ResLife told us on the phone, there was a bit of water by the door, and a water stain on the ceiling, but nothing that was completely ruined were a few papers and a sweater I had left on the floor — which I was willing to take the blame for, because why was there a sweater on the floor in the first place?

My roommate and I grabbed whatever valuables of our own and our other roommates’ that we could, thinking that we’d come back up to a Montclair State cleaning job on Jan. 15 — just expecting the water stain to be painted over or told that it didn’t pose any risk to our apartment.

With the lack of communication from the school, it really seemed like that would be it. However, I found myself back on campus on Jan. 8, three days before residents would receive any news from the university regarding their apartments. I was escorted into the building by a resident assistant (RA) to grab something I needed from my room.

When I entered the apartment, I think I went into shock.

Concrete walls were exposed, every piece of molding was ripped out and all of our furniture and belongings were covered in a thick coating of drywall dust if they were not directly under the plastic sheets haphazardly thrown across our beds. I had only gotten a quick look and taken a short video, since the overall mess that had taken up the place I had called home for the last few months overwhelmed me, and the workers in full PPE suits made me feel as if I was in more danger standing there than the woman I had spoke to let on.

Keep in mind, this was still before the university notified the majority of the displaced residents that they would have to move out.

The last communication I received was two days prior, saying that the building would hopefully be ready for occupancy on the 15th. As far as my knowledge goes, no residents were informed of the state of the building at this point which was further confirmed when move-out began on Sunday, and many were shocked by the wreckage left in their rooms.

Again, I acknowledge that my apartment was one of the luckier ones.

Our room didn’t see any large amounts of water, and no electronics were ruined by the excess moisture within the room. However, unhappy for us, the cleaning company or some other entity took care of anything that came out unscathed, covering it in copious amounts of drywall dust, breaking everything that could be broken or just performing vanishing tricks on any valuables left behind.

In addition to the carriage of ripped posters and broken soap dispensers around our apartment, we were gifted an empty two-liter bottle of Pepsi in our unplugged freezer, sitting atop the now-thawed shrimp cocktail tray that some may have considered a biohazard after sitting for an unknown number of days.

If I were under oath, I would swear on the Bible that not one of my roommates would consume Pepsi, so I know for a fact that it had to have been placed there by someone other than us. Following this, as we split off to find our new housing assignments, my roommate and I were unfortunate enough to find out that not only had our assigned room been double booked; but that our bookings had been changed, meaning we were placed in doubles with random roommates.

Now, in any other circumstance this would be okay, but toting the contents of an entire room; plus half of a bathroom, a quarter of a kitchen and a common area into someone else’s room without warning just seemed inconceivable to both parties. I completely recognize that the pipe bursting may have been unavoidable, that the cleaning company has a very difficult task and that ResLife has to relocate 79 students halfway through the school year must have been a challenge, but come on. Pipe bursts like this happen at least once a year on campus, so why hasn’t Montclair State come up with a better way to handle this so that it alleviates stress from the affected students? Why was it my responsibility to double and triple check their work, to make sure my housing was correct, to make sure I even got housing, to make sure I could clear my entire day to come to move out and move back in?

If residents are not returned to our rooms promptly, Montclair State should be prepared to give full housing refunds to all affected. At this point, it’s the least they can do to compensate for their empty promises, utter lack of communication and absence of care for their residents’ personal items.
Impostor Syndrome May Be Slowly Destroying You

Darian Mozo
Assistant Opinion Editor

Impostor syndrome is the feeling of self-doubt and insecurity about yourself. Those who suffer from it constantly question their talents and accomplishments, unable to notice how skilled and talented they truly are.

Those who suffer from this feeling tend to consider themselves as "failers" or, as the name suggests, impostors in an environment full of successful people. They feel forced to live in constant fear of making a mistake and being "discovered" by others.

People suffering from this syndrome think their achievements are due to external factors such as a lucky break or the intervention of third parties. Trust me, you are not alone.

In fact, according to an article from the American Psychological Association (APA), an estimated “up to 82% of people face feelings of impostor phenomenon.”

Major celebrities and notable figures such as Michelle Obama have admitted to experiencing impostor syndrome at some point in their lives. Even if the term "syndrome" already has a negative connotation, let me tell you that having a little bit of impostor syndrome isn’t bad at all.

It is always good to aspire toward better goals as you move forward in your life and to desire to become the best version of yourself.

However, at what point does this become a legitimate problem in your life? That would be the moment when the motivation to be better becomes a fear-driven limitation.

I never knew that I suffered from impostor syndrome until recently. I knew that if I worked hard and consistently I would one day achieve my goals. But sometimes, it’s just never enough.

Anxiety and stress took away my confidence when I needed it the most. I started to feel alone and misunderstood. I found it hard to applaud my achievements. My good grades or job performance were not a source of joy because I thought to myself that anyone could have done better or I was just lucky.

My mistakes became my worst enemies. I dreaded making a mistake and everyone around me would catch it. All the internal pain sloshed ed itself physically - feeling discouraged and weak, headaches, drastic weight changes, and hair loss. It was a complete disaster.

Fortunately, over time and with the support of close friends, I learned to move past this and to keep pushing forward to reach my goals.

Applaud all your efforts, even if you feel it’s not really an actual one. Personally, I like to write a list, preferably by hand, of all the good things I’ve accomplished during the day or week.

Impostor syndrome can be tough to beat, but it’s not impossible. Never miss the opportunities that come your way just because you don’t believe you are sufficient. Have faith in yourself.

I write this article from the bottom of my heart, and with tears in my eyes, in the hope that readers will be relieved and understand that they are not alone.

I also wrote it for myself, too, in the hope this will keep reminding me of how far I have come as a professional journalist and as a person.

Missouri State House Enforces Sexist Dress Code for Women

Claudia Martillo
Staff Writer

Women have long been the victim of sexist dress codes in the workplace and schools. They are penalized for their bodies and have been forced to cater their appearance for the benefit of men.

Led by Republican representative Ann Kelley, the Republican-controlled Missouri State House of Representatives sought to strengthen the dress code only for female lawmakers, stressing the coverage of their arms and the use of jackets to conceal themselves.

According to The Washington Post, Kelley stated “it is essential to always maintain a formal and professional atmosphere.”

The proposal was met with backlash from Missouri Democrats, who “are fighting - again - for a woman’s right to choose something. This time, it’s how she covers herself,” Representative Raychel Poudrie said.

Poudrie also noted that the dress code would be challenging for any pregnant officials to follow due to the limited availability of professional maternity clothing and income to pay for tailoring services.

There was no proposed change to the dress code for male legislators. Missouri Democratic Representative Pete Merideth indicated his support for a stricter dress code and the Republican uproar following the mask mandate in the State House during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

Another Missouri Democratic Representative, Ashley Aune, described the “ridiculous” nature of the proposed change to the dress code and high-lighted how the code would be difficult to enforce and who would actually be the one to determine if their outfits are appropriate. She stressed how uncomfortable she would be with the idea of having her appearance policed by the media and others.

This all begins in childhood. Young girls are often told by school officials to ensure their clothing does not distract their male classmates or the male faculty. These rules typically include the three-finger strap for tank tops, knee or fingertip-length skirts or skirts, no visible bra straps, no exposed shoulder, no exposed midriff and more.

These rules allow young women to believe that their bodies are shameful and they must always put the needs of surrounding men above their education, career and comfort. These expectations feed into women throughout their lives as displayed by the Missouri State House ruling, forcing adult female lawmakers to change how they regularly dress.

In my personal experience in high school, I had school faculty tell me to “leave something to the imagination” when wearing a croppped sweater and was penalized for wearing certain tops. However, what many schools and jobs do not take into consideration is the fact that clothing appears different on different bodies.

I often felt singled out for shirts I would wear that other girls would wear as well but because they fit differently on my body compared to theirs, I would be penalized.

This further perpetuates the idea that women are viewed only as sexual objects, not real human beings. Women are simply bodies to be used at the disposal of men and must follow rules that have no justifiable standing or impact on the way women perform work. Rather than trusting women to dress how they see fit and trusting men to control themselves, women must always be the ones to suffer.

Not only do dress codes such as these act as another way to reinforce gender power imbalance, but they are also often discriminatory to women of different body types. As previously stated by Poudrie, pregnant women can find a new ruling like this challenging to follow, similar to this, dress codes are often unfair to plus-sized bodies.

Plus-sized people are not awarded the same access to a wide variety of clothing as smaller-sized bodies. Many stores do not carry a plus-sized section let alone plus-sized business-professional apparel, leaving people to seek out often more expensive alternatives and methods.

The necessity to change the dress code by Missouri Republican officials emphasizes the fact that topics like dress codes are more important than actual social issues. Ultimately, the Missouri State House’s new dress code only further fuels the argument that women’s bodies must be controlled by others.

Claudia Martillo, a junior journalism and digital media major, is in her second year as assistant opinion editor for The Montclarion.
While it’s been a running joke that “Avatar” has left little to no cultural impact since its record-breaking box office run, “Avatar: The Way of Water” becoming the sixth highest-grossing film of all time this past week asserts that there is no denying the place of “Avatar” in the zeitgeist, and as such, it becomes imperative to discuss the glaring cultural blind spots of both films.

As far back as its release in December of 2009, “Avatar” was criticized for being a “white savior” narrative. The “white savior” is a trope often seen throughout the history of cinema, wherein a white protagonist rescues non-white characters from various conflicts, such as would-be invaders, or becomes a prominent figure in civil rights movements and various aspects of race relations.

Typically, the “white savior” of the story is a man, but there are notable exceptions such as Sandra Bullock in “The Blind Side,” who won an Academy Award for playing an exaggeratedly heroic version of Michael Oher’s disabled former US Marine who inhabits the body of a Na’vi, an alien race whose home world is being colonized by humana seeking resources for their dying world.

The Na’vi clan in the first film, the Omatikaya, is obviously an alien culture, but they are heavily inspired by many real-world cultures. Their skin and slender, muscular bodies are meant to resemble Hindu gods, and their beloved Hallelujah Mountains are inspired by the Chinese Huangshan mountains, but their culture and plight are primarily based on the European colonization of the Americas.

James Cameron, the aging auteur behind the franchise, has made no secret of this inspiration, and frankly, if you don’t notice it, then you’re not paying attention. While making an anti-colonialist, anti-industrialist blockbuster is a very noble goal, the role of Jake Sully throughout the film somewhat sullies the film’s message.

You see, Jake doesn’t just aid the Omatikaya in their fight, Jake becomes the legendary hero of prophecy that leads the entire species to victory. The saviorhood of it all becomes even more apparent when you notice that all of the indigenous Na’vi are played by Black or Native American actors, further cementing their place as people of color, through the lens of both systemic oppression and representation in popular culture?

All of this is not to say that James Cameron is some vicious, bigoted racist. His intentions are still undeniably noble. But his handling of race in the “Avatar” films is almost entirely thoughtless. The points being raised here are likely ones that never crossed his mind, but that’s the whole point.

The first two “Avatar” films cost a combined $697 million, have grossed a combined $4.8 billion and took a collective 28 years to reach theaters. James Cameron has had more than enough time, money and opportunity to take a step back from his creation and take a look at its implications. Is that too much to ask from the biggest films in the history of the medium?
“Sound Memory”
by Anexis Matos | Staff Writer

Do you remember the memory of
that sound? What is it about that great sound
that covers you in a memory glove
that takes over you and spins you around
until you arrive at a different time?
To this day, you remember where it came
from and why it’s a reference to this rhyme.
You remember that great sound by its name.
It held something special that would surprise
you immensely and, no matter the day,
you knew it came from someone with bright eyes
who, with no doubt, would always light your way.
To some, it’s nothing but a simple noise,
but to you, it’s like a determined voice.

“Coming Out Angst”
by Orion Oss | Staff Writer

You said you’d support me
but the day after I came out
you got mad at me for correcting you
it hadn’t even been a day
now you don’t call me by my name
instead
my love
my baby
little one
and the worst one yet
hey, you
I know you love me
but couldn’t you show it a little more
you only have one son
I only have one mom
we have to make this work.

“War Time Kisses”
by Alex Pavljuk | Fiction Editor

The shelling never ceased as winds whipped across my ex-
posed and frosting nose. My lower half sank deeper into the
snow which built up rapidly in the depths of this sadly dug
fox hole not so far east of enemy lines deep within the dying
heart of the Ardennes forest.

Daggers of ice disguised as snowbound kisses grazed my
neck leaving me with the desperate allure of my lover’s lips.
How has it been so long since I’ve looked into her eyes?

Oh how I long for her eyes.

If the tips of my fingers didn’t fear the frost of an icy bite
I’d try and write despite not knowing if she’d found another
man to fill the void in her life.

I dreamed that maybe if I just stood up and took a stray en-
emy bullet I’d wake up away from all the red stained snow
and back in front of my fireplace wasting away my days with
her beside me.

But, back here in the moment, this frosty and scornful mo-
ment, it was the roar of panzer tanks pushing through the
banks of snow which brought me back to the deathly real
reminder of the war which raged before my eyes.

Across from me sat a shaking and shivering shell of a sol-
dier who was far from the family farm way back across the
majestic Atlantic and deep beyond the spanning scope of
Appalachia toward the depths of the American heartland.
The last place he’d thought his life may end would be in the
depths of a cold Belgian forest.

I didn’t think that I’d die here either. Yet, alas, here I am sat
waiting for my number to be called.
“Closer to Heaven” (Part 4 of 5)

by Izy Love | Staff Writer

Kristen lodged herself in the back of the crowd that had gathered in the arena floor of the Roman Colosseum. Stiff share-holders, journalists ready to spew questions, TV cameramen ready to shoot all joined her. None of them were completely sure of what to expect. They all stood waiting before a temporary assembled stage. With a monitor bearing the park logo hanging over it and sound seemingly locked and loaded, there was only one thing left to wait for.

She was very curious to see what Brock’s next move would be. Kristen knew she had lost the argument; whatever that really meant. But she was too optimistic not to be convinced something hadn’t jammed inside the machine. Could she have made a dent after all? The fighter inside her wanted badly to believe so. Hope just meant there was something left to fight for. But her nihilist side, the one more vocal in these scenarios, shook its head. Whatever it was, she had to see it with her own eyes.

Brock stepped onto the stage, the energy he unleashed when they drove through the park earlier re-emerged. He waved royally at the applauding crowd until they had settled down enough for him to speak.

He leaned professionally against the podium. “Thank you all for being here. As many know, I designed my first statue in my last year of grad school. It was a simple 1:1 scale Triceratops. In those days, I was a young, dumb kid. Fresh from college and yearning to make the most of my skills and knowledge. Today, I may not be as young as I was. But the spirit of innovation still reigns freely.”

On cue, 3D images of various figures flashed across the monitor. Kristen could make out a spaceship and possibly a mountain. Oohs and aahs emitted around her. In the distance, she heard cameras began to flash.

“Next year, construction will begin on an expansion to the East and West ends of the park in order to accommodate the latest in Babylon attractions...”

The footage dissolved into a timeline marked by years and names. Kristen was shocked to realize she would be an old woman by the time the furthest date came around. As Brock continued to speak, digital mockups joined every name he listed.

“We have the Space Shuttle...the Great Pyramids...Mount Everest...Manhattan. All this and more, sitting on an extension of over 1,100 sq. miles.”

A map showing the newfound borders of the park dissolved on screen. It was a square taking up most of the state’s northern panhandle and poking into Oregon. Each namedrop was bookended with great applause from all but one. Kristen felt something break inside of her with each name. That was enough; she hadn’t invested all that energy into her argument only to be discarded on a whim. She began to force her way through the crowd, pushing bodies aside and stepping on the occasional foot. Kristen reached the side of the stage and hopped up the steps unobstructed. She failed to notice how the black-clad guards did not stir as she brushed past them.

Brock’s speech was derailed as Kristen suddenly shoved him away from the microphone. The applause stopped as all eyes jumped to the manic appearing woman at the podium. Facing the crowd, she breathed through her mouth as she attempted to catch her breath.

“Don’t you all see what’s wrong here?!?" Kristen shouted breathlessly. “This lunatic is killing us; the proof is out there!”

The crowd stared at her in silence as if she’d farted. A single cough echoed throughout the arena.

“Brock doesn’t really care for innovation; he doesn’t care for anyone. All wants from these statues is to feel like God! And he’ll destroy the environment to get it! If anybody can stop this all, it’s you! We can all supporting him, supporting the park! Please, just put your wallets where it matters most!”

She finished, racked with an aftertaste of adrenaline. Scanning the crowd, she saw the flash of cameras, indifference, awkward sneers and judgy whispers. Kristen couldn’t believe it. After all the documentation, pleas of passion, and the ever-overwhelming nature of it all; she was the crazy one. Nobody could be burdened by the truth, only the novelty of its façade. I.

A meaty hand gripped her from behind. And Kristen quickly found herself being dragged from the podium and off the stage. Brock stepped back before the microphone. She swore there was a hint of a smirk in the corner of his lips. After a pause in which everybody watched her being hauled away, he broke the ice and chuckled.

Tight lipped laughter peaked in Kristen’s earshot. She felt herself floating away from it all; Brock, the crowd, the park. What would she gain from resisting? Another opportunity to yell at the brick walls surrounding her? She couldn’t tell if she felt weightless because of the security guard’s strength or if it was all in her head. Kristen and Brock locked eyes at a distance. Even from the edge of the crowd, she could see the flame that roared in them. Brock would reach the heavens after all.

“The Apparatus”

by Emily Christian | Contributor

If you asked me today, I would pack a bag and run.
I would follow you anywhere.
To the mountains in New York, to the Great Plains in Kansas, to the Golden Coast of California, I would spend cold nights with you.
I would be your muse in every sense of the word. Like when the camera turns to the audience in Contempt, you would turn to me and see an apparatus of art,
of skill,
of talent.
Combining his many passions with his determination, Montclair State University student JT Bethea is making his creative mark with his many skills. Bethea, originally from Egg Harbor Township, is a junior film and television major at Montclair State. He works as Booking Director at WMSC 90.3 and hosts “Madness To The Method” and “Identity Crisis” along with Terry Dickerson, a junior journalism and digital media major, and Cam Martin, a junior sports communication major.

Artistically, JT Untamed (his stage name) is a rapper, actor, producer and filmmaker. Since he was in first grade, he has demonstrated an amazing ability for writing. Now he is combining it with huge passion for content creation on social media.

One of his earliest memories is when he started creating parodies of some of his favorite songs. “I just remember writing my own lyrics to the tune [from] ‘The Jungle Book,’” Bethea said. “It kind of took a spin from there.”

But everything would take an unexpected twist when, according to Bethea, at the age of 14, his mother brought home what would become his first contact with the world of music and the production of his own art. “When I was a freshman in high school my mom [bought] the family a new computer,” Bethea said. “I was always on [it] downloading all [sorts] of software, playing with it.”

With the lapse of time—and a lot of self-training—Bethea composed his first song using GarageBand along with a quick poem to go with it. The song was recorded but never released. It wasn’t until his high school years that he took his career seriously. This led him to focus more on improving his songwriting, recording and producing skills. As a result, he created new music he is proud of.

His growth as an artist and person has had its ups and downs, but the love and support from his loved ones is always present. Shekinah Mays, his girlfriend, has witnessed all the hard work her partner constantly puts into his content. Mays especially supports him in his filmmaking career by motivating him to persist and helping him in any way she can. “I think he’s a very professional artist,” Mays said. “He’s a hard worker and gives his all in anything he does. I’m so proud of him.”

Bethea said something that really represents him as an artist is his last EP, “Nocturnal Daydreams.” “Nocturnal Daydreams,” which has a total of six songs, was released on June 17, 2022. Some of the songs are in collaboration with fellow artists like Ben Petruk, a senior journalism major, and Lilgrinch, Bethea’s hometown friend. “Every song on it, with the exception of the last [one], has a message, has a meaning, and I pour my heart [and soul] on every song,” Bethea said. “My favorites are Nocturnal Nightmare,’ ‘Battle’ and ‘Intro.’”

In October, Bethea directed a music video for his latest single “Snow,” a Christmas rap that is now available on all music platforms. The creative process and production were challenging. Sabrina Hajsko, a senior film and television major, was the executive producer and director of this project. For Hajsko, it took a lot of effort and hard work from the entire team. “There was much to do between writing the script, casting, putting together the crew, finding locations, costumes and so much more,” Hajsko said. “Overall, it was a great experience.”

Brent Brown, a junior social media and public relations major, was the director of photography on the set. Brown said it was a fun experience, especially because he was surrounded by his friends and made connections with amazing people. Jared Tauber, a junior filmmaking major, acted as Kringle, the head elf in the music video. Tauber recounted one of his favorite moments during filming. “My favorite part was shooting in [Bethea’s] car because we just got to dance to the song in an insulated, warm environment without [worrying] about blocking or continuity, just vibes,” Tauber said.

During the time it has taken him to forge his musical career, Bethea learned a fundamental lesson: the best thing you can do, in every sense of your life, is what you feel is right at the moment—everything will align in time. “I feel like the best course of action is to take things one day at a time,” Bethea said. “One step at a time, one task at a time, one song at a time.”
‘Ginny & Georgia’ Shows Promise in Season Two

Maya Savoy
Guest Writer

Season two of "Ginny & Georgia" premiered on Jan. 5, and still remains in Netflix's Top 10. This series has taken on a life of its own, leading with 180.47 million hours viewed.

Mother-and-daughter duo Ginny (Antonia Gentry) and Georgia Miller (Brianna Howey) show us the pretty and the ugly truths of a coming of age story while we watch them engage with each other like we’ve never seen before. Seeing them at odds is not out of the ordinary and it remains at the forefront of the majority of the season as viewers continue to watch everything unfold, including different dynamics throughout the show surrounding murder and buried secrets within the household.

We are welcomed back to the women’s world with a lighthearted opening scene giving the audience hope for this complicated yet dysfunctional family. Greeted by Maxine (Sara Waisglass), we feel a sense of belonging to the Monterclaire High School. In season one, we left Ginny with a compromising decision to leave home with her little brother, Austin (Diesel La Torraca), in search of answers for their mom’s behavior. While her life was falling apart at home, she didn’t have much luck with friends from school as Ginny begins the season on bad terms with her best friend Maxine. Outside of Wellsbury drama, these students have their complicated lives at home. Many characters are faced with challenges this season and embark on their own journeys that all seem to be connected in the town of Wellsbury.

We continue to root for Ginny’s happiness in season two as she experiences problems that many teenagers face, like self-harm. Other characters also struggle with mental health this season, like Marcus (Felix Mallard), when he begins to open up more about his feelings, making him and Ginny become more connected.

Noticeable changes in wardrobe and lighting, often highlighted by TikTok, really set this season apart from the first as many viewers have been able to get a small glimpse of what is happening to each character and what mental state they are in.

By discussing mental health, this show is a great reminder to us all that asking for help is always an option. Unlike others, "Ginny & Georgia" gives a positive outlook on therapy and being more self-aware of what people around us need. It can remind our generation to ask for help above all and to lean on the people you love for help. This perspective evokes the audience’s curiosity to know more about how the characters overcome their challenges and allows us to elevate each of their stories.

Though we are surrounded by the uncertainty of people’s paths in the show, we are able to enjoy the season by seeing more love on screen than before and the emergence of new characters, which added more potential to the storyline and has shown different sides to everyone. Their influence added so much more value in ways that I never imagined this season.

Season two was emotional in many ways, having me leave each scene on a high of emotions, not ready for the next one. No one can fully prepare for the new season of "Ginny & Georgia."
Toan Le  
Staff Writer

Back in 2009, “Avatar” created a massive impact on the film industry as it was an innovative technological achievement in filmmaking as well as storytelling. The film soon claimed its noble title as the highest-grossing film of all time and remains till this day. “Avatar: The Way of Water” might not have the same impact as its predecessor, but it does not fall short of wonderment. The story picks up years after the first “Avatar.” Jake Sully (Sam Worthington) thrives as the chief of the Omatikaya tribe while raising his family with his wife, Neytiri (Zoe Saldana), and their three kids, Neteyam (Jamie Flatters), Lo'ak (Britain Dalton) and Tuk (Trinity Bliss), along with their adopted daughter, Kiri, an offspring from Grace Augustine’s avatar (both played by Sigourney Weaver).

As their kids grow and live among the human that chose to live peacefully with the Na’vi, they have become inseparable from Spider (Jack Champion), a Pandora-born child from the late Colonel Miles Quaritch (Stephen Lang). Soon, an adversary from the past threatens the tribe and forces Jake and his family to leave their home to avoid another war against the human colonizers. Ultimately, they seek refuge in another tribe near the eastern seaboard where they have to adapt to the lifestyle of the ocean. As Jake and his family start to feel accepted, the war follows them, leading them to have no other choice but to stand their ground.

The biggest takeaway from the film is its incredible, breath-taking visuals. The visual effects team does a masterful job to fully realize Cameron’s vision. From the characters’ models to the creation of Pandora’s seaboard, the immersivity is apparent to every viewer. Under Cameron’s amazing directions, the film’s dazzling imagery and graphics serve a purpose: they significantly contribute to the characters’ journey and hardships—nothing here feels too out-of-place as the story progresses.

To top it off, the film features jaw-dropping action sequences that deliver grand explosions. Between the stunning choreography and mind-blowing graphics, the level of hard work to create these set pieces are greatly appreciated. Heart and dedication can be vividly seen and admired within every frame. At some point, the line between motion capture and reality become indistinguishable. Combined with fantastic sound mixing, visceral score and exceptional editing, the film makes the immersive experience all the more gripping and entertaining.

The film’s cinematographer, Russell Carpenter (who won an Oscar for “Titanic”), does an excellent job of amplifying the viewing experience with gorgeous establishing shots and luminous lighting systems that feel wonderous and justly. The world of Pandora never ceases to look like a moving painting, existing beyond reality. The ensemble, including newcomers like Kate Winslet and Cliff Curtis, really brings out the humanity of the film even if most of them are portraying another species. As always, Saldana delivers her best when it comes to playing an emotional component to the main protagonist. Beside her, the young cast also rounds out the ensemble, doubling up on the emotions for the story to progress. Worth noticing is how the new additions to the cast truly complement the veterans, especially Winslet, who has some amazing scenes.

At Cameron’s helm, the story does an outstanding job setting up the next chapter in the “Avatar” franchise with many possibilities to where the core characters could end up. Underneath all of the majestic visuals, the story as a whole lacks in substance compared to the first “Avatar.” Of course, there are some enticing puzzle pieces that will hopefully have an emotional pay-off in next installment, but at times, the story feels derivative and safe—nothing the audience hasn’t seen before. Complexity only surfaces when the main protagonist and the antagonist encounter their own family drama and conflicts, which is enough to distinguish itself from other repetitive action blockbusters. Nonetheless, the film is well-rounded and cohesive with some dynamic elements that keep viewers engaged.

“Avatar: The Way of Water” is worth the 13-year wait; Cameron’s directions are always purposeful and creative, making the most out of his remarkable vision. Yes, the narrative does have weak spots and seems formulaic at times, but the heart and emotions remain strong throughout the experience. Not to mention, the visual effects transform the film into another dimension with jaw-dropping sequences and an exceptional world creation, setting a new technical standard for the industry.

“Avatar: The Way of Water” might not be the best sequel, but it is still a solid, entertaining film with breathtaking graphics that will leave viewers speechless.
G. Puccini’s

GIANNI SCHICCHI

Set in medieval Florence, the established Donati family are grieving around the deathbed of their patriarch, Buoso Donati. But when they find out he’s left their inheritance to the church — mourning turns to rage. They rope in a lower class fix-it guy, Gianni Schicchi, to change the will, in exchange for his daughter Lauretta marrying their young Rinuccio. Schicchi finds the perfect solution, executes the plan, and gets the Donati exactly what they deserve.

Michael Ching’s

BUOSSO’S GHOST

In the sequel to Puccini’s masterpiece, Michael Ching’s Buoso’s Ghost, Schicchi discovers a dark Donati secret. When they come back to haunt him, Schicchi screams for mercy, until he conjures up a new plan, and summons the ghost of Buoso for a little help.
The women's team recently had a massive win against the Lions of The College of New Jersey.

Dani Mazariegos | The Montclarion

Swimming and Diving's Huge Splash

Ryan White
Assistant Sports Editor

The Panzer pool has been active and full of splashes as of late courtesy of the Montclair State University’s swimming and diving teams.

The Montclair State men’s and women’s swimming and diving teams opened the new year with a statement, claiming a total of 13 first-place times as they swept Fairleigh Dickinson University-Florham on Jan. 17.

The women’s team is currently sitting at 6-3 overall (2-2 in the New Jersey Athletic Conference) and coming off a massive statement win over The College of New Jersey (TCNJ). With the victory, the Red Hawks kept themselves right in the mix of the NJAC and are sitting at third behind Rowan and Kean University.

Sophomore standout Julie Tiedemann had herself a career day against TCNJ as she placed first three separate times individually. Tiedemann’s first victory of the day was in the 1,000 free with a time of 11:08.22. She then won the 200-freestyle in 2:00.18. Tiedemann completed the hat trick of wins as the sophomore got her third win of the day in the 500-freestyle by touching the wall in 5:23.12.

The win over TCNJ was huge for both the Red Hawks amidst their season and Tiedemann individually.

“This past Saturday, it was a really big deal for the women’s team to beat TCNJ,” Tiedemann said. “I think all of us were super excited. Personally, I had three wins across the meet so that was really nice winning all of my individual events.”

Following the matchup with TCNJ, Tiedemann’s big performance earned her NJAC Women’s Swimmer of the Week honors. Junior Spencer Dubois for the men’s team also was named NJAC Men’s Swimmer of the Week after a record-setting performance as Dubois broke the Panzer pool record in the 100-yard breaststroke with a time of 57.63.

It was a phenomonal out for Dubois as he finished first in the 100 and 200-yard Breaststroke, placed second in the 400-Freestyle and third place in the 200-Medley Relay.

The Metropolitan Championships are coming up next month for the Red Hawks.

The men’s team is also in a nice spot currently at this point in the season as they sit with a record of 5-2 and are third in the NJAC standings behind TCNJ and Rowan (1-2 in the NJAC).

The Red Hawks have put themselves in a great position after a successful fall season with wins over Ramapo College of New Jersey, Drew University, Vassar College, The College of Staten Island and FDU-Florham.

Back in October, after a pair of blowout wins over Ramapo, head coach Brian McLaughlin hit a milestone as he notched his 200th career victory as women’s head coach.

“The Red Hawks have put themselves in a great position after a successful fall season with wins over Ramapo College of New Jersey, Drew University, Vassar College, The College of Staten Island and FDU-Florham. Back in October, after a pair of blowout wins over Ramapo, head coach Brian McLaughlin hit a milestone as he notched his 200th career victory as women’s head coach.

Next on the schedule is an NJAC matchup against William Paterson University at home on Jan. 31 and the Red Hawks will look to close out their regular season on a high note before the Metropolitan Championships.
Mahogany Worsley-Wooten recently scored her career-high against Rutgers-Camden with 18 points.

Women's Basketball: Fighting For the Playoffs

After a tough stretch in Las Vegas, the Red Hawks have had a back and forth stretch

Thomas Gaffney
Staff Writer

The action for the Montclair State University women's basketball team did not stop through the university's winter break as they played seven games throughout the holidays and into the beginning of the spring 2023 semester.

Five of those games were conference games within the NJAC (New Jersey Athletic Conference) and two came from the team's trip to Las Vegas to compete in the D3 Hoops Classic.

Before the break, the Red Hawks were 5-4, their last win coming from Hunter College in New York, on Dec. 13, winning 76 to 44. Leading the Red Hawks was senior guard Nickie Carter with 18 points, five assists and five rebounds.

The Red Hawks continued the action after 15 days on a trip to Las Vegas, Nevada to compete in the D3 Hoops Classic. The first game was played against Amherst College. They failed to secure the win but a bright spot was once again Carter with 21 points.

The next game was against Rutgers-Newark and the Red Hawks came through Newark like a tornado. Winning the game 84-39, that was the biggest blowout this season by the Red Hawks. And it was a full team effort, having a whopping 13 players play.

Game four was against Rowan University. The Red Hawks took them down 73-67, making it a three-game win streak for them. They were led by Carter again with 31 points and Vero with an astounding performance of 15 points and 13 rebounds.

The final game of the five-game stretch was against Kean University. The Red Hawks failed to make it a four-game win streak, losing 58 - 41. That mark was the lowest number of points the Red Hawks have scored all season.

The Red Hawks finished this span with a 3-4 record, but in these games, it showed that the Red Hawks can bounce back from any sort of defeat.

Although the team lost, sophomore forward and center Olivia Vero had a mark rarely done by anyone within Division III women's basketball. Vero secured six blocks in the game, the second most by any player in the history of the D3hoops.com Classic Tournament.

The next game was against the University of Southern Maine. The Red Hawks fought hard but again failed to win. A different player was the main star for the Red Hawks as freshman guard and forward Isabella Orlando scored eight points in only 15 minutes. It was an efficient offensive game for Orlando.

The trip came to an end with the Red Hawks going 0-2.

Although the team lost, sophomore forward and center Olivia Vero had a mark rarely done by anyone within Division III women's basketball. Vero secured six blocks in the game, the second most by any player in the history of the D3hoops.com Classic Tournament.

The next game was against the University of Southern Maine. The Red Hawks fought hard but again failed to win. A different player was the main star for the Red Hawks as freshman guard and forward Isabella Orlando scored eight points in only 15 minutes. It was an efficient offensive game for Orlando.

The trip came to an end with the Red Hawks going 0-2.

But Montclair State would not let that bring them down as they returned back to the Panzer Athletic Center with a five-game stretch of NJAC divisional games starting with Ramapo College of New Jersey.

In the first game at Montclair State since the start of the break, the game ended 63-53 and the stretch continued to not improve. But the outlook for the Red Hawks did improve.

Game two took place at Panzer Athletic Center with a five-game stretch of NJAC divisional games starting with Ramapo College of New Jersey.

In the first game at Montclair State since the start of the break, the game ended 63-53 and the stretch continued to not improve. But the outlook for the Red Hawks did improve.

Game two took place at Panzer Athletic Center with a five-game stretch of NJAC divisional games starting with Ramapo College of New Jersey.

The next game was against Rutgers-Newark and the Red Hawks came through Newark like a tornado. Winning the game 84-39, that was the biggest blowout this season by the Red Hawks. And it was a full team effort, having a whopping 13 players play.

Game four was against Rowan University. The Red Hawks took them down 73-67, making it a three-game win streak for them. They were led by Carter again with 31 points and Vero with an astounding performance of 15 points and 13 rebounds.

The final game of the five-game stretch was against Kean University. The Red Hawks failed to make it a four-game win streak, losing 58 - 41. That mark was the lowest number of points the Red Hawks have scored all season.

The Red Hawks finished this span with a 3-4 record, but in these games, it showed that the Red Hawks can bounce back from any sort of defeat.

With losing to New Jersey City University on Jan. 18 and winning against Rutgers University-Camden on Jan. 21, the Red Hawks are now 9-9 overall and 5-6 in the NJAC.

With seven games left, all being NJAC games, the Red Hawks look to make a push for a coveted spot in the NJAC tournament coming up in about a month. Their next game is against Rutgers-Newark at Panzer Athletic Center on Jan. 25 where they are looking to bounce back after their loss against Kean.
Men's Basketball Continues To Be A Top Team In The Conference

Wyatt Lardieri  
Staff Writer

There are many ways to gauge a team’s success. The team’s record, style of play and the number of championships are all ways that we, as fans, measure success.

For the Montclair State University men’s basketball team, success is measured slightly differently. While other teams focus on wins and losses, the Red Hawks have a unique focus on habits.

Habits often go overlooked, but for head coach Justin Potts, habits have become a focal point. Coach Potts and the team’s commitment to building good habits is not taken lightly. The team has adapted the word and made it their motto.

“The habits mantra is our core value,” Potts said. “We’re trying to build the right habits day in and day out for our guys. [Associate head coach Sean] Rossi has done a really good job talking to them about being able to respond. Respond when it’s not going your way, respond when it is going your way. How can you solve it and how can you fix it? And just the habit of growth. A growth-type mindset.

Steve Breeman takes a shot with a Centenary defender going for the contest.

Player from the Red Hawks have been having stellar individual performances that helped propel the team to where they are today. This includes seasoned veterans like senior forward set as a program. Let’s try to get better every day.”

The focus on habits is certainly working as the Red Hawks currently have a 15-3 record and sit in third place in the New Jersey Athletic Conference (NJAC) standings. Montclair State plays a new-age style of ball, pressing constantly and relying heavily on the three.

“We’re trying to play fast at both ends of the floor,” Potts said. “We’re trying to defensively pressure you for 94 feet. We press a couple of ways and then we’re a man-to-man team in the half-court. Ofensively, we’re trying to play fast at that end of the court as well. We try to space you out and put you in close-out situations. We prefer to shoot a high volume of threes. [Rossi] is in control of the defense and has done a really good job coming up with some concepts. It’s about playing with pace, keeping the floor spaced, and trying to take advantage of various guys with multiple skill sets.”

This style of play has been a major factor in their success. However, it’s almost impossible to expect someone to press for the entire game. The Red Hawks’ style of play requires quality depth to keep up with the physical demands. Luckily for Montclair State, depth is exactly what they have.

“I think our guys do a good job of preparing themselves and being ready for opportunities,” Potts said. “We like to tell them all the time, we want depth to be a factor in games because we trust our depth and we have a lot of it. We play, when healthy, somewhere around 13 guys but our 14th and 15th guys are an opportunity away from getting rotation. I think a lot of it comes in practice as well. We’re pretty competitive in practice and guys are always trying to earn opportunities.”

Beyond the style of play, the team shares an incredible bond. It’s evident upon watching them play they genuinely care for one another and understand each other’s game. Potts spoke on the importance of this bond and just how strong it is when asked what makes this team special.

“Probably the biggest thing is the genuine love for each other,” Potts said. “They get along and love competing together. I think that’s evident in some of the statistical stuff you see. We have multiple guys that can be the guy on any given night. We play a lot of guys, we’re top ten in the country in assists so they share the ball. They understand the style and you can’t play 35 minutes in this type of system so there’s a sacrifice from that standpoint.”

Players from the Red Hawks have been having stellar individual performances that helped propel the team to where they are today. This includes seasoned veterans like senior forward Steve Breeman, who recently won NJAC Player of the Week, averaging close to 17 points per game.

You don’t have to look hard to realize something special is happening within the program. With seven games left and playoffs looming, the pressure is starting to build. However, Potts and the rest of the team will continue to do what they have done all season. Take it day by day and continue to build habits.