How Is Montclair State University's Hand Extended As a Hispanic-Serving Institution?

Students walking around campus.

In 2016, Montclair State University was given the status of being a Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI). Many question exactly what this designation means for its Hispanic students. Dr. Katia Paz Goldfarb, associate provost for Hispanic Initiatives and International Programs, shared how Institutions become HSIs.

“We are not born a [Hispanic-Serving Institution], we become a [Hispanic-Serving Institution],” Goldfarb said. “It is a designation that is federally designated. The federal government decided that once an institution of higher education, which could be community college or universities, four-year institutions, [arrives] to 20 percent, 25 percent of their undergraduate students that self identify as Latinos, you are a [Hispanic-Serving Institution].”

The designation is also dependent on students’ financial needs. “There is another part of it. [It’s that] you have to be also a university where the financial aid is high, the need for financial aid is high but the bigger part is really enrolling,” Goldfarb said.

Genesis Rodriguez, a junior psychology major, praises Montclair State for being an inclusive Hispanic-serving community. “[Especially] since I am a transfer student and I come from a school that was not very inclusive,” Rodriguez said. “Montclair [State] has a lot of programs, especially for Hispanic students that I always see. They are always inclusive with the students with the events, opportunities, [and] scholarships that I’ve been seeing.”

Goldfarb said that bringing opportunities to the Montclair State Hispanic student body is not about looking at what they lack but how they can be supplemented for their growth. “[I make an effort to bring] the resources into the university in my office,” Goldfarb said.

Hispanic-serving institution
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Dr. Katia Paz Goldfarb, associate provost for Hispanic Initiatives and International Programs, shared how Institutions become HSIs.

Kara Urena feels Montclair State University is doing its part as a Hispanic Serving Institution.

“Not necessarily because of the deficit perspective of the Latino student coming [into my office], which is ‘Oh, what is it that you need? [What are] your challenges?’ and all of that, but actually to provide you with the opportunities.”

Dr. Laura Quiros, associate professor for social work and child advocacy, explains how she shares her background with students and encourages them to also share their identity.

“Not necessarily because of the deficit perspective of the Latino student coming [into my office], which is ‘Oh, what is it that you need? [What are] your challenges?’ and all of that, but actually to provide you with the opportunities.”

Quiros found that growing up, she did not feel secure in her identity until graduate school because of a lack of diversity at her undergraduate alma mater.

“So I think in my undergraduate years it felt very isolating except for one or two close friends that I had, and we were kind of all exploring our identity, but then it wasn’t until my graduate and Ph.D. program [that I no longer felt isolated].” Quiros said. “I think that also had to do with my stage of development. I really started to understand what this identity meant to me. I think I’ve experienced lots of discrimination at different points in my life related to my Latina identity, especially in the summer and [has] curly hair. So there was always a trying to assimilate into a white culture.”

Dr. Milton Fuentes, a psychology professor, shares what he believes is important for Hispanic students and what they need to hear from Hispanic professors and staff.

“I think it’s important for students to see themselves, [represented] across the campus not just as faculty but in terms of staff and other students as well,” Fuentes said. “[Students] see my last name, Fuentes, that’s a good start but it’s not enough. I think they also need to hear my story. They need to hear that I’m Puerto Rican. They need to hear that my parents came here from Puerto Rico. They need to hear that my mom has a second-grade education.”

Fuentes said he wants the Hispanic student community to know that they have potential, resources and people they can turn to.

“I would like students to feel like they matter at Montclair [State],” Fuentes said. “To feel that they belong at Montclair [State]. I would also like them to know that there are people at Montclair [State] who really care about them and want to support them in terms of realizing their goals and dreams. To know there are a lot of resources and I hope they can feel comfortable taking advantage of these resources. Research has shown that when students reflect on their values, it gives them a sense of purpose and meaning and it helps them succeed. If they ever feel disenchanted, pause and reflect. Why are you doing this? What’s your purpose in life?”

Students shared their thoughts on Montclair State’s status as an HSI. Kara Urena, a sophomore psychology major, shares her opinion and experience as a Hispanic on campus.

Jordan Walters, a sophomore fashion design major, expresses some ways Montclair State can improve on being an HSI.

“We see a lot of Hispanic students on campus. I’ve been to many events like the [Latin American Student Organization].”

“I feel we could have more open events on campus,” Walters said. “Not just in a specific area like the Quad. We could have it all over campus, ranging from Freeman Hall to Blanton [Hall] and just have a big celebration with food, music, parties and just have a lot of fun.”
Aryanna Salmon was in the middle of creating her collection and she was thrilled to show off her Peruvian Indigenous inspired designs in an industry that lacks such perspective. But that rush quickly went away when she received the phone call that her mother was in a severe accident overseas in Rome, Italy. The senior fashion design major lost motivation to complete her collection and the only thing that was on her mind was her mother.

“It was her second day in Rome,” Salmon said. “She was on an electrical bicycle tour. It got jammed and she fell on her stomach. And it was so bad that my uncle was there with her and he called my dad and said ‘you and Aryanna need to come.’ The medical workers said it was 50/50. I couldn’t comprehend how a bicycle could do that to someone.”

Not knowing when she would get back, she dropped her tools and booked a one way ticket to Rome. As her mother was recovering, Salmon still didn’t feel, what she didn’t know at the time would be a first place collection at the Newark Fashion Week Festival, was even worth finishing.

“When I got home after being in Italy for weeks, I was like, ‘I can’t even think about this competition right now,’” Salmon said. “Like my mom, I’m going to need to take care of my mom.”

She then recalled back to when she was a little girl helping her mother sew different garments, patch different fabrics, and make her Halloween costumes, and realized one of the reasons why she started this collection was because of her mother’s influence.

Dayana Salmon, Aryanna’s mother, said to her, “Just do it, you never know what could happen.”

Inspired by her mother, after some time, Salmon got back to curating different designs. She recalled the different times she went to her mothers hometown in Nazca, Peru back in January of 2022 with her mother, and discovered how much the history and culture wasn’t admired or respected.

“Majority of the people there don’t even take care of the ancestral grounds, like the Inca burial grounds in my mom’s hometown,” Salmon said. “There’s trash everywhere, I even saw a Lay’s chip bag near a mummy.”

She hopes that the Peruvian-Indigenous people that pioneered many designs are recognized for what they do. Due to the lack of representation, Salmon argues that it sometimes leads Peruvians to dissociate themselves with the culture. Even though the culture and history of Nazca was not admired in her mother’s hometown, Salmon argues that the people that inhabit much power in the fashion industry, took credit for what the Peruvian-Indigenous people pioneered. She argued, much of the pioneers in the fashion industry are often overlooked for their ideas in designs and when their work finally gets spotlighted on the runway, their counterparts who inhibit much power in the industry take credit for it.

“I would appreciate it if people of power actually gave recognition to the people who were inspired by Peruvians, and gave back to that community,” Salmon said. “I don’t like it when people see traditional designs that they really like, and develop it into something else and take it as their idea.”

Wanting to be the change she wanted to see behind and on the runway, she bought a Peruvian blanket which she used in her garments from the time when she was with her mother in Peru. For her final project in her Fashion Illustration course, her professor, Carlos De Moya, challenged his students to have a connection and meaning with their collection culminating in 10 looks. This decision wasn’t too hard for Salmon to make. He expressed having a talent for fashion design is something that often cannot be taught, but something that one exudes in their work naturally.

He expressed that Salmon was one of those people. Her collection, Saphi, which means “Roots in Quechua,” was inspired by Peruvian culture and her father who had an “alternative” style.

“For [my collection] I chose family,” Salmon said. “I chose my Peruvian culture and projected that into my illustrations. My father was very much into metal, so I wanted to combine the alternative side of fashion with my mom’s culture.”

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Walk Like A Champ is hiring! We are a local Dog walking company and looking to add members to our team. Looking for an energetic part-time Dog walker, with availability Mon-Fri. Weekends are a plus. We can do our best to work around your schedule. Reliable transportation and experience with Dogs is required. If interested, please send us an email at walklikeachamp44@gmail.com. Look forward to hearing from you!

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Verona family looking for after school care for our 5-year old kindergartener. Details below:
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- Times: 2:30-5:30p (9 hours total a week)
- $22 an hour
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Interested? Please text or call 551-427-7251 to set up time.
What does it mean to be Latinx? Is it rooted in genetics, the way one is raised, how they dance or the food they eat at home?

The identity of Latinx comes with additional sub-identities that impact daily life. One of these sub-identities involves being subjugated to specific beauty standards, where having straight hair means being more beautiful. Instead of championing one's natural hair, they are encouraged to treat it so it makes them more attractive to others. Another example of these sub-identities is enjoying food that may not be common in other households. A food that is normal for one may be rare or seen as unhealthful in another. In this way, being Latinx also mean being the receiver of rude comments about food. In both examples, there are instances where people are ostracized for certain aspects of their identity, so much so that they feel ashamed for something that is normal within their household.

The arrival of Hispanic Heritage Month has sparked a fascinating conversation surrounding the Latinx identity and how these sub-identities and other components of the Latinx identity shape one's expression of it. During their General Miembro (Member) Meeting, the Latin American Student Organization (LASO) of Montclair State University discussed how their identity has affected them in both positive and negative ways.

As part of the meeting, members were divided into groups to discuss various prompts pertaining to identity. Throughout these discussions, students had the opportunity to share their struggles and how they address these struggles moving forward. Others had the opportunity to share the ways in which they felt empowered, like reclaiming parts of their identity in a positive manner.

Alexa Abreu, a senior psychology major with a visual arts minor, explained that as a child she did not think her homemade food was out of the ordinary. But when it garnered negative attention during school, she began to distance herself from it in order to fit in. This started a discussion surrounding conformity and the levels that some underwent in order to be considered enough in the eyes of Americans.

"One of the ones that was big on me was being made fun of for eating my own food from home," Abreu said. "Like that happened when I was in elementary school, it wasn't even anything crazy, I literally just brought an empanada and got the dirtiest looks. I never brought that type of food ever again. I only brought peanut butter and jelly to school after that."

Sofía Perez, a junior family science and human development major, explained the difficulty of standardized testing like the SAT, one must check off a box for the race they most heavily identify with. In terms of race, the categories are as follows: White, Asian, Black or African American, American Indian or Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander. It also includes a question for ethnicity where there is an option for Hispanic or Latino.

Perez shared that when she was younger, it was difficult to figure out which box to check off and that even her teachers did not know.

"I think we're supposed to put, because we're both Taino, we're supposed to put the Native peoples just because we are Native peoples, but like I don't know, Perez said.

Jose Acevedo, a freshman majoring in business administration, discussed how his family often suggests wearing his hair a certain way in order to look more pleasing. However, this contradicts his desire to embrace his natural hair and his identity.

"Hair is -- is our identity to it, it's what makes us us," Acevedo said. "My example is that like, right now I have curly hair. My hair type is weird, but like when it's longer and when it's washed I have this big curly fro, and my family, they say 'Oh, pick it up' or like 'Straighten it' or 'Put it in a bun cause it looks nicer', but it's just no I wanna embrace my natural hair cause it's just a part of who I am."

LASO dissects and talks about important topics such as these during their general body meetings on Wednesdays at 3:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. in University Hall room 1030. To learn more about the organization and its events, follow them on Instagram at @laso1970.
Manifesting, Mentoring And Making Mami Proud: Melanie Lopez

Chelsea Pujols
Staff Writer

Surviving commuter life's busiest time of year, Commuter Appreciation Week, junior journalism & digital media major and mentor Melanie Lopez gives a smile brighter than the pink Beats that rest on her neck. Reflecting on all the jobs she had to do, like making over 1,000 snack bags for hungry commuters, Lopez reminisces on her beginnings as a commuter at Montclair State University. "I originally was born and raised in Paterson, so Montclair State is fairly close to where I live," Lopez said. Despite the proximity to campus, Lopez still recalls feeling overwhelmed by college life. "The change, it was pretty sudden--I've been used to going to schools close to where I live." Lopez said.

Culture shock is not a foreign concept, especially for first-generation students like Lopez, who is of Puerto Rican and Peruvian descent. However, the diversity at Montclair State provided her comfort and excitement for what was to come and was able to find herself a community quickly. "A lot of my mentees, they are really responsive, [they] respond to all the messages I send if there are things happening," Lopez said. "A lot of them text me personally [and] reach out to me because they feel comfortable asking me questions. And I love asking questions. Sometimes if you're from a certain background or a certain race, you're perceived a certain way [right] off the bat. So that's what I was worried about, but they don't seem to have an issue with me being Latina."

Lopez is extremely proud of her heritage, mentioning it whenever she can. Lopez was awarded the Jose Raudal National Association of Hispanic Journalists New Jersey Chapter Scholarship for her work in the School of Communication and Media in May 2023. Looking back on the moment, you can hear the pride in Lopez's voice. "That was very shocking and surprising to me because I wasn't expecting [to win] but I felt very very proud of myself. I was never expecting to win a scholarship in college, especially being Hispanic and a Latina, [which] made me feel proud of where I come from," said Lopez.

The award was an unexpected blessing to her and her family who were concerned about tuition for the upcoming semester. Financial concerns are a huge factor in a Latino/x/e families’ decision to send their children to college, as the loan system and tuition price can be new, confusing and daunting. According to a 2020 study from the Student Borrower Protection Center, about 72 percent of Latino/x/e students turn to loans to pay for college.

"I definitely feel blessed because that's where I'm able to pay for tuition this year. I feel extraordinarily grateful that [my effort and my work were] being noticed. I was like, 'Wow, I didn't know that they do this for Hispanic students!' So I was very very happy," Lopez said.

Besides being an attentive mentor and award-winning student, Lopez aspires to become an anchor for a large bilingual news anchor at NBCUniversal Telemundo Enterprises. The School of Communication and Media's Mentorship program and Gomez’s guest speaking in various classes connected the two.

"She is amazing! She was a presenter in my class last semester and she does everything that I would wanna do, and she's so confident," Lopez said.

One of the things that Lopez made clear is that she believes in the power of dreams and is confident in making them come true for herself and her family. It is almost a universal truth that Latino/x/e sons and daughters dream big so that their parents' sacrifices of leaving their family to move to a new country and learn a new language become worth it. "Manifestation is key," Lopez said. "I tell that to everybody I know. Manifest this, manifest that, do this, do your work."

Watching her parents' hard work has been more than enough motivation and inspiration for Lopez's determined attitude. "Especially coming from two parents who never went to college--my mother's of Peruvian descent, my father's of Puerto Rican descent--I'm their only child, it [falls] on me a lot to make them proud," Lopez said. "They can't say that they've done what I've done, and I want to make sure that they feel content knowing that they raised a daughter who's able to accomplish things that they wish that they could have done."
**Make An Italian Angry Today By Having Some Dominican Spaghetti**

**Chelsea Pujols | Staff Writer**

There is truly no other spaghetti I would rather have than the one from my culture. No hate to Italy, but Dominican/Caribbean spaghetti is famous all throughout Latin America and its diaspora for its flavor. Needing absolutely no meat for accompaniment, this recipe can be easily made vegan/vegetarian.

“Sofrito” is truly the star of this dish. A blend of peppers, onion, herbs, and spices: this mixture known as “sofrito” in Italy and “epis” in Haiti makes any dish go from a measly 1 to a 10.

Now before I have the Latin American/Caribbean/Italian communities after me, let me preface the recipe by saying this is my family’s recipe. You can add or remove stuff but please do not curse me out. It’s Hispanic Heritage Month, or remove stuff but please do not curse me out. It’s Hispanic Heritage Month, and its diaspora for its flavor. Needing absolutely no meat for accompaniment, this recipe can be easily made vegan/vegetarian.

Step 1: Cook your spaghetti and start your sauce

The “I cook you clean” rule does not apply in my Dominican household so let us make our lives a little easier for each other. Once your spaghetti is drained, leave it in the colander and use the same pot. Practice your “cuando yo me muera” speech and add your oil.

Also, do not forget to save your pasta water! It will come in handy soon. It is bad, but eating one is devastating. Traumatizing, even.

You should have turned down your heat to medium or medium high by now, unless burnt sofrito is your thing.

Step 2: Drain your spaghetti and start your sauce

The “I cook you clean” rule does not apply in my Dominican household so let us make our lives a little easier for each other. Once your spaghetti is drained, leave it in the colander and use the same pot. Practice your “cuando yo me muera” speech and add your oil.

Also, do not forget to save your pasta water! It will come in handy soon. It is a magical tool we will use for later, or whatever Mickey Mouse said.

Once the oil is hot, add your sliced bell peppers, your sofrito and your chicken bouillon. Try to break up the cube with your spoon as it heats up, because finding a chunk of “sopita” is bad, but eating one is devastating. Traumatizing, even.

You should have turned down your heat to medium or medium high by now, unless burnt sofrito is your thing.

Step 3: Finish the sauce and add your pasta

Once the chicken bouillon is fully incorporated, add your sauce. If you are not sure what that looks like, everything should have a yellow tint to it. It’s like “La Vie En Rose” but for cooking. And yellow. Actually, it is nothing like “La Vie En Rose.” Forget I said that.

You want to keep your flame on medium heat so that you do not have that sour raw tomato taste. You will know your sauce is cooked when it turns from a bright red to a deep red. Be sure to mix everything every once in a while to avoid burning, and lower your heat after the color change. You can add your oregano here as well. If you are not sure what that looks like, pack your dish in Tupperware and take it to the beach. Every Dominican knows that spaghetti tastes better on the beach. Do not ask why, it is just a fact of life passed down from generation to generation.

Other traditional sides to this dish are tostones or rice and beans. Yes, rice and beans. It may be a little too carb-loading, but it is delicious and inexpensive and we are all too broke to judge.

Now, I would like to congratulate you. Out of all the recipes you could have picked, you chose the best one. The spirit of Juan Pablo Duarte smiles upon you. “El Farolito” by Juan Luis Guerra plays as you take a bite. What a blessing it is to be Dominican, no matter if it’s for a lifetime or the ten minutes it takes you to eat.

Que viva la República Dominicana, and Happy Hispanic Heritage Month!
The Office of Hispanic Initiatives: Leading the Change They Want to See

Marilyn Moya's passion for her job stems from a special connection she holds with the Office for Hispanic Initiatives. She herself was a first-generation college student who received her undergraduate at Montclair State University and is now currently enrolled in a graduate program.

"When I was a student at Montclair State University in the nineties, it was predominately a white institution," Moya said. "We were not a Hispanic serving institution yet. To me, representation is important from my own personal experience, when I went to school, I didn't have people who looked like me or spoke Spanish."

That is why Moya is now with the Office for Hispanic Initiatives. The office aims to make the college experiences as enjoyable and fruitful as possible for Latino students. It also works to spread knowledge about the Hispanic community in New Jersey and beyond. Most students are not aware that Montclair State has an Office of Hispanic Initiatives. The office is led by two key figures: Moya, the office's administrative assistant, and the head of the office Dr. Katia Paz Goldfarb, Associate Provost for Hispanic Initiatives and International Programs.

During Moya's time at Montclair State, there was no Hispanic Initiatives office to support her through her undergraduate. Supporting the Latino community here on campus is a very personal mission for Moya because she and others within the office want to do for Latino students what they wish someone had done for them.

Moya pointed out that although there have been improvements, there is still room to grow. "Although representation on campus has changed, we could do better with staff and faculty representation," Moya said. "I think it is important for students to see people of color so that they can have that comfort level or cultural connection that adds to that feeling of 'familial' and understanding."

Within the Office of Hispanic Initiatives, Moya is more involved with maintaining student belonging, while Goldfarb focuses on a grander scale of providing resources and academic support to the Latino faculty and students on campus. Among some of the roles Moya takes on is handling all the office operations with Goldfarb and student workers and serving as the event coordinator.

For example, Moya takes charge of planning most of the events going on during Hispanic Heritage Month like Latino panel discussions and the annual Hispanic block party. In addition to her role in creating these events on campus, Moya is involved with certain programs the Hispanic Initiative Office offers, such as the Hispanic Student College Institute (HSCI), a pre-college program for rising high school juniors and seniors to get a glimpse of life on campus and help them with the transition into college. As well as the Hispanic Latino Alumni Network (HLAN), the first Latino alumni network Montclair State has ever had. It is an outreach program to connect former students with current students and faculty.

A large part of what the Hispanic Initiatives office does is to make sure that the Latino population is not just enrolling, but staying and are finishing their degrees. According to a study done by Pew Research Center taken in Oct. of 2022 about Hispanic enrollment in college, "between 2000 and 2020, the number of Latinos enrolled at four-year institutions jumped from 620,000 to 2.4 million, a 287% increase. By comparison, overall student enrollment at four-year institutions in the U.S. grew by 50% during this time."

Montclair State became a Hispanic-serving institution in 2016. To be considered an HSI, 25% or more students enrolled in the incoming class need to identify as Hispanic or Latino. Since 2016 the percentage of Latino students enrolled in Montclair State has only risen. This incoming class of 2023 is the biggest enrollment of Latinox and Hispanic students ever at about 44% of the incoming class. Although enrollment within the Latino community is on the rise, that doesn't mean that financial and personal problems don't have any effect.

This is where Goldfarb's role comes to fruition. These initiatives made by the Office of Hispanic Initiatives to give the Latino community support are how can we keep that percentage rising.

Goldfarb shared what she thinks about the most when it comes to the Latino student population. "My main concern with the students is the intersection between being a Latino student and first generation," Goldfarb said. "Within the Latino population, we have a large group of first-generation students, always."

She also spoke about how Latino representation is inspirational for other Latino students. "We all know representation matters," Goldfarb said. "It is in research from preschool to a work environment. Representation for students to see others who have the same history as them, and to be able to look where they are, what they are doing, [it makes us realize] we can do it too."

Goldfarb emphasized this point further. "It is important because they need to see us in these higher positions," Goldfarb said. "Not only in the workforce outside of higher education, but within as staff members and especially in an administrative position."

To get in contact with the Office for Hispanic Initiatives, students can call (973) 655-7489 or email hispanicsatmsu@montclair.edu.
What is your favorite Hispanic/Latin dish, why, and what country is it from?

By Dani Mazariegos
Assistant Director of Photography

Edmillie Binet
Senior
Acting

I'm Peruvian and my favorite food of all time is arroz chaufa. I don't know how they make it that it is so good, I have loved it since I was a child.

Paul Santos
Freshman
Communication and Media

I'm Dominican. My favorite food is either mangú or tres leches. It basically reminds me of my home country, it reminds me of all my family and my people over there. It has been 7 years since I went back, but the smell of food still reminds me of home.

Micaela Barraza
Freshman
Communications and Media

Well I'm Dominican, so there is a whole bunch of good food. I am a big soup person, so I love a good sancocho, mangú is always gonna hit no matter what day it is; breakfast, lunch or dinner. Tostones, pica pollo, all of that. Honestly, I just like food.
Tallarines Verdes, green spaghetti, pesto y espinaca (spinach). I'm from Peru, my mom is Peruvian, but my dad is El Salvadorian, but identify more with my Peruvian side because I lived there for three years. I grew up eating all this kind of stuff. Stuff like chaufa, ceviche, ají de gallina all that kind of stuff is all nostalgic to me, it’s main reason why I like it.

Sebastian Rodriguez
Junior
History and IT

I'm El Salvadorian. My favorite food is pupusas it is from El Salvador. It's my favorite dish from my country and it is also my favorite dish. Whenever I eat it I think of my grandma, my grandma lives in El Salvador currently.

Alexander Claros
Sophomore
Acting

It's pretty classic, I love like a good arroz blanco, con bistec, and yuca. I'm Cuban. It's the food I grew up eating, every meal that I eat has white rice with it, and if it doesn't it isn't a meal to me. And I feel like you can't go wrong with meat. Also the way my mom makes yuca with the onions and oil, its to die for. It’s like fast food but cuban fast food.

Yazmery Milian
Senior
Acting
<table>
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| **Capricorn**  
Dec. 22 – Jan. 19  
Quoting “Borax” out of context isn’t nearly as funny as you think it is. Pause and take a deep breath before your next “My Wife.” |
| **Cancer**  
Jun. 21 – Jul. 22  
This week, there may be a really nice lady at the Blanton Dunkin who gives you a free muffin if you are the chosen one. |
| **Aquarius**  
Jan. 20 – Feb. 18  
Aquarius, are these Eagles fans annoying you to no end? Just remind them that Taylor Swift betrayed the Eagles by dating a player that beat them in the Super Bowl last year. That will definitely create bad blood. |
| **Leo**  
Jul. 23 – Aug. 22  
So, you hooked up with a guy who posts his crowd work on tik tok. Shameful. |
| **Pisces**  
Feb. 19 – Mar. 20  
Hey Pisces, even though your team puts you through the wringer this week emotionally, it could be way worse. The East Rutherford Giants got mollywhopped in their own stadium so bad the place was half empty by the third quarter. That’s their fault for not having Jake Elliott and his three incredible legs! FLY EAGLES FLY! 4-0! |
| **Virgo**  
Aug. 23 – Sep. 22  
Hey Virgo! Have you considered trying this week? At least a little? Even if you do decide to skip class for the fourth time in five weeks, hop in the shower. |
| **Aries**  
Mar. 21 – Apr. 19  
BRING BACK DUNKIN DONUTS LEMONADE REFRESHERS! |
| **Libra**  
Sep. 23 – Oct. 22  
Hey Libra! Celebrating your birthday this week? Nice! Got any plans? Oh, Medieval Times? That’s…cute! Sure! Don’t expect much in the way of a birthday present. |
| **Taurus**  
Apr. 20 – May 20  
Hey Taurus! What’s that on your shirt? Haha! Got you! |
| **Scorpio**  
Oct. 23 – Nov. 21  
Hey Scorpio, are the New York Football Giants giving you the blues? Well, get used to it. We play the Dolphins and then the Bills. Things are not looking up for us. |
| **Gemini**  
May 21 – Jun. 20  
Hey Gemini! Midterms are coming up soon! Just a reminder that it’s never too late to drop out! Go ahead and get that paperwork started! |
| **Sagittarius**  
Nov. 22 – Dec. 21  
A new romance may be coming your way. Be on the lookout for dudes playing acoustic guitars in public and steer clear. They are not the one for you. |
The Montclarion Crossword Puzzle and More!

Karol G Edition

By Dani Mazariegos

Across
2. Karol G was most notably known for her ___ color hair, so much so that fans would wear the same color wigs to her shows.
3. The word Karol G made up derived from a common Puerto Rican slang, her song of self confidence and the name of her sold out tour is ___?
6. Her song with Bad Bunny, ___, became her breakout hit.
8. Karol G was the first Spanish speaking artist to headline the ___ in Foxborough, Massachusetts.
9. Karol G started her career on the popular talent show, the Colombian spin off show ___.
10. In 2014, after realizing her career was not going to take off fast enough in South America, she moved to ___ to work and stay with her aunt until her career took off.

Down
1. The singer’s third concert tour was called ___.
2. Karol G was most notably known for her ___ color hair, so much so that fans would wear the same color wigs to her shows.
3. What is Karol G's real first name?
4. Karol G recently got a ___ tattoo to cover her previous relationship name tattooed on her right hand.
7. Karol G's fans are known as the ___.

Word Search

M U P X N Y C G F O S M N X B X Z D X S
L X B K Y R C C O L O M B I A N P X X W
H H O D R L M C A G K D B Q S W W B V Z
R T V X K W T N X N I T D O E Z G Z K U
I R C M T D U O G L H R S N M T G P Z P
J E F G E E Z X U B P Q L G R I X J O Y
S Q E T L D P F Y R L W P F A S V D C
G G N M T L E Q H K C A T O H C I B L
R X T H Y Q G L S V T E O T A W V F A A
Y H M A A H L K L I R K T Z H E T N B
E G N T N O D B I Í N S K O B H F R I R
H P L B A N L I O K N K R S G F G A T E
A B R Ñ M G C Y P S T E A Q W X T A E
X C U M A Y N Q J I C R A T P S W U L Y
J E W X M Q M P H U A O N I Y P C S M S
Z E O R I W J K J C T E I N F E A S T
Q G T E S E U N E B H U O O R N B I W
Z B V M H Y V I C K H L C B H Z B D L M
D S C T C S V O Y U O G S O P W R Y F K
A P R O V E N Z A P X I U C A H R T O J

Bichota  China  Será
Colombian  Latina  Medellín
Girl Power  Mañana  Provenza

Sudoku

6 1 4
5 2 1 7
3

2 9
8

1 6 5
2

1 4 7 9
Montclair State is “dedicated to upholding the university’s allegiance to promoting an inclusive environment to support the success of all Hispanic students, faculty and staff.”

During Hispanic Heritage Month, groups on campus such as the Latin American Student Organization (LASO) and the Mexican American Student Association (MASA), among others, are hosting events all month long to commemorate the history of our communities and remind us why we are proud to be Hispanic and/or Latino.

At Montclair State, there is also the Hispanic/Latino Alumni Network (HLAN), which helps Hispanic and Latino alumni stay in contact and connect with current and future students. They announced that as of Fall 2022, the Hispanic and Latino population on campus rose to 40 percent of all undergraduate students.

Additionally, the Montclair State Press Room confirmed that our university is only getting more diverse. In last week’s editorial, we discussed issues within the Hispanic and Latino communities. This week, we will look at the importance of Montclair State University’s status as a Hispanic-serving institution.

Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs) are defined as institutions of higher education that have an enrollment of undergraduate full-time equivalent students that is at least 25 percent Hispanic students.

In 2016, Montclair State became eligible to be an HSI, which allowed our university to expand opportunities and services to serve Hispanic students and help them obtain a degree.

Besides becoming an HSI, the Office of Hispanic Initiatives at Montclair State is “dedicated to defending the university’s allegiance to promoting an inclusive environment to support the success of all Hispanic students, faculty and staff.”

During Hispanic Heritage Month, groups on campus such as the Latin American Student Organization (LASO) and the Mexican American Student Association (MASA), among others, are hosting events all month long to commemorate the history of our communities and remind us why we are proud to be Hispanic and/or Latino.

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Additionally, the Montclair State Press Room confirmed that our university is only getting more diverse, with 45 percent of the incoming class of 2027 identifying as Hispanic.

Though it is more than obvious that Montclair State serves Hispanic and Latino students, besides having the label of a Hispanic-Serving Institution, why should our university care about us as a demographic?

First off, it should be recognized how much we contribute and work hard to be represented on campus, giving incoming students a place to belong away from home. From leadership roles, clubs, organizations, cultural sororities and fraternities, there is a place for people of Hispanic and Latino heritage.

Representation genuinely matters. People of color are more likely to experience imposter syndrome, which is when high-achieving individuals doubt their skills, intelligence or accomplishments.

Black and Latino college women have a harder time belonging to higher education or corporate spaces due to the obstacles they face because of sexism and racism.

CNBC reported that “Fostering community through campus organizations, employee resource groups, professional associations or even Facebook groups can help Black and Latina women manage their imposter feelings in professional and academic settings.”

It’s important for young Hispanic and Latino students entering college for the first time to see themselves cared for and looked out for, but most importantly, to feel like they deserve to be pursuing a degree and achieve everything they set their minds to.

At Montclair State, we have developed a sense of community and unity amongst ourselves and on campus that celebrates past, current and future generations of Hispanic and Latino students who enroll at our university.

We have given so much of our cultures and traditions for others to appreciate and learn from without expecting anything in return. Even if you meet Hispanics or Latinos different from you, you will find a friend in them.

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**Campus Voices**

**What’s your favorite part about being Hispanic?**

By Sophia Lazaridis and Jayla Trice

- **Sophia Lazaridis**
  - Junior
  - Public Health
  - Dominican
  
  “My favorite thing about being Hispanic is just the sense of community. So, not only being Dominican, just all the Latinos in general, we are always uplifting each other. The endless compassion I feel from everyone in the Latino community is awesome.”

- **Jayla Trice**
  - Junior
  - Psychology
  - Puerto Rican
  
  “I’d have to say the lessons I’ve learned. I’ve learned so many skills I carry with me all the time that I’ve got just from growing up in a hispanic household from taking care of other people, cooking [and] taking care of myself.”

- **Yuliana De los Ríos**
  - Senior
  - Animation
  - Colombian
  
  “My favorite thing about being Hispanic, or Latina, is the community. Knowing that wherever I go, I’ll find similar, like-minded individuals that all share similar values as me.”
If You Are Going To Be About It, Then Really Be About It:
A Message to President Koppell

Chelsea Pujols  
Staff Writer

It is no secret that our President now prefers our school to be referred to as “Montclair” in an attempt to add a modern and progressive flair to the institution. And it is absolutely not a secret at all that the student body is very unhappy with the change.

I would argue that we are annoyed even, as seen through this article titled “Montclair State’s Rebrand Is President Koppell’s Most Out-Of-Touch Move Yet.” And I would consider that a fairly tame headline.

While there arguably are more pertinent subjects to discuss, there is a small detail in President Koppell’s addressing of the changes being made that I would like to discuss:

“And it is easy to remember and pronounce, an advantage when communicating to those who do not have English as their first language.”

While I understand that at first glance the sentence above may seem unproblematic and progressive, it raises concerns for me as a first-generation Dominican-American and a proud Spanish speaker.

My first concern is more about what would occur if I were to talk about Montclair State University, the location, as just “Montclair”? If someone who does not speak English hears me, how would they know that I am referring to the University and not the city? And with the added fact that this change is being made to benefit international students, how would they know the difference if they have not visited either place yet? How would communicating with friends and family abroad, assuming that they have never been to the United States or have only come to visit, go?

Logical and conversational arguments aside, I believe that shortening the preferred name for the University with the intention of assisting non-English speakers—while not directly stated—almost portrays them as helpless victims who need a white man in power to save them.

Allow me to make it very clear. Immigrants do not need your pity. They do not need your performative acts of PR. They do not need a phrase to be shortened or anything to be watered down or sugarcoated for them to succeed in the United States, because they will do so anyway with or without your help.

Nothing needs to be “dumbed down” for them to understand or to be able to pronounce anything. English is often a language that is taught as an extracurricular class in schools all over the world, and thanks to the impact of the internet, many non-Americans are able to consume American media. At a university that champions the School of Communication and Media, which houses many students from all over the world, it would be less than common sense to assume that the president who oversees the entire university would be aware of that.

According to the Pew Research Center, 37 countries were surveyed to determine the percentage of people who followed or had an interest in American news. A median of 48% of people in countries like Japan, South Korea, Kenya, Venezuela, India, Brazil and more said they closely followed United States news. Though this was conducted in 2017, we can only imagine with streaming platforms and social media, this number may be a lot higher.

On the entertainment side of things, “Barbie” (2023) made more than $1.38 billion dollars worldwide, despite it being considered a very “American” movie due to references from films like “Grease” (1978) and “The Wizard Of Oz” (1939). There is a lot of interest in English-language media, and where there is interest, there is money. Making the assumption that foreigners do not already interact with the English language in their everyday lives is not only an ignorant one but a costly one as well. Just something to consider.

While I understand that the new changes may have been done in good conscience and with genuine intentions, I respectfully suggest that there are other ways to truly support immigrants, non-English speakers and international students.

For example, Hudson County Community College, a county known to be a safe haven for immigrants and first-generation Americans, features English, Spanish and Arabic in both their Jersey City and North Bergen campuses. Their website allows you to select any language to read its contents in, a feature that is lacking or not easily accessible on the Montclair State website.

If that is a change that can be seen as too drastic or costly, then I suggest adding alternative names to cater to the demographics on campus or the ones the university wishes to bring more of. For example, we have a large Hispanic/Latine community here. Why not have “Universidad Estatal de Montclair” as an approved alternative name?

If Montclair State could see that its diverse population is a actual community that needs care and not a statistic to boast about, then perhaps non-English speakers could see how great the university is for themselves with their own intelligence and decision-making skills and not via soulless PR moves and marketing. Because truly, who does the label Chelsea Pujols, a junior journalism and digital media major, is in her second year as a staff writer for The Montclarion.
My parents both immigrated from Ecuador when they were around pre-teens. Though they never met in Ecuador, they found each other when they worked for the same company in New York City.

I grew up in a suburban town in New Jersey surrounded by family that spoke Spanish, but I struggled with doing it myself. Although my extended family spoke Spanish conversationally with one another or some form of Spanglish, my parents only ever spoke to me in English. I picked up on Spanish as a child as I was always being taken care of by my grandmother who spoke little to no English but lost my ability as I grew older and went to public school. I continued to lose my fluency as I got older no matter how hard I tried to sustain it.

There were rarely opportunities for me to practice other than being around my family who would then consequently tease me for incorrect pronunciation, conjugation and for being “white-washed.” I eventually lost total confidence in my ability to speak Spanish and rarely ever spoke it unless absolutely necessary.

Though my hometown was primarily White, I had many Dominican friends who all spoke fluent Spanish. This brought a sense of comfort to me as I had found people who I could relate to, but I was always jealous of their effortless ability to switch between English and Spanish. Their parents spoke Spanish to them at home and therefore they mastered being bilingual.

I had a friend who would diminish my ethnicity and declare I was not truly Latina because I could not communicate in Spanish. She would relentlessly belittle my struggle and call me “Americanized” and White. We are no longer friends. But this did a lot of damage to how I viewed my identity as a Hispanic.

I knew that many of the people around me who were bilingual had parents who spoke Spanish regularly to them, and I did not have that same chance. I felt guilty and not like a true Ecuadorian because of my inability to speak Spanish. The people around me and online had engrained in me that being able to speak Spanish was a vital part of Hispanic identity. If you are not able to, then you are not actually Hispanic.

For a long time, I believed that sentiment to be true. I would feel ashamed, and I still do sometimes. Although I could understand a lot of Spanish, I could not speak it for some reason. I became too embarrassed. I see Latina celebrities like Jenna Ortega, Selena Gomez and Cameron Diaz get shamed for this too. It brings me some comfort that we are in the same boat, but it’s a disheartening one to be in.

Stars Insider writes “[Cameron Diaz] has been very vocal about her ineptitude to speak Spanish, often citing she sometimes even struggles with English. It seems that all she has inherited from her Cuban ancestry is her Hispanic last name!”

In a different article from Distractify, Diaz says, “…grew up with the Cuban heritage, the Cuban culture, the food, the language, although I don’t speak Spanish.”

People quickly and easily dismiss someone’s entire ethnicity without knowing the full truth. Similarly, though I did not regularly speak Spanish I grew up with Ecuadorian foods, Latin music every Saturday morning to clean the house, telenovelas and the superhuman ability to fall asleep at parties that lasted until 2 a.m. with music blaring. According to a study by the Pew Research Center, “54% of Hispanics who say they speak no more than a little Spanish say another Hispanic person has made them feel bad for it.”

My inability to speak Spanish properly should not get to dictate my ethnic identity. This kind of exclusion is isolating and unnecessarily divides the Latinx/Hispanic community further. People should be allowed to celebrate and connect with their background in whichever way they see fit. I believe that it is well past the time for non-Spanish-speaking Latinx people to stop being bullied by others, oftentimes including their own families, for their difficulty with the language. I am proud to be Latina and I now know that it does not make me any less Latina.
Reggaeton Needs a Renovation

Paula Milian  
Guest Writer

Musician like Bad Bunny, Karol G, J Balvin, Shakira, and many others are dominating Latin music today. Some of them have been able to cross over to American audiences, the most powerful example being Bad Bunny. whose album “Un Verano Sin Ti” was nominated for a Grammy this year. No one can deny the influence these artists have on the music world. But on a closer look, their music is not as great as it seems.

It is no secret that the music industry is a capitalistic system that profits from the economic status of its listeners. A YouTube video from the channel “Art Support” has a video titled “Bad Bunny—How To Turn Yourself Into A Superstar.” The video description reads, “Are you stuck in a dead-end job with bigger dreams? Don’t worry, so was Bad Bunny, a dead-end job with bigger dreams?”

Bad Bunny was an average guy who worked different jobs to make ends meet. Now, how do you go from this to peaking, “I went to the Billboards to the Grammy’s and I didn’t see you, nah / I’m a legend, no one has climbed as far as I have.” The lyrics are from a song he released back in 2020, titled “Hoy Cober.” What would a Reggaeton anthem be without bragging about how much power and money you have?

It is possible to become a star no matter where you come from. But the troubling thing is how these musicians frame success.

They are not honest with their fans when it comes to the reality of superstardom, much less to the people living in poverty like most Spanish-speaking countries.

Back in 2019, Colombian reggaeton star J Balvin caused controversy after releasing an Instagram post that read, “Life is perfect. We all have what we work for. Luck doesn’t exist. Poverty comes from the mind.” Many people disliked this statement, especially considering that over 13 million Colombians were living in poverty in 2018 near the time of this post, according to Chilean newspaper La Tercera. Although the number has dropped as of 2023, the problem of poverty and inequality still affects many countries throughout South America, such as Venezuela, Honduras, Bolivia, and Ecuador, to name a few.

People will say that artists like Bad Bunny are changing the game because he is speaking about problems like corruption and economic inequality. It does not change the fact that he still preaches a message and writes music that fits into the idea of “I’ve got everything. Cars, a good life, a bunch of women around me. You can be just like me if you work hard and never give up on your dreams.” It fits in with what J Balvin wants his audience to believe: Poverty comes from the mind.

Capitalist agendas aside, Reggaeton is notorious for its machista portrayal of women. It confounds me how musicians like Maluma are still in the business contributing to the misogyny prevalent in Hispanic culture. If Bad Bunny and Maluma claim to love and respect women, why do they put out songs that demean them as objects for sexual pleasure?

I am not saying that we should hate these musicians for their success. It is not a sin if you dance to these songs at a party. But we have to be aware of the contradictions, problems and false ideas being given to people who will never reach their levels of fame. Maybe it is time for a Reggaetonero superstar to speak about these flaws of the industry in their music.

He has not improved much from then, as his recent songs like “Hawaii” and “Madrid” tell the story of a man who is stuck in his sexist delusions. Even Bad Bunny is not free of misogyny. His party anthem “Titi Me Pregunta” is about a man who brags about all the girls who want him, talking about them like they are clothing items he cannot decide to wear. And honestly, some of the lyrics in this song are atrocious.

“A lot of them want my baby gravy / They want to have my first-born / And take the credit.” My stomach is churning. These lyrics are only contributing to the misogyny prevalent in Hispanic culture. If Bad Bunny and Maluma claim to love and respect women, why do they put out songs that demean them as objects for sexual pleasure?

It is time for a Reggaetonero superstar to speak about these flaws of the industry in their music.
“Tongues & Teeth, Part Four”  
by Delilah Summerer | Staff Writer

Hymir hated waiting. He focused on breathing. It was easier to think about being calm than to “be” it. The air was cool in here, cool enough that he wasn’t actively getting angry. And there was a hum from some machine hiding somewhere in the walls. The soft sounds of Dimitri fiddling the feathers of an arrow with his fingertips. Soft. Everything in here was soft, as if everything was afraid of disturbing the balance of the room.

“We leave tonight.” Pallas’s voice was rough. He had not cried. He was under constant supervision, and he had not cried. Enviable. “I’ll call ahead for the boat. We pack. We leave.”

Dimitri glared at Hymir before taking Pallas’s hand once more. “Are we taking him?”

“I thought you’d be more worried about my mater.”

A sigh. “If you wanted to leave, you were going to leave. Love her, but she knows that. And the sooner you get your test over with.”

Pallas stood up, and Dimitri stopped talking. A simple transaction. “Explain to Hymir so he doesn’t look like a lost puppy.” Hymir thought that he looked fine. But Dimitri rolled his eyes as he scooted to fully face Hymir, and Pallas went to stand in a corner and talk to himself.

The two looked bitterly at each other, for lack of a better word. “You are the crappiest assassin ever.” Hymir shrugged. He was used to this. But Dimitri rolled his eyes as he scooted to fully face Hymir, and Pallas went to stand in a corner and talk to himself.

The burden is easier with strong allies. Strong fighters. Me. Not you.”

Hymir wrestled his spear from the wall. It was a miracle that it hadn’t fallen. With that piece of familiarity back in his hands, it was easier to think. In order to fulfill his contract, he was going to an island and win this competition against a really powerful fella. Ancient times stuff. Totally not connected to Greek politics. Got it?”

A nod. “What could be said? “It only works if the new King isn’t cheating.” Hymir nodded and Dimitri beamed that media smile, hand outstretched. “Hey, I’m Dima.”

“You’re not the worst assassin.” A moment, Pallas’s low voice the loudest thing in the room. “Better introductions?” Hymir nodded.

“Hymir.” They shook hands. “Is he okay? He’s been muddering for a while.”

They looked over at Pallas. Dima shook his head with a smile. “He’s fine. He’s on the phone.” That wasn’t a word Hymir knew, and it was all over his face. Nothing was done about it.

Once Pallas was done with the ‘phone,’ Dima and Pallas packed while Hymir wrestled his spear from the wall. It was a miracle that it hadn’t fallen. With that piece of familiarity back in his hands, it was easier to think. In order to fulfill his contract, he was going to an island and enter a battle with two people he’s never fought with before. It was foolish. But it sounded like… fun. Something new. Something that he didn’t do every week since he was ten.

Packing was short. Dima had his bow and quiver, loose arrows snatched from the floor. Pallas had a halberd and a pack filled with water bottles. Ten minutes. Hymir watched the setting sun through the window on Pallas’s bed. Levin preferred to take him out during the night, saying that it was easier to be stealthy. The off-chances Hymir hadn’t fallen. With that piece of familiarity back in his hands, it was easier to think. In order to fulfill his contract, he was going to an island and enter a battle with two people he’s never fought with before. It was foolish. But it sounded like… fun. Something new. Something that he didn’t do every week since he was ten.

Waiting to leave was shorter. They went out into the night, the first few stars serving as beacons.

“A little longer”  
by Kiara Oelker | Staff Writer

It was the peak of dusk.  
The sky a perfect, gradient rainbow.  
The May beach breeze was cold,  
But your pedaled heart melded  
A warm layer of peace.  
When I asked to stay a little longer.  
Your silence spoke of novels,  
Ones we have written and ones  
We will draft soon.  
Your hands  
Sculpt endless bounds, but  
I would give anything to feel  
Those furnace hands in front  
Of the ocean once again.

“I’m not here to interrupt what… relationship you guys have here,” Hymir said, glancing between Dimitri and Pallas. “I’m here for a month. Tops. Trust me, I am not in the way of you two being ‘besties.’”

It was a word Peter liked using but had no one to use it on.

Silence held them. To Hymir’s surprise, Dimitri bursted out laughing. It sounded like bells. Only for a moment, a blink. “Are you actually here for a treaty?”

A nod. “There’s a war brewing up North. My… superiors are the ones starting it. We’re not supposed to get too many treaties since that’s suspicious.” Dimitri rolled his eyes again and Hymir smiled, because it was ridiculous, and Levin was a fool for thinking that. “You guys are the first people. For what it’s worth, I’m sorry I’m sucking at this.”


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Waiting to leave was shorter. They went out into the night, the first few stars serving as beacons.

"Kevin, Stop Being a Coffee Snob"  
by Cassidy Cooney | Contributing Writer

Orange crusted diamonds cover city streets
And when I gaze upon them
I’m reminded of the days we meet
In café’s in the suburbs,
Where the espresso’s always burnt.
You always want to argue
With the baristas
But I’d rather not have their ego’s hurt.
So instead you take the paltry
Coffee that you’re given
Knowing it’s not of quality
But, at least your mind’s still living.
“Unlike the tombs we see outside this coffee shop each day,” you snide
The first time we came here
You asked me,
“Becky, why did you take me to a coffee shop across from a cemetery?”
“The Day I Met Trujillo”  
by Claudio Josuel Alejo | Contributing Writer

There is a faded, tonal colored, creased photograph in a golden frame of an elder—what once appeared to me a white-skinned man. He has the most perfect combed back white hair. His skin looks as if it never saw a pimple in its life. His eyes glinted with sincerity, humility, caring, and ambition. His mustache expresses greatness. I remember being told as a child that a mustache distinguished the might of a man. His white shirt, multicolored tie, and black suit tell us that this man was important.

The photograph hung in the backyard porch of Papá Pancho, my paternal grandmother’s father’s house. It hung in the center of one of the yellow-painted, wooden sticks that held up the tin roof of the house, almost as if the individual in the photograph was so mighty that removing his picture would make the house crumble.

The photo calls out to me, inviting me to unravel the many secrets behind it, permitting me to exhume the stories of those who lived, of those who lost, of those who loved.

“Ita y ese hombre, who is that man? Ese es el papá de Papá Pancho?” A disturbed look spread across my aunt’s face as I asked if my lineage traced back to this man. It made me realize that I should have either known the answer to this question, or she dreaded telling me who this man was.

“You do not know who this man is? Do they not teach you history of different countries in your classes in Nueva Yol?” She shook her head and crossed her arms. I don’t know what was worse—my ignorance or my aunt’s insolent reply.

This man must be important and definitely not a family member because, if he were in my family, I should have had the privilege to meet him, and if he were so important I should have learned of him in my beat-down public school system.

“Bueno, Tia, no lo conozco, I never learned Dominican Republic history pero who is that man? Por qué hay una foto de el subía?”

“Ay Josuel, that is Trujillo.” You see everyone tells the same two Trujillo stories. It is the one of a Dominican Hitler, it is the one of a Dominican Nelson Mandela. It is the one of a vibrant, prospering country. It is the one of a broken identity and blood shed tyranny. “Era un ambiente completamente de miedo y uno vida de terror. There was no freedom. There was no security.” I am a grandson of the Trujillo regime. The sepia toned photo was taken some time around the 1940s. Trujillo was first in everything and then God. Trujillo was a blessing from God.

Revolucionario(a): a person who participates in a political, social or economic revolution of one’s nation. Last time I heard that word, it was my first time seeing a two-hundred Pesos Oro Dominicano bill. Currency in Dominican Republic always amused me because it was vibrant, unlike American currency. But the color was not the only thing that astounded me since I was used to the multi-colored bills already but the fact there was not just one woman, but three women on this bill. In America, there is nothing but white, rich, plantation owning men from the country's genesis. But in Dominican currency, there are revolutionaries.

“Papá, who are those women? And why are they on the bill?”

“Papito, those women son revolucionarias de la Patria, Las Hermanas Mirabal.”

In the tales I collected over the years, las Hermanas Mirabal, who were from Salcedo, Moca, about thirty minutes from San Victor, were honorable women, respected by all. They were unlike so many women of their generation. Yet, there are two versions of their story that have been told to me. Minerva Mirabal was invited to a grand fiesta by El Chivo himself. She refused to go because she hated Trujillo with a passion. Her father, a pharmacy owner, begged her to go because everyone knew to never deny an invitation sent by El Chivo. Denying his invite was like accepting an invite to the nearest prison or cemetery. Her father acknowledged that Minerva not going would bring havoc to the family. Minerva feared that Trujillo might touch her just like the stories that have been told prior. Trujillo would have these fiestas to choose his next few victims. Sometimes he’d even show up at the all-girl schools for “assemblies and ceremonies,” but in reality it was to offer these young women all the luxuries they’d want in exchange for their hour glass bodies. Many of them who were poor, would accept and what greater honor than to be the mistress of the Almighty Trujillo?

Minerva was more serious. Nevertheless, she arrived at the fiesta with her parents. Her mother had her wear the most glamorous salmon colored dress, three inch pumps, and her hair straightened out. Trujillo was received with the usual pomp that characterized his official appearances, the gaudy display that his regime so cherished. T rujillo approached Minerva and invited her to dance. Minerva refused but her father insisted. That fiesta would be remembered mostly for the big slap Minerva gave Trujillo in his face, in front of everyone, in the center of the dance floor when he put his hand on her buttocks. She stormed out of the reception and her parents followed.

Minerva was about to graduate law school to become the first woman lawyer in the nation but on the day of her graduation Trujillo denied her degree.

Suit era invalido.

Shortly after, Trujillo had her family’s business shut down. Her father lost his pharmacy. Trujillo had the Mirabals under watch. Frustrated with everything that was occurring, not just with them but with the regime in general, the Mirabal sisters came together in secret with a few other rebels and began to plot the death of Trujillo. The Hermanas Mirabal and their gang of rebels were successful in their tactics and making it known that they would not live to praise this regime causing them to be incarcerated and as well as their husbands incarcerated and tortured in La Fortaleza, the end was near. The bloodbaths, gun war, fake bombings, threats, moving from region to region, hiding, and protests were all coming to an end. But the end was not of Trujillo-it was of them. Trujillo had incarcerated their husbands in Puerto Plata. Months had passed since they were allowed to visit them and finally Trujillo granted them permission. Nov. 25th 1960, a day to be remembered in infamy.

That morning they had gone to visit their husbands. The end in Puerto Plata was a day to remember. They met up for a whole day of visitation which wasn’t the norm but what Trujillo says, goes. Upon returning home, to Salcedo, that evening, they traveled along a serpent rode, at the end of the rode they were detained. Four men dragged the sisters out of the jeep along with their driver. They were taken into another vehicle.

I don’t know what happens after this for this fragmented memory, like so many others, is not mine. It is only part of a story told directly to me. I hear memories like this. Some mine, some received, some made up: the memories of my ancestors. I want to remember them as my own. I want each of these memories told to me to drag me into that time period and let me encounter it as if I were there.

But all I can remember is that the next day, it was reported that the Hermanas Mirabal and their driver were found dead on the bottom of a mountain due to a horrific car accident.

Typical Trujillo sponsored death: no one knows who, what, when, where, why or how, but it happened and no one is to question it.

Illustration  
by Alex Pavljuk
"The Fixer" by Samuel Martorano  
@cojecto_

"Star Beach" by Alex Pavljuk

"After Party" by Hannah Effinger
“Bleeding Print” by Olivia Yayla
@bleedingprint
Editor’s Choice: Hispanic Heritage Month Edition

To celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month, The Montclarion Editorial Board has put together a special Editor’s Choice featuring picks from section editors sharing their favorite films with Hispanic people in front of or behind the camera. From slice-of-life comedies to dark fantasy dramas, there’s a little something for everyone this week!

“Stand And Deliver” (Available to Rent or Buy)

“Stand and Deliver” follows the story of a high school teacher named Jaime Escalante, who takes on the challenge to teach a group of marginalized kids in Los Angeles. The relationship between Mr. Escalante and the group of students grows strong as they get closer to taking an AP test. “Stand and Deliver” is based on the true story of Jaime Escalante, who was able to help his students improve throughout their high school experience. Mr. Escalante is ruthless with his students as he sees the potential of these kids. A great feel-good movie that makes you root for the students and teacher to succeed.

- Emily Iztaray-Rosario
Social Media Manager

“Real Women Have Curves” (MAX)

“Real Women Have Curves” is an indie drama starring America Fererra and directed by Patricia Cordoso. The 2002 film centers on the life of Ana Garcia and the issues she faces entering womanhood in her tight-knit Mexican household. A senior in high school, Ana wants to go to college but her dreams are halted as her parents’ expectations of becoming a meek housewife keep her chained at home. To support the family, she gets a job at her sister’s struggling dress factory. Ana strives to reach her goals despite her parents’ disapproval, slowly freeing herself from Hispanic cultural norms. She also deals with body image issues, sexual liberation and a complex mother-daughter relationship.

This incredible film will resonate with a lot of women who are first generation Hispanics as it covers many relevant and taboo topics in the community. It is a confirmation that women can follow their dreams and not feel guilty for not fulfilling those of papi y mami. Featuring a few hilarious scenes and too many relatable moments, “Real Women Have Curves” is a staple coming-of-age film.

- Kamil Santana
News Editor

“Jane the Virgin” (Netflix)

“Jane the Virgin,” is an American television show based on “Juana la Virgen,” which is a Venezuelan telenovela. This show focuses on one woman, Jane Villanueva, and her not-so-ordinary life in Florida as a Venezuelan-American. This show is impactful in its comedic narrative, with critical undertones that highlight issues that continuously weaken modern-day America. Issues regarding class/wealth, gender roles, race, a difficult immigration system, and sexual orientation. This show can have you laughing one second and crying the next, all while keeping the viewer encapsulated in the show and Jane's hectic life.

- Ajay Gobind
Business Manager

“Blue Beetle” (Available to Rent or Buy)

“Blue Beetle” is a superhero film that was released in August, starring actor Xolo Maridueña. The movie centers around Maridueña’s character Jaime Reyes, a recent Mexican-American college graduate in Palmero City. While searching for the job, Maridueña meets Jenny Kord, whose family company owns an item known as the Scarab. The Scarab is an alien self-defense system relic that fuses with the person it chooses. After stealing it from her aunt, Jenny gives the Scarab to Jaime. The Scarab then chooses Jaime, fusing with him. Jaime and Jenny then must protect Jaime from getting killed by Jenny’s aunt, who wants to use it for military purposes.

This movie is remarkable for so many different reasons. The dialogue between the characters is strong, and it allows the movie to portray the themes of family and perseverance well. The character development is also powerful, especially with the character of Ignacio, Victoria’s cyborg test soldier. I won’t spoil anything, but the movie allows you to see an enemy of the protagonist in a different light. “Blue Beetle” captivates viewers with both classic superhero action and raw emotion.

- Sal DiMaggio
Feature Editor

“After Tonight, Everything Will Be Different” (Available to Purchase)

“After Tonight, Everything Will Be Different,” by author and musician, Adam Gnade, is an autobiographical book of short stories which feels like conversations and recited memories you’d hear over dinner with a long-lost friend, and that’s because that’s what the book is. Gnade chronicles his life through momental and important meals which shaped and ultimately changed him for the better despite the hardships some of those meals represent. Be that cactus candy in Mexico as a three year old boy, a tuna melt later in life at his parent’s seafood restaurant in Southern California, or an eggplant parmigiana on the run from a bill you just dined and dashed on as a young man. I love the voice that this book is told in and the tone and pain that it conveys despite its lively and honest grasp at finding beauty in the hardships of a full life that is far from over. It is an account of a youthful robust and informed experience of life despite years and decades to come.

- Alex Pavljuk
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- Alex Pavljuk
Fiction Editor
"Pan’s Labyrinth" is considered to be Del Toro’s magnum opus, and for good reason. Its heartbreaking story, beautiful cinematography and incredible performances, particularly that of the young Baquero, whose innocence makes her throne.

Ofelia discovers she is actually the reincarnated daughter of the king of the underworld and is guided by a faun to complete three tasks to help her reclaim her throne.

"Pan’s Labyrinth" is available to Rent or Buy.

"Selena" is a biographic that captures Quintanilla’s early life and career as she blossomed into one of the world’s biggest musical icons. Selena, played by Bronx native and Latin pop culture icon Jennifer Lopez, is born into a musical Mexican-American family in Texas. At just 10 years old, her father Abraham (Edward James Olmos) realizes that his daughter is talented and as any parent would do, he lands her gigs at small venues. From there, she never looked back, making strides on the Latin charts and selling out stadiums. Quintanilla marries her guitarist Chris Perez (Jon Seda) and begins recording her first English album, a highly anticipated album that would propel her to mainstream artist level like Gloria Estefan. However, tragically she never gets to complete it.

"Selena" is available to Rent or Buy.

"Coco" is about a boy named Miguel (Anthony Gonzalez) who explores the Land of the Remembered but it is revealed to him that Maria has in fact not died and he becomes determined to meet her once again.

"Coco" is available to Rent on Disney Plus.

Edited by Avery Nixon
Opinion Editor

"The Book of Life" is a heartwarming, thrilling, magical and fun story to watch. Even though it is targeted towards children, all ages can enjoy this film. And it has a cover of “Creep” by Radiohead.

"The Book of Life" (MAX)

Directed by Jorge R. Gutierrez, "The Book Of Life" is based on the Day Of The Dead, a Mexican holiday to remember and celebrate those who have passed, and centers Manolo (Diego Luna) a bullfighter who wishes to be a musician instead. Manolo is also stuck in a love triangle with Maria (Zoe Saldana) and Joaquin (Channing Tatum). Manolo believes Marta has died and lets Xibalba (Ron Perlman), ruler of the Land of the Forgotten, kill him. Manolo is then transported to the Land of the Remembered but it is revealed to him that Maria has in fact not died and he becomes determined to meet her once again.

"The Book of Life" (Available to Rent or Buy)

Edited by Lynise Olivacce
Editor-in-Chief
Samira Villagomez, also known as “the Mother of the Mosh.”

Sophia Lazaridis | The Montclarion

Sophia Lazaridis
Video Editor

Samira Villagomez, also known on Instagram as @samimisthecoolest and @motherofthemosh, is making big strides in the underground music scene and is working tirelessly at fostering a healthy community for the New Jersey alternative scene.

Villagomez, an Ecuadorian sophomore at Montclair State University majoring in Design Technology Management with a concentration in costumes, first came on the scene her freshman year by hosting events in various North Jersey venues, including Montclair’s The Meatlocker.

Besides managing bands and hosting shows locally, Villagomez had picked up a new side hustle drumming in her new band “The Pin-ups,” including Salvadorian guitarists Ruben Chavez and Saraí Furman, and fellow Montclair State University Film and TV student Celine DaSilva, who is Brazilian, on bass and vocals.

Villagomez details how lead singer DaSilva and her had brought the band to fruition. “She had the idea for a while, and I’ve been in bands since I was about 12. I started playing guitar, but I never really thought I was going to ever stick to being in a band. I thought I was going to do more hosting and management, but down the line she asked me to become a drummer,” she said.

As time went on, the duo had recruited more members through mutual friends. “I had been managing another band called Public Disturbances and one of my buddies there, he was interested in doing something that wasn’t as heavy, heavy rock. And I, you know, offered him to come join us,” Villagomez said. “And Celine had found one of her friends who was trying to do more with guitar.”

Villagomez describes the band as merging into the “indie sleaze movement” as its revival is on the rise but some of their inspirations for their music include Daft Punk, Regina Spektor, MGMT and LeBang, a French Jazz band out of New York.

As of now, The Pin-Ups have performed less than ten shows, but that does not mean that there haven’t been many memorable moments. Villagomez recalls a previous show in Rahway, New Jersey and describes it as a “nice, nice time.”

“The turnout was amazing,” Villagomez recounts. “It was everybody who I’ve ever cherished in my life who showed up. That was just a fulfilling moment because when I host, sometimes it’s scary. You feel like people aren’t going to show up, you know? It’s just that fear. But everyone showed up and there was just so much love that day.”

The Mother of the Mosh’s biggest priority for these shows is creating a safe environment for all of those performing and spectating.

“I love creating community and I love bringing people together, especially creating safe spaces for everybody to be able to be themselves and make new friends.” She continues, “One of the highest honors I’ve had is have someone tell me that they felt the safest they’ve felt at a local venue, like ever.”

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Villagomez at times feels like she is the “only Hispanic in the room” and describes the isolating experience of being a Hispanic woman in the art scene.

“There’s been big movements in getting more inclusivity in theater which is really cool. But lately, like around me, I just haven’t had a lot of other people, a lot of other Hispanic people.”

Villagomez describes Lin-Manuel Miranda as one of her inspirations, as he is a multifaceted talent and speaks up for Hispanic communities.

In terms of the future, Villagomez plans to make costuming a priority and work on children’s TV focusing on puppetry or “anything crafty of that sort.”

She also plans to pursue production in the music field, own a record label or an event venue of her own.

Villagomez’s next event will be hosted in Montclair’s The Meatlocker this Halloween.
Popular American music artist Demi Lovato has been producing music since her days on Disney Channel, and in recent years has expressed an urge to return to her pop-rock roots. Upon embarking on this new era, Lovato initially released an explicit album, moving onto the album revamping her old pop songs into new pop-rock songs, creatively titled “Revamped.” In “Revamped,” Lovato re-records ten of her biggest hits throughout the years, a few of which we will be taking a look into.

Lovato starts off the album strong using a song so many fans know her best for, “Heart Attack.” The utilization of drums fits very smoothly, which is often difficult to play off when translating pop into rock. Out of all the songs on this album, Lovato’s utilization of her voice and her riffing prowess seems to be most prevalent and fun in this one. “Confident” is where I start to feel a disconnect from the rock-vibe Lovato is going for. After multiple listens, the song has become more comfortable, however it does not feel like a pop-rock song. If Lovato truly is revamping this album, why not change things up with the structure of the songs instead of just bringing in real instruments and some special effects? The opening, while true to the original recording with its sporty sound, feels out of place when trying to translate genres. Maybe this song just does not translate well to rock if Lovato does not want to change the essence of the song itself to fit a new genre, or maybe I am being overly critical, but this song is a definite pass for me in its new form.

If anyone could turn “Sorry Not Sorry” into a rock song and bring Slash in for a guitar solo (and make it work) it would be Lovato. I was admittedly nervous about its rock translation, however it works very well. The pre-chorus feels very smooth on my ears and immediately makes me want to dance. Slash’s guitar solo, while simple, works very well for Lovato’s style since she’s not going for anything heavy. This one is great! “Cool for the Summer” in some areas, namely before the chorus, the guitar overpowers her vocal tracks in a strange, distorting way. It is not bad, however there was probably a better way to recreate the essence of this iconic song. It is a bit too close to the original, which is not a bad thing in itself, however the mixing of this song feeling slightly off. A positive about her recreation is that the bridge of this song gave her a lot of room to show off her expanding range, which she fully took advantage of and rocked. If I had to pick to listen to its pop predecessor or this new version, I would pick the original. The absolute grip “La La Land” on me as a pre-teen has perhaps made me hypercritical, but the distortion on the guitar, while I got used to it over time in the background, feels very off-putting to begin the song with – almost like being slapped in the face. This song was already bordering on pop-rock when it originally premiered on Disney Channel nearly a decade ago. Besides the expansion of Lovato's range, it feels very similar to its original. I feel very neutral about this recreation since it doesn’t feel like anything was done to truly revamp its essence.

While we did not go into a deep dive into her songs featuring The Maine and The Used, the utilization of both of those bands and singers meshed very well with Lovato’s own vocals. Slash’s appearance was a very noteworthy addition that aided in translating a classic pop song into a fun pop-rock one. Overall, the album is worth a listen if you are a fan of Lovato, however, she could have made improvements with less vocal distortion, better mixing, and more rock elements to enhance the recreation of classic hits. I can only hope that her dive into rock music continues, as it seems to be something she enjoys.

‘Revamped’ or a Flop?

Cassidy Conney
Guest Writer

‘Revamped’ Album by Demi Lovato
Producer: Warren "Oak" Felder
Explicit, Rock, 36 mins
3.5 stars

Benito Antonio Martínez Ocasio, also known as Bad Bunny, is a reggaeton superstar with a global following. The artist, with over 12 million followers, released a new song onto the music scene recently. Unfortunately, it appears that this could be the final release we can expect from him in 2023.

A cryptic WhatsApp message on a channel maintained by Benito, the Puerto Rican icon previewed what he stated was going to be his final solo single of the year. The artist teased his latest single on Sept. 20, informing fans that the song would be released before the end of the month. The release of this new single is hinting at a potential new era for the artist.

This reggaeton track, titled “Un Preview,” offers a glimpse into what is on the horizon for next year and his next album. “Un Preview” comes accompanied by the direction of Bad Bunny’s now-up-and-coming video director Stizzl. The music video begins with the artist riding a mechanical horse and the frame cuts to a woman riding a real horse. Bad Bunny then proceeds to sing in front of what appears to be an old school Rolls Royce. The visual component featured elements of cowboy culture wearing denim attire with face coverings that single out the eyes. The beginning lyrics of the song state that he is no longer scared to taste her and to fall in love again. “Baby, yo no tengo miedo, je / De probarle y de enamorarme de nuevo / Que se joda, mami, yo te sigo el juego, ey / Bien loquito en la disco, me pego bailando y te beso el cuerpo, ey / Contigo me voy a fuego, ey,” which translates as follows. “Baby, I’m no longer scared / Of tasting you and falling in love again / We’re crazy at the club, I get closer to you dancing, and I kiss your neck / With you, I’ll deal with fire.”

This single which has many fans wondering if it really is a “preview” of his new album, has opinions divided. Even though a fifth Benito album would be great, fans feel that the artist sounds repetitive with his new work. As one X user wrote, “I love Bad Bunny, he’s my number one guy, but ‘Un Preview’ didn’t move me. I feel like I have listened to it a thousand times.”

Still, others disagree, calling the new song a certified “banger.” However, once Bad Bunny released the song on Sept. 25th, fans immediately had mixed feelings about the work. One frequent opinion was that the song “doesn’t hit.” This might be a reference to Benito’s 2022 song “El Aquapón,” and the fans might be wondering “where’s the sazón?”

This single follows Bad Bunny’s participation in K-Pop’s “Utopia,” the only release preceding Travis Scott’s “Utopia.” It marks his second solo single of the year, following the Jersey club-inspired “Where She Goes,” which dropped shortly after his headline performance at Coachella. “Un Preview” since being released to the public seems to be the artist’s answer to rumors of a new album dropping this fall. Although Bad Bunny was hesitant to confirm whether a project was actually releasing, he did however touch base on what he predicts the vibes will be on his next album.

‘Un Preview’ Has Bad Bunny Fans Wondering ‘Where’s The Sazón?’

Tiffany Echeverria
Guest Writer

‘Un Preview’ Single by Bad Bunny
Producers: Tainy, La Paciencia, MAG, Reggaeton, 3 mins
0.5 stars

Benito Antonio Martínez Ocasio, also known as Bad Bunny, is a reggaeton superstar with a global following. The artist, with over 12 million followers, released a new song onto the music scene recently. Unfortunately, it appears that this could be the final release we can expect from him in 2023.

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The Montclair State University football team proved that a red hawk is tougher than a lion. The Red Hawks made a statement on Homecoming as they tore down the Lions of The College of New Jersey (TCNJ) in a 42-7 win.

It was a special night all around for the Red Hawks, Montclair State students, alumni, and all those who attended the Homecoming events earlier in the day. The biggest and most anticipated game of the year drew in a crowd of just over 5,000 people. Those who could not attend in person still got the ultimate experience with the Red Hawk Sports Network’s (RHSN) multi-camera broadcast which included replays, sideline interviews, pre-game, halftime and post-game shows.

Junior linebacker and team captain Nick Burgess was all smiles after the game. “We’ve got to win homecoming every single year,” Burgess said. “That’s so important for the school, so important for our program, and I’m just excited. Now we’re going to celebrate the win and then we’re 1-0 for Kean.”

Montclair State collectively accounted for six total touchdowns including four offensive touchdowns, a blocked field goal returned for a touchdown and an interception returned for another touchdown. “It felt good to finally put a complete game together. I’m excited about the way we executed today,” Head coach Mike Palazzo said. “I think we just focused on the little things and we simplified a couple of things. We just wanted to make sure that we were executing at a high level and not getting too complicated and I think you saw the result tonight.”

Montclair State’s second touchdown of the game came from a blocked field goal courtesy of junior defensive back Keyshawn Dixon which was then returned 84 yards by sophomore wide receiver Jayden Brimage. The Red Hawk defense accounted for three interceptions including Burgess’s 52-yard pick-six. But why was the offense so dominant with four touchdowns and 315 total yards? Two words, Andrew Sandborn. Sophomore quarterback Sanborn spread his wings and soared with 20 completions, 205 passing yards and four touchdown passes. The recent transfer student from American International College put on a show for the thousands in attendance, leaving TCNJ’s defense in shambles.

“Man he’s ballin’, he’s playing so good,” Burgess said. “[He] came in, faced a little adversity being our quarterback, and bounced back this week and it’s so important that he keeps ballin’ out and keeps putting us in the right spots.”

Montclair State heads into the new week preparing to face the Cougars of Kean University. The Red Hawks’ mindset this season is to refresh at the start of every week and treat it as a fresh start each week. “One game at a time,” Palazzo said. “One game championships, that’s it.”

Montclair State will visit Kean Alumni Stadium on Saturday, Sept. 7 for their battle against the Cougars.
Senior Day Success for Women's Soccer

Zachary Papenberg
Guest Writer

After a heartwarming ceremony in honor of the seniors on the women's soccer team, Montclair State University was ready to take the field against the Ramapo Roadrunners. They were looking to put on a show for the fans and get the win for the school on Homecoming day. The women's team started out strong as they jumped out to an early lead within the first few moments of the game. Sophomore Julie Baker opened up the scoring by crossing the ball into the net after it deflected off of a Ramapo defender. This gave the Red Hawks a big boost in confidence as they continued to apply pressure on Ramapo's goalie, Makenna Tahbaz. Shots on goal began to pile up, but despite the overwhelming success, the score remained 1-0 heading into the half.

Ramapo's defense was very solid considering they were under duress the entire first half and they needed to come out fired up getting their offense going if they wanted a chance to win the game. Unfortunately for them, things remained the same and only got worse from there on out for the Roadrunners.

Baker scored her second goal of the game and not long after she capped her wonderful day off with the hat trick. They were her first career collegiate goals and for it to be a hat trick made it even more special.

“They were my first career goals so it was really cool for them to be a hat trick,” Baker said. Baker’s primary position is a defender but today she was playing up top as an attacking player which proved to be a great decision from Head Coach Patrick Naughter. As time went on, the Red Hawks just were too much for Ramapo, only getting sharper as the game progressed. Freshman Gianna Curci and senior Olivia Kedziora added their goals to the tally, making the final score of the game 5-0 Red Hawks.

Montclair State came into senior day with extra motivation after their draw against Stockton University according to Baker.

“Coming off of Wednesday’s tough draw, I think we were all super motivated to get back on a winning streak,” Baker said. “For us this win is viewed as another step and a great NJAC win that is getting us excited for next week.”

Kedziora has had an up and down career at Montclair State largely due to injury so being a part of the team meant a lot to her. And on her big day, she got her first career goal with the program.

“I was a little nervous to take the kick but I stuck to my plan,” Kedziora said. “Same side and same pace and it went in so I’m happy.”

Montclair State played with high intensity and Head Coach Patrick Naughter believes their play showed it.

“I thought Wednesday night we were really good and took really good shots along with making very good decisions but they blocked them making great saves,” Naughter said. “Today, however, we got deflections into the net and we were the ones that caught the breaks. We earned the breaks though. I am not saying we got lucky. Overall I was happy that we ended up getting the results.”

It truly was a special day for the Montclair State women’s soccer team as it seemed like nothing could go wrong and it felt almost meant to be.

“If you asked me this morning what would have been the best case scenario for these kids, I would not have been able to come up with all of this stuff,” Naughter said. “The kids love Tara and Kedz so the fact that they were able to celebrate and get the win today on Homecoming is just awesome because they deserve it.”

Montclair State currently sits at 7-1-1 and has everything going for them. The Red Hawks take on Arcadia University on Wednesday, Oct. 4, and their next New Jersey Athletic Conference game is scheduled for Saturday, Oct. 7 at MSU Soccer Park against Rowan University.
Head coach Eddie Stawinski came into 2023 with a record of 217-141 at Montclair State. After playing four years of Springfield volleyball at Springfield College, Stawinski would eventually reach the professional volleyball most of his life, Stawinski was around his older brother’s coaching at high school practices. Due to being around pro league games, he would watch growing up. “As a kid, I would go to the pro league games. As every athlete knows, sports are not just the uphill part of a roller coaster. There are bumps and obstacles that present themselves at unpredictable times. Stawinski would be challenged emotionally, as he was traded from the team that made his dream come true a few days prior. ‘They traded me a week after,’ Stawinski said. ‘That was really rough because it was a new experience and I was loving life, then all of sudden I’m getting traded.’ Despite Stawinski’s untimely trade, he bounced back shortly after. He was traded to the team named Caribes de San Sebastián, which would turn out to be a fortunate opportunity for Stawinski. “It was about an hour and forty-five minutes from home,” Stawinski said. “It was the most amazing experience.” Regardless of the long hours in the car, Stawinski loved this team. “We would have like a hundred fifty people to come up just to watch practice,” Stawinski said. “It was amazing because my coach was a former Cuban national team assistant coach. I was playing with a member of the United States national team that played in the Olympics the year prior and then the other player was from Portugal.” Stawinski’s unexpected trade would be proven to be a blessing in disguise, as he was playing with Olympians, foreign players and Cuban national team members. Playing with highly credible teammates and for a town that overflowed with support, Stawinski would be excited to start a career with his new team. Strenuous pressure would come along for the ride, but connecting with his teammates and playing for his home, offset any baggage that trailed behind. Today, Stawinski reflects on his professional career and feels the butterflies in his stomach as he remembers the great moments that came from the experience. Stawinski relives his professional playing days through videos and teammates. “It was a surreal experience,” Stawinski said. “Looking back at it, I was very fortunate. But it was one that I still, to this day, I have old videos and I’m like that was amazing.” Stawinski and his team would meet at the peak of their season when they played in a coliseum in front of 18,000 people. This was the largest crowd that Stawinski ever played in front of and claims it was the first time he was ever nervous before a game. Several years later, the memories have lived on for him and moments like playing in front of thousands of fans have been unforgettable. Volleyball has brought endless memories, lasting relationships and a new career for Stawinski. Retiring from his playing days, Stawinski would come to meet his new dream of becoming a volleyball coach. Living and playing in Puerto Rico established his love of the game as well as the life-changing opportunities. “Growing up in Puerto Rico, the opportunities, like playing volleyball and I also wanted to stay with volleyball in coaching,” Stawinski said. “I was playing professionally and got the opportunity to be a grad assistant.” Read more at themontclarion.org

Avery Jackson
Guest Writer

Opportunities appear for different reasons at unexpected times. For Stawinski, it was receiving a phone call to play professional volleyball. He made the most of this opportunity and achieved his goal of becoming a coach. Herb Brooks, coach of the legendary 1980 United States Olympic ice hockey team, once said, “Great moments are born from unexpected times. Stawinski was unaware his dream was about to come true. “Upon graduation, like the week before, I got a call from a team down there. They said we wanna sign you.” Stawinski was excited to move back home to his old stomping grounds. He already had the ball rolling prior to his signing, as he played on a summer team in Puerto Rico, which would eventually sign him as a professional volleyball player. Due to NCAA rules, college players were prohibited from accepting money from leagues and sponsors. Moreover, this was a once in a lifetime opportunity for Stawinski. As every athlete knows, sports are not just the uphill part of a roller coaster. There are bumps and obstacles that present themselves at unpredictable times. Stawinski would be challenged emotionally, as he was traded from the team that made his dream come true a few days prior. ‘They traded me a week after,’ Stawinski said. ‘That was really rough because it was a new experience and I was loving life, then all of sudden I’m getting traded.’ Despite Stawinski’s untimely trade, he bounced back shortly after. He was traded to the team named Caribes de San Sebastián, which would turn out to be a fortunate opportunity for Stawinski. “It was about an hour and forty-five minutes from home,” Stawinski said. “It was the most amazing experience.” Regardless of the long hours in the car, Stawinski loved this team. “We would have like a hundred fifty people to come up just to watch practice,” Stawinski said. “It was amazing because my coach was a former Cuban national team assistant coach. I was playing with a member of the United States national team that played in the Olympics the year prior and then the other player was from Portugal.” Stawinski’s unexpected trade would be proven to be a blessing in disguise, as he was playing with Olympians, foreign players and Cuban national team members. Playing with highly credible teammates and for a town that overflowed with support, Stawinski would be excited to start a career with his new team. Strenuous pressure would come along for the ride, but connecting with his teammates and playing for his home, offset any baggage that trailed behind. Today, Stawinski reflects on his professional career and feels the butterflies in his stomach as he remembers the great moments that came from the experience. Stawinski relives his professional playing days through videos and teammates. “It was a surreal experience,” Stawinski said. “Looking back at it, I was very fortunate. But it was one that I still, to this day, I have old videos and I’m like that was amazing.” Stawinski and his team would meet at the peak of their season when they played in a coliseum in front of 18,000 people. This was the largest crowd that Stawinski ever played in front of and claims it was the first time he was ever nervous before a game. Several years later, the memories have lived on for him and moments like playing in front of thousands of fans have been unforgettable. Volleyball has brought endless memories, lasting relationships and a new career for Stawinski. Retiring from his playing days, Stawinski would come to meet his new dream of becoming a volleyball coach. Living and playing in Puerto Rico established his love of the game as well as the life-changing opportunities. “Growing up in Puerto Rico, the opportunities, like playing volleyball and I also wanted to stay with volleyball in coaching,” Stawinski said. “I was playing professionally and got the opportunity to be a grad assistant.” Read more at themontclarion.org

From Player to Coach: The Life and Legacy of Eddie Stawinski

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Guest Writer

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