

AAUP members silently protest convocation

By Jake Tiger

AT the front of the Yvonne Theatre was a highlight video of Rider's recent achievements, and a three-year "Path Forward" for the institution. On the opposite end, a block of hushed and disgruntled professors hoisted signs commanding the university president to step down.

Rider's annual faculty and staff convocation on Aug. 31 showcased the jagged rift between President Gregory Dell'Omo and Rider's chapter of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), as another fall semester began with frustration, unrest and a silent protest amid the threat of faculty layoffs.

"For Rider's path forward to truly go forward it needs to be with new leadership at the helm," said AAUP President Quinn Cunningham in a statement emailed to The Rider News after the convocation. "[Dell'Omo] calls on us all to make sacrifices for the good of the institution, but he is conveniently forgetting that he is asking for sacrifices to fix his failures."

According to Cunningham, an associate professor at the university, the administration asked the AAUP



Kaitlyn D'Alessio/ The Rider News

Members of the AAUP hold up signs urging Rider President Gregory Dell'omo to resign as he spoke at the faculty and staff convocation.

to take a \$1 million cut over the next two years, despite the terms of the union's current, five-year contract being agreed upon last September after multiple protests and just before a strike.

The AAUP has declined to take the cut thus far, making faculty layoffs, specifically in low-enrollment programs, a likely and ugly alternative this fall.

To voice its shared, long-standing disdain for

Dell'Omo and the potential layoffs, the union organized a silent protest at Rider's convocation for a second consecutive year.

Due to stipulations in its contract, the AAUP is barred from demonstrations considered to be "disruptive" to Rider, so union members chose to silently protest at the convocation, Cunningham said.

Protestors first marched in solidarity from the Bart Luedeke Center to the Fine Arts Building, entering together and taking their seats in the back of the theater.

The union did not make a sound for the entire convocation, instead bringing signs that sternly read, "RESIGN." AAUP members stretched up with their signs any time Dell'Omo spoke, but whenever he passed the microphone to another member of his administration, they quickly dropped the demand.

"I must question the judgment, motivation and professionalism of those who have engaged in this self-destructive behavior," said Dell'Omo toward the end of his presentation, prompting protestors to repeatedly thrust their signs high above their heads. "It's so frustrating, not to mention harmful, to see some of the rhetoric that gets put out there in the public opinion about Rider. ... It does nothing to ensure our future viability and success."

SEE SHORTLY PAGE 4

Tax forms reveal Rider's top earners

By Amethyst Martinez

RIDER President Gregory Dell'Omo received a \$56,420 increase in his salary and benefits, according to Rider's most recent federal tax forms, which showcased the university's highest-paid employees, as well as its spending habits.

In the fiscal year that spans from July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022, the president's salary and benefits amounted to \$661,936, compared to the previous year's total of \$605,516, when Dell'Omo and other top administrators took a salary cut due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The most recent total is Dell'Omo's highest annual compensation at Rider since he arrived in 2015, and more than \$40,000 over his pre-pandemic earnings.

At the same time, Rider faculty and staff have seen wages virtually frozen. The current faculty employment contract calls for two years without raises, then one year with a 0.25% increase, followed by 2% in each of the final two years of the contract.

In addition, during a July webinar, Dell'Omo suggested that an assessment of low-enrollment academic programs could lead to faculty layoffs this fall.

Non-union Rider employees saw Rider's contribution to their retirements slashed from 5% to 2.5% starting Sept. 1, and eight staff members were laid off in July.

In the most recent tax filing, Dell'Omo's salary came out to \$569,702, with benefits costing the university an additional \$92,234.

These benefits include the president's campus-adjacent residence on Lawrenceville Road, which the university offers and requires him to live in. In the prior tax filing, Dell'Omo's benefits amounted to \$90,831.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, a number of university administrators took pay cuts, including Dell'Omo.

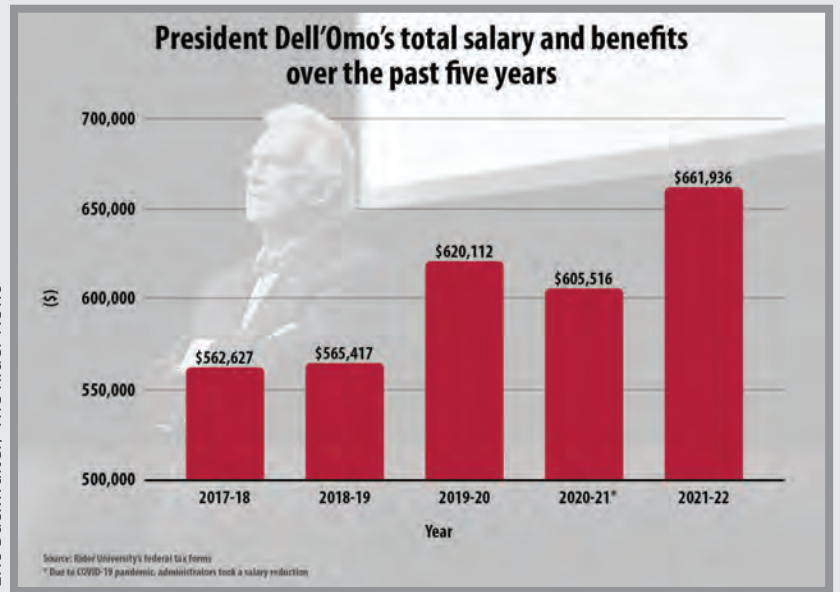
According to a Sept. 5 email to The Rider News from Kristine Brown, associate vice president for university marketing and communications, Dell'Omo took a 25% voluntary pay cut from May to October 2020, and a 15% pay cut from November 2020 through June 2021.

Brown said the president's salary was higher in the most recent tax filing because he took a larger pay cut the previous year.

In the 2019-2020 fiscal year, Dell'Omo's salary and benefits amounted to \$620,112, according to university tax forms.

Rider's high earners

Men's basketball Head Coach Kevin Baggett was the second-highest paid employee at the



Eric Buckwalter/ The Rider News

University tax forms over the past five years showcased President Gregory Dell'Omo's salary and benefits.

university, with his total annual salary and benefits coming in at \$382,436, as opposed to the previous year, where he made \$376,554.

James Hartman, Rider's chief financial officer, made \$285,906, ranking him as the third-highest paid employee at the university, as opposed to the previous year, when Hartman made \$277,443.

Provost DonnaJean Fredeen went from having

SEE \$302,597 PAGE 3

INSIDE **MAKING NOISE**
Rider baseball won its first NCAA tournament game since 1987.



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PROFESSOR SHARES HIS DISAPPOINTMENT
Joel Feldman expresses his frustration toward Dell'Omo after his speech at convocation.

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FROM RIDER GRADUATE TO MISS NEW JERSEY
Victoria Mozitis talks about becoming Miss New Jersey.



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SECURITY BRIEFS

BY AMETHYST MARTINEZ

Smoky Switlik

Faulty air conditioning. On Aug. 23, at 8:49 p.m., Public Safety was dispatched to Switlik Residence Hall for a fire alarm activation. Upon Public Safety's arrival, they responded to the room in which the alarm was activated and discovered a heavy smoke condition inside, but no visible flames. Upon further investigation, it was discovered that there was a malfunction of the air conditioning unit causing it to overheat. Windows were opened so that the smoke could vent out. The fire alarm system was reset. Facilities Management was contacted about the issue and advised to make repairs.

A Tired Trespasser

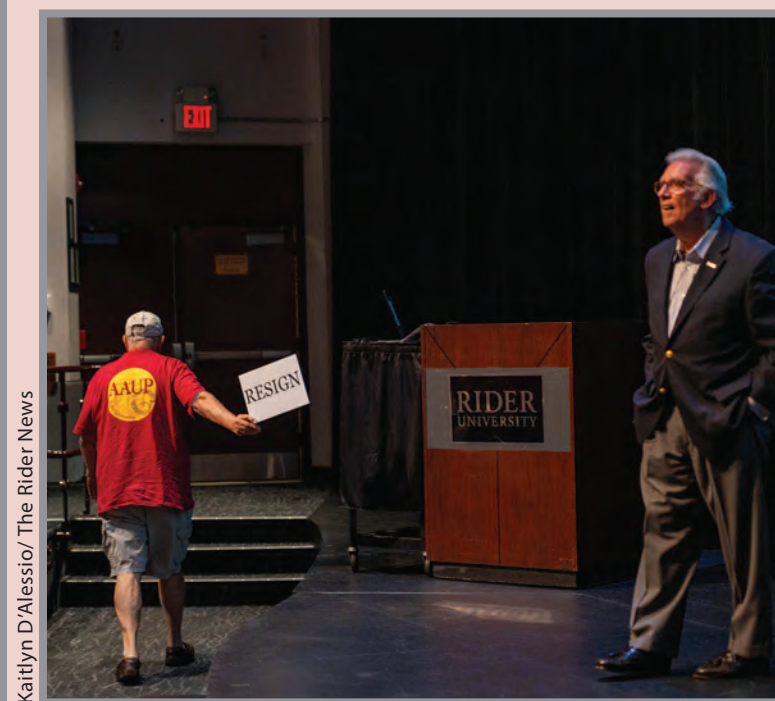
Found out cold. On Sept. 5 at 1:47 a.m., Public Safety was conducting a security check of the Kroner Residence Hall, when they discovered the lights turned off inside of a lounge. Upon turning the lights back on, a Public Safety officer observed a person sleeping on one of the couches inside the lounge. The Public Safety officer approached the person and woke them up and discovered that they had no affiliation with Rider and were possibly trespassing. Public Safety attempted to identify the person and called Lawrence Police to respond. Lawrence Police detained and identified the person, and they were advised not to return to campus by the police and Public Safety banned the person from all university properties. Public Safety reminds all campus community members to report any suspicious activity and to make sure all your doors are locked.

False Alarm

Broken smoke detector. On Aug. 29 at 2:50 p.m., Public Safety was dispatched to Poyda Residence Hall for the report of a fire alarm activation. Upon their arrival, Public Safety found the building occupants evacuating. They proceeded to the location of the alarm and discovered that someone had broken the smoke detector head off of its mount in the hallway. It is unknown if the damage was accidental or intentional. Public Safety is investigating.

- Information provided by Public Safety Capt. Matthew Babcock

Faculty, staff convocation sees growth and grievances



Kaitlyn D'Alessio/The Rider News

AAUP members exit the faculty and staff convocation as the Q&A portion begins.

AAUP Presence

Many members of Rider's chapter of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) sat together wearing cranberry shirts with "Invest in Rider's FUTURE. Invest in Rider's FACULTY" in gold letters while Dell'Omo updated the audience of Rider's financial standing, along with the university's recent accomplishments.

AAUP members silently held up "RESIGN" signs throughout the presentation before leaving as soon as the Q&A portion began.

An email from AAUP President Quinn Cunningham had instructed members to skip the convocation reception as well.

Enrollment and finances

Standing at the front of the stark separation of faculty and staff, Dell'Omo updated the audience on key issues like enrollment trends and financial goals for the university.

Most notably, the fiscal year (FY) operating budget showed calculations indicative of a \$7.2 million deficit, over \$10 million smaller than that of FY2022 and a value that the university has been attempting to eliminate through means that have become highly controversial.

According to Dell'Omo, much of the deficit

came from the loss of revenue during the COVID-19 pandemic, especially as the number of resident students shrunk.

In 2020, the number of residential students faced a tremendous cut, dropping from 1,995 students in the fall of 2019 to 910 the following year.

The loss of nearly 1,000 residents, equates to almost \$15 million of lost revenue, Dell'Omo said, emphasizing just how important housing is to the university's budget.

There are 1,665 residential students for the fall of 2023, an increase from 1,607 the previous year.

According to Vice President for Enrollment Management Drew Aromando, as of Sept. 4 Rider is expecting to see 808 freshmen, just shy of its 825 goal, and 217 transfer students, excelling its goal of 205.

The Path Forward

In order to bolster the university's financial standing and assist in overcoming its lingering cash deficit, Rider has implemented a new three-year initiative, "The Path Forward" plan, with FY2024 serving as the inaugural year for a slew of revenue enhancements.

Some key revenue streams include a new mandated parking fee of \$125 per semester for all students, the optional First Day program for course materials, renovations to reopen the Poyda Residence Hall and the listing to sell West Long Drive House.

The property was "not fitting our needs," according to Dell'Omo, and the university is facing a heightened need for upfront capital — like the

SEE EXPECTED PAGE 3

By Kaitlyn McCormick

ENROLLMENT as well as faculty and administrative tensions have risen yet again, fresh for the start of the fall semester.

The staff and faculty convocation on Aug. 31 was the perfect platform for an airing of grievances toward Rider's financial struggles and the faculty union's critiques of President Gregory Dell'Omo.

New First Day program questioned by student body

By Jake Tiger

WHEN Rider students opened their university bill for the upcoming fall semester, they were met with a new, mysterious fee for something called "First Day Complete," a program that every student was automatically opted in to by the university.

First Day was pitched as a simple, almost charitable way for scholars to source course materials, but the student body was quick to realize why the administration adopted First Day in a time of dire financial need.

"We did not like this program, and we did not think it would be beneficial for the student body," said Rider's Student Government Association (SGA) President Naa'san Carr to The Rider News. "We actually told the administration no, and it was to our surprise ... that the institution was going forward with this program."

First Day charges students \$23 per credit in exchange for discounted and convenient access to rented course materials, meaning students taking a typical 15-credit schedule would be charged \$345 per semester on average.

In an email sent out on June 27, Rider claimed students will save approximately 35-50% on course material, while avoiding the hassle of shopping around and worrying about books arriving before classes start. Enrolled students were given access to digital materials

on the first day of classes, and physical copies were available for pickup at the Rider University Bookstore.

The program was implemented through Barnes & Noble College, the manager of Rider's bookstore, who now has hundreds of colleges participating nationwide, including nearby Rutgers University.

All undergraduate students were enrolled in the program when it was introduced, regardless of whether or not it benefited them.

On Aug. 7, the first day of the program's opt-out period, SGA sent out a universitywide email informing the student body, along with a link to the opt-out page.

"We just want to make the student body aware that they have an option," said Carr. "We've been finding other ways to get our textbooks: buying from a bookstore, buying from other resources, renting them at a cheaper rate than buying them at Rider University."

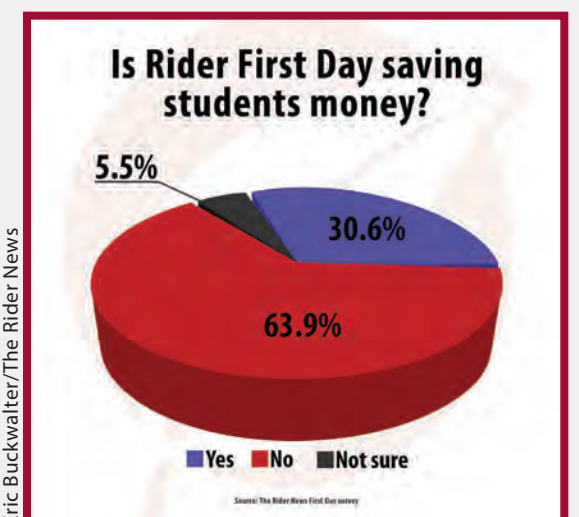
According to Carr, when SGA sent out the Aug. 7 email, the opt-out page on Barnes & Noble College's website crashed because so many students were withdrawing at once.

"I think there's really something there that's valuable," said Carr. "This was a missed opportunity for the administration to reach out to students and see what was of value to them, because students are the heart of the university. ... They weren't engaged with the student body and it shows."

During the staff and faculty convocation on

Aug. 31, Rider President Gregory Dell'Omo had the program listed as one of many "revenue enhancements," alongside things like the new student parking fee and Mercer County Community College housing program.

According to Dell'Omo, First Day is expected to bring in approximately \$150,000 in revenue during the 2024 fiscal year.



Eric Buckwalter/The Rider News

A majority of Rider students state that the "First Day Complete" program does not benefit them financially.

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Rider First Day

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“First Day allows students to get all of their course materials electronically through Barnes & Noble, which obviously increases the commissions for the university,” said Dell’Omo during the convocation. “This will also provide a convenience and a fair market value for the students.”

From Aug. 31 to Sept. 3, The Rider News conducted a survey that gauged the usefulness and standing of First Day among Rider’s student body.

Of 36 participants, 28 (77.8%) said they had already opted out of First Day. They were also asked if the program was benefiting them, with 23 students saying they were not saving money, 11 saying they were unsure and two saying they were.

Notably, there was an overlap in the data between students who are still enrolled in First Day, and students who don’t know how it is affecting them financially.

Participants were then asked to provide any thoughts they had on First Day; a few students said they were saving anywhere between \$200-300 on course materials, but the majority expressed negativity or apprehension toward the program.

“I think First Day is a scam,” said sophomore voice performance major Jacqueline Burkholder in the survey. “Rider is so desperate to wring us for every drop we have and this just seems like another one of those things, kind of like the new parking fees. I have been able to procure all of my textbooks for less than \$50.”

Barnes & Noble College claims that 79% of students believe First Day offered them more affordable course materials, and that 83% felt more prepared for their academic term.

“I was being charged \$368 for print and digital rental books through the program,” said sophomore arts and entertainment industries major Emma Zatkowski in the survey. “After opting out, I bought print copies of all my textbooks and rented one from the campus bookstore. The total was about \$150. Where was the extra \$200 they were charging me going?”

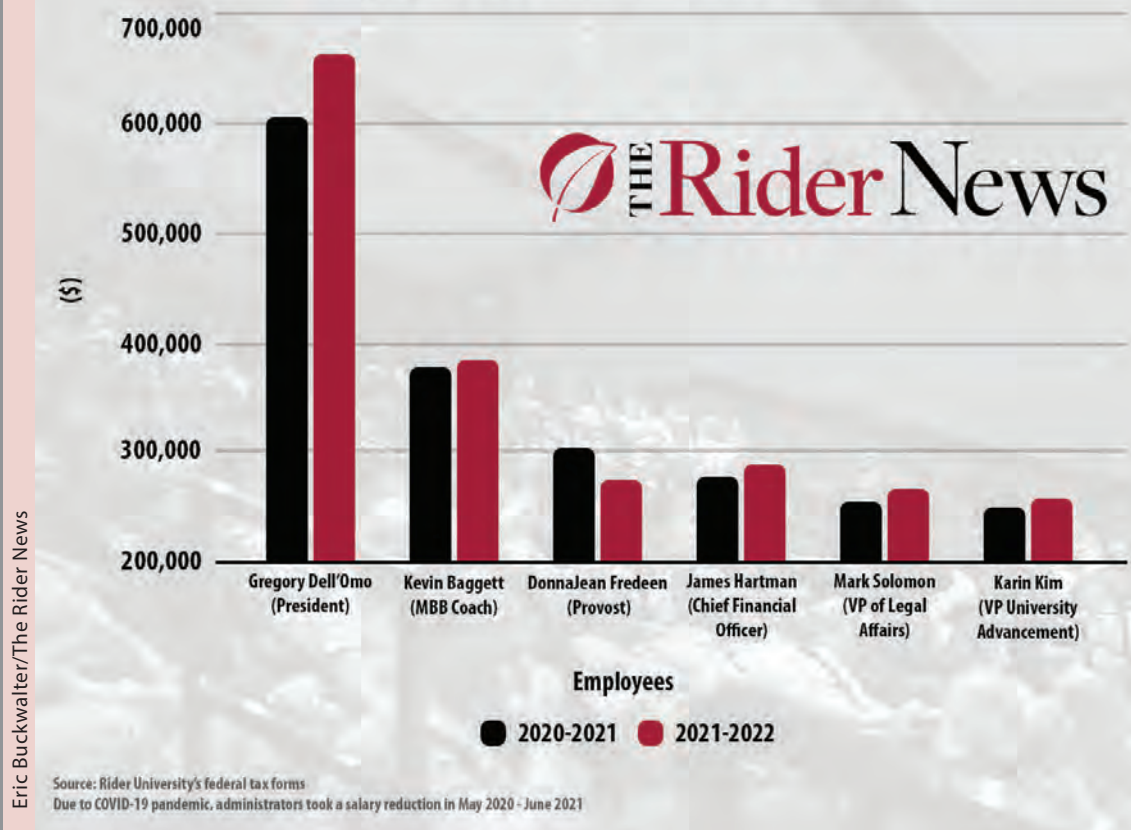
The dissonance between First Day’s message and student experience was documented in a study published in February 2020 by professors and librarians at the College of William & Mary that examined the affordability of course materials. The report includes an evaluation of First Day that found the program was not a viable option.

“We found no firm documentation of savings that might be realized,” the study claimed. “The program was viewed as merely shifting costs from students taking courses with high-cost materials to students in courses with lower-cost materials. As a result, for example, English majors would subsidize books for business or STEM majors.”

Students enrolled in First Day also receive additional discounts at the Rider Bookstore: 20% off school supplies, 10% off electronics (excluding laptops) and 10% off calculators, according to the bookstore.

The deadline to opt out of First Day is Sept. 19.

Annual salaries and benefits of Rider’s highest-paid employees in 2020-2021 and 2021-2022



Rider’s highest-earning employees based on its most recent federal tax form.

Tax form shows Rider’s spending habits

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\$302,597 in salary and benefits in the past year to \$273,093 in 2022.

The 2019 fiscal year saw over \$200,000 in administrative bonuses and incentive compensation, many of the heightened salaries facing slashes after the pandemic’s effects on financials.

Rider’s financial positioning

In a webinar to faculty and staff in July after announcing staff layoffs and university restructuring, Dell’Omo stressed that Rider’s financial position was “dangerously uncertain,” and hinted towards faculty layoffs.

Quinn Cunningham, president of the American Association of University Professors, said that the university recently asked for \$1 million back over the next two years from the union due to the ongoing financial crisis at Rider.

Cunningham said, “If we’re in that poor of a financial situation that you’re going to ask for give backs, [then] why is there enough money for increases?”

The tax forms specify where Rider spends the most money for university operations as well. Ellucian, an information technology company that

runs DegreeWorks and specializes in work with college campuses, was the highest expense, totaling \$1,723,354. The previous year, the company received \$1,466,544 from the university.

In addition to the money paid to Ellucian, the second-largest expense was 160over90, a marketing company which accounted for \$1,542,301.

In an interview with The Rider News last year, Brown said that although the number may be high, the company does acquire advertising for Rider.

The university also paid \$314,002 to Resource Management Group for “COVID-19 related services.”

Finances, enrollments shared at tense summer convocation

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expected \$650,000 revenue.

Savings were also found through changing employee wages and benefits; the elimination of over 30 positions saved \$2.5 million alone.

Additional measures included the faculty early retirement incentive, shifting medical claims projections and decreasing the employer match 403(b) pension plan in half to 2.5%.

The goal of this new initiative is to not only eliminate the school’s cash deficit, but to turn it into a net positive of \$5.3 million by FY2026.

Dell’Omo caveated that that FY2026 goal will come down if the university is able to secure additional borrowing funds.

Speech in the ‘public arena’

In light of the behaviors and actions of the AAUP, Dell’Omo made Rider’s public perception a critical

talking point at the end of his presentation.

“It’s okay to have differing opinions, ideas and ways to address our challenges,” Dell’Omo said, before condemning some of the speech he has seen and heard about Rider.

“It’s so frustrating, not to mention harmful, to see some of the rhetoric that gets put out there in the public arena about Rider,” he said firmly.

While so much revenue comes through student tuition, fees and housing, it is clear that there is a concern that the “irresponsible” and public nature of gripes, speculation and complaints about Rider being made in various forms will harm the school’s profits and future enrollment counts.

“Publicly disparaging this institution does nothing,” Dell’Omo said.

Jackie Incollingo is the faculty advisor of The Rider News. Incollingo had no participation in the writing or editing of this story due to a conflict of interest.



President Gregory Dell’Omo speaks at the convocation.

Kaitlyn D’Alessio/The Rider News



Kaitlyn D'Alessio/The Rider News

New crosswalk signs on campus.

Parking fees fund improvements

By Kaitlyn McCormick

ALMOST 90 spots have been reallocated to improve student parking with more changes to come after Rider implemented an unexpected parking fee for all students over the summer.

Mike Reca, Rider's vice president for facilities and university operations, said that the parking improvements made since the spring cost roughly \$60,000 for the 87 spots that were rededicated for student parking in order to help commuter and residential populations.

While he couldn't give specifics yet, Reca said even more projects are in the works to provide "more convenient parking to the residence halls."

In addition to these new spots, which reduced the size of the visitors lot on the South side of campus and utilized spaces in the administrative lot, other spots were re-striped and new signage has been added to various lots and crosswalks.

It was announced via email in June that students who plan on keeping a car on campus must pay either \$125 per semester or \$250 for an annual permit to park their rides. Previously, only freshman resident students had to worry about a parking fee, which was a one-time payment of \$300.

Many students and alumni took to social media to post their gripes about the new bill, especially those who had already paid their freshman year.

"Never been happier to have graduated. This is desperate and unfair," one user wrote in an Instagram comment on The Rider News's post about the increase.

"Rider better get it together," said another.

During the faculty and staff convocation on Aug. 31, University President Gregory Dell'Omo addressed the controversy of the new fee.

While he made the point that Rider was likely one of the last schools to implement a parking fee, Dell'Omo did say that they had been trying to put it off. Now, the implementation is expected to generate about \$550,000 in revenue for the university in fiscal year 2024.

The announcement email, sent by Vice President of Enrollment Management Drew Aromando, explained that the new fee was intended to fund improvements and maintenance to lots across campus.

According to Reca, these changes are expected to happen incrementally, with more upgrades being made each year, funded by the permits.

Permit fees were due on Sept. 1, but anyone who has yet to register their vehicle with public safety is urged to do so.

Faculty union continues their criticism

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Shortly after this statement, Dell'Omo's presentation concluded and the AAUP protestors exited the theater, propping up their signs on the door as they walked out. The signs remained there for the Q&A portion of the convocation.

"I think it's difficult to tell employees, who see the ship is sinking, to just be quiet and it'll all be fine," said Cunningham to The Rider News after the convocation. "I don't think anyone's at the point anymore of thinking that if we just sit quiet it'll all go away somehow."

Faculty layoffs became a real threat over the summer when Dell'Omo hosted a webinar for staff and faculty on July 27, in which he detailed his three-year recovery plan for Rider: "The Path Forward."

During the Zoom meeting, Dell'Omo described the university's financial situation as "dangerously uncertain," and as a result, he stated that smaller

programs could see cuts before the Oct. 31 deadline for faculty layoffs.

"In the higher education environment we find ourselves in, we no longer have the opportunity of continuing to offer every low-enrollment program simply on the basis of its individual academic value," said Dell'Omo during the webinar.

It wasn't until the weeks following Dell'Omo's summer presentation and "The Path Forward" was put in place that the administration reached out about the \$1 million cut, Cunningham said.

"If we're in that poor of a financial situation that you're gonna ask for give-backs, why is there enough money for [salary] increases?" asked Cunningham.

Jackie Incollingo is the faculty advisor of The Rider News. Incollingo had no participation in the writing or editing of this story due to a conflict of interest.

Rider names new CDO after DEI losses

By Amethyst Martinez

AFTER a summer of departures among diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) frontrunners at the university, multiple roles have been combined and given to one employee: Heeyoung Kim.

Kim, who has worked at the university since 2010 and serves as the director of the Teaching and Learning Center (TLC) in addition to being a professor at the university, will now be taking over two other DEI roles on top of her prior responsibilities.

This move, however, is unsurprising: Kim, who is now the chief diversity officer (CDO), has worked in similar roles since her beginning at Rider and currently teaches university employees about the importance of DEI.

Rider's community has been actively trying to catch up to other colleges in terms of DEI, from adding the CDO role in 2021, to a recently initiated Student Government Association president with a main focus on DEI.

Barbara Lawrence, the previous CDO, left the university in June, followed shortly after by Pamela Pruitt, executive director for the Center for Diversity and Inclusion (CDI), and Leanna Fenneberg, vice president of student affairs, who left in July.

Although Pruitt and Lawrence's departures were voluntary, Fenneberg's position was eliminated, according to Provost DonnaJean Fredeen. All three figures worked mostly on DEI issues, leaving a hole at the university in a list of top employees.

In an interview with The Rider News in June, Lawrence expressed concerns for the university's future in DEI after the departures.

"It is a tremendous loss for Rider right now," said Lawrence. "I think it speaks to where their real priority was with the diversity work, which wasn't what I think people thought."

In the same interview, Lawrence predicted that the role would be filled by someone already employed at Rider who they "feel more comfortable with."

Kim, who spoke with The Rider News on Aug. 31, believes, however, that she is prepared given her previous roles at Rider.

"I've been in the fabric of DEI for the past five years or six years," said Kim. "I feel like I have all the background now."

Fredeen said that, when looking to fill the CDO role, Kim felt like "the perfect person to put in place."

Kim said, "I feel confident that I have historical knowledge and experience of what we do with DEI work."

Kim also said that being a professor has

aided her in understanding what students need in terms of DEI, which has helped her when working with faculty.

"I believe that I have great, trusting relationships with many faculty members. So whenever you start a new job, or a new responsibility, building relationship is the first thing you have to do," said Kim. "I already have 1/3 of the big community [where] I built the relationship."

Kim's role at the university will now be a combination of Lawrence's old position, along with Pruitt's, whose main focus was the Center for Diversity and Inclusion. She will also continue to work as the director of the TLC and as a professor.

Currently, Kim and Fredeen are preparing for an evaluation of the university in September, where a DEI specialist will create a comprehensive assessment of the university's work over the past four years since the launch of Rider's inclusive excellence plan.

"We have over 75 pages of accomplishments," said Kim. "I just wanted to see that from an expert."

Kim said that the specialist will do their assessment, along with her own, in order to see where DEI can be strengthened at the university and what the next steps are.

"[They] can help me to create additional goals [that] maybe we haven't thought about," said Kim. "[But] I don't think that's the case."



Photo courtesy of Rider University

Rider's new Chief Diversity Officer, Heeyoung Kim.

From Rider graduate to Miss New Jersey

Photo courtesy of Victoria Mozitis



Miss New Jersey 2023 **Victoria Mozitis** poses for a photo while sporting her Miss New Jersey sash.

Photo courtesy of Victoria Mozitis



Mozitis smiles for the camera after winning the title of Miss New Jersey 2023.

By **Tristan E. M. Leach**

In a movie-like moment, Victoria Mozitis stood on stage at the Resorts Hotel Casino while her name was read out and the audience cheered. In her floor-length, red gown, Mozitis bowed as the crown was placed on her head. Mozitis was Miss New Jersey 2023.

Not too long ago, Mozitis was competing in her first competition. COVID-19 shut down the world of musical theater, Mozitis's passion and the major she had chosen to study while attending Rider. A family friend approached Mozitis's father to ask if she would be interested in joining a pageant that was looking for more young women.

"Theater was still closed and I was dying to perform and sing on a stage. There is a talent portion and that was something that really drew me to the organization. I did that one [competition] and I was hooked ... I've been there ever since. I just love what the organization [Miss New Jersey] stands for," said Mozitis.

Mozitis was a runner-up for her first pageant and that was the motivation to keep going. Her work and dedication paid off and she won Miss Gloucester County 2022. The win allowed her to compete for Miss New Jersey in 2022. Mozitis made it into the top 10 and in 2023 earned a ticket to compete again after being crowned Miss Cape Shores.

During her senior year, Mozitis juggled her classes, her work as a sister of Zeta Tau Alpha (ZTA),

preparing for the 2023 competition and her service project regarding literacy for Miss New Jersey, as all women competing must complete a service project to a cause of their choice.

Mozitis said, "Throughout the year, I put together certain service projects to strengthen that platform. I partnered with an organization called The African Library Project. They are an amazing organization that partners individuals in the United States with potential libraries and schools over in Africa. They paired with this teeny-tiny school in Uganda that wanted a library and I got the school [Rider] involved."

Mollie Brislin, a senior majoring in business administration, was Mozitis' sorority twin in ZTA and got to watch the process that Mozitis went through last school year.

"When you think of pageantry there's all these negative connotations because in the history of pageantry there've been some troublesome things. Seeing her [Mozitis] go through it and seeing how the Miss America organization has evolved was really cool," said Brislin. "It's so much more about what's on the inside and the type of person you are. It was really cool to watch that process."

Mozitis got her sisters involved and a community service project was born. A book drive was started and, with the donations from other members of Greek Life, over 700 books were collected and sent to the

school in Uganda.

"That was the biggest thing I've ever done and it was the biggest thing I'd done to strengthen that initiative," said Mozitis.

"At first it didn't feel real, but then we got pictures and comments back from the people in Uganda and that was a really rewarding experience. It was also cool to support Tori in something ... doing it [charity work] for someone else was cool," said Brislin.

Now Mozitis is preparing for the next leg of the competition: Miss America. While there is no set date or location for the pageant yet, Mozitis and her team are working hard to prepare her. However, for Mozitis, being Miss New Jersey isn't about getting to Miss America, it's about being an ambassador for New Jersey and role model for young girls.

"I'm excited to watch people see what we've been seeing for the last four years. I think people knowing her and seeing her will leave an impact on the state of New Jersey. If we could live in a world full of Tori's we would live in a really good world," Brislin said.

"[Miss America] has transformed into America's big sister and role model for young women and little girls in America. That's what I want to represent as Miss New Jersey," said Mozitis.

Hannah Newman is an editor for The Rider News and a sister of ZTA. Newman had no part in the writing or editing of this story.

Welcome back Broncs: a photo gallery

Kaitlyn D'Alessio/The Rider News



Students line up to get a sweet treat from Kona Ice at the Block Party.

Kaitlyn D'Alessio/The Rider News



A group of students bump around a volleyball at Broncapalooza.

Kaitlyn D'Alessio/The Rider News



Students participate in a game organized by 107.7 The Bronc at Broncapalooza.

Kaitlyn D'Alessio/The Rider News



The Block Party featured inflatable games for students and staff.

Freshman wins free tuition and a start to her business

By Hannah Newman

ALTHOUGH the pandemic felt like a step back from reality, freshman marketing major Brianna Bogos used the time to step forward in her career as she begins her first year as a Bronc with a full-tuition scholarship from the Norm Brodsky Business Concept Competition.

Her business entry, Find the Perfect Outfit, LLC, won the annual competition in which students compete to win a scholarship gifted by Norm Brodsky, Rider alum '64.

"Once you have a passion for something, I feel like you can make it what it is," said Bogos.

Find The Perfect Outfit, LLC, is a platform that provides looks for a variety of styles by showcasing a plethora of different businesses and the clothing they offer.

Viewers are able to make a wish list and follow their friends to see what styles, retailers and new releases are available.

Bogos collected her ideas to start the platform during the COVID-19 pandemic, a time where small businesses were suffering immensely.

"When I was 15 during COVID-19, I saw a lot of small businesses and fashion designers failing because they couldn't get their stuff out there," said Bogos.

After advertising the platform on social media sites

like TikTok and gaining around 20,000 followers, Bogos found herself overwhelmed by the opportunity to make her vision come true. Boutiques would send free merchandise in exchange for boosting their consumer rate.

Bogos was determined to turn stress into strategy by taking the successful outcome of a versatile fashion platform to an app that will make the content even easier to access.

"The website physically couldn't hold enough people and I couldn't handle it all myself," said Bogos. "I had the idea to create a social media app ... it's on your phone and it's more affiliate links, so I get much more money from that, and you can follow your friends, find fashion designers and just basically get styled by the app."

Bogos found herself unable to find the funds to produce the app and was convinced by her high school economics teacher to submit her idea to the Norm Brodsky Business Concept Competition.

"I didn't have the funds for it and nobody took me seriously because I was 17, and so that was a huge pushback," said Bogos.

Not only did Bogos win the contest, but the achievement allowed her to put her college savings into taking her business to the next level.

"It's actually been really hard for funding to be the

main issue. But since I won the competition, I don't have to pay for school anymore," said Bogos.

The app is currently in the process of being launched.

Sophomore accounting major and former winner of the Norm Brodsky Business Concept Competition Caitlin Hopkinson was inspired by Bogos' determination to bring her vision to life.

"I love her business idea and think it's very useful," said Hopkinson. "It's so inspiring that she is already running this business. I'm so excited for her to join everyone at Rider."

Although Brodsky does not take part in evaluating the winning entry, he is amazed by the current generation's ability to use technology to their advantage within the business world.

"Like every six months there is a whole turnover with platforms and technology and so I think that the younger people have a better opportunity. They're not stuck in the old way of doing things," said Brodsky. "Sometimes when you reach your 30s through your 80s, it's really hard to change your way of doing things. You have to have an open mind to do that. And so I am not surprised that the young people today sometimes have better ways of doing things, and they're always thinking about it."



Photo courtesy of Brianna Bogos

Freshman marketing major **Brianna Bogos** poses with roses at her high school graduation.



Photo courtesy of Brianna Bogos

Bogos stands with her dad next to the cranberry promise sign holding her certificate.



Photo courtesy of Brianna Bogos

Bogos poses for a photo in front of the Island Waterpark at Showboat banner.



The students and faculty at Moonshots and Moneymakers smile for a photo in front of a pop-up dining experience in Oxford.

The making of Moonshots and Moneymakers in Oxford

By Hannah Newman

THE annual Moonshots and Moneymakers conference gave 18 Rider students the opportunity to meet over 60 entrepreneurs at Oxford University in August 2023.

The conference was established during the COVID-19 pandemic when Norm Brodsky, Rider alum '64 refused to let this freeze period in life stop him from creating a difference in the world.

While adhering to COVID-19 restrictions, Brodsky would invite entrepreneurs to meetup on the balcony of his office in Williamsburg, Brooklyn, despite how cold it was outside.

The frigid weather prompted Brodsky to serve whiskey to warm everyone up.

After a time well spent together, they decided to make 'Whiskey Wednesday' a weekly occurrence and bring a friend or two each time they came.

Brodsky, who has a passion for helping entrepreneurs grow their businesses, knew that the weekly meetings needed a purpose. The first four people to attend the introductory meeting suggested bringing a friend of theirs who needed some business advice.

"A couple of guys brought a couple of friends and that's how 'Whiskey Wednesday' started. And as we met every week, people would come in and out and it would get bigger. I decided that we should have some sort of cause," said Brodsky.

Brodsky wanted to continue donating to those around him which was the point in time that helped people get on their feet.

"Word caught on that you can come up and pitch us, maybe get some money to start your business or help the business."

Brodsky assisted businesses such as Burning Man and also lent a hand in the growth of charity work including donations to Neighbors Helping Neighbors and the YMCA.

Before Moonshots and Moneymakers came to be, Brodsky still funded students to travel to England for a similar program but as his resources sharpened through the pandemic, he was determined to fine tune the opportunities made possible for those who attended.

As the tradition continued, Brodsky stumbled upon Nick Howard, who attended Oxford University and connected him to an office in Manhattan where he was able to develop a new program in St. Edmund, Oxford's oldest school.

"We brought about 35 entrepreneurs and we were limited to around 20 students. And this past year, we brought about 65 or 70 entrepreneurs," said Brodsky.

The Moonshots and Moneymakers conference gives students the chance to grasp the understanding of entrepreneurship through lectures, workshops and witnessing innovative start-up pitches.

"I was given perspective from the many entrepreneurs I made connections with," said sophomore global supply chain major Kyle Gerber. "Many explained to me how their journey was how they failed, but turned those failures into their success. A common theme was 'Follow what you want to do and there will be a space for it.' It's about finding the

right people to surround yourself with the doors that will open from there."

Some students were even offered internships during their one-week stay at the program.

"I was offered two internships which was great," said sophomore accounting major Caitlin Hopkinson. "One was with a woman named Mackey McNeill. She is a retired CPA [certified public accountant] and she does CFO [chief financial officer] coaching, helping businesses to prosper instead of just settling for profits. The other is with a woman named Erica Dobbs. She created her own defense solutions company, where they strive to deliver cybersecurity and analytics solutions to the government as well as commercial clients by using automation, innovation and training."

Brodsky continues to run Whiskey Wednesday even if he cannot attend every meetup along running America's largest annual gathering of private entrepreneurs, Inc. 5000 Master of Ceremonies.

"This Whiskey Wednesday has taken on a life of its own. It runs 52 weeks a year. When I'm not there, somebody else runs it," said Brodsky. "It's a hot ticket to get in. We get inundated with requests from charities and people who want to make pitches and it's been really interesting. It's created a whole new business for me."



18 Rider students pose with luggage in hand for a photo in the airport, ready to visit Oxford.



Students take a photo in front of the Radcliffe Camera in Oxford, England.

Ghost jobs, personality tests and more: job hunting after COVID-19

AFTER working at Dunkin' for two years, I was sick of the smell of burnt coffee beans, the taste of overcooked donuts and standing on moldy floors. I decided it was time for a new job, thinking I would get one rather quickly. Not only did it take over a month, but I applied to over 200 jobs and I only heard back from 10. I applied to retail, fast food, cleaning services, dog walking and so many more. I used ZipRecruiter, Indeed and LinkedIn throughout the process, and some of the employers reached out asking if I'm available for an interview, but when I responded with my availability, I never heard back. Every company said they were hiring; however, throughout the interviews, employers either forgot they had scheduled interviews or were late. One job offered me ten dollars an hour in cash. I would have gotten paid under the table and wouldn't have been receiving at least minimum wage in New Jersey.

An article by TIME, "You're Not Imagining It—Job Hunting Is Getting Worse," explained that since COVID-19, the hiring process now has even more steps—including many rounds of interviews, personality tests and the creation of "ghost jobs," which are positions employers never fill but help them instead gather possible future candidates for upcoming positions. Due to the pandemic, many people were laid off, and once it started to come to an end, employers needed to hire quickly so they made the applications uncomplicated. But now, with the fear of a recession, companies have made the applications strenuous.

Peter Cappelli, a management professor at The Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, explained that it's not just the economy changing the hiring process. He expressed that more people from higher positions within a company want to get involved in the process. The extra managers present during an interview doesn't mean the applicants are more qualified for the position, it in fact only adds extra time because, as he explains, many of them don't fully understand how it works.

"Companies who laid off human resources staff are now delegating interviewing and hiring to line managers who aren't familiar with the process," Cappelli said. "None of this means employers are getting better candidates, but it has lengthened the time it takes to hire."

A report was released in June by the Josh Bersin company and AMS, a workforce solutions firm stating, "The amount of time it takes to hire a new employee reached an all-time high of 44 days in early 2023." The report also concluded that it is not likely that the process will get any better in the future.

After I applied to numerous positions and went on many failed interviews, I was finally offered a job that I wanted, which made me so excited. However, I was ghosted by that company and one more after that. In my disappointment, I kept applying and I got another offer from Pandora. I have been working with Pandora for two months and it has been great. I love working in a healthy, friendly environment and I am so grateful my job search is finally over.

Felicia Roehm
junior journalism major



Eric Buckwalter/The Rider News

Companies like LinkedIn and ZipRecruiter assist those on the job hunt.

THE Rider News

Longstreet House, 2083 Lawrenceville Road, Lawrenceville, NJ 08648

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Photo courtesy of Wikimedia Commons

The job hunt has become increasingly difficult for workers after the COVID-19 pandemic.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Professor calls out contradictions at convocation

I WAS astonished to hear Rider's president say at the faculty and staff convocation that we have to work together whatever our differences. This is a man who has never worked together with anyone. He has operated through threats to extort concessions from the faculty. He has shoved a sham prioritization process down our throats against our loud objections. He has destroyed successful programs by unilaterally announcing eliminations that saved virtually no money in violation of every principle of shared governance. He has reduced our beloved choir college to a shadow of its former glory.

We told him that he would lose the lawsuit and that we would lose the land in Princeton, but he refused to listen. Now he is throwing good money after bad by pursuing a fruitless appeal. He has trashed the institution financially after repeated sacrifices from the faculty and now he comes to us asking for more concessions and threatening layoffs. At no point has he ever taken any responsibility for the disastrous consequences of his reckless actions, and he has continually blamed everyone else. Then he has the unmitigated gall to speak of "working together."

No. I will not work with him. I will not work with him to advance the continued destruction of the institution to which I have devoted my life. I will not work with him to pursue a path forward which leads over a cliff. Nor does it make any sense to try to talk or reason with him. At this point, I am just waiting for him to leave, because I don't think anything will get better until he does, and there is not much I can do in the meantime. Sadly, I speak with many faculty members every day who express this same sense of helplessness, but all I can do is to continue to do my job, to teach and inspire my students the best I can, in the midst of the perpetual disaster machine that Rider has become under this administration.

If Gregory Dell'Omo had one shred of integrity, one ounce of concern for this institution, then he would step aside for the good of that institution and let someone else lead to give us a new start. That is why I held a sign at the convocation asking the president to resign. I don't expect it to happen, but he will eventually leave, and I just hope we get better leadership next time. Then I will enthusiastically lend my hands and my heart to work together to rebuild this institution.

*Joel Feldman
philosophy professor*



Photo courtesy of Rider University

Professor Joel Feldman shares concerns after Dell'Omo's speech at the faculty and staff convocation.

SENIOR SIGHTINGS

Lost but not found: the horrific history of Indigenous trafficking

OVER the summer, there were many shocking news stories. From Hurricane Hilary, to the government holding a congressional hearing on aliens, there was no shortage to what a conversation could center around. However, too quickly, the news of a Native American girl being found in the barracks at Camp Pendleton in Oceanside, California, appeared to be overlooked. This may seem like another story of a missing child found, but the depth to the story is deeper than many of us acknowledge.

Let's start with some facts about the case. First, a 14-year-old girl ran away from home. According to Saved In America, an organization dedicated to helping families and law enforcement locate missing children, within the first 48 hours of a child running away, they will be approached by a trafficker. Second, the girl was reported missing on June 13 by her grandmother. Third, the girl was found in a Marine's barracks on June 28 in Camp Pendleton, one of the biggest Marine Corps bases in the United States.

The girl was allegedly bought from a trafficker by a Marine who is currently stationed at Camp Pendleton. It is unknown how the Marine managed to get the girl onto the base or how he was able to keep her from being discovered for so long. The Marine, an unidentified man, was initially allowed to return to his position after the girl was discovered. The girl alleges that the day before she was discovered, the Marine in question sexually assaulted her.

As of Aug. 17, the Marine was at a preliminary hearing where charges were read out and it is now in the hands of the Military Courts. The Marine is not exempt from being taken to civilian court on both state and federal levels and it is most likely he will be.

So, why is this case such a big deal? Children go missing, unfortunately, every day and luckily many of them are found every year. The same can not be said for Native American children, especially Native American girls.

According to Katie Couric Media, in 2020 alone, 5,295 Native American girls and women were reported missing. These numbers are, unfortunately, not surprising at all. Since the colonization of the United States of America, Native Americans have been treated as second class — having their land stolen, women being sexually assaulted and forced to marry the wealthy men who took their way of life and their children being taken from them.

Native American people began to work for those who had taken over their land to keep themselves alive in a society that did not care for them. In Canada in the 1830s, the first residential schools began to pop up. In the late 1860s, the schools, which were church-ran, made their way into the United States. Native American children were forcibly placed into these schools after being abducted by government officials.

Here, the children were punished for speaking their native language, forced to cut their hair and give up the way they dressed and taught how to be a "proper" member of society. On top of that, the Native children were taught that the religion they practiced was immoral and that they and their parents were evil.

Trafficking of Native American peoples, especially women and girls, can be traced back to the beginning of the America we all know today. This 14-year-old girl is one of the few who has been found, let alone found alive. This case is unique since she was discovered and the man who bought her is being brought to justice; however, for every missing child, this is not the case, most certainly for those over 5,000 missing Native American children and women.

*Tristan E. M. Leach
senior journalism major*



Photo courtesy of Wikimedia Commons

Native American students at a workshop at the U.S. Indian Industrial Training School.

MEN'S SOCCER

New men's soccer coach brings record of success

By Logan VanDine

AFTER 12 years and three Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference (MAAC) Championships under Charlie Inverso, Rider men's soccer now has a new leader in Head Coach Chad Duernberger.

Duernberger, who has coached three collegiate teams, is looking to prove to the Rider community that he can win.

Originally from Belle, West Virginia, Duernberger had visited New Jersey in the distant past, but when he came back several months ago, he knew this was the place for him to coach.

"I got [to New Jersey] in January when I first got the job and I love it here," said Duernberger. "My dad is originally from New York right outside of the city, so for me, we would always make trips here. He played college soccer as well and his teammates were from Point Pleasant Beach so we would come to Jersey quite a bit."

When Duernberger played soccer at the youth level and into high school and college, there was one position he enjoyed playing the most that helped him with his coaching style.

"I was a forward and I think it has definitely impacted my coaching," said Duernberger. "Everything we do is by attacks so we are an attacking-style soccer program."

When he played high school soccer at West Virginia, he compiled an incredible resume as he won his time winning the 2001 West Virginia High School State Forward of the Year and was named First Team All-State in three consecutive seasons.

"It was awesome, I really enjoyed my experience playing high school soccer, it's so different now for these kids. They're on club teams all season round so they can't even play for their high school teams. I really enjoyed my experience playing for my high school team," said Duernberger.

When it came time to pick the college where he'd play soccer, the University of Charleston in West Virginia, his parent's alma mater, was not a hard choice.

"My mom and dad both went to school there and I grew up about 15 minutes from there," said Duernberger. "I just loved the environment of the games as a high school student and that's where I wanted to go," he said. "I played there all four years and then went to Marshall to get my masters, and after that, the job opened up at Charleston."

Duernberger was also a head coach at Charleston for three years and an assistant coach at Penn State for seven years when he took over coaching both



Photo courtesy of Mark Selders/GOPUSports

Head Coach **Chad Duernberger** is looking to match the success he had during his days at Charleston and Penn State.

teams, he helped develop a winning culture.

When Duernberger inherited Charleston men's soccer, it had previously gone 0-17.

"[Charleston] took a chance on me," said Duernberger. "I was 24 years old at the time and there were players on the team that were 23. ... We finished that first season 4-11-2, and the next year we went 19-4 and went to the Elite 8 and finished seventh in the country."

When Duernberger was first an assistant coach of the Nittany Lions, he helped them win back-to-back Big Ten regular season titles, and coached them in two NCAA Tournament appearances.

Penn State also won the Big Ten in 2013, and when it entered the tournament, it advanced to the Sweet 16 after upsetting No. 10 UC Santa Barbara. Duernberger was later elevated to associate head coach in 2016.

After 10 seasons coaching for Charleston and Penn State, Duernberger caught the attention of Rider Athletic Director Don Harnum, who was searching for a new Rider men's soccer head coach.

"Coach Duernberger emerged as the leading candidate from a very strong pool of potential candidates," Harnum said in an email. "What separated him was that he had fortunate head coaching experience, as well as successful Division I experience as an assistant coach. His personal philosophy, core values and a clear vision of how he would run the men's soccer program also resonated during the interview process."

Senior forward Justin Ruffino also raved about Duernberger and spoke about his first impressions of

the journeyman head coach.

"My first impressions of Coach Duernberger have been very positive and trusting. I think coming in he created an environment and locker room that is extremely close and will go fight for each other on the field. So far, this has been the closest Rider team I have been a part of and it makes us all look forward to coming to training every day," Ruffino said.

Duernberger also doesn't feel any pressure in his first season coaching for the Broncos, and he also gave kudos to what Inverso did during his 12-year tenure at Rider.

"I don't feel any pressure," said Duernberger. "First I would tell you, hats off to Charlie [Inverso]. He was fantastic, Charlie is a great person, he helped me with this transition and told me to call him if I ever had a question. ... Overall I don't feel any pressure. I just want to instill all of our core values in the program. We talk about attitude, work ethic, competition and discipline. Those are our values and we go at those every single day."

When asked if he was given any advice by Inverso, there was one thing that he left in his now former office for Duernberger that stood out the most to the first-year Broncos head coach.

"To show his professionalism and how great of a guy he is, I walked into his office, which was his baby for 12 years," said Duernberger with a smile. "This was his program, and when I walked into his office all cleaned out, he left on note on my desk that said, 'Good luck, Chad.'"

FIELD HOCKEY

Broncs blanked by La Salle, fall to 1-3

By Logan VanDine

IN the midst of a five-game road trip to begin the season, Rider field hockey could not find the net against La Salle, as the Broncos dropped their third straight match after a 1-0 start to the Explorers.

The opening quarter was a sign of things to come for the Broncos, as the Explorers jumped out to a 1-0 with over seven minutes remaining in the first quarter, and a second La Salle goal gave the Explorers an early 2-0 lead.

The Explorers got some much needed insurance early in the third quarter as they notched another goal to make the score 3-0 and put the game away for good.

"I think we started off a little slow, but really started to connect and play together in the second half. We had a lot of scoring opportunities, but just couldn't get them to fall in and that was the difference in the game. We need to capitalize on our opportunities," first-year Head Coach Alicia Govannici said. "I felt everyone fought hard until the end despite being down and that is something we can definitely build upon."

The Broncos did have some opportunities to get back into the game, including a penalty stroke that they failed to convert. They also had five corners in the fourth quarter that generated shots, but not goals.

Ultimately, the Explorers outshot the Broncos 17-12, as well as outshooting them in the cage by a margin of 8-3.

Rider now moves to 1-3 on the season after an opening-day victory and despite the slow start to the season, Govannici still believes that her squad can turn things around.

"We are growing as a team and getting better every day," Govannici said optimistically. "We need to be able to play the full 60 minutes, communicate more in defense and finish in the circle with some goals."

The Broncos have one more road game on Sept. 8 against Drexel before they return to Ben Cohen Field for their home opener against Georgetown at 12 p.m. for Alumni Day.

The Drexel game begins at 5 p.m. and can be streamed on FloSports.



Brian Foley/Rider Athletics

Sophomore forward **Valeria Perales** cuts through the defense.

MEN'S SOCCER

Broncs kickoff season at 2-1; defeats SHU

By Trey Wright

AFTER a major coaching change highlighted Rider men's soccer's offseason, a new era began, winning two of their first three matches of the season, all while picking up new Head Coach Chad Duernberger's first pair of victories in the process.

"Our message to the players has been that we have to find ways to score goals in different ways," said Duernberger, who replaced previous Head Coach Charlie Inverso over the summer. "This includes buildup play, transition play and set pieces in order for us to be the best team we can be."

After falling to Seton Hall 1-0 in the season opener on Aug 24, but bouncing back with a 2-0 shutout over Saint Joseph's on Aug 28, the squad's

Senior forward **Justin Ruffino** moves past an encroaching defender.

next stop was Sacred Heart for a matchup with the Pioneers, crossing the halfway point through Rider's four-game road trip to open the 2023 campaign.

The action kicked off in the eighth minute, when a Pioneer corner kick led to a pair of scoring chances, but sophomore goalkeeper Adam Salama made key saves on both opportunities, the initial save being a diving block on the goal line to keep the game scoreless.

"After the first game I sat down with the coaches to go over both the good and bad from our previous game to make sure I improve for the next one," said Salama.

Salama was a big part of the Broncs' defensive effort in the first half, with the only three shots on goal coming from Sacred Heart. A close call came at the nineteenth minute mark, when a laser from outside the eighteen ricocheted off the crossbar.

Rider had issues entering the Pioneers' side of the pitch, having to wait until the 29th minute to record their first shot on the Sacred Heart keeper, entering the half deadlocked at 0-0.

"The boys were very frustrated at halftime. I simply told them to smile, stay positive," said Duernberger. "We are going to have games that don't go the way we hoped, I think we showed maturity tonight in finding a way to win when the game wasn't going our way."

The pep talk paid off almost immediately, as less than three minutes into the second half, freshman Saad Chaouki sent a beautiful corner into the box, where graduate student Ethan Shaw headed the shot into the net to put the Broncs on the board.

The duo struck again in the 68th, with Shaw

and Chaouki copy-pasting the connection from 21 minutes prior, another header off another corner to extend the Rider lead.

"I would love to keep getting on the score sheet from inside the box and contribute to our team's success," said Shaw, the St. John's graduate who transferred to Rider after four years with the Red Storm's program. "We have great players that can deliver a perfect ball and they are just as important to the win we got tonight as I am."

Rider held onto the shutout until the 88th minute, before Sacred Heart finally responded with a minute to go in the match. The Broncs were able to hold on though, topping Sacred Heart 2-1, the first pair of back-to-back wins for the team since the 2021 playoffs.

"We simply try to put the players in the best position possible to be successful both individually and collectively under our core values of attitude, work ethic, competition & discipline," said Duernberger. "I love these guys. They buy into believing in our brotherhood and the representation of doing it for Rider University is what I'm most proud of."

The match was not without a loss however, as Zaki Alibou was awarded a red card in the dying minutes of the match, being ineligible to play in the next.

The Broncs round out their road trip against NJIT on Sept. 8, before making their debut at Ben Cohen Field on Sept. 11 against UPenn.

WOMEN'S SOCCER

Rider stops slide, advances to 2-3-1

By Benjamin Shinault

AFTER an opening-round defeat by the hands of the Canisius Golden Eagles last season, Rider women's soccer wanted redemption.

The Broncs started their fresh 2023 campaign with a 2-3-1 record with a win against the Wagner Seahawks 1-0 back on Aug. 18, and their most recent win against the Delaware State Hornets on Sept. 3.

Outside of these two wins, the Broncs were scoreless during the young season.

The Broncs' three losses and tie came at the hands of Long Island, Temple, Seton Hall and Albany. For all those matches, the Broncs were shutout.

In the match against Albany, Rider struggled with keeping the ball in their offensive zone, as they finished the match with only three shots on goal and seven in total while they allowed the Albany Great Danes to score three times and get 15 shots in the second half alone.

After the Albany loss, Head Coach Drayson Hounsoume broke down what he told his team after yet another shutout loss.

"Goals determine the game and influence the game and so in that first period, if we can take advantage of some of our offensive opportunities we had, that completely changes the game," said Hounsoume.

It wasn't going to be easy to snap the scoreless streak, as the Broncs were playing in tough weather conditions in a mid-day match with temperatures exceeding 90 degrees Fahrenheit.

It took Rider until the second half to get the ball rolling offensively when sophomore midfielder Margret Fridricksson sailed one right past the diving hands of the Hornets goalkeeper to give her team the first goal of the match.

Less than 15 minutes later, the Broncs scored once more thanks to junior forward Logan Racine making the score 2-0 half way through the second half.

Graduate student forward **Chloe Fisher** splits the two Delaware State defenders.

The women's soccer team poured it on again as senior midfielder Hannah Freeman scored a goal as well, putting the Broncs up 3-0, showing Delaware State little to no mercy in the blistering heat.

"My legs are shot, but even though it's hot for us, it's hot for them too," said Freeman. "At the end of the day we had to work harder than them."

Hounsoume preached about what Freeman is capable of. "When she's on her game she's as good as an attacking midfielder that we have," Hounsoume said. "She really looked to attack today and that led to two quality goals."

The Hornets finally put one in the net in the 72nd minute just out of the reach of Broncs senior goalkeeper Ellie Sciancalepore.

The 4-1 win against Delaware State finally

brought the dreadful scoreless streak to a halt. "It was great to see us get on the scoresheet very early in the second half and I think that took a little weight off their shoulders," Hounsoume said.

The Broncs match against Delaware State was their final out-of-conference match for the season, and they now head into Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference (MAAC) play.

"[The] expectation is to make the conference playoffs and then compete for a conference championship," Hounsoume said.

Rider will take on the Marist Red Foxes at Ben Cohen Field on Sept. 9 at 7 p.m., hoping to build upon its past victory.

Sports

ONLINE

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BASEBALL

Broncs take the MAAC; earn historic NCAA win



Eric Buckwalter/The Rider News

The Broncs were crowned champions of the MAAC conference for the fourth time in program history and their second title in the last three seasons.

By Benjamin Shinault

WHEN the past school year came to a close and everyone packed up their bags and headed home, Rider baseball didn't: the Broncs were just getting started.

Rider had a mission to accomplish, and they did just that and more within the summer months, winning the Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference (MAAC) Conference and notching its first NCAA Tournament win since 1987.

MAAC Tournament

At the conclusion of the regular season, the Broncs finished with a record of 36-21 which planted them as the second seed in the Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference (MAAC) tournament, only behind Fairfield University.

In the MAAC tournament in Pomona, New York, the Broncs faced Quinnipiac and crushed them in a shutout win, 8-0.

Current graduate student first baseman Luke Lesch had a two-run home run in the fifth inning to send a jolt of energy into the Broncs' offense that ultimately gave them the win, landing them in the MAAC Championship game for the third consecutive year, this time facing top-seeded Fairfield.

The Broncs faced adversity in the first game against the Stags and Head Coach Barry Davis recalled the tough opening loss: "Losing game one in the championship round when you are one pitch away from winning ... was heartbreaking."

However, the loss did not deter the Broncs, as they came back and won the next game 18-4 to crown them MAAC Champions for the fourth time in program history, and second time in the last three seasons.

With the MAAC Championship belonging to the

Broncs, their next step was the NCAA Tournament. Rider was selected to play in the Conway Regional along with Duke, Coastal Carolina and North Carolina Wilmington.

Heading into the NCAA Tournament, the Broncs were prepared to play bigger baseball programs, as earlier in the season when they had beaten Duke and Oklahoma.

"We were confident entering the tournament," said Davis. "Winning the MAAC, beating Oklahoma and Duke during the year gave this team added confidence. ... We were ready."

NCAA Tournament

In the first game, Rider had to face the Coastal Carolina Chanticleers, who were ranked as the 10th best team in the nation, and the Broncs went toe to toe with them, engaging in a slugfest that included a combined 21 runs and 26 hits.

The Broncs were down by five runs in the fifth inning before exploding for nine runs in the seventh inning to give them the lead. The Broncs were able to hold on to the lead until the ninth inning, when the Chanticleers made things interesting and tied the game up at 9-9.

The game went into extra innings, and Rider was able to add two runs to give them the lead heading into the bottom of the tenth. With two outs and the bases loaded, Coastal Carolina was running on contact as a Chanticleer ripped one into center field, but junior outfielder Richie Sica made a spectacular, diving catch to pull off the historic upset in Rider's first game of the NCAA Tournament.

The next day, Sica's catch was shown on ESPN as SportsCenter's top play of the day.

Immediately after the breathtaking catch, the Broncs dugout was suddenly out on the field and

jumping with multitudes of joy and jubilation. "You could see the excitement on the field. Everyone was euphoric," said Davis. "It was a special time for this team."

The next game was a different story for Rider as they lost to Duke, 2-1. The Broncs were tied heading into the later stages of the game but the Blue Devils scored on a sacrifice fly in the top of the ninth and Rider could not equalize.

The next game the Broncs were scheduled to play was a rematch in loser's bracket against Coastal Carolina, and the Chanticleers got their revenge with a 13-5 win.

Heading into the NCAA Tournament, the last time the Broncs won a game in the tournament was in 1987.

With the Broncs getting the spotlight on the big stage, many Broncs from last season's team got opportunities to play for different programs, including outfielder Brendan O'Donnell, who holds the single-season home run record for the Broncs, infielder John Volpe, who came up huge at the plate multiple times in the MAAC Tournament, and starting pitcher Dylan Heine, who was one of the best pitchers in the MAAC last season.

Davis commented on the departures of some of his top producers from last season and what he is expecting from the new-look Broncs.

"It is a new team. It is hard to look into the crystal ball and predict how we will do," said Davis. "I am certain there will be storms to weather. It is how we handle them that will determine our fate."

Davis had a clear-vision in place for this upcoming season.

"Goal: get in the MAAC Tournament and I promise you we will be dangerous," Davis said.

RIDER VOLLEYBALL HOME OPENER

SEPT 6 @ 7 p.m.
ALUMNI GYM



CHECK OUT TRN'S COVERAGE OF RIDER VOLLEYBALL

