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THE Rider News

THE STUDENT NEWSPAPER OF THE RIDER COMMUNITY SINCE 1930

Vol. 94, No. 16

Wednesday, February 28, 2024

theridernews.com

Faculty assess validity of Rate My Professors

By Sarah F. Griffin

AFTER a long semester, many students share their frustrations and gratitude for course instructors with other students online on RateMyProfessors.com, a site that allows students to rate their professors in terms of quality and difficulty on a scale of one to five stars, disclose their grade and comment on their experience in the course.

The site tags professors with the most common descriptions used for them and their classes, like “group projects,” “caring” or “get ready to read.”

As of Feb. 27, Bosah Ebo, a communications professor, who has worked at Rider for the last 37 years, is rated 3.3 out of 5 on the site, which was calculated from 73 ratings. Some students that rated him called him a “tough grader” and a professor that assigns “lots of homework” and wrote that “participation matters” in his class.

“The way I look at it is that it’s individual. It’s students putting their thoughts, how they think and how they feel. That’s fine — everybody has the right to evaluate someone,” Ebo said on the scoring system, adding that he didn’t look at the scores as good or bad but rather as someone’s view of him.

Ebo compared the site to the evaluations that he gives his students through the grades they receive in his class.

“Evaluations are oftentimes subjective. As a professor who evaluates people’s work, I understand that evaluations are very individual,” said Ebo. “My colleague might look at my evaluation of a student and see them differently than I do.”

Rate My Professors, in Ebo’s eyes, is a “wonderful



Eric Buckwalter and Katie Cosentino/The Rider News

Professors are scored on RateMyProfessors.com by students who have taken their course.

thing” because it allows students to express their beliefs, adding, “However a professor chooses to look at it is irrelevant. The point is that it offers students a place to go and express themselves.”

In response to the opinion of some students on Rate My Professors that he is a tough grader, Ebo said, “I grade appropriately. I don’t think I’m a tough grader, but I can see someone saying that. In my view, if you do your work, you’re going to get a grade that reflects the work; if people do B work and expect an A, it’s not gonna happen.”

Ebo described his ideal student as someone who has a “commitment to improvement and a commitment to learning.”

As of Feb. 27, David Dewberry, a communications professor, has a 4.4 out of 5, calculated from 29 ratings on Rate My Professors. The adjectives used

SEE RATE PAGE 4

Black spirituality celebrated with music

By Jay Roberson

“GOSPEL Fest” returned with grace as the community was brought together by song, dance and spirituality at the annual celebration that closes out Black History Month at Rider.

Rider’s Chief Diversity Officer Heeyoung Kim opened up the event by defining gospel: “Gospel means a good story or good news. So I’m confident that we’re not going to let you down.”

Kim introduced the MC for the night, senior political science major and Student Government Association President Naa’san Carr.

Carr, who is also the president of Rider’s NAACP, led the attendees in prayer before moving into the song “Lift Every Voice and Sing,” better known as the “Black National Anthem,” originally written as a poem by NAACP leader James Weldon Johnson in 1900.

Freshman psychology major Aquila Kipp, who uses they/them pronouns, expressed their appreciation for events like these at Rider.

Kipp said, “I’m from Brooklyn, New York, so this is just what we do. My family hasn’t been going to church as much, but that’s why this feels at home.”

‘A lot of love’

Between each song, Center for Diversity and Inclusion student workers and leaders of Black organizations on campus presented information on Black history.

The chief of staff of the CDI, Jada Waddell, gave a brief history lesson on African American art and its wide-felt impact.

“Artistic and cultural movements such as the New Negro, Black arts, Black renaissance, hip-hop and afrofuturism have been led by people of African descent and set the standards for popular trends around the world,” said Waddell.

Keyonia Proctor, a local community member, took the stage to sing “The Windows of Heaven,” which lifted the audience to its feet to join her in singing.

Freshman psychology major Melody Juno admired the welcoming environment the event

SEE “GOSPEL” PAGE 2

Keyonia Proctor performs “The Windows of Heaven” in celebration of “Gospel Fest.”



Jay Roberson/The Rider News

Fredeen: provost, chemist, trailblazer

By Amethyst Martinez

MANY may know the university provost from her annual speech at graduation, or from her office in the library ground level covered with glass windows, giving her the ability to view students, faculty and staff walking by.

Maybe they have seen some of the work she has been a part of, such as diversity, equity and inclusion efforts or massive university restructuring.

DonnaJean Fredeen, however, may surprise those she meets for the first time, having an unmistakable Southern twang and a smile that never tires.

“I was always such a happy baby,” said Fredeen. “I laugh a lot. ... If we did not laugh, we would all go insane.”

Nestled in her office bookshelves are bunny figurines, wedding and family photos, awards and books, including “Friday Night Lights: A Town, A Team, and A Dream,” a story based on Permian High School, where Fredeen attended.

Permian is located in Odessa, Texas, an oil-reliant town where Fredeen grew up.

“When there was a big boom, then things were going great, and then when there was a bust, you saw things close down,” said Fredeen.

One of her favorite activities as a child was writing on the chalkboard and “playing teacher” — a path that she ended up going down.

A passion for chemistry

Her father, a medical technologist, first introduced her to the lab, where she grew to enjoy chemistry.

High school chemistry teachers Jerry Watts and Sam Meador encouraged her to continue her education in the male-dominated field, and Fredeen was doubtful she’d be able to pursue her career goals without their help.

After high school, Fredeen went on to attend McMurry College, now known as McMurry University.

At first, she thought that going into medical technology, like her father, was what she wanted to do.

However, a stark realization hit after her father asked why she was pursuing his passion and not her own.

“I thought he was so proud of the fact that I wanted to follow him in his footsteps,” said Fredeen. “I looked at him and said, ‘Well I really love working in the lab,’ ... he smiled at me and said ‘DonnaJean, you should be a chemistry major.’”

After that, Fredeen did internships in other labs and ended up being a chemistry major, just as her dad predicted. At the time, she didn’t think she wanted to teach.

She went on to pursue her Ph.D. in analytical/inorganic chemistry at

SEE GENDER PAGE 3



Maggie Kleiner/The Rider News

DonnaJean Fredeen shares the personal details of her life and how it led her to work at Rider.


INSIDE **BRONCS WIN THE MAAC YET AGAIN**
Rider indoor track and field wins third title in five years.
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REST IN PEACE
The public is furious after the devastating death of a nonbinary teen.
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SHINING LIGHT ON BLACK EXCELLENCE
Clinton Asante-Addo discusses his passion for business and helping people.
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SECURITY BRIEFS

BY MADISON LEWIS

Taking shortcuts

Rider racing. On Feb. 22 at 2:50 p.m., Public Safety saw a vehicle drive against traffic on the Campus Mall. The officer noted it was traveling at a speed above the posted speed limit of 15 mph. Public Safety located the vehicle and spoke to the driver, who reported that they were driving that way because they were running late. The incident was forwarded to the Office of Community Standards.

Campus disorientation

Crisis calls. On Feb. 23 at 9:34 a.m., Public Safety was approached by an older man asking for directions. The Public Safety officer noticed the person was bleeding and offered to help. The man refused, got into his vehicle and drove toward the back of campus. Public Safety then located his car near Olson Hall. Public Safety officers began speaking with the man and observed that he was disoriented and possibly having a medical crisis. Lawrence Township Police and EMS were requested to respond. The male refused to cooperate with Public Safety and drove his car into a Public Safety vehicle. Police and ambulance services arrived on location and brought the man to the hospital.

Injured athlete

Present paramedics. On Feb. 25 at 1:25 p.m., Public Safety was dispatched to the athletic fields for the report of an athlete who had sustained an injury. Public Safety arrived on scene and met with paramedics who had already been called to respond. A visiting athlete had sustained an injury and was transported to the hospital via ambulance.

-Information provided by Public Safety Capt. Matthew Babcock

The weight of waste during lunchtime at Daly's

By Grace Bertrand

As students finished up their lunch at Daly Dining Hall on Feb. 22 and headed to the trash corridor to throw away their leftover food, they were met at the doorway by three Eco Reps from Rider's BroncsGoGreen in aprons and gloves waiting to dispose of the plates' contents themselves.

"Weigh the Waste" is an annual event on campus in collaboration with a national waste-reduction competition called "Campus Race to Zero Waste," that tracks and records all the food waste accumulated during a 90-minute lunch period.

Students' food waste was collected and separated into different bins, labeled liquid, paper or solid and weighed at the end of the period.

During that time alone, 16 pounds of solid waste, 10 pounds of liquid waste and 6 pounds of paper waste from students' plates were accounted for.

"Sadly, it baffles me, but it doesn't anymore," said sophomore acting major Skyler O'Kelley. "As an Eco Rep, I see stuff like that all the time."

'Campus Race to Zero Waste'

"Campus Race to Zero Waste," abbreviated as CR2ZW and formerly known as "Recyclemania," is an eight-week friendly competition for universities across the country to promote waste reduction and encourage students to recycle more.

Over the eight-week period, colleges across the United States and Canada record and report the amount of trash and recycling collected every week and are then placed into a range of categories based on how much was recycled on a per capita basis.

Since 2001, CR2ZW has involved more than 1,000 colleges and universities by providing tools, resources and a little competitive incentive to motivate students and staff to increase recycling efforts and reduce waste generation.

Although Rider does not compete in the national campus competition, they promote education for students about the different waste streams happening in the world, on campus specifically.

"Weigh the Waste" is just a small part of Rider's participation in this year's campaign.

Similar to past years, Rider has focused on different types of waste reduction in the first three weeks of February: metals, paper cardboard and food waste.

Rider's Director of Sustainability, Melissa Greenberg, said, "It's not just about recycling. We use the campus race as a way to communicate with the Rider community about our various waste streams."

Efforts in waste reduction

Food waste reduction isn't new for the university.

Rider Dining has been active in a food waste reduction initiative of its own called the "Waste Not 2.0" program where it tracks and weighs how much food has been wasted by the end of the day such as food scraps, leftovers, expired foods and overproduction.

Rider Dining keeps track of how much food was made and collected by students in order to calculate how much it needs to make the next day.

The problem with this is that oftentimes, students take on more food than they can eat and end up disposing of most of it, which becomes unaccounted for in the production process.

Last year, Daly Dining Hall installed a SEED food waste biodigester manufactured by BioHitech, replacing a previous model that was installed in 2014.

The machine contributes to the university's overall sustainability efforts and its aspiration to become carbon neutral by 2050 by transforming food waste into gray water, allowing it to be safely discarded into the municipal sewage system.

In cooperation with Waste Management, Daly Dining Hall's workers collect and compost 90% of the food waste generated to create fertilizer and are able to recycle all fryer grease into biofuel.

Greenberg reports that with the new biodigester comes data collection capability, meaning she now has digital access to the statistics of food waste put in the machine over any time frame.

With this new addition, the new biodigester has been more than successful in recording and diverting as many as 500 pounds of food waste from ending up at landfills per day.

As of Feb. 23, the biodigester has collected 6,797 pounds of food waste just this month, with 75,975 pounds of food waste in the last year.

Referring to the event, O'Kelley said, "I want people to be aware of their food consumption and just how



Grace Bertrand/The Rider News

Skyler O'Kelley separates waste into liquid, paper and solid during the lunch period.

much food goes to waste, because we had 16 pounds of solid food waste in just an hour. Daly's is open almost 12 hours a day every day."

Finishing the race

For the past 11 years, the university has been named one of the nation's most environmentally responsible colleges by The Princeton Review and is consistently recognized for its sustainability efforts.

However, according to Greenberg, when it comes to Rider's race to zero waste, there is still much more to be done.

"We need to make sure that the students coming into our dining facilities are educated year after year because there was turnover," Greenberg said. "There's always a constant cycle of people that need to be informed."

On pace to meet its sustainability goal, Rider continues its initiatives led by its energy master plan that first established the vision for its green efforts in 2008.

Greenberg hopes to host more events like "Weigh to Waste" in the future and encourages students to be mindful of the amount of food waste they are responsible for in their daily lives.

"I don't think anybody has to uproot and change their lifestyle," Greenberg said. "But I think that people can make small, reasonable changes in some aspects of their lives."

'Gospel Fest' returns to Rider with new and old performers

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environment that the event created for the Rider community.

"There's just a lot of love that people are showing. It just felt like a really nice environment," said Juno.

Rider Black Student Union President Kayla McIntyre spoke about how spirituality is rooted in many Black Americans' lives.

"Belief in God, regular prayer, worship attendance and belief in life after death are some of the core

beliefs of a large majority of African Americans," said McIntyre. "Enslaved Africans were exposed to the literature of the Christian Bible and they found comfort and direction in the same book that was used to justify their enslavement."

Maranda Curtis, a member of the local community, brought a different display to Gospel Fest and performed a flag dance to "The Lord's Song."

Gospel's origins

The president of Rider's chapter of Black Men Unified, Shawnaeja DeWitt, educated the audience on the origins of gospel music, which was once rejected but is widely celebrated today.

"Singers like Aretha Franklin had introduced gospel style songs to the pop charts with songs like 'Think' in 1968," said DeWitt. "Church-centric gospel music began to cross over into the mainstream following the

release in 1969 recording of 'Oh Happy Day' by The Edwin Hawkins Singers."

Samuel Frisby, who performed at last year's "Gospel Fest," returned this year and sang "More Than Anything" by Lamar Campbell and "How Great is Our God" by Chris Tomlin accompanied by the piano.

To close out the night he gave a rousing performance of "Total Praise" by Richard Smallwood which moved the audience to join along in song.

Kipp explained the ending stood out to them and said, "My mom used to be in a choir and they used to sing this song. It really brought me back to that, it was a really odd experience. It felt like a time machine, it was awesome," said Kipp.

"Gospel Fest" not only served as a way for the community to get together and rejoice in song, but also as a Black history lesson to send off Black History Month at Rider.



Jay Roberson/The Rider News

Samuel Frisby leads the last three songs to end "Gospel Fest."

An evening with Rep. Gottheimer

By Julia Train

CONGRESSMAN Josh Gottheimer stood at the front of about 80 people in Lynch Adler Hall 202 with a grande Starbucks drink in one hand and a microphone in the other.

After Eden Nadella, a freshman political science major, introduced the representative with a brief biography, Gottheimer began speaking about his journey to where he is today.

"If you're afraid because you want everyone to love you every hour of every day, you'll never get anything done. You've got to take some risks," said Gottheimer during his Rider visit on Feb. 21.

Gottheimer, who represents New Jersey's 5th District, believes in fighting hard for what he believes in and stated he'd be "willing to take or throw a punch."

The representative was first sworn in on Jan. 3, 2017, and is now in his fourth term in office, serving on two committees, including the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence and the House Financial Services Committee. He is also co-chair of the high-profile Problem Solvers Caucus.

The congressman spent the evening fielding questions from Rider students, alumni, faculty and community members from the surrounding Lawrenceville area.

Micah Rasmussen, director of the Rebovich Institute for New Jersey Politics, stood on the right, asking the questions attendees wrote on cards and handed to him, while Gottheimer walked around the podium on the left, standing mostly in the center, closer to students.

Problem Solvers Caucus

Attention was focused on the congressman as he spoke about a variety of topics ranging from social media tactics amongst politicians and fundraising to enemy countries and combating hate. Every answer was simply explained with jokes intertwined.

Most of what he talked about were subjects relating to his work on the Problem Solvers Caucus, of which he is a co-chair.

The caucus promotes common sense over extremism and works across party lines on key issues such as lowering taxes, protecting the environment, affordable healthcare and national security, among others.



Rep. **Josh Gottheimer** is co-chair of the Problem Solvers Caucus, where he works to "olve the state's key issues with "commonsense over extremism."

According to its website, the caucus' aim is "to create a durable bloc that champions ideas that appeal to a broad spectrum of the American people. It is a group united in the idea that there are common sense solutions to many of the country's toughest challenges."

Some solutions the caucus created were to problems like COVID-19 recovery and contingency planning, infrastructure, health care, immigration, criminal justice reform and gun and school safety.

One of the principal issues he is working to tackle is getting residents to stay in New Jersey by working on the state's affordability.

In order to accomplish this, Gottheimer said he is constantly trying to bring back as much money to the state from the federal government as possible, as well as more jobs, which he said will create more revenue and lower the taxes in New Jersey.

Gottheimer mentioned that even when others in the caucus disagree, they're still able to work cordially with each other because it's the only way to legislate and get things done.

Gottheimer worked at the White House after college, writing President Bill Clinton's speeches as one of the youngest presidential speechwriters in history.

After leaving the White House, he worked at the Ford Motor Company, was a senior adviser to the chair of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, published the book "Ripples of Hope: Great American Civil Rights Speeches" and served as senior counselor to the chairman at the Federal Communications Commission.

Rasmussen kicked off the evening in a peculiar manner, using the famous saying, "What happens in Vegas stays in Vegas."

Before the congressman arrived on campus, his press secretary asked to keep his speech off the record, a typical tactic the politician uses when visiting schools and public forums.

"Generally, any kind of these conversations, it's better if you can be more free flowing," Gottheimer said to The Rider News after the event. "What happens if I'm fully on the record, then I'll just be less relaxed because I'll be worried that every word could be taken out of context."

In order for a speech to be off the record, both parties have to agree. In addition, Rider University's Media Access Policy affirms a presumption of openness and states that there is no expectation of privacy or anonymity at university group events. In keeping with journalism ethics and the university's media policy, The Rider News continued to cover Gottheimer's speech, despite his request.



Congressman **Josh Gottheimer** poses with students after the event.

Gender discrimination in the chemistry industry

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Texas A&M in 2004, 2005, and a friend of mine who was working there ... said it was still very pervasive throughout the chemistry department at that time."

Despite that, Fredeen pressed on and proved her professor wrong.

After marrying her husband and beginning her job search, she scored a job interview for a position in mass spectrometry force, something she didn't have much experience in.

She stopped the interview, told the interviewer she didn't want to waste his time, and ran out to her husband, who was waiting for her.

"I just looked at him, and I said 'I don't want to do this. I want to go into academics, and I want to go to an institution where the focus is on teaching,'" she said.

From drawing on blackboards as a child to beginning her career in higher education, it couldn't have been more of a full circle moment for the provost.

University work

After Fredeen realized that she was meant to teach, she found a job as a professor at the University of Bridgeport, but frequently faced gender-related discrimination.

"I was the only woman in the department," said

Fredeen. "I didn't even understand the stress that this job was putting on me, but it really was the environment."

After a position opened up at Southern Connecticut State University, she took the opportunity to leave.

"Again, only woman. Again, 25 years younger than the men in the department. But I would also say, those seven men all wanted me to succeed," she said.

The university was looking to hire a woman in the chemistry department due to changing demographics in the classes of general chemistry.

"They had the vision: 'We've got to have a woman standing in front of them, we need to convince these young women they too can become us,'" said Fredeen.

After moving her way up from assistant professor, to professor, to chairperson of the entire department, to eventually the dean of the School of Arts and Sciences, Fredeen finally found a place that took her seriously as a woman in chemistry.

"I knew I wanted to get into administration, [but] I didn't think at that point in my life: more so 10 years down the road," she said. "I had an impact on our students' education that would really set them up for success as lifelong learners."

During her time teaching, she also wrote a book, "Study Guide to Accompany McMurry and Fay's General Chemistry," which is now in its sixth edition.

In 2013, Fredeen made her way to Rider, where

she became the university provost, one of the highest positions at the university.

Rob Stoto, Rider's vice president of human resources, said that Fredeen comes from "the highest integrity."

"I think the world of her: as a colleague, as a provost and for the hats she wear," said Stoto.

She has won plenty of awards in her time as an educator, such as the "Distinguished Former Odessian" award that sits upon her bookshelf, or the "Academy of Distinguished Former Students in the College of Science at Texas A&M," from her alma mater in Texas, a state she worries deeply about.

"I would not want to live there now," said Fredeen. "And I certainly would not want to be part of the higher education system in that state because I think they are really attacking academic freedom."

Although she worries what's happening in Texas could spread to the entire country, Fredeen remains committed to her job at Rider. The proof is there, with two of her children even graduating from the university.

"I believe very, very strongly in the power of higher ed," said Fredeen. "Despite what everybody is thinking and questioning about higher education today, it is what is going to allow us to maintain our impact not only on everybody in this country, but around the world."

Professor publishes book based on her business

By Hannah Newman

WHETHER it's writing Marvel Comics or strengthening the power of self-development, Eisner-Award-winning author and communication professor Sheena Howard has completed every project with a passion to challenge societal norms.

Howard expanded her experience in building a name outside the world of academics with her newly published book, "Academic Branding," that shares written guidance on how to increase visibility, authority and income without the expense of a publicist particular to higher level education degrees.

"I don't want my research to just be in the basement of college libraries, I want it to impact regular people who do not have the privilege to obtain a Ph.D.," said Howard.

She has been building an incentive to write "Academic Branding" since she began her Ph.D for communications in 2007.

"Academic Branding" is the written version of Howard's business, Power Your Research, a platform that works with tenured professors who are looking to broaden the power behind their name as a professional without the financial burden of hiring a publicist.

"Building your brand is entrepreneurship, and entrepreneurship in a lot of ways is the exact opposite of what they teach in school," said Howard. "I can talk to students in a different way, I can bring my experience into the classroom."

Howard had mentioned that using class topics in her career is the best way to show students that what they are learning can help them outside of the classroom. Howard used the diffusion of innovation theory, a component of a communications course to show students that the theory can help them build a brand.

Technological advancements travel through society and cultures, as an example of how she applied a concept from the classroom to another career.

"I am not just giving my students theoretical examples," said Howard. "I'm showing them that I've used communication-based theories to build a business, which is invaluable."

Freshman psychology major Adrienne Bishop, who is a student of Howard, said her lessons go beyond curriculum.

"Howard's reputation as this powerhouse academic is really translatable into the classroom," said Bishop. "The lectures she gives don't feel like lectures, they feel like a conversation."

Howard began Power Your Research in 2020 during the peak of COVID-19, when Rider began to lay off teachers, which led her to take action in pursuit of a sustainable career.

"I have a young son, so I thought, 'What could I create that I wouldn't need to leave my house to run and would make me some money?'" she said. "I spoke to my accountant and he said, 'The way to make money is to do what you're good at and not what you love,' which is the exact opposite of the era we live in."

Howard knew as a single mother that entrepreneurship would return as much support as she dedicated herself to the building process.

After testing out the program on a few clients who provided



Photo courtesy of Sheena Howard

Professor **Sheena Howard** previously wrote an eight-page story in "Marvel's Voices: Wakanda Forever," which was published in February 2023.

feedback on the quality of the service, Howard was able to transform the approach into a business.

"Most of us have creative things we want to do outside the confines of a classroom," said Howard.

Whether it's writing a comic or pushing herself to the next level, Howard has kept passion in her pocket, making success for herself and others a part of what she wears daily.

"Your work has a higher purpose, you just need a roadmap," said Howard, a sentiment displayed on the Power Your Research website.

Rate My Professors review reactions

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to describe him most often are "hilarious," "gives good feedback," "tough grader," "lecture heavy" and "participation matters."

Dewberry said he hasn't checked his rating on Rate My Professors in a while.

"I don't remember when the last time I checked it was. I haven't checked it in quite some time — I'd say maybe 2015."

Dewberry said he didn't have a strong opinion about his current score and doesn't "put much value in it."

Dewberry added he doesn't tell jokes to make class more fun, but to "make class tolerable" when the material could get dry, and he encourages people to participate because "it's boring to hear yourself talk so much."

As for new professors who want to make a positive first impression, Dewberry said they should "Remember what it was like to be a student ... treat students how you wish you had been treated."

William Totaro, an accounting professor, has a 4.9 on Rate My Professors, which he attributes to how he treats his students.

"If I'm a student and I'm motivated ... and the class made me comfortable about the arena I'm about to enter, then I would be happier if I could share the information about how the professor made [me] feel," said Totaro.

While he doesn't habitually check his rating on the site, some of his close family members have brought it up to him.

"My daughters look at it," said Totaro. "They said, 'Did you know that you were on this?' and I said 'Yes.' One of my daughters said, 'They think pretty highly of you.'" He described accounting students as "all over-achievers," and said good students "show up on time, do what [they] say [they're] going to do and say please and thank you."

 **Rider News**

CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE!



Rider Student Theater Company to present original student work

By Marissa Spencer

THE Rider Student Theatre Company will present “Coffee Hour Cabaret,” a one-night-only event on March 3 at 9 p.m. in the Spitz Theater of the Fine Arts Building. Blending the sights and sounds of a cozy cafe, “Coffee Hour Cabaret” is the second student-run cabaret of the season with an original script written by junior musical theater major Mya Bodnick.

Bodnick and junior musical theater major Lydia Diekmann have embarked on their dual directorial debut, conducting a cast of 15 musical theater majors.

The duo is no stranger to the stage, as prior assistant directorial credits include working under some of Rider’s faculty, including T. Oliver Reid and Ryanne Domingues.

Diekmann recalled her time assistant directing Rider’s 2022 production of “Pride and Prejudice,” where Domingues fostered her desire to direct by

teaching her “how to speak to the actors ... and what looks good on a stage,” she said.

“There’s a lot of risks and decision making that comes along with directing ... you really just have to trust your instincts and go,” Bodnick said, detailing her first non-assistant directing job.

Bodnick said she drew the concept of the show from a dream, contributed by the influence of her family’s travels.

“There’s a definite love for coffee in my family,” she said. “Wherever we go we always try to visit the local coffee factory, farm or cafe.”

As the rehearsal process is underway and actors are prepping for this weekend’s show, the two directors are collaborating to bring the heartfelt production to the student body.

Bodnick and Diekmann met prior to attending Rider on a pre-college Zoom call in 2021 where Diekmann recalled thinking, “I have a feeling this girl and I are going to become close friends.”

“From the minute I met her online, I knew that we had like minds,” said Diekmann.

Other team members include junior musical theater major Breanna Lemerise as the music director and sophomore Peyton Divirgilio, who is stage managing the production.

“It’s been an awesome experience ... it’s taught me so much about leadership and creativity,” said Bodnick. “I wrote the script, which ties all the songs together. I love to write.”

Bodnick describes the production as having a “jukebox musical feel,” meaning familiar songs with unfamiliar situations.

“The actors have such great chemistry with each other,” said Diekmann.

While “Coffee Hour Cabaret” is sold out, the waitlist has remaining spots for potential admissions.



Photo courtesy of Louis Danowsky

Sophomore **Sadie Patton** (left) watches as senior **Thomas Higgins** (right) sings to senior **Ricky Cardenas**.



Photo courtesy of Louis Danowsky

Sophomore **Sterling Hart** (left), sophomore **Sadie Patton** (center) and freshman **Maddie McKenna** (right), all musical theater majors, rehearse their number for “Coffee Hour Cabaret.”

ADVERTISEMENT

Spectrum Soirée
Presents

Starry Night

March 22nd
7:00pm-11:00pm
BLC Cavalla Rm

Photo courtesy of Cynthia Lucia



Jay Stern (far right), a media arts professor, moderated student screenplay readings during last year's film symposium.

The annual film symposium features filmmaker Ross McElwee

By Hannah Newman

THE university community can come see Rider's annual film symposium, entitled, "Real Life, Reel Representation: The Art and Politics of Nonfiction Film," Feb. 28 and 29 in the Rue Auditorium.

Since 2007, the film department has held a two-day symposium that analyzes different areas of film. The program allows film students to explore their passions and create a more distinct film presence on campus.

Cynthia Lucia, a professor of media arts, said, "The purpose of the symposium is to create a vibrant film culture on campus and provide a more public forum for our students in presenting their own work."

In addition to enhancing the opportunities for film students to be exposed to the industry, the symposium brings together cutting-edge professionals.

During the afternoon and evening hours of Feb. 28, student panels will be held, giving those the chance to display their passions for certain films.

The night will feature film scholar Barry Keith Grant via Zoom. Grant is an expert in documentary film studies, specifically his work about Frederick Wiseman, who is now 94 years old and known for his observational cinema.

Observational cinema is the art of placing viewers within a scene without any interventions or written titles. Wiseman takes his camera into institutions and observes how power is negotiated. A well-known film of his is "High School," a documentary from 1968 that shows the life of Northeast High School in Philadelphia from an eye in the sky perspective showing how teachers interact with students.

Lucia has played the film in her classes due to its organic creativity and the pivotal time period it was made.

"At that point America was involved in the Vietnam War and many young men at the graduating point of

high school were drafted to serve," said Lucia.

Feb. 29 at 11:30 a.m., a faculty forum will be held with presentations from professors Barry Janes, Jay Stern, Robin Rusciano and Cynthia Lucia.

Feb. 29 will have a special in-person guest: award-winning filmmaker Ross McElwee, who has won many awards in the industry, such as the 2005 Independent Spirit Award for Best Documentary, the 2006 News & Documentary Emmy Award for Outstanding Individual Achievement in Writing, a nomination for the Cannes Armed Forces Communications and Electronics Association (AFCAE) Award.

Junior film and television major Nat Kapustin said, "I personally have questions for McElwee about what we've watched in class."

McElwee will be showcasing his latest projects to students to heighten their ambition to work in the film industry.

UPCOMING EVENTS

FEBRUARY

29

THURSDAY

Cranberry's Patio
11 a.m.

Swap Shop
Office Of Sustainability

MARCH

1

FRIDAY

Mercer Room
6 p.m.

MURDER MYSTERY
Masquerade

MARCH

1

FRIDAY

Ben Cohen Field
3 p.m.

RIDER LACROSSE
vs. OREGON

MARCH

2

SATURDAY

BLC Theater
7 p.m.

RIDER DANCES
Dance Department

Tristan E. M. Leach and Eric Buckwalter/The Rider News

Shining Light on Black Excellence: Clinton Asante-Addo

By **Tristan E. M. Leach**

AS senior digital marketing major Clinton Asante-Addo sits at a table in Sweigart Hall, nearly every student who passes by greets him. With a friendly smile and bright, inquisitive eyes, Asante-Addo waves back, asking each how they are and what they've been up to. These qualities are the bow on the package that is Asante-Addo and his passion for helping others.

From a young age, Asante-Addo had a passion for business. Growing up he was surrounded by healthcare professionals but quickly decided that the field wasn't for him.

In middle school he resold sneakers. His success at this feat ignited a flame that hasn't gone out since.

Originally majoring in business administration, Asante-Addo wasn't sure what he wanted to pursue when it came to business and the many facets that come with it. After taking a class that taught how social media and digital marketing are tied, Asante-Addo decided to switch majors.

"I liked the idea of marketing, but I wanted to get more specific," said Asante-Addo. "Digital marketing is a newer thing in a lot of industries and something companies are looking for ... it's a newer field, so it means that it is in demand."

Digital marketing combined Asante-Addo's passion for helping people and his love of business. By choosing a newer field in the business world, Asante-Addo has made himself an in-demand worker with skills that are invaluable in the ever-changing world of business.

"[Digital marketing] keeps you on your feet. A lot of times people change, things change. So you always have to think of ways to innovate and make your company stand out from others," said Asante-Addo.

If there's one thing Asante-Addo knows how to do, it's stand out. To further his education in the business world, he became a brother of Delta Sigma Phi, the co-ed business fraternity at Rider. Asante-Addo was inspired to join after a brother came to one of his classes to talk about what DSP does and the benefits that come with being in the fraternity.



Photo courtesy of Clinton Asante-Addo

Senior digital marketing major **Clinton Asante-Addo** is currently an intern with Capital Health.

Asante-Addo became a member in the spring of his sophomore year. Since then, he has held several leadership positions in DSP, including vice president of alumni relations, fundraising chair and his current role as vice president of pledge education. Asante-Addo praised DSP for what the organization has taught him and shared that the organization has given him confidence and allowed him to become a well-rounded professional.

Lauren Turnbull, a junior finance major, is the current president of DSP and has known Asante-Addo since the two rushed the fraternity together. Since becoming brothers, the two have worked together in close capacity, attending events, recruiting potential new members and, in their current positions, working to ensure that the fraternity and its new members thrive.

Turnbull said, "Clinton and I work closely to facilitate the education process for our new pledges hoping to become brothers. [Vice president of pledge education] is one of the more important roles after the recruitment process is over because it prepares the potential new members for becoming brothers and being accepted into the fraternity."

This role has been a sweet spot for Asante-Addo. Helping others is what his work both professionally and academically comes down to. Currently, Asante-Addo has an internship with Capital Health. He runs the social media and works on the website for the Capital Health Trenton region. On campus, he is a tour guide and was recently promoted to manager on duty at the Student Recreation Center.

In May he will graduate, but Asante-Addo will return to Rider to get his Master of Business Administration and hopes to find a full-time position with Capital Health.

After receiving his master's, Asante-Addo hopes to pursue work in several areas that interest him, including getting his license in real estate and someday becoming a professor of digital marketing.

Until then, Asante-Addo is committed to his brothers, his internship and, most importantly, to fanning the flame of passion that is business and digital marketing.

This article is a part of the Shining Light on Black Excellence series by The Rider News to showcase impactful Black figures on campus for Black History Month.



Photo courtesy of Zachary Fernandez

Clinton Asante-Addo (far left) poses with the brothers of Delta Sigma Phi, the co-ed business fraternity on Rider's campus.

The devastating death of a nonbinary teen

COMING out as nonbinary was one the biggest steps I have taken as a queer person. I have been lucky enough to live in states that are safe for transgender and nonbinary people: New Jersey and California. However, I am very aware that every day, transgender and nonbinary people across the country are not fortunate in the ways I am.

I was reminded of this thought while scrolling through Instagram. I saw a post from Impact, a social media news outlet that reports on issues related to climate change, queer politics and more. The headline on the first slide read as follows: "A nonbinary 16-year-old is dead after being attacked in the bathroom of their Oklahoma high school." I felt a sickness settle in the pit of my stomach as I took in the words. Under the headline, a curly-haired, bespectacled teenager smiled up at me.

Their name: Nex Benedict.

In Oklahoma, laws prohibit transgender and nonbinary people from using the bathroom that they are most comfortable in. This means that Nex Benedict had to use the girls' bathroom while in school. Not only does this law discriminate against transgender and nonbinary individuals, it also opens up the door for potential danger to those individuals. This was, unfortunately, the case for Nex Benedict.

Nex Benedict, who used they/them pronouns, was brutally beaten in the girls' bathroom by three older students, resulting in injuries including head and brain trauma. Nex Benedict died the following day, and the cause of death is under investigation. The horror did not end with the beating. Nex Benedict's high school refused to call an ambulance for the teenager, but a school nurse recommended that Nex Benedict go to the hospital after school.

When Nex Benedict arrived home, their grandmother and legal guardian, Sue Benedict, took Nex Benedict to the hospital. Nex Benedict was interviewed by police while at the hospital and a report was filed. They were discharged from the hospital shortly after. No one knew that these would be the last hours of Nex Benedict's life.

One day later, shortly before 3 p.m., Sue Benedict called 911 for Nex Benedict. When emergency services arrived, CPR was performed and Nex Benedict was rushed to a pediatric hospital. Nex Benedict passed away there.

If you feel like crying after reading that, you are not alone. I mourn Nex Benedict. I mourn what could have been for them and what should have been for them. I mourn that they never knew a world where it was safe to exist as a transgender or nonbinary person. I mourn that there is no way to protect every transgender, nonbinary and queer individual in the United States.

As a queer, nonbinary, multi-ethnic leader on Rider's campus, I work to ensure that safety exists for the LGBTQIA+ community. I have worked with several faculty, staff and students who share my concerns and passion for the LGBTQIA+ community, both at Rider and on a larger scale. I know what it takes to come out and be honest about who you are. There is nothing easy about being LGBTQIA+ in this country. So when institutions such as Rider make an effort to create safe spaces for us, we feel seen and heard. There is always room for improvement, but the very fact that those spaces were created speaks volumes.

When I came to Rider, I made a point of becoming a student leader who could be an advocate for underrepresented communities, specifically those who are LGBTQIA+ and Native American peoples. I knew I had a responsibility to my communities and I knew Rider would work with me. When I see stories like Nex Benedict's, I want to wrap my arms around every person on this campus who is part of the community and bring them comfort. The fear of being killed for being who you are has never left the LGBTQIA+ community, and I fear it may never.

I see myself in Nex Benedict. We are both nonbinary and both members of Native American tribes. The only difference between us is that only one of us is still here, a fact that I may never be able to fully accept.

Nex Benedict, I am sorry. I am sorry that you will never know a life outside of school, outside of Oklahoma. I am sorry that our lawmakers and those in power have failed you. I am sorry that no matter how kind and good you were, others decided you weren't. I am sorry.

I will forever carry the loss of another member of our community with me. It is moments like these that remind me why I work as hard as I do on Rider's campus and why I will continue my work after my graduation this May. I hope Rider will continue to be a safe space and I hope that I never see another case like Nex Benedict's again. They should have never been a case in the first place.

Rest in peace, Nex Benedict.

If you or someone you know is struggling with the recent news of LGBTQIA+ related issues The Rider News encourages that you reach out to one of these resources:

*The Trevor Project, thetrevorproject.org
Rider Counseling Services, counseling@rider.edu
Spectrum Pride Alliance, spectrum@rider.edu*

*Tristan E. M. Leach
senior journalism major*



Rashe Mishra/The Rider News

Nex Benedict, a nonbinary teen, passed away, causing public outrage.

THE Rider News

Longstreet House, 2083 Lawrenceville Road, Lawrenceville, NJ 08648

©2024 General Meetings: Wednesdays at 4:30 p.m.

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JUNIOR JOURNALS

AEW to host annual 'Revolution' wrestling event

On March 3, All Elite Wrestling will host its annual “Revolution” pay-per-view event. Featuring the retirement of 40-year veteran Sting, the much-anticipated event has the potential to be one of the biggest in AEW history.

In 1984, “The Icon” Sting made his wrestling debut. Over the decades he spent extensive time in World Championship Wrestling and Total Nonstop Action, winning a total of 14 world championships. Earlier this year he announced he would be wrestling his final match: a tag-team match with partner Darby Allin at AEW “Revolution.”

Before he could decide his opponents, Sting and Allin were attacked by the Young Bucks, brothers Matthew and Nicholas Jackson. The duo vowed to rid the company of old stars like Sting.

Sting and Allin won the AEW Tag Team Championships on Feb. 7, and were again attacked by the Young Bucks. It was then made official: Sting and Darby Allin versus the Young Bucks for the AEW Tag Team titles on March 3 at “Revolution.”

Sting’s career has lasted decades, and he is arguably one of the greatest wrestlers of all time. One can only hope that Sting sees a satisfying end to his career after seeing a late-stage resurgence with the help of his much younger partner, Darby Allin. If there are any two opponents perfect for the job, it is the agile, villainous Young Bucks who can make Sting look dominant even with his limited mobility.

With one door closing, another opens. Revolution marks the debut of Will Ospreay as a full-time AEW wrestler. Ospreay has made a name for himself over the years as one of the best in the world, having many matches considered amongst the greatest ever.

Ospreay announced in November that he had signed a contract with AEW. After having finally finished his time in Japan, Ospreay will wrestle his first match as an AEW talent this week against Konosuke Takeshita.

Since both Ospreay and Takeshita are incredible wrestlers, I expect this bout to be the match of the night. To see Ospreay on American television for the first time is very exciting and it certainly will not disappoint.

Other notable matches that are sure to impress include: TNT Champion Christian Cage versus Daniel Garcia, Continental Crown Champion Eddie Kingston versus Bryan Danielson, International Champion Orange Cassidy versus Roderick Strong and Women’s Champion “Timeless” Toni Storm versus Deonna Purrazzo. Of course, the biggest prize in AEW will be contested for at “Revolution” as AEW World Champion Samoa Joe defends his belt in a triple-threat match against Adam Page and Swerve Strickland.

In November at AEW “WrestleDream,” Strickland defeated Page. The following month at “Full Gear,” Swerve gained a second victory in a Texas death match. On the Feb. 7 episode of AEW “Dynamite,” Strickland and Swerve battled to find the number one contender to Samoa Joe’s championship. The match reached a 30-minute draw, meaning both men qualified for a championship match.

The two have become fierce enemies over the past few months, and now their blood feud has led them to the main event. While Page is already a former AEW Champion, Strickland has yet to win any singles championship in AEW.

Despite playing a villain, Strickland has a massive amount of fan support and is arguably the most popular wrestler in the company. He is the favorite to win this match, and the person that I am personally rooting for. Samoa Joe is one of my favorite wrestlers, but he is a veteran who has already had his time in the spotlight. This Sunday, it should be Strickland’s moment to become a world champion.

Between the retirement of Sting, the debut of Will Ospreay, Swerve Strickland and Adam Page’s rivalry reaching the world championship and many other title matches, “Revolution” is shaping up to be a very exciting event. Wrestling fans can buy the event on pay-per-view and watch the show this upcoming Sunday. With Sting’s final match, this is the end of an era that fans should not miss.

*Elijah Nevlin
junior marketing major*



Photo courtesy of Elijah Nevlin

An AEW match in 2019 at the Liacouras Center in Philadelphia.

SOPHOMORE & JUNIOR JOURNAL

Importance of National Eating Disorders Awareness Week

THIS week has been proclaimed for the third year in a row by the Biden administration as National Eating Disorders Awareness Week.

During the week, held from Feb. 26 to March 3, numerous organizations and individuals seek to spread awareness about the complex conditions that are eating disorders.

Eating disorders are biologically, psychologically and socially-influenced disorders, meaning that there is no one cause and that they can affect anyone regardless of race, gender, age, sexual orientation or body size. Yet, the media does not seem to realize these facts. The media has it wrong. Again.

You may be familiar with movies and shows that depict a sensationalized version of an individual struggling with an eating disorder. More often than not, the individual is a thin, white, straight, affluent, teenage girl.

The media consistently judges celebrities for their appearance. Every time suspicions arise that a celebrity’s appearance changes — weight, facial features, etc. — there are always people reporting “before and after” or “what happened to them?” While eating disorders are commonly seen in the media as only affecting this narrow population of individuals, this is far from reality and is not representative of the actual people that struggle with eating disorders.

So what is the reality? Well, let’s take a look at a few facts and statistics.

The media has structured a stereotype that if someone has an eating disorder they must be visibly and medically ‘underweight;’ however, fewer than 6% of people diagnosed with eating disorders are also medically diagnosed as ‘underweight,’ according to the National Association of Anorexia Nervosa and Associated Disorders (ANAD). This statistic indicates that around 94% of people with eating disorders are not classified as underweight. Instead, they are described as having medically ‘healthy’ weight or ‘overweight.’

Keep in mind that there are populations of people who go undiagnosed because they do not meet the underweight criteria required for specific diagnoses. Using the ‘judging a book by its cover’ method will not clarify if a person has an eating disorder or not just by looking at them.

There are also misrepresented population demographics in the media when it comes to eating disorders. A study conducted by Lucy Bassett and Maya Ewart



Angellina Fierro/The Rider News

NEDA week brings attention to information posted online.

published in the Journal of Eating Disorders analyzed the demographics of those struggling with eating disorders. The results showed that in American television shows and non-documentary movies, 84.85% of the groups represented with eating disorders in the media were white.

In an article published in the journal Eating Behaviors, Norman Kim wrote that “large-scale studies have found that rates of all eating disorders are the same or higher in all racial and ethnic groups as compared to white individuals.” Kim discussed how problematic this is because not only are people of color getting misrepresented in the media, but they are also less likely to receive care for their eating disorders.

Bassett and Ewart found that only 10.61% of the characters struggling with eating disorders were men. In reality, one-third of individuals struggling with an eating disorder are male. This inaccurate representation has to change, because all people deserve to be seen and cared for. Raising as much awareness as possible for underrepresented groups will promote change as they will be seen and recognized in their struggles.

Project Heal notes on their website that “transgender and gender nonconforming individuals are at least four times as likely to struggle with an eating disorder than their cisgender counterparts.” Bassett and Ewart’s study found that all individuals in the media’s depiction of eating disorders were cisgender.

These are just a few of the ways media gets eating disorders wrong. This misrepresentation of deadly disorders in the media highlights the importance of weeks such as Eating Disorders Awareness Week in providing education and debunking myths and stigma around these disorders perpetuated by the media. The most important thing to remember is that eating disorders have no one look or cause and they can affect anyone regardless of age, race, gender, sexual orientation or body type.

Accurate representation of individuals affected by eating disorders is needed in the media to emphasize to the public that anyone can have an eating disorder. Take the time this week to learn more about eating disorders and how you can help end the stigma surrounding them.

*Libby D’Orvilliers and Sarah Dickstein
sophomore and junior psychology majors*

MEN'S BASKETBALL

James scores 50 over two wins at Alumni Gym

By Richard Saile

RIDER men's basketball was able to overcome two close games in the Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference with wins over both Iona and Quinnipiac on Feb. 23 and 25.

The Broncos extended their win streak to four straight wins after winning back-to-back games at Alumni Gym. The Broncos moved to 1.5 games back from Niagara and Marist for a top-four seed in the MAAC.

Thriller in 'The Zoo'

On Feb. 23, Rider hosted Iona to start a stretch of back-to-back home games. The last time the Broncos played the Gaels they lost 94-93.

The Broncos started the game on a 19-6 run in the first six minutes when senior forward Tariq Ingraham made a layup for the first basket of the game. The Gaels' two buckets in that run were two 3-pointers.

The Broncos were able to make layups from both Ingraham and senior forward Mervin James and hit 3-pointers from senior guard Allen Powell.

The Broncos' bench and crowd got into the game after a pair of shots from senior guard Corey McKeithan, including one 3-pointer from the top of the key.

The Gaels were able to get their offense going as they hit some layups and 3-pointers to stay within nine before halftime. The Broncos ended the first half strong as James hit a 3-pointer from the left corner and graduate student guard T.J. Weeks, Jr. made three free throws to send the Broncos to the locker room up 41-29 at halftime.

Entering the second half it was a different story as the Gaels started with a 17-2 run that gave the Gaels their first lead of the game.

The Broncos responded with a 12-0 run of their own that included two 3-pointers from Powell that helped the crowd and bench erupt as Rider regained the lead. The Broncos struggled to defend Iona from beyond the arc as the Gaels found an answer to keep it close.

The Broncos were able to find their answer by attacking the paint and getting to the free throw line thanks to James and Ingraham.

Freshman guard Ruben Rodriguez was able to



Josiah Thomas/The Rider News

Senior forward **Mervin James** waits to receive a pass.

make three key free throws and provide eight points off the bench that helped the Broncos seal the win 78-75 and extend their winning streak to three games.

According to Head Coach Kevin Baggett, the team's dynamic for the season finally started to fall into place.

"Everybody fits now, where we were trying to fit the puzzle and it wasn't fitting ... guys needed to just find their roles and be comfortable in those roles," said Baggett. "Now everybody understands where they are and what it is that we're asking each and every one of them to do. Now they're able to play out of it without thinking, worrying about what it is that they need to do."

Rolling over Quinnipiac

On Feb. 25, the Broncos hosted the top-seeded

Quinnipiac Bobcats at Alumni Gym and looked to extend their winning streak to four games. They were able to do so with a 30-point effort from James.

The Bobcats started out the game on a 14-5 run attacking the paint and hitting two 3-pointers to stress the Broncos' defense. Rider worked its way back into the game, as James and Ingraham each made a mid-range jumper and free throws to shrink the Bobcats' lead.

The Broncos went on a 10-2 run before heading to the locker room. They attacked the Bobcats' defense in the paint and drew contact that got them to the free throw line. The crowd celebrated buckets made by McKeithan, Ingraham and Powell as the Broncos took a 38-37 lead at halftime.

In the second half, both teams exchanged buckets in the early minutes. The Bobcats got three free throws and a 3-pointer to increase their lead to six with 14:25 left in the game.

The Broncos cut the deficit thanks to Weeks and junior forward JT Langston Jr. to help earn a seven-point lead with just over 10 minutes left in the game. The Bobcats wouldn't go away as they made two key jumpers and a pair of free throws to cut the Broncos' lead down to three with just over seven minutes left.

In the final five minutes, Rider went on an 18-9 run and closed out the Bobcats to win 88-78 and earn its fourth straight victory.

The game had a matchup of the two highest scorers in the MAAC and the top two candidates for MAAC player of the year between Quinnipiac's Matt Balanc and Rider's James.

James finished with 30 points: a team-high, while Balanc finished with 11 points.

James lead the MAAC in scoring at 19 points per game, just ahead of Balanc's 18.4 scoring average.

"I mean you could say that, but I just felt I was playing basketball," James said when asked if the game was a statement for player of the year.

The Broncos snapped a seven-game losing streak to the Bobcats and are just behind both Niagara and Marist for a top-four seed in the MAAC, with their next game at Niagara on Mar. 1.

The game will be broadcast on ESPN+ and tipoff is at 7 p.m.

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

Broncs win four straight behind Firebaugh, Langan

By Kadie Diguseppe

RIDER women's basketball has been on a high, winning its last two games and extending its win streak after overcoming Saint Peter's on Feb. 22 and Marist on Feb. 24 to bring its season record to 9-16.

'We were locked in'

The Broncos came off two hard-fought wins in a row before they matched up against St. Peter's at home on Feb. 22.

In its previous game against Saint Peter's, Rider lost a tough battle 68-58 after falling apart on all sides of the court during the second half.

Rider played a completely different game this time around. During their 59-48 victory over the Peacocks, the Broncos shot over 43% overall and led by 32 points.

Both teams came out of the locker room ready to compete as graduate student guard Taylor Langan got the game started offensively.

The Broncos also picked up three early steals that helped them outscore the Peacocks 38-14 going into halftime.

The third quarter for the Broncos has been the quarter where they have struggled the most all season. In the Broncos last five games, they have been outscored by their opponents 78-47 during the third quarter. That was not the case this time. Rider's defense was on lockdown, only allowing 10 points in the third quarter.

Once leading by more than 30 points, the Broncos

ended the game winning 59-48.

Senior guard Makayla Firebaugh and Langan had eight rebounds each and combined for 33 points. Senior guard Molly Lynch and junior guard Sanaa Redmond also contributed with 11 combined rebounds for the Broncos.

Langan and other players mentioned postgame that the Broncos have heavily focused on defense during their last couple of games. Head Coach Lynn Milligan said, "We were locked in on the game plan."

Junior guard Mariona Cos-Morales had one of her best defensive games of the season with four steals and two blocks.

"I thought Nona [Cos-Morales] was terrific," said Milligan. "She battles with the bigs down there. She's not afraid of the physicality. I thought her timing today was very good."

Winning streak at four

The Broncos were back at home on Feb. 24 against Marist looking to extend their winning streak to four games. They traveled to Marist earlier this season and left with a 65-55 loss.

The first quarter was back and forth for Rider, but after graduate student guard Jessika Schiffer made her first 3-pointer of the afternoon, the Broncos had the lead.

In the second quarter, Rider only scored five points and let Marist score 13 extra points to bring the score to 25-19 in favor of Marist going into the second half.



Maggie Kleiner/The Rider News

Graduate student guard **Taylor Langan** moves past the defender.

Rider took the lead in the third quarter, but at the end of regulation the score was tied at 54.

Redmond, Cos-Morales and Lynch all contributed to scoring points in overtime, but Firebaugh was the last one sent to the free throw line to finish things off for the Broncos and secured the 62-61 nail-biting win.

The last time Rider had a win streak of four games was the 2019-2020 season.

Nearing the end of the regular season, the Broncos will travel to Niagara on Feb. 29.

The game is at 6 p.m. and will be streamed on ESPN+.

WRESTLING

Broncs split matches to close out regular season

By Logan K. VanDine

WITH the Mid-American Conference Championships on the horizon, Rider wrestling knew it had to finish off the regular season strong as it embarked on a two-day road trip.

The Broncs split their matches against No. 18 Pittsburgh on Feb. 22 and Cleveland State on Feb. 23, losing to the Panthers but following with a win over the Vikings.

The Broncs' win over Cleveland State marked a perfect 8-0 record in conference play for Rider this season, a program record.

'The kids wrestled hard'

Despite Rider heading into this match with lots of momentum after winning its last two matches, the Panthers showed why they are a nationally ranked team as the Broncs fell to No. 18 Pittsburgh 29-9 on Feb. 22 in the first of two road matches.

Senior Tyler Klinsky started things off for the Broncs, but his bout loss by technical fall was a sign of things to come.

Rider ended up losing its first four bouts of the night and eight overall to drop back to .500 on the season at 7-7. Head Coach John Hangey commented on this loss for the Broncs.

"The kids wrestled hard, but they gave up too many first takedowns," said Hangey. "I thought Pittsburgh came out and wrestled to score first and quickly and they did that."

Despite the lopsided loss, there were some bright spots for the Broncs with juniors Colton Washleski and David Szuba winning the only bouts for the Broncs, Washleski winning by decision and Szuba by fall.

Hangey was pleased with his two junior wrestlers in their bout victories.

"They did what they've been doing and they went out to establish their ties, their offense, and their mentality was that they were going to go out there and score," Hangey said.

Washleski gave his input on how he thought he wrestled and the challenge he faced going up against a good team like Pittsburgh.

"I wrestled pretty good, I just kept going forward on the attack and kept scoring," said Washleski. "I could have scored more if I took the chance and I'm glad for our schedule having high-caliber teams like Pittsburgh because it challenges us and makes us better."

'It's super important'

Looking to avenge their loss to the Panthers, the Broncs had to quickly turn things around as they traveled to take on Cleveland State. In their final match of the regular season, Rider rebounded to pick up the victory 23-12 on Feb. 23.

After losing its first four bouts the day before, Rider made sure that would not be the case against the Vikings with Klinsky and graduate student Richie Koehler winning the first two bouts for the Broncs by decision and the team winning four out of the first five bouts of the afternoon.

The Broncs did not slow down from there as they only lost a total of three bouts to win three out of the last four bouts to finish off the season over .500 at 8-7.

After losing their first four bouts against Pittsburgh, Hangey spoke about how important it was for his team to jump out to an early lead.

"It's super important because with a team like

Cleveland State that's trying to rally their troops and trying to win their first MAC title, you want to make sure that you close the door on them as soon as you can and winning four out of the first five was very important," said Hangey.

Senior Quinn Kinner also rebounded for a bout win by major decision. "I was a little disappointed in myself after the [Pittsburgh] match, I didn't feel like I pushed it enough, and going into the Cleveland State matchup I just really wanted to make wrestling happen and wrestle hard," Kinner said.

The Broncs will now prepare for the MAC Championships, which are set to take place beginning on March 8 in Kent, Ohio.



Maggie Kleiner/The Rider News

Junior Colton Washleski wins both his bouts on the road against Pittsburgh and Cleveland State.

LACROSSE

Rider wins first home games for 4-0 start

By Logan K. VanDine

RIDER lacrosse finally had its inaugural home games as they were prepared for an intense stretch of three home games in a span of five days.

The Broncs gave their fans plenty to celebrate, winning all three home matchups against Saint Francis on Feb. 22, Central Connecticut State on Feb. 24 and Monmouth on Feb. 27, to start their season at a perfect 4-0.

'We came out strong'

In their first home game, the Broncs picked up right where they left off from their first game of the season as they cruised past Saint Francis 19-13 in the first of three home games at Ben Cohen Field on Feb. 22.

After scoring 19 goals in their first game against Fairleigh Dickinson, the Broncs' offense did not show signs of slowing down as 40 seconds into the game,

sophomore midfielder Katie Walsh started scoring off by netting her first goal of the afternoon to give Rider a quick 1-0 lead.

Walsh did not stop there as she scored her second goal just under a minute later to make the game 2-0 as Rider had a 6-2 advantage over the Red Flash by the end of the first quarter.

"We came out strong, we used each other, it was a different defense that ran than what we run, but we worked well and saw those cuts and we did good," Walsh said.

Despite being outscored 3-1 by the Red Flash in the second quarter, the offense picked up in the third quarter as they outscored Saint Francis 9-3, which proved to be the difference maker as for the second straight game, the Broncs scored 19 goals.

Head Coach Evan Mager said, "We came out firing, which is exciting to see because I think it the hardest thing to do, but I think with the first game and the excitement of playing here that's why they did."

Next to Walsh, the Broncs' leading scorers were junior attacker Selena Carrington, who also had five goals, and graduate student midfielder Kylee Garcia who scored four.

'Defense was a game-changer'

The Broncs' offense was a main factor in their 2-0 start to the regular season. On Feb. 24, not only was their offense humming once again, but the Broncs' defense stepped up as well, as Rider took down Central Connecticut State 17-3 to move to 3-0 on the season.

The Broncs have tended to score early and first in their games so far this season, and after the match was scoreless for nearly the first five minutes, junior attacker Toni Gismondi changed that with the first of her five-goal outing.

"It was all about the timing I had my teammates with me," Gismondi said. "Most of my goals were assisted so I have to thank them for that to just keep

our heads up and step into a new role today."

The Broncs added four more goals in the first quarter, the defense also pitching a shutout to give Rider a 5-0 lead over the Blue Devils.

The Broncs' offensive attack only got better from there, as they tacked on six more goals in the second and three in the third and fourth to give the Broncs a dominating win.

The Broncs' defense was also up to par, as they did not allow a single Blue Devils goal in the first half.

"Our defense was kind of a game-changer for us and they kept us going, Nicole [Caldarone] got her first start, played the whole game and made some big saves and had a shutout through the first half," Mager said.

Freshman goalkeeper Nicole Calderone, who had five saves, talked about what was working for her in the afternoon to only allow three goals and gave credit to her defense for her success in the net.

"My defense keeps me in it, I trust them so much and I know they have my back through it all," Calderone said.

A perfect home start

In its third straight home game, Rider held on to defeat Monmouth on Feb. 27 12-10 to start their season at a perfect 4-0.

The Broncs' offense got off to a fast start in the first quarter with Carrington scoring the game's first goal three minutes in followed by graduate student attacker Anna Devlin scoring the Broncs' second, as they eventually ended the first quarter with a 7-2 lead.

Despite the Broncs being shutout 4-0 in the second quarter, Rider did not trail at all in the game as just four goals in the second half were enough to secure the win.

The Broncs return home on March 1 to take on the Oregon Ducks at 3 p.m.

The game can be streamed on ESPN+.



Maggie Kleiner/The Rider News

Sophomore midfielder Katie Walsh eludes a Saint Francis defender.

Sports

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TRACK AND FIELD

Broncs win consecutive MAAC titles for first time



Photos courtesy of Peter G. Borg of Rider Athletics

Junior jumper **Savanna Marcantonio** and sprinter **Artie Burgess** both shine in the MAAC Champions.

By **Logan K. VanDine**

AFTER finishing first in the 2023 Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference Track and Field Championships, Rider men's and women's track and field was looking to defend their titles this year in New York City. With first-place finishes on both sides by the men finishing with 190 points and the women finishing with 179.5, the Broncs repeated as champions for the first time since joining the MAAC.

'We had some nice performances'

On the first day of the MAAC Championships, the Broncs started off strong as both the men and women placed first on Feb. 24 with the men gaining 75 points and the women with 50.5 points.

"We had some nice performances on day one from the men. A few Rider records, a bunch of PRs, and some strong performances highlighted the night," Head Coach Bob Hamer said. "We had some great effort from the women in many areas tonight that give us a chance tomorrow."

Both the men and women had first-place finishes in the 60-meter relay with junior jumper Mariah Stephens placing first and getting a time of 7.62 seconds. For the men, senior sprinter Artie Burgess also had a stellar showing for the Broncs and placed first with a time of 6.74 seconds, a Rider record.

"I feel like I executed my 60 [meters] really well, I got out hard at the start and stayed relaxed and put myself in a good position for the final," Burgess said.

Stephens was also pleased with her performance on the first day of the championship.

"With having the fastest qualifying times for both the hurdles and the 60 meters, I would say that I gave everything I had in those races," she said in an email to The Rider News. "I used the little bit of energy I had left to get the win in the long jump on my first jump and my teammates and I brought the energy."

Stephens wasn't done that afternoon, as she also competed in the 60-meter hurdles and placed first in that category with a recorded time of 8.61 seconds.

For the men, graduate student hurdler Marques Merriweather placed second in the 60-meter hurdles with a recorded time of 8.09 seconds.

Some other notable finishes on the first day of the MAAC Championships featured junior Hailey Palmer finishing in fourth place in the 200 meters with a time of 25.62 seconds and fifth in the 400 meters with a time of 58.75 seconds.

Rider had a strong show in the high jump for both the men and women's side as junior jumper Savanna Marcantonio finished in second at 1.68 meters and senior jumper Devynn Lee finished in first place at 2.03 meters.

MAAC Champs

Heading into the second day of the MAAC Championships, the men looked to hold first place while the women were looking to work their way out of second. By the end of the day's action, the Broncs were able to defend their title with first-place finishes by both the men and women to clinch their second MAAC Championships on Feb. 25.

For the men, Burgess picked up right where he left off with a 6.77-second first-place finish in the 60-meter relays, a first-place finish in the high jump, Lee placed first in the triple jump with 14.77 meters in the category.

Another notable first-place finish was in shot put with junior Jayden DuBard who got 16.30 meters.

"I'm really excited and proud of the men. We needed a total team effort and they brought it this weekend. Every time we needed some big points the men responded. Devynn had an outstanding meet, he called it off with a big win in the triple jump," Hamer said. "Artie got a huge win in the 60 and runner-up finish in the 200. He is a big-time performer when the lights are on. Jayden got a big win for the team in the shot tonight."

For the women, Stephens continued her great weekend with a second-place finish in the 60 meters with a time of 7.62 seconds, a first-place finish in

the 60 meters hurdle with a time of 8.64 seconds, a first-place finish in the long jump finishing at 5.82 meters and was named MAAC field most outstanding performer.

"It was rewarding to walk away with the Female Most Outstanding Field Performer plaque because there was great competition across all of the field events," said Stephens. "I couldn't be happier with how this weekend went on both the track and in the field and I have my parents, teammates, and coaches to thank for helping me get to where I am today."

Stephens wasn't the only one who had a great weekend of MAAC action as graduate student thrower Nataya Glasco had a first-place finish in the shot put with a score of 14.65 meters.

"We faced some adversity with illness and injury but they rose to the occasion. Mariah was outstanding, she was great this weekend, she steps up when she's needed and that is the sign of a great athlete," said Hamer. "Natya stepped up big time in the shot today. She was a bit disappointed with the weight throw last night but then she brought it today when we needed to lock down the meet."

Glasco, who earned a gold medal, talked about how important it was to bounce back and get the win after not getting the results she wanted on the first day of the championship.

"I am grateful to God for giving me the opportunity to compete at this level. I am also grateful for my teammates, coaches, family and friends because they are a part of the reason why I wanted to get after a big throw today, I didn't want to let them down," Glasco said.

Up next for the Broncs is the Intercollegiate Association of Amateur Athletes of America and the Eastern College Athletic Conference Championships from March 1 to 3 in Boston.