



Former governor Jim McGreevey talks prison reform



Peter G. Borg/Rider University

Former N.J. governor **Jim McGreevey** made his faith a cornerstone of his talk on Feb. 10 in the Mercer Room.

By Hailey Hensley

STUDENTS, staff and community members alike stood along the walls and sat in tables in the Mercer Room on Feb. 18 eagerly awaiting the beginning of a much-anticipated talk by former New Jersey Governor Jim McGreevey.

Guests chatted away but were quickly silenced when McGreevey made the decision to begin his talk a few minutes earlier than anticipated, due to the already full house.

Micah Rasmussen, director for the Rebovich Institute for New Jersey Politics, stated that “We stopped accepting RSVPs once we reached the room’s capacity. Clearly more participants turned out than responded. That Governor McGreevey generated such strong interest and that people decided to stand and stay are real indications of how engaging he was.”

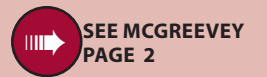
McGreevey served two years as the governor of New Jersey and resigned from office after a complicated scandal revolving around his sexuality as well as financial issues in 2004.

The event was organized by the Rebovich Institute for New Jersey Politics. Rasmussen worked as McGreevey’s press secretary during his tenure in office.

McGreevey opened his talk by thanking the audience as a whole, as well as specific audience members who he knew well.

He then moved on to discuss his time before his governorship as well as what led him to his current ideals.

“I went to college and law school and graduate school and I came back and I was a prosecutor in Middlesex County. You start off in kiddy-court, prosecuting juveniles. I remember that I was putting these kids away and these were some of the smartest kids and you were putting them away because they sold CDS, controlled dangerous substances,” he said. “The reality was, for these kids who were in public housing projects, it was the only economic opportunity available to them. And I thought to myself, ‘Why are we putting all these kids away for taking the only opportunity available to them?’ and that stayed with me.”



University CFO stresses fiscal responsibility after limited spending freeze

By Stephen Neukam

RIDER’S administration enforced a university-wide spending freeze on supplies, materials and other professional services in January that will remain in effect until the end of the fiscal year on June 30.

Vice President for Finance and Chief Financial Officer Jim Hartman said that the decision to freeze the budget items is an attempt to eliminate “unnecessary spending” with a call for the university community to be “fiscally responsible.”

“We know this is a difficult situation for our campus community, but we must take a fiscally responsible approach to the university’s finances and felt these spending freezes were made with the best interest of our students and the overall health of our institution in mind,” said Hartman.

Taken into account in the freeze was the reductions from actual spending plus commitment in the budget lines toward the end of January, which, according to Hartman, make it difficult to calculate the actual savings that the university will gain from the move.

The freeze, which applies to five specific line items in the university’s budget, came as a surprise to faculty and the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) leadership at the university. Hartman said that he shared “regular updates” with faculty, staff and the union leadership but did not say that the university community was made aware of the spending freeze beforehand.

In a written statement to The Rider News, the AAUP said that it had met with Hartman on a single occasion and that the budget freeze was not mentioned — the request for a statement was the



A limited spending freeze on supplies and materials was implemented in late January.

first time the union had been made aware of the decision. The union raised concerns about the university’s undertaking of a \$16 million to \$20 million consolidation plan to move Westminster Choir College to its Lawrenceville campus while at the same time implementing spending freezes on supplies and materials.

“If Rider really is in a fiscal situation that justifies a budget freeze, then why is the administration planning on spending \$20-plus million to replicate facilities that we already have in Princeton in order to move WCC to the Lawrenceville campus,” said the union statement. “Replication of facilities is always a questionable use of scarce resources but it is a particularly bad idea if we are in fiscal freeze. The union is deeply concerned that this is simply the beginning of a campaign to justify further cuts to resources for the actual work of the university: educating our students.”

The university budgeted for an \$8.2 million deficit for the fiscal year 2020, according to the school’s projections.

Hartman emphasized the need for the university to grow enrollment to “strengthen our overall financial

position.”

“Rider’s budgets are dependent upon enrollment, requiring the university community to be flexible as our enrollment changes,” said Hartman. “That’s why we’ve made student recruitment and retention efforts a central focus of the university’s strategic plan. Many of our recruitment and retention efforts are showing a positive impact.”

Sophomore political science major and class Vice President Matthew Schantin was alarmed by the university’s spending freeze and said that the interests of all students must be considered in a time of transition and fiscal challenges.

“Everyone knew that taking on the Westminster campus was going to be a big task, but I think the Lawrenceville campus is starting to finally feel the effects,” said Schantin. “I think it’s going to put a lot of tension on the student body to start looking more closely at the transition process to make sure the bulk of Rider’s students still get a fair deal out of this process. It’s understandable that money gets tight with such big renovations but I think it will become a problem if the Lawrenceville campuses basic needs are not taken care of.”

Editor’s note: Like many university academic departments and organizations, The Rider News’ annual budget was also affected by the spending freeze. Nearly \$1,900 earmarked for supplies, materials, furniture and equipment were removed from the newspaper’s budget.

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The men’s basketball team won two games to move into first place in the MAAC.

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SECURITY BRIEFS

BY STEPHEN NEUKAM

Reality TV

Kicking and screening. On Feb. 4 at 12:33 p.m., a male student went to Public Safety to file a report on an ongoing dispute with his roommate over the TV in their room. Public Safety referred the students to the Office of Residence Life and the two roommates were separated.

Hit and run

Swipe out. On Feb. 5 at 6 a.m., officers responded to a report that the card reader to the Canastra Health and Sports Center parking lot was broken. When officers arrived, it was determined that the bracket securing the card reader was cracked and the corners of the bracket were hanging onto the poll. It appears that an automobile may have caused the damage but there are no suspects. Facilities Management was notified to fix the card reader.

Good Samaritan

Honor system. On Feb. 3 at 12:40 p.m., a student reported that she left her phone on a couch in the Science and Technology Center but when she went back for it, the phone was missing. However, the phone was found in an administrative office later on.

— Information provided by Public Safety Capt. Jim Flatley

Past NJ governor touches on life after leaving the office

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McGreevey repeatedly emphasized the need for job training for prison inmates and those recently released, citing it as the number one way to keep people from reoffending.

"We train guys and gals to be, for example, diesel mechanics and HVAC operators. We want the possibility that someone is going to have a skill-based job instead of just working in a warehouse for thirty, sixty, ninety days doing back-breaking labor and not developing skills necessary to have a career," McGreevey said.

Throughout his talk, McGreevey often lightened deeply serious discussions by cracking relevant jokes that often had the audience rolling in laughter and deeply engaged in his talking points.

He heavily referenced statistics relating to imprisonment in the United States that placed it as the country with the most prisoners per capita.

"...the reality is that there are 19,000 fellow New Jerseyans right now in prison, and there's 85,000 more churning through county jails, in and out during the course of a year," McGreevey said. "I'd also like to emphasize that America is only 5% of the world's population and we have 25% of the world's incarcerated population. That means we lock up more fellow Americans than any other country locks up their fellow citizens. We're number one."

McGreevey reiterated his passion for lowering recidivism rates, or the rate of inmates reoffending, through job training programs and giving inmates a path to learn valuable skills that will lead to long-lasting and sustainable employment.

"If we're willing to spend 52,000 to lock someone up for a year, which is an insane amount of money, we should be willing to spend a fraction of that cost investing in education that's going to give someone the tools necessary to compete in this marketplace," McGreevey said.

The audience heavily participated in the question and answer section, with

detailed answers always to follow from the former governor. He seemed to take each question into careful consideration before answering and appeared delighted that the audience was interested in his work with inmates and the recently released.

Rasmussen highlighted the importance of McGreevey's campus visit as well as his work since leaving office, where he has remained closely tied to New Jersey politics, especially relating to criminal justice reform.

"New Jersey has one of the strongest governorships in the nation. It is vested with more powers and responsibilities than any other, and it is the epicenter of New Jersey politics. We only have seven living people who have been elected governor of New Jersey, and in the last year, three of them have visited with us on campus," Rasmussen said. "So each of their perspectives are critical to our understanding of the office and the power it holds, but Governor McGreevey is particularly fascinating both as a leader and political figure, and in the vital work he has done in the years since he left office."

McGreevey wrapped up his talk discussing future plans and his next steps in life, with audience members directly asking what the future holds, to which he deadpan responded that his next step was "death."

"You guys are all walking up the hill, I'm walking down it all. You realize these things don't last forever," he said. "You realize you want America to be better, you want the next generation to be better, and you want the next generation to give a darn."

WCC transition and commencement focus of SGA town hall with Dell'Omo

By Lauren Minore

THE Student Government Association hosted a town hall featuring President Gregory Dell'Omo and other administrators to inform members of the campus community about updates related to the transition of Westminster Choir College (WCC) onto the Lawrenceville campus, among other things, on Feb. 11 in the Student Recreation Center Seminar Room.

"This was a decision that the Board of Trustees, the administration and others, were actively involved in for the last three years in studying the issue," Dell'Omo said in his opening statements. "In fact, this has been a discussion at Rider University for a number of years, ever since Rider took over Westminster back in 1991, 1992. Always this idea, how do you really consolidate these two entities and make it work economically, academically, profile-wise."

Dell'Omo acknowledged that there were economic reasons behind the decision to consolidate the two campuses.

"It's not like WCC was purely an off-site location, it is a fully-operational campus," Dell'Omo said.

"With, as you know, library, residence hall, student life, academic buildings, and so forth, and it's only six miles away from the Lawrenceville campus. Economically, that just does not make sense, in terms of running two fully-operational campuses six or seven miles apart."

Dell'Omo went on to further discuss Westminster College of the Arts, established in 2007, which serves as an umbrella that majors on both campuses fall under, including WCC majors and School of Fine and

Performing Arts majors, and the college's impact on Rider's profile.

"When you think about the profile of Rider University and the rise of our academic programs, and you know the strengths we have at this university going back to our heritage business school, and getting involved over the years in education, the sciences, liberal arts, and more recently, performing arts," Dell'Omo said. "There is a very vibrant performing arts program on this campus."

Vice President for Student Affairs Leanna Fenneberg also provided updates about the Inclusive Excellence Plan, which was launched in fall 2019, followed by Vice President for Facilities and University Operations Michael Reca.

Reca discussed major building renovations to aid in the transition of WCC from the Princeton campus, detailing changes to Moore Library, Gill Chapel and the Fine Arts building, among others.

Another major topic discussed at the event, once the format opened up the floor to student questions, was the undergraduate, graduate and doctorate commencement ceremonies, which will be combined into one single ceremony this year. Senior Class President and senior political science major Charles Palmer opened up the topic during the discussion.

"Speaking with a lot of my peers, a lot of them have asked about commencement," Palmer said. "Recently, they've combined like the undergraduate and graduate ceremony. A lot of students weren't like aware of it, even though an email did go out, so can we just touch upon the reasoning behind it."

Dell'Omo said, "We want to make sure we do it in a way that allows us to celebrate the sort of

uniqueness of each area, undergraduate, continuing... and graduate."

Dell'Omo said this was the first year Rider was graduating doctorate students and that "the numbers allowed us this year to be able to combine" the ceremonies.

CORRECTION

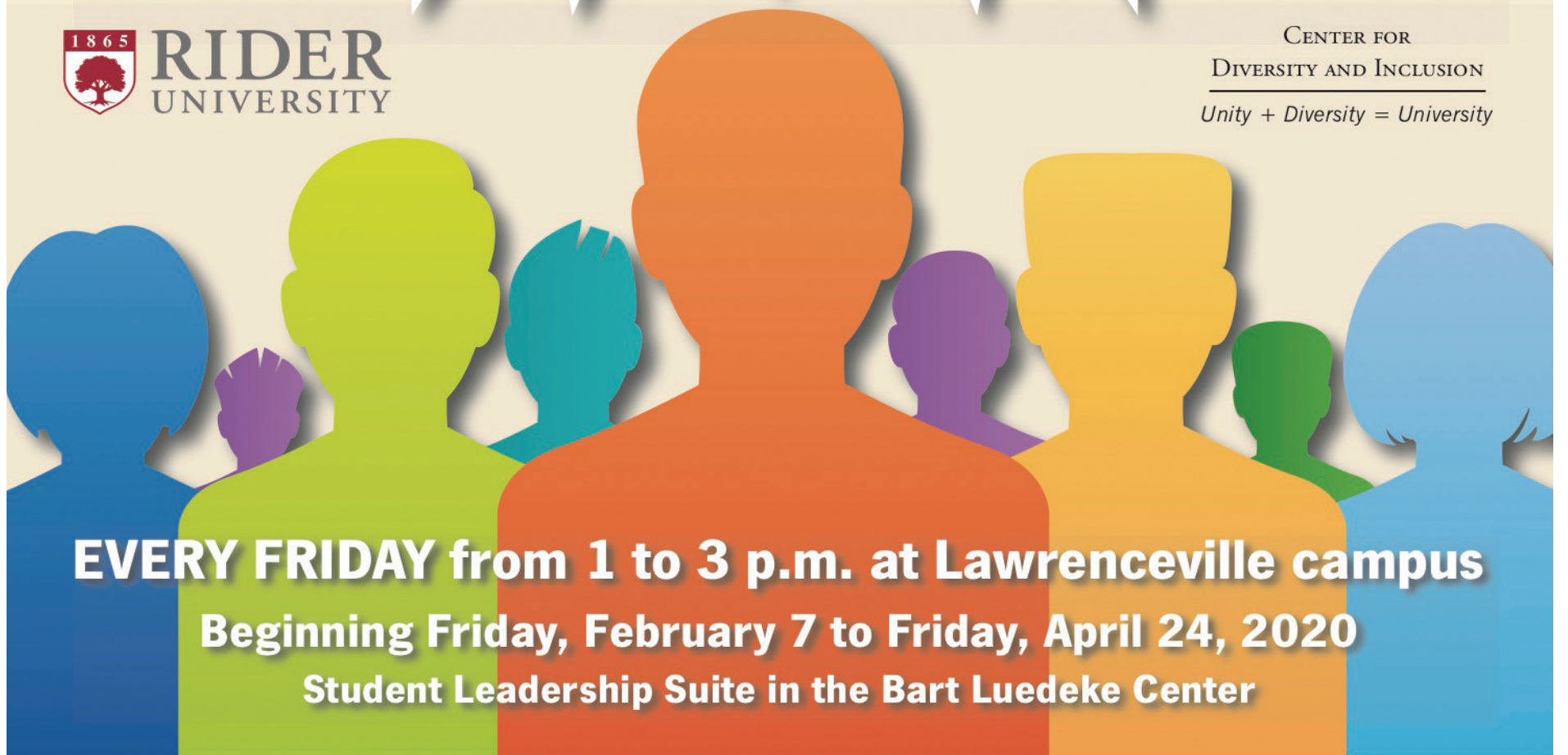
Due to incomplete information provided by a Rider spokesman, The Rider News incorrectly reported on Feb. 5 that the university's permits for construction for the consolidation of Westminster Choir College were expected later than the administration anticipated. In fact, contrary to the spokesman's written statement to a reporter that there were "no substantive changes" to prior information regarding permitting, permits were approved for construction in Omega House and Gill Chapel in January, according to the Lawrence Township Construction Office. In addition, next month the town's Planning Board is expected to consider the university's applications for major construction projects at the Fine Arts Center, the Science and Technology Center and a 6,000 sq. ft. storage building at the back of the campus.

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Teacher leadership program gives graduates endorsement by the state

By Tatyanna Carman

RIDER'S teacher leadership program has been granted endorsement by the New Jersey Department of Education to program graduates, a process that "took a few years" according to the Director of the teacher leadership program Judith Stegmaier-Nappi.

The endorsement was created by the New Jersey Department of Education, however, the state is still developing an assessment for the teacher leadership endorsement despite its approval.

The teacher leadership program was created in 2011 as a result of research that indicated that school administrators could no longer meet the needs of stakeholders by acting alone, according to Stegmaier-Nappi. There are seven courses within the program: creative, ethical teacher leadership, supervisor/teacher leadership for improved instruction and student learning, strategies for curriculum development, innovation and change, assessment of curriculum and instruction to improve the performance of teachers and diverse learners, using research strategies and analysis of data to make decisions in schools, group process in supervision for creative change and collaboration in schools and seminar/practicum in teacher leadership and supervision.

"The teacher leadership program has enabled teachers to gain the skills necessary to become leaders in many aspects of the school," said Stegmaier-Nappi. "For example, coaches, professional development, mentors, role models, curriculum experts. Many teachers are interested in taking on some leadership roles while remaining in the classroom."

Graduate student in teacher leadership Yuliya Tsypenyuk said that a friend who graduated from the program influenced her decision to pursue this degree and liked that the program could give her the tools and knowledge of how to help within her school district while remaining in a teaching position. She also shared that she was able to dig into data through her leadership class assignments and hearing her classmates discuss their schools and classrooms allowed her to gain ideas that will be adapted to her school.

"Having to develop growth projects and log numerous leadership hours, I worked with my school's administration to tackle problems and solutions," Tsypenyuk said. "I think through this and my leadership hours, my administration has started to see me in a different light and given me more responsibility and leadership within the building. While I often was willing to take on different tasks and roles, I think this program has given me more confidence in my leadership within the school and has led to others seeing me as more of a leader."

She shared that she plans on using her graduate degree or leadership endorsement to help her tackle the necessary roles that other districts may have a formal designation for. She also said that earning that endorsement gave her security knowing that if her goals change she will have the endorsement, a



Courtesy of Rider University

The New Jersey Department of Education endorsement for graduates teacher leadership program offers graduates a formal way of legitimizing skills.

supervisor certification and her masters.

"I think the endorsement has been exciting news for people in the teacher leadership program because it offers another formal way of having our leadership skills recognized. Knowing that Rider is among the first schools authorized to grant that endorsement will certainly help prospective students see an even greater appeal to coming to Rider for the teacher leadership program," she said.

Rider and Bucks County Community College allows cybersecurity credit transfers

By Tatyanna Carman

RIDER and Bucks County Community College (BCCC) signed an agreement to transfer credits from the community college to the university for the bachelor's cybersecurity program.

According to a university press release, the transfer agreement was signed on Nov. 5 and will allow students from the BCCC to be a part of the 54-credit major. The cybersecurity program was chosen because of the rapid growth of the cybersecurity industry, according to Associate Vice President for University Marketing and Communications Kristine Brown.

"The goal of transfer agreements with our community college partners is to create a seamless path for students completing a two-year-degree to continue on to complete their bachelor's degree," she said. "This is beneficial for both the individual program (in this case cybersecurity) and the university as a whole as these transfer students become part of our university and are often highly motivated to achieve their goal of a four-year degree."

Brown also mentioned that Rider is continually working with community college partners in the region such as Mercer County Community College, Brookdale Community College, Raritan Valley Community College and more.

The cybersecurity program was chosen because of its presence at both the community college and at Rider, according to Chair of Computer Science and Physics Department John Bochanski. He was heavily involved in the implementation of the new bachelor's program in cybersecurity, which will debut in the fall 2020.

Bochanski said that transfer agreements are pretty common for Rider and nearby community colleges, and "we are always excited to team up with other schools with similar programs."

"Most of Rider's students come from within about 100 miles, so I think you won't see a huge impact on the community, but I still think it's a great thing," said Bochanski. "It makes a lot of sense to partner up with schools that are nearby, have students in similar fields and want a great education."

He also shared how he felt about the agreement and the upcoming major.

"I am excited by the opportunities that we offer students in the Computer Science and Physics Department. With the addition of cybersecurity, we will be offering one of the most in-demand majors in the country, and I am glad that Rider and Bucks students have the opportunity to pursue these studies."

Senior computer science major Fredy Ulloa shared how he felt about the partnership.

"I think the partnership benefits Rider community a whole lot because it helps the new computer science grow. All the new students [are] eager to work with each other and grow the Rider community," he said.



Stephanie Jessiman/The Rider News

Bucks County Community College is one of the many colleges that have partnered with Rider to allow transfer credits.

Dr. Vaccaro does not “dance” around the topic of climate change

By Christian McCarville

DANCE is an art form that can say so much without saying anything at all. Dancers convey emotions and feelings with their elegant and swooping movements across the stage. Dance professor Kim Vaccaro uses dancing to spread awareness of the changing climates across the globe while also emphasizing how waste can be cutdown and be more sustainable.

Rider Dances has previously performed the Dance and Sustainability Project on campus on multiple occasions. It has always attracted a large crowd and many acclaims throughout its multiple showings. The show was directed by Vaccaro and all participants were Rider students.

Vaccaro was recently given the incredible opportunity to present a Dance and Sustainability research project at the National Dance Education Organization (NDEO)’s national conference. This project was in collaboration with senior dance performance major Gabriella Boes.

“Over the course of 9 months, Dance and Sustainability Project (DASP) partnered students from across campus with environmental groups in our community as well as Artichoke Dance, whose work is at the intersection of art and environmental action,” said Vaccaro. “Many of those involved and who attended felt the final presentation was transformative in understanding their personal responsibility to the planet.”

The creation of the Dance and Sustainability project was no easy feat. It involved 35 dancers and six choreographers with additional help given by Rider Eco-Reps and filmmakers.

“I was extremely honored to be a part of a project that was presented at a national conference. I feel that the Dance and Sustainability Project is a message worth sharing with as large an audience as possible,” said sophomore dance and elementary education major Hannah Wade. “The pieces included in the show each expressed a message surrounding the theme of environmental change, which is an idea we all believe should be spread across the world.”

At the conference, Vaccaro and Boes presented a poster that included a brief summary of the Dance and Sustainability project that was performed at Rider. Also included on the poster were a few testimonials of Rider students who participated in the project as well as those who have seen the performance.

Vaccaro and Boes’ poster was seen by over 900 dance educators from all over the country. It was one of several dozen posters presented at the conference. Over 250 workshops, panels, performances and presentations were shown over the three-day course of the conference.

The pair attended many conference sessions on a variety of topics related to dance. They were able to learn lots of useful information that they may someday implement in their future dances.

Both Vaccaro and Boes were given an incredible opportunity to further expand upon an excellent combination of dance and environmental awareness. Performances like this can help audiences rise to action in an effort to reverse the harmful damages done to the environment.

“Dance as an art form can evoke emotions that other mediums cannot. By presenting such a strong message through dance, those in the audience feel a personal connection to our message and are more likely to relate to the ideas,” said Wade. “We hope that through watching our pieces each individual in the audience will change at least one habit to positively impact the environment.”

Vaccaro will also serve as an artistic director and choreographer in the upcoming Rider Dances: Moving in Our Community performance. The show will take place on March 7 at 7:30 p.m. and March 8 at 2 p.m.



Courtesy of Rider University

The upcoming show, Rider Dances: Moving in Our Community, will feature artistic directing and choreography done by Kim Vaccaro.



Courtesy of Rider University

The Dance and Sustainability Project was performed on multiple occasions at Rider’s campus. It was an interesting way to use the art of dance to teach audiences what they can do to positively impact their environment.



Courtesy of Rider University

The project took lots of student participation to complete. It included student dancers, choreographers and filmmakers.



Courtesy of Rider University

The costumes for many of the dances were created by recycled materials. This exemplifies the many simple ways in which sustainability can be practiced.

Shantay, relay: Drag Race fundraises for Relay for Life

By Jason Mount

BRIGHT lights illuminated the Yvonne Theater as the bass from the loud music vibrated the seats. Rider's Drag Race was back once again to stun the crowd. In years past, the performance was a chance for students to dress in their best drag and compete for the title of champion. On Feb. 8, however, the competition was turned into a showcase of drag talent, both student and professional alike.

Junior technical theater major Makenzi Kalsch attended this year's Drag Race as well as the year before, and thought that losing the competition aspect could help students understand what a real drag show could be like.

"I thought it was very unique," Kalsch said. "A lot of people only see drag through the TV show 'RuPaul's Drag Race,' so seeing a live drag show was a new experience for a lot of Rider students."

The event once again intended to raise money for Rider's Relay for Life, collecting money via Venmo and walking around with buckets in between performances.

The night's entertainment started with a number by Miss Phoebe Mantrapp, a drag entertainer from New Hope, Pennsylvania. Her lip-sync performance of Lizzo's "Good as Hell" set the tone for an energetic evening the students would cheer for.

The show continued with performances by drag queens from Philadelphia, including Cyannie, Morgan Wells, Maria Topcatt and Sapphira Cristal.

Wells was introduced as an owner of her own costume design business, a hobby that was apparent upon her first step on stage. She graced the stage and evoked gasps from the audience as she shimmered in her opulent gold gown with large sunflower headpiece, twirling around as the light glittered off of her dress.

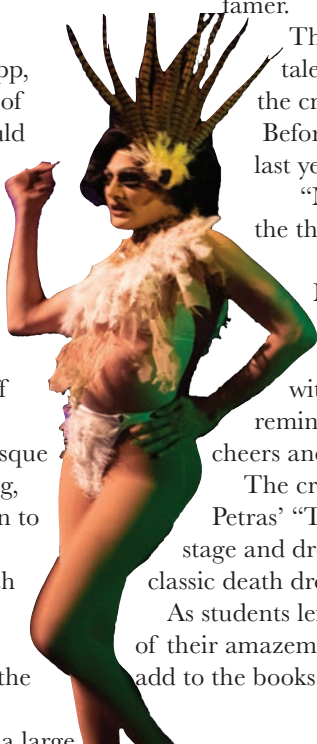
Maria Topcatt was another crowd favorite, showing off her talent in burlesque to a slower jazz rendition of Britney Spears' "Toxic." Topcatt swirled her long, black ensemble around a coolly-lit stage, stripping off her coat and dress-train to the adventurous rhythm of the song.

Topcatt's electric performance was met with thunderous applause, to which she bowed graciously and addressed the audience "Thank you so much, now take out your phones so you can follow me."

She roused more giggles from the audience with more conversations with the audience, even calling out to the theater majors in the crowd.

"Who here is a theater major?" Topcatt asked, to which she was met with a large

Maria Topcatt performed two burlesque numbers to the crowd's amazement.



amount of raised hands. "Good. This is your future," she joked as she gestured to herself.

Another energetic performer was Sapphira Cristal, who lip-synced to a medley of female-performed hip-hop songs. Once she was finished, she wanted to promote a message of self-love.

"I want everyone to hug themselves right now. This isn't a choice, you have to do it," Cristal said. "Now I want you all to repeat after me: I fully love and accept myself."

Cristal's mantra echoed through the theater as the audience repeated it multiple times, the feeling of self-love radiating through the crowd.

Halfway through the evening, Associate Dean of Student Life Nick Barbat came out on stage to give a heartfelt introduction to New Hope icon and friend, Miss Pumpkin. Barbat celebrated Miss Pumpkin for her achievements of raising over \$1 million for HIV research, and graced her with the crown as Rider's first drag hall of famer.

The show continued with several more performances from the night's talent, as the performers donned different outfits and continued to stun the crowd.

Before the night ended, however, there was one final act that viewers of last year's Drag Race could not wait to see.

"My favorite part was Diana Jettcrash," Kalsch said. "I really enjoyed the theatrical aspect of her performance. She's simply incredible."

Diana Jettcrash, also known as senior musical theater major Terren Mueller, won last year's Drag Race and returned this year to raise the bar.

Jettcrash was wheeled onto the stage on a stretcher, covered with a white sheet. Suddenly, she was brought to life and dressed reminiscent of the bride of Frankenstein. Her number conjured gasps, cheers and applause from the audience at numerous points.

The crowd hollered loudest, however, during Jettcrash's lip-sync to Kim Petras' "There Will Be Blood," where she stood over a patch of plastic on the stage and drenched herself in fake blood, closing the evening's festivities with a classic death drop.

As students left the Yvonne Theater, music accompanying their exit, comments of their amazement filled the air, making Drag Race yet another successful event to add to the books.

"MAD About You!" will win hearts just in time for Valentine's Day

By Giavanna Troilo

LOOKING for a last minute Valentine's Day date idea? The Rider Musical Theater Department's upcoming cabaret "MAD About You!" promises to take audience members on an emotional rollercoaster of love and loss.

The cabaret, guest directed by Franklin Trapp of the Forestburgh Playhouse, will feature a variety of familiar artists and genres and speak to the trials and tribulations of love, joy and heartbreak.

Nicholas Contois, sophomore musical theater major and cast member of the cabaret, is confident that this show will "pull at the heartstrings" of all who attend.

"I think that any audience member can find a piece of this show that they love," he said. "It ties together musical theater repertoire and 2000s pop songs."

The show will feature songs from the likes of Bruno Mars, Queen and Lily Allen, in addition to musical theater favorites such as "Hairspray," "The Prom" and "South Pacific" — all within the course of an hour.

Contois will be featured in Mars' "Marry You," as well as the "South Pacific" classic, "Wash That Man Right Out of My Hair."

"The show sells itself," said Contois. "Each song features a new soloist, a new twist on a classic and an original image."

The cabaret offers a different experience than the mainstage musical — though some are scripted, every year Rider creates its own collection of stories to tell through song.

Alyxandria Batty, sophomore musical theater major and another cast member of the cabaret, said the performance will put many featured soloists and ensemble members on display.

"I think everyone gets hyper fixated on the musical, but the cabaret gives more of a chance to showcase people who may not be showcased all the time," she said. "We still do character work, but it's more personal — it's not like, 'this is what you have to do because that's what the script says', which is really cool."

Fine and Performing Arts students from first-year to fourth-year will all have a chance to shine; according to Batty, students featured in the show have had just a few weeks to get the show together, having received the song list in mid-January.

Despite the short rehearsal period, Batty, who will be a featured soloist in "Unruly Heart," from "The Prom," believes "MAD About You!" sets itself apart in

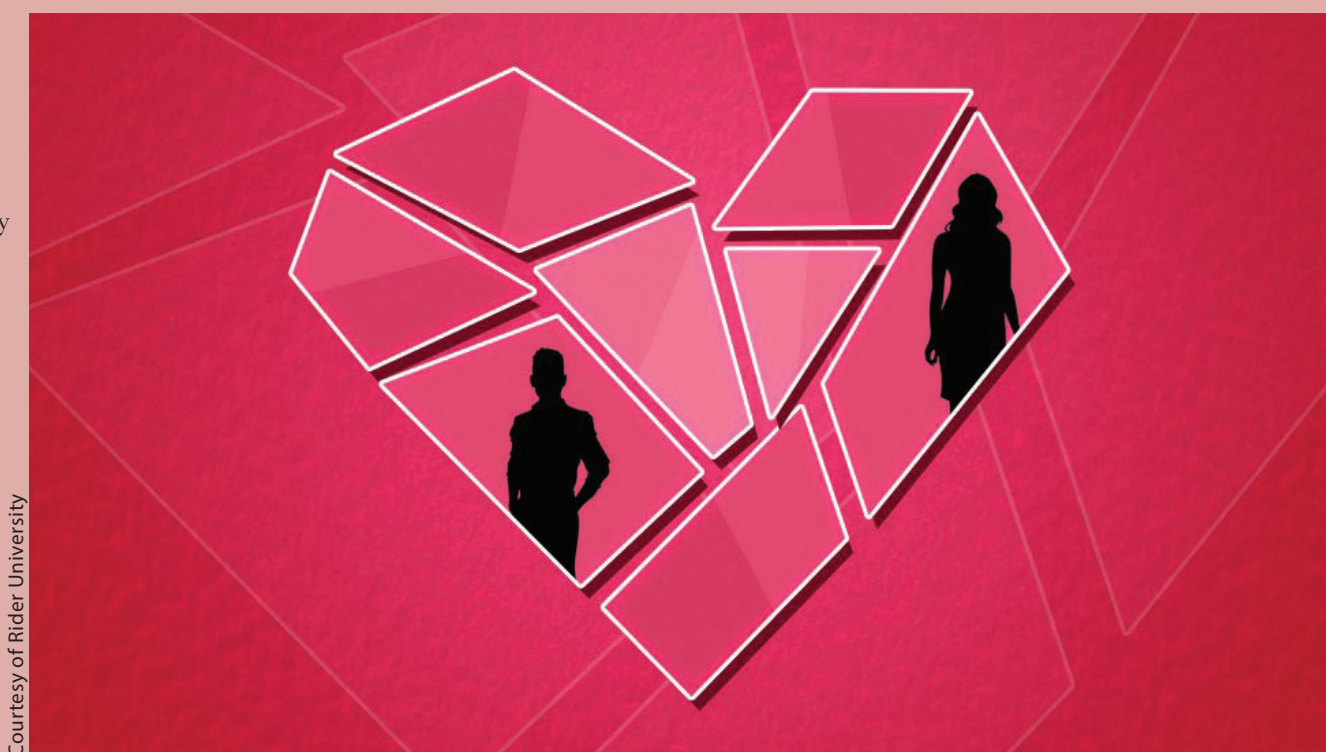
that each song is a "showstopper."

"Most of the time that doesn't happen - most of the time, you're like, 'oh yes, that's the weak spot.' It's showstopper after showstopper; there's so much talent in our cast," Batty said.

In attending this weekend's performance, audiences can be sure to find something they can connect to — from euphoria, to angst, to bliss, to pain, "MAD About You!" will cover it all.

"Love is a very human condition, and it's the basis of pretty much every interaction we have," said Batty. "This showcases the many different faces of it."

"MAD About You!" will run from Feb. 14 to Feb. 16 in the Bart Luedeke Center Theater. No ticket purchase is necessary. Shows start at 7:30 p.m. and 2 p.m. on both days.



Courtesy of Rider University

"MAD About You!" will be taking place in the Yvonne Theater on Feb. 14 and 16. It will feature a wide variety of songs including Bruno Mars' "Marry You" and musical theater favorites from "Hairspray" and "South Pacific."

Don't be a drag: Check out these photos from Drag Race

Gerard Blandina/The Rider News



Rider's Drag Race transformed from a competition to a showcase of drag talent. (Clockwise from top left) Morgan Wells, Maria Topcatt and Sapphira Cristal all visited to show their lip-syncing talents and raise money for Rider's Relay for Life.

Not throwing away her shot: Rider alumna in "Hamilton"

By Cassandra Stathis

LIFE doesn't discriminate between the sinners and the saints. It takes and it takes and it takes and we keep living anyway. We rise and we fall and we break and we make our mistakes," said Milika Griffiths, a Rider '17 Alumna, who was part of helping create some of the best productions at Rider.

A few of her works consist of "Beauty and the Beast," "Ragtime: National Tour" and just recently "Hamilton." "Hamilton" the musical takes place during the 18th century and follows the story of one of America's founding fathers, Alexander Hamilton. The musical consists of various different genres such as hip hop, soul and R&B. "Hamilton" won a Pulitzer Prize for drama as well as 11 Tony Awards in 2016.

"All the hard work I put into the process was finally becoming a reality," stated Griffiths when she first received the news that she would be part of one of Broadway's most successful musicals.

She had continuously auditioned for the show for a year and finally joined the "And Peggy" company in San Francisco. Moving to the west, Griffiths felt this was "an opportunity to start a new chapter" and "to have a chance to learn."

Theater professor Miriam Mills had Griffiths as a student and remembered the work ethic that she had put in in the classroom.

"She was always such a positive student, hard-working, kind, talented, creative," Mills said. "She truly is where she should be — joining one of the most successful musicals in Broadway history."

Mills reminisced on Griffiths' work during her time at Rider, remembering a specific production the two worked on together.

"My favorite memory of [Griffiths] was working with her on a production I directed of 'Machinal,'" Mills recalled. "Her willingness to try anything and everything that I threw at her, she tried and gave each attempt her full commitment. She was brave, easy to work with, funny and always positive."

"Ragtime" was Griffiths' first professional job in 2015. "Ragtime" is a musical that takes place during the 20th century. The production follows three families of different classes and races learning to adapt to America's evolution during World War I.

Joining "Hamilton," Griffiths reflects that, "five years later I feel like I am more grounded and can expand on my craft so much more."

"In Ragtime, I only had one role to focus on. In Hamilton, I am a swing with four roles to learn," she states when comparing two shows. Griffiths' job as a swing, an off-stage performer, means she will have to be prepared for her four roles by learning the tracks her roles sing in. There are also times when a swing will have to sing more than one role in a song.

Over the years and through a broad range of performances, Griffiths has learned about herself as a person and an artist.

"The biggest change I've noticed is that I am so much more secure with my artistry than when I first started," she stated.

Griffiths is an example of someone who continuously followed their dreams and showed that it takes a lot of hard work. Opportunities should be taken as a chance to learn and changing is a critical part of it all.



Courtesy of Rider University



Milika Griffiths '17 got her first professional job with the national tour of "Ragtime," and now travels across the nation as an ensemble member in "Hamilton."

FROM THE EDITOR

Greta T: Nobel Peace Prize nominee

GRETA Thunberg is a 17-year-old Swedish environmental activist that started her cause by skipping school to raise climate awareness. Thunberg got her claim to fame when she spent days camped out in front of the Swedish Parliament, holding a sign that read “Skolstrejk för klimatet”: “School Strike for Climate.”

Thunberg has addressed heads of state at the United Nations, met with the Pope, went head-to-head with U.S. President Donald Trump and inspired 4 million people to join the global climate strike in September 2019, in what was the largest climate demonstration in human history, according to Time magazine.

The teenage activist has now been nominated for the 2020 Nobel Peace Prize by two lawmakers in Sweden: Jens Holm and Hakan Svenneling, who are both members of Sweden’s Left Party.

Social media has played an astronomical part in the exposure of the Earth’s mortality rate and how humans are the very cause of it. Social media has become an outlet for people around the world to share their solidarity or criticisms of the cause.

But, what is there to criticize when the facts are hard to ignore?

In 2018, United Nations scientists declared that the world has less than 10 years to get climate change under control, according to The Washington Post. Just 100 companies are responsible for 71% of global emissions, according to The Guardian. A small number of fossil fuel producers, as well as investors, can be the solution in seizing climate change.

In 2019, from January to November, there were 46,706 wildfires compared with 52,080 wildfires in the same period in 2018, according to the National Interagency Fire Center (NIFC). About 4.6 million acres were burned in the 2019 period, compared with 8.5 million acres in 2018.

“Average global temperature [in 2015] is 14.8°C (58.6°F), the warmest in thousands of years. Level of CO2 in the atmosphere goes above 400 ppm, the highest in millions of years,” according to Climate.gov.

Many celebrities and companies have stepped up and used their platforms to bring awareness of the unpredictable dangers of climate change and taking advantage of their platform to potentially be a part of the change.

Singer Willow Smith recently collaborated with Adidas to release a 100% recyclable sneaker that never has to be thrown away called “Futurecraft Loop”.

This is not Adidas’ first initiative to jumpstart sustainability innovations. This year, Adidas will “produce 11 million pairs of these wonderfully ‘trashy’ shoes through intercepting plastic waste on beaches, remote islands and in coastal communities,” according to the company’s website.

Adidas explains the shoes as “the beginning to the end of waste” and is set to be released in 2021.

Jaden Smith has teamed up with father Will Smith in creating a water bottle that is 80% renewable resources containing zero plastic. Smith’s Just Water was originally 50% renewable with the bottle being made up of paper until replacing it with sugarcane.

“The environmental crisis is a problem of the youth and the youth is going to be the one who has to heal this problem,” said Smith to STEM10, a new documentary series that brings together a collaboration of diverse minds and inspiring future leaders.

Actress Zazie Beetz partnered with New York City council members to pass a historic retrofit bill called the Dirty Buildings Bill that will help polluting buildings go green and cut a third of New York City’s emissions by 40%. Real estate is the cause of 70% of New York’s emissions and only 2% of those buildings create half of all the city’s pollution.

Our generation has the ability and the knowledge to make a difference on our planet that is currently dying. We are witnessing first hand the abnormal intensity and frequency of these natural disasters taking place internationally. Now that we are of age to vote we can emphasize this crisis and take it into our own hands.

“I want you to panic,” Thunberg told the annual convention of CEOs and world leaders at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, in January. “I want you to feel the fear I feel every day. And then I want you to act.”

Thunberg’s fearless efforts to combat climate change, tackle policies and talk politics with world leaders is more than any (probably Greta herself) expected a teenager to accomplish. Awards given to advocates for change like Martin Luther King Jr., Nelson Mandela and former U.S. President Barack Obama. Greta Thunberg, to me, holds symbolism of the actual change the newer generations can and will bring in the coming years.

This is the Earth we have been left with, how do you want to leave it?



This editorial expresses the unanimous opinion of The Rider News Editorial Board. This week’s editorial was written by Opinion Editor Qur’an Hansford



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THE Rider News

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FROM THE EDITOR

'Yikes:' Mrs. Petty under fire for Rosa Parks rap reference

HIP-HOP has been a vehicle for free speech since its emergence to mainstream media in 1979. The genre became political in the late 80s when rappers and MCs (master of ceremonies) began to voice their opinions and experience in America in their lyrics.

From hip-hop groups such as Public Enemy to N.W.A., rap has been used as a tool to express opinion, talk politics and stroke egos. Hip-hop feeds off the First Amendment and is ultimately protected by it. Then there are the ones who take it a step further.

Rapper Nicki Minaj debuted her first single “Yikes” Friday since the release of her fourth studio album “Queen” (2018). In the song, Minaj says a line that seems to have social media in a frenzy. “All you b---es Rosa Parks, uh-oh, get your a-- up, uh.”

Music listeners on social media have explained their issues with Minaj’s Rosa Parks lyrics saying they were disrespectful and distasteful given the song was released during Black History Month and soon after Parks’ birthday.

This is not Minaj’s first time in the hot seat for her comments on historical figures.

Back in 2014, Minaj was called out for her usage of Malcolm X as cover art for a song with the use of the N-word that drew criticism from Malcolm X’s family.

“Ms. Minaj’s artwork for her single does not depict the truth of Malcolm X’s legacy,” Malcolm X’s daughter, Ilyasah Shabazz said in a statement to the Associated Press.

An attorney for the estate and family threatened legal action if the photo was not removed.

“This is a family photo that was taken out of context in a totally inaccurate and tasteless way,” said Mark Roesler, CEO of the business representative for the Malcolm X estate to Rolling Stone.

“For his image to be misused this way, it’s despicable,” Jacob Morris, head of the Harlem Historical Society, told the New York Daily News. “It’s disgraceful to attach the n-word to him — flat out.”

After the backlash from Malcolm X’s family, Minaj proceeded to make reference to the incident in her 2014 single “Chiraq” stating, “Malcolm X daughter, came at me.”

Nicki Minaj has also made references to the late “Queen of Soul” Aretha Franklin.

In 2014, Franklin sat down with Senior Editor Christopher John Farley of the Wall Street Journal and when asked about this decade’s women in music the singer did not have much to say about Minaj responding, “I’m going to pass on that one.”

In 2017, Minaj passed Franklin for most Billboard Hot 100 Hits of any female artist and later delivered the iconic line, “Papoose wrote a Ether record but I broke Aretha record,” both accusing rapper Remy Ma of using a ghostwriter and addressing her ego-boosting accolade.

Minaj did not stop there. A year later, on her latest album “Queen,” Minaj

name drops the Queen of Soul again saying, “Miss Aretha, I think I just passed her (passed her)” following Franklin’s death.

Hip-hop and rap have never conformed to society. I would go as far as to say the foundation of hip-hop is built off rebellion and free speech. Nicki Minaj is the embodiment of no filter and her aggressive cadence is why people listen to her music — at least why I listen. Especially, for a female in a male-dominated genre, Minaj felt like she had to come harder than anyone else in hip-hop and music in general. But, the question that arises is, what is off-limits and what is considered to be free speech?

I believe Nicki Minaj uses the art of metaphors, similes and hyperboles to transcend the imagination and reality of her music which she has done through her multiple personas and character development. I do not believe Minaj meant any malice or disrespect by her lyrics but for the sake of the craft, she is willing to cross those lines of formality and uncomfortableness. Whether she mentions the malpractice of Michael Jackson’s doctor (Flawless Remix) or how President Donald Trump is going to deport her because of her Carribean heritage (Black Barbies), the rapper has not taken her foot off the neck of the music industry. So why should she let up now?

*Qur'an Hansford
junior journalism major*

GREEN CORNER

The 21st-century environmentalists: How social media drives activism

THINK about how many times a day you check your phone. You scroll through Instagram, Facebook, Twitter and repeat. It is no question that social media has become an essential part of our day-to-day lives. More often than not, it is our lone source of news and media updates. But what does that mean for how we discuss climate change?

According to research from Newswhip.com, 2019 saw over 270,000 more articles written about climate change than years past. These massive social media platforms create an ease of sharing that allows information to be shared with hundreds and thousands of people with the tap of a screen. This means that friends and family can mark themselves “safe” from climate catastrophes, organizations can raise money to protect environmental causes and Greta Thunberg can broadcast her groundbreaking speeches at climate rallies around the globe. You can access it all from one tiny device. If you don’t know who Greta is by now, Google her!

Information is more accessible and more abundant than ever. One video is released of a struggling turtle with a plastic straw impeding its breathing and reusable straw sales skyrocket. Social media allows for huge waves of change to be made around the world, but one question still remains — will it be enough?

The sheer volume of discussion about climate change on social media platforms is a great step in the right direction towards addressing the sources of the issues, but it also creates a misleading sense of helpfulness. It is gratifying to put your electronic signature on an environmental petition and sign off for the day, but how much of that is actually creating on the ground change? Not only that, but the more time you spend clicking on environmental ads and articles, the less you will see of the dark side of the climate change conversation.

“With social media, people are easily swayed into wrong opinions from headlines that they see on Facebook, but it also holds so much potential for groups to use it to advocate for change,” said senior musical theatre major Jason Quackenbush comments.

Internet algorithms function in such a way that we only see the information that will trigger us to interact. This means that the movement of environmental activism online is not as accessible to certain demographics. Environmental brands tailor and target their ads towards those who they have already collected data from, as they are more likely to interact. This then creates an oversaturation

of information to those that are already showing an interest in climate change movements and allows for climate deniers to put thousands, if not millions, of dollars into debunking climate change science to propagate harmful ideas on the feeds of those who are susceptible to that information.

Money and profit functions as a driving force for many mainstream brands that create trendy “eco-products” in the eyes of social media consumers.

“We vote with our dollar, and consumer culture is leading us to believe that our consumerism changes will make the biggest difference,” said senior musical theatre major and Eco-Rep Alison Fisher. “But in the end, it’s going to require changing the system and holding brands accountable for their environmental impact from their emissions to the way they use or abuse their internet platform,” she continued.

Big change is risky for businesses, so in today’s society, it is safest to follow along with the movements, but not stand up against the system that creates the source problems. Waves of change and conversation are easy to hide behind and it’s not difficult to get caught up in what that means.

Social media is a tool that is absolutely essential to the climate conversation and has already made major changes in our global reactions, but it must be used intelligently. Simply clicking on articles and signing petitions is not going to save our planet. Ordering a reusable straw from halfway across the world to cut out single use straws is not going to save our planet. We all have to be conscious of what our online interactions actually mean - who is providing funding? What am I actually supporting? And think about what actions we can take to get up, get out and change the world.

Because there is no Planet B.

*Emma Harris
Eco-Rep*

WRESTLING

Rider falls to Big Ten's Rutgers



Peter G. Borg/Rider University

A sold-out crowd in the Alumni Gym witnessed Rider take on Rutgers on Feb. 9.

By Michael Ricchione

AFTER being limited to two decisions in its loss to Illinois on Feb. 7, Rutgers flipped the tables and held the Rider wrestling team to six points on Feb. 9 in front of a sold-out Alumni Gym.

"I wish this was like this for every dual meet," Head Coach John Hangey said of the crowd. "Because our kids deserve to wrestle in crowds like that... because of the hard work they put on and I appreciate everybody that came out. I apologize for the end result because we didn't get it done but we need that continued support and I think our kids deserve it because of what they sacrifice and devote their lives to in this sport."

Rutgers (9-6, 3-5 Big Ten) took a commanding lead by winning the first four bouts before redshirt senior Jesse Dellavecchia, ranked fourth by WrestleStat, got Rider (10-3, 6-1 MAC) on the board. He gave the fans something to cheer about before the intermission with his decision over Mike Van Brill, 3-1, at 157 pounds.

"It's a cool feeling," Dellavecchia said of the crowd reaction. "It was really important to get that win and keep a little train going, trying to get Joe Casey pumped up."

During the intermission, Rider honored two of its former All-Americans, Lou DiSerafino and Shawn Scannell. The men were approaching their 40th and 20th anniversaries of becoming an All-American, respectively.

On the other side of the intermission, the Scarlet Knights also took four out of the five bouts.

"We just lost a lot of tight, close matches and I think that was the difference in this match," said redshirt senior Dean Sherry, who had the other Rider victory with his 5-3 decision over Willie Scott. "Could've gone either way, there were a lot of toss-ups and we were on the short end of the stick."

Redshirt senior Pete Lipari, who transferred from Rutgers earlier this season and ranked No. 25 by FloWrestling, wrestled against JoJo Aragona, who beat Lipari for Rutgers' 141-pound starting spot on the roster.

During the sixth overtime period, Lipari had a one-point lead and was seconds away from protecting it until Aragona got the reversal and the victory.

After the bout, there was a fight in the stands near the Rutgers bench that delayed the start of graduate student Gino Fluri vs. Gerard Angelo at 149 pounds.

Another altercation occurred after the dual, in which Lipari needed to be restrained by the coaching staff after he went through the handshake line.

"I walked over and I just saw Pete [Lipari] and I don't know who said what, what happened, I just grabbed him and got him out of there. That's my responsibility as a coach to protect my athletes," Hangey said of the incident. Lipari declined to comment.

The lone matchup involving two ranked wrestlers happened at 197 pounds where No. 19 Jordan Pagano wrestled junior Ethan Laird, ranked seventh by FloWrestling.

Laird scored a takedown and Pagano managed two escapes in regulation. Pagano was also sitting on a stalling warning and the crowd begged the referees to hit him with another stalling but it did not happen and the match went into overtime.

In overtime, the crowd was still looking for another stalling call but instead saw Pagano secure the upset victory with a takedown which prompted some fans to leave.

There were a total of three overtime bouts but Rider could not win any of them as Fluri lost his Southern Scuffle rematch against Angelo.



Redshirt seniors **Jesse Dellavecchia** (top) and **Dean Sherry** (bottom) notched wins vs. Rutgers on Feb. 9. (Photos courtesy of Rider Athletics)



Rider was without its 133-pound regular in redshirt senior Anthony Cefolo, who is out with a neck injury. Cefolo's status for the rest of the season is uncertain, according to Hangey.

Weighing-in redshirt freshman Chris Wright and Richie Koehler at 133 pounds, Hangey gave Wright the call against No. 9 Sammy Alvarez.

"Total style matchup in my opinion," Hangey said of the decision to go with Wright. "That kid [Wright] has a couple of things that he's very good at that Richie [Koehler]'s kind of a little vulnerable for. It had nothing else to do with anything other than that."

Wright tried but Alvarez just barely got the major decision, 8-0, the only bout with bonus points.

Before being beat by Rutgers, the Broncos traveled to Lock Haven for a Mid-American Conference (MAC) dual on Feb. 7.

Lock Haven (7-6, 3-4 MAC) won the first three matches, all by bonus points, to jump to a 14-0 lead. Fluri with his decision over Brock Port and Dellavecchia with a major decision against Alex Klucker cut the lead in half through the midway point.

The Broncos captured the last four bouts to win, 20-17.

Rider could clinch a share of the MAC Regular Season title if it wins against Clarion (8-5, 5-3 MAC) on Feb. 16 and Missouri (10-6, 7-0 MAC) loses to SIU Edwardsville, which, in contrast, has not won a conference dual to this point.

MEN'S BASKETBALL

Broncs move into first after weekend sweep

By Austin Ferguson

In a much-needed sweep, the men's basketball team defeated Canisius and Niagara on Feb. 7 and 9 to move up to first place in the Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference (MAAC) standings.

Rider vs. Canisius, Feb. 7

The Broncs hosted Canisius on Feb. 7 after a loss to in-state rival Monmouth, 90-84, on Feb. 2. At Monmouth, four Rider players scored in double figures, led by redshirt junior forward Dimencio Vaughn's 28 points.

In Rider's last meeting with Canisius on Jan. 19, the Broncs were able to score 86 points but ultimately allowed 95 points en-route to a loss. Canisius guard Malik Johnson led his team in scoring with 18 points, though Rider senior center Tyere Marshall led all scorers that contest with 31 points.

game-tying layup. He missed. With 15 seconds left, Malik Johnson put up a 3-pointer that could have proved to be the dagger for Canisius. He missed.

With the clock winding down and no clear, open shots for Rider, Nuñez put up a prayer from three to try to give the Broncs a lead. He missed. A whistle blew. He was fouled.

Nuñez went to the free-throw line with a chance to win the game. He made the first two shots from the line to tie the game before Canisius made an attempt to ice the shooter by calling a timeout.

"I was waiting on the timeout, I just didn't know when it was going to come," said Nuñez.

After the timeout, Nuñez returned to the line, took a deep breath and shot the most important free throw of Rider's season so far.

It went in.

Rider called a timeout following the go-ahead free throw to regroup the team for an important defensive possession with five seconds to go.

Out of the huddle, Malik Johnson looked to get the ball inbounds so it could be returned to him for a final shot. Marshall had other plans, stealing the ball and dribbling out the game clock to secure the improbable 61-60 win for Rider.

"We missed a ton of layups and free throws," Baggett said. "But a win is a win is a win and I'm certainly not going to complain about that."

Despite the chaos that seems to be with Rider basketball on many occasions, Vaughn reassured that his team is calm and collected.

game with a mid-range jump shot to beat the shot clock buzzer. Niagara guard Shandon Brown hit a tough shot over Scott to bring the score to 9-4, which Scott answered with a long ball to re-extend the Rider lead to eight.

Hammond came back and hit a deep 3-pointer of his own, though an Ings layup made sure that the Broncs kept their distance into the second media timeout.

After both teams traded points following the break, Nuñez hit a 3-pointer to give the Broncs a convincing 21-9 lead with seven and a half minutes left in the first half.

Both teams proceeded to trade points over the next three minutes, culminating in a Jordan shot from beyond the arc that put Rider up 30-14 with four minutes left in the half.

The Purple Eagles managed a quick five-point swing to lower the Niagara deficit to 11. Rider did not allow the quick run to last, however, as Jordan hit his second 3-pointer of the game and Scott found himself open in the post to continue the Broncs' strong first half.

Niagara continued to try to keep itself within reach with another five-point run to get the margin to single digits, forcing Baggett to call a timeout.

Out of the timeout, Niagara guard Raheem Solomon hit a shot but was answered with a 3-point shot from Scott to end the half with the Broncs ahead, 40-29.

Rider dominated on all sides of the ball, holding significant advantages in assists, rebounding and points in the paint, highlighted by the 24-4 advantage they held in paint scoring.

Rider's efficient scoring was thanks to a 6-of-6 first-half performance from the field for Scott and a 5-of-5 mark for Marshall. Scott was 2-of-2 from beyond the arc to account for six of his 14 first-half points.

Marshall matched Scott's first-half shooting mark with his sixth-straight make to begin the second half, while Hammond hit a floater to begin the scoring for Niagara.

Marshall came right back to hit his seventh shot in as many tries, matching the Broncs' largest lead of the game to that point at 13.

After multiple stops on defense, Williams faked out his defender at hit a layup and Vaughn bottomed a 3-pointer to put Rider up, 49-31, four minutes into the half.

A two-minute scoring drought after the under-16-minute timeout ended with a Vaughn three and Marshall layup to the Broncs up by 23 points.

The Broncs dominated for the rest of the game, leading by as many as 31 points. Niagara pushed in garbage time, bringing Rider's lead down to 15 points, but the Broncs emerged victorious by a score of 73-58.

Rider achieved its highest lead of the game at the 8:47 mark of the second half when an inbound alley-oop from Jordan found itself in the hands of Ings, who elevated and finished the pass with an emphatic slam. The dunk landed in the fourth spot of ESPN's SportsCenter Top 10 Plays on Feb. 10.

Jordan was asked whether or not he and Ings practiced the inbound play at all before Feb. 9's game.

"I mean, sometimes we do it after practice," Jordan said, "Until [Baggett] tells us to get off the court."

Rider's MAAC Standing

The Broncs' win, compounded with Saint Peter's win over Monmouth that same day, propelled them into first place in the MAAC, though the lead is far from comfortable. Rider is tied with Saint Peter's with a 7-5 MAAC record while last-place Canisius is just three and a half games back from the top of the conference.

Upcoming Games

Rider's next matchup will take place in Albany, New York, when it takes on Siena on Feb. 14 at 9 p.m. The Saints are undefeated at home this season, posting a 10-0 record in Albany, New York.

The Broncs will return home on Feb. 16 to play Quinnipiac at 2 p.m. The Bobcats handed Rider an 80-61 loss in Hamden, Connecticut, on Jan. 7, and currently sit one-and-a-half games behind the Broncs.



Unlike the Broncs' last game against Canisius, both teams were cold to start the contest. After Canisius guard Jordan Henderson scored the first basket, both Rider and the Golden Griffins went one for their next five shots from the field, with Canisius claiming a 6-4 lead through the first media break.

Senior guard Stevie Jordan and Vaughn led the Broncs' offensive attack over the next series of minutes to establish a Rider lead. Johnson made sure the Golden Griffins did not fall too far behind as the Broncs led 15-10 into the second break.

Both teams went back-and-forth over the next three minutes as Rider maintained a five-point lead, however, Canisius erased the Broncs' surge in a matter of seconds and peeked ahead, 26-25.

After almost two minutes of scoreless play, Brandon made a free throw to extend the Golden Griffins' lead to two.

Freshman guard Allen Powell made back-to-back 3-pointers to re-establish one-point leads for the Broncs, though Canisius was hot on their tails to maintain its advantage.

Canisius forward Scott Hitchon hit two free throws to finish the first half with the Golden Griffins up, 34-31.

The scoring drought in the middle of the half made a dent to both teams' stats, with both teams shooting a combined 4-of-28 from three.

Rider's scoring was headed by Vaughn, who led all scorers in the first half with 10 points on 5-of-10 shooting. Jordan and Powell both finished the period with six points.

The second half was neck-and-neck until Canisius went on a 9-1 run with four minutes to go to clinch a seven-point lead.

Down 56-49, graduate guard Willy Nuñez, Jr. and Vaughn hit back-to-back 3-pointers to bring the score within one point. Malik Johnson answered with a jumper to re-extend the Golden Griffins' lead to three with just under three minutes left in the game.

With 2:18 left on the clock, Jordan nailed a game-tying 3-pointer to knot the score at 58. A minute later, Canisius forward Corey Brown found himself in the paint and finished a layup to push the Golden Griffins ahead 60-58 with a minute to go in the contest.

The Broncs went back up the court and with 40 seconds left, Vaughn drove in for a potential

Peter G. Borg/Rider University

Freshman guard Christian Ings finishing an inbounds dunk against Niagara on Feb. 9.

Vaughn said, "You guys may be panicking, but we try to stay as calm as possible."

Rider vs. Niagara, Feb. 9

The Broncs remained at home on Feb. 9 in hopes to sweep the weekend with a win over Niagara. Rider's last meeting with the Purple Eagles ended with a buzzer-beating 3-pointer from Niagara guard Marcus Hammond for a 70-68 defeat for the Broncs.

The pace to start the game was a bit slow, only seeing three baskets in the first four and a half minutes, all by Rider to put it up 6-0 and keep Niagara scoreless headed to the first media timeout.

Out of the break, redshirt senior guard Kimar Williams hit a free throw and a layup to extend the Broncs' lead to 9-0.

Five minutes into the game, forward Greg Kuakumensah scored Niagara's first points of the

Sports

INSIDE

WRESTLING LOSES TO RUTGERS

Mike Ricchione recaps Rider's loss in its biggest match of the season so far.

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WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

Rider drops two in first MAAC losses



Carolo Pascale/The Rider News

Sophomore guard **Amanda Mobley** scored 17 points and dished out six assists in Rider's 63-58 loss to Marist on Feb. 11.

By **Dylan Manfre**

SAINTE Peter's put the Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference (MAAC) on notice 28 days before the 11 teams descend to Atlantic City for the conference tournament with a 67-56 win over Rider.

Rider at Saint Peter's, Feb. 6

The Peacocks hosted the Broncos on Feb. 6 and from the tip, Rider did not look like the seventh-best mid-major program in the nation, according to collegeinsider.com. Certainly not after being down 13-2 with a minute left in the first quarter and being down 12 at halftime.

Rider had 20 points at halftime — its lowest total for a half all season.

The traditional good shooting was absent as the Broncos went a woeful 1-for-20 from deep and 32% from the field in the game.

Somehow senior guard Stella Johnson managed to record a 22-point 10-rebound double-double with her team struggling to find the flow.

Four of the five starters had four fouls and put Head Coach Lynn Milligan in a tough situation on deciding whether to keep players such as sophomore guard Amanda Mobley or senior guard Amari Johnson on the floor.

The team substituted senior center Aubure Johnson out and played freshman Victoria Toomey in the middle, but having the experienced senior lineup would have been ideal.

Saint Peter's ending Rider's 14-game winning streak shows the league the Broncos can be vulnerable. Canisius upsetting Fairfield on Feb. 8 made the Rider-Marist game at Alumni Gym on Feb. 11 much more interesting given the playoff implications as the two teams were separated by a half a game in the MAAC standings.

Rider vs. Marist, Feb. 11

Turnovers and foul trouble were the main culprits for the Broncos against Saint Peter's. Rider would need its starters on the floor to avoid a Saint Peter's 2.0. Favre was the only starter without four fouls.

Multiple Rider comeback efforts in the second half showed the resiliency of the group but it was to no avail in a 63-58 loss on Feb. 11. Right from the opening tip, Amari Johnson had a fire in her eye. Notorious for being a tenacious rebounder, she

managed to snag 10 at the end of the first quarter. She battled with Marist's Rebekah Hand and ripped the ball away forcing a jump ball.

The first quarter seemed promising. Marist only held a two-point lead and Rider's offense seemed to have a bit more intensity.

That all went away in the ensuing quarter and things got ugly.

Marist took a 13-0 run which lasted 8:46 and held Rider to shoot 1-of-16 from the field.

The Broncos scored two points in the entire quarter, a season-low. The lone bucket came on a floater from Stella Johnson with 41 seconds left. It was almost as if a lid were on the basket.

"We were taking good shots... I think it was just people getting back in the rhythm of things [after Saint Peter's] and it was just a lid on the basket," Stella Johnson said.

Milligan emphasized that despite the result of the game her team is "not on a skid."

"We're not on a slide. Everyone needs to relax. These are two completely different games," Milligan said. "We didn't get the job done for different reasons and all of those reasons and things we will correct by Thursday."

Some sort of switch clicked with Rider when they left the locker room because Stella Johnson did what that she does best: score.

She pointed to an improvement in communication that allowed them to mount a comeback.

"First half I think we were a little relaxed," Stella Johnson said. "The guards have to talk to the post and the post needs to talk to the guards and I think we needed to do that better in the first and second quarters. This game we weren't communicating as a team."

Stella Johnson carried the team on her back during the first five minutes of the third quarter, pulling Rider to within seven thanks to a 14-4 run.

Johnson was responsible for 10 of those points 14 points.

Over the course of the 4:49 stretch, the Broncos were 6-for-9 from the field and had two 3-pointers from Stella Johnson. However, the quarter ended with the Broncos down 47-33.

Lea Favre, who leads the MAAC in field goal percentage, finished the game shooting 2-for-10.

"I think Lea just missed shots," Milligan said. "I mean she's the leader in field goal percentage in the league and she has been for two years strong. Those are shots we want her to take. I think she was a little bit rushed today, I thought they sent an extra defender at her so maybe her shots were a little more rushed than normal."

It was the Broncos' small spark as they came to within nine at one point in the third quarter.

Stella Johnson pulled the Broncos to within eight on multiple occasions in the fourth quarter. A pair of strong defensive plays from Amari Johnson gave Rider some life as well as with the team's full-court press.

A Favre layup pulled Rider within seven and sent Alumni Gym into a frenzy.

A turnover from Vander Weide gave Rider time to regroup. It led to another Favre layup making the score 57-55.

The Broncos were unable to close out in the final stretch of the game, losing 63-58 to the Red Foxes.

Milligan was confident her team would manage to trim their lead.

"We've been in this situation a lot of times,"

Milligan said. "I think this is the first time we've been down double-digits and we didn't come back and win. Do we want to dig ourselves that hole? No, we don't."

Rider's MAAC Standing

Following the loss to Marist, the Red Foxes and the Broncos switched places in the MAAC standings. Rider now sits in second place, a half of a game behind Marist.

Upcoming Games

Rider will play three games in a week against Siena, Manhattan and Quinnipiac, all on the road. The Siena game is on Feb. 13 at 7 p.m.

The Manhattan and Quinnipiac games will be on ESPN+ and the Siena contest will be on ESPN3.