



## Rider keynote event opens dialogue about free speech



Gerard Blandina/The Rider News

Director for Campus Free Speech at PEN America **John Friedman** spoke on the history, parameters and importance of free speech on Feb. 20 in the Mercer Room of Daly Dining Hall.

By Tatyanna Carman and Gabrielle Waid

**P**ROJECT Director for Campus Free Speech at PEN America Jonathan Friedman spoke at Rider's keynote event about free speech on Feb. 20 in the Mercer Room of Daly Dining Hall.

PEN stands for poets, essayists and novelists. PEN America is a "100 year-old non-profit organization that is [committed] to essentially the intersection of literature, defending free speech, the power of words and human rights," according to Friedman.

Prior to being at PEN America, Friedman was an adjunct professor at New York University and Columbia University. He came to Rider in August 2019 to lead a professional development event, according to Vice President for Student Affairs Leanna Fenneberg.

Fenneberg opened the event and introduced the speaker. Friedman started with a background on PEN America.

"Two things that are central to the work are that we advocate for the unimpeded circulation of ideas and the arts across borders and we view free speech as a matter of broad civic concern," said Fenneberg.

He said that many issues that are present today originated at least 100 years ago, if not more. He gave an example of controversy of film in the 1920s and compared it to controversies today surrounding social media. Friedman tied the importance of free speech to history. He then showed two definitions of free speech through two different historical documents: the Constitution and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

"Free speech is not just something that American citizens have, it is actually a human right," he explained. "This can be pretty surprising to a lot of people who today think of how free speech is being used as a kind of umbrella term to say hateful things or to push ideas in the public sphere that might undermine the idea of the university. But actually there is a long history of not just the United States, but countries around the world committing to the idea that 'everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression. This right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through



## Renovations, expansions among proposed changes to Fine Arts

By Austin Ferguson

**A**s a part of ongoing preparations for the consolidation of Westminster Choir College (WCC) to the Lawrenceville campus, the university announced details of its largest project for the consolidation to date: renovations and a three-story addition to Fine Arts.

Details of the project were shared with members of the Rider community on Feb. 5 in an email from Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs DonnaJean Fredeen.

"The Facilities Working Group has done an outstanding job in creating these plans to benefit all Rider students while paying particular attention to the needs of those coming from the Princeton campus," Fredeen said toward the beginning of her message.

Construction, which is set to begin in the spring, will involve with changes to the existing structure of Fine Arts, headlined by a new main entrance in front of the Yvonne Theater.

The new facade will be accompanied by the new Art Gallery, which according to Vice President for Facilities and University Operations Mike Recca, will be relocated from the second floor of the Bart Luedke Center (BLC) to the lobby in front of the Yvonne theater.

Other first-floor renovations include a new lobby to the Yvonne Theater, upgraded bathrooms and common areas and renovations to classroom spaces to become music classrooms and create space for Westminster's bell choir.

Renovations to the second floor, which have been ongoing since summer 2019, aim to create a wing for communication students. After the relocation of the Liberal Arts and Sciences (LAS) Dean's Suite to Lynch Adler Hall and the eventual move of faculty offices, the entire floor will be dedicated to communications, including additions of editing and production studios, along with labs for journalism, digital media and television.

In the former LAS Dean's Suite, 107.7 The Bronc, Rider's student-run radio station, will find its new home in April, relocating from the ground floor of the BLC.

Classrooms in Fine Arts will all receive renovations, which include new lights, ceilings and floorings, furniture and paint jobs. All renovations to the existing building are scheduled to finish by the start of the fall 2020 semester.



Courtesy of Rider University

Graphics released by the university detail expansive renovations to the Fine Arts Center.

Also starting in spring 2020 is the expansion of the Fine Arts Center, though that project is not expected to be finished until the start of the fall 2021 semester.

The largest point of emphasis made for the 23,000 square-foot expansion by Fredeen was the multipurpose space that will be located on its third floor.

"Similar to the new space in Gill Chapel, it will create a flexible space able to accommodate rehearsals and performances for many programs, including choral ensembles, theatre, musical theatre and dance," Fredeen said. "In addition to the existing Yvonne Theater and Spitz Theater, the new multipurpose room will be the third performance space in Fine Arts alone."

The ground floor of the expansion space will include new bathrooms, dressing rooms and instructional spaces for performance-oriented needs, including opera and acting.

The second and third floors are proposed to house 40 new offices for music faculty, with all being able to accommodate a grand or upright piano. For the 2020-2021 academic year, those offices will be located in Omega House, where according

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### RIDER BEAT TWICE

The men's basketball team was defeated twice, dropping to fourth place.

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### CALL HER ZAYA

NBA legend Dwayne Wade sits down with Ellen DeGeneres to talk about daughter Zaya.

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### HORSING AROUND

Find out what inspired the mascot we all know and love.

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## SECURITY BRIEFS

BY STEPHEN NEUKAM

**Gone Missing**

Benched. On Feb. 18 at 5:04 p.m., a student came to Public Safety to report that he was sitting on a bench outside of the Fine Arts Center between 4 p.m. and 4:30 p.m. and when he got to class he realized he left his phone on the bench. When he checked the area he could not find the phone. He reported the phone stolen was a value of \$900. There are no suspects.

**Watch Your Foot**

Drop it like it's hot. On Feb. 18 at 7:31 p.m., a student reported that when she was moving a desk in a classroom in Bierenbaum Fisher Hall at 2:50 p.m., the top of the desk separated from the bottom and the bottom part landed on her foot. She complained of pain in her foot and Public Safety provided an ice pack and bandages. She said she would follow up with Public Safety at a later time.

**Freshman Follies**

It's full. On Feb 20 at 8:52 p.m., Public Safety responded to a fire alarm at Poyda Hall. The building was evacuated and smoke was observed coming from the laundry room. It was discovered that a washer was smoking due to it being overloaded. The washer was unplugged and the laundry room was ventilated.

— Information provided by Public Safety Coordinator Michael Yeh

**Jonathan Friedman touched on a variety of aspects regarding free speech**

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any media and regardless of frontiers.”

Friedman connected this to universities and said that students wrestling with ideas is fundamental. He also gave examples from PEN America of instances where violations of free speech have occurred. Some of those examples Friedman gave were of Washington Post journalist Jamal Khashoggi, Cameroon rapper Valsero, Ukrainian filmmaker Oleg Sentsov and Myanmar journalists Wa Lone and Kyaw Soe Oo.

“They are all stories of people being imprisoned or otherwise penalized for things that they said critical of their governments,” he said. “We often do not necessarily think of them when we think about free speech in the United States today. We often do not think about these international human rights issues, we’re often thinking about instead, ‘well what crosses the line?’”

He showed a billboard in Times Square in New York City from last year that received a lot of attention displaying an athletic woman with tattoos, tying up President Donald Trump in red, white and blue rope with the burning White House behind them for an advertisement for athletic-wear. He said that some people viewed it as inciting violence. He then showed a billboard in North Carolina that was a mile away from a gun store that showed four women elected in the House of Representatives Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez of New York, Ilhan Omar of Minnesota, Ayanna Pressley of Massachusetts and Rashida Tlaib of Michigan and were called the four horsemen of the apocalypse. He said that some people viewed it as inciting violence as well.

“Of course, a lot of people on both sides of the political spectrum today think all the problems in the country have everything to do with that other side,” Friedman said “But a lot of the time they don’t recognize the ways in which we are now caught up in a kind of dynamic where one side does one side does one thing, one side does the other and there is this almost cultural war taking place, not only in the public sphere, on social media and what you can put on billboards, but what’s caught up right in the center are college campuses and you all know that.”

Friedman then spoke on types of censorship such as threats, harassment, strict cultural norms and inequality of thought and how they manifest on campus. He also emphasized how social media and the internet can spread misinformation and spoke on hateful rhetoric.

Friedman offered solutions to the issues and controversies surrounding free

speech which, according to him, comes from harmonizing free speech and inclusion and through PEN’s three-pronged framework for balancing free speech and inclusion. Friedman also discussed the importance of students, faculty and administrators retaining their personal beliefs and values. His advice to retaining this crucial element can be explained in four steps that have been cultivated and created by PEN America.

“[First] articulating your core values... start off a semester putting information on your syllabus about what’s going to guide conversation in the class,” he said. “Second, it’s about education what you’re doing today, you’re educating yourselves.”

Friedman went on to discuss how to actively prepare to handle situations involving free speech and beliefs on campus, “Third, we can promote dialogue and listening so it’s not just about education and core values, it’s about making dialogue and listening across differences,” Friedman said, “Finally preparing for different scenarios... anticipating how you are going to promote free speech when its a difficult situation.”

The event ended with a question and answer session that covered topics such as handling outside perceptions of a person’s beliefs, cancel culture, “mob think” and critical thinking on issues and ideas.

Coordinator of Student Involvement Allison Koury, shared how she thought the event turned out.

“I think that it is really great. I’ve heard Jonathan speak the last time he was on campus and absolutely loved hearing him,” she said. “I think the message of PEN America is so urgent on college campuses today and in our world. As we know, free speech has come under threat over and over again. I think that it was an amazing turnout to see so many people from across the entire campus come together to be here to discuss free speech.”

Junior musical theater and film major Kristen Wisneski said what she learned from the event.

“I think one of the main things that I learned was how hate speech is not necessarily a definitive term in the dictionary and all forms of speech should be valued no matter what opinion is backing them up,” Wisneski said. “We should all look towards including all communication principles and inclusive dialogues in our own communities and with people that we do not even necessarily know.”

**Fine Arts construction will offer new spaces for student’s creative projects**

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2020-2021 academic year, those offices will be located in Omega House, where according to Reca, the demolition of the interior of the building is underway.

It has also been proposed that 16 new practice rooms will reside in the second and third floors of the space set to be finished in 2021.

If construction is to be finished as proposed, the number of practice rooms, which already have homes in Kroner Hall and are proposed to have homes in the renovated Gill Chapel, will rise to 53, which, according to Fredeen, will surpass the number of practice rooms available on Westminster’s campus.

Reca sees the incoming changes to Fine Arts to be exciting for Rider students.

“It’s a renovation that’s going to touch all programs in Fine Arts,” Reca said. “We’re renovating pretty much every classroom in the building and we’re shifting things around to better serve the arts program.”

Fredeen ended her statement with confidence in the project’s ability to support the students of WCC and the Lawrenceville campus.

“This project represents a major investment in the Westminster College of the Arts and our commitment to ensuring a strong and sustainable future for WCC on the Lawrenceville campus,” Fredeen said. “I’m confident this project is going to support our students in their efforts to reach the highest levels of musical and artistic achievement and contribute to their overall educational experience.”



Courtesy of Rider University

A new addition to the Fine Arts Center is planned to be built to accommodate the WCC merger.

## ADVERTISEMENT


 Join Us!



# Women's History Month 2020

## Women's Empowerment

### March 5

#### **Nina's Whisper: Intimate Partner Violence**

11:45 a.m. to 12:45 p.m.,  
The Yvonne Theater in Fine Arts

Dr. Sheena C. Howard presents *Nina's Whisper: Intimate Partner Violence*, a talk and Q & A session about her upcoming debut novel. The book, *Nina's Whisper*, is about a woman who struggles to triumph over domestic abuse at the hands of another woman. In the end, it is an inspirational tale that will anger, console and call you to action. During this event, Dr. Howard will address our preconceived notions around what domestic abuse is, looks like and who it affects.

Sponsored by the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and the Center for Diversity and Inclusion

### March 9

#### **#WhyIDidn'tReport**

9:30 p.m., Rue Auditorium (Sweigart 115)

An open discussion of sexual assault that can help spread awareness on the topic. Some things to be talked about will be victim blaming and self-blame stigmas. We will also be addressing the ongoing statistics and research on women sexual assault cases and their current statuses. The goal is to create a safe space where we can come together to speak upon these issues.

Sponsored by Rider Women United

### March 30

#### **Celebrating Women in Rider Athletics: A Reception in Their Honor**

6 p.m., NJM Community Room

Join Rider Athletics, Rider's Women's Basketball, Club Sports Council, and the Center for Diversity and Inclusion for an evening reception honoring Rider's female student-athletes in the areas of leadership, community service and academic excellence. A distinguished Rider alumna athlete will provide remarks about her time at the University and lessons she learned that have helped her excel in life and her career. You won't want to miss the opportunity to mix and mingle with these impactful female role models.

Sponsored by Rider Athletics, Rider Women's Basketball, Club Sports Council, and the Center for Diversity and Inclusion

[rider.edu/events/womens-history-month](http://rider.edu/events/womens-history-month)

## OTHER UPCOMING EVENTS

### March 4

#### **Rider BMR Swab Drive**

1 p.m., Student Recreation Center Lobby

The Rider Bone Marrow Registry aims to educate the Rider community about the importance of becoming a bone marrow donor. In collaboration with the Gift of Life, one of the nation's largest bone marrow and stem cell registries, the Rider Bone Marrow Registry is hosting a swabbing event to register new potential donors and educate the community about the overall donation process. Rider BMR is dedicated to expanding the national bone marrow registry and providing support for affected individuals.

Sponsored by Rider Bone Marrow Registry, an SGA recognized organization

### March 9

#### **"Stairway to the Past: The Holocaust Exhibit" Ribbon-Cutting**

Noon to 1 p.m., Moore Library

This ribbon-cutting event will serve as the ceremonial opening of "Stairway to the Past: The Holocaust Exhibit." These provocative photos of the Holocaust illustrate one of the most horrific examples of genocide, leaving an indelible mark on mankind that will remain in our lives forever. This exhibit will offer a visual narrative of that time in history that provides deep insight into the suffering and pain withstood by Jews. The exhibit will be on display through April.

Sponsored by the Julius and Dorothy Koppelman Holocaust/Genocide Resource Center, Center for Diversity and Inclusion, and Moore Library

### March 9 and 11

#### **Green Film: *Bigger than Water***

7 p.m., Rue Auditorium (Sweigart 115)

*Bigger Than Water* uplifts the stories of some of the most dedicated and engaged Flint residents who continue to fight for the safety of their community while connecting the dots between Flint's history and how the interests of a few greedy officials anxious to capitalize from Michigan's emerging Blue Economy would set the stage for one of the nation's most horrific man made disasters. For more information, please visit [biggerthanwater.com](http://biggerthanwater.com).



CENTER FOR  
DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION  
*Unity + Diversity = University*

These events are partially funded by the mandatory student activity fee.  
Approved by Campus Life – 4/1

# Various offices are being moved to new locations on campus

By Hailey Hensley

**A**SLEW of construction projects have either begun or are slated to begin during this academic year and over the summer. Additions are being made, buildings are being renovated and some of Rider's most frequently-visited offices are getting brand new looks in different locations across campus.

In early 2020, the university formally announced that 107.7 The Bronc, Rider's student-run radio station, would be relocated to the Fine Arts Center in the former location of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences dean's office, at the end of a second-floor hallway. That area was under construction as of Feb. 25th.

General Manager of 107.7 The Bronc John Mozes emphasized that this move was an exciting prospect for Rider students and specifically students who have a vested interest in working in radio.

"There are many things that are great about it [the move]. I think this will create a fantastic space the get real-world experience with modern equipment," Mozes said. "All the equipment will be IP-based, we're going to have a new automation system, it's going to have touch screens. It's really going to be a space where students can hone their skills, or learn new ones."

Sophomore film, television and radio student Danny Allen Jr. expressed anticipation and joy at the upcoming renovation and relocation of the radio station, saying that it could even change the overall perception of the station across campus.

"We [107.7 The Bronc] could arguably be the centerpiece of Rider, for a time at least," Allen Jr. said.

Taking over the large space on the first floor of the Bart Luedeke Center (BLC) will be a larger office space for the Center for Diversity and Inclusion as well as a new Student Navigation Office, all of which are part of Rider's new Inclusive Excellence plan unveiled earlier this academic year.

Executive Director for the Center for Diversity and Inclusion (CDI) Pamela Pruitt clarified the importance of a larger presence for the CDI and highlighted the ways in which it benefits the campus community as a whole.

"We wanted a space that would make a statement to the campus community on how the university perceives issues of inclusion and the importance of promoting a sense of multicultural understanding," Pruitt said.

Along with the move of the CDI and the radio station, the College of Continuing Studies (CCS) will also be relocated in order to make room for the larger CDI space and navigation office.

CCS offices will be moved to the second floor of the BLC where the Art Gallery used to be located.

Dean of the College of Continuing Studies Boris Vilic eagerly described the construction project that would give him and his colleagues a brand new office space, even going so far as to take a Rider News reporter up to the construction site.

Vilic described a variety of projects set to occur on the second floor of the BLC, including the Registrar's Office moving into the building, right next to the Financial Aid and Bursars Office. Vilic described this as a "one-stop-shop" to solve student issues.

"We [CCS] are very excited for this move. It will be good for all Rider students,



Hailey Hensley/The Rider News

The former Art Gallery is being redesigned to create a new space for the College of Continuing Studies.

not just CCS students, to have all of these offices together. We will be able to solve all of the student's issues at once," said Vilic.

Vilic stated that construction in the art gallery is slated for completion at the end of March or early April, at which point the CCS office will be moving into their new space.

"I think it is a great time to be a student at Rider University. I think it's a great time to learn. I think it's a great time to be part of campus life," said Mozes. "I think it's a great time to be engaged in what's going on at Rider University."

The wide variety of construction projects across campus may be leaving students wondering what will happen next, but one thing is certain: changes are imminent.

## Dance/movement therapy program in process of approval from American Dance Therapy Association

By Tatyanna Carman

**R**IDER'S dance/movement therapy (DMT) concentration program is in the process of gaining approval from the American Dance Therapy Association (ADTA).

The concentration is a part of the the Master of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Counseling program on campus. It met the education and training standards for ADTA, so the program was submitted for candidacy in summer 2019 and its curriculum was reviewed, according to Assistant Professor of the DMT concentration Eri Millrod. She said it will take three years to gain full approval because it requires the first cohort of students to graduate before gaining approval. Rider would be one of six programs in the nation with this approval and could be the first in New Jersey.

"So [the program] launched, this is the first year, so 2019 fall was the first semester that we started," Millrod said "We started developing the program in 2013, maybe the first discussion on like 'Let's do this,' was that long ago. And then Rider University and all the stakeholders approved it in the spring of last year. So between spring of last year and September of last year, we recruited students."

DMT graduate student Stephanie Greenleaf explained the importance of the program.

"This program allows Rider to be at the forefront of clinical mental health education and creative arts therapy," she said. "Being the only school in New Jersey to offer this concentration, Rider is now it for [DMT] in our state and will graduate the first official class of dance movement therapists."

Greenleaf said the program gave her a new sense of purpose as well as an opportunity to use what she loves to impact both individuals and society.

"As I get further into the DMT program, I am realizing how important it is to be a part of this new endeavor for Rider University," she said. "With mental health being such a big part of our national conversation right now, knowing that we will have validity to bring the creative arts into that conversation is exciting."

Millrod said she used her 27 years of dance and movement therapy experience, her expertise in teaching students from other programs and seeing their needs and her doctoral dissertation on training DMT students to help create the program.

"When they graduate from this program, they should be able to practice both verbal-based therapies and non-verbal based therapy through dance and movement therapy," Millrod said. "It's never enough, two and a half, three years. Even the part-time where people take four years and a semester to finish. It's not enough to be a therapist. So you can imagine being a therapist is very complicated and you need to experience it. So they're not going to be ready to be a full-fledged therapist. They will be ready for the entry-level credentials, which is what it does. I hope they



Courtesy of Rider University

The dance/movement therapy concentration program is a part of the Master of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Counseling program and its first semester, which started in fall 2019.

have a good enough foundation to understand that they need not be this finished product, that they are a work in progress."

Millrod emphasized that the most important thing for a DMT is to have "tolerance of the unknown" which she says relates to the creative process behind the field.

She also mentioned that the candidacy is pragmatic in the sense that it qualifies graduates of approved programs to qualify for the entry-level registration certifications, which sets the groundwork for board certification. Millrod also shared what she thought the concentration adds to the Rider community.

"[DMT] is very much a social justice kind of a practice. It's very much current in terms of embracing multiculturalism, diversity and inclusion, because dance movement therapists work with people who have disabilities, whether it's intellectual, mental, physical," Millrod said. "I worked with mentally-ill patients and people with addictions, so we advocate naturally for their equal rights as citizens of the larger society. I think it does fit into Rider's inclusive, diverse culture and hopefully it will create, as a dance movement therapist, an awareness for wellness, holistic wellness. Not just thinking and cognitive, but body mind wellness. So I hope it goes beyond the walls of the graduate program."

# Robert Burger recognized for his “art of visual storytelling”

By Cassie Stathis

**N**EW Hope Arts is an art center that allows local contemporary artists to put their work on display. It was opened in 2002 by Robin Larsen, who wanted to reclaim that New Hope, Pennsylvania, was a top national art landmark. The center hosts annual events in six different mediums: sculpting, wood, fine artisan crafts, painting and new media installations. Robert Burger, an adjunct professor of graphic design and animation at Rider, recently had his work on display at this year’s New Hope Arts’ Annual Juried Members Exhibition 2020.

“It is always a thrill to have my art included in an exhibit, particularly when it is a juried show and your work has been recognized for its quality,” said Burger. His work has a large variety from cool, funky geometric shapes to different animals playing instruments.

“Throughout the years my work constantly changes and evolves. I have moved through various styles and mediums in my years of artistic creation,” he continued. “I choose to take a new direction that excites me and poses new challenges, conceptually and technically.”

His work being put on display caught the eyes of many, but most notably the Executive Producer of “Pee-Wee’s Playhouse,” Peter Rosenthal. Burger reminisced on the memories he has about the show, “Pee-Wee’s Playhouse’ is one of my all-time favorite TV shows.”

“The originality and wackiness of the show really resonated for me and it appears that the wackiness in my work also resonated for one of the brains behind the show,” said Burger.

Senior graphic design major Fredy Ulloa appreciated Burger’s passion for art and illustration, a love that carries over into his teaching.

“He allows us to learn on our own while also giving feedback,” said Ulloa. “He seems to always smile,

which is great. It seems he really enjoys being a professor and he loves to interact with us.”

Burger remembers beginning his art career in kindergarten. He recalled his earliest memory of drawing, “creating art of drawing flying saucers and aliens.”

In high school, Burger’s art went through a drastic change. He had the opportunity to work with friends and branch out his artwork, “In high school, a good friend and I created and sold our own original comic book.”

Burger continued to work on his art and gain recognition.

“After graduating from Pratt Institute, I began my career as a freelance illustrator,” he said. “Creating illustrations for book covers, album covers, magazine covers and editorials, advertising and movie logos.” He even designed the logo for the original “Conan The Barbarian” movie.

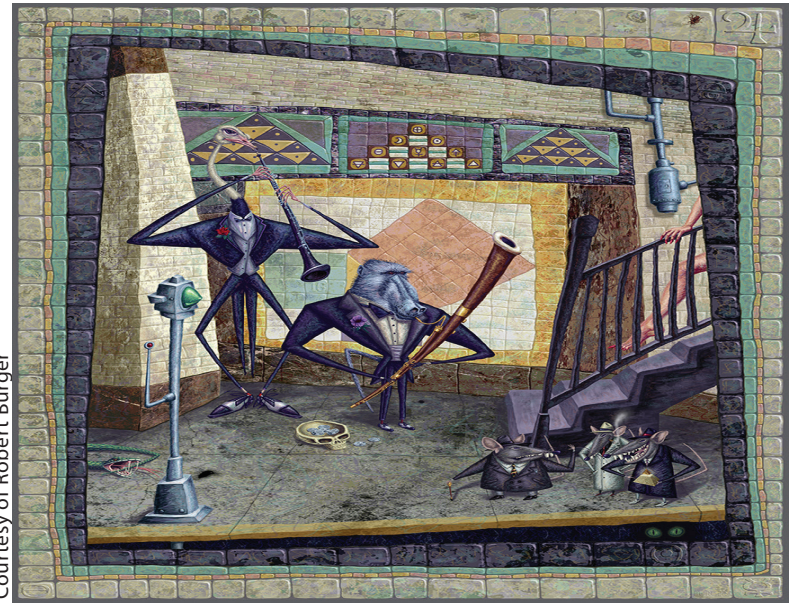
Over the years, Burger’s inspiration has gone through a lot of changes.

“I draw creative inspiration from many sources – from museums and travel to music and books,” he said. “Surrealism has always been a major influence on my work.”

One of his more recent works includes different animals playing various instruments. “I decided to develop the musical animals concept into a series of paintings starting with a solo musician,” he said. “Followed by a duo, trio, quartet, quintet and finally a sextet, which will be the last painting in the series.”

Burger also mentioned another recognition about a specific piece of his, “The Lambdoma Duo,” which was recently accepted into the Society of Illustrators of Los Angeles’ Annual Juried Exhibition.

The Society of Illustrators of Los Angeles, founded



Courtesy of Robert Burger

“The Lambdoma Duo” is a painting by Robert Burger. It was recently accepted into the Society of Illustrators of Los Angeles’ Annual Juried Exhibition.

in 1953, promotes philanthropic and educational goals, and serves as a way for artists and designers to find work on the west coast. It had been created by a small number of artists and designers from Southern California.

Although Burger’s work is unconventional to some, he said, “I think the art tells a story through its imagery and I am telling a story in each one of my works. Illustration is the art of visual storytelling.”

Burger continues to branch out and change his artwork over time.

“After all, creating art is my idea of fun and there is nothing like the sense of satisfaction and accomplishment when a work of art is completed,” he said.



Courtesy of Robert Burger



Courtesy of Robert Burger



Courtesy of Robert Burger



Courtesy of Rider University

All of Robert Burger’s works explore surrealism and delve into elements of the outrageous and wacky. Burger’s style stood out enough to catch the attention of Peter Rosenthal, executive producer of “Pee-Wee’s Playhouse,” a show that inspired Burger himself.

# Unmasking the mascot: AJ the Bronc

By Christian McCarville

It is unlikely for one to attend a school event without seeing a person in an animal-like costume jumping around and getting the crowd excited. The mascot of a college or university is commonly the face of the school and, in many cases, implemented in how the school brands itself.

At Rider, it is no secret that the school brands itself as “the Broncs.” However, this was not always the case.

Back in 1929, when the school was known as Rider College, athletics were first introduced under the first Director of Athletics Clair F. Bee. Needing a catchy name for these athletic teams, Bee came up with the Roughriders.

Rider’s athletic teams were known as the “Roughriders” until 1955 when it was renamed to “the Broncs.” This resulted in the creation of Rider’s current mascot, the lovable AJ the Bronc.

“AJ the Bronc is an important part of Rider University,” said Associate Director of Athletics for External Operations and Development Karin Torchia. “He’s a recognizable figure not only for our Division I athletics teams, but also for the university as a whole.”

While AJ the Bronc is a very recognized name on campus, the Bronc went nameless for almost six decades. In 2016, Rider held a contest to name the Bronc, open to all faculty, staff, students and alumni.



AJ the Bronc competed against other mascots during the Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference (MAAC) basketball championships. AJ will surely be at this year’s championship to cheer on the Broncs men and womens basketball teams in the playoffs.

The names AJ, Andy, Blaze, Brock and Rowdy made it to the final five. AJ eventually became the official name of the Bronc, as it was an homage to Rider’s first president Andrew J. Rider.

AJ the Bronc does not appear exclusively at sporting events, as he can be seen at many locations and events all over campus. There are different variations of the AJ the Bronc costume that are worn by different people on various occasions.

The Office of Admissions frequently has select students being AJ the Bronc and embodying the mascot for events such as Admitted Student Day and open houses.

Sophomore arts administration major Ethan Manton has worn the AJ the Bronc costume on multiple occasions for the Office of Admissions.

“I feel like a completely different person when I’m in the suit, almost like a superhero. That being said, with great power comes great responsibility,” said Manton. Sophomore accounting major Cory Mayo has also had the opportunity to be AJ the Bronc.

“It gives me a new identity when I put the outfit on. It helps express a side of me that can be difficult to show as myself,” said Mayo. “It’s a responsibility I accept to represent the university. Anything I can do to help boost the school’s reputation, I am all for.”

Rider’s basketball games are where AJ the Broncs shines, as he encourages the crowd to get on their feet and support the team to victory. AJ also occasionally delivers entertaining half time show performances to keep the energy and momentum going between halves.

AJ the Bronc is present for the home games of many sports, assisting in boosting team morale and energy from the crowd.

“Mascots are a great way to bring the various teams and the fans attending an event together and AJ often performs during games and gets the crowd excited.”

The Bronc has also competed in various competitions against other school mascots. These mascot competitions are typically held during the Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference (MAAC) basketball championships. Seeing AJ the Bronc go head to head with the mascots of rival universities can instill a feeling of pride among fellow Broncs.

“AJ stands out from other mascots in many ways, but mostly for his indomitable spirit and his uniqueness as Rider is the only school in the NCAA Division I (and probably all of the NCAA) with “Broncs” as the school mascot name. Therefore, AJ is one of a kind,” said Torchia.

Whether he is seen at a sporting event or an Admitted Student Day, AJ the Bronc always brings a high level of energy and school pride that makes him hard to dislike. He has been the face of Rider since 1955, and shows no signs of stopping anytime soon.



AJ the Bronc does various activities during halftime at sporting events to keep crowds entertained and engaged.



# Rider takes to the turf and goes for the goal in “The Wolves”

By Megan Raab

THE School of Fine and Performing Arts will present their second show of the semester, “The Wolves” by Sarah DeLappe, from Feb. 25 to Mar. 1 in the Yvonne Theater. The play, directed by Ryanne Domingues follows a female soccer team through their season.

The unique show has the cast playing a soccer team. Some of the actresses played soccer as kids, but many of these girls are learning their roles and the sport at the same time. For one actress, Lucy Connell, a senior musical theater major, did have some previous soccer experience, but not since she was nine years old.

“Needless to say, I am so grateful that we have had the opportunity to work our soccer skills through rehearsals and actual practices,” Connell said.

Senior acting major Taryn Elizabeth Grey had absolutely no soccer experience whatsoever before the rehearsal process began. On training, she says, “Before winter break, the cast met up with Ryanne’s stepfather who happens to be a former collegiate soccer coach to teach us passes and small drills. Over winter break, I bought a soccer ball and practiced a lot in my spare time.”

The characters in this show function like a team. So much so, in fact, that they are named only by their Jersey numbers, tying their entire identity to the team. Connell’s character, No. 25, is the team captain. She describes the character as being “Like most high schoolers — she is struggling to find her place in the social order of the team, but also how to push herself further towards her goals. She’s tough, but definitely still trying to get a grasp on it all.”

For Grey, No. 7, though she had to do a lot of work to master the soccer skills, she related to her character right from the start. During the rehearsal process, Grey discovered her and her characters similarities.

“I realized how complex she is, and how similar she is to me. She puts on a tough face to hide her emotional vulnerability,” Grey said.

Because of the way it is written, the show does require a lot of the actors. “Each girl has worked to develop a complete, individual character to build this play,” said Connell. The journey the characters go through is also very realistic and the circumstances are very human.

Connell says the realistic writing was actually one of the biggest challenges.

“A lot of the conversations start and stop and overlap, and there are multiple conversations happening on stage at the same time. It really gives the show a deeper understanding of these

girls’ relationships, but it was definitely a challenge to master,” she said.

For Grey, the hardest thing was synching her newfound soccer skills with the character work she has to do.

“The show’s pretty much an emotional rollercoaster with soccer balls,” she said. “The focus has to be on. The show is written very modern in its language, and it’s so easy to paraphrase or get sloppy with the diction when you have a “like” every five words or say “oh my gosh” all the time. Plus we’re trying to do soccer drills without kicking the ball offstage.”

The show takes place in the Yvonne Theatre on Feb. 27 through March 1, with both evening and matinee performances.



“The Wolves” explores girls on a high school soccer team trying to find their individuality while working as a team, using modern language that the cast found difficult to use to convey the theme.

# UPCOMING EVENTS CALENDAR

WED, FEB. 26

Rider Theater: “The Wolves” 7:30 p.m. | Yvonne Theater

THU, FEB. 27

Resume Writing and Interview Techniques and Strategies 4:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. | Bierenbaum-Fisher Hall 101

Rider Theater: “The Wolves” 7:30 p.m. | Yvonne Theater

FRI, FEB. 28

Rider Theater: “The Wolves” 7:30 p.m. | Yvonne Theater

2020 Lindsey Christiansen Art Song Festival 7:30 p.m. | Bristol Chapel, Westminster Choir College

SAT, FEB. 29

Rider Theater: “The Wolves” 2 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. | Yvonne Theater

2020 Lindsey Christiansen Art Song Festival 7:30 p.m. | Bristol Chapel, Westminster Choir College

SUN, MAR. 1

Rider Theater: “The Wolves” 2 p.m. | Yvonne Theater

TUE, MAR. 3

Resume Writing and Interview Techniques and Strategies 4:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. | Bierenbaum-Fisher Hall 107

FROM THE EDITOR

## Call her by her name: She is Zaya Wade

**N**BA legend Dwayne Wade sat down with Ellen DeGeneres on Feb. 11 when she commended him and his actress wife Gabrielle Union for their remarkable parenting in supporting their 12-year-old daughter Zaya.

Born Zion Wade, the pre-teen came home and expressed that she was ready to live her life as a girl, Zaya. At that point, the Wades knew it was their job to get more information and educate themselves on how to progressively raise their child. The couple talked to cast members of the FX show “Pose” and reached out to others that they knew. Both Dwayne Wade and Gabrielle Union are vocal allies of the LGBTQ+ community and about supporting their daughter so she has the full potential in living a fulfilling life.

Once the episode of “Ellen” was aired, all of a sudden everyone had an opinion on Zaya Wade.

The Wades have received much support from celebrities in solidarity with Zaya, such as Jamie Foxx, Kerry Washington and Tracee Ellis Ross. But, some celebrities have been vocal about their opposing views on the matter.

The loudest voice was Boosie “Wipe me Down” Badazz, the rapper that has single-handedly changed the college party scene as we know it with this timeless classic. But, what does Boosie know about the LGBTQ+ community? Clearly not a lot.

Boosie went on his phone and recorded himself making the accusations that Zaya had plans on undergoing surgery to physically transition, when that is not the case here. The Wades did not say that their daughter was undergoing surgery.

The main reason that naysayers are using to justify their opinion is that Zaya is too young. I strongly believe the Wades understand that Zaya is only a pre-teen and too young to go through with the change, but it is also illegal for Zaya to undergo the surgery at such an early age. So, the assumption that this child is physically transitioning is absurd.

Additionally, many kids develop crushes and have fake relationships in elementary school when it involves a young boy and girl because that is what’s normalized. But, when a 12-year-old child is vocal about their identity and brave enough to live in their truth knowing the world may not be so kind, you listen.

Boosie should be the last man to have an opinion on what is appropriate and inappropriate when he has made other obscene comments involving his teenage son’s sexuality, saying he will hire a woman to perform oral sex on his son for his 14th birthday. Where was the outrage then? Is 14 not too young to expose a child to sexuality? The standards double when dealing with heterosexuality.

Celebrities were awfully quiet when rapper T.I. publicly admitted to checking his 18-year-old daughter’s hymen. The hymen

is a thin piece of mucosal tissue that surrounds or partially covers the external vaginal opening. It forms part of the vulva, or external genitalia, and is similar in structure to the vagina. The rapper takes his daughter to the gynecologist to get her hymen examined yearly to check whether or not she is a virgin.

There seems to be an urge to maintain the purity in girls and ensure masculinity in boys while neglecting the feelings of the child.

While the people speaking out against the Wades think Zaya is too young to know about herself, they do not bat an eye at other kids who are cisgender. If a child says they are heterosexual and cisgender, it is normal and almost praised for not deviating from the societal norm. If those children are not too young to know that they are cisgender, why is Zaya too young to understand herself?

Other comments on social media go past the point of saying Zaya is “too young” to understand and claim that no matter what, Zaya will “still be a boy.”

One Twitter user by the name Peculiar Baptist said “Zion Wade is male. No amount of money, drugs or surgery will change that.”

Another Twitter user by the name of Willie Lunchmeat said Zaya’s identity is not who she is, saying, “The boy seeks a departure from who he is in every way. Trans preach love and acceptance of self while despising who they actually are.”

While there are many people who have spoken against the Wades, there are even more who have shown love and admiration. People banded together on Twitter to show the respect they have for Zaya and her family, and the kind comments outweigh the hateful ones. The support for Zaya is overwhelming compared to the negativity.

I commend the Wades for standing by their daughter and respecting her for who she is. The world of sports is typically considered masculine, and the connotations of that are not necessarily understanding or respecting the LGBTQ+ community. Dwayne Wade became a role model to other men who look up to him and hopefully his love for his daughter influences other dads to love and respect their children.

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

*Qur’an H.*

*J.A.M.*



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## JUNIOR JOURNAL

# Not all heroes wear capes: Rapper Akon builds his own city

ONE of the most notable achievements of 2020 is rapper Akon's establishment of Akon City. Authorized by Senegal's state-owned SAPCO tourism company, there will be a "crypto-city" built on 2,000 acres of land. For money, residents will use a cryptocurrency known as Akoin. The city, a five-minute drive outside of Dakar, Senegal's capital will be billed as a global eco-tourism destination.

Akon was born in Senegal before moving to Union City, New Jersey, at age 7.

The Senegalese-American is best known for his songs like "Locked Up" and "Lonely" but the Grammy-nominated rapper is more recognized as a business man than a musician these days.

His most recent endeavor prior to Akon City is Akon Lighting Africa, which is providing solar power to African countries.

"I really want to make the biggest impact in Africa for sure," Akon said during a 2013 interview with CNN. "If I could have my way, Africa would be the United States of Africa."

About 600 million people in sub-Saharan Africa live without access to electricity, according to LightingAfrica.org

Approximately 80% live in rural areas where there is no grid-electricity and expansion is largely financially and logistically infeasible.

Many of the countries where Akon wanted to tour simply did not have the infrastructure to support big concerts and festivals he was used to playing in the United States, particularly after dark, according to Forbes. So he teamed up with fellow Senegalese-American Thione Niang and Malian entrepreneur Samba Bathily to create Akon Lighting Africa.

The initiative is now showing great progress in the movement to illuminate a country where millions are without power.

"100,000 solar street lamps installed across 480 communities in 15 countries, along with 1,200 solar micro-grids and 5,500 indirect jobs created," according to Forbes.

The question that arises in my mind is what is Akon gaining from this? Akon is a millionaire who has made an immense amount of money from his short career in music, now taking on philanthropy, which is not an uncommon public relations move for celebrities.

But, philanthropy especially can be used as a disguise for a business move. We have seen this happen with rapper and billionaire Jay-Z and his plans on building the Barclays Center in Brooklyn that was supposed to bring an influx of jobs and revenue to Brooklyn but ended up displacing thousands of New Yorkers.

Promised "affordable housing" has yet to be built and where the construction

of new housing was being attempted, there were major structural and engineering problems. The opportunity of opening new businesses in the shadow of the arena was slim. The increase of traction made the surrounding areas more expensive and nearly impossible for Brooklyn natives to thrive there financially and later socially.

Akon does not pretend that his project is philanthropy.

"It's definitely not a charity," he says. "It is a for-profit company. The way I would categorize it, really, is just social entrepreneurship. We do our business in Africa that's not [just] to help people, but empower them to make their money in the process," Akon told Forbes.

The Akoin is not intended to just be a substitute currency but as a way to establish credit, borrow money, access government services, etc.

"I think that blockchain and crypto could be the saviour for Africa in many ways because it brings the power back to the people," Akon said to Business Insider. "Cryptocurrency and blockchain technology offer a more secure currency that enables people in Africa to advance themselves independent of the government."

The city is expected to be solar-powered and sustainable without requiring assistance from an electricity grid. As a green city relying on renewable energy, Akon City is expected to become Senegal's first Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED)-certified city, according to EuroNews.

The new city is expected to include homes, shops, parks, universities, schools and its own stadium, according to SkyNews.

When completed, the futuristic city will have its own airport for residents and tourists. Those wanting to visit Akon's city will be able to fly there and experience the city for themselves. On a Twitter and Instagram post, Akon announced that he is "Looking forward to hosting you there in the future."

I remember when the critically acclaimed film "Black Panther" came out, about this technologically advanced and mystical land in Africa that had a superhero who defends the safety of the country. Akon is a real life superhero trying to make a change and quite literally bring light to the continent of Africa.

*Qur'an Hansford  
Junior journalism major*

## QUESTIONS FOR QUR'AN

### Protect the work you produce

**DEAR Qur'an,**  
It was revealed recently that the new viral "Renegade" dance was originally choreographed by 14-year-old Jalaiah Harmon. Charli D'Amelio, TikTok's biggest homegrown star, with nearly 30 million followers on the platform, has been affectionately deemed the dance's "C.E.O." for popularizing it. How do you suppose young creatives protect their art and ideas from being stolen?

**DEAR Reader,**  
TikTok has become a major social media outlet in less than a year. The app generates new content and new influencers, verifying them with a blue check and opportunities. We often see artists in different mediums becoming victims of theft from bigger platforms. We see this in fashion, music, dance and culture. Those who can see the potential to profit, will. From Elvis and Big Mama Thornton, Jennifer Lopez and Ashanti, Fashion Nova and almost any up and coming boutique, we see bigger entities feed off the little guy.

My advice is to be your best customer. Never stop making ideas, sketching, writing or building. Always support your work, find other people to support you and when no one wants to, support yourself some more.

Be loud. When you see fraudulence on the timeline, speak out. When you see

big companies and influencers leaching on smaller brands, defend them.

Make sure whenever you collaborate with anyone you receive credit for your contribution.

Your work is an extension of yourself. The time spent perfecting that craft deserves recognition and compensation if there is a demand.

The name Kayla Lewis may not ring a bell, but I am sure the phrase "on fleek" takes you down memory lane. Kayla Lewis, aka Peaches Monroe, made that iconic Vine six years ago, leaving an impact on pop culture. Lewis was left unknown and uncompensated for her coined phrase. We see this happen too many times to so many young talents.

Jalaiah Harmon is a perfect example of being robbed of your talent. Imitation can be offensive, but luckily, Twitter handled the situation in less than 48 hours, getting Harmon her shine and her coin. She performed at the NBA all-star game and Ellen and is now TikTok verified.

Alexa, play "Crank That" by Soulja Boy Tell'em.

*Protect your neck,  
Qur'an*



Courtesy of Creative Commons



## MEN'S BASKETBALL

# Losses put Broncos' bye in jeopardy



Carolo Pascale/The Rider News

Senior center **Tyere Marshall** (with the ball) registered his fifth double-double of the season with 22 points and 14 rebounds against Iona on Feb. 21.

By **Austin Ferguson**

**M**IRRORING its most recent road trip, a pair of Broncos' losses marked trouble for the men's basketball team as the season is approaching its end.

After its losses, Rider is at risk of losing its first-round bye in the Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference (MAAC) tournament, now just 1.5 games ahead of the sixth seed.

## Rider at Iona, Feb. 21

Rider's trip to Iona on Feb. 21 started on a promising note with the Broncos holding on to a slim advantage through the first 10 minutes. The run was highlighted by four early points from sophomore forward Ajiri Ogemuno-Johnson and three from senior center Tyere Marshall.

A pair of threes from Iona guard Isaiah Ross, supplemented by a jumper from Gaels forward E.J. Crawford, pushed Iona ahead 15-12 and erased the early Rider lead.

After a 3-point play from Iona forward Tajuan Agee extended the Gaels' lead to four, redshirt sophomore guard Tyrei Randall made a 3-pointer to bring the score back within one.

Iona dominated from that point until there were less than four minutes left in the half, culminating in another 3-point play from Agee that put the Gaels ahead by nine. Marshall, senior guard Stevie Jordan and redshirt junior forward Frederick Scott made a quick six-point swing to bring the score to 30-27 with under two minutes to go.

Both teams went back and forth, though Iona was able to reclaim a five-point lead into halftime with a layup from Agee at the buzzer.

The trio of Agee, Ross and Crawford were accountable for all but three of Iona's first-half points, scoring a combined 31 points in the first period. Agee led all scorers with 13 points.

On Rider's side of the ball, Jordan led all Broncos with seven points, closely followed by Marshall with five. Scott, Ogemuno-Johnson and redshirt junior forward Dimencio Vaughn finished the half with four points.

With Iona leading 34-29, both squads went back-and-forth at the onset of the second half, though Rider was able to chip away and tie the game with a Jordan 3-pointer.

Both teams continued to push back on offense, with the Broncos tying the game on multiple occasions. Iona eventually re-established control and with 13:19 left to go, Crawford drilled a 3-pointer to put Iona up 48-40.

Down eight, Vaughn and Marshall grinded the Gaels lead down until another Jordan 3-pointer brought Rider within one point of tying the game again.

Iona was able to hold on to either a tie game or a small lead until the 3:21 mark in the second half when a Scott jumper gave the Broncos their first lead since the 10:26 point of the first half.

Rider held on strong, even extending its lead to five from a Marshall free throw with just 37 seconds to go. The Broncos were in a strong position to avenge their home loss against Iona.

Or so it seemed.

After a pair of free throws from Crawford brought the score to 68-65 to Rider's advantage, Randall split a trip at the line to extend the lead to four with 28 seconds left. Seven seconds later, Iona guard Isaiah Washington made a layup to make it a two-point game.

Randall was sent to the free-throw line again with 20 seconds to go with a chance to make it a two-possession game.

Randall missed both free throws.

With 13 seconds to go, Ross took advantage of the Broncos' woes from the charity stripe and nailed a three, pushing the Gaels ahead, 70-69. Jordan would put up a shot at the buzzer, but it was no good as Rider dropped another heartbreaker to Iona.

The Broncos shot just 9-21 from the free-throw line, surely accounting for what could have been a close but decisive win for Rider.

"We shoot ourselves in the foot," Head Coach Kevin Baggett said. "We cost ourselves the game. We've got to make free throws. We've got to execute. We've got to do what we're asking you to do, not what you want to do."

## Rider at Saint Peter's, Feb. 23

Frustrated over the loss, Rider looked to move on with another road matchup, this time against first-place Saint Peter's on Feb. 23.

Rider, however, fell flat again in a blowout loss.

"A lot of breakdowns. Giving up threes and not guarding it the right way," Baggett said. "Disappointing performance all the way around. We started off good. But too many turnovers."

The Broncos started off strong with an 8-0 run but were immediately answered by a Saint Peter's 18-1 run. Rider fought back and brought the Peacocks' lead down to 3, but Saint Peter's held steady to bring a 31-24 lead into the locker room at halftime.

Rider lowered the lead to as little as two in the second half but an unconscious run where Saint

Peter's guard Doug Edert scored 19 of Saint Peter's 21 points in a 21-6 run rocketed the Peacocks to a 14-point lead.

Saint Peter's cruised to the finish line, leading by as many as 20 points and winning 73-54.

Edert's offensive explosion contributed to his 28-point effort, a career-high for the freshman.

Despite the tough loss, Vaughn still shelled out a great performance, scoring 24 points and tallying eight rebounds, four steals and three blocks.

Vaughn expressed his frustration after the loss to Saint Peter's.

"[I] just keep reminding them that you've got to play hard, stop quitting, just play through it," Vaughn said. "I know where I'm at right now. I'm tired of losing. [That's] two games we should have won."

## MAAC standings

Though the Broncos' weekend appeared to be a complete disaster, Rider is far from out of the MAAC's upper echelon. Rider is three games behind Saint Peter's for first place and sits fourth in the standings, just a game and a half behind in-state rival Monmouth.

In second place is a resurging Siena team that, along with Saint Peter's, has won its last five games.

Right behind the Broncos in the standings are Iona, Quinnipiac, Manhattan, Fairfield and Niagara. Iona is just one-half game behind Rider and 3.5 games behind Saint Peter's, while Quinnipiac, Manhattan, Fairfield and Niagara sit in a four-way tie for sixth place and are 4.5 games behind the Peacocks.

## The schedule ahead

Rider has just three games left in its regular-season, two of which are taking place at home.

The Broncos return to Lawrenceville, New Jersey to take on Monmouth on Feb. 28. The game will be broadcasted live on ESPNU, meaning tip-off will be at 9 p.m., as opposed to the usual 7 p.m. start.

Rider heads to Connecticut on March 1 for its final road game of the season against eighth-place Fairfield, tipping off at 2 p.m.

The Broncos' final regular-season game will take place on March 4 for a rare Wednesday matchup with Manhattan at 7 p.m.

At best, Rider can move up to second in the MAAC at the season's end. At worst, the Broncos could lose their first-round bye in the MAAC tournament and enter it in ninth place.

## BASEBALL

# Rider loses two of three after 4-0 start

By Shaun Chornobroff

**F**OLLOWING a three-game series against East Tennessee State, the baseball team's early perfect record has been spoiled.

The Broncos started their week by dropping two of three games against East Tennessee State.

The series opener did not go Rider's way as it was shutout 7-0. The Broncos could only muster three hits the entire game.

Senior pitcher Pete Soporowski took the loss, but was ultimately dealt a bad hand.

Soporowski was dominant through the first four innings as the game was deadlocked at zero, but two errors in the fifth inning would lead to four unearned runs and ultimately the loss.

Soporowski has a 0.82 earned run average after his first two starts.

Rider's bullpen gave up two more runs in the next inning and the Broncos dug themselves into an almost insurmountable 6-0 hole.

Rider's three hits came from redshirt sophomore infielder Jake Barbieri, senior outfielder Sebastian Williamson and freshman infielder John Volpe, who entered as a pinch hitter in the ninth inning.

Rider made up for its series-opening woes with a 7-4 win in the second game.

The star of the day was pitcher Frank Doelling. The sophomore had a career day, allowing only three hits and one earned run en route to his first win of the season.

Rider's offense may have had its most consistent performance of the early season.

The team had been scoring in bunches, and although inconsistent, Rider pushed runners across the plate in five different innings.

The Broncos had eight different batters get on base during the win.

Rider played its best defense of the season, completing its first errorless game of the year.

Barbieri proved to drive in the game-winning run in the seventh inning when an error by an East Tennessee State shortstop allowed Volpe to score Rider's fifth run.

East Tennessee State scored three in the last two innings, but Rider prevailed for their fourth win of the season.

Rider's pitching would let it down on Feb. 23 as it dropped the series' rubber game, 10-4.

Rider jumped out to a hot start in the game with RBI singles from Barbieri and senior outfielder Joe Simone that put the Broncos up 2-0 before the first out had been recorded.

Freshman infielder Luke Lesch drove in his second-career RBI on a groundout



Courtesy of Rider Athletics

Sophomore pitcher **Frank Doelling** allowed just one run on three hits in seven innings of work in Rider's 7-4 win over East Tennessee State on Feb. 22.

and senior catcher Chris Roan drove in another run on a fielder's choice.

Rider was up 4-0 after the top of the first inning, but would self destruct as fast as it built the lead.

Rider's first two pitchers, freshman Kenny Oujamo and sophomore Kyle Smith, could not get out of the first inning.

The pair combined to give up seven runs in only two-thirds of an inning as East Tennessee State jumped out to an 8-4 lead in the first inning.

After an exciting first inning, Rider's offense was practically silent, putting only one more runner in scoring position in the last eight innings.

Rider's scheduled game against Lafayette on Feb. 25 was postponed due to inclement weather. The Broncos' matchup against the Leopards has been rescheduled for Feb. 26 with a 2:15 p.m. scheduled first pitch.

## WRESTLING

# Broncs end regular season with Big Ten win

By Mike Ricchione

**W**ITHOUT the services of redshirt senior Jesse Dellavecchia or junior Ethan Laird, the wrestling team ended the dual season the same way they started it, with a win against a Big Ten school.

Rider (12-3, 7-1 MAC) traveled to Maryland (2-17, 0-9 Big Ten) for a rematch of the Virginia Duals semifinals on Jan. 11, where the Broncos won 24-8 before defeating Virginia for the title. It also happened to be senior night for five Terrapins.

"Tonight was a complete team effort," Head Coach John Hangey said after the match. "When you sit two starters [Dellavecchia and Laird], you need other guys to step up and they did just that."

There were only three repeat matchups in the dual, Rider won all three of those at the Virginia Duals and at the Xfinity Center Pavilion.

Redshirt junior Jonathan Tropea spoiled Brandon Cray's senior night with a 5-1 decision to start the dual at the 125-pound weight class.

Redshirt senior Pete Lipari held on for a 4-3 decision against Hunter Baxter at 141 pounds to build Rider's lead to nine.

Having to protect a two-point lead, redshirt senior Ryan Cloud closed out the dual with another bonus-point victory, defeating Parker Robinson by major decision, 12-4, in the heavyweight division. Rider went on to win 22-16.

Cloud heads into the postseason having won his last two matches by bonus points and five of his last six overall.

Neither Dellavecchia or Jahi Jones got the nod at 157 pounds for their respective teams as the weight class was contested between redshirt sophomore Travis Layton and Lucas Cordio.

Dellavecchia won via disqualification against Jones in the Virginia Dual. The disqualification also cost the Terps a team point.

Cordio won with a pinfall in the third period to get the Terps on board after the Broncos won the first four matches, all from decisions.



Carolo Pascale/The Rider News

Redshirt freshman **Richie Koehler** has defeated Clarion's Seth Koleno and Maryland's King Sandoval since appearing in the Broncos' lineup.

Redshirt sophomore George Walton looked to avenge his loss to Kyle Jasenski earlier in the season but instead got Phillip Spadafora, who recently made the jump from 174 to 184 pounds.

Walton fell one point short of consecutive major decisions, defeating Spadafora, 12-5.

Redshirt senior Dean Sherry wrestled Josh Ugalde, someone he had not squared off with before during the season, but faced off when Maryland visited Rider last season.

Sherry won this matchup via decision, 7-4, after losing a major decision a year ago. Sherry is on a six-match winning streak and has won nine of his last 10.

The Terps only won three bouts but were all with bonus points with the Cordio pin, Kyle Cochran's 11-2 major decision over redshirt sophomore Joe Casey and a Jaron Smith forfeit at 165 and 197-pounds respectively.

Next up for Rider is the Mid-American Conference (MAC) tournament. The two-day event is scheduled for March 7 and 8 on the campus of Northern Illinois.

Automatic qualifier allocations for the NCAA tournament will be announced on Feb. 27. According to FloWrestling's projections, the MAC is projected to have at least three automatic qualifiers at each weight except for the 165-pound weight class, which is the only weight class predicted with one.

Automatic qualifiers are allocated based on meeting two of three benchmarks in the NCAA's coaches' panel, Rating Percentage Index (RPI) and winning percentage against Division I opponents. Conference champions punch their ticket to Minneapolis regardless of the league.

Last season while Rider was a part of the Eastern Wrestling League (EWL), the EWL only had one

# Sports

INSIDE

RIDER'S FIRST ROUND BYE IN JEOPARDY

*The Broncs may have to play in the first round of the MAAC tournament after two road losses.*

FIND THIS STORY ON PAGE 10

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

## Stella Johnson helps Broncs bounce back



Gerard Blandina/The Rider News

Senior guard **Stella Johnson** finished with 15 points as Rider goes its fourth straight victory.

By **Dylan Manfre**

**A**LRIGHT Rider fans, pump the brakes and take a breather. Senior guard Stella Johnson is fine. And so is the women's basketball team.

Johnson used a scooter to get around campus the past week solely as a precaution after sustaining an ankle injury by landing on the foot of a Manhattan player in the second quarter.

Head Coach Lynn Milligan said Johnson went through practice as usual throughout the week and it was not a concern she did not participate in every drill.

### Rider at Quinnipiac, Feb. 20

Johnson played the full 40 minutes against Quinnipiac on Feb. 20 and scored 29 points in the process.

She is never one to boast about achievements but with a made 3-pointer in the first quarter, Johnson eclipsed 2,000 career points. She finished the game with a team-high 29.

Rider defeated Quinnipiac earlier in the season and got the win that eluded Milligan's teams her entire coaching career. A sweep of the series was a challenge for the Broncs, who defeated the Bobcats 68-62 on Feb. 20, but Quinnipiac did not go down easily — especially on its home floor.

All-Conference forward Paige Warful was held to 10 points, seven of which came from the free throw line. The Broncs held star guard Shaq Edwards, who did not play in the team's first meeting this season, to three points.

Quinnipiac found no success from behind the arc, where it traditionally is exceptional from, as it could not convert any of its 10 attempts.

Stretches in late February of playing three games in a one-week span is tough on the team because every game is important.

"There's going to be some interesting stuff that goes on the next couple weeks just based on what's gone on already," Milligan said. "We can't worry about anybody else. We put our destiny in our own hands and that's all you want."

### Rider vs. Iona, Feb. 22

Against Iona, Johnson became the only active player in NCAA Division I women's college basketball

to record 2,000 points, 700 rebounds, 400 assists and 300 steals. When she got her first assist of the fourth quarter.

Iona played with a healthy lineup, which was not the case in the first meeting between the two programs. Senior guard Morgan Rachu wore a charcoal gray brace on her left knee through warmups and during the game.

The Broncs pressured Iona to work for its points early on as it started the game going 1-of-8 from the field at the first-quarter media timeout.

Iona went on a 10-4 run and gained a two-point lead over Rider after the first 10 minutes of play and Johnson committed two fouls but stayed in the game.

Gaels sophomore guard Juana Camilion averages 13 points per game and kept the Gaels alive in the second quarter. She drained a deep 3-pointer with four seconds left on the shot clock to take a 21-20 lead into the locker room.

"I think you have to stay between her and the basket and make her take tough shots and be as off-balanced as possible," Head Coach Lynn Milligan said. "I thought Amanda [Mobley] was on her a little while, did a good job ... I thought overall we kept her off balance a little bit with some different looks."

It tied the second-lowest scoring output for the Broncs in the first half this season. The Broncs had 20 points at halftime against Saint Peter's on Feb. 6 and were handed its first MAAC loss in the process.

When asked if she was concerned about the low production, Milligan bluntly said "No."

"To be honest with you, I think we're in sync more times than not," she said. "I think sometimes it looks like you're out of sync when you miss a shot or they are a bucket but if they score a bucket in a way that is not their comfort zone I still think we're in sync."

Johnson scored 13 of Rider's 17 points coming out of halftime and immediately there was a change made on both ends of the floor. The adjustments got Rider its fourth straight win, 53-41, and showed signs things were back on track.

"I think we just locked up. We were switching. I think we just trusted each other," Johnson said. "The first and second quarter we weren't sure what we were going to do. I think we were guessing what they

were going to do and we actually need to watch what they're going to do instead."

Learning from the scouting report is important, however, it is not all the team should rely on. Johnson said they just need to focus on the game unfolding in front of them.

"We obviously play off instincts quite a bit but there's some things on the scout that we want to try and take away," Milligan said. "I thought we did a great job on the perimeter. There's a couple [things] defensively we needed to do today, particularly on the perimeter, that I thought we did a great job on consistently throughout the whole game and then we amped it up in the fourth quarter."

As the game went on Mobley continued to stay poised and confident in her shot. Mobley hit a pair of 3-pointers as the shot clock winded down much as she did against Marist earlier in the season.

"Just when the shot clock is running down you have to make a play," said Mobley who finished with 16 points on 6-of-14 shooting. "Someone is going to be open or you're going to be open so I think it's just practice like we do game situations like "shot clock" in practice."

She said those situations drill the team runs in practice help Mobley mentally slow the game down, which is exactly the objective of the drill.

Rider junior guard Daija Moses was ruled out of the game against Iona after she sustained an ankle and back injury in practice the day before. It took a toll on the defensive effort today as the Broncs gave up 14 first-half points in the paint.

### The schedule ahead

Fairfield will be Rider's next opponent, which it will face on the road on Feb. 27 at 7 p.m. The Stags currently sit at 10-5 on the season.

### MAAC standings

After Fairfield lost to Marist by 30 points on Feb. 25, Marist took a half-game lead of first place in the conference with two weeks left until the postseason tournament. The Broncs would have taken sole possession of first place had Fairfield won the game.