

## Tax form reveals salaries of top Rider administrators

By Sarah Siock

SEVERAL of Rider's top administrators, including President Gregory Dell'Omo, received significant raises in 2019 according to the university's most recent IRS report. Dell'Omo received \$620,112 in annual salary and benefits as the highest-paid employee, nearly \$55,000 more than the prior year.

The Rider News acquired a copy of the university's 2019 IRS 990, which spans from July 1, 2019, to June 30, 2020. The form shows eight administrators and two professors earned a base salary over \$200,000.

The report reveals that multiple administrators received significant performance-based bonuses, while Rider's faculty went without any pay or cost-of-living increase from 2013 to the fall of 2021.

In 2019, Dell'Omo's salary was \$532,400 and \$87,712 in additional benefits. In 2018, Dell'Omo's total compensation was \$565,417. Part of Dell'Omo's salary increase was due to a \$36,386 performance bonus.

"The president's salary and performance bonus is determined by the Board of Trustees. The performance bonus is normally based on the president's performance during the applicable fiscal year, but since no bonuses have been granted for a number of years, the board also considered the president's performance over his entire tenure at Rider," said Associate Vice President for University Marketing and Communications Kristine Brown. "The Board of Trustees evaluates the president's performance based on mutually agreed upon goals developed by the president and the board."

While the school's tax documents list its highest-earning employees, it does not always list the same individuals and positions each year. Of the 13 employees listed in both 2018 and 2019 reports, 12 received raises.

Men's head basketball coach Kevin Baggett's 2019 salary was \$344,732 and \$36,026 in additional benefits, making him the second-highest-paid employee at the university. In 2018, Baggett's total salary was \$316,645, meaning he received an extra \$64,113 in 2019. Baggett could not be reached for comment.

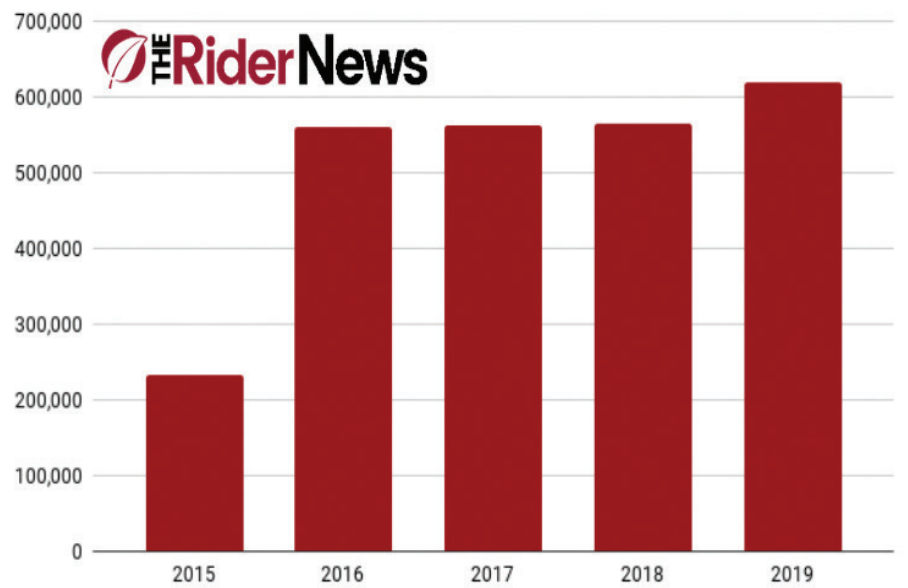
In the 2019 to 2020 season, Baggett led the men's basketball team to 18 wins and 12 losses. The team was set to play Niagara in the MAAC Quarterfinals before the tournament was canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Coach Baggett's salary is a reflection of market value for an experienced, successful head Men's Basketball coach in the MAAC. Recent increases were derived from revenue and private donations generated by the men's basketball program," said Brown.

Vice President for Finance James Hartman was the third highest-paid employee and the highest-paid cabinet member with a total compensation of \$324,829. Provost DonnaJean Fredeen was the second-highest paid cabinet member with a total compensation of \$321,778 with a \$32,508 raise from the year prior.

Hartman, Fredeen, Vice President of Legal Affairs and General Counsel Mark Solomon, Vice President for Strategic Initiatives and Planning and Secretary to

President Gregory Dell'Omo's annual salary plus benefits since 2015



Adrienne Unfreed/The Rider News

President Dell'Omo's salary increases are determined by the Board of Trustees.

the Board Debbie Stasolla, Vice President for Facilities and University Operations Michael Rea, Vice President of Enrollment Management Drew Aromando and Vice President for University Advancement Karin Klim all received performance-based bonuses in 2019. The average of the bonuses was just under \$26,000.

"Performance-based bonuses for senior leadership are determined by the president and Board of Trustees and are based on performance during the applicable fiscal year. Senior leaders are evaluated on an annual basis based on goals developed and approved by the president and Board of Trustees. Through an independent firm, the Board of Trustees routinely assess senior administrator total compensation, including both fixed and variable pay, against peer institutions," said Brown.

The university ended the fiscal year 2021 with an approximately \$9.5 million deficit. Brown said that all cabinet members took salary reductions that year to help alleviate the pandemic's financial savings on the institution, which equated to approximately \$475,000 in savings.

"A projected deficit is always a significant factor when developing the university's overall annual budget," said Brown.

Barbara Franz, a political science professor and president

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## COVID-19 vaccine requirement brings normality back to campus

By Olivia Nicoletti

RIDER University is expecting to return to a somewhat normal semester this fall with their requirement of the COVID-19 vaccination for students. It has been recorded that 96% of students are vaccinated.

An exemption form was released for students who have medical or religious reasons to not get the vaccine. Those who are exempt but still attending in-person classes and living on campus will be put onto a confidential list before the semester starts.

According to an email sent by the COVID-19 Implementation Team on Sept. 1, unvaccinated students will be tested on a weekly basis. Approximately 150 students were approved to be exempt.

Some students who did not receive the vaccine or get approved for the exemption "chose to take only online classes and agreed not to access campus at all this semester. Others have decided not to return this semester," said the Associate Vice President for University Marketing and Communications, Kristine Brown. "No student who is not vaccinated or granted an exemption is allowed to access campus in any way this semester."

Students starting the year without both shots of the vaccine will be following the same procedures as the non-vaccinated students. Students will be considered fully vaccinated two weeks after their final shot.

From the same email from the COVID-19 Implementation Team said that, "Rider has temporarily established an indoor mask requirement for everyone, regardless of vaccination status. When the local transmission and infection rates improve, we hope that this universal masking requirement will be revisited for fully vaccinated students,



Andrew Xon/The Rider News

Rider's vaccination requirement allows for large scale gatherings outside.

faculty, and staff."

Whether the mandate stands or not, unvaccinated students will be required to wear masks the entire year. The faculty is expected to enforce the mask mandate but no one is allowed to identify unvaccinated students.

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INSIDE

**"IT DOESN'T FEEL TOO GOOD"**

Read about Men's Soccer's loss against Saint Francis.

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**CAMPUS CORONAVIRUS PREVENTIONS**

Mask mandates and vaccination requirements on college campuses have sparked frustration amid COVID-19

fatigue.  
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**NEW JOURNEY**

The class of 2025 begins their in-person college experience after two years being remote.

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# Two Fondling Incidents Reported to Public Safety

By Sarah Siock and Shaun Chornobroff

**A**t 8:37 p.m. on Sept. 7, Rider’s Public Safety department notified students via an email that two alleged fondling incidents that happened four days prior were reported to the office.

The incidents involved the same individual and he is known to both survivors, according to the email.

“One incident occurred near Daly’s Dining Hall and the other occurred off campus,” the email read.

University officials are conducting an investigation as per Title IX and Rider’s Anti-Harassment and Non-Discrimination Policy. The university also issued a no-contact order to the suspected individual involved in both incidents.

Public Safety notified the university about the incident in compliance with the “Timely Warning” provision of the federal Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act of 1998. According to CleryCenter.org, under the Clery Act, colleges and universities use timely warnings and emergency notifications to inform the campus community of potential threats

against which they can take preventive measures.

“Rider university takes allegations of fondling and other crimes very seriously. The university is committed to sustaining an environment dedicated to learning and mutual respect as reflected in the University’s mission, Statement of Community Values and Anti-Harassment and Non-Discrimination Policy. As per the Policy, Rider prohibits all forms of discrimination, harassment, sexual assault, sexual misconduct, sexual harassment, dating violence, domestic violence and stalking,” Public Safety wrote in their email to the university.

Associate Vice President for University Marketing and Communications Kristine Brown added,

“We encourage our students to always come forward and report incidents to Public Safety, the public safety and our student affairs team are there to help students, no questions asked day or night. Reporting an incident is the best way for us to be able to help keep the community safe at large. The more information we have, the better off it would be.”

# Professor criticizes administration pay raises

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of Rider’s chapter of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), reviewed the tax document and was concerned by the lack of raises and bonuses for non-administrative faculty members. While the AAUP ratified a one-year agreement this month, including a 3% salary increase for its members, Franz noted that all faculty salaries were frozen for the past several years.

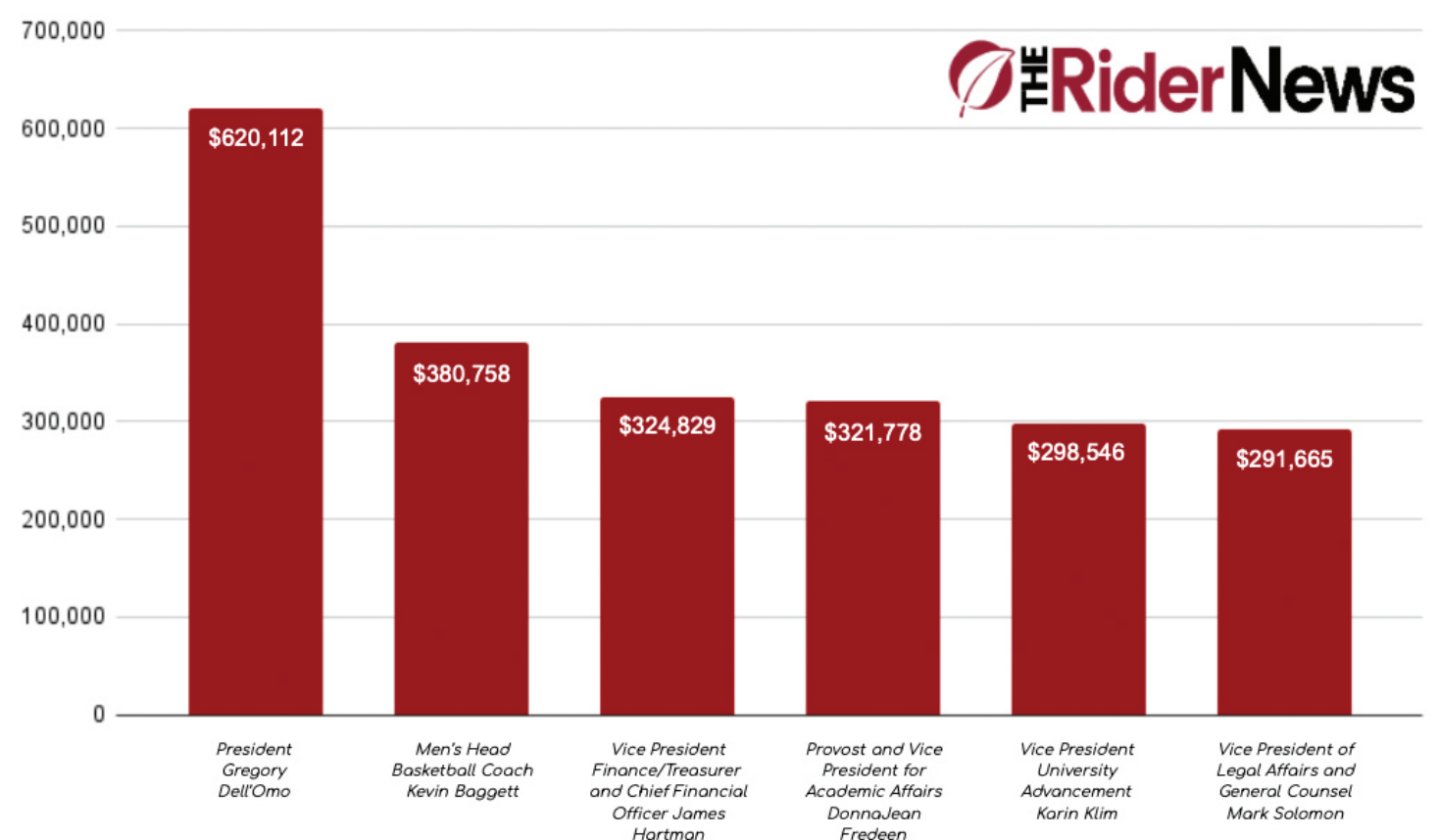
Franz said, “Greg Dell’Omo continues to live very well. The Board of Trustees gave him another raise of more than \$52,000 in the fiscal year 2020, which brought his overall base salary to \$532,400. All the while, some of our students work double shifts in pizzerias and at grocery store checkout counters to afford Rider tuition payments, and our faculty members have to make ends meet on salaries that were frozen since 2013.”

Franz also questioned the money Rider spent on legal fees in recent years in the wake of lawsuits surrounding Dell’Omo’s unsuccessful attempt to sell Westminster Choir

College (WCC) and his later decision to shutter its Princeton campus. In 2019, the university paid \$352,058 to the law firm Pepper Hamilton. The prior year, the university paid \$831,332 to the prestigious and costly firm.

“With their many poor decisions, Rider’s president and his many vice presidents have gotten involved in a number of lawsuits, spent huge sums on consultants and law firms, and thanks to their leadership, managed to get Rider’s bond rating downgraded by Moody’s Investors Service twice in the past year. Overall, the administration’s failures have cost Rider millions of dollars. Now, they seem to be running out of ideas. They just hired Credo, a consulting firm that is mostly interested in downsizing universities and cutting liberal arts programs. The Board of Trustees is rewarding these

Annual salaries and benefits of Rider’s highest-paid employees in 2019



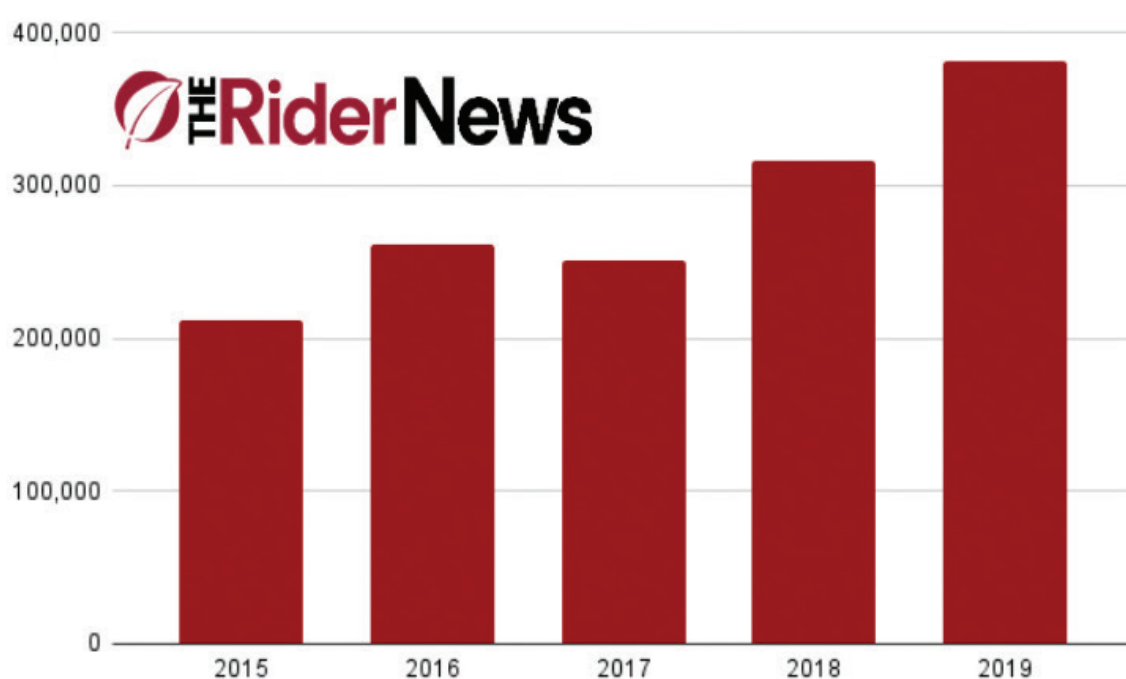
poor decisions and lack of ideas with large paychecks to the president and his cabinet,” said Franz.

According to Brown, Rider partnered with the national higher education consulting firm Credo in June due to “the complex and multifaceted challenges” the university faces. The firm specializes in helping independent colleges and universities move forward on the continuum from surviving to thriving. Credo has worked with more than 400 institutions like Rider since its inception in 1995.

Brown also commented on the lack of faculty raises and the Westminster Choir College sale.

“Faculty compensation is governed by the collective bargaining agreement. The

Men’s Head Basketball Coach Kevin Baggett’s annual salary plus benefits since 2015



contract in place at that time did not include any agreed-upon bonuses for faculty members nor any merit increases for individual bargaining unit members based on performance,” said Brown. “... As to Westminster ... this university-wide strategic initiative voted by the Board of Trustees in 2017 after extensive thought, analysis and reflection, designed to both preserve WCC and to further enhance the Westminster College of the Arts, has been viewed as a positive by the rating agencies. The corresponding lawsuits, which we feel have no merit and are intended to obstruct and to impose unnecessary financial pain on the entire Rider community, are unfortunately a cost of doing business that we must deal with.”

Brown added that pay cuts for cabinet members and the president through 2020 to 2021, “were greater than any raise received in 2019 to 2020.”

“Cabinet will once again not be receiving an increase in salaries this year, 2021-2022, which will be the seventh time in the last nine years going back to 2013-2014, just like the AAUP,” said Brown. “... Additionally, we are surprised and disappointed by Barbara Franz’s attack. ... But most importantly and perhaps of greatest disappointment, is this attempt to create division and strife immediately following a successful bargaining negotiation and at the very opening of an academic year; one that especially will require collaboration, cooperation, and goodwill for us to meet and overcome the many challenges that we will face, not as factions, but as a joined community.”

# Students are enjoying the normalcy of campus

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“Students who do not comply with our COVID-19 protocols, whether our masking, testing or other COVID-19 related requirements, will be referred to the Office of Community Standards for a violation of our Student Code of Social Conduct, specifically 4.12 Failure to adhere to campus-wide pandemic/emergency directives,” said Brown. “Students found responsible risk loss of housing and other potential serious sanctions.”

According to the COVID-19 Implementation Team, the Student Health Center will contact Chris Botti, the COVID-19 case manager, when a student tests positive. He will then take the next steps in contacting the positive-tested student and identifying their recent close contacts.

Close contacts are considered anyone who has been in contact with a positive individual within 6 feet for 15 or more minutes, had physical contact, shared bodily fluids with and/or lives with them. A faculty member might need to help identify who has been in close contact with the student while in class.

Botti will then be able to reach out to close contacts and ensure they follow their appropriate protocols.

As stated in the email from the COVID-19 Implementation Team, unvaccinated individuals must quarantine themselves for 10 to 14 days and take a test five to seven days after the exposure. If they are negative, they can end quarantine on the tenth day. Vaccinated individuals do not need to be quarantined but will need to wear a mask for 14 days when around other people. They must also test three to five days after exposure.

According to Brown, the staff is 86% to 87% vaccinated. Most of the staff reported their status to Human Resources but those who did not are assumed to be unvaccinated.

“The University was confident that by working with our faculty, staff, and in particular our two unions (AFSCME and AAUP) and asking them to voluntarily provide their vaccination status, we would come to the same outcome and high vaccination rates as we are seeing now without the need to require vaccines,” said Brown. “... employees who do not provide their vaccine status are considered unvaccinated and are required to abide by the same masking and testing requirements as unvaccinated students.”

Sophomores Emily Meier, an undecided major, and Antigona Cana, an environmental studies major, have participated in the events during Welcome Week. Meier lived on campus during the spring 2021 semester while Cana lived at home, they both share the same desire for a normal fall semester.

Meier expresses her lack of social life in her previous year at Rider. She indicates that while living on campus whenever she would leave her room, “it felt like a ghost town where barely anyone was outside doing anything.”

Meier is pleased with the atmosphere created at Welcome Week and already feels more comfortable at Rider and is excited for the upcoming semester to begin.

Cana said, “Being able to finally be on campus and get to know my school has been more fulfilling than working from home. I am able to get to know the campus and return to in-person classes which is more of a meaningful experience. All I have known for the past two years was online school, where I was never able to meet any professors or classmates. Now that I am finally able to do that my perspective as a student has changed drastically.”

In regards to student life, the guest policies for residents have changed as well.

The Residential Guest Policy goes as follows, “Guests for residential students will be limited to other residential students. No commuter students or off-campus guests will be permitted in the residential facilities. Overnight guests should be registered with the Residence Life staff. Please note this policy may change based on pandemic guidance. Residents should host no more than two guests per occupant.”

The Residential Guest Policy is one of the only complaints Meier has thus far.

“It has improved from the previous year but it is frustrating not being able to have outside guests, even if they are vaccinated and Rider students,” Meier said. “Besides that, going back to in-person classes will help make this semester feel more normal again. Being in a classroom environment alone will help make it feel more normal.”



Andrew Xon/The Rider News

Students are enjoying more normalized activity after a pandemic ridden 2020-21 school year.

# Rider faculty union ratifies contract extension

By Sarah Siock

**A**FTER summer labor negotiations with the administration, Rider’s chapter of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) voted on Sept. 2 to ratify a one-year extension of the present contract agreement that included a 3% raise for its members.

The ratification is the second extension of the agreement that was initially in place from 2017 through 2020. The previous extension was ratified in June 2020 and extended the contract until Aug. 31, 2021. The prior agreement marked the seventh year in a row that faculty did not receive a cost-of-living raise.

However, the current extension, valid through Aug. 31, 2022, includes new provisions the AAUP presented as contract requirements to the administration. According to AAUP Chief Negotiator Jeffrey Halpern, the union achieved in receiving increases in base salary, support for research and scholarship and protection against layoffs.

All members of the AAUP bargaining unit, which includes full-time and part-time faculty, coaches and trainers, will receive an average of 3% in salary increase. The increase to base salaries will happen this academic year in two steps, one beginning on Sept. 1 in the form of \$1,600 and the second on Feb. 1 at \$1,400.

The previous extension of the agreement came at a time where universities across the country were cutting costs due to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Associate Vice President of University Marketing and Communications Kristine Brown said, “The administration is pleased to have reached agreement with the AAUP leadership on a one-year extension of the collective bargaining agreement and are grateful that the contract was recently ratified by its members. We believe it is advantageous to all parties to not have a long-term contract at this time so that we could have a better understanding of important university issues impacted by the pandemic and other environmental changes taking place in higher education.”

Halpern, however, advised against a third extension of the agreement next year.

“Like all agreements, the one between the University and the AAUP needs review and updating on some regular basis. There is much work to be done, and I would not recommend that we do a one-year extension again,” Halpern wrote in an email to The Rider News.

Brown said that the administration is also open to negotiating a longer-term contract once the current agreement is no longer valid.

Brown said, “As we go forward, we can work toward a new multi-year contract that is both fair and in the best interest of the faculty, our students and the university as a whole. We recognize the importance our talented faculty play in our overall

mission and we look forward to starting the new academic year working together.”

Halpern also commented on the lack of salary increases in recent years and how it will influence next year’s negotiations.

“We achieved an acceptable increase. Because of the failure to gain increases over the previous seven years, there is still a lot of lost ground that must be made up. That still needs to be done along with other improvements in the AAUP Agreement with the University. We will be back at the negotiating table next summer,” Halpern said.



Rider’s chapter of the AAUP has previous held protests on the Lawrenceville campus in May 2017.

The Rider News

# Dell'Omo opens up on COVID-19 effects at convocation

By Shaun Chornobroff

In front of an unplanned Zoom audience because of storms that terrorized the state the previous day, Rider president Gregory Dell'Omo showcased a university that had suffered because of the COVID-19 pandemic, yet was on the road to recovery at the fall convocation on Sept. 2.

## COVID-19 Setbacks

Dell'Omo said that undergraduate freshman enrollment for 2021 is well below the fall of 2020 and explained that Rider still “has a ways to go to get back to a more financially solvent situation.”

“There are many factors which have been impacting freshman enrollment this past year, probably the most significant impact has been due to COVID-19 restrictions that prevented two critical influences and events that are important to Rider’s enrollment strategy,” Dell'Omo said to his audience.

Dell'Omo explained that the pandemic hit low to mid-income students harder than other demographics, which is an area where Rider gets a number of its students.

The issues with COVID-19 have also shown in student retention. Rider’s undergraduate returning student rate dropped to 76.8% this past year, a steep drop from 80.3% the year before. Dell'Omo said Rider’s total enrollment is at 3,827 students, which achieves the budget that Rider has, but is a stark drop from the 4,218 students from the previous year.

“When we talk about enrollment, it’s always particularly important to remember that freshman enrollment number,” Dell'Omo said. “That’s not just a one-year problem, that becomes a four-year problem, because it carries through the next four years for those students.”

There has been a 27% drop in residency for Rider, which Dell'Omo said adds up to about a \$60 million loss in revenue.

With the school still reeling from the pandemic, Rider is projecting to operate at an almost \$22 million deficit for the 2022 fiscal year.

## The Path Forward

Despite the pandemic-related troubles, Dell'Omo was optimistic about the upcoming future and what is to come for the university.

One of the main points of Dell'Omo’s presentation was bringing in prospective students and putting a new aggressive recruiting strategy in place.

Dell'Omo said, “We put together a much more focused funnel development team that’s been established to further spin the student search process, name purchases and identify pipelines for prospective students within the recruitment funnel.”

## Students, Faculty speak out about Rosh Hashana on first day of classes

By: Tori Pender

SEPT. 8, 2021 means different things to different people. For some, it is arriving at Rider to attend fully in-person classes for the first time since March 2020, while for others, it is the second holiest day in the Jewish religion, Rosh Hashana. Some students and faculty expressed their opposition to the semester starting on the High Holiday.

“Last year, we got constantly bombarded about diversity, diversity, diversity, diversity which clearly didn’t include a portion of our population,” said Jay Kawarsky, professor of composition and theory.

The holiday is observed from Sept. 6 through the evening of Sept. 8.

Kawarsky continued, “My biggest problem with this... is that new students feel that they can’t miss the class and opening class, so they don’t participate in the High Holidays. They don’t go home or don’t go to the synagogue a little bit down the road. That’s my biggest problem.”

Per university policy, it is encouraged for all faculty to allow students observing major religious holidays to make up any work, tests or examinations that occur on the day or days in question.

“This position is endorsed with the understanding that students are responsible for all classwork missed,” according to a school-wide email sent by Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs DonnaJean Fredeen.

The day in which the semester starts is decided between the University Academic Policy Committee (UAPC), which consists of the provost, deans

and elected faculty members of every college.

Fredeen explained that the UAPC created a policy to start fall classes the Wednesday after Labor Day on Feb. 1, 2005. Any changes to the fall start date have to be approved by the UAPC.

The April 27, 2021 UAPC meeting minute notes state, “Discussion of the Wednesday after Labor Day being the last day of Rosh Hashana, of the problem of adding a Wednesday back in before Thanksgiving or elsewhere, the final exam schedule, starting on a Thursday rather than a Wednesday. A motion to make Thursday the first day of the fall semester 2021 was not approved, two approve, 13 oppose, two abstentions. The motion did not pass.”

Joe Singer, president of the Jewish Student Organization Hillel Club said, “I feel that with any religious holiday, Rider should respect those who want to observe it and be able to be excused from activities such as classes and other events.”

Past Hillel president Hannah Isaacs ’17 said, “I understand that sometimes the school year starts during the Jewish Holiday of Rosh Hashanah. As a Jewish student, it can be challenging to choose between attending classes or observing a Jewish Holiday. I would hope that Rider university would allow students observing the Jewish High Holidays adequate accommodations and communicate those accommodations to the full teaching staff.”

As a part of this new initiative, Dell'Omo said there will be an increase in program-specific campaigns sponsored by the university, proven value messaging and “a lot more work in the area of in-person engagement.”

Dell'Omo announced that Rider will be moving away from its online education partnership with Pearson that started in 2019, due to lower than promised enrollments.

“We’re bringing that work in-house. So our graduate and continuing education online programs will be more done in-house. Therefore, we are going to be investing in the growth and expense of our marketing, recruitment and student navigation teams, and we no longer have to provide 53% of revenue sharing with Pearson,” Dell'Omo said.

Dell'Omo also touched on the two-phase project with the higher education consulting firm Credo. The multi-year partnership is already in the midst of its first phase, which started in the summer of 2021 and ran through the following summer.



Shaun Chornobroff/The Rider News

President Gregory Dell'Omo discussing his plan this year for Rider over Zoom.

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# The show must go on, even in an pandemic

By Amethyst Martinez

**W**ITH the everchanging COVID-19 pandemic, college students across the world have been affected by the virus and its impact on their college experience. But the pandemic especially impacted performing arts students due to the nature of their majors.

Sophomore Avery Gallagher, a musical theater major, remembers the struggles of adjusting to online classes last fall.

“I spent my first semester of college at home and completed my ballet classes in my kitchen and voice lessons in my basement,” said Gallagher.

Gallagher’s experience was the reality for a majority of performing art students last school year due to the pandemic.

Performing arts relies heavily upon in-person interaction, which led to both students and professors having to be creative and find new ways to teach and learn without the classroom, as well as performing without the stage. Many of the classes and performances instead took place on Zoom and Jitsi, both video conferencing websites.

Sean McCarther, associate professor and director of graduate studies at Westminster Choir College, taught all of his classes synchronously.

“I was actually surprised by how effective it could be. No question, it was a different experience, but I saw growth in all my students” said McCarther in an email to the Rider News.

For Gallagher, she found voice lessons were more productive in an online setting. Gallagher said, “It allowed for growth even without physically being in the room together as most of the teachers can hear the issues of technique through the Zoom audios.”

Both professors and students were able to create a space virtually that did not replicate in-person learning, but instead created a completely new way of learning that will be used for many years to come.

McCarther said, “The 18 months of quarantine have forced artists to search for new ways and new platforms through which to perform. I do not think those are going to disappear once we finally emerge from all of this.”

Gallagher moved on campus her spring semester to hopefully improve her college experience.

“It was incredibly hard trying to find a creative spark when all the live theater was shut down and I felt isolated being home all day doing class. ... I felt like I was missing out significantly from seeing what my friends on campus were doing so I decided to live on campus [for the] second semester,” she said.

With Gallagher on campus for her spring semester, she then had to adjust to learning on campus with classes that were still mostly synchronous. Gallagher said, “Living on campus and doing musical theater classes within COVID protocol was a whole new ball game.”

For her dance class specifically, Gallagher said, “There were taped squares over Marley flooring covers placed in the second section of the Student Recreation Center gym that several musical theater and dance majors used as socially distanced spaces to take their dance classes.”

This year, with Rider’s less restrictive COVID-19 protocols, musical theater and performing arts are expected to be much different compared to last. Gallagher said, “I think this year, with less restrictive guidelines, everybody will be able to grow to their fullest potential and gain a more filled and exciting experience of what it is to be a musical theater student in college.”

The guidelines are under Rider’s protocols and students will all be asked to wear masks regardless of vaccination status. McCarther said “Across the Westminster College of the Arts, this includes performance-based classes as well as rehearsals. ... It is a balance: how do we create the best learning environment that empowers our students to do good work while ensuring the safety of our students, faculty and staff.”

Even though all students will be masked, classes being held in person will allow for some normalcy to return to their learning experiences.



Courtesy of Avery Gallagher

Pictured left to right: **Alicia Bartosik** sophomore musical theater major, **Anna Spendley** sophomore musical theater major, **Avery Gallagher** sophomore musical

COVID guidelines of last year.”

The school year will be filled with more in-person activities that many performing art students are looking forward to. “I cannot wait to walk into the new year with fewer restrictions, in-person classes and live theater,” said Gallagher

Although COVID-19 has been a struggle for everyone, musical theater students and professors have figured out how to continue the college experience regardless of barriers presented due to the pandemic.

McCarther said, “Art needs to evolve and mutate to stay relevant and to meet the needs of today’s society. I’m excited to see how our field changes in the next few years.”



Courtesy of Avery Gallagher

Pictured left to right: **Avery Gallagher** sophomore musical theater major, **Natalie Mattson** sophomore musical theater major, **Carly Walton** junior musical theater major, and **Nicole Duffy**, junior musical theater major.

McCarther said, “This year, the College of the Arts is committed to as much in-person learning as safety will allow. Clearly, in the performing arts, so much of what we do happens in the space between people, whether that is between scene partners on stage, between a singer and the pianist, or between a performer and the audience. That has been difficult to replicate via Zoom.”

Despite some restrictions still in place, it is still an upgrade from last year. Gallagher said, “This is a drastic improvement in accessibility from the strict and harsh



Courtesy of Carolo Pascale/The Rider News

The Yvonne Theater will hopefully resume in person performances this school year.

## Rider welcomes the Class of 2025 for in-person instruction

By Aaliyah Patel

**R**IDER is welcoming students back to campus for full in-person instruction after transitioning to remote learning during the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. With the implementation of mandatory vaccinations and heightened precautionary measures, including wearing masks inside buildings, students can once again immerse themselves in on-campus activities.

For many, being back on campus is a new experience, as is with the class of 2025 who wrapped up their non-traditional senior year of high school through remote and hybrid instruction.

Joining the incoming class of students represents the start of a new journey, a start that many were afraid would be non-traditional.

Emilie Beals, a freshman music education major, transitioned from missing out on many school events to being fully booked for her first semester.

“The pandemic made me realize how much I loved and missed performances, athletics and spending time with larger groups of people,” Beals said.

To make up for lost time, Beals is hopeful to become actively involved, as she hopes to make new friends and build meaningful relationships.

“I’m looking forward to getting involved with WCC performances, acapella groups and club sports,” Beals said.

During the beginning of each semester, the university hosts welcome week, a series of interactive events that students can become involved in to become social among their peers.

This semester, there are many events students can attend including, Broncapalooza, Cranberry Wednesdays, Cranchella, Dynamic Duos and a university exclusive, the R Factor Singing Competition.

Grayson Davidock, a musical theater major, is looking forward to his first year living on campus, especially after he struggled to learn remotely.

“After spending my entire senior year miserably attending school virtually from home, coming to Rider feels like the breath of fresh air,” Davidock said.

Students can also expect to experience a wide range of performances including Drag Race and Rock Fest this semester.

“Life on campus and being back in an environment where I can be with my peers in person has been incredible,” Davidock said. “Especially coming off of a year of minimal social activity.”

As these new students have missed out on many of their senior year experiences, beginning a new institution can relay feelings of anxiety. Students are encouraged to participate in all the interactive events that the university has to offer to embark on their new journey in college.



Courtesy of Emilie Beals

Emilie Beals is all smiles after learning she will be on campus for her freshman year.

## Cranchella Photo Gallery



Courtesy of Andrew Xon/The Rider News

Popular food trucks gathered large crowds due to popularity.



Courtesy of Andrew Xon/The Rider News

Carnivale Donut Bar served students sweet treats throughout the event.



Courtesy of Andrew Xon/The Rider News

Various interactive activities including bouncy castles made an appearance on the campus lawn.



Courtesy of Andrew Xon/The Rider News

The Pub welcomed students to enjoy outdoor seating throughout their time outside.

# The sophomore class experience from a COVID-19 perspective

By Amethyst Martinez

**L**AST year, college freshmen made their way onto campus or Zoom without knowing what to expect due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Now, the same freshmen are sophomores hoping for a better year due to the loosening of COVID-19 restrictions on Rider's campus.

Sophomore psychology major Jenna Rosa stayed home last year due to the pandemic. Rosa said, "My first year was uneventful due to being home both semesters, but I certainly made the most of it. I wanted to play it safe and do my freshman year online since the vaccine wasn't eligible at that time."

Many students stayed home last year and only participated in synchronous and asynchronous classes, the freshmen at that time never even having attended a college class in person before. This was after many of their high school senior plans were canceled due to the uncertainty of the pandemic. Rosa said, "I feel as though the hundreds of other students who did virtual classes, along with me, missed out on that freshman experience."

Sophomore global studies major Kay McIntyre stayed on campus last year despite the pandemic in hopes of creating a more realistic college experience. When speaking about her residence hall, McIntyre said, "The first floor was actually really quiet. There were some students dorming, but most of us were staying in our rooms doing classes on Zoom all the time."

With many of the classes synchronous last year, it was certain that all college students' experiences were affected, especially freshmen at Rider. It became difficult to meet new people on campus due to the strict COVID restrictions and the fact that most classes were held over Zoom.

Rosa said, "Finally being able to talk to my peers in person and not in a breakout room on Zoom will be a great change."

When asked if she thought it'd be easier to meet people on campus due to Rider going back to in-person classes and dorming, McIntyre said, "Most definitely."

Meeting people will become much easier due to the increase of students being on campus, an experience sophomores have yet to encounter.

Rosa said, "I am so looking forward to being able to socialize with people normally again."

Many students at Rider are excited to start in-person classes again, but especially those who missed out on the experience of being in a college classroom altogether.

Rosa said, "I believe my college experience will be improved by being on campus and attending in-person classes. Zoom, although a fabulous resource, does not equate to an actual classroom."

Hopefully, in-person classes will return a sense of normalcy that was missing last year.

Although it was difficult to get involved in clubs and organizations last year due to the pandemic, many students did not let that stop them from participating. McIntyre became the class president of her freshman class and along with various clubs, hopes to become more involved this year.

McIntyre said, "With the pandemic happening, you have to take these bits of normalcy as much as you can because we don't know when another breakout or something similar will occur."

Although last year was difficult, the class of 2024 remains hopeful for a better year. Rosa said, "It will be a wonderful experience and a new chapter in all of our lives."



Courtesy of Jenna Rosa

Jenna Rosa brings her love of exploration into her upcoming semester.

## UPCOMING EVENT CALENDAR

**THU, SEP. 9**

**Rider University's 20th Memorial Ceremony of 9/11**  
**5:00 p.m.**

**FRI, SEP. 10**

**LGBTQIA+ Welcome Dessert Reception**  
**11:00 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.**  
**Rock Fest**  
**7:30 p.m.**

**SAT, SEP. 11**

**Dynamic Duos**  
**7:00 p.m.**

**MON, SEP. 13**

**A Diverse Welcome Reception**  
**5:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.**

FROM THE EDITOR

# COVID-19 precautions on the college campus

**T**HE past year and a half has been a consistent ebb and flow of everchanging COVID-19 safety precautions and restrictions, and as new variants of the novel coronavirus pop up in the global and national community, more states and businesses are reinforcing restrictions after catching only a slight glance of easing up. The decision to reimplement mask requirements regardless of vaccination status has received mixed reactions.

Governor Phil Murphy's executive order regarding masks in New Jersey schools went into effect on Aug. 9. The order states that all faculty, students, staff members and visitors must wear a mask when indoors. This order pertains to both public and private institutions, including parochial schools, ranging all the way from preschools to secondary education buildings.

The mandate has understandably received mixed reactions, varying from relief, to disappointment, to backlash and, as expected, criticism. This decision to require masks for the 2021-2022 school year is smart, especially for students that are under the age of 12 and cannot yet get vaccinated to protect themselves from COVID-19 and its variants, specifically the new and highly transmittable delta variant. Garnering frustration, however, is the requirement for schools with vaccine-eligible students, specifically secondary education institutions like Rider University, where on-campus students are required to be fully vaccinated to participate in in-person classes and events.

Students are expected to be fully vaccinated to participate in on-campus living and in-person events unless already approved for a medical or religious exemption to the requirement. In an email sent to faculty, Rider's COVID-19 Implementation Team reports that 96% of students partaking in living and learning on campus are vaccinated.

At least 150 students have been approved for vaccine exemption, though they will have to comply with weekly testing protocols beginning Sept. 13. For faculty, however, union status prevents the vaccine from being mandatory, though individuals are strongly encouraged to get protected and protect others. According to a speech given by Rider University President Greg Dell'Omo at the school's fall convocation, as of Sept. 2, 87% of staff and 86% of full-time faculty are vaccinated, with adjuncts still being closely monitored. Unvaccinated staff and faculty members will rightfully be required to participate in weekly testing as well.

Coinciding with mask implementations and vaccine requirements, Rider University will follow Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines and recommendations for contact tracing in the event of a COVID-19 exposure case. This response relies on reaching out to individuals who are considered a close contact, which is characterized by having been within six feet of an infected person for 15 minutes regardless of mask status, coming into physical contact or contact with bodily fluids, or living with the infected individual. Vaccinated individuals will not have to quarantine like their unvaccinated counterparts, however, wearing a mask for 14 days after exposure and producing a negative test will be required.

To some, reinstating a mask mandate for communities with an overwhelming majority of vaccinated members may be frustrating or difficult to understand, especially in the wake of severe COVID-19 fatigue after 18 months of living through a pandemic.

The simple answer, however, is that masking up for extra precaution can't hurt, especially in communities like college campuses that involve shared living spaces and high contact levels, as well as the ability for students to travel off campus where their interactions with others cannot be monitored. Wearing a mask also protects at-risk community members who may want to get the vaccine, but aren't able to due to medical conditions, or people who may come in frequent contact with loved ones who are unvaccinated.

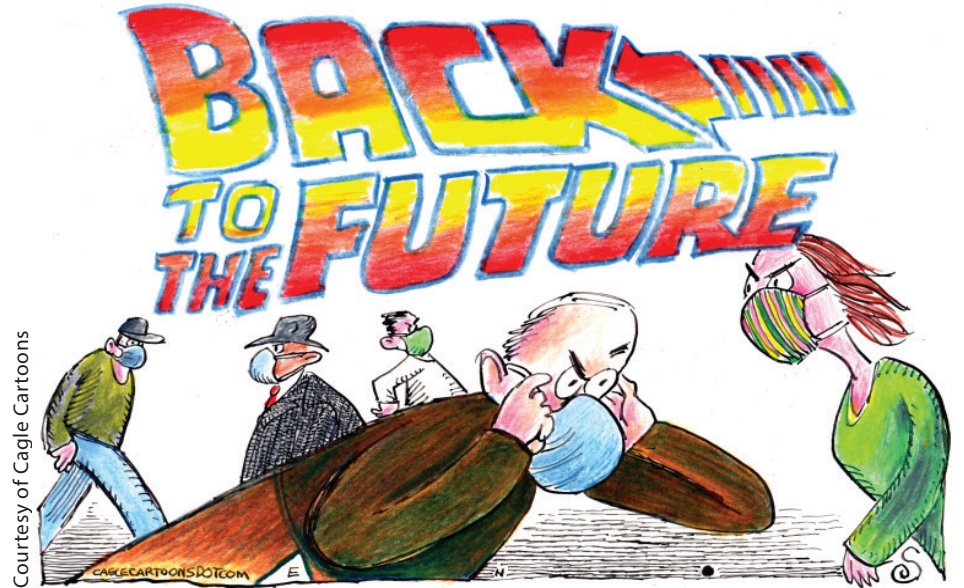
According to the CDC's seven-day metrics, within the most recently documented period of Aug. 28 through Sept. 3, Mercer County is reported as having a high level of community transmission. The CDC recommends that in these areas of high transmission, community members wear a mask in public indoor spaces regardless of vaccination status.

Wearing masks when in close contact with others is an especially good idea when it comes to the information that is still being obtained on the delta variant, which the CDC reports to be two times as contagious as previous variants. Of course, the main focus and risk remain in individuals who are not vaccinated, which may make these requirements seem irrelevant or unnecessary in an environment where vaccination is mandatory, but breakthrough infections are still a possibility, and research regarding the COVID-19 pandemic as a whole continues to develop.

Wearing a mask is one of the easiest ways for individuals to protect themselves and others, and in the long run, it is only a minor inconvenience when the matter at hand is a question of public safety. Living in a pandemic is anything short of predictable, but doing everything possible for the health and safety of community members should remain a top priority for Rider.

*This editorial expresses the unanimous opinion of The Rider News Editorial Board.  
This week's editorial was written by Opinion Editor Kaitlyn McCormick*

*Kaitlyn McCormick*



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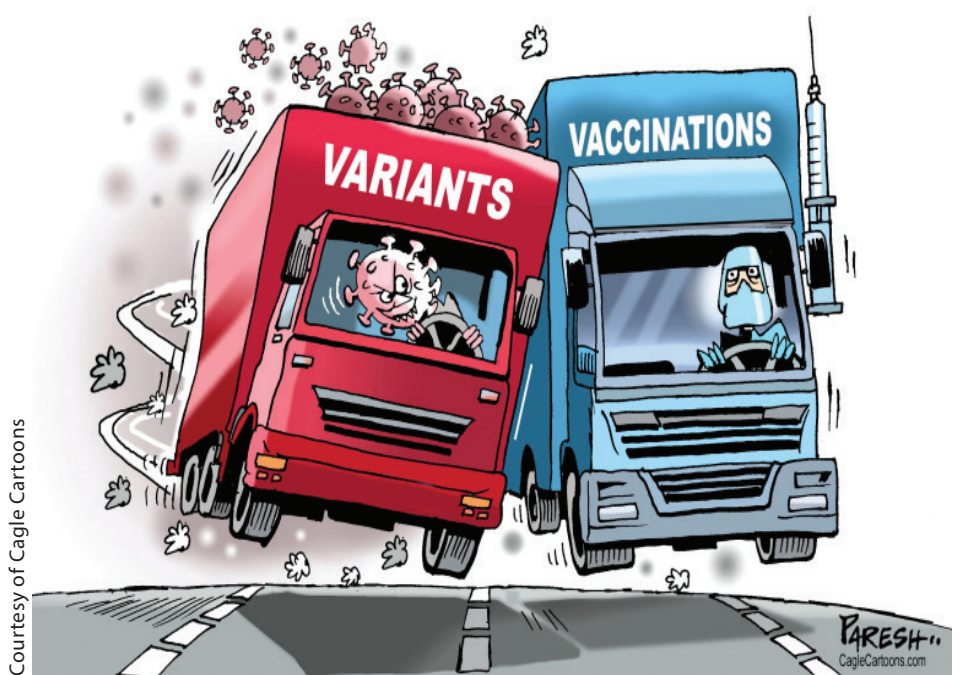
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SOPHOMORE SIGHTINGS

# Trouble in Texas: the problem with abortion bans

On Sept. 1, Texas' Senate Bill 8 (SB8), also known as the "Texas Heartbeat Act," went into effect, banning most abortion access past the six-week marker. In a close 5-4 decision, the Supreme Court refused to block the Texas law, with 3 of 5 votes in favor of upholding from Trump-appointed judges. Chief Justice John G. Roberts joined the court's three liberal judges in dissent.

This decision and its aftermath has led to deserved outrage not only in Texas, but across the country due to its severe restrictions as well as its unprecedented nature following prior Supreme Court decisions regarding abortion access and reproductive health. SB8 calls for a ban on abortions past detection of cardiac activity, typically occurring around the six-week point in a pregnancy.

The law reads, "A physician may not knowingly perform or induce an abortion on a pregnant woman if the physician detected a fetal heartbeat for the unborn child."

This law directly works against the precedent set by *Roe v. Wade* in 1973, where the Court established that states could not strictly regulate abortion access before the viability of a fetus, which, according to the National Library of Medicine, is around 24 weeks of gestation.

Dissenting Justice Sonia Sotomayor wrote in her opinion that the Texas law was "enacted in disregard of the court's precedents through procedural entanglements of the state's own creation."

A pregnancy is not viable at six weeks, and is technically not even advanced enough to be referred to as a fetus, because the development is still in the embryonic stage. In reality, six weeks of pregnancy is only a mere two weeks after someone has missed their period. This means that most people with a uterus would not even realize they are pregnant before their abortion access has been ripped away from them.

This blurred line caused by inaccuracies, like calling an embryo a fetus, making the developmental stage seem further along or referring to that embryo as having a 'heartbeat' adds to the convoluted surrounding abortion and reproductive rights. This emotionally charged rhetoric is dangerous because it presents a false interpretation of the scientific and biological happenings throughout various stages of pregnancy.

Quoted by NPR, Jennifer Kearns, OB-GYN, from the University of California San Francisco explains the inaccuracies of terms like 'heartbeat' when referencing early pregnancy, "What we're really detecting is a grouping of

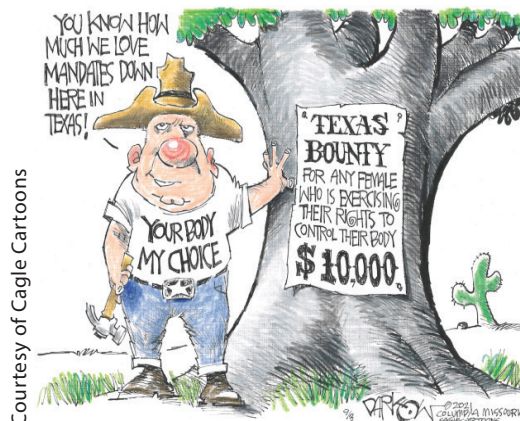
cells that are initiating some electrical activity ... In no way is this detecting a functional cardiovascular system or a functional heart."

The blatant disregard of the Supreme Court's past decisions and restriction of reproductive rights for cisgender women and other persons with uteruses are disgustingly not the only concerning facets of SB8. The law allows for Texas residents to sue any clinic, doctor, clergy-member, driver or support system that aids in a person receiving an abortion after six weeks for a \$10,000 incentive.

This allowance is extremely dangerous and will most definitely put pregnant people at risk. Justice Sotomayor stated in her dissent that the lawmakers in Texas have "deputized the state's citizens as bounty hunters, offering them cash prizes for civilly prosecuting their neighbors' medical procedures." SB8 has incorporated fear tactics into its harsh grasp on reproductive freedom, and the results have the potential to be catastrophic. The expected legal fees concerning these lawsuits are also meant to hinder abortion providers financially.

The news from Texas only reinstalls concern for abortion access across the country and the fear other conservative states will attempt to follow suit. This issue is especially prevalent as the Supreme Court is scheduled to hear *Dobbs v. Jackson* in October, a case that questions the constitutionality of abortion as a whole, and how that standard influences a state's rights to rule on reproductive freedoms. News coming out of Texas this week only sheds a slight light on the never-ending war on reproductive rights in America.

Kaitlyn McCormick,  
Sophomore English & journalism major



Courtesy of Cagle Cartoons

A LETTER TO THE EDITOR

# Faculty member reacts to Rider University's tax form 990

President Dell'Omo received a nice raise from the Board of Trustees while the university was told that we are living through dire times and will need to implement austerity measures. Amid the coronavirus crisis, the president made \$532,400, plus \$87,712 in additional compensation in the fiscal year 2019-2020. That's a raise of more than \$52,000 from his 2018-2019 salary of \$480,018 (plus \$85,399 in additional compensation). Other administrators also got raises. For example, although the administration laments declining enrollments and smaller freshmen classes, the Vice President for Enrollment Management, Drew Aromando, got a raise of \$36,769, bringing his base salary to \$239,708.

These salaries compare to an annual baseline salary of \$68,210 for a lecturer, \$74,000 for an assistant professor, \$90,500 for an associate professor and \$112,500 for a full professor at Rider University.

All faculty salaries were frozen for nearly a decade. As an institution of higher learning, Rider has increased the number of administrators, many of whom are very well compensated, by almost 20% and cut the number of full-time faculty members by more than 15% from 2016 to 2020.

One could argue that managerial leaders are entitled to much larger compensations because they make the key decisions that should keep institutions like ours solvent and fiscally healthy. This is not the case here; the Dell'Omo administration has engaged in several very poor decisions since its inception in 2015. For example, in July 2021, analysts at Moody's Investors Service downgraded Rider University's bond rating to "junk," signaling that the credit rating agency is increasingly concerned about the institution's precarious finances. Under Dell'Omo's reign, Rider's rating was downgraded once before in 2020. These downgrades are largely the result of the particularly catastrophic and misguided efforts to sell the land in Princeton on which Westminster Choir College, until recently, resided. The resulting lawsuits and consulting fees alone cost many thousands of dollars and, overall, this administrative failure has cost Rider millions of dollars.

More poor management decisions will soon impact our faculty and students: Rider recently hired the consulting firm Credo to help with the current student recruitment and downsizing agenda. This company seems to undervalue the liberal arts curriculum and encourages administrations to promote professional degrees and expensive certificate programs, rather than a well-rounded education, because these programs generate greater tuition revenue. Hiring this

company might suggest our highly paid administrators have run out of ideas.

Rider has what renowned New School For Social Research economist Sanjay Reddy describes as a "bloated administration," with resources increasingly going towards highly compensated administrators rather than towards faculty and education. Yet, this administration does not make wise business decisions; it's an example of what distinguished Johns Hopkins historian Francois Furstenberg has described as "ineptitude at the top" at institutions of higher education.

Barbara Franz  
Professor of Political Science and President of Rider's Chapter of the American Association of University Professors

Check this box if neither the organization nor any related organization compensated any current officer, director, or trustee.

(A) Name and title	(B) Average hours per week (list any hours for related organizations below line)	(C) Position (do not check more than one box, unless person is both an officer and a director/trustee)					(D) Reportable compensation from the organization (W-2/1099-MISC)	(E) Reportable compensation from related organizations (W-2/1099-MISC)	(F) Estimated amount of other compensation from the organization and related organizations
		Individual trustee or director	Officer	Key employee	Highly compensated employee	Former			
(1) GREGORY G. DELL'OMO PRESIDENT	50.00		X			532,400.	0.	87,712.	
(2) KEVIN A. BAGGETT BASKETBALL COACH	37.50			X		344,732.	0.	36,026.	
(3) JAMES P. HARTMAN VP FINANCE & TREASURER	50.00		X			299,099.	0.	25,730.	
(4) DONNAJEAN A. FREDEEN PROVOST/VP ACADEMIC AFFAIRS	50.00		X			283,751.	0.	38,027.	
(5) KARIN KLIM VP UNIVERSITY ADVANCEMENT	50.00			X		255,022.	0.	43,524.	
(6) MARK A. SOLOMON VP LEGAL AFFAIRS & GENERAL COUNSEL	50.00		X			252,377.	0.	39,288.	
(7) GARY M. BROSVIC PROFESSOR PSYCHOLOGY	37.50			X		248,144.	0.	23,012.	
(8) DREW C. AROMANDO VP ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT	50.00			X		239,708.	0.	12,463.	
(9) MICHAEL F. RECA VP FACILITIES & UNIVERSITY OPERATION	50.00			X		238,161.	0.	12,038.	
(10) CYNTHIA NEWMAN PROFESSOR MARKETING	37.50			X		235,678.	0.	10,291.	
(11) MARSHALL ONOFRIO DEAN WESTMINSTER COLLEGE OF THE ARTS	37.50			X		216,747.	0.	23,021.	
(12) DEBORA Z. STASOLLA, SECRETARY	50.00								

A screenshot of the university's 2019 IRS 990, which spans from July 1, 2019, to June 30, 2020.

MAAC SPORTS

# NCAA, MAAC announce new COVID-19 guidance

By Shaun Chornobroff

**W**ITH the majority of the nation's college athletes vaccinated, and the 2020-2021 school year that bears many unhappy memories for colleges and universities across the country in the past, the NCAA has updated many of their COVID-19 policies for the 2021 fall season.

With a strict vaccination requirement, along with the changes the NCAA has made, MAAC commissioner Rich Ensor is confident that the conference and its member schools, including Rider, will be able to avoid the inferno of cancellations that plagued the conference in the 2020-2021 winter and spring seasons.

"Our conference, our member schools, are taking this pretty seriously still," Ensor said of potential roadblocks due to the ongoing pandemic. "We just have to [take] the normal precautions. Wear a mask, avoid close contact with people you don't know. Things of that nature."

In an email, Rider men's soccer coach Charlie Inverso admitted he is concerned specifically about the new variant, saying "we have to be cognizant of the dangers of the new variant and that it has the potential to shut us down at any time."

Members of athletic teams who are fully vaccinated or had been infected in the 90 days prior to a situation will not be forced to be tested unless they are symptomatic or if it's "based on a risk assessment of a documented close contact with COVID-19," according to the NCAA's Resocialization of College Sport document which was released on Aug. 4 but was updated on Aug. 18.

This differs starkly for unvaccinated student-athletes who are forced to take a polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test within three to five days of arrival or two antigen tests on non-consecutive days within three to five days after, according to the document.

If a fully vaccinated student-athlete is deemed a close contact, the document requires "masking in public indoor settings for 14 days with discontinuation if a COVID-19 test is performed three to five days after exposure and is negative, or if the assessment does not reveal high risk."



Carolo Pascale/The Rider News

The new NCAA guidelines on COVID-19 are more lenient toward student-athletes who have been vaccinated against the virus.


The NCAA explains that unvaccinated athletes who are considered a close contact with someone with COVID-19 should quarantine "in accordance with public health authority guidance."

Regardless of vaccination status, the policy for a positive test for COVID-19 states that an athlete must be isolated for 10 days, and a fever must have subsided for at least 24 hours without "the use of fever-reducing medications," as well as the improvement of other symptoms.

In his interview with The Rider News, Ensor made

it clear that he wants players and schools alike to know three things.


First, the MAAC is taking vaccinations seriously. Second, the conference is in a much better situation than it was a year ago at this time. Finally, there are still current and upcoming challenges regarding the pandemic, and precautions must be taken to avoid the issues that deprived many athletes of opportunities to compete in the not-so-distant past.





**WVB = WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL**  
**WSOC = WOMEN'S SOCCER**  
**MSOC = MEN'S SOCCER**  
**FH = FIELD HOCKEY**

■ = Home  
 ■ = Away

## RIDER UNIVERSITY ATHLETICS



## WEEKLY SPORTS SCHEDULE

Sept. 8	Sept. 9	Sept. 10	Sept. 11	Sept. 12	Sept. 13	Sept. 14
<p><b>WSOC vs NJIT</b> 7:00 PM</p> 		<p><b>FH vs GEORGETOWN</b> 4:00 PM</p> <p><b>WVB vs RHODE ISLAND</b> 7:00 PM</p>	<p><b>WVB vs MERRIMACK</b> 1:00 PM</p> <p><b>WVB vs HARTFORD</b> 4:00 PM</p> <p><b>MSOC vs LA SALLE</b> 7:00 PM</p>	<p><b>WSOC vs BUCKNELL</b> 1:00 PM</p> <p><b>FH vs TOWSON</b> 2:00 PM</p>		<p><b>MSOC vs STONY BROOK</b> 7:00 PM</p>

## RIDER ATHLETICS

# Rider AD Harnum discusses fall season

By Dylan Manfre

**P**LANNING the 2020 season was a nightmare for Rider Athletics and Athletic Director Don Harnum. He was clear when he said it was the hardest season to plan for in his tenure at Rider University.

Harnum is grateful for the lessened anxiety surrounding the build-up to the first true fall season since 2019. However, there is some concern as the new delta variant cripples the country.

Harnum was able to take in the women's soccer team's season-opener on Aug. 20 at Ben Cohen Field against Wagner College from his usual spot to the left of the scorer's table. Across the field from him, the fans in the stands comprised more than the parents of the players this year.

"This was one I was actually looking forward to because it is a little bit more normal," Harnum said. "It was good to see people sitting across the way and actually being able to attend the games."

Harnum was quick to note the high vaccination status of the student-athletes, which is around 96-97%, in a Zoom interview with The Rider News in August. That number was provided to him by the trainers.

He knew the number would not be 100% because of religious and medical exemptions that the University offers on a limited basis to students. Harnum speculated there were four or five teams with unvaccinated student-athletes.

The high vaccination rate has allowed for a modified form of business as usual for Harnum's staff and the fall sports season.

"I know you can still get [COVID-19] by being vaccinated, but I'm a lot less worried about people getting really sick," said Harnum, who is fully vaccinated himself. "I'm a lot less worried about a lot of pauses."

He credited the conference brass Rich Ensor and company for instituting a vaccine mandate early on. Some schools in the Metro Atlantic Athletic



Carolo Pascale/The Rider News

Rider Athletic Director **Don Harnum** spoke about the changes to the fall season and how he feels with games being played.

Conference (MAAC) already mandated their students to be vaccinated before coming to campus.

Those who are unvaccinated will be subjected to testing three times a week, according to the conference's guidelines released on Aug. 11, which instituted a vaccine mandate for all student-athletes and game-day personnel. The league's press release did not explicitly name coaches as part of the vaccine mandate.

Harnum said, however, "almost every coach is vaccinated." He did not comment on which coaches were not vaccinated.

## New Scheduling Policy

One of the most noticeable changes from last year, besides the sports teams playing in the appropriate seasons, is the return to a full-length slate of games.

When the college basketball season was in full swing press releases were frequently sent out announcing scheduling changes because of COVID-19 related issues.

The MAAC enacted a new policy that says if a team does not have a sufficient amount of players available because of a COVID-19 issue, they will forfeit the contest and the opponent will get a win.

The 11 athletic directors were consulted on the unanimous vote and Harnum was "absolutely" in favor of its passing.

"We can't keep operating the way we did last year," he said. "I think this shifts the responsibility a little back to the teams, the coaches and the individual schools. Let's keep everyone healthy, so we can keep going and not have to forfeit."

The Northeast Conference, which the field hockey team is a part of, adopted its cancellation policy on Sept. 3 should a game not be played because of COVID-19. It is similar to the MAAC's policy in that if a team does not have enough players, it would result in a forfeit.

Field hockey senior midfielder Carly Brosious felt it was a "fair policy, teams have to make sacrifices for one another, in a way that's a test to that."

## MEN'S SOCCER

# Broncs unable to find a goal in latest loss

By Shaun Chornobroff

**W**HEN the final buzzer sounded at Ben Cohen field on Sept. 5, many players on the Rider men's soccer team could be seen sitting down on the pitch with their hands in their head and an obvious aura of disappointment surrounding their bodies.

The scoreboard in the corner of the field, not far from the bleachers, displaying a 1-0 loss to the Saint Francis Red Flash, was not a welcomed sight among anybody associated with the Broncs.

"You're never happy when you lose, it doesn't feel too good," Rider Head Coach Charlie Inverso said after Sunday's crushing loss.

Playing its third game in seven days, a Rider team that prides itself on energy and possession appeared sluggish and unable to connect passes in the opening minutes of the game, finding themselves playing defense for long periods.

Despite the slow start, however, Rider was destined to take the lead with a hair over three minutes left in the first half when junior center back Lenny Cidolt rose over the Red Flash defense to get his head on a corner kick, only for goalkeeper Jonas Diesler to leap through the air and keep it out of the net.

In the 51st minute, Saint Francis earned a corner kick. Rider failed to properly clear the ball out of the box, and Jeff Thielman made the Broncs pay, burying the ball into the back of the net.

"We did a fairly decent job defending, then we just broke down on the corner kick. That's where games are decided so many times, corner kicks and free kicks," said Inverso.

From then on, Rider dominated the game, creating several opportunities, bringing the team within inches of tying the game. But no matter where Rider shot the ball, it did everything besides hit the back of the net.

In the 72nd minute, exciting senior midfielder Zaki



Amethyst Martinez/The Rider News

Senior midfielder **Zaki Alibou** reacts after taking a close shot on goal in Rider's loss.

Alibou retrieved the ball in the attacking end of the field and beat the Saint Francis defense like he had so many times prior. The only thing between him and his third goal of the season was the goalkeeper. Thus, Alibou opened his body, curled the ball around him, only for it to strike the crossbar and cause an audible gasp of shock from the crowd.

Nine minutes before Alibou's chance, sophomore forward Justin Ruffino looked to have his first collegiate goal. Hitting the ball hard eight yards away from the net, Diesler recovered to get a body part on the ball and parry it over the net for his second miraculous save of the game.

Rider hit the post two other times in the second half and forced Diesler into another diving save with less than five minutes left, but never got a goal to show for it.

All in all, it was just that kind of day for Rider.

"We had a lot of minutes recently this week. So we came out slow, and we just tried to have some energy," senior midfielder Taner Bey said of the loss. "A couple of chances didn't go our way and we didn't get what we wanted."

Several inexperienced players had a chance to showcase themselves in the game, including junior goalkeeper Guillaume Veinante who made his first career start as a Bronc.

Veinante performed well, making three saves, including a diving save on a free kick in the first half.

After a grueling week, Inverso and the rest of the Broncs will finally have some rest and take the field again on Sept. 11 when they travel to Philadelphia to compete against La Salle.

# Sports

INSIDE

## NEW COVID-19 GUIDANCE

*Shaun Chornobroff details the differences for vaccinated and unvaccinated student-athletes.*

FIND THE STORY ON PAGE 10

NAME, IMAGE AND LIKENESS

# Rider athletes speak on NIL's Impact



Carolo Pascale/The Rider News

Women's basketball senior guard **Lenaejha Evans** is releasing her own apparel line and hopes to profit off her name, image and likeness.

By **Carolo Pascale**

**C**OLLEGE athletics across the United States changed forever on July 1, 2021. Student-athletes in every college and division rejoiced with the NCAA's adoption of a new name, image and likeness (NIL) policy, allowing college athletes to reap the benefits of endorsement opportunities and sponsorships.

This change in the NCAA's NIL rules has been lurking in the background of college athletics for a long time, going back to the moment the term "student-athlete" was coined in the 1950s.

The new rules state that any college athlete can engage in NIL activities based on the state laws of their college; they can engage in NIL activities even if that state has no NIL laws, use professional services providers and require the athlete to report any NIL activities to their college.

The big question is how this affects Rider. Since New Jersey has no NIL laws — although one is potentially planned for 2025 — it is up to Rider to decide on the NIL rules for its student-athletes.

"We do have a policy that we developed over the summer," Rider's NCAA Compliance Officer Greg Busch said. "Basically, the NCAA passed on coming up with formal policies at the national level for the NIL. So they pushed it onto the individual institutions to come up with their policies as to how they would manage NIL."

With Rider and other colleges developing their NIL policies, the NCAA has seemingly provided little guidance on what is okay and what is not.

"The limited guidance that the NCAA has provided does say, and it's in our policy too, that you can't promote anything that is related to gambling, adult entertainment, alcohol, drugs, kind of a whole

litany of things," Busch said.

Dan Lust, a sports lawyer and New York University professor who spoke with the Rider women's basketball team over the summer, echoed this sentiment.

"We're just going to call it a free-for-all. If you were in a state that had NIL laws, congrats, you had a little bit of guidance. But if you were now in a state that did not have any laws that were effective, like New Jersey, you have no floor, you had nothing to help you," said Lust.

However, there are athletes at Rider that have NIL opportunities already lined up. Several students are Barstool Athletes, which is run by the controversial Dave Portnoy. One of Rider's Barstool Athletes is senior softball pitcher Brooklyn Trujillo-Quintana.

"I was excited because I think that's something that's super cool. It's an opportunity for college athletes to make money off of all of their hard work. Automatically, I was like that's super awesome and how do I get in on it," Trujillo-Quintana said.

"As a smaller school, we now have the opportunities to build our own fan base and bring in more not just for ourselves, but for the university and program as a whole."

As a Barstool Athlete, Trujillo-Quintana talked about the process of becoming one and why she chose to become one.

"First off, I love Barstool," Trujillo-Quintana said.

"I think it's hilarious. I think the company is awesome. There was an application process that you had to fill out talking about your sport, where you played and personal information. Then, you got an email that said [to] wait and see and send a picture of yourself playing. You had to send a screenshot of your Twitter and Instagram bio saying, "I am a Barstool

Athlete." This was the first thing that I had seen that was saying that it doesn't matter where you go, it doesn't matter how many followers you have."

Another Rider athlete involved in NIL activities is senior women's basketball player Lenaejha Evans. Evans is now the CEO of her own clothing brand called Legendary Ending.

"I think NIL will be good because a lot of student-athletes can find something they can use to brand themselves in their name. And whatever you like, as long as you follow the rules, it'd be good for you," said Evans.

"It's always been a plan for me even before the NIL rule came out. So when clothing brands started hitting me up to promote their brand new stuff with my name, I thought I might as well just do my own thing," said Evans. "I'm a basketball player, so I'll be able to brand myself, so when people ask what I do besides basketball, I could tell them I have a clothing brand."

Evans thinks the NIL will be beneficial to those who decide to use it.

"I think a lot of female athletes should take advantage of it because that's how you're going to brand yourself if you're gonna go to the next level, especially putting a brand behind your name. It means a lot, really. So I think a lot of female athletes will benefit from it," said Evans.

Between schools, states and the NCAA all working to allow college athletes to reap the rewards of their hard work through NIL opportunities, it's safe to say that it's a great time to be a college athlete.

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