

Administrators address student concerns at SGA town hall

By Sarah Siock

THE effect Rider's partnership with the consulting firm Credo will have on students and mental health services on campus was the focus of the Student Government Association (SGA) town hall on Nov. 4.

Administrators speaking at the event included President Gregory Dell'Omo, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs DonnaJean Fredeen and Vice President for Facilities and University Operations Michael Rea. Students had over an hour to participate in the Q&A event held in the Science and Technology Center that revolved around five topics: Credo, health services on campus, dining services, the transitions back to in-person learning and Public Safety.

The portion of the event that focused on Rider's counseling services involved students directing questions to the counseling staff. Associate Vice President of Student Affairs and Dean of Students Cindy Threatt, who works closely with the counseling center, spoke about the outcome of an external review of the counseling center that took place over the summer.

Threatt said, "Some of the things that they recommended were in terms of outreach. In establishing relationships and identifying your highest-need students, figuring out where those students actually have their resources and safety connections and connecting with those spaces as well ... Rider University is no different than

all the universities that are really interested in making sure we have the services and support that you all need to be able to be healthy, to have really strong esteem and to know that you have resources that you can wrap around all the time."

Dell'Omo was the first to speak at the event and addressed Rider's partnership with Credo that launched in June. The partnership has been criticized by Rider's chapter of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), with leadership claiming, "Credo has a disturbing pattern of deep cuts of programs and departments and reduction in student services."

Dell'Omo explained what led the university to partner with Credo.

He said, "Since we're looking at the future and how we're going to position the university to continue to be as competitive as possible, we then looked at using outside organizations to help do an assessment. In our case, we chose a firm called Credo, which is a consulting firm of higher education that specializes in institutions like Rider."

The first phase of the partnership began with a Student Assessment Experience where Credo representatives engaged in interviews with students at Rider over the past few months. Dell'Omo said the assessment looks at components that affect the student experience including academics, residence life and orientation.

"We've asked [Credo] to help kind of look at all those different points that we have with you ... to figure out how we can do things better," Dell'Omo said.

Dell'Omo also spoke on the controversial second phase of Credo's partnership, which involves academic prioritization process. In 2015, Rider also completed an academic prioritization process that resulted in the elimination of three programs: fine arts, German and business education. Dell'Omo said the goal is to have data collected by the end of the year and then begin to make decisions in the spring.

"It's fair to say that we are going to have some cutting at this university, given the deficits we are running, and realizing that we're not going to be able to raise that much new revenue in a relatively short time. So we realize you're going to have to do some cutting and reallocation of resources to make the university even more effective. I can venture to say that it's going to be across the university in different areas. The administrative side is not going to be exempt from that process," Dell'Omo said.

A task force, where university employees will assess Rider's programs, was assembled for the academic prioritization process. Currently, no members of the AAUP have volunteered to assist in the process.

Several students raised concerns about the lack of transparency from the administration regarding the Credo partnership.



Rider president Gregory Dell'Omo spoke on Credo at SGA's town hall

Rider students enhance global awareness by engaging in Nobel Peace Prize

By Christina Natoli

STUDENTS were put up to the challenge of choosing nominees for the 2022 Nobel Peace Prize during a special topics course in spring 2021.

The course taught by political science professor Roberta Fiske-Rusciano, titled Student Model Nobel Peace Prize: Research on Social Justice Issues and Recent Activism (GLS 295), met biweekly on Tuesdays over Zoom, with Rider students and Thursdays with students from Notre Dame University in Lebanon.

Through a carefully analyzed and highly selective process, this worldwide collaboration culminated with the election of a singular candidate for the Norwegian Nobel Committee to examine for possible selection.

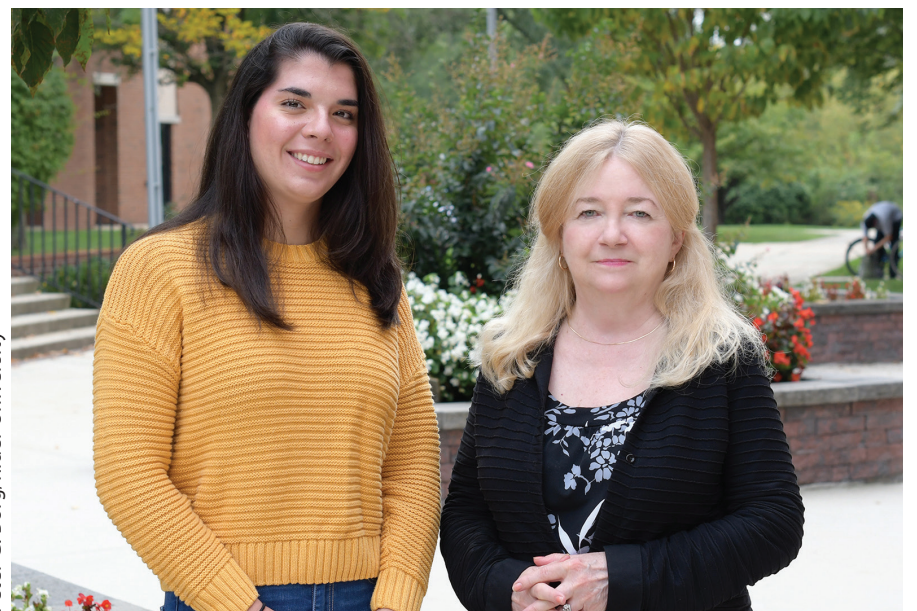
"Brainstorming and persuasion was crucial, but students also had to get to know each other culturally. I watched as they increased their skills in listening and negotiating, and they made some friends as well," said Fiske-Rusciano.

Students studied Lebanese history, social justice theories and previous Nobel winners' values. Additionally, they exercised powers of coercion and listening to reach a conclusion that students from multiple backgrounds could accept.

Suhriti Sarangal, a senior psychology major said, "I looked for various qualities while selecting my candidate such as field(s) of work, the scale of impact, number of active years, their stand on other important issues, to name a few. I wanted to make sure that my candidate had a large-scale impact on the world; a candidate that did not work with only a specific group of people or country. Along with that, I wanted to select a candidate that had shown a lifelong devotion to their work and went above and beyond to bring their message forward to the whole world while creating a large-scale impact... I wanted a candidate who was working for the whole world."

Ultimately, cooperation led the students from both countries to civilly agree upon one candidate. They determined the candidate based on present issues and the candidate's ability to combat those issues.

When asked about her experience in the course, Sarangal enthusiastically said, "The course has been a once in a lifetime experience for me. I not only got to



Peter G. Borg/Rider University

Paola Carlesso (left) a sophomore global studies major and Roberta Fiske-Rusciano a political science professor along with the class met biweekly over Zoom during spring 2021.

speak with Dr. Asle Toje, who is a member of the Nobel Committee but also got an invite to attend the Nobel Prize Ceremony. I wouldn't exchange this experience for anything."

Nobel Week will occur in Oslo, Norway from Dec. 6 through 12, though COVID-19 restrictions prevent the invited students from attending. The class cannot currently announce their nomination while the selection process occurs, but the students and faculty expressed their enthusiasm for the ceremony regardless.



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Rider men's basketball started its season on Nov. 9 against Duquesne.
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Students express issues they've had with parking at Rider.
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Westminster Choir College faculty and students sing for social justice during Homecoming weekend.
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SECURITY BRIEFS

BY SARAH SIOCK

Tearing up

Unexpected weapon. On Nov. 2 at 1:45 p.m., Public Safety, while speaking with the counseling center staff, was informed that they had found pepper spray in their building that they wanted to turn over to the police. Public Safety stated that they could take possession of the spray and turn it over to the police if needed. Upon inspecting the canister of pepper spray, it was discovered that it was not pepper spray, but military-grade tear gas. The tear gas was turned over to the police immediately as it is an illegal item.

Suspicious smell

Marijuana and more. On Nov. 5 at 12:44 a.m., Public Safety was dispatched to a residence hall for the report of the smell of marijuana. The source of the odor was narrowed down to a residence hall room. Public Safety spoke with the occupant of the room who consented to a search of the room. Residence Life staff responded to assist during the search. During the course of the search, suspected marijuana and paraphernalia was found. The suspected marijuana was disposed of and the paraphernalia was confiscated. The smoke detector head was also found covered and was uncovered. The incident was referred to the Office of Community Standards.

Exit issues

Damaged sign. On Nov. 7 at 8:40 a.m., Public Safety was dispatched to Olson Residence Hall for the report of damage in the building. The officer checked the interior of the building and found a damaged exit sign and a damaged smoke detector head. Facilities were contacted to replace the damaged sign and smoke detector. The incident is under investigation.

-Information provided by Public Safety Capt. Matthew Babcock

SGA president acknowledges concerns over Credo

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When asked why students were not included on any task force Fredeen said, "This is a well thought out process and has been around for many years. We're talking about making decisions that involve resources where it has truly just been faculty and the administrators who have been part of it. To be quite honest, it was not something that was brought to our attention that we should consider or not."

Senior computer science major and SGA President Elizabeth O'Hara said the student government will continue to provide a platform for students to get answers to their questions and provide timely updates on the projections of Credo's recommendations.

O'Hara said, "We encourage our peers to continue communicating their concerns and fears surrounding the partnership as we move forward with the semester. We never want students to feel like they are being given no information or no chance to speak up about decisions that impact them directly. ... In every conversation we have with the administration, we are intentional about voicing what is best for the student body, and discussions about the partnership are no different. Above all, the student body should not be caught in the crosshairs of the reviews, and concerns over the Credo partnership shouldn't distract from the current academic experience."



Andrew Xon/ The Rider News

The SGA town hall took place in the Science and Technology building room 102.

Professor expresses importance of learning about social justice

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Fiske-Rusciano has big plans for the course and hopes it can find more permanence within the course roster. She feels that "through learning about social justice issues around the world, students become engrossed in what is going on around the world. They are not powerless, that's a powerful lesson for undergraduate students."

Fiske-Rusciano has experience teaching global studies, political science, multicultural studies and gender studies. For her; she feels educating young people on their ability to make change is quintessential.

Fiske-Rusciano said, "students take a look at gigantic issues and think 'I can't do anything about it.' Groups will prefer students don't vote, and they make it difficult for them to exercise their voices. I believe this course allows students to learn basic lessons that you have a certain power and skill, that part of your heart can be dedicated to people around the world. That's not easy to squash down; once that lesson is inside you, you can grab onto it and learn how to nurture that part of yourself."

Courtesy of Suhriti Sarangal



Suhriti Sarangal, a senior psychology major, took GSL 295 and considered multiple qualities when looking at candidates.

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Rider continues to stave off high COVID-19 numbers

By Shaun Chornobroff

PREPARE for the worst and hope it doesn't happen. That was the mentality Rider's COVID-19 implementation team had when the coronavirus outbreak occurred in early 2020 and continues to have to this day. Especially when the school decided it was allowing fully in-person instruction for the 2021- 2022 school year.

The school has staved off the worst case scenario, with the university only seeing 33 positive COVID-19 cases in the fall semester as of Nov. 5, according to the university dashboard which is updated every week.

"I am still feeling good about where we stand COVID positive wise, because the numbers are still relatively low. And that's despite all the testing, which you can see in the dashboard," said Debbie Stasolla, Rider's vice president for strategic initiatives and planning and secretary to the board, who is also one of the leaders of the implementation team.

The low number is a pleasant surprise for the implementation team, as they are well aware this semester could have gotten off to a significantly worse start.

"I'll be honest, I wasn't sure what to expect. And frankly, when you do this kind of planning, you got to prepare for the worst, right?" Stasolla said. "So that's why we put aside the entire University House [Rider's quarantine and isolation housing], thinking we were going to be using it a lot, potentially. So far we haven't. ... My job was to mobilize my colleagues to think in terms of any kind of emergency planning, you want to prepare for the potential worse, and so far, that has not come to fruition."

The latest update to the dashboard displayed four positive cases from Oct. 30 to Nov. 5, which were evenly split between students and faculty. The previous week, from Oct. 23-29, the dashboard reported zero positive cases for the first time this semester.

The university administered 327 COVID-19 tests between Oct. 30 and Nov. 5, the dashboard said, with the Student Health Center administering 32 COVID-19 tests itself.


In the early parts of the semester, the university had several students who failed to appear for required surveillance or weekly testing. These students were referred to the Office of Community Standards for violation 4.12, "Failure to adhere to campus-wide pandemic/emergency directives" of the Student Code of Social Conduct.

The violation, which Stasolla said was established at the beginning of the pandemic, is written as a "failure to adhere to directives issued in response to pandemics and other campuswide emergencies/unusual situations and designed to protect the health, safety and well-being of all members of the Rider community

including students, faculty, staff and visitors."

Stasolla explained that as the university started enforcing this violation, the number skipping mandatory testing decreased.

"For some students that was a wake up call," she said. "You probably pay a little more attention to getting an email from the Office of Community Standards saying that you've got to talk to a judicial officer because you're in violation of the code of conduct, and you risk removal for housing or suspension, depending upon the severity of your violation of this policy."



Confirmed Cases:
Last updated: Nov. 8, 2021

33

Cumulative total of laboratory-confirmed cases of COVID-19 at Rider University (Since September 2021)

COVID-19 cases reported to Rider University by week:

Month/Year	Student Case Reports	Employee Case Reports
Oct.30-Nov.5	2	2
Oct.23-29	0	0

Rider University reports its testing numbers and other coronavirus statistics every Friday at rider.edu/dashboard

On Campus Student Testing:

Weeks	Health Center	Surveillance Testing
Oct.30- Nov.5	32	295
Oct.23-29	13	311
Oct.16-22	33	245
Oct.9-15	33	211
Total	271	1801

Student Quarantine and Isolation:

Students in quarantine have been identified as close contacts of someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, are completing their travel advisory required quarantine or have symptoms consistent with COVID-19 and are awaiting test results. Students in isolation have tested positive for COVID-19. This week there are:

- 0 student(s) quarantining on campus
- 1 student(s) quarantining off campus
- 2 student(s) isolating on campus
- 0 student(s) isolating off campus

Adrienne Unfreed/The Rider News

Information courtesy of Rider.edu

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Psychic medium speaks to spirits in the Yvonne Theater

By Tristan Leach

HOMECOMING weekend kicked off at Rider on Nov. 5. Among the huge selection of events that students and their families could participate in was a psychic medium presentation that took place in the Yvonne Theater.

Edward Nunzio, a psychic and grief counselor, was asked to come to Rider for the event. Nunzio is the author of the books “The Messenger” and “Someone To Watch Over Me.” According to his website, Nunzio’s mission is to “dispel the fear that lies between the boundaries of life and death.” He is also the host of an Amazon Prime series, “The Messenger,” in which he communicates with people’s passed-on loved ones to help them live through grief.

Interested students and staff alike flocked to the Yvonne Theater to see Nunzio do his work in person. As COVID-19 persists, guests had to sign a waiver to enter the event. Once everyone was seated, Joan Liptrot, director of Services and Civic Engagement, gave an introduction to Nunzio. Liptrot recounted her encounter with a psychic, who told her that her father was in fact with her.

After Liptrot’s introduction, Nunzio walked on stage. An elderly Italian man, Nunzio spoke with a demanding tone, capturing everyone’s attention. Nunzio asked that side conversations be kept to a minimum to avoid interference with his ability to communicate with passed-on ones.

Nunzio asked several people to come on stage. Using paper and pen to write down what he heard, Nunzio gave each person a private message from their passed-on loved one. He asked for only their first name and birthdate excluding the year. Sometimes, he asked to see the palms of a person’s hand, enabling him to better understand the situation.

Linda Ingling and her husband Tim were in attendance at the event. Their son, Andrew Ingling, is a senior at Rider. When asked why she attended the experience, she said, “Well, my husband’s brother passed before my son was born, and he knew things about my brother-in-law that he couldn’t have known because he never knew him. So I was just curious to see.”

Nunzio made it clear that everyone in the room had loved ones coming through. He picked the people in the audience who he felt were in urgent need of hearing from their deceased friends and family. He said, “Our loved ones come through at any time.” Attendees held their breath in anticipation when Nunzio picked people in the audience.

In some cases, audience members were moved to tears. Nunzio called down a mother and father in the audience; he informed them that a child was coming through. The pair revealed that their son was taken at a very young age by a drunk driver. Nunzio grasped the woman’s hand and said that the boy was at peace, offering a sense of closure for the parents.

Nunzio told his own stories throughout the night, telling audience members that he believes he received the gift after falling out of a third-story window. Nunzio spoke of how he sometimes becomes exhausted by knowing so much. Nunzio said, “I push because people need information. So no matter how tired I am, I am here, and I’m here to do the work. I’m here to give of myself. I’m not a priest, I’m not anything like that, but I have to share what I have with everyone.”

Before closing out, Nunzio called down JennieMae Sprouse, a sophomore vocal performance major. Nunzio felt that Sprouse needed to be more loving of herself. Nunzio had Sprouse repeat positive affirmations about herself, and she was met with proud applause from everyone in the audience.

“I felt very exposed, honestly, because, first of all, he was like ‘you were anxious about having me make you wait,’ and then I wanted to go up but I was really anxious about it,” Sprouse said of the experience. “And then he pulled me up and he was like ‘you needed to wait.’ He said I really need to start believing in myself.”

At the end of the event, Nunzio thanked everyone for attending. Audience members lined up to thank the medium or ask him quick questions. Others left talking about what they had just witnessed.



Tristan Leach/The Rider News

Edward Nunzio, the psychic medium, spoke to students about their passed on loved ones.

Westminster Choir College sheds light on social justice

By Hannah Newman

THE Westminster Choir hosted an event to shed light on social justice by bringing together those who wish to find peace within the world through singing. The event was held on Nov. 6 and was meant to bring people together through the power of song.

“This is a social justice sing, a participatory event with leaders from our students and faculty. We had printed music provided for those that wanted to use it; everyone else could sing by ear. All of their music relates to the theme of social justice, justice for the earth and justice for all people. This is a way for people’s voices to join together and advocate for justice,” said Jason Vodika, chair and associate professor of the Westminster Choir.

Students and faculty introduced a variety of music that pertained to social justice. Many cultures were

shared through different uses of instruments and languages such as Cuban and Korean, illustrating the idea that people from everywhere can communicate through the language of music.

Assistant professor Preston Wilson shared the most empowering part of the event in his eyes.

“Honestly we haven’t been able to just sing together in so long, so just being able to come together to make music is what I really enjoyed the most,” said Wilson.

Families and friends were able to join the Rider community in this event and discuss their feelings for justice by talking to their neighbors in the audience and coming up with lyrics to be sung by all, incorporating ideas from each side of the room.

Senior music education major Becca Kirk shared her

favorite part about being involved in such a lively event.

“It’s really cool, because everybody in the audience loves music, and we’re getting exposed to different kinds of music that we don’t normally sing in choir, which was really nice,” said Kirk.

The social justice sing was just one of the many different events for homecoming weekend on campus, giving visitors the first-hand experience of what life is like in the Westminster Choir. Many parents and friends sat beside their loved ones and watched them take the stage, highlighting the significance of social justice.



Andrew Xon/The Rider News

An ensemble of women from Westminster Choir perform songs for social change.



Andrew Xon/The Rider News

The audience was filled with faculty, students and families for the Homecoming weekend event.



Andrew Xon/The Rider News

An ensemble of men from Westminster Choir perform for the audience during the concert.

What does Rider meme?

By Amethyst Martinez and Rebecca Taylor Bludgus

RIDER students have found a creative outlet for other students to enjoy and relate to: meme accounts.

Across Instagram, many students have been reposting, liking and sharing Rider meme accounts. These accounts post things that students can relate to, such as hard classes, bad dining options on campus and more.

When many of the accounts' owners were asked for an interview by The Rider News, most opted to keep their personal identity anonymous.

@ridermemes, an account posting relatable photos for students to share, has almost 300 followers on Instagram.

When asked why they wanted to stay anonymous, the student who runs the accounts said, "I just really like the mystery of it. I feel like I know a lot of people on campus, because we are such a small community, so I think it adds a little bit more fun to it."

The same student also runs @ridercantpark, an account that posts photos of poorly parked cars across campus, and has almost 250 followers on Instagram. All of the posts are submitted by students, while the student who runs the account curates the page itself.

"I've always been really into memes and making them on my own time for fun. I've never been able to share them with anyone. I think it's a great outlet for my creativity and also for the creativity of other students who also submit their memes. But, I also think that it's a great way for the Rider community to unite and be able to relate to some of the things I post. It feels like a lot of us can relate to most of them," said the anonymous student.

While some of the accounts are general to Rider, others revolve around the popular British boy band One Direction, which has been on an hiatus since 2015.

These meme accounts post pictures of the five different band members photoshopped across places on Rider's campus.

Instagram moderator of @riderharries made their first post on Oct. 17, and five accounts were created afterward: @directionsofrider, @riderniallers, @riderpaynes, @bradfordbadbronc and @riderlouies.

In the past 18 months, students have been stuck at home and are trying to find new ways to engage in the Rider community.

Reagan Wisenbach, a sophomore accounting major, runs @bradfordbadbronc, an account specifically highlighting One Direction member Zayn Malik.

She posts photoshopped pictures of Malik across Rider's campus, including him with AJ the Bronc and in front of the Bart Luedeke Center.

When asked about why she started the account, Wisenbach said, "I've always loved Zayn more, so I felt like it was perfect that I made his. ... I saw the Niall [Horan] and Liam [Payne] account followed me on my personal and I was 'like this is funny' and 'should I make one?'"

The student who runs @ridermemes and @ridercantpark said, "I saw the One Direction ones that I so badly wish I ran ... because I love One Direction, and I love Harry [Styles]. Seeing those surface, I was like, wait, we don't even have a meme one. And I wanted to make it, so that's what really inspired me."

Wisenbach said, "I'll see something at work or here and I will be like 'that will be a funny picture' [and] I'll save it for later."

A lot of the meme accounts interact with one another through Instagram.

"I've been interacting with them, at least the One Direction ones, we started DMing [direct messaging] and they're all very friendly ... I mean, I don't even know who they are either," said the same student.

Although many of the accounts have been created this semester, the hope is to continue posting for future Rider students to enjoy.

The @ridermemes and @ridercantpark owner said, "I don't have much time left here at Rider. I am a

senior, but I do plan on posting up until I graduate, and then hopefully, I'll have someone who I can pass the account to."

Rider students can submit their memes to many of these accounts.

"I love all the submissions from people, I'm getting a lot of those. So definitely keep up with the submissions, I love them," said the anonymous account that runs @ridermemes and @ridercantpark.



Photo courtesy of @ridermemes

@ridermemes posts relatable memes for Rider students to enjoy, including one on the topic of class registration.

Need a laugh? Take a look at memes created by Rider students



Photo courtesy of @rideraffirmations

@rideraffirmations, another meme account, posts comical affirmations that relate to Rider.



Photo courtesy of @riderharries

@riderharries is one of the meme accounts that posts One Direction members, specifically Harry Styles, around Rider's campus.



Photo courtesy of @ridermemes

This meme posted by @ridermemes featured a photoshopped sign with the phrase 'Rider needs to lower tuition,' with President Joe Biden standing beside him in agreement.

Campus parking becomes a continuous issue for students

PARKING logistics in any setting tend to come with a slew of inconveniences and issues; however parking issues at Rider have been a major topic of discussion amongst students. Some of the complaints include cramped lot space, an increase in parking tickets and the hike from the parking lot to residential areas, especially now that temperatures are dropping and the sun is setting earlier.

Sophomore journalism major and The Rider News entertainment editor Amethyst Martinez is one of the many students who experienced issues with parking at Rider.

“I have been inconvenienced by the parking at Rider. ... It’s constantly an issue for me every time I go to park my car,” said Martinez, recounting the difficulty in finding available spots in the residential lot.

Although the C/R/Z lot in the very back of the south entrance parking lot is open to all decals, it is also the furthest from most residential buildings, which can pose a problem for students, especially at night.

“As a female student, I feel extremely unsafe at night,” Martinez said.

Sophomore elementary education major Emili Dimoski shared Martinez’s hesitancy about the long walk from the parking lot at night.

Dimoski said, “The parking lots are so far away from the dorms, so when I’m coming back at night I have to walk alone, and that’s scary. ... I’ve had people drive up and pull over, like men, trying to talk to me.”

Obviously, this specific facet of parking complaints is multidimensional and may not have one set solution. While Rider does use an emergency blue light system — lighted posts designated around campus that provide direct contact with Public Safety — the parking lots on campus are so expansive that the usefulness of these posts is questionable.

Regarding overall safety, Director of Public Safety James Waldon recommends students call an escort from the Bronc Safety Service or familiarize themselves with the number to call Public Safety directly.

Aside from overall logistical concerns, students have recently been complaining about the ticketing procedures at Rider. Sophomore music education major Sienna Grinwald-Alves explained that she has been ticketed in the past and found the appeal process frustrating.

Grinwald-Alves said of her appeal process, “I’ve never gotten a response ... that’s how good the system is.”

Martinez believes the cramping in the lots and the lack of clarity about lot boundaries could be playing a factor in the seemingly heightened amount of ticketing complaints.

Martinez said, “There was no parking available [in the resident lot]. I parked at the end of the commuters parking lot, which I didn’t even realize was a separate parking lot until I walked out the next day and there was a ticket on my car.” Although this occurrence was recent, Martinez also noted a “lack of response” in the appeal process.

According to Waldon, parking appeals are handled by the Office of Community Standards, not Public Safety, and the process has been backed-up due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which prevented a summer appeals meeting.

Parking has also been an issue for various activities on campus, for example, late night classes and rehearsals for performing arts students.

Senior musical theater major and commuter John Viggiano is no stranger to parking frustrations at Rider, specifically in the Fine Arts lot for rehearsals that run late, for instance, tech week rehearsals that let out around 11 p.m.

“It is inconvenient that we have to walk all the way across campus to the BLC [Bart Luedeke Center] if it’s raining or snowing or something when no one is parking in that [Fine Arts] lot at that hour, and it could easily be utilized for students,” Viggiano said. “I feel like there’s some sort of workaround that they’re just not finding.”

Waldon ascertained that while students cannot park in the Fine Arts lot, which is designated for faculty during the week, parking is available for fine arts majors in both the Poyda and BLC lots.

Senior technical theater major John Roca noted that although parking is available in the Poyda lot, there is still a certain level of inconvenience making the walk from there to the Fine Arts building, especially at night. Roca expressed a frustration with the “lack of exemptions in the case of students parking in the Fine Arts lot.”

An email was sent to students on Sept. 1 with details relating to parking regulations. For example, the Fine Arts lot is open to all vehicles from 5 p.m. Friday to 6 a.m. Monday. It seems, however, that there remains a clear lack in the spread of information to the student body about these strictures.

All of these complaints, and their breadth, beg the question of a comprehensive solution to parking stressors — if there is one. While Grinwald-Alves pitches the idea of expanding the parking lot entirely and Martinez hypothesizes the installation of a parking garage, there doesn’t seem to be an immediate, feasible solution to the physical logistics of Rider’s parking lot layout.

Regardless, it’s not unfathomable that some flexibility could be afforded without entirely deconstructing the safety and order concerns that establish parking regulations in the first place. While this issue may be seemingly small or inconvenient on the surface level, it is just another area in which Rider could listen to the experiences and input of students and attempt to develop a compromise.

*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



Andrew Xon/ The Rider News

The Rider parking lot

The Rider News

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SENIOR SIGHTINGS

Marvel's "Eternals" and the problem with review bombing

MARVEL'S "Eternals" boasts the most diverse cast of any Marvel Studios film so far, and some people are upset about it.

The film features actors from many different ethnic backgrounds, a same-sex couple with a child and a deaf superhero — several firsts for a film in the Marvel Cinematic Universe.

However, in what appeared to be an effort to protest some of these choices, the "Eternals" IMDb page was met with more than 400 one-star reviews over a week before the movie was even released to the public. Many of the reviews complained about the inclusion of a gay kiss, with one user saying the film's only purpose is to "tick all the Hollywood Woke boxes."

Kumail Nanjiani, who portrays the character Kingo in the film, tweeted in response to the flood of negative reviews, saying "Looks like we're upsetting the right people."

Although the tweet has since been deleted, Nanjiani was correct. These reviews are likely the work of a whining, entitled minority, and their intense disapproval at the mere existence of this film serves as evidence that Hollywood is on the right track to including better diversity.

IMDb temporarily removed the "Eternals" review section until the film was officially released, but review bombing — a phenomenon in which several people leave negative reviews of a product online — is far from a new idea.

Several high-budget films in the past few years have been victims of such efforts. For example, "Captain Marvel" actress Brie Larson mentioned in a 2019 interview that she was working to make her press days "more inclusive" after being interviewed by "overwhelmingly white male" journalists for previous films.

Not long after this interview was published, film review website Rotten Tomatoes was bombarded with negative reviews for "Captain Marvel" several weeks before the film's release to the general public. The majority of the reviews didn't even critique the movie and instead accused Larson of sexism and racism for her comments.

Films such as 2016's "Ghostbusters," 2017's "Star Wars: The Last Jedi" and 2018's "Black Panther" were also review bombed on Rotten Tomatoes before being released in theaters, due to having female main protagonists and a primarily Black cast, respectively. In February 2019, the repeated bombings led to Rotten Tomatoes banning users from submitting film reviews before the official release date.

And yet, people are still finding ways to review bomb media through different internet platforms.

This most recent instance of review bombing poses an important question:

What do review-bombers hope to gain from this? Analyzing and critiquing negative aspects of media can be extremely valuable. All films have faults, and it's fine to judge the quality of a film based on its plot and characters.

That's not what's happening here.

"Down With Disney's Treatment of Franchises and its Fanboys" is a now-defunct Facebook group that claimed responsibility for the review bombing of "The Last Jedi." The owner of the group was interviewed anonymously by the Huffington Post in 2017.

When asked for his specific complaints against the "Star Wars" film, he said, "I'm sick and tired of men being portrayed as idiots. There was a time we ruled society and I want to see that again."

It seems that many who engage in review bombing are much more concerned with squashing characters that portray heroic women, queer people or people of color than having a genuine debate about the quality of these films. Hollywood has only recently started producing more diverse films, and these stories deserve to be judged based on their own merits, not condemned simply for daring to be inclusive.

Straight white men should not be the only ones who get to be superheroes — everyone deserves a chance to see themselves represented on the big screen.

Jeremy Hester,

Senior English major and copy editor for The Rider News

A LETTER TO THE EDITOR

University professor recalls 2015 prioritization in wake of Credo

In a recent email to faculty, the provost said that the prioritization process used in 2015 will be the basis for the decisions of the newly formed efficiency task force, claiming that this process was endorsed unanimously by the 11 faculty members on the 2015 prioritization task force. I served on that task force and would like to set the record straight.

I know that the task force did not vote unanimously in favor of the recommendations, because I voted no on many of the specific recommendations, and I did not vote in favor of the final report. I also know that many of the other faculty who served on that task force expressed misgivings about both the process and the result. Moreover, it cannot be true that the process used by the task force was endorsed by the members of that task force, because we were not given the opportunity to vote on the process, which was handed down by the provost, who gave us no choice but to use the method of placing the programs into quintiles.

This is not the first time the provost has misled us. When the prioritization process began in 2015, we were assured that decisions to eliminate programs and lay off faculty would be based on the results of the process, but just weeks later, on Oct. 29, 2015, it was announced that more than a dozen programs would be eliminated, and more than a dozen faculty members would be laid off. The layoff plan provides a clear indication of the intentions of the administration with regard to the elimination of programs: the goal is to eliminate small programs, mostly in the liberal arts and social sciences, which the administration deems not sufficiently profitable.

The flaws of the process used in 2015 are too numerous to enumerate here, but it quickly became clear to me that the process was rigged to generate the predetermined outcome that can be easily discerned in their layoff plan. The use of quintiles means that it is predetermined that 40% of programs will be considered for elimination or reduction of resources because they will be placed in the bottom two quintiles. This is equivalent to being required to give a D or F to 40% of the students in a course. Moreover, although the process considered qualitative factors as well as financial data in evaluating programs, the qualitative factors tended to cancel out of the equation, because most of our programs are already excellent, so there was not a great deal of difference in the quality. Consequently, the financial data became almost the sole basis for evaluation, and the result was predictable: small programs with few majors tended to end up in the lower quintiles.

I participated in the process in 2015 in good faith, hoping to promote improvement and excellence in all of our programs. When I suggested that some of the programs in the lower quintiles could be improved by providing more

resources, one member of the task force who is no longer at Rider informed me that "not all of our programs can be excellent." This was the moment when I realized that the process was not about the improvement of our programs, but about eliminating programs that are not considered profitable.

The philosophy program, for instance, despite its many qualitative strengths, was placed in the next to last quintile and "curricular efficiencies" were recommended. The result is that the two faculty members who retired were not replaced, and the program now has only two full-time faculty members remaining. The program is now barely able to maintain viability, and I doubt it will survive another round of prioritization. Although philosophy programs tend to be small and do not generate a lot of profit, they are central to the mission of any university. That illustrates the fundamental flaw in the prioritization process: by subordinating all other values to the unrestrained pursuit of profit, it threatens to rob the institution of its vitality and undermine its mission.

Joel Feldman,
associate professor,

Department of History and Philosophy



Courtesy of Rider University

Dr. Joel Feldman

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

Rider poised with depth and offense after exhibition

By Dylan Manfre

FOR the first time since the end of the 2019-2020 season, Rider women's basketball was able to play in front of a live home fanbase. Players warmed up unmasked and Alumni Gym was decorated with its normal game-day attire. The Rider Pep Band was on the stage, cheerleaders lined the entrance and the Rider Dance Team sat in the student section. It was as normal of a game as Rider has experienced since 2020.

As expected, Rider won 68-42 over its Division III Route 206 rival TCNJ. The Broncs did so with the support of three new players and an assistant coach that stems from head coach Lynn Milligan's list of former athletes.

Rider's Continuity

Sophomore forward Raphaela Toussaint, who was an All-MAAC Rookie-Team selection, had a remarkable start in the first quarter of the game scoring 11 of Rider's 24 points. Toussaint seemed to continue the strong start she had as a freshman that ultimately led to her securing a starting spot.

Defensively, she had three rebounds and a block in eight first-quarter minutes, the second most of the starting group. Toussaint impressed many with her offensive rounds too, grabbing five by the end of the game. She finished the game with a double-double of 20 points and 12 boards.

"I was just trying to track the ball," Toussaint said. "I had a little bit of trouble with grabbing it

sometimes, but I'm trying to keep doing what I do."

Senior guard Lenaejha Evans was a great complement to Toussaint off the glass with six boards entering the final quarter of action. Evans developed a sweet pull-up jumper that she displayed plenty of times vs. TCNJ. Head Coach Lynn Milligan said the move is very "Amari-esque" referring to the silky jumper from former forward and 2020 All-MAAC Second Team member Amari Johnson.

Evans showed off her transition game with a beautiful Euro-step midway through the fourth quarter.

"I feel like I'm starting to understand things more, just feel like my old self," Evans said. "I think the team chemistry has been clicking and everything so it's helped me a lot."

New Crew

Rider brought in junior Jessika Schiffer, a 5-foot-9 transfer guard from the University of Buffalo, to the roster in addition to two freshmen, Madison Johnson and Emily Strunk.

Johnson did not play because of a leg injury and was on crutches.

Schiffer, who averaged four points per game with Buffalo, spaced the floor well and had good movement off-the-ball. She took two shots and missed both in her first few minutes of action but found her footing and ended the game with five points.

"Jess has been doing that all through practice and in our last scrimmage," Milligan said of her new



Sophomore guard **Makayla Firebaugh** checks out of the game against TCNJ on Nov. 3

transfer. "She's a big strong guard."

Five players had come off the bench by halftime and it was not too impressive, with the Broncs only scoring a total of nine points on a combined 4-for-12 from the field. All of them were scored by Evans, who is in her second year with the team.

Now that Rider's lone tuneup is out of the way, its regular season begins on Nov. 11 at Penn State at 7 p.m. As far as conference play is concerned, while that is quite far from now, Milligan said this could be the most competitive season yet.

"I think everybody's roster looks a bit different than maybe they anticipated a year or so ago," Milligan said. "I think the conference is going to be exceptionally well."

FEATURE

Schiffer emerges as an intriguing transfer

By Dylan Manfre

JESSIKA Schiffer is one of the newest members of the women's basketball team and is already providing a creative touch on and off the court.

Her contributions during Rider's exhibition game against TCNJ on Nov. 3 were felt as she wove around the court with precise off-the-ball movements and nonverbal cues. She pulled out those tools of her repertoire because according to her, the fans were loud and she did not know if her teammates would be able to hear her.

Her movements away from the ball are as important to her as scoring. Schiffer did contribute five points on 2-of-5 shooting from the field in her first action as a Bronc and according to Head Coach Lynn Milligan, her game is still a work in progress with Rider's system.

"[That is] the only thing Jess is lacking right now," Milligan said. "As far as her development as a point guard, being able to score, being able to run the offense, shoot the 3[-point shot] ... she's got all of that. The only thing she needs is reps in our system and that's coming every day."

The exhibition gave Schiffer a craving for the upcoming season.

"It was nice to see how games went on," Schiffer said. "I loved it. I'm excited for the season to start."

The junior guard came to Rider this summer after transferring from the University of Buffalo. She primarily left because was that she was looking for a change. Schiffer did not want to provide any further specifics about whether the atmosphere of the team or the culture of the program contributed to her departure.

After being recruited by Rider out of high school



Carolo Pascale/The Rider News

Junior guard **Jessika Schiffer** transferred to Rider from the University of Buffalo.

and not attending the university, she is thriving in the cranberry and white and gelling well with her new teammates. She provides the Broncs with a lot of depth at the guard position.

"The versatility in our guards is definitely bolstered by Jess," Milligan said. "And then you throw in the development of Makayla [Firebaugh] and the health of Amanda [Mobley], the development of [Lenaejha Evans] and the development of Molly [Lynch], that group of six guards we have is strong."

Milligan said Schiffer was one of the most conditioned guards she's ever seen and that she works with a smile.

"She has a real discipline about herself and a real work ethic. She's always in a good mood but she's not afraid of the work," Milligan said. "She'll be in here in the mornings, she'll be in here at night, she'll be in here on her days off. She's a worker and she wants to be great."

A true artist

Outside of basketball, graphic design brings Schiffer just as much joy as the sport itself and is her creative outlet.

Schiffer has about 17 pairs of shoes, mostly Nike's that she wears outside of practice and games since Rider Athletics is sponsored by Adidas. Schiffer enjoys customizing shoes, particularly Nike Air Force 1s. To an interview with The Rider News she wore a self-designed white pair.

One side of the shoe had purple drips coming from the Nike swoosh, and on the other side, there was a teal green dragon. On the heel of the shoe was her name in a decorative script.

"I care a lot about the shoes I wear with my outfits," Schiffer said.

She got into graphic design because of her mom's self-owned business where she printed designs onto clothes. Schiffer posts many of her designs to her Instagram account @J.S.Customs_.

3x3 Experience

Schiffer played on Germany's U23 3x3 National Team that consisted of her and four other teammates. 3x3 has recently garnered a lot of popularity recently and is now an Olympic sport.

"The pace from switching from offense to defense is really quick," Schiffer said of the sport. "You could lose the ball and the next second you get a 3-pointer in your face."

Schiffer is another dynamic guard in Rider's system and it is only a matter of time before she begins to flourish into the scoring talent she was at Buffalo.

RIDER BOUNCED FROM NEC TOURNAMENT

The Broncs' season came to a close after a loss to top-seeded Fairfield in the NEC tournament.

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MEN'S SOCCER SCORES UPSET

Rider advanced to the semifinals after beating Siena, 1-0, to set up a Nov. 12 home game.

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FINAL HOMESTAND

The Broncs defeated Manhattan and Iona in two of its last four home games of the regular season.

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MEN'S BASKETBALL

Mervin James shares special basketball bond with Dwight Murray Jr.

By Jacob Tiger

AFTER their February 2018 quarterfinal loss to Grayson High School, Pebblebrook High School's varsity basketball season came to an end, and after playing together for the last four years, it was time for Mervin James to part ways with his teammate and close friend, Dwight Murray Jr.

Murray took his talents to Incarnate Word in Texas for the first two years of his college career, before transferring to Rider, blossoming into a star for the Broncos in his first season at Rider.

Beginning the next chapter of his basketball career, James found himself at the University of North Alabama, where he was a starter as a freshman and sophomore, having a respectable amount of success for a young player.

As a sophomore, he averaged 14.0 points and 7.2 rebounds per game, and earned All-Atlantic Sun Second Team honors.

But despite his upward trajectory at North Alabama, James felt like he needed a change of scenery.

"I just felt like it was my time to move on, see what another coach had to offer. I don't want to say they did anything wrong, I just felt like I needed to experience the world... I gave them what I gave them," said James.

With any number of paths in the NCAA Transfer Portal, one in particular was calling James' name. A reunion with Murray at Rider just felt like the right thing to do.

"Me knowing [Dwight], I feel like I owe him because... [in] high school I shorted us out of the state championship, so I feel like I owe him personally... to help him win a MAAC championship," said James.



Junior forward **Mervin James** had an impressive shooting performance in Rider's exhibition against Division II Kutztown University.

Along with his self-appointed obligation to Murray, James cited Head Coach Kevin Baggett as a reason for his transfer.

"When I got on the phone, he [Baggett] was like, 'We need you here,' and I was like, 'Aight cool,'" James said nonchalantly.

Standing at 6 feet, 7 inches, James instantly filled a need for Rider, occupying a vacant starting power forward spot. On Nov. 6 in an exhibition against Kutztown, he made his Bronc debut in front of an electric home crowd.

James introduced himself to the fans by scoring Rider's first seven points of the evening, and "The Zoo" was sure to reward him with a serving of their rejuvenating, thunderous encouragement.

"It was embracing... it was just a great 'home' feeling to know that the crowd and atmosphere will be like that every night," said James.

The name Mervin James echoed throughout Alumni Gym many more times that evening. James

was efficient and effective in his Rider debut, finishing with 19 points on 53.3% shooting from the field and helping the Broncos secure a satisfying comeback win over Kutztown.

In conjunction with the duo of Murray and senior forward Dimencio Vaughn, James may be the piece that finally gets the Broncos over the hump and into the MAAC's upper echelon of teams.

However, James was still uncertain whether or not transferring to Rider was the right decision for him, but it wasn't something he was particularly worried about yet. In fact, as a native of the U.S. Virgin Islands, he was just starting to adjust to life in New Jersey.

"I really don't know... I'm a day-by-day guy. I just live," said James. "It's cool here. It's a different experience... it's cold up here. It's colder than what I thought it was... I'm bundled up."

Baggett comedically interjected, "You haven't seen anything yet."

MEN'S BASKETBALL

Broncs fall to Duquesne in season opener

By Carolo Pascale

RIDER Men's Basketball returned to the court and opened up its 2021-2022 season in disappointing fashion losing to Duquesne on the road 73-61 on Nov. 9.

"I thought we played well in the first half. In the second we lost our composure," said Head Coach Kevin Baggett.

Looking to start the season strong, the Broncos posted a veteran-heavy starting five. One of those players, senior guard Dwight Murray Jr., got his first action of the season after not playing in the Kutztown exhibition game on Nov. 6 due to an undisclosed injury.

"I think I played decent for it to be my first game back. I don't like my performance all the way though," said Murray. "We're just gonna watch film, get better. I feel like as a team we just got some things to work on."

Both the teams went to work from the tip-off with the first points coming from Broncos junior forward Mervin James. Each team went back and forth with the lead, trading blows. Also jumping in on the action was sophomore guard Corey McKeithan, hitting dueling jumpers with former high school teammate and current Dukes guard Primo Spears.

"It meant a lot," McKeithan said of playing against Spears. "It was just a great feeling."

Despite the score going back and forth, Rider shot an abysmal 1-for-11 from the 3-point line. Meanwhile, Duquesne didn't shoot much better at 6-for-17 from behind the arc.



Sophomore guard **Corey McKeithan** had 10 points in his first regular-season game as a Bronc.

When asked if 3-point shooting was something the Broncos need to improve upon, Baggett said, "We work on it everyday. We just gotta make them."

The game continued to go back and forth and the first half ended with Rider having a 33-30 lead. Overall, the Broncos played well in the opening 20 minutes despite their rough three point shooting, going 15-for-31 from the field and making two of their three free throws. Along with that, senior center Ajiri Ogemuno-Johnson corralled nine rebounds in just the first half.

In the second half, the Broncos defense returned to one that looked similar to the first half of the

Kutztown game, playing sloppily and taking unnecessary fouls. After two rough turnovers, Baggett called a timeout and was very animated.

"We broke down defensively at times and started taking some bad shots. We've got to be a little more disciplined," said Baggett.

Afterward, the defense locked down and played much better for most of the second half.

The game continued to go back and forth, but Duquesne started to pull ahead, taking a 71-55 lead with 3:11 left in the game. Despite the better play defensively, Rider continued to give up points at the foul line. The Dukes went 13-for-13 from the free throw line, while Rider went 7-for-9.

The Broncos tried to push back but Duquesne was able to hold on and deal the Broncos their first loss of the season, 73-61.

Murray led the team in points with 17 and played 38 minutes of the match. Ogemuno-Johnson led the team with 12 rebounds. The Broncos shot 26-for-57 from the field and went 2-for-16 from the 3-point line.

"We need to play for 40 minutes and we haven't done that yet. Execute better, take our time, be patient, make shots, rebound, we gotta defend better. So many guys we're counting on have got to play better for us," said Baggett.

With their first game of the season under their belts, the Broncos return to Alumni Gym to face off against Coppin State on Nov. 12 at 7 p.m. The game will be streamed on ESPN3.

MBB PHOTO GALLERY

Take a look at Andrew Xon's photos from the men's basketball scrimmage vs. Kutztown.

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PINNED IN THE OPENER

Rider wrestling dropped its first match of the season to Big 10 opponent Purdue University.

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THE SPORTS SECTION PODCAST

The Rider News sports crew Carolo, Dylan, Jake and Trey discuss the latest in Rider Athletics all season long.

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MEN'S BASKETBALL COLUMN
Shaun Chornobroff shares his thoughts on the men's basketball upcoming season.

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