

Students have a conversation with Rider president about issues of diversity

Tatyanna Carman/The Rider News



Rider President **Gregory Dell'Omo** talked about the search process for faculty members and explained how they are asked about diversity and inclusion.

By **Tatyanna Carman**

STUDENTS discussed issues regarding lack of representation and support, along with their thoughts on the racist Zoom bombing incident that occurred on Feb. 11, with administrators and President Gregory Dell'Omo at the "Reactions to the campus response to racism: A conversation with the President" event, which occurred on Feb. 24 at 7 p.m.

The university sent out an email inviting all students who identify as Black or African-American to have an open conversation about the racist Zoom bombing incident with Dell'Omo and other members of his leadership team on Feb. 19.

"We also want to provide students with an opportunity to discuss the event with me and other senior leadership, which is one of the reasons why we're here tonight as one of the first steps in having that conversation, and really want to learn more about how this was all perceived and reacted to and more importantly, how do we learn from this situation," Dell'Omo said.

Thirty-six people attended the event. One of the recurring themes discussed at the event was how the university plans to support its Black students.

"One is listening and getting feedback," Dell'Omo said. "That's more the full process and continuing these conversations, but also through more formal ways in terms of our programs, our events, our support systems that we have in place. You know, it's just making sure we create a culture in the institution that allows for people to feel comfortable, safe and welcomed."

Senior psychology major and Student Government Association (SGA) Equity and Inclusion Chair Leana Chisolm said that one of the ways the university could show support for its Black students is by broadcasting that services, such as the counseling center, have staff that represents various backgrounds. She said that speaking to a Black counselor at the counseling services helped her after the Feb. 11, Zoom bombing incident.

"When I went to counseling services myself, there was a lot that I didn't have to explain because she understood because when I went and I signed up, I specifically asked for a Black counselor," Chisolm said. "There was a lot that I just was able to, you know, just go through and we got past a lot and got through a lot because she already understood."

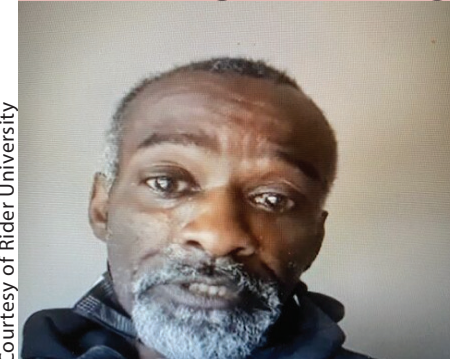
Graduate student Gabrielle Magwood added to Chisolm's sentiment about the need for support.

"I just feel that there is a lot of talk, but there's not enough action being done," she said. "Like, I feel like students don't feel that they can or don't feel supported because there's always comments



Ex-employee arrested on second and third-degree charges

Courtesy of Rider University



Lockhart was charged after making threats against a former colleague at Rider.

students not to approach the man and to call Public Safety if he was spotted. The next day, administrators put out a more urgent warning, advising the community to lock doors and stay away from windows. It was not reported in the email whether Lockhart was on campus or not.

According to administrators, Lockhart was arrested at his home. Federal regulations require the university to alert the community to threats. However, the rules allow the school leeway in what information to report, including the subject's name and other identifiable information.

In an email sent after Lockhart was arrested on Feb. 17, the university clarified information about its warning system. The email included that the threats were, "directed and imminent" which led the university to issue a shelter in place, that directed everyone on campus to remain in place until further notice, "so as not to potentially be in harm's way."

"In an emergency situation, when information is often not available in abundance, we will always err on the side of caution and issue immediate directives via RiderAlert to students, faculty and staff to help ensure their safety," said the statement.

The university issued Lockhart a Persona Non-Grata letter which prohibits him from entering or being on University property.

By **Sarah Siock and Stephen Neukam**

JAMES T. Lockhart Jr., 47, of Trenton, New Jersey, was arrested and charged with second-degree false public alarm and third-degree terroristic threats, the Lawrence Township Police Department announced on Feb. 24.

Lockhart, a former employee for a campus contractor at Rider, was taken into custody after making threats to a former colleague on Feb. 17. The incident prompted school administrators to order the campus into a shelter in place.

Lockhart was still incarcerated at the Mercer County Correction Center as of Feb. 24.

The university alerted students to the possible threat posed by Lockhart on the night of Feb. 16, with an email, which included his photo, warning

Dell'Omo on fall and finances at town hall

By **Stephen Neukam**

PRESIDENT Gregory Dell'Omo revealed slightly better-than-forecasted budget projections for the current fiscal year and previewed a hopeful vision for the school's next semester, at a faculty town hall on Feb. 26.

Dell'Omo also debuted a new academic initiative by the university that promises career outcomes for students, a move the president hopes will make Rider more attractive than rival schools.

The financial projections and plans for the fall showed a university still in flux and searching for answers to the immense issues posed by the coronavirus pandemic.

Budget projections

The university's budget is set to overachieve original projections from the beginning of the year. However, this will be a small consolation with a deficit that stands at over \$13 million.

The university is projecting a \$13.5 million operating deficit for the current fiscal year, a figure that is slightly better than the \$17.5 million shortfall that the administration budgeted for. While revenues plunged, the university recovered costs with a nearly \$10 million reduction in labor costs in one year.

The projections will leave the university with \$22.5 million on hand, with refinanced bonds giving the school more flexibility with cash.

There was also a substantial cost for the efforts the university made to soften the blow of the pandemic for students. In all, the university lost \$4.7 million in

potential revenue to the financial support of students.

Federal support has aided Rider a bit, with the university still weighing how to use the second round of federal funding that it will receive, according to Dell'Omo. However, \$1.8 million of the second funding package will be used to help aid students in need.

Fall semester plans

While expectations for next semester remain largely in the air, Dell'Omo made clear that the university was planning for much more normal campus operations when students return from the summer break.

At the mercy of national and state guidance, Dell'Omo and other administrators previewed a fall semester that would resemble business as usual, including full classrooms and unmodified class schedules. Dell'Omo said he hoped that the state would communicate quickly with universities to give them an understanding of safety regulations.

Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Donna Jean Fredeen said that while the university plans to release a course roster that features a regulated slate of classes, it will also have a "plan b" roster as well.

Early indicators of freshman enrollment next semester show overall applications down by 6.5% with a 20% decrease in applications to the College of Education and Human Services.



INSIDE **BREAKING THE SLUMP**
Allen Powell makes seven 3's and scores 25 points in Rider's first win since Jan. 23
PAGE 10



FREE THE WEED
New Jersey becomes the 13th state in the U.S. to legalize marijuana.
PAGE 8

PUB GOERS
Rider Pub continues to serve up signature meals for the Rider community.
PAGE 5



SECURITY BRIEFS

BY STEPHEN NEUKAM

Snow Thrower

Lock your door. On Feb. 25 at 3:33 a.m., Public Safety was dispatched to Hill Hall for a report of criminal mischief. A student residing in a room awoke to find someone had opened the door and threw snow in the room. The student could not describe the possible suspects. The incident is under investigation.

Where's The Glass?

Mystery pane. On Feb. 26 at 6:38 a.m., an officer was completing a walkthrough of Lake House when they observed a window missing. There were no signs of broken glass — only an empty frame in the window. A work order was filed to have it replaced.

Floor Thief

Missing sign. On Feb. 28 at 5:40 p.m., an officer was conducting a walkthrough of Poyda Hall when they discovered that the placards that indicate floor levels in the stairs had been stolen in the A-wing and C-wing. Photos were taken and facilities are replacing the placards.

— Information provided by Public Safety Cpt. Matthew Babcock

Rider student coronavirus cases at all-semester high

By Austin Ferguson

RIDER returned its highest single-week positive COVID-19 case total of the spring 2021 semester from Feb. 22 to Feb. 28, the university's COVID-19 dashboard indicated on March 2.

In the span from Feb. 22 to Feb. 28, 17 positive cases were confirmed by Rider, 16 of which came from students. The student total is the first time this semester that at least 10 students tested positive for COVID-19 in a single week, and the total case numbers are the second-highest all-time weekly total at the university, only being eclipsed by 31 student positive cases between Nov. 16 and Nov. 22, 2020.

Rider Vice President for Strategic Initiatives and Planning and Secretary to the Board Debbie Stasolla said that the increase of cases, which are a "mixture of some student athletes across multiple teams and our general student population," does not yet appear to be a cluster or spike of cases at the university.

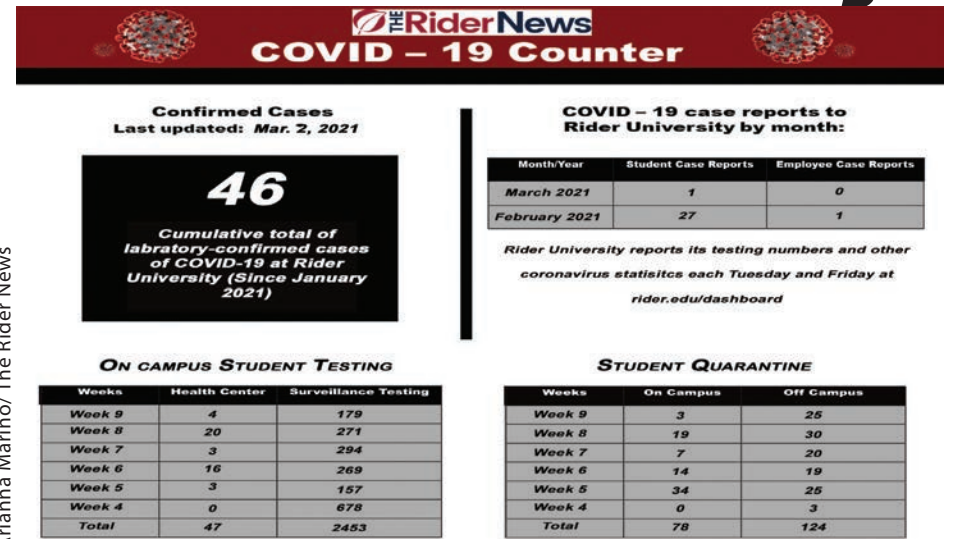
"So far, we have not determined any commonality among [the cases]," Stasolla said. "As we learn more through our contact-tracing work, we may have to reconsider that, but so far we're not seeing, out of those 16 cases... anything in the way of commonality."

Stasolla added that, as the university has shown in the past after an increase of cases lead to focused testing in Hill Hall in the Fall 2020 semester, it is ready to make changes should any patterns in positive cases or exposure appear.

"[If] we suspect that there may be any commonality, we will make changes in our protocols," Stasolla said. "We will institute other measures if we suspect that we need to learn more about cases to see if there is indeed commonality that we have not been able to determine in our contact tracing."

One measure the university already had in place has been a weekly meeting that, according to Stasolla, includes herself, Rider Student Health Center Director Elizabeth Luciano, Head Athletic Trainer Tim Lingle, Associate Dean of Students and Lead Contact Tracer Chris Botti, Lawrence Township Health Officer Carol A. Chamberlain and a New Jersey Department of Health epidemiologist, who are often called "disease detectives," to analyze weekly case data at the university and address any at-large issues with COVID-19 spread as needed.

A semester-high 30 students were in quarantine between Feb. 22 and Feb. 28,



Arianna Marino/The Rider News

Rider Vice President for Strategic Initiatives and Planning and Secretary to the Board Debbie Stasolla said the increase in cases does not yet appear to be a cluster or spike of cases at the university.

with 20 of those students quarantining off-campus, according to Rider's online dashboard. Off-campus quarantine numbers have since increased to 25 as of March 2, though a seven-student decrease in on-campus quarantining brought the overall total number of students in quarantine down to 28.

Stasolla said that through contact tracing and testing, the university was prepared for an eventual increase in positive cases, especially given the colder weather of the first half of the semester.

"We're definitely always prepared. It doesn't come as a surprise at this point in the semester, given that it's cold out and we're all kind of inside most of the time, that we would see an increase in cases," Stasolla said.

Between March 1 and March 2, the university dashboard confirmed one positive COVID-19 case, coming from an off-campus student.

Dell'Omo invited students to talk with administration about Zoom bombing

CONT'D FROM PAGE 1

students don't feel that they can or don't feel supported because there's always comments about, you know, like, we're going to do this, we're going to do that. But where are concrete action plans? Where is a concrete timetable of when are these things being implemented?"

She also said that a concern for her is that the administrators that make these large-scale decisions do not look like her.

"There are a lot of people who are making these decisions, who don't look like the people that these decisions are supposed to impact," Magwood said. "So as much as you want to do the best for those students, until you have people that look like those students that have those lived experiences, I don't think that Rider's going to be able to effectively create that inclusive community until the people making the decision sitting in that room look like the racial makeup of our university."

The student attendees also asked about the diversity training process for professors.

According to Dell'Omo, during the search process for faculty members, candidates are asked to "speak on their issues of diversity and equity inclusion and how they approach their discipline, their teaching and their research."

Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Donna Jean Fredeen said, "In the search process itself, one of the things we ask any candidate to do is to submit a statement that describes not only their commitment to diversity and inclusion but also evidence of that commitment," she said. "And we asked them to talk about their experiences in teaching diverse populations of students. So we are asking, and one of the primary reasons we asked that is to also send a message to the candidates, that we take diversity and inclusion very seriously on campus."

Dell'Omo said that there is not a required training process for faculty, but there are voluntary programs within the Teaching and Learning Center available.

Students also addressed that there is an issue in communicating the supportive resources for Black students. Dell'Omo said that this issue is a "common theme" in the discussions that he has with students in regards to communication.

Magwood said that she decided to attend the event because she felt it was "pertinent to hear what other students were thinking" and to voice her concerns after hearing about the Feb. 11, Zoom bombing incident. She said that this event met her expectations.

"The fact that this conversation was even held is great to me because sometimes

I feel like there aren't enough platforms for Black students to be open and honest," she said. "I do believe that people voiced important statements and opinions that needed to be said and to some of the right people."

Magwood said that she wished more people showed up and wished the event would be open to non-Black students because "Black students can say all of the things that they want about the situation, but it is non-black students who typically perpetrate these attacks and prejudicial comments/actions."

Vice President for Student Affairs Leanna Fenneberg shared the insight she gained from the conversation.

"I hear from some of our Black and African American students that they believe we are committed to racial equity and inclusion as a campus, but they clearly want to see the continuous progress and actions towards this positive change," Fenneberg said. "I hope students believe in the campus commitment to these issues that we have exercised in many ways, understanding that this kind of long-lasting systemic change does take time, but that people from all corners of the campus are working continuously in this direction. I think we can improve in our continuous, transparent communication to share with students the specific actions that are being taken and how we are measuring progress on our goals."

Chisolm shared that she thought the event was OK and it met her expectations.

"Personally, to say it was a successful session, I wouldn't say successful, but I would say that the different administrators were able to hear different voices than the usual student leaders, and also they seem to actually be taking everything in," she said. "When I check back in to see if any steps have been taken since the feedback given to the President, that will determine if the event was successful or not."

She also said that she thought the students learned about more resources that they "did not know about on campus, that would be more helpful to them being comfortable."

"I personally am glad that they got to hear from other students than the usual black student leaders because those students were not only able to give a new voice but also a new perspective," Chisolm said. "Especially, from the perspective of black commuter students because I do think they do not get the recognition they should. However, all in all I do hope to see some next steps as soon as possible, but I know these things do take time."

ADVERTISEMENT

JOIN US!

RACE AND DEMOCRACY: BUILDING RESILIENCY AS AN ACTIVIST

THURSDAY, MARCH 4 | NOON TO 1 P.M.

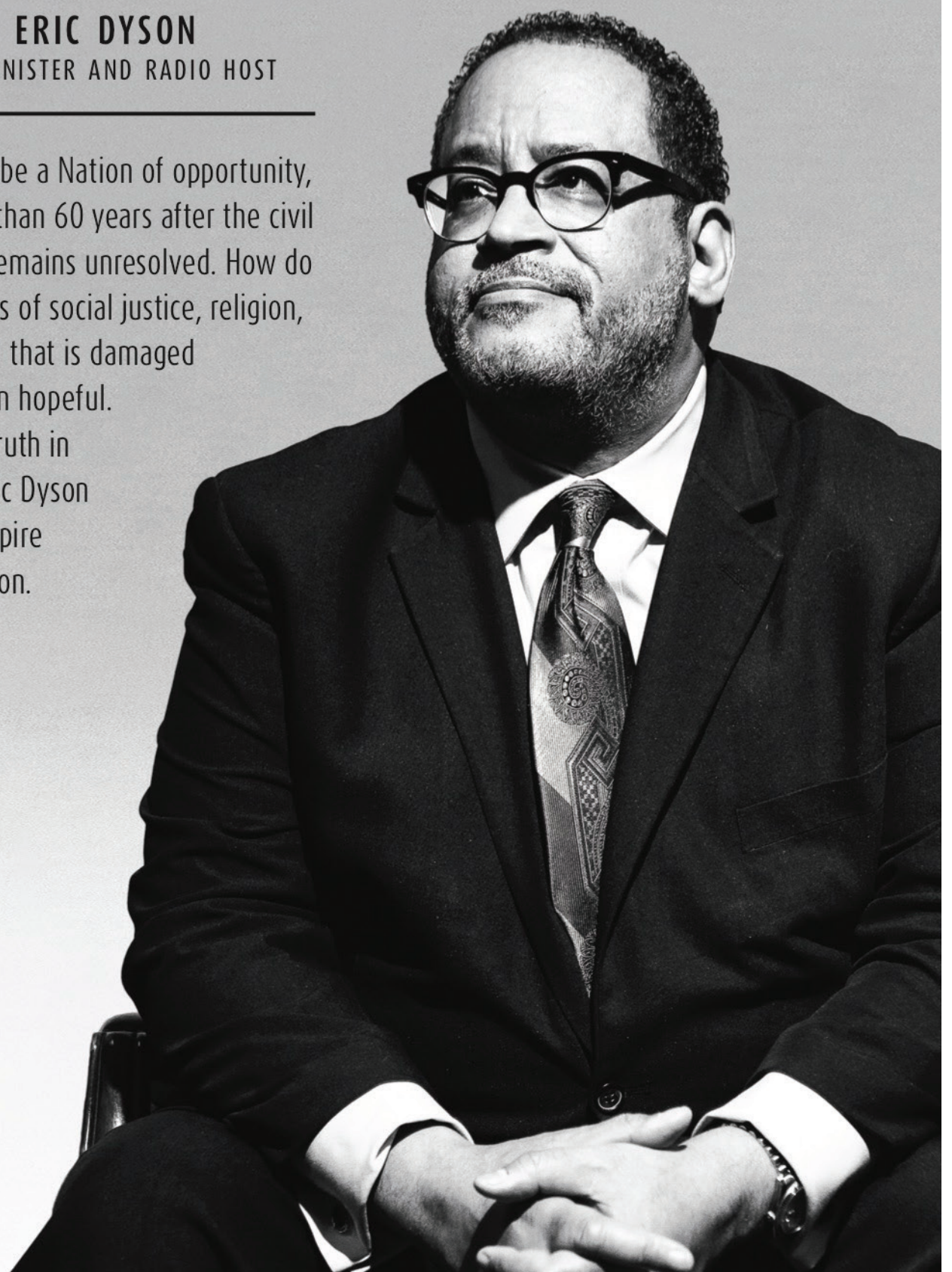
Zoom - Register in Advance: rider.edu/resiliency

FEATURING DR. MICHAEL ERIC DYSON
ACADEMIC, AUTHOR, ORDAINED MINISTER AND RADIO HOST

America has always promised to be a Nation of opportunity, freedom and equality, but more than 60 years after the civil rights movement, the situation remains unresolved. How do we continue to address the issues of social justice, religion, race and police reform in a world that is damaged and at times hopeless. We remain hopeful. Bearing witness to the difficult truth in our country today, Dr. Michael Eric Dyson aims to rebuild resiliency and inspire America's young people to carry on.

CENTER FOR
DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Unity + Diversity = University



Administrator leads Zoom self-defense event for student organizations

By **Tori Pender**

An informative Zoom Self-Defense event for student organizations took place on Feb. 24 covering how to make sure virtual meetings are as secure as possible.

This event was held in response to the Zoom bombing attack that occurred on Feb. 11 during an event hosted by the Chi Alpha chapter of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc. and Tau Kappa chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.

“Rider University will not tolerate the hatred displayed during this event and will use every opportunity to engage all members of our community in actions that dismantle racism and other forms of marginalization,” said President Gregory Dell’Omo in a campus-wide email.

As of Feb. 28, there has been no update to the investigation of the aforementioned Zoom bombing.

The Zoom Self Defense event was run by Campus Life and the Office of Information Technologies (OIT). Associate Dean of Campus Life Nicholas Barbati covered all of Zoom’s settings and Technical Support Coordinator Nick Karalexis provided a demonstration.

The first way to maximize safety is to use Zoom through Rider’s portal, Rider.zoom.us, as only Rider members have access.

Settings

Barbati explained that it is best for the host to have screen share abilities set only to themselves. If participants need to share their screen, the safest way is to individually give those users the role of alternate host.

In recent Zoom bombings, the agitators had taken over the annotate feature. This can be prevented in settings by changing the function to host only.

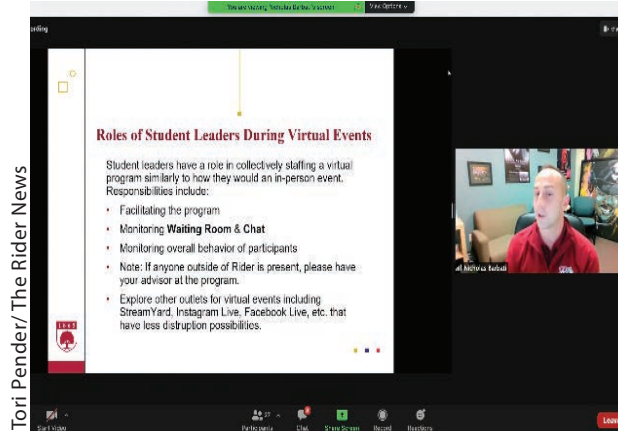
Waiting rooms are another recommended way to monitor the call before it begins; this ensures no one is in the meeting before the host is and allows the host to regulate attendees.

Registration

Lucia White, the coordinator of Campus Life, explained that student leaders must register events through the form on Bronc Nation. Once the event is approved, the registration links can then be created.

There are two different ways to have students register for events: Google Forms and Zoom registration.

The difference between the two is how the registration links are created. Zoom registration links create individual registration links, which would make



One of the pieces of advice Associate Dean of Campus Life **Nicholas Barbati** gave students was to have screen share abilities set only to hosts.

kicking out an individual from the meeting easier. On the other hand, Google Form links give the same link to everyone who registers, meaning once you close that link, no one can come back into the event.

Within Zoom’s setting, Zoom registration will give anyone who registers the meeting link, unless it is altered in settings to allow the host to approve of each registration.

Promoting an event

Campus Life is advising that organizations stop displaying the actual Zoom meeting link and passwords on social media. Instead, they recommend to only make the registration link public, allowing club leaders to have more control. Another creative way to make the registration link available is through a QR code.

The safest place to publicly put the actual Zoom meeting link is Bronc Nation. Barbati explained that it is because the site is password protected and limited to the Rider community.

“My immediate advice is to only post registration information on Rider Connect,” said Barbati. Opposed to displaying the meeting link, it allows organizations to have more control over who joins.

Similarly, Rider’s official pages will not be making Zoom links available for the public, only registration links.

During the event

Barbati recommended tasking other members with jobs to ensure that the Zoom event will run smoothly.

“There is likely an individual who is facilitating the program, so to please make sure that, that person is decided and that’s really for the functions of the program,” said Barbati. “However, like if you were

having a program in the Bart Luedeke Center theater or the Yvonne theater we need individuals watching the door. And in the Zoom world, the door is the waiting room and the chat.” This would prevent the chat from becoming disruptive and it would allow for matters to be taken care of without involving the presenter, thus taking away from the meeting’s original intentions.

Another task involves someone monitoring the participant’s video feeds to ensure that all participants are behaving appropriately.

A feature that should be taken into consideration is the record feature.

Barbati said, “It can be helpful if an issue is arising or has arisen during the Zoom event and an investigation is necessary. That way if there are some questions, or what happened needs to be told, you immediately have a video that you can share with [Campus Life and OIT].”

Recorded videos from Zoom are exported once the Zoom call is finished and can be found on your computer or in the cloud, depending on an individual’s settings.

Barbati said, “Recording is not mandatory, if however, an emergency begins to arise within your event, we ask that you please hit record immediately if you are the host. That way we are able to catch all that is happening to be able to share with Public Safety.”

All participants must be made aware that a call is being recorded.

Stopping an incident

“In meeting controls, choose ‘security’ and then ‘suspend participant activities,’” explained Barbati.

This action locks the Zoom call. All features are suspended: video, audio, chat and screen share.

Barbati recommended that student leaders write down the agitator’s names, even if they are fake pseudonyms, along with the time the incident occurred.

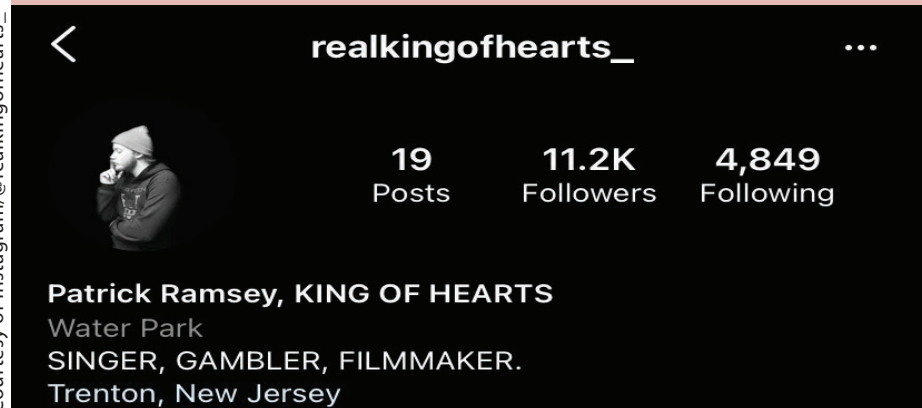
After that, the host should proceed with Zoom’s reporting policy. Once a user is reported by the host using their security feature, a report is automatically sent to Zoom for them to review.

“Following the meeting with a Zoom intruder, it is vital to report the incident to OIT as well as Public Safety,” explained Barbati.

The next Zoom Event Security meeting for faculty, staff and students is scheduled for Thursday, March 11 at 10 a.m., registration links can be found in a campus-wide email sent by Douglas McCrea, associate vice president of OIT.

University announces passing of 19-year-old freshman student

Courtesy of Instagram/@realkingofhearts_



Ramsey recently transferred to Rider, enrolling in classes for the first time at the start of the spring semester.

By **Stephen Neukam**

FRESHMAN general studies major Patrick Ramsey, 19, of Lawrenceville, New Jersey, died on Feb. 26, the university announced via email on March 1.

According to the email, Ramsey recently transferred to Rider. Ramsey’s Instagram account was filled with condolences from peers and classmates.

Priority Adjunct Assistant Professor in the Department of Psychology Melissa Dewees said she only met Ramsey once but spoke highly of his commitment as a student.

“We had a nice conversation and he seemed very motivated,” said Dewees. “He was well-prepared before coming to

class. During class he participated and asked lots of great questions. He seemed like a very engaged and motivated student ... my heart goes out to his family.”

Ramsey was a gifted actor and performer, according to an obituary in the Trentonian. His social media was popular, drawing millions of views on videos of him singing.

The statement from the university said the school “reached out to Patrick’s family to extend our sincerest condolences and offer any support we can provide.” Ramsey’s cause of death was not released by the university.

Details regarding funeral services have not been announced.

New program aims for student career success

CONT’D FROM PAGE 1

Westminster Choir College applications are down over 15%, with just 133 submitted so far.

Rider is not alone in undergoing enrollment challenges, said Dell’Omo. Universities are confronting application declines as students face uncertainty about what next year will bring.

Cranberry investment

As the university attempts to tackle enrollment challenges — a large priority in getting control of budget deficits — the administration is being aggressive in attempting to make Rider more attractive than rival institutions.

At the town hall, Dell’Omo revealed the “Cranberry Investment” — a revamping of the university’s commitment to career success. The president said it was the latest change in a line of ventures that he hopes will improve the value of a Rider education.

The program, which students will have the opportunity to opt in to and must maintain certain academic requirements, promises students an entry-level position or acceptance into a graduate or professional program within six months of graduation. If this promise is not met, the university will offer students extended support to

achieve this goal, including free credits and career coaching.

Student Government Association President and senior musical theater major Dylan Erdelyi was made aware of the program before it was announced to the community and said he was looking forward to seeing it put in place.

“This is an exciting program that should provide some security for students graduating from Rider,” said Erdelyi. “I’m hoping it will further connect students to Career Services. It will be interesting to see what the program looks like in practice and how many students will end up taking advantage of the investment.”



The new program promises students career outcomes within six months of graduation.

The Pub: A little taste of Rider's culinary experience

By Elena Lobo

GOT food? Rider's classic campus juncture, The Pub, has plenty; located on the ground floor of the Bart Luedeke Center (BLC) in Cranberry's Cafe, The Pub is a campus staple.

The location was recently renovated and features a comfy, modern and warm atmosphere. Due to safety restrictions brought upon by the rise of the COVID-19 pandemic, The Pub is focusing on take-out and pick-up through contactless interaction at the counter in Cranberry's.

If students wish to sit down and eat, they can bring their food to one of the distanced tables in Cranberry's open food court, after getting their temperature checked and logged into the Campus Clear app.

According to staff and students who frequent The Pub, the restaurant is working alongside Rider to cultivate a safe and comfortable environment for students by practicing distancing and temperature check guidelines.

Masks must be worn at all times except while actively eating and drinking, and staff is required to wear masks as well as gloves when they work. As per government regulations, a 6-foot distance must also be kept between all patrons. Additionally, hand sanitizer dispensers can be found throughout the location and on campus.

"Rider is doing the best it can, and that is a completely different environment now. We are missing the love, smiles and laughter," said Paulette White, a longtime food service employee.

White is a force to be reckoned with, having spent 37 years working for Rider. She started at Daly Dining Hall, and she eventually made her way to Cranberry's front end when an opening was made available. White seized the opportunity to ensure that needs were met.

Once the pandemic hit, White moved within Cranberry's to greet and interact with customers, take temperatures and make sure everyone is wearing masks, all while maintaining a safe distance.

"I like working at Cranberry's. When you enjoy what you are doing, it is worth it," said White.

Just like the students, White has her favorite meals at The Pub. She said she enjoys barbeque wings, both boneless and with the bone, the most. However, mozzarella sticks are a close second.

Another dedicated Cranberry's staff member is Assistant Manager Alessandro Tramo.

Tramo has worked for Cranberry's since Gourmet Dining took over. Along with his coworkers, Tramo ensures that the establishment runs smoothly throughout these tough times. While maintaining safety regulations, Tramo also managed to incorporate new entrees and appetizers into the mix.

Tempura shrimp tacos and braised beef sliders were added to the "secret menu" at The Pub. Both of these dishes add a contemporary, delicious flair to the menu. The tempura shrimp tacos are a savory masterpiece with a crunch to it, while the braised beef sliders bring about a scrumptious take on a classic dish anyone can enjoy. For the rest of the week, The Pub will feature barbeque ribs on their menu, another classic dish worth keeping an eye out for.

The Pub has an inclusive menu with items for vegan and vegetarian diets.

From the student perspective, Nicole Tremble, a sophomore biology major, said she visits The Pub about once a week and looks forward to enjoying a nice, warm meal. "The AJ burger, it's my favorite by far," said Tremble.

The AJ burger is a mouth-watering hamburger topped with a savory meat patty, fried egg and cheese — a classic that never misses the mark.

The Pub is a go-to hot-spot that any student can enjoy. The warm, friendly atmosphere coupled with exemplary service makes the restaurant one of the many unique food experiences one can encounter throughout their time on campus, a true delight.



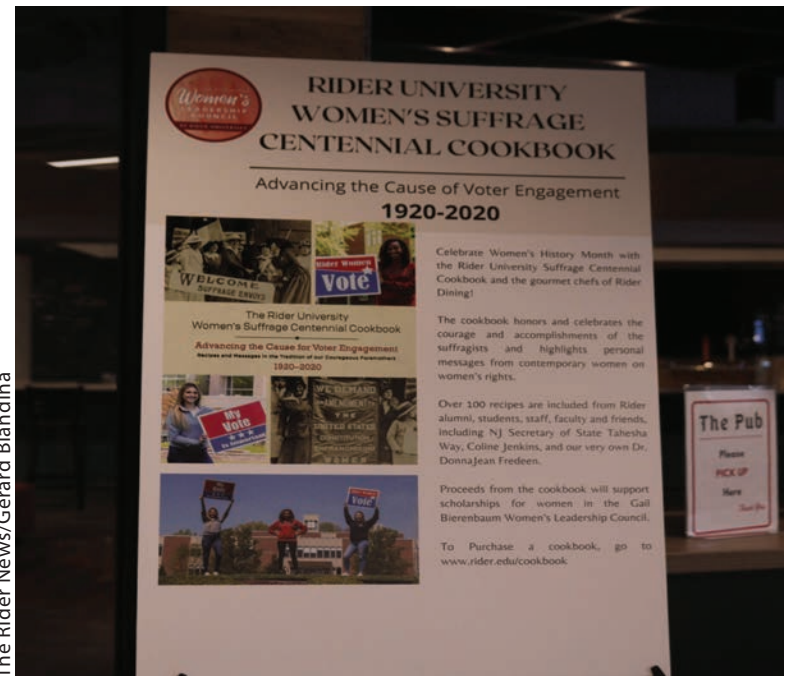
The Rider News/Gerard Blandina

As part of a newly unveiled secret menu, The Pub will begin serving a barbeque rib meal. This recipe comes from Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs DonnaJean Fredeen.



The Rider News/Gerard Blandina

Alessandro Tramo (Left) is an assistant manager at Cranberry's. He ensures that the everything within the dining area runs smoothly and safely.



The Rider News/Gerard Blandina

Several new menu items this month are inspired by Women's History Month. The chefs of Rider Dining have even put together a cookbook comprised of recipes that reflect powerful women in history and in the Rider community.

ADVERTISEMENT

Presented by the Office of Sustainability

Green Film Series

2020-2021

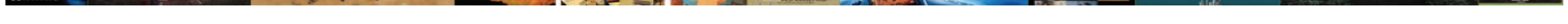
**Tuesday & Wednesday,
March 9th + 10th
7P.M. | ZOOM**

A tenacious attorney uncovers a dark secret that connects a growing number of unexplained deaths to one of the world's largest corporations. While trying to expose the truth, he soon finds himself risking his future, his family and his own life.

Register at www.rider.edu/greenfilms to receive the Zoom Link

*Boarder contains previously shown films

Brief discussion following the film.



Rider's public relations society prepares for national competition

By Sarah Siock

FOR this year's national Bateman competition, Rider's chapter of the Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA) was faced with the challenge of creating a campaign that focuses on increasing civility in public discourse during a time where tensions are especially high after a divisive election season.

The Bateman competition, hosted by the national PRSSA, tasks students with creating and executing a full-scale public relations campaign. This year's competition asked students to exemplify how public relations professionals can restore inclusivity in public discourse. Rider's Bateman team prepared a campaign titled, "Communication Across the Aisle" to address the competition's theme.

The team, consisting of Rider students, created a campaign that actively involves the Rider community. PRSSA asked students to submit a video of themselves performing an act of creative expression that reflects a part of their identity or beliefs. Video submissions included dance routines, song performances and piano renditions.

"The theme of the competition is a reference to the political divide in our country. We wanted to emphasize civility, not necessarily uniformity, by fostering a conversation that includes everyone's viewpoints and respects differences. We felt the best way to do that was to create a project that combines different viewpoints of students at Rider," said sophomore public relations major and Bateman team member Keyonna Murray.

The team will present all of the submissions at a Zoom event on March 5 where a panel of judges, consisting of students and professors, will determine which pieces best represent the competition's theme. The event will also feature live polls where viewers can vote on their favorite performance. Since students of all majors were invited to participate, the Bateman team hopes the events will foster diverse representation.

"Many times when people talk to those with different beliefs or opinions from them it goes very negatively. We are trying to give a platform to show that you can talk about those things in a positive way and facilitate an impactful conversation," said sophomore public relations majors and Bateman team member Elise Spedding.

The creation of this event has been a work in progress throughout the semester. The students were not only in charge of creating the event but also the promotion of it, just like true public relations professionals. The team members said the process of working on the campaign helped them prepare for their future careers.

"Working as a team has taught me a great deal. We figured out our problems together. I have never planned an event of this scale and I really challenged myself throughout this process," said senior public relations major and Bateman team member Ryan Wetter.

Wetter said that the making of the campaign came with many obstacles. Due to the restrictions presented by the coronavirus pandemic, the event was made virtual. According to Wetter, promoting the event through digital outlets was difficult in the beginning.



Photo courtesy of Elise Spedding

Bateman team members Gabriel Kennis, Elise Spedding, Rachel Amato and Keyonna Murray meet over Zoom to prepare their public relations campaign.

"We have made a lot of progress. However, the biggest challenge was motivating our peers to participate in something like this since student involvement has been lower since the pandemic began," said Wetter.

Once the event is complete the team will submit a report of their campaign to PRSSA. In mid-April, the results of the competition will be announced. No matter the outcome of the competition, Murray said working on the project has been an irreplaceable experience that has shown her real-life skills.

"This project has taught me the importance of applying creative talents to something important. Often, we are told to put our passions aside in the workforce. However, I think if you are not motivated and passionate in what you are doing then you will not be successful," said Murray.

News editor Hailey Hensley serves as a Bateman team member. Hensley was not involved with the writing or editing of this story.

Student Affairs book club sparks impactful discussions

By Christian McCarville

READING can bring peace and tranquility to a reader, especially in times of high stress and pandemic-related worry. Reading can also shine a light on topics of importance, relevant to societal issues.

Student Affairs has invited students to participate in a virtual book club, meeting periodically over Zoom. The selected text for this most recent book club is "I'm Not Dying With You Tonight" by Kimberly Jones and Gilly Segal.

"The virtual book club is an opportunity for interaction among student and staff participants, promotes a form of self-care through engagement and relaxation and provokes thoughtful conversation on a variety of issues," said Vice President of Student Affairs Leanna Fenneberg. "It can be difficult to find time to 'read for fun' outside of course material and the book club offers some motivation and accountability to pick up the book and discuss it."

The original suggestion for the club to discuss was "The Hate U Give" by Angie Thomas. However, the consensus was that most students are already familiar with the book and the film.

"As we explored that option, we recognized that many students have already read the book or seen its corresponding movie," said Associate Dean of Campus Life Nick Barbati. "As we discussed books with similar themes geared towards young adults, we came to find 'I'm Not Dying With You Tonight' as a great option based on previous work of Kimberly Jones and its reviews."

"I'm Not Dying With You Tonight" follows the story of two teenage girls who

must rely on one another when their city falls into unrest due to racial tensions escalating. Both girls come from different backgrounds and points of view, but they must set their differences aside to survive the night.

In 2020, the book was nominated for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) Image Award. It provokes many relevant discussions relating to racial inequality in America.

"In a time where the stark realities of racial inequality are so vividly surfaced in our country, the content of this book is even more timely," said Fenneberg. "The book offers an opportunity to recognize and debunk stereotypes, consider someone else's perspective and observe systemic racism and its impact on individuals and the community."

The book club has currently covered the first third of the book. It had its first meeting on Feb. 23 and held productive discussions about the text.

"Discussing the book with students has already been an eye-opening experience as I believe each of us had an 'aha' moment when hearing how someone else interpreted particular moments and motivations of the characters," said Barbati. "We each bring with us unique perspectives based on our lived experiences, and that alters how each of us interprets what we are reading."

The shared experience of a book discussion is sure to produce a greater appreciation and understanding for everyone involved. The book club plans to meet again soon to discuss the next assigned portion of the text.



Courtesy of Jack Hughes

"I'm Not Dying With You Tonight" is the story of two teen girls who must rely on each other to survive hateful race riots. The story touches on important topics such as inequality and racial prejudices in America.

Hypnotist helps students relax at virtual demonstration

By Aaliyah Patel

WITH online classes taking up the majority of time in most Rider students' days, Zoom fatigue has become a constant reality. To help the Rider community during these stressful times, the Office of Campus Life hosted a virtual hypnosis event to help students concentrate.

Eric Mina, an author, speaker and coach, held the self-hypnosis demonstration on the evening of Feb. 26.

Mina specializes in improving focus, clarity and performance. His work consists of achieving higher performance without medications, one he was told was impossible after struggling with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) as a child. Through his certification as a hypnotherapist, he taught students how the mind and body work together to either focus or distract someone.

In his publication, "From Blurry to Brilliant: Creating Clarity in Our ADHD World" Mina shares how eliminating mental clutter can result in accomplishing one's goals. After a successful in-person appearance last year before to the COVID-19 pandemic, Mina was invited back virtually.

Nicholas Barbati, the Associate Dean of Campus Life, shared how the Office of Campus Life hosted this event to help students understand how hypnosis can improve their lives.

"We were excited to welcome Mr. Mina back due to his high energy and excitement for performing for college students. Many of our performers are found through our participation in the National Association of Campus Activities, which showcases many performers annually for colleges and universities, and that is how we initially were introduced to Eric Mina," Barbati said.

Mina practices his teachings through demonstrations, presentations, workshops and keynote speeches across North America. Senior business management major and Student Entertainment Council (SEC) president Goanio Chavarria mentioned the importance of establishing normalcy with events for students during this time.

"The Student Entertainment Council (SEC) is just trying to deliver as many events as we can. With the pandemic, it has been a challenge being

creative and authentic because there is only so much we can do. We do not have much to work with, but the board is working hard to deliver virtual events to the students," Chavarria said.

Students can look forward to future events, such as this one, throughout the semester.

"We are in the works of launching a campus-wide scavenger hunt, bringing in more food trucks, a talent show where artists can showcase their vocal or rapping abilities and outdoor movies for later in the semester when the weather gets warmer," Chavarria stated.



Courtesy of @EricMagicMina

Eric Mina is an author, a speaker and a coach. He is a certified hypnotherapist specializing in improving the focus and clarity of others.

UPCOMING EVENT CALENDAR

THU, MARCH 4

Race and Democracy: Building Resilience as an Activist

12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.

THU, MARCH 4

A Night with Broadway Star Javier Muñoz

7:00 p.m.

FRI, MARCH 5

The Virtual Magic Experience with Joel Meyers

7:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

TUES, MARCH 9

A Virtual Discussion with Jack Ciattarelli

11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Free the weed: Marijuana is legal

THE Garden State has a whole new meaning now. The wait is finally over. New Jersey has officially become the 13th state in the United States of America to legalize marijuana. New Jersey Gov. Phil Murphy signed into law three bills putting into effect a ballot question overwhelmingly supported by voters last year.

Although stoners and potheads alike are lighting up with joy at this very exciting turn of events for New Jersey's weed connoisseurs, the real exciting news is the hope for the decriminalization of marijuana and the freedom of those who have been jailed on petty charges.

New Jersey became the the first Mid-Atlantic state to renounce decades of weed arrests in favor of a program that focuses on wrongful marijuana charges led by social activists.

"It marks the end of tens of thousands of weed arrests annually and the beginning of a cannabis industry that could be an economic boom for the state and region," according to NJ.com.

Currently, the only other states on the east coast to legalize weed are Maine, Vermont and Massachusetts.

Over three months after New Jerseyans voted to legalize weed, Murphy signed into law three bills that decriminalize and legalize marijuana for "adult use," a term used to refer to any use of the drug without a medical marijuana card.

Many asked the question, "what took so long?" Well after the ballot question got enough votes (67% to be exact, according to NJ.com) the regulations needed to be put in place by the state. No regulations, no legal marijuana.

The legalization regulations have been held up for months while legislators debated things such as tax structure and penalties for underage marijuana users.

Here is what my pot patrons need to know.

According to NJ.com, under bill A1987, the use of or possession of up to six ounces of marijuana is decriminalized and comes without any penalties. There are also restrictions on how police officers can stop and search anyone who may be using or consuming marijuana.

You also cannot "legally" purchase marijuana in New Jersey without a medical marijuana card and, according to NJ.com, it will be at least months before any recreational marijuana sales begin.

Home grown marijuana is also a no. The bills Murphy signed do not include any provisions allowing people to grow weed at home. New Jersey is the only state with legal weed that does not allow its medical marijuana patients to grow, according to NJ.com.

Marijuana consumers can expect to pay \$41.50 in taxes, a mark-up of about 12% , including a \$10 social justice tax fee, according to NJ.com. But, as the cannabis industry grows, the marijuana price will likely drop. The sales and municipal tax rates will stay the same, but the

social justice tax fee will increase to ensure that tax revenue still flows — specifically to communities of color.

A question I wondered to myself was — where will my tax money go?

The laws Murphy signed into place emphasize three separate taxes on legal weed purchases.

"First, there is an enhanced state sales tax of 7%. Per the legal weed laws, 15% of this revenue will come off the top and be directed to 'underage deterrence and prevention,' specifically community groups who will use the money to educate children and young adults about the dangers of substance use," said NJ.com.

Of the remaining 85%, 70% (or 59.5% of the total sales tax) will go toward one of 20 "impact zones," cities with large Black and Latinx communities and high unemployment rates where marijuana laws were most strictly enforced, according to NJ.com.

The remainder of the sales tax revenue, about 25.5%, will go to the "general fund" — the state's general tax coffers and budget.

"The second tax is the social justice excise fee, which will fluctuate between \$10 and \$60 depending on the average price of cannabis. Per the laws, 100% of this revenue will go toward the impact zones," said NJ.com.

The third tax is an optional 2% sales tax which municipalities can levy on any marijuana business within its borders. This money goes directly toward the town's budget and can be used at the will of the governing body.

When I voted for legal marijuana back in November, my reasoning was not only for the idea of legalization but for the safety of the Black and brown communities that are more likely to be affected by and criminalized for it. With this legalization it would mean fewer people facing jail time for nonviolent offenses and clear records of those with past weed convictions. Those arrest records are hurdles for people applying to jobs, loans and public housing.

Police in New Jersey arrest more people for marijuana possession than every other state except for Texas and New York, according to the FBI arrest data. Black people are arrested at a rate more than three times higher than white people, although people of both races use marijuana at similar rates.

Marijuana reform advocates have long denounced weed laws for their disproportionate impact on Black and brown communities.

No more "what-ifs" and think pieces on whether weed should be legal or not, the time is now for tangible reform.

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




Courtesy of Creative Commons

THE Rider News

Ridge House, 2083 Lawrenceville Road, Lawrenceville, NJ 08648

Phone: 609 896 5256

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

Executive Editor

Stephen Neukam

Copy Editors

Tori Pender

Managing Editor

Austin Boland-Ferguson

Jenna Dean

Emily Kim

News Editors

Tatyanna Carman

Hailey Hensley

Cristalia Turck

Nicoletta Feldman

Features and Arts

& Entertainment Editors

Christian McCarville

Sarah Siock

Design Manager

Arianna Marino

Business/Advertising

Manager

Danielle Jackson

Opinion Editor

Qur'an Hansford

Circulation Managers

Karagh Tait

Jordan Wilson

Sports Editors

Dylan Manfre

Shaun Chomobroff

Photography Editor

Carolo Pascale

Video Editors

Drew Jacabacci

Ben Ross

Gerard Blandina

Tiffany Hartman

Social Media Editors

Gerard Blandina

Brenna Edwards

Juliette Eddings

Faculty Adviser

Dr. Jackie Incollingo

The Rider News serves as a public forum for student expression and welcomes letters to the editor from all members of the university community. Letters must include the writer's telephone number and email address for verification. Letters that constitute personal attacks on individuals or groups are unacceptable. We reserve the right to edit letters to the editor for length, clarity, accuracy, grammar and libel. Letters must be appropriate in terms of taste and civility. Brevity is encouraged. All decisions are at the sole discretion of the editorial board, which may reject any letter. Send to The Rider News via email at ridernews@rider.edu. Letters must be received by midnight on the Monday preceding publication. Any tips or suggestions can be sent to ridernews@rider.edu.

 @theridernews

 www.theridernews.com

 @theridernews

 facebook.com/theridernews

 ridernews@rider.edu

GREEN CORNER

Climate Change: The irreversible effects are getting closer by the day

RIDER'S campus received another snowstorm last week, which brought snow totals in parts of Mercer County to 25 inches for the season already — a sharp departure from last year when snow accumulation in Lawrenceville barely reached an inch. While some have been enjoying the snowy scenery and winter activities like sledding, skiing and snowboarding, others are worried about the trend that this represents on a larger scale.

After the extremely cold temperatures and power grid failure in Texas last week, it is clear that the United States does not have the necessary infrastructure weatherization in place in the south to handle the severe cold weather conditions brought on by climate change.

“Seeing extreme weather events getting worse and more frequent makes me nervous to imagine what the future will hold,” said sophomore musical theater major Brianna Nicola.

Nicola’s worry is shared by many, as weather patterns in the United States begin to reflect the severity of the climate situation we are currently facing.

In a report published this January by NOAA and NASA, it was reported that 2010 to 2020 was the hottest decade since weather record-keeping began 140 years ago. This pattern is certainly indicative of the presence of global warming, but it is important to recognize that warming is only part of a larger problem: climate change.

Although people tend to use these terms interchangeably, global warming is just one aspect of climate change.

Global warming refers to the rise in global temperatures due mainly to the increasing concentrations of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. Climate change refers to the increasing polarization of climate over a long period — including dramatic changes in regions’ average precipitation, temperature and wind patterns.

These impacts are a direct result of humanity’s unsustainable use of natural resources, including fossil fuels, specifically in the United States. While many populations have been dealing with the implications of our growing problem for years, soon it will be a part of everyone’s daily life.

The USA has been experiencing increasingly disastrous weather events for the past decade, with hurricanes like Sandy, Maria and Harvey leaving damage

still felt to this day in the communities they impacted. Intense heat waves forced people across the country and world into dangerous swelter.

Wildfires devoured hundreds of thousands of acres of deciduous forests in the west. Climate records fell left and right. This year has had the hottest and coldest record-breaking temperatures ever.

Even now, as Texas is beginning to thaw from drastic winter weather record-low temperatures and waiting on the power to be restored, many citizens have discovered that their taps have run dry, pipes have burst and water treatment plants have failed, forcing millions to boil all water before usage. Should more extreme weather conditions occur throughout the United States, as energy usage demands keep rising, the power grids designed in the 1950s could continue to fail, leaving communities across various regions facing similar disasters.

The southeast alone may need 35 percent more electric capacity by 2050 simply to deal with the known hazards of climate change, as found in a recent study by the American Chemical Society.


Though all of these extreme weather events are not the same, they share a common root cause in the exponentially increasing effect of climate change.

Unregulated additions of greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere, caused primarily by the mass burning of fossil fuels, are trapping extra heat near Earth’s surface. This warms Earth as a whole, increasing the contrast between our hottest and coldest seasons. The outcome is both straightforward — a hotter planet — and incredibly complex, as changes cascade through the oceans, atmosphere, soil, rocks, trees and every living thing on the planet.

Rider sophomore musical theater major Jasmine Bassham indicated, “Looking back at all of the natural disasters in the past decade, I feel very nervous about the next one... I hope our leaders realize how high the stakes are now and start to take real steps to fix this.”

Muriel Baki,
Eco-Rep

ADVERTISEMENT



RADICAL RECYCLABLE ROBOTS

INDIVIDUALS OR TEAMS OF UP TO FOUR PEOPLE WILL WORK TO CREATE ROBOTS OUT OF VARYING TYPES OF RECYCLED MATERIALS COVERED IN THE CAMPUS RACE TO ZERO WASTE

ALL CONTEST ENTRIES MUST BE COMPLETED AND RECEIVED BY MARCH 22, 2021 FOR DETAILS AND ENTRY, EMAIL BRONCSGOGREEN@RIDER.EDU

CATEGORIES

MOST CREATIVE

BEST LOOKING

CELEBRITY ROBOTS

MOST SCHOOL SPIRIT

MOST DIVERSE MATERIALS

WINNER OF EACH CATEGORY RECIEVES A \$100 VISA GIFT CARD



MEN'S BASKETBALL

Rider takes one of two against Saint Peter's

By Shaun Chornobroff

In the gym of Division III New Jersey City University, the men's basketball team earned a hotly-contested and much-needed split against the Saint Peter's Peacocks on Feb. 26 and 27.

Game One

The two-game series pitted one of the best offensive teams in the MAAC (Rider) against one of the best defensive teams (Saint Peter's) the conference had to offer. When the opening game went to halftime, Rider was beating Saint Peter's at their own game, leading the Peacocks 24-23 in a defensive affair.

The Broncos unraveled in the second half, with Saint Peter's stifling defense accruing eight steals and forcing turnovers, all while only allowing the Broncos to shoot 33.3% from the field and 18.2% from beyond the arc.

"We just had breakdowns in the second half, between that and the defensive breakdowns, that was the difference," Head Coach Kevin Baggett said.

Rider seemed unable to find their footing in the second half, with one mistake after another, leading Rider to yet another defeat.

Rider held off the Peacocks for much of the second half, but a 20-3 run, which was aided by a multitude of mistakes from the team, saw the Peacocks pull away from Rider.

"Things compound," Baggett explained. "One mistake after the next, we never come up with the 50/50 balls and the next thing you know, we either foul a guy or give up an and-one... It's been a consistent thing all-year long."

Junior guard Dwight Murray Jr. was the only Bronco to score 10 or more points on the night, accounting for 13 of Rider's 52 points to go along with six assists. But even he uncharacteristically turned the ball over six times in the loss.

Game Two

For the fourth time this season, sophomore guard Allen Powell set a career-high in points, scoring 25 points and making every one of his three-pointers that touched the rim in a 78-65 win over the Peacocks.

Powell made seven of his eight three-point attempts in the game, the only one he missed was his final attempt from beyond the arc, which was blocked by a Saint Peter's defender.

After being held to a combined four points in his



Carolo Pascale/The Rider News

Sophomore guard **Allen Powell** knocked down seven 3-pointers and scored 25 points in a crucial win against Saint Peter's.

previous two outings, the scoring outburst was a nice reminder of the Philadelphia native's talent.

"I definitely know I'm capable of it," Powell said of his expert marksmanship in the game. "It's just some days you have your off days and some days you have your great days, today I had a good day."

Twenty of Powell's points came in the first half, including two three-point heaves that beat the shot clock and looked like they were straight out of a video game. The sophomore's contributions were crucial to the team taking a 12 point lead going into the halftime break.

"He's a confident kid," Baggett said. "He started it out for us, hit some big shots down the stretch with the shot clock running down and he got us going... It's good to see him hit his shots tonight against a team that defends really well."

Rider was also aided by the return of Dontrell

McQuarter in the series. The junior forward had been missing from the team for more than a month, but he made his return to the court in the opening game and was back in the starting lineup for the victory.

"You see it in both games, with him we're a better team, without him we're struggling a little bit," Baggett said. "To have him back, his leadership, his experience, his defense, it gives us another guy we can really trust on the defensive end as well as the offense."

The victory breaks Rider out of the MAAC's basement, putting it at 10th in the conference, virtue of a tiebreaker over Manhattan with two games left before the MAAC Tournament.

Rider will try to stave off Manhattan and a last-place finish when it concludes its regular season at Alumni Gym on March 4 and 5 at 4 p.m.

MEN'S BASKETBALL

Broncs gets ready for transfer wave in NCAA

By Shaun Chornobroff

"The Times they are A-Changin," is not only the title of Bob Dylan's 1964 classic hit, but also a moniker that represents the current state of the NCAA.

The new trend of players transferring earlier and more often than ever, even if they have success with the team, has Rider men's basketball Head Coach Kevin Baggett wary of what is to come.

Baggett's concerns are even more justified with the NCAA likely passing a one-time transfer rule in the near future, meaning a player can transfer a single time, without having to sit out a season.

"Guys are going to be able to transfer this year if they pass that NCAA rule, where you don't have to sit out one time... you know, would I like to have everyone back? Of course, but we'll see how that works out in the end. You just never know," Baggett said. "I didn't think Dimencio [Vaughn] and Freddie Scott were going to leave, or I hoped they weren't going to leave being that they had a lot of success here, but they decided to transfer up and play at the highest level. You'll see a lot more of that going forward."

Vaughn and Scott were both all-conference selections and veteran leaders on a Rider team that finished the regular season fourth in the MAAC last season, but they decided to depart Rider for the glitz and glamour of Power Five conferences as graduate transfers. A graduate transfer has already earned their degree and is eligible to transfer to a new school and play immediately without any type of waiver.

Graduate transfers have always been around, but in the 2010s it has become an option that players use

with more consistency than ever.

"When I first got started [in coaching] 18 years ago, the only guys that really transferred were the ones that didn't have a chance to play... Fifth-year transfers were unheard of until about seven years ago, it was something you never heard about. If a player got hurt, they redshirted that year and they just had an extra year at their respective school," Rider men's basketball Assistant Coach Marlon Guild said. "Now, you almost cringe a little bit when a guy gets an extra year because you never know what he's thinking. You can do everything right by that young man, just pulling the cord in the classroom and in life, and they can just leave."

"I think it just slowly crept up, I don't think there was one case in particular," Guild said of the popularity of the fifth-year transfer. "I think once guys knew they had options, you know, as you get older you get more information. As with anything you explore... and guys started doing it."

With the aforementioned NCAA rule coming, it won't just be graduate transfers — any player, from freshman to senior, will be able to leave a program one-time free of charge and immediately suit up.

"I think nationally, if you look around the country, you're seeing it in football, you saw what Joe [Burrow] did at LSU. So, that's the way of the world now, kids are transferring," Baggett said. "There are over 900 kids in the transfer portal, it's going to get worse, you're going to see tons and tons of kids transfer once they pass that rule. We have to be ready to adjust and deal with it when it comes and when that's passed."

With a surge of transfers incoming there is an

obvious question: Will this be good for players?

"I just think that it doesn't teach kids how to problem solve, I mean every day's not going to be great, sometimes you have to go through some struggles to come out on the other side of it," Baggett said. "I dealt with this a little bit because I wanted to play early on, back in the day freshmen were not guaranteed anything, more often than not you didn't play as much because you had seniors in front of you who had gone through the system,"

"I just think now you get guys that will go into a program and if they're not playing they're just going to transfer," the 54-year-old head coach explained. "There's no more being able to deal with things and learning from it... It's just different, these kids don't know how to solve anything, I learned to go through some things in order to get to where I am as a person. If you're always going to run from problems, how do you problem solve?"

The NCAA is a constantly-moving and adjusting entity which landscape changes quicker than anybody can imagine. But for Baggett, Guild and the entire coaching staff of the men's basketball team, the bond they create with their player never leaves, even if the athlete does.

"You're disappointed, no doubt about it. But I think at the end of the day you want what's best for the student-athlete," Guild said. "We've had guys transfer from our program, were we disappointed? Sure, but that relationship will still be there because with us it has always been bigger than basketball."

WRESTLING

Broncs enjoy accolade-filled MAC tournament



Peter G. Borge/ Rider University

Graduate student **Jesse Dellavecchia** became Rider's first two-time MAC Champion at the 157 pound weight class.

By **Mike Ricchione**

MISSOURI'S Jarrett Jacques scored a last-second takedown, but it was not enough as graduate student Jesse Dellavecchia captured his second-straight Mid-American Conference (MAC) championship at 157 pounds to headline the Broncs wrestling team's performance at the MAC tournament on Feb. 26 and 27.

As a team, Rider placed nine at the podium, qualifying five wrestlers for the NCAA tournament which begins on Mar. 18.

The Broncs qualified four wrestlers for the NCAA tournament on day one, when redshirt sophomore Richie Koehler, freshman McKenzie Bell, senior Ethan Laird and Dellavecchia reached the finals.

Dellavecchia started with a 10-3 decision over Buffalo's Michael Petite in the quarterfinals after a first-round bye and followed up by pinning Edinboro's Peter Pappas at 4:44 in the semifinals before defeating Jacques, 3-2, for the title.

"Feels good. It's been a weird few weeks, a little over that, like a month," Dellavecchia said. "It just feels good to be wrestling and competing again so it was fun."

Laird also had a first-round bye in the heavyweight bracket and punched his ticket to the NCAA's with a pair of 3-2 decisions over Northern Illinois' Max Ihry and Missouri's Zach Elam before falling to Central Michigan's Matt Stencel, 7-2, in the finals.

Stencel became the MAC's ninth four-time champion and the first ever to do so at heavyweight.

Bell started his tournament at 141 pounds with a 13-2 major decision over Kent State's Avry Mutschler

in the first round. Bell put up double-digits once more in his quarterfinal victory over Edinboro's Gabe Willochell, 10-5.

To reach the finals, top-seeded Allan Hart of Missouri was standing in Bell's way. Bell started with a six-point swing to lead 6-1 after one round. Bell won 8-6, upsetting the top seed. Bell fell to Central Michigan's Dresden Simon in the finals, 12-5.

Koehler, who went unseeded in the 133-pound bracket, won with decisions over Central Michigan's Andrew Marten and Northern Illinois' Bryce West before pinning Bloomsburg's Cole Rhone in the semifinals. Koehler fell to Missouri's Matt Schmitt in the finals, 9-6.

Two other Broncs reached the semifinals but lost. There were also the coach's challenges in both matches that didn't end up going Rider's way.

Redshirt senior Jonathan Tropea and Central Michigan's Drew Hildebrandt were battling along the boundary when both were close to a takedown at 125 pounds.

Tropea, who was leading 2-1 at the time, almost added to his lead with a near-takedown. But Hildebrandt scored a takedown for the 3-2 lead which was challenged by Head Coach John Hangey but the call stood and the score as well and led to a Tropea defeat.

At 184 pounds, redshirt senior George Walton was close to a takedown in the third period of his bout with Missouri's Jeremiah Kent, which would have given him a 7-6 lead.

After review, there was no takedown, giving Kent a 6-5 decision and a ticket to the NCAA's.

"I felt strongly that they should've gone our way, but I have a biased opinion," Hangey said. "The public opinion also was in agreement with me for the large majority but I'm not those officials."

Tropea secured his trip to St. Louis with a 7-3 decision over Lock Haven's Luke Werner in the consolation semifinals.

Walton did not fare so well in the consolations, falling to Clarion's Max Wohlabaugh in overtime to fall to the fifth-place match. The redshirt senior lost the fifth-place match to Edinboro's Ethan Ducca to take sixth.

Graduate student Matt Correnti fell one place short of qualifying for the NCAA tournament, falling in the third-place match to Clarion's Greg Bulsak via major decision, 10-2, at 197 pounds for fourth.

Redshirt sophomore Jake Silverstein took fifth at 165 pounds. Sophomore Wyatt McCarthy took sixth at 149 pounds.

As a team, the Broncs placed third with 120.5 points. Hangey was named MAC Co-Coach of the year with Missouri's Brian Smith.

"I've surrounded myself with good people," Hangey said on winning the award. "From a coaching staff and in particular [Assistant Coach] Nic Bedelyon. When I went out with my health issue, he stepped up and took this program and made sure, he's like 'Hangey don't worry about anything.' [We] did all that we needed to do and as a result, we kept moving forward."

Next up is for all the marbles at the NCAA championships March. 18 to 20 at the Enterprise Center in St. Louis.



Sports

INSIDE

WRESTLING ITS WAY TO NCAA
Rider wrestling enjoyed two successful days at the MAC Tournament

FIND THE STORY BY MIKE RICCHIONE ON PAGE 11

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

Broncs 'anxious' to get back to playing games

By Dylan Manfre

"It's March and anything can happen and we'll be ready."

Well said, Lynn Milligan. Well said, indeed.

The 14-year head coach is right, anything can happen, but the women's basketball team's fate — and when it plays its first Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference (MAAC) tournament game — is tightly held in the hands of its opponents.

Rider does not control its destiny going into the tournament because it will not have played a game for 21 days.

Seeding Update

The rest of the women's field has a pretty packed schedule with 23 games being played between Feb. 14 and March. 8, when the tournament starts.

Rider (5-13, 6-17) could have four more days added on and have the break become 32 days if it is locked in as the sixth seed. Should the scenario transpire, Rider would be pit against the no. 3 seed on March. 11 — exactly one year since its last MAAC tournament game.

The "hardest thing" for Milligan is preparing for an unknown opponent and making sure the team stays ready in the process.

"If you're seven, you're playing on Tuesday and if you're six you're playing on Thursday, so it just changes a little bit of your planning," Milligan said. "The sooner we know, if we're six or seven, the easier it is to plan what we want to do and how we want to get ready for that game."

After it split the Feb. 27 and 28 series against Quinnipiac, Niagara jumped Iona for the no. 7 seed. With two games left to play, the Purple Eagles can eclipse Rider for the no. 6 seed if they sweep Siena on March. 4 and 5.

Iona is the no. 8 seed and can jump to sixth if it sweeps Monmouth. Iona swept Rider earlier in the season and owns the tiebreaker.

Milligan has been at Rider for 14 years as a head coach. She knows a thing or two about playing in the tournament so multiple seeding scenarios is no surprise to her.

"It's been that way since [the] jump," she said. "It really has."

Preseason 2.0?

The break period is a lengthy one. A preseason 2.0 perhaps. Unlike the initial preseason period, the Broncs do not have to worry so much about how many people they can have in the gym and how long they can practice for at a given time. They just practice.

"It's weird because it feels like a long break but at the same time we're still working out, we're still practicing, we're still doing everything we normally do," sophomore center Victoria Toomey said. "I think we definitely had a really good opportunity to get in the weight room. We've been doing extra strength and conditioning workouts."

With no games being played, what else can you do aside from practice, lift and school, of course?

Multiple players said there is an "anxiousness" to get back on the court in Atlantic City for the tournament especially since over 3/4 of the team has little or no experience in a MAAC postseason atmosphere yet.

"We know what we're working for," Milligan said. "I think they're excited to have a chance to play in Atlantic City. We feel good about where we are as a team right now."

There are games Rider would like to get back though. Game one against Marist is a particular example which stood out to Toomey. Rider lost by one, 47-46, and it was the first time this season Marist had been held to under 50 points.

Freshman forward Raphaëla Toussaint has worked on her confidence all season long. With the latest off period, she said that has been the area she wants to improve the most.

"Just playing [and] not letting anything get to my head or just overthinking things," said Toussaint, who started 15 games this season.



Carolo Pascale/The Rider News

Freshman forward **Raphaëla Toussaint** is gearing up for her first conference tournament after a strong freshman campaign.

How does she do that?

"Just try to move on to the next play ... Coach always says just to let it out and embrace the mindset," Toussaint said.

Return of the fan

Rider will play in front of actual fans again for the first time since Nov. 25 when it opened the 2020-2021 season against Villanova University.

The league reversed course on its no-fan policy at the MAAC basketball tournament on Feb. 26. This comes four days after New Jersey Gov. Phil Murphy signed an executive order declaring venues holding over 5,000 people can host spectators at 10% capacity as of March. 1. No tickets will be sold since only limited persons related to players or coaches will be allowed.

Jim Whelan Boardwalk Hall in Atlantic City, New Jersey, has a capacity of 10,500 persons so 1,050 people could be accommodated under the new ruling.

"I think the kids are excited that their families get to come because the people who are coming to the games are families and friends," Milligan said. "We

have a lot of local kids and a lot of parents that are just really invested in our program. I think it's going to be a great thing that their family gets to come see us play."

It is unclear now how many passes each team will receive. Friends and family members attending games will have to be on a "pass list" and have to show identification upon entering, per a Rider Athletics spokesperson.

When the MAAC tournament was played last March, the league announced fans would not be allowed to watch the remainder of the tournament on March. 11. The tournament itself was canceled the following day along with the NCAA March Madness tournament in a stunning move which prompted other closures.