



## 15 years later: how one night changed Greek Life at Rider

By Olivia Nicoletti

**I**N 2007, a seemingly normal spring day on campus turned into a whirlwind of events leading to loss, lawsuits and learning for the Rider community.

Gary DeVercelly Jr., an 18-year-old member of Phi Kappa Tau (PKT), died of alcohol poisoning on March 30 at the hands of his fraternity brothers after performing a big/little hazing ritual in the Greek house on campus.

### The night before

In Long Beach, California, Gary and Julie DeVercelly were awakened in the middle of the night on March 29 by the pounding of police at their door telling them that their son was at the hospital in critical condition. They were instructed to immediately call Helene Fuld Medical Center in Trenton.

“After Gary [Sr.] hung up we booked four one-way tickets on the first flight out of [Los Angeles International Airport] to [Philadelphia International Airport]. Gary and I and our two younger children flew across the country on what was the longest flight of our lives,” said Julie DeVercelly. “We had to change planes in Phoenix and called the hospital for an update. Gary’s prognosis went from a 50/50 chance of survival, to no hope at all.”

At this point, the couple had no idea what could have caused their son to be lying almost lifeless and alone in a hospital bed.

When the grueling hours of travel came to an end, the DeVercelly family arrived at the hospital. Julie DeVercelly said, “We were escorted by security to Gary’s hospital room through a special entrance to protect us from the media that was all over the hospital. The realization that whatever happened to our son was not merely an accident was starting to sink in.”

The fraternity ritual was eventually revealed to entail more than just brotherly bonding. The older members forcefully made new members drink an excessive amount of vodka on the night of March 29. Gary DeVercelly Jr., a freshman, drank most of a bottle during the “Big-Little Night” initiation ritual.

### The day of heartbreak

Once the DeVercelly’s reached the trauma floor, former Rider President Mordachi Rozanski and former Dean of Students Anthony Campbell were waiting outside their son’s room. Julie DeVercelly can remember Rozanski and Campbell reaching out to shake their hands as they rushed into the hospital room.

“I will never forget walking into Gary’s hospital room and seeing him on life support. Those images will never go away,” Julie DeVercelly said.

On March 30, as he was surrounded by his parents, brother and sister, Gary Jr. was taken off life support and was pronounced dead.

“I felt discombobulated and overcome with emotions. Unless you’ve lived this,



Courtesy of Julie DeVercelly

**Gary DeVercelly Jr.** died from alcohol poisoning on March 30, 2007 after a big/little hazing ritual in Lake House, the former home of Phi Kappa Tau.

you have no idea. There are no words for the pain,” said Julie DeVercelly.

### Rider’s reaction

The day following his death, Rider held a memorial service for Gary Jr. According to Julie DeVercelly, the chapel where the service was held was completely packed with over 500 people.

A plaque has since been placed in front of the Lake House, the former home of Phi Kappa Tau, to honor Gary Jr. and to remind students of the dangers of hazing.

Pam Brown, a retired professor of the Department of



## Rider announces merger of CLAS and WCA

By Sarah Siock

**P**ROVOST and Vice President of Academic Affairs Donnajean Fredeen announced the merger of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) and Westminster College of the Arts (WCA), at an all-faculty meeting on March 25, a move that she said will save the college \$500,000 annually as it attempts to combat a projected \$20 million deficit.

### A ‘top-down’ decision

Pending negotiations with Rider’s chapter of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), beginning July 1, CLAS and WCA will merge to form a new, single college called the College of Arts and Sciences. Current CLAS Dean, Kelly Bidle, was appointed dean of the College of Arts and Science and will lead the new college. Within the college, there will be four schools: Westminster Choir College (WCC), the School of Media and Performing Arts, the School of Humanities and Social Sciences and the School of Science, Technology and Mathematics.

When asked at the faculty meeting, Fredeen said the merger was made without faculty input and was a “top-down” decision, and added that the university’s hired consultant CREDO also played no direct role in the reorganization.

“As early as last summer when we began exploring options for restructuring the institution, we asked the question, given our size, does it make sense to have four distinct colleges? Quite honestly, the answer is no,” Fredeen said at the faculty

meeting. “I firmly believe that this merger will enhance our ability to provide a more integrative educational approach, creating opportunities for our students to realize the interconnections of knowledge and inquiry, and the humanities, social science, arts, mathematics, technology and science.”

### Union negotiations

Fredeen said the merger requires negotiations with the AAUP regarding the contractual language of the existence of CLAS and WCA. AAUP President Barbara Franz told The Rider News that until this language is negotiated the merger remains only a proposal.

“This is a top-down proposal designed by the administration without any faculty input, like the hiring of CREDO, the cuts in library funding and the idea of selling WCC,” said Franz, a political science professor.

At the meeting, Fredeen said she felt the merger would not affect students. However, Franz expressed concern over how the merger could impact students’ coursework.

“It seems clear to me that, if implemented, many students will face substantial changes to their curricula and especially their core course requirements. I assume the faculty will advocate for their students and vote against changes that will impose additional burdens on our students,” she said.



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### ON THE SIDELINES

Rider legend MyNesha McKenzie returns to Alumni Gym as an assistant coach on Lynn Milligan’s staff.

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### A PAPER OF RECORD

The Rider News receives multiple state and regional recognitions this awards season.

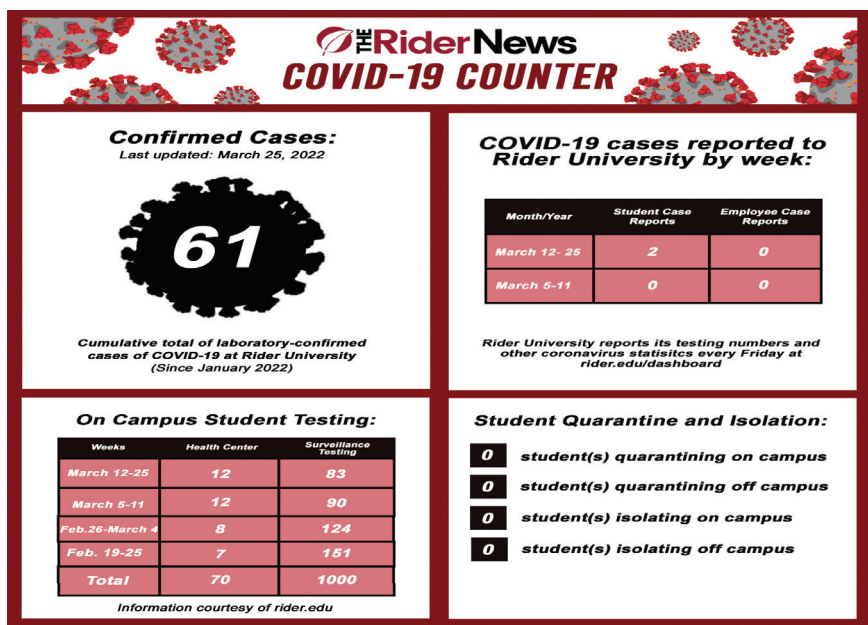
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### RIDER NEW WORKS

Rider hosts a festival featuring eight student-written plays performed by students.

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## CORRECTION

A March article published in The Rider News about the 2022 Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference (MAAC) men's and women's basketball tournament incorrectly stated the location of the tournament in 2003. That year the tournament was held in Trenton, New Jersey. The Rider News regrets the error.

A March 23 article about Rider wrestler Quinn Kinner stated the incorrect conference Rider competes in. Rider wrestling competes in the Mid-American Conference (MAC) whereas other Rider sports compete in the Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference (MAAC). The Rider News regrets this error.

# Communication professors question new placement of department

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Earlier this month, the current Dean of WCA, Marshall Onofrio, announced to WCA faculty, staff and students via email that he would be departing from Rider on June 3, due to taking part in the university's voluntary leave program. Those who partook in the voluntary leave program were offered financial incentives that are not normally in place.

Fredeen said the new college will include two associate deans: Brooke Hunter, the current CLAS associate dean, and Jason Vodicka, the current chair of WCC's Department of Music Education. Hunter will oversee the School of Humanities and Social Sciences and the School of Science, Technology and Mathematics, while Vodicka will head WCC and the School of Media and Performing Arts.

## Questions over reorganization

Professor of communications David Dewberry questioned the reasoning behind the Department of Communication, Journalism and Media being placed with performing arts instead of with the School of Humanities and Social Sciences.

Dewberry said, "If you look at anything any of us [faculty in the department] have written or published, it's social, scientific and humanities-based. It's not creative performance-type stuff. ... In terms of our research, it makes sense to be [with humanities and social sciences]."

The change in the structure of the colleges also brings questions about how the departments will interact with each other in the new schools. Professor Emerita Pamela Brown, who was the chair of the Department of Communication, Journalism and Media for six years, said she felt it made more logistical sense for the department to be lumped with social sciences.

"I think that there's a failure by the Provost's Office to understand the Department of Communications, Journalism and Media focuses on factual content, not entertainment content, not fictitious content and not creative storytelling. That's a significant difference between the kinds of majors that are in Communication, Journalism and Media and the kinds of majors that are in performing arts," said Brown, who retired in 2019.

In an email sent on March 28 to union members AAUP Chief Negotiator Jeffrey Halpern reiterated Franz's statement that the merger is not final until a contract negotiation takes place.

In the email, Halpern, a sociology professor, said, "The fact of the matter is that the proposed reorganization would alter numerous elements of the agreement ranging from promotion and tenure through all the elements of the shared governance of the university and cannot be implemented until we have come to agreement on all of those elements. Until that happens, the present agreement remains fully in force, and the timing and actual shape of any reorganization is yet to be determined."

# The underlying effects of brain trauma on college students

By Shaun Chornoboff

In the fall of 2019, her first semester as a college student, Bailey Adams was playing intramural flag football, a mostly non-contact sport she enjoyed playing with her new friends in college.

It was fun, carefree and harmless. Until it wasn't.

In the middle of a seemingly average game, Adams was the victim of a brutal collision with a much bigger opponent, leaving the sophomore environmental science major with a brain injury she still copes with two-and-a-half years later.

"There are some kids that they're out for a couple of days and they come back and they feel completely normal. But then there are other people like me, who is still feeling the effects years after," Adams said.

A study using data from the health center of the University of Colorado Boulder in 2019 found that one in every 75 college students sustains a concussion during their time in college, and in all years, non-varsity-sport-related concussions outnumbered varsity sport-related concussions.

Brain injuries can have a traumatic effect on college students, especially in the digital age when classwork and assignments are done almost exclusively on a computer.

Rider's Director of Student Accessibility and Support Services Barbara Blandford has guided plenty of students struggling with brain injuries and seen the stress that it brings.

"It's because [students] know how they did before having a concussion, so it's not a lost memory, especially if they were really good students," Blandford said. "It's much more difficult to be a good student because the time that one would need to put into studying, reading for example, whether it's on a screen or a book, would be very difficult to maintain after a concussion."

For Adams, the constant staring at computer and projector screens along with the mental stress of being a college student has been an uncontrolled detriment to her college experience.

Her sensitivity to screens caused her to take the

2020-2021 school year off. Even now that she is back in the classroom, Adams constantly has to take shortcuts she didn't have to before as a result of her injury.

"There are days where it's extremely difficult to just get by with my classwork because I'll have classes where I'm spending three hours just solely on the computer, and then I have to go back to my room and do homework immediately after," Adams said.

Unlike a sprained ankle or black eye, the effects of a concussion are invisible to the naked eye, and no one concussion is like another.

David Szuba is a freshman on Rider's wrestling team. At 6 feet, 2 inches and 285 pounds, he wrestled his way to a state championship in high school before starting his career at Rider. While he had his share of glory on the mat, he experienced one of his most heartbreaking losses off of it.

Jared Crippen was a teammate and good friend of Szuba's at Brick Memorial High School. Szuba described Crippen in a recent email to The Rider News as, "this burst of positive energy all of the time. The only time I really saw him down was after losing close wrestling matches."

In March 2019, Crippen sustained a concussion in a pre-season lacrosse game, and despite returning to action, Szuba said his friend was not his normal self.

"Off is really the only word I could use because it didn't seem like much other than just a normal concussion," Szuba said.

It was not a normal concussion. The mental stress had taken its toll and on April 23, 2019, five weeks after he first sustained the injury, Crippen shockingly took his own life.

"It didn't feel real for the longest time. I personally didn't believe it because nobody ever saw it coming," Szuba said.

Having to cope with her concussion, Adams has joined support groups on Facebook with other people dealing with issues similar to hers. She's had to skip countless events, struggled with anxiety, constant migraines and several other unseen challenges.

Despite this, she still finds herself having academic success, even achieving a 4.0 GPA in the fall semester, an accomplishment that holds more meaning than it did before her injury.

"It's honestly just trying to make the best out of it. You know, I can't change it, so I'm trying to learn from it" Adams said honestly. "I am more proud of how I had a 4.0 last semester. I'm more proud of that than I ever was at high school or before this happened, because I actually had to work for that."

Rider's Student Accessibility and Support Services can be reached at 609-895-5492 or by email at [accessibility@rider.edu](mailto:accessibility@rider.edu).

The Concussion Legacy Foundation has been supporting people affected by concussions since 2007. More information about the foundation can be found at [concussionfoundation.org](http://concussionfoundation.org).



Courtesy of Rider Athletics

David Szuba, a freshman on the Rider wrestling team, lost a friend in high school to suicide five weeks after he was concussed.

# Hazing policies strengthen after tragic death on campus



Courtesy of Julie DeVercelly

**Gary DeVercelly Jr.**, nicknamed “Cali” by his friend during freshman orientation, was well liked by students and staff on Rider’s campuses.

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Communication, Journalism and Media at Rider, was present during the time of grief and disbelief after his death.

“I’ve seen more than one tragic death of a student, and it always shakes you up — it always shakes the place up,” Brown said. “Rider is a very small, close place. This was one of those instances where you wish you could undo it. You wish it didn’t happen.”

After Gary Jr.’s death, Rider revoked PKT’s chapter.

Gary and Julie DeVercelly successfully sued Rider University and two administrators after their son’s death. In the lawsuit settlement, announced in 2019, Rider banned the use of alcohol at all Greek social events in residence halls and Greek houses on campus; strengthened punishments for hazing; and instituted a “Good Samaritan” policy, which encourages students to seek medical help without fear of punishment.

## What now?

The rules regarding alcohol inevitably tightened as Rider scrambled to recover its reputation after Gary DeVercelly Jr.’s death.

Being underage was no longer the only root of the issue involving alcohol on campus. A new policy was put in place stating that students 21 and older could consume alcohol in their living area, but it was prohibited anywhere beyond those premises.

The new policy also prohibited beer balls, kegs or any other containers of alcohol for group consumption.

Today, anyone who consumes alcohol excessively, regardless of age, will be reprimanded; this can include fines, parental notification, suspension or university dismissal, according to the 2020 Annual Security and Fire Safety Report.

With Rider’s four sororities housed on campus and three fraternities off-campus, hazing — specifically geared toward drinking — is still something the university continues to monitor.

In recent years, a fraternity by the name of Kappa Alpha Psi had been one to continuously abuse the rules against hazing.

Since 2018, the fraternity had three allegations against them including physical beatings and food and sleep deprivation, according to a university hazing statistics report. They are currently on suspension for three years, with a possible return date of Oct. 15, 2024.

Mike Langeveld, a junior finance major, is the president of Sigma Phi Epsilon (SigEp). In recent history, this off-campus fraternity has zero allegations of hazing, according to the university hazing report.

“We need to make sure history doesn’t repeat itself,” Langeveld said. “I’ve watched the documentary [“We Don’t Haze”] that was recently posted, and after seeing that, I was able to really see that the [fraternity] traditions just become more

and more dangerous, really. And that kind of just evolves into something where like, in Gary’s case, someone died. It’s important to stick to making sure that your members are safe and that you treat them with respect, because, in the end, it can turn out really bad.”

However, allegations of hazing were made against two out of the four sororities on campus, Phi Sigma Sigma in 2019 and Delta Phi Epsilon in 2020.

Phi Sigma Sigma was found not responsible for the accusations of bullying and seniority. However, Delta Phi Epsilon’s president took responsibility for the chapter’s wrongdoings including sleep deprivation and bullying toward new members. Delta Phi Epsilon was placed on a correction plan for one year, according to Rider’s hazing report.

Julie DeVercelly addressed the work toward eliminating hazing at Rider and said, “The numerous changes made to Greek Life and specifically fraternities, the ongoing education and awareness of hazing, and the implementation and enforcement of these changes have all made Rider a much safer campus.”

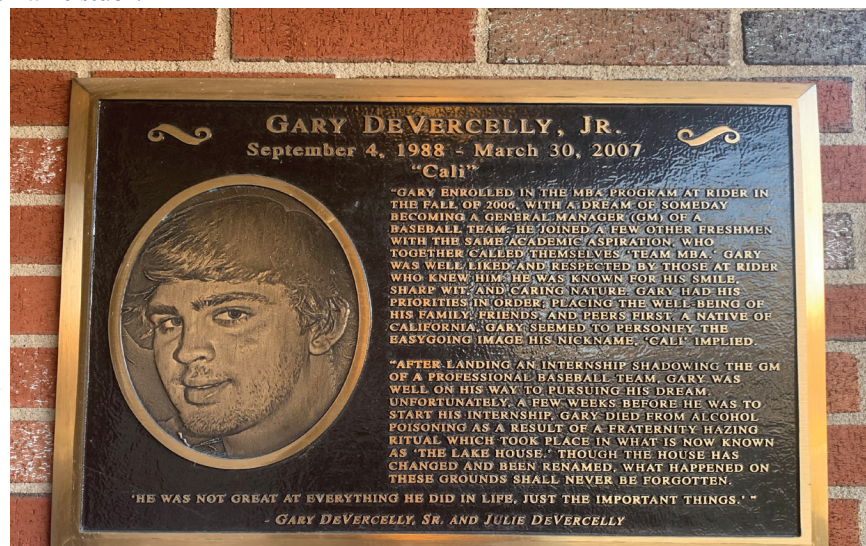
In regards to students who may feel they are in a position prone to hazing, Julie DeVercelly discourages hazing and motivates victims to, “Speak up and say something. If anyone requires you or someone you know to do something that is humiliating, degrading, abusive or endangering, speak up and say something. Chances are you are not alone. Walk away and get help before it’s too late. I know this is hard to do. To speak up and put yourself out there is scary. The possibility of not being ‘accepted’ is difficult. However, hazing in any form is not OK and should not be tolerated nor accepted. Who knows, you could be saving someone’s life, maybe even your own.”

## The continuing effort to stop hazing

The DeVercelly family has continued to work toward spreading awareness of the dangers of hazing.

On March 31, 2007, Rozanski established the Cali Scholarship to honor a senior student who best exemplifies the characteristics of Gary DeVercelly Jr..

“Cali” was a nickname given to Gary DeVercelly by fellow Rider student Ross Boehm when they met at freshman orientation, and according to Julie DeVercelly, the name stuck.



Olivia Nicoletti/The Rider News

A plaque placed outside of the Lake House honors Gary DeVercelly Jr. who lost his life in the building 15 years ago when it was housed by the Phi Kappa Tau fraternity.

The DeVercelly’s have met with lawmakers in Washington advocating for federal legislation to combat hazing and advocated in 2015 for a federal hazing awareness bill. Their work resulted in the creation of The Reach Act (Report and Educate About Campus Hazing), once passed, it would require universities to provide evidence-informed hazing prevention education, have a published policy on hazing and include hazing crime statistics in their annual security reports, according to Gary DeVercelly Sr.

The idea is to make all colleges and universities publicly report hazing incidents as part of their annual federally-mandated crime reports according to Julie DeVercelly.

“Rider is a much safer campus because of the changes made after Gary died. The REACH Act includes many of these changes. Had these been in place when Gary went away to college, he’d be alive today,” Julie DeVercelly said.

Both Gary and Julie DeVercelly hold a position on the Clery Center board, which helps colleges and universities regulate and implement effective safety standards.

They have partnered with the Clery Center and stophazing.org to develop an educational documentary, “We Don’t Haze” for universities and schools to use to teach about hazing.

According to Gary DeVercelly Sr., “You can view the film for free. In it, victims share personal stories about their experiences with hazing, viewers learn what hazing entails, why it’s a problem, and how they can achieve unity and team-building goals with positive alternatives to hazing. There are also free, downloadable, worksheets as companion pieces for the film.”

Gary and Julie DeVercelly continue to speak at high schools showcasing this film and are in the process of creating a six-part mini-documentary series called “Protect the House” that will reveal what goes on with the fraternities and how they truly affect their members, member’s families and communities.

Hazing affected more than just Gary DeVercelly Jr.; it uprooted his parents’ lives, and they continue to do their part in educating those who may be subjected to hazing.

Julie DeVercelly said her message today to Rider’s community is: “It’s been 15 years since Gary died from a fraternity hazing ritual. Thankfully Rider has not had another hazing tragedy. Please help us to keep this from ever happening again at Rider. Continue to be the model for other higher education institutions to follow on how to stop hazing. Let’s continue to work together to stop hazing.”



Courtesy of Julie DeVercelly

Remembering Gary DeVercelly, Jr.

The death of Gary DeVercelly Jr. changed many lives and impacted the way Greek life organizations function on Rider’s campus.

## State Supreme Court nominee holds discussion with students

By Amethyst Martinez

**R**ACHEL Wainer Apter, Director of the New Jersey Division of Civil Rights and New Jersey Supreme Court nominee, joined Rider students and faculty for an open discussion in the Rue Auditorium on March 24.

Apter came to Rider to talk about civil rights, a topic at the forefront of American politics and discussion. Micah Rasmussen, director of the Rebovich Institute for New Jersey Politics, organized and led the discussion. Andrew Bernstein, a junior political science major, introduced Apter, as he is currently interning at her office.

After graduating from Harvard Law School, Apter worked as a law clerk for former Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsberg, Judge Robert Katzmann on the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit and Judge Jed Rakoff on the United States District Court for the Southern District of New York.

Apter, now a New Jersey Supreme Court nominee by Gov. Phil Murphy, became the Director of the New Jersey Division of Civil Rights in 2018 after working as the Counsel to the Attorney General, advising on civil rights and immigration issues. Apter also worked for the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) on cases involving discrimination.

Rasmussen said, "One of the things I've noticed this semester and this year is that politically-minded students on campus are very interested in talking about civil rights and civil liberties. ... Rachel is on the front lines of that. She is the one whose office steps in when the state believes that somebody has been discriminated against."

Apter first discussed her career in civil rights, as well as law clerking with judges like Bader Ginsberg.

"[Bader Ginsberg] was a really wonderful mentor and support and source of inspiration for many years," said Apter. "She took words very seriously. ... Justice Ginsberg really believed in the power of language."

She also continued to talk about her working experience for the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) for five months, and why she left after such a short period of time.

"I met with [Attorney General Gurbir Grewal] and he said, 'I would like you to come on and figure out how civil rights work should work in New Jersey.' And so I thought that was an incredible opportunity that I could not say no to. I ended up leaving the ACLU after five months, and it was very sad because it was a wonderful experience," said Apter.

Apter also explained how the New Jersey Division of Civil Rights functions and what kind of work her team does.

"The division is an administrative body where people who feel that they have been the victim of discrimination or bias-based harassment, either in employment, housing or public accommodations, can file individual complaints, so they don't need a lawyer. ... We have a team of neutral investigators who investigate cases, and if we conclude at the end of the investigation that we think discrimination did occur, then we will prosecute the violation, either in court or in the Office of Administrative Law," said Apter. The division also can reach settlements.

After Apter offered background information about her career and the work she does, students and faculty were able to ask questions in an open discussion.

Rowan Mickley, freshman elementary education major, asked multiple questions about civil rights to Apter.

"I felt like she was really helpful in addressing what I had to say," said Mickley.

The discussion led to a more in-depth look at civil rights laws in New Jersey.

Apter said, "I think it's very important for there to be strong enforcement of civil rights laws both on a federal and state level. But, as I mentioned, New Jersey law is much more protective than federal law on a whole host of different issues."

Wrapping up the conversation, Apter spoke about her nomination for the New Jersey Supreme Court.

"If I were lucky enough to be confirmed — I am 41 now, I will be turning 42 at some point soon — I would have many years to be able to serve the people of New Jersey, and I would feel incredibly grateful for that," said Apter.

Bernstein said, "Rachel Wainer Apter was so important for students to hear from because she's talking about something that affects the lives of everybody, of students from all backgrounds, and her expertise is unparalleled. ... She's a brilliant legal mind. To hear from her about what is being done [about] civil rights in New Jersey and what can still be done is, I think, a really impactful discussion for a lot of students. It touches upon something that is meaningful to people's lives."



Amethyst Martinez/The Rider News

Rachel Wainer Apter, director of the New Jersey Division of Civil Rights and New Jersey Supreme Court nominee, conducting an open discussion at Rider University.

## Rider student runs for Mount Laurel School Board

By Amethyst Martinez

**H**EAVILY involved with his minor in political science, Anthony Corbi, a Rider junior sports media major, is running for Mount Laurel School Board this upcoming election.

Corbi, a former student in Mount Laurel's school district, is hoping for a spot in one of three open seats.

If he wins, Corbi aims to alleviate the mental health crisis among many schools in the district after the COVID-19 pandemic.

"I used to be a student in the district, and I know that there was very little attention to mental health. ... There were a few people that I knew who dealt with mental health issues, and they couldn't get the help they needed," said Corbi.

In his campaign video, Corbi explained that the school district doesn't have enough guidance counselors for the number of students in alignment with the state average.

According to the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) for the 2018-2019 school year, New Jersey assigned 358 students per counselor. The ASCA recommends a 250-to-1 ratio.

However, Mount Laurel's ratio is worse according to Corbi. "[For] Harrington Middle School, they only have two guidance counselors, and there are over 900 students. So it's about 482 students to every one guidance counselor. ... The upper elementary school [has] 467 students [to] every one guidance counselor," said Corbi.

Corbi started creating his campaign in May of 2020, where he began doing preliminary action for the election. One person he sought advice from was Micah Rasmussen, a professor at Rider and the director of the Rebovich Institute for New Jersey Politics.

"One of the things I say to all of my students in intro class is you probably will never run for office: but if you do, I want you to come and sit down with me because we can work out a strategy by which you can win any election," Rasmussen said. "He's the first student who ever took me up on that."

Corbi is now determining how to do effective voter outreach to the residents who will vote for the school board.

"It's a huge election," explained Rasmussen. According to the United States Census Bureau in 2020, there were 44,633 residents in Mount Laurel Township.

One of Corbi's plans is to reach residents by sending letters, with three volunteers to help with writing them. Corbi said, "We're going to start writing

more and more letters fairly soon."

Overall, Corbi hopes to win and positively impact the school district he once was a part of only a few years ago.

"I'm running to address mental health and make the school board more reflective of what Mount Laurel as a whole believes should be the case in our schools," said Corbi.

The election is on Nov. 8, and more information on Corbi's election can be found on his campaign website, corbi2022.com.



Photo courtesy of Anthony Corbi

Junior sports media major Anthony Corbi's logo for his campaign for Mount Laurel School Board's upcoming election.

ADVERTISEMENT

**April 7**

**ASIAN/ASIAN AMERICAN FACULTY COOK-IN FOR STUDENTS**

*5 to 7 p.m., Daly Dining Hall*

Let's kick off Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month by joining Rider's Asian/Asian American faculty as they lead students, faculty, and staff in a "Cook-in" of different Asian/Asian American cuisines. You can learn how to prepare these meals, alongside the professors, or you may simply want to enjoy feasting on these traditional Asian/Asian American dishes. There will be music and prizes, too!

*Sponsored by the Center for Diversity and Inclusion, the School of Fine and Performing Arts, the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, the Norm Brodsky College of Business and Gourmet Dining, LLC*

**April 13**

**REAL TALK: ON BECOMING VISIBLE - ASIAN VOICES AND PRESENCE**

*6:30 to 8 p.m., Rue Auditorium (Sweigart 115)*

Asians are grouped into one category as if there is one Asian culture, when in fact there are 48 countries in Asia. Stereotypes, misunderstandings, and microaggressions abound, and overt anti-Asian acts have increased since the pandemic. Hear personal stories of assimilation, integration, and resilience from members of the Asian community who navigated the differences between their ethnic culture and the U.S. culture. Learn how allies can join their Asian friends' efforts to gain visibility and acceptance within diverse fields and professions. Discussions will include how to dismantle stereotypes such as the "model minority" and "perpetual foreigners" to promote an inclusive community.

*Sponsored by the Center for Diversity and Inclusion, the Department of Theater and Dance, the School of Fine and Performing Arts and the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences*

**April 14**

**THE TRAJECTORY OF KOREAN MUSIC**

*6:30 to 8 p.m., Rue Auditorium (Sweigart 115)*

Celebrating the Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage Month, Dr. Sangmi Kang, an Assistant Professor of Music Education, will give a lecture presentation on the trajectory of Korean Music. Musical pieces include 14th-century art music, 18th-century folk music, 20th-century contemporary music, familiar Western melodies played on Korean instruments, and K-pop music. Traditional Korean musical instruments of the gayageum (stringed instrument), haegeum (fiddle), tapyeongso (brass instrument), and janggu (hourglass drum) will be featured. Come and enjoy the ecstatic sounds of Korean music!

*Sponsored by the Center for Diversity and Inclusion and the Westminster Choir College*

**April 19**

**JAPANESE CALLIGRAPHY: ONE BRUSH STROKE; A MILLION IDEAS IN ACTION**

*7 to 8 p.m., Lynch Adler Hall 202*

In this seminar, participants will discuss how Japanese tradition and cultural practices in this collectivist society influence the process of creating arts. As the springboard for the discussion, the participants will be introduced to the design works of renowned Japanese stage designer, Mitsuru Ishii, whose international experiences enable him to fuse Japanese and Western aesthetics into harmonious and complex works. The participants will have a chance to try out Japanese calligraphy to have a deeper understanding of its metaphor and significance. Professor Yoshinori Tanokura will lead us in a "hands-on" experience.

*Sponsored by the Center for Diversity and Inclusion and the School of Fine and Performing Arts*

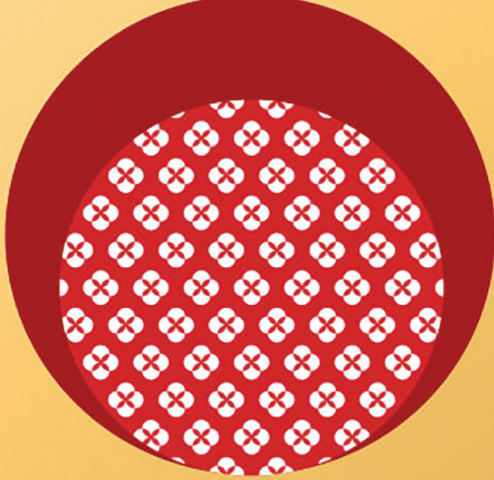
**April 29**

**CONCERT: CHINESE POETRY, MUSIC, AND PAINTING**

*12:30 to 2:30 p.m., Fine Arts 147*

For centuries the stunning and varied beauty of the Chinese landscape has inspired, and continues to inspire poets, painters, and musicians alike. This multimedia presentation brings together three art forms inspired by it: poetry, music, and painting. Westminster Conservatory faculty members Fang-Ting Liu (piano), Dezheng Ping (violin and er-hu) and Timothy Urban (voice) in collaboration with Dr. Shunzhu Wang of the Foreign Language and Literature Program of Rider University have prepared a panoply of poetry, both recited and sung, and instrumental music performed against a backdrop of projected images of historic paintings, calligraphy, and pictures of the landscape which inspired them. Featuring poems by some of China's most renowned poets of the Tang and Song Dynasties, (Su Shi, Li Bai, Wang Wei) as well as poets of the early 20th century (Xu Zhi Mo, Liu Ban Nong).

*Sponsored by the Westminster Conservatory, and the Department of Languages, Literatures & Cultures*



# ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH

— ADVANCING LEADERS THROUGH COLLABORATION —

**RIDER.EDU/ASIAN-HERITAGE-MONTH**

*Asian Pacific American Heritage Month is celebrated in May. At Rider, it is celebrated in April.*

## OTHER UPCOMING EVENTS

**April 7**  
**NO THROWAWAY KIDS: #150YEARSISENOUGH**  
*1:10 p.m., Rue Auditorium (Sweigart 115)*  
**Speaker: Ashanti Jones, New Jersey Institute for Social Justices**  
*Sponsored by Gender and Sexuality Studies*

**April 12**  
**INTERFAITH SEDER DINNER**  
*5 to 6:30 p.m., Mercer Room in Daly Dining Hall*  
*Sponsored by Hillel, Various Faith-based student clubs and The Julius and Dorothy Koppelman Holocaust | Resource Center of the Center for Diversity and Inclusion*

**April 20**  
**LAVENDER GRADUATION CEREMONY**  
*5 to 7 p.m., BLC Upper Patio*  
*Sponsored by SPECTRUM Pride Alliance*

**April 20**  
**IS THIS A DANGEROUS TIME TO KNOW YOUR RIGHTS?**  
*7 to 8:30 p.m., hybrid event*  
*In-person at the SRC Seminar Room or through Zoom*  
*Register in advance, rider.edu/know-your-rights*  
*Sponsored by the Center for Diversity and Inclusion and Stark & Stark - Attorneys at Law*

**April 21**  
**THE KOPPELMAN SCHOLAR SHOWCASE**  
*6:30 p.m., NJM Community Room in the Bart Luedeke Center*  
*Sponsored by The Julius and Dorothy Koppelman Holocaust | Resource Center of the Center for Diversity and Inclusion and the College of Education and Human Services*

**April 25**  
**MULTICULTURAL PRE-COMMENCEMENT: A RITE OF PASSAGE CEREMONY**  
*Pre-Gathering for Graduates | 5:30 p.m., Practice Gym*  
*Doors Open | 6:30 p.m., Alumni Gym*  
*Ceremony | 7 to 8:30 p.m., Alumni Gym*  
*Dessert Reception | 8:30 p.m., Alumni Gym*  
*Sponsored by the Center for Diversity*

**April 27**  
**THE NUMBERS ON MY PARENTS' ARMS**  
*6:30 to 8 p.m., hybrid event*  
*In-person at Rue Auditorium (Sweigart 115) or through Zoom*  
*Register in advance, rider.edu/jerry-bagel*  
**Speaker: Dr. Jerry Bagel, author**  
*Sponsored by The Julius and Dorothy Koppelman Holocaust | Resource Center of the Center for Diversity and Inclusion*

**April 28**  
**KENTE GRADUATION CEREMONY**  
*11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., Kaplan Plaza*  
*Sponsored by the Black Student Union and the Center for Diversity and Inclusion*



CENTER FOR DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION  
 Unity • Diversity = University

These events are partially funded by the mandatory student activity fee. Approved by Campus Life – 5/1/22

Amethyst Martinez/The Rider News



A funeral crasher talks badly about her dead husband in front of the attendees at a funeral in **Alisha Atkins'** play "The Perfect Eulogy."

# Students shine in peer written plays

By **Amethyst Martinez** and **Kaitlyn McCormick**

**T**HE lights of the Yvonne Theater spotlighted a multitude of talents this past weekend as Rider students put on their first in-person festival titled Rider New Works. The production featured a diverse and innovative collection of eight 10-minute plays, all student-written, ranging from a murderous prom date gone wild, an unexpected wedding love triangle and a dramatic, unexpected run-in with an ex-girlfriend, all of which garnered laughter, surprise and emotion from audience members.

While the COVID-19 pandemic brought the derailment of many students' college experiences, especially performing arts majors who were unable to practice their craft in person, Rider New Works was born from the need for innovative virtual collaboration.

Due to performances being held over Zoom, the performance rights to many plays were not being granted to college students to perform virtually, because playwrights not wanting their work streamed online.

Robin Shane, assistant professor of theater and the producer of New Works, came up with the concept of holding a new works festival at Rider in the form of short films. After a successful festival last year, they decided to hold it again, this time in person.

"We need to allow the students to have a place to express their voices and the things that they're thinking about," said Shane. "As we were deciding on the season for this year, I and a couple of colleagues convinced the rest of the department to do and to take a chance on doing another night of 10-minute plays. ... Some undergraduate institutions have student-produced plays, but they're very rarely supported in this way by the

department as part of the mainstage season."

Rider New Works has given students the unique opportunity to get involved with playwriting, costume design, stage production and more. Sophomore technical theater major Blake Gonzales said, "Every single thing is done by students except for the directing and the actual production."

Many students involved branched outside of the direct parameters of their major to exercise their creativity. Sophomore musical theater major Carly Walton was one of the many students behind the new plays being performed this weekend.

"It feels nice to be recognized for something other than performing. ... I'm really interested in a bunch of things," she said.

Walton's play, "The French Lesson" portrays conflicts pertaining to queer couples, specifically in regards to closeting in relationships.

"I wanted to get representation for gay women specifically," Walton said, citing the underrepresentation she typically sees in the media.

Gonzales wrote the play "Passed Connection," a story about a woman talking to a man at a bar, only to lead audience members to a twist ending revealing that he was her ex-boyfriend who died tragically and she was just envisioning him.

Gonzalez said, "This is the first-ever production that I've had where I wrote it and completed it and actually got to see it put up."

The festival also featured freshmen students, who normally are not allowed to audition for mainstage events. Liberty Ashe, a freshman acting major, had three roles in the production, including the role of a

mustache-clad, boisterous high school football coach with impeccable comedic timing, which ignited the audience with laughter throughout "A King's Choice" by senior English major Matt Zadera.

"I decided to audition for the show because I really wanted to get myself on stage again after the pandemic," Ashe said. "The entire process has been so freeing and creative."

Kyle Metzger and Rose Freeman were the guest directors of the Rider New Works festival.

Freeman, who directed the first half of the festival, said, "So many people were wearing multiple hats in this production, and that was something really exhilarating to see because it reflects a lot of what early-career or community-minded work has within the world."

Metzger directed the second half of the festival. "I love working with college students because they are always willing to try anything, and that's the most important thing about making art is to not be afraid to fail and take risks," said Metzger.

The Rider New Works festival represented unique collaborations between students, who were able to tell their own stories for the first time in person after the COVID-19 pandemic caused struggles for musical theater as a whole.

Nicole Duffy, sophomore musical theater major, said, "It feels really cool to be the first person to ever do these plays because who knows where they're going to go."

Kaitlyn McCormick/The Rider News



**Kate Harbison**, freshman dance performance major, lip-syns for the audience.

Amethyst Martinez/The Rider News



**Javier Santos Bentio**, a junior acting major, and freshman **Liberty Ashe**, an acting major, talk in a bar.

# Hypnotist puts students under a spell

By Tristan Leach

**E**XCITED students entered the room, whispering in anticipation as they took their seats. Suddenly loud music and an announcer's voice blared through the speaker. Music played as David Hall walked across the Cavalla Room floor. Cards Against Hypnosis was about to begin.

On March 26, the Student Entertainment Council welcomed Hall, a full-time hypnotist, who performs two popular shows. At the start of the show, he made sure to emphasize that hypnosis is a voluntary happening that people experience every day.

"It is all in your imagination," Hall told the audience. To demonstrate this Hall asked the audience to try two different small exercises to prove that it was really up to the people in the audience whether or not they wanted to be hypnotized. The exercises included focusing on your fingers until they touch and your arms moving independently while you focus on them.

After these two exercises, Hall chose 10 volunteers from the audience to be hypnotized. Hall made it clear that nobody would be embarrassed.

"I don't believe we need to embarrass people to have a good time," he told the audience and participants.

After the 10 were picked, they went through a hypnotic induction. This five-minute induction prepared the participants for what hypnosis would truly feel like and also allowed Hall to see if anyone had any lasting reservations about the experience. During the induction, Hall put the participants through several prompts, including relaxing on a beach in the Bahamas, trying to keep themselves warm in freezing temperatures, and eventually returning them to a state of deep sleep.

Hall said, "I got interested in this when I was in college and then I started studying it in college. After college, I went and got trained out in Las Vegas in stage hypnosis."

As the participants slept, Hall explained the

game, using cards in the style of the popular party game Cards Against Humanity, there would be a prompt, and then the audience would be able to choose between two outcomes.

"I was looking for a way of involving the audience, 'cause in the past, I used to do hypnosis shows where I would just pick the things on stage for people to do, and the audience would sit back and watch. So I was looking for a way to engage the audience, and I think this is a really fun way to allow the audience to be more excited and engaged," Hall said.

Some of the night's favorites included the participants being hypnotized to believe they were seeing their favorite celebrity or favorite animal. One student told Hall he saw a blue and white cat sitting in the third row.

He also convinced all of the participants that they had won a million dollars, and then told them there was a pickpocket amongst the spectators. Hall rushed the participants to hide their checks and then asked them if they happened to have a \$1 million check or not. The reactions of the participants had the audience members in fits of laughter.

As the night came to a close Hall brought the participants out of their hypnotic trance and then had each of them bow individually, as "they were the real stars of the show," Hall said.

Megyn Kukulka, a sophomore arts entertainment industries management major, said, "I attended the show because I attended a hypnosis show prior and I thought it was a lot of fun, so I wanted to go see it again."

Hall thanked the audience and participants for an amazing night, took his bow and the night ended. Excited students rushed to talk to their friends who volunteered to be hypnotized; others went to talk to Hall.

As students left the Cavalla Room there was excited chatter. Many expressed their hope to see Hall and his talents back again soon.



Tristan Leach/The Rider News

Participants were put into hypnotic induction to prepare them for the night's comedy sketches.



Tristan Leach/The Rider News

Life-sized cards allowed the audience to participate in the show and choose prompts.

# Sports media major wins intercollegiate award

By Zachary Klein

**S**EAN Harrington is the latest 107.7 The Bronc personality to win an award this academic year.

The senior sports media major won a 2022 Intercollegiate Broadcasting System Media Award in the best sports update category for his sports recap segment, "The Overtime."

According to John Mozes, station manager for 107.7 The Bronc, the Intercollegiate Broadcasting System Media Award is one of only two major awards given to colleges across the country.

"They're like the Golden Globes, while the Marconis are like the Oscars," Mozes said. "We were competing against schools like Temple University, University of Kansas and Auburn University, so definitely against some big names."

Harrington was ecstatic when he found out he won the award.

"Going into it, I was just really happy that I was even a finalist, and I was even joking around saying 'Oh yeah, I got this in the bag,'" he said. "But when I actually won everyone got really excited and it was just really awesome to get recognized for my work."

"We were all together that night and had a watch party for the radio station and we were all watching it on TV screens," Mozes said, "It's our first-ever nomination and win for The Retro, our online-only streaming station."

It has not been long since Harrington got involved with the station. He started during the spring semester of 2021 when he and his roommate were working for Mozes.

"I was put on a show called 'The Feinline' and worked with two other students where two guys would talk about their [sports] picks and bets for the upcoming weekend," Harrington said. "I took over for the other two students after they graduated last May and did it throughout the summer up until the start of the school year."

Justin Riebman, senior sports media major and sports director at 107.7 The Bronc, said that he met Harrington working on "The Feinline," which airs on ESPN stations across the country.

"We gave Sean the role of 'The Overtime' to correspond with his class schedule," Riebman said. "He was really nervous at first but as he kept on doing it and developing it, he just kept on getting better, reading ads, transitioning he really over time learned to have so much fun with it. Whenever Sean does anything he just has fun with it."

With many exciting sporting events happening over the last several months, including thrilling finishes in college football, college basketball, the NFL, the NHL and the NBA, there were lots of choices on which games to cover for a segment consisting of just a quick update. Harrington was able to pick out a clear favorite event that he recapped for the program, an exciting college football game that occurred in October 2021.

"The game I really liked recapping was the Michigan vs. Michigan State football game," Harrington said. "That was the same recap I used in the episode I won the award. The game was really back and forth and there was a lot of scoring and crazy statistics. It ended 37-33 with Michigan State winning."

A native of Ocean Township, New Jersey, Harrington said that he is a dedicated sports fan of the New York Jets, the New York Yankees and the New Jersey Devils. However, leaving biases behind is very important when on air, and Harrington said he does not let his allegiances affect him while doing the show.

"I only talk about those teams when something relevant in the news comes out about them," he said.

One of the most interesting parts of hosting any radio show consists of having the freedom to say whatever someone wants while on air, within reason. Harrington said that this is indeed his favorite part of doing "The Overtime" because of his ability to take the

content in whatever way he sees fit.

"Whenever I do my show, I try to be informative with what news is discussed, but I also want to be entertaining," he said. "I believe if people are entertained by what you have to say, you gain credibility from people, and they will be more likely to listen to what you have to say."

Harrington was one of six students to be nominated for an Intercollegiate Broadcasting System Media Award at The Bronc. Other categories nominated include best use of social media, best station ID, best promo series, best giveaway and best station contest/promotional event. Harrington was the only student lucky enough to take home an award.

"I am very proud of Sean's win, especially under my direction as sports director, and it was a great night to see him win," Riebman said.

"I think he had all the elements that go in a good sports report – actualities, personality – but you still just never know how the judges are going to win," Mozes said. "I think overall, they thought the same way we did and he ended up taking the prize."

Harrington is now hosting a segment called "The Best Damn Sports Report" on the main FM station.

*Logan VanDine is a copy editor for the Rider News and works for 107.7 The Bronc. VanDine had no part in the editing of this story.*



Photo courtesy of 107.7 The Bronc

Sean Harrington won for his show "The Overtime."

# Reflecting on an award winning year

**A**T The Rider News, the staff is dedicated to producing trustworthy news for the Rider community. As an independent student-run publication, the staff understands the great responsibility of keeping the student body informed and shedding a light on issues the university faces.

Editors at The Rider News work tirelessly each week to produce a paper that we take great pride in. Putting together the paper every Wednesday is no easy task, and every person on the staff plays a crucial role in the process. Section editors' lives are consumed on Monday and Tuesday evenings, as the job requires intense attention to detail and diligent fact-checking. Every story is written with intention from an impartial standpoint and carefully reviewed by editors before being published.

Students choose to work for the paper while taking a full course load because they are dedicated and have a passion for journalism. Being a student journalist comes with a responsibility for integrity that is not only instilled in the journalism and media programs at the university but taken seriously by each writer and editor at The Rider News.

Most recently The Rider News' hard work was recognized by state and regional competitions. Collectively, the paper won eight awards from the Society of Professional Journalists (SPJ) and the New Jersey Press Foundation (NJPF). These awards were given to news and video stories that explored important topics such as accessibility on campus and student wages.

These awards speak to the care and effort put forward by the staff. Without a staff of editors and reporters who strive for accuracy and quality, these awards would not have been possible. We do not aim to just write articles; The Rider

News asks tough questions, searches for multiple sources and strives for credibility.

The stories published in The Rider News — whether news, sports, opinion or features and entertainment — give an authentic account of the university.

Rider as a whole is at a pivotal and transitional point in its storied history. The entire staff at The Rider News recognizes the crucial role it has in communicating these often complex topics to the community.

As a paper of record, we strive each and every week to produce content that is well-done and engaging, but most importantly, informs the Rider community of the current state of the university.

The NJPF and SPJ noticed the paper's reputable work when recognizing The Rider News with a plethora of awards, including a third-place award for general excellence, in which the judges commended the paper for its efforts across all sections.

For more than 90 years, a standard of accurate and truthful reporting has been essential to the success and recognition the newspaper brings to Rider. This is a standard the current staff continues to uphold with each issue distributed to the university.

*This editorial expresses the unanimous opinion of The Rider News Editorial Board. This week's editorial was written by Executive Editor Sarah Siock and Managing Editor Shaun Chornobroff*

*Sarah Siock*  
*Shaun Chornobroff*



Olivia Nicoletti/ The Rider News

Members of The Rider News staff.



Adrienne Unfreed/ The Rider News

## THE Rider News

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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](mailto: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](mailto:ridernews@rider.edu).

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## SOPHOMORE SIGHTINGS

## Abortion restrictions on the rise: a scary time in America

LESS than a year following Texas's enactment of Senate Bill 8, also known as the Texas Heartbeat Act, one of the most restrictive abortion laws in the country, other states throughout the nation have been pushing legislation that directly challenges abortion rights in America — a progression that will be detrimental to the health of pregnant people nationwide if successful.

In the spirit of SB8, lawmakers in Idaho passed legislation this month that would severely hinder the rights to abortion in the state. Senate Bill 1309 allows for a select group of relatives of a “preborn child” to sue an abortion provider, starting from \$20,000. This group includes the “female upon whom an abortion has been attempted or performed,” as well as the father, grandparent, sibling, aunt or uncle of the “preborn child.”

The law enforces legal implications for procedures past the six-week marker, a time when the majority of people would not even know they were pregnant, and definitely not far enough along in gestation to warrant calling an embryo not viable outside the womb a “preborn child.”

The financial motivation for relatives to sue can and will be devastating to abortion providers in the state, which in turn would be detrimental to people actively seeking a safe abortion.

This recent legislation out of Idaho is only one of many similar bills sweeping the country, testing the limits of accessibility in reproductive health care and relying on the initiative of public citizens. Take for example Oklahoma House Bill 4327, which, similar to SB8, would in short allow citizens to sue not only abortion providers but other citizens for helping one to get an abortion or even for having the intention to do so.

These state bills aren't even the greatest of threats to abortion rights in America, as the *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* case continues to be heard in the United States Supreme Court — a case that, depending on the verdict, directly challenges the precedent set by *Roe v. Wade* in 1973. This case questions the constitutionality of abortions on a broader spectrum and serves to set a new precedent banning abortions after the 15-week mark.

Consistent threats to abortion access in the United States don't come as a surprise, but as state legislatures grow creative in finding loopholes for these restrictions, like allowing private citizens to sue those seeking or providing abortions depending on state, more and more women and childbearing people are put in danger. In instances like Texas's SB8, which the Supreme Court upheld, abortions in the state dropped by 60% within the first month of the enactment, according to the Texas Health and Human Services Commission, but that does not mean the procedure isn't still being sought after.

No matter how many laws, policies and petitions pro-life legislators and supporters in these more conservative states put forth, the need for abortion will persist. Enacting highly restrictive legislation is not a comprehensive or compelling way to solve what many claim to be a concern for life, especially when these conversations often lack commitments to existing human life.

Abortion is health care. It is health care in and of itself, outside of the exceptions to the stigma involved in cases of incest or rape. It is illogical that anyone opposed to the medical procedure enough to sue or pass devastating legislation to hinder its use has a sincere interest in protecting life if they are not equally as loud, if not louder, about topics like enforcing safe-sex education, access to contraceptives, affordable child care and reliable parental leave.

More often than not, these laws and the rhetoric of the majority that support them have an off-putting tendency to read less like a genuine and respectable concern for life, rather as a way to feel righteous in the face of others' personal, private and difficult decisions.

Kaitlyn McCormick  
sophomore journalism major  
and The Rider News Opinion Editor



Courtesy of Cagle Cartoons

## A LETTER TO THE EDITOR

## Balancing the budget: the need for a new crisis management approach

As a Rider graduate and an adjunct, I must address some of the solutions that are being discussed to reduce the deficit. I am a nonprofit, public policy and capacity-building professional who manages crises. I have successfully spearheaded five transitions and organizational restructures during circumstances that closely mirror the one the university is navigating. Thus, I understand many of the challenges that Rider is facing. However, some of the proposals that are moving forward will impede the basic functions of a university and must be reversed. Cutting the library budget by \$300,000 and eliminating subscriptions to current academic journals will deny students and faculty access to rudimentary materials that should be a given in an academic setting. Therefore, I want to share some crisis management strategies that I have found effective.

It is essential to identify strategic objectives that increase efficiency, build the capacity to carry out the work of the university at all levels and prepare for the future. The three key strategic objectives at this moment are increasing revenue, increasing the prestige and visibility of the university and reducing debt and unnecessary costs. This requires triaging priorities and establishing short-term and long-term remediation strategies. Many of the current solutions appear to only focus on cost-cutting measures that do not consider their impact on the integrity or functions of the university.

Problem-solving strategies must be co-developed with a team of varied stakeholders. In this case, this would include a combination of faculty from each department, staff who provide support services for students, and different administrative departments who would ensure that there is sufficient manpower and funding to support problem-solving strategies. Without collective engagement, every suggestion will be met with suspicion and resistance because the solutions will not be viewed as aligned with the direct work of the university or will appear to compromise academic integrity.

Co-creating solutions does not mean administrators and consultants identify areas to slash and departments then provide input on how to operationalize their decisions. Instead, priorities should be driven by those who best understand the university's work. Correspondingly, the faculty and student services staff are most suited to identify student needs and research priorities. The fiscal, development, marketing and compliance departments should then strategize on how to pay for, publicize and operationalize the jointly identified solutions while balancing the administrative functions of the university like paying the bills, managing the facilities, human resources, health insurance, etc. This type of collaboration does not appear to be happening.

A useful starting point for triaging priorities that can seem counterintuitive is to begin by asking all stakeholders, “If money was not a consideration, what would be needed to increase revenue and increase the prestige and visibility of the university?” Based on the financial reality, course corrections are then developed and strategic priorities that build toward the optimal organizational structure are

identified. Input from everyone with a touchpoint to a shared strategy or function (i.e., faculty, student services, fiscal, fundraising, etc.) should be incorporated into the final implementation plan that includes short-term priorities, mid-range strategies and long-term growth objectives.

In mission-driven organizations like Rider, the recovery process must also be driven by a common set of values since faculty, staff and students are driven by the institutional mission. A shared ethos also helps to guide decision-making during conversations that can, inevitably, become emotional and conflictive if people don't feel respected, informed or heard.

Crisis management at a nonprofit university cannot be undertaken in the same manner as a for-profit business. The economic principles that guide universities are different from those of for-profit institutions because they are not exclusively driven by supply and demand. Rider has a hybrid funding stream that relies on tuition, grants, donations and legislative appropriations. Unlike a for-profit where you can just make cuts, the needs and wishes of the donors must be complied with.

The Board of Trustees and the university's leadership have a duty of care that they are obligated to carry out. It's not too late to re-examine your existing approach to problem-solving. Organizational systems and processes must always support the work of an institution instead of the reverse. Prioritize balancing the needs of students with the sustainability and reputation of the university by adopting a new strategy.

**Note:** The term “administrative” refers to employees whose work provides benefits across all the functions of the university and cannot be attributed exclusively to one department. It includes the worker bees who make the university function, pay the bills, carry out the fundraising, implement public relations strategies, etc. I am not suggesting increasing the salaries of the VPs or hiring more VPs.

“Capacity” refers to ensuring that everyone has the resources and systems support they need to carry out their work.

Paulina Goldman,  
political science adjunct

## TRACK &amp; FIELD

# Rider track dominates, both men's and women's place first at home meet

By Logan VanDine

**A**t the Michael P. Brady Track, both Rider's men's and women's track teams dominated their opponents, as they won the Rider five-way meet on March 26.

"We had a really nice day with both teams getting the win. It is important for us as a program to win meets and this is a big step toward us continuing to build a championship program," Head Coach Bob Hamer said.

On the men's side, the team scored a total of 289 points, handily taking first place while the second place team, Saint Joseph's, was nowhere close with 117 points.

One of the events that the men won was the 400-meter dash, as two of the top three placed finishers were seniors Jerome Boyer in first place with a time of 48.39 seconds and James Green placing third with a time of 48.78 seconds.

In other preliminary events, junior Marques

Merriweather had an impressive showing, winning the men's hurdles with a time of 14.76 seconds.

"Boyer winning the 400 meters in 48.39 and Merriweather winning the hurdles in 14.76 were nice races for both of them, especially since they were able to get the IC4A mark in those events," Hamer said.

"It felt good, good little PR for outdoor, happy to be here to be honest it's a real blessing," said Boyer, "I'm happy to run hard and do what we get to do."



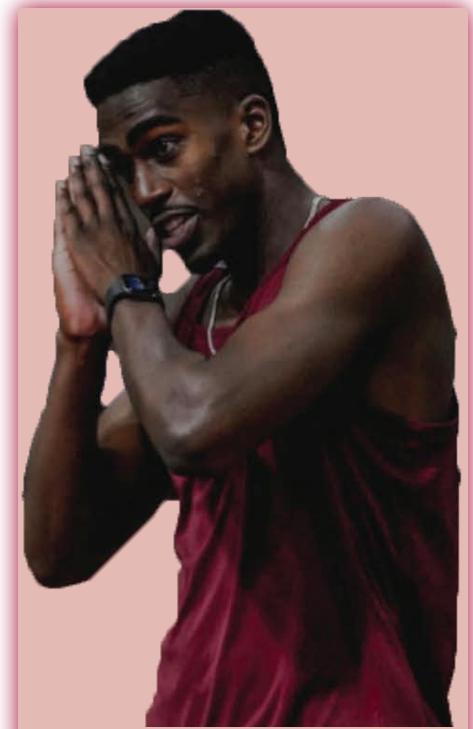
Dylan Manfre/The Rider News

**James  
Green**  
Sprinter



Dylan Manfre/The Rider News

**Jerome  
Boyer**  
Sprinter



Courtesy of Marques Merriweather

**Marques  
Merriweather**  
Hurdles/jumps

## Women's track racks up 245 points en route to first place finish

The women also had a dominant showing, notching 245 points placing first over Sacred Heart who scored only 160 finishing second.

Senior Genesis Walker placed second in the 200-meter dash with a time of 25.94 seconds.

In the triple jump, freshman Mariah Stephens had an impressive showing in that event placing second overall with a score of 12.08 meters.

Stephens added on to her already great day as she

placed first in the women's 100-meter hurdles with a time of 14.53 seconds.

"Mariah Stephens had a big day picking up where she left off during the indoor season. Both were PRs and the triple jump was an ECAC qualifier," said Hamer.

The women also placed first overall in the 800-meter dash thanks to senior Teagan Schein-Becker, as she won that event by 14 seconds with a time of 2:24.47.

Schein-Becker also talked about her first place finish.

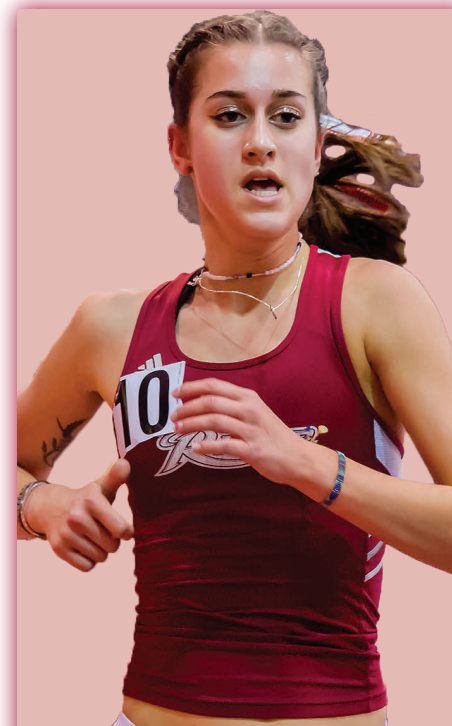
"I've worked really hard to get where I am and that was actually my first outdoor season in three years because I've been dealing with injuries so it was really rewarding for me to finally get to where I need to," Schein-Becker said.

The Broncs will be heading to the Colonial Relays which are set to take place beginning March 31 in Williamsburg, Virginia.



Dylan Manfre/The Rider News

**Genesis  
Walker**  
Sprinter



Courtesy of Stockton Photo

**Teagan  
Schein-Becker**  
Distance



Courtesy of Stockton Photo

**Mariah  
Stephens**  
Hurdles/jumps

## WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

# MyNeshia McKenzie: from court to courtside

By Jake Tiger

**S**OME view MyNeshia McKenzie as the 10-year-old girl that dominated flag football leagues with her brothers in their hometown of Springfield, Pennsylvania. Some view her as arguably the greatest Lady Bronco to ever come through Alumni Gym. Some view her as a professional and a foreigner, accumulating knowledge and maturity through a shared love of basketball.

Currently, McKenzie is an assistant coach at Rider, her alma mater, completing the circuit of knowledge and elevating a new generation of young women.

McKenzie is many things, but above all, she is the quintessential Bronco.

*“She bleeds cranberry”- Head Coach Lynn Milligan*

**Unfamiliar territory**

Before McKenzie graduated from Rider in 2014, she made sure to leave an everlasting mark on Rider women's basketball. When her career was done, she finished first all-time in rebounding, third in scoring and first in games played, and formed an 'unbreakable' bond with Head Coach Lynn Milligan.

However, her time at Rider was over. She had to turn the page.

After receiving encouraging advice from Milligan, McKenzie decided to take her talents to Europe, getting a taste of life as a pro and life as a whole, as she found herself submerged in a melting pot of new cultures.

“Those were some of the best years of my life thus far ... being able to go over there and experience different cultures and different people,” said McKenzie. “I had people from Wisconsin, the West Coast, the South ... you add that in with our foreign players, it was really a great time.”

The Springfield native made stops in Portugal, Romania and Luxembourg over three seasons, earning All-Import and First Team All-League honors in Portugal and Romania.

McKenzie was living out her dream in Europe as a professional baller and student of life, but Luxembourg is 3,844 miles from Springfield, Pennsylvania.

If there's one thing McKenzie loves more than basketball, it's her family, the people that molded her into the person she ultimately became.

“MyNeshia likes to be in her comfort zone,” said Milligan.

After three years of living in a distant land and being away from her family, McKenzie knew one thing for certain: she needed to come home.

“The decision that really drove me home was wanting to see my little brother grow up ... At the time, he was finishing his high school [football career] and I hadn't seen him play. I had been away for so long with college and playing overseas,” said McKenzie. “Him and I are like yin and yang ... He's literally like my twin. I just wanted to be there for him, because I felt he had always been there for me.”

At the cost of her professional career in Europe, McKenzie was back home with her family, but content as she was, life without basketball simply wasn't cutting it.

“When I got back home, I actually got into personal banking. Yeah, it's weird ... somehow I ended up working at a bank,” said McKenzie.

McKenzie still felt an attachment to the game to which she devoted over a decade of her life, but at the same time, she knew her playing days were behind her. Luckily, she found a compromise.

“I remember [McKenzie] called me and was like, ‘Coach, I don't want to play anymore. I'm done. I think I want to coach,’” said Milligan.

With assistance from Milligan, McKenzie made her return to the hardwood, this time from the sideline. It marked a new, unfamiliar chapter of her life, but she could see the foreshadowing long before it began.

“I always saw coaching in my future. When I was in college, I found a different love from the game and I just couldn't let it go,” said McKenzie. “I knew at some point the ball was gonna stop dribbling for me, but I was gonna give back to a game that gave so many opportunities to me.”

Fortunately, for McKenzie, she wouldn't have to uproot herself, as her first two coaching jobs were in Philadelphia at Holy Family University and Saint Joseph's University.

“[Milligan] actually got me into those jobs through people she knew,” said McKenzie. “She has helped me through my entire coaching career. We never lost connection.”

With three seasons of coaching experience, McKenzie was well into her next chapter, but as fate would have it, her excursions into uncharted territory would again lead her back home.

“[Milligan] had called me and she was like, ‘Let's go to breakfast.’ Her and I have that type of

relationship ... so I didn't necessarily think anything of it,” said McKenzie. “We're eating, chatting about stuff, and finally she's like, ‘Listen, I want you to come back home. I need you at Rider.’”

**‘Rider is my home’**

“I think everything came full circle,” said Milligan. “I think it was inevitable that we were gonna find a way to get her back here ... because she bleeds cranberry.”

Despite a seven-year odyssey, McKenzie instantly assimilated back into the program in June 2021 as if she had never left at all.

“Rider is my home. I love everything about Rider,” said McKenzie. “It was comfort for me ... The transition back into this was seamless.”

In less than a year as an assistant coach for Rider women's basketball, McKenzie has carved out an invaluable niche in the coaching staff with her experiences as a Lady Bronco creating unique coaching opportunities.

“If you've been to any of our practices, I play. I'm big on telling you one thing and being able to show you as well,” said McKenzie. “Don't tell me you can't get rebounds. I've done it. Don't tell me you can't score. I've done it.”

Being 30 years old, relatively young for a coach, McKenzie also has an aptitude for bonding with her players on a deeper level.

Knowing how valuable her relationship was with Milligan during her playing days, McKenzie strives to recreate that bond with a new generation of Rider athletes, being more than just a basketball coach to them.

“I know exactly what they're going through ... being a young woman and trying to figure out what you are and what you wanna do with yourself,” said McKenzie. “The development of these young women is paramount to me. It's bigger than basketball for us always.”

McKenzie hopes to one day lead a group of young women as Milligan has, but only time will tell if that is in the plans for the ever-evolving McKenzie.

Until then, she is honed in on one of the very few achievements that have been able to elude her: the prestigious Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference Championship.

“When I was recruited here, the biggest thing was to hang banners and that's what I'm here to do,” said McKenzie. “I came back to my alma mater to hang a banner because that's what I set out to do 14 years ago, and I want to hang it with [Milligan].”



Courtesy of MyNeshia McKenzie

**Rider records:**

- First all-time in rebounding
- First all-time in games played
- Third all time in scoring



Carolo Pascale/The Rider News

Assistant Coach **MyNeshia McKenzie** had a prominent basketball career that has led to the sidelines on the Broncs coaching staff.

# Sports

INSIDE

**BOTH MEN'S AND WOMEN'S TRACK PLACE FIRST**  
*Men's and women's track both finished victorious in the Broncs' first home meet of the spring season.*


FIND THE STORY ON PAGE 10

Carolo Pascale/The Rider News



BASEBALL

## Broncs sweep Gaels in first weekend of MAAC play



### Rider Top Performers

Pitching		Hitting	
<b>Frank Doelling</b>	IP 5.0 ERA 3.60	<b>Luke Lesch</b>	AVG .333 (four RBIs against Iona)
<b>Kyle Smith</b>	IP 4.0 ERA 2.25	<b>John Volpe</b>	AVG .333 (Two doubles and one triple)
<b>Vincent Vitacco</b>	IP 6.0 ERA 1.50	<b>Alex Diamantis</b>	AVG .444 (First home run of season)
<b>Joe Papeo</b>	IP 8.0 ERA 1.13		

Graduate student **Vincent Vitacco** pitched six innings on March 27, registering a 1.50 ERA.

By **Luke Lombardi and Andrew Smolar**

**E**VERY team wants to come out of the gate hot when conference play starts, and the Rider Broncs did just that as they swept Iona from March 25-27.

The first game was the closest by far. It started as an intense pitching duel with no runs being scored entering the fifth inning.

That when the Broncs struck, as sophomore designated hitter Brian Skettini scored on an error. The joy continued for Rider as junior center fielder John Volpe scored on a passed ball and junior first baseman Luke Lesch hit in the third run making it 3-0 Broncs.

Only scoring one earned run and winning 3-1 was a unique experience for senior second baseman Jake Barbieri.

“It’s definitely a different way to win a game,” said Barbieri. “We capitalized on their mistakes. There’s a lot of different areas that go into winning a baseball game.”

Iona scored one run in the ninth, but it did not matter, as the game ended 3-1.

Graduate student pitcher Joe Papeo had a gem of a start as he pitched eight innings of no-run ball before allowing a runner on to start the ninth that scored.

Head Coach Barry Davis was skeptical about letting Papeo start the ninth but eventually gave in.

“Initially, we decided to go with [graduate student closer Cal] Stalzer right away, but then, you know, Joe

[Papeo] wanted to get the complete-game shutout,” said Davis. “He felt good, so I told him we’d go batter-to-batter and he threw one pitch and the kid got a hit so we took him out.”

The Broncs earned their second-consecutive win over Iona on March 26 with a resounding 15-3 victory.

Rider’s offense scored runs in six out of nine innings including four in the first and six in the seventh en route to the blowout victory.

It was a dominant game for junior infielder Volpe who went 3-5 batting with two RBIs, drew two walks and also had two stolen bases.

“Having a big game is just part of baseball, that game hits were just falling and our team has plenty of guys that can have huge games,” Volpe said.

Rider’s batters were especially patient as they drew an almost unheard-of 15 walks. After not drawing a single walk on March 25, Davis was encouraged by the patience despite a lack of strikes thrown by Iona’s pitchers.

“We always place an emphasis on patience,” said Davis. “Today Iona struggled throwing strikes but it happens. I’ve seen our guys do the exact thing over the years.”

Starter Frank Doelling pitched five innings of two-run ball. He then gave way to senior Kyle Smith who allowed just one run in the final four innings.

Rider completed the three-game sweep of the Gaels

on March 27 with a convincing 8-1 victory. Davis was pleased to have finished the weekend clean.

“We are happy to have finished the weekend with three wins,” said Davis. “It’s a good start to a challenging conference regular season. It will only get more difficult.”

Rider’s offense scored in each of the first four innings of the game and never looked back. Junior Socrates Bardatsos and senior Alex Diamantis led the way offensively with two RBIs apiece.

The pitching was once again dominant for Rider as they were all series long, finishing the three games allowing just five runs.

Graduate student Vincent Vitacco had a strong start on March 27, pitching six innings and allowing just one run. From there, he gave way to junior Dylan Heine and senior Danny Kirwin who finished the final three innings without giving up a run.

On March 30, the Broncs secured another victory against nonconference opponent Lehigh, winning 3-0. Junior pitcher Kenny Quijano registered three strikeouts across 6.1 innings and allowed four hits.

Stalzer also registered his team leading fifth save of the season in the victory. It was his fourth save in the last four times he’s been on the mound.

The Broncs will next face St. John’s in a three game series, with the first game taking place on April 1 at 3 p.m.