



Congressman Andy Kim hosts talk with Rider community

By **Tori Pender**

UNITED States Representative Democrat Andy Kim discussed an array of topics from mental health, gun safety and the Capitol riot that took place on Jan. 6, 2021, with the Rider community on April 11 at 6:30 p.m. in Lynch Adler Hall Room 202. The event was hosted by Micah Rasmussen, director of The Rebovich Institute for New Jersey Politics and Rider political science professor.

Kim became the first Asian and Korean-American member of Congress in 2019 and the current congressman of New Jersey's 3rd congressional district.

Rider President Gregory Dell'Omo said, "On behalf of the entire Rider community, we are honored to welcome Congressman Kim to our campus. ... I invited him to come speak with the Rebovich Institute and here he is tonight."

Opening remarks

Kim explained to the full room of Rider students and community members that his driving focus is a singular pursuit of making the greatest impact he can.

"Everything changed on Sept. 11 for me," said Kim.

Kim continued, "When I was in college, that was when Sept. 11 happened, ... If that day never happened, I would probably be a mediocre microbiologist right now."

For Kim, the attack made him rethink where he wanted to head in life, switching his major from biology to politics and international relations.

Kim said, "When I was walking around ground zero, I just remembered how angry I was, how upset I was. I realized I can't build a career and a trajectory just off of anger, just off of fear, just off of rage. That I know so many people in this country felt that day. So, what I chose as my singular question is that I want to dedicate my career to stop preventable deaths."

Kim has worked in Africa on Malaria prevention, as well as a national security adviser under President Barack Obama as the director of Iraq.

Community questions

One bill sponsored by Kim that stands out to him, is H.R.8, or the bipartisan background checks act of 2021, for universal background checks on guns.

"That one was really powerful. Never before on the House floor has a vote like this passed, for a bill to do that ... I remember most times when we are voting ... you vote and then you kinda just mingle around. For those of you trying to find a way to sleep you might turn on the C-Span vote counter, you know? And you see the votes up on there and see people just milling it out. That's normally what happens," said Kim.



Andrew Xon/The Rider News

United States Representative **Andy Kim** partook in a discussion on campus on April 11 in an event hosted by The Rebovich Institute for New Jersey Politics.

Kim continued, "This vote was different. Everyone was just standing there, staring up at the vote counter, waiting for that thing to get up to 218. 218 is our magic number. ... When that vote finally ticked up above the max number, it just erupted in applause."

Capitol insurrection

On Jan. 6, Kim was working at the United States Capitol. At the end of that day, Kim was photographed while picking up trash in the rotunda.

"I was just so heartbroken to see this room in that condition. I truly believe that the rotunda is the most beautiful room in this country. I love it so much, it's literally the center point of our democracy," said Kim.

Kim spent an hour and a half cleaning the rotunda, which he described as "instinctual."

In Kim's closing remarks, he left the audience with a question, "What is service? What does that apply to in our lives? Service isn't just a job, it's a way of life."

Lack of progress on Westminster lawsuits leaves plaintiff frustrated

By **Shaun Chornobroff**

AFTER appealing the court's decision to dismiss lawsuits filed against Rider over the Westminster Choir College's transition from Princeton to Rider's Lawrenceville campus, the Westminster Foundation, a group made up of alumni and faculty, is still awaiting a date for oral arguments more than two years later.

Two lawsuits were filed by the Westminster Foundation on behalf of Westminster Choir College (WCC) students and alumni, but in March 2020, the New Jersey Superior Court granted Rider's motion to dismiss them. Since then, the Westminster community has anxiously awaited the chance to present its argument to the appellate courts.

Constance Fee, president of the Westminster Foundation, said she is "flabbergasted" at the long delay for a court date.

"We are maintaining our position. ... It's frustrating not to have any news to share. I wish there was something, but we just wait," Fee said, disappointedly.

Rider's Associate Vice President for University Marketing and Communications Kristine Brown said the lawsuits "could continue for some time."

"Rather than litigating, which only serves to hurt Westminster Choir College's future success, we believe everyone's resources and energy would be better directed at rebuilding Westminster's enrollments, strengthening its reputation and encouraging the program synergies that are possible on the Lawrenceville campus," Brown said in an email to The Rider News.

As the wait for a conclusion on both Westminster lawsuits wages on, the Princeton campus that used to house WCC remains unsold. While the campus is not being marketed as for sale, according to Brown there are many parties interested in acquiring the campus.

"We won't speculate about a sale price, but we believe 23 acres of property in

Princeton is valuable," said Brown.

"Rider is taking many steps to solidify its financial position. Although those efforts are not predicated on selling the Princeton campus, sale of the property would be helpful not just for the sale proceeds, but to end the substantial expense the university incurs for basic operation and maintenance of that property," Brown said.

Rider Vice President of Finance and Chief Financial Officer Jim Hartman estimated that maintaining the Princeton campus costs the university \$1.2 million per year.

In addition to the lawsuits filed by the Westminster students and alumni, the school is also subject to a lawsuit from the Princeton Theological Seminary.

The seminary argues it has a beneficiary right toward the campus and accuses Rider of violating an agreement made between the university and the Princeton Theological Seminary when Rider acquired Westminster in 1992.

Brown said both the university and seminary have filed motions for summary judgment and the next step in the judicial process for the Princeton Theological Seminary lawsuit is oral arguments.

Rider recently announced it intends to make WCC a member of the school's new College of Arts and Sciences and Brown affirmed that WCC remains an important component of the new college.

Despite much controversy surrounding Westminster's assimilation onto the Lawrenceville campus, Fee remains hopeful the school will continue to carry itself into the Rider community.

"I hope it will; I can't say that I have confidence that it will, but I have hope, and we can't really count on anything going one way or another right now," Fee said. "We just have to wait and see how things evolve."

INSIDE

THE NEWEST BRONC

Jack McFadden is a highly-touted high school basketball recruit coming to Rider in the fall.

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THE NEXT STEP

Westminster Choir College students are feeling hopeful about the newly announced college merger.

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SNEAKERHEADS

Students talk about their sneaker collection and the ups and downs of the shoe industry.

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Mandatory testing for unvaccinated students and employees ends

By Shaun Chornobroff

JUST over two years since the coronavirus pandemic touched down in the state of New Jersey, Rider made another step toward its return to normalcy by eliminating mandatory surveillance testing for unvaccinated students and employees on March 30, Rider's Vice President for Strategic Initiatives and Secretary to the Board, Debbie Stasolla, told The Rider News.

Stasolla, who is one of the leaders of Rider's COVID-19 implementation team cited the "relatively low number of cases this semester," the fact that vaccinated and boosted individuals can contract and spread the virus and the effectiveness of the surveillance testing as reasons for the change.

"I would say a large portion of the small number of positive cases that we discovered through our surveillance testing of unvaccinated students and employees, turned out they were indeed symptomatic. So we did not uncover a lot of asymptomatic positive cases that you might expect in an unvaccinated population," Stasolla said.

Rider only recorded four tests through its surveillance testing and 20 tests overall from April 2-8, according to the school's COVID-19 Dashboard which gets updated every Friday. The surveillance tests are from unvaccinated student-athletes who are still required to get tested, per NCAA regulations.


"If you're symptomatic, we're still asking that students get tested at the Student Health Center," Stasolla said. "We all have access, even more so now to at-home tests. Test yourself before coming to campus, class, work events, those kinds of things so we can help mitigate the spread [of COVID-19] between now and the end of the semester, so we can all try to get through the semester successfully."

Since March 26, the dashboard has recorded 26 cases at Rider and displayed 12 cases from April 2 to the 8.

This accounts for 30% of the 88 cases throughout the spring semester. The rise in positive cases coincides with a rise across the entire Northeast. However, Stasolla remains unworried since the cases the school has seen are mild.

"We've not seen severe illness, we've not had any hospitalizations," Stasolla said. "Frankly, I saw more illness in the fall, whether that was with strep or the flu, or other kinds of viral illnesses. I was aware of students being sicker in the fall as compared to what we're seeing with COVID."

Adrienne Unfreed/The Rider News



The Rider News COVID-19 COUNTER

Confirmed Cases:
Last updated: April 8 2022

88

Cumulative total of laboratory-confirmed cases of COVID-19 at Rider University (Since January 2022)

COVID-19 cases reported to Rider University by week:

Month/Year	Student Case Reports	Employee Case Reports
April 2-8	10	2
March 26- April 1	10	4

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

On Campus Student Testing:

Weeks	Health Center	Surveillance Testing
April 2-8	16	4
March 26-April 1	10	81
March 12-25	12	83
March 5-11	12	90
Total	96	1085

Information courtesy of rider.edu

Student Quarantine and Isolation:

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

- 2 student(s) quarantining on campus
- 2 student(s) quarantining off campus
- 3 student(s) isolating on campus
- 2 student(s) isolating off campus

Student government announces executive board election results

By Sarah Siock

AFTER five days of voting and a presidential race consisting of three candidates, Rider's Student Government Association (SGA) announced the results of its executive board elections on April 7. Next year's SGA will be led by junior political science major Andrew Bernstein as student body president.

Bernstein focused his presidential campaign on student-centered concerns such as mental health, diversity and inclusion, the Westminster Choir College transition and Greek Life.

Bernstein has an involved history with SGA serving as a senator, chair of the Academic Affairs Committee and most recently vice president of University Affairs.

In a message to students, faculty and staff Bernstein thanked his predecessor Elizabeth O'Hara and applauded the entire SGA for its work over the past year.

"Reflecting on this past academic year, I'm incredibly proud of the work that the Student Government Association has done to advocate on behalf of students. Our organization, led by Liz O'Hara, has continuously brought student voices to the table, whether that be by expanding access to free feminine hygiene products, the installation of lockers in the commuter lounge or the establishment of the 'Your Questions Answered' series to increase communication," said Bernstein. "As I transition into the role of Student Body President, I am beyond grateful for the confidence of the Rider student body. I hope to continue the example of tireless, committed leadership demonstrated by Liz."

In a statement to The Rider News, O'Hara reflected on her time as president.

"I am extremely fortunate to lead SGA alongside six incredible individuals. The SGA executive board does not always get the credit they deserve for the amount of time and energy they dedicate to serving the student body. Our roles require us to think deeply and maturely about university-wide decisions and determine how they will contribute to the longevity and health of our institution, which is



Andrew Xon/The Rider News

Andrew Bernstein, a junior political science major, will be the SGA president for the 2022-2023 school year.

not always easy," said O'Hara, a senior computer science major. "We've been pulled in many different directions this year but stood firm in standing up for students, our opinions not being swayed by those who seek to undermine the sense of community we value at Rider. I am proud of the commitment from students at all levels of our organization this year and even prouder of all we've been able to accomplish together."

O'Hara added that she could not think of someone more qualified or prepared to take on her role than Bernstein.

"[Bernstein] has proven himself to be an action-oriented leader in our organization, spearheading a variety of initiatives that positively impact physical spaces on campus, the well-being of our student

body and the quality of a Rider education. He is joined by a dynamic team of leaders that will take whatever comes their way head-on, and I am looking forward to seeing how they leave Rider off better than they found it," O'Hara said.

Bernstein will lead the student body with newly elected SGA Executive Vice President Riley Mozes, a junior health sciences major. The remaining executive board members for the 2022-2023 school year will be junior business data analytics major Noah Bernstein as vice president for administration and finance, junior marketing major Kayla Wagner as vice president for communications, sophomore political science major Naa'san Carr as vice president for class connections, sophomore political science major Maria Castillo as vice president for University Affairs and sophomore business economics major Joe Tufo as vice president for Student Affairs.

Throughout his campaign, Andrew Bernstein spoke on several initiatives he hoped to implement if elected, which included increasing intercultural competency in courses at Rider and advocating for collective housing for divine nine fraternities and sororities. Looking to the future, Andrew Bernstein said he aims to take a collective approach by listening to all voices.

"Our road ahead is never easy, but [SGA] will continue to prioritize student needs and goals, working collaboratively with all university stakeholders to enrich the student experience at Rider. Through my experience in SGA, our best accomplishments have always stemmed from the eagerness of students, faculty, staff and administration to work together in solving complex problems," said Andrew Bernstein. "And in reality, that's what makes Rider so special: the ability for all stakeholders to listen, understand and work with those who we share this collective university. So, as we look forward to a new academic year, I am truly excited for all the great things our student government will accomplish."



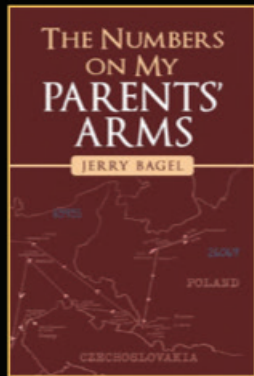
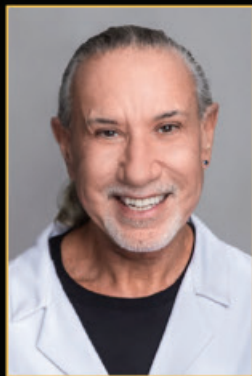
THE NUMBERS ON MY PARENTS' ARMS

HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE DAY

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 27 | 6 TO 8:30 P.M.

Hybrid event | In-person at Rue Auditorium (Sweigart 115) or through Zoom
Register in advance, rider.edu/jerry-bagel

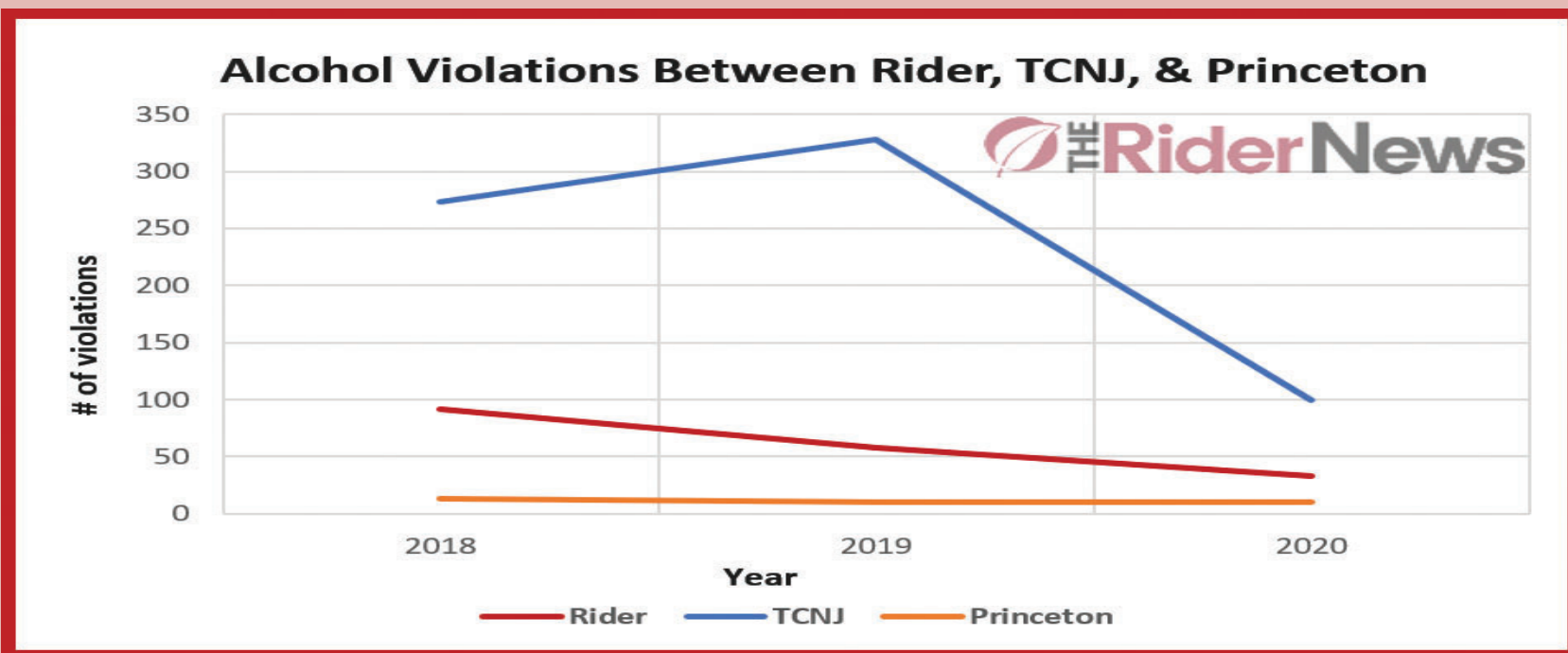
Join **Dr. Jerry Bagel**, nationally recognized physician and author, as he describes how his parents had both of their families completely slaughtered in the Holocaust. They survived malnutrition, typhus, sterilization techniques, and walking 15 miles barefoot in freezing snow. They survived like the phoenix bird to rebirth of a new family, success, and fulfillment.



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Information from Clery Report

Campus-wide dip in drug and liquor law violations succeeding pandemic

By Emily Kim and Carolo Pascale

THE 2020 Rider Annual Security and Fire Safety Report revealed a significant decline in drug and liquor law violations on the Lawrenceville campus with a 76.9% and 70.5% decrease respectively since the peak in 2017. Additionally, from 2018 to 2020, there was just over a 64% decrease in the number of alcohol violations.

Rider University, Princeton University and The College of New Jersey (TCNJ) reside within about 30 minutes of each other. Many students at each of the schools mingle with one another and share hang-out and party locations. As expected, at any college or university, alcohol is often involved, ultimately leading to added violations for students.

Although the student population and decrease in alcohol violations at Rider and TCNJ are similar, the numbers at TCNJ are still much higher than Rider. Between 2018 and 2020, TCNJ has seen a 63% decrease in alcohol violations, according to the U.S. Department of Education.

In comparison to Rider and TCNJ's data from 2018 to 2020, Princeton recorded a mere 13% decrease in alcohol violations, including a high of 13 cases during the same period.

Rider has been more receptive than both universities to lower the number of alcohol violations which are not only reported from on-campus residential facilities but also in non-campus buildings and public properties.

The student perspective

Senior healthcare management major and first-year community assistant (CA) in Olson Hall, Alyssa Miller said that in her experience, "there have been no drug law violations for either the fall or spring semester so far."

By comparison, in 2019, there were 13 on-campus drug law violations classified as disciplinary actions and/or judicial referrals. This statistic dropped drastically in 2020, as there were only three of the same type of violations.

Miller said she feels that the decline is potentially attributed to "the freedom to lift the restrictions on smoking cannabis for students ages 21 and over," since it "has allowed students to effectively participate in the use of the drug off-campus."

Although marijuana use has been legal in New Jersey since 2021, it is still prohibited on college campuses in the state. However, Miller argued that the legalization of marijuana has not affected Rider in terms of drug use and law violations in residential facilities and other on-campus areas.

Additionally, she said she doesn't feel it is essential for Rider to further implement its restrictions and limitations regarding on-campus recreational drug use as long as "there are no violations on campus or not many to raise suspicions." Her belief lies in the hope that "there will eventually be a way to allow cannabis on campus while maintaining a respectful environment."

Since 2012, the number of disciplinary actions and judicial referrals concerning drug law violations on the Lawrenceville campus have fluctuated from year to year, falling steadily from 2012 to 2016, from nine to two violations respectively, and rising

unpredictably to 13 violations in 2017.

Junior sociology major and first-year Community Assistant Niera Crawford lives and works in Wright Hall.

"I have not caught anybody in Wright doing drugs or anything of the sort," Crawford said. "I have, however, heard of cases in other buildings where students have engaged in drug activity on campus. There have been a few occurrences this semester alone, and I have been in buildings with other CAs when they have smelled marijuana and suspected drug use."

Crawford accredits the campus decrease in drug law violations to the coronavirus pandemic.

"I think, for a really long time, it was hard for students to get into groups or have access to drugs due to the quarantine and most people staying inside," she said.

Crawford, like Miller, does not believe that the legalization of marijuana has significantly impacted the campus safety data regarding drug law violations at Rider.

Since working in this position, she concluded that "most people who smoke or use cannabis had already been using it whether or not it was legal," and therefore feels that "Rider can further manage drug violations moving forward by having better inspections of residence halls."

Moreover, the Clery Act, "requires colleges and universities to report campus crime data, support victims of violence and publicly outline the policies and procedures they have put into place to improve campus safety."

Concerning liquor law violations on Rider's Lawrenceville campus saw a 70.5% decrease in the number of disciplinary actions and judicial referrals concerning liquor law violations since 2017.

Impact of COVID-19

Second-year Rider Pub Graduate Assistant MacKenzie Garrity said she feels that the effects of the pandemic are closely related to the decrease in liquor law violations.

"If we're considering the past year and a half, there have not been as many people on campus, but this year, it's kind of starting to go back up ... I honestly do think that the pandemic has something to do with it as well as a lower student population at the university," Garrity said. "There are more aspects of the CA and CD training that know how to actually deal with and talk to students about alcohol."

In her experience working at the pub, she said that "there are rarely students underage who come in and try and [either] purchase a drink." To her knowledge, the majority of students who violate the liquor laws and regulations at Rider participate in drinking behavior in residential facilities both on and off campus.

More off-campus options

She stated that another potential reason for the recent decrease in liquor consumption at Rider "could also just be the student population being a little smarter about what they are doing because there more people are starting to commute, so it's

easier to go off campus to peoples' houses" instead of drinking on campus with the potential risk of getting punished or fined.

According to the Rider's alcohol policy, alcohol-related incidents can be categorized as either tier one or tier two, and depending on its severity, "students may [also] be issued additional sanctions including, but not limited to, loss of housing and dismissal from the University."

Regarding an on-campus bar being accessible to students and faculty, Garrity said she believes that "if there wasn't that kind of space, there would be more violations depending on the residence life code; depending on which buildings you can have alcohol in and whether they want to create dry and wet spaces."

Because Rider is a private institution and the Pub holds a club license, both Rider Public Safety and the local police are expected to intervene when there is a liquor-related incident on campus. Ultimately, Garrity said that the Pub is "a liability just existing in one of the student centers," but the most important thing is "understanding and being very aware of the environment in there."

While there have not been any arrests for liquor law violations on Rider's Lawrenceville campus since 2015, with only one that year, there have been several instances of arrests for drug law violations with a high of 24 arrests in 2015, which translates to a significant 70.8% decrease in 2020 when seven arrests were reported.

Legal responsibilities

Rider Public Safety Director James Waldon said when it is necessary to contact the local police department whenever dealing with drug law violations.

"As long as it's under eight ounces, then we don't contact law enforcement. If it's over 8 ounces, we are still required to contact law enforcement," Waldon said.

Waldon commends Rider for its efforts to limit the number of alcohol violations on its campus.

"Rider does a lot of educational programming," Waldon said. "That's mainly done by the Office of Student Affairs. There are a number of programming initiatives that they do throughout the year."

Senior health sciences major, and second-year community assistant in Wright Hall Love Oluwadare commented on her views on the alcohol policy at Rider. She credits the decline to "the increased awareness of drinking and driving" and "further outreach and exposure on social media to reach the younger generation."

"It is a personal choice for people to drink responsibly," she said.

The decrease in alcohol violations at Rider typifies a trend going in the right direction. Looking ahead, Oluwadare said she feels that "the drug and alcohol regulations set on Rider's campus will continue to implement rules that enforce and emphasize student safety while also allowing students to enjoy themselves freely."

Rider welcomes springtime with fun-filled festivities

By Tristan Leach

As the sun began to set, groups of students gradually appeared on the Campus Mall. The air was thick with excitement as music started to play from the DJ booth perched on top of the small hill. Spring Fling 2022 was getting started.

On April 9, the Student Entertainment Council hosted Spring Fling. The event was one of great excitement as students and staff alike had been kept inside all week due to heavy rain. Though the grass squished with water from earlier that day, students ran to get their favorite carnival treat and free Rider merchandise.

This year's Spring Fling included food from Rider's Bronc Bites truck. During the event, the truck served corn dogs, chicken tenders, caramel apples and candied apples. Mister Softee was also featured at the event, which served ice cream with a variety of toppings. Students could also enjoy fried Oreos, cotton candy and pizza. Many students got one of each delicious treat or shared it with their friends.

Senior Emily Owens, a film and television major, said, "We got here right when it started. We wanted to beat the crowds, but so far it's really fun. The music is really good. I got my candied apple; I got my snacks and I'm getting more snacks."

While some enjoyed the free food and hanging out on the grass with their friends, others engaged in some friendly competition. Spring Fling featured several inflatable games for students. Amongst these were an obstacle course, a basketball game, bull riding and Knocker Balls, a game where students wore a giant padded ball around their

body and tried to knock out other opponents. Laughter rang out across the Campus Mall as students watched their friends.

Serenity Sanders, a senior psychology major, said, "I came to the festival, one for the free food and two, it sounded like a good time and I could hear the music from my room, so I figured why not pop out."

As the sky grew darker, the event — Hey DJ, Play This Song! — began. This event featured a bit of friendly competition. Two students would volunteer to come up and play a song based on the given category. Whoever won would remain at the booth until they were beaten by a new competitor. The winner of each round was picked by applause from the students and staff. Some categories included boy bands and crowd favorites.

As Hey DJ, Play That Song! ended, some students made their way over to the Resident Quad, where a giant inflatable movie screen was set up. The movie on the chilly spring night was "Spider-Man: No Way Home," a Marvel fan favorite. Before the movie, music videos and other short entertainment were shown. At the beginning of Spring Fling, goodie bags were given out for the movie. The bags featured a Rider beach towel, a Rider water bottle and some snacks for the film.

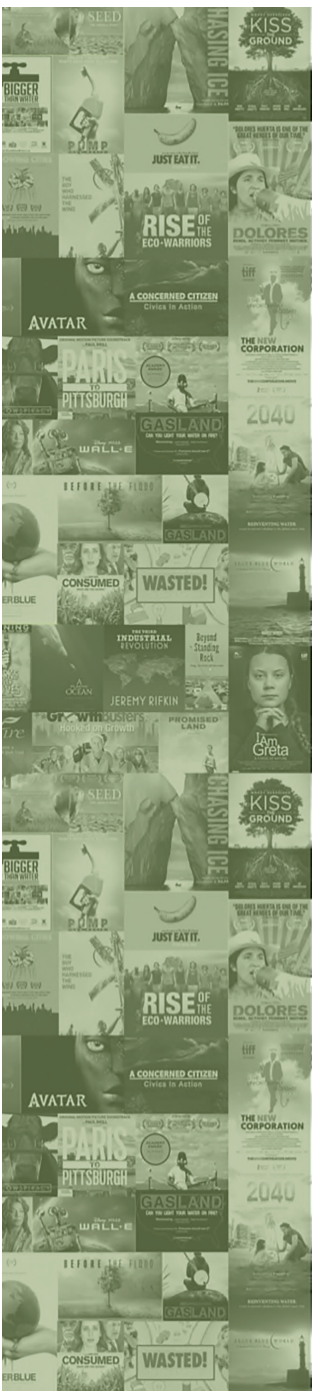
The night carried on with students leaving the event happily. With smiles on their faces, they talked about their favorite parts of the evening and expressed their hope for Spring Fling to return next school year.



Tristan Leach/The Rider News

Students enjoy sweet treats from the Mister Softee ice cream truck on campus.

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The Office of Sustainability Presents
2021-2022
Green Film Series

I Am Greta
A FORCE OF NATURE

Monday and Tuesday
April 18th + 19th

7 P.M. | RUE AUDITORIUM (SWEIGART HALL RM 115)

I Am Greta tells the story of teenage climate activist Greta Thunberg through compelling, never-before-seen footage in this intimate documentary from Swedish director Nathan Grossman. Starting with her one-person school strike for climate action outside the Swedish Parliament, Grossman follows Greta—a shy schoolgirl with Asperger's—in her rise to prominence, and her galvanizing global impact as she sparks school strikes around the world. The film culminates with her astonishing wind powered voyage across the Atlantic Ocean to speak at the UN Climate Action Summit in New York City.

Brief discussion following the film. Scan the QR Code for More Info!

BRONCS GO GREEN | RIDER UNIVERSITY



Tristan Leach/The Rider News

A group of friends eat cotton candy, fried Oreos and other delicious treats.

Arts & Entertainment

The rise and fall of sneaker collecting: sneakerh



Andrew Xon/The Rider News

Junior graphic design major **Jessika Schiffer** poses with some of her favorite Nike shoes.

By **Jeremy Hester**

THE shimmering red and black high-top Patent Bred Air Jordan 1s are currently senior sports media major **Lenaejha Evans'** favorite pair of sneakers. She owns 16 different pairs overall, with her collection consisting of Jordan 1s, 4s and 11s.

Junior graphic design major **Jessika Schiffer's** collection consists of Jordan 1s, Yeezys and several white Air Forces, "because I customize them," she said. Many of her hand-painted shoes are featured on her Instagram account *@j.s.customs_* with designs that include dragons, flowers, butterflies, Spider-Man and Kobe Bryant.

Evans and Schiffer are both sneakerheads: a subculture of people who collect and trade sneakers as a hobby.

"I like sneakers because I'm able to style them in different ways," Evans said. "I like the different colorways, designs, fabrics on the shoe and the details."

Schiffer said, "They can transform an outfit completely ... It's also one of the first things I notice about someone's outfit."

Origin of sneakerheads

The emergence of sneaker culture can be attributed to two major factors: Michael Jordan and hip-hop music.

In 1984, Jordan teamed up with Nike to release the first line of Air Jordan Brand sneakers. As an NBA rookie, Jordan wore a pair of red and black Nike Air Ships — a prototype of what would later become the Air Jordan 1 — to his sixth preseason game with the Chicago Bulls.

"I felt like I wanted to be different," Jordan recalled in a 2016 promotional video. "The league said, 'Well, we've gotta stop that.'"

David Stern, the NBA commissioner at the time, outlawed the sneakers for not having enough white on them. But Nike capitalized on this story by creating an ad campaign surrounding the rebellious nature of basketball superstar Jordan's banned sneakers.

Around the same time, rap culture began to popularize sneakers, turning them into a status symbol. Rapper LL Cool J wore a pair of Jordan 1s on the back cover of his 1985 debut album "Radio," and in May 1986, hip-hop group Run-DMC released the song "My

Adidas." Record scratches and a sparse, thumping beat are featured along with lyrics like "My Adidas and me, close as can be/We make a mean team, my Adidas and me." This song ultimately led to a sponsorship deal with the brand. The relationship between hip-hop and sneakers has persisted to this day, with rapper Kanye West's exclusive line of Yeezy sneakers being one of the most prominent modern examples.

Taking Ls

Purchasing sneakers has always been challenging. Sneaker companies like Nike and Adidas have a history of using artificial scarcity to build hype, meaning there are never actually enough shoes to go around. It wasn't uncommon for early sneakerheads to camp out in front of stores all night for a new pair. Riots, muggings and even murders have also been associated with sneaker culture since the first Air Jordans dropped. However, the digital age has created a completely new set of obstacles.

Although Nike's SNKRS app was originally designed to make it easier for sneakerheads to get their hands on new shoes through its raffle-like system, the app has become synonymous with disappointment.

"I don't know how I feel about [SNKRS] because I've never won," Schiffer said with a dry laugh.

Evans expressed a similar sentiment, saying, "I'm upset because I do it every time and every time I don't win, not once."

The app has been known to glitch during sneaker drops, with users experiencing anything from infinitely long loading screens to having to re-enter payment information multiple times. One Apple app store review called the app "the worst thing to happen to the sneaker community," while another said, "unless you have a bot to complete a transaction in less than a millisecond, don't even waste your time."

Evans and Schiffer also complained about bots — computer programs designed to buy sneakers in mass quantities, typically to resell at a higher price — while talking about their experiences with SNKRS. Schiffer pointed to bots as one of the biggest problems with the app, while Evans said that bots are unfair to those who genuinely want to buy the latest sneaker drop.

"You have people who don't even want the shoe, but they end up winning. It's like bro, you don't want that shoe," Evans said. "I think it's unfair, they have bots and stuff, and they allow these bots to get, like, 50 plus wins ... it's unfair to those who actually want it, because they're allowing these bots and resellers to just get the shoe and resell it for more."

One recent example of egregious bot usage can be found in the story of Oregon reseller **Joe Hebert**. Last year, many sneakerheads would've felt lucky to cop a single pair of the patchwork gray and white Yeezy Boost 350 Zynos. A then-19-year-old Hebert and his team purchased 600 pairs, despite the limit of one pair per customer, by using bots.

Hebert spent about \$132,000 on the shoes and resold them all the same day, flipping them for a \$20,000 profit, according to news coverage. In a Bloomberg article about his business, Hebert said, "if you know the right people, this is the city to sell shoes," referring to his hometown of Portland, Oregon, where Nike and Adidas base their U.S. operations.

However, the same Bloomberg article revealed that "the right people" included his mother, **Ann Hebert**. The 600 pairs of Yeezys were purchased with an American Express corporate card owned by Hebert's mother, who had served as the vice president and general manager of Nike North America for several years. Although Nike says there were no conflicts of interest, Ann Hebert resigned five days after the article was published. Joe Hebert is still reselling today, but many sneakerheads view him and resellers like him as a blight on the sneaker game.

Discussing resellers, Evans said, "That's their side hustle, that's how they make money. So that's cool, like, do you. But if you have people out here that really want shoes and they can't get them because they're like \$400, \$500, that just defeats everybody's purpose."

Inside a cook group

In sneakerhead slang, to "cook" means to buy. Cook groups are online sneaker-buying communities that use messaging apps like Discord or Slack to plan and coordinate their attacks, with most groups charging monthly membership fees.

Universal Cook is a Discord cook group that charges members \$15 a month for "monitors" that scan the internet and alert users the moment a new shoe gets released, access to auto-checkout bots, guides on how to resell sneakers and even potential backdoor sneaker sources that would allow members to buy sneakers at the retail price before they are available to the public.

Universal Cook members often brag online about their success with bots to each other. One member shared a picture of a huge tower of shoeboxes they'd obtained using bots, including 13 pairs of Black White Nike Dunks, three pairs of Vintage Green Nike Dunks, six pairs of Yeezy slides and a pair of yellow Retro Lightning Jordan 4s. Another member complained about how they "only got 10" pairs of black and purple Social Status Jordan 6s. One member was so confident that they'd be able to use bots to buy a pair of cream-colored Retro Air Jordan 3s that they sold them to StockX, a marketplace website, "before I even bought."

Groups like Universal Cook exemplify how sneaker culture has changed in recent years. What used to be a method of self-expression has turned into a high-value resale market focused solely on profit.

The future of sneakerheads?

Shoe companies are starting to realize that many sneakerheads are exasperated by the current state of sneaker culture. According to PowerPoint slides and other details from an internal meeting at Nike in October 2021 that was leaked to Complex, it was revealed that Nike only satisfied 7% of desired sales on the SNKRS app in that year, down from 13% in 2020 and 2019, and that disenfranchised customers are turning to "smaller, independent brands."

Although SNKRS Vice President **Ron Faris** said during the meeting that Nike does a great job of defending against bots despite what the public thinks, he also said that the company needs to do better for those who have been "gentrified out and alienated by the resale market," specifically the "Black and brown communities and Asian communities" that were essential in creating the sneakerhead subculture before it went mainstream.

The meeting ended with plans to build a more fair experience around sneaker launches and a promise to start listening more to the sneaker community as a whole. Discouraged collectors can only hope that Nike keeps their word and other brands follow suit.

Despite these frustrations, many sneakerheads still love the thrill of the chase.

"Sometimes the work to get them is fun," Evans said. "You look back at the adventure you went on ... and you just have to laugh because you did all that for a shoe."



Andrew Xon/The Rider News

Lenaejha Evans Air Force 1s sit on top of a tower of shoe boxes.

Head students struggle while shopping for shoes



Andrew Xon/The Rider News

Senior sports media major **Lenaejha Evans** is a fan of Air Jordans, a popular shoe made by Nike.



Andrew Xon/The Rider News

Senior sports media major **Lenaejha Evans** sits with her collection of sneakers, including Nike Dunk Lows, Yeezys, and Air Jordans.



Andrew Xon/The Rider News

Junior **Jessika Schiffer**, a graphic design major, is an avid collector of Nike shoes.

A promising move for Westminster Choir College

WHILE the merger of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) and Westminster College of the Arts (WCA) garnered mixed reactions from students, staff and faculty, this move, announced by Provost DonnaJean Fredeen on March 25, adds another chapter to the Westminster Choir College (WCC) students' transition to Lawrenceville from their Princeton campus — one that many are choosing to see as a step forward.

'Cautious optimism'

Marion Jacob, a second-year master's student studying choral composition as well as one of the co-creators of a petition sent by WCC students to the administration last semester, said that while she was initially unsure how to feel about the merger, she thinks that WCC students in general right now are feeling a lot of "cautious optimism."

"It seems like a move in the right direction, but can we trust that it's going to be a positive one?" Jacob said.

Senior music major Abigail Flanagan is also choosing to see this merge as a positive move.

"I feel like I've really witnessed a lot of turmoil with my school ... I think I'm hoping to see the dust kind of settle," Flanagan said.

Preserving the Westminster name

For WCC students, fighting the erasure of Westminster's name and legacy has been at the forefront of concerns, and the merging of colleges has, at the very least, kept the WCC name intact as its own college under the new College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) which will move forward officially in July.

Flanagan said that one of the greatest needs from WCC "really has been to maintain the identity that comes along with WCC and that type of community, and I think the WCA was sweeping a lot of that under the rug."

At a time when WCC students have already faced so much uncertainty and disappointment with the loss of the Princeton campus, keeping the authenticity of the college as its own entity is imperative to not only its success but also the morale of the students and alumni who are proud of making it through such a well-respected and well-known program.

Flanagan said, "[WCC] is something to be celebrated and it is a really important part of the music community and the choral community, and I think it's about time that they take their rightful place back in that community."

Counting on new leadership

The recent retirement of WCA Dean Marshall Onofrio has made room for a new leadership team, adding to the excitement about the merger.

CLAS Dean Kelly Bidle was appointed dean of the proposed CAS, along with two associate deans: Department of Music Education Chair, Jason Vodicka '03, '09, and current CLAS Associate Dean Brooke Hunter.

Jacob said that Bidle, Vodicka and Hunter attended a Westminster Choir rehearsal on April 9.

"For the first time, I just really felt like, 'Okay ... this is a wonderful thing. Here we have three deans who care deeply about the students and about what we do,'" Jacob said.

Following the tumultuous and hurtful loss of their Princeton campus and the struggle to find adequate space on Rider's Lawrenceville campus, the WCC community needs now more than ever an administrative support system that will truly be dedicated to not only hearing their needs and concerns but making necessary changes and solutions come to fruition as well.

Jacob said that the interest shown by the three deans thus far is "the kind of responsiveness and attention that especially the students of WCC have not had from upper administration in the last few years."

Bidle, who spent time at the Princeton campus teaching gen-ed science and Baccalaureate Honors Program courses before serving as CLAS dean, displayed a welcoming excitement in having WCC as a more affirmed presence on the Lawrenceville campus.

"I loved bringing science to those students the same way I love them bringing music to me and our students," Bidle said.

Bidle also expressed a commitment to not only making WCC students feel heard as a part of the Lawrenceville campus but maintaining the promises made to these students in terms of facilities.

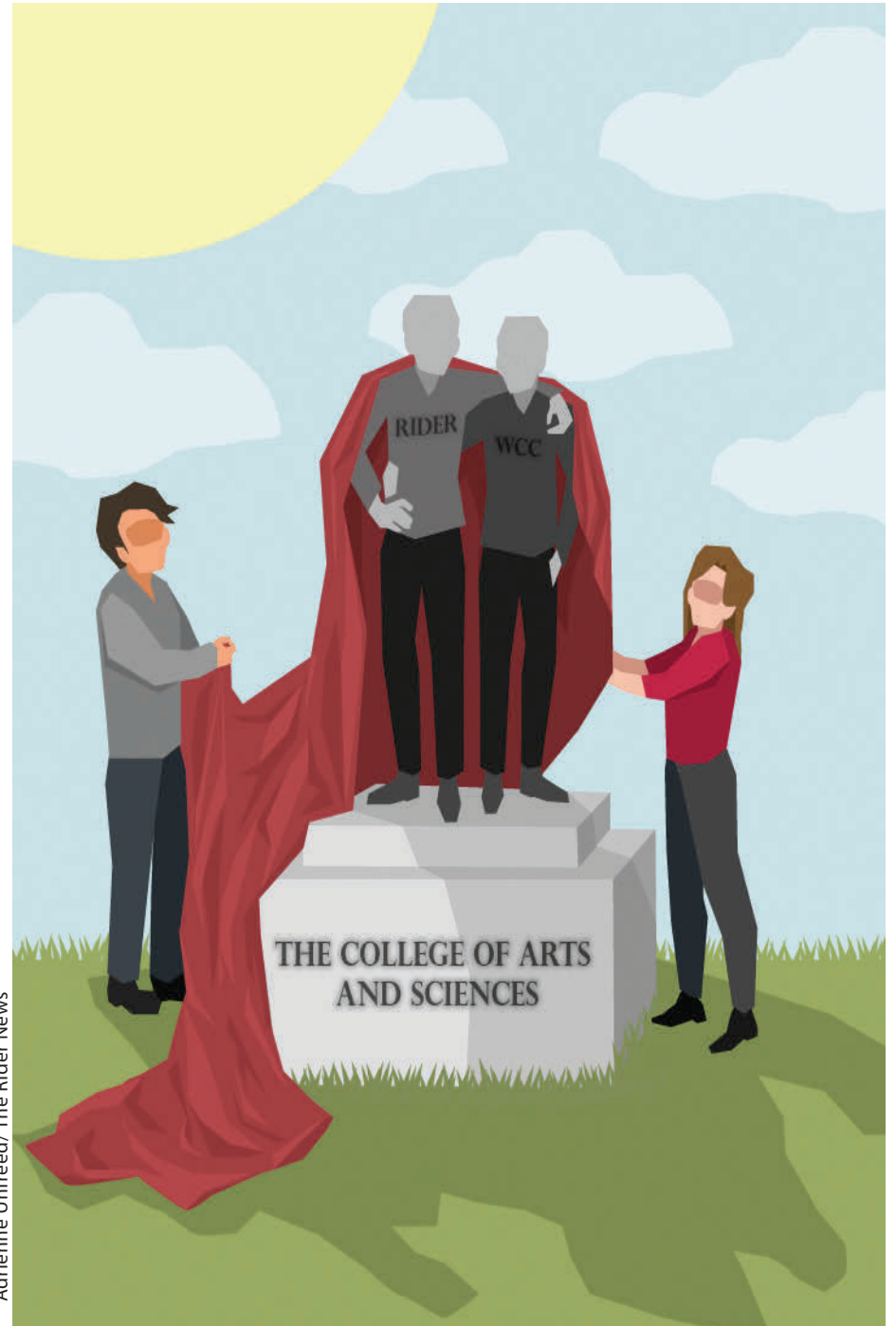
"We made a \$12 million facilities commitment to bring the campus down here ... I hope [that] demonstrates we've invested, we recognize there's some more we need to do," she said. "I have every intention, at least what I'm able to control, to make sure we do ... not just what the Westminster students need, but what all of our students need."

Looking forward

While some students are feeling a tentative sense of security and even excitement about the decision to merge the colleges, the administration has an even higher responsibility now to truly listen to WCC students and faculty and make true to the promises that were granted to them during their transition.

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

Kaitlyn McCormick



Adrienne Unfreed/The Rider News

THE Rider News

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SOPHOMORE SIGHTINGS

Fetishization: the unspoken terror faced by the queer community

WHEN I began my coming out journey, I was not naive to the difficulties I would face. I knew there would be unaccepting people, people who would believe I could be changed and so much more. I was, however, naive to one part of being a lesbian and being in women loving women relationships: fetishization.

A majority of queer people experience fetishization. Even when queer people are not in relationships, we experience this. A lesbian and her friends can go out and be asked out by a man. If she tells him no, there is a 50-50 chance as to how he will react. He may make lewd remarks about her sexual orientation or tell her because he also likes women he is a lesbian. A gay man can say he doesn't want to be someone's gay best friend and that person will be offended. There is a delicate balance that all LGBTQ+ people learn in order to respond to these comments: You must stand up for yourself, but you must also do what you need to survive.

A few years ago I saw an article about a lesbian couple who was attacked on a public train. They were attacked because they refused to kiss for the entertainment of a group of men. The pictures of the women are brutal. When I saw those, I wondered how a person could do that. Seeing those pictures and reading that article prepared me for realities that are not beyond me.

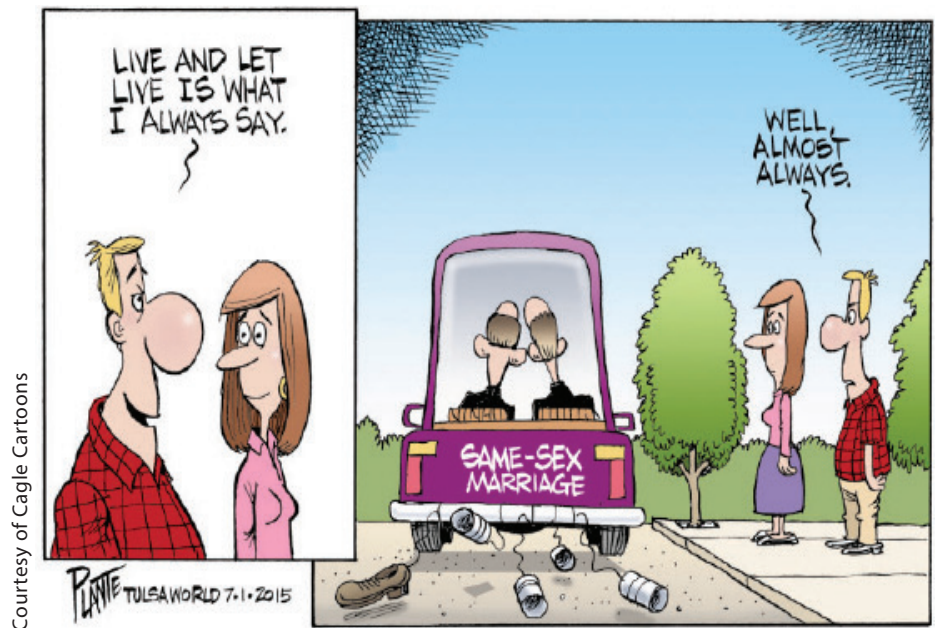
I remember the first time I was fetishized. I was 17 years old and at Disneyland with my girlfriend at the time. We had bought Minnie Mouse ears with the rainbow bow in the middle. We were in our shared safe place until it wasn't safe. We were next in line to get a car for Autopia, a slow ride that stimulates driving through a forest. The guys behind us saw us holding hands and started whistling at us. I was scared at first, and then I got defensive. I made myself taller and bigger so they couldn't look at her. Just by chance, the car came and I got my girlfriend in. As we buckled the seatbelts one of them yelled, "Why don't you kiss for us?" My girlfriend stepped on the pedal and we were off.

When I hear people say "You don't need to shove your sexuality in my face," or, "Keep it to yourselves," I think, "We are not shoving it in your face, we are doing what thousands of people have had the right to do that we haven't had: to exist happily with our loved ones." It is important to acknowledge that queer people live every day in fear of being approached and something awful happening to them. To be fetishized in a place where I should have felt safe was a very eye-opening experience.

Ever since then I have been more aware of people who may call out to me and

my current girlfriend. I am constantly aware that our relationship may provoke different reactions. I know that who I am is not comfortable for all people. I do not exist for your comfort, I do not need to change who I am to make you feel okay about my existence. I know that there are people out there who objectify me for my sexuality. I do not exist for your pleasure. I am a diverse person who also happens to be gay, and I hope you can see me that way.

*Tristan Leach,
sophomore journalism major and
The Rider News features and entertainment co-editor*



Courtesy of Cagle Cartoons

GREEN CORNER

Changing the face of climate politics: counting on the next generation

As climate change increases at unprecedented rates, it is no mystery that uncertainty increases regarding our futures. However, we know one thing for sure: the world is in the hands of the youth. As the youth population dominates the world with the largest number of young people, aged 10-24, in history, this generation is quickly building awareness for environmentalism and turning to activism. Why? We are the generation whose future will likely be most affected by the cost of climate change.

The Youth Climate Movement started in 1992 with youth attendance at a major United Nations conference known as the Rio Earth Summit. In 2005, the first Conference of Youth happened in Montreal and soon after, nearly all organizations within the movement began sending members to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to represent youth populations across the globe.

The youth make great activists, leaders and fighters because of their hope, fearlessness and budding creativity, says World Youth Alliance. We see youth activism at the front of just about every movement, from the little girl chanting "No justice, No peace" after police brutality toward George Floyd to a sustainable youth organization known as Sunrise coining the climate proposal known as "The Green New Deal" that has been in the mouth of nearly every politician in the country. Ali Zaidi, the current Deputy National Climate Advisor of President Joe Biden's Office said to Andrew Marantz for The New Yorker that throughout American history, "Whenever we have achieved a phase change, it's been young people making it happen."

One of the most important components of the youth climate movement and its rise is social media.

"I've learned the most from the social posts I see every day on Instagram," said senior musical theater major Chase McFadden.

Social media gives people all across the globe a chance to connect with others, circulate news posts, share petitions, educate themselves, raise money and join movements and strikes. Even TikTok has turned into a medium for sustainability education and outreach.

School counseling graduate student Jenn Zhong said, "Even though I only follow a handful of sustainable accounts, I see shared posts on my friends' stories and my explore page constantly. They are always so educational and empowering; it's impossible to not repost it on my story to educate and empower someone else."

Some important youth activists of our time that more people should be aware of are 19-year-old Isra Hirsi, who is the co-founder of the U.S. Youth Climate Strike, 19-year-old Greta Thunberg, who went on strike from going to school until the Swedish government reduced their carbon emissions, 14-year-old Mari Copeny, who advocates for clean water in Flint Michigan, including a \$100 million relief package she got approved for the city, 21-year-old Hannah Herbst, who was recognized for developing an ocean energy probe that can utilize and

harness the energy of the ocean currents for energy in developing countries and so many more.

These young activists have caught the attention of politicians across the globe as they obliterate their adult opposition with their followers, subscribers, sharers and viewers. Join us to learn more about the Youth Climate Movement through the wise words of Thunberg in the documentary, "I am Greta."

The film screening will be April 18 - 19 at 7 p.m. in Rue Auditorium, Sweigart Room 115, with a brief discussion following the film. You don't want to miss this one because as Greta once said, "change is coming, whether you like it or not."

*Ashlyn Whiteside
Rider University Eco Rep*



Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons

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IS THIS A DANGEROUS TIME TO KNOW YOUR RIGHTS?



WEDNESDAY, APRIL 20 | 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

Back by popular demand, this third installment of the “Is This a Dangerous Time to Know Your Rights?” series will focus on the modern workplace. The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on employees and employers nationwide, leaving many people to question what their rights are in the modern workplace. From hiring to firing and from sick leave to privacy, the pandemic has forced us all to wonder about, “the letter of the law.” Thus, for this program we have assembled a panel of experienced employment law attorneys to discuss the legal issues that will impact us all as we set out to work in the post-pandemic era. If you want to know what your rights are in the modern workplace then you don’t want to miss “Is This a Dangerous Time to Know Your Rights?” moderated by Rider Lecturer, Charles E. Ray, Esq.

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MEN'S BASKETBALL

Rider adds depth at guard with incoming commit

By Carolo Pascale

SINCE the end of the basketball season, Rider men's basketball has lost five players to the transfer portal, with many of them being guards. To help fill that void, the Broncs have added incoming freshman combo guard Jack McFadden.

The 6-foot-5 inch, two-star ranked recruit — according to Verbal Commits a popular recruiting website — from Endwell, New York, was a prolific player at Maine-Endwell High School. He's also played at the highly regarded SPIRE Institute and Academy, which produced 2020-2021 NBA Rookie of the Year LaMelo Ball, and AAU Team Fredette Elite UA Rise.

McFadden said his love for basketball came from his family.

"My brother and all his friends taught me and my dad and my mom," said McFadden. "I have had a basketball in my hands ever since I was really little. I fell in love with the game like every other day I played it."

McFadden was a multi-sport athlete growing up, playing hockey, football and baseball along with basketball. But his real talents showed when he had the rock in his hands. He gravitated toward basketball because of how fun it is.

"Honestly, it was just because of how it made me feel when I was playing it. I didn't feel that way with any other sport I play," said McFadden. "Basketball just made me feel like no other sport did. I had so much fun with it. And I thought I was the best at it. So I pursued that."

McFadden began playing in Maine-Endwell's varsity basketball program when he was in eighth grade, which caused him to adapt his level of play. Nevertheless, he held his own and led the team in free throw percentage and assists that season. McFadden called the time "surreal" and a "big first step" for his career.

Throughout his high school career, McFadden earned many accolades. From 2018 to 2020, McFadden was named to the Basketball Officials Stars and Stripes All-Star Team, as well as being First All-Section Four. In 2019, he was named to the NYS All New York State Roster Ninth Team. In 2020, McFadden earned his most valuable hardware, being named to the NYS All New York State Roster Eighth Team and being named the 2020 NYS Section 4 Class A Player of The Year.

After his senior high school season was cut short due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Jack felt disheartened about it not finishing the way he wanted it to.

"It was definitely tough. But I was just very grateful that we had a season at all," said McFadden. "We had 10 games, and I was just grateful that we could play in some games at all, because I thought we were gonna have no games my senior year."

But in the 10 games that his team did play, he



Courtesy of Jake McFadden

Incoming freshman combo guard **Jack McFadden** was a standout high school player who committed to Rider on March 30.

averaged 25.5 points and eight rebounds per game (according to stats from his website). By the end of his high school career, McFadden managed to become Maine-Endwell's second all-time leading scorer with 1,309 career points.

"It meant a lot to me because I just love playing in front of my hometown. They supported me all through my career," said McFadden. "That's a big accomplishment for me, and it means a lot because of how much I respect my town and my school."

After he graduated high school, McFadden decided to take a gap year, instead of going straight to college. During his time off, he focused entirely on basketball, playing at the highly touted program of SPIRE Institute and Academy and on AAU Team Fredette Elite UA Rise.

McFadden's coach at Team Fredette, Jhason Clark, believed that the gap year really helped McFadden develop both on and off the court.

"It actually helped him mature," said Clark. "At his high school he kind of was the go-to guy and they ran things for him. So he was so used to having the ball in his hands all the time. So going into SPIRE, having other guys that were really good around him actually matured him and he was able to be off the ball a little bit more. When he gets to that level at Rider, everything's not gonna be run for him. So I feel like the gap year really helped him."

After his gap year, McFadden looked to finally take the step to play at a Division I program, and Clark had the connections to be able to put McFadden in front of Broncs Head Coach Kevin Baggett.

"I have a good relationship with Coach Baggett," said Clark. "So I was sending him film and constantly

updating him on Jack's progress and just building that communication between me and Coach Baggett, and then Coach Baggett and Jack."

On March 30, McFadden officially announced his commitment to play for the Broncs.

"Jack played in front of a lot of coaches, but in his mind, and in his heart, he really wanted Rider," said Clark.

As for why McFadden chose Rider, he said that it's a perfect size for him and he loves the coaching staff that the Broncs have assembled.

With McFadden now committed to Rider, the Broncs will have more depth at the guard position. He will now be able to learn under the tutelage of senior guard Dwight Murray Jr. and junior guard Allen Powell.

"I feel like I can bring a lot of different skills in my skill set, like shooting, passing, putting it on the floor, making my teammates better and also creating my own shot, getting to the lane, even though I'm a little undersized," said McFadden. "I'm not only like a catch and shoot; I can create my own shot and get to the lane. I'll do whatever Coach [Baggett] wants me to do."

With an entire summer to work with the team, McFadden is excited to get started.

"When I committed, it was just the world off my back with stress and all that," said McFadden. "I was just so happy that I'm finally committed to Rider. And I'm just so excited to see what we can do this upcoming fall."

At the time of publication, McFadden had not officially signed with Rider but indicated his intention to sign in early May.

BASEBALL

Lesch and the Broncs rebound after game one defeat

CONT'D FROM PAGE 12

four hits and a walk to tie the game once again.

The Broncs took to the 12th inning to close things out. Two walks and a sacrifice bunt led to the opportunity for freshman catcher Ty Gilligan to play the hero. He did just that, hitting a walk-off double to drive in the winning run for the Broncs.

"I just wanted to go up there and do everything I can to help my team win," said Gilligan. "Ever since I was a kid, it was my dream to play baseball at a high level, so I've envisioned that moment a million times over."

Senior Frank Doelling pitched a great game for Rider. He blanked the Stags for six innings, only allowing one hit in the process.

Lesch goes yard twice in big win

Given how Fairfield has displayed its offense throughout the series, Rider backed the Stags into a

corner on April 10 in the rubber match.

On the backdrop of a gray cloudy day that produced sprinkles of rain and frigid winds, Rider found its opportunities when the sun poked through and its offense shined.

Lesch smashed crucial home runs in the sixth and seventh innings putting the Broncs ahead 14-6 and on a path to winning the game in a 14-7 final.

"It's a huge confidence boost for me," said Lesch who homered late in the first game of the series as well. "I felt good going into the next at-bat. Coach Lipinski said to just sit on a fastball, and I did."

A hit from sophomore infielder Brian Skettini in the bottom of the third inning scored Rider two runs with bases-loaded giving the Broncs a 2-1 lead and forcing Fairfield to make a pitching change.

When the Broncs made mound changes, their relievers got some much-needed run support scoring half of their runs during innings five through seven.

"I tried to tell them don't panic," Davis said.

Early mistakes prove costly

The Broncs hosted the NJIT Highlanders on April 12, suffering a frustrating, self-inflicted 4-3 loss.

The Highlanders found their runs early, scoring all of them in the game's first three innings. Their second and third runs were brought in on two wild pitches by junior pitcher Kenny Quijano, and the fourth was scored after NJIT stole home.

Rider spent the rest of the game trying to dig itself out of a four-run hole, but the comeback fell one run short despite a superb showing from junior infielder Jack Winsett.

Winsett went 3-3 at the plate, including an RBI single to put Rider on the board.

The Broncs will look to get back in the win column on April 14, when they get back on the road for a three-game series against Niagara.

Sports

ONLINE

MULTIMEDIA PAGE

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By Hannah Newman and Carolo Pascale

WITH one victory against Canisius and two victories against Niagara on April 9 and 10, Rider softball reached 20 wins for the first time in a decade over the weekend.

'That's how we hit'

The Broncos opened a doubleheader vs. Canisius with a 4-2 loss in their first game but bounced back with a 5-4 walk-off win in their second game on April 9.

Rider junior outfielder Alyssa Ansara reached first on a bunt and advanced to third off a bunt from senior second base/shortstop Gianna Epps in the bottom of the third inning of game one.

In the top of the sixth, Canisius dominated the game with three runs but the Broncos snuck in one more in the bottom. Giese ended the bottom of the seventh inning with a 1-2-3 knockout.

"One of the things that we have been lacking for a few games is intensity. We did not come out intensely. We did not come out ready to beat them or take it from them," said Head Coach Davon Ortega.

The Broncos went into game two of the series carrying the heat of the first game on their shoulders, while Canisius took the lead with a score of 4-2 by the top of the seventh inning.

"It's frustrating because I know what we are capable of doing and I know that we are in our heads and this is mental instead of seeing the ball and hitting it. It is hard to be a coach in that situation but I trust my kids and I know they will make the adjustments," said Ortega.

By the bottom of the seventh inning third baseman Brianna Koonce, pitcher Jessie Niegocki and Epps loaded the bases to keep the winner unpredictable.

A line drive hit down to center field by outfielder Amanda Cooper gave the Broncos two runs. After the ball was bypassed by center fielder Christie McGee-Ross, Niegocki made her way across home plate from first for the winning run.

"It's never a shock because that's how we hit. That's the type of team we are," said Ortega.

Senior day domination

The second half of the back-to-back doubleheaders saw the Broncos take on the Niagara Purple Eagles on April 10. Rider defeated Niagara in both games of the series, first posting a shutout 5-0 victory, and then defeating the Purple Eagles again 3-1.

April 10 was also senior day for the Broncos. The program is graduating seniors first base/catcher Grace Stansfield, catcher Kaitlin Vazquez, pitcher Brooklyn Trujillo-Quintana, second base/shortstop Gianna Epps, outfielder Lani Moreno and junior utility Elena Gonzalez. Gonzalez will be graduating from Rider early, doing so in just three years.

"Four of the six are part of my first recruiting class," said Ortega. "It's really cool for them to be able to come full circle, where when they started and we couldn't win any games when they got here as freshmen

SOFTBALL

Softball reaches 20 wins for the first time since 2012



Carolo Pascale/The Rider News

Rider softball celebrated six players on April 10, with the program graduating five seniors and one junior.

and now we are able to sweep conference opponents."

For the first game, the Broncos went with their ace in sophomore pitcher Anna-Marie Groskritz.

In the third inning, the Broncos earned a 1-0 lead that was started by Ansara. She perfectly placed a bunt and was able to beat out the throw to first, which then allowed Cooper to knock a deep single into left field, sending her home for the lead.

The fifth inning is where the Broncos took over. It started with Cooper hitting another single into left field. Stansfield singled as well, which allowed Ansara to score off of an error, giving the Broncos a 2-0 lead. Rider continued the offense when both Moreno and junior catcher Chaela Crowder hit RBI singles to the left side, putting the Broncos up 5-0.

From there, the Broncos rode off the great pitching from Groskritz, who pitched her second complete game. She threw 103 pitches, just three shy of her 106 pitches just the day before.

"Coach Ortega has us practice all year round, always hitting the gym and conditioning," said Groskritz. "We'll do high pitch count days and just always be out working."

Once the game concluded, the scoreboard showed a 5-0 Broncos win. Moreno went a perfect 3-for-3 at the plate and had two RBIs. Groskritz posted four strikeouts through seven innings of work and only allowed one hit.

The second game of the Niagara doubleheader started with the Broncos forcing another three-up, three-down top of the first, now with Trujillo-Quintana in the circle.

The hitting once again came quick and strong for the Broncos, with Stansfield sending an RBI single to the

right side, giving the Broncos a 1-0 lead in the bottom of the first. The hit was Stansfield's 100th career hit as a Bronco.

"It just feels like I finally helped turn the program around, and it's a big milestone for myself," said Stansfield.

In the top of the second inning, Niagara had an infield hit but the Broncos made two throwing errors on the play, which led to Niagara tying the game at one run apiece.

"We get complacent," said Ortega. "We don't put it away. We get complacent and then our mental game goes to crap. You can print that."

The bottom of the second was better for the Broncos, when Ansara hit an RBI single, giving Rider back the lead 2-1.

After that hit, it was a quiet game until the bottom of the sixth, when Vazquez hit an RBI single up the middle, giving the Broncos a 3-1 lead, which would ultimately be the final score.

Trujillo-Quintana also pitched a complete game for the Broncos, throwing just one short of 100 pitches, which included five strikeouts.

"I think the positive thing is pitching this weekend," said Ortega. "But I think what we need to do is to take away what we need to work on to improve, and to continue on the road."

The Broncos will go on the road to face Fairleigh Dickinson on April 13 and will be on the road for almost the entirety of their remaining games. They won't return home until May 6, when they finish their season against Monmouth.

BASEBALL

Broncs win two of three in MAAC Championship rematch

By Dylan Manfre, Andrew Smolar and Hannah Newman

RIDER and Fairfield's recent history features a riveting conference championship series that the Broncos won in 2021. The two programs met for the first time since then from April 9 to 12.

Stomped by the Stags

When the Fairfield Stags arrived at Sonny Pittaro Field, there were a few updates that looked different to them. One addition, however, stood out more than the others.

Located on the left-field side was a list of Rider's Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference (MAAC) championships and 2021 is now cemented in Bronco history as the team's third title. That victory, against none other than the Fairfield Stags. The heralded team the Broncos upset to secure the title last spring.

A three-game rematch does not hurt to get the competitive juices flowing; however, Fairfield showed its dominance in a series-opening game that lasted three and a half hours.

From the first pitch, the appearance of the 2021 MAAC Championship addition to the left-field fence was all Fairfield needed to start a rally. The Stags jumped on Rider early and won 17-2 on April 8.

Fairfield's lineup made a full rotation in the top of the second inning, drawing six runs on five hits off Broncos pitcher Joe Papeo. The senior struggled with his early command, throwing more balls than strikes.

After Papeo's exit, Rider ran through the pitching gauntlet, putting in six players including junior infielder Luke Lesch. Senior pitcher Danny Kirwin's outing lasted two innings and fanned five batters.

"I feel like sometimes I didn't get them ready ...

ultimately I'm the guy that's got to get them ready," Head Coach Barry Davis said. "Tomorrow will be an indication of what kind of character and what kind of pride we have."

Twelve innings of redemption

Rider bounced back from the series-opening defeat to Fairfield with a 4-3 win in 12 innings on April 9.

The game started slowly offensively for both teams. The first run wasn't scored until the bottom of the sixth when junior John Volpe singled in redshirt senior Jake Barbieri.

After letting the Stags tie the game in the eighth, the Broncos went down by two in the 11th. They responded promptly, starting the bottom of the 11th with