



TO SEE OR NOT TO SEE

Rider takes on a Shakespeare classic with a feminine twist. **page 6**

FROM THE EDITOR

Starting off on the right note. **page 8**

MEET THE VAN OMMERENS

A sneak peek into field hockey sisters' lives. **page 12**

WCC students show resolve in the face of consolidation



Lauren Minore/The Rider News

WCC protestors feel strongly that the choir college should stay in its Princeton location.

By Stephen Neukam

AMID a peaceful protest and confrontations with university officials, Westminster Choir College (WCC) students anxiously wanted to learn one thing: where their academic futures lie.

That was the goal when a group of around 75 students and protestors gathered outside the Fine Arts Center (FA) on Sept. 24, holding signs that pleaded for WCC to remain in Princeton.

Victoria Vazquez, a junior sacred music and voice performance major, was jaded by her experience in her future academic home.

"It kind of looks like a jail in [the FA]," said Vazquez. "The lighting is really painful and the hallways are really small — it's not exactly inspiring for music-making."

Under Rider's current consolidation plan, all students, staff and faculty at WCC will be moved to the Lawrenceville campus in September 2020. This plan came in the aftermath of a lengthy attempt to sell the choir college to a Chinese company that was aborted in July.

When WCC students entered the Lawrenceville campus they did not plan on entering the FA. After failing to gain access to New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy, who visited campus on the same day, the students planned to take a picture in front of the FA and to silently enter the building to see their proposed home, according to freshman musical education and sacred music major Jordan Klotz.

According to Vazquez, Public Safety officers and university officials barred them from entering the building and cited the fire safety code as the reason.

Vice President for Strategic Initiatives and Planning and Secretary to the Board Debbie Stasolla, who was at the FA and helped stop the students from entering, said that she was concerned about the safety of the students entering the building in large numbers.



2018 Security and Fire Safety report provokes discussion around safety

By Tatyanna Carman

BOTH burglary and domestic violence cases on the Lawrenceville campus at Rider increased between 2017 and 2018, according to the 2018 annual security and fire safety reports.

The annual security and fire safety reports are the number of Clery reportable crimes, arrests, disciplinary actions and judicial referrals that occur on the Lawrenceville and Princeton campuses, as well as the reported fires that occur in residence halls and fire systems, according to Public Safety Capt. Jim Flatley.

"It is difficult to say what contributed to the increase in the number of reported burglaries in 2018. There were 16 reported burglaries that occurred on the Lawrenceville campus; 15 of them were in the residence halls. Of the 15, eight were reported in Poyda Hall, and of those eight, seven occurred over spring break. We did an extensive investigation to identify who was responsible, but we were not successful," said Flatley.

These statistics brought in the question of overall safety on campus.

Freshman biology major Corinne Rosso gave her thoughts on the increase in crime in these areas. She said she was surprised by the reports.

"I know that Rider is huge on safety and prevention of any violence or anything like that. From what I've seen, I haven't seen any problems. I mean, that's just from my eyes and where I've been. It could be different for someone else," Rosso said.

Rosso also shared that Rider "doesn't seem like a place where I would have to be cautious of where I am or anything like that."

On the other hand, junior criminal justice major Destiny Waters hesitated on her answer and said that surveillance is "minimum to none."

"Yes there is a scanner to get in the building as a whole and I have a key, but our campus is open. There is no one monitoring who comes onto our campus," Waters said. "Again, the surveillance needs to be addressed, also having police officers monitor our campus instead of security jobs because there are limitations to how much they can protect us."

Waters also shared that she recently got her Apple AirPods, which are wireless headphones which retail for about \$159, stolen so she knows, "about the theft on our campus, personally."

Both students gave their advice to their peers at Rider.

"I see a lot of people walking a lot with their phones in their faces. So obviously if you're like walking across the street, maybe you should look around," Rosso said.

Walters echoed her sentiment.

"Be cautious and do not get comfortable with your surroundings," said Waters. This coincides with Flatley's advice as well. He said to think of a residence hall as a



Stephanie Jessiman/The Rider News

Public Safety headquarters are a place where students can come to report actions that have made them feel unsafe on campus.

neighborhood.

"They should get to know who belongs, who visits... If they see something out of the ordinary call Public Safety," said Flatley. "When walking around campus, I encourage students to look where they are going and not have their full attention on their cell phone. We encourage students to be aware of their surroundings and to walk with others at night. Public Safety does offer a Safety Escort through the Bronc Safety Services program."

He also stressed the safety of faculty, staff and visitors as well.

"If anyone is the victim of a crime we want them to report it to us. If you see something, say something. I believe that Public Safety is part of the university's educational mission," Flatley said. "I realize that some think we are only here to write parking tickets or refer cases to the Office of Community Standards, but Public Safety does have a role in providing an environment that is conducive to the educational pursuits of our community."

SECURITY BRIEFS

BY STEPHEN NEUKAM

Car Fire

Don't start the engine. On Sept. 25 at 11:45 a.m., Public Safety received a call from the Lawrence Township Police Department that a student called 911 and reported that their car was on fire. Public Safety, Lawrence Police and the Lawrenceville Fire Company responded to the CZR lot and the car was not on fire when the parties arrived. The student said that she was having car troubles and that the car started smoking when she tried to start the engine. She said she saw a small flame under the engine and threw water on it to put it out.

Clogged

A royal flush. On Sept. 27 at 3:55 p.m., Public Safety responded to a call at the Phi Sigma Sigma house. When officers arrived, they found that a toilet in a second-floor bathroom overflowed and the water had leaked into the hallway and into two students' rooms. The water affected the carpet of the hallways and the carpet of the dorm rooms. The officers got the water to stop flowing and facilities were contacted for repair.

Wallet Whereabouts

Where's my money? On Sept. 25 at 12:35 p.m., a student reported that she lost her wallet around the main entrance of Olson Hall. She left her room around 1 p.m. and noticed that the wallet was missing. She found it in the front lobby of the residence hall and discovered that \$40 was missing but all of her other belongings were there. There is no suspect.

— Information provided by Public Safety Capt. Jim Flatley

Westminster students criticize Rider infrastructure

CONT'D FROM PAGE 1

"I expressed concern regarding the rather large number of people walking as a large group throughout the building... from a safety perspective given the large size and the potential disruption to classes and offices," said Stasolla.

Klotz said that some of the students on the Lawrenceville campus came and asked the protestors questions, but a number of them mocked and laughed at the demonstration.

Perhaps more alarming, according to Klotz, was the treatment that Public Safety officials gave to the students.

"[A Public Safety officer] told his tour group that they 'would have to grow up and learn to live with the other Rider students,' or something of the sorts," said Klotz.

Stasolla said that she and Public Safety Director James Waldon were taking the issue "seriously" and are following up with the officers.

"We all must be sensitive to how we express ourselves with one another and out of respect for one another given the complexities of the transition and the very understandable emotions that are being experienced as a result," Stasolla said.

Senior music education major Max Brey was frustrated that the university "was under the assumption that we were going to be a problem."

Of paramount concern for the students was the quality of the facilities on the Lawrenceville

campus. Most of the infrastructure at WCC is highly specialized and unique to the needs of a choir college.

Rider has been vague on proposed renovations and additions to facilities for the students, with the latest indication coming from a statement to The Rider News by Associate Vice President for University Marketing and Communications Kristine Brown. She alluded to changes to Omega House, Gill Chapel, Moore Library and the FAC.

The plans for renovations are being handled by the Fine Arts Facility Working Group, part of the administration's Campus Transition Team. The group currently has no students from either campus on it, according to Brown.

"There are not facilities [at Rider] that are appropriate for our studies," said Vazquez. "I can't play the oboe as loud as I want to when there is a political science class going on."

Brey, who helped organize the protest, shared the same concerns as Vazquez.

"This building is built for something, and it's not us," Brey said. "The facilities are fine [for the current programs.]"

Students called into question the availability of practice rooms, space for the over 100 pianos on the Princeton campus and other conditions that affect their quality of education.

Despite the long saga that has engulfed WCC, from the decision to sell the school, a tumultuous legal battle that continues today, significant dips in enrollment and donations and tensions between the

school and the administration, Klotz said the spirit of WCC remained.

Klotz said he chose WCC knowing that its future was in limbo. However, he found such a love for the school that not even the current consolidation plans would hinder him from committing to the choir college.

"Even this would not deter me from coming [to WCC]," said Klotz. "Simply because there is such an amazing community here of musicians and the faculty is truly world-class."

Brey explained that his three years at WCC had been unique in the fact that each time he went home to see family, he would have to answer questions about whether his school was still open or not.

"That's not the question that people usually get when they go home from school," said Brey. "I have to say, 'yes' and explain [the situation.]"

Klotz, Vazquez and Brey all emphasized that they had no problem with the students on the Lawrenceville campus or the university in general. However, given the steps that were taken by the administration to find a solution for the school, there is obvious strain on the relationship.

Undeterred by the past and focused on the future, the students remain "deeply committed to each other and recognize that we are getting probably the best education in the field," said Brey.

"One semester, or two semesters, at [WCC] is still more worth it to me than anything else."

Trenton Water Works issues warning to boil water before use

By Lauren Minore

TRENTON Water Works advised residents in Trenton, Hamilton Township, Ewing Township, Lawrence Township and Hopewell Township to boil their water before ingestion on Sept. 27, according to a press release. The water disinfection process was disrupted by chlorination levels dropping too low due to an equipment malfunction in its water distribution system.

According to Associate Vice President for University Marketing and Communications Kristine Brown, the Lawrence Township Health Officer contacted the university in the early morning on Sept. 27 to notify them that there would be a boil water advisory issued by Trenton Water Works to all of its customers.

"After the advisory was issued, Mike Reca, vice president for facilities and university operations, spoke to the Lawrence Township Health Officer again to determine what to expect for the duration of the advisory," Brown said. "She provided guidelines for cooking that were issued to Gourmet Dining, which they enacted immediately."

Students were alerted of the issue at 7:49 a.m. via RiderAlert, Rider's emergency and weather alert system. Cases of water bottles were immediately distributed to all residence halls and locations in public and academic buildings, including Anne Brossman Sweigart Hall, Canastra Health and Sports Center and the Student Recreation Center, among others.

The university was in contact with Lawrence

RIDER ALERT NOTICE

September 27, 2019

Please be advised that Trenton Water Works has issued a boiled water advisory until further notice that affects Rider's Lawrenceville campus along with Trenton, Hamilton, Ewing and Lawrence Townships. All residents are advised to boil water for one minute for drinking, brushing teeth, preparing food, and washing dishes or to use bottled water. Do not swallow water while showering or bathing.

Bottled water is being distributed to residence hall lobbies as well as the SRC, Canastra and Sweigart lobbies for use by students, faculty and staff. Gourmet Dining is taking the necessary precautions in its food preparation.

Please see Rider's website at www.rider.edu/updates for the entire notification from Trenton Water Works which is working to correct the problem.

We will provide further updates as they become available.

Students at Rider were forced to use bottled water to brush teeth and drink.

Township every two hours for the remainder of the day until 7 p.m., and then beginning again at 7 a.m. on Sept. 28 until the advisory was lifted, according to

Brown.

The advisory was lifted at approximately 2:15 p.m. on Sept. 28.

"After notifying our campus community, the university and Gourmet Dining resumed normal operating procedures," Brown said. "Additionally, the facilities staff opened all of the domestic water hydrants on campus for five minutes each to flush the system."

According to Reca, during the duration of his career at Rider, this incident was the fourth time it occurred, not related to a hurricane or incimate weather conditions.

"This is the reason we maintain 10,000 bottles of water on campus at all times for emergency purposes. We also have filters on all of our drinking water throughout both campuses," Brown said.

Community Director Sue Perls said that she recently read "Trenton Kids Count 2019: A City Profile of Child Well-Being" and learned there are higher levels of lead and contaminated water in areas of Trenton, New Jersey, than in Flint, Michigan.

"There are people in our surrounding community, in our own backyard, that deal with issues of contaminated water on a daily basis," Perls said. "As a Rider employee, I am thankful for the response of upper administration. They successfully delivered water bottles across campus in a timely fashion and they are in constant contact with Trenton Water Works to ensure that we are in the loop."

Lauren Minore / The Rider News

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NATIONAL
COMING OUT
DAY KEYNOTE:

THE CHANGING
FACE OF LGBTQ+
ACCEPTANCE IN
THE CARIBBEAN

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NEW BOOK RELEASE:
CROSSFIRE: A LITANY
FOR SURVIVAL



THURSDAY, OCTOBER 10, 2019

6:45 P.M. (BOOK SIGNING AFTER EVENT)

RUE AUDITORIUM

BOOK WILL BE FOR SALE AT 6 P.M. IN ATRIUM LOBBY

OTHER UPCOMING EVENT

Oct. 10

Inclusive Excellence Plan Launch Event

11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., Cavalla Room, Bart Luedeke Center, Simulcast: Talbott 1

Join all members of the campus community as President Dell'Omo introduces Rider's Inclusive Excellence Plan – a plan which highlights Rider's values of diversity, equity and inclusion and outlines strategic commitments to advance Rider as an inclusive community. Reservations are required.



CENTER FOR
DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION
Unity + Diversity = University

In collaboration between SPECTRUM Pride Alliance, Gender and Sexuality Studies, and the Center for Diversity and Inclusion.
Partially Funded by MSAF • Approved by Campus Life - 10/17

Rider unveils new cybersecurity bachelor's program

By Tatyanna Carman

A NEW cybersecurity undergraduate program will be available at Rider in fall 2020, according to The Chair of the Department of Computer Science and Physics, John Bochanski.

The new major will have two components: a technical and a policy track. The technical track has a lot of overlap between the computer science courses and the policy track is for people who are “not all that interested in coding and trying to figure out how all of these pieces fit together, but they want to run a large organization and make sure that people aren’t sitting around with post-it notes with their passwords stuck to their computer.” There are also a lot of courses that are offered in political science and homeland security that are within the policy track as well. Bochanski talked about the high student demand cybersecurity had from the university.

“I would say maybe every other question [at the open house] or every third question, it’s ‘oh, I want to go into cybersecurity. Is this the major for me?’ And what I would say is that both the cybersecurity and computer science majors are both going to open up doors for people in terms of getting into their field. I expect a lot of double-majors to come out of the technical track plus the computer science major,” he said.

He also talked about the employment aspect of choosing to create the program. “Not only is it high student demand, but employer-wise, it’s also in very high demand. Jobs in the cybersecurity field are one of the top choices out there. There’s a huge demand for it now. I really don’t think that’s going to go anywhere. At least anytime soon,” Bochanski said.

The required courses for the cybersecurity core credits are introduction to cybersecurity, cybercrime and cyberterrorism, cyber ethics and societal impact and Computer Science I. Then there are different courses required for different tracks. For the technical track, students could take courses like hacking and penetration testing, software security engineering and analysis of algorithms. For the policy track, students could take courses like homeland security, terrorism and counterterrorism and cyberspace law and policy. There will also be an internship program available to students for the major and independent study.

Bochanski shared how cybersecurity is applied to real world situations and current events.

“I was watching the Congress interview [of the] director of national intelligence today [who] talked about how there’s a cyberwar going on with Russia,” he said. “How cybersecurity issues leading into the next election — who we pick to be the leaders of this country — if that’s getting swayed by and it is getting swayed by communications online and we’re not sure if those are valid or not, that’s a big deal. So that’s just another way of informing our students and our university about what’s going on out there.”



Stephanie Jessiman/The Rider News

The Science and Technology Center will soon have an addition that accommodates computer science and cybersecurity programs.

He also explained the predictions for how many cybersecurity majors there will be.

“We’ve been averaging about 30 new computer science majors per year, which is not bad for a brand new program. I would expect numbers close to that. Maybe not the first year, but once we really get rolling here, I think we’re going to see a pretty healthy population of students.”

Jacob Guevarra, junior computer science major, shared his thoughts on the new computer science-related programs at Rider.

“I think it’s a great thing for Rider, implementing another computer-related program into its system. I was essentially the lab rat of computer science. It was introduced by freshman year and over time it started to become more of an active thing on campus,” Guevarra said. “More freshmen are starting to become majors in computer science. We just implemented a new game media and design major and now they’re implementing another cybersecurity major program here. So it’s nice to see Rider finally opening its doors to the technology field.”

Guevarra also said that the major would add a lot of diversity in terms of the established science community that Rider’s built over time. He said he is glad to see the “computer science, interactive game and media design and cybersecurity starting to make an up and coming” at Rider.

“The best part about the whole thing is when the students show up in that fall semester. You’ve just taken this thing that lived in a Google Drive folder for a long time and now there’s 20, 30 students sitting there, ready to do this. That’s the best part,” said Bochanski. “I can’t wait to greet our students next fall.”

Jeffrey Deskovic opens up about being wrongfully convicted

By Hailey Hensley

A POPULAR advocate for restorative justice and the wrongfully convicted came to Rider on Sept. 30, 2019, to speak about his experience as someone who was wrongfully convicted, served a prison sentence and was exonerated.

Jeffrey Deskovic, founder and president of the Jeffrey Deskovic Foundation for Justice, was convicted of first-degree rape and second-degree murder in January 1991, according to the National Registry of Exonerations.

In November 1989, a 15-year-old girl was found raped and murdered in Peekskill, New York, according to the registry.

The victim was a classmate of Deskovic’s and according to Deskovic they “knew each other by name, but that was it.”

According to Deskovic, he was originally picked as a suspect because he “didn’t fit in” and was “overly distraught” by his classmate’s death.

Deskovic originally sought to assist the police in its investigation and visited the police station frequently, even providing notes to help the police narrow down the suspects, according to Deskovic.

“They [the police] would say things like ‘the kids won’t speak freely to us, but they will around you, let us know if you hear anything.’ They made me feel important...I wanted to be a cop when I grew up,” said Deskovic.

According to Deskovic, this early opportunity to assist with police work made him more vulnerable to trickery from the police.

Police were able to convince Deskovic to submit to a polygraph test and drove him to a location that was over forty minutes from his home. He had no parent, guardian or lawyer with him, according to Deskovic.

“I didn’t know where I was, I didn’t have any money on me. I had no way of escaping. I was totally dependant on the police,” said Deskovic.

During the polygraph, Deskovic was provided with “at least six or seven cups of coffee” and was not given any food, according to Deskovic.

“It seems clear in hindsight that the purpose of the



Hailey Hensley/The Rider News

Deskovic spoke about serving 17 years in prison over a rape and murder he did not commit.

coffee was to amp me up, to make me nervous,” said Deskovic.

The polygrapher was dressed in normal clothes, and never identified himself as a police officer. According to Deskovic, he was never read his Miranda rights and was not technically under arrest.

“I pushed back all my concerns, I figured I was there to help the police and that was all that mattered,” said Deskovic.

Deskovic was then under interrogation for seven hours and it was not filmed or recorded in any way, according to Deskovic.

“He [the polygrapher] raised his voice at me. He asked me the same question over and over again. He invaded my personal space. The way he was conducting himself made me really frightened,” said Deskovic.

He was then convinced that he had failed the polygraph test already and that he “might as well just confess,” according to Deskovic.

Deskovic was told that he was going to be harmed by police officers if he did not confess and so he proceeded to make up a story using facts he had heard from the police and the news regarding the crime, according to Deskovic.

“By the time the interrogation was finished, I was curled up into a fetal position on the floor, crying uncontrollably,” said Deskovic.

Shortly thereafter, Deskovic was arrested and indicted for the rape and murder he was coerced into confessing to, according to Deskovic.

At that point, DNA testing had revealed that DNA

found on the victim’s body did not match Deskovic and he was falsely informed that he would no longer be pursued as a suspect if the DNA results excluded him, according to the registry.

According to Deskovic, a medical examiner for the state of New York committed fraud in order to get him convicted.

Deskovic was convicted of the crime and was sentenced to 15 years to life. He was 17 years old at the time and was immediately placed into an adult maximum-security prison, according to the registry.

During his sentence, Deskovic filed six appeals, all of which were denied. Throughout the entirety of his sentence, he maintained the fact that he was innocent, according to Deskovic.

Finally, in 2006, all charges against Deskovic were dropped on the grounds of actual innocence after new DNA testing was done and the DNA sample found on the victim was shown to match a convicted criminal who was already in prison for murder, according to the registry.

Deskovic was released in Sept. 2006, following an apology from the assistant district attorney of New York, according to the registry.

After his release, Deskovic went on to receive his master’s degree from John Jay College of Criminal Justice and then in May 2019, Deskovic received his law degree from Pace University.

Deskovic now serves as an advocate for exonerees and the wrongfully convicted. His foundation, the Jeffrey Deskovic Foundation for Justice, has assisted seven wrongfully convicted individuals in getting released.

Deskovic wanted to make very clear that wrongful conviction is a problem across the board, and doesn’t always discriminate by race, class or gender.

“It can happen to anyone...It’s not a particular walk of life. This cuts across religious and racial and to a large extent socioeconomic class,” said Deskovic. “I hope to inspire some students to go on to careers that will help fight wrongful convictions. Some of these students might be lawyers or jurors in the future and I want them to keep this in mind.”

Students get their grub on at remodeled Cranberry's

By Austin Latanzio

DINING options have increased since the remodeled Cranberry's opened on Sept. 23. The eatery in the Bart Luedeke Center has undergone a facelift in both food operation and visual style and is now reopened for students to enjoy. Returning students on campus shared their thoughts on the new eating area.

"It's much wider... and it has a bigger variety of food," senior musical theater major Ryan Lloyd said.

Another student had more insight on the new look of the dining facility. "It looks nicer and there is more seating than before," junior elementary education major Jessica Rountree said. However, she also felt that the remodel left some things to be desired, such as the salad bar from previous years and Andrew J's, the general store that used to occupy part of the area.

Despite this, Rountree prefers eating at Cranberry's over other dining options on campus, because "I'm a commuter, so it's super convenient."

Lloyd also felt that the new Cranberry's had some negative aspects: "I think having to use Grubhub to order might be a turn off for some people," he said. "While it is convenient to order from your phone, some students would prefer to just order and get their food right then and there, and even just pay cash."

Even after its opening, Cranberry's is still not finished. Students have noticed a booth covered with a black tarp in the back of the restaurant, accompanied by a sign stating "Coming soon, Wendy's."

"It will be interesting to see," Lloyd said when asked about his thoughts about a Wendy's on campus. "It will be a convenience though."

Rountree also shared her opinion on Wendy's. "Nutritional wise, I don't think we need it on campus," She said. "But it is something that people are familiar with menu wise."

While the establishment is not yet done, Cranberry's has satisfied students by providing sushi, quesdallias, pizza and more since its opening. Students can also look forward to more options coming soon to Cranberry's to broaden their food options even more.



Stephanie Jessiman/The Rider News

The sushi station offers Rider students a brand new option for Meal Exchange and Bronc Bucks purchases.



Stephanie Jessiman/The Rider News

Students enjoy the Sono station at the newly renovated Cranberry's.



Stephanie Jessiman/The Rider News

The newly renovated Pub transformed into a sit-down-style restaurant, offering a wider menu and alcohol options for students over 21.



THE AMAZING GREEN RACE

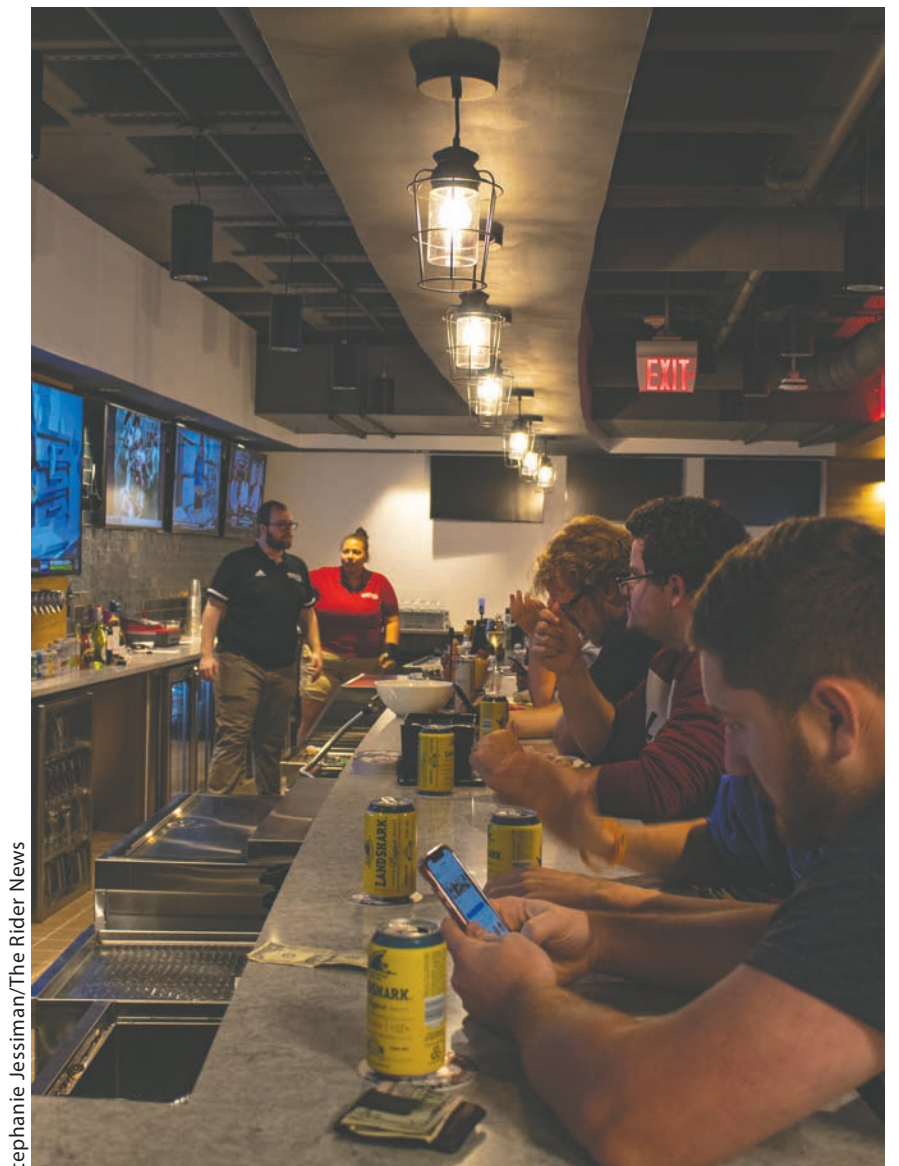
Do you want a brand new bike?

Tuesday, October 15th



11:30 A.M. BLC Lower Patio

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To register, send an email to broncsgogreen@rider.edu



Stephanie Jessiman/The Rider News

Students sit barside at the new Pub.



Stephanie Jessiman/The Rider News

The renovated Pub includes several large screen TVs to air sports games.

Say his name; Rider professor screens his film

By Christian McCarville

STUDENTS tend to forget just how immersed their professors are in their field of study.

For many, the most qualified professors have had large amounts of experience in their subject matter and walked the same paths that their students are currently navigating. Some professors are still making large strides within their respective fields.

Jay Stern is a prime example of one of these professors. Stern is a professor in the communications department and specializes in teaching film classes. Stern, having much experience in directing both film and theater, directed a feature-length film titled "Say My Name" that debuted in 2018 in the United Kingdom.

The film later debuted in the United States in 2019, earning "Best Indie Film," "Best Actor" and "Best Director" awards at the Los Angeles Film Festival.

While it is evident that Stern has had a lot of directing experience, he explains that a director is never fully finished perfecting their craft.

"You learn a lot from every film you do. I think on this one I learned to trust my instincts a bit more and to be more decisive about things," said Stern.

The movie stars Lisa Brenner as Mary Page and Nick Blood as Statton Taylor. Mary and Statton are complete strangers engaging in a one-night stand when they are interrupted by a robbery. The plot of the film then follows the two as they struggle to regain what was stolen from them.

On Sept. 26, a screening of the film took place in the Bart Luedke Center theater moderated by Cynthia Lucia. The screening was free to all who were interested in watching Stern's film. Following the screening there was a Q&A with Stern, Writer Deborah Frances-White, Producer and lead actor Lisa Brenner and Director of Photography Alan McIntyre



Courtesy of Say My Name Productions Ltd.

Communications professor Jay Stern said "I think... I learned to trust my instincts a bit more," when working on "Say My Name."

Smith.

"I thought the film was surprising because I did not know what to expect going in, but it made me laugh within the first two minutes," said sophomore film, TV and radio major Ben Ross.

"I personally thought the film was amazing, definitely straying away from other films where the roles are reversed and the female lead is such a driving character. I think it was executed perfectly," said sophomore film, TV and radio major Danny Allen.

Stern explained that the production of this film was slightly different than what he was typically used to, which provided him with small challenges that he learned to overcome.

"Normally I work with smaller crews, so it was a bit of a challenge — and a luxury — to work with such a large team on this one. Plus, there was a learning curve to working in another country with other production procedures," said Stern.

Stern also stated that he finds ways to incorporate his films into his classes.

"I would like to try and incorporate the way he wrote his script into my own work. All of the dialogue felt so natural even with all of the insane situations these characters were in. If I could learn how to write complex situations like that and make it feel normal, that would be great," said Ross.

Allen enjoyed the writing of the film as well, and was intrigued by the cinematography and lighting of the shots.

"I adored the cinematography of the film and I want to use the style of lights and color when in dark lit rooms to create a party vibe," said Allen.

For those who were unable to attend the screening, the movie is available online to buy and rent on Amazon Prime Video.

Kathleen Browne: a "GEM" of Rider University

By Liz O'Hara

GEOLGICAL, Environmental and Marine Sciences Department Chair and Associate Professor Kathleen Browne is this year's recipient of the William E. Bennett Team Award, given annually to both an individual and team whose Science Education for New Civic Engagements and Responsibilities (SENCER) activities have made exemplary and extraordinary contributions to citizen science.

Browne received this honor alongside two other educators, Jessica Monaghan of the New Brunswick Public Schools and Missy Holzer of Chatham High School. SENCER strengthens student learning and interest in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) by using an approach that makes science more accessible, local and focused on real world problems.

"This is an organization that has been around for decades that has promoted and supported college faculty in the sciences and beyond to help students use science in the context of real, complex issues in the world," Browne said.

"This means adding intrinsic motivation to learning as students will see the value of it, but also giving students a running start in helping the world with some of these complex world problems."

Browne's connection with SENCER started over 15 years ago when she first attended one of its summer programs.

"I went as a way to explore my own options for construction and it happened to be when I was running the Teaching and Learning Center and the Science Education and Literacy Center, or what is known as Rider SELECT," she said.

Browne attributes her work in the Teaching and Learning Center for completely changing her path and allowing her to become involved in science education research.

She is a carbonate sedimentologist by training but got involved in local science projects, such as lake eutrophication and invasive plants, when she arrived at Rider.

This led to her most recent research as she helps K-12 teachers improve their practice through SENCER alongside infusing the next generation science state standards.

"In these new standards is the expectation that students learn and use engineering design and in that process is problem solving," she says.

Browne was instrumental in launching a program to help K-12 teachers draft problem-based lesson plans in hopes that the teachers will use their work to infuse civic engagement into their curricula and classrooms.

In her own freshman-level science course, the future of natural resources, students study how science and non-science disciplines contribute to solutions to contemporary issues.

By using project-based, civic engagement and active learning strategies, students



Courtesy of Rider University

Kathleen Browne, center, poses with the two other winners of the William E. Bennett Team Award, Jessica Monaghan, right, and Missy Holzer, left.

explore the intersection of disciplines around pressing world issues in the natural sciences.

This course has become a SENCER model, that faculty are able to access in order to design curricular projects to connect science learning to real world challenges.

Additionally, Browne's science education work is partly about using digital media, specifically video creation, to aid in student learning.

"It's a way of getting students to produce something and show me what they understand and not have to write a paper, which I think can be enticing."

Sophomore journalism major Meghan Mulhearn, who had Browne in oceanography, attests to the benefit of such a project.

"It was fun to create [the video] and made me learn the scientific steps much quicker than doing a long, boring paper," said Mulhearn. "This was just one of the many projects that allowed students to be engaged and upbeat during the entirety of the class."

Browne received a Ph.D. from the University of Miami in 1993 and is an associate professor of geological and marine sciences, and was recently appointed Rider's Geological, Environmental and Marine Sciences (GEMS) Chair in 2017.

She has been a professor at Rider for more than 25 years, and her favorite part is "watching light bulbs go off for students and seeing them succeed."

A new R Factor champion arises

By Christian McCarville

IT is no secret that there is an abundance of talented individuals on Rider's campus. The R Factor is one of those events that allow students to bring their talents to light in front of the entire university.

The R Factor auditions pit many extremely gifted singers against one another that resulted in seven acts moving on to the finals.

It was extremely difficult to pick which performers got to move on, therefore making it even more difficult to pick a final winner.

The performers took to the stage one final time to sing their hearts out and prove to the judges that they have what it takes to be an R Factor champion.

For the finals, the four judges split the remaining contestants into multiple teams. In the past, it was customary to have four final acts coming into the last round, but this year there were seven. Within these seven acts were nine contestants, each with uniquely incredible voices eager to be projected to the audience. The judges also put together two solo performers, making them a duo.

The finals were split up into two rounds, beginning with each act performing one by one. Every performance was spectacular, making the final decision from the judges seem nearly impossible.

The contestants had to be narrowed down, however, and the audience was able to vote for their favorite act from their phone. The audience's vote picked two acts to move on, while the judges picked a third.

Therefore, the last round of the finals was narrowed down to only three performers. These three were to perform once again, and then the final verdict would be decided.

Senior environmental science major Alina Bardaji delivered a stunning performance to the judges. "For the final round, I performed an original song that I wrote,

called "The Less I Want to Go," said Bardaji.

"My favorite performance was Alina's final performance as it was original and very well done. It felt like it was a recording," said political science major Matt Schantin.

After much consideration, the audience ultimately voted for Bardaji to become this year's R Factor champion.

"When I first discovered I was this year's R Factor champion, I don't think it registered in my brain right away. I guess I was in shock because everyone was so incredibly talented and it could've gone to any one of us. To say I had not expected it would be an understatement," said Bardaji.

Bardaji explained, "there have been so many artists that have influenced my style. I try to put all of myself into my performances like Robert Plant (frontman of Led Zeppelin), or John Mayer, but vocally, James Bay is by far one of my favorites. He has a raspiness in his tone that is similar to mine, and you can hear in his voice how much he loves what he does".

R Factor is always an incredible event that creates students into stars.

However, Bardaji explains that she doesn't perform for the attention or publicity. "The best part of performing for me is being able to play for my friends and family. Although, when I'm on a stage, I'm not doing it for anyone else. It's not about the crowd or the applause for me. It's about laying my heart and soul out on the stage and doing something that brings me an indescribable amount of joy," said Bardaji.

The crowd certainly enjoyed the show and were largely entertained throughout. "I came out to the finals mostly because I saw the auditions and was excited to see it through. I also saw all three shows last year and absolutely loved it so I had to do it again this year," said Schantin.

With another successful year of R Factor in the books, fans are sure to return next year with a fresh set of competitors and possibly a few returning faces.



Courtesy of Rider University



Courtesy of Rider University

Alina Bardaji performed her original song "The Less I Want to Go" for the last round of the R Factor finals.

Long live the queen; Rider's all-female "Hamlet"

By Jason Mount

ONE of Shakespeare's well-known tragedies will be given a new spin with an all-female cast in Rider's production of "Hamlet," running from Oct. 3 to Oct. 6 in the Yvonne Theater.

Junior theater major Lauren Rejent, who plays Horatio, believes the all-female production will make this particular Shakespearian production stand out from others.

"I think the way a female tells a story definitely differs from the way a male might, especially with a show like Hamlet," she said. "So I think you get some different angles and perspectives on such a famous show which is really cool."

Junior theater major Victoria Robles, who plays Ophelia, also believed that the production's defining factor is the casting: "It really brings out a different perspective and it creates a different environment for the audience."

The casting choice also helped with the chemistry between actors, Rejent said, and helped the cast as connect better as a whole.

"There's a bond that really comes reaching a new level of vulnerability with each other since we're all females, and that vulnerability reflects in these male characters in a way that you don't see too often," Rejent explained.

Robles agreed, and said that the feminine cast has "made me feel heard and understood."

Rejent listed off a number of memorable moments from the rehearsal process that helped the cast bond, such as taking time to prepare for rehearsal outside as the sun set in the background.

"We also went over to our director Ivan Fuller's house to watch an episode of 'Mystery Science Theater 3000' that was based on watching a badly dubbed German version of 'Hamlet.' That was a lot of fun," she said.

For Robles, one of her favorite parts of the process was making Shakespeare work for a modern audience.

"What we were mostly working on was getting the show timing right," Robles said. "Hamlet takes five hours to explain. We try to cut and condense the show to make it become two hours with intermission. It was a process, but we did it."

The cast also experienced some challenges while taking on one of Shakespeare's works, some more difficult than others.

"One of the challenges would be the constant giggle fits," Rejent started as a smile grew on her face. "I know me and Victoria would always break into giggles during rehearsals and have to control ourselves."

Of course, there were also obstacles that were no laughing matter.

Robles had difficulty with Shakespeare's words, focusing most of her energy on memorizing her lines.

"Shakespeare tends to write a lot of soliloquies, and although I only had a few, it was still a process to memorize. I had to take all summer up until the middle of September to finally be memorized," Robles said.

Rejent agreed that remembering lines was a difficult task. "On a more serious note, a real challenge was memorizing lines over the summer and hitting the ground running a couple days before school started," she said. "We only had a month to put on this production so there's been a lot of tears and sweat, but a lot of laughter too."

Rejent was able to power through because of the comfortable rehearsal environment she was in, she said.

"It's easy for one person to get very overwhelmed with the content of the show, but because we were always in such a safe space surrounded by people we knew had our backs, we felt comfortable to be open enough when we were struggling so that's definitely a silver lining," she explained.

The cast is excited to show Rider what its production has to offer, and Robles believes the audience will love it for more than just the female cast, but the mixing of elements that "Hamlet" has.

"Hamlet" is definitely a different feel from the other productions done here at Rider," Robles said. "It's a tragedy play, but there's a lot of lightness and comedy here and there just to get the audience more engaged. We try to involve the audience as much as we can and break the fourth wall a lot. It's going to be amazing and I can't wait for the responses."



Courtesy of Rider University

Rider's production of Shakespeare's "Hamlet" will run Oct. 3 to Oct. 6 in the Yvonne Theater, and will feature an all-female cast.

CORRECTION

Oct. 2, 2019

Last week's issue misidentified former Board of Trustees Chair Michael Kennedy due to an editing error.

FROM THE EDITOR

Westminster students, we welcome you

APIECE like this is hard to begin because, I admit, I don't know exactly how you feel.

A part of me feels uncomfortable speaking on this because I am not in your position. I haven't faced your reality and I won't have to — but a bigger part of me knows that it is time to extend my hand to those in our community who feel the most vulnerable.

I know you are angry, I know you are hurt. There are probably times when your emotions hit you in waves and times when you feel nothing at all. It must be scary knowing that, if the latest plan is enacted, only about 200 of you are going to be thrown in with thousands of us. You must feel betrayed. I'm sure you feel like your beautiful, historic campus is being ripped from underneath you. Again, I can't say I know any of this to be true — but I want to know how you feel.

The only way I can empathize is to try and imagine myself in your situation. If I had to leave my campus — where I have built my life for the past two years, made lasting friendships, discovered my passions and built the foundation of my dreams — I would be devastated. This is why I can't fully understand how you must be feeling. Just imagining that is hard for me, living it is something completely different.

"I want to know when it became "you" and "us," or "us" and "them." Was there a time when it was all of us, one student body, one community? If so, could we reach that point again? Do you want it to be that way?"

I believe that change can be good. It challenges us to be better versions of ourselves. It forces us to face reality and move forward without fear of the future. As hard as this may be, I believe the Westminster Choir College community is resilient. Your voices have been and will continue to be heard. In the coming months, it is my hope that they will continue to grow louder.

It is easy to place the blame on this administration and feel angry and defeated. But I feel it is more necessary, however, to move forward with the reality we all face and prepare ourselves for what is expected to come. The consolidation plan, as it stands today, will be implemented in fall 2020. Now it is my responsibility, as a Lawrenceville student, to make this transition as warm and welcoming as possible.

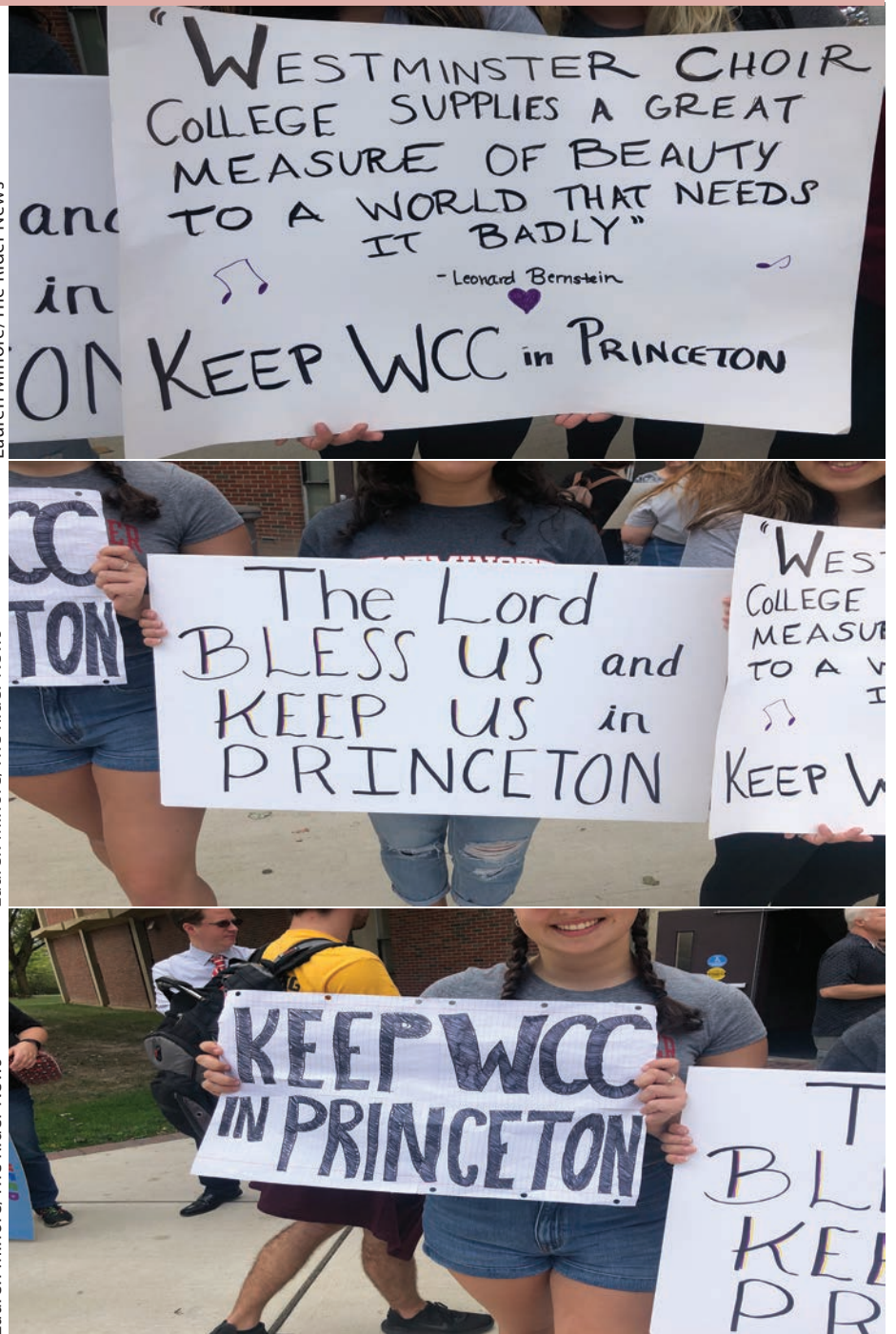
I don't know how you feel, but if there is one thing I know, it is that our Lawrenceville campus community will benefit from having you here. Rider will have a more vibrant, richer campus community with artists like you. Your passion for Westminster Choir College transcends any movement I have ever witnessed in my lifetime. I believe our student body is greater when you are a part of it. I want you to know that you are welcome and feel that this is your campus too, even when

it feels like the Rider administration is against you. Whether you believe administrators are responsible or not, it is time to embrace our identity as students of one Rider community, holding those above us in positions of power accountable.

The editorial staff of The Rider News works tirelessly to shed light on the truth every Wednesday morning. We work independently from the administration. In a world of "fake news," we prioritize honest, objective journalism. There are times, however, when our roles as students compel us to speak our truths — this is one of those times.

To the Westminster community: Our newspaper would benefit from hearing your voices. Our paper is a platform for you to utilize. We need more writers. We need more submission of opinion pieces. I hope that you will embrace this invitation.

This editorial expresses the unanimous opinion of The Rider News Editorial Board. This week's editorial was written by Managing Editor Lauren Minore.

Lauren Minore/The Rider News

Lauren Minore/The Rider News

Lauren Minore/The Rider News

THE Rider News

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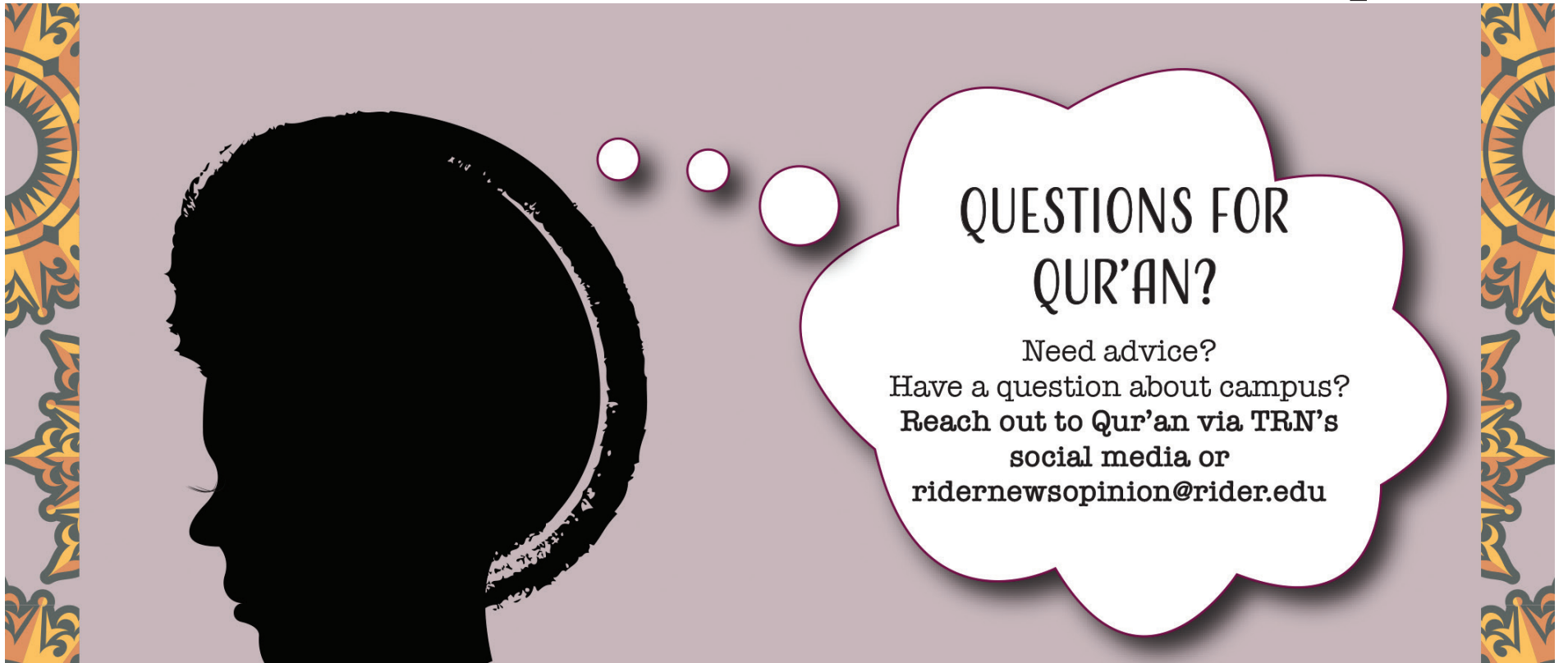
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A quick Q&A with Q *"The Boondocks" edition*

Q: What is your favorite season of The Boondocks?

A: Season two.

Q: Who is your favorite character?

A: A Pimp Named Slickback.

Q: What is your favorite episode?

A: "The Trial of Robert Kelly."

Q: What character do you relate most to?

A: Tom Dubois.

Q: What recent pop culture phenomenon do you want the reboot to touch on?

A: All of Trump's presidency.

JUNIOR JOURNALISM

HBO Max looks to reboot popular cartoon "The Boondocks"

In 2004, writer and cartoonist Aaron McGruder debuted the American sitcom "The Boondocks," which is based on the satirical comic strip of the same name. The show follows the adventures of two black boys, Riley and Huey Freeman, who experience a culture clash when they move from southside Chicago to the "boondocks" to live with their grandfather.

The show touched on the multiple components of black pop culture, including "The Trial of Robert Kelly" (second episode, first season), "The Invasion of the Katrinians" (ninth episode, second season) and the election of former President Barack Obama (first episode, third season). The Boondocks also made several unforeseen predictions that unexpectedly came true, like "The Kentucky Fried Chicken Flu" (13th episode, third season) about the fried chicken craze and how it relates to the recent Popeyes' chicken sandwich phenomenon.

Associate Professor of Communication Sheena Howard wrote her dissertation on The Boondocks (the comic book), enjoying the political and social commentary the strip offered.

"The Boondocks,' historically, is very significant. 'The Boondocks' animated show was edgy, controversial and, at times, offensive. I think it was impactful in that it enjoyed a crossover audience, racially but focused on the life of a black family, headed by a grandfather," said Howard.

"The Boondocks" brought something new and relatable to television. The raw coverage of early 2000s pop culture and the exposure of stereotypical dynamics in black culture highlighted on TV was important to see and refreshing to connect to.

"It was about a black family and it used very specific African-American cultural dynamics. Doing this, especially in the early 2000's, usually makes it hard for a show to succeed. The show included African-American vernacular English, black style and aesthetic, as well as a needed shared cultural foundation in order to really get some of the jokes. Some of it was universal, but some of it was very black American centered. To me, this made the show unique. Also, the art style in which the series is drawn is influenced by manga and anime, which makes it special. The blend of African American cultural dynamics and the influence of manga and anime was visually pleasing and interesting," said Howard.

HBO announced "The Boondocks" will return to television in 2020 which has

sparked a social media debate about whether the show will uphold its satirical reputation. One side of the debate believes that in today's climate the public has become more "sensitive" and "The Boondocks" may have a harder time succeeding in 2019.

"We live in a time period, where it's no longer funny or cool to make fun of those who are marginalized, that song and dance has long gone. Comedians and comedy-based shows need to be funny, without the marginalized being the butt of the joke. The show would have to adapt in that specific area, if it wants to do well," said Howard. "I think [writer] Aaron McGruder has proven that he can adapt and adjust to the times and modern social-political issues. He did it with 'The Boondocks' comic strip, pumping out cultural and politically relevant content weekly."

"Watching the show is so relatable, especially if you grew up in the hood or know someone who grew up in the hood. I love seeing characters that look like me, sometimes act like me and are freely expressing their different opinions. For the reboot I want to see the Popeyes' chicken sandwich come to life, all of Trump's presidency and their take on today's reality shows," said sophomore communication studies major Rikiyah Mixson.

The reason "The Boondocks" has done so well in the past is because of their objectiveness on controversial topics. The writers did an amazing job telling all sides of mainstream, contentious issues. The show's goal was to make fun of real people that many of us have known or come in contact with. Its accurate use of satire is what drew its audience in and is what is driving it to make a comeback in 2020.

The new series from the original creator Aaron McGruder will have 24 episodes and launch in fall 2020 with a 50-minute special.

All 55 episodes of the original series will also be available on the direct-to-consumer offering at launch.

*junior journalism major
Qur'an Hansford*



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THE CHALLENGE OF FREE SPEECH ON OUR CAMPUSES

An Evening with Fred Lawrence, J.D.

Thursday, October 3 | 7 p.m.

Cavalla Room in the Bart Luedeke Center

Frederick M. Lawrence, 10th secretary/CEO of the Phi Beta Kappa Society, is a distinguished lecturer at the Georgetown Law Center, and has previously served as president of Brandeis University, dean of the George Washington University Law School, and visiting professor and senior research scholar at Yale Law School. He was elected to the American Philosophical Society in 2018 and the American Law Institute in 1999. An accomplished scholar, teacher and attorney, Lawrence is one of the nation's leading experts on civil rights, free expression and bias crimes. He has testified before Congress concerning free expression on campus and on federal hate crime legislation. His legal career was distinguished by service as an assistant U.S. attorney for the southern district of New York in the 1980s, where he became chief of the Civil Rights Unit.

WOMEN'S SOCCER

Two quick goals push Rider past Quinnipiac

By Allie V. Riches

WITH less than seven minutes left in the second half, the Broncs scored two goals to defeat Quinnipiac, 2-0, on Sept. 28.

The win brought Rider's conference record to 1-0-1 after the Broncs tied with Siena in their first Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference (MAAC) game on Sept. 21.

Rider's match with Quinnipiac started slow and neither team was able to find the goal. Quinnipiac led in shots on goal with six, while the Broncs only mustered one shot on goal in the first 45 minutes of action.

"We were somewhat quiet in the first half," junior back Kaitlyn Siciliano said. "We talked about it and said that we needed more communication."

Both teams pushed to produce offense in the second half. However, strong defensive play prevailed. Quinnipiac put nine shots on goal in the second half, all of which were saved by junior goal keeper Carmen Carbonell.

"[Carbonell] played great," Head Coach Drayson Hounscome said. "She had 15 saves and five of those would've hit the back of the net. That's what you want from your keeper."

Carbonell's performance against Quinnipiac helped her earn MAAC Defensive Player of the Week honors on Sept. 30. Freshman midfielder Camryn Dees won MAAC Rookie of the Week honors on the same day after she recorded an assist against Quinnipiac.

Rider's play decided the game in the closing six minutes. In the 84th minute, sophomore midfielder Ailis Martin scored the first goal of the game.

After breaking the tie, one thing was on the mind of senior midfielder Sofia Soares and the other Rider players: do it again.



Peter G. Borg/Rider University

Senior midfielder **Sofia Soares** scored a goal in the 85th minute of Rider's 2-0 win over Quinnipiac on Sept. 28.

"As soon as we managed to get the first goal, the huddle after was 'Okay girls, let's focus. Let's let nothing past our defense and let's get straight after it again,'" said Soares.

Less than a minute later, Soares netted a goal of her own. The pair of scores cemented the game for the Broncs and gave them the 2-0 victory.

Siciliano attributed the energy of the first goal as a catalyst to their second score.

"After we had that first goal, everyone was saying 'Let's go,'" Siciliano said. "I just heard a ton of talking on the field after that, which was really important."

Quinnipiac outshot Rider 30-9 in the match, though Hounscome didn't see that fact as a negative. "Another way to look at it is that out of their 30

shots, 15 of them gave us possession of the ball, so it definitely wasn't something we were concerned about," Hounscome said.

Hounscome also said that Carbonell showcased what it meant to be a goalkeeper against Quinnipiac.

"You want your keeper to make the big time save when it comes rather than the quantity of saves," Hounscome said. "It's the quality of the saves that she made when she had to make them that was critical."

The Broncs travel home to Ben Cohen Field on Oct. 2 to host Niagara at 3:30 p.m. Rider hits the road again on Oct. 5 to take on Marist at 6 p.m.

CORRECTION

Oct. 2, 2019

Rider plays Canisius on Oct. 5, not Fairfield.

VOLLEYBALL

Broncs fall to American, split MAAC matchups

By Austin Ferguson

AFTER victories in their first two matches of the Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference (MAAC) schedule, the Broncs were shut out in an out-of-conference match against American University and split two MAAC contests against Siena and Marist to end the week 1-2.

Rider traveled to the nation's capital to take on American University on Sept. 25. The Broncs came into the match after they had won three straight games for the first time this season.

American stopped Rider in their tracks and won in consecutive sets, 25-15, 25-12 and 25-19. The loss was the last out-of-conference matchup for the Broncs this regular season.

Despite the sweep, freshman opposite hitter Morgan Romano continued her sensational rookie campaign with 12 kills against American. Sophomore setter Anilee Sher also had a powerful showing for Rider and recorded 19 assists and a kill in its losing effort.

The Broncs looked to bounce back from their loss at American with a home matchup against Siena on Sept. 28.

Rider dropped the first set by a close margin, 25-22. After the Broncs soundly took the second set, 25-15, both teams battled it out in the third set. Siena managed to hold on to a lead for a majority of the set and brought the score to set point multiple times. Rider continued to battle from behind and eventually took the set, 29-17.

The Broncs secured the fourth set, 25-18, and took down Siena, 3-1. The win brought Rider's MAAC record to 3-0, its best conference start since 2015, when the Broncs won their first seven MAAC games.

Romano continued her dominance in the match with 24 kills over the four sets. Junior outside hitter Ali Ward complimented Romano and recorded 14 kills herself.

Senior libero Rachelle Runyon and freshman defensive specialist Pamela Loh anchored the Broncs defense with 16 and 12 digs respectively. Loh's 12 digs were the most she had recorded in her career with Rider.

The Broncs' early success with MAAC opponents appeared to be continuing against Marist on Sept. 29 when Rider took the first set, 25-20. Marist, however, answered with back-to-back set wins, 25-18 and 25-17, to take a 2-1 match lead.

With their backs against the wall, the Broncs took a 25-22 victory in the fourth



Peter G. Borg/Rider University

Sophomore setter **Anilee Sher** recorded a season-high 55 assists in Rider's 3-2 loss at Marist on Sept. 29.

set and forced a fifth and deciding set. Marist rallied in the fifth to take the set, 15-8, and escaped with a 3-2 match victory.

Rider did not go out quietly in its first conference loss of the season.

On offense, Romano and Ward registered double-digit kills. Romano led the Broncs with 24 kills and Ward finished close behind with 16 kills of her own.

Sher put up her best passing performance of the season and recorded 55 assists over Rider's five sets.

On defense, three Broncs recorded 10 or more digs against Marist. Runyon had a team-high of 25 digs, while Loh and junior defensive specialist Danielle Blanco each registered 10 digs.

On Oct. 1, Romano was named MAAC Rookie of the Week for the fifth consecutive week. Romano is one MAAC Rookie of the Week award away from tying the conference record for most rookie honors in

Rider moves on to two MAAC road matchups in attempt to salvage their strong start to conference play.

The Broncs play Niagara on Oct. 5 at 1 p.m. Rider won its last two matchups.

Sports

Online Today:

The van Ommeren sisters sit down for a video interview.



FEATURE

Meet the van Ommerens

By Dylan Manfre

The last time field hockey Head Coach Lori Hussong had siblings on her roster was 2004: the year the Boston Red Sox won its first World Series since 1918, former United States President Ronald Regan passed away at age 93 and President George W. Bush was re-elected for a second term.

Hussong's next set are a pair of Dutch sisters who live and breathe field hockey.

Meet Tess van Ommeren and Kiki van Ommeren.

For the first time in her life, Tess van Ommeren has the privilege of calling her sister a teammate at Rider.

Their journey to Lawrenceville, New Jersey, began on the other side of the world — 3,690 miles to be exact — in Amsterdam, Netherlands. They picked up field hockey six years prior to the average age children would start playing in America at age 12.

They both played for the First Ladies AthenA club team, the highest level in the Netherlands. Kiki van Ommeren played on the youth team for a year prior to coming to America. Tess van Ommeren played one year for the older group team, which has some of the country's top talent.

People in the Netherlands can play the sport anywhere from age six to upwards of 60, according to the sisters' mother, Gabrielle Luhrman. She even played until she

suffered a knee injury at age 40, caused from field hockey.

"It always brings back memories [of when I played], watching Tess and Kiki," Luhrman said in an email. "We share the love for this sport with our family and friends. The first years of their lives Tess and Kiki were coming with me to all of my games just like all the other kids of my teammates."

Above all, Luhrman is elated to see her daughters succeed. She is even planning a trip to America with her sister this month to visit her daughters and the team.

"It really makes me happy, grateful and proud," Luhrman said. "They are so lucky to have this opportunity to grow as a player as well as a person. I hope this adventure will bond them even more for the rest of their lives."

The sisters always spent time practicing in their backyard or with their friends at a local park from the first time they picked up a stick. The sport runs in the blood of the van Ommeren family as they are synonymous with the highest level of field hockey.

Luhrman, who is a board member of the AthenA field hockey club, said when the girls were 12 years old they worked as field hockey trainers.

"I started playing around six years old and [Kiki] just came with me because she was my sister and playing

with my team," Tess van Ommeren said. "When you start earlier, with anything, it's going to be easier for you."

Coming to America was difficult for Tess van Ommeren. She was the first in her family to travel to the United States. While she had a basic understanding of the language, she said it was still a challenge to get acquainted.

"It was super hard in the beginning," she said. "I had a really hard time... it's hard to communicate with people and with preseason, you practice everyday and we don't do that at home. That was all new. That was one of the

reasons I wanted to come here."

Adjusting without her sister in the house was hard for Kiki van

me and my mom were so sad." Kiki van Ommeren said. "It was super weird. Our mom works sometimes really late and sometimes Tess would come home, but now it's just me and my mom."

When it came time for Kiki van Ommeren to look at options for colleges, she had her older sister give her the rundown on college life in America.

"She told me stories about how she made friends," Kiki van Ommeren said. "I didn't have that information about other schools so it made me feel a little bit closer."

One intriguing story Tess van Ommeren shared with her sister was that the team took ice baths to recover after practices.

"I thought that was so cool," Kiki van Ommeren said. "I once saw a movie where the Dutch National Team went in ice baths. It felt super professional."

When asked about how it felt sliding into the frigid tub, she laughed and summed the experience up in four words.

"It wasn't that special."

It's safe to say that playing her first game was a bit more satisfying than the shivers of an ice bath for Kiki van Ommeren.

When preseason ended and it was time for the team to put on their cranberry jerseys to face Lehigh, Kiki van Ommeren would be the only sibling to suit up.

A quad injury sidelined Tess van Ommeren for the season opener but she was able to rid her sister of those first-game jitters and cheer her on.

"She always makes me feel super comfortable and we know each other very well," Kiki van Ommeren said. "She knows what to say to make me feel good."

Immediately when Kiki took the field, Hussong was beyond impressed at how dynamic of a player she was. She came to Rider as advertised.

"I think she is an amazing kid to

have on the team. Nobody outworks Kiki on the field in everything that she does. She does everything with a smile on her face. She's really appreciative and happy for this opportunity, not only to play for Rider, but to play with her older sister," Hussong said.

"Kiki is getting better each time out. We've had her playing several positions on the field

already trying to get a feel of which will help us the most. She's an athlete and she can run all day."

The anticipated first game the sisters would take the field together was against La Salle when the Broncos pulled out a 2-1 double overtime victory for their first win of the year.

Kiki van Ommeren was responsible for the opening goal.

"The second I scored, I was like 'Huh,'" she laughed.

"And then I realized I scored and I was so happy. I've never been so happy with scoring a goal.

Winning seasons also feel really good but this is a totally different thing. It felt so good."

Tess van Ommeren said she was more proud of her sister scoring than if she were to score herself.

Now the sisters have played in seven games together and never once did it feel odd. In fact, the opposite is true.

"I expected it to feel weird or something but it doesn't feel different at all," Tess said. "It feels like she should be here."

Aside from being very supportive of each other, the van Ommerens show a sense of genuine humility. There is no sibling rivalry.

When asked who they thought the better player was:

"I think Tess is," Kiki van Ommeren said.

"And I think Kiki is," Tess van Ommeren said pointing to her sister. "I didn't know she was this good before she came here. She was a little insecure the first few games. Now she's all over the place and playing so good."

Their teammates feel the same way. "They're selfless," sophomore midfielder Carly Brosious said. "They're very supportive of each other. [Kiki] is our goofball. She always has everybody laughing no matter what."

Senior midfielder Tess Coorens might have said it best: "They look up to each other."



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Ommeren too. She described it as "like someone had died."

"The first few months she was away,



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