



Rider Rock makes groundbreaking move

By Jake Tiger

DESPITE tectonic shakeups at Rider over the last two decades, the unwavering Rider Rock outside of the Bart Luedeke Center was always something the community could take for granite.

But even rocks can change given enough time, and on Sept. 27, Rider’s stunted monolith was hauled to its new home beside the Office of Admissions with hopes that it can become a much-needed cornerstone of culture at an embattled university.

The three-hour operation cost \$900, according to Vice President of University Operations Mike Recca.

Beyond the price tag, many were left pondering the meaning behind the move, as it could not have been a simple practice of the Patrick Star method: take the Rider Rock and push it somewhere else.

Rider President Gregory Dell’Omo said, “[The rock is] the tradition of becoming a member of the Rider community. ... The reason we wanted to move it here is because we wanted that experience to actually begin the moment you visit the campus.”

It’s not just a boulder

The rock, gifted by Rider’s Student Government Association, first touched down on campus in 2006, and with it came the tradition of students touching it only twice: once as an incoming freshman or transfer, and once as a graduating senior.

Its location on the BLC’s fringe was chosen when Rider’s commencement ceremony was still on campus, and students would conveniently pass it when they walked at graduation.

However, when commencement was moved to CURE Insurance Arena in 2017, the once-foundational tradition began to erode and the stocky

obelisk eventually became obsolete, according to Drew Aromando, Rider’s vice president of enrollment management.

“From the point that we moved graduation off campus, the idea was to build it back into some kind of tradition,” said Aromando, who began advocating for the rock’s move in 2021. “We wanted to try and tie the message of the rock into that experience a student has from their very first moment on campus.”

With the stone’s new home behind P.J. Ciambelli Hall, where campus tours began, it will be the first stop for prospective students, who will touch the granite slab, and in theory, begin to develop a bond with Rider.

Dell’Omo said, “It was a pretty location and I understand why it was put there, but ... in the past, [prospective students] didn’t really have that connection, even though it was relatively close. This makes it very, very upfront and more personal and more intimate.”

It’s a rock

At first, there were understandably some problems when trying to get the rock airborne on the misty, fall morning of Sept. 27; it had remained motionless for 18 years for a reason.

The private contractors Rider hired arrived around 8 a.m. with a forklift and a mix of straps to hoist the rock, but they had trouble getting underneath the hulking, misshapen mass, and eventually they decided to leave for an hour and return with heavy-duty straps.

Lifting the rock was initially so difficult that it prompted one of the contractors to question how the ancient, forklift-less Egyptians could have possibly built the Great Pyramids of Giza: “They had these big, 15-ton rocks, and they did it with rope and... hope?”



Josiah Thomas/The Rider News

Contractors move the Rider Rock to P.J. Ciambelli Hall.

With enough grit, the workers managed to get the stone up and onto the forklift, which was when the machine’s operator realized that the rock was 9,120 pounds – more than a ton over the estimate of 7,000.

Students walking to their morning classes began to cluster up on the Campus Green as the rock made its treacherous trip across the wet, uneven terrain.

After about 30 minutes, the forklift made its way over to the rock’s new location, which sits alongside a path to the admissions building that was installed over the summer.

Aromando, Dell’Omo and students surrounded the machine, watching as it lowered the rock onto the thin strip of concrete with shocking precision.



COVID dampens class of 2025’s involvement

By Jay Roberson

NAVIGATING a pandemic and the college admissions process was a tricky balance for most prospective students in 2021. They were transitioning away from a virtual world and adjusting to in-person classes while taking COVID-19 precautions.

When asked about her college decision process, senior political science major and Student Government Association President Christina Natoli said, “You kind of had to fill in what you might not be seeing [on tour]. I remember I was so happy when classes started because Rider was a smaller school, that people not being out was a result of that. But seeing how much campus vibrancy there really was, it was tricky because we weren’t able to see that in bloom.”

Not only were first-year students figuring out how to manage college life, but Rider was figuring out what worked for the institution post-pandemic.

Vice President of Student Affairs Nick Barbati said, “We were trying to still navigate the challenges of reinstating a campus with tradition and events that are signature to the school, but finding ways that could accommodate for COVID-19. So it was still non-traditional [that year] in that regard.”

Senior English major David Collins is involved in a

plethora of clubs and organizations, but still feels Rider does not always go out of its way to provide events for current students.

“You have to kind of go out of your way to look [for events] besides the beginning of the semesters, where they do the club fairs. There’s not much that Rider does to make you aware of what’s going on,” Collins said.

Collins said in his first-year experience many people he knew made friend groups and stuck with them because there weren’t many chances to connect with more students.

Senior Arts and Entertainment Industry Management major Michaela Smith decided to get more involved as she adjusted to Rider.

“I picked at least one club, just to not get too overwhelmed. But I think as time went on, I found myself feeling okay. I think it was more so just getting a handle on the academic routine,” Smith said.

Though she wasn’t involved in much, Smith felt she was able to stay connected with campus through social media and advertisements her freshman year.

Barbati said, “It took groups of clubs and organizations a little while to get footing after the pandemic. Also, some of the clubs and organizations didn’t immediately return to their full activity ... as the



Photo courtesy of Rider University

SGA President **Christina Natoli** found it hard to fit in in 2021.




years have gone by, students were reinstating clubs that might have gone dormant for a little while.”

In an Instagram questionnaire The Rider News posted on Sept. 30, some students from the class of 2025 stated when they first arrived on campus, they found it difficult to get involved.

Many of these students took it upon themselves to get more involved in their sophomore and junior years.

Natoli said, “The class of 2025 was getting its last year taken from high school. [A lot of them were] unmotivated because they missed out on what some might call the fun part, or the end experience. Now that we have that opportunity in college, they’re less



<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg); font-weight: bold; font-size: 2em;">INSIDE</p>	<p>BRONCS HIT A WALL <i>After winning three straight, Rider field hockey suffered a shutout loss.</i> PAGE 8</p> 	<p>MARCELLUS WILLIAMS' EXECUTION <i>The public is appalled by the unjust execution of Marcellus Williams.</i> PAGE 6</p> 	<p>RIDER GOES DANCING WITH 'RHYTHM AND ROOTS' <i>Rider's CDI hosts a night of celebration for Hispanic Heritage Month.</i> PAGE 4</p> 
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SECURITY BRIEFS

BY KLAUDINE BESSASPARIS

Information provided by Public Safety Capt. Matthew Babcock

Re-lint-less mess

Linty lineups. On Sept. 25, at 12:45 p.m., Public Safety was contacted by a student regarding excessive lint near the dryers in Hill Hall. The student was concerned with the amount of lint that had built up behind the dryer and the fire risk caused by such a condition. Public Safety responded, confirmed the issue and contacted Facilities Management to have the area and ducts cleaned.

Through the looking glass

Glass ghosts. On Sept. 25, at 5:02 p.m., Public Safety was dispatched to Olson Residence Hall for the report of criminal mischief. Students in Olson reported someone banging on their room window. When they checked the window, they found the outside pane of glass was broken. It is unknown who or what may have broken the glass. Public Safety is investigating.

Smoke screen

Cover reveal. On Sept. 29, at 4:20 p.m., Public Safety was dispatched to University House for the report of a fire safety violation. Residence Life discovered a covered smoke detector head while performing its rounds. Public Safety arrived on location, documented the covered smoke detector head and then uncovered it. The Lawrence Township Fire Marshal's office was notified of the incident and the incident was referred to the Office of Community Standards.



Photo courtesy of Kim Algeo

Rider has the most international students this fall in over a decade.

2024 international class is largest in 10 years

By Hannah Newman

RIDER welcomed 84 international students this fall from 30 different countries, making the largest international class the university has seen in over a decade, if not ever, according to Kim Algeo, director of the Office of International Education.

"It's definitely the most [students] in 10 years. It could be ever, but we just don't have the data analytics to track it," said Algeo.

Since last year, the number of international students has grown by 14.

Among the 84 students, 30 are exchange students here for one semester. These students come from a variety of European countries, some of which include Sweden, Finland, England, France and Germany, according to Algeo. Currently, there are 21 international athletes.

While adjusting to American life, the international students still come eager to learn and connect with their peers, Algeo said.

"I always hear them say that they are excited to meet new people and integrate with Americans," said Algeo. "Some of them get really disappointed when they find out they don't have an American roommate."

Algeo explained that Rider guides its international students through life in America by helping them grow accustomed to their classes and lifestyle change by taking them to New York and Philadelphia, which are in close proximity to campus.

"We pick them up from the airport, we take them on a week-long orientation around Rider, we go to New York and the Statue of Liberty," said Algeo. "I

think that's a big driving factor."

In addition to the planned excursions, the international students are taken to Target to get dorm supplies and attend a welcome lunch with Rider President Gregory Dell'Omo.

Senior education major Maria Tarodo Bravo was a student at the University of Antonio De Nebrija in Madrid, and met Algeo when the OIE director was visiting to recruit international students.

Tarodo Bravo was immediately drawn to Rider and decided to spend her last two years of college in Lawrenceville.

"The [OIE] is amazing. They help us with everything and they are our family here," said Tarodo Bravo. "They gave us the confidence to know that they are going to be with us always."

Algeo mentioned that, during the pandemic in 2020 and the worldwide lockdowns, the OIE feared there would be a dip in international students. However, numbers have only increased.

"Nobody was getting a visa because the embassies weren't open or taking interviews, so it wasn't even possible to come here," said Algeo. "A lot of students had to defer their time in 2020, so we had a lot more in 2021."

Despite being in college during the peak of Covid, Bravo mentioned that nothing could stop her from experiencing what she has at Rider. She would recommend the program to anyone looking to study abroad.

"Don't be afraid... It is going to be awesome. Just go there with an open mind because the culture is so different."

Rider Rock reaction

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

During and after the rock's journey, students took to Fizz, a social media app for university-related posts, to discuss, question and quip about the 150-foot transplant that seemed pointless on the surface.

One anonymous user joked that the rock looked "naked" without its usual shroud of shrubbery, and another mourned the landmark's old location, which had a perfectly rock-shaped void.

Aromando said the university does plan on decorating around the rock.

While the Rider Rock's new, unfurnished home may take some getting used to, Aromando was confident the move will resolidify the crumbled custom.

"Moving it maybe 50 yards puts it in this perfect place on this path to the academic quad, and secondly, it's right next to the admissions building," Aromando said. "It starts their journey. Given the message on the rock of 'your time here will transform you,' there's no better place."



Scan to see the Rider Rock's journey!

Video by Josiah Thomas

2025 class steps up

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

motivated to want to take on leadership roles and get involved."

Possibly as a result of this, the class of 2025 currently has the least amount of leadership roles in SGA, according to Natoli.

Barbati said, "The lives of students have changed, as students are weighing commitments to internships and class scheduling and employment. I think it's a little hard for them to be committing so far out. It's probably reflective of the changing demographic of students or what they can initially sign up for."

For some students, like Natoli, taking on leadership roles in college made up for years lost to the lockdown in high school.

"Especially as someone who was new to leadership coming into college, I kind of took the ... lack of opportunities from high school and use[d] it to motivate me to get involved, and I think that the peers and faculty I had around me were definitely supportive of that and were able to help me along the way," Natoli said.

Though the pandemic had an impact on the first few years of the class of 2025's college experience, it has still been able to prosper in their own way.

"Ultimately, I do think this year's senior class is every bit as exceptional and has made their mark every bit as much as any other class year that's been here," said Barbati.

AI's academic value debated by professors; universitywide policy to be reevaluated

By Caroline Haviland

ARTIFICIAL intelligence began plaguing Rider classrooms in 2022 with the introduction of ChatGPT – an AI chatbot that uses machine learning to respond to human language. In response to the new AI challenges, a task force was created to draft a proposal that incorporates the new technology into the school code of academic integrity.

The result of this proposal, however, led to confusion rather than solutions on where the university stands: is AI in academia an instrument or an invader?

AI as a tool

Provost DonnaJean Fredeen organized the academic integrity task force, hoping to add to the current policy a universitywide agreement on AI in the classroom. The final proposal awaits approval from the university academic policy committee.

“There was a task force last year on academic integrity, and they were bringing forward a policy that makes it very clear [that] the use of AI is considered academic dishonesty unless the professor has very, very clearly stated it can be used,” Fredeen said in a Sept. 9 interview with The Rider News. “That will be making its way through the [university academic policy committee] this semester.”

Associate Professor Wil Lindsay served as the committee chair, but he could not comment on the content of the proposal due to its delayed deliberation.

“It’s getting stalled because people in various places don’t agree, and we want more student input,” said Lindsay. “There’s just not enough agreement on it at this point.”

Lindsay, who teaches game and interactive media

design, uses AI in his courses, a choice he said “everyone needs to take with a grain of salt.”

“AI is a conglomerate of existing work. It’s not super effective for final products, but it works great for prototyping,” said Lindsay. “You can’t go to an AI and say ‘make me this game.’ We teach it as a tool in game design just like any other software.”

The use of AI for various sections of visual arts, such as videos and photos, is not as advanced in comparison to its writing capabilities, making it reliable for prototyping concepts.

The advanced technology can skip steps for Lindsay’s students with features, including para programming, which replaces the coding once done by a programmer in game design. This causes concern for the future jobs devoted to tasks like this.

“Those people might be losing their jobs, I wouldn’t doubt that. But at the same time there will be other jobs and other sectors improving that AI,” said Lindsay.

AI infractions

Olivia Newman, chair of the Department of Government, Politics and Law, is one of many professors who adamantly opposes AI. She worries these large language learning models undercut processes like working through and comprehending dense text and analyzing people’s ideas.

“There were already big challenges with student attention spans post-pandemic, and their sticktoitiveness to get through challenging assignments,” said Newman. “Everyone came out of the pandemic banged up, and now with AI coming in at this place, it’s a very tempting short-cut.”

Newman’s department created a policy that strictly bans AI use for all assignments, which could create a

confusing landscape for students in regards to other AI policies in different departments. Newman said, however, that coming to a unanimous, universitywide agreement might be a losing battle.

“You could ask AI to help you brainstorm for a paper, and maybe that would help at the moment, but I want students who can brainstorm for themselves and not become dependent on artificial intelligence,” said Newman.

Lindsay added he could not say whether the finalization of the policy would take “several weeks or months.”



Maggie Kleiner/The Rider News

Rider’s current AI policy leaves its usage up to professors.

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Rider's drag race goes 'full force'

By Katherine Sukunda

DRAG queens dominated the stage on Sept. 28 at 7 p.m. in the Bart Luedke Center Theater as the beloved Rider Drag Race returned to campus.

The host of the performance was a Rider community favorite and professional drag queen, VinChelle, who dazzled in a twinkling, long-sleeve dress.

Among the drag queens who performed for the packed theater were local legends Stefani Steel, Octavia Anyae, Kimmy Sumony and Jolina Jasmine.

Following the professionals were four student participants, who took to the stage one by one, stunning the audience as they sang and danced in elaborate outfits, usually accompanied by dramatic mid-performance costume changes.

Stefani Steel's performance to Ariana Grande's "Touch It" included her entering the stage in a fluffy, floor-length coat decorated with stars, which she took off to reveal a black leather piece she described as "mysterious and sexy."

She expressed her immense love for drag when asked what being a part of the drag community meant to her.

"The drag community is uplifting everybody at gigs like this and making college students and newer people who have never seen drag understand that it's

just a fun time and it's art," she said.

Jolina Jasmine, who kicked off her night to Tyla's "Water" in a ruffly, purple long-sleeve dress, described her passion for the artistic side of drag and the bond she has with her fellow drag queens. She shared that since 2001, drag has been an artistic outlet for her to express her love for doing makeup and creating things.

"Being a part of the drag community is like being in a sisterhood," she said.

Barbie Diva, a Rider senior double majoring in Spanish and English, shared that the Rider Drag Race was one of her first performances. Pairing a black crop top, a pink skirt and red tights, Barbie Diva took on the stage with confidence.

"I just wanted to do something that looked cute, something that screamed queen diva," said Barbie Diva when asked about the inspiration behind her look.

Host VinChelle concluded the evening with a thank you to the Rider community and a reminder that to her, Pride Month and Black History Month are every month.

Stefani Steel encouraged individuals who might be interested in trying drag to just go all in: "Put on a wig. Put on some shoes. That's all. Just go full force and be very confident about it."



Destiny Pagan/The Rider News

Kimmy Sumony wears a glittery, red dress and waves the train.



Destiny Pagan/The Rider News

Miracle Monroe gives the audience an emotional performance.



Destiny Pagan/The Rider News

Vinchelle, the host of the night, shows off her silver dress.



Destiny Pagan/The Rider News

Over Dewey Decimal graces the stage.

MAACness basketball is Hollywood bound

By Madison Lewis

RIDER'S 2024 men's and women's basketball teams emerged from a smoky haze, walking along a red carpet as multi-colored lights engulfed the stage and Rider-branded shirts flew into the surrounding crowd.

On Sept. 27, the Office of Campus Life hosted the annual MAACness celebration to commemorate the Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference and the new basketball season. The theme was "MAACness Goes Hollywood," and the event was held in the SRC Parking Lot.

At the front of the lot, students lined up patiently, waiting for bracelets that allowed them to grab free food from the trucks. Familiar food vendors surrounded the lot, including Mister Softee, Nomad Pizza, and Shaved Ice and Sweets, where students had to show their wristbands to gain access to the event.

While supplies lasted, students with wristbands grabbed mini backpacks and reusable water bottles adorned with the Rider logo.

Clubs and organizations such as the Transfer Student Association and the Student Government Association tabled to get name recognition and encourage potential members to join.

Alongside the food trucks were immense, inflatable games like basketball and "Connect Four" that students challenged friends to while waiting for the MAACness festivities.

There was a red carpet that led to a stage, which held the main event: the introduction of Rider's basketball players and coaches.

Rider's beloved mascot, "AJ The Bronc," made an appearance wearing a tuxedo, dressed to impress for the upcoming start of basketball season.

The Rider cheerleaders and dance team performed choreographed routines to music played by the Rider Pep Band, preparing the guests for the show.

"Seven Nation Army" by The White Stripes hyped up the crowd as the players lined up before walking out to their songs of choice. Bad Bunny, Kendrick Lamar and other rap artists' works emitted from the speakers.

When all players were introduced, the coaches announced the first games for each team.

The men's team will start on Oct. 26 against Holy Family University, and the women's team will start on Nov. 4 against Navy.

After the introductions and announcements concluded, the barriers between the crowd and the performers were torn down with vigor, and the Broncs in the audience were urged to make their way to a makeshift dance floor to do "The Wobble" alongside the cheer and dance teams.

In past years, MAACness was held in the Alumni Gym. However, according to senior business administration major Ella Osmer, the first open house of the semester was held in the gym where the event usually took place.

The rain was a hindrance for the performers, as the flips and tricks characteristic of the dance and cheer teams were not executed. Despite that, both clubs had coordinated dances and opportunities to show off their skills to the Broncs.

Sophomore arts and entertainment industry management major Alina Eusebio, who is a new member of the dance team, said that they had been practicing their routine to "A Milli" by Lil Wayne for

two weeks in preparation for the event.

"MAACness is a great opportunity for [the] dance team so everybody got to see our faces and we were introduced to ... the basketball teams as well as [the] band and [the] cheer [team]."

After the "Cha Cha Slide," the students gained confidence, dancing to the "Electric Slide," the "Macarena" and other well-known dances until the Hollywood-themed dream ended.



Josiah Thomas/The Rider News

Junior guard Taylor Blunt dances as she walks onto the red carpet.

Maggie Kleiner/The Rider News

Rhythm and Roots

A Celebration of Salsa, Merengue and Bachata!



"Rhythm and Roots" featured a collection of live music, dancing and traditional Hispanic cuisine.

Rider goes dancing with 'Rhythm and Roots'

By Grace Bertrand

STUDENTS came prepared to own the dance floor the evening of Sept. 30 as live traditional Hispanic music echoed throughout the Cavalla Room, creating a festive atmosphere.

The Center for Diversity and Inclusion hosted "Rhythm and Roots," a night of cultural celebration where students and faculty enjoyed vibrant sounds, Hispanic cuisine and even a few dance lessons in honor of Hispanic Heritage Month.

"My goal was to get students engaged and active in celebrating the different heritages we have here on campus," said CDI Director Jasmine Johnson. "I think the more hands-on students can get, the more they're gonna want to come out and be engaged."

Hispanic Heritage Month recognizes and celebrates the influence of Hispanic culture and its history in the U.S., observed annually from Sept. 15 to Oct. 15. According to a diversity report from fall 2023, Hispanics are the second largest demographic at Rider.

A cultural celebration

The evening of festivities began with lively performances by Rick Reyes and the Pasofino Social Club. Throughout the night the band performed iconic songs with traditional Spanish instruments like congas, maracas, bongos and ocarinas.

"The beauty about this is that there are so many Latinos from different parts of Latin America all gathering together," said Reyes, who is from Puerto Rico. "As much as it is a celebration of these individual cultures,

it is also a celebration of Latin culture in America."

During the breaks between live music, a professional dance instructor graced the floor to teach traditional salsa, merengue and bachata. Everyone was encouraged to join in as the dances suited individuals of all experience levels.

When people were not dancing, they were digging into an assortment of appetizers from Hispanic cuisine. They served sides of salsa, guacamole and sour cream alongside tables of flautas de pollo, which are crispy rolled-up tortillas filled with chicken, beef empanada and cheese quesadillas. There were refreshments of water and limonada Mexicana, and a classic dessert: churros.

Importance of inclusivity

Co-sponsoring the event with the CDI was Rider's DominiRican club, the first Dominican and Puerto Rican club on campus, and Rider Latinas Unidas, an inclusive club for Latinx women.

"I think the importance of having an event like this is just uniting the community," said Liz Ortiz, sophomore human resource management major.

Ortiz is the founder and president of the DominiRican club and serves as the chair for public relations of Rider Latinas Unidas.

"One of the reasons I wanted to start the DominiRican club is because Latinos are very family-oriented, and I wanted to create a community where everyone is welcome..., not only Hispanics," Ortiz said.

Ortiz said she hopes to see Rider host more events that celebrate different cultures on campus, aside from

just Hispanic heritage.

"I definitely encourage Rider or [the] Office of Campus Life to create more events that are Latin-based and just multicultural-based," Ortiz said. "We have a lot more other heritage months, like Black History Month and Asian Pacific Islander Month, that just need more recognition on campus."

The CDI previously helped host a similar event for Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month this past April, "Pulse of Asia," that highlighted different Asian cultures.

"Rhythm and Roots" marks Johnson's first official event as the new director of the CDI, which she considered to be successful.

"It's our first event taking a pivot from the usual to give the campus something new, exciting and refreshing to mix things up and get students to want to come out to learn something new," said Johnson.

Throughout the night, professors who taught classes that discussed heritage also brought their students out to the event, including Heather Lee, who brought her class, Anti-Racist and Just Practice in Social Work.

With the inclusion of Lee's class, the event garnered more than 60 attendants, said Johnson. She hopes to partner more with faculty on future events to give students a real-life example of what they're learning in class.

"I feel like we can learn about culture in different ways," explained Johnson. "It doesn't always have to be from a textbook. We can hear right from people themselves and actively embrace what we're learning."

Hispanic Heritage Month Spotlight: Cynthia Martinez

By Madison Lewis

PROFESSORS and students are working toward adequate representation for a large demographic at Rider this Hispanic Heritage Month. One educator in particular, Cynthia Martinez, has worked tirelessly to reach this goal.

Martinez is a professor in the Department of Languages, Literatures and Cultures, teaching mostly Spanish and Latinx studies.

Martinez was born in Ecuador and lived there for 10 years before moving to Louisville, Kentucky, which did not have a big Latinx population.

In the United States, Martinez spoke English regularly, but she felt that she was forgetting her first language: Spanish.

Relearning Spanish over the years ignited a passion within Martinez for teaching others about the language and Latinx culture in general.

"Especially for my classes that really focus on Latinx studies, a lot of what I bring in is discussions about identity: about who Latinos in the U.S. are, about migration, about some of the most urgent topics surrounding our communities," Martinez said.

Martinez stumbled into a Latino studies course while studying at Murray State University. She was drawn to it because this was the first time she saw herself being represented. She wants her courses to be that guiding light for students who desire a deeper relationship with their own culture, as well as students drawn to learning more.

Senior psychology major Cece Cream has taken classes with Martinez since her freshman year. Now,

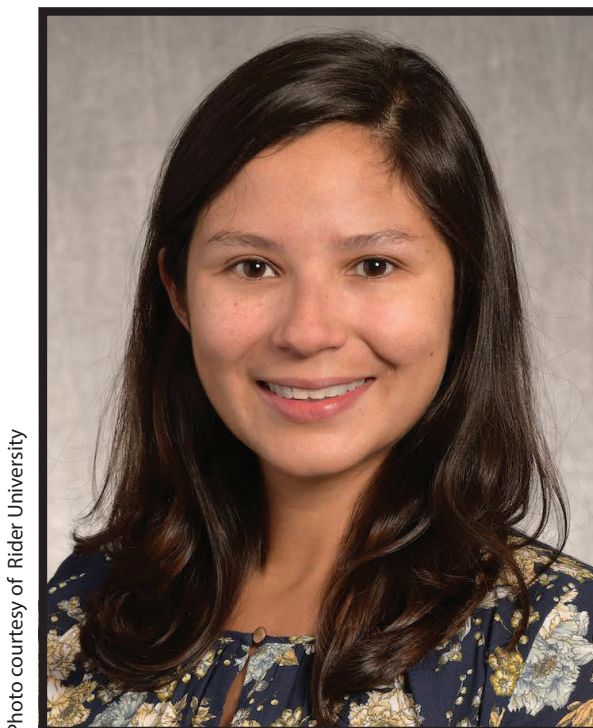


Photo courtesy of Rider University

Cynthia Martinez teaches Spanish and Latinx studies for the Department of Languages, Literatures and Cultures.

Cream is taking a class about Latinx cultures, which helps her connect to her Puerto Rican Heritage.

"Not only does [Martinez] acknowledge the individual heritage and culture that uniquely define each Latin heritage, but she also intersects and intertwines what we know of [Latin culture] today,"

Cream said. "She's a wealth of knowledge."

According to Martinez, the Hispanic demographic is the fastest-growing minority group in the U.S., and Spanish is the second most-spoken language in the U.S.

"Latinos are a huge presence where we live in the United States, so I think it is always worth it to get to know any community that is within your surroundings," said Martinez.

No matter how a person identifies, it is important to recognize the general history that may have been obscured over time.

"You cannot have any understanding of U.S. history without Latino culture. Latino culture is embedded in U.S. history whether it is acknowledged or not," Cream said. "[We can utilize] an entire month to be able to highlight [historical figures and activists] who otherwise go unspoken."

Cream and Martinez agreed that Hispanic Heritage Month brings visibility to and sheds light on histories that may be obscured.

Student groups, like the Latin American Student Organization, DominiRican club and Rider Latinas Unidas, of which Martinez is the adviser, are seeking to do this work at the university.

"While these heritage months are extremely important, they also can't be everything," Martinez said. "We can't only think about Latinos during Latinx month. ... We need to extend what we are engaging in within these heritage months to all the time."

The unjust execution of Marcellus Williams

As I prepare myself to teach eighth grade for the day, around 8:30 a.m., I hear the school speakers play “...with liberty and justice for all.” But I don’t make students stand for the pledge.

I don’t feel right standing most of the time.

The wrongful execution of 55-year-old Marcellus Williams proves there is not justice for all.

“All praise be to Allah in every situation,” Williams, who was a devout Muslim, wrote as his last words before he was executed in Missouri on Sept. 24.

Williams remained on death row for more than two decades, claiming innocence in the murder of 42-year-old Felicia Gayle in 1998.

The St. Louis County Prosecuting Officer disagreed with Williams’ execution due to DNA evidence. Gayle’s family agreed that he was innocent. Two petitions that received over a million signatures disagreed with the death of an innocent Black man; the state of Missouri thought otherwise.

As stated by the Noose to Needle Project, “It’s no coincidence that the frequency of state executions began to increase just as lynchings started to decline in the beginning of the 20th century.”

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People called his death “a modern day lynching.” The governor of Missouri, Mike Parson, was the one holding the rope.

Some say racism is a problem of the past, yet governments have found loopholes to incarcerate – or kill – Black Americans everyday.

Between the 19th and 20th centuries, at least 60 Black Missourians were killed in lynchings, according to the Death Penalty Information Center. It’s no surprise that Williams, an innocent Black man, was executed for the murder of a white woman.

DPIC has tracked state executions since they were legalized in 1976. The most appalling fact was how Black people have been executed for the murder of a white person 321 times, while only 33 white people have been executed for the murder of a Black person. Out of 1,600 total people executed, 544 have been Black Americans.

DPIC also reported that at least 200 people who have been executed since 1973 have been exonerated. Now the question is: why would you execute someone if you’re not 100% sure they’re guilty?

The Innocence Project found that 58% of those who were exonerated from state execution are Black people. This is not a mere coincidence. This is racism embedded into the roots of our society.

Overlooking the physical evidence proving William’s innocence, Parson said, “I follow the law and trust the integrity of our judicial system.”

I don’t trust this system.

In Williams’ 23 years in prison, he devoted his time to writing poetry and studying Islam, according to The Innocence Project.

As much as society tries to say, “we can never let this happen again,” there is not much that can be changed without reform to the judicial and prison-industrial complexes the U.S. has implemented in an effort to keep Black people powerless.

Williams was robbed of his humanity, spending almost half of his life in a prison cell for a crime he did not commit. The best we can do is keep on saying his name. Marcellus Williams, I am so sorry this is the America you had to spend your short life in.

In a poem titled “At Last... Another’s heartbeat” Williams wrote, “there is so much beauty and comfort in being in love and just being... / – amidst sounds of buzzing / chirps / crickets / the pleasant but irregular blowing of the wind / fireflies dancing in step with the light of the moon / how strange it is to become aware of another’s heartbeat but forget one’s own – / finally love.”

Jay Roberson

senior secondary education and English major



Gail Demeraski/The Rider News

The execution of 55-year-old **Marcellus Williams** sparked public outrage.

DIGITAL ONLY: ‘Emotional Women’ moves audiences (By Jay Roberson)



Photo courtesy of Hailey Tedesco

From left to right: **Hannah Bonnette, Jacob Ebert** and **Grace Mandel** perform a scene from ‘Emotional Women.’

DIGITAL ONLY: Professor questions timing of Dell’Omo’s new university model (By Richard Zdan)



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VOLLEYBALL

Broncs end losing streak with Merrimack win

By Lindsay Scarola and Glendale Eversley

RIDER volleyball finally put an end to its losing streak with a resounding 3-0 victory against Merrimack on Sept. 29. However, this came after two more losses on Sept. 25 against Lehigh and Sept. 28 to Quinnipiac.

'Errors piled up'

Rider fell to the Lehigh University Mountain Hawks three sets to none, gaining its ninth loss of the season.

"We did not perform well offensively. Part of that was our inability to pass in order to run our offense," said Head Coach Jeff Rotondo, "The errors piled up due to reckless, or not thoughtful, attacking."

In the matchup, Rider had 22 errors, compared to Lehigh's nine.

Off to a rough start against the Mountain Hawks, Lehigh had full control of the set. Ultimately, Rider lost the first set 25-12.

With the game at 25-24 in the second set, junior outside hitter Kiannisha Santiago had back-to-back kills. However, Lehigh followed up with three straight points to win 28-26.

Lehigh had control during the last set, leading 17-13, before the Broncs were able to cut the lead to one. The Mountain Hawks ended up winning the set 25-18, beating Rider three sets to none.

Conference time

The Broncs were defeated Saturday afternoon, 3-0, against the Quinnipiac Bobcats in their first conference game of the season.

Rider came out strong in the first set, building a 5-2 lead, until the Bobcats went on a 6-0 run. Despite cutting the Bobcats' lead by two, the Broncs fell in the first set, losing 25-19.

The second set had different energy. When trailing 17-14, junior libero Keegan O'Connor contributed to the seven-point run with two aces, allowing the Broncs to take the lead. With the game at 24-21, the Bobcats were able to tie it. However, Johnson gained a block and a kill for Rider, winning the set 26-24.

Rider was down in the third set by two points against the Bobcats, but ultimately,



Kaitlyn D'Alessio/The Rider News

Sophomore libero **Simone Langford** looks on as senior setter **Ryley Frye** dives for the ball.

Quinnipiac took the lead 17-15. Quinnipiac took this set 25-22 with a 2-1 lead on the Broncs overall.

During the fourth set, much like the third, Rider led 12-9 until the Bobcats went on a 4-0 run, putting them ahead. The Broncs could not catch up and lost this set 25-21. They lost to Quinnipiac 3-1 and gained their 12th loss of the season, their 10th in a row.

At last

To finally stop its skid, Rider defeated Merrimack College 3-0 on Sept. 29.

The Broncs improved their overall record to 2-12, while the Warriors dropped 2-11. Both teams hold a 1-1 Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference record.

Rider captured its second win of the season, coming off its 10-game losing streak.

Senior setter Ryley Frye set the tone early with an ace as part of a four-point serving run. The Broncs never looked back, cruising to victory and winning the first set 25-15.

The Broncs carried their momentum into the second set. Being up 5-3, Rider pushed the advantage with seven-straight points. The Broncs eventually won the second set 25-11.

Following the final tie of the match at 21-21, Rider sophomore opposite Anja Kelly had two kills during a 4-0 run, closing out the decisive set.

The Broncs next game will be on Oct. 2 at Saint Peter's at 7 p.m.

WOMEN'S SOCCER

Rider remains winless against MAAC rivals

By Kadie DiGiuseppe

AFTER its two-week long break, Rider women's soccer continued Metro Atlantic Conference play at Canisius, but it was defeated 2-0, bringing the season record to 1-5-2.

Grazing for a goal

Both teams came out the gate with heavy attacks on offense, allowing sophomore forward Noa Menzing to attempt Rider's first shot on goal.

Freshman midfielder Ava DeGeorge joined in a couple minutes later, but her shot was saved by the Canisius Golden Griffins' goalkeeper.

Senior midfielder Amanda Mendez also got a shot off in the first, but could not find the back of the net.

On defense, starting goalkeeper graduate student Ellie Sciancalepore had three saves for the Broncs in the first half.

"The girls looked very strong in the first half and I think we did play well, defensively," said Sciancalepore.

However, the Golden Griffins came out of halftime hungry for a goal. The Canisius offense was able to quickly score its first goal in the second half of play.

Less than a minute after that, the Golden Griffins were able to get past the Broncs' defense again and put Rider behind by two.

'It's always competitive'

After its goals, the Canisius offense was able to put up five more shots, but those were unsuccessful.

The clock started to wind down, but the Broncs were still looking for their first goal of the game.

Sophomore midfielder Ava Ferrie and sophomore back Courtney Carter both had shot attempts in the final 10 minutes of play but never scored.

"No matter what the standings say, every game is competitive. In the MAAC, it's always competitive," said Sciancalepore.

During their second MAAC game of the year, the Broncs were outshot by the Golden Griffins 14-5 and only had two corners while allowing eight. However, Sciancalepore finished the game with six saves, bringing her season total to 40 saves.

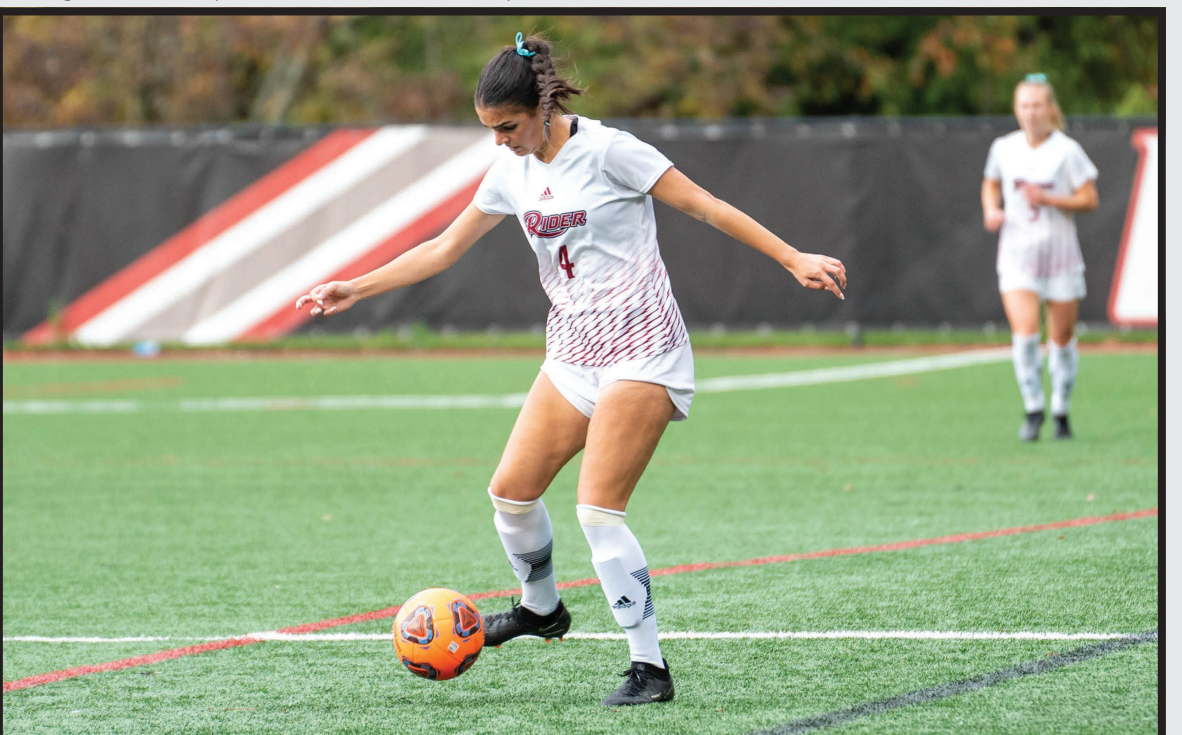
Sciancalepore looked forward to coming back home against two more MAAC opponents.

"To be able to play big games at home is something that we always look forward to. It's always a

goal to win at home, because if we can win those six home games, we make the playoffs," Sciancalepore said.

On Oct. 2, Rider will return to Ben Cohen field to play another MAAC opponent, Quinnipiac, at 7 p.m. The game will be streamed on ESPN+.

The Broncs will stay in Lawrenceville for their game on Oct. 5 against Sacred Heart at 1 p.m.



Kaitlyn D'Alessio/The Rider News

Senior midfielder **Amanda Mendez** dribbles the ball.

Sports

ONLINE

SPORTS, SPORTS AND MORE SPORTS

Read up on all of Rider's fall sports including volleyball, field hockey, and men's and women's soccer!

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FIELD HOCKEY

Broncs best Fairfield, move to 2-0 in NEC play

By Kadie DiGiuseppe

COMING off two road wins, Rider field hockey was welcomed back to Ben Cohen Field this weekend for a matchup with Fairfield Stags, the Broncs' second Northeast Conference game of the season. They then headed to Philadelphia to play the Drexel Dragons.

Rider won its second NEC game 1-0 over the Stags before falling on the road to the Dragons 4-0, bringing their season record to 5-4.

Back on 'Benny'

The Broncs and the Stags started battling things out from the jump on Sept. 27, already demonstrating that it was going to be a close game.

Sophomore midfielder Ang Borisow was first to initiate with two corners, but the offense could not find a shot on goal.

Fairfield responded and initiated its first corner of the game, but freshman forward Olivia Machiavelli was able to get the ball into Fairfield territory and secure another corner for the Broncs.

Off the feed from Machiavelli, the offense was able to get the ball to graduate student forward Katie Wuerstle, who gave the Broncs an early 1-0 lead.

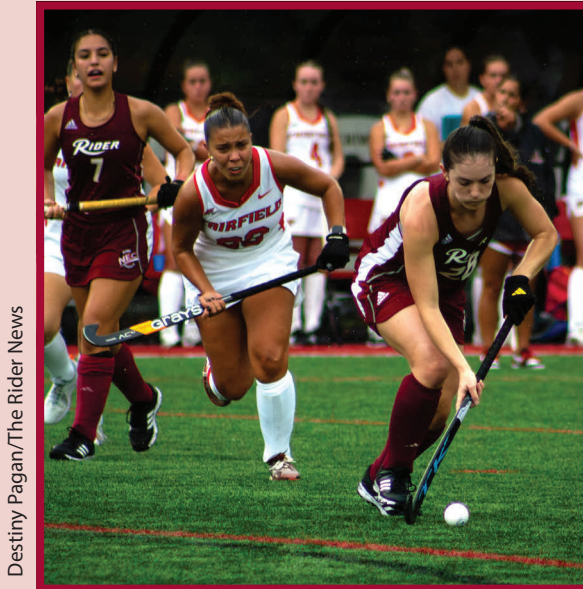
With the game nearing halftime, both of the teams went back and forth, looking to get the ball back on offense.

The Stags ended the half with three more penalty corners, but they were unsuccessful in the circle, as freshman goalkeeper Jade Regnart saved all attempts.

Borisow initiated another corner to open the second half, where Machiavelli was able to get another shot, but it was saved, along with Wuerstle's just minutes later.

Fairfield started to pick up the pace with the third quarter coming to an end, initiating five corners and getting seven shots off.

Not only was Regnart able to save those shots, but she saved Fairfield's penalty stroke in impressive



Destiny Pagan/The Rider News

Graduate student forward **Katie Wuerstle** shields the ball in fashion.

"Take one save at a time, watch the ball. This was a huge game, and leading up to this, we were all like, 'This game matters,'" said Regnart.

In the fourth quarter, the Stags were fighting hard to tie the game while the Broncs were looking to keep their lead.

Borisow kept her energy high, initiating two more corners while getting a shot along with freshman forward Anna Finn.

Regnart tied her career high of eight saves while she and the Rider defense held the Stags back, giving the Broncs their second shutout NEC victory.

"It just feels amazing to be back on our home field and come back on Benny with a win. We're just going to keep going," said Wuerstle.

"They're a phenomenal team and they are very strong, so we knew that we had to stay together. We couldn't break down in those really big moments," said senior forward Lyric Scott.

Even though Rider was able to pull off the win, they were outshot by Fairfield 14-6 and only earned six corners compared to the Stags 11 corners.

Fighting in Philly

Rider traveled to Philadelphia on Sept. 29, looking to extend its winning streak to four games.

The Drexel Dragons controlled the entire first quarter, getting five shots off while not allowing Rider any.

Seven minutes into the second quarter, the Dragons scored their first goal of the game and then continued to dominate on the offensive side.

To open the second half, Scott and junior forward Semra Said both attempted unsuccessful shots, and, shortly after, the Broncs' defense gave another goal to the Dragons.

Soon after its second goal, Drexel scored its third, but Machiavelli was not going to let the Broncs go without a fight, commencing two corners and getting one shot off.

Drexel continued its offensive efforts into the fourth quarter, scoring their fourth and final goal to make the score 4-0, in favor of the Dragons.

Machiavelli, Scott, Said and freshman forward Amanda Walker kept Rider's offensive chances alive in the final minutes of play, but all efforts failed.

Regnart had five more saves during the affair, bringing her season total to 41 saves, but the Broncs were outshot 20-10 and only attempted three corners.

"We're a pretty young team, so they're growing and growing. We have a lot of young players on defense that are getting better and better each game," said Head Coach Alicia Govannici.

Looking to get back in the win column, Rider will travel to Stonehill on Oct. 4 for more NEC play and then travel to Holy Cross on Oct. 6.

MEN'S SOCCER

Rider drops two straight; shut out by Iona and Army

By Benjamin Shinault

In a rematch of last season's Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference Championships, the Iona Gaels were able to get revenge over the Broncs by winning 1-0 on Sept. 28.

With the shutout loss, Rider saw its winning streak get snapped at six games. They opened up MAAC play with a loss.

On Oct. 1, Rider took a trip to West Point, New York, to take on the Army Black Knights but the scoreless drought followed along as Rider lost 2-0.

'We didn't finish our chances'

On a dreary, rainy afternoon in New Rochelle, New York, the Broncs took on an opponent in last year's MAAC Championships. The weather appeared to foreshadow the Broncs' glum performance, as they were shut out 1-0.

The match opened up with plenty of chances from senior midfielder Bryan Akongo, who had a shot on

goal in the sixth minute. Unfortunately, the ball sailed to the right of the goal post. Soon after, in the 17th minute, the ball was sent sailing over the crossbar.

"It was a chance where the ball was there to be won between me and the keeper and a defender. I was able to get a flick, and unfortunately, it hit the bar," Akongo said about his first goal opportunity.

Akongo got another opportunity 11 minutes later to put the Broncs on the board, but the ball never met the back of the net.

"I think the keeper got a little touch on it," Akongo said, "that chance was really to just get a shot off and just keep the keeper busy."

By the end of the match, the Broncs had 17 total shots, but only six on goal.

"The amount of shots and corners we had [demonstrated success statistically], but unfortunately, we didn't finish our chances," Head Coach Chad Duernberger said.

Later on in the 17th minute, Akongo got another shot with Iona's goalkeeper coming out of the net, but Akongo just missed it, as the ball clanged off the left side of the post.

In the 29th minute, Iona was able to score the one and only goal of the match – a penalty kick that resulted from an infraction from junior midfielder Momo Diop.

Despite the loss, Duernberger was pleased with how the offense performed.

"To go to a place like Iona and be able to get as many shots as we did, we are very pleased with that," Duernberger said, "we just didn't have the final product."

The Broncs were also able to get 14 corner kicks in comparison to Iona's three. Yet, once again, Rider was not able to take advantage of what the Gaels were offering them.

"Most of the performance, I thought we were a lot more threatening in front of the net compared to the other games where we won," Akongo said. "We were happy about the fact that we were able to create chances and create openings."

Rider had an opportunity in the 89th minute from graduate student midfielder Andrew Erickson, but it was once again saved by Iona. The Broncs chalked up the loss.

"If there was any positive take away from the match, it would be the statistical side of things," Duernberger said, "I think we actually played pretty well, and sometimes that is just how the sport goes."

Drought continues

It seems as if the scoring bug hopped on the bus to West Point, New York, when the Broncs took on the Army Black Knights as they were again shut out 2-0.

Similar to the Iona matchup, the Broncs were able to create plenty of opportunities around the 18-yard box as they finished the match with 19 shots with only six on goal.

During the late afternoon match, Army played aggressive against the Broncs as they tallied 13 fouls in comparison to Rider's two.

Diop came close to ending the scoring drought in the first half with a laser towards the Army's goalkeeper but it deflected off the top rail and just out of the reach of the outstretched keeper's arms.

Senior midfielder Jack McGeechan also had a close look but once again, the ball couldn't land.

The Broncs now look toward Merrimack on Oct. 5 at 5 p.m. to break the scoring drought and losing streak.



Kaitlyn D'Alessio/The Rider News

The Broncs huddle up on the field before their match.