



Students air questions, concerns at SGA town hall

By Jake Tiger

AROUND 60 students packed into Rue Auditorium, bringing an array of questions to fire at a row of Rider's top administrators.

The Student Government Association's student town hall on Nov. 14 covered a buffet of topics in about 80 minutes, with students voicing their questions, comments and concerns on Rider's upcoming shift in leadership, parking changes, on-campus renovations and more.

On the stage, SGA Executive Vice President Michael Deem Jr., a junior film and television major, managed the event, lobbing student-submitted questions to the panel of six administrators: Rider President Gregory Dell'Omo, Provost DonnaJean Fredeen, Chief Diversity Officer Heeyoung Kim, Public Safety Director James Waldon, Vice President of Enrollment Management Drew Aromando and Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs Nick Barbati.

After the questions submitted prior to the event were answered, audience members passed around a microphone for students to offer additional queries and feedback.

Parking queries

Deem said parking was a "very popular" topic among students, as a feeling of frustration has mounted around ticketing and paid parking passes, the latter becoming a requirement for students in fall 2023 costing \$125 per semester.

Waldon said to The Rider News after the town hall that there has been "no intentional effort" by Public Safety to more heavily enforce parking regulations.

Deem read a submitted question to Waldon about the increased rates for parking fines and violations, as there was confusion as to when the change occurred. Waldon said communication was sent out about the new rates via an email on Oct. 4.

"I was trying to limit the number of emails that were sent out, because I know a lot of people don't

open up and read emails, so I was trying to squeeze a lot of information into one email," Waldon said. "I'm definitely open to suggestions about how to communicate better."

Freshman public relations major Vincent Piraino asked about the process for appealing tickets and if there was a grace period for new students. Waldon said there is a grace period each academic year of about two to three weeks, giving students time to obtain their parking passes and figure where they are allowed to park.

As for appealing a ticket, Barbati said the process goes through the Dean of Students Office, where each case is evaluated.

Change of power

Between Dell'Omo's retirement announcement and the recent formation of Rider's presidential search committee, students had questions for the outgoing president, as Rider's change in leadership during a trying time in higher education has students concerned.

Rider and many other institutions are in a period of financial hardship as they continue to rebound from the pandemic and brace for a nationwide "enrollment cliff," according to Dell'Omo. Some schools, like Pennsylvania's Cabrini University and the University of the Arts, have closed as a result.

During the town hall, Dell'Omo said there was "no concern" regarding closure.

"We are continuously looking at the budget of the university, how we operate," Dell'Omo said. "It's an ongoing process. ... In today's age, as we're seeing a lot of fluctuation in [enrollment], we have to have a very conservative budget structure that allows us to have the flexibility we need."

Rider's financial situation will challenge the new president following Dell'Omo's retirement next summer. Trustee Joe McDougall, chair of the presidential search committee, said to The Rider News in early November that "firm financial stewardship"



Jake Tiger/The Rider News

Administrators serve as panel members in Student Government Association student town hall.

was one of four main characteristics Rider's next president should have.

Former SGA President Naa'san Carr asked if there were any updates regarding the transition to Rider's next president, to which Dell'Omo replied he was "probably the least involved person in that process." However, the president did say that the search committee planned to meet for the first time during the week of Nov. 18.

"Rider's in a good spot in terms of the amount of time [it has] to be able to attract people," Dell'Omo said. "There's plenty of time to identify candidates, get to narrowing the process down, invite candidates to campus to meet the university community and, hopefully, by the time I leave, they have selected somebody."

Current SGA President Christine Natoli asked Dell'Omo what he would miss and what his plans were during his final months at Rider.

"What I'm really going to miss and what I look forward to is just attending as many activities on campus," Dell'Omo said. "The reason I got into higher education is that I love the concept of a college campus. ... To be able to partake in that and see [students] grow through their intellectual and out-of-class experiences, that's really been powerful."



Fraternities adapt to Poyda despite unkept promises

By Caroline Haviland

RESIDENCE Life opted to move the fraternities from University House to Poyda Hall starting fall 2024, a decision that came after challenges sprouted from having multiple organizations crammed into a small building.

Previously home to InterFraternal Council fraternities Tau Kappa Epsilon, Sigma Phi Epsilon and Theta Chi, as well as a smattering of brothers from the multicultural and historically Black fraternities Lambda Theta Phi Fraternity Inc. and Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity Inc., University House was an outdated living space with minimal air conditioning units and one washer and dryer for all of its residents.

Kadi Diallo, Rider's director of student involvement and first year programs said, "[The fraternities] had been in [University] House for quite some time. ... each of the fraternities had outgrown living in that space together. It was a tight space ... That's why we presented them with other options."

The IFC fraternities chose Poyda as their living space for the 2024-25 academic year, as they were each

Photo Courtesy of Guy Varela



From left to right: Sigma Phi Epsilon brothers **Shane Tully, Guy Varela, Kevin Ortiz and Dennis Golembiewski.**

promised a sectioned-off wing on separate floors of the residence hall, while the rest of the building housed standard residential students.

However, Tau Kappa Epsilon only has five members living in Poyda, which is not substantial enough to earn its own floor. Instead, members live among the remaining two fraternities on their floors.

The president of Theta Chi, a junior finance major Jason Aretino, said some of his brothers were pushed down to other wings due to the additional members in

Theta Chi's wing occupying their designated space.

"There have been mixed feelings from the brothers. They have a mixture of the fraternities on each floor," said Aretino. "It's not just all of us, like we were told it was going to be. But other than that, they enjoy just being around each other."

Guy Varela, a member of Sigma Phi Epsilon and a sophomore film and television major, noted an additional unkept agreement. Originally, the fraternities were guaranteed a door to section off their wings from the other residents to create a close-knit atmosphere for the organizations, but it was never set in place.

"I don't know what happened with [Residence Life]," said Varela. "There was supposed to be a plan, and then it was just never installed. So it's just like regular living, I guess."

Additionally, standard residents occupy a few of the rooms in Sigma Phi Epsilon's wing, a place appointed for fraternity members only, said Varela.

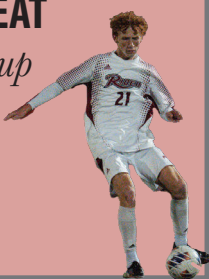
Dennis Golembiewski, a sophomore business administration



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GUT-WRENCHING DEFEAT

Rider men's soccer came up short in overtime of the MAAC championships.



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RESPECT FOR RETAIL

What is it really like to work retail during the holiday season?



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HOLIDAY KICKOFF

Rider's Celebration of Lights brings food and fun, and inspires a festive word scramble!



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SECURITY BRIEFS

BY COLLETON AND KLAUDINE BESSASPARIS

Information provided by Public Safety Capt. Matthew Babcock

Escape route

Runaway signs. On Nov. 12, at 8:16 a.m., Public Safety was dispatched to Lincoln Hall for the report of damage to the building. A facilities management staff member doing work in the building discovered five exit signs that had been damaged. The faceplates of each sign were found to be missing. Public Safety was investigating.



Olson odors

Mysterious marijuana. On Nov. 13, at 4:52 p.m., Public Safety was dispatched to Olson Hall for the report of the suspected odor of marijuana. Public Safety arrived on location, detected a slight odor and proceeded to check the entire building for the source, which they did not locate before it faded.



Stinky suspects

Basement stench. On Nov. 15, at 11:18 a.m., Public Safety was dispatched to Olson Hall for the report of someone smoking in the building. Upon arrival, officers met with a facilities management staff member who found evidence of someone smoking in the basement. In the basement area, near the exterior doors, several chairs were set up, the door was propped open, and there was evidence of smoking debris on the floor. Public Safety was investigating.



Destiny Pagan/The Rider News

Poyda houses fraternity organizations and standard residential students.

Poyda residents ‘keep to themselves’

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major and member of Sigma Phi Epsilon, expressed his delight in residing in Poyda, mentioning the opportunity to strengthen brotherly connections through close living.

“It’s been nice with accountability as well. I am the type of person who will sit down and do nothing. But now I’m surrounded by all these people who are proactive and inspire me,” said Golembiewski.

Aidan Cardone, a sophomore accounting major and one of the five Tau Kappa Epsilon members living in Poyda, said the other residents and fraternities have been living among each other in harmony.

“A lot of the random people that live in Poyda keep to themselves. They don’t raise their voice, so if they had a problem, we would never know. I’m with the [Sigma Phi Epsilon] guys a lot, and I’ve never heard them get a noise complaint ever,” said Cardone.

Aaron Presti, a senior public relations major, has lived in Poyda for the past year as a standard resident and feels “indifferent” about the newest inhabitants in the residence hall.

His only complaint? The noise.

“My only minor issue is this one dorm in the

corner of my hallway. Every time I walk past, there’s music on, or, if it’s on the weekend, there’s some sort of party happening,” said Presti. “I don’t know what fraternity they’re associated with. But that’s really the only issue I’ve had.”

At the start of spring 2025, Diallo and Residence Life administrators will discuss contingency plans for Greek Life housing, according to Diallo. Once a few options have been agreed upon, the presidents of each fraternity will weigh in on what would work best for each organization.

“At the core of it, it’s their experience. As the director of this area, that means everything to me. I’m not in the business of telling our students, ‘This is what we’re going to do; you have no say in it,’” said Diallo. “So even last year, when we approached them about Poyda, the conversation was, ‘Hey, we know things haven’t been the best for you all in [University] House this year; here’s some options we’re presenting to you all.’”

Diallo added that all of the fraternities do not have to come to a mutual agreement. Each fraternity is given a choice to stay in their designated housing or spread their members throughout campus.

Presidential search website launched

By Caroline Haviland

RIDER’S presidential search website just launched, according to a universitywide email sent by Chair of the Presidential Search Committee and Trustee Joe McDougall on Nov. 18.

“This dedicated platform will keep you updated on important developments throughout the search process, providing you with a central resource for all information and announcements,” the email read.

Accessible through rider.edu, the website offers a space for individuals to submit questions that will eventually lead to a generalized question-and-answer section, said McDougall in an interview with The Rider News on Nov. 7.

Students can also offer input via an online survey attached to McDougall’s email.

The website features sections for both potential candidates and inquisitive students eager to learn about the members of the committee and the timeline of operations.

To justify a private search process, the website states five reasons for confidentiality: attracting strong candidates, reducing external influence, encouraging honest assessments, maintaining professionalism and allowing a thorough process.

The website will be updated as the presidential search continues forward.



Josiah Thomas/The Rider News

The presidential search website, a repository for all information regarding the process, recently launched.



What factors influence college-student voters?

By Hannah Newman

WITH the election having a pivotal role in college students' futures, marketing professor Sergei Kuharsky had his students develop a survey about the factors that influence college voters.

Students in his class had about a week to market the survey after the election to cross-analyze the components they thought explained the reasoning behind college students' votes.

"[The goal is] to be smart consumers of research in their business careers and that they look at things with understanding that results are the end of a series of dominoes," said Kuharsky. "If the dominoes aren't set up correctly, you can't necessarily trust the results."

Junior marketing major Reylan Alexis said, "We've seen a pretty polarizing campaign trail from both sides over the past year. And you can kind of get lost in terms of the cultural aspect of it."

There were 38 students among two classes in charge of sending the survey for answers from any enrolled undergraduate, not just Rider students, to get a unique perspective.

The first two questions asked the surveyor's birth year and if they are enrolled as an undergraduate student. If the surveyor did not fall in the parameters of a college-aged student currently enrolled in a university, they could not continue with the survey.

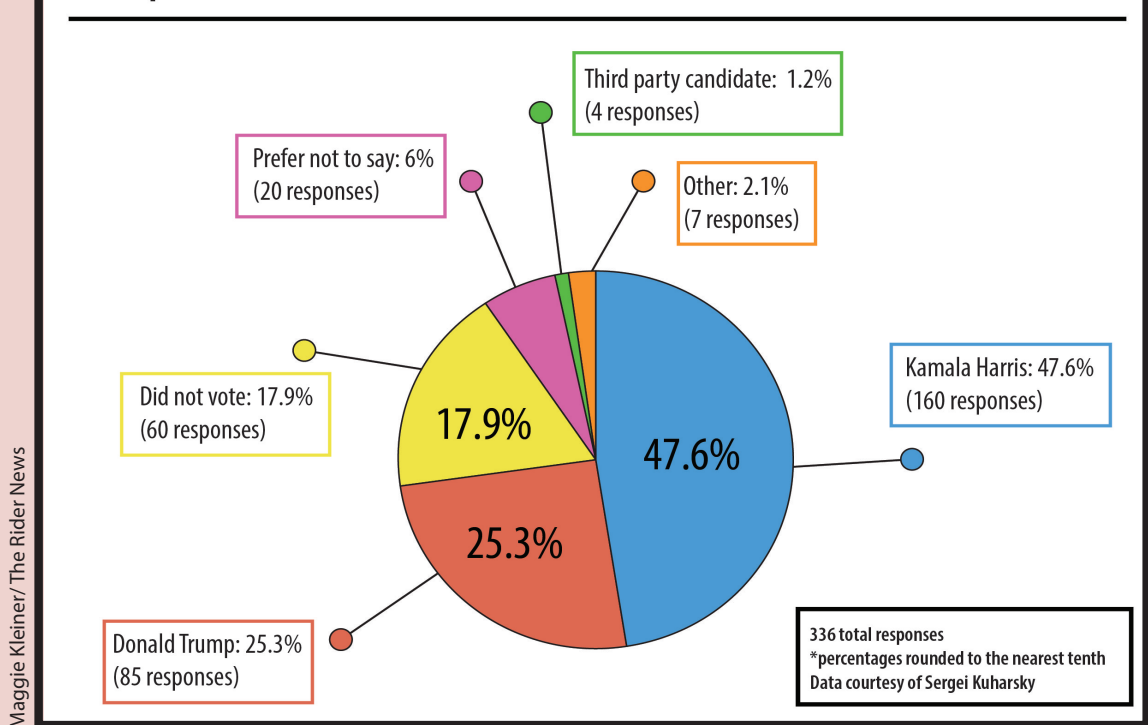
The survey was completed by 336 students; 267 said they voted while 69 did not.

The survey indicated 160 students voted for Vice President Kamala Harris and 85 voted for eventual President-elect Donald Trump. The rest either voted for a third-party candidate, preferred not to answer or did not vote in the 2024 election.

With the immensely controversial topics the election provoked, the most important issues that influenced college student voting varied; however, the top two conflicts were the economy, with 74 votes, and abortion and women's reproductive rights, with 72 votes.

Senior marketing major Ewelina Krokos said, "The results [of what was the most important issue] didn't really surprise me. I think people were vocal about their beliefs, and it kind of just showed through the data that there was kind of an equal representation on both issues."

Which presidential candidate did students vote for?



The data above shows who college students voted for in the 2024 election.

Considering the amount of celebrity endorsement and involvement in the election, the survey also showed that 172 students followed a celebrity that expressed a political view, but only four admitted to being highly influenced by it.

"The last thing anyone wants to admit is that they were influenced by anyone. America is a pretty individualistic country," said Alexis. "I do think that [celebrities] had at least somewhat of an impact, especially thinking about, like, how much both candidates were willing to put out celebrity endorsements, and the Harris campaign had all those concerts, and the Trump campaign was at UFC events."

The survey also indicated 99 voter students felt unsure of what educational resources were available on college campuses.

Krokos felt that the best way to share voting resources would be via email; however, Rider is known for spamming student's inboxes with things that do not pertain to every student, deterring students from engaging with the content.

"I do think the inbox is the most personal touch to reach out about something, but at the same time, from Rider's emails, it's getting to a point where they are sending a lot of emails that aren't relevant," said Krokos.

Although there were many different versatile components to what influences college-age voters, students in Sergei's class will now take what they feel are the most interesting parts and cross-analyze the data even further for their final project.

According to senior marketing major Autumn Agliata, the purpose of the study is to examine how college students of different genders prioritized key issues during the 2024 presidential election and to assess whether these priorities are influenced by gender-specific values, beliefs and social perspectives.

"I plan to use the information, specifically the categories of gender and issues most important to you, to cross analyze and assess whether the priorities are influenced by gender specific values, beliefs and morals," said Agliata.

Campus updates, debating discussed at town hall

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Renovating Rider

Walter Eddy, executive director of planning and construction, answered questions pertaining to facilities and campus improvements, as Vice President of University Operations Mike Reca was off campus, Dell'Omo said.

Eddy discussed recent on-campus renovations, including residence hall updates, the wrestling team's new practice facility, the Cavalla Room's facelift and the relocation of the Rider Rock. He also touched on some changes that could come to campus in the near future, namely renovations for Conover Hall and information monitor installations around campus.

According to Aromando, the delayed renovations for Conover Hall, initially scheduled for summer 2024, will take place in summer 2025. The university plans to open Conover Hall for the fall 2025 semester, when its two-year residency requirement begins. The new rule will only apply to incoming students; all current students will be unaffected.

Conover Hall was closed for the fall semester after the university determined it was not needed to accommodate its volume of residential students; without it, Rider's residence halls reached 98% capacity overall, Aromando said.

Eddy said the university is hoping to install information monitors across campus, which will display important information and upcoming events

on Rider's high-traffic walkways.

In an April interview, Aromando said they would look like the directories found in a shopping mall, and one proposed location was the four-way intersection between Anne Brossman Sweigart Hall and the Franklin F. Moore Library.

Lastly, Rider is looking into a mobile blue light system, where people on campus can use their personal devices as emergency blue light phones.

Bringing back debates

As recent election results are finalized and processed by the community, Fredeen expressed a desire to bring organized debates to campus, serving as an outlet for constructive political dialogue during a divisive time.

In an interview with The Rider News after the town hall, Fredeen said debates were particularly important to her as someone who competed in debate and public speaking contests as a high schooler in Texas.

"I would love to be teaching more about debate on campus," Fredeen said. "You could start with topics that ... are not as emotionally upsetting to our students to help introduce them to the idea of discussing difficult topics and then being able to move on."

Fredeen mentioned that Rider had an April Fools' Day debate several years ago, with one side arguing that the turkey should be America's national bird, and

the other side defending the bald eagle.

The recently university looked into debate organizations Bridge USA and Brave Angels, Fredeen said in an email to The Rider News. According to each group's website, the organizations aim to depolarize politics and promote the understanding of both sides of an issue.

Fredeen said both organizations could be created on campus if students are interested, and she noted that Rider does not currently have a debate team.



Students asked administrators questions at the fall 2024 Student Government Association town hall.

Destiny Pagan/The Rider News



Rider’s annual Celebration of Lights emphasized the diversity of holidays this year ahead of its traditional lighting of the library.

A night of festivity and diversity at Rider

By Grace Bertrand

ONCE the lights turned on and the Franklin F. Moore Library was dressed in a glimmering glow, the inclusive, holiday festivities began. Rider’s annual Celebration of Lights was held late Nov. 19, courtesy of the Student Government Association, the Office of Student Involvement, the Office of Campus Life and the Center for Diversity and Inclusion.

“Let us remember that light is more than just a symbol. It represents hope, connection and the brilliance that diversity brings to our world,” said CDI Director Jasmine Johnson in her welcoming address at the event.

Different organizations came together to highlight and honor eight diverse holidays within the community as the season of giving approaches.

The on-campus groups in attendance included the Catholic Campus Ministry for Christmas, the Asian American Student Association for Thai New Year, Hillel for Hanukkah, the Muslim Student Association for Ramadan and Eid al-Fitr, the Korean Culture Association for Seollal, the Latin American Student Association for Las Posadas and the Black Student Union for Kwanzaa.

This year, New Year’s was added to the list, and international “good luck” foods were served in respect. The festivities of the night began in the Cavalla

Room of the Bart Luedeke Center, switching gears from previous years. A procession then led to the library with everyone holding lit candles.

Lined tables representing different holidays surrounded the room from each organization, with table cloths matching the traditional colors for the respective holidays, a detail that Johnson said was important in keeping with the theme of unity.

“Sometimes, we get ingrained that the holidays are just Christmas and it’s just red and green, but those other holidays have their own colors, too,” said Johnson.

In the center of the room sat tables of different holiday-related foods, including milk tarts for South Africa, dumplings and shrimp for China and the twelve grapes for a Hispanic tradition.

MSA President Helena Rashid, a junior political science major, hosted a table representing Ramadan and Eid al-Fitr.

“This event helps people understand where everyone else is coming from and helps them broaden their horizons, even if it’s just for the holidays,” said Rashid.

Before heading out, heartfelt and merry performances took place by this year’s R Factor winner Emily Taylor Kaufman, who sang “When You Believe” by Mariah Carey and Whitney Houston, and the Rider University Choral singing “Where The Light Begins” by Susan LaBarr.

“I was raised Catholic, but getting to be exposed to all these different types of holidays was impactful,” said Connor Maletta, a sophomore psychology major, who performed in the choir. “I think it’s very important that everybody gets a voice.”

Before students and faculty made their way to the library, The Rider Poets performed a spoken-word poem demonstrating the importance of celebrating different holidays.

Keeping with the traditions, an array of festive treats were handed out under the cold night sky like simmering hot cocoa, brownies and chocolate chip blondies.

As students collected their holiday goodies, they gathered around the two fire pits set up in front of the library to warm themselves up.

The Rider Pep Band performed a rendition of “Winter Wonderland” by Felix Bernard as the library lit up with colorful lights, lining the top of the building, along the trees and bushes and around the “Broncs” and “Rider” hedges on the Campus Mall.

Taking a step toward more inclusion, the evening wrapped up without a special appearance from Santa Claus, a tradition from previous years.

“Around the holidays are usually a cheerful time, so bringing some of that cheer to campus is always a great thing,” said Johnson. “It’s definitely a time to learn from others, to show gratitude, to laugh and spread joy.”

Maggie Kleiner and Destiny Pagan/The Rider News

CELEBRATION OF LIGHTS WORD SCRAMBLE



Unscramble each word. Hint: Think Celebration of Lights.

EDACNL
1

LYHIOAD
2 3 4

AOOCC
5

DNATIORTIS
6 7

GTLSHI
8



Scan here for the answers!

Now fill in the boxes by number to solve the riddle!

ANSWER: ‘WITH 1 2 3 4 – 5 6 7 8 !’

Witkowski jumps from radio to television

By Gabriela Tobar and Madison Lewis

SENIOR communication studies major Nick Witkowski juggled being 107.7 The Bronc’s student general manager and a news production intern at Fox News, preparing him for his future career in media.

Witkowski began his 10-week internship on Sept. 12, working in New York City on 47th Street by Rockefeller Center.

He worked on the set of Neil Cavuto’s live show and the “Your World” show, where he created the graphics and video included in the broadcasting system.

“[The internship included] the administrative and organizational skills that I learned through my experiences at 107.7 The Bronc,” said Witkowski. “I ... shifted from radio to TV in ... the span of one day.”

Witkowski called the pre-internship interview personable and compared the communication with his higher-ups to the tight-knit community at Rider.

“I like ... one-on-one experience; that’s why I chose Rider in the first place, because it was such a small class size,” said Witkowski. “[Rider and Fox News were] an opportunity to be a big fish in a small pond.”

He was able to get out of his comfort zone with the internship, preparing him for post-graduate life.

“Coming to 107.7 The Bronc and getting all these opportunities from John Mozes was me getting out of my comfort zone,” said Witkowski. “And I am ready to move up and ... make these moves.”

John Mozes, general manager at 107.7 The Bronc and Witkowski’s mentor, spoke about how Witkowski has grown.

“Nick is driven, intelligent, creative and passionate. He has a strong work ethic. He is the perfect student to work in media,” Mozes said.

Witkowski began working at 107.7 The Bronc before graduating high school and created his own ‘80s show before focusing on production.

Witkowski became fascinated with “Wake Up Rider,” the campus’ weekday morning show, which he eventually hosted for two and a half years.

“He was the creative force

behind ‘Wake Up Rider’ all while becoming production director,” Mozes said.

Witkowski was production director for three years and was nominated for a few Intercollegiate Broadcasting Systems media awards for his work.

“Nick doesn’t miss an opportunity. If an opportunity is presented in front of him, he will take it. He’s very ambitious, and he’ll try anything,” Mozes said.

Witkowski wanted to try new things within the radio station, prompting him to work on “The Bronc News Flash” and “Getting Down to Business,” the daily news and business reports on The Bronc and The Bronc Retro.

“Nick is not afraid to try anything, and he is not afraid to fail. So he tried as much as he could to figure out exactly what he wanted to be and what he wanted to do when he got out of Rider,” Mozes said.

Mozes emphasized how there are many different facets to the radio station, and Witkowski tried them all in the last four years, which elevated his confidence in the field.

“Nick has grown immensely. He has grown personally, professionally and creatively. He is a well-rounded, marketable student, who I see big things ahead of him when he leaves Rider,” Mozes said.

Witkowski took advantage of the opportunities presented to him, according to Mozes.

“Nick’s drive and how he sees his career and ... how he wants to succeed was his own internal mechanism that drove him. Nick’s a very unique student. He’s different from most Gen Z kids,” Mozes said.

Witkowski will return to Fox News in the spring for another 10-month period, where he will be a news production intern again.

He gave 107.7 The Bronc a lot of credit for his success with Fox News. Witkowski mentioned that his pre-existing audio production skills made the transition smoother. Instead of learning new equipment and skills, he expanded upon his knowledge from the radio station.

“I was a sponge,” said Witkowski.

He had five classes, responsibilities at the radio station and other extracurriculars in tandem with his internship.

“Take every opportunity you can because Rider has them all,” said Witkowski. “You just have to seek them. You have an opportunity here to make something of yourself.”



Photo courtesy Nick Witkowski

Senior communication studies major **Nick Witkowski** earns a spot on the Fox News team for a fall internship.

Witkowski advises other students to take opportunities, even if it seems like too much to handle.

“Never say no. Even if you don’t know what you’re doing, you’ll figure it out,” said Witkowski. “There is a reason why you were given the opportunity, and there is a reason why you were meant to complete it.”

Throughout the internship, Witkowski covered topics such as live hurricane coverage and election updates. He covered stories with key players in politics, like Donald Trump and Robert F. Kennedy Jr.

Witkowski said he was never into politics; now, he finds himself researching and learning more about history, laws and other aspects of news reporting. He emphasized the importance of looking at the Republican and Democratic angles of each story.

“At the end of the day,” said Witkowski, “we are broadcasting to 18 million Americans, and we take that very seriously.”

Witkowski plans to be in front of the camera during his spring internship. “I want to continue to do so in any capacity, whether it’s hosting, production, editing ... I just want to do it ... I love the industry and I just want to keep going.”



Eco Reps educate students on recycling practices

By Jasmine White and Grace Bertrand

EVERY piece of paper, soda can and plastic bottle recycled on campus puts a smile on a Rider Eco Representative’s face.

In collaboration with Zeta Tau Alpha sorority and Rider’s chapter of Broadway Green Alliance, the Office of Sustainability brought students together to celebrate America Recycles Day on Nov. 14. Together, they set out to educate Rider about how donations and participation, no matter how small, play pivotal roles in bettering the community.

“There are so many items that people have in their homes that they no longer want or need, and we’re providing an outlet for donations,” said Director of Sustainability Melissa Greenberg.

Greenberg emphasized the variety of campus donation events and recycling initiatives to encourage the Rider community to do their part in being green.

The event held tables for bra donations, free book and clothing exchanges and sustainable utensil gift boxes. They also collaborated with “Towels for Toto” to collect towels and old shirts, regardless of the condition, to donate to dog shelters or repurpose as dog toys.

ZTA partnered with the Office of Sustainability to educate its peers and fundraise for breast cancer awareness. They tabled for bra donations to support individuals who may be adjusting to a new size and do not have the means to purchase a new bra.

The ZTA representatives at the event shared their excitement for collaborating with other organizations to encourage others to give back.

Eco Representative Chloe Bacsik, a junior biology



Angelina Fierro/The Rider News

Eco Reps promote sustainable practices on campus.

major, shared her passion for the office’s events that invited students to hang out while, in turn, showing them how fun serving the world around them can be.

Bacsik emphasized the importance of giving back to the community and playing a positive role in recycling.

“I feel like we’ve made it kind of easier for students to do certain things with sustainability, being on a college campus,” said Bacsik.

In every residence hall, the Office of Sustainability offers TerraCycling, allowing students to dispose of their empty beauty products and utensils. From 2007 to 2024, over 25,000 health and beauty product packages

have been recycled through TerraCycle.

Another program offered on campus is “Fill it Forward,” an initiative that donates money and water to places in need every time a water bottle is refilled.

The program is designed to encourage people to choose reusable bottles and cups while moving away from single-use plastic options.

Rider alone holds over 50 water bottle refill stations on campus, including the Dining Services locations, according to the Rider University website.

“These are very simple things that anybody can do,” Greenberg said of the sustainable options offered by the Office of Sustainability.

To those that believe their small contributions do not matter, Bacsik offered words of encouragement: “What I’d say to that is the good old quote, ‘It’s just one straw, said a billion people.’ It’s a domino effect. Even if you can’t physically see it, it does count.”

The Office of Sustainability plans to host its yearly Green Your Holidays event that allows students to make reusable bags out of old T-shirts, make ornaments out of unwanted CDs and DVDs, make gift wrap out of unconventional items and more.

“We have a planet to care for and to leave for future generations, and there is a mechanism for recycling items, and we should be utilizing that for resources,” said Greenberg.

Managing editor *Hannah Newman* is a member of Zeta Tau Alpha and had no part in the writing or editing of this story.



The ‘magic’ of the holiday season in retail

WALKING past leftover Halloween pumpkins and candy wrappers strewn across the sidewalks, I entered my job with an optimistic autumn attitude. Upon walking through the main entrance on Nov. 1, I was met with a cacophonous, “Glee-esque” cover of “Jingle Bell Rock” subtly leaking from the store speakers while shoppers clad in red and green clamored for the holiday deals, their grandchild’s wishlist in hand.

It is almost inevitable that one will work in some form of the service industry during their time spent as an undergraduate student. While I will be placing special focus on working in retail, as this is where I have experience, it is important to acknowledge that most of the sentiments I share likely apply to other areas of the service industry, such as the food service sector.

I love my job with all my heart, and I know it is a privilege to say that, as not everyone, especially those working in retail, can agree. However, there is something about the holiday season that makes working in retail less “magical.”

Junior psychology major Victoria Vargas, who works in two different retail positions seasonally, shares this same sentiment: “For the most part, I love my job.” However, she admits that it is frustrating when she is trying to be helpful and customers continually push back about things that she has no control over, such as prices. Vargas shared that she has been frustratingly and unjustly called a “scammer” by customers on several occasions due to the store’s lack of holiday deals.

I can certainly relate to shoppers looking for a good deal; however, as the holiday season progresses, customers will express their frustrations to me over item prices more frequently, sometimes even swearing at me or other employees. While this does not generally phase me, as I understand the stresses of holiday shopping, it still takes a mental toll. It is important to keep in mind that, while you may be annoyed with the prices of items, please contain yourself so as to not take it out on the hourly employees just trying to earn some of our own holiday shopping money.

In addition to the expected tasks of a retail worker, including restocking shelves, running the register and helping customers to locate products, I, along with most retail employees, must clean up after customers who make messes or leave trash behind.

Aside from having to listen to the repetitive, poor musical renditions of previously-beloved holiday classics and dealing with huffy customers who are upset when we do not carry a specific scented candle and are always in a hurry, no matter what time of day it is, I have had countless positive interactions with holiday shoppers that reignite my passion for the job.

Whether it’s helping a customer pick out the perfect gift for their new daughter-in-law or sharing a brief moment of cordial laughter with my coworkers over the latest musical masterpiece to sound from our company-prescribed playlist, working during the holiday season has many benefits. One of my favorite things about my job is the connections, no matter how brief or small.

Sharing appreciation toward retail workers matters. Vargas shares that one of her jobs, like many in the service industry, sends out a “satisfaction survey” to

customers where they have the opportunity to share their shopping experiences. Mentioning your positive experiences to companies is a great way to communicate appreciation if thanking employees in person makes you uncomfortable. Vargas once received positive feedback this way: “It literally made my day because someone acknowledged that I am doing a good job.” The little things matter.

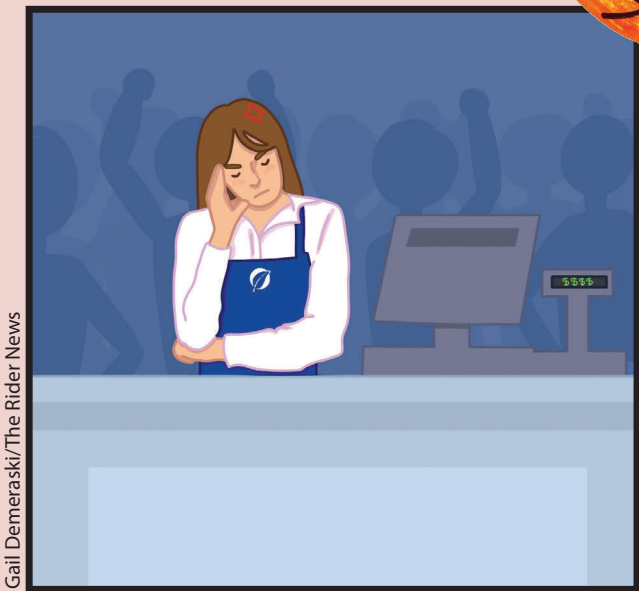
During this taxing holiday season, please pick up your trash; if you cannot find a trash bin, do not hesitate to ask us. Do not just leave it on the floor, or even worse, on the shelves among the products. This is not only inconvenient to the already overworked employees but to fellow shoppers as well.

If you are in the checkout line and are getting impatient, please try your best to practice understanding. Chances are very high that a shift is short-staffed and that people have called out, so there really is only one or two of us able to be up at the register.

Despite it all, here we are, retail workers, happy to help you. Just remember to be kind and respectful to us while you are busy shopping. We do really want to help you, and a little “thank you” or “have a nice day” can go a long way in helping us feel more appreciated this holiday season.

Additionally, please wish me luck – I work a closing shift on Black Friday.

Libby D’Orvilliers
junior psychology major



Gail Demeraski/The Rider News

Retail workers remind you to be considerate as you shop this holiday season.

DIGITAL EXCLUSIVE: ALBUM REVIEW: Lil Uzi Vert surprises longtime fans – in interesting ways

By Josiah Thomas



Josiah Thomas/The Rider News

Rapper Lil Uzi Vert’s latest album, “Eternal Atake 2,” misses the mark.



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MEN'S SOCCER

Rider toppled, shutout by Iona in MAAC Championship

By Rich Saile

In a rematch of last season's Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference championship game, Rider men's soccer, the defending champions, were tasked to take on the top-seeded Iona Gaels. After a hard-fought, gritty and physical match, the Broncs saw their title stripped away in a 1-0 extra time shutout.

To get to the championship on Nov. 14, Rider men's soccer hosted the Siena Saints for the MAAC semifinal, resulting in another 1-0 shutout victory for the Broncs.

Sneaking by Siena

The Broncs offense started out aggressive, catching the Saints defense off guard with a goal 30 seconds into the game off a shot by senior midfielder Bryan Akongo.

The Broncs defense held the Saints to only three shots, as the first half was a defensive stalemate, each team testing the other's patience.

In the last 20 minutes of the first half, the Broncs attempted to push the ball into Saints territory, but a pair of missed shots from junior midfielder Momo Diop and graduate student Adel Al Masude kept the game scoreless.

To start the second half, the Broncs took the ball into Saints territory, and junior midfielder William Baker fouled, resulting in a yellow card that gave the Broncs a free kick early on.

Then, Diop curled his shot around the Saints' wall and inside the right post to give the Broncs a 1-0 lead.

"That was a big moment. It's not always easy. Sometimes you got to find a way to score a goal off a free kick... and that's what happened. I got that free kick and saw an important moment to change the game and help the team," Diop said.

The Saints had a pair of chances to tie the game 1-1, but junior goalkeeper Adam Salama caught a pair of saves that evaporated the Saints' chances to tie, and the Broncs held on to win 1-0.

Diop scored his 10th goal of the season, and his two points increased his season total to 24, leading the MAAC.



Destiny Pagan/The Rider News

Junior midfielder **Momo Diop** loads up for a kick.

Rider posted its third consecutive shutout, 10th of the year, to advance to the MAAC championship game. The Broncs forced a rematch of the 2023 MAAC championship game with a trip back to Iona. Rider and Iona tied for the regular season MAAC championship, but Iona ultimately got the top seed with a 1-0 victory over Rider earlier in the season.

Gut-wrenching loss in the 95th

Fresh off their multiple shutout wins in the MAAC tournament, the Broncs took a trip to New Rochelle, New York, on Nov. 17 to face off against the Iona Gaels, an exact replica to last season's MAAC championship. But this time, Rider fell short and lost 1-0.

In a tightly-contested first half against Iona in the MAAC championship game, the Broncs pushed the ball on the Gaels' side of the field, but Diop did not strike the ball past the goalkeeper.

The patient Gaels offense relied heavily on their defense to keep the game on their terms.

Diop missed two more shots while the Broncs

defense held the Gaels to just four shot attempts in the first half.

As both teams left the locker room, the Gaels offense quickly applied pressure to the Broncs defense to test Salama, but they could not find the back of the net.

Freshman midfielder Ezra Punselie had a chance to give the Broncs the lead, but they could not get it past the Iona goalkeeper.

The action picked up in the 66th minute when Salama made a kick save from the goal line off a shot made deep inside the six-yard box. Three minutes later, the Gaels got a shot past Salama, but Da Silva swooped in to head the ball over the crossbar and keep the game scoreless.

Senior back Jack McGeechan crossed a pass to the 12-yard box to junior midfielder Luke Kirilenko, but his shot was saved by Gaels goalkeeper once again in the 70th minute.

In the 88th minute, it appeared the Gaels had clinched the win with a shot headed toward the net, but a Gael was called offside, keeping the Broncs alive.

Iona was pushing through the Broncs defense and looked to seal the game in regulation, but Rider forced overtime.

As overtime started, the Gaels were down a man but still moved the ball into Broncs territory.

The Gaels missed three consecutive shots until Salama deflected one that missed right, which Iona rebounded past Salama and inside the net, sending the Gaels to the NCAA tournament.

The Broncs season ended in the 95th minute of the game. Their final record for the season was 14-5-1.

"Credit to Iona. They have a very good team, but I'm really proud of my guys for the fight and what they've done all season," Rider Head Coach Chad Duernberger said. "We had class and integrity all season long with how we went about our success, and I think that's what I'm most proud of."



MEN'S BASKETBALL

Broncs mobbed by Hawkeyes in 83-58 loss

By Benjamin Shinault

RIDER men's basketball took a trip to the land of corn to face off against the Iowa Hawkeyes on Nov. 19.

In the first matchup of the two programs since 1987, Iowa defended their home court and won 83-58, snapping Rider's three-game win streak.

The Hawkeyes got an early start on the Broncs by scoring the first two buckets of the game, both coming in the painted region.

Down 4-0 to start, sophomore guard Ruben Rodriguez was able to penetrate the dense Iowa defense and lay one in to get the Broncs on the board.

Outside of opening the scoring for Rider in the game, Iowa was able to take Rodriguez out of the picture for the first half, as he did not score again.

The Hawkeyes were also able to mute Rider's attack from beyond the arc, as none of Rider's six attempts found the bottom of the net.

Iowa also managed to take graduate student guard T.J. Weeks Jr. out of the game. Weeks, in the early stages of this season, was the lifeblood for the Rider's offensive system, but in the first half, Weeks recorded zero points and was only able to get one shot up.

Later on in the game, Weeks was able to get on the board with five points and closed out the game with only five attempted shots from the field and three from beyond the arc.

Graduate student forward Tariq Ingraham shined through despite the Broncs first-half struggles, as Ingraham scored 10 of Rider's 26 points in the half.

Despite the credible performance

in the first half from the veteran forward, Head Coach Kevin Baggett wanted to see more out of him on the other side of the floor.

"It's more than just offense for us. Tariq Ingraham needed to play better defense and it starts in the post," Baggett said.

When it comes to defending the basket, Rider struggled mightily, giving up 44 points in the paint while letting up 20 points off turnovers. Sticking with turnovers, the Broncs committed 20 and were only able to force eight from the Hawkeyes.

"We just didn't play well in any phase of the game. Offensively, defensively, sharing the ball, too many breakdowns," Baggett said, "So, chalk it up and learn from it."

Rider also struggled with their shooting from 3-point range, an unusual struggle for the team. Rider as a team shot 1-of-16, with the only 3-pointer coming from senior forward Jay Alvarez. From the field, Rider performed better, shooting at a 43% clip.

"We can always learn from these things. It doesn't matter who you play. There's things you can always learn and we will learn from them," Baggett said.

Rider will return home to right wrongs before hitting the road on Nov. 23 to play Bucknell.

The game will be broadcast on ESPN+ at 7 p.m.



Josiah Thomas/The Rider News

Senior forward **Jay Alvarez** collects his dribble.



Sports

ONLINE

MEN'S SOCCER PHOTO GALLERY

Check out a photo gallery from Rider men's soccer 1-0 loss in the MAAC championship at Mazzella Field.

FIND THE PHOTO GALLERY ON [THERIDERNEWS.COM](https://www.ridernews.com)



VOLLEYBALL Rider splits weekend matches, secures 3rd place in MAAC

By Lindsay Scarola

DURING its home stretch before the Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference tournament, Rider volleyball dropped a match against the Fairfield Stags 3-2 on Nov. 16 before besting the Sacred Heart Pioneers 3-1 for Senior Day on Nov. 17.

Down to the wire

Rider ended its seven-game win streak with its match against Fairfield, where they lost, 3-2. The Broncs had a 7-2 run to lead the first set 21-17. Combo blocks by junior outside hitter Kiannisha Santiago and sophomore middle hitter Molly Rohde contributed to Rider's 25-17 win in the first match. Down 19-15 in the second set, Rider rallied five points for the lead. In a back and forth battle, the Stags were victorious, taking the set 25-21. The Broncs led by two before going on a 6-1 run in the third match, making the score 22-15. Aces by junior libero Keegan O'Connor and senior setter Ryley Frye allowed for a 25-17 win. Already up 9-7 in the fourth game, Fairfield took over after scoring eight points for a score of 17-8, a nine-point deficit Rider could not recover from. The Stags took the set 25-15, forcing a fifth round. The Broncs controlled the start of the final match; however, once the score was 8-6, the momentum flipped, and the Stags outscored Rider, leading Fairfield to a 15-9 set win and a 3-2 victory.

Senior Day

The last game of the regular season was Rider's Senior Day, honoring the graduating Broncs, junior middle hitter Carley McAleavey and Frye. In front

of its home crowd, Rider secured a 3-1 win against Sacred Heart. The Broncs jumped out to an early lead of 4-1 in the first game. The Pioneers rallied in an attempt to catch up, but they ultimately fell short, losing 25-22. Rohde started the second set with a pair of blocks to give Rider a 4-1 lead. A 15-11 lead soon became a 17-16 deficit after Sacred Heart went on its own run. As Rider lost control over the game and the score became tied at 24, the Broncs called a timeout. "We pointed out some things technically [that] we can be better at," said Head Coach Jeff Rotondo. The quick reset paid off, as sophomore opposite hitter Anja Kelly and sophomore outside hitter Paige Giechtbrock had back-to-back kills, ending the set with Rider earning a 26-24 win. In the third game, Sacred Heart led 19-17 until they finished it off with a victory, 25-18. Rider gradually built its lead in the fourth game, 19-12, but at 22-17 Sacred Heart went on a 5-0 run, tying the set. Santiago had a kill and a block, pushing Rider to a 25-22 win. The Broncs played for their seniors, having a huge win over Sacred Heart, 3-1. Frye said getting to be a part of the Broncs volleyball culture as a captain was meaningful: "There's a lot of teams around the country that don't enjoy being together, but we really enjoy each other and we love being together, so I'm really gonna miss the girls." Despite graduating early, McAleavey said she loved her time as a Bronc: "I'm just gonna miss my built-in family. As soon as I stepped foot on the court and stepped in the gym the first day I was a freshman, I had 18 best friends."



Destiny Pagan/The Rider News

Junior middle hitter **Carley McAleavey** and sophomore opposite **Anja Kelly** celebrate after a score.

Rider finished the regular season with an overall record of 15-16 and a conference record of 14-4, currently sitting at third in the MAAC with a first-round bye in the tournament. The MAAC tournament lasts from Nov. 21-24. The Broncs will play on Nov. 22 in the second round at 7 p.m.



WOMEN'S BASKETBALL Broncs still winless at home after Bryant loss

By Kadie DiGiuseppe

RETURNING to Alumni Gym after losing its home opener, Rider women's basketball faced another defeat on its home court, this time to the Bryant Bulldogs 62-54 on Nov. 15, bringing its season record to 1-2. Junior forward Emilee Tahata started off hot, scoring first for the Broncs with two 3-pointers. Freshman guard Camryn Collins got on the board early after a failed 3-point attempt, but Tahata was the more consistent scorer.

"Knowing that, no matter what, my teammates have my back is great," said Tahata. Collins and Tahata combined to give the Broncs 15 points before the Bulldogs took their small lead away. Even after its fiery start, Rider ended the first quarter down 22-17. In the second quarter, senior guard Gabby Turco's great pass allowed senior guard Mariona Cos-Morales to add to the Broncs' score. Later in the quarter, the Broncs found themselves down 12 points due to weak performances on defense.

Cos-Morales and Turco both added more points before halftime, but Rider went into the locker room trailing 35-25. At one point during the second quarter, the Broncs had only scored three points in seven minutes, while the Bulldogs put up nine points. The Broncs let the hype from the crowd fuel their run in the second half as they cut the lead to tie things at 38 apiece. Senior guard Sanaa Redmond, Collins, Tahata and Turco all contributed on offense, combining for 13 points to tie while the Broncs defense locked in. Sophomore guard Aliya McIver's free throws kept the tie going in the final quarter. During the first three minutes, Rider forced three turnovers but could not finish on the offensive end. Collins did rack up five points before Turco's second 3-pointer tied things up; however, the Bulldogs offense took the lead back with less than a minute left, ending the game 62-54. "Late-game execution: it's vital to winning games. It's something that we work on every single day in practice," said Head Coach Lynn Milligan. "We came up a little short in that today. We just didn't execute the way I thought we would." Collins added, "We're not used to situations like that. I think it just came down to late-game execution." Tahata and Turco finished the game with a combined 32 points while Collins got in double figures for her third game as a Bronc, with 12 points. The Broncs will travel to La Salle University on Nov. 20 at 6:30 p.m., and then to Virginia Commonwealth University on Nov. 24 to play against the Rams at 1 p.m.



Josiah Thomas/The Rider News

Junior forward **Emilee Tahata** and senior guard **Gabby Turco** celebrate a made bucket.

