

Faculty union marches to hand petition against Ecke’s firing

By Grace Bertrand

MEMBERS from the executive committee of Rider’s faculty union marched to Rider President John Loyack’s office at Moore Library on Oct. 7 to hand him their signed petition that calls for the reinstatement of former adjunct professor Kate Ecke and an apology from Loyack for his decision to fire her.

The march was announced by Rider’s chapter of the American Association of University Professors in a Sept. 29 facultywide email with the goal of showing solidarity among the faculty union in their demands. The email also announced an on-campus petition that faculty were given the opportunity to sign, which garnered 102 signatures.

Ecke was abruptly terminated on Sept. 17 for political posts on her personal Facebook account about conservative political activist Charlie Kirk, which Loyack said “did not reflect [Rider’s] expectations for respectful and civil engagement” in his Sept. 17 universitywide email announcing the termination.

Rider’s AAUP chapter Chief Grievance Officer Jeffrey Halpern said, “We want to simply let the president know there is a unified faculty support for academic freedom. That’s the purpose.”

Halpern said the march was not a “big demonstration” but more of a symbol of unity from the faculty union, specifically the executive committee.

The march commenced outside of Fine Arts as the executive committee made its way to the ground floor of the library where the offices of Loyack and Provost



From left to right **Luis De Agustin, Jeffrey Halpern, Richard Zdan, John Loyack** and **Maria Villalobos-Buehner**. Rider faculty members handing the petition to President Loyack.

Kelly Bidle are located. Upon arrival, the union stopped Loyack on his way into his office, handing him the petition.

Four Public Safety officers were present on the walk to Loyack’s office, including Director of Public Safety Matthew Babcock, and remained outside the library while the faculty union handed the petition to Loyack.

Richard Zdan, one of the executive committee’s at-large members and an associate sociology professor-lecturer, helped organize the march and facilitate the

physical petition. He said, “The issue of the firing of Professor Ecke is not about anything she said. It’s not about anything she did. It’s about the concept of academic freedom and the university’s decision to violate her academic freedom.”

Joining the march with the union was She’ron Mason, senior sociology major, who felt it was important for students to stand with their professors in the fight for academic freedom.

SEE “AAUP”
PAGE 3

Loyack proposes solutions for Rider’s financial crisis

By Caroline Haviland

TO combat the university’s \$21.8 million deficit, Rider President John Loyack announced a possible course of action in an Oct. 6 universitywide email based on feedback from almost 100 university constituents.

In the email, Loyack revealed Rider’s recent \$13 million Westminster Choir College property settlement will unexpectedly not help the university’s financial standing.

The email said, “Prior to my arrival I, like many of you, was hopeful that the funds from the Westminster settlement would help with Rider’s financial situation, but this is not the case. The funds anticipated from the Westminster legal settlement had been committed over the last several years as a basis for borrowing money that paid for prior-year cash operating losses. Rider is obligated to use the Westminster settlement proceeds to repay those loans and borrowings.”

College of Arts and Sciences Senior Associate Dean and WCC Associate Professor of Music Education Jason Vodicka said in an email to The Rider News, “While I have a lot of emotional attachment to the WCC campus, knowing the amount of the sale or how the proceeds from it will be used is not information that would be shared with someone in my position.”

The proposal comes after Loyack labeled Rider’s financial situation as “more severe than expected,” in a Sept. 19 universitywide email, due to unforeseen events that he did not identify.

The ideas presented in the email, sparked from

a dozen small-group listening sessions Loyack and Provost Kelly Bidle held over the previous two weeks, include laying off additional personnel, reducing salaries, eliminating inefficient programs, improving workload efficiency, making adjustments to employee benefits and eliminating employee reimbursements.

In response to an inquiry from The Rider News regarding Loyack’s email, Director of Communications Rachel Stengel said the correspondence highlights the latest information available for the campus community, and more details will be shared at a later time.

Communications Professor David Dewberry called Loyack’s listening sessions “an ineffective strategy,” since the ideas only came from some people.

“If someone came to me and said, ‘Do you want to reduce salaries?’ I’d want a vote in that and I would say, ‘No.’ As I think most people would in that situation. ... Just because somebody said something doesn’t mean we’re willing to do it,” Dewberry said.

Dewberry pointed out the idea of layoffs is not new to Rider, as former Chief Diversity Officer Heeyoung Kim and former Assistant Vice President of Career Development, Engaged Learning and Leadership Kim Barberich were laid off over the summer. The methods to address Rider’s financial situation, Dewberry said, “seems to be no different than in the past.”

As the AAUP’s contractual Oct. 31 faculty layoff deadline approaches, the faculty union’s leadership plans to meet about Loyack’s correspondence on Oct.



President Loyack announced in a Oct. 6 email proposed steps for repairing Rider’s finacial crisis.

8 and deliver a formal response some time afterwards.

The universitywide feedback also helped Loyack foster a vision for a Rider beyond its current financial distress, the email explained.

These future ideas include improving the university’s academic model, creating partnerships with outside organizations, improving campus life, enhancing existing revenue streams, bettering operational efficiency and working on the university’s reputation.

With the president announcing changes to come, Dewberry said that while many are anxious for the future, the university has been “living under this umbrella for some time.”

INSIDE

Strolling down the boardwalk at MAACness

Rider welcomes new basketball teams outside Alumni Gym

PAGE 5

Broncs score nine goals over last two games

Rider field hockey has broken their five-game losing streak, winning four straight.

PAGE 10



Taylor Swift: If pity was a person

“The Life of a Showgirl” is disappointing, at best.

PAGE 7



SECURITY BRIEFS

BY BRIANNA VELAZQUEZ

Information provided by Public Safety Director Matthew Babcock

Garbage Graffiti

Discovered drawings. On Oct. 2, at 10:20 a.m., Public Safety was on a park, walk and talk in Hill Hall where they discovered graffiti in the first floor trashroom. Facilities Management was notified to have the graffiti removed. Public Safety is investigating.



Power Down

Dark dorm. On Oct. 6, at 6:09 p.m., Public Safety was dispatched to Hill Hall for the report of power out in a room. Upon arrival, Public Safety discovered that the majority of the rooms in one of the wings of the building had lost power. Facilities Management was contacted and sent in a staff member to make repairs.



Missing Microwave

Hot theft. On Oct. 6, at 10:35 a.m., Public Safety was dispatched to Switlik Hall for the report of a theft. Upon arrival, they met with Facilities Management, who reported the basement microwave had been stolen. The cable that attached the microwave to the wall appeared to be forcefully removed. Public Safety is investigating.

Hillel president responds to recent antisemitism

By Caroline Haviland

In the aftermath of an antisemitic vandalism incident that took place in a Rider classroom on Sep. 29, Rider's Hillel chapter President Jenna Forgash labeled the event as further proof of rising antisemitism.

"What we are seeing today with antisemitism being so prevalent and normalized is what happened in the years leading up to the Holocaust. This incident that happened on our campus is another example of normalizing antisemitism," Forgash, a senior elementary education major, said in an Oct. 7 email to The Rider News.

The vandalism took place in a classroom at the Science and Technology Center prior to the scheduled time of a 300-level English class, according to Forgash, who became aware of the incident through a fellow Hillel board member in the class. As students took their seats, they noticed the words "Heil Hitler," a term used in Nazi Germany, written in black ink on the whiteboard.

Forgash said Public Safety was immediately called to the classroom and came to investigate, take photos and question those in the room.

In response to the incident, Director of Public Safety Matthew Babcock said in an Oct. 6 interview with The Rider News, "We absolutely do not condone it and we do everything in our power to prevent that. ... We're doing everything possible to find out who did it, working closely with Title IX and assisting law enforcement with any cooperation."

Forgash received emails from faculty and

administrators after the incident, including Hillel faculty adviser Melissa Greenberg and Vice President of Community Engagement and Belonging Darryl Mace, to show their support and stand in solidarity.

This event marks the third antisemitic occurrence on Rider's campus in 2025, with the previous two taking place in April 2025: the carving of swastikas on a Jewish student's door and an anonymous individual using the name "Hitler" when responding to attend an on-campus Passover Seder event.

Rider President John Loyack and Mace responded to the recent antisemitic vandalism in a universitywide email on Sept. 30, saying "hate speech has no place at Rider University."

"I am committed to a campus free from hate, intimidation and fear, a campus where every Bronc knows they are cared for and that they belong," Loyack said.

With the event occurring days before the most important Jewish holiday on Oct. 2, Yom Kippur, and a week before Sukkot which begins on Oct. 6, Loyack's email sent a message to Jewish Rider constituents, "To our Jewish brothers and sisters, know that we stand in solidarity with you as you prepare to enter Yom Kippur, followed shortly after by Sukkot."

Additionally, the Student Government Association sent an email on Sept. 30 to make a formal comment regarding the vandalism: "These acts of hatred completely violate the respect and dignity we deserve as human beings. Especially as the climate of our university is tense, we encourage everyone to lift each



Gail Demeraski / The Rider News

Antisemitic vandalism was found written on a whiteboard in the Science and Technology Center.

other up and strengthen our campus community."

As Forgash moves forward as the president of Rider's Jewish student organization, she shared a final sentiment in her email to The Rider News; "We must continuously call out this behavior to ensure that history does not repeat itself."

CDI renamed to The Center for Community and Belonging

By Grace Bertrand

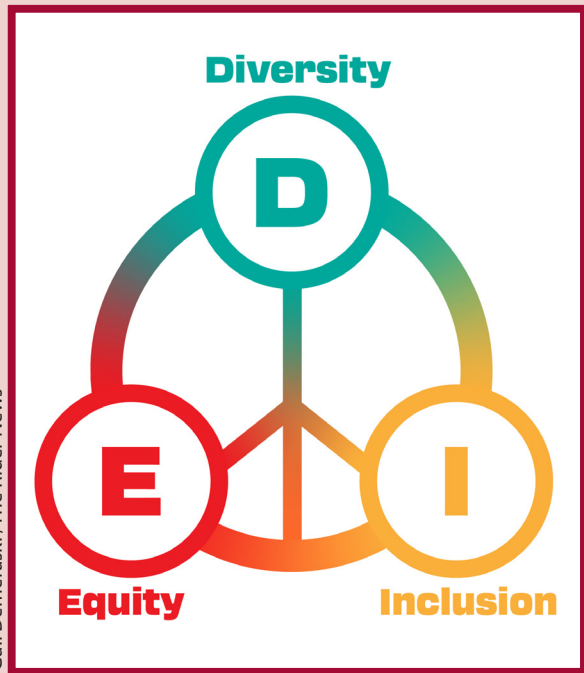
RIDER'S Center for Diversity and Inclusion has been renamed to The Center for Community and Belonging, among other new initiatives listed in a Sept. 24 universitywide email from Darryl Mace, vice president of Community Engagement and Belonging.

Mace introduced himself in his new role and Rider's new division of CEB in the email, while also proposing new efforts for the program. Some projects include rebuilding the Office of Service and Civic Engagement, extending more support to service-focused student organizations, strengthening connections with the Educational Opportunity Program and expanding the visibility of the Dr. Eugene Marsh Center for Veterans and Military Affairs and the Julius and Dorothy Koppelman Holocaust Genocide Resource Center.

A call for collaboration

Mace's vision focuses on supporting both service and faith-based organizations to better equip every Rider student in community service and engagement.

"If we don't help students learn how to be engaged citizens in the world, then we're not doing a full education. We're actually not doing our job fully," Mace said in an Oct. 6 interview with The Rider News. "And so community engagement, community service, civic engagement, understanding



Gail Demeraski / The Rider News

Announced in a Sept. 24 email, the Center for Diversity and Inclusion has been renamed to The Center for Community and Belonging.

how political, social, cultural, and structures work is essential to understanding how to be a full human being."

In the Sept. 24 email, Mace explained that the new name for the center captures its "ethos," or

character, and the new vision he has for the center, which he said he shared with Pamela Pruitt, former executive director of the center and one of its originators.

Jasmine Johnson, director of CCB, emphasized that the center would still remain committed to planning events for identity-based months like Hispanic Heritage Month, which is annually observed from Sept. 15 to Oct. 15.

"I think one thing I would stress to the Rider community is that the heart and essence of the center is still here," Johnson said in an Oct. 6 interview with The Rider News. "We're still going to continue to welcome students and student-orgs into our spaces. ... We continue to build on it, adding the community piece to it, because we are a community."

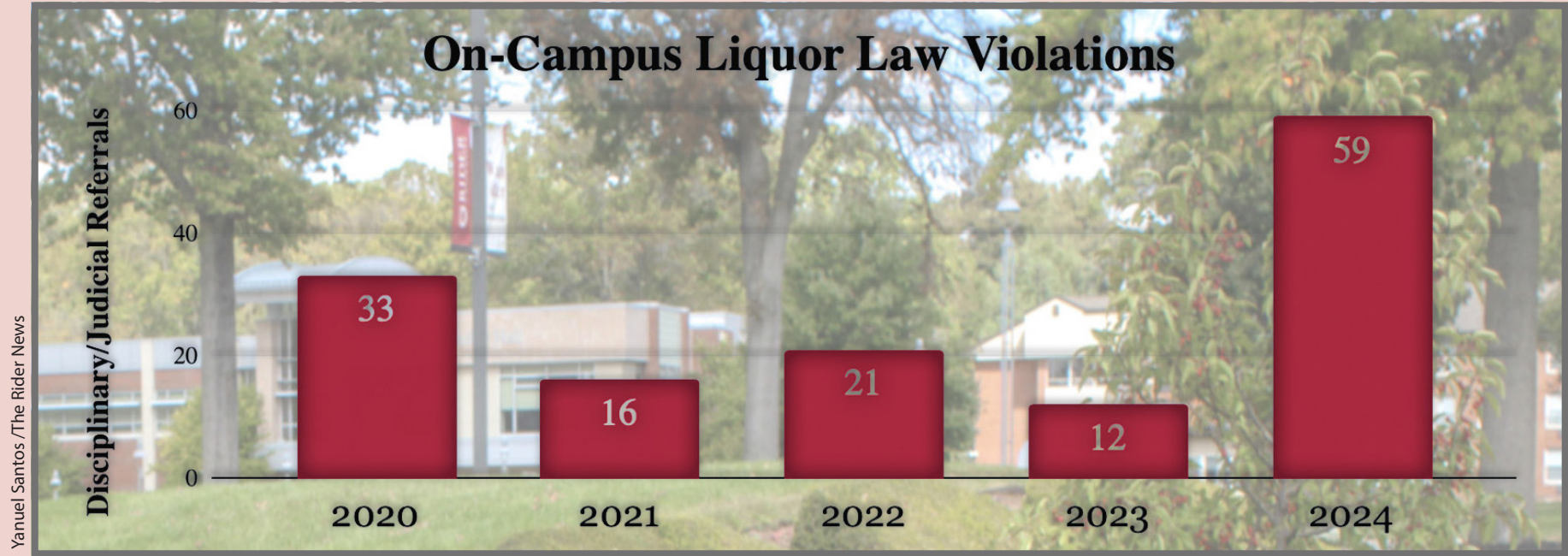
In the email Johnson was announced as taking on directorship of the Rider Bonner Community Leaders Program, a group of community leaders who serve in civic engagement on and off campus.

Mace said he hopes to bring to Rider many of the initiatives he had at Alvernia University, his previous employer where Rider President John Loyack also worked.

With Alvernia being a Catholic institution, Mace said he is excited to bring a similar strong interfaith program to Rider, promoting collaboration and civil dialogue



SEE "MACE" PAGE 4



Statistics for on-campus liquor law violations from Rider’s 2024 Security & Fire Safety Reports are compared to those from previous years.

Annual security reports show rise in alcohol violations

By Caitlyn Sutton

THERE was a steep uptick in on-campus disciplinary actions regarding liquor law violations from 2023 to 2024, according to Rider’s Annual Security & Fire Safety Reports for 2024.

While no arrests were made in 2023 or 2024, the amount of actions and referrals increased from 12 cases of on-campus violations resulting in disciplinary actions in 2023, to 59 cases in 2024.

The report was sent out in an Oct. 3 universitywide email, with the reports required to be released yearly on Oct. 1, according to the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act. The security and fire safety reports are used to disclose various pieces of information regarding on-campus crime statistics, as well as keeping the community informed of security and safety policies.

Over the span of 2020 to 2024, there have been 141 disciplinary actions or judicial referrals in relation to liquor law violations, with 41.8% of the liquor law violations cases taking place in the last calendar year.

Director of Public Safety Matthew Babcock said,

“There were several incidents, where smaller parties were discovered and charged with alcohol violations. ... one incident may result in seven conduct referrals for alcohol violations.”

While liquor law violations rose this past year, cases of on-campus domestic violence remained the same between 2023 and 2024.

There were four reported instances of domestic violence on campus in 2023 and 2024; three took place in residence halls both years.

Rape cases reported on campus have decreased since 2021. Eight reported cases of rape occurred in 2021; seven were in residence halls. In 2024, there were two cases of rape and both were reported to have been in residence halls.

Under section three of the security report, Anti-Harassment and Non-Discrimination (Title IX) Policy, it stated that Rider uses a “preponderance of the evidence standard of proof” when determining whether a violation of their policy occurred. There is also no time limitation for someone to make a complaint with the Title IX coordinator.

Director of Title IX & Equal Opportunity Compliance; Title IX Coordinator Ryan McKinney

did not respond to multiple requests for comment from The Rider News.

The 2022 and 2024 Annual Security & Fire Safety Reports reflected zero cases of criminal homicide from 2020 to 2024.

Cases of stalking, aggravated assault and arson have decreased since 2023.

In 2023, there were two cases of stalking; there were no reported cases in 2024. Aggravated assault cases decreased from three to zero between 2023 and 2024. Arson cases decreased as well, from two in 2023 to one reported case in 2024.

The safety report suggested that there were no cases of murder, manslaughter, statutory rape, incest, dating violence, stalking, robbery, aggravated assault or motor vehicle theft on campus in 2024.

There was one reported fire in a residence hall in 2024’s calendar year in Ziegler Hall. Less than \$1 of damages were sustained during the incident. The safety report explained what the guidelines are for residence hall fire safety regulations.

According to the report, there were no cases of crime or safety incidents on Princeton’s campus. Students have not been housed there since 2021.

AAUP demand for Ecke’s reinstatement and an apology

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

As the petition was handed to Loyack outside of his office, Mason spoke up and said “A lot of us [students] are really disappointed by the firing, especially in a situation like this. It’s a very serious topic.”

In response to the faculty union and Mason, Loyack responded saying, “I appreciate your opinion.”

In an Oct. 7 interview with The Rider News, Mason said, “For the university to fire Ecke over something like this, it just goes to show where [they] stand. They don’t stand with the people. They don’t stand with the victims.”

Following her posts, Ecke received threats to herself, threats to her personal business, and according to administrators, the Rider campus was threatened, although no “Timely Warning” was issued to alert the community. In Loyack’s Sept. 17 email, he stated that several individuals at Rider received a threat “as a result of this individual’s actions.”

Mason said that finding out about Ecke’s firing through Loyack’s email felt like students were being kept in the dark and described the email as vague. She said, “[They] tried to purposely keep the student body in the shadows about that with the email ... not telling us what the behavior was. That seems to be the theme with the administration here is that they don’t tell us when issues are going on and what kind of issues they are.”

It was important to the AAUP that they demand not only Ecke’s reinstatement but also a university apology, specifically naming Loyack and Bidle who were responsible for Ecke’s termination.

In the Sept. 29 facultywide email, the faculty



Members of the executive committee of Rider’s AAUP chapter marched to Rider President John Loyack’s office at Moore Library.

union wrote, “We must stand together and send a clear message to President Loyack and Provost Bidle that we will defend our rights under the Agreement and that attempts to divide and conquer us will fail.”

Additionally, the AAUP partnered with the American Federation of Teachers New Jersey to launch a statewide letter-writing campaign. The campaign has received 342 letters as of Oct. 7.

A student-led change.org online petition launched on Sept. 17 also called on Rider to reinstate Ecke. As of Oct. 7, the petition has garnered 438 signatures.

In an Oct. 7 facultywide email, Rider’s AAUP chapter thanked the faculty for their support with signing the physical petition and announced that it had filed a grievance for Ecke’s firing and is awaiting

a response from the administration. The email stated, “Today, we delivered the petition signatures to President Loyack. We are proud to report that we are sending a massive, unified message... Kate is extremely appreciative of all the support she has received, and she is ready to return to Rider to support you.”

Zdan said that the faculty union will be satisfied once Ecke is reinstated and the university apologizes to her for their violation of their labor agreement, Article IV Academic Freedom, which states that the university will “not threaten, coerce, or discipline members of the bargaining unit because of what they say or what they do as private citizens.”

Zdan explained that the march to Loyack’s office represents the faculty union going to bat for something much bigger than Ecke’s termination.

He said, “Academic freedom is under attack nationwide and this is part of a broader threat to higher education ... Professor Ecke’s firing represents an attack on the very foundations of education as a concept in this country. And that’s not just a Rider thing, that’s not just a higher-ed thing, that’s an education thing.”

Jackie Incollingo is the faculty advisor for The Rider News and a faculty union member. She had no part in the writing or editing of this story.

Mace places emphasis on community outreach and civil dialogue

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

among Rider’s faith-based organizations like Hillel, the Jewish Student Organization, Muslim Student Organization, Catholic Campus Ministry and Rider Intersivity Christian Fellowship.

“We want students to be able to find their belonging in whatever it is and for some of our students, that is based on their faith tradition and identity. That piece of their identity is primary for some students ... and those exist in faith-based organizations,” Mace said. “What’s also important is to be able to have conversations outside of those groups. We don’t want students to feel siloed into particular organizations.”

In his vision for the future of the Rider community, Mace said he plans to create an incentive system where the CEB will provide additional funding to all student organizations that is based on how much they collaborate with each other.

Mace said, “If [a student organization] collaborates with one other organization, [they] get a certain amount of money. If they collaborate with ten other organizations, they get more money.”

Mace also plans to introduce an internal interfaith assessment to better understand the campus climate around interfaith and a climate survey to better understand inclusion and community on campus. He said the division will then use the data collected to help make future decisions for the different programs.

Opening the conversation

In the Sept. 24 email, Mace opened his door to have conversations with members of the Rider community through weekly one-on-one meetings beginning Oct. 8. He said all of the available slots were filled up that day and more slots would be added soon.

“I need to learn Rider and I need to learn the Rider way,” Mace said. “I’m not coming in to build Dr. Mace’s vision of what should happen. It’s a collaborative effort. You can’t do belonging without collaboration, right?”

Mace said students and faculty were meeting with him to propose ideas for the CCB and inquire about the name change of the center. Mace hopes to provide more transparency on the vision of CCB, a virtue he said he and Loyack had at Alvernia.

For the long term, Mace said future training and programming will also be focused on having more civil discourse across Rider.

He said, “We are going to bring in programming that’s going to help to support our civic civil dialogue so that we are a place where people can voice their opinions and differences, but in a way that builds trust and collaboration as opposed to dissension.”

Additionally, Mace hopes to place a stronger emphasis on community outreach and facilitate more donated meal swipes, a winter coat drive and a



Photo courtesy of Rider University

Darryl Mace, vice president of Community Engagement and Belonging, addresses additions to the new division.

career closet, making professional attire accessible for students to borrow from for career fairs and internship interviews.

“Learning in a classroom and experiencing things with your peers is great, and it’s so much of what happens in the college experience,” Mace said. “But when you graduate, when students graduate, they have to be able to engage in the world.”

Library sessions teach students to ‘leverage’ AI

By Zyheim Bell

STARTING in October, the Moore Library will host workshop sessions open to the Rider community in hopes of empowering students across all majors to learn how to “leverage” artificial intelligence, according to a Sept. 25 studentwide email from the university library.

The workshops will be offered in four in-person sessions within the library. Two sessions will be held on Oct. 8 while the remaining two will take place on Oct. 9 and 21.

Students have the opportunity to attend sessions that teach them how to utilize Google Notebook LM, use AI models that can help planning and development of group work and explore career options.

Dean of the Library Sharon Whitfield said, “We’re kind of looking at AI more as what it’s supposed to be, as an assistant that works with you.”

Whitfield is an avid user of AI employing the software in uses where she believes creativity is not required. “They tend to be very automated things in my life. For instance, if I want to just make sure that an email is coming across effectively,” she said.

The Oct. 8 sessions will both cover Google Notebook and learn how AI can be implemented for creating studying tips and remain within compliance of the university’s AI policies. The Oct. 9 session “From Doodles to Done: AI Tools for Smarter Group Work” intends to teach students how to apply AI models like Google Gemini and Napkin to take “doodles” and prompts to create images.

The Career Development and Success department will cover the Oct. 21 workshop on how students can use AI like Google Career Dreamer for career path ideas and skill building, the email stated. Students will be able to utilize the Google workspace AI features like Career Dreamer and Notebook for free through Rider.

With the workshops, the library team wants students to understand how human input and

collaboration with AI is needed for the best results — a “centaur-based” relationship according to Whitfield, where the human and technology have to work hand in hand with one another.

Whitfield is hoping that the sessions provide students with the necessary skills to utilize AI, and that starts with the prompting and user input.

According to her, AI writes at a seventh-grade level and when students do not take the time to properly format the prompts or use models to completely write for them, they run the risk of their work having a high level of “banality.” Whitfield wants students to understand and see how AI produces these unoriginal responses to build the understanding that programs will not produce writing that is “creative” or capable of being a “great argument.”

Whitfield combats this herself in two ways, using AI only to proofread her original work and using promptings that focus on the audience she wants to adapt her writing for.

“I will kind of take my prompt and say from a certain lens, what do you think about this?” she said.

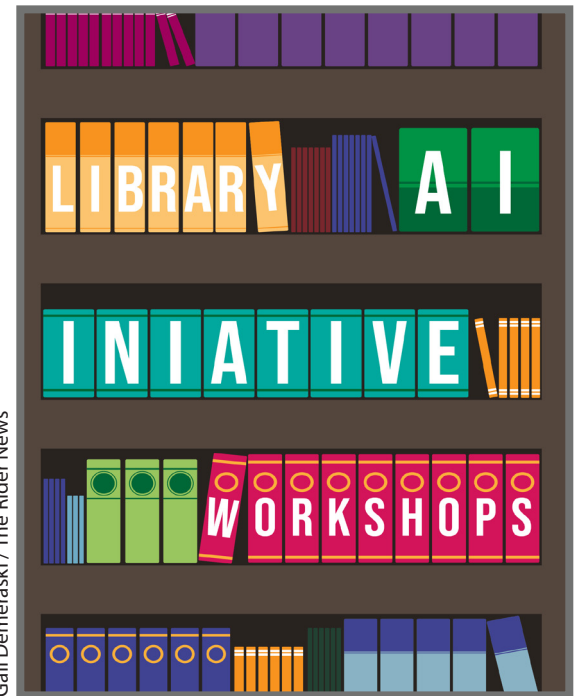
Trevor Janusas, a junior communications major, believes that it is important that the school has opted to host programs teaching AI through the library.

“There’s so much rampant use of AI within every part of people’s school lives ... Why not learn how to make ourselves better from it instead of just completely cheating?” he said.

Janusas uses generative AI systems like ChatGPT for creating study guides and helping to complete assignments. However, he also notices that the convenience of AI has been a “slight detriment” to him.

“It might be taking me back as a learner because I’m not doing as much of the thinking as I used to do in high school,” Janusas said.

The library workshops are working toward correcting this and bringing students to that “next-level” by using AI to enhance written notes, provide



Gail Demerski / The Rider News

The university library has begun hosting sessions to equip students to properly utilize artificial intelligence.

new lenses of thinking and remaining critical of AI, according to Whitfield.

Cheating is not the only issue that can be raised when it comes to the use of AI; Whitfield wants students to understand the ethics behind the software.

Whitfield said, “There’s a bias to AI, and that typically happens with all technologies. So we want them to also think about that.”

AI is also fed by the content that is put into it. Whitfield noted that each time someone submits work to AI programs, they lose their intellectual property as the writing is used to feed and improve AI databases.

Whitfield hoped that more students would begin to enroll in the workshops, and urged students to take control over the shaping and use of AI. She said, “Make sure that you continue to prompt ... to ask more questions to use this tool more effectively.”

THE TRUTH WILL BE TOLD!

Listen Saturday at 11 a.m.



Jasmine White/The Rider News

The Rider cheer team gets ready to perform for the Rider community, celebrating the 2025-2026 basketball season alongside Rider's mascot A.J. the Bronc.

Strolling down the boardwalk at MAACness

By Teagan Rotella and Sofia Santiago

THE cranberry red and bright white lights permeated the parking lot behind the Alumni Gym as colorful smoke emerged from both sides of the stage. As each basketball player crossed the stage filled with adrenaline, their teammates and the crowd cheered them on in anticipation for the upcoming season.

On Oct. 3, the annual MAACness event commemorated not only Rider's men's and women's basketball teams, but other organizations as well. The boardwalk-themed celebration brought many Rider students together, some for the first time.

As a freshman guard, this marked psychology major Alena Cofield's first MAACness event with the women's basketball team. Cofield highlighted the electric atmosphere and the chance to "spend time with the team and the coaches."



Jasmine White/The Rider News

The Rider cheer team performs for the crowd at MAACness.

Leslie Perez, a senior elementary education major and captain of the Rider cheer team, emphasized her

excitement for the new members of the team as this was their "first appearance with [them]."

The cheer team performed multiple times throughout the night, pulling off choreographed dances with lifts and stunts. The team wore shirts with mermaid-inspired designs of the Rider "R" as a nod to the event's boardwalk and beach theme.

Tables surrounding the edges of the parking lot offered countless boardwalk-themed food options such as funnel cake fries, root beer floats and a popcorn bar.

The tables also featured student clubs: Green Team, Future Business Leaders of America, Student Government Association, Lambda Theta Alpha Latin Sorority, Incorporated and Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Incorporated.

Each table had a game or decorations centered around the boardwalk theme. Rider students had the opportunity to win prizes courtesy of the student organizations and the multiple tables run by the Rider Athletics Department, the organizers of the event.

Rider's Senior Associate Director of Athletics, Karin Torchia, has run the event annually since 2000. She mentioned MAACness has been typically held inside the Alumni Gym, but they could not last year due to scheduling conflicts. Despite this, last year's outdoor event was a huge success, convincing Torchia to hold MAACness in the parking lot again this year.

While there were speakers playing music over the course of the event, Rider's Pep Band performed multiple times hyping up the crowd. Junior elementary education major and Rider Pep Band President Skye Chernobilsky expressed excitement about the newer

members' debut at MAACness, saying "It's really cool seeing how hype everyone gets, especially the newbies. It's nice because this is their first event, and we're kind of throwing them in the deep end ... it's cool to see how everyone adapts [for MAACness]."

When it was time for the basketball players to appear onstage, the speakers returned to playing music. One by one, Rider's women's and men's basketball teams walked out to a different song, some of their choosing, as the emcee announced their player number, position and gave a brief biography of them.

This year did not only mark many student's first time participating, but it was also Rider Women's Basketball Head Coach Jackie Hartcell's first time experiencing MAACness.

Hartcell shared her thoughts, "The energy was great. It was really exciting. I've never been a part of anything like this, so this is really cool, and I know our players really like this too."



Jasmine White/The Rider News

The Rider men's basketball team celebrates the start of their season.

The spirit of fall inspires music by the Rider Rock

By Stacie Hueter

CRISP, russet leaves and a cool breeze befell the evening of Rider's second "Live from the Rider Rock," open-mic event.

Fitting with the theme, "Autumn Leaves," the environment set a lovely scenery around the makeshift stage for a time of comforting and cathartic performances by various students.

Junior music production major Madeleine Gilson helped organize the event as the chair of Rider's Student Entertainment Council. She expressed her excitement about having a second open-mic night.

Another organizer and chair on the SEC Gil Bitsimis, a junior music production major, said, "We get to interact with students we've never really interacted with before."

The event featured many evocative songs, such as "Sweater Weather" by The Neighbourhood and "Get You," by Daniel Ceasar, providing a sense of coziness to the audience.

Mars Springsteel, a freshman music production major who performed at the first open-mic event, said she felt "stoked to be back ... I hadn't performed in quite a bit, so this is really exciting." She sang "We Fell in Love in October" by Girl in Red, which officially initiated the warm fall vibe for the rest of the evening.

Another previous performer, Mya Mcfarland, junior social work major, mirrored Springsteel's thoughts. "It was cool. I felt a little bit more confident than last time because I sang a song by China Anne McClain," she said.

Mcfarland enjoyed the low-stakes of the event in contrast to more popular, anticipated ones like

R Factor because "it's not the entire campus." The crowd's bright smiles and adoring cheers eased her worries about singing.

Lathan Gil, known around campus by his alias "Lay Tin," is a sophomore music production major who performed twice on stage despite "feeling under the weather." He sang "We Belong Together" by Mariah Carey, using an original track sample that he decided to show off to students. Gil added that this was a "very impromptu moment." The supportive audience, even unfamiliar people, encouraged Gil to step forward showing how the event reels out unexpected actions of nearby students.

Gil's striking vocals attracted many to stop by the rock, such as Julie Hilse, a freshman music production major.

"The first thing I heard was Lathan's performance of 'We Belong Together.' [I thought] 'This sounds fun, I should go over and check this out' ... I love the energy," Hilse said. The event provided a meaningful buffer period in between tiring classes. Hilse was inspired to the point of volunteering herself to perform "Falling Behind" by Laufey despite feeling stuffy as well.

Gilson and Bitsimis duetted multiple student-singers with appealing harmonies throughout, while senior music production major Koryna Jn-Louis, another chair of the Rider's Student Entertainment Council, shared her time in the spotlight, singing "Wildflower" by Billie Eilish.

Many individuals stopped by to admire the talent presented by passionate Rider creatives.

Jn-Louis said, "We always run a bit past seven

o'clock. But I think it's a good problem to have." She said it showed the willingness of student performers when given the chance to perform something for themselves, and their fellow peers.

Moving forward, the trio stated that they would love to extend the open-mic evenings to as long as 2 hours. In Gilson's words, "People want to be up here. People want it."

Zyheim Bell is news editor of The Rider News and is Student Government Association delegate. He had no part in the writing or editing of this story.



Stacie Hueter/The Rider News

Sophomore music production major Lathan Gil performs "We Belong Together" by Mariah Carey, sharing his musical talents.

Saxby’s new SCEO leads with ‘trusting personality’

By Jasmine White

BORN to two immigrant parents from Colombia, junior marketing major Felipe Ramirez was born and raised in what he described as “the land of opportunity,” seizing every chance to further his education, career and network adding to his already lengthy resume. This semester, he will take on the position of Rider Saxby’s Student Chief Executive Officer.

Ramirez was introduced into the Rider community through the Multicultural Student Leadership institute program, which is now the All Broncs Belong program through the Center of Community and Belonging.

“I was very involved with the [Center of Community and Belonging] and that spiraled into all these opportunities for me from the start like Latinos in College and [Sigma Phi Epsilon fraternity],” Ramirez said.

Ramirez explained how having great character and leadership qualities play significant roles in being the head of a large team of student workers. Though this is his first time in a SCEO position, he makes it his business to be integrative and interactive with all of his fellow employees.

“The real requirement is that you have a trusting personality because [Saxby’s at Rider] is not looking for someone who ran businesses in the past,” Ramirez said. “You’re a college student who has never run a business before, so this is your first step into that world.”

Saxby’s SCEO is in charge of inventory counts, curating schedules and overseeing the financial inputs and outputs every week. Essentially, there is no set schedule and works more as a “clockwork” ordeal as described by Ramirez.

Entering the position, Ramirez learned how

Photo courtesy of Felipe Ramirez



Junior marketing major **Felipe Ramirez** is elected for Saxby’s new Student Chief Executive Officer, despite being an external hire.

to manage his time, plan ahead and be prepared to tackle unexpected circumstances to ensure that the business runs smoothly regardless of potential setbacks.

Leila Johnson, senior accounting major and Saxby’s SCEO in fall 2024, met Ramirez in his freshman year, during the All Broncs Belong Program.

“I was a peer leader my sophomore year and he was one the students [during] his freshman year,” Johnson said. “I’ve seen him grow into a young leader on campus and it’s really shown throughout his term.”

According to Johnson, Ramirez is a very hands-on SCEO, despite being an outside hire that did not have the employee experience prior to taking on his lead role. Ramirez handles all the technical work and still compartmentalizes his time to be interactive with his team and day-to-day tasks.

Mercado Central commemorates Hispanic Heritage Month

By Jasmine White

THE scents of savory dishes and the sounds of a vast array of Hispanic cultural music filled the air and streets outside of the Student Recreational Center.

On Oct.7, students in the Bachelor’s of Social Work program, led by its director Irma Sandoval-Arocho, hosted a Hispanic Heritage tabling event, Mercado Central, sponsored by the Center of Community and Belonging and accompanied by music courtesy of 107.7 The Bronc.

BSW provided and served tacos de birria and flautas with horchata and Agua de Jamaica beverages to accompany the Latin flavors. A series of artists, creatives and organizations partook in tabling; mixing Rider with its neighboring communities.

Two Indigenous artists and co-owners of Jamm Gallery, an art gallery in Morganville, New Jersey, Sonia Tepas and Miguel Martinez, brought their artistry to the event to show off their gratification in their cultural backgrounds.

“[Martinez] is from Mexico, and I’m Salvadoran, so we’re very prideful in our work,” Tepas said. “We try to translate [our culture] into our work.”

Martinez used T-shirts as his canvases and created street wear, using airbrush paints on clothing as a way of freeing his creative side and circling back to his Mexican roots through the imagery.



Miguel Martinez (left) and **Sonia Tepas** (right) table at Mercado Central, celebrating their heritages through their artwork.

“I’ve been doing art forever and I really kicked off around 2020 when I started airbrushing during

lockdown,” Martinez said. “I feel like my art is a message and I’m really just a vessel toward something bigger.”



Students interact with different identity based tables enjoying food, learning information and receiving small trinkets.

On the painting side, Jazmyn Jones, an artist from Puerto Rico, presented her childhood experiences and expressed her love for Puerto Rican Culture through her work. Jones captured intergenerational practices and key pieces of her life on canvas and in photography.

There were tables with stunning jewels, displaying bracelets and necklaces, along with hands on tables, where students decorated miniature pots, painted rocks and created kites that were flown around the Campus Mall.

Additionally, there was a face painting station, attracting a number of students to their table with a plethora of paint colors, sparkles and designs.

Club de Español, a newly established club on campus, served a Salvadoran dish called pupusas, filled with cheese and chicken and an assortment of blue and white decorated cupcakes.

Junior elementary education major and Public Relations Chairman Stephany Mendez and sophomore biology major and treasurer Natalia Hernandez explained the premise of Club de Español.

“We basically have little events representing

“It’s a lot to learn being a new hire on the team instead of being someone who started in the cafe and worked their way up,” Johnson said. “It’s really rough being thrown into the deep end like that, but he’s been doing great.”

Ramirez joined Sigma Phi Epsilon fraternity during his freshman year and became vice president of communication from Nov. 2024 to April 2025, where he ran its social media page, helping him gain marketing experience early on.

Senior finance major Sean Lacy is one of Ramirez’s fraternity brothers. Lacy and Ramirez were neighbors in their dormitories last year, and Lacy highlighted how whenever Ramirez was around, he was “this ball of energy that you just naturally are attracted to every time you see him.”

Lacy said, “He is always doing things more behind the scenes, but I feel like that’s a really core thing we need within our [fraternity’s] chapter.”

Outside of Saxby’s and Sigma Phi Epsilon, Ramirez is active throughout the surrounding communities, volunteering at Trenton Area Soup Kitchen during the winter months for community service.

“It’s particularly to help the homeless and help the community,” Ramirez said.

The hands-on experience allowed Ramirez to acclimate to what it takes to run and care for a business. He encourages the next elected SCEO to be active with the Saxby’s team members because “they are the heart” of the cafe.

“If you don’t have a close relationship with your team, then you won’t be able to respect one another, enjoy one another and be able to delegate tasks,” Ramirez said. “It’s important to have a close network of people.”

every Latin American country, like today we are representing El Salvador,” Stephany Mendez said. “We hope to see people like us embracing every culture, understand what their values and purposes are.”

“Pretty much,” Hernandez added. “Don’t forget to practice your Spanish too!”

Lambda Theta Alpha Latin Sorority, Incorporated also tabled along with other identity-based organizations: Latin American Student Organization, Puerto Rican Association for Human Development and Mercer County Hispanic Association, Incorporated.

Trenton Area Soup Kitchen representatives Thalia Mendez and Ana Reyes collaborated with Rider’s event, emphasizing their love for getting involved with the community. TASK is an organization that allows for people to come together and serve the Trenton community.

“We love working with the community, especially being employees of [TASK], but just citizens of Mercer County,” Thalia Mendez said. “We love coming together, something like especially being Latina, something like this, bringing us together.”

Yanuel Santos is multimedia editor of The Rider News and is the president of Club de Español. He had no part in the writing or editing of this story.



Artists portray their love for their cultures through paintings using multiple mediums such as paints and yarns to add texture.

ALBUM REVIEW

Swift’s ‘The Life of a Showgirl’ is full of pity

THE music realm would not be what it is today without the occasional “I just broke up with my ex” or an “I am so in love” type of song, but consistently spamming this type of sound gets old.

Taylor Swift’s newest album, “The Life of a Showgirl” has a majority of her songs repeating the same themes of a woman yearning to find herself in the likes of a man, disregarding the true power a woman holds all on her own. The other half of the selections speak on Swift’s true feelings of being in the coveted limelight.

Swift’s album cover showcases her likeness scantily clad in a distorted collage, with her face plastered with makeup. What concerns me is that this hyper-sexualization of the star could leave the impression on younger fans that such an image is the standard for how women should look in the public eye. Before even listening to the record I felt that Swift missed the mark with the cover art alone.

The album opens up with the song, “The Fate of Ophelia.” This song was designed to represent the story of the character Ophelia from Shakespeare’s “Hamlet.” Ophelia dies a tragic death in the play, unable to be alongside the love of her life. Though Swift attempted to change Ophelia’s fate, the main theme of the song is a woman losing herself and unable to continue on in life without being “in love,” with another person. For all the Swifties, especially the younger girls just hitting the phase of developing feelings and crushes, the wrong ideology of what love is can be strongly impacted by the subliminal messaging in Swift’s songs.

The second song, “Elizabeth Taylor,” has similar themes, opening up with the story of a woman who thought the love of her life would stay, but because Swift is “under bright lights,” referring to her life in stardom, “all the right guys promised they’d stay” and soon “they withered away.”

Those lyrics emphasize the pity party Swift throws for herself, though she seems to be in a very convincingly happy relationship with the Kansas City Chiefs’ tight end, Travis Kelce.

With what seemed to be a new relationship during and after every album Swift released, previous songs to match up to her current ones, honing in on her longing to be wanted by someone.

A few other songs featured are “Father Figure” and “Eldest Daughter.” These songs focus more solely on the different experiences Swift had previously in her music career. These two songs

expose the reality of what it means to be a celebrity, having to give up one’s innocence and freedoms for the price of fame — the themes are more respectable and more of a lesson to be learned when dealing with society’s most desired lifestyles of being in the eye of a camera lense 24/7.

This leads me to her song, “CANCELLED!,” which guides fans to believe that she is feeling the pressures of being famous. Though walking on eggshells, Swift expresses she is tired of being the center of attention, wanting a more private life.

For someone that takes shots at celebrity culture for being implanted into her everyday life, the music she produces and the people she involves herself with will only continue to draw her media attention. It screams, “pick me, choose me!”

The album ends with “The Life of a Showgirl” featuring pop star Sabrina Carpenter. This has to be one of Swift’s stronger songs on this album just because she implemented another booming artist, adding intriguing flares to her monochromatic sound.

The world perceived Swift’s past albums like “Red,” as her experiencing intense emotions and mood shifts upon dealing with one of her alleged 13 breakups over the years. However, because Swift claims to have finally settled down with Kelce, there needs to be a shift of tone for her songwriting.

“The Life of a Showgirl” album was definitely not Swift’s best work and exemplifies a downward spiral in her creativity, but lucky for her, the only direction left to go from rock bottom is up. Swift’s music themes need a change before the masses lose interest; out with the old and in with the new.

Jasmine White
senior journalism major



Gail Demeraski/The Rider News

Taylor Swift’s 12th studio album “The Life of a Showgirl” missed the mark in several ways.

Time to talk about LGBTQIA+ History Month

As a queer person in the U.S., I am greeted almost daily by news headlines that make me feel a pit in my stomach. From executive orders ripping gender affirming care away from my transgender brothers and sisters to ones erasing diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives, I tend to feel helpless.

LGBTQIA+ rights have been under attack for years not only in the U.S., but around the world. While I acknowledge the fact that gay marriage and other rights have become more widespread and accepted, our work does not end there.

As a cohesive community, we should take more time to educate ourselves and others on LGBTQIA+ history and rights.

We tend to appreciate “queer icons” such as Elton John and, in more recent years, people like Chappell Roan, but we also need to address the fact that there are so many other LGBTQIA+ historical figures that do not get nearly enough attention.

Most people who know about LGBTQIA+ History Month, observed throughout October, may not know about the man who created it: a teacher from Missouri, named Rodney Wilson. As a society, we claim that we are aware of this history — but how aware are we, actually?

Dedicating a month to acknowledging LGBTQIA+ history is important to the understanding of the community as a whole, as minority groups are less respected and understood.

I often find the days that commemorate and celebrate queer lives are met with arguments of why other groups do not receive a month the way LGBTQIA+ individuals do — this comparative mindset often comes from a place of deep ignorance.

When I look at a list of national month-based observances, I notice that there are no other groups

or topics celebrated that receive the amount of backlash that queer-related observances receive.

Even though people say that LGBTQIA+ individuals are generally accepted in society, we have to address the fact that historically, queer people have been underrepresented as well as subjected to hate crimes and other incidents.

Entering a public space and hearing slurs exchanged as a “joke” is incredibly harmful to the LGBTQIA+ community.

Exchanging words that have been historically used as a way to bring down a group of people is ignorant and hurtful.

The history of queer people worldwide has been gruesome and negative, including some countries who jail LGBTQIA+ individuals, places who do not allow them to marry, or even including queer people subjected to death for who they love.

Addressing the fact that people within the LGBTQIA+ community have faced incredible hardship throughout history is important to make us feel understood.

Through small changes, such as advocating for LGBTQIA+ individuals, making conscious decisions to not repeat harmful phrases and respecting the harsh history queer people have faced are meaningful ways we all can make an impact to contribute to the respect of queer people — in October and every other month.



Gail Demeraski/The Rider News

October is LGBTQIA+ History Month.

Caitlyn Sutton
sophomore journalism major

Embracing my Guatemalan heritage and culture

My parents came to the U.S. in the 1980s with hopes of creating a better future. At first, they thought they would work for some time and return to Guatemala with enough money.

However, life had other plans for them. They met and fell in love while living in Trenton New Jersey, and eventually had four kids.

My siblings and I grew up in a household with rich Guatemalan culture. My parents always reminded us of our roots, despite us living in America.

The lovely culture is what makes me feel “orgullosa,” or proud, of where I come from. So, I would love to tell you all more about it.

Almost every day my mom made tortillas to accompany the delicious traditional food that she and my dad cooked. I remember putting an apron on to help my mom and just being mesmerized by how she could make a perfect circle with the masa.

Growing up, Spanish was my first language since I spent most of my time with my parents. My English eventually got better in school while being surrounded by my peers.

I think that learning Spanish first helped me absorb my parents’ accent. Every time I go to Guatemala to visit, my family says that I sound just like them, that my Spanish is perfect.

I love traveling to Guatemala because it’s such a beautiful country with so many amazing places to explore. Everyone is kind and welcoming no matter where you’re coming from.

My parents brought those warm traits, as well as others, with them and passed it down to my siblings and I. I truly feel so fortunate in being half Guatemalan and learning these traits from my parents.

A fun ways I see this culture come through is during our family events, where music and tradition are at the heart of it all.

My family always throws big parties and they never fail to include marimba, our traditional music. Even though it is dancing music, we also enjoy listening to it while we eat dinner; I think it is beautiful and relaxing to listen to.

So much so that I like listening to it while I am doing homework or when I am feeling anxious. My dad is a huge fan of listening to marimba, he is almost always listening to it in the car. My dad also enjoys listening to it while cooking. Although I never ask him why, I think my dad finds it relaxing just as I do.

Despite being a picky eater, I make an effort to understand Guatemalan traditional dishes. My favorite is a dish called “estofado.”

This dish contains beef, potatoes, rice and a recado that adds a burst of flavor. Recado is a seasoning paste that is popular in Mayan and Yucatecan cuisine. I have tried countless estofados but no dish is nearly as tasty as my

dad’s.

I also love when we have cookouts because we make so much food and have a great time. Hispanics love to dance, so having music to dance to is essential.

Growing up, my siblings were part of many quinceañeras and because I would tag along with them, I learned how to dance. Almost every Hispanic girl has a quinceañera. So, of course I had one and so did my sister.

My quinceañera was one of the best nights of my life; celebrating the upbringing of my womanhood was something magical. I remember always wanting to have a big party with a beautiful dress and, thanks to my parents, I was able to live that dream.

At my quinceañera, I had the traditional father-daughter dance with my dad, I had a choreographed dance with my friends and I had a special dance with my Godparents.

My mom did not have a quinceañera when she was in Guatemala, but she always dreamed of one. I know that she lived out her dream with my sister and my parties.

Something that I learned growing up was that unfortunately, my parents did not have much in Guatemala. However, they found ways to get through. Their stories of resilience and perseverance have always inspired me.

I admire my parents for making the sacrifice of coming to a new country where they had to learn a new language, culture and routine. I am truly grateful that they did not forget where they came from, though, and continued to show my siblings and I their culture in our home.

Learning a new language and culture is such a privilege that I will eternally thank my parents for. I hope that someday I will be able to do the same with my future children because I do not want to let my roots disappear.

Hispanic Heritage Month, which is observed from Sept. 15 to Oct. 15, is one of my favorite times of the year and I feel fortunate to be able to celebrate it and embrace my Guatemalan roots.

Gabriela Tobar
senior sports media major



Gail Demeraski/The Rider News

Hispanic Heritage Month offers an opportunity for individuals to explore and embrace Hispanic culture and heritage.

WOMEN'S SOCCER

Broncs scoreless in five straight, last in MAAC

By Samantha Clark and Joshua Yuhas

RIDER women's soccer recorded their fifth consecutive scoreless games, drawing 0-0 at Mount St. Mary's University on Oct. 1, and suffering a loss at home against Merrimack University on Oct. 4, falling 0-4.

Evenly matched runs

Rider took control of the game early with the Ferrie sisters firing the opening three shots of the game. Ava, the junior forward, launched the first two and Tess, the sophomore forward, shot the other.

Freshman defender Ella Baumgardt then found a chance from inside the box, but the Mountaineers grabbed the ball before Tess Ferrie could reach it.

A minute later, freshman forward Lauren Black nearly gave the Broncs their first score since Sept. 14, but was once again blocked by Mount St. Mary's.

The Broncs totaled six shots in their five-minute barrage to start the match, but could not get one by.

The Mount, however, returned the favor, taking their first shot of the game in the seventh minute and adding five more shots up to the 23-minute mark.

The Broncs' defense stayed strong with freshman goalkeeper Ashley Moore tallying two saves to keep it tied at the half.

Black provided an early scoring chance for the Broncs to start the second half, but was knocked away by a Mountaineer.

Moore demonstrated her defensive prowess in net as well, leaping up to deny a 72nd minute strike.

Junior forward Noa Menzing curled a shot to the top right corner, which was later lifted over the net by Mount St. Mary's.

Sophomore midfielder Ava DeGeorge provided a near perfect cross into the box, but celebrations came to a halt when a late offside flag was raised.

The Mount worked a final attack in the 87th minute, but Moore was able to make the save and preserve a scoreless night, securing her fifth shutout of the season.

"The opposition defenders and goalkeepers have

however been able to prevent us from scoring," Head Coach Drayson Hounsoume said. "These moments affect momentum and, as a team, we need to be able to manage those moments so they don't affect the flow of the game."

Rider closed the night with 13 shots, five on goal, each outranking their opponent by one.

Scoring drought continues

The Broncs headed back home to host the Merrimack Warriors for their sixth game in Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference play.

The game opened with a Warrior foul, opening the door for Tess Ferrie, but her shot at the top of the net was saved by Merrimack.

The Warriors continued to attempt three shots in the next four minutes, with two far left and one successfully blocked by Moore.

Rider gained five corner kick opportunities in the first ten minutes of the matchup, applying steady pressure to Merrimack's strong defensive team, though the score remained 0-0.

Ava Ferrie and Black attempted back-to-back goals, but with both flying far from the net, they posed no threat to the Warrior keeper.

Moore tallied four more saves for the Broncs before Merrimack overcame the standstill in the 35th minute, taking the Broncs 0-1 in the first.

The second half opened with a mere-immediate set of fouls on junior midfielder Isis Ovares, Ava and Tess Ferrie, and a Merrimack forward.

Moore secured her sixth save of the game in the 65th minute, not allowing a goal for 26 minutes of play.

A far left Merrimack goal, followed by a yellow card on Ovares, gave the Warriors access to their next shot of the game, gaining two over the Broncs.

Junior forward Taylor Mays fired the ball to the bottom left corner of the net, unfortunately finding a Warrior, resulting in a team save for blue and gold.

Merrimack went 0-8 on their next set of shots, two



Liliana R. Basile/The Rider News

Sophomore midfielder **Ava DeGeorge** protects possession against a Peacock.

of them protected by Moore, until one slipped into the net, sending Rider down 0-3.

Moore saved two more shots in the final five minutes of the match, reaching her new career high of 10 saves, just one more from her previous record on Sept. 27.

"It was definitely a high-pressure game, but I just stayed focused on what I could control," Moore said. "As a keeper, you can't think too far ahead, you just stay focused on the game and any situation that comes to you."

The final Warrior goal was achieved with under a minute left, sending the Broncs into another shutout loss of 0-4, their first loss to Merrimack in program history.

The Broncs inch closer to their second year in a row without an entrance to the quarterfinals, a feat they have not faced since the 2011-2012 seasons.

Rider women's soccer team looks to end their drought in New Rochelle, New York, where they will face the Iona University Gaels on Oct. 8.

MEN'S SOCCER

Broncs pick up two points in two MAAC draws

By Benjamin Shinault and Liliana R. Basile

THE Broncs are slowly gathering some points as they move deeper into Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference play, securing two points in a draw against the Manhattan University Jaspers on Oct. 1 and a draw against the Siena University Saints on Oct. 4.

Draw under the lights

Rider men's soccer ended their fifth home game against Manhattan on Oct. 1 with a hard earned tie, 1-1.

The Broncs welcomed the Manhattan Jaspers at 7 p.m. under the lights of Ben Cohen field. This would be Rider's third MAAC game they have played this season.

Rider was put to the test early in the first half with only one corner kick and one shot on goal made by junior forward Patryk Rojek, before the Jaspers were able to get the ball in the back of the net, leaving the score 1-0 Manhattan.

By the end of the first half, Rider was able to put four shots up on the board, with a total of three corner shots and two fouls called.

Coming back from half time, the Broncs came out fired up with more determination. At the 33-minute mark, the third shot on net ended up being the one to tie the game.

The goal was scored by Rojek off a pass from senior midfielder Luke Kirilenko that deflected off his head and found the back of the net.

A red card was given to the Jaspers around the 36-minute mark and not even a minute later, a yellow card was given out to Rojek.

Rider ended the game with a tie but put a total of 11 shots up, five saves, a total of five corner kicks and nine fouls.

"I saw more fight and grit and togetherness in



Liliana R. Basile/The Rider News

Senior midfielder **Lovro Kostanjseks** clocked in 50 minutes against the Manhattan Jaspers on Oct. 1

this group, which I think we've been lacking, which is the way we play, which is the Rider way," said Head Coach Chad Duernberger. "We played very well as a unit," said Rojek, "There's a lot of communication back there, which was very good from our center backs and our outside wings. We experimented a little bit today in the back, and stopped the bleeding, so it was pretty good."

Wheels fell off

In what looked like the Broncs first victory since Sept. 1, quickly turned into a 3-3 draw against the Siena Saints on Oct. 4.

Rider got right into it to start. In the first seven minutes of the match, the Broncs found the back of the net, thanks to senior midfielder Lovro Kostanjsek.

Shortly after, in the ninth minute, Rider added another goal, this time off the foot of senior

forward Xavi Csato to give the Broncs a commanding 2-0 lead.

The Broncs held onto their lead up until the 35th minute when they scored their third goal of the season from junior defender Ryan Vaubel.

In the 68th minute of the match, Siena scored to make it 3-1. And about seven minutes later, the Saints found the back of the net again to make it 3-2.

The clock reached the 77th-minute mark and the Saints tied it up at three. Siena scored three goals in about 22 minutes to tie the Broncs.

Time ran out and Rider settled with a draw. By the end of the match, Siena totaled 21 shots against the Broncs with eight on goal and also had nine corner kicks in comparison to Rider's one.

The Broncs will take the tough point and run with it as they now look ahead to their next match against Fairfield University on Oct. 11 at 4 p.m.

Sports

WANT TO KNOW THE LATEST IN RIDER SPORTS?
SCAN QR CODE TO DONATE TO THE RIDER NEWS!





FIELD HOCKEY

Nine goals in two games, Broncs win four straight

By Kadie DiGiuseppe and Emma Geremia-Hartigan

FROM a five game losing streak to winning four straight, Rider field hockey’s 2025 season has been a rollercoaster of a season. Over the weekend, the Broncs took down Mercyhurst University 5-1 and La Salle University 4-3 in overtime.

Offensive masterclass in Erie

After its homestand, Rider picked up its third consecutive Northeastern Conference win on Oct. 3 over the Mercyhurst Lakers.

The Broncs connected on offense to start the game and senior forward Semra Said gained the first goal four minutes into the game off an assist from sophomore midfielder Anna Finn.

Rider limited Mercyhurst’s shots to only one in the first quarter while taking two more shots before the next goal was scored.

Senior forward Valeria Perales gave the Broncs a 2-0 advantage shortly after the second quarter had started.

The Mercyhurst defense was able to lockdown and block six more of Rider’s shots before halftime.

Sophomore forward Amanda Walker added onto the score a minute into the third quarter, scoring her first goal of the season.

Three minutes later, the sophomore class was not done showing off their offensive talents, as Finn scored Rider’s fourth goal of the game, assisted by junior midfielder Ang Borisow.

Perales got in on the action once again off the feed by junior forward Emma Bonshak in the third quarter and obtained the Broncs fifth goal of the game, marking their highest total of goals scored in a single game this season.

With the goal marking her sixth of the season, Perales was crowned the title of highest scorer on the team.

For the rest of the quarter, Rider’s four shots taken were all unsuccessful but they did not stop fighting in the last 15 minutes.



Liliana R. Basile/The Rider News

Sophomore forward **Anna Finn** recorded a goal against Mercyhurst on Oct. 3.

The Broncs attempted seven more shots in the fourth quarter and allowed the Lakers a shot with less than two minutes left.

Rider took a new season high for goals, with 28 shots during the game while Mercyhurst only took six. Said led the team in shots with seven, while Finn and Borisow combined for nine.

Starting sophomore goalie Jade Regnart had three saves and junior defender Sarah Fitzpatrick had one save.

Four-straight victories

Rider field hockey pulled off a gritty 4-3 win over La Salle on Oct. 5 in Philadelphia, improving to a 5-5 record on the season. It took four overtime periods to settle the score, but the Broncs dug deep and found a way to close it out.

La Salle opened the scoring just under 10 minutes in, but Rider answered right back when senior defender Megan Normile buried a penalty stroke to tie things at 1-1.

The Explorers went ahead late in the first, only for Said to even it up in the second quarter, making it 2-2 at halftime.

“A goal of mine for that game was to go all the way through the baseline, and in that moment, this goal came into my head, and I just kept going and was rewarded at the end of it. My mindset basically was ‘be confident, keep going,’” said Said.

La Salle struck first after the break with a goal in the third, but Rider did not panic. Perales scored her first of the day in the 50th minute to tie it once again, setting the stage for a tense finish.

After a scoreless stretch through multiple overtimes, Perales came through again in the 74th minute, putting away the game-winner and sealing the Broncs’ 4-3 victory.

With Perales’ heroics, she was named the NEC’s Offensive Player of the Week.

The game was not just about scoring. Cards played a big role, with both teams racking up multiple calls that forced adjustments. Head Coach Gina Carey-Smith was proud of how her team stayed steady despite the whistles.

“We believe the team handled the cards in a mature manner,” Carey-Smith said. “The most important thing is not to react to the cards. I will say, the officials were very fair with the cards and both teams were getting them.”

In the end, Rider’s ability to stick to their plan made the difference.

“The biggest lesson we will take from this game is, when we follow the game plan great results happen,” Carey-Smith said. “Also, believing in ourselves and each other makes a big difference.”

The Broncs will face off Saint Francis University at home on Oct. 10 at 7 p.m.

VOLLEYBALL

Rider winning streak broken, splits MAAC matchups

By Lindsay Scarola

RIDER volleyball hosted Sacred Heart University on Oct. 3 concluding their “Dude Be Nice” Campaign, beating the Pioneers 3-1 while falling to Fairfield University 3-1 on Oct. 4 to bring a close to its four-game winning streak.

‘Dude Be Nice’

The Broncs were down 5-2 early in the opening set against Sacred Heart. Up 11-10, Rider went on a 5-0 run to extend their lead, never looking back.

They had a comfortable 24-15 lead to close out the set 25-17 for the win.

Down 10-8 in set two, junior outside hitter Rylah Robinson had a kill and two blocks contributing to Rider’s 6-1 run.

Sacred Heart did not see this as a threat; it worked its way back to tie the set at 21.

After a long volley, senior opposite Kiannisha Santiago got a kill sparking a 3-0 run to lead 24-23 with Robinson hitting the final kill giving the Broncs a 25-25 set win.

In between sets two and three, the volleyball team honored Liz Sapudar, the academic support coordinator for student-athletes, for their Dude Be Nice Campaign who shows genuine kindness and is an all around caring person.

“Since she assumed her new role, she has helped to build a positive, uplifting, and strong community of student-athletes,” Head Coach Jeff Rotondo said.

Trailing 13-9, the Pioneers went on a 7-0 run to take the lead in set three.

Rider came back to tie the set at 19 eventually taking a 22-21 lead.

It got its first match point at 24-23 but the Pioneers countered. Tied 25-25, they were able to take set three 27-25, the Broncs needed to win set four.

The fourth was a back and forth battle, the Pioneers pulled ahead with a 3-0 run.

They eventually extended the lead 22-18, at that moment the Broncs got a side out to send Santiago to serve.

She served for six points with graduate middle hitter Carley McAleavey having a kill to give Rider that 7-0 run needed to close out the match 25-22.

The Broncs defeated the Pioneers 3-1.

Stags Strike

After leading 6-5 in the opening set, Rider expanded it with a 5-0 run. The Broncs would continue this drive to go up 18-11.

Fairfield had a 4-0 run but the Broncs countered with three-straight points for the lead. Fairfield countered the counter to pull within one.

Santiago had the kill and junior setter Makenna Mason aced to secure a 25-21 set victory for the Broncs.

Mason’s contributions got her named MAAC Setter of the Week and her teammate, senior libero Keegan O’Connor, was named Libero of the Week.

Rider led 10-7 in the second set looking strong against Fairfield but they fired back to take the lead.

Though the Broncs retook the lead 19-18 another 5-0 run by the Stags gave them the edge.

Fairfield took set two, 25-22.

Having the lead to start again, Rider had control and Fairfield went on a run to take the lead.

Ahead 14-10, the Broncs countered with a 5-0 run. Tied at 19, the Stags went on a 4-1 run which would ultimately decide the set. The Broncs lost set three 25-22.

For the fourth set in a row, Rider was up early leading 7-6.

A 6-0 run later became a 10-1 lead, a gap the Broncs couldn’t come back from losing 25-14.

Rider fell to Fairfield 3-1.

The Broncs will be home to host the Quinnipiac University Bobcats on Oct. 10 at 6 p.m. and Oct. 11 against the Warriors of Merrimack College at 2 p.m. Both games will be streamed on BroneVision.



Destiny Pagan/The Rider News

Junior setter **McKenna Mason** (left) and senior libero **Keegan O’Connor** both won MAAC weekly awards.