



Yanuel Santos/The Rider News

Junior political science major **Jaiden David** and junior human resources management major **Lizbeth Ortiz** are the candidates for the 2026-27 SGA president position.

SGA's race for presidential position commences

By **Caroline Haviland and Cal Sutton**

For the first time since 2023, the election for Rider's Student Government Association president has more than one candidate on the ballot to potentially lead the organization in the 2026-27 school year through a time of revitalization for the university.

All full-time undergraduate students have until April 8 to choose between junior human resource management major Lizbeth Ortiz or junior political science major Jaiden David to succeed current SGA President Moira Geiger.

To understand the focus of their campaigns and the vision for their potential presidencies, The Rider News held separate interviews with both candidates on March 30.

A more involved community

The first candidate, Ortiz, has been involved with SGA since her freshman year, starting with a position within the student affairs committee through her freshman and sophomore years at Rider. She also was involved in the student clubs and organizations committee, though she took a break this semester to fulfill an internship in human resources.

Ortiz knew she wanted to make a difference on campus since she began at Rider.

"As a freshman, I came to Rider, I was like 'I want to be SGA president,'" Ortiz said.

Ortiz's vision for Rider, if she wins the position, is to bring back a higher level of student engagement, she said, noticing a difference in engagement between her freshman year and fall of her sophomore year.

Her goal is to foster more Rider spirit across campus, including hosting more events that collaborate with clubs and organizations, bringing back Cranberry Wednesdays and resurrecting Food Truck Fridays.

"It's those little pop-up events that ... [make] people more engaged," Ortiz said.

Ortiz also plans to encourage athletes to get more involved in on-campus activities to get them out of their sports-centric routines, looking to partner with the Student Athlete Advisory Council and Morgan's Message.

Working with the Counseling Center is important to Ortiz, planning opportunities for pop-ups before or after Thursday senate meetings.

She also hopes to renovate the communal area in the residence quad, as well as develop a weather-protected social and study spot at the lawn behind Gee Hall.

Ortiz noted the variety of perspectives she has from her life experiences and her on-campus involvements to be the reason why she is the best candidate for the position.

Ortiz founded and is president of Rider's DominiRicans club, noting, "We needed more Hispanic unity on campus." Noticing that the Latin American Student Organization was not active at the time, she decided to start a club that made people feel at home.

Holding herself and her culture close, she said, will give her the opportunity to see campus from various lenses. "I have so many different identities [as] a part of me," Ortiz said. "I always stay true to myself."

Along with her involvement in Lambda Theta Alpha Latin Sorority, Inc. as the secretary, academic chair and Rider's delegate, Ortiz is an Equal Opportunity Program scholar and was part of the Multicultural Student Leadership Institute her freshman year, now known as All Broncs BELONG Alliance. She is also a resident assistant in Lincoln Hall.

Ortiz said she is proud to be a student with strong on-campus involvement and wants to help students of all kinds promote Rider spirit.

"We're proud to go to Rider, I am proud to go to Rider," Ortiz said.

Enhancing campus contact

The second candidate on the ballot is David, who has not held a position in SGA before, but brings experience from his other roles on campus. He serves as the vice president of Rider's chapter of Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc. and is the director of comedy and game shows for the Student Entertainment Council.

His decision to run for SGA student body president came the week before this year's spring break. David said, upon reflection with his advisers and friends, he felt that he underestimated himself when it came to pursuing bigger roles such as SGA president.

"I'm my biggest critic ... I realized that the SGA

president is a Rider student at the end of the day," David said. "So anybody in this room has what it takes to be SGA president, so why can't I?"

David said his campaign is centered around four main aspects: communication, organizations, resources and everyday student concerns and issues — or CORE, as he puts it.

To communicate with and hear from students more often, David said he wants to send out frequent email updates about ongoing problems to the student community so that they know SGA is working to make resolutions. He also plans to place suggestion boxes around campus for students to voice any concerns they may have.

His goals as student body president primarily revolve around an increasing utilization of social media to shine a light on different organizations and resources that Rider offers its students, which he referred to as the "heartbeat of our campus."

"I feel like our resources, like the Academic Success Center, the Counseling Center ... should be talked about, not just when people are down, but it should be talked about when everybody is in a good light," David said.

In regards to frequent issues that students face on campus, David said he wants to be the voice to ensure the prioritization of resolving qualms with the university's internet and residence halls.

To get these issues heard by university officials, David credited the relationships he has built over the past three years at Rider as an advantage to his potential presidency.

With the SGA student body president being the liaison between the administration and student body, David said he is ready to advocate for the needs of his fellow students.

David recollected a time last year when he worked at an Apple store. He and his newly hired colleagues were people of minorities and faced discrimination by some of their other coworkers. This led David to speak with the human resources department within his first month there, which he said took a lot of courage.

"I feel like with [SGA president], if I was able to stand up to my higher ups then, and I didn't have power or anything, imagine what I'm capable of doing if I have the power to actually have a say," David said.

INSIDE

APRIL HOROSCOPES

What do the stars have in store for you this month?



PAGE 6

ENDORSEMENT FOR NEXT SGA PRESIDENT

Find out who The Rider News endorsed in the upcoming election!

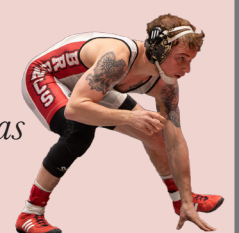
PAGE 7



KLINSKY ETCHES HIMSELF IN RIDER HISTORY

Rider wrestling veteran Tyler Klinsky finishes as All-American.

PAGE 12



SECURITY BRIEFS

BY MADISON LEWIS

Information provided by Public Safety Director Matthew Babcock

Car full of cannabis

Smoky situation. On March 25, at 2 p.m., Public Safety was on patrol in the area of the Vona Center when they detected the odor of marijuana. A staff member in the area pointed out a vehicle with smoke coming out of it. Upon further investigation, students were found to be smoking marijuana in the vehicle. The students were identified and the matter was referred to the Office of Community Standards.

Cross-campus parkour

Unjustified joyride. On March 26, at 4:22 p.m., Public Safety received a call from a staff member reporting a car pulling someone riding a skateboard across campus. Public Safety responded to the area and did not find the vehicle or skateboarder in question. After a follow-up investigation, the driver of the vehicle was identified and the matter was referred to the Office of Community Standards.

Pocketed pedestrian post

Stolen sign. On March 27, at 11 a.m., Public Safety was on patrol in the area of Lynch Adler Hall when they noticed a pedestrian crossing sign was missing from the intersection. The sign was installed on March 24 to advise drivers to stop for pedestrians in the crosswalk. Upon reviewing security camera footage in the area, it was observed that a group of students picked up the sign and walked off with it. Public Safety is investigating.

Sarah F. Griffin/The Rider News

Union City Mayor Brian Stack brings grassroots politics to Rider's campus

By Samantha Clark

With a continued effort to connect students to state leaders, the Rebovich Institute for New Jersey Politics welcomed Brian Stack, state senator and mayor of Union City, on March 30.

The Institute's director, Micah Rasmussen, hosted the event in Lynch Adler Hall to provide a front row look at strong leadership in action.

"There are not many people in New Jersey whose endorsement can move thousands of votes," Rasmussen said. "I can count them on my fingers ... and one of them is in this room."

Stack took to the podium and began breaking down his extensive journey along the political ladder, which began in his early teenage years.

Growing up in Union City, among the most densely populated cities in the country, Stack was raised on the basis of maintaining a strong drive to succeed. With his father as a Port Authority train conductor and his mother as a full-time superintendent, the importance of work ethic was ingrained from early childhood.

At the age of 14, Stack began volunteering for former Union City Mayor William Musto at city hall, and later became his part-time assistant at 17 years old.

"I organized my schedule so that I could be out of high school by 12:30 every day, and I couldn't wait to get to city hall," Stack said. "I'd be there until 5, 6 at night."

At 19, he ran for the Union City Board of Education, but lost the race by 2,000 votes due to the "political machine" that paid another candidate with the same last name to run against Stack, subsequently pulling away his votes.

Stack then became extremely versed in city hall, employed by almost every department in the municipal government, including public works, public safety and the health department.

"I think it's important to be elected on a municipal level before getting elected on a state level. Whether it be in the county or a municipal council, that's the best education someone could get," Stack said.

In 1997, the Commissioner of Parks was retiring, and Stack sought out the position due to the lack of playgrounds since his childhood. Though the state promised Stack the position, they sent someone to run against him.

At the time, New Jersey law stated that, if somebody



Morgan Dickens/The Rider News

State senator and Mayor of Union City **Brian Stack** spoke to the Rider Community on March 30.

vacated office before Labor Day weekend, candidates were required to run that following November in a special election. However, Union City did not hold a special election until the next year, putting Stack in a position to wearily campaign for seven straight months.

"I beat them in that election, 7,471 [votes] to 5,260 [votes]," Stack said. "Talk about David and Goliath, we came in and took on a machine and beat them."

In 2000, Stack was elected as both Union City mayor and the county freeholder, a title unique to New Jersey that included elected officials on county legislative boards, which later became a county commissioner seat.

Stack held the seat until 2004, when he was then elected for the Assembly. In 2008, he continued his campaign, this time for a Senate seat, and just like before, the county's political machine that was put in place to come after Stack never failed to falter.

"They published stuff saying I was a drug dealer, they went after my family, they tried to get my mom and dad evicted from the building where they lived," Stack said. "It was a vicious campaign."

Nevertheless, Stack was elected state senator that year, becoming a dual officeholder. He continues to serve in both roles to this day, becoming Union City's longest-serving mayor with 25 years of leadership.

As mayor, Stack is a leader that stands for the people, he said, expressing the importance of connection to Rider students through his tangible examples. Whether

it be a "Breakfast with the Mayor" event, or his open door policy at city hall, constituents are always encouraged to speak with him or simply say hello.

"I like to be in touch with the people. I like to keep my finger on the pulse, to know what's going on and what's on people's minds," Stack said. "When you show people that you care, that you listen to what their problems are, people appreciate that."

Bringing a leader to a campus that focuses on doing the people's work and connecting with them was important to Rasmussen, as it is these political virtues that will take students far, he said.

Senior political science major Billy Malone agreed with this sentiment, viewing the opportunity to create formal connections with guest speakers as helpful for engagement and future endeavors.

"[These events] are so important because it shows our Rider community exactly who is out there beyond campus," Malone said.

With plans to run for reelection on May 12, Stack will campaign unopposed, continuing his long-running seat in office.

Stack said, "I love being the mayor, I love being a senator and I love delivering for the people."

Presidential Hope Fund helps get students ‘across the finish line’

By Grace Bertrand

Providing students with a financial safety net, Rider’s Presidential Hope Fund has allocated an estimated \$200,000 to nearly 60 students since its launch in late October, according to Senior Vice President and Chief of Staff for Student Experience Mary-Alice Ozechoski, who oversees the program.

The initiative was launched as a way to supply students in need with emergency funds to continue going to college, specifically looking to help first-generation students or students that come from single-parent households.

The program itself has raised nearly \$2.4 million from contributors across all sectors of leadership on campus, Ozechoski said, with every member of the Board of Trustees, Senior Leadership Team, The Norm Brodsky College of Business and the alumni board giving money directly from their pockets.

Ozechoski noted that hearing stories of struggling students are what inspired many donors to give, recalling a time when she had to personally step in and pay a single-parent student’s electricity bill with a university credit card because their only other option was to drop out of college.

“I’ve had people tell me that students are sleeping in their cars, or people are out of meals or students are worried about a situation at home,” Ozechoski said. “When you talk about it with donors, everybody remembers a time in college when they had a hard time.”

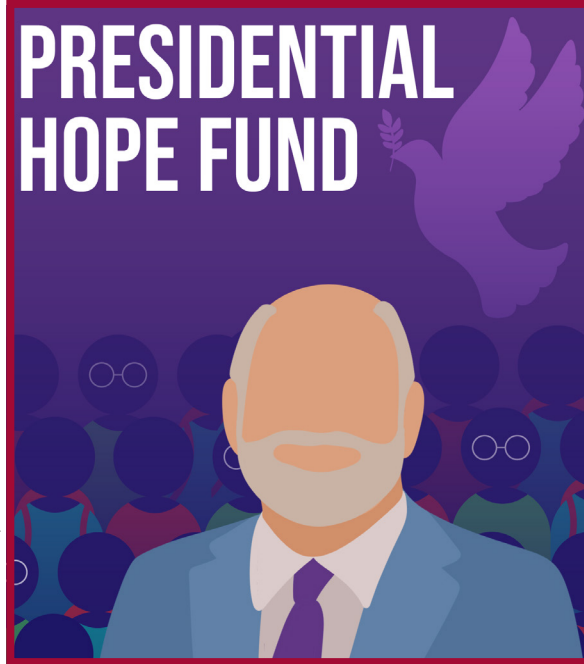
Calling the financial issues students are facing “universal,” Ozechoski attributed it to the “complexity of who’s coming to college now,” with a bigger majority of students coming from blended families and backgrounds than before.

One student who was aided by the Hope Fund is sophomore acting for film, television and theatre major Mickey Durkin, who goes by they/them pronouns. They recently applied to receive financial support in light of their mother passing away from cancer over winter break.

“After my mother passed away, I was not only navigating grief, but also immediately jumping back into classes, moving to New Jersey in my off-campus house and battling with the financial strain that came from missing weeks of work while caring for her at the end of her life,” Durkin said.

The support they received from the Hope Fund eased that burden, and according to Durkin, allowed them to properly grieve and continue their education “without the constant weight of financial panic.”

Durkin said they requested money from the Hope



Gaill Demeraski/The Rider News

The Presidential Hope Fund was implemented in November 2025 to assist students in need to continue their education.

Fund three times and were granted the necessary funds each time, highlighting Dean of Students Christine Mehlhorn as an important person who met with them personally to prompt them to apply.

They continued, “Because of this fund, I was able to travel home to be with my family when it mattered most and maintain my housing during a time when even the most minor costs felt overwhelming and uncertain. That security made an enormous difference.”

Paying it forward

As a first-generation college student himself, Rider President John Loyack originally launched the Hope Fund with Ozechoski at their previous employer, Alvernia University. After they noticed the positive impact the program had on students at all levels across the community, from undergraduates to graduates and adult learners, the pair repeated the same formula at Rider.

Loyack was the first to make a donation to the program, pledging \$150,000 over the next three years, causing a ripple effect of other donations to come in from university leaders.

Provost and Senior Vice President of Academic Affairs Kelly Bidle highlighted the significance of the funds in getting students “across the finish line” in just a short period of time.

She said, “These funds make an important difference in the lives of those students who just need a little help to get them through a myriad of financial challenges that would otherwise make it difficult for them to continue with their studies at Rider.”

For Ozechoski, though, the barrier that students experience is not if a program like the Hope Fund exists, but the embarrassment that may come with sharing their stories.

Consequently, it was a priority for Ozechoski to make the application process as confidential as possible, with only three to four people reviewing the applications.

Students can fill out the applications online, which are continuously open, and they then go through the Dean of Students Office before being sent to the Financial Aid Office, where a “professional judgment” is done to see if the students are eligible for more aid. If not, the application is then looked at by the decision-making team, who determines if the Hope Fund can help the student and whether the aid will be partial or whole.

Every student helped by the Hope Fund is also encouraged to share their stories and give what they can back into the program after they graduate, whether it be \$20 or \$200.

“It’s hard to have a sight line to give back when you have a payback [for student loans]. But, this is an easy, low-budget thing for people to do, and really, people can give at all levels,” Ozechoski said.

Though she is not a first-generation student herself, Ozechoski said she understood the challenges that come with paying for school on your own, as she was faced with that task after her dad refused to pay for her college because he did not believe in women getting a higher education.

Her hope is that she can help students who are facing similar struggles get the education that she was able to receive and she believes the only way to do that is if the community gives back to each other.

Ozechoski said, “I think as a community, we want to be a place that says we can help you. This isn’t your fault, you know? Things happen in life and we should be able to support it.”

Two cases of sexual misconduct reported to Title IX

By Grace Bertrand

Two incidents of alleged sexual misconduct, taking place in February and March, were reported to the Office of Title IX and Equal Opportunity Compliance on March 25, according to a campuswide notification.

Both occurrences involved individuals who knew each other, the March 25 email stated, and the two reports are currently under an initial assessment by the Title IX office.

Ken Koenig, the recently appointed director of Title IX, told The Rider News that the two reports were independent of one another and involved alleged “non-consensual sexual contact” occurring between students on campus between Feb. 3 and March 25.

He said the exact days and times of the two incidents were not reported to Title IX and that the university was notified as soon as the reports were made.

“In this case, we’re still looking at what the dates are,” Koenig said. “Some people may give a date range ... but some people may not remember the date.”

While there was no ongoing threat to the campus, Koenig said, the Title IX office is reviewing both cases and are in the midst of “assessing appropriate next steps” in accordance with Title IX.

Koenig continued, “To protect the privacy of those involved and to comply with federal privacy laws, including [the Family Educational and Rights and Privacy Act] and Title IX, the university cannot share additional information at this time.”

The mandatory notification from Title IX was shared under the federal Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act of 1998, commonly known as the Clery Act.

This is the third incident of sexual misconduct reported to Title IX in the spring 2026 semester, with a

sexual assault initially reported to Lawrence Police on Jan. 1 and communicated to Rider a month later on Feb. 2.

On Feb. 26, Koenig reported that an initial assessment was in place for the January incident and a formal investigation had not yet been initiated. As of March 31, the initial assessment is still ongoing, Koenig said, but did not confirm the reasoning.

While this assessment involves a review of the facts and a “limited” interview with the individual filing a report, Koenig said a formal investigation gives the Title IX investigators the ability to collect evidence and conduct multiple in-depth interviews with people involved.

Dean of Students Christine Mehlhorn added that in addition to the initial assessment of the two March 25 reports, “supportive measures have been offered to both students who made reports.”



Morgan Dickens/The Rider News

People at the No Kings Day protest in Princeton holding up signs in resistance to President Donald Trump’s administration.

DIGITAL EXCLUSIVE:

No Kings Day in Princeton and Lawrenceville proves peace and passion can coexist in protests

By Mary-Simone Collazo



Abby Ray/The Rider News



Students race to collect eggs for a chance to win big prizes at 107.7 The Bronc's Eggscellent Egg Hunt.

Eggsactly what Broncs needed: The Eggscellent Egg Hunt

By Madison Lewis

An unheard countdown and attendees running prematurely to the eggs scattered at 107.7 The Bronc's Eggscellent Egg Hunt resulted in an immense crowd of ravenous college students pushing each other, tripping and diving for a chance at winning prizes like a Royal Caribbean Cruise, a diamond pendant and an LD 55-inch television.

The Campus Mall was adorned with petting zoos, blow-up carnival games, mini golf and food trucks for the March 31 event, and in the center, was a sectioned-off area filled with 10,000 plastic eggs. Around noon, attendees began to encircle the barrier, seeking their ideal vantage point.

Senior exercise science major Lillianne Quinn said her strategy was to "dive in and scoop" the eggs, a tactic that was attributed to her time on Rider's club volleyball team. She dove multiple times, and the effort was not in vain, as it ensured her big win — the coveted Royal Caribbean cruise.

When asked what her plans are once she reaches the Bahamas, Quinn answered definitively and with a laugh, "Tanning." She hopes to celebrate her 21st birthday on the cruise in June with a friend.

Students surrounded tables labeled one through six, with table one offering the most exclusive prizes. The others offered passes to Skyzone, Fedelos gift cards, posters and other memorabilia.

Prior to the main event of the egg hunt, students and families alike stopped at a variety of booths featuring activities run by campus clubs and organizations, local businesses and sponsors who offered their time.

At the Egg Hunt, the Easter Bunny faced competition for the title of fan-favorite animal, as farm critters and domesticated pets drew unceasing attention from attendees.

Easel, an animal rescue league in Ewing, New Jersey, had attendants flaunting puppies on leashes, which attendees fawned over and provided well-received belly scratches.

The farm animals from Happy Trails Ponies, including bunnies and chickens, were also receiving love from Rider's student body.

Jada Waddell, a senior psychology major who uses they/them pronouns, said, "My favorite part is always going to be the petting zoo. I love animals, and this year I got to hold a very beautiful white bunny."

Waddell did not participate in the gathering portion of the Egg Hunt this year, but instead, indulged in the free food trucks, the music provided by 107.7 The Bronc, the plentiful social opportunities and the pleasant weather.

They said, "I think the prizes are really enticing, but everyone tramples over each other, and it's really scary."

Senior graphic design major Hannah Wallace agreed with Waddell's sentiment on the intensity of the egg hunt, saying, "It gets animalistic out there."

Wallace said she would pick up loose candy that others left behind.

Waddell and Wallace came up with solutions to address the pushing and tripping problem, suggesting either a larger field or having people walk, rather than run.

Despite the seemingly vicious descriptions of the Rider students in the heated moment before the egg hunt, both Waddell and Wallace relish the opportunity to see their fellow peers enjoying campus activities.

"It's nice to see the community come out and ... see a lot of new faces," Wallace said.

Waddell also appreciates attending the event as a senior, saying, "I like meeting new people. ... I love these last moments to connect with my school, my alma mater."

While the egg hunt and petting zoo were undeniable highlights of the event, the food was another aspect students looked forward to every year. Some selections included DeLorenzo's The Burg's pizza and B2 Bistro, serving lemon chicken pastina, and returning featured favorites, such as Bronc Bites and Yooo Cuz, which served loaded tater tots, hot dogs, fries and cheesesteaks.

Attendees could wash down their food with Monster Energy drinks, another brand tabling at the event. Vibrant blue, pink and white cans shimmered in the sun, and college students contemplated having a pick-me-up before they hunted for eggs.

Though students may be satisfied with the drink and food options, along with the plentiful activities and photo-op moments at the event, a question lingers on the minds of some students: Who is parading around academic buildings and who is gracing social media in the beloved Bronc Easter Bunny costume?

Junior sports media major and general manager at 107.7 The Bronc Kadie DiGiuseppe did not divulge the secret.

"The bunny is the bunny," she said. "The Easter Bunny that, you know, comes around during Easter time and they take a visit to Rider University for our Eggscellent Egg Hunt."



Morgan Dickens/The Rider News

Josh Harry Travels' namesake and John Mozes, general manager of 107.7 The Bronc, pose with Lillianne Quinn, senior exercise science major, who won the Royal Caribbean Cruise.

Egg Hunt Photo Gallery

Photos by Abby Ray, Morgan Dickens and Yanuel Santos



Home Away from Home: Jesus Serna Illescas

By Sofia Santiago

Jesus Serna Illescas is always ready for an adventure. Although he is only in New Jersey for one semester, he is determined to make the most of his time at Rider.

As an English marketing major in his third year at Universidad Europea de Valencia in Spain, studying abroad in an English-speaking country is essential for both his academic and professional career.

Since high school, Serna Illescas knew he wanted to study in an English-speaking country because of his passion for communications and his excitement to step out of what was familiar to him.

“I really like everything related to economics and how you communicate with other people. My main idea was to study specialist communications, which is communications dedicated to economics and different parts of it,” Serna Illescas said.

Once he graduated from high school, he applied to universities in the U.S., and moved to the U.K. for nine months to learn the language.

“[At the time,] I didn’t know any English at all. How do I learn English? Go to the closest place that they speak it. So I just went. If you don’t learn English in the U.K., you won’t learn it anywhere else,” he explained. “Back at that time, I was really bad at communicating myself. So [I thought], when I improve that part, I will be stronger in other places.”

Eventually, he found the marketing program, taught almost entirely in English. “I think in my class, there’s only one or two guys that are actually from Spain. The others are from Poland, Nigeria, Japan ... It’s like the United Nations,” Serna Illescas said.

Because of his experiences in the U.K. and his interactions with international classmates, the transition to a new language and a different culture was not difficult for Serna Illescas.

“You get used to it. You have to adapt a little bit to the language barriers. Communication is the biggest thing, because when you speak in another language, you have to think in that language. You don’t



Photo courtesy of Jesus Serna Illescas

Jesus Serna Illescas is originally from Valencia, Spain.

have time to translate it,” he shared. Serna Illescas is trilingual; fluent in English, Spanish and Valencian, a dialect of Catalan.

His home university offers exchange programs, and among the options available, Rider was his top choice.

“I like that it’s really small. The teachers can actually be close to you and talk with you,” he said. Serna Illescas’ home campus is spread around the city, meaning that one building could be six miles away from another, with most students living off-campus.

“Now I can say that I’m living university life for the first time,” he said.

In Spain, he goes to his department’s building for classes that take place anywhere from around 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., then Serna Illescas explained that, typically, “you just go back home, and you just do your own life.”

Serna Illescas played a variety of sports since childhood, both in and out of school, and currently in Valencia, he is part of a club soccer team.

Along with the 15 credits of classes he is taking, Serna Illescas has been engaging in the Rider community as much as possible by joining multiple intramural sports teams and winning both the intramural futsal, similar to indoor soccer, and basketball championships. It is through these activities

that he has been able to meet friends at Rider.

Senior graphic design major Juan Perez met Serna Illescas on move-in day, and the two have been close friends ever since. Perez invited Serna Illescas to stay with him in his hometown over spring break. The two enjoy playing cards, watching movies, playing pool and attending American sporting events that Serna Illescas has never been to before, such as lacrosse and ice hockey.

These experiences are what Serna Illescas says give him, “The feeling that home is not only a place back with all your family, which it is, but [also one that] you can make in your own path. That’s something that Rider makes me notice.”

“[Serna Illescas is] a very dedicated individual. Once he puts his mind to something, he really wants to go and shoot for it,” Perez said.

Since February, Serna Illescas has been training for a half marathon that he plans to run on April 4 in Philadelphia.

“The thing about running is, like, you can do it actually anywhere,” he explained.

Serna Illescas had previously participated in triathlons and track and field, but had to stop due to other responsibilities. Since coming to Rider, however, he has been able to push himself out of his comfort zone and reignite his love for running.

Serna Illescas explained his adventurous mentality, “The earlier you go out of your bubble, the more comfortable you are going to be in any other aspect of your life. And I learned that [being] uncomfortable and going to other places is going to change your mindset. ... You’re going to have bad times, but that’s what the experience is about, and after that, it’s going to be life changing.”

This article is part of the Home Away From Home series by The Rider News to highlight international students from the OIE.

Rider’s Women United, having a ball and empowering women

By Sofia Santiago

Guests in glittering gowns waited in line to get their coats checked by two masked ushers outside of the Cavalla Room. Once directed inside, the stylish students were immediately greeted by a red carpet that paved the way into the transformed space for the evening.

On March 30 at 6 p.m., Rider’s Women United club, in collaboration with the Culture n’ Trends club, Rider’s chapter of the NAACP, the Educational Opportunity Program Women in Action Academy and the Center for Community and Belonging hosted the Women’s Empowerment Masquerade Ball.

Students were invited to attend wearing formal attire to create an elegant, fun and inspiring atmosphere. Masks were optional, as the main purpose of the event was to discuss the ‘mask’ that represents the roles women are expected to play and how to stay authentic despite it all. The event also celebrated impactful female figures and wrapped up the club’s Women’s History Month events.

Junior elementary education major Rihanna Johnson, the president of Rider’s Women United and the political action chair for Rider’s NAACP chapter, gave further insight about the purpose of the Masquerade Ball.

Johnson said, “[People do not often look] into the mask and the roles that women have to wear every single day of our lives to fit into some type of standard, regardless if it’s a workplace standard, if it’s school, if it’s classroom.”

On the left side of the room stood a stage and podium under the projected schedule for the evening, overlooking the luxuriously decorated dinner tables.

On the right side of the room, mocktails, refreshments and catered Olive Garden salad, chicken fettuccine alfredo and marinara meatballs were arranged. Past the food table was a reserved open ‘ballroom’ area for dancing.

The night started off with opening remarks by Johnson and soon after guests were invited to get food, which was served at the tables by members of Rider’s Women United. The plates, table cloths and



Ymanuel Santos/The Rider News

Students enjoyed an informative and glamorous evening at the Women’s Empowerment Masquerade Ball.

decorations followed a golden and royal blue theme, most of which were paid out of pocket by the club members themselves due to a reduced club budget.

“This is here to empower you, for you to come and have fun, for you to chill, eat with your friends. That’s why we wanted to pay out of pocket. We wanted to make sure the event happened so the Rider community can have a safe space like this,” Johnson explained.

Refreshments were provided courtesy of the Culture n’ Trends club, and were in honor of Marsha P. Johnson, an activist and a key figure of the LGBTQIA+ rights movements of the 1960s and 70s.

“It’s becoming increasingly more important for marginalized groups, specifically women, specifically queer women, to be able to get their voices out there,” said Eden Lewis, senior English major and president of Culture n’ Trends. “And to be able to feel like they have community and that there are other people like them, who are going through the same thing, who will actually uplift them and not hold them back.”

Then, a guest speaker took the stage: Rider alumna, Aniyah Parks ’20. Her speech focused on the importance of advocating for themselves and being intentional about their academic journey. The inspiration for her speech came from her reflections from her time at Rider, getting her undergraduate and

masters degree and now, her journey in getting her doctorate degree while working at Montclair State University as the Assistant Director for the Health Careers Program.

“I’m telling students to always be true to yourself, but also, when you are saying something, be intentional ... And never say no to opportunity, because you may never know where that may take your future,” Parks said in regards to her speech.

After Parks concluded her speech and answered questions, students were encouraged to participate in a ballroom dancing lesson choreographed by freshman dance education major Nizya Reese.

Finally, guests strutted down the red carpet to showcase their extravagant outfits. Even as the event was drawing past 8 p.m., the supposed ending time, attendees were still on the dance floor enjoying themselves while dancing to “Boots on the Ground” by 803Fresh and “Cupid Shuffle” by Cupid.

What could have been another sit-down lecture workshop was turned into what Johnson described as an event that is, “People just bringing people together.”

APRIL HOROSCOPES

Presented and Designed by Gail Demeraski

Aries

(March 21 - April 19)



Your relationships will transform this month, Aries. You might find yourself partnered with someone new or potentially experience a loss of someone close to you. Either way, you will be flourishing inwardly and outwardly this month, so have faith and focus on yourself.

Taurus

(April 20 - May 20)



Focus on yourself this month, Taurus. April will make you feel more introspective, and you will have the power to triumph over bad habits and establish a routine that works best for you. You may feel more anxious this month, but with self-appreciation, you will prosper over your doubts.

Gemini

(May 21 - June 20)



Keep up the focus this month, Gemini. This is your month to shine in both your career and relationships. Last month may have been a struggle for you, but April will allow you to positively expand your circle, both professionally and personally.

Cancer

(June 21 - July 22)



Be prepared to lead, Cancer. Your career will blossom this month as you enter a strong-willed headspace. Be careful not to let your impatience get the better of you, as there is so much movement happening this month. Take some time with those closest to you to destress.

Leo

(July 23 - Aug. 22)



Do not be afraid to take up space this month, Leo. You will find yourself feeling more confident and bolder than you ever thought possible. You are going to awaken something deeper inside of yourself, but make sure to take some breaks and reflect on long-term goals.

Virgo

(Aug. 23 - Sept. 22)



You deserve to travel this month, Virgo. Even though you will find yourself in a time of financial prosperity, continue to manage your finances closely and make good choices. Traveling will not only be a deserved treat to yourself, but it will allow you to fully disconnect from the stress of life.

Libra

(Sept. 23 - Oct. 21)



Keep your eye out for deep connections this month, Libra. After the stress of last month, it is time you start doing more for yourself. Treat yourself to nice things and start connecting with new people. This month may reward you with a new friend, or at least teach you healthy boundaries with your current ones.

Scorpio

(Oct. 22 - Nov. 21)



Continue to let your passion drive you, Scorpio. Now is the time to make big career moves. There are eyes on you and you will have the desire to keep pursuing new ventures. You may find burnout seeping into your mind, but pushing through for one more month will lead to great things.

Sagittarius

(Nov. 22 - Dec. 21)



Keep riding the high, Sagittarius. Make sure to keep yourself moving, both physically and in your career. Your focus and mood will be high this month, so make sure you keep your adventurous spirit alive and have fun.

Capricorn

(Dec. 22 - Jan. 19)



You will restructure your life foundations this month, Capricorn. You may find yourself focused on your home and family, so be curious to learn more about your ancestry. Be sure to stay on the path truest to yourself, as others may try to distract you from it. Maintain focus and you will feel enlightened.

Aquarius

(Jan. 20 - Feb. 18)



Make sure to go outside this month, Aquarius. As the seasons turn, you should be prepared to embrace change and connect with nature. Since your creativity will continue through this month, make sure to direct your energy outwards and also rejuvenate yourself.

Pisces

(Feb. 19 - March 20)



Boundaries will be extremely important, Pisces. You will have the power to transform your relationships into something more meaningful, but misunderstandings may also arise. Allow yourself to get comfortable, but make sure you do not lose your creative direction.

The Rider News endorses Lizbeth Ortiz for SGA President

As Rider is currently pulling its way out of a dire financial crisis, student morale has taken a punch amid the uncertainty of what the future holds for the university. Electing a student body president for Rider's Student Government Association that will prioritize the welfare of the student population is a priority now more than ever. Voters have a choice between two candidates to take on the role: junior political science major Jaiden David and junior human resource management major Lizbeth Ortiz.

After holding interviews with both candidates on March 30, The Rider News' editorial board endorses Ortiz as the next SGA student body president.

Ortiz brings a plethora of experiences to the table as a leader and member of multiple sectors on campus. She started in SGA during her freshman year as a member of the student affairs committee and eventually transitioned to the student organizations and clubs committee. Her history within the organization is a vital factor of understanding how to navigate the student body president position.

In addition to SGA, Ortiz is a part of Lambda Theta Alpha Latin Sorority, Inc., an Educational Opportunity Program scholar, a former member of All Broncs BELONG Alliance and a resident assistant in Lincoln Hall.

She also founded and is president of Rider DominiRicans, a club that represents Hispanic unity and her own Dominican and Puerto Rican heritage.

These pieces of her background share a common factor of making people feel they have a space on campus, and The Rider News' editorial board felt her experience made her prepared to amplify this effect as the student body president.

A big part of Ortiz's campaign surrounds student engagement, which she felt has dwindled since the reality of Rider's financial situation took a drastic turn in the past academic year. One way she plans to uplift the student experience is by creating collaborations

with different clubs and organizations to ensure the Rider community feels connected.

Marissa Dingess, one of the social media editors, said, "We're coming up on a big time for Rider and [Ortiz] had a lot of great ideas for student morale."

As the university slowly gets back on firm financial footing, Ortiz said she wants to bring back some of her favorite campus traditions that have dissipated in the past year, such as Cranberry Wednesdays and Food Truck Fridays, while also creating new events like Rider Connect Nights for faculty and students and Thriving Thursdays for students to socialize after SGA's weekly senate meetings. These initiatives not only offer a place for students to connect, but for Ortiz to meet the student body, specifying that she wants people to view her as a friend.

Design Manager Gail Demeraski, who transferred to Rider in 2024 and did not get to experience many of Rider's former staple events, said that hearing about Ortiz's love for Rider made her seem like the perfect person to inspire the student body.

"That's the kind of environment that I wish I would come into and hearing [Ortiz] talk about it so passionately ... just kind of showed me how passionate and driven she's going to be if she were to win," Demeraski said.

In The Rider News' interview with Ortiz on March 30, she mentioned that she has wanted the position of SGA student body president since her sophomore year, and the editorial board agreed that her presidential vision puts her personal ambitions aside and centers on the students and their Rider experience.

With a diverse background in helping others and her solid ideas for campus initiatives, it is clear that Ortiz wants students to feel a sense of belonging and pride about attending Rider amid a time of low morale.

"I think that is something students really need right now, and that really stuck with me," Opinion Editor Libby D'Orvilliers said.



Yanuel Santos/The Rider News

Junior human resource management major **Lizbeth Ortiz** speaks with The Rider News.

The legacy Ortiz said she plans to leave behind, if elected as student body president, is one of authenticity, and to be known as someone who made others feel empowered to stay true to themselves.

Her adherence to lifting the campus' spirit and making a change to the Rider student experience seems to be a passionate goal, and The Rider News endorses her efforts to return hope to the campus community.

This editorial expresses the collective opinion of The Rider News' editorial board. This week's editorial was written by Managing Editor Caroline Haviland and Executive Editor Grace Bertrand.

"Project Hail Mary" shoots for the stars — and succeeds

Admittedly, I was not greatly anticipating "Project Hail Mary" after seeing the first trailer. My initial thought was that it would be on par with "The Martian," as that was author Andy Weir's other book-turned-movie; that film was not exactly outstanding, which is why my expectations were improperly set rather low. That being said, however, the movie blew me away on so many levels and is a theater experience I will remember for ages, as I cannot recall the last time I felt so many emotions in one sitting.

If it was not already clear, I have not read Andy Weir's "Project Hail Mary," so I am not exactly equipped to comment on whether or not it stayed true to form — though I heard from others that it was a good adaptation. With that, I will primarily be sticking to reviewing just the feature film.

Phil Lord and Christopher Miller start the year off with an out-of-this-world film adaptation of "Project Hail Mary," marking their return to live action filmmaking. The duo is most famous for their works in animation, making films like 2009's "Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs," 2014's "The Lego Movie" as well as the 2002 TV series "Clone High." Despite opting for live-action, rather than animation, their newest film follows their previous works so clearly in tone and writing. The script for "Project Hail Mary" is tight, being chock-full of hilarious bits and great one-liners; the humor never feels overbearing or forced, and is so enjoyable that I was laughing the whole time. It is not a comedy film, yet it is better than most in that genre being released nowadays.

Humor excels in these directors' work, but there is also a great deal of emotion. The way the movie swings from comedic and lighthearted to serious and moving works so well and never feels like emotional whiplash.

While the directors did their job, it could not have



Kamiyah Jenkins/The Rider News

The film adaptation of "Project Hail Mary" was released on March 20. It has been executed better if it were not for Ryan Gosling in the lead role of Ryland Grace. His charisma is brighter than the star he is sent off to save in this movie, and I would go so far as to say that this is his best role in terms of range and personality. For most of the movie, he is the only character we see — or at least, human character — and it never feels like too much for him; Gosling owns the screen, dominating it with his charm. Scenes of him talking to himself, reacting to his surroundings — he perfectly conveys everything to the audience and is the best vessel to view this story through.

As I alluded to prior, he is technically not the only character on screen. Joining him is his Erid-born rock friend, who he dubs as "Rocky." One could argue that Rocky is just a cute creature, a mascot that lacks substance who is meant to sell toys and get butts in seats. That could not be further from the truth, as this faceless geode is just as — if not more — compelling

of a character than Gosling's. The level of depth and backstory given to Rocky is incredible and brings a great level of emotion to the scenes with him and Grace. Never does it feel cheap or one-note. Rocky is a more gripping character with more personality and aura than most lead roles in big-budget films coming out these days. In truth, the middle chunk can drag at times, but it is barely noticeable, and oftentimes forgivable, just due to how entertaining and fun Rocky and Grace's dynamic is. Watching them grow and bond together is perfection.

To take a quick aside from Grace and Rocky, Sandra Hüller does an amazing job in a supporting role, and the few scenes that she is in are great. I loved her in this movie, and my favorite moment was easily her karaoke scene about halfway through.

To sum up such a large movie like this is difficult, but I would describe this film as a glimmer of hope. It oozes positivity and has a clear message of optimism in humanity. The story centers around the darkest possible outcome for Earth: widespread famine and possible extinction. The next two plus hours prove to the audience that efforts from the most unassuming of people can change and save the world. In the time that we found ourselves in, "Project Hail Mary" serves as a reminder for what can be.

If it was not clear already, I loved this movie and even saw it a second time. There are not many films that attract such a wide audience and succeed at pleasing all of them by delivering a high-quality and entertaining film. This film gets two thumbs down from me, and five out of five stars.

*Alfie Eville
freshman history and secondary education major*

Transgender Day of Visibility: Celebrating life

The last day of March may not mean anything to some people. It may just be another day to trudge through work and classes as a college student. To me, though, it means a lot more than that. March 31 is Transgender Day of Visibility.

Transgender Day of Visibility is an annual celebration of transgender individuals and their contributions to society, as well as a day to recognize the adversity and discrimination they face in their everyday lives.

Being transgender is not foreign to me. I am a transgender individual in a political climate where being transgender is not always easy. I often wake up to news headlines coming from across the United States that sour my stomach and contort my anxiety in ways I could not have imagined.

Oftentimes, I do end up finding comfort in myself and my identity, even though it seems that, a lot of the time, people do not find comfort in me existing. This is why Transgender Day of Visibility is so important.

I have known I was not “normal” since I was 9 years old, but I pushed it down and let it sink deeper into my body until the end of my freshman year of college when I finally said, “enough is enough.”

Realizing who I truly was started with passing comments I would make on the playground with friends about what I would do differently in society if I were a boy. Such comments could have probably been a blaring signal to those around me, but only I seemed to have known who I was.

I surfed my way through middle school and got to March of my sophomore year of high school before I realized I was not where I wanted to be — I was not addressing who I actually was. I cut my hair short, started going by a different name and faced a lot of negative situations following that. Needless to say, I grew my hair back out, reverted back to my birth name and kept sailing.

Situations like mine are an example as to why we need to celebrate Transgender Day of Visibility. If we, as a society, could somehow come to an agreement that transgender people are not evil or gross, then we would not have people shoving themselves back into boxes they do not fit in.

As June 2025 rolled around, I realized that I was doing more harm than good by not being myself. I felt like I was lying to the new friends I had made when

I came to Rider, but I could not seem to muster the courage to tell any of them how I was really feeling.

I started small. I texted one of my best friends a long paragraph at 6:30 p.m. on a random Tuesday and I told him about my identity. Fortunately, I was met with a kindness I had not experienced before. We talked about it, and in the following days, discussed names that he had helped me brainstorm. His help led me to select “Cal,” a name I now hold dearly to my identity and who I really am as a person.

I had come to the conclusion that if I were to be comfortable being myself anywhere, it would be at Rider because of the diverse community and the friends I had made.

The transgender community is incredibly widespread, and they deserve respect and a place in society wherever they may go. They are your neighbors, your friends, the people you pass on a busy street — and they deserve the same kind of respect, acknowledgment and kindness that anyone else has the opportunity to experience.

Transgender Day of Visibility is important to celebrate now more than ever because trailblazers within our community did not work as hard as they did to see our country vote against us time and time again.

From bills in Kansas revoking driver’s licenses of transgender individuals to refusals for gender-affirming healthcare for minors across the nation, the current political climate is pulling back on the hard work of transgender activists and trailblazers.

Rachel Crandall-Crocker, a psychotherapist and activist, pioneered the celebration of Transgender Day of Visibility after recognizing that the only day we had was a solemn one, though important; Transgender Day of Remembrance. It was founded to honor transgender individuals who had died due to identity-based adversity and discrimination.

Crandall-Crocker noted that Transgender Day of Visibility was meant to be “a day to focus on the living.”

Marsha P. Johnson, a name that may be familiar to most, was an integral factor in the turn of transgender rights following Stonewall, which were a series of protests in the late 1960s where LGBTQIA+ individuals retaliated against police harassment in gay bars and other similar spaces.

Transgender individuals have been around and



Gail Demerski/The Rider News

Transgender Day of Visibility was founded in 2009.

acknowledged since Ancient Rome, where Elagabalus, a Roman emperor, was said to be transgender and even sought gender-affirming surgeries.

I believe that transgender individuals deserve their space in society, in the jobs they desire and in positions of power — Transgender Day of Visibility is important to show that we are not just statistics. We are people with passions, livelihoods, friends and loved ones. Transgender individuals are not a threat, but instead, people with a different and refreshing view on the world.

The history of transgender people runs deep within societies across the world. Whether you are transgender or not, Transgender Day of Visibility is a way to celebrate those around us who face adversity due to who we are, because we are more than just our identities. We each are our own individual person with backstories who have so much to share with the world.

I encourage you to acknowledge the strengths of transgender individuals, as well as rally around them through their struggles. Advocate for them when you can and make sure they feel visible. Not only on Transgender Day of Visibility, but every day.

I am transgender, but my personality is deep and I have so much passion for the things that I love. Being transgender is just a small fraction of who I am, but it still deserves to be recognized. Happy Transgender Day of Visibility.

Cal Sutton

sophomore journalism major

Take pride in prioritizing your own fashion sense

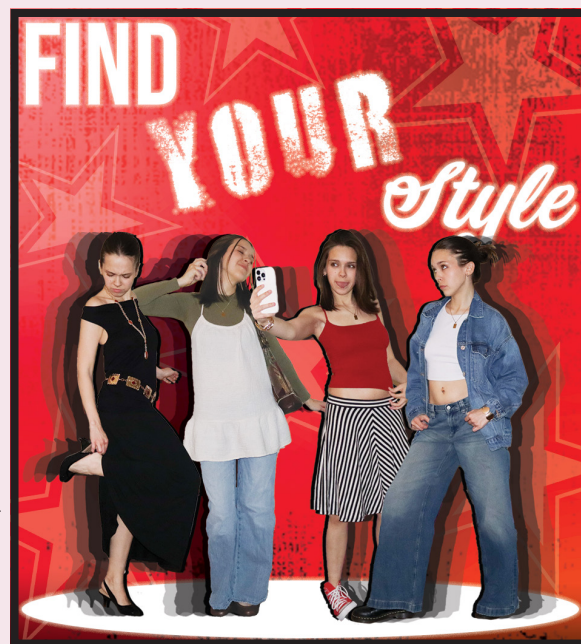
Not many students consider their daily fashion choices. Prioritizing comfort is the usual style — completely valid, no judgement here. But for those who are looking to add an extra bit of flair, there are so many clothing options out there! We need to prioritize personal style and stop following every trend.

Fashion trends are not a new concept and will definitely not be going anywhere anytime soon. I have no problem with trends; they are something that defines an era. I do, however, have a problem when it comes to microtrends and the increasing speed of trend cycles. Fast fashion is horrible for its industry and the environment. Our planet should not be sacrificed for a “cute fit.” Following every trend also prevents us from finding what we actually feel good wearing.

Choosing a piece of clothing just because it is popular can end up being wasteful. You might end up hating the material or how the clothes actually look. Once an item is not trendy anymore, it will likely find its way to a landfill. The United Nations Environment Programme reports that 92 million tons of textile waste is produced globally every year. It is normal to dislike certain clothes as you change, but clothes should be meant to last. Donating and upcycling clothes are just a few ways to minimize waste.

This does not mean that trends should be hated, though. There are some that are fun to keep up with, as long as you still like it after it is unpopular. Some people find clothing they like due to certain pieces becoming trendy. There are so many styles out there that people might not be aware of. Becoming trendy is not inherently bad because it can introduce you to something you did not even know you liked!

This is where personal style comes into play. Outfits can be more than just clothes; they can represent you as a person. It can show your interests, hobbies, the



Gail Demerski/The Rider News

Finding your own personal style can be very fulfilling.

music you listen to and your individuality. You do not get to show that off if you always wear what everyone else is wearing.

Personal style is something that is developed over time. As lovely as it would be, your dream wardrobe is not curated in one day. This is normal, as it lends time for experimentation and finding a style that is uniquely yours.

My favorite way to find style is to simply appease your inner child. If a younger version of you would think the current you is cool, then you are doing something right. We all had someone who we looked up to and said, “I want to be like you when I grow up,” and there is no better chance than the present to make that person be you.

Similarly, it is easy to find inspiration from the media you digest. It can be from any point in your life. If you like a character or artist, maybe try to replicate parts of their outfits. This does not mean cosplay, but instead taking elements from them.

If you are someone who likes the Netflix TV show “Bridgerton,” maybe you try finding babydoll tops with ribbon to replicate the empire waistline dresses from the show. For any superhero fans, the heroes are not in costume all of the time. Without a doubt, there has to be instances of your favorites in civilian clothes. Batman fanatics should bring back smudged eyeliner and Winter Soldier fans all need a red Henley shirt.

Starting small also helps. The style of the “Winx Club” girls is something that could easily be replicated into real life, but maybe an entire wardrobe change is too much, and instead, you opt for some jewelry with butterfly charms. Maybe you are into the anime “One Piece” and want to go for a sturdy pair of jorts, like our favorite future pirate king.

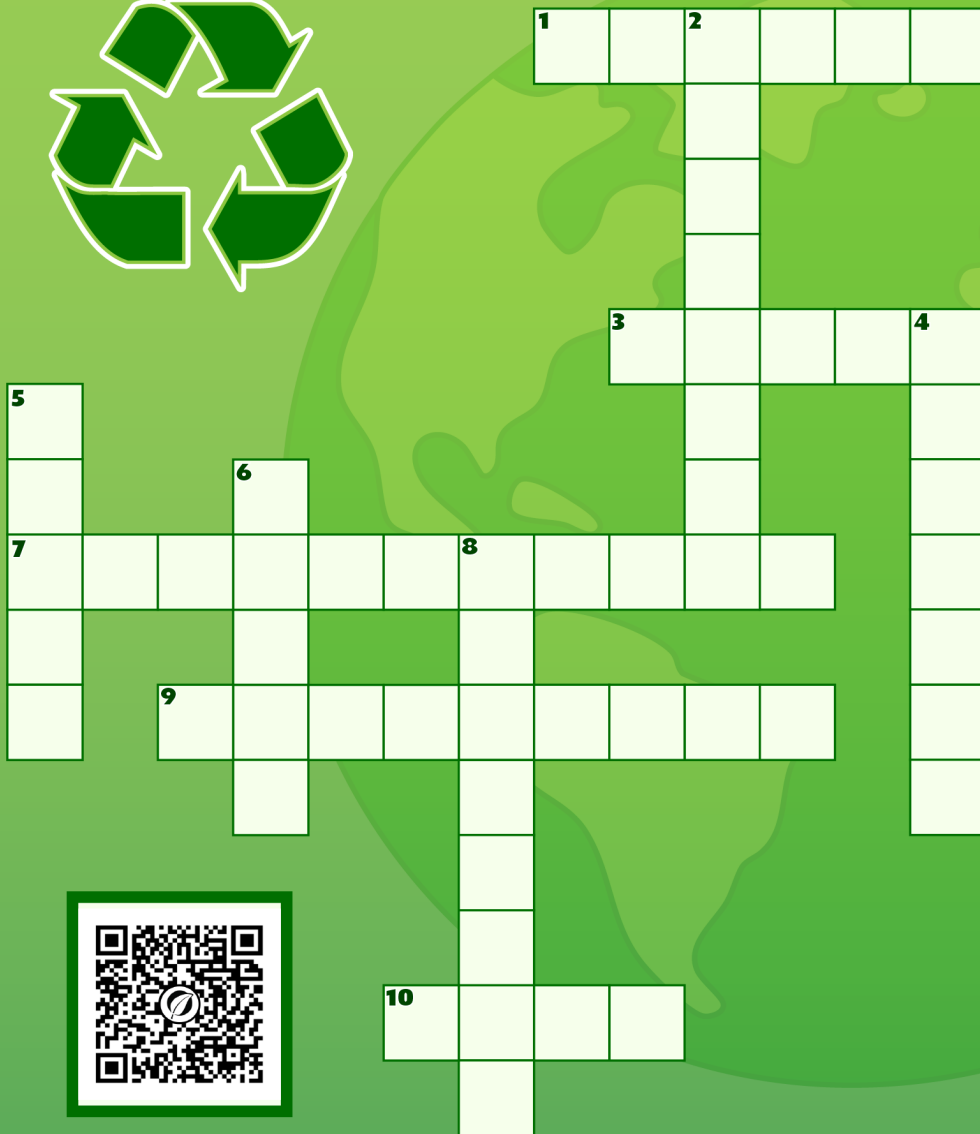
There are also numerous different subcultures of fashion out there. There could be one, or even more, that represents a style you like. Remember that there are also subcultures rooted in music and political ideologies. It is important to respect those and stay educated.

Of course, fitting into one category is not feasible outside of the internet. No one has to limit themselves to one aesthetic. The goal of personal style is to find a style that makes you feel like the best version of yourself.

Jenna Munswami

junior communication studies major

GOING GREEN CROSSWORD



ACROSS

- 1. You can buy second-hand clothes at this type of store.
- 3. Switching to _____ straws over plastic ones can help reduce plastic waste.
- 7. Daly Dining Hall uses a _____ to process food waste.
- 9. Earth Day 2026 will be observed on this day of the week.
- 10. Some trash receptacles around campus are made from reclaimed plastic _____ jugs.

DOWN

- 2. Do not forget your _____ bags at the grocery store!
- 4. Reduce, reuse and _____.
- 5. One might plant trees to celebrate National _____ Day.
- 6. This Rider building is certified LEED Gold Lynch _____ Hall.
- 8. Rider has charging stations on campus for these types of vehicles.



ANSWER KEY!

Libby D'Orvilliers and Gail Demeraski/The Rider News

COMIC: Harvey and Schnoz

By N. D. Medal



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Broncs finish up homestand winning four of five over MAAC rivals

By Emma Geremia-Hartigan and Lindsay Scarola

Rider softball swept Niagara University in a doubleheader, winning game one 10-4 and game two 16-1 in just five innings. They continued the homefield momentum, pulling off two wins in their three game series over the Quinnipiac University Bobcats.

A cranberry sweep

In the first game on March 25, senior outfielder Maddie Luedtke hit a two-run home run and junior infielder Kiersten Buchanan added an RBI single to fight back against heavy Niagara offense.

Keeping the momentum going, sophomore infielder Aspen Wheeler hit a two-run single, giving Rider a 6-2 lead. After that, the Broncs never let up.

Luedtke added another solo home run in the fourth inning, while Buchanan drove in three more runs in the sixth inning to put the game out of reach.

Niagara added a couple of runs late, but Rider held on for the 10-4 win.

Rider wasted no time in the second game of the doubleheader, with junior catcher Abby Cruz setting the tone with a first inning grand slam, which sent Luedtke, sophomore utility Keegan St. Cyr and Wheeler across the plate and gave Rider a 4-0 lead.

Luedtke followed with a run later in the inning, and St. Cyr added an RBI double to extend the lead.

Cruz continued her impact at the plate with a sacrifice fly to bring in another run, while sophomore first baseman Emma Morgan singled home Luedtke, and Buchanan delivered another RBI single.

Junior outfielder Shelby Dyer and Wheeler added hits to drive in more runs, pushing Rider's lead to 10-0.

Hitting her second home run of the day in the fourth inning, Luedtke's shot put the score at 15-1.

Wheeler's double later in the inning brought in another run, sealing the final score at 16-1 under the five-inning mercy rule.

Bringing home the victory

The Broncs then hosted the Bobcats on March 28, the game remaining scoreless until the bottom of the fifth, where Rider trailed 1-0.



Destiny Pagan/The Rider News

Junior first baseman **Kendall Reda-Fehsal** brought home one of many runs for the Broncs.

After St. Cyr's hard grounder hit, Buchanan slid into home plate to tie the game 1-1, where she collided with the Quinnipiac catcher, sparking an intense argument between the umpire and Quinnipiac's head coach.

"We had runners on first and third, and I knew my run was important with us down one," Buchanan said. "Once I saw the ball get through, I took off."

After a moment, the umpire confirmed that Buchanan was safe, a call that immediately shifted the energy on the field.

The game remained tight through the top of the seventh inning, with Quinnipiac briefly taking a 2-1 lead on a single.

St. Cyr then responded with a sharp single to left field, driving in Luedtke to even the score at 2-2.

With runners now on first and second base, Rodriguez reached on a misplayed throw by Quinnipiac's baseman, allowing Luedtke to sprint home and give Rider the 3-2 lead.

Sophomore pitcher Gabi Rodriguez, who had already pitched six strong innings, earned the win by going the full seven innings, allowing just two runs.

"Gabi settled in really well and kept the batters off balance mixing different speeds and working on different planes," Head Coach Davon Ortega said. "She was confident going right at their hitters and that's what made her stand out."

Offensively, Rider showed balance and depth, with multiple players stepping up when it mattered

most. Luedtke led the way with three hits, including two doubles, while Buchanan added two hits and her game-tying run.

On March 29, the Broncs had a doubleheader against the Bobcats, where game one fell out of Rider's control.

Quinnipiac scored four runs in the second inning with seven more coming in the third. The runs did not stop there, as the Bobcats added two more in the fourth for a 13-run lead.

The Broncs were unable to get their offense going, with the game ending after the fifth inning with Quinnipiac earning the run-rule victory.

Game two was a different wave, as Wheeler and St. Cyr led off in the bottom of the first inning with back-to-back singles.

A Bobcat error loaded the bases, setting up Cruz for a two-run RBI double. Junior first baseman Kendall Reda-Fehsal then beat out an infield single, bringing in another run for the Broncs.

A wild pitch advanced the runners, setting up Morgan for a single that drove the pair home, extending the lead, 5-0.

After Quinnipiac got a run back in the top of the second, Wheeler led off the bottom half with a double. Luedtke singled up the middle, extending their lead to six runs.

With two outs and a runner on, Cruz and Reda-Fehsal had back-to-back singles, bringing a runner home and adding another to the board.

From that point on, not a single runner was allowed beyond first base until the bottom of the sixth, when senior pitcher Fallyn Stoeckel had a pinch-hit double.

Three batters later, Luedtke had another base hit to bring home the final run and the Broncs' 8-1 win.

Rider will look to carry this momentum into their next matchups against the University of Pennsylvania on April 1.

The Broncs will then take on Siena University on April 3 in the beginning of a three-game series, followed by a doubleheader on April 7 against Saint Peter's University.

Lacrosse drops two more, adding to Broncs' longest losing streak in history

By Samantha Clark

After entering Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference play over spring break, Rider lacrosse pushed their losing streak to 11 straight games with a 17-9 loss against Manhattan University and a 17-2 loss to Mount Saint Mary's University, marking the longest scoreless run in program history.

Falling in the fight

The Broncs hosted Manhattan on March 25, which kicked off with an almost-immediate goal from the Jaspers, who made contact with the net just 15 seconds into play.

Graduate student draw specialist Marissa Ross attempted a goal, but it fell too wide, and after a foul from sophomore defender Kayla Vazquez, the Jaspers were allowed a free position shot, putting the Broncs down 2-0 after the first three and a half minutes.

Multiple sets of turnovers and failed draw controls from Rider put Manhattan ahead by five goals, until the Broncs put up back-to-back goals from graduate student attacker Kayleigh Colleary and junior attacker Maggie Hance.

With an assist from sophomore attacker Brynn Merklinger, one more goal from Hance closed the first quarter with the Broncs trailing 5-3.

Similar to the first, the second quarter opened with a mere-immediate Manhattan goal to widen the gap to three goals. The Broncs quickly bounced back by adding two in under 30 seconds from Colleary and sophomore defender Hannah Kozik.

The Jaspers responded with two of their own, but both teams followed with eight and a half straight minutes of unsuccessful play, until Hance cashed in the final of the first half, setting the Broncs back 8-6.

Rider did not score a single goal until the final minute of the third quarter, allowing Manhattan to

hold them to a 5-0 run in the opening 14 minutes of the second half.

Not only did the Broncs not score until the final minute, but there was also not a single goal attempt on Rider's end until Colleary's successful one, sending the Broncs into the final quarter down 13-7.

Junior midfielder Marybeth Smith put up the first goal of the fourth, but the Jaspers responded with four of their own.

A steal and assist from freshman defender Ally Basile allowed for Ross to break the Broncs' drought, scoring the final goal of the game, marking a 17-9 loss for Rider.

"I try to stay as positive as possible, keep the energy up and stay aggressive. We've seen throughout the season that we have the ability to go on runs, so we continue to keep our heads up and keep looking for those opportunities," Colleary said.

Bump on the road

The Broncs then headed to Emmitsburg, Maryland, to face Mount Saint Mary's on March 28, where they were challenged with a heavy offense and defense, leading to their 11th straight loss.

Rider did not score a single goal in the first 15 minutes, allowing the Mountaineers to put up a score of 4-0 after the first quarter. Goals from Kozik, Hance, Colleary and sophomore midfielder Madi Eollo were attempted, but all fell short, contributing to the scoreless quarter.

Mount Saint Mary's scored their fifth goal to open the second, but Colleary responded four minutes later with the Broncs' first goal of the game, her 15th of the season.

However, to close the second quarter, the Mountaineers put up six goals in a row, the Broncs heading into the break trailing 11-1.



Morgan Dickens/The Rider News

In the March 28 matchup against Mount Saint Mary's University, graduate student attacker **Kayleigh Colleary** scored her 15th goal of the season.

More of the same was seen in the second half, as Mount Saint Mary's opened the third quarter by adding two more goals to the scoreboard.

After a foul from the Mountaineers, Smith was given a free position shot, allowing her to record Rider's second and final goal. Two more from Mount Saint Mary's sent the Broncs into the fourth quarter down 15-2.

In the final 15 minutes, sophomore goalie Avery May only allowed two goals from the Mountaineers, saving two and the rest falling too wide, ending the Maryland matchup down 17-2.

"Adversity is part of the process," Head Coach Paige Frye said. "Our players continue to support each other, keep competing, and trust that if we stick to our standards, we can be proud of the product we are putting on the field."

The Broncs look to pick up their first win since their season opener on Feb. 6 when they host Fairfield University on April 1 at 3 p.m. and Niagara University on April 4 at 1 p.m.

Rider splits nonconference games, defeats Canisius

By Benjamin Shinault and Joshua Yuhas

The baseball looked like a beach ball for Rider in their latest Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference series against the Canisius University Golden Griffins, as the team put up 32 runs over the three game series.

But before their MAAC home series, the Broncos faced the Saint Joseph's University Hawks and came up short, 11-10.

The Broncos then faced off against the University of Delaware in a midweek matchup, in which they were victorious, 10-5.

Grand slam not grand enough

A leadoff triple and a sacrifice fly from senior right outfielder Erich Hartmann gave the Broncos a 1-0 lead to begin their March 25 matchup with the Hawks.

With runners on first and second base, junior catcher Nick Shuhet added on two more runs after roping a two-run single to close the first inning.

A pair of two-run home runs for the Hawks and a pair of RBI singles for the Broncos left a 5-4 Rider lead after three innings.

With the bases loaded, sophomore infielder Eliot Medlock launched a fourth-inning grand slam, but the Hawks quickly chipped back into the game.

Seven unanswered runs for the Hawks spanned from the fourth to seventh inning, sending Rider into the ninth trailing by two.

The Broncos got one run back after a single from senior third baseman Will Gallagher, but they struck out for the final two outs of the game, closing an 11-10 loss to Saint Joseph's.

First place in the MAAC

The Saint Joseph's loss was a tough one to swallow for the Broncos, but they got right back to work against their MAAC rival in the Golden Griffins.

Clouds covered the sky above Sonny Pittaro Field on March 27 when Rider faced Canisius. Toeing the mound for the Broncos in game one was senior pitcher PJ Craig.

Craig ran into some early trouble and put the Broncos in a 2-0 hole, but after a shaky third inning, Craig dialed in and finished with an impressive line of eight innings pitched, allowing just four hits and striking out three.

"He threw the ball well," Acting Head Coach Barry Davis said, "He gave up two runs early, but for the most part, he was in control."

Until the fifth inning, the Broncos were held without a hit. But in a blink of an eye, the Broncos surged and put up an astonishing 13 unearned runs in the fifth inning alone to get out to a 13-2 lead.

Later on in the seventh inning, the Broncos were able to add another run to the column off a fielder's choice. Then, in the eighth inning, Rider added another unearned run to cap their scoring at 15 total runs.

Gallagher turned in his bat for a glove in the ninth



Photo by Destiny Pagan/The Rider News

Senior third baseman Will Gallagher recorded two hits while also making a pitching appearance in the series opener against Canisius.

inning and closed out game one with a win for the Broncos, 15-3.

"My job was to come in and throw strikes," Gallagher said. "It's a quick turnaround going from third base to the pitcher's mound."

Game two of the series looked very different from game one, as the Broncos could not rummage up many runs, losing 8-2 to split the series at 1-1.

Chilly weather was the perfect pair to go with the Broncos offensive struggles. Rider was able to collect nine hits, but could not quite get the runners around the base path.

The Broncos first run of the game came from junior outfielder Kyle Neri who singled to score a run. Later in the sixth inning, sophomore designated hitter Peter Crespo doubled to center field to score another run, then that was it for Rider, as they lost 8-2, setting up the rubber match.

In game three, the Broncos found themselves in an early hole, once again, as they were down 2-0 by the end of the first inning.

An inning later, Rider was able to knot it up at two apiece with back-to-back RBI singles from junior infielder Matt Leahy and junior designated hitter Austin Cannon.

Leahy saw the ball very well in the series finale, as he finished with four hits and five RBI's.

"Matt's been working hard ... He was able to put four quality at-bats together and he came up in big situations," Davis said.

The third inning was huge for the Broncos, as they put six runs on the board to get out to an 8-3 lead.

Canisius was able to get two runs back in the fifth

inning to make the score 8-5. The three-run deficit did not last long, as Hartmann launched a ball over the right field wall to score three runs, allowing the Broncos to hop out to a more commanding 11-5 lead.

Both teams would add a few more runs, but the Broncos emerged on top, 15-7, to win the series and maintain first place in the MAAC standings.

Midweek victory

The Broncos winning ways were not done, as on March 31, Rider hit the road and drove south to the University of Delaware to face the Blue Hens.

On the mound for the Broncos was freshman pitcher Dylan Kane. Kane, over his five innings of work, struck out a batter and only allowed two earned runs, a walk and three hits.

Similar to the Canisius series, the Broncos fell into an early 2-0 hole, but were able to climb out of it in the third inning when Cannon shot a single up the middle to make the score 2-1.

Then in the fifth inning, the Broncos exploded for seven runs.

Both Shuhet and Medlock recorded RBI doubles while Hartmann and freshman catcher Demetri Bardatsos cashed in one run each with singles.

In the very next inning, Medlock came through again with another RBI to make the score 9-2.

Medlock on the night had three doubles and two RBIs.

The Blue Hens were able to make things interesting in the seventh inning as they were able to get three runs across to close the gap to four runs.

But, the hope did not last too long, as the Broncos added an additional insurance run in the eighth inning from a Leahy double.

Another freshman arm came in to close it out in the ninth inning as Connor Flynn toed the mound and made quick work of Delaware, securing the 10-5 road victory.

The Broncos will be once again hosting a MAAC faceoff on April 2 when Marist University comes to town for a three-game series.

First pitch will be at 3 p.m. and will be broadcast on ESPN+.

VOTE FOR MEN'S AND WOMEN'S PLAYER OF THE YEAR!

Sports

CRACK THE CODE!



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Graduate student **Tyler Klinsky** has closed out his Rider career as the program's 22nd All-American.

All-American Klinsky: A juice worth the squeeze

By Benjamin Shinault

The year is 2020. In a world of uncertainty, one thing was left for certain: graduate student Tyler Klinsky was going to commit to Rider.

As time rolled on, Klinsky continued to wrestle for the Broncs. Year after year, he honed his craft and perfected his maneuvers.

By the end of his senior year in 2024, Klinsky had scooped up 49 wins, but he was not quite done with his Rider journey.

Two more seasons passed by and Klinsky completed his Rider career, not just as a Rider wrestling veteran, but as an All-American.

The Klinsky timeline

Klinsky, a native to Middletown, New Jersey, was the top wrestler in the state at 113 pounds in 2020. Klinsky also went on to be ranked the 15th-best 113-pound wrestler in the nation, making him a sought-after prospect for Rider Head Coach John Hangey and his staff.

Throughout his high school career at Middletown North, Klinsky scooped up 169 wins, placing him first in the school's history. Klinsky was a state champion in his senior year and also was a two-time state finalist.

Klinsky came to Rider in a year of unpredictability in 2020 for his freshman year.

The 2020 season for all college sports looked very different. Rider finished with a record of 4-1, only wrestling in two Mid-American Conference matches. Klinsky finished his freshman year with a record of 3-2.

During Klinsky's sophomore year in 2021, he completed the MAC Championships after a season where he went 11-12 overall with a 6-2 record in MAC play.

From sophomore year on, Klinsky started to find his groove and role within the team. His junior and senior year were very productive, as he had 28 wins combined over the two years. At the MAC Championships his senior year, Klinsky finished second and secured his first ever NCAA at-large bid.

Senior year came and went for Klinsky, but with two more years of eligibility, Klinsky stayed put at Rider.

Finishing strong

With a diploma in hand, Klinsky continued on wearing cranberry and white for Rider. In his first graduate season, Klinsky decided to redshirt.

"I took time to stay healthy and get stronger," Klinsky said.

His off-year proved to be fruitful.

In Klinsky's final collegiate season, he had his best one yet. Klinsky finished with a record of 30-6 overall,

going undefeated in dual meets for the first time since Ethan Laird '23 did it in the 2022-23 season.

"It was definitely a grind that took a lot of work. I am thankful for the tough schedule Coach [Hangey] created," Klinsky said.

When conference play rolled around, Klinsky was ready. In his first MAC match of the season, Klinsky defeated his Clarion University opponent by decision. And from there, Klinsky continued his dominance.

As matches passed by and Klinsky continued to collect win after win, it was time for the MAC Championships.

Klinsky wasted zero time at the tournament in Buffalo, New York, as he made his way to the final round and won by major decision, 11-3.

With the win, Klinsky secured his first ever MAC title and was also named the tournament's most outstanding wrestler. Klinsky also secured a bid to the NCAA Championships. Later on, Klinsky was named MAC Wrestler of the Year on March 27.

'Nerves and doubts always find a way into your head'

After a little over a week to soak in being a MAC champion for the first time, Klinsky knew that his job was not finished.

The day of the NCAA championships was full of anticipation for Klinsky. The sleep the night before was not very restful.

"Those nerves and doubts always find a way into your head and keep you awake for a few hours," Klinsky said.

Throughout the sessions at the NCAA championships, there is a lot of down time for the wrestlers who are waiting to hit the mats.

Klinsky used this time to maintain his high energy and stay focused.

"It's a lot of sitting around waiting for your turn to wrestle, but it's important to focus on yourself and focus your energy on warming up, eating and drinking properly to ensure you compete to your best ability every time," Klinsky explained.

During the first session, Klinsky faced off against a foe from the University of Pennsylvania. Klinsky crushed his opponent, winning by a technical fall. In his next match, Klinsky took on a wrestler from the University of Minnesota. This time around, the match was very low scoring, with both wrestlers battling for position. By the end of the match, Klinsky was shut out, 2-0. With the loss, his streak of 20 straight wins was snapped, but he stayed alive in All-American contention.

'The juice was worth the squeeze'

After another night of limited rest, Klinsky was ready for day two of the championships. Klinsky was set to face off against wrestlers from Ohio State University and the University of Oklahoma.

In his match against the Oklahoma Sooner, Klinsky had his way and coasted to a 14-5 major decision.

Next up, Klinsky went up against the third-ranked wrestler in his weight class, setting up for a prestige match.

Klinsky fell behind in the match early, but was able to come through in the late stages to secure a massive, upset win.

Riding the high of a huge win, Klinsky then faced off against a wrestler from the University of Iowa.

With a win, Klinsky became an All-American.

The score was knotted up at 0-0 by the end of the first period. The Hawkeye was able to score first with an escape, in which Klinsky quickly equalized.

With time dwindling in both the match and his Rider career, Klinsky came through with a takedown to pick up three points. Time expired and he was victorious.

Running and jumping into Hangey's open arms was Klinsky, cementing six years of Rider wrestling as an All-American.

"The juice was worth the squeeze ... it was the greatest, most fulfilling feeling I have ever experienced," Klinsky said.

Hangey, who recruited Klinsky and coached for six years, had nothing but great words for his All-American wrestler.

"Couldn't be happier for Tyler. It couldn't happen to a better kid. He pours his heart and soul into everything he does," Hangey told Rider Athletics after the match.

Etched into history

With Klinsky's All-American recognition, he is now Rider's 11th All-American in the last 12 years and 22nd overall.

"For a program like ours, having four All-Americans in four years, and 11 in the last 12, says a lot about what our guys put into this and the support we get. It's a standard we expect to keep going," Hangey said.

Klinsky, however, is not too sure what his next step will be. After spending six years at Rider, Klinsky's life will look a lot different in the next few weeks.

"A lot of decisions have to be made. I definitely want to be involved in the sport of wrestling, but not sure what level that will be or what my future will look like," Klinsky said. "Teaching and coaching was originally the goal but things change, but I am excited to see where I end up."