QCC Steps up Support of Title IX

By Kezia West

In wake of the growing nationwide concerns, the New York City Council Committee on Higher Education is to hold a hearing over how private and public colleges handle cases of sexual assaults. The Title IX section in the education amendment has been revised to protect victims of sexual assault and to better address the concept of consent.

As of July 2014, Queensborough Community College is among the few CUNY schools that have appointed a full-time Title IX Coordinator, Mary Jane Shaw, who has a law degree, and a Masters in Anthropology from SUNY Buffalo. Prior to her appointment as Coordinator, all discrimination complaints were investigated “promptly and thoroughly by our Chief Diversity Officer, Mavis Hall, in the Office of Affirmative Action, Pluralism & Diversity/Compliance,” Shaw explained.

Title IX is a portion of the United States Education Amendments placed to ensure that no one in this country is subject to discrimination under any education program or activity based on their gender. It has been revised in mid-October to also protect students from sexual harassment, sexual assault and domestic violence.

Sexual harassment is generally defined as unwanted sexual advances or obscene remarks, and sexual assault as a sexual act in which a person is threatened, coerced, or forced to engage against their will.

According to Center of Family Justice, 60% of rapes and sexual assaults are not reported to the police. This is an issue many feel uncomfortable speaking openly about. Victims are sometimes discouraged from coming forward because of the possible negative outcomes of the criminal justice system and the lengthy process of reporting and investigation, as Eliza L. Gray reported in the Time magazine story, “Why Don’t Campus Rape Victims Go to the Police?”

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How Do You Feel About Minimum Wage?

By Pimsiri Kanchanasakul

Feeling kind of broke? You are not alone if you are one of the millions of Americans who hold a minimum wage job. Rising gas prices, college tuition costs, money for groceries, and paying the rent...as college students, paying for these expenses, how can we meet these needs or ever have money left over for other necessities?

While minimum wage jobs used to be occupied mainly by high school and college students, these days many adults and college graduates have just as much need of these jobs. And while our cost of living is going up, the wages these jobs pay are not.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, minimum wage workers account for 4.7% of hourly paid workers. Based on Center of Family Justice, 60% of rapes and sexual assaults are not reported to the police.

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Smile for the Camera: Reducing the Speed Limit to 25

By Ron Gross

Lead-footed drivers beware. The New York City council passed a bill on Oct. 7 to lower the New York City speed limit by a 45-4 vote. Set to go into effect on Nov. 7, the change will reduce the limit from 30 miles per hour to a supposedly safer 25.

So why decide to change the speed limit for the first time in 50 years? There are several reasons. Based on the New York Police Department’s data on motor vehicle crashes, 178 people were killed in the year 2013, and as of now there have already been 210 deaths since 2014 began.

According to USA Today News, a pedestrian being struck by a vehicle moving at 30 miles per hour has a 20 percent chance of being killed, whereas the chances of a pedestrian being killed by a vehicle moving at 25 miles per hour is only half of that. On average, every two hours, someone in the city is either killed or injured in a traffic accident. The death toll on traffic related deaths is rising annually and Mayor Bill de Blasio intends to put an end to it. Completely.

Mayor de Blasio’s Vision Zero Project intends to eliminate all traffic related deaths in the city by the year 2024. In support of his Vision Zero Project, de Blasio has put in place new speed cameras and additional speed bumps to help enforce the issue of speeding.

“There’s little dispute that there has been a serious number of traffic-related fatalities and there’s no dispute that speed kills,” said Mark Treyger, a City Council member, as quoted by “The Sheepshead Bites.” “The issue that I continue to raise is the issue of enforcement … and making sure it does not continue on page 15
How Do You Feel About Minimum Wage?

minimum wage is not enough. One Queensborough student, Stanley Phan, is frustrated with the current minimum wage. “I feel like they should raise the minimum wage because the MTA is hiking their fare every month, and paying for my phone bill is not enough. It’s not like I can even work that many days since I’m a full-time student.”

Yet not everyone feels this way. Isaias Flores, a second year student at Queensborough believes that “the minimum wage shouldn’t be raised because that just means they would raise the standard of living. Things like housing or items in stores will just ultimately end up being raised to meet the equilibrium of minimum wage. So raising it will not do anything for the economy.”

There are also more direct ways a raise might negatively affect minimum wage workers. They will be taxed more on their paycheck, some might lose their benefits, some might be forced to take a cut in hours, and may have to work more if other workers are let go. Many business owners could end up having to let go of workers some argue, to cut the expenses.

At Ooba, a restaurant in Manhattan, the owner Noom S. believes raising the minimum wage will heavily affect how he runs his business. He believes that with the minimum wage hike next year, he will have to be stricter on his employees to make sure they can handle the workload. Currently, he has over 15 waiters that he pays eight dollars an hour, but with the hike to $10.10, he says he might possibly stop hiring and make sure the ones that remain can handle any extra work.

“It’s hard to run a small restaurant in this city,” Noom explains. “There’s so much competition on every block that we need to cut on expenses as much as possible while still providing the best food and service. The last thing I want to do is raise the price of the food."

In the state of Washington, the minimum wage is $9.32, while in the city of Seattle, they passed the local ordinance to increase it to $15.00. The nationwide federal minimum wage is at $7.25 but a state like Wyoming still has a state rate of $5.15.

Internationally, Switzerland holds the highest rate minimum wage at $15.00 per hour. America does not even round out the top 10 according to Bloomberg.com.

The minimum wage has had the most impact on the least skilled of workers. With the gap between the rich and poor widening, it’s only a matter of time before things become too much for minimum wage earners. With any luck, if a hike goes into effect, it will at least produce positive outcomes in narrowing this gap.
Impact of Construction: Students Speak Out

By Andy Poon

The active construction site in the Science Building is visible to everyone at Queensborough Community College (QCC), however, the physical and acoustic impact, particularly for those who are frequently on campus is much less obvious. The Communiqué sought to determine the scope of the impact, and have found that while the faculty are heavily affected because they spend more time on campus and actively communicate, the effect on students was not as obvious.

As part of a two-part story, over thirty individuals from students, faculty, and staff were interviewed. The small number of interviews is by no means a representative sample of the total campus population of 18,200 tallied from the numbers stated in the project website. This is part one, which focuses on the students. Part two will follow in the next issue of the Communiqué.

Construction has been underway in the Science Building for over a year. Officially known as the Science Building enclosure project, it was covered in detail in the October 2014 issue of the Communiqué. A major benefit of the project is that upon completion, it will provide a much-needed larger dining hall and event space at QCC.

In order for construction work to be possible, three courtyard entrances that lead into two stairways and the Science Café are walled-off. Primary access into the Science Building is reduced to the main entrance at the front right of the building and on the left side where it connects to the Medical Arts Building, requiring major changes to travel patterns. The restrooms near the auditoriums are closed. Half of parking lot 2 is closed for the staging area.

Construction activities will also create noise.

According to the project website, a noise mitigation plan was created to reduce the impact of construction. It requires high noise construction to be conducted during the early morning, weekends, or holidays. Walls are constructed on the inside windows of the rooms facing the courtyard as a barrier to sound. As the construction project, the ongoing construction site includes asbestos abatement in various parts of the Science Building. In terms of noise, “I go to class at around nine p.m., so it doesn’t bother me,” she said.

Natasha Brown, a student working at the Academic Computing Center, had much to say. “Construction personnel asked students to move away from there until they finished what they have to do,” as she recalls an instance where students were requested to vacate an area. “It’s inconvenient sitting down to eat on the benches.” When asked why, she replied, “Dust from the construction. Sometimes I want to sit down and relax, but with the equipment and noise, it’s hard to do. Students rush to class, but a tractor carrying equipment needed to pass. I need to take another road or skip buying food,” referring to the construction vehicles crossing the front entrance serving Science Building, preventing entry for that duration. “They should warn the students; have a sign that they are going to be using this area today.”

A club officer who requested to remain anonymous said, “It certainly makes it a lot more annoying. Where people sit to eat, there’s overcrowding. People can’t find a place to sit. My calculus professor tried to teach, but from the constant, continuous noise going on, she has to raise her voice, close the door and windows, which in turn can make the room uncomfortable and hot. Very ironic—most students who are here before the construction began are not going to see the results of this inconvenience. All this overcrowding, fighting to get on line just to get some food—I’m not going to see why I go through all of this.”

The individual interviews show that students, particularly those from later semesters, are much more impacted by the construction.

“Students barely approach us regarding matters such as the construction project. I feel like the problem is that a majority of students are reserved, so there’s only a low chance that they’ll voice their concerns,” said Student Government President Patrick Bouicault. “We know about the issues regarding the Science Building Enclosure Project. We haven’t heard much about it from the students, but we’ve heard a lot more about it from the faculty.”

Despite the noise mitigation plan and other measures put in place to minimize impact, there is still plenty of room for improvement. A problem cannot be addressed unless it is reported. Students who have concerns or complaints about the construction should be aware that there are proper channels for communication. They should contact their professors, department chairs, club officers, or the Student Government who have the ability to bring it to the proper channels.

“We agree with the project’s goal to utilize QCC’s space more efficiently and providing students with a better area to eat and relax. It’s just very unfortunate that students who are here right now have to deal with the noise and physical effects of this project,” said President Bouicault. “We’re their voice, and we speak for them. Students should always feel free to come and speak to us during our office hours.”
Winter Session: STEM Waivers and Milestone Scholarship

Professor Burdi also shared that the STEM courses were chosen for this program because some are requirements for student’s program of study, or are needed as prerequisites to other courses, which will better prepare students for more advanced STEM courses.

“When a student takes these courses, they are being exposed to the material sooner so when they take a subsequent STEM course the following semester they will be able to apply prior learnings and know what is going to be expected of them.”

The requirements for those interested in this opportunity are that they be current CQCC students in good academic standing, continuing in Spring 2015; the course they wish to apply the waiver to must be in their program of study; and they must be a New York City resident. Students must also have a GPA of 2.50 at the time of application submission, with the exception of first time Fall 2014 semester students, who currently do not have an established GPA.

Students will receive an email on November 3rd through Tigermail about the waiver and its requirements along with the application. This information will also be available on the QCC website.

The waivers will be approved on a first come first serve basis, so be sure to get your application in before the December 5th deadline.

Students at the end of the Fall 2014 semester, who have between 26-29 credits, may also qualify for the Queensborough Milestone Scholarship. This scholarship will cover the cost of any course in the Winter session enabling the student to reach the 30 credit mark. Qualifying students will be receiving an email as well on November 3rd.

Enrollment for the Winter 2015 session has begun. Good luck to all those who will apply!
ASAP Program

By Destiny Nagora

When walking down the halls of Queensborough, one may see posters that read ‘ASAP.’ Most students do not know what it is or what beneficial factors it holds for City University of New York (CUNY) community college students. ASAP is an abbreviation for Accelerated Study in Associate Programs which is a community college program that helps motivated students earn their Associates Degree as quickly as possible. Its goal is to graduate 50% of their students within three years. This program began in 2007 with funding from the New York City Center for Economic Opportunity. Since the first cohort in 2007 proved successful, ASAP has been running ever since.

ASAP helps make your transition into college go much smoother. Before college begins, ASAP requires a mandatory summer institute where students get to know the campus. During the first year of college, a majority of ASAP students are put into small classes with other fellow ASAP students within their majors. This helps students build supportive relationships with each other and their professors.

“The community itself, looks out for each other. Were here to push and challenge each other,” said Nikki.

Students within ASAP are given a permanent advisor for their whole community college experience. The advisors are there to help guide the students in the right direction. Students meet with their advisor frequently, where they discuss graduation plans and other opportunities. If students are struggling, they are sent to meet with an ASAP tutor. If students are excelling, they are assigned a mentor within the Queensborough faculty. Mentoring assists students in exploring their career.

“The summer institute helped me when it came to the first day of school. I did not have anxiety of not knowing anyone or not knowing where anything was,” says Francesca Plowright.

ASAP helps prepare you for the future. The program even has its own career employment specialist who provides information on careers. Students are shown job shadowing and internship opportunities. These opportunities help students find their path on what they want to pursue. Workshops are another great opportunity that ASAP provides. They provide students with information and skills that they can for future careers. The workshops range from resume building, mock interviewing and opportunities to receive answers to any school-related questions. The ASAP oriented classes help with networking and gaining supportive relationships.

“ASAP taught me great skills: strong communication skills, time management, interview preparation and financial preparation,” says Francesca.

ASAP encourages you to be active on campus. The office frequently sends emails to students about many ASAP and campus oriented events as well valid information relating to jobs, internship opportunities and more.

“I am able to do so much more. I get to be more involved with my campus,” commented Francesca.

ASAP helps with the financial barriers for college students. If a student qualifies for either FAFSA or TAP but can’t afford the rest, they will cover the remainder. They also provide monthly Metrocards and a $500 book voucher, when all obligations are completed.

“ASAP disabled my financial obstacles that would have kept me from furthering my education,” said Nikki Siapno.

If you qualify for ASAP, you should most definitely apply. To qualify you have to be admitted to a CUNY Community College, take CUNY assessment test, live in New York, have a minimum of twelve credits and receive some sort of financial aid.

Can #TeamInternet Be Found on the QCC Campus?

By Megan Sullivan

Team Internet? Yes. It’s a thing, and it’s how some people on YouTube see themselves and others who do what they do. A lot of people don’t really understand the success you can gain from making YouTube videos, it’s honestly incredible and unbelievable. If you have a hobby, or if you’re really good at doing something, put yourself out there! You never know what can happen. The possibilities are endless. In today’s world, the Internet is, and can be a huge part, of anyone’s success, no matter who you are or what you do.

What will making YouTube videos do for me? Why would I want people who don’t even know me watching my videos online? These are just two of the many questions you may be wondering about, so let’s get some background knowledge on the success that can be found on YouTube today. The majority of people who make YouTube videos on a set schedule started with no views, no anything. They didn’t have an audience following them when they first started, and now making the videos is their job today. Though millions and millions of people watch YouTube videos everyday, success still doesn’t come just overnight. It’s taken these people a few years, but guess what? They’ve gained a few million viewers. Yes, a few million. Can you even imagine how many people that really is?

Your videos online can really be about anything. There is no one sitting behind you telling you what to do or even how to do it. If you’re interested in make up and hair, try doing beauty videos to share your tips and tricks. If you’re interested in video games, make a gaming channel. If you’re interested in cooking, make videos sharing your recipes and best dishes. You can make videos of yourself singing, that’s how some of the best artists were found today. As I mentioned, the possibilities are endless and there’s so much you can do and so many options. And guess what… You can even make money. Get paid from putting videos online? Yes, that’s correct. And what student wouldn’t love a little bit more money in their pockets? (But make sure you’re doing what you love because you love it, not just for the money.) YouTube has partnership deals, and there are even management companies that might be interested in you. Once you reach a certain number of subscribers, they see that people are interested in you and that you are someone to watch. Remember, be original and be yourself!

Let’s take a look at some of the success you can find on YouTube. For example, let’s look at the achievements of Bethany Mota, who has over 7.5 million viewers who are subscribed to her channel. You’ve most likely have seen her face somewhere. Like the others, she started by making videos from her bedroom. Now, she’s on the latest season of Dancing With The Stars, won a Teen Choice Award alongside another huge YouTuber known as Tyler Oakley this past summer, and has her own clothing line that can be found in Aeropostale stores all over the country. Insane, right? Many YouTubers attend red carpet events with celebrities, get their own book deals, come out with beauty make up lines, they even have tours which gives them a chance to meet their viewers in person. The possibilities are endless.

Here on the Queensborough Community College campus, we have so many students who are interested in so many different things. We have students who are extremely talented. Many students may want to put their talents and hobbies out to the world, show how good they are and maybe get paid! Here’s your sign telling you to take out the camera, and make the video that can quite possibly change your life someday. Make sure you go check up the QCC YouTube channel!! All you have to do is search ‘CUNY Queensborough.” It has a good number of viewers subscribed to the YouTube channel as well, and has videos of things that go on at the school, such as sports, ceremonies and assemblies that us students should take the time to check out. If you haven’t already, make sure you subscribe and become a new viewer as well to support the school!
The Season of Giving

By Domoniquè Nicole Chaplin

In the Northeast, the later months of the year, more specifically, November and December, mark times of remembrance, generosity and appreciation. On Veteran’s Day we pay homage to those who have served in the U.S. Armed Forces. Human Rights day gives a voice to all beings and their natural born rights, and both Thanksgiving and Christmas, though possessing separate meanings, both support a culture of quality time with loved ones and selflessness.

While one holiday is not socially considered more important than the other, of the two national holidays, Christmas and Thanksgiving, the latter signifies something necessary yet lacking in the day-to-day lives of Americans, as it has more significance than meets the eye, and should thus also be celebrated on more days than one.

Thanksgiving and its many variations are celebrated worldwide, as past world wars, social oppression and national famine, have aided many countries in their realization that nation-wide gratitude is one of the most paramount and requisite factors in maintaining a sound state.

On the molecular level, here in the United States, those who have the greatest influential potential on both today and tomorrow’s society are college students. Among the most technologically advanced scholars in American history, students earning a higher education hold the keys to the continuation of the culture of giving.

Alas, it has become almost too easy for students to forget the importance of regular acts of service. Even after high school, when school credit may not be given, community volunteering is necessary not only to build a giving character, but also to remain humble, as there are many who do not have the privilege to obtain a college degree. Queensborough Community College professor and Chief Librarian Jeanne Galvin also notes the importance of Acts of Service.

Professor Galvin was responsible for setting up a box in the QCC library to collect items for the Hour Children Food and Supply drive here on campus. Hour Children is a charity created to aid children with incarcerated mothers, placing focus on the most important hours in both the mother and child’s lives – the hour when the mother is arrested, the visiting hour and most importantly, the hour when she is released.

“The library is centrally located and about 4,000 people enter the building each day,” began Professor Galvin, “various student groups are working on the project [as are other] professors and people from Criminal Justice.”

Hour Children is just one example of the many volunteering opportunities for students. Soup kitchens, shelters for battered women and children and even nursing homes are also wonderful places to participate in community service.

This year, when you are served a delicious Thanksgiving meal, or when you find dozens of presents under your Christmas tree, try to remember how big a blessing the life you live is, and always keep in mind that the greatest gift of all, is to know that to give is to receive.

Over Crowding In the Library: Is It an Issue?

By Anderson Ordonez

It is midterm time and you have to study for a big test with little time on your hands, why not go to the library Queensborough Community College (QCC) as students often do? I can think of one reason students may be disinterested in entering. At times there is nowhere for you to sit except the floor. The QCC library is a great a place to be when you have some down time during breaks between classes and want to make some progress towards your many class assignments that are due.

Students constantly come to the library to study and get papers and other school work done. However, they are often met with the discouraging issue of not finding a place to sit or not getting access to a laptop at the reserve desk due to high demand. Many students agree that there is an overcrowding problem in the library because when they enter the library they must scavenge for a seat in order to study and if they want to use a computer they must wait their turn.

In an interview with the chief librarian Ms. Jeanne Galvin, she agreed that the library can be frequently over crowded; she stated, “gate counts have gone up by about 40% since 2008.” Although she suggests that this might be due to the fact that some students use the library space for other purposes other than studying such as sleeping and socializing. She went on to say “The library has two kinds of space.

Quiet space is on the main (second) floor; group study space is on the third floor.” She did mention that when students are disruptive in the library, the library staff could call the public safety officers to escort them out of the library. This can help tremendously seeing as many students do use the library just to socialize as previously stated. On another note she mentioned of a project underway to enclose the balcony on the third floor. As to when this will be completed there is no definite time frame but when it is, it will provide students with even more study space.

One student, a third semester Liberal Arts major, Ama Donkor, gave an alternative to solve this issue, “Why not make vacant classrooms which are not being used at certain times during the day a study room for students who would like time to study.” When I asked Professor Galvin if this were possible she said, “Unfortunately during the hours we are most crowded, most classrooms on campus are in use.” Although, she stated that she mentioned this alternative to administration and it would be taken into consideration she is not sure if this would be a possible alternative. She also mentioned certain times in which the overcrowding problem peeks, “The library starts to get crowded around 10a.m. It is less crowded between 3 and 5p.m. Traffic builds again from 5 to 6. After 7p.m. it is pretty quiet. Fridays are less crowded than other days.” This means that the library has a fluctuation of traffic and is not constant this is helpful to know for those of you who want to know when might be the best time to visit the library.

Some students voiced that this causes them to be late to class when waiting to print an assignment under a short time period. Myo Thu Ya Aung a first semester engineering student said, “It is annoying to print things out in the morning and the waiting has made me late to class in the past.” If that were not enough students also spoke about the lack of laptops in the reserve desk. Charles McKenzie a third semester business student said, “I dislike it how there are no laptops available at times because laptops must be fully charged in order for students to use them.” Many students feel that trying to study in the library is an issue because there is not enough space for them. I believe many students can agree that this is an issue on campus that needs some serious consideration.
A Healthier QCC

By Melissa Rodriguez

From pizza to sugary drinks – is Queensborough Community College the ideal place to find yourself a nice, healthy snack or meal?

Eating a nutritious meal before or during your time at school will help you focus and maintain a healthy weight. For some students at QCC, getting food from the cafeteria is something they do daily because of the long hours they spend studying in between classes, or long hours they spend in school/class regularly.

Although the QCC cafeteria has food choices that may seem healthy to many; some are actually the complete opposite of “healthy.” One major deceptive food choice that QCC has is the oh-so-appetizing mini Jamba Juice center in the cafeteria. While it is a fresh fruit smoothie made in front of your eyes, all of the smoothie choices are not necessarily healthy for you. Some smoothies that portray themselves as healthy contain tons of sugar and other bad ingredients such as palm oil (a trans fat) that are in no way, shape or form good for your body.

According to Food Network, “Some of the highest calorie smoothies include: Peanut Butter Moo’d (original size): 770 calories, 109 grams sugar and the Chocolate Moo’d (original size): 570 calories, 103 grams sugar.” If you do decide to purchase a smoothie from Jamba Juice inside QCC or outside, don’t be afraid to ask the employee helping you to see the nutrition label. While you’re looking at the label, look for the smoothie with the lowest calories, no trans fats and no added sugar. Everything in the smoothie should be healthy and natural.

Other foods you should stay away from in the cafeteria is the pizza, fries, bagels, bacon, chicken nuggets, and anything else fried, even fish sticks! All of these fried foods are high in fat and sodium and low in nutrients, and they may raise your bad cholesterol. A healthier option of these foods would be a pre-made salad which ranges from only $6.00-$10.00 depending on which salad you’d like. The cafeteria also has pre-made yogurt parfaits as well that cost almost the same price as the greasy pizza and fries. The desserts the cafeteria sells are a big no no! The pop tarts, danishes, and doughnuts, are high in calories and sugars which will eventually slow you down throughout the day and make you less energetic and ready for class.

Students who do not eat before they arrive to QCC usually aim towards the convenient vending machines that happen to be on almost every floor of every QCC building. Those vending machines have drinks like Pepsi, Brisk, ginger ale and only one truly healthy drink - water. As for the snacks in the vending machine, sugary candy and cookies are the main options available for students and staff. From my observation, the only healthy item the vending machine has is the mixed nuts, which is full of unsaturated fat, fiber and magnesium.

After asking 50 random QCC students if they believe “QCC would be a more enjoyable environment if our campus contained healthier snacks and drinks,” 45 out of the 50 responded with “yes.” One of the students who participated in the survey and wanted to remain anonymous actually said they “depend on QCC to provide them with food” because of the fact that they can’t eat in the morning in order to get to QCC on time for class. They also stated that they “feel sluggish after eating the greasy foods,” but feel obligated to buy it because there is nothing else that is appetizing to them.

If QCC brings more tasty and healthy options to the cafeteria and in the vending machines I do believe more people would be satisfied with what they eat while they’re at school. Until then; learn to chose the healthier meal. I know all the greasy goodness looks tempting but in the long run choosing foods that benefit your body rather harm it will do you justice.

Music Society On The Rise

By Edward Zephyrin

QCC’s own Music Society conducted their first concert this semester at the Pergola (right next to the Art Gallery) on 11/5. The club is home to the talented musicians of Queensborough, that are also current students. The club is made up of keyboardist, drummers, vocalists, and avid music lovers that gather to share their enthusiasm of their love for music.

The event took place on a cloudy day but the talent shined bright with featured students. The outside concert lasted a brief 30-40 minutes but showcased some of the emerging talent of Music Society.

One student performed a cover version of legendary singer Frank Sinatra’s “My Way”, while another student sung a song dedicated to their significant other, who was also present in the audience. Another student showed off his rap skills as he swayed the crowd with relatable conscious lyrics.

This offering was a prelude to their bigger production coming next month at the Student Union. If you are looking to join the Music Society, the club hours are 12-2pm on Wednesdays in the Humanities basement, room 27. The only conditions to join are that you must be a lover of music. On any given Wednesday afternoon, the Music Society gives vocal and guitar seminars to enrich attendees about the basics to playing the instrument.

Although the students of the Music Society are young musicians they are on the rise. We’ll see in December if they are looking to have a lasting impact on the QCC community with consistent concerts and Showings.
Put The Phone Away and Nobody Gets Hurt: QCC Students’ Pet Peeves of Driving

By Nicolas Sully

Doesn’t it grind your gears when you are trying to cross 58th Avenue and you have to leap back because a car going 70 mph zoomed right past you? Well, Queensborough Community College students, this is what you call bad driving.

New York is one of the best places to learn how to drive because New York can prepare you for driving anywhere in the country when it comes to road trips. “If you can drive in New York, you can drive anywhere,” says one Queensborough student, Negina.

However, New York is also one of the most nerve-wracking states to drive in because it is the state with the most impatient drivers. What makes drivers so impatient is feeling as though there isn’t enough time to get where they have to go. Time is of the essence but we, as people with the privilege of driving (not a right), should be more cautious when we are operating a deadly weapon.

“[New York drivers] speed, they don’t signal, they brake to hard, [and have] a lot of road rage,” said Eric, another QCC student who drives daily.

And these are not the only faults of New York drivers. According to an informal poll, here are the top-five driving pet peeves of QCC students:

1. Texting and Driving

Despite the fact that there are so many advertisements and campaigns depicting what texting and driving can do - young drivers remain ignorant of the fact that texting and driving is very harmful. Texting while driving is a large distraction and can possibly lead to death.

“I once got into an accident where the other driver was texting while pulling out of a parking spot,” Negina explained. “I did it all the time; it’s easy,” admitted Gabriela, another QCC student. Though it is a big temptation, texting and driving must stop. On textinganddrivingsafety.com, it states that a person who texts and drives is 23 times more likely to get into a car accident than a person who is not driving distracted.

If you are caught texting while driving you will be fined, you’re at a higher risk towards license suspension, plus you get points on your license. Unless you like to pay a lot of money to your insurance, you should avoid accumulating points on your license.

Your first offense of texting and driving can get you fined between $50 and $200. The more you do it and get caught, the higher the fine. Every time you’re found guilty of texting and driving, you get five points on your license. The more points you get on your license the closer it brings you to a license revocation.

Then you’re stuck waiting for the Q27 or the Q30 bus where you can text all you want. Which would be a better option for you if you’re addicted to your cell phone.

2. Unnecessary Speeders

Just as texting while driving is a big temptation, so is speeding. Many New York drivers are always in a big rush — you can see it when a driver is doing 80 in a 55 zone.

We, as New Yorkers, always have places to go, but there is something called giving yourself more time. Leave a little earlier so that you don’t have to exceed the speed limit.

“Sometimes, people don’t even have anywhere to go,” said Elesha, a QCC alumnus. “They just want to be adrenaline junkies, but little do they know they’re putting other, safer drivers at risk.”

There have been times where you’ll see a driver exceed the speed limit and next thing you know they’re pulling into a McDonald’s drive thru.

Mayor De Blasio is lowering the speed limit from 30 mph to 25 mph because of all the pedestrian victims who have been struck by cars. According to nyc.gov, “Reducing vehicle speed from 30 to 25 mph doubles the likelihood of a pedestrian surviving a crash.”

We get it, you want to show off but people really don’t care that your Infiniti coupe can reach 100, especially if your going that fast where pedestrians are standing and about to cross the street (For example: across the street from the Q30 bus stop). It’s unsafe — and plus, driving in bad weather causes vision impairment.

And these are not the only faults of New York drivers. According to an informal poll, here are the top-five driving pet peeves of QCC students:

3. People that change lanes without signaling

Hooray for guessing games. Your signal was left on, so I don’t know whether or not you’re going to change your lane now or later. Then there are the people who just change their lanes without signaling.

But as drivers we need to educate ourselves and know that changing lanes without signaling is a moving violation and can get you fined if a police officer witnesses you do it. Even when you’re on the highway there are signs that give you a notice stating that signaling when changing lanes is a law.

“They are times when I want to fill a gap in between me and the car in front of me, then the car in the next lane just comes over in front of me,” said one QCC student. “It catches you off guard and it causes you to brake hard, especially when you’re on a highway.”

If you drive on the Belt Pkwy, there are digital signs that read “NY’s Law: Signal before changing lanes.” For all your hasty drivers out there, the car in front of you is driving slow but if you want to get out from behind that car, just signal and safely change your lane to the left lane because it is illegal to pass a vehicle on the right side.

4. Green is the New Red

Sometimes it seems as though nobody wants to move once the light turns green. I remember back in the day before I started driving, people actually moved once the light turned green, but now it seems as though green means stop and red means go.

There are intersections where you should count to three after the light turns green in order to avoid being hit by red light runners. But then you have the people who honk at you once the light turns green. Those are the impatient drivers you shouldn’t even worry about. Your safety is more important than wherever that person has to go.

There have been times when you’re stuck in traffic while the light is green and everybody wants to force themselves up once it turns yellow-to-red. If people were in such a rush then wouldn’t it be better to put your phones away at the red light and stay focused more so once it turns green, you can go?

5. People that drive recklessly in crappy weather

It is a fact that the roads are much slippery right after the rain and snow begins to sprinkle on the ground. However, New York drivers still decide to go over the speed limit in rain and even sometimes in the snow. Another thing people do while driving in bad weather is not clean off their cars properly. Have you ever driven behind somebody and all the snow on top of their car just flew at you and hit your windshield? This is why people need to clean off their cars when it snows because it can cause very bad accidents and plus, driving in bad weather causes vision impairment.

But nothing impairs your driving more than when a big glob of snow from someone’s roof is smacking your windshield as you drive.

When we first start driving, we feel like the poster child for safe driving. But it wasn’t until I got two moving violations within a month that I got a reality check and changed the way I drove. One moving violation was for speeding to work because I was late and being punctual is very important to me. But it wasn’t until my mother scolded me and said to me, “Do you want somebody calling your boss and saying, ‘Nicolas is in the morgue because he was driving 80 mph trying to get to work on time,’” or would you rather get to work late, but safely?” that I changed my ways.

So think about it: Is driving while texting worth five points towards getting your license suspended? Is going 50 mph in a school zone really worth facing murder charges because you can’t control your urge to speed? Let’s utilize what we learned in our five hour classes and put those lessons to use to make New York a safer place to drive.

Do you like to write?

Do you want to share your writing with others?

Then write for the Communiqué.

The QCC Communiqué is looking for a few good writers for its upcoming Fall issues. We are especially interested in micro-reviews (200-300 words) of new movies; editorials related to QCC, higher education, NYC, and the world; feature articles about college life; and book, theatre, and music reviews for our arts section.

Writing for the Communiqué is a great opportunity to share your ideas with other QCC students and contribute to the campus community. It’s also an excellent way to beef up your resume and your college applications.

Interested students should contact Communiqué Faculty Adviser, Elizabeth Toohey, at EToohey@qcc.cuny.edu

The Communiqué

It’s Your Paper!
City

Where Should You Get Coffee?

By Kelly Rothwell

As a Starbucks barista, coffee is one of my specialties. Starbucks, like many other mainstream coffee corporations are available for everybody’s convenience. With their many locations, grabbing a morning cup of coffee becomes an accessible routine in many lives. A study completed by E-Imports, the leading provider of coffee business solutions in the specialty coffee industry, found that 50% of Americans drink coffee. They also discovered coffee sales are increasing every year by 20%, which is pooled into the 18 billion dollar U.S coffee market. As a coffee drinker myself, it is astonishing how much coffee Americans are able to consume every year. Starbucks, Dunkin Donuts, 7 Eleven, and other favorable coffee shops are wonderful for everyday commuting. What about days with more leisure? Queens is home to plenty of hidden authentic coffee shops.

Sixty Beans Coffee and Tea

Located at 36-02 Ditmars Blvd Astoria, NY 11105, this coffee shop has beautiful architecture inside and out. The moment you walk in, the aroma is pigmented with coffee. The atmosphere is peaceful with friendly baristas waiting to craft your drink. The menu offers a variety of choices, just as Starbucks does. This bistro offers a basic drip coffee, which unlike our daily coffee shops; brew beans that are usually considered reserve coffees. Instead of a basic house blend, they had Monte Carlos, an Ecuadorian coffee. The taste was magnificent and very earthy. Aside from their coffee on tap, they offer six different coffee roasts made to order in a process called pour over. Basically, you grind the beans per cup and use a filter to brew each individual cup. The options offered for individual cups were Benediction, Piramide, Borboya, Guatemala, Colombia, and Ethiopia. Starbucks only allows the customer three choices in store: blonde, medium, and dark. The cafe grants the customer an advantage when choosing a cup of coffee. The baristas here take pride in their espresso machines and can craft any specialty drink, just as Starbucks does. Along with absorbing drink choices, Sixty Beans offers an assortment of pastries to pair with your crafted beverage. The most interesting aspect of their shop was their beer and wine menu. I have never been to a coffee shop that also offered beer and wine! They also had a wide variety of teas, if you are a tea person. Sixty Beans undeniably impressed me with their coffee house.

Brooklyn Bagel & Coffee Company

Located at 35-05 Broadway Astoria, NY 11105, this cafe also had a great exterior. I noticed they were more focused on bagels than coffee. They had over 20 choices of cream cheese and even allowed customers to sample! I ordered a sesame seed bagel with vegetable cream cheese. The bagel was huge! Their bagel was definitely one of the best I have eaten. Their coffee choices weren’t as diverse as Sixty Beans, but they offered a hazelnut brew that was delicious. Brooklyn Bagel also offered freshly squeezed orange juice, which I have never seen before. I sampled some and it was refreshing. I highly recommend trying a bagel and coffee here!

Sixty Beans and Brooklyn Bagel & Company are absolutely worth the visit. Sixty Beans exceeds coffee knowledge more than Dunkin Donuts and 7 Eleven. Brooklyn Bagel & Coffee Company offers appetizing bagels with colorful choice. As a Starbucks barista, I am going to visit more local coffee shops and expand my horizons.

International

Drones & War

By Krystal R. Singh

Death and destruction are two of the many words that come to mind when you hear the word “Drone” in relation to war. A drone is an aircraft without a human pilot on board. It is also known as an unpiloted aerial vehicle (UAV) or remotely piloted aircraft (RPA). “Drones have gotten a pretty bad reputation. The word conjures up images of war, surveillance and collateral damage” says Katie Couric in a recent article on a new type of life-saving drone.

The United States has made hundreds of target attacks in areas of Pakistan, Iraq, Afghanistan and Somalia under then President George W. Bush and now has been taken over and increased by president Barack Obama. Drones have become Obama’s number one tool for taking out militants in Iraq and Afghanistan coupled with airstrikes. According to a Pro-Publica article, drones have conducted 95% of targeted killings since 9/11. According to another article, administration officials have often in the past directed drone strikes as going after “High-level al Qaeda leaders” that were planning attacks against the United States. The US strikes can go after unidentified militants also known as “Signature Strikes”, which started under George W. Bush and then expanded by President Obama. In 2009, drones stirred up controversy with the insurgents back on US drones.

The Wall Street Journal writes in an article that militants in Iraq were able to use $26 off-the-shelf software to intercept the live video feeds from US drones streaming information with what they need to monitor US military operations. ISIS, is another group that seems to be using sophisticated surveillance drones, this means that terrorist groups are now operating drones. On July 14th, 2014, a Hamas operated drone flew into Israeli airspace above Ashdo, it is believed to be the first time a militant group sent a drone into Israeli territory. There is also the concern of the number of innocent civilians that are killed and the motivation from that killing to become a terrorist. The killing of innocent children, mothers, fathers and other family and friends only builds up hate towards Americans. Domino effect!

Now the question is, are drones really needed or helpful in our military operations? Most Americans are in favor of drones. For one they allow our military personnel to safely monitor militants, and areas where sending US troops are risky. The safety of the military would be important and for most the number one reason to keep drones in operation.

Another positive is that drone strikes are actually cheaper than having a ground or aerial combat. Mathew M. Aid a leading intelligence historian, expert on NSA and regular commentator on intelligence matters for the New York Times, reports that the Pentagon has revealed that the American military services are currently flying 6,316 unmanned drones in the U.S and overseas as well. The drones are flown remotely from the United States through a network of secret bases and other locations around the world. The bottom line is that from the United States’ point of view, drones are low risk and low cost. There are no risk of a hostage situation or death of pilots. These drones give CIA and military operations more leeway and more war strategies.

Learn More

Information Sessions: Wednesdays, Nov 19, Dec 3 and 10 9 a.m. - 6 p.m.
http://sps.nyu.edu/mcgsheev-events2f
visit: sps.nyu.edu/mcgshee2f
call: 212-998-7100
request.info: apply:
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Jordan Houghton, Alumna, B.S. in Leadership and Management Studies

Jordan Houghton is a multitalented actress, singer, and dancer, pursuing her dream of becoming a performing artist in NYC—the cultural capital of the world. Grounded in practicality, however, she decided to earn a B.S. in Leadership and Management at the NYU School of Professional Studies Paul McGuire Undergraduate Division to provide a sense of security and the business acumen required should she choose to opt for a management role in the arts. Transferring from the theater department of a prominent performing arts conservatory, Jordan was able to use the credits she earned to pursue her four-year degree. She completed many courses online, providing the flexibility for her to continue auditioning and develop her talents. Through it all, her McGuire academic advisors partnered with her, giving her the guidance and the support she needed to succeed in the spotlight and behind the scenes.

Bachelor of Arts

Applied General Studies

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Bachelor of Science

Digital Communications and Media

Information Systems Management

Knowledge Through Practice

NYU SCHOOL OF PROFESSIONAL STUDIES
Undocumented Lifestyle

By Jonathan Jimenez

The media often shows us how many undocumented immigrants are in the United States and how they arrive here. However, do we actually know what they go through to get to the United States? And do we at all take into consideration their struggle to survive here?

There are millions of immigrants in the U.S. and many have fears of deportation. In states like Arizona, where the local police are ordered to ask for documentation according to law, we can gather that many of them indeed have a real life struggle to live in the United States. They have no connection to government aid or health insurance, and also have a hard time getting a college education due to lack of income. This lifestyle is hard to live, but many manage through it and become leaders in an effort to try and change the lives of many immigrants like themselves.

Since 2001 we have seen a great increase of the leaders of the immigration movement because of their fight with Dream Act of 2001. Now it’s 2014 and many things have changed. Battles were fought, and victories were won in the undocumented community. We can say this with many states being immigrant friendly. Many have no knowledge of who these leaders are and how they earn victories and changes for their community.

Many are from organizations that work with social justice issues and from there they became the leaders that create change. An example is Make the Road New York, which has many youth leaders who take on the forefront to fight for the undocumented community. One of these leaders who started there is Cristina Jimenez who is now the Managing Director of United We Dream, a national non-profit organization that is youth led. This organization has had a big impact on changes with politics that involve immigration. They have been fighting local bills in different states such as California and Texas, and in 2010 with SB1070 bill (a bill making it a misdemeanor for undocumented youth under the age of 14 to be in public without proper paperwork) in Arizona. Furthermore they were a key impact with the introduction of DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) that was announced by president Obama on June 15 2012.

However, this doesn’t stop here. They continue to fight and have many campaigns such as 11 Million Dreams. This year they are preparing to make a difference for the community and try to get their families away deportation. United We Dream (UWD) has begun to strategize since Obama failed to announce plans for the undocumented community. The organization has gathered its 55 affiliates in each region and began meetings to decide what to do. The last meeting was the Mid Atlantic region that was made up by the states of Connecticut, Maryland, Delaware, New York, Massachusetts, Washington, DC and Virginia and their leaders of the states began to become better leaders. In the meetings they demonstrate leadership, organizing, networking, but most of all the art of story telling. Jimenez shares at all the time and because of it, says she is the person she is today because she knows that it makes her strong.

“Growing up undocumented,” she said, “I felt alone, ashamed, afraid and disempowered. I was afraid of being deported or losing my parents to deportation. This experience motivated me to join other youth who share my experience and create UWD a national organization that empowers immigrant youth and advocates for the rights and dignity of immigrant families.”

Other members of the UWD have similar stories like Julieta Garibay who is the Deputy Advocacy Director who has one of the impacting story and who shared some of it. “I came to the U.S. at the age of 12 with my mom and sister as undocumented immigrants. I had always known we were undocumented but had never realized the magnitude of it. I still remember the day when my mother came home after work, I was in my senior year of high school, and she looked scared and defeated. The courageous woman who had raised me, was scared because her employer had asked her for proof of her work permit, which we all lacked. She never returned to that job and we even moved to a new apartment. That’s when I realized that it was more than a label; it meant that we needed to flee every time someone asked us for papers. When I started getting involved in the movement, I felt the hope but most importantly saw the power of needed to flee every time someone asked us for papers. When I started getting involved in the movement, I felt the hope but most importantly saw the power of the collective front and the power of our truth.”

Two of these leaders had a struggling undocumented lifestyle that led them to become the leaders they are today. Many others go down this path and they help to create a change. Like others who are too scared to speak up these courageous leaders choose to put everything on the line and speak up. They are now the new leaders that will bring upon a great change in this unjust immigration system.

On another note these courageous leaders have built up the momentum and started their actions with the White House rally, the heckling with Hillary Clinton in Maryland, and the most recent heckling of Obama in Bridgeport Connecticut. They stood their ground and spoke up to what they believed in.

Backstage Access to ELECTRA and Queensborough’s Theatre Department

By Jay Lucero

It was a Saturday afternoon when I stopped by the Z building, also known as the Shadowbox theatre, to interview the cast of Queensborough’s new production, “Electra” by Sophocles, directed by Georgia McGill. Before I was allowed into the theatre I could hear the cast running through lines and receiving notes from their director. There is a cast of thirteen people in this production but one thing they’re all trying to do is portray the story as honestly as possible. Electra is a play that touches upon different themes. It is about family, revenge, mourning, justice and justification. The main character Electra is trying to avenge the assassination of her father. She goes through an emotional journey to get what she wants.

Marie Marrero who plays Clytemnesthes (Electra’s sister) describes the play being about “a dysfunctional family in an even more dysfunctional world.”

The entire cast agreed that this play is still relevant today although it was written around 409 B.C. For those of you that are intimidated by Greek drama, be not afraid! Professor McGill used a modern translation of the play and an entire musical score was written for Queensborough’s production. Who wrote the score?

Amanda Morris, who plays Electra, wants the audience to really think about the way this play relates to them. “I want everyone to go back home and hug his or her families. They should appreciate what they have because it’s sacred.” Putting on a production is not easy work. The cast of Electra has rehearsals for about 6 hours or more everyday, night after night, so don’t miss out! Queensborough’s next production is “Dog Sees God” written by Bert V. Royal. Lisa Yonker will direct it. Keep your eyes on the productions coming up and the opportunities the department offers. You can sign up for the theatre mailing list by sending an email to: studenttheatre@qcc.cuny.edu. Who knows, maybe you’ll be the next student performing on stage!
With so much evidence of foul play, he does not call the police immediately. Thus arrives the audience’s suspicion of Nick. Nick is a professor, who is himself quite wity. He uses the right words and captures Amy’s heart at their first meeting. An all American guy, he is quite handsome and knows a thing or two about flirting. They seem the perfect couple; both are into their treasure hunt games, where Amy leaves clues in envelopes every now and then testing her husband on how well he knows her. Both are sexual beings and engage with each other anywhere and everywhere—literally.

What can break them apart? Perhaps not everything is right on the table as they thought it was. You are introduced to Amy’s diary, which was found in a secluded area—a diary that might be the key source to her disappearance.

For those who haven’t seen the film, be warned: there are spoilers to follow. We at first feel sorry for Amy who is supposedly missing, and anger towards Nick, when we learn he had been unfaithful with a younger student of his.

But the movie then takes a misogynist turn

You find yourself plunged into another plot, within the middle of the film when it becomes clear that Miss Amy Dunne is not who she claimed to be. She is indeed alive and is trying to make Nick pay for his affair, by revenge.

Does this play into typical stereotypes that every man is a pig no matter how beautiful his wife may be? And every woman scorned is turned into a manipulative, crazy woman? Amy becomes the quintessential femme fatale. The fact that she lies and uses sex to control men makes you think that every woman indeed might be as dangerous.

The stereotypes (or archetypes?) of film noir here may well push some viewers out. But moviegoers without these misgivings will start to feel remorse and pain for Nick, who has to deal with Amy. She had framed him for her own murder. If you think I’m giving the ending away, then you’re wrong. The rest you must see to believe.

The movie has an amazing soundtrack, which is played throughout the film. The performances by celebrated actors such as Neal Patrick Harris, Tyler Perry, and Ben Affleck, worked brilliantly together. Be warned that the film is very graphic, given the amount of explicit sex and gory scenes of blood.

I would give this film 4 out of 5 stars. Although the ending felt a bit weaker, the film did do well with engaging me throughout the whole two hours of suspense.
Matilda

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The book by Dennis Kelly is darker than the original novel and movie. Yet there were changes from the story that made it stage worthy.

The set, done by Rob Howell, looks like a giant Scrabble board, making it look kid friendly but like magic, appearances can be deceiving. Tricky sets like those in the show make a person’s experience in the theatre more magical. An example is shown at the close of the first act where the headmistress, Miss Trunchbull forces a child named Bruce Bogdrotter (played by Mitchell Sink) to eat an entire chocolate cake and it disappears within that four minute song.

The music composed by Australian singer Tim Minchin is up there with scores that range in different genres of music from small cute solos such as “Naughty,” to big musical numbers. With numbers such as the anthem “Revolting Children” and the sweet sounding “When I Grow Up,” you can’t help but clap or shed a tear. Other songs were good (not great but good – meaningful lyrics, but not all the tunes were catchy or poignant). Matthew Warchus’ direction allowed the actors to take the theatre space and interact with the audience. Warchus has the guts to have the action exceed from the stage to the orchestra, the boxes, to even the ceiling (not giving any spoilers here). It’s as if they make the theatre their own personal playground. Peter Darling’s choreography does a good job of handling dances for both the children and adults. The cast spoke in heavy British accents, which may be hard for American audiences in just a few parts.

The cast makes the characters come to life. As the title character, Eliza Holland Madore is adorable, yet she manages to carry the show on her itty bitty back. She is given a job of handling dances for both the children and adults. The cast spoke in heavy British accents, which may be hard for American audiences in just a few parts.

What Defines You?

By Angela Medel

Style is a form of expression. We all have our own way of putting clothes together but that’s the beauty of fashion. You can take a dress or a shirt that hundreds of people already have and make it into something that’s your own. But have you ever wondered why and how people dress the way they do?

The Communique took this question to a few fashion conscious individuals outside of QCC, such as Kelly Valladares, fashion marketing student, Justina Soto, singer/songwriter, Priscilla Ivette, full time fashion blogger for the blog Modeamen, to get their perspective on fashion and style.

Angela Medel: Who or what inspires your style?

Kelly Valladares: Hayley Williams (lead singer of Paramore) was one of the first people that inspired me because I wanted to dress how she dressed but I also get inspired from the bands I listen to.

Justina Soto: I was never really into fashion but when you’re living in New York you kind of have to be, in a sense. Since I’m always walking around the city, I am very much inspired by what people on the street are wearing and it makes me want to experiment with my wardrobe.

Priscilla Ivette: Music always plays a huge part in my wardrobe; however, at the moment I have been getting a lot of inspiration from photos off of Tumblr. I will search up a certain print, pattern or color and come across photos of people wearing outfits that really inspire me.

AM: How did you find your personal style?

KV: I found my personal style through music and many of the bands I started listening to.

JS: I found it through trial and error. Haha!

PI: I’ve always loved the bohemian style so that eventually made its way to how I dress now.

AM: Have you gone through any awkward style phases?

KV: Not really, I’ve always worn things that I felt comfortable in.

JS: Yes, in junior high I dyed my hair all the time and dressed horribly. But to be honest, every human on this earth has gone through an awkward phase at some point in their life.

PI: Yes, I definitely went through a “scene girl” [gothic meets alternative] phase. Haha!

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**American Pop Culture: A Fiendish Affair With Dracula**

By Margaret Chin Quee

“How do I love thee? Let me Count the ways,” in this case, how many more cinematic versions of Count Dracula can the American audience embrace? This year’s film release, *Dracula Untold*, is a middle ages tale of how Count Dracula becomes a vampire. Vlad the Impaler’s Transylvanian territory, like the rest of Europe, faces the threat of a Turkish invasion. Upon realizing his armed forces are inadequate and inferior, he seeks out the Master Vampire’s service of endorsing him with supernatural powers to defend his people, territory, and protect his son, and to vanquish his Turkish enemies. He is granted this on the condition that he does not succumb to the urge of drinking human blood for three days. Unfortunately, Prince Vlad loses his humanity to save his son and the rest is filled with spectacular, Hollywood, special effects where he morphs into millions of bats and controls climate changes to kill and totally defeat the besieging Turkish army and his turned, mutinous vampire fighters. He is more a supernatural hero, crossed over to the dark side, with courageous intentions than a monster in this rendition, which the silver screen has exploited and creatively delivered here.

Many of the popular gothic works written from the early 19th to the 20th century, such as Mary Shelly’s *Frankenstein*, *The Picture of Dorian Gray* by Oscar Wilde, and Robert Louis Stevenson’s *Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, have been adapted for films over the years. However, none has been as famous or has experienced such extensive exposure in the entertainment industry along with the psychological interest and intrigue as Count Dracula. This villainous, blood-sucking character is a literary creation by Irish author Bram Stoker in 1897 of the Victorian era. So, why then is this century’s old, cultural obsession with a dark knight of Gothic, literary imaginings, still today staking claim to and possessing the heart of American pop culture?

Simply, Count Dracula is a Transylvanian aristocrat or prince who is cursed to live out the rest of his days as an undead person surviving on human blood. However, Hollywood and the entertainment industry’s love affair with Count Dracula has produced over 200 film adaptations to hundreds of books and comic books, scores of plays, several television series and numbers of video games to cement his phenomenal cultic appeal here in America. Even the Library of Congress has labeled the first (1922) Count Dracula movie “culturally significant” and has added it to the National Film Registry.

His evolutionary, Hollywood appeal, of blood-thirsty vampire to afflicted dark hero, has generated great magnetic interest throughout the years. The first 1922 silent film version, “Nosferatu: A Symphony of Horror” to the successful ones of the 1950s, ’60s and ’70s (Horror of Dracula, Blood of Dracula and Dracula) deliver on the fear and gore factor, with throat-slashing, blood-sucking and the ruthless ravishing of victims, to satiate horror fans’ appetite of the macabre. In the 1992’s box office hit of Coppola’s film version, * Bram Stoker’s Dracula*, the central theme of enduring, romantic love and of love lost uplifted Dracula’s image from blood lust night stalker to tragic hero. There is no diminishing effect of horror thrill in this adaptation, nor restraining of his hideous ability to frighten as well as to captivate us with his stylish, princely attire and manners. In fact, it spawned more modern day versions, such as *Wes Craven Presents Dracula 2000*, where he is sexier and more flamboyant in wooing and controlling women and killing with monstrous ferocity. Whether super fiend with ghoulish, aristocratic charm, or tortured romantic hero, or super villain turned super hero, we are never disappointed spending our money every time we pay him cinematic homage.

Of block-busting entertainment value, these numerous film adaptations are laden to the brim. However, there is a recurring psycho-social life issue that always overshadows Dracula, the matter of life after death. This and the fact that he symbolically represents the fear of death, causes the subsequent, obsessive intrigue he has over us throughout the years. According to “The Evolution of the Vampire in Fiction and Popular Culture” paper written by Anne Shepherd, we have a “hard time imagining our existence after death, and it may be easier to imagine a life that goes on.” Therefore, we are fascinated and drawn to vampires because they were once humans. As Shepherd puts it, with “their particular sort of immortality, the undead (vampire) betray their origins and remains recognizable, disturbingly human.” In vampirism, we recognize the benefits and negatives of being human, therefore vampires are relatable. So, as this dark prince’s mystique continues to lure and beckon us to question more of life’s unanswerable mysteries, we are spellbound and fall prey, fantasy wise, to be captivated by the super-human quality and immortality of a vampire.

Is there life after Dracula? Yes! But, do we want to live without him? Probably, not! He continues to mesmerize our way into our collective hearts with his ultra-smooth manners, lethal romantic prowess, brooding, intellectual mystique and supernatural powers and fighting skills with each new film, book, play and game that he is resurrected in. Conflicted dark hero or unique dark villain? You decide. But, as an American pop-culture icon, he is here to stay – transcending time and place, and will probably be for many years to come.
How to Thwart Government Surveillance

By Mayur Y. Pathak

Most of us will agree that technology is a monumental part of many lives around the world. From speaking to loved ones thousands of miles away, to programming alerts to remind us to do our laundry, much of humanity has become dependent on technology. It is quite common for these basic, everyday tasks to be performed on a device no larger or complex than a smart phone. Nevertheless, desktop computers and laptops continue to be as valuable and widely-used, if not more so, than their handheld counterparts. As the capabilities of personal computers continue to increase, a growing number of Americans have become more and more concerned regarding the safety and privacy of the data on their devices.

Computers are often used to make tuition payments, purchases on various different websites and many even conduct sensitive bank transactions through their desktop PC’s and laptops. Exercising safe browsing habits, along with general computer maintenance, are excellent preliminary steps one may take to safeguard themselves on the internet.

But what if a computer containing sensitive data is stolen or unlawfully confiscated? What can be done beforehand to protect said data in such unfortunate scenarios?

The answer is simple – encrypt it.

Cryptography is the art of safeguarding information by scrambling it into an unreadable format. It is a method that has been around for thousands of years. According to Gary C. Kessler, Ph.D., President of the computer and network security firm Gary Kessler Associates, “the first documented use of cryptography in writing dates back to circa 1900 B.C. when an Egyptian scribe used non-standard hieroglyphs in an inscription.” The concept of securing information so as to conceal it from all but the intended recipient(s) is nothing new. Even so, the astounding level of security offered by the Advanced Encryption Standard (AES) is worth taking a closer look at.

While there are various cryptographic ciphers, all with their own unique names, “Rijndael” is the algorithm that has been selected by the U.S. National Institute of Standards and Technology as the candidate for the Advanced Encryption Standard (AES). When implemented correctly, a hard drive encrypted with AES would be practically impossible to access without authentication.

According to an EE Times article by Mohit Arora, a Senior Systems Engineer & Security Architect, “a 256-bit AES key has 1.1 x 1027 possible combinations, and it would take approximately 3.3 x 1056 years to crack AES with a 256 bit key.”

To put that into perspective, the amount of time a hacker or thief would require to compromise data on this particular drive, using current technology, would be many orders of magnitude greater than the age of the known universe.

Fortunately, there are several programs available free of charge to those who wish to better protect the data on their computers in the event of an unfortunate incident such as theft. BitLocker Drive Encryption, a full disk encryption feature included with the Ultimate and Enterprise editions of Microsoft’s Windows Vista and Windows 7, is one option; however Microsoft is not a company that deserves to be trusted, considering the widespread allegations of the existence of an NSA backdoor discovered in Windows NT 4 Service Pack 5 (which had been released unstripped of its symbolic debugging data) in August 1999 by Andrew D. Fernandes of Cryptonym Corporation.

I personally recommend TrueCrypt version 7.1a; though discontinued from active development, it remains a top choice among security-enthusiasts due to it’s reliability, as well as some unique features, such as the ability to create a hidden operating system on a PC—essentially an OS within an OS—where you can keep your most secret files.

Darryl Williams, College Laboratory Technician at Queensborough Community College, recommends Safeguard encryption software, as it is also a reputable and reliable source.

The impressive degree of protection offered by encryption greatly appeals to those who take privacy seriously; however not everyone is thrilled about said powerful technology. In a saber-rattling speech last month at the Brookings Institution in Washington D.C., FBI director James Comey had plenty to say on this front.

“Their chargeds with protecting our people aren’t always able to access the evidence we need to prosecute crime and prevent terrorism even with lawful authority,” he remarked.

“Encryption isn’t just a technical feature; it’s a marketing pitch… it’s the equivalent of a closet that can’t be opened. A safe that can’t be cracked. And my question is, at what cost?”

What Mr. Comey fails to understand is the growing mistrust the American public has developed towards the government in the wake of Edward Snowden’s disclosures. Additionally, it is people like Comey who are the reason citizens have begun to take privacy into their own hands. As an average American citizen, I obviously do not have any solid knowledge regarding the capabilities of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Central Intelligence Agency, and the National Security Agency. However, I am positive that any protective measures I implement are, in all likelihood, child’s play compared to the technological prowess of the aforementioned agencies.

Even so, as long as American people feel as if their privacy is being unfairly taken away, encryption and similar technologies will continue to flourish among the populace.

Living Social

By Suleimy Santos

Social Media has become part of our lives. It’s like having a family member; you can’t live with it and can’t live without it. In Media Bistro Allison Stadd commented, “80% of people that are 18-44 years of age”, the first thing they do when they wake up is check their phone instead of yawning, going to the bathroom or brushing their teeth.

Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, and Vine are all over our lives. The dependencies we have on these sites are unbelievable. We depend on social media sites because it’s what makes us feel good about ourselves. We give a lot of value to the likes and when not satisfied, we have on these sites are unbelievable. We depend on social media sites because it’s what makes us feel good about ourselves. We give a lot of value to the likes and if not satisfied, we can’t control our kids anymore because once their kids start acting crazy they are quick to yell.

The existence of these social media platforms began once technology started invading our lives. Computers, phones and other technologies have surrounded us for decades. It’s the easiest way to carry out the easiest task on a daily bases. Instead of reading a book or newspaper, we read on our tablets. Instead of solving a math problem we are quick to pull out our phones to use the calculator. We either choose the easy way.

Just think to yourselves, have you ever waited for the bus, the train or just stood in a public place and stopped doing whatever it was you were doing just to watch everyone around you? The majority of people are usually using their phones, either on a social network or texting.

When asked whether or not they could truly survive a full day without their phones, CUNY students Nahomy Moran who attends City Tech and Hector Feliz who attends John Jay College, both responded “Not a chance!” When asked why not both stated, “My phone is a must have. It keeps me updated on the news that concerns me and I get to communicate with friends. It also keeps me updated on Instagram, Facebook and Twitter”. It was a little bizarre when Nahomy stated, “being without my phone is like not having any underwear on. I feel naked”. CUNY student Jonathan Jimenez, who attends Queens Borough Community College said otherwise. He says, “I can go 24 hours without my phone. Im very active during the day and once I arrive to my house all I want to do is sleep. Can this truly be how many others feel? I can go a day without my phone but I will be thinking about it all day. How many texts did I receive, how many likes did I get on my last picture and who has been there for you? The majority of people are usually using their phones, either on a social network or texting. We can’t control our kids anymore because once their kids start acting crazy they are quick to yell.

What would our lives be without any technology? In 2400BC the first form of technology ever invented was the calculator, not the phone or the television. Before that there was nothing. If people in that era survived without technology, then why can’t we? Yes technology has come a long way for us but was it worth it? People have become more self-conscious about themselves, dependent, insecure and lazy. The majority of parents can’t control their kids anymore because once their kids start acting crazy they are quick to pull out the iPad with out even monitoring their kids just to shut them up.

Technology isn’t as bad as it seems. But just thinking that we wouldn’t be able to survive without it because we use it so much and if we were to stop using it we, wouldn’t be able to function because we rely on it so much.
Four E-book Apps for Book Lovers

By Gabriela Tejada

In an era in which hardcover books are considered prehistoric, E-readers and E-book apps are taking over. These E-readers and E-book apps allow people to store thousands of books without having to worry about being called a hoarder. But now with so many E-book apps, it’s hard to know which is the right app for you. With the number of E-book apps doubling over the last few years it can feel like we are being smothered.

The “E” in E-books stands for electronic, which means that the book is electronically formatted. E-readers are incredibly useful because, since these books and textbooks are electronically formatted, we can carry thousands of books with us, while saving space and money. These E-book apps store hundreds to thousands of free books with helpful tools like built-in dictionary and sidebars where you can write notes to yourself while reading. They open up a whole new world that would not be accessible to those who just read paperbacks.

Here is a list of the top four mobile apps for bookworms and writers.

Wattpad - Free Books & Stories
By: WP Technology, Inc

Wattpad is a community that gives undiscovered writers the opportunity to showcase their work to a large audience. Once you have an account, you’re open to the entire community. People can follow you, and you in return can follow your favorite authors through the app’s news feed, which functions similar to Facebook. Wattpad is advertised as “The world’s most widely used E-Reading app to discover unlimited free stories in every genre of the rainbow,” which is entirely correct.

The app allows people who enjoy reading to find an unpublished book on anything from One Direction fan-fiction or fantasy to LGBT books. In a world where paperback books are becoming extinct, as shown in the survey conducted by Business Insider, “74.1 percent of iPad one owners said that they used their iPad for reading books.” Apps like these are thriving, allowing readers and writers new ways to experience books.

If you want to save yourself time and money this is the app for you. But there is also a downside to reading on an app like Wattpad. Since Wattpad allows writers to publish practically anything on their application (which makes the app great for aspiring writers), you get a lot of flukes, and stories that you’ll begin to read but never finish because the publisher decided to discontinue it. There are also a lot of grammatical errors on most books since they are unedited. This can become a problem when you are just getting into a story but encounter an entire paragraph full of run-ons.

Kindle - Read Books, eBooks, Magazines, Newspapers and Textbooks
By: AMZN Mobile LLC

The Kindle reading application is an Amazon App. Users will have access to over a million titles in the Kindle Store, plus hundreds of newspapers like The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, and The New York Post, along with magazines such as Cosmopolitan and National Geographic. It also offers the ability to download and buy PDFs and rent textbooks.

This can save the user up to 60 percent if they are buying a textbook, and up to 80 percent if they are renting it. It can all be bought on the Amazon and the Kindle bookstore. The app is offered in the Apple store, as well and Google play store and supports AWZ, MOBI, PDF, TXT and EPUB book formats.

Because it’s originally a part of the Kindle tablet system, this app allows readers to start a book, or newspaper on their Kindle tablet and continue it on their Kindle app on their phone. The Kindle app makes it easy for someone who left their Kindle at home to open their phone and find the book where they left off. The only downside to this is that a credit card is required even for free downloads.

iBooks
By Apple Inc.

iBooks is a free iOS e-book app created by Apple, with over 130 million downloads. It gives users the ability to open PDF files, and allows them to access thousands of books including classics like The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe by C.S. Lewis and Tom Sawyer by Mark Twain. The app provides language options for readers whose native language is not English. It covers languages from French to Ukrainian and everything in between.

The design allows users to view their books like they would in a library. It offers the readers the ability to take notes with the built-in bookmarking features and share your favorite quotes and thoughts with your friends through Twitter and Facebook. iBooks also offers a magnifying glass, where you can search the book for a certain page or a word or phrase, which is convenient when reading on a phone. This offers the reader an abundance of books. Yet the downside is that this app is not accessible on the Google play store, since it’s exclusively offered to apple users.

NOOK – Read Books & Magazines
BarnesandNoble.com LLC

The Nook application is one of the best free E-Book apps on the market for book lovers. This app is adapted from the Barnes and Nobles Nook tablet to iOS and Android phones. With over five million downloads in the Google play store, it offers over one million free books, as well as a 14 day free trial on magazines and newspapers, which all can be accessed through the Barnes and Noble e-book database.

You don’t need credit card information when making a Barnes and Noble account if you’re just downloading free books, which is a plus for those who just read free books and don’t feel comfortable putting their card information online.

Since it’s an application created by Barnes and Noble it offers the same deals that you would get in store, but its also categorized into sections not found in the store like “Nook recommendation,” and “Books under $2.99.” This is helpful to readers who don’t know where to start looking for a book. It offers sample of books, which some E-book apps don’t offer, thus you can try out a book without having to buy them. A cool feature that the Nook app offers that the majority of E-readers don’t offer is the lending feature. Some books are equipped with a lending feature that allows users to share books amongst friends and families. The downside of this is that there is no option on the drop box for free books. You have to search in order to find them instead of them being all centralized in one place.

I suggest that if you’re still stuck in the 20th century that you step out from under your rock and download one of these apps. It will open an entirely new world of reading for you, and if you don’t read, it will make a reader out of you.

Smile for the Camera: Reducing the Speed Limit to 25

continued from cover page

become a mechanism for increased revenue, like for these [speed] cameras where some of them are problematic. I think it should be for the true intention – to save lives.”

Although changing the speed limit, as well as increasing the number of speed bumps and speed cameras seems to benefit the Mayor’s plans, most students on campus don’t think that the Mayor is being very realistic.

“He’s dreaming. It’s not always the driver’s fault. It’s [the] pedestrian’s fault too,” asserted Teresa, a Queensborough student.

For most, the speed limit change just seems to be an inconvenience rather than a step toward Mayor de Blasio’s dream come true.

So how does that affect those of us who feel we are better than most other New York City drivers? Well, the truth is, we’d just have to leave a few minutes earlier to get where we are going.

“Everyone has somewhere to go and they all need to get there as fast as possible at everyone else’s expense,” stated Jason, a student that’s graduating at QCC.

That being said, many students feel that this will only cause an increase in people speeding as well as the obvious rise in city revenue.

However, not all of us end up getting the short end of the stick. There are also those people who are only beginning to drive and will become licensed with this change already in place. For them, there’s no need to adapt. They will start with the 25 miles per hour speed limit and so will all the new drivers that follow.

So what choice are we left with?

“We can all just boycott cars and take public transportation everywhere in order to lower the death rate,” said William another student.

However, if public transportation isn’t your thing, there are few other options. We can just deal with it and drive at the new 25 miles per hour speed limit, we can try and speed anyway and just avoid doing so around speed bumps, cameras, and police and hope we don’t get caught, or we can do what New Yorkers are commonly known for and do whatever we want. As one student, Israel, put it “New Yorkers are New Yorkers (and) there will always be people who ignore the law.”
NYC: A Losing State of Mind?

By Michael Perez

New York City is considered to be one of the greatest sports cities in the world. The stadiums are state of the art, the fans are passionate and the owners are willing to spend whatever it takes to win.

There are ten major professional sports teams that play their home games in the New York metropolitan area. Four are ranked among the top-20 highest valued teams in the world, according to Forbes. Naturally, the New York Yankees place the highest of the local teams at fourth - making them the most valuable American-based franchise. The Giants, Jets and Knicks also made the top-20 of the Forbes list.

But that financial success hasn’t translated to the court or the field of late. Since 2001, New York’s sports teams have only captured three titles. Even the 27-time world champion Yankees haven’t been immune from the town’s sports struggles. They’ve missed the playoffs back-to-back years for the first time since 1994.

The fans are starting to notice this nearly unprecedented futility. “They are in a bad situation,” said CJ Cooke, a sophomore at Queensborough Community College, who identifies as a Yankees fan. “I don’t see them winning for another two to three years maybe.”

With the retirement of Derek Jeter, the Yankees now find themselves without any of the “Core four” [Jorge Posada, Mariano Rivera, and Andy Pettitte] for the first time in 20.

The Yankees cross-town rivals, the Mets, haven’t been to the playoffs since 2006, and haven’t won a World Series since 1986. They seem to be, however, in the advancing stages of rebuilding. Their farm system is in among the top-10 in the MLB and it seems the players on the Major League level are starting to find their way.

Cooke stated, “The Mets are doing what the Yankees should, and using more youth. The talent is there but they just can’t execute.”

The Mets have young, promising pitching—and in today’s game that is a huge luxury. Unfortunately for the fans, due to the constant losing and occasional late season collapse their fans won’t be guaranteeing October baseball just yet.

Freshman at QCC Kwame Perez agreed, “The Mets just have really bad luck, and it seems they can never get over the hump.”

The Giants are the gold standard of New York football due to the fact that they won the Super Bowl in 2007 and 2011. The Jets on the other hand, haven’t won since 1968. The Giants, while winning those Super Bowls, haven’t found a constant formula to success, having only made the playoffs twice since 2007.

The Giants today find themselves in the middle of the pack, but are still on the outside looking-in. There is still time to move up, but without Pro Bowl receiver Victor Cruz for the rest of the season, it remains to be seen which direction the Giants head.

Cooke believes, “As long as the offensive line gives Eli [Manning] time to throw, they should be problem free.”

The pressure is on for the Giants to step up and lead this team to what fans hope is another Super Bowl.

Sophomore Amanda Fleming added, “One player doesn’t make a team. I believe they can get their act together. They can find a way to come out on top. They’ve done it before.”

The Jets are in a completely different situation. They are in a state of turmoil. They’ve gone out and spent money on players and yet currently sit in last place. They have lost seven straight games since the season opening win.

The Jets main headline the last few years has been their quarterback situation. Fleming simply stated, “Why stick with a quarterback who doesn’t come up big for you?” And that is exactly what has happened.

Due to this losing streak and leading the league in giveaways with 16, QB Geno Smith has lost his job to back-up, Michael Vick who looks to make a comeback after and injured season last year. This may be the start of many changes to come for the Jets.

This city is also considered the mecca of basketball. But the fact of the matter is, neither team has won since 1973. They have the two most expensive teams in the NBA and still aren’t considered a prime contender.

“They are not winning teams,” said Fleming, “You have guys leaving after one year and news coaches practically every season. They have the potential, but I don’t see it happening.”

Fleming added, “New York expects to win. New Yorkers have this mentality that we are going to win.” What some may need to realize is “just because we have good players wanting to come to New York doesn’t mean we will get a championship.”

That is very much the issue here in New York. The Knicks have one of the best players in the league in Carmelo Anthony, but have yet to build a consistent team. They went from having a 54-28 record and making it to the second round of the playoffs to having a 37-45 record last season – forcing them to miss the playoffs.

The Brooklyn Nets went into last season having created one of the most promising lineups in the league with future hall of famers and all stars. They were expected to be immediate threats to win the title and instead underperformed and lost in the second of the playoffs.

Playing for a New York team means big expectations. Two teams that don’t always have the constant pressure of the other teams are the Rangers and Islanders. The Islanders unfortunately haven’t reached the Stanley Cup Finals since 1984 but the Rangers made it just last season.

New York was behind them. It was special to see so many fans gathered together to lift the team up. Thousands of fans gathered in Bryant Park and watched the games in Los Angeles on a big screen. It was special to see so NY come together.

New York has some of the most passionate fans in the world. They are just waiting to fill those stadiums up for championships.

Each team with the exception of the Rangers are now in a situation with lower expectations. It could be humbling to fans but NY believes it’s a winner.

Lifestyles

Back to the Basics- Paleo Diet

By Samantha Mena

Stuck in the Stone Ages? It’s not as bad as you’d think. The use of the Paleo Diet is at an all time high. Many argue that Paleo is not a diet, but rather a lifestyle. The Paleo Diet, also known as the caveman diet, takes food back to the basics like the cavemen did. With the consumption of processed foods by the general population at an all time high, the Paleo diet emphasizes the importance of eating real food! The diet calls for eating whole foods that are minimally processed and are extremely nutrient dense. It consists of eating a high amount of protein and a low amount of carbohydrates, as well as the elimination of grains, legumes and dairy from your diet. The idea of eliminating grains and dairy might be a scary concept to some, which is why the Paleo diet may not be for everyone.

Paleo suggests eliminating grains, legumes and dairy from your diet simply because our ancestors didn’t eat them. For many, these over-processed and refined foods have been the main cause of various health problems. Studies have shown that the grain that is being consumed today is nowhere near the same grain that we ate thousands of years ago, and researchers are finding that many cannot digest this “Franken-Grain” properly. Dairy has been known to acidify the body, raise insulin levels, and cause an inflammatory response to the body. Legumes have always been believed to be a great source of protein. However, they actually contain a high carbohydrate to protein ratio. High carbohydrate consumption raises insulin levels; therefore it is not worth consuming legumes for the protein.

The idea of Paleo- Primal eating isn’t based on the hunter-gatherer approach that cavemen needed to do to survive but really just to eat foods that do not contain Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) as well as consuming high quality meats. Generally, animals that come from feedlots tend to have higher fat and cholesterol content. High quality pastured organic meats have less and tend to be leaner healthier cuts of meat, just like our cavemen ancestors used to eat. The Paleo diet has helped many people with various ailments, as well as helping a student here at QCC. “Changing to a Paleo lifestyle not only helped me lose 60 pounds, but it also helped cure my Pre-Diabetes” said Maria Carrera. What may work for some may not work for others, there is no cookie cutter approach to health. However the strategy of eating high quality, real food, is something we should all implement. “I would have been dead at 50 if I hadn’t changed to a Paleo lifestyle” says Jeanette from Cross Fit of Flushing. If we have enough money for the latest and newest technologies, we should be able to spend a little more on food that is going to help keep us healthier. Health comes from eating real food, not products.
Demas Leading Women’s Volleyball Team to Success

By Joseph Wolkin

Five days a week, the Queensborough Community College Lady Tigers meet in the RFK Gym. Led by Coach Jason Demas, the Lady Tigers were 18-5 during the regular season. Going undefeated against CUNY Athletic Conference teams, they started off the year with a seven-game winning streak, but lost two of their final three events.

The squad, consisting of 13 players, recently lost the CUNY Championship to Hostos Community College 3-1 after taking a victory away from Borough of Manhattan Community College in the semi-finals.

“I was very fortunate to have one very good player,” said Demas, who has been with the Lady Tigers since 2010. “With volleyball, most people only need one aspect that’s really good and they can have a successful team. After the success that we had, I have been very successful in recruiting and developing different players at different times.”

Demas has led QCC to titles in 2010 and 2011. In 2011 and 2013, he was named CUNYAC Coach of the Year. Besides his duties with the Lady Tigers, Demas is also the Sports Information Director for all of QCC.

“I got a whole new group together (for this year),” explained Demas about his tenure with QCC. “Some of them were returning that didn’t play much. I think they bonded really well together and I definitely think that this team – everyone got along and everyone liked each other.”

Led by team captain Stephanie Ho, the Lady Tigers held their opponents to 11 shut outs this year. As a second-year player, she has been one of the main players that Demas has relied on, especially as a Libero. Due to her success on the defensive side and off of the court, she’s going to be transferring to New York University next year. But the team has been excelling this year.

Alanna Caffrey, an Outside Hitter for the team, was a three-time CUNYAC Rookie of the Week this year. Coach Demas hopes that she can win Rookie of the Year after her impressive season. Besides Caffrey’s impressive rookie year, three QCC Lady Tigers were able to win Player of the Week awards in the CUNYAC division.

Second-year players Catherin Hernandez, Raluca Mosora and Katrina Zapanta have become leaders for the team this year. Hernandez won the Player of the Week award in the same week that Caffrey was named Rookie of the Week at the beginning of October when the team won two of their three games. Zapanta was the first Setter for the crew to win the award in late September, but Mosora closed out the year with the accolade.

Get A Ring or Die Trying: A Carmelo Anthony Story

By Kadeem Fletcher

At 30 years of age, Carmelo Anthony has been in the National Basketball Association for 11 years now but he’s still without a NBA Championship.

Beginning his career in Denver with the Nuggets, Carmelo asserted himself as one of the NBA’s most lethal scorers amongst fellow young stars LeBron James and Dwyane Wade. After eight seasons of being a Denver Nugget, Anthony felt it was best to be traded to the New York Knicks, his hometown team. With the quest of a NBA Championship still haunting him, Anthony saw this as a perfect opportunity to attempt at winning his first with the team to which he feels the greatest connection.

New Yorkers saw this as a big break but boy, were they wrong. With Anthony’s arrival, they envisioned a soon-enough return to the Promised Land.

They expected Anthony to come to town and turn everything around and into the right direction. This was evident as the team gave up the bulk of their roster at the time to acquire Anthony. Since his arrival, we have seen many flashes of greatness from the Knicks’ organization but none have been consistent and long term. At this point – four years after Anthony’s arrival – the Knicks seem farther away from a championship now than they were before he came to town.

With the clock ticking now on Anthony’s career, he seems more determined than ever to try and bring another championship to the Knicks. But how much can the slimmed-down star do at this point in his career to propel his team? Many wonder how much of a leader Anthony truly is. They wonder whether his effort on defense holds him and his team back. They wonder if he only cares about the money.

All these questions surrounding your team’s most important player is never a good thing.

For Carmelo to have a chance at accomplishing greatness, he has to turn over a new leaf. Interestingly enough, it seems that he’s doing just that. Slimming down in the offseason, believing in new coach Derek Fisher and president Phil Jackson, and understanding that it’s now or never, all are great signs for Knicks’ fans.

But how much can we expect from the star that hasn’t even came close to winning a NBA title? This 2014-2015 NBA season will reveal much about Carmelo’s determination, stature, and it is safe to say that it will also dictate what Anthony’s legacy will be.

The Only Man in the Club

By Niko Robalino

When Peyton Manning threw for his 509th touchdown breaking his tie with Brett Favre for the most passing touchdowns in National Football League history, one thought went through the minds of NFL fans across the world: “Wow.”

Let’s go back to the start of the 2011-2012 NFL season; news came out that Manning, who was recovering from offseason neck surgery, would miss the Indianapolis Colts’ season opener. Now, this is significant because Manning had started 227 consecutive games for the Colts, which is second all time to Favre’s record of 297 consecutive starts.

As the year progressed, Manning’s health continued to deteriorate as he continued to miss week after week and the Colts’ continued to lose. He ended up missing the entire season and the Colts finished the season with a 2-14 record, the worst in the NFL.

Right before his brother Eli Manning and the New York Giants played against arch rival Tom Brady and the New England Patriots for the Super Bowl in Lucas Oil Stadium, where Peyton called home for so many years, a story surfaced that shocked the NFL world; due to four neck surgeries to repair a damaged nerve in his neck, it was highly unlikely that Peyton would play another game in his storied NFL career.

Later on that year Peyton Manning was released from the Colts, who were moving on from the future Hall of Famer in favor of Stanford Quarterback Andrew Luck whom they took with the first overall pick. Manning would go on to sign with the Denver Broncos organization after doctors deemed him healthy enough to continue his Hall of Fame career and the rest, as they say, was history.

Since signing with the Broncos in 2012, Manning has thrown for 12,270 yards and 114 touchdowns, and broken three NFL records in the process, the most passing yards in a single season (5447) the most touchdown passes in a single season (55,) and none more significant than his 509th career touchdown pass, which set the all-time record. (Statistics from ESPN.com.)

If he continues on his career average of about 30 touchdown passes a season for the remainder of his contract and career with the Broncos, he’ll be the first quarterback in NFL history to throw 600 career touchdown passes.

Peyton Manning can now end up as the greatest player to ever play the position; to think just a little over three seasons ago it was thought that he would never play another down in the NFL. That alone will continue to wow fans across the world as he continues to spoil us with his unbelievable play.
Lifestyles

QUEENS! One of the Most Diverse Places on Earth

By Christine Joseph

Queens is known to be the most diverse areas in the world! Can you believe just walking down the block you can hear, see and smell ten different cultures? If you live in Queens I’m sure you’re next door neighbor came from a different country.

Next Stop...179 St

Have you ever taken the bus to the F train? 179th Street is the stop for you. The bus is always packed but as soon as you get to 179th Street where the F train stations are, about 2/3rd of the bus gets off. Ever notice who gets on or off the bus with you. Who you might be sitting or standing next to?

A year ago, I did a paper on the diversity of Queens and took my research paper to the infamous bus stop on 179th Street. As I stood on 179th, I noticed that every bus stops at 179th Street and this was perfect to see whom I share this diverse borough with. The Q17 approached and about everyone with an exception of 4 got off the bus, majority of these people happen to be of an Asian background. The Q17 runs through Flushing, which is known to be occupied by Asian people.

The Q2 approached and majority of the people also got off the bus heading for the F train. The Q43 approached and many high school kids were on the bus, many from a Hispanic and African American decent. Living in Queens Village my whole life, the Q43 is a transfer for many coming from the Q27 from Cambria Heights, which is mostly occupied by Hispanics and African Americans. The Q1 approached 2 minutes later with majority of people of a West Indian background. The Q1 bus route is through Queens Village, an area populated with people of West Indian origin.

Diwali and Phagwa

Are interesting holidays that go on right in your backyards are Diwali and Phagwa. If you live in Queens Village, then you’ve probably heard about these holidays. These two popular holidays are very important to the Hindu religion. Diwali is the celebration of lights. It is a reminder that good will always triumph over evil. It is one of the biggest and most important holiday in the year for Hindu followers. Phagwa is somewhat similar but it is the celebration of colors. It celebrates spring and a new beginning for Hindus, where you are able to start a new beginning, get rid of the past year.

Diwali is celebrated either in October or November, signifying the last harvest. Diwali or Deepawali translates to “row of clay lamps.” This row of clay lamps are an important aspect of Diwali that goes back for centuries. However, historically, the origin of Diwali traces back to many different stories. All in all, the message behind the rituals performed on Diwali all mean the same; good conquering evil.

As part of the festivities of Diwali, attending service at the temple is a tradition. Hindu followers come together to the temple, dressed in the traditional Hindu clothes. They bring offerings, such as fruits and sweets and some even cook after the service. Together these Hindu followers celebrate the day of good over evil as they pray together and kneel before the gods. Anyone’s invited, so pick a temple, go and experience something new, something different.

One of the best part of this festival is the food. Seven curry is a vegan traditional dish served on special occasions. The seven curry is made up of pumpkin, chana and potato curry, khatara curry, mango curry, kallaloo (spinach), balanji (eggplant), and achar and is served with rice and dhal. There is not one moment of silence as everyone talks and laughs as they eat.

If you might feel uncomfortable going to the temple, you can check out some of these locations that host events of such religions. The Resorts World Casino host many events for different holidays. One of their popular events in the Hindu religion is the Diwali show that they host every year.

Phagwa happens to be my favorite holiday. Every year, in March or sometimes at the end of February, in 2015 it will be March 6, Smokey Park in Richmond Hill will be covered in powder, dye, music, and floats. And it is one of the most magical experiences anyone can have.

Phagwa is such a magnificent holiday. It is filled with colors, laughter, and happiness. This day is very significant in which it allows you to be free. The color signifies a new life, a new beginning and the atmosphere on this day is just delightful. Take a friend, bring some powder, and let go of the past, let go of last year because spring is coming and just like the plants it’s a new start.

One rule however, you must wear white, well so you can see the end result of all that powder and dye.

So take a friend with and head on over to Smokey Park next March 6th.

Is Queens really that Diverse?

During my fieldwork, every 2 minutes a Q1, Q2, Q3, Q17, Q43, Q36, Q77 and Q76 and Long Island buses came packed with people from all over Queens. It amazes me how although Queens might be so diverse, these people came from locations known to be occupied by their nationality. Queens is diverse in sections but where does the culture blend? Where do we interact? How do we experience these different cultures? We pass by people from all over the world, we live next to a different country. Why travel the world where the world is right in your backyard?

Queens holds lots of events. Take a bus to Chinatown, Little Italy, Little Guyana, Little Colombia and much other areas to experience a slice of the diversity.

A great site to see many upcoming events is isitqueens.org

The thing is, we learn about these great cultures, read about them, write about them but never experience them. As a college, we are adults, maybe hosting events can bring young people to experience the world in which we inhabit. Maybe on Diwali they will be able to experience Phagwa there will be a festival on the courthouse, in the Student Union, along with other holidays that maybe you and your family celebrate.

Let’s experience it together. We’re still young.

What is Fitness?

By Cheyanne Bacchus

Are you tired of feeling lazy and exhausted daily? Is your body in good health? Think of your body as a vessel of life. Taking care of it is an important factor in one’s lifetime. Being fit is considered being in good health. If you have the sufficient energy and vitality to accomplish daily living tasks and physical activities without fatigue, you are considered to be fit. Being fit has numerous benefits. One of which includes a longer life span. People with moderate to high levels of physical activity tend to live longer than those who don’t. This is because of their frequent exercise which causes multiple body processes to function at a more efficient level.

According to Certified Fitness Trainer, Kacper Joksowski, “Your heart is a muscle, and like every muscle, when you train it, it gets bigger and stronger. This allows your heart to pump more blood with lower beats per minute (BPM), in turn, allowing your muscles and other organs to receive more oxygen and nutrients for life processes and expel waste products such as carbon dioxide.”

Exercise is an important factor in maintaining your body’s fitness. It is structured and planned physical activity that stimulates the growth of new brain cells in your brain. Many people may train for months on end and in turn get no results. This troublesome point in your exercise is known as, “The Plateau.” It is when the human body gets used to doing the same exercise over and over again, which is why it’s important to keep changing your exercise routine. Some of the most common exercises we use today include squats, crunches, and pushups. However, the more varieties in your exercise routine means the closer you become to obtaining results.

Fitness not only affects you in a physical way but in emotional and psychological ways as well. According to The National Center for Biotechnology Information (NCBI), involvement in structured exercise has shown promise in alleviating symptoms of clinical depression. Moderate to intense levels of physical activity have been proven to affect your mood, decrease your risk of depression and anxiety, relieve your stress, and overall improve your quality of life. Using your social connections like coworkers, family members, and friends to get involved with can also help you towards obtaining an optimal fitness workout as they can be a source of encouragement.

Time is key to exercise. The duration of your exercises can have great effects on your results. Generally, exercise sessions should last from twenty to sixty minutes. However, thirty minutes is a good average for which to aim. To receive maximum benefit from your exercise, you need to adjust your level of activity by altering duration and intensity every so often. This can be done by adding more sets, changing the order, or by using various movements of a particular exercise. Joksowski even suggests increasing your weight and decreasing your repetition count. He claims that “where muscle confusion comes into play, the variety of movements ‘confuses’ the muscles causing them to adapt to multiple movements thus increasing your results.”

Being fit is not only a great source of health but it also helps you feel good about yourself. The feeling of being able to fit into an old pair of jeans, or your little black dress is both exciting and relieving. So take the step towards fitness and make a change!
Opinion

Why Wear Your Natural Hair

Br Nathalie Dorval

The natural hair epidemic has been sweeping the United States for years now. More and more women of color have been putting away the relaxers and the texturizers, and letting their afros, TWA’s (teeny weeny afros), locks, and twists out for the world to see. According to a study conducted by the hair company Design Essentials, the amount of women going natural jumped up from 26 percent all the way to 36 percent between the years 2010 and 2011 alone. Another study conducted by the consumer spending and market research firm at USA Today and Mintel found that relaxer kit sales have dropped 17 percent so far since 2006.

In a society where the specific ideal of beauty has been long luxurious straight hair for such a long time, it finally seems like things are turning around. However, it wasn’t until my 11 year old cousin Samira adamantly expressed to me that she wanted straight hair because it’s “prettier,” that I realized how much work there still is to be done. Traditionally, women of color have been striving to reach this ideal standard of beauty that the media so ruthlessly portrays. From the beginning of its popularity, television programs and advertisements mainly consisted of white people. This easily set the beauty standard, introducing and later solidifying the white woman as the perfect specimen. With media being the enormous influence it is, it didn’t take much for all women to begin to imitate what they saw. With Garret A. Morgan’s invention of the hair relaxer and the iron “hot” comb in the 19th century, the prayers of black women in the United States were finally answered, for they were now allowed the chance to be “beautiful.” Through the use of these new inventions, black women were gradually finding solace and comfort in their conformity.

The Black Power movement of the 70’s was thought to be a fresh start for black women to take pride in their blackness, with the newly common sporting of the afro. However, this rise in black pride was quickly diminished. New television shows in the 1980’s like The Cosby Show did portray successful black families, which was a huge step forward in and of itself. Nevertheless, with Claire’s straightened-then-layered look (mimicking the fashions of white women of the day), the beauty standard set by white hair went right back to square one.

But after decades of the white ideal being the primary tendency, women have finally started to break out of their shells and release themselves and their hair from the shackles bound by the media. Today, we can see a huge change in women of color and the pride that they now hold in their natural beauty simply by looking at the percentage of women who have decided to go natural, and the massive drop in hair relaxer sales (perhaps also prompted by uncovering the damaging effects of hair relaxers).

Unfortunately, this cannot be said about all women. There are still vast numbers of women and young girls who do rock their natural hair, but aren’t as comfortable showing it off, and hide it under weaves and braided extensions year round. Why is this? What is it that’s still hindering us from showing off our true selves?

Natural hair isn’t for everyone because of the amount of maintenance and patience it requires. However, when a woman makes a habit of winter protective styling, or refuses to get rid of her extremely damaged relaxed hair, it’s hard not to wonder what’s behind it.

Aside from the mass media, there are more personal factors that may contribute to a woman’s emnity toward her natural hair. For example, men who seem to have a preference for the lighter skinned, longer haired woman play a much larger role in this than they might think. This “preference” is more of a result of systematic brainwashing by media and racism in the U.S. combined, and whether a man openly says it or not, it’s clear what his preferences are by the way he treats different shades of women. Naturally, whether or not we want to admit it, we are all conscious of what is considered desirable to others, and have an underlying desire or impulse to tailor our appearance to it.

Now, we’re left with several questions. Are we truly free from the weighty shackles placed on us by the media? Are we truly willing to take on the task of defining ourselves rather than allowing others to define us? Is sporting our natural hair just a trend or part of a larger movement?

Becoming acquainted with every aspect of our natural appearance, and falling in love with it is the first step. Self-love is and always has been the key and the foundation of one’s contentment. Whatever you decide, your natural hair will always be beautiful simply because of the fact that it’s yours. When all women of color, and even women in general, can genuinely come to this conclusion, the original ideal standard of beauty may as well have never even existed.

Are you willing to change the standard?

Lifestyles

Why to Go Vegetarian

Br Gabriele Albrecht

There are approximately seven billion people living on earth. Out of that .5% are vegans. Those who follow that lifestyle don’t use anything that comes from an animal. 3.2% of the population, which is about 7.3 million, follows a vegetarian based diet where they don’t eat any living breathing animal. Only 10% of the population follow a vegetarian incline diet. People who follow a vegetarian inclined diet usually cut out red meats and sometimes poultry, but continue to include fish in their diet.

The main reason why people choose to remove meat from their diet is for their own personal health. Some also choose to withdraw meat to save our environment. Supplying enough poultry and beef for the world is actually causing more pollution than cars, planes and all other forms of transportation combined. An average North American, if this farm can consume more than 75 million gallons of water a year; which is more than a city consumers.

Then there are those who stop meat consumption because of animal cruelty on farms. Animals are injected with hormones to help them grow quicker and bigger than their normal. Chickens and cattle get to the point where they are too big to even walk let alone stand. As animals, they should have the right to have fresh air and walk around in fields and eat grass, these vegetarians argue. On factory farms animals are put in confined spaces, in the amount of thousand with no light and barely any air. They walk, stand and sleep in normal. Chickens and cattle get to the point where they are too big to even walk let alone stand. As animals, they should have the right to have fresh air and walk around in fields and eat grass, these vegetarians argue. On factory farms animals are put in confined spaces, in the amount of thousand with no light and barely any air. They walk, stand and sleep in normal. Chickens and cattle get to the point where they are too big to even walk let alone stand.

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Some may think you need meat to live. You need those nutrients and protein that you can’t get from vegetables. Which is slightly true. You may not get the same amount of protein as a piece of steak but you can get pretty close. One serving size of ground beef is about 22 grams of protein. One cup of vegetarian baked beans contains 12 grams of protein, almost half of that of ground beef.

“I choose to exclude everything except poultry and fish. Granted once I got pregnant I couldn’t resist a nice hamburger. Almost two years later I have gone back to eating all kinds of meats but not daily. I pay the extra to have organic because grass fed cattle contains less fat, and whatever better I can do for myself as well as my family I’ll do,” said Marina, previously living a vegetarian incline diet, and a mother who is currently expecting her second child. “I don’t plan on strictly enforcing any of these beliefs on my children, but as long as they know what’s good and bad for your body they then can take it anyway they please.”

An Oxford University study in The United Kingdom has shown that those who follow a meatless diet are 40% less likely to develop cancer, type 2 diabetes, kidney stones, gallstones and other chronic diseases. It is not a statistic proven fact yet but there are studies in effect claiming vegetarians life span is high than meat eaters life span.

“I look at it in the way of saving myself. It is a fact that red meat can contain mad cow disease and many others that have hit our nation. Yes vegetables can have e coli but it anyway they please.”

Becoming acquainted with every aspect of our natural appearance, and falling in love with it is the first step. Self-love is and always has been the key and the foundation of one’s contentment. Whatever you decide, your natural hair will always be beautiful simply because of the fact that it’s yours. When all women of color, and even women in general, can genuinely come to this conclusion, the original ideal standard of beauty may as well have never even existed.
STEM Research Club, STEM Academy, Academic Service Learning & Queensborough MSEIP present

I ♥ Science Day!

November 19th 2014
12:10 – 2 pm in Student Union

- BIOLOGY: ball python, bearded dragon, DNA, blood flow, milk snake, tegu, hydra
- CHEMISTRY: marshmallow madness, Secret Letter: Who is the spy? I know what I was – memory metal
- PHYSICS: laser Fiber optics
- ENGINEERING: 3D printing, robotics

Cosponsors: Chemistry Club, Science Research Alliance, CSTEP Club, Asian Society, Haitian Club, Motor Club, Biology Club

All QCC Students Welcome with Valid Student ID - Refreshments Served