The War On CUNY

By Noman Iqbal

The fight for the City University of New York was well underway when the Professional Staff Congress – the labor union of more than 25,000 faculty and staff collectively collaborated to protest for better wages and a contract that have not been revised in half a decade. According to The Nation, since 2008, state funds for CUNY and the State University of New York have been cut by $1.5 billion. To make up for these cuts, in 2011, Governor Cuomo instituted a $300 yearly increase in tuition for both CUNY and SUNY students.

The state started funding CUNY back in the 1970s when the university system was undergoing a catastrophic fiscal crisis. However, the city is in a lot better shape now, and Mr. Cuomo wants to shift the responsibility back to the city, the way it was four decades ago. The tuition spike was meant to bring better resources but President of the PSC, Barbara Bowen said in regards to Mr. Cuomo’s statement, but that had not been the case. “Since coming into office we have seen a pattern of disinvestment in an institution that is at the heart of any progressive cause in this city.”

At the State of the State address, in January, Governor Cuomo revealed his budget for fiscal year 2017. According to his proposed plan, he intended on offloading the latest budget from the state’s balance sheet onto the city’s. He told NY1, “The city can’t expect the state to pay for everything, especially with increases in funding toward other areas…” The governor’s proposal to suddenly force a large part of the responsibility back to the city would be catastrophic fiscal crisis. However, the city is in a lot better shape now, and Mr. Cuomo wants to shift the responsibility back to the city, the way it was four decades ago. The tuition spike was meant to bring better resources but President of the PSC, Barbara Bowen said in regards to Mr. Cuomo’s statement, but that had not been the case. “Since coming into office we have seen a pattern of disinvestment in an institution that is at the heart of any progressive cause in this city.”

Fun Things to do in New York City

By Carlos Ordonez

Some people might think that they are experts on New York City, but there are a lot of interesting things that people don’t know about this beautiful city. Here you will find out about a few things that you’ve probably never heard about the city that never sleeps.

In America’s colonial days pigs would roam freely around the streets of New York City as consumers of garbage, much like pigeons and rats do today. But in the mid-19th century, they began to be viewed as unsanitary and were soon banished from the streets.

The Brooklyn Bridge used to have an enormous wine cellar. Many years ago on the Manhattan side, the city rented a spot where all the wine sellers used to sell their wine because they maintained a constant temperature of 60 degrees.

If you go to the city a lot and you’re getting off at a subway station you’ve never gotten off before, it can be difficult to tell which direction you need to go. But there is a smart way to figure it out which way you want to go. The traffic in NYC flows west on odd numbered streets and east on even numbered streets, that way you can easily figure it out which way to go.

In New York City, there are 469 subways stations in operation, up from 28 when the subway system was opened in 1904, according to the MTA. Most of the stations in New York were built by 1940. Another interesting thing about the City is that electricity usage in subways lines use so much electricity, it could power the city in Buffalo, NY for an entire year.

Believe or not if you are up for a walk inside the Central Park and you get lost there is a smart way to find out which direction you need to go without using your smart phone. Central Park’s lampposts are a navigation system. Every lamppost in the park has a set of numbers and a key to decode them.
QCC Sews to Heal

By Alexis Josue Mounogara

“Do not live a life unlived. Keep moving forward, one moment, one step, one day at a time and never look back.” These are the words spoken by Ms. Susan Riekert of the Queensborough Community College Nursing Department, who along with several members of the faculty as well as students, have bonded together in unity to make healing blankets for women who are victims of domestic abuse.

Every nine seconds in the United States a woman is assaulted or beaten. According to the Census Bureau, one in three women have been victims of physical abuse by an intimate partner. On a typical day there are more than twenty thousand phone calls made nationwide to domestic abuse hotlines. These women who are seeking help and protection are greeted by the angels of the community through phone calls made nationwide to domestic abuse.

For the angels and healers of our QCC community who have made these blankets, each patch they have sewn of orange, yellow, blue, and black represents a step closer towards healing. Each patch adds a message of empathy, and with the college colors added to each blanket, the blanket states that the Queensborough Community College family as a whole takes a stand against domestic violence and hopes that a victim recovering from the trauma of being in an abusive situation can feel a small measure of comfort.

According to Ms. Riekert, the Common Read program provided the inspiration for the blankets along with the book Picking Cotton: Our Memoir of Justice and Redemption and its message of forgiveness and healing. Ms. Susan Madera, director of the Common Read program who participated in the Healing Blankets project says, “In addition to bringing together members of the college community, the Healing Blankets project aims to offer a small measure of comfort. Specifically, the warmth offered by the healing blankets represents the feelings of respect, compassion and support with which they were made of.”

Nursing faculty and students work for a cause Credit: Barbara Rome

The Healing Blankets convey a message of hope, a message of understanding, healing and compassion. Domestic violence is truly a heinous crime that all must discuss and take a stand against. Even if you are not making a blanket, and or are a victim of domestic violence, the QCC community hopes that you will pass on or call this number (1-800-621-4673) and seek help, and take a stand against domestic violence.

Blankets that are ready for local shelters - Credit: Susan Riekert
The War On CUNY

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The next day, at a news conference, Mayor Bill de Blasio revealed his concerns. “There are two things in the budget that are not fair to New York City that will be harmful to New York City, that will set us back, and will particularly set back our students at CUNY.” He vowed to fight the reduction “by any means necessary.” In response, Mr. Cuomo insisted that “it won’t cost New York City a penny,” and that he “wants to see more money at CUNY at the end of the day, and more money in the classroom” according to what he told NY1.

However, many believe Mr. Cuomo is not looking out for CUNY’s best interest. They are concerned about how these changes may affect the university system. CUNY faculty and staff have made it clear that instead of making it more difficult to acquire a college education, New York State needs to provide its students with a path to opportunity. “Larger class sizes, fewer courses, fewer full-time faculty, less student mentoring and guidance, longer time to graduation, and more students failing and dropping out — these are the choices Governor Cuomo made in his budget,” said PSC First-Vice President Steve London “Instead of asking millionaires to pay a little more, Cuomo would ask CUNY students to put their future on hold. That will hurt all New Yorkers.”

According to DMailInfo, faculty and student protests had become routine in Albany and outside the governor’s office in Midtown in the past few months. Signs and chants demanded the skirmish on CUNY be halted and aimed at the revision of recent tuition hikes and budgetary restrictions that have prevented faculty from getting a raise. During one incident, CUNY faculty blocked the entrance of Mr. Cuomo’s office chanting “C-U-N-Y, Don’t Let CUNY Die!” resulting in the arrest of 41 protestors.

In mid-March, Mr. de Blasio visited Albany for another round of sparring with Mr. Cuomo regarding the funding. He seemed to have a change of perspective after “productive” conversations between his staff and Cuomo’s about CUNY funding according to the NY Daily News. “It’s a worthy dialogue, it’s a worthy thing to have a process,” de Blasio said. “It is not worthy to have any cuts that affect the city in this year’s budget and again we’re going to hold the governor to that.”

In recent weeks, he’s repeated the governor’s promise that the new budget won’t hurt the city. Mr. de Blasio plans to hold the governor to his word. “The governor has assured us this won’t cost the city a penny, and we take him at his word,” de Blasio spokeswoman Amy Spitalnick said in an email.

On the other hand, Cuomo spokeswomen Dani Lever said the state will foot the entire $1.6 billion in government operating costs for CUNY as long as the state legislature agrees to hire a management efficiency expert to look for savings at the city and state university systems according to the NY Post. In other words, Mr. Cuomo is betting on CUNY being fully funded next year.

There are still worrying signs that Mr. Cuomo will not do good on his promise due to his previous track record, thus backfiring on New York City after all. It’s only a matter of time until budget bills are finalized, but until then #SaveCUNY, the fate of the entire city depends on it.

Be Aware of Economic Issues Before Traveling to Greece

BY Katerina Theophanous

In the article Is it Safe to Travel to Greece Right Now? travel advice from the Foreign Office says that while banks are closed in Greece, tourists should make sure they take comfortable amount of euros in cash “to cover the duration of your stay, emergencies, unforeseen circumstances and any unexpected delays.” “You should take appropriate security precautions against theft. There are currently no restrictions on taking unspent euros out of Greece at the end of your stay,” it adds. Greek banks are closed and there are restrictions on how much Greeks can withdraw from banks - known as capital controls. Tourists’ credit and bank cards issued away can be used at functioning cash machines freely - subject to progression and the amount of cash in them.

The new limits on withdrawals from ATMs by those with Greek bank accounts do not apply to tourists, but there is concern that cash machines will be empty. All cards currently accepted, such as MasterCard and Visa, will continue to work as normal. Previous experience suggests that smaller shops and restaurants may be afraid to accept credit and debit cards, preferring customers to pay in cash instead. That is because they might find it difficult to get hold of cash from their own accounts. Depends on who is using the ATM. “For users of debit or credit cards issued in Greece, the government has imposed a 60 Euro per day (67 American dollars) withdrawal limit from ATMs, as part of their capital control measures,” says Ashley Scarfo, a regional analyst at iJet, which provides travel security services to companies.

In an article Should You Cancel that Greek Vacation?, John Rendeiro, the vice president of Global Security and Intelligence at International SOS, a travel security company, says the country is on edge, given its fragile economy. “While it’s safe to travel to Greece, travelers should avoid all related protests as a precaution.” The Greek police won’t accept disorderly or ridiculous behavior, especially where excessive drinking is involved. Greek courts impose heavy fines or prison sentences on people who behave unwelcomely. It would seen that the financial crisis — while making life difficult for most Greeks — is a benefit for budget travelers. Hotel prices are down, and roads outside of Athens are essentially traffic-free, as higher gas prices have caused locals to cut down on excess driving.
The House Budget Committee announced a budget plan on October 21, 2015, that will cut Pell Grants, which help more than eight million students from lower and middle class families afford college. These cuts are among the plan’s five trillion in cuts. Amongst the five trillion in cuts 69% will come from financial assistance programs that will help families of low or moderate income. This is likely to force further cuts in eligibility and benefits and make student loans more expensive and cut other education training programs. At that point the only way for students to access Pell Grants are through the annual appropriations process. Roughly eight million students are currently receiving Pell Grants nationwide.

This plan is justified by raising questions about the program’s finances and impact on the cost of higher education. These claims however hold no merit. Contrary to popular belief Pell Grants are not rising as rapidly as believed. There hasn’t been a dramatic upsurge in Pell Grant costs in nearly a decade. The last dramatic increase in Pell Grants happened from 2007 to 2010 as a result of the economic recession. As the economy was getting worse, the demand to attend college increased and more people started attending college and driving college costs up. Pell costs fell by roughly one-fifth between 2010 and 2015 as the economy was slowly recovering. According to the Congressional Budget Office, costs are expected to decline by nearly 0.5 percent a year on average for the next decade. Both House and Senate have set goals to eliminate the federal deficit within this time which is achieved through cuts and these cuts will include student aid. While the Pell program may be in a surplus at this point in time, a freeze at this point could mean fewer grants available to students in the future.

The Pell Grant is in fact not experiencing a short fall in funds. The harsh plan of the House Budget Committee will only create more obstacles for students of low or middle income families who seek to attain higher education. Pell Grant has helped low income and moderate income students attend and complete college for years and taking it away will only be a setback for these students. Evidence that Pell Grants drive college prices up is weak. It is also expected that Pell cuts will increase the debt burden on many low income students. Pell Grant recipients are eligible for loans and are entitled to these loans unlike non-Pell Grant students who are most likely not eligible. With this said, it is safe to say that the House Budget Committee Plan will be reducing opportunity for low income students striving to obtain a college education and a better future and would also undermine a crucial investment in the competitiveness and economic vitality. As the cost of tuition continues to increase this plan will keep maximum Pell Grants stagnant at $5,775 for at least the next decade per student and is expected to rise by 2017 and will remain stagnant for some time. The first $4,860 the maximum Pell Grant is supported by discretionary costs, which is provided thorough annual appropriations. Policymakers paid mostly for the additional mandatory funding with savings being generated by changes to student loan programs and to the Pell program itself. Pell Grant students are more likely to face significant difficulties finishing college than other students. The good news is that the Obama Administration has a plan to increase the maximum Pell Grant to keep up with the constant growing inflation. The House Budget Plan has said that federal student aid as a driving force for tuition costs and linking Pell Grant’s as the primary driving force. Committee chairman made a claim last year asserting that Pell Grants hurt students, but provided no evidence to prove this claim. While the house plan claims to be making Pell Grants sustainable when they really mean cuts in both funding and eligibility which closes the opportunity of further education for lower and moderate income families. At this point in time there have not been any final decisions made in regards to the specific changes that will be brought to these student aid programs.

Babies Born Addicted to Heroin

By Angela Rodriguez

The rise of heroin addiction is getting out of hand, especially in the lives of pregnant women, and is causing babies to be born addicted to heroin and already going through withdrawal. Every 19 minutes, a baby is born with an opioid addiction. Women using heroin while pregnant must seek help if they want their unborn child to be okay. They can’t just quit “cold turkey”, because the bottom line is, if the mother is addicted to drugs, the baby is as well, and quitting can cause the baby to go into withdrawal and possible death. According to the CDC, scientists believe that when the drugs are taken away too quickly, the baby becomes hyperactive and then oxygen-deprived. Women who are addicted must seek help, so that their doctor will replace the heroin with methadone to help gradually decrease the addiction.

There are many health complications that comes when anyone is addicted to heroin, but when a pregnant woman is addicted, not only is she putting her own health and life at risk, but she harms her baby as well. The obvious greatest risk is death to the mother and to the baby. The addiction might not kill the mother but it can result in a spontaneous abortion, or immediate death after the baby is delivered. If the mother’s addiction wasn’t bad enough to kill her child during or after her pregnancy, the results are still extremely complicated. The baby could be born with low birth weight, low blood pressure, a brain bleed and the inability to breathe. Low birth weight might sound as if it weren’t so bad but this can bring long term effects such as heart disease,
Social Security-The Basics

By Kimberly Holmes

Most college age students are not thinking about their Social Security. As long as you are working, you are contributing to your social security. Depending on what age you are when you retire will determine how much your monthly social security payment will be. The more years you work and the later your retirement age the larger your payment will be. On the Social Security Administration (SSA) website, www.ssa.gov, you can create an account and get information on your history, estimate your benefits, apply for benefits and download any forms you may need.

Social Security is basically one large savings account that all working people deposit money into. According to the SSA, you and your employer pay 6.2% tax on your earnings up to $118,500. If you are self-employed, you pay 12.4% on your earnings. This is how they determine how much to take out of your paycheck. This money is constantly being recycled and repaid. The people working right now are basically supplying the payments for the people receiving social security benefits now. This is what makes social security one of the most efficient branches of the government.

For most people, full retirement age is 67. You can choose to retire as early as 62, but it will significantly decrease the amount of your monthly benefits. On the other hand, you can to delay your retirement until the age of 70, which will significantly increase your monthly payments. There are also ways to continue working and collect benefits at the same time. There are many different situations that people find themselves in when it comes to social security.

The SSA also provides disability benefits to people that are unable to work. They also provide benefits to spouses and children of workers that have died. There are many different circumstances under which one can receive social security or disability benefits. These are also cases where age is not a determining factor in whether someone is eligible for benefits.

The SSA is also in charge of the trust fund for Medicare. This is also another tax on your earnings. You and your employer pay 1.45% tax on your earnings. If you are self-employed, the tax is 2.9% of your earnings. Medicare is also another program that you become eligible for at the age of 65. It is a health insurance plan for people over the age of 65 and people with disabilities. There are also many different situations that apply to many different people in regards to Medicare.

Many of us have heard from someone or from the news the question about whether social security will still be around when it’s their turn to collect their benefits. Most experts do agree that it will be around. According to Rachel Maddow, “Social Security isn’t a Ponzi scheme. It’s not bankrupting us. It’s not an outrage. It is working.” Just like anything else, you have people who believe it will be around and people who think it will be wiped out by the year 2037. It has been running successfully for many years. On their website, the SSA states, “The Social Security Act was signed by FDR on 8/14/35. Taxes were collected for the first time in January 1937 and the first one-time lump-sum payments were made that same month. Regular ongoing monthly benefits started in January 1940.” And have been ongoing since.

The best way to learn about social security and how to get the most out of your money, even if it seems like a lifetime from now, is to be informed. It takes five minutes to set up an on-line account, where you can see exactly how much you have already paid into social security. It is going to be your money one day; it’s never too early to start keeping an eye on it.

NASA Planning Mission To Mars in 2018

By Steve Zouvelos

This image shows the Insight Space craft which is going to be delivered to Mars in May 2018. Its objective is to drill into the core of the planet and record important clues about Mars. Credit: Wikipedia.org

On March 9th, NASA announced that there will be a Mars launch in two years. The reason this mission will take place during that time period is because that will be the next time that Earth and Mars will be close enough to allow a quick six month trip. What NASA is planning to bring to Mars is called the Insight Spacecraft which is designed to monitor what is happening in the deep interior of the planet including quakes.

According to NASA.gov, the seismometer instrument’s sensors need to operate within a vacuum chamber to deliver the exquisite sensitivity needed for measuring ground movements and it will also measure the change of velocity of seismic waves as they move through Mars. These will give the space agency clues about Mars crust, mantle, and core. The probe will drill itself to a depth of 16 feet into the ground next to the lander. The International Science Team involved with this mission include researchers from Belgium, Austria, Canada, China, France, Japan, Germany, Spain, Switzerland, United Kingdom and The United States. The Insight Spacecraft was supposed to launch sooner but NASA delayed the mission to fix a leakage problem with the spacecraft. Due to the delay it will add to the missions 675 million dollar cost.

Dr. Banerdt who will travel to NASA headquarters to present a more detailed cost estimate and report on the fixes said there is a slight possibility that NASA officials can cancel the mission. If the Insight Spacecraft does not get off the ground the mission will fail, however NASA has been running tests on the spacecraft and even shipped it from the Vandenberg Air Force Base in California to Denver where it is being prepared for storage. Lockheed Martin, which is the aerospace technology company who built the Insight Spacecraft, are extremely optimistic the Insight will deliver and everyone is thrilled to start this mission.

Two years after this operation NASA is planning another journey to Mars and they will send 4 astronauts in a rover to make a historic landing. This will be a huge leap for NASA if they can execute this idea because they will be able to explore Mars and conduct more research about the Red Planet. As of right now they are gathering astronauts that are interested in deploying there and the final decisions will be made later on in the future. The goal is to collect as much information as they can from Mars and people want to know if their questions will be answered, the main one being: is there a possibility of living life on Mars?
National/International

When Progress Rails Against Improvement

By Lissett Young

Honolulu Rail Transit- Credit: Jackson Phelps

New Yorkers are used to the continuous hustle and bustle of tourists, delivery services, com-muters, public transportation, construction, traffic, and now Uber. Honolulu, located on the is-land of Oahu, is not. Though a common tourist location for vacation, its residents are adjusting to the ever growing city’s metropolitan area and expanding highways. With people from all over the world moving to the tropical island, expansion and reconstruction of its city is one of the many ways Oahu is keeping up with modern day advances. For some time now, the city of Honolulu has been considering a rail line with hopes of providing a faster mode of transportation to both ‘townies’ and tourists. However, not everyone agrees on the transition.

The proposal for the Honolulu Rail Transit has been in the works for about 40 years, un-til 2011 when the Honolulu Authority for Rapid Transportation broke ground. Finally, the city’s budget and proposal was approved but the general population is not convinced the large scale project will hold up to its promises. The New York Times states, “The project was initially pro-jected to cost $4.6 billion, but that number now is $6.7 billion, forcing the city in January to ap-prove a five-year extension of a general excise tax surcharge to help cover the overrun.”

Despite a few setbacks, including large cracks developing so early on, construction is still underway and the 20 mile rail is set to partially open in late 2018, from Kapolei to Aloha Stadium. The remaining stations and final stop, Ala Moana Center, is anticipated to open be-tween 2021-2022. The new project has residents preferring the city of Oahu turn its focus on TheBus, the current public transportation system for everyday commuters. The rail’s large scale budget has residents asking if the funds, time, and traffic jams are worth the ‘economic de-velopment’ it is also supposed to bring.

The rail, consisting of 80 train cars each holding up to 200 people, is set to run close to the H-1, intersecting in certain areas. The neighborhoods closest to the rail will be serviceable yet towns farther inland whose lengthy commute would be brutal without a car will not benefit. Those on the Windward side of the island, such as Kaiula and Kaneohe, home to many small towns, businesses, schools, and the Marine base Kaneohe Bay, will not reap the benefits of the rail. Nuuanu, a primarily residential area with popular scenic views of the Ko’olau Mountains range, has the same dilemma.

Pamela Young, an RN at Kaiser Moanalua Hospital and resident of Nuuanu, has been opposed to the rail since the beginning. “It’s a sore topic in this house. The rail is something we will never use living in Nuuanu. It’s poorly planned and has caused the state to be put into mountains of debt it will never be able to dig itself out of, at least in your and my lifetime. It [has] displaced many people and businesses and made those areas it’s going through areas you want to avoid. I have not talked to one person who is looking forward to it. It’s only 20 miles long and not even servicing vital areas. I don’t believe it will help the traffic problems we have. I never wanted it to be built and have been against it since its inception.”

Jackson Phelps, a retired US Marine who has been living on the island for 7 years, cur-rently near the downtown Honolulu area, has his own perspective on the rail. “Honestly, I’ve got mixed feelings. It seems [messing] with traffic. I live far enough from it that it doesn’t [affect] me beyond ‘oh look a train’ and the occasional traffic jam, all so the island can ‘get around quicker’. I live in Moiliili so the traffic jams I run into are in the morning. From 3pm- 5pm you cannot drive West [due to traffic congestion], period. Especially on the highway. I’m lucky because I drive East. It doesn’t bother me, but [I had heard] it was displacing some locals and causing homeless to flock but turns out those rumors and such aren’t true.”

Safety is a top priority in the maintenance and operations of the rail but safety precau-tions seem to have been an oversight during construction. Several complaints and lawsuits have been filed against the city and construction companies who did not maintain safety nets around the cantilevers being built above the H-1. Falling debris has been reported by residents traveling down the highway since March of last year, damaging car roofs, hoods, and shattering wind-shields. Although the nets were previously installed, they are no longer there, causing unease and frustration to both locals and tourists.

Hawaii State officials are insisting the Honolulu Rail Transit will bring employment, easier access to affordable housing, and promote construction on the West side of the island, connecting the outer areas and the city center. They are insisting walking away from the project now would cost hundreds of thousands of dollars.

The first and second set of train cars arrived within days of each other at the Honolulu Harbor the ending of March. According to KHNO2, a local Oahu news TV channel, “A second rail train will arrive in the fall. Officials say they will see how that train moves on a test track, which is about a quarter-mile long.” They also spoke with Dan Grabauskas, executive director of HART. “We’ll begin what’s called static testing. The train’s not moving. It’s just the components of the train… There’s a lot of wiring in here that you want to make sure each and every one of these wires matches up. That’s going to take us into the spring and summer.”

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Last Candidates Standing

By Taylor Jacobs

As the presidential primaries have come underway, the debates have laid the groundwork for the political platform that each candidate will assume for the rest of their respective candidacy. The Republican frontrunner Donald Trump does not have experience in politics but is a major business mogul with a net worth of $4 billion dollars. Trump acquired massive amounts of support from Republicans upset with the current state of the Republican party. Many of his supporters admire his boisterous attitude and controversial views. During the debates, attention is more often than not directed toward him regardless if the topic at hand has anything to do with him. Trump as of 2012 is a Republican but some of his Democratic and Independent ideas have carried over with him to this year’s current Presidential race such as his support for affirmative action, legalization of marijuana, and abortions only in cases of incest. Trump though is a strong advocate of defending planned parenthood, stronger border security, and no limits on guns. Trump wants very much to build a wall around Mexico and to deport hundreds of thousands of illegal immigrants to ensure that American workers keep their jobs. He also advocated for the banning of all Muslims from entering America which has caused an uproar among critics.

Former State Senator of Texas, Ted Cruz is allowed to run for president despite

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Babies Born Addicted to Heroin

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hypertension and type 2 diabetes. Not only will the baby experience health risks but the mother will go through a number of them as well, including impaired immune function, delayed cognitive development, and behavior disorders.

Clorissa Jones is a woman who was addicted to drugs during her pregnancy of her first child, Jacoby. She said, “I was in labor, in the bathroom, shooting heroin”. This caused Jacoby to go through a lot of medical treatment as a newborn and spend his first few months in a hospital. There is no newborn except for immediate placement of rehab. Not only were health problems involved, but custody became an issue for her because she was only beginning to sober up. Today she is heroin-free and was successfully gain custody of her boy.

The same thing happened to a young mom named Ashley Kennedy. She could not

continued on next page
Women’s Median Annual Earnings Remain About 20% below Men’s Annual Earnings

By Ileana Marinescu

April 12, marks Equal Pay Day, the day which represents how far into 2016 the average American woman must work in addition to her work in 2015, in order to earn what the average American man earned in 2015.

According to an article on The Washington Post website titled, “It’s 2016, and women still make less for doing the same work as men,” the Census Bureau calculates that the median women in the United States makes 79 cents for every buck paid to the median man.

The gap widens with race, with black women’s earnings dropping to 60 cents and Hispanic women earning 55 cents to every white man’s dollar.

It’s been more than half a century since President J.F. Kennedy signed The Equal Pay Act, and yet gender pay gap is still with us. Despite the fact that over the last decades, American women’s share of the labor force has been continually rising, and the gap narrowed from 60 cents in 1970 to over 70 cents in 1190, it remained between 7678 cents since 2001.

President Obama, comedian Sarah Silverman, Beyonce and many more men and women are continuing the fight against wage discrimination in the United States. Unfortunately, earnings are not equal in any country around the world. According to the World Economic Forum, Global Gender Gap Index 2015, United States ranks 28th, surpassed by third world countries such as Rwanda- 6th, Nicaragua -12th, and Mozambique- 26th.

According to the Institute for Women’s Policy Research, women will not see equal pay until 2059, which is certainly extremely too long a wait for millions of men and women fighting against wage discrimination in our country.

American women encompass about half the labor force, and since the 90s they are the majority of all undergraduate and graduate degrees, therefore a better understanding of gender pay gap is crucial.

Unfortunately, the matter of gender pay gap isn’t that simple. However, looking at statistics from the Bureau of Labor, the Congressional Budget Office, the National Committee on Pay Equity, and prestigious economic studies shows in nations which they have paid maternity, women will not see equal pay until 2059, which is certainly extremely too long a wait for millions of men and women fighting against wage discrimination in our country.

Pay gaps based on gender in the U.S - Credit: Ileana Marinescu

The majority of research suggests that discrimination is the cause for the motherhood wage penalty. “A lot of these effects really are much due to a cultural bias against mothers,” said Shelley J. Correll, a sociology professor at Stanford University.

Ending cultural bias against mothers can be done by implementing policies like paid family leave. Research shows in nations which they have paid maternity, women are returning to work after having a baby. Furthermore, men who are able to take paternity leave spend more time on child care later.

Emma Watson, UN Goodwill Ambassador, in her speech at the launching of the HeForShe campaign, she said, “Men I would like to take this opportunity to extend your formal invitation. Gender equality is your issue too. Because to date, I’ve seen my father’s role as a parent being less valued by society despite my needing his presence as a child as much as my mother’s. Having seen what I’ve seen and given the chance I feel is my duty to say something. English Statesman Edmund Burke said: “All that is needed for the forces of evil to triumph is for enough good men and women to do nothing.”

Therefore, take your formal invitation and join all those great men and women, who started this fight more that half century ago, the close once for all U.S. gender wage gap because as President Obama said, “A woman deserves equal pay for equal work.”

Justice activist even marching with Martin Luther King in the past and being arrested for resisting arrest. Sanders voted against the Iraq war and the Wall Street bailout. He also is a supporter of marijuana legalization. Sanders is popular among young voters and his campaign is backed by most people contributing less than 30 dollars so he can continue his run for presidency.

Hillary Clinton is the former first lady of the United States and the first, first lady to obtain a post graduate degree. Hillary’s the front runner of the democratic primary but her campaign is under fire for her email scandal in which Clinton sent numerous emails to her personal email degree. Clinton has a reputation among critics to straddle the fence with her stance on issues and it is often stated that she advocates for things that she does only in a desperate plea for young voters.
Change in Policy on Public Urination

By Gabrielle Slatnick

Yellow isn’t so mellow in the streets of New York City anymore. Public urination has run amuck and it results in a substantial amount of arrests every year. Although classified as a misdemeanor, people still take not care and continue doing it. The idea that people can legally urinate in public in a misconception. The truth of the matter is that urination has been reduced to a civil offense rather than a criminal one.

In one article from The New York Times by David Goodman, it is made clear that Mayor Bill de Blasio wants public urination to have a less harsh punishment. Goodman writes, “those accused of such violations would then go to a civil court run by the city’s Office of Administrative Trials and Hearings, where they would face fines and civil judgment rather than warrants and jail time” stated on The New York Times article, New York City Is Set to Adopt New Approach on Policing Minor Offenses The fines would range from $25 to $250 for first time offenders.

Eight bills were introduced to the City Council that would reduce the impact of the style of policing. “The bills are known as the Criminal Justice Reform Act and its purpose is to balance the goal of fairer punishment, laid out by Melissa Mark Viverito, a Democrat who is the council speaker, the Police Department’s desire to maintain the discretion that officers use in making arrests, for even seemingly trivial offenses, when they deem it necessary,” she said.

When given information like this it’s difficult not to jump to conclusions because this still has an impact on residents even though it’s not made legal yet. Upon a closer look, an inside source explained the situation further. “You aren’t supposed to be doing it and you won’t be arrested for public urination unless you have a warrant or some other issue. They will give you a ticket.”

Public Urination in New York Becomes Test Case for Policing also stated that in 2014, 28,609 people were cited for public urination, an offense that must be witnessed by an officer to be charged. In areas such as East Harlem, West Village in Manhattan, Bedford Stuyvesant in Brooklyn, Astoria, and Long Island City in Queens are the top places for the most summonses for public urination. Mr. Corey Johnson, who represents much of Manhattan’s West side, Councilman said, “there is already a significant problem every single weekend with widespread, out of control peeing.” Ms. Mark Viverito and her allies have been careful to point out that “reduced penalties would not imply an acceptance in behavior. Only the punishments would change.” There is a great quantity of summonses that exceed a tremendous amount of cases that are getting out of hand for police and courts to handle.

Cheap Ways to Impress Your Date

By Karima Meloni

You’re sitting on the couch, watching TV, life’s passing you by. You keep procrastinating over and over, maybe I’ll go on a date next Friday. NO! DO IT RIGHT NOW! Date night doesn’t have to be a chore, it’s a time for you and your significant other to spend some alone time together and connect over a relaxing atmosphere. Living in New York “the city that never sleeps” you would think finding a place like that would be easy, but sometimes it’s not. So I’m here to save you time and money testing out places and give you 10 places that will have your partner blushing the whole night.

Everybody has a special place for chocolate in their heart, so why not eat at a restaurant dedicated to chocolate? Max Brenner been opened since 1996 and is located at 841 Broadway where you can have a delicious mac and cheese lobster, and end the dinner with over 10 different fondue options. The exciting part about this restaurant is the fondue is made to share with your date. The Boil has a Cajun styled restaurant, and once you walk in you can smell the amazing aroma. It opens at 5pm and on any day be ready for a wait, which in the end is well worth it. Once you are seated in their old school wooden tables your waiter ties in their old school wooden tables your waiter ties up with a plastic bib around your neck, and places a metal bucket on the table for any of your shells. This is a great place for a fun Friday night or a double date.

If you’re looking to spice up your brunch Lavo is the way to go. Located at 39 East 58th Street. Lavo on Saturday afternoons is where to be. Upstairs is an Italian restaurant where you can get your fills of pasta and a raw bar. Once you’re done with your meal you can head downstairs and the party’s already started. Socialyeti reviewed it saying, “Girls decked out in heels and shiny party dresses are parading down 58th. Anywhere else in the city, seeing a girl dressed this way so early in the day would surely be a sign of a walk of shame, but outside Lavo, it is a sign of something else entirely.”

Do you want to stay local? There’s El Patron at 194-01 Northern Boulevard which is about 10 minutes from Queensborough. It is a modern bar but also serves great food to have while watching
Cheap Ways to Impress Your Date

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the game. After the game is over they have a life size jenga in the middle of the bar, you and your date can have a friendly game of. Located in the flatiron district it’s a great area for a late night date.

If you’re looking for a cheap easy early lunch Spice Thai restaurant is where to go. Spice has all your go to favorite Thai foods, pad Thai noodles, shrimp fried dumplings and there sweet Thai tea. If you get there before 3:30 the lunch special is 10 dollars. You can find a Spice Thai restaurant anywhere in Manhattan on a summer day coming from the beach or just on a walk in the city and want a quick bite to eat.

SUSHI! Mamasushi is the new way to enjoy your sushi experience. Located at 237 Dyckman Street is the it spot in the summer. Mamasushi isn’t your typical sushi spot, yelp calls it “Japanese-Mexican fusion” where you can find a sushi wrapped in fried plantain. Mamasushi is blocks away from La Marina and is opened late so after you partied it up you can walk down the block and enjoy over 30 different varieties of sushi.

Ruth’s Chris Steak House is the ultimate date night where you’ll leave full and a doggy bag in tow. Ruth’s Chris has been around since 1965 serving steak like you’ve never seen. You might have seen Ruth’s Chris on many episodes of Keeping up with the Kardashians. Around the corner from The Museum of Modern Art, Ruth’s Chris is the perfect way to end the night right. With their delightful cream spinach and mashed potatoes sides for you well prepared steak cooked to perfection.

Does champagne and fried chicken sound like a good Sunday morning? If it does Birds and Bubbling might just be your new favorite place. Located at 100B Forsyth Street, Birds and Bubbling is as hipster as you’re going to get. If you’re lucky to visit on a warm day you can be sited in the courtyard which is lit up by white lanterns hanging above you. There will be no judgement if you order chicken and waffles with a bottle of champagne off their exclusive champagne menu.

10 Below. No it’s not a movie about snow, it’s a new, innovative way to have ice cream. YouTube it if you don’t believe me, the restaurant has posted videos of how there new way of ice cream is changing your typical hot fudge sundae. It’s located at 10 Mott Street Yelp has said it’s “Snug, sleek parlor for Thai-style ice cream rolls mixed with flavors & toppings while you watch.”

Fun Things to do in New York City

continued from cover page

of four numbers, the first two tell you what street you’re closet to, while the second two tell you how far away you are from 5th Avenue. The higher the second two numbers, the further west you are. I actually went to Central park to see that in person. I went all the way inside the park and without using my phone I figured out how to get out from the park by following the lampposts numbers system. It’s a fun thing do. You should try it.

As we can see today marijuana is very popular in the whole world but what you don’t know is that New York used to be a huge marijuana garden many years ago. Until 1951, marijuana plants grew like weeds everywhere in New York City. The same year during the summer, 41,000 pounds of plants were uprooted and incinerated.

If you ever have been in the New York Public library’s main branch and you see the two lions in front of the library, you might ask yourself if they have names. Well the answer is yes their names are Patience and Fortitude, and you can remember which one is which by remembering that Fortitude is close to 42nd Street.

New York, the city that never sleeps, has much more to explore and stories to tell but here I show you the ones I think are interesting for me and also that will help you to know a little bit more about this beautiful city where you live.
Social Media Promotes Productivity in the Lives of Young Adults

By Ajeé Roberson

It's safe to say that everyone knows the negative connotations associated with adolescents and young adults and the powerful influence of social media on them. Between Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, or Facebook, these websites are infamous for completely engrossing the user, as if they have their own gravitational pull. But this gravitational pull can be channeled into positive things.

There is no doubt that such a large generational gap plays a huge role in how receptive each individual is to the use of social media, and how well versed we all are in it. Less than 20 years ago, social media was virtually nonexistent, but its role in our society today is one that is undeniable and is definitely here to stay. However, the real question in all of this is, “Are there ways that social media can promote productivity in the lives of young adults that actually transcend boundaries itself?”

Many social media sites are also known by another, equally accurate name – social networking sites. Because of the way these websites have evolved into an effortless way to connect people from all over the world on one, or several public forums, it is now a lot easier to gain exposure regardless of your fields of interest or career/business. The use of social media instantly broadens your audience, and if used tactfully, can actually create a substantial following for whatever your professional endeavors happen to be.

Examples of networking ideas often circulating through the social media realm include the work of musicians, small business owners, authors, entrepreneurs, journalists, bloggers, podcasts, fashion designers, visual/graphic artists, DJ’s, promoters, hair stylists, comedians, dancers, other variations of performers, and so much more! The possibilities are literally endless.

For most people between the ages of 16-25 or even 30, the use of social media is one of the best, and possibly only ways for their effortless way to be heard and for their message to reach a large mass of people. We live in an age where networking through Twitter or Instagram is one of the main ways that talent is being discovered.

Take Ella Mai, for the perfect example. The 21 year old singer-songwriter hails from South London, while maintaining strong ties in New York City, and now Los Angeles. She started out as part of a girl group, Arize who appeared on The X Factor (U.K.), but it was social media that really gained her the notoriety she deserved.

She told The Fader Magazine, “I mean, I’ve had my Instagram for ages... but it’s like I had an epiphany one day. I decided, ‘Okay, I go to school for music, my friends know I can sing, but what am I really doing to put myself out there?’ At the time “679” by Fetty Wap was a really popular song. So I was like, let me put my own little spin on it. I wouldn’t have guessed all of this would have come from that video and then all the videos following up after that.”

When asked “what’s the most important tip you’d give to someone trying to promote their business or craft through the use of social media?” Ella Mai said, “To answer your question, I’d say ‘Be you!’ Originality is key. So many people try and use social media to benefit them but try to be like everyone else, which doesn’t give people much to remember you by. You also have to be very active. Keep putting stuff out, but stuff that differentiates you from the rest. For example, with me, loads of people sing on Instagram, I made sure I changed the way the song is sung to make it my own… if you get what I mean.”

There are a few other tips for utilizing the tools of social media to your professional advantage. One of the most important has to be to build a strong, legitimate following. The word “legitimate” comes into play because it is not unheard of for people to actually buy “followers” on Twitter and Instagram for example, just to create the illusion of success or popularity. It could also work to your benefit to follow people who are either already successful or working their way up in your field or a field similar to yours. Interact with those people, as well as others to establish a rapport with your audience. Don’t be afraid to engage! Also, as earlier mentioned, be very consistent when showcasing your work or product so that it stays fresh in the minds of the people. Don’t just disappear for weeks or months at a time, because with the short attention span of most people (especially youth and young adults) you’ll likely become nothing more than a distant memory in no time.

Finally, there is a huge piece of advice that should be considered common sense but most people tend to forget. Contrary to popular belief, social media and networking sites are only an extension of the real world. Don’t post anything that you wouldn’t want to tarnish your image or ruin any opportunities that you have, or may come your way. You are your own PR firm. Be meticulous in what you choose to showcase to the public, because once it’s on the internet – it truly is there forever.

All in all, social media has many uses and its entertainment value clearly cannot be denied. But as college students with the intentions of becoming working professionals one day, now is a good time to strategize in every way possible in terms of becoming a name that people can recognize and will remember. Not everyone wants to be a part of the media though, or wants to work in a field that would require or benefit from such promotion on social networking sites. That’s fine too! Just remember that the option is there if you ever decide to use it, and be willing to share this information with anyone that you think could stand to gain something from this innovative approach to working social media to your full advantage!
Abusive Relationships

By Rachel Vella

The National Coalition Against Domestic Violence (NCAVD) defined domestic violence as the willful intimidation, physical assault, battery, sexual assault, and/or other abusive behaviors as part of a systematic pattern of power and control perpetrated by one intimate partner against another.

It’s not always easy to tell whether or not your partner is abusive during the beginning stages of your relationship. It’s also extremely hard to leave your partner once they start hitting you, and there are a few reasons as to why that is. Some people fear that their partner will do worse to them if they try to leave, possibly threaten them or even their family. Some people think to themselves ‘It was only once or twice, it won’t happen again’, or that their partner didn’t mean to hurt them.

A majority of people don’t really think of females being the abusive one in the relationship, and although most cases are about male abusers, females can be just as abusive and manipulative. NCAVD also stated that 1 in 3 women and 1 in 4 men have been victims of some type of abuse and intimate partner violence covers about 15% of all violent crimes.

It’s understandable that it’s difficult to get out of a relationship, the abuser can be very manipulative and very convincing that it won’t happen again and they’re sorry. It’s important to look out for the signs of an abuser so you can get out of it as soon as possible.

Helpguide.org has an article on domestic abuse and mentions some of the signs of an abusive partner. The partner might humiliate or tell you at home, have a bad and unpredictable temper, force you to have sex, or physically hurt you. Also if they seem excessively possessive or jealous, control where you go or what you do, or even try to blame you for their abusive behavior. This website also can help you determine if you’re in an abusive relationship by giving examples of how you feel or think, such as if you’re afraid of your partner or you avoid certain topics, thinking it will make your partner angry, or they make you feel you deserve to be treated this way.

No person deserves to feel that they’re trapped or they deserve to be abused, disrespected, or mistreated in any way, shape or form. These relationships can hurt you physically, and most definitely make you feel scared of ever getting into another relationship afterwards, fearing that your next partner will do the same thing as your abuser. You may end up with intimacy issues, you may not like being touched, whether it’s a hug or just a handshake, and depression can definitely develop from being a victim of domestic abuse.

Being in an abusive relationship can happen to anyone, but a lot of those relationships are people that age from mid teens to late 20s. A girl that’s 19 years old who shall remain anonymous, was in an abusive relationship for a year and half. Her boyfriend was extremely manipulative, blamed her for everything that went wrong in the relationship, hit her twice, and was very controlling. What’s heartbreaking is that her friends and her parents noticed these signs, but she was so blinded from being in love with him, that she did not listen to any of them, and ignored all of what her loved ones were saying. Fortunately she eventually started to realize these actions of his and called him out and left him.

If you are in a relationship and notice any of these signs, seek help immediately. Don’t let your partner get the upper hand and make you shut everyone out. There are a few ways you can get help. You can start seeing a therapist, go to family or friends and ask for their support and protection. If you know someone that’s in an abusive relationship, help them find the strength to leave it and be there for them through it all. There’s phone numbers/ hotlines you can call, such as:

The National Domestic Violence Hotline- (800)799-7233
NCADV- (303)839- 1852
Safe Horizons- (212) 227-3000
Loveisrespect- (866) 331-9474

5 Essential Tips to DE-STRESS

By Victoria Graham

It is very easy to get stressed out especially being a college student. There are more deadlines, homework, and exams than you can imagine in one semester. Honestly, it feels like we need more hours in the day to get everything done. You’re either a student in college who is stressed out, or counting down the days until your next vacation. So now that we have both lost hope and are stressed out, let’s talk about some tips on how to de-stress your life!

First, take baby steps and start simple with a couple deep breaths. How does taking deep breaths help you? From the article, “Why Does Deep Breathing Calm You Down?” there is an explanation about our body’s reactions to stress. According to the article, when you are in a stressful situation, it creates anxiety and your body reacts with a fight or flight response to prepare the body for conflict or danger. In addition, under stress most people often breathe in a shallow manner, not using full lung capacity. This is a natural response but often times feels like the world is falling apart. So, next time stress happens remember to take a couple deep breaths.

Most times stress has to do with time management. How do you start reading the three different articles to answer questions for anthropology class, finish 20 math problems, write a criminal justice ethics response and find time to practice ballet especially when the due dates are all at the same time? I think learning how to manage your time is the greatest skill to have in life. First make a list of what you have to do and the due dates. Then play to your strengths! Do an easy subject first then do the homework you’re dreading to do. When you have a busy week, it’s important to set a time to do your homework. Remember, take control of your life and use your time more productively.

The next skill you must learn is saying “No.” How is saying “No” important to time management and reducing stress? People tend to over commit themselves to events, projects or people. Remember college students are supposed to be self-focused. Don’t feel guilty because you need to focus on finishing your homework or working towards your career goals. When you take care of yourself first, it gives you more energy to take care of others. Personally, having worked 30 hours a week, juggling college classes, work and my personal life it can feel like the world is crashing down. Find time and take care of yourself.

You know that sleep is important for many reasons. It’s a key part of a healthy lifestyle, and can benefit your heart, weight, mind, and more. Plus having good night sleep means you can wake up on time and be at class on time. Unless it’s a life or death emergency, you need to go to class and learn something. Overall, lack of sleep will lead to more stress in your life.

If you’re having more problems and need help Queensborough Community College is here to help. You can go to the Counseling Center and get one on one help. In case you want a simpler fix:

1. Take a FREE yoga class on Thursdays at QCC. It’s at 11:00 am to 11:50 am in Kenny Building GYM 302
2. Go swimming during free periods at QCC pool. Monday 8:00 am to 10:00 am // Wednesday 12:00 to 2:45 pm // Thursday 7:00 am to 9:00 am // Friday 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm
3. Watch a funny TV show or re-watch your favorite movie.
4. Play a video game
5. Organize your closet
6. Talk to your bestfriend
7. Treat yourself to something small

Week Homework Tracker - Credit: Victoria Graham
Another Hate Crime, Another Plea for Help

By Katharine Romero

As of June 26, 2015, the United States Supreme Court made an important decision for many, to legalize same sex marriage in all 50 states. This was a moment made in history, and the first step of many for the LGBT community. Although the community has fought for too many years for a moment like this, it doesn’t necessarily mean that they’re welcomed with open arms by everyone. After all, the LGBT community wasn’t accepted and validated very much at all to begin with. Luckily, with LGBT organizations and activists, little things like gender neutral bathrooms have slowly become a norm in society. Of course there is always going to be an opposing side to everything, but unfortunately it can sometimes get way out of hand. According to the OAS (Organization of American States) statistics, during the month of July 2013, transgender murders in North and South America occurred at a 50 percent higher rate than those of gays and lesbians. It goes without saying that any murder to begin with is unacceptable, but the fact that transgender people have a higher risk of being murdered for being who they are, just as much as gays and lesbians, is ludicrous.

To begin, an unfortunate incident that impacted and changed the LGBT community occurred on the night of July 22, 2013. Dwayne Johnson, a 16-year-old Jamaican boy, was beaten to death for showing up to a party dressed as a woman. Before this, Johnson was kicked out of his home by his father and harassed in high school for being effeminate, and dropped out by 14.

Johnson was told homophobic slurs and beaten violently. New York Times, states that she had been beaten, stabbed, shot, and run over by a car. Johnson was mid-conscious for two hours before a final attack ended his life. In New York, 2013 of August, Islan Nettles, 21 years of age was told homophobic slurs and beaten violently. New York Times, states that she had been declared brain dead due to the heavy injuries and was later taken off life support in Harlem Hospital Center. February 2015, Bri Golec, a 22 year old transgender woman, was stabbed to death by her father and tried to cover his crime by calling 911 and telling a series of lies. Bri was marked to be the 6th transgender individual to have suffered a violent death in 2015 according to Daily mail. These are not ordinary crimes, these are hate crimes that are just piling up more and more by the week. A transgender person should not have to be killed in order to input another plead for help in headline news. They should not have to fear walking down streets, they should not have to fear dressing how they want to, they should not have to fear for their lives. It should not matter that they are different, they’re someone’s baby, sister, brother, mother, or father. They’re all still human beings.
Rap Guide to Climate Chaos-An Off Broadway Review

By Vincent Caccione

Rap Guide to Climate Chaos is a brand new off Broadway one-man musical about saving the environment. I found it to be a very enjoyable and very informative experience with a strong performance done by a man who is passionate about the subject.

Baba Brinkman is a Canadian rap artist and award winning playwright. Set in the darkened theatre of the Soho Playhouse, he performed informative raps about the environment and the politics involving environmental aid. Another fine point of the show I really enjoyed was his originality. His raps weren’t repetitive or annoying. They were all very attention grabbing and you could tell he spent a lot of time on them. They were equally informative as they were entertaining. Brinkman is an award winning performer and it was evident in the way he carried himself on stage.

I have very few complaints about the show and the ones I do have are very minor. While Brinkman raps there is a screen behind him with a slideshow of charts, pictures and information that run on a loop throughout a song. Personally, I found these to be too distracting while he was rapping and it was hard to focus on one or the other. I think if he left an image up while he was rapping or slowed down the slideshow the information would sink in more for some people. However, all the slides with graphs and tweets from celebrities and pictures of melting ice caps were very interesting and helpful in understanding what the real issue at hand is.

He was very energetic and enthusiastic about his topic and you could tell he really cared about what he was preaching. He told us a little bit about his history and how he used to plant trees with his parents in Canada. In the middle of the show Brinkman stopped and asked if we had any suggestions on what he could add to the show to make it more interesting to us because the show constantly changes based on what’s going on in the world at any given time. At the end of the show he also gave out information involving organizations that we can join that work to help the environment in our daily lives.

All in all, this was a very good musical that brings a lot of attention to a very important topic. This was a funny, interesting and informative experience. It was definitely original on all accounts and something that I had never experienced before and I highly recommend it.

Superhero Review Corner

By Chris Beccarelli

With the “Dawn of Justice” finally upon us, I take a look back on some other Super Hero must-see features for both fans and non-fans alike.

1. Watchmen (5 Stars out of 5)

Beginning as one of the greatest pieces of superhero fiction ever written, the 12-issue limited series Watchmen was long believed to never be able to work as a singular movie. Director Zack Snyder, however, proved that theory wrong. Set in an alternate 1985 against the backdrop of a nuclear holocaust, costumed superheroes are a normalcy, and the team of superheroes known as The Watchmen are at the center.

Dealing with themes of nihilism, war, the passing of time, and the more serious side of masked person’s, the movie is unlike any superhero movie you will ever see. The cast, which includes the likes of Jeffrey Dean Morgan and Patrick Wilson, take the nuanced material of the book and convey the struggles of the characters with the utmost effort. These are characters dealing with real world problems like anxiety and impotence, rape and murder, each and every cast member does an incredible job. Zack Snyder is known for his particularly stylized and darkly hued camerawork, so his choice to adapt almost each and every page, bar the ending, almost scene for scene makes this a faithful, highly original superhero film worth it’s almost 2 and a half hour run time. It will make you wince, think, and appreciate the darker take on the “Superhero Team” Dynamic.

2. Deadpool (4 Stars out of 5)

Hands down the funniest superhero movie of all time, the onslaught of jokes and quips seems never ending, and that’s exactly how a Deadpool movie should be. The hearts of millions of comic readers worldwide have been captivated by the character of Wade Wilson, the not so “mild mannered” man behind the mask of Deadpool, for more than 20 years. This movie, long thought impossible to make, was a dream come true for these die hard fans. The 4th wall breaking self referential humor, the surprisingly nuanced backstory, and the perfect casting of funnyman Ryan Reynolds meld together to make a movie that would make even the most uptight naysayer of comic book movies crack a smile. The opening credit’s sequence, one of the funniest scenes in the entire movie, has to be seen to be believed. The villains and side cast are a tad weak, and the story itself falls a bit flat when it isn’t dealing with Wade’s superhero origins, but the performance Ryan Reynolds gives as the character and the genuinely funny humor make this a superhero movie that is worth a watch with some friends.

3. Daredevil Season 2 (4.5 Stars out of 5)

Riding his off of it’s incredible first season, this Netflix original series manages to be even better in it’s second season. For those unfamiliar, the show deals with Matthew Murdock, a tentatively blind lawyer who becomes spawned into being a superhero after the death of his father and subsequent attainment of incredible abilities. While the first season dealt with Wilson Fisk, AKA the Kingpin from the comics, this seasons deals more with Daredevils past and the incredible addition of actor John Bernthal as the Punisher. Ruthless, near insane, and brutally honest, the Punisher tears a bloody swath through Hell’s Kitchen much to the chagrin of do-gooder Daredevil, and the way in which the two characters clash showcases the ability of the talent involved in bringing these characters to life. Set in the same cinematic universe as the Avenger’s series of movies, Daredevil brings light to an incredibly darker and more serious side to the Marvel world, and those looking for a break from the constant quips and family friendly feel of the Avengers need to look no further than this incredible series.

4. Man of Steel (3 Stars out of 5)

One of the most polarizing superhero movies of all time, Man of Steel kicks off the start of the DC cinematic universe with a dark and brooding take on Superman by Watchmen director Zack Snyder. Supplanting the story of Superman into the present day, the movie moves away from the happy, lighthearted approach to the character and instead injects an almost existentialist, real world approach to the character is. This works for the most part. Superman (Henry Cavill) leveling the city in his fight with Zod (a menacing Michael Shannon) and having to make hard decisions based on the teachings of his adoptive father (Kevin Costner) definitely adds a sense of real world drama to the movie, since this is the kind of thing that would happen were a man like him to exist. He’s going to doubt himself, he’s going to not know what exactly to do with his incredible powers, and this aspect manages to work really well. At the same time, however, the slowness of the story when it comes to everyone who isn’t Superman and the dreary tone manage to take away from this interesting take on the character. As good as Henry Cavill does in the role, his chemistry with co-star Amy Adams as Lois Lane is almost nonexistent, and the fact that she seems to be ever present for the sake of the story gives way to more plot holes than plot convinience. Overall this movie involves a fresh take on the character and a menacing villain surrounded by plot contrivances, too much gloom and a lack of any substantial message found in the myriad of existential questions it poses.

5. Batman V Superman: Dawn of Justice (3.5 out of 5 Stars)

While suffering from many of the same mistakes as Man of Steel, Batman V Superman manages to do a surprisingly large amount of things right while also making a few mistakes of it’s own. As one of the biggest Batman fans I know, I went into this movie a bit nervous at the casting of Ben Affleck and the shear amount of bad reviews the movie seems to have been accruing over it’s opening weekend. On the Batman front, I can say with the utmost honesty that Ben Affleck nails the role and is without a doubt the best part of the entire movie. He is, unlike the more original take on the character of Superman, the closest take on the character of Batman we have ever gotten on screen. Superman himself is also far more in line with the comics this time as well, and it seems that director Zack Snyder has listened to what fans had to say about Man of Steel, lending to this movie being better than it’s predecessor on the character front. While Wonder Woman is in the movie for only about eight minutes of total screen time, she manages to steal the show, and the final fight in which the three heroes come together to fight for the greater good is a comic fans dream come true. The story, however, is still a bit too scatterbrained, and the abundance of dream sequences can be a little overbearing at times regardless of how cool Batman’s nightmares of a war torn future ruled by Superman happens to be. The worst part of the movie, and perhaps the most miscast role since Ben Affleck’s own stint as Daredevil, was the casting of Jesse Eisenberg as Lex Luther. It was weird, unfunny, and incredibly surreal, and Jesse Eisenberg does not fit at all as he erratically chirps his lines against the far more competent leads. This movie is far more focused than Man of Steel, and the real world themes work far better with Batman involved; His contempt for Superman comes from the fight in Man of Steel in which Superman and Zod wreck the city killing thousands, and it just works. Along with the publics many reactions to Superman in particular where he appears to a woman on a flooded rooftop (as an almost angelic like figure), it seems to be doing what Man of Steel wanted to do with a more focused and insightful mindset this time around. It’s still bombastic, and loud comic fare, and this cinematic universe is far less focused than the lauded Marvel one, but if this is the direction Zack Snyder is taking with these characters than it is a step in the right direction.
**Arts**

**Louis Armstrong House Museum**

By Lissett Young

April’s warmer weather and blossoming flowers remind us Spring is finally here, the perfect time for a picnic or walk in the park. If you’re looking for something to celebrate, April is also Jazz Appreciation Month. Many venues, museums, and art centers are setting up special performances and events in honor of Jazz month, International Jazz Day on April 30th, and all of the talented artists, past and present, who have contributed to the continuously growing styles, including Dixieland, Swing, Bebop, and Free Jazz.

The Louis Armstrong House museum, located in Corona, Queens, is doing just that. The current exhibit “Hotter Than That: 90 Years of Louis Armstrong and His Hot Five” along with displayed record albums, a short video, and an optional hour long guided-tour will have everyone reliving Louis’ and his wife Lucille’s life as you take a walk through their garden and two floor home, furnished and preserved since the 1970s. Not only will you experience first-hand Louis’ passions and life’s work through history, private recordings, and photographs on display but it illustrates Louis’ impact on Corona as a community role model, his influence on Jazz and other musicians during the 1920s both locally and internationally, and his devotion to Jazz.

The museum is offering free admission to CUNY students with a valid school ID all month long with one free guest ticket and New York City public school children and their families can enjoy free admission during Spring Break, April 23 – April 30. Regular Admission is $10 and $7 for seniors. For more information, visit louisarmstronghouse.org

**Sports**

**Take Me Out to the Ball Game**

By Erika Orosco

The Queensborough Community College (QCC) Tigers Baseball Team began their pre-season with a lot of new players this year. The QCC Tigers began their pre-season on March 12th with twenty-six players but only two starters returned from last season, which makes the team a very new and young team. However, any returning player is beneficial to the team. “They teach the new team members my way of coaching and that helps the team development a lot” said coach Mischel. The QCC Tigers official season begins on March 29th.

This pre-season is not looking so great for the Tigers. The team has played twelve games and sadly lost all twelve. However, the head coach of the QCC tigers Baseball team, Coach Roger Mischel thinks differently. “Pre-season started great, we have a good group of guys, hard working group of guys and as far as training it is also going great because I am learning who my starters are going to be, I am also learning who are the people I am going to turn to in big moments” he said.

Coach Roger Mischel believes that one of the main reason the team has lost all their games during pre-season is because, he is personally “testing the team” and trying to figure who are going to be his main players and which players will have to train harder for a higher position on the team. In other words, he has not put his starter players together yet and that’s one reason that has affected their pre-season games. “Also let’s keep in mind that all the school we have played during pre-season are schools on a higher division than ours, we haven’t played a school that is on our division yet,” coach Mischel added.

The team believes that the season has just started and they have a lot of potential to make it to a good place if not the best place in their division “I feel like we just have to communicate more on the team and our season will be better. We have a lot of talent this year,” said Joel Luna a returning team player. As a team they have their main goal very clear even though the pre-season didn’t start as expected. “Our main goal is to bring back home the CUNY championship, and as a team we are willing to work as hard as possible to make it happen” Gabriel Gonell one of the team captain added.

The QCC Tigers main goal this year is to “reach the top” of their division. They want to win the CUNY’s championship and also regionals. To achieve these goals the coach leads himself by the stacks of the players. Making sure his best players are the ones out on the field fighting for the team goals.

If you would like to support the Tigers through their season, here are the remaining games.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Union CC</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>4/19</td>
<td>QCC (p.preller field)</td>
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<tr>
<td>4/22</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Suffolk CC</td>
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<tr>
<td>4/30</td>
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Opinion

Women Should and Deserve to Have a Say

By Irene Drivas

An abortion can be a difficult procedure for women to go through, but if an abortion is necessary then so be it. This important life decision needs to be made by those who conceived the child. It is something private and personal, mainly because there are individuals strongly against or strongly for abortions and we need to respect the decisions others have to make. Why not give women a better chance at motherhood? Why shouldn’t an 18-year-old be allowed to have a baby? Regardless of the decision the person makes, what difference does it make to your life? Conceiving an unwanted child is difficult enough.

I truly understand both sides because I know how difficult this could be, but I also understand that abortion is baby-killing. I feel if you’re not financially ready to have a baby then don’t. Everyone’s life situation is unknown; therefore abortion clinics should be open to the public. Women have their rights, and although I believe adults remain at fault for conceiving a child, it’s not worth it for the child to suffer. Women should inform themselves on the various options available to them for safe sex and preventing pregnancy: male and female condoms, the day after pill, birth control. For more information or to discuss which options are right for you, talk to your doctor today to avoid going through an abortion or an unwanted pregnancy.

The National Center for Biotechnology Information stated the following reasons why women have abortions and why there should interfere[s] with a woman’s education, work, or ability to care for dependents.” Other reasons include not being able to afford the baby at that point in their lives, preferring not to be a single mother, or experiencing relationship issues. There are 40 abortions per 1,000 women in the age group of 20-24, and more than half of American women obtaining abortions are in their early 20’s.

 Abortions clinics all around the world are closing, and a few states only have one abortion clinic. According to hartzell.house.gov, “Two pro-life Republican presidential candidates are asking the nation’s highest court to uphold a pro-life law in Texas that has been responsible for closing abortion clinics and saving an estimated 10,000 babies from abortion.” It is unfortunate that women’s decisions on abortion are not being respected. The choice is hard enough for people to make. Why do people feel the need to be involved in the decision of whether or not others should or shouldn’t have a child? A baby isn’t a toy, it’s a life that should be discussed between the parents and how comfortable they feel to have a baby.

According to the Associated Press, it was reported in June 2015 “nationwide the number of abortions decreased by an average 12% since 2010.” With abortion clinics closing worldwide, women won’t have access or the necessary resources to have an abortion, forcing them to keep the baby. Religion plays a key role in women’s decisions on whether to proceed with a pregnancy or abortion. Some religions are against abortions while others support it. The decisions made by those in this predicament should be tolerated because they can either be unprepared or financially unstable, and they need to be ready for the responsibility of a child.

I believe a child deserves better than being unwanted but I also believe a child deserves a happy and healthy life. Abortions are often hasty mistakes people make. Many of the pregnant teenage girls are unsure of how to raise themselves, let alone a baby. Abortion and pregnancy are not easy to discuss and whatever you choose it’s going to be a life changing decision. A female won’t be the same after going through such a procedure, even the word abortion won’t have the same meaning to her.

People shouldn’t be closed minded about abortions because what happens if someone decided to have the baby after being forced or pressured by religion or a significant other, and all of the responsibility becomes overwhelming and the mother decides to walk away? She leaves and stops taking care of the child because she realizes she wants “to live her life.” Wouldn’t it be better if women had the option of abortion instead of reading an article saying, ‘3 month old starved to death because mother abandons child.’ My advice to women: make a decision that ensures you and your child(en) have a better life. Don’t regret anything because, no matter what, everyone judges. Whether you decide to have an abortion or a baby at a young age people will talk. The overall purpose is to make the right decision. Talk to your partner, ask yourself if you’re ready, and then proceed with this life-changing event. No matter what you choose, always remember you made the right choice.

What does “Make America Great Again” Really Mean?

By Rennae Monteith

What does the Republican frontrunner Donald Trump mean, by his campaign slogan “Make America Great Again”? For some that means removing all the strides the United States has made in allowing minority groups an equal opportunity at the American Dream, which according to Trump is dead. As an immigrant who came to this country a few years ago, my main objective is to acquire a university level education in order to be able to better support my family and contribute positively to society in this ever changing financial and political atmosphere. There is no doubt that minority groups have made and continue to make a constant effort to improve upon the civil and political rights of not only its citizens but around the world who have contributed to what we know now as the United States of America.

A place where even people living in war torn areas of the Middle East and other regions of the world that are plagued by violence, civil unrest, drought, financial uncertainty, still believe in the United States’ fundamental roots in democracy and free speech in its constant effort to improve upon the civil and political rights of not only its citizens but people around the world.

The slogan “Make America Great Again” has taken on a life of its own, leaving people wondering why Trump’s message resonates so deeply with white supremacy groups who have made a strong comeback recently. I personally have seen stickers of this slogan in and around this campus, which has me questioning who are these people who promote this message and I am I to be persecuted under Trump’s possible presidency because I am an immigrant?

Groups such as the Klu Klux Khan have endorsed Trump for president. While there were strong calls for his repeal of the endorsement, they claims to not have heard the request. Trump has been brazenly and overtly racist, despite the encouragement and endorsement from a group whose main function is to terrorize minority groups and violate their civil rights. Is it not the president’s main priority to protect the constitutional rights of all Americans? Would it be presumptuous for me to say Trump does not care about all Americans, only those who support his fascist views?

There are reports and pictures circulating on the Internet that leads one to believe these supremacist groups take Trump’s slogan to mean returning America to the days of segregation and civil unrest. Trump’s campaign put fear in anyone who can simply imagine the destruction his fascist views could do to the United States causing what could only be call a civil war which could divide the United States again.

There is a post on Instagram that says, “…Jews support Bernie Sanders because we have seen this before …” what does this says about Trump’s campaign strategy and the fear it is instilling in the populous. It is increasingly obvious that Trump’s campaign condones physical violence, bigotry, and racial hatred against women, people of color, immigrants and minority religious groups. For example his policy to stop all Muslims from coming to America and require those who live here to wear specific identification is reminiscent of Nazi Germany. Recently, Trump’s campaign manager was charged by the police in Jupiter, Florida for simple battery of a female reporter. Ted Cruz has come out saying Trump’s campaign has “an abusive culture” which has been proven time and time again to be true with fights that breakout that his rallies along with the bullying and punching of demonstrators. Trump has instigated this supporters to be violent towards demonstrators on countless occasions. Is this what the presidential elections have become? Those who are critical or oppose Trump’s views have the right under the First Amendment to freedom of association and to right to peacefully assemble and freedom of speech, but what if someone were to protest in a peaceful manner. I think Senator Ted Cruz puts it best when he said, “…Campaign that is built on personal insults, on attacks and now physical violence, that has no place in democracy … helps clarify for the voters what Trump’s campaign is all about.”

It would seem that a United States presidency by Donald Trump would not only be an American issue but a global issue as well. With relations already strained in the Middle East with constant threats from terrorist groups such as ISIS and other groups, the United States needs a leader who will quell the violence both home and abroad with the betterment of people globally in mind. God Bless America.
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