Building to Begin Next Year

Massive Renovation of Science Building to Begin Next Year

By Luke Tabet

The latest capital project being undertaken by QCC is the remodeling of the Science Building Courtyard. The new construction will include the addition of a new kitchen, serving area, elevator and bathrooms, as well as an enclosed dining/meeting space with a capacity to seat up to 500 people.

The Communiqué spoke with former Dean of Facilities Arthur Perkins, who had previously presented the project in detail to a large group of faculty, students, and staff. Perkins served as Dean of Facilities for 3 years until early November, and during his time in office he worked closely on the project and its design.

The new space was designed by a firm called Goshow Architects, and this is their first contract with QCC. The area will be built in two separate phases of construction. Phase one, which is expected to begin in 2013 and go on for one year, will include an extension of the restrooms in the science building and the construction of a second elevator, which will comply with regulations.

The innovative design of the roof for the Science Courtyard makes use of a material called Ethylene-tetrafluoroethylene, or ETFE for short. ETFE is a translucent material formed in “inflated, plasticine film pillows,” according to Perkins, it has an excellent capacity for insulation and an extremely high melting point and has been used extensively in the UK, Europe, and China, as well as in aircraft and spacecraft to cover electrical wiring. These pillow-like sheets will be supported by a lightweight steel structure. The roof will serve as shelter from the elements in all seasons, although the space will not be protected from the cold temperatures of the winter months until phase two, when it will be completely enclosed.

Seating will be arranged around a number of tables, with an area in the center that can be cleared and made available for meetings and events held by faculty and students, which currently are held in the main floor lobby of the Student Union Building. Next to his center area, design plans boast a large backdrop wall to be covered in vines, which will lend to the aestheticism of the area.

While construction is underway, the courtyard and surrounding areas affected by the work will be closed to the campus, this could last up to a year while work is being completed. The space would then be open to students and faculty until phase two of construction began.

Phase two of the project will include the building of a new kitchen/’servery’ for the Science Café, and the full enclosure of the courtyard. Once complete, the area will be available to the campus year round and will provide a space for students to meet, study, or dine even in the winter months. Large fans will be displayed from the ceiling which will serve to ventilate the enclosure as well for the summertime.

“In terms of new space, it’s the most exciting and visible of capital projects at Queensborough” said Perkins, who assisted with the management of the project, reviewing designs as well as participating in discussion and decisions in many aspects of production. Though he told the Communiqué that the most up to date financial estimates were unavailable, Perkins stated during his presentation that the project would cost around 18 million dollars.

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from 31.0% to 33.7% and American Indian students from 33.3% to 41.7%. Asian students, however, saw a two and half percentage point decrease from 45.5% in 2005, to 43.0% in 2010. But by far the biggest drop since 2005 was among Black student. Graduation and transfer rates for Black students at QCC have dropped more than five full percentage points from 35.9% to 30.6%. That equals a near 15% decrease in the total number of Black students who graduated in 2010 compared to the number of those who graduated in 2005.

According to the Journal of Blacks in Higher Education, the college graduation rate for Black students nationwide is 44%.

There are two million African Americans continued on page 5

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The new space was designed by a firm called Goshow Architects, and this is their first contract with QCC. The area will be built in two separate phases of construction. Phase one, which is expected to begin in 2013 and go on for one year, will include an extension of the restrooms in the science building and the construction of a second elevator, which will comply with regulations set by the Americans with Disabilities Act. Also included in the plans for the first phase of construction will be the installation of a seating plan capable of serving 450-500 people, and most significantly the new roof that will partially enclose the courtyard.

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Making a Resolution that Sticks

By Alison Lo

For the majority of us, the excitement of the New Year, combined with a few shots, gives us eternal optimism in our New Year’s resolutions. And every year, without fail, we draw up a whole mess of promises, each of them more intimidating than the last, and believe with unwavering certainty that this year’s resolutions will finally stick. Of course, after the liquor wears off and our minds clear, our confidence diminishes. Suddenly were faced with the daunting task of living up to our own expectations. Yikes! Well, hopefully we’ve all learned from years of disappointment that this plan usually fails miserably. So how do you make a New Year’s resolution that sticks? Read on.

Have a Game Plan

Claim your expectations and write them down; be specific. If you’re looking to lose weight, specify a goal. Don’t say to yourself, “I will lose weight.” What foods are you cutting back on? How often do you want to exercise? Narrow down your goals and have a plan of action. Review your resolutions, set aside smaller goals for yourself, and reward yourself for achieving them; a reward that seems very far off will make you feel discouraged and uninterested continued on page 18
News

Students Complain New Credit Card Minimum Unfair

By Michael Rodriguez

Metropolitan Food Services, the company which provides food services in the QCC cafeteria, café, and student union buildings, recently enacted a six dollar minimum purchase requirement for all credit card transactions. The new minimum has upset many students who worry that the minimum will wind up causing them to spend more money to use their debit/credit cards. In fact, some students have reportedly already complained to the administration about the new policy. William Faulkner, Associate Dean for Business & Administration Services & Controller, stated: “a student has come to me about this before because he was upset about the issue as well.”

The food served in the cafeteria and the student union building, is all supplied by Metropolitan Food Services which is on a contract with QCC. Up until July 21, 2010, it was illegal for credit cards to charge a minimum but, since the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act, which included a section on credit cards, minimum charges of up to ten dollars are now legal.

The financial administration of QCC can approve and disapprove of anything that Metropolitan Food Services wishes to follow through with. When asked about the credit minimum, Dean Faulkner explained the administration is well aware of the six dollar credit minimum on campus. “Metropolitan food service was able to show the auxiliary enterprise corporation that by students purchasing items, which came to a dollar or two and putting it on their debit/credit cards, that their company was not making a profit,” said Faulkner.

Faulkner explained that the administration of QCC is aware of the minimum and that the only solution to avoiding the minimum is to use the ONECard. Students who use their ONECard, save money on taxes and if they put $50 or more “they receive a meals worth of extra money on their card.”

When asked about the credit card minimum student Alexandra Franco said: “I think it kind of makes sense with what they are doing because at least the college provides us with the One Card to help us avoid the tax on foods. But, I still think it’s dumb because this is a college and the food services should help us because we aren’t rich.”

Ashley Samet, a third year student at QCC said: “Under normal circumstances I would say yes because it provides important life lessons about having cash in emergencies and what not but right now with the economy being the way it is, I think a lot of customers will drop especially with kids getting direct deposits into their accounts from their jobs. Who has time to go to an ATM?”

Although contacted by the Communiqué several times by phone and e-mail Metropolitan Food Services was unavailable for comment.

Humanities Courtyard: VIP to Birds Not to Students

By Marisol del Pozo

The courtyard located on the 4th floor of the Humanities building has been closed for more than three years and many students are wondering when it will be open again. Although previous student government leaders had promised to do something about the closed courtyard, the administration has said they have no plans to do so.

When asked about the courtyard, which encompasses the third and fourth floors of the Humanities building, Arthur Perkins, then Dean of facilities at QCC, said the place is not open to students because it is very secluded and there are no security cameras or guards present. He argued that at some times of the day it could be pretty isolated and the school is worried about the safety of students. Perkins also said opening the space would require said that the reasons to keep the area closed are as follows: the space would require maintenance and cleaning and that additional staff might be required as security and upkeep. Also the Dean is of the opinion that new furniture might be required for the courtyard.

Reportedly, there was originally a serious pigeon problem, which had made the area close to unusable. Feathers and feces littered the ground, continued on page 7
Help for Immigrants at Last

By Edwin Livigianay

In June 2012, the United States Department of Homeland Security created a new immigration reform program called Deferred Action. The Deferred Action program is designed for undocumented students who were brought to the United States as young children. Students who are granted Deferred Action will receive work permits to legally work in the United States and the possibility of acquiring a driver license. CUNY is a very diverse university that receives many undocumented students each semester, therefore the university has offered workshops and advisement for students applying for Deferred Action.

Thousands of applications have been filed so far. Annie Palacios, a 19 year old student who arrived in the United States at the age of 8 years old is one of the many students who have been approved for Deferred Action. “I have more opportunities now...can get a better job,” Palacios said, expressing how the program has benefitted her as it continues to benefit other students nation-wide.

The application is simple and can be downloaded for free from the U.S Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS) web site. All specific documents needed for filing also can be found on the web site; more information and frequent questions asked for consideration of Deferred Actions are also available.

People who have applied have only two concerns, the application fee and the fact that Deferred Action is only valid for up to two years and will have to be renewed in that period of time. Also many fear that by filing an application their current immigration status will be known to Immigration and fear they may be removed from the country. However, such fears are unsubstantiated, since all documents are confidential and will only be reviewed by the USCIS. Despite it all, Attorneys have offered workshops and events to inform and help student file for Deferred Action and have strongly advised that anyone who is eligible to file should do so. There is still time to file an application for Deferred Action. The estimated time for the whole process is three months but it can vary depending on the situation.” Everything was worth it” Palacios said, adding that she wishes it could be a permanent thing rather than temporary, but still she is very happy with the results of the program.
Professors Speak out on Stop and Frisk at QCC

By Danielle Del Priore

People who are believed to be suspicious are being stopped and searched randomly with force all over New York City. The source of all this unnecessary conflict regarding the NYPD is the Stop and Frisk Policy, which occurs when a person who is usually Hispanic, Latino or African American is halted, questioned, and is then forced by the police to put their hands against the wall while they are being patted down. The Stop and Frisks started in 2001, and the policy was passed by Mayor Bloomberg. The students at QCC gathered in the Student Union building on November 15th, from 1:00 to 3:00 pm to hear Professor Leroy Gadsden talk about the growing phenomenal that is known as Stop and Frisk. This policy is discussed due to the immense affect it has on minority groups, including many students who go to QCC; there are even stops that have occurred right in front of Queensborough. SGA President Preston Baker and Administrative Vice President Mariama Coulibaly were also present and hosted the event.

After the introductions were made, Professor George Fragopoulos began the discussion by saying that Stop and Frisks “Have a disproportionate effect on our minority community.” He addressed race and class as the main issues when it comes to Stop and Frisks. “The policy claims to be objective,” he said, adding that “the policy started out as a way to get guns off of the street.” However, according to Fragopoulos, few guns have been recovered, but there have been millions of searches that still occur daily. The endless searches are a result of the quotas that require all police officers to make 250 stops each year. Most people who are stopped are young African American men. After a 13-minute video was shown of a 19 year old boy named Trevor being stop and frisked, due to the fact that his book bag was empty, QCC students started sharing their own stories.

One student spoke about a stop and frisk that happened on November 9th, as he was walking out of store with his friends. As they reached the corner, they were stopped after one of his friends spit on a tree, in the direction of one of the police officers that conducted the stop. However, according to the student, the real reason why they were targeted was because they were Hispanic and African American. After they were frisked, it resulted in a summons, just for spitting on a tree. “That’s really stupid,” the student added.

Professor Jessica Rogers examined the stop and frisk issue a little closer by showing maps of how NYC neighborhoods are affected by the stops, and how often they happen. Specifically she pointed out the Brownsville Projects as one of the areas, because if you arrive at your home without your keys, you are seen as trespassing and receive a summons after being stopped. Out of the 70,000 stops that took place in Brownsville last year, only 6% of them resulted in arrest. For neighborhoods that have 36% White residents, only 16% of stops happen citywide. As for neighborhoods with 64% Non-White residents, 84% of stops are conducted citywide. That means that QCC students who are non-White have a greater chance of being stopped. Professor Rogers while touching the subject of race explained that, “Last year more African Americans were stopped in New York City than there are African Americans.” That means that many African Americans that were stopped throughout New York City had it happen to them more than once. Most of the targets the NYPD looks for are teenagers in parks, who are most likely not breaking any laws. Professor Rogers feels that, “We need to be able to trust the police. It paints a picture of what is being viewed as suspicious.” Many students in the audience raised their hands as being stopped more than once by the police.

Many students wonder why a Stop and Frisk is such a great burden. Professor Gaddeen opened the eyes and ears of the students by explaining a situation. Imagine you are walking home with your boyfriend/girlfriend; suddenly, you get stopped by a police officer, who without warning pins you against a wall and starts to search your shirt, pants and undergarments before letting you go. That act by the NYPD is not only humiliating, but also against the law. Professor Gadsden reminded us that the 4th Amendment protects you from search and seizures. He adds that, “Stop and Frisks are only allowable if you have committed a crime, are about to commit a crime, or you are committing a crime.” The NYPD is not a law making body, thus Stop and Frisk is merely a policy approved by Mayor Bloomberg.

Professor Gadsden explained that “There is no evidence that police brutality leads to reduction in crime.” There were 685,000 Stop and Frisks that were recorded last year; only 800 guns were confiscated. “We should see an increase in gun confiscation as Stop and Frisk increases.” To show how a stop is conducted, he asked the students watching the forum to number themselves where the first person is one and the tenth person is ten, and then it restarts from 1-10 until every person has a number. He asked every person who is number 10 to stand up; they represented the people who were stopped and had guns. This was to prove that the police officers have a 1/10 chance of finding an actual criminal while conducting their unnecessary stops.

This forum was to inform students that, as citizens, students need to know their rights to avoid being stopped and frisked. Preston Baker shared his gratitude to everyone who came; “I’m thankful to George Fragopoulos. He made this happen. Also Professor Roger’s and Professor Gadsden’s presentations were great.” Mariama Coulibaly added, “The policy goes against the Amendments we have, it takes away the ability to exercise our freedom.”
Black Graduation Gap at QCC

When asked about this, Bernardez said that the lack of funding from the CUNY system has had a strong negative effect on students at QCC. “The day care closed down because there wasn’t enough money to support it...so then students have more responsibility to go to school, have a part time job, and then take care of the child...you need to keep spending also to support that child... It’s harder for them to manage,” he says. Lack of funding, Bernardez adds, is added pressure on Blacks to find economic support in part time jobs that may distract them from their studies. They end up being held back from graduating faster or from graduating at all.

Emily Tai, associate professor of history at QCC and member of the university faculty senate, shares a similar opinion as Bernardez in terms of economic factors. “It’s not necessarily a social support issue, but may be a financial issue,” says Tai. Many black students have responsibilities and financial burdens that make it difficult to pay for college, such as needing to help take care of an elderly relative or parents who are between jobs and cannot help with the costs of college.

Such factors also seem to be having an enormous impact on the Black student community when it comes to paying student loan debts. According to the JBHE, 69% of Black students didn’t finish their time in college because of the amount of money they owed to the school. Only 43% of Whites faced similar issues. According to College Insights, an internet source that holds data on college finance and progress, tuition at QCC has been increasing from $3,140 to $3,490 in a matter of three years from 2008 to 2011; a $350 difference. Data on College Measures show that the student default rate for that same period has increased dramatically from 5.6% in 2008 to 7.9% in 2010. This increase is part of larger trend that has seen student loan default rates at QCC skyrocket from 2.8% in 2005 to 7.9% in 2010; that’s a near threefold increase. “I don’t think the decline in any graduation rate can be uncoupled from the stresses that are facing our national economy,” said Tai.

Admissions practices at CUNY may also affect the racial graduation gap among QCC students. Beginning in 1970, CUNY had allowed open admissions to all high school graduates who signed up at CUNY’s five four year institutions. But it was abolished in 2000. According to the New York Times, African Americans who sought to become first time freshmen at CUNY had, on average, scored 10 percent lower in the SAT. Focusing more on test scores, CUNY admissions tend to favor students from better schools with a higher percentage of White students.

But there is help for black and minority students who may be struggling to complete their degrees at QCC and CUNY. Accelerated Study in Associate Programs known as ASAP are available in two year institutions to offer students help with paying off student loans and tuition, and boost graduation rates. The Mens Achieving and Leading in Excellence and Success (M.A.L.E.S) initiative David Bernardez could not agree anymore when he says that the issue derives from “social and economic factors.” He says that any lack of support from the household may contribute to students dropping out of school in high school let alone college. “For example, a student grows up in a home where their mother may work a lot of hours, and dads not around to give that student support to stay in school... chances of drop outs or even early teen pregnancy are high,” he says.

However, such factors do not necessarily account for the steady decrease in black graduation rates seen at QCC since 2005. In fact, of all the CUNY Community Colleges, Queensborough has seen the most significant decrease in graduation and transfer rates for Black students. The Black graduation and transfer rate at LaGuardia Community College, for instance, has remained more or less steady since 2005, while rates at Kingsborough, BMCC, and Bronx have dropped no more than two percentage points.

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enrolled in higher education, but only 19% of them hold a four year degree, compared to 34% of White students. This rate, though low, has actually increased five percentage points over the past four years.

The JBHE suggests that the factors contributing to low graduation rates among African Americans range from a lack of preparation from Kindergarten to 12th grade, to wealth and family issues. Program coordinator of the Mens Achieving and Leading in Excellence and Success (M.A.L.E.S) initiative David Bernardez could not agree anymore when he says that the lack of support from the household may contribute to students dropping out of school in high school let alone college. “For example, a student grows up in a home where their mother may work a lot of hours, and dads not around to give that student support to stay in school... chances of drop outs or even early teen pregnancy are high,” he says.

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Renovation to Include New Dining Area, Kitchen, and Restrooms

Goshow Architects is providing design services to enclose the courtyard within the existing Science Building to create a multi-purpose student facility. QCC lacks a central location on campus where students can gather to eat, study, and collaborate. Enclosure of this space will provide this much needed amenity.

To accommodate budget and funding constraints, the alterations to the building courtyard will be completed in two phases. The first phase will cover the courtyard using ETFE film, a resilient, recyclable and self-cleaning material which is a sustainable, affordable choice for a publicly funded higher education project. The second phase of this project will fully enclose the dining area, and provide a new commercial kitchen and servery.

Source: http://www.gaarchitectsllp.com

Capital projects such as this are handled not only by the Administration and Buildings and Grounds departments of the college, but are largely managed and financed by CUNY and the Dormitory Authority of the State of New York (DASNY).

Though QCC is hopeful that construction will begin in early 2013, the process is a bit more complex than one might think. As Dean Perkins explains, the plans and design for the area must first be finalized. Goshow Architects has the contract to design the structure, though they are not involved in actual construction. Once designed, the project goes “out to bid,” which Perkins describes as the process when contractors across the state submit estimates to QCC, CUNY, and DASNY that include cost analysis, time for completion, and a multitude of other data which is reviewed before a contractor is selected and work begins.

Plans for this renovation of the Science Courtyard have been ongoing at QCC for years and in fact outdate Dean Perkins’ tenure here. Having undergone “at least three years of discussion and design,” Perkins affirms that Interim President Diane Call has been heavily involved in initiating certain stages of the project, which took a six to eight month hiatus at one point in order to incorporate the addition of a second elevator into the plans.
Humanities Courtyard: VIP to Birds Not to Students

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and the constant presence of the pigeons had become a menace. In response to this problem, Buildings and Grounds placed a net over the open space above the courtyard “a few years ago” said Dean Perkins. This solution seems to have solved the pigeon problem, yet the area still remains closed to students and faculty.

The current student government says they have no plans to talk to the administration about the space. “We have no plans regarding that area,” said Preston Baker, the president of the QCC SGA. Baker did say, however that if students came to them with complaints they would be happy to work toward a solution. “This has never been brought to our attention. But if the students came to us, that’s our job” said Baker.

While Perkins explained that “it is not within the power of the Buildings and Grounds department to reopen the area, but rather the Administration,” Sherri L. Newcomb, Vice President for Finance & Administration said definitively that “there are no plans to open the 3rd floor Humanities Courtyard at this time.”

“it is not within the power of the Buildings and Grounds department to reopen the area, but rather the Administration...”

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Plastic owls nesting in the pottery
A lot of students nationwide are in debt. Student debt is rising every year and college costs, as well as graduate school costs, have gone up faster than inflation. Even though there is financial aid available for many students, such help is frequently not enough to cover the rising costs of tuition, books, and room and board. Combine this with the fact that fewer students are getting jobs after college, and you have the recipe for what many are calling a student loan debt crisis.

Two thirds of the national college class of 2011 finished school with loan debt, and those who borrowed walked off the graduation stage owing on average $26,600 up about 5 percent from the class before. At the same time, unemployment for recent college graduates jumped from 5.8% in 2008 to 8.7% in 2011 the highest annual rate on record. In the United States, in 2010 student debt exceeded credit-card debt for the first time. In 2011 that debt had exceeded that of all auto loans, and in March, the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau announced that student debt had passed $1 trillion. It grew by $300 billion from the third quarter of 2008 even as other forms of debt shrunk by $1.6 trillion, according to a separate tabulation by the Federal Reserve Bank of New York.

As the number of people taking out government backed student loans has exploded, so has the numbers who have fallen at least 12 months behind in making payments. The number of students currently in default is approximately 5.9 million nationwide, up about a third in the last five years. As a share of a household income, the debt burden was the greatest for the poorest 20 percent of households, or those making less than $21,044. In all, 40 percent of U.S. households headed by someone younger than age 35 owed college debts, the highest share of any age group. On top of that, the non-profit Project on Student Debt reports that America’s student loan debt is growing at a rate of $2,853.88 per second. So, instead of young adults graduating with hopes and dreams of a better future, they are graduating with the pending doom of creditors. And with unemployment at record high levels, graduates are finding a harder time paying back those loans.

In CUNY Colleges for the next fours they are raising the tuition which means taking out more money on loans. I spoke to a student at QCC named Emily who said that “CUNY might not think that it is a big difference for us students, but it is, especially for the students that are going to come in two or three year the tuition are going to be much higher.”
By Sabrina Aumuller

Taking the bus, ideally, should be avoided at all costs. Some people on the bus just don’t know how to act. Not only do you have that one couple that can’t stop making out on the back of the bus but you also have the rude people that don’t get up for the elderly. Not to mention those people that will not move to the back of the bus for whatever reason. It’s probably to get away from that couple that can’t stop making out.

Every morning I take the painful hour and a half bus ride from my house to QCC. The buses are beyond crowded in the morning. Everyone needs to get to school and work. When I finally get on a bus I’m lucky enough to be standing near one of the many people that feel it is okay to blast their music. I’m sorry but I’d like to actually be able to hear my own music over your obnoxiously loud music.

Luckily, I manage to get a seat on the bus once we stop at the mall and everyone gets off to transfer to the train. Then of course I get the pleasure of having the person that has not stopped coughing the entire bus ride to sit next to me. The bus begins to get crowded once again and the bus driver decides that he is not moving until everyone is behind the white line. This is when I get most annoyed. I don’t understand why nobody wants to move to the back of the bus. No matter how many times the bus driver tells people to move they continue to stay in one spot.

When the bus finally arrives at Main Street I get on the Q27, which is another horrible bus ride. The Q27 is always crowded. The Q27 never seems to be empty. I’ve noticed that many elderly people take that bus. It gets me so angry when I see an elderly person get on the bus and no one gets up for them. You can see that they had trouble getting on the bus and you have those people that continue to just sit down. It’s so rude. Whenever I see an older person get on the bus I make sure I get up for them to sit.

Another thing that drives me crazy is when you are waiting for the bus and people just push and shove to get on the bus. I understand you want to get to where you have to go as soon as possible but it’s just rude. There can be older people and pregnant woman on the line and people will continue to push and shove. I always make sure I let any pregnant woman or elderly person on the bus before me.

On the bus ride home I always manage to get the seat near the couple that can’t keep away from each other. I also get on the bus with high school and middle school students who need to talk so loudly to their friends who are sitting right next to them. There is no reason the talk so loudly on the bus especially if you are sitting near your friends.

I’m sure many of you can relate and have suffered throughout at the hands of the MTA. I know my friend is always telling me a different story about his horrible bus ride to school in the morning. Hopefully people’s bus etiquette will improve. If not, you can always take up jogging.

By John Duran

Did you hear about the school’s new hang out spot? There are computers to use, books to read, places to sleep in, and you can even eat there! It’s called the Schmeller Library. The overcrowded library seems to have become a shelter as well as a place for students who are waiting between classes to kill time. That rule about not talking in the library seems to have been lifted as well because students can be heard talking from every corner of the library. And if the librarian reprimands you about eating, there! It’s called the Schmeller Library. The overcrowded library seems to have become a shelter as well as a place for students who are waiting between classes to kill time. That rule about not talking in the library seems to have been lifted as well because students can be heard talking from every corner of the library. And if the librarian reprimands you about eating, you can even find snack wrappers and potato chip bags inside the books (this really happened to me). Students use the available desks to sleep in or watch television shows on their laptops and leave no room for people that actually need the desks to study. The aisles are crowded with people deep in conversation or trying to do the work they would have done on an available desk.

I go to the library for three hours every Tuesdays and Thursdays and I can honestly say there has not been one day where none of this happened. There are, of course, several problems with this, because the library is supposed to be a relaxing and educational environment where students go to do research, homework, or even for tutoring. One of the problems is that the students who actually need the library don’t have the available space to do so because it is packed like a can of sardines with students who just go to kill time. The library’s computers and printers make it a prime center for students who need to print work out or copy things that they would not normally be able to do in other buildings. There lies the other problem; you can’t just kick out a large amount of students onto the campus. Even if the rules were strictly enforced the library would still be overcrowded, which means the campus has a lack of space for students to spend time in other than classrooms. Even the Student Union building, which houses couches and pool tables for the entertainment of those that wish to spend time there, is overcrowded.

This lack of space forces the students to stay in the learning buildings, overcrowding the hallways, and as mentioned, overcrowding the library and student government building. To fix this recurring problem the school should invest in either extending a section of a current building or building a new one dedicated specifically to housing students on their off hours. QCC has no dorms, and there aren’t that many places to go that are near the school. For someone who perhaps has a hour break and can’t afford the time to get home or somewhere off campus, such a building would be of highest importance. You just can’t have the students over all the steps outside (especially in this cold weather) or striking up loud conversations in places where people are trying to learn. If the student body is given a place to go to then I guarantee that the hallways would be clear of loiterers, there will be more than enough room in the student government building, and Kurt R Schmeller will return to its former glory as an educational facility and not the loud, dirty hole it’s currently becoming.

Club Schmeller

The QCC Communiqué is looking for a few good writers for its Spring 2013 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.

Do you want to share your ideas with others?

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 James Hoff at jhoff@qcc.cuny.edu.

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Opinion

State Laws Slowly Chipping Away at Marijuana Prohibition

By Azzouzi Nsouli

A favorite pastime for millions of Americans has been the use of marijuana. Although illegal and frowned upon because of its classification as a drug, many question how bad for you it really is. This past November, following the presidential elections was something nobody expected; marijuana was legalized in both Colorado and Washington state. After voters took it to the ballot, the recreational use of cannabis was made legal for adults ages 21 and older.

The law in Colorado and Washington now states that as long as an individual is of the age limit and is carrying no more than an ounce of marijuana on their person then they are fully within their rights. Now here’s the tricky part; the possession of marijuana is still illegal in the eyes of federal law, so users have to be careful. Before the votes were in, analysts had already predicted that the motion would pass in Washington and Massachusetts while analysts had already predicted that the motion would pass in Washington and Massachusetts while voters took it to the ballot, the recreational use of cannabis was made legal for adults ages 21 and older.

To follow through. That said, federal law doesn’t break out the Cheetos or Goldfish too quickly.” So in regards to the federal government and the fact that marijuana has been made legal, it is still banned on college campuses across Colorado and Washington. For along time, colleges and universities have had rules and regulations banning marijuana, and if one takes into consideration the fact that many of these institutions are funded by the federal government (which still considers marijuana an illegal substance) it only makes sense for them to not support the newly passed laws in these states. Since it was many young Americans that helped to pass the legalization, they’re disappointed to see this limitation being placed on their favorite past-time. One Washington State college student, Anna Marum said, “The first thing you think of when you think of legalized marijuana is college students smoking it. It’s ironic that all 21-year-olds in Washington can smoke marijuana except for college students.” With all that said, it is clear that the younger generation of Americans have a huge impact on the government, and the legalization of marijuana in two states of this nation is a clear factor of that. Never would anyone have thought that this could be possible in the United States, for years marijuana has been frowned upon in this country, even medically many weren’t happy with it being used as a medicinal treatment. This is certainly a major stepping stone in the history of this country. Now the real question is what will the federal governments next move be in regards to dealing with this? And if they do allow it, will more states within the nation be next, will the United States of America officially make marijuana a legal substance in the near future?

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ATTENTION: QCC Students

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C'mon Down!
to the Band Room

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7:15-9:30

Dr. Bernard Rose-Band Director
Contact: qsband@gmail.com
Professor Bill Myles is a Tai Chi and swim instructor at QCC. In September of 2010 he was diagnosed with Lupus, an autoimmune disease that can affect several different areas of the body.

Myles began to suffer from the disease in late 2009, though doctors were unable to determine the cause of his ailments until almost one year later. Since then, he has made a tremendous recovery, the likes of which health professionals involved in his treatment have not seen before. Myles attributes his ascent back to health to three distinct avenues of treatment.

“You have to think of it as a three-legged stool,” he said, when asked about his methods. “You need all three legs to balance one in order to keep you up.”

The first ‘leg’ of the stool is traditional medicine. Myles underwent diagnostic and post-diagnostic treatment for his health problems at the NYU Medical Center. He has worked with a Dr. Honig, MD in treating his Lupus, who prescribed him Prednisone, along with other steroidal medications in order to help with joint pains and other ailments associated with the disease. Over time, Myles’ prescribed dosage of Prednisone (which is known to have a large number of attributed side-effects) has been lowered.

Myles maintains appointments every “Six months or so,” with Dr. Honig, who claims complete responsibility for his recovery, and laughed when he learned that his patient was seeking alternative methods of treatment.

These alternative methods make up the second ‘leg’ of Myles’ theoretical stool. In February of 2011, shortly after he had been diagnosed with the disease and began treatment with Dr. Honig, Professor Myles was introduced to Zina Kroner. According to the website for her practice, Advanced Medicine of New York “Dr. Zina Kroner is a board-certified internist who completed her residency at North Shore University Hospital in NY.” Determined to bring his health back to where he was before his decline, Myles started what he calls “vitamin and mineral treatment” under the guidance of Dr. Kroner, who specializes in creating personalized regimens for patients based on state-of-the-art blood testing and analysis that is done on site during each visit. Professor Myles visits Advanced Medicine of New York every “three to four months,” and is very happy with the results of the treatment he’s received thus far.

The third, but by far not least important ‘leg’ is a routine of exercise, diet, and meditation that the professor keeps. This part of treatment is administered by Myles himself and consists of 10-15 minutes of meditation each day, in addition to walking three to five miles, swimming two miles, and keeping a strictly gluten-free diet supplemented by lots of vegetables and proteins. Before his diagnosis, Myles was still swimming, walking, teaching classes, and altogether living rather healthily, though in the process of his rehabilitation he has taken this idea to new extremes, making it an integral part of his daily life.

According to Myles, none of these three techniques are the key to his regained health, but rather the combination of them. “If I had just taken the treatment at the hospital, and not the other [vitamin and mineral] treatment and exercise, I wouldn’t be better like I am.”

His decline from health began in late 2009. “I had aches and pains, very low energy, and I didn’t know what was going on.” By June 2010 he’d completely lost the use of his left leg, a phenomenon Myles and his doctors are still not able to explain.

In the Summer of 2010 he was down to 128 pounds from his regular weight of 160, and sleeping “45 minutes on the hour.” As well as experiencing the red facial rashes associated with Lupus. It was not until roughly two months later that Myles was finally diagnosed with Lupus and began treatment. It was also found that he had become completely anemic, another issue that has reversed during his miraculous recovery.

During this time, Professor Myles continued to teach his classes at QCC from the confines of crutches. “I had a car service bring me from home to do my swimming and my Tai Chi classes, and then they’d pick me up and bring me back to Manhattan,” he explains.

As the medications prescribed by Dr. Honig began to take effect, Professor Myles regained the use of his leg and was able to walk with the use of a cane. He was introduced to Dr. Kroner in February of 2011 and within a month was no longer using the cane.

He is now still teaching classes and feeling healthier than ever, except for one thing:

“I still have no feeling in my feet.”

When I heard this I was stunned. One of the key elements of Tai Chi is the balance one has within their body and almost all of the art is done standing up.

“Yeah it’s like pins and needles in my feet.” Professor Myles says with this with half a grin on his face, as he explains his philosophy for health and peace of mind “Even though I was teaching Tai Chi and swimming before [being diagnosed] I was still a more stressed person than I wanted to believe. My whole attitude has changed. I don’t worry or stress about things anymore, and My Tai Chi is better.”
Queensborough: A History of Pride

By John Duran

Queensborough Community College has a very rich and interesting past. The QCC campus was originally part of the Oakland Country Club, one of whose buildings we still use today as the art gallery and faculty dining area. In September of 1960, Queensborough opened up as the third community college in New York City, with a student body of only 200. The two colleges that came before it were Bronx Community College and Staten Island Community College. Because the school was just starting out, students used the previous club’s buildings, mobile classrooms, and some off campus residences to do their studies. It wasn’t until 1962 that the school began working on new buildings. QCC was led by President Joseph P. Murray, who was a professor at Long Island University and the state housing commissioner. It later became a part of the City University of New York when CUNY was established in April of 1961 along with two other community colleges and four senior colleges. The school started to grow in 1962 when construction started on the Engineering building. Before then, students would meet for classes in local high schools and sometimes in mobile classrooms parked on the property. By 1978, the school already had the Science building, the library, the Medical Arts building, and the Administration building. The Oakland building had wings added to it, one of which burned in a fire in 1970 destroying the radio studio.

From five clubs to over six different houses, the students had started their extracurricular activities right away, at this point led by professors or university staff. The Communiqué itself was created in 1960 by Dr. Roger Dooley and students then had to apply for jobs on the Communiqué staff. Using photo offset printing the first issue was out to students in October of 1961 and was an immediate success! Besides being in the Communiqué, there was a literary magazine called ECHO that published literary works by students. Another first for publications was the yearbook, which was created by the first graduating class of 1962. It was named the Aurora and that name still remains today. The book itself is filled with information about its president, the various clubs and houses, several news articles about the creation of the school, and of course pictures and quotes from students and faculty members.

Today, the school has ten buildings and the student body has grown considerably to about 14,000. As the campus grew, QCC was able to offer more classes and more opportunities to the students. Today, there are 17 academic departments and more than 300 courses to choose from. One of the most significant changes to the school was the application of tuition in 1970, having been a free learning establishment beforehand.

With the open enrollment came a wave of diversity. Students from all over the world diversified the school with new clubs that promoted culture and events like the multicultural fair. Some of these clubs had special guest speakers and entertainers come in and speak to the school. One of them was Reverend Al Sharpton, who came on behalf of the Black Student Union to speak about overcoming adversity and making it far in the outside world. Community was important to the school and its long running Circle K club which was a gathering of students that went out into the neighborhoods around the school and lent a helping hand. This was even furthered with the growth of environmental awareness in the late 90’s/early 2000’s.

One thing the students knew how to do well was live. Not only were there many planned activities on the campus, but students gathered in large numbers to plan vacations together during the breaks. The school had ski trips, pumpkin carving contests, yearly fashion shows, and huge parties like Fright Night (the Halloween festival), the Christmas party, and the yearly end of the year BBQ Cookout. There was even a radio station, WQCC, which played in the cafeteria all day long. This unity helped them excel both in academic and social areas and kept the student body alive.

However, along the way there were some bumps in the road, and they too are a part of the school’s history. With the addition of all the new buildings, the popularity of Queensborough Community College was increasing, and with it its population. Because of the increase, the city passed an open enrollment policy that would give admittance to a wider variety of students to fit their needs. This caused a higher demand in funds that the city could not meet and the city defaulted on payments causing the school to close for two weeks. After that, QCC officially became a tuition implementing school. However, open enrollment did not come easy. The whole ordeal started with minority students from CUNY schools protesting about the disadvantages they had and about the huge White population across CUNY schools. That is why CUNY finally allowed the open enrollment admissions after hearing their demands and investigating the situation. Open enrollment was the admittance of students into the schools without prior examinations, meaning anyone could join the school would be less selective. Open enrollment did not receive a warm welcome though, as many students protested across CUNY and QCC had its first sit-in in the administration building, involving over 400 students. A large amount of faculty CUNY-wide quit their jobs in disagreement with continued on next page
The only protest to put a hold on these protests was the shooting of a QCC student later in the year by an off-duty cop. Although it was off campus, it caused a controversy because he was well known and people argued whether he was at fault or the cop. He was killed outside a bar where he jokingly pointed a BB gun at the bouncers, and the off-duty cop shot and killed him. However, other deaths had happened in the school’s community throughout the years, like a professor who was killed in a car accident and another who died at a spiritual retreat.

There are also great highlights in the school’s history. Queensborough Community College was one of the first community colleges to offer classes and transportation aid to students with special needs. The school had a telephone program, which gave the students the opportunity to plan better in getting to the school. Unfortunately the campus had much to do before they were fully admitted but it was a first step, one that is evident today. Summer of 1975, the school gave a six week orientation program to 26 blind students, giving them a better chance at education and allowing them to be on par with everyone else. Also under its highlights is President Kurt R. Schmeller’s decision to speak up at a conference on Women and Higher Education, in which he discussed legal ways to put an end to all the sexual harassment that was taking place not only in the school but in the state. One of the school’s professors, Henry Zenger, actually worked with NASA to help develop fiber optics in a campus laboratory. That’s right, fiber optics started at QCC. Over the years many programs opened to allow the disabled and the illegal to attend the university.

A look at the school’s history is not complete without a look at its leaders. Joseph P McMurray was like the father of the school, being he was its first president in 1958. He worked hard to find a site for the school as well as staff members and temporary classrooms. It’s because of him that QCC is located in Bayside. He was president from 1958 to 1962.

His successor, Doctor Dumont F Kenney, installed and created many things for the school. He helped plan the new buildings and the new clubs, including Phi Theta Kappa, one of the school’s honor societies. Under his leadership, the school’s physical shape began to take form. Doctor Kenney also donated money to scholarship funds and enforced the importance of sports earlier on in the school. He was principal from 1963 to 1967.

The school’s longest running president was Kurt R. Schmeller, whom the library is named after. Under Schmeller, the school’s buildings were completed, open enrollment and tuition placement began, and the school took its first steps into being accessible to the disabled. He also implemented the use of adjuncts in the school. The world changed as well as the years saw a lot of protests and diversity. Schmeller was unfortunately involved in a scandal, as already mentioned, which lead to most of the school’s decisions to be run by a representative of CUNY. However, the student body blossomed while he led.

The new millennium came with a new president as Schmeller retired and made way for Doctor Eduardo J. Marti, one of the school’s leading presidents. Under Marti, there was ease of diversity and more programs for immigrants and freshmen. By the time he was appointed, there were 9 student clubs and organizations dedicated to the understanding of different cultures. Because he was an immigrant himself, Dr. Marti made sure that all students, even undocumented ones, had a chance to excel in the university. 

He also established the school’s annual scholarship fundraiser which aimed to add assistance the financial aid already taking place, as many students were in need. In furthering the education of students, he oversaw the opening of the nursing department’s new virtual hospital and the Kupferberg Holocaust Center, and started a new career mentoring program where alumni would come and assist current students in taking that next step into the working world. Doctor Marti also helped set up proper remediation programs to teach remedial classes. He spent his time as president working for the students and making sure they received the proper education they deserved regardless of race, disability, or immigration status. And that brings us to our current interim president, Dr. Diane B. Call, who was the school’s Vice President of Finance & Administration for many years, and under whom the smoking ban was passed.

Although the campus is all a buzz and much different from its original state, certain things remain the same. Even in 1961 there was a Q27 bus that dropped students off at the school. The school still offers transfer credits and job opportunities for those that become a part of it. Queensborough Community College has not swayed from its original purpose either; to give a chance to life and learning to students who were turned away from other institutions and a place to move above and beyond in life, regardless of circumstances. This year it celebrated its 53rd anniversary, and may Queensborough keep on going.
Santa’s Back in Town, Already?

By Melpomeni Amorgianos

The holidays are finally here: that time of the year when everything revolves around food, family, gifts and decorations. Whether it is Christmas, Hanukkah, or New Years, it is a time of joy and family celebration. However, the holidays can also bring stress and anxiety to many people: figuring out which gifts to buy, if the gifts you bought are right for that person, if your decorations make a statement, if you try to remember sending a greeting card to “Uncle Joe”, if “Grandma Mays” cookies force you to forget about your diet, or even eating at “Grandma Mays” means having to force unpleasant food down your throat. The holidays are a mixture of emotions. With some help, you can survive this festive time of the year and enjoy yourself while making new memories with your loved ones.

Gifts

The hardest part of the holiday season is the gifts. It is hard to find the perfect gift for someone, especially when it’s important for it to be perfect. Think of what they like, think of their personality, think of a certain inside joke or a memory between you. Do not ask a person what they want, and never tell them what you’ve bought them: it ruins the surprise. Try to personalize the gift, this way it means more to the receiver. Try to pay attention to the things they mention, people often drop hints as soon as the holiday season rolls around.

Broke?

Around this time of year, many department stores and businesses are hiring for the holiday season. Help is much needed due to all the shoppers. For example, Macy’s announced they are hiring 80,000 seasonal associates this holiday season. This would be a great way to make some extra money, so you too can surprise your loved ones with gifts and you could maybe treat yourself also.

Decorations and Greeting Cards

Decorating can be frustrating. Usually no one knows where to begin. Gather your family together and bring up ideas on how your home should be decorated. Working together will save you time, and will bring you closer during this time of year. Remember, great minds think alike, so the possibilities and ideas on decorating will be endless. Before sending your greeting cards, make sure to make a list of who will receive one. Make sure you have everyone’s correct address. Be organized and creative. Your greeting cards should be personalized, this way they mean more to your loved ones.

Food

On a diet? Then the holidays are your worst nightmare. The amount of food this time of year is endless. From turkey, to stuffing, to cookies and chocolate, it never ends. It is important to grab a quick snack before the party so that you won’t feel starved. Make sure you continue to count your calories. A great idea is to cook your own healthy dish to bring to the party, this way the holiday dinner doesn’t completely throw off your diet. Not enjoying “Grandma Mays” dinner? Well pretend you are. It is rude to upset your host. Remember to thank them at the end for everything.

Giving Back

It is unfortunate that many New Yorkers are dealing with hardships and are in need of help. There are many charities in the city that give back to the less fortunate with support from donations and volunteers. Some of the charities that serve these unfortunate people are, The Salvation Army Greater New York Division, The Food Bank for New York City, CityMeals-On-Wheels, and God’s Love We Deliver.
Christmas Recipes for Your Inner Waisseler

By Alyssa Ruiz

Christmas is one of the most festive holidays on the calendar. It’s all about family, decorating, Christmas carols, gifts, and of course lots of food and drinks. If you’re searching for the perfect holiday recipe, don’t miss out on these taste bud explosion ideas.

1 Creamy Eggnog - A holiday classic made with a soft custard base. This creamy drink is sure to usher you into a sweet holiday slumber.

For the Soft Custard you need:
- 3 eggs, slightly beaten
- 1/3 cup granulated sugar
- Dash of salt
- 2 1/2 cups of milk
- 1 teaspoon of vanilla

For the Eggnog you need:
- 1 cup of whipping cream
- 2 tablespoons of powdered sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon of vanilla
- 1/2 cup of light rum
- Ground nutmeg

Step 1: In a 2-quart heavy saucepan, stir the eggs, granulated sugar and salt until they are well mixed. Gradually stir in the milk. Cook over medium heat 10 to 15 minutes; keep stirring until the mixture coats a metal spoon. When that happens, remove from heat. Stir in 1 teaspoon vanilla. Place saucepan in cold water until custard is cool. (If the custard curdles, beat vigorously with hand beater until its smooth.) Cover and refrigerate for at least 2 hours but no longer than 24 hours.

Step 2: Just before serving, in a chilled medium bowl, beat whipping cream, powdered sugar and 1/2 teaspoon vanilla with a mixer on high speed until it is stiff. Gently stir 1 cup of the whipped cream, and the rum into custard.

Step 3: Pour the custard mixture into small bowl. Drop remaining whipped cream in mounds onto the custard mixture. Sprinkle with nutmeg. Serve immediately. It can be stored in the refrigerator for up to 2 days.

2 Roasted Pork (Pernil) - Instead of making the usual, like glazed ham or turkey, this Spanish dish is very delicious. Whether you make it for a grand Christmas party or a cozy Christmas dinner it will definitely leave your family and friends with watery mouths.

For this dish you will need:
- 4 to 5lb boneless Pork picnic half (pork thigh)
- 1 tbsp salt
- 1 tsp black pepper
- 1 tsp Oregano
- 1/4 cup of lemon juice
- 5 Garlic Cloves (finely chopped)
- 1 cup of vinegar, if desired for a tangier taste

Step 1: Rinse the pork thoroughly. If you decide to use vinegar let it soak in a bowl for 25 minutes, then rinse.

Step 2: Set the pork aside and mix the salt, black pepper, and oregano and garlic. Make sure the garlic is finely chopped or mashed up to enhance the flavor. Then finally add the lemon juice. Stir well until it’s thoroughly combined.

Step 3: Take the pork and poke 5-6 holes on each side. This will allow the seasoning to get deep inside providing maximum flavor. Then pour your marinade over the pork. Making sure your marinade gives the pork full coverage. Once this is done, DO NOT cook it. Let it marinate in the fridge overnight or for two nights.

Step 4: To cook, preheat the oven to 300 degrees. Then place the pork on a deep baking pan (I HIGHLY recommend that you line the pan with aluminum foil for easier cleanup) and pour the excess marinade over it. Cover well with aluminum foil and transfer to the oven to let it cook. It is very important that you let it cook for 4 hours at 300 degrees! (4 is enough, but if the roast is a couple of pounds larger, leave it in for 5 hours covered.) After 4 hours of cooking time, take the pan out of the oven, remove the aluminum foil, then crank up the heat to 450 degrees and place the pork back into the oven. Let it cook for an additional 20 – 30 minutes keeping a close eye on it. Doing this step will make the pork skin crispy and also finish giving the pork some more color. Once the pork is nice golden and crispy, remove from the oven and let it rest for 10 – 15 minutes.

Step 5: After letting it rest, the pork will be really juicy and tender. Transfer the meat to a serving platter and to finish it off, dust it with a pinch of salt (this step is optional but it gives the pork even more flavor). You can serve this dish with some fresh lime wedges and a side of rice or vegetables.

3 Frosty the Snowman Candy Face Cake

This Cake is a really easy recipe that can be fun for both Adults and children to make.

You will need:

1 box Betty Crocker SuperMoist cake mix (any flavor)
Water, vegetable oil and eggs (what is required on the box)
1 container Betty Crocker® Rich & Creamy vanilla frosting
8 pretzel rods
About 18 large gumdrops in assorted colors
2 candy canes (break them in half)

Step 1: Heat oven to 350°F and grease or spray the bottom and sides of a round cake pan.

Step 2: Make and bake cake mix as directed on box. Cool 10 minutes; remove from pan and cool completely for about 1 hour.

Step 3: Spread frosting over side and top of each cake. continued on next page
4 Winter Wonderland Sangria

This is by far the best sangria ever! A must recipe! When you make sangria it all depends on the amount of people you’re making for. This recipe is for a decent amount of people, not to many but not a small amount.

To make this you’ll need:
- A pitcher
- Carlo Rossi white wine
- Blue curacao
- 2 part Coconut ciroc
- 1 orange
- 1 red apple
- Seedless red grapes

Step 1: When buying the white wine get a bottle you think will be enough because you will be using the whole thing. Add the white wine, a half of cup blue curacao, and 2 parts of the coconut ciroc into the pitcher and stir.

Step 2: Cut your orange and apple into small slices, cut your grapes in half. Add the fruit into the pitcher. Stir. Serve chilled. The longer you let the sangria sit in the pitcher, the better it will taste.

Everyone at the QCC Communique wish you and your loved ones a Happy and Healthy Holiday Season and Bright New Year!
New Year’s Resolutions: Advice from a Self-Proclaimed Expert

continued from cover page

in continuing. Go to that new movie you’ve been dying to see, or finally buy that new dress that you’re been wanting. Make yourself want to achieve. Remember to be realistic; however; failing at an impossible goal will likely deter you from ever trying again. Give yourself a reachable goal and clearly mark a path to achieving it.

Get Realistic

So many of us get caught up in the thrill of the New Year, it’s a time for change: new relationships, new careers, and new experiences. And in the midst of that excitement, we tend to go a little overboard with our New Year’s resolutions. Don’t create a long list of impossible goals for yourself. Setting yourself up for failure by setting a goal you know you won’t be able to achieve will only diminish your pride. Instead, pinpoint a goal that you’re confident in, then focus all your energy on achieving it.

Enlist in the Help of Your Friends and Family

Who says you have to go it alone? Studies show that having support from others can help make difficult goals easier to achieve. Having the support of your loved ones can be just the boost you need to keep you on track. Inform your friends and family of your resolutions, and ask them to help you. Think of them as your own personal support team. Together you can celebrate your small victories and calculate your setbacks. Their support, coupled with your reluctance to let them down, will prevent you from falling off the path.

Remove the Temptation

At the start of the year, we’re all fueled with motivation and a strong desire to achieve. We’re ready to move mountains and tackle any obstacle preventing us from achieving our goals. But as much as we believe that a little willpower can go a long way, constantly facing our temptations can make even the strongest constitution waver. The thing is, lack of motivation isn’t the problem, it’s the temptations. So how do you avoid it? It’s easy to sit down and throw your hands up in defeat. The real challenge is carrying on even when the going gets rough. Your resolution is a long term goal to better yourself, and a few relapses along the way are to be expected. Don’t let one minor setback throw you; use it as a learning experience. Learning new skills or kicking bad habits can be challenging because they test our abilities and willpower. Be strong and don’t back down.

Set a Deadline

Don’t let your New Year’s resolution drag on for months on end. Strike while the iron’s hot. Don’t wait until your enthusiasm to succeed has dwindled down and you can hardly remember the purpose of your resolution in the first place. A deadline will keep you on track and give you the added push you need to continue on with your goal. Complete your resolutions in a timely fashion, don’t let them dip into next year’s resolutions.

New Year’s resolutions are the perfect way to challenged ourselves. And with the appropriate plan of action, any feat is achievable. So go ahead, take up rock climbing, finally become a ladies’ man (though I don’t know why you’d want to), be the person you’ve always wanted to be. The process may be grueling but the results are well worth it.

New Year’s Resolutions from QCC Student:

By Danielle Del Priore

The holidays are in full gear which can only mean one thing for QCC. New Year’s Resolutions. Students are not only celebrating Christmas, but also making promises to themselves for the upcoming New Year. Omar Abbas, a sophomore at QCC says, “My new year’s resolution is to study more and become more prepared for the Air Force.” QCC students not only care about college, but also personal aspects of their life that they want to improve. For example, Oriana Rodriguez, also a sophomore majoring in Liberal Arts comments that, “I want to become a better person.”

Personal resolutions were a bit more diverse. Some of the students’ resolutions were as petty as “mine would be to get the best grades.” While others were a bit more challenging, such as “To become a better listener.” President Preston always puts the students’ needs first; by creating and promoting events such as pep rallies, he encourages school spirit. QCC is filled with athletes, and after speaking with Will Allen, a member of the Men’s Indoor Track Team, he enlightened me by saying, “If I were to have one (resolution) it would be to balance sports and academics more. Right now academics aren’t important enough to me. Sports overpower it by too much. I really need to change that.” It is essential to make room for what you love to do, and what you need to do when it comes to a student’s future in college.

Statistics from statisticbrain.com show in 2012 only 45% of people in New York City made a New Year’s Resolution. Out of the resolutions that were made, the top three were to lose weight, be more organized, and to save more, spend less. The number 9 resolution was to fall in love, which relates to Chris Gonzalez, who is 19 and a sophomore at QCC. When questioned about his resolution, he simply stated, “I want to meet a girl whom I can look back at one day and say, ‘Man, I really loved that girl.’” My personal resolution would be to become more responsible and aware of my surroundings. So whether it’s receiving better grades, becoming a better person, solving money troubles or finding Mr./Ms. Right, most students have something to look forward to in 2013.
A Beastly Good Time: The Mainstream Takeover of Independent Film.

By Luke Tabet

As Hollywood continues to churn out its endless string of sequels, re-makes, and star-studded action blockbusters, a new movement is taking place. Moviegoers turn to under-the-radar releases such as “Beasts of the Southern Wild” and “Moonrise Kingdom” for a more intellectual experience. Since the turn of the century independent film has changed a great deal. The genre (dubbed “indie”) is no longer comprised solely of films that are not backed financially by a major studio, but is recognized as a distinct style of artistic expression.

Released earlier this year, ‘Beasts of the Southern Wild’ is director Benh Zeitlin’s first effort. The film focuses on a small, defiant town that chooses to cut its contact with the outside world and sustain itself. In this town – affectionately called ‘The Bathtub’ - a man and his daughter (played by newcomers Dwight Henry and Quvenzhané Wallis) live together and teach one another about the world. The film has a shy but vibrant beauty to it. It is dazzling visually and has a bittersweet nostalgia to it that makes this film an important piece of Americana. The concept is that The Bathtub and its population are leftover from Hurricane Katrina and refuse to be evacuated or to accept aid of any kind. Many of the actors lived through the storm themselves, including Henry, who was asked to accept the role after Zeitlin walked into his bakery across the street from auditions and decided he had the look and attitude for the role. This unorthodox cast of first time actors lends itself to the reality of the film, making it easy for the viewer to suspend their disbelief.

The movie distinguishes itself through its use of metaphors and experimental techniques, which can deter most regular moviegoers. However this new movement is seeing Indies make their way to mainstream. The film is driven strongly by a voice-over narrative provided by the startlingly forceful Quvenzhané Wallis. “Beasts” alternates between busy, intense interactions of characters and long sequences with no dialogue which causes the audience to flow with the scenes, setting a rhythmic pattern.

As the plot progresses, tensions raise between Hushpuppy (Wallis) and her father as we gain insight to their familial past. After a stirring scene in which Hushpuppy sends her cabin up in flames, a harsh rainstorm afflicts the Bathtub, and the remaining townspeople collect and live together in a small hut. When a small group of men from the town blow a hole in a retaining wall in an attempt to drain water from the Bathtub an agency comes in and relocates the whole town a shelter, which they then break out of.

The grainy, worn-down look of the film adds to the magic of the scenery and color. The juxtaposition of Quvenzhané Wallis being such a small thing in such a big world is a repeated motif of the film.

Looking at “Moonrise Kingdom,” it has all the elements of an indie film. Wes Anderson - one of the most prolific figures in the genre - directs this colorful, candid story of young love in 1960’s New England. While audiences look to more sophisticated means of entertainment (mostly represented by a wave of new TV shows which adapt much of the style of indie genres) so are the actors in the industry. While the Oscars will always maintain their spot in the forefront of the industry’s adoration, Independent Film Festivals such as Sundance and Cannes are becoming major vehicles for up and coming filmmakers to break into the mainstream.

“Moonrise” boasts an all-star cast, grace by big shots Bruce Willis, Bill Murray, Frances McDormand, Edward Norton, Jason Schwartzman, Tilda Swinton, and Harvey Keitel. The film keeps audiences laughing, and engages them with the personal drama of its wide cast of characters while at the same time remaining true to the Indie genre. Anderson’s personal style of deadpan delivery and unique scenes is ever present, transcending the ordinary Hollywood look and feel of star-studded films such as this.

The film centers around two young kids who run off together into the woods of a small beach community on an island in the Northeast, believing they are in love after having met just once. As things progress, the town comes together in their search for the missing children. The film is colorful both visually and idealistically, and has garnered much attention.

Both films recently took awards at the 22nd Annual Gotham Independent Film Awards, which saw Benh Zeitlin win for Breakthrough Director and bestowing its greatest honor on Wes Anderson for “Moonrise Kingdom” which won Best Feature.
Rise of the Guardians

If to save the world you had to believe in yourself, but you couldn’t because you didn’t know who you were? Director Peter Ramsey’s holiday flick Rise of the Guardians explores that and much more in a film that has you revisiting your inner child while giving you wisdom and motivation.

The horrible boogie man (Jude Law) has escaped from capture and is trying to instill fear across the children of the world for he feels that is the only way they’ll believe in him. The moon calls upon the guardians of the world and gives them the task of saving the children all while introducing a new guardian, Jack Frost (Chris Pine). Jack and the guardians, North (Alec Baldwin), Tooth (Isa Fisher), Bunny (Hugh Jackman), and the Sandman (who was mute), quickly set out to save the holidays and keep the fear out of the children’s lives. Unlike the other guardians Jack is invisible to the world, because no one believes in him or thinks he exists. That, and the loss of his true memories, sends Jack on a path of confusion that almost gets him captured by Pitch, the boogieman. Simultaneously, Pitch releases...

Breaking Dawn Part Two

The Twilight era comes to an end with its last film, Breaking Dawn Part 2, directed by Bill Condon. Bella (Kristen Stewart), Edward (Robert Pattinson), and the rest of the Cullens get into some trouble with the Volturis and need help. Irina played by Maggie Grace tells the Volturi that Bella and Edward have an immortal child. Having an immortal child is against the rules because it causes havoc in the towns. The Cullen family must team up with the Quileutes tribe (werewolves) in order to convince some of Carlisle’s (Peter Facinelli) friends to save Bella and Edward’s child, Renesmee (Mackenzie Foy) from the Volturi. By proving to the Volturi that Renesmee is half mortal and half immortal they can save the family’s lives. The ending of the film is action packed and fills the audience with excitement. There will be a roar of applause from the crowd. There’s a twist though. You will jump back into your seats at the twist ending. Twilight saga lovers will enjoy this film.
The Man with the Iron Fists

By Luke Tabet

In this Kung-Fu kick back, seven clans in 19th century China battle over a shipment of Imperial gold. The film features a soundtrack compiled and performed by The Rza (of the Wu-Tang Clan) who also wrote, directed, produced, and stars in the movie. Movie-goers who enjoy old Bruce Lee and Jackie Chan flicks are sure to enjoy this hour and a half long gore-fest.

Russell Crowe plays the drinking, whoring, fighting Englishman who teams up with the blacksmith (Rza) to take on the violent Lion Clan. Lucy Liu is the scheming Madame whose brothel is the center-stage for the film’s action. The all-star cast and upbeat dialogue make this film an audience experience not soon to be forgotten.

Quentin Tarantino also produces, and the film is reminiscent of his ultra-violent ‘Kill Bill’ series, and also includes elements of the animated ‘Afro Samurai’ series, which The Rza also provided the soundtrack for. The Man with the Iron Fists is sure to please fans of many genres, whether it is kung-fu, hip-hop, comedy, romance. It’s a fun-filled ride, though rated R for extreme violence, nudity, and language.

Wreck it Ralph

By Luke Tabet

In the magical film Wreck-it-Ralph, director Rich Moore portrays a world where video games villains aren’t inherently evil and just doing their job. Ralph (voiced by John C. Reilly) is a villain for the arcade game Fix-it-Felix, and for 30 years he has been doing the same job and not getting any appreciation for his work. Ralph deserts his arcade game to prove he is not so bad after all and starts game jumping, or in their world “turbo-ing”, to pursue a hero’s medal and to prove he has what it takes to be a good guy. He sneaks out to other consoles ending up in a first-person shooter alien invasion game, Hero’s Duty, and then Candy Land Esque racing game Sugar Rush. During his journey for his medal he stumbles upon a character, Vanellope von Schweetz (Sarah Silverman) and they team up for the quest. As the pair prepare for their journey, they stumble upon a mysterious plot that threatens the entire arcade, forcing Ralph to see what it really means to be a good guy. Die hard gamers will appreciate and find plenty of entertaining in jokes, but having knowledge of video games is not a prerequisite for Wreck-it-Ralph.

Star Ratings

- ★=Don’t waste your money
- ★★=Take your chances
- ★★★=Worth watching
- ★★★★=Must see
- ★★★★★=Oscar worthy
Intimations of Mortality: Kazuo Ishiguro’s
Never Let Me Go

By Alison Lo

Never Let Me Go is a dystopian novel written by Japanese-British writer Kazuo Ishiguro, best known for his critically acclaimed novel The Remains of the Day. Ishiguro creates a bizarre alternate history with an astonishing and unorthodox twist, which questions the very foundation of humanity. Ishiguro’s eloquently written prose tells the beautiful and tragic story with such simplicity, that readers will continue to wonder what it truly means to be human.

The story, written in the retrospective narrative of Kath, follows the peaceful years leading up to her and her close friend' shocking discovery. Early on, Kath and her friend Tommy form a close bond, with Kath acting as a protector of sorts for the constantly bullied Tommy. Right away, the reader notices that there is something eerie about Hailsham, such as the apparent lack of mention of the students’ families, coupled with the fact that none of the students appear to have last names. Odder still is the usually strong focus on the arts above all else, including seemingly more vital subjects, such as math and science. Year round, students are encouraged to produce high quality artworks to be sent to the art gallery. Other than the occasional visit from “Madame,” a mysterious woman who confiscates the students’ prized artworks for her mysterious art gallery and the deliverymen, Hailsham is largely secluded from the rest of society.

Despite their budding interest surrounding the outside world, the students regard what exists beyond Hailsham as a distant reality. Grotesque stories, of which no one can pinpoint an originator, tell of tragic incidents in the woods, in which students we’re unfortunate enough to find themselves stranded outside the protective walls of the school. From a young age, the students stay away from certain topics, sensing that they cause their beloved guardians great distress and regard them as taboo. Talk of future lives and careers are rarely discussed among the students, who seem to regard them as vague impossibilities. Despite, several indications that the guardians seem to be hiding something, the majority of the students seem to be perfect contently with acting otherwise, somehow understanding that Hailsham’s secret may better be left in the shadows.

However, as the students mature it is evident that Hailsham’s facade is slowly giving way. One of the guardian’s cryptic remarks leads to her sudden and unexplained dismissal from Hailsham after finally revealing Hailsham’s long kept secret.

Kazuo communicates the haunting tale with striking clarity. From the start, there are several inklings that hint to the reader that something is amiss, without directly stating the real trouble at hand; it is evident to readers that a darker secret lurks just beyond the shadows of Hailsham. Underneath the subtle narrative is an always more serious and somber undertone, looming over the story as a whole. Rather than simply stating his motive, Kazuo only casually alludes to the real problem at hand, leaving the reader to ask all the big questions about humanity, ones that resonate emotionally. Kazuo’s

Rise of the Guardians

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Five Apps for the Perfect Workout

By Azzouzi Nsouli

It’s the 21st century, the era where with technology almost anything is possible. And now with all these smart phones that have become the ideal cell phone for everyone of almost all ages, working out and doing it the right way is easy too! Whether you have an iPhone or Android smart phone, there are hundreds of apps available that will provide you with tips and techniques on fitness and health; it’s like having a personal trainer in your pocket, but much less costly.

Below are five of the best apps for fitness.

1. **iFitness Pro (iPhone and Android)**

   In this fitness app, you are provided with a very specific list of exercises for every muscle group in the body. Once you select a muscle group, such as arms for example, you are then given numerous exercises that come complete with images of what to do for each step. There is also a video for each workout that shows you exactly how to do them correctly. Something that is also incorporated into the app which I found very nice was a section where you can input your record for how much weight you can do or how many times you can do the exercise and this way keep track of your progress which is displayed to you in the form of a graph. A “My Workouts” section is also included in the app, where you can mark and schedule your favorite workouts from the hundreds that are provided to you. If you aren’t too familiar with exercising and trying this out for your first time there is also a “Programs” tab that comes equipped with a beginners workout, intermediate, advanced, and even a weight loss program. Finally something nice that was included into the app is helpful tools such as a calorie counter, body weight tracker and a body mass index (BMI).

2. **Fitness Buddy: 1700+ Exercise Workout Journal (iPhone and Android)**

   Like iFitness Pro, Fitness Buddy lists exercises based on muscle groups and provides step by step pictures and videos on how to execute them. This app has a bit of a one up on Fitness Pro due to the fact that under each step by step image you are provided with detailed captions of how to execute the exercise just in case the image wasn’t clear enough for you. Programs are also available in this app, in addition to the usual beginner, intermediate and advanced program options, user also have the choice of goal specific programs, such as abdominals or chest for example. Along with each exercise and list of instructions you are supplied with vital information on how often to do the workout and how to fit it into your workout schedule.

3. **Gorilla Workout (iPhone)**

   This workout app is a little different than the other two I’ve already reviewed. It puts a fun twist to things, and it challenges you at the same time. The app opens up and the first thing you see is a selection of levels 1 through 4; each level is classified by how many push ups you can do. Once you select the level that you think is suitable for you it gives you a list of which exercises to perform and how many of each to do. The best part is that these are all body weight exercises, meaning there is no need for any equipment at all! If for any reason you do not know how to perform one of the exercises, instructions for you are listed at the main screen, along with information on which muscles are worked in the exercise and even a demonstration video.

4. **Muscle (iPhone)**

   From the start, you are greeted with a three dimensional representation of the human body. The figure is fully interactive and you can spin it around with the swipe of your finger. Now here’s the cool part; tapping anywhere on the body will lead it to zoom into the muscle and show you various exercises, meaning there is no need for any equipment at all! If for any reason you do not know how to perform one of the exercises, instructions for you are listed at the main screen, along with information on which muscles are worked in the exercise and even a demonstration video.

5. **FitnessFast (iPhone)**

   More similar to the first two apps, FitnessFast provides you with stats and activities of your workouts and also displays them in a beautifully layed out graph for you. Your programs can be pre selected or made up by your personal preference, so it can be very personalized. There are hundreds of exercises available for every muscle in your body, and you can pick and choose your favorites. Another cool feature within this app is the fact that you can take notes on certain days of your workout in case there is something you’d like to remember for the next day or just jot down your sets and repetitions, it’s like keeping a workout journal on your phone.

   Here you have it, my top 5 fitness apps for the iPhone and Android smartphones. Now while all these apps are great, I do have a favorite and I will tell which one and why. Gorilla Workout is my personal preference of the 5, because having personally used it myself I think it is the one app that will be easiest to use for everyone, whether you workout like a feen or you’re just beginning. The app includes exercises that require no equipment, so you can simply do them from the comfort of your home. This is also great for those who don’t have time to get to the gym during the week, but need their workout. With that said, any app that you decide on is a wonderful choice and will help you in attaining your physical goals, just be sure to keep at it, like anything else working out requires constant time and dedication so make sure you’re in it to win it!
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