SGA Town Hall Meeting Raises Crucial Issues

Anthony Sganga
Staff Writer

Student concerns were heard at the first Student Government Town Hall Meeting on Nov. 9. The purpose of the event was to address and solve the various issues students raised.

The open forum consisted of an esteemed group of five panelists, including Interim President Dr. Jose A. Adames, Student Government President Jossi Luongo, Interim Chief of Student Services Ann Lota, Director of Financial Aid Magali Muniz, and Faculty Senate Chairman Alan Kaufman.

The program began with some brief words from the Student Government advisor, Nestor Melendez, who said the Town Hall was for “feedback from community” and to gauge the “degree of improvement” that Bergen could use.

After the introduction, Student Government Vice President Kathryn Rodriguez, who served as moderator for the event, began with a few questions sent in from students who could not attend.

Following this, audience members were invited to voice their questions to the panel. Questions were about various topics, from the price of utensils in the student center and cafeteria, to the lack of help in financial aid.

Although many issues were brought up, none was more questioned than the role of developmental courses, such as English Basic Skills (EBS) courses and developmental math courses. Many of these questions were inquiries about why the classes are not graded on a pass/ fail basis.

Students commented on how the classes negatively affected their GPA while not assigning college credits.

President Adames responded to these questions by explaining how many colleges do not count developmental courses as credited classes and that the credits, while not applicable in transferring, were accepted at Bergen.

Furthermore, he explained how BCC has made efforts to address the concerns of those experiencing difficulties. A mother of a BCC student mentioned concerns about the delays of some of the NJ Transit buses that commute to and from the college. One student raised the question of aid to help those struggling to meet with the rising price of food at the school.

In response, Muniz said, “The possibility of meal cards are being looked into.” But when pressed for when this plan would be implemented, she commented, “There is no timeline.”

Some other topics discussed were the redesign of the college’s website, the procedure for school closings, and public transportation.

Transportation was mentioned with concern about the delays of some of the NJ Transit buses that commute to and from the college. One student stated how the delays affected his GPA due to time missed in class. The panel mentioned that they will look into it and that those experiencing difficulties should call NJ Transit and voice their concerns.

Overall, the SGA town hall appeared to fulfill its goal of linking the student body with those in charge of the various groups that make Bergen function. Many questions were raised and the panel did their best to address the concerns of the BCC community.

SGA is hoping to make the town hall a regular fixture at Bergen.
Bike Share Program Kicks Off

Hihesha Creary
Contributing Writer

Many students have a problem in common, and that problem is a way to get around campus without driving. Especially when it is cold out.

The Environmental Club has solved that problem. This year, the club celebrated the opening of their Bike Share Program just outside Ender Hall. The program will help students to get to their classes at Ender Hall faster.

The Bicycle Share Program is not just for getting around campus, but also helps reduce the usage of gas fuel from driving long distances from home to Ender Hall. The bicycles used in this program are recycled bikes that Proto Charles Sontag, one of the advisors of the Environmental Club, fixed himself. The bikes are attractive and built to last. They have internal hubs, to protect the gears from outside elements, and will have baskets for books.

The Bicycle Share Program is already in effect and available for BCC students to get around. To be able to obtain a bike for transport, a student must fill out a form by Public Safety.

This is so awesome, they should have thought of this a long time ago," said Dylan Theodore, a BCC student, upon hearing about the program.

The Environmental Club is a service club, so most of what they do is out in the field and not in a classroom. The club also provides trips, internships, service learning and job listings for anyone that is interested.

The club lives up to its name by doing what it takes to help and teach other BCC students about the environment.

They meet every other Thursday in room C-314.

Phi Theta Kappa Dedicated to Student Success

Hihesha Creary
Contributing Writer

“Your signature is your commitment towards your goal.” This was the motto of Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) as they encouraged students to sign the banner in support of Commit to Complete. On Oct. 31, the group, which was standing behind the purple-clothed table, was attempting to obtain signatures in order to motivate students towards completing their degrees.

President Obama, in a Feb. 2011 speech, set a nationwide goal of being the top nation for graduates by 2020. Obama also mentioned how critical of a role community colleges will play in this plan.

Obtaining a degree from any college can be a stressful and difficult proposition. The struggle to meet requirements and the prospect of failing behind can lead to suffering grades or even dropping out. Luckily for Bergen students, PTK is trying to make graduating an easier process with their “Commit to Complete” project.

Commit to Complete is a multifaceted project that is aiming to help motivate students at Bergen to graduate. There are a number of ways PTK is working to help make this happen.

During the banner-signing event held in the student center, students who wished to graduate in the near future signed their name to make a commitment to complete their studies. Members of PTK have also visited some of the college’s new Success 101 classes on campus to give speeches on how to succeed while in college.

The work of PTK has expanded beyond Bergen. Members of PTK work to help students who are potential future Bergen students. Members have also visited high schools in order to reach this potential student audience.

The club lives up to its name, ”Phi Theta Kappa is called Alpha Epsilon Phi. It is one of the top 25 ranking chapters in the U.S. The organization is always looking for students who meet the requirements, to join the Alpha Epsilon Phi chapter.

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This Year’s Student Government Continues to Take on Big Issues

David Gomez
Staff Writer

Student Government Association (SGA) has committed to work on major issues that concern students most. On Nov. 9, they held the first of many town halls in the student center lobby with a panel of representatives from the school to create an open forum for students and faculty. SGA has also created surveys to gauge student opinion on issues.

As a result, SGA has developed several plans to improve students’ lives on campus, they are working with NJ Transit to plan new bus routes that will involve major malls in Paramus. SGA wants to clean up the environmental impact of the buses by implementing a receipt system for the on-campus NJ Transit to plan new bus routes that will involve major malls in Paramus. SGA wants to clean up the environmental impact of the buses by implementing a receipt system for the on-campus

With regard to improving student representation by developing a debt plan system and preventing financial aid from going up. SGA wants to have student representation by developing a debt plan system and preventing financial aid from going up. SGA wants to have student representation by developing a debt plan system and preventing financial aid from going up.

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Ambassador Shares His Story for Asian-Heritage Week

John Sapida
Staff Writer

“No matter what happens, never give up hope,” were the words Ambassador Sichan Siv’s mother said to him. These are the words he holds onto today.

In celebration of Asian Heritage Week, the first Asian-American ambassador of the United States to the U.N., Sichan Siv, visited the college on Nov. 21. As the keynote speaker for the week, Siv shared about his life experiences in the U.S. and his home country of Cambodia in his talk entitled, “From the Killing Fields to the White House.”

Siv’s fascinating story began in Cambodia during the time of the killing fields under the Khmer Rouge. As an intellectual university student, he was targeted by the regime. He threw his classes, a sign of intelligence, away and started his trek across Cambodia to freedom in Thailand.

His mother told him “never give up” and left him with her scarf and a bag of rice. Since then, he began his journey alone to evacuate Cambodian youth by way of an evacuation plane by 30 minutes, and eventually more extreme violence.

Over time, his peers began to get physical, graduating from verbal harassment to beating up, just as his mother told him. He was the only one out of his 16 family members to survive the genocide. His 16 family members were targeted by the regime. He threw his glasses, a sign of intelligence, away and started his trek across Cambodia to freedom in Thailand.

The Khmer Rouge was the communist party that ruled Cambodia in 1975 and killed approximately two million people. Siv missed the last U.S. evacuation plane by 30 minutes, because he chose to help arrange food and supplies for refugee families in an isolated province.

He was forced to flee his country on foot. During his journey out of Cambodia, he was caught and put under a death sentence twice, but survived and was sent into slave labor. He volunteered to be a crane operator in order to study the Thai border. One day, while picking up timber along the border, he made his escape. It took him three days to reach Thailand. He was hungry, wounded and exhausted, but was still full of hope.

After successfully escaping the Khmer Rouge, Siv spent a few months teaching English to fellow refugees and entered a Buddhist monastery in Thailand after he was arrested for not having papers.

“Everyone needed to learn English before they could go to an English speaking country,” said Siv. He then worked to get himself to the U.S. In June 1976, he arrived in Wallington, Connecticut with two dollars in his pocket, his mother’s scarf and his empty stomach.

He survived by picking apples. “I picked apples... enough to last a lifetime,” said Siv. He then worked at Friendly’s for the minimum wage and ate hamburgers. After he moved to Manhattan, he became a taxi driver, but soon realized himself in the halls of Columbia University with a scholarship to get his master’s in international affairs.

His success did not stop there. In 1988, he volunteered for George H.W. Bush’s presidential campaign. In 1989, 13 years after his escape to Thailand began, he was the first Asian-American to be appointed as deputy assistant to President Bush.

In March 2001, President George W. Bush appointed Siv to become a delegate to the U.N. Commission on Human Rights. A few months later, in October, the Senate unanimously voted to make Siv the 28th U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. Economic and Social Council.

In 2006, he also became the first Asian-American to become the U.S. representative to the General Assembly and Security Council.

His book, Golden Bones was released in 2008. “It took me 30 years to write the book, because I was so reluctant,” said Siv. During his visit back to Cambodia in 1992, he visited his father’s old village and was a dubbed a person with “Golden Bones” or a man who is truly blessed. The book describes his life story, his struggles, his triumphs, and his empathy because he faced while keeping his hopes up, just as his mother told him. Siv is living with his wife, Martha Pattilo, in San Antonio, Texas. However, he travels to Cambodia occasionally to visit political figures and represent the U.S. He also travels the U.S. sharing his story with students and professionals.

His message of the power of hope is truly inspiring. Every morning, he prays in front of his mother’s scarf and rice bag, thanking his mother for those words she left him. “No matter what happens, never give up hope.”

H.E. Ambassador Sichan Siv

Anti-Bullying Advocate Visits for GLBT Week

Michelle Santana
Contributing Writer

Still of great relevance today, bullying affects millions of students annually. Regardless of motive, bullying of any form or for any reason is morally wrong. Jamie Nabozny, an advocate against bullying, is one of the first to speak about his story with students with the desire to make both sides happy.

When the book first came out, he was chosen to speak at the White House. He found this unusual, because speakers at the White House usually speak about policy, but he was chosen to speak about his book. “They knew my story is an American story, my story is your story, it’s our story,” Siv said.

When it seemed that all hope had been lost, he gave into the abuse and found only one way out.

The worst part of Nabozny’s situation was not the physical or mental abuse, but the lack of assistance from authority figures. Constantly, he would go right to the school faculty for intervention, but to no avail. When meetings were scheduled between faculty and Nabozny’s parents, the common given response was simply “boys will be boys.”

One faculty member even criticized his sexual orientation, saying that “if he [Nabozny] was going to be so openly gay, he had to expect this kind of response from his fellow students.” Following the lack of help from the school faculty and the progressively worsening beatings, Nabozny ran away from home.

He eventually found assistance in the form of a legal advocate at a community help center, who insisted that he consider filing a lawsuit. With full support from his mother and father, Nabozny sued his school district for their negligence, an act revolutionary of its kind. Ultimately, Nabozny received $900,000 in settlements for his pain and suffering.

Now serving as an activist against bullying, he feels his legal victory was a victory for students everywhere experiencing similar struggles and dilemmas. Sharing his story with colleges, universities and students nationwide, Nabozny’s goal is to alleviate any and all bullying. And his efforts are not just for those who share his sexual orientation. Through the reiteration of his tale, Nabozny hopes that his story gives all who are faced with similar predicaments the hope and courage to stand up and ask for help.

In order to put an end to bullying, Nabozny suggests individuals take an alternative approach to discipline and preventative measures. “It’s not enough just to help the kid being bullied,” Nabozny said. “We’re failing one part of the equation.”

Time and time again, Nabozny feels that the discipline process of resolving bullying leaves out the aggressor. Bullying is a two-part process involving both the aggressor and the victim. The key to eliminating bullying is to uncover questions that desperately need answers.

Such questions could include the cause of the need to bully and most importantly, why? The solution is hardly ever punishment, and a resolution oftentimes can be made through compromise. Sure bullying is wrong, but being punished hardly ever resolves anything.

Nabozny believes that we still effectively diminish bullying. Nabozny’s efforts are to hopefully inspire students and faculty cooperation and intervention through unconventional means to make both sides happy.

Nabozny travels nationwide to schools, colleges and universities to share his story with students with the desire to get involved. Additionally, Nabozny is an active supporter of gay, lesbian and bisexual youth. More information is available on his website, www.jamienabozny.com, or on his Facebook page.
Hip-Hop Pioneers and Police Discuss Gang Violence

Panel Focuses on Relationship Between Rap and Gang Violence

Trevor Galluzzo
Contributing Writer

Gun and gang violence has been an ever-present threat over the last few decades. Pioneers of the hip-hop community have gathered together to combat gang and gun violence. Working with police and law enforcement officials, the hip-hop community has been successful with carrying out their message of peace.

Meeting with students on the matter at Bergen Community College’s own Caccia Theater, representatives of the hip-hop community Kool Herc, Lord Cashus D and Yo-Yo were present for the dialogue. Additionally, Les Poole, Terry Davis, and Brian Verkey of the Bergen County Gang Task Force were present.

The individuals sat down to a very personal debate in which each shared their experiences with students. Throughout their experiences, the panel ultimately described the dangers of gang violence, but also the negative reputation that hip-hop has received because of it.

Hip-hop, as described by Kool Herc, the father of hip-hop, serves as a basis for communication and unity. As touched upon by the panel, the gangster-lifestyle mentality has always been present subtly in hip-hop’s history.

Rap, which can be considered a subdivision of hip-hop, glorifies gun and gang violence. It is this violence that sells records and albums and has become very influential throughout the media industry. Used almost religiously by media industries worldwide, the phrase “if it bleeds it leads” has become mainstream in modern day society.

With explicit content comes explicit lyrics, and unanimously decided upon by the panel, explicit lyrics are influential toward gun and gang violence.

Social Worker Brings the Message Home

Focusing upon the ideas presented at the hip-hop panel, Neal Nabil Howard hosted a similar assembly. Howard, a licensed clinical social worker and hip-hop historian, expressed his opinions on the matter, focusing on the meaning of musical lyrics and describing his efforts to eliminate local gang violence.

Following the hip-hop dialogue, Howard gave a presentation to students and faculty. His message was to show how gang violence is present everywhere, even in our own backyard, Bergen County.

Interestingly enough, hip-hop originally was composed of very clean and positive lyrics and rhymes. Following the dawn of early 1990’s, hip-hop began to make a radical turn.

It was at this point where explicit lyrics and themes began to become more commonly utilized and these singers. Because of this, the misconception of hip-hop has come to be. Rap and hip-hop are not the same thing, they are two very different mediums. In the words of Lord Cashus D himself, “Rap stands for ‘recording artist pretending.’

The artists of the music in question may not be entirely guilt-free. Both rap and hip-hop singers (and singers of any genre of music for that matter) serve as role models for the younger generation. The artists themselves may be contributing to gun and gang violence indirectly. While the lyrics have been determined to be influential, the singers of these lyrics unknowingly take the form of a parental figure.

Listeners, especially of the younger generation, may look to these singers as role models for who or what they should become. After hearing these lyrics that glorify gun and gang violence, adolescents and teenagers may adapt these lyrics to their lifestyle.

This is the main threat for the younger generation, but can also be considered a primary factor as to why children and teens turn up dead from gun and gang related activity. Ultimately, these singers and songwriters need to realize how influential they can be, especially to the younger generation.

As a result of the cause of the violence, the hip-hop industry has certainly contributed to the reduction of gun and gang violence. It is interesting how a genre of music almost 40 years old can still be influential in modern day society. With their efforts, in combination with police and public officials, may one day our society can be completely gun and gang violence free.

In unison with the House of Culture organization, Howard and other representatives visit local schools to reach out to students who are considering joining gangs. As an advocate against gang violence, it is his goal to one day eliminate it entirely.

Howard also included a compare and contrast session between song lyrics. Interestingly enough, he compared two songs with the same name, “The Love,” by both MLP and A Tribe Called Quest respectively.

After comparing the two, both provided very definitive and contrasting messages that showed just how influential song lyrics can be. MLP’s version of the song described a love of domination, destruction and lust; whereas A Tribe Called Quest’s version spoke of love toward family, friends and lovers. Two similarly titled songs, but each providing a very different message to its audience.

While the hip-hop panel and Howard’s target audience may differ, their goals are identical: to eliminate any and all gang violence. With contributions from Lord Cassius D and Yo-Yo from the prior panel, as well as from faculty and students, all participants learned and grew from each other’s ideas and experiences.

Gang violence is certainly an aspect of society that needs to be eliminated. The road to reaching this goal may be long and difficult. However, with the unity of the organizations and local efforts working together, one day it will surely be achieved.

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Want to get started? Get in touch with the Office of Transfer Admission:
- Phone: 609.896.5036
- E-mail: admissions@rider.edu
- Web: rider.edu/admissions
Some of the students had good thoughts on the new student center. Many mentioned that they are spending more time in it than the cafeteria or the library. The bigger size was also talked about, yet some wanted it to be even bigger.

These students still liked to hang out in the new student center, content with the new layout and expansion. They were content with waiting for the renovation, but they were not around when the old student center existed.

Passing through the new center has served as a quick route to take when going to and from class. Students that were registered before the opening have taken this opportunity many times to get to their classes on time.

Most of the newer students, though, have taken a liking to the new student center and adjusted quickly. They have mostly heard the details about the old student center from their friends that have attended BCC before the renovations. Their feedback wasn’t as positive.

The rest of the students asked about the new student center have been negative about it. Their expectations have not been met.

Feedback about what could be improved includes the lack of outlets for charging by all seating arrangements and the absence of televisions that they thought should have been present. With the number of seats there are in comparison to the number of outlets available, there is not enough to suit every student.

There were some neutral statements about the Student Center, as well. For example, several students have made similar claims that the lobby where the Dunkin Donuts and the pizzeria are located look like an airport lobby.

There were even more vocal complaints about the student center from a few students. One said that the tuition increase could be related to paying off the price of $5.5 million dollars for the renovations on the new student center. That student also stated that club space should have its attention, but not take priority over other areas that should be brought to attention like the raise in tuition.

Another stated that the duration of making those changes to the student center was too long, that it should have been a lot shorter. People that remembered the old student center pointed out the disappearances of some certain items, from the computers for registration to the televisions. They hoped to see those inclusions in the near future, including the addition of ATMs from different banks, like Chase, and a game room. The no food and drink policy for the upper portion of the new student center has also posed a problem to the students, as that part is right next to the dining area. Despite some that don’t like the policy, other students have recognized why that policy was in effect and didn’t mind about that too much.

Even though the new student center has recently re-opened back to the college campus, it will take time for all the students to adjust and get used to it.
Once you’ve earned your associate degree and are thinking about continuing your education, a great place to consider is DeVry University. For 80 years we’ve been helping students reach their career goals by providing an accredited university education that helps to prepare them for the workplace. We work with community college students like you to transfer qualifying credits and give you the opportunity to earn your bachelor’s degree in as few as 18 — months — so you can get started on your success even sooner.

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Corrections
The Torch strives for the highest journalistic standards and accuracy. Readers are encouraged to contact us if they find any mistakes in any edition of the Torch.

Editorial and Opinion Pieces
As an open public forum, The Torch welcomes guest opinion pieces and letters to the editor from any member of the Bergen Community College community. Material should be submitted to editorinchief@torchbctc.com or delivered to The Torch office, SC-111. Such submissions must include the writer’s name, student number and email address and must not exceed 500 words. The Torch reserves the right to edit or refuse publication of any submission.

Letter from the Student Government
Kathryn Rodriguez
SGA Vice President

My Fellow Students,
Your experience at Bergen Community College is your own, but it is also important and we, the Student Government, have begun many ventures on your behalf this semester. We have surveyed you, spoken with you, fed you, sat among you, listened to you and acted on your words. We have worked diligently to try to ensure that you have everything you told us you wanted. Our work isn’t finished. We aren’t finished speaking. I implore my fellow students, please do not underestimate your value or your influence.

The grand majority of movements and revolutions have been started by students such as yourselves in this country and around the world. Women’s Suffrage, Civil Rights, Gay Rights, First Amendment, Street Revolution, etc. These were all started by students. Yes, Bergen Community College students have changed the face of this country over and over again. I hope the Wall Street Occupiers speak loudly and are heard around the world. Students are the only thing truly standing in the way of the American college student. Don’t let your unspoken words sit on a shelf. Bring them to the Torch and let them be heard.

It is because the Student Government believes wholeheartedly in the legitimacy of student concerns that we have worked tirelessly to resolve areas of discontent around the three campuses. Our most recent proposal to pass through the SGA Senate was one to add two additional student trustee representatives to the Board of Trustees. We have also included a request to implement voting privileges for all student representation, equal to other trustees.

This request will appear on the February Board of Trustees agenda. The College has taken a step, the place has been worked on, and the visibility is needed to secure a permanent voice in the college.

As Vice-President of Student Government, I want to invite you to stay in touch with us. We are here to serve the students, and it is my goal to make sure that we do that as efficiently as possible. Contact us for more information: (201)447-7582, studentgovernmentvp@gmail.com.

Sincerely,
Kathryn Rodriguez
It’s easy to make a buck. It’s a lot tougher to make a difference. Together, we can.

P.S. The Biannual SGA Book Exchange will take place during Welcome Week of the spring semester outside the cafeteria. Check us out for more information: (201)447-7582, studentgovernmentvp@gmail.com.

The new student center will talk... with someone about your desire to graduate; you’ll discover a passion for something you never knew you had.

The Torch
VOLUME 19 ISSUE 4
DECEMBER 2011

Amplify the Student Voice
Perpetua Romain
Editor-In-Chief

How important are students to this campus? Student Jake Oh said at the March 2011 Board of Trustees meeting, “This is our school. School without students is not a school, it’s a business.” Indeed this is our school, whether we are student leaders, student workers, student interns, we occupy the college and we are students first. There are over 17,000 students on campus, meaning some are excessive.
Newly elected president of GLS Jake said, “We have club offices now, but no one knows what’s in them because there’s just a wall with people on it. No one knows where to find any of the clubs. People are unable to seek us out in our offices, and [Executive] Board members should have keys. Be there to do offices after all.”
Regarding flaws in the implemented security structure of the offices, a student worker said, “Give [the students] a chance... Give them the option to have a inside... instead of saying ‘no right off the bat.’”
Numerous complaints arose about the lack of handicap accessible treatments. Some feel that the administration “treats the students like children,” yet many students are well over the age of 16 and up, a student of Bergen Community College said. As a fellow student, I must insist that you have the right to your thoughts and opinions that must be heard. “Power to the people!” said Randy Hale, president of Bards and Scribes.
“I feel like [students] don’t stop up and speak on the way they feel and try to do what they want to do as they feel it’s appropriate to do them, they are going to get stepped over by the administrations. The administrators, they’re second to us as long as we have a voice, as long as we have a strong union.”
No, loads, changes are coming. This semester, drastic changes have already been made in the administration, many familiar faces are no longer around, tuition is rising, offices are being moved. However, students are making changes as well. We as pupils must see our bright futures ahead, which starts with taking a stand now.
This newspaper is a strong tool that should be utilized by everyone. The Torch carries the voice, opinion and news of Bergen. I encourage anyone to take advantage of this opportunity and be heard. Your opinions matter, not only to your peers, but also to your future. I hope you enjoy every moment here at Bergen Community College.
Sincerely,
Kathryn Rodriguez
It’s easy to make a buck. It’s a lot tougher to make a difference. Together, we can.

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DECEMBER 2011

The Torch
Audism: When Intellect Concedes To Ignorance

Matthew Charles Friedberg
Contributing Writer

Audism is broadly defined as discrimination against deaf or hard of hearing people. It can also be a discriminatory thought or act towards anyone with a difference in their hearing ability. Audism has other definitions, such as a feeling of superiority over deaf or hard of hearing people.

Discrimination against deaf people has been occurring for as long as history has been recorded, but was only classified as Audism in 1975.

When a student searched on Google, the search engine tries to correct the search to autism. Furthermore, when 25 Bergen Community College students were asked if they knew what Audism was, not a single one was able to answer. This demonstrates how infrequent the word is used and could further extrapolate the lack of knowledge possessed by the majority of today's students. It is as though a blanket of ignorance is spreading across the hearing world. For example, legal, ethical, and moral discrimination have been classified for hundreds of years, yet deaf and hard of hearing discrimination has only recently been classified for the last 26 years.

Within this small amount of time, the hearing population has begun to recognize their actions as discrimination. Deaf and hard of hearing people have made, and are continuing to make, a lot of head way in facing the hatred and discrimination that they face on a day to day basis. As sign language classes and information become more readily accessible to the general public, the ignorance of the hearing world seems to subside.

With this ignorance slowly waning, discrimination is lessening everyday. People feel more accepted in society and less secluded. In fact, there are numerous sign language courses offered at RCC. There is even an Office of Specialized Services, room L-115 in the main building, for students who want more information.

These facts are not only true, but wonderful because discrimination towards deaf and hard of hearing people stems from a person's own insecurities. The fact is people are frightened of situations that they do not understand.

Are You Offended? Reactions Are Costly.

David Gomez
Staff Writer

We tend to accept a fascist way of thinking when people plead the offended card. Is what someone says the problem, or do people refuse to tolerate views that do not belong to them? Is it truly beneficial for society to strive to recall words? Why do we see people and organizations act out against what most of us would agree is free speech?

The selfish act of righting a situation that is wrong to one's self is not a reasonable way to come to a fair conclusion and should not be encouraged. However, there must be an understanding of the conflict between the first amendment and opinion in our society.

What is different on their way, then how about those in favor of free speech? It is equally offensive to see the first amendment and its protection of political reactions.

Comedian Tracy Morgan, during a stand-up routine in Tennessee, told the audience jokes pertaining to gay people that many felt were vulgar. Due to his status as an actor, those against the statements found it necessary to take what he said as political rather than comedic.

Morgan was immediately forced to publicly apologize for his statements due to groups, such as the Gay and Lesbian Advocates and Defenders (GLAD), who demanded he do so.

“We call on him to remove these violently anti-gay remarks from his show and send a strong message that anti-gay violence is not something to joke about,” said GLAD in their statement.

A question all people must ask themselves when they are presented an issue they personally conflict with is, “Is your thinking more rational than others?” You may be angry about a statement that was said and was untrue and/or demeaning, but the role of an authority on the issue does not belong to the biased.

We are individuals who think differently on things like politics, religion, ideology, etc. and adopt other’s views on things. It would be unwise to eradicate any options on worldviews; this is how we come to separately conflict ones from the frowned upon.

Author Salman Rushdie released his book, The Satanic Verses, in 1988, and it became a major controversy with Muslims who despised the depiction of the prophet Muhammad. Ayatollah Khomeini issued a fatwa for the execution of Rushdie, who was forced to go into hiding. To this day, he still receives threats pertaining to his novel.

Had Rushdie's novel been a satire of the prophet Muhammad, free speech would still stand. What someone says does not always have to be right, balanced and innocuous. Rushdie himself has said, "Free speech is the whole thing, the whole ball game. Free speech is life itself."

There is something to be noticed in these cases: Those who become the offended are easily regarded as the victim. Free speech is disregarded and the change requested is what we are requesting when an issue is not universally interpreted the same way. Anyone striving to silence others based on their personal beliefs is leading us toward a totalitarian and big government. Free speech is life itself.

There needs to be a change. The future will be bleak if students do not open their eyes to the problems around them. With little wisdom to look back upon, the citizens of tomorrow will have laws and other important issues passed without their knowledge.

It has already happened with the passing of the Universal Health Care Act. With no vote or warning, a huge piece of legislation was put into fruition that can alter the way people receive medication. This could possibly be the tip of the iceberg and open the door for others as that further limit the democracy that we currently enjoy. In 10 to 15 years, with a further decrease in the amount of voters, we could possibly have a socialist or totalitarian government that was installed without the support of a majority of our public. Even then, if we woke up as a generation, it might be too late.

But before accountability is taken, one must become aware of the issues at hand by paying attention to the events around us. We, as a generation, must take an aggressive role in our government and society, unless otherwise face the determined smack across the face from the hand that is ignorance.

We must change our ways now and become more active in our communities and the nation as a whole. Taking more accountability and ending the trend of pointing fingers can accomplish a shift like this.

When we blame others, nothing is achieved. It is only possible to experience change by carving the way to it yourself. Standing idle and hoping for someone else to make the world better is part of the reason society is where it is at. Stand up and make a difference.

While the old adage says that ignorance is bliss, this is not the stance to take; we must wake up and make sure the future is a better place than it was when we received it.

Ignorance Is Not Bliss
Anthony Nganga
Staff Writer

A parasitic growth seems to be engulfing a majority of today's students. It is as though a blanket of ignorance is beginning to cover this generation. In the age we live in, the youth of our generation are not aware of the important events surrounding them.

These are unstable times, but if one were to ask a majority of students and young adults, few would know it. With this ignorance slowly waning, discrimination is lessening everyday. People feel more accepted in society and less secluded. In fact, there are numerous sign language courses offered at RCC. There is even an Office of Specialized Services, room L-115 in the main building, for students who want more information.

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Public Safety Crime Report

Roving Reporter: What Should BCC Improve on Next Semester?

Perpetua Romain
Editor-In-Chief

Andrea Quinones
Liberal Arts

I think that they shouldn't make the classes so big and they should have more options for classes that also have teacher's aides. That way, the students who are having a hard time in the class can get extra help from the professor.

James McFaul
Liberal Arts

Sometimes when people call Public Safety, they don't show up. That's pretty lame. Also why is it so cold all the time?

Yuri Kim
Music

The long line at the bookstore is a nightmare! Bergen should spread more awareness of alternatives, like the internet. I also think professors should never tell students to get books if they never use them.

Raven Bryant
Journalism

Public Safety needs to be more accommodating. If you press the emergency button they don't come fast enough. You will die!

Veronica Cherkshyn
Criminal Justice

More jobs for students

Mohamet Faty
Info Tech

The network speed, cost of food, recognition for students participating in clubs.

Elliott Bencevi
Business Mgmt.

Better help in the transfer area and financial aid; lower food prices.

Paul Park
Engineering

Prices with the food...and these doors [in the student center] gotta go. It’s too cold in here.

James McFaul
Liberal Arts

Student Forgot His Wallet at a Bake Sale and Money Was Taken

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Torch Passed to New Generation

Perpetua Romain
Editor-In-Chief

The award winning periodical of Bergen Community College, The Torch, has elected a new Editorial Board for spring 2012. As the number one community college newspaper of the state of New Jersey, with 19 awards, this new team of editors is eager to become well-equipped to garner more.

Many of the veteran editors’ terms at Bergen are coming to a close, leaving Torch in the hands of fresh new innovative minds that will become the new generation staff. Most are expected to graduate 2013-2014, providing a great opportunity for the editorial board to remain stable over a long period of time.

Elected positions are as follows: Editor-In-Chief, Jessica Czarzynska; Co-Editor, Adriana Szaboova; Copy Editor, Anthony Sganga; News Editor, Antonella Sielicki; Features Editor, John Sapida; Sports Editor, David Gonzalez; Photo Editor, Arturo Hernandez Sangregorio; Layout Editors, Nita Lim and Christine McDonald; Online Editor, Karl Reyes; Ad Manager, Laura Madera.

Torch has not only received awards, displayed in a glass case next to Student Government’s office, Torch has established an academic class, COM 110- Print Journalism. With Torch Advisor Lew Wheaton as professor, this class is a hands-on course in which students automatically become members of the Torch and write for, edit and produce the paper. The class covers reporting, ethical and legal issues and other topics. Class meets in W110, Thursdays from 9:25 a.m.- 1:30 p.m.

Torch has relocated to the Student Center, SC-111, always accepting new members and story pitches. Torch is always looking for new writers, photographers, illustrators and web/graphic designers. If you are interested in joining Torch, attend the meetings on Tuesdays from 12:30 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. in room A-113.

I have confidence in the newly elected to raise the expectations of each month’s content. I have been in Torch since I first stepped into Bergen. I have a hand in what the paper is today, along with editors of my generation stemming back to 2009. I would love to see what the Torch will become, keeping the key structure and principals created by the doyen of Torch.

-Perpetua Romain

People should expect different issues concerning students in the paper along with students opinions, good photos and wonderful layout.

Students should read it because it’s the ONLY paper that its sole focus is to cover BCC, students, faculty and administration. I always layout editor and sex columnist this past semester and I am continuing as such. I expect to graduate spring 2012.

-Nita Lim

Reading the paper will help students stay in the loop about events on campus. What better way to learn about your own school than through the voice of the students? Prior to this semester, I was the Features Editor for the spring 2011 and fall 2011 semesters. Before that, I was a staff writer. I am currently the Co-Editor to the Torch newspaper. Unfortunately, I am graduating this coming spring semester. I would love to stay longer, but I have worn out my welcome. :)

-Adriana Szaboova

More than $37 million in Berkeley College grants and scholarships for qualified students provided in the past award year

The Transfer Opportunity Program (T.O.P. Scholars) from Berkeley College offers scholarships to students who have earned an Associate’s degree from another college. Scholarship amounts are based on a student’s grade point average (GPA) and range from 25% to 50% of the tuition at Berkeley College.

Who is eligible?
To be eligible as a T.O.P. Scholar, a student must:
• Have an Associate’s degree from another college.
• Be enrolled as a full-time student at Berkeley College.
• Remain continuously enrolled for his/her first academic year (three quarters). After that, the student may take one quarter off without losing the scholarship.

For more information on T.O.P. Scholars, Please Visit: BerkeleyCollege.edu/Transfer_Scholarship
Call: 800-446-5400, ext. GBC or Text: “EASY” to 247365

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ONLINE: BerkeleyCollege.edu/Online
"Don’t be afraid to say revolution." Dr. Cornel West said these words when he came to Zuccotti Park, now renamed Liberty Square by the occupiers, on Sept. 27—the tenth day of the occupation. It has been a long road since then.

Despite a national crackdown, the movement has gone global and is over 90 days old. Even Desmond Tutu, Archbishop Emeritus of Capetown in South Africa and distinguished activist, declared his support for the occupiers. He sent a message urging Trinity Church, near Wall Street, to assist the occupiers. It said, "Impoverished the unfairness, and the struggle hold of greed which has beset humanity in our times must be answered with a resounding, 'No! You are that answer.'"

The reasons to direct our national anger towards the corporate financiers of our government are many. These reasons are listed in the Declaration of the Occupation of New York City, which can be found in this centerfold and also at www.oyp.nyc.

Did Americans vote for our government to bail out Wall Street? Have any of the banks, saved by our tax money, been accountable to us? Who are the answers to these questions? No.

We could picket Congress and the White House with only the Democratic Party and the voice of the individual citizen is drowned out. Corporations use their monetary influence to sway all political campaigns and dispatch dozens of lobbyists to Capitol Hill. The voice of the individual is drowned out.

Corporations use their monetary influence to sway all parts of our government. On Jan. 1, 2010 in the Citizens United ruling, the Supreme Court ruled that corporations have the same free speech rights as people, effectively allowing corporations to spend without limit on TV advertising in the run-up to elections.

History shows that the campaign that raises the most money is the campaign that wins. How can private citizens compete against corporate juggernauts? This is not democracy. When our republic is operating more like an oligarchy, we have a problem. And, we must fight back.

This is not just a federal issue. In June, Reuters reported that Governor Chris Christie is proposing the elimination of the school police force in New Jersey. This is not the way to address our current issues. In this manner, Occupy has been reclaiming the democratic process in each community that desires a local assembly.

These types of assemblies should be occurring everywhere. If we can mobilize ourselves and engage in a fair discussion without authority figures, we can develop a solution to our problems from within our communities. This is infinitely better than waiting on corporations or corporately-financed politicians.

I would like to invite students, staff and faculty to be a part of the discussion. We can create an Occupy Bergen Community College movement and begin having our own general assembly meetings. If interested, follow @OccupyBergenCC on Twitter to join the Occupy Bergen Community College Facebook page or email occupybcc@gmail.com.

My friend Ashley Drzymala and I at the first New York General Assembly meeting of Occupy Wall Street on Sept. 17. The beauty of the Occupy Movement is in its methods: occupying public space and engaging in a Greek-like forum called the general assembly, discussing political ideas and reaching group consensus in how to address our current issues.

The 99’ers, we, are saying there should be occurring everywhere. The 99% are the future, they need not only be heard but what they are saying must be acted upon.

There are few of us that are not part of the 99%. I believe this is a transition point in the U.S. The 99ers, we, are saying there are significant inequities in our country growing large for the last 40 years. It is time to force Congress as our employees to act responsibly and equitably to solve these problems. If not, leave office now or be voted out. The 99% are the future, they need not only be heard but what they are saying must be acted upon.

Beginning of a mainstream revolution. Beginning of an open conversation raged by the youth. Praise US, the 99%, to fight for true liberty. Stand proud and be heard. It’s time for the change.

I moved around a times, perked each and every time the rent. Banging on my dad, my entire life and once a mom, and sister alone we didn’t work, and my sis bringing in the income. My mom and dad and pay all the bills by pay the debt off. I showed to school doing homework a $7.32 being involved in community service, and some time, I am...
As we gather together in solidarity to express a feeling of mass injustice, we must not lose sight of what brought us together. We write so that all people who feel wronged by the corporate forces of the world can know that we are your allies.

As one people, united, we acknowledge the reality: that the future of the human race requires the cooperation of its members; that our system must protect our rights, and upon corruption of that system, it is up to the individuals to protect their own rights, and those of their neighbors; that a democratic government derives its just power from the people, but corporations do not seek consent to extract wealth from the people and the Earth; and that no true democracy is attainable when the process is determined by economic power. We come to you at a time when corporations, which place profit over people, self-interest over justice, and oppression over equality, run our governments. We have peaceably assembled here, as is our right, to let these facts be known.

• They have taken our houses through an illegal foreclosure process, despite not having the original mortgage.
• They have taken bailouts from taxpayers with impunity, and continue to give Executives exorbitant bonuses.
• They have perpetuated inequality and discrimination in the workplace based on age, the color of one’s skin, sex, gender identity and sexual orientation.
• They have poisoned the food supply through negligence, and undermined the farming system through monopolization.
• They have profited off of the torture, confinement, and cruel treatment of countless animals, and actively hide these practices.
• They have continuously sought to strip employees of the right to negotiate for better pay and safer working conditions.
• They have held students hostage with tens of thousands of dollars of debt on education, which is itself a human right.
• They have consistently outsourced labor and used that outsourcing as leverage to cut workers’ healthcare and pay.
• They have influenced the courts to achieve the same rights as people, with none of the culpability or responsibility.
• They have spent millions of dollars on legal teams that look for ways to get them out of contracts in regards to health insurance.
• They have sold our privacy as a commodity.
• They have used the military and police force to prevent freedom of the press.
• They have deliberately declined to recall faulty products endangering lives in pursuit of profit.
• They determine economic policy, despite the catastrophic failures their policies have produced and continue to produce.
• They have donated large sums of money to politicians, who are responsible for regulating them.
• They continue to block alternate forms of energy to keep us dependent on oil.
• They continue to block generic forms of medicine that could save people’s lives or provide relief in order to protect investments that have already turned a substantial profit.
• They have purposely covered up oil spills, accidents, faulty bookkeeping, and inactive ingredients in pursuit of profit.
• They purposefully keep people misinformed and fearful through their control of the media.
• They have accepted private contracts to murder prisoners even when presented with serious doubts about their guilt.
• They have perpetuated colonialism at home and abroad.
• They have participated in the torture and murder of innocent civilians overseas.
• They continue to create weapons of mass destruction in order to receive government contracts.*

To the people of the world,
We, the New York City General Assembly occupying Wall Street in Liberty Square, urge you to assert your power. Exercise your right to peaceably assemble; occupy public space; create a process to address the problems we face, and generate solutions accessible to everyone.

To all communities that take action and form groups in the spirit of direct democracy, we offer support, documentation, and all of the resources at our disposal.

Join us and make your voices heard!

*These grievances are not all-inclusive.

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**Declaration of the Occupation of New York City**

This document was accepted by the NYC General Assembly on September 29, 2011

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As one people, united, we acknowledge the reality: that the future of the human race requires the cooperation of its members; that our system must protect our rights, and upon corruption of that system, it is up to the individuals to protect their own rights, and those of their neighbors; that a democratic government derives its just power from the people, but corporations do not seek consent to extract wealth from the people and the Earth; and that no true democracy is attainable when the process is determined by economic power. We come to you at a time when corporations, which place profit over people, self-interest over justice, and oppression over equality, run our governments. We have peaceably assembled here, as is our right, to let these facts be known.

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**Religion Brings Students Together**

*Antonella Sielicki*

**Staff Writer**

When you enter the classroom where the Christian Student Association holds their meetings, you will find a diverse group of people. However, regardless of skin color, age, sex or ethnicity, they have all come together to share the fact that they all have in common: their Christianity.

The Christian Student Association, CSA, is one of Bergen Community College’s four organizations. The CSA is a forum where students of the Christian faith can worship and work in the company of their peers.

While all are welcome, the Christian religion does play an active part in this club. They gather to worship together on Tuesdays, as well as a bible study and discussion on Thursdays.

The CSA is run by President Sarai Otero, Vice President Antonio Sielicki, and Treasurer Ray Bauzon. During the bible study, they read and reflect on various passages from the Bible and discuss how it applies to their own life. They share stories and lessons with one another and keep the floor open for advice. One by one, the students open up and even the shyest ones feel comfortable in the calm, positive setting.

CSA holds its annual concert in December in each year, in which all members participate. This year, it will be held on Dec. 9 and the theme of it is “Breaking the Chains; We remain to worship.” All are welcome to attend. For those who want to attend their meetings, they are on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 12:30 p.m. in C-316.

**Passalubong Teaches Culture Through Food and Dance**

*Antonella Sielicki*

**Staff Writer**

Passalubong is one of the smaller clubs on campus. It is great for you and you can check out their success online at http://www.daejayonusa.org.

Although the Philippines is one of the smaller countries in Asia, Passalubong, Philippine American Student Association Leading Under Bergen On Newer Grounds, is the Filipino Student Association on campus. It is one of the largest clubs at the school and well represented from other international student parties. For those interested in joining the club, meetings are held every Wednesday at 12:30-1:30 p.m. in room L-146.

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While all are welcome, the Christian religion does play an active part in this club. They gather to worship together on Tuesdays, as well as a bible study and discussion on Thursdays.

The CSA is run by President Sarai Otero, Vice President Antonio Sielicki, and Treasurer Ray Bauzon. During the bible study, they read and reflect on various passages from the Bible and discuss how it applies to their own life. They share stories and lessons with one another and keep the floor open for advice. One by one, the students open up and even the shyest ones feel comfortable in the calm, positive setting.

CSA holds its annual concert in December in each year, in which all members participate. This year, it will be held on Dec. 9 and the theme of it is “Breaking the Chains; We remain to worship.” All are welcome to attend. For those who want to attend their meetings, they are on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 12:30 p.m. in C-316.

**Passalubong Teaches Culture Through Food and Dance**

*Antonella Sielicki*

**Staff Writer**

Passalubong is one of the smaller clubs on campus. It is great for you and you can check out their success online at http://www.daejayonusa.org.

Although the Philippines is one of the smaller countries in Asia, Passalubong, Philippine American Student Association Leading Under Bergen On Newer Grounds, is the Filipino Student Association on campus. It is one of the largest clubs at the school and well represented from other international student parties. For those interested in joining the club, meetings are held every Wednesday at 12:30-1:30 p.m. in room L-146.
Creative Blog Captivates Art Community

Antonella Sielicki
Staff Writer

A hodgepodge of goodness is how Sweet Station’s creator Honey describes her art blog. However, do not let the word “art” scare away the creativity-impaired individuals.

Sweet Station is an eye catching, interesting website combining all aspects of art from architecture to photography to plain old painting. Honey, along with her brother Welshie and newcomer Evans Mbai put up whatever appeals to them and that they would like to share with the world.

“Its purpose is to inspire creativity and to connect the people of the world to the world of arts,” said Honey.

For her, art is not a benefit; it is a need. It began from her simply keeping a journal of all the interesting works she found on the internet to evolving into the blog that is Sweet Station today.

The name Sweet Station came to her and her brother on a whim one day after much brainstorming.

“I wanted it to be a buffet of art and creativity,” said Honey. Even if you may not be an art buff, Sweet Station is a mix of new and old, happy and intense. There is a little bit of something for everyone. All the creators of this site have been doing it for almost three years out of their own free will and put their heart into it, and it shines through.

They are college students just like you and there is such a variety of different things, that guaranteed you have not seen before. Sweet Station has open the doors between the person and the internet filtering through what is appealing to them and what they feel will appeal to the rest of the cyber world.

Honey, along with her brother Welshie, have opted to keep their last names private.

Are you an artist or find something that catches your eye? You are encouraged to submit it into Sweet Station, and if they agree, they will post it up for you.

Check out www.sweet-station.com.


SAB Embodies the Holiday Spirit

Jamie Kurtz
Staff Writer

The holiday spirit is finally upon us as the fall semester dwindles down. During the month of December, the Student Activities Board (SAB) has some great events to end the semester with a bang! The biggest event happening this month will be the talent show. Auditions were held last month and everyone’s hard work will finally pay off. The talent show will take place from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. in the new student center on Dec. 13.

During the week of finals people are getting super stressed and feel like they will never get the time to relax. So SAB is hosting relaxation week, which takes place from Dec 12 to 16.

On the Dec. 15 in the student center, we will be offering aqua massages just in time for when you need it.

Speaking of money, December will be the month that SAB will contribute our charity hours. Every year our club donates time and collects toys for the toy drive. It is in perfect timing for the holidays and we even get the chance to interact with the kids in the Childhood Development Center. It is such an awesome experience that once you do it once, you will want to contribute every year. In addition to all the events mentioned before, we will also have our monthly karaoke and bingo, as well as a few possible surprises for the holiday season.

Even though the semester is coming to an end, SAB events are not. So enjoy this last month while you still can and get involved!

Are you an artist or find something that catches your eye? You are encouraged to submit it into Sweet Station, and if they agree, they will post it up for you.

Check out www.sweet-station.com.


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SAB & Italian Club are collecting new or unused toys for Toys for Tots until Dec. 16. Please bring toys to A-115.
BCC’s Piano Man Reveals His Talent

Karl Reyes
Staff Writer

Seven years ago, in 2004, 13 year old Joe Pearson made his debut onto the music scene with little fanfare. Presently, Pearson is now a multi-talented artist ranging across the spectrum from abstract art, to music. Pearson stated, “I’m now a multi-talented artist with influences in music, “ said Pearson when asked if there was anything he has yet to master about the piano. Beyond the realm of music, Pearson certainly has an artistic side to him. “I mostly enjoy abstract and modern art, but rather, nature. His persistence paid off to the titles of the songs, Flannery goes on to explain the meaning behind some of titles. "I had a band for probably about four years, all through high school and stopped around our senior year. The name of my previous band was called ‘Project Erie’ which was named after the name of our street, ‘Project Erie’ which was named after the name of our street. The darker and somewhat mysterious theme, there are titles suggested a deeper meaning to the lyrics and the artists themselves. When asked about the titles of the songs, Flannery goes on to explain the meaning behind some of titles. "The original version of strive was myself, a BCC student who played the bass, a co-worker of mine who played the drums and his girlfriend who was a back up vocalist," said Flannery. "Long story short, the relationship between my drummer and his girlfriend fell apart. Once they broke up they ruined the chemistry of the band instantly and as a songwriter, I stayed with the band along with my drummer’s ex. We eventually found ourselves in a relationship that caused tension between myself and my former drummer. While the apparently fatal concocktion of drugs, alcohol and failed relationships may have caused the demise of the original band roster, Flannery’s explanation of the current incarnations indicate a brighter future. "The current members are really excited and sometimes get anxious just to help out. I never have to ask, they always have it done," said Flannery. "If you or your members don’t, you better find someone who will turn to Joe Pearson for his or her inspiration. \[6\]

Strive’s Revival Sure to Electrify Audience

Karl Reyes
Staff Writer

Fresh onto the music scene, the newly formed band Strive has splashed onto the stage and looks towards gaining notoriety in the world of rock bands. Described as a two year, Flannery and alternative rock, Strive’s music draws off the member’s raw emotion and energy, especially when writing their songs. Lead singer and guitarist Ryan Flannery explained that the name of the band is derived from his constant strive to find dedicated musicians such as himself. His persistence paid off and in Oct 2011, bass player Nick Gallo and drummer Joe Fahey formed ranks with Flannery into what is now known as Strive. Gallo, a bass player of four years, has been said to have previously attended The School of Rock, an after school music program located in South Hackensack devoted to teaching kids to read, play and perform music. Gallo is currently pursuing an internship there. Fahey, a drummer of four years, has been described as more of a hobbyist by Flannery. Flannery has been playing guitar for over seven years and performed as a singer for the past two years. Flannery is also the band’s primary lyricist. The band as a collective has unified goals, primarily the recognition as well as the ability to express who they are. The band has already made several performances in the short time they’ve been together, most of which featured original songs by Strive. When asked what their most notable original tracks were, Ryan said, “We have five notable songs, ‘Through With You,’ ‘Mistakes,’ ‘So It Goes,’ ‘Leave It All Behind’ and ‘Too Late.’"
Bergen Stages Sets Record with “The Mousetrap”

John Sapida
Staff Writer

When Thieves Are About have done several tours throughout the northeast of the United States. They even put their money together to purchase an old school bus to convert into their tour bus. The band was featured at Bamboozle in 2008, Warped Tour in 2009 and 2010, and has done several solo tours with other local bands to promote their debut EP, extended play, “The Challenger.”

The band gained their following through the internet and word of mouth. Their music is energetic and punk rock. To a small local audience it was, “Nothing but a bunch of no-names in a room.” The band, When Thieves Are About, is taking a break from touring. They have been too focused on recording their next album. They were invited back on stage by one of their heroes, NOFX.

Some of their songs, such as Sum 41, Powerman 5000, Senses Fail, We Came As Romans, and The Atari. Sum 41 invited them back on stage for the final song of their set list. As of right now, When Thieves Are About is taking a break from touring. They have been too focused on recording their next album. They were invited back on stage by one of their heroes, NOFX.

When Thieves Are About have opened for several bands such as Sum 41, Powerman 5000, Senses Fail, We Came As Romans, and The Atari. Sum 41 invited them back on stage for the final song of their set list. As of right now, When Thieves Are About is taking a break from touring. They have been too focused on recording their next album. They were invited back on stage by one of their heroes, NOFX.

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**Lighting Up the Holiday for the Fortunate**

_Alyssa Jahren
Contributing Writer_

For Toys for Tots is an organization that has helped to bring smiles to children’s faces for years. This organization is run by the United States Marine Corps and was first established in the year 1947. The main goal and idea behind Toys for Tots is to give presents to children who are less fortunate. Hundreds of millions of toys have been donated and collected over the years, and all of these toys and gifts really bring so much happiness to joy to children who are going through a difficult time.

This is such an amazing organization and there are many ways to get involved. People can donate, request to take part from now until Dec 20. The organization has a train that goes around all areas of New Jersey to pick up toys that were donated. Right here in Paramus are two Toys 'R Us locations where you can drop off your toys to the children, make sure to do so. December is such a joyous time of year for people to come together and let their worries go away. They keep, are very different, they bring families and friends together to celebrate a special day or week with others.

Toys for Tots needs volunteers to help distribute toys to local children who live in need. From the stocks to the vendors, make sure the toys are organized properly in the warehouse and so much more.

Volunteering for Toys for Tots is such a rewarding charity and being able to give back around this time of year is a great thing to do. December is such a joyful month, so help bring that joy and happiness to a child in need!

---

**Poached Pears**

_Jamie Kurtz
Staff Writer_

Halloween and Thanksgiving have passed, and now it’s on to the holidays of December. During Halloween, everyone stocked up on candy and chocolate. On Thanksgiving, we all stuffed ourselves with turkey, mashed potatoes and stuffing. Here is a simple treat for December that is sweet, filling and gives you a much healthier meal.

**You will need:**
- 5 medium pears
- Simple syrup
- Sugar
- Water

**To prepare:**
For the simple syrup, combine 1 quart of water with 1/2 cup sugar. Bring a boil. Let cool in the poaching liquid.

1. Peel the pears and remove the cores. Place the pears in a sauce pot and add enough simple syrup to completely submerge them. Bring to a boil (over medium-high heat) and continue to simmer until pears are very tender.
2. Let cool in the poaching liquid, drain, and serve as desired.

---

**Timber! Cutting Your Own Christmas Tree**

_Maryann de Pinto
Contributing Writer_

This year Christmas may prove to be tough for some BCC students, but that should not be a reason why the tradition of cutting down a Christmas tree should be extinguished. Lantier Tree Farm in Monroe, NJ is only one of many farms within an hour’s drive of Bergen County that the public can venture to for the experience. For $50, anyone can do it.

While on the farm, there are helpers to assist with finding the tree that will appropriately fit your needs. The most popular tree, as well as the one most frequently featured in Christmas displays, is the Fraser Fur.

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**Kwanzaa is an African-American cultural holiday that is celebrated from Dec. 26 to Jan. 1. The celebration involves lighting the seven candles each night. Families that celebrate Kwanzaa decorate their homes with traditional African artwork and colorful clothes. One traditional cloth is called a Kente.**

The main colors for Kwanzaa are red, black and green. Kwanzaa celebrates seven principals, hence the seven candles. These principals are umoja or unity, kuumba, self-determination, ujamaa, collective work and responsibility, umoja, family, Nguzo Saba, mutuality and umoja, faith.

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**Celebrating December Holidays**

_Christine McDonald
Contributing Writer

Hannukah is the Jewish “Festival Of Lights.” For eight days and nights, families light the menorah and watch the candles burn bright. Hannukah is observed starting on the 25th day of Kislev according to the Hebrew calendar, which may occur any time from late November to December depending on the Gregorian calendar. They also exchange gifts and eat some traditional potato pancakes. Traditionally called latkes, these potato pancakes are a traditional staple of the Jewish holiday. Another popular tradition of Hannukah is playing the dreidel, a top used to spin and play games. The holiday does hold an incredibly significant meaning; it reminds us of the Maccabees resistance and the rededicating to the Holy Temple in 2 B.C.

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“I love the opportunity to work with a diverse group of people.”

Brittany Barrow, Class of 2012
Childhood/Special Education Major
Transfer Student

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**Play Games With Your Mind**

Anthony Sanga  
Staff Writer

“You think, therefore, you can.” This is the Emotiv Systems motto, a technology company that has created a headset that could innovate the way people play video games and use computers. The EPOC is a neuroheadset. A neuroheadset allows the wearer to communicate with a computer by using brainwaves instead of touch.

The headset uses a series of sensors that tap into electrical signals that the brain produces. It then reads the users thoughts and emotions and delivers them to the computer.

The key to future technology could be inside your head.

---

**Introducing Scarlet Foxy! Establishing Soon at a Club Near You**

Wendy Cee  
Contributing Writer

Scarlet Foxy rocked The Clash Bar in Clifton, New Jersey on Oct. 22 and Nov. 5. Scarlet Foxy is comprised of Gerwyn Reynolds on lead vocal, Iden Cross on guitar, Chris Basile on bass and CB McAlister on drums. Reynolds, Cross, Basile and CB are all Bergen Community College alumni.

Scarlet Foxy is a eclectic alternative rock band off to a promising start with a rock sound. When asked to sum it up, Frontman Reynolds commented that it is easy to see how far they’ve come, even since their last show.

The band’s ability to click so well together is a testimonial to their progress and the fact that they have been playing together for a few months.

‘Raw, but full of promise, the band hopes to establish itself on the local club circuit. Scarlet Foxy will next be appearing Dec. 17 at Stage Left at Chill, on 332 Bloomfield Avenue in Montclair, New Jersey.’

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**Assassin’s Creed: Revelations: Good Standards and New Tricks**

Alphonso Delgra  
Staff Writer

“Assassin’s Creed: Revelations.” the fourth game in the series seems to be quite the experience as it follows last year’s “Assassin’s Creed: Brotherhood.”

Assassin’s Creed: Revelations (AC: R) has more meaning in the plot, as some of the mysteries that left you guessing in the last game are unraveled.

The game starts right where AC: Brotherhood left off. Desmond has been through the Anims and is now back with the Apple of Eden. Desmond finds himself somewhere in the Animus with a character that fans would remember quickly.

The player resumes Ezio’s story as his travels take him to Constantinople in the year 1544. His goal is to hunt down what is thought to be an ancient artifact that can end the war between the Assassins and the Templars.

For new players to the series, it’s suggested that you play the previous games, or you will get lost and confused. With the complex story and mysteries of AC: R.

The gameplay feels great; everything that you could do in Brotherhood is brought over to Revelations, with a few new additions. Tazim, a fellow assassin, gives you two new items, the hookblade and bombs. The hookblade acts as an extension of Ezio’s arm and helps him travel much faster via zipline, as well as being very handy in combat. Bombs can serve three different purposes: kill, distract or act as a decoy for guards.

In the bomb crafting process, you can modify your bomb to fit your situation or liking. You can create bombs that blow up in different radii, bombs that bounce off of walls and contain deadly explosions or even fake coins to attract crowds.

An interesting addition to Revelations is a new mini-game introduced early on in the gameplay. You can place crosbowmen, riflemen, and leaders and more to prevent the Templars from breaching through the path. It’s enjoyable while it lasts as it is very scarce throughout the game.

The multiplayer experience for Revelations has a lot of additions, as well. Game modes such as free-for-alls, team-based and simple deathmatch have been added. Some additions in sessions include honorable deaths, where you can directly confront your assassin when you are being hunted, dates, or challenges to outscore your friends and accolades, rewards met under specific conditions.

Keeping true to the series, Assassin’s Creed: Revelations has all the mystery, action and plot that any Assassin’s Creed fan will enjoy. 

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**Unlikely Hero Embraces Her Destiny**

Danielle Martin  
Contributing Writer

The world is so well described that one can help but feel they are there themselves. Similar to early Spain, everything from the people, the food and even the scenery are well imagined and described in a way that feels realistic and not boring.

Lucero-Elisa of Oravalle is not your typical Cinderella style princess. She is an unattractive and fairly unassuming protagonist. She begins the story as the type of young woman who would be utterly hidden from view and not be thought of as having any influence whatever.

The world is a much larger place than she realizes and she begins to distance herself from her destiny than embrace it. However, she was born with the Godstone. The Godstone is a jewel sent directly from God into the receiver and only comes once every century, this is a mark that declares she is destined for greatness.

Although Elisa is riddled with insecurities and doubts, she self-pitying. Throughout the story, Elisa goes through a stunning transformation: transforming from a frightened child to a poised young woman. She goes through many physical and emotional changes. Rae Carson has created a character that can not help but root for. It is amazing when you reach the point where Elisa cheers for herself.

The Girl of Fire and Thorn is fantasy at its best. The writing, magic, heroes and villains. This is a novel for readers and fans of authors Tamora Pierce, Holly Black andbooks similar to them.

The Girl of Fire and Thorns is the first book in a trilogy, though the story has quite a definitive ending. That being said, the characters are so easy to get attached to. Truly, the second book can not come soon enough.
Call of Duty: Modern Warfare 3: The Long Awaited Finale to an Innovative Series

Jorge Abreu
Staff Writer

The long awaited title from Infinity Ward, the developers of the Call of Duty series, released "Call of Duty: Modern Warfare 3" on Nov. 23, 2011. This is the final installment in the Modern Warfare series.

Call of Duty: Modern Warfare (COD: MW), follows a storyline that gets all who play it so involved and attached to the characters. From MW1 to the new MW3, the storyline has pushed this game far on its own, with epic battles, trail gun sequences and amazing delivery. From the voice actors to the weapon sounds, there is no dull moment.

A high quality sound system will make you feel as if you are in the war itself. Everything sounds real. The explosions and sound effects are designed to show Henry Clay Frick's wealth and social status that truly shows the atmosphere with the sound of flowing water.

The atmosphere at the Frick Collection is peaceful. This peaceful environment creates an ideal space for viewing and analyzing art. The Frick Collection's small interior makes it easier to visit, analyze and even sketch amongst some of the sculptures and busts within the court. The fountain in the middle of this Garden Court completes the peaceful atmosphere with the sound of flowing water.

The Frick is currently holding a special exhibition of Pablo Picasso's drawings until Jan 8, 2012. The collection is housed in Frick's old mansion at 1 East 70 Street in NYC. The house home at 1 East 70 Street in NYC. The house is open to the public and prepares them for careers in the most advanced emerging industries.

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John Sapida
Staff Writer

The Frick Collection is closed on holidays and closed on August 27. The Frick Collection accepts private, corporate and public group and family visits. Father's Day is on Sunday, June 17, 2012. All visitors are invited to enjoy a birthday celebration at The Frick Collection.

For more information about the Frick Collection, ticketing, pricing, and special exhibitions and lectures, visit its website at www.frick.org.

The TORCH

DECEMBER 2011
VOLUME 19 ISSUE 4

THE TORCH

NJIT
New Jersey's Science & Technology University

The Long Awaited Finale to an Innovative Series

Personal Collection Takes Visitors Through History

The Frick Collection's 16 galleries are designed to show Henry Clay Frick's collection in an organized fashion with each gallery representing either a national origin or a time period.

Some of the artists in the Frick's permanent collection include Gerhard David, Duccio, Holbein, El Greco and Titian.

The atmosphere at the Frick Collection is peaceful. This peaceful environment creates an ideal space for viewing and analyzing art. The Frick Collection's small interior makes it easier to visit, analyze and even sketch because now upgrading your weapons depends on how good you are, not how many wins you had because your team was that good.

Call of Duty: Modern Warfare 3 definitely answers the call of many gamers, and if it is not in your possession yet, put it on your Christmas list.
Do You Have an Eskimo Brother or Sister?

Women tend to pretend that their current significant other has not had any other sexual partners than themselves. If they are aware about past sexual partners they are more likely to size them up. The term “sloppy seconds” is thrown around a lot in female locker room.

If you know your partner’s past sexual partners and they happen to be someone you are not exactly friends with, leave the situation alone. Do you really want everyone to know that you have their sloppy seconds?

Men, on the other hand, tend to to see eskimo brothers as honorary badges and something to show off or buy a drink for. Men have proudly proclaimed that they have been with a woman that has also been with a professional athlete or a musician in a band. For a guy to know that he slept with the same woman that he also idolizes is a proud thing. For a guy to know that he slept with the same woman that has also been with a professional athlete or a musician in a band. For a guy to know that he slept with the same woman that he also idolizes is a proud thing.

Why each gender takes this differently is due to variety of reasons but a main one seems to be territorial, especially for women.

Everyone has a past right? Depending on how you take it could change how you see what you have in the future and who you cuddle with this cold season.

Cons:
False sense of hope: While there may be a certain ease to getting to know your partner’s family during the holidays, there does come the possibility that the family is just putting up with you, rather than accepting you. If you are planning on making this person a permanent part of your life, plan to see the family again, perhaps when school gets out for the summer. This way, you will get a clearer idea of just where you stand with them.

Fake personality: If your girlfriend is less than desirable, in the eyes of your very traditional family, she is definitely going to put on the exact facade your family is going to want to see. While it is natural for all of us to put on our best face when meeting new people, especially ones we need to impress, it is critical we remain true to ourselves. While you should try to make a good first impression, make sure it is an impression that can last every time you see them.

“Don’t Spray Me, Man”

By: Brendon Miel

While the weather is getting nippy, cuddling and getting close is starting to look better and better. Yes, we are in college and according to research by Advocates for Youth Organization, 79 percent of college students are having sex. But when people are often having sex, it is also likely for them to have had past partners.

Enter eskimo brothers and sisters. According to urbanguardian.com, an eskimo brother or sister refers to two men who have slept with the same woman. The term eskimo brother or sister is not the formal term but it is used in pop culture.

In the TV show “The League” Taco MacAfee, played by Jonathon Lajoie, and Pete Eckhart, played by Mark Duplass, discover they are eskimo brothers and proudly proclaim it.

This kinship has taken different forms amongst different groups of people but the biggest difference is between women and men.
Massenzio’s UFC Hit Men Take to the Mat

David Gonzalez
Sports Editor

The wrestling team’s head coach, Mike Massenzio, already had a great reputation when he came to Bergen last season. This does not include the fact that he is going to be competing Jan. 14 in a worldwide Pay-Per-View Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC) event. Some of his other notable credentials include being a two-time New Jersey State High School Champion and Junior College National Champion as a Bulldog for BCC.

Massenzio put his passion for wrestling on a path he knew he was ready to compete in, a level of fighting where he could continue to nurture the already extraordinary abilities he had acquired throughout his career in the sport. The UFC and Martial Arts Fight for UFC, Coach Massenzio calls it the biggest professional fighting organization in world; it’s the NFL of MMA (Mixed Martial Arts Fighting).

The dominance of wrestling is common knowledge within the fighting community, especially when it comes to take downs, which take place usually in the beginning of every fight. It is that initial positioning that often gives (UFC) fighters their necessary advantage for winning.

Coaching wrestling is a strong advocate for wrestling. He says it builds strong character and discipline. Those who apply themselves in this sport will learn how to maintain good athletic form. He takes pride in seeing his athletes progress from where they were to where they end up. Simply put, the hard workouts routines and competition, “make you a man,” said Massenzio.

No stranger to seeing hard work in student athletes, Coach Massenzio coached four years at Paramus Catholic and one year at DePaul. He currently trains full time for fights, much like a full time job. He more recently opened a Brazilian Jujitsu academy in Newark. Mike Massenzio has been wrestling since he was 4 years old. His father, uncle and cousins got him into the sport because they all love it too.

Bergen has 13 matches and two tournaments this upcoming season, “It’s tough—goes from January,” said  Massenzio, March wrestling two or three times a week is intense. Bergen’s goal this year is to get into the top 15 (amongst the best in the country). More than one All American is a possibility if they take the needed top 3 meets in the conference tournament.

It is a young team this year, comprised mostly of freshman. There are 35 members of the wrestling team at this point down from 50 a few weeks ago, “I’ve never seen so many people trying out for the team since I’ve been a coach here at Bergen” said Coach Kochakji, “down from fifty a few weeks ago, we will have a solid team I’m sure.”

Coach Massenzio will have a better picture of his team by the time January rolls around. “This is pretty much what we got,” he said, “Biggest thing at this point is to just weed out guys who are not as dedicated and the guys who are for real.” One wrestler is back in his second year season with Coach Massenzio.

The NJCAA Region 19 Division 3 first matchup is January 4 (tentatively). Middlesex and Gloucester are two main teams to beat this year, with Middlesex winning it all last year. Bergen finished 9 and 3, and lost to Middlesex and Gloucester. There has been no captain named as of yet. The announcement will come following the New Year. www.region19.org

David Gonzalez
Sports Editor
Alphonsus Delgra
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The Panthers of Passaic County College took the lead and never looked back after the Bergen’s Bulldogs endured yet another early season loss. The Bulldogs played a great game in front of a crowd who cheered them on to the end, but the Panthers were relentless.

The action was intense in the first half as both teams aimed to get to the basket quickly, pushing the ball up the court on every chance. With several fouls in the first half that stopped the clock and slowed the game down, Bergen picked up the tempo by pressing hard to steal the ball successfully. This became one of their most important strategies throughout the game. #3 Ricky Carroll stepped it up, making several free throws to tie the game, but despite Bergen’s best efforts, the score was 48-35 in favor of Passaic at the end of the 1st half.

In the second half, PCC pushed the ball up and down across the court with each shot made, getting the Bulldogs closer to overcoming Passaic’s offensive onslaught. With 8:50 left on the clock, the Bulldogs tied the Panthers, Passaic fought back and kept the lead. In the last five minutes, BCC jumped in front, leading to a full court press once again, resulting in multiple 3-point plays for the Bulldogs. This worked, until the Panthers figured out Bergen’s full court pressure taking over in turnovers to keep them in the lead. The game ended with a score of 82-74.

Anthony Vorgel, the head coach of the Panthers was pleased with the game. He said that this was the first game that they had full control. He also emphasized to his team the importance of ball movement in keeping the pace up throughout the game. Ricky Banks, the assistant coach, shared his strategy about pacing, referring to it as the gas pedal. “Keep the foot on the gas pedal to prevent the opposition from catching up.” In other words, prevent your opponent from ever taking the lead once you have it.

Matt Odalen, Coach for the Bulldogs, had a different approach. He focused more on the defense against an aggressive offense like the Panthers, wanting to limit the shots they made to 1 possession. This approach was based on rebounding every single rebound to be successful. While on the offensive, Odalen wanted his team to spread the floor out, creating distance between the players to control the clock and get the baskets they needed to win.

This loss may have been hard on the Bulldogs, but they have plenty of time to get back into their winning groove. With an overall record of 4 wins and 7 losses so far this season, Bergen is caught in a four-way tie for seventh place. Middleses, Northampton and Gloucester Community Colleges respectively hold the same record of 3 wins and 5 losses. Brookdale leads the Region 19 Division 3 Conference with an undefeated 7-0 record.

On a brighter note, Bergen took a recent Tournament, The Roadrunner Classic defeating Gloucester County College and Burlington County College proving they are still a force to reckon with. Freshman Guard #22 Zack Anderson from Englewood, and Sophomore Shooting Guard #5 Maynard Freeman of Paterson, were both decorated for outstanding performance.

With the rest of the season still ahead for the Bulldogs, their regular season continues on throughout the winter break and into the month of February, with the chance of further extension should they make the playoffs. Visit www.cignawgeben.org for more recent updates.

David Gonzalez
Sports Editor

The Lady Bulldogs were down by two points in overtime when they took on the Panthers of Passaic County on Dec. 6. Tia Cangialosi came up with a huge rebound off a blown lay up opportunity by PCC. Arms flew in the air signaling time-out opportunity by PCC. Arms flew in the air signaling time-up opportunity by PCC. Arms flew in the air signaling time-up opportunity by PCC. Arms flew in the air signaling time-up opportunity by PCC. Arms flew in the air signaling time-up opportunity by PCC. Arms flew in the air signaling time-up opportunity by PCC. Arms flew in the air signaling time-up opportunity by PCC.

Bulldog Head Coach Tracy Green had a short talk with her players, Felicia Castillo, Kayla Dziewa, Tia Cangialosi, Priscilla Quiceno and Brittany Meyer gathered around. “We want this,” said Green. She reassured what they already knew, and that was win.

“Everybody on Bergen’s team wanted to win, that’s for sure,” said Co-Captain Yohaira Orozco. She stood in the huddle and looked at the crowd and the time on the clock, but completely into the game. “I told them we have to show them what we have, let’s not get aggravated with each other,” she said.

Bergen took the ball on the inbound and a series of clock stopping fouls ensued after their time-out. Felicia made the final free throw before the clock ran out and the game finally came to an end, with the final score, Bergen 91 Passaic 90.

Bergen’s offense really broke out in the second half, said Co-Captain Kayla Dziewa. Yohaira agreed saying, “We woke up.”

Felicia Castillo scored 21 points, Kayla Dziewa 22, and Tia Cangialosi lead all scores with 23 points and 5 rebounds. “We made our shots from the floor but we didn’t make our free-throws,” said Yohaira, who had aggravated the knee she had surgery on a year earlier, forcing her to sit out.

This is a change from our last two games. Our team was losing and we let it keep us down, but not this time,” said Yohaira. “Now our team is maturing and in the game; we wanted to win.”

The Lady Bulldogs are currently holding steady at 6-6. For more information on schedules and results, visit www.region19.org.