BCCSnaps Causes Controversy

LUCIA RUBI GODOY

A particular Snapchat account named BCCSnaps has become very popular with the students of Bergen Community College. This account features photos and videos taken by different students all around the school.

Although this account has been around for over a year, it has only become a popular account recently. The account originally started as a way to show off students and faculty, but it became more of a platform for students to express themselves.

Some students see nothing wrong with the account, and find the content rather entertaining. “It’s just funny. I think it’s just another social media bringing the school together,” said student Mary Tyler. Others believe that by carrying the name of the school, the account fails to properly represent it and gives it a bad reputation with its inappropriate content.

Peter Zalokostas, a senator of Student Government Association, says that he does not think the owner/manager of the account should be censored, but that maybe the account’s name should be changed to something different, or include a clarification that it’s not an official account managed by the school.

“The is not an official account of the college. The college does not authorize the actions of any social media account other than its official Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and Twitter pages,” said Larry Hlavenka, the Managing Director of the Office of Public Relations of Bergen Community College.

“It’s mostly content driven. 99 percent of the stuff on the page is absolutely repost. Because I have a jailbroken phone, people send me stuff, I save it, and then repost it,” said the owner of the account, who asked to stay anonymous.

Some of the most popular trends on the account are to send pictures of sleeping classmates, selfies, and pictures of cars for “Whip Wednesday.” Some less innocent trends include students sending videos taken while deliberately ignoring the drug and smoke free campus rules and submitting naked photos for “Titty Tuesday.” It’s not meant to be offensive, it’s mostly content driven by whatever people are sending in the submissions. It’s simply what the people want to do,” said the owner of BCCSnaps.

One particular snap that upset several students was a picture of two random underage girls wearing hijabs talking, with a caption that read “plotting a terrorist attack.”

That day, I set it on auto-repost mode. With a jailbroken app, whatever people send in it automatically gets re-posted. As soon as I open my phone after class, immediately people were messaging me like “what’s going on?” explained the owner of BCCSnaps. “Apparently some racist student had sent somestuff in that did not represent me, shouldn’t be representing the school, so I immediately took that down. That was definitely a mistake, and now I never use auto-repost mode. There’s a lot of work that goes behind it to filter out all this content,” he explained.

The administrator of BCCSnaps expressed he has a desire to encourage people to get involved, besides simply entertaining them.

“I’m probably gonna do the same than the guy before me, and pass it on,” he said when asked what he would do with the account when the moment to move on arrives.

The existence of this account was brought to the attention of the department of Public Relations before, which means it has been investigated by the school.

Although the school does not endorse the account, and the content has not been approved by the college, the content is real material sent by students, according to the BCCsnaps owner.

New Medical Building Nears Completion

CHRISTOPHER MOLINA

The New Medical Building will be expected to open in May//Genesis Fuentes

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With the Health Professions Integrated Teaching Center almost completed, we want to know what its impact on the school is, and how much it cost to construct this massive project. The ribbon cutting ceremony will be expected by the end of the spring semester of May.

The Managing Director of the Office of Public Relations, Larry Hlavenka, expressed the importance of this site when he said, “Bottom line, this is going to be a regional training center. The fact that we can take all of our health professions programs every semester. 250 of those who graduate go on to work in health services in Bergen County.

In a 2012 study done by the U.S. Census Bureau and Center for Economic studies found that health care and social assistance lead in average employment in Bergen County with 65,803, and second in hiring with 4,357. “Health professions and health care is the number one job sector in Bergen County, so it only makes sense that this type of facility would exist in Bergen County,” says Hlavenka.

With a large number of students involved in the medical field, moving to the building will be an easy task. “Nursing, dental hygiene, these are the programs that won’t require a whole lot of promotion. The community knows that they exist and it is fact that the classes can be bigger, we can admit more students, I think the students will probably enjoy that,” said Hlavenka.

Students seem to agree, having to see the project as an opportunity to better their skills. “I think it’s a great idea, and it really helps us, as nursing students,” said nursing student Monica Kalins. “[I’m going to] be able to practice more, there’s more space, I’m very excited about this.”

The Health Professions Integrated Teaching Center would not only include high tech equipment, but a population of 1,500 students.

(Continued on pg.2)
BCC Cleared To Fly Drones

Medical Building Update

Continued from Front Page

800 health professions students and ones from the veterinary technology will be moving from Pitkin into the new facility, except for the Paramedic Science students. The ones left behind in Pitkin will be repurposed for other needs of the school. The amenities inside the building will provide real world experience; both the dental hygiene and nursing lab will be working with the best equipment and technology in providing them a real world experience. The name Health Profession Integrated Teaching Center is looked at as more than just a name. To the people working at Bergen, it means that, “we prepare health professionals, plus the non-credit programs are moving over, so is about 16 different specialties, that will be coming together, to be able to learn in a more collaborative environment” says Dr. Susan C. Barnard, Dean of Health Professions.

Bottom line, without the [Building Our Future Bond] Act, the necessary funds we’ll need to construct a high tech state of the art facility like this one are very hard to come by,” said Larry Hlavenka.

Dean of Health Professions.

“This project is not just one person, it takes everybody, it takes all of our partners. It obviously everybody at the college, it takes people who are working on this building, our community partners, it takes local officials, it takes our state officials, and this is the kind of project that a lot of people are working very hard to become reality,” said Hlavenka. Many are very pleased with how this project is going to play out in the future.

Much of the credit with financing the construction went through the Building Our Future Bond Act, which comprised a $750 million referendum that New Jersey voters approved in 2012. That bond act helped fund many projects, not only in Bergen County, but institutions across the state of New Jersey. Hlavenka has expressed the importance of the act stating that “All the colleges received money, in order to construct academic facilities. Bottom line, without that the [Building Our Future Bond] Act, the necessary funds we’ll need to construct a high tech state of the art facility like this one are very hard to come by.”
Lack of Policy For Security Camera Usage Raises Concern

BRENDAN DALY
Assistant Editor

There is a growing worry on campus due to the lack of an official policy for the College’s surveillance cameras. “My concern is that there doesn’t appear to be any regulation with camera use. And in order to know that it’s being used properly, ethically and not for intimidation, there needs to be guidelines,” said head representative of the Support Staff, Albert Legge.

“We don’t have a policy on the cameras,” said William Corcoran, the Vice President of Facilities, Planning, Operations and Public Safety. “But the cameras are purely for mine and your safety on this campus.”

After the lack of policy was brought to the attention of Public Safety of the lack of policy, Corcoran and the Executive Director of Human Resources James Miller have discussed plans to create one.

Since the implementation of the cameras, a detectable increase in safety has occurred. There has been a 75 percent increase in lost or stolen items being retrieved, according to the Office of Public Safety.

“I do think they are very useful. If I am ever in a dangerous situation, I know that if I file a suit, they will be able to see what happened. But I do think that there should be limits and regulations as to how the cameras are used,” said Bergen Student Noemie Broussoux-Coutard.

Several Public safety officers, who have asked to remain anonymous due to fear of discipline, have also expressed that while cameras with a clear policy on their use is beneficial; officers are concerned as to whether they are being used a form of management control.

“There would be a disciplinary action if it did happen, there is no question about that,” said Miller. “If somebody was misusing it to watch employees and not using it for the purpose of safety on campus we’d have to investigate it. We do not take discipline lightly here, especially if it is something like this,” added Miller.

Each of the cameras cost about $6,000, most of which was covered by a series of three grants. The first of which was from the College itself back in 2008 (for just about $300,000) and the next two were from Homeland Security, each of which was for $150,000, according to Corcoran.

According to Corcoran there is an estimated 200 cameras, and the camera monitors are under watch in the Public Safety office. There are five monitors, each of which is split into four smaller screens so the officer on duty can watch 20 cameras at a time.

Corcoran said the cameras are purely for security, but, “If it’s something like this,” added Corcoran. “I do think they are very useful. If I am ever in a dangerous situation, I know that if I file a suit, they will be able to see what happened. But I do think that there should be limits and regulations as to how the cameras are used,” said Bergen Student Noemie Broussoux-Coutard.

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According to Corcoran there is an estimated 200 cameras, and the camera monitors are under watch in the Public Safety office. There are five monitors, each of which is split into four smaller screens so the officer on duty can watch 20 cameras at a time. An officer has the ability to flip through all of the cameras as he or she pleases. Camera recordings loop approximately every 21 days.

Currently, however, there is no specific qualification for camera monitoring. “[It’s too early] to know as to how the policy is going to be written. But we are writing one right now,” added Corcoran.

Listening to Jupiter

JOVE antenna and receiver to listen to radio waves coming from Jupiter, the Sun and the hydrogen gas of the Technology Building on the Paramus Campus.

Hoping to start a project long overdue.

The building of a Radio Astronomy student, Enxhi Xhydollari, asked to do the antenna, “it’s coming all out of my pocket right now,” he commented laughing and that it is also quick to build.

“[It’s too early] to know as to how the policy is going to be written. But we are writing one right now,” added Corcoran.

Students work together to create the antenna to listen to radio waves! / Genesis Fuentes
**Middle States Evaluation Has Bergen Standing Tall**

SAMUEL MCLAUGHLIN & DENNIS PEARSON JR.

The Middle States Commission on Higher Education warned Bergen Community College that its “accreditation may be in jeopardy.” The commission determined that BCC was unable to find adequate resources to give graduates the necessary skills they needed upon graduation. Though this was a negative report, the commission was confident that BCC would be able to make the necessary changes.

Richard Pokrass, a spokesman for the commission commented that BCC was “not in dire shape.”

“Typically, within relatively short order, in many cases a year or less, they can come back into compliance.”

Five years later, The Middle States Commission has returned with encouraging news for BCC. On March 2, Kenneth Ender of The Middle States Commission on Higher Education made an oral report stating that Bergen Community College has met all of the standards set forth by the Commission to maintain the College’s accreditation. If a college doesn’t meet the federal standard, they will lose their accreditation and federal funding.

The 19 member self-study team, which reported to the evaluation team, was directed by the Vice President of Institutional Effectiveness Yun Kim, Professor in Performing Arts Sony Tiwari and Gail Fernandez. Evaluation team members, college officials, faculty and staff were in the Technology Building awaiting the studies results.

“Bergen remains successful because of the professionals who teach and work here, as we are now. They explain things more clearly and make sure we understand everything before going on. They’re really fun to be around. I’m so glad I was chosen as one of the seven to be part of this project.”

Along with Barnes, Summer Caviness, Ori Shen-Tov, Carol Choquepuma, John and Luke Whelan also participated in these projects with the help of amazing mentors; Robert Goeze, Nicolette Filippone, Joan Madera, and Russell Cardenas.

During the visit to the College, Orange and Rockland Scholars displayed the work that was done by the seven students and four STEM students to company representatives, also including Rockland Manager of Strategic Partnerships, Linda Feger.

The Orange and Rockland Scholars project exemplifies Bergen Community College’s commitment to focus to the teaching and education of STEM.

In 2011, Bergen received $3.8 million U.S. Department of Education grant to support the Graduation Pathway to Success Project, a five year proposal to prepare STEM students for graduation, transferring to four-year colleges and entry to professional fields.

The Turning Point program at Bergen Community College is to focus on academic, vocational and social skills while preparing to receive employment and further independence.

**Obama Strengthens Cybersecurity**

DENNIS PEARSON JR.

The White House has announced that they’ll be working on strengthening the nation’s cybersecurity, after recent data breaches occurred in the Office of Personnel Management and the Justice Department. Millions of people had their valuable information stolen by hackers including social security numbers, fingerprints, and financial and health records. It is suspected that China was behind the attacks, but no proof has been provided. On February 9, President Obama signed an executive order creating a federal privacy council to lead in the long term mission to strengthen cybersecurity. The overall long term plan was named the Cybersecurity National Action Plan (CNAP). This plan includes various initiatives in the public and private sector in order to close the IT gap between them.

For starters, the proposed 2017 budget would dedicate $19 billion for cybersecurity improvements including $3.1 billion out of the budget to replace outdated and inefficient IT systems. CNAP will also be reaching out to U.S. citizens to encourage them to strengthen their own cybersecurity. It will be motivating everyday Americans to move from simple passwords and usernames to more advanced security protection including fingerprints and single use codes which work with cell phones to strengthen personal security.

The plan will also include collaboration between federal, state and local governments as well as private companies like Google and PayPal. It includes universal access to each group’s information and a shared effort between federal agencies to build, as well as maintaining each other’s IT systems, instead of each agency having to maintain their systems individually. The government will also be working on ways to identify citizens other than their social security number. Incentives for people seeking IT degrees have also been considered in the plan’s budget including scholarships, a federally created curriculum and student loan forgiveness.

IT and other tech industries are constantly growing fields. As they grow, they become more integrated in our everyday lives. With that integration comes opportunity and vulnerability. If passed by the Republican dominated Congress, this plan will reinforce the nation, not with walls of stone, but with data protection.
What is the Superdelegate Vote?

The superdelegate vote is a political phenomenon unique to the United States. A superdelegate is a political party leader or an elected official who is not bound by how people vote in the primaries and caucuses. Superdelegates can choose whomever they want to support before the convention, and they are not bound by the rules that pertain to the popular vote. This can make them a very influential group in the nomination process.

The purpose of the changes was to make the composition of the convention less subject to control by party leaders and more responsive to the votes cast during the campaign for the nomination. The superdelegate system was established over the spring and summer of 1982 by a special committee of the Democratic National Committee (DNC) that was chaired by then-North Carolina governor James B. Hunt. Superdelegates were the most important of several such changes approved by the CPN; others included shortening the primary season, and loosening the rules for pledged delegates (such that it became easier to be a ‘faithless’ delegate).

As Merriam-Webster states, “A superdelegate is a political party leader or an elected official selected to vote at a national nominating convention who may or may not be pledged to support a particular candidate.”

We’ll use the 2016 Minnesota presidential election as an example of the superdelegate vote. Bernie Sanders won the New Hampshire primary election, but he didn’t win the superdelegate vote. Sanders won 15 of the 24 regular delegates. However, due to pledged superdelegates, Clinton obtained the same number of delegates from New Hampshire as Sanders, despite losing the popular vote by more than 21 points. She also won 29 delegates in Iowa to Sanders’ 21, despite the virtual tie in the caucuses.

The superdelegates contribute to reveal whom they support before the primary election in their state, which gives us an idea of what the delegate count is. However, they can change their minds up until the convention.

For 2016 democratic superdelegates, they establish 712 of the party’s 4,763 delegates. Being “unpledged” to a specific candidate means the superdelegates remain free to choose their candidate up until the convention. Superdelegates, are almost always unpledged.

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Bergen Community College and Fairleigh Dickinson University are partnering to offer you a more affordable path to a bachelor’s degree. Graduate with your associate’s degree from BCC, and you will be eligible to transfer to a FDU bachelor’s program at a significant tuition discount. Benefits include:

- 40% tuition reduction for undergraduate programs, which may also be applicable to some master’s degrees at FDU
- Additional grants may be available for resident students, NJSTARS and students graduating with a 3.5+ GPA

Questions? Visit Almida Hernandez, FDU’s on-site advisor, Monday-Friday at the Pitkin Education Center, Room A126
alhernan@fdu.edu or BCC-FDUScholars@fdu.edu
201-493-4088

Learn more at fdu.edu/bcc-fdu
Breasts are categorized as a sexual body part in the minds of many people, despite their sole purpose of feeding babies. Women who wish to breastfeed their children in public are shamed and told to go home, or to cover their breasts and their baby’s head with a blanket.

Most nursing women will encounter a situation where they find the need to breastfeed their babies in a public place, but unfortunately for them, there are still close-minded people out there that aren’t going to harass them. They are seen as just wanting attention and are publicly humiliated, receiving rude looks and requests to cover up. It is under federal law that women can breastfeed whenever, wherever they want in the U.S., but without a way to enforce these laws, they are virtually useless to mothers.

Videos of women being harassed for publicly breastfeeding have been going viral recently. Through the power of the internet, many mothers have united and defended their rights by generally agreeing upon the following: If my child is hungry, I am going to feed him/her no matter what. A blanket over my baby’s head in, let’s say, 90 degree weather? That’s a definite “no,” and also, my child is bothered by a blanket over his or her head. A child refusing to take a bottle is another common rebuttal amongst mothers. These are all legitimate and sound reasons that in no way indicate these women just want to harbor attention.

“It is indecent.” Nude women are used for advertising anything from lingerie to cheeseburgers; celebrities like Rihanna are praised for wearing sheer see-through dresses where the whole human form is naturally visible, while a woman taking out her breast to nurse her baby is considered indecent? This mentality is the result of the oversexualization of breasts within society.

This controversy has been going on for years, and the human race will survive for all time. However, this is not the first time women are asked to bite their tongue when it comes to their rights to defend themselves in case they encounter anyone who wants to bully them out of a public space for no legitimate reason. The only state that does not have laws protecting breastfeeding mothers is Idaho. Idaho needs to get it together.

Anyone that can look at this controversy with an open mind can easily conclude that it should not be an issue at all. All the backlash that it receives is from people who log into Facebook to impose their conservative ideologies of what is morally acceptable onto everyone. And the only ones that support them are those who are there to do the same. It is redundant, and quite frankly, embarrassing. Stop body shaming women, in general, but especially for doing what has helped the human race survive for all time.

The Shaming of Breastfeeding in Public

INESS RABAH
COPY EDITOR

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Only White Lives Matter to Us

LUCIA RUBI GODOY
cloud edition

By the end of 2015 it was a popular trend on Facebook, especially amongst young people and college students, to have one’s profile picture edited so that it appears to be tinted blue, white and red, resembling the flag of France.

This was a nice gesture from the American Facebook users to show support to the citizens of France in times of hardship. Nevertheless, while the bombings in Paris were talked about for weeks and everyone went out of their ways to show support, many other people have lost their lives in horrible ways and nobody cares, or even pretend to care.

For example, the terrorist groups Boko Haram and Islamic State alone caused around 51 percent of all violent deaths globally in 2014 alone. Since the beginning of the Syrian Civil War, about 220,000 people have died. The same people whose lives and country, and families are being destroyed by the Islamic State. Boko Haram killed 2,000 people in Baga, Nigeria in one single attack and nobody filtered their pictures with the Nigerian flag.

Without leaving the Middle East, Israel and Palestine have a conflict over land and religion. According to multiple reports, over 10,000 people were killed or harmed during the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In America, rather than showing support or encouraging peace, people take sides, or directly don’t care because it does not affect us and America does not have an interest in either country anyway.

It is impressive how little we were impacted and able to connect when 20 people whom were killed in a shooting in a university in Northwestern Illinois. (Continued on pg. 8)
Death of a Giant Creates a Giant Problem

BRENDAN DALY
NEWS EDITOR

On February 13, the supreme court lost one of its heavy hitters, Antonin Scalia. Scalia was known for being a headstrong right-wing Conservative. He was widely known as one of the best legal minds to have ever existed. His sudden death leaves the Supreme Court and President Obama in a little bit of a pickle.

Scalia was found dead in Shafter, Texas at a big game hunting ranch. He was pronounced dead of natural causes by the county coroner.

With his death, that leaves the Supreme Court at a standstill of eight justices, which comes at the worst time since the court has to review three cases in the coming few months. Until President Obama nominates another justice and the justice passes through the Senate, they will have to hear cases and come to conclusions with just eight, and if the court comes to a tie, the decision goes to the appeals court from which the case came from.

With Scalia's death, people (especially right wingers) are getting more and more concerned with who Obama will nominate, some even going far as to say that Obama is threatening the American governmental system. President Obama has a few prospects in mind, all of whom are democrats until his term is over and another candidate takes over the White House.

The right winged politicians who are fascinated with how President Obama is slowly ruining the United States, need to wake up and look at the facts. The nation hasn't been in better shape since the Clinton administration. Now the ball is in the Republicans' court to see if they will do their duty and push a nominee through, or wait until a new president is elected. So people need to relax and wait to see if the Conservatives will do their job, or yet again prove to go against what they were elected to do.

Only White Lives Matter to Us

Continued from pg. 7

Pakistan last month. School shootings are not something America has never experienced before, which makes it all the more surprising that this was in the news for two days at most.

Countries in our own continent are suffering violence on a daily basis and support is not the word that comes to my mind when I think of the reaction of the American public. Why is gang violence in Central America not being talked about? According to The Guardian, violent deaths increased by 70 percent in El Salvador during last year, which means that nearly 7,000 people were killed. The country has become the homicide capital of the world, and this is barely mentioned in American news sources.

It is understandable that with upcoming presidential elections, the American population in general has other things to worry about. But that is only another part of the problem. People are too distracted to focus on any real issues. A frighteningly large part of the population has been distracted enough to be entertained by a presidential candidate who believes that a wall should be built to prevent Mexicans, and by default other Central Americans, from entering the country by crossing the border between America and Mexico. The same man who believes that if we were to take in Syrian refugees they should wear some kind of badge or armband identifying them as muslims. The part of the population who believes that we are not entertained by these ideas is too terrified of the threat it would mean to the country for said man to gain power to worry about the tragedies happening anywhere else.

It has only been a trend to filter pictures with the flag of France. Yes, it may raise awareness and make somebody else think for a couple of seconds about the tragedies happening anywhere else.

We feel good about showing support by filtering a profile picture, but we consider it a possible threat to allow Syrian refugees in the country, because they have nothing to offer to the country.

JOIN THE ORG
Meetings every Tues., 12:30 p.m., SC-111C-D
Cameras are For Safety, Not Intimidation

GABE WANISSIAN
March 20, 2016

We are currently faced with a dilemma of just how much liberty and privacy we are willing to give up to increase our safety at BCC. The answer seems to be a just a little bit, as since 2008, the College has increased the number of security cameras up to an estimated 200, according to The Office of Public Safety. But it should never come at the expense of using that to manage employee behavior.

Of course, this is not a knock on the security cameras themselves, because in today’s society, they are not only effective - but necessary. Seventy five percent of lost or stolen items are now retrieved since their implementation, according to the Office of Public Safety. Whether they are useful to discover who was responsible for a lender bender, or if the camera captured an assault, that case can now be followed up to ensure a student, faculty member or employee’s safety.

However, there seems to be a double edge sword to this useful tool, as the lack of a policy on camera usage has led to suboptimal working conditions for those who we trust to keep us safe on campus.

Several Public Safety officers, who I will leave anonymous out of respect, expressed that they feel that they are being watched on camera by colleagues, and that this has bred a culture of intimidation in the process. This is no climate for an employee to work under, and while an officer who is slacking on the job should be reprimanded for his or her subpar work, it should not come in the form of “Big Brother” spying on them.

Of course, one could argue that if someone has nothing to hide, then what is the big deal if an employee is being watched by his or her boss? This is a weak argument, and one can reply with another question. How would you feel if a cop demanded to search your car, and if you replied with “do you have a warrant officer?” The officer replied with “what do you have to hide? even without probable cause?”

Credit needs to be given where it is due, however, as Vice President of Facilities, Planning, Operations and Public Safety William Corcoran and Executive Director of Human Resources James Miller have now expressed plans to create a sound camera policy ever since this issue was brought up to them. The Office of Human Resources followed up by saying that any occurrences of spying is unacceptable, and it will lead to disciplinary action.

Perhaps an internal evaluation is necessary, but taking a look at other colleges that have created effective camera protocols are also crucial. Santa Fe Community College happens to be one of them, as their camera policy is one that was developed to stress fair use.

The SFC’s Policy process provides sound guidelines to mitigate any misuse of cameras towards employees under “Procedures and Locations.” The first rule states “The use of surveillance cameras is limited to uses that do not violate a person’s reasonable expectation of privacy,” as that term is defined by law.” A follow up rule states “The College’s use of surveillance cameras for monitoring or recording must be used in a professional, ethical, and legal manner consistent with all existing College policies.”

Some other procedures that can further create a foolproof camera policy is to implement the use of a logbook that tracks all noted incidents found on camera. In addition, camera footage surveillance should only be accessible to a certain few; those who have been adequately trained and are qualified to monitor them.

The administrators at the College are now aware of this, yet it is a shame that it took this long. Currently, there is no timetable as to when a rough policy procedure will be created, but it is a start. Let’s hope that the following actions bring us closer to proper camera use.

“Time to Hit The Ground Running!”

Dear Student Body,

It is now March and the semester is in full gear! I know it is probably getting to the point in the semester where everyone is already wishing for Spring Break was here, but we cannot stop working. Commencement is only a couple months away and as Greg Fenkart, Coordinator of Student Life always says, “It’s time to hit the ground running.” So let’s embrace the journey that is left for us at Bergen Community College.

On another note, throughout this month, you may notice a few people walking around our campus and observing our campus and hopefully continuing to give our college accreditation. Accreditation is the process of validating our college. It is crucial that our college stays accredited so that we are able to smoothly transfer our credits from BCC to the four-year institution of our choice. With this being said, I challenge you all to have friendly smiles and greet our guests with respect to demonstrate how wonderful our school is.

Moving on, SGA will be having numerous events coming up such as Spirit Week and “A Day of Diversity.” The dates are Monday to Wednesday and everyone is already wishing for a lookout for flyers that will be posted and keep checking your Bergen Daily! We also have many surveys this week in place, but it is for the benefit of the students. Please help us collect the feedback that we need so that we can work on student-based initiatives. As always, I encourage everyone to get involved on campus. Stop by our Senate meetings on Wednesdays 12:30-1:30 p.m. in Room S-138 to be informed and remember to Lead with Passion, Act with Confidence, and Embrace the Journey.

Sincerely,

SGA President Laura Zottarelli

New Jersey Press Foundation

First Place Awards: General Excellence, Layout & Design & Best Newspaper, Non-Daily Student Newspaper


Honoring the Best of Student Journalism

Mark Excellence Awards

The Torch

VOLUME 24 ISSUE 6 | MARCH 2016
La Esquina Latina: 
El Significado de Vivir sin Latinos

Why Do You Confine My History to One Month?

Why do we celebrate Black History Month? Many individuals often ask themselves this question and yet, the question still remains unanswered. Star actress Stacey Dash stated “there shouldn’t be a Black History Month. We’re Americans, period that’s it.”

When historian Carter G. Woodson founded Negro Week, which later elevated to Black History Month, he chose the month of February. In the eyes of many, Woodson chose a terrible month. In February, many festivals take place, regardless of the fact that it’s the shortest month of the year.

The Super Bowl, Valentine’s Day, V.M.A.s, and the Grammy Awards all take place this month. Why so much going on, so little attention is paid to Black History Month. “With Black History Month, people don’t really have a focus on it like we should. It’s been pushed in the back ground and the only way you’ll learn about it is if you take an African-American History course. The fact that society pushed it in its own corner makes us focus on black history less,” says Tristan Anderson, who’s the president of the Black and Latino Males Committee.

Prof. Earl Taylor, who’s been teaching African-American Studies since 2008 at Bergen Community College, had made a bold statement, most professors would never utter. “I want my students to leave with a curiosity about the roles of African-Americans playing in U.S. history.” When asked how he felt about Black History Month Prof. Taylor said “well.. it’s a start, it was actually Negro History. I actually take in the month and embrace my knowledge on the Black History Month. Stacey Dash, believes Black History Month shouldn’t be celebrated since it is already American History, however, Anderson has a different opinion. “I do feel like we should celebrate Black History Month,” he said. It’s important to many people and we need to utilize the month.”

When Anderson was asked whether or not he would change Black History Month, he gave a different proposal. “I would make it so that it’s year round, just keep a month to focus on African-Americans as individuals so they can recognize their roots.”

Only African-Americans have the luxury of having a month dedicated to their own history, saysProf. Morgan Freeman once said, “I don’t want a Black History Month, Black history is American history.” It is abundantly clear that Freeman and Stacey Dash share mutual sentiments towards Black History Month. Similarly to what Freeman said about Black History Month, Prof. Taylor feels nearly the same way. “When February comes to an end, black’ history doesn’t come to an end, it’s year round.” According to Professor Taylor, he is satisfied with Black History Month. “Black History Month is okay but it’s up to us as individuals to keep going past February.” For 90 years it has been its own month completely distinguished from American History. Black History should be integrated with American History. The adversity that African Americans went through took place on American soil, it is only right that they receive proper recognition for it. Why is it that history that isn’t “Black History” is taught completely? part of the del se congregaron en la capital de Wisconsin en solubilidad por lo ocupado. Los líderes del movimiento querían que la gente sintiera la ausencia de tanta gente buena, tanta gente que puede salir perjudicada en donde más dañe: la economía. La población latina del estado constituye un cuatro por ciento de toda la población- la gran mayoría de la gente joven hoy. Tantos estudiantes de la Universidad de Wisconsin, 40% de los empleados y empleadas de las granjas lecheras son latinos, probablemente indocumentados, que podrían ser deportados del país si estas dos leyes entraran en vigor. Los estudiantes y los profesores trabajaron, trataron de detener la sanción de estas nuevas leyes. Más de mil personas acudieron, firmaron, gritaron, pidieron que no se aprobaran. Más de mil personas fueron ignoradas. La respuesta del Gobernador Walker con respecto a la marcha fue la siguiente: “There are protests all the time at the state capitol, it doesn’t affect the economy one way or another.”

Why is it that history that isn’t “Black History” is taught completely distinguished from American History? Black History Month is in the month of February. In the eyes of many, Woodson chose a terrible month. In February, many festivals take place, regardless of the fact that it’s the shortest month of the year. The Super Bowl, Valentine’s Day, V.M.A.s, and the Grammy Awards all take place this month. Why so much going on, so little attention is paid to Black History Month. “With Black History Month, people don’t really have a focus on it like we should. It’s been pushed in the back ground and the only way you’ll learn about it is if you take an African-American History course. The fact that society pushed it in its own corner makes us focus on black history less,” says Tristan Anderson, who’s the president of the Black and Latino Males Committee.

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Black History Month celebrates the significance of African Americans; that cannot all be celebrated within one month. All people should be celebrated year round regardless of the race or religion.
Graduating From Bergen Community College?

Spring 2016
College Transfer Information Presentations

Wednesday, February 3 .......................William Paterson University
Wednesday, February 10 .....................Baruch College
Wednesday, February 17 .....................Rutgers University
Wednesday, March 2 .........................Ramapo College of New Jersey
Wednesday, March 9 .........................John Jay College of Criminal Justice
Wednesday, March 30 .......................Montclair State University
Wednesday, April 6 .........................New Jersey Institute of Technology
Wednesday, April 13 .......................New Jersey City University

Meet with representatives from area colleges here on campus.

12:30 p.m. to 1:30 p.m.
Main Campus, C-313
The most notable speaker throughout the entire weekend was Jose Antonio Vargas. Vargas is a Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist and filmmaker. His works revolve around the American identity, particularly the experiences of undocumented immigrants living in the U.S.

Among his notable pieces is an essay he wrote that was published in the New York Times in 2011, in which he revealed and wrote about his experiences as an undocumented immigrant in the U.S. He hasn't let that stop him. He went on to speak at many conferences, including the College Bound conference. Dr. Carley is a retired professor from Hillsborough Community College, which started sending students to the conference in 2011. This year sent a cohort of 14 students and became one of the 18 main sponsors of the conference.

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Luis Ari Lopez Wei

Features editor

College retention and graduation rates among Hispanics and Blacks are much lower than their White counterparts. "We are deeply concerned with the plight of African-American and Hispanic males," said Dr. Sylvia Marion Carley, who initiated the Black and Brown College Bound conference. Dr. Carley is a retired Hillsborough Community College administrative and current President and CEO of Marion & Associates. Ten years ago, she created this very national summit to increase the retention, achievement and graduation rates of Black and Hispanic males in higher education.

In 2006 (its inaugural year) the conference had about 200 attendees, and now the conference in its tenth year has over 2,000 attendees from schools in different parts of the country. Bergen Community College, which started sending students to the conference in 2011, this year sent a cohort of 14 students and became one of the 18 main sponsors of the conference.

Much of the conference was spent in networking, or "building a personal brand," as one attendee explained. There were many quality speakers throughout the weekend, including Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Jose Antonio Vargas, General Colin Powell, USA (Ret.), award-winning actor Mr. Hill Harper and Dr. Darnell Williams.

The keynote speakers all spoke on different things, but everything fell under the importance of education. Dr. Williams posed the question, "What are you doing with technology," noting the importance of technology in education today. He went on to talk about each individual as a brand, and why developing your brand is so important.

General Powell spoke to a large audience which included members from all walks of life. He spoke on his family's experiences as Jamaican immigrants living in Harlem.

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Black History Month Comes to a Close

“Hallowed Grounds”

Every year, the Bergen Community College Black History Month committee plans a range of events to honor not just black history, but American history. It is too often forgotten that the stories of every race, or culture in this nation, is part of this Nation’s narrative. The theme for this year’s BHM celebrations at BCC was “Hallowed Grounds: Sites of African American Memory.” The month started with the opening day ceremony where Dr. Arnold Brown discussed this year’s theme, and the month ended as it always does here, with the annual BHM closing banquet.

The banquet, held here at the college in room TEC-128, and was attended by students, faculty, staff and a number of community members, some of whom donated to make the event possible. It was hosted by the BHM committee chair Ronald E. McKnight and co-chair Dr. Damyen Davis, who both work in the office of Executive Assistant to the President. The event highlighted the accomplishments of black students and staff here at the college; the presidents of the Caribbean club, the Black Student Union, the African Student Union and the NAACP chapter here were all in attendance, showing the proactive role that is being taken by students of color at BCC.

Dr. Ursula Parrish Daniels, the Executive Assistant to the President, spoke and recognized those who had a hand in putting together the month’s events, and also spoke on the involvement of the National Coalition of 100 Black Women. Students at the school with 4.0 GPAs were also recognized and provided with certificates to congratulate their academic achievements by Robert L. Pettet (the District Director for NJ Congressman, Scott Garrett). Dr. Davis also recognized the students present who have been through the school’s summer intensive program, including Justin Anderson (who graduated last semester and now works with Dr. Davis). Tamara Taylor (who is president of the BSU), and Elisha Phillips (who is president of the ASU).

Following a dinner which consisted of a mix of soul food and Caribbean food donated by a community member, a student and one of the members of the BHM committee gave an impassioned speech on this year’s BHM theme of Hallowed Grounds. The student who spoke, Tristan Anderson is extremely active on campus; he is the VP of the Summer Intensive club, Chair of the Black and Latino Males Committee, ASU and Caribbean clubs treasurers and publicist for the FBLA. He became the keynote speaker by immediately volunteering himself, once it was asked.

(Continued on pg. 20)

“Hallowed Grounds”

“Hallowed Grounds give voice to African American History” is the title of the speech given by the keynote speaker Dr. Arnold Brown at the Opening Ceremony of Black History Month celebration.

“Cemeteries are hallowed sites,” he told an audience of over 100 freeholders, administrators, faculty, visitors and students in the Anna Maria Ciccone Theatre on February 2, 2016. “We need more historic markers…” Brown said; “but, today I chose to emphasize cemeteries.”

“These hallowed grounds are the history that African Americans have left for us to remember and gain inspiration and knowledge from; to help us and guide us on our journey through life,” said Dr. Brown, an attorney, lecturer, historian and foremost expert on African American culture. “To preserve history, and honor those that were forgotten,” Brown added.

African-Americans, whether slave or freedman, were buried in unmarked graves, some on the top of a hill. Others were buried on the side of a barn where they previously labored, or in a flower garden beside a house.

“In the 1800’s, Bergen County held 23 percent of the overall 12, 252 slave population in the 21 counties of New Jersey,” Brown said. “The need for burial grounds was evident and the need for proper burial grounds for African Americans went wanting.”

The Gethsemane Cemetery in Little Ferry is among four cemeteries in Bergen County dedicated as historic. The other three are the African American Baptist Church cemetery in Bergenfield, the Derrick Memorial African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church in Hackensack and the The Native American and Slave Burial Grounds in Teaneck.

Samuel Bass, employed as a sexton at The First Baptist Church of Hackensack, was denied burial rights at the Hackensack Cemetery by the trustees of the cemetery,” said Brown. “Bass was taken back to First Baptist church and buried the next day in the Gethsemane Cemetery.”

“The outcry of discrimination from the community and community leaders reached the ears of the Governor Chris Christie, which led to legislation that was enacted and signed by the Governor. The law permitted African Americans the right to burial at any public burial ground in New Jersey. “This changed the burial practice in New Jersey,” said Dr. Brown. It resulted in the desegregation of New Jersey’s cemeteries.

In 1985, Civic groups joined together to petition the Bergen County freeholders to restore the abandoned Gethsemane Cemetery. The Bergen County
Poetry in Motion: Poetry Slam for Dummies & Open Mic!

FERNANDO VAZQUEZ
FEATURES WRITER

Literature Professor Brian Cordell created a wonderful workshop for those interested in the Poetry Slam in the Student Center. The workshop consisted of essential tips for a better recital and viewing videos by professional poets and professional poetry competitions. Poetry slams can be universal, political, emotional and personal. Cordell taught important guidelines for a successful poetry slam. He told everyone to not worry about rehearsing the poems for the upcoming event.

A poem has to be structured and must give details that will provide you the choice on where you want the poem to go. “It will give the audience better details and interest of a poem you want to recite for the public,” Cordell said. The subject and points of the poem are the tone of the poem and its flow. The tone of the poem can be happy, sad or an outcry. The points for a better poem are the emotions of the poem.

The golden rule of poetry slams that Professor Cordell gave for a poet to be themselves. Rather than imitating, you should find your own unique voice with different tones and emotions by using emphasis on different words. Improve the tone of the poem or extend the poem if you don’t like it, don’t be afraid to change it even after you feel you’re done. Practice, and read your final poems out loud, record your poem, and share it with your friends.

The final golden rule Cordell gave the attendees was to not be fake. “Your audience can tell when you’re not being sincere, and it takes away from your work and your performance,” he said.

The open mic event hosted by the Black History Month activities at the Student Center was held with great excitement. Ten brave poets signed up for the open mic event and stepped on the stage with the microphone to recite their poetry with their own unique styles. Some were great, some were dull, and some had passion that caused the audience to cheer loudest. As John Oh’s “Bad Cop” was about “injustices” and “prejudices” of some police officers. The topics included death, glory, injustices, love, and bitterness. One of the main event organizers, stepped onto the stage and invited the Student Center audience to perform. Some brave audience members presented their poetry and two students stepped onto the stage to perform their “freestyle hip hop.”

BCC Visits Harlem Landmarks

LUIS ARI LOPEZ WEI

If you’ve never heard of Londel’s Supper Club or the Apollo Theater, then you’re missing out. Londel’s Supper Club restaurant and the Apollo Theater are two landmark establishments in Harlem that Bergen Community College students, staff, faculty and friends had a chance to visit during Black History Month. The outing was a steal too; tickets for the night that included transportation to and from both venues, dinner, and a show at the Apollo Theater’s Amateur Night cost $15 for students and $30 for staff and faculty.

The outing on February 24, was made possible by Aretha McMillian, Dr. Lourda Daniels, Ron McKnight from the Office of Executive Assistant to the President, and Joli Nelson from the Office of Student Life. It began with a bus ride from the college to Londel’s restaurant for a delicious dinner that consisted of jasmine rice, collard greens, ribs and roasted chicken, buffet style. Londel’s is owned by former NYPD police officer and long-time community member, Londel Davis. The restaurant whose slogan is, “Refining the Harlem Dining Experience,” does not disappoint. Everyone enjoyed their meals and Mr. Davis happened to be present that night and addressed the group before our departure.

Following dinner at Londel’s, the group boarded the bus again and rode the 13 blocks to the Apollo Theater. The large vertical “Apollo” sign was a sight to see, as its bright lights greeted the group as they arrived.

The Apollo Theater, which was established circa 1934, has been home to many famous black artists and played a major role in the emergence of jazz, swing, bebop, R&B, gospel, blues, and soul. Artists like James Brown, Sammy Davis Jr, Gladys Knight, Luther Vandross and many others have gotten their start at the Apollo. The Amateur Night shows, one of which we attended, began in 1934, a year after the theater was reopened as the Apollo and began catering to black audiences. 38 BCC attendees were seated in the right orchestra level, towards the front of the nearly 1,600 seat theater.

The show was started off with the “Set-It-Off Man”, Joe Gray who introduced us to some of the Apollo’s history. He also introduced us to The Executioner, CP Lacey, the man who would “kick” performers off stage if the audience boosed their disappoval at them. Following the introduction of the show by these two characters, Comedian Capone hit the stage. Capone is known as the Gangster of Comedy and is a Bronx native. He immediately had the audience rolling with laughter as soon as he hit the stage, starting with chastising us for not giving him a standing ovation when he walked on. To test the enthusiasm of the audience, he split us up between top, middle and bottom, saying, “I’m gonna separate y’all. That’s what they do in America," much to the amusement of the audience.

The rest of the night, the audience was introduced to performers who came from all over the world, the first being from Sicily, Italy and others hailing from South Carolina, Texas, and Alabama. Entering the stage, each rapper, who’s stage name is “Female Rapper”, and the performer following her were both booted off stage. After hearing the audience’s boos, the Executioner came out, dressed as James Brown and showed the performer the way out. All other acts, including the first which was Opera, were warmly welcomed by the audience. At the end of the show, the winning performance was by a man from Alabama, Thomas Davis Jr, followed in close second by a woman who had sang “Hallelujah.”

When asked about how she felt about the night, BCC student Lucia Rubi Godoy said, “The Food was great, and it was entertaining, they didn’t give you time to get bored.”

Although for a couple of the acts, it didn’t help them much. A female Bergen students enjoyed a night of entertainment at the iconic Apollo Theatre. // Luis Ari Lopez Wei
2016 started with a warm welcome should know about, but many do not. Professor Christine Eubank, to educate students about the female body. Professor Eubank continued to lecture on many important subjects such as how important it is to visit a gynecologist at least once a year, and the average menstrual cycle of a woman. She also went over fertilization and pregnancy, and all the different forms of birth control/contraception, as well as their average costs and effectiveness.

The event, held on February 18, started with a warm welcome that included pizza and drinks, and the club showing a clip from the hit show "Orange is the New Black." For those who have watched "OITNB," they know about the scene in which a group of women sitting at the lunch table are arguing about whether or not the vagina is also where women pee from, or if that is another hole entirely. All of the women were confused about it, but finally found out the answer, and that brought up an important question. How much do women really know about their own bodies?

As their average costs and effectiveness.

To test our knowledge, club members passed around diagrams of the external and internal parts of a woman's genital/reproductive organs and split us into five groups so that we may attempt to label each of the parts. Only one out of five of the groups had everything correct.

Professor Eubank continued to lecture on many important subjects such as how important it is to visit a gynecologist at least once a year, and the average menstrual cycle of a woman. She also went over fertilization and pregnancy, and all the different forms of birth control/contraception, as well as their average costs and effectiveness.

President Allison Jamaica of the F-W.O.R.D club expressed her feelings about the event. "I thought the event went extremely well and it was so refreshing to see how many people were interested in learning something so important about themselves: their bodies. The audience was very interactive and aside from all the giggles, everyone walked out of the room learning something."
The Revival of the Student Activities Board

From Bergen To Shanghai: Gilman Winner Spotlight

The Gilman Scholarship Program is an opportunity for undergraduates to study abroad in different regions focusing on the student, assuring they receive the experience of diverse education and life. This is for undergraduates students who receive the Federal Pell Grant funding at a two-year or four-year college to education and life. This is for undergraduate students who receive the Federal Pell Grant funding at a two-year or four-year college to education and life.

When it comes to student involvement, Bergen Community College exemplifies one of the most active student bodies in the nation. With a plethora of clubs, organizations, and honor societies, it thrives on the existence of dynamic students motivated to make the school a more welcoming place. During this spring semester, many new clubs have surfaced thanks to enthusiastic members of the student body, but one stands out over the rest. It is the Student Activities Board (SAB), an archived club with a glorious past, that makes its comeback in the midst of the club beehive. Before Fall of 2014, SAB was known for being a part of the "big boys" on campus, delivering activities all students could enjoy with no need to commit fully to the club. Dedicated solely to on-campus events, SAB rose to fame for organizing fun, educational, and memorable activities. This spring, a group of motivated, involved students took on the task of resuscitating the board, with enormous plans in mind. "I honestly cannot wait for the club to be fully established, as we have a multitude of incredibly exciting events coming up," recounts the SAB President Shamir Gill, also the Director of Service for Phi Theta Kappa and a part-time Student Aid at the Office of Student Life on campus.

Indeed, Gill was not lying in this last statement. After only a month of revival, on February 8, the club has already organized an abundantly successful event held in the student center, a Valentine's Day Candy Gram. This activity consisted of selling candy to the student body for their sweetie, using the profit as a fundraiser for SAB. Moreover, the club plans to organize BCC’s very first Spring Fling at the end of this semester, celebrating the warm weather with a student-led concert, a carnival, and an entire day filled with joyful student collaboration. "We’re just so excited that students are getting involved and that they are creating a more valuable campus life experience and more activities for their peers," states Rachel Lerner Colucci, Dean of Student Life.

From Bergen To Shanghai: Gilman Winner Spotlight

Winner Spotlight

The business student shares advice for anyone who decides to study abroad: “apply for the Gilman Scholarship Program; even if you don’t think they will receive a large grant, apply for it. Any amount helps if you really determine to diversify yourself in various ways, especially if you are serious in your career field. You have nothing to lose. Winning this scholarship has made my trip to Shanghai possible.”

The Gilman Scholarship Award this year went to second year Bergen Community College business student Elie Tanous, who is now in China to study abroad for his International Business major in the prestigious Shanghai University of China. "I got to choose between a lot of cities in Europe, some places in the Middle East and Asia. I chose Shanghai because I’m an International Business major and I’d like to work at a trading company upon graduation and most of manufacturing is done in China anyway," The Gilman Scholarship Program is an opportunity for undergraduates to study abroad in different regions focusing on the student, assuring they receive the experience of diverse education and life. This is for undergraduates students who receive the Federal Pell Grant funding at a two-year or four-year college to education and life.

“What’s good about the scholarship is it targets people who want to study abroad that have been studying foreign languages… I’m studying Chinese” the 26-year-old says. “I’ve been studying Chinese on my own for about a year now. I did a class here in Bergen for a semester, and I’ll be taking two classes in China.”

“I feel great I’m taking this offer," he says, "especially that the organization had offered the higher amount. I expected I would receive something but definitely not this generous," while he receives up to $5,000 for his program costs.

This isn’t his first time out of the country. "The most time that I’ve spent abroad was probably when I was younger, I would go to the Middle East for about two months; that was just vacation, but I’ve actually been to China before. The longest time I’ve spent there was three and a half weeks.”

When he was in China, he was there to help out a relative in Shanghai, because the population is much larger than New York City’s. Even though [China] is becoming more westernized, you still have a lot of that culture in that city and I’m very excited to get both perspectives from both cities." Tanous will reside in China for three months attending Shanghai University. He departed February 22, 2016.

Since winning the award, he has also gained popularity in recognition of his achievements. "When I first received the email, I was excited obviously considering the grant amount they had offered me. I didn’t realize how prestigious this scholarship was and I would be at work or walking on the school grounds and people would just stop me and congratulate me, saying ‘you’re the Gilman scholar, right?’ I got to finally realize how amazing it really is. I encourage everyone to sign up for it if they can.”

KATHERINE CANILLAS
contributing writer

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“We all come together with love and peace despite our religion, nationality or ethnicity. So why can’t everyone back in India do the same?”

-Deesha Supawala

Put a Chicken Ring on It: A White Castle Perspective

GEORGE R. GUERRA  

The Little Ferry White Castle will forever hold a special place in my heart. Whenever I left a high school event with my friend Rich, and we were suffering through the fatigue of high schoolers at 11 p.m., we could count on the White Castle screwing up our order and netting us some free food. So when I heard about Valentine’s Day festivities and found myself with no other plans on the day when chocolates and stuffed bears would be pushed by Hallmark harder than a woman pushing out a baby, I gave Rich a call and we made our reservation.

We arrived for our 9 p.m. reservation half an hour early. A White Castle burger and cold beer at the same time, and I thought I would not be disappointed. White Castle is White Castle; the inclusion of table service and BYOB without any increase in price is only an improvement. Before Valentine’s Day, I’d never had hot White Castle burgers and cold beer at the same time, and I thought I would spend the rest of my life having to choose one or the other. White Castle is striving to strike that off of everyone’s bucket list, and has done so in a way that has generated a new yearly tradition for a good friend and I.

Found myself with no other plans on the day when chocolates and stuffed bears would be pushed by Hallmark harder than a woman pushing out a child in her eighth hour of labor.

Having gone with a good friend, I can’t speak for the romantic quality of a trip to White Castle for Valentine’s Day (that’s for you to take up with your significant other). I for one was not disappointed. White Castle is White Castle; the inclusion of table service and BYOB without any increase in price is only an improvement. Before Valentine’s Day, I’d never had hot White Castle burgers and cold beer at the same time, and I thought I would spend the rest of my life having to choose one or the other. White Castle is striving to strike that off of everyone’s bucket list, and has done so in a way that has generated a new yearly tradition for a good friend and I.

Religious Intolerance in India

MANAHIL AHMAD  CONTRIBUTING WRITER

India, the nation that gave the world Gandhi and the freedom of religion, speech, and development secularism in its constitution is now being questioned for becoming an intolerant democratic nation.

The question rose after two very disturbing incidents. The first in August, M.M. Kalburgi, a scholar famous for being a critic against idol worshipping was gunned down followed by the killing of a communist leader a few weeks later.

The second horrifying incident took place when a Hindu man, Mohammad Akhlaq, was brutally beaten to death with bricks by mobs as they wrongly suspected him of keeping beef in his house. The incident followed the killing of two more Muslim men after a couple of weeks, who were accused of transporting beef. Prime Minister Narendra Modi or the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) did not expect that these horrifying attacks would reach international news.

Many journalists and writers have protested by returning their hallmarks of academic awards. Many famous public figures, from Raghuram Rajan, a reputed central banker to famous Bollywood stars like Shahrukh Khan and Aamir Khan, have spoken against the rising intolerance in India.

Chief Minister of Haryana declared that Muslims could only live in India if they stopped eating cow meat. Islam is the second largest religion in India, but a minority, making up 14.9 percent of the country’s population with about 180 million adherents. One of the most notable religious conflicts in recent history has been between Muslims and Hindus. This was a major factor toward the partition of the British colony of the subcontinent into India and Pakistan.

Bergen Community College student Deesha Supawala, member of the South Asian American Heritage (S.A.A.T.H) club, has spoken about the situation of intolerance in her homeland, India. “India is a very diverse country, with multiple religions, languages and subcultures. I’ve never supported such acts, as it will take away peace from our country,” she said. “Cows might be sacred to us, but not Muslims and so the brutal killing of Mohammad Akhlaq is not acceptable in any circumstances. I’m friends with a lot of Muslims and even in our club S.A.A.T.H, we all come together with love and peace despite our religion, nationality or ethnicity. So why can’t everyone back in India do the same?”

Opposition political leaders are demanding Prime Minister Modi to break his silence and take a step toward the Hindu militants before it becomes worse and India enters a very menacing phase since Independence.

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St. Patrick’s Day: How Well Do You Know The Holiday?

HEINEKEN QUEEN
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Held annually on March 17, Saint Patrick’s Day is a widely acknowledged holiday in which many nations celebrate in various ways. It can be by wearing green, parading in large cities, serving traditional Irish foods like corned beef and cabbage, and of course, the consumption of a substantial amount of alcohol that everyone seems to enjoy. Why are we celebrating this? What’s this holiday all about? How come this event has such a profound importance to most countries?

St. Patrick, the patron saint of Ireland, was actually a pagan who was born in Britannia in the late fourth century. When he was 16, he was kidnapped by Irish raiders and taken as a slave for six years, until he escaped and went back to his family in Britain and converted to Christianity. In 432 AD, St. Patrick returned to Ireland with a mission to convert the Irish, who were predominantly pagans during the time, to Christianity. For 20 years he established churches, monasteries, and schools across Ireland. St. Patrick died on March 17, 461 AD, which has been commemorated as St. Patrick’s Day until today.

There are myths that propagated throughout the years associated with the event. One of the many beliefs that still disseminates to this day is that St. Patrick drove the snakes out of Ireland. This fallacy is a metaphor for him turning pagans into religious Christians. Another one is that he used the shamrock to explain the Holy Trinity, which led to Irish Christians wearing green in addition to the country being referred to as the “Emerald Isle” due to the greenness of its landscapes.

Starting out as a simple feast and religious gathering, the very first Saint Patrick’s Day celebration was held in Boston in 1737, organized by the Charitable Irish Society to honor the Irish culture. It was followed by Irish soldiers who marched in New York City in 1762, which started the traditional parade. Eventually, the supposed feast day was turned into a secular holiday that emphasized on the Irish culture. Today, the St. Patrick’s Day Parade in New York City is one of the largest and most famous parades in the nation. There’s a record of 300,000 marchers and 3 million spectators that were present during the 2002 parade.

Besides parades, the dyeing of the Chicago River is another one of the many ways that America celebrates the holiday. The fascinating thing about this tradition is that not only this particular river in Chicago has the substances that allow the water to turn into Irish green, but through the Illinois River, Mississippi River, and the Atlantic Ocean, it makes its way from Chicago to Ireland.

St. Patrick’s Day also falls during Lent season when Christians give up their vices in a fast. However, this one-day celebration allows them to consume alcohol, which is why beers became associated with the holiday.

Whatever way that people may decide to celebrate it, there’s no doubt that St. Patrick’s Day has a strong impact that unites different cultures all over the country.

Designer Brings Insight on Broadway Productions

BRENDAN DALY & JAMES O. DIAZ
NEWS EDITOR & CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Have you ever been amazed by a Broadway show? There is such a fascination for the actors and the props, but not many people wonder about the scenery itself. Projection designer and artist Michael Clark is the man behind the scenes. Working on productions such as “Jersey Boys”, “Ghost”, “Ring of Fire”, “700 Sundays”, “Dracula, The Musical”, “The Elephant Man” and many more, Clark creates the scenery by graphically designing softwares that would be projected onto the thick canvas. Unlike the productions from long ago, where the background would be drawn on long curtains of canvas, Clark explains the never-ending possibilities a projection designer can have.

Clark owns his own company in which he sells his services in the field of theatrical projections. He has several years experience in the field and is constantly working on different Broadway plays.

A great example of Clark’s surreal artwork is in the award-winning musical “Sunday at the Park,” where he projects a room that slowly becomes the artwork is in the award-winning musical “Sunday at the Park.”

Clarks elaborated on much of his work, and how such projections came to be. Like many of the actors in a play, Clark has read the script, made imaging lists, met with artists such as graphic artists, animators, photographers and videographers, to be able to know the algorithms that allow the projection to be seen well, and even work amongst researchers compositors.

Using examples of his own work and examples of other great plays, he showed how amazing projections can add to the experience of seeing a play. He also explained how much cheaper using projections is and how it has allowed theatres to find new ways to spend the money that these new projections have allowed. From small handheld projectors to massive hundred pound projectors that need to be carried by more than one person, Clark explains how each can add to the experience and how much doing so will cost.

Ultimately, a projector designer needs to know and utilize his equipment, the projection software, the projector, and the screen. Much like the painter with his canvas, Clark brings the surreal artwork, inserting the audience in locations they have not experienced.
February 8 marked the first day of the 2016 Chinese New Year. Each year is dedicated to a particular animal in the Chinese zodiac and this year is the year of the Monkey. Festivities include lantern lighting, food, dancing, fireworks and gift giving, all based on Chinese history and mythology. On February 13, BCC had the chance to experience a little taste of the Chinese New Year with the Chinese New Year Show held in the Ciccone Theatre. It was organized and comprised by the Chinese Club, Dance Club, Music Club, the Huaxia Bergen Chinese School, and even a delegation directly from China.

The event was mostly comprised of traditional Chinese dance with a bit of American dance as well. The Ciccone Theatre was filled with people of all backgrounds excited for the upcoming performances. The performances by the the Huaxia School and the Chinese delegation were outstanding and very entertaining. The music sounded like it had a mixture of both classical and Chinese elements. It perfectly matched the emotional theme of the dances, whether sad, happy, mellow or exciting. They had both male and female dancers of all ages. The choreography and the costumes were diverse and well designed. Dances were composed of twists, jumps, kicks, shimmies and poses, all combined to different rhythms, speeds and divisions. Just like the music matched the theme of the performance, the choreography was specially designed to complement the beauty and grace of the dancers and their costumes. Their costumes and props were especially impressive. They were comprised of various types of dresses, head dresses, tunics, robots, belts, jewelry, shoes, parasols and fans. Costumes had a rainbow of colors and designs inspired by nature. The costumes truly show how beauty can and should be put in even the most common and mundane things.

American dance and song was also put on by the dance club and music club. The choreography was headed by Marcos J. Velasquez who led the dance team and even performed a solo. Songs like “Dirty Little Secret” by the All American Rejects and “The Only Exception” by Paramore were sung by two members of the BCC music club. Other notable events at the show were a short performance on the Chinese language, the giving of hongbao or red envelopes with money to young children which is a Chinese new year tradition and a short play about Chinese mythology.

The show ended with all the dancers, singers, actors and audience members coming out and singing a very famous song in China called Nan Wang Jin Xiao or Unforgettable Night in English. The Chinese New Year Show at BCC was like a little Shen Yun right here in our own backyard. One of the most important parts of this event was the cultural exchange between Chinese and American peoples. I’m sure although many Americans in the audience couldn’t understand Chinese and many Chinese people couldn’t understand English, both groups shared a common background and that is the arts.

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Black History Month Comes to a Close

“Hallowed Grounds” Continued from pg. 14

Continued from pg. 14

executives and freeholders agreed. The cemetery is completely restored, preserving history in honor of those forgotten.

On the entrance-way is a historic marker, informational panels tell the story of its history and the names of those buried in the cemetery. Tours are available upon request through the Division of Cultural and Historic Affairs, a division of Bergen County Parks Department.

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The Merc With The Mouth Has Finally Spoken

After 10 years of trying to make this movie, Ryan Reynolds has finally successfully released “Deadpool.” The movie is based off of the Marvel comic book, anti-hero Deadpool. In its opening weekend, the movie already doubled its budget ($88 million) in the box office with $132,434,639 domestically.

Wade Wilson, aka Deadpool, is a mercenary who gets involved in an experiment to cure his cancer. While the testing cured his cancer and was granted immortality, he was left with horribly disfigured skin. Wade Wilson then goes on a hunt to find the man who did this to him under the new name, Deadpool.

Reynolds was the right person to portray Wade Wilson/Deadpool. He has the charisma, and after 10 years, it seems that he knows the character well enough to be him. T.J Miller as Weasel (Wilson’s best friend, compliments Wade’s character) brings balance with Wilson’s sarcastic humor and Weasel’s witty comments. Ed Skrein (A-Jax/Francis) playing as the mutated villain who performed the experiment on Wade, gives Francis a cool persona.

Just like in the comics, Deadpool is humorous with his sarcastic, filthy jokes. He is fully aware that he’s in a superhero movie and interacts with the audience. This is a superhero movie, but breaks the boundaries of what a superhero movie would typically be. It’s humorous, dirty, and gory. It’s the very first time the costume was made just how it is in the comic world, with being white with no pupil, which hopefully can be brought to future superhero movies.

The graphic effects, which include the explosions and an impressive slow motion opening sequence (which Tim Miller, the director, has been known for doing spectacular opening sequences for “The Girl With The Dragon Tattoo” and “Thor: The Dark World”) already brings the audience to some giggles with the play on words in the opening credits and the editing that shows the audience the different angles of what is happening in that one scene. Still, the movie has the superhero cliches; there's the girl in distress, Wade’s girlfriend Vanessa, and the lovable side characters who help the “hero.”

It’s common to have difficulty thinking of our heroes as people. We don’t think about how awkward Abraham Lincoln likely slipped down the steps at least once. We forget that Martin Luther King Jr. played pool, and it doesn’t seem noteworthy in relation to the rest of his life that Tom Hanks is really into typewriters.

With the arrival of Black History Month, there is always a renewed interest in the illustrious career of Jackie Robinson, easily one of the most captivating players of all time. The same conclusion is drawn that, despite dramatic as his over the course of our lifetime. However, we can learn from shared experiences with a hero and role model, how to overcome everyday adversities. Jackie Robinson was an outstanding baseball player, but he was also a husband, a father and a person. Only he knew which of those roles was the most important.

Second Lieutenant Jack Roosevelt Robinson

GEORGE R. GUERRA

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Robinson had some incredible victories in the course of his life, but he also endured everyday victories and failures just like anyone else. He was drafted during World War II, and one of the few black soldiers at the time to be accepted and pass Officer Candidate School. He had an experience not unlike that of Rosa Parks, when he was asked to sit at the back of a bus to make room for the wife of a white officer, and refused. It was then that he hardened himself to the racism of those around him, a trait that would prove crucial when he entered the public eye.

Jackie Robinson had a supportive wife, who went on to become an assistant professor at Yale University. He also had three children. Jackie Robinson Jr., his eldest son, died the year before him in an automobile accident at the age of 24 after being injured in Vietnam, and waging his own battle against drug abuse. The experience caused Robinson to support anti-drug use. Robinson’s daughter, Sharon, has written two books about her father, in addition to being an educator; Robinson’s youngest son is a social activist in Tanzania.

The reason for Jackie Robinson’s recognition as a man is due to the fact that many of us will not achieve victories as dramatic as his over the course of our lifetime. However, we can learn from shared experiences with a hero and role model, how to overcome everyday adversities.

Second Lieutenant Robinson in his uniform/Imgr
The MLB off-season is now in the books and spring training is finally upon us; baseball fans from all over the New York area, whether from the Bronx or Queens, have every reason to be excited for this upcoming season. Both New York teams, the Yankees and especially the Mets, are looking to have successful seasons after big off-seasons. The question now is, who will be the better team?

Looking at the defending National League champions, the New York Mets, they are just as good if not better than last season. While the loss of Second Baseman Daniel Murphy to the Washington Nationals was a big blow, they were able to fill the hole he had left in the infield with the signings of Neil Walker and Asdrubal Cabrera. Not only that, the team was able to bring in another good big fish, Yoenis Cespedes, who was on fire once the Mets acquired him at the trade deadline last season from the Detroit Tigers. He batted .287 and smacked 17 home runs in 57 games. Lastly, with the resigning of starting pitcher Bartolo Colon, the Mets still probably have the best starting rotation in the league.

The amount of noise the Mets have made in baseball has not been going unnoticed by the New York media. Now with Opening Day just around the corner, the Mets are the most talked about baseball team in New York as they get ready for another World Series run.

One of the main reasons for this shift in the New York spotlight is the Mets showing the results of what it truly takes to build a championship winning team in baseball. That is drafting and developing young players, to build a strong minor league system. While they were rebuilding, the Mets never spent crazy money or made huge trades for big name players. Instead, their roster was built on players coming up from the minors; they brought up a shutdown rotation of Matt Harvey, Steve Matz, Noah Syndergaard, and Jacob deGrom, as well as more than respectable hitters such as team captain David Wright and Daniel Murphy. With all this youth they developed and more, the Mets made it to the World Series the first year they got back into playoff contention.

Looking at the Yankees during the last 20 years, who were some of their key players, during their dynasty of the mid to late 90s and early 2000s? That’s right. The “Core Four” of Derek Jeter, Mariano Rivera, Andy Pettite, Jorge Posada, and if you want to call them the “Fab Five” Bernie Williams. While the Yankees were no strangers to spending big money, they were still able to develop almost undeniably the strongest core of players in the history of baseball. The Yankees weren’t quite the same over the last handful of years. Their farm system was very lacking and their roster was full of overpaid players.

Luckily, this off-season has provided a much needed change of direction for the Yankees. According to Baseball America, the Bronx Bombers now have at least one prospect in every single minor league. Furthermore, multiple prospects’ MLB careers on the horizon such as Greg Bird, Aaron Judge, and Luis Severino, are showing off the new strength of the Yankees farm system. During the off-season the Yankees were able to add players like reliever Aroldis Chapman and infielder Starlin Castro, the former completing almost undeniably the best bullpen in the Majors, while giving up little to no youth.

While the Mets are looking better than ever and gearing up for another shot at truly taking over New York with a World Series championship, the Yankees have shown they aren’t going to let them take their crown without a fight.

Marshawn Lynch: High Profile NFL Players Electing to Retire Young

There have been rumblings around the NFL of high profile players retiring younger than most. These thoughts of early retirement have surely been caused by all the negative effects football can have on one’s body post career. Calvin Johnson, star wide receiver for the Detroit Lions, has contemplated retirement this off-season at the age of 30. Calvin Johnson owns the number one spot in all of the Lions receiving records and his career. Calvin Johnson, star wide receiver for the Detroit Lions, has contemplated retirement this off-season at the age of 30. Calvin Johnson owns the number one spot in all of the Lions receiving records and has been a top receiver in the NFL since he started his career seven years ago out of Georgia Tech.

Now, NFL star halfback Marshawn Lynch, also known as “Beast Mode,” declared his retirement last week on February 7 at the age of 29. After the conclusion of the Super Bowl, many fans anticipated a retirement announcement from Peyton Manning, quarterback for the Super Bowl 50 Champs Denver Broncos, instead of being shocked to hear of Lynch’s announcement.

Lynch’s announcement was a unique one as he simply tweeted a peace sign emoji, with a picture of his cleats suspended from a telephone wire, signifying he is hanging up his cleats for good. Many fans were unsure whether or not this tweet meant Lynch was calling it quits, but soon were reassured by a tweet from teammate and star cornerback Richard Sherman.

“Salute to my guy @MoneyLynch.” Sherman tweeted out. “It was an honor sharing the field with you.” The Seattle Seahawks Twitter account soon followed by tweeting “#ThankYouBeastMode”, making it crystal clear to fans that Beast Mode was riding off into the sunset away from the NFL.

Retirement has been on Lynch’s mind for the past two seasons. As of last season, Lynch was regarded as one of the best running backs in the NFL as he led the NFL in rushing touchdowns in two consecutive seasons, scoring 12 in 2013 and 13 in 2014. Beast Mode will be remembered for his colorful personality, as well as for his power running. It will surely present an interesting case for an induction to the NFL Hall of Fame even in the face of his relatively short career.
Track and Field Assistant Coach Resigns

CHRISTOPHER MOLINA
STAFF WRITER

Every sports team faces hardship, both on and off the field, but one of the toughest obstacles is for a team to see their coach leaving the program. Assistant Coach Angel Solias of Bergen Community College Men’s and Women’s track team, had left the program to become the head coach at his alma mater. With the team having just finished with less than 10 kids total, a lot of pressure is on the team to have a better season than before. Many of the players feel saddened for their loss and wonder how the season will turn out once they hire a replacement in time.

“He was a good coach,” said thrower Garrett Pynn. “He’ll definitely be missed. It’s weird seeing him go.”

MATTHEW BELMONTE
STAFF WRITER

My Experience With Wrestling

BERGEN CO-CAPTAIN

I’ve had the pleasure of being one of the co-captains of the Bergen Wrestling Team”. The sport is not for everyone and has intensity incomparable to any other sport. I’ve just finished my two years of wrestling and have seen a pattern every year. About 30 or so kids show up, and as the weeks go on, it always seems that the team gets smaller and smaller. It’s a sport that is definitely not for everyone. I guess wearing a singlet isn’t too in style. At the end of the season, we finished with less than 10 kids total.

But believe me when I tell you, I would go to war with these guys. They all work hard and it’s not easy fitting in schoolwork, a job, and wrestling. Alongside me, was the other co-captain, James Henry. He had leadership skills unlike many others and didn’t take nonsense from anyone; together we were able to handle anything. Every day after sitting through class, it was expected of you to come to practice afterwards, and it was a lot to ask of college students who can think of many other things to do. Practices were brutal: a lot of sweat, blood, and occasional tears were shed. I give a lot of credit to the guys who stuck around and saw it through. On top of this, many of them were cutting weight, and it’s one thing to practice and another to practice on an empty stomach. Luckily for myself, I did not have to cut weight more than one time.

To go along with a great set of wrestlers came a very influential team of coaches. Our coaches were there for us not only for practicing wrestling, but were always concerned for us outside of the sport. They would help us on insight for our future careers, and looking at other colleges to continue our education.

Coach Ed Kochakji had a very approachable attitude with an extensive background of wrestling. He always had something to say and ways to improve form and technique. He did a fantastic job organizing the weight classes, and inspiring us to be ready for our matches. Coach Mitt Rehain was not as talkative as the others, but don’t be fooled for he also shared much wisdom. He made every practice and he also drove us to every match; it’s hard to stay awake when everyone else in the van was sleeping.

Coach Chris was the backbone of our eligibility complex. He made classes for any one of the wrestlers who needed it, and would give advice whenever we needed it most, to pass our classes. Many times he would roll around with us on the mat, introducing any skills he could add. He was always on campus with us, so he was never far when help was needed or just for a friendly “Hello”.

The Athletics department also had a very big impact on me. Athletic Director Jorge Hernandez and Assistant Director Elaine Korinko were always on top of scheduling and doing a lot of the background work necessary for us to go away to matches, getting uniforms, and pictures taken. It’s hard to find people who care, work hard and are as exceptional as they are in their profession; as well as their personality. The whole team became very close, and we still keep in close contact even after the season has finished. I will undoubtedly miss the team; it was an honor and a privilege, and I wish the best of luck to my teammates in their future endeavors.

“Practices were brutal; a lot of sweat, blood, and occasional tears were shed. I give a lot of credit to the guys who stuck around and saw it through.”
ADAM GRASSANI

The weather is finally starting to heat up, baseball season is almost upon us and Bergen Community College’s home baseball team is hard at work in practice. The Bulldogs are already looking to improve on a more than respectable 22-14 record last season.

“Last year we were a good team,” said Bergen Baseball Coach, Steve Mimmis. “I thought that was probably one of the best teams we had in Bergen history probably. We had a lot of big freshman step up for us. We beat every team in the conference, all the big teams so we were there. We were very competitive. We just came up a little short. It was a good learning curve for our team.

Last season was definitely not a failure for the team. Along with their 22-14 record, they were 35-6 against conference teams. They were also fourth in the nation in team batting average with a cumulative average of .360. Furthermore, they were eighth in on base percentage and ninth in slugging percentage, a percentage of .435 for the former and a percentage of .472 for the latter. One area of the team however, that could possibly use improving is the team’s ERA, which was 3.7th at 4.81.

“Pitching wise, yes we had a high ERA but at the same time we got, it was mainly from our bullpen,” said Coach Mimms. “I think our bullpen took a hitting but that was a lack of depth. We gotta use the same guys so many times in a week. Our starters did a great job keeping the runs down because we were getting good run support. We were averaging five runs a game.”

Heading into the 2016 season, the team’s goal is to take that to the next level, and they have the roster to do it. First Team All Region shortstop Junior Naasi will be returning, who hit for a .441 average, .486 OBP, and a .614 slugging percentage last season. Right-handed pitcher Blake Smith will also come back, who pitched a 2.67 ERA and 46 strikeouts in 2015. Along with this, the team has many key newcomers such as Brian Rodriguez, James Randle, Luis Pita, and John Calabrese.

“It’s definitely different; faster pace than high school,” John Calabrese said on the shift in culture from high school to college baseball. “But the guys on the team have made it really easy to transition. Coaches has made it really easy on us. I think I can say we have a good attitude; the right mindset. I just want to win. Do whatever it takes to help us win.”

The Bulldogs will be playing their doubleheader home opener on Saturday March 5 against Manhattan Community College. The first game will start at noon and the next will start at 2:00 p.m.

“We are very talented individually, but now we want to improve on a more than respectable 22-14 record last season,” said Coach Mimms. “They say ‘what are you going to do this winter?’ Like the old saying goes ‘I’m gonna stare out the window and wait for spring’ That’s it. That’s what I do all winter. I’m excited. I think this team is excited. We’re prepared. I think our teams preparing very well. We got a great attitude; the chemistry’s coming together and I can start right now. Success is our only option. We have one goal. We tell the guys we go with the model EAT. E. A. T. Effort. Attitude. Teamwork. Keep that in our heads. We’re going to EAT all day. We’re going to EAT a lot. That’s what we want. That’s our goal.”

GABE WANISSIAN

An invigorating breath of fresh air has propelled the Men’s Basketball team into a hot streak that got the entire division’s attention. The Bulldogs were able to etch themselves into the playoffs after going on a seven game winning streak that emerged from a change of philosophy on the team.

“We changed our offense. It was more conducive where the team didn’t have to think too much and play freely. They also gelled [together] and now we are ready to go,” said Palmadessa. And ready they were, as the Bulldogs were able to defeat Atlantic Cape Community College in a 95-93 overtime thriller on their home turf. The team is currently placed as the sixth seed, but the Bulldogs are hungry for homefield advantage.

“We want fourth or fifth seed,” said Coach Brown. “The conference is extremely tough. There are no nights off. You can’t look at those looks on paper and say ‘oh this is a win’. But we look really good right now.”

Looking good is one thing, but they played just as well, as Bergen ended up finishing with a 17-10 regular season record; placing third seed did not surprise anybody.

The Bulldogs soundly defeated Bucks Community College 85-73 in the first round, proving to any naysayers that their hot streak was not just a fluke. Finally, they had returned to the Quarterfinal match that they failed to pass last season, and they defeated long time rivals Cumberland Community College 92-84.

Unfortunately, their season came to a halt, after they were defeated by second seed Philadelphia Community College 77-71. Although their season has come to an end, the message made across the region is still strong, Bergen is a force to be reckoned with.

MEN’S BASKETBALL: HOT STREAK PROPELS TEAM INTO FINAL FOUR

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