



THE OUTLOOK

MONMOUTH UNIVERSITY'S
STUDENT-RUN NEWSPAPER SINCE 1933

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Class of 2024 Reported to Be Monmouth's Most Diverse Class Yet

MELISSA BADAMO
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF/FEATURES EDITOR

Monmouth's Class of 2024 is the most racially diverse class yet, with students of color representing 33.1 percent of the class, according to President Leahy.

This is compared to 28.7 percent of last year's incoming class and 29.0 percent the year before that, Leahy said.

He also said that Monmouth's success with student diversity resulted from the accrual of several efforts over the last decade. "It starts with making all students feel welcome and wanted on our campus, which is a message we try to send in everything from our recruitment materials to our highly personalized on-campus admission programs," he said.

Leahy also mentioned that the introduction of the Intercultural Center in 2019, with Dr. Zaneta Rago-Craft as the director, has paved the way for

the development of a more diverse community.

"It is an exciting benchmark for our University and I trust that our community will continue to grow in its diversity for many years to come," said Rago-Craft.

According to Monmouth's

website, the Intercultural Center promotes university-wide shifts towards diversity, inclusion, and respect. It also provides programs, educational opportunities, and consultation that supports the academic, social, and professional success of

historically underrepresented campus community members including (but not limited to) People of Color, LGBTQIA+, first-generation, low-income, international, and religious minority members of the University.

"It's quite possible that prospective students saw the existence of this Center and the outstanding work Dr. Rago-Craft is doing as emblematic of our commitment to continually improving on issues related to diversity, equity, and inclusion," said Leahy.

Rago-Craft emphasizes the importance of building up the skills and empathy required to understand the various experiences of others.

She said, "Because so many of our K-12 schools remain economically and racially segregated, attending university provides one of the first opportunities to build authentic and



GRAPHIC MADE by Angela Mascia

Monmouth's five-year strategic plan includes the expansion of diversity-promoting initiatives on campus.

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New Dean of the School of Humanities

MATTHEW CUTILLO
MANAGING/NEWS/LIFESTYLES EDITOR

Richard Veit, Ph.D., Professor of Anthropology, has been named Interim Dean of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, succeeding Kenneth Womack, Ph.D., effective July 1, 2020.

Veit previously served as an Associate Dean with a focus on faculty affairs in the School of Humanities and Social Sciences. When Dean Kenneth Womack stepped down, Veit decided to apply for the position.

"I saw this as a great opportunity to serve Monmouth University and a school that I love," Veit said. "I was thrilled to be selected for the position."

Veit was the founding director of the University's Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, and the University's master's program in anthropology.

Chair of the Department of History and Anthropology since 2014, Veit is a recipient of Monmouth's Distinguished Teaching Award and the Donald Warncke Award for his service.

Robin Sakina Mama, Ph.D., Dean of the School of Social Work, believes Veit "brings many wonderful qualities" to his new position. "Having spent the last year or so as the Associate Dean has definitely given him some idea of what the Dean's office needs to accomplish," Mama said.

"He has also held several other administrative roles at Monmouth, which have also prepared him for his new position. Dr. Veit is approachable, kind, thoughtful and supportive – all qualities that a Dean must possess."

Veit is working with faculty colleagues Hettie Williams, Walter Greason, Julius Adekunle, Anwar Uhuru, and Zaneta Rago-Craft to help reboot the Wayne D. McMurray School of Humanities and Social Sciences Africana Studies program.

Julius O. Adekunle, Ph.D.,

DEAN cont. on pg. 3

The Outlook Wins Fifth National Award

MEGAN RUGGLES
SENIOR/POLITICS/ASSOCIATE NEWS EDITOR

The Outlook, Monmouth University's student-run newspaper, was named "University Newspaper of the Year 2019-20," by the American Scholastic Press Association (ASPA) earlier this month.

The ASPA holds an annual national competition for university newspapers and other publications. Papers are judged on everything from news coverage to layout and design. This is the fifth national championship The Outlook has won since their establishment in 1933.

"I was ecstatic when I heard that The Outlook received such a prestigious honor," Melissa Badamo, Editor-in-Chief (EIC) and Features Editor, said. "This award was the result of teamwork, devotion, and hard work across the entire Outlook staff."

"Each year, our editors emphasize coverage of campus news and events, exceptional writing and page design, and always striving to be fair and truthful," she continued.

John Morano, a Professor of Journalism, has been the faculty advisor to The Outlook

for over 30 years, and from his experience, the paper could've won 15 times. "The paper is consistent in their coverage of the campus and its news... There is really one main focus, bring quality news and information to the readership of Monmouth University," he said.



PHOTO COURTESY of Monmouth University

The Outlook's 2019-2020 Editorial Board at journalist and alumna Linda Deutsch's naming ceremony in Nov. 2019.

"In the pursuit of that, be fair and tell the truth. Whether the paper has managed to that or not, is for the reader to decide, but certainly, judged by independent journalists against other institutions, The Outlook has distinguished itself," Morano added.

Danielle Schipani, a graduate assistant to The Outlook, believes the "dedication of undergraduate students who work tirelessly every single week to ensure a high-quality paper hits the stands on Wednesday morning," makes the paper so successful.

Morano agreed, "It still takes deep dedication from a group of students willing to perform all kinds of tasks for little to no credit, essentially because they believe the pursuit of useful information is a valuable endeavor."

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SGA Fundraises For Yemen Humanitarian Crisis

ALEX DYER
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

Over the summer, Monmouth University’s Student Government Association (SGA) held a fundraising event for the people of Yemen, a Middle Eastern nation which has recently been affected by widespread famine and resource shortage, according to the Famine Early Warning System.

This June, the members of SGA created an online fundraiser in an effort to aid people suffering from a humanitarian crisis in Yemen, ultimately raising over \$1,500. Stemming from proxy wars in the area between the Saudi-backed Yemeni government and the Iran-backed Houthi movement, routes to vital resources like food, water, and medical assistance have been either compromised or cut off, creating a subsequent humanitarian crisis

that has escalated to an emergency in some parts of Yemen.

Regarding the creation and execution of the fundraiser, Jenna Lee, a sophomore health studies student and Vice President of the SGA, said, “When we recognized the humanitarian crisis occurring in Yemen, our immediate thought was to help in any way possible. As the Vice President of SGA, my goal is to make a change not only within the Monmouth community, but around us as well.”

Saliba Sarsar, Ph.D, a Professor of Political Science and Sociology at Monmouth who has studied Middle Eastern/American relations extensively, commented that “the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region is well-endowed with human and natural resources. But these are not evenly or properly distributed. Yemen happens to be the poorest country in the MENA, with

a total population of around 30 million and a GDP per capita of approximately \$2,500.”

Joseph Patten, Ph.D, an Associate Professor of Political Science, said, “People in Yemen are literally starving to death every day. It’s good to see the SGA helping as much as they can.” Patten also noted that the United States is intervening, but that it hasn’t necessarily been an easy task, and that it is “a human rights issue over anything.”

Due to COVID-19, SGA opted for a socially-distant fundraiser. “We created a BINGO board to post on social media for people to donate any amount displayed on the board,” said Lee. “All of our senators share[d] this with their family, friends, and Monmouth community; resulting in a huge success. All the donations were transferred over to the Yemen Emergency Appeal fund under

‘Monmouth SGA.’”

The effects of COVID-19 are still being seen across Yemen as well. According to Sarsar, “two-thirds of the population is in urgent need of food, water, and medicine. Conditions are expected to worsen if COVID-19 is allowed to spread... food security and health security are endangered.”

The SGA’s BINGO fundraiser ultimately raised over \$1,500, which was donated directly to Islamic Relief USA’s Yemen Emergency Appeal. According to the organization’s statistics, \$1,000 is enough to build a water or sanitation facility, and \$500 is enough to distribute multiple full medical packages or food parcels to people in need in regions affected by the proxy wars and their fallout.

“No matter how much money we were able to raise,” Lee said, “we are proud to say we were able to do something to help in any way possible. We thank everyone who donated, and hope to continue to inspire our community as well as other Student Government Associations to be the change.”

Sarsar echoed Lee’s sentiment, similarly calling for action among governments across the globe in easing the crises affecting Yemen. “The international community, including the United States and the United Nations, must redouble its efforts to end the ongoing violence in Yemen so as to allow the Yemeni people to rebuild their lives and country,” he said. “Enough with violence. Peace is the path and the destination.”



PHOTO COURTESY of Getty Images
The Student Government Association has raised over \$1,500 to aid the Yemen Humanitarian Crisis.

President Leahy Appoints New Chief of Staff

MATTHEW CUTILLO
MANAGING/NEWS/LIFESTYLES EDITOR

University President Patrick F. Leahy, Ed.D. has named Emily Miller-Gonzalez, Director of Planned Giving within the Division of University Advancement, as the Chief of Staff to the Office of the President. The decision comes as a result of additional organizational changes to the President’s office over the course of this academic year.

“In order to help streamline communications and create efficiencies in my office, I have identified an internal candidate to serve as the Acting Chief of Staff for a term of six months,” Leahy wrote in a memo to Monmouth staff, sent on Monday, Sep. 14. “Emily Miller-Gonzalez, who currently serves as the Director of Planned Giving within the Division of University Advancement, has graciously accepted this temporary appointment.”

Miller-Gonzalez is well-positioned for the role, which includes managerial duties of special projects emanating from the President’s Office, the development of strategic presidential communications, and representing the President’s Office to internal and external audiences alike, Leahy wrote.

Closing over 5 million in gifts and pledges over the past two years, Miller-

Gonzalez has introduced over 20 new members to the Shadow Lawn Society, Monmouth’s circle for recognizing donors who have included the University in their estate plans.

Previously the Director of Development for the School of Education and School of Social Work, Miller-Gonzalez helped grow the Dean’s Advisory Council for each school “... and ultimately helped to identify new members of the Board of Trustees,” Leahy wrote. “She also secured a six-figure seed gift that launched the SRF Suicide Prevention Research and Training Project, as well as a gift that permanently endowed the Virginia A. Cory Community Garden.”

“With this new role, I am looking forward to expanding my knowledge of the University, and to enhancing my relationships across University areas,” Miller-Gonzalez said. “I am excited to apply my background and professional training to help streamline projects and communications emanating from the President’s Office. I appreciate this unique opportunity to concurrently serve the Monmouth University community as our resident planned giving specialist, and hope to celebrate many new planned gift commitments in the

coming year, as well.”

Prior to joining the University, Miller-Gonzalez was a major gift officer at the Rutgers University Foundation, as well as a part-time lecturer at Rutgers University-New Brunswick, teaching courses on diversity and oppression and groups at-risk in contemporary society.

Miller-Gonzalez has a Master of Social Work and a Juris Doctor from Rutgers University, as well as a Bachelor of Arts, magna cum laude, from George-

town University. While attending Georgetown, Miller-Gonzalez played women’s soccer, as well as spending the year between her undergraduate and graduate studies as an Americorps volunteer working with underserved youth in Chicago, Illinois.

“I thank you for your ongoing support of the Office of the President, and for warmly welcoming Emily into this important role,” Leahy wrote to end his announcement.



PHOTO COURTESY of Monmouth University
Emily Miller-Gonzalez will serve for a term of 6 months.

COVID-19 Dashboard

MATTHEW CUTILLO
MANAGING/NEWS/LIFESTYLES EDITOR

President Leahy announced a COVID-19 Campus Dashboard on Wednesday, Sep. 16. Updated daily by 4 p.m., the dashboard tracks confirmed COVID-19 cases among employees working on campus, residential students and non-residential students, as well as the amount of University-sponsored beds occupied by students currently in isolation or quarantine.

Accessed at monmouth.edu/dashboard, the dashboard “reflects our commitment to transparency related to the health and safety of our campus community,” Leahy wrote in an email addressed to all members of the Monmouth University community. “The dashboard also reflects the number of students living off campus in the local community who may have in person or hybrid courses here on campus who are in quarantine or isolation at their homes in the community.”

After becoming aware of an employee/student who tests positive for COVID-19, one should notify Health Services by contacting Kathy Maloney at kmaloney@monmouth.edu or health@monmouth.edu, Leahy wrote. “Upon such notification, the Health Services will keep the academic area informed should students or professors miss classes due to the illness by informing Danielle Schrama from the Center for Student Success.”

Students who become positively diagnosed with COVID-19 will be isolated from the general student population, Leahy wrote. “Students who live within 100 miles of campus and are able to go home will be encouraged to do so. For COVID-positive students who are unable to go home, they will be moved into campus isolation housing.”

The COVID-19 Response Team, consisting of members of Residential Life, Health Services, MUPD, Student Life, Dining Services, and Center for Student Success will be tracking positives.

They have developed an Excel spreadsheet to track essential information, date of positive test, symptoms, location of isolation, monitoring and date of release from isolation,” Leahy wrote. “They will ensure the health, safety, and academic needs of the student are met.”

Leahy expressed satisfaction with the fall reopening, being “pleased to see” so many students and faculty respecting and following the health and safety protocols. “Practicing social distancing, hand-washing, wearing masks, and following the health and safety protocols will help us mitigate the virus and enable us to continue to offer in-person instruction and campus experience for everyone.”

Leahy hopes that “students, their families, and employees will find this dashboard to be a useful source of information as [the University] works to keep our campus and surrounding communities as safe as possible during the COVID-19 pandemic.”

Outlook Staff and Faculty Reflect on ASPA Award

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Caroline Mattise, former Editor-in-Chief from 2019-20, said, “It is an honor to be recognized by the ASPA for our hard work and dedication to accurate and relevant reporting.”

She continued, “I am grateful to have been a part of *The Outlook* team for the past four years. This award solidifies the role that student journalists play in upholding the Fourth Estate in our society and within our institutions.”

Schipani explained that she recognizes how difficult balancing school, work, and an editorial position at the paper can be; she has been with *The Outlook* since her sophomore year, having held positions as the News Editor in 2015-16 and the EIC in 2016-17.

“I admire all the editors for their hard work... This award shows how awesome our editors and writers really are. I am always impressed by their passion and dedication and find it truly inspiring,” Schipani said.

Schipani added, “[Winning this award] speaks to the wonderful communication education that Monmouth provides, and of course highlights the dedication and efforts of the

students,” she said. “We are also so lucky to have such an incredible supervisor, Professor Morano. I’ve learned everything I know about journalism from him, and I can’t thank him enough for all the late-night editorial conversations and for his dedication to our learning experience.”

Aaron Furgason, Chair of the Communication Department and Associate Professor, explained that since this is the Fifth National Championship for *The Outlook*,

it suggests “a high level of student leadership as well as faculty oversight by advisor, Professor John Morano.”

“I am in awe of the level of excellence and passion for journalism that the staff of *The Outlook* puts into every issue during the academic year,” Furgason said.

The Outlook staff puts together a 16-page weekly publication, devoting Monday and Tuesday evenings to layout and editing and spend the rest of the week assembling stories.

Matthew Cutillo, the Managing, News and Lifestyles Editor, transferred to Monmouth to pursue his degree in Journalism more seriously and joined *the Outlook*. “The staff was very welcoming on all levels, and I appreciated the amount of dedication to their craft.”

He continued, “It was motivating to be surrounded by people as interested in Journalism as myself. I could sense myself becoming better amongst my new peers.”

“Excellence in journalism requires a high level of consistency in the product each week and aggressive but fair reporting, which are all skills that every student involved with *The Outlook* possess,” Furgason said.

In the aftermath of receiving this award, Morano does not believe the paper’s standards will need to change. “To tell you the truth, I don’t think being recognized in this way puts any more pressure on the paper. I’m sure the editors will attest to this,” he said.

“I expect us to be champions every year, every week, in fact. We set the bar high. Sometimes we clear it, sometimes we don’t, but we’re always trying to get there, and we will continue to approach it that way,” Morano concluded.

Badamo agreed, “I wouldn’t say that I feel pressure to improve from last year, because I am confident that our staff will continue to apply that same diligence *The Outlook* has been known for year after year.”

She elaborated that there is always potential for growth at the newspaper and is that she is committed to leading our team of writers and editors to another year of success.

“...judged by independent journalists against other institutions *The Outlook* has distinguished itself.”

JOHN MORANO
OUTLOOK FACULTY ADVISOR/ PROFESSOR OF JOURNALISM



PHOTO COURTESY of Monmouth University
The Outlook staff compiles a 16-page newspaper to be published every Wednesday. Library

Dr. Richard Veit Named Interim Dean

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who teaches undergraduate and graduate courses on globalization, politics, religions, and cultures of Africa, considers Veit to be “a brilliant scholar, a great teacher, a hardworking professor, a successful archaeologist, a wonderful colleague, and an amazing leader.”

“He works well with both students and faculty,” Adekunle said. “He is an administrator who has the interest of those he leads. His being the Interim Dean is an opportunity and a challenge to continue doing his best for Monmouth University.”

Veit also mentioned excitement over restarting the Institute for Global Understanding and witnessing its growth. Strengthening the Universities academic programs and helping students and faculty “do their best work, even during this terrible pandemic,” Veit said. “I see the School of Humanities and Social Sciences playing a key role at Monmouth University. I look forward to being an advocate for all of our programs.”

Hillary DelPrete, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Biological Anthropology and Anthropology Undergraduate Program Director, considers Veit to be a wonderful mentor and friend during her time at Monmouth University. “I feel so grateful to have had the time to work with him and I

think the school of Humanities and Social Sciences is lucky to now have him as Dean,” DelPrete. “His kindness, dedication, and commitment are an inspiration.”

Veit has authored or co-authored many articles and reviews and five books, and is currently working on several projects, including a book on the Archaeology of Religion in colonial America and a grant-funded archaeological project for the National Park Service at Morristown National Historical Park.

“That project examines how soldiers from different states came together to form the Continental Army,” Veit said. “Working on substantial projects, whether books or research projects, has helped me develop organizational and interpersonal skills that I look forward to using as Interim Dean. As a faculty member in History and Anthropology I got to work with a great group of colleagues who have been wonderful mentors and friends.”

Christopher S. DeRosa, Ph.D., teaches undergraduate and graduate courses in the military and political history of the United States, the Civil War and Reconstruction, the Cold War, and World War II.

“Rich Veit is a renowned teacher and the leading archaeologist of New Jersey,” DeRosa said “He was a very effective chair of the Department of History & Anthropology, where he set a tone for putting students first and striving for excellence in teaching. I have every reason to believe he will succeed as Dean.”



PHOTO COURTESY of Monmouth University
Richard Veit, Ph.D., has been named new Associate Dean of the School of Humanites and Social Sciences.

Campus Diversity

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meaningful relationships across lines of difference.”

Rago-Craft has also been named Advisor to the President on Diversity & Inclusion.

The University has developed a five-year plan to increase diversity on campus. Two recent initiatives involve renaming Wilson Hall to “The Great Hall at Shadow Lawn” in June and creating a crowd-sourced resource repository on race, racism/anti-racism, and policing and equality found through the library website.

Leahy continued to stress the importance of diversity at Monmouth, “We all know that learning and problem-solving are more robust and effective when there

are different voices and approaches.”

He continued, “We have a responsibility to get students to think critically about race and privilege and unconscious biases and many other things that might prevent them from being informed and critically aware citizens of the world. Part of our role as educators is to get students comfortable with going out into our diverse world after graduation—even if we challenge them to be uncomfortable at times before graduation.”

“By answering the call to build a more welcoming campus environment, we will all only become more inclusive scholars, employees, and colleagues at a time where the world around us demands it,” said Rago-Craft.



PHOTO COURTESY of Monmouth University
Students of color represent 33.1 percent of the Class of 2024.

THE OUTLOOK

Melissa Badamo	EDITOR-IN-CHIEF/FEATURES EDITOR
Matthew Cutillo	MANAGING/NEWS/LIFESTYLES EDITOR
Megan Ruggles	SENIOR/POLITICS/ASSOCIATE NEWS EDITOR
Alex Dyer	ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR
Professor John Morano	FACULTY ADVISOR
Tarra Emery	OFFICE COORDINATOR
Danielle Schipani	GRADUATE ASSISTANT
Mark D'Aquila	SPORTS EDITOR
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Georgianne Nigro	ASSOCIATE POLITICS EDITOR
Lowell Kelly-Gamble	DIVERSITY/GRADUATE EDITOR
Angela Mascia	ADVERTISEMENT MANAGER

TECHNOLOGY MANAGERS

Alex Sheriff Yosef Davidowitz

DELIVERY ASSISTANTS

Joseph Falzini Jessica Pak

STAFF WRITERS

Shannon McGorty Grace Enright Katherine Rivera Erin Mulligan John Spinelli Lauren DeMarco

Monmouth University's Student-Run Newspaper Since 1933

Plangere Center 2nd Floor, Room 260

Phone: (732) 571-3481 Fax: (732) 263-5151

Mailing Address: The Outlook Monmouth University 400 Cedar Ave West Long Branch, NJ 07764

Website: outlook.monmouth.edu E-Mail: outlook@monmouth.edu Advertising Inquiries: outlookads@monmouth.edu

The Outlook Editors on Re-opening

EDITORIAL STAFF

Since Monmouth University re-opened with a mix of in-person and online classes this semester, students have rapidly adjusted to the “new normal” on campus. Regulations such as social distancing, mask wearing, and hand-washing are enforced, while the new meal-ordering app was introduced to minimize the number of students in the student center and dining hall.

The Outlook editors shared their opinion on Monmouth’s approach to re-opening campus this fall amid the COVID-19 pandemic, with some agreeing with the decision to reopen campus.

“I think that Monmouth made the right choice with appropriate safety measures in place, and it is up to students to do their part and act responsibly now,” an editor said.

One editor thought re-opening was the right move to justify the tuition increase and to ensure students get a well-rounded education with in-person classes.

However, some editors believe that Monmouth has not made the right choice reopening this semester, citing safety and health concerns.

“I think a better approach would’ve been to have the semester online,” one editor said. “The entire world shut down but universities were quick to jump back in, but nothing has changed.”

“Safety-wise, the better choice would have been keeping the students home but then the students would miss out on social interactions and the experience of being on or near campus which is so essential to the college experience,” an editor commented.

Another editor pointed

out, “Students are going to have more access outside of school with other students, which will allow more physical contact, which will make it so much easier for this virus to spread quicker. I am afraid the longer I stay on campus, the higher of the risk I have to contracting the virus.”

Some editors also commented on the possibility of Monmouth reverting to an all-remote semester if cases continue to climb.

“I think the choice Monmouth made was well thought-out and I understand that it is a tough situation no matter how you slice it,” said an editor. “I am just unsure of if this will last and I think the school knows that as well.”

Many are fearing the possibility of students disobeying campus safety measures by not wearing masks, not social distancing, and gathering in large groups.

“I am worried...that students will find ways to undermine these safety measures and an outbreak will occur on campus that way,” said an editor, who also mentioned Monmouth’s COVID-19 Campus Dashboard that was launched last week on their website. The dashboard lists the number of students who have been on campus and tested positive for the virus.

The editor said, “I also think that Monmouth’s symptom tracker lacks efficacy, as it does not account for contact with asymptomatic people or those who have not explicitly tested positive.”

As of Tuesday, Sept. 22, the dashboard shows 15 total confirmed positive cases including four residential students, eight non-residential students, and three employees. The

dashboard indicates that it does not include test results taken prior to the return of campus this fall semester, nor students and employees who test positive but are 100 percent remote.

Many editors point out the struggle of commuting to and/or living on campus with the mix of in-person and online instruction.

“Personally, I would have preferred all online classes because a mix of classes makes it difficult to take classes from home and return to campus for in-person classes an hour or two later,” one editor said, who commutes approximately one hour to campus.

“I kind of wish my classes would have been all online so I would not have had to come all the way back to campus,” agreed another editor, “but I think having some normalcy by coming back and going to campus for at least one of my classes will lead to a more successful semester for me.”

Many editors are content with the University’s enforcement of safety protocols such as hand washing stations, outdoor classes and dining, and placing desks six feet apart.

However, one editor pointed out a flaw with outdoor dining. They said, “A student can wear a mask consistently during class, but you have to laugh at the ‘safe’ outdoor dining of dozens of students sitting shoulder to shoulder with no masks on.”

Many editors are wary about students’ compliance with the University and state regulations, fearing that cases won’t decrease unless students begin socially distancing off campus, staying away from parties, and as one editor points out, “...actually take this virus seriously.”

HOW TO SUBMIT ARTICLES OR LETTERS:

The Outlook provides the Monmouth University community with information concerning issues in and around the University while serving as a forum for expression of the ideas of its readers.

Contributions must be submitted (email outlook@monmouth.edu) by 12:00 p.m. Sundays to The Outlook office, 2nd floor, room 260, Plangere Center.

All copy must include the author’s full name and contact information. The Outlook accepts articles and graphic material from students, faculty and administrators, and reserves the right to edit or reject any material which they determine is not suitable for publication or its readers. Copy and advertising appearing in The Outlook do not necessarily reflect the views of Monmouth University or The Outlook.

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Dealing With Virtual Learning

SAMUEL CIOCIOLA
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Throughout my college experience, I always avoided online classes; I am the type of person who learns better hands-on and in-person.

I only took one online class prior to the coronavirus situation, it was not the worst thing in the world, but I felt as if I did not learn as much as I would have in the normal classroom environment. From there, I told myself I would avoid online classes and stick to in-person.

Fast forward two semesters, a global pandemic hits and I am forced to go to school entirely online. At first, I thought I would not learn anything, and I would be better off taking time off of school, but then I realized it would be more fulfilling if I were to rise to the occasion and finish out my senior year regardless of the circumstances.

I ended up finishing my last semester strong and even took two online classes over the summer that went very smoothly. Every student reading this probably has a similar story since many schools were impacted by the pandemic. I share this with fellow students because it is important to never doubt yourself.

Throughout college, I constantly found myself overwhelmed and questioning myself, constantly thinking my ideas were dumb, my questions were not worth asking, my work was not “A” material, etc. These thoughts were entirely in my head, my anxiety



PHOTO TAKEN by Lauren Salois

No longer are students going to campus for every class, now they stay home for most classes and learn through their electronic devices.

towards school was guiding my experience and I was allowing my own thoughts to get in the way of reaching my full potential.

I changed my mindset. For example, I went from “I will never do well in an online class” to “I WILL do well in an online class.” Staying positive and doing the best you can is crucial during these uncertain times, and I thought it would be more than appropriate to bring light to the power of overcoming anxiety and worry through positive thinking and productivity.

This semester is extremely different from any previous semester in my college career;

I bet almost all of you can agree. Although rolling out of bed and logging onto zoom felt like a treat at first, the uncertainty of when we will get back to structured days consisting of safely socializing with students and staff in “normal” settings is beginning to contribute to a lot of our anxiety.

Some in-person courses with strict pandemic guidelines are taking place here at Monmouth University, but walking around campus in a mask trying to stay six feet apart from fellow students and faculty feels just as disheartening as sitting on the computer for hours on end doing assignment after assignment.

The reality of this situation is that nothing about our educational experience feels normal right now but keeping an open mind towards online instruction will help us stay

educated and productive during the remainder of the pandemic.

My experience with online instruction is that it is what you make of it. Online courses come with a whole new level of responsibility, which could benefit us to some degree.

If you choose to spend zoom lectures scrolling through Instagram or not watching the boring YouTube video your professor posted on ecampus, that is on you. Learning how to navigate through online educational tools will be a huge advantage to us as we enter the professional world during this new virtual norm.

Waiting around for the world to regain normalcy is only damaging at this point, embracing online learning will set you up for a successful educational journey for the remainder of this unpredictable year.



PHOTO TAKEN by Lauren Salois

For hybrid and in-person courses classrooms now have COVID guidelines with desks distanced, hand sanitizer and antibacterial wipes provided, and plexiglass and a marker dividing the professor from the students.



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The Black and African Diaspora Forum United

LOWELL KELLY-GAMBLE
DIVERSITY/GRADUATE EDITOR

The Black and African Diaspora Forum United (BADFU) was established as an organization consisting of Black and African American faculty members and allies at Monmouth University, which evaluates African American academics at dominant white institutions of higher education.

The organization began in summer 2020 in response to a series of racist and anti-Black incidents that have occurred involving members of the Uni-

versity community.

Consisting of 15 faculty members, BADFU strives to unearth institutional practices that negatively impact the learning, education, or opportunities for African American and Diaspora students and faculty.

By working with administration and faculty decision makers to transition new practices, BADFU supports the increase of diversity in student and faculty ratio, placing more African Americans in administrative roles (specifically positions of institutional

governance), and incorporating education to the institution on matters related to the Black and African Diaspora experience while providing advice through interactions with key stakeholders at the University.

"This University currently has only three self-identified tenured Black/African American faculty among a faculty of nearly 300. That's less than two percent. This is more than problematic," said Hettie Williams Ph.D., member of BADFU and Assistant Professor of the Department of History and Anthropology.

Walter Greason Ph.D., another member of BADFU and Associate Professor and Chair of the Department of Educational Counseling and Leadership, said, "Without question, Monmouth University has an opportunity to become a world leader in anti-racist education by listening to the forum's membership and taking immediate actions to improve all aspects of campus and community life."

Greason believes that the need for an organization such as BADFU is urgent, and that students and faculty will gain a more responsive and holistic experience of university life by including voices and experiences that are often marginalized.

"The forum is unique among organizations that pursue the goals of equity and inclusion because it is based in advanced research and concrete time tables for reaching specific benchmarks. Too often, vague statements of principle can dissipate momentum toward impactful change. The forum

has a level of focus and determination rarely seen among university faculty on these issues," he said.

He also believes that by fall 2021, these changes could present a shift in campus climate that will inspire favorable comparisons against higher-ranked competitive institutions.

Williams believes that Monmouth has responded expeditiously to concerns of diversity and inclusion by establishing the Intercultural Center, Monmouth Moments, the Africana Studies Program, and commitment to the HB-CU's (Historically Black Colleges and Universities) Fellows Program, but needs to strive for better.

She said, "Though there are existing organizations and groups on campus that advocate for diversity, inclusion, and equality, anti-Black racism and structural inequality are still major obstacles that have impacted members of the Black and African American community in significant and unique ways on this campus and in the nation."

She continued, "The current number of Black faculty and students on this campus is a reflection of missed opportunities and a need for more robust practices of inclusion. Black/African American faculty have not been fully integrated into multiple sectors of the university community and this is glaringly evident when it comes to faculty ranks."

Williams said that race intersects with a host of other aspects of identity such as gender, and that having several

women as members incorporates a variety of perspectives on matters of diversity and inclusion.

For BADFU, it is a historic moment that President Leahy and the Provost have listened to their stories and shared support.

BADFU currently host a weekly podcast called This Week in Black History, *Society, and Culture*, with its first episode airing on Sept. 7.

During these podcasts, BADFU members interview scholars, authors, activists, and community leaders on situations which have an impact on the history, society, and culture of Black and African American communities in the United States and beyond. Each series discusses a variety of topics which include higher education, economics, criminal justice, reparations, mental health, history, science, gender, popular culture, women, and politics.

The podcasts are accessible from services such as Apple Podcasts, Spotify, Overcast, and more. New episodes are released on Monday mornings from September to May during each academic term.

The organization will also take part in Black History Month in February with a virtual event called "Policing in Communities of Color," which will feature a conversation on police violence, Black Lives Matter, and police reform.

To stay updated on BADFU, and for information about programs, events, and advocacy, you can also follow them on Twitter (@bad_union) and Instagram (@black_faculty2020).



PHOTO TAKEN FROM Unsplash

BADFU supports the increase of faculty, students, and staff of Black/African American descent.

Class of 2024: What It's Like to Start College During the COVID-19 Pandemic

MELISSA BADAMO
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF/FEATURES EDITOR

Members of the Class of 2024 are facing some unique obstacles. After finishing their senior year of high school in quarantine, they're now transitioning into college at a time where things like online classes and social events are looking a bit different.

First year students shared some concerns, and how they're navigating campus life, as they enter their third week of college.

"Freshman year is not how I expected it to be because of COVID-19, but Monmouth University helped in putting the students' safety first and made it possible for me to stay on campus and in my dorm," said Clinical Lab Sciences student Faith Guerron.

"It's been a bit tough to balance working and school again," shared Kayla Gillespie, a freshman English student.

For students who encounter the common struggle of balancing multiple responsibilities, Director of Tutoring Services Dorothy Cleary recommends reaching out to the University's many services designed to promote student success.

"As we know that the transition from high school to college can be stressful under 'normal' circum-

stances, I think it's important for first year students to realize is that there are many resources on campus that can offer support and they should make sure they are familiar with them and how to access those resources," said Cleary. "Speaking with that student's first year advisor is a great place to start, and also speaking with your Peer Transition

Assistant (PTA)."

The Center for Student Success, which includes First-Year Advising, Academic Advising, Tutoring Services, Writing Services, Supplemental Instruction, and more, is offering academic support to all students.

Additionally, the Office of Student Activities encourages stu-

dents to download the "Experience Monmouth" app to keep informed about upcoming events, both virtual and in-person.

"Although the pandemic has seemed to change regular circumstances, you can still utilize a surplus of resources on campus to make life easier," added Adriana Zefutie, a freshman psychol-

ogy student. "From clubs to events posted on the apps, Monmouth is creating a great environment for students to flourish in during their first year."

Many first year students may also be unsure what to expect, but taking each year one step at a time can alleviate heavy workloads and facilitate a successful college experience.

"Students need to try and make sure they get enough sleep, eat responsibly, communicate with others, and realize that college is a marathon, not a sprint. Get involved, stay organized, and give your yourself a chance to experience many things and realize that help is available as needed," said Cleary.

First year students remain optimistic, making the best out of an atypical situation.

Guerron said, "I met a lot of people from so many different places and formed a bond with some of them. I'm grateful for having the opportunity to have in-person classes and I can't wait for more wonderful memories/experiences."

Whether they're sitting at desks six feet apart or turning on their webcams and logging into Zoom, the Class of 2024 have a lot to look forward to over the next four years at Monmouth University.



PHOTO COURTESY OF Monmouth University

First year students are hopeful for a successful semester as they transition into college during unprecedented times.

It's a Bird! It's a Plane! It's... Smoke.

JESSICA PAK
ASSOCIATE LIFESTYLE EDITOR

Nothing beats September weather. Crisp air, lukewarm temperatures, warm breezes, the transition from summer to fall is absolutely breathtaking. But have you noticed that this past week's forecast has been "cloudier" than usual? Contrary to popular belief, those "clouds" are actually plumes of smoke being produced from the record-breaking wildfires that have been impacting California, Washington state, and Oregon.

The west coast's dry conditions, high temperatures, and abundance of lightning have all served as catalysts for these wildfires. According to an article written by BBC News, the fires were so extreme they destroyed thousands of homes, killed over 30 people, and overall affected 42,000 people in the area. Individuals in the area have been experiencing one of the worst air quality conditions on earth.

With the smoke stretching over 5,000 miles, scientists predict the acrid yellow-green smog may linger in those parts for weeks. The air was so thick that one airline stopped flights to Portland, OR, and Spokane, WA, earlier this week. Businesses have closed temporarily and residents were not able to go outside for walks.

Not only has the smog impacted the air quality of these areas, but it has been inducing mass amounts of pollutants. According to an article published by sciencedaily.com, NASA's satellites indicated high-altitude concentrations of carbon monoxide that are more than 10 times the norm. Scientists have concluded

that these fires are the worst they've ever been in 18 years. John Morano, Professor of Journalism and Environmental author, explained the potential complications this environmental catastrophe can have on the earth's ecosystems.

"There can be costly ripple effects resulting from events like this. The California wildfires will not bode well for ecosystems and creatures that are already stressed on multiple fronts by climate change, human encroachment, deforestation, invasive species, as well as many other pressures. While it's true that in some ways the forest can be quite resilient, this tends to happen when there isn't a tsunami of pressures being exerted on wild places simultaneously," said Morano.

On a brighter note, the smoke coming from these fires has been producing vibrant sunsets all throughout the United States. The combination of haze coming from the smoke and cirrus clouds has created some beautiful views in the Midwest and the Northeast.

Moreover, according to an article written by michiganradio.org, Nick Schroek, a professor of environmental law at the University Detroit Mercy, expresses that the particulate matter in the air has not increased. This is a good sign since an increase in particulate matter can be harmful especially to those with respiratory issues. However, he feels that climate change is the main contributor to the severity of these fires.

Kayla Kennedy, a junior

communication student, expressed her position on this issue.

"We should genuinely be concerned, especially when the skies are turning orange because of the fires. People don't realize how powerful the element of fire is. It can be destructive in the tiniest of ways but when it spreads across multiple states it basically becomes next to impossible to stop it. Our environment is changing and based off of these fires it's not for the best," said Kennedy.

Junior science student Emily Vasquez expresses contrasting thoughts on the fires.

"I don't think the smoke will have a lasting effect on the health of the environment, I think it is somewhat of a passing event. Perhaps wherever the smoke and dust settles it'll be good for nature since they are essentially dissolved plant nutrients. However, trees and plants store carbon, and when deforestation and burning happens, there's less plants to absorb carbon in the atmosphere which contributes to climate change. A lot of carbon is being released into the atmosphere right now and I can imagine even more will due to these fires," said Vasquez.

With climate change increasing more and more, these fires are another reason why individuals should think more sustainably. Recycling, using less nonrenewable resources, and shopping locally are a few simple ways to make your lifestyle a little less wasteful. By paying attention to one's actions and how it affects the environment, change can be made for the better.



IMAGE TAKEN by Los Angeles Times
The California wildfires came as a result of the west coast's dry conditions and high temperatures.



PHOTO TAKEN by Associated Press
Thousands of homes have been destroyed in the wake of the California wildfires.

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Vinyl Refuses To die, Again

RAY ROMANSKI
ENTERTAINMENT EDITOR

For the first time in 34 years, vinyl records outsold CDs. Outsold isn't the proper word, though. A more fitting term should be "destroyed."

The *Recording Industry Association of America* reported vinyl records created over \$230 million in revenue in the first six months of 2020 alone, whereas CDs only sold \$130 million. CD sales have seen a 48 percent decrease in revenue, and vinyl has seen a 4 percent growth. I guess you could say records have had a record breaking year.

This comes after a tumultuous start for the music industry in 2020. With record stores and other businesses being largely shut down because of COVID-19, physical

sales dropped 23% overall. Many record stores, including Holdfast Records in Asbury Park, NJ, could not survive the absence of eager audiophiles and were forced to close.

Additionally, one of the two remaining vinyl producing plants in the world burned down in the Apollo Masters fire in February. This factory in Banning, CA produced the lacquer needed to create master plates, which would be cut into vinyl records.

Rolling Stone reported Apollo Masters Corp. was responsible for "70 to 85 percent" of the world's lacquer plates needed for production. The only other factory of its type is MDC in Japan. As the recording industry scrambles to find an alternative to lacquer pressing, this could

mean inflationary costs on each record sold.

"Records pressed on wax" have been around since the late 1940s, evolving to stereo sound in the 1960s, and reached its most popular point in the late 1970s. They preceded the cassette, the 8-track, the CD, and the laserdisc and have outlived those other analog formats. While their popularity might have dwindled with the rise of compact discs, they were never really dead. Since 2005, vinyl has seen a steady increase in popularity.

One of the contributing factors to the vinyl resurgence is Record Store Day, a national holiday celebrated in April. The holiday began in 2008 and its purpose is to support independent music shops with exclusive LPs, 7" inch singles, boxsets, unreleased demos, live albums, soundtracks, and much more.

There were only 10 exclusive releases in that first year; that number this year is over 200. RSD has also gained popularity internationally. The holiday also became so popular that Black Friday has become a sequel; another opportunity to buy some high quality high-fidelity.

Because of COVID-19, Record Store Day was canceled in April, but three dates have been announced as "drop" dates. The first one happened in August, the next one is this Saturday, Sept. 26, and



IMAGE TAKEN from Manchester Evening News
Audiophiles stand on line to get some RSD exclusives.



PHOTO TAKEN by Ray Romanski
Vinyl records have outsold CDs for the first time in over 30 years.

Disney's Mulan Under Fire

DANA CATERINA
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

It is no surprise when someone says that Disney movies are some of the best movies made today. Between Marvel films and the countless other movies they have created since the beginning all, for the most part, have held high standards. With the recent release of *Mulan*, Disney's recent live-action recreation, people have been taken back by the low reviews and confusion among fans.

Fans ave stated their opinions on social media and on news outlets and from looking at it, it has not been good. I recently watched the film myself with an unbiased, open-minded opinion, and where there are many points of the film where I found it beautiful, it was a little rough to sit through.

The biggest problem that people have been seeing with this film isn't the \$30 premium access copy on Disney+ (which comes as a shock) but the controversy behind it. A lot

of viewers have been questioning how Disney, an overly successful company in which many of us, including myself, know and love, could have messed this up so badly. *Mulan* is one of the most beloved Disney films. With timeless music, beauty, meaning, and an appealing sidekick, *Mulan* was something many fans were struck by when they found out Disney was writing it as a new live-action film.

It wasn't the lack of music and similarity that struck a chord in fans, but the lack of diversity on the team that created the film. As a refresher, *Mulan* follows a woman who wants to replace her sick father in the fight against the Huns. She disguises herself as a man until the climax of the movie. The original film really brings light to wonderful cultural aspects of China through these years in our world history.

When it came to creating a new film, fans expected the same cultural resemblance, but there wasn't substance. As Katie Hammond of the



IMAGE TAKEN from Asia News
The Xinjiang government has held Uyghur Muslims in camps like this.

CNN opinion section said, "In an era when diversity and representation should mean more than simply putting Asian actors on screen, Disney missed a chance to make a movie that was broadly inclusive and widely appealing."

In this case, it is easy to say Hammond is right. The crew behind the camera have been seen as being too white and lacking true knowledge about the topic at hand. They wrote

a film about ancient China, but there was no substance to it; it felt bland, and like every other film when Disney could have shown off their live-action and screenwriting skills to make this film the best it could have been. The only culture that was presented in this film was the idea of bringing honor to your family and showing loyalty, just as they were in the original film.

This isn't the only problem that was found in the film. The star of the film, Lie Yifei, made it known in 2019 that she supports the Hong Kong Police, which sparked a lot of criticism. Emma Specter of *Vogue* Magazine reminded readers in a tweet from Hong Kong activist, Joshua Wong; he tweeted, "This film is released today. But because Disney kowtows to Beijing, and because Liu Yifei openly and proudly endorses police brutality in Hong Kong, I urge everyone who believes in human rights to #BoycottMulan."

With this raise of criticism, the film gained a hashtag on Twitter and

other platforms; #BoycottMulan has had a raise of interaction when Yifei commented on her support, and the news came out that those who were behind the camera weren't of Chinese descent.

In the midst of rage and the recently created hashtag, #BoycottMulan, Jeannette Ng brought up an important fact as well. Alex Ward of *Vox* put Ng's tweet in an article. The article focuses on human rights and how the film lacks human rights, especially in the credits. The tweet spoke about the concern of filming the movie in the place "where the cultural genocide is happening," but they stated in the credits that they filmed in "Northwest China."

The Xinjiang region of China, where *Mulan* was filmed, has been the sight of a large attack on the Uyghur Muslim population, attacking, imprisoning, and re-educating them. The huma rights violations include lengthy detentions, mass birth control, indoctrination, and abuse at the hands of police officers.

This caused speculation seeing that there is no reason for Disney Executives to recognize the human rights issues happening within miles of their filming locations.

There have been many issues surrounding Disney's new recreation, and where these are only a few of them, I am sure there are more to come up. The film has been available on Disney+ since Sept. 4, so if you are interested in seeing it, you will need \$30 (unless you wait until December where you will only need a subscription).



IMAGE TAKEN from Looper
The *Mulan* remake is nothing like the original: This one has controversy.

Alicia Keys Returns with Her Best Record Yet

RAY ROMANSKI
ENTERTAINMENT EDITOR

Alicia. She’s a musician so renowned, you know her by first name alone.

Mrs. Keys has returned with her seventh record and her second namesake album, *ALICIA*. Released on Sept. 18 from RCA Records, this 54 minute-long record is a daring return to her R&B side.

Now for some heartbreaking news. Alicia Keys is rumored retirement at age 40. Being she is currently 39, I’m hoping that is just a rumor.

Alicia Keys was born in Hell’s Kitchen in 1981 and fell in love with music early on. As a classically trained pianist, she composed her first song about her departed grandfather after seeing the film *Philadelphia* at 12 years old. Keys was then signed to Columbia Records at a mere 15 years old, and became a hot commodity for the recording industry.

A bidding war between Arista and Columbia Records ensued for Keys’ talent. After a tennis match of contract litigation, Keys was negotiated out of her Columbia contract with help from Clive Davis. After being outed from Arista, Davis formed J Records, and signed Alicia immediately.

Her debut album, *Songs in A Minor*, was a highly anticipated record. Keys had performed her single “Fallin’” six weeks before the album release on *Oprah*, *The Tonight Show*, amongst others, and her record debuted at #1 on the charts, where it stayed for six weeks. In the



IMAGE TAKEN from Complex

Alicia Keys’ seventh record is her at her strongest.

first week alone, 236,000 copies were sold, but it has since sold 18.6 million copies worldwide. Keys was nominated for six Grammys, winning five, including Best New Artist and Song of the Year because of *Songs in A Minor*. Fifteen Grammys and 64 million global record sales later, Keys is unstoppable.

Out of her seven full-length albums, five debuted at #1 and two of them debuted at #2.

ALICIA was originally supposed to be released in May, but because of COVID-19, the album’s release was delayed. The “Alicia World Tour” slated for this summer has also been postponed. The first single, “Show Me Love” featuring Miguel was released back in November, and the second single “Underdog” was dropped back in January. Keys performed “Underdog” as host to the 62nd Grammy Awards.

Produced largely by Keys herself alongside a team

of established producers, including husband Swizz Beats, *ALICIA* is a return to her R&B form and not so much pop. The common thread through all 15 songs are notions of hope and affirmation through struggle.

The opening track, “Truth without Love,” includes the wistful lyric, “All in time, one day/You’ll find that truth without love/Is just a lie.” Here, she poses a question to her fans: Would you

love me if I wasn’t Alicia? “Time Machine,” the second track features a funky bassline groove in the vein of Parliament. But the best apart this song isn’t the groove; it’s the retrun of the canon of her own vocal harmonies she utilizes occasionally. The canon seems exclusively hers in recording today. Few can pull off a canon like she can and she remains unopposed.

Socially conscious as ever, songs like “Authors of Forever,” “Perfect Way to Die,” and “Underdog” are all narratives of unity through unfairness. Despite loss, working yourself to the bone, and the common despair of hopelessness, she reminds listeners, “We’re all in this boat together/And we’re sailin’ toward the future and it’s alright/We can’t make the whole thing better/We’re the authors of forever and it’s alright.” Between all that gets us down, here we are; you and me and a life full of beauty. One day, the sun will shine for you, even though you’re

in a maelstrom. The album ends with a strong affirmation to anyone who needs some positivity in this bizarre 2020, with just her voice and her piano on “Good Job.” A three-and-a-half minute ballad that is way too short, Keys acknowledges those who don’t get any praise, but deserve it.

“Six in the morning/As soon as you walk through that door/Everyone needs you again/The world’s out of order/When you’re not around.” Alicia performed this song back in May for a Robin Hoof Relief video, and the performance features photos of all the essential workers in her native New York, coupled with her clad in white playing a matching Steinway.

Sometimes, just telling somebody they’re appreciated and doing a good job despite their own belief is all someone needs. To all the students whose semester is now virtual, you’re doing a great job.

Parents juggling work-from-home and teaching, you’re doing a good job. The recognition essential workers, like myself, deserve during these uncertain times is not received from many. But Alicia sees us, and I’m okay with that.

If this is in fact Alicia’s last serenade before retiring, fans will be pleased. *ALICIA* is Alicia at her strongest. And although we could use her uplifting compositions more than ever, she is bowing out gracefully.

I foresee her cleaning house again at the Grammys.



IMAGE TAKEN from Rolling Stone

Alicia Keys hosting the 62nd Grammys in January

The Emmys: Who Won and Lost in The COVID-19 Simulcast

ALEX DYER
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

The entertainment industry, in many ways, has struggled to adapt to the lifestyle permitted by COVID-19. In spite of this, the 72nd Primetime Emmy Awards took place last Sunday, with multiple records being broken throughout the ceremony.

Perennial host Jimmy Kimmel started off the socially-distanced ceremony live (but remotely) from Los Angeles’ Staples Center, also a perennial favorite arena for the showrunners. Kimmel’s monologue poked fun at critics who claimed that the show being held in 2020 was frivolous, and all the nominees were in attendance from their respective broadcast

locations.

Forbes reported that only 6.1 million viewers watched the awards show. This is an all-time low for the Emmys.

Limited series *Watchmen* was the most-nominated show of the night, with 11, and dramas *Succession* and *Ozark* followed with ten and nine nominations. *Last Week Tonight with John Oliver* and *RuPaul’s Drag Race* won for Variety Talk and Competition series respectively. One shock of the night included the absence of any awards for *The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel*, Amazon Prime’s flagship Emmy’s contender, even out of eight total nominations.

Other winners of the virtual night included ac-

tors Mark Ruffalo, Billy Crudup, Julia Garner, and Uzo Aduba, as well as a directing award for *Unorthodox*, Maria Schrader’s series about Hasidic Judaism.

However, on the Comedy Series side of the coin, Pop TV’s Canadian sitcom *Schitt’s Creek* was dominant, with leads Eugene Levy and Catherine O’Hara winning Lead Acting awards, and Dan Levy and Annie Murphy winning both Supporting Acting awards.

Additionally, they won for Directing and Writing. *Schitt’s Creek* was the night’s titan, and ended up winning every award for which it was nominated. Dan Levy went home happy as well; he became the first person in Emmys history to win an award in all four major categories: Producing, Acting, Directing, and Writing.

Watchmen was another star of the night, winning awards for Regina King in the Actress department and Yahya Abdul-Mateen II for Supporting Actor in a Limited Series/Movie.

Family financial drama *Succession* also made bank in the awards department, winning the Outstanding Drama Series category over its competitor *Ozark*, as well as Directing, Writ-



IMAGE TAKEN from Hollywood Reporter

Jimmy Kimmel hosted the Emmys for the third time last Sunday.

ing, and a surprising win for Lead Actor Jeremy Strong over category favorite Jason Bateman’s performance in *Ozark*.

Perhaps the most exciting twist of the night came when Zendaya’s Outstanding Drama Actress nomination for her role in HBO’s *Euphoria* became a win, beating out Jennifer Aniston and others, making her the youngest person to ever win in the category.

Some of the big snubs of the evening include Elizabeth Moss for Best Actress for her performance in *The Handmaid’s Tale*, Bob Odenkirk and Rhea Seehorn for their roles in *Better Call Saul*, and FX series *Pose* all were absent.

Though the night went off for the most part with-

out a hitch, I’m sure Kimmel and the rest of the Emmys staff would greatly prefer a pre-COVID-19 Emmys ceremony. However, I have to admit that it did work well, considering it was no one’s ideal vision of an award show.



IMAGE TAKEN from New York Times

Eugene and Dan Levy celebrate one of nine Emmy wins.



IMAGE TAKEN from StickPing

Appeals Court Upholds Florida Law Baring Ex-Felons from Voting

MEGAN RUGGLES
SENIOR POLITICS/ASSOCIATE NEWS
EDITOR

A federal appellate court ruled that Florida can bar ex-felons from voting if they owe court fees or fines related to their convictions, even if they are unable to pay, on Friday, Sept. 11.

The 11 Circuit Court of Appeals 6-4 ruling overturned a lower court's ruling that negated parts of Florida's GOP controlled legislature's law that conditioned the right to vote for former felons on payment of all financial obligations associated with their respective sentences.

Chief Judge William Pryor's wrote in the majority opinion that the law does not constitute a poll tax, rather "it promotes full rehabilitation of returning citizens and ensures full satisfaction of the punishment imposed for the crimes by which felons forfeited the right to vote," he said. "Monetary provisions of a sentence are no less part of the penalty that society imposes for a crime than terms of imprisonment."

Johanna Foster, Ph.D., an Associate Professor of Sociology, said of the majority opinion, "On the face of it, that argument may sound reasonable, but Chief Justice Pryor most certainly knows the facts that people who have not paid court fines are disproportionately poor, and disproportionately people of color."

"For people to be productive when they return to society, they need greater access to political power to organize and change the systems that make 'productive citizenship' a challenge," she continued.

The denial of voting

rights to formerly incarcerated persons mixes with the exclusion felt from their communities, and "does nothing to promote rehabilitation," explained Eleanor Novek, a Professor of Communication whose research is focused on incarcerated individuals. Some reports, she noted, have linked civic engagement to lower rates of recidivism.

A study conducted by the University of Pittsburgh, found that reversing felon disenfranchisement laws that restricted voting rights led to an increasing in trust and cooperation with the government.

Sean Bell, the founder of the Alternative to Violence Project (AVP) in Orlando, Florida, who became involved with AVP while serving time in Garden State Correctional Facility, mentioned that Florida has reported having roughly 774,000 disenfranchised felons. "How do you cut that number down by adding stipulations? A lot of people aren't in a position to pay off their fines, or they have a lot," he said.

Felon disenfranchisement violates the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, explained Brittany Macaluso, a senior social work student. "Article 21 states, 'everyone had the right to take part in the government of his/her country directly or through freely chosen representatives.' As an individual reentering society, being part of a community that is accepting of you is critical for rehabilitation."

"In Florida, they are deliberately showing these returning citizens that they have no community in the democratic process, arguably one of the most important aspects of life as an Ameri-

can citizen," Macaluso said.

Owen Harper, a junior criminal justice student, said, "to say that seizing a person's right to vote 'promotes full rehabilitation' is a ridiculous assertion." A key issue in reintegration following incarceration is the detachment from processes in everyday life. Furthermore, the idea that fines are part of ones' sentence is true, but the restriction of voting due to unpaid fines is irrelevant to satisfying that punishment and will never enable timely payment, he explained.

Under the guise of promoting rehabilitation, the ruling, issued two months before the presidential election, will bar District Judge Hobert Hinkle's permanent injunction against the Florida legislature's law from going into effect.

Hinkle had held an eight-day trial that found the majority of felons in Florida would be unable to pay the court fees owed, and that the law amounted to an unconstitutional poll tax. Now, 1.4 million former felons will be prevented from registering to/ or voting this November.

Novek believes it "seems obvious" that the conflation of finances and voting rights amounts to an unconstitutional poll tax. "Even at the best of economic times, people with felony records often face employment discrimination and have difficulty finding jobs that pay a living wage. Withholding the vote until they have paid all fines and fees essentially deprives them of the right to vote indefinitely."

Foster elaborated that the law around denying voting rights to "justice-involved" persons, and

the implementation of complex court procedures and fees are "directly related to barriers white elites impose against poor people and people of color to retain political and economic influence."

Harper is inclined to view this law as an unconstitutional poll tax but that it hinges on "semantics." "The 24 Amendment bars any state from restricting the right to vote by reason of 'failure to pay poll tax or any other tax.' Does a fine constitute a tax? You could say that fines levied against felons for their actions are just 'crime taxes' if you were so inclined, thus satisfying the comparison," he clarified.

"Either way, the government is requiring compensation for the right to vote, which at its most basic level is the same as levying a poll tax regardless of what we call it," Harper said.

This law plays into the historical record of using felony disen-

franchisement to support laws suppressing the black and brown vote, as evidenced by gutting the Voting Rights Act, rising voter ID laws, and movement led by racial justice advocates to end felony disenfranchisement laws, Foster explained. "There is no question in my mind that we are seeing another instance of the politicization of the judicial branches of government."

Harper explained that the ruling displays partisan overtones, with half of this court's judge's being President Trump's appointees. Florida has been won by both parties in past elections, and with 29 electoral votes it is valuable to win. "In a state with over 16 million adults, 1.4 blocked voters are very significant."

"And consider the proximity to the presidential election as well. I think it is a partisan effort at voter suppression, as well as an attempt to keep up the conservatives' 'tough on crime' attitude," Harper said.

"This ruling could absolutely impact the November election," Foster added. "We saw it happen already in Florida in 2000 when 537 votes were the difference between Bush and Gore. Not only were formerly-justice involved people denied the right to vote in that election, but people of color who had no criminal-justice involvement were also wrongfully purged from the voting rolls," she said.

"As we now know quite clearly, if there had not been felony disenfranchisement laws in place in Florida in 2000, the voter turnout would have almost surely been such that the vote would have gone for Gore," Foster concluded.



IMAGE TAKEN from The Hill

The law will prohibit ex-felons with outstanding fees from voting, indefinitely.

An Analysis of Kenosha Shooting Suspect's Motives

GEORGEANNE NIGRO
ASSOCIATE POLITICS EDITOR

Following the police shooting of Jacob Blake, 17-year old, Kyle Rittenhouse, fatally shot two people and wounded another person at a protest in Kenosha, Wis. on August 25th. Rittenhouse is facing charges for murdering two people.

Kyle Rittenhouse's attorney, John Pierce, says his client acted in self-defense.

Johanna E. Foster, Ph.D., an Associate Professor of Sociology, said, "Obviously, Rittenhouse, like all of us, is afforded the assumption of innocence until proven guilty in a court of law. I do think the video images we have of Rittenhouse, similar to the images we have of police officers blatantly using deadly force on unarmed civilians, makes for a real challenge in proving his innocence for folks willing to put politics aside."

Foster then continued with, "That said, I think what is also important to raise up is that it is a justice system that is truly equitable would give people of color the same presumption of innocence in cases, big or small, that is, rightfully so under the law, being afforded to Rittenhouse right now."

Foster said that if Rittenhouse is acquitted from his

charges, she predicts that serious social protests would occur.

"What I find equally disturbing is how we have found ourselves in a society where a 17 year-old kid who is too young to legally own a firearm nonetheless shows up as a counter-protestor at a racial justice rally with an assault weapon," said Foster.

Ralph G. Cuseglio, Assistant Professor of Social Work, said that Rittenhouse getting support from people, especially

President Donald Trump, is a prime example of the divisiveness in our country right now.

"It's unlikely that Trump cares about Rittenhouse or his actions. It's more about how Trump's support, or lack-there-of, plays politically," said Cuseglio. "Many Trump supporters are staunch defenders of the 2nd amendment and respond favorably to his tough, law and order rhetoric. Trump failed to condemn Rittenhouse because he does not want to alienate his base."



IMAGE TAKEN from Kyle Rittenhouse/TikTok via CNN

Kenosha shooter claims he shot in self-defense.

Agreeably, Joseph Patten, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Political Science, explained that Rittenhouse is part of Trump's "political tribe".

"Trump has identified Rittenhouse as part of his political tribe, and like most tribes, people in those tribes tend to stick up for each other," said Patten.

Cuseglio believes that those who "support" Rittenhouse do not truly support Rittenhouse himself. "He's a convenient poster boy for their ideology," said Cuseglio.

Cuseglio then explained how he does not believe that Rittenhouse was acting in self-defense. "I think it's a tough case to prove self-defense based on what's been shared with the public. However, there are things about the incident we just do not know for sure," said Cuseglio.

Cuseglio discussed how this was not a case of Rittenhouse being in the wrong place at the wrong time.

"First, Rittenhouse was not a trained law enforcement officer, not ordered by local, state, or national officials, nor was he privately hired privately to protect any businesses in Kenosha. Second, he was also illegally carrying a firearm according to Wisconsin law, as he is 17. There are decisions leading up to this situation that contributed to two people being killed,"

said Cuseglio.

Patten also agrees that this case did not look like it was self-defense. "Based upon the video I saw, that looks to me like murder," said Patten. "I think you have to look at the intent of what would make a 17-year-old strap on a rifle and drive to another state and feel empowered to have police powers over a political protest. That just strikes me as a bit odd."

Patten continued, "Of course this will go to court, right, and anything can happen at trial. Everyday guilty people are found not guilty and guilty people are found guilty. So, somebody could have a good lawyer, and somebody could have a bad lawyer. There is no way to predict certainties of what will happen at this trial."

Sarah Cooper, a senior psychology student and Research Team Lead for the Gender Development Lab, believes his intention going in that night was not to kill, but she believes that his influence had a lot to do with the culture he surrounds himself with.

"He is so consumed with white supremacy and pro-gun rights, and extreme conservative views. I think he genuinely thought he was doing the right thing, and in a sense thought he was fighting back, but in reality, he was not at all," said Cooper.

Dear Students:

Welcome to a new academic year at Monmouth!

To our freshmen and new transfer students, please accept my warm welcome to this exceptional University community. I am so pleased that you have chosen Monmouth as your University. You are the most diverse and academically-prepared group of incoming students in Monmouth’s 87-year history, and we are proud to call you Hawks. I look forward to getting to know you, and to following your academic achievements and extracurricular successes over the next several years.

To our returning students, welcome back. It has been terrific seeing your familiar faces on campus – and online – as we embark on a fall semester unlike any other. I am proud of your resilience and commitment to this place, and I thank you for helping to shape Monmouth into the University that we all cherish. I am proud, too, of your past accomplishments in the classroom and beyond, and look forward to touting your continued successes this year. Thanks to your collective commitment to academic excellence, you have helped to propel Monmouth to its highest ranking ever, #23 among Regional Universities North, by U.S. News and World Report. We are also proud to be included once again in Princeton Review’s Best Colleges publication and in Money Magazine’s Best Value Colleges edition.

Over the past six months, everyone here has worked diligently to plan for your arrival this fall in a safe and responsible manner. I am beginning to feel the student energy again on campus, which has been missed greatly since March, and I know I speak for faculty and staff when I say, it is so good to have you home.

Although some things might look and feel markedly different at Monmouth this fall, I can assure you that many remain the same. Among them, the strong and highly personalized academic delivery and auxiliary services that our students consistently enjoy at Monmouth. We are committed to providing you with the finest possible personalized learning experience, and encourage you to take full advantage of all that Monmouth has to offer, both inside and outside the classroom.

From our robust offering of clubs and organizations to the co-curricular programming hosted by our centers of distinction, there is something for everyone here at Monmouth. I hope you will safely seek out these opportunities to get more engaged with the University, and look forward to your active participation therein.

As we settle into our new normal this fall, I ask for your continued flexibility and goodwill, as well as your shared commitment to protecting the health and safety of the Monmouth University community. The guidelines are pretty simple: 1) wear a mask, 2) wash your hands and don’t touch your face, 3) practice social distancing, and 4) if you don’t feel well – or if you present any coronavirus symptoms – stay home and seek medical advice from our staff in Health Services or from your own provider.

Even more importantly, please do your part to make Monmouth a community where everyone feels a sense of acceptance and belonging. Hate and intolerance have no place at Monmouth, and I am committed to making this a safer, more inclusive, and more just University community. join me by respectfully exploring our individual differences, while celebrating our collective identity as Hawks.

Dr. Patrick F. Leahy
President

I look forward to a safe and successful academic year with all of you.

To All of Our Monmouth Students,

Welcome back to the campus we all love in what will be a semester like we have never seen before. I can’t tell you how nice it is to once again see the campus come alive and to feel the energy that you, our students, bring to this community.

This year more than ever before, I need you to think about the important role you play as a member of a community. Yes, of course I mean your responsibility to help yourself and others stay safe and healthy. But just as importantly, it is critical that we all learn to live, work and learn in an environment where all are welcomed and respected regardless of where we come from, our religions or political beliefs or our race or ethnicity. We are all members of a family; the Monmouth Hawk family and we must be committed to caring for every member of the family.



PHOTO COURTESY OF Monmouth University

Beyond this please know that whether you are studying and living with us here on campus or living at home and completing your academic work remotely, we are here to help support you in any way we can. All services that are part of the Division of Student Life from Health to Dining, Counseling to Activities, and all the other departments are available to you in person and virtually. Please don’t hesitate to reach out for help and support as you navigate these uncharted waters of campus life in the midst of a global pandemic.

Stay healthy, stay focused and stay together (socially distant of course) and we will all get through this!

My best wishes for a great semester.

Mary Anne Nagy
Vice President for Student Life and Leadership Engagement



PHOTO COURTESY OF Monmouth University

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Men's Basketball Alumn Signs Pro Contract

JACK MURPHY
ASSOCIATE SPORTS EDITOR

Former Men's Basketball forward Mustapha Traore has signed a professional basketball deal with the UMF Skallagrimur Bogarnes in Iceland.

Traore graduated from Monmouth University last spring after spending five

years with the men's basketball program. He finished his collegiate career with 611 points and 520 rebounds. He also notched 47 rejections during his time with the Hawks.

Traore was a member of both the 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference (MAAC) regular season championship teams,

however he did not play his year as a true freshman.

Due to his efforts in college, Traore will now be doing what he loves for a living.

"Being signed to a team and playing professional basketball means everything to me," said Traore. "These are the things you really dream about as a kid."

"Being signed to a team and playing professional basketball means everything to me, these are the things you really dream about as a kid."

MUSTAPHA TRAORE
Monmouth Basketball Alumn



PHOTO COURTESY of Monmouth Athletics

Monmouth Alumn Mustapha Traore will be making his professional debut on October 2nd with the UMF Skallagrimur Borgarnes.

Traore is from Philadelphia, PA and played high school ball at the Phelps School in Pennsylvania where he reached the 1,000-career point marker. He led the team to a 24-6 record his senior year.

After not playing for the Hawks as a true freshman, Traore made his collegiate debut in 2016 as a redshirt freshman. In that season, he played 30 games while averaging 1.7 points per contest. He also tallied a total of seven blocks in his first campaign in blue and white.

In his sophomore season, Traore played in 28 games while starting in 18 of them. He finished the season averaging 3.1 points per game while shooting just under 47 percent from the field. He was second on the team in blocks with a total of fifteen for the season. He also recorded his first double-double in his Monmouth career against Yale.

Traore was the only Hawk that started in all 35 of Monmouth's games in his third season and finished second on the team in rebounding, averaging 5.3 boards a game as a redshirt junior. He was second on the team in blocks as well with 15 and led the team in field goal percentage. He also finished fourth in scoring on the team as he averaged 7.4 points per game.

Traore also put together an amazing performance in the MAAC tournament in the quarterfinals against rival Quinnipiac.

He scored a career-high 19 points, recorded five rebounds and a steal to help the Hawks defeat the Bobcats 98-92. Monmouth would go on to make the MAAC Championship that season ultimately losing to Iona.

In his final season with Monmouth, Traore was one of two Monmouth players to start in all 31 contests. He led the team in rebounding with 5.5 per game. He had 171 total rebounds, which was good for tenth in the entire conference. Traore averaged 7.1 points per game and had 20 blocks on the season, which was good for second on the team.

Traore's most notable game in his last season with the Hawks came against Radford when he went off for 16 points and 14 total rebounds while shooting a perfect 6-6 from the stripe. Because of his efforts as a redshirt senior, Traore was named to the MAAC All-Championship team for the season.

After spending five seasons under head coach King Rice's wing, Traore will be entering the next chapter of his basketball career. "He has a great opportunity in front of him, and he improved on the court and grew as a man so much in his five years here," said Rice. "This is so great for him in his family."

Traore will make his professional debut on October 2nd as UMF Skallagrimur Borgarnes will open their season against Fjolnir Reykjavik.

Men's Lacrosse Announces Incoming Class

ERIN MULLIGAN
STAFF WRITER

The Monmouth University men's lacrosse team announced their incoming 2021 class including nine freshmen and two graduate transfer students on Tuesday, September 15.

Although it's only September, many are looking forward to seeing what 2021 has in store for Monmouth athletics when they return. Men's lacrosse has a lot to look forward to especially. There is nothing but optimism, anticipation, and faith surrounding the incoming class.

"It's always an exciting time when we welcome our next class to campus and they officially join our team," said head coach Brian Fisher. "This freshmen class is a group that has our staff really energized about their potential and we know that they are going to be great teammates, contribute to our team and Monmouth community in a positive manner."

Graduate students entering the program are midfielder, Colin Bosak of Ridley Park, Pennsylvania, and Attack, Dwayne Mattushik, of Paramus, New Jersey.

In high school, Bosak, who was a three-year starter at The Haverford School and one-year starter at Navy Prep, helped his team get their national championship in 2015. He played for St. John's for the past four years becoming a two-time Big East All-Academic Team Selection while racking in two goals, one assist, and 38 ground balls as well as going

94 for 216 at the faceoff X.

Mattushik, a product of Bergen Catholic, was a three-year starter at Jacksonville University with a total of 68 points, 57 goals, and 11 assists. The attackman was named the 2017 Rookie of the Year in addition to being a 2017 All-Freshman Team selection.

The incoming freshmen include Greg Clark, Alex DeBenedictis, Sean Ketchen, Max Kistler, Andrew Kuhlman, Patrick Orapello, Jimmy Osorio, Ryan Stefanik, and Max Sullivan.

Greg Clark, of Huntingdon Valley, PA, is a defenseman who played for Academy of the New Church and was team captain. He helped his team earn their sixth straight league championship title.

Attackman, Alex DeBenedictis, of Yorktown Heights, New York, played for Yorktown High School. He was an All-Selection One and All-League selection as a junior. DeBenedictis also earned an All-Section One Honorable Mention as a junior.

There will also be two Calvert Hall College High School alums playing for the Blue and White this year. Attackman, Sean Ketchen and midfielder, Max Sullivan of Baltimore, Maryland will be joining the team.

Both Ketchen and Sullivan helped their team win their Junior Varsity and Varsity championships in addition to playing for club team FCA.

Max Kristler, long stick midfielder and defenseman, of Soplay, Pennsylvania, played at Parkland High School. He



PHOTO COURTESY of Monmouth Athletics

The Monmouth Men's Lacrosse Team will feature eleven new members this season, including nine freshman and and two graduate transfer students.

also played club lacrosse for Fusion Lacrosse.

Goalie, Andrew Kuhlman of Austin, Texas, played lacrosse at Regents School as well as club lacrosse for Iron Horse Lacrosse. In club, he racked up 384 saves, two assists, one goal, and 95 ground balls. He was a three-time All-State selection.

Patrick Orapello, a midfielder from Wayne, New Jersey, played four years on Varsity at Wayne Hills. Racking up 37

assists and 105 goals, Orapello helped his team earn three consecutive county championships. He was also a four-time First Team All-League choice and played club lacrosse for New Jersey Riot.

Attack and midfielder, Jimmy Osorio, of Ronkonkoma, New York, played for St. Anthony's High School. Throughout his high school career, Osorio made 43 assists, 62 goals, and helped his team in their two championship wins in ad-

dition to a 16-1 record. Osorio also played club for Tenacious Turtles.

Ryan Stefanik, the midfielder from Franklin Lakes, New Jersey, played for both Saint Joseph Regional High School and later transferred to Cheshire Academy. He also played for the club team, LI Sting 2020 Black.

"We are really excited about their arrival and can't wait to see them in action this fall semester," said Coach Fisher.

Big South Champion Hawks Host Ring Ceremony

MARK D'AQUILA
SPORTS EDITOR

Monmouth football held their long awaited Ring Ceremony on Saturday, Sept. 19 at Kessler Stadium to celebrate their Big South Championship from last season. Both graduated and current players gathered in socially distanced fashion on the field that they went a perfect 7-0 at in 2019 to collect their rings.

“It was great to have everybody from the 2019 team back and assembled on campus to celebrate,” said senior wide receiver Lonnie Moore IV. “Being a part of that team will be something I cherish and remember for the rest of my life.”

Last year’s Hawks went 11-3 but were a conference best 10-2 and 6-0 in conference play in the regular season leading to their first ever Big South crown. They also reached their highest national ranking in program history by the end of the season as the #12 team in the nation.

“We made history and set the bar for expectations going forward,” said Moore IV. “This team will go down in history

Championship Series (FCS) Playoffs but winning their first round game against Holy Cross was a monumental step for the Monmouth football program.

It could not be done without the leadership of their veteran head coach heading into his 28th season at the helm, Kevin Callahan. The 2019 American Football Coaches Association (AFCA) Region II Coach of the Year is seventh among active coaches in FCS wins. He also finished fourth in 2019 for the Eddie Robinson Award named to the nation’s best FCS Coach.

“The ring ceremony honoring our 2019 Biwg South Championship team was a very special event for our players,” said Callahan. “In addition to reliving all of the outstanding accomplishments from last fall, the day was filled with an energy and excitement that we have not experienced in a while. Kessler Stadium was filled with positive vibes, and seeing the joy on the faces of our players and their parents was something special. I could not be prouder of this 2019 team and all of the great things they have achieved.”

Callahan will look to lead the



PHOTO TAKEN by Karlee Sell

Monmouth Football players looked on as the jumbotron recapped their remarkable and memorable 2019 season that brought a first-ever Big South Championship to Monmouth University.



PHOTO TAKEN by Karlee Sell

Monmouth Football players pose with their shiny new hardware at Kessler Stadium after an 11-3 season and a Big South title.



PHOTO TAKEN by Karlee Sell

Head Coach Kevin Callahan hands Big South Championship rings to the players who helped him win his first Big South title.

and I’m astounded to have been a part of the success.”

The senior wide receiver was certainly a massive part of the Hawks’ success putting up a career-year leading the team in receptions with 74 (a program record) and receiving yards at 1022. Moore IV also recorded nine receiving touchdowns which was second on the team to the now senior wide receiver Terrance Greene Jr. who had ten.

Moore IV is among the leaders of this current team alongside fellow teammate and fifth year offensive lineman AJ Farris. Both players were First Team All-Big South selections in 2019 and Preseason All-Big South selections leading into 2020’s postponement.

“The ring ceremony is something I will never forget for the rest of my life,” said Farris. “Having President Leahy present us with our rings was really something special. As I watched the season recap on the jumbotron it felt as if I was reliving the whole season.”

Not only reaching the National Collegiate Athletics Association (NCAA) Football

ropes again for the Monmouth football team and defend their Big South crown whenever they return to play. Unfortunately, at the moment their biggest test to date and opportunity to really put Monmouth football on the map opening the season against the Big Ten’s Rutgers was cancelled. If they do return to play at some point this season it seems likely that the schedule will remain in-conference like they are doing across college football this year.

Regardless, the Ring Ceremony was a much-needed lift of positive energy for Monmouth athletics and specifically the football players who accomplished so much in 2019.

“I’ll never forget this last season and the relationships I built going through the ups and downs to get to this point,” said Farris. “The guys on this team are my brothers for life and now we share an unbreakable bond. Now we are going to take this past season and use it as motivation going right into the next season. Back-to-back is the goal and trust me, we will be ready!”



PHOTO TAKEN by Karlee Sell

Fifth year lineman AJ Farris was named to the 2019 All-Big South Team as well as the 2020 All-Big South Preseason team before the season was postponed.



PHOTO TAKEN by Karlee Sell

Senior wide reciever Lonnie Moore IV was a leader of 2019’s Big South Championship team leading the Hawks in receptions.

“This team will go down in history and I’m astounded to have been a part of the success.”

LONNIE MOORE IV
Wide Reciever



RING BLING



Monmouth football's John Gallina, Evan Powell, and Tymere Berry celebrated last season's Big South title with a long-awaited Ring Ceremony at Kessler Stadium with President Leahy.

SEE STORY ON PAGE 15

PHOTOS taken by Karlee Sell