



# THE OUTLOOK

MONMOUTH UNIVERSITY'S  
STUDENT-RUN NEWSPAPER SINCE 1933

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## Federal and Private Student Loan Debts Continue to Rise

JASMINE RAMOS  
STAFF WRITER

Students in the United States borrowed a combined \$1.67 trillion in federal and private student loan debt, according to the Federal Reserve's most recent report. The total federal student loan debt is \$1.54 trillion and the total private student loan debt is \$131.81 billion.

Ken Michell, Ph.D., Chair of the Department of Political Science and Sociology, explained that the problem isn't about where people went to college. "Let's be clear, whether its \$10k or \$50k in student loan debt relief, neither option is progressive nor conservative nor solves the problem. I personally do not support student loan relief because it does not address the real problem - uni-

versities simply charge too much money in tuition. The USA is the only country in the world that 'punishes' its young people (and their families) who succeed in making it out of high school with good grades."

Mitchell mentioned how other countries handle their education system. For example, in Canada, according to US News and World Report in 2018-2019, the average

tuition ranges from a little more than \$2000 to almost \$7000 per academic year. In the US, that same year, in-state tuition averaged under \$10,000 to \$35,000 for a private institution education.

According to an opinion piece in The New York Times, public and private universities are beginning to use their tuition money on lavish amenities, that aren't needed in higher education. Schools in Alabama, Iowa, Louisiana, and Missouri, to name a few have added lazy rivers to their campuses.

Robert Scott, Ph.D., Professor of the Department of Economics, Finance and Real Estate, explains that the demand to attend college has exponentially grown in the last three decades, which would mean more people borrowing money.

"Student loans are crazy because the interest rates charged are high—even given the risk. Also, student

## World Cinema Series: Film Discussion of "Honeyland"

ABIGAIL BROOKS  
STAFF WRITER

The fourth installment of this year's World Cinema Series analyzed the 2019 documentary drama *Honeyland* with virtual discussion led by Monmouth faculty Pedram Daneshgar, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Biology and Mihaela Moscaliuc, Ph.D., Associate Professor of English, on Thursday, March 11.

*Honeyland* focuses on Hatidze Muratova, a beekeeper from the Macedonian village of Bekirlija, and her traditional, environmental-friendly practices to sell the honey that she gathers from her bees. Problems arise when the family of Hussein Sam move to Bekirlija and begin using methods far less sustainable than those practiced by Hatidze that only bring damage to her



PHOTO COURTESY of Anthony DePrimo

Recent graduates face difficulty paying off student loans, according to a report by the Federal Reserve.

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## Resident Assistants Talk Dorm Difficulties Amid Pandemic Safety Restrictions

DENISSE QUINTANILLA  
STAFF WRITER

One year into the COVID-19 pandemic, safety restrictions have impacted many members of the Monmouth University community—and on-campus residential assistants (RAs) are no exception. In a short period of time, RAs had to adjust to a completely different way of interacting with residential students.

Mia Ardovini-Brooker, a senior political science student with a concentration in legal studies, has been an RA at Cedar Hall for about two years. She had the opportunity to experience being an RA before the pandemic.

"It was hard at first because we have never had to

worry about so many restrictions on our programs before this," Ardovini-Brooker said. "It was hard to get residents to come to programs pre-COVID so during COVID, it has been even harder."

However, Ardovini-Brooker mentioned that time has really helped her students engage and participate in events. "Once residents came to the first couple of programs, they opened up and have continued to come to them," she said, "It is not hard to engage residents when you take the time to get to know them and their personalities. This helped me understand what they would want to participate in."

Mike Fazzino, a first-year graduate student in the Student Affairs and College Counseling program has been a University RA for three years. He is the head RA of

Hesse Hall.

"One of the biggest challenges is making sure everyone is following the COVID guidelines when in the residence halls, and even more so trusting that they are doing the right thing when they leave campus," he said.

Fazzino and Ardovini-Brooker share the same challenge when it comes to engaging with their residential students.

"There will always be a challenge with getting people into a Zoom call, but it's all about finding creative ways to make people want to join and offer something unique or unexpected," Fazzino added. He also said that creating events for residents was mostly trial and error to find activities that

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PHOTO COURTESY of Anthony DePrimo

Safety procedures limit the interactivity of residential students who live in on-campus dorm halls, according to two Resident Assistants.

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# Cedar Bridge Tavern's Archeology Findings Detailed

MATTHEW CUTILLO  
MANAGING/NEWS/LIFESTYLES EDITOR

The Ocean County Historical Society resumed its lecture series online with "A Great Place to Eat or Drink: Cedar Bridge," hosted by Sean McHugh, adjunct professor and co-director of the Archaeological Field School of Monmouth University, on Sunday, March 7.

McHugh began the presentation with a background on archaeology before detailing the history and investigations of the tavern. Archaeology is a social science that falls under the larger umbrella of anthropology, which is the study of human societies and cultures, McHugh explained.

He emphasized that the most important word in the definition of archaeology is "material," referring to the artifacts that can or have been altered in some way by humans. When asked by recent graduates on a direction to take, McHugh urged them to "go get lost in the field."

"Literally, go work in the field for as many companies and as many parts of the country as you can," McHugh said. "Learn your material then come back and get your masters degree. While some of what is pictured can be obvious, knowing the difference between stoneware, earthenware, and ironstone ceramics matters."

An archaeological site such as Cedar Ridge Tavern provides artifacts that tell a

story of its past, McHugh explained. "Whether it is a cup, a bowl, or a mug, matters. This will indicate a small scale family use or mass consumption you would see at a restaurant or tavern."

"Features" are artifacts that are not movable or if moved will destroy their defining characteristics. "Here's the thing: archaeology is a destructive science," McHugh said. "We single-handedly kill our informants. We have to get it right the first time. My nightmares are filled with the possibility of blowing through a feature while digging."

Archaeology is labor in-

tensive, so it utilizes sampling strategies to hone in potential archeological deposits, McHugh explained. "Shovel testing" helps cover a larger area. These tests are generally placed on a 50-foot interval grid focused on the presence of cultural material.

The Cedar Bridge Tavern is situated on a property that was purchased on December 4, 1712 by Thomas William Fox. Initially, the property was comprised of a 333-acre parcel in Shrewsbury, Monmouth County and the province of East Jersey.

The division line was later relocated east of the tavern property in 1743 with the original line remaining

to demarcate the boundary between Burlington and Monmouth County. During their ownership, William died and a family member assumed control of his share of the property, which was continually sold and passed down for generations.

In the summer of 2010, the University metal detected and excavated 31 shovel tests and nine excavation units, resulting in the identification of 12 features, nine of which are classified as cultural, McHugh explained.

"In addition to the features, the students and staff of MU recovered 6409 artifacts," McHugh said. "A small amount were prehistoric in origin."

Despite the limited excavations, it was determined that the site was eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under "Criterion D" for its ability to provide new information on 18th and 19th century farmsteads, consumerism, and food waste in the New Jersey Pineland region, McHugh explained. Archaeological excavations conducted by the University in 2004 included an additional 20 shovel tests, resulting in the recovery of 6797 more artifacts as well as the identification of 17 features.

"Testing within the building revealed subfloor pre-dating the 19th century as well as a dog burial from the early 19th century, as well as a builder's trench contemporary with the construction of the east wing of the tavern in the 1830s," McHugh said. "In 2019, Monmouth University attempted to identify any Native American occupation within the property."

While those excavations were not able to identify dense Native American deposit, additional features found at the tavern's surrounding buildings and the recovery of numerous artifacts indicated that additional archaeological resources are present and could provide additional information to understand the ways of life at the site during the late 18th and 19th century before and during the use of Cedar Bridge Tavern.



IMAGE TAKEN from Wikipedia

The Cedar Bridge Tavern sits on a property that was purchased on December 4, 1712 by Thomas William Fox.

## Faculty Weigh in on *Honeyland* Docu-Drama

HONEYLAND cont. from pg. 1

way of life and the village's local environment.

"*Honeyland* really takes us to the heart of the fragile balance between humans and nature," said Thomas Pearson, Ph.D., Professor of History and Anthropology. "It was an international sensation. At the end of 2019, there were a lot of critics who called it the best film of the year."

The docu-drama won all of the top honors at Sundance in 2019 and became the first international film to be nominated for an Oscar in both the Best International Feature and Best Documentary categories in 2020.

"The two directors of the film and the producer emphasized after they finished production and the festival circuit that the film does not really seek to demonize anyone," said Pearson. "It obviously puts Hatidze in a very favorable light, but even though Hussain Sam is trying to make a quick buck from the honey business, their argument is that they're not trying to demonize him. What they are raising is the problem that people have a willingness to exploit natural resources without considering the damage to their neighbors or the long term health of the environment."

Daneshgar was one of the featured speakers who led the discussion. He spoke about the scientific significance behind *Honeyland* and the recurring

themes regarding sustainability.

"In my opinion, the bees are the star of the film, more so than Hatidze and Hussein," said Daneshgar. "I was really taken with their story and the tragic story of what eventually happens to them. We see that many of the bees die off, and it's not an uncommon story. Right now, the U.S. has half as many bees as we did 10 years ago. Bee populations are consistently on the decline."

"Bees work particularly hard during those warm months when flowers are available, flying around to gather pollen and nectar. They consume some of it, but the majority is brought back to the hive to help sustain it throughout the year when

the flowers are no longer available," he explained. "The overharvesting of the honey by Hussein deprived the bees' ability to stay warm during the winter. Since his bees no longer had a food source, they had to prey on other hives to get the sugar to stay alive and keep their colony warm."

Hatidze's philosophy on beekeeping focuses on agricultural sustainability. "You take some for you, you take what you need, but you don't take too much so that the hive can sustain itself," explained Daneshgar. "Hussein Sam ultimately makes the mistake of having too much of a commercialist nature motivated by profit and demand, overharvesting what was available. We see kind of

an overexploitation of resources here, which ultimately leads to tragedy."

The second speaker, Moscaliuc, led the rest of the discussion with an analysis of the environmental and cultural messages raised by *Honeyland*.

"We see two characters who are both dependent on natural resources for survival. They represent two different stances regarding how this dependency works," said Moscaliuc. "Their attitudes are shaped, to some extent, by their different circumstances."

"Hussein is a migrant cattle farmer who works hard to feed a large family. His struggle to provide for them isn't that dissimilar to Hatidze's effort to care for her mother," she ex-

plained. "However, Hussein sees bees as a seasonal, temporary endeavor that can help him supplement his income. He does it in a hurry as a novice who is not interested in being a real apprentice. He has no history with the bees and no history with their habitat or their habits."

"By contrast, Hatidze proudly sells her honey at the market herself. For me, Hatidze is a model of sustainability," said Moscaliuc. "I think she also embodies this concept of conditional hospitality. She understands our position as guests to the home that is Earth. There are consequences to being bad guests. The bees are not hers. She's a beekeeper, not an owner. She is a guest in their world."



IMAGE TAKEN from imdb.com

*Honeyland* became the first international film to be nominated for an Oscar for both Best International Feature and Best Documentary.

# Director of Singapore Community Gardening Talks Initiatives

**MATTHEW CUTILLO**  
MANAGING/NEWS/LIFESTYLES EDITOR

Kay Pungkothai, the Director of Community Gardening, Skyrise Greenery and Projects at the National Parks Board (NParks) in Singapore, gave a virtual presentation to University attendees as part of the “Community in Bloom” engagement program on Tuesday, Mar. 9.

Pungkothai is part of a team that works to improve the capacity development of community gardening, therapeutic horticulture, and sky-rise greenery initiatives in Singapore. She encourages all people of different backgrounds to garden together in an effort to create a ‘City in Nature.’

Pungkothai gave context on what “City in Nature” truly means in order to prove perspective on how her team wants to integrate greenery into Singapore, and how they plan out and develop those ideas.

“This is something that we are working on very hard,” Pungkothai said. “We want to restore nature back into the city, from the perspective of sustainability and so on. All governments around the world are preparing for climate resilience, and that ‘City in Nature’ vision is linked to meeting some of

these climate resilience issues.”

Ecological and social resilience are also important factors during the development of a greener city in the interest of making sure newly introduced habits are sustainable, she said.

“Why would a parks board be interested in social resilience?” Pungkothai asked. “Nature must serve a purpose. It must be useful for the people who live here. While they live here, we want them to interact with nature. We want them to benefit from nature. We have another layer that’s looking at social resilience. This is how we see it as our new paradigm as we

develop greenery in our city.”

This idea of “greening” Singapore dates back years. “In the early years, we needed to green out the city,” Pungkothai said. “We needed to build enough public housing to house our citizens, and we needed to do it quickly. You see that one of the preliminary ideas of urban planning back in the 1960s was to have a clean, green city. If we had a clean and green city, the idea was that investors would think, ‘Yes, you are serious about how you are projecting yourself and you have thinking behind your city and planning.’”

Pungkothai and her team went on to intensify pre-plant-

ing over the following years, strengthening connectivity between communities and giving attention to the “built” environment.

“When you say “built” environment, you mean the buildings,” Pungkothai explained. “Buildings occupy so much of the footprint in our city. How do we get those buildings as part of our greening facilities?”

One of her team’s projects involved allotment plots, which allow community residents to rent a space in a nature park to grow whatever they wish. More than 20 parks in Singapore have allotment gardens.

“It promotes a space for

people to garden because many people live in apartments, so extra space is a premium,” Pungkothai said. “Here, they can come to a park and rent a space for gardening. We have a lot of guide books you can access from our website.”

This new way of gardening allows those who view the practice in an unapproachable, traditional light to become involved.

“There’s a lot of new opportunities that have come about in the last five years in terms of technology that allow us to have simple systems like this indoors,” Pungkothai said. “This is something that we constantly share.”

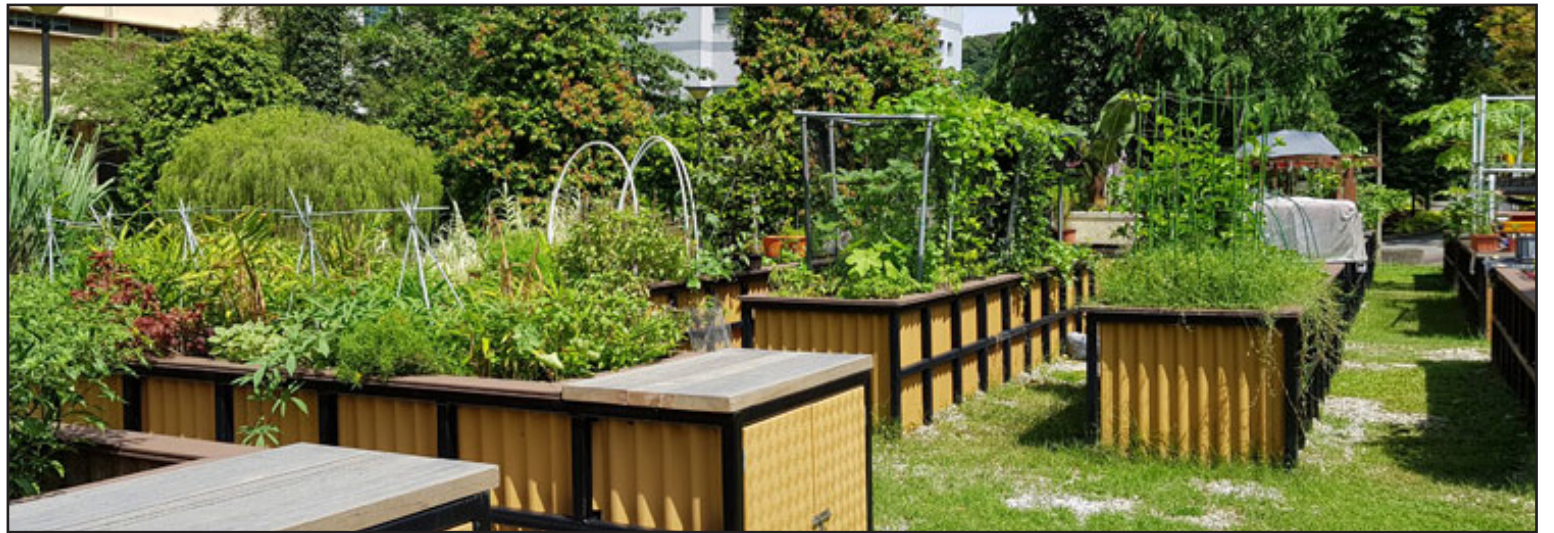


IMAGE TAKEN from nparks.gov.sg

Allotment plots allow community residents to rent a space in a nature park to grow whatever they wish.

# DHS Agent Speaks With Guardians Club

**JEREMY LENART**  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

The Guardians Club hosted a virtual webinar with Kevin Weinstock, former Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) agent and current agent at the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), about his career on Wednesday, March 10.

Weinstock graduated from Monmouth University in 2008 with a bachelor’s degree in criminal justice. Graduating in the middle of a national recession, finding a job was no easy task, he explained. He landed a job at a local law firm before interviewing for the FBI in the summer of 2008, right before the bureau went on a two year long hiring freeze.

Weinstock left the firm and bounced around from different jobs until eventually re-

ceiving a call back from the FBI in 2010, starting his career with the bureau in Newark, New Jersey. He was then transferred to Washington D.C., where he worked for eight years. Currently, he resides in San Diego, California working for the Department of Homeland Security.

His primary responsibility while working for the FBI involved time in the security department, running background checks on potential hires. The FBI runs two arms in the hiring and firing of employees, Weinstock explained. The first is called “suitability,” in which the human resource department exams whether or not the person is a good fit for a specific job.

The other arm of employment is referred to as “security,” which goes into effect after a candidate passes

the suitability requirement. Weinstock was responsible for investigating if potential hires were a safe fit for the job, such as researching for any outstanding financial debts or history of drug use or crime. Weinstock said debt and drugs are the two most common factors that ruin someone’s eligibility of being hired at a government job.

Working security background checks led to one of Weinstock’s most rewarding experiences with the FBI. He had been working background checks in Washington D.C. when he came across a man with ties to terrorism, the FBI immediately denying the applicant access. Regarding the background-checking job, Weinstock said, “rewards are few and far between, but that is probably a good thing.”

Weinstock clarified some common misconceptions

about the FBI. Oftentimes, an FBI agent does not live the run-and-gun lifestyle portrayed in popular movies and TV. In fact, the FBI is home to more desk type agents, Weinstock explained. One thing that Hollywood does get right, according to him, is the secrecy the FBI works so hard to maintain. An agent at the Washington D.C. headquarters does not know anything about the case his friend and co-worker is working on down the hall. It is all part of the FBI’s priority to keep the people safe.

Weinstock enjoyed his time at the FBI because, “federal law enforcement gave me a sense of purpose.” He explained how there are other jobs with better salaries, but at the end of the day, it never mattered to him. He knew what he was

doing had a purpose, not only for himself, but for the nation, he said.

Weinstock offered industry advice to soon-to-be graduates in the virtual call. Cyber security is on the rise, so a minor in information technology (IT) would look very nice on an application, according to him. The FBI also “loves interns,” which is a great way to get noticed. Along with that, Weinstock said that some experience in international relations or learning a second language can give a graduate a leg up on the competition.

Weinstock ended the call with a message to the students, saying, “For me, it was not to sit around and wait for one job. Your job is to apply to jobs. Take anything you can. Once you get a job, it is easier to find other jobs.”



IMAGE TAKEN from Pexels.com

Kevin Weinstock’s primary responsibility at the FBI involved time in the security department running background checks on potential hires.

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# Asynchronous vs. Synchronous

## EDITORIAL STAFF

Students had to make the unexpected change to online learning last year. Online learning is broken down into two types of classes: synchronous, where students meet at a certain time on a certain day; and asynchronous, where students do the work as they please as long as it is submitted by the deadline. In synchronous courses, students meet with their class in real time and engage in a semi-normal classroom interaction.

Some students enjoy asynchronous learning, while others prefer synchronous. The editors are split 50/50 on whether they prefer asynchronous classes or synchronous classes. One *Outlook* editor com-

ments and drawbacks. Students struggle with Zoom fatigue in synchronous classes and often have to teach themselves in their asynchronous ones. When it comes to synchronous classes, like in-person classes, students have the option of a three-hour class once a week or an 80-minute class twice a week.

One editor said, "I would prefer the 80 minute blocks twice a week. My high school set me up for college by using 80-minute classes so my attention span really caps around an hour and twenty minutes. Three hours is too much for me." Wanting to meet for three hours at a time on Zoom can take a lot out of a person, but some prefer to meet

the difference. One editor commented, "The professor definitely makes a difference when I choose whether I want a class that is asynchronous or synchronous. For example, I had a professor that I loved for a three-hour course pre-covid and I chose to take two more classes in person with her last semester because she was one of my favorites."

It was difficult for some students to stay on top of work before COVID-19, and now it is just as hard, if not harder. An editor commented, "It is so much easier to stay on top of work for synchronous classes. I constantly feel worried in my asynchronous classes that I am missing something."

**"I worry about how much I am genuinely getting out of my asynchronous classes since the professors are very hands off."**

mented, "I prefer synchronous classes because it gives the same feeling of meeting in person, and we are being taught the material through conversation. I feel that I have a much clearer sense of what I need to do with synchronous classes. Asynchronous classes make me anxious that I am missing materials or assignments."

In contrast, another editor said she prefers asynchronous classes because it is more convenient, and another added that having asynchronous online classes are better than in-person classes. "I have an in-person class that's already been called off twice because students are positive. Having to wear a mask indoors while the professor is basically yelling behind a plexi-wall just so we can have 'normalcy' is the exact opposite of normal," the editor said.

Both forms of classes have ben-

once a week so that it is over and done with.

In asynchronous classes, students do not meet with the professor and are assigned work to complete on their own by the due date. While some people enjoy this because it offers more flexibility, others feel this should not be an option. "I think asynchronous classes equates to teaching yourself. Personally, I think it's a way for professors to cop out of logging onto Zoom, when they should be showing up virtually at the very least," one editor added. "I worry about how much I am genuinely getting out of my asynchronous classes since the professors are very hands off."

Some students believe professors who choose synchronous learning are trying to make students feel as normal as possible. These professors make all

While professors are still available for personal, one-on-one help with asynchronous classes, it is still not an easy feat for some students. Because asynchronous learning is so hands-off, it raises the question if students are receiving an adequate education with this virtual learning method.

Another editor added, "[Synchronous classes are] easier because teachers will remind us in class about upcoming deadlines rather than due dates getting lost in the abyss of emails and e-campus updates for asynchronous classes."

Because every student has different needs and preferences when it comes to online learning, there is no right or wrong class style. Hopefully, this will be the last semester in which students have to worry about asynchronous or synchronous classes.

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# The Luck of the Irish-Asian

KAYLA REYNOLDS  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

When you picture St. Patrick's Day, you typically imagine one of the biggest celebrations of Irish heritage. People decked out from head to toe in green, shamrocks galore, extravagant parades equipped with Irish step dancers, and masses of people flooding streets and restaurants all fueled by their mutual love of being Irish.

As someone who is proud of their Irish culture, I'd fit into that image in your head. Well...kind of.

Being half-Irish and half-Asian, this holiday looks a little bit different for me.

I often find myself stuck in this middle ground between my two races every day of the year, not just March 17. Too Asian to be white, too white to be Asian. Struggling to decide which box to check off for my race on forms when I'm only allowed to check off one. There are rarely implications for choosing one race or the other, but there is something unsettling and distressing about having to present yourself as only how you partially identify.

Society is constantly trying to fit people into a singular category. For people who rightfully fit in more than one, it forces them to make a decision they shouldn't have to. American culture depicts St. Patrick's Day as a day of celebration, but only for those who are fully Irish and white. In only partially applying to that description here lies my choice: forego my Asian culture for a day and fit the image society desires, or let my Asian culture be the reason I don't get the full extent of the festivities.



IMAGE TAKEN from Pexels.com

St. Patrick's day is the celebration of Irish heritage on March 17 in observance of patron Saint Patrick's death.

This isn't to say there is no option that exists between these two choices. However, how that comes to fruition in reality is being the "Irish Asian" celebrating the holiday; and to be considered the novelty in that situation is nothing short of undesirable.

I love both cultures equally. They make me who I am and the fact that I am both is something I hold incredibly dear to my heart. With that said, there is absolutely no way I could abandon my Asian side in order to experience a more "authentic" holiday. It would go the same way with my Irish side if the roles were reversed.

Thus, my St. Patrick's Day is probably just slightly off from the version in your mind. I will be adorned in green and shamrocks, watch parades on TV, eat corned beef just like everyone else. Except my corned beef meal comes in the form of corned beef and rice, a common Filipino breakfast.

Some may not consider this an authentic celebration and I'd be lying if I said these thoughts didn't weigh on me during the holiday. But, there's no changing who I am, and whether it's accepted or not, this is my St. Patrick's Day.

At the end of the day, St. Patrick's Day at its core is another day meant for fun. Not being Irish has not and will never stop people from enjoying the day as their own. So, yes, the holiday is mine and I love to celebrate it. However, it will never fully be mine by society's standards. It hasn't and will never be that way for me.

Therefore, despite the endless and extreme contradictions that come with being a person of mixed race on March 17 and always, I will never deny the love I have for this holiday nor what it means to me and the culture that I consider myself lucky to identify with.

# Spring Break: What Break?

JOHN PAPAGNI  
STAFF WRITER

Spring break is a time for students to kick back, relax, and not worry about assignments for a week or so. However, due to COVID-19, spring break has been canceled, and instead, students are given two single-day breaks: one break day in March and one in April.

I am fully aware of why it must be this way, and it is because if students traveled to a different state or country and brought COVID-19 back to Monmouth University the number of positive cases would skyrocket like it did last semester after the super spreader event at off-campus housing. Though this procedure is for the student's safety, and to limit the number of COVID-19 cases, I am honestly very disappointed and frustrated that we students only get two separate days of break instead of an entire week.

Even though these "breaks" are supposed to minimize the number of people going on vacation, there will be some people who are going to travel. These students assume the risks of traveling even though we are in a pandemic.

On social media, I have seen countless students from Monmouth University post about how they are in Florida, California, or states known for their spring break parties. Very few people are socially distancing, wearing masks, or just being safe in general when on vacation. This could be because they want to make the most of the short amount of freedom they have until it's time to go back to reality.

While I understand they are college students and these are supposed to be the

best four years of our lives before we must start our professional careers, going on vacation during this time will only prolong this pandemic. The more people go out and party, the longer people will have to wear masks and socially distance. Everyone just wants this pandemic to be over already, and many are living like it is.

For the past two to three weeks I have had non-stop back-to-back work that I needed to complete. Just when I think I am finished and caught up with my work, all my teachers assign three to five more things that I need to get done. I feel like I am being suffocated with all the work that I must do, and it seems like there will be no end to it until after my finals. Even during what is supposed to be a break day I do not get a break, as I am using that time to catch up on my work.

Students are not getting an adequate break from their work. Instead, they are given a quick breather for a day and then must jump back into a mountain of assignments. I wished Monmouth University gave students a normal spring break, and then went virtual for a week or two. This way, students could've had a somewhat normal spring break and having that one to two weeks of online classes would limit the interaction between people and minimize the spread of the virus.

I hope by next year, the pandemic is finally over and the restrictions are gone. I just want the full college experience and a normal college spring break, not in this warped way of having online classes, little to no interaction with my classmates, and not being able to see my friends unless under certain safety restrictions.

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# Student Workers: The Turner Syndrome Foundation

KAYLA KENNEDY  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Monmouth University students can become involved in different ways—through clubs, on-campus jobs, Greek organizations, or becoming Resident Assistant (RA) or student ambassador. Some students even begin to work at a non-profit organization. Five Monmouth students currently work for the Turner Syndrome Foundation, located in Hazlet, NJ.

The Turner Syndrome Foundation (TSF) was founded in 2009 with a mission to raise awareness of Turner Syndrome, a chromosomal disorder that affects 1 in 2,000 females (two million in total), according to their website. The non-profit organization strives to reduce the age of diagnosis and increase the standard of care for affected individuals. TSF also provides educational resources, supports research, and continues to broaden its reach to patients and caregivers worldwide.

Ameka Yawson, a junior sociology student, has been working as a Program Assistant at TSF for about three weeks. Born in Liberia and having moved to America with her family in 2004, she is the youngest of seven children and a first-generation student.

“I decided to work with TSF because I was trying to explore a job opportunity that combines two passions of mine, both medical and sociology,” Yawson said. “This job was the perfect fit. I get to be part of a team that is seeking answers for a medical condition which is just awesome.” Yawson enjoys the skills she gains while working for the foundation, such as Microsoft Excel proficiency, because of its wide use in the workforce.

“Even though I’m just the program assistant, my role is important,” she continued. “I input/organize data that is being used to better the organization.”

Kierstyn Holly, a commu-

nication student, has worked as the Communications Coordinator at TSF for a little over a year. “[I want] to encourage and support those with Turner Syndrome and help those who must have a better understanding,” Holly said. “Every individual deserves to have their voice be heard. My role at the foundation is to advocate for this cause and let the stories of those living with Turner Syndrome be known.”

Holly decided to work at the foundation because she knew she would gain experience in the public relations field while also learning and raising awareness for a condition that she was previously unaware about. Watching the TSF community come together and share their stories to help others has inspired her, helping her gain hope for the future.

“Seeing that lives are being changed for the better because of the work being done at TSF has showed so much hope for those being affected by Turner Syndrome,” Holly said.

Annabella Marte, a business administration student, has worked at TSF for about four months. As the Community Outreach Coordinator, she hopes to continue to advocate for those affected by Turner Syndrome and to build and maintain community support.

“I decided to work with TSF because of my mom and her background working with non-profit organizations,” Marte said. “For years, myself and my family have volunteered and been heavily involved with various organizations such as the domestic violence awareness coalition in New Brunswick, central New Jersey Health consortium, and the Visiting Nurse Association, as my mom has always had a passion for helping those in need and taking action regarding women’s rights and accessible health care to lower income households, women, and children. I’ve always wanted to develop an experience with a non-profit as well to gain insight and help those in need,



IMAGES TAKEN from TurnerSyndromeFoundation.org. From left to right: Ameka Yawson, Kierstyn Holly, Annabella Marte, Rowan Elrais, and Kayla Kennedy work at the Turner Syndrome Foundation in Hazlet, NJ to raise awareness about the chromosomal disorder.

so I researched TSF and felt encouraged to work with them.”

What she’s enjoyed most about this experience is the emphasis on community outreach and the development of a community for those affected by Turner Syndrome. “As the Community Outreach Coordinator, I often stay connected with those involved with the foundation and find that because of us those with Turner syndrome feel heard and comforted that there’s a rally of people behind them supporting them,” Marte said. She also noted that the organization offers various networking opportunities and provides the ability to adapt to the various methods of communication.

Rowan Elrais, a junior in the 5-year program for special education, works as the organization’s Education Initiatives. Just like her colleagues, she strives to increase awareness of the foundation and to assist in building a stronger community.

“As an educator with a concentration in special education, I have been trying to find more experiences related to my major,” Elrais said. “I have worked with so many different people

with so many different disabilities, but I have never heard of or worked with anybody with Turner Syndrome before. This felt like an amazing opportunity to broaden my scope on the disability spectrum. I want to become a useful resource to all those in need and an advocate for them as well.”

Elrais has only worked for TSF for about two weeks, but she hopes that her skill set will become a reliable resource for the foundation.

Last but certainly not least, me! As a junior communication student with a minor in political science, I work as the Press Coordinator at TSF. I empathize a lot with those who have Turner Syndrome since I also suffer from a medical condition with no cure—epilepsy. That’s why I hope to make a difference at the foundation.

Since I was diagnosed with epilepsy, one thing I have done for myself and others was advocate. Advocacy is the best way to bring light on a situation and inform people. With my new role, I will advocate for the Turner Syndrome community, educating the public on this condition and the roles

they can take to help.

I decided to work at TSF because I wanted to gain experience working with a non-profit, being that I’ve never worked at one before. One thing I’ve enjoyed about my experience at TSF is the environment. It’s clear that TSF is a very supportive community, as its members are there to uplift and aid one another.

I have gained many useful skills from this experience—most importantly time management, responsibility, and using one’s voice to advocate for a cause. With my job, I have a voice that I can use to inform others about Turner Syndrome and encourage them to get involved. Knowing that I can contribute to this cause warms my heart and makes me realize the power of advocacy and education.

Each of us working at TSF are enthusiastic about using our roles to create change and spread awareness of Turner Syndrome. We may only just be college students, but we are hard workers, learning as we go. We are proud to not only represent TSF, but Monmouth University as well.

## RAs Talk Dorm Difficulty Amid the Pandemic

DORM cont. from pg. 1

gauge student interest.

Both Fazzino and Ardovini-Brooker have been hard at work to create engaging activities for their residents, such as a virtual trivia night hosted every Tuesday night at Hesse Hall where

students can compete for gift cards. Additionally, they have implemented “grab and go” programs with individually-packaged snack bags for movie nights via Netflix Party. In the future, Fazzino hopes to host a March Madness style video game tournament.

Over at Cedar Hall, Ardovini-Brooker hosted a special event for the Super Bowl. “I got snacks for my residents and asked them to put their name in a bag for the team they thought was

going to win. At the end of the night, we picked a name out of the winning team’s bag and the winner received a gift card of their choosing,” she described.

While trying to engage their residential students and give them the best college experience possible amid the pandemic, RAs have also had to adjust to this new reality.

Fazzino shared, “I think the biggest adjustment for me personally...is having to stay vigilant and follow our guidelines. I’m a really social person...but I think we are all finding new, creative ways to satisfy that need for social interaction and I’m proud of what we have accomplished in Hesse.”

“I have had to be more careful/cautious,” Ardovini-Brooker added. “A lot of my friends are RAs in other buildings, so we have had to find ways to hangout that

follow COVID guidelines implemented by the university. It has been hard, but it definitely beats being at home away from everyone.”

Fazzino and Ardovini-Brooker offer a piece of advice to current residential students.

“Get involved! Talk to your RAs because they can be a friend and support system for you (that is what we are here for). Lastly, get to know everyone in your building because you can hang out with them” said Fazzino.

“I would tell students to take advantage of whatever activities or events are being offered to them, keep up with what’s happening around campus because there is always something, and even tell people to be creative and come up with a program idea or a way to engage,” Ardovini-Brooker said.

She continued, “I want to commend all of the RA’s and

CA’s for remaining vigilant, being creative, and staying strong throughout this academic year. It’s been a

challenge, but they have all stepped up to the plate and done a great job within their building communities.”

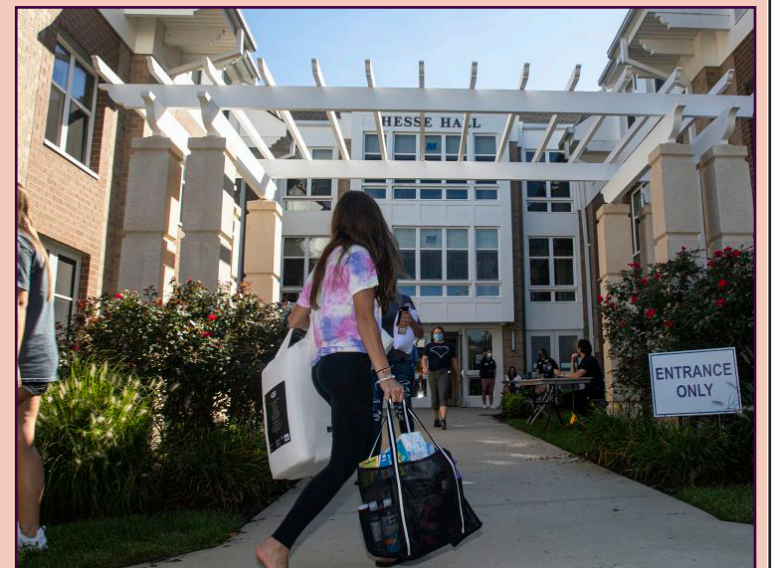


PHOTO COURTESY of Anthony DePrimo

Since residential students were welcomed back to on-campus housing in fall 2020, RAs have been forced to get creative as they work to establish community engagement.

# Summertime COVID: False Sense of Security?

**MATTHEW CUTILLO**  
MANAGING NEWS/LIFESTYLES EDITOR

There's a lot of debate on whether the COVID-19 vaccine is worth it. Of course, looking back on this idea even a few months back may have left the public more worried, but the vaccine rollout combined with warmer weather has left many wondering if they can wait it out.

The Monmouth Polling Institute found that although Americans are generally happy with the direction of the vaccine roll out, a quarter of the population is still unwilling to receive the vaccine.

Many would rather not have their older family members roll the dice. The polling institute states that "worry about a family member getting seriously ill from the virus has dropped sharply in recent weeks," yet a possible resurgence in cases this fall could spell trouble for those hoping to wait for everyone else to take action.

"Currently, 40 percent are very concerned [of a family member becoming sick] and 28 percent are somewhat concerned about this happening in their families," a report from the polling institute states. "The number who were very concerned had been climbing since the fall. It hit 47 percent in September and 50 percent in November, and then topped out at 60 percent in Janu-

ary, before dropping in the current poll."

This is pure speculation, but one could suspect people's lack of concern with their family becoming sick has to do with the false sense of security the warm months has lulled us into. As last summer indicated, COVID-19 cases are not easily spread outdoors. The warmer weather allows more opportunity for people to meet outside, so cases go down.

The last thing someone would want is for a family member to not receive the vaccine out of hopes of the virus becoming fully eradicated over the summer, as variant and hybrid formats could easily rise again next fall as people resume indoor activities.

It is very easy for those sitting on the fence of receiving the vaccine to quietly keep their head down in hopes of everyone else's efforts to quell the virus, but my concern is that this is a delay to the issue instead of a solution.

"There has not been a lot of movement in willingness to get the vaccine – or not," the polling institute's report goes on to state.

"Currently, 24 percent of Americans claim they will never get the vaccine if they can avoid it and another 21 percent prefer to let other people get it first to see how it goes. These numbers are virtually unchanged from January (24 percent and 19 percent, respectively). A majority

of the public, on the other hand, have been vaccinated already (16 percent) or plan to get the shot as soon as they are allowed (38 percent)."

Let's say you have one parent who is vaccinated and the other is not. The latter may be attempting to schedule an appointment, but has not received much luck in being able to do so. Convincing them to keep trying is difficult, but you'd rather all their bases

be covered so another resurgence in the fall doesn't affect them.

A quarter of Americans do not plan to receive the vaccine for a myriad of reasons. If a family member does not wish to receive theirs out of the false sense of security the summer brings, one could encourage them to play it safe and be part of the solution instead of just hoping it will be gone before the weather cools back down and in-

door gatherings continue.

It's important not to pry into people's personal reasons for not wanting the vaccine. There's plenty of political and personal motivations behind the decision, but if someone is not doing so out of a suspicion that their dose would not matter in the long run, you may want to help them reconsider. If they still refuse, do not pry, as it is a personal decision at the end of the day.



IMAGE TAKEN from Pexels.com

The warmer summer months may trick people into a false sense of security

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# South ParQ: Pandemic and Vaccination Specials

JASMINE RAMOS  
STAFF WRITER

*South Park's* creators have hit the mark, yet again, while depicting our current cruel reality into two one-hour long specials on Comedy Central, with the most recent one airing on March 11. Usually, *South Park* episodes can take our day-to-day life and exaggerate it to satirical extremes, but with how much has been thrown our way in the last year, the jokes hit too close to home. But it might have been the remedy we all needed.

Last year, with the stay-at-home orders in place, the creators, Trey Parker and Matt Stone, decided to give us an hour long special instead of their yearly episode filled season. Titled "The Pandemic Special," it tackled all the points we were stacked against, from the mask debates, the presidential election, racial inequality, Zoom calls, and just wanting to smoke some nice "Pandemic Special" weed curated by Tegridy Farms' owner Randy Marsh.

While what seemed to be a standard satirical episode with "chin diaper" masks and police defunding causing the shooting of the only Black character, the show did something it had never done before.

While always maintaining

their political stance as both sides being evil ("Douche" on one side and "Turd" on the other), they broke the fourth wall and urged people to vote.

The creators knew that things were looking bleak, and while staying on brand, they used this to their advantage to poke fun at what was going on but also examine the severity of the situation. One way was by promoting their first special by having cardboard cutouts of their entire cast, sitting in the Denver Broncos stadium for one of the games, socially distanced and wearing masks.

Almost exactly one year later since the pandemic hit us hard, they released their second COVID-themed episode, "South ParQ Vaccination Special."

The small town in Colorado has now received the hottest item on the market, the coronavirus vaccine. With lines that go on for miles, the pharmacy has turned into the most exclusive place in town, where only senior citizens can pass the bouncer.

The show does a wonderful job at expressing how we are feeling at this point: tired. Teachers are frustrated about going back in class and not qualifying for a vaccine, kids just wanting to go back to normal and "guess 2021 is gonna be just like 2020."

Not only does it discuss our inner frustrations, but it tackles

all the anger and uncertainty we have been experiencing.

*South Park* brings up the QAnon conspiracy theorists, bipartisanship in news coverage and even the storming of the Capitol, by recreating the infamous shirtless man with the fur headdress in the show.

2020 was so harsh, even in this fictional world, that it has broken apart the iconic "broship" of Stan, Kyle, Cartman and Kenny, after spending much time away from each other. While they still manage to do their crazy schemes and pranks throughout the episode, they ultimately part ways, while sharing custody of Kenny, "to give Kenny the best possible life."

It seems like the only people having a good time are the senior citizens. Being the only ones receiving vaccinations, they begin to wreak havoc in town. The nightclubs and bars are theirs to use, with no mask or risk of catching COVID, and they don't let you forget it. Their lives and some sense of youth are back, and they are ready to take on the world.

Even Mr. Garrison (the 45th President of the United States) has made a comeback, wanting things to return to normal, and for people to not remember that he was the Commander-in-Chief not so long ago. Playing the stand-in



IMAGE TAKEN from NME; banner from *Entertainment Weekly*; background from *IndieWire*

*South Park's* recent Vaccination Special on Comedy Central satirized QAnon conspiracy theorists by imagining a children's branch of the movement called "Lil' Qties."

President Trump for the last five seasons, he returns with no remorse, or recollection of what he had did. He just wants to teach the kids, just like the old times.

The show ends with a series of self-aware jokes, and the discussion if things can go back to normal, not just in real life, but also in the show. *South Park* has been experimental throughout the last 24 years, and some fans have been critical of it.

The episode ends with Mr. Garrison back in his original form and revealing an old friend, Mr. Hat, who hasn't been seen on the show for 11 years.

According to ScreenRant, the puppet character abandonment has been an indication of Parker and Stone "moving away from the surrealism of early *South Park* to more topical satire."

Could this be the return of a more traditional *South Park*, the nostalgia we are yearning for in our lives, or the sense of normality we have been craving? We're going to have to continue tuning in to find out.

The "Vaccination Special" turned out to be cable's top 2021 show among young adults, reaching 1.73 million viewers on opening night. The special can be seen on Comedy Central or on HBO Max.

## Sam-I-Am (Not): McCurdy Won't Return for iCarly Reboot

DENISSE QUINTANILLA  
STAFF WRITER

Fans of the iconic Nickelodeon sitcom *iCarly* have reason for disappointment, as co-star Jennette McCurdy revealed she will not be joining Miranda Cosgrove, Nathan Kress, and Jerry Trainor for the show's long-awaited reboot.

On a recent episode of her podcast *Empty Inside*, McCurdy, now 28, shared that she quit acting and is "ashamed" of some of her roles.

During the episode in a conversation with actress Anna Faris, McCurdy said, "My family didn't have a

lot of money, and [acting] was the way out."

"I quit a few years ago because I initially didn't want to do it," she continued. "My mom put me in it when I was 6 and by...10 or 11, I was the main financial support for my family."

McCurdy is most well-known for playing Sam Puckett on *iCarly* from 2007 to 2012. After *iCarly's* run ended, her character was given a spin off series, *Sam and Cat*, alongside *Victorious*-actress-turned-pop-star Ariana Grande.

"I ultimately quit after my mom passed away because with her death kind of died a lot of her ideas for my life, and that was its own journey,

and a difficult one for sure," McCurdy told Faris. She added that acting was "always, always, always, difficult for [her]" since she had a very difficult time dealing with anxiety.

"Once I started to get the nerves under control was when I started to actually get some traction," she explained, "but, I ultimately quit after my mom passed away because with her... died a lot of her ideas for my life. And that was its own journey, and a difficult one for sure."

She shared that she did briefly return to acting in February 2020 for a one-woman show she wrote called *I'm Glad My Mom Died*, which debuted in Los Angeles. The show explored her mom's death in 2013; however, McCurdy explained that it was a "one-off."

Many fans remember her snappy and often gross one-liners from *iCarly*. However, McCurdy does not feel the same way about her performance. In the same *Empty Inside* episode, McCurdy admitted she was embarrassed by some of her roles.

"I feel so unfulfilled by the roles that I played," she said, "...I did the shows that I was on from like 13 to 21,



IMAGE TAKEN from *Insider*

Jennette McCurdy recently confirmed that she will not return as Sam Puckett for an upcoming reboot of *iCarly* on streaming platform Paramount Plus.

and by 15, I was already embarrassed." McCurdy also revealed one of the most painful moments in her acting career; at around age 13, she was passed over a role in the 2005 film *Because of Winn-Dixie* because casting agents thought she was too "homely," or unattractive, for the role.

When asked if she would ever return to acting, McCurdy said that it would depend on whether or not she would be able to collaborate with a director she really admired.

Well folks, there you have

it: Jennette McCurdy will not be making an appearance in the upcoming *iCarly* reboot. However, she hasn't completely disappeared from the radar, as many are still able to hear what she has to say by tuning into her podcast, *Empty Inside*.

For those of us who miss seeing the iconic web star dream team of Carly Shay and Sam Puckett, we always have the option to watch the past in action on Netflix or Paramount+. Although we will miss her on the screen, as long as she is happy, I'm sure her fans will be too.



IMAGE TAKEN from *Elite Daily*

Jennette McCurdy (left) also played Sam Puckett on the double-spinoff *Sam and Cat*, which costarred singer Ariana Grande (right) as Cat Valentine.



# THE GRAMMYS: the *Good*, the *Bad*, and the *Unexpected*



ALEX DYER  
ENTERTAINMENT EDITOR

This past Sunday, performers of popular music all gathered for a nontraditional version of the world's biggest annual celebration of music.

The 63rd Grammy Awards took place on March 16, featuring comedian Trevor Noah as the host and emcee of the night.

The ceremony itself was interesting, even though it ultimately received low ratings. According to *Variety*, viewership for the awards was down over 50 percent from 2020.

Regardless, though, the structure of the program was a refreshing and enjoyable departure from most years, in which grandiose performances and spectacular collaborations are commonplace. Instead, with Noah at the helm and a greatly reduced attendance list, the Grammys this year featured a charming set of relatively straightforward performances from the music world's most influential and listened-to artists, all in one neat package.

The Grammys are usually my least favorite awards show of the season, precisely due to that culture of one-upmanship that results from the magnanimity of usual performances at the show. My favorite part of any award show is seeing the awards

and making predictions; the Grammys are simply never satisfying enough in that regard (to a list freak like me).

Speaking of which, I'm contented to remind you that, in the Dec. 2, 2020 issue of *The Outlook*, I made my predictions for the "Big Four" Grammy Awards: Record, Song, and Album of the Year, and Best New Artist.

While I was wholeheartedly rooting for white-haired skeleton queen Phoebe Bridgers in all the categories for which she was nominated including Best New Artist, I predicted Megan Thee Stallion's win in that category. I also got H.E.R.'s win for Song of the Year and Taylor Swift's Album of the Year correctly, not to toot my own horn. However, I way overestimated Doja Cat's TikTok clout that she gained from the Grammy-nominated "Say So." Instead, Billie Eilish won Record of the Year for the melancholy yet pulsing "Everything I Wanted."

One thing that is abundantly clear is the absolute dominance displayed by the women who were nominated for awards Sunday night. There were parts that I enjoyed quite a lot, parts I cringed at, and parts that were just weird to me. Here are a few of those Grammy moments.



## GOOD: Dua Lipa Wins Best Pop Album

British-Albanian singer Dua Lipa won the Grammy for Best Pop Vocal Album for *Future Nostalgia*, following an energetic performance with DaBaby that left me in a disco state of mind. Am I surprised? No way. Dua Lipa has made hit after hit after hit, many just from her most recently award-winning album. In all, I don't think it's ever a bad time to give Lipa an award; she just seems to be dedicated to making the world a more fun place.

## BAD: Taylor Swift's Cardigan Medley

I know I might get chewed out for this. But was this a medley at all? I understand Swift's genre-defiance, and I support it. This performance just fell flat for me, and I think in the introspection of her lyrics something is really lost in translation when it comes to a live scene. Swift has had some of her greatest successes in the past two projects she's released, but this performance really lacked an energy that's important for such a big platform.



## BAD: Phoebe Bridgers wins Zero Grammys

The Weeknd may have been snubbed right off the bat. But Phoebe Bridgers got snubbed *while she was at the Grammys!* I wasn't necessarily shocked when Bridgers lost Best New Artist to Megan Thee Stallion. What did shock me, though, was that she won exactly no awards at her freshman Grammys. She lost Best Rock Song, Best Rock Performance, and Best Alternative Album. She tweeted at Megan Thee Stallion following the awards to congratulate her; I think she might be taking it better than me.

## UNEXPECTED: Blue Ivy Carter Wins First Grammy

Blue Ivy Carter, the nine-year-old daughter of Grammy sweethearts Jay-Z and Beyoncé, took home a gramophone of her very own, for Best Music Video. Blue shares the award with her mother, in whose music video for "Brown Skin Girl" she starred. If she's getting started this early with racking up the Grammys, I wouldn't be surprised if she had more than her mom by the time she's 30!



## GOOD: Megan and Cardi Perform "WAP"

There isn't a whole lot to say about this one. It was dirty, it was fun, it was a genuinely great and vivacious performance, regardless of how racy the song is. Just move your kids away from the TV or something, because the song (which Trevor Noah joked is about kittens getting bathed), is worth hearing and seeing live.

# United States Airstrikes Syria

JOHN SPINELLI  
STAFF WRITER

President Joe Biden ordered a military airstrike near Abu Kamal, Syria on Feb 26. This was his first military action as Commander-In-Chief since taking office on Jan 20, and the intention was to be a retaliation for Iranian-backed militia groups that have recently attacked U.S. military encampments.

Saliba Sarsar, Ph.D., Professor of Political Science, said he sees the attack as being part of a larger state of affairs.

"The attack was not random; there is a current struggle going on in the Arabian or Persian Gulf for regional hegemony, mostly between Iran and Saudi Arabia. The United States is, of course, allied with Saudi Arabia and other countries like Israel, Jordan, and Egypt against Iran," said Sarsar.

Biden called off an additional airstrike on March 4. He was notified by Pentagon officials that children and civilians were in one of the targeted areas. Sarsar continued, "I believe the Biden administration was very calculated. They tried their best to send a message to Iran to behave, and not too intrusive or aggressive."

According to *BBC*, the government of Syria criticized the American airstrike, arguing it was "unlawful" by international treaties. The airstrike was not politically unprecedented. Both former U.S. presidents Trump and Obama have authorized military actions in Syria.

The military attack comes at a time where the United States

has recently gone through a new presidential transition. Ken E. Mitchell, Ph.D., Chair of the Department of Political Science & Sociology, described the current state of the United States' foreign relations.

He said, "President Biden is a committed internationalist and values traditional alliances—NATO, USMCA, WTO, OAS, and so forth. However, he inherited a world unfamiliar to him."

Mitchell said that Biden doesn't understand that Trump was loathed by our traditional allies and they understand Trump could return in 2024.

He said, "Trump during his time in the White House read the USA electorate well: it had zero interest in foreign affairs, and it desired to drift back to-

ward the America's pre-WWII isolationist past. This strategy worked reasonably well in terms of domestic politics—he almost won in 2020—but he ruined our position in the world and now everything is harder at the global level."

Mitchell also emphasized the importance of America's strategic alliances in the Middle East.

He said, "Biden's air strike is small business. Iranian backed groups are all over Iraq and flare-ups occur frequently. Biden is backing away from the Saudis—ending the U.S. commitment to Saudi war in Yemen—and how this plays out in the various proxy wars between the Iranians and Saudis is unclear."

Mitchell said Biden under-

stands that the American public has no desire for further commitments in the Middle East, so he does not anticipate much beyond the occasional exchange of rockets.

Over recent years, there has been a debate about how the U.S. should have a role in the Middle East. Matt Filosa, a junior political science student, said, "When it comes to Middle Eastern affairs, the U.S. has been entrenched in endless conflict that has resulted in much death in terms of our military personnel and cost."

The airstrike was reported to have one fatality officially, but experts said that the number could be up to 22.

"Looking at U.S. strategy in the Middle East today, moving U.S. troops out of the re-

gion may be better but there are threats that do exist. The Middle East is not a one solution problem, the different countries have different issues," said Filosa.

He said that Afghanistan is America's longest war and he feels that it has gone on for too long. Filosa also said that if the U.S. fully withdraws, it gives power back to the Taliban which could erase the work of 20 years of war.

"In that case, removing conventional forces could be a smart move while relying on U.S. Special Operations Forces for short term deployment and training of national forces in the country," said Filosa.

He added, "Our relations with Saudi Arabia are, in my opinion, against our values as a country. They murdered a journalist who is a dual Saudi-American citizen, and the current Administration did not go after them hard enough. But that is because we trade oil in exchange for weapons because they are against Iran in a proxy war in Yemen, which is also a major human rights crisis."

He concluded by saying more open dialogue and diplomacy should be conducted with Iran to bring them to the table.

While the Middle East is in constant flux, Sarsar argued for diplomacy and moderation in resolving current problems. He said, "It is about time for the U.S. to balance its pragmatism with its principles and assist Middle Easterners to envision and actualize a future full of potential, hope, stability, and peace for all!"



IMAGE TAKEN from NBC News

The Biden Administration called off an additional airstrike on March 4 after ordering one on Feb. 26.

## The U.S. Student Loan Crisis

WAGE cont. from pg. 1

loans require people to start paying right after graduation even if they don't have a job etc. And if their loans go into forbearance, they still accrue interest." He suggests that there should be a more reasonable grace period for students to start repaying.

President Joe Biden announced during his first town hall that he would not be supporting a plan to forgive up to \$50,000 in student loan debt on Tuesday, Feb 16. He responded to a member of the audience that he will "not make that happen," despite having the support of several members of his party.

He continued, "It depends on whether or not you went to a private university or a public university. It depends on the idea that I say to a community that I am going to forgive the debt of billions of dollars of debt for people that have gone to Harvard, and Yale and Penn."

This was met with major backlash, not only from members of the democratic party, but others alike. Within hours, "#CancelStudentDebt" was trending on Twitter, according to *The Guardian*.

Biden suggested that the money could be used to-

wards early childhood education instead of the debt accumulated. Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez challenged this idea later that night, saying that the country could do both. On Twitter, she posted, "Nowhere does it say we must trade-off early childhood education for student loan forgiveness. We can have both."

She also said, "Who cares what school someone went to? Entire generations of working-class kids were encouraged to go into more debt under the guise of elitism. This is wrong...We've got the \*Senate Majority Leader\* on board to forgive \$50k. Biden's holding back, but many of the arguments against it just don't hold water on close inspection."

According to *CNN*, over 60 lawmakers and 17 state attorneys' generals have called on Biden to go further and cancel up to \$50,000, including Sen. Elizabeth Warren and Senate Majority Leader Charles Schumer.

Another problem that arises from student loans is the racial and prejudice implications around it. Congresswoman Ayanna Pressley mentioned that she herself had to borrow to attend school, just like 85 percent of Black students and that she defaulted on those loans.

She continued, "We know



IMAGE TAKEN from Kiplinger

*CNN* reported that 17 state attorneys' generals and over 60 lawmakers have called on President Joe Biden to cancel up to \$50,000 in student loan debt.

that Black and Brown students are five times more likely to default than their white counterparts."

A Demos report sampled from Experian's entire credit database in December 2014, and found that out of 35,000 students debtors, Black students debtors "are 16 percent more likely to be in default of seriously delinquency than white" and that Latino borrowers are eight percent more

likely to default.

Pressley wasn't the only person in office to confess that they struggled with student loans. Former Georgia candidate Stacy Abrams mentioned that while running for governor, she was "\$200,000 in debt," some of which included student debt.

Senator Marco Rubio was reported to have \$150,000 in student loan debt when he was elected to Florida legis-

lation, according to the *New York Times*.

Natorye Miller, former communication student, said that students, no matter the institution, deserve some sort of relief. "There are a lot of people in debt because they took out these huge loans in order to attend these private institutions. We are not asking for much, although we could be asking for more."

# Delta Phi Epsilon Hosts Annual ANAD Vigil

HAILEE KALLE  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Delta Phi Epsilon sorority hosted their annual ANAD Vigil event via Zoom on Wednesday, March 3. Not only this, but the sisters of Delta Phi Epsilon also spent the week doing many different Instagram challenges and other social media events to raise both money and awareness for one of their national philanthropies, which is the National

Association for Anorexia Nervosa and Associated Eating Disorders (ANAD).

The event was planned by the Delta Omega chapter's Vice President of Programming, Sophia Edwards.

The main purpose of Delta Phi Epsilon's annual ANAD Vigil is to show support and recognize those who struggle with eating disorders, as well as to educate and help people find a support system and different forms of treatment. According to one of the vid-

eos published by ANAD, which was presented at the event, close to 30 million people struggle with some form of eating disorder; 20 million often being women and close to 10 million being men.

In today's day in age with social media and the internet being as popular as it is, it is very common to be subjected to internet influence as well as the unrealistic beauty standards of the media. Millions of people are exposed to these expectations every day and are willing to do anything to fit into this image that society demands. This can lead to many damaging effects in the future. Delta Phi Epsilon is dedicated to breaking these unrealistic expectations and demonstrating the importance of body positivity, building self-esteem, and loving yourself the way you are.

During the vigil, three different speakers took part in explaining their own personal eating disorder story and how they have grown and found recovery from their past experiences. One speaker was Molly McElroy, who is the creator and founder of the Beautiful Me campaign, which was established in 2013. McElroy suffered from anorexia nervosa within her early years of high school and went through a major battle but came out stronger. She even spoke in front of her whole high



IMAGE TAKEN from Delta Phi Epsilon Delta Omega  
Sophia Edwards serves as Vice President of Programming for Delta Omega and helped plan the event.



PHOTO COURTESY of Delta Phi Epsilon Delta Omega  
Delta Phi Epsilon's national philanthropy is the National Association for Anorexia Nervosa and Associated Eating Disorders.

school about the challenges she had been facing and how she found recovery, and from that moment was committed to helping people who are in similar situations.

"Your self-esteem won't come from body parts. You need to step away from the mirror every once in a while, and look for another reflection, like the one in the eyes of the people who love you and admire you," said McElroy.

Along with the Vigil, the different Instagram challenges to raise awareness in-

cluded "No Makeup Monday" and "Take Your Hair Down Tuesday." It encouraged girls to upload their own photos as a way of demonstrating how important it is to feel beautiful in your own skin, and to not let society define what beauty is.

You can learn more about the National Association of Anorexia Nervosa and Associated Eating Disorders at [anad.org](http://anad.org), as well as through the sisters of Delta Phi Epsilon within the Monmouth Community.

## Upcoming Campus Events

(More information on the Experience Monmouth app)

### Wednesday March 17, 2021

- ~Virtual Spring Career Day, 12:30pm
- ~Study Abroad 101, 2:45pm

### Thursday March 18, 2021

- ~Active Minds Meeting, 7pm
- ~Trivia Party Game Show, 9pm

### Friday March 19, 2021

- ~Guess The Music, 7pm
- ~Paint a Craft: Mugs hosted by SAB, 9pm

### Saturday March 20, 2021

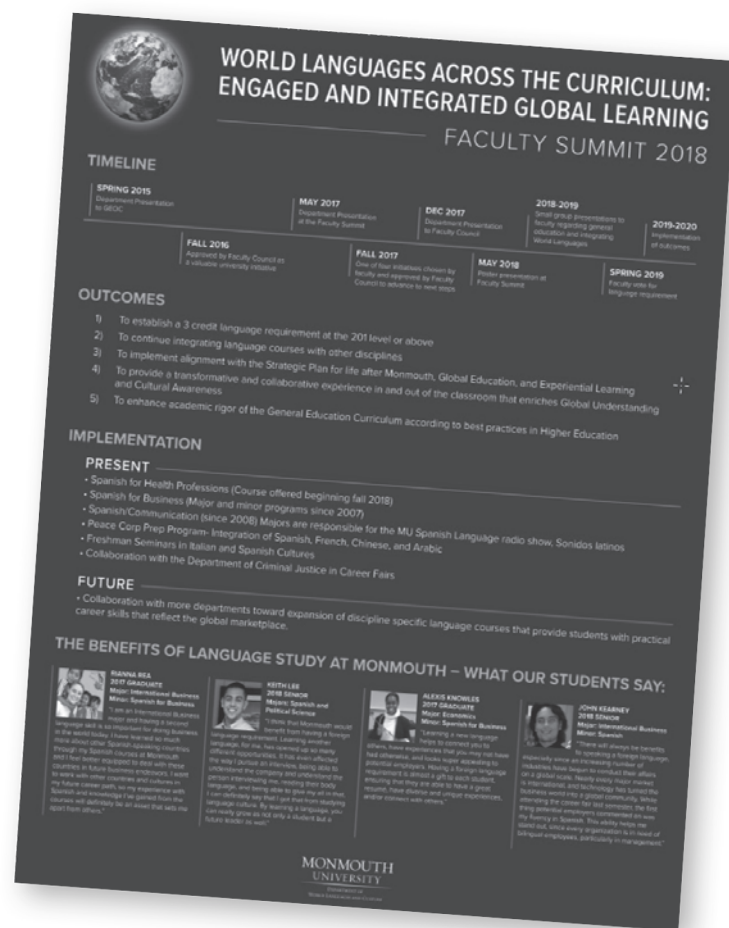
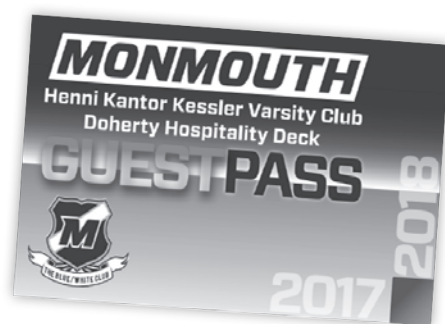
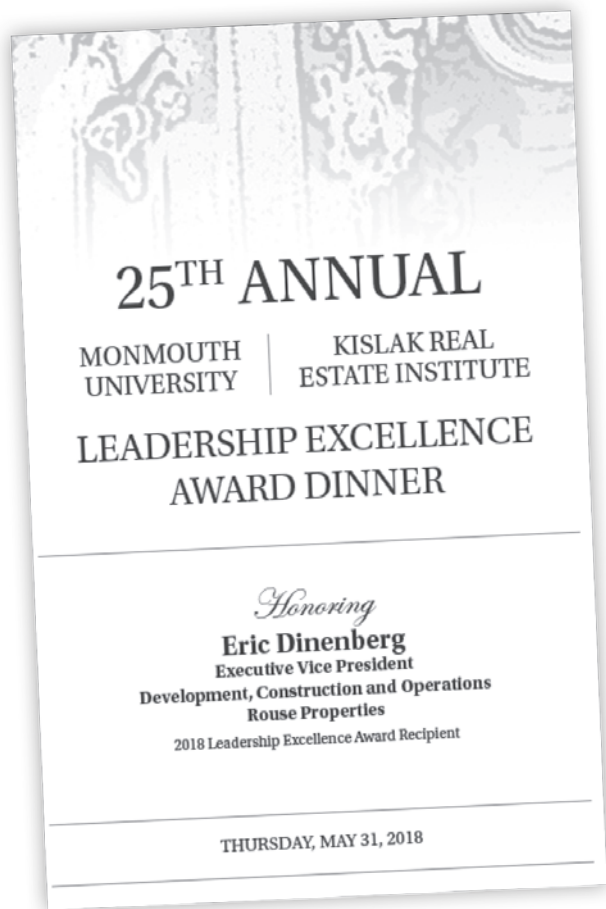
- ~Spring Planting Event hosted by SAB, 9pm

### Tuesday March 23, 2021

- ~Students in Recovery Meeting, 6pm
- ~Intercultural Center: Women's History Month Trivia, 9pm

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# Women's Lacrosse Opens Strong with Record Breakers

MARK D'AQUILA  
SPORTS EDITOR

Women's lacrosse opened up their 2021 season with a very busy yet strong week of play going 2-1 in a three-game week. Fifth year attack Nicole Ceraso headlined the opening games with 18 total points on 14 shots, seven goals and 11 assists to become the Monmouth program's all-time points leader.

"After everything that's transpired over the course of the last year with COVID and so many uncertainties leading up to this point it felt surreal just to be back out there in our uniforms again playing together against real competition," said Ceraso after her team's first game. "It was a long time coming to get to this point where we can all be together competing again, but we finally made it."

The season opened up at Kessler Stadium on Wednesday, Mar. 10 against Iona where the Hawks wasted no time getting the party started with a 3-0 lead in the first seven minutes. Senior midfielder Rachel Mills scored the first goal of the new season for the blue and white before fellow returning seniors Allison Turturro and Ceraso added their first goals of the year.

These two led the charge for the Hawks per usual with 11 of the team's 14 points in the first half of the game. The game was pretty much over from the start with MU going into the half up 10-2 and extending the lead to a final of 15-3.

"It was a total team effort today, from the administrators that helped get the season going, to our players on the field to our bench, everyone contributed, and it felt really good to be togeth-



PHOTO COURTESY of Monmouth Athletics

Senior attack Nicole Ceraso broke the program record for points with 252 after scoring 18 points in the first week of the season with 14 shots, seven goals, and 11 assists.

**"It was a long time coming to get to this point where we can all be together competing again, but we finally made it."**

NICOLE CERASO  
Senior Attack

er," said Interim Head Coach Christie Kaestner. "We are really fortunate that we have a ton of experience and a ton of chemistry. They've played a lot of games together; it has been 365 days since our last game and today truly felt like we resumed after a

pause and picked up where we left off."

Senior goaltender Stephanie Delliturri had an elite performance for her career with a high of 14 saves in the game which was three more than her previous best of 11 against Lehigh in 2020.

The Hawks followed up their Opening Day blowout with a road letdown at Marist on Friday night.

The tight loss did come with a huge achievement, however, as Ceraso became Monmouth's all-time leader in the game with 252 ca-

reer points. The senior attack scored three goals in the game with an assist as well to pass Heather Bryant, a former All-American and Hall of Famer at MU.

At one point Monmouth held a 4-2 lead in the first half, but Marist rebounded strong and pulled away in the end with the 15-11 victory.

"Tonight, was just not our night," said Coach Kaestner. "Credit to Marist for playing hard and wanting it. We will take this early season loss as a teaching moment and make sure Monmouth women's lacrosse gets better together moving forward. Our goal remains the same and this loss is a piece of our journey together."

The bright side was that Monmouth had one more game left to close out their weekend on Sunday against Iona at home again. They dominated in this one similar to the first game with a 15-5 offensive outpour against the Gaels. Senior defender Megan Hart broke the second record of the week for Monmouth setting the career draw mark of 232. She already holds the single season record at 101 in 2019.

It was a very balance attack for Monmouth with nine different players scoring in the game including Ceraso and senior attack Caroline Bleck who each recorded a hat trick.

"Today was another great team effort," said Coach Kaestner. "It was so important to have a gritty win today and get back into the win column. We were able to grind out a tough win today and feel good going into the next two weeks with the bye week."

Monmouth's next game will not be until they face Quinnipiac at home on Mar. 26 at 3:00 p.m.



PHOTO COURTESY of Monmouth Athletics

Monmouth women's lacrosse will be home for their next matchup against Quinnipiac after their bye week coming up, heading into it with a 2-1 record and 41 total goals.

# Men's Basketball Eliminated From MAAC 'Tourney'

JACK MURPHY  
ASSOCIATE SPORTS EDITOR

Men's basketball fell to Fairfield in the quarterfinals of the Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference (MAAC) Tournament by a score of 79-60, marking the end of Monmouth's basketball season. Their record to end the 2020-2021 season was 12-8, and 12-6 in conference play. "We've had a great season; we weren't picked to win it and we ended up close and

tying with Siena," said Head Coach King Rice. "We hit 10 wins and we held that down for a long time."

While the season may seem to be a little bit of a disappointment, the Hawks did exceed the expectation that were set for them in the beginning of the season. Coach Rice received the honors of MAAC Coach of the Year because of his team's efforts. This is the third time Rice has received this honor in his six-year tenure with

Monmouth. Deion Hammond was also honored by being named to the All-District First Team for his efforts this season.

Monmouth was able to build a first half lead of six points when Redshirt sophomore guard Donovan Toatley knocked down a triple, then quickly scored twice in transition to build a 20-14 cushion. However, Fairfield would answer by crafting together a 12-0 run, and led by as many as 11 in the first 20

minutes, but by the end of the half the Hawks were facing a seven-point deficit heading into the locker room.

The Hawks showed a bit of late life in the second half as senior forward Melik Martin and guard Deion Hammond knocked consecutive three-pointers and knocked the Fairfield lead all the way down to just four points. However, Fairfield erased any possibility of a comeback when they went on another 12-0 run, giving them a comfortable 16-point cushion, which was enough for them to secure themselves a spot in the semifinals of the MAAC championship.

"This one feels a little built different but let's start out saying how incredible Fairfield played," said Rice, "They just out toughed us, they hit us in the face, they were solid."

Fairfield would advance all the way to the MAAC Championship game, where they ultimately fell to Iona by a score of 60-51.

Legendary college basketball coach Rick Pitino led the Iona program to a MAAC championship in just his first season. After securing a bid by winning their conference, Iona will be facing off against Alabama in the round of 64 in the highly anticipated NCAA Tournament after

its cancellation last year.

If there was one word to describe this season of Monmouth basketball, it would be peculiar. It has been just over a year since COVID-19 spread rampantly around the globe. After the cancellation of the MAAC Tournament a season ago, college basketball had to be re-structured to let the athletes perform at their highest potential.

This year had its up and downs for the Hawks. Fans witnessed games get cancelled, records get broken, and players flourish all throughout the season. Even though fans could not attend the games, students and fans of the program certainly were watching at home rooting on the blue and white. While many people hoped that Monmouth would have made it deeper in the MAAC Tournament, it was a great season for the Hawks with the constant adversity and doubt throughout the entire season.

Congratulations to seniors Deion Hammond, Melik Martin, George Papas and Marcus McClary for their collegiate careers representing the blue and white, and thank you for all the hard work you put in for the program and Monmouth University.



PHOTO COURTESY of Monmouth Athletics

Men's basketball had their season end at the hand's of Fairfield in the quarterfinal's of the MAAC Tournament.

# Men's Lacrosse Wins First Two Games of Season

ERIN MULLIGAN  
STAFF WRITER

On Saturday, March 6, the Monmouth University men's lacrosse team began its 2021 season with an 8-5 win against Manhattan at Kessler Stadium.

After the first quarter, Monmouth trailed 1-0 but scored four of the five goals. After taking hold of the lead, the Hawks—who were sporting their chrome blue helmets, white jerseys, and shorts—never let it go. Man-

hattan was the first to score in the second half but in response, the Hawks upped the score to 4-1. A Manhattan win was out of sight.

With a hat trick was fifth year student and midfielder Zach Clemente, while graduate student and attackman Dwayne Mattushik provided two more. Racking in three assists was senior midfielder Max Brooks.

With this win, Monmouth is now 6-1 all-time against the Jaspers. With this being Monmouth's first game in 365

days, they have now won six straight games against Manhattan.

Making their career debuts were sophomores, attackman Conor Macrae and Michael Quigg on defense, attackman, graduate transfer student, Dwayne Mattushik, and freshman, Patrick Orapello making his debut off the bench.

The Hawks continued their exciting success on March 13, with a win in double over-time against Siena at Hickey Field in Loudonville, New York.

The thrilling victory was all

thanks to graduate student attackman, Dwayne Mattushik and Junior Midfielder, Andrew Duswalt.

At halftime, the Hawks were in the lead with a score of 5-2 before four consecutive goals by Siena changed the score to 6-5 with 11 minutes left in the fourth quarter.

Monmouth refused to let up on the Siena defense and Mattushik launched into the back of the net for a goal with 2.7 seconds left in regulation, extending the game into overtime.

In the overtime periods, Monmouth outshot Siena 12-2 and scooped up the victory when Duswalt rebounded, providing a 7-6 Hawk win.

Monmouth is now 6-1 all-time against Siena and won six straight games against the Saints. The Hawks have their first 2-0 start since the 2016 season.

Looking ahead, Monmouth will host Marist this coming Saturday, March 20, at Kessler Stadium at 1:00 p.m.



PHOTO COURTESY of Monmouth Athletics

Men's Lacrosse earned their first two wins on the season by defeating Manhattan 8-5 and squeezing by Siena by notching a 7-6 win in overtime.



PHOTO COURTESY of Monmouth Athletics

Fifth Year Midfielder Zach Clemente scored a hat trick in Monmouth's season opener against Manhattan.

THE OUTLOOK



# NETTING RECORDS



Women's lacrosse went 2-1 in their opening week of play as fifth year attacker Nicole Ceraso scored 18 points in three games to become the program's all-time points leader.

SEE STORY ON PAGE 14

PHOTO COURTESY of Monmouth Athletics