



# THE OUTLOOK

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## “Raise the Wage Act” Aims to Increase Hourly Federal Minimum Wage to \$15

GEORGEANNE NIGRO  
SENIOR/ POLITICS EDITOR

The newly introduced “Raise the Wage Act” may be enacted by the end of March, but government officials are still deciding whether to proceed. If enacted, the federal minimum wage will likely be raised to \$15 an hour.

On Jan. 14th, President Joe Biden released an eco-

nomie stimulus plan which contained the objective to raise the federal minimum wage. Richard Roberts, Specialist Professor of Economics, said that at this point in the COVID-19 recovery, the costs of increasing the minimum wage outweigh the benefits. He said the pandemic has driven many businesses to close permanently.

“Adding the cost of a \$15 minimum wage could force

our most vulnerable businesses to forgo hiring, reduce worker hours, cut jobs, or simply close altogether,” said Roberts. “While those minimum wage earners who can keep their jobs would undoubtedly benefit from the increase, many others risk additional pain.”

Roberts said he sees hope

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IMAGE TAKEN from Pexels.com

A raise in the Federal minimum wage, currently \$7.25 an hour, could benefit university students, who are often minimum wage earners and have seen college costs rise annually while their wages remain stagnant.

## COVID-19 Pandemic Affects Student Teaching for Education Majors

ABIGAIL BROOKS  
STAFF WRITER

Education students seeking to complete their student teaching hours have faced many changes in the structure of these requirements as a result of the ongoing pandemic.

“When a student imagines what their field work is going to be like in their program before COVID, they have a certain idea in their head about what it would be like. Now it’s different because the majority of students are on more of a hybrid or remote base,” explained Corina Earle, Director of Field Placements for the Department of Education. “I wouldn’t say that anybody is missing out, it’s just a different adaptation.”

Many education students

are completing their required hours and establishing classroom connections in an entirely virtual setting. “This semester, my field hours are online,” said sophomore music education student Gabriella Estrada. “I get to lead Zoom breakout rooms and have one-on-one sessions with students to go over their assignments or any classwork they may need help with, which allows me to create a more personal connection with the students. It would probably be easier to do that in person, but all in all everything is still the same minus the fact that it’s online.”

Other students have not yet reached the point in their major’s sequence where they start student teaching, but the pandemic has still resulted in a predominantly virtual learning format. “As an Elementary Education major, I didn’t get a

formal field placement yet. I was assigned to watch a list of YouTube videos, which were reinforcing what we were doing in class and giving us techniques to use when we do get to go in the field,” said Emma Morris, a sophomore majoring in Interdisciplinary Studies for Elementary Educators.

Every student will eventually get the same number of student teaching hours before graduation, regardless of whether they take place in-person or virtually. “The New Jersey Department of Education did not change requirements regarding hours for student teaching,” said Earle. “At the end of the day, everyone gets the same amount of hours and the same experience working with schools. They’re still getting a valuable experience,

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## Campus-Wide Book Discussion Of Ibram X. Kendi’s “How to Be an Antiracist”

MATTHEW CUTILLO  
MANAGING/ NEWS/ LIFESTYLES EDITOR

The University President’s Advisory Council on Diversity and Inclusion held a campus-wide book discussion on Ibram X. Kendi’s “How to Be an Antiracist,” on Friday, Feb. 26. *The New York Times* bestselling book has been made available through the University store with 500 copies.

Faculty facilitators included Michael Corsey, Digital Content Strategist in the Department of University Marketing and Communication; Nicole Pulliam, Ph.D. Associate Professor in the Department Educational Counseling and Leadership; Jennifer McGovern, Ph.D., Assistant Professor and Faculty Athletics Representative; and Claude Taylor, Communication Lecturer and Director for Academic Transition and Inclusion.

Zaneta Rago-Craft, Ed.D., Director, Intercultural Center and Advisor to the President on Diversity and Inclusion, laid the groundwork for the discussion. She emphasized openness, respect and a willingness to learn.

“We’re all here with the best intentions, which is to learn,” Rago-Craft said. “Sometimes learning doesn’t necessarily mean we’re all starting at the same place or ending at the

same place. It’s a process, and respecting that we’re here with good intentions is something really important to remember.”

In “How to Be an Antiracist,” Kendi shares his own experience with racist thinking. Rago-Craft asked the audience how his honesty may help to create a space that acknowledges and names our own internalized racist behaviors and attitudes.

Corsey suggested that Kendi may have created a space for those to comfortably share their thoughts on this question by design. “The topic in general is uncomfortable, right,” Corsey said. “On the other side of that discomfort is the growth, and that’s really where we want to get people. When you make it easier for people to talk about these things in different ways, it really does go a long way in helping.”

White students have expressed they feel permission to “let their guard down” around persons of color who share some, or have shared racist thinking or biases in general, Pulliam recalled. “As a person of color, I have heard my white students in particular say they appreciate those

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IMAGE TAKEN from New York Times

500 copies of Ibram X. Kendi’s “How to Be an Antiracist” have been made available through the University store.

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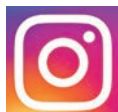
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# Virtual Discussion Details Legacy of Shirley Chisholm

MATTHEW CUTILLO  
MANAGING/NEWS/LIFESTYLES EDITOR

Claude E. Taylor, Director for Academic Transition and Inclusion in the Center for Student Success, moderated a virtual community discussion titled “African American Political Participation and the Legacy of Shirley Chisholm” on Thursday, Feb. 25.

The evening’s dialogue was built around and shaped by the film “Chisholm ‘72: Unbought & Unbossed,” a 2004 documentary by filmmaker Shola Lynch that chronicled Chisholm’s rise as the first woman to run for the Democratic Party’s presidential nomination and the first African American candidate to run for any major party’s presidential nomination.

Taylor set the stage for the night’s discussion by reading a passage written by Lynch, the film’s creator.

“I got to know Shirley Chisholm through the making of ‘Chisholm ‘72: Unbought and Unbossed,’” Lynch wrote. “What I discovered is that Chisholm was not a great woman. She was an ordinary woman who exercised the extraordinary in her by taking great risks. She started her professional life as a school teacher who volunteered at the local Democratic Club and evolved through the years into a politician. She saw things in her community that she wanted addressed.

Instead of complaining, she tried to do something about it. That attitude took her on many journeys throughout her life, including a run for the Democratic nomination for president.”

“What I love about the film is that it’s about an ordinary person actively participating to shape the Democracy we live in,” Taylor Said.

Taylor shared a quote from Chisholm that he believes “captures the essence of this figure in the United States political landscape.” She said she wanted to be known as a 20th century black woman who dared to be herself.

“That’s a deeply profound self-awareness that speaks to her engagement in the public sphere as a historic political figure that we’ve

come to know,” Taylor said.

The parallels between Chisholm’s 1972 election campaign and recent political presidential campaigns is notable, Taylor said. He then encouraged the audience to share their own interpretations and thoughts on the film.

Sharon Mitchell, an organizer from the Plainsboro Public Library, shared her thoughts on Chisholm’s presidential run and the similarities to candidates today. She noted that issues such as voting rights, voter suppression and education are still relevant in the modern sense.

Mitchell recalls a scene in the film where Chisholm’s probability of winning was considered low. To help the odds, those around her asked Chisholm to consider run-

ning as a Vice President instead.

“Here we are today with Kamala Harris, who identifies herself as African American,” Mitchell said. “Considering the parallels, I just find that whole thing interesting.”

Diana Rosenberg, an event attendee, drew parallels between Chisholm losing endorsements for president as a result of not being considered a “safe” choice and the modern Democrat party having a similar mindset.

“Bernie Sanders had this grassroots support, but right before the South Carolina primary [most of the candidates] bailed,” Rosenberg said. “We had a large pool of candidates seeking the Democratic nomination for president, but they all bailed

before the South Carolina primary to go with the candidate who had the ‘most realistic’ chance of beating Donald Trump. The more things change, the more they remain the same and that was just astounding to me.”

The genre of documentary film uses the ability to capture the sentiment and the feel of a time period and preserve it for modern audiences, Taylor said. “The film was released in 2004, and even at the time of its release Shola Lynch and the team were anticipating the ways in which the politics of 2004 seemed to parallel 1972,” Taylor said. “It’s really interesting to see the cyclical nature of American politics through the lens of this film and Shirley Chisholm’s campaign.”



Shirley Chisholm was the first woman to run for the Democratic Party’s presidential nomination and the first African American candidate to run for any major party’s presidential nomination.

# Campus Community Shares Experiences with Kendi’s Work

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vulnerable, open and honest conversations where I can model some of that way of thinking to help them let their guard down,” Pulliam.

The question also draws attention to some important ways that individual behavior and collective or structural forces intersect, Taylor explained.

“What I’ve read in Kendi’s work is so much about the ways in which structural discrimination, racism and white supremacy shape the lives of people in ways that we may or may not recognize,” Taylor said. “I think this conversation about experiences with racist thinking and the vulnerability [it] exposes helps us see how so much of the experience people are born into is structural.”

President Patrick F. Leahy Ed.D., joined the conversation and shared his insight on the question. The biggest takeaway from Kendi’s work, Leahy said, is the need to constantly identify, describe, and then dismantle racism.

The opposite of racism is being anti-racist, and there’s a need to identify where those systemic problems in society that are obstacles to justice, equity, and inclusion are located.

“Given the incredible privileges that I have, not

only as a person, but also the position that I’m entrusted with [at the University], I thought it was such a great inspiration for him to clarify that difference,” Leahy said.

“I do think that we have a responsibility to right the wrongs where we see them but it requires us being very conscious about identifying them and then trying to figure out what we can do to level those.”

Rago-Craft then posed the audience another question, asking about experiences calling out racism even if it may be uncomfortable to identify.

“It’s so important to call out racism when you see

it, both interpersonal and structural,” Rago-Craft said. “I think sometimes one is easier to recognize than the other. I think there’s different levels of risk in terms of who calls it out. For me to call out something as racist [is different] than a white colleague or friend to call out something as racist in terms of the repercussions of what that could mean. Oftentimes, even if it’s not about a person and it’s not about [something] interpersonal, to call out a system, practice, structure, policy or law as racist is often personalized and there’s just a different level of risk.”

Calling out racism in a

work setting comes with its own set of potential repercussions, Pulliam said. Calling out racism in personal settings, such as around a family dinner table during a holiday, has a different set of potential repercussions.

“I often struggle with it, especially with family. Sometimes it is exhausting work,” Pulliam said. “Sometimes I have to negotiate when to call out and fully recognize when I am not in a good enough mental state [to do so]. Then when I choose not to, I go back and say [to myself] ‘Man, I really should have said something.’ I think it’s important to recognize

that we’re going to miss things. Sometimes, for myself, I choose depending on the situation to say I just don’t have the capacity to have this conversation right now.”

“It’s wonderful and important to show up [to these types of events],” Rago-Craft said.

“This is a really great way to be in community with one another across all of our roles here on campus. We all have work to do and a role to play. A special piece of gratitude to President Leahy for giving us the greenlight to be able to offer this text to the whole campus community in this way.”



Ibram X. Kendi’s book has been made available through the University store with 500 copies.

IMAGE TAKEN from AAMC.com



# Rago-Craft Joins “Monmouth Mondays” Podcast

MATTHEW CUTILLO  
MANAGING/ NEWS/ LIFESTYLES EDITOR

Patrick Leahy Ed.D., and Communication faculty member Matt Harmon invited Zaneta Rago-Craft, Ed.D., Director of the Intercultural Center on their weekly “Monmouth Mondays” podcast on Tuesday, Jan. 26. The trio discussed the different programs and initiatives the University has to offer when it comes to diversity and inclusion.

Rago-Craft joined the University in the summer of 2019, becoming the first director of the newly established Intercultural Center. She was born and raised in Long Branch, so taking up the position “felt a bit like coming home.”

“It’s an area that I’m deeply passionate about,” Rago-Craft said. “I’m coming from an institution that has one of the oldest cultural centers on a college campus in the country, and I just felt it was a really great opportunity to marry my interest of giving back to my hometown and my expertise in diversity and inclusion efforts, particularly within the lens of intercultural centers on college campuses.”

Leahy and Rago-Craft began discussions about

the importance of diversity and inclusion before either of them began at the University, Leahy explained. Rago-Craft has since taken on the role of Advisor to the President on Diversity and Inclusion.

“I wanted to make sure that she had direct access to me and to our senior team,” Leahy said. “I just wanted to make sure that [Rago-Craft]’s wisdom was present at all of our University decisions, not just those that could be sort of categorized as diversity and inclusion, but that she would be present and have a real say in all of the University decisions. She’s holding down that dual role now.”

Rago-Craft’s dual role came right before the COV-

ID-19 pandemic, an unprecedented occasion that required new and inventive methods of leadership.

“It’s certainly been a test of creativity,” Rago-Craft said. “I cannot say enough how much a physical space is important to things like community building, fellowship and students. We really had to pivot to virtual [methodology]. I would actually say that we’ve had better attendance at some of our virtual programming than we did in person, so there is some silver lining to the virtual programming that we’ve created with faculty, staff, and students across the campus.”

Last semester, the University made the unanimous decision to rename “Wilson Hall” to “The Great Hall.” Leahy

considered it a symbolic obstacle to the University’s sincerity around diversity and inclusion.

“Here, you have this very complicated figure who over the recent years historians have clarified his record on race relations and it’s not a good record,” Leahy said of Woodrow Wilson. “[Changing the name] is not the heart of the matter. The heart of the matter is the community that we create. We just felt like if this is a symbol or some kind of obstacle to us creating that more fully, let’s do something about it.”

Rago-Craft says every institution has their own journey on this type of decision-making. “Almost every campus has a name with

a complicated or racist, homophobic or sexist history,” Rago-Craft said. “I think what’s important in this particular decision is that it’s not just about the changing of the name, it’s also about bringing to light that history. You can remove a name from a building and restore its original name while contextualizing the name that you changed. I think that is the core of what we are as a University; we’re here to teach.”

Leahy also mentioned his intention to transform the Great Hall into a student centric building.

“There’s going to be more investment in the Great Hall to turn it into a hub of activity for our students, faculty and staff,” Leahy said.



PHOTO TAKEN from History.com

Rago-Craft joined the University in the summer of 2019, becoming the first director of the newly established Intercultural Center.

# Prince’s Celebrity Status Explained in Virtual Discussion

MATTHEW CUTILLO  
MANAGING/ NEWS/ LIFESTYLES EDITOR

Anjali Vats J.D., Ph.D., virtually discussed her new book about late music artist Prince on Wednesday, Feb. 24. Tentatively titled “Creating Wild Purple: Prince, Intellectual Property and Black Capitalism,” Vats outlined Prince’s cult of personality and his methods towards controlling the perception of his celebrity status.

“Prince was a social justice advocate, and I think that didn’t used to be how people thought about Prince,” Vats said. “Now, posthumously, people have started to say Prince really did care about race. People say a lot of nonsense about Prince like he didn’t care that he was black. Prince is somebody that was deeply invested in racial justice.”

Prince was very much aware and invested in the history of the exploitation of black artists, Vats explained. “He is not the only artist to do so, but I think he’s a really important artist in advocating for rights for black musicians.”

In the modern day, Taylor Swift has sparked discussion about musicians fully owning the rights to the master recordings of their music. It may be cool when Swift does it, Vats explained, but Prince was criticized for doing so in the 1990s.

The right of publicity is an intellectual property right that protects people against the misappropriation of their name, likeness, or other marker of personal identity, Vats explained. She used Vanna White, the hostess of Wheel of Fortune, as an example.

“Rights of publicity re-

ally developed as a way to protect people’s personas,” Vats said. “They’re not in the three major categories of intellectual property, being copyrights, patents and trademarks, but they are an extension of the rights of privacy. Rights of publicity are used to protect these unique aspects of a celebrity that perhaps intellectual property rights otherwise would not protect.”

Prince was well aware that the law was not on his side in the context of privacy and publicity, so he developed performative ways of protecting his persona and his privacy, Vats explained. “This is where I come up with this idea of ‘conjectural celebrity’ as a kind of persona management.”

He also took advantage of an idea referred to as “sensory anticipation.” Seemingly otherworldly, many stories

about him revolve around the artist appearing and disappearing out of thin air.

Rumor-making was also vital to Prince’s image and legend. Vats recalled a story of traveling to Prince’s home city of Minneapolis, becoming taken aback by the amount of personal stories of the artist the city’s members seemed to have.

“There’s a real sense of community around [the rumors] of Prince,” Vats said. “He never moved from Chanhassen. He never really gave up his Minnesota roots, so I think people in that town were really invested in him as an individual and as a person who really cared about his privacy. They were co-conspirators in cultivating a kind of gossip around Prince. You didn’t take pictures of Prince. You told tall tales about Prince, but those tall

tales are always respectful.”

Prince was excellent at protecting his identity. He often deconstructed generalized ideas of gender, combining femininity with masculinity. Vats provided a Prince lyric to exemplify this concept, as well as showed a *Chappelle Show* sketch of Prince competing in basketball while wearing a blouse-type outfit.

“I’m not a woman, I’m not a man, I am something that you’ll never understand,” Vats recalled of the Prince lyric. “I think that sums up Prince in a nutshell. He’s doing this, for the time, really queer performance and then he’s great at basketball. The gender politics of Prince are really complicated and no one really knows what his story is. For Prince, it cultivates an extra performative way of being able to negotiate his celebrity.”



IMAGE TAKEN from Pexels.com

Prince took control of his celebrity image by never conforming to a distinct gender norm, only appearing when he wanted, and protecting his own master recordings of his music.



THE OUTLOOK

Melissa Badamo	EDITOR-IN-CHIEF/FEATURES EDITOR
Matthew Cutillo	MANAGING/NEWS/LIFESTYLES EDITOR
Georgeanne Nigro	SENIOR/ POLITICS EDITOR
Professor John Morano	FACULTY ADVISOR
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TECHNOLOGY MANAGERS

Alex Sheriff Yosef Davidowitz

DELIVERY ASSISTANTS

Joseph Falzini Jessica Pak

STAFF WRITERS

Grace Enright  
Katherine Rivera  
Lauren DeMarco  
Samuel Ciociola  
Matt Filosa  
Erin Mulligan  
John Spinelli  
John Papagni  
Jasmine Ramos  
Gianna Ferraro

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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  
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COVID-19 Pandemic: One Year Later

EDITORIAL STAFF

It's been a full year since the University, and the world for that matter, shut down due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite the pandemic seemingly being on its last legs, some editors still worry for their job prospects after graduation. "I am not graduating this semester; however I feel like the job industry has drastically suffered since this pandemic has started," they said. "The amount of people who have gotten laid off since this pandemic has started

time on my hands, I tend to get my work for school and my internship done in a more timely manner. I also prioritize my moments better due to all of the free time on my hands." A different editor feels similarly. "Although remote learning and remote work in general has been forced on me, I do have to admit that it's made me a more balanced employee. I can't say I don't have more skills than I did before the pandemic in that department, so that's a piece of positivity that

the fall will be more normal. "I am really hoping this fall semester will be a bit more college-like in terms of classes," they said. "I enjoy the convenience and safety of on-line classes; however, I do hope that more of my classes will be in person next semester so that I can have more of a routine." "I have adjusted to remote learning and feel I would be able to do another semester if I had to," a different editor said. "However, I am still hoping that we go back to in person in the fall. I

"The amount of people who have gotten laid off since this pandemic has started astounds me."

astounds me." Another editor is also worried by the future they are soon to enter. "It's hard to get excited about graduation when I don't know what kind of life I'll have," they said, "Job security was already bad enough before the pandemic, so I can't even begin to imagine what it will be like now. All I can try to do is just stay positive and hope for the best." Despite all of the pandemic's hardships, a silver lining exists—we've all been forced to go through different forms of personal growth. "I have grown to be more self-sufficient in certain ways," one editor said. "Since this pandemic has given me more

I'm holding on to." The University has been criticized about raising the tuition during the pandemic. Despite the tuition raise being marketed as one of the lowest in our school's history, some editors believe it still came across as a crass action. "If there is anything Monmouth could have done differently during the pandemic, it would be to lower tuition by a substantial amount," one editor said. "It baffles me that tuition is as high as it is despite the economic recession and classes being mostly online (and all online for some)." Another editor hopes the return to classes in

am graduating then, and I feel it has made me a more rounded job candidate because I learned to adapt to new situations." The pandemic has brought us a lot of lessons in this one year. Some voluntary, but most forced. The editorial team has done their best to work through the pandemic by creating the paper online and still publishing in print. We're aware these skills will make us more well-rounded as a result. When it's all said and done, maybe this pandemic wasn't the worst thing ever in terms of personal growth. However, we've all had to learn to be comfortable with this new normal and sense of self-discovery.

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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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# Happy Birthday Dr. Seuss!

## Read Across America

GIANNA FERRARO  
STAFF WRITER

CAITLIN CALLAHAN  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

National Read Across America Day is Mar. 2, and with that comes reminiscing on childhood books that shaped us into who we are today. When I think of children's books, the first name that comes to mind is Dr. Seuss. His books were a pivotal part of many childhoods.

Dr. Seuss was known for his ability to expand our imaginations in a way that not all authors could. While all of Dr. Seuss's books are beloved by children, they contain messages that resonate with adults and can be applied to our everyday lives.

One quintessential book is *Oh The Places You'll Go!* The book is about constantly changing circumstances, but always staying grounded to who you are. It also gives the lesson of taking control of your life. It is important to learn that staying true to who you are despite everything around you is one of the keys to success in this world. If you are self-assured, anywhere you go, you can make the best of it.

Another important lesson learned from this book comes from a quote, "You have brains in your head. You have feet in your shoes. You can steer yourself any direction you choose. You're on your own. And you know what you know. And YOU are the guy who'll decide where to go." It is really difficult to remember all the good in life when you are down, so this quote is a good reminder of how you can control what you do with the tools you have. This book still has an impact on my life because of all the



IMAGE TAKEN from CNN.com

Dr. Seuss' birthday is celebrated through Read Across America Day, a day for children to embrace reading.

lessons it taught me.

Another favorite Dr. Seuss' book is *The Lorax*. At the time, I was mesmerized by the abundance of colors and interesting illustrations. When I was young, I knew there were meanings behind the book that challenged the destruction of the environment, but did not know how deep it went. At my young age, I was more focused on the pictures and the rhymes.

*The Lorax* represents the animals whose lives are severely impacted by environmental destruction. It can be seen as the environmental movement, the forest personified.

Dr. Seuss's intended message is pretty clear; it raises ethical issues in terms of the environmental impacts of our actions. Although young when I first read *The Lorax*, I could still see the overall message being against the destruction of the environment. The message itself never changed. What changed was how I

interpreted that message as a child and as an adult.

The meaning of this book could not be any more evident in its warnings against environmental destruction. We can all do our part and apply environmentally sustainable changes in order to prevent the planet from turning into the ending of *The Lorax*.

These are only two of Dr. Seuss' books we are discussing, but if you try to find all the lessons that can be learned from his books, it would be nearly impossible. He influenced generations of children and installed confidence and joy in children and even adults.

These lessons have stayed with us as adults and are a great reminder of the control you have of your life. If I'm not happy with how something is going, I'll look for a change. Even though change is scary, it isn't always bad—and these books taught us that.



IMAGE TAKEN from Sessville.com

The themes and messages of Dr. Seuss' books can stick with readers even into their adult life.

# Ask Shannon

*How do I build a good rapport with my professors on a virtual platform? I don't see them in person and I can't make the same connections that I would like.*  
- Anonymous

SHANNON MCGORTY  
OPINION EDITOR

TV show, or just get to know each other.

I am a person who, like you, likes to build strong connections with my professors. I do not like just being a name to them; I want them to know me enough so that when an opportunity presents itself I am the first person they think of. Going virtual has definitely made this harder but not impossible.

Just a few weeks ago, I was logged onto class about maybe ten minutes early and there was just me the professor and two other students. Because I was logged on early, I was able to have a conversation with the professor that had nothing to do with the class and everything to do with my interests.

Most students wait to log on until last minute, so being early gives you a few minutes to be personal with your professors. This will give you an edge over other students. While everyone else waits until the last second to join class, you have already been there and have had conversations that help you build the good rapport with the professor you are looking for.

Do not be afraid to reach out. Professors want to hear from their students. In this virtual world, professors and students alike are looking for conformation that they are doing something right. Starting a simple email and having that conversation will benefit both the student and teacher.

Communication is key today, so communicate anyway you can. Bring that attention to yourself; just make sure it is positive attention.

I hope this helped to answer your question!

*Have a question you need answered? Email Shannon.M.McGorty@monmouth.edu and she will be glad to help. She doesn't have all the answers but for the answers she does have, she is committed to getting the answers you need.*

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# Surviving in the Digital Age

SHANNON MCGORTY  
OPINION EDITOR

In today’s technology-dependent society, it’s nearly impossible to unplug from electronics and take a break. Technology today is used for both business and pleasure, especially when the COVID-19 pandemic pushed students further into the virtual world.

Phones are students’ main source of communication, computers are mostly used for work, and televisions are meant for entertainment. All these electronic devices can be overwhelming to the human body, and remaining plugged in can be detrimental to one’s mental health.

According to the *New York Times*, internet usage spiked during the pandemic—Facebook use increased by 27 percent, Netflix by 16 percent, TikTok by 15.3 percent, and YouTube by 15.3 percent. Meanwhile, video conferencing apps have also been seeing an influx of users as people find digital ways of staying connected.

Because most college students grew up experiencing the evolution of technology, and now have seen a spike in usage during the pandemic, it can be hard to realize how much time they are spending on electronics. Even before the pandemic, people’s heads were buried in their phones whether they were walking, with friends, eating, or doing schoolwork.

“It is important to unplug from technology,” said Christopher Mckittrick, Assistant Director of Counseling & Psychological Services. “With the current state of everything, we tend to rely on the virtual world to supplement things that are missing from our physical world. By unplugging from tech (for at least a little while), we allow our mind and body to reconnect. When we use Zoom, Netflix, Hulu, and other

services, we tend to retreat into our mind and often forget to listen to our body and physically feel what is around us.”

He added, “For our own physical and emotional health, it is important that we connect to our physical body. When we tend to retreat or reside primarily in our mind, we can easily give a lot of fuel to feed anxious or depressive thoughts and, if we lose our footing, we can get lost into intrusive thoughts that tend to increase our stress and decrease our mood.”

These anxious and depressive thoughts can arise now that school and work overlap into personal lives more than ever. What used to be a typical nine to five is now a job done at home from the moment you wake to the moment you lay down to sleep at night.

“Visual and auditory sensory

overload is real. We do our best thinking and creating when we are able to be in a quiet space and just be.” said Elizabeth O’Brien, Director of the Education Opportunity Fund. “Unplugging doesn’t have to be forever. But it should be intentional.”

Students should not have to be forced to unplug. In many cases, students have to force themselves to take that much needed technology break because they cannot tear themselves away from their devices. Students often find it difficult to find the time to unplug. Part of the challenge is finding time to unplug while also keeping up with their studies.

Tabitha Rahman, a senior English education student, said, “It can actually be super difficult for me to unplug. Being on my phone definitely takes up a lot of my

time. I just try to turn my phone off when I do my work and eliminate all other distractions.”

By unplugging, you can appreciate people and the world around you more than you could stuck behind a computer or through the lenses of the camera on your phones. Many people think unplugging means just sitting there staring at the ceiling because they cannot imagine doing something without their devices. Some of the best times in one’s life will be away from technology. The moments you don’t capture on video or in pictures, but by living in the moment.

Josie Gargiulo, a senior English student, shared some ways she unplugs from technology. She said, “When I have time to unplug and step away from the screen for a bit, I love to walk my giant

newfoundland dog Ben to the beach. Even when I have a heavy workload with school or feel overwhelmed, going to the beach always helps clear my head. The beach will forever be my favorite place to unplug.”

Katherine Lubnewski, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Special Education, said, “It’s okay to not respond to e-mails after a certain time or to give yourself a ‘day off.’ During that time, really make an effort to not to check your e-mail and go and do something active that you enjoy like going for a walk on the beach, exercising, cooking, checking out a new area, etc. I feel like you have to listen to your body, it will give you clues like it’s sore, thirsty, eyes have a hard time seeing...those are the times that it needs a break. I also think that for every hour spent on technology you should get up and walk around for 10-15 minutes.”

There are many opportunities for college students to unplug and unwind. For example, a night of playing board games can be filled with undeniable happiness and true laughter. Most college students are unbelievably competitive and will keep the night honest fun and interesting.

Many art museums are either free or offer discounts for college students. You can explore great paintings at the Modern Museum of Art, learn about new photographers at BRIC House, or take a walk through the New York Botanical gardens feeling, smelling, and enjoying the displays created with the different greenery.

The college community provides many unique opportunities for technology breaks. The University often invites students to Broadway shows, host guest speakers, invite entertainers like comedians and hypnotics to campus, and have a lively athletic scene—all of which allow students to unplug so they don’t miss out on life.

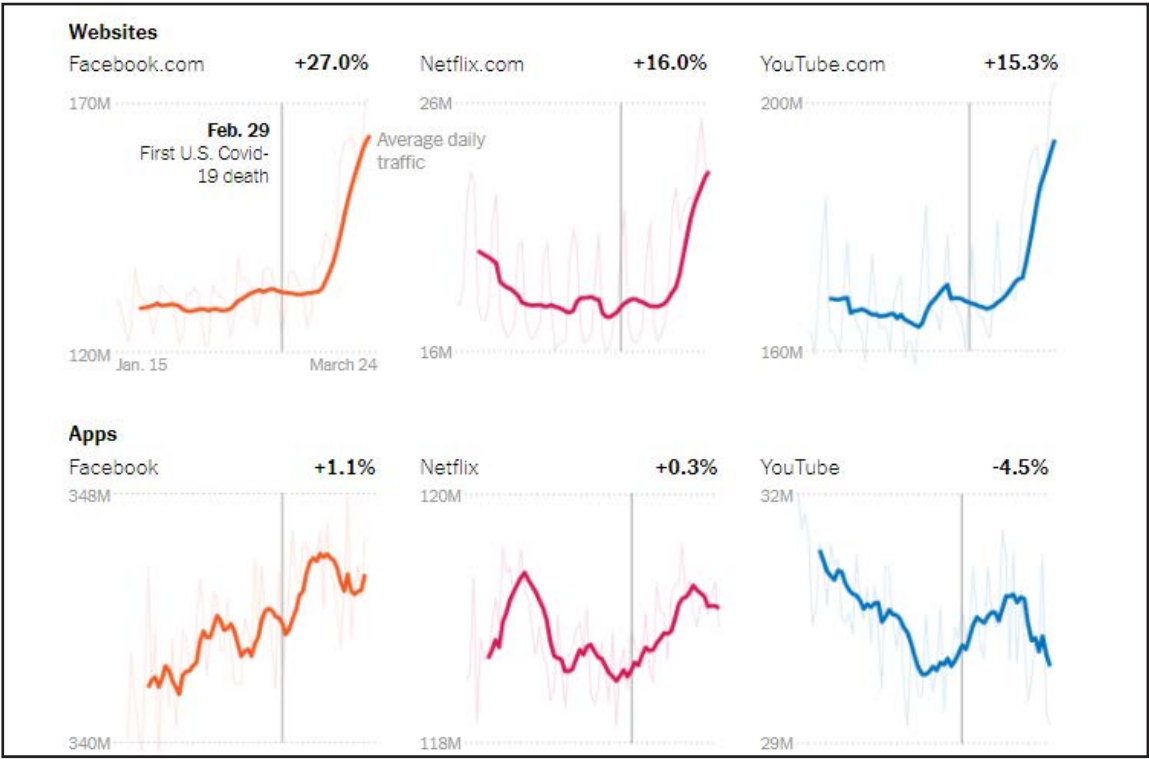


IMAGE TAKEN from The New York Times  
The New York Times reported a spike in internet usage since the first U.S. COVID-19 death on Feb. 29, 2020. Apps and websites like Facebook, Netflix, YouTube, and TikTok have fostered a digital place for users to spend their time during the pandemic.

## Pandemic Learning: How COVID-19 Altered Student Teaching for Education Majors

EDUCATION cont. from pg. 1

even if it is online.” Professors are attempting to work past the limitations of the pandemic to ensure that they are preparing students for their careers after Monmouth. Jason Fitzgerald, Pd.D., Assistant Professor in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction, explained the steps that many professors are taking to overcome these restrictions.

“As anyone who has taught or taken an online class knows, the two experiences are different,” said Fitzgerald. “We try to replicate collaborative engagement, build positive classroom environments, and promote deep content and conceptual learning, but that doesn’t look the same in every setting, either between or within modes of instruction.”

Monmouth’s award-win-

ning education program has made this online transition more feasible and has continued to provide a quality learning experience for students. “We are fortunate to have one of the best schools

said Fitzgerald. “So, going into the pandemic, we had a strong base for preparing excellent teachers and administrators.”

He said that professors have brought in guest speak-

their classes, have provided professional development opportunities for students.

“The best part of my own experience has been inviting some of my current and former students to speak

tice in the School of Education. This pandemic has amplified those relationships in ways that I hope has supported students and strengthened university-school-community connections.”

Regardless of the obstacles brought on by the pandemic, students have continued to persevere and put their best foot forward in their educational endeavors.

“Our MU education students are learning to teach in some of the toughest conditions right now,” explained Fitzgerald. “[They] have consistently risen to the challenge and I think that these students are going to be some of the most creative and technically skilled teachers we have. If they can learn to teach as well as I have seen them teach in these tough circumstances, I know they will be phenomenal teachers once this pandemic is over.”

“Our education students are learning to teach in some of the toughest conditions right now. [They] have consistently risen to the challenge...”

Jason Fitzgerald, Ph.D.  
Assistant Professor, Curriculum and Instruction

of education in the country. A tangible example of that is the award we won from our national accreditor, CAEP, for being one of only 11 institutions in the nation to pass without any recommendations for improvement,”

ers to demonstrate online education strategies. Additionally, the School of Education held a Monday evening speaker series on the topic, and the cooperating teachers, who work with and mentor students as part of

with my classes about how to manage remote learning technologies, social-emotional learning, and student motivation,” said Fitzgerald. “Learning from and with our students has been a consistent part of our prac-



# The Weather Is Warming Up: What Comes Next?

MATTHEW CUTILLO  
MANAGING/ NEWS/ LIFESTYLES EDITOR

As the weather gets better and COVID-19 restrictions start to lessen, it's natural you'll be on the lookout for things to do outside. But what's safe? Even if indoor locations are open, you may still want to find COVID-free and safe opportunities to have fun outside.

Last summer, my girlfriend and I made it a point to see as many natural landmarks as we could. They were breathtaking to behold, and they offered a large degree of

freedom. We felt comfortable exploring these new environments and it helped us greatly forget about COVID. There was a ton of privacy, far away from strangers. We didn't worry about contracting COVID from someone bumping up against us or sparking an impromptu conversation.

When the pandemic began, there was a lot of talk about boredom. People were bored they could not go to a myriad of locations, but this logic never made sense to me as we lived in a state with an amazing outdoors. Ev-

eryone is in such a rush to travel, going to other countries or even staying within the United States. If those people stopped for a second and thought about the travel opportunities and places to go within their own state, especially outdoor related activities, they may not complain as quickly.

But that was last summer. Now, the COVID cases are expected to be even lower and there's a good chance you'll be able to vaccinate yourself by this spring (if you choose to do so.) Personally, I'm still going to be

wary of strangers until I've obtained my two-doses. However, I'm far more optimistic about the ability to feel guilt free participating in activities and locations as the country finally seems to be heading in a safe and responsible direction.

So be on the lookout for fun and safe things to do as the weather warms up. I'm sure there's plenty of beautiful outdoor landmarks in your nearby area to explore. If you're vaccinated, grab a friend and bring them with you.

Some of my fondest, best and only memories

of last summertime were exploring these different scenic venues. My entire Snap Memories is filled with lush trees and forest brush.

Be safe and responsible as we approach these upcoming warm months and don't pass out before the end of the COVID-19 finish line.

You've come this far doing the right things. You're right there at the end, so you owe it to yourself and others to make educated decisions about how you want to spend the final few months of this horrendous year long pandemic.



Finding things to do outside is easy when you know where to look.

IMAGE TAKEN from Pexels.com

## Adorable Adoptables



Tina Tuna



Female!

One year old &  
loves treats!

Buster



Male!

Three years old &  
loves to play!

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# POKÉMON FANS REJOICE: Three Upcoming Games Announced

ALEX DYER  
ENTERTAINMENT EDITOR

After a lackluster presentation at their Direct on Feb. 17, Nintendo has shocked a good portion of its fans with the announcement of not one, not two, but *three* new games in the *Pokémon* franchise: *Brilliant Diamond* and *Shining Pearl* Versions, and *Legends: Arceus*.

To be released for the Switch console in late 2021/early 2022, all three new *Pokémon* games will expand on the lore of the series' fourth genera-

tion, which took place in the fictional Sinnoh region.

Originally released for the Nintendo DS in 2006, *Pokémon Diamond* and *Pearl* focus on (aside from catching creatures in balls and battling with them) themes of temporal and spatial awareness, as well as the peaceful coexistence of tradition and modernity.

The player must put a stop to the plans of the villainous Team Galactic, who plan on harnessing the *Pokémon* incarnations of temporal and spatial power—Dialga (mascot of *Diamond*) and Palkia (mascot of

*Pearl*)—in order to establish their own universe.

What is particularly special about the Sinnoh remakes is the amount of speculation about their existence that had been going on since long before their reveals.

The fourth-generation remakes have been speculated on since at least 2014, when the previous generation's remakes *Omega Ruby* and *Alpha Sapphire* came out for the Nintendo 3DS. Additionally, three months ago on Twitter, a French leaker known as Kelios stated, "You're going to have your remake next November [2021], stop complaining. And you will say, 'omg Pokémon this is the best license.'"

The news comes as a generally positive revelation to fans, but there are some issues that have received some backlash. One of the main complaints based on the first impressions of *Brilliant Diamond* and *Shining Pearl* is that the graphics look somewhat childish. However, I'd argue that this "chibi" art style is actually more in line with the original four-way directional layout of the games.

Something tells me that the *Pokémon* Company expected this, as they announced another perhaps less expected new game.

Seeing as it's the 25th anniversary of *Pokémon*, it was a pleasant surprise to hear of the



IMAGE TAKEN from GoNintendo.com

The graphics in the upcoming remakes of *Pokémon Diamond* and *Pearl* have received mixed initial reception due to the more cartoonish nature of the graphics compared to their main series predecessors, *Sword* and *Shield*.



IMAGE TAKEN from Nintendo; banner from Pokemasters.net

*Pokémon Legends: Arceus* was announced alongside *Brilliant Diamond* and *Shining Pearl*, and will ostensibly be the first main series *Pokémon* game to feature a completely open-world map.

development of *Pokémon Legends: Arceus*, a fully open-world action RPG that will feature brand new mechanics for capturing and interacting with the famously diverse creatures.

*Legends: Arceus* will apparently also take place in Sinnoh, however it will happen during the so-called "feudal" era of this land. Instead of the normal linear format of the franchise, this game will take an open-world approach clearly inspired by that of Nintendo's 2017 masterpiece *The Legend of Zelda: Breath of the Wild*.

Though it's still quite early to speculate on the plot

of this new and unexpected type of *Pokémon* adventure, we can assume that Arceus, who is essentially the creator god of this canon, will play a vital role. Additionally, it's likely that some as-of-yet unknown lore will be added to give even more context to all three future releases.

While it's often perceived to be a children's game (which it is in a lot of ways), *Pokémon* still has a highly-dedicated fanbase among all ages, and these three new games, at least for me, represent the continuation of a series that has been a staple of my childhood and adulthood alike.

## Victoria Justice Releases New Songs After Hiatus

MELISSA BADAMO  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF/ FEATURES EDITOR

After a seven-year hiatus, Victoria Justice is finally releasing new music again. The 28-year-old actress and singer is best known for her lead role as Tori Vega on the hit Nickelodeon show *Victorious* from 2010-2013. As a part of the show, she recorded songs for three albums with the *Victorious* cast and released chart-topping earworms like "Freak the Freak Out," "Best Friend's Brother," and "Beggin' on Your Knees."

Following the show's conclusion, she released two debut solo singles in

2013, "Gold" and "Shake," but they both failed to reach the music charts. Shortly after the singles' release, she left Columbia Records and decided to focus on acting, where she landed roles in the movie *Naomi and Eli's No Kiss List* (2015), the TV reboot of *Rocky Horror Picture Show* (2016), and more.

Flash forward to today, and the singer has turned over a new musical leaf. She released two singles, "Treat Myself" in December 2020 and "Stay" in February 2021, with music videos to accompany them. This is a new chapter for Justice as she leans towards a more mature sound than the songs

we know and love from one of Nickelodeon's most top-rated sitcoms.

"Treat Myself" is a straightforward song both melodically and instrumentally. It features a guitar riff, piano chords, and a minimal drum beat that complements her smooth vocals. The song is all about self-love and learning to treat yourself better, a message we could all be reminded of. Its vulnerable lyrics show that she is opening up to the public after seven years.

Meanwhile, "Stay" is a romantic ballad with electric guitar reverb that Justice described as "Sexy and passionate." Its sound and music video projects a strong '70s vibe, inspired by one of the best decades of music.

"The stuff I'm putting out is obviously more mature, it's been seven years and what not," Justice told *Forbes*. "I'm a woman now."

Anyone following Justice since her Nickelodeon days, as I have, knows that she's been promising new music for years. "I made a promise to you guys and to myself that I was going to release music in 2020," Justice captioned a Dec. 7 Instagram post. "My hope was to complete a full musical project and have



IMAGE TAKEN from Billboard

Victoria Justice recently released a music video for her song "Stay," in addition to having released "Treat Myself" a few months prior.



IMAGE TAKEN from Victoria Justice/YouTube

Victoria Justice's video for "Treat Myself" focuses heavily on self-care, and is sonically "more mature" than her previous work.

an album or EP to release, but of course 2020 has not exactly turned out as many of us planned. And instead of overthinking all of this, I just thought...I'm going to just put it out there."

While there is no official announcement of a full album or EP, I'm thrilled that Justice is finally showcasing her musical talents through these two singles.

The double-threat is still pursuing acting projects while releasing new music; most recently, she starred

in the coming-of-age film *Summer Night* in 2019 and has a new movie coming out called *Trust* on Mar. 12.

Justice is severely underrated as both an actress and a singer and is one the few Hollywood stars with an absolute heart of gold. For years, she has been constantly compared to *Victorious* co-star Ariana Grande in the media, so this time around, I hope she finally gets the recognition she deserves.



# Movie March: What’s on this Spring

ALEX DYER  
ENTERTAINMENT EDITOR

The past year of restriction and confinement has taken a huge toll on the entertainment industry. Theaters for both stage and cinema are shuttering left and right, Broadway is much too quiet, and awards shows (like last Sunday’s Golden Globes) have gone virtual. Life without entertainment is bland. It’s a huge bummer that we just can’t go places to be entertained lately. Instead, we’ve had to settle for streaming services like Hulu, Netflix, and others which are becoming so ubiquitous. But this spring, like buds on the tree of entertainment, it seems as though movies

are beginning to pop up. We need movies, and movies definitely need us. In this section, I’ve listed five of the movies coming out this March that seem fit to, at the very least, add a little bit of life to an industry that needs rejuvenation so desperately.

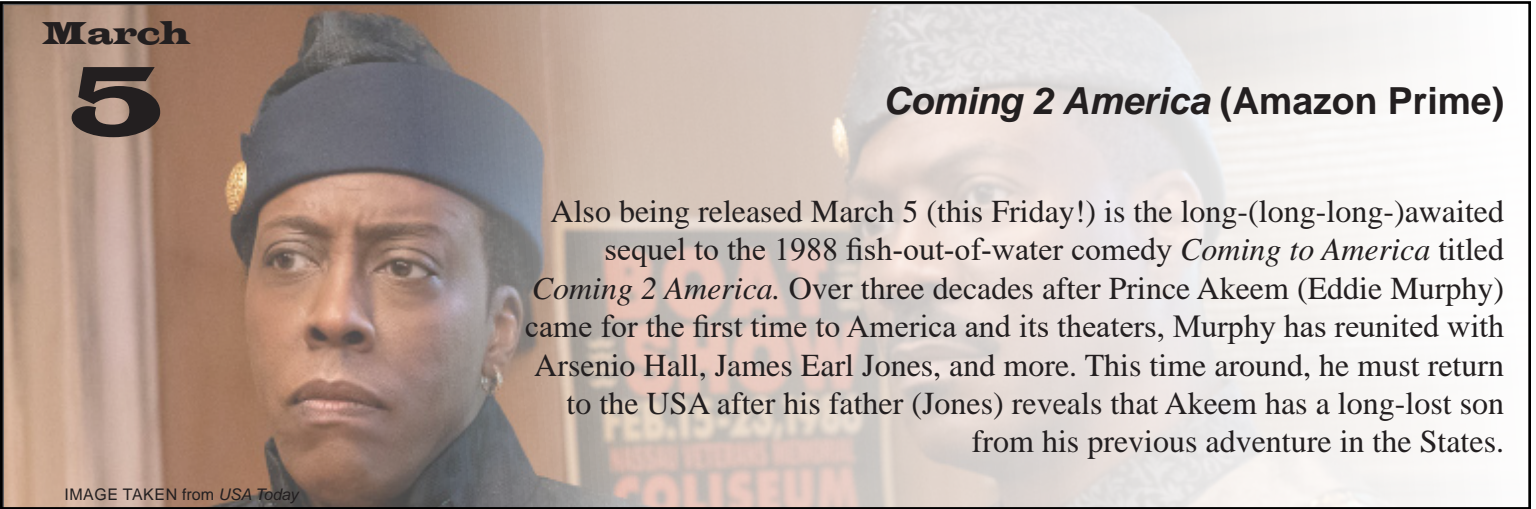
March  
5

***Raya and the Last Dragon* (Disney+)**  
  
Disney’s newest animated film is *Raya and the Last Dragon*, a gorgeous-looking and colorful story set in the land of Kumandra, an analogue for Southeast Asia. *Raya* is made up of an all-star cast of Asian-American voice actors, including Sandra Oh, Awkwafina, Daniel Dae Kim, and Kelly Marie Tran in the title role.

A close-up of the character Raya, a young woman with long brown hair, wearing a traditional woven conical hat and a red garment with gold trim. She has a determined expression. IMAGE TAKEN from Cinema Express

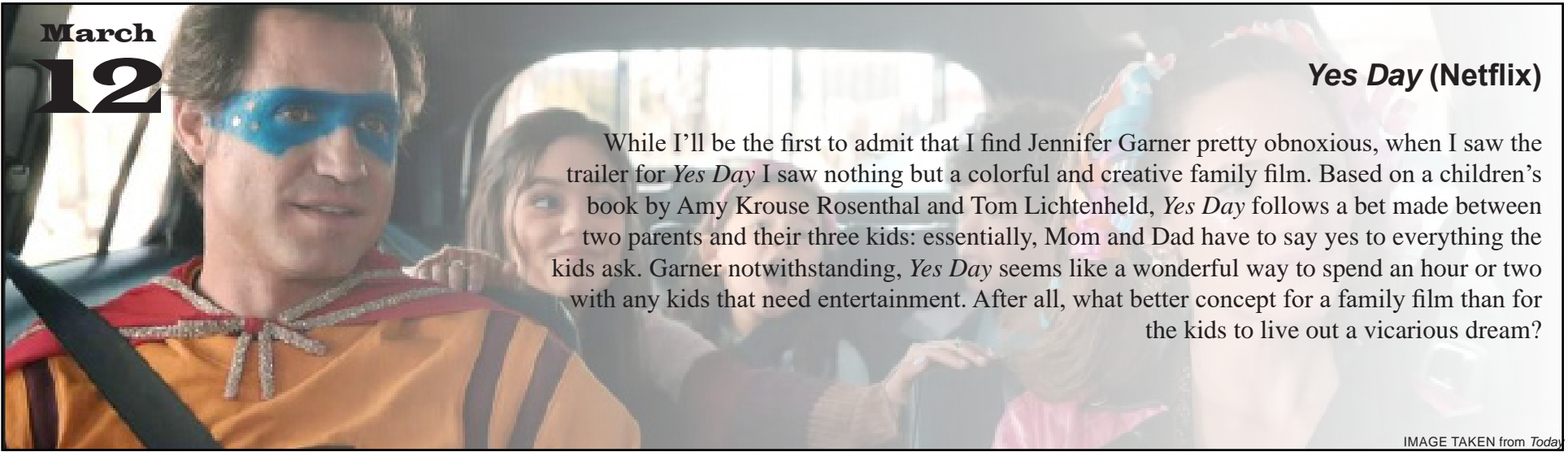
March  
5

***Coming 2 America* (Amazon Prime)**  
  
Also being released March 5 (this Friday!) is the long-(long-long-)awaited sequel to the 1988 fish-out-of-water comedy *Coming to America* titled *Coming 2 America*. Over three decades after Prince Akeem (Eddie Murphy) came for the first time to America and its theaters, Murphy has reunited with Arsenio Hall, James Earl Jones, and more. This time around, he must return to the USA after his father (Jones) reveals that Akeem has a long-lost son from his previous adventure in the States.

A close-up of Eddie Murphy as Prince Akeem, wearing a blue turban with a gold ornament. He has a serious expression. IMAGE TAKEN from USA Today

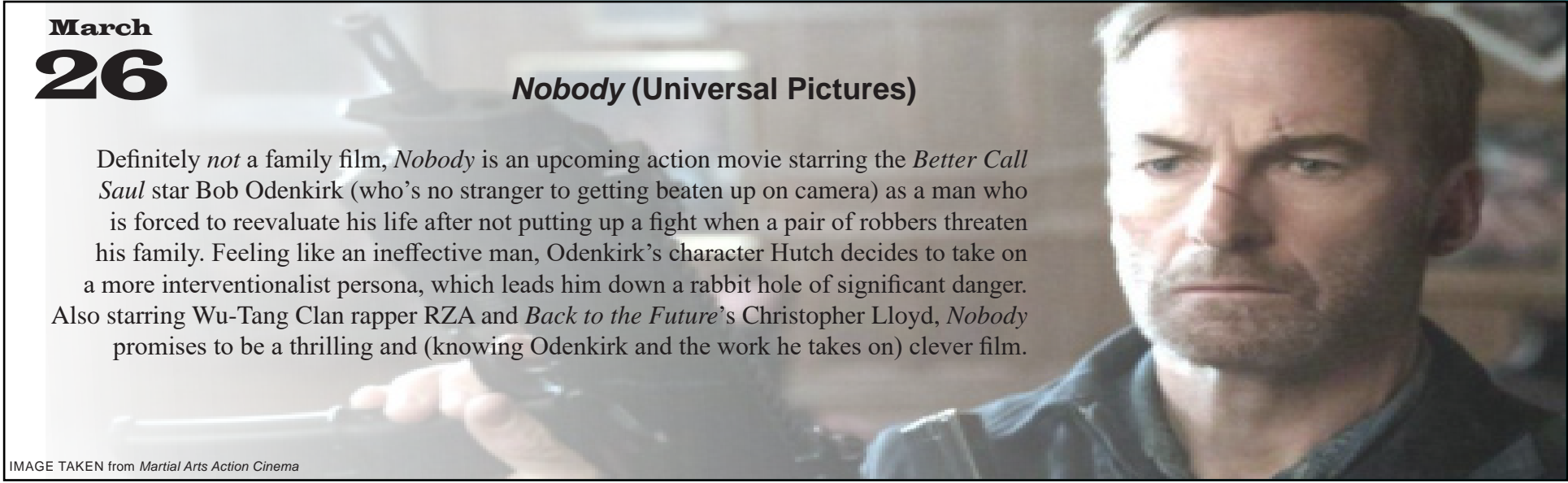
March  
12

***Yes Day* (Netflix)**  
  
While I’ll be the first to admit that I find Jennifer Garner pretty obnoxious, when I saw the trailer for *Yes Day* I saw nothing but a colorful and creative family film. Based on a children’s book by Amy Krouse Rosenthal and Tom Lichtenheld, *Yes Day* follows a bet made between two parents and their three kids: essentially, Mom and Dad have to say yes to everything the kids ask. Garner notwithstanding, *Yes Day* seems like a wonderful way to spend an hour or two with any kids that need entertainment. After all, what better concept for a family film than for the kids to live out a vicarious dream?

A man in a superhero costume with a blue mask and a red and orange suit is driving a car. In the background, a woman and two children are visible. IMAGE TAKEN from Today

March  
26

***Nobody* (Universal Pictures)**  
  
Definitely *not* a family film, *Nobody* is an upcoming action movie starring the *Better Call Saul* star Bob Odenkirk (who’s no stranger to getting beaten up on camera) as a man who is forced to reevaluate his life after not putting up a fight when a pair of robbers threaten his family. Feeling like an ineffective man, Odenkirk’s character Hutch decides to take on a more interventionalist persona, which leads him down a rabbit hole of significant danger. Also starring Wu-Tang Clan rapper RZA and *Back to the Future*’s Christopher Lloyd, *Nobody* promises to be a thrilling and (knowing Odenkirk and the work he takes on) clever film.

A close-up of Bob Odenkirk as Hutch, looking serious and holding a handgun. IMAGE TAKEN from Martial Arts Action Cinema

March  
31

***Godzilla vs. Kong* (HBO Max)**  
  
Finally, at the end of the month we will have the answer to one of the most profoundly important and consequential questions of the past century: Who would win, Godzilla or King Kong? The long-hyped and monster-packed kaiju film will be the 36th Godzilla movie and the 12th King Kong movie. It’s been a very long and unpredictable year, and that has largely not been a fun experience. However, one prediction that will no doubt bring joy to many is guessing whether a giant nuclear lizard or a sentient building-sized ape will come out the victor. Personally? My money is on the monkey.

A large monster, Kong, is shown in a city setting, surrounded by fire and destruction. IMAGE TAKEN from USA Today



# U.S. Government Puts Snowy Owls in Danger

RIYA AJMERA  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

More than 3 million acres of protected habitat of the northern spotted owl in the Pacific Northwest was removed by the Trump Administration and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) on Jan. 13.

“We, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), revise the designation of critical habitat for the northern spotted owl (*Strix occidentalis caurina*) under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (Act) by excluding approximately 3,472,064 acres (1,405,094 hectares),” as stated in the Federal Register, “The Daily Journal of the United States Government,” by the Fish and Wildlife Service.

The plan eliminates habitat across Washington, California, and Oregon to benefit timber industries. Aurelia Skipwith, the Director of the Fish and Wildlife Service, said in a U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service press release, “These common-sense revisions ensure we are continuing to recover the northern spotted owl while being a good neighbor to rural communities within the critical habitat.”

Matthew Filosa, political science student, represents one individual who was unknowing of the plan.

“I was not aware of this specific action regarding the spotted owls, but I was aware of the Trump administration implementing environmental rollbacks even at the end of the term,” said Filosa.

Many are not supportive of the plan administered without expectation and was viewed as harmful to the already dwindling population of the snowy owl and environment.

Randall Abate, Ph.D. the Rechnitz Family and Urban Coast Institute Endowed Chair in Marine and Environmental Law and Policy at Monmouth, has focused on environmental law and policy for three decades within his career.

“This massive slash of critical habitat for a listed species under the Endangered Species Act is unprecedented. At a time when this species was a candidate to be ‘uplisted’ from ‘threatened’

to ‘endangered’ status for more protection under the Act, this decision to eliminate an enormous swath of critical habitat for this species shows callous indifference toward the purpose of the Endangered Species Act,” said Abate.

“All of the Trump administration’s actions to undermine environmental protection were undertaken in the interest of short-term economic interests, which is dangerous to the long-term sustainability of human and non-human life that our environmental laws are designed to support,” added Abate.

Nancy Mezey, Ph.D., Dean of the Honors School and Profes-

sor of Sociology, said that The *New York Times* ran an article about the northern spotted owl on Jan. 13. Given what was happening at the time with the storming of the U.S. Capitol, the article was easy to miss.

“The Trump Administration was clearly placing the interests of capitalist industry over the interests of the environment. The U.S. Government must find ways to balance the two,” said Mezey.

She continued, “What people generally do not understand is the interconnected nature of human lives and the rest of the natural world. The loss or demise of any species will have grave

effects on all of us.”

On the basis of reasoning for the action, Dustin Ho, a sophomore studying economics and finance, said, “My knowledge is that this would benefit the timber industry and that is not justification for putting the owls at risk of extinction... The owl is listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act and should be protected.”

On the same topic, Filosa said, “This action is not justified and can have dire consequences on ecosystems and wildlife. During the Trump administration much of the rollbacks on protecting land was to access resources or do development on these lands... The land would be lost forever which means less land for wildlife to roam without encroachment in human environments and can push them to endangerment or worse extinction.”

“The main purpose of the National Fish and Wildlife Service is to serve as a conservation and protection agency that holds the best interests and wellbeing of fish and wildlife at center of their care and policies... The plan issued by the USNFWS runs contrary to their purpose,” said Mezey.

The Oregon Fish and Wildlife Office state the snowy owls are threatened, but “past trends suggest that much of the remaining unprotected habitat could disappear in 10 to 30 years.”

As of Feb. 22, it was reported that the U.S. Interior Department said they would review changes and delay the effective date of the ruling from March 16 to April 15.



IMAGE TAKEN from OPB

The Trump Administration and USFWS removed more than 3 million acres of protected habitat of the northern spotted owl.

# Implications of Raising the Federal Minimum Wage

WAGE cont. from pg. 1

with the economic landscape, but he knows we are not yet clear of the COVID pandemic. He said that the Federal Reserve estimates unemployment to be over 10 percent when individuals that have dropped out of the labor market are considered.

“Furthermore, data suggest that the industries with the highest unemployment levels also have the largest percentages of low-wage employees. An increased minimum wage may very well lead to longer unemployment, lower work hours or hiring, and increased layoffs for low-wage workers,” said Roberts.

He then said that the most appropriate time to weigh the cost and benefits of a minimum wage increase will be after the economy has recovered from the COVID-shock.

An anonymous business partner said that any time costs are increased it brings in challenges. They said the market for applicants becomes smaller, which makes recruiting more difficult.

“Retaining the great employees also becomes a challenge. Not only do the great employees require

higher pay, but we also need to find other ways to engage and motivate like bonus rewards or other incentives,” said Anonymous.

They also said that every business is different, but they all must adapt and innovate to continue to generate sales. They said that automation and other forms of technology will play a huge part in who stays in business and who does not.

“Price increases can only get you so far when the store up the road has similar product for a cheaper price. The majority of consumers will flock to the stores with the lowest prices, who usually have the highest buying power, rather than visiting the local guy,” said Anonymous.

The anonymous source also said that they are planning to keep their business around for a long time to be able to support both their employees and their community. They said that they are lucky to be part of a company that shares the same values.

“Finding and keeping team members who have the same vision and core priorities will continue to be high priority moving forward. It always comes down to people,” said Anonymous. “Providing exceptional products and services every day will



IMAGE TAKEN from KTVE

There are pros and cons to a raise in the federal minimum wage, currently at \$7.25 an hour, to \$15 an hour.

not change. How we provide those services and products will continue to evolve.”

However, some workers currently believe that the minimum wage should increase. Sarah Cooper, psychology student, works at Patient First, an urgent care in Pennsylvania. She said that the minimum wage should absolutely increase considering how much the cost of living increases an-

nually and minimum wage does not.

“I’m not sure if this will really change much for my workplace. We make more than minimum wage and our wages change based on competitive salaries nearby at other healthcare facilities. It may help us if the other facilities raise their wages,” said Cooper.

Other student workers think otherwise. Timothy

Foley, communication student, works in a warehouse and feel that the minimum wage increase would do more harm than good. He does not feel that that increase would really hurt workplace, though.

“Many people do not seem to realize that when the minimum wage increases, the price of everything else will go up as well,” said Foley.



# "I Can't Hear You" Hosted by CUS

LILY HOFFMANN  
CLUB AND GREEK EDITOR

On Wednesday, Feb. 24, 2021, the sisters of Chi Upsilon Sigma hosted an event called "I Can't Hear You" as a way to bring awareness to the effects of COVID-19 on the deaf and hearing-impaired communities.

The event was moderated by CUS sisters Yarleny Mejia and Paola Reyes-Duran. The interactive event kicked off with an informative activity, which brought awareness to statistics about the hard-of-hearing community.

Participants of the event learned that American Sign Language was introduced in the United States in the year 1817 and that there are about one million Americans who speak the language that uses both facial expressions and bodily movements.

Sisters of CUS informed attendees that due to CDC guidelines like mask-wearing, those that rely on lip-reading are unable to effectively communicate. For this reason, masks with clear panels have been introduced as a way to solve this problem. However, they have not become standard.

Another adversity for the deaf community throughout the pandemic is unequal access to information, due to a lack of closed captions or

ASL translators present during news conferences. According to Reyes-Duran, "A lack of various forms of sign language translators leaves a large portion of Americans without the necessary information to understand the pandemic, and the government's plan to improve conditions in the country."

This opened up a discussion about how the University works to aid the deaf and hard of hearing community. While some believed that the University is inclusive by having a club for the deaf, others feel that the school should be doing more.

Jennifer Garcia, a sister of Lambda Theta Alpha said, "It's very hard to find, I feel

like the community doesn't really support the hard of hearing community as much as they should be."

Students in attendance were in agreement that the University should offer more classes in American Sign Language. Priya Telidevara, the president of the Multicultural Greek Council even suggested making ASL a minor as a way to encourage more students to learn the language. Other attendees suggested having an ASL interpreter present at University-sponsored events.

Thanks to the sisters of CUS, a deeper awareness of the deaf community was fostered, and students were inspired to do more to serve their hearing impaired peers.



PHOTOS TAKEN from CUS Gamma Beta  
"I Can't Hear You" was hosted virtually by Mejia (left) and Reyes-Duran (right).

# Blue Hawk Records Welcomes Another Compilation Album

ALYSSA CARDENAS  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Get ready to hear more talent from the students of Monmouth University! The University's student-run record label, Blue Hawk Records, has announced their 18th studio compilation album for the spring 2021 semester. Auditions concluded on Feb. 10 in Woods Theatre, and 20 auditions were submitted from students of all majors. Six artists were chosen for the upcoming compilation album.

Michelle Etienne, a sophomore music industry student and member of Blue Hawk Records, shared her thoughts on the upcoming album and auditions. "I thought the auditions went so well this year," she said. "We were presented with so much talent and so many amazing songs it was hard to choose only six. I'm proud of how the team came together and had a great discussion about what we wanted the album to look like and feel like and how these submissions fit and mold our vision. It was such a tough decision that came with a lot of back and forth but in the end, I think we chose six amazing artists. I can't wait to see what they do and how these songs come together!"

The artists for the 18th

compilation album are Alexander Giorgi, a senior business administration student; Brian Smith, a junior communication student at Rutgers University; Josh Heckler, a sophomore music industry student; Asad Whitehead (also known as Kid Ace), a freshman music industry student; Sarah Lambert; and Mona Ray Cobb, a junior political science student.

Blue Hawk Records is also developing a TikTok campaign in addition to music updates on their Instagram page (@bluehawkrecordsofficial).

Founded by Joe Rapolla, Assistant Professor and Chair of the Music and Theatre Department, Blue Hawk Records releases a compilation album every semester and features the top talent that the institution has to offer. A live release show takes place at the end of each semester to spotlight the artists and to celebrate the work music students poured into the record behind the scenes.

The record label is looking forward to creating this album and seeing which artists will bring new talent for upcoming semesters. Those looking to get involved in the record label can email [bluehawkrecords@gmail.com](mailto:bluehawkrecords@gmail.com).

## Upcoming Campus Events

You Won't Want To Miss These, Hawks!

### Wednesday March 3rd, 2021

- ~"Email Etiquette" hosted by Lambda Theta Phi & Chi Upsilon Sigma, 9pm
- ~ANAD Vigil hosted by Delta Phi Epsilon, 9:30pm

### Thursday March 4th, 2021

- ~Active Minds Meeting, 2:40pm
- ~Aspring Composers and Songwriters Interest Group Meeting, 8pm
- ~Body Positivity Workout hosted by Delta Phi Epsilon, 7pm

### Saturday March 6th, 2021

- ~Monmouth LEADS, 11am

### Tuesday March 9th, 2021

- ~Students in Recovery Meeting, 6pm
- ~Tuesday Night Record Club, 7:30pm



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# Field Hockey Opens the Season with a Nail-Biter

MARK D'AQUILA  
SPORTS EDITOR

The preseason poll leaders in the America East conference, Monmouth field hockey, capitalized on their season opener against Hofstra with a 2-1 come-from-behind win.

The Hawks started slow going down 1-0 in the early part of the game at the 21:47 mark off of a put-back rebound. This game was a defensive battle through and through as the score remained 1-0 heading into the locker room at half time.

However, the blue and white showed immense resilience with two unanswered goals starting with senior leader midfielder/defender Ireen Frenken who knotted the game up at the 30:42 early in the second half of play. Her goal was a strike from the top of circle executed from an assist by sophomore defender Bente Steenhorst for her second career assist.

After ten more minutes of grind-it-out defensive play sophomore midfielder Aylin Aufenacker tapped in the game-winner that came off the cross from the far end-line. Aufenacker's clutch goal was assisted by junior forward Annick van Lange whose illustrious collegiate career now has 61 points. This is now the 12th highest point total in Monmouth field hockey history.

Monmouth closed out the game with nine shots on goal compared to Hofstra's two as the defense put on



Senior midfielder Ireen Frenken tallied her first goal of the season to tie the game back up for the Hawks at 1-1 with a strike from the top of circle on the assist by sophomore defender Bente Steenhorst.

PHOTO COURTESY of Monmouth Athletics

“The girls proved yet again that their tenacity and character can change the trajectory of any game..”

CARLY FIGLIO  
Head Coach

a show led by the redshirt sophomore Ally Tarantino who made her first career goal in net allowing just one goal. MU also outshot Hofstra by a total of 15-4 overall for the entire game.

Despite earning a green card at the end of the game, they closed it out with a big stand by the defense who refused to allow anything to get to the net. Junior goal-keeper Kate O’Hogan closed out the game in net for the Hawks and got the win to improve to 22-8 for her career.

“I felt we showed well in the second half,” said head coach Carly Figlio. “The girls proved yet again that their tenacity and character can change the trajectory of any game. I am very proud of this team and happy to finally be out there playing.”

Among the MU players, two were performing in their first ever starts, junior midfielder Katie Yoder and junior forward/midfielder Aly Perez.

The victory is Monmouth’s fourth straight over the Pride improving to 4-5 in their all-time series. More impressively, it was the team’s first come-from-behind win at halftime since a victory against Cal in the conference semifinal on Nov. 8, 2019.

Coming up next on the schedule is the home opener for Monmouth as they will take on LaSalle on Sunday, Mar. 7 at 11:00 am. The game will be played at So Sweet a Cat Field as Monmouth will be looking for So Sweet a Victory.



PHOTO COURTESY of Monmouth Athletics

Monmouth field hockey will return home for their home opener against LaSalle on Sunday, Mar. 7 at So Sweet a Cat Field after starting the delayed 2020-2021 season 1-0.



# Men’s Tennis Start The Season 2-1

JACK MURPHY  
ASSOCIATE SPORTS EDITOR

Men’s tennis was selected first place in the Metro Atlantic Athletics Preseason Coaches’ Poll as they received six out of seven possible first place votes. They also won the first two of their first three matches of the season to get out to a 2-1 start.

The Hawks led the way with a total of 48 points in the poll and second place Quinnipiac only received 38 votes as well as the only other first place vote.

Following Quinnipiac was Fairfield who received 36 points. Marist and Siena took fourth and fifth in the coaches’ poll finishing with 29 and 22 points respectively. Niagara claimed the sixth spot as they received 15 points and rounding out the poll was Rider who received eight points.

They also brought back many key players from last season including fifth year Max Benaim, senior Will Cooke Wharton, fifth year Sergio Martinez and senior Charles Gortzounian.

Monmouth will also be add-

ing newcomers to the squad including junior Lucca Silva, sophomore Victor Castro, freshmen Charlie Penman and Diego Laporta.

Monmouth started off their season with a victory against Fairleigh Dickinson as they won by a score of 6-1. They lost the doubles point however responded by sweeping all six of the singles matches. Cooke Wharton, Martinez, Penman, Castro, Silva as well as sophomore Gabriel Busato. Cooke Wharton and Penman earned two wins in this matchup winning both a singles and dou-

bles match.

The Hawks also reigned victorious in their second match of the season at the Little Silver Tennis Club against Colgate as they won by a score of 6-1. Cooke Wharton and Penman both earned themselves another two wins in the Hawks victorious effort in this matchup. Other players who earned victories in this one was Castro, Martinez and Busato.

This past Sunday, the Hawks suffered their first loss against Army at West Point by a score of 4-3. The six matches of singles competition were

split with three wins per school. Earning the victories for Monmouth were Cooke Wharton, Penman and Martinez. The winner was then decided in the doubles where Monmouth was swept making them fall to a 2-1 record.

Up next for the Hawks is two road matchups this upcoming weekend. First, they will head to Newark, Delaware where they will be facing the University of Delaware on Friday, Mar. 5 at noon. Then on Saturday they have a 2:00 pm contest scheduled against Bucknell.



PHOTOS COURTESY of Monmouth Athletics

Men’s tennis started off the season with a record of 2-1 after being selected first overall in the Coaches’ Preseason Poll with a total of six first place votes.

# MAAC Golf Preseason Rankings Released

ERIN MULLIGAN  
STAFF WRITER

On February 22, conference officials announced that the Monmouth University men’s and women’s golf teams were selected seventh in the Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference (MAAC) Preseason Poll.

In the ranking, the Monmouth University men’s golf team earned 26 votes.

Iona was picked to win the league

The women’s team had five first-place markers and was one of four teams that received a first-place vote.

Monmouth University men’s golf was selected seventh in the MAAC Preseason Poll, conference officials announced Monday morning. The blue and white tallied 26 votes in the ranking.

Iona was chosen to win

the league with five first-place markers, one of four teams that received a first-place vote. Rider received two top-spot markers, while Saint Peter’s and Siena also did. Canisius and Fairfield topped the Hawks, with MU chosen ahead of Manhattan and Niagara.

MU Head Coach Bill Britton enters his second season at the helm of the Hawks, and returns his entire roster

minus one golfer.

Monmouth University Women’s Golf was chosen seventh in the MAAC Preseason Poll, league officials announced Monday morning. The Hawks received 38 votes in the poll from the conference’s head coaches.

Albany was selected to win the league with five first-place votes, one of four teams that received a first-place tally. Quinnipiac got

two votes in the top spot, while Dayton and Hartford did as well. Siena and Rider preceded Monmouth in the ranking, with the Hawks topping Niagara and LaSalle.

Monmouth comes off a season in which they won three tournaments as a team, and return the entire roster from 2019-2020. Head coach Michelle Melia enters her third season at the helm of the blue and white.



PHOTOS COURTESY of Monmouth Athletics

Men’s and Women’s golf were selected seventh in the Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference (MAAC) Preseason Poll.





# ***STICKING IT TO EM***



Field hockey pulled out the win in a 2-1 defensive battle led by sophomore midfielder Aylin Aufenacker against Hofstra after placing first in the preseason polls.