

The Outlook

Monmouth University's Student-Run Newspaper EST. 1933

April 9, 2025

Monmouth University

West Long Branch

New Jersey

VOL. 97 No. 20

STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION (SGA) HOSTS "RALLY FOR STUDENTS RIGHTS"



PHOTO TAKEN by Henry Boody.

SGA President Tanner Purdy providing opening remarks at the "Rally for Students Rights."

TAYLOR MEMOLI
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF/NEWS EDITOR

Members of Monmouth's Student Government Association (SGA)—as well as an estimated 200 students, faculty, and administrators—stood on the front steps of the Great Hall on Apr. 2 in support of SGA and their new resolution (SGA.RES.S25-01) during their "Rally for Students' Rights."

The new resolution, passed on Feb. 5, urges faculty to use eCampus, specifically to upload midterm grades. Since the passage, SGA has received pushback from Monmouth's faculty union, FAMCO, who said, "We want to take the time here to reiterate to all students that we fully support grade transparency in our classes. We love teaching our students, and their success is our priority. It's why we do what we do. It's also why we negotiated a union contract that enshrines grade transparency in our classes as an important value and a requirement of all full-time faculty," in their open letter published in "The Outlook."

The morning of the rally, President Patrick Leahy sent out an email to members of the Monmouth community showing his support for SGA. The email was signed by Leahy; Richard Veit, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs; Pedram Daneshgar, Chair of the Faculty Council; and John Comiskey, Vice Chair of the Faculty Council.

"As a student-centered institution," Leahy wrote, "Monmouth University is committed to continually improving the learning conditions of its students. The administration, along with our colleagues on Faculty Council, support

our students' request for grading transparency, and we are committed to working to ensure that students receive timely and thoughtful feedback on their work in accordance with our collective bargaining agreement (CBA)."

He went on to explain how, in a new effort, an increase in eCampus involvement is in the works.

He continued, "We will continue to work with the faculty union on the possibility of a Memorandum of Agreement to support these efforts between contract negotiations. In the meantime, we propose the following as next steps to address the concerns raised by the SGA regarding online grading. Monmouth University is committed to voluntarily achieving a 90% participation rate in the use of online gradebooks through our learning management system by the end of the fall 2025 semester."

"This morning, we received the endorsement of the administration and the faculty council which is huge towards our goal," explained Brendan Sheehan, SGA Senator & Director of Public Relations. "We received commitments from the University and the faculty council to work towards 90% compliance, while also working with our faculty union to get a memorandum of understanding so it is required. We are confident we are moving in the right direction, and this here today is a sign of that."

Tanner Purdy, SGA President, added, "I want students to know that the SGA is here to ensure that your voices are heard on issues central to your Monmouth experience. No matter the issue, it is our goal to engage with you to work through the problem."

"Rally for Students Rights"
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“Rally for Students Rights”

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Purdy also commented on FAMCO and their opposition to the resolution, saying, “I would be remiss if I did not mention that FAMCO’s lack of action on the concerns of over 900 students is what drove this issue into becoming a campus-wide debate. I say that not to diminish the role or importance of FAMCO. In fact, I am personally pro-union, and as the son of a former union president, I greatly value collective bargaining and fair representation.”

Purdy continued by saying that it saddens him that some faculty members think that SGA is anti-union. He said, “However, that perception demonstrates the extent to which students felt ignored, and the extraordinary measures we had to take to be heard. Make no mistake, our escalation was driven by the downplaying and dismissing of the concerns of our peers. I want our entire community to know that students made this happen, and students can do it again. Students have the power to advocate for themselves, and when we do so with unity and purpose, we can make change. By working together, building



PHOTO TAKEN by Henry Boody.

Attendees photographed outside the Great Hall.

partnerships, and standing firm in our values, we can ensure fair policies that uplift our entire community without compromising the well-being of students.”

The rally was flooded with signs, some stating “eCampus: I pay for it, faculty chose it, use it!” and “When FAMCO needed support, the students marched. When the student union needed support FAMCO’s E-Board turned their back.” The audience cheered for the SGA members and booed at times when Aidan Murray and Sherly Gonzalez-Lopez—Director of University Affairs and Director of Finance, respectively—shared student testimonials from various grades and majors that consisted of experiences with professors not using the eCampus for

their grades. Along with members speaking, Sheehan; Eliana Duarte, SGA Vice President; and Professor John Burke, Specialist Professor in Economics, Finance, and Real Estate; spoke at the podium. Sheehan and Duarte discussed their future campaigns to run for SGA President next year and how this issue will be at the forefront of their campaigns, while Burke voiced his support for SGA and what they are doing.

Several participants in the audience expressed their motivations for backing SGA and what prompted them to attend the rally.

“I think it is ridiculous that this is even an issue,” explained Phillip Pussilano, sophomore Homeland Security major. “We pay good money to go to this

school, we should be able to get grades in the grade book.”

Frank Dige, a freshman Political Science major, expressed his first-hand experience with professors not using eCampus already as a freshman. “I came just because I think it is an important issue,” he said. “I certainly like to know grades, and I’ve had teachers already who have struggled to put stuff in the books. I came out because it is a cause I believe in, and I have a lot of friends in Student Government who I know are working hard for this, so I came out to support.”

“We are here because the [FAMCO] E-Board refused to even hear our side out,” expressed Mariami Ramirez Tsuladze, junior Anthropology major. “SGA is the student

union, and students stood for FAMCO. We even marched for them. We asked for one thing, and they just declined the student union to even hear them out. It’s really the E-Board’s fault, not the whole organization.”

SGA’s petition in support of the resolution currently has an estimated 1,300 signatures, and SGA still plans to fight for their cause long after the rally.

“The Rally for Students’ Rights demonstrated that the students at Monmouth University have a voice, and that we can use that voice for change,” concluded Matthew Gold, SGA President Pro-Tempore. “It was incredible to see the outpouring of support from students and faculty alike who all came together to demand the transparency and accountability that we deserve.”

Student-run book club in the beginning stages of development

MEGHAN REILLY
STAFF WRITER

A book club, proposed by sophomore Finance and Political Science major Aiden Fornicola, is in the works here at Monmouth. The club’s aim is to cultivate a shared love of language and literacy through reading, book discussions, and activities like author visits and working closely with other clubs and social forums.

While there are other book clubs on campus, Fornicola wanted to create a student-led space for avid and new readers alike. “I really enjoy talking about a book after I finish it, but oftentimes there is nobody for me to talk about it with,” Fornicola said. “So starting an active book club has always been a secret wish of mine.”

Fornicola hopes the book club will serve as a

productive alternative to digital distractions. “We as a generation are waking up and realizing that ‘doom-scrolling’ just isn’t that fun anymore; we need healthier alternatives to fill our free time. I think a book club is the perfect solution to the ‘brain rot’ problem we are currently dealing with.”

Fornicola is not alone in his efforts. University Librarian Kurt Wagner backs this endeavor completely. “For several reasons, it is a challenge to read for pleasure,” Wagner said. “So when student Aiden Fornicola and Dr. Rekha Datta approached me with a book club idea, and Aiden discussed it as a way to, perhaps, spark a renewed interest in reading books, so I was quick to join the effort.”

Dr. Rekha Datta, Professor of Political Science and Author, joined Fornicola in his efforts during the idea’s

beginning stages. Fornicola joined the Debate Team and Datta on their recent trip to India, where they observed a more significant focus on literacy. “The idea germinated among and from students when we were on College Street in Kolkata, India,” said Datta. “College Street, with its rows of bookshops and street-side used and rare book stalls, is a haven for book lovers. I was very impressed to see how our students immediately fell in love with the place and from then on, have kept up discussions of books of all genres.”

This interest is worth reigniting, as the interest is already evident on campus. Professor Beth Sara Swanson, English Lecturer and faculty advisor for Monmouth’s chapter of Sigma Tau Delta, the International English Honors Society, has seen how Sig Tau’s recent efforts demonstrate a growing readership on campus. “The popularity of Sigma Tau Delta’s ‘Blind Date with a Book’ on Valentine’s Day confirmed

that there’s a palpable interest in reading that extends beyond the boundaries of a single major into our whole campus community,” said Swanson.

In recognition of this readership, Fornicola envisions expanding interest through partnerships with other clubs, one example being Sigma Tau Delta. Through themed readings, author visits, and discussions, Fornicola aims to inspire student engagement regardless of whether they have the time to read the book. “When two groups that share such an investment in promoting literacy across campus come together, it really elevates the vibration and expands our outreach far beyond what we could accomplish individually,” said Swanson. “Nothing brings people together quite like a book club. Stories are very powerful things.”

Both Wagner and Datta can attest to this. As an author herself, Dr. Datta hopes that the book club will create stronger

readers and stronger students. “My graduate school advisor used to say ‘good reading leads to good writing.’ I have always tried to follow that advice,” she said. “I want my students to become strong writers and good reading is critical in that formative process.”

While there are constant efforts to increase library attendance and use of resources, Wagner is confident that this will increase how people approach library services. “There is so much about a Library that cannot be replaced with a Google search. A book club provides a good opportunity for an in-person conversation, and that’s a marvelous way to interact and experience a community of ideas like none other.”

While the book club is in its beginning stages, Fornicola, alongside support from the library and other faculty, hopes for the club to be open for new members and executive officers by next Fall. Students who wish to join this new chapter can contact Aiden Fornicola.



PHOTO TAKEN by Matthew Boyle.

Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) to visit Monmouth University

LORELAI HILARCZYK
ENTERTAINMENT EDITOR

The Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) will visit Monmouth University (MU) on Apr. 6 through 9 as part of the reaffirmation accreditation process.

MSCHE is a global institution of education that “ensures accountability, self-appraisal, improvement, and innovation through peer review and the rigorous application of standards within the context of institutional mission,” according to their website.

The evaluators consist of colleagues from institutions across the region. Their goal is to verify that MU meets the needs and expectations of the students to lead them to academic excellence, and furthermore evaluate how the University functions, including formal academics and student life.

Patrick Walden, Co-Chair of Accreditation at MU, explained that MSCHE concerns quality assurance and public trust. He explained that one of those purposes is “Eligibility for Federal Funding,” which includes Pell Grants, federal student loans (Stafford and PLUS loans), and federal research grants. “This is crucial. Maintaining accreditation is a requirement for the university and its students to be eligible for federal financial aid programs... Without accreditation, access to these essential funds would be lost, significantly impacting affordability for many students,” Walden said.

Walden also explained that this process benefits students’ daily experiences by providing access to financial aid to pay for housing, books, and tuition. These add to the quality of education and resources like qualified faculty, academic advising, library resources, labs and technology, and more. An accredited institution also adds to the value of a student’s

degree and allows for a more recognized and respected organization.

The qualities and dynamics of MU will be reviewed by evaluators and then presented over two days. On Apr. 7, an Open Session with the Evaluation Team will be at 3:30 p.m. in Pollak Theatre and an Oral Summary of the Team’s Findings on Apr. 9 at 9:15 a.m. in the Great Hall Auditorium.

President Patrick Leahy sent an email to the student body expressing how this will be conducted. “They’ll engage with students, faculty, staff, and University leadership to evaluate how well we live up to our mission: advancing academic excellence, supporting student success, and provisioning inclusive access to higher education,” Leahy wrote.

The mission of Monmouth is defined in a 168-page “Self-Study Report” made available to students and faculty through email on Thursday, Apr. 3. The report is divided into eight sections, including an executive summary which focuses on MU’s mission, core values, strategic plan, and the self-study process.

The aspiration of Monmouth is listed as the following, “By 2026, Monmouth University will be a national leader in integrating excellence and access by becoming the most highly ranked (US News & World Report – Regional Universities North) institution with our access measures (Pell eligibility) in our category (private, non-sectarian, Division I).”

MU’s core values are detailed in the report also, which are “Excellence in Teaching and Learning, Caring Campus Characterized by Mutual Respect, Personal and Professional Integrity, Diversity, Service, and Empowerment of University Community,” as stated on page 11.

Brendan Sheehan, Student Government Association (SGA) Director of Public Relations, explained how he has had a variety of academic experiences, inside and

outside of the classroom, that directly align with these values.

“The faculty members I have had during my time at Monmouth have been highly qualified, intelligent, and dedicated to student success. I share the belief that our campus, and the people that walk its grounds, are caring. This is the kind of community where people hold the door open for one another, smile as they pass and have a general demeanor of care and respect for students, faculty and staff,” Sheehan said.

He explained that whether it’s education or community

“The faculty members I have had during my time at Monmouth have been highly qualified, intelligent, and dedicated to student success. I share the belief that our campus, and the people that walk its grounds, are caring.”

- Brendan Sheehan, Student Government Association (SGA) Director of Public Relations

service with organizations like SGA, fraternities, sororities, or even groups like the Debate Team, Monmouth is doing a lot to build the community and contribute to the good of the world.

“There are always areas for the university, and its stakeholders, to improve. I think to continue support for the pillars they’ve listed, Monmouth should continue placing emphasis on community service and giving back,” Sheehan explained.

Within Theme 2 of the

Strategic Plan titled “Enhance the Student Experience,” MU is actively trying to engage students to form meaningful relationships and strive for personal growth, as Sheehan explained. Walden attested to the same saying that across all levels of study, students take the initiative and build on deeper connections.

“While my primary focus is on graduate education, I regularly see how undergraduates build community and develop a strong sense of purpose here at Monmouth. Student-led clubs, affinity groups, and student media, like ‘The Outlook,’ serve as training grounds where students learn to collaborate, manage responsibilities, and express their values in tangible ways,” Walden said.

Along with all the strengths Monmouth has achieved, such as campus infrastructures like the construction of the Bruce Springsteen Archives & Center for American Music, the Center for Student Success, and the Career Development Center, there’s still room for growth.

The report lists MU’s challenges; one in particular is “Financial Sustainability: The heavy reliance on tuition revenue creates vulnerabilities in an increasingly competitive and price-sensitive higher education market (Standard 6).” MU lists in the “Opportunities for Ongoing Institutional Improvement and Innovation” section that this can be achieved by continuing to evaluate administrative and academic operations so that they can increase efficiency and reduce costs. Currently, MU relies heavily on tuition-based income, reducing this financial dependency through external grants, corporate, or sponsorship partnerships is their goal.

Leahy said, “Growing non-tuition revenue, mostly through gifts and grants, will ease the pressure to raise tuition in the years to come. However, as costs continue to increase, it is very likely that gross tuition will continue to see annual increases. We try to keep these increases as modest as possible. For example, this year’s increase is the 3rd lowest in the last 50 years.”

Monmouth also states in its

report that one of its areas of focus is “developing academic programs to enhance MU’s marketability and reputation as a leader in specialized fields of study.” As Walden explained, “Accreditation ensures that academic programs are well-designed, regularly reviewed, and focused on achieving specific student learning outcomes. This means your courses and major should provide you with the knowledge and skills they promise.”

In enhancing these programs, MU is looking into programs for future career opportunities that students can take advantage of after graduating.

Richard Viet, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs said, “We are exploring how we might partner with Netflix when they come to Fort Monmouth through a program in film industry. We are also looking at ways to make Monmouth’s graduate programs more accessible to students by developing online pathways to degree completion.”

Between academic development, brand enhancement, finances, and MU’s overall community, the MSCHE board will look for evidence that the University meets the goals and objectives described, and can continue to meet them in the future.

Both Walden and Leahy encourage students to hear MSCHE’s findings after their on-site visit. “Your warm reception and assistance to the evaluation team—and their work—can make a lasting impression on our guests and reflect the best of who we are as an institution,” Leahy wrote in an email to students and faculty.

After reviewing the topics discussed above and the entirety of the “Self-Study Report,” had the chance to hear student input on campus, and evaluate the systems the university has in place regarding teaching effectiveness, the team will write a report citing their findings and recommendations.

The MSCHE commission will review the material and make the final decision on the reaffirmation of accreditation around June of this year.

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MU Fitness Center should extend their hours

EDITORIAL STAFF

The MU Fitness Center is a great resource for students and faculty to be able to access for free, whether people are lifting weights, running on the treadmill, playing basketball, etc. There are a variety of different activities that people can participate in in the fitness center to stay physically and mentally fit.

Although the fitness center is an amazing resource that the school offers, the facility is not accessible anytime after 10 p.m. Monday-Thursday, 9 p.m. on Fridays, 5 p.m. on Saturdays, and 7 p.m. on Sundays.

With these early closing times, it can make it hard for students with jobs or classes to focus on during the day to be able to fit in time to get to the gym.

When asked if the fitness center should extend their hours, one editor said, "I do think the gym should extend their hours. While I don't personally use the gym on campus, a lot of people have classes all day and can't make it to the gym before closing. Extending the hours would allow for a lot of flexibility for students to get out of class or work and be able to workout."

Another editor shared a similar opinion, saying, "I think they should extend their hours. Some students, including myself, have later classes and obligations dur-

ing the week that keep me from attending the gym. If the hours were longer on the weekends (especially Saturday), it would help my busy schedule."

A different editor said, "I think the weekend hours need to be extended, I believe 6 a.m.-10 p.m. are good hours for a school gym during the week but I'd like to see additional hours during the weekend."

The fitness center has some student employees, so extending hours would probably mean that more students would have the opportunity to get on-campus jobs.

When asked if they believed that the fitness center would be able to get enough hours covered by student employees to extend the facilities hours, one editor said, "I'm sure there are students who could cover those hours and who want to work after class to make some extra money. Being a college student is hard enough when it comes to finances, so everyone needs to make ends meet around here."

Another editor said, "Yes, I think with the budget cuts that slashed my student's hours or even jobs, having the fitness center open later would allow more students to have an on-campus job. I think they would have no problem finding people to work."

A different editor said, "I

would assume so, there are always students looking for on-campus jobs and I think the university would be able to find people to staff it."

The earlier closing times on the weekends seem to be looked at more negatively than the 10 p.m. closing time Monday-Thursday. When asked if the weekend closing times are reasonable, an editor said, "No. I understand a lot of people go home on the weekends, but maybe part of the reason is things are closed and/or close early. I believe the gym should be open later on the weekends so students can spend their days out and about and use the gym at night."

A different editor said, "Not really. I wish they were longer because that is when a majority of people have free time to use for their personal needs."

The lack of accessible gym hours has some students going elsewhere to workout. One editor said, "I don't use the Monmouth gym anymore because I prefer going at night, so I got a different membership."

Many students are busy during the day with important obligations and only can go to the gym at later times. Students are looking for jobs on campus, if Monmouth University extended hours of the fitness center, this would make gym-goers happy and open up more jobs on campus for students.



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Yondr bags are dumb

FINN SHATRAW
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

What is the craze with Yondr Bags? First there is the cost, around 25-30 dollars per student, most schools require the student to pay for the cost or use a massive chunk of their budget for this new 'tech'.

What even is a Yondr Bag? It is a cloth pouch with a magnet and a locking device where students are required to put their phones in. No one can get in without an unlocking device, not students, not staff.

That might seem like a good idea till one thinks about it in a critical sense, there are no exceptions, not for students with disabilities where they might need it in case of an emergency or students with home issues, like family in the hospital where they might need access for updates and calls for worse case situations.

Unfortunately on a darker side, students might need it in case of a school shooting, not allowing students to have their phone in order to call for help is insane. Also the timely issues are present when considering students

have to wait for a member of the staff to unlock their phones at the end of school. This leads to massive pile up and a scramble to be in the designated spot for Yondr Bag unlocking.

Yes, the idea of phones not being easily accessible in the classroom sounds good in today's society, but with that being said in certain circumstances it is too important to have easy access to a phone.

Some may bring up the fact that these pouches are used to provide a non phone learning experience, phones can be a distraction in class, but fully confiscating an individual's phone that they own is insane.



IMAGE TAKEN BY everyondr.com.

Torpedo bats should not be allowed in MLB

DYLAN LANE
STAFF WRITER

The torpedo bat is a new and attention-grabbing innovation in Major League Baseball (MLB), known for its unusual shape and its ability to boost player performance. It was created in response to falling batting averages across the league. Unlike traditional bats, the torpedo bat has more weight shifted closer to the hands and a barrel that's wider and rounder—kind of like a torpedo or bowling pin. This design helps line up the bat's sweet spot with the area where hitters usually make contact, making it easier to hit the ball harder and more effectively.

The New York Yankees have been at the forefront of adopting the torpedo bat. Players such as Anthony Volpe, Jazz Chisholm Jr., Cody Bellinger, Paul Goldschmidt, and Austin Wells have incorporated it into their game play. During the opening series of the 2025 season, these players collectively hit nine home runs using the torpedo bat, contributing to the Yankees' record-tying 15 home runs in their first three games. Bellinger noted, "Personally, the weight is closer to my hands, so I feel as if it's lighter in a way. For me, that was the biggest benefit. Obviously, the bigger the sweet spot, the bigger the margin for error."

The idea of the torpedo bat is credited to Aaron Leanhardt, a former physicist from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). Leanhardt transitioned from academics to baseball, joining the New York Yankees' coaching staff. His scientific approach led to the creation of this innovative bat, tailored to each player's hitting



PHOTO TAKEN BY Michael Gruseke.

zone while fitting to MLB regulations. Leanhardt's work underscores the integration of data analysis and player collaboration in today's sports.

The torpedo bat has also sparked discussions regarding its impact on the game. While some view it as a natural evolution of equipment, others question its fairness. Brewers closer Trevor Megill commented, "I think it's terrible. We'll see what the data says. I've never seen anything like it before."

The torpedo bat should be banned because it creates an unnatural advantage that threatens the integrity of the game. Its redesigned shape—with more mass near the handle and an oversized sweet spot—makes it significantly easier for hitters to drive the ball with power and consistency. This isn't just a slight edge—it's a game-changer.

Baseball has been played the same for over a century and now is not the time for change. Pitchers in today's game face many disadvantages as the whole controversy behind the

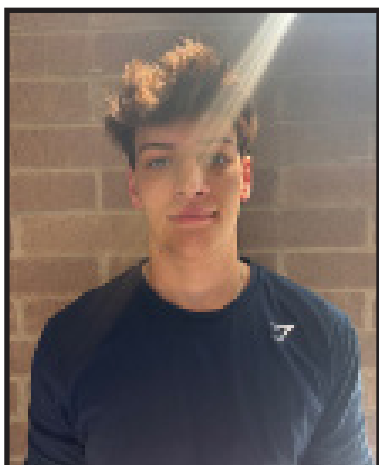
balls being juiced. The Yankees, who led the way in using the bat, hit a record-tying 15 home runs in their first three games of the 2025 season as mentioned before and almost tied the most home runs hit in a game, when they hit 9 home runs against the Brewers on March 29. That kind of offensive explosion doesn't happen by chance—it's a direct result of using equipment that gives hitters more margin for error and more power with less effort.

In conclusion, while the torpedo bat may seem like a smart innovation, it ultimately gives certain players and teams an unfair advantage that could harm the integrity of the game. Its design makes it easier to hit for power and consistency, which can inflate stats and overshadow skill. On top of that, only wealthier teams have access to the technology and resources needed to use it, creating an uneven playing field. To keep the game fair and competitive for everyone, Major League Baseball should strongly consider banning the torpedo bat.



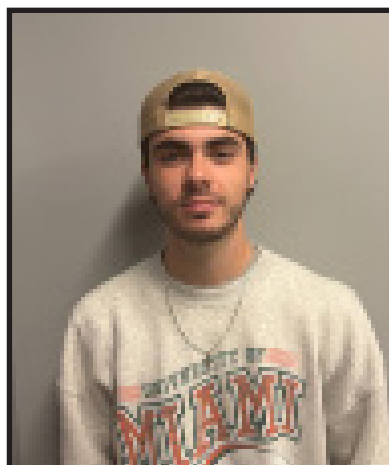
INTERVIEWED BY
MICHAEL GRUSEKE

Should torpedo bats be allowed?



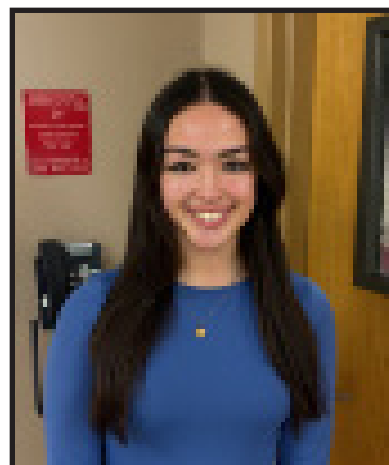
"It's good for batters who get jammed and overall exciting for baseball."

- Mason L.



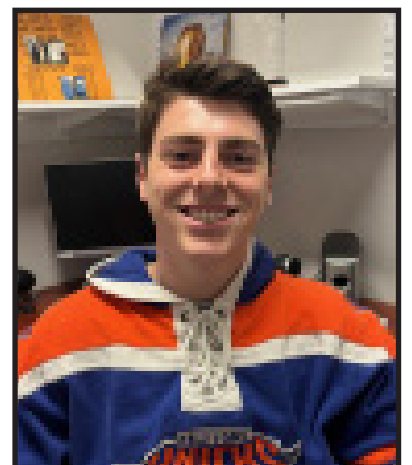
"I am all for the torpedo bats. If all the teams have the ability to use them I don't see how it is negative."

- Bayden D.



"I don't think torpedo bats are fair because everyone should be using the same type of bat to keep the game equal for everyone."

- Leila C.



"If you're not going to juice the balls, juice the bats. You can't be mad about it because any team can use them."

- Luke M.

HawkTank spotlight: Talking with Friends

AVA MCGINTY
FEATURES EDITOR

Practicing social situations can be very important for people who are on the autism spectrum. Ashley Zingillioglu, senior English student, recognizes that and upon researching it, discovered that there is a lack of interactive social stories (ISS), specifically tailored to teach socio-communication skills to middle and high school aged people on the autism spectrum. That is why Zingillioglu created her first product “Talking with Friends.”

The product uses digital storytelling to enable players to practice real-life conversational scenarios without the pressures of a face-to-face chat. This provides users the opportunity to develop social skills, minimizing the fear of potentially awkward encounters.

“I grew up with a brother on the spectrum, so when I came to Monmouth University, I was already interested in solving real-world issues

that impact students with autism. When I began working with Dr. Erik Raj and Dr. Yao Du on speech-related research, I noticed the absence of any ISS tailored to teach socio-communicative skills to middle and high school students on the autism spectrum,” explained Zingillioglu.

“Middle-school and high-school students on the autism spectrum require scaffolding in building relationships, and may need assistance initiating conversation, creating an appropriate response, or staying on topic. What’s more, these students may already know these skills but may hesitate to apply them in daily life because they fear the possible negative consequences of unintentionally poor social choices.”

That is when “Talking with Friends” comes in. Zingillioglu said, “Hence, a safe and playful way to address these concerns is through an ISS: immersive content accompanied by visuals, text, and/or audio.”

Playing “Talking with

Friends” allows users to learn that making good decisions within a social interaction allows them to move onto the next exercise, furthering their social skill sets by practicing new ones. “More generally, an ISS customized for these learners will give them a digital space they need to grow and thrive as individuals, students, and community members,” said Zingillioglu.

The proposed product that Zingillioglu will be presenting was done through the Honors thesis, approved by Dean Ross, since it did not align with her major, Dr. Stanley Blair suggested the alternate route. Zingillioglu has also been working with the Center for Entrepreneurship. She said, “Through the Monmouth Center for Entrepreneurship, I have studied

the varying types of revenue models available for use in a start-up company. I have also refined my skills in launching a go-to-market strategy that surpasses initial business objectives.” She continued, “Most importantly, I have learned to take accountability in the product and culture I cultivate, constantly refining my approach to better serve the target user’s needs.”

Zingillioglu spoke about her experience and said, “I never expected to be selected as a finalist for HawkTank. I am proud and honored to be a part of this community of creative visionaries and innovators.”

Zingillioglu will be pitching her product idea at HawkTank on Apr. 29 in the Center for Entrepreneurship.



PHOTO COURTESY of Ashley Zingillioglu.

Main Street Innovators: Local Visionaries Reimagining Retail panel

AVA MCGINTY
FEATURES EDITOR

On Apr. 1, the Center for Entrepreneurship hosted a panel, Main Street Innovators: Local Visionaries Reimagining Retail. The panel featured businesses including Steady Hand Cafe, District Refillery, and Fleur de Mer.

The panel explored topics including how to create memorable brand experiences that can help facilitate building loyal communities, how to balance having an online presence while creating authentic in-person connections with customers, and how to develop a sustainable business model.

Ashley Burk of the Steady Hand Cafe, with a Brick and Mortar location opening soon in Bradley Beach, is reimagining the traditional coffee experience through thoughtful sourcing, community spaces, and multi channel distribution. This has allowed to extend the brand beyond just the physical location of a traditional coffee shop.

Among the panel was Michelle Costa and Dana Weiss, both Monmouth University Alumni. Weiss from the District Refillery, located in Point Pleasant, is pioneering the ze-

ro-waste retail movement. This is an innovative business model that educates consumers and provides sustainable alternatives to everyday products. Michelle Costa with her co-founder and sister, Emily, own Fleur de Mer in Ocean Township. They are using design innovation and experiential retail to create memorable moments by elevating traditional floristry. While all of these brands are unique and different to one another, they all are reimagining retail.

The panel was well received by the student attendees. Ashley Bento, junior business organizational leadership major, said, “I loved this panel, the positive mindsets and ideas from these women helped so much, I found myself writing so many quotes from them. They had a great outlook on entrepreneurship and have an understanding of hard work, a great attitude, and sustainability.” She continued, “My favorite idea from them was to empower customers and make them feel safe, united, and comfortable together as a main goal for your business.”

The sentiment was shared by Alexandria Young, junior small business management and entrepreneurship major. She said, “I feel that attending the Main Street Innovators panel definitely helps

shape my perspective of what it means to be an entrepreneur, to add value to customers’ lives while being receptive to feedback. While at the same time, understanding that you will never be able to solve every problem or request and that’s okay too.”

Alison Gilbert, the Director of the Center for Entrepreneurship, said, “We are excited to host experiences like this at the Center for Entrepreneurship to bring real-world insights and create opportunities for inspiration and connection within our growing Monmouth entrepreneurial community. Our Main Street Innovators panel—featuring local visionaries including Monmouth alumni—exemplifies how we’re cultivating a thriving ecosystem that connects campus and regional entrepreneurship.”

Students gained a fresh perspective listening to the panelists speak and Bento said, “My understanding of entrepreneurship was changed when I heard the advice from Ashley Burk, ‘you don’t know what your business is until your customers interact with it.’ This made me realize I need to go with the flow and appreciate any outcome that happens when I place my business into the real

world!”

Nasir Cole, junior business entrepreneurship major, also noted that Burk’s quote stuck out to him. He said, “One of the main takeaways I received from the most recent panel is that community can be one of the biggest parts of small and local businesses.”

Above all, the panel discussion inspired students who are on their own journey of starting up businesses. Young explained, “The panel did inspire me to start thinking of new ideas in which I can create a sense of community within my own tech-startup I’m building called Dialeco. The discussion of building community within their businesses is what truly stood out to me as it highlights the very human side of running a business. It is not just profits alone that matter but how you treat people.”

Bento concluded, “I have listened to a lot of entrepreneurs speak as offered in my courses. I have never heard their advice before and as a young future entrepreneur, I have tools from these women I can utilize when framing a business. I need to understand how to make it sustainable, bring people together, utilize partnerships, and see customers as helpful when they give you honest feedback.”

Upcoming Events!

WEDNESDAY

2025 Spring Career and Internship Fair
1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Ocean First Bank Center

Softball vs Columbia
3:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.
MU Softball Park

Men’s Tennis vs Temple
3:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.
Outdoor Tennis Complex

Baseball vs Princeton
3:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.
MU Baseball Field

THURSDAY

Women’s Lacrosse vs Drexel
3:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.
Kessler Stadium

Women’s Tennis vs St. John’s
3:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.
Outdoor Tennis Complex

Zumba
6:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.
Boylan Gym South

Dr. Strangelove
7:30 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.
Pollak Theatre

Thursday Night Alternative - Trivia Night
8:00 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.
Pinewood Lounge

FRIDAY

Squid Games Field Day: Hawks Edition
3:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.
Intercultural Center

Colleges Against Cancer - Relay for Life
6:00 p.m. - 11:00 p.m.
Student Center - Anacon Hall

Craft Night & Snacks
8:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m.
Student Center Fireplace Lounge

SATURDAY

Women’s Tennis vs Hofstra
12:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Outdoor Tennis Complex

Men’s Tennis vs Hofstra
3:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.
Outdoor Tennis Complex

Family Fued Game Show
7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.
Student Center - Anacon Hall

SUNDAY

Sweat it Out Sunday - Yoga
12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.
Boylan Gymnasium

Destress Crafts: Glitter Mason Jars
7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Song of the Week!

“In My Arms Instead”
by Randy Rogers Band





IMAGES TAKEN FROM Amazon.

From rom-coms to thrillers: Top 10 books to read in the summertime

BAILEY FREDERICKS
MANAGING EDITOR /
LIFESTYLES EDITOR

With summer just around the corner, it's time to refresh your to-be-read (TBR) list from spine-chilling thrillers to the perfect beach reads. Read the following list to find out what books you should grab for this summer.

1. "The Hotel Nantucket" by Elin Hilderbrand: The number one book on this list also reflects the number one beach read in my heart - Elin Hilderbrand's "The Hotel Nantucket". The main plot of the book is centered around Lizbet Keaton, who is quibbling with the mixed emotions of enduring a harsh breakup while simultaneously securing her dream job as a manager at the famous Hotel Nantucket. The book has lots of side plots, including a gleeful ghost haunting the halls and housekeepers with secret pasts. If you're adverse to horror, mysteries, or thrillers, don't worry, this book is whole-heartedly wholesome and not scary at all.

2. "Same Time Next Summer" by Annabel Monaghan: One of my favorite romances of all time, this book is perfect for new readers (or for someone who wants to quickly add to their reading goal for the month) as it is under 300 pages long. A wedding is on the horizon, love songs are dancing through the air, and the summer bustle in Long Island is in full swing. I could almost smell the salty air when reading this book, but I wonder if that was because of its setting or because the guy-next-door was clearly unhappy about his childhood best friend's engagement.

3. "The Fury" by Alex Michaelides: If you're not into romance, give "The Fury" a try. Pulling from classic murder mystery tropes that mirror Agatha Christie's "And Then There Were None," the book places you on an island where four Hollywood elites are stranded. Michaelides' signature trope, an unreliable narrator, gives the book a great twist and leaves you questioning who is telling the truth up until the very end.

4. "Hook, Line, and Sinker" by Tessa Bailey: "It Happened One Summer," the first book in The Bellinger Sister

series, is a definite skip for me. But, "Hook, Line, and Sinker," has many redeeming qualities which snatches it a spot on my list. This book is light, fluffy, easy to read, and simply not that deep. If you want something to keep you entertained and make you giggle, definitely give this one a read. And don't worry, you don't have to read the first book to fully understand this book; they have parallel story lines meaning they both take place at pretty much the same exact time.

5. "Heart Bones" by Colleen Hoover: An underrated CoHo title, "Heart Bones" is one of my personal favorite summer reads. Taking place on a peninsula in Texas, the book transforms you into a world where you actually feel like you're a teenager living in a rich beach town in the middle of the summer. If you like "The Summer I Turned Pretty," you will definitely want to pick this book up.

6. "Better Than the Movies" by Lynn Painter: The first book on this list that doesn't actually take place in summer, "Better Than the Movies" still just gives off summer vibes. Trust me, you will get what I mean if you read it. Being a romantic comedy wrapped into a

perfect book, Painter starts each chapter off with a quote from everyone's favorite rom-coms like "When Harry Met Sally" and "10 Things I Hate About You". While this is a young adult book and follows the story of high school students, don't be scared off as the writing is still mature and relatable.

7. "Beach Read" by Emily Henry: How could I make a list on must-read beach novels without including "Beach Read" by Emily Henry? One of Henry's many "New York Times Best Sellers," this book delivers one of the best sunshine-grumpy tropes I have ever read. Honestly, if you haven't read this while lounging by a pool yet, what are you doing?

8. "Where the Crawdads Sing" by Delia Owens: To slightly veer away from strictly romance once again, Owen's "Where the Crawdads Sing" is a heart-breaking tale that follows Kaya, an outcast dubbed, "marsh girl," as she grows up in North Carolina. With nuances of romance coupled with the brooding energy of a murder, the book interweaves themes of love, loss, struggle, and redemption.

9. "Joyland" by Stephen

King: Now, if you really want absolutely no romance (well, maybe just a little), try "Joyland". I've raved about this book many times before because it is just that good (and underrated). King's 2013 release is about Devin Jones, a college student who takes up a new internship at Joyland - a famous (or infamous, depending on who you ask) theme park located on the North Carolina coast line. As Jones' begins to unravel the sinister past of the amusement park, he discovers he may be on a dangerous path leading him straight to a serial killer.

10. "Malibu Rising" by Taylor Jenkins Reid: While "Malibu Rising" isn't one of my favorite reads, I can set aside personal feelings to add this widely well-loved book onto my list. The 1980s Hollywood crowd is bursting with excitement because tonight the legendary Riva's are hosting their annual end-of-summer party. But, as the events of the night unfold, family secrets will be revealed, breakdowns will occur, and the party will turn into complete chaos.

I hope you found a book to add to your TBR this summer. Happy reading hawks!

Wonders of the music world: Discover your next favorite artist

LORELAI HILARCZYK
ENTERTAINMENT EDITOR

The music world is full of new artists, musicians, and genres to discover. Whether it's Folk, Rap, Pop, or Alternative, there's certainly no shortage of talent in the industry. Some of the best artists are the ones hiding in

his debut album, "Good Morning Mr. Hallman," a play on his job as an elementary school teacher. He even credits the children for getting his creative juices to flow again. The very start of the album features his students yelling, "Good Morning Mr. Hallman," naturally giving the album its name. The record features songs such as "Cleo" and "Something to Believe In," which feature his

acoustic feel. Many Sea Hear Now Festival (SHN) fans commented under the lineup posts this year, begging for Hallman to take the stage as many smaller NJ artists have before. Sadly, Hallman didn't get the call, but hopefully, in the future, we'll see him on the sand.

The next artist is someone I have had my own personal interaction with and seen perform live. Bo Staloch, a Nashville-based singer-songwriter who is making a name for himself within the Indie Pop scene. Staloch performed last year at SHN in Asbury Park, NJ, as a last-minute addition after a band pulled out. Thank god they did, not only were Staloch and his band a complete vibe on the beaches of Asbury Park, but super humble and grateful to be there. Later on that day, Staloch and his bandmates waved to my friend and me from the shore; Needless to say, they gained an instant fan for life with that interaction.

His songs, "Springtime Red Tulips" and "Santa Fe," are two great representations of Staloch as an artist. His vivid imagery lyrics, paired with his storyteller-voice, make him a standout artist among those in his genre. "Santa Fe" was one I got the pleasure of hearing live before it was officially released. Its lyrics embody the feeling of summer whether you spend it on the beach, in the woods, or the desert. While the lyrics might not exactly capture that vibe, they sure have a care-free attitude. He sings, "I can't recall everything I said/I got too drunk, had a pack of cigarettes/ Now I'm running on fumes, and I think/I'm out of patience/I'm sick and tired of faking/Enough of saving face, saying grace/My, my/Something's gotta break."

Recently, Staloch released an EP titled, "The Garden" featuring six tracks. It tells the story of heartbreak, loss, and being able to sit in those emotions until you finally come out of it. It's got a beautiful story arc from "Give It A Break" to the last track, "Speak To Me."

Staloch is currently on the road, making his way through the United Kingdom. In May, he'll be at Variety Playhouse in Georgia, 9:30 Club in Washington, D.C., and Brooklyn Steel in New York. He'll also make his Lollapalooza debut in July.

Now, let's head over to Pop, R&B, and Soul-land with Canadian singer-songwriter Stacey Ryan. I discovered Ryan back in 2022 with her single "Fall In Love Alone." Her jazzy, funky production, along with her vocal gymnastic riffs and runs, make her so fun to listen to.

Her 2023 EP titled "I Don't Know What Love Is" really gained her attention from the TikTok music community. Since then, she's teased plenty of new songs on

social media but hasn't released them yet. She has, however, released one single, "Everything Everything," which could be a hint to her new album. As much

(Over Nostalgic Edition.)" "Someday, Someone" is the perfect breakup recovery song to shake all the worries away. The song features an iconic moment



IMAGE TAKEN from Spotify.

Cole Hallman's debut album "Good Morning Mr. Hallman" features songs "Cleo" and "Something to Believe In."

plain sight and as much as I love mainstream music, there's something so magical about underground artists. Let me introduce you to four musicians who might be less well known than those we hear constantly on the radio, and hopefully, one of them will become your next favorite artist.

Starting right here in the Garden State, is singer-songwriter Cole Hallman from Manasquan, New Jersey. Hallman was featured on American Idol back in 2022 and reeled the audience in with his warm and raspy vocals. He instantly became a fan favorite, but sadly, did not make it through the entire competition.

signature rasp and wholesome guitar, wrapping each song into a neat package.

However, my favorite Hallman songs aren't on this record but older EPs and singles he's released over the years. His song "Manasquan," released in 2024, has a special place in my heart, as it does for many natives in the area. It's an ode to his hometown as he tells the story of needing to get away from that typical city life. There's something so special about being near the shore. He sings, "I just really wanna go home/Well I wish that I could stay/But I'm gone, gone, gone/Driving all the way back to



IMAGE TAKEN from Spotify.

Bo Staloch's EP, "The Garden" released Mar. 7 and can be found where you stream music.

Luckily for us, his music journey didn't end with Idol. Recently, he dropped two new singles, "Big Boy Now" and "Mistake," alluding to more projects in the works.

In May 2023, Hallman released

Manasquan/When I try to act my age/Can't seem to do it on my own."

Hallman resembles a Bon Iver and Lumineer-type sound that'll leave you wanting more of that



IMAGE TAKEN from Spotify.

Stacey Ryan's album "I Don't Know What Love Is" takes on Pop, Funk, and Soul genres.

as I love this new single, the older tracks still hold the top spot.

One of my favorite tracks is "Bad For Me," featured on "I Don't Know What Love Is," and is absolutely intoxicating. Ryan sings about how she knows this love interest is bad for her but continu-

from the 1998 drama series "Sex and The City," where "Mr. Big" says, "I don't get it," and Carrie Bradshaw replies, "And you never did." This scene is not only a turning point for their relationship but for Bradshaw as she comes to terms with what wasn't



IMAGE TAKEN from Spotify.

Kenzie Cait's song "Someday, Someone" features an iconic scene from "Sex and The City."

ously falls into less-than-ideal habits. There's something so alluring about wanting things we either can't have or know aren't healthy. At least it was done for the "plot." She sings, "You know, you know, you know you're affecting me mentally/And I can't sleep, I count sheep, but that shit's useless 'cause/The voice in my head keeps on saying that you're bad for me." Ryan is an artist to put on your radar so you can say you were a part of the original fandom.

My last recommendation is Pop princess Kenzie Cait, who I regretfully admit I found on Instagram. Apparently, the algorithm knows me way too well. While she's been releasing music since 2022, I found Cait because of her song "Someday, Someone" off her EP "Good Luck, Goodbye

meant to be. Leading into Cait's vocals of, "Someday, Someone's/Gonna really love me right/Gonna take me dancing, so in love under the light/And play my songs in the car/Sing along, cause it's not that hard."

Her other tracks on the album, "Somebody (Eternity)," "Congratulations," and "Thank God," encompass those same emotions of growing up, finding love, and then ultimately falling out of it while searching for the one.

Artists like these have such a clear vision of where they're going and aren't afraid to experiment with sound and concepts. This is bringing the older nostalgic sound and pop icons back into the forefront of the music industry. Check out these artists wherever you stream music.

“Surreal Realities”: A night of multimedia magic at Monmouth

HENRY BOODY
STAFF WRITER

On Wednesday, Apr. 2, in the Great Hall Auditorium, the lights dimmed on an eerily quiet day, and the room came alive, transforming into something completely different—part screen, part stage, and entirely surreal.

With projections unraveling across the walls and performances echoing through the room, “Surreal Realities” wasn’t just another campus event. It was a multimedia storytelling showcase created by two student-run communications clubs, CommWorks and HawkInteractive.

The inspiration that started this journey stemmed from a shared vision to create something new and different.

“Surreal Realities” was inspired by our excitement to collaborate with Hawk Interactive to combine our aspects of oral performance with their technology skills,” said Giovanna Territo, a junior communications major and President of CommWorks. The chosen theme, “Surreal Realities,” wasn’t just a name but an invitation for performers to explore anything from personal

experiences to alternate worlds with complete creative freedom, so to speak.

Preparation for the event was not easy either. With the vision in motion since last semester, rehearsals topped with workshops allowed students to dig through their pieces while experimenting with the visual aspects. “Each individual performer wrote their scripts and received feedback from other members during rehearsals,” Territo explained.

The process blended performance with projection mapping, which was uncharted territory for both clubs. HawkInteractive handled the technical side, using platforms such as MadMapper, a video mapping service, and other tools. As Moises Meza, a junior communications student and tech lead for the event, explained, “We used projectors, an audio board, and a lighting board to coordinate and create the graphics and audio for each performance.” He explained that working in tandem with CommWorks to create the surreal and totally immersive experience was so unique, as was the chance to collaborate with his peers.

The immersive element was also a leap for CommWorks, a

club known for its intimate and performative style. “CommWorks is very much not into digital projections,” said senior and Vice President Bridget Capano, “So it was really interesting... timing came into it, sound came into it, and you had to be in certain parts of the stage at certain times.”

Jefferson Gonzalez, HawkInteractive’s President, echoed the same challenges. “I didn’t know what to envision at first, but once we started testing what projection mapping could do, it opened a new door in my brain,” Gonzalez said.

Each performer brought something distinct. Territo’s “Growing Up” moved through childhood, adolescence, and adulthood. Capano’s “Maple” reflected on nature and ecological loss. Gonzalez’s “El Barrio” honored his roots and Hispanic identity. Other standout moments included Kaitlyn Hackett’s introspective “It’s Only Fictional,” a meditation on fantasy versus reality, and Matthew DeVita’s “In the Shadows of Paris,” about a city he couldn’t leave behind. Pieces like “The Long Road Ahead,” “The Phantom’s Monologue,” and “And The Sun Burned so Bright”

added additional emotionality.

For those in the audience, the event left a lasting impression. “Each performance was uniquely different from one another, and the graphics perfectly matched each story,” said junior communications major Anthony Cassieri. “You could really tell how passionate everyone was. It really was unlike anything I’ve

ever seen at Monmouth.”

The impact lingered as the lights rose and the crowd filtered out. “I hope the audience was able to see the importance of collaboration, hard work, and dedication,” Territo said.

“Surreal Realities” didn’t just tell stories. It made the surreal feel real through community, creativity, and technical production.



PHOTOS TAKEN by Henry Boody.

Smashing hit or box-office bust: What does the future of the MCU look like?

MATTHEW CIOLETTI
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

The Marvel franchise has been the reason I still go to the movies lately. Marvel is such a recognizable brand, and I know about their releases before most other movies nowadays.

The main difference between “The Infinity Saga” and the “Multiverse Saga” has been that fans have been able to catch content, as streaming old films and new series has become more popular than buying a ticket to the theater. But as the Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU) transitions into “Phase Six,” there seems to be lots of uncharted territory in which Disney and Marvel hope to make more money at the box office.

The MCU began the year with the release of “Captain America: Brave New World” this past February. According to “Cinema Blend,” the film grossed \$88.5 million the first weekend, keeping the streak alive for MCU movies to win at the box office. However, this result is a giant disappointment for Marvel as a whole as this Captain America film did not live up to

the hype compared to other films, which garnered over \$200 million opening weekend.

Since the last Avengers movie, the biggest box office successes in the last few years were, 2021’s “Spider-Man: No Way Home” grossing \$600 million (\$260 million opening weekend) and 2024’s “Deadpool & Wolverine” grossing over \$500 million (\$211 million opening weekend), according to “The Direct.” It has been hard to top the box office production for Marvel movies since the COVID-19 pandemic. It also has to do with Marvel fans recognizing that the film will eventually go on Disney+, the streaming hub for all things Marvel. Given the fact that the Spider-Man movie franchise is owned by Columbia Pictures, which is not an entity of Disney, people had to see the series in theatres, not knowing when the movies would end up on streaming.

Recently, “Daredevil: Born Again” was released on the streaming service on Mar. 4. Matt Murdock (Charlie Cox) navigates the streets of New York City, balancing crime fighting

as Daredevil with his daily life working in Hell’s Kitchen as an attorney at law. Cox previously made appearances in “Spider-Man: No Way Home” and “She-Hulk: Attorney at Law,” so a series all about his alter ego was inevitable and finally came out. Since the MCU started making series’ to stream exclusively on Disney+ in 2021, lots of the content was built to be watched from home, along with never-before-seen footage.

This summer will see the release of two more films, “The Thunderbolts” and “The Fantastic Four: First Steps.” “The Thunderbolts” is set to be the next release on May 2, while “The Fantastic Four: First Steps” will launch in theatres on July 25. The story of “The Thunderbolts” revolves around the question, “Where have the Avengers gone?”

Since many of the well-known Marvel superheroes disappeared during the blip in the last Avengers movies, trials started to happen, which are supposed to answer whether or not they still exist. Yelena Belova (Florence Pugh) embraces life as the new

Black Widow leading this team of antiheroes working for the US government, while Bucky Barnes, the Winter Soldier (Sebastian Stan), is on the outside looking in, seeming to track the antiheroes down. This film will be followed up the events of the last Black Widow movie from 2021.

But there is some reason to be excited as Marvel released “The Avengers: Doomsday” which has just started production and is currently filming. They revealed on social media the actors’ chairs of all the actors which will star in the new Avengers movie. This MCU extravaganza comes out in May 2026, so that gives so much yet so little time for character development between the heroes and villains in the upcoming films and series until then. Some of the cast of superheroes already announced are Captain America (Anthony Mackie), Black Panther (Letitia Wright), Thor (Chris Hemsworth), Ant Man (Paul Rudd), Shang-Chi (Simu Liu) and even “The Fantastic Four.”

The Marvel franchise has even expanded to include some

“Stranger Things” favorites, including Johnny Storm (Joseph Quinn, Eddie Munson) from “The Fantastic Four” and Alexei Shostakov/Red Guardian (David Harbour, Jim Hopper) from “The Thunderbolts.” They are all rocking and rolling after a social media teaser came out at the start of filming. There has already been a change in the antagonist from “The Kang Dynasty,” as Jonathan Majors is no longer working on the films, to Doctor Doom to be played by Robert Downey Jr., who played Iron Man which was revealed at the San Diego Comic Con last summer.

Marvel clearly is entering an era which is uncharted and I’m wondering if the upcoming Avengers movie will make as much at the box office as the highest grossing films of the previous decade. These were some of the first movies I saw when I was younger, so now that I am older, it’s different seeing new actors come and go throughout the franchise. Hopefully this summer Marvel brings enough energy to these new releases to get Marvel fans excited for the upcoming cinematic releases.

“Hands Off” rallies protesting Trump administration taking place across United States

BRENDAN SHEEHAN
POLITICS EDITOR

There was coast-to-coast opposition to President Donald Trump’s administration during a national day of protest on Saturday, April 5.

In nearly 1,300 locations in all 50 states, millions of Americans took to the streets to protest the incumbent administration.

There were nearly two dozen planned “Hands Off” rallies in New Jersey, including in Toms River and Red Bank. At a rally in Montclair, U.S. Senator Cory Booker spoke to the crowd of roughly 8,000. Booker told the rally-goers, “the power of the people is greater than the people in power.”

According to organizers, the Red Bank rally drew a crowd of roughly 3,500 people.

According to the latest Gallup poll released March 16, Trump has a 43% favorable rating and a 53% unfavorable rating.

The protests, the largest and most widespread of his second term, shared common themes

opposing the mass firing of federal workers, immigration raids, and Elon Musk and his Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE).

Many Democratic members of Congress joined protests in their respective districts and states as the party struggles with low approval ratings among their own voters for a perceived lack of fight against the Trump administration.

Organizers of Boston’s “Hands Off” rally, which drew tens of thousands of protesters, told ABC News, “the federal administration thinks this country belongs to them - and that they’re above the law.”

There were no reported arrests or major disturbances at any of the over 1,000 organized rallies across the United States.

Karoline Leavitt, the White House Press Secretary, in a Fox News interview, dubbed the protestors, “lunatics”, and said, “these far-left activists who don’t stand for anything, they only stand against Donald Trump, and they hate....The Democrats have officially become the party of crazy.”

In a social media post on X, U.S. Representative Marjorie Taylor Greene, Republican of Georgia and a staunch Trump

ally said, “they’re not protesting policies, they’re protesting democracy.”

50501, the group leading the rallies, has organized another day of protest on Saturday, April 19. According to the group’s social media, they are hoping to get 11 million people, roughly 3.5% of America’s population, to participate. They said this number is the, “sustained resistance in order to make a difference.”

50501 also said the April 19 protests will be rising up against a “hostile government takeover” by the Trump administration. Their name, 50501, originates from there being 50 states, 50 protests and one movement, which put together makes 50501. They estimated roughly three million Americans protested on April 5th, and acknowledged nearly quadrupling that number is a monumental task.

While specifics on rally locations are still limited, the groups have confirmed a large-scale rally in Washington, D.C. and school walkouts at various colleges including New York University (NYU).

If you’re interested in learning more about the 50501 movement or finding rally locations near you for April 19, you can visit fiftyfifty.one for more information.



PHOTO TAKEN BY SABRINA LUNANUOVA & BRIAN DONAHUE.

The Red Bank “Hands Off” rally on Saturday.

Beyond our coverage

“The Outlook” is committed to bringing you the most important and essential news coverage on Monmouth University’s campus. However, we live in rapidly-changing times and continue to strive to inform you of local, national and international headlines of the utmost importance.

Compiled by Brendan Sheehan

Local

“Murphy Signs Bipartisan Legislation Establishing Civil and Criminal Penalties for Deceptive AI Deepfakes” (Insider NJ)

“Mahmoud Khalil’s case will move forward in New Jersey, judge rules” (Politico)

“MAGA truck driver who toppled powerful Democrat drops bid for New Jersey governor” (Politico)

“Feds threaten funding cuts if NJ schools don’t apply Trump’s anti-diversity policies” (NJ Spotlight News)

National

“Trump planning military parade through DC for 79th birthday” (The Hill)

“Wall Street Starts to Speak Out Against Trump’s Tariffs” (Wall Street Journal)

“US budget deficits skyrocketing, as national debt poised to hit grim new mark” (FOX Business)

“‘This is the Trump recession,’ CEOs say, with price increases, job losses incoming: CNBC survey” (CNBC)

International

“EU Commission proposes 25% counter-tariffs on some US imports, document shows” (Reuters)

“US admiral at NATO fired in expanding national security purge” (Reuters)

“Netanyahu says working on new captive deal as attacks continue in Gaza” (Al Jazeera)

“Russia Strikes Kyiv as Ukraine Mourns Deadly Attack on Zelensky’s Hometown” (New York Times)

TO/ The Outlook

Hello, everyone! My name is Taylor Memoli and I am so honored to be this year's Editor-In-Chief and News editor! I can't wait to work with each of you. I am so passionate about *The Outlook*, and I hope all of you will want to share that passion with me. Student journalism is incredibly important. As students, you have the right to know what is going on within your campus, and at *The Outlook*, we promise to promote honest and informative articles that educate students on what is going on around them here at Monmouth University. If anyone has any questions or story ideas for *The Outlook*, please feel free to reach out to me at any time! My email is s1321538@monmouth.edu. Happy reading!

- Taylor Memoli, Editor-in-Chief and News Editor

Hi everyone! My name is Bailey Fredericks and I'm this year's Managing Editor & Lifestyles Section Editor. I'm so excited for this year & to read all the awesome articles everyone writes! If you would like to write for the lifestyles section or have any other questions about *The Outlook*, please email me at s1321296@monmouth.edu!

-Bailey Fredericks, Managing and Lifestyles Editor

HAWK TV Hawk TV

Hawk TV is excited to be back for this semester! We are the student run television station on campus, and it is a great opportunity to meet new people and get involved! Our studio is on the first floor of Plangere, and we currently have four shows. Hawk TV News shoots biweekly on Tuesdays starting at 7 p.m. and alternates with the Creation Corner that starts at 7:30 p.m. On Wednesdays we film our sports show called the Extra Point and Thursdays, our pop culture show called Triple Scoop, and both of those begin at 7 p.m. We hope to see you this semester!

- Ava McGinty, Hawk TV Secretary and Executive Producer of Hawk TV New

PRSSA PRSSA

Hi Hawks, join the Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA) & Shadow PR, Monmouth's student-run and nationally affiliated PR firm, for meetings every Wednesday at 3 p.m. in Plangere 234. PRSSA gives students the opportunity to gain real experience in the PR world through hands-on work with local clients and guest speaker events. All majors & grade levels are welcome!

- Bailey Fredericks, Co-President

MU CD College Democrats

We have 34 reasons you should join the College Democrats. Join Team Freedom today!

- Owen Bros, President



Real Estate Club

Hello everyone! The 19th of this month is a career night in the Bey Hall auditorium at 6:30 p.m. If you have any questions, please feel free to email me at s1322694@monmouth.edu.

- Margaret McNeil, President



WMCX

Here at WMCX, there is so much space to grow and use your voice! With opportunities such as broadcasting Monmouth University's home basketball games, having weekly talk shows on a variety of topics surrounding sports, music, pop culture, or politics, or becoming part of the E-board, there's a place for you at WMCX! If this sounds like something for you, come to one of our weekly meetings every Wednesday at 2:45 in Plangere 236. Our doors are always open if you want to come and visit us upstairs. And stay tuned for some exciting events happening later this semester!

- Beyonce Carranza, Program Director (VP)



LASO

The Latin American Student Organization (LASO) brings students together to celebrate Latin American culture. The club is open to everyone and hosts events like Día de los Muertos and their annual Outdoor Movie Night where they show a movie from latin american and have latin american cuisine. LASO also supports minority representation and encourages leadership. It's a great place to meet new people, learn about different traditions, and be part of an inclusive community.

- Jeff Gonzalez, general member



"College Core" - WMCX

Tune in every Wednesday from 1-2 p.m. for rocking tunes and gossip!

xoxo - Bailey



College Republicans

We are so excited to see you all and work to preserve your freedoms on and off of campus this year!

-NJFCR Chair Jacky Bruno and MUCR Chair Giavanna Cangialosi



Finish the semester as strong as you can

While the summer might be getting closer, there might be some unexpected hurdles. Managing stress is important for your success and well-being. Whether you need a moment to recharge in the Zen Den, a conversation with a counselor, or some helpful guidance about life skills, Counseling and Prevention Services is here to support you



Schedule a one-on-one session with a counselor

or

Reserve time in the Zen Den to experience mindfulness in action

Take A Breath. Reset. Finish with Confidence.



732-571-7517

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Schedule via the Health Portal



Guided Imagery:

A 20-minute session to measure and manage stress.

Progressive Muscle Relaxation:

A 15-minute exercise to release tension.

Deep Breathing:

A 10-minute technique to help you reset

&

other Self-guided activities in the TAO Wellness Library.

Funded by the Community Provider Partnership and Professional Development Grant awarded to Monmouth University by the Office of the Secretary of Higher Education for the State of New Jersey.

Monmouth University
Relay for Life
2025

Friday, April 11th
Anacon in the Rebecca Stafford Student Center

5pm-10:30pm

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50's 60's 70's 80's 90's 2000's

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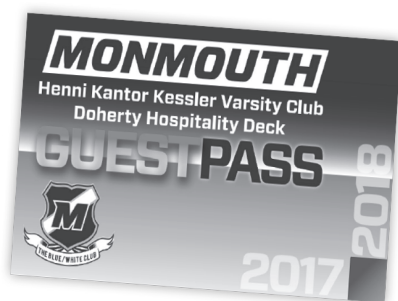
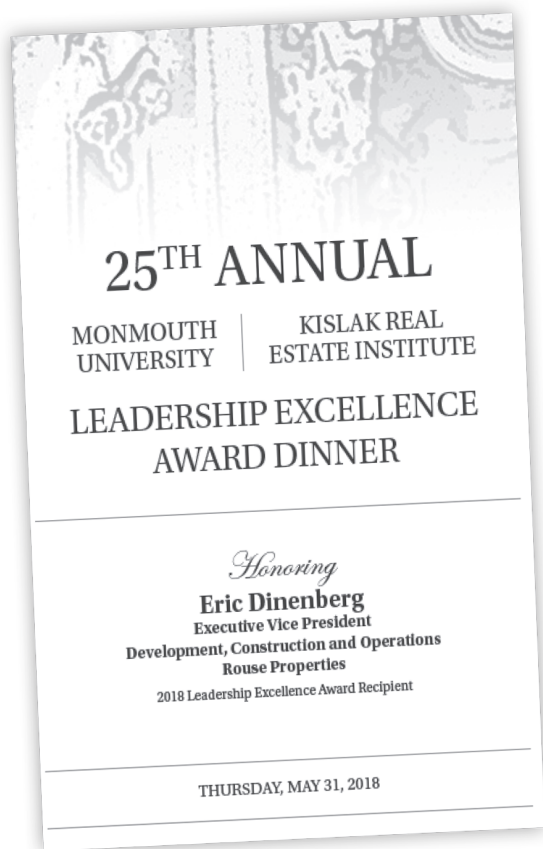
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Hawks' 2025 football practice is in full spring

EMILY STACHERSKI
STAFF WRITER

Monmouth University's spring football practice begins as Head Coach Kevin Callahan prepares for the upcoming season.

After a winter of strengthening and conditioning, Monmouth's football team started practicing for spring football on Apr. 1. The Hawks are getting ready for the spring showcase on Apr. 27 at 1:00 pm at Kessler Stadium.

With a few coaches gone from last season, the Hawks welcome three assistant coaches. Codey Cole, the new Defensive Line coach, who recently served in the same position at Bucknell, where he helped two players become part of the 2024 All-Patriot League. Before Bucknell, he coached at Findlay, which was ranked among the nation's best scoring defense, total de-

fense, and run defense.

Louis DiRienzo Jr. is the new Linebackers coach, as well as the Defensive Run Game Coordinator. Before joining Monmouth's coaching staff, he served five seasons at Springfield, where they won multiple conference titles. Before working at Rutgers in 2019 and Wagner in 2018, DiRienzo had a great collegiate career as a team captain and strong linebacker.

Last but not least, Kamau Dumas is a new addition to the Defensive staff, however, not a new face to Monmouth. He was part of Monmouth's 2017 playoff team and helped lead the program to an MIAA Conference Championship. The Hawks are excited to add more success to their coaching staff.

With a few players gone from last season, keep your eye out for other players moving up and getting the chance to display their talents.



The Hawks prepare for the 2025 season.

PHOTO COURTESY of Connor Graf.

Baseball vs. Saint Peter's

EMILY STACHERSKI
STAFF WRITER

On Wednesday (4/2), Monmouth's baseball team won against Saint Peter's at 3:00 pm at the MU Baseball Field at the bottom of the ninth.

To start the game, St. Peter's scored twice with two RBI doubles, giving them the lead early on. In the top of the second, the Peacocks scored a three-run home run, advancing their lead to 5-0. In the third inning, with no answers from the Hawks, St. Peter's scored another run.

With 6-0 on the board, sophomore infielder Wyatt Hunt ran home and scored when graduate student and outfielder Harry Padden reached on an error. The Peacocks retaliated with a solo home run, pushing their lead to 7-1.

Monmouth's comeback began in the bottom of the fourth when junior outfielder Nick Lovarco hit a two-run double, making it a 7-3 game. After the first scoreless inning for St. Peter's, the bottom of the fifth included nine hits and

five runs for the Hawks. Senior infielder Jay Bant and sophomore outfielder Chris Walsh both had RBI doubles, and Lovarco had a single that scored two runs, leaving the Hawks on top, 8-7.

In the sixth, Bant had an RBI single, leaving the Hawks comfortably sitting two ahead. After a scoreless seventh inning, the Peacocks tied up the score 9-9 in the eighth inning.

After a scoreless top of the ninth, Bant was the first hitter up to bat. On his second pitch, he sent the ball over the fence in center field for a solo home-run, winning the game for Monmouth.

In this game, graduate student and outfielder Casey Caufield had his 100th walk of his career, only the eighth player in school history to do so. He also extended his streak of reaching base to 25 straight games. This battle of the birds ended with a Monmouth win 10-9.

Baseball vs. Charleston

MICHAEL GRUSEKE
OPINIONS EDITOR

The Monmouth Hawks (15-17) took on the Charleston Cougars (18-12) this past Sunday (4/6/25) and secured a gutsy 5-4 victory at home after pitchers Ryan Mealy and JD Greeley allowed just two hits in the last four innings of play.

This win wasn't just any typical win, as it was the first time the Hawks got the better of the Cougars in team history.

Charleston started the game off strong, scoring a run in the top of the first inning after DH Landon Penfield recorded an RBI by grounding out, which allowed Dariyan Pendergrass to score.

Monmouth responded by taking the lead in the bottom half of the first inning after senior infielder Jay Bant hit an RBI single that scored CF Harry Padden and 1B Chris Walsh hit a sac fly to right field, scoring 2B Casey Caufield. These RBI's put the Hawks up 2-1.

In the bottom of the sec-

ond inning, Padden hit a key RBI single, scoring sophomore catcher Brendan Buecker, which made the score 3-1 in favor of the Hawks.

Charleston eventually came all the way back, scoring three straight runs, with one run coming in the fourth inning, and two coming in the fifth inning.

In the bottom of the fifth, Monmouth took the lead right back. Walsh hit another sac fly to right field, which tied the game at 4-4. Third baseman Wyatt Hunt reached on a fielder's choice that ended up allowing Bant to reach home plate, giving the Hawks a 5-4 lead going into the sixth inning.

Mealy, who pitched the first five innings, would pitch the sixth inning and allow no runs.

Greeley earned the save after pitching a shutout the last three innings, helping the Hawks escape the day with a 5-4 win over the Cougars.

Men's lacrosse drops game vs. Towson in Final Minute

FRANK HOARLE
STAFF WRITER

The Monmouth lacrosse team gave up two goals late in the game to allow the Towson Tigers to take down the Hawks at Kessler Stadium on Saturday, Apr. 5.

Deadlocked at ten, Towson, the defending champions of the CAA, scored two goals in the final three minutes to solidify a 12-10 victory over Monmouth.

Towson got the scoring started quickly, with Mikey Weisshaar scoring his 30th goal of the season to give the Tigers a quick 1-0 lead. Monmouth responded with a goal by freshman LSM Gavin Seaman to tie the game at one. The goal was Seaman's first of his collegiate career. Sophomore attackman Brendan Dundas scored with just under five minutes left in the first quarter to give Monmouth

a 2-1 lead. After a Towson goal to tie the game, Junior attackman Ty Caffarelli scored with four seconds left in the first quarter to give Monmouth a 3-2 lead at the end of the first frame.

The Tigers took control in the second quarter, outscoring Monmouth 4-1. The Hawks' lone goal was Caffarelli's second of the game.

Towson headed into the half with a 6-4 lead. Towson continued their momentum into the second half, with Weisshaar scoring his second of the game just 1:12 into the half to extend Towson's lead to three. Monmouth responded with a two-goal streak to cut the lead to one. Caffarelli scored his third to give him a hat trick, his fifth of the season.

After Monmouth cut the lead to 7-6, Towson scored three unanswered goals in a little over four minutes. Towson's 10-6 lead was the largest lead either team had for the entirety of the game. Two goals in the final 90 seconds



PHOTO COURTESY of Anya Kazmierczak.

Brendan Dundas recorded his sixth game this season with multiple goals.

of the quarter by midfielder Sean Ketchen and Dundas would cut the lead to 10-8 heading into the fourth quarter.

The Hawks' momentum would carried into the final frame, as Ketchen scored his second followed by a man-up goal by junior midfielder Ryan O'Rourke to tie the game at ten apiece. O'Rourke's goal was Monmouth's fourth in a row after Towson took a 10-6 lead.

After the game-tying goal,

there was no scoring for a little under four minutes. With just under three minutes left in the game, Alex Roussel would give Towson an 11-10 lead. Just under a minute later, he would score another goal to solidify the 12-10 Towson victory.

Caffarelli led the Hawks in scoring with three goals. He now sits at 25 on the season. Weisaar, Roussel, and Ronan Fitzpatrick would score two goals each for Towson. The win improved Towson's record in CAA play to 4-0,

while Monmouth fell to 1-3 in conference play.

Towson now sits at 5-5 overall after an 0-4 start. They will look to continue their hot streak on Wednesday night against Loyola Maryland. The Hawks sit at 4-7 overall and are 1-4 in their last five games. They will look to get back on track on Saturday Apr. 12 as they travel to Long Island to take on the Stony Brook Seawolves.



PHOTO COURTESY of Monmouth Athletics.

Sean Ketchen added two goals, recording his third straight two-goal game.

THE OUTLOOK



BASEBALL ENDS SERIES WITH A ONE POINT WIN



Monmouth baseball secured the win in the last game of the three-game conference series

SEE STORY ON PAGE 14

PHOTO COURTESY of Monmouth Athletics