

The Outlook

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New scholarship honors Thom Bell and David Steinberg

EDWARD GRANADOS
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Monmouth University has established the David J. Steinberg and Thomas R. Bell Endowed Scholarship, a new award supporting student musicians while honoring two influential figures whose partnership helped shape the sound of American R&B and soul music.

The scholarship will be awarded to two students each year, with the first honors going to sophomores Leonardo Hernandez and Evan Schuett of the Department of Music and Theatre Arts. Hernandez said receiving the scholarship feels like being handed the final note of a melody he's now determined to finish. Schuett shared that the award brings him a step closer to the career path he



Legendary producer Thom Bell alongside longtime attorney and friend David Steinberg.

hopes to carve in the music world.

"I am incredibly grateful and honored that I was selected for the David J. Steinberg and Thomas R. Bell Distinguished Endowed Scholarship. For me, this

scholarship means that I will be able to get closer to the specific career in the music industry that I desire, which involves helping others create and distribute music," said Schuett.

Jeffrey Steinberg,

IMAGE TAKEN from New Jersey Stage

David Steinberg's son, described the scholarship as a lasting tribute to the two men's friendship and creative impact. He said the endowment serves as "their encore," a meaningful way to keep their legacy

alive while helping future students reach their goals in the music industry.

The announcement comes shortly before Bell is set to be posthumously inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame on Nov. 8. Bell was behind major hits such as "La La Means I Love You," "You Make Me Feel Brand New," "Betcha by Golly Wow," and "I'll Be Around." While Bell crafted the sound that defined a generation, Steinberg played a key behind-the-scenes role, ensuring Bell's creative vision was supported and protected.

The Steinberg family hopes the scholarship will continue to grow with support from loved ones, friends, and fans. Monmouth University also plans to honor Bell's music each year through performances connected to the scholarship, supporting the next generation of student musicians who will carry their legacy forward.

Drs. Phillips-Anderson and Vujnovic represent Monmouth University at Rhetoric in Society #9 Conference

KAMRYN CARDONE
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Michael Phillips-Anderson, P.h.D. associate professor of Communication and Marina Vujnovic, P.h.D., A.P.R. and professor of Journalism presented their joint research at the Rhetoric in Society #9 Conference, held Jun. 18–21, 2025, at the University of Zagreb in Croatia. The international

event, themed "Rhetoric in the Digital Age," brought scholars from around the world to explore how communication, persuasion, and public discourse are evolving in today's increasingly digital environment.

Their presentation, titled, "Sympathy is an Out-of-Network Benefit: An Examination of Digital Rhetoric and Dark Humor

Following the Death of UnitedHealthcare's CEO," examined how online users used humor, irony, and metaphor to react to the December 2024 murder of Brian Thompson, CEO of UnitedHealthcare. "We were interested in how people used metaphorical language—especially healthcare metaphors—to express their feelings about the tragedy,"

Phillips-Anderson said. "One of the tweets we found said, 'I'd feel bad for the guy who was killed, but sympathy isn't an out-of-network benefit.' Another said, 'Your murder doesn't meet my deductible.' People were channeling their frustration with the healthcare system through the language they used to

talk about this event."

The collaboration began when Phillips-Anderson stopped by Vujnovic's office with an idea. He said, "There's a rhetoric conference in your hometown next summer—we should propose something," Vujnovic said. "Of course, I

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Society #9 Conference

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got excited, and we started brainstorming. Around that same time, the murder of Brian Thompson happened, and it became the focus of our project.”

Although the two approach media from different perspectives Phillips-Anderson as a rhetorician who studies humor and public discourse, and Vujnovic as a scholar of journalism and media systems and their expertise complemented each other. “We’ve written and published together before,” Phillips-Anderson said. “Even though she’s more into journalism and PR and I’m more into rhetoric, our interests overlap nicely.”

Their research also builds on their earlier co-authored work, “Watchdogs and Fact Checkers: Contemporary Journalism and Political Influence,” which appeared in *Dirty Deals: Encyclopedia of Lobbying, Political Influence, and Corruption* (2014).

For Vujnovic, the trip was both professionally and personally meaningful. “It was very special to go back home in a professional capacity—and even more special to have Dr. Phillips-Anderson there with me,” she said. “He’s the only colleague from Monmouth who’s ever visited Croatia with me. It felt a bit surreal, in the best way, to see Monmouth University



IMAGE COURTESY of Marina Vujnovic

Marina Vujnovic and Michael Phillips-Anderson, professors at Monmouth, attend the Rhetoric in Society #9 Conference in Croatia.

written on our conference tags while not being on campus.”

Although Vujnovic broke her foot shortly before the trip and couldn’t show him around as much as she hoped, their presentation was a success. “I really enjoyed what we had to say and all the feedback we received,” she said. “It was also great to connect with other faculty from around the world and share ideas.”

Dr. Deanna Shoemaker, Chair of the Department of Communication said, “Drs. Phillips-Anderson and Vujnovic bring Monmouth University to the global stage with their research;

our students also greatly benefit from their rigorous commitment to scholarship.”

For Phillips-Anderson, the experience had some unexpected highlights being interviewed on Croatian television. “I was super nervous,” he admitted with a laugh. “I’ve been on NPR before, but it’s still surreal to see yourself on TV in another language. Under my name, the caption said something like ‘Professor at the University of New Jersey.’ Not quite right—but close enough!”

Both professors said the conference left a lasting impression both academically and personally. For Dr. Phillips-Anderson, the event highlighted just how quickly the field is evolving. “The conference focused on how rhetoric operates in the digital age,” he said. “Even books from 2019 already feel outdated because things are changing so fast. I’m updating my materials to reflect that—and exploring how we can use language not just to divide, but to connect.”

For Dr. Vujnovic, the experience underscored the power of collaboration. “Collaboration is such an important part of what we do,” she said. “We each could have done this project on our own, but doing it together made it so much richer. That’s something I always try to bring back to my students and colleagues—good collaborations create better, more meaningful work.”



IMAGE TAKEN by Marina Vujnovic

Keynote by Professor of Cognition, Jean Wagemans, Communication, and Argumentation at the University of Amsterdam, Netherlands

Monmouth’s Arctic Defense Campaign aims to take steps forward

MAIREAD SPELLACY
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF/NEWS EDITOR

On Oct. 30 at 12:15 p.m. at West End Park, members of Monmouth’s Arctic Defense Campaign, the nonprofit group that is connected to the national organization, organized an event where volunteers planned to dress up as Arctic Animals, carry banners that read “Arctic Drilling is Scary” and “Congress: Protect the Arctic!” while asking those who passed by to make a call to U.S. Congressmen for New Jersey’s 4th District, Chris Smith, to take action to permanently protect the Arctic National wildlife refuge from oil and gas development. In addition to over 1,000 New Jersey residents taking action over the course of the past few months by signing

petitions, writing letters to local newspapers, and calling their members of Congress, Monmouth’s chapter was expecting an additional 100 people to join them in their campaign. Due to the weather of high winds and heavy rain that afternoon, their turnout was not as expected. Despite the weather, Jackson Smith, an environmental organizer with the Arctic Defense Campaign, Sara Nelson, a student volunteer from Monmouth University, and Kate Paladiy, a student volunteer from Monmouth University continued with their individual speeches of why their campaign mattered. Smith shared they plan to reach out via phone to the community in hopes of getting more to join them in their campaign.



IMAGE TAKEN by Mairead Spellacy

Members of the Arctic Defense Campaign gather on Oct. 30 at West End Park

Alpha Chi Rho is back at Monmouth

BROOKE STEINWEISS
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

After a 17 year absence from campus Greek life, Alpha Chi Rho (AXP) has been granted permission to return to the university this fall with an initial group of 16 brothers.

Anthony Tesoriero, a junior who was named the colony's president as of last week, along with the help of juniors Phillip Pussilano, Steven Evanski, and John Terista took up the initial charge to bring Alpha Chi Rho back, and really put the wheels in motion to get Monmouth, the national AXP headquarters, and students involved in bringing the chapter back.

According to Nicolás R. Hewgley, Director of Communication and Development for Alpha Chi Rho National Fraternity, "Alpha Chi Rho had been having conversations for a few years with the University to rejoin the campus community." Hewgley said, "Through good luck, this group of students approached Alpha Chi Rho Headquarters to begin the expansion process at a time when the National Fraternity was having active conversations with the University."

Tesoriero said, "We didn't want to wait until our senior year, we wanted to enjoy the frat and keep growing interest. Many of the guys who joined wouldn't have joined Greek life in the beginning. I didn't feel like I identified with any one organization and that led to let's start our own organization."

Pussilano, who is their Vice President, said that

they grew their connections, went out, talked to people, and got themselves pushed to the top of the list to come back because of how many people they had interested.

Jayde Ware, the Associate Director of Student Engagement for Fraternity and Sorority Life, said student interest was the main thing that made now the right time for the fraternity to come back. Ware said, "Typically for any organization if there is a student interest group and we can see they are serious, if we see the students are driving that, it makes it easier for our office to support them."

Since they are still a colony, they will be spending this year building their charter plan, said

Tesoriero. He explained, "We are planning to submit a charter plan early spring, early-mid March once we raise a bit of money, volunteer hours, and make our bylaws."

Joshua Lichtbraun, the Junior AXP Social Chair, said, "The biggest challenge has been building a base for ourselves. We have not been on campus in 15 plus years. We're trying to establish the foundation we once had, telling everyone we're here, we want to be active, be there for other organizations, have them there for us."

While there are some people on campus who seem to think that the fraternity has a Christian focus, Tesoriero pointed out, "AXP is not a Christian Frat; it was founded in the

early days as a Christian fraternity and has religious affiliations, but today it is secular." He pointed out that all the men in AXP met and got close through religious organizations on campus, such as the Campus Catholic ministry. "We thought it'd be fun to have a social aspect that had men with similar values and desire for their college experience," said Tesoriero.

According to AXP's website, they hold character, honor, and integrity as their values. The recruitment chair, Terista, said, "We want to be known as the husbands and fathers of tomorrow. We are recruiting guys of high character, with high and clean morale standards."

Tesoriero said they are trying to have a good

wholesome time while still defining who they are right now. He explained, "It's all about our morals and ideas of being the best men we can be while having a good time with each other."

They currently have elected an e-board of seven members; Tesoriero as President; Pussilano as Vice President; Frank Dige as Secretary; Evanski as Treasurer; Terista as Recruitment Chair; Lichtbraun as Social Chair; Chris Feliks as Risk Chair; and Member at Large as Michael Becker.

Other fraternities have expressed excitement about welcoming AXP back. Anthony Cona, a senior and President of Sigma Pi, said, "I see them as a group to get involved with and [their return] opens the door to more opportunities for fraternities to do combined events together to build unity."

Jake Diaz, a senior and President of Tau Delta Phi, said, "I was really excited about it because I think it's great to grow the community when you can, even in a time when recruitment is difficult."

Pussilano agrees with this. He said, "Apart from being removed from the school, a lot of fraternities are removed from each other, but we want to make it where we are all together, make it more of hosting bigger events with multiple fraternities involved."

Ware maintained, "We are excited to have AXP back and they will bring a different take to our campus, they will bring different guys to fraternity life." She said it's, "another opportunity to have students' lives changed by joining a fraternity or sorority on our campus."



The 16 brothers of Alpha Chi Rho.

IMAGE COURTESY of Brooke Steinweiss

Lauren K. Woods Theatre puts on dance showcase

KYLENSKY MIRACLE
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

On Thursday Dec. 2 at 7:30 p.m. the Department of Music and Theatre Arts has invited the community to its annual Dance Showcase in Lauren K. Woods Theatre.

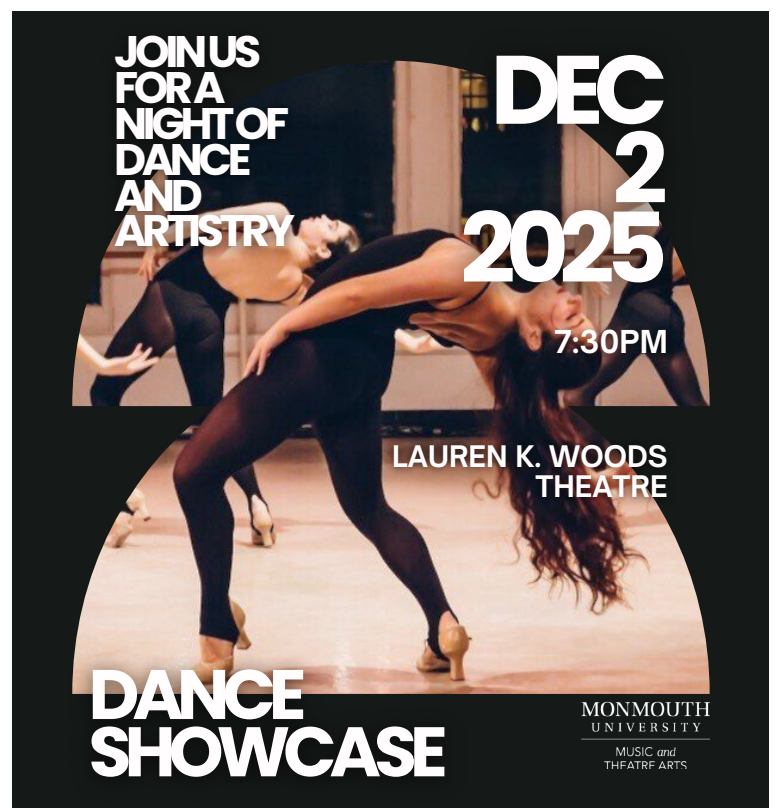
Audiences attending

can expect a variety of dance styles. Ranging from classical ballet pieces, contemporary choreography, and rhythmic tap numbers. Overall highlighting the skill, passion, and artistry of emerging dancers from around the area.

Monmouth University's classes in Ballet, Modern

Dance, Contemporary, Tap Dance, and Choreography, will perform alongside dancers from the Dance Movement Academy and Red Bank Catholic High School.

You won't want to miss the showcase of talent, connection and creativity through art and movement.



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Government shutdown
and its reflection on college
campuses

EDITORIAL STAFF

Recent developments in Washington have drawn new attention to the impact of federal gridlock on everyday life, including on college campuses. With the U.S. Government shutdown, questions arose about how stalled agencies, paused services, and delayed programs could impact healthcare access for students, even though many don't directly pay for their insurance or fully understand how their coverage works. The shutdown still carries consequences that may not be immediately visible.

The editors had differing perspectives on the most significant ways the shutdown could disrupt student healthcare. One editor shared, "I think it could be tougher for those who need it to access it, which would obviously lead to big problems not just here, but across campuses nationwide."

Another editor emphasized how the shutdown threatens low-income students specifically, saying, "Students like me who depend on Medicaid may face delays in the program because the federal workers aren't currently working."

Editors were also asked

whether the shutdown could make it harder for students to get medications, appointments, or basic health services, with one editor noting that the impact may vary, explaining, "It depends a lot on the situation of the student. It may be more difficult for some, while some might still have no issue at all."

Another editor warned that delays are inevitable, adding, "Everything is getting delayed as well as paused. Though the effects aren't immediately realized, they will hit us eventually."

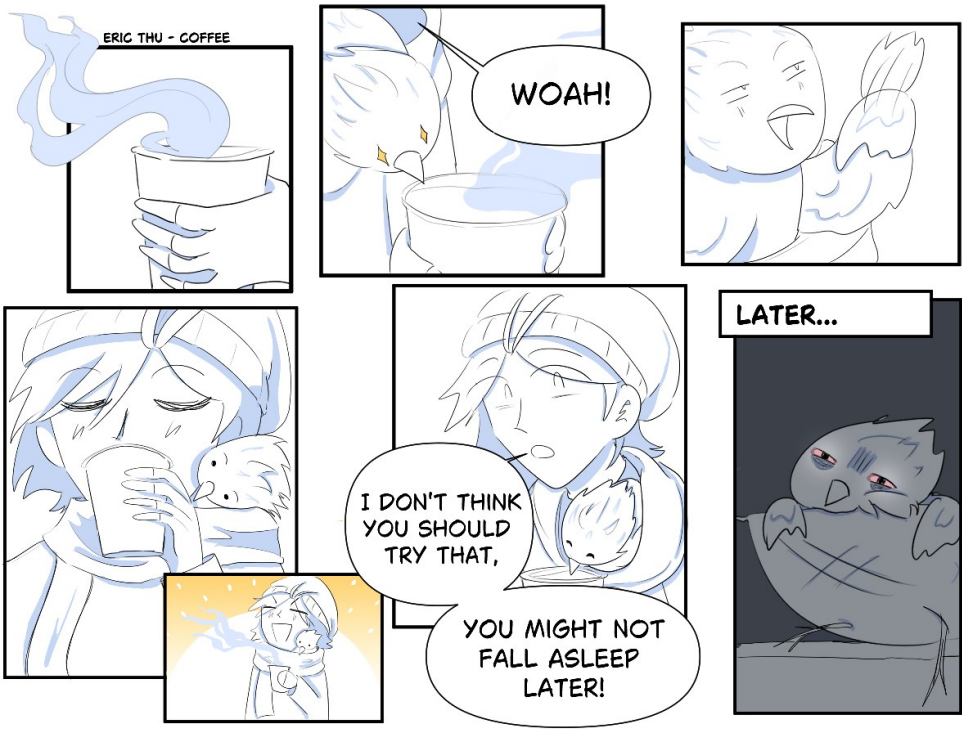
At the federal level, agencies such as the FDA and CDC operate at reduced capacity during a shutdown, which can have a ripple effect on public health and campus safety. One editor pointed out how this could pose challenges for students traveling over the holidays, saying, "If people are flying or going away for Thanksgiving, it can obviously lead to serious problems for students and people in general." Another stressed the importance of these agencies, especially during the colder months: "The CDC has a lot of say on college campuses, especially during flu season... without

them, campuses may not be up to date with knowledge about certain viruses."

Editors discussed further divided on what part of student healthcare would be impacted first. One believed rising prices would hit students earliest, putting it straightforwardly, "... No government funding? Prices will only increase."

Another editor saw access as the first thing to fall off, explaining, "Some people may be able to get it, but there won't be enough for everyone to benefit as usual. With high demand and low supply, cost will follow."

Government shutdowns often feel distant, something happening in Washington rather than West Long Branch, but their effects inevitably spread outward. From weakened public health communication to delayed services for low-income students, the impacts may reach campuses sooner than expected. The strain on healthcare access highlights how deeply students rely on federal systems that many rarely notice. The concern going forward is not just how long the shutdown lasts, but how prepared colleges are to support their students when those federal systems stall.



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Being a veteran at Monmouth University

CHRIS MARGOTTI
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

I remember it like it was yesterday, on a cold and dreary day in December of 2015 at Mcquire Air Force base, I raised my right hand and swore the oath to the constitution. A decision I made that changed my life, and I sure did not expect to be sitting here writing this as a Monmouth University student. Being a veteran at Monmouth doesn't come with special treatment, and to be honest, we prefer it that way. We are just students; each trying to earn a degree and have success in our 'mission.'

When I decided to leave the Air Force, I was unsure what my path was going to be or what even interested me. I had committed 10 years of my life to service to this country, and to the men and women who stood next to me in uniform. I had traveled all over the world, gained experiences and knowledge that I would not get anywhere. Deciding to leave something that was your livelihood, the thing that reshaped you as a person, the brotherhood you gained was something that still lives with me to this day. But it was time to move on.

That's the biggest challenge for every veteran who decides

to hang it up is – what is my next mission? What am I going to do now? It's the struggle that many veterans face when we decide it's time. They don't tell you how much your life is going to flip upside down when you transition to civilian life. There's no one in a uniform holding you to standards like how you perform in your fitness tests, how clean your boots are, or how pristine your hair cut is. You're on your own again, and for too many of us it can be scary and also exciting at the same time.

This was not a decision I took lightly nor was it an easy one. I had thought about leaving the Air Force for some time and had gained a new passion for writing when I had been on deployments. It was a way for me to express myself in ways that I was unfamiliar with, something that was never natural. Through my experiences and my time here at Monmouth, my passion for writing, more specifically journalism, has become my newest mission in life. Something I had not imagined until I had left my time in the military.

When I first came to Monmouth, the adjustment didn't hit me all at once. It was little things. Sitting in a class and realizing I had lived a whole chapter of life before some of my classmates fin-

ished high school. Watching students stress about things I used to think of as routine and just another typical day. Driving to school to and from my job on days I was capable of making it to class. Things not your average student may have to deal with. Being an older student and a veteran certainly comes with its jokes and while yes they do hold up, it reminds you that you're just another student and to enjoy the ride.

That's what the transition from the military to civilian life was like. It's not an identity crisis. It's a change of pace. You go from a world built on structure and routine to a world built on independence and choice. At first, it can seem overwhelming. Over time, you learn to appreciate it. You learn how to build your own structure instead of having one handed to you. You learn how to balance who you were in uniform with who you're becoming now.

Monmouth has been generous and welcoming of veterans, but like any campus, it's easy for student veterans to blend into the background. Most people don't automatically look at a classmate and assume they served. They don't assume we might be older, supporting families, juggling multiple jobs, all while having to write endless papers for our classes.

Being a veteran at Monmouth also means sharing the campus with people whose service journeys look nothing like your own. Some are young, some older. Some served overseas, others stateside. Some are adjusting easily; others are quietly struggling.

Some student veterans are parents juggling childcare, part-time jobs, and full-time course loads. They aren't just balancing homework; they're balancing lives. Veterans don't walk around advertising any of this, so unless someone asks, it stays below the surface. Sometimes as a veteran and those who still serve, we're considered quiet professionals, the ones who you will never hear complaints but to keep our heads down and keep rucking forward.

Being a veteran on a college campus means adjusting to a new environment while carrying experiences most classmates are unfamiliar with. It means figuring out how to connect with people who grew up in a different world. In class, I sometimes process things in a different way, not because I disagree or don't fit in, but because my past gives me a broader outlook on life. When topics tap into conflicts, policy, or national service, I sometimes feel the weight of those conversations in a way

that isn't abstract.

Veterans bring strengths to Monmouth that aren't always visible. Many of us know how to work under pressure, stay organized, and stay focused when things get busy. We value teamwork because we lived it for many years. We're used to showing up on time, keeping our commitments, and staying calm when stress builds. These traits don't make us special. They make us experienced, and that experience adds something valuable to our education.

Being a veteran at Monmouth has allowed me to move forward with my new journey while honoring where I came from. It represents my new path in working toward a degree with the same purpose I brought while wearing the uniform. It has allowed me to gain a new perspective on life when I may not know what was coming in the future.

Being a veteran and serving this country is a thankless job. We all signed up to serve those in need with no regrets. So, if you know a veteran on campus, talk to them. Ask questions sincerely. Get to know them. Understand that we may carry our past quietly, but we are here for the same reason as everyone else: to build something better for our future.

The Jonas Brothers: Kings of the Boy Bands?

TARA DALESSIO
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

While there has been a generationally-passed debate of this topic, I have finally put it to rest. Lots of people argue over which "boy band" is the best, but we have really settled the debate. Whether you like 90's bands, K-pop, TV show bands, or just someone more modern, I believe that the Jonas Brothers put that all to rest. It's time to say "Goodnight and Go," to all of their other competitors.

When looking at who the Jonas Brothers beat in this race, the topic of the boy band originators come to mind. Stereotypical, dancing bands like NSYNC, The Backstreet Boys, Boys to Men, and New Kids on the Block are known as the creators of this pop-loving division of music. That being said, they do something that keeps them out of reach of Jonas Brother fan's minds, which

in my opinion sets them back; not changing with the times. All of their music sounds the same from when they formed all the way until their current stuff. The Jonas Brothers have been able to change with the times, and update their music in a tasteful way that allows them to keep original things that initially sold them, while creating music for those growing up with them who are now adults.

Discussing who does and doesn't adapt to fans who have followed since they were young, Big Time Rush is the first to come to mind. Like the Jonas Brothers, they started their career in television, and later on took the talent that their shows and movies created for them, and made it something real. The difference is that even despite both boy bands having temporary splits, the Jonas Brothers were the only ones who adjusted their style to stray from the teenage element. While I am a fan of Big Time Rush as well, they still seem to have that corny, kids show, stereotypical boy band sound that keeps some on, but runs out with their lack of production. The Jonas

Brothers have been able to send out even more current and quality albums since their return, unlike the classic Nickelodeon band.

Even though the topic of the Jonas Brothers being considered as a boy band is a little touchy with fans of their competitors, I believe that they qualify. For starters and the obvious, it is an all male group, the first checkpoint for any boy band. They have pop-focused music, have a coordinated image and branding, and as funny as it sounds, they have that stereotypical teen-appeal that boy-bands have. While the Jonas Brothers' fans start as kids, it doesn't change the fact that their fans grow up to continue to follow them, and overall top all other bands who have failed to do the same.

As I see it, the Jonas Brothers is more than just a band: they are a cultural moment that continues to redefine itself. No matter your age, where you come from, and what you've been through, their art finds a way to connect, and that is an important goal that a lot of music tends to miss. Ultimately, that puts them on top, reigning above everyone else in the music sphere today.



IMAGE TAKEN by Tara Dalessio

Monmouth Football: Running toward history

ASIA COOKE
STAFF WRITER

The moment Derek Robertson went down, we all knew it was bad. The Monmouth football team's starting quarterback, the leader who prepared better than anyone on the roster, wasn't getting up.

When the news came that Robertson would miss the rest of the season, starting running back Rodney Nelson felt two things simultaneously: devastation for his teammate and friend losing his final year, and the weight of realization settling on his own shoulders as well as the fact that his work load was about to explode.

"When he went down, I knew it was something bad, but I didn't know he'd be put for the whole season," said Nelson recalling the moment Robertson sustained his injury. "I was upset for him because no athlete wants to go out like that in their final year, and I also realized my

workload was about to increase and it was a wake up call to do better."

For the junior running back and social work major, this season has been a case study in adaptation.

What started out as a breakout year alongside Robertson has transformed into something else entirely – a chance to prove himself as the focal point of an offense that's re-writing Monmouth's recent history.

The Hawks are now 8-2, their best start since 2017, and Nelson credits the team's chemistry above all else.

Since arriving in the spring of 2023, he's watched the culture shift. "The team's chemistry is fully involved in success this season. Everyone holds each other accountable, we see each other as brothers," said Nelson.

That mindset defined the season opener, when Monmouth fell behind 31-7. Nelson and his brother, wide receiver Gavin Nelson, combined for every touchdown after halftime, with commentators shouting out their mother as the deficit evaporated.

Nelson recalls this particu-

lar moment with high regard, stating that "No one on the team thought we were going to lose, we knew we had to come out and win. Then all the touchdowns after halftime were the Nelson brothers."

Nelson has always been a hard worker, and he continues to maintain that work ethic throughout this season.

He scouts defensive tendencies with clinical precision: how players tackle, their lateral movement, their speed, whether they can fill gaps. He identifies key players and studies their tells.

In addition to prepping for other teams, Nelson stated that he's also gotten comfortable letting opposing teams prepare for him.

That confidence comes from the expanded role he's carved out, particularly after Robertson's injury shifted the entire offensive calculus.

"On the field, Derek is someone you can follow, knows how to lead and push his guys and we have so much confidence in him because he prepares better than anyone on the team," said Nelson, reflecting on

his relationship with quarterback Derek Robertson. "Off the field, he carries himself the same way, but you can see more of his personality. He's kind of goofy, which you can see if you're close with him, genuine, easy to talk to and connect with."

Losing that presence mid-season forced adjustments. The backup quarterback, redshirt-freshman Frankie Weaver, is talented but hadn't played his first college game when thrust into the starting role.

When Robertson ran the offense, his mastery created versatility. Without him, defenses key on Nelson and the other running threats exclusively.

Nelson's four-touchdown performance against the Hampton Pirates showcased his ability to carry the offense, but the increased workload comes with its own set of pressures.

"I have to know a lot more to make his [Weaver] job easier ... I have to be damn near perfect."

Nelson's aforementioned work ethic can be traced back to his little league coach, Coach Bacon, who served as a father figure throughout Nel-

son's life.

"He always kept me focused when I was young, always made sure I was working out and that my grades were good, even when he didn't have to," recalls Nelson. "He was at the Hampton game and still checks up on me."

With the postseason approaching, Nelson has specific targets: 2,000 rushing yards, 20 touchdowns (he currently has 15), a CAA championship, and national title run. But beyond personal milestones, he wants this season to be remembered as legendary.

"Monmouth hasn't been 7-1 since 2017 and in the previous season, we beat an FBS team with the same players from this year," says Nelson regarding successes he feels are helping to propel them to the finish line.

Every additional carry takes a toll. Nelson undergoes regular treatment to keep his body ready. But mentally? No nerves, no stress. He frames the increased workload as an opportunity.

"I want to prove myself to myself, no one else."

The many voices of Professor Messina

ASIA COOKE
STAFF WRITER

Imagine crouching in a bush, microphone in hand, patiently waiting to capture the sound of birds chirping, thinking, "What am I doing? ... This is cool as hell." This is what a regular weekend looks like for Nicholas Messina, professor of communication, and it encapsulated everything about his decade here at Monmouth.

Messina has built a career that defies the traditional academic mold, balancing classroom instruction with voice over works, audio production, podcast creation, and union leadership.

His students aren't just learning theory. They're learning from someone whose voice has sold Old Navy jeans and Chili's appetizers, who's produced training modules for McGraw Hill and LEGO, who still takes on projects that require him to, well, hide in shrubbery to get the perfect sound bite.

Messina's journey to academia started on stage in high school, but he decided that studying acting felt impractical, so he chose the next best thing – communication.

"I viewed studying communication as a bridge – I wanted to be a broadcast journalist and I liked the idea of telling stories," said Messina.

The New Jersey STARS program covered Messina's first two years at Brookdale Community College, where he discovered the campus radio sta-

tion. Though he didn't formally join until his sophomore year, once he did, everything clicked.

After transferring to Ramapo College for a degree in Global Communication and Media (with a minor in Italian Language and Culture, a detail that would later fuel passion projects), he interned at a commercial station and seemed destined for a traditional radio career.

Then came his 23rd birthday. He'd interviewed with a commercial station on Monday, and by Wednesday, he'd landed a job with WBJB – Brookdale's station where it all began – to co-host their morning show.

The communication career path continued to work out for Messina. Once he hit the age where he realized he'd need his own health insurance really soon, Monmouth just so happened to have an opening for someone with audio and radio expertise.

The timing was almost fateful, if slightly awkward seeing as though he was younger than some of his students at the time.

Though his resume lacked a couple years of experience, Director of Advising for the Communication Department, Professor Lorna Schmidt, saw potential and asked him if he would consider graduate school.

What followed was a grueling two-year sprint. Messina recalls those early teaching years laughingly, "So, in my first academic year teaching I was doing the morning show, coming to teach classes, then the summer of 2016 started my master's. I was teaching 4-5 classes, taking 2-3 classes, and writing my thesis ... on the

construction and dissemination of fake news..."

Now, as a specialist professor, Messina's job description is refreshingly straightforward: keep working in the field. Stay current, practice what you teach.

"It's a unique position. The objective is to consistently be working in the field, to still be improving hard skills in production ... I love the research aspect, but the ebay way for me to teach students about audio production is being able to do it," says Messina in regard to what it means to be a specialist professor.

The next time you see Messina, ask him what work he does to help him stay current, and he'll smile knowingly.

"You would be surprised where your voice can be. I've done commercials for Old Navy, Chili's, Lipton, videos for LEGO, Airstream (travel trailers) training videos, worked with airing and production services here at Monmouth, political advertisements, entire training and e-learning modules for McGraw Hill."

His client list reads like a mall directory, and no one job is the same as the last. Audio production projects vary.

Messina stated that on any given day he can be hauling equipment to remote locations, spending hours in post-production layering tracks and syncing audio to video, or sometimes venturing into nature for authentic soundscapes.

Despite all of this, some of Messina's most compelling work happens in his passion projects. Currently, he is devel-



PHOTO TAKEN from Monmouth University.

oping a podcast series that shines a light on Italian-American history that most Italian-Americans don't know – or don't want to know.

He explores topics such as "The Years of Lead" and "The Anarchists of Patterson," both of which were pivotal turning points in the history of Italian-Americans, especially those here in New Jersey.

That willingness to embrace uncomfortable conversations extended to his current role as the Communication Coordinator for FAMCO – the faculty union and the first at a private university to earn National Labor Relations Board support.

Within this role, he is planning campaigns to educate faculty about contract rights and translating dense legal language into accessible video content.

"Last year's disagreement was

on increased health care costs that were not relative to raises and we were at an impasse ... After last year's big win, the role is all about image maintenance, trying to stay positive in the eyes of the Monmouth community," said Messina about the role and what he and FAMCO are doing currently.

With a decade at Monmouth behind him and ongoing projects always sitting at 75-85% completion, Messina shows no signs of simplifying. His calendar remains packed with classes, voice-over sessions, union work, and those perpetually unfinished podcast episodes about the history of Italy and its descendants.

For a communication professor, there's no better lesson plan than living the complexities of communication itself.

Books you need on your winter TBR list ASAP

ASIA COOKE
STAFF WRITER

As temperatures drop and daylight shrinks, the winter season practically begs for escapism. And what better way to escape real life than with a comforting winter read?

Whether you're looking for a smutty romance, stress-inducing mystery, or heartwarming fiction, this winter's reading lineup has something for everyone and every mood.

***King of Wrath* by Ana Huang**

If you're looking for a romance that delivers intensity and sophistication, Ana Huang's *King of Wrath* from her *Kings of Sin* series is your winter companion. This billionaire romance follows a marriage of convenience between a powerful CEO and a woman determined to maintain her independence. Huang excels at creating tension that crackles off the page, with characters who feel fully realized rather than cookie-cutter romance

archetypes. The corporate setting provides a glossy backdrop for emotional vulnerability, and the slow-burn development will keep you reading well past your bedtime. Fair warning: you'll likely want to binge the entire *Kings of Sin* series once you finish.

***The Thursday Murder Club* by Richard Osman**

Nothing says winter reading like a clever mystery, and Osman's debut novel delivers charm alongside its crime-solving. Four retirees in a British retirement village meet weekly to investigate cold cases — until a real murder lands in their lap. The novel balances humor with genuine mystery, and the unlikely detective quartet brings warmth to even the darkest plot twists. It's the literary equivalent of a cup of tea: comforting, British, and surprisingly complex. The book has spawned a popular series, so if you fall for these amateur sleuths, you have multiple winters of reading ahead of you.

***Tomorrow, and Tomorrow, and Tomorrow* by Gabrielle**

Zevin

Winter's extended darkness makes it perfect for ambitious novels that require attention and emotional investment. Zevin's story of two friends who create video games together spans decades, exploring creativity, friendship, love, and betrayal. Despite the game industry setting, this isn't a niche novel; it's a profound story of collaboration and human connection. The characters feel achingly real, their mistakes understandable even when frustrating. Keep tissues nearby for the final chapters. This is the book you'll want to discuss with everyone, making it ideal for book clubs facing the winter meeting season.

***The House in the Cerulean Sea* by T.J. Klune**

Sometimes winter demands pure escape, and Klune's whimsical fantasy delivers exactly that. A caseworker visits an orphanage for magical children on a remote island, discovering found family and unexpected joy. The book radiates warmth despite its seaside setting,

offering gentle humor and genuine emotion without veering into saccharine territory. It's the reading equivalent of a hug, exactly what many people need during winter's isolating months. The magical realism elements provide an imaginative escape while the themes of acceptance and belonging ground the story in emotional truth.

***The Hidden Life of Trees* by Peter Wohlleben**

Winter reveals the forest's architecture — bare branches create patterns invisible during leafy months. Wohlleben's exploration of how trees communicate and support one another transforms ordinary walks into wonder-filled experiences. The German forester writes accessibly about complex scientific concepts, revealing that trees communicate danger warnings to one another, share nutrients, and maintain relationships. Reading this during the winter, when trees appear dormant, adds poignant context. You'll never look at a forest the

same way, and inter hikes and walks become opportunities to spot the networks the author describes.

***Such a Fun Age* by Kiley Reid**

Winter reading doesn't have to mean escapism — sometimes the best books are the ones we relate to the most. Reid's sharp, thought-provoking debut novel follows a young, Black babysitter accused of kidnapping the White child in her care during a late-night grocery store trip. What unfolds is a nuanced exploration of race, class, privilege, and performative allyship that will have you examining your own biases. Reid's prose is accessible and often humorous despite the serious subject matter, making this the kind of book that sparks hours of discussion. Perfect for winter book clubs or for readers who want something meaningful to think about during those long, contemplative winter nights.

This winter, permit yourself to get lost in these pages. The world will still be there when

November goals you'll actually stick to

HANNAH FIERRO
STAFF WRITER

November always sneaks up quietly. It's the in-between month, past the chaos of midterms, and the excitement of the new school year is gone; finals are creeping up, and the weather's cold enough to make you want to sleep in. It's easy to slip into survival mode, just trying to make it through each week. But instead of waiting until New Year's to "start fresh," November can be a solid time to reset.

You've probably heard of "No-Spend November," but this doesn't mean cutting everything; it means spending smarter by paying attention to what you buy. College life makes it too easy to fall into small habits that drain your bank account fast, so check how often you're buying coffee, DoorDash, or random things you don't need. Even cutting back a

little can make your wallet hurt less by the end of the month. You don't have to go extreme; try small swaps like making coffee in your dorm, using your meal swipes more often, or planning a Target trip once a week instead of multiple times. It's more about building awareness than a restriction. The more aware you are of your spending, the more confident you'll feel heading into the holidays, when money always disappears even faster.

Start holiday preparation early. When finals hit, you're not going to have the energy to shop for gifts or plan anything. Getting ahead now saves both money and stress. Start by creating a quick list of who you want to buy a gift for and set a limit. If you're on a student budget, small gestures count, such as a handmade card, a baked treat, or even planning a chill night with friends before break can mean just as much as a pricey present. The best part about starting early is that you get to enjoy the holidays

instead of rushing through them. You'll actually have time to be present, to decorate, relax, and breathe instead of scrolling through Amazon in a panic the night before heading home. Planning isn't about being overly responsible; it's about making space to actually enjoy the end of the semester.

Another thing to do is to adjust your skincare, because the cold weather doesn't play. If your face randomly feels dry, it's due to your skincare routine. Cold air and dorm heaters ruin moisture. You don't have to purchase expensive items; just switching to a gentle cleanser, a thicker moisturizer, and using SPF does the job. Look for barrier-supporting / hydrating ingredients: ceramides, glycerin, hyaluronic acid, niacinamide. These help keep moisture in and your skin less freaked out. I personally use CeraVe Hydrating Facial Cleanser, and it has left my

skin with fewer breakouts and is very soft when I follow up with the CeraVe moisturizer. It's not about being high-maintenance; it's about feeling refreshed and clean in your 8 a.m. class, so do some research on your skin type to find the right skincare for you.

The middle of the semester always feels heavy, so make sure you're taking care of yourself and doing at least one thing a day for your mental health. It could be taking a walk after class, listening to music, keeping a journal, or jotting down something that went right that day. There are multiple resources on campus. If you start to feel overwhelmed, you can talk to someone. A quick check in with a friend or counselor can make a difference.

Reflect before the year ends. November's a good time to pause before everything speeds up. You're close enough to the end of the semester to see what worked and what didn't. Think about

the habits you want to keep and the ones that drained you. Reflection doesn't have to mean deep journaling or big revelations. It can be as simple as recognizing how far you've come since August. Even surviving a rough class or making it through busy weeks counts as progress. Take a note of what you learned about yourself this semester, what motivates you, what throws you off, and what you actually care about. That awareness is what makes the next semester easier to handle.

November isn't just a countdown to finals or break. It can be, but it could also be a chance to slow down and reset before everything restarts. These goals aren't dramatic or life-changing; they're the kind that make you feel a little more balanced when things get messy. Give yourself credit for making it this far, and use this month to steady yourself before the next rush hits.

Take a trip to the Underworld with Broadway's "Hadestown"

KATELYN SANDVIK
STAFF WRITER

“And we will always raise them up/To the world we dream about, and the one we live in now.” From the moment the stage lights brightened and the cast walked out “Hadestown” captivated viewers and took them on an emotional, thought provoking journey to reflect on their lives.

The Broadway show “Hadestown” is based on ancient Greek mythology and carefully weaves together the tragedy of Orpheus and Eurydice with the tale of Hades and Persephone. The show began with Greek god, Hermes introducing the characters and explaining that the story about to unfold is a sad one about two lovers, which they continue to tell again and again. During this scene, viewers also get introduced to the harsh and cruel world with only freezing cold and boiling hot seasons. This forced Eurydice to turn her back on the world, keeping everyone at arms length. However, this changes when she meets Orpheus; the exact opposite of her. Naive and innocent to the ways of the world, he immediately falls for



PHOTO TAKEN by Katelyn Sandvik.

Eurydice. She initially casts him aside, before realizing there's something special about him: he has the ability to bring balance back to the seasons with song.

As the two fall in love, the seasons get harsher and surviving becomes more difficult. Hades calls Persephone back to the Underworld, causing a quick end to spring and bringing about a

cruel winter. Orpheus continues to work hard on his song, meanwhile Eurydice is starving and cold. Eventually she is lured to the Underworld by Hades with the promise of food and warmth. When Orpheus finds out he is devastated and embarks on a quest to bring her back home.

What makes Hadestown such a unique show is its ability

to blend these old tales with modern jazz and folk music. The musicians sit atop the stage on bleachers allowing the audience to see them play live, and feel the music. It's such a prominent part of the play because of its ability to amplify the mood of scenes as well as mark the switch between the normal world and the Underworld.

Another way this transition is emphasized is through the stage. Similar to other Broadway shows, “Hadestown” features a revolving stage or turntable seemingly symbolizing the continuous telling of this tragedy. To denote the normal world from the Underworld, the innermost circle lowers down into the stage, hiding characters from the audience. This makes it all the more dramatic when Eurydice leaves and descends.

“Hadestown” is currently playing at the Walter Kerr Theatre. The cast includes Jack Wolfe as Orpheus, Morgan Dudley as Eurydice, Rebecca Naomi Jones as Persephone, Paulo Szot as Hades, and Kurt Elling as Hermes. Each cast member is memorable and brings powerful emotions to their character. There are also three

characters called The Fates who are sisters that portray the inner doubts and fears of the characters. They steer the characters' actions and try to bring out the worst in them. For example, when Orpheus is on his journey to bring back Eurydice, they swarm him singing, “Who are you?/Why are you all alone?/Who do you think you are?/Who are you to think that you can walk a road/That no one has ever walked before?”

Even though the play was first written and performed in 2006, it quite eerily speaks to the world today. The main themes are that of oppression, control, and having hope in a world that offers so little in return. Viewers will see pieces of themselves reflected within the characters, allowing them to resonate with the story.

One thing is clear, “Hadestown” is a must see Broadway play for everyone. It does not just tell a story, but makes audiences feel it through raw, emotional songs and performances. “Hadestown” has a raw, gritty feeling to it, making it stand out from other Broadway shows and giving it a sense of realism. Make sure to get your ticket soon and take a trip to the Underworld!

The Neighbourhood hiatus is over with “((((ultraSOUND))))”

MELANY MCCANN
STAFF WRITER

After a three-year hiatus, and a constant sadderdaze since they've left, The Neighbourhood has officially returned. Beginning in August of 2025, the band had hinted on their Instagram that they were reunited and on Oct. 23, they announced their new album “((((ultraSOUND)))),” set to be released on Nov. 14. Just in time for sweater weather!

They've also announced a ton of more surprises for fans, presumably making up for lost time. In their announcement post for their album, they also released three singles from the new album, “OMG,” “Lovebomb,” and “Private.” If these songs are any indication of the quality of the new album, fans are in store for the same alternative rock and indie genre of previous albums, but even better. They've truly taken this time off to hone their skills, and it shows.

The first single, “OMG” is an alt rock track that explores the vulnerability that comes with deep connection and dedication. “Lovebomb” is an introspection on the early stages of romance,

and “Private” is about the tension and thrill in a secretive relationship. One thing all of these songs have in common, though, is their unique and exceptional production. They are filled with bass made for dancing around your room, and an ethereal production that gives an out-of-body experience. These songs are addictive enough to keep you listening, and are exactly what you'd expect from The Neighbourhood. It has the same sound the band always has—just more refined.

These singles weren't the only surprises in store for fans, though. Oct. 31 marked the ten year anniversary of their album “Wiped Out!” and the band celebrated this by releasing an anniversary edition with four new songs including, “Leather Weather,” “Maniac,” “Cinnamon,” and “Pressure,” along with several demo tracks. These songs are a time capsule to 2015, filled with the same alternative rock/indie influences and melancholic lyrics. However, the band's comeback didn't stop there. After a three-year drought,

they were making up for it.

On Nov. 3, they released the music video for “Private.” This video featured all band members, with the lead singer Jesse Rutherford taking center. The video is a combination of black and white clips featuring the band and a presumed romantic partner at night, hiding from public view. This perfectly encapsulated the song as it was filled with tension and explored the vulnerability that comes with connection and secrets.

The surprises didn't end there because they also announced their world tour, titled “The Neighbourhood: The Would Tour,” a word play on their band

name. They haven't toured in over three years, so this announcement not only came as a shock, but with so much adrenaline from fans to secure tickets. On this tour, they're stopping at ten locations in the U.S., and then heading abroad for 23 more shows. Soon after all the tickets went on sale on Nov. 7, they added three new dates abroad and announced that all of the dates were successfully sold out, including the famous, Madison Square Garden. They haven't announced the opener for the show, but many fans are speculating that Chase Atlantic may be the opener as they left a suspicious comment on the tour announcement post, leading to

rumors of their connection.

Whilst all of these announcements and releases are surely exciting and long-awaited, it is not without controversy. Many have expressed frustration that the band decided against signing a new drummer and kept Brandon Fried in the band. In November of 2022, lead singer from The Marias publicly accused Fried of sexual assault. This sparked a lot of criticism toward the band, who kept the drummer despite having enough time and resources to find a new one. This frustration has gone as far as many fans are refusing to purchase tickets.

Despite it all, this is arguably the comeback of a century. After being disbanded for three years with no sign of ever returning, it has been such a thrilling month for fans. Watching the band return to social media, leak songs at events, and then announce a full world tour has been so unexpected and exhilarating. I can't wait to stream the new album and take in any more surprises they may have in store. Nothing unites quite like music, and The Neighbourhood has shown just that.

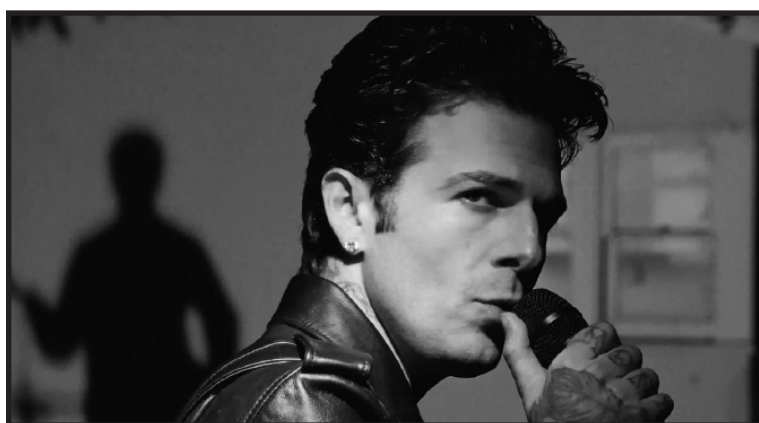


IMAGE TAKEN from InfoMusic.ro.

The Music and Theatre Arts Department's "Into the Woods": A magical experience like no other

LORELAI HILARCZYK
ENTERTAINMENT EDITOR

"No one is alone, truly/
No one is alone," is one of the heartfelt life lessons "Into the Woods" has to offer among the difficult moments.

Stephen Sondheim and James Lapine's "Into the Woods" is certainly no easy task in the theatre world. It's full of complex overlapping storylines about the characters and archetypes we all know and love. This writer was fortunate enough to climb down her busy beanstalk of a schedule and attend the dress rehearsal run as they prepare for opening night.

John Terista (Baker), Taylor Wichterman (Cinderella), Kelly Nide (Little Red Riding Hood), Andrew Shuberda (Jack), and Antonia Bongiorno (Baker's Wife) are our rag-tag group of "wishers" who set out into the woods to fulfill their individual desires. The Baker and his wife cross paths with all of them in search of a cow as white as milk, a cape as red as blood, hair as yellow as corn, and a slipper as pure as gold to break an ancient spell.

This group had perfect chemistry and flow with one another. The opening of "Prologue: Into the Woods" featuring the entire company was so full of energy it had me on the edge of my seat. And towards the end of the production, "Your Fault" had me singing along to the fan favorite.

The solo numbers were just as cohesive as the group ones. Bongiorno's "Moments in the Woods" was one of my favorites of the night. She was poised and passionate yet so witty in her delivery of the lyrics. Wichterman's "On the Steps of the Palace" was just as memorable, giving the audience some insight into why she lost her famous golden shoe. Her tone and presence will linger with you on the car ride home. Stepping into the minds of these women is exactly like reading a storybook. It's deliciously intrusive and audiences are going to love living with these two.

Our two younger

characters, Jack and Little Red, played by Shuberda and Nide, are oh so naive, thinking that cows and harps can be friends, and that wolves don't see you as a meal. Shuberda's "Giants in the Sky" was vocally excellent, including the money note at the end. However, my hope is that he truly commits to the wonder of playing Jack and that feeling that anything is possible. Nide's "I Know Things Now" was exactly how I imagined. The wordiness of the lyrics and the tempo changes were smooth and careful. As well as her vocal performance of completely giving into the higher-pitched tone of a child.

Now there's one character I have yet to introduce, but that is because she needs no introduction. Remember that

ever mess around with her greens, especially the beans.

Her performances of "Stay With Me" and "Last Midnight" gave me chills and almost brought tears to my eyes. Her complicated story of wanting to protect her "child," Rapunzel played by Julia Gale is so heartbreaking. Chesla gave it her all and you could feel her pain and drive during "Last Midnight." Parents in the audience will be able to resonate with wanting to protect and shelter their children. That's what makes this musical so relatable from all angles.

Another great moment to watch was Terista and Bongiorno's "It Takes Two." The vocal chemistry between them is great and is a testament

of the Mysterious Man is revealed at the end, but act one will have you shouting, "Who the hell is this guy?"

As fabulous as our main characters are, there were a few side characters who stole the show. Amanda Giunta (Cinderella's Stepmother), Emma Fitzgerald (Florinda), and Allie Fontana (Lucinda) were absolutely hilarious. From taunting Cinderella to looking ever so chic in their sunglasses after an accident, these ladies brought some much needed humor. When they enter on stage know that you're in for a funny mannerism or comment.

Charlie Ferrera as Cinderella's Prince also known as "Charming" was also one of my favorites. His performance of "Agony" with Francisco

Narrator) were also characters I looked forward to seeing. Khatri's "Hello, Little Girl" was clever and well suited in a higher key. This updated twist made the song seductive and chilling. Finkelstein did a great job guiding us through the tale and being clear and concise. Without her, the audience would be even more confused due to the rapid pacing.

It's important for me to give credit where it's due to the artistic staff and production team. Director, Sheri Anderson and Musical Director, Mike Glich no doubt took time and care to prepare this cast for these taxing roles. Their hard work and dedication truly shows. The production team, from the mysterious lighting and giant footsteps to the magical storybook scene with vines and a tree, were great visual aspects. Without these individuals the story wouldn't be fully brought to life. I would also be a fool if I didn't mention the Chesla as costume designer and the amazing good luck omen of this cast having some of the Broadway production's costumes.

Overall, this show is fun, heartfelt, and fast paced. My major critique would be for all the cast members to clearly enunciate each sentence. Those bits of information can get lost in translation at times and we wouldn't want the audience to leave feeling incomplete. This minor detail doesn't take away from the production as a whole. As the Witch would say, "Well that's another story/ Nevermind/Anyway." If you're ready to set out on the ultimate musical adventure of humor, growth, and companionship, then see this show.

All performances are held at Woods Theatre and opening night is this Thursday, Nov. 13 at 7 p.m. Don't lose your glass slipper if you miss the first journey into the woods! There are more shows on Saturday, Nov. 15 at 2 p.m. and 8 p.m.. The show will close out the run with a matinee and evening performance on Sunday, Nov. 16 at 2 p.m. and 8 p.m..

As the company sings, "Into the woods/Into the woods/ Then out of the woods/And home before dark!"



PHOTO COURTESY of Katherine Grace.

The Music and Theatre Arts Department presents "Into the Woods" this week. See Kelly Nide, Taylor Wichterman, Julianna Chesla, Andrew Shuberda, Antonia Bongiorno, and John Terista on Nov. 13, 15, and 16. For tickets visit www.monmouth.edu/mca.

ancient spell? The Witch played by Julianna Chesla, cast it on the Baker's family line. Draped in Bernadette Peters' original cloak from when she played the role, Chesla truly embodied this wickedly misunderstood character. From the moment she appears on stage you know two things, every time she is involved you need to pay attention and don't ever never

to their teamwork. You will be rooting for these two up until the very end and their story is one you won't want to miss. "No More" was another great unexpected duo moment as Terista gets an unusual pep-talk from Xavier Santangelo (Mysterious Man). He learns never to give up no matter the questions or tests thrown his way. Don't worry, the identity

Marques (Rapunzel's Prince) was audibly laughable, in the best way. I held my laughter in (sometimes) for the sake of being professional, but I digress. Both men are excellent singers and actors, but if they both let it rip with over-the-top dramatics, this number will be worth waiting for.

Sami Khatri (The Wolf) and Alexis Finkelstein (The

Sherrill Wins NJ Governor’s Race, Sets Early Focus on Education and Student Support

HENRY BOODY
POLITICS EDITOR

Democrat Mikie Sherrill won New Jersey’s 2025 governor’s race on Nov. 4, securing a double-digit lead over Republican Jack Ciattarelli as votes were counted statewide. According to NJ Spotlight News, the Associated Press called the race shortly after 9 p.m., making Sherrill the state’s second woman elected governor.

Reported from New Jersey Globe, New Jersey rarely elects governors from the same political party three times in a row. The outlet further noted that the last time a party won three consecutive gubernatorial races was 1961, when Democrat Richard Hughes succeeded two-term Democrat Robert Meyner. The state has historically shifted parties every eight years, even when outgoing governors remained popular, most notably Republican Tom Kean in 1989 and Democrat Brendan Byrne in 1977. Sherrill’s win therefore marks a rare break in a decades-long pattern of partisan turnover in the state.

Education was the through-line of her campaign, and it’s shaping up to be the centerpiece of her transition. During her election-night

remarks in Montclair, Sherrill told supporters that as the federal administration was “cutting SNAP [and] ripping away healthcare,” her administration would “fight for a different future for our children,” according to NJ Spotlight News.

Much of Sherrill’s platform centers on the state’s school funding formula. During the September gubernatorial debate, Sherrill said the formula “needs to reflect student need and real district costs,” according to Chalkbeat, while speaking on stage at Rider University. Chalkbeat also reported that Sherrill argued New Jersey must reassess how underfunded districts are identified and how their needs are measured across K–12 systems.

Sherrill also emphasized the importance of academic recovery and access to tutoring. According to Chalkbeat, she stated that her administration plans to support “high-impact tutoring,” which involves individualized, consistent academic support delivered multiple times per week. She told reporters the next state budget should “lock in” funding for districts using this model.

Mental health was another theme of her fall campaign. According to Chalkbeat, Sherrill said the state needs



IMAGE TAKEN by Bryan Anselm

to “evaluate what programs are working and strengthen those that show measurable improvement,” while speaking to the press after an August event.

Students at Monmouth University reacted to Sherrill’s education focus with both optimism and concerns about affordability.

According to Abby Kosch, a sophomore majoring in communication, educator support is essential for students’ academic stability. “Students deserve to have the best education they can, and it is extremely important to support educators,” Kosch said while speaking to The Outlook. She added that increased mental health access “allowed me to continue to

pursue my dreams” and said she hopes the administration expands support for first-generation students.

Funding changes at the K–12 level also drew attention from Monmouth student Olivia McGlone, a junior social work major, who said strong early-grade systems “give students a better foundation academically and emotionally,” while speaking to The Outlook. She also pointed to affordability pressures, saying “even small increases in tuition or housing costs can make a big difference in whether students can stay enrolled.”

Policy groups have begun framing what Sherrill’s agenda may

look like in practice. Whiteboard Advisors released a breakdown of both candidates’ platforms ahead of Election Day, showing Sherrill has pledged to invest in mental health services, expand after-school programming, and maintain state support for affordable pre-K. The analysis also notes that her administration is expected to review district efficiency and consider shared services where they may reduce costs.

Sherrill is expected to announce her transition education team later this month. According to NJ Spotlight News, her office plans to release early budget priorities before she takes the oath of office in January.

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 Henry Boody

Local

“Sherrill names Alex Ball as chief of staff and Tim Lydon as chief counsel”
(New Jersey Globe)

“Hate changing clocks twice a year? Proposed N.J. law would extend Daylight Saving Time.”
(NJ.com)

“Immigrant advocates rally to push for bill protecting immigrants in NJ”
(North Jersey.com)

National

“Senate votes to end government shutdown, sending funding bill to the House” (CNN)

“Supreme Court Declines to Reconsider Same-Sex Marriage Decision” (Wall Street Journal)

“Celebrities Lament Zohran Mamdani Win” (Newsweek)

International

“US aircraft carrier moves into Latin America region, escalating Venezuela tensions”
(Reuters)

“Air pollution in India’s capital draws protests as schools are shuttered” (CBS News)

“Russian court extends jailing of teenage singer over street performance of anti-war songs”
(The Associated Press)

TO/ The Outlook

Hello, everyone! My name is Mairead Spellacy 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 s1342915@monmouth.edu. Happy reading!

- Mairead Spellacy, Editor-in-Chief and News Editor '25/'26

Hi everyone! My name is Ava McGinty and I'm this year's Managing Editor & Features Editor. I'm so excited for this year & to read all the awesome articles everyone writes! If you would like to write for the features section or have any other questions about *The Outlook*, please email me at s1356207@monmouth.edu!

-Ava McGinty, Managing and Features Editor '25/'26

HAWKTV 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 three shows. Hawk TV News shoots biweekly on Tuesdays. On Wednesdays, we film our pop culture show called Triple Scoop and on Thursdays, our sports show called the Extra Point. All begin at 7 p.m. We hope to see you this semester!

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

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 '24/'25

MU CD College Democrats

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

- Owen Bros, President '24/'25



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 '24/'25



WMCX 88.9

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) '24/'25



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 '24/'25



"OmniSports Media" - WMCX

Tune in every Friday from 11 a.m. -1 p.m. for sports content about the MLB & NFL on WMCX 88.9.

- Dean Heidel, OmniSports Media Host



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 '24/'25

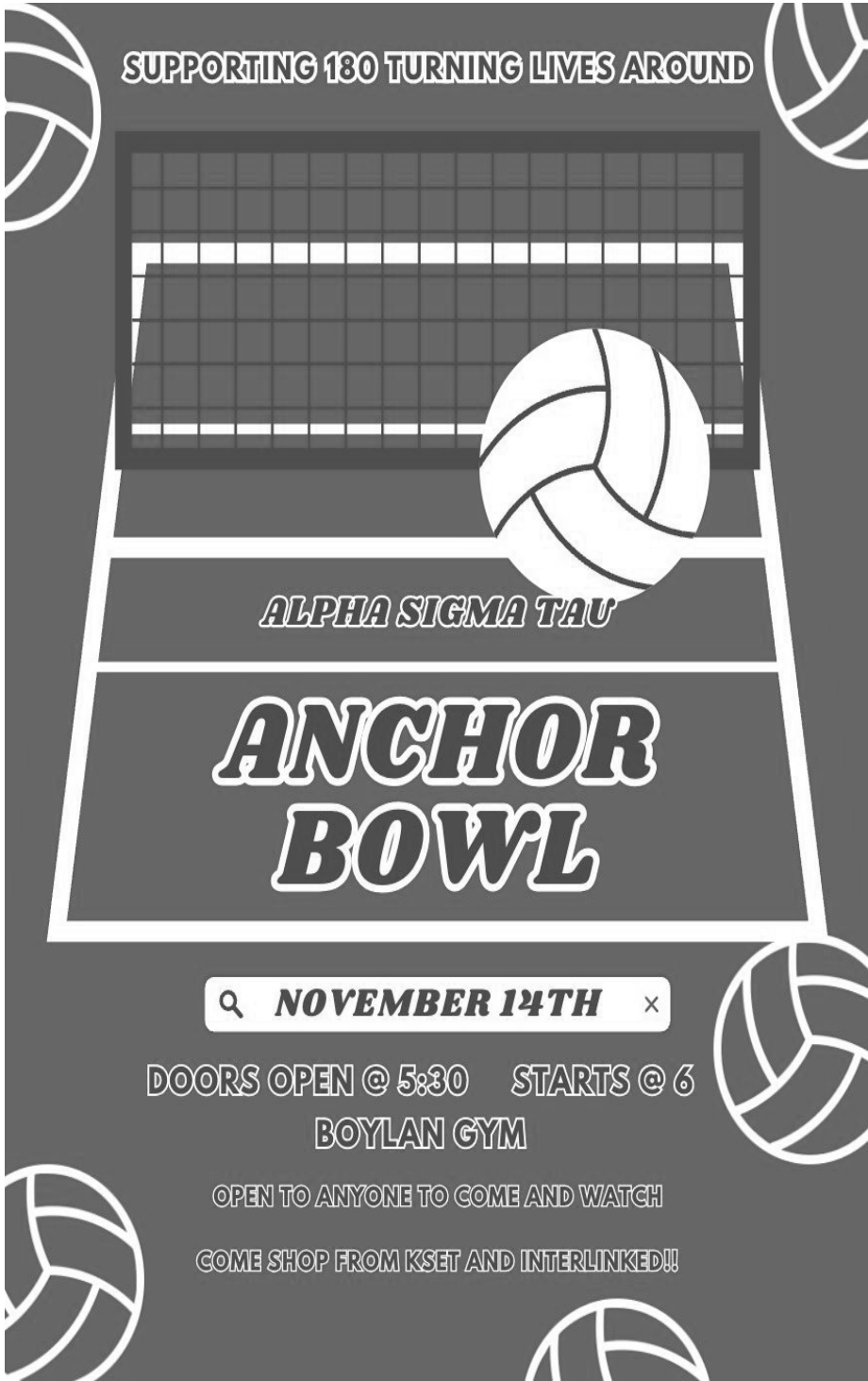


MU Sports Industry Club

We are a club dedicated to connecting aspiring students with sports industry professionals through networking opportunities. Our first meeting will be on Sept. 22nd at 7 p.m. on Zoom with Rachel Luscher, the Digital Coordinator at the New York Islanders! Follow our Instagram @musportsindustry for more info!

- Ava McGinty, Vice President

SUPPORTING 180 TURNING LIVES AROUND



ALPHA SIGMA TAU

ANCHOR BOWL

Q NOVEMBER 14TH X

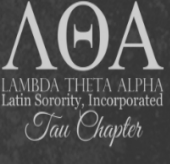
DOORS OPEN @ 5:30 STARTS @ 6
BOYLAN GYM

OPEN TO ANYONE TO COME AND WATCH
COME SHOP FROM KSET AND INTERLINKED!!

Lambda Lounge



November 12th
8:30pm
Shadows Lounge

 Come lounge with the Lambda Fam and have a great time playing games, eating food, and more.



A DAY IN OUR BOOTS



11/12
1-4 pm
Student Center

Ever wondered what military life is really like? Join Monmouth's Student Veterans for an interactive event where you can explore the tools, tastes, and training that define service.

- ✔ Try a real Meal Ready-to-Eat (MRE)
- 🛡 Check out Battle Rattle & Medical Gear
- 🧰 Explore Chemical Protection Equipment
- 💬 Chat with Student Veterans about their service and transition to campus life



PEARSON
**WORLD
CINEMA
SERIES**

Between Two Worlds

13 Nov, 6:05 - 9:00 p.m. | Pozycki Auditorium
Host: Manuel Chávez | Discussant: Marina Vujovnic

Based on French journalist Florence Aubenas's bestselling non-fiction work *Le Quai de Ouistreham*, investigating rising precarity in French society through her experiences in the northern port city of Caen. Directed by **Emmanuel Carrere**.



Monmouth University Department of Music & Theatre Arts Presents:

INTO THE WOODS

Music and Lyrics by STEPHEN SONDHEIM
Book by JAMES LAPINE

Originally Directed on Broadway by James Lapine
Orchestrations by Jonathan Tunick

Director Sheri Anderson	Musical Director Mike Gilch	Choreographer Sami Khatri
Costume Designer Julianna Chesla	Scenic Designer Olivia McGlone	Lighting Designer Max Ghaffar

NOVEMBER 13, 15, 16

November 13 7:00PM	November 15 2:00PM	November 15 8:00PM
November 16 2:00PM	November 16 8:00PM	

Lauren K. Woods Theatre
www.monmouth.edu/mca

Into the Woods is presented through special arrangement with Music Theatre International (MTI). All authorized performance materials are also supplied by MTI.
www.mtishows.com



Please join us for a special discussion
and book signing event
sponsored by the Office of the President



Featuring award-winning journalist

JACK FORD
Author of
"Beyond This Place of Wrath and Tears"

Thursday, Nov. 20
1 to 2:45 p.m.
Great Hall Auditorium

Inspired by the true story of Lee Carson,
the daring journalist who shattered gender norms
on the frontlines of World War II, Ford's novel
offers a powerful exploration of courage
and resilience.

REGISTRATION
1 to 1:25 p.m.

BOOK DISCUSSION AND Q&A
1:30 to 2:15 p.m.

BOOK SIGNING
2:15 to 2:45 p.m.

Don't miss this opportunity to hear directly from
the author and engage in an interactive
conversation about his work.

Free signed copies available to the first 50 registrants

Football upset by New Hampshire to end six-game winning streak

FRANK HOARLE
SPORTS EDITOR

Monmouth Football dropped its first game since mid-September this past Saturday Nov. 8, as the New Hampshire Wildcats went into Kessler Stadium and defeated the Hawks.

The loss was Monmouth's first in CAA play, and also their first loss against any FCS opponent this season. The Hawks entered the game ranked No. 6 in the AFCA FCS Coaches Poll and No. 7 in the Stats Perform FCS Top 25, the highest rankings in the program's history.

The teams started the games exchanging punts before Monmouth was able to get a drive going on their second attempt. They were able to get the ball within the New Hampshire 25-yard line before deciding to get aggressive on fourth down as they have all season. Freshman quarterback Frankie Weaver attempted a pass to senior wide receiver Maxwell James, but an incompleteness led to a turnover on downs for the Hawks.

New Hampshire's second drive ended in disaster, as sophomore quarterback Matt Vezza fumbled the ball on 2nd & 10, and it was recovered by junior linebacker Charlie Sasso. An unsportsmanlike conduct penalty on the Wildcats following the fumble set up the Hawks inside the New Hampshire 10-yard line. After failing to get anything going on first and second down, Weaver found graduate tight end Jack Neri wide open while under pressure for a Monmouth touchdown. After the extra point, Monmouth held a 7-0 lead with a little over three minutes remaining in the first quarter.

New Hampshire responded with another punt, and Monmouth once again found themselves in a fourth down situation in New Hampshire territory after a relatively good drive. The Hawks tried to get the first down on the ground with sophomore running back Rodney Nelson, but the Wildcats defense stood tall and stuffed Nelson, leading to the second turnover on downs of the game for Monmouth.

This time, New Hampshire took advantage of

Monmouth's offense failing to convert, as it only took them five plays to find the end zone. Vezza ran it in on his own for the score, and the game was tied at seven apiece.

Monmouth's next drive ended in yet another fourth down situation in New Hampshire territory. They once again went for it, but Weaver's pass intended for junior wide receiver Josh Derry was broken up, leading to a third turnover on downs in just five drives. New Hampshire was able to once again drive down the field, but this time their drive stalled and they had to settle for a field goal. Still, the Wildcats held a 10-7 lead.

After Monmouth went three and out on their next drive, the Wildcats once again stalled in Monmouth territory. New Hampshire elected to try a 53-yard field goal with sophomore kicker Nick Reed, and he booted it through to give the Wildcats a 13-7 lead.

Monmouth got the football back with only 44 seconds left in the half, but Weaver led the Hawks straight down the field. A 32-yard pass to Derry set Monmouth up in the red zone, and then a second pass to him on the very next play led to a Monmouth touchdown with 14 seconds to go in the half. It only took Monmouth 30 seconds to go 75 yards downfield.

Monmouth then tried to catch New Hampshire sleeping and faked the extra point attempt with a run, but New Hampshire was all over it, stopping the Hawks, thus keeping the score tied at 13 heading into halftime.

New Hampshire started the second half by getting stopped by the Monmouth defense. They sent the punt unit out on fourth down, but they then elected to pull some trickery themselves and fake the punt. Their attempt was successful, as junior wide receiver Josh Filion was the one who threw the ball and got the first down for the Wildcats. New Hampshire drove straight down the field after the successful fake punt and capped off its drive with a 22-yard rushing touchdown by senior running back Myles Thomason.

After taking a seven point lead, New Hampshire con-



Josh Derry caught five passes for 73 yards and a touchdown in Monmouth's 34-13 loss to New Hampshire on Saturday, Nov. 8.

PHOTO COURTESY of Emily Webb.

tinued to add on, as Weaver was strip-sacked on the ensuing Monmouth drive and New Hampshire recovered in excellent field position. They wasted no time scoring again, as Vezza threw a 27-yard touchdown pass to sophomore running back Denzell Gibson.

After falling down two scores, Monmouth's high-flying offense was not able to respond. Their final three drives of the game resulted in a punt and two more fumbles. New Hampshire added another score late in the fourth quarter, and they ended the game with an impressive 34-13 victory over a consensus top 10 FCS team in the country.

After New Hampshire's fake punt, Monmouth was outscored 21-0. Weaver threw for 233 yards, which is the most he's thrown in a game after taking over for the injured Derek Robertson. He also threw for two touchdowns. Nelson ran for 88 yards on 19 carries, the first time he's been held under 100 yards rushing since the loss to Charlotte earlier in the season. Senior wide receiver TJ Speight led the team in receiving with 89 yards on six receptions.

With the loss, Monmouth now sits at 5-1 in CAA play with two games left. They are one game behind the Rhode Island Rams, who are the only remaining un-

defeated team left in CAA play. Monmouth needs Rhode Island to lose at least one game in order to at least go to tiebreakers to determine the CAA champion. Rhode Island plays on the road at Maine and home against Hampton to finish its season.

Despite a CAA championship now looking less likely, Monmouth is still very much alive for an at-large bid in the FCS Playoffs. After the loss, Monmouth fell to No. 12 in both the AFCA FCS Coaches Poll and the Stats Perform Poll. Their next game is this Saturday, where they will travel to Greensboro to take on North Carolina A&T.

Men's and Women's Basketball open season with wins

FRANK HOARLE
SPORTS EDITOR

Both Men's and Women's basketball opened up their seasons with dominating victories, as each took care of Division II opponents.

Women's basketball opened their season on Monday, Nov. 3 against Chestnut Hill, one of the premiere Division II teams in the region. The Hawks never trailed in the game, and took care of business for a dominant 81-42 victory.

New faces were the name of the game for the Hawks. Junior forward Alexis Davis, who transferred in from the University of Buffalo, had 20 points and 14 rebounds in just 19 minutes in her debut for the Hawks. Sophomore guard Fatumata Djalo, a transfer from Ole Miss, played 20 minutes and scored five points in her debut. Junior guard Gigi Gamble also had six points in her Monmouth debut.

Players returning for the

Hawks also shined. Junior forward Divine Dibula, a preseason All-CAA selection, had 12 points and six rebounds in the victory. Sophomore guard Kellyn Preira, who only scored 14 points in the entirety of her freshman year at Monmouth, scored 12 points and played the fourth most minutes of anybody in the first game of her sophomore campaign. Senior forward Ella Farrelly had four points and 10 rebounds in the first game of her fourth season with the Hawks.

The win showcased the depth of the Hawks team, who look to continue to have success in the CAA. In the last three seasons, Monmouth has had a record of .500 or better in conference play.

The day after the women's basketball team kicked off their season, the men's team started their campaign against Division II Caldwell. After exchanging the lead back and forth for the first five minutes of the game, Monmouth pulled away and

never looked back for a commanding 96-68 victory.

Freshman forward Stefanos Spartalis had 16 points in his collegiate debut, tying for the most points on the team with sophomore guard Justin Ray, who also had 16 points off the bench. Junior forward Jason Rivera-Torres, a transfer from San Francisco, scored 13 points in his Monmouth debut. The rest of the Hawks scoring was spread out, as Spartalis, Ray, and Rivera-Torres were the only three Hawks to score in double digits. Senior guard Jack Collins and junior guard Andrew Ball each had nine points as they returned to Monmouth for another season. Junior forward Cornelius Robinson, who is also a notable returnee for the Hawks, was injured early in the first half and did not return to the game.

Despite both teams winning their first games, they each dropped their second games. Women's basketball travelled to Rupp Arena to play No. 24 Kentucky, who



PHOTO COURTESY of Connor Graf.
Jason Rivera-Torres has 37 points in his first two games as a Monmouth Hawk.

defeated them 104-46. Senior guard Alexis Andrews, a transfer from Charlotte, had 12 points in the loss. Men's basketball travelled to Philadelphia, where they lost to the La Salle Explorers 73-60. Rivera-Torres scored 20 points for the Hawks, a career high for him.

This week, women's basketball traveled to Maryland to play MD Eastern on Tuesday, Nov. 11. Men's basketball heads to the rock to take on Seton Hall on Thursday, Nov. 13, as they seek to defeat the Pirates for the second straight season.

Field Hockey ends season with CAA Finals loss following semifinal win

EDWARD GRANADOS
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Monmouth University field hockey closed out its postseason with a dominant semifinal victory followed by a narrow loss in the CAA Championship, wrapping up a season that showed the program's consistency, depth, and rising presence in the conference.

In the opening round against Hofstra, Monmouth delivered one of its most complete games of the year, defeating the Pride 5-0 at So Sweet a Cat Field. The Hawks set the tone immediately with a goal a little more than a minute into the match and maintained control from that moment forward. Their attack was relentless, generating 24 total shots while holding Hofstra without a single attempt. Monmouth also earned nine penalty corners, consistently turning pressure into scoring opportunities, while the defense prevented Hofstra from threatening in transition or settling into any offensive rhythm.

The scoring was spread across the lineup, with sophomore midfielder Milla Frye and freshman



PHOTO COURTESY of Monmouth Athletics.
Ava Zeffass had two goals and an assist in the CAA Tournament, leading the team in points.

midfielder Alicia Vanderlyde driving the front line and creating chances throughout the match. Sophomore forward Claire Campen and sophomore midfielder Lilly Ricks added fourth-quarter goals as part of a three-score surge that sealed the victory. The Hawks played with poise and organization, moving the ball confidently through midfield and winning 50-50 plays that helped them dictate pace. By the final whistle, Monmouth had

improved to 13-3 on the season and remained perfect in conference play, setting a strong tone heading into the championship match two days later.

The CAA Final brought a tougher challenge as Monmouth faced Drexel in a game filled with momentum shifts and high-pressure moments. Both teams approached the first quarter cautiously, probing for openings and trying to gain control of the midfield. Drexel finally

broke through late in the second quarter on a penalty corner, putting the Hawks behind for the first time in the tournament. But Monmouth responded quickly. Early in the third quarter, Frye set up junior forward Ava Zeffass for the equalizer, and the Hawks appeared to regain their rhythm.

The turning point came midway through the third when Drexel struck twice in less than three minutes. Both goals came from sustained pressure and quick execution, forcing Monmouth into a sudden two-goal deficit. The Hawks, known all season for their resilience, answered by tightening their press and pushing higher up the field. Their persistence paid off early in the fourth quarter when senior forward Emily Singer scored off a pass from junior defender Eulalie Brouwers, cutting the lead to 3-2 and igniting the energy on the Hawks' sideline.

Monmouth controlled large stretches of the final minutes, generating looks in the circle and earning key possessions, but Drexel's defense held under pressure. The Hawks finished with 11 shots to Drexel's 12 and four pen-

alty corners to Drexel's six, numbers that reflected how evenly contested the matchup was from start to finish. The narrow result was a reminder of how tight the margins can be in a championship game, especially between two well-matched teams.

Despite the disappointing ending, the Hawks' postseason run showcased everything that has defined their year: disciplined defense, balanced scoring, and the ability to elevate their play against top competition. Their semifinal win showed the dominance they are capable of, and the championship game displayed their toughness and refusal to fade even when facing a late deficit.

Unfortunately, the Hawks were not selected for an at-large bid into the NCAA Tournament, thus ending their season. Monmouth ends the season as one of the CAA's strongest programs and a team well-positioned to contend again next year. While the conference title slipped away, the Hawks' performance throughout the fall strengthened their identity and set a solid foundation for future success.



Both the men's and women's basketball teams won their season-opening games on Monday, Nov. 3 and Tuesday, Nov. 4.