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Lawsuits mount after data is breached in cybersecurity incident

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Three lawsuits were filed at the end of March in the United States District Court for the District of New Jersey against Monmouth University alleging that the university failed to protect highly sensitive data and allowed cybercriminals unrestricted access to their students' and employees' personal identifiable information (PII).

The Plaintiffs are Jordan Staub, Erin Masterson, and Matthew Englehardt, all former Monmouth University students, all a part of the class action lawsuit. According to Masterson's complaint, her case is a class action with 100 or more members of the proposed class and at least one is a citizen of a state different from the defendant. Claims of all members of the proposed class are in excess of \$5 million.

Only a few years ago, Monmouth was faced with another class action lawsuit unrelated to this cybersecurity incident. In 2022 Monmouth University agreed to a \$1.3 million class action settlement to resolve claims that it failed to refund students for on-campus tuition during the COVID-19 closures, according to Top Class Actions. The class action lawsuit sought refunds for excess tuition. Students claimed to have overpaid because the university transitioned to remote learning in March 2020 and were no longer living on-campus, using on-campus resources, or participating in student organizations.

For this current incident,

the lawsuits are mounting. We reached out to Charlene Diana, Vice President and General Counsel, and sought to find out about the legal repercussions of such cyberattacks. In addition, we sought to understand potential repercussions that class action lawsuits might have on the university. She provided us with the following response, "I am not able to provide comment on any potential or ongoing litigation related to this matter. Our current focus is on addressing the incident at hand and providing support to our community members."

Masterson's complaint alleges that, "Defendant has not informed its current and former students and/or employees [as of yet] of the Data Breach. Indeed, Plaintiff and Class Members were wholly unaware before posts about it began appearing on the Dark Web, including the publishing of their PII." President Leahy informed current students and employees about the data breach via email on March 13. As of the writing of this article, we were not able to independently confirm whether or not former students were informed of this

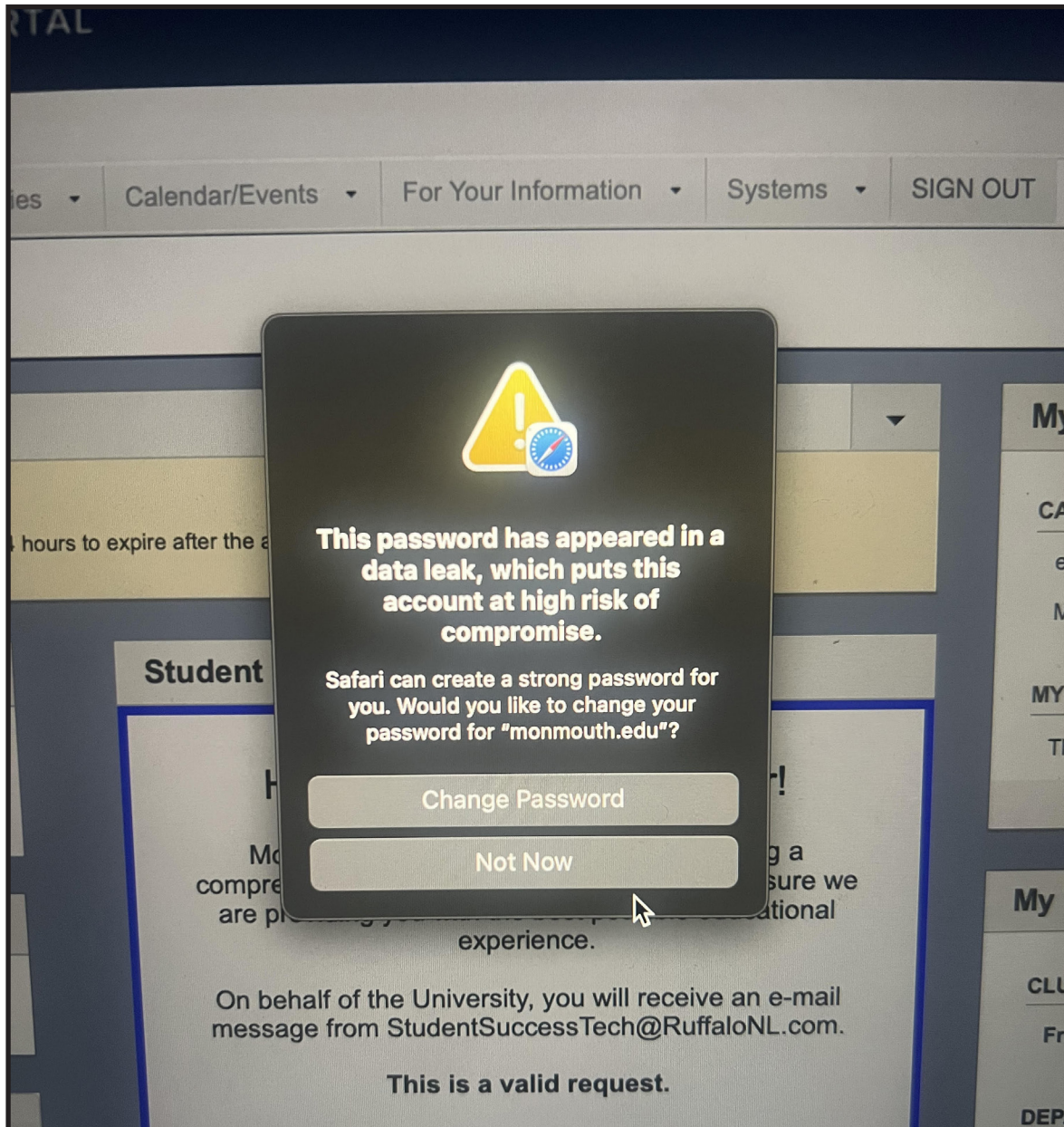
incident. John Sonn, Associate Vice President and Chief Information Officer stated that the university is working on identifying individuals who have been affected by the data breach. "As a part of our investigation and response, we are working to identify the specific information that was involved so we can notify any individuals that had their personal information included. We are committed to transparency and keeping our community informed, and appreciate their patience and understanding as we conduct our investigation. As we move

forward, we are working with our cybersecurity experts to further enhance the security of our systems to prevent a similar incident from re-occurring in the future," he said.

New Jersey Identity Theft Prevention Act requires universities' disclosure of data breaches to be done "expeditiously and without a reasonable delay." In the case that PII is compromised the university must notify the affected individuals and the New Jersey Division of State Police. On a federal level, Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act (GLBA) requires universities that participate in Federal Student Aid programs to report data breaches to the Federal Student Aid (FSA) office within 24 hours after the incident is identified.

The Outlook asked Sonn, specifically to provide his assessment of Monmouth's cybersecurity preparedness. He provided us with what he called "our" official statement. The statement is as follows, "Monmouth University recently discovered a cybersecurity incident that occurred on our systems which resulted in the unauthorized access to some information on our network. Upon learning of this incident, we immediately initiated our response protocols, engaged cybersecurity experts, and notified the FBI and the Department of Education. We believe the incident has been contained. Importantly, there has been no operational disruption, and University systems and programs continue to operate as normal."

cont. on pg. 2



Student who wishes to stay unidentified shared this photo with The Outlook upon logging into their Monmouth email.

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Cybersecurity

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In our last coverage of this incident, we informed the campus community that the perpetrator was Pear Extraction and Ransom (PEAR) who claims to have stolen 16 terabytes of data according to Comparitech. PEAR is alleged to have stolen included but not limited to financials, students' private and confidential data, PII, Protected Health Records (PHI), minors data, files from OneDrive and Dropbox Cloud storages. Masterson's filing specifies that the PII's stolen include "names, addresses, phone numbers, emergency contact information, insurance information, financial information, partners' and vendors' data, students' private and confidential information including grades, email correspondents, and university HR records which could potentially include personal health information." According to Health and Human Services, in cases in which the university maintains health records that are not part of an education such as those in a campus health center for treatment purposes, it may be subject to HIPAA's Breach Notification Rule by which affected individuals must be notified

without unreasonable delay and no later than 60 days following discovery. In case the breach affects more than 500 residents of a state, the institution must provide notice to media outlets.

President Leahy's email from March 13, informs that cybersecurity experts and law enforcement were engaged to assist in the investigation. He offered general information to students and employees about the steps they can take to protect themselves from misuse of personal information by offering a link to consumer advice available on the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) website. According to Staub's filing, FTC updated its publication, Protecting Personal Information: A Guide for Business, in 2016, in which it states that FTC brings enforcement actions against businesses for failing to protect customer data adequately and reasonably.

The lawsuits allege that Monmouth University failed to follow minimum industry standards and cybersecurity measures putting students and employees at risk. In Staub's filing, it is alleged that Monmouth University failed

to train its employees on cybersecurity and failed to maintain cybersecurity safeguards and protocols. Englehardt's filing states that Monmouth University lacked, "effective means to protect, detect, stop, or mitigate breaches of its systems." As a result, as stated in the lawsuit, it is not known how much time cybercriminals had access to Monmouth data before the breach was discovered. President Leahy, in his March 13 communication, said that the university acted "immediately after becoming aware of the incident." "We initiated our response protocols and engaged cybersecurity experts and law enforcement to assist in our investigation of this matter, including a thorough review of the data/information that has been accessed," he said.

Lawsuits further allege that this behavior was both reckless and negligent. In Masterson's filing it is stated, "Defendant disregarded the rights of Plaintiff and Class Members by intentionally, willfully, recklessly, and/or negligently failing to implement adequate and reasonable measures to ensure that Plaintiff's and Class Members PII was safeguarded, failing to take available steps to prevent unauthorized disclosure

of data and failing to follow applicable, required and appropriate protocols, policies, and procedures regarding the encryption of data, even for internal use."

Danny Crawford, a computer science major, shared his concerns about this data breach with the Outlook. Crawford was concerned about the amount of information that's been reportedly taken and how his personal information might be used including his credit card information. He said, "...there is a lot of private information that the university stores that can be exploited...that's why when you have a security breach with a database that involves social security numbers, date of birth, even health information, that's really bad." Crawford was concerned that many in the Monmouth community aren't understanding the scope of this breach. As far as the university's response he shared some criticism, "I feel like it is getting swept under the rug and not taken as seriously as it should be...that is the scary part about this, it is getting so downplayed when it's really serious."

Another student who wished to stay unidentified in this story shared their

concern about their data being leaked to the Dark Web when they noticed a pop-up window upon their login into their Monmouth email that read, "The password has appeared in a data leak, which puts this account at high risk of compromise." "I'm not sure if this notification is linked to the cybersecurity incident, but it made me nervous and worried that it might be, I have no way of knowing," they said.

As this has been a developing story with high impact on students, employees, and alumni, we reached out to President Patrick F. Leahy for any updates on the incident. "We continue to partner with our external team of cybersecurity experts as part of our ongoing investigation and response. Once we have new information to report on the specific data that was involved, we will advise the university community and notify any individuals that have been impacted," he stated in an email correspondence. "In the meantime, if our community members have specific questions or concerns, we encourage them to contact support@monmouth.edu directly. The senior administration and I extend our thanks for the continued patience of our university community while the investigation continues in earnest," he added.

WMCX 88.9 begins expansion of its music catalog

ANTHONY CASSIERI
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

After broadcasting rock and alternative music for over 50 years, WMCX, Monmouth University's student-run radio station, will be expanding their music catalog to include a variety of new genres including pop, dance, and more.

Professor Aaron Furgason, PhD, and the WMCX Advisor, as well as the members of the WMCX Executive Board, decided on the addition of the new genres into the station. Furgason and the Board said the decision of expanding the catalog has been in discussion for the past few years, but the expansion will now take place over the next few months, with the full process taking up to a year to complete because of the data entry process. They also said one of the main reasons for this expansion is to encourage more stu-

dents to go on the air, while also trying to extend the station's listener base.

Although alternative music is WMCX's main genre, Furgason said that it's time for a change at the station. "Fundamentally, there is nothing wrong with alternative music. What has certainly changed is how people interact and listen to music...people who like classic rock and alternative for example, they just like songs they don't necessarily like genres anymore," said Furgason. The professor explained that instead of focusing on a specific genre, people today just like individual songs regardless of what style of music they come from. By WMCX expanding into more genres, Furgason said that not only will it attract new students to want to have their own show on the air, but it will also expose brand new genres and artists to a wide range of listeners.

Furgason also emphasized how large of a listening au-

dience WMCX currently has.

Based on the data from the RadioFX app, as well as another radio streaming app that he did not specify, he said that around 250,000 people worldwide listen to WMCX every single day. "Yes, it seems like a small number, but those 250,000 people are really dedicated," said Furgason.

Luke Moleski, the WMCX General Manager and a senior communication student, said that with the help of Kaitlyn Sullivan, the WMCX

Music Director, along with communication professors, and student employees, the station has already started the expansion. "Personally, I love classic rock and we did add a bunch of classic rock and pop songs into the station...Lady Gaga, Katy Perry, Lynryd Skynyrd, and Queen are all big artists that a lot of people are interested in and I think that it's going to help grow the station a ton," Moleski said.

Moleski explained that even though the station

is planning on expanding genres, that does not mean that the music already being played on WMCX is going to disappear. He said, "The rock music will still be there and all of the songs will still be in the station that you're familiar with listening to on WMCX... It's not going to be a major change throughout the station, it's just going to be a little bit different than what we have known in years prior."

cont. on pg. 3



Ava Marton and Dean Heidel, Eboard members, at the X.

IMAGE TAKEN from Instagram @WMCX889

WMCX

cont. from pg. 2

Ava Marton, the WMCX Program Director and a junior communication student, said that although the inclusion of new genres is very exciting, the transition should be smooth and that not all of the different genres should be played at one time. “Even if we wanted to have it scheduled where one specific hour is more directed towards pop music and then once that hour switches off it goes into alternative or rock again. I think that it would make it a lot easier for people to transition and get used to the change in sound,” Marton elaborated.

Frank Hoarle, a junior communication major, said, “I personally feel like the music on the station is very repetitive. “I’m a huge country fan, if they could get Morgan Wallen, Luke Combs, Thomas Rhett, Post Malone, I would love that.”

Furgason explained that there is one genre of music

in particular that he does not want added into the system, country music. He said, “Listen, this is a bias...I think there are enough places for country music to be heard. I don’t think country music offers anything interesting or exciting.” Furgason elaborated that if there are students who do have their own radio show and enjoy country music, they can still connect their personal device and play as much as they want on air.

Professor Eric Reisher, the Director of Broadcast Engineering and a Communication Professor, explained that one of the reasons this expansion took so long to occur, is because of how much time and effort the data entry process requires. Reisher said, “It’s a long tedious process and it’s not necessarily something that goes quick. I would say it takes maybe three to four minutes a song to fill out all the information

correctly and upload it. If you have someone who’s really good and really fast, it goes faster.”

As far as the information that Reisher refers to, all songs that enter the central server, where WMCX stores its music, must have digital markers placed exactly when the song begins and ends, then filled out manually with the title of the song and the artist, the date the song was added into the system, and more. All songs uploaded into the system come from multiple sources, including CDs, vinyl records, cassettes, and digital record pools.

Professor Nicholas Messina, an Audio Productions Specialist Professor in the Communication Department, said that the addition of the new genres will be beneficial for both the students and the professors. “If students see more artists that they are familiar with, that will encourage them to be on the air more often and I think it will also cause them to be more curious into seeking out new

music,” Messina said.

Messina teaches an Intro to Radio Production Class where students are required to host a one hour radio show on WMCX every week and then are graded on their performance. Messina explained that by the station expanding into new genres of music, it’s going to make it a lot more interesting for both the students to decide what to play for the hour and for the professors to hear the songs that they decided on when listening to the recording. Messina elaborated, “We aren’t giving up the spirit of the X, it’s just a reexamination of what that spirit is.”

Megan Kelly, a Monmouth University Alumn who graduated in 2024, who now has a part time role at Press Communications as an on-air host for Thunder 106.3 and B98.5, said that the alternative genre started to feel repetitive. “It definitely made sense for a college audience at one point, but over time it felt a bit outdated,” Kelly said.

Kelly said that there may be some risks that are involved

with expanding genres, but she feels like the potential reward is greater. “Music trends today are so diverse, so it makes sense for the station to reflect that,” she said.

Dean Heidel, one of the WMCX Production Directors, and a senior communication student, said, “I am really excited for adding more music into the station. This has been something we have been talking about for a while on the Executive Board and I can’t wait to hear a more diverse soundtrack.”

Natalee Mattei, a daily WMCX listener, and a sophomore communication student, said, “Including new music in the X’s catalogue is going to be great for not only listeners, but also for [WMCX] members to enjoy different genres of music and to get more attention from possible Newcomers.”

Furgason said, “We do an amazing job, the students do an amazing job of recognizing what the possibilities are here and making them happen, there’s really nothing more that you could want.”



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Is the dining hall open long enough?

EDITORIAL STAFF

Over the course of recent weeks, there has been some openly-expressed concern from people within the Monmouth University community about the current dining hours at the dining hall on campus. Currently, the campus dining hall is open from 7 a.m.-9 p.m. from Monday-Thursday, 7 a.m.-8 p.m. on Friday, and 10 a.m.-8 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays. People have expressed concern that these hours might not be enough to properly nourish the student body across campus.

The editors were asked whether they believed the complaints were justified. One editor agreed with the complaints. They said, "I think these complaints are definitely justified since for many people the dining hall is the only source of food on campus, especially during the weekends."

Another editor agreed with this sentiment, saying they themselves have found the current hours difficult to navigate. They said, "There were many times when I had a meal plan that I would miss the window of opportunity to eat which would leave

me with no real options to feed myself."

One editor disagreed with and said some of the complaints may be overblown. They said, "I understand the complaints, but 14 hours on weekdays is a long time. I think those hours are fine, but perhaps weekends should be a little longer than just 10 hours."

The editors were also asked about what changes they would make to the current dining hall schedule if they could. One editor suggested a change to consistent hours throughout the week. They said, "I want the dining hall to open at 7 and close at 10 for all days of the week. Just because it's the weekend does not mean that students don't need to eat."

Another editor agreed that the weekends need the most change. They said, "If it were up to me, the dining hall would open up significantly earlier on weekends, at like 7 or 8 similar to weekdays. A 10 a.m. opening time for weekends is simply not feasible."

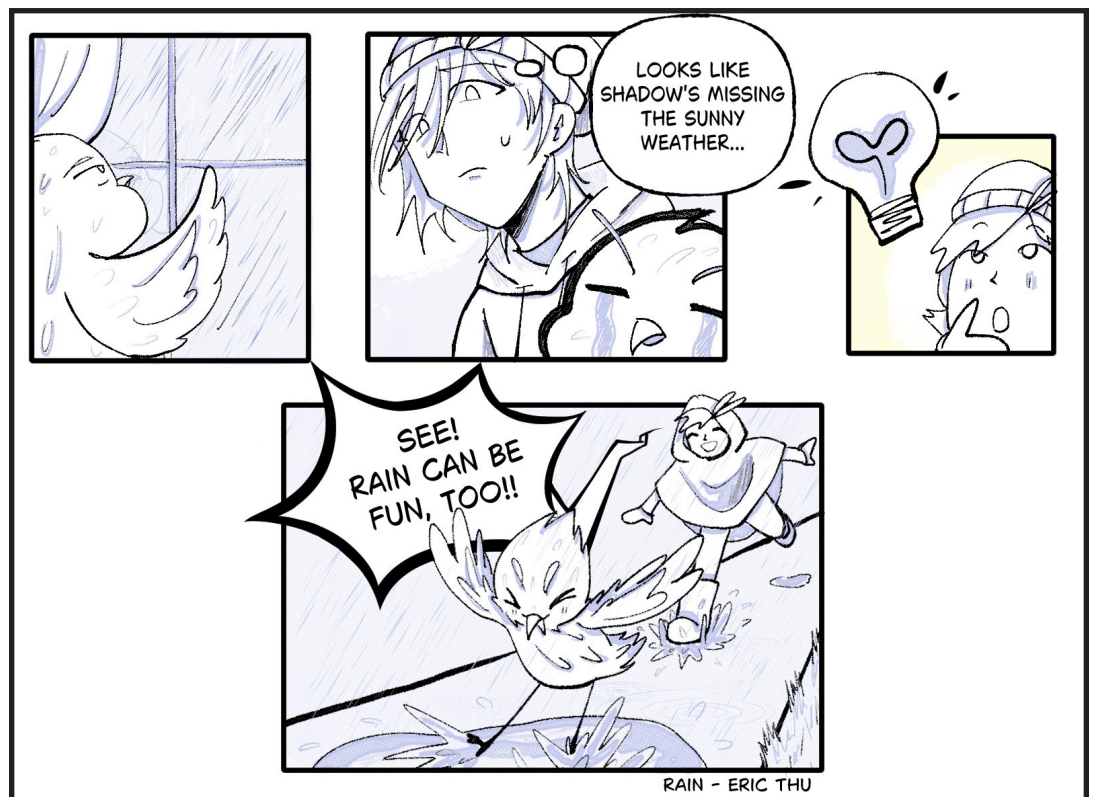
The editors got the chance to express their opinions on if they believe the school currently does a good job providing good nutritional options for

their students. The opinions were overwhelmingly negative about the school's job in this category. One editor said when asked if they believe the school currently does a good job, "Honestly no... that's why I eat out everywhere and didn't bother getting a meal plan as a commuter. I've heard lots of stuff from friends so I'm happy with my decision."

Another student said, "I think the school gives students the opportunity to properly nourish themselves, but I know a lot of people don't like the food they put out so it is hard to get that nourishment they try to give you."

A third editor also agreed that the school could do better. They said, "No, I the food is mostly fried and I never felt like I was eating clean and healthy food."

Overall, the consensus from the editors is that there is room for improvement in both the current operating hours of the dining hall and how good of a job the school is doing nourishing their students. This issue is one of the most prominent amongst families and parents across the university, and only time will tell if the school will listen to the feedback and make changes to its dining operations.



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Should mental health days be excused?

RILEY MCGEE
STAFF WRITER

Now more than ever, mental health is a topic that circles schools, homes, and universities, and it is important to prioritize students' health physically and mentally.

This is something that schools should start to take into consideration when it comes to absences, and discussing if mental health days should be excused or not.

In schools, it is not talked about enough that it's okay to take a break or to need time to just breathe, or to take a day off to reset. Students face the constant pressure from teachers, peers, and family members to be the best that they can be. They are put under the stress of homework, sports, a job, and are expected to be strong and know how to balance it all.



The truth is, balancing it all is not something that is easy to do on your own. Students need a support system and guidance to know that you don't know how to go full speed 24/7 and that taking a mental health day is okay.

Schools should consider giving their students a certain number of mental health days to use as an excused absence every year, because the truth is, everyone needs a day to breathe sometimes. Not only should this be put in for students, but for staff as well. This could be something that the schools block in as a mandatory day off from school, where the whole school gets a day to mentally rest one to two times a school year, or add two to three excused absences for mental health to all students' schooling, and staff call-out days.

Taking care of ourselves is something that can be extremely hard when life gets overwhelming and busy. We get too caught up in the moment and forget that

slowing down and learning to take care of ourselves is important, especially with the amount of pressure students are under at school and at home. Many students spend hours on homework after school, play sports, have a job, and barely have time to rest.

Some students, on top of all of that, might suffer from symptoms of depression and anxiety and feel like they can't slow down. Schools do not advocate the importance of mental health enough for them to feel like mental health days should count as excused absences, when the truth is that putting in the time to teach about mental health and instill these kinds of days into the school year can really make a difference for the student who is struggling.

For the student who feels the weight of the world on their shoulders because of everything they have to do, or the student who feels like they can't speak out about how they are feeling, the student who feels like they are going to be a failure if they do not accomplish everything their peers and parents may want them to.

Having an excused mental health day may be something all students need. They can take the day to relax, sleep in, and do something other than school that they enjoy, or do nothing at all.

A mental health day for students should consist of doing nothing that is school-related because that just might be the reason for all the students' anxiety and stress. Acknowledging that students need a break is something that schools need to take the time to learn, as well as learn that staff also need a break.

Today, everyone tends to feel like they can't slow down because of the stressors that we have around us, and for schools, it is important that they consider adding mental health days to excused absences.

Are The Masters losing prestige and class?

BADEN DELANEY
STAFF WRITER

The Masters is supposed to be one of the most traditional and respected events in all of sports but this year, it felt a little different.

The 2026 PGA Tour season is in full swing and its most prestigious tournament, The Masters, just wrapped up on Sunday, April 12th. While watching countless hours of it there was just one thing I could not get out of my head, and that was questioning whether or not the tournament was losing some of its tradition and high standards.

The reason I first thought about this was because the Wednesday before the tournament began, The Masters held their annual par-3 course competition, and numerous celebrities were in attendance. Some notable names in attendance were Kevin Hart and Jason Kelce.

While this seems relatively harmless, the way that it was being broadcasted made it feel less traditional and more of a joke in my opinion. The Masters is built on years and years of history,

class, and very strict rules, all meant to uphold a certain image. While I like Kevin Hart and Jason Kelce, their casual approach to the event may have taken away from what the tournament is all about.

There were certain holes where Kevin Hart was a little bit rowdy and animated in my eyes, and it seemed as though he was trying to be the center of attention. I think part of the beauty of the Masters is how carefully it is run and how much emphasis they put on tradition. For example, you are not even allowed to have your phone on property because the leadership wants it to be a place solely focused on golf and being present.

To me, these values were kind of lost on Wednesday, and I am not a huge fan of the addition of celebrities to the event. I tune in to The Masters to watch elite golf,



IMAGE TAKEN from *brotherrice.org*.

not Kevin Hart hitting a ball and yelling afterwards.

Another aspect of this that bothered me was that Hart was interviewed afterwards, and for almost the entire conversation, he was treating it unseriously and making jokes.

While there is always a place for humor and fun in our world, The Masters should be kept to a high standard and focus on what makes it so special, the tradition and class. I am opposed to celebrity appearances if they are going to be the main center of attraction and not act in a high-class manner.

Furthermore, I think that there are plenty of other tournaments that this would be more than appropriate at, but not The Masters. The leadership at The Masters is

very serious when it comes to how they are represented, how players and patrons can act, so why did that go out of the window this past week?

While I know this may be controversial because people will say it is just a fun element they added, I would argue that The Masters did not need it and it did not fit with the entire persona of the event.

The Masters isn't just another golf tournament, it's built on tradition, discipline, and a level of respect that separates it from every other event. I am personally out on the integration of celebrities at Masters events, and hope that this is not a sign that the tournament is losing its class and tradition.

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support ensure our students
and faculty have the tools
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your reliability and your
commitment to keeping
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department-running
smoothly.**

Photo essay: Springtime at MU

HENRY BOODY
POLITICS EDITOR



Coachella so far: What you need to know

KAMRYN CARDONE
STAFF WRITER

The Coachella Valley Music and Arts Festival has returned to the Empire Polo Club in Indio, California, for its 2026 edition, taking place from April 10–19. Every year, it feels like Coachella takes over the internet for a few weeks, but this year it feels even more unavoidable. Between influencer outfit videos, celebrity appearances, brand partnerships, and nonstop “get ready with me” content, the Coachella lifestyle has basically taken over everyone’s For You Page.

Headliners

This year’s headliners are Sabrina Carpenter, Justin Bieber, and Karol G. The lead-up to their performances on social media was insane. Everyone was trying to guess what songs they would sing, plus what their sets would look like. Sabrina’s performance had multiple set changes as well as outfit changes, and she played

some of her most iconic songs along with new ones from her recent album, *Man’s Best Friend*, including her first time performing “We Almost Broke Up Last Night.”

Justin’s performance was so meaningful. First of all, he was using a laptop and projecting it onto the screen behind him. He pulled up videos of himself from when he was younger, music videos, and even memes. His performance has probably been one of the most talked-about sets from Coachella, and it honestly felt like a throwback concert, blending his older hits with songs from his new album *SWAG*.

Karol G also performed and made history as the first Latina to headline the festival. Her performance had many set changes as well as outfit changes, bringing such a powerful and energetic presence on the stage.

From this weekend’s sets alone, it’s honestly hard to imagine how any of these artists are going to one-up themselves for the upcoming

weekend. Every performance already feels so big and over-the-top in its own way, so the expectations for what comes next are even higher.

Brands

One of the most common ways to attend Coachella is through a brand trip or sponsored stay, especially for celebrities and influencers. There are several “houses” where influencers or celebrities are sponsored to stay together, all while representing a specific brand. For example, brands like Poppi, Lola Blankets, Method, and many more create these experiences. It kind of turns into a huge marketing moment, and it’s all over social media.

These brands decorate their houses with full-on branding. Everything from the furniture to the decor to the products curated to match the brand’s image. Guests are gifted products, and every corner is designed to be photographed and shared online. For example, Alix Earle just launched her brand, Reale

Actives, and her Coachella house was completely transformed into a physical version of her brand. She even had a bouncy house shaped like her products, making the entire experience feel like an advertisement.

Celebrities/ Influencers

There are several celebrities and influencers who are attending Coachella. Some of the most talked about, besides the headliners, are Alix Earle, Hailey Bieber, and Kylie Jenner, along with several smaller influencers, such as Sam Kelly and Katie Richie, who are primarily known on TikTok.

What makes this year especially interesting is how much these influencers are shaping the overall Coachella experience. It’s not just about the music anymore; it’s about the content. From outfit reveals and “get ready with me” videos to brand-sponsored parties and house tours, influencers are constantly posting and giving their followers a behind-the-scenes look at the festival.

A lot of the attention is also on what everyone is wearing. Coachella has basically become a fashion show, with influencers planning their outfits weeks in advance and working with brands to create viral looks. Every post, story, and TikTok turns into a moment, and fans are just as invested in the outfits as they are in the performances.

At this point, Coachella feels like more than just a music festival; it’s become a full-on lifestyle that everyone has been following on social media. Between the performances, influencer culture, and brand advertising, it’s clear that Coachella is just as much about the experience and image as it is about the music. What people wear, where they stay, who they’re seen with, and what they post all play into this curated version of festival life that audiences consume in real time. It’s almost like Coachella has turned into a digital world of its own, where everyone, whether they’re attending or just watching from their phones, gets to experience it.

Your 2026 summer playlist

JULIAN CAROMANO
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Summer is right around the corner, and no time is better than now to find some perfect songs and albums suited for the season. From the 80s to as recent as a year ago, these songs remain timeless for their melodies that make you feel like you’re right on summers’ doorstep. We could all use a shake-up in our music tastes, so give these tracks a try!

1. *Timely!!* - Anri

Released on December 5th, 1983, *Timely!!* fuses J-pop and City pop, a form of Japanese pop combining elements of jazz, R&B, and soft rock, to create an invigorating and blissful collection of songs that makes you feel as though you’re reliving nostalgic memories of a life you’ve always dreamed of living. Popular songs from *Timely!!*, such as “Windy Summer,” “I Can’t Stop The Loneliness,” and “Remember Summer Days” are perfect for a road trip to the beach, and will

keep you remembering the sun and surf the whole ride home. From themes of urban romance to lost love, and the bittersweet in-between, *Timely!!* will have just the song for you.

2. *Fruitcakes* - Jimmy Buffett

Released on May 24th, 1994, *Fruitcakes* is one of many albums made by singer-songwriter Jimmy Buffett, who is known for his themes of “island escapism” within his songs, expressing a desire to fly somewhere far away from all the troubles of daily life. *Fruitcakes* is no different, featuring many songs that make you feel like you’re on vacation in the Florida Keys, living the good life under the string lights and palm trees. While it’s one of the less popular Jimmy Buffett albums, *Fruitcakes* gives off the best summer vibes out of the many, being a favorite for many country fans. The upbeat title track, “Fruitcakes,” is a personal favorite, along with the calming “Apocalypso,” the energetic “She’s Got You,” and the positively melancholy “Frenchman For The Night.”

3. *Jubilee* - Japanese

Breakfast

Released on June 4th, 2021, *Jubilee* is a wonderfully joyous mixture of alternative, dream, and indie pop. The album focuses on themes of joyfulness and love, an intentional choice after Japanese Breakfast’s previous two albums focused on grief. *Jubilee* is notable to me, personally, as being very uniquely composed compared to many other modern indie pop albums. The album starts with very upbeat, joyful songs, such as “Paprika” and “Kokomo, IN,” perfect while relaxing on the beach among crashing waves and people playing. However, as the album comes to an end, “Posing For Cars” is an emotional six-and-a-half-minute metaphorical goodbye to fans, with the instrumental latter section letting you soak in the emotions and lived experiences in its entirety, cementing itself in your memories as you reminisce about the summer.

4. *This Is How Tomorrow Moves* - Beabadoobee

Released on August 9th, 2024, *This Is How Tomorrow Moves* is a sentimental indie-

rock album, with songs ranging from pleasantly relaxing to invigoratingly energetic for all of summer. Many of the songs are infectiously catchy, having unique arrangements that exemplify Beabadoobee’s emotional lyricism. The album touches on themes of adulthood, self-growth, and acceptance, expressing feelings that can feel relatable to many young adults. In particular, “Girl Song” and “This Is How It Went” express the self-growth that comes with healing from past trauma, combining elegant composition with lyrics. Additionally, *This Is How Tomorrow Moves* has several energetic songs to kick off your summer break with a blast, such as “California,” “Beaches,” and “Post.”

5. *Addison* - Addison Rae

Released on June 6th, 2025, *Addison* is a dreamy, eclectic, positively melancholic pop album that is unapologetically intimate, vulnerable, and youthful all in one. The album features multiple interludes, or short songs serving as a “palate cleanser,” offering a

break between the album’s refreshing mood changes. *Addison* is perfect for the summer, feeling upbeat for all the hours having fun in the sun and feeling emotional for reliving the memories as the summer comes to a close. Songs like “New York” and “Money Is Everything” express the addicting sensation of feeling young and free, while “In The Rain” and “Times Like These” express feeling vulnerable and emotional, and coming to accept the hardships that come with life. Especially in the interlude “Life’s No Fun Through Clear Waters,” offering a rarely orchestral instrumental that sets itself apart from the rest of the album, indicating a tone shift into what I consider the best song in the album, “Headphones On,” a beautiful mixture of elegant composure, emotional lyricism, and a perfect end to an album like *Addison*.

I hope that these picks freshen up your summer and keep the season as memorable and lively as ever!

Laufey's "A Matter of Time: The Final Hour": Behind the fairytale of love

MELANY MCCANN
STAFF WRITER

After seven months since the release of "A Matter of Time," Laufey has finally decided it was time to release the deluxe edition "A Matter of Time: The Final Hour" on April 10. While we may have turned into madwomen awaiting its release, it was well worth the wait.

The original edition of the album was a critically acclaimed and Grammy winning jazz-pop album that re-told and essentially challenged the "fairytale" narrative of love. It dove deep into themes of insecurity, infatuation, and loss. All while disputing the notion that relationships are naturally perfect and explores the development of relationships through different periods of time, touching on toxicity, heartbreak, and the vulnerability of loving and being loved.

The deluxe expands on these themes but leans especially hard into breaking toxic cycles, grief, and self-growth. And Laufey does this the best way she knows how—with sorrowful lyrics, backdropped with her classic jazz and unique orchestra. Along with all new album visuals and four new songs, this release has come with a new music video for the single "Madwoman," it's safe to say Laufey fans are well-fed, even after all this time.

The deluxe begins with "Madwoman," which is a track about the toxic cycle of returning to a past lover, even when you know it's bad for you. Laufey sings, "Such a terrible idea/Worst one I've had all this year/But I can't ignore our obvious attraction." She perfectly encapsulates that feeling of being unable, or unwilling, to stay away from that person.

The next one is a tearjerker. "How I Get" explores altering yourself and changing your morals fit with a lover. This song depicts an incredibly intense, passionate, and borderline addictive relationship. In this record, Laufey questions "Has addiction come for me?" clearly outlining how she feels unhealthily attached

to this person. In addition to the intimate, chilling lyrics, is the orchestra in the background, a stimulating and powerful backtrack that extenuates the heavy emotion from the lyrics.

The strongest verse in this song, and arguably the greatest in the entire album, is "I don't smoke cigarettes/Don't do things I'll regret/Don't mood swing, shoulder bets/But baby, with you, that's just how I get." This one is for all the anxious attachment girls.

The third track is "I wait, I wait, I wait" and it's especially vulnerable and harrowing. Accompanied with a piano melody, it describes the poignant fear of abandonment, an all too familiar feeling for many people. Throughout the song, Laufey explores living in expectation of heartbreak, loss, and abandonment. She sings "I wait for the day when you finally say/You're out of love with me."

The final song in this deluxe is "I'll Forget About You (In Time)" and it's a bittersweet conclusion to the album. After various heartbreak anthems, this one is a ballad about moving on. It comes at a powerful point in the album. While the rest of the new tracks are about toxic cycles and unhealthy relationships, this song's message about time being the biggest healer is impactful.

The song depicts the aftermath of the relationship, "I knew I had to do it, break it off/Now I feel ruined 'cause you treated me so awfully." This is a beautiful line, especially as it comes after "Madwoman" explored returning to a toxic relationship. It's truly a mark of how time heals. The album closes with "I'll forget about him in time, oh/I'll forget about him, won't I?" It is the ultimate testament of self growth and the passage of time.

Along with the new tracks, the visuals for the deluxe are vastly different from the original edition. The original visuals were hues of light and dark blue, and the cover was Laufey in front of a large, blue clock. The deluxe, however, is filled with shades of green. While it does also contain a clock, it is more subtle and

muted, the image in front of greenery. Instead of Laufey simply placed in front of the clock, she is leaning toward the time on the clock, as if she were chasing or reaching

for time.

According to her website, this deluxe marks the end of an era for Laufey. While she has officially closed this chapter, it's not too little, too

late for you to reopen and dive into this tale. Especially with her Coachella run this weekend and into the next, she's sure to linger in everyone's minds and hearts.



IMAGE TAKEN from Laufeymusic.com.

Anne Marie and Tricia would like to thank **Scarlett Pizarro, Jenna Jackson, Dayanara Olmeda, Marcus Fortune, and Thambbir Khan** for their hard work and dedication in supporting the Biology Department!!!!

They always arrive with a smile, a positive attitude, and their lab coats! The third floor of Edison shines with their creative touches!

Congratulations to **Scarlett** for being a nominee for Student Employee of the Year!

Special thanks to **Julia Caccarelli** for all her help as a TA in the Genetics lab. She single-handedly helped the lab succ"SEED."

They are our Rock Stars and we could **NOT** have made the Biology labs happen without them!

Industry Alumni Networking panel: Finding the path to your career

LORELAI HILARCZYK
ENTERTAINMENT EDITOR

On April 7, Blue Hawk Records (BHR) hosted their fourth annual Industry Alumni Networking event in Woods Theatre featuring five former Monmouth University (MU) students with current jobs in the entertainment field. Hosted by chair of the Music & Theatre Arts Department and specialist professor, Joe Rapolla and BHR President Antonia Bongiorno, the event embodied the end of the semester full of possibilities and love for what makes us tick, in this case music.

Future president of BHR, Alexis Finkelstein spoke a few words before the night officially kicked off with the panel discussion. She said, “Blue Hawk Records has always been about collaboration, opportunity, and growth,” signifying this event which is meant to give students the chance to grow their network with former and current hawks.

The network of industry experts at this panel consisted of Olivia Melfi, Studio Manager and Artist Representative at Lake House Recording Studio and Shore Point Records; Cassidy Crosby, Media Sponsorships Lead at Vevo; Kelli Torres, People Operations Associate at Vydia Inc.; Ricky Govel, Football Marketing at Klutch Sports Group; And last but not least, Natalie Zeller, Integrated Producer at Grey Advertising Inc. As the group introduced themselves and the years they graduated (all varying from 2019-2025) it was clear the love they have for MU as well as trying to uplift the students present.

Bongiorno kicked the conversation off by asking the panel how they currently got into their industry, what did it take to get there, and what connections did they make to get themselves where they are. Almost all of the panel got their starts from their appreciation for the entertainment field whether it be music, sports, or even performance based. This

led them to internships and jobs where they could form connections with professionals.

“I wanted to be as close to entertainment, and you know something creative as possible,” Zeller said and then explained how she met the right people who saw her potential for her current position. Govel was also able to grow his connections simply by finding a local job and excelling in the restaurant industry at The Butcher’s Block in Long Branch. He said, “I ended up deciding to stay there and got into a management position, which opened up plenty of opportunities to start to meet a bunch of athletes, entertainers, musicians, and politicians, everybody across the board.” Clearly, where you make your start depends on the person but all comes back to being

of music can take you farther than you think. “I thought it was a conflict of interest to be an artist because it felt funny in that regard. But I’ve been told that it’s actually something that makes me stand out because I can directly relate to the artist that I’m working with,” Melfi said. She quipped to never be embarrassed by your “fangirl” or “fanboy” behavior because at the end of the day it shows your commitment.

Torres also joined the conversation and explained how while being organized and paying attention to detail are what we hone into during our college courses, communication is key for any job. “I think being able to speak to others is really, really important. That’s like a skill that I’ve, you know,

and connections were a very big aspect of this event and in the panel discussion. Crosby explained that the music industry and entertainment world is extremely small from marketing to production. “You want to make sure that you’re leaving the best impression that you possibly can on anyone you meet because you don’t know who has a connection to someone else. Who knows this person, who’s worked with this person in a previous job, everyone knows everyone, and be kind to everyone,” Crosby said.

Melfi also echoed Crosby’s advice and added that networking isn’t as scary or intimidating as it’s made out to be. She said, “It doesn’t have to be so transactional and I think especially in the music industry like we’re all here because we all love music

still think that we need to have a human touch when we’re writing emails and stuff like that because you can still feel a difference,” he said.

The conversation wrapped up with a short Q&A from the student audience which included advice on marketing yourself, setting up your LinkedIn, and really starting to share your experiences.

In true BHR and department fashion, the end concluded with two special performances from Women In Music collegiate chapter President, Joleen Amer and BHR member Elijah Elias. Amer performed Michael Jackson’s “Human Nature” from his 1982 “Thriller” album alongside Jeffrey Mendez on the piano. This song was perfect for Amer’s voice and her love for music truly radiated off her while performing.

Elias performed an original composition on the guitar of classic 50s songs including, “Maybellene” by Chuck Berry, “Blue Suede Shoes” by Elvis Presley, and “Twenty Flight Rock” by Eddie Cochran. Not only is Elias a great guitar player but his artistry shined through and was definitely appreciated by the audience who couldn’t help their smiles.

As this time of year can be stressful for many upcoming graduates and those searching for their next way to stick their foot in the door, this event gave clarity and solace. BHR and the Music & Theatre Arts Department provided students the opportunity to network and have conversations regardless of their area of study. It’s also important to remember that while jobs are important, living life as human beings transcend any full-time position.

Zeller said it best, “At the end of the day, we all want to be in a creative field, and it should be fun.” That is exactly what this event was at its core, a fun moment between creative individuals sharing their knowledge and perspective with Monmouth’s soon-to-be industry playmakers.



PHOTO COURTESY of Joe Rapolla.

Alexis Finkelstein, Olivia Melfi, Natalie Zeller, Antonia Bongiorno, Joe Rapolla, Ricky Govel, Cassidy Crosby, and Kelli Torres (left to right) at the end of the Industry Networking Panel.

personable, hardworking, and optimistic.

After the introductions the conversation shifted to what skills or qualities are important to cultivate when it comes to your career path. Melfi explained that putting “detail orientated” on her resume was something she didn’t realize was that important, however those leadership positions are counting on someone to read into the smaller details. She also said that being a “fangirl” and a true lover

really developed over time as my communication went from being overly communicative to now like direct,” Torres said. In any industry there’s going to be a time where you need to have grit and determination as well as warmth and understanding. Govel added as well that it’s important to have that relationship building aspect at work because that’s how you grow in a company.

Relationship building

and are so passionate about it.” It’s as simple as bonding about music, favorite artists, current songs, and anything that will help start a personable conversation.

Just like in previous industry panel’s the topic of company wide technical platforms like Google, Microsoft, and even Artificial Intelligence were discussed. While these are important to any job and learning their platform, Govel noted that having a human touch to your work is essential. “I

U.S. Navy set to blockade ships in the Strait of Hormuz

HENRY BOODY
POLITICS EDITOR

President Donald Trump announced Sunday, April 12, that the United States Navy will begin blockading ships entering and exiting the Strait of Hormuz, hours after peace talks between the United States and Iran collapsed in Islamabad, Pakistan.

In a Truth Social post reported by CBS News, Trump said the Navy would begin “BLOCKADING any and all Ships trying to enter, or leave, the Strait of Hormuz” and “seek and interdict every vessel in International Waters that has paid a toll to Iran.” He called Iran’s control of the strait “EXTORTION” and said Iran “will not be allowed to profit off this Illegal Act.”

According to NPR, CENTCOM later confirmed that the blockade will take effect at 10 a.m. ET Monday and will apply to ships entering or exiting Iranian ports and coastal areas. Vessels traveling between non-Iranian ports will not be impeded.

The Strait of Hormuz, a narrow waterway between Iran and Oman, normally carries about 20 percent of the world’s oil supply. Since the U.S. and Israel launched airstrikes against Iranian military and nuclear targets on Feb. 28, Iran has restricted passage through the strait, and Al Jazeera, citing AAA reported that the average price of gasoline in the United States has risen to \$4.15 per gallon, up from under \$3 before the war began.

More than 21 hours of face-to-face negotiations preceded the blockade. Vice President JD Vance, who led the American delegation in Islamabad, said the talks collapsed over Iran’s nuclear program. “The simple fact is that we need to see an affirmative commitment that they will not seek a nuclear weapon, and they will not seek the tools that would enable them to quickly achieve a nuclear weapon,” Vance

said, according to NPR. He added that Iran “chose not to accept our terms.”

Iranian officials described the talks more broadly. NPR reported that Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmail Baqaei said in a post on X that the discussions covered the Strait of Hormuz, nuclear issues, sanctions, reparations, and an end to the broader regional conflict. He criticized what he described as “excessive demands” from the American side. Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi also wrote on X that the two sides had been “inches away” from a memorandum of understanding before running into what he described as “maximalism, shifting goalposts, and blockade,” according to NBC News.

Trump, in a separate Truth Social post Sunday, wrote that “most points were agreed to, but the only point that really mattered, NUCLEAR, was not,” CBS News reported.

On Saturday, April 11, the USS Frank E. Peterson Jr. and the USS Michael Murphy became the first U.S. Navy guided-missile destroyers to cross the Strait of Hormuz since the war began. Al Jazeera reported that CENTCOM said the ships were operating in the Arabian Gulf “as part of a broader mission to ensure the strait is fully clear of sea mines previously laid by Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps.” In the same statement, Adm. Brad Cooper said the U.S. had begun establishing “a new passage” to encourage the flow of commerce.

That account was disputed by Iran. Al Jazeera reported that an Iranian military spokesperson “strongly denied” CENTCOM’s claim, while the IRGC warned of a “firm and forceful response” to any military ships attempting to pass through.

Commercial traffic has also become part of the

confrontation. CBS News reported that analysts from Lloyd’s List Intelligence said the IRGC imposed what they described as a “toll booth” regime after restricting access in early March, requiring vessels to submit documentation, obtain clearance codes, and accept IRGC-escorted passage. At least two vessels paid Iran in Chinese yuan to guarantee safe passage, according to CBS News.

Kenneth Mitchell, chair of the political science department, said the blockade was a predictable escalation. “This is just the next shoe to drop,” Mitchell told The Outlook. He described the strategy as an attempt to cut off Tehran’s revenue. “The objective is to starve Iran of money,” Mitchell said.

Mitchell warned that the timeline is working against the administration. “He doesn’t have six months,” Mitchell said, pointing to

the economic fallout and the approaching midterm elections. He said countries outside the Gulf are more likely to lose patience with the disruption first, and that walking away from the region is not an option without risking key alliances.

Even after the talks failed, both sides signaled that more action remains possible. Vance said the United States left Islamabad with what he called its “final and best offer,” adding, “We’ll see if the Iranians accept it,” according to NPR. Trump, meanwhile, suggested military action could continue. CNBC, citing a Wall Street Journal report, said he is considering resuming limited strikes, and in a Fox News interview Sunday, Trump said, “I would hate to do it, but it’s their water, their desalinization plants, their electric-generating plants, which are very easy to hit.”



IMAGE TAKEN from Military Times.

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

HAWK TV Hawk TV
CHANNEL 12.1

Hawk TV is the student run television station on campus, and it is a great opportunity to meet new people and get involved! We are gearing up for our holiday live show on Dec. 5, and have a lot of themed shoots coming up! We are also filming our annual Turkey Bowl on Friday, Nov. 21, and the crew call is at 3:30 p.m. This is a great event and fun way to connect with alumni! To get involved, email hawk-tv@monmouth.edu and our secretary will add you to our email list so you never miss an update. Hope to see you there!

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

ΣΤΓ Sigma Tau Gamma

Looking for something to do during the weekends? Are you interested in creating lifelong friendships and being a part of a unified brotherhood?

Sigma Tau Gamma endeavors to create a strong, lasting bond within the Monmouth University community. Becoming a brother means more than joining a fraternity, it means joining a network of men who support one another academically, socially, and personally. Whether it is cheering on Hawks athletics, taking part in philanthropy events, or hanging out on a quiet Sunday, there is always something to get involved in and someone to stand beside you.

Membership in Sigma Tau Gamma is not just about events or letters; it is about belonging. You will find people who show up for you, who push you to succeed, and who celebrate your achievements as if they were their own. From philanthropy to leadership to weekend hangouts, there is always a chance to get involved, make memories, and build connections that last far beyond four years.

If you are searching for brotherhood, purpose, and a place where you can truly make your mark at Monmouth, Sigma Tau Gamma stands ready to welcome you!

- Ian Epstein, President '25/'26



Black Student Union

The Black Student Union is a safe space and a home away from home for our black and brown students here on campus. Everyone is always welcome and we are rooted in family and community. We believe that the only way to cultivate community is to pour into the communities around us and create bonds and friendships that last. BSU is not just about having fun it's about building communities that last well after we're gone and creating a space where our students can finally feel like they fit.

- Simara Rodriguez, President '25/'26



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



Monmouth Finance Society

We host regular workshops, invite guest speakers, and organize trips to places like the New York Stock Exchange and the Federal Reserve Bank of New York. This semester, we expect to host around 12-14 speakers from companies such as Morgan Stanley, Apollo Management, JPMorgan, and Société Générale, among others. Basically, we have every Wednesday during student club hours booked until the end of the semester. We meet every Wednesday from 2:45 PM to 4:15 PM.

- Arseniy Shafran, President '25/'26



LASO

The Latin American Student Organization works hard to bring vibrant and energetic community to campus. Anyone is welcome to the events and meetings. It really works to give campus a stronger understanding and connection to Latin culture. A home away from home.

- Matias Sanchez, social media chair '25/'26



"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. For more information follow @omnisportsmediaa on Instagram!

- Dean Heidel, OmniSports Media Host



MU Sports Industry Club

We are a club dedicated to connecting aspiring students with sports industry professionals through networking opportunities. Follow our Instagram @musportsindustry for more info!

- Ava McGinty, Vice President '25/'26

Student Employee Appreciation Week 2026 Thank You & Recognition

The **English Department** would like to give a big shout-out to our incredible student employee, Branden Van Allen, who's been with us all four of his years at Monmouth! Branden has become known for his dedication and reliability, and consistently brings a calm, steady presence to even the busiest days. His level-headed approach and creative thinking have made a lasting impact on our team, and we're so grateful for everything he's brought to the department. Congratulations on your upcoming graduation, Branden, we can't wait to see what you do next!

The **EOF Staff** would like to extend our heartfelt thanks and "Welcome Aboard" to our Office Assistants and Ambassadors - Jana Aly, Clark-Cassius Appling, Nasir Cole, Jaylee Flora, Sarah Hailu, Enyinna Nnaemeka and Maxy Reyes. A special thanks to Lourdes Castillo for her continued support. We appreciate and thank you for all your assistance, creativity, versatility and hard work.

Global Education Office—To our *Global Education Marketing and Communications Assistants and Front Desk Team*: We deeply appreciate each of you for the dedication and enthusiasm you bring to our office. Victor and Viv, thank you for your creativity and attention to detail in developing our presentations, social media content, international newsletter, and so much more. Your efforts ensure our operations run smoothly and effectively. Lauren and Sanchia, as the first point of contact for visitors, your kindness and professionalism create a welcoming atmosphere that reflects the very best of our team. Each of you plays a vital role in making our office a better and more vibrant place to work, and we are truly grateful to have you on our team.

To our *Study Abroad Mentors (LJ GEMs)*: the **Global Education Office** thanks you! Your positive energy, cultural awareness, and expertise enriches our students' experiences. To our seniors: Joshua Lichtbraun, we will miss your can-do attitude, your sense of humor, and the dedication you've shown in encouraging others to follow your path! We can't wait to one day see "AXP Abroad" happen. Gillian Sepp, your leadership skills have been integral to our office! We'll miss your expert management and campus expertise, and the way you've guided our GEMs. You've both experienced how a semester in London (or anywhere) can make everlasting impact, and you chose to selflessly share your knowledge with other Monmouth students. Thanks! To our GA Jenna Lozzi, you've grown so much in your role and we're grateful for all you've done! As a world traveler and excellent writer, your wonderful presence has been palpable and will be greatly missed.

History & Anthropology Department—Huge thanks to Nick Pollard and Emma Levinson. Nick, thank you for stepping into this position and holding the fort for the entire academic year! We are so thrilled to have someone we can count on to cover all the bases. It's always great when a student worker moves from "learning the ropes" to "running the show." You have that rare ability to see what needs to be done before being asked. Emma, thank you for joining our team, you have picked up the ropes well! You really brighten up the office with your welcoming personality. We appreciate the positive energy you bring to the office every day. Nick and Emma, we look forward to welcoming you back to your positions next academic year. The success you've achieved in your respective roles does not go unnoticed!

Honors School—Behind every successful event and every warm welcome in the Honors School, there is a student employee making it happen. You are the bright minds who turn busy days into meaningful experiences, often anticipating needs before they even happen. You greet challenges with grace, represent us with pride, and bring a spirit of excellence that elevates everyone around you. Because of you, our space feels more connected and more vibrant. During Student Employee Appreciation Week, we celebrate the dedicated, thoughtful, and exceptional individuals who help the Honors School shine. Thank you for being the magic behind the moments. — Doris and Dean Ross

Shout out to Alexis Morris-NG, from the **Department of Political Science and Sociology**. We appreciate you! Your enthusiasm, creativity, energy, and work ethic are a gentle, but powerful force. Keep up your incredible spirit, and opportunities will arise for you.

SLP Department—We want to thank our student workers Julie Rosado, Brielle Leinheiser and Natalie Shaw for everything they do for the Center for Language and Speech Disorders and the department. The chair, faculty, staff and clinic supervisors truly appreciate your help. Thank you for everything you've brought to our department!

Student Employment Office—Grace, Breana, Jessica, ianna, Emma, Gabriella and Madison. As Student Employment Appreciation Week wraps up, we want to take a moment to personally thank each of you for all the hard work, dedication, and positive energy you bring to our team. Your contributions—big and small—do not go unnoticed. Whether it's juggling tasks, stepping up when things get busy, or simply showing up with a great attitude, each of you plays a valuable role in keeping everything running smoothly. You've brought not only your skills and creativity, but also kindness, reliability, and a spirit of teamwork that makes all the difference. Thank you for everything you do. It's truly a pleasure working with such an amazing group of students, and I'm so grateful for your continued efforts. Wishing you success in everything ahead—both here and beyond! With appreciation, Student Employment Office

Student Government Association-Veronica Belloso & Emma Baez, SGA Office Assistants. THANK YOU for all you



The Student Employee of the Year is an annual recognition program coordinated by the National Student Employment Association, honoring outstanding student employees at Monmouth University and campuses nationwide. Each spring, colleges and universities select one student whose exceptional contributions and achievements set them apart from their peers. Nominees consistently perform high-quality work and demonstrate reliability, professionalism, and initiative.

2026 STUDENT EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR

Luke Moleski



Moleski, a senior leader on the Athletics Marketing student team, has made an extraordinary impact through his leadership, innovation, and dedication. Beginning his journey as a production room assistant, he has grown into a key leader, overseeing game-day production and mentoring fellow students in one of the most critical behind-the-scenes roles within athletics.

Favorite Student Employment Memory:

"It's hard to pick just one favorite. I've had four years of awesome memories with great people. There was the football victory over Villanova. The time I was Shadow for a football game. When Cat, Kylie, and I bought red hair wigs and wore them for Kelly's birthday. And of course, Cory Miller's buzzer-beater when the Hawk Faithful stormed the court. However, I'd have to say my favorite memory was Student Field Trip Day this year. These kids blew the roof off OFBC. Every basket, they cheered like their lives depended on it, even during pregame warmups and halftime. It was special being at a game with an arena full of energy like that. Anything I said on the microphone, those kids would go nuts for. That was a great morning and an amazing Hawks W."

The value gained through his job: "This job has given me everything. I owe this job my life. I would not still be here without my supervisor, Kelly, the Shadow Squad, and this job. My freshman year, I didn't have one person at Monmouth I could've called a friend. I was lost and depressed. I applied for this job thinking I was leaving Monmouth after one year, and after I started working and getting comfortable, I found a purpose. Entering college, I never had an interest in sports marketing, and after four years of working in sports marketing, it is now my dream to work in sports marketing at a higher level. I've had so many different jobs throughout my life, and I've never loved a job as much as this one. I can't even call it a job because when you think of a job it's something that you have to do. I want to do this. I look forward to going into work every game. I would do this for the rest of my life if I had the choice. I live and I'd die for the Hawk. I don't want to graduate. I don't want to leave Kelly. I don't want to leave the Shadow Squad. I don't want to leave this job. It feels like my purpose. I feel like there's a reason I'm here, and it's for this. This job has reshaped my entire life for the better, and I believe I am the man I am today because of this job."

Student Employee of the Year Nominees

- **Sulma Alvarez**, Library Assistant Building Manager and Story Time Program Assistant, Guggenheim Memorial Library
- **Paola Valle Alarcia**, Athletics Event Staff, OFBC Building Manager, Fitness Center Desk Assistant
- **Chris Buzaid**, Student Research Assistant, Department of Computer Science & Software Engineering,

- **Madison Bush**, Reading Tutor, George L. Catrambone Elementary School
- **Aidan Cole**, Live Broadcasting Student Assistant, Athletics / Monmouth Digital Network
- **Claudia Decker**, Live Broadcasting Student Worker, Athletics / Monmouth Digital Network
- **Gina Dige**, Graphic Design Intern, Center for the Arts, Department of Art & Design
- **Vincent Macri**, Live Broadcasting Student Worker, Athletics / Monmouth Digital Network
- **Scarlett Pizarro**, Biology Lab Assistant, Department of Biology
- **Delvis Rodriguez**, Digital Marketing Coordinator, Turner Syndrome Foundation
- **Sarah Schuld**, Office Assistant / Peer Mentor, Honors School
- **Gillian Sepp**, Lead Global Education Mentor, Global Education Office

The Supervisor of the Year program is a regional program that beins at an institutional level and progresses to the regional level. Each year, NEASEA looks to students at colleges across the region to nominate supervisors who they feel are especially worthy of recognition.

2026 STUDENT EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR

Dorothy Cleary

Director of Tutoring and Writing Services



Today, we honor and remember our 2026 Supervisor of the Year, Dorothy Cleary.

An extraordinary, compassionate, and dedicated leader, Dorothy was a two-time recipient of this award and deeply committed to mentorship, student success, and creating meaningful experiential learning opportunities. Her warmth, guidance, and unwavering support shaped countless student employees and strengthened our entire campus community.

Dorothy was also deeply committed to service beyond campus, including her involvement with New Jersey Run for the Fallen and her volunteer work with Serenity Stables, a therapeutic horse farm supporting veterans.

Nominated by Veronique Manfredini, Student Employee, Tutoring and Writing Services, this award was accepted in her honor by Veronique. We know Dorothy would have been deeply honored and proud of this recognition

Supervisor of the Year Nominees

- **Tom Bieber**, Associate Athletics Director for Academic Support
- **Caroline Hurtt**, Assistant Director of Undergraduate Admission
- **Doris Meyer**, Assistant to the Dean of the Honors School
- **Kelly Valentine**, Associate Athletic Director for Marketing & Promotions

The Monmouth University Student Employment Office thanks all the businesses that made our 30th Annual Student Employee Appreciation Week such a success!
Shop Local. Eat Local. Spend Local.

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AMY'S OMELETTE HOUSE LONG BRANCH	HOT BAGEL BAKERY OAKHURST	MOGO KOREAN FUSION TACOS ASBURY PARK	PEEL RESTAURANT OAKHURST
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FIN'S TROPICALI CUISINE BRADLEY BEACH	MCLOONE'S RESTAURANTS LONG BRANCH & SHREWSBURY	NIKKI'S HAIR STUDIO OAKHURST	SURFN SPARK AVON-BY-THE-SEA
FIRST WATCH EATONTOWN	MCDONALD'S WEST LONG BRANCH	OFF SHORE COFFEE LONG BRANCH	TOAST CITY DINER ASBURY PARK
GRANDMA'S CHEESE CAFÉ LONG BRANCH	MILLERS ALE HOUSE OCEAN	OTTO'S TAVERN OCEAN	TURNING POINT LONG BRANCH & OCEAN
GRATEFUL DELI LOCH ARBOUR	MING YING CHINESE RESTAURANT LONG BRANCH	OUTBACK STEAKHOUSE OAKHURST	TWO RIVER THEATRE RED BANK
GROSSMANS DELI & GRILL OAKHURST		PARTY FAIR OAKHURST	WINDMILL RESTAURANTS WEST END LONG BRANCH
HAND & STONE WEST LONG BRANCH			ZACHARY'S WEST LONG BRANCH
HERR'S LAKEWOOD			

Baseball earns third series sweep of season vs. Towson

TARA DALESSIO
STAFF WRITER

BADEN DELANEY
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Monmouth baseball secured its second series sweep of the season over their conference rival, the Towson Tigers, this weekend. It marked their third sweep of the season and allowed the Hawks to maintain their hold on first place in the CAA North Division. This is the Hawks first time since 2018 that they have gotten three series sweeps in the span of one season. This series also allowed several Monmouth players to hit key milestones.

The Hawks opened the series on Friday afternoon, securing an 8-2 victory. The team capitalized early and maintained control throughout. Freshman shortstop Sam Saucke sparked the offense, leading off with a double and quickly established himself as a key contributor to the series. Saucke continued his offensive efforts in the bottom of the second inning, driving in two runs to extend the early lead.

On the mound, sophomore righty Ryan Mealy delivered a strong seven-inning performance, allowing just one run and avoiding any walks. Mealy struck out five Tigers, which was key in keeping Towson off the board. Towson attempted to answer the Hawks' offense in the seventh with a solo homerun to right field, but still fell short.

Monmouth extended their lead in the bottom half of the inning, as senior infielder Simmi Whitehill singled to left field and advanced to second on a walk to senior outfielder Nick Lovarco. Junior catcher Brendan Buecker followed with a two-run single to push the lead further.

Fifth year pitcher Kevin Opanel closed out the eighth efficiently, keeping the momentum with Monmouth. Whitehill added another RBI single in the bottom of the inning, sealing the Hawks their first win of the series.

Game two began early Saturday afternoon, and graduate righty Alec Couture took



Simmi Whitehill had a big series for the Hawks, tallying six hits, six runs, and three RBIs over the course of three games in Monmouth's series sweep over Towson this weekend. PHOTO COURTESY of Katelyn Sandvik.

the mound as Monmouth's starting pitcher. Towson earned the first run in the top of the opening inning. After several scoreless innings from both teams, junior outfielder RJ Mustaro lifted a sacrifice fly to right field, bringing in the Hawks first run of the game.

The Tigers responded in the fifth, regaining the lead with another RBI, but Monmouth countered in the following inning. Whitehill, a key source of energy this game, singled to left field and advanced into scoring position with a stolen base which would set up Buecker's game-tying bunt. Whitehill would go on to score for the 27th time this season during this season, evidence of his pivotal role to the Hawks in the standings. Sophomore designated hitter Jake Howlett followed with an RBI single, putting

the Hawks back in front. Buecker kept his previous momentum going and gave the Hawks two additional runs after a single to right field, turning the game on its heel.

In the bottom of the eighth, junior first baseman Chris Walsh stepped up to plate, doubling and giving Monmouth its sixth and final run of the day. Towson attempted a late attack in the ninth, scoring three runs and narrowing the margin, but the rally ultimately fell short, and the Hawks held on, giving them a 6-5 victory.

The final game of the series took place on Sunday and it was nothing short of a track meet as the game ended with Monmouth grabbing a big 10-8 win. The Hawks started off the scoring with a huge three-run home run

from Lovarco in the first inning, his fifth of the season. Towson got themselves on the board in the second with a solo homerun, but the Hawks quickly got that run back after Howlett added a solo shot of his own.

In the top of the third, Towson fought back and tied the game at four with a three run inning. In the bottom of the third, Monmouth regained control after Mustaro came through with a sacrifice fly, giving him his 21st RBI of the season and scoring Whitehill. Lovarco also scored after an error on the play, pushing Monmouth's lead to 6-4.

Towson would eventually tie the game at six in the seventh inning, but this tie would not stand for long, as Monmouth's bats came alive. A big eighth inning that included RBI singles from

both Whitehill and Buecker, as well as a two-run double from Lovarco put the Hawks up 10-6.

Towson scored two runs in the top of the ninth inning, but Monmouth was able to end the threat and walk away with a 10-8 win over the Tigers. Some notable performers for Monmouth included Lovarco, who ended the day 2-4 with five RBI's, Whitehill, who finished 2-4 and scored three runs, and Saucke who also ended the game 2-4.

Monmouth now trails only Campbell in terms of CAA record and looks ahead to their next game on Tuesday against out of conference opponent, NJIT, who sits at 11-19 on the year. The Hawks will look to keep their momentum going after a big sweep of their conference rival.

Strong third quarter lifts Hofstra over Monmouth women's lacrosse

FRANK HOARLE
SPORTS EDITOR

Monmouth women's lacrosse dropped a crucial conference game to the Hofstra Pride on Saturday, giving up 10 goals over the course of the third quarter in the process.

The game was competitive in the first half, but Hofstra went on an incredible second-half run to end up winning by double digits.

Senior attacker Shea Berigan got the scoring started in the Saturday afternoon contest, giving the Hawks a 1-0 lead a little over a minute into the game. Hofstra tied it less than a minute later, but senior midfielder Brooke Lacey responded 20 seconds later to give the Hawks the lead back.

The Pride and Hawks exchanged two goals apiece to wrap up the first quarter, with freshman midfielder Marlania Grimm scoring her first goal of the game and Lacey scoring her second for the Hawks.

The start of the second quarter wound up being the best stretch of the game for the Hawks, as they outscored Hofstra 3-1 over the first four minutes of the frame. Berigan scored two goals, and senior midfielder Sophia Lymberis netted her first of the game. After this stretch, Monmouth had a 7-4 lead.

The rest of the game was a

struggle for Monmouth. Hofstra outscored the Hawks 4-1 to close out the second half to head into halftime in an 8-8 tie. Berigan scored her fourth goal of the game during that stretch for the Hawks.

In the third quarter, Hofstra blew the game wide open. The Pride scored 10 goals, including seven in a five minute and 44 second stretch between the 13:00 mark and the 7:16 mark in the quarter. Freshman midfielder Olivia Castaldo stopped the bleeding slightly for the Hawks after Hofstra's seven-goal run, but Hofstra responded to that with four straight goals to open the score to 19-9. This put the game on a running clock, despite a tie score at halftime.

In the fourth quarter, Castaldo and Grimm both scored their second goals of the game, but the third quarter collapse was too much to overcome, as Hofstra ended up winning the game by a score of 22-11. The 22 goals was the most the Hawks have given up in a game since April 12, 2024. On that day, they also let up 22 goals to this same Hofstra team.

Berigan led the way for the Hawks in scoring, netting four goals and an assist for five points. Her assist on Castaldo's first goal was her 50th point on the season, second on the team behind graduate attacker Lauren Rismani, who had two assists in the game. Grimm, Castaldo, and Lacey each had two goals, with Lymberis scoring one. Senior attacker Brenna McCafferty and graduate



Shea Berigan scored her 50th point of the season with four goals and an assist in Monmouth's 22-11 loss to Hofstra this weekend. PHOTO COURTESY of Katelyn Sandvik.

attacker Julia West each had one assist.

The third quarter was the turning point of this game. Hofstra outshot Monmouth 13-1 in that frame and outshot them 41-16 total in the game. Junior goalkeeper Katie Sullivan held her own in the first half and kept the Hawks in the game, making seven saves on fifteen shots on goal, but in the third quarter she allowed ten goals on twelve shots on net.

With the loss, Monmouth's postseason hopes are hanging on by a thread. They sit at 1-4 in conference play with two conference games remaining. They are tied for sixth in the

CAA standings with Drexel. Their only path to a CAA Tournament spot is to win their final two games and have Towson, who is currently fourth in the CAA standings and hold the final tournament spot, lose their final two games. They also need to pass William & Mary, who is fifth in the standings and beat Monmouth earlier in the season.

The Hawks will visit the aforementioned Drexel Dragons today, April 15 at 3 p.m. for a midweek game. With both teams sitting at 1-4 in conference play, the loser of this game will be eliminated from postseason contention.

As for Hofstra, they have already clinched a spot in the CAA tournament and are still undefeated in conference play. They sit at 9-5 overall on the season and will face their toughest test yet as they will travel across Long Island to face Stony Brook on Friday, who is also undefeated in conference play and ranked No. 12 in the country. Both teams have already locked up spots in the conference tournament, but the winner will have a clear path to the No. 1 seed in the bracket. The game between the top two teams in the conference will kick off on Friday at noon.

Men's lacrosse falls on Senior Day

EDWARD GRANADOS
STAFF WRITER

The Monmouth men's lacrosse team delivered a strong start on Senior Day but could not withstand a late surge, falling 17-10 to Stony Brook on April 11, at Kessler Stadium.

Monmouth (5-6, 2-3 CAA) came out with energy early, matching Stony Brook (7-4, 3-1 CAA) goal-for-goal in the opening quarter. Both teams found the back of the net twice, setting up a competitive battle. The Hawks then took control in the second quarter, where their offense began to click. Behind balanced scoring and efficient possessions, Monmouth outscored the Seawolves 4-3 to take a 6-5 lead into halftime.

The Hawks continued that

momentum into the third quarter. Graduate midfielder Nick Teets led the charge offensively, finishing with a team-high three goals. Junior attacker Matt Porazzo and Senior attacker Ty Caffarelli each added two goals, helping Monmouth build a 10-6 advantage midway through the period.

Monmouth's offense was not limited to its top scorers. Senior midfielder Caden Kesseling, sophomore faceoff-specialist Landon Parker, and senior midfielder Riley Chester each contributed a goal, showcasing the team's depth and ability to spread scoring opportunities across multiple players. The Hawks' ball movement and shot selection were key factors in building their four-goal lead.

However, the momentum shifted dramatically late in the third quarter. Stony Brook be-

gan to find success offensively, capitalizing on defensive breakdowns and pushing the pace in transition. What was once a 10-6 Monmouth lead quickly disappeared as the Seawolves mounted a comeback.

The turning point came when Stony Brook tied the game at 10-10 before the end of the third quarter. From that moment on, the Seawolves took complete control. They closed the game on an 11-0 run, shutting out Monmouth over the final stretch and scoring six unanswered goals in the fourth quarter alone.

Despite the loss, Monmouth showed strengths in several statistical categories. The Hawks held a 40-48 shot deficit but remained competitive by putting 24 shots on goal. They also edged Stony Brook in ground balls, 25-23, and had stretches of strong

possession due to their 18-13 faceoff success.

Still, the difference came down to execution late in the game. After scoring 10 goals through three quarters, Monmouth was held scoreless in the fourth. Offensive opportunities became limited, and turnovers allowed Stony Brook to maintain control during its decisive run.

For Stony Brook, the comeback was fueled by standout performances from junior attacker Collin Williamson and junior attacker Justin Bonacci, who each scored four goals, along with sophomore midfielder Caleb Yeung, who added three goals and two assists. Their offensive efficiency in the second half proved too much for Monmouth to handle.

For Monmouth, the game highlighted both promise and

inconsistency. The Hawks demonstrated their ability to compete with a strong conference opponent, using balanced scoring and solid defensive efforts to build a lead. Contributions from players like Teets, Porazzo, Caffarelli, and supporting scorers such as Kesseling and Parker showed the team's offensive depth.

However, the inability to close out the game ultimately overshadowed those positives. The late-game drought and defensive struggles proved costly, turning a potential Senior Day victory into a difficult conference loss.

Monmouth will look to regroup as it continues CAA play, aiming to build on its strong stretches while improving consistency down the stretch. Monmouth will face Fairfield in their last home game of the season on April 25 at 11 a.m..

THE OUTLOOK



BASEBALL CONTINUES ROLLING WITH THIRD SERIES SWEEP



Monmouth baseball earned their third overall series sweep and second of the season over Towson in a three game set in West Long Branch this past weekend.

SEE STORY ON PAGE 14

PHOTOS COURTESY of Katelyn Sandvik.