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**THE BROOKLYN COLLEGE**

# **VANGUARD**

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# BC’s Notorious Res Hall Closes Its Doors

By Maya Schubert  
News Editor

After years, the Residence Hall at Brooklyn College has finally shut its doors. According to a former RA, the building at 1 Kenilworth Place stopped operating toward the end of July.

Though the building continued housing students after Brooklyn College’s campus closed, numbers dwindled significantly as many students moved back to their parents’ homes. Because the fate of the fall semester went unannounced for most of the summer, potential residents like freshman or transfer students were also not making definitive move-in plans.

For many, the residence hall’s quiet shutdown seems to deny its infamous reputation. Known across Brooklyn College’s campus for dirty conditions, floods, and a hostile environment, RHBC has attracted unwelcome attention for years. In May 2019, both the Kingsman and Excelsior newspapers reported on grimy conditions and reports of sexual harassment by employees at the dorms. The articles followed YouTube videos and a short film about the residence hall released by BC film student



Residence Hall at Brooklyn College has stopped operating by the end of July./ Residence Hall at Brooklyn College on Facebook

Chris Omar. Over the 2019 fall semester, The Vanguard repeatedly reported on floods at the dorms.

Joann Johnson, the former bookkeeper at the residence hall, said that the owner didn’t share with her why RHBC is closing, or if the building would be sold.

“I guess [it closed] because of COVID,” Johnson said. “I’m not sure.”

All she knew was that it was shutting down.

“The residence hall is not opening back up,” she said. “It’s closed; it’s locked.”

In May, Brooklyn College let its advertising contract

with the building expire.

“Brooklyn College is unable to provide any assistance to students interested or residing in the building,” Ron Jackson, Vice President of Student Affairs, wrote in an email on May 22nd. “Brooklyn College has no involvement in the management or operation of the facility.”

The school’s conspicuous attempt to dissociate itself with RHBC came as the result of public complaints from students following the newspaper reports and Omar’s short film. Omar, who graduated in Spring

2020, is sure that RHBC’s closure is the latent result of generated publicity.

“I knew once we released the documentary -- and the media attention surrounding it -- they could no longer carry on their money-grabbing practice of exploiting Brooklyn College students,” Omar said. “While I wish this had happened years ago, I am glad they are finally out of business. All in all, I’m glad no one can be exploited further by RHBC.”

The owner of RHBC, Sefi Zvieli, declined to comment.

## PRLS Dept. Celebrates 50th B-Day

By Ryan Schwach  
Editor-in-Chief

Brooklyn College’s Puerto Rican and Latin Studies Department (PRLS), a trailblazer when it first began, celebrates its 50th birthday this month.

In a normal year, the department would be celebrating in person during their yearly event, Encuentro, but will of course have to move the celebration online.

“I’m excited about it! It’s just hard to be excited when we can’t be together to celebrate,” said Danny J. Vázquez Sanabria, a PRLS major and President

of BC’s Puerto Rican Alliance. “We’re a very small department but we’re always doing things together, and an online format can’t replicate everything.”

Spurred on by calls from a diverse cloth of Brooklyn College Students for more inclusion, the department was formed with the intent of standing on three pillars: awareness, analysis, and action.

“We started from the institute of Puerto Rican Studies that was created alongside the Black Studies Institute, both key spaces that came about from student struggle,” said Vázquez Sanabria.

The PRLS Department has continued to fight for those fundamental beliefs throughout their half century of existence. In 1974, 44 Brooklyn College students were arrested while demonstrating for more inclusion within their own department, and in more recent years, students and faculty have fought against the underfunding of the department and of CUNY as a whole.

“It feels great to know that after 50 years, and the constant push from the administration to defund both Africana Studies and Puerto Rican and

Latino Studies, we are still standing,” said Vázquez Sanabria.

Now, the work continues. He and his fellow members are now working to make campus more anti-racist, equal, and equitable for the entire student body.

“Many of our students leave with a more defined sense of who they are, what they want to do, and why they are doing whatever they choose to do,” said Vázquez Sanabria. “Our departments have truly produced a family setting in the most violent of spaces, so we celebrate that along with the anniversary.”



# Hybrid Courses On Hold, To Start Sometime In Fall

By Bobbie Bell  
Staff Writer

As Brooklyn College adapts to remote learning, how and when hybrid courses will begin for the fall semester is still up in the air for the theatre and film departments. There will be thirteen hybrids across all departments in the college, including the physics and earth and environmental sciences department.

“We will be attempting to run a small number of hybrid engagements on the campus this fall to help with the performative aspects of actor training,” said Kip Marsh, the chairperson of the theatre department.

The department hopes to have five hybrid acting courses: Voice Production for the Actor I and III, Movement for the Actor I and III, and Acting for the Camera.

Those pursuing a master in fine arts acting degree will most likely be placed in these hybrid courses due to their small class sizes. This will leave the classrooms less congested and therefore allow social distancing guidelines to be more easily carried out. Before any hybrid course can move forward, however, the department must submit their plans to the Reentry Review Board.

Marsh has had to “submit a reentry plan [to the Board] that details how [they] would like to be able to use the campus for classes and performance engagements.”

“The Reentry Review Board is very thorough in its assessment of campus usage plans and often sends a department’s plans back



Brooklyn College WEB building./ Brooklyn College Twitter/BklynCollege411

for modification or redirection,” Marsh said.

Marsh is uncertain of how long the process should take, but expects hybrid classes to span from early October to mid-November for graduate students in these courses.

“My first class will be October seventh on campus with my second year MFA students, and October eight with my first year MFA students,” said Judylee Vivier, a professor in the theatre department.

Anne Lopes, the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs has joined the Response and Reentry Task Force.

“It has been both exciting and challenging to be part of the Task Force,” said Lopes. “The criteria we used for considering requests for a hybrid class was based on the need for students to use equipment or learn to use equipment that is housed on campus for the delivery of the degree program.”

The undergraduate film department is only offering one hybrid class for undergraduates this semester, a cinematography class, according to Annette Danto, the chairperson of the undergraduate film department. Hybrid classes for the Barry R. Feirstein Graduate School at Brooklyn College include 3D Computer Animation I, Computer Animation 3, Production Workshop 1, and Special Topics in Cinema Arts 1 and 2, as listed on CUNYfirst.

“Our WEB Film Department doesn’t have the proper air filtration system, so we’ve been told that it’s unsafe for students, faculty, and staff to spend time in the building during the pandemic,” said Danto.

Lopes listed a few things the Task Force takes into consideration when reviewing a proposal for a hybrid class, including “requested rooms and ventilation, number of times each student

will be on campus, plans for disinfection of equipment, signage posting, and the cleaning schedule for the space.”

Like the theatre department, Danto says the film department is still combing through final details of their hybrid classes. The class will be virtual for the most part, but will include “two hands-on lighting workshops.”

“These workshops, as per the college’s health and safety guidelines, will only involve five students at a time working with the instructor in a large studio space,” Danto stated.

Everyone must also wear a mask and maintain social distancing.

“At the core, theater and performing artists are storytellers and communicators, and engaging with our community to tell stories and communicate difficult social dilemmas is the primary opsuit, regardless of the form in which it happens,” said

Marsh.

All theatre courses are currently online, but Kip sees online learning as a unique challenge that allows students to “produce work remotely,” a necessary skill for actors in today’s climate.

The same can be said for the film department. Students will receive their sound equipment kits, which will allow them to work on projects from their homes.

“We are most concerned about everyone’s health and safety so we are doing our best to come up with creative solutions for our hand-on craft classes which rely on equipment usage,” said Danto.

According to CUNYfirst, the Earth and Environmental Sciences department will have one hybrid course: Field Mapping. The Physics department will also have a hybrid course called Modern Physics Laboratories. Neither departments were available for comment.



# Petition to Protect CUNY Student Privacy Circulates

By Paola Sacerdote  
*Staff Writer*

CUNY students are unhappy with the university's decision to permit live, online proctoring of exams. The frustration led to the creation of a petition on change.org called "Do Not Let CUNY Violate Student Privacy," in the hopes to remove the proctoring rules implemented by CUNY. The petition so far has over 27,500 signatures.

Students specifically take issues with the programs CUNY is partnering with in order to administer exams virtually. "As the Fall 2020 semester begins, online classes are implementing various software services to curb potential academic dishonesty. While the intentions are in good faith, the implementation will

be atrocious," the petition reads.

The petition is supported by the University Student Senate, and the student governments at Brooklyn, John Jay, Baruch, Queens, BMCC, Hunter, York and CSI. According to CUNY, students will start seeing their exams being recorded by midterm season of this fall.

The AI driven programs CUNY is working with, such as Proctorio, Respondus, and Proctortrack, capture screen content on the users computer, and has features like one that tracks eye-movement, all to ensure that students can't cheat. However, students fear this could be used to infringe on students' privacy and safety. "CUNY, through its partnership with McGraw Hill Publishing, can use Proctorio to spy on students

and violate their rights to privacy," the petition says. "Proctorio is a direct and abhorrent violation of privacy at every conceivable level...Full and unrestricted access to personal data from students (computers, private physical rooms, and other means of identification/monitoring) is a despicable overreach by CUNY, and McGraw Hill. It is unacceptable that students must surrender their civil rights, especially while attending a public institution, to complete their education."

Students hope that all CUNY schools will involve student leaders in the search for alternatives to online proctoring and to notify the students that they are not required to accept the terms and conditions of any online proctoring software.

"The data privacy, student



Students worry new testing programs may infringe on privacy./ Edited by Humza Ahmad

liability, indemnification provisions, hardware compatibility, and cost considerations in question are quite complex and we are working as purposefully and thoughtfully as possible, fully understanding the sense of urgency involved," the CUNY Guidance on Academic Continuity to campuses reads.

Many students who signed the petition have left a comment on the webpage

voicing their opinion of CUNY's decision.

"Though I do not doubt the intentions of CUNY, this system has tremendous potential for abuse, not to mention the fact that this would disproportionately hurt neuroatypical students due to the eye-tracking feature," a student commented. "I strongly urge CUNY to reconsider their use of this technology."

## Stuent Activities Fee In Question

By Ian Ezinga  
*Business Manager*

At the end of last semester, Brooklyn College students saw a \$28.35 "waiver" in their CUNYfirst accounts which accounted for a partial refund of the Student Activities Fee (SAF). This semester, with club events and the majority of classes held virtually, it remains uncertain if students will be seeing a similar waiver.

"Student Activity Fees are about \$114 and go to different groups on campus that serve the students," Iqura Naheed, press director for the Undergraduate Student Government's executive cabinet, told the Vanguard.

With roughly 18,000 students enrolled, the fees generate a substantial amount of money well over a million dollars.

All of the groups that receive funding through this pool of cash are still operating in some capacity, even with the gates to campus shuttered to students.

"It is understood that not all students may use the

services that SAF provide, but a lot of students still do and that is why they are in place," said Naheed.

Vital services such as the health clinic and the food pantry are still operating remotely and are continuing to provide important resources to students in a city still weathering the effects of a pandemic.

So while certain essential services are locked in, there are some funds in flux, particularly the \$93,000 allocated to student clubs this semester. With no in-person events, which have served as the largest cost for clubs in the past, it remains a question as to how executive members of clubs will be spending their budgets.

"They have the opportunity to choose how to use their money to best support the BC community," Naheed said. "The guidelines around what they can do is up to the school. Everyone is learning together what can be done online, and clubs are finding creative ways to interact with their members including virtual meetings, online panels, giveaways,

and more."

However, the allocated funding for clubs is a relatively minor portion of the entire Student Activities Fees budget. The students at the helm of the undergraduate student government (USG) campaigned under a radical platform which sought to better organize the student body and extract concessions from the college's administration to better the conditions for students.

So while the end destination for much of the money is still to be determined, the USG president, Ethan Milich, and his cabinet want to eek out an equitable solution for Brooklyn College students. Naheed continued, "The executive office at USG has been working on finding ways to set up grants or charitable funds in hopes to financially support the student body... At each turn, we have found that we do not have the power to enact such measures. We are still hoping for a compromise with the administration to be reached within the next



The Food Pantry at Brooklyn College, which is funded by Student Activity Fees./ Brooklyn College Twitter/BklynCollege411

few weeks, where we can be allowed to spend the money in organizing and helping the student body have a successful semester."

Since the student services funded by the SAF will remain open, albeit virtually in most cases, it is not clear how much cash the cabinet would be able to pull together for their goals of alleviating students' financial stresses. The uncertainty about the outcome of future negotiations with the college's administration rests upon the elected student's commitment to changing the fundamental ways that funding is even

raised in the first place.

"We think that once the student body is sufficiently organized, it will have the tools to accomplish their demands, including tuition freezes and eventually free tuition altogether," concluded Naheed, who set out to make the case that the fight for helping students is only just beginning.

With the money in a sort of limbo and the administration seemingly set on a straightforward course of action, much is still to be learned about how the Student Activities Fees will come back to serving students.



# Koppelman Holds Webinar On Small Biz During Pandemic

By Gabriela Flores  
*Features Editor*

The pandemic has presented several financial hardships and uncertainties for small businesses, forcing owners to grapple with revenue losses and potential closure. On Tuesday, Brooklyn College’s Koppelman School of Business invited three experts to discuss the Covid-19 response and recovery for small businesses. Throughout the webinar, panelists analyzed racial inequity, bank and business relationships, and the flaws embedded in the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP), a business loan system enacted under the CARES act.

“Not only did it create a health crisis, it produced a severe economic shock,” said Darline Augustine, Associate Professor of Business Management at Koppelman.

During the early months of the pandemic, large PPP loans were granted to not-so-small businesses like Shake Shack, Potbelly, and Ruth’s Chris Steak House. Though the loan program was initially capped at \$350 billion, and available to all

businesses with 500 employees or less, the funds soon depleted significantly. So much so, the second rounds of loans called for an additional \$310 billion. The depletion in funding left many small businesses, like mom-and-pop shops, to receive little to no PPP funds in the CARES Act’s first round of loans. For communities of color, experiencing pre-existing conditions such as exposure to poorly performing banks, PPP funding was difficult to obtain.

“I’m sure many of you were experiencing and hearing that the conditions for small business owners were pretty grave. And that they were especially grave in communities of color, and immigrant communities,” said Claire Kramer-Mills, Assistant Vice President and Director of Community Development Analysis, Outreach & Education Program, Federal Reserve Bank of New York.

According to a study Kramer-Mills utilized in her research, 41 percent of small businesses were owned by people of color. From February to April, Black small businesses were shutting down

twice as fast than small businesses generally closed. Furthermore, Black business communities were exasperated with weaker banking relations. With underperforming banks who were unequipped to handle the surge of PPP loan applications, COVID-19 relief funds for Black businesses were limited.

“PPP did leave significant coverage gaps, those coverage gaps were particularly acute in places that had been hard hit by COVID-19. Many places in America that were hardest hit by COVID-19 in the early stages of the health crisis, were places that had higher densities of Black-owned businesses,” said Kramer-Mills.

To support minority small businesses, organizations like the Business Outreach Center (BOC) have provided aid to owners struggling to meet ends meet. Through their latest survey, BOC targeted a demographic of small businesses, finding that major areas of impact included revenue loss, workforce reduction, changes in operation, and permanent closures. For John Frias, the

organization’s Business Program Manager, the survey intended to understand the “qualitative concerns of small businesses.”

“Sure enough the top concern that they had is their personal financial security. They live off their business, if their business is sinking, they feel like they are sinking as well,” said Frias.

To further evaluate whether the PPP “hit the target” of appropriately allocating funds for small businesses in need, João Granja, Associate Professor of Accounting at the University of Chicago Booth School of Business, presented three dimensions of the issues. The first was figuring out if funds were flowing to areas with the most economic dislocation before the establishment of PPP. The second dimension was determining whether appointing banks to handle and deploy PPP loans was actually more convenient for small businesses. And lastly, Granja questioned whether PPP accomplished its purpose in promoting employment or developing mechanisms to help firms operate. Using new data on the distribution of

the first round of PPP loans and employment data, Granja found that the four top banks, including JPMorgan Chase, Bank of America, Wells Fargo, and Citibank, accounted for a total 36 percent of small business loans before the PPP policy. Meanwhile, during the first round of PPP, these banks severely underperformed and disbursed less than 3 percent of total loans.

“Regions with a larger footprint of underperforming banks are going to receive disproportionately smaller allocations of PPP funds,” said Granja. “It was not the case that areas with higher PPP actually did better after the program launched, but rather pre-existing conditions are related to the allocation of PPP funds.”

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought on a series of changes to our day-to-day lives, but most of all it has caused financial instability for small businesses. As the “new normal” continues, numerous small businesses will need to recover from their substantial revenue losses and looming shutdown to regain some stability.

THE VANGUARD

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CHECK US OUT ONLINE!

@THEBCVANGUARD ON SOCIAL MEDIA

# BC Prof Ngoc Cindy Pham Helps Her Students And Community During Pandemic

By Tsering Zangmo  
Staff Writer

During the COVID-19 pandemic, BC Business Professor Ngoc Cindy Pham has been a supportive force for her local Brooklyn and Vietnamese Asian communities, as well as her students. As a professor, Pham has been able to live her life's purpose in using teaching as a "power to change the lives of students and inspire them to be the best they can be," as she puts it. "When I was a kid I wanted to be super fast or super strong," she said. "I do it everyday as a professor."

Aside from her work in the classroom, Pham is a philanthropist, businesswoman, and Marketing Director of a New York Fashion Week show. She is well known by students as an educator who is passionate about every students' professional well-being.

Pham has been featured in the Brooklyn Public Library's Oral Histories Stories of COVID-19 and the Museum of Chinese in America project MOCA OneWorld COVID-19 Special Collection. As a leader during this health crisis, she started a GoFundMe for Brooklyn College's Class of 2020, which will pay for a delayed graduation celebration once they are able to come back to campus. She was recently



Ngoc Cindy Pham./Wall Street Journal

presented the Faculty of the Year Award, which is given to a faculty member in recognition of their outstanding teaching contributions and dedicated service to student success. Professor Pham has worked tirelessly, and her caring actions have extended beyond helping the students at Brooklyn College.

Pham offers support in all sorts of ways to members of her community and her students, including providing mental and emotional support for friends and students, as well as donating home-made dumplings for those struggling.

Pham proudly said she has used her time to learn more about

cooking, particularly her dumplings, which come from a recipe passed down through her Chinese lineage. Professor Pham is of Vietnamese and Chinese descent.

"[Vietnamese people are] very positive, optimistic, caring. We are very loving people. We love to share," she said. "My father always says we are from a small country. If you don't work hard, how will people look at you in your country? I ask myself how people will perceive me as Vietnamese. I have huge pride in my nationality."

Pham has indeed worked very hard during the COVID-19 pandemic, putting her educational power to

use. She has written for the Vietnamese National Newspaper about the situation in New York from her own perspective.

To stay productive in quarantine, she utilizes every moment of time.

"Do something to take an opportunity," she said. "Think of it as a way to get stronger. In life there are so many unfortunate events. Buddhist philosophy guides me to do better..."

Pham excitedly shared news for the future: she has been nominated to give a presentation on TED Talks.

"My dream project is to give a TED Talk. It is a scholarly place for millions of people. I feel my country and

my message will be heard more. I want to get involved in more politics, meet VIPs across the board," said Pham. "I want to bring more gender equality. As a female professor, I had to walk up two to three times more. I want to see more successful female students. Men and women are equal."

Through her selfless acts of kindness, Pham has demonstrated her deep-rooted connection with her students and ethnic communities. She has proven to be a resilient and proactive leader, willing to take on any challenge, including a pandemic.



# Involvement Fair Moves Online

By Gabriela Flores  
*Features Editor*

As most of Brooklyn College continues remotely, the Student Activities, Involvement, and Leadership Center (SAIL) hosted its very first Virtual Involvement Fair to give students and clubs a chance to interact with one another remotely. Though the event's turnout was lower than in previous years on campus, participating BC organizations and students managed to engage across their devices and adapt to the move online.

"In-person you can interact with students and actually know who you are speaking to. Online it was a bunch of screens, that's who you're speaking to," said Sheena Naser, President of BC's American Sign Language Club, "but it was very engaging, like a lot of people surprised me. They come and they were very interested in being involved."

Before the pandemic canceled the fair in-person, nearly all BC clubs would set up their tables to chat with students passing by. No student registration was needed to attend. But this year, participants had to register on Bulldog Connection to access the fair hosted on Zoom. 16 clubs joined the fair last Tuesday, September 8, with each having their own meeting room and a short description box introducing their organization to students scrolling by.

"We didn't get the

number of clubs we usually do on campus. Also, the aspect of just comradery that's associated with having the involvement fair where it's on campus and students interacting with one another presented sort-of a challenge," said Hamilton Raymond, Associate Director of SAIL. "But overall, with the feedback I received, it was phenomenal. Students are looking for us to set up another one for them."

Initially, many organizations expected low student turnout since accessing the digitized version of the fair required registration and more effort. With this in mind, many clubs prepared for this year's event differently than they normally would. Some had a PowerPoint presentation ready to go, while others improvised. For BC's Muslims Giving Back (MGB), preparation for this year's fair was "more scripted than in-person." When the fair was on-campus, MGB members could discuss their club with each student individually and share some candy or flyers from their booth.

Now online, one of the significant components in MGB's fair preparation was the promotion of their Zoom meeting room. To better their expected turnout, MGB board members collaborated with the college's Islamic Society, Muslim Women's Educational Initiative, and other club board executives. Together



Poster for SAIL'S "Virtual Involvement Fair." / BC Sail Center's Facebook

the organizations used their social media to encourage students to join each other's fair rooms.

"We do see a better turnout that way. It's easier to promote each other like that, and it's easier to reach out to more students," said Maryam Ahmad, Secretary of MGB.

Though student attendance was better than many anticipated, some aspects of the fair's former in-person experience could not be replicated online. The ability to spontaneously start small talks or face-to-face conversations with students based on their interests or features, such as their clothing, was no longer available over Zoom. Nonetheless, the Phi Sigma Chi Multicultural Fraternity was still able to carry their chapter's core principal of a lifelong brotherhood to those interested in joining. Through the Virtual Involvement Fair, the fraternity was

able to gain prospective members.

"We really take our pride in knowing who our people are. We take the time to actually cultivate groups together -- people who eventually cross into the fraternity together," said Mohammad "Big Brother Tonic" Tusar. "Where they are able to have a brotherhood at large, but a brotherhood at a minimal level too between each other and each person."

For some clubs, like the Asian and Asian American Film Organization (AAAF), the fair's move to online proved to be more convenient and useful in connecting them to the BC undergraduate community. As a film group that started last year in the Barry R. Feinstein Graduate School of Cinema, AAAFO's demographic was limited to the graduate student body. Through the Virtual Involvement Fair, members had the

opportunity to bridge the college's graduate and undergraduate populations, all while connecting students through their diverse cultural identity and interest in media.

"We had a couple of undergraduate Asian students coming in and showing up. And then by listening to them, being Asian in a community interested in Film, TV and Radio, at least they know of a sense of belonging they can confirm and acknowledge," said Kosaku Horiwaki, Vice President of AAAFO. "That's a strong feeling that I felt from them, so it's the feeling beyond that of our graduate school community."

The fair indicates the college's decision to move forward in the "new normal." As digitized events like the Virtual Involvement Fair continue at BC, the community will likely adapt to interacting virtually for as long as the pandemic remains.



# BC Contributes to Modern “Journal of a Plague Year”

By Chaya Gurkov  
Staff Writer

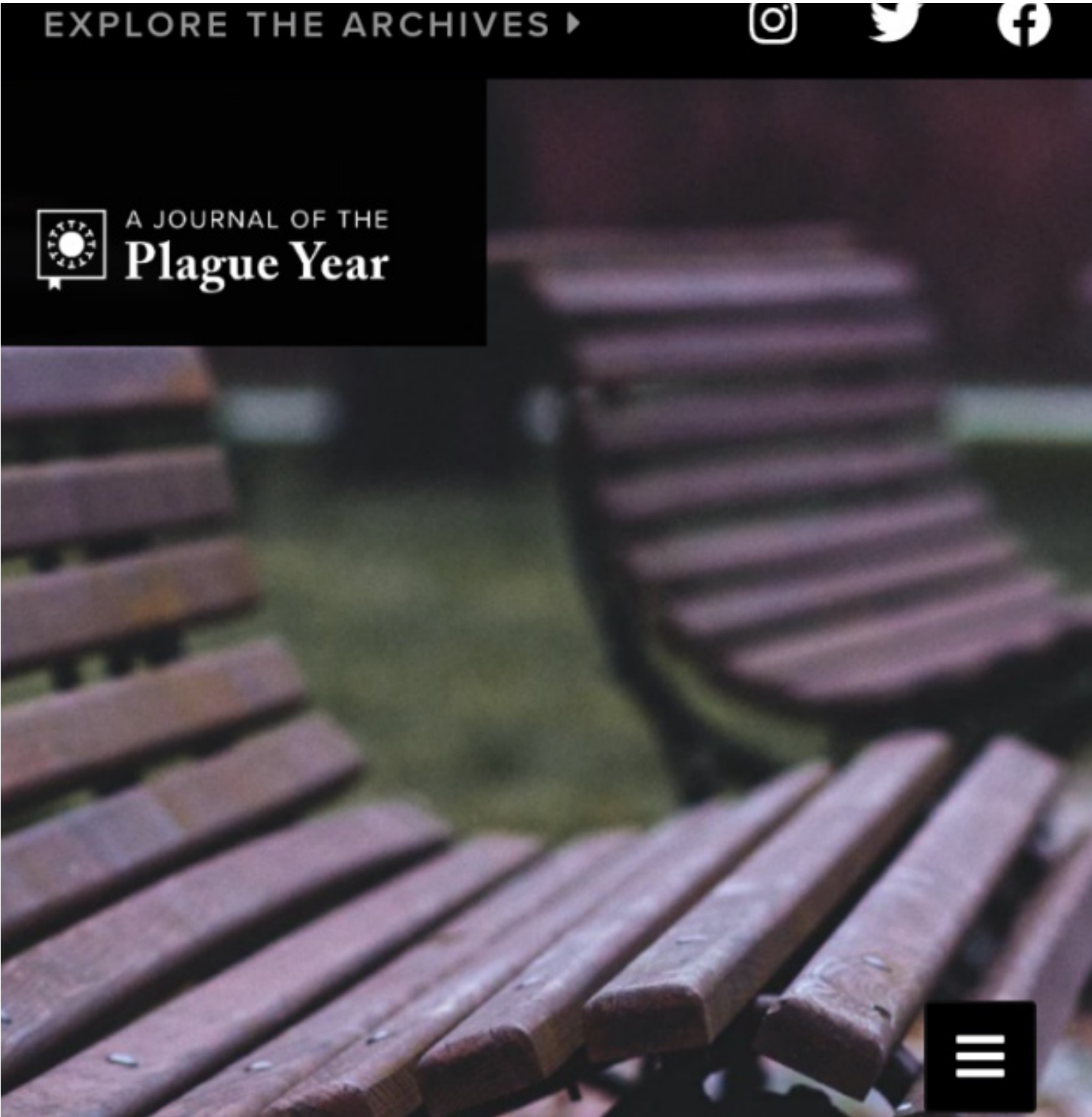
Back in August, Brooklyn College became the newest member to join A Journal of the Plague Year (JPY), an online submission initiative that aims to provide the community an opportunity to document their experience living alongside the coronavirus.

Named for Daniel Defoe’s 1722 novel, “A Journal of the Plague Year,” which chronicles the 1665 Great Plague of London, JPY is meant to be a collection of stories to record the time of Coronavirus.

When we look back at a time when the great COVID-19 pandemic of 2020 is merely a figment of the past, who’s going to tell the story? Who is going to relay the difficulties of isolation or the palpable fear and tension in the streets? Who’s going to document the endless Zoom meetings and the new routines we had to pick up? The JPY aims to answer those many questions.

In March, history professors at Arizona State University began the project, and as of now, it includes submissions from institutions in Australia and the Philippines to Canada and New Orleans.

“In a sense, this is kind of guerilla history,” Associate History Professor of ASU Mark Tebeau said. “We want stories from everyone: those who are not as digitally active, older folks who are at the greatest risk, communities of color which may be impacted differently than



The “Journal of the Plague Year” website, which is open to submissions./ [covid-19archive.org](https://covid-19archive.org)

others. The best archives are those which are most representative,” he said. The archive welcomes any form of a contribution to its site, whether its personal narratives and family stories, interviews, artwork, photos, or social media posts. The goal is to gather as much documentation of our lives during this pandemic as a record of how we face and continue to face an unprecedented time in modern American history. As of print release, five submissions are available on BC’s collection. One contribution, entitled Fighting for Equality

during a Pandemic, documents creator Jada Benjamin coming to grips with the fight for equality despite the ongoing pandemic. She writes underneath a video of an ongoing protest, “For the first time in months, I choose to get up and leave my little street, and join the people who were fighting for Black Lives.” Another submission comments on how the pandemic has brought light to the educational inequities in New York City public schools. While one video, carrying a more humorous tone, shows a Zoom meeting in which two dogs named

Mabel and Olive visit the screen. While sparse, the stories within the Brooklyn archive are unique to its curator, an advantage BC Associate Librarian Miriam Deutch and Director of Open Educational Resources (OER) see’s specific to Brooklyn students. “Because the Brooklyn College community is so diverse, we can give a voice to people from a wide range of racial, ethnic, socioeconomic, gender, religious and cultural backgrounds and create an inclusive archive,” she said. Deutch told the

Vanguard that they are looking to expand the archive, commenting that in the future, “historians will want to hear from everyone that has been impacted by the virus.” No story is too small, no submission too simple. Every person living through this time has a distinct perspective that will only add to the thousands of contributions already made, as Deutch pointed out, “We are all witnesses to history.”



# “Alienation Sogai” at the CUNY Asian American Film Festival

By John Schilling  
Arts Editor

Over the summer, CUNY’s Asian American/Asian Research Institute (AAARI) hosted the 17th Annual CUNY Asian American Film Festival featuring a variety of short films made by CUNY students. Among the featured filmmakers was Nobuhiro Futaki, a recent graduate of Brooklyn College and the director of *Alienation Sogai*.

*Alienation Sogai* tells the story of Kenji, a combat student in New York who receives a surprise phone call from his father in Japan. The film focuses on Kenji’s inability to connect with his father as he masks his true feelings over the phone call and deals with his own personal struggles.

The film stars Ken, who goes by first name only, as Kenji with Nathaniel Velez, George Eliseev, Myu Hayashi, and Sakarou making up the supporting cast. It also features original music by Yuriy Lehki, another alumnus of Brooklyn College.

After the film’s screening, Futaki joined the live streamed event to speak with CUNY AARI about



Ken as Kenji in Nobuhiro Futaki’s *Alienation Sogai*./Nobuhiro Futaki and CUNY AAARI

*Alienation Sogai*. Despite the film being completely fictional, Futaki applied some of his own real life situations when writing the screenplay.

“I was an international student who studied something in New York while experiencing many obstacles including [a] language barrier,” Futaki said. “I also share some of my psychology with the protagonist.”

For Futaki, this includes Kenji’s struggle to connect with his father, as well as a fear of both failure and the unknown.

“My actual father is not

like the father in the story, but it is kind of tough on me to express my honest feelings to my father for some reason,” Futaki revealed. “I don’t want to show my weaknesses to my family, but on the other hand, I have been scared of hearing some bad news about my family in Japan...[which] happens to my protagonist.”

Despite this internal conflict, Futaki praised New York City as an inspiration for filmmaking and cultural diversity.

“New York City is definitely inspiring for writing and filming

with many inspiring filmmakers and cinematic-looking locations,” Futaki shared. “Cultural diversity of the city helps me to see my background in the bigger picture and dig deeper into my psychology as Japanese while comparing it to psychology in other cultures.”

Psychology is a major factor for Futaki when it comes to character development in filmmaking, and this is something he wishes he explored more of in *Alienation Sogai*.

“If I had an opportunity to make another version of this film, I would focus more on the protagonist’s psychology,” Futaki shared. “Maybe employ a little abstract and experimental expressions to express his mentality.”

This is something Futaki plans to do in his next project: a film about a screenwriter.

“The next film will be another short narrative about a Japanese guy who wants to be a screenwriter in the United States and there is conflict between

the protagonist and his own character who is also a screenwriter in the story,” Futaki teased. “It’s a conflict between reality and ideal, and it’s also a conflict between his ego and self in psychology.”

Futaki revealed that it was the beginning of quarantine when he began writing the script for this next project. The Covid-19 pandemic, however, did not affect the production of *Alienation Sogai*.

“I don’t think Covid-19 affected my production a lot since I didn’t have anything to shoot at the time,” Futaki shared. “I was writing a short script for my next project, and I am a person who needs to go to a coffee shop to write something. So the closure of coffee shops has slowed down the writing process to a great degree, and I haven’t finished with the script yet.”

At the end of the film’s screening, *Alienation Sogai* was awarded “Runner-Up” in the Fiction Film category.



Nobuhiro Futaki./CUNY AAARI



# My Big Fat BC Experience: Joel Zwick Talks to Students

By Michela Arlia  
Staff Writer

On September 10, Michelle Hecht from the Brooklyn College Foundation along with other professors and faculty within the Theater department hosted a virtual discussion with director Joel Zwick. Famous for many sitcoms and box office hits, Zwick is also a member of the BC family.

Having graduated from Brooklyn College in 1962 with a B.A. in Television and Radio and with a Masters in 1968, Zwick is most famous for directing hit television shows such as *Mork & Mindy*, *Laverne & Shirley*, *Full House* and *K.C. Undercover* as well as the highest grossing romantic comedy of all time, *My Big Fat Greek Wedding*. He is also the benefactor of the annual Brooklyn College Theater Department Scholarship in Directing that bears his name.

The original event was supposed to take place on campus last semester but was cancelled due to the COVID-19 shutdown. For this semester, the event was rescheduled and made into a virtual discussion.

The event began with an introduction by Thomas Bullard, professor and head of the M.F.A. Directing program on campus, as well as a welcoming address by B.A. student, Nia Blizzard, who served as the moderator of all the questions for the event.

After serving in the entertainment industry for over 50 years, Zwick gave an address retelling childhood stories and the narrative of how his



Joel Zwick advising Brooklyn College students./ Michela Arlia

well known directing style came to be loved by all of Hollywood. Zwick, saying “never give up on possibilities,” focused on a recurring theme throughout the address -- never lose connections with people you meet, and take all opportunities presented to you.

“Take opportunities and run with them,” said Zwick on giving advice to a younger generation of avid theater makers.

To Zwick, connections are the most important thing to make in the entertainment industry, and those connections are the people you meet on a day-to-day basis. Reflecting on his own connections that got him to the position he stands in today, Zwick was able to encourage students in the forum to make connections and keep them, even in their early days as Brooklyn College students.

“There is no reflection on what your career was about until you have done

it,” says Zwick on looking back on his time in BC and his career.

Growing up in Sheepshead Bay, Brooklyn in what he calls “a spectacularly stupid period of time,” from a low income family, Zwick’s original intentions in college were to become a doctor and help support his family. This did not work out in his favor, as his grades were never at a standard high enough for medical school. After much shuffling around to different departments to figure out where he best belonged, Zwick found his place in the Television & Radio department, taking acting and vocal classes. At this point in his life, Zwick says “How does a kid like me who has a little bit of talent make connections?”

From there, he did make his connections and developed his opinion on the three pillars to excel in the industry, which he graciously shared with his viewers.

The first pillar is

understanding the craft which Zwick says is “necessary,” always evolving, and should never be second guessed.

The second pillar is making social connections. “It is more valuable to have people think you are a success than a failure,” says Zwick. This pillar is very important to bring people with you on each new project who you know and can trust.

The third and final pillar is to understand the political nature of the business. Zwick said that because the entertainment industry is no longer a craft, “the dollar is gold,” and “speed is money,” so it is important to understand the inner workings of the business.

Following Zwick’s address, B.A. student Nia Blizzard, moderated a question and answer session with him. He commented saying it was time for him to leave the scene and make room for

“fresh faces.” Zwick’s best piece of advice following most of his questions was “If you don’t like laughing and having fun, don’t direct comedy.”

Another question posed by Michael Hairston, technical director for audio and lighting at BC read, “What were the challenges you faced learning to direct differently between theater, TV, and film?”

In response, Zwick’s advice was that learning how to talk to actors was key for any medium, whether it was television, film, or theater. According to Zwick, keeping actors happy and allowing them to feel respected was the greatest challenge.

Concluding the event, Zwick left his viewers with a piece of advice.

“Take opportunities,” said Zwick. “Don’t turn them down thinking something better will come along. Get into the opportunity and work hard.”



# NYC's Whitney Museum Reopens, But Draws Controversy

By Stacy Fisch  
Staff Writer

Summer has almost come to an end, and you won't be able to walk in Prospect Park or ride your bike down Ocean Parkway to visit Brighton Beach anymore. Remember when it was cold, and the only free place to stretch your legs was a mall or museum?

Well, good news came after Governor Andrew Cuomo approved the reopening of museums in NYC beginning on Aug. 24. Among these museums was the Whitney Museum of American Art, which opened on Sept. 3 with a few exhibits extended until Jan. 31 due to the quarantine.

"Great news! All exhibitions that were on view when we closed have been extended," the Whitney Museum tweeted on Aug. 19. "You'll have the chance to visit (or revisit) each of them when we reopen on Sept. 3."

However, despite the positivity of reopening, the Whitney Museum quickly drew ire with a new exhibit centered around Black Lives Matter and COVID-19.

But keep in mind there are new visitor policies. Visitors should be prepared for the new reality. Tickets must be purchased in advance to maintain social distancing and avoid overcrowding and could likely sell out fast due to limited capacity.

While visiting, there is a face covering mandate -- everyone must abide by this rule or be dismissed from the museum. As

stated on the Whitney Museum's website, "The Museum reserves the right to remove any person acting in an unacceptable or inappropriate manner."

The Whitney Museum of American Art has extended muralist exhibits "Vida Americana: Mexican Muralists Remake American Art, 1925-1945" with Frida Kahlo and her husband Diego Rivera, through January 31. This exhibition conveys the influences on the Mexican muralists had on their counterparts in the United States and builds narratives about American history. The artists utilize their art to comment on economic, social, and racial injustices.

American art is a significant piece of our history; it expresses revolutions, triumphs, social and racial injustices. As of now, America is going through chaos with racism scrutinizing people of color. Protests across the country have fought for change through the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement.

Directors of the museum, Adam D. Weinberg and Alice Pratt Brown, expressed their opinion of BLM in a letter.

"Devastating racism and inequity are all too prevalent across the United States," they wrote in a statement. "As a museum of American art, we have sought to make visible and condemn, through the voices of the artists and art we present, the injustice, systemic



Whitney Museum will reopen September 3rd./ Whitney Museum of American Art website

racism, and violence aimed at people of color in our country."

The Whitney Team is trying hard to re-examine any paintings that they feel might be racist or go against BLM. They will also make sure there is enough art that expresses positive political movements with people of color.

"We have increased the racial diversity of our collection, exhibitions, performances, educational programs, audiences, and staff. But we must go further and do more still," the statement continued. Ironically, however, this is where things got messy.

The museum put itself in hot water, after purchasing discounted BLM artwork for their new exhibit unique from the others called "Collective Actions," a

response to the BLM movement and COVID-19. The exhibition opening was originally planned for this Thursday, Sept. 17, but it was officially canceled due to this misstep.

Outcries reached Twitter when a BLM photographer, Gioncarlo Valentine, received an email from curator Farris Wahbeh thanking Valentine for his inspirational artwork that was purchased at a fundraising organization. In the email, Wahbeh asked Valentine for his biographical information to cite the painting that was to be placed in "Collective Actions." However, Valentine and his peers were not having it. They wanted permission for paintings to be displayed as well as compensation. Instead the exhibition

was canceled.

"I'm speechless," wrote Valentine, in a tweet. "People DREAM of having their work shown in the Whitney, and y'all out here trying to grab the s--t on sale? Like the tear gas s--t wasn't tarnished enough? @whitneymuseum F---ing unbearable."

"My sincere hope in collecting them was to build on a historical record of how artists directly engage the important issues of their time," Wahbeh wrote in his apology email to all artists. "I sincerely want to extend my apologies for any pain that the exhibition has caused."

So, if you plan on a change of scenery and a visit, this is what to expect.



# Online Schooling’s Other Options

By Michael Castaneda  
*Columnist*

News to no one is that Brooklyn College is online for the Fall 2020 semester due COVID-19. Yeah, so was Spring 2020, but we didn’t know that coming into it. This time we do. Now going totally online probably wasn’t the worst idea considering that as of September 3rd, there were 51,000+ COVID-19 cases in 1,020+ colleges, according to a New York Times survey.

If we are going to be learning remotely anyway, we must remember that we have more options than an online version of a brick and mortar institution. There have been online institutions offering coursework for years now, with online curriculums designed for virtual learners. Compare that with Brooklyn College, which seems to be making it up as they go along. So what should we do?

In his book, Feynman’s Tips on Physics, Richard Feynman writes: “This is a matter of fact, the way you start on any complicated or unfamiliar problem: You first get a rough idea; then you go back when you understand it better and do it more carefully.” So with that in mind, let’s see how a few of these online offerings compare with our Harvard of Flatbush.

Some of the more famous online learning institutions are Coursera, M.I.T. OpenCourseWare

(OCW), Skillshare, Udacity, and Udemy. These places are known as MOOCs, which stands for “massive open online courses.” MOOCs are a relatively recent phenomenon. It started when Stanford University opened up some of its most popular computer science courses online in the summer 2011. The year 2012 was proclaimed the year of the MOOC by the New York Times. Some of those Stanford professors would start for-profit MOOCs with venture capital. Sebastian Thrun started Udacity and Andrew Ng and Daphne Keller started Coursera.

Many of you are probably familiar with M.I.T. OCW, if only to supplement our own Brooklyn College lectures. Most colleges have a thing called “recitation,” where there is an opportunity to ask a teaching assistant questions and there are further explanations of the lecture material. It’s not like recitations don’t exist here at BC, but they seem to be far and few between. Most students I have met are using YouTube channels to break down course material and not all professors appreciate that.

If you are using a MOOC in some way already, why pay for Brooklyn College tuition and why take four years to complete it? Why not take that a step further and do your semester or even your major with M.I.T. OCW? As John Mulaney put it: “I paid someone \$120,000

to tell me to read Jane Austin, then I didn’t.” Brooklyn College isn’t quite that expensive but you get the point.

Scott H. Young conducted what he referred to as “the M.I.T. Challenge,” in which he completed the entire four year M.I.T. Computer Science curriculum in 12 months and for none of the cost. He vlogged the entire process on YouTube. Scott was successful and detailed exactly how to do it.

M.I.T. OCW offers more than computer science, including music, theatre, political science, and women’s and gender studies.

Of course, we don’t all have the resources of Scott H. Young to rent a big apartment for a year in Vancouver, quit our jobs, and just focus on video courses while doing all the homework. Some of us, you know, have lives and responsibilities. Computer science might not be the greatest example either, as it is a career in which people can get jobs so long as they demonstrate that they can do the work, unlike working as a teacher with the New York City Board of Education, where there is a long list of milestones needed to be fully incorporated into the system.

Over the summer, I had the opportunity to take a Udacity course. This one is different from OCW because it is designed to help the student along the process of self learning.

There were supposed to be mentors and help channels to get you through the rough patches. They offer free courses but they also offer nano-degree courses that give you a certificate stating you passed. The nano-degree courses prices are on par with CUNY pricing.

They try to put up a veneer that this is a serious course by making you take a prerequisite test. I took a math exam that stretched over material from Calc 2, linear algebra, and abstract algebra. I was certain I failed this test, but was told that I had one of the highest scores of the set people taking the test at the same time. I have my doubts on their integrity and I think, like any business, they just wanted to get paid.

They gave a sweet intro, stating how safe and forward thinking their approach is. I was excited. I logged on to the course and there were more links that I could count to, which signified the duration of the course. The course content was presented by short YouTube videos and Wiki pages. Sometimes the YouTube instructor spoke so fast that I had to listen to it several times to get the content of a less than two minute video.

Once I got into the meat of the course, it became impossible. I would have needed a few perquisites to understand what they were teaching. So much of the content was predicated on previous

knowledge that I have never touched. I found myself scouring the internet, looking to fill in the missing pieces. I tried to read a chapter of a textbook to try to bolster the flimsiest definitions of concepts presented by Udacity. I couldn’t get a hold of a mentor and no one ever answered my plea for help on the chat lines. It felt like the courses were designed for people who already knew the material and not for a person seeing the material for the first time. In the end, I never finished it.

For the same money, I really do appreciate Brooklyn College for the simplest reasons. They assign a textbook, there are physical instructors, and departments. There is a support system and other students taking the class at the time that you can leverage. Actual deadlines such as class schedules and test dates motivate learning as well.

I think in-person classes are far superior than remote learning, but if you are going to be paying hard cash, our little college just might work.





# Online Schooling As A Lifelong Homeschooler

By Maya Schubert  
News Editor

While most agree that online learning is the only way to return to school safely this semester, few are excited about it. Many dread a repeat of last semester: a haze of information in the form of never-ending zoom meetings and evasive Blackboard links — perhaps overshadowed completely by personal struggles, physical and emotional.

At the very least, students this fall fear a lack of motivation. It seems to come with the ability to simply sit up in bed and grab a technological device to receive a college education. This past March, I found myself in a familiar position. Not only had I returned home (with campus closed, I had no reason to stay in Brooklyn and returned to my parents' upstate house,) I was schooling from home. Again.

My mother homeschooled me from Kindergarten through my junior year of high school. In middle school and high school, I took English and Math classes online. So, as most of my friends groused about lack of motivation for the rest of the spring semester, I found myself—literally—at home. I had known how to use the chat function, mute my microphone, and navigate Blackboard for years. I knew how to budget online homework and wake

up “on time,” when there was nowhere to go. I even knew how to stay in the house all day without going crazy. I wasn't particularly happy about being thrust into the position I had left years ago, but I still tried. I knew there was worth in it.

I probably first discovered that worth after I entered college. Over my homeschooling years, I faced stereotyping from adults and kids alike that quickly left me with a suspicion of my own intelligence.

“How exactly does it work?” an adult would ask, beaming down at me with concern. “I mean, how do you learn?”

“You must be stupid,” a kid once said to me, after I told her I was homeschooled. (We later became friends, and she remains a close friend to this day.)

I liked to think that I was smart, but there was only so much evidence I could scrounge up. Most of the grading was done by my mom, who said I was smart, but could be just flattering me. Sure, my mother made detailed quarterly reports to our school district, and I took state testing at the end of every year. But the testing results, which Mom always presented to me proudly, were always strange graphs and irregular numbers, not A's or 100s. When I started online English classes, I was annoyed to find that I would not be graded a letter, but a number from one to



Maya Schubert being homeschooled in kindergarden./Maya Schubert

four. I always received a four, but three was failing, so what did that mean?

It was only when I started college that my doubts began to recede. They were tempered by receiving grades—definitive grades, letters, and numbers scrawled in red ink—from people I barely knew. I relished my grades, even the bad ones. To this day, I have every graded college paper and project stuffed into a folder under my bed. They are proof, not of my faultless intelligence, but of my education's legitimacy. I have thrived in some

subjects. I have pursued the same passions I had as a homeschooler and succeeded. I have found new interests and explored them.

I don't mean to glorify grades. I only want to say that I received everything I needed from my early education.

There are so many parts of campus life that I will miss this semester, and I'm not overjoyed to return to a method of education I thought I left years ago. I know, however, that I can learn, and that I will learn. I may zone out sometimes during zoom

meetings. I may wander around my apartment between classes because I'm tired of sitting in my room. My computer will overheat, I will undoubtedly lose Wi-Fi a few times. I will, nevertheless, learn. There are worlds to be explored in books and videos, and even in a professor's droning voice behind a computer screen.

It is possible to learn from home, from a room, from anywhere. All that is really needed is the desire to learn, which is hopefully why most people are in college anyway.



# The Closure of the Residence Hall Is A Win, But Students Still Need Safe Housing

By Chris Omar, Corrine Greene, & Zainab Iqbal  
*Guest Contributors*

The Residence Hall at Brooklyn College (RHBC) has finally shut down. Students have been sounding the alarm on the conditions of the dorms for years. Make no mistake: we won.

Two of us lived at 1 Kenilworth Place ourselves and experienced the hostile environment, outrageous cost, mold, and lack of promised Residence Assistant support. And one of us wrote about it all. Together, we collaborated and created a short award-winning documentary film telling the story of a young woman named Christine DeLisser, who was sexually harassed not once, but twice by an employee at RHBC and the school's administration told her they couldn't do anything. She encountered endless bureaucracy when she simply needed an advocate—like so many other students on this campus who run into hurdles when they just need a map with the path forward. In a span of two—yes two—years, we exposed rampant sexual harassment in the building that had gone unanswered for years, a result of unwillingness to act and a reality of the dangerous public/private partnership dynamic that precluded the building from important Title IX accountability. And now, regardless of the reason provided for the closing, RHBC has shut down for good.

We, the students, held the college administration accountable. Some can say it was a David vs Goliath type win against a foreign

multi-million dollar corporation by three BC students in a group chat that continues to this day. We forced action where there otherwise would have been none, resulting in the locked doors at 1 Kenilworth Place, and cessation of the contract previously held between CUNY Brooklyn College and the New Brooklyn Development company.

While this is great news, now is the time to reflect, learn, and most importantly: do better. It shouldn't take private political pressure, rallies, years of failed student government leadership, FOIL requests, media involvement, and an unknown amount of survivors for CUNY and campus administration to do the right thing for Brooklyn College's students. This win is part of the long legacy of the students of this university taking claim to the notion that CUNY, as an institution, exists to serve those that it was built to educate. Like many before us, we tried to work "within the system" of Brooklyn College's established bureaucracy, reaching out to those with titles and salaries that indicate they'd been hired or elected to serve students. The same answer always met us like a brick wall: "Our hands are tied."

The bureaucracy of Brooklyn College doesn't serve those who make it run, and leadership doesn't align with position or title. Why did we have to FOIL to get a copy of the infamous contract they always referred to as being their biggest boundary to obtaining justice? Why was the student government unable to get results for constituents living in

housing advertised on their campus? As Chris' documentary, "You Found A Home" highlights, even when it came to direct survivor support, the campus administration did not act without significant pressure, an indication that student housing security was not their concern.

We've now graduated and new student leadership is in place. In the middle of a pandemic, how do we make student housing a priority in time for the eventual return of students to our beautiful campus—a place we value now more than ever? How does the university and campus administration protect the diversity it so prominently celebrates? How does a college president with a legacy in championing survivors of sexual assault in her legal career live up to that reputation in her current role? There's a void now that there are no dorms available for students—a void that needs to be filled right away. It is vital that the campus leadership finally steps up and rights the wrongs committed during the era of their exploitative contract with RHBC. There are steps to be taken to turn this arguably tragic failure into something for CUNY and Brooklyn College to be proud of.

What if CUNY acquired RHBC? What if elected officials pulled together some money? What if the money that is allocated for President Anderson's, as well as all of the other CUNY presidents' housing, was used to acquire the building? Now that would be a huge win for the community, wouldn't it?

We propose the following measures to support

students seeking housing: Reinstatement of a full-time housing coordinator to assist current and prospective BC students in finding a place to live and people to live with near campus.

In the absence of any CUNY-affiliated student housing in Brooklyn, we call on CUNY to reach out to aggressively source capital funding to develop CUNY-run student housing in Brooklyn. We propose, as has been raised to the CUNY Chancellor and CUNY University Student Senate in the past, that CUNY build a centrally located dorm to serve the students of Medgar Evers College, New York City College of Technology, Kingsborough Community College, and Brooklyn College.

Finally, we call for Financial aid reform that considers the needs of students utilizing scholarships and lo to pay for housing costs: specifically, disbursement dates must align with housing payments during the school year.

We also call for a better representation of womxn & the full scope of campus diversity in campus governance. Further, there needs to be a (well) functioning Title IX office on the Brooklyn College campus. We also call on Student Government and the University Student Senate to step up Title IX and housing support advocacy for their constituents. While in large part a commuter school, this university is (proudly) composed of students from across the state, country-- and the world. Every stakeholder of the campus community can appreciate the need for housing conducive to

study and work after this pandemic, so let's support our students now.

Is CUNY about selling poor students out to enrich foreign millionaires at the risk of their health and safety? Will CUNY live up to its ideals of being the "greatest urban university in the world," or will it continue to seek to privatize its essential services and shut the door to those who don't have the good fortune to have a safe home environment within commuting distance & an ability to commute to campus with ease?

The closure of RHBC is a victory in that it stopped the bleeding; the simple reality is that not every student is equipped with safe housing or financial support to acquire it in a traditional apartment setting, within commuting distance of the borough of Brooklyn. Now, CUNY and campus administration must step up and heal this gaping wound. It is vital to the future health of this valuable institution.

So leaders, what's it going to be? Your hands are no longer tied. Let's take the lessons learned and turn them into action in time to make sure CUNY really is a welcoming home for all—before it's too late.

*Zainab Iqbal ('19) is the former Editor-in-Chief of the Excelsior newspaper, Chris Omar ('20) is the Director & Producer of the documentary "You Found A Home," and Corrinne Greene ('20) is a Public Education advocate & former Brooklyn College club president.*



# New Sun Rising: Legend Stave Nash Nabs Nets HC Job

By Conrad Hoyt  
*Sports Editor*

After short search for a replacement, Steve Nash was announced as Head Coach of the Brooklyn Nets on Sept. 3.

Nash, an eighteen-year NBA veteran, eight-time All-Star, two-time recipient of the NBA's Most Valuable Player award and Hall of Famer, is known for his keen basketball mind, silky-smooth jump shot, and leadership qualities.

After retiring from the league in 2015, Nash largely took a back seat from the limelight. In addition to infrequently commenting on soccer matches (both domestic and abroad), he took on a part-time consulting position with the Golden State Warriors.

As most of us sports junkies know, 2015 was the Warriors first title this millennium, and Warriors star Steph Curry has been compared to Nash in his ball-handling ability, shot, and leadership intangibles

(though most agree Curry has already eclipsed Nash).

However it was a year later when Nash oversaw perhaps the biggest change in his future. Kevin Durant decided to join the Golden State Warriors, and for the next three years, a bond between Nash and Durant was formed.

This, clearly, had an impact on the Nets' decision to hire Nash as the team's next head coach. With a healthy Kevin Durant and Kyrie Irving next season, presumably partnered with rising youngster Caris Levert and good friend of the aforementioned duo DeAndre Jordan, expectations will be high for the team hailing from the most populous New York borough next season.

So why then, did Sean Marks, a man who has shown his ability to be among the best GM's in basketball in the culture he set in Brooklyn and rebuild he oversaw, hire Steve Nash, a man of no NBA coaching experience?

Because superstars run the NBA, and in many senses, they always have. Marks needed a coach that, the moment he steps into the building everyday, commands the respect of his star duo, especially concerning the enigmatic nature of Irving and to a lesser extent, Durant.

On sharpshooter (I'm sensing a trend here) J.J. Reddick's "The Old Man and the Three" podcast last week, Durant commented on the Nash hire.

"Every time I'm in the gym with him, I was always like a sponge," said Durant.

"I'm looking forward to this man. I always feel like I'm a student of the game. Somebody who has experienced so much and played in different eras, I'm looking forward to him teaching me some more things about it as well."

Sean Marks made a high profile pick with the Nash hire to a four-year deal. It's not the mecca of New York, but Brooklyn isn't Indiana. Expectations will be sky



Steve Nash playing in 2013. / Simple Wikipedia

high for this group next season.

When Nash was hired, a side story of the move was people noting that this hire was an example of white privilege. "What black retired NBA star would get a four-year deal right off the bat with no experience?" pundits pondered.

The NBA, a league made up of roughly 80% Black players, has only five Black head coaches. So even if one argues that Nash's relationship with Durant and overall basketball acumen made him the right move for the Nets, the hiring still opened up a conversation about equality in the league and more savvy Black men (and women) deserving a fair shot.

Whatever the case, New York and the world alike will be giddy in anticipation to see how Nash, Durant and co. will do.

# Who The Knicks Can Take With The 8th Pick

By Elijah Hamilton  
*Staff Writer*

After an abysmal shortened season, the New York Knicks are again drafting in the lottery, hoping to find another cornerstone player to turn their fortune around.

And though the Knicks have dropped to the number eight pick, failing to get in the top three, there's still plenty of valuable prospects in this year's draft that the Knicks can fit alongside R.J Barrett and Mitchell Robinson.

One of the players on many mock draft boards for the Knicks is Auburn forward, Issac Okoro. The 6'6" freshman was outstanding during his

time at Auburn, Averaging 12.6 to go along with 4.4 rebounds and two ast.

He is a versatile wing where some of the main strength is exceptionally high I.Q, nack to get the rim, and explosiveness driving into the paint. He is a player who can defend wings and even some small-ball power forward. Though he has many upsides, Okoro struggles with shooting from 3, averaging 28 percent from deep.

One of the many significant needs on this Knicks roster that can be filled in this draft is the guard position. One player who can fill that need is Iowa State Point Guard, Tyrese Haliburton. Halliburton, who played

two years at Iowa, is 6'5" and, at times, has drawn comparisons to Lonzo Ball due to his length and defensive capability.

He is a solid playmaker averaging 6.5 assists, and a pest on defense with 2.5 steals a game. Like Okoro, Haliburton is still a work in progress as he needs to improve at shooting from 3-point territory. Snagging Haliburton at number would be beneficial for R.J Barrett as it will allow him to play off the ball.

Another option for the Knicks is trading up into the top 3. The Knicks have enough assets and moveable contracts to make a trade to get up to LeMelo Ball. Melo, who played overseas, showed



Isaac Okoro, American Basketball player for the Auburn Tigers. / Getty Images

a glimpse of greatness while playing for the team in Istanbul. Unlike his brother Lonzo Ball, The 6'8" point guard's biggest strength is his shooting ability during his time he was able to shoot off to dribble, while also being really good from downtown. Ball is an all-star and is someone who can come in and become a franchise player for the Knicks day one.

Though the NBA Draft has moved up from the start date from Oct. 16 to as late as Nov. 18, it's still something many hoops fans look forward to.



# NFL Week 1: Bills Win, Jets & Giants Can't Get Off Ground

By Jose Rohdin  
*Staff Writer*

New York Football is back. With the coronavirus canceling the preseason, we had not seen New York NFL football since January 4th, 2020, when the Bills lost to the Texans in overtime in the wildcard game.

With no preseason, the first few weeks of football have the potential to be rocky, but there is hope among fans that some of the New York teams will have decent seasons.

The Buffalo Bills are a team that could make a huge jump this season, having already made the playoffs as a wildcard team last year. Josh Allen is not the most accurate thrower of the ball at times, but has shown an ability to throw deep passes, and he is most deadly with his legs.

He showed that week one against the Jets, rushing for 57 yards and a touchdown. However, even with John Brown and Devin Singletary, the offense still needed top tier weapons. The Bills traded for Stefon Diggs, who made a big week one impact. Diggs had 8 receptions for 86 yards and opened up the field for Brown to have a big game with 6 receptions, 70 yards, and a touchdown in the Bills defeat of the Jets 27-17.

Sean McDermott is also a coach who has improved the team every year he's been in charge. His focal point has

been defense, and the Bills defense has been one of the best in the league. With players like Tre'Davious White and Micah Hyde in the secondary, it is hard for any team to complete passes.

With Tom Brady leaving the New England Patriots, this seems to have made the division a little more open. This could be the perfect opportunity for the Bills to get their first division title since 1995.

The Jets had hope in the offseason, similar to the Bills, to fill the power vacuum, but that dream quickly faded.

The Jets started week one against the Bills and pretty much looked hopeless in the first half. Their defense could not do anything, and Sam Darnold struggled having a 19.3 QBR. Jamison Crowder seemed to be the only offensive weapon the Jets had, which isn't a good thing.

Le'Veon Bell picked up an injury that looks like he might be out a few weeks, which now puts timelord, Frank Gore, as the lead back, which makes things worse on offense.

The defense looked terrible, and you can tell that trading away Jamal Adams was a mistake. He pretty much was the defense last season, and with him not there, the Jets' defensive issues were compounded. Along with that, C.J. Mosley choosing to sit out (which makes perfect sense) is the



(Left to right) Josh Allen, Sam Darnold, Daniel Jones./ Photo edited by Humza Ahmad

only proven playmaker of this defense.

All in all, it does not look like the Jets will have a very fruitful season.

However, the other MetLife Stadium team, the New York Giants, seemed to be on a different path, with first-time head coach Joe Judge and a young roster. But they still found themselves 0-1 after a week one loss to the Pittsburgh Steelers.

The offense, led by the second year starting quarterback Daniel Jones, is filled with talent. Saquon Barkley, Sterling Shepard, and Darius Slayton had great games receiving the ball, catching 6 passes each.

Slayton put up the best numbers with 106 yards and catching Jones' 2 touchdown passes. However, the offensive line once again seems to be the achilles heel of the team. Jones was always under pressure, leading to inaccurate passes and one interception (the one to T.J. Watt was Jones' fault). However, the biggest issue was not getting running lanes for Barkley, who had a horrible night of 15 rushes and only 6 yards.

But the defense was able to hold its own throughout the game. Surprisingly, the defensive line was able to get a lot of pressure on Ben Roethlisberger, having 3 sacks and 21 pressures. But Roethlisberger still managed 3 touchdown passes, and Benny Snell Jr. gained 113 yards rushing.

With free-agent signings such as Blake Martinez, Logan Ryan, and James Bradberry, Giants fans had hoped the defense would play better, and they did, but only because last year's defense was horrible.

The Giants still have the right man in charge with Judge, but Offensive Coordinator Jason Garrett's play calling on offense was not exciting. On the other hand, the Giants are a young team building for the future and don't expect to see many wins, just progress, and only go up.

## Vinny The Goat by Mo Muhsin and Gabrielle Toro Vivoni

