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Photo Edited by John Schilling

USG Considers Legal Action Against CUNY Pending BOT Decision On Refunds

By Matt Hirsch & Gabriela Flores
News Editor & Editor-In-Chief

After receiving pushback for its non-vaccination withdrawal policy, CUNY is considering refunding non-vaccinated students enrolled in hybrid or in-person classes who were withdrawn after Oct. 8. While the final call is pending approval from the Board of Trustees (BOT), the university’s governing body, Brooklyn College’s Undergraduate Student Government (USG) is planning to possibly sue CUNY for their withdrawal policy on behalf of students.

“The point is to show, ‘Hey, look, yes, we’re students. Some of you might think we’re incompetent, but we’ll see you in court,’” USG Co-President Aharon Grama told The Vanguard, noting that the funds USG will use come from student activity fees.

At the semester’s start, students enrolled in hybrid or in-person classes were required to get vaccinated before entering campus if they did not have an approved religious or medical exemption. The mandate extended to remote-only students who wanted to go on campus at any point during the semester on Sept. 3. Students who did not upload their vaccine verification on CUNYFirst by Sept. 23 were initially facing withdrawal with no



refund by CUNY. Many students university-wide, including USG and BC’s Graduate Student Organization, advocated against CUNY’s lack of clarity on withdrawal guidelines and sudden mandate changes. Before the announcement of potential refunds, USG members had decided to propose a resolution to the Brooklyn College Association (BCA) requesting \$1,000 for legal consultation to possibly sue CUNY for their call to withdraw non-vaccinated students.

USG Secretary Emmanuel Valdez was the first to propose the idea of pursuing legal action against CUNY after questioning administrators on why

faculty and staff were not mandated to receive vaccination. Cabinet members collectively agreed with Valdez and thought a lawsuit could pressure the university to take their calls against withdrawals more seriously. In a meeting with BCA last Wednesday, Oct. 13 about passing USG’s resolution, Grama and his colleagues received support from both students and faculty alike. While the BOT’s approval of withdrawal remains pending, USG members will consult with senate members to gather more opinions on how to go about pursuing legal action. If the university decides to finalize giving back out-of-pocket payments to withdrawn students,

however, USG’s initial plan to file an injunction may change. “There’s no reason to go to a prolonged war with the administration if it’s not needed,” said Grama. Though Grama thinks the refund effort is reasonable and an indication of CUNY acknowledging their concerns, he and his colleagues will attempt to continue their calls for no withdrawals due to non-vaccination. “I’m not saying that’s the best way to approach dropping students and changing the eligibility in the middle of the semester, but better than nothing, right? At least they’re doing the right thing,” Grama said, “at least giving them [withdrawn students] back the money.”

GENERAL INQUIRIES
THEBCVANGUARD@GMAIL.COM

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
GABRIELA FLORES
23FLORESG@GMAIL.COM

MANAGING EDITOR
JOHN SCHILLING
JOHNJSCHILLINGIII@GMAIL.COM

BUSINESS MANAGER
FAWAAD FAROOQ
FAWAADFAROOQ27@GMAIL.COM

LAYOUT EDITOR
ANAKIN JACKSON
ANAKINJACKSONM@GMAIL.COM

DIGITAL EDITOR
EMMAD KASHMIRI
EMMADK01@GMAIL.COM

PHOTO EDITOR
DYLAN KAUFMAN
DYLANANDREWKAUFMAN@GMAIL.COM

SOCIAL MEDIA MANAGER
MUHAMMED MUHSIN
MUHAMMEDMUSTAFAMUHSIN@GMAIL.COM

SECTION EDITORS
NEWS: MATTHEW HIRSCH
MATTHEW.HIRSCH96@GMAIL.COM

FEATURES: SERIN SARSOOR
SERIN.SARSOOR@BCMAIL.CUNY.EDU

ARTS: MICHELA ARLIA
MICHELACA24@GMAIL.COM

OPINIONS: IAN EZINGA
IANEZINGA@GMAIL.COM

SPORTS: OWEN RUSSELL
OWENNRUSSELL@GMAIL.COM

CARTOONISTS
MUHAMMED MUHSIN
GABRIELLE TORO VIVONI

STAFF WRITERS
JOHAN S. ABDU
SAMIA AFSAR
RADWAN FARRAJ
ILIANA CALDERON
CHAYA GURKOV
ELIJAH HAMILTON
ALIYAH JACOBSON
SAMUEL KELLEHER
FARAIBE KHAN
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JAKE OKULA
CAILAH PARKER
SAMMY QUARRATO
JORDAN RAMOS
STEPHANIE JIMENEZ REYES
SYDNEY RODRIGUEZ
STAVROULA STATHOPOULOS
BILLY WOOD
ALEXANDRIA WOOLFE
MARY ZAKHAROVA

PHOTOGRAPHERS
KELSEY LOPEZ

FACULTY ADVISOR
ANTHONY MANCINI

Suspect Arrested in Local Yeshivah Fire

By John Schilling
Managing Editor

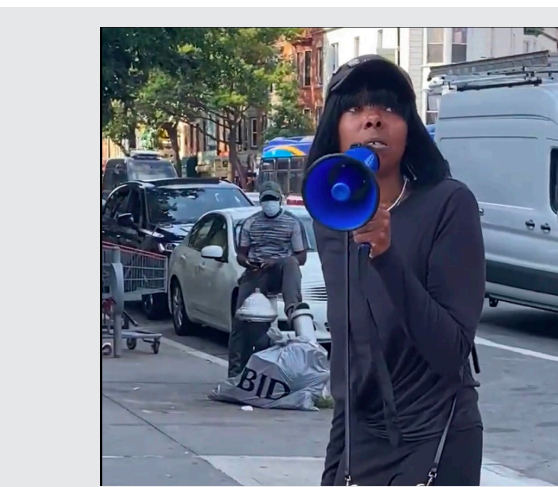
Sharee Jones, a 39-year-old Brooklyn resident, was arrested on Sunday, Oct. 17 in connection with a fire set outside of the Yeshivah of Flatbush Joel Braverman High School on Avenue J on Thursday, Oct. 14. The school is about a 10-minute walk away from the Brooklyn College campus.

“HCTF [Hate Crime Task Force] Detectives, assisted by Manhattan/Queens Warrants, apprehended this individual,” NYPD

Hate Crimes released in a statement before identifying Jones as the previously unknown woman who was caught on camera pouring gasoline outside of the Yeshivah and lighting it on fire.

A school security guard noticed the fire and was able to put it out with water before it could spread, according to ABC 7 New York. As a result, no injuries were reported.

The NYPD HCTF investigated the matter and determined that Jones, who had been spotted on Nostrand Avenue and Avenue J



39-year-old Sharee Jones is facing arson and hate crime charges./@NYPDHateCrimes on Twitter



Sharee Jones is accused of pouring gasoline outside of the Yeshiva and lighting it on fire./@NYPDHateCrimes on Twitter

with a megaphone and gas can before the fire, was the perpetrator seen in the video.

“The rise of antisemitism across New York City, the United States and around the world is disturbing, and though we wish the

heartbreaking reality of what happened to the Jewish community had never happened in the first place, it was a relief to know that security was available and able to handle the situation for the Flatbush Yeshivah,” wrote Yelena Azriyel,

the Assistant Director of Tanger Hillel at Brooklyn College, in a statement to The Vanguard.

With her arrest, Jones faces reckless endangerment as a hate crime and attempted arson charges.

Phishing Continues To Spread On BCMail Accounts

By Radwan Farraj
Staff Writer

A flood of scam emails circulated CUNY recently, offering instruments for sale, part-time job opportunities, or even financial aid stipends to many students and staff. Though the fraudulent phishing emails are not new to the university, reports of scam emails have more than doubled nationally, according to an FBI Internet Crime Report published in 2020.

These emails are not limited in who they target, as seen by the surge making its way through CUNY accounts. “Typically,

a student is phished and the criminals use that account to send thousands - or possibly hundreds of thousands - of other scam and phishing messages cyclically,” Brooklyn College Media Relations Manager Rich Pietras told The Vanguard.

More than 2.2 million scam complaints have been filed in the last five years, according to the FBI’s Internet Crime Complaint Center (IC3). Losses reportedly totaled more than \$13 billion for victims since 2016. In 2020 alone, the IC3 reported nearly 800,000 complaints and more than \$4 billion in losses, with phishing

scams ranking as the most common.

Students are predominantly affected by these phishing attacks that can take the form of a “spray-and-pray,” where “a low-effort scam is sent to a very large number of recipients,” Pietras explained. Even a minimal response rate can be profitable for scammers.

The most effective method to deal with these scams is user education and promoting awareness of red flags. In observance of Cyber Security Awareness Month, CUNY is releasing information on how to avoid different digital attacks,



BC Email Accounts have been flooded with phishing messages./Photo edited by John Schilling

with their second week “work from inside focused on phishing. Beyond user education, Brooklyn College has implemented its own protective measures. “[...]We use many technological means to detect and block incoming fraudulent mail,” said Pietras. However, he warned that criminals can

the systems” should a student’s account be compromised by a scammer.

For any questions about phishing or to report a suspicious message on BCMail, email BC-InfoSec@brooklyn.cuny.edu.

Exclusive: Mayoral Hopeful Curtis Sliwa Talks CUNY, Education, Vax Mandate

By Owen Russell
Sports Editor

After the mayoral primaries in June, Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams became the Democratic nominee, while Curtis Sliwa, the founder of a crime prevention non-profit called the Guardian Angels, won the Republican race.

While the two candidates have spoken about healthcare and law enforcement publicly, little is known about their plans for CUNY if elected. The city's next mayor will be responsible for appointing five members to the university's Board of Trustees, a panel that oversees CUNY's budget and decisions. They will also negotiate the budget of CUNY community colleges, tuition assistance programs like CUNY ASAP, food pantries, and other services, as reported by The Envoy.

The Vanguard reached out to both primary nominees to ask for their take on issues pertinent to CUNY students. Adams' campaign did not respond to The Vanguard's interview requests. Sliwa,

however, sat down and discussed his views on the current state of New York City's public higher education.

"CUNY for generations has been the stepping stone for the poor and lower middle class sons and daughters of New York City," Sliwa said, "and it needs to continue in that tradition." As for how Sliwa plans to maintain CUNY's status as a "stepping-stone," his first concern is ending remote learning.

"We have to get students back in the classroom as soon as possible," he said, "We understand that there will be some hiccups, but this online learning is not working." Though more in-person and hybrid classes have returned this semester, with 50 percent of fall courses at Brooklyn College instructed in one of these modalities, Sliwa thinks more students should return to the classroom.

"Why should an entire generation be made to suffer and be forced to lose a year or more of valuable education?" said Sliwa, noting that his three sons, while not yet college aged, have struggled with online

learning.

For students who returned to campus this fall, CUNY implemented a vaccine mandate and a deadline for approved verification that passed this Oct. 7, per former Governor Andrew Cuomo's orders. Under the current policy, students may be exempted from showing proof of vaccination due to approved religious or medical reasons. Despite being vaccinated himself, Sliwa believes that if a student does not want to be vaccinated, they should not be required to receive the jab. His opponent Adams, however, has voiced his strong support for vaccine mandates.

"I would encourage any faculty or students to get vaccinated," said Sliwa, "but if you choose, for whatever reason to not get vaccinated, then you deserve the option to get tested weekly."

In addition to the vaccine mandate, Sliwa stressed that many of the problems CUNY faces need to be addressed before students enter college. "CUNY is expected to make up for the lack of education people are receiving in the public school system," Sliwa



Mayoral Candidate Curtis Sliwa./AP Photo by Mary Altaffer

said, explaining that the education system needs to be fixed from the ground up.

"The problem needs to be addressed at the junior high school level," Sliwa opined. He said throughout the interview that he believes there should be more of a focus on making sure students retain information from their classes before they are passed to the next grade.

Sliwa also thinks some students should consider vocational training. A vocational school focuses its teaching on trade jobs, such as plumbing, electrical work, and carpentry.

"Many students may have a propensity to these skills, which will

be in high demand," noted Sliwa.

Sliwa ended the interview by comparing the CUNY system to that of Ivy League schools, stressing that he wants to help the university in any way possible. Though Eric Adams did not speak with The Vanguard, students can hear both him and Sliwa discuss New York City's most pressing issues in two separate debates streamed by WNBC-NY. The first will be held on Wednesday, Oct. 20 and the second on Tuesday, Oct. 26.

Early voting for the election begins on Oct. 23 and ends on Oct. 31. On Nov. 2, polls will be open from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m.

BC's International Biz Club Partners With NY African Restaurant Week



(L to R) BC Alumna Zury, BC Officer Hill, BC Prof. Pham, BC student Johnny Desius, and BC student Mary Zakharova during NYC African Restaurant Week./Hideki Aono Photography

By Mary Zakharova
Staff Writer

African Restaurant Week (ARW) started as an after-work party where now-CEO of the event, Akin Akinsanya, invited his colleagues to try traditional African food. It's been eight years since the project started, and now it is an annual city-wide food festival where African restaurants present their traditional dishes.

"New York is a melting pot. So why not have our

cultures for different people and show them what's best of Africa?" Akinsanya told The Vanguard. This year, the African Restaurant Week started on Oct. 7 with the main events held on Oct. 9 and 10. There, restaurants offered their traditional meals to teach the visitors about Africa's various cuisines, and African-owned businesses presented their products, including traditional jewelry, cosmetics, and clothes. One of the designers not only presented her collection, but gave her dresses to the

ARW organizers for the event's duration. The festival was held at Hillel Plaza, next to Brooklyn College. It was curated by Find your ID NYC, PYNK NYC, and the Brooklyn College International Business Association (IBA) Club. The BC IBA Club and their advisor, Dr. Ngoc Cindy Pham, promoted the event so all BC students attending were able to get a discount on their tickets and food. "I am a professor of International Business. I always teach about cultures in all of my lectures," Prof. Pham told Find Your

ID NYC. "I believe culture is a big part of our life and business. If we understand each other's uniqueness, there would not be any conflict or war." All the restaurants at the festival are either small or growing businesses that invite people to try the food they might never have tried before. "Why not make it something bigger to represent the culture?," Akinsanya said, emphasizing the importance of incorporating and promoting small businesses at the festival. The menus included

Ethiopian, Nigerian, Haitian, Jamaican, Ghanaian cuisine, Akinsanya explained. Visitors tried plantains, a type of banana that is mostly used for cooking, rice, and meat cooked with Suya, an African mix of spices. The event was not just about the food though. At the end of the day, visitors were able to stay for the concert and dance to African music and popular songs performed by African musicians. People were dancing, singing, and sharing their experiences at the event with the crowd.

New Civic App Reinvents Activism

By Serin Sarsour
Features Editor

A new age of activism is on the horizon, and an app called Civic is responsible for it. Since graduating from Georgetown University this past May, Matias Burdman and Thomas Connelly have devoted their time to co-founding and building the app that intends to increase civic participation and make it easier for people to get involved.

“Right now, we are an app where you can download it and instantly find every protest, rally, volunteering opportunity, community event happening in your area. And we are soon going to be coming out with more features like the ability to donate to organizations and keep track of what they’re doing,” said Connelly.

Burdman and Connelly mentioned that the death of George Floyd in May 2020 and the resulting protests inspired them

to create Civic. “[...] It became kind of crystal clear to Thomas and I that there wasn’t a central place to find information about what was happening, how to get involved, who was organizing things, and that it would be really valuable to everyone if someone would actually build that,” Burdman explained.

Although Burdman and Connelly were eager to create Civic for people looking to get involved and help out in their communities, they faced a few obstacles. “I think the biggest challenge is just letting people know that we’re out there,” Burdman said.

The pair, however, have been working on the app’s exposure, connecting with activists and protestors in demonstrations. “We figured that since those people are already at an event, they might be interested in hearing about new ones and future ways to get involved,” Burdman explained.

Creating the app has affected the



Civic

Matias Burdman and Thomas Connelly are the founders of Civic. / Photo edited by John Schilling

Georgetown alums in many ways, allowing them to better understand how people advocate and fight for their causes. “I think that does change you. And it makes us, even maybe more than before, want to help out in any way possible,” Burdman said.

Additionally, Connelly expressed the perspective he has gained from working closely with protest organizers in the Big Apple. “[...] We’re really reaching out to every corner of the kind of activist landscape here

in New York City... getting a sense of every and all kinds of difficulties that they’re running into, which has been pretty eye-opening for us,” said Connelly.

Burdman and Connelly emphasized the importance of incorporating a social component within the app alongside the current informational aspect. With that, the future of Civic aims to strengthen communities and bring people together in the wake of activism and similar issues that they care about with active

support groups.

Along with its main features, such as the map section where you can see what protests and other events are occurring in your area, Civic also serves as a hub where you can meet new people, organize events with them, and fight for what you believe in together.

“We’re always looking for feedback!” said Burdman. “We want this to be an app that’s fundamentally built by activists and activist groups and then also for activists.”

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Puerto Rican Alliance Observes Day Of Dignity

By Gabriela Flores
Editor-In-Chief

I n commemoration of Indigenous Peoples Day, Brooklyn College’s Puerto Rican Alliance (PRA) gave an overview of indigenous history last Tuesday, Oct. 12. There, participants and the PRA hosts Christopher Arias and Valeria Pinet delved into Taíno culture predating Columbus’ arrival, the complexities of identity, colonialism, and other aspects that have affected North American and Caribbean indigenous peoples throughout history.

“We respect and acknowledge that indigenous people are the original stewards of this land, and continue to be despite past and present continuation of forced removal from their traditional territories at the hands of colonial settler states like the US,” said Pinet, acknowledging that the land that makes New York City belongs to the Lenape and Canarsee indigenous people. “It’s important that we see indigenous people for who they are today. From resilient to thriving to creative and inspiring,” she continued.

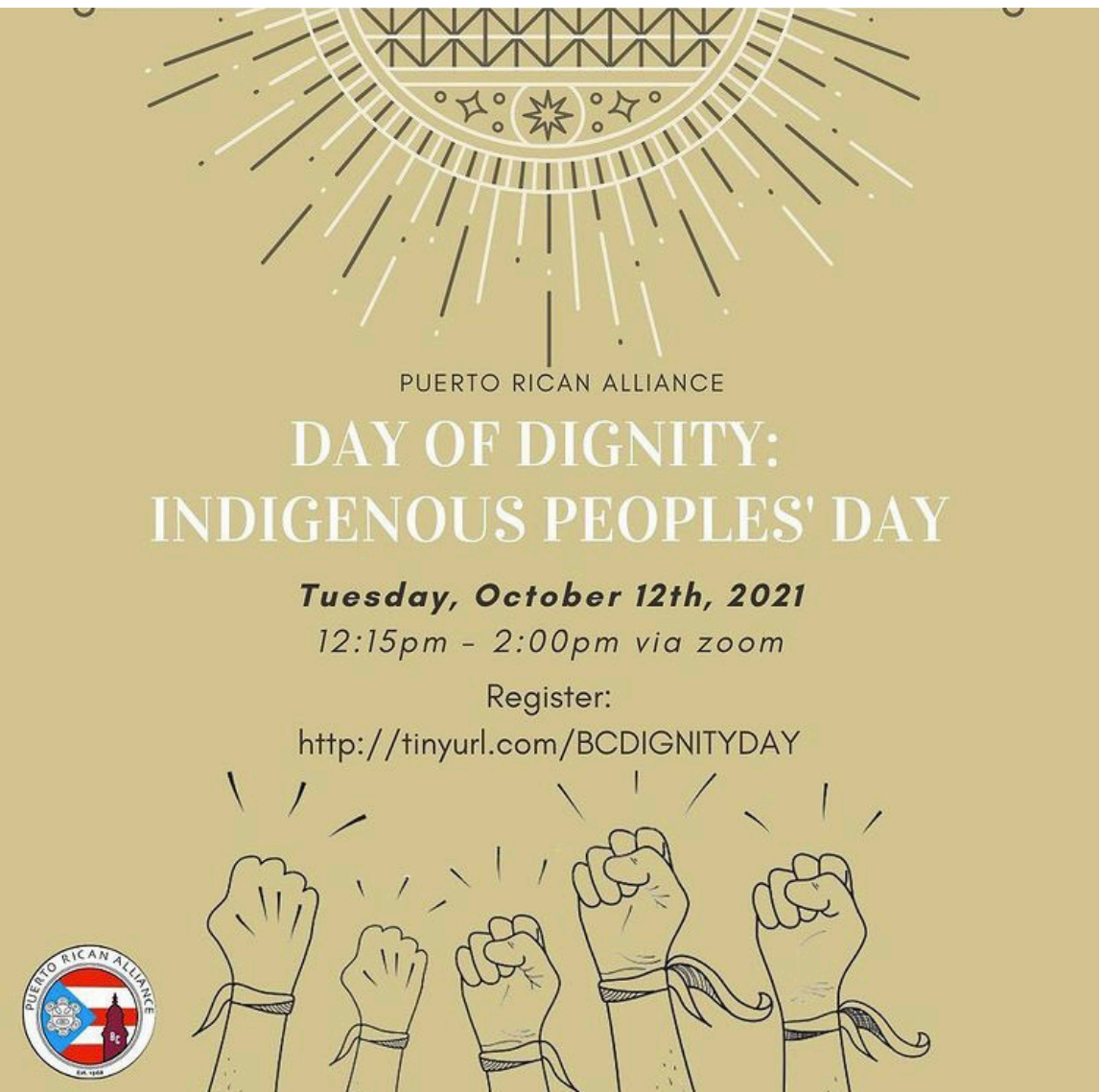
In starting their observance of the holiday that celebrates Native Americans and other indigenous people, while rejecting the recognition of Christopher Columbus Day, the PRA debriefed the history of Lenapehoking, or “land of the Lenape.” Pinet informed participants that New York City, some southern counties of the state, New Jersey, and

parts of Pennsylvania and Delaware exist on Lenape land stolen by colonizers. To date, Lenape history has shaped the landscape of the Big Apple, Pinet explained. Before becoming the financial hub it is today, Wall Street in the 17th century, for example, was where a 12-foot wall was designed to keep native Lenape people out of what is Manhattan today.

Across the waters and into what we now call the Caribbean, encompassing major islands like Puerto Rico and Cuba, the indigenous Taíno lived and organized into chiefdoms, a structure where one designated leader looked over several communities. Interestingly, host Arias said, chiefs in Taíno culture could have been men or women - and family lineage was traced through the mothers of these communities.

“So there was a very strong sense of motherhood and mother wisdom that guided them,” said Arias.

Though there are no records on how many Taínos lived in what was then known as Hispaniola, about 3 million were recorded when Columbus arrived on its shores. They were skilled in abilities like sailing and navigating, actively venerated their ancestors, and were spiritually in tune with their environment, gods, and goddesses. But by 1565, after Columbus invaded, they were declared “extinct” under a census that their descendants today call “paper genocide,” an attempt to erase records of the culture’s existence,



Day of Dignity promotional image./@BC_PRA on Instagram

Arias explained.

“We have to put into context to understand that a lot of these documents such as the census I referred to were created by the colonizers - so there’s very much biased perspective on how information is gathered,” said Arias. “It’s important to have that context and lense to understand things better.”

Today, about 61 percent of Puerto Ricans were found to be American Indian through mitochondrial DNA, which is genetic information that descends from the mother. Many Boricuas commonly think that their indigenous ancestry is linked to the Taínos, according to a video the hosts showed to detail further how deep-rooted Taíno history is beyond documents safe kept by colonialists.

Given the biases seeped into

historical records about the Taíno, and other indigenous people, the PRA hosts emphasized the importance of researching these cultures and colonialism through different perspectives.

“I think it’s also important to realize the process of colonialism both past and present because it’s important to remember that colonialism has no specific time period,” Pinet said. She quoted historian Patrick Wolfe from his discussion of “settler colonialism,” the concept of a settler having the intention to make the land they invaded their permanent home.

More broadly, colonialism encompasses military force; internal efforts, such as cultural assimilation; and other practices of subjugation against native people. The process of decolonization,

which would differ between settler states like the U.S., would call for getting rid of “settler sovereignty,” a concept Pinet referenced from the article “Decolonization Is Not A Metaphor.”

Through actions like land reparation, which call for the recognition of stolen lands and the significant role indigenous people play in protecting biodiversity, one could better understand the history of native people.

“This presentation barely scratches the surface of the erasure of both North American and indigenous peoples history,” Pinet said in closing, “and so we urge and encourage you all to support indigenous creators and organizations that continuously exemplify their resilience and strength.”

When Two Worlds Collide: BC's New Pathways Chemistry Art Course

CHEM 1012: Chemistry in the Arts and Archaeology

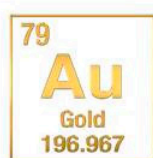
Satisfies Pathways Flexible Core Scientific World requirement

Chemistry and art/archaeology are usually seen as polar opposites. Art is thought of as creative and free of definitions, chemistry is precise and analytical.

However, there is a significant crossover between these subjects. Just think about art forgeries and how they are discovered, and how the age of some exciting archaeological artifacts is determined.

If you wish to learn more... register for CHEM 1012 during this Winter 2022 Intersession! offered on-line

Professor Maggie Ciszowska
Chemistry



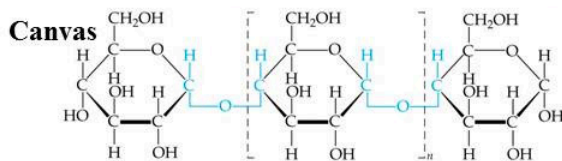
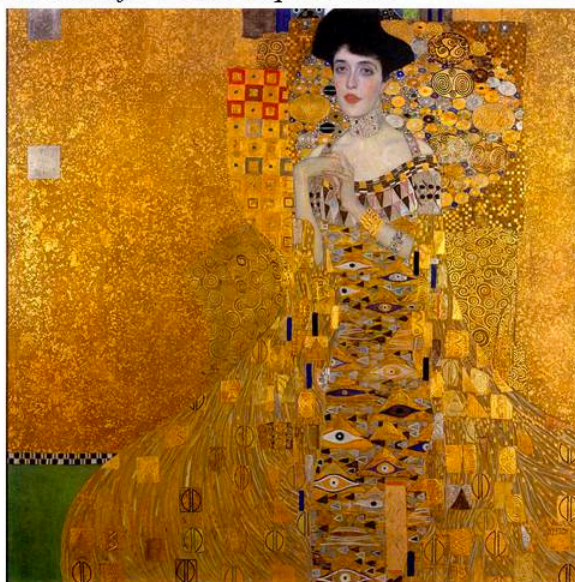
Gold leafs



Cinnabar red
HgS



Malachite
 $\text{Cu}_2\text{CO}_3(\text{OH})_2$



CHEM.1012 advertisement./Dept. of Chemistry at Brooklyn College

By Michela Arlia
Arts Editor

A new course is coming to BC's roster this winter which combines two seemingly polar opposite subjects, but actually have more in common than one may think.

"CHEM. 1012: Chemistry In the Arts and Archaeology" will be taught online during the winter intersession for the first time as an option that satisfies students' "Pathways Flexible Core Scientific World" requirement. Taught by Chemistry Professor Maggie Ciszowska, the course sheds light on how the arts and science worlds collide.

"I just wanted to share my fascination with chemistry with those who probably only thought about it as an unpleasant school subject," Ciszowska told The Vanguard.

For nearly 25 years, Ciszowska has been teaching at Brooklyn College, having once held the title of department chair for 9 years. Creating this course is something she has looked forward to sharing with students for a

long time.

While the course is new to BC in Pathways requirements, Professor Ciszowska is no stranger to teaching the course, as she created it herself, calling it her "baby. She has taught it once before for the Brooklyn College Honors Academy in Fall 2020, and is currently teaching it as a seminar for the Macaulay Honors College students this semester.

"She taught the class once before for the Brooklyn College Honors Academy in fall 2020 and is currently teaching it as a seminar for the Macaulay Honors College students this semester.

"It was born in my head many years ago, and it was waiting for its introduction to a wider audience for several years," said Ciszowska.

Ciszowska first thought of the course after meeting colleagues from the Swiss Federal Laboratories for Materials Testing and Research, who analyzed paintings from the 16th and 17th centuries using chemical analytical methods.

With her research background being in

analytical chemistry, Ciszowska was intrigued by the use of chemistry to study art and create a scientific tie to classic pieces.

"It was fascinating that while being chemists, they had a chance to get so close to these masterpieces, and they were able to find from where some of the pigments (mainly lead white) used in those painting came," she said.

Though her long-standing focus in academia is chemistry, it was her second love of the arts and art history that propelled Ciszowska to teach this course.

"Chemistry has been my 'love' from the 7th grade when I first took chemistry classes in my native Poland. As for the arts, I have the misfortune of not being able to draw or paint," Ciszowska said, noting that she remains an art fanatic nonetheless.. "So, the idea of showing how artists use chemical compounds in their work, how they apply chemical techniques to achieve beautiful visual effects, and how chemical techniques are helping in authentication of art pieces was extremely appealing."

Since teaching her course, Ciszowska said she has received nothing but positive comments from past students, which makes her hopeful the class will be just as enjoyable for all BC students choosing it for Pathways.

"I was told by my students that their favorite subject of this course is the part on art forgeries and art authentication," said Ciszowska. "Here, a chemist plays the role of a detective."

In creating this course, Ciszowska made it possible for it to appeal to many students from different academic backgrounds such as chemistry majors, students who have never taken a chemistry course, art historian buffs, and everyone in between.

"While designing this course, I was trying to make it both interesting and understandable to all students," she said. "I trust that all of them will learn a lot and that after finishing this course, they will become real 'ambassadors' of chemistry, as this part of science that is really interesting and useful."

As for how the course will incorporate art and

chemistry exactly? Take for instance the "Portrait of Adele Bloch-Bauer" by Gustav Klimt and all its properties that compose it, Professor Ciszowska explained.

"Not too many of us look at it and think, 'What a fantastic diversity of chemical compounds,'" said Ciszowska. She notes how every aspect of the renowned painting, from its canvas to its oil paints are composed of different properties, including the gold metals attached to its surface along the Lady in Gold. "So, by using one painting, I can introduce students to many scientific ideas such as atoms, ions, chemical compounds, polymers and many, many other chemical concepts."

Ciszowska is very excited to be offering this course to any and all BC undergrads this winter, hoping to continue teaching the course at least once per semester.

"Perhaps it is too much to wish for, but I really would like my students to become as fascinated with both chemistry and art as I have been for many, many years," she said.



Courtesy of Prof. Maggie Ciszowska

Dr. Acevedo-Muñoz Joins PRLS West Side Story Lecture Series

By Gabriela Flores
Editor-In-Chief

With the readaptation of “West Side Story” hitting theaters in December, Dr. Ernesto R. Acevedo-Muñoz, one of the film’s historical consultants, joined the Puerto Rican and Latino Studies Department’s (PRLS) ongoing lecture series, “West Side Story: The Brooklyn Connection.”

In conversation with PRLS Deputy Chair María Pérez y González and Brooklyn College Professor Emerita Dr. Virginia Sánchez Korrol, Acevedo-Muñoz discussed how the timeless tale did more than what film critics initially gave it credit for decades ago. He noted how “West Side Story” used its musical numbers and artistic merits to showcase social issues experienced by Puerto Ricans and immigrants in America.

“We just go back to ‘West Side Story’ when we want to remind ourselves that the musical can be political and it can be socially conscious,” said Acevedo-Muñoz. “And here we are in 2020, 2021, in a time of great concern. A time of political unrest, social unrest.”

Acevedo-Muñoz’s introduction to “West Side Story” predates his work on the upcoming Steven Spielberg production. Growing up Puerto Rican and playing the musical’s soundtrack on repeat, Acevedo-Muñoz became hooked on the classic despite the cast lacking authentic Latino representation. For him, “West Side Story” was beyond a love story caught between two gangs set in the 1950s, but a step towards acknowledging Puerto Rico on the big screen.

“As a child, I was enamored with ‘West Side

Story.’ We’ve never had Puerto Ricans in movies, in any form, even if they were fake Puerto Ricans most of them. But the words ‘Puerto Rico’ were spoken in the soundtrack. We knew it was something unique,” Acevedo-Muñoz said.

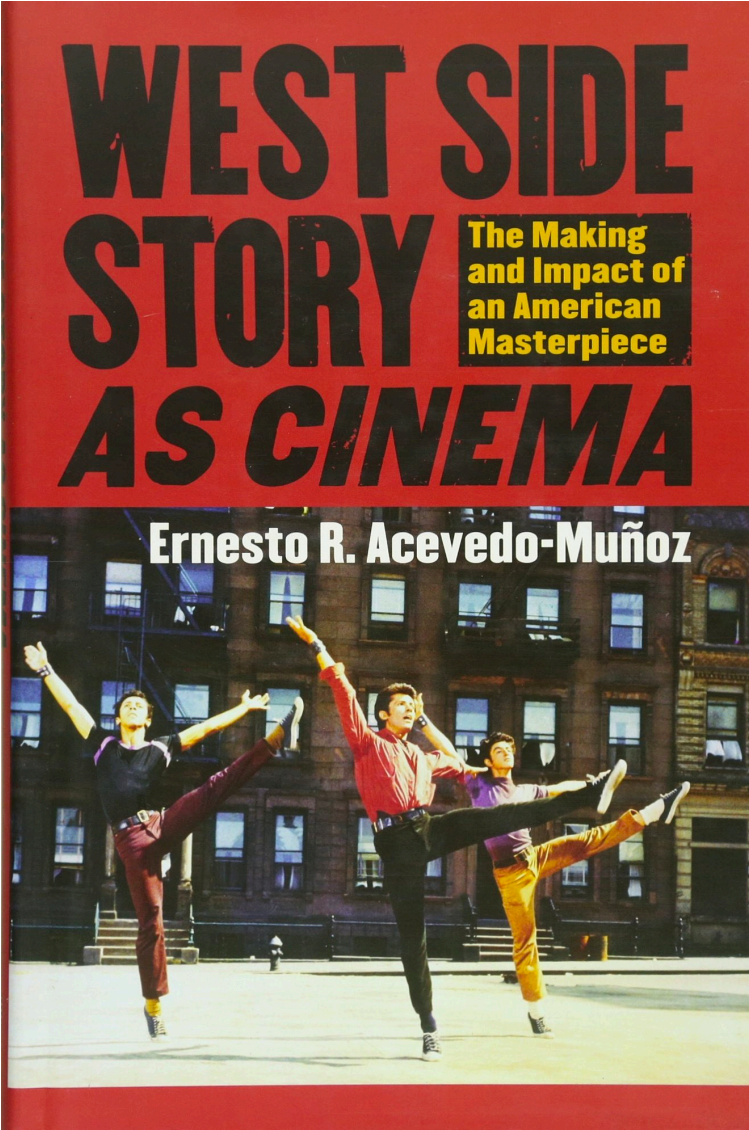
His love for the film carried on throughout his life and seeped into his former course “The Hollywood Musical” at the University of Colorado Boulder, where he chairs the Department of Cinema Studies And Moving Image Arts. Throughout past lectures, students constantly asked Acevedo-Muñoz about the classic, which eventually led him to delve nose deep into researching its history.

“I said, ‘Okay, I’m going to write a book on ‘West Side Story.’ I think this needs to be done and I just have to keep some intellectual distance,” said Acevedo-Muñoz. “Because it’s not just going to be a fanboy

letter. I have to go deep.”

After visiting different libraries, and searching through numerous boxes of documents detailing the inner workings of the musical’s 1961 version, Acevedo-Muñoz published his book “West Side Story as Cinema: The Making and Impact of an American Masterpiece” in 2013. Throughout his academic findings, he analyzed the production’s cinematics sequence by sequence, from the production design down to the visuals and sounds. In doing so, Acevedo-Muñoz also detailed the political and social significance of “West Side Story,” where numbers like “America” went into the nitty-gritty of the challenges Boricuas and immigrants faced in the US during the 1950s.

“In its own merits artistically, it’s a great movie,” Acevedo-Muñoz said. “(...) It is not as passive as film critics would like to point out.”



The cover of Acevedo-Muñoz’s book./Ernesto R. Acevedo-Muñoz



Dr. Ernesto Acevedo-Muñoz./colorado.edu

In acknowledging these groundbreaking moments in the film, Acevedo-Muñoz also noted within his book the problematic casting patterns between the musical’s leading female protagonists: Maria and Anita.

Within the 1961 film adaptation, many roles of Puerto Rican characters were filled by white Americans in brownface. One of the few Boricuas on set was Rita Moreno, who played Anita, a persona that Acevedo-Muñoz described as the “typical iteration of the Latin spitfire.” Though she was Latina, Moreno was also placed in brownface to contrast the skin color of Maria, a Puerto Rican character played by Natalie Wood who visibly had lighter skin and was portrayed as “innocent.”

This problematic “dark and light contrast,” Acevedo-Muñoz explained, is something different revivals are gradually correcting with more multiethnic casting. Nonetheless, it is a pattern that continues in different portrayals of Maria and Anita.

“That distinguishes not just the actors but the persona of the characters. It has to be visible that they are different people,” Acevedo-Muñoz said.

Spielberg’s upcoming release is no exception to the wave of casting changes being made to the film over the years. Though the character of Maria will be played by Rachel Zegler, a Colombian-American who does not have Puerto Rican roots as some Boricuas had hoped, Professor Sánchez Korrol, who served as the film’s historical consultant, said that the final casting decision likely boiled down to Zegler’s operatic voice.

“We’ve seen this real effort to get it right. It’s absolutely important to Spielberg to ensure the authenticity of props, signage, dialect,” said Acevedo-Muñoz, who mentioned that he’s glad that a Latina is playing Maria in the first place. “This is going to be a different ‘West Side Story,’ in terms of the culture and context, and the historic context, and the ethnic casting.”

Rolling Rock Ramblings: Fear And Loathing In Hollywood

By Ian Ezinga
Opinions Editor

Trigger Warning:
The following article addresses topics related to sexual assault. Please read at your own discretion.

For an English class this semester, I watched Roman Polanski’s “Chinatown” (1974). This was my first time watching the film, but not the first time I had heard of Polanski. I’m usually in favor of separating an artist’s character with the art they create, but in cases where the artist’s content is directly related to their malignant traits or actions, it is ruefully important to understand their art in that light. While a choice remains in choosing to keep them separated, doing so would be voluntarily choosing to remain ignorant in the face of the horror that may lay behind the screen.

The choice begins with having an idea of Polanski’s crimes and the way they appear, thematically, in movies like “Chinatown.” Less than three years later, Polanski was arrested in Los Angeles on six separate charges after having drugged and raped thirteen-year-old Samantha Geimer at actor Jack Nicholson’s house. After some back and forth between the prosecutor and his lawyers, Polanski was going to take a plea deal in which he pleaded guilty to the charge of rape and would be sentenced to a ninety-day psychiatric evaluation. Nearing the eve of his court date, however, Polanski found out that the judge was going to reject the deal in favor of fifty years in prison. Polanski fled the country and has been living in France for the past forty years where he cannot be extradited and has still been directing movies.

The film in question,

“Chinatown,” follows a private detective named Jake Gettis played by Jack Nicholson. The job that Gettis finds himself in at the beginning of the film starts out rather simply: a classic case of an important official having an affair and ends up dead. From there, the story takes a nosedive as we uncover the supposed mistress, Katheryn, was actually the sister and the daughter of the murdered man’s wife, Evelyn. It was not an affair and Katheryn was born out of incestual rape wrought upon Evelyn by her own father, Noah Cross. Additionally, we discover that Cross had killed the man earlier in the film because he was about to expose his schemes to re-route LA’s water so that he could cash in on a real estate investment. Gettis attempts to help Evelyn and Katheryn flee their shared father. Cross intervenes at the last minute but is shot by Evelyn who then drives off. The police, assuming her to be guilty, shoot at the car. The camera arrives at the car to find Evelyn shot through the head and the screaming child is then taken away by Cross, who was not fatally wounded and plays the part of a concerned grandparent. The story ends in a disgusting, devastating, and whirling sequence that shows sincere horror prevail as the villain wins, and Jake Gettis’ cries for the truth to be heard are lost in the crowded streets of LA’s Chinatown.

The film carries a sort of moral realism that is entirely frank when it shows our society is corrupt, bad people get away with things, and our institutions are simultaneously ineffectual and culpable. All you can do is uncover the truth and move along. I would argue that it’s impossible to separate this message from the crimes that Polanski went on to commit. Truth be told, I would greatly



Roman Polanski./Julien De Rosa for EPA via Shutterstock

appreciate the film’s message if it was being pitched to us by someone who did not embody the horror that it exposed. But being that is not the case, I have to reconcile the final product as tarnished and troubling.

And troubling is just about all you will find the more you uncover about Polanski and his relationship to Hollywood. In 2009, over one hundred noteworthy people signed a petition to pardon Polanski. Among those who committed to paper their belief that justice need not be served were Wes Anderson, Woody Allen, Guillermo Del Toro, Martin Scorsese, Harrison Ford, Natalie Portman, and personally devastating to me, David Lynch. All of these people have tremendous power and all work to create art that depicts the world as they understand it. Our responsibility, then, is to not swear off all movies (although I think that would be fine), but be hypercritical of these peoples’ work and the ways in which it might perpetuate, however subtly, a culture that doesn’t condemn sexual violence toward women and minors.

Be it known, that this short list of people, and

this one specific crime, is only the surface of a deeply complex and interwoven web of indifference, horror, and callousness. It is still our choice to uncover it, and intake popular culture through this unholy lens. I don’t want to make this choice out to be an easy one, for I think the right answer is both obvious and terribly hard at the

same time. By choosing it, you cannot go back. This can be quite daunting and may prompt a desire that you hadn’t uncovered this terrible information in the first place. But to quote the author who is behind the title of this opinion, “I was not proud of what I had learned but I never doubted that it was worth knowing.”



Chinatown poster./Rotten Tomatoes

Opinion: Keeping Connected During COVID-19 Is Possible

By Melissa Morales
Staff Writer

Aug. 27, 2019, was my first day at Brooklyn College. As soon as I stepped foot on campus, I immediately immersed myself in the ambiance, classes, and community. I can still remember the light breeze and sound of water trickling as I sat on a bench by the lily pond, and when I typed essays in the library as the bell tolled from outside.

More importantly, however, the tangibility of Brooklyn College made me feel at home. Being able to experience the significant aspects of college is such an important and integral moment.

Halfway through my second semester as a freshman at Brooklyn College, the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a global pandemic on Mar. 11, 2020. Everyone's life drastically changed.

Classes became virtual, campus closed down, clubs stopped meeting, and everything felt stagnant. It was as if the whole world was holding its breath until we could receive the news that we could return to normal again.

But that news never came. The truth was, the world as we once knew it would never return. We now live in a world where masks are essential for our health, staying 6-feet apart is crucial, computer screens facilitate our

communication, and washing our hands is more important than ever.

Oct. 4, 2021, was my first time back at Brooklyn College since the pandemic occurred. It was almost a year and a half since I had last stepped foot on campus. Admittedly, things definitely felt strange yet new. Many students strolled around campus, but the ability to sit next to one another and eat lunch in the Boylan Hall Cafeteria with friends was gone. Now, students were a table away from each other with masks on. To even enter campus, one must show a vaccination confirmation pass on their phone.

While this shift and circumstances for many people, including myself, can be difficult, it just reveals how unexpected life can be--how the most unpredictable events can happen at any time.

This doesn't mean we should stop living, or more importantly, forget what made us alive before the health crisis. This pandemic should be a time to continue being immersed in the world by engaging and creating tangibility in creative yet effective ways both in-person and online.

During the earlier days of COVID-19, and even now at times, virtual classes don't necessarily feel too connecting. This is understandable because of the literal



There is hope to be had with a change of perspective./Filippo Bacci via Getty Images

distance between ourselves and the other people on our screens. However, I believe that there are ways to still engage and feel that tangibility that we all desire.

For one, communication. Now, more than ever, having the ability to communicate with family, friends, peers, students, and professors is crucial. Because of our technological advancements, we are able to stay connected with others even if it's in a virtual space. Platforms such as Zoom, Google Meets, or a phone call are even better to interact with one another, to see and hear each other face to face.

Additionally, by communicating virtually, schedules can become extremely flexible for many people and therefore, conversing becomes convenient and constant, which can lead to connections that can feel as real as if they were

in person.

As for actually being in person, communication is also equally important (at a socially safe distance, of course).

Group activities are another effective way to increase tangibility. Being connected and collaborating, especially in small teams, provides intimacy and warmth, whether that be from in-person settings with safety precautions or virtually.

The idea of group activities should not get completely discarded just because things are digital; in fact, there should be greater use of them. According to an article from the Mayo Health Clinic System, having connections with others is essential for our mental well-being. "We seek out and lean on human interaction when we are experiencing the stress of life's challenges," the article reads. "This biological programming drives us to gather in

groups, usually shielding us from mental and physical harm."

We must not also forget about ourselves and our passions: staying creative during this time is important to keep us productive for ourselves, interests, and worldly engagement. I know for myself, staying true to my passion for writing has helped me get through some of these difficult times and has opened doors for me in terms of getting opportunities from the works that I've created. Being inspired is necessary for reclaiming some pieces of normality from the pre-COVID world and for planning what's to come.

Though we will never return back to full normalcy, it is important to realize that we are still able to keep things tangible and as real as they used to be (online or in person). Not just with one's life in particular, but with life in general and our collective future.

Review: Like Pacific’s “Ketamine Jesus” and “Love Them And Leave Them”

By Iliana Calderon
Staff Writer

Canadian pop punk band Like Pacific released two new songs on Wednesday, Oct. 6 titled “Ketamine Jesus” and “Love Them And Leave Them.” Both are identical in sound, having an intense and upbeat tune.

The beginning of “Ketamine Jesus” starts off with a strong guitar riff and soft first verse, then goes into an upbeat second verse. Throughout the entire song, there are influences from their last two albums, giving the listener a consistent and familiar sound.

“Love Them And Leave Them” immediately hits us with an intense pop punk beat in the first verse. You can also hear a bit of a post-

hardcore sound to this track, which is something common from their last two albums. Like Pacific gives listeners a mix between pop punk and some post-hardcore in their two previous records, paired with a catchy chorus and bridge.

However, “Ketamine Jesus” doesn’t seem to fit the standard structure of a song where it first has a verse, followed by another, complimented by a chorus, going into a third verse, and landing in a bridge and chorus. “Love Them And Leave Them,” however, follows this order.

Both of the songs are very catchy, and I see myself listening to them and checking out Like Pacific’s new album. For those who are fans of Movements, Trashboat, The



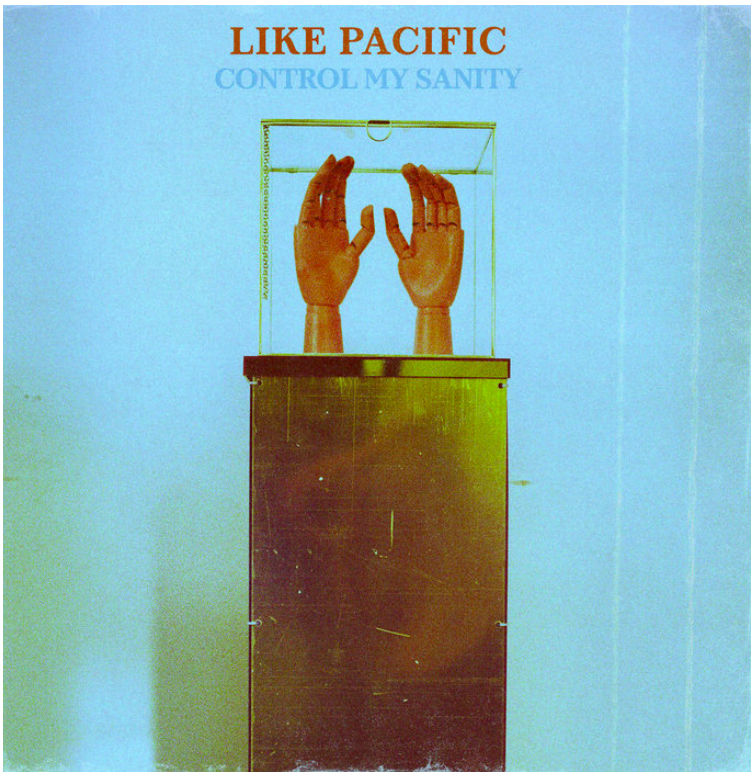
The Canadian band’s third studio album is slated to drop on Dec. 3./Christopher Sherman

Wonder Years, Knuckle Puck, and Seaway, you will definitely like this pop punk band.

Like Pacific, formed in 2010, has been a band that sticks to their sound, seeing as both of their previous albums, “Distant Like You Asked” (2016) and “In Spite Of Me” (2018), along with their EP (2015), have a very similar auditory experience.

Their new album, “Control My Sanity,” is set

for release on Dec. 3. They currently have no plans to go on tour, but you can pre-order the new album along with their vinyl and some bundles.



Like Pacific’s Control My Sanity Album Cover./Like Pacific

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MLB Playoffs Update: Yankees Knocked Out Of Playoffs

By Owen Russell
Sports Editor

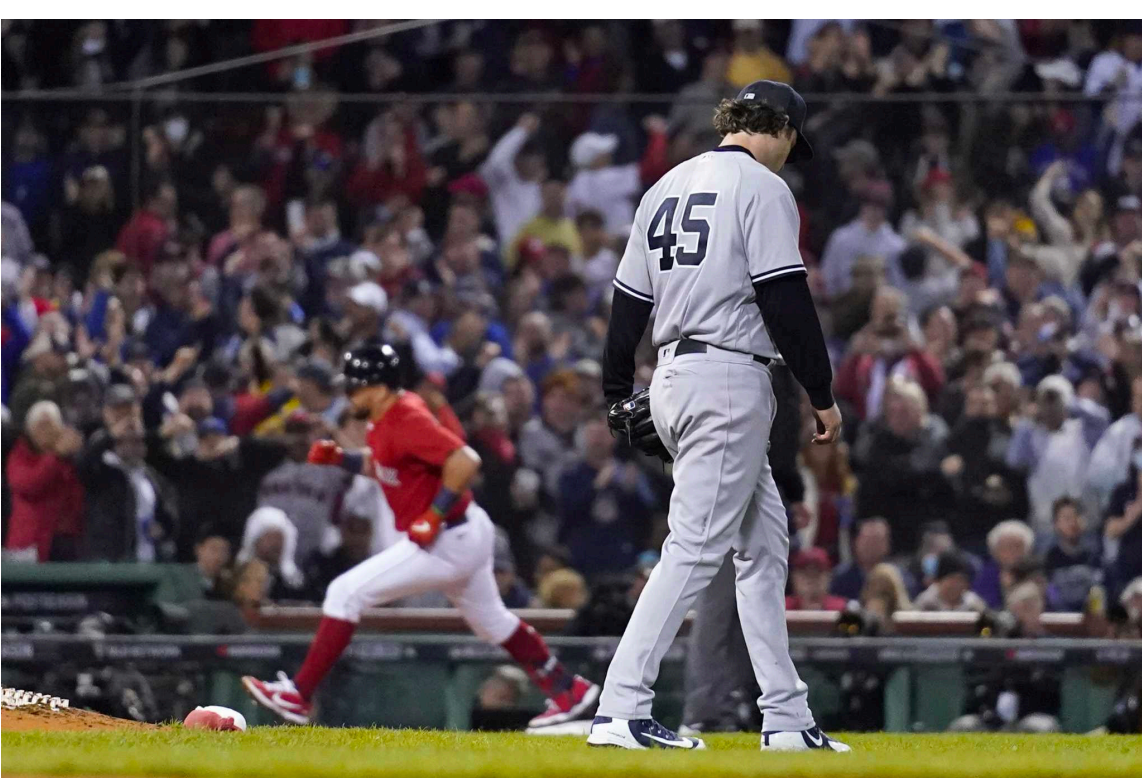
The New York Yankees lost 6-2 to the Boston Red Sox in the American League Wild Card Game on Oct. 5, eliminating the team from the playoffs and making it 12 years since the franchise’s last World Series appearance.

The Wild Card contest was a relatively rough game for the Bronx Bombers. Starting pitcher Geritt Cole was pulled from the game after allowing three earned runs in only two innings pitched. The bats were quiet for the Yankees as well with the only two runs coming from home runs by designated hitter Giancarlo Stanton and first baseman Anthony Rizzo.

In the postgame press conference, Yankees Manager

Aaron Boone stressed that he was proud of his team. “This was a challenging year. This was not an easy year for us, and when we had to play well the final two months, and compete at a high level, I thought we did that,” he said. The Yankees went 36-20 in August and September to secure a Wild Card berth in a tightly contested playoff race.

While the Yankees’ season has ended in disappointing fashion, the Boston Red Sox, their storied rival, have been catching fire recently. After rolling over the Tampa Bay Rays, the Red Sox have played out to a 2-1 lead over the Houston Astros in the American League Championship Series. The series has seen Boston crush an unprecedented 3 grand slams (bases



Gerrit Cole looks down as Kyle Schwarber rounds bases after hitting a home run./AP Photo by Charles Krupa

loaded home runs). Houston and Boston will continue battling it out for a spot in the World Series on Tuesday, Oct. 19 at Fenway Park.

The National League Championship Series is also underway, featuring the Atlanta Braves and Los Angeles Dodgers. The Braves made a late push to win the National League East, beating out the New York Mets in the process. Then,

in the playoffs, the team beat the favored Milwaukee Brewers 3-1.

The Dodgers, on the other hand, won over 100 games, but ended up with the Wild Card, losing the National League West to the San Francisco Giants. In the Wild Card Game, however, utility player Chris Taylor hit a walk-off home run to beat the St. Louis Cardinals. Then, in the divisional round, Los Angeles

got revenge on the Giants, winning a hotly contested series 3-2. So far, the Braves lead the Dodgers 2-0. They play again on Tuesday, Oct. 19 in Los Angeles.

Regardless of which of these four teams makes the World Series, one thing is for certain: the New York Yankees will be watching the fall classic from home yet again just like the Mets.

Vinny The Goat by Mo Muhsin and Gabrielle Toro Vivoni



NY Red Bulls Keep Playoff Hopes Alive



The NY Red Bulls hope recent success will bring them to the playoffs./[abc7ny.com](#)

By Billy Wood
Staff Writer

The New York Red Bulls are now one point away from a playoff spot for the Major League Soccer Cup with five games remaining.

The Red Bulls have been in great form recently as they have won five out of the last seven games with two draws, which is a stark contrast to how they started their season as they only won three and lost four in their

opening seven games.

The most recent win came on Sunday, Oct. 17 against local rivals the New York City Football Club (NYCFC). The Red Bulls were able to secure all three points against their in-state rival in their third game against each other in 25 days. The Red Bulls were able to get a 1-1 draw and a 1-0 win away at Yankee Stadium back in September.

“New York is red,” said Red Bulls Head Coach Gerhard Struber following his team’s victory over NYCFC.

They were able to keep their momentum going against their local rivals as they won 1-0 at the Red Bull Arena. They took an early lead with a goal from Venezuelan midfielder Cristian Cásseres Jr. in the third minute, which was his fifth goal of the season for him. The Red Bulls goalkeeper, Carlos Coronel, was also able to make two big saves during the game.

“There’s still a long way to go, there’s a lot to improve,” said Club Captain Sean Davis about the

team’s recent form in a postgame press conference. “But I think that we’ve been through a lot as a team and that builds character. And I think that we’re seeing it now.”

The team now shifts their focus to their next game away against Columbus Crew. Their last game in Columbus on Sept. 14 saw the Crew win 2-1, which was the last time the Red Bulls tasted defeat.

“The big goal is that we step in the playoffs and we have some big to-dos in the next few weeks

with big opponents and big battles,” stated Coach Struber in a press conference. “I think right now we need to enjoy the moment but we know that this is not the end. We have to bring constantly performances like that and then I think in the end we stay in the playoffs.”

The Red Bulls are hoping to keep their momentum going as they look to make it to the postseason for the 12th consecutive year.

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BC Sports Recap (Oct. 6–19)

Cross Country Runners Shine As CUNYAC Championships Near

By Owen Russell
Sports Editor

The cross country teams have been coming down the stretch, as they only have one meet left this season with the CUNYAC Championships on Oct. 31. The teams past three meets featured two contests at Sunken Meadow State Park. On Oct. 10, the Bulldogs competed in the Golden Eagle Invitational. While the men's team did not have the minimum five runners to field a team score, Senior Shane Kimball had a strong finish coming in 11th overall, with a time of 27:25 for 8K. The women also competed that day, and were also unable to field a full team.

Senior Malak Abuhashish finished within the top 50, running 23:20 for 5K. This past Saturday, Oct. 16, Brooklyn returned to Sunken Meadow State Park for the St. Joseph's College Invitational. This race saw both the men and women able to field full teams. The men finished behind CUNYAC rivals Hunter, CCNY, Baruch, and CSI, but finished ahead of York and Lehman. Shane Kimball was the team's top finisher, coming 10th overall, and Junior Christian Montelibano came in within the top 50, running 32:32 for 8K. The women's team had a tough day on the course, finishing second to last, only ahead of conference



Damion Reid for Brooklyn College Athletics.

rival Baruch. Senior Malak Abuhashish was the team's top finisher, running 24:49 and placing 49th overall. The Bulldogs had their third race in seven days

on Oct. 17, competing in a dual meet against Lehman and Baruch at Van Cortlandt Park. Kimball won the men's race in a time of 33:40 and Abuhashish finished second in the

women's 6K race with a time of 29:55. This meet serves as a prelude of sorts to the CUNYAC Championships which take place on the same course on Oct. 31.

Men's Soccer Split Four Games

By Owen Russell
Sports Editor

The men's soccer team has picked up their play these past couple of games. The team split their last four contests, winning two and losing two, but playing hard even in the losing efforts. On Oct. 6, the team traveled to Randall's Island to square off against Baruch College. The game was hard fought, and it remained scoreless at the end of regulation. Brooklyn out shot Baruch 8-7, but the Bearcats scored the sole goal in double overtime. Despite the loss, it was a strong team effort by the Bulldogs to keep the match close. The Bulldogs lost

another heartbreaker, this time to CCNY at home in another double overtime on Oct. 9. The Beavers scored first, but the Bulldogs were able to tie it up heading into the half, thanks to a goal by Senior Randy Urgiles. The next two periods remained scoreless, and then in the second overtime period CCNY capitalized on a late penalty in the box. The Beavers knocked in the penalty kick, winning the contest 2-1. Much like their previous contest, the Bulldogs showed real mettle in a hard-fought match. Oct. 13 saw the Bulldogs play their third straight match. This time the team faced York College at home, and all it took was one overtime



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this go around for the Bulldogs to beat the Cardinals. York got out to an early lead, but Brooklyn was able to tie the contest on Randy Urgiles' second goal in two games. The second period passed with no score, so the match headed to overtime. This time the Bulldogs were able to pull through after regulation, scoring the

winning goal in the 99th minute. Senior Espinoza knocked Arturo Zaraza knocked in two goals, and in the deciding goal. graduate student Roko Brooklyn's Radovani knocked in fourth game in ten one of his own. The win days came against brings the Bulldogs' John Jay out in Staten CUNYAC record to Island on Oct. 16. After three wins and three three straight overtime losses. contests, Brooklyn The Bulldogs was able to finish off will play next Oct. John Jay in regulation. 20 at home against The Bulldogs beat Medgar Evers. the Bloodhounds

BC Sports Recap (Oct. 6-19)

Women’s Soccer Remains Winless

By Owen Russell
Sports Editor

The women’s soccer program had three matches scheduled in the past two weeks, all of which were against conference rivals. The first contest against Medgar Evers was canceled, and therefore the Bulldogs played their first conference action of the season on Oct. 13 against CCNY. The match

against the Beavers was a high-scoring affair, with a total of seven goals scored. The Bulldogs knocked in two of their own, but were unable to keep pace with the Beavers, losing 5-2. Sophomore Priscilla Vixama and Junior Dalia Hernandez scored the Bulldogs’ two goals. City College outshot Brooklyn 31-5. Oct. 16 saw the Bulldogs lose again, this time to the Bloodhounds from

John Jay. Brooklyn was outshot, as they allowed John Jay to score four goals. The Bulldogs had eight saves on the day, but the Bloodhounds fired off 23 shots, 19 of which were on goal. These past two losses sank the Bulldogs’ record to 0-11 on the season. Their next game will be against York College on Oct. 19.



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Women’s Volleyball Loses Two, Wins Three Matches

By Owen Russell
Sports Editor

The volleyball team saw plenty of action these past two weeks. The team played five matches, losing two and winning three. On Oct. 9, the team competed in the CUNYAC Tri-Match against Baruch and Lehman. The Bulldogs swept both of the contests notching 17 aces between the two matches. Freshman Outside Hitter Aleah Rafat led the Bulldogs in kills against both CUNYAC rivals. The Bulldogs saw another CUNYAC Tri-Match on Oct. 11, this time around against Hunter

and York. The match against Hunter was a tight showdown. The teams traded the first two sets, Hunter winning the first, and Brooklyn taking the second. After, the following two sets were incredibly close, but Hunter was able to win both, 30-28 and 25-22 respectively. The Hawks were able to survive an impressive offensive attack from the Bulldogs which saw Sophomore Ashley Fung score 17 kills. The second match of the day went better for the Bulldogs, as Brooklyn swept York three sets to none. The match was never in doubt. Brooklyn won each set by double digits.

After having their Oct. 14 match against Medgar Evers get canceled, the Bulldogs played again Oct. 15 against New Jersey City University. The Bulldogs kept each set close, all within three points, but ended up getting swept by the visiting NJCU. Junior Setter Ezri Shor tallied 24 assists and 14 digs. She and her teammates’ strong play was not enough for the formidable Knights from New Jersey. After these last string of games, the Bulldogs maintain a winning record, 10-9, and a 3-1 record in conference play. Brooklyn will play next Oct. 19 against CUNYAC rival John Jay.



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Women’s Tennis Split Two Matches

By Owen Russell
Sports Editor

The women’s tennis team only played twice these past two weeks. They split the two matches, winning their first, and losing their second. On Oct. 9, the Bulldogs hosted Lehman College. It was a dominant showing for Brooklyn, as the team won 7-2. It was an entire team effort, as singles competitors #2 through #6 all picked up victories. The win gave Brooklyn their second of

the season and their first in conference play. Oct. 15 saw the Bulldogs lose to conference rival John Jay. The Bloodhounds won 6-3, dominating in singles competition. Brooklyn’s lone singles win came from Sophomore Veronika Tsiko, as she won #3 singles. The match against John Jay closes out the regular season play for the Bulldogs. The first round of the CUNYAC Conference Championships begins on Oct. 24.



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