‘Play Ball!’

Meet Sam Nahem, The BC Alum Who Fought For Baseball’s Integration

pg. 12–13
By Gabriela Flores
Editor-In-Chief

With one ticket running for president in the student government election, and a referendum that proposes cuts in student activity fees for all undergraduates and other changes, Brooklyn College students began casting their votes this Monday, Apr. 4 for who will form part of the new Undergraduate Student Government administration. The election ran till Wednesday, Apr. 6 at 5 p.m., with the results pending as of press time.

"Make sure to cast your vote for the students who you feel will best represent you and your interests at Brooklyn College and CUNY. Please let your voices be heard," Ron Jackson, Vice President For Student Affairs, wrote in a college-wide email on Apr. 5.

On this year’s ballot, USG Co-President Aharon Grama bids again for presidency with his new running mate, Carrie Ebin, a first-year student who is currently serving in the government’s senate. The election also included 23 other students running for senate, a legislative body that sets the annual budget for USG and the 104 student clubs that are overseen by its governance, according to BC’s official website. Senators also investigate and address student concerns.

Though the senate has 27 spots for interested students, the proposed referendum included for voting this year will decrease the openings to 19 if passed. To Grama, this decrease would enable the government to operate with a balance of "the diverse aspect and probably the effective aspect."

For the cabinet – the executive branch that allows representatives to speak, introduce directives, vote, and count for a quorum on cabinet meetings – will also have one seat removed and transferred to the senate, bringing the total number of cabinet members to seven if the referendum passes.

"This would also be beneficial because that odd number will help with getting quorum," Grama told The Vanguard, noting that the student advocate role would be moved to the senate. "[...] The student advocate over here, who used to be on the cabinet, would actually now be in charge of the senate in some capacity - I think that’s very good for the check and balances."

The proposed referendum also asked BC voters whether they wanted to have their student activity fees decreased and for certain referendum groups to move under the discretion of USG.

In order for the referendum to be implemented, regulations call for several steps, including a majority student vote on the proposed changes.

Prez Anderson Updates BC On Resources, Events, And Job Openings

By Matthew Hirsch
News Editor

As campus life makes a comeback, Brooklyn College President Michelle Anderson addressed some important updates for the BC community to take note of in her latest email on Monday, Mar. 28.

Notably, all Brooklyn College community members have access to campus safety escort services. Those feeling uncomfortable leaving campus by themselves can contact campus safety at 718-951-5531 to request a campus safety officer to walk them to their train station or vehicle. Escort requests should be made at least twenty minutes in advance, Anderson noted.

The Women’s Center is also planning a self-defense class, “specifically to address personal safety concerns,” according to the letter. This announcement comes in the midst of a rise in “on-campus conflict” President Anderson spoke about at the last Faculty Council meeting.

Now that the Brooklyn College campus reopened, students looking for work-study or part-time employment are in luck. The college is offering employment opportunities to students through Hire BC for the first time since the pandemic began. “As the campus is fully operational, work study and part-time CA jobs are now available on campus that provide students with financial support,” wrote Anderson in the email.

Nobel Laureate and Brooklyn College alum Leymah Gbowee is giving a speech in the Tang Auditorium on Apr. 8. She’ll be discussing her experiences as a leader in the nonviolent women’s peace movement that played a role in ending the Liberian civil war. Those unable to make it to the event can watch a livestream available on Brooklyn College’s YouTube page.

Mental health counseling is also available to any and all Brooklyn College community members who are struggling. Students can schedule confidential sessions by sending an email to BCPersonalCounseling@gmail.com. Faculty and staff are encouraged to use the CUNY Work/Live Program.

Anderson ended the email with a reminder that Ramadan began on Apr. 1, and for the BC community to be considerate toward the Muslim community members who may be fasting.
NYPIRG Plans Event To Help BC Students Access Fair Fares

By Radwan Farraj
Staff Writer

More than 270,000 New York residents have received half-fare MetroCards as a part of the city’s Fair Fares Program, which began in early 2019 with the help of Mayor Bill de Blasio. NYPIRG’s upcoming event on Thursday, Apr. 7 will teach BC students how they can apply to Fair Fares and how NYPIRG plans to campaign for increased student accessibility to the program.

“This is a part of the NYPIRG Straphangers Campaign… our goal is to essentially make transportation easier for students in general,” said David Dugue, a project leader for NYPIRG. The Straphangers Campaign is NYPIRG’s central campaign for working towards better city transit and has been active for the last four decades.

Goals for the campaign include creating 30 miles of new bus lanes, improving entry onto buses with the use of the city’s fare paying system OMNY, and advocating for bus improvements in city budgets, according to Dugue.

“We’re advocating for holding the mayor accountable for saying he supports the MTA,” said Dugue. “We’re trying to hold him accountable for students to have better transportation.”

To be eligible for the Fair Fares program, the city requires that applicants live below the federal poverty line, which lies at $26,500 for a family of four.

“NYPIRG was part of the original effort to implement Fair Fares in 2019. Students were out there rallying and lobbying their elected officials,” said Shelli Cohen, a project coordinator for NYPIRG’s BC chapter.

By changing the eligibility requirement to better residents and workers’ lives,” said Stringer in a statement to PSC CUNY. “I know the value of a CUNY education…I know the economic return is worth it.”

NYPIRG’s flyer for an upcoming event on affordable fares./NYPIRG

Gov. Kathy Hochul Delays The New CUNY Budget

By Matthew Hirsch
News Editor

New York Governor Kathy Hochul couldn’t come to a deal with lawmakers to pass a new state budget by the Apr. 1 deadline, which includes new CUNY and SUNY budgets.

Hochul had proposed a record-setting $216.3 billion executive budget, but state senators are shooting for a $6 billion increase. Bail reform and casinos are a few key issues holding the budget back.

Governor Hochul proposed $1.5 billion for SUNY and CUNY over the next five years. However, senators such as Andrew Gounardes, who sponsors Senate Bill S4461A, the New Deal for CUNY, are asking for a $500 million increase. The New Deal for CUNY would make tuition free at all CUNY colleges. As well as increase the full-time faculty-to-student ratio and raise pay for adjunct professors. It would also increase the ratio of mental health professionals to students from about 1:2,700 to 1:1,000.

On Mar. 30, CUNY faculty, staff, and students held a rally at Lehman College in the Bronx to advocate for the new deal. New York City District 11 Council Member Erik Dinowitiz attended the rally and spoke on behalf of the budget increase.

“CUNY is a vehicle for upward mobility. It provides education to people who are going to go out and make our city better,” Dinowitiz said. “But it’s not about the numbers. It is about investing in people…like the students behind us.”

CUNY Rising Alliance (CRA), a coalition of over 30 organizations, made its way up to Albany last week to advocate for the new budget. Previously, CRA marched over the Brooklyn Bridge for the cause.

Notably, a March 2021 report by then New York City Comptroller, Scott Stringer, showed that CUNY alums make up about 10% of the city’s private workforce. They account for a combined $55 billion in annual revenue and pay about $4.2 billion in state income taxes. The New Deal for CUNY is an investment in the economic future of New York City, many advocates argue.

“The key to economic recovery out of this pandemic is to invest in people, not one-time corporate giveaways with little, if any, guarantees to better residents and workers’ lives,” said Stringer in a statement to PSC CUNY. “I know the value of a CUNY education…I know the economic return is worth it.”

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NYPIRG’s flyer for an upcoming event on affordable fares./NYPIRG
BC Hosts Local Sustainability Orgs For Earth Month

By Gabriela Flores
Editor-In-Chief

Reporting assistance by Radwan Farraj

As April begins, so does Earth Month, which places emphasis on sustainability, environmentally-friendly practices, and other ways that humans can better the planet's state. To kickoff Brooklyn College's observance of the month, NYPIRG, the Undergraduate Student Government, and Campus Sustainability invited local green-thumbed organizations to share their initiatives with students on the East Quad lawn.

With a handful of community leaders in attendance, students were able to connect with initiatives like the Wyckoff House Museum, an East Flatbush-based organization that aims to educate and engage with New Yorkers on sustainable farming.

"We were looking forward to meeting some of the students here," said Zack Strein, the museum's manager. "For some students, we might be their immediate neighbors, for others they're not our way. And for anyone interested in sustainability, urban agriculture, food system, where how those things relate to social justice, we hope to work together with those students and engage them in stewarding our space."

Though Wyckoff has been running for about 40 years, its current programs, that include using a public park as an educational garden for high schoolers, has been alive for approximately five to six years. Beyond working hand-in-hand with community members on the city's land, other organizations shared with BC students the importance of demanding state decision-makers to do more for New York's environment.

"Our mission is to oppose corporate control and abuse of our most vital resources and ensure that government fulfills its obligation to protect our health, our communities, and our environment," said Eric Weltman, a senior organizer of the Food and Water Watch, an organization that opposes fracked gas. For those who stopped by his table, Weltman asked them to sign a petition to Governor Kathy Hochul, the state legislature, Assembly, and Senate. The petition advocates for the state budget to include a bill called the All-Electric Building Act, which bans fracked gas and other fossil fuels in new buildings erected across New York despite the extraction method being prohibited in the state.

"Fracking is a dangerous method of extracting natural gas and oil," Weltman said. "[..] So fracking, unfortunately, is still being done in Pennsylvania and Ohio. And that's where New York State gets much of our gas - it's fracked in other states. So even though like I said, we've banned fracking here in New York, we're still very much reliant on fossil fuels and fracked gas in particular are from other states."

At Brooklyn College, sustainability efforts are also taking shape across campus with resources like maps of bottle-filling stations installations distributed for all community members to use.

"There's always new things coming up on how we can better reduce waste in new ways," said Sondus Elboluk, a Campus Sustainability Public Health Ambassador. As COVID restrictions rolled back, her program's focus has shifted from pandemic-related duties to increasing sustainability at Brooklyn College. One short-term goal the program has initiated includes the cafeterias' latest addition of clear bins to allow students to discard unused plastic. Their goal! To demonstrate for onlookers how much plastic BC uses.

"This is to start engaging public opinion and awareness on the amount of plastic being used on campus," said Bryant Tufino Flores, a Public Health Ambassador.
Brooklyn College held a “Management Consulting in the Digital Age: Insights of the VP of Enterprise Consulting of Media.Monks” event on Monday, Mar. 28. The conference was hosted by Professor Ngoc Cindy Pham and Nelson Jiang, alongside guest Matt Lentz, the Vice President of Enterprise Consulting at Media. Monks.

“We wanted to give them an overview of what the industry is like, and how they can break into the field, in terms of how to prepare for recruitment,” Jiang told The Vanguard, noting the conference was meant to introduce students with a focus in marketing to the profession and offer them some internship opportunities.

Vice President Lentz first described the ways Media. Monks figures out how brands reach new groups of customers digitally.

“We are essentially a new age ad holding company that approaches everything in a more holistic manner, rather than a disparate model that a lot of incumbents approach today,” he said.

Lentz then discussed the role of the consultants, who work to help organizations and their leaders solve their most challenging issues, including how to best increase their revenues, present a new product available on the market, or cut the company’s costs.

Lastly, he talked about how students could get into the consulting world. Lentz pointed out that technical skills, or knowledge that allow you to perform tasks, can be something that gets the candidate to the interview. While non-technical skills, or interpersonal skills that enable someone to successfully interact with colleagues and clients, will help to get them through the interview itself. He highlighted that communicating and networking with people from the sphere are essential for marketing. Building connections will not only make it easier to move faster within the consulting career path, but it will also help students find a mentor who could walk them through all of the position’s processes and nuances.

Lentz also suggested some courses that could be helpful for students to become more familiar with the field, such as strategy and management, and business and analytics courses. “Data is essentially a new oil […],” said Lentz. “If you are able to come up with creative insights that are able to drive a client, you’re going to rise incredibly fast in your career […].”

Furthermore, he highlighted the importance of extracurricular activities that may help students get a position in a company and practice their skills. Lentz also gave some resume tips, like quantifying your impact, keeping your LinkedIn updated, and skipping out on a mission statement.

“Don’t tell me that you are results-oriented, show me that you are results-oriented,” said Lentz. While discussing recruiting, Lentz emphasized the importance of networking events and elevator pitches, that you always need to have ready.

At the end of the event, James Lynch, the Chair of the Business Management Department at BC, introduced the new Data Analytics program that is currently developing. The program will soon be available for both undergraduate and graduate students.

“We wanted to identify which critical skills the students really need,” said Lynch. “They needed to hear that because they needed to know that there is no shortcut to having skills that are going to be applicable to the marketplace if they want to get jobs that they can stay with for a long term.”
Under The Sea: CUNY Student Melina Giakoumis Studies Climate Change’s Impact On Sea Stars

By Serin Sarsour
Features Editor

Melina Giakoumis has spent the last five years researching the response sea stars have to climate change as she travels all across the east coast region of North America, collecting sea star DNA samples. The CUNY Graduate Center student is a PhD candidate in the ecology and evolutionary biology program, who has been interested in ocean life since the very beginning.

“I have always loved the outdoors and especially the ocean. My dad likes to fish, so we spent lots of weekends on his boat,” Giakoumis told The Vanguard. “Also, my family comes from Greece and they are all fishermen there, so I kind of grew up hearing and seeing for myself about these changes that were happening in the ocean, and I sort of got interested in climate change.”

She also noted how she appreciates the fact that invertebrates, such as sea stars, are some of the most charismatic species.

As a result, Giakoumis’ passion for climate change and its impacts on wildlife and ecosystems translated into her future as she majored in environmental studies and earned her master’s degree at Columbia University in conservation biology. At the very beginning of her research five years ago, Giakoumis was granted the opportunity to revisit a 1979 study about sea stars that’s similar to hers. She highlighted a significant difference between the decades-old study and what she has found in the past few years. During her first trip to collect sea star DNA samples, she drove from New York to Florida and stopped at numerous beaches along the way. However, to her surprise, she only came across a couple of sea stars.

“When I was looking back at the historic literature, that was not the case in the 1970s. In that study in 1979, they were finding in certain places up to 18 to 20 sea stars per quarter meter squared;” Giakoumis said, raising the point that those findings were the last time someone had rigorously documented the density and abundance of the sea star species found in that part of the world. Giakoumis is working with the Schoodic Institute at Acadia National Park to redo the survey so that there is some contemporary data available to compare directly to the research done in 1979 and further understand why there is such a drastic decline in sea stars in the beaches she visited. She continues to utilize the same protocols and same places that were in the original survey to look at how the density of sea stars have changed in the last 40 years, but she has also added a few places that have not been covered and documented in the past.

The work that Giakoumis has been doing is divided in two components: the 1979 survey that she is revisiting, and genomics work in which she collects and studies the entirety of the DNA sets of sea stars. “What we are finding with the genomic work is that they [a species of sea stars] actually are hybridizing in the area of New England where their distributions overlap,” she said, emphasizing that these sea stars have been shown to crossbreed, or hybridize, in a lab setting but they have never been conclusively documented to do so in the wild.

Furthermore, Giakoumis is currently doing work with the genomic data to figure out what parts of the environment shape the distributions of the two species and which areas of the hybrid zones in the environment make it possible for the sea stars to inhabit and crossbreed there. Her goal is to find a correlation between variations discovered in the genetic data to variations in the environment.

“I basically snorkel around or wait at low tide to find sea stars. I then pull a couple of tissue samples, so like 10 of their tube feet from each sea star. If you have ever flipped over a sea star, the little suction cups on them are called tube feet, which they can grow back if they are pulled off,” said Giakoumis, describing a method she utilizes to find and analyze sea stars within her genomic work. After collecting the tissues from the sea stars, she isolates and standardizes the DNA from them with established protocols, such as DNA extraction kits, along with sequencing and preservation techniques. Giakoumis then puts individual sea stars together in groups based on how genetically similar they are.

“From there, you can kind of assess how much ancestry has come from each species. All of the species that are pure individuals will cluster together, and the same will happen for the other species. Everything else will have like chunks of the genome from each of the other two species, so that is how you can tell which individuals are hybrids,” Giakoumis explained. “I would really like to stay in the marine invertebrate conservation field if possible.”
BC Alumna Malena Dayen Takes Opera Scene By Storm, Earns Hodder Fellowship

By Michela Arlia
Arts Editor

Originally hailing from Argentina, Malena Dayen is a well-established opera singer who has performed all over the world and worked with accomplished composers in the New York City opera scene, building a name for herself that goes without notice.

Dayen was recently awarded the Hodder Fellowship in the Lewis Center for the Arts at Princeton University after earning her MFA in Performance and Interactive Media Arts from Brooklyn College in 2020. Her time at BC helped to pave the way towards this amazing accomplishment.

“Tango is my musical mother tongue, the music I grew up with and that I still keep discovering,” expressed Dayen. “It’s like a treasure trunk in the attic where I keep finding new inspiration. The tradition of tango is very rich and in a way, very operatic.”

Dayen’s love of music has transformed itself over the years. A singer at heart, she always felt the creative need to explore how other artforms interact with opera and how to best blend them together for the audience’s pleasure.

“Although I know opera is where I belong in terms of making art, the role I have in it has changed in the last years and the discovery of what I do with opera is still ongoing,” Dayen told The Vanguard. “I’m passionate about the intersections of opera with other art forms, like dance, film, and new technologies.”

Following her time at BC, she came out of the program directing many innovative projects for major opera companies, where she experimented to great lengths and pushed boundaries where necessary.

In November 2021, Dayen directed “Cuando el Fuego Abrasa,” a co-production of Opera Hispánica and Teatro Grattacielo at LaMama. Other directing credits include a production of Pietro Mascagni’s “L’Amico Fritz” at the Festival of the Voice in Phoenicia, NY and LaMama, “Heroes of New York,” and “The Late Walk,” a new opera in collaboration with Bare Opera and the Decameron Opera Coalition that was inducted into The Library of Congress’s Performing Arts COVID-19 Response Collection. Dayen also starred and directed in a production of Astor Piazzolla’s “María de Buenos Aires” and “Don Giovanni” with Bare Opera in New York City.

Dayen has been fortunate enough to work on many projects over the course of her career, her latest being one that was springboarded by her classmates at BC.

“My time at BC was amazing,” said Dayen. “I had a group of outstanding professors that became mentors and offered excellent opportunities and support.”

Dayen and fellow alum Sangmin Chae have co-created a new experimental operatic work entitled “Exercises on The Presence of Odradek,” which blended the styles of opera and technology, and was performed in a live online format.

Having moved to New York with her husband in 2001, Dayen has built a life in a place that she is proud to call her new-home, with many opportunities such as the fellowship helping her along the way.

“We [Dayen and her husband] both found the diversity of its people and the immense cultural and artistic offerings very inspiring and are now proud to be part of this community and be called New Yorkers,” Dayen said.
Students Showcase
Original Works At Annual CUNY Theatre Festival

By Gabriela Flores
Editor-In-Chief

In a night filled with freshly written work, monologues, and theatrical performances of all sorts, CUNY students showcased their talents and wit despite the pandemic’s odds. This year’s CUNY Theatre Festival remained virtual on Mar. 26, with creators making the best of their zoom stage — bringing everything from a reflection on Brooklyn’s gentrification to a chilling play on cannibalistic siblings. “These theater-makers from CUNY’s all over the city have created new work, some upcoming works that are personal, true, and raw,” said Amanda Santiago, a LaGuardia Community College student who was the event’s master of ceremonies. “And especially after coming out of a pandemic, there’s so much spiraling within us that we just want to let out, right?”

Playwrights, directors, actors, and everyone in between the night’s production represented different campuses, including Borough of Manhattan (BMCC), Brooklyn, Lehman, York, and others. To kickstart the several performances, students Kayla Greene and Maite Martin from LaGuardia opened with original pieces that were created that morning during a devised theater workshop with Stefanie Sertich, a professor from their college. Greene performed “Are You Happy?”, a reflective piece on the pressures that weigh on adults in American society. From earning a bachelor’s degree to having children, adults are pushed to live with an absence of passions, according to Greene’s piece. “When I’m alone in the dark, I ask myself, ‘Am I happy or am I pressured?’” recited Greene, later emphasizing her desire for putting happiness first.

In her own performance, Martin delivered “Memories Best Kept The Brooklyn Way.” Backdropped by a photo of herself as a child, Martin reminisced about Bedford-Stuyvesant, when she and her dad went to Underwood Park for the day and got pizza after, all while living 15-minutes away from their former brownstone. As gentrification seeped into the neighborhood, she noticed just how much Brooklyn has changed. “If I woke up tomorrow with amnesia, the memories I would want to return are my childhood memories in Bedford-Stuyvesant, before gentrification hit the fan and ruined the charm,” Martin opened, later ending her piece on how to spread love the “Brooklyn way.”

Followed by the two self-written works were monologues. The first on the night’s schedule was Joshua Newkirk from BMCC, who played Enzo from “The Lotus Eaters Anonymous,” a play written by BC student Nolan Patrick Frontera. With his zoom camera set up vertically, Newkirk wore a black sweater while performing as a recovering drug addict whose faith in God pulled him out of his darkest days when he shot up heroin. “As I got higher and higher, the world just kept getting darker and darker — until it became too dark, and it took Narcan and a few slaps to the face to revive me,” Newkirk recited. This snippet of Enzo allowed viewers to hear his arc, from being the one who needed help to now being the helping hand that aids those with similar struggles.

Right after Newkirk’s performance was Avinash Nandlal with a self-written piece called “The Truth.” Nandlal spewed his own truths and reflections of different issues that make up society, dictating his words with accompanying rhymes. “[...] I’m giving a contract to my soul, but I refuse to sign. Cuz I define my life by every letter, word, and line. And I live for something I'd die for — what you find, what you're willing to go to war, for what's real is the truth,” he closed his piece.

Shatisha Bryant from BMCC followed with three back-to-back performances that highlighted her greatness as an actress and undeniable talent in embodying each of her characters. In her first monologue from “Look At Me,” by LaGuardia student Sheila Gilot, Bryant sported an orange bob wig and a black trench coat. She looked off-camera to address “her dad,” and spoke of liking a man and being more than a good girl. For her second act, derived from Kayla Greene’s “More Than That,” Bryant took off her coat and wig to portray a character that was upset about being ridiculed for every little mistake she commits. Moving to the verge of tears, viewers saw just how versatile Bryant is as an actress.

With her third performance “Maybe I Was Meant to Survive,” written by Myrleven's Adran from York College, Bryant scrambled to her desk that sat in front of the camera while addressing her audience eye-to-eye. Though it is unclear where exactly her character was, one can tell she's undergoing suicidal thoughts and has swallowing her traumas without fully healing from their harms. “I'd die for — what you find, every letter, word, and line. And I live for something to my soul, but I refuse to sign. Cuz I define my life by every letter, word, and line. And I live for something I'd die for — what you find, what you're willing to go to war, for what's real is the truth,” he closed his piece.

Continued on page 9...
Bill rehashed the details they chose to be a therapist. As her “the truth” of why she pushed Bill to tell the appointment. Dylan brought a loaded gun (which actually turned out to be a water gun) to the edge: when Nick pressed Bill into the day that pushed viewers were immersed into the night's final set of works. Four 10-minute plays were curated and cleverly shown, each adapted to zoom screens. First up was “Bill,” written by Jake Okula and directed by Mu-Hsi Kao. The piece centered around a former therapist named Billie, or Bill (Anabel Lugones), who quit her profession as a “sex-crazed Granny,” to her patients like Catherine, whose turns off. There, viewers were immersed into the day that pushed Bill into the edge: when Dylan brought a loaded gun (which actually turned out to be a water gun) to the appointment.

Dylan pushed Bill to tell her “the truth” of why she chose to be a therapist. As Bill rehashed the details to Nick, she was told what she’d always tell her patients: “Our problems, however big or small, will pass.”

Cutting the tension with even more drama was “Glory Whole,” a play that was written by Leonardo Gonzalez Dominguez and directed by Curtis Howard. The night’s attendees were the only ones able to catch an intimate look at foreplay gone wrong since the organizers paused the event’s recording for the play’s duration.

“Utica Ave” by Chelsea Allison followed, and was directed by Doreen M. Nemorin. Set on an empty subway station at Utica Avenue in January 2021, the play centers around Shawntay (Kira), Martin (Shatisha Bryant—played by Erica Jeudy), and Tracey (Adrien), a patient who is stone-cold after. Similar to her profession, Bill looks at her own therapist, Bill has cried during her first therapy session but became adamant on staying on the track of survival again. Nick’s presence on the zoom screen comes as his character thinks of his mother dies. On the zoom screen, viewers saw Bryant and Wilson’s performances encapsulate a scared little girl, with a screen showing the undeniable young chemistry between the two partners, but their unfortunate reality and circumstances are what audience members can assume will separate them.

The scene closed with the train’s arrival. To conclude the eventful night filled with theatrical twists and turns, Maite Martin (Kira) and Shatisha Bryant (Shawntay) returned to deliver a chilling performance called “Family Meal.” The production, written by Georgina Woo and directed by Jill Alday, was set in a post-apocalyptic world with two siblings sitting around a bonfire with meat cooking. Shawntay is the youngest sister, having just turned 12 the week before. Her sister Kira seemingly becomes her caretaker after their mother dies. On the zoom screen, viewers saw Bryant encapulate a scared little girl, with a screen showing a bonfire placed right in the middle between her and Martin. There were no visuals of what creatures were attacking mankind in this fictional world, but Shawntay and Kira kept referring to them as “monsters.” As the younger sister gets more scared, and the other tries comforting her, some secrets start to unravel.

While Shawntay describes how she knows that their mother killed their pet, presumably a dog, for food, Kira is taken aback. “She said we had to eat, or we’d die, and you ran away,” Shawntay recalled. One thing led to another and Shawntay aired out another secret Kira hid from her: how the meat they were eating is their mother’s flesh.

“I wish you didn’t bury the rest of her,” Shawntay said, throwing audience members into a silent shock. “[...] Mom had more meat anyway” she said, closing the night’s final act.
The other day on Instagram, I saw a story urging Americans to better understand the crisis in Ukraine. The situation on the ground, the story explained, is one where Putin is planning on constructing concentration camps, Russian soldiers are playing games involving hunting children, and that the war is overwhelmingly popular amongst ordinary Russians. While obviously against the war, I am becoming increasingly wary of some of the messaging one can find floating in the news and online. The problem is not bringing awareness about the atrocities of war but framing the conflict in such a way that insists upon further escalation, particularly by the hands of NATO and the United States.

In early March, a guerilla action by several artists filled the floor of New York's Guggenheim Museum with paper airplanes to signify the need for a no-fly zone over Ukraine. This is just one example of liberally minded individuals, whose hearts are arguably in the right place, expending energy in a completely backward trajectory. A no-fly zone, for those unaware, is a whisper away from a declaration of war; establishing a precedent to shoot down any military aircraft entering said zone and in effect, immediately creating grounds for compounding the scale of the conflict.

Stringently damning the entirety of Russia, calling for a no-fly zone, and unilaterally praising Ukrainian officials we know nothing about, are all avenues for distorting our understanding of the conflict and distancing us from the arrival of a lasting peace. The aggressor is plainly in the wrong, and the horrors brought upon the people of Ukraine are incalculable. But once that conclusion has been reached, the work left to be done should be objective. Do we hate war? If the answer is yes, the goal should be to seek peace as quickly as possible. The headlines, and the entire profit model of news media, demand drama. It is easier to get traffic on a story or post asking if the US is doing enough to prevent further suffering than to encourage readers to perform a cost-benefit analysis of getting directly involved in a conflict with a hostile nuclear superpower. It doesn’t take a background in geopolitics or the logistics of military engagement to get the gist that the US or NATO committing more than military equipment and humanitarian aid spells out a conflict much more costly than the one being acted out in the present. Do not mistake the usage of ‘cost-benefit analysis’ as glossing over the loss of human life. The cost I am most concerned with are human lives, and it is why I am generally opposed to the West doing much more than they are right now. In addition to becoming jaded or losing the ability to remain engaged at all, I also fear that the constant stream of updates mixing emotion with both facts and fiction will frivolously kidnap our attention and trap us into limited ways of thinking.

The penalty for staring too long is losing sight of the primary objective—peace—and beginning to see heightened military action as a solution as opposed to something that should be avoided at all costs.”

By Ian Ezinga
Opinions Editor

“The penalty for staring too long is losing sight of the primary objective—peace—and beginning to see heightened military action as a solution as opposed to something that should be avoided at all costs.”

Ukrainian troops outside Kyiv on Saturday, Apr. 2/Nadim Ghirda for AP
Opinion: Words Can Be A Form Of Violence Too

By Priscilla Mensah
Staff Writer

By now there have been upwards of thousands of think pieces written about the Will Smith and Chris Rock fiasco. Instead of frivolously adding to the pile of mind-numbing articles, I want to use this space to share my opinion about how to navigate, and perhaps more importantly, learn from breaking news, such as this, as it unfolds.

As I was inundated, as you probably were as well, with the first wave of videos, memes, and social media posts surrounding the incident, I formed an initial opinion that I deliberately made flexible for if, and when, I learned more information. While this event has already been deeply conversed, I still find value in, if only briefly, breaking it down with the hopes that healthy ways of intaking media can be learned in the process.

If nothing else good comes of the slap that Will Smith landed on Chris Rock last Sunday, we should at least learn some valuable life lessons which can be applied to our lives. Among such lessons to be learned include recognizing the various forms that violence is now understood to be possible of engendering.

Many who sided, at least initially, with Will Smith were quick to point out the violence of Chris Rock's words. This acknowledgement of the ability of violence to take forms other than our traditional understanding of it, has important implications for us going forward.

For one, it, quite importantly, sends the message that words too can be destructive, and because of this, we should be careful with how we choose our words. This is a good message to get across because people often attempt to weaponize words in ways that do more harm than some forms of "actual," physical violence. Worded insults have habitually been a way to circumvent the normative and perhaps expected punishment that comes along with committing violent acts.

Though the consensus seems to be that Will Smith was in the wrong, if those who, at least in the beginning, supported Will Smith are on to something, it should serve as a reminder that words have the power to inflict real pain to those on the receiving end of them.

Also, you might have been like me, and at first sided with Smith, while understanding Rock's perspective. In other words, you may have been torn. The reason why I was initially torn in my opinion was because - as I previously touched on in the beginning of this piece - I did not know all the facts. I came to an opinion, with the understanding that it might change once I have more information.

This initial opinion was based primarily on hearing that Rock insulted Smith's wife, Jada Pinkett Smith, and her medical condition that is alopecia.

Almost immediately, I sided with perspectives which contended that Rock's words were violent. It was only after I saw for myself - and not merely relying on recaps of the event that lacked actual footage - did I change my tune about the violent nature of Rock's words, noticing that Rock prefaced his joke by first saying "Jada, I love you..." coupled with a lighthearted tone.

Nonetheless, it is clear, even with some people no longer classifying Rock's words as violent after given proper context, that there has been a renewed interest and understanding of the ways in which words too can be violent. Such renewed public intrigue and broadened comprehension will likely remain with us for years to come. Going forward, we all need to be mindful of the ways in which our words, whether intentional or not, can be just as harmful as physical and more traditionally understood forms of violence.
Sam Nahem: BC Alum, MLB Pitcher, and Civil Rights Activist

By John Schilling
Managing Editor

The day was Tuesday, Aug. 17, 1948. Philadelphia Phillies pitcher Sam Nahem headed for the mound in the top of the sixth inning, preparing to face Brooklyn Dodgers rookie catcher and eventual Hall of Famer Roy Campanella.

The Phillies, who trailed the Dodgers 5-0, were right at home in Shibe Park, located in the heart of Philadelphia, but to say that Nahem was at home would not be accurate.

Nahem was no stranger to the Brooklyn Dodgers or Brooklyn as a whole, as he had begun his career with the Dodgers in 1938 at 22 years old, graduated from Brooklyn College in 1935, and grew up on Ocean Parkway for most of his childhood as one of eight children to Syrian Jewish immigrants.

As a Brooklyn Dodger 10 years prior, Nahem was not a teammate of Campanella, who at the time, still played in the Negro Leagues with baseball having yet to be integrated. When Jackie Robinson broke Major League Baseball’s color barrier in 1947, Campanella would join the Dodgers the following year, but the racist attitudes of the time were far from over and Black baseball players continued to face abuse both on and off the field.

Despite Nahem’s Brooklyn roots and familiarity with the Dodgers, he was very much an extrovert, but he would say that he was actually very shy before he became a star athlete, and he made this transition while at Brooklyn College. 

Despite not making his high school baseball team, Nahem was a Kingsman through and through at Brooklyn College, where he pitched for the school’s baseball team and even played quarterback and fullback for the football team.

Between his on-field athleticism and off-field activism, Nahem seemed to have left very little time for his studies, something that his son, Ivan, learned along with Occidental College Professor Peter Dreier when the two researched him for a story in late 2020.

"Peter and I were surprised to learn that his academic record, which I requested from the school, was actually subpar," Ivan Nahem told The Vanguard. "He was a sophisticated thinker and surely would have done well if he had applied himself. It’s possible that his passion for sports interfered with this."

What Nahem may have lacked at Brooklyn College, he made up for in the years that followed. After graduating, Nahem signed with the Brooklyn Dodgers and spent three years in the minor leagues. Within that time, according to the Jewish Baseball Museum, Nahem was "discovered" by Dodgers Manager and eventual Hall of Famer Casey Stengel, who first noticed him pitching batting practice at Ebbets Field in 1935 and could not hit off of him when got into the cage to try.

As previously mentioned, Nahem would finally reach the Major League level in 1938, and it was here that he would begin to speak on baseball’s integration.

"In New York if you’re young and Jewish you’re political," Nahem told The Jewish News of Northern California. "And I did my political work there. I would take one guy aside if I thought he was amiable in that respect and talk to him, man to man, about the subject. I felt that was the way I could be most effective."

Oddly enough, Nahem, by his own admission, found himself in these positions throughout his career as most of the places he played were made up of people vehemently opposed to the integration of baseball and Black baseball players in general.

After only one game with the Dodgers in 1938 in which he pitched all nine innings, surrendered three runs, and still recorded the win, Nahem was traded to the St. Louis Cardinals in 1940 and found himself back in the big leagues in 1941, a career season he would finish with a 3-2 record, a 2.98 ERA, 31 strikeouts, and just under 82 innings pitched.

One year later, Nahem switched teams again with the Philadelphia Phillies purchasing his contract from St. Louis, and it was here especially that Nahem found himself at odds with some of his teammates, which prompted him to speak about the issue of integration individually instead of openly.

"One of the southerners was sulminating in the clubhouse in a racist way and I made some halfway innocuous remark defending blacks coming in to baseball," Nahem revealed in "The Whiz

Continued on page 13...
Kids and the 1950 Pennant. "Boy, he went into a real tantrum and really came down on me. So I decided I would not confront anyone openly. Your prestige on a ballpark depends on your won-loss record and your earned run average. I didn't have that to back me up. I only had logic and decency and humanity. So after that I would just speak to some of the guys privately about racism in a mild way."

While Nahem called for integration early on and challenged those who complained when it finally happened, his biggest accomplishment came on the field, but not a Major League Baseball field.

After pitching 35 games with the Phillies in 1942, Nahem enlisted in the U.S. Army that November during World War II, hoping to aid in the fight against Nazism in Europe. During his first two years of service, Nahem was stationed at Fort Totten in New York, where he continued to play baseball, a program the military would expand after Germany's surrender in May 1945.

When this happened, Nahem, who had been sent overseas to a base in Reims, France the year prior, ran two baseball leagues while also managing and playing for the Overseas Invasion Service (OISE) while also managing and ran two baseball leagues in France the year prior, overseas to a base in Reims, Nahem, who had been sent to Reims. When this happened, his biggest accomplishment came on the field, but not a Major League Baseball field.

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This decision, while historic, proved to be effective as well. OISE finished with a 17-1 record and went on to win the GI World Series against Germany’s Red Circlers. One month after OISE's victory, Branch Rickey signed Jackie Robinson to a contract, but Robinson would not break MLB's color barrier until two years later when the Dodgers finally called him up. Nahem would return to the big leagues a year after that in 1948 as a member of the Philadelphia Phillies once again, but his 3-3 record and 7.02 ERA across 28 games and 59 innings pitched indicated that his best days were behind him. He would never see MLB playing time again but kept the sport for the San Juan team in the Puerto Rican League toward the end of the 1948 season and for the Brooklyn Bushwicks, an independent team, during 1949.

In the years after, Nahem's leftist ideology made him an easy target during the Red Scare. Nahem, who had pursued work as a law clerk, salesman, and longshoreman, lost many jobs during this time as FBI agents alleged he was a "Communist" and informed his employers of their suspicions.

This prompted Nahem to move to San Francisco in 1955 with his wife Elsie and their three children. In California, Nahem worked at the Chevron fertilizer plant and left the Communist Party but remained civically engaged, often taking his children to "civil rights and anti-war demonstrations," according to Forward.com.

Nahem never returned to Brooklyn or New York City before passing away in 2004 at 88 years old, but the opportunity did present itself in the 1980s at Brooklyn College no less. "I [...] recall that sometime in the late 80s he was offered a coaching job at Brooklyn College. I think it was for the football team," Ivan Nahem told The Vanguard. "I think he considered it, but he loved living in his home in Berkeley, and didn't want to return to New York City."

Still, while Nahem left Brooklyn, Brooklyn never left him, and that voice he gained during his years at Brooklyn College inspired him to do great things.

So on April 15, when Passover begins and MLB coincidentally honors Jackie Robinson for breaking MLB's color barrier in 1947, let us also remember Sam Nahem, a Brooklyn-based Jewish man who called for and began baseball's integration in the military years prior.
Nets Need To Find Results Despite Kyrie Irving’s Return

By Johan Abdu

Brooklyn Nets point guard Kyrie Irving successfully ran out the vaccine clock and is starting to drive fans impatient.

After refusing to be vaccinated to comply with the city’s mandate, Irving was barred from playing Nets’ home games in Brooklyn. He was, however, allowed to travel with the Nets to play away from home, where other cities and their stadiums had looser vaccine mandates.

Ever since NYC Mayor Eric Adams officially lifted the city-wide vaccine mandate for professional athletes to put them “on a level playing field,” Kyrie Irving has played 25 games. Mar. 27 marked his debut when the Charlotte Hornets rolled into town at a jam-packed Barclays Center, and Irving himself was anxious in the days leading up.

“Please take my comment seriously when I say I’ve been pinching myself since Wednesday and Thursday because there was a time where I got my hopes really, really high and all the air just got let out,” said Irving during practice a day before.

The stage was set for Irving to deliver in front of the home crowd, season ticket holders old and new. In the end, the Nets lost to the Hornets 119-110.

The Nets season has been a real rollercoaster since. They’ve slipped down to 10th in the Eastern Conference with a 40-38 record.

“The ball’s not going to go in every night,” Nets Coach Steve Nash said of Irving. “I don’t know how much he felt that or not. It’s just not always gonna happen for you. It’s not always gonna go in.”

A team who was favored to win the East for so much of this season, now dangles by a thread, despite Irving averaging 27.08 points a game. Defensivey, the team falls apart piece-by-piece in big game situations.

What fans can look forward to these days is Irving’s desire to stay in Brooklyn.

Irving, according to the NY Daily News, will become a free agent by declining a $36.6 million player option and opting for a five-year, $246 million max deal. Or, he can exercise his player option and sign a four-year, $190 million extension with the Nets. For Irving, he already knows what he wants.

“I signed up for this for the long run,” Irving said. “Once that summertime hits, I know we’ll have some conversations. But there’s no way I can leave my man No. 7 [Kevin Durant] anywhere.”

Kyrie Irving dribbles down the court. /USA TODAY Sports

The Brooklyn Nets lose to the Hornets on Mar. 27, when Irving returned to home games. /Getty Images

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**Men’s Volleyball Finishes Season On Low Note**

By Owen Russell  
Sports Editor

The Bulldogs concluded their regular season this past week. As they roll into the playoffs, here is how they performed over the past two weeks.

On Mar. 22, Brooklyn lost to Lehman College up in The Bronx. To the Bulldogs’ credit, each set was kept fairly close. Brooklyn lost the first two sets by no more than five points (25-20, 25-23). In the third set, Brooklyn battled back and was able to nab a victory, winning 25-18. The fourth set saw Brooklyn losing a close one yet again as Lehman closed out the game with a 25-21 win. Brooklyn kept things relatively close on the scoreboard due to some great play all around by some key players. Sophomore Admir Cekic led the game in assists, tallying 35, and junior Zhao Ming Li led the Bulldogs with 11 kills.

After losing five straight, the Bulldogs finally walked away with a win on Mar. 24 against York College. Brooklyn needed a victory badly coming into this game. After suffering tough losses to multiple conference rivals, the Bulldogs were out to prove something against the York Cardinals. Brooklyn swept York in a dominant fashion, winning the first two sets by double digits (25-10, 25-11). York kept things a little closer in the third set, but the team could not stop Brooklyn from completing the sweep. Brooklyn won the third set 25-18. The Bulldogs dominated in practically every statistical category, most notably with 27 kills while York only had five. Sophomore Admir Cekic led the Bulldogs in assists with 25, and York had five assists in total.

Having just swept York, Brooklyn hoped to capitalize on their momentum against CCNY on Mar. 26. Earlier in the season, the Bulldogs suffered a sweep against the Beavers on Mar. 10. Saturday’s game was a familiar sight. Brooklyn lost in three straight sets (25-18, 25-14, 25-18). CCNY had the Bulldogs outmatched in every category. With the loss, Brooklyn’s conference record stands at 2-6.

The Bulldogs took on York again, this time on Mar. 28. Last Monday’s game was a serious case of deja vu, as the Bulldogs swept the Cardinals once again. The Bulldogs blew out York in the first two sets (25-11, 25-12). The Cardinals kept things closer in the third, but Brooklyn still won 25-17. Sophomore Admir Cekic dominated the stat sheet. By the end of the contest, he had 29 assists, six aces, and four digs. The victory marked Brooklyn’s sixth of the season.

The following day, Mar. 29, the Bulldogs lost a heartbreaker to John Jay. The Bulldogs and the Bloodhounds traded sets. The Bloodhounds won the first and third (25-22, 25-21) while the Bulldogs won the second and fourth (26-24, 25-19). The two teams needed a fifth set to determine a winner. In the fifth set, teams played to 15 rather than 25. Unfortunately for the Bulldogs, John Jay was able to reach 15 first and walked away with a hard-fought victory.

On Mar. 31, Brooklyn played its last game of the regular season against Hunter College. It was a tough draw for the Bulldogs since Hunter came into the match-up #1 in the CUNYAC. Brooklyn fought as much as they could, but ultimately suffered a sweep by the Purple Hawks (25-19, 25-13, 25-18). It was Brooklyn’s second loss to Hunter this season, and 15th loss in total.

Having put the regular season behind them, Brooklyn will now begin postseason play. The Bulldogs enter the championship season as the fifth seed. Their first matchup in the CUNYAC Championship Tournament will be against fourth seeded John Jay on Apr. 5. The winner will face Hunter College, the 1st seed.

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**Men’s Tennis Impresses Against Hunter College**

By Owen Russell  
Sports Editor

The tennis team won in their first taste of CUNY competition this past Thursday, Mar. 31.

The Bulldogs battled conference rival Hunter, marking the team’s first CUNYAC match of the season. Brooklyn won the contest narrowly, beating Hunter 5-4. Freshman Ryan Sham and sophomore Aymen Kuc secured Brooklyn’s only doubles victory of the match, defeating Hunter’s team in #1 doubles. Brooklyn nearly won every singles competition on its way to victory. Along with their doubles victory, both Sham and Kuc won singles matches as well.

Brooklyn should be riding high after its win against Hunter. The team will look to continue their momentum into their next game against St. Elizabeth University on Apr. 4.
BC Sports Recap (Mar. 21 – Apr. 4)

Women’s Softball Returns For First Time Since COVID

By Owen Russell
Sports Editor

It only took 683 days, but softball is back at Brooklyn College after COVID canceled their previous seasons. The Bulldogs opened their season with four straight double-headers.

Brooklyn’s first double-header of the season came against St. Joseph’s on Mar. 21. For the Bulldogs, it was not exactly the storybook return they had hoped for. The Bears from St. Joseph scored 18 runs in the first game and 26 in the second. Brooklyn was held scoreless in both, and held hitless in the first game. The Bulldogs struck out 10 times on their way to being no-hit in the first half of Monday’s double-header. The second game was not much better, as the Bulldogs allowed 26 runs, but Brooklyn earned its first hit in nearly two years with senior Kayla Steele recording the team’s first hit of the season.

The third and fourth games of the season for Brooklyn came against NJCU on Mar. 23. It was another scoreless night for the Bulldogs, as they were unable to manage a run in either game. As for the Knights from NJCU, it was total dominance with 18 runs in the first game and 11 runs in the second. Brooklyn recorded a total of four hits in the two games, spread out between two players. Sophomore Stella Witkowski hit three times across the two games, and Kayla Steele recorded her second hit of the season.

Brooklyn would continue its losing streak on Monday, Mar. 30 against Hunter College. Despite allowing 29 runs between the two games (18 in the first, 11 in the second), Brooklyn recorded its first runs of the season. In game one of the double-headers, Brooklyn scored five runs. Leading the charge for the Bulldogs was catcher Stella Witkowski, hitting two triples and recording two RBIs. Brooklyn’s losses to Hunter marked its fifth and six straight losses.

The Bulldogs wrapped up the past two weeks with another double-header, this time against Baruch on Apr. 1. Brooklyn lost the first game 11-2. No Bulldog recorded an RBI, but shortstop Chanel Jemmott and center fielder Carolina Alfonso scored on errors. The second game of the day was yet another loss for the Bulldogs, 12-4. This time the Bulldogs earned three of their runs.

Chanel Jemmott singled in the fifth inning, scoring one, and Carolina Alfonso also singled in the fifth, scoring two. First baseman Zoey Van Vleet scored on an error in the second.

Things could have gone better for the Bulldogs. In eight games, Brooklyn allowed 125 runs while only scoring 11. It may not be an ideal start for the Bulldogs, but there is plenty of time to turn things around. Brooklyn will be looking to secure its first win on Apr. 5 against Yeshiva University.

Vinny The Goat

by Mo Muhsin an Gab Toro Vivoni