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THE BROOKLYN COLLEGE **VANGUARD**

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see you in the spring!

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Updates On Whitman Damages And Construction By Roosevelt Hall

By Michela Arlia
Managing Editor

Over the past week, BC's campus has experienced some construction and unforeseen facilities problems across various parts of campus.

From heavy construction outside Roosevelt Hall near the tennis courts, to leaks in Whitman Hall affecting the Theater Department's spaces, and the patching up of broken glass doors at the West End Building (WEB), students were bound to see work occurring both inside and outside buildings.

According to Rich Pietras, the college's media relations manager, the trenches near the tennis courts were dug up to help with repairing pipes connecting back to WEB's

heating system.

"The piping that originated in Roosevelt Hall developed a leak, and that is being repaired by vendors being managed by DASNY [Dormitory Authority of the State of New York]," wrote Pietras to The Vanguard. "The college hopes this work is completed over the next few weeks."

Leaks and a partial ceiling collapse in the basement of Whitman Hall near the New Workshop Theater were the result of last week's rain.

"Due to heavy rains in the past few days, a drain outside the Whitman Theater was clogged with debris and overflowed on Dec. 7 into the first floor of the Whitman Theater," commented Pietras. "Water also ran downstairs and damaged several ceiling



Ceiling tiles missing after Whitman's partial ceiling collapse in the basement./*Michela Arlia*

tiles. The drain was cleared immediately by the plumbing crew, the theater carpet dried, and all damaged ceiling tiles were removed. The tiles will be replaced as soon as possible."

While Whitman now seems to be dry again, construction adjacent to the tennis courts

near Roosevelt will continue on without an end date scheduled for the time being. The Vanguard will report any follow up information as it becomes available.

USG Forms Partnership With Non-Profit Swipe Out Hunger

By Radwan Farraj
News Editor

The Undergraduate Student Government is beginning its partnership with Swipe Out Hunger to address the prevalence of student hunger at Brooklyn College. Swipe Out Hunger is a non-profit working with colleges throughout the country to better provide for students who face food insecurity.

"Swipe Out Hunger actually reached out to us in student government so that they wanted us to help promote their campaign for the Hunger Free Campus Act," Robert Adler, USG's student advocate, told The Vanguard, "which has been passed in many state legislatures, but is currently on the docket for the New York State legislature."

The Hunger Free Campus Act has passed in six other states and aims to bring state investments to campus food pantries and basic needs hubs, according to Robb Friedlander, director of advocacy for Swipe Out Hunger. The non-profit currently works on more than 450 campuses across the country in all 50 states and Canada, he added.

"Our goal is to make sure that as we are advocating up in Albany and here in the city for funding for this bill, that at the front and center of that, are Brooklyn College student voices," said Friedlander, "making sure that



USG collaborates with Swipe Out Hunger to expand food pantry and other services./*Edited by Gabriela Flores*

you all have the ability to speak straight to legislators, to let them know what's happening on campus, what the reality is on the ground, and how much we need their support in order to serve students."

Swipe out Hunger is already partnered with several CUNY and SUNY campuses, working to improve food pantries at all their partner organizations. Campus partners work with Swipe Out Hunger to attain a Hunger Free Campus designation, which shows that a campus has met particular requirements for providing food assistance to those in need.

Having an on-campus food pantry, information about other local pantries, the provision of food vouchers for grocery stores or meal donation programs, and pantry staff that can help students to enroll in Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits,

are some of the milestones for campuses to reach.

"Once a school is designated as a Hunger Free Campus, they're then eligible for a grant that can go right back to growing anti-hunger and basic needs programs on campus," stated Friedlander.

BC meets most of the requirements for the designation and is working with Swipe Out Hunger to better improve access to the campus' food pantry in 312 Student Center, which is currently open on Tuesday from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. and Wednesday 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. Some of the needs that could best serve BC students include more refrigerators, staff that can assist students with SNAP, homeless and housing services, and clothing centers for students to borrow professional clothing for job interviews, according to Friedlander.

"And we wanna make sure

that students are able to have a supportive environment at Brooklyn College. And that's our major goal going forward," said Adler. "Working through the legislature, working through local governments, and working on the local level in terms of helping get the administration to recognize a lot of the needs that students face and working with them towards achieving meaningful solutions."

Swipe Out Hunger and USG soon plan to meet with New York state Senators Zellnor Myrie, Kevin Parker, and Jabari Brisport, who represent neighboring parts of Brooklyn, to talk about the Hunger Free Campus Act. Members of Swipe Out Hunger and student representatives from different campuses, including BC, will go to Albany in February to campaign for the bill.

NYPIRG Demands More Funds For CUNY, SUNY In Letter To Gov. Hochul

By Gabriela Flores
Editor In Chief

The New York Public Interest Research Group garnered over 250 signatures across CUNY and SUNY campuses through a letter to Governor Kathy Hochul demanding more investments in the university's public education systems. Organizers and their supporters are calling on Hochul to consider in her upcoming executive budget providing each university a \$500 million operating budget, funding for community colleges to stay afloat through enrollment declines, expanding programs like the Tuition Assistance Program, and other resources.

"Students, faculty, and staff have been sounding the alarm on higher education funding shortfalls for years," read the letter shared on a Google Form. "And while the state's last adopted budget begins to answer the call, the work is far from over to meet the financial needs of New York's students,

faculty, staff, and institutions." The letter emphasized the importance of investing in New York's public college education, given that it is "an engine for economic growth" in the state, where over 80% of CUNY graduates stay to work in New York.

Last April, Hochul and state lawmakers passed a \$220 million budget for CUNY, with \$53 million for hiring full-time faculty across senior and community colleges. The budget also saw \$150 million to expand TAP for currently-ineligible students in CUNY and SUNY taking at least six credits in classes. Though the executive funds mark a boost in funding for the university, supporters of the New Deal for CUNY, a \$1.7 billion proposal

that advocates making the university tuition-free again, thought that more funding needed to be allocated.

Within their recent letter, NYPIRG mentioned the proposal, while outlining how \$500 million operating budgets for CUNY and SUNY

respectively would allow smaller class sizes, more mental health resources, "phase-out of tuition charges for all students," and other benefits.

"This financial ask of a \$500 million operating budget is not only necessary for the current needs of CUNY and SUNY students, professors, and staff, but long overdue," wrote Sadiya Hoque, the chairperson of NYPIRG's Board of Directors, in an email to The Vanguard. Hoque, along with other student leaders, aided in collecting signatures for the letter. The groundwork and push for the governor to increase funding for public higher education came about from local organizations like NYPIRG.

"NYPIRG and our partners worked hard to build the political momentum for these investments, and it's a no-brainer that this upcoming fiscal year should have a budget that reflects the same," said Hoque.

The letter also called for the

Dear Gov: DON'T ROLL BACK PROGRESS ON HIGHER EDUCATION SUPPORT!

Are you a club or organizational leader?!

Add your organization to the letter

Link in bio to sign



NYPIRG's promotional post asking for club organization signatures./@brooklyn_nypirg via Instagram

expansion of resources that state funding.

would help students with basic necessities outside of academia, including free and reduced-price transit fares for the MTA, LIRR, and MetroNorth, supporting programs that address food insecurity, and other demands. NYPIRG and other organizations will rally on Wednesday, Dec. 14, in the state's Capital building in Albany, where they will continue pushing for more

"It's important to highlight that every student should support the state fully funding higher education regardless of the major they are studying in school," said Hoque. "Access to higher education should be just and equitable, and having a fully funded higher education system in place would help not only our economy but the society as a whole."

BC Installs Menstruation Product Dispensers

By Gabriela Flores
Editor In Chief

Across Brooklyn College, 73 menstruation product dispensers were installed in women's and all-gender bathrooms last November, with four more dispensers coming soon. As of press time, there are no sanitary napkins or tampons in the dispensers while the college continues discussing the details of their funding.

"I'm just really hoping that these dispensers work out in the best way possible. I think that these products are the bare minimum. There's always more you could do," said Carrie Ebbin, the vice president of BC's Undergraduate Student Government, who initially advocated for increasing access to menstrual hygiene products

on campus. The dispensers, however, were independently installed by the college's personnel. The Vanguard could not confirm before press time if the dispensers were supplied by CUNY as a university-wide initiative.

Before the installments, the Women's Center and Health Clinic were the only two sources of free menstrual products on campus. Joining forces with the two centers, Ebbin and other USG members planned how to expand access to menstrual products, especially for those who needed them off campus, in emergencies, or in other circumstances.

"To me, a lot of being in this position is kind of looking for what people need, finding a problem, and then just finding a way to fix it. I think that this is something that can help so

many people, including myself," said Ebbin, who will continue her advocacy by ensuring the eventually supplied products are regularly replenished, and contain ingredients that are safe for use and sustainable.

"I'm really excited to see how this project pans out in the end, and I'm excited and hopeful to continue to be part of the conversation and keep it going," said Ebbin.

Since 2018, New York State requires all public schools serving grades six through 12 to provide free hygiene products in school restrooms. Jumaane Williams, NYC's public advocate and a BC alum, introduced a bill to the City Council proposing that the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene provide CUNY students with free menstrual hygiene products across the



A menstruation product dispenser in the first floor women's bathroom in Whitehead Hall./*Gabriela Flores*

university's campuses. The bill remains filed and has not yet passed.

The Vanguard will report

updates on the dispensers and their supply of menstrual products as they become available.

MTA Announces Fare Hike Proposal For Mid-2023

By Radwan Farraj
News Editor

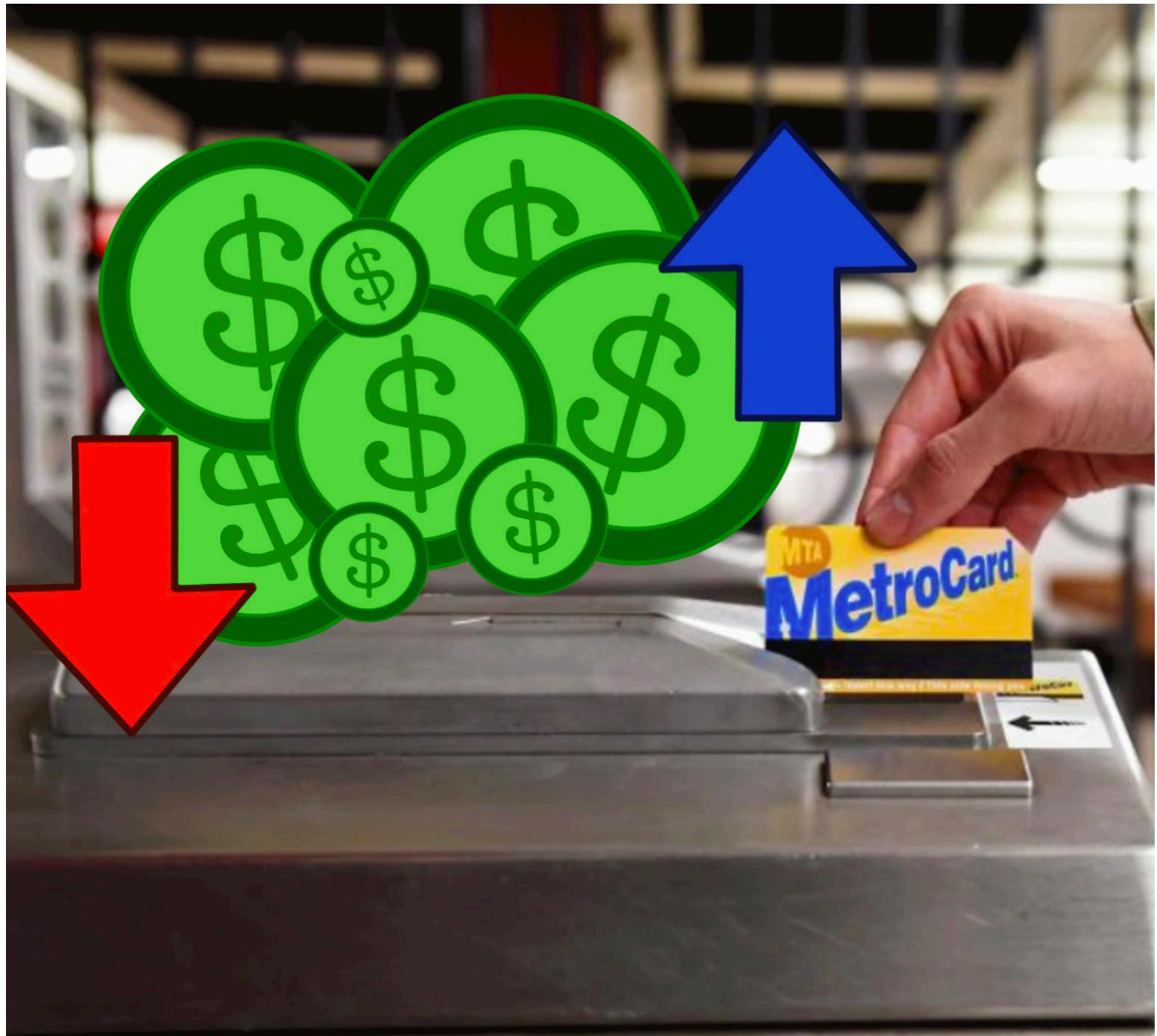
The MTA announced a proposal that would raise commuter fares by 5.5% to make up for a \$600 million budget deficit that needs to be addressed in the coming year. The fare hike would go into effect sometime in 2023.

"We can definitely avoid a fair hike if there is a plan, an answer, coming from all the decision makers: Albany, Washington, and City Hall and maybe others, that fills the \$600 million gap," said MTA Chairman John "Janno" Lieber in a press conference on Nov. 30. "And if they also want to help us come up with an answer that makes the fare hike unnecessary, we're all ears."

MTA revenue has declined as ridership struggles to climb back to pre-pandemic levels. Prior to the pandemic, fare revenue made up \$6.4 billion, or 42.1% of the MTA's total revenue, according to the Office of the New York State Comptroller. MTA authorities have said that the proposed 5.5% fare hike, which could raise the current cost of a ride to \$2.90, would be necessary to prevent higher hikes in the future.

"I think that the MTA needs fares to pay for its maintenance and construction and paying its employees, but what feels like arbitrary price hiking is just not the way to go about it," said Carter Greene, a senior at BC. "If there's just like every 10 years we're gonna up the price by 50 cents, and if everybody in the world knows that it's just an MTA thing, then I feel like people will be less mad about it."

The MTA has not raised the \$2.75 fare since 2015 but has



MTA proposes to raise ride fare to \$2.90./*Kaylin Guzman*

typically increased the fare in increments of 4% every two to three years since 2009. MTA officials considered increasing the fare last year but decided against it, instead raising bridge and tunnel tolls by 7% to compensate, according to Gothamist.

"I feel like if they [the MTA] talk to the community and be like, 'Oh you think it's an increase?,' a lot of people, they're not gonna want it," said Johnny Palacios, a junior at BC. "So if they go out and talk to the community, a lot

of them are gonna agree, like, 'Oh we wanted it to stay as is,' or lower it down because living expenses have been increasing for a while now."

Inflation has increased the cost of living for many over the past year and although inflation is not as volatile as it was a few months ago, there are still concerns about further interest rate increases by the Federal Reserve.

"I think if they had to raise it, they should have done so slowly in the sense like if it's \$2.75 now, it should be \$2.80

to also let people have the time to – if you are a lower income New Yorker – get the funds or try to upgrade or try to figure out a way that you can afford to get all those extra cents" said Kayla Gutierrez, a BC alum, explaining that it may be difficult for some New Yorkers to afford the cost difference at the end of a year.

The proposal precedes the MTA's scheduled plan to phase out MetroCards and MetroCard dispensers for OMNY cards by 2024, which are available from

select retailers like CVS or Walgreens. Fare-reduction programs available for MetroCard users are still not fully available for OMNY, which expects to see equivalent fare-reduction programs made available on a rolling basis. When asked about creating more fare-reduction programs, a MTA press representative redirected the Vanguard to a press release detailing the agency's plans to cut costs in 2023.

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PSC Union Prepares For Contract Negotiations, Advocates For Adjuncts And Other Demands

By Alejandro Barrera
Staff Writer

Adjunct lecturer Anthony Harb is a doctoral candidate at the CUNY Graduate Center and is one of the few among his peers to be receiving grant assistance to complete his dissertation and obtain his doctorate. Even so, the past six years have been an uphill battle.

"The more things you have on your plate as a student, the less time you have to do your schoolwork. I needed to finish my dissertation to get into a full-time position in the university, and when I was teaching two or three classes [...] that consumed my entire life," said Harb, who teaches in the Anthropology Department at Brooklyn College.

For the past six years, he has been balancing his life as an instructor and a student with aspirations in higher academia. Harb's experiences as an adjunct professor led him to become an active member of his union. He is currently the secretary of the Executive Committee at the Professional Staff Congress, the largest union that represents thousands of faculty and staff across CUNY campuses. In preparation for the expiration of their current contract in February, the PSC is gearing up for another round of negotiations.

PSC represents many different positions within the CUNY system, which means there are different goals for the new contract that will encapsulate the needs of adjuncts, full-time employees, and other staff. Harb's priorities lie with the conditions and compensation of adjunct faculty since he believes that the disparity in wages and job security is unfair compared to that of full-time faculty.

Due to CUNY policy, classes may be canceled for a semester if a minimum number of students fail to register, and Brooklyn College is facing an enrollment crisis with this fall seeing an 11% decrease in total enrollment from fall 2021. This, combined with adjuncts only getting paid for their "contact hours" inside the classrooms and office

hours, creates a difficult situation for many.

"I have insurance through the Grad Center, so I'm lucky in that way, but there are so many adjuncts who don't have that net, and so for those adjuncts, when they lose a class they really lose their entire livelihood," said Harb, noting the unpaid labor he and other adjuncts do for their classes, such as the preparation that takes place in between semesters.

Beyond the lack of secured support for adjunct lecturers, other PSC members are looking to address the unrealistic workloads placed on professors. Across the university, departments are experiencing understaffing and its subsequent challenges.

"So many staff and faculty on campus are struggling to pay their bills and are overworked," said Professor Naomi Schiller, associate professor of anthropology and the Graduate Center, and a member of the Executive Committee of BC's PSC chapter. "There's so many things that I will never ask my colleagues to do because they are not being paid to do it."

According to Schiller, many faculty feel that the time they spend in classrooms is not sufficient to meet the needs of their students. With better conditions and compensation, professors could have the security and leeway they need to invest more energy into students outside of contact hours, she explained.

Supporting professors could in turn support student needs that extend beyond the classroom and their academic careers, many PSC members believe. "The work that a lot of faculty do, particularly faculty that are Black, and brown, and women; we see the work that we do that goes far beyond narrow definitions of research, teaching, and service," said Lawrence Johnson, assistant professor of sociology, and co-chair of the union's Anti-Racism Committee. "College is not just a place where students come eager to learn and stuff like that. They have to deal with all the stresses of living in New York City. We

have to address those things," he added.

Johnson's role in the preparation of negotiations for him and his colleagues focuses on the language used in the contract and the PSC's bargaining, and how the university should better articulate all the duties instructors undertake.

"[We need] to rewrite not just what faculty do, but what the university is. What staff do, and who are our students," said Johnson. He feels that the current PSC contract staff and faculty work under only covers the bare minimum of what instructors are actually expected to do. Besides giving lectures, instructors guide and teach their students how to cope with challenges that fall outside the purview of what they would learn in a classroom, according to Johnson.

"How we define our students helps us redefine our faculty, helps us redefine the university," he said, expressing his belief that including more "human-oriented" language in the contract would encourage more of his colleagues to act as advisors, as well as prepare them for that expectation.

Increased workloads are felt by staff throughout the college, including higher education officers (HEOs), or staff members at CUNY that deal with administrative matters, such as the financial aid and admissions offices, student services, and departmental events.

"If someone leaves, generally if the job can be done or absorbed by someone else, it is. [...] We keep losing people. They're retiring, leaving for other positions, so that's more or less the crisis," said Crystal Schloss-Allen, administrative executive associate to the Dean of Natural and Behavioral Sciences. She explained that faculty have a "staffing index" that models exactly how much faculty they need to perform certain tasks.

"With the staff, they don't think about it like that. They just try to squeeze everything they can out of the minimal amount of people," she added.

Schloss-Allen advocates for the colleagues that share



PSC tabling event on Thursday, Dec. 1./Naomi Schiller

her position. Another one of the issues she raises is that of "workplace bullying." Many HEOs have been in their positions for many years, up to even a decade, but the directors who supervise them move in and

out of departments with much more flexibility. She believes that some deans and directors make the job harder for experienced HEOs by demanding that they ask for permission before completing the tasks they already know have to be done.

"If you just start doing the things that you're already doing, they get upset and write you up," she said. This pattern can lead to HEOs getting poor annual evaluations, and three consecutive ones are grounds for termination.

Outside of the PSC, students and faculty at Brooklyn College have mixed opinions about the efforts to better adjunct circumstances and other issues looking to be addressed by the university's union.

"Of course I believe adjuncts should receive decent wages, but if they don't have the same expertise as full-time professors, I don't see why they would be paid at similar rates," said Amir Ismael, a freshman at BC.

Ismael questions how the unionization and advocacy for changes in how faculty are treated at CUNY would impact students. "I mean, I do support their right to unionize, but I don't really see how their demands positively benefit me," he said.

Jake Xie, a Macaulay Honors

student at Brooklyn College studying psychology, thought differently, expressing frustration at the guidance he and his peers lack. He thinks that advisors are overloaded that they're hard to come by for students.

"There's a lot of really brilliant adjunct professors that aren't able to, like, teach full time because they're adjunct professors [...] the fact that they're adjunct doesn't mean that they're any less qualified," said Xie. "I think just in general, like, more opportunities for advising could lead to everything being more organized and smoother and just a better educational environment."

Recently, the PSC held tabling events on Nov. 30, Dec. 1, and 7. They hoped to solicit student feedback through an online survey, as well as promote PSC membership to any faculty and staff that may not be a part of the union. They also have tentative plans to invite students who visited their table to an organizing event at the beginning of the spring semester.

"We do have different roles, and we do have different capacities, and we do have different things about our experiences at CUNY, but at the end of the day, the conditions – that is, bettering the conditions – is really something that benefits everybody," said Harb.

By Community, Through Faith: BC's Newman Catholic Center

By Gabriela Flores
Editor In Chief

Sitting on Glenwood Road is Brooklyn College's Newman Catholic Center, where Catholics, Christians, and non-religiously affiliated students alike gather and bond. Through their shared space and experiences together, Newman members and their friends find others with similar values, welcome those who have a curiosity about their faith, delve into thought-provoking conversations, and, of course, enjoy good company.

"We want to be [as] inclusive as possible. I think, when it comes to religion, it is a subject that many like to tread lightly on. However, you can't ignore the fact that religion can be the difference for how someone lives out their life," said Phoebe Marbid, Newman Club's treasurer and a BC sophomore. "At the same time, you have to realize that no matter if you are Roman Catholic, a Christian, or a non-Christian, everyone is on different walks with God."

Channeling the teachings of St. John Henry Newman, the center aims to provide a Catholic space for BC students to embrace their faith. Since around the 1950s, the Newman Center has provided the BC community with mass services, bible studies, and different secular events like its traditional New Orleansque Mardi Gras. After returning from its remote run during the peak of COVID, Newman came back to people who were eager to make their college experience worthwhile and connect deeper with their religious and student communities.

"I only became Catholic during the end of my high school time, so I wanted to find more people that were also Catholic. That's why I was looking to find

Catholic organizations within the college," said Alexander Ocasio, Newman's president, who was formerly Protestant-leaning. After only joining last spring, Ocasio and Marbid have become two of the center's newest leaders, ensuring that they welcome BC students from all walks of life while remaining in tune with the religious and emotional needs of their peers.

"I do find value in building up both the intellectual and community aspects simultaneously since I do want to ultimately lead to people having a closer and stronger relationship with Christ. And so that they might have a greater understanding and experience of their faith," Ocasio said, who values having philosophical conversations and debates surrounding religion.

Staying connected to their Christianity, Newman members have weekly masses on Tuesdays and occasionally on Thursdays, and other regular activities like Tea and Litanies, the brainchild of Marbid, where students can unwind and later pray for those who might be suffering.

"Not only do we want spiritual growth, regardless of whatever religion you may have, but also your intellectual growth. And I think, when it comes to academics, we tend to get caught up in hustle culture and on the grind," said Marbid, who noted the importance of taking breaks while studying. Specifically, during Tea and Litanies, Newman members recite the "Litany of Divine Mercy," where they are "entrusting the safety of those who are currently suffering into the hands of God," according to Marbid.

In conjunction with their religious practice, the members at Newman watch football together, host game nights, and other activities



Students at Newman's latest St. Nick party./*Newman Catholic Center*

to let loose. One of their latest events was a St. Nick party that will be followed by a St. Lucia celebration this Tuesday, Dec. 13, before the fall comes to a close. Though it's alive and booming again, the physical Newman Center, that's turning 40 years next fall, was not as lively as it is today. At the pandemic's peak, members of Newman carried on virtually. Over time, however, their member count dwindled as people graduated or seemingly moved on. But being back from COVID, the Center is thriving again.

"And then, all of a sudden, we had this rush of people like Phoebe and Alex that were just coming into the building, and it was like an answered prayer," said Michael Martinez, Newman's spiritual director, a BC graduate student, and an ex-official e-board member who officially joined the club in 2017.

Witnessing the center before, during, and after the COVID shutdown, Martinez noticed that the center's demographics have changed, especially with more LGBTQ Christians visiting the Newman house. "Which is a first for us. We have also a lot of non-Christians who would join in and just come in and learn about Christian life

and we take pride in that," said Martinez, who noted there was more house participation with students coming to Newman to study, pray, or sit in each others' company.

At the core of this boom in participation is the center's extension of invitations to all students and friends. For Martinez, who has strong connections with the campus' Tanger Hillel, a center that revolves around Jewish faith, is just one example. "We kind of have this exchange where I come in and experience their faith and culture, and then they come in and experience mine," said Martinez, who noted there is a service for Christians to visit Israel.

Though the house has seen more activity since the beginning of pandemic times, it's also undergoing some infrastructural challenges. From some molding incidents to problems with plumbing, Newman members,

alongside members of Kappa Sigma Fraternity, are working out the maintenance of their late-Victorian-style center located at 2401 Glenwood Road. In doing so, they are conscious of trying to make the most of their space and tangible resources to host more students regardless of their background or

religious affiliation.

"We're speaking on that note of making this space not just exclusive for Catholics, but really accepting all students with these different backgrounds. I think I do want to emphasize this space being a safe space," said Marbid.

Before the fall semester comes to a close, Newman is inviting students to relax in a laid-back finals event filled with grilled cheese sandwiches and soups on Wednesday, Dec. 14. Once the spring comes by, members will be hosting studies of parables in the Hebrew bible on Tuesday nights, a Mardi Gras celebration, planning the 40-year anniversary of their house, and potentially embracing the cultural and religious intersections of students through an event. All while focusing on building a stronger community and larger turnout for religious practices.

"I feel like Newman has been a great place for intellectual discussions and also being able to be with others and to spend time and make new friends there, to delve deeper into the Catholic faith," said Ocasio. "Even if you're not Catholic, at least open yourself up to those questions about God, religion, and reality itself."

Making An Impact: New BC Volunteering Tool



BC Volunteer Initiative, a new tool for volunteering opportunities./*Kaylin Guzman*

By Gabriela Flores
Editor In Chief

Volunteering, no matter the cause, can have different impacts. Whether it be donating one's time cleaning up weeds in Brooklyn College's gardens or helping local shelters for the unhoused, students can lend a helping hand in more ways than one. By centralizing this plethora of opportunities on Instagram, the new BC Volunteering initiative headed by senior Samuel Shif is setting out to make volunteering more accessible and known.

"I hope that this account will take off in its own way and have a domino effect of people wanting to volunteer. I think that's the biggest thing, just having people asking me, 'When's the next volunteering event,'" said Shif, who founded and runs the information hub on Instagram. "I think that's the biggest complement this account can receive."

What started as a

marketing pitch in a selling class became a project that Shif launched about three weeks ago. Though just at its inception, the account is gradually gaining attraction and setting the groundwork for becoming the most "easy-to-digest area" for students to stay in the loop of where and how to get involved in communal efforts. By sharing off and on-campus volunteering events, Shif hopes to give students a broad range of opportunities.

"I think when people think of volunteering on a greater scale, it's almost always good things," Shif said. "And if people start volunteering, even if Brooklyn College's name is very subtly included there, they're going to start associating Brooklyn College as, yes, a commuter school, but also a school that is making some sort of impact."

As a marketing major, Shif pays close attention to what BC students want something out of volunteering, how many engage with his initiative's page, and whenever overall, how he

could improve on getting the word out about how succeed with this," said Shif, to help on campus and noting she even sent out his beyond.

Within the past week, he joined the BC Sustainability Club to rid the college's gardens of weeds. In the near future, he hopes to embark on causes that directly impact communities and moments donating his time and efforts. From currently collaborate with other local groups, including possibly a cat rescue. By doing so, he intends to continue focusing different causes here and on hands-on efforts rather than monetary donations.

From the get-go, when the initiative stemmed from a class assignment where Shif proposed a hypothetical nursing home. Though he beach clean-up that would technically didn't volunteer, draw more eyes to Brooklyn College, he has had the support of Professor Ngoc Cindy Pham of Business Management, connected him with her contact at the cat rescue.

"She really inspires people to want to build something, to feel good about people," Shif explained. "Because yes, there's a time really means for other And mine just so happens to be this account. Now it. But I think that feeling stems from the feelings overall, how he

they show, the feelings they portray - 'Wow, somebody cares to sit down and talk with me."

After his undergraduate run comes to an end this spring, Shif will likely leave the account's reins to the Student Activities, Involvement, and Leadership Center. In the meantime, however, he's looking to hear ideas from other students, extend his account's outreach, continue promoting volunteering gigs, and possibly host a volunteering event of his own initiative.

"I think students should – even if they don't think they'll enjoy volunteering – at least try it once and get your foot in the door. Again, college is all about building connections, and I think the people you want to be building connections with are people who are willing to donate their time and give back to the community," said Shif.

The Mind Behind 'Vanguard Gazette,' Cartoonist Nitu Farhin

By Serin Sarsour
Features Editor

Brooklyn College sophomore Nitu Farhin juggles school and her love of art, all while being the cartoonist for The Vanguard.

Farhin first made her mark at the paper through her series "Vanguard Gazette" at the beginning of the fall semester. Not following traditional cartoon styles, Farhin started to progressively draw in a less realistic way as an artist, making her work stand out from the designs of others like The Vanguard's previous cartoonist, Mo Muhsin.

"When I saw Mo's cartoons, they were very like comic book strip vibes and that was so cool. I was like, 'How do I sort of not imitate this, but get the same vibes with my own art style?' And so it's like a hodgepodge of comics and Nitu, too, now," Farhin said.

Since getting an iPad, Farhin has begun to transition to and gravitate toward digital art instead of traditional art made with a pen and paper in hand. Nonetheless, she enjoys partaking in both forms. With school and other responsibilities applying time constraints to when she can create art, Farhin found that digital art is more accessible, easier, and quicker to do because traditional art is messier, taking more time to prepare and clean up.

"I don't know if there was a specific age, but I think I've always been into art," said Farhin. "I don't have like a collection of my old art at home, but here and there with the scraps that my mom didn't throw away, I can see that there's been a progression

in my journey in art."

Farhin's artistic interests stem from elementary school, but truly blossomed in middle school because she attended M.S. 51 William Alexander, where each student has to choose a talent or subject they want to specialize in throughout their years in attendance there. Farhin chose art.

When she graduated from her art-focused middle school, she attended Midwood High School, where her focus shifted to research pertaining to medicine to help prepare herself for the pre-med track. Although Farhin is not as involved with art as she was in middle school, her love and appreciation for the creative outlet are still present in her life.

"I like that I can create things out of the blue," she said. "Instead of putting individual pictures together like scrapbooking, I do it in my brain, so it comes out like a weird little picture, but it's all in one style, so it seems very seamless."

One of Farhin's favorite projects is a self-portrait she did in middle school. She used her hijab as a focal point in the piece, where she used pastel colors and wrote words within the space on the hijab. With the presence of Islamophobia and other issues around the world, Farhin believed it was important to incorporate empowering messages about the hijab through her art. Although she did not win a competition her teacher entered her in for the self-portrait, Farhin was proud that she could represent herself.

As for her comics for



Courtesy of Nitu Farhin

"Vanguard Gazette," Farhin has serialized and created a story to them, advising viewers to avoid reading them out of order. The idea to put her comics in sequential order originates from when she used to write short fiction.

"After I create the episode for the week, throughout the week I start to think about what could come next naturally. I then sit down and make a storyboard with notes that sort of details what's gonna happen in the next scene, who's talking, and like what I'm going to visually

represent," said Farhin.

Her love for Korean dramas also acts as an inspiration in her work. "I feel like I don't just watch them for just enjoyment. I research while I watch them and see what maybe the director is doing or what they're doing to evoke a certain emotion, which helps me sort of implement that into my own work," Farhin said.

Aside from art and being The Vanguard's cartoonist, Farhin created her own major at BC called "women in health" instead of double

majoring in public health and gender studies to pursue pre-med. She hopes to find internships and work for nonprofit organizations that work with women, while also still making the time to work on her art.

"Moving forward, I'd like to have a space in my life where I create art consistently because, with school and everything, I'm struggling to make space for art. I joined BC Vanguard to give myself that time to create art," said Farhin.

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@THEBCVANGUARD ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Prof. Emerita Tania León Receives Kennedy Center Honor

By Michela Arlia
Managing Editor

Composer, conductor, and educator Tania León was recognized earlier this month at the 45th annual Kennedy Center Honor, one of the nation's most prestigious awards for lifetime achievement in the performing arts.

León, who was a Brooklyn College professor for thirty-five years in the Conservatory of Music, received this high honor alongside Irish rock band U2, Gladys "Empress of Soul" Knight, Amy "Queen of Christian Pop" Grant, and Academy Award winning actor George Clooney.

Professor Emerita León served as BC's director of music composition in the Conservatory of Music, as well as a professor in CUNY Graduate Center's music doctoral program. She retired in 2019, and is the first CUNY-affiliated professor to receive the Kennedy Center Honor.

León was born in Havana, Cuba, yet has called New York City her home since the 1960s. In her over fifty years in this city, her accomplishments and contributions to the music and dance world are never ending.

"Little did I imagine when studying in La Habana that life was going to grace me with such a distinction!" Professor León said in a statement. "My first thoughts went to my ancestors: They believed in my dreams, and what we lacked in material wealth, they made up for in spirit, encouragement, and support."

A founding member of the Dance Theatre of Harlem, León also instituted the Brooklyn Philharmonic



Professor Emerita Tania León./*Greg Allen for AP*

Community Concert Series and co-founded the American Composers Orchestra "Sonidos de las Americas Festivals," where she was the music adviser. She also served as music adviser to Kurt Masur and the New York Philharmonic in the 1990s, and in 1998 was awarded the New York Governor's Lifetime Achievement Award.

Some of her other major honors and awards include winning the Pulitzer Prize for Music in 2021 for her orchestral work "Stride," commissioned and premiered by the New York Philharmonic in celebration of the centennial of women's

voting rights and inspired by Susan B. Anthony's activism. She was also inducted into the American Academy of Arts & Sciences, and named a USA fellow in 2018.

She has received honorary doctorates from Colgate University, Oberlin College and SUNY Purchase and awards from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, National Endowment for the Arts, Chamber Music America, NYSCA, Lila Wallace/Reader's Digest Fund, ASCAP, Guggenheim and the Koussevitzky Foundation, among others.

Her resume extends even

farther than this, as she has commissioned countless pieces with the Symphony Orchestra of Marseilles (France), L'orchestre de la Suisse Romande, Santa Cecilia Orchestra (Italy), Gewandhausorchester (Germany), and Orquesta Sinfónica de Asturias (Spain).

Speaking high praise for León's major accomplishment in the arts, CUNY Chancellor Félix V. Matos Rodríguez was delighted to have the university represented in such a prestigious award.

"Professor León's compositions – which embed African, Afro-Caribbean and modernist rhythms in classical

structures – sing to the essence of our country's spirit," said Matos Rodríguez. "On behalf of our University, I salute Professor León on a most-deserved recognition. Her personal journey, trailblazing career and over three decades teaching public higher education students embody the best of CUNY and our committed and outstanding faculty."

The full event, which was attended by President Joe Biden and first lady Jill Biden, will be televised Dec. 28 on CBS and streaming on Paramount+.

Farewell From Anakin Jackson, Vanguard's Layout Editor

By Anakin Jackson
Layout Editor

Farewell Vanguard. I understand it to be my role that as the parting senior of my publication, it's my duty to impart some everlasting, undying wisdom or a quirky little story wrapped in metaphor about how that "coffee latte literally saved my life," or how it really was the friends we made along the way. Instead, I will betray this and tell you that for most of you college will not be what you expect, hope, or dream. Like many things in your life, it will just be.

My first semester at Brooklyn College was quite lonely if I am being honest. I found myself in a new place and struggling to make new friends due to my own arrogance and ignorance. I vividly remember calling my mother in tears two weeks into my first semester, telling her that I had to leave, not because I was alone or sad but because I was convinced I wouldn't learn anything in college.

I told her I must leave and I must leave today because I am just spinning my wheels in these classes and surely, certainly, no professor could actually know what was going to be valuable. I began to hatch a plan to write my way out of college (however unrealistic, I was willing to delude myself into thinking it was possible, despite my lack of knowledge). I wrote a pilot script for a show I titled "Development Hell," which followed a character essentially modeled after myself moving to New York City, disregarding college, and pursuing his dream of filmmaking.

Thinking I had it all together enough to leave and do this was my first lesson: I made a deal with my mom that I would finish the semester, get the credits, and reassess around Christmas. Needless to say, I landed around then without a solid exit plan and with the stress of seeing my peers and being afraid of being a failed drop-out, I decided to commit to the entire year. I had proven to myself that I, in fact, couldn't make a plan to write myself out.

In March 2020, we all know what happened, and

being afforded two years to rediscover and reconnect with myself proved valuable. Despite the devastation of the pandemic, I honestly cannot say that I would be before you, pending my final exams, a college graduate.

I found myself in the Vanguard community at the end of spring of my freshman year. I landed as the layout editor for the Vanguard. While my experience at Brooklyn College wasn't traditional, I believe I have a few pieces of parting advice:

Just do something. There's no pride in being removed or detached from community. Community is essential; it motivates us to do well, be inventive, and most of all, care. Without a community, it's a lot harder to create meaning in watching reruns of 30 Rock.

People are usually understanding. If you do find yourself with a group of people you call friends, coworkers, or fellow club members and you get in a disagreement or fight, take a beat, explain yourself and circle back. Yes, it'll require time and space, but more often than not, if those people are meant to be around you they will be. This, however, is sometimes less effective with professors.

Get your work done ahead of time. This is a skill I still need to work on. I need to feel the heat of a deadline which is why I'm writing this on my phone on an LIRR ride back to Brooklyn the day the paper is due. As of writing this, I have not begun the layout (sorry, guys).

Be thankful, and be kind. We can't be here without others. When you have an opportunity, thank people and always choose kindness. Years ago, I saw those who were kind in the face of all things as weak. Now I can see them as just truly experiencing their lives. The only reason we aren't kind is that we are denying someone else's humanity. There's a quote from the play "Harvey" that goes, "in this life, you can be oh so smart or oh so pleasant, for years I was smart, I recommend pleasant." So



Courtesy of Anakin Jackson

now, with my platform of the Brooklyn College Vanguard, I would like to thank some people. If you expect to be on this list and don't find yourself, it isn't personal. Send your complaint emails to complaint@bcvanguard.org.

So anyways, THANK YOU TO (in no particular order)...

Jade Cheung-Becker, my favorite person I've met during my entire time at Brooklyn College. She's changed my life, she already knows this, but much love to her.

Todd Chandler, for opening me up to the possibilities of editing, being kind, inspiring me, introducing me to Jem Cohen, and sharing your skills.

Bonnie Harris, for your instruction, smile, and generous comments on all of my creative writing work. Also, the best reading selection of all my English professors.

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Mickey Kaplan, you had no reason to be as awesome as

you were to me, but you were without fail and without reason.

Rich Imburgio for being someone I admire and aspire to be like, and saving the day with your edits on the last scene of my thesis film.

Becky MacDonald, I learned the most about the industry in Film Artists with her! Thank you for always remembering me and thinking of me kindly.

Gabi, John, Michela, and Ryan for being such great editors and tolerating my lateness with the issues. Special shoutout to Ryan for hiring me!

Lindsay Smilow and Elizabeth Mellen for being the two professors outside of my major that made me more engaged and interested in their subjects (art history and classics).

Althea (my sister, ick) for really being a great role model, and support system, and providing 98% of my meals during freshman year.

My parents, it's all for you.

Cassidy (my other sister, PEE YEW!) for always wanting to hear from me, for always supporting me, and for making me feel like you're proud of me.

Hank! You made your class

the best, I genuinely looked forward to doing free labor and spending time with you weekly.

John Wright, for being there for me always, for making me laugh always, for being more than a friend – like a brother.

Brian Paccione, for opening up my creative mind, offering an expansive view on how to create a film, and taking the time to be interested in what I would like to create.

Oscar and Karl, I don't have either of your guys' last names, and we didn't stay in touch after the first semester, but you guys really added a lot of light to that dark period.

Thank you to all my current professors (let's try to keep my GPA that sweet, sweet 3.9, eh?)

This list feels very incomplete. There are so many more of you, but it's also 8:44 PM the night before we publish this thing, so just know, it's not that I don't love you, it's that I procrastinate (see tip #3). Thank you again, Brooklyn, thank you again, Vanguard, and thank you again to everyone everywhere in my life. You loved me into this moment. I will always feel it, I will always cherish it.

Review: 'In The Next Room, Or The Vibrator Play' Is A Powerful Dramedy



Promotional flyer for the show./BC Theater Department

By Samia Afsar
Arts Editor

Women beware! Female hysteria is back in the BC Theater Department's adaptation of "In The Next Room, Or The Vibrator Play," a play written by Sarah Ruhl and directed by Brooklyn-based theater director, Florence Le Bas.

"In The Next Room, Or The Vibrator Play," which opened on Dec. 9 in the New Workshop Theater, is a lighthearted yet captivatingly beautiful dramedy set in Saratoga Springs just before the turn of the 19th century, in the dawn of electricity and societal modernity.

The story revolves around the distinguished but rather blunt and sexist Dr. Givings

(Matthew Zimmerman) as he invents a device that he believes will cure hysteria in women. In doing so, he attempts to rid the town women and one man of excess bodily fluid, which he suspects is disturbing their daily duties. During his sessions, Dr. Givings places his vibrating device on, or in one case, in his patient's most intimate parts, unbeknownst to him, introducing the world to the first vibrator.

As he cures the townfolk plagued with hysteria, Dr. Givings and his wife, Mrs. Givings (Julieanna Stolley), navigate their own marital struggles as they hire Elizabeth (Nancy Umba), a wet nurse, to the Givings' household. The couple aims to overcome together possible infidelities, bridle trust issues,

and sentiments of loneliness, all while exploring the true meaning of love in this hilariously sensuous story of femininity and tragedy.

With the play performed in a Black Box theater, which grants patrons the privilege to be up close to the actors, the BC student performances not only poured out passion but intimacy as well. An attribute parallel to the potent themes of Ruhl's play, but more importantly, one that had audience members so deeply engrossed in their seats, laughing, cheering, and, even at times, tearing up.

Possibly the most captivating part of the entire play was the closing scene, where Mr. and Mrs. Givings finally set aside their marital quarrels and undressed each other in

the garden outside of their home in an attempt to reignite their lost love. And with fake snowfall ever so gracefully falling right onto the stage, it was an exceptionally powerful conclusion.

It is no doubt that the BC Theater Department directs stellar productions, as they have proven to do so show after show. The actors' performances appear to improve greatly with each production, not to imply that improvements were ever necessary, but instead admired and applauded. Still, perhaps the beauty of the department's adaptation of "In The Next Room, Or The Vibrator Play" is the writing itself.

Although set almost 150 years before the modern day, Ruhl's play is one that

navigates patrons onto the hauntingly familiar journey most women face as they attempt to comprehend the complexities of their own womanhood. "In The Next Room, Or The Vibrator Play" is not merely a comedic story about multiple unwarranted female orgasms, but a tale depicting the virtues of divine femininity itself.

Ruhl's play allows audiences to witness and reflect on the gap that still exists between men and women regarding marital responsibilities and societal taboos related to sexuality. It is a story that the BC theater department, under the direction of Bas, executed with such precision and beauty that it left theatergoers yearning for more.

WANT TO WRITE AND REPORT FOR THE VANGUARD?

Join a team of BC students and delve into student journalism.

From covering hard news to the latest sports games, find your beat and sharpen your skills as a staff writer for the paper. Interested in joining?

Email your inquiries to: thebcvanguard@gmail.com.

Free Association Club Continues, Bridges Creative Majors

By Alexandria Woolfe
Staff Writer

After nearly a year of recruitment, meetings, and good fun, the Free Association club has formed itself into a helpful community for Brooklyn College students since officially beginning last spring. The club remains adamant on bridging the gap between all creative majors at BC, a goal they've carried on since they last spoke with The Vanguard.

Zara Zeidman, Free Association's president and founder, first got inspiration for the club when taking an improv class with Professor Ralf Jean-Pierre, who they cite as a significant inspiration to them and their career dreams.

"I had heard from all of the

seniors and the other students that they had tried to get a club going and someone just needs to take the lead and do all the paperwork," said Zeidman

In search for a CUNY with a conservatory-style acting program, Zeidman came to BC and wanted the most focused acting training possible. The Acting MFA program at BC offers courses with class sizes of eight to 12 students that progress through the major together for three years. While the college offered their ideal program, it doesn't offer networking opportunities that Zeidman felt were fitting for themselves.

"The film department feels like 100 miles away and it robs people of training and making fun movies," they said. "The BA [film majors]

are very disconnected from the BFA [actors] and the theater department, as well, is disconnected from the filmmakers."

Free Association has existed through the pandemic, which Zeidman viewed as a positive rather than a hardship. "Despite all of the frustration, it [the pandemic] swept away all of the old and now we have a blanket of new for us all to grow out of," they said.

Zeidman started the club with no previous references or real "guides" on how to run an organization of the magnitude they had envisioned. However, Zeidman knew that their plans wouldn't only benefit them alone, but something other students in similar departments and majors needed as well.

Several aspects of Free Association are still in development but most importantly, Zeidman and their team are prioritizing keeping a lack of organization and negative energy out and allowing everyone a chance to be heard. Leadership in the club is what Zeidman deems in a "non-hierarchical" stance.

"When planning, we take the power out of it and delegate the organization of events to all club members. It's about who is best to fit the lead at the time," Zeidman said, citing their team as a part of why Free Association works so well.

Typical events at the bi-weekly meetings are dance parties, journaling sessions, and open mics. Planning these activities takes intuition and

reading the room "to see what works with the attendees," explained Zeidman.

What Zeidman wishes more people knew about the club is that, "you don't need to change who you are to begin getting creative," something that they personally held onto after leaving Professor Jean-Pierre's class.

In the future, Zeidman would like to see the club facilitate writing groups and devising rooms between screenwriters, directors and actors, in hopes of merging the gap between the film and acting majors.

The next Free Association event is an open mic on Dec. 16, and Civic Friday meetings from 6 to 6:45pm.

EXTRA! EXTRA!

Vanguard's New Radio Show: Vanguardian Voices

The Vanguard newspaper is now on the air! Catch a debriefing of our latest issues, a sneak peek of upcoming stories, and meet the staff that brings you your weekly dose of Brooklyn College news. Tune into our new show, Vanguardian Voices, Tuesdays at 12 pm on WBCR, Brooklyn College's student-run radio.

Can't listen to us while we're live? Check out the radio's YouTube channel to hear previous episodes.

BC Prof. Moore's "Alien Rescue" Wins Virtual Reality Experience

By Samia Afsar,
Arts Editor

Brooklyn College's very own Professor Jason Moore scores big by winning the VR Experience of the Year at the 2022 VR Awards for his virtual reality MetaMovie, "Alien Rescue."

"Every artist dreams of winning a big award, stepping onto the stage, and making that acceptance speech, and when I was in the audience, I really didn't think I was going to win," Moore told The Vanguard. "I was just there having fun with other members of my team, and when they called the name of our project, I almost had a heart attack. [...] I was so shocked that it took me a minute or two to collect myself and get out of my chair."

Combining elements of cinema, live theater, video games, and role-playing, Moore's immersive VR experience, "Alien Rescue," puts audiences inside a virtual reality movie where they are granted an unprecedented level of agency. Users can say or do as they please, a feature that is unique to this particular VR experience.

In the approximately 75-minute-long immersive film, users go on an adventure alongside a crew of characters, making decisions along the

way that dictate the story's multiple branching storylines and six different endings.

As an independent producer and director having to compete amongst big companies with larger budgets, such as Google and Meta, Moore was thrilled to even be nominated. His work "Alien Rescue" also won "Best Multiplayer Experience" at the 2021 Raindance Festival.

"It was an incredible feeling to be nominated in the first place," Moore said. "The VR awards are like the Oscars or the Academy Awards for the VR industry and to just be nominated amongst the other companies and projects was a thrill."

Although his win came as a surprise, Moore took the opportunity to inspire other independent artists to pursue their own filmmaking dreams in his award speech.

"Walking down to the stage, it felt like I was in a dream. I never had a feeling like that, and of course, I didn't prepare a speech because I honestly didn't think I was going to win," Moore said. "[...] So, I just spoke from the heart and thanked all my collaborators and gave a shout-out to all the other indie creators out there, because I think that when an indie person wins, it sends a really good message to other people who are trying to work in the space and maybe



The award was presented by The Academy of International Extended Reality./*Jason Moore*

a little bit intimidated by the competition."

In his course, TREM 3881 Storytelling for Virtual Reality, Moore exposes eager students to the new refreshing affordances that VR has to offer. During the semester, students go 'world-hopping,' exploring what it means to be embodied in avatars, and attend classes virtually through VR Chat, all while learning the fundamentals of virtual video production. Although Moore faces some challenges teaching this remote course, such as his

inability to physically help students from their homes, it still remains his favorite course to teach.

"It's quite fun to be at home, but also with the rest of your class in a virtual space where we can all see each other and make eye contact and wave at each other," Moore said. "But I think just sharing my passion and love for VR with my students is really the best part."

Moore will also be offering an Advanced Storytelling for VR course sometime in the near future, and

advises enthusiastic students interested in the VR world to enroll and expose themselves to a whole new, but very virtual, world.

"There are a lot of affordable VR headsets for sale, and if you can afford one, I would say just buy a headset and, start playing around," Moore advises to students interested in pursuing a career in virtual reality. "There's lots of information available on the internet, but really, just come take my class and I'll teach you everything you need to know."



Professor Jason Moore and his team receiving their award./*Jason Moore*

Opinion: EHS Is Not The Only Option



EHS is not the only housing option for students, Shea Stevenson writes./Alamy Stock Photo

By Shea Stevenson
Staff Writer

Googling “Brooklyn College housing,” the first thing that comes up is the Latin/Greek Institute housing page on the BC website. That page is weird on its own, but if you turn your eyes one result further down, you find the “Living in Brooklyn” section of the “Campus Life” part of our shared website, our banner, our heraldry facing the world.

Here’s a brief walk through this web page:

We start by speaking on the bountiful history of Brooklyn and its diversity; a common talking point of the college and one I find endearing. So far so good. Next, it rapid-fire lists a bunch of places one might like to visit in Brooklyn like the Brooklyn Museum, Prospect Park, the Navy Yard, and other spots. It talks some more about the cultural diversity, and ends it with calling Brooklyn a “mass transit hub, so you’ll be able to enjoy all the borough has to offer.” Brooklyn College is the end of the 2 and 5 train lines. It’s never more clear

that Brooklyn mass transit is a secondary consideration to Manhattan than when, to get to northern Brooklyn (or, God help you, Queens) from southern Brooklyn, you first need to go to Manhattan. But still, these are not bad points on their part. Okay, Brooklyn College, what next?

“Finding an apartment in New York can be extremely challenging. Brooklyn College provides the following information as a resource for students seeking housing options in New York,” the website reads. There is a link embedded in the “Finding an apartment” line to a New York Times article about how hard it is to find places to live in the city.

It lists one option: EHS, a student and intern housing system, complete with a legal disclaimer that EHS is an unaffiliated private company.

This is the page that I came upon as an incoming freshman. I got a double room at St. George’s Tower, EHS, for my freshman semester. It’s not that the building is terrible, that things are falling apart, or that it’s not worth the price. I love that it’s in Brooklyn

Heights, which is otherwise far and away out of my price range, and I love that it’s in the same building as a subway stop on the red line. But good Lord, is it a strange option, and not the only one.

EHS represents the quintessential New York paradox of luxury not because of what it is, but where it is. At EHS, you pay more than you could pay for a studio apartment with a roommate (assuming you split the cost), but you have a roommate anyways. Both of you are paying full price. The room is barely 10 feet across, and you can’t bring your own furniture.

There is one large kitchen for everyone to use, no dishwasher. These are not crazy living conditions if you didn’t grow up well off, but they are totally average living conditions for an apartment in the city. A studio has its own kitchen, some with dishwashers. You can have a chair with wheels. So what are you paying for at EHS?

The convenience of purchase. You can go to the EHS website, fill out a form, give them your credit card, and you’re done. It’s a one-time massive

payment, so there is no “rent” in the usual sense. You don’t have to deal with brokers, landlords, or anything. On the one hand, that rules. But on the other hand, it’s rather nefarious. New students who are intimidated by the rhetoric surrounding apartment-hunting are snared into a vastly more expensive alternative because of its comparative simplicity. Though not a particularly bad one, EHS is a strange option with lots of necessary context to consider.

Often I meet people who stayed at EHS for a semester, realized it’s ridiculous, and then left. That’s its target demographic. People who don’t know their options. It’s not just weird that Brooklyn College only lists EHS in its section on options for housing, it’s irresponsible and lazy. Pay someone to write up some advice for looking for roommates and apartments in Brooklyn. Which neighborhoods are close, what they’re like, things like that. You are Brooklyn College! It is so hard to live in the city, so why are we leaving prospective students out in

the rain? Why not give some well-considered help?

ENROLLMENT IS DOWN RECENTLY, AND YOU KNOW WHAT MIGHT CONVINCE MORE PEOPLE TO MOVE HERE AND ENROLL?

Enrollment is down recently, and you know what might convince more people to move here and enroll? Knowing how to move here! That would be a resource that wouldn’t need major updating year by year, and if it did, it would pay for itself with the students who are now able to enroll, having found cheaper housing. I know we’re a CUNY but come on, guys. Get it together.

Opinion: This World Cup Is One To Remember (Both The Good And Bad)

By Gabriela Flores
Editor In Chief

Reader, full disclosure before I rant on for the oncoming 900 words: I'm neither experienced nor well versed in soccer, or what most of the world outside of the United States calls "football." There is one thing that I am certain of — and that is the sense of pride that rushes over my competitive soul when World Cup season comes around.

As the World Cup's final matches drew near, Argentina, France, Morocco, and Croatia were the four left standing for the semi-finals. Beating Croatia on Tuesday, Argentina secured their chance to hold the 2022 global cup with a 3-0 win.

This year's wins from the quarter-finals saw a first: Morocco, the first African country to head into the semi-finals this Wednesday, Dec. 14. You, like me, were likely not in Qatar enjoying the 1-0 win against Portugal, but trust me, you could hear the immense roar that came from the Moroccan crowd last Saturday from wherever you watch your sports.

By the 42nd minute, striker Youssef En-Nesyri landed a stunning header in the split second that the Portuguese net was free. I'd like to think I'm not a sadist, but when it comes to the underdog beating top players like Cristiano Ronaldo in a game they've dominated for so long, it's hard for me not to get excited. Ronaldo was noticeably absent in the first half of the game and absent for the majority of Portugal's previous matchup, where its players swept Switzerland 6-1. Some can't help but wonder if the notorious CR7 just isn't cut out to be the center of attack and attention for Portugal anymore. And since this is presumably his last FIFA Cup, the loss must've stung. On the flip side, though, Morocco is making history!

Not only was Morocco's footwork clever, but so was their goalkeeper, Yassine Bounou, or Bono. Morocco's mark on the World Cup this year will undoubtedly be one for the books, as will Argentina's soccer stealth. It's

no surprise that Argentina, with their Captain Lionel Messi as one of the most legendary players in the world, is making strides left and right. As a sore loser, I was honestly hoping for Argentina to be bested by the Netherlands during the quarter-finals since my native Mexico has never been able to land a FIFA win against the men decked in white and blue. But, I can't deny talent and quick thinking (and quite honestly, this year's Mexican line-up did not show out).

Besides Messi's determination throughout the match, Argentina's wicked playbook stole the show. Without looking up, Messi passed the ball through two or three Dutch players to Nahuel Molina, whose left foot secured the game's first of four goals. Argentina knew what game they wanted to play and how to get there. The Netherlands didn't shy away either. When all seemed lost, striker Wout Weghorst scored the equalizer that led the Dutch and Argentines in extra time with 2-2. Eventually, when penalty shots came around, it was Argentina who came out victorious with stunning shots, and the Netherlands' goalie always missing a potential block.

The quarter-finals saw another two teams that were determined to give it their all: Croatia and Brazil. Both headed into extra time after they were left scoreless. That's until Neymar scored the first goal of the game and a definitive one for his career, making him tied with Brazilian legend Pele, with 77 goals in international matches. Croatia's Bruno Petkovic scored the equalizer soon after. Undeniably, the two teams didn't outcompete or outplay the other. It was simply the luck of the penalty kick draw, which ultimately favored the Croatians.

The same couldn't be said for the match between England and France, where the reigning Coupe Du Monde champions of 2018 did not let the match go as far as extra time. France's Aurélien Tchouaméni kicked the cleanest, no-nonsense shots I've ever witnessed. The man saw an opening and went



This year's World Cup has much to remember, from FIFA's corruption to historic wins on the field./**FIFA**

for it, securing the match's first goal. England followed with an equalizer by Harry Kane, who secured a penalty shot. But France's Olivier Giroud planted a beautiful second shot through the English goalie's reach.

Though every team who made it this far into the semi-finals fought tooth and nail, it's been surreal putting it against the backdrop of a much more serious, non-adrenaline rushing context.

Let's not forget — leading up to this year's games, documentaries surrounding the corruption committed by FIFA leaders, the deaths of migrant workers that were selfishly sacrificed for Qatar to physically hold the FIFA games, and much more have left many wondering: Does our human need for entertainment and attention have no limits?

This cloud that loomed over the World Cup's soccer fields has influenced my viewing of the games and how I view the role that politics plays in all entities that have some form of authority and money.

As the quarterfinals were near, I recollected the exposés that peeled back the layers of FIFA. Taking us back to

2012, when Russia and Qatar won their bids for hosting the World Cup in 2018 and 2022, respectively, many other bidders, like the United States and England, called BS. One could argue those who didn't land hosting powers were sore about losing and unwilling to accept that it was high time for the games to be held outside of the "Western bubble." Although, that statement would seemingly ignore the fact that this year's current host, Qatar, didn't have the physical capacity in 2012 to host the World Cup.

For perspective, the nation is roughly 20% smaller than the state of Connecticut and needed to build seven stadiums, more hotels to host the over one million visiting FIFA fans, and expand its highways in 10 years, according to NPR. Who got the heavy work done? Migrants. Were they at least paid decently? No, they weren't. Decent housing and healthcare? Nope — but is it surprising?

Though FIFA and Qatari officials initially stated three died from the construction of the new infrastructure and another 37 workers died of other non-related causes,

an investigation from The Guardian and human rights groups found otherwise. Over 6,500 migrant workers from India, Nepal, Bangladesh, and other countries, died from workplace accidents, the intense heat they worked in regularly, suicide, and other circumstances related to the delivery of FIFA-standard infrastructure.

As one of the nations that were considered the underdogs in the World Cup, it's not hard to imagine why Qatar wouldn't have funneled cash and negotiations with FIFA and their allies if they had the means to do so. It also meant bringing global attention to their nation. FIFA is predicted to bring in five billion viewers globally to see this year's matches. A number that isn't far-fetched given that the last World Cup run in Russia had a record-high 3.572 billion audience.

With more eyes seemingly glued on screens this World Cup season, it may be difficult to remember how the upcoming finals and exciting, unpredictable moments can be played out in the first place. But try your best, anyway. I did, and let me tell you, it got me thinking.

BC Sports Recap (Dec. 4 – Dec. 11)

Women's Basketball Trails Behind



Courtesy BC Athletics

By Michela Arlia
Managing Editor

The BC women's basketball team were defeated by the Drew University Rangers 74-53 at the Tuesday, Dec. 6 game where Drew hosted the Bulldogs.

The thought of a positive outcome was present for the Bulldogs after taking a 4-2 lead in the first 1:30 of play, yet all thoughts of hope subsided when the team were only able to manage one point for the entirety of the quarter.

The Rangers were able to make a quick advance, leaving the Bulldogs trailing 37-20 at the half.

Despite the loss, guards Eriks James, Gianna Gotti, and Nancy Pham led the team, James with a team high 17 points from her three makes behind the arc, and Gotti and Pham with 8 points each.

With hope for a rebound

in their match against Smith College on Dec. 11, the Bulldogs were once again defeated 88-78.

A rematch of the NCAA Tournament Second Round game last year, BC trailed by 15 points by the third quarter, before making up the distance with a score of 65-58 by the end of the third.

Smith then took charge however, out-rebounding the Bulldogs 18-8 on the offensive board. Top scorers for BC were once again James and Gotti, with a combined 52 points and Gotti scoring a game-high 28 points. James, along with forward Aleah Rafat scored three three-pointers.

BC moves to 3-6 with this non-conference loss. Their next match will host William Paterson University Dec. 13 in the West Quad gymnasium.

Men's Basketball Bounces Back

By Michela Arlia
Managing Editor

The men's basketball team has had a strike of fortune after hosting Pratt Institute Dec. 8 and claiming a win of 83-74.

The Bulldogs were able to secure their first double-figure lead 14-3 with just under 15 minutes left in the first half. Events started to then shift when Pratt came back for a 24-20 lead with just 7 minutes to spare by halftime, but BC doubled down in the remaining six minutes of the half, to end off with a 40-27 lead.

The momentum continued in the second half as Brooklyn

extended their lead by over 20 points, and solidified the win with free throws by the end of regulation.

Forward Elisha Park had one of his most outstanding game performances, having shot 7-13 from the field, with 3-4 from behind the arc, as well as adding 6 assists. Also leading the team were guards Malik Dale with 17 points, Serge Thraysbule with 13 points and 6 assists, and David McFadden and Kayin Olajide, with 11 points each.

Brooklyn improves to 2-8 with this win. The Bulldog's next match is an away game on Dec. 13 against the Ramapo College Roadrunners for a non-conference tilt.



Men's basketball bounces back./Damion Reid for BC Athletics

My 2023 National Baseball Hall Of Fame Ballot

By Owen Russell
Sports Editor

If you are a long-time reader of the Vanguard, you may remember former managing editor John Schilling filled out his own Baseball Writers of America Association Hall of Fame ballot. In doing so, he wrote a detailed explanation for each of his choices. Well, as an avid baseball fan and unscrupulous thief, I thought it would be fun to mimic John and create one of my own this year.

The 2023 Hall of Fame Ballot was released on Nov. 21, and voting has already begun. Littering the ballot are plenty of New York baseball icons and borderline candidates who may finally enter baseball's hallowed halls.

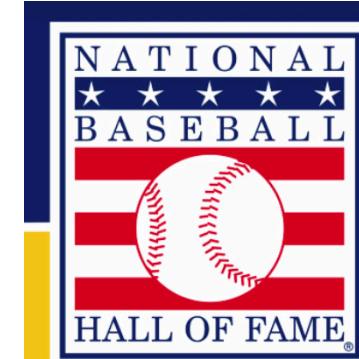
It should be stated that I am not a member of the BBWAA, and therefore my opinions mean nothing. My votes do not count; I am simply a nerd pouring over spreadsheets for fun.

Before diving in, here are a few things to keep in mind. For a player to be elected to the Hall of Fame, he must receive more than 75% of the total vote. A player remains on the ballot for ten years unless they receive less than 5% of the vote. If a player fails to receive 75% of the vote in ten years, or if they receive less than 5%, then they are eliminated from the ballot and must hope for an outside chance of getting elected by one of the Hall's "Era Committees." Voters are allowed to vote for as many as 10 players, but are not required to cast a single vote.

Now with that established: Let's dive into the madness!

The No-Brainers

Todd Helton: Sports matter. Baseball is a sport, and therefore it matters. The Colorado Rockies are a baseball team, and therefore they matter. And Todd Helton is the best player in Colorado Rockies' history, and therefore he matters.



2022 Hall of Fame

Owen Russell's Hall of Fame Ballot

The No-Brainers

Todd Helton
Scott Rolen

Reliever's Rights

Billy Wagner
Francisco Rodriguez

The Pumpkin Eaters

Alex Rodriguez
Manny Ramirez
Carlos Beltran

The Bordline Boyz

Andy Pettitte
Andrew Jones
Gary Sheffield

Honorable Mentions

Jeff Kent
R.A. Dickey

Owen Russell's picks for National Baseball's Hall of Fame this year./*Kaylin Guzman*

Not only does Helton matter, but he deserves to be a Hall of Famer without question.

Helton played 17 years for the Rockies, a rarity for a player of his era. In those 17 years, he distinguished himself as an all-around player, winning the batting title in 2000, along with four Silver Slugger awards, three Gold Gloves, and five All-Star selections. He was a stalwart at first base, playing the fifth most games in league history at the position.

As far as the Colorado Rockies go, Todd Helton is at or near the top of all offensive categories. He leads the franchise in hits, RBIs (runs batted in), and doubles. His OPS, batting average, and on base percentage all hover around the top, just below Hall of Famer Larry Walker.

Since joining the ballot, Helton's stock has steadily risen. His first year, 2019, Helton earned 16.5% of the vote. Last year he earned 52%. With some of last year's

big names gone from the ballot, Helton seems poised to garner more attention from voters.

Not only does he have the statistics, but he represents an entire franchise. The Colorado Rockies joined the major leagues in 1993. Since then, Helton has been the face of their franchise. If elected, he would be only the second Colorado player in the HOF (Larry Walker being the first), but electing Helton would mean that the franchise's all-time best player is finally immortalized.

Scott Rolen: Rolen was last year's shocker. In 2022, Rolen jumped from 52% to 63 % of the vote. With five more years on the ballot, he is as close to a lock as there is.

The biggest knock against Rolen is that he was never a lights-out hitter. But his numbers are certainly solid enough compared to other third basemen residing in

Cooperstown. His .364 on base percentage ranks just below Paul Molitor and above Brooks Robinson. His .490 slugging (total bases divided by at bats) ranks better than George Brett. But if you are unconvinced by his batting stats, Rolen was no slouch in the field.

In fact, Rolen may be one of the best defensive third basemen of the past 20 years. He won eight gold gloves from 1998-2010. His defensive WAR (wins above replacement) ranks sixth all-time among third basemen, above every Hall of Famer except Brooks Robinson. You would be hard-pressed to find a third baseman with the resume of Scott Rolen.

The Pumpkin Eaters (Cheaters)

Alex Rodriguez: A three-time MVP, 10-time Silver Slugger, 14-time All-Star. A

home run king who swatted 696 homers. In any other universe, Rodriguez is not only a Hall of Famer – he is one of the most prolific players in MLB history. However, this is the universe where A-Rod tested positive for anabolic steroids. And that is the 400-lb orangutan sitting on the chest of his Hall of Fame resume.

If the voters could not forgive Barry Bonds, Roger Clemens, or anyone who got wrapped up in the performance-enhancing drug plague, then there is seemingly no hope for Rodriguez. That being said, I hold nothing against these cheaters. They did what they did. We cannot erase that.

Rodriguez and his peers deserve to be in Cooperstown, even if they put asterisks next to their names.

Manny Ramirez: I talked about steroids for A-Rod, so I will not mention the needle

Continued on page 18...

My 2023 National Baseball Hall Of Fame Ballot (CONT'D)

Continued from page 17...
 anymore.. Ramirez hit over 550 home runs, ended his career with a .410 on base percentage, and crushed his way to a .585 slugging percentage.

But even if we ignore the electric numbers, Ramirez has etched his name in baseball history like no other. His fingerprints are all over the fabric of the game. In 2004 Ramirez made a name for himself winning Boston's first World Series in nearly 100 years. Ramirez put on a spectacular performance, shouldering the load as the Series' MVP.

But if you need an even more solid case, take a look at Ramirez vs. David Ortiz. Ramirez ranks higher than Ortiz in practically every statistical category. But because of the steroid issue, he has languished on the ballot for six years while Ortiz succeeded in his first try.

Carlos Beltran: You may be asking yourself: "Why is Beltran lumped in with these steroid pumping dirtbags? He never touched the juice." And you are correct! But hide your trash cans because Beltran represents the first player stained by the Houston Astros' cheating scandal to see the ballot. Will Beltran's involvement hurt his chances?

More than likely. But as I have demonstrated, I care not about cheating. I am scum. And as scum, I am able to look past the scandal which got Beltran fired from the Mets before ever managing a single game. For those who need refreshing, Beltran was a member of the 2017 Houston Astros, and the only player specifically named in their sign-stealing scandal. It will undoubtedly hurt his chances, but taking a peek at his advanced metrics, Beltran resides among a throng of Hall of Fame talent. He ranks in the top ten for offensive WAR among center fielders. The top ten represent seven Hall of Famers, one current player

(Mike Trout), and Bernie Williams (who inexplicably only lasted two years on the ballot). It seems as though the numbers are in Beltran's favor. He was never much of a talented fielder, but he wasn't a liability either.

If Beltran can survive this ballot, he may benefit with some distance from the Astros' cheating scandal. I mean he was 40 years old at the time...

Relievers' Rights

Billy Wagner: Wagner enters his eighth year on the ballot, picking up quite a bit of steam. In a stunning turn of events, Wagner earned 51% of the vote last year, becoming a serious contender in his final two years. And it's clear to see why.

Among relief pitchers, Wagner may be the best not yet in the Hall. He ranks sixth all time in games finished and saves. He's a seven-time All-Star, with his first appearance coming in 1999 and his last in 2010. His WAR is most similar to Trevor Hoffman (Hoffman had a career 28.0 compared to Wagner's 27.7). Hoffman made the Hall in his third year, so why not Wagner?

Advanced metrics don't tell the whole story. Hoffman ended his career with over 600 saves, compared to Wagner's 422, but that shouldn't discredit Wagner's resume. He played at an elite level up until his last season. Wagner is the measuring stick for how all future relievers will be evaluated. Do you have to be Mariano Rivera or Trevor Hoffman to deserve recognition? Or will the league recognize how important relief pitching really is and expand their horizons?

Francisco Rodriguez: Here it is. The hot take which discredits me in the eyes of all respected sports journalists. But I stand by it. Francisco Rodriguez deserves my vote.

K-Rod (in reference to his ability to strike out batters with ease) was the definition

of electric. He led the league three times in saves, and remains the only player in major league history to account for 60 saves in a season. Rodriguez's 437 saves ranks above Billy Wagner, and cements him as fourth all-time. He's a six time All-Star, and two time Reliever of the Year. And if you want to play the "what-if" game, he probably should've been the CY Young in 2008. His 62 saves were historic, and his 77 strikeouts in 68 innings helped earn the K-Rod moniker. But this is the Hall of Fame, and we don't deal in "if, buts and maybes." We deal in absolutes.

Rodriguez has some pretty serious knocks against him. He has a history with the law, being caught up in multiple physical altercations including one where he punched a fellow player at Citi Field and tore ligaments in his hand. His statistics are just as volatile. His 2.86 ERA is fine, but it doesn't stand out. He walked more batters than a Hall of Fame reliever should. But for the most part his resume is right up there among the game's best relievers. A vote for K-Rod would help him stay on the ballot for another year, and hopefully stop voters from ignoring relievers anymore.

The Borderline Boyz

Andy Pettitte: The only starting pitcher to make my ballot, Pettitte is most notably a member of the Yankees' "Core Four." Pettitte, Derek Jeter, Mariano Rivera, and Jorge Posada comprised the group which came into the majors around the same time and helped New York win a bevy of World Series trophies in the late 90s and early 2000s. Rivera and Jeter may garner much of the praise for those trophies, Pettitte lays claim to postseason heroics of his own.

In the history of Major League Baseball, no player owns more postseason wins than Andy Pettitte. He has the most innings pitched, the most games started, and the

fourth most strikeouts. These may seem like skewed stats, but considering the nearly 150 year league history, it remains impressive that Pettitte's name rises to the top. He was no schmuck in the regular season either.

His 256 wins place him within the top 50 pitchers of all-time. Among those 50 pitchers, 40 inhabit the Hall of Fame. Pettitte better pray voters overlook his unimpressive 3.80 ERA. If they're anything like me, voters will see the merit of Pettitte's postseason prowess, and give him another year on the ballot.

Andruw Jones: Jones' career resembles that of Scott Rolen. They both earned a reputation for stellar defensive play, and though they were not the most dominant hitters, they still swung a serviceable bat which helped prolong their careers. However, Jones suffers from position syndrome.

According to Defensive WAR, Jones is the preeminent center fielder. There is no one better. His ten Gold Gloves illustrate that. But with a position so deep offensively it remains hard to stand out.

His offensive numbers may not have been as elite, but they still hold up. His 434 home runs rank one below Carlos Beltran, and just above Hall of Famer Duke Snider. It is head scratching that Jones has only received 41.4% of the vote, but there is promise.

Jones's first year on the ballot saw him receive only 7% of the vote. Same thing in his second year. Although now that voters have had some time to ruminate on his career, Jones has continuously climbed. With five more years on the ballot, Jones will more than likely make the Hall of Fame.

Gary Sheffield: Does Gary Sheffield deserve a vote more than Bobby Abreu, Torii Hunter, or Jeff Kent? I don't know. That is what is so frustratingly beautiful about baseball. The game manages

to be subjective and objective at the same time. The stats will be what they are, but it is up to us to synthesize and decide what matters most. That being said, Gary Sheffield is a player who made a name for himself crushing baseballs, and that's good enough for me.

Sheffield's offensive WAR is sixth all-time among right fielders. Higher than Reggie Jackson, Al Kaline, Vladimir Guerrero, and Dave Winfield. In other words, he hit the ball better than your favorite right fielder and looked cool doing it. His funky batting stance made no sense. The way he waved the bat looked like an old man threatening children to scram off his property. Sheffield wagged willy-nilly in the face of opposing pitchers, smashing 509 home runs over his 22-year career.

There is the question of whether Sheffield knowingly touched steroids or not, but even if he did it wouldn't change my mind. His fielding left a lot to be desired, and will more than likely hamper his Hall of Fame chances. Sheffield has spent eight years on the ballot. In that time, he has jumped from 11% of the vote to 40%. Unfortunately for Sheffield, he has been stuck at 40% for two years. Unless there is a sweeping change of heart, Sheffield will remain on the outside looking in. It seems bleak, but he gets my vote. Does that count for anything?

So that's my Hall of Fame ballot. It has been fun, but it also shows what players have to endure. A player can spend 20 years in the majors, work his butt off, and compile a Cooperstown-worthy career. Once he retires, his legacy is in the hands of nerds who have never stepped on a major league diamond. It is totally backwards, but totally baseball at the same time.

Read about honorable mentions that didn't make it to print on our website: vanguard.blog.brooklyn.edu.