

**PSC Union Shows Banners  
Supporting New Deal For CUNY**  
Pg. 2

**People's CUNY Launches, Talks  
Racism And Repression At University**  
Pg. 3



**THE BROOKLYN COLLEGE**

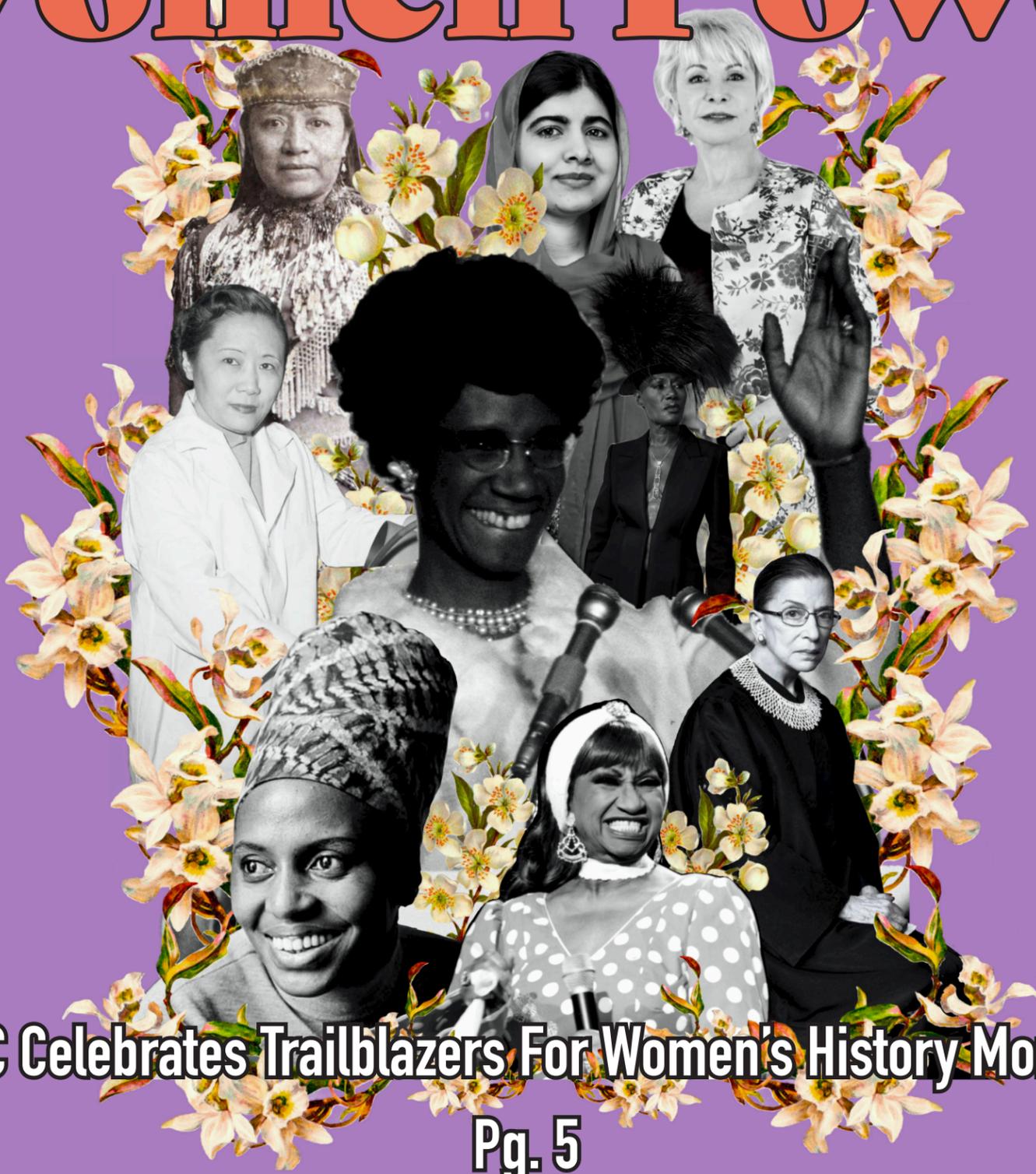
# **VANGUARD**

Spring 2023, Issue 7

[vanguard.blog.brooklyn.edu](http://vanguard.blog.brooklyn.edu)

Wednesday, March 15th

# **Women Power**



**BC Celebrates Trailblazers For Women's History Month**  
Pg. 5

**Pushing For A Healthier  
Campus: CHeF Initiative**  
Pg. 7

**BC Film Student Wins Big  
With 'Post Term'**  
Pg. 11

**World Baseball  
Classic Recap**  
Pg. 15

**GENERAL INQUIRIES**  
THEBCVANGUARD@GMAIL.COM

**CLUB HOURS**

118 ROOSEVELT HALL  
MONDAY: 11 A.M. - 3 P.M.  
TUESDAY: 11 A.M. - 6 P.M.

**EDITOR-IN-CHIEF**

GABRIELA FLORES  
23FLORESG@GMAIL.COM

**MANAGING EDITOR**

MICHELA ARLIA  
MICHELACA24@GMAIL.COM

**BUSINESS MANAGER**

HIFZA HAMEED  
IHFIFZAHAMEEDII.COM

**LAYOUT EDITOR**

BRIE UNDERWOOD  
BRIECUNDERWOOD@GMAIL.COM

**DIGITAL EDITOR**

EMMAD KASHMIRI  
EMMADK01@GMAIL.COM

**PHOTO EDITOR**

KAYLIN GUZMAN  
KAYLINGT01@GMAIL.COM

**SOCIAL MEDIA MANAGER**

NIDHI MAHADEVAN  
NIDHI.MAHADEVAN@MACAULAY.CUNY.EDU

**SECTION EDITORS**

NEWS: TBD

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

ARTS: SAMIA AFSAR  
SAMII.AFSAR@GMAIL.COM

OPINIONS: SHEA STEVENSON  
SHEAWS02@GMAIL.COM

SPORTS: OWEN RUSSELL  
OWENNRUSSELL@GMAIL.COM

**STAFF WRITERS**

DIANA BAUTISTA  
ISABELLE CACHIA-RIEDL  
HELEN DANG  
KATE DEMPSEY  
MANAR DIHYEM  
ALLISON DUBROW  
RADWAN FARRAJ  
TRAVIS FREEMAN  
PAULINA GAJEWSKI  
DAVID GLANZMAN  
ALDERRODO GRIFFITHS  
CHAYA GURKOV  
MARWA IKHMAYES  
STEPHANIE JIMENEZ REYES  
SHLOMIE KATASH  
HARITHA LAKSHMANAN  
CYNTHIA LEUNG  
JASON LIN  
MELISSA MORALES  
DAMIEN OVALLE  
CAILAH PARKER  
SAMMY QUARRATO  
JADA SIMON  
STAVROULA STATHOPOULOS  
AMIRA TURNER  
DYLAN TYLER  
DELASIA VANTERPOOL  
AVI WIZWER  
ALEXANDRIA WOOLFE

**CARTOONIST**

NITU FARHIN

**PHOTOGRAPHERS**

SOPHIA KEBADZE

**FACULTY ADVISOR**

MJ ROBINSON

# PSC Union Unveils Banners Supporting New Deal For CUNY



One of the banners displayed at Ingersoll Hall./Serin Sarsour

By Serin Sarsour  
Features Editor

A group of Brooklyn College professors rallied together to unveil two banners on campus in favor of the New Deal for CUNY last Tuesday, Mar. 7. The legislation they demanded calls for a tuition-free university and more faculty and staff, among other demands that advocate for more investment in the

entirety of the CUNY system. “A New Deal for CUNY is legislation that has been proposed for a few years now that will provide free tuition to students, increase the number of mental health counselors, increase the number of advisors, and more money for infrastructure to fix CUNY’s buildings. It’s basically a call for greater state investment in the CUNY system,” said BC Sociology Professor Carolina

Bank Muñoz, who chairs the college’s Professional Staff Congress chapter.

The New Deal for CUNY was first proposed by the PSC, state legislators, and CUNY advocates in February 2021. Last Tuesday’s banners were up for a few hours and addressed to CUNY Chancellor Félix Matos Rodríguez, formally asking him to “come to the table” to negotiate a fully-funded contract that is fair to CUNY faculty and staff after it ended on Feb. 28. One banner hung outside of a window in Ingersoll Hall as the other hung across it from a window in Boylan Hall.

“I think these banners are a message to the governor, to the chancellor, to the mayor, that what makes New York City and New York state great is our incredible public university system. But that system is critically

underfunded and we need the support now,” said Naomi Schiller, a BC professor in the anthropology department.

The PSC represents 30,000 CUNY staff and faculty in a labor union and demands raises and job security for adjunct professors. The CUNY New Deal also calls for commitments to fixing the infrastructure of CUNY campuses to ensure a better, safer school and work environment.

“I hope that the state passes a New Deal for CUNY; that’s 100 percent in the purview of Hochul’s authority,” Bank Muñoz said. She also noted that there is more than double in the state budget that could be put towards CUNY. “And at the more local level, our chancellor needs to sit down, needs to come to the table and bargain with us over a fair contract,” said Bank Muñoz.

## Upcoming Events On Campus (Mar. 15 to Mar. 21)

**Wednesday, March 15th**

“Justice or Just Us?: Defining a Queer Agenda.”  
BC Library, 8 AM to 9:30 AM.

“Lunch N Learn” with The Orthodox Club.  
Tanger Hillel at Brooklyn College, 12:30 PM.

“Teaching as a Liberating Practice” with Hess Scholar-in-Residence Barbara Smith and BC Faculty.  
BC Library, 3:40 PM to 4:55 PM.

“Career Panel Event” with Muslim Women Educational Initiative and Islamic Society.  
Student Center’s Bedford Lounge (2nd Floor), 5 PM to 6:30 PM.

“Lighting Workshop” with Film Society.  
WEB Room 230 at 6:30 PM.

**Thursday, March 16th**

“Working for Liberation and Having a Damn Good Time.”  
BC Library, 8 AM to 9:30 AM.

“InterVarsity Christian Fellowship’s Large Group.”  
Student Center’s Maroon Room (6th Floor), 12:15 PM.

“Lunch N Learn” with The Orthodox Club.  
Tanger Hillel at Brooklyn College, 12:30 PM.

“BC Undergraduate Student Government Debate.”  
Student Center’s Gold Room (6th Floor), 12:30 PM to 2:30 PM.

“Afternoon Chamber Music.”  
Don Buchwald Theater, 1 PM.

“Robert L. Hess Memorial Lecture by Barbara Smith.”  
The Claire Tow Theater, 5 PM to 6:30 PM.

“42nd Biannual International Electroacoustic Music Festival.”  
Don Buchwald Theater, 7 PM.

**Friday, March 17th**

“42nd Biannual International Electroacoustic Music Festival.”  
Don Buchwald Theater, 7 PM.

**Saturday, March 18th**  
“42nd Biannual International Electroacoustic Music Festival.”  
Don Buchwald Theater, 2 PM.

**Tuesday, March 21st**  
“Puerto Rico and Palestine Solidarity!” with Students for Justice in Palestine and the Puerto Rican Alliance.  
Student Center’s Jefferson-Williams Lounge (4th Floor), 12:30 to 2:15 PM.

**Got an event?**  
Send calendar listings to [TheBCVanguard@gmail.com](mailto:TheBCVanguard@gmail.com).  
Events should be sent at least one week prior.

# People's CUNY Launches, Talks Racism And Repression At University



Flyer for the launch of People's CUNY./  
@peoplescuny via Instagram

By Gabriela Flores  
Editor-In-Chief

In an effort to address repressive and racist actions at the university and city, a new coalition called the People's CUNY officially launched last Thursday, Mar. 9, at the CUNY Graduate Center. The organization intends to hold CUNY and city officials accountable for their "anti-Palestinian racism, anti-Blackness, Islamophobia and other forms of systemic racism and racialized violence," according to its official statement.

Throughout its launch hearing, People's CUNY hosted community leaders, students, and professors on two panels. The first focused on the university's shortcomings in addressing racism, police surveillance, labor exploitation, and other forms of repression. The second panel discussed how said issues relate to struggles outside of CUNY. "Today, we are collectively

launching the process of mobilizing our voices in a people's hearing," said Professor Corinna Mullin from John Jay, who opened the event alongside Professor Saadia Toor from the College of Staten Island.

The idea for creating People's CUNY began last July after officials from the New York City Council's higher education committee and CUNY administrators named CUNY Law student Nerdeen Kiswani during a hearing that intended to address antisemitic allegations. Kiswani, a Palestinian activist who protests against Zionism and the state of Israel, was singled out and not defended by the university, according to the People's CUNY organizers. The administration's lack of support for the Palestine liberation movement and Kiswani, along with the push for CUNY to adopt policies that "limit our ability to even

mention Palestine within the university space," ultimately led to the making of People's CUNY. Organizers were especially driven by the lack of attention officials gave to issues like anti-Blackness, labor exploitation of faculty and staff, along with other struggles.

"As such, we felt strongly what was needed was in fact a people's hearing, to hold the city and university accountable to its students and workers, and to the wider community in which it's embedded. CUNY must not be seen as a bubble separate from the broader context of New York City," said Toor, explaining that the repressive experiences discussed throughout the event are not specific to CUNY, but also present in the city and United States more broadly.

Before delving into the panel discussions, organizers delivered a land acknowledgment of the stolen Lenape land that CUNY and NYC sit on today. In the event's first panel, historical CUNY movements that were led and continue to exist were mentioned, including anti-war efforts led by Jewish immigrant students at City College in the 1920s and 1930s; the actions of a Puerto Rican and Black students coalition in the 60s; and the CUNY for Abortion Rights group that formed in response to the overturning of *Roe v. Wade*.

"So why do we gather here? Why do we gather for a people's hearing on racism and repression at CUNY? Because we have the most ethnically diverse chancellor, Board of Trustees, college presidents, and city government, but that doesn't inherently produce an anti-racist People's CUNY, does it?" said Conor Tomás

Reed, who forms part of Rank and File Action's Reclaim the Commons initiative. "As we challenge all forms of repression and exploitation, we must not let [the] ruse of representation to cloud our judgment." Reed also noted that in the CUNY Graduate Center, almost 1,000 signatures have been collected for a no-confidence statement against the school's president and provost.

"We want the president and provost out – they do not represent us, they are not handling their jobs well. They need to go," said Reed.

In calling for reforming CUNY through radical changes, speakers discussed a range of concerns and experiences -- from Black politics and how it's not properly addressed in the institution for the community's benefit, to the problems that can arise with assigning synonymy between antisemitism and anti-Zionism. Kiswani, and Rachel Pincus from CUNY Law's Jewish Law Students Association, discussed the university's address of movements supporting Palestine and opposing Zionism.

"By conflating anti-Zionism with antisemitism, we are in essence saying that every Palestinian is anti-semitic," said Kiswani during the event. "And this often extends to all Muslims and Arabs, and racialized people in general who stand against the state of Israel."

During the second panel, community leaders that form part of solidarity initiatives with Puerto Rico, the Philippines, Haiti, and other countries described the struggles they face daily in their respective advocacies. Tristan Dutchin, who forms part of the Amazon

Labor Union, was one of the speakers, articulating how the booming company exploits laborers and should be continuously held accountable.

"It wasn't really easy unionizing that place [Amazon]. We went through a lot of barriers. A lot of bizarre stuff to get where we needed to get, and that's what you have to do to get into this working-class labor movement. You have to go through the odds," Dutchin said, later noting that he was fired from Amazon after helping successfully launch the company's unionization.

Later, Gabriela Malespin from the NYC chapter of Boricua Resistance took to the podium, mentioning how her organization aims to free the island from imperialism and capitalism. During her talk, she called out officials, including CUNY Board of Trustees member Robert Mujica, who has a stake in Puerto Rico and CUNY's state.

"I want to highlight all these different people who are connected to CUNY and to the public system because A) we all deserve better. We don't deserve these horrible, imperialist people taking over our institutions, our budgets, impeding our access to education [...]," said Malespin. "We're calling on specifically for him [Mujica] to be removed from the Board of Trustees."

Following closing remarks, the People's CUNY later spoke informally with those who attended through an "organizing huddle," where they further discussed ways to address the university and city's forms of repression.

# BC Vanguard, WBCR Host Town Hall, Discuss Campus Issues



Dean Peter Tolia speaking with students during the town hall./TV, Radio, and Emerging Media Department

By Radwan Farraj  
Staff Writer

Student leaders from The Brooklyn College Vanguard, WBCR, and the Television, Radio, and Emerging Media Department held a town hall on Tuesday, Mar. 7 for BC students and faculty to discuss issues facing the campus community and university.

The live-streamed event took place at the Jefferson-Williams Lounge in the Student Center and was split into discussions regarding rising costs at CUNY, academic needs, campus infrastructure, and student life. Panelists began each discussion with general overviews, inviting students and faculty to ask questions, provide comments, and respond to each other.

CUNY has instructed its 25 campuses to recommend budget cuts for programming and activity expenses for the 2024 fiscal year, with BC tasked to cut about \$9.3 million. Students voiced concerns about the pending budget

cuts and the governor's proposed tuition increases that CUNY students could pay in the future. "So from what I understand, they're [CUNY] cutting \$9 million, but they're voting to raise tuition. So what are we paying tuition for? What are we paying that we're not getting?" asked one student.

Governor Kathy Hochul recently released an executive budget proposal that would provide a recurring sum of \$94 million in state support for CUNY to address general operating costs, university employee benefits, and financial aid assistance. CUNY senior colleges are slated to receive \$484 million for facility upkeep and investment projects. The university's community colleges would receive \$120 million for similar projects.

The proposal also authorizes annual tuition increases for CUNY senior colleges and SUNY state-operated campuses by 3% in accordance with the Higher Education Price Index, which measures

inflation and spending in higher education. SUNY's university centers would see annual raises of 6% in differential tuition for the next five years for in-state students. The tuition increases are expected to generate \$97 million and \$31 million annually for SUNY and CUNY, respectively.

Declining rates of enrollment have created revenue shortfalls for many CUNY campuses, with cost cuts and tuition hikes for enrolled students being the only possible solutions for balancing expenses, explained Peter Tolia, dean of the School of Natural and Behavioral Sciences. "But again, I'm not the fiscal person. I'm trying to figure this all out, too," said Tolia.

Participants then talked about graduation requirements, new faculty hires, and class modalities for future semesters. Students commented on the lack of available courses required for major completion and the decrease in courses offered online. "It was kinda

disappointing that classes I needed, that I thought I should get, I'm not getting," said one student.

The availability of online courses has been dependent on factors outside of CUNY's control, according to Qing Hu, dean of the Koppelman School of Business who was also in attendance. New York State's Department of Education and separate accreditation agencies required that certain courses be returned to in-person formats by 2022. "There should be a healthy decision and mix in terms of what is the most appropriate courses we could offer online, and the rest that need to be held on-campus, especially for the undergraduate curriculum," stated Hu.

Discussion shifted to campus infrastructure and resources, where students expressed their thoughts on campus resources available to them and campus upkeep. "Walking on campus, beautiful outside. Walking inside, I was absolutely appalled," said one student

who transferred to BC in spring 2022. "It makes you wonder what are you paying for, and why are you paying," the student said. Current total deferred maintenance would cost the college \$1 billion to address, with \$760 million in maintenance being required for the sciences alone, said Tolia. Deferred maintenance refers to planned maintenance projects postponed by lack of adequate resources.

"Brooklyn College had problems before the pandemic. We already had deferred maintenance before the pandemic," said Ron Jackson, vice president of Student Affairs. Due to additional upkeep issues brought on by COVID-19, it has been difficult to figure out what needs to be fixed just to get by, according to Jackson.

The town hall concluded with a discussion of student life, where participants spoke with USG representative Noam Abrahams about club leadership, campus events, student government, and club funding.

# Women's History Month Celebration Honors Trailblazers

By Michela Arlia  
Managing Editor

Reporting Assistance By  
Serin Sarsour  
Features Editor

The Women's Center, Immigrant Student Success Office, and Undergraduate Student Government teamed up to recognize and honor women in the best way possible: with a celebration on Thursday, Mar. 9. To ring in Women's History Month, the event in the Student Center's penthouse honored trailblazing women, as well as the women in our personal lives who defy the odds on the regular.

"I think that Women's History Month is really important because we actually do forget so many of the important historical women, but also I think it's really important that we think about the women in our lives and ourselves," said Nicole Solis-Ramirez, program director at the Women's Center on campus.

The celebration featured catered lunch and activities such as button

making, a temporary tattoo station, and the opportunity to make a card for a special woman in one's life. Juniors Jennifer Lucero and Sasha Calderon also sang songs with strong themes of women empowerment during the event.

For a BC sophomore named Annie who was in attendance, the card making station offered a potential turning point for her relationship with someone close to her.

"I really liked creating this card for my sister," she said. "Most of the time we get into arguments or we just don't see the same way, we have different viewpoints, but I feel like if I write this card for her, maybe she'll change a little bit. Maybe she might say you know, 'I actually do love my sister, she thought of me making this card.'"

On all the tables across the room were centerpieces with information about an important woman in history. Some of the women featured included model Grace Jones, journalist Isabel Allende, activist Miriam Makeba, "first lady of physics"



Participants who attended the Women's Center event./Serin Sarsour

Chien-Shiung Wu, and singer Celia Cruz.

"I think this is a beautiful celebration of women in our community and it's important to celebrate them because I think we have a really beautiful community here at Brooklyn College and it's always worth celebrating, especially during Women's History Month," said USG Vice President Carrie Ebbin, "and celebrating past women and present women and really coming together, it's really nice." For Ebbin,

the opportunity to make a card for her mother was a personal highlight from last Thursday.

Amber Prophete, a junior who is a "squad member" at the Women's Center, was responsible for assisting in planning events under her federal work study position. She was happy to have the event be such a success, noting that women need to be celebrated and empowered.

"We've [women] been through so much just like the generations and eras of life, and we've just been completely taken advantage of, so now that we are able to empower each other and celebrate is always a good opportunity and good idea," said Prophete.

Though the campus event had a large turnout and appreciation for, Solis-Ramirez explained that women today still don't get the proper recognition for everything they have done and continue to do for society.

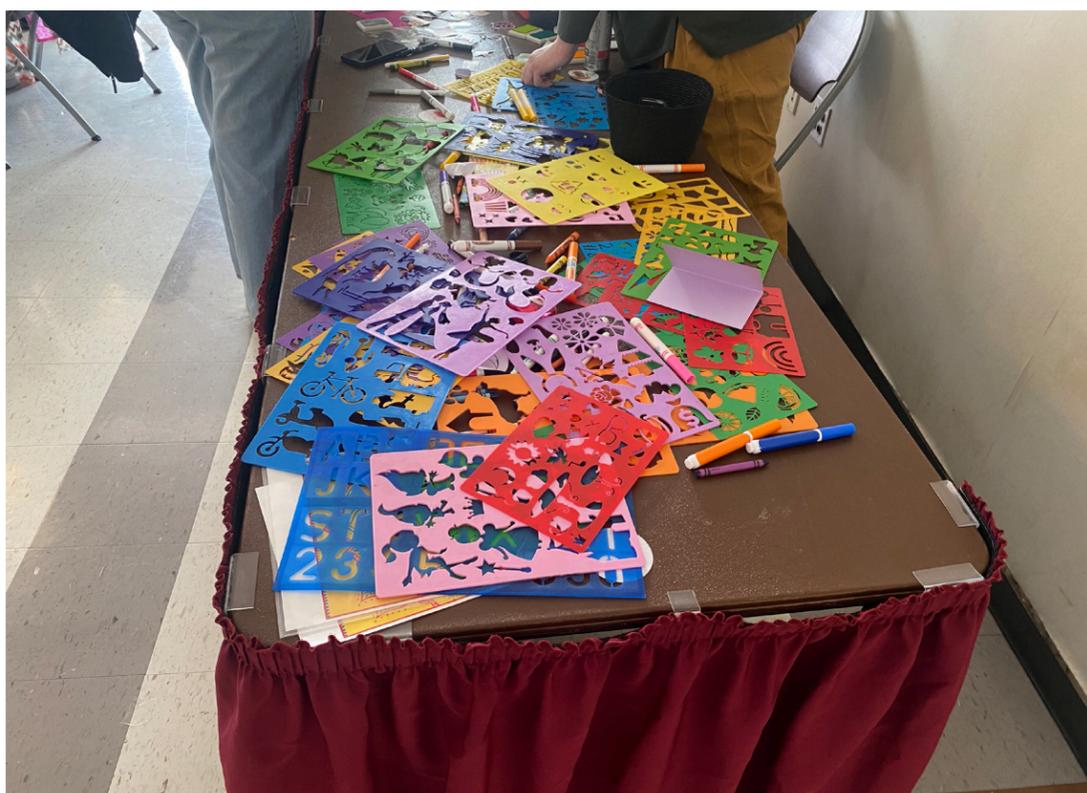
"I think it's really important to host these events because I think that if we actually study history, women are sort of

at the center of everything, including the economy. What we do is really keep things going, and I think that women's history itself is so often dismissed," she said.

To try and change the outlook society has on women, the Women's Center works to bring light to the ways in which women have actually contributed to important changes around the world.

"I do think it's important to honor the trailblazing women that came before us, because if we don't acknowledge them, I mean I know it's a sort of repeated sentiment, we are doomed to repeat the past," said Solis-Ramirez.

As the center's busiest month on campus is underway, more events throughout March will highlight women in the BC community and beyond. The Women's Center looks forward to hosting the Women in Business Pop-Up on Mar. 21, where students and other BC members are invited to showcase and sell their small business goods.



Some supplies used for the event's card-making./Serin Sarsour

# BC Reacts: A New Deal For CUNY



Organizers of the banner drop in support of the New Deal for CUNY and other demands. /Serin Sarsour

of our classes are taught by adjuncts who are really woefully underpaid and exploited, and our students deserve better,” she said.

A protest for the New Deal occurred on the same day as the banner drop. Andrade was among one of the protesters and is looking forward to participating in future demonstrations to fight against slashed budgets and for a more accessible, affordable CUNY.

“The state should take responsibility and fully fund our institutions. This tuition hike that Gov. Kathy [Hochul] is proposing is like a tax increase for the working class, which makes it harder for students to earn a higher education degree,” said Andrade.

Student organizers are now planning their annual “March In March For CUNY: CUNY Is We, We Are CUNY” rally, which will take place on Sunday, Mar. 19 from 12 PM to 3 PM. CUNY students, faculty, staff, and advocates will meet at Brooklyn Borough Hall, march over the Brooklyn Bridge, and end at City Hall to fight for the New York State legislature to pass the New Deal.

Harb’s message for President Anderson, Governor Hochul, Chancellor Rodríguez, and other officials is to make some kind of effort now. “Put your money where your mouth is. Come to the table in good faith for negotiation, ready to make significant commitments to CUNY and the people that make it great,” he said.

By Serin Sarsour  
*Featured Editor*

Legislation advocating for a better and brighter tomorrow for the CUNY system continues to make waves on the Brooklyn College campus. The bill, New Deal for CUNY, calls for a tuition-free university where faculty and staff are no longer underpaid and more resources are made available across campuses.

“Everybody likes to talk about how CUNY is an engine of economic mobility for students, which it is, and that is something that should be valued in our society and therefore free. So for me, the investment in an institution and students and faculty and staff is what makes an institution run and we need that investment,” said BC Sociology Professor Carolina Bank Muñoz.

The New Deal for CUNY was first proposed in February 2021 by the Professional Staff Congress along with a group of CUNY advocates and state legislators. Besides its call for free tuition, the New Deal aims to increase the diversity and number of CUNY faculty and staff, including more academic advisors and mental health counselors.

For BC junior and New York Public Interest Research

Group representative Damien Andrade, the bill’s plans are more important now than ever before. “I want to be at a place where students don’t have to fear the burden of tuition costs in order to debate going to school or having enough money to pay rent,” he said. “I also believe that we need more academic advisors and more mental health counselors for each campus because we are still in a pandemic and people still stress.”

At the heart of CUNY and the New Deal are first-generation students who come from low-income families and are pushing for a chance at higher education, but tuition costs are currently in the way of their academic pursuits. Andrade noted that CUNY used to be free until the 1970s, so he has faith that the efforts being made from the PSC union and the CUNY community have the potential to make the university free again.

“For me, the New Deal for CUNY is trying to live up to the actual mission of a public university that provides quality education for New Yorkers, for people in the city, and to support their faculty and staff and everybody that makes this university run by putting resources, money,

and opportunity into the brilliance that already exists in this university and building it from within,” said Anthony Harb, an anthropology professor at BC.

The New Deal for CUNY also advocates for more investments into the infrastructure of CUNY buildings. There are buildings on the campuses that date back to the 1930s, so updated repairs and maintenance are long overdue, according to many supporters. Bank Muñoz noted that pushing off this maintenance has repercussions for students, staff, faculty, and their experiences inside these buildings, as well as how technology works or doesn’t work in them.

A group of BC faculty and

staff took action last Tuesday, Mar. 7, after hanging two banners on campus for a few hours: one hanging from a window in Ingersoll Hall and another hanging from a window in Boylan Hall. These banners were meant to send a message to CUNY Chancellor Félix V. Matos Rodríguez and other officials.

“I think a New Deal for CUNY will address the critical underfunding that has been happening for decades,” said BC Anthropology Professor Naomi Schiller, who accompanied Bank Muñoz and Harb during the banner drop last Tuesday. “Our buildings are falling apart, our students don’t have enough career counselors, there’s not enough mental health counselors. So many



A banner hanging outside an Ingersoll window read “Felix! Come To The Table.” / Serin Sarsour

# CHeF Calls For Healthier Options On CUNY Campuses

By Gabriela Flores  
Editor-in-Chief

Vending machine options and healthy eats can often be overlooked in the bustle of college life. In looking out for the CUNY community's well-being, the Campaign for Healthy Food (CHeF) works to definitively end the university's pouring rights contract with Pepsi, expand dining options for students, and overall, promote a healthier and more sustainable campus. At the heart of their drive, a team of students, faculty, and food policy professionals tackles economic, environmental, and nutritional aspects that impact CUNY's public health.

"When it comes to food and dining, and when it comes to the vending options, many colleges promote this sustainable campus and involvement in foods and nutrition," said Mark Hachicho, a CHeF student organizer. "But is it really reflected through the lifestyle that they promote?"

CHeF is an initiative led by Healthy CUNY, a program created by the Urban Food Policy Institute, which seeks to make CUNY the healthiest public university system in the country. Through a range of services, including enrolling students in food assistance programs, Healthy CUNY works to advocate for students and their health. Composed of about 15 students, and food policy advocates like Eman Faris, CHeF represents a diverse group of CUNY students looking to better the university.

For Hachicho and Abeir Anasseri, a Brooklyn College student who forms part of the CHeF research team, joining the initiative back in November has

enabled them to delve into aspects of health and nutritional sciences that they were not previously exposed to. Whether it be building skills outside of the biochemistry realm or dietician studies, they both gained insight into how to effectively advocate and research for food policy. In doing so, they've collaborated with other students hailing from Baruch, Lehman, Kingsborough, and other campuses.

"I think just the research and the education that goes on in our coursework and our professional work really prepares us on how to build a more resilient food system," Hachicho said.

The crux of CHeF's purpose is to permanently end the \$21 million, ten-year pouring contract CUNY has with Pepsi. With the contract's end approaching, they aim to give the university's top-ruling body, the Board of Trustees, concrete reasons for cutting ties with Pepsi. Pouring rights contracts grant universities incentives and compensations for the exclusive rights to serve, sell, and market a company's products on campuses. To CHeF and other food policy advocates, the current Pepsi contract limits CUNY students' options to sugary beverages and unhealthy choices, which could bode community health problems in the long run.

At BC and other CUNY colleges, these Pepsi-confined options are reflected in vending machines.

"A lot of students also are in a time crunch where they don't have a lot of time to like leave the campus to grab something. And so they're left stuck with whatever's in the vending machine," said Anasseri, noting that CHeF aims to diversify food options on



Edited by Gabriela Flores

campuses, not get rid of Pepsi or similar products altogether.

Those involved with CHeF have learned how to communicate their message for a healthier CUNY, as well as find better alternatives that benefit not only public health but the city's economy, too. While they look into the logistics of the Pepsi contract, CHeF members go beyond the issue's surface and consider how CUNY's partnership with an enormous company impacts small businesses. The university's vendor policy emphasizes the importance of partnering with businesses that are owned by women, minorities, or service-disabled veterans. But as researchers and advocates working in CHeF found, the contract with Pepsi does not align with said values.

"When you're giving money to what could be the monopoly of Pepsi, you're not really encouraging the economic development of the small businesses around you," explained Hachicho. He noted that moving away from a Pepsi contract renewal and towards local businesses could "help service and create this economic development between CUNY and the small businesses around

us."

CHeF also considers the environmental impacts of the plastic waste that can come from limited vending machine and lunchroom options. While they finalize their proposals for contract switches to healthier, local alternatives before the Pepsi contract is up, CHeF members keep in mind biodegradable products that could have a lighter impact on the environment.

"I also think that's a great thing about this campaign that we're not just encompassing like nutritional aspects, but also like how it affects sustainability," Anasseri said. According to her and her team's studies, Anasseri found that the Department of Health and Mental Health suggests no more than two columns with high-calorie beverages. On BC's campus, however, they found that only three out of 84 vending machines follow this guideline.

Besides their focus on the pouring rights contract, CHeF students intend to address the dwindling food options across lunchrooms. As members have discussed and noticed on their respective campuses, cafeterias have been hard hit by COVID. With Boylan Cafe's scarce food options, questions of consumer

rights and CUNY's food vendor contracts were something that Hachicho pondered.

"There are just so many different ideas, and it leads us to ask the question of where do we draw the line? And how much does the consumer have a say in these contracts, and how are they gonna support the consumer," he said, noting that the community's health and the broader economy's state should be considered.

Experiencing first-hand the challenges and consistent efforts of advocating for a healthier CUNY, CHeF members have benefited from their experiences in the initiative. Looking to their career pursuits after graduation this May, both Hachicho and Anasseri plan to implement their lessons related to food policy into their respective careers.

"It's [CHeF's] encompassing of different things and it helps me have a good balance between nutrition and dietetics, and how it is an encompassing of community and the gastronomy behind the food," said Anasseri, who is working towards becoming a registered dietician. "So I think it's also really cool to do that at all."

# Desi Culture Club Celebrates Colorful Holi Festival



Participants threw colorful powders in celebration of Holi./Jason Lin

By Jason Lin  
Staff Writer

Awaiting the arrival of spring, the Desi Culture Club at Brooklyn College hosted a Holi celebration at the West Quad on Tuesday, Mar. 7. In collaboration with USG and the Bangladesh Students Association, the organizers created the same fun atmosphere as last year with music blasting, colorful powder throwing, and cultural embracement. “Because it is like a cultural celebration, that aspect will be applied to the festival. But it is also something that everyone could participate in; it is not just for those who celebrate Holi,” said Stella Mathew, the president of the Desi Culture Club

that organized the festival with her team. In exchange of winter for spring, observers of the Holi Festival embrace their loved ones, throw dry color powders at one another, among other traditions. As one of the most significant holidays for Hinduism, Holi is especially popular in India. Known for its celebration of colors, the holiday lasts for one day and one night, starting in the evening of Full Moon Day, or Purnima, in the Falgun month, according to holifestival.org. As a club that celebrates Holi itself, the Desi Culture Club used the opportunity to introduce Indian culture to all students at Brooklyn College, which has dozens of different ethnicities,

traditions, and cultures represented on campus. “Everybody is coming together, with all the club and undergraduate student government. It [is] an event for everyone on campus and a lot of fun for cultural reasons for those who haven’t experienced other culture,” said Madison Martinez, a freshman at Brooklyn College. The event last Tuesday was done with USG’s support in setting up an annual budget and policies that allow the club to host festivals in school. BSA helped to promote the celebration on the quad with its platform and group that gathers Bangladeshi students, who work to announce events related to their culture.

Volunteers collaborated to organize snacks, dry powder, white T-shirts, and other aspects to make sure the fun ran smoothly. “Its something that brings people closer; you can see people just having fun. It also promotes Southeast Asia culture,” said Adil Ahmed, coordinator of the Desi Culture Club. Several of the student participants have roots in India, acknowledging that sharing their culture with other BC students was a great opportunity to embrace the college’s diversity. For some participants, even the dancing and music selection of popular Indian tracks vibrated the richness of Indian culture during the Holi festivities on campus. “I definitely love celebrating my friends who are of another culture, and it allows me to embrace

their culture; to see what they do differently,” said Sanaa Jackman, a junior at Brooklyn College. In spotlighting the Holi Festival, the Desi Culture Club brought together a rare moment for the massive BC community to immerse themselves in cultural fun. As club members gear up for their biggest event of the spring, Desi Night, they hope to highlight the vastness of Desi culture and celebrations in the best way they know how: through good fun, music, food, and communal gatherings. “There are so many cultural celebrations, like a basic celebration, that spilled into a different celebration aspect within it. So incorporating those will truly help to bring joy like the Desi Night in May,” Stella said.



The event was organized by the Desi Culture Club, Bangladesh Student Association, and USG./Jason Lin

## Big Apple City

by Nitu Farhin



BIG APPLE CITY: The Green Ribbon [Retelling Alvin Schwartz's Version]

# Amplifying Pakistan's Culture: BC's New Pakistani Students Association

By Haritha Lakshmanan  
Staff Writer

The Pakistani Students Association officially became a club for the spring 2023 semester. Founded by Areeb Shahid, a junior and computer science major, the association was made to celebrate and promote Pakistan's culture and history for everyone on campus.

"I want to introduce Pakistan's unique culture through this association. It seems to many that there are other clubs that may represent Pakistani culture, but there is no Pakistani student association for Pakistani students or other students who want to exclusively learn about Pakistani culture and traditions," Shahid said.

Although South Asian cultural associations on campus exist, including the Desi Culture Club and the Bangladesh Student Association, neither specifically highlights the Pakistani students at Brooklyn College. After Shahid's experience on other campuses, he saw the importance of uniting the Pakistani students at BC in order to create a safe space for them as well as to teach them about Pakistani culture, traditions, and even Pakistan's government.

All of the current board members have Pakistani origins, with each hoping to teach students of other



Members of the Pakistani Student Association./Courtesy of PSA

backgrounds and even Pakistani students who are interested in learning more about their country's traditions and history.

"Growing up as a third-generation Pakistani-American, I always had fear of losing my Pakistani roots. So, whatever chance I had to represent my culture, I took it and felt passionate about it. I used to always put henna on my hands, wear salwar kameez, and to this day, I still do all of these things," explained Sanaa Bhatti, director of social and cultural affairs at the PSA. Henna is a temporary tattoo that is often used on one's hands or feet for decorative purposes. A salwar kameez is a traditional clothing worn by women that hail from eastern Pakistan and

northwestern India.

Being born in Brooklyn, with her grandfather and father moving to New York at a young age, Bhatti loves sharing her culture with everyone else for the most part. She feels as though her cultural identity is deeply rooted in her.

PSA explained that for students who grew up in Pakistan, they are able to proudly celebrate Pakistani culture and traditions because they understand them. Oftentimes, Pakistani American students are not able to embrace their Pakistani identity to its fullest potential because they don't understand where these traditions originate from or why they are celebrated. "Being that there is such a large

Pakistani community at Brooklyn College, I want us all to work together to represent our culture abundantly, not only to the Desi students, but to the non-Desi students and faculty as well," said Bhatti.

Before delving into building PSA at Brooklyn College, Shahid was initially worried there were not many Pakistani students on campus that were willing to join the club. To spread the word, he reached out to people on LinkedIn to see if they would be willing to sign a petition to make the association official. However, to his surprise, the PSA's official group chat now contains over 150 students.

"Our goal is to make

sure that Pakistan's diverse traditions and cultures reach everyone, regardless of race," said Bhatti.

The Pakistani Students Association recently held its first event titled "Kab Shab" (translated as chit chat event) on Tuesday, Feb. 28. Looking ahead, members plan to collaborate with the Muslim clubs on campus for the Grand Iftar dinner to be hosted on Mar. 27 as a part of Ramadan, a month of prayer, fasting, and reflection for the Muslim community worldwide. In addition, they are planning an event for Pakistan Day on Mar. 23. In the fall, they hope to have a conference in collaboration with the PSAs at other universities about the political and economic crises that Pakistan currently faces.

## Calling all budding reporters and writers!

Want to sharpen your journalistic skills?

## Then join The Vanguard, Brooklyn College's student newspaper.

From covering the latest campus demonstrations to profiling the most interesting creatives a reporter can find, you'll have plenty of topics you could cover at The Vanguard.

**Email your inquiries to [thebcvanguard@gmail.com](mailto:thebcvanguard@gmail.com).**

# BC Conservatory's Concert Delivers The Heart Of Strings



(L to R) Ajin Kim playing violin and Eri Kang on the piano./Paulina Gajewski

By Paulina Gajewski  
Staff Writer

The Conservatory of Music students took to the stage to tug on the heartstrings of audience members with its Music for Strings concert on Wednesday, Mar. 8. The concert, which was coordinated by Brooklyn College professor and two-time Grammy-nominated violinist, Jesse Mills, took place in the Don Buchwald Theater. Throughout the evening, the show's design ensured the clarity of the melodies played by an assortment of violins, a cello, and guitar.

String instruments are the foundations of most orchestral pieces. Whether the musician is plucking, striking, or bowing, strings can reach some of the highest and lowest sounds in a piece. Each of the songs played at the concert reflected the range string instruments have, a range

just as vast as human emotion. These musical depths were showcased by wonderful musicians who were accompanied by Eri Kang on the piano.

Opening the show was Ajin Kim on the violin, playing "3 Old Viennese Dances: No. 2, Liebesleid." In this piece, also known as "Love's Sorrow," by Fritz Kreisler, one could not help but feel sympathy with the woe perceived in the notes. With the piano accompaniment, Kim produced a sweet tone akin to a lover's plea.

Lila Bruschi embarked next with a piece by the beloved Beethoven. Bruschi's piece, the "Violin Sonata No. 5 in F Major, 'Spring' op. 24," began with II. Adagio molto espressivo. As expressed in the name, the piece is slow yet expressive. Bruschi's skills shone through, painting an image of petals of spring blooms slowly unfurling. Continuing onto III. Scherzo Allegro

molto, Bruschi delivered a playful and brisk tune. The rapid notes lifted the audience, an exhilarating feeling that resembled a newborn bird learning to fly.

**“Each of the songs played at the concert reflected the range string instruments have, a range just as vast as human emotion.”**

Following Bruschi's performance was Mary Beth Castaño with a violoncello. Castaño excelled in her abilities to perform "Cello Sonata No. 1 in E minor, op. 89" by Brahms. She was able to keep a slow and steady pace while also reaching moments of emotional intensity.

Benjamin Kotik took

to the stage with a piece by Bruch called, "Violin Concerto No. 1 in G minor, op. 26: 1. 'Vorspiel (allegro moderato)'" The vibrations were felt throughout the theater with the rapidity that Kotik displayed in his performance. William Swinick later assumed his position with "Violin Sonata in D major, RV10" by Vivaldi, showcasing his skills with the range of paces displayed in the piece.

Diverting from the evening's predominant violins, Noel Cahill let the audience take a breath with his guitar performance. Cahill embodied both a classical and acoustic feel on the stage, demonstrating the full scope of musical techniques that can be achieved on the guitar. Cahill's pieces included "Allegretto: 13 from 18 etudes progressives, op. 51" by Giuliani, "Prelude in F-sharp minor 1: From 12 preludes," by Ponce,

and "Sons de carrilhões" by Pernambuco.

The concert's closing piece returned to the violin. Samuel Braiman played "Violin Concerto in E minor, op. 64" by Mendelssohn. Braiman began with the slow II. Andante, and accelerated in III. Allegretto non troppo. Allegro molto vivace.

In an interview with Braiman following the show, he stated the importance of conservatory shows. "Performing is also a skill in its own, which is why it's important to perform here at Brooklyn College," he told The Vanguard. "It helps me prepare for the real world."

With a final flourish and bow, the audience was filled with beating hearts and full souls. The Conservatory of Music's second Music for Strings performance is set for May 10.

# A Testament Of Love: Feirstein's Saleem Gondal Wins Big With Film 'Post Term'



A scene from Gondal's 'Post Term.'/Focus Features

By Samia Afsar  
Arts Editor

Saleem Gondal's short film "Post Term" is among five winners honored during the Gotham Film & Media Institute's fourth annual Focus Features & JetBlue Student Short Film Showcase.

Created for his MFA thesis film at the Feirstein Graduate School of Cinema, Gondal's production was carefully selected by a special jury of filmmakers, curators, and critics who assessed projects from 23 graduate programs across the country.

"It's always really nice to know your work is being understood and that there's an opportunity to celebrate it," Gondal told The Vanguard while reflecting on his win. "It's been a really great and overwhelming experience to hear all the positive responses."

Set in the fall of 1992 and based on his parent's first year together in the U.S. as Pakistani immigrants in an arranged marriage, "Post Term" is a beautifully captivating tribute to South Asian relationships, in which

intimacy is expressed through gestures in lieu of direct dialogue.

"I'm really interested in that kind of ephemeral nature of love, and that was something I wanted to do here," said Gondal. "In South Asian arranged marriages, there is love in most of them or in many of them, but it's not expressed in the way we would in the West [...] there's a lot of unspoken affections and expressions of love."

**"I'm really interested in that kind of ephemeral nature of love, and that was something I wanted to do here."**

Due to COVID-related restrictions, Gondal's film was written, shot, and cast in five months during the pandemic. Gondal conducted separate interviews with his parents detailing the early years of their

marriage and their immigrant experience, and requested cast members to translate his English script to Urdu. By trusting their fluency to maintain the film's storyline, "Post Term" is a film that Gondal credits as a unified collaboration.

"It was a very interesting experience because although this is a film that is very personal to me, it's something that came about with a whole team of collaborators," said Gondal. "And even though I have been making movies for a while, I don't think I've ever worked with this amount of people who are all as invested in the story as I am."

Despite his parents' experience being the main influence behind "Post Term," Gondal also reflected on his own recent wedding and the parallels between his marriage and that of his parents in relation to his film.

"A lot of the conversations in the film about having kids and what the future holds, they're things that my parents told me they

were thinking about in their marriage, but it's also a lot of what I've been thinking about with me and my partner," said Gondal. "So I was definitely trying to explore what I think the future will hold for me through their story."

Gondal is currently working on a feature film entitled "Tortilla Roti," which revolves around the Punjabi Mexican community that was formed in the early 20th century, when legislation banned Asians from becoming U.S. citizens or from owning land. Gondal's film will follow

a Punjabi man and a Mexican woman who do not speak the same language, yet form a family and learn to trust in each other in order to both survive and thrive in the American Southwest.

As of now, Gondal is hoping that with the proper funding, he can begin filming "Tortilla Roti" sometime next year.

In speaking to aspiring filmmakers, Gondal sends the message that going beyond your abilities only produces a more emotionally receptive and authentic story.

"Don't limit yourself because the world and other people will always try to put limitations on you [...] allow yourself the freedom to tell the stories that you need to tell," he said.

Gondal's film "Post Term" is available to stream on Focus Features, Jetblue, and Youtube.



Feirstein student Saleem Gondal./Focus Features

# Opinion: COVID Delayed The Media Industry's Creativity



“Morbius” is an example of how COVID led to blockbusters flopping, Jada Simon opines. *Marvel Entertainment*

By Jada Simon  
Staff Writer

Everyone knows that COVID has delayed everything, but one of the things it has greatly changed is the television and movie industry. As a result, some of the latest and greatest blockbusters ended up being a bust.

“Morbius,” a 2022 blockbuster release, is a great example of a movie that left fans disappointed. This superhero thriller was originally expected to release on July 10, 2020, but its release date was pushed back on six separate occasions before it hit theaters.

According to digitaltrends, the movie had constant delays due to theater closures caused by the pandemic. The combination of the perpetual delays with the eye-catching trailer

being out for so long, left fans anxiously awaiting. But by the time it finally arrived in April 2022, the film’s action was not as entertaining as expected.

The piece came off as rushed and incomprehensible. Screen Rant, an entertainment news outlet, said that the problem was “the film’s lack of structure and coherent script.” Not only had it missed the ideal release date, but “Morbius” also “moves at a rushed pace while compromising its timeline, characterization, and logic.” In the end, the scenes appeared poorly done and not thought out.

Post-production was assumed to have been rushed due to the release taking so long, since the studio was playing catch-up with all the other

films that were pushed back by the pandemic as well. A St. Albert Gazette article says that, “Finishing a film in time for its premiere is often a scramble in a normal year, but with COVID-19 shutting down many facets of life in March [2020], movie-makers faced an even tougher deadline.” “Morbius” was a film that was brushed over and too hard to understand despite audiences’ high expectations, but truthfully, it was not alone. Many TV and film productions suffered at the hands of COVID and failed to meet their marks.

We can also think back to the release of “Black Widow” in 2021 and the problem that Scarlett Johansson, the film’s titular character, had with landing a fair deal with Disney+ to secure her cut of streaming

sales.

During the pandemic, Disney started to really take advantage of its online, subscription-based platform. For the industry, a lot of its revenue was starting to come from streaming at the pandemic’s peak. Johansson’s contract said nothing of getting profit from the streaming platform’s proceeds, only from theater-related profit, meaning she would miss out on all the money Disney+ was making on the movie. CNBC said that Johansson argued a majority of her profit was expected to come from box office sales in her Disney lawsuit and that adding “Black Widow” to Disney+ without receiving a portion of the profit would “cost her a \$50 million payout.”

It turns out that many companies were

following this trend, but she was not going to be one to get caught in that spider’s web. Gabrielle Carteris, the president of the Screen Actors Guild said, “Scarlett Johansson is shining a white-hot spotlight on the improper shifts in compensation that companies are attempting to slip by talent as distribution models change.”

So, yes, many things have changed due to the pandemic, but the media industry really has some slack to pick up. Consumers are constantly going to theaters hoping that these supposed blockbusters will live up to the name, only to be met with disappointment.

How long can media production shortcomings fall on the excuse of the pandemic?

# Before The Presses: Let's Rename Some Queens Streets

By Gabriela Flores  
Editor-in-Chief

It's a brutally hot July, and it's time for an hour-long bike ride around Astoria. The year is 2009, and gentrification wasn't even a thought in the developing mind of eight-year-old me. As I push the brakes and look around, I notice one truly perplexing aspect of Queens – our streets can be incredibly confusing.

Running from east to west, you have your avenues; north to south, your streets. If you're lucky while strolling in Queens, you have some basic understanding that “drive,” “lane,” “place,” and “road” all signify different locations, even if the number that precedes it is the same. This fuss about street names may surely seem superficial and definitely unworthy of discussion – but that's where I would challenge such an assumption. In recent years, gentrification has contributed to the loss of Queens' locals. And for as much as I adore having both my avenues and streets being the same, there comes a time when you wonder why more streets don't pay homage to the great community legends, influences, and staples that shaped the concrete land you're walking on; or perhaps which country most residents on a certain block historically descend from. Street names, at least to me, have a certain longevity that can withhold time and even the ever-growing presence of gentrification.

Let's consider some of the power-statement street names that illustrate



Some street names like Kalpana Chawla Way show the heart of Queens./Edited by Gabriela Flores

this tangent. If you head to Rockaway and soak up the breeze, you may come across Jacob Riis Park Promenade, named after the famous journalist whose photographic documentation highlighted the living situations in impoverished NYC slums during the 1880s. A curious onlooker who comes across the eponymous pave and its sign while walking, may look up Riis and “How the Other Half Lives.” On a more fundamental level, the street name's very existence pays respects to an important part of history, and one that shouldn't be forgotten to avoid possibly repeating today.

If you set your GPS on course to Jackson Heights, you may spot a quirky sign on 35th Avenue with small numbers labeled along its bottom. And no, these numbers and oddly placed lines aren't typos by fault of the city. Instead it's a nod to Scrabble, a game

founded in the basement of a local Queens church. Sure, there is nothing unique about “35th Avenue” itself, but there

**“Even if our residential homes or local spots get bulldozed into dust and replaced with luxury complexes, we could at least have something that keeps those streets rooted in the community that built them.”**

is something to be said about creative subtlety, especially here when it unravels such close-to-home histories behind common pastimes.

Being the world's borough, it's only

fair for certain green aluminum signs across Queens to highlight the activism, community building, and struggles leaders took on for the sake of their respective hood, or pay homage to people who became role models for certain ethnic communities. The latter is what the enclave “Little India” did with a segment of 74th Street honoring Kalpana Chawla, the first woman of Indian descent to go to space.

So much of our city streets as New Yorkers shape who we are and our experiences, whether you're from The Bronx, Manhattan, Brooklyn, Queens, or Staten Island. The only fitting move for active community members to do is to continue renaming certain streets. At the bare minimum, we should have more eponymous street titles in conjunction with the standard “34th Ave” and “34th Street.” Not only will it help

those of us who have the attention span of an unshelled walnut, but it will also highlight who we are as Queens people, our values, and how we want to represent ourselves. This is especially important given that locals in our neighborhoods and many across our neighboring boroughs are experiencing the brunt of gentrification, struggling to pay rent and get by in a place where they formerly thrived. Even if our residential homes or local spots get bulldozed into dust and replaced with luxury complexes, we could at least have something that keeps those streets rooted in the community that built them. Infrastructure could be dropped and built again, but street signs carry a certain weight of importance – at least for the cyclist in me at eight years old, and still today.

# Opinion: How Disney's Misrepresentations Affect Young Girls



The classic Disney princesses can lead to misrepresentation of women./Disney

By Manar Dihyem  
Staff Writer

As a Muslim woman, it becomes difficult finding films that resonate with my beliefs. And as a woman in general, it becomes infuriating to see the way women are represented in a lot of movies. In the beginning, the rules were strict on women and how they portrayed themselves on television. Over time, the rules began to progress but simultaneously they continuously fell into the hands of men, white men. Some representations of women on television can be misleading and misrepresented, including for example, Disney princesses.

Young girls look up to these princesses, but they are unaware of who or what they idolize. Do they know

these princesses create unrealistic goals for them? Or that they're created by men? Women in television have been misrepresented for decades, and this is a problem that extends to children having preconceived notions of how a woman should look and act.

Either women are presented in a sexualized and objectified light, or they're presented as overly strong and vicious. There's rarely ever a median for portrayals of women. Take the children's movie "Aladdin," with the lead Princess Jasmine being shown as a conventionally beautiful woman. She is depicted as a woman with long hair and an hourglass-figured body. Is this the correct representation of what a woman is supposed to look like? The answer is no, it is nowhere near a

proper representation of a woman. Why? Because it is creating unrealistic body expectations for the little girls who are watching animated characters.

It's common for female characters across different shows to be depicted with "big chests, small waists, and generally unrealistic bodies," according to Forbes. It does no justice to the situation that the writers and producers of these shows and films tend to be, more often than not, white men. This then creates a problem because it is white men determining how the female character looks and acts, arguably designing her to their personal liking. They are essentially controlling and creating what in their eyes is the "dream girl." A woman that has a nurturing personality, cooking skills, is

friendly with animals, has long hair and an hourglass figure, are just a few of what classic Disney movies portray in their princesses.

It isn't just "Aladdin" that promotes this misrepresentation but rather, all Disney princess movies.

As a child, I always loved Disney, and my favorite princesses were Jasmine and Belle. However, I grew up watching TV without a visibly Muslim role model. I would always be on the lookout for a hijabi princess or a Muslim princess that also celebrates the same holidays as I do. But, time and time again I was let down. Because of this, I vowed to choose the princess that was (culturally) most like me – and that was Jasmine. Naturally, I continuously compared myself to her physically and emotionally.

Because Princess Jasmine wore revealing clothing, young me thought that I had to dress similarly to be accepted by society. Anyone aware of the Islamic religion, however, would know that wearing revealing clothes in public conflicts with Islamic beliefs. As a child, I didn't realize that at the time.

But over the years, I've come to recognize how serious representation is. An article from Forbes reads, "The constructivist approach and cultivation theory suggest that the gender role portrayals present in the films may influence children's beliefs and ideas about gender, social behaviors, and norms." Anecdotally, this approach is true because I experienced it firsthand. Princess Jasmine created goals that were impossible for me to follow. Some good did come out of it, though. Once I grew up and learned my religion more and spoke with other Arab and Muslim women, I realized that it's okay that we don't look the same. In fact, everyone is different. Everyone has different looks and beliefs, and there's absolutely nothing wrong with that. This is why I became a film production major, to produce stories that resonate with Arab and Muslim women of all ages. And one day, I hope to be able to achieve that.

# Reporting Live From The World Baseball Classic



The Vanguard reports live from Miami, covering the matchup of Israel vs. Nicaragua. *Owen Russell*

By Owen Russell  
*Sports Editor*

Electric – no word can better describe the atmosphere around Miami since the moment I arrived for the World Baseball Classic. Maybe you've seen the games on TV (some thrilling, others massive blowouts) but the energy from inside the stadium has been unmatched.

For those unaware, the World Baseball Classic is the equivalent to soccer's World Cup. Nations compete in a tournament to prove which country boasts the best baseball team. Originally slated to take place in 2021, this year's tournament had to be postponed due to COVID-19. The tournament is supposed to take place every three years, and its organization can be a bit funky.

Twenty teams are spread out across four pools (five teams per pool). Each team plays four games, and the top two finishers from each pool advance to a single elimination knockout stage. The four host cities for the group stage are Taichung (Taiwan), Tokyo (Japan), Phoenix (USA), and Miami (USA).

Now with the housekeeping out of the way, it's time to paint a picture of the vibes down here in South Beach. Pool D, the pool taking place in Miami, hosts the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, Venezuela, Nicaragua, and Israel. Those following baseball understand how top-heavy this pool is. The Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, and Venezuela are stacked with MLB players. Heading into the tournament, all three teams were expected to make noise. Venezuela versus the Dominican Republic proved electric. But that's not the game I saw this past Sunday, Mar. 12.

Israel vs Nicaragua... not necessarily two baseball powerhouses. Neither team is teeming with major league talent, fielding mostly unknowns for the world stage. Tickets were sold for as low as five dollars. The media made no fuss about the game, scheduling it for 12 PM on a Sunday.

My expectations were low. I was here for a baseball game. It didn't matter who was playing. With the pressures of school and life squeezing my brain, I needed the comfort only a ballpark hotdog could

provide. The place could have been empty for all I cared.

My expectations were immediately exceeded as I entered the stadium. LoanDepot Park, home of the Miami Marlins, was packed to the gills with maybe the most passionate fans I've ever seen. As I entered, the Nicaraguan National Anthem began. The stadium stood at attention, hands on their hearts, but below the surface the place felt liable to explode. And that's exactly what happened once the song ended through the last pitch.

Never have I been to a game where routine flyouts were met with such spirited celebration. The stadium leaned heavily in favor of Nicaragua. Anytime a Nicaraguan player made contact, the stadium was on its feet. If the Nicaraguan pitcher had two strikes on the opposing batter, the cheers threatened to blow the roof off the building. Nicaragua has a population of 6.8 million people (nearly two million less than NYC), and it sounded like all 6.8 million were in Miami.

I was swept up in the moment. I'm a sucker for underdogs with ultra-

passionate fanbases. While Israel couldn't be considered a powerhouse themselves, their lineup was sprinkled with a few major leaguers. Nicaragua's lineup consisted of zero. Israel's starting pitcher played 22 games for the Baltimore Orioles last year. Nicaragua's starting pitcher was just assigned to the Northwest Arkansas Naturals (Double AA). You get my point. There's usually no point cheering such an unaccomplished team, but Nicaragua kept the game interesting.

Nicaragua's pitching platoon kept the game scoreless for seven innings. In the fifth inning, shortstop Steven Leyton doubled with two outs, scoring right fielder Sandy Bermudez. Entering the eighth inning, Nicaragua led 1-0. The stadium was bumping, and I was too.

The crowd reached a fever pitch as relief pitcher Jonathan Loáisiga reached the mound. Loáisiga is Nicaragua's sole major leaguer; he's pitched for the New York Yankees since 2020. I assumed, like most of Nicaragua's fans, that this was the clincher. The pitchers before, the ones with zero major league

experience, were able to shut out Israel for seven innings. Surely a New York Yankee can do the same for two.

It didn't work out that way. Loáisiga lasted one inning, getting absolutely rocked by Israel. He allowed one walk, three hits, and three runs. The stadium fell silent for the first time all afternoon. Nicaragua failed to score in the ninth inning. Israel won 3-1. Game over.

As someone with no affiliation to either nation, I had no investment heading into the game. Again, just there for the baseball, but over the course of nine innings I became enthralled. The passion building with each strike, or each crack of the bat, gave rise to the same feeling within me. I know how hard it is to root for a bad team – I have been a Buffalo Bills fan since the early 2010s. It's hard to get excited for a team which, on paper, doesn't stand a chance. Even though Nicaragua may be the biggest underdog of the World Baseball Classic, their fans acted like they were the 1927 Yankees. Baseball can be beautiful that way. Sometimes you have to see it to believe it.

# BC Sports Recap (Mar. 3 – Mar. 11)

## MEN'S TENNIS STARTS ON WRONG FOOT

By Owen Russell  
*Sports Editor*

The men's tennis team kicked off the spring season this past week with a 6-3 loss to SUNY Purchase on Thursday, Mar. 9.

The Bulldogs struggled primarily at the top of their lineup, losing their top two doubles contests and top four singles contests. Their sole doubles victory came in the #3 doubles match when the team of sophomore Mujibur

Shaad and freshman Allen Mardakhayev defeated the challengers from SUNY Purchase. Mardakhayev tacked on a singles victory in #6 singles, marking an undefeated day for the freshman. Junior Mordecai Lev scored Brooklyn's remaining victory in #5 singles.

Brooklyn started its season on a questionable note, but will have plenty of time to turn the tide. The next match comes on Friday, Mar. 17 against York College.



Bulldogs fall in season opener./BC Athletics

## MEN'S VOLLEYBALL FINALLY WINS



Men's volleyball sees wins and losses./ BC Athletics

By Owen Russell  
*Sports Editor*

Men's volleyball snapped a five-game losing streak this

past week with a win against York College on Tuesday, Mar. 7.

The Bulldogs came into Tuesday's match desperate to stop the

bleeding of their five game skid. Brooklyn earned its victory in emphatic fashion. The Bulldogs swept the Cardinals, winning

each set by double digits (25-3, 25-5, 25-9). En route to utter dominance, the Bulldogs suffocated York with aces. Brooklyn scored 18 aces while only allowing one to their competition. In outskilling the Cardinals, BC scored 24 compared to York's eight. Junior Tommy Min made his presence felt, scoring 10 aces and earning 18 assists. Freshman Wai Lin led the team in kills by scoring seven.

Brooklyn failed to carry Tuesday's momentum into their Thursday, Mar. 9 match against CCNY. The Bulldogs battled

valiantly, but suffered a sweep nonetheless (25-20, 25-14, 25-20). The Beavers proved to be too much for Brooklyn, despite being close statistically. CCNY scored 31 kills, while Brooklyn scored 25. The Bulldogs were solid defending the serve, allowing only one ace. Senior Fidel Maldonado Jr. led Brooklyn in kills, scoring nine.



**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 station.**

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

