

**Exploring Urban Wildlife:
Inside Macaulay's BioBlitz**
Pg. 2

**BC Esports Hosts its Annual
Super Smash Bros Tournament**
Pg. 3

THE BROOKLYN COLLEGE VANGUARD

Fall 2024, Issue 3 vanguard.blog.brooklyn.edu @thebcvanguard Wednesday, September 25th

BLAZE ON!

Blaze Dance Club Holds Auditions for 2024 Team
Pgs. 6-7

**The Artistry of Comic
Writer Alex Segura**
Pg. 5

**BC Athletics Department
Eliminates Shoes from Budget**
Pg. 10

**Vanguard Attends
NYFW!**
Pg. 12

Cover by Tony Lipka, Photos by Ren De Hoyos

GENERAL INQUIRIES
THEBCVANGUARD@GMAIL.
COM

CLUB HOURS
118 ROOSEVELT HALL
THURSDAY: 12:30 P.M. - 1:30 P.M.

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
KATE DEMPSEY
KATEMDEMPSEY00@GMAIL.
COM

MANAGING EDITOR
PAULINA GAJEWSKI
PAULINAGAJEWSKI8@GMAIL.
COM

BUSINESS MANAGER
JASON LIN
JLIN82752@GMAIL.COM

LAYOUT EDITOR
AMIRA TURNER
ARIMARENUT@GMAIL.COM

DIGITAL EDITOR
EMMAD KASHMIRI
EMMADK01@GMAIL.COM

PHOTO EDITOR
TONY LIPKA
TONYLIPKAVT@GMAIL.COM

SOCIAL MEDIA MANAGER
NIDHI MAHADEVAN
NIDI.MAHADEVAN@MACAULAY.
CUNY.EDU

CONTENT CREATORS
KHALAILAH BYNOE
KHALAILAH.BYNOE10@BCMAIL.
CUNY.EDU
KEY JONES-FORD
KIARATATSUJF@GMAIL.COM

PODCAST MANAGER
YASSIR AZZAM
YASSIR.AZZAM07@BCMAIL.
CUNY.EDU

SECTION EDITORS

NEWS: DANIEL AFANASYEV
DANIEL.AFANASYEV@GMAIL.
COM

FEATURES: T'NEIL GOODEN
TNEILGOODEN617@GMAIL.
COM

ARTS: JAIDA DENT
JAIDA.DENT1@GMAIL.COM

OPINIONS: RAMI MANSI
RAMI.MANSI66@BCMAIL.CUNY.
EDU

SPORTS: MANUEL POLANCO
MANNYPOLANCO764@GMAIL.
COM

STAFF WRITERS
GIOVANNI RAVALLI
EDEN LAWRENCE
LUIS ANGEL PEREZ MARTINEZ
MICHELLE CASTILLO
SERENA EDWARDS
VICTORIA KERAJ
HECTOR SERRANO
AVI WIZWER
EZAE DARBY
MARS MARTE
DANIELLE DWECK

STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER
MOUSA (@FLIXBYMOE)
T ABBATEMARCO
REN DE HOYOS

FACULTY ADVISOR
MJ ROBINSON

Exploring Urban Wildlife: Inside Macaulay's BioBlitz

By **Danielle Dweck**
Staff Writer

Over the course of Sept. 14 and 15, Macaulay Honors sophomores from all CUNY campuses, including those at Brooklyn College, gathered at Van Cortlandt Park for "BioBlitz": a 24 hour deep dive into the park's hidden biodiversity. The BioBlitz involved an intense period of biological surveying in an attempt to catalog the plant and animal life within the designated area.

Macaulay students did not have to undertake this task alone; the event provided students with a unique opportunity to collaborate with scientific experts and other knowledgeable enthusiasts who led teams and guided them through the park.

During the course of the event, students were divided into various teams, each focusing on a specific aspect of the park's diverse wildlife. The topics of interest ranged from birds to insects to fungi, but all research groups shared the same goal: to gain a deeper understanding of the biodiversity that lies within Van Cortlandt Park.

"This event is so important because we need to document the biodiversity of Van Cortlandt Park, and most parks in the city, so that we can better understand the different species that live in and around it," said Shelly Zebak, a BC attendee.

With this aim in mind, the teams took off and ventured further into the park's grand territory to start their research journey. Immersed in the park's abundant wildlife, the teams thoroughly analyzed their subjects and collected various points of data using crowdsource technology to document their findings. This experience allowed students to develop a comprehensive understanding of wildlife they might not have

had the opportunity to study before, or cultivate a newfound interest in species they had previously overlooked.

"When I was first put into the insect group, I was hesitant about the subject, but as I started to discover more about all of the various insect species and the processes taken to identify them, my interest grew. It was fascinating," said Natsha Herman, a BC student attendee.

For other students, it created an opportunity

global awareness towards the environment. Through this event, Macaulay gave students the opportunity to extend their scientific knowledge beyond the classroom and apply it to real-life scenarios.

"It's an essential form of citizen science in a way, and being here we're able to collect data and learn more about our environment," said Maria M., a student from Queens College.

Students also remarked on the event's broader significance in enhancing

as the students connected with nature and each other, they developed a lasting commitment to the environment that extends beyond the park, underscoring the vital role of citizen science in preserving New York's rich biodiversity.

"It's fun meeting students from the CUNY system, where I am from as well, and engaging them in community science in our New York parks while teaching them the basics of what I know," Christian Liriano, a sixth-year leader, said. "It's also enjoyable to participate in this multi-year snapshot of biodiversity, as I have been interested in studying biodiversity for about 15 years now."

Not only did participants acknowledge the importance of the event and the information that they gained, but many immensely enjoyed their time in nature. As the BioBlitz came to a close, participants acknowledged just how interconnected humans are with the NYC ecosystem.

"It's great to learn about all of the living creatures that surround us," said William Sesai, a student from the College of Staten Island. "It can impact our actions in life and the way that we see the world around us."

To learn more about the findings from this year's BioBlitz and access the data collected by the students, interested parties can visit the official Macaulay Honors College BioBlitz website at <https://eportfolios.macaulay.cuny.edu/bioblitz>



Students from across CUNY came to experience the BioBlitz./*Danielle Dweck*

to further learn about the species they are interested in, getting firsthand experience of the wildlife they study.

"Coming in to this event, I was hoping that I would get a chance to become familiar with the birds that inhabit the area, and when I was later assigned to the bird watching team I was thrilled to be able to learn so much about the species I am passionate about," said Vicky Kabareti, a BC student.

The goal of the project was to have students engage in civic responsibility and

our understanding of New York as a whole. "It's critical to know about the different geographical features of New York and how the Parks Department established these areas, so that we can both preserve the natural beauty of the city, and understand the natural ecosystems that make it up," Pawel Ceislak, a BC student, explained.

To attendees, the event also allowed them to engage with the broader community, meeting those with shared interests of science and environmental engagement. Additionally,

BC Esports Club Hosts Annual Super Smash Bros Tournament

By T'Neil Gooden
Features Editor

On Sept. 19, the Brooklyn College Esports Club held its annual Super Smash Bros Tournament. Over 88 students attended the event to watch students compete in a tournament that sparked cheers and applause for the players.

Three Smash Bros games were being played simultaneously on the second floor of the Student Center, with students awaiting their turn in the best-of-three games at each station. The prizes were \$50 for the first-place winner and \$25 for the second-place winner.

Alexander Raff, the founder of the Esports Club, expressed that this event is one of the best ways to bring the esports community

together as it builds positivity within the BC community.

"You can hear the cheers from the halls," Raff told The Vanguard. "This is the loudest this room has ever been and this tournament brought us all together for it."

To leaders of the club, the best part about hosting the tournament is seeing how the crowd reacts to their players competing.

"Seeing everyone show up 15 minutes before the event even started shows how invested students are in this affair, and we are so happy to see everyone playing and enjoying this event," Eli Kutsenok, the president of the Esports Club, told The Vanguard.

The Esports Club has continued to put its name on the map with the Super Smash Bros

Tournament, adding new members to the community at a rapid pace. At the end of August, the Discord server peaked at 671 members, and after the Super Smash Bros tournament the Discord Server reached over 770 members.

"The esports community is very supportive of each other even if [students] are from different schools," Sijian Wu, the social media manager for the Esports Club, told The Vanguard. "We usually hold the Smash Tournament every semester to let everyone in BC know that we are always looking for people who are interested in gaming competitively or casually."

Students in the Super Smash Bros Tournament



Esports members commenting on the game./T'Neil Gooden

not only competed with each other, but also learned the dynamics of the game by having conversations in between each competitive round about the different functions and strategies needed to participate.

"The Smash Tournament lets students exchange advice on how to do better and what to fix to become better in the future," Wu told The Vanguard. "Our players never look down on anyone even if they only played Smash for one month or one year."

The support that echoed across the room for each player was felt by all the students who watched the players compete.

"One of my favorite things to see is whenever all the players are just watching one great play, they're screaming the name of that person," Kutsenok told The Vanguard. "[The support] really shows the unity that this club has, it's a lot more unified than other

clubs who really don't have the bond as we do."

The Esports Club is just getting started as they begin to expand their gaming community in competitive teams and casual gaming. There is a new women and marginalized gender Valorant team, an all-new Overwatch team, a Tekken team, and a Hearthstone team. To the leaders of the club, their hard work and dedication demonstrates that their reach extends beyond the digital world.

"Everyone that joins this club and team is not afraid of taking up a challenge," Wu told The Vanguard. "It makes our whole Esports e-board ecstatic when we notice how much BC students are supportive of each other and interested in our events every semester."

Interested students can follow the Esports Club on their Instagram @cunybc esports



Attendees watching the tournament./T'Neil Gooden

Under the Knife: The Toxic Beauty Standards in “Uglies” Are Our Own

By Mars Marte
Staff Writer

Sept. 13 marked the debut of “Uglies”: a Netflix original movie directed by Joseph McGinty Nichol and adapted from the critically acclaimed Scott Westerfield book series. Uglies challenges viewers to confront the impact of unrealistic beauty standards in a society that has become increasingly obsessed with appearance. Uglies holds up a mirror to our current appearances and asks viewers to unpack the effects of unrealistic beauty standards. While the world of Uglies may be set in the far future, its portrayal of toxic beauty standards is an issue reflected in our current society.

The movie is set in a dystopian future where beauty can only

be achieved through the “pretty procedure,” which is a form of extreme cosmetic surgery. It explores a society that seeks to eradicate differences in favor of a uniform ideal, rooted in the belief that conformity is the path to peace.

On a person’s 16th birthday, they get the procedure performed and are molded out of their physical characteristics into a flawless standard template. The story unfolds through the eyes of Tally, a 15-year-old grappling with her identity in a world obsessed with unrealistic beauty standards. Uglies refuses to shy away from its depiction of toxic social norms. The extent of this can be seen through Tally’s consistent usage of the “morphos,” a form of digital face altering that depicts Tally’s face

post-procedure.

Audiences are first introduced to Tally as she longingly stares at her altered face projected onto the walls of her room. Tally is not only given the ability to see her face post-procedure, but she has free reign to alter the morpho as it fits into the “pretty procedure” standard. The morphos create the illusion of power for teens like Tally, creating a false sense of control over their appearance and helping condition the teens to reject their original faces.

Tally’s use of morphos mimics the use of filters in our world, the present-day way to digitally enhance one’s image. The usage of filters and other digital editing techniques runs rampant across social media platforms. You can have the ideal

now with a click of a button that alters your facial features. Filters blur the line between fiction and reality, creating unrealistic rules that impact young adults’ self-perception. Oftentimes, the usage of digital editing is hidden from the masses and is promoted as reality, creating a standard that is rooted in fiction.

In Uglies, the pretty procedure is just one of many surgeries. Those who exist in the Uglies world, receive multiple surgeries throughout their lifetime. These surgeries allow the youth of the Uglies world to not age to fit in their society’s standards. The use of plastic surgery to age gracefully is reminiscent of our current society. In the contemporary world,

aging is treated as a condition that needs to be cured. Cosmetic procedures like Botox have been invented to reduce the natural formation of wrinkles. A smooth flawless face is considered the ideal, any sign of wrinkles and you are automatically deemed to be less than that.

This facade is perpetuated throughout media outlets, resulting in a skewed perception of aging influencing impressionable young adults. Even teens are now beginning to seek out surgeries to maintain their youthful appearance. Surgeries that range from Botox injections to liposuction are now done on young adults who adjust their bodies as they see fit. With the help of social media, teens are taught to conform to society’s standards, much like the teens in Uglies. As unchecked expectations continue to grow, youth find themselves striving for unattainable ideals that are rooted in rejecting one’s authentic self.

Through the film’s exploration of a society fixated on superficial perfection, viewers are encouraged to question the unrealistic beauty ideals perpetuated by our own society. Uglies serves as a much-needed reminder that conforming to societal pressures is never the path to self-acceptance.



The Netflix movie is based on the 2005 novel “Uglies” by Scott Westerfield./Plugged In

Promotional flyer for the Netflix adaptation of “Uglies.”/Netflix

“Into The Segura-Verse”: Comic Writer Alex Segura’s Artistry

By Ezae Darby
Staff Writer

In the comic-based movie, “Into The Spider-Verse,” a wise man once said, “Nah...ima do my own thing.” That man was Miles Morales, the main character donning the title of being Spider-Man. Critically acclaimed author, comic book artist, and editor Alex Segura also did his “own thing.” While it may not involve climbing walls and saving universes, his work has proved to be just as heroic for the fans who enjoy it.

Segura has published stories for Marvel, DC, and Archie Comics. His stories have brought life to iconic characters like Batman, Superman, and Spider-Man. One of his latest works, “Spider Society #1”, is now available for fans everywhere to check out.

Segura spoke about superheroes and the importance of representation in comics, as well as the impact of social media on storytelling. Segura believes that Marvel has done a good job with representation of characters and events in their stories, in particular with the diverse cast of characters in “Spider Society #1.” The series can continue to highlight diverse voices and perspectives.

“When people think of Marvel, they think of it as the world outside your window,” said Segura. “I think the cool thing about Spider-Verse is that there’s really a character

for everybody.”

Segura recalled reading Spider-Man 2099 and felt personally connected to a superhero for the first time after not seeing many Latinx characters represented. To Segura, this was just the start of assuring that everyone finds part of themselves represented in a superhero.

“One of my most powerful comic book memories was picking up ‘Spider-Man 2099 #1’ and realizing that Miguel O’Hara was Latino. We had never heard of this character. I’d never seen a character like me [...] he had similarities to my culture and that sense of identification is very powerful. You can’t sum it up in a sentence,” said Segura.

Segura later talked about Spider-Man’s well-known struggle to balance personal life and superhero duties, a challenge that resonates with many of his readers as they juggle the different realms in their lives. He talked about how this duality speaks to the pressures people face today, especially in the aftermath of the pandemic. “It’s a huge thing for me. Everyone’s experienced it in their own way. Spider-Man was the first superhero who truly drew me in as a kid,” said Segura.

Despite these struggles, Spider-Man and other superheroes often embody themes of resilience and hope. Segura talked about how he aimed to capture these themes in “Spider Society #1,” especially given the current global



Alex Segura signing books at Anyone Comics in Brooklyn./Ezae Darby

challenges.

Segura has also appeared at Comic-Con for several years and deeply values his relationship with his fans. While the relationship between an artist and their fans can be strong, Segura finds it important for creators to stay true to their ideas, to “disconnect from the discourse” in order to avoid being overwhelmed by feedback.

“As creators, it’s really beholden on us to feel like we’re not crowdsourcing our work [...] we understand that fans have strong opinions but these

may not always make for great stories,” said Segura.

As a Comic-Con regular, Segura uses the internationally-known comic festival to connect with fans on a deeper level, sharing insight into his processes as an artist. In addition, it’s an opportunity to see the impact of his work firsthand.

“I love New York because I get to meet the fans, I get a non-stop barrage. It feels like sensory overload in the best way. I’ll see people I worked with twenty years ago. I’ll see family, I’ll see friends from the book world who write

novels, I’ll see people that I didn’t even know were at Comic-Con,” said Segura.

To Segura, the best part about what he does is not just seeing the final product, but seeing the impact it has on all his readers.

“Once it’s out there, it’s not mine anymore. Once the work is done, I’ve done my part and the hope is that the more people that enjoy it,” Segura said. “I enjoyed working on the book and now it’s out of my hands. Now it’s your story to consume.”

“56...5678!” Blaze Dance Club Holds Auditions for 2024 Team

By Victoria Keraj
Staff Writer

After reigniting last fall semester, Brooklyn College’s Blaze Dance Team is fired up this semester as they hosted their tryouts on Sept. 18 in the Hall of Fame Room at the Student Center, welcoming all to try out for the 2024 tour.

Energetic music filled the room as treasurer Jessica Shannon and president Amy Montrose welcomed the arriving students. Students were nervous, but also enthusiastic about auditioning.

“I’m definitely nervous, but I’m also excited, so hopefully the excitement outweighs the nervousness and I can just do what I have to do,” said Zoey Hanson, a freshman at the tryouts.

Hanson found out about tryouts from a post on the Undergraduate

Student Government (USG) Instagram page. She was also led to the club by her passion for dance. “I just really love dancing, you know. It’s a way of communicating your emotions. If not to everybody else, you know dancing in your room is a way to communicate your own emotions to yourself. I just fell in love with dance,” she told The Vanguard.

To other auditioners, they struck a match with the community and fun that the team offers. Mia Tifa, a sophomore also there to audition, stated, “I like to be part of a team, having something to look forward to, so that’s why I wanted to join.”

After waiting for everyone to arrive and settle in, Montrose and Sannon gathered everyone in a circle, encouraging everyone to have fun while dancing and to not get

psyched out. “I’ve been dancing since 2nd grade, I still get nervous,” Sannon told the group.

The students all introduced themselves with their names and favorite dance styles. People mentioned Bachata and Bouyon—traditional Dominican styles of dance and music. Montrose and Sannon went over what they were looking for in the dancers.

The main purpose of the audition was to see if the students could meet their dance expectations. With plans to perform at Phi Sigma Chi Fraternity and the Caribbean Student Union’s (CSU) annual Multicultural Night and talks of entering competitions, dancers must be able to be versatile.

Montrose and Sannon choreographed a dance for the students to perform. They

would all learn the dance together, perform it in small groups before the judge’s table, and then they’d find out in a week’s time if they had made it in or not. Montrose stated they were looking for “precision in moves and personality.”

“We wanted to make sure the dancers were able to pick up the [choreography] quickly but have musicality and speed to add difficulty. Our goal is to have a team that is able to execute moves clearly and be able to perform well,” Sannon said.

After hyping everyone up to dance, Montrose and Sannon introduced the dance that the students would be performing for the audition by performing it for everyone. They danced to the song “Whatever She Wants” by Bryson Tiller.

Next came the process of learning

the dance. Students would be judged based on how well they could perform a dance they’d just learned. They were not required to bring any material of their own to audition with, but the dance’s choreography included portions where they could improvise and add some of their own style. The president told everyone there that she was going to be judging for creativity, energy, and musicality. Even though all may not make the cut, dancers were nonetheless encouraged for putting on a great performance.

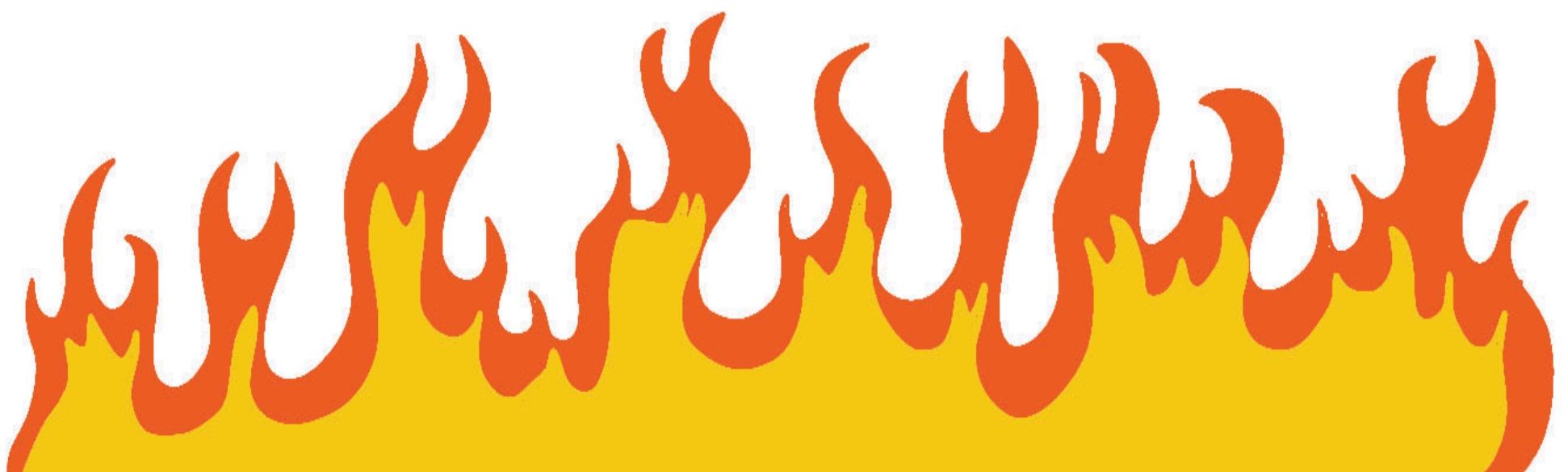
“Even if you mess up, keep going. End strong,” Montrose said. “The dance goes on.”

Students interested in learning more about the Blaze Dance Team can visit their Instagram @blaze_bcdanceteam





Photos by Ren De Hoyos, Graphics by Amira Turner



The Art of Forgiving Yourself

By Rami Mansi
Opinions Editor

Our minds are our own worst enemies: we feel complex emotions, and physical manifestations of that complexity follow. These physical manifestations can include lashing out at those around us, becoming negligent of responsibilities, or becoming self-centered.

We try not to make these mistakes and hurt those around us, maybe even ourselves. But in a fit of emotional distress, we do. The aftermath of this may be a fallout, resulting in multiple layers of pain for both sides.

Learning how to forgive yourself is a painful but rewarding process, it won't be picture-perfect, but small strides can mean the difference between healing or becoming trapped.

After realizing that you made a mistake, you feel awful. How are you supposed to move on after you not only hurt the other person, but yourself in the process?

I am in this process currently, forgiving myself for mistakes that may not have hurt other people, but have certainly made an impact on how I developed and see myself as a person.

Before you start to forgive yourself, the first step you need to take is the acknowledgment of what's been done on the surface level. What broke and fell apart, what painful memories developed, and what emotional bruises did you inflict? Whether to yourself or others, something has gone

wrong due to either a conscious or unconscious emotional outpour. Taking responsibility for your actions is the preliminary step to begin to forgive yourself.

This brings us to the first step: recognizing and acknowledging your emotions. Peeling back the first layer of the issue and going beyond the surface are the emotions, the motives that made you take that first negative action.

Ask yourself the following: what was I feeling before the

moment? Have you felt this way for a long time? Was I feeling this way on purpose or was I overwhelmed and out of bounds? Most importantly, understanding what triggered the emotion to come out is a strong way to recognize and bring out those underlying feelings. Following an emotional upheaval, comes the second step: confronting your emotions and recognizing ways to help prevent another mistake.

Figuring out the

emotions behind the mistake is one thing. Now, we need to find ways to prevent it and take action to enhance ourselves. The way to do this can be done through multiple outputs: creatively expressing yourself through various forms of art, continuing with your improvement by working out or changing your eating habits, or simply focusing on getting through the day.

positive way to go about processing. Always remember that no matter what you do to heal or how long it takes, you are prioritizing yourself and your mental health. Whenever in doubt, always remember these three simple words: you're doing great!

That being said, this next step could be the longest and most difficult step that can be taken in this process: sharing empathy and making amends to those you hurt.

You've made

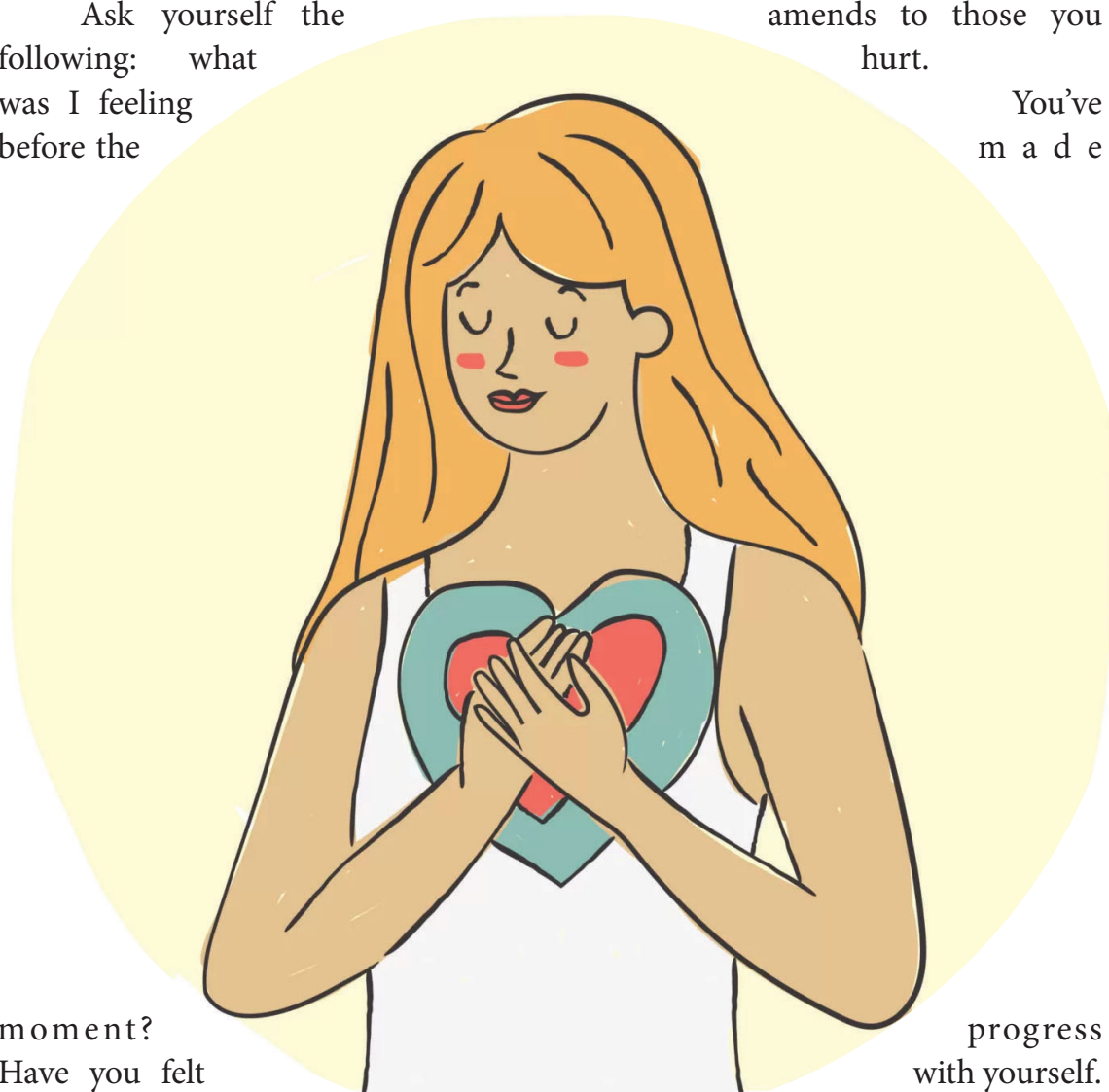


Photo courtesy of [recipiesforwellbing.org](https://www.recipiesforwellbing.org)

No matter what route you take, any movement is good movement.

Through this process, you might feel overwhelmed, tired, and mentally drained. Rome was not built in a day, nor will becoming the person you want to be. Forgiving yourself takes time, whether days or years; naturally allowing yourself to go through the process is the most powerful and

progress with yourself. You are making changes on how to act and react to certain emotions and memories, and you are on your way to becoming the person you want to be. It's time now to share your progress with others and allow yourself to experience the humility needed to make amends with the people you've hurt along the way. Whether that's by a sit-down conversation or a long phone call, let that person know what you're feeling, what caused you

to act that way, and most importantly, how you've grown as a person that will prevent you from acting the way you did again.

They might not forgive you immediately, but a simple recognition is a way to share the process of healing with them to carry forward. But what happens when you don't hurt another person, but yourself instead? This brings us to the final step: forgiving yourself.

The final step to forgiving yourself is understanding and experiencing self-empathy. It's time to understand that your past self made mistakes, and that's okay. Yes, you will cringe when you look back on that one embarrassing thing you said in front of the class, and that's okay. You might stay up late at night thinking about how you didn't stand up for yourself and allowed yourself to get hurt by other people, and that's okay.

Feel your emotions with the utmost gratitude. Experience what it was like to be in that position. Putting your memories at the forefront and deep-diving into them is the best way to forgive yourself. By understanding your past self's point of view of the situation, and realizing why you did what you did, you can understand yourself.

And that is the art of forgiving yourself.

The Battle of the Artists: Kendrick Lamar v. Lil Wayne for Super Bowl Spot

By Serena Edwards
Staff Writer

Every year, during the beginning of the football season, everyone's attention is drawn to one thing: the Super Bowl. Naturally, one question at hand is: who's performing at halftime show? The NFL just announced Kendrick Lamar as the halftime performer for this year's show. However, there has been discourse on whether or not he deserves to be the halftime performer. This discourse includes peers in the industry, notably Lil Wayne, who does not believe Kendrick deserves the spot. Kendrick just happened to check off more boxes than Lil Wayne. Though some are upset at the decision, in the end, Kendrick is the superior choice for the performance.

Kendrick has been on the rise following his hit single "They Not Like Us," seemingly winning the rap battle against rapper Drake. As a teenager, Kendrick started rapping in 2003, and later on released his first mixtape under the name K.Dot. Outside of his hit "They Not Like Us," his other hits include "Poetic Justice" (which ironically features Drake), "HUMBLE", "Don't Kill My Vibe",

and more.

Wayne was an artist that paved the way for many artists including Nicki Minaj and Drake. Wayne started rapping at the age of eight and later impressed the brothers of Cash Money Records. Since the beginning of his career, Wayne created many hits including "Lollipop", "A Milli", and "6 Foot 7 Foot". Due to his success in the industry, Wayne expressed that he felt snubbed and overlooked in the choice as the Super Bowl performer. In an Instagram video posted on his account, Wayne stated that for years one of his goals was to perform at the halftime show. He expected that this would be his year because the Super Bowl is being held in New Orleans, and he is a New Orleans native.

Many artists have attacked Jay-Z for snubbing Wayne because he is in charge of who performs at halftime.

Nicki recently went on Twitter to defend Wayne,

expressing that he was also overlooked. Wayne is known for paving the way for Nicki and helping her become the artist we know her as today, and in return, Nicki always praises Wayne for his help in her career. Kendrick is also known for introducing new artists such as Baby Keem.

Wayne has undeniable talent and will always have a name in the rap industry. Though Wayne had an influence in the rap industry, he may not have been the best option compared to Kendrick. Kendrick has more hits that are streamed compared to Wayne's hits. Many of Wayne's hits are him featured on other artists' songs, whereas Kendrick has many singles and albums that are hits on their own.

The Super Bowl isn't also about the songs: it's about stage presence. When you think about the super bowl, you think about the dynamic stage set up and choreography. Artists like Katy Perry and Rihanna had different costumes and stage props and structures. Outside of that, you have to make the performance somewhat like a time capsule, starting from the newest to the oldest hits or vice versa. Thinking about the history of Super Bowl performances, they consist of dynamic performances with dancers and creativity.

Wayne is known more for his lyrics rather than performances. Kendrick is known for his

controversial, but attention grabbing performances.

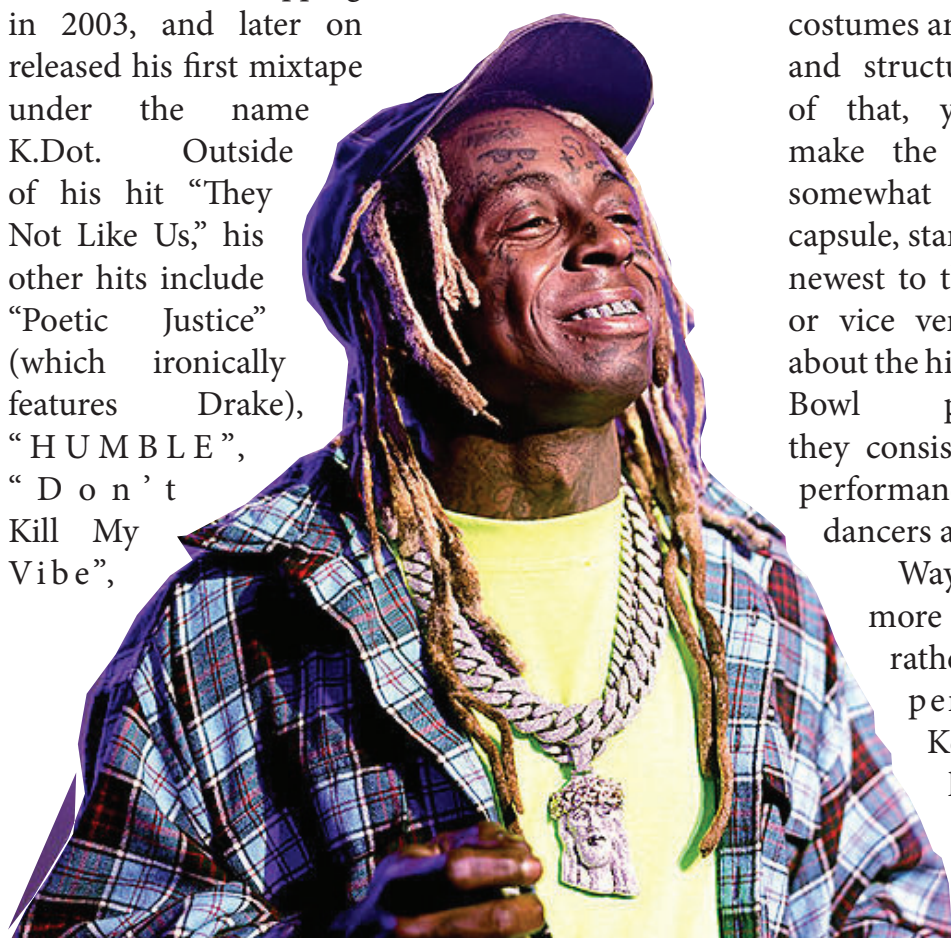
Another dealbreaker to think of is the demographic that you are trying to cater to. Wayne has more of a Black demographic, whereas Kendrick caters to everyone. For example, when you think of the audience during the halftime performance, you are having many families of many generations tuning in. On the radio you are more likely to hear Kendrick's songs new and old than Lil Wayne, and that's not only due to less explicit lyrics, but relevance. The relevance and attention is more on Kendrick because he started later than Wayne did, causing his demographic to be younger.

Throughout Kendrick's career, he has been able to use his music to talk about controversial topics. His famous song "Alright" touched upon race and the obstacles of being Black in America. In his most recent album, he brought up the normalization of toxic relationships as well as the underrated

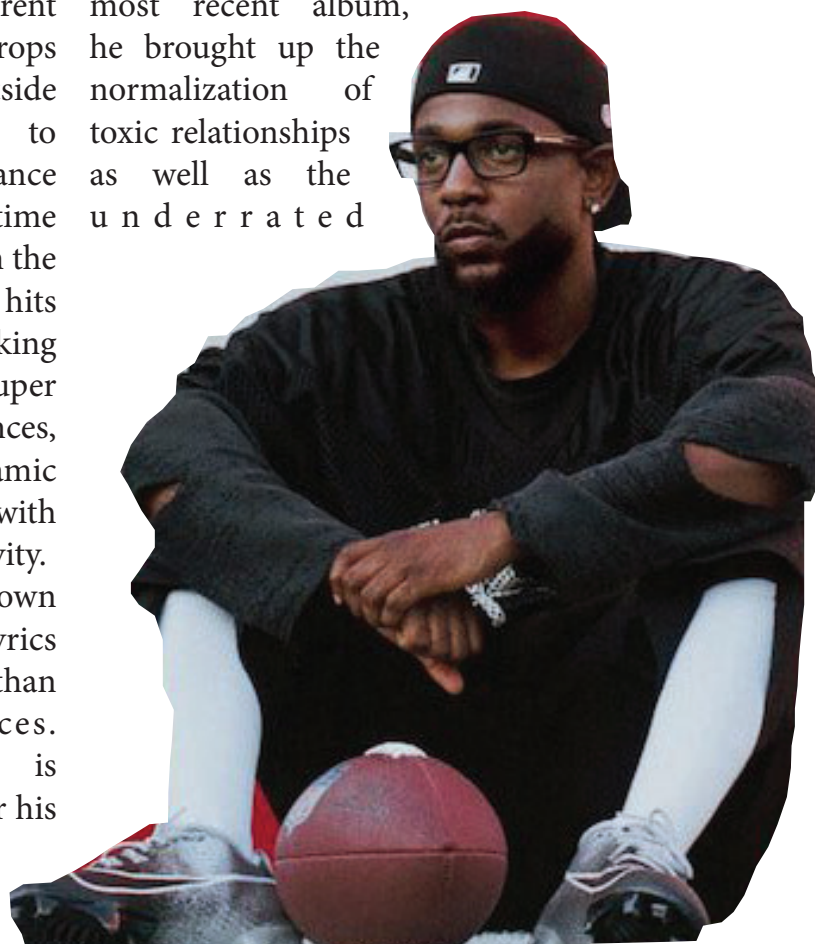
conversation of mental health. His music is used to cause discussion on overlooked topics.

This isn't Kendrick's first time performing at the Super Bowl; he performed in 2022 alongside Dr. Dre, Mary J. Blige, Snoop Dogg, and Eminem. This showcased that he already has what it takes to be the main performer. He connected his popular songs and made it into a narrative with just two songs, even tying in the choreography and costumes.

This debate has downplayed the influence Kendrick has also had within the rap industry. The argument in favor of Wayne was that because he was a veteran in the industry he deserves it. This, however, discredits the work Kendrick has put in and continues to put into the rap industry. Kendrick was the right fit for the performance, showing that he continues to be the legendary rapper that he is.



Lil Wayne./XXL Mag



Kendrick Lamar promotional photo for Super Bowl 2025./
Billboard

BC Athletics Department Eliminates Shoes from Budget

By Key Jones-Ford
Content Creator

A referendum was passed for Brooklyn College students athletes for the fall 2024 semester dictating that all athletes from each sports team are now responsible for the purchasing of their own footwear for their sport. The Brooklyn College Student Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC) voted to no longer provide shoes for all athletic teams that would require them.

SAAC's main function is to "provide insight on the student-athlete experience," according to CUNY Athletics mission statement, and is made up of student athletes. SAAC has a role in the rules and regulations regarding student athletes so that athletes get a say in their experience, just as their coaches and directors do. All referendums then go through BC Athletics Department Director Eric Smiles. "Whenever there's a problem for student athletes we would go to the director to try to fix the problem," said BC senior tennis player and SAAC vice president Mujibur Shaad.

"We're an advocate for

athletes on campus. We have a monthly meeting with Mr. Smiles who asks us about our experiences. If there is a problem for the athletes [...] then Smiles will speak with his peers in the sports department."

The coaches will deliberate in private before presenting it to SAAC and two representatives from each team. From there, it will be brought to a vote. If enough agree, the referendum is passed. If it fails the vote to pass, it can also be reworked to try and be passed again.

This was not a spur-of-the-moment decision, according to Magdalena Mackiewicz, sophomore women's basketball player and SAAC secretary. The referendum was officially voted on during the 2024 spring season, but was only enacted as the 2024 fall season began.

"[Director] Smiles would come to games and notice teams not wearing the sneakers [provided by BC]," Mackiewicz said.

Shaad explained that students have been bringing their own shoes to practices regardless of the shoes being able to be provided to by BC "Athletes would not typically use the shoes that school's provided, [and some] reasons would be they aren't their personal favorites, and the school gives you a random model."

The primary goal of the referendum's passing was the budget of the athletics department. "Cutting out the sneakers allows the athletics department to [reallocate] the money to plenty of other areas, which most likely will be voted on later this year," said

Mackiewicz. One of the uses of the reallocated money has gone to students being able to have a tracksuit that is theirs to keep. "The goal was to provide the athletes with something better than the shoes. They wanted to make better use of [the budget], and they didn't have a lot of money to begin with," Shaad told the Vanguard.

When asked if there was potential to repeal or change the referendum, Shaad stated that there was potential if more money was put into student athletics. "If there was better budgeting to give us, we could add the shoes back in."

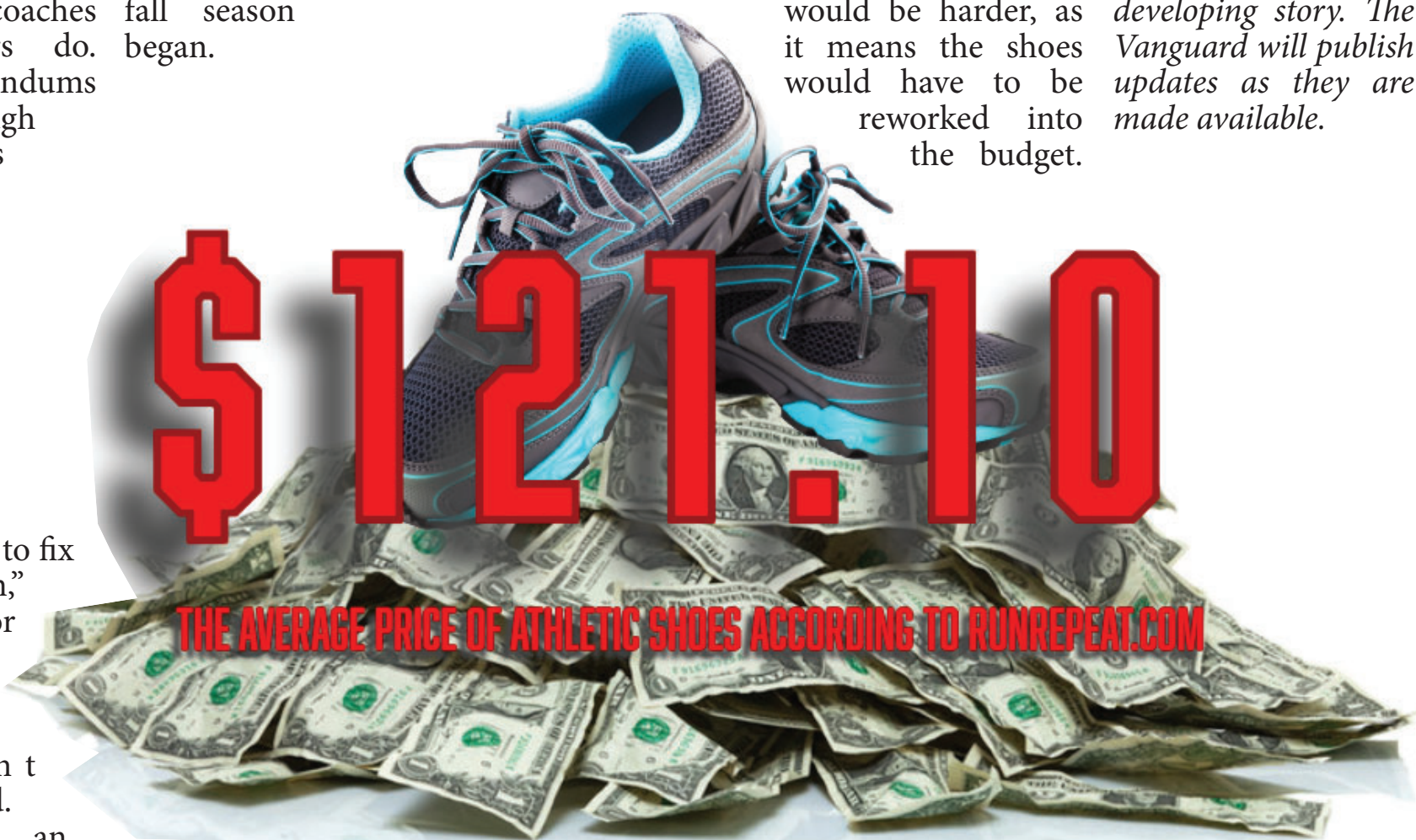
Like with other similar processes, there is also the chance that it could be brought back to a vote. Mackiewicz acknowledged this chance, however she did note that this would be harder, as it means the shoes would have to be reworked into the budget.

"Budgets are tight in CUNY, as every penny we can save is a penny we can move to a different area."

For students who are worried they are not able to participate due to financial barriers in buying shoes, SAAC leaders state that there are always ways to ensure their participation. "If there's an issue, Mr. Smiles said he would accommodate any student who may have issues obtaining shoes or equipment. If they approach their coach, they will be able to receive assistance," Shaad told The Vanguard.

It remains to be seen what impact this will have on student athletes as they go about their athletic careers for fall 2024. For now, shoe purchases are in the student athlete's court.

This is a developing story. The Vanguard will publish updates as they are made available.



Graphic by Amira Turner

Sports Recaps (Sept. 16 - Sept. 21)

By Manny Polanco
Sports Editor

Men's Soccer

The Brooklyn College men's soccer team took on William Paterson University on Sept. 14 at their field in Paterson, New Jersey. The men's team would lose this game by a score of 8-0, and their opponents would remain undefeated in the season so far. The Bulldogs tried to score every quarter by putting pressure on the defense, but to no avail.

The team hopes to rebound in their next game against Saint Elizabeth University on Wednesday, Sept. 25.

Women's Soccer

The Brooklyn College women's soccer team faced off against Bard College on Sept. 17 and looked to muster up their first win of the season. Things didn't go as planned, and the Bulldogs would lose the game by a score of 6-0. BC freshman goalie April Hartje saved 3 goals in the early parts of the game, but Bard overwhelmed the

defense and broke the scoreless tie. Bard would score three goals in the first quarter and three in the second as well. The Bulldogs would try to answer back with shots from Chelsea Gonzalez, Sage Bernstein, Gianna DiPronio, and Dionisia Payamps, but they would remain scoreless.

BC faces off next against Kean University on Wednesday, Sept. 25.

Women's Volleyball

The Brooklyn College women's volleyball team has been on a roll as of late, and has amassed a winning streak of three. After their first two successes, they went on to beat Medgar Evers College with a score of 3-0 on Sept. 17. BC dominated the game against Medgar Evers, scoring 25 points in each set and holding them to a single digit scoring. Aleah Rafat had 10 kills, and one ace Magdalena Mackiewicz had five kills, and Danielle Fuxman had four kills. The game saw nonstop



Freshman goalie, April Hartje./Courtesy of BC Athletics



Senior goalkeeper, Hady Bakrye./Courtesy of BC Athletics



Senior Aleah Rafat going for a spike./Courtesy of BC Athletics

offense and defense propelled the team Farmingdale State as the team would to keep winning. University on capitalize on their BC hopes to Tuesday, Sept. 24. opponents errors continue their victorious run and help each other and keep their out with assists. This exciting run streak in their of dominance has next game against

NYFW x Hot Girl Market: Where Sustainability Meets Fashion

By Hector Serrano
Staff Writer

Camera flashes, loud music, and chatter fill the air as the crowd of people gather around the runway during the New York Fashion Week (NYFW) Hot Girl Market show. Designers from all over the world showcased their fashion for the upcoming Spring 2025 and Summer 2025 season in the show, which included independent designers dedicated to the mission of sustainable fashion.

Alexis “Lex” F., the creator of Hot Girl Market and a Brooklyn College student majoring in business administration, explained that the market came to be in order to support smaller artists, using her experience working in flea markets selling vintage clothes to spur the showcase. To have Hot Girl Market be alongside other designers in NYFW demonstrates to them that they are taken just as seriously as other major brands in the fashion world.

“My main mission is

providing a platform for sustainable small businesses and connecting them with ‘Hot Girls’ that can support them instead of going to the mall and purchasing mass produced items,” Lex told The Vanguard. “It’s important for everything at my market to be secondhand or handmade adjacent. That way, it’s more fulfilling to purchase something rare and getting it directly from the person who made/curated it.”

Hot Girl Market mainly features women designers and vendors who celebrate “girlhood”—the unspoken feminine bond women experience as they go about life—and Lex’s personal style. Hot Girl Market celebrates femininity while rejecting patriarchy: the ideology that sees men holding more power than women. Lex’s main goal is to create a space and platform for women in the male-dominated secondhand market, allowing them



Alexis F. on the runway introducing the designers./Nick Lewis

to vocalize and express their creativity.

“I thought if I created a space that would attract everyone who likes the same type of stuff I do, I could sell more clothes,” Alexis told The Vanguard. “Most markets are male-dominated, catering towards true vintage and antiques. Hot Girl Market was inspired by ‘girlhood’ and my love for the 2000s era.”

The designers in the show included 815, Bodega by V, Chloe Likes Pink, Sour Cherry, Sage and Saber, Infrared, Rayne by Anijah, NOSTYLGUH, and fonkymonky. All of the designers were chosen

by Lex because of their mission of sustainability by being handcrafted, which included using upcycled and ethically-sourced material.

One of such designers featured in the show was Rayne by Anijah. Rayne by Anijah features all hand knit clothing made by the designer herself.

“My budding moment was definitely watching ‘That’s So Raven’ growing up. That was my girl! [Fashion is] just a way to express yourself, have fun, and just create. Every outfit, every piece, is just a work of art,” Rayne told The Vanguard.

As Hot Girl Market grew, the market gained more vendors and sponsors. Their runway show was sponsored by Drink Lunar, Culture POP soda, Smart Water, Magnolia’s Bakery, and Maya’s Snack Bar. The Hot Girl Market runway show was fully produced by Lex alone, allowing her to see her dreams come to fruition.

To Lex, this is

just the beginning of Hot Girl Market. With many more curated pieces to come, and a continued emphasis on celebrating girlhood, they hope to reach all the “Hot Girls” out there.

“I hope to host more events and expand to maybe different cities or possibly open a store,” Lex told The Vanguard. “I have endless dreams.”



Models backstage prepping for the show./Arleth Pando



Emily Tang for Sage and Saber./Arleth Pando