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Over After Reaching a Historic High
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Interborough Express on Track To Connect Brooklyn and Queens

By Max Ranieri Staff Writer

Metropolitan The Transportation Authority (MTA) is one step closer to connecting the outer boroughs. On Nov. 12, the agency held the last of three meetings to kick off its environmental review process on the Interborough Express (IBX), a proposed transit line running from Sunset Park in Brooklyn to Jackson Heights in Queens.

The IBX will use light rail trains, as opposed to the heavy rail that makes up the existing New York City subway system. Light rail is smaller, lighter, and has slightly lower capacity. To reduce construction time and cost, the IBX will also run along existing freight rail lines. Trains are projected to run every 5 minutes during peak times, and every 10 minutes off-peak, according to the MTA.

The MTA has already earmarked funding for the project through 2029. These environmental review meetings served to explain the scope of the project to residents of Brooklyn and Queens and to receive their feedback.

Along the proposed IBX line is a connection to the Flatbush Avenue–Brooklyn College station. Consequently, the first meeting was held in Whitehead Hall at Brooklyn College (BC). The following meetings were held in Queens and over Zoom. Each meeting began with an overview of the

project, then members of the public were invited to give brief comments.

Midwood and Flatbush residents who spoke at the BC meeting were largely enthusiastic about the project, especially the transit connections and potential for new green space. Future BC students can also look forward to easier commutes from Brooklyn and Queens.

Currently, "the commute from Queens to Brooklyn is rough," said BC student Nicolas Colon. Colon makes a 90-minute trek to campus, including a "detour" through Manhattan and two to three transfers.

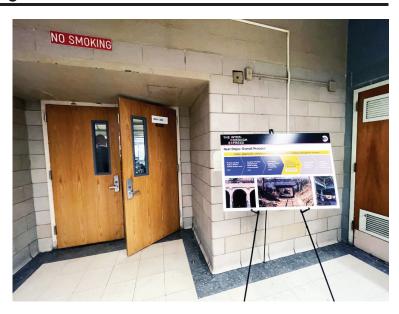
"The IBX will open up access to Brooklyn College to whole neighborhoods that, right now, are so far away that it's almost impractical to go here," said BC sociology professor Gregory Smithsimon, who is also the director of the Center for the Study of Brooklyn.

There are current BC students who make the 1-2 hour commutes, but the travel time would become significantly shorter with the IBX, which would probably make the school more appealing to future students from these neighborhoods.

At the BC meeting, a few commenters were worried about noise pollution from construction and operations, as well as how well the stations would accommodate seniors and disabled passengers. The MTA is taking steps to minimize noise and optimize accessibility.



The proposed route for the IBX./Courtesy of the MTA



The MTA held the first of three meetings for public comment in Whitehead Hall./*Max Ranieri*

Professor Smithsimon, however, says that his main concern about the IBX is its potential success. "It may turn out to be far more popular than we're able to model and predict."

Professor Smithsimon compared the project to other "peripheral light rail" projects that have been built along the outer edges of global cities in the past decade, such as the light rail in Paris, France, which has seen heavy ridership.

"You're not just taking the trips that people might already be taking by bus and putting them on a different mode of transit," said Professor Smithsimon. "By creating this new pathway through the city, you're allowing people to go on trips that they wouldn't have done otherwise."

Those trips may be for leisure, but they may also connect New Yorkers with jobs that were previously inaccessible.

BC student Sara Mahoney, originally from Bay Ridge, is looking forward to faster service between Brooklyn and Queens.

"I love Queens but rarely go because it is such a schlep," said Mahoney. "The only train line that runs through Bay Ridge right now is the R, and as many Brooklynites probably know, that stands for Rarely."

The IBX is also giving current CUNY students an opportunity to study a major new transit project as it is being developed. Students in BC's Urban Sustainability Program have conducted independent research projects on what Smithsimon calls "the really exciting questions about how a city can work best."

So far, students have studied the planning done by local community boards and how the IBX may integrate with new and existing bicycle infrastructure. "It's really exciting, as a New Yorker, to be around at a moment when the MTA is moving quickly with a project as important and transformative as the IBX," said Professor Smithsimon. "And even more exciting to be part of Brooklyn College, which is going to benefit so much from this project."

According to sociology professor Tammy Lewis, who directs the urban sustainability program, "The IBX will increase access to Brooklyn College by making it easier and faster for more students from Queens and Brooklyn to attend BC. The IBX has the potential to boost economic development around the college, increase transit equity, reduce car dependency, and add green space along the tracks."

The environmental review is being conducted simultaneously with design and engineering, according to the MTA. Once the 18-month review is complete, the MTA will look to award a construction contract.

As the process advances, there will be further opportunities for public comment.

The MTA is holding public town halls on Nov. 19 in Queens and Nov. 20 in Brooklyn. Feedback and comments can also be submitted online. Further details are available on the MTA website.

Students interested in learning more about BC's urban sustainability major can reach out to the director, Tammy Lewis, at tlewis@brooklyn. cuny.edu.

Confronting Changes: BC Clubs Stand Together at USG Senate Meeting

By Emily Nixon
Staff Writer,
Margot Dragos
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& Contributing Editor
Jaida Dent
Managing Editor

On Nov. 11, multiple clubs spoke at a senate meeting held by the Undergraduate Student Government (USG), voicing their concerns about issues they've had with the Brooklyn College (BC) administration's updated policies regarding clubs in the past semester.

"Until everyone sees these policies as fundamentally unjust, some people will follow them to the letter, unaware of the damage they are doing to student life," said Miguel Figueroa, Vice President of the Puerto Rican Alliance (PRA). "Students have no power if we can't have fun, or learn about and express our culture."

While policies are written and voted on at the Clubs Affairs Council (CAC), they are enforced and regulated by the Student Activities, Involvement, and Leadership (SAIL) office and Student Affairs.

The changing policies around club and event registrations have been a major source of frustration for BC clubs, such as Student Organization For Every Disability United For Progress (SOFEDUP).

"We had trouble registering at the start of the semester because of the changes to the process," said Venus Blue, former president of SOFEDUP (2024-2025). "SAIL changed the rules from requiring 2 e-board members to 4 over the summer and abruptly denied our re-registration, and then we had issues with the new training rules."

Another source of frustration for club leaders has been the unclear regulations put forth by Central Depository, which funds club events when Event Request Forms (ERFs) are submitted and approved.

"Consistently, SAIL has failed to accurately disclose the official budget for our club despite the rough estimate given to many club leaders during the mandatory club training sessions," said Tai Lee, Secretary of the J-Fashion club. "We have remained within the estimated budget given to us [...] but time and time again, we have never approved the full amount necessary to ensure that our club has all the items we need for our events."

This remains a problem for the J-Fashion Club, according to Lee.

"On the day of the Senate Meeting, we were having an event in collaboration with the LGBTA club, and just a day before the event, Central Depository informed us that they did not order some of the things we requested weeks in advance," said Lee. "The lack of communication and sufficient reasoning behind these decisions has made it challenging to establish ourselves as a new club."

Clubs claim there has been a lack of communication about these changing regulations, which has added to their frustration with Admin's lack of support, according to Blue.

The lack of communication sufficient and reasoning behind decisions these has made it challenging to establish ourselves as a new club.

"SAIL, USG, or the administration has communicated with us at all about these policy changes or increasing enforcement," said Blue. "We do not feel as though we have been supported; in fact, we have consistently been ignored by administration, and in particular, [BC President] Michelle Anderson, who we met with last year regarding several important issues to our members, which she was and continues to be incredibly dismissive of."

Various cultural clubs expressed frustration with their events being cancelled and funding being pulled. There have been issues with clubs' ERFs being cancelled or rejected "for frivolous reasons," according to Figueroa.

"This is like on a broader pattern, specifically cultural clubs, where they're losing money for events, getting their events rejected for frivolous reasons like spelling mistakes," said Figueroa. "For PRA, there was the Encuentro that we had recently [...] There was a mistake on the flyer of which room in SUBO the event was going to be in. Rather than asking us to edit the flyer later before we posted it, the entire ERF got cancelled."

President of PRA, Angelina Venetian, spoke out against alleged "favoritism" from Charles Amerson, Director of SAIL and the Department of Student Activities at Student Affairs

"I see a clear discrimination against clubs like mine and in favor of clubs like United for Israel. Charles Amerson in specific rejected one of our important ERFs because our flyer didn't include all of the co-sponsors' logos - we had to rewrite and submit the entire ERF," said Venetian.

Last spring, 17 clubs signed a letter to CUNY and BC Administrations, written by Blue, who was president of SOFEDUP at the time, "condemning the use of police violence" in response to the May 8 Pro-Palestine demonstration.

"There is no place on our campus, or on any college campus, for this level of intimidation and repression, or for students to be willingly placed in harm's way by administrators," states the letter.

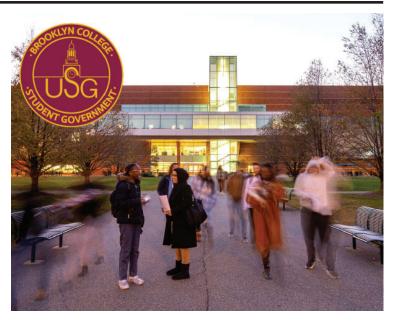
During the meeting, Blue criticized the supposed targeting of the clubs who'd signed the letter.

"Most of those clubs over the last few months have experienced ERFs being cancelled, funding being pulled, discrimination [...] [Admin] are targeting people that they disagree with politically, that speak out against things."

Towards the end of the meeting, USG apologized for the statement they put out.

"I will apologize on behalf of USG and on behalf of the post," said Doha Nemr, USG's Chief of Staff. "Yes, it could've been done in a much better way [...] we kind of had to respond quick, so I do apologize for the post [..] and hopefully we can move forward with that and take action for you guys."

While those in attendance appreciated the apology, Figueroa pointed out that all parties deserving of an apology weren't present when it was given, namely, figures



Brooklyn College West Quad./Courtesy of the Brooklyn College website, Graphic by Jaida Dent

from Blaze, BSU, and CSU.

During the meeting, Sanchez said that representatives from SAIL had been invited to attend, yet were unable to.

Haikeda Hilliman, USG Club Director, remarked that this meeting had been the first step towards progress.

"This is the first time that we've had students really come to these meetings and actually sit and let us know there really is a problem," said Hilliman. "So now that you guys have done so, I'm sure that we can come together and at least have a meeting with SAIL as a group."

Many students are unaware that they are able to attend the senate meetings, according to Lee.

"I would like for USG to advertise their meetings and town halls more widely to the campus and students," said Lee. "Many of us were unaware that these meetings are public to us, which made it difficult for us as students to know what was going on within USG and Brooklyn College."

USG President Cyle Paul later confirmed to The Vanguard that plans were underway to set the meeting up between SAIL, USG, and club leaders.

"We're also planning a December town hall specifically focused on this topic so that SAIL, USG, and club leaders are all in the same room hearing the same information at the same time," said Paul.

Lee felt that despite the conflict in the meeting, a consensus was reached about what the next step needed for resolution was.

"Though there were some moments where it felt like there was still blame being shifted between USG and eboard members, there was a collective agreement that

SAIL and Student Affairs need to be held responsible for their neglect of student clubs," said Lee. "Seeing that a majority of USG were sharing our frustrations and understanding where many of us are coming from felt like we were being seen and heard."

Nemr issued a warning to club leaders that they should manage their expectations of what transparency USG and Admin can give.

"I know that you guys want transparency, but there are certain things that happen backstage that we really can't share," said Nemr. "But, whatever we can share and whatever's gonna make you guys happy, that's what we will do."

The senate meeting served as a step towards unity between USG and club leaders as senators emphasized that they are here to serve BC's student body.

"There is a clear crackdown on student clubs, specifically culture and political activist clubs," said BC student and USG senator Ari Tirado Candia. "Again, I want to emphasize that our role as USG and student representatives is to be one in solidarity with other clubs and students."

Students interested in further events by JFashion Club, PRA, SOFEDUP, and USG should check their respective Instagrams: @bcjfashionclub, @bc_pra, @sofedup_bc, and @bcstudentgov.

The Government Shutdown Ends: What Happens Now?

By Key Jones-Ford **Content Creator**

After 43 days, the federal government of the United States reopened after shutting down due Senate over funding.

The U.S. government shut down due to a disagreement in government 2026. Senate Democrats by large wanted to extend insurance by while Senate year, Republicans wanted to senators made a deal to let the credits expire. Their disagreement led to the historical shutdown.

On Nov. 9, the Senate proposed a new funding Eight senatorsseven democrats and with Republicans on an agreement to fund the criticised government and vote on credit at a later date.

approved the funding bill proposed. According to the BBC, the bill was approved with a vote of Caucus, joined Republicans to vote yes.

The funding package, known as H.R.5371, extends money for most federal agencies until Jan. 30, 2026, and guarantees all federal workers who were laid off will be able to return to work. Those to develop, to deliver on who were not laid off will receive back pay that the Senate failed to do was missed during the shutdown. It is not clear how quickly this back Cortez [D-NY] in a press pay will be distributed.

The bill also extends by Politico. funding to the

Supplemental Nutrition Program Assistance (SNAP), the Department of Agriculture, Congress, and Veterans Affairs through September 2026, when a new funding bill to disagreements in the will be proposed and voted on.

Not included in the bill spent over a month was an extension of the subsidies provided by the the Affordable Care Act. Senate on a bill that These subsidies lower the would fund the federal cost of health insurance through for several low-income citizens across America. Their expiration means tax credits on health that millions are at risk another of losing their insurance.

As a compromise, the hold another vote on the tax credits at a later date, reported by BBC to take place by the end of the second week in December.

Democrats, both one independent-voted on Capitol Hill and across the nation, have the seven senators who voted on the health insurance tax the bill. In particular, Senate Minority Leader On Nov. 12, the U.S. Chuck Schumer [D-NY] House of Representatives has come under fire his perceived "ineffectiveness" as a leader for the Democratic and several 222-209, with President are now calling for his Donald Trump signing removal. Representative the bill into law the Seth Moulton [D-MA] same day. Six Democrats wrote in a post on X, "Tonight is another example of why we need new leadership. If @ ChuckSchumer were an effective leader, he would have united his caucus to vote 'No' tonight and hold the line on healthcare."

"We had a responsibility health care subsidies, and that," said Representative Alexandria conference reported on

Schumer has vowed



U.S. President Donald Trump shows the signed bill package to re-open the federal government in the Oval Office of the White House in Washington, DC, on Nov. 12./ Courtesy of Brendan Smialowski for Getty Images

to "keep fighting" in a post to his X account, mentioning that Democrats have fought "for months" to address the healthcare crisis in America.

Now that the shutdown is over, the damage it left must be dealt with.

During the shutdown, **SNAP** benefits, Smithsonian institutes, airlines, national parks, and federal workers were largely affected.

National parks and Smithsonian institutes are federally funded; during the shutdown, these institutes were closed to the public or operating with reduced NPR reports that these parks were unable to collect any revenue from entrance or recreational fees and are feeling the strain in combination with their reduction federal in funding.

"For 43 days, many national parks were left open, vulnerable and unprotected," Kristen senior Brengel, vice president of government affairs at The National Parks Conservation

Association said to NPR. Brengel also revealed that they to the USDA website. are unsure if they will missing funds in a timely manner.

Airlines saw a reduction in service due to the expected to make a full reduced service.

6% reduction in flights from major airports will remain in effect until the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) deems it safe to return to full capacity. Airline traffic controllers are from the month of October.

resuming; however, it remains to be seen how recipients will receive their benefits. In addition to being paused in some states, the program is facing several ongoing legal challenges and changes to the program written in the bill passed in the summer. The new policy requires recipients to

(NPCA), work at least 20 hours per pay week, according

While the shutdown be able to recover those was in effect, the House of Representatives was in recess, delaying the swearing in of recently elected representative shutdown, and are not Adelita Grijalva [D-AZ]. When the House comeback from their reconvened to vote on H.R.5371, Grijalva was CNN reports that the also sworn in on Nov. 12, according to PBS. Grijalva takes the place of her late father, Raúl Grijalva. "We can and must do better. What is most concerning is not what this administration has done, but what the among those who will be majority of this body has returning to work after failed to do," she said in missing two paychecks her speech upon being sworn in.

The extension of the SNAP benefits are funding lasts only until Jan. 30, meaning if there is another disagreement, there could be another shutdown.

East Quad Renovations Aim To Replace Aging Trees

By Victoria Keraj **News Editor**

Brooklyn College (BC) will begin removing the East Quad elm trees to make way for new ones as part of a capital of focused projects on renovations and improvements.

The BC community was made aware of the upcoming construction from USG president Cyle Paul, who expressed that the change was "a tough goodbye, but necessary," in an email sent to the BC community on Nov. 10.

Removing the trees Renovation BC Quad project.

The project specifies "That American were with are more resistant wear and tear." diseases to and rising temperatures.

when arborists, urban of scoping for the arborists



Brooklyn College East Quad field./Courtesy of the Brooklyn College website.

is a part of BC's East renovation project. landscape administration hired by told The Vanguard, Central. inventory that the current elm recommended forum, Gilbert also foundation. species, the Siberian removal of the large introduced other "The project is not the construction will elms, will be replaced elms because they capital projects, such only replacing the begin in the spring. past elms, which have lifespan and showed of new fiber cables enhancing the plant shared that the new longer lifespans and signs of significant for improved Wi-Fi beds surrounding changes to the East

summer Vice President (VP) 5-year capital plan. for Finance and According to the Administration, other improvements and project, the trees previously hosted an to the quad, such the date back to the open forum where as BC he elaborated on the paving and lighting. and replacing the was first founded. project and shared a There are also plans doors to Boylan and administration graphic detailing the to shared that a team proposed planting subsurface utilities Quad," BC told The of tree care experts, scheme for the quad. infiltrated by tree Vanguard. The planting scheme roots and failing with took inventory of was designed by a age," according to announcement the BS trees as part team of professional the project proposal. states the East Quad

artists USG

their as the installation elm trees and greatly BC administration Alan Gilbert, Senior included in a CUNY also

replace

the walkways, and The plan mentions strengthening environment for all." improving infrastructure updating the beneath the lawn, "the Ingersoll facing the

While Paul's and The email sent by will be fenced off for

president construction in the CUNY Paul mentions the coming weeks, an trees' roots, which email sent by Gilbert During the are damaging the ahead of the 2025 Fall semester states

in BC, which are the quad, but it is Quad will create renovating "[...] a more beautiful welcoming

From Commute to Community: Brooklyn College Tea Party Highlights Safe Spaces

By Mars Marte **Content Creator**

The Brooklyn College (BC) Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Alliance (LGBTA) hosted a cozy tea party in collaboration with the J-Fashion club in the Student Center, Maroon Room on Nov. 11. Students who attended the event were greeted with sweet treats, hot tea, and a reprieve from the mundane.

Jasmine Karasu, The Vice president of the J-fashion club, the president of the urges students at our commuter school, "[...] To put themselves space. out there and to step corporate life."

inner-city school adds just be nice to people." its own pressures to a student's whether it be leaving earlier getting home later than energy.



Event attendees Em Katz and Chela enjoying casual conversation./Mars Marte

J-fashion club, founded the club to create a safe

"[Our club] fosters out of the comfort of acceptance for people, no matter how you dress Attending an urban or what you like [...]

The goal Katz set out day-to-day, for was on full display as guests at the party than wandered in and found your class starts or a room buzzing with

was also an opportunity to learn, explore, and educate themselves alternative about styles. In doing so, the alliance nurtures a kind relationship the two student-run clubs on campus.

"[The J-fashion club and the LGBTA club] open big safe spaces not just for the gays but anyone who's feeling a little left out and lonely," shared the Vice President of the LGBTA, Matthew Vasquez. "We all need a space to connect."

Connection is the first building block of a community. Offering bonds makes college where students get their Studies degrees.

scholars to get a wellrounded experience that isn't solely rooted in studies, which in turn can reduce burnout in students by breaking the routine.

the biggest needed right now," an loneliness."

students to connect; it observation made by Vasquez.

> [J-Fashion] fosters acceptance for people, no matter how dress you or what you like[...] be nice people.

As the division students a safe space among the American to discover and form people continues to grow, isolation begins more than a place to replace attachment. conducted by researchers at the Club events empower American Psychological Association show that "adults who reported societal division as a significant source of stress in their lives were not only more likely feel emotionally "Community is strained, but also more thing likely to experience

The APA conducted this study via selfa research reports, method that directly an individual about their experiences and behaviors. In their report, researchers at the APA found that individuals nationwide are feeling the strain of a society separated. In times when there seems to be a never-ending disconnect with those around us, going about the day-to-day can feel draining.

In a city that moves fast and often leaves us feeling left behind, gatherings like this tea party become more than events for BC students; they are reminders of what a community can feel like.

At the end of the day, community isn't something we wait for; it's something we choose to build, one moment at a time.

For more information about the J-Fashion **USt** club and the LGBTA club, please visit their respective Instagrams: @bcjfashionclub and @brooklyn.lgbta.



Sweet treats for guests./Mars Marte

expected due to MTA delays.

Commuting can be echoed complex for students; thankfully, BC goers offer club events that help them connect their with campus community. Katz (she/they/he),

Casual conversations fueled by compliments throughout the room. Strangers connected and shared their favorite fashion brands and tips..

The tea party was more Em much than an opportunity

Sustainability Club Presents A Smashing Way To Reduce Waste

By Khalailah Bynoe

Arts Editor

The Brooklyn College (BC) Sustainability Club's pumpkin smash event was a success

Fifty participants came out to smash a pumpkin, which was a much-needed de-stress from midterms. The event was held on Nov. 11 at the BC Eats Garden. There was pizza, drinks, and piles of pumpkins waiting to be smashed and composted. In attendance were BC clubs and partners: the Public Health and Medicine Club, TREEage Club, NYPIRG, Flatbush Food Co-op, and Big Reuse.

BC student and pumpkin thrower, Roma Yermakova, told The Vanguard, "I did bring my own pumpkin today. It was on my porch [it] served for a good three weeks, and it was its time to go [...] it's time for it to be reborn into compost."

Yermakova continued, "I was mostly just excited about getting rid of my pumpkin in a more eco way."

The Flatbush Co-op, which has worked with BC's Sustainability Club in the past, had its own table.

"We are a communityowned food cooperative, and one of our core tenets is sustainability. So we like to help out with the BC Sustainability Club. We've done a few different events with them over the years. We were also able to provide them with some pumpkins to smash today from our produce," Marketing and Members-Owner Services Manager at Flatbush Food Co-op, Leah Danger, told The Vanguard.

"I just wanted to also mention that twice a year we do a recycling event at our store in collaboration with the Lower East Side Ecology Center, where we recycle papers, electronics, and textiles."

We host many community events involving sustainability, involving the kids, involving the community, and I think that's important." Outreach Coordinator at Flatbush Food Co-op, Joanna Wactor, told The Vanguard.

While in the end, all of

the pumpkins will have a purpose, some were especially special.

"We have striped pumpkins and gourds, [...] that'll be good to grow in the garden themselves [Sustainability Club]," Former Sustainability Club President, **CUNY** Climate Scholar, and Sustainability Council Member, Carina Alessandro, told the Vanguard.

Not all of the pumpkins were smashed.

"The Public Health and Medicine Club [...] took pumpkins in advance for their food prep. So we're just utilizing them the best [in] as many ways we could," said Alessandro.

Once all the smashing is done, the composting job is just beginning. Alessandro says, "After we smash them, we have shovels. I'm going to put them in our compost bin, that [...] Big Reuse donated to us last year. Because usually at a pumpkin smash, there'll be a master composter, and I'm one of those. [...] I get to use a shovel and try to get them to smaller pieces that compost more easily. And the compost is going to go to the gardens on campus."

Outreach Coordinator at Big Reuse, Onasis Cirineo, shared with The Vanguard their mission.

"Big Reuse, we're an environmental nonprofit here in New York City. Our mission is to help combat climate change through community-based and zerowaste initiatives. We help administer a lot of the master composting programs here in the city. We work a lot with community partners and all the boroughs to help bring zero-waste here to the

city. [...] Whether we do community composting, educational workshops, or on-the-ground street tree care." Cirineo continues.

"We really just try to tell New Yorkers there's a plethora of [...] ways to [...] give back [and] to be green."

Keeping a watchful eye and ensuring everybody was safe was Sustainability Coordinator, Office of Environmental Health, Safety, and Sustainability, Stalin Haeger-Espinal.

The Pumpkin Smash has been running for the past three years. "It was a lot [of] fun, and we always use all the smashed pumpkins that are left over from, like, the holidays and stuff, and give them to the community gardens and the BC Eats garden. [...] Because they use that and turn [it] into compost that helps the gardens on campus have a better cultivation and crop season next year," Haeger-Espinal is also an alum who was actually a part of the Sustainability Club as an undergraduate in 2018. He came back in 2022 as the Sustainability Coordinator.

The TREEage Club showed support for the event.

"This is our third time participating in the annual Brooklyn College pumpkin smash that's facilitated by the Sustainability Club. We really enjoy coming out to show support and also rep our club alongside other sustainability clubs on campus," TREEage Club President and Campus Organizer, Leila M. Tazi, told The Vanguard.

The president and vice president of the Sustainability Club hope that events like this will get everybody more



BC Sustainability Club President, Tommy Richards./ *Khalailah Bynoe*

involved in sustainability.

"We're here to educate people about composting and promote BC Eats, the garden, and come together and just have some fun after Halloween. We're actively doing a lot of work around composting and collecting food scraps, and it's really in the works. We're getting a lot more hot box-style bins on campus. So this year specifically, we're really hoping to [...] streamline process," Tommy Richards, BC Sustainability Club President, told the Vanguard.

"We've been having it for a few years now. [...] But it's a great way for students to get involved with sustainability on campus, because a lot of students, since it's a commuting school, may not know about what's going on with sustainability on campus. But it's also a great way after Halloween to find sustainable ways to [...] compost your pumpkins. And it's just a great way for everybody to feel involved," BC Sustainability Club Vice President Annalise Grekalski

told The Vanguard.

Sustainability was not the only change being promoted; BC's NYPIRG had a table to encourage people to get their voices heard.

"We're a student advocacy group on campus. [...] Today we're trying to get people to sign up for an event called the People's Money, which is basically a democracy driven event where [...] we're trying to get regular everyday citizens and students to [...] get involved with participatory budgeting," Project Coordinator at BC NYPIRG, Mamadou Diallo, told The Vanguard.

"Basically just making it so that people that [...] didn't really get a say in how [...] the city is developed can finally get a chance to [...] get involved in some type of way," Diallo continues, "This is just about increasing student power and [...] making it so that people [...] engage with their community more.

Flatbush Food Co-op is hosting a blood drive on Dec. 26 from 12-6 pm at 1415 Cortelyou Road.

For more information about the clubs and organizations mentioned, visit @bcsustainabilityclub, @bc.phamclub, @bc_treeage_club, @brooklyn_nypirg, @flatbushfood, and @bigreuse.



Atendee preparing to throw a gourd./Khalailah Bynoe

"We Have Always Existed": "Caribbean Queen" Brings LGBT and Caribbean Worlds Together

By Eddy Prince Staff Writer

Brooklyn College's (BC) LGBTQ+ Resource Center and Black and Latino Male Initiative (BLMI) collaborated to screen "Caribbean Queen" on Nov. 13. The film tells the story of Q, a young Caribbean individual determined to be the Queen of NYC's West Indian Day Carnival Parade, all while facing discrimination adversity throughout their community.

This screening was collaborative effort between the Caribbean Project and Equality the CUNY LGBTQIA+ Consortium.

The screening opened up with introductory from Kelly remarks Spivey, the Director of BC's LGBTQ+ Resource Center, and Spivey welcomed Sekiya Dorsett, the director of "Caribbean Queen," to the podium.

'Caribbean Queen' is storytelling meeting advocacy, meeting activism.

"This is a very powerful movie. I'm from the Bahamas, and when I came to New York City, I was searching for a home," said Dorsett. "Ever since then, I've been always asking myself, 'Where is home?', and I found home in 'The Revival Women and the Word, where I found black lesbians I could connect to."

"This movie means so much to me. I was never able to wrestle with my Caribbeanness and my



Film screening attendees with "Caribbean Queen" director Sekiya Dorsett./Eddy Prince

queerness until this ["Caribbean moment. Queen"] for me is really me unpacking that and coming to terms [with that]. One of the themes that you'll see in the film is this line, 'We have always existed.' That is our message here."

This line, repeated throughout film, serves to bring these stories to light. "Sometimes, there's a lot of vulnerability in telling our stories," said Mohammed Q. Amin, the founder of the Caribbean Equality it's Project and executive producer of "Caribbean Queen". "There's also a lot of risk in telling our stories. For a lot of queer and trans people now, just being visible and just being themselves can be dangerous. So how do we tell our story?"

"Ithink'Caribbean Queen' is all about visibility and representation, not just of Caribbean culture, but queer Caribbean people," said Amin. "It's about making sure that students see themselves in the film, but also being able to tell their stories. It's about us telling who we are, what makes us unique Caribbean people.

Queen" "Caribbean storytelling meeting advocacy, it's art meeting activism."

The film, which premiered in the summer of 2024, also sought to raise awareness about the violence perpetrated against queer people.

Josiah Robinson, an openly gay Grenadian singer known as 'Jonty', was murdered in Grenada, and the subsequent lack of investigation elicited a heavy response from LGBTQ communities. The slogan "Justice for Jonty" was made and showcased in NYC's West Indian Day Parade.

"It wasn't until [celebrities like] Beyonce's publicist, Yvette Noel-Schure, and Tyler Perry came together to offer up \$100,000 for information leading to the arrests of [Jonty's] attacker that it hit international media a little bit more," said Amin. "When the Caribbean Equality Project participated in the West Indian Day Parade, this was our sole message. Our message to the judges and to the West Indian Day Parade Committee was raising awareness for this queer Caribbean person that was killed in Grenada."

Amin went on to discuss how Jonty's death was a call to action and explain just how the queer community took action.

"Justice for Jonty, Queer Caribbean Lives Matter, [...] we had over 150 people march in the parade carrying these posters," said Amin. "It got such wide coverage to the point where it actually created a rippling effect on the country of Grenada. A lot of LGBTQ people [who study in Grenada] were questioning whether they are safe in the country. But because of the widespread coverage, stands as a celebration the police department more investigation. Two weeks you if you let them. later, they were able to

arrest someone that is allegedly the suspect in the case [...] I think we've gotten justice."

"It was important to us that we had queer representation [in the film]," said Karl O'Brian Williams, executive producer of "Caribbean Queen". "Representation not just in the film, but behind the scenes as well. That was something that was very important to Sekiya [Dorsett] and became important to all of us as [...] it was part of the intention to embrace the community. So all of these things were intentional, authentic, and community-driven."

"We had this concept throughout the film, 'We have always existed," said Amin. "It's something I said to [Dorsett]. I told her, as Caribbean people, we have always existed. But because of the harm and trauma, our visibility is why we have often been silent. Because of all the safety issues, we haven't always been visible. And [Dorsett] loved that. We have always existed. And then we added that into the script, and it had imparted this presence into the film in and of

"Caribbean Queen" of self-expression and acceptance. Adversity and resources into the and prejudice only affect



Attendees eating and watching the film./Eddy Prince

"Open Mic" Shines Light on BC Students

pour their hearts and souls

into organizing the event,



Dana Smith performing a spoken word piece./Mia Muskan

to maintain and organize

"I'm truly so privileged

innovative, dedicated, and

genuinely caring group of

interns who inspire me

every single day. They

this open mic.

By Mia Muskan Staff Writer

Amongst a busy and to work with a talented, breezy midterm season Brooklyn College (BC) students, the Interns of the English Majors' Counseling Office hosted yet another successful Open Mic Event in Woody Tanger the Auditorium on Thursday, Nov. 13. Creative students flooded the auditorium, eager to present their hard work and talent in front of other inspired peers.

BC has been hosting Open Mic Events as early as 1998, on a strict schedule of once every winter and spring semester.

The event was introduced Albena Professor Lutzkanova-Vassileva, a BC associate professor of English and comparative literature. Professor Vassileva gave a short and sweet speech at the beginning of the event.

With a bright smile on her face, the English professor expressed her joy at this event and the work the interns put in

and I want to thank them for all that they have done so that we can be here todav." Students from backgrounds, different styles, and majors are able to bond over something they all collectively enjoy. The loud applause roaring after a student nervously finishes their piece, or the snapping in unison whilst someone performs a song. Throughout the event,

the English Interns were seen taking the lead and initiative, assuring that the event ran smoothly. eagerly took turns introducing each performer, applauding, and giving their complete undivided attention.

Two of the interns, President Mathew Faltas and Social Media Manager Duly Rosenberg, also had the opportunity to present their own work.

Talking Vanguard, Faltas shared their excitement about being able to present their work in front of an audience.

"[Being able to perform]

was nice because I don't usually write poetry, and it was nice to try something new to express myself. I would say all my creative works are forms of expression, but it was nice to try something new."

Resenburg, a senior intern, discussed her love for writing.

"I shared a song I wrote. I love sharing my music because it feels like music is a way that I can kind of move emotions through myself. [Singing] takes two things that I love, writing and music, and puts them together. I felt really good to share [my song] and to hear that it resonated with some people."

Several students took to the stage with their guitars and voices. Attendees sang original songs, nervous at first as they tuned their guitars. As they performed, a level of comfort was reached by the artist. As soon as they strummed their last note, the artist was met with loud cheers and applause. Adding onto the idea of

"open mic", where anyone can perform their own original works.

As the event wrapped atmosphere up, the remained light uplifting; Students left with big smiles and possible inspiration for their future work.

53 Open Mic Events were held at Brooklyn College, with this being the 54th.

The English Major Interns are hosting their next event, a spelling bee, on Thursday, Nov. 20.

To stay updated with events held by the Interns at the English Majors' Counseling Office, check out their Instagram @thejunctionbc.



Jarett Denver performing a song./Mia Muskan

A Lover Girl With Boundaries: Summer Walker Releases "Finally Over It"

peace up in the home. Tryna

meet all your demands when

you ain't even got no goals,"

This song is for the people

"The answer's no, no, no

pleasers who are learning to

(No, no, no-no). You used to

hear yes, but I can't take no

more. Get used to hearing

this 'cause the answer's no."

She reemphasizes through

this song that she will no

longer be a doormat in her

song that shows appreciation

to women who are setting

their boundaries and looking

good while doing it. "Go

Girl" features female rappers

Latto and Doja Cat. This trio

was a perfect blend of lover

Walker then flows into a

said Walker.

relationships.

By Serena Edwards
Opinions Editor

Grammy-nominated recording artist Summer the leftover Walker released the third edition to her "Over it" album series on Nov. 14. This album is entitled "Finally Over It," and it is safe to say that she is no longer settling for less. Throughout this album, Walker shows you can be a lover girl with boundaries. pop-up help the leftover experiencing them "finally two discs, "For Worse' total of 18 states and it is safe to say that she is no longer settling for less. Throughout this album, walker shows you can be a lover girl with boundaries.

The "Over It" series started back in 2019 with her debut album entitled "Over It," which covered all of the stages of grieving someone she couldn't be with. She then continued the series in 2021 with "Still Over It," which covered her tumultuous relationship with London on Da Track. In that album, she covered what caused the breakup between them and how it affected her pregnancy. This album, "Finally Over It," completes the series and reemphasizes everything that her previous album states. Walker is known for her unique storytelling through her albums. Her relationship stories flow through her albums and help bring the album all together.

The album has been anticipated since her Grammy-nominated single "Heart of a Woman" was released on Oct. 25, 2024.. To market the album, she did a pop-up at Morehouse

pop-up featured a garbage truck for fans to throw away their exes' belongings. This pop-up helped people release the leftover feelings they were experiencing and to help them "finally get over it".

This album was split into two discs, "For Better" and "For Worse". The album has a total of 18 songs, including a music video featuring "Heart of Women".

She starts the album off with "Scars," which carries the message of how unhealed wounds bleed into the next relationship.

stages of grieving someone who is still alive but someone she couldn't be with. She then continued the series in 2021 with "Still Over It," which covered her tumultuous relationship with London on Da Track. In that album, she covered what caused the "I can't see you for who you are if you won't show me what's beneath those scars", sings Walker. She starts off vulnerable within this 1 minute song, which foreshadows the repeating theme of emotional tolerance the album has.

In her song "Robbed You," featuring fellow R&B artist Mariah the Scientist, there is a moment of reflection, feeling like she should've got her revenge, or "lick back," and taken everything from her exes when she left.

"I need all of that back and then some, cause with all the things you've done, I should've robbed you," stated Walker.

She reiterated that her exes are lucky that she is nice and that she didn't leave the same amount of damage they left her with. The song also



"Finally Over It" vinyl cover./Courtesy of Instagram

seductive flow, met with Walker's insane vocals.

"FMT" was a song that shows that sticking to your type might leave you in shambles. Walker also talks about how her friends want better for her and tell her that she can do better.

"They said, Girl, can't you see, won't you open your eyes? The places you'll reach, you'll go higher and higher. You need someone who's gonna equal your fame."

This song emphasized that sometimes what we desire might not be the best for us.

"Don't Make Me Do It/ Tempted" resonates with those at their wits' end with the relationship, and that sometimes the things you understood ain't gotta be explained. How come all this pleasure gotta come with pain?" Walker sings.

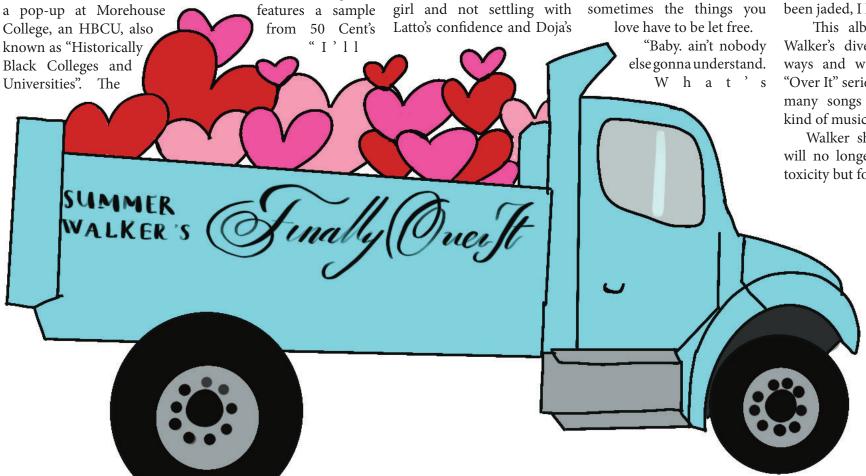
The title track "Finally Over It" was the last song on the album and tied the journey of a third album altogether.

It marked the end of an era. Walker is now living for herself and not paying any mind to what others think because it is her life.

"Oh, no more crying in public. Our love bipolar, finally over. Oh, for you I pray," sings Walker. She also takes a moment to reflect on the toll that it has caused on her and how she is waiting for love now. "I got too many issues I never solved. I've been jaded, I have questions."

This album showcased Walker's diversity in many ways and wrapped up the "Over It" series strongly, with many songs redefining the kind of music she makes.

Walker showed that she will no longer be living for toxicity but for prosperity.



Graphic by Amira Turner

A New Ferry Line?: The Struggle & Thoughts of a Staten Island Commuter

By Ameena Khan Staff Writer

It's official! Starting next month on Dec. 8, 2025, Staten Island (SI) and Brooklyn will have a connecting route in the NYC Ferry system, connecting the island's north shore, St. George, to Bay Ridge.

But what if I told you that there used to be a ferry service between the two boroughs, which was put out of service momentarily following the opening of the Verrazzano-Narrows Bridge in 1964?

To keep it short, it's systemic racism and classism. And not only is Robert Moses to blame for all of this, but his influence has left massive ongoing impacts that affect everyday commuters such as myself, between SI and Brooklyn.

The idea of a ferry line between SI and Brooklyn isn't anything new; in fact, this wouldn't be the first time a proposal of a potential transportation connection between SI and the rest of New York City (NYC) has been made. Proposed plans for a subway line and pedestrian walkway during the construction of the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge were initially rejected by the constructor and designer, Robert Moses, who vehemently opposed them and shut them down. Even today, in Bay Ridge, lies the abandoned and incomplete "Staten Island Tunnel," otherwise officially known as the "Brooklyn-Richmond Freight and Passenger Tunnel," constructed in 1823 and halted in 1925, intended to be used as a new crossing through the Narrows.

So, what gives? How come in the 21st century in NYC, we still haven't successfully proposed alternate transportation routes between SI and Brooklyn that aren't solely dependent on the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge until now?

First of all, I want you to ask yourself: Why else would SI be extremely isolated from the rest of NYC? It's not only due to its vast distance separated from the rest of the city, but including SI's routes and transportation that were intentionally designed by Robert Moses to be car reliant, serving the borough as a suburban enclave of the white middle class, in other words, a "white flight" to the suburbs from the city shortly after the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge was constructed. Essentially, this would make it increasingly difficult for people of color and the lower class, as they weren't able to afford a car, and all public transportation methods were suppressed.

While lack of funding and engineering made it difficult for the completion of an underground subway line, much longer before the planning and construction of the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge, it simply couldn't have been a coincidence that the previously working ferry line between the two boroughs had suddenly gone out of service, just days after the bridge was completed.

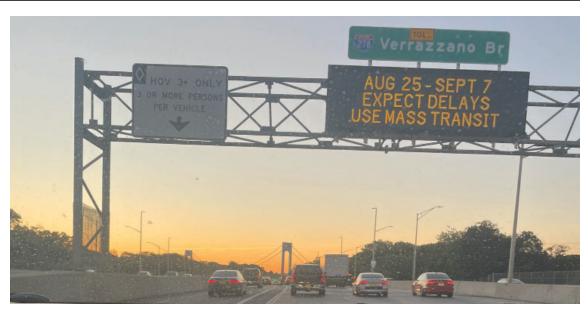
As a Staten Islander who regularly commutes to Brooklyn, doesn't have her driver's license yet, and relies heavily on public transportation to get around NYC and her own borough, I have mixed feelings regarding the newly proposed ferry between SI and Brooklyn.

Currently, our only options to commute between the two boroughs are the MTA bus lines, such as the S79, S53, and S93. Other methods include going to St. George Ferry Terminal, by either bus or the Staten Island Railway (SIR), then taking the free Staten Island Ferry to Whitehall Terminal in Manhattan, and transferring to any subway line that would take you to Brooklyn. Your last option would be to just drive over the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge, that is, if you have a car and a license, with a discounted toll of \$2.75 for SI residents with E-ZPass.

Meanwhile, the NYC Ferry posted a schedule, detailing the routes and scheduled times with large waiting intervals with specific times.

"The St. George route will be connected to Brooklyn and the rest of the system so Staten Island riders can transfer to any other route. This also connects Brooklyn to Manhattan's west side," according to the NYC Ferry website. Originally, the St. George route only consisted of Midtown West, Battery Park City, and St. George. Now with this new connection, additional stops have been added.

According to the Staten Island Advance, "While the NYC Ferry will now cross New York Harbor to Bay Ridge, the existing stops will remain. There will be two legs on the St. George route. One will be the familiar connection to western Manhattan, with



Approaching the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge from Staten Island./Ameena Khan



New St. George Ferry./ Courtesy of NYC Ferry

stops at Battery Park City and Midtown West at Pier 79. The second leg will proceed from the Island's North Shore to Bay Ridge, before continuing to the Atlantic Avenue stop at Brooklyn Bridge Park. The final stop on this leg of the route will be in Lower Manhattan, Wall Street at Pier 11."

Not only will Bay Ridge be added to the connection, but so will Atlantic Avenue in Brooklyn, and Wall Street in Manhattan as well be a part of the ferry service.

My thoughts?

If I had to predict, I would only see myself taking the St. George to Bay Ridge route only once in a blue moon, depending on my mood. Sorry, but why would I pay a four-dollar fare when I could stay on the five train instead of getting off at Atlantic Avenue, get off at Bowling Green, and head towards the Staten Island Ferry, which, did I mention, was free? And once I'd reached the St. George Terminal, I'd pay once more either for the SIR train, which, usually, is

free with the exception of the St. George and Tompkinsville stop, and be on my way home, or take a bus. With the new ferry line, I would just be paying extra.

Yet, if anything, I predict my commute time would be even longer. In Bay Ridge, the waiting time for the ferry's arrival would be equivalent to 2 to 3 S79s already arriving and leaving, dropping and picking up commuters. Both the new ferry and the bus take approximately 11 minutes to cross to Staten Island, yet the bus would take me farther to my destination, while the ferry would require a transfer.

From admiring the vermillion hues of the sunrise on the S79 when commuting to college, to admiring the ocean's blue reflection of the sky on the Staten Island Ferry, all I wish is that for public transportation not only between SI and Brooklyn, but for Staten Island as a borough as well. Despite being in a privileged position where my father could drive me to college in Brooklyn on his way

to work, even lending me the car to commute once I am able to drive, that is not the case for thousands of commuters who commute between the two boroughs every day, whether it be for work, school, family, or activities.

While exciting, the ferry route appears much more as a luxury than for the average commuter traveling between the two boroughs, who rely on public transportation. Regardless, I do expect to see a surplus of excited Staten Islanders waiting to experience the reimagined ferry line directly between another borough that isn't Manhattan for once.

Sports Recaps (11/09 - 11/15)

By Manuel Polanco Sports Editor

The amazing year for the women's volleyball team has come to an end as they came up short against their familiar enemy, John Jay College, in the CUNYAC championship game. A great season to reflect on in the offseason. The women's basketball team remains undefeated in the early season, while the men's basketball team is still looking for its first win.

Women's Volleyball

On Nov. 11, the Brooklyn College (BC) Bulldogs took on the Lehman College Lighting in the first round of the CUNYAC playoffs. BC swept Lehman, 3-0, and advanced to the semifinals, where they would face off against Baruch College.

Each set went as follows: 25-16, 25-16, 25- 21. Lehman would turn up the heat in the third set as it was tied 14-14, but BC would get the lead back and win. This great playoff debut was capped off by a great game from freshman Saule Okeke-Ziburkus, who had six kills, one ace, and one block. Teammate and longtime player Ruti Joshi had four kills and six

Ella Snobar had four kills, one ace, and one block. Senior Ayatallah Elkotby had two kills and one block in this game as well. With this great win, BC advanced to the semifinals against Baruch.

This game against Baruch was a juggernaut of a match, as in a five-set duel, BC would come away victorious and win the semifinals 3-2. Each set went

as follows: 15-25, 25-22, 25-22, 19-25, 15-12.

A great game by Snobar, who was the hero of the game, with 13 kills and five blocks. Teammate Danielle Fuxman had nine kills and three blocks.

Olive Carroll had five kills and two aces to cap off her night, and Okeke-Ziburkus had five kills and two aces as well. Pure dominance to begin their playoff run, and it culminated in a final match between the top seed, John Jay.

All good things come to an end, as BC came up second in the championship against John Jay. The sets went as follows: 25-22, 18- 25, 16 -25. Okeke-Ziburkus had 12 kills, Carroll had eight kills, and Snobar ended her night with six.

Elkotby had two aces and five blocks to cap off her night. A great season came to an end, but the potential to be better grows until next time.

Men's Basketball

The men's basketball team had its season home opener on Wednesday, Nov. 12. They faced off against SUNY New Paltz and lost 91-51.

New Paltz started the first quarter off by scoring 46 points dominantly. Sophomore guard Edmond Ruci had 21 points in 25 minutes of play while making five three-pointers.

Sophomore Guard Muneer Ibrahim scored 10 points in 25 minutes of play, while making two threes. Sophomore Guard Joe Charles scored six points, making one three-pointer in 29 minutes of play. Junior Center Tyler Goron had six points in 13



Junior Malia Reyes celebrating./Courtesy of BC Athletics

minutes played.

Their next game was against the New Jersey City University Gothic Knights. This was another home game for the men's team, and they lost a close one 67-52. Both teams would end the first quarter tied 27-27.

NJCU would take over in the second half, scoring 40 points while BC scored 25. A great game by Ibrahim, who scored 16 points, making three three-pointers in 29 minutes of play. Senior guard Thomas Hall had 15 points, scoring three three-pointers in 31 minutes of play. Gordon had nine points in 20 minutes.

Their next game will be against William Paterson University in New Jersey on Wednesday, Nov. 19, at 7:30 p.m., as they search for their first win of the season.

Women's Basketball

Facing off against Yeshiva College on Nov. 12, the women's basketball team improved to 2-0 after winning 82-32. BC ended the first quarter with a 21-3 win, showcasing their dominant play.

A great game by senior Dior Dorsey, who had 12 points and six rebounds in 19 minutes. Senior center Sheily Quezada had 12 points and six rebounds in 21 minutes, senior guard Anna Kitc had 10 points and 14 rebounds in 23 minutes. Lastly, senior guard Victoria Kantzian had eight points in 14 minutes.

They hoped to continue this winning streak against Manhattanville, Friday, 7 p.m.

The winning streak continues as BC is 3-0 to start the season and beat Manhattanville 72-66. In this close game that went four quarters, BC showed resilience and kept gnawing away at the victory. BC outscored Manhattanville twice and vice versa.

Kitsch ended her night with a double-double, scoring 18 points and grabbing 10 rebounds in 33 minutes. Junior guard Brianna Jackson had 15 points with six assists and five rebounds to end her night. Dorsey ended her night with 12 points in 24 minutes, going 4/4 at the free-throw line.

BC hopes to continue its undefeated streak as it faces Kean University on Tuesday, November 18, at 6 p.m.



Pre-Meal Dinner Rolls Yields 10-12 rolls

Recipe by Key Jones-Ford **Content Creator** Graphics by Jocelyn Rios



I packet of active dry yeast or instant yeast (or roughly 2 4 tsps)

2 tbsp sugar

2 tsp salt

Cooking spray or oil (coconut or vegetable oil recommended)



- 1. If using active dry yeast, activate your yeast in half a cup of warm (around 100°) milk and a pinch of sugar, and let sit for 5-10 minutes. You'll know it's ready if the yeast starts to foam. If using instant, skip this step.
- 2. While the yeast is rising, combine the remaining milk, salt, sugar, and oil in a large bowl or the bowl of an electric mixture. Add the risen yeast mixture and about 2 cups of flour. Stir to combine. If you're mixing the bread by hand, continue adding flour in small amounts until the mixture is difficult to combine by stirring. You'll know dough is ready when it is slightly sticky to the touch, but not impossible to knead.
- 3. Once the dough is properly combined, place flour onto a flat surface and begin to knead your dough lightly for 7 minutes. Alternatively, if you have a dough hook for a stand mixer, run the dough in your mixer on medium speed for 5 minutes. Your dough should be smooth and slowly bounce back when lightly poked.
- 4. Grease your bowl with either your oil or cooking spray. Place the dough in, cover your bowl with a cloth, and leave in a warm place to rise for 1 ½ hours. After the dough has had time to rise, punch your dough to deflate it.
- 5. Preheat the oven to 350°F.
- 6. Divide your dough into separate balls, roughly the size of golf balls. Stretch the dough between your fingers and pinch it underneath to ensure smoothness. Place your rolls into a loaf pan or 9×13 " Cover the loaves with a cloth and leave to rise for another 30-45 minutes.
- 7. Place your baking dish on the lowest rack of your oven and bake for 20-25 minutes, or until rolls are golden brown on top. Remove your rolls and allow them to cool for about 10 minutes before serving.
- 8. OPTIONAL: Brush the rolls lightly with a mixture of honey and melted butter once they're out of the oven for honey butter rolls.

Perfect before the main course of any meal!