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President Trump Meets With NYC Mayor-Elect Zohran Mamdani in the White House



Trump and Mamdani take questions from press after their meeting./Courtesy of The White House

By Victoria Keraj
News Editor
& Rami Mansi
Editor-In-Chief

During Zohran Mamdani’s campaign for Mayor of New York City (NYC), President Donald Trump had immediately taken a stance against Mamdani. Making statements and social media posts that point out Mamdani’s policies, which he interpreted as “communist” policies, and implied that he would withdraw funds from NYC if Mamdani were to be elected.

On Nov. 21, Mamdani and Trump met in the Oval Office and shared a private conversation. The White House posted a video in which Trump and Mamdani answered questions after concluding their meeting.

“We have one thing in common. We want this city of ours that we love to do very well,” Trump told the press after calling the meeting “great” and “very productive.”

Trump has previously been antagonistic towards democratic

officials who refused to cooperate with his administration’s efforts to deport immigrants from sanctuary states. Trump has also deployed the national guard to five Democratic states, along with Washington D.C, according to Democracy Docket, which also documented Trump’s threats to send troops to NYC.

“ We have one thing in common. We want this city of ours that we love to do very well.”

People took to social media to share their surprised reactions. Two political figures on opposite ends of the political spectrum, who have been sharing negative comments about each other since earlier this year, had a

seemingly productive and beneficial conversation by finding a common ground.

Reporters tested this common ground. When asked by a reporter how the two would reconcile their opposing views on deploying Immigration officers and national guard forces, Trump stated, “We’re gonna work together, and we’re gonna make sure that if they are horrible people, then we want to get them out. I think he wants to get them out more than I do. So we’ll work together. We discussed it at great length.”

During his campaign, Mamdani promised to stand up to Trump and called him a fascist. Despite Mamdani reaffirming his statements on NBC’s Meet the Press, he did not directly call out Trump as a fascist.

Mamdani instead chose to share the following sentiment: “I thought again and again about what it would mean for New Yorkers if we could establish a productive relationship that would focus on the issues that those New Yorkers stay

up late at night thinking about.”

As previously covered by The Vanguard, a campaign focused on affordability was what won voters over for Mamdani and democratic candidates running in other states on election day.

In their interview at the White House, Mamdani emphasized that New Yorkers who had voted for Trump in 2024 said they did so because of their economic concerns.

“When we spoke to those voters who voted for President Trump, we heard them speak about the cost of living. We focused on that same cost of living, and that’s where I’m really looking forward to delivering for New Yorkers in partnership with the president on the affordability agenda,” Mamdani stated.

This conversation opens the door for new questions and concerns about NYC moving forward.

How does a republican president come to share ideas and speak with a democratic socialist?

Black Friday Sales Falter as Consumers Continue to Prefer Online Shopping

By Rami Mansi
Editor-In-Chief

In a time where we spend more time online than ever before, shopping is one of the many industries that has taken a digital turn.

This Black Friday, consumers spent more time shopping online than in stores, driving an all-time high in e-commerce. But what led to the digitalization of shopping? Why have consumers switched to laptops instead of camping outside of Best Buy for the best new deals?

This change in consumer behavior can be traced back to COVID, where the choice to buy in person or online was made for us via a mandatory quarantine. According to Digital Commerce 360, consumers spent \$11.9 billion online, up from \$9.3 billion in 2019.

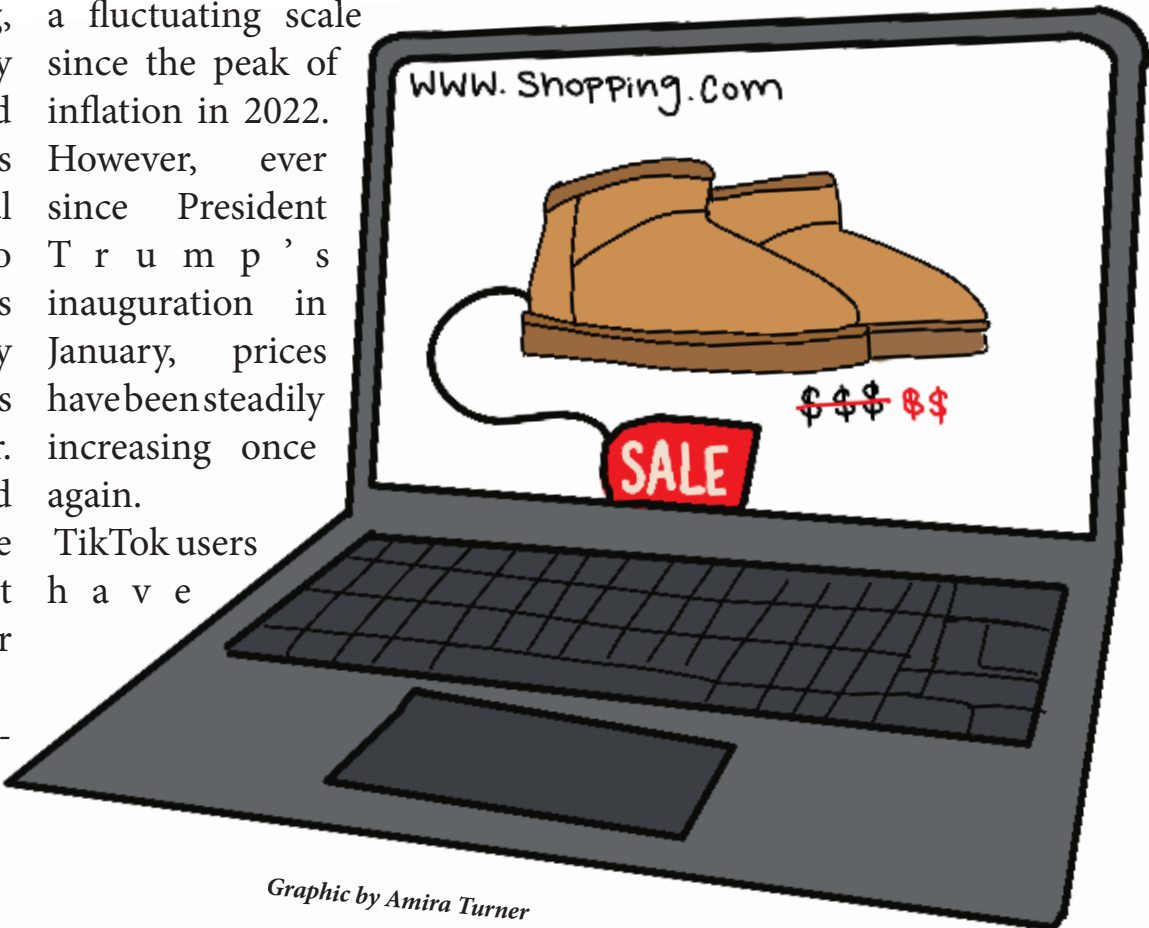
By the time 2021 came, not only did consumers feel comfortable shopping in the comfort of their own homes, but companies transformed their marketing and brand strategies to attract and acquire more online consumers. Companies like Amazon thrived during quarantine due to their almost 100% online shopping system and competitive pricing,

Competitive pricing, a marketing strategy where prices are based on the competitor's prices, is critical for consumers to pay attention to; it's another reason why online shopping has become so popular. The options presented to you, the more chances you have at choosing the lower price.

The price of an in-person sweater retail price on sale compared to an online seller via Amazon on Cyber Monday could demonstrate two very different prices. Rising prices have been on the rise for quite some time across the entirety of American society. According to CBS News, these prices have been on

a fluctuating scale since the peak of inflation in 2022. However, ever since President Trump's inauguration in January, prices have been steadily increasing once again.

TikTok users have taken to making year. Users expressed how Black Friday used to be a day of full chaos, with sales amounts being people camping and given by stores. Other users claim that the lack of disappointment with this prominent sales was a



Graphic by Amira Turner

recession indicator.

Several states have been stuck in a recession with economic downturn on the rise, with more states coming to join them, according to Fortune. This recession has hit middle-class Americans the hardest, the same population that makes up the largest number of consumers.

Online shopping is one of many ways the world sticks to a screen, and companies like Amazon have made billions of dollars off this mentality.

It is up to the public to be smart, healthy, responsible consumers when buying content online.

Online vs in-store Black Friday shoppers in 2024

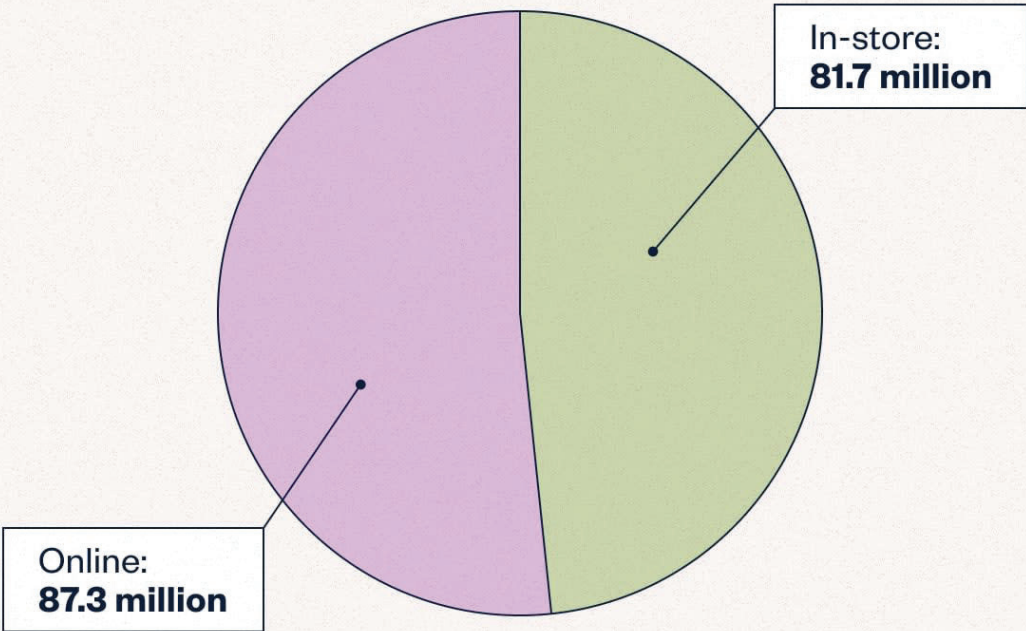


Chart comparing the average amount of online and in-person shoppers./ NBC News, National Retail Federation

Girls Who Code Partners and BC’s Computer Science Club Host Career Panel

By T’Neil Gooden
Features Editor

Girls Who Code, along with Brooklyn College’s (BC) Computer Science Club, brought three women working in computer science to share their knowledge and advice with BC students looking to learn more about the present state and future of the major.

“Our goal was to give Girls Who Code members the opportunity to connect with women working in the industry. Bringing in three women software engineers to share advice and speak with the next generation is exactly the kind of impact we hope our club can make,” said Munisa Ilhomova, the president of Girls Who Code and a senior at BC.

Students were greeted by: Amena Khan, a software engineer at Macquire Group; Oleksandra Kurbanova, a software engineer at Capital One; and Allina Khan, a former software engineer at BlackRock. These women shared their experiences within their jobs and any intel they had within the field of computer science.

When learning about being in the workforce, Amena Khan told students to “do the best you can in the beginning, and then you make mistakes, you adjust, and you keep at it. I think AI helps a lot with that, too, to be able to communicate technical concepts to people who are more business-oriented.”

Students were able to learn about the work that comes after their degree and be provided with a level of comfort from those who are in the fields they are looking to enter.

“I would say don’t quit, it’s part of the process to struggle. We struggle with system-defined concepts, the instructions and algorithms, and workplace communication. So it’s hard for everyone. And I think the biggest thing, as an engineer, is to stay persistent, keep learning, and keep doing,” Allina Khan told the audience.

“Bringing in three women software engineers to share advice and speak with the next generation is exactly the kind of impact we hope our club can make.”

Girls Who Code provided students with these women as a guide for the futures they aim to build for themselves.

“This event represents the support Girls Who Code aims to provide for our

members. We’re here for you, and we want to see you succeed. With the support of BC students, I believe we can continue aiming even higher,” Ilhomova told the Vanguard.

These software engineers not only gave students insights into their experiences working within the field, but they also provided students with guidance, as many students are looking to graduate later this year.

“We [women] need to be more confident,” Kurbanova told the audience. “The engineers don’t know the whole style, whole languages, whatever. They can’t build everything from scratch without help. So don’t undersell yourself. When you get the chance to interview or apply to things, try to lead with the best effort.”

Amena Khan followed Kurbanova’s message by saying, “The best piece of advice I received was don’t take things personally [...] You have a lot of aggressive personalities, and I am a very apologetic, shy personality. So, you know, if someone may come at you with demands or kind of quiz you, men or women, be confident in yourself.”

The speakers also reminded students to take advantage of the opportunities and professors that they have within their four years of school.

“Some professors here are really great at the stuff they know; listen to



Girls Who Code & Computer Science Club Presents:

Computer Science Career Panel

Join Girls Who Code and the BC CS Club for a talk with software engineers from BlackRock and Macquarie Group as they share their career paths and project experiences.

Food: Popcorn Chicken, crispy fries, spring rolls

November 18 | 12:15–2:15 PM
Amersfort Room, Student Center



Amena Khan
Current Software Engineer
Macquarie Group



Oleksandra Kurbanova
Current Software Engineer
at Capital One



Allina Khan
Previous Software Engineer
at BlackRock



Flyer for the panel./*Courtesy of @gwc_brooklyn_college on Instagram*



Girls Who Code President, Munisa Ilhomova, speaking with computer science panelists./
T’Neil Gooden

them,” Kurbanova told the audience.

Kurbanova also explained that the best thing to learn from college is “the ability to understand complex systems, breaking things down to smaller problems, and then trying to make sure you understand those smaller components fully.”

The spokeswomen each shared the importance of asking seniors in the field questions once they have entered the computer science field.

“Socializing at different events within your company, you are able to meet more senior people, but also build those relationships more naturally and sort of have those closer understandings,” said Kurbanova. “You can ask questions and bring up concerns that don’t feel like part of the workplace discussion. You can make friends with people with more experience and actually get their opinions.”

Amena Khan shared the same sentiment. “Finding someone who specializes in the field you are interested in would probably be a good way to make a good career decision,” she said. “A lot of the time, the challenge is finding that person and having the confidence to actually reach out. But I

think it’s true for the most part that most people are available and generally do want to help.”

Girls Who Code explained that there is more to learn when expanding their knowledge to clubs within and outside of their college campus.

“I’d encourage students to get involved as much as possible. Joining organizations like the Computer Science Club and Girls Who Code helps you learn, grow, and make connections you wouldn’t otherwise have. While you’re a student, it’s the perfect time to build those early Networks,” Ilhomova told The Vanguard.

Those interested in joining Girls Who Code or the Computer Science Club can follow their Instagram accounts: @gwc_brooklyn_college and @bccs.club.

The Bee’s Knees: Riverrun Club Hosts Its First Annual Spelling Bee

By Margot Dragos
Staff Writer

The Interns of the English Majors’ Counseling Office, also known as the Riverrun Club, challenged students to spell tricky words for special prizes at the first annual Riverrun Spelling Bee on Nov. 20.

The event was held in Boylan Hall, Room 2412, and hosted by three English department interns, who came dressed to impress in suit jackets and ties.

One of the hosts, senior intern Matthew Faltas, expressed their excitement about hosting the event alongside two fellow interns.

“I was really happy to host this event because in my previous semester, we never got to do anything like this, and it felt good to be involved and help guide our community together.”

The rules of the bee were similar to traditional spelling bee

whether or not the contestant spelled it correctly. This tally was done privately on flashcards to avoid revealing to the next speller whether the word was correctly spelled or not.

Seven contestants were competing in the bee: Angelina, Sawsan, Winnie, Julian, Miguel, Christopher, and Jonlison, who were assigned numbers 1-7, respectively.

Each speller was allowed to ask for a definition and example of the word in a sentence. The interns hosting the event would tally up the ones spellers would get right, and the spellers with the most correct answers would move on to the next round.

The first round contained the easiest words of the competition, but they still posed a challenge.

Contestants were challenged to spell words such as abrasion, hippopotamus, and delicatessen. The audience would frequently clap and cheer spellers on after each word, even though it wasn’t announced if that spelling was correct.

After a brief break for the hosts to tally up the scores, the second round began with the four top spellers advancing: Lambros, Sawsan, Winnie, and Figueroa.

As the pool of spellers got smaller, the words got harder. The remaining spellers were challenged with words such as lackadaisical,



(L to R) Winners Sawsan, Angelina, and Miguel holding their prizes./Margot Dragos



Spelling Bee hosts handing Sawsan her ribbon for winning third place./

Margot Dragos

abecedarian, and logorrhea.

Finally, the top two spellers, Lambros and Figueroa, advanced to the final sudden-death round. Both attempted to spell words such as onomatopoeia, ecclesiology, and neurosis. The hosts finalized the tally and announced the winners.

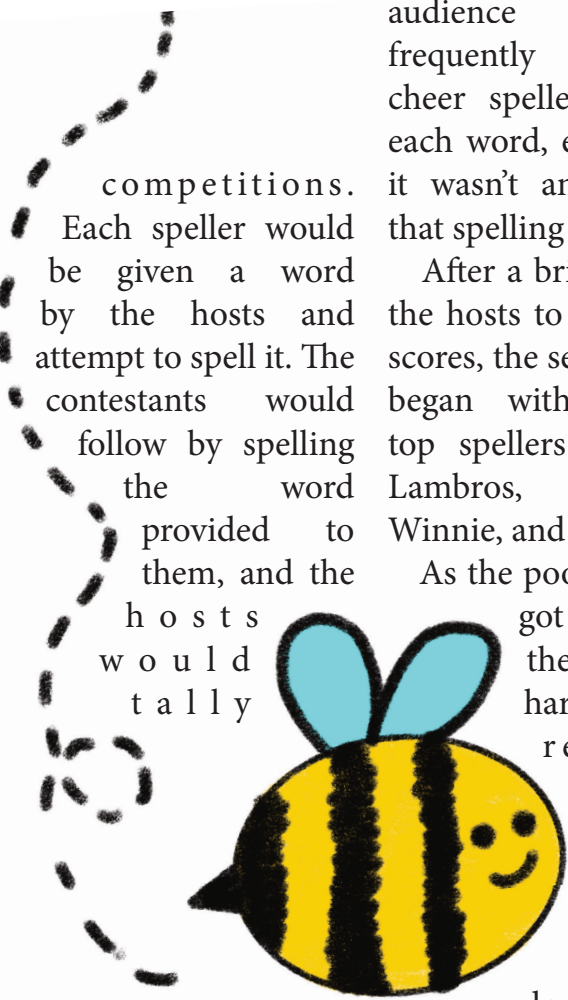
Sawsan came in third place and received a Merriam-Webster dictionary. Lambros

came in second and was given a mug that read “doing my bee,” to remain on-theme for the spelling bee. Figueroa won the first-place prize, which was a notebook and a set of pens. Each winner was also given a ribbon corresponding to their placement.

“I think a lot of people had a great time,” said Ivy Allick, one of the English department interns hosting the event. “I definitely want to do it

next year. I really hope the next interns continue on and it becomes a tradition.”

Students interested in future events hosted by the Riverrun Club should follow @thejunctionbc on Instagram.



Poetic Power: BLMI Holds Second Cafecito Lounge Featuring Poet Roberto Carlos Garcia

By Emily Nixon
Staff Writer

Quiet conversations filled James Hall Room 3309 as an excited buzz swept over attendees.

On Nov. 25, the Brooklyn College (BC) Black and Latino Male Initiative (BLMI) held their second Cafecito Lounge in an effort to foster community and uplift marginalized voices.

“We need more spaces where students can be vulnerable, and we need more spaces where we have creative outlets,” said Carla España, an assistant professor at the Department of Puerto Rican and Latinx Studies (PRLS). “Especially in these times where certain voices, especially marginalized voices, keep being silenced.”

The Cafecito Lounges serve as a way to support the artists of the community, offering them a safe space to work and create, according to Christopher Rodriguez, Director of BLMI.

“The ultimate goal [of the Cafecito Lounges] will be to create somewhat of a published version of student [creative] work. In the spring, there will be a lot of hands-on collaboration with faculty and authors,” said Rodriguez. “The goal is really to create spaces where we’re allowing you to develop your work, grow your work, and then hopefully, by the end, we have a way to celebrate that work and have it live on here. Our voices matter, and we want to actually live to that instead of just saying that.”

Each Cafecito Lounge has a guest speaker to help connect with and provide representation

for creatives in the community.

“With the launch [of the Cafecito Lounges], we had a Puerto Rican poet [...], so this time, when we thought, ‘What if we had a poet who also represents a lot of the backgrounds of the students,’” said España. “For me, it’s been so powerful to bring in that representation in

among descendants of the Latin American and Caribbean diaspora in the United States,” according to Teachers College at Columbia University.

Garcia spoke to students about how historical figures, such as French poet, author, and politician Aimé Césaire, found power in poetry and fiction, which later

from Arabic culture surrounding poetry’s importance.

“This is actually a tradition in Arabic because of the way the language is – in the way in Arabic culture, it is believed the ears are the window to the soul, not the eyes,” said Elwakil. “So, the spoken word is very powerful.”

peoples] have never had the experience of meeting an elder that did not go through some type of colonialism, or whether it be a dictatorship imposed by the U.S. or whatever it might be,” said Garcia. “We have to process all of that [...] to get out of that headspace of colonialism, and it’s not easy.”

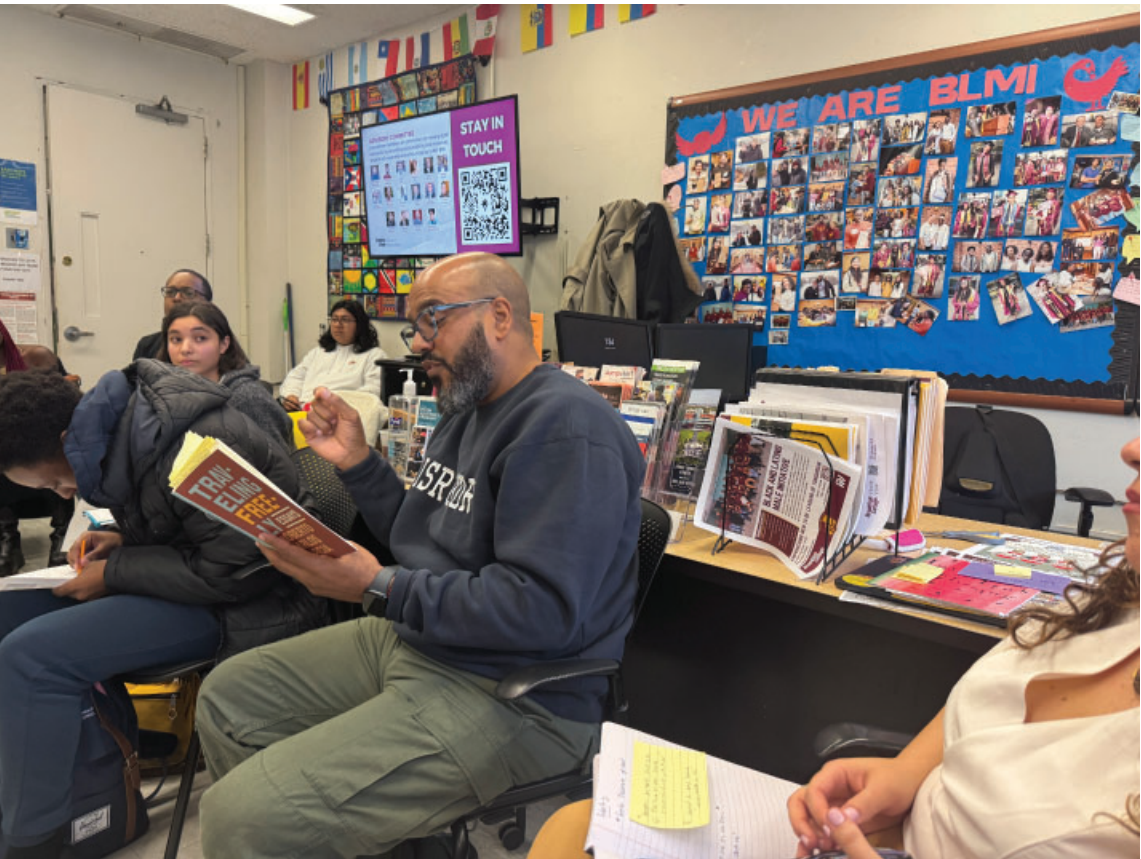
During the event, Garcia and España asked attendees to share a line of advice they heard in childhood as a prompt to write poetry or a creative work, which was then shared with the group.

“I’m really pleased [...] how open people were to describe their childhoods and lines that have shaped them, and questions about the way we’ve been raised,” said España. “And I think, isn’t that what the college experience should be all about?”

The organizers intended for the Cafecito Lounges to be a small, intimate affair for its attendees, to foster vulnerability and a sense of safety, despite how much they want to extend these resources to a broader audience.

“I was wrestling with that tension of ‘I want to expose [students] to these amazing speakers,’ but really the purpose of this series is for everyone to see themselves as a creator, as a creative,” said España. “and if they see themselves as a creative, then we need these intimate spaces so that they could feel that they could open up and be vulnerable [...] we want everybody to feel heard.”

For students interested in further events from PRLS and BLMI, check out their respective Instagrams: @bc_prls and @bcbmi.



Guest Poet Roberto Carlos Garcia reads a passage from his book to students attending the event./Emily Nixon

here as we continue the series.”

For this lounge, the organizers invited Roberto Carlos Garcia, a poet and author with Caribbean roots, to speak with students about his writings and perspective.

“Roberto Carlos Garcia [is] at the intersection of being not only a poet, but as an Afro-Latino poet and thinking as Afro-Latino, where he talks in his writing about blackness, and the anti-blackness and latinidad,” said España.

While contested among various groups about the term’s inclusivity and accuracy, Latinidad can be “broadly defined” as “a political, social, and cultural self-identification

influenced his work.

“Cesaire realizes [...] ‘Our island is kind of being held hostage [by French Colonizers], and I can’t say this aloud because I was penalized here in France. How can we say it?’” said Garcia. “Through Poetry, through fiction, through art.”

Students like Omar Elwakil resonated with the notion that art is powerful enough to connect people.

“I think because humans, we navigate the world through narratives and conversation, the beauty of art is being able to hold conversation with people that have been dead for centuries,” said Elwakil.

Elwakil hails from Egypt and shared insight

As the conversation continued, Elwakil shared their experience watching their family’s behavior change as they went through colonization.

“The way [my great-grandmother] holds, and carries, and moves, and navigates the world is vastly different from the generation after her,” said Elwakil. “My grandfather’s generation were the ones that were colonized.”

Garcia remarked after the event how interesting this perspective was to him, and how that change in behavior between generations was necessary to reflect on and reclaim their power as a marginalized group.

“Many [marginalized

BC Fiber Arts & Design Hosts Charm Bracelet Event

By Rami Mansi
Editor-In-Chief

In the Avairy room of the Student Center, the Brooklyn College (BC) Fiber Arts and Design Club hosted an event centered on having attendees crochet their own friendship bracelets.

Fiber arts is a type of art that uses tactile materials such as fabric and yarn to create designs and artworks.

The long table, which had just enough seats for all the attendees, was filled with beads of various colors, rolls of yarn and strings, and a tray of sweets in the middle. With materials galore and assistance from E-Board members, club President Aaliyah Martin says creating a safe space to cool off during testing season is the most crucial aspect of this event.

“[Our event] is really about building community and having a space just to do one thing.”

“[Club members and attendees] are here to hang out, even if you



VP Saazia Khan and attendees at BC Fiber Arts & Design Event./Rami Mansi

don’t want to improve your skills crocheting every day and stuff like that. You’re just sitting in that moment, and around midterm season, around final season, you come [to club events], and you decompress, and you just want to have a good time.”

More than just a space for relaxation, the club offers students the opportunity to bond with one another over the arts. “We’re all on the same footing. All students here, so [our event] is really about building community and having a space just to do one thing. That’s what [our EBoard] wants,” said Martin.

Participants could be seen braiding yarn with assistive devices, with boxes of beads

passed around to decorate their newly assembled bands.

BC student Carina Alessandro attested to the beginner-friendly guidance given out at the event.

“The event feels very welcoming. I like how [the event’s space] is not a humongous event where you don’t feel like you’re gonna get help at all,” Alessandro stated.

“[This event] really caters to people who are beginners who don’t really know how to crochet, as well as people who are more advanced, so that’s really helpful.”

The BC Fiber Arts and Design Club has been around since the original E-board founded it earlier last year. After a handful

of semesters, an ad from the club’s official Instagram account was looking for members to find a completely brand new E-Board.

Vice President Saazia Khan, who was excited to take on this new responsibility, but nerves almost steered her away from applying for the position.

“I attended one of [the club’s] events as a transfer student. I saw that I really liked [the event], and then [the club] was doing the elections. At first, I didn’t want to do it. I was kind of nervous. [...] I was like ‘You know what, let me try. Let me see what happens. If I lose, I lose; if I win, I win.’”

The tactile-materials-based club

hopes to return next semester, reaffirming its role as one of the few art-based clubs on campus.

“It feels like a full-circle moment of being able to teach people how to crochet, because [our club] is the only space [at BC] that does that.”

For more information about the BC Fiber Arts and Design club, visit their official Instagram: @bcwc.crochet.

Let Kids Be Kids: Pre-Teen Media is Vanishing, and It’s Affecting Teen Development

By **Serena Edwards**
Opinions Editor

Growing up in the early 2000s, the growing Gen-Z had a plethora of options to turn to during our preteen years. From the competition of going from Disney or Nickelodeon at 7:30 P.M. and having a subscription to Tiger Beat and J14 magazine, there was a visible separation of teen and adult content. With the vanishing of once-popular teen magazine “Teen Vogue,” many are reminiscing about the separation of teen and adult media. With a lack of representation in the media for preteens and teens to look up to, teens are skipping the most developmental parts of their lives.

On Nov. 3, it became apparent that teen media was dead once “Teen Vogue” was absorbed by “Vogue”. The sister brand separated the adult topics seen on Vogue and gave a lighter feeling to topics such as mental health and lifestyle. The absorption leaves teens to turn to other media outlets with less censorship.

TikTok has taken over most of the teens’ time nowadays. They have more screen time than reading time. We’ve gone from physically going to the mall to now buying things off the TikTok shop.

TikTok is an app used by a diverse age group. The app is specifically known for its “For You Page,” which is built based on the content you engage with. There are little to no restrictions on what teens, or truly any age group, can see on their timeline. This

lack of filtering exposes content intended for older audiences to young users, leading influencers to promote items to unintended age groups. Last year, “Sephora Kids” was a term coined for pre-teens who came into Sephora buying skin care products catered to those of an older demographic, including products containing retinol, which is often used to treat wrinkles

engaging in the precocious behavior of preteens and kids. Actor and mother Shay Mitchell launched “Rini,” a skin care company built for kids and preteens. This has sparked controversy for many who feel like “kids should stay kids” and don’t need a skin care routine at this young age. The company is marketed towards those aged three and up as “play skin care”. But

Mota, Alisha Marie, Eva Gutowski, and many more were our “it girls”. They provided us with high school GRWMs (Get Ready With Me videos) and puberty life hacks. This content catered to the teen demographic, even though they were a little older. Everyone that the kids are looking up to now is in their twenties and is experiencing something completely different than their

The real problem stems from the pandemic. Since there was a restriction on the amount of social interaction allowed, they turned to social media and ditched books for Netflix and TikTok. This caused a lack of attraction to age-appropriate materials and more curiosity for the things they saw on TikTok. This became an addiction; the first app that they turn to now is



Collage by Serena Edwards

and acne. One of the brands that profited from this was Drunk Elephant, a skin care company that catered to millennials and older age groups.

Products with niacinamide and retinol are used to restore vitamins to the skin. Kids, especially teens, have sensitive skin since they are going through the first stages of development, also known as puberty. With the lack of knowledge on how to navigate it through media catered to them, they are turning to the older demographic.

Companies are

though it looks good on the outside, there is a problem that brews below the surface: insecurities.

When kids skip their developmental stages, they open themselves up to topics that they were never introduced to, causing confusion and their own perception.

There is no teen it girl that teens can turn to when times are tough, and they need guidance, not on YouTube, TikTok, or Instagram. For many people who grew up during the early 2000s, they had a diverse group of lifestyle “influencers” to turn to. Bethany

demographic. Who is the it girl for Gen Alpha? There is a lack of realistic lifestyle content for teens, and it is causing teens to have an unrealistic and unattainable teenage life.

It has even faded into the shows that were being watched this past summer. Love Island became the number one-watched reality TV show. That wasn’t because of the adults but because of the new audience: teens. Teens once again are chronically online, and TikTok raved about Love Island, which ultimately reached them quickly, and they became a part of the fandom.

TikTok and ‘brainrot’ and ‘ragebait’ content. Companies like Justice, a preteen clothing store, are being traded out for Lululemon and Edikted. It became apparent that companies would not be able to recover from it after the pandemic.

The impact of the lack of teen representation in media is shown now through the way that teens dress and behave, and it is only going to get worse if we don’t provide direction and a safe space for them.

“Hamilton” 10 Years Later: Ahead of Its Time or a Product of Its Time?

By Renae Visico
Staff Writer

I was eleven when I listened to a “Hamilton” song for the first time. As a child discovering my passion for musical theater, the musical’s catchy tunes and witty lyrics immediately stuck with me. More than that, it felt like an emblem of America’s social progress. However, the America we know now has only grown more different from the America “Hamilton” introduced itself to.

My elementary school history teachers emphasized how much America has truly become the land of the free for everyone. Seeing people of color (POC) at the forefront of my favorite musical at the time felt like a representation of the optimism I’ve been taught. It felt like I was witnessing a revolution from my laptop. That was in 2018.

2018’s America was very different from the America in 2015, when “Hamilton” first debuted.

Ten years, three presidents, one pandemic, and at least three thousand shows later, the vision of America seen in “Hamilton” seems so distant from what it is today. However, that doesn’t mean we can’t learn anything from it.

If there was any time to write an optimistic musical retelling the story of slave-owning Founding Fathers through a cast of actors that represent many racial minority groups, the Obama administration was the best time. With the

election of America’s first black president, one who expanded health coverage and legalized gay marriage, it felt like America was taking steps in the right direction. Steps where everyone can feel comfortable calling this country home.

“Hamilton” reflected the optimism of the Obama administration. On paper, “Hamilton” seemed like an idea that would never work. A hip-hop musical had never been popular on Broadway, there wasn’t much mainstream interest in the Founding Fathers, and Hispanic, black, and Asian actors would be playing historical figures who would not have welcomed them into their America.

But “Hamilton” creator Lin-Manuel Miranda had perfect timing, so that wasn’t how first-time viewers saw it. For many, “Hamilton” was very refreshing on the broader scale of musical theater. Everything that made “Hamilton” seem crazy on paper became part of its charm, drawing thousands from every corner of the world to line up for overpriced tickets to the Richard Rodgers Theater.

Of course, the issues people cite with “Hamilton” now did not go over viewers’ heads ten years ago. Having people of color depict their oppressors in a glorified manner reads like wishful ignorance of these historical figures’ racist past for the sake of representation. However, any and all representation, especially for POC playing meaningful roles, seemed reflective of

the hope Obama pushed for a more welcoming America.

Then Trump became president in 2016 and again in 2024. The optimism that made “Hamilton” resonate with viewers was no longer present. There’s a reason the entire cast wore black, the color of mourning, at the 2025 Tony Awards, while the monarchical King George wore red.

The empowerment in Hamilton and Lafayette’s iconic line, “Immigrants, we get the job done,” now seems dangerous in the midst of a crackdown not just on immigrants, but on anyone who isn’t white. It’s hard for immigrants to feel pride over fear under an administration that legally gives ICE the power to target people based on race, language, or accent.

The humor in King George, notably the only role played by a white actor, singing gleefully about killing families and friends of innocents to remind them of his “love” doesn’t seem so funny when we’re under the rule of a man threatening to cut food benefits of innocents under the guise of “love” shown by protecting America’s least vulnerable citizens.

Angelica, Eliza, and Peggy Schuyler singing about female independence seems like wishful thinking in the midst of an administration that exclusively praises white feminism and eugenics, shown in Sydney Sweeney’s jeans ad, while using women of color to push an agenda that only serves to harm them.

The charm that helped “Hamilton” become a blockbuster was now being seen as corny and outdated. Lin-Manuel Miranda’s signature songwriting wasn’t witty or clever anymore; it just felt out of place in a country where the fog of optimism had lifted, and more people became increasingly aware of its glaring shortcomings.

Americans wanted more meaningful change, and “Hamilton” was no longer considered reflective of the change the public wanted. But has it ever reflected the change people needed?

“Hamilton” was never meant to replace a history lesson, nor has it ever claimed to. However, as a musical that has undoubtedly sparked mainstream interest in



“Hamilton” cast performs “The Battle of Yorktown” at the 2016 Tony Awards./Courtesy of Marissa Martinelli.

American history, it shouldn’t be unreasonable to expect transparency regarding the figures it represents.

Positive representation of people of color has always been, and will continue to be, necessary for social progress. But so is the acknowledgement and direct confrontation of America’s ugly history. There’s no reason “Hamilton” had to choose between one or the other.

In the 2016 PBS documentary “Hamilton’s America,” Daveed Diggs, who played Marquis de Lafayette and President Jefferson, addressed this conflict, saying that viewers “don’t have to separate these things [slavery] from Jefferson. He could have written these amazing documents with things we all believe in, and he sucks.”

I’m sure Miranda meant well while writing “Hamilton” to resonate with modern Americans. But the idea of him de-emphasizing the role of slavery in American institutions because it didn’t fit his artistic vision of Alexander Hamilton as a “young, scrappy, and hungry” immigrant is in itself a form of erasure.

Now more than ever, America needs to confront its history and current applications of institutionalized racism. Pretending it doesn’t exist is the farthest from what we need for real progress.

However, “Hamilton”’s shortcomings shouldn’t stop people from enjoying it or using it as a tool for empowerment. In this time of political despair and polarization, the optimism “Hamilton” represented shouldn’t be dismissed or taken for granted.

When “Hamilton” moved to Disney+ in 2020, it received a resurgence in popularity, and

more people were discovering it as I did in 2018. In the midst of a global pandemic and the rise of the BLM movement after George Floyd’s murder, “Hamilton” became increasingly used as a tool for advocacy.

Lines such as Alexander Hamilton’s “This is not a moment, it’s a movement” and John Laurens’s “We’ll never be truly free, until those in bondage have the same rights as you and me” were used to reclaim America’s history back in the hands of people it silenced.

In a way, that hasn’t changed.

During the two No Kings Protests this year, songs like “Story of Tonight” and “History Has Its Eyes On You” were written on protest signs.

One Reddit user, Miss Anna, even made dolls representing the Hamilton cast holding up lyrics from the show as protest signs.

In an interview with Jimmy Fallon, Miranda said that “[Hamilton] always has something to say about the moment, because we’re constantly dealing with the past. [...] We’re never done with the flaws, the contradictions in the founding. And so it just hits differently depending on where we are.”

I doubt that “Hamilton” would be so beloved if it came out today. But it’s clear that it will not stop being important, nor will it stop being meaningful for Americans and for all who look towards a brighter tomorrow.



Reddit user Miss Anna’s dolls representing the “Hamilton” cast holding protest signs with lyrics from the musical./Courtesy of u/Equivalent_Pay901

Beyond the Bathroom Binary: All-Gender Restrooms at Brooklyn College

By Massimo Ranieri
Staff Writer

West End Building (WEB) 158 is a perfectly normal bathroom. Sure, the urinals are placed directly across from the sinks, which makes it a little awkward to check yourself out in the mirror while someone is peeing. But there’s something special about WEB 158: it’s a multi-user all-gender bathroom—one of seven on the Brooklyn College (BC) campus.

All-gender bathrooms represent an important step toward equity for transgender, non-binary, and gender non-conforming students, but BC can do better.

There’s just one problem with WEB 158 (besides the urinal placement). The bathroom does not have resources for students who menstruate. There is no tampon/pad dispenser, nor are there private waste bins for disposing of menstrual products in the two stalls.

Most of the multi-user all-gender bathrooms at BC appear to be repurposed single-sex bathrooms, with updated signage and occasional facility updates.

People of any gender can freely use any single-user bathroom at BC. Signs posted outside men’s and women’s multi-user bathrooms also remind us that “Under the law, all individuals have the right to use this single-sex facility consistent with their gender identity or expression.” However, there is no guarantee that a single-sex facility will have appropriate resources for all students. For example, multi-user men’s bathrooms on campus generally do not provide resources for students who menstruate.

Moreover, despite CUNY policy, trans and gender non-conforming students still risk harassment each time they use what others might perceive as the “wrong” bathroom.

In the US, 49% of trans and

non-binary young people reported avoiding public bathrooms, according to an article published in the International Journal of Transgender Health.

But “holding it” negatively impacts mental and physical health.

All-gender bathrooms provide a way for students, faculty, and guests to handle their hygienic needs without fear. But as we have seen in WEB 158, these facilities are inconsistent in terms of their accessibility and utility for all students.

Ingersoll Extension (IE) 116 is another all-gender bathroom on campus. Walking into IE 116, it feels approximately 5 degrees warmer than the rest of the building. It is also perpetually populated by two “Wet Floor” signs, which seem to apologize for the frequent smell of urine. One of the two toilets in IE 116 has what I can only describe as a janky handle: You pull the handle up to flush, instead of down. Many users seem to miss the bit of graffiti scrawled on the wall helpfully explaining this, so the toilet is often clogged.

IE 116 does have something going for it, though: Free pads. On the other hand, like WEB 158, IE 116 is missing the private waste disposal bins inside stalls, so if you do use one of those free pads, you’ll have to carry your trash out to the main garbage can.

What’s more, IE 116 is not an accessible bathroom. Whereas WEB 158 has a wide entrance and one large stall, IE 116 only has standard-width stalls, and a sharp turn in the entryway prevents easy access.

The only multi-user all-gender bathroom I have used on campus that comes equipped with both a tampon/pad dispenser and private waste bins is



An illustration of the helpful graffiti inside IE 116./
Massimo Ranieri

2402. WJH 2402 is also one of the cleaner bathrooms I’ve used, but like IE 116, WJH 2402 is not fully accessible.

Many buildings on campus, including Ingersoll/IE, WJH, and WEB, only have one all-gender bathroom available. That means students who need to relieve themselves during class may have to traverse a labyrinth of staircases and hallways to reach these facilities. Does it have to be like this?

It’s easy to take the multi-user bathroom experience for granted. You sit down in a stall with your feet exposed. “Women’s bathrooms” look one way, and “men’s bathrooms” look another way. It is possible, though, to imagine an entirely different bathroom experience.

“Stalled!” is an online resource dedicated to rethinking inclusive bathrooms, created by designer Joel Sanders, transgender historian Susan Stryker, and legal

expert Terry Kogan. “Stalled!” proposes gender-inclusive, accessible restrooms with fully enclosed stalls, which are separated from washing and grooming areas.

This type of bathroom isn’t just a hypothetical. In 2022, a new all-gender facility at Newark Liberty Airport was a finalist for the title of America’s Best Restroom, as reported in Patch. In this all-gender bathroom, floor-to-ceiling stall dividers provide privacy for all users, regardless of gender.

Of course, change like this doesn’t happen overnight. Updates like this require time and money, which are always in short supply.

In the meantime, I hope BC finds ways to improve existing all-gender facilities, to add more of them, and to imagine a better bathroom future for all students.



The all-gender bathroom inside the West-End Building./
Massimo Ranieri



The gender-neutral bathroom at Newark Liberty Airport./Port
Authority of New York and New Jersey

Sports Recaps (11/18 - 11/25)

By Manuel Polanco
Sports Editor

As the end of the semester draws closer and closer, Brooklyn College’s (BC) basketball teams saw some great wins and heavy losses. The women’s basketball team lost its undefeated streak and now has a 5-1 record. Not only that, the men’s basketball team notched two wins in a row.

Women’s Basketball

On Nov. 18, facing Kean University, the Bulldogs looked to extend their fourth consecutive win. They did just that as a 14-0 start to the game propelled them to their fourth straight win, beating Kean 78-61.

In this tight game, which went four quarters, Ana Kitch went off with a career high of 28 points and 13 rebounds to help the team. BC ended the first quarter up 24-12 thanks to a hot start. Kean had 34 turnovers this game, which helped BC take advantage and keep the pressure on them. Senior center Sheily Quezada had 16 points with 11 rebounds and three steals.

Junior guard Brianna Jackson had five points, nine assists, and eight rebounds in her game time. Freshman Adunoluwa Akinduyi had 10 points, and Dior Dorsey had seven points as well. BC would continue forward, as they took care of business and beat Gallaudet 76-40,

earning their fifth straight win, on Nov. 22. BC dominantly started this game, closing the first quarter off up 23-4.

The Bulldogs collectively shot at 48% from the field. A great game by Kitch, who had 16 points and nine rebounds. Dorsey had 10 points in 17 minutes, and Quezada had 10 points in 22

guard Brianna Jackson had 12 points and two steals on her night. Dorsey had a solid game, notching 12 points and three steals. Their next game is on Friday, Dec. 5, against CCNY.

Men’s Basketball

On Nov. 19, the men’s basketball team faced William Patterson University in their

and junior guard AJ Ahmed had 10 points to end his night as well.

BC would go on to face The University of Mount Saint Vincent, in the Bronx, on Nov. 22. In a close game that ended 69-63, BC got to earn their first win of the season. They held the upper hand in the first quarter with 30-28, but got outscored in the second with 30-35.

the United States Merchant Marine Academy (USMMA) on Nov. 25.

BC handled business and entered Thanksgiving Break on a high, with a two-game winning streak as they beat USMMA 64-58. BC was in control the whole game and outscored USMMA in each quarter, earning 27-26 in the first



BC women’s basketball team celebrates a win./*Courtesy of BC Athletics*

minutes of play.

On Nov. 25, BC would face Colby College from Waterville, Maine. Both teams would enter the game with undefeated streaks under their belts, but it would be Colby College that remains undefeated as they beat BC 54 - 49.

Colby is ranked 23rd in the nation, and BC still held its own even in this loss. BC won the first quarter 21-18. Sophomore guard Ameea Daniel had a solid game with 13 points and seven rebounds, and junior

opponent’s home court in Wayne, New Jersey. BC would have a strong showing in the second half, outscoring the Pioneers by 42-36, but it was not enough to come up with the win as the Bulldogs lost 74-64. BC shot 42% from the field. A great game by Sophomore guard Joe Charles, where he capped off a career high 25 points, four steals, and an assist in this game.

Junior center Tyler Gordon earned a double-double this game with 17 points and 12 rebounds,

This great win for the team included another impressive showing from Charles, who had 15 points and three steals.

Ahmed had 12 points, five rebounds, and five assists in this game. Senior forward Thomas Hall had 11 points and six rebounds this game. Gordon had yet another great game and scored his second consecutive double-double, ending his night with 10 points and a career-high 15 rebounds.

The team would move forward against

quarter and 37-32 in the second.

Charles’ offensive prowess continues as he scored 30 points this game with five threes and five steals. Hall had 10 points and six rebounds, and Ahmed had nine points and four steals.

BC hopes to continue this winning streak against Pratt Institute on Monday, Dec. 1.

Winter Wonderland Word Search!

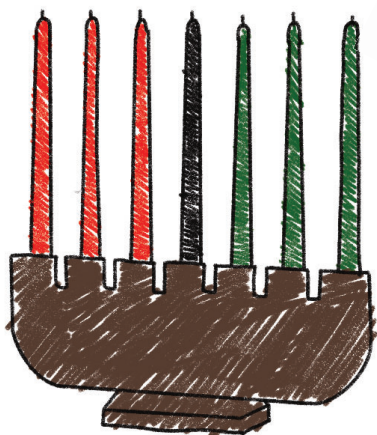
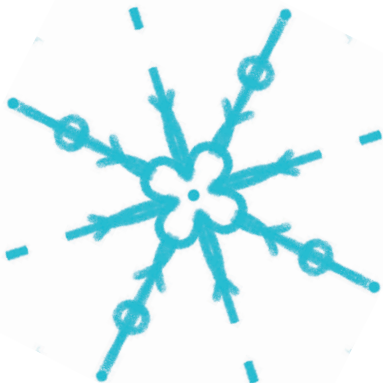
By Key Jones-Ford
Content Creator
Graphics by Amira Turner
Layout Editor



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Aquarius, Blizzard, Capricorn,
Christmas, FigureSkate, Hanukkah,
Hockey, Holiday, Kinara,
Kwanzaa, Menorah, PineTree,
Ski, SnowBoard, Yuletide



Answer Key

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