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Cover by Jocelyn Rios

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Trump Retaliates With 15% Tariff After Supreme Court Rules Tariffs Illegal

By Emily Nixon
News Editor

On Feb. 21, the United States (U.S.) President Donald Trump raised a 10% global tariff to 15% in response to the U.S. Supreme Court ruling in a 6-3 vote that the tariffs enacted under the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA) are unconstitutional.

“Based on a thorough, detailed, and complete review of the ridiculous, poorly written, and extraordinarily anti-American decision on Tariffs issued yesterday,” said Trump in a Truth Social post. “I, as President of the United States of America, will be, effective immediately, raising the 10% Worldwide Tariff on Countries, many of which have been “ripping” the U.S. off for decades, without retribution (until I came along!), to the fully allowed, and legally tested, 15% level.”

Trump has sworn that more tariffs are to come in the future.

“During the next short number of months, the Trump Administration will determine and issue the new and legally permissible Tariffs, which will continue our extraordinarily successful process of Making America Great Again - GREATER THAN EVER BEFORE!!!” stated the post.

The ruling specifically targeted tariffs imposed under IEEPA, which was a law enacted in 1977 that states that powers given to the president “may be exercised to deal with any unusual and extraordinary threat, which has its source in whole or substantial part outside the United States, to the national security, foreign policy, or economy of the United States, if the President declares a national emergency with respect to such threat.”

Such powers granted to the U.S. President under IEEPA are stated as the ability to “investigate, regulate, or prohibit any transactions in foreign exchange, transfers of credit or payments between, by, through, or to any banking institution, to the extent that such transfers or payments involve any interest of any foreign country or a national thereof, the importing or exporting of currency or securities, by any person, or with respect to any property, subject to the jurisdiction of



The United States Supreme Court Building./Courtesy of Jeff Kubina via Wikimedia Commons.

the United States,” among others.

The law later specified that the granted powers may only be used in such circumstances.

“The authorities granted to the President by section 1702 of this title may only be exercised to deal with an unusual and extraordinary threat with respect to which a national emergency has been declared for purposes of this chapter and may not be exercised for any other purpose,” states the law.

“Any exercise of such authorities to deal with any new threat shall be based on a new declaration of national emergency which must be with respect to such threat.”

U.S. Customs and Border Patrol stopped collecting the “duties imposed pursuant to IEEPA” on Feb. 24, according to an internal bulletin from the department.

After the ruling, Trump took to Truth Social to fiercely denounce the results and had already found a workaround.

“To show you how ridiculous the opinion is, the Court said that I’m not allowed to charge even \$1 DOLLAR to any Country under IEEPA, I assume to protect other Countries, not the United States, which they should be interested in protecting,” states the post. “But I am allowed to cut off any and all Trade or Business with that same Country, even imposing a Foreign Country destroying embargo, and do anything else I want to do to them —

to \$175 billion. That money must be repaid immediately. For small businesses with little to no resources, this refund process can be extremely difficult and time-consuming,” said Small Business Committee Ranking Member Senator Edward J. Markey in the article.

Joining the calls for refunds, Illinois Governor J.B. Pritzker sent an invoice to the White House for over 8 billion dollars, according to a post on X from Pritzker.

“Your tariffs wreaked havoc on farmers, enraged our allies, and sent grocery prices through the roof. This morning, your hand-picked Supreme Court Justices notified you that they are also unconstitutional,” states the letter from Pritzker.

“I demand a refund of \$1,700 for every family in Illinois. There are 5,105,448 households in my state, bringing the total damages you owe to \$8,679,261,600.”

In response to President Trump’s State of the Union Address, Pritzker reminded his followers about the pending refund.

“All that talk and not one word about the \$134 billion tariff refund he owes to the American people,” stated Pritzker’s post. “Pay up, Donald.”

How nonsensical is that?”

The ruling does not clarify whether and how the federal government should refund importers for the rescinded tariffs, leaving business owners in limbo, according to an NPR article.

“Indeed, the government already has a routine process to refund tariffs in cases of, say, errors on a customs form. But on Monday, Wells dialed into a call arranged by the small-business group Main Street Alliance and heard lawyers suggest that this time, getting her money back would likely require suing the government,” stated the article.

Senate Democrats have already begun pushing a bill to force the federal government to expedite the refund process and prioritize small businesses.

“Trump’s illegal tariff taxes cost small businesses, consumers, and families up



Illinois Governor J.B. Pritzker meets with President Donald Trump in 2018./ Courtesy of The White House via Wikimedia Commons.

Guests Play Key Role At The 2026 State of The Union Address

By Samuel Mortel
Staff Writer

On Feb. 24, the United States (U.S.) President Donald Trump delivered the first State of the Union address of his second term.

The State of the Union address traditionally presents the sitting president with an opportunity to deliver a message to the nation about the state of the country, what their administration has accomplished, and what they hope to accomplish, among other topics.

The president and members of Congress can often deliver messages without even using their voice, rather through their guests. Politicians can spend countless hours and use countless words to preach the importance of a certain issue or take a stand for a cause they believe in. Still, it's often hard for an issue to feel "real" to people unless they see someone affected by it. An invitation could allow a politician to bring an issue to life in front of the American people. It could also allow them to show appreciation and honor someone they feel deserves it.

The president can invite up to 24 guests to the State of the Union address, and each member of Congress may also invite one guest to accompany them.

A variety of guests have been invited to attend previous State of the Union addresses as a means of showing appreciation, ranging from civil rights activist Rosa Parks (1999, invited by Bill Clinton) to Desiline Victor, a 102 year-old woman who waited in line for over three hours to cast a vote for Barack Obama in the 2012 presidential election (2013, invited by Michelle Obama).

Members of Congress sometimes use their invitations to signal support for a certain issue, take a stand against the sitting president, and/or use the publicity from the event to turn the press's eyes to a national issue.

One notable example is when Democratic lawmakers, such as Elizabeth Warren, Cory Booker, Kamala Harris, and several others, brought the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) recipients to attend the 2018 State of the Union address. This move was in response to a massive legislative battle over Trump's mission to rescind the Obama-era immigration policy.

Numerous hot-button issues that became the topic of national discussion over the past year, and, like in previous years, the State of the Union became an event where the president and members of Congress could air their grievances and signal their priorities to the American people by bringing a guest (or multiple guests) as a sort of living embodiment. Here are some of



Donald Trump at the 2026 State of the Union Address./Courtesy of [whitehouse.gov](https://www.whitehouse.gov)

the most notable guests of last week's State of the Union address and the significance of their presence.

Minnesota Representative (D) Ilhan Omar invited Aliyah Rahman, Mary Granlund, Mubashir Hussen, and Gerardo Orozco Guzman. All four of these guests were victimized by immigration enforcement.

Rahman is a U.S. citizen who was dragged from her car by ICE agents, Hussen is a US citizen who was arrested by ICE agents, Orozco Guzman is the son of a labor organizer who was arrested by ICE and taken to a detention center, and Granlund is the chair of the Columbia Heights School Board, which is the school that 5-year-old Liam Ramos attended before he was detained by ICE agents.

ICE terrorizing citizens is a topic that especially hits close to home for Omar, whose home state was the site of a large-scale ICE operation. The operation was met with massive protests and ultimately ended in the deaths of two US citizens, Renée Good and Alex Pretti, at the hands of federal immigration enforcement agents, as previously reported by *The Vanguard*.

Rahman was arrested during the State of the Union after authorities in the building felt that she was disturbing Trump's speech by standing in protest. During the address, President Trump turned his attention to the issue of immigration, specifically within the state of Minnesota.

"[...] members of the Somali community have pillaged an estimated \$19 billion from the American taxpayer."

He went on to say, "The Somali pirates who ransacked Minnesota remind us that there are large parts of the world where bribery, corruption, and lawlessness are the norm, not the exception. Importing these cultures through unrestricted immigration and open borders brings those problems right here to the USA."

President Trump turned the attention of his address to two of his guests: Jacqueline Medina — the mother of a teenage girl who was killed by an undocumented immigrant in 2023— and Dalilah Coleman, a 6-year-old who was injured in 2024 when an undocumented immigrant crashed into a parked car that she was in.

"We can never forget that many in this room not only allowed the border invasion to happen before I got involved, but indeed, they would do it all over again if they ever had the chance. If [democrats] ever got elected, they would open up those borders to some of the worst criminals anywhere in the world."

President Trump continued, "The only thing standing between Americans and a wide-open border right now is President Donald J. Trump and our great Republican patriots in Congress...That is why I'm also asking you to end deadly sanctuary cities that protect the criminals and enact serious penalties for public officials who block the removal of criminal aliens. In many cases, drug lords, murderers all over our country."

This section of Trump's speech prompted negative reactions from

the Democrats in attendance, namely Congresswoman Omar. "You have killed Americans! You have killed Americans...You are a murderer!" Omar shouted. Trump departed from his speech to respond, "You should be ashamed of yourself," to which Omar shot back, "You should be ashamed."

Numerous survivors of Jeffrey Epstein were invited to attend the State of the Union, along with Sky and Amanda Roberts, brother and sister-in-law of outspoken Epstein survivor Virginia Giuffre, who passed away last year. Various democrats invited over a dozen survivors of Jeffrey Epstein, and in some cases, the victim attended in place of a Representative. Prior to the address, House Democrats and Epstein survivors hosted a press conference where both groups called for the release of the full Epstein files. "We will keep coming back again and again until all the Epstein files have been released because accountability is impossible without full transparency," said survivor Lisa Phillips. "We are not going away. We are not fading into silence."

Trump and his administration have faced massive backlash over their handling of the Epstein files, with Trump in particular being criticized for being mentioned in released Epstein documents over a thousand times, including disturbing allegations.

Enrique Márquez, a guest of President Trump, is a former political prisoner of Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro, who was captured under Trump's direction earlier this year. Trump

used Márquez's presence to bring up his ambitions to "unleash extraordinary economic gains for both our countries."

First Lady Melania Trump invited Everest Nevraumont, an 11-year-old youth advocate for artificial intelligence in education. President Trump himself has been a large supporter of the AI industry, going as far as to sign an executive order banning states from regulating it. The President and First Lady seem to have a shared goal in spreading the use of artificial intelligence.

President Trump also invited Erika Kirk, the widow of Charlie Kirk, a conservative media personality and founder of Turning Point USA, who was assassinated last year, as previously reported by *The Vanguard*. Invoking Charlie and Erika's faith, Trump reaffirmed the conservative belief that America is a Christian nation. "In Charlie's memory, we must all come together to reaffirm that America is one nation under God," President Trump said. "[...] We love religion, and we love bringing it back. And it's coming back at levels that nobody actually thought possible."

In an event centered on the president delivering an address to the nation, guests ended up grabbing substantial media attention, resulting in press conferences, back-and-forths, and implications for what was to come.

On Again, Off Again: Netflix Drops From Warner Bros. Bid

By Serena Edwards
Opinions Editor

After winning a bidding war for the newly split Warner Bros. Discovery (WBD) in December, Netflix has decided to withdraw its bid, placing Paramount as the top bidder. But what happens now?

As previously reported by The Vanguard, Warner Bros (WB) and WBD parted ways, splitting into two entities.

By the end of 2025, Netflix won the bidding war with an \$83 billion deal, claiming ownership of WBD, though these changes wouldn't go into effect until the third quarter of 2026.

After Netflix's \$83 million bid was placed, Paramount, owned by Skydance, raised its bid in response.

"Paramount upped its



Graphic by Serena Edwards

bid for WBD to \$111 billion, about 34% higher than Netflix's initial nearly \$83 billion deal," according to Essence.

Netflix released an official statement withdrawing from the bidding war in response to the Paramount bid.

"We've always been

disciplined, and at the price required to match Paramount Skydance's latest offer, the deal is no longer financially attractive, so we are declining to match the Paramount Skydance bid," according to a press release from Netflix.

Netflix's decision to withdraw was intentional,

with an imminent deadline to counterbid Paramount.

"The swift decision by Netflix to walk away will certainly come as a shock to the industry because the streamer had four business days, or until Wednesday, March 4 at 11:59 p.m. ET, to

come up with a new proposal to salvage its WBD deal," according to Variety.

"Netflix had the legal right to match the PSKY offer. As you all know, they ultimately decided not to do that. That then resulted in a signed agreement with PSKY as of this morning," stated Bruce Campbell, chief revenue officer of WB, in a statement.

Due to the termination of the Netflix and WBD deal, Paramount had to pay the termination fee in addition to the bidding offer.

"Paramount paid the \$2.8 billion termination fee that Warner Bros owed Netflix, the streaming giant said in a regulatory filing on Friday," according to Reuters.

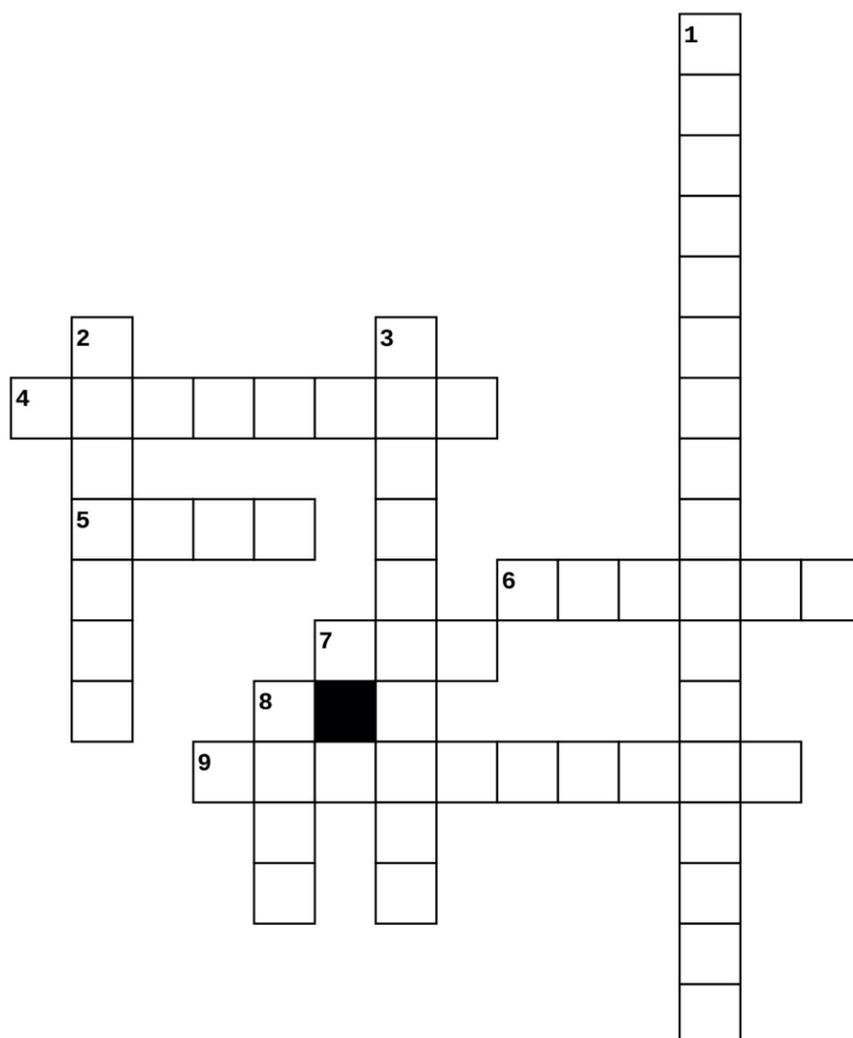
As the third quarter of 2026 approaches, Paramount's position as the top bidder will be key to any ownership changes to come.

Women's History Month Crossword

By Key Jones-Ford
Content Creator

Graphics by Jocelyn Rios
Layout Editor

Invented By A Woman

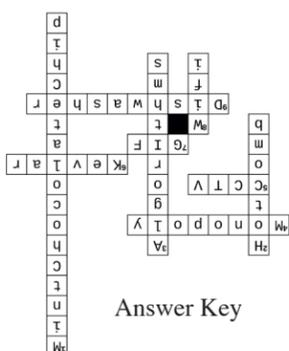


Across

- 4. A popular board game played with fake money; invented by Elizabeth Magie Phillips
- 5. An acronym that refers to a security system; invented by Marie Van Brittan Brown
- 6. Used to make bulletproof vests; invented by Stephanie Kwolek
- 7. A clip used to react to a statement online; invented by Lisa GelobterMonopoly
- 9. A laundromat for kitchen items; invented by Josephine Cochrane

Down

- 1. Controversial ice cream flavor; invented by Marilyn Ricketts
- 2. Used to straighten hair; patented by Annie Malone, improved by Madam C.J. Walker
- 3. An invisible process coded into a program; invented by Ada Lovelace
- 8. How we connected to the internet; invented by Hedy Lamarr



Answer Key

“First Place Goes To...”: Women’s Center Hosts Trivia Night

By **Rami Mansi**
Editor-in-Chief

On Feb. 26, the Brooklyn College (BC) Women’s Center (WC) and the Women’s History Month Committee collaborated and hosted “Ultimate Trivia Game Night.”

The event started with the setup of light refreshments, including snacks and pizza, which were served to attendees. Soon, the games were brought out, and all bets were off!

UNO, chess, Connect 4, and other games kept players at their seats for multiple rounds; after every round or so, attendees would invite new guests to sit next to them and play a round.

When asked why the Center is choosing to host an event such as this one, President of the WC, Rimaz Elmosbah, stated that in a school where students don’t prioritize community, hosting events like these encourages students to partake in extracurriculars.

“It’s important to have these events that bring everyone together because I know [BC] is a commuter school and people just come [to campus], then to class, then go home. But I want people to know that there are events and clubs to help people come together and be, like, friends,” Said Elmosbah.

Following a brief setup time, the trivia rounds

were all pre-made Kahoots that were presented on a screen for all to join. The first-place prize for winning a Kahoot was a mug with the WC’s logo on it.

The first Kahoot had questions about science and space, titled “Brainy Bites.” The second Kahoot was based on the history of MTV, with questions about what the channel provides and how the channel transformed through time. Lastly, the third Kahoot was based on the popular game show “Are You Smarter Than A Fifth Grader?”

Although the trivia was as intense as a bingo game you play with your extended family on New Year’s Eve, attendees found the atmosphere of the event

more than calming; it was peaceful.

“[The WC] has different things, different types of events that we have, but this event is one of the many [events] that’s very calm, a collective chill. Not every event has to be insane,” Reassured Elmosbah to the Vanguard.

Some of the attendees were not familiar that this event was going on, but stayed because of the positive atmosphere. Students like Khadija Espada, who was not prepared for trivia night, stayed to have some fun.

“Originally, I wanted to come [to the WC] to pray, and I wanted to work on my schoolwork. Then I noticed that there were gonna be games. So I just came to play Uno and, yknow, I like it [...] It’s very nice, I’m

meeting new people.”

The WC is home to many resources on campus, just ask Damien Niesewand, a BC graduate and Squad Member of The WC.

“[The WC] has many basic physical needs like sanitary products [...] We have snacks, tea, coffee. So, your physical needs get met, but then we also have the emotional support. There are people who come in and talk to some of the higher-level staff, like quite regularly, about things going on with them.”

With March being Women’s History Month, the WC hosts the Women’s History Month Committee.

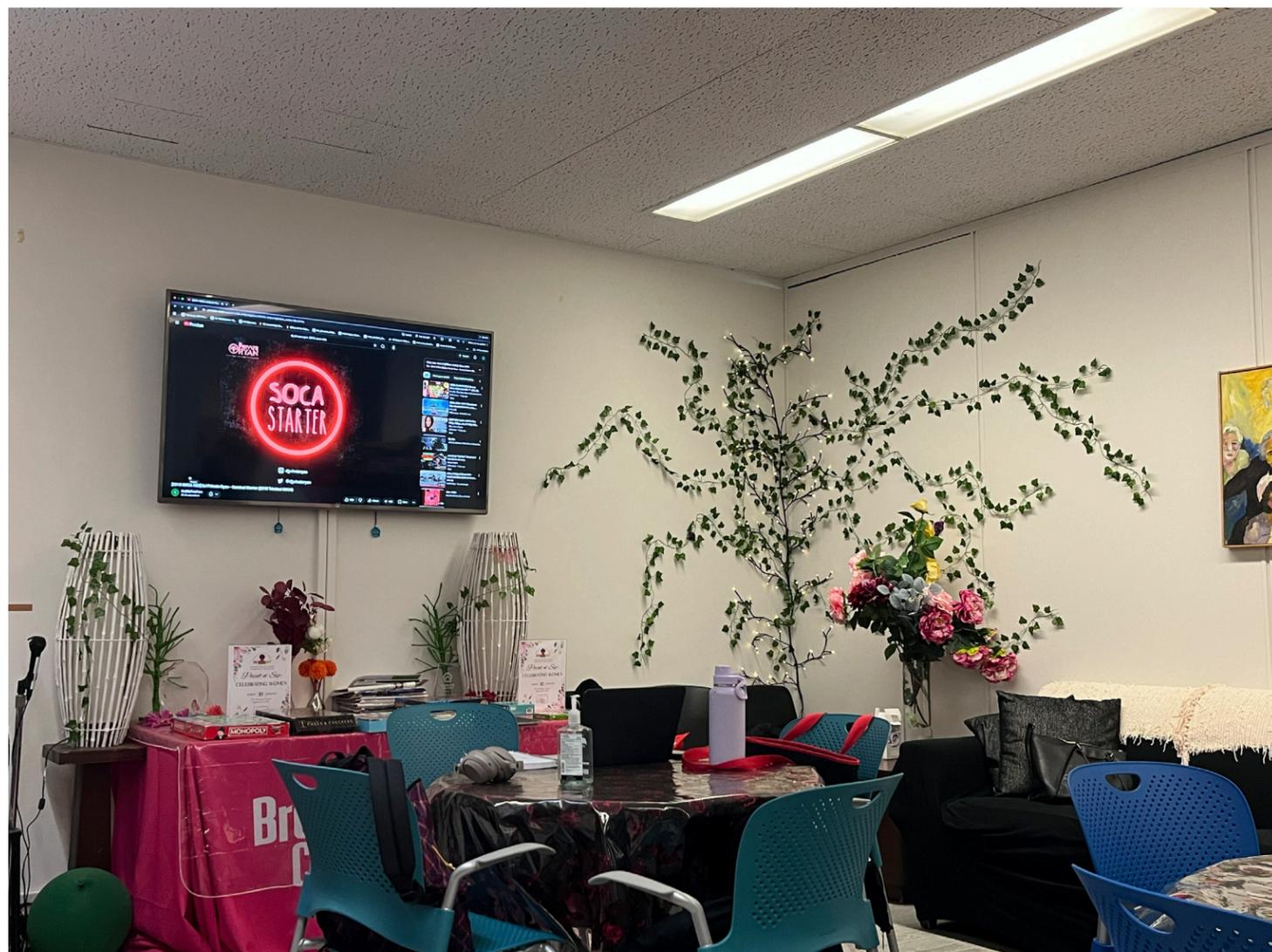
“[The Committee] runs a lot of events to continue building that sense of community; they were the people

running the trivia night.”

Niesewand continued by discussing the importance of The WC holding events such as this Trivia Night: Showing up for the BC community

“We are trying to show that [The WC] is a space people need. Like [having community events] is more important now more than ever. Just staying present and making sure people know that they have a space here.”

For more information about the Women’s Center and the Women’s History Month Committee, please visit them on Instagram: @womenscenterbc.



The Women’s Center lounge area./Rami Mansi

The three rounds of

J-Fashion Club's Valentine's Paint and Sip Teaches Students About Japanese Fashion



An attendee, Stepan, paints an emoji on a coaster./Margot Dragos

**By Margot Dragos
Arts Editor**

On Feb. 26, J-Fashion Club engaged Brooklyn College (BC) students' creativity and curiosity during their Valentine's Paint & Snack event in the Student Center's Glenwood Room. The event not only encouraged students to engage with their creative sides but also taught attendees more about Japanese fashion.

J-fashion, short for Japanese fashion, refers to the many subcultures of Japanese street fashion. Many J-fashion styles include bold colors and maximalist outfits, emphasizing individual expression.

Attendees painted wooden jewelry boxes and coasters while snacking on pizza and sugar cookies. There were also hair claw clips available to decorate with an assortment of lace and charms.

"I'm decorating the hair claws for my mom and I," Tania Guerrero, a senior psychology major, told The Vanguard.

Although this was the club's first event of the semester, the J-Fashion club is no stranger to crafting events. They previously hosted a Decoden

DIY event where students used colorful charms to decorate phone cases and compact mirrors.

"I love J-fashion events," Iris Henna, club connector for J-Fashion club, told The Vanguard. "They're very fun. I love making crafts and just decorating."

Towards the middle of the event, Em Katz, founder and president of the J-Fashion club, began a Kahoot game, an online quiz for students to join, that tested attendees' knowledge of J-fashion.

"I always try to relate [the club's] events back to J-fashion somehow," Katz told The Vanguard. "But it was hard to do that with this one because it was more so a late Valentine's Day celebration and a painting event,"

which is why I did a J-fashion themed Kahoot so people could still learn something from it."

Among the questions in the Kahoot were, "Which Tokyo area is most famous for J-fashion style?" and "What Japanese word is most heavily associated with J-fashion?" The first, second, and

third place winners were BC students Chela, Elias, and Denise, respectively. They each took home a pink stuffed animal as a prize.

Even those who didn't win learned more about J-fashion from observing the Kahoot.

"Sure," said Christopher Bonifacio, a business administration major, when asked if he learned anything new about J-fashion from the event. "When they were doing the Kahoot, I was listening in."

Katz frequently dresses in J-fashion styles and participates in the New York City (NYC) J-fashion

community. She continues to bring this knowledge of J-fashion to the BC community through her club's events.

"I personally love J-fashion and am an active member of the NYC J-fashion community," said Katz. "So I wanted to educate people about our community and spread love and awareness for J-fashion."

"I actually learned about [J-fashion] from Em," Henna told The Vanguard. "[...] It's just really interesting to learn about it. I love all the colors

community because I didn't see any fashion-related spaces on campus, especially one that was a safe place for alternative students," said Katz.

"Although we are J-Fashion specific, we welcome everyone, whether you're alternative, like J-fashion specifically, or fall into neither of those categories!"

The club encourages self-expression through fashion and aims to continue providing a safe space for students to



Graphic by Jocelyn Rios

participate in J-fashion styles.

"I've heard from many people that they want

to wear J-fashion but don't know where to start, or are scared to do it alone," said Katz.

"This is why having a space to do so can be so important for people, to give them the confidence to start being themselves."

Students interested in learning more about the J-Fashion Club can follow their Instagram @bcjffashionclub.



L to R: J-Fashion Club E-board members Elly, Em Katz, Iris Henna, and Elias./Courtesy of Em Katz

“Artist, Teacher Mentor”: BC Art Gallery Hosts a Zoom Panel With Lois Dodd

By Eddy Prince
Staff Writer

On Tuesday, Feb. 24, Lois Dodd, along with three of her former students, mentors, and friends, held a Zoom panel meeting to commemorate the opening of “A Radiant Simplicity” and celebrate Dodd’s life and career. Among the attendants were her friends and fellow artists Diana Horowitz, Elizabeth O’Reilly, and Jeff Epstein, as well as Dodd herself, and the panel discussion was moderated by Dodd’s personal friend and fellow arts professor Janet Carlile.

“When Brooklyn College (BC) was built in the ‘40s, Robert Wolfe was the chairman, and he and Milton Brown were instrumental in hiring some really great American painters. Later, our new chairman Morris Dorsky [...] carried this tradition of excellence forward by hiring Leigh Bontecue, Leonard Anderson, Lois Dodd, and many others,” said Carlile in her opening remarks. “I was hired at that same time. [...] In the ‘70s and ‘80s, [the Fine Arts Department] was a powerhouse, teaching excellence, innovation, creativity, with a commitment to nurturing the next generation of artists,” Carlile continued. “Lois and I both marveled at how lucky we were [...] to teach in the early 1970s.”

Elizabeth O’Reilly, one of Dodd’s guests, was a former student of Dodd. O’Reilly eventually worked alongside her at Brooklyn College in the 1990s & released 10 exhibitions with Dodd. O’Reilly shared some stories of her time with Dodd, often spending the weekends painting at Dodd’s hours in Blairstown, NJ.

“We can say amazing things about [Dodd’s] paintings, but her character is just exemplary, and she’s just, she’s kind, she’s low key. There’s no bells and whistles,” said O’Reilly.

“[Dodd] would invite the painters who wanted to paint on site to come out to her house in Blairstown on the weekends [...] I would say ‘non-hierarchical’ is the word I would use for Lois. It was



Lois Dodd often painted using vibrant colors and practiced a subtle mastery of shadows, as shown in “Barn Next to Sullivan’s Place, Hainesburg.”/Eddy Prince

never, ‘she was the teacher, we were the students.’ We were all equal.”

“I remember being up at Truro [Center for the Arts] at Castle Hill. [At the end of the day], [Dodd] had dinner with us, and then she brought us to the beach, and there was some kind of special moon [...]” said O’Reilly. “When we got back to our house, it was 10 o’clock, and Lois pulled out her paints. She wanted to paint the moon at 10 o’clock, from what she remembered. I would have readily gone to bed, but I was ashamed. [So] I thought, ‘Okay, I have to pull out my easel too.’”

“This is a sort of pattern that Lois has,” said Jeff Epstein in agreement.

“Lois does not like sloth. If you invite somebody to go paint with you [...] you go paint.”

Epstein, another one of Dodd’s colleagues who

has collaborated with both Dodd and O’Reilly on group exhibitions, most notably “Painting The Moon & Beyond,” was initially taken aback by Dodd and her shrewd observations.

“Lois sort of just walks in the room and starts critiquing,” said Epstein. “After about a month of this, Lois says to me, ‘You know, your work is awfully glib.’ I had to wait until I got home, and could run to my dictionary to look it up, and it meant fluent or facile, but lacking in real depth or conviction; shallow, insincere. So the next day at school, I saw Lois at the end of the hall. I went running after her, saying, Who are you calling glib?’ And she explained that initially, she was sort of impressed by the way that I dealt with the figure, but she had the feeling that I would be doing whatever it was I did, no matter what the model was doing. So I thought, ‘Oh, all right.’ So I paid a little more attention to what was going on with the model, and we got along fine after that.”

Dodd’s third guest, Diana Horowitz, studied under Dodd in the latter half of the 1980s and taught alongside Dodd for her final year before Dodd retired from teaching.

“When I was inducted to the National Academy in 2003, the National Academy was almost all white men,”

said Horowitz. “Lois was one of the few women.”

Dodd is considered to be a pioneer in the world of female artists. She has been the subject of more than 50 solo exhibitions since 1954, a time when female artists didn’t receive the same opportunities and recognition as their male counterparts.

“The club was definitely a men’s club, but those were the abstract expressionists,” said Dodd about the lack of female artists. “The figgies, who opened up somewhat later, they allowed women in the group. But a little bit later in time, there were more women figurative painters.”

“The Club,” also known as “The 8th Street Club,” was the colloquial name of the group of postwar artists from New York City, who often blended figurative art and abstraction.

Dodd, along with names like John Ferren, Franz Kline, and Bill de Kooning, found a community within this organization.

Meanwhile, “The Figgies,” another group of artists who largely practiced figurative art, began in the twilight years of “The Club.” Alex Katz, a well-known “figgie,” has known Dodd for years, having met at the Cooper Union.

“It’s interesting about Alex’s paintings because he always was figurative, and he was

kind of doing something that nobody else was doing, early, back then,” said Dodd in a 1988 interview with Barbara Shikler. “He was kind of challenged, often. The way he painted didn’t seem to—wasn’t quite serious. He wasn’t taken as being a serious painter by a lot of people.”

“The Club had been going on before we even started,” continued Dodd in the same interview. “It functioned as a place where people came in at a certain point in the afternoon, and they would run into somebody else, and conversations would take place. It was just terribly interesting. Everybody would go over to the Artist’s Club and hear the talk [...] They talked their way through from five o’clock ‘til midnight at the very least. If you wanted to see people and talk, you knew exactly where to go.”

Not The First Time, Nor The Last: The Mistreatment of Black Women

By **Serena Edwards**
Opinions Editor
& **Rami Mansi**
Editor-in-Chief

Mel B. of the Spice Girls, Normani from Fifth Harmony, Leigh-Anne from Little Mix, and now Manon from Katseye. All household names, all the sole Black women in their successful girl groups.

Black women have been used as a marketing tactic and a diversity pick rather than utilized for the talent and unique flair that they bring to their group.

Manon Bannerman, from the global girl group Katseye, is the only Black woman in her group. On Feb. 20, the group's labels, Hype Entertainment and Geffen Records, released a statement claiming that Bannerman will be taking an indefinite hiatus due to concerns for her health. Shortly after this was released, Bannerman released her own message to fans stating that she is healthy, as well as liking an Instagram video about the unfair treatment of Black women in girl groups.

Katseye was built from the competition show "Popstar Academy" on Netflix, where a multitude of women competed for a slot in the band.

For the months coming up to the group's debut, Bannerman was criticized for being "lazy" and not a team player. But behind closed doors, Bannerman was suffering from her own health issues.

But these lazy accusations were amplified when the group solidified, more recently with the announcement of Bannerman's hiatus. The father of fellow group member, Daniella Avanzini, commented on Bannerman's hiatus on Instagram.

These statements fired up news outlets, all claiming that Bannerman was a

victim of discrimination and that she deserves better than this treatment.

Along with magazines and media outlets supporting her, former and current Black women in girl groups, along with other celebrities, rallied for Bannerman.

One of the girl group members who spoke out was Leigh-Anne Pinnock, a former member of the chart-topping United Kingdom (UK) girl group Little Mix. As the sole Black woman in her group, Pinnock faced discrimination and hate trains ranging from people ignoring her at meet and greets to hate comments online. Pinnock followed Bannerman on Instagram and shared her support for the 23-year-old singer.

The support shown by these members is very reminiscent of what girl group members like Pinnock and Normani should've received during their time in the groups. They did not receive the widespread support Bannerman is getting; therefore, the leading ladies hope to set an example and make sure Bannerman knows that she is not alone.

Though Black women have received support for their impact within the group, they are left with the damage from being dismissed compared to other members. They have silenced their experience and have been kicked to the side when it is convenient for the brand.

Some industry leaders

have even deemed Black women hard to work with, with little to no explanation. "The report finds that six in 10 black music creators have experienced racism, while 86% say they have faced barriers to their career because of their race," according to the BBC.

Though these women are bringing everything to the table and more, they are still seen as replaceable. Women like Bannerman push themselves 10 times harder just to be equal to their fellow group members. Even after sharing similar experiences that happen within multiple girl groups, society has normalized this treatment. Many fans found comfort in seeing

that was all they were there for?

Many fans online have taken notice of Bannerman's treatment, especially evident in Katseye's "Debut" video, where Bannerman is covered for the majority of it. The video might've had innocent undertones, but it paints a broader picture of how Black women are treated within a professional environment.

Normani stated in an interview that her abilities were downplayed in comparison to those of her other members.

"I didn't get to really sing in the group. I felt like I was overlooked," she said. "That idea has been projected on me. Like, this is your place."

Black women are often tokenized in the music industry, only brought up in

In girl groups, Black women are brought on the team to help the group appear more diverse and open it up to another audience. These artists make the best with what they are given and attempt to be a strong role model for their audience, which is why Bannerman's departure from Katseye affected so many people on a deeper level. If a growing, young artist who is experiencing both fame and success faces such high levels of discrimination and alienation from high music executives, then what does that mean for the young girls watching Bannerman?

Even with Bannerman's reassurance that everything is okay and that she sees the love being poured into her, only time will tell whether Bannerman can flip the



L to R: Normani from Fifth Harmony, Manon from Katseye, and Leigh-Anne from Little Mix.
Graphic by Jocelyn Rios

representation within their favorite groups, but what if

discussion when they fit the needs of a label or a certain genre.

rightful artist in her own light and on her own terms.

The Red Pill Epidemic: The Rising Political Scene Among Gen-Z

By **Schonn Elcock**
Staff Writer

Through algorithmic manipulation, the media has pushed the rise of The Red Pill Movement, a political movement that prioritizes masculinity and misogyny, appearing as an opposition to feminism. The Red Pill Movement is a core component of what people consider the manosphere.

Manosphere is an umbrella term for online communities that have increasingly promoted narrow and aggressive definitions of what it means to be a man.

The movement emphasizes that men are truly the oppressed gender in a “feminist” run society.

Now we know this isn't true; the feminist movement was founded to ensure equality, not oppression.

Here lies the core issue with the Red Pill community: manipulation.

Red Pill influencers use selective truth to distort the reality of vulnerable men. For example, in an article from The Guardian, author Rachell Hall speaks about the tactics Red Pill influencers employ.

“[Jordan] Peterson has said in a video that the ‘Andrew Tate phenomenon’ is a result of Tate becoming ‘a voice’ offering ‘forthright

aggression’ as an alternative to ‘cringing defeat.’”

This is key to how these individuals gain a following. These men seek guidance and turn to these individuals for advice. I want young men and all people, frankly, to be wary of these tactics, especially due to the political climate of the world.

According to City and State Pennsylvania, “Campaigns can leverage partnerships with influencers and content creators to cast a much wider net and ensure their message reaches the eyeballs of those who may not otherwise engage in politics.”

Due to how focused Red Pill rhetoric can be, manipulation is employed to engage young men to interact with their content through targeting a specific demographic.

The “concept” of the Red Pill generates a sense of community that specifically targets emotionally vulnerable men.

According to Equimundo's “State of American Men 2025” report, “Isolation is an epidemic. Over half of men say ‘no one really knows me.’ That loneliness comes with a cost: despair, suicidality, and political radicalization.”

These dreadful feelings lead these individuals to entrust their feelings to various influencers and digital spaces.

The appearance of a mentor figure/life coach entices men into falling into the Red Pill rabbit hole. Content is initially pushed through tips on dating, fitness, day trading, lifestyle, etc. Then, as a deeper connection is built, misogynistic ideals are subtly

packaged



Nick Fuentes greets supporters before speaking at a pro-Trump rally./Courtesy of CBC News

through small “jokes” or “memes” until the hateful speech becomes normalized.

This behavior is very damaging to both men and women.

According to Unwoman, “Stereotypes about women in the manosphere promote myths and hierarchies that hold women back.”

In the digital age society, these stereotypes are shared online. In a study from Morning Consult, “Gen Z gets 63% of their news from social media, with a remaining 36% relying on television news for their sources.”

Relying on social media for your information without fact-checking, you are left open to being manipulated. This is how politicians assert their ideals on Americans. Campaigns strategically leverage relationships with influencers to target voter demographics.

Prominent Red Pill influencers tend to operate in right-leaning/ far-right media ecosystems where misogyny, anti-progressive, and white nationalistic ideologies overlap. X (formerly known as Twitter) is the biggest representation of this ecosystem.

According to Intelligencer, “From the right: Elon Musk killed Twitter, created X, and saved civilization.”

Musk specifically pushed Right-wing and conservative content onto the “For You” pages of X accounts. Within seven weeks of exposure to this content, algorithmic feeds were both “4.7 percentage points more likely to prioritize policy issues considered important by Republicans [...] 5.2 percentage points less likely to reduce their X usage,” according to an article from Intelligencer.

It dawns the name, algorithmic persuasion.

X has become a place not only that attracts conservatism but also pushes people who engage with the content further right. To be practical, look at how frequently President Trump posts on X. The President's goals with X are done on purpose because the platform was created with one of many goals: to push right-wing ideology.

The further a community is within the Far-right political scene, the more physiologically damaging the content becomes.

Adin Ross and Nick Fuentes are two massive influencers who openly

support President Trump, with Nick Fuentes as of late rescinding his support, considering Trump “not being right-winged enough.”

President Trump has cut Medicaid for low-income Americans, taken away SNAP benefits, spoken down on many minority communities, done egregious things to women, and more. President Trump is very “right-wing” and checks many boxes within the Red Pill agenda.

Nonetheless, the rhetoric remains harmful, and with this sentiment, I encourage people to engage with multiple sources of news for their information. There are deliberate acts within our government to persuade the public to join their side.

Information is vast and important, being relayed many times over in various ways. Ensure that you can cross-reference sources and line up data.

Red Pill content continues to be a dangerous and influential portion of media that affects young men, in turn, hurting larger communities as well.

END:

**Misogyny
Patriarchy
Discrimination
Inequality
Stereotypes**



Instagram post encouraging gender equality./Courtesy of @unwomen

Spotify Enforces Old Rap Ecosystems for Capitalistic Purposes

By Alfonso Abreu
Staff Writer

Over the past week, music streaming app Spotify has placed billboards in different cities, declaring a simple statement, “Hip-Hop needs new leaders.”

Discussions regarding the statement split in two directions: the obligatory list of rappers, whom have been tossed in these conversations before COVID-19, and a sudden realization that the genre has grown past needing “leaders”.

Ironically, Spotify launched an advertising campaign and showcased what it thought were the new leaders of the genre.

This list, which should be no surprise to anyone reading this, is a strategic and out-of-touch selection that doesn't serve to highlight rappers behind sounds defining the decade. Yet instead, features artists who will (and continue to) thrive under the company's algorithm. It is an initiative attempting to preserve the remnants of the old rap ecosystem, solely because it benefits streaming services and the executives within the industry

From the beginning of the decade, there has been a shift in the music landscape, influenced by how accessible the internet is. Algorithms have become increasingly controlling and influential to listeners. These two factors play a huge role in how music is created, consumed, and presented. Songs are being uploaded at a frequent rate and packaged for consumers without the need for label and executive approval.

Retracing Hip-Hop's



Courtesy of @RapCaviar on X

steps demonstrates that an artist's music will find itself in the ears of listeners, somehow and someway, without the industry's authority.

In the 90s and early 2000s, mixtapes were sold out of trunks and from Canal Street bootleggers, converted into ready-to-be-downloaded digital files on websites, to what we have today: accessible uploading. It fundamentally captures the essence of the genre, community.

Existing simultaneously are labels and emerging streaming services, which still have power, or more accurately, leverage over the artist and listeners. The industry once maintained large control over what music reached audiences and how. Once the internet became a tool first and accessory second, this control began to transfer into the hands of the artist and the listeners.

In contemporary times, audiences have more control over what is being pushed and consumed rather than a label, which in turn acts in opposition to streaming services.

Rightfully so, as this is more relevant now than ever, yet it's better to look at it through a lens. The story is a label believing there was more success to be had in having their star producer (at the time) be one of the driving forces behind their other bigger successes. It's the foreshadowing of a capitalistic loop that will be damaged in today's landscape.

Let us once again retrace the genre's footsteps to look at the well-known story of Kanye West.

The heavily documented series of events saw Mr. West go through the troubles of securing a record deal due to an assumption that his sound would result in a lack of success in a scene dominated by artists like 50 Cent and Dipset. It's commonly reflected back on as a motivational tale of an artist cutting through the noise with their specific frequencies. Artists had personal say in their releases, placing the music as their first priority over revenue. For decades, labels have made multiple attempts to crack down on this scene, to no avail, of course, as it simply

moved to the internet.

The iconic mixtape website Datpiff is a hotbed of mixtapes that have shaken up the genre; remnants of the website now live on through the Internet Archive, among other notable sites, which had their own exclusive drops. To quickly sum it up for those who never grew up clicking through the site, Datpiff was a proto-streaming service before streaming services were everywhere.

If Apple Music and Spotify are Netflix and HBO Max, then Datpiff was Tubi.

A week before Spotify's Billboard, the Datpiff's X account tweeted out, “Back in 2014, I had an exec @ Apple tell me WE were their competition, little us vs a \$4B company.”

Less than a year later, Drake (cause it always leads back to him) dropped “If You're Reading This It's Too Late” and billed it as a “commercial mixtape,” which is basically another way to say studio album, but instead of living on a free website, it's behind a paywall for millions to access. This is mainly why this trend became the standard; it was a part of a streaming service that has the power to push out the music onto your algorithm. These free mixtape websites relied on traffic generated from word of mouth, blogs, and, of course, clicking through the website. Factors that have now become archaic due to society's reliance on the algorithm.

Spotify's recent push for new leaders rings as an open declaration of who the company will push forward using its algorithm.

Bronze, Silver, & Gold: Stand-Out Moments from The 2026 Winter Olympics

By Key Jones-Ford
Content Creator

Running from Feb. 6-22, this year's Winter Olympics took place in Milan and Cortina d'Ampezzo in Italy. It introduced ski mountaineering as an Olympic event and the first games to be overseen by the new International Olympic Committee president, Kirsty Coventry.

The United States of America (Team USA) took home 33 medals total, including 12 gold medals. The Guardian reported this as the highest number of medals ever taken by Team USA in a Winter Olympics.

Of those 12, eight medals were won by female athletes, as reported in an Instagram reel posted by Impact.

Among gold medalists was Alysia Liu, who won the first women's figure skating gold medal for the U.S. in 24 years. Liu has gained attention with her personal style and refusal to conform. This includes her unique halo hairstyle and her ruling that she will lead and make final creative choices on all her performances. Her performance of Donna Summer's "MacArthur

Park" netted her first place.

After placing sixth in the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics at 16, Liu announced her retirement from the sport. However, after a break, she chose to come back on her own terms.

"No one tells me what I'm gonna wear. No one tells me how my hair is gonna be. No one's gonna try to change me," Liu said to Cosmopolitan in January ahead of the competition.

Liu was joined on the podium by Japanese figure skaters Kaori Sakamoto and Ami Nakai, who won silver and bronze, respectively.

Beyond her skating abilities, Liu has also been open about her views on competing in adulthood. In an interview with NBC Sports, she said, "Winning isn't all that, and neither is losing. It's just something that happens. It's the outcome. But what matters is the input and the journey. And I would say take a break. I take breaks even now, and I think that's the way to do it."

The other successes of the U.S. came from the men's and women's ice hockey teams, which both took home the golds winning

against the Canadian hockey teams.

A leaked video showed the US men's team on a call with the United States (U.S.) President Donald Trump, after winning, in which he invites them to the White House and made a comment regarding the women's hockey team.

"I must tell you, we're going to have to bring the women's team. You do know that. I do believe I probably would be impeached [if I didn't.]"

Several players can be heard laughing and joking back with him. One player can be heard yelling, "two-for-two," allegedly in reference to inviting both teams to the White House.

The video has received public backlash, with women's team captain Hilary Knight telling The Guardian, "I thought it was sort of a distasteful joke, and unfortunately that is overshadowing a lot of the success, the success of just women at the Olympics carrying for Team USA and having amazing gold medal feats."

Men's team goaltender Jeremy Swayman regretted the initial laughter and said the men "should've reacted

differently."

"We know that we're so excited for the women's team, we have so much respect for the women's team," said Swayman.

"To share that gold medal with them is something that we're forever grateful for."

The men's hockey team met with President Trump for dinner ahead of the State of the Union on Feb. 24, and goalie Connor Hellebuyck received a Presidential Medal of Freedom. According to The Athletic, he was awarded the medal for saving a "record" 41 shots of 42 during their decisive game. The Medal of Freedom is the highest honor for any civilian and is usually

awarded for exceptional lifetime achievements in the arts, science, sports, and other fields.

Hellebuyck joins the 19 recorded Olympians in earning a Medal of Freedom for their achievements.

The women's team declined the invitation to the White House. NBC reported that a spokesperson for the team said that, while the women were "honored to be included and grateful for the acknowledgement," they could not attend due to prior commitments and scheduling conflicts. Dominik Hašek, a Hall of Fame former NHL goalie, commended them for their response.

"Yes, your president is a big liar and a fraud who abuses his position to insult and bully his fellow citizens," Hašek wrote on X. "Still, I believe you must have shown a great deal of heroism in making this decision. Thank you for that."

Rapper and co-founder of hip-hop group "Public Enemy," Flavor Flav, offered to host the women's team in Las Vegas on X.

"If there is an interest for the team to come to Las Vegas and celebrate with Flav — we will figure it out on our end and make it a lovely experience."

This invite has since been opened up to the women's skeleton and bobsled teams.

Other wins this year included Brazil winning its first gold medal in its Winter Olympic history, and the first South American National Olympic Committee to do so. Norwegian-Brazilian skier Lucas Pinheiro Braathen took home the gold for alpine skiing during the men's giant slalom.

The next Winter Olympics will be in 2030 and will take place in the French Alps, according to the official Olympics website.



The Winter Olympics 2026 closing ceremony./Courtesy of Kelly Loeffler on X

Sports Recaps (2/25-03/01)

By Manuel Polanco
Sports Editor

It's Championship Week for Brooklyn College (BC) sports! The men's and women's basketball teams look towards securing the CUNYAC Championship, and the men's swim team competes at the ECAC Swimming and Diving Championships.

Women's Basketball

Before their run to the final game of the season, BC took on a familiar foe and the No. 4 seed on Feb. 25 at John Jay College. With a dominant score of 95-80 at home, BC would advance to the final round for the 11th consecutive season. BC was able to get 22 steals this game and converted it to 31 points in the game.

Junior guard Brianna Jackson had a great game with 16 points and nine assists. Senior guard

Dior Dorsey had an impactful game with 14 points, six rebounds, and five steals. Off the bench, freshman guard Adunoluwa Akinduyi had a great game with 12 points.

Freshman guard Aaliyah McCalla had 11 points, and sophomore forward Danae McMullen had 10 points and nine rebounds off the bench.

The streak and dominance season for BC came to an end on Feb. 27 in a loss to Hunter College 77-69, leaving BC dethroned after winning the CUNYAC championship the last five seasons. By the end of the first quarter, this game was 19-11, but Hunter College was relentless.

Jackson would have been the MVP of this game if BC won, as she notched 22 points, four assists, and four steals. For her efforts, she was



Junior Guard, Brianna Jackson./Courtesy of BC Athletics

honored with a nomination to the All-Tournament Team. Dorsey received a nomination as well, and she ended her day with 15 points, nine rebounds, and three steals.

Senior Anna Kitch had a double-double with 16 points and 10 rebounds. The Brooklyn College women's

basketball team was an amazing dynasty, but as all things must, it came to an end.

Men's Basketball

In an action-packed game that went to double overtime, BC lost to City College (CCNY), 76-72, in their semifinal game at home on

Feb. 25. BC outscored their opponent 38-34 from the paint, and CCNY shot 22-33 from the free point line.

Sophomore guard Joe Charles had a great game with 34 points and five three-pointers. Junior center Tyler Gordon was a defensive staple in the first half of this game as he notched 12 points and 10 rebounds. Senior guard D'aze Hunter had 10 rebounds, six assists, and seven points. Lastly, senior guard Thomas Hall had seven points in 46 minutes of the game.

Winter Blues

By Josiah Sanon
Staff Cartoonist



Men's Swimming

The BCmen's swim team began a weekend-long stretch at the ECAC Swimming and Diving championships. Beginning on Friday, Feb. 27, freshman Or Volpert had a great debut, as he qualified for the swim with a time of 22.58, which helped him come in 45th place.

On Saturday, Feb. 28, Volpert, junior Michael Kravets, and freshman Andrew Woo swam in the preliminary rounds. Kravets placed 37th in the 100 butterfly with a time of 54.63, Volpert placed 44th with a time of 58.03, and Woo placed 27th with a time of 59.04.

Kravets also participated in the 200 freestyle, placing 26th with a time of 1:51:39.

Lastly, on March 1, Kravets and Woo ended their ECAC tenure with a pair of performances. Woo placed 24th in the 200 breaststroke with a time of 2:17:22, and Kravets placed 29th in the 200 butterfly with a time of 2:04:73.