

The Viking News

HEERF Funding Might Be Ending: What Will This Mean For Student Services?

DANIEL CHARLES

During a press conference called by WCCFT, the college union, on March 24, President Belinda Miles confirmed that The Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF) funding will be ending on June 30th. HEERF funds were used to pay for the salaries of two part-time employees in both Student Support Services (SSS) and Mental Health and Counseling Services (MHCS) during the "Covid Era." The college is preparing to ask the federal government for an extension of these funds, but additional funding has not yet been confirmed.

HEERF is a program that was incorporated into the American Rescue Plan (The 2021 Covid-19 Stimulus Package). It provided

\$39.6 billion to higher education institutions to help combat low enrollment rates due to the pandemic. The HEERF grants came in the form of three installments (HEERF I, II, and III), the third of which endowed the school with \$13,141,473 in student emergency aid, and \$13,028,409 as an institutional grant.

Earlier this semester, the Student Government Association (SGA) expressed worry that the ending of HEERF would result in the lay-offs of employees in SSS and MHCS because they are currently being paid through these funds. Although one of those employees in MHS has left SUNY WCC this semester to pursue job opportunities elsewhere, the other three employees are still employed by SUNY WCC. Losing these employees would lead to much



Dr. Miles publicly announced the ending of HEERF during a press conference in the Gateway Building.

Photo by Daniel Charles

more work for the remaining staff in these departments, which could result in a decrease in services available to students.

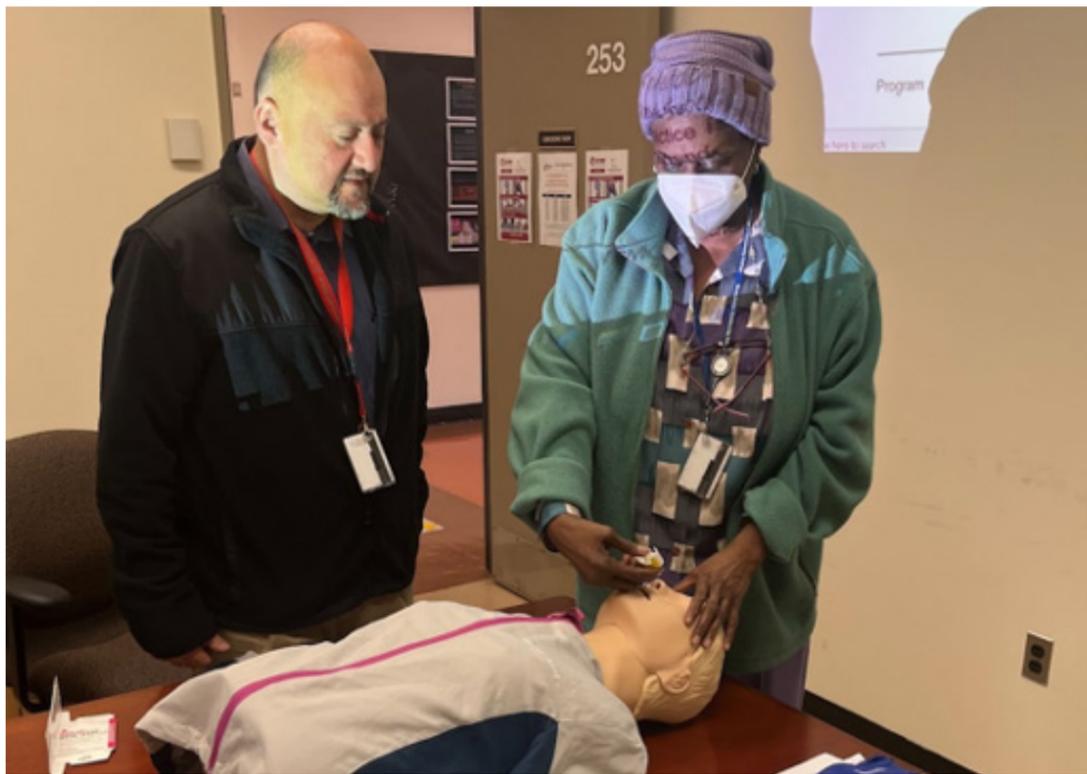
"We do share your concerns about the significant impact on, and detriment to, student mental health should HEERF not be renewed," said Kristy

Robinson, Acting Director of the Department of Mental Health and Counseling Services, LCSW.

Continued on page 2.

Free Life-Saving Stop the Bleed and Naloxone Trainings Available to the WCC Community

LUIS GRANADOS



Dr. George Contreras directs a trainee on how to use the Narcan Nasal Spray (naloxone HCL) on a dummy.

Photo by Daniel Charles

With so many violent incidents occurring all over our cities, including college campuses, it is even more important than ever to increase our level of preparedness. Dr. George W. Contreras, Dean of the School of Health Careers, Technology, and Applied Learning, has decided to take action.

Recently appointed to his role, Dr. Contreras has created the "Dean's Lunch and Learn" program, where he shares

crisis management information with attendees. Dr. Contreras is doing alternating monthly presentations every first Wednesday on Stop the Bleed and Naloxone training.

"No matter what degree you're getting at the college, it's important to know this life saving information as a general rule," said Dr. Contreras.

Naloxone is a medication which negates the effects of opioids. On April 5, there was a

Naloxone training session, so on May 5, there will be a Stop the Bleed presentation. SUNY WCC students, faculty, and staff members are invited to attend as the presentations teach significant skills that could be helpful in the event of a medical emergency.

The college has already implemented certain measures on campus in case of an emergency. Around campus, there are automated external

defibrillators (AED) kits containing Stop the Bleed and Naloxone equipment. In collaboration with security and marketing departments, Dr. Contreras is working on improving the labeling on AED kits so that people may know that the Stop the Bleed and Naloxone kits are in the same box. He is also encouraging clubs, organizations and departments to contact him if they would like a presentation done during one of their meetings. Furthermore, everyone who attends a Naloxone training session will receive a Naloxone kit.

The increase in overdoses from opioid prescriptions comes as a result of how addictive they can be. They are usually prescribed for pain management. Prescription opioids include Fentanyl, Oxycodone, Hydrocodone, Codeine, Hydromorphone, Meperidine, and Methadone. Fentanyl is currently the most powerful and most dangerous opioid used in modern medicine.

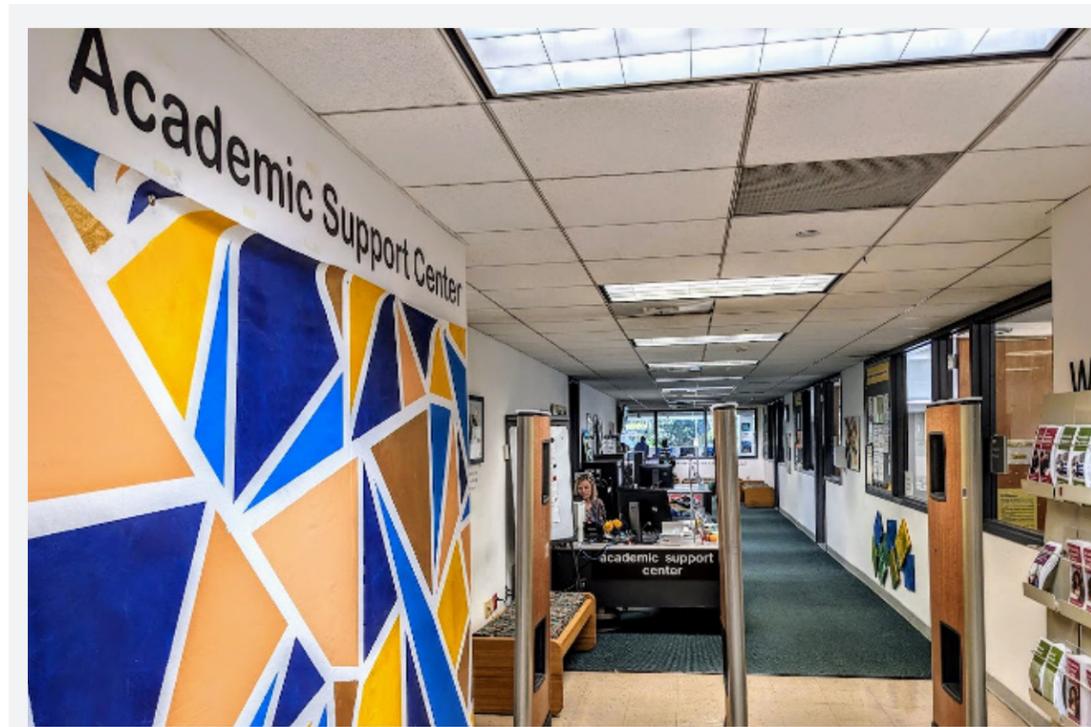
Some signs and symptoms of an opioid overdose include slow breathing (less than 10 breaths per minute) or not breathing at all, snoring with gurgling, cyanosis (bluish skin due to oxygen loss) and minimal or no responsiveness.

Naloxone helps restore breathing to someone who has reduced or lost their capability

to breathe after use of opioids. However, after 30 to 90 minutes of naloxone administration, the opioid effects may kick in again. Therefore, it is important to call 911 as soon as possible, as the person overdosing can only be treated properly at a hospital. It is important to note that Naloxone only works on opioids and not on any other drug. If the person overdosing does not have a pulse, perform CPR as Naloxone is not a substitute for CPR.

Stop the Bleed Training, on the other hand, was a national campaign to raise public awareness and was started by the White House in 2015. The training aims to teach the public a simple but significant skill that may prevent someone from bleeding out. Unlike the Naloxone training, people do not get a Stop the Bleed kit after attending the training. Rather, kits may be found in AED and Naloxone kits. If someone is suffering from a major bleed, one should first call 911. It can take only a few minutes for a person to bleed out, which is why immediate action must be taken.

Good Samaritan Laws protect bystanders who are administering aid in this fashion to someone who is incapacitated. To schedule a session or sign up for a session, please call 914-606-6910.



The entrance to the Academic Support Center invites students to learn and improve.

Photo by Stephen Perry

Job Opportunity Advertisement: Become a Tutor!

Do you want to help other WCC students succeed in their classes? Would you like to strengthen your own academic knowledge? Are you planning to go into a career in education? These are all great reasons to become a tutor with the Academic Support Center (ASC). The ASC is looking for tutors for the Fall 2023 semester.

Both volunteer and paid positions are available. Tutors are needed in Computer Science, ESL, Math, Physics, Science, Study Skills, and Writing. If you have received a

B+ or higher in courses related to these subjects and would like to help students achieve the same academic success you have, you can email the Academic Support Center at asc-group@sunywcc.edu.

Please provide a resume and be prepared to provide faculty references in case you are selected. All tutors are required to work in person at the Academic Support Center located on the ground floor of the library building on the Valhalla campus. We hope to have a few wonderful WCC students join our team of talented tutors!

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“The demand for our services continues to grow and resources are needed to sustain the quality of support we aim to provide students and the greater SUNY WCC community.”

According to Brian Murphy, Vice President and Dean of Administrative Services, the school is applying for an extension for HEERF until

June of 2024.

“All institutions of higher education that received HEERF grant awards are required to submit a HEERF Annual Report,” states the U.S. Department

of Education. The school will be requesting the extension through this report.

“The college has to come up with a very detailed plan to send

for the extension,” said Murphy.

Murphy is optimistic that the federal government will approve of the extension after seeing the comprehensive plans that the school has drafted to justify this additional funding.

“We are counting on the extension to HEERF,” said Dante Cantu, Vice President and Dean of Student Affairs. “It’s a high probability that HEERF funds

will be extended to June 2024.”

However, Cantu wanted to remind students that at some point, emergency aid will stop coming because we’re no longer dealing with an emergency.

“We’re not going to have federal funds like this forever [...] because the wave of need is not going to follow that,” Cantu said.

When that time comes, SUNY

WCC will have to rely on an increased rate of enrollment, and continued financial support from the County and State, to ensure the high quality of education and campus services that students have been promised.

A New Chapter, The New Sound: How POWER 88.1 Is Restructuring Their Organization

SHPAT GJONBALAJ

POWER 88.1 just took the phrase, “new year new me,” to a whole new level. Usually, people set goals like losing twenty pounds in a couple of months, but quickly return to their regular habits. Not Power 88.1. They’ve followed through on their promises of restructuring their entire Tier 1 organization. Although it’s taken longer than expected, the transition from an academic department, into a Department of Student Involvement (DSI) organization, has been a long time coming.

As a result of this new transition, new policies needed to be made. Since there weren’t any policies to begin with that met the criteria of DSI, Juan-Carlos Piñeiro, the Assistant Director of DSI, took the reins. He contacted other SUNY colleges in the system, who had their own radio stations, and cross referenced them all in order to come up with the vision DSI had for POWER 88.1.

That vision was to create a safe environment for students interested in producing music, speaking on the radio, or working for the radio station, according to Piñeiro. Similar to The Viking News, which imitates a real life news organization by publishing

articles produced by SUNY WCC students for the Westchester community, the radio station also broadcasts to the public of Westchester. This means that if a student DJ wanted to blast out “Hit The Floor” by Linkin Park, or “Tiimmy Turner” by Desiigner, all they need to do is to sign up, get trained by one of the officers, and then set up a time to jam out. (Though one would have to play the clean, curse-free versions of any song.)

“By establishing a professional working radio station environment, POWER 88.1 is able to inform the campus community and greater Westchester County and provide a place for learning and personal growth and development for the student members,” according to the Policies & Procedures Manual for the radio station.

Part of the reason that it’s taken so long is because the school is still feeling the effects of the pandemic, according to Piñeiro. Prior to Covid, not just Power 88.1 but the Viking News, and other Tier 1 organizations were restructured. SGA, WEB, and PHI THETA KAPPA, all looked in the mirror and determined proper improvements for the coming future. POWER 88.1 just so happened to be the last one



Outside the POWER 88.1 room 020 on the basement level of the Student Center Building, posters indicating the station is closed to guests.

Photo by Shpat Gjonbalaj

to make these changes.

During the pandemic, Power 88.1 had turned into a hangout room for students. Instead of having jobs and or tasks to take care of, people brought in capri suns, threw them in the fridge, and drank to their hearts desire.

Although this era of POWER 88.1 was fun, not much work was actually getting done. The situation was determined to be a liability. During this time, there was a lack of a proper system, which would only fester negative impacts to the club as a

whole, instead of positive ones.

The effects of the new and improved POWER 88.1 will echo around campus for years to come. To learn more and get involved email ExecutiveDirector881@sunywcc.edu.

Exploring “Reflective Practice” To Improve Student Learning Outcomes

SORELLE MARSH



5 Thinking States from John Dewey's Reflection Theory Diagram Graphic by Sorelle Marsh

SUNY WCC held an online event as part of the English as a Second Language Endowed Chair Webinar Lecture Series. This was hosted by Dr. Thomas Farrell, Professor of Applied Linguistics at Brock University.

Reflective Practice is commonly used in fields such as healthcare, education, and social work to enhance professional development. As Dr. Farrell puts it, reflective practice is a “mark of professional confidence” where it is universally used.

“Gaining teaching experience as a teacher is not enough to provide automatic professional development, for we do not learn much from experience as

much as we learn from reflecting on that experience,” says Dr. Farrell.

It is a methodical process that involves looking back on experiences and analyzing them to gain insights and improve future outcomes. Using experiences combined with frequent reflection is key to professional growth and becoming effective teachers. Dr. Farrell explains that there's still not much agreement on what reflective practice is or how to operationalize it, even studying and working on this topic for over 35 years.

A major part of reflective practice is “reflective thinking,” which all roots to the work

of the American philosopher John Dewey, or how Dr. Farrell phrases it: “Dewey insights.” This means slowing down the interval between thought and action.

Dr. Farrell says this approach is very relevant in today's world, especially in the social media domain where communication is in the form of texting. The same concept takes place in teacher-to-student interaction. Researchers came to the conclusion that teachers make 1000 interpersonal exchanges each day and they don't realize how fast they're relaying information because their day is so action-packed.

Another piece of the puzzle is referred to as “Reflective Inquiry,” which encourages educators to see a situation through a different lens and explore possibilities. Dr. Farrell describes this process as the “Guiding Lenses,” where one must suspect immediate judgment and think of alternative possibilities. The goal is to turn the initial emotional reaction into an intellectual reaction to investigate the issue.

The three ways in which this technique can be executed are: considering the teacher, the colleague, and, most importantly, the student lens. Dr. Farrell suggests asking the students if they understand the information that was given to them, hence the student's thoughts are more important

than a colleague's. He puts emphasis on how teachers should constantly ask questions such as: “Are my instructions clear?” And, “am I including everyone,” and “how do I know?”

Further, Dr. Farrell introduces the “Score Analysis,” a commonly used system to assess angles of the classrooms in which students

from students. To prompt more elaborate responses, Dr. Farrell suggests that if a teacher increases their wait time from three to five seconds, this will encourage more elaborate responses.

Dr. Farrell closes the discussion by summarizing the four principles of reflective practice.

“Gaining teaching experience as a teacher is not enough to provide automatic professional development, for we do not learn from experience as much as we learn from reflecting on that experience.”

Dr. Thomas Farrell

Professor of Applied Linguistics at Brock University

are receiving information from the teacher. The purpose of this technique is to maximize student learning, depending on their classroom seating location. Dr. Farrell discovered in his years of research, that the majority of teachers only pay attention to the front row in classrooms. Thus, the students that sit in the front are most equipped to get the benefits of learning.

In addition to this method, Dr. Farrell describes the amount of time teachers should be waiting after asking a question to students. In a typical class setting, teachers ask approximately 45 questions in a span of 10 minutes. This usually produces one-word responses

The first principle is an evidence-based approach that is systematic and intentional. Principle two, or “Reflective Disposition,” fosters the idea of open-minded and whole-heartedness. Dr. Farrell puts it as, “being able to admit that you could be wrong,” as well as taking accountability for the impact of your teaching. This leads into the third principle, which revolves around social interactions with others. Lastly, the fourth principle, “Way of Being/Life,” states that developing resourcefulness and resilience are required to face future challenges in any profession.

Health Awareness Day Provides Resources For A Healthy Body And Mind

STEVEN GARCIA

SUNY WCC's Health Office and Future Nurses Club held a Spring Into Health Fair on Wednesday, April 12. There, students, staff, and advisors could visit different stands to learn about the importance of staying healthy.

Free and healthy food was given out throughout the event. At the Blood Pressure table, individuals could get a Blood Pressure Screening. Community members were also able to meet with specialists and understand sexual health. Here students learned of an increase in STIs, HPV, and Syphilis, which are the most common sexually transmitted infections, and why people should use protection. In an effort to reduce the rates of infection, preventative measures were offered by the representatives at the Planned Parenthood table.

Another focus of the fair was on young adults who smoke cigarettes, e-cigarettes, old-fashioned smoking with pipes, or even Hookahs. Professionals stressed the health dangers smoking presents, especially for people with asthma. Nicotine, an addictive drug contained in

cigarettes and vapes, causes an increase in blood pressure and increases the risk of heart disease.

According to the information provided by representatives of the POW'r Against Tobacco, the Respiratory Club, as well as the Heart Disease, and Blood Pressure tables, tobacco kills over 480,000 people every year.

E-cigarettes or vapes are considered a serious danger and may be worse than smoking traditional cigarettes, because vapes contain even more harmful chemicals. A main misconception about vaping is that it can be used as a method to quit smoking cigarettes. However, the FDA has not substantiated these claims since no studies have proven it. On the contrary, studies have found that vaping can lead to smoking more regular cigarettes.

According to other information provided at the Health Fair, having a high level of cholesterol from harmful eating habits can also be dangerous. High levels of cholesterol (a waxy-looking fat) in one's system could lead to damage in the arteries and

decrease, or even stop, blood flow to major organs such as the heart and brain.

Another section of the fair was the Men's and Women's Health table, at which the Men's Health representatives talked about how men and people assigned male at birth should check their testicles frequently and at an early age to be able to detect testicular cancer in its first stages. When caught early, testicular cancer is nearly 100% treatable, but the longer men wait, the harder it is to treat.

The representatives for women's health explained that women and people assigned female at birth should self-examine for signs of breast cancer. Everyone is advised to perform these exams in the shower and that it's best to self-test once a month or more.

Finally, finals are coming up for all SUNY WCC students and this can bring anxiety and stress. The Department of Mental Health and Counseling Services was also present at the Health Fair, where they talked about how mental health is an understanding of different kinds



Mental Health and Counseling Services provided free key chains at the fair.

Photo by Steven Garcia

of challenges that people have to deal with every single day. They provided examples such as Bipolar Disorder, PTSD, and depression.

Among many other tables and resources, students were also offered the opportunity to get

a professional massage on campus at the fair. Any student who has questions or concerns should contact the Health Office by email HealthOffice@sunywcc.edu, by calling (914) 606-6610, or visiting the Student Center room 181.

Music and Dance Mark Opening Ceremony of Asian Pacific Islander Heritage Month

STEVEN GARCIA

April brings with it not only spring weather but Asian Pacific Islander Heritage Month (APIHM). To kick off the school's celebration, the Department of Student Involvement (DSI) hosted a live performance by

musical group Taikoza. Taikoza performs with thunderous sounds offering a unique blend of Taiko drums, Shakuhachi Flute, and Fue Flute for an energetic performance.

Guest performers Mack Evans and Marco Lienhard put on a show that no one in the Student Center audience had any trouble

hearing. Taikoza's instruments include the massive Taiko Drums that weigh about 50 lbs. The drums are made in a wooden barrel shape and on both ends are wrapped in animal skins. They are played with wooden sticks. Each strike to these drums was so heavy and strong that the audience could feel the shockwaves and the vibrations. The group's instruments also include two flutes, the Shakuhachi and the Fue. The Shakuhachi originated in China and later became an instrument within the Japanese flute family. Fue is a Japanese word for bamboo flute and is native to Japan.

Lienhard is the group's director. Originally from Switzerland, he moved to Japan right after high school. Although he had no knowledge of Japanese culture at the time, he adapted to the new country and is now a Taiko band leader. Evans is American, originally from Philadelphia. He joined Taiko programs and became part of the Taikoza band. Evans and Lienhard performed many beats, one of which was a song designed to ward off evil Bat Spirits that might still exist on the campus.

This was only one of the APIHM events. The school also hosted an event featuring the performer Sung Lee, known professionally



Lienhard and Evans drum the Bat Spirits away from our campus. Photo by Steven Garcia



Students listen to Sung Lee's beats in the Student Center. Photo by Steven Garcia

as SungBeats. SungBeats is a one-man band who mimics percussion, scratches, basslines, trumpets, strings and other sound effects to create organic music with the human voice. SungBeats is best known for his live-looping and ability to layer precise vocals to replicate covers. Stylistically, he has embraced the music of all genres including hip hop, EDM, and house. SungBeats performed live in the Student Quiet Lounge where he beatboxed and did live loops to create original music and recreate existing songs.

Lee was born in South Korea, but at the age of 9, he immigrated to the United States. When he was 23, he quit his job as an office manager in Las Vegas and began to beatbox in NYC subways. A year later Lee won the Amateur Night at the Apollo (2014). Now 33 years old, Lee continues to beatbox and says he is proud of his profession. APIHM is one of multiple ethnic celebrations hosted by DSI to help SUNY WCC students experience diverse cultures.

Lifelong Learners Are Eager to Attend Classes at WCC's Collegium

KEIRA FERRETTI

Collegium, though a possibly unfamiliar word, holds much meaning for the learners who attend classes at the Collegium for Lifelong Learning at WCC's Knollwood Center. Collegium means "a group whose members pursue shared goals while working within a framework of mutual trust and respect." This definition truly captures the community and the goal of the Collegium, a campus organization that has attracted retired members of the area since its founding in 2004. With classes and forums on film, finance, faith, and more, the Collegium provides those who have curious minds and still vibrant spirits the opportunity to pursue what interests them, in six-week sessions that satisfy their continuing need for knowledge.



Instructor Michael Shamosh leads a class on Conversations about Money and Finance. Photo by Steven Garcia

The Collegium has managed to fill a gap in the community and still continues to teach with sessions both in-person and online (using the platforms HYFLEX and Zoom). Courses are taught by volunteers who are experts in the topic, some being WCC professors, and others being retired career-people who have a passion for teaching others about their field. Volunteers consist of retired

FBI agents, social workers, Ph.D. holders, businessmen, members of the military, actors, and specialists in many other professions.

The Collegium for Lifelong Learning is eager to spread the word about their opportunities for all those with intellectually inquisitive minds to learn about a broad range of topics, and their students are eager, too. "[The

Collegium] offers topics that I would probably never pursue on my own," one student said.

The exploration and room for growth are what makes Collegium different from other educational settings, and a prime setting for the senior audience who like to stimulate their minds. Although an overwhelming majority of the students that attend Collegium

classes are in the upper age bracket or retirees, the Collegium is open to all those who possess a hunger for knowledge and a respectful attitude. "There is no age limit to who can learn," says one Collegium member.

Collegium not only provides educational opportunities but also provides a social aspect, which is desperately needed in the senior community. Seniors

are the most affected by social isolation and may suffer from health issues because of it. However, with the weekly meetings, and between-class coffee and refreshments, many of those who have attended Collegium sessions have spoken of the "great joy" it brings them to be reminded of the good old days of the chats around the water cooler that made up their careers.

For a modest fee for classes, the non-profit Collegium for Lifelong Learning gives WCC and Westchester as a whole a bright future of learning. With students of nearly all ages, Collegium provides a forum for a relationship between the age groups which might have otherwise never crossed paths. As an 87-year-old Michelangelo once said, "I am still learning."

Those who are interested in attending classes held by the Collegium for Lifelong Learning can sign up by calling (914) 606-6748 or by emailing collegium@sunywcc.edu for more information. Spring classes end on May 19, but the Fall semester is expected to bring new and exciting sessions that are bound to pique the interest of students young and old and of all backgrounds.

Not-So-Golden Goose: The Fight Against Campus Geese

STEVEN GARCIA & SORELLE MARSH



Water can attract geese to certain areas on campus.

Photo by Sorelle Marsh

For quite some time, WCC has been dealing with an environmentally challenging and hostile animal: the Canadian goose. These charming delinquents gained the reputation of terrorizing the students on their daily commute to classes and have a history of being territorial and

aggressive to the students and faculty members who get too close to their nests. Currently, this behavior has intensified because of the mating season which lasts from March all the way until June.

In a recent interview with Prince Guerra, Superintendent of Buildings and Grounds at

WCC, valuable insights were gathered about the causes of geese behavior as well as some information on school initiatives that have yet to be disclosed to the general public. Guerra's main goal is to maintain a safe and secure environment for students and faculty on campus. Enlightening us on the goose business that occurs regularly on campus, he said, "Geese are perspicacious creatures that systematically forage for food in three designated locations: the main campus, the nearby golf course, and the neighboring cemetery."

The geese essentially own these domains and rotate back and forth to allow the grass to grow and create an infinite food source. "They use sort of a buddytactic, where one eats and the other watches their back," said Guerra. "They repeat this process in militaristic fashion, having a natural tendency to keep their head on a swivel at all times."

Many students and faculty are curious about where the geese's nesting site is. A simple answer to the question is: in water. One of the geese's most popular feeding spots lies in the 9/11 memorial site between the Classroom Building and the Library. This is a home to

large flocks that gather around the water fountain, sometimes competing with each other for the best drinking spot. These birds burrow in large bodies of water so that they can be protected against predators such as coyotes, bears, gulls, and eagles. Geese will fight back if an animal threatens them. These courageous birds are known to viciously drown their opponents without mercy.

Another issue that needs a closer look is the damage that geese cause to campus property. Our feathered friends take pride in destroying the campus grounds by leaving droppings on sidewalks, lawns, and buildings and the mess they leave can be a nuisance. Moreover, this can pose potential health risks to humans and other animals in the area. Goose feces is a hazard for many reasons, one being that it frequently contains parasites. One of the most harmful parasites to look out for is cryptosporidium, which can cause symptoms such as fever, nausea, vomiting and most commonly diarrhea.

In a situation of a potential goose attack, it's crucial to know the proper procedure in order to de-escalate such an event. Guerra has never formally received complaints of anyone getting

physically harmed or injured by the geese. "One fact is that these geese will never cause serious harm to a person," Guerra said. "Humans are three times bigger than a goose, so these birds will usually only hiss at you."

In case of an actual attack, NYS Department of Environmental Conservation recommends to remain calm and try to back away without making any sudden movements. Avoid making direct eye contact while giving the goose space and if that doesn't work, try waving your arms and making loud noises while trying to act bigger. You should never turn your back on and run away as it may show that there is clear and present danger. It's important to note that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) prohibits physical harm to geese, eggs, or nests without prior authorization. On a positive note, the geese on campus can bring a sense of joy and serenity to students, faculty, and visitors. They provide a special connection to the school, and are reminders of the beauty of nature and the importance of preserving our environment. Their contributions to the ecosystem are endless, and we must work together to sustain a symbiotic relationship.

Meet the Pros: How to Have a Successful Career in the Communication Industry

ANYA DUTOVA

On Thursday, April 6, Westchester Community College hosted a meeting with media and communications professionals Patricia Robinson and Armand Cheeks. Robinson is a host of 94.7 FM radio, and Cheeks is a Digital Marketing Strategist. The event's purpose was to give the students an opportunity to get to know more about the aspects of the field they are most interested in by asking questions directly to people in the industry.

Robinson was working as an accounting specialist but realized she didn't want to have this job for life. She started to look for something else. "I sent my resume out to hundreds of companies," she said, "and one company called me back." Even though they could not offer her a job, they were interested enough to want to talk to her. It was the first step toward success in industry.

Cheeks talked about his education at Pennsylvania State University. His STEM background helped him to gain confidence in his future career in marketing. As well as looking directly at the goal in a traditional way, Cheeks advised the younger audience to

keep an open mind about using unconventional approaches.

In terms of advice, both of the guests stressed the importance of networking. As professionals in the communication and media field, they spoke about the importance of networking through online social programs, such as LinkedIn, as well as through real-life meetings. According to the experts, the best place for networking starts with understanding one's individual type. If you are introverted, then one on one communication is the best option. Another way of networking can be meeting people at an event or party, as well as on Instagram.

Both of the guests gave their views on the most important and useful steps that can lead to success in the industry. Cheeks named critical thinking, confidence, and the skill of storytelling as keys to articulating and helping oneself in business. "We are always telling our stories to make connections with others," Cheeks said.

Robinson mentioned openness to learning, the ability to be flexible, and the art of listening, which she mentioned are "underrated." All of that leads to building up confidence.



Media professionals Armand Cheeks and Patricia Robinson answer students' questions.

Photo by Shanice Wilcox

According to Robinson, the best way to have warm relationships at work is to effectively learn your audience. As a real-life example, Robinson used a situation in her workplace, where she learned some things about the behaviors and habits of her colleagues that helped her to better their communication.

For example, one of her colleagues liked to make small talk before actually asking for what they wanted, while another colleague did not like small talk at all. She also noted that another colleague was into "laughing and goofing around" before work. Robinson said that learning about her audience

helped her to deal with everyone accordingly.

After the official part of the event, students met and talked to the guests one on one, and asked questions of the experts privately.

VISIONARY VIKING

Un Día

STEVEN GARCIA

Un día, te vas a dar cuenta que no cualquier persona se va a quedar,

con vos a pesar de que conozca tus defectos y virtudes,

Un día, te vas dar cuenta que no cualquiera dejara su orgullo para estar bien con vos,

Un día te daras cuenta qu te amaron incondicionalmente, tanto como para quedarse con vos a pesar de lo difícil que puede ser,

Un día, te vas a dar cuenta que los personas en tu vida nunca vay a quedar en tu vida por siempre,

a veces ellos o ellas quedan por un rato o quedan por un buen tiempo en tu vida, nunca es siempre

Un día, vas solamente recordar los memorias de ellos o ellas, si esos memorias va a doler, pues necesitas aceptar y sigue adelante, la vida no te va esperar,

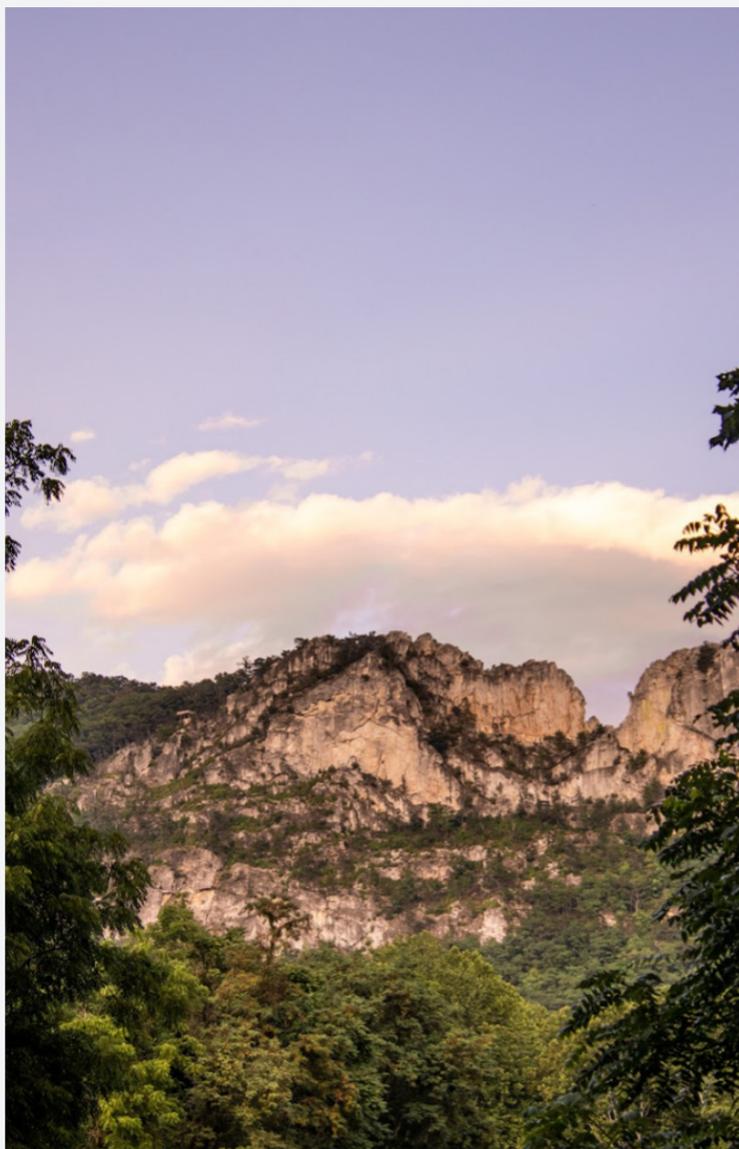
Un día, la vida te va enseñar cosas buenos y malos,

Y la vida nunca vay a abandonar te,

Ten un buen día

Celebrating Earth in Pictures

WCC students capture the Earth and observe Earth Day in pictures of landscapes and wildlife.



Seneca Rocks, West Virginia Photo by Markian Nychka, August 2022

The Paintings Hang Simultaneously

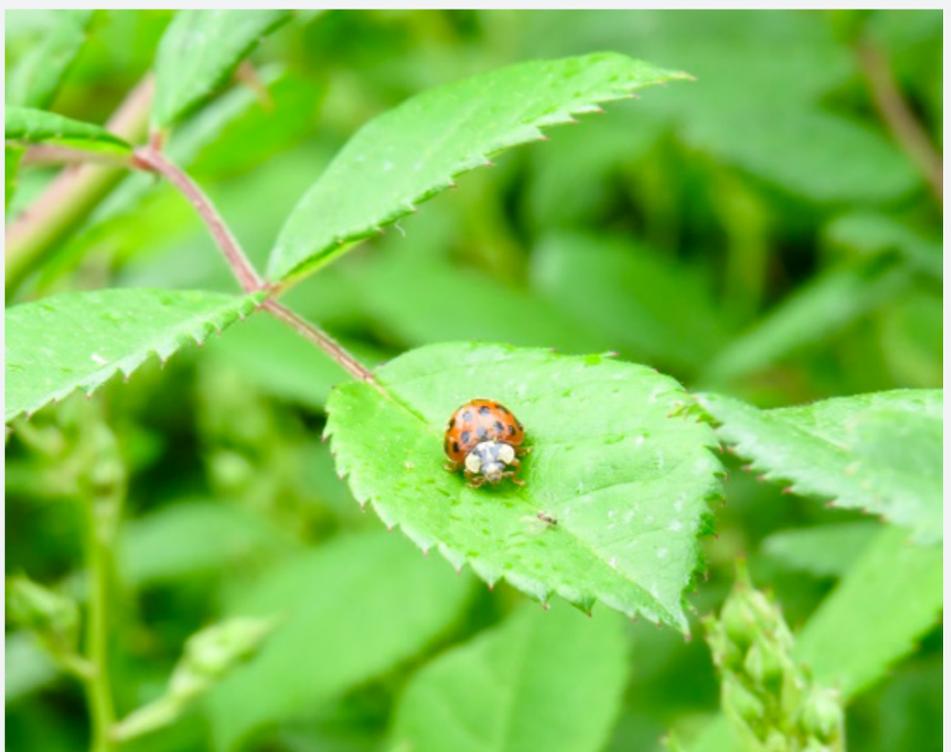
DAVID WILSEA

To walk through a museum is to backtrack along the thin tightrope of a timeline. Years unwind along lonely halls stamped with the significant integers of ancient artifacts. Plaques of text ascribe to them stories spanning generations of history, once real lives now relegated to blurbs readers will forget before they leave. Museums are bastions of what is not yet lost, a second brain that never forgets as long as its corridors pulse with activity. On the other hand, however, they are meaningless. They are a refuge for arbitrarily valued props belonging to long-deceased lineages you will never know. It's all distant and impersonal, yet I still found myself in attendance.

Museums are the past materialized, brought to life to remind us of the finite reach of individual influence. With viewing history's leftovers comes the recognition that you are no more than an outsider unable to change what has already happened. Maybe it was spite that drove me to attend, some twisted idea that I was above that which I was looking down upon. This disdain lingered within every room of my isolated tour. Despite this, it wouldn't be long until I was pulled back down to reality for a humbling experience.

I still remember that moment I found myself among the final exhibit on offer. Inside remained a small collection of paintings, but to pluralize them in such a manner strips them of incredible beauty unique to every one of them. Each piece differed in size, shape, technique, and age, but together shared a bond that undeniably connected them all. The paintings told the stories of those thousands of miles away from a few feet apart, including grandiose tales of a Bulgarian president, Costa Rican comedian, Mexican dancer, and Brazilian travelers. They were snapshots of those who once were, but told a story that molded who I wanted to be. That day, I found myself among something greater than smug isolation; the warmth of proximity.

Museums may be the past, but they are also the future. One's individual influence is finite, but can infinitely live on through the touch of another. This touch creates a permanent bond, one that bounds over the rigid tightrope of time. I was touched by the influence of these paintings, but this too had its limits. The exhibit was temporary, which would one day result in its undue closure. The paintings would continue to be together, but I would have to move on without them. Left with no other option, all I could do was say thank you. Museums are great troves of even greater memories, links between the past and future that symbiotically become greater than they ever were alone. Those lovely paintings imprinted on me a mark fulfilling and potent enough to stick long after my departure. I hope that I made a similar mark on them.



Ladybug vibing on a sunny spring afternoon

Photo by Steven Garcia, April 2022

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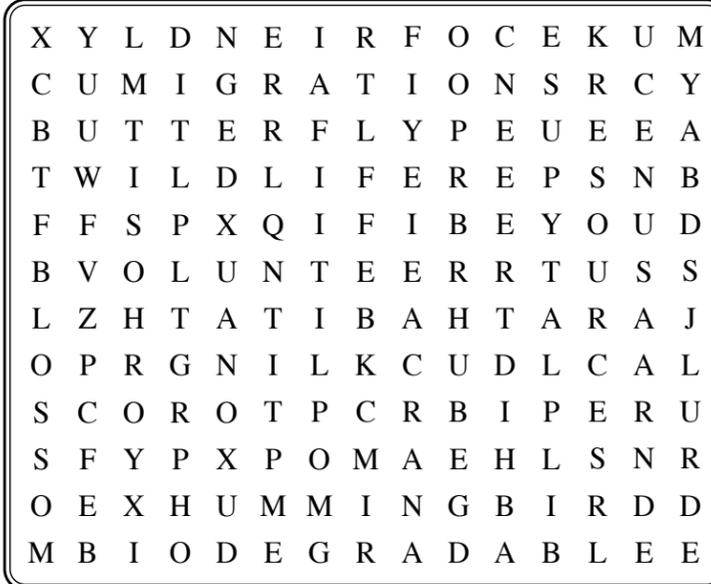
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Weekly meetings are open to all students
and staff on **Mondays at 4 p.m.**,
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EARTH DAY WORD SEARCH SORELLE MARSH



- BUTTERFLY
- BLOSSOM WILDLIFE
- HABITAT DUCKLING
- HUMMINGBIRD
- TREE ECO-FRIENDLY
- BIODEGRADABLE
- MIGRATION
- VOLUNTEER
- PLATYPUS
- RESOURCES

Word Plexers

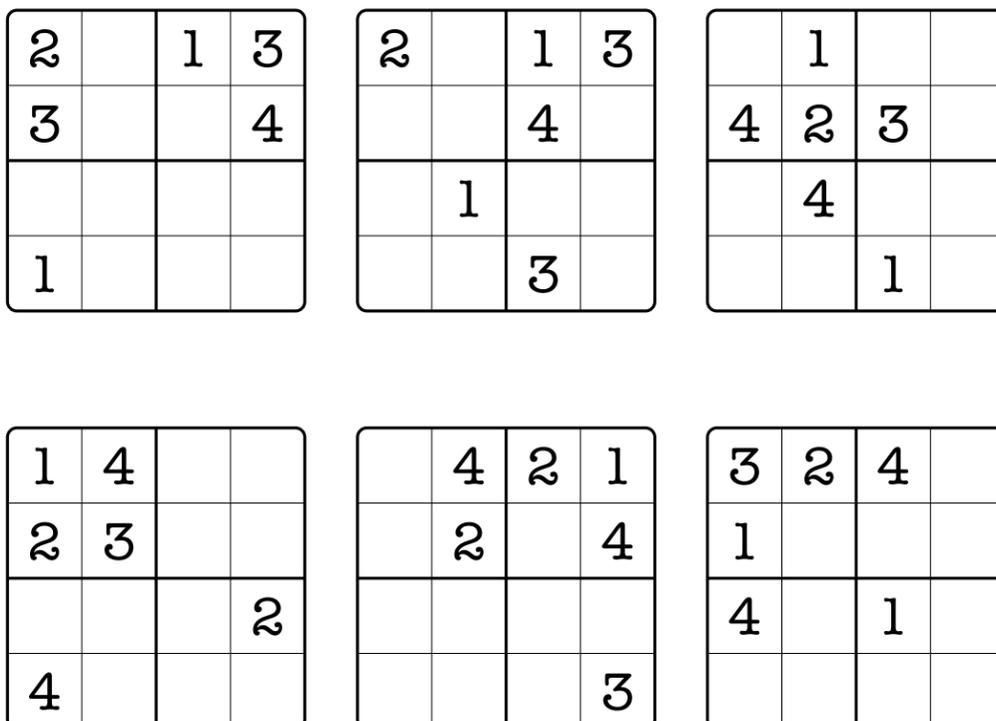
SORELLE MARSH

Some common words and phrases are encoded in these plexers.

Can you tell what they are?



Sudoku SORELLE MARSH



FILM REVIEW

Winnie-the-Pooh: Blood and Honey **SORELLE MARSH***Student watches Winnie-the-Pooh: Blood & Honey.**Photo by Steven Garcia*

Winnie-the-Pooh: Blood and Honey, a shoestring-budget cinematic catastrophe with a score of 4% on Rotten Tomatoes, may have been the best \$5 I spent this year. The British horror film starring the famous

yellow bear is directed by the one and only disaster artist, Rhys Frake-Waterfield, and features a crude presentation of the “The Adventures of Winnie-the-Pooh” gone rabid.

This movie contains an outright

disturbing depiction of the beloved characters Pooh and Piglet, who’ve turned into cold-blooded murderers on a quest to get revenge on their friend Christopher Robin, who had betrayed and abandoned them when he ventured off to college.

The extensive introduction explains, “They renounced their humanity and returned to their animalistic roots, swearing to never talk again.” I find it bizarre that the only way to avenge themselves on Christopher is to go on a mass killing spree. A bear should know that you catch more flies with honey than vinegar.

The weak acting in the film stood out to me, highlighted by the aggravating performance of Nikolai Leon, whose acting was blander than a piece of cardboard. Having said that, despite the unstable plot and subpar performances throughout the entirety of the film, there were a few notable moments that changed my initial impression of the film from sour to sweet. I appreciated the picturesque shots of the 100 Acre Wood in the introduction. The hot tub scene was beautifully executed as I’d never in a million years expect to see an anthropomorphic bear stalking a girl relaxing in a jacuzzi.

Keep in mind it’s difficult to combine horror and comedy in a movie. In an interview with Variety, Waterfield said, “When you try and do a film like this, and it’s a really wacky concept, it’s very easy to go down a route where nothing is scary and it’s just really ridiculous

and really, like, stupid. And we wanted to go between the two.” Understanding Waterfield’s initiatives behind the film gave me greater respect for the movie. It takes a creative mind to generate pure entertainment.

Despite the low rating on Rotten Tomatoes, this film deserves more recognition and positive reviews. Who doesn’t enjoy a brilliant twist on a beloved childhood classic? After all, this film was produced on a \$100,000 budget, which is the opposite of a Hollywood-level production. This film has managed to gross up to 4 million dollars, an impressive return considering that the film was shot in just 10 days.

One of my favorite moments in the movie is Pooh’s first and final words in a demonic-sounding voice, uttering “You left” and subsequently slashing a girl. It reminds one to treat all bears with kindness. I couldn’t keep it together when Christopher absurdly cursed at Pooh during their quarrel at the 100 Acre Wood. There were so many nonsensical scenes that kept my head spinning, and it made the film’s shortcomings all worth it. I can’t wait for the sequel of this movie to be released. According to Waterfield, the budget will be “5 times larger than the previous installment.”

ALBUM REVIEW

Fall Out Boy Returns with 8th Album *So Much (for) Stardust***KEIRA FERRETTI**

For me, the name Fall Out Boy conjures up memories of my first concert, seeing them at Madison Square Garden in March of 2016. I was 12 and at the peak of my emo years. Moody and apathetic as I was, their music spoke to me in a way nothing else had before. So when I heard recently that they were releasing a new album, I was geeked.

It’s been five years since their last album (the unfortunately ill-received *Mania*), and fans have been greatly anticipating how they would recover. After all, emo kids never took kindly to their beloved bands going pop. However, *So Much (for) Stardust* is “what would it have sounded

like if we had made a record right after *Folie à Deux*,” according to lead vocalist/rhythm guitarist Patrick Stump, referring to a hit album released in 2008. It’s true! Fall Out Boy have managed to return to their roots (and not just by returning to their original label, Fueled by Ramen) and have outdone themselves.

The album opens with “Love from the Other Side,” a dazzling combo of heartbreak and epic highs that only the Chicago foursome could make work. Tumbling down through song after song of punchy writing, Fall Out Boy gives listeners a sound reminiscent of their first four albums.

Although some songs (“Heaven, Iowa” and “Fake Out”) do give

off their newer pop sound and may remind listeners of *Mania*, there is nothing to fear as they are nowhere near bad. The rest of the album reminds us of what Fall Out Boy once was and, more important, is still capable of. *So Much (for) Stardust* looks in two directions: backward through welcome callbacks to their first few years, but also forward through an obvious desire to continue to grow as artists.

Final rating: 3.5/5



So Much (for) Stardust was released on March 24, 2023. Photo by Keira Ferretti

Must-See Movies**MARYGRACE ORFANELLA****March of the Penguins** (2005)**Earth** (2007)**Dolphin Tale** (2011)**Mighty Joe Young** (1998)**Polar Bear** (2022)**Finding Nemo** (2003)

Editorial

Dear Viking News Readers,

As I prepare to step down from my position as EIC I've decided to look back at all of my time spent on the Viking News. From my first article to this, my last editorial. Going into the position of EIC I thought I knew what a leader did, boy was I wrong. Not only does the leader have to make sure that everything runs smoothly, they also have to learn when to make changes, keep things the same and to figure out how to make sure everyone has access to the resources that they need.

Luckily in my capacity as EIC I had the ability to pick the best possible team to help me. My chosen section editors, social media coordinator and website editor in conjunction with advisors Dana Hirsch and Joe Sgammato encouraged and supported and helped me with all of the changes that I wanted to make.

While it took a lot of time and effort we were able to successfully bring The Viking News into 2023 with advancements such as a new website design, an increased team of writers, a section dedicated to puzzles, a new layout and expanded page count and much more. Our puzzle page has been the biggest draw and one of my own personal favorite sections, with the content being provided primarily by Sorelle Marsh and Keira Ferretti.

While the puzzle page has greatly increased our circulation I have no doubt that our audience will continue to increase over the next semester because I am proud to announce that Keira Ferretti will be taking over as EIC in the coming school year.

I have been proud to be your EIC and I hope you have enjoyed the expanded content that was added during this time. I hope to keep serving you in other capacities for the rest of my time at WCC.



Forever Grateful,
Marygrace Orfanella
Editor in Chief

Campus Mystery Continues as Anonymous Confessional Account Shuts Down

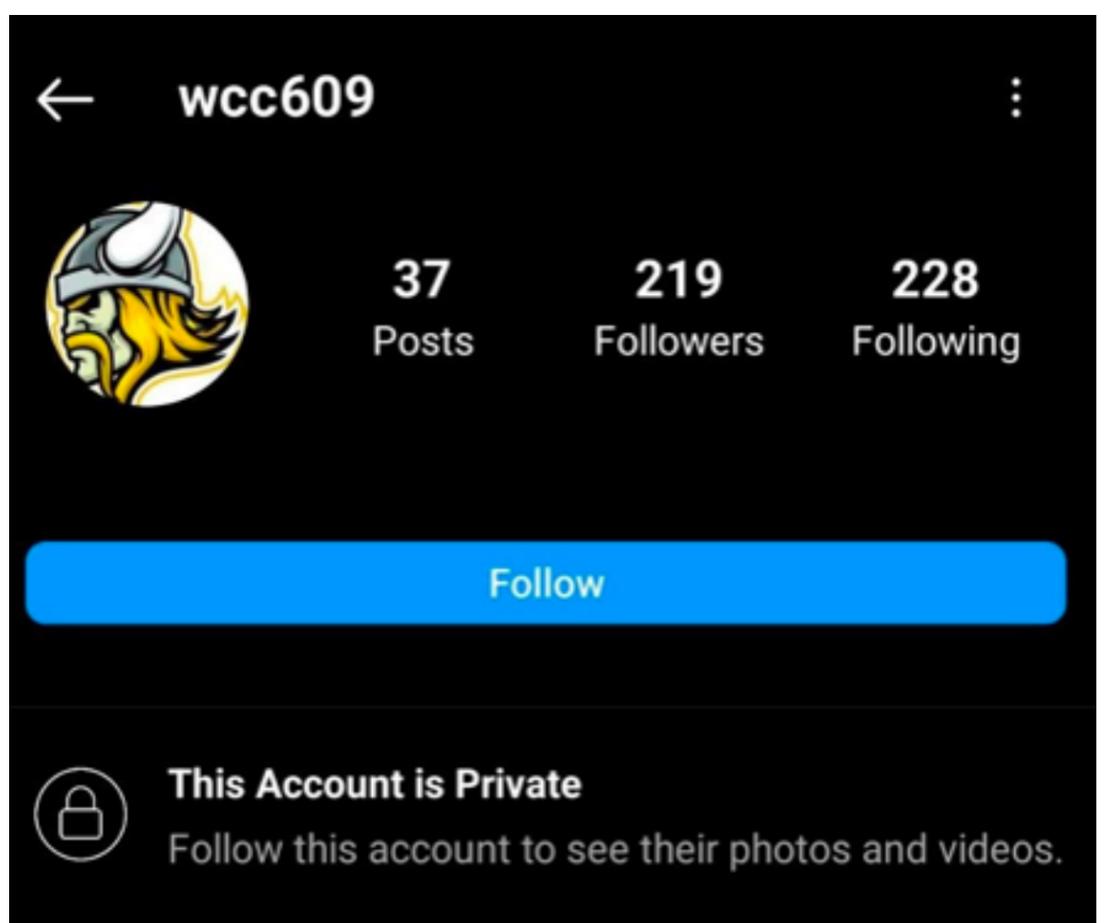
STEVEN GARCIA

On the social media platform Instagram, there has been an unidentified account called wcc609 which acts as a personal confession page. Its first post was in November of 2019. The site has been popular despite (or perhaps because of) its anonymity. "The confession page is fun and hilarious," says SUNY WCC student Felipe Zuniga. "Reading people's confession, this is what makes WCC interesting, I have never personally confessed and I would never confess to the page [and] I'm not interested in finding out who runs the page, but I like the vibe that the page gives. Expecting a confession page to stay hidden is risky and now many students have grouped together and started investigating the mastermind of the account."

The mystery account has also inspired much speculation. For example, some believe that more than one student has been running the account. Recently the account has

been conducting scavenger hunts for its campus followers. Since these began, a few lucky students have enjoyed some valuable prizes. For example, one found a rainbow projector lamp, which was hidden in a gender-neutral bathroom in the Technology Building. The second scavenger hunt winner found a \$50 UberEats Gift card hidden in another gender-neutral bathroom. "Pretty fun in finding out who runs the page and it was also fun when they did the whole scavenger hunt and the only thing I know is this person has a bunch of money," said SUNY WCC student Kayla Hidalgo.

Recently, there have been new developments. The account went from public to private, and as of April 12 at 11:30 pm, the account has been deactivated. Why was the account deactivated and how will the students who followed the account react? Will this be the end of the story, or the beginning of a new phase? Stay tuned.



First marked private, the account has now been deactivated.

Photo by Marygrace Orfanella

How to Solve the School Lunch Dilemma SORELLE MARSH

As a WCC freshman, I've been impressed with the multitude of resources and opportunities that this school offers. A few of these noteworthy amenities include Mental Health & Counseling Services, Student Involvement opportunities, Career & Transfer Services, and an engaged Faculty Student Association (FSA). But I'm also aware that some of these programs are still in need of significant improvement, primarily the school's dining services.

The majority of students are acquainted with the costly school food which poses a financial burden, especially for those who are already struggling

with tuition. Being a frequent eater at the school cafeteria, I can tell you that food prices add up quickly, especially if you're on a tight budget. Not long ago, I purchased a cup of pudding and a tray of sushi that rounded up to a whopping \$15. In addition to that, a few of these regularly sold food items have increased by another 50 cents, simply adding to the problem as a whole.

With a \$7 price tag plus taxes, the cost of sandwiches is perhaps higher than ordering one at a restaurant. Considering the volume of nourishment you get in return, it may not be a fair bargain, according to some

students. "For the amount of [money you pay for] cold sandwiches, I better be full the whole day," said WCC student Deandre Bailey.

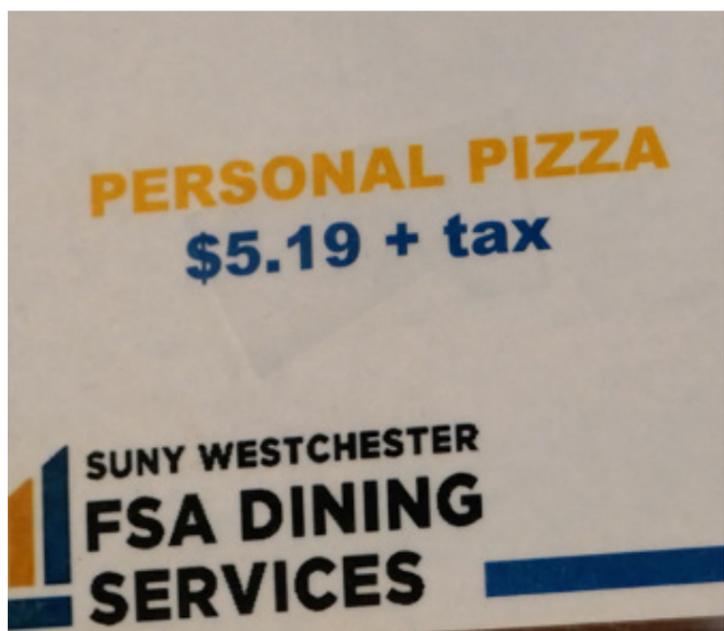
In addition to the prices of school food, the cafeteria hours are limited. For example, on Fridays, the student center cafe will close as early as 1:00 pm, leaving students who must remain on campus with highly limited options. Closing so soon can be an inconvenience and a disadvantage to students who have longer class hours on the opposite end of campus, where the Academic Arts and Health Sciences buildings are.

These restricted times can hinder the quality of education students receive at WCC. Getting a meal can be a taxing journey and can disrupt their studies. This is what WCC nursing student Lenny Marlow experiences on a day-to-day basis. "We mainly have to rely on the vending machines for our meals here. Just getting a cup of coffee can be a hard thing to do," he says.

But there may be light at the end of the tunnel. It's exciting to see the reformation that's currently taking place in the dining services. At the moment, the SGA is working to improve the dining experience of students. SGA's new President, Lotus Taylor, has taken the lead on this project by collaborating with the WCC Dining Services



The Chicken Cutlet Sandwich is one of the many sandwiches sold in Student Center Cafeteria. Photo by Sorelle Marsh



Personal pizzas are sold for \$5.19 plus tax in the Student Center Cafeteria. Photo by Sorelle Marsh

Committee to enhance student dining by increasing financial accessibility to students. Lately, the committee has offered Spring Luncheons with a budget-friendly full-course meal for only \$12. The goal of this initiative is to create an enjoyable dining experience where students can socialize with friends. In April, the menu offered students an entrée of chicken francese with mashed potatoes, vegetables, and a Caesar salad, followed by cookies and ice cream for dessert.

The school food dilemma is a difficult issue whose improvement may require an extra set of hands. This could take place by providing additional funds or even by students volunteering to help with food preparation. As a work in progress, I believe that strong cooperation between the student organizations and the school dining services can lead to innovative solutions that are both financially and nutritionally sound.

Crumbl, Spice, and Everything Nice: A New Sweet Spot LUCAS WERNER

Back in 2017, a new bakery chain called Crumbl Cookies started out of Utah and has expanded across the United States over time. In mid-March, a new location of this business opened up at the Dalewood Shopping Center on North Central Avenue in Hartsdale, right next to Shake Shack. Its grand opening was met with a line of people going out the door, waiting to try out the company's freshly baked cookies. Curious about the appeal of the cookies served at Crumbl, I interviewed Megan Neeleman, who together with her husband Seth owns the franchise.

"The company was founded in Logan, Utah in 2017," said Neeleman. "The company was founded by Jason McGowan and Sawyer Hemsley, who both shared a dream to start a bakery. Sawyer Hemsley was thinking of descriptive words for cookies and was intrigued by the word 'crumble.' They dropped the 'E' to be a bit more catchy/trendy."

According to Neeleman, the company had decided to open a

location here because there was a gap in Westchester County's local market and the company wanted to capitalize on that opportunity. "Our number one item is the homemade chocolate chip cookies that are made with real chocolate," Neeleman said with obvious pride in her product. "We also have a weekly rotating menu of over 275 cookie flavors."

If you need more than just the above paragraphs as an incentive to go to Crumbl, here are some comments on Google Reviews provided by Neeleman that, she says, made these first-time customers become regulars.

Best cookies ever. When I received the cookies they were hot and fresh. Looking forward to going back. My favorite was the churro. Super worthy to stop by. -Daniela Rosi

Awesome service and the best cookies! Fresh, soft and delicious! Each cookie flavor has its own goodness, they are amazing! -Lisa Diaz

"I had a fudge brownie from Crumbl, and it was too rich and soft for me," said Daniel Charles, The Viking News News Editor



Crumbl Cookies decorated their store logo with balloons for the big opening. Photo by Steven Garcia

and SUNY WCC student. "I prefer Famous Amos cookies instead, because dry and hard cookies are perfect for dipping into milk. Crumbl cookies don't pair well with milk."

How about you? Reviews or comments on Crumbl Cookies are hereby invited from readers. Email EditorInChiefVN@sunywcc.edu with your thoughts!

Crumbl Cookies
377 N Central Ave. (Next to Shake Shack)
Hartsdale, NY 10530
Open from 8 am - 10 pm on weekdays
8 am - 12 am Fridays and Saturdays
Closed Sundays
Crumblcookies.com
@crumblcookies

Coach Pennicooke: A Head Coach With A Heart For Community College Students

WILL MURRAY

Head coach of the SUNY Westchester Community College

Yet, this did not stop the passion he had for the game of basketball, ultimately leading him to get into the world of coaching.

and Pennicooke accepted. He began as an Assistant Men's Basketball Coach and Recruiting Coordinator at Manhattanville College. After that he applied

yourself, I know how important it is for someone to be able to guide you along your path and make things a little bit easier for you," said Pennicooke.

From his personal experience of having to give up playing basketball to be able to continue his education, he made it a point to be sympathetic to his player's work schedules or other conflicts outside of school.

"For those guys that do have to work, I'm like it is great

"So in my coaching experience, I grew up with the kids at the same time," said Pennicooke. "I grew as a coach as they grew as people. That wasn't new to me, so the communication part was a bit easier for me than it would be for a first-year coach in college, but then the administrative part was different, so it's not like high school where I could pretty much do whatever I want, when I want, pertaining to access to gyms and stuff. But there are rules in the NCAA that limit you



SUNY WCC men's basketball Head Coach Andre Pennicooke coaches the team to win.

Photo by Dani Colon

men's basketball team, Andre Pennicooke, concluded a solid first-year campaign by leading the Vikings to a semi-final. From being a SUNY WCC graduate to becoming the men's head basketball coach, Pennicooke's journey brought him back to where it almost ended.

Pennicooke began his basketball career as a student at Cardinal Spellman High School in the Bronx. After graduating, Pennicooke enrolled at SUNY WCC and hoped to continue his basketball career. Despite having a passion for the game, Pennicooke wasn't able to play basketball at SUNY WCC.

"I was actually on the team, not recruited, but was on the team for summer workouts," Pennicooke said. "But at that time, I had to work to pay for school and technology wasn't that advanced so I couldn't do uber eats. So, it was either work or basketball, and unfortunately for me in order to play basketball I had to work."

After graduating from SUNY WCC, Pennicooke went on to earn a bachelor's degree from Iona College in business administration, and a master's degree from Manhattanville College in sports business and entertainment management. He started his coaching career in 2011, when he was asked to coach the men's club basketball team at Iona. Not knowing what would come from this experience, Pennicooke soon realized that he could have a future as a coach.

"I actually never wanted to coach," said Pennicooke. "But after graduating just trying to figure things out, I love basketball, and that was one way to keep me in basketball. So, I decided to try it out and after the first year I realized I wanted to do this for the rest of my life."

At the same time, Pennicooke started coaching AAU teams in Westchester. In 2018, he had the opportunity to become a coach for an NCAA team,

for head coaching here at SUNY WCC.

Given this opportunity, Pennicooke accepted the job and began his SUNY WCC coaching career as a head coach for the college this past year.

"It really means a lot. A full circle moment," Pennicooke said. "And for me personally it is doing something that I wasn't able to do when I was younger with having total involvement in athletics. So for me, it is full circle and I just try to help the younger generation get to a point where they can have a better career, a better path than I did."

With all the experience that he accumulated over the years, it is clear that Pennicooke has solidified himself as a college head coach. Yet, as any great coach does, Pennicooke decided to focus on the leadership aspect of his role.

"I know how hard it is as a youth, and while you're in college trying to figure things out by

"For those guys that do have to work, I'm like it is great you have to work, here are our practice times so you can work outside of those times. And here are some options for you to earn money here by working inside the athletic building."

Andre Pennicooke Men's Basketball Head Coach

you have to work, here are our practice times so you can work outside of those times," Pennicooke said. "And here are some options for you to earn money here by working inside the athletic building."

As well as Pennicooke being familiar with SUNY WCC, being a first-time head coach brought new challenges.

to practices you can have each week, what you can do outside of the season, dealing with higher education administration, and just learning basketball on a more professional level."

Despite these challenges, coach Pennicooke led the Vikings to a 13-16 record, 4-4 in their conference, and a semi-final playoff in the NJCAA Region XV Tournament.



Coach Pennicooke explains a play to SUNY WCC men's basketball player Yave Cruz. Photo by Dani Colon

Camaraderie Fuels SUNY WCC Men's Baseball's Perfect Season

DANI COLON

SUNY WCC Vikings have surely been fighting hard to keep their overall record 32-4 (press time) with an almost perfect record. Several players and assistant coach Bobby Rodriguez had a few thoughts about their perfect season.

"We have a great attitude this year. Even though we have had a great year this year we are not satisfied. Our goal is to win a championship," said Thomas Browne, pitcher.

agrees with Browne's sentiments.

"Mike Manganiello is our guy who breaks it down and gets us all in the right set to play," Stockhausen said.

Manganiello remained humble and shared that he felt honored by his team's feedback.

"Knowing I have the respect and support of my teammates no matter what the world means to me," Manganiello said. "I

common goal: that National Championship in Oklahoma."

With all these wins, the team is determined and pushes forward. According to Coach Bobby, who has been coaching baseball for 12 years, four of which here at SUNY WCC, camaraderie has a lot to do with the team's success.

"These guys felt heartbreak during last year's playoffs and that alone pushed them to work their butts off and be better," Bobby said. "They did just that by holding each other accountable. They bought into our coaching staff philosophies and have just clicked as a group. They don't just click on the field, but their bonding goes beyond the two foul lines, having team gatherings and dinners. And that in itself speaks for a lot."

But the season isn't finished yet, and according to Manganiello, there is still room for improvement.

"As of right now, we feel as if we are doing everything right, going at it 110%," said Manganiello. "All we can ask for right now is to stay consistent and focused and we should be in good shape. We know we have a target on our back, but we do not fear anyone. They fear us."

Even with the amazing season the team has had, there are tense situations members endure with the spotlight on them.

"I trust all the work I put in, I try not to think at all, and I know



SUNY WCC baseball player Michael Manganiello is ready at bat.

Photo by Dani Colon

"As of right now, we feel as if we are doing everything right, going at it 110%. All we can ask for right now is to stay consistent and focused and we should be in good shape. We know we have a target on our back, but we do not fear anyone. They fear us."

Michael Manganiello

Even with this almost perfect season, Browne mentioned that there was definitely one person who had helped with the team's determination.

"We have a lot of good leadership on this team," Browne said. "Our biggest leaders this year have been both of our catchers, Mike Manganiello and Anthony Dolce."

Student Marc Stockhausen, who plays outfielder,

was always taught to lead by example. Being the guy my teammates rely on to lead by example truly shows that they have confidence in the decisions that are in the best interest of the team and our success as a whole. Overall, being recognized as a leader in tough situations can be a positive thing, but it's important to remember that leadership is a team effort and requires everyone to work together towards a

my teammates believe in me, which helps me even more," Stockhausen said about dealing with this kind of pressure.

Read more of the player's thoughts on our website at www.vikingnew.org.



SUNY WCC soccer player Luis Alvarez guards the ball from a member of the other team.

Photo by Dani Colon

A Season Of Goals: How SUNY WCC's Men's Soccer Team Prepares For The Upcoming Season

DANI COLON

Last year, the SUNY WCC soccer team had a 7-9 season. With the 2023 season on the horizon, players plan what they want to improve upon this time around. Sam Rrotaj position left wing and striker mentioned some improvements he believes he could use for the upcoming season.

"I need to improve my fitness and to be more clinical when it comes to finishing," said Sam Rrotaj, left wing and striker for the team. "The team is really determined to have a great season next year [and] our coach has already started open practices to get fit for the upcoming season and for new players to also try out. So far, we haven't had any obstacles. We all show up to practice on time and put in 100% effort every week."

With a new season rolling around the corner, there are rival schools the team is ready to face.

"Our biggest rival is Ulster College and we are prepared to face them again and hopefully win the Mid-Hudson conference tournament," said Rrotaj.

According to Alabdiel Hernandezm, the teammates that are stepping into leadership roles are Jason Otiniano, Micheal Echeverria, and himself.

"I always try to stay calm and prepared so I don't make any stupid mistakes that can cost my team the game [when facing strong rival teams]," Rrotaj said.

With team members fighting hard on the field, goalkeeper Nick Nunez puts in motivational work.

"It's the energy and adrenaline within the field and my team," said Nunez. "It's what I enjoy the most, especially being the last man to save the ball to keep my team in the game."

What keeps Nunez going is having a strong team around him, as well as the satisfaction

of working together towards a common goal.

"As players we have to trust the coaches' plans and tactics, but it could sometimes get confusing," Nunez said. "We just have to execute."

According to Nunez, he already has plans to improve for the upcoming season.

"100% I feel like as a goalkeeper, you have a different aspect of the whole entire field, so I have to get better at understanding formations to be a step ahead. I definitely learned a lot last season, especially switching over positions but overall, I feel like I helped my team on a different end."

As the players think hard about their strategies for the new season, they all agree on working even harder to be in the Mid-Hudson Conference again and win it this time around.