#### Westchester Community College's Premier News Source

# The. Viking. News

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Valhalla, NY

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### BREAK AT THE BORDER

Alternative Spring Break Offers Journey to Personal Growth



Photo credit: Lucas Cruz

#### by Guadalupe Conde

Each year, the department of Student Involvement (DSI) gives students who want to do more on Spring break than lie in the sun or sleep late for a week an opportunity to combine a rich learning experience with an immersion into an unfamiliar community. It's called Alternative Break. This year's announcement from DSI offered a trip to San Diego as well as a chance to "explore the impact of living only 15 miles from the

U.S./Mexico Border and the challenges faced by families, local farmers, businesses, and the large Chicano community." I decided to accept.

As a first-generation Chicana student myself, I wasn't sure what to expect. My main goal has been to make my parents proud and succeed academically as well as financially. But at the same time I have always seen myself as one who is faced by the hurdles that come with being a Latina woman. On this trip I met people who faced hurdles that were the same or worse than mine, and the experience taught me that I belong to a community. We learned more about Chicanx culture from many community activists and most importantly we all began our journey on identifying our role in

this movement.

For example, we went to Barrio Logan, a small Chicanx community that is host to Chicano Park as well as many Chicanx-owned businesses which strive to keep the Chicanx culture alive and lift up one another. Chicano Park, an important site itself, represents the strength and courage of the San Diego Chicanx population as well as the

creativity and resourcefulness within them. We were introduced to Rigo Reyes, the Program Director of VIA International and long-time Chicano activist in the San Diego area, as well as a member of the Amigos Car Club.

Some of the encounters were overwhelming. For example, we witnessed two men get detained at the San Diego-Tijuana border. In addition, we

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### Yonkers branch targets Fall '22 opening

#### by Liam Murphy

With an eye toward making a WCC education more accessible to residents of southern Westchester, the college is moving the Yonkers Cross County campus to a much larger space on the third floor of the Target department store in the Cross County Mall. The present Cross County site will be vacated during a

move this summer. The new campus will be around 40,000 square feet, three times the size of the current Yonkers The new campus will offer five compete degree programs: Liberal Arts & Sciences, Humanities, A.A.; Liberal Arts & Sciences, Social Sciences, A.A.; Business Management, A.S.; Criminal Justice-Police, A.A.S.; and Fashion Design & Technology, A.A.S. The proximity to



New York City is being seen as an advantage of the branch campus, especially for majors such

as Business and Fashion Design. There is also a positive note for Criminal Justice majors since Yonkers has the

largest urban police force in Westchester County.

There will be expanded academic and student services available. The college will have its own private entrance on the upper level. Shoppers at the old Sears Wanamaker's retail stores will recognize this as the former entrance to the upper level of the stores. The entrance boasts plenty of free parking.

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## NEWS

#### Alternative Spring Break Offers Journey to Personal Growth

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Alternative Break 2022 students visit Chicano Park, San Diego.

also met Robert Vivar, a Chicano U.S. military veteran who was deported in 2003 and fought almost 20 years to come back legally to the United States.

Perhaps the greatest wisdom that I absorbed from the trip was the value of community. Remembering your roots and knowing your identity was a principle

we are gifted with and share uplift our community. them with others. Many of

> now, but we must fight to deconstruct the system and create a new, fairer one.

emphasized to us. Another gatekeep our talents. We was to remember to use the should share our talents, knowledge and talents that which hold great power to

We should also remem-

us who come from hum- ber our roots. Even when ble backgrounds dream of we end up leaving home being successful. Success and start enjoying the fruits means something different of our success, we should for each of us, but in all remember where we came cases it is vital to remind from so that we can return ourselves that we shouldn't and give back to the same community that supported us. We may be the outliers of our community right

> Our whole group was positively impacted. "The Alternative Break experience was incredible," said Prof. Tanvir Toy, one of our advisors. "After spending

an entire week with ten students...I feel like I've developed a bond that will always be there.... I am so proud of our students for volunteering to immerse themselves in Chicano culture and learning about the immigrant experience." One of my fellow students, Melissa Brown, called the trip

"an experience I will never forget. I would describe the material as heavy, and emotionally taxing. However, I have learned so many invaluable life lessons from fellow students and faculty members on the trip, as well as individuals we met along the way."



Prof. Tanvir Toy takes selfie of Alt Break group.



### Yonkers Branch Targets Fall 2022 Opening

Continued from page 1

The new campus will have a spacious lobby with welcome desk for one-stop support for students and visitors, an event space, a canteen/café, two workforce training labs, ten standard classrooms, two instructional computer labs (ESL & Credit), a multiuse science lab, a fashion design lab, and multi-use

learning commons.

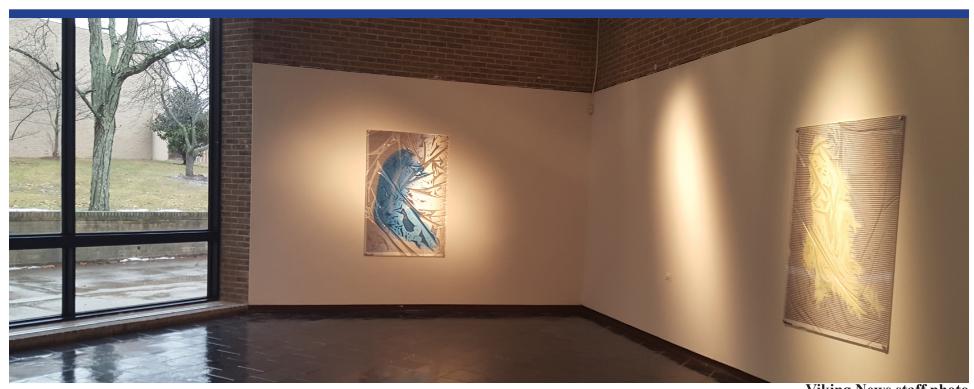
According to Joseph Cooke, the director of the new campus, there will be a generous amount of office space for the teaching staff, including adjunct office space. The lack of sufficient office space for adjunct faculty is a problem on the main campus. Some students are wax-

ing optimistic over the new Yonkers campus. Brian Rios, a sophomore majoring in Business Administration, says he is excited about the fall opening of the new campus. "First and foremost, it will be less of a commute for me as I currently live in Yonkers, and I don't drive.' he says. "I will be able to get to and from as

campus more easily." Brian is also excited about the 140 class offerings. "I am really optimistic and believe this new location will certainly be a plus for students."

A major attraction of the Yonkers campus is the shorter traveling distance for students from the low-Westchester area such Yonkers, Mount Vernon, New Rochelle, and the Bronx, among other towns. Students from such areas will save commuting time. As classes shift back to in-person, some students have said that commuting times will be a factor in their decision to enroll at WCC. The new campus is conveniently accessible via public transportation.

# NEWS



#### What You Get Is More Than What You See

#### HAAB Gallery Showcases Nontraditional Photography

#### by Zefferino Carriero

The latest exhibit at the WCC Art Gallery, located on the 3rd floor of the Hankin Academic Arts Building, is now open to the public. Sarah Mills, professor of Art History at WCC is the curator of the exhibit. The artists selected for the show entitled "Plane Break" share a common belief that the perception of photography is just as important as the photo itself, with the spectator and their observations adding to the lore and perception of the work. What happens when the artist intentionally alters their work so as to disrupt the viewer's interpretation? What we get is a sudden "break" of the plane between illusion and reality.

Three artists are represented: Monika Sziládi, Jason Isolini, and Annie Ling.

Sziládi was born and raised in Hungary and now works in New York City. She holds a MFA in Photography from Yale and a Maîtrise in Art History and Archaeology from Sorbonne University in Paris. In her work, Sziládi explores the transhumanist aspect of photography. For Sziládi, the implementation of technology in our daily lives has directly impacted our expectations regarding socialization. "Have digital devices become an extension of our bodies and souls," she asks. How do we grapple with our own inventions?"



Annie Ling, Sad Woman (Kitchen)

To Sziládi, the implementation and subsequent obsession with technology is just as much a visual blight as a psychological one. To show this, Sziladi superimposes elements external to the subject on the subject itself, to the extent that it is often difficult to tell what's original and what's supplemental. For Sziladi, this sentiment echoes the false perceptions of technology and societal standards imparted by the advent of social media.

Jason Isolini is an artist, media sculptor, and digital cartographer based in

Brooklyn. He received his BFA in photography and video from the School of Visual Arts New York City, and his MFA from the Art Institute of Chicago. In his work, Isolini takes special note of the performative aspect of photography: the display of photographs in artistic spaces, where the primarily performance that packaging, or presentation, bonds the practice togethbecomes part of the work er." itself. "I think of my work



Monika Sziladi, Untitled (Two or More)



Jason Isoline, Untitled (Magenta)

In one of Isolini's works, as a model of cartography, "Untitled (Magenta)," the where narrative can go in purposely mismounted unmultiple directions," he has derlying sheet urges the said. "This can take form in viewer to acknowledge the photography, moving im-lens itself, cascading with age, and sculpture, but it's iridescent hue. By restricting the forms to only the base colors of print media itself (cyan, yellow, magenta, and black) the work takes on an industrialist motif, the assembly itself being art.

> Born in Taipei, Annie Ling was raised by multiple families. Her work lies on the boundaries between investigative, exploratory, and liminal. Annie has lectured at Columbia University and was awarded the New York Foundation of the Arts (NYFA) fellowship for photography. In

her series "Still Life," Ling explores the transcience of memory. Photographs of a family emerge after they have been lost or forgotten, with some of the human figures replaced by blank spaces. With identities withheld, spectators are left to wonder and question, filling in the spaces with memories of their own, or questioning how they went missing to begin with. Only one thing is certain for the viewer: they were once here, and now they are gone. Only the pictures remain.

"Plane Break" will be open to the public through April 30.

Exhibit photos are reprinted here through the courtesy of the artists.

# **OPINION**

### Women Who Rock the Campus

whose careers we take for

On The campus of WCC there are many people

by Adam Adamu

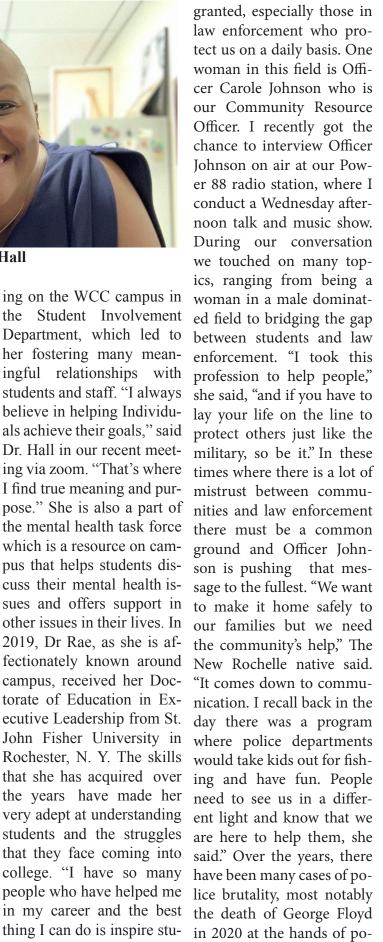


DSI Assoc. Dir. Dr. Rachele Hall

When March comes we celebrate Women's History Month. I personally feel that the amazing contributions women have made to society shouldn't be relegated to one month but should be celebrated on a daily basis. We have all seen women constantly breaking barriers and shattering the proverbial "glass ceiling." There are many women doing extraordinary things on campus and I would like to tell them all that they are appreciated and their contribution is recognized. For this issue of The Viking News I want to spotlight three of the amazing women in our college community doing exceptional work in their respective fields. I also wanted to interview them and get a better understanding of their backgrounds and what ultimately motivates them and inspires them to achieve their goals.

The first woman I interviewed was Dr. Rachele Hall, who is the Associate Director of Student Involvement here at WCC and has been involved in the campus community for over a decade. She received her undergraduate degree in philosophy from SUNY Oneonta in 2006. While there, she was actively involved in many campus activities such as helping to found Mu Sigma Upsilon chapter, the first minority-based sorority at SUNY Oneonta. She was also an RA (Resident Assistant ) On the campus. This foundation then led to her receiving her Masters of Education from SUNY/Albany in 2009. In 2011, Dr. Hall began work-

ing on the WCC campus in the Student Involvement Department, which led to her fostering many meaningful relationships with students and staff. "I always believe in helping Individuals achieve their goals," said Dr. Hall in our recent meeting via zoom. "That's where I find true meaning and purpose." She is also a part of the mental health task force which is a resource on campus that helps students discuss their mental health issues and offers support in other issues in their lives. In 2019, Dr Rae, as she is affectionately known around campus, received her Doctorate of Education in Executive Leadership from St. John Fisher University in Rochester, N. Y. The skills that she has acquired over the years have made her very adept at understanding students and the struggles that they face coming into college. "I have so many dents."





Officer Carole Johnson

lice officer Derek Chauvin. apply," she explained. How-Floyd's death shocked the ever, her mother remindworld and opened up the ed her "Tu valles mucho," conversation on this issue which translates to "You again, sparking nationwide are worthy." Those words protests and in some cases alone gave Jessica a whole riots. "It was sad," said officer new outlook, one that she Johnson in response to the hadn't had before. "Growing death of George Floyd. "It's up I saw my mom raise me something that should have as a single mother and she never happened. I felt that always persevered through the situation certainly could any obstacle that came her have been handled different- way; that was inspiration-

interviewed was Jessica Gra- and also a greater sense of ramajo, Assistant Director of belonging no matter where

al for me." This led to her The next WCC woman I gaining more confidence Student Involvement here. she went. After graduating



DSI Asst. Dir. Jessica Gramajo

Anyone who's ever been part of any of the dozens of clubs here at WCC has benefitted from Jessi's guidance and care. Jessi is herself a WCC alum, having graduated in 2014 with an Associate of Arts degree in Communications/Journalism. During her time as a student she was engaged in many activities. She was president of W.E.B., which is the student-run events board on campus and was also president of the Making a Difference volunteer club. "WCC opened so many doors for me," says Jessi. "Engaging with students and people who cared about my personal growth was so important." As a first generation college student there were many obstacles that she had to overcome. At times she felt undeserving of the opportunities available to her. "I didn't feel worthy of applying for certain scholarships. It seemed like something that was not attainable for me, so sometimes I wouldn't even try to

from WCC Jessica continued to work on the campus in various ways, from counseling and helping students register for courses to answering calls to the Admissions Office. She furthered her education at Brooklyn College, earning a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Radio, Television and Communication Sciences in 2016. From there she went on to receive her Master of Arts degree in Higher Education and Student Affairs in 2019 from UConn. From my own experience Jessica Gramajo has always been a person that is willing to help and see individuals succeed. As a proud member of the Latinx community (of Mexican and Guatemalan descent) Jessica has always stayed true to her roots and encourages young women to always be authentic. "We are constantly put under a microscope, but when you are your authentic self no one can take that from you."

# **FEATURES**

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# **DEI Workshop** Highlights **Issues of Identity** and Acceptance

by Marygrace Orfanella

DEI is a phrase becoming ever more familiar not only on the WCC campus but in schools and companies around the country. The letters stand for diversity, equity, and inclusion. While these are not new concepts they are being used increasto define WCC's current mission not only to accept but to celebrate the differences among its students and staff. The ultimate goal is to make them feel safer and happier in their environment.

As part of this effort, a workshop in DEI was conducted on Feb 21 by Juan-Carlos Piñeiro, Assistant Director of Student Involvement for Leadership and Multicultural Programs, and Dr. Rinardo Reddick, Chief Diversity Officer of the college. The remote event was one of the core sessions of the college's Leadership Development Badge program being administered through the department of Student Involvement.

The workshop began with an exercise to help students truly understand what diversity, equity, and inclusion mean. Students were asked to write down five groups that they felt made up part

of their identity, whether it was their gender, religion, sexual orientation, race, disability, or other. They were then asked to cross out these groups one by one, analyzing the feeling that they got when told they could only identify as the remaining groups. Finally, only one was left. They were then asked to think about how they would feel if they could only identify as this one thing. For most students it was distressing.

This is the feeling, they were told, that individuals have when people only see them as one thing and aren't open to acknowledging who they are and what makes them special, or—even worse—when they ostracize and ridicule them for

Dr. Reddick and Juan-Carlos Piñeiro continued their workshop by explaining what diversity, equity, and inclusion mean. To Piñeiro, "Diverse, equitable and inclusive leadership is the act of doing one's best to treat others as humans and not as projections of one's own expectations for others." When one engages others as individuals, he continued, "one can more aptly create spaces in which

human ingenuity, grace and abundance can more fully flourish." In addition, he said, one can "locate solutions that become restricted due to inequitable environments driven by exclusivity and homogeneity."

The workshop discussions made clear that diversity is made up of all the things that make people different and that the college wants everyone to feel that they can be different without having to worry about what others will think or do. Equity is when each person, no matter how diverse, has the same opportunities as everyone else; WCC wants students to be able to have the same educational, social, and economic opportunities. Inclusion is when every person feels respected and valued among their peers despite their differences. The two workshop leaders made clear that WCC wants every student to know that they are valued and important not just despite but because of their differences.

For more information on the Leadership Development Badge program, contact the Department of Student Involvement.

### Film Club presents the 10th Annual **WCC** Film Festival

Of student films

**Thursday April 21 Gateway Center** 

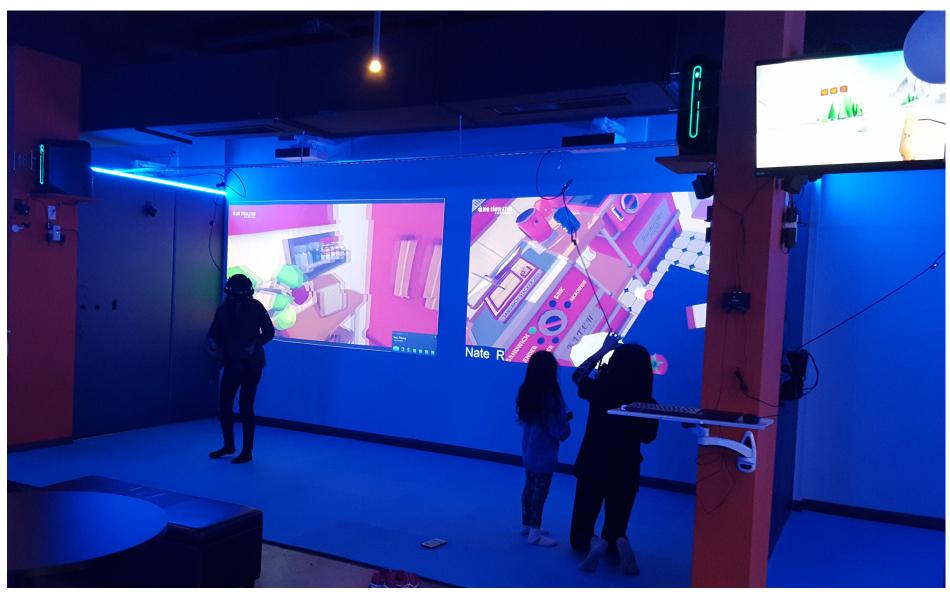
Festivities start at 4 pm. Films shown at 6 pm.

Food! Gifts! Celeb Photo Booth! And more! The last hurrah before exams! Tip: Ask your film prof about extra credit for attending.

# FEATURES

### "How's Your Semester Going?" I'm Having a Blast (Among Other Things)

by Wolfgang Punk



A fragmented social web, big?

Both: That's how I'd describe the WCC campus scene this semester. Of course we have COVID-19 to thank for that. Nevertheless, there sure isn't a lack of events or clubs. I had two pleasant experipus. Despite the universe kicking us in the shins, I've taken the time to enjoy the smaller things in life.

During February, a.k.a. Black History Month, I attended a tribute to West African dance, held in the HAAB Auditorium. I hadn't been on campus in a long time, and I managed to get lost in the Academic Arts Building. Instead of walking through the front door, I came through the back, and ran smack into one of the dancers. He seemed lost himself, searching for something,

but he pointed me in the or the rebirth of something right direction and I found the auditorium, which was fairly empty. There was a family that sat to the side, and they even participated in the dancing. A couple of students also came just in time for the dancing, which was very enjoyable.

The second on-campus ences on campus in the last event took place at the bemonth, and one off cam- ginning of March: Blaster Ball! Like the dancing event, this one was hosted by Dr. Rachele Hall, Associate Director of the Department of Student Involvement. It was run by Mario, a Record-A-Hit Entertainment employee and an interesting chap. I happened to be in the gym already when he came in, walking in with a Bang energy drink. He told me all about the kind of work they do, how colleges are their main source of income, and how he travels all the time. Only ever home once a week. The game was simple, think paint ball but with

bigger balls. The weapon of choice was this combination of a squirt gun and an air tank that made a deafening sound when you pulled the trigger fast. This wasn't my first rodeo, and the cover provided was more than enough to have a real life warzone experience. Again, the crowd wasn't big, but it included fun people, such as Power Radio's Santino and a couple of his friends.

And then there was the off-campus event, which came about when an employee of a new virtual reality arcade invited us to come and check the place out. It's called "5th Dimension VR." The location is great, 55 Church Street in White Plains, a couple blocks away from the city center. This is the perfect place if you're looking for something new and different to do. The entire arcade has a total of eighteen booths, with two party rooms if any of you have a birthday coming up, and over thirty games to choose from. With story-rich games such as Half Life, to a basic bow and arrow game, Eleven Assassins. There's even a paintball game if you've got the itch. To play costs about thirty bucks for an hour, fifty for two. The space is huge and there's a pizza shop next door if you get hungry.

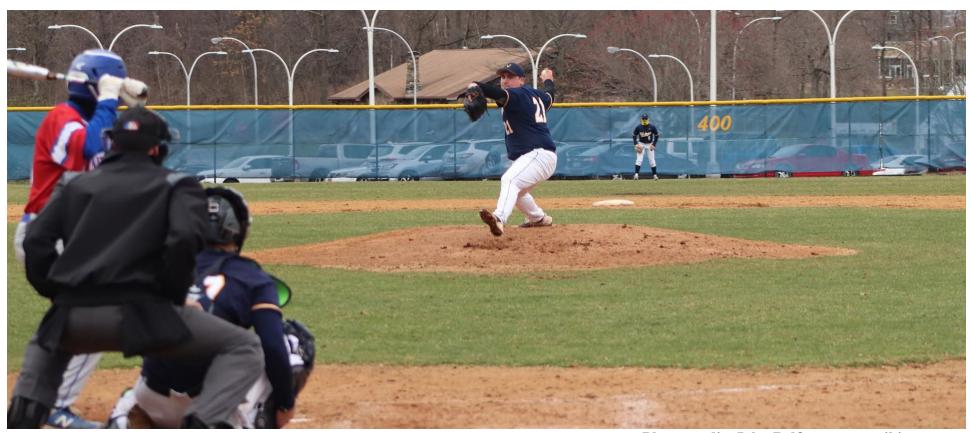
I was lucky enough to not feel any motion sickness from the headsets, because I found myself floating in mid air sometimes. So here you have it: A place away from home, a place away from academics, a place dif**Viling News Staff Photos** 

ferent from clubs and social interaction. So much so that you're literally in a different world. The graphics of the Half Life game were awe inspiring.I got used to the constructed world, and felt comfortable in it.

I hope that during the fall semester the campus will be a lot more energetic. That's what I'm looking forward to: The return of on-campus classes: the hordes of sleep-deprived teenagers headed to their next class. And, if I'm lucky, more people showing up at some pretty great events.



# **SPORTS**



John Peteani throws a pitch to visiting UCONN-Avery Point

Photo credit: John Belfiore, gowccvikings.com

# WCC Baseball Takes Three Out of Four From UCONN-Avery Point in Late March Series

#### **Report courtesy of Gowccvikings.com**

It was literally the most consequential weekend of games for the Westchester Community College Baseball team in years, and when the final out was finally recorded to complete a thrilling 7-6 win over UCONN-Avery Point during Sunday's nightcap, a message was sent that the Vikings are once again a contender. Not only did Westchester end a weekend of thrillers with a win, but

It was literally the most sequential weekend of games during a single seanes for the Westches- community College the first time since anybody seball team in years, can remember ... if ever.

After winning back-to-back 5-2 games at UCONN Avery Point on Saturday, March 26. Westchester returned home on Sunday for another twin-bill, and quickly realized why the UCONN Pointers have entrenched themselves as the premiere program in the

district for years on end. Westchester had While all of the momentum in the world, UCONN had a pitcher by the name of Keegan Daigle with an electric right arm that stymied the Vikings from the start. For the first six innings, Daigle proved to be virtually unhittable, and despite a terrific effort by Westchester pitcher Thomas Browne the Vikings trailed 5-0 heading into the bottom of the seventh inning.

And, as they have done all season to this point ... the Vikings rallied.

Freshman John Peteani became the third Westchester pitcher of the game, and simply turned in a masterpiece. He did not allow an earned run over 4.1 fantastic innings, did not walk a single batter, and allowed only four hits.

Just as Peteani shut down the UCONN bats, the Westchester bats came alive. Westchester scored five runs during the bottom of the fourth inning to take a 5-4 lead. Sophomore CJ Spence scored an unearned run to make it 4-1, and then Ambrosecchia singled home Bobby Beaton and freshman Lucas feliciano to make it 4-3. Baronian then came through once again, singling home Osso and Ambrosecchia to

give Westchester its first lead of the day, 5-4.

But the Pointers did not go down quietly, scoring twice during the top of the seventh inning to make it 7-6. With runners at first and second and two outs, freshman Matt Jacobson induced a ground out for his first career save, to give Westchester an enormous non-region win.

But the story of the

game was the effort of Peteani, who improved to 2-0 for the 2022 season. He now leads the Vikings with a 1.64 ERA.





Freshman pitcher John Peteani Photo credit: gowccvikings.com



Sophomore CJ Spence Photo credit: gowccvikings.com

# April 11



Final Four excitement at the New Orleans Superdome

Photo credit: goglobalevent.com

### A Long and Winding Road to the Final Four, A Short Exciting Road to the Title

#### by Tom Kavanagh

Let's set the scene for perfect ending to a legendone of the greatest college ary career that has lasted basketball games in NCAA more than 40 years than to history. bring a championship back

The Final Four was set. to Durham.

A No. 8-seed was the outlier Villanova was looking on paper, but the University to win their fourth national of North Carolina has a stel- championship. This would lar reputation when it comes be their first since 2018. to athletics that belied its They also got the job done low standing. The other two years earlier. The Kanthree came as no surprise: sas Jayhawks were looking Duke and Villanova were to win for the first time in No. 2 seeds and Kansas was fourteen years and were a No.1 seed. coming in hot, having lost

Legendary Duke coach only six games all season. Mike Krzyzewski was fi-Luckily, we fans were nal four bound in his final able to watch and enjoy a year. It's only fitting that he fierce underdog make hiswould meet the North Car- tory when St. Peter's fought olina Tar Heels in an ACC their way to the Elite Eight. matchup that was unlike- The small Jesuit university ly to disappoint. The Duke in Jersey City with an en-Blue Devils were looking rollment of approximately for revenge as they had lost 3,000 students shocked the to the Tar Heels in the ACC country as they were the tournament. There would first 15 seed to make it that not have been more of a far. A true Cinderella team

people to root against.

Their run came to an and strong Tar Heel team. The matchup between the two showed that eventually the more talented team will win. It's practically inevitable. Nevertheless, the peroutside of Manhattan gave people something to smile

There were only powerhouse programs left standing. No matter which team won the tournament, no one could call it an upset.

Cut to the Superdome Saturday night April 2. In a fierce contest of which both coaches and both schools could be proud, The Tar Heels and the Blue Devils duked it out (excuse the pun). What fan could ask more from a championship

that made it impossible for more from a championship game as the lead alternated back and forth in the final minend when they met the fast utes of the game. Ultimately, UNC was triumphant.

Not so nail-biting was The Jayhawks' decisive victory over Villanova. With star guard Justin Moore sidelined by injury, the unMoored Wildcats sistent Peacocks from right never really recovered from an early 10-0 deficit, succumbing to Kansas 81-64.

> And that led to the climax of March Madness, the title game. Down by 15 at halftime, the Jayhawks came out for blood in the second half, reducing their deficit to six seemingly within seconds. In the end, Kansas beat North Carolina 72-69.

> Upsets aplenty. A Cinderella team to root for. An exciting climax with this year's Final Four. No one can say this year's March Madness didn't deliver.



Archived photo from one of the classic matchups between Duke and UNC

Wikipedia Commons