

The Banner

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Issue # 9



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Head Swim Coach In Too Deep

Men's Swimming Program May Face Harsh Penalties

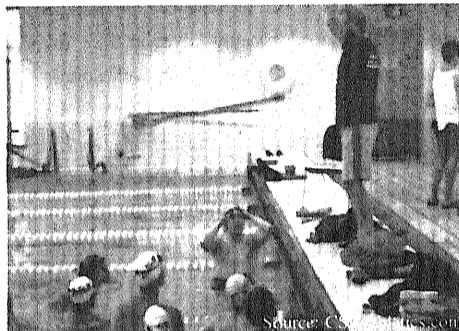
BY BRADLEY POPKIN

The men's swimming program will pay a price based on an NCAA Division III Committee on Infractions report released in late November. The report covers a period of allegedly unethical conduct by former coach, Oleg Soloviev, which included providing cost-free housing to one student, from 2006-2012.

"In July 2011, the College became aware of improprieties in its men's swimming program and self-reported the violations to the NCAA," said President Fritz. "A joint investigation by the NCAA Enforcement Division ensued, and on March 14, 2013 the NCAA issued a formal Notice of Allegations (NOA)."

Fritz participated in a hearing held by the infractions committee in August. The college submitted a formal response to the NOA in June 2013.

Penalties may include a four-year probationary period and a two-year ban on post-season competition; putting a halt on potential



NCAA title aspirations of the talented Dolphins.

Additionally, all individual records of six student-athletes from the time they became ineligible for competition through the time their eligibility was reinstated will be vacated.

Athletic Director Charles Gomes would not provide any names for the other affected athletes and declined to comment on the infractions and subsequent punishment. However, Gomes was able to offer insight on

one portion of the investigation.

"Nothing related to the NCAA investigation had anything to do with the budget," said Gomes.

The student activity fee provides funding to athletics. Supplemental funding can be provided to teams by the recreational center through membership fees and rentals. CSI Association Executive Director, Marianne McLaughlin, handles the development and review of activity fee budgets.

"To my knowledge, none of the money came from college related funds or budgets," said McLaughlin.

According to the NCAA report, "the administration never required Soloviev to give an accounting of his recruitment activities." The report also claimed, Soloviev was recruiting international athletes electronically and at times when he was vacationing overseas.

The committee found that Soloviev facili-

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CSI Students Face Financial Aid Problems

BY EDWARD ANGELL

Students at the College of Staten Island are not receiving their financial aid payments on time, and with the staff losing their handle on the CUNYfirst system, applying for funds and receiving them may only get worse.

In 2012 over 80% of students in public universities received some form of financial help, according to the U.S. Department of Education. CSI is no exception to the overwhelming amounts of students who need help to pay their way.

Since the current semester began, there has been over 10,000 students who have traveled to building 2A room 401 in order to acquire funds for their school bills. But many have encountered issues when it comes to finalizing payment. One issue occurred with Robert Gonzales, a student at CSI who has had a considerably hard time collecting his financial aid money since the begin-

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Children Center Leaves Parents in the Dark



Photo Credit: Matthew Bergman

BY VICTORIA CAROCCIA

Student parents in the Evening and Weekend Program at the College of Staten Island are pushing for later hours at the Children's Center (2R) to accommodate those enrolled in night classes.

The Children's Center at CSI provides child care and educational programs for children of students at the college. The center is open weekdays from 7AM to 6:30PM and offers care for infants, toddlers, preschool, and school-age children. While the

program is greatly beneficial to student parents who attend day classes, those enrolled in The Evening and Weekend Program can't utilize the center's services.

"The Children's Center is open until 6:30PM, but that's when most of my classes start," said Precious Sherman a Sophomore Psychology Major and a single parent to eight year old Genesis. Sherman, who works and attends school full time, enrolled in the Evening and Weekend program and registered her daughter in the center's after school program.

Because the Children's Center closes early, Sherman has to pick up her daughter and often times bring her along to class.

"Most of my professors don't mind because she sits quietly with her iPad and headphones and keeps to herself," said Sherman. "But some professors don't allow any visitors to the class." In those cases, Sherman will either pay for a babysitter or just stay home from class that evening.

According to their website, the Children's Center is funded

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

To the Editor,

We've seen it time and again, companies placing the priority of their profits in front of public health concerns and the environment. No matter how much money the gas companies are placing into their advertising campaigns, we know they cannot hide the truth. We've seen the horrific effects the natural gas industry has caused in Pennsylvania, Texas, Ohio and Wyoming. In Pennsylvania, there have been countless reports of toxic tap water due to failing cement casings. In Texas, scientists have shown a direct correlation between the gas boom in Dallas/Ft. Worth and the increase of cancer rates. Small towns in Ohio have become the victims of minor earthquakes, having never dealt with them before. The Green Upper River Basin region of Wyoming has had days with more smog in their air than Los Angeles. These are just some of the disgusting effects fracking has had on the United States.

In Staten Island, we've had our own tragic experiences. In the winter of 1973, 42 workers inside one of TETCO's natural gas tanks here in Staten Island were killed in a disastrous explosion. We know that banning hydrofracking is the right thing to do, and urging Governor Cuomo is the only way we can win. New York State needs energy solutions that are in line with the future. Call 1-800-566-5020 to ban hydrofracking in New York!

Matt Zheleznyak NYPIRG
csi@nypirg.org

Re: "Soon You Will Need a Fake ID to Buy Both Beer & Cigarettes"

Raising the age to consume cigarettes is honestly pointless in my opinion. I agree with John L. Falcone III wholeheartedly. If you can vote legally and fight in a war at 18 you should have the privilege of buying a beer and some smokes. The only thing this law will do is send nicotine hungry folks over the bridge to Jersey where the legal age is 19 and where cigarettes are half the price of those in NY. Now New Jersey will be getting our hard earned cash instead of our own state. Good job Bloomberg, just one last way to screw up our city before stepping down from office.

Terri Caputo

Re: "Catching Fire Tops the November Box Office"

This is a fantastic review. I really liked how she was able to describe the basis of the film without giving major key moments away. I completely agree with the commentary regarding Jennifer Lawrence's portrayal of the character. I think she did an incredible job at showing Katniss' vulnerability in this film. I also had no idea that the costumes were taken off the runway. That is awesome! Also, the odds being "ever in their favor" quote, bravo. This article was very well done.

Jenna Rubertone

Re: "Sex & the Island: The Best Albums for Getting the Biggest Bang for Your Buck"

I really enjoyed all the collaboration that went into this article. The variety of albums and sensual language makes all the music tempting. However, the page was a difficult read because each article was chopped into parts that continued in other parts of the page. So I had to find where other paragraphs work since it wasn't together. Still enjoyable though.

Lucia Rossi

Re: "A New Cave Carved Out for the Dolphin Cove"

This is a good article because it really let's the growing concern for more dorms on campus. If we can't fill the third dorm, what happens if you can't pay off our debt we owe? Many questions arise from this.

John McCarthy

Re: "CSI's NYPRIG Chapter Faces Lack of Cohesion"

This is a concerned party who, has been a friend to Andrew Oppenheimer and has gotten to know Matt Zheleznyak on a professional level. This article entitled "CSI's NYPIRG Chapter Faces Lack of Cohesion" is well placed. I know Andrew personally and that his leadership came from the heart. This was a man who was welcome with so many because he was patient and cared about what he did. Matthew is someone I have given benefit of the doubt to even though he brashly did not wait to ask my professor if he could present. He nearly

came into the class before she arrived and continued to present even after she arrived and got settled. Irritated I knew Andrew would never on his worst day do such a thing. Also, it saddens me to say that Matthew did in fact say he enjoys a certain part of NYC because, "it's white." This overgrown youth who is given way to the stereo typical wear her possibly racist connotation is unacceptable! Why should an organization replace a man who does good work, above and beyond, with one such as this? I call in question NYPIRG superiors leadership and all their agenda. Should they not bring back Andrew, and I say we as a community should petition for his return, that they should be removed from CSI.

Anthony Acevedo

Re: "Biggie Jackets Make More Than a Fashion Statement"

I took an interest in this article simply because I do have a younger male family member who was punched in the face for this exact reason. I think it's disgusting how kids and I do mean kids, are being harmed over a stupid jacket. It upsets me because of how hard a certain family member worked for his jacket, yet these kind of things are what is going on in society. Nothing like that should ever have to occur, but sadly it does.

Rosalie Oquendo

Re: "Black Friday Returns to Cause Havoc and Happiness"

You never know how crazy Black Friday is, until you work in retail. To many shoppers, Black Friday is the moment they've been longing for the entire year. To employees, it is safe to say that it is not! In fact, Black Friday is a total nightmare. This year, I started working at the Staten Island mall for the first time and luckily my first day landed on a Black Friday. I worked for eight hours and for those eight hours, I thought I was going to lose it. Customers were somewhat inconsiderate. They tried on clothes and then threw them on the floor, expecting someone to clean up after them. And, the more close I picked up, the more I realized how much work there was to be done. The whole time I thought to myself "are you kidding me?"

Hadiatou Wann

"In Too Deep?"
Continued from Front Page

tated the visa process for five international prospects; arranged for reduced-cost lifeguard certification classes for three-student athletes and signed leases for four student-athletes.

"The college lacked control of its athletic department when it failed to provide adequate NCAA rules education, failed to monitor the recruitment activities of the former coach and failed to monitor student-athlete housing arrangements," an NCAA official said at a press conference held on November 21.

The official also acknowledged that the college "indirectly provided financial assistance to prospects" by lowering swim lane rates for the private swim club and "permitted certain student-athletes to compete without executing student-statements."

Suspicion of any wrongdoing stemmed from a posting Soloviev made in July of 2011 on the website of a private swim club, an enterprise that he formed in 2003 and continued to run. An employee of CSI spotted the message, which requested that members of the swim club donate household items for two international prospects that were scheduled to arrive in the U.S. later that year. The message alerted the college to review files it maintained on international students.

"The institution discovered documentation in which the former coach, his wife or the

"Children's Center Leaves Parents"
Continued from Front Page

through CSI student activity fees, state and federal grant money, and a fee of \$2 per hour. Sherman feels that, because the students are paying for it, the center should be able to extend their hours.

"If CSI can't provide me with the child care I need, then why would I stay?" Sherman explained that out of the eleven CUNY senior colleges, nine of them offer child care. "I would probably spend the same amount of money commuting as I do on private childcare. If tuition is the same price and I get the same amount for financial aid, then I may have to transfer."

In an attempt to resolve this issue, Sherman contacted Cassandra Emery, the Evening and Weekend Commissioner for Student Government.

"Parents going to school usually have to work during the day to pay for their living expenses and then attend evening classes or weekend classes," said Emery. "Without reliable care for their children, this makes this stressful and sometimes impossible."

Emery, who is also a student parent, was unaware of the center's evening care and enrolled in day classes to avoid any scheduling conflicts. However, students like Sherman don't have that kind of flexibility and would need to utilize the center's nighttime hours.

"The Children's Center offers evening care when the demand for child care is over five children per night," said Emery. "In the past, this demand has not been enough for them to continue evening services, so they haven't been promoting it and many people at the college didn't know they even offered it. The center is in part funded by student activity fees that evening and weekend students also pay. Therefore, they are paying for something that should be available to them."

Cynthia Murphy, the director of the Children's Center, confirmed this information and also discussed why it is difficult to provide

private swim club had agreed to sponsor and/or provide room and board to four incoming international student-athletes," noted the NCAA report.

According to a statement by President Fritz, "The NCAA imposed upon the former coach a show-cause order, the most severe penalty the NCAA can levy against a coach. This affects future employment for the next four years at an NCAA member institution".

"I believe that due to our proactive measures, including self-imposed remedial measures, the College was able to preserve the continuation of our swimming program and the integrity of our athletics program," said Fritz.

According to Fritz, "there was no allegation that the academic integrity of the College's students or faculty was ever compromised".

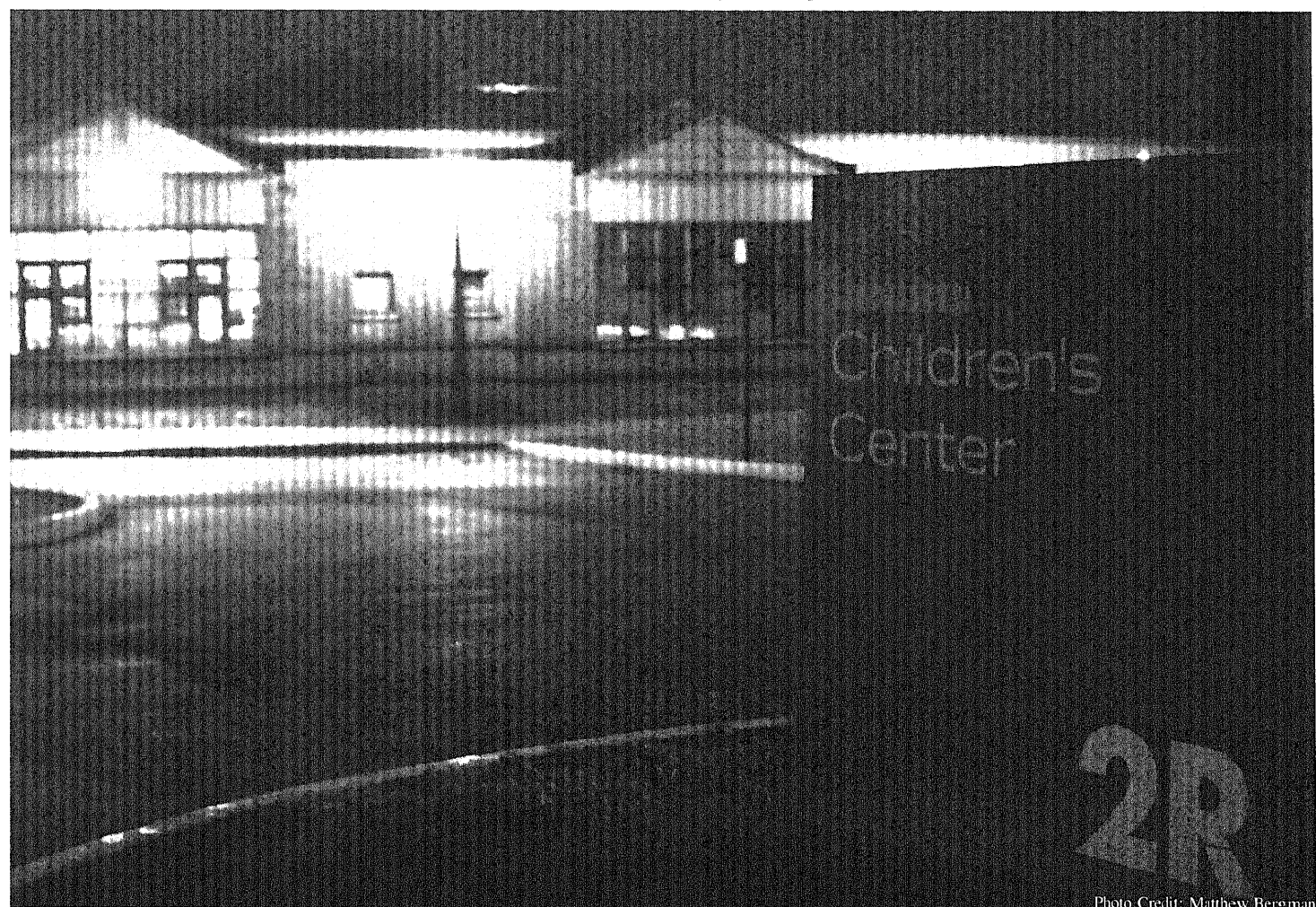
Soloviev, who had been the school's director of aquatics since late 1995, led the Dolphins to seven CUNY Conference titles and produced the school's first NCAA champion in any sport, Pavel Buyanov of Russia.

Major changes were made to the athletics program upon the appointment of Fritz as President and before the formal NOA by the NCAA was issued. Athletics was placed under direct supervision of the President's Office in April 2013 and Charles Gomes was named Interim Athletic Director; an emphasis was placed on professional development and rules

child care after hours.

"Within each program, there needs to be a minimum of two adults, one of which is a licensed teacher, to care for the children and conduct the classes," said Murphy. "Because of budgetary and licensing purposes, we need to have at least five children enrolled per night from each age group. Most of the time, we barely get five children in total for the week."

According to Murphy, there are roughly 130 students registered for the Children's Center per semester and are admitted through a lottery system. If more students register for child care, the Children's Center will be able to extend their evening hours and accommodate more students.



Lights shine within the Children's Center after dark but parents are left without childcare for evening classes

education concerning NCAA compliance for administration, coaches and staff; and lastly an internal review of facility usage and rentals and disassociation from the privately owned swim club referenced in the report.

The President also created a Compliance Team consisting of various members of his administration, faculty members, a student representative and the Athletic Director.

Additionally, CSI cannot recruit interna-

tional prospective men's swimming student-athletes for the remainder of this academic year. A new faculty athletics representative will be appointed for fall 2013.

Currently, the team is 4-2.

As the details of the NCAA investigation come to light, CSI prepares to monitor athletics operations more closely. It's believed that the investigation could be on going.



Ex Head Swimming Coach Oleg Soloviev is under investigation by the NCAA

"You want your kids to be safe, and you want to be able to afford good child care all while earning your degree," said Thomas Brennan, the evening advisor for the Center of Academic Advisement. "It's an important issue that we're trying to resolve."

To bolster the center's registration, Emery made it her commission's initiative to inform the students of evening care. Emery and Brennan worked together to spread awareness about the Children's Center's evening hours.

Emery's commission sent fliers to buildings around campus, while Brennan advised his evening student parents to register for programs at the Children's Center. Emery is in the process

of following up with Murphy at the Children's Center to see if her efforts have made any difference in helping student parents in the Evening and Weekend Program.

"I believe that the evening and weekend services will help student parents in a great many ways," said Emery. "From what I've seen, student parents are often the hardest working because they have more to fight for and more to lose if they fail. Therefore, it is necessary that we provide these services to this group of people."

For program and registration information from the Children's Center, visit their page on CSI's website.

The Banner is now offering INTERNSHIPS to CSI students. Internships last one semester and give students the opportunity to learn about media. Interns will work a minimum of 12 hours per week, and can focus on:

- Blogging
- Editing
- Photography
- Graphic design
- Layout & production
- Reporting
- Web design
- Fact-checking

Visit us and EAT FREE PIZZA on Thursdays, 2:30-4:30, at 1C-228
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"Financial Aid Problems"
Continued from Front Page

Gonzales applied for his financial aid a month before the fall 2013 semester, and he contacted the financial aid office and the bursar office on numerous occasions throughout the semester in order to check on the status of his funds. Gonzales discovered that he was supposed to receive a \$2,600 check in the mail but it was sent to an older address associated with him. Gonzales changed his address with the bursar office only to find that another error had occurred.

"They told me that I had owed almost \$6,000 between this semester and the next one,"

said Gonzales.

Both he and the staff member knew this was an error and she proceeded to correct the matter immediately. Although the problem was resolved, the mailing of checks to the wrong address is not an isolated incident here or in the rest of the country when it comes to Financial Aid.

Another student, Daniel Jalashgar, has had problems receiving his money when he applied for FAFSA over six months before the semester began. Jalashgar was accepted for the aid but he was told he would have to wait. He was given no definite time window for when he would receive his money. Now three months into the semester Jalashgar has still not received any money and

because he has not managed to pay his bill he cannot register for his next semester of classes.

Between the Financial Aid room and the Bursar office there are many students having issues in what they describe as a lack of communication between the two offices.

Students are told they can avoid problems with acquiring their aid by registering early.

"Students are urged to apply for financial aid before March 30, when students applications are reviewed by the Federal Government and not by our office," said Director for the Office of Financial Aid Phillippe Marius, despite students like Jalashgar already doing so. "When the government gives us the approval we send the approval information to the Bursar office who finally issues the payments to a student's CUNYfirst account. Any other problems collecting funds may be due to problems with CUNYfirst or something that may need to be cleared up with the Bursar's Office."

Mr. Marius added that since CUNYfirst has been implemented it has taken some time for all of the staff to get accustomed to the system and that there were a few bugs, but assured students that most problems were being corrected. Students who have applied for their Financial Aid but failed to acquire it are told that refunds are handled specifically by the Bursar Office and have nothing to do with Financial Aid at all, leaving the fate of their education and finance in the hands of the many administrative offices.

Governor Cuomo Approves SUNY 2020 Challenge Grant Program

A 19.5 Million Dollar Grant for SUNY/CUNY may Result in Additions to CSI

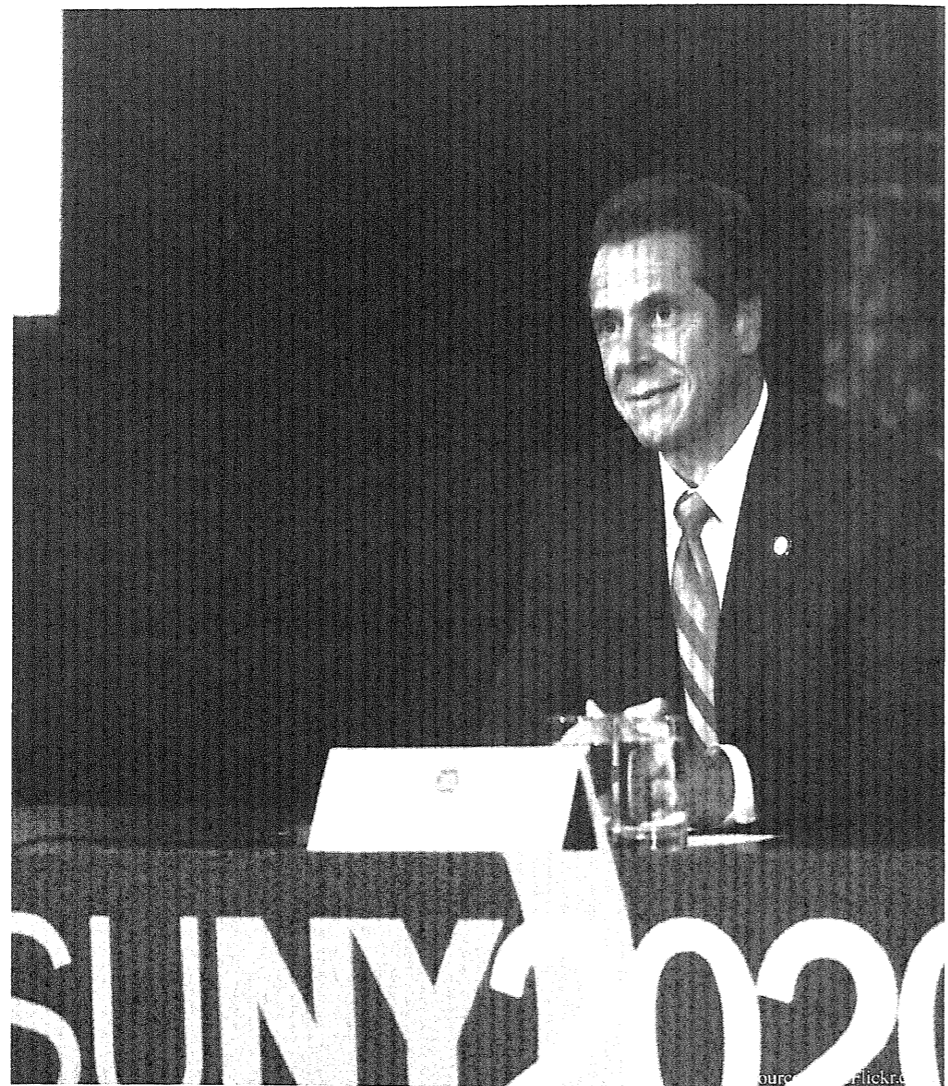
BY CLIFFORD MICHEL

College of Staten Island has unveiled its plan to leverage a capital investment of 19.5 million dollars over two years from Governor Andrew Cuomo's NY-CUNY 2020 Challenge Grant Program.

CSI is working on this proposal with The Graduate Center, Borough of Manhattan Community College, The City College of New York, The New York City College of Technology, and the School of Professional Studies.

If successful, the new School of Business will be leading the way to create several big data business analytic resource sites throughout New York City. The remaining revenue will be used to construct a center in building 2M for big data analytics.

Big data analytics concerns processing extremely large amounts of data that are near impossible to capture through traditional methodology. Big data analytics allow hidden patterns, little known correlations and other useful information to be seen. Successful big



Governor Cuomo addresses the audience in a conference detailing SUNY2020



Cuomo with representatives from CUNY and SUNY officially signs the new grant

data analysis results in competitive advantages, more successful marketing and increased revenue.

"If funded, CUNY 2020 will provide training for graduate students and business professionals to meet the current industry demand for big data analysts in the public and private sectors," wrote CSI Interim President, William J. Fritz.

According to Fritz, the project would have an extraordinary economic impact. It would result in 26.3 million dollars in wages, 8.7 million dollars in tax revenue and create over 100 construction jobs in the City.

CSI is choosing to construct an analytics center in 2M because the college recognizes it as the future home for the new School of Business. The college plans to implement ten classrooms and two offices later this year and is planning multiple phases of construction later in time.

"I think it's important that the school looks for ways to help out the business school. It's a new program and could use all

the help we can get, plus business and STEM fields are on the up and up, it makes sense to invest in it," said Hannah Parkins, an accounting major. "Having hands on experience with big data would look help me out personally with my resume, so I can see why the school is interested."

The CUNY 2020 Challenge Grant was created earlier in 2013 as a joint program between Governor Andrew Cuomo and CUNY. The goal of the program is to create long term economic development plans, designed by CUNY campuses in fields they excel in. The capital funds will support programs sustainable in the long term and provides economic development which will affect students as well as the surrounding community. Preference will be given to projects that are deemed transformational, leverage investment, support advance academic research and impact job creation.

A total of 55 million dollars in capital funding will be provided for the first year of the NY-CUNY 2020 program. All Graduate and professional schools, senior CUNY colleges and community colleges are eligible to compete for the grant. All CUNY schools have the option of vying for funding independently or collaborating with other schools.

The idea for the NY-CUNY 2020 challenge stems from the NY-SUNY 2020 challenge grant, established in 2011. The program set a fixed increase in tuition for all SUNY and CUNY campuses, it also provided 140 million dollars to the four SUNY University Centers (35 million dollars per campus). The second round of the grant was implemented this past June and 60 million dollars was awarded for four more projects.

In Governor Cuomo's 2013 State of the State address, a third round for the NY-SUNY 2020 challenge grant, awarding 55 million dollars, was confirmed along with CUNY's first round.

While new capital is expected to continue to be provided, the decision is made year by year and continued funding is dependent upon the success of the initial 2013-2014 funding.

BANNER POLITICS

15 Things You Probably Did Not Know About Minimum Wage in America

A Tribute to the Seattle Suburb Where Voters Raised Base Pay to \$15 Per Hour

BY JOHN L. FALCONE III

Yes, you read the headline correctly. There is a place in the United States where some workers will be earning a minimum of \$15 per hour.

During this past election cycle, voters in the city of SeaTac, a suburb of Seattle, narrowly passed Proposition 1. In doing so, they voted to raise the city's minimum wage to more than double the federally mandated \$7.25 per hour.

There is more to this law, however, than just raising the minimum wage. Proposition 1 guarantees that: the new \$15 per hour minimum wage must be adjusted annually for inflation, extra hours are to be offered to existing part-time employees before hiring additional personnel, tips will be allowed to be accepted by

employees, paid sick time can be accrued, and audits must be performed to ensure compliance with the new regulations.

Not surprisingly, Proposition 1 was highly controversial. A recount was called for by Common Sense SeaTac, a group of businesses which united to spearhead opposition to the proposal. The ballots were recounted on December 9 and it was confirmed that Proposition 1 had passed by just 77 votes.

But before you begin to get too excited, and start to think there may be an impending groundswell of minimum wage increase movements about to sweep the nation, you need to understand that this law is actually very limited in scope.

This is because the city of SeaTac is essen-

tially an airport.

Home to the Seattle-Tacoma International Airport, SeaTac was not even a city until its incorporation in 1990, and derives its name from the name of the airport: *Seattle-Tacoma*. SeaTac is only about ten square miles in size, three square miles of which is - you guessed it - the Seattle-Tacoma airport. The 2010 census reported that only 26,909 people resided within the city's limits.

These numbers are important to understand because SeaTac's \$15 per hour minimum wage only applies to the airport and airport related businesses.

NBC News estimates that this means the new law will only benefit about 6,500 employees. Assuming that most of these employees

live in or around SeaTac, it quickly becomes clear that this law is far from a sweeping reform of minimum wage standards in America.

Despite the limited demographic and geographic impact that will result from the passing of Proposition 1, and despite the fact that this small city's new law will not likely start a movement to double the federal minimum wage any time soon, it is refreshing to see a group of people take political action to tackle an important issue, rather than to simply complain about it.

So in honor of their new \$15 per hour minimum wage, The Banner presents to you a list of 15 things you probably did not know about the minimum wage in America:

- 1. There are 20 states that have a minimum wage higher than the federal minimum.**
Arkansas- 7.75 Missouri- 7.35
Arizona- 7.80 Montana- 7.80
California- 8.00 Nevada- 8.25
Colorado- 7.78 New Jersey- 8.25
Connecticut- 8.25 New Mexico- 7.50
Florida- 7.79 Ohio- 7.85
Illinois- 8.25 Oregon- 8.95
Massachusetts- 8.00 Rhode Island- 7.75
Maine- 7.50 Vermont- 8.60
Michigan- 7.40 Washington- 9.19
- 2. There are 21 states that have a minimum wage of \$7.25 per hour, equaling the federal minimum.**
New York
Delaware North Carolina
Hawaii North Dakota
Iowa Oklahoma
Idaho Pennsylvania
Indiana South Dakota
Kansas Texas
Kentucky Utah
Maryland Virginia
Nebraska West Virginia
New Hampshire Wisconsin
- 3. There are 4 states with a minimum wage that is less than the federal minimum.**
Arkansas- 6.25 Minnesota- 6.15
Georgia- 5.15 Wyoming- 5.15
- 4. There are 5 states with no minimum wage.**
Alabama South Carolina
Louisiana Tennessee
Mississippi
- 5. Facts 3 & 4 are possible because states are not federally mandated to have a minimum wage.**

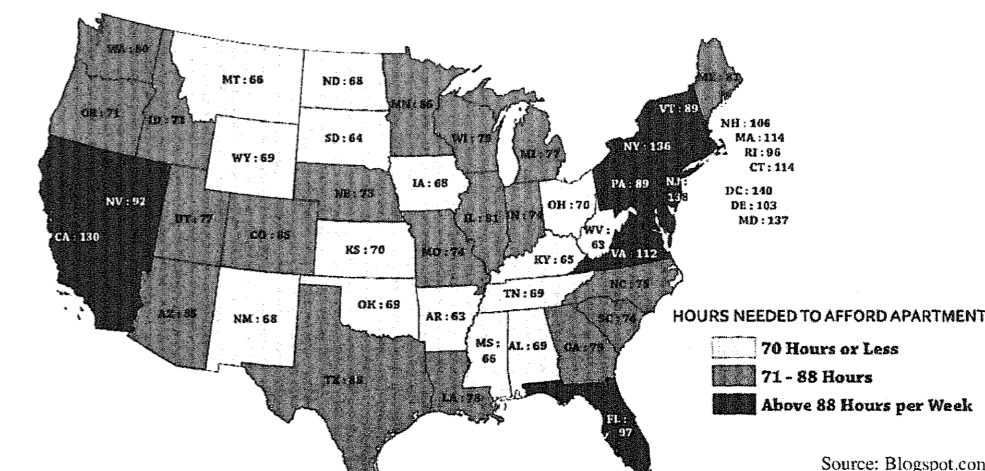


Voters from the small city of SeaTac, Washington made their voices heard by approving a law to raise their city's minimum wage to \$15 per hour

- 6. Washington D.C. has a minimum wage of \$8.25.**
In D.C., the rate is automatically set to be \$1 above the federal minimum wage.
- 7. The federal minimum wage was first established in 1938.**
Establishing a federal minimum wage was an integral part of the Fair Labor Standards Act which was passed during the height of the Great Depression in hopes of stimulating the economy.
- 8. Franklin D. Roosevelt was President when the federal minimum wage was established. The rate was \$0.25 per hour.**
That would be equivalent to approximately \$4 per hour today.
- 9. Barack Obama was in office for the last increase of the federal minimum wage in July of 2009.**
It rose from \$6.55 to \$7.25 per hour. Congress has only raised the minimum wage three times in the last thirty years.

HOURS AT MINIMUM WAGE NEEDED TO AFFORD RENT

In no state can a minimum wage worker afford a two-bedroom unit at Fair Market Rent, working a standard 40-hour work week.



- 10. Working at \$7.25 per hour, a full time worker would earn \$15,080 in one year.**
That is only \$3090 more than the MSRP of the cheapest new car currently on sale in the US, and once you pay the taxes and insurance it is doubtful that you would even have enough left over to fill your tank.
- 11. In the US, for a single person considered to be in poverty they must earn less than \$12,000 a year.**
If you have two kids, the threshold rises to \$23,000. This would mean that if a couple with two children both worked full time at the minimum wage they would be a mere \$7,000 above the poverty line.
- 12. The Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that as of 2010 about 4.4million Americans worked at the minimum wage.**
Mississippi, Texas, Alabama, and West Virginia have the highest proportion of minimum wage workers in the nation.
- 13. The minimum wage would need to rise to \$10.74 per hour in order to compensate for inflation.**
In 1968 the minimum wage was \$1.60 an hour and at its peak buying power. Though the rate has increased, it has not accounted for inflation, thus the buying power of the minimum wage has gone down. Another way of saying this is that the buying power of \$1.60 in 1968 is the same as the buying power of \$10.74 in 2013.
- 14. \$2.13 is the federal minimum wage for tipped employees.**
This applies to restaurant employees, parking attendants, hotel staff, and other occupations in which gratuity is a part of an employee's income.
- 15. Pew research reports that as of February 2013, 71% of Americans will support a federal minimum wage increase to \$9.00 per hour.**
An increase would see support from 87% of Democrats, 68% of Independents, and 50% of Republicans. At the state level, New Yorkers have voted for three increases, which will be:
\$8.00 on December 31, 2013
\$8.75 on December 31, 2014
\$9.00 on December 31, 2015

BANNER STYLES

Tips on How to Utilize Time During Your Winter Break

Thirty-Five Days of Winter

BY MILENA KOZLOWSKA

Those dreadful finals are over and now it is time to catch up on some well deserved you time. Winter break is one of the perks of being a college student. After three months of non-stop brain power, we are granted a 35 day break to relax.

Although catching up on some much needed sleep is necessary, all this free time must be utilized. Returning from the 35 day rest period back to the school environment is tough. Stay on track and utilize your free time during winter break to eliminate that rough transition. Here are a few tips on how to do just that.

Keep momentum by taking a winter course at The College of Staten Island. Taking a course will not only keep you in the right mind set but it will also allow students to earn credits and bring their graduation date a little closer. CSI offers a variety of courses in this three week term that will help keep you on track to achieving your goals.

Other than coursework, finding an internship or a part time job during the winter break can also keep students on track. The Open Education Database (OEDG) gives 88 tips on how to succeed in college, and planning ahead to seize the day is one of them. OEDG also says that setting goals similar to taking on internships, extra courses and finding part-time jobs can "keep you motivated and give you something to work toward."

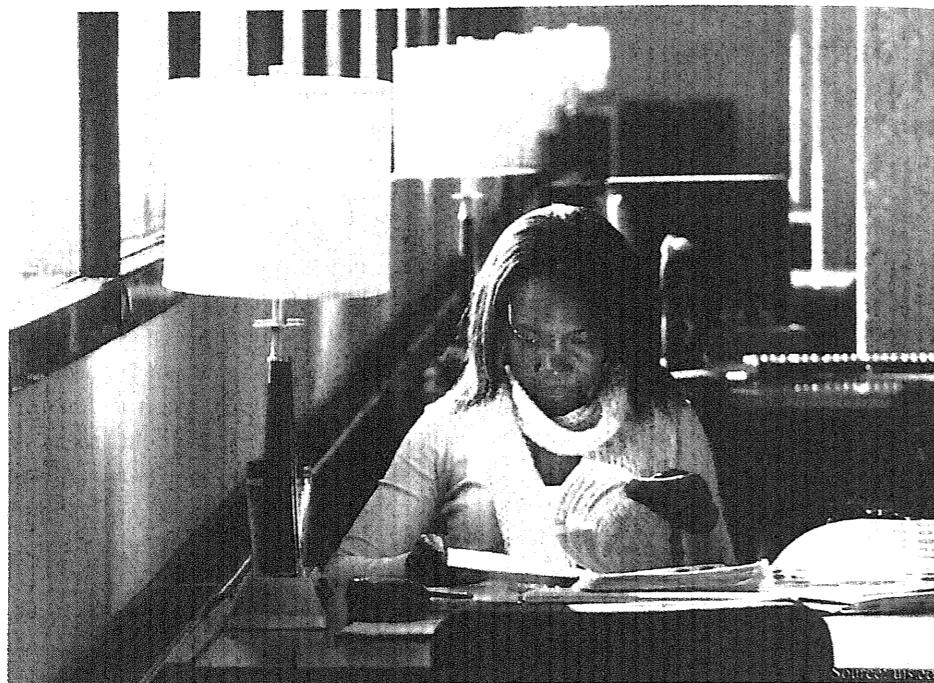
Walk over to the Career and Scholarship Center in the South Administration Building (1A), Room 105 to grab some information or talk to a representative about job and internship opportunities. The internet can also be a helpful tool in searching for internships in your major.

Apart from this, many retailers at the Staten Island Mall such as H&M, Macy's, and Best Buy are looking for part time seasonal workers. This may not be someone's dream job, but it is a way to gain experience in the work field and earn some extra cash before returning to school for the spring semester.

If there is no winter internship in the works, no need to fear. This is the time to get on those search engines and start applying for those summer internships. The free time during winter break gives students time to perfect their resumes and work on cover letters. Planning ahead is key, not only to keep students on track for the spring semester, but to keep students on track for life after college.

Aside from winter courses, internships, and part time jobs, students can take advantage of their free time by learning new skills and taking up hobbies. Whether it's going to the gym to stay fit and gain that summer body or reading that book that everyone has been raving about.

Maybe you have been meaning to start those new kickboxing classes, or learn a new



Take advantage of an empty library to study for your upcoming classes

song on your guitar. Now is the time to do all of these things. Keeping small goals like these can help to avoid sulking on your couch all day. Winter break is a time for students to accomplish the goals that they could not during their hectic fall semester.

All good things must come to an end. Those last few days of winter break are always the most bitter sweet. Students are excited to get back to school to see their friends and find out what their new courses will be like. With

this excitement also comes sorrow.

Students will miss those homework free days, but it is time to start a new semester. In these days, students can get a head start on their class readings. Some professors send out emails of the course syllabus in advance. Reading and researching about the course ahead of time can help eliminate any sort of anxiety. With these tips, students will feel more prepared and more confident to take on the new semester.

BANNER STYLES

New York City's New Year's Eve 2013

What To Do

BY VICTORIA CAROCCIA

New York City is the place to be, not only on New Year's Eve, but any day of the year. Several television stations broadcast live from the streets of Times Square in front of thousands of freezing out-of-towners and insane locals to watch the ball drop. If you're anything

like most New Yorkers, the thought of trekking up to Times Square in single-digit temperatures only to be thrashed around by drunk tourists probably sets off your gag reflex. Lucky for us, there are tons of things to do on New Year's Eve that don't involve overly friendly intoxicated visitors from the Midwest.

New York Crawl 'Til the Ball Falls New Year's Eve Bar Crawl (5PM to 4AM)

Everyone knows that the best way to spend a holiday is by being completely inebriated! The annual Crawl 'Til the Ball Falls bar crawl will help you kick off one of the best drinking holidays in style. The crawl starts at McFadden's Saloon, a dive bar located on 2nd, pay \$10 for general admission and you'll be given a wristband, a cup, and a detailed map of all the bars participating in the event. From there, you and your friends can hit up several bars throughout the area, from Duke's Gramercy on 19th way up to Calico Jack's on 2nd avenue between 42nd and 43rd street. Registration is from 5PM to 10PM, on Tuesday, December 31, and the event lasts as long as you can function.

Webster Hall New Year's Eve Ball (8 PM December 31 to 12PM January 1)

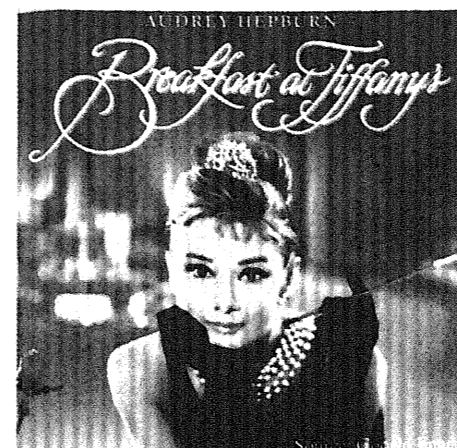
Webster Hall is three floors of mayhem and music. Their annual NYE Ball is a spectacle to behold, with crazy light shows, magicians and performers, and of course, EDM freaks. Tickets are \$99, and even though there's a cash bar, you'll receive a free 2014 membership card that grants you free admission every Thursday through Saturday, along with admission into the Wolfgang Gartner after hours performance. Aside from endless music and dancing, there's a live screening of the Times Square Ball Drop and a champagne toast at midnight to keep the traditional New Year's vibe alive. The party lasts all night long and even offers a continental breakfast the next day, but hopefully you'll find your way home by then.



AMC 34th Street Silver Screen Festival (8PM to 3AM)

If being drunk and cold doesn't sound like your idea of a good time, then walk down a few blocks to enjoy a night of food, booze, and classic Hollywood films. The AMC Silver Screen Festival features a night full of screenings of old favorites, including Breakfast at Tiffany's and Casablanca.

With the purchase of a \$45 general admission ticket, you'll be able to roam the theater and pop into as many movie screenings as you like. The theater offers a free open bar from 9PM to 2PM and a buffet from 9PM to 11PM. Your general admission ticket also grants you access to the AMC after party, just in case Audrey Hepburn and Humphrey Bogart didn't get you rowdy enough.



Sitting at Home and Watching TV (All Night Long)

If your bank account is still depleted from holiday shopping, staying in is probably the only activity on your New Year's Eve itinerary. Luckily, each channel offers plenty of New Year's programming to keep us entertained. AMC will be airing a Walking Dead marathon from season one onward to catch up on the series before the midseason premiere in February. SyFy's annual Twilight Zone marathon is always a crowd pleaser and lasts well through New Year's Day. If you're looking for something a little more festive, then tune in to ABC, NBC, or MTV for live broadcasts from Times Square. These shows feature live performances from Top 40 artists and often times random celebrity appearances. (Remember the year that Bloomberg kissed Lady Gaga on the mouth?!) Create a new tradition with your family: play a drinking game where you take a shot every time someone screams into the camera or makes a complete fool of themselves in the frame behind the celebrity host! New Year's Eve is an exciting night that is best when spent with family and friends. Whether you all decide to spend hundreds of dollars on cover charges and alcohol or if you choose to crowd in your living room to watch Dick Clark's New Year's Rockin' Eve is totally up to you. Happy 2014!

What To Wear

New Year's Eve is the most exciting and fun filled night of the year, but it can also be the most stressful. As soon as Christmas is over, we're thrust into New Year's preparation, from where we're going, what we're doing, whom we're doing, and most importantly, what we're wearing.

Dress Code

Just like in real estate, fashion is all about location. An important thing to keep in mind is to dress accordingly to where you're going. NYE is a night to dress to impress, but depending on where you're partying, you don't want to overdo it. A cocktail dress is always a crowd pleaser and comes in all different styles to flatter any figure. If you're going for a classic, sophisticated look, an A-line dress is the way to go. For something a little sexier, try a fitted bodycon dress. While dresses are the ultimate NYE wardrobe staple, there are other more casual options for those staying in. Jeans and a blouse are a simple look that can be dressed up with statement jewelry and a pair of heels. Plus, if you're wandering the streets of NYC, you'll be less likely to get frostbite.



Dress Code

Now that you have a complete arsenal of outfit ideas, you can focus on completing your look with the most important accessory: makeup. While your usual makeup routine is sure to turn heads, NYE is a night that you want to break necks. The best way to go about doing that is with a bold smoky eye. Start off with a gel eyeliner pencil on the inner rim of your eye. Gel liner glides on smoothly and stays on longer without smudging. Once you've lined your eyes, select the color of shadow to use. Unless you're really coordinated or have OCD, the color of your eyeshadow should not match the color of your outfit. Instead, pick a shade that will make your eye color pop. For brown eyes, try blue shadows. Purple shadows will complement green eyes, while browns and golds work best for blue eyes. Take a light shade of the shadow of your choice and dust it over your eyelid up to your brow bone. Then, overlap the outer edges with a darker shade. To blend, take a clean brush and lightly brush it back and forth over your lid. If you're feeling really artistic, paint some winged eyeliner over your finished product. For the best results, try the Sephora brand gel pencil, liquid liner, and glitter liner and Maybelline Eye Studio eyeshadows. These products are not only affordable, but they're specially designed for long lasting wear and won't melt away before the ball drops.

A good outfit is all the difference between landing that countdown kiss or spending it with your cats.

Not to worry, this NYE style survival guide will make picking an outfit the least of your problems.

Braving the Elements

It is the end of December. There will most likely be snow on the ground, a bitter winter chill, and single-digit temperatures.

You would probably look great in a mini skirt, but after you spend the whole night complaining about how cold you are, no one is going to want to give you a kiss at midnight. With the right accessories, you can still stay warm without looking or feeling like Frosty the Snowman. Dresses are perfectly acceptable, so long as you have a cute pair of tights to match. If you're wearing a solid colored dress, go for a patterned tight, and vice versa. If you're feeling brave and want to mix patterns, make sure they're both subtle patterns, like pinstripes or small polka dots. Otherwise, have fun looking like Pippy Longstocking.



SwoonStyleHome.com

Sparkle and Shine

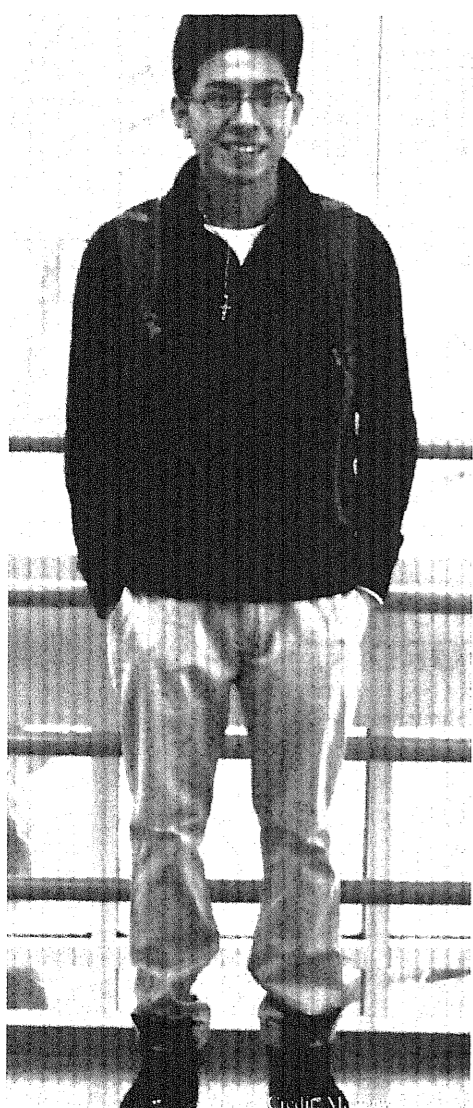
Champagne, fireworks, and tacky hats and horns allow for NYE festivities to be the glitziest and most glamorous of them all. Just because the decorations are flashy doesn't mean you should miss out on your chance to sparkle! Metallic colors and sequined pieces are very popular for NYE. Don't be afraid to step out in a glittery bodycon cocktail dress or break in those sparkly stilettoes you've been dying to wear. It's the last night of the year, go out with a bang! When you do decide to go bold with a busy pattern or shiny metallics, be sure to stick with subtle accessories. The more sparkly your outfit is, the less jewelry you need. If you're not feeling bold enough to go full glitz, there are plenty of fun ways to incorporate sparkles into your look. A nice manicure is the best way to kick off the new year and brighten up your look. Mariah Carey's nail polish line for OPI comes in eight shades of girly colors, one more bold and sparkly than the next. Freshly polished nails are an awesome conversation starter at parties, and the bartender will appreciate the effort when you reach for your drink.

Campus Styles



Laura Bromley
Junior

Favorite Store: Urban Outfitters



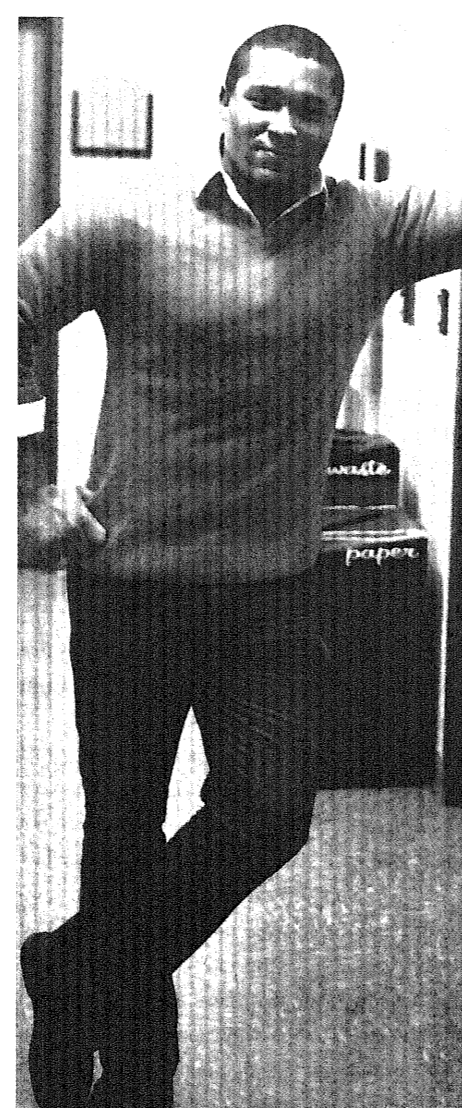
Steven Arriaga
Sophomore

Favorite Store: American Eagle



Alvin Dan
Senior

Favorite Store: H&M



Samuel Stepyer
Senior

Favorite Store: Urban Outfitters

The Banner Presents:

The Year May Be Over, but Here Are Five Games Still Worth Playing

BY STEPHEN KLEIN

2013 was arguably one of the stronger years in gaming with advent of some major titles and the next generation systems.

Despite the release of games such as Mass Effect 3 and Far Cry 3 last year, 2012 was a relatively weak year in gaming. This year, gaming made a comeback and we only have more to look forward to in 2014. However, before it's all over, here are my personal top five favorites of this year.

Charming away at number five is Tearaway. I have a confession to make. Media Molecule's previous series, LittleBigPlanet, never cut it for me, but Tearaway delighted me in a way that few games have.

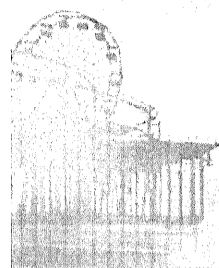
First off, the game looks stunning between the amazing graphics and incredible art style. Second of all, Media Molecule brilliantly puts virtually every feature on the PlayStation Vita

to use in ways that aren't gimmicky and genuinely make you feel like you are a part of Iota's or Atoi's world. If you own a Vita, you owe it to yourself to get Tearaway.

Shooting away at number four is BioShock Infinite. Although it may only be narrowly better than the original BioShock, topping the original BioShock is quite a feat. In some ways, it's completely different and similar at the same time to the BioShock games before it.

It may be an acquired taste for some and it's not exactly my all-time personal favorite shooter, but BioShock Infinite gripped me. Between the innovative rollercoaster-like sky-lines and the dynamic between Booker DeWitt and Elizabeth in a plot influenced by quantum mechanics and string theory, this is easily my favorite first-person shooter of 2013.

Slashing away at number three is Infinity Blade III. Infinity Blade has always been a fan-



tastic showcase of what the iPhone is capable of and this iteration of the trilogy is no exception. Chair Entertainment and Epic Games decided to take the epic feel up a notch in this installment. Between random battles with dragons and a whole slew of new mechanics, I can't help but feel that this is by far the best Infinity Blade.

As previously mentioned, Infinity Blade III is the perfect game for the latest iPhone and I got more enjoyment out of it than all but two games this year. If you're looking for not only one of the best games of 2013, but an iPhone game that isn't Angry Birds or Candy Crush, look into this one.

Powering away at number two is Saints Row IV. Easily the best game in the series, Saints Row IV also takes things up a notch by giving you superpowers. The result is one of the most fun and funny games of 2013.



Source: Google Images

As I've said in a previous review of the game, Saints Row IV fully solidifies just how different Saints Row and Grand Theft Auto truly are. While Grand Theft Auto has gotten less cartoony and more realistic with time, Saints Row has gone in the opposite direction. None of that is bad for either series, but it only excites for what's to come with both.

This leads me into number one: Grand Theft Auto V. I stand by my prior statement in my review of the game that GTA IV was the more action-packed and fun game. In hindsight, I would say that even the story in GTA IV was better.

However, Grand Theft Auto V is still absolutely phenomenal and I definitely enjoyed it more than any other 2013 release to the point where it's hard to even criticize. For that reason, GTA V is my pick for Game of the Year.

2013's Top Five

The Top Five Grossing Films of the Year



Source: Swishost.com

BY LUCIA ROSSI

This year had some great failures and successes in the film industry, but what films stood above the rest? Here's the Top 5 grossing films of 2013.

1. Iron Man 3

Iron Man 3 landed the number one spot on the list since it grossed an estimated \$409 million dollars in the United States. This movie was a must-see with Robert Downey Jr.'s charismatic character and awesome special effects. In the film, Tony Stark faced his enemy the Mandarin and his loyal group of fire powered soldiers. *Iron Man 3* was the first film after *The Avenger's* debut which had comic book lovers pining for more. Although reviews of the film's plot were mixed, the box office clearly shows that it was still a success.

2. Despicable Me 2

America's most loved animated minions come back in the second installment of *Despicable Me* and made a whopping \$366 million gross income. This film did exceptionally well in the box office because it is appropriate for all ages and the comedy was irresistible. Just when ex-villain Gru adjusts to his new family life, he is called by the Anti-Villain League to investigate a robbery and is teamed with Agent Lucy Wilde, who he falls

in love with. This movie was an instant win due to the love it inspired from its first film and its huge fan base.



3. *Hunger Games: Catching Fire*
Hunger Games makes the third spot on



Source: Blogspot.com

the list with its gross income of about \$306 million. Whether viewers loved the books or just the first *Hunger Games* film, everyone

records with an estimated \$161 million. *Catching Fire* is about Katniss Everdeen and Peeta Mellark entering yet another *Hunger Games* trial after their previous victory as an effort done by President Snow of the Capitol to suppress a major rebellion.

4. Man Of Steel

Man of Steel takes the fourth spot on the list with its \$291 million gross income. *Man Of Steel* was a very polarized film when it came to its reviews, people either loved it or hated it. Clark Kent, a.k.a Superman, realizes his heritage and must defend Earth from enemies of his own race. This film gave a very dark edge to Superman's character as DC did with *The Dark Knight* films. It was completely action packed and viewers are now left to wait for the sequel which will be even better.

5. Monsters University

Beating out the film "Gravity," *Monsters University* takes the last spot with \$268 million gross income. *Monsters Inc.* lovers, both young and old, had to go see *Monsters University*. This film focused on Mike and Sully's friendship in college, which really wasn't a friendship at all. The movie is all about how to overcome your differences with others and learn to be friends. Mike and Sully are very loveable characters and the film was so hilarious that anyone can enjoy it.

The Five Most Watched Television Shows of the Year

BY LUCIA ROSSI

Besides the obvious Sunday Night Football and NCIS that has over 21 million viewers, there are shows that really stood out this year. This list is only compiled of shows that had new seasons this year and are from the United States, so sorry no Doctor Who or Breaking Bad. Based on the TV Guide, here are the shows that made it big this year:

1. Big Bang Theory

CBS's comedy show *Big Bang Theory* did make a big bang with its 19 million viewers. It is America's number one most watched comedy with its witty dialogue and humorous quirks. It's very fast paced and with two physicists as the main characters, it teaches a lot about pop culture and science.

The show revolves around Leonard Hofstadter and Sheldon Cooper, brilliant and socially awkward physicists, who work at Caltech and live together. Then, a pretty actress named Penny moves in the apartment across from them and their worlds start to clash. Similar to *How I Met Your Mother*, you can tell that a lot of thought was put into this comedy series so that every moment was special.

2. The Walking Dead

AMC's *The Walking Dead* is an obvious win due to its extremely huge fan base. *The Walking Dead* makes the second spot with its 14.3 million viewers. Some may think that this zombie theme is only a fad or craze that will die down, but fans have claimed at conven-

tions like Comic Con 2013 that if certain characters die, they will riot. Norman Reedus, aka Daryl Dixon, alone has his own huge fan base, mostly made of women.

The show is about Rick Grimes who leads a group of survivors through the zombie apocalypse after he was in coma. They not only face the challenge of being eaten, they face struggles like keeping their humanity, constantly running out of supplies, facing sickness without medicine, and having enemies that only want power over what's left of the human race.

It's a show that constantly keeps the viewer on their toes because you never know what is going to happen next or who is going to die next. Due to the show's huge success, the original graphic novels for *The Walking Dead* have also become extremely popular.



3. Elementary

Watching CBS's *Elementary* was a must-see after BBC came out with its short but very successful series *Sherlock* that might have started the craze. *Elementary* gets the third spot on the list with its 13 million viewers. Sherlock Holmes has become extremely popular because of the two shows going on around the same time and because of the Robert Downey Jr.-Sherlock films.

With this show, fans can compare all different kinds of Sherlocks. *Elementary* stands out because Watson, Sherlock's companion, is usually a man, but *Elementary* crossed boundaries and made Watson a woman played by Lucy Lu. This proved to be risky but ultimately very successful. The show has intricate cases that makes viewers want to solve along with Sherlock as he makes deductions.

4. Modern Family

It is no wonder ABC's *Modern Family* made the list with its 12.7 million viewers because it is truly a show that is for everyone. Every character in each of the three related families have their own unique characteristics and deal with their issues in very comedic ways.

What makes this family so "modern" is how much people today can relate to them. People enjoy the show so much because it is very believable and they don't exaggerate things to make people laugh. The show can also be parallel to that of the show *Arrested Development* where it is a big wacky family that goes through the motions of everyday life.

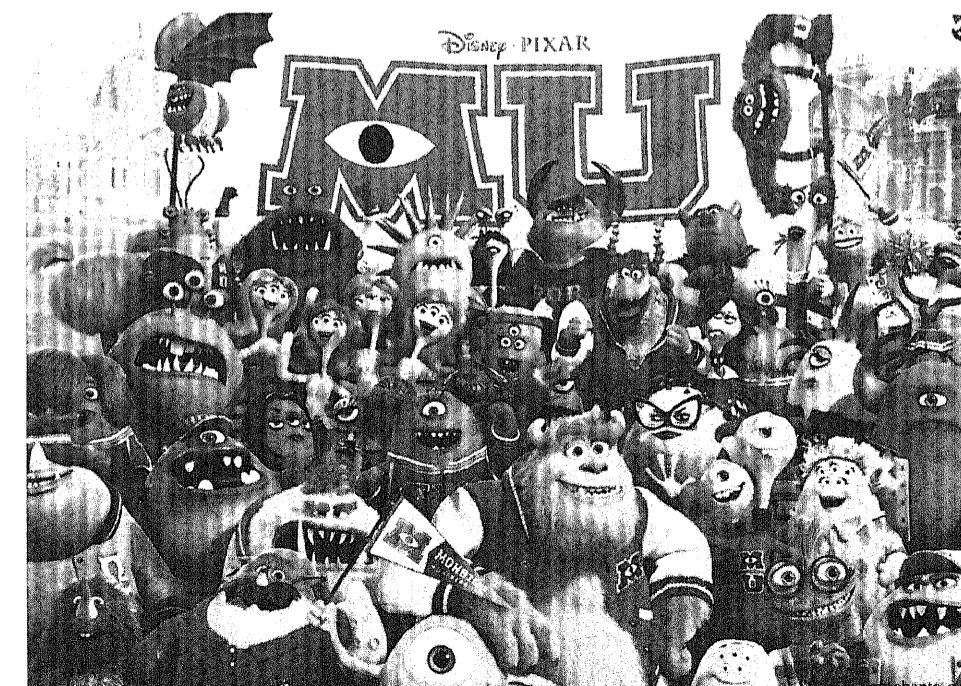
5. Duck Dynasty

A&E's *Duck Dynasty* attracted 12.4 million viewers this past season, which is huge for a reality sitcom.

The series focuses on the Robertson family who live in a Louisiana Bayou and run a thriving business that made them multi-millionaires but still stay true to their lifestyle and family values. Their rags-to-riches story is built upon their empire of top of the line duck calls and decoys made of swamp wood. Although they run a booming business at the end of the day, they still remember they are family. The show is not there to entertain people with "redneck millionaires" its displays acts of comedy, drama, life lessons and challenges that inspire viewers to focus on family values.



Source: Moviecroft.com



BANNER OPINIONS

Politically Correctness Goes Overboard for the Holidays

Merry ChristmaHannaKwanzaa

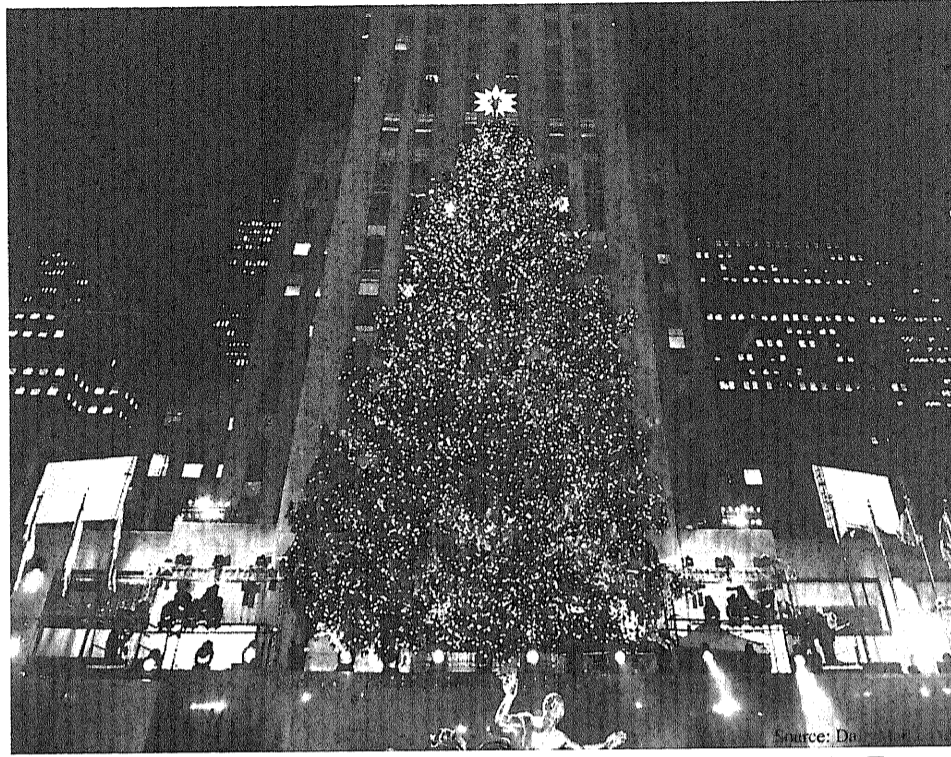
BY JONATHAN CABAN

In 1843, Charles Dickens had his famous story *A Christmas Carol* published. It's a story about a man named Ebenezer Scrooge who discovers the joy of Christmas after being visited by three ghosts. However if Dickens wrote this story today, it would most likely be called, "A Holiday Carol" where Scrooge would shout "Happy Holidays!" after his visit with the ghosts instead of "Merry Christmas!". I wonder how Dickens would feel knowing that wishing someone a "Merry Christmas" has become an insult these days.

Now before I continue, please don't think that I'm some fanatic Christian who's intolerant of the other holidays. That's definitely not the case. I'm not much of a Catholic since I don't go to church every Sunday but there are certain things that I do celebrate and one of those things is Christmas.

It's my favorite time of the year where I get to see relatives I haven't seen in months, go shopping for presents (have you read my Black Friday article?), and decorate the house. On one of my shopping trips, I was in the Staten Island Mall and noticed the big Christmas tree in the middle. It put me in such a great mood to see it. Then, I noticed that surrounding the tree were the Nativity Scene, Menorah candles and Kwanzaa candles.

At first I didn't mind cause I figured each holiday had to be represented until I overheard someone say, "Oh look they put up the Holiday Tree!" It took all my strength not to turn around and scream. "IT'S A CHRISTMAS TREE!!!" The mall has to be politically correct and have each holiday present, I get that, but it's a Christmas



Soon this will most likely be referred to as the Rockefeller Center Holiday Tree

tree ladies and gentlemen. It's bad enough that they banished Santa Claus to the JC Penney wing several years back but referring to it as a "Holiday" tree? That's too much!

I went into a few more stores after this and in every store the cashier said, "Have a nice Holiday!" to which I always politely responded, "you too". I haven't wished anyone a "nice holiday" in years. I always wish people a "Merry Christmas". I'm not being intolerant. I'm not being a jerk. This is the holiday that I celebrate and I'm simply passing it along. If I definitely know someone is Jewish, then of course I wish them a "Happy Hanukkah" and if I know some-

one celebrates Kwanzaa then I wish a "Happy Kwanzaa" to them. Inevitably, I run into people who say "Happy Festious for the rest of us" from the TV sitcom *Seinfeld*. I don't respond to that one. I couldn't stand *Seinfeld* then and I can't stand it now.

Several years ago, I worked at the mall in Bath & Body Works. I was one of those retail workers that were forced to say "Happy Holidays". I went along with it for awhile but finally I started saying "Merry Christmas". I started doing this because a majority of my customers all mentioned how they were Christmas shopping and so by wishing them a merry after

they were done was quite appropriate. One time I said "Merry Christmas" to a man on his way out and he responded, "and you have a Happy Hanukah!" with a big smile on his face. It was a very Hallmark Channel moment for both of us. Instead of responding, "Oh I don't celebrate that" he responded by inviting me to celebrate his holiday in a way.

However, this Hallmark Channel moment turned into something found on Court TV when one of my managers overheard me. She took me into the back room and told me the importance of being politically correct and not insulting the customers. I actually had to defend myself that saying "Merry Christmas" was not insulting and I was just acknowledging my holiday. This could've been a plot line for an ABC Family movie that would premier as part of their 25 Days of Christmas.

I remember leaving work that day frustrated and confused. Then, I turned on the radio in my car and Mariah Carey was belting "all I want for Christmas is you!" It was 106.7 Lite FM and during the month of December they always play Christmas music. I wondered if they got spoken to about wishing people a "Merry Christmas" over the radio.

If you haven't noticed, I've used the phrase "Merry Christmas" several times throughout this article. It's my little way being able to say it over and over again with nobody being able to tell me I can't. If somebody wishes you a "Merry Christmas" you shouldn't be insulted. Your first reaction shouldn't be "I'm Jewish" or "I don't celebrate Christmas". Just be polite and say it back. Now I say to all of you, "Merry Christmas to all, and to all a good night."

SEX AND THE ISLAND

Hipster Girl Wears Red Lipstick to Actually Cover Up Her Herpes

Satan's Gift to Women: UGGs, a Forked Tongue, and Red Lipstick

BY DAERYUNG LEE

This is the time and age to be cautious. Being cautious after all, saves lives. It saves your life, your partner's life, and whatever person you've escorted to your bed's life.

Sometime around last year I decided to wean myself off the forbidden fruit: CSI girls. But you temptresses are too powerful with your hexes, your giggles, and your UGG boots. Slowly but surely I fell into the trap of a hipster-esque girl who sat bowlegged over the precipice that overlooks 3N and the new dorms.

She smoked, casually. Flicking ever so often, even occasionally spitting all throughout the singular smoke session. Intrigued I asked her for a light, sat next to her and noticed the odd novels she was reading.

We talked about music: "I love Tyler, The Creator! I met him once!" We talked about our majors: "I'm an art major!" We talked about the odds of seeing her tomorrow: "Yeah, if you're around and have a phone number I don't see why not" she added coyly.

I rushed back to my friends, telling wild stories of the girl who was cool, yeah, too cool for school.

And from there, the prior meeting was better than the last and every meeting after that just got better.

Between meeting up to share cigarettes, because we were both of the proletariat side of CSI, we talked about a future, an inkling that it would be shared between us. She also let it slip that her boyfriend was an asshole.

Which made me an asshole for getting into that situation but whatever man, don't ever let him ever steal your rays of sunshine.

Hands were held. Kisses exchanged. Each day, her bright red lips left stains on mine, on our cigarettes, on everything. It was love but there were too many factors to break apart a real relationship. Instead, the world was on edge, waiting for her to stop seeing her asshole boyfriend.

Hands were held. Kisses exchanged. Each day, her bright red lips left stains on mine, on our cigarettes, on everything. It was love but there were too many factors to break apart a real relationship. Instead, the world was on edge, waiting for her to stop seeing her asshole boyfriend.

She was the picture of perfection. She was a model for several magazines. She had taken trips to various third-world countries to broaden her horizons and give back to impoverished families. She was bright and funny but held dark secrets of despair and depression allowing me to be a shoulder to lean on.

More than that, she would laugh with me in a time period where I wasn't so sure if I was myself. She lent me books and gave me confidence. She took my advice as if my opinion

mattered. More and more, feelings complicated the little life we had caved out for each other. She would meet me and we'd walk and talk about various things, conversations that didn't matter but mattered in the long run.

And it all came to an abrupt stop one rainy day.

Slowly but surely, she matriculated herself into the same pool of friends I had. Soon, it came to the point at which I would be at home

studying while she'd be out with the crew drinking, getting drunk or high or some combination of both. That didn't matter. I was happy that she could be happy with the people that made me happy. It was just another thing to share.

Then I got a breathless, urgent call from my best friend and big sis. She asked me if I was alone to which I affirmed I was. I did have her know that I was supposed to be meeting the model and world-explorer later to which

she was willing to endanger my health with an STD and cheat on her man, then who the hell did I think I was? I'm no one special and herpes doesn't discriminate.

Last I heard from her, she was in the city with the same asshole boyfriend, determined to conquer the city and become the next "It girl". Oh. And she probably still has herpes.

she inhaled sharply.

She let out a whirlwind of words, a typhoon off jumbled up phrases that I had to have her repeat. The story goes that big sis had met up with the model to go shopping at the mall. There, they tried on makeup and other things gurlies do to pass time. It is highly doubtful that they actually bought anything.

They got to lipsticks to which the model told big sis to go first. When big sis asked why, the model revealed that she had oral herpes.

"That's why she's always wearing dark red makeup," big sis asserted. "It's not because she actually likes doing it."

Then the world flipped upside down. For all the cigarettes and makeup sessions we shared, the entire time I was bombarding my lips with the herp derp. And that made me feel unclean. That's when I realized the relationship wouldn't go anywhere.

It wasn't because she had herpes although, ordinarily, that would be a dealbreaker. We had already bonded so much that if she had a penis, I'm not saying I would but I'm not saying I wouldn't if you catch my drift.

It's the fact that she couldn't be honest. If she was willing to endanger my health with an STD and cheat on her man, then who the hell did I think I was? I'm no one special and herpes doesn't discriminate.

Last I heard from her, she was in the city with the same asshole boyfriend, determined to conquer the city and become the next "It girl". Oh. And she probably still has herpes.

The Fight Against Modern Slavery Continues Around the World

Human Trafficking: Still a Domestic Issue for The United States

BY HADIATOU WANN

They are manipulated, used as sex objects, and labor machines everyday in the United States. These people are the victims of human trafficking, and could be your next-door neighbor.

According to the US Federal Law, "Human trafficking is a form of modern-day slavery where people profit from the control and exploitation of others."

ECPAT-USA (an organization focusing on the elimination of child prostitution, pornography and trafficking) reports that each year, approximately 45,000-50,000 people are trafficked into America, 15,000 of which are children. These overwhelmingly high numbers of human trafficking taking place in our nation demands greater scrutiny.

President Obama declared January National Slavery and Human Trafficking month, 2014 will mark the second year of its existence, followed by National Freedom Day on February 1.

"Human Trafficking is extremely profitable," said Professor Bridgette Carr in CNN's *Human Trafficking: Modern-day in America* documentary. "It's so profitable that we're seeing some drug traffickers get out of drug trafficking and into human trafficking."

Some of the victims whom fall into the trap of human trafficking are people who have been told that they're being brought to the US for a brighter future, an opportunity. To their dismay, once they arrive in the "land of opportunity," they realize that they have agreed to an opportunity that could mark the beginning of a nightmare. Others, are victims born and raised in the US.

Usually, when the topic of human trafficking is brought up, what comes to mind is prostitution. However, sex is only a snippet of what human trafficking is about. Some victims are forced to work off the books for many hours without getting paid for the work and energy they put in.

"If I knew this is how my life was going to be, I would not come," cried Zena, a human trafficking victim, from that same documentary, who was brought to the US from West Africa at a tender age. Her and twenty others were forced to work at an African hair braiding salon in Newark, New Jersey, where they were forced to work fourteen hours a day, seven days a week without pay.

Whether these victims were born in the US or on foreign land, they are still subject to maltreatment.

In The Blaze's documentary *For The*

Record: Human Trafficking in the United States, former Mexican Congress Representative Rosi Orozco explained: "when [drug traffickers] take one pound of drug, they will sell it once. When [human traffickers] take a girl, they will sell [her] 30, 40, 50 times a day, many days without rest."

For the discourteous trafficker, selling a person for his or her body and labor is a price he's willing to pay in order to have residual income. For the victim, he or she will have to endure physical and mental pain forever.

"It's an eye-opener because we're not exposed to the dark side of what's going on in the society," opined CSI student Derrick Tam, who was one of the leaders whom assisted students at the "Tunnel of Oppression" workshop, which was held on the campus of CSI November 14, 2013, to educate students on the topic of human trafficking.

Before, human trafficking operations were run only in the streets. But, as technology became a driving force in building businesses, traffickers have found ways to keep their operations running on the internet.

Backstage.com and craigslist are examples of where traffickers sold sex to potential clients.

Even though many attorneys have requested for the owners to dispose the sections that

allowed clients to buy sex from women and underage girls, the owners of the sites second-guessed the demand because of the enormous revenue selling sex was bringing them.

"Backstage.com makes \$33.7 million a year on sex ads alone," expressed Kim Sykes, a proponent for the fight against human trafficking. "Maybe that's why they don't want to stop and take it down because they're making a lot of money off of a human rights abuse and off the sale of women and children on the internet."

One might question why the victims don't speak out? The traffickers brainwash them into believing that if law enforcement found out, they would kill the victim and the victim's family.

Those who have the impression that slavery perished when Abraham Lincoln abolished it in the 1800s, are left delusional. Slavery still exists and will continue to unless the government and more people in our community join arms and fight against it.

And, even when masses have joined arms to fight against human trafficking, there will be people out there who are manipulative and will find illegal ways to make money. The best thing we can do in a battle we have no control over, is to watch out for each other and not be blinded to what's going on around us.

Do Unto Others As You Want Others to Do Unto You

Mario and Friends Re-Enact the Friend-Zone

BY VICTORIA CAROCCIA

Friend zone is one of the most commonly used and dreadfully uttered phrases in the English language. Being in the friend zone is comparable to being in purgatory. You spend a lot of time with a certain person and there seems to be a mutual attraction, but there are no labels being thrown around so you aren't sure of where you stand. Friend zone gets hellish when the person you're lusting after finally gives you a label, and it's not the boyfriend/girlfriend label you were hoping for.

Males often associate themselves with the friend zone because they feel females are cruel mistresses that mistake their kindness for weakness and take advantage of their unrequited love.

Truthfully, putting a male in the friend zone seems a lot more common than putting a female in friend zone, considering chivalry isn't dead and men still practice it. However, there are plenty of cases in which females have gotten a taste of their own medicine.

Because my love life is so colorful and exciting, I've seen both sides of the friend zone spectrum. My most memorable act of friend zoning took place when I was in high school. During my travels, I befriended a group of guys from an all boys' school. Because they were trapped in a building with

teenaged boys all day long, a friendship with an attractive girl was like a refreshing gift from St. Francis Xavier himself.

While each one of them gave off flirtatious vibes from time to time, there was one goon in particular who stood out from the rest. For all intents and purposes, let's call him Wario.

Wario was enamored with me the minute he saw me. I, on the other hand, did not share the same feelings. Despite my distaste in his appearance, I enjoyed his company and decided to be his friend. Unfortunately, this didn't register correctly in his mind.

Shortly after I met Wario, I befriended a cute guy who we'll call Luigi. He was tall, dark, handsome, and extremely smart, but very shy and insecure. Noting his social flaws, I decided to take him under my wing and make him my new project, all the while trying to seduce him into being my perfect boyfriend.

Things were going fairly well up until I realized he was in love with my best friend, Princess Peach. At first, I decided to back off and let them build a relationship of their own. But when neither one of them acted on their mutual attraction, I thrust myself back into the picture.

My plan was going well: Luigi and I had made out with each other on several occasions and his parents were convinced that we were

dating. Whenever I brought up the topic of relationships, however, he would either ignore my questions or change the subject. Part of me knew that he was still hooked on Princess Peach, but the other part was too stubborn and vengeful to care.

While Luigi was stuck in a predicament that most guys only dream about, Wario and I were spending a lot of time together. There were certain instances where I felt he was getting too close for comfort, and I would constantly remind him of my kind-of boyfriend Luigi and my love of Hispanic men.

Everywhere we went he would offer to pay for me, even if we were with a group of our friends. I always felt bad and would offer to at least go dutch, but he was persistent and never accepted my money. When he tried to take me out for dinner and a movie on Valentine's Day, I knew that I was in way too deep.

I eventually found out that Wario was telling people that I was his girlfriend. While most of our friends had enough brain cells to realize that this information was false, others actually believed him and questioned my sanity.

Once I set the record straight, I confronted him about it and completely shattered every last one of his hopes and dreams, or so I

thought. He then signed me up to be his prom date despite our previous conversation, and that's when I knew I was dealing with a Stage 5 Clinger.

I told him that he wasn't my type, which prompted him to remind me that he was a quarter Dominican and that I should love him because of it. After an hour of yelling via text and a threat from my father, he finally got the hint and slowly faded out of the picture.

Luigi was well informed about my spat with Wario and used every opportunity to make fun of me for it. I would laugh along with him, until I finally realized that I was the butt of the joke. Although I was a professional friend-zoner, I was too blind to realize that Luigi was friend-zoning me. While Wario was definitely off his rocker, I sympathized with him because I knew how he felt.

I eventually mustered up some dignity and broke things off with Luigi. I even patched things up with Wario and can now hang out with him without worrying about him proposing marriage.

My days of friend zoning and being friend-zoned are over and done with, but they've taught me a lot. If you find yourself in a similar predicament, don't stick around. If they can't appreciate you, find someone else who will.

SPORTS

Men's Basketball Rally Over Montclair State Dolphins Push Over Hawks in Non-Conference Play

BY JESSICA PIFALO

With another game coming down to the wire, CSI came through in a victory. The Dolphins defeated the Hawks of Montclair State University 77-73 in non-conference play. The Dolphins lifted to a 4-2 record, while MSU falls to 2-5.

The first half was not in the Dolphins favor, as the Red Hawks came out storming. MSU's Kevin McGorry and Daniel Singleton got things rolling for the home. McGorry sunk a free throw and Singleton nailing a three-pointer putting MSU on the board 4-0. From there, the Red Hawks continued to push for-

ward to they extended their lead to 5 at 16:07. The Dolphins would fight back, however, and would cut the lead to 1. Kevin King would get the momentum going hitting a jumper, next was Dylan Bulger who would sink a layup assisted by freshman Frankie Schettino. Schettino would continue the run as he sunk a pair of free throws, setting the score 10-9 at 14:11.

From there the Red Hawks would keep the Dolphins trailing through most of the first half, with only three ties. MSU would hold it's biggest lead at the end of the first half, leading the Dolphins 47-38 going into the locker

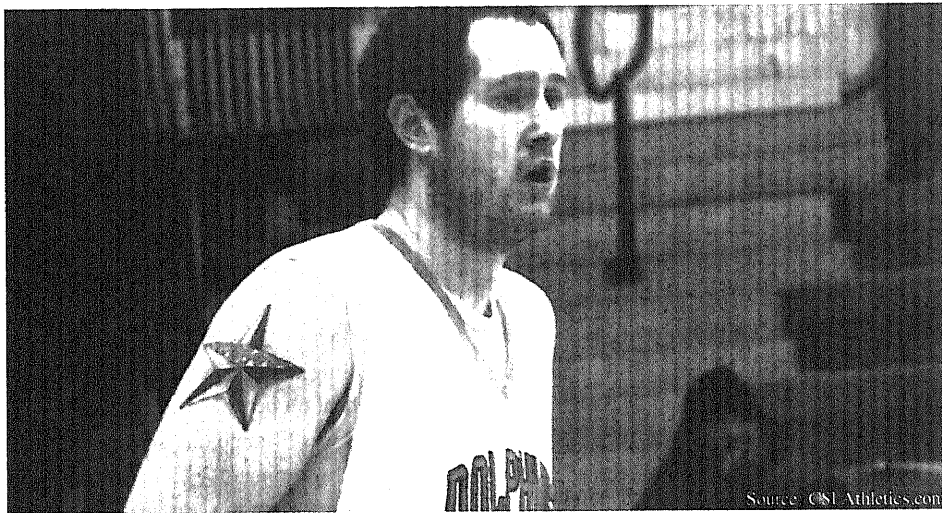
rooms.

Heading into the second half the Dolphins started to pick up the pace and vamped up the defense. With trading baskets, Bulger who nailed a jumper early would start chipping away MSU's lead.

From there Javon Cox would lay in another two points, followed by a lay-up by Matt Van Manen, cutting MSU's lead down 49-44. MSU would come storming back, but not for long as the Dolphins would go on an 8-0 run. Cox would tie up the game at 53 at 13:15. From there the Dolphins would grab the lead from the Red Hawks for the first time with a jumper by Schettino, followed by a layup by Van Manen, and two free throw by Will Fonseca, and would lead the Red Hawks by 4 at the 8:43 mark.

Despite a valiant attempt by MSU, the Dolphins would take control of the rest of the game as Bulger would seal the game with a pair of free throws, securing the win for the visiting squad.

Bulger led the squad finished with an outstanding season high 24 points and 15 rebounds. Teammate Fonseca recorded 17 points, and Schettino would rack up 13. The Dolphins team highlight was in their free throws, as they shot an impressive 70% and would connect on 21 of 30.

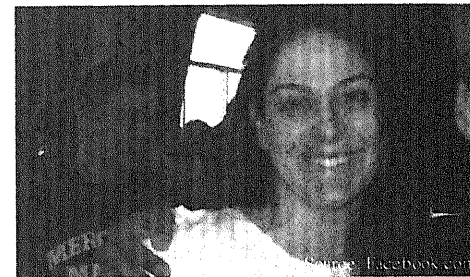


Dylan Bulger recorded a season high 24 points and 15 rebounds in a thrilling win

Inside the Dolphin Tank

Meet Women's Swim Team Captain: Jessica Pifalo

BY MICHAEL PAPANDREA



Jessica Pifalo is in her final year as the Women's swim team captain. So far, her and the rest of the Dolphins find themselves at a split 4-4 season. With three straight losses and three meets left, the team needs to figure things out before the three day CUNYAC Championship meet.

The Banner: What kind of responsibilities go into being team captain?

Jessica Pifalo: Just making sure that everyone is working hard at practice and just always being there for the underclassmen, if they need help in the pool, out of the pool, especially the freshmen and just setting the best example I can for the team.

TB: Are there any goals you are still looking to achieve before the season's end?

JP: I would like to break the 200 IM record as well as the 100 backstroke record, those are some goals I have been keeping since last season and I'm still trying to push myself to accomplish them.

TB: After losing three straight, what do you think the team has been missing?

JP: I mean, losing three straight no athlete ever wants to feel. Our first loss to Hunter was probably the toughest pill to swallow just because they are our biggest CUNYAC rival besides Baruch, but we are pushing ourselves harder now to make sure that come championship time we are going to show them that we are the better team.

TB: Has the Men's playoff ban hurt the team's motivation?

JP: It's been tough on the program as a whole, we are just trying to move past it and look to the future and take this and bounce back stronger together. We feel for the men's team and we are just trying to encourage them as much as we can in a tough situation.

TB: Favorite album?

JP: Speak Now by Taylor Swift.

TB: Favorite professional athlete?

JP: Nathan Adrian.

TB: Spot to eat on the Island?

JP: Qdoba.

TB: Best personal moment on the swim team?

JP: When I broke the 400 IM school record in my freshman season.

TB: Favorite movie?

JP: Great Gatsby.

TB: What meme describes your life?

JP: Lazy College Senior, touch of Senioritis here.

Women's Basketball Beats Mount St. Mary 78-68

BY CLIFFORD MICHEL

After building a convincing lead in the first half, College of Staten Island's women basketball team (5-1) then had to hold on in the second half to shake off a threatening attack from Mount Saint Mary College (0-6), resulting in a 76-68 non-conference victory. CSI ran a 4-out, 1-in motion offense, where four guard players stayed around the perimeter and one forward stayed near the post. It showed tremendously as long ranged jumpers seemed to be CSI's bread and butter in the first half, running over a short lived 7-6 Saint Mary's lead by going on a 27-5 run. CSI sophomore, Megan Myhre, led the charge with five three pointers, including one seven minutes into the game which gave the Dolphins their first double-digit lead of the match.

The Dolphins continued on to build a 23-point lead before Mount Saint Mary College standout, Natalie Candarelli, highlighted with five points in an 11-3 run from Saint Mary. Though CSI still held a 43-28 lead at half time, head coach, Tim Shanahan, was animated while MSM tore through the Dolphin's defense.

CSI bounced back in the second half with yet another three from Myhre, which gave CSI their biggest lead of the second half at 58-41. Mount Saint Mary snapped out of their offensive slump with a 12-0 run, included a big three from Candarelli, which riled up Mount Saint Mary's travelling supporters. With nearly seven minutes left in the match, MSM pulled within a point of CSI's lead.

The Dolphins were tense but a trip to the free throw line from Alyssa Carlsen and a much needed layup from Melanie Johnson gave the team an inch of breathing room as they pulled to a 62-58 lead. Johnson's layup ended the Dolphins abysmal 0-for-13 shooting, which lasted almost nine minutes.

Nikki Fabozzi lived up to the number "23" imprinted on the back of her jersey, she maneuvered well for an inside drive and forced the home crowd into a roar after hitting a long range jumper from beyond the arc to sink arguably the most important shot of the game. Fabozzi's efforts brought CSI to a 67-60 lead. With little over three minutes left in the game,

MSM cut the Dolphins lead to three.

But two free throws and a deep jumper from sophomore point guard, Lisa Galasso, to put the game out of reach.

CSI's 5-1 start to the season is the best the program has had since the 2008-09 women's squad started 7-1.

"We picked up our intensity this year, we know what we have to do from our mistakes last year, and we just do what we have to do," said Johnson, referring to the squad's 0-4 start last year. "The main thing is not letting that streak get to our heads. We need to keep pushing, playing and being aggressive—as we've been playing to get those W's."



Senior Katelyn Hepworth scores a layup over the MSM Mountaineers