

The Tamarack

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Naugatuck Valley Community College

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Narcan Training: Two Hours Well Spent

Thomas Ackerman

Last year, NVCC was one of several community colleges to receive \$10,000 in annual grant money, for education on opioids. This was especially relevant given the current statewide and nationwide opioid crisis. NVCC has designated part of the grant money toward monthly 2-hour trainings regarding “Naloxone.” Often referred to by its common brand-name, “Narcan,” it is an overdose reversal medicine. The trainings—offered free-of-charge to students, staff, and faculty—are meant to educate attendees on opioid abuse and how to use Narcan.

Professor Sandra Valente, Coordinator of NVCC’s Drug and Alcohol Recovery Counselor Program, hosts the trainings. She said the grant is gifted from the CT Healthy Campus Initiative. Valente is also a member of Waterbury’s Opioid Task Force, along with first responders, treatment providers, and Waterbury Mayor Neil O’Leary, who created the force.

1,038 CT residents died in 2017 due to heroin, morphine, and/or codeine detected causes, according to data from the Office of CT’s Chief Medical Examiner. Valente mentioned with some optimism that projected data, through the end of 2018, shows 1,032 deaths. She believes education, including the monthly trainings at NVCC, is key to combatting overdose. Generally, between ten and thirty participants attend, almost every month, including DARC students, non-DARC students, faculty, and staff.

NVCC student Raymond Christopher Rosado lost his father to a drug overdose last February. Rosado attended the October training to better understand what happened. He hopes to help others prevent a similar experience. “If I’m in

It only takes a little to lose a lot.



“IT’S LIKELY THAT EVERYBODY KNOWS SOMEBODY WHO IS STRUGGLING WITH THIS VERY PROBLEM.”

-NOAH



Photos Courtesy of CDC

public, I always carry my (Naloxone) bag now,” Rosado said.

The kit includes two 4 mg. nasal spray containers, a set of plastic gloves, and a CPR face shield. Rosado said the training included a procedure on identifying an overdosing person, the direction to call first responders, and how to utilize the nasal spray.

Naloxone cannot cause overdose, Valente said. It has no effect on the brain, if there is no presence of opioids in the body. Narcan has a stronger affinity to the receptor site in the brain than opiates, Valente said, so it prevents the opioid from binding there, temporarily reversing the overdose. She added that opioids do not metabolize immediately, but if there are enough opioids in the system, or if fentanyl is present, a person can start to overdose again, justifying the use of the second spray.

While much coverage of the crisis has focused on legally dispensed opiate drugs enabling addiction, there is also a phenomenon of drug dealers cutting product with cheaper and deadlier drugs. These are often synthetic, like fentanyl.

Valente said a kilogram of fentanyl may

cost \$3,500, while a kilogram of heroin may be \$50,000 to \$65,000. She added the fentanyl-laced high is more potent, and consequently more appealing to addicts, whether they became addicted through legal means or not. Another goal of Valente’s training is to destigmatize addiction. To that end, she shares demographic data. She said, in Waterbury, the typical opioid overdose victim is 30-59 years old, white, and male. The oldest patient from the data is 79 years old, while the youngest is seven months old, when a child found drugs on a table.

Valente said Waterbury, and CT, are targets for opioid and drug traffic because of its location along the I-95 corridor, which facilitates North-South transportation. 32 percent of local 9-1-1 initiated overdose interventions do not involve Waterbury residents, but visitors coming to the city for drugs. “Waterbury has a very high overdose rate,” Valente said, so awareness of Narcan distribution is important because of NVCC’s large campus

size, and vicinity to high overdose areas.

Edward Schreiner, manager of Stoll’s Pharmacy, on Grove Street, in Waterbury, attends NVCC’s trainings, and other events, to supply information and Naloxone product. Schreiner said Grove Street has a reputation for drug use and crime, but the pharmacy is never bothered because of the services they provide the community. He and other pharmacists at Stoll’s require a permit to dispense the drug outside of the office, as he does at Valente’s trainings.

Schreiner works with Valente to offer Narcan as cheaply as possible to attendees. He can dispense Narcan like any other drug, and attendees can use their insurance to pay. If a co-pay is expensive, Schreiner said something can be worked out, as profit is not the goal, such as getting the Narcan for free, from Dr. Valente.

Schreiner lost a “very, very” close family member to addiction. The family thought everything was under control, and the death occurred shortly before Naloxone became well-known and available. “The goal is to keep that person alive until they come to a realization they’ve had enough,” Schreiner said. He added you can’t tell people to become sober. They have to want it. Schreiner said he has prescribed multiple doses to an individual, due to them using the product multiple times on the same loved one.

Valente said some colleges with the CT Healthy Campus grant funding, have been resistant to allowing Narcan trainings, despite appropriate faculty having certifications. A college president or other administrator ultimately determines whether trainings can occur. She said NVCC is lucky to have a supportive president.

The fall semester’s final Narcan training will take place December 10th, from 6:00 – 8:00 pm in Kinney Hall Room 715. For information, contact Dr. Valente: svalente@nv.edu.



Photo Courtesy of Duluth Police Department

Foreign Souls

Daniela Ullauri



Blending into a country you were not born into is like trying to breathe underwater; there is nothing that feels natural, and the overwhelming urge to take that breath of air, to resume normalcy, becomes almost intolerable. Being an immigrant, I know this difficulty, and it is that empathy, that experience, that makes two poems by Julia Alvarez, “Queens, 1963,” and “First Muse,” so impacting. From vivid details, to the poet’s expressions and emotion in the language—the heart of the poems—I understand it all too well. While it is difficult, there is a remolding of character that is, without a doubt, a result of that strain, that

forced change. It is as if you can now breathe underwater.

There are few who can understand the impact and power of these words from Julia Alvarez in “Queens, 1963”: “Everyone seemed more American/ than we, newly arrived/ foreign dirt still on our soles” (1-3). The term for immigrants does feel fitting at times: aliens. We are foreign, trying to make contact with a different life in a different place, just trying to survive, like everyone else. When I immigrated to the United States at age fifteen, I did not want to leave my home, but my family was leaving, so I too had to leave.

I had foreign dirt on my soles when I arrived, as if that dirt came from my core, and it served as a remnant of my home in a place that certainly was not home. Alvarez encapsulates so many of those feelings with her use of imagery and diction in “Queens, 1963”. The dirt on her soles is an analogy for what she, and other immigrants, are to others, foreign “dirt”. While she eventually blended in, as I, too, have, to this beautiful country, this poem

is a reminder of the difficulty of immigrating, the sense that you do not belong, do not fit in and have to cleanse, to change to blend.

Part of the challenge of blending into a society is finding confidence to change where needed, but still holding on to the parts and pieces of yourself that make you who you are. As an immigrant, it is easy to lose confidence, and to feel oppressed and stifled simply by language. In the poem, “First Muse,” Alvarez writes of a language barrier blocking her from her creativity, making her fear her creative expression. It stems from a statement by a “famous poet” that “One can only write poems in the tongue /in which one first said Mother,” (1-3). This ideology muddled Alvarez into thinking her voice is only heard in one language; it made her question whether she could pursue what she loves.

Like her, I was faced with a language barrier that felt crippling, and at times oppressive. I was denied the opportunity of an equal education when I initially started school in the U.S. because of a suspected language barrier.

Though I spoke English, and understood it well, I was told I could not receive the level of education I deserved due to the fact that my first language was not English. This destroyed my confidence; I was convinced I could not succeed in this new country. However, when I looked at my family and saw that, despite this language barrier, they were fighting and achieving success in this whole new life for us, I was inspired, like Alvarez by her muse. This is when I realized my voice could be heard not just in one language, but in two.

Blending into another country can bring many obstacles, but our unique routes through those obstacles are what give us our stories, and make us stronger. In the poems, “Queens, 1963” and “First Muse,” Julia Alvarez speaks of the difficulties of immigration, but does so in a way that makes the reader hope. Hope for people to be more easily accepted, hope for people’s creativity to be heard, and hope we can coexist as humans, even when those humans seem so different.

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK



Keeping Pace

There will always be talk about the next big travesty in our news. There will always be

another chaotic occurrence that makes us wonder when it will slow down. Yet, with everything that goes on around us, never has there been a more peaceful time known to history. What we lack is clarity to see beyond the eye-catching negativity that is always being pushed on to us. In our most primal instincts, humans have evolved to think negatively out of survival.

Think about it, whenever we happen to come across a new person, our instinctual thought is to find what is wrong with them. This mindset has been imbedded in our psyche through the legacy of our ancestors. All they mostly desired was to keep safe as they stemmed from small groups of likeminded people to simply find their next meal. Not long ago, humans did not live to see past their fifties. If you ran into one who did, they would inform you it was on borrowed time. Fast-forward a couple of millennia and the idea of penicillin, running water, and cell-phones are taken for granted. When we find ourselves surrounded by all that goes on around us, it is difficult to keep pace. There is a demand to do everything faster. Therefore, it's important to slow down, breathe, find our center, and go at our own pace.

December is bringing us to another end of a semester, and with it, some of us are likely to move on from NVCC. No doubt, there will be in some of our hands perhaps an associate degree or something else which makes us feel like we have hit a metaphorical milestone marker. Some may choose to go onto higher education, and others may not, but what we need to address is that, just because we have earned something here, does not mean it is over. See, we must earn what we have done here every day.

Most people think incorrectly to themselves that, once this paper states *I have a degree* that the hard part is over. That I will not need to use my mind to exert myself in this focus again. The mind and our education need to be exercised similarly to the body. When we step away from constantly becoming better, we inevitably become dull. My intention here is not to orchestrate anxiety, but for us to help each other to be prepared in our lifelong journey.

Finally, a quote for the break from Seneca, "As long as you live, keep learning how to live."

Regards,
Alam Khan
Editor-in-Chief
tamarack@nv.edu

Fresh Check

Tamarack Staff



Photos Courtesy of Tom Ackerman

NVCC held its second annual "Fresh Check Day" event this November. The event originated with the Jordan Porco Foundation; Porco was a college freshman when he took his own life. Following their son's death, his family established an initiative to highlight mental health, especially among college students. Colleges and other institutions are joining the effort to spread awareness.

"[The event] made access to support services more open and more accessible," said Dean of Student Services Sarah Gager, who was instrumental in hosting the event. She said the college chose to provide both physical and mental health proponents. "It's more comfortable to stop at a booth and have a conversation," she said, as opposed to more traditional means of students inquiring about their health.

Eight clubs participated with booths and activities, up from five clubs last year. Around 400 students attended, which made the event one of the most popular she has seen. Students had the chance to enter a raffle to win prizes, such as a TV, by receiving a stamp from a select number of booths. Hula hoops, drunk goggle obstacles, and the creation of a Safe Haven Quilt, were among the activities.

Louisa Printz is a community educator and prevention coordinator, for Safe Haven of Greater Waterbury. She works with NVCC, and is often invited by faculty to speak in classrooms. Safe Haven provides support and resources to victims of sexual assault and abuse.

Printz referenced a quote someone had written on a piece of fabric: "I am not what my father did." The fabric is part of a collective quilt being made, which will hang in Prism Lounge. Printz said 144 pieces were made last year, and over 125 were made last month, to allow for voices to be heard in a more discrete fashion.

The Veterans' Club hosted a booth, and talked with students about veterans' trauma and suicide. The group cited dramatically higher suicide data for military members. Matthew Steinerman and Andrew Iava represented the club.

Iava said people seem to think of military veterans as tough, but said it is important to understand the mental shift soldiers experience when they return home. He said boot camp desensitizes soldiers to accomplish a mission, but desensitization can be long-lasting. Returning home means leaving financial support, food, friends, and a place to live. The need to re-adjust to society can weigh heavily on veterans.

Daiana Malcervelli, a first-year student from Brazil, said, "People don't see clarity to their problem," urging those in dire straits, not to give up. "Call it a second chance to live your life," she said. Tiana Laurendeau, another NVCC student, did not know all the resources the school makes available, until she attended for the first time, last year. Returning this year, Laurendeau said the event comes at an opportune time in the semester.

SGA PRESIDENT



December to Remember

It's December which means it's time to reflect on what a great fall semester we had and look to the great spring semester we have ahead of us. With December, comes the end of a semester and a sigh of relief that classes will be over. We have all come so far, so congratulations to everyone who has made it this far.

As always, a new month means new SGA activities! Our first event of the month will be our Annual Holiday Party on December 5th from 10:00 am - 1:30 pm. Everyone should come join us in Café West to enjoy a Winter Wonderland with buffet-style food, gingerbread house building and so much more!

Our next and last event of the fall 2018 semester will be the final Waffles for Success. As always, the event will be held in the Academic Center for Excellence. On December 12th from 9:00 am - 11:00 am, make sure to stop by the ACE to enjoy free waffles, juice, and coffee as you study for your finals. And speaking of finals, my fellow SGA officers and I wish you the best of luck in showing all you've learned this semester.

With the semester coming to a close, our SGA meetings have come to an end. We'll be starting back up in the spring. However, just because we will no longer be meeting, doesn't mean you can't get involved. If you are interested in becoming a senator for the spring semester, or if you have any fun ideas for events you want to see on campus, you're always welcome to swing by S516, our office in Prism Lounge, or email us at NV-SGA@nv.edu. Happy Holidays, and I look forward to seeing you all again next semester!

Best regards,
Tabitha Cruz

Center for Teaching

Time for Reflection

Prof. Lisa Kaufman

Lisa Kaufman, NVCC Professor of Communications and co-advisor to the Phi Theta Kappa Honors Society, is a longtime CFT committee member.

Before you leave for a long-deserved break from academics, take some time to reflect on the fall semester. Ask yourself: What have I learned? How has my community changed? What will I do differently when I return to classes in January?

You gained a lot of new ideas this semester. What knowledge can you use in the future? When I teach presentation skills in my classes, I urge students to transfer that information to other classes and even work situations. What you learn in classes can be used in a multitude of ways. Don't make your education a fifteen-week marathon.

Who were the students with whom you shared classes or club memberships? Think of these people you've surrounded yourself with as your new friends and colleagues. You can depend on each other for support, study skills, and maybe even a good time. You will feel more comfortable and enjoy your education if you expand your community. Don't make your relationships a fifteen-week marathon.

After all of the reflection, what will you do differently next semester? Do you need to adjust your college or work schedule? Think carefully about your priorities. Is your family life suffering? Did you make enough time for your friends? Did you allow new friends to come into your life? Don't make your priorities a fifteen-week marathon.

Make sure to enjoy yourself over winter break. Relax and recharge. Celebrate the holidays—and your academic achievements—with family and friends. Don't forget about the knowledge you gained, the new communities you formed, and what adjustments you will make in the future. Don't make next semester a fifteen-week marathon.

Legal Assistant Club Revival

Tom Ackerman

When Nicole Zappone, a jack-of-all-trades and aspiring legal assistant, asked Professor David Clough about the possibility of a Legal Assistant Club, Clough told her one previously existed. In fact, Clough said, the club was active and vibrant for years, until around 2016, when interest faded. That was all the encouragement Zappone needed, and now students are reviving NVCC's Legal Assistant Club.

Zappone joked she did not want to pay exuberant amounts to be a lawyer, yet, but that writing and law are her passions, which work well, in tandem, to be a paralegal. She added, "I want to make a difference here [at NVCC]. I want to bring the club back to life!" Zappone also writes for a number of local newspapers, and wrote public affairs articles with her high school NROTC group, which shaped her interests.

While the club was approved at a recent SGA meeting, it may not take off until next

semester. Professor Clough will again advise the group. He said there is much interest, both from his and Nicole's class, as well as previous students, and others, who have reached out.

Clough said there are approximately 15 students who could serve as a core group, while others showed some interest, and may attend intermittently. "The key thing is having very motivated students, and I'm seeing that in a number of students right now," Clough added.

Clough is active in the field of law, and knows many people within the industry. He was involved with the club from his first year at NVCC, 1994, until around 2005. At that point, another professor, Walter Lippincott, now retired, wanted to become more involved. Professor Kathy Taylor later took over when the club seemed to merge with the Accounting Club, until it dissipated.

"Nicole or Kevin brought it up," Clough said, referring to Vice President Kevin Pistilli. "I was gratified," he said. "Listen, guys," he told the two, "this used to be a very active club, and a lot of fun." He said the group, previously around 15 members, often met at Spartan's Restaurant. They hosted lawyers, judges, and once went to New Haven to observe a criminal arraignment proceeding.

Pistilli said, in an email, "[The club] seems like a very low key and informal way for students to interact with people in the legal profession and get a unique insight into how our justice system works." He added he felt the need to take initiative because of his classmates' desire to gain more practical understanding of the paralegal's role in the legal system. Both Pistilli and Zappone are excited and grateful.

"Getting people interested in this club has not been hard at all! I think the worst part about [getting the club reestablished] was just filling out the paperwork," Pistilli wrote.

The Tamarack

"Standing, like a resolute tree, as your source for news."

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EDITORIAL

Alpha Males?

They say men are supposed to be tough and take no crap from anyone. Well...that might be a bit of a problem. To be fair, being tough is not itself a problem, nor is not taking any guff from some palooka. If you're not a Popeye fan that means taking crap. The problem comes when people take it too far. You might recognize this term: toxic masculinity. Maybe you might recognize its other common label, Alpha Male.

In modern terms, Alpha Males are men who get what they want. Sadly, this means disregarding everyone else; other men, women, children, it doesn't seem to matter. But selfishness is not actually an alpha attribute. It takes something far more to rise above the "pack" and lead.

Leaders encourage everyone; leaders have the best interests of their followers in mind, and leaders are sometimes called upon to sacrifice what they personally want in favor of improving the group. Modern representations of Alpha Males do none of that. In fact, they do the opposite and work to interfere with real leaders.

Does that mean Alpha Males are bad? Of course not! They simply have a lot of work to do on themselves before they can claim the alpha title. Support and encouragement are necessary, as well as keeping an open mind. Working hard to set the example of a hard worker is also a necessary trait. A lazy person who belittles others, then claims credit for all of the work, is not exactly the noble soul one would find in leadership.

To boastfully lay claim to "alpha" status is not a good thing; intimidation is not the mark of a leader. To rule through fear is to misunderstand the true ability it takes to lead. Things might get done, but they will never survive the threat. In modern life, it seems too tempting for a few to wield fear as the terrible swift sword of command.

Only those who inspire greatness can claim true greatness. Tyrants who would terrorize all in their sight to preserve their fragile, ego-based sense of control, will only ever be remembered as bullies. To potential alphas reading these words, find the people in your life who help you grow and become the best person you can be. Then use that as a framework to help others grow equally as well.

We stand better working with each other in support of the common goal. After all, the strongest ropes are those that entwine together many pieces of string, not those made of a thick single strand. So reject weakness masquerading as strength, and grip tight the hands of those leaders, be they of any gender, who promote a legacy of unity.

Answering a Need

Andre J.R. Williams and Thomas Ackerman

Established last year, NVCC's Food Pantry, located on the third floor of Ekstrom Hall, below the ACE, is seeking to match with a designated local grocery store. The pantry is showing increases in its use, each month, despite many students being unaware of its existence.

Professor and Program Coordinator, Kathleen Leblanc, said October saw 1,095 student visits for "grab-and-go" food, and 55 students registered for more regular pickups of grocery items. Grab-and-go food is equivalent to a snack, such as crackers or granola bars.

Leblanc explained that the pantry joined the Food Resource Committee of the United Way of Greater Waterbury. In December, the group will meet with a CT food bank. "We're asking to become a part of the Food Recovery Program, where they would match us with a grocery store," Leblanc said. The store will allow for more fresh foods, like fruits and vegetables.

"I don't want to step on anybody's toes who's already using and depending on a particular store," Leblanc said. "I don't want to show up at Big Y, and find that [another pantry] is using it. That's how you end up with problems."

One of the ultimate goals of the pantry is to become a self-sustaining and integral part of the College. This would mean they'd have dedicated staff, and multiple services to help students in need. Next semester, they will be working with a local community agency to establish wrap-around services, with the goal of offering students vouchers for clothing. They would also eventually like faculty to assign service learning coursework, where students are given a credit-bearing assignment to work with the pantry.

Eventually, the pantry would like to expand into a place that offers services for basic needs, such as food stamps, housing subsidies, and energy assistance. Leblanc noted the pantry currently has student interns, and these positions fulfil a required internship aspect to graduate from the Human Services Program. Professor Leblanc said more volunteers will be needed next year, as current students prepare to graduate.

As for now, the pantry committee would like students to spread the word about the pantry, since there are many out there who don't know it exists. However, students should not see it as a place to come and get free food, in order to spend food money on something else that's not a necessity.

"Some people just come because they forgot their lunch, they're having a hard week, or they had a big bill. Then there are people coming every day because they've graduated from high school, and they had a free breakfast and lunch at school. Now they're in college, and they're missing ten meals a week," Leblanc said.

This is important because food insecurity can contribute to lowered success rates, as hungry students are unable to pay attention in class, perhaps even resulting in students dropping out. The food pantry wants students to see the campus as a place that really welcomes them.

Janel Abdul-Lateef is a full-time employee; her position is funded through an Americorps grant. She started work at NVCC in September, and said she likes for students to feel comfortable in the pantry. At the Fresh Check event, Abdul-Lateef talked with many students who did not know about the pantry, but said they were hungry.

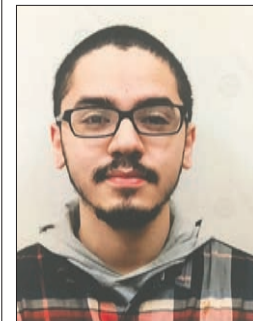
Leblanc referenced a student who was taking time to decide what grab-and-go item to choose. "She saw me looking at her, and she said, 'I'm trying to decide if I want something hot for breakfast or lunch.' It's hard," Leblanc said. While she wishes she could make exceptions, food is costly, and the goal is to feed as many students as possible. Leblanc said there is \$10,000 in funding from United Way, and \$5,000 from the NVCC Foundation, but the money goes very quickly, with an average of \$2 per student visit.

The food pantry is looking for volunteers who can dedicate at least 20 hours a week. They're looking for students they can count on. These volunteers will need to go through training and will also need a reference letter. Contact Professor Leblanc for more info: kLeblanc@nv.edu



New Secretary Joins SGA

Christian Soto



One day I needed some help with my Music Theory homework, so I asked my classmate, Tabitha Cruz because she's one of the more knowledgeable people in the class. We worked on the homework in the

S.G.A. office, and while we worked, Tabitha mentioned that the Student Government Association officers were looking for a new SGA Secretary.

I wasn't sure if I could take on that role at first because I didn't think I could handle the responsibility, considering I take five classes at the moment. I am also in Music Society; I participate in writing for *The Tamarack*, and I recently got involved in the Male Encouragement Network (M.E.N.) Club.

After much thought, I decided S.G.A. is something I can do to not only benefit myself, but the school as well. I enjoy taking on new challenges and responsibilities and trying things I have never done before, things that take me out of my comfort zone.

I'm typically a shy person, but I do enjoy meeting new people, and I saw this as a great opportunity to be more engaged with the school. I have attended Naugatuck Valley for quite some time now, and I've always been grateful for the resources and opportunities the College has given me, so I figured it was about time that I gave back.

Multicultural Celebration of Bread

Karlene Ball



Academic Dean Dr. Lisa Dresdner; student, Wafaa Algharib of Lebanon; and Karlene Ball, ESL Coordinator (l to r) at Algharib's table at the event.



Students, faculty, and staff celebrate community in Café West. Photo Courtesy of Arbenita Musliu

The Multicultural Celebration of Bread on November 12 was a wonderful community gathering around bread from all over the world. The event was organized by the ESL Program and the Office of Multicultural Affairs with support from the BSU and the

HSU. Students, faculty and club advisors shared brioche, bun and cheese, casabe, challah, cornbread, hard-dough, kifle, kulaç, pan de agua, pão de queijo, pita, saj and tsourekhi. New to the celebration this year was the Ugandan

fried dough, mandazi which complemented the offerings from Greece to Jamaica from Brazil to Israel. It was a wonderful way to celebrate this season of Thanksgiving through the sharing of our daily bread.

Words of Honor

NVCC President Daisy Cocco De Filippis, Ph.D. shares her “reflections on a professor, teacher, mentor, colleague, and generous member of our NVCC family.”

“Cambia todo cambia” (“change, everything changes”), the poet once said. Yes, of course, life is about change, about hellos and good-byes. How do I say hasta luego, hasta pronto, perhaps, adios, to someone who, through the years, but in particular this past decade as I have witnessed, has given of himself to all of us?

William Foster III, brother professor Bill, is a larger-than-life presence. As I consider how do we count the ways to say gracias, mil gracias y bendiciones, images come

“William Foster III, brother professor Bill, is a larger-than-life presence.... May your path be shining and kind, and may happiness and justice accompany your days.”

NVCC President

Daisy Cocco De Filippis, Ph.D.

to my mind: student orientations, issues of *The Tamarack*, publications of student coursework, karate classes and functions, talent show presentations, writers’ conferences, Confluencia readings and facilitations, publications, playing checkers with students in the cafeteria, stopping by my office to share an article, teaching across the hall, co-teaching with me (well, mostly he taught) during my first years here, courses on Comparative Literature and African-American Literature.

How then, do we count the ways he will be missed? We will all miss him. There are no words to say thank you, please come back to see us because your absence will be felt. “Caminante, no hay camino, se hace camino al andar,” mused another poet (“fellow traveler, the path is ours for the making”). May your path be shining and kind, and may happiness and justice accompany your days.

In Reverence

Pamela Tolbert-Bynum Rivers

The Swahili people believe “when there are experts, there will never be a lack of learners.” As such, when experts leave us—uprooting and retiring their gift of scholarship—every library bows its head in reverence. We respect and affirm you, Professor Bill Foster, for the joy and sheer magnitude of your talent. Graciously, we relinquish your expertise to a new, universal family of learners, just as hungry as we for your poetic sustenance. Ascend, sir!

A Bouquet of Wishes

Tamarack Staff



NVCC Dance students, (l to r) Fallon Dignan, Arii Alamo, and Robert Collazo, pose with Professor Foster (center) and Assistant Professor Megan Boyd (far right). The students performed original choreography by Boyd, presenting Prof. Foster with a dozen roses in honor of his retirement.

A Man and His Multiverse

Jeannie Evans-Boniecki

Is it a bird? Is it a plane? No, it’s Professor William Foster III, and he has decided to retire this December, after 25 years of teaching at NVCC.

Over his quarter century of service, Prof. Foster has contributed to NVCC in a multitude of ways: You might have known him as your spring 1998 Communications or English professor; you might have attended one of his presentations on representations of African Americans or Native Americans in comic books back in the early 2000s. Maybe you got painted up as a zombie and rifled through back issues of *Lone Wolf and Cub* at his annual Brass City Comic Con in Leever Atrium during some summer.

You might have known him as Sensei Foster, demonstrating sets of push-ups or encouraging you to confidently disarm an assailant. Maybe he got you to smile some Halloween when he served as costumed MC for the Writer’s Conference Open Mic. Maybe you danced behind him to the Electric Slide at the Student Awards Banquet in 2005. Whether you knew him as advisor to *The Tamarack*, or to *Fresh Ink* or the Otaku club, your life has been touched by his exuberance, positive attitude, and passion.

Prof. Foster is best known for his ability to lift spirits with a kind word. A walk down the 5th floor hallway with him tells it all: Heading to Café East... a young man with a backpack approaches. “Yo, my brother (hand clasp, bump)! He turns back, smiles. “Like I was saying....” But then two young women

look up from their cubicles. “Hey, glad to see you.” After five or six greetings, he arrives at the cafeteria, then begins to chat with ten to twelve ping-pong and pool players before giving a hug to the cashier.

“I’ll miss the students, but I want to get back to my writing...”

Professor William Foster III

Along with his vibrant personality, Prof. Foster is known for his work. In addition to plays and poetry, Prof. Foster’s published works include *Looking for a Face Like Mine*, *Dreaming of A Face Like Ours* and *The Untold History of Black Comic Books*. He’s become a world-class authority on the history of African American representation in comic books and spoken at numerous conferences in New York, California, Australia, and China.

Retirement from teaching can be a huge transition. Professors become accustomed to being surrounded by large numbers of people, to being “on stage,” to being needed. Their lives become cyclical, following a semester-by-semester pattern. At the retirement of someone as energetic and engaged as Prof. Bill Foster, the question has to be: What’s next?

In his own words: “I’ll miss the students, but I want to get back to my writing. I have so many projects in the works, but it’s hard to find the time. I’m looking forward to immersing myself in my new book.” As the multiverse expands, we wish him the best.

A Respectful Request

Gwenydd Miller

With the closing of Café East two months ago, there’s been plenty of talk about why it occurred: students using vulgar language, playing loud music, and damaging school property. The closure was not without controversy. Some argue it isn’t fair everyone has to suffer for the crimes of a few. However, many students avoid Café East entirely because they feel uncomfortable and somewhat threatened by the loud and rowdy behavior. So how is that fair to them?

One concern is Public Safety cannot step in without a complaint. However, people aren’t submitting complaints; they’re ducking and running, avoiding the situation altogether. Unfortunately, that doesn’t solve the problem. I want to encourage people to speak up about these disturbances, so Public Safety can better prevent them in the future.

I admit though, I’ve been guilty of not making formal complaints as well. I know usually at least one person in Café East every time I pass by, and I don’t want to get them in trouble, or get their friends in trouble. Normally, you’d think knowing someone would make it easier to say something. But it can make it more difficult to speak up as well, due to peer pressure and not wanting to offend a friend.

So, hear me out. I bet most, if not all, those in Café East do not intend to create an uncomfortable environment. They’re just blowing off steam, relaxing with friends, and if they were made aware of their effect on other students, maybe they’d tone it down a little. It’s all about approaching people respectfully. So, if you know someone contributing to the disturbances in Café East, perhaps take them aside and just let them know. And if you’re a student who sometimes gets a little too noisy, it never hurts to check your own behavior. By always making sure to clean up after yourself and exercising a measure of self-control, you just might set an example for others.

As the semester comes to a close, these are some things to keep in mind for spring. Let’s make Café East a place we can all feel welcome when we come back from winter break.

The Circle Expands

Christopher Gordon



Photo Courtesy of Chris Gordon

November 2, 2018, Dr. Daisy Cocco De Filippis and the President’s Circle Committee inducted three 2018-2019 Circle members. With pride and dignity, the trio of honored students—Irisa Hoxha, John Williams, and Ingrid Taveras, (l to r, flanked by Circle members, Chelsea Clow and Chris Gordon)—accepted their blue blazers and circle pins, as well as their new responsibilities as NVCC student ambassadors.

The challenge is not an easy one. Being a student ambassador is not simply a title, but a philosophy of charitable giving and academic rigor that does not end at graduation. It is a pledge to always represent the values of NVCC, wherever members of the Circle study, work, and live.

With advice and encouragement from previous inductees, Irisa, Ingrid, and John are on their way to doing even more great things for our community. We welcome these exemplary individuals to this special Circle!

Foster’s Fabulous Farewell Feast

Tamarack Staff



Foster poses with Ron Picard, Pamela Tolbert-Bynum Rivers, Nikki McGary, and Jeannie Evans-Boniecki (r to l).



Professors Kate Pelletier, Julia Petitfrere, and Nikki McGary (l to r) join forces to wish Prof. Foster well.

LABSS Division faculty and staff gathered November 19th to commemorate Professor Foster’s retirement. The event, modeled on the traditional holiday potluck Foster has spearheaded each fall, was a fitting tribute.

Honoring Adjuncts

Positively Powerful

Maggie Sachse-Skidd



Photo Courtesy of Maggie Sachse-Skidd

"I am fascinated by human behavior and enjoy exploring the potential of the mind and biology of the brain with students."

My name is Maggie Sachse-Skidd, and I teach psychology at Naugatuck Valley Community College and Western Connecticut State University. I have been teaching at NVCC for more than two decades and have taught just about psych every course we offer. I recently developed two honors courses in Positive Psychology and Positive Organizational Scholarship at WESCONN.

This semester, I am teaching Behavior Modification and Organizational Psychology at NVCC, and next semester I will be teaching General Psychology and Criminal Behavior. I am fascinated by human behavior and enjoy exploring the potential of the mind and biology of the brain with students.

My recent certification in Positive Psychology from UPENN has informed my teaching by exploring the role of positive emotions, positive experiences and positive institutions through the lens of each course. This semester in Organizational Psychology, we worked on developing positive work identities, job crafting and mapping our professional energy networks. In Behavior Modification, we did a deep dive into the power of habit loops, and students created self-management programs to power up their plans to show up in the world the way they want to.

I currently am a monthly contributing writer to *Wild + Free Magazine* and *The Secular Homeschooler*. I also published my first book last month, *We Travel As A Tribe: Homeschooling with Vision*. I homeschooled all four of my children from birth to college. They all attended NVCC as part of their homeschool high school experience and transferred to four-year schools and graduate schools. I frequently speak at homeschool conferences and am currently working on releasing a podcast, *We Travel As A Tribe*, aimed at giving tools to women to dream big for themselves and their families.

I love teaching and view it as a privilege to share in a student's education. This semester I start each class with the question, "Who has good news to share?" The field of psychology has historically worked within a disease model and developed a science of mental illness. Positive psychology seeks to balance the study of psychology with the scientific study of happiness, well-being, and what makes life worth living. As a behavioral scientist and positive psychology practitioner, my goal is to present tools, science, and share stories to encourage optimal living. I look forward to seeing you in class.



Between the Bookends

News from the NVCC Library

Jaime Hammond



Photo Courtesy of Max Raul Egusquiza

Jaime Hammond is the Director of Library Services. She loves being a community college librarian and wants you to ask her obscure questions.

It's December, which means two things: bad weather and questions about works cited pages. Luckily, the Max R. Traurig Library can help with both! Many of the library's resources and tools can be accessed from off campus, which means that, even if the weather is frightful, doing your homework doesn't have to be. Here's an overview of some of our most important virtual resources:

- **EBooks, streaming films, and online journals:** When you search for a book or article in NV Search (the library catalog), you can easily limit results to online resources. After you enter your search topic, click search. On the results page, you'll see an option called "Delivery Format"- choose "Online". Then, under "Resource Type," you'll be able to choose between books, audio visual (like movies and music), and journals.
- **Research Guides:** Need help with your Psychology or English research paper, but it's late? Check out the library's subject-based Research Guides! Each guide will recommend books, articles, journals, and websites to help you with your research, and include helpful citation information. They're a great way to get started—and you'll also find them in your Blackboard courses, under "Library Study Guide".
- **MLA, APA... Turabian?** The library has some great citation guides you can use to check your work, see sample Works Cited/Reference pages, and generate website citations. Check <http://nvcc.libguides.com/CitationGuides> to get started.

Speaking of citations, every year your friendly NVCC librarians host a really fun event called Exciting Snacks. We cook up some delicious treats for you to enjoy (free of charge), and then we provide the recipes, complete with their MLA and APA citations! We also hand out worksheets to help answer your questions, and you can bring your paper to get on-the-spot advice. Each year we have a huge turnout for this great event, and we hear that the citation help is even more appreciated than the snacks (But the snacks are really, really good too)! This event will take place on Wednesday, December 5th, from 11:30 am to 1:30 pm in room L501. We can't wait to see you there!

SPEAK UP

Are you interested in where your Student Activities Fees are spent? If so, voice your opinion at NVCC's Student Government meetings held every Wednesday, 4-5 p.m. in L501, across from the Library.



For more information call 203-596-2185, stop by S516, or emailSGA@nvcc.commnet.edu.

FACE IN THE CROWD

Scholar, Scout, Scuba, and Scares

Mitchell Maknis

I'm Mitchell Maknis; I've been a Connecticut resident since I was born. Through my two decades of life, I have witnessed and participated in an eclectic group of experiences that I've been fortunate enough to share with family and friends.

For instance, throughout my younger years, I followed in my family's footsteps by joining karate, specifically the Cheezic Tang Soo Do Federation. I was fortunate enough to be taught by my own mother, a master belt who would constantly have me practice different forms and techniques in and outside the dojo. Thanks to my mother's and my own persistence, I received my black belt and set off on my next journey: Boy Scouts.

I joined Middlebury's Troop 444, where I spent my time honing my scouting skills. During those years, I forged friendships I feel sure will endure throughout my lifetime. I finished my time in Scouting by becoming the Troop's Senior Patrol Leader. I'm proud to say that, after several years in Boy Scouts, and with the help of friends, family and Scout leaders, I was able to receive the rank of Eagle Scout, the highest achievement in scouting.

One of my favorite merit badges I earned as a Boy Scout was the scuba diving merit badge. I credit my family's love of the ocean and respect for sea life that led my father and me to become certified scuba divers. We then joined our instructor, Dr. William Zarillo, in his Venture Crew named Crew 3000. Crew 3000 is a non-profit organization; its main focus is on coral restoration. For my volunteer work in Crew 3000, I was awarded the Bronze Triton Award for my conservation efforts.

Due to my background in coral restoration, I was accepted into The Sound School in New Haven for my high school years. The



Photo Courtesy of Tracey Maknis

Sound School has an amazing aquaculture program I felt would complement my love of sea life. I was ready to launch into a career in Marine Biology until during my high school tenure, I came to the realization that I have a disdain for the minutia of science. Although I was disillusioned by the intricacies the job of a Marine Biologist entailed, I learned a lot about myself, and my time there was well spent. I went from a disinterested and inauspicious student to an inquisitive and ultimately successful one, graduating with honors and earning the George Foote School Spirit Scholarship.

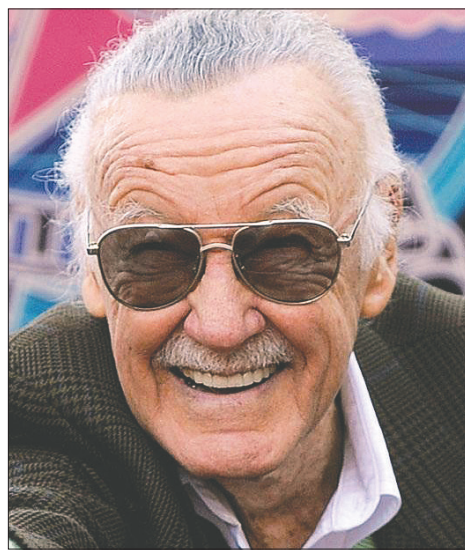
During my college years, I feel I have grown and flourished as a scholar. Currently, I write for Naugatuck Valley's newspaper, *The Tamarack*, and have had multiple articles published, ranging from news, to arts and culture. During my freshman year I was nominated and won NVCC's Male Image Award, and recently I was inducted into Phi Theta Kappa National Honor Society.

While I do focus on my academic studies, a passion of mine is to understand all aspects of film, television, and theater. This also leads to my favorite past-time when I am not working or writing. I lie down on the couch with my dog and watch obscure horror movies I find while attending local comic and horror conventions.

Excelsior, Now and Always

Farewell, Stan Lee

Anna Bunovsky



This past summer, devoted fans walked out of movie theatres screening *Avengers: Infinity War* feeling less like they'd seen a movie, and more like they'd been punched in the gut. With the now iconic snapping of fingers, half of the most celebrated superheroes of the past ten years quite literally vanished into dust. It's not hard to understand why fans reacted so strongly; for many of them, these characters have been an integral part of their childhoods. Whether they grew up reading the classic Marvel comics, or watched the Marvel Cinematic Universe unfold throughout their formative years, many an imagination has been captured by the likes of Captain America and Black Panther. If we are so deeply affected by the loss of our favorite characters, how can we cope with the very real loss of their creator?

Born December 28, 1922, Stanley Martin Lieber was the son of a poor Romanian immigrant who made his living as a dress-cutter in the Washington Heights. He was an avid fan of

adventure books and the swashbuckler movies of Errol Flynn, and carried that love of the daring and fantastical into adulthood. After graduating from DeWitt Clinton High School, Lieber began his life of entertainment and writing by joining the WPA Federal Theatre Project. By 1939, he took a job for \$8 a week as a gofer for Timely Comics, and two years on, he wrote a two-page story for Jack Kirby and Joe Simon's *Captain America* comic titled "The Traitor's Revenge!" He used the pen name Stan Lee.

By 1942, Lee enlisted in the U.S. Army and served with the Signal Corps, writing manuals and training films, and working alongside legends such as Frank Capra, William Saroyan, and Theodore Geisel (aka Dr. Seuss). Following the end of World War II, Lee returned to comics and served as editor. In 1961, the newly renamed Marvel Comics needed heroes that would put them on par with DC Comics and their immensely popular Justice League, so Lee and Kirby wasted no time. The duo created icons of the superhero genre such as the Fantastic Four, a charismatic family of do-gooders; Spider-Man, the web-slinging teen balancing the responsibilities of a hero with the struggles of adolescence; and the X-Men, a team of mutants fighting for their rights as well as saving the day. As the new roster of characters found quick success, the seeds of a legacy were planted, bringing us to where we are now.

With the passing of Stan Lee, one word has come up in many a farewell: Excelsior! Lee chose the word to close off his stories for its uniqueness, as he needed a catchphrase that competitors would not copy, yet the word bears a greater significance. The Latin word means "ever upward," and what better way to send off a man who always elevated storytelling upward toward its wildest potential? So, I too, say Excelsior!

Take Back the Night

Special from the Women's Center



Rose-Mary Rodrigues, Director of the Women's Center (front left), poses with students, Millennia Figueroa, Savanna Turner, Michael Matovu (l to r), and (back l to r) Antonio Gonzales, Mathieu McPadden, Diante George, and Eduardo Melendez at the TBTN event. Photo Courtesy of Tamarack Staff



Photo Courtesy of Rose-Mary Rodrigues

November 14, a group of students and staff gathered on a frigid night. Their purpose was to stand together, to create awareness, and to empower those who have been victims of sexual assault.

Prior to the event, many students gathered in the Leever Atrium to make signs to carry during the march. The event opened with a beautiful piano performance of Lady Gaga's "Till It Happens to You" played by our very own Gil Harel, Assistant Professor of Music.

Speakers at the event included Rose-Mary Rodrigues, Associate Director of the ACE and Director of the Women's Center; Dr. Lisa Dresdner, Dean of Academic Affairs; and Heather, a representative from Safe Haven.

Together, the small group of twenty braved the cold with lit candles and marched with posters with messages that included "Believe

support for those who have experienced sexual violence, the events provide education and inspire others to become allies and supporters of survivors. More information is available at TakeBacktheNight.Org.

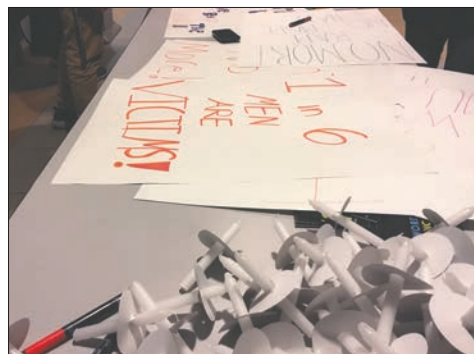


Photo Courtesy of Rose-Mary Rodrigues

Women! Do Not Excuse the Accused!!!" "Take Back the Night, Take Back Your Life, Take Back Your Rights," "I should be able to walk alone," "No More Rape, No More Hate" and more.

Take Back the Night (TBTN) is about the power of speaking out. Rape, sexual assault, sexual abuse, and domestic violence are often labeled as "crimes of silence" because of low reporting rates and social discomfort with public discussion around these traumatic events.

By shattering the silence on sexual violence, TBTN events help survivors, and friends and family of survivors, know that they are not alone. Such gatherings reinforce the fact that these crimes will not be tolerated, nor will their survivors be left to go silently into the night.

TBTN is inclusive of all ethnicities, nationalities, genders, religions, sexual orientations, ages, abilities, political philosophies, socio-economic groups, and educational backgrounds. In addition to providing

My Student Worker Experience

Gwenydd Miller

Assistant Professor Christopher Rempfer, Coordinator for the Liberal Arts and Sciences Degree Program, and Assistant Professor of Sociology Nikki McGary, are co-chairs of the Center For Teaching. Recently, they got their first-ever student worker. I'm happy to say I was lucky enough to get the job.

Many people may know me from around campus, seeing as I'm in way too many clubs, including Creative Writing and Safe Space, as well as the Honors Society, Phi Theta Kappa. Obviously, I also write for *The Tamarack*. This semester, I decided I'd be crazy and extend my hours on campus with a new job.

Until a friend suggested it, I never thought about having an on-campus job. The big appeal is that, since I already spend a lot of time at school, I might as well be working while I'm here. Another thing I really like about working on campus is the flexibility; my work schedule is built around my classes. It's also really nice to get to see the familiar faces of students and faculty.

My work is more or less an administrative assistant job; my most recent projects have been designing flyers and brochures, organizing Social Justice Series review forms, tracking CFT events, making and sending certificates, and much more. I also run small errands, like delivering paperwork.

There are two programs I know of that provide on-campus jobs for NVCC students. Jobs on Campus is the one I'm most familiar with, as that's where my pay comes from. The requirements are to be carrying nine credits, have a 2.5 GPA, and have a FAFSA on file. Well that's easy. The last requirement, though, confused me. You must either be ineligible for Work Study Funds, or Work Study Funds must be depleted. Well, what exactly are Work Study Funds?

After a lovely discussion with Lisa Boyko, Associate Director of Financial Aid, I was informed that, while Jobs on Campus is privately funded, Work Study Funds are federal. The qualifications are a GPA of 2.0, a completed FAFSA, and taking a minimum of six credits. On the FAFSA, there is usually a box to check, showing interest in a Work Study position. An email will then be sent out to all those who checked said box.

Being the CFT student worker has been one of the best experiences. I'm almost sorry to see this semester end, but I hope to continue in spring 2019. Prof. McGary is probably one of the best bosses I could have asked for. Prof. Rempfer? Eh, he's all right (Kidding! He's great; just don't tell him I said so!). I'm very thankful to them both for all they do, and all they've taught me—as my professors, my employers, and probably most of all, by being the wonderful people they are. Happy holidays, and see you next semester!

PTK Column

Limitless

Irisa Hoxha



Pictured (l to r): PTK Officers, Egzon Dauti, Irisa Hoxha, Erika Crabe, and Anthony Rosa with Faculty Advisor Prof. Greg Harding (back row).

Hello there, everyone! This month, PTK officers are sending greetings from Massachusetts. The five of us, including our advisor, Professor Greg Harding, attended the New England Region's Fall Conference, hosted by Massasoit Community College. All the PTK members enjoyed a day filled with workshops, meetings, and a transfer fair. It was a great experience with positive synergy everywhere.

There were more than 100 students from Vermont, Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Connecticut and Rhode Island. "Limitless Leadership" was a three-hour beneficial training from Tom Healy, a national speaker and consultant who is an expert in helping leaders reach their extraordinary leadership potential. According to Healy, "If you want to see YOU as a leader, you should surround yourself with smart people while you are working hard." He also suggested comparing yourself not with others, but with your past self. If you ask yourself "What is next?" the answer contains different options: contribute, do better, inspire, be great, and THRIVE in the moment!

After this training, we enjoyed lunch provided by the hosting college. Later on, we attended a college transfer fair with representatives from different universities located all over the United States. Afternoon found us attending different workshops which were organized by the New England Region Advisory Board Members. They talked about the competitive edge, educational forums, the honors in action and college project, APA formatting and scholarships.

Before leaving, we got to enjoy the door prize drawing in which most of us got gifts; the raffle was hosted by the board members. I also want to share my favorite quote from this conference: "There may be people who have more talent than you, but there is no excuse for anyone to work harder." Thus, as college students, we should put effort every day to achieve our goals if we want to succeed in this life.

Besides the conference, another project completed successfully by PTK active members was "Coats for Coffee," led by PTK Vice President, Egzon Dauti. Dozens of coats and hoodies were donated by NVCC students, staff, and faculty members to benefit homeless people around town. Moreover, this project served as a fundraiser to attend the next conference to be held in spring 2019. We want to say thank you to all the people at NVCC who supported us with donations and the purchase of homemade cupcakes.

Let me ask you something before I close: How great can you be? As great as YOU want! PTK is looking forward to seeing you in our next meeting and at future activities.

Trim that Tree!

Tamarack Staff



On Thursday, November 15th, as CT braced for a too-early winter storm, spirits were high on campus. Despite the impending weather—and unaware of the nightmarish commute it would cause—the S.G.A. hosted its annual tree-trimming ceremony. With traditional carols playing, and tasty treats on hand, students and staff transformed Prism Lounge—even festooning the doorway to *The Tamarack* office—into a festive holiday destination.



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Creative Writing Club

Mondays
2:30 - 4:00
S517

Thursdays
3:00 - 4:00
S517

Visiting Colleges 101

Christian Cruz

Well isn't this a scary topic, visiting colleges? Remember to breathe as I explain how you should start exploring where you want to be after NVCC. Many lost souls on campus do not know what we'd like to do for a career or even a major. Before we know it, we've graduated with our associate's degree and have to transfer.

"Which college should I attend?" is a big question. Sometimes, breaking it down, an individual expects the world. For example, a must-have list might include: Fitting in on campus, lots of scholarship opportunities, a good program for my major, a clear path to enter my career field, professors who are nice, good food, and a plethora of other outrageous things we expect as community college graduates. So let's create a more reasonable list and good starting points.

First off, start searching early. Visit potential colleges and connect with those organizations. Then, try to envision yourself on their campus and see if this college is right for you. Another good way to start is to discuss this with your parents and a close professor or advisor early. They'll have your best interest at heart; from there you can make a more reasonable decision.

Second, free is free. If a college, any college, offers a free application, fill it out. What do you have to lose besides time? Fill it out. You never know, that college may shock you by their enthusiasm or interest in you.

Third, narrow your choices quickly by your last year of community college. It will make you feel a lot more comfortable, and less overwhelmed, knowing where you want to go by that point in your community college career.

Fourth, is price. Oh boy, it's always a big factor. How much will this experience cost? You always have to think about the bottom line: How can I afford this experience? The numbers and outcomes sometimes get crazy. However, knowing what you can afford is key.

Finally, visit EVERY COLLEGE you're interested in! Visiting is key to any of your final choices. If you're going to be somewhere for two or more years of your life, it better feel, smell, and taste like it will be worth the experience. When you go, bring an objective eye, and bring close family members and friends to help make that decision easier.

As someone who's checked out a few colleges, there are always positives and negatives on each visit. At University of Rhode Island, I found a beautiful and inviting campus. Eastern CT State University felt like home away from home. Though New Hampshire's Colby Sawyer College is in the middle of nowhere, the community was friendly and welcoming. It all depends on what experience you seek and how you want to personalize your college career. Remember, here at NVCC, you learned how to research. Now use those skills on your college hunt. Good luck!

NVCC Students Move Audience

Juliann Dignan



Photo Courtesy of Ray Shaw Photography

Five schools. Five Dances. All Connecticut. That's how it started sixteen years ago. The 5x5 CT Contemporary Dance Festival, Connecticut's largest and longest-running contemporary dance festival, has grown over the years to include professional dance companies sharing a venue with student dancers. This concept offers students an opportunity to grow in their art and to realize in part their own dream of becoming professional dancers.

Held at the University of St. Joseph in West Hartford, the festival this year included a dance choreographed by NVCC's own Megan Boyd and Fulbright Scholar-in-Residence Aguibou Bougobali Sanou. The day's activities included Master Classes taught by professionals such as Mr. Sanou and the event culminated in a showcase performance at night.

"Toungaranke" (Immigrant) was performed with music from the Toungaranke Music Project and by student dancers from NVCC, including Nasaria Bennett, Alexandria Angle, Austin Gonzalez, Robert Collazo, Monica Mulligan, Eric Mahoney, Michelle Wright, Fallon Dignan, and Gilia Jose. Among the beautiful and soul stirring performances of the evening, this expression of the human condition of immigration began quietly in sacred circle and moved gracefully through to stunning climax.

Using elegant and strong movement with a combination of the dancers' own improvisational acts, it provided a natural and organic sense of the struggles and elation felt by those "moving from place to places looking for peace" and a better place to live, as noted in the program. Through the masterful choreography and performance, in the end, one felt lost in time and place and part of the human struggle, the human condition in that "we are all immigrants."

This unique interpretive dance will be performed again in the Playbox Theatre at NVCC's Fall Dance Showcase on December 6th and 7th at 7:30 pm. The Showcase, sponsored by the LABSS Division and the Terpsichorean Dance Ensemble, will also include an evening of dance choreographed and performed by NVCC students. Tickets are just \$5 and reservations may be made by calling (203) 575-8193.

A Day in Salem

Imani Stewart



Photo Courtesy of Imani Stewart

In fact, Salem is so popular with students it's been chosen as the fall trip for the past ten years. "I've been to Salem more than ten times," Blake admitted. She added it's a must-go destination for Halloween. Calling the trip a chance for students to relax, take a break from studies, and have fun, Blake added, "I hope the students, make friends, and genuinely enjoy the trip."

For my brother and me, Salem was amazing! The food, the scary costumes, the décor, all of it was as wicked as we could imagine. Salem also had a fair going on, so students could participate, whether eating candy apples or enjoying some rides.

My favorite were the antique shops; every shop you walked in was decorated differently, but kept that creepy Halloween Salem vibe. Some shops sold tarot cards, others sold brooms. I enjoyed the shops that specialized in zodiac gems.

My brother was, quite surprisingly, excited about seeing the statue of Roger Conant, Salem's founder. On our journey we saw many of the famous historical spots people rave about when they visit Salem, for instance the Witch House.

The Witch House must be the most touristy part of Salem, since this is where Judge Jonathan Corwin, one of the many judges involved in the Witch Trials, lived. It is the only structure tied directly to the Witch Trials that's still standing. Of course, when we arrived there, the house was surrounded by hundreds of people, but we still got a great look.

I love Salem, and I'm pretty sure my brother enjoyed it as well. If you're ever looking for a special trip around Halloween, check to see if the College is sponsoring another Salem trip. It's definitely a place I'd recommend, and truly a day to remember.

Salem, Massachusetts is one of the most beautifully historic places in the U.S.—despite its gory past. I was fortunate to visit as a sophomore in high school. This fall, while looking for trips to take, I noticed an NVCC Student Activities flyer for a Salem trip on Oct. 20th, and I just had to go. I was allowed one guest, so I invited my 15-year-old brother to come along. He was just as excited as I was since he was learning about Salem in class.

I visited the Student Activities Office to ask why, when, and how they chose Salem as the destination for this October. Karen Blake, Director of Student Activities, said, "It's popular with the students, so we decided to go again." Apparently, student choice is a deciding factor, and destinations are voted on by students.

A Capella Carol Event

Christian Soto



Lesser known carols will also be presented without sheet music; these will be sung as a set list amongst the A Capella Group for the enjoyment of those in attendance. Last year, there was a similar Messiah Sing Event that was a great success, with the audience singing along with lyrics to songs pulled up on their smartphones.

The A Capella Group wishes to see that same enthusiasm towards singing along, considering the song lyrics will be provided on paper this year. Music Society wishes to see as many people as possible attend the event. We also invite everyone who enjoys singing to join the A Capella Group. The event is sure to be a lot of fun, with snacks and beverages provided to include hot chocolate and peppermint hot chocolate.

Support your local NVCC artists, and join in the holiday spirit. Wishing you very happy holidays from Music Society!

December 10th at 6:00 PM, Music Society is hosting a caroling event in Founder's Hall. The A Capella Group will be singing many popular carols and encouraging the audience to sing along. Sheet music will be provided for all the well-known carols, so everyone who wants to sing with the A Capella Group will be able to do so.

Connect. Develop. Succeed.

NJIT
New Jersey Institute of Technology

info.njit.edu/transfer

An Artist's Words

Tamarack Staff



Photo Courtesy of Joshua Poole

Joshua Poole is an NVCC student and plans to graduate this coming spring. Majoring in the arts, he enjoys illustration and printmaking most. Joshua has been moving around most of his life. He's lived in many different places and met many new people, experiencing many different cultures. Much of his art is "about the joys and sorrows of having no place to look back on and call home." Poole states, "The short precious time people spend together is very important to me. In my art and writings I really try to connect the past and present. I try to connect the memories I run from, to the future I hope to have. Not to remind myself of happy or sad times, but to remind myself—and hopefully viewers and readers—that life is a journey, one with many beginnings and many ends, many seasons." Poole hopes to illustrate "what it took me so long to realize. I hope to remind people, and myself, that *we are* because of the roads we have traveled, and that seasons hold no malicious intent."

"Of a Feather"

We met some time ago. Just there on the barren birch tree. In freshly fallen snow we walked and sang. We neither knew how far we'd come or whether we'd return. We only knew our feathers matched, and both us far from home.

We met some time ago, just there on the barren birch tree. Now I sit and wait alone, for you. Wherever you have flown.

"After the Meal"

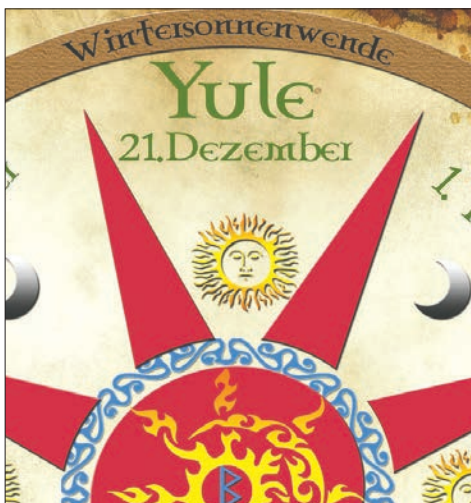
After the dance of forks and spoons, the plates alone are left. The noise of chattering silverware drifts from the mind like an old memory. Glasses of drink once full, are now empty. The trance of eating has ended. Light floods the room, bringing with it the color and warmth of the sun. The golden shine plays with everything it touches. The tabletops flicker. The water in the flower vase shimmers. Your eyes sparkle like starlight. After the meal, we talk about life and how it has treated us. About how it has lulled and whispered, pushed and pulled us. To where we now sit. Sharing our lives however briefly. Soon the details of the meal are forgotten and we talk about what people talk about, after the meal.

"A Playground for Angels"

Death the composer had a female's voice, as we sat in her taxi and she urged her passengers to fasten their seatbelts. The quiet murmur of people and luggage being placed into their temporary graves had ceased. The taxi crawled and rattled along the runway as it gathered speed. My brother next to me, started to cry, and I held his trembling hand. I told him everything would be okay, but I myself did not know the outcome. As our metal coffin shook ever so violently, I closed my eyes and prayed. With my eyes closed I could feel my stomach being left far below. Our coffin rose higher and higher, above all fear and above all doubt. There we stayed, in that high place. A gap between breaths. When I opened my eyes to look out of the nearest window, I imagined the worst. To my astonishment, what I saw was a symphony of light sparkling on the soft skin of clouds. At that moment my sorrow and isolation had given birth to wonder and hope as our metal bird, and not coffin as I had initially thought, had lifted us to the playground of angels.

Yuletide Traditions

Gwenydd Miller



The winter holidays are here at last, and they're "supposed to be jolly, with mistletoe and holly...and other things ending in olly," as goes my favorite quote from the *Hogfather*. It's a yearly tradition in my house to watch the movie, *Hogfather*. It's based on a Terry Pratchett book about Disk World, a reality that's a mirror of our own, and it mirrors our holidays as well. *Hogswatch* is the Disk World equivalent to our Christmas, but it has a lot in common with another holiday as well.

My family considers itself Neo-Pagan—meanwhile our extended family on my mom's side is Lutheran, and on my dad's side they're Catholic. It's a strange mix of religions, and I essentially grew up celebrating three different Christmases each year.

The first holiday, Yule, is about keeping the light/life going through the Winter Solstice, the longest night of the year. The evergreen is symbolic as it doesn't lose its needles through the winter. Actually, this is where the Christmas tree came from. Don't believe me? Then ask

yourself what a tree with lights on it has to do with the birth of Christ.

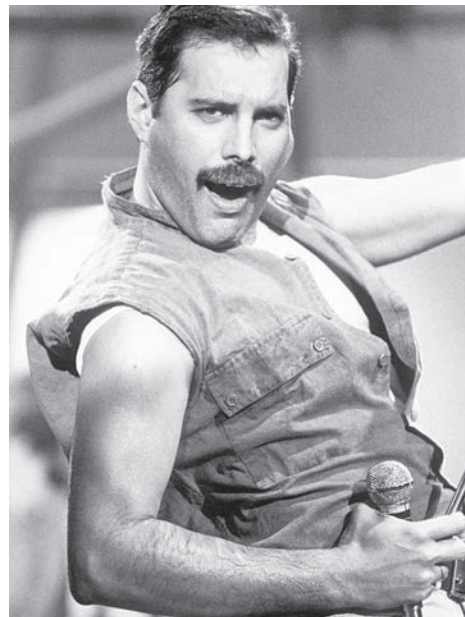
Yule is a three-day holiday. The first night is Mother's Night, when we decorate the Yule tree and get our first present of the holiday season: an ornament. On Yule Eve, as a ritual, we each write a wish on a ribbon of wrapping paper, then tie them onto a wreath we'll burn on New Year's Day, so they can be granted. After eating a big dinner and watching *Hogfather*, we light a candle that burns until morning, to keep the light on the darkest night. After, we make promises for the New Year on the back of a bread boar; then each of us takes a piece to eat. It's almost like a New Year's resolution. The next morning, we open presents and eat as much breakfast pizza as my dad can make.

Christmas Eve, we go to my great aunt's house to celebrate with my dad's side of the family over a fish and pasta dinner. My mom's side of the family usually picks a random day—anywhere from before Christmas to the middle of January—to exchange gifts. Christmas morning, we go down to Mom's to exchange presents. As a tradition, we go on a long walk, then out for Christmas sushi! Everywhere else is closed.

Occasionally, on Christmas Eve, I go with my mom to a midnight service. When I walk into a church, I sometimes feel, because I'm of a different faith, I shouldn't be there. The silver pentacle hanging around my neck—a symbol of harmony and balance—marks me as evil to some people. But on Christmas Eve, with my family, holding a candle in a dark church, I feel absolutely welcome. I can't say I believe in God, or Christmas, but I definitely believe in the night and the effect it can have on people. However you choose to celebrate, I wish you the happiest of holidays!

Revolutionary Rhythms

Queen's Freddie Mercury



Bohemian Rhapsody, a look into the formation of the band Queen, as well as the underlying struggles of lead singer, Freddie Mercury, hit theaters November 2nd. Mercury, born Farrokh Bulsara, in Zanzibar, Tanzania, had a brilliantly talented mind. After studying music in college, he befriended Brian May and Roger Taylor, his future bandmates, and they formed Queen in 1971; John Deacon joined later. The band released a self-titled album in 1973, but it wasn't until 1974, that their third album, *Sheer Heart Attack*, delivered their first hit, "Killer Queen".

A major focus of the movie was on the risky yet defining moment when the band created "Bohemian Rhapsody". Mercury's idea to incorporate an operatic feel at first seemed ridiculous, but it worked. The film depicts the challenging rehearsals, doing take after take to get it right, and all of the little details that went into it. One risky element was that the finished song was very long—approximately six minutes—plus, it wasn't the same kind of rock music for which they'd been known. However, despite the risks, it was an instant hit, and remains an iconic song for the band.

Queen's success escalated throughout the 70s and early 80s. Those hits include "We

Will Rock You," "We are the Champions," "Somebody to Love," "Under Pressure," "Fat-bottomed Girls," "Another one Bites the Dust," and "Crazy Little Thing Called Love". Mercury's four-octave vocals and his high octane stage presence captured the attention of fans. He knew how to entertain them and often included them, inviting audiences to sing along.

The film charts Queen's success, while also focusing on Mercury's sexuality. While the song, "Love of My Life," refers to Mary Austin, whom he was, in fact, going to marry, Mercury eventually admitted his interest in men. Though he and Austin remained friends, Mercury's sexual liaisons eventually led to him contracting AIDS.

In the film, we see Mercury embrace the rock star lifestyle of over-the-top parties, losing himself in drugs and meaningless sex. The final wedge between him and the band was caused when Mercury signed a lucrative contract to record a solo album.

When Queen was invited to perform at Live Aid in 1985, to raise money for famine relief in Africa, Mercury convinced the band to reunite. Though rehearsals were rocky, and Mercury was suffering with a throat infection the day of the concert, he found new vigor, belting out a 20-minute set, including "Bohemian Rhapsody" and other favorites.

Sadly, in 1991, Mercury, succumbed, at age 45, to AIDS-related pneumonia. After announcing publicly that he had AIDS, he died the following day. In 1992, his bandmates put together a tribute concert to honor Mercury and spread AIDS awareness.

It's impressive that, nearly thirty years after Freddie Mercury's death, Queen are still thrilling audiences. They remain iconic, not only for their music, but for their showmanship, and their lead singer's unique vision.



Alyssa Katz

The Rise of E-sports

Christian Cruz



League of Legends is a free-to-play game that's really made a splash in the Multiplayer Online Battle Arena (MOBA) universe. In these games, individuals can't win alone; they're team-oriented games. Each team must achieve an objective together to win the game. Every MOBA has different versions of how to create these arenas. League's most famous version is "Summoner's Rift". In this game mode, players pick champions who have five clearly defined roles, and they battle each other to ultimately destroy the other team's nexus.

Riot Games has made a world championship game for the last eight years, and it has generated amazing results. Besides them starting out with the dominance of Korean teams this year at World's, there has been a strong showing, from European teams, to North American teams, to other Asian teams finally making a strong showing in the tournament.

It has been inspiring to see this game grow as more professional teams join the rift every

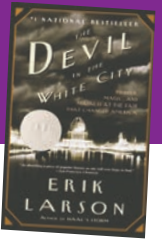
year. The only issue with the professional scene at League of Legends E-sports is that professional players do not last too long. Unless you are a very dominant player, you'll probably only last one World's tournament.

Yet, again, it is a business, and seeing the growth in this industry has been shocking and invigorating at the same time. Who would have thought gaming could have risen to a professional scene with paid benefits to players and work space given to practice playing video games? Once a form of entertainment everyone thought my generation was wasting too much time on, now E-sports is something a young player could potentially get into as a career and not sacrifice to do something they love. Those who get into it now can make an actual living as a gamer.

This year at World's, a Chinese team won their first championship as best player, defeating last year's powerhouse team, KT Rolster. Rolster has decided to take a break after losing his first World's Championship since hitting the professional scene.

These games are high octane and great fun to watch. Watching this year's eventual champions in Invictus Gaming you could just feel the electricity throughout. When people say E-sports is a phase, and could never hold up to actual sports venues with athletics, I beg to differ. E-sports can create that electricity that a sporting event can create with amazing games and great storylines as well. Not to mention the best part: gamers can now look up to somebody just like them, as they too hone their skills to be the next professional on that grand stage.

RECENTLY READ



The Devil in the White City
by Erik Larson

Is there any phenomenon quite so lurid as the true crime genre? From podcasts, Netflix miniseries, and even entire television networks, true crime has seemingly captured the cultural zeitgeist. Yet, beneath the genre's bedrock of blood and murder, lies the potential for richly human stories.

Erik Larson's *The Devil in the White City* tells such a story. A journalist turned historical writer, Larson masterfully crafts a twofold narrative. This is the true story of America's first known serial killer, pharmacist H. H. Holmes, interwoven with the larger story of Chicago's 1893 World's Columbian Exposition, spearheaded by architects Daniel Burnham and John Root. Readers are witness to the Fair's creation from conception to operation. Meanwhile, the easily unnoticed Holmes builds and maintains a hotel in which he murders his patrons. He leaves an increasingly grisly trail of bloodshed in his wake, until finally being apprehended in the closing days of the Fair.

This is truly a non-fiction novel; the book perfectly straddles the line between plain fact and driving narrative. Larson brings the world of streetcars, newsboys, and the stench of slaughterhouses to vivid life, punctuated with direct citation, lest a reader begin to question his authenticity. Structurally, Larson splits his work down the middle, with each chapter switching between Burnham and Holmes respectively. This choice best allows him to distill a complex network of events into a functional story framework.

Perhaps the most important front that Larson delivers on is the horror. In the chapters devoted to Holmes, Larson engages in a slow burn game, teasing out chilling scenarios without directly rendering gruesome details to readers. Dramatic irony and grisly implications are tools expertly employed here. These chapters become like short stories unto themselves, in which charmed friends, acquaintances, and passersby are slowly made to feel uneasy in the presence of Holmes. Only later, do they realize what readers knew from the outset: this man is a monster.

However, the real magic is how Larson spins the mundane into the mythic. Here, the story of the World's Columbian Exposition is more than the work of stodgy old men smoking cigars in drawing rooms. Larson conjures it into something epic, like the American Dream itself. Though Larson makes it clear many men shaped the Fair, principle architect Daniel Burnham is the clear centerpiece of these chapters; he embodies the underdog nature of the whole undertaking. The Fair becomes an impossible ticking timeclock that must be beaten, and Burnham's crew is repeatedly faced with setbacks. Still, they persevere to the finish.

It's no coincidence Holmes's story is framed through the creation of his murder hotel alongside architect Daniel Burnham. Holmes becomes like an architect, drafting not just a building, but an extension of himself. In this way, architecture becomes metaphorical for driven people shaping the world around them in their image—be it great or terrible. Different in every way save for their ability to will visions into reality, the duality shared between these two men is ironic given they would never meet—only coexist within the pages of this thrilling read.

Matthew Olivares



Media Blasters

Mitchell Maknis



Photo Courtesy of Mitchell Maknis

Throughout recent decades, Western society has become accustomed to diversity in the entertainment industry with the cultural influences of foreign films and anime. What consumers might not realize is commodities such as these wouldn't be available without visionaries who recognized the potential of these unique products. John Sirabella, founder of Media Blasters, is one such innovator.

I was able to sit down with Sirabella and gain insight on his business and experiences in the entertainment industry. Sirabella described his company, saying, "Media Blasters is an independent film distributor. We translate, subtitle, dub and release anime titles. We also license products that don't run through the studio system and give them a proper release." Located in New York, Media Blasters has been providing fans with hit anime series for two decades by releasing industry defining titles, such as *Rurouni Kenshin* (1996) and *Berserk* (1997).

When asked about how his company came to be, Sirabella recounted humble beginnings. It seems while attending a *Star Trek* convention, Sirabella came across a vendor selling videotapes of Japanese anime. At this time, Japanese anime was not a mainstream product in the U.S. Interested, Sirabella purchased a couple tapes. After viewing them, he remembered thinking they were "different." He dug deeper, and after extensive research, Sirabella decided this might be a product others would enjoy. For over two decades, Sirabella and Media Blasters have been supplying consumers with its unique brand of products.

Although anime is Media Blaster's main line of business, the firm has also been providing audiences with an eclectic group of products spanning a variety of genres. For instance, they've distributed live-action features including vintage cult classics such as *Dracula vs. Frankenstein* (1971), and *Destroy All Monsters* (1968). Media Blasters' rising industry influence allowed the company to venture out further and create content, co-producing films in Japan like *Death Trance* (2005), *The Machine Girl* (2008), and *Tokyo Gore Police* (2008). They also financed a number of their own independent features in the U.S., such as *Flesh for the Beast* (2003) and *Shadow: Dead Riot* (2006), among others.

As the industry continues to change, Sirabella believes more people watch anime and the product has transitioned into a household name. He remarked that currently Media Blasters' strongest sales are in the company's line of adult titles. Sirabella believes, from an industry standpoint, the market has shrunk and "the days of the 90s and 2000s are over." He further elaborated on how the internet has forever altered the home video business.

However, Media Blasters continues to thrive, proven by the success of their recent line of English dubs which include *Ladies Vs. Butlers!*, *Juden Chan Recharged*, *Rio Rainbow Gate*, *World War Blue*, and *Ai No Kusabi*.

Visit their website, www.media-blasters.com, or check out their social media platforms. They can be found on www.amazon.com or www.rightstuf.com and their line of titles is available for streaming on www.crunchyroll.com, www.netflix.com and other streaming services.

FACE IN THE CROWD

To Be Happy

Alexandria Miller

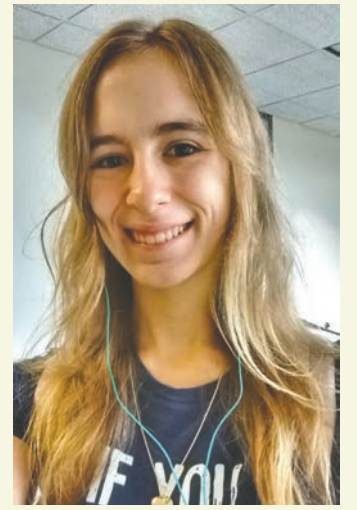


Photo Courtesy of Alexandria Miller

I was born on a brisk November day. My mother named me Alexandria after her mother. My father, gave me the Indian name "Catches Wind by Tail," for the speed and high winds he experienced barreling down the highway to meet me. My mother left my father two years later, and took us from Colorado to Connecticut to live with my grandparents. I didn't know it was because of my father's other daughter, my eldest sibling.

When I was four, we moved out of my grandparents' house in Trumbull to Ansonia. I had a hard time making friends, so most of my free time was spent wrestling with my brother or watching television. I was seldom allowed to leave the house. Later, I joined the afterschool program called *Boys and Girls Club*. There I began a ten-year-long, award-winning sewing career and a nine-year karate career (I test for black belt soon). It was nice to get out of the house and fill my time constructively.

During that period, my mother developed depression and was constantly unemployed. She didn't allow us any contact with our father until I was about seven. The struggle for visitation rights was a source of hatred and spite for my mother. In turn, her frustrations were projected onto me and my brother.

During high school, I was barely home. I joined about thirteen clubs, including band and drama, as well as interning with Sikorsky Bank. Being as busy as possible somehow gave me purpose. More time away from home turned out to be beneficial with my mother's decline.

I graduated high school at 17 in spring 2016, ranked 11th in my class. Afterwards, I got a part-time job at JoAnn Fabrics and took a semester off to adjust. I was very torn as to what I wanted to do in life. I had no direction.

When people asked, "What do you want to be when you grow up?" my only answer was, "I want to be happy!" What I didn't know was what was going to make me happy. Things are still pretty unclear...but I know I want to be happy, so that's a start!

In spring 2017, I began college as a psychology major. That summer, I picked up a full-time job at a hydroponic greenhouse, but kept my part-time job at JoAnn's. With two jobs, it was difficult to maintain full-time student status.

It was then, something inside my mother snapped. She began stealing from us, busting down doors, and eventually changing the locks. I found myself homeless at 18 for almost two weeks in the middle of my second semester. My brother invited me to move in with him and his friends. I agreed. Somehow, we were able to collect our belongings from my mother's house and make a home for ourselves.

About a year has passed since then, and I have to say I am the happiest I've ever been in my life. Things could be better, but they are one hell of a lot better than they were. I still don't know what the future holds for me or what big decisions I should make, but I always try to be optimistic. Happiness is my goal, after all.

DON'T
TEXT
AND
DRIVE

"It was just"
It was just a text....

23 Makes you 23 times more likely to crash

18 Slows your brake reaction speed by 18%

25 Causes almost 25% of ALL car accidents.

We ran this graphic PSA in the November issue, but failed to credit the artist. The piece was designed by Tae Kyeong Kim in GRA150, Introduction to Graphic Design, taught by Terry Laslo. TK's striking image is a good reminder to avoid distracted driving behaviors. Thank you for allowing us to publish it, TK! And thank you for assigning work that matters, Terry!

Veteran's Voice Understanding PTSD

Rick Bellagamba



Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is a chronic, debilitating psychiatric disorder characterized

by symptoms of re-experience, avoidance, and hyperarousal that

can arise immediately or many years after exposure to a traumatic event or injury. It's not just prevalent within the military. It can affect anyone who experiences trauma, but police officers, firefighters, EMTs, doctors, and nurses—in other words, first responders—are common sufferers.

Those in the business of saving lives get a front row seat for some of the worst life has to offer. Such traumatic occurrences can become a major factor for an otherwise healthy person. Anyone who's witnessed or experienced a traumatic event can develop PTSD, creating a need for mental health attention, and discussing mental health should not be taboo. It's likely there are NVCC students or staff dealing with PTSD.

There wasn't much support for returning WWI or WWII military veterans, or those returning from Korea and Vietnam, in regards to mental health. Those men and women came home (following WWI and WWII, diagnosed with "Shell Shock") and were expected to re-enter "normal" life. But no one really cared these lives might now be inundated with mental health trauma.

They didn't know better. I read an article where the government basically said, "Suck it up and deal with it." (Sorry, I can't find that reference again, but trust me, I didn't make it up.) I'd ask my Dad, but it's too late. PTSD also affects civilians who've lived through the horrors of war—in Europe, Russia, Africa, Southeast Asia—and those affected by violence in our own country.

How can PTSD be treated? The Veterans Administration (VA)-Yale Clinical Neurosciences PTSD Research Program has received a 10+ million dollar government grant to investigate the neurobiology of traumatic stress, post-traumatic stress disorder, and resilience to stress. The goal is to develop new biological approaches for treatment of trauma-related disorders without opioids. The VA has reduced opioid prescriptions in recent years by 33%.

Currently, VA Health Care System doctors treat PTSD with a variety of psychotherapies, depending on individual need. Family Behavioral Therapy, Social Therapy, Substance Abuse Therapy, Depression Therapy, are just a few of the treatments available for returning veterans. Substance abuse and alcohol addiction are prevalent issues.

Substance abuse treatments include one-on-one sessions with psychiatrists and/or psychologists. Another aspect is Group Therapy, veterans interacting with one another, sharing horrific memories, feelings and visions. They discuss their positive successes, if any, and the problems of coming back to a normal life in "the system." Sharing personal problems provides positive therapy, offering common threads for abstinence from addiction; run by therapists or psychologists, it's been proven successful. I say that because I've been there.

Doctors and therapists use Cognitive Therapy, as a rule, in most PTSD and drug therapy cases. However, there are many forms of treatment offered, including Art Therapy, Music Therapy, Anger Management, Depression Management, and others, depending on individual needs.

Some returning Iraq and Afghanistan veterans suffer chronic pain or nightmare mental illnesses. I have a son in this class. During my many years of rehabilitation, I've heard countless stories of their discomfort, to say it quickly and politely. The VA is doing its best to address these struggling veterans, but we can each do our part by recognizing that PTSD is real. There should be no shame in asking for help, but it is a shame when it's not offered.

**Thank you for listening. God Bless our USA!
Rick**

Queer Code

The Troubles of Being Trans, Part 1

Alexander Wilson



I started identifying as trans about eighteen months ago. I wore my chest binder every day; I cut my hair shorter and shorter; I wore fairly masculine clothing, especially jeans. I was never taken seriously. When I couldn't take the torment of social dysphoria anymore, I looked for medical intervention.

Many people don't realize just how crucial it is for us to get the right kind of help, or how impossible it sometimes can be. I got lucky in terms of my transition. My doctor sent me for a quick psych evaluation, just to be sure I knew what I was getting into. Once that was cleared, I was prescribed testosterone. Not everyone is this fortunate.

It's not always a fun process. Every week, on Wednesdays, I get home from work, usually late at night and have to inject myself with 1 milliliter of a 200 mg/mL concentration of testosterone cypionate. I use an inch-long 23-gauge needle on a 3 mL syringe. It hurts. A lot. But I need these to survive.

I began counting the days, weeks, months I'd been on testosterone. It never seemed like it would ever be enough to finally pass as male. Some changes were ones only I could see when I looked in a mirror. My leg hair was growing in a lot thicker, and the hair on my stomach was getting darker. The fat around my face, my cheeks especially, was shifting. My face was much less round. Those changes started in the first three months.

Then, the changes stopped for a bit. My voice was still high-pitched, I didn't have much facial hair, so I still wasn't taken seriously. I'd correct people at work, but they'd never correct themselves. It was frustrating; more importantly, it was affecting my dysphoria and depression. Of course, I also didn't have enough

support. I had no friends who were transgender, at any point in their transitions. Several months later, I have many.

At the time of publication, I'll be celebrating ten months on testosterone. As I write this, I'm rubbing my face, feeling the strange beginnings of a beard. It's mostly sideburns and under my chin, but it's definitely there. My voice, still not really deep, is starting to settle into a different tone. It still cracks, and when I wake up, it's still high-pitched, but it's changing. I'm called "sir" more frequently at work, which I almost find hysterical. It's always new customers, not the regulars yet, but it's something.

I want you to understand: Just because I've mentioned parts of my transition doesn't mean it's okay to ask other people about theirs. I'm open to discussing a fair amount of what I go through, but not all. No one has a right to ask me about any medical procedures I may or may not go through, and that's true of any transgender individual.

No one has the right to ask us, or assume, what we have "in our pants". I don't know about the rest of us, but I'd just give a really bizarre and unhelpful answer. Think of yourself. If you don't want to be asked a certain question regarding gender and presentation, chances are, we don't either.

Respect is earned, not given. I'm perfectly fine cutting people out of my life who aren't going to support me in probably the most difficult point in my life. I'm essentially becoming a whole new person on the outside, even if I'm not changing on the inside.

I want to remind you, sometimes life doesn't happen according to plan. I never planned on being trans; it just happened. I love this part of me, and I wouldn't give up being trans for anything, even though some steps in the journey are harder than others. The easier things I can do will make my life as meaningful as possible, which is why I keep writing this column. Make your lives meaningful.

**With love,
Alexander, who's finally happy. Peace.**

Concerned Citizens

Robert Pinto

A longer version of this piece, by NVCC student Robert Pinto, titled, "The Quest to Bring Patagonia to Winsted," was originally featured on sp-bx.com

Here I was, in Winsted, CT, to hear legendary consumer advocate, Ralph Nader give a speech. It was a December evening at the local bookstore, The Law Works.

For millennials like myself, I want to give a backstory about Ralph Nader and the accomplishments he has made for society. Nader, a champion for consumer safety, grew up in Winsted. He attended Princeton University and then Harvard Law School, graduating in 1959. He served in the U.S. Army and then went on to travel the world, working as a journalist and visiting interesting places including Cuba and Argentina.

His story doesn't stop there. Nader published his groundbreaking book, *Unsafe at Any Speed*, in 1965. He began a campaign that continues today, fighting for justice for those negatively affected by the misdeeds of corporations.

Nader travelled America, interviewing people, collecting information, and relaying it back to the public. His accomplishments include establishing Public Citizen, a non-profit consumer advocacy group in 1971; lobbying for OSHA; the creation of the Clean Water Act; banning smoking on airplanes; popularization of the term "whistleblower"; and the installation of airbags in cars. His is also responsible for the "Nader bell" heard when trucks back up, and many more groundbreaking safety features in cars and trucks, as well as important health, safety, food, and water regulations. His work, credited with saving millions of lives, continues today.

Nader began his speech by discussing his mission to bring more tourists to the town of Winsted. In the past few years, he has

established the first law museum in Winsted, called the American Museum of Tort Law. Having been to the museum, I found the establishment to be one-of-a-kind, with its selection of famous tort cases and fantastic picturesque quality. The museum even contains a reconstructed red Chevrolet Corvair as well as a bookstore with dozens of volumes of books not typically found in a Barnes & Noble.

During Nader's speech I found myself raising my hand, as I normally do in my college classes to pose questions and gain a journalistic insight.

"If you could bring any corporation to Winsted, who would it be?"

"Patagonia," he responded, explaining the makers of outdoor clothing and gear would be a fantastic corporation to bring to Winsted. He steadfastly approves of their mission to bring environmental activism and awareness to the public. Nader mentioned other ways to bring tourism to Winsted. He believes every student should know where town hall is, the importance of bookstores and how his bookstore, The Law Works, is the only bookstore in a 30-mile radius of Winsted. He also stated, "All it takes is for citizens to dedicate anywhere from 300-500 hours each year to bring about change," sharing, "My brother, Shafeek started Northwestern Connecticut Community College in 1965 with just five others."

To close the half hour discussion, Nader voiced concern over the rise of corporate giant, Amazon. Applause filled the room, and we all filed into the open space of The Law Works, where shelves are neatly stacked with dozens of interesting, thought-provoking books. After the evening was over, and I drove home, I felt compelled to take action, which is why I started my Petition, "Bring Patagonia to Winsted, Connecticut" on change.org

Celebrate Safely

Tom Conte

Did you know alcohol poisoning is the number one cause of drug-related deaths? Alcohol, in general, is the most prevalent drug in the United States and the rest of the world. However, many people view it as less lethal than marijuana, cocaine, and other substances. Due to social norms, alcohol is associated with the everyday pastimes of the average American citizen. Drinking at a restaurant, at a barbecue, or just sitting on one's couch watching the game, have become acceptable aspects of American life.

Many people who generally don't consume alcohol do drink during the holiday season, often to excess. As a result, many calls to 911 will be made, as overconsumption can lead to the dangerous condition called alcohol poisoning. Alcohol poisoning can cause lasting health effects such as brain damage. Due to dehydration from the alcohol consumed, liver and kidney issues can also result, as well as damage to one's trachea, due to vomiting, which causes stomach acid to surge upward through the throat. In extreme cases, alcohol poisoning can even result in death.

The signs one may have alcohol poisoning include cold or clammy skin. The person may also have blue-tinged skin, especially around the lips or underneath the finger nails. You may notice slurred speech or confused or disorientated thinking and/or behavior. The individual may also be unable to walk or lack physical coordination. Other physical symptoms may include choking, vomiting, or loss of bowel or bladder control. Hypothermia, loss of body heat, can also be a signal. In extreme cases, the inability to stay conscious or becoming unresponsive can lead to labored breathing or an irregular pulse. Seizures are a sign that a person is in immediate danger.

If you suspect someone has alcohol poisoning, call for emergency medical assistance by dialing 911 and request paramedics immediately. Here are some steps to follow when helping someone suffering from alcohol poisoning: Keep the person stationary. Do not let them "walk it off." Keep the person conscious if possible. Do not let them "sleep it off." If the individual is able to drink, give them water. Don't offer caffeinated beverages, as these will cause further dehydration. Get a warm blanket, as alcohol poisoning will likely make the person cold. Do not give them a cold shower.

It's best to keep the person in a seated position; however, if an individual is lying down, and you cannot move them into a seated position, roll them over onto their side with their arms over their head to prevent them from choking on their own vomit. Do not force the person to vomit; let them vomit on their own if they need to. Remember to check for breathing and a pulse. Do not give them any medications, for these will react with the alcohol. Never leave the person alone.

Be sure to act when someone is in need of help; you could potentially save their life. When one of my friends suffered from alcohol poisoning, I was there with him every step of the way. I maintained his breathing by keeping him in a seated position. I kept him conscious and responsive, and I made sure he was drinking water. When he had to regurgitate, I made sure he was near a toilet. Many of my other friends were there as well, and they were a big help. We called 911, and when paramedics arrived they brought him to the hospital. My friend needed to be resuscitated multiple times; thankfully, he survived.

As the holidays approach, the key to celebrating safely is knowing when to say, "I've had enough." Unfortunately, when alcohol is involved, sometimes personal responsibility is forgotten. Be safe this holiday season, and watch out for others. Keep the instructions above in mind, and if you're in a social situation where people are overindulging, have their backs. If the situation gets out of hand, and it seems like alcohol poisoning could result, don't hesitate to offer help or seek help from medical professionals. Helping save a life could be the most important gift you give this season.

That's What She Said



Making Herstory

Jessica Ney

Last month were the midterm elections, and in case you live under a rock, some pretty historic and incredible things happened for ALL women out there. Over 100 women were elected into Congress, many of them being women of color and women from a number of minority groups.

We have Sharice Davids, the first Native American woman and the first openly LGBTQ Congress member. Deb Halaand of New Mexico will also be bringing a Native American perspective. There are now two elected officials who are Muslim women, Ilhan Omar and Rashida Tlaib. We have Connecticut's (and Waterbury's) own Jahana Hayes, the first Black woman to represent our state in Congress. Across the border, Massachusetts also elected Ayanna Presley, the first Black woman to win a Congressional seat in that state's history.

Marsha Blackburn is the first woman ever to be elected to the U.S. Senate in Tennessee. New York also brings a first with the youngest woman elected; at only 29 years old, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, born in the Bronx and of Puerto Rican descent, will represent the state.

This is truly a time to be celebrated, as 101 seats have been taken by a diverse group of women. Prior to this, the highest number ever held was 84. However, in light of this accomplishment, we must not forget there is still work to be done. We have fought for these positions for a reason.

We still live in a culture of ignorance and hate; a hundred seats in the House is a big step forward for equality, but the biggest battles are fought in the real world. Our Senate will not make change without a community response. They are the vessels for our voices.

I leave you with a quote from Donna Shalala, a Democrat recently elected to Congress in Florida. Shalala, who ran for Congress because of her anger over the policies of Donald Trump, stated, "Until this heartless administration is held accountable for their numerous injustices, we will not stop."

We must not stop fighting for equality for everyone; we owe it to each other. So let's enjoy our win, but let's prepare for tomorrow. We have a duty to those who came before, those who struggle alongside of us, and the precious women and girls who will come after us.

Table Talks: "We plow the fields...."

Matthew Gilbode

For many of us, Thanksgiving was a celebration of family at the dinner table enjoying turkey, stuffing, and mashed potatoes while sharing thoughts of the things we are thankful for. Rarely, however, is a thought, or thanks, given to the farmers who grew the food we eat. Ironically, many farmers were not able to sit down and enjoy the holiday this year because of pressing issues on the farm that would not take a holiday, whether that be baling hay, an animal giving birth, fixing a broken piece of essential equipment, or dealing with the multiple economic issues that plague small farmers.

In recent years there has been a stigma attached to being a farmer, and it shows in the demographics. Today, according to the U.S. Department of Labor Statistics, the average age of a farmer is sixty years old. What is troubling is, typically, when the average worker in any given field is thirty years old, that field is considered to be "dying." So why, with a global population projected to be nine billion by 2050, are small farmers becoming increasingly scarce? What can we do about it?

One thing we can point to as a cause for the dwindling number of young people invested in farming is the expensive points of entry. Small farmers have to rent or buy expensive land and equipment in order to compete with larger agricultural industry farming ventures.

Perhaps if young farmers didn't have to subject themselves to these high expenses because they had access to better federal support, and had the equally important support of local markets, we would see an increase in the number of people farming.

Now, people might protest this point and bring up their towns' small local farmers' markets, and how gratifying it is to generously buy a few tomatoes and a half dozen ears of corn after they've spent \$300 at the local supermarket. It is important to point out that people don't attach as much value to locally produced food. The reality is the resulting higher prices associated with small scale farming operations keeps those farmers' markets small and the prices of vegetables a bit higher than in the store.

Also, many of the supposed farmers at these "grass roots" markets are not actual local producers of food at all, but rather are distributors, buying produce from larger more distant farms and reselling it. Supporting these operations will not create a favorable market for small scale farmers. Having your local grocery store buy locally will.

Hopefully, this year as you gathered at the dinner table, you gave thanks for your food, but also thanked the small scale farmer. For the remainder of this holiday season, show support of Connecticut small farms by including a dish grown locally. Farmers will be grateful.

Readers Respond

Dear Editor,

I was very interested when I read the title, "Ignoring Red Flags," by Christopher Gordon...referring to the heated debate on Brett Kavanaugh. Gordon made his opinion very clear within his article as well as making a very good argument, but I do have to disagree with him.

Gordon states, "If innocent, he had nothing to fear from an investigation. Plus, his arrogance while being questioned by Congress highlighted his lack of character." But I do then have to ask: If you were being accused of something that you knew you did not commit, how would you react? Most of the way Kavanaugh reacted was due to the fact that he never committed sexual assault against Dr. Christine Blasey Ford.

Within Gordon's article, he also talks about his refusal to let the FBI investigate. But did you know, Kavanaugh went through more than one investigation? People are looking for evidence that is not there nor will ever be there. I question Dr. Christine Blasey Ford, not Brett Kavanaugh because there is no evidence whatsoever; she waited more than thirty years before telling what happened, and there were many questions brought about Ford's polygraph test, which was never made public. Seem a bit fishy? I think so.

I hope people can review both sides of the debate to form their own opinion. People should look more in depth with given evidence and their own research. Most news

stations only tell their audience what they "think" is right, but this case has opened up many people's eyes, including mine to learn more on their own instead of listening and agreeing with others. I would like to thank Gordon for this argumentative article.

~ Sincerely, NVCC Student

Dear Editor,

After hearing about all these accusations of sexual assault towards women in the media, and how the victims are accused of lying or fabricating their stories, I am comforted in knowing that there are others who do side with the victims just like I do. Jessica Ney's article, "P. T. S. Don't Undermine My Trauma," is a reminder that we should not take these traumatic events of sexual assault lightly.

Just like the author, I too am lucky not to have experienced such horrific attacks, but just the thought of what kind of fear and horror these women must be going through breaks my heart. It enrages me to know that women are not safe, that these attackers are not being held accountable for their actions, that not enough is being done to make sure this does not continue to happen, and that not enough is being done to help these women heal.

Ney states, "...we are now fighting to protect future generations from the "suck it up" culture we've lived through." Just like her, I stand with victims, because by doing so, we can hope to make sure this is something our future generations will not have to worry about anymore. ~ Sincerely, NVCC Student

Thank You All

Heartfelt Thanks

Irisa Hoxha

Congratulations, my beloved fellows! It is officially the last month of fall semester, and NVCC students will soon be grateful to be done with their final exams. There is also excitement about registering for the upcoming semester. As an overseas student, words would not be enough to express my gratitude to all the NVCC people who have supported me since the beginning of my journey as a college student.

First, I am thankful to the Center for Academic Planning and Student Success (CAPSS), where I got the positive impact as a freshman when I first started attending college. After taking the Accuplacer test, I met with my charismatic advisor (also my mentor) Yvette J. Tucker, who taught me to celebrate all my achievements. As an advisor, she helped me shape my vision and reach my academic goals each semester. Yvette showed me the importance I had as a student and motivated me to interact with different students and faculty members on campus. So, thank you, Yvette, for the support and motivation you gave me when I first started at NVCC. Thank you, everyone in CAPSS, for being there when students need help, either with academic and career development, or personal growth.

Secondly, I want to mention my English professor, Eleni Saltourides, who made me test my limits as an ESL student. She brought my English skills to another level. Thank you for making me challenge myself through analyzing and writing diverse articles. Thanks to your accelerated class, now I am a proud student who owns a certificate for Advanced English Proficiency.

Last but not least, I want to thank all the NVCC students who are determined to achieve their educational goals, along with other priorities. Thank you for investing in yourselves and actively making our community a better place to live. Please, be open to the variety of opportunities NVCC offers to all students. Do not take anything for granted; appreciate all the resources you have as students in the U.S.

November was the month of Thanksgiving, but it is never too late to say thank you to someone who crosses your mind after reading this article. Always express your gratitude towards people who help you become who you are.

Cheers to all the effort we put in this semester!

Loved it? Hated it?

Send us your letters in response to articles, features, and profiles in The Tamarack. Limit them to 200 words and email them to tamarack@nv.edu with the subject line READERS RESPOND. Letters may be edited for length and grammar.

Tamarack
EDIT MEETINGS

Wednesdays 2:00 pm, S519
ALL WELCOME!!

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A Frank Discussion

Alam Khan

Perhaps this article would have been more favored in the November issue; nonetheless it is important. Every fall season, there comes a special time where women and men alike participate in a form of abstinence called, "No Nut November". The rules are: you must stop viewing pornographic material, and refrain from sex and masturbation from November 1 - 30. The reason for doing so is to simply gauge one's will. To my understanding, it also further highlights the effects pornography has on our generation.

We never talk about it in person with other students because it is an embarrassing topic, yet we know it is there. Can you even imagine telling a professor or someone in that caliber, Hey, we need to talk about pornography? It is insidious by nature. Many people believe pornography has no detrimental effect. Yet this is furthest from the truth.

Pornography will ruin your life and expectation when hit with reality. When someone is viewing such things in their own seclusion, the mind is being splashed with colors of feel good dopamine and other similar chemicals. This induction of an artificial experience along with the chemicals in our minds keeps the viewer coming back for more.

In other words, if you did not catch the drift, I'm describing addiction. What started out as a routine viewing turns into the desire for imitation. This is where it really hits home for people because there is an expectation that what is viewed on screen is what everyone wants. What people look away from ironically is the fact that this is a business. Did you hear me in the back?

Websites that offer such content are collecting ad revenue and making money off the ill-fated desire to keep coming for more in order to see their fantasy played out. It cannot be stressed enough, this is an issue no one is ready to tackle. So why do people watch it?

Well, for various reasons but not limited to one. People watch it because it is an escape; others might lack social skills, or depression. The list is long but the solutions...the solutions are often not expressed. If anyone is reading this and feels they have a problem, the best thing to do is seek help from those who are professionals. You may find yourself ashamed, embarrassed and reluctant to do so, but living a life where you cannot stop yourself from doing the one thing you told yourself not to do is far worse.

We owe it to ourselves to conquer our mind and body, so we can get the best out of life. The best place to start is your own medical practitioner, but it may be that members of our community here can do something as well. Whatever the problem, a solution starts with open communication.

Why Violence?

Rick Bellagamba

"Why?" I ask. There are so many religious affiliations. Which one is right? Does it matter? I and most decent Americans don't believe so. There should be no difference in the value placed on life based on any of these beliefs—whether Christian, Jew, Muslim and so on.

Unfortunately, some single-minded residents of the U.S. don't agree. It is everyone's right to disagree, but violence is not an answer. I'm talking about the mass shooting in Pittsburg, Pennsylvania, one of the recent acts of senseless violence in our country, at Tree of Life, L'Simcha Congregation on October 27, 2018. During their Shabbat morning services, 11 people were killed, and seven more were injured. Let's not just call it another "sad story," but a senseless act of violence fueled by anti-Semitism.

This kind of violence has proven many times over throughout our country's history that no one wins. It doesn't accomplish a thing, except creating hurt and sorrow. There have been so many mass shootings, such as the one at First Baptist Church in Sutherland Springs, Texas, November 5th, 2017. Twenty-six died and twenty others were injured.

In another mass shooting, nine African-American worshipers died, plus three were wounded during a prayer service at the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, South Carolina on the evening of June 17, 2015. Yet another hate crime by a man targeting victims based on race.

On June 12, 2016, 49 people were killed, and 53 others were wounded in a lone terrorist attack at Pulse, a gay night club in Orlando, Florida. Again, innocent individuals were murdered in an explosion of hate.

Why should anyone take such offense over what religious or political affirmations others hold? After all we're all humans. Should we have to worry we'll be murdered over our religion? Over politics? Because of homophobia? Unfortunately, the Trump Administration has stoked fear of the Muslim community, of immigrants. Are Muslims the enemy? Surely, not so. Are Jews? No. How about South Americans? Or Christians? This hate and fear scares the hell out of me.

What's the problem? If we take time to get to learn about other religions, we'd see there's not much of a difference. Jews, Muslims, and Christians share similar ancestries. There have always been major conflicts because of religion, but we all share a desire to live a happy existence with our families in peace. No matter what we believe in, family, love, are the only real importance.

I truly hope this message will change some thoughts and actions. What is the answer to the growing slaughter of innocent people? Whether it happens in a place where people seek peace with their god, or gather to be themselves, it is a national crisis. We need to focus on the mental health issues right in front of our noses. We need to acknowledge the problem of hate instead of ignoring it. We need more education around issues of troubled citizens. The problems of today can't be solved with talk; there must be action—before the next fuse blows.

Time to Get Emotional, Boys

Imani Stewart

I always noticed, even at a young age, men and boys being told to suck it up when they were emotional or on the verge of crying. I've always thought this societal rule odd since emotions are out of human control. So, imagine your brain, holding every emotion in, even the overly happy ones. Imagine never being able to have a shoulder to cry on because all your life you've been told that it makes you less as a person.

Men, I see what you're going through, and I won't stand among the quiet and let this issue continue. In a world so socially conscious that women and men should be treated equally, you would think men should feel comfortable showing every emotion they feel. Yet, we see this isn't the case.

With everyone trying to make women's rights as strong as ever, let's not forget men are equally important. Both need our attention, and as a young, upcoming activist, I took my opinion to my peers and asked their thoughts on the idea that men should be able to cry and show vulnerability.

"Yes emotions, are the embodiment of all, [but] men hold emotions to not show weakness, which is a very dangerous stereotype," according to Adrian Maldonado. This got me thinking: If men think crying makes them weak, what do other women think? Do they agree when men cry it deems them weak, or do they appreciate sentiment?

When I asked my female peers, Marquita Rivers said, "They have feelings, too, I cry often, so imagine how men must be feeling if they have all that pent-up emotion they can't show because they'll be 'weak' or 'soft'; we need to

learn how to allow men to be emotional creatures too."

Women are just as responsible for the uptight emotions men have. Women, since the beginning of time, have raised their boys to be leaders and supporters and what they think of as "strong men." Forcing them into sports and telling them to get over something that emotionally bothers them is one of many reasons men fear the act of showing emotion, especially to women.

They fear women, not just men will look at them as less than a man, unworthy of a woman's time. Tiarra Fryar thinks differently; she said, "When I see a man cry, I kind of melt a bit because it shows he isn't afraid to be in touch with the emotions he experiences like any other human." I had an overwhelming number of women tell me they find it not only attractive, but an important trait in a man. According to Amber Ajro, "Vulnerability is true strength because it shows you're human, you hurt, and you're not afraid of someone seeing your humanity."

See men, not all women want you to be strong all the time. In retrospect it's impossible. Emotions will always be a wonder of the human psyche, and they were always meant to be expressed. Being emotional won't make you weak; it'll just make you human, showing you, just like everyone else, have tough issues. When they get overwhelming you should always have a shoulder to cry on. As for me, I'll continue to teach my brother emotions aren't a bad thing, and if he ever needs a shoulder to cry on, I'm here.

Learning from Failure

Christian Cruz

We students go into every semester with high optimism for the new start. We love to look ahead and relish the thought of potential opportunities that will present themselves once we get through these things we call college courses. However, getting through is the hard part. Not all of us are the next Einstein; some of us are only extremely skilled at a few things. It could be dance, art, playing instruments, writing, science, or mathematics. Yet, even though school systems know this, we're still required to take certain subjects we may struggle with heavily.

For example, I would say I'm generally confident when I go into something blind because at that time I haven't experienced failure. Then I got here and took MAT*137. Although I believed I was good at math, this time was different. I made a schedule for myself that was not very favorable and did not give me enough time to do everything I needed to pass without a hitch. Yet, because I was stubborn, I stuck it out and ended up failing. I even took a hit in some of my other courses, as, before I realized it, I was slacking off in those classes to catch up with this

one subject I was struggling in.

My advice to current students going through this struggle to keep up with certain subjects is try to schedule your classes wisely. Use the resources available to you. Use Rate My Professor—and talk to fellow students—to find professors who will resonate with you in a classroom setting.

You should also get help from your advisor, who can guide you into getting a good schedule formed around your requirements. Try not to experiment too much; keep it simple. By that I mean, if there is a subject you struggle in, try to isolate that class where that is the only class you take that day.

That is what I did my next semester with MAT*137. I took it on a Tuesday/Thursday as my only class that day, so I breathed just math those days. It really did help me a lot to be able to have a day dedicated just to math, and this time around I got a B+. Not bad!

At the end of the day, do not worry about what you can't control, like future aspirations. You're not there yet. Worry about doing your very best in the here and now, and even if you fail at something, apply the lesson learned to your next opportunity. Then the future will take care of itself.

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