

The Tamarack

Our college. Our news. Our voice.

Naugatuck Valley Community College

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An Essential Observance

Nicole Hayes

International Women's Day, March 8th, was first recognized in the U.S., February 28, 1909, to honor the 1908 New York Women Garment Workers' strike. In 1978, a Northern California school started a new tradition, extending International Women's Day into a week-long celebration. During the week of March 8th, students participated in activities including an essay contest and parade honoring women's historical achievements.

As years passed, and this practice gained attention, other communities and school districts followed. In 1980, the March 8th celebration was nationally declared a weeklong celebration. An American organization, The National Women's History Project, based in Santa Rosa, CA, successfully lobbied for a national recognition of women's contributions to American history, and President Jimmy Carter signed the first presidential proclamation declaring the week of March 8th National Women's History Week. Carter, a supporter of women's equality during his administration, stated:

"From the first settlers who came to our shores, from the first American Indian families who befriended them, men and women have worked together to build this Nation. Too often, the women were unsung and sometimes their contributions went unnoticed. But the achievements, leadership, courage, strength, and love of the women who built America was as vital as that of the men whose names we know so well."

Seven years later, The National Women's History Project successfully lobbied Congress to declare a women's history month; 1987 became the first year for Women's History Month. Every year, a presidential proclamation announces the monthlong celebration. The initial proclamation noted: "Whereas American women of every race, class, and

ethnic background have made historical contributions to the growth and strength of the Nation in countless recorded and unrecorded ways;

Whereas American women have played and continue to play a critical economic, cultural, and social role in every sphere of our Nation's life by constituting a significant portion of the labor force working in and outside of the home;

Whereas American women have played a unique role throughout our history by providing the majority of the Nation's volunteer labor force and have been particularly important in the establishment of early charitable philanthropic and cultural institutions in this country;

Whereas American women of every race, class, and ethnic background served as early leaders in the forefront of every major progressive social change movement, not only to secure their own right of suffrage and equal opportunity, but also in the abolitionist movement, the emancipation movement, the industrial labor movement, the civil rights movement, and other movements to create a more fair and just society for all; and

Whereas, despite these contributions, the role of American women in history has been consistently overlooked and undervalued in the body of American history: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America

in Congress assembled. That the month of March, 1987, is designated as 'Women's History Month,' and the President is requested to issue a proclamation calling upon the people of the United States to observe such month with appropriate ceremonies and activities."

The recognition of women's contributions to American culture is beneficial to society overall. However, one shortcoming of National Women's History Month concerns which women are highlighted. Schools across America have often failed to incorporate diverse voices into curricula. The National Women's History Month Museum (NWHMM) conducted a study on the status of women in social studies textbooks in U.S. grades K-12. Their findings show lack of representation of women in provided state materials for social studies classes. Along with lack of representation is overemphasis on White women's voices throughout those textbooks. Of 178 individual women's names in social studies textbooks, 63% are White. Shockingly, America's first women, Native American/Native Alaskans, only account for 4% of women inside social studies textbooks. This is not a true representation of history. Many unsung heroes are missing from historical textbooks.

Findings from the NWHMM also show textbooks overemphasize women's domestic roles, overwhelmingly showcasing male-orientated leadership, perpetuating sexist stereotypes and underrepresenting women's leadership throughout American history. Social studies textbooks do not reflect women's scholarship. Of the 178 named women, the report shows

textbooks usually only display the names of women who have made national or regional contributions.

Recognizable names—Susan B. Anthony, Abigail Adams, Jane Addams—were over-emphasized throughout, leaving little room for marginalized women's contributions. For example, in this era of acclaim for environmental activism and activists in female form, few if any school districts teach about women pioneers in this sphere, like Eliza Burton Conley, a Wyandot American lawyer. She was the first American Indigenous woman to argue before the U.S. Supreme Court, attempting to prevent the sale and development of Wyandot National Burying Ground.

Universally, women and girls continue battling the glass ceiling, the gender wage gap, gender violence, unequal educational access, menstrual inequity, and other forms of oppression. UN Women warns, "...there is still a long way to go to achieve full equality of rights and opportunities between men and women." Education about women and their achievements is vital yet lacking. States must reevaluate what they deem important, as state standards determine textbook content. School districts should expand curriculum more fully reflecting American history in its racial and ethnical diversity. Finally, because society has yet to fully embrace women's contributions to American culture, Women's History Month remains essential. However, communities and schools would do better expanding such celebrations beyond one month.



Another Outlaw President

Richard Bosco

In less than fifty years, the Republican Party has produced two outlaw presidents. In 1974, Richard M. Nixon resigned before being impeached and convicted. Now, in 2020, we have Donald J. Trump. Unlike in 1974, this rogue leader is backed by a Republican Party that seems to have lost its way.

In 1974, House Republican Minority Leader John Rhodes and Senate Republican Leader Howard Baker led a group of Republicans who convinced Nixon to resign. He did so at their urging for the good of the country, Congress, the Republican Party, and, yes, for his own sake. This starkly contrasts today's Republican leadership, who are in total lockstep with the president, a man whose moral compass has either been broken or missing for decades.

While unfortunate, it seems many Republicans—not just elected and party officials, but average rank and file members—have misplaced their own moral compasses as well. In recent discussions with several average Republicans, I encountered people who are willfully uninformed. Each one refused

to accept information from anywhere other than Fox News (aka Trump News), or via social media. Nor had any read the Mueller Report, not even the executive summary. None even tried to follow the impeachment trial on CSPAN or any other non-Trump media outlet.

When questioned further, these same Republicans swore not only is Donald Trump innocent, he is better at handling the economy than Barack Obama. So, I challenged one individual with degrees in mathematics and computer science who's taught college-level statistics. He picked which economic barometer to look at: the current 3.6% unemployment rate. We found the rate of unemployment, which started its decline in late 2009, has continued at the same rate and slope of decline right up to the present.

So, the best my friend could say was that Trump hasn't screwed up the economic trajectory set in place by President Obama. We looked at other economic metrics as well. All were the same, except one: the rate of increase in the national debt. Since the start of his presidency, Trump has been wildly successful in effectively doubling the rate of national debt accrual that took place during Obama's first term, while Obama was fighting the Great Recession.

On the topic of Trump's lawless presidency: if any of my Republican friends had read the Mueller Report, they would have

found over 124 contacts between Trump's campaign and Russian Military Intelligence (GRU) which oversees cyberwarfare for Russia. What Mueller could not prove "beyond a reasonable doubt" was whether an organized criminal conspiracy by Donald Trump, specifically, or on the part of his campaign, existed.

Mueller's inability to prove this was due to his being unable to break through the barriers Trump's inner circle had in place. What Mueller and his team did prove was that Trump committed obstruction of justice. Being a straight shooter, who knew he could not charge a sitting president, Mueller simply said he "could not exonerate" Trump. Fortunately for Trump, he had Attorney General William Barr to successfully muddy the waters, declaring Trump "innocent." That false pronouncement seemed to stick even when Mueller said it wasn't the case, that Trump had not been exonerated.

As for the impeachment trial, it is clear: Republican House members and the Republican-controlled Senate acted out of self-interest and blind loyalty, rather than for the good of the country. They basically denied every aspect of the case against the president, choosing to ignore proof, including video evidence of Trump in front of the White House acknowledging what he did. More troubling is their blanket dismissal of hours of testimony from unbiased career diplomats and military

personnel, including former U.S. Ambassador Yovanovitch and Lieutenant Colonel Vindman.

Republican Senators' justification—Trump's actions were inappropriate but did not rise to the level of removing a President from office—amounts to a grave miscarriage of justice. It's doubtful the Founding Fathers would condone trying to manipulate a foreign leader into spreading dirt on one's political opponent. It seems this act alone should warrant removal, as it constitutes the very definition of a High Crime and Misdemeanor. America, we have a lawless President, and Republican members of Congress unwilling to do their Constitutional duty. That is except for one man, Senator Mitt Romney, who has already faced backlash for voting with his conscience.

Trump made the Ukraine call the day after Barr's false claim that Mueller exonerated him. Now he's punishing his perceived political enemies—Vindman's firing, for example—because they told the truth. The president has been compared to a banana republic dictator. The difference is, unlike those oppressed by such a republic, Americans thus far have failed to act en masse, demanding justice. It's up to us, as patriotic U.S. citizens, to prevent further harm to our Constitution and Republic, by voting out of office this lawless President and his enabling party. May God Bless America; we sorely need it.

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK



March Musings

Congrats, we've made it to March! Spring Break is almost upon us; I, for one, can't wait. Please also be aware of all the wonderful events the SGA and clubs have coming up this month, including the St. Patrick's Day Party. Event information can be found either on flyers, monitors, or via the event calendar online. I happen to know the SGA and club officers put a lot of effort into their events, so don't let it go to waste.

March also happens to be Women's History Month, a time set aside to honor all the women who came before—as well as those who continue making a positive impact today. As you flip through the pages of this month's *Tamarack*, be sure to read about the wonderful women who inspire some of our staff members.

There are many reasons to honor women (I'm not just saying that because I am one); for instance, just think about mothers and how much influence they've had in our lives, surrogate mothers just as much as biological. Throughout hundreds of years, what it means to be a woman has changed significantly, even in some ways we can't possibly know. It used to be women found their place in the home. Now we're seeing more and more career women who are stronger than ever imagined. In the grand scheme, that evolution has been fairly recent, and it's cause for celebration.

There are several women here at NVCC I find particularly inspiring. My number one would have to be Professor Nikki McGary. She's always kind and caring, and it's obvious she loves doing what she does. Her classes have such passion and are very inspiring for her students. She not only is a great professor, but just a wonderful human being. Without her guidance as an advisor, I likely wouldn't have changed my degree to what I really love. I've always admired the way she leads by example, and expresses her opinions in an educated, meaningful way.

Other campus women I find especially inspiring—though I don't know them as well—include Professor Kate Pelletier, for her mindfulness and generous spirit; Professor Julia Petitfrere, for her involvement in so many worthy causes; Director of Student Activities Karen Blake, for her tireless commitment to the SGA; and President Daisy Cocco De Filippis, for her steadfast leadership and care for students.

These are just a few of the notable women here at NVCC. I know plenty others just as worthy of recognition. I'm sure, though, there are even more I haven't met yet. This month be sure to let the exceptional women in your life know how much they're appreciated.

Happy mid-semester!
Gwendydd Miller
Editor-in-Chief
tamarack@nv.edu



“Never interrupt someone doing what you said couldn't be done.”

Amelia Earhart

Puerto Rico in Crisis

Christian Soto



On September 20th, 2017, Aguadilla, Puerto Rico was affected by a magnitude 4.3 earthquake. The U.S. commonwealth's slow recovery was incomplete when, on December 28th, 2019, another earthquake hit the island. In fact, the southwestern part of the island of Puerto Rico was struck by an earthquake swarm including eleven that were of magnitude five or greater. In just thirty days, there were eleven significant earthquakes recorded.

Due to these earthquakes, many parts of the island have been left without power. On January 7th, 2020, Puerto Rico Governor Wanda Vazquez Garced declared a state of emergency and activated the Puerto Rico National Guard and the State Guard. In the areas most affected, Puerto Rican residents and officials are reportedly calling the earthquake damage worse than that suffered from Hurricane Maria. It has also been stated that this is the strongest earthquake to hit the island since 1918. Reports show that at least one resident has died.

On January 12th, tent cities were set up in five of the hardest hit towns with space for 3,200 refugees. As additional homes were reported damaged, by January 14th, more than 8,000 people were left homeless. Furthermore, damages to government structures were calculated at a cost of several hundred-million dollars. The educational system was hard hit, with

856 schools, approximately 20% of all those on the island, deemed structurally damaged, forcing the start of the semester to be postponed.

The physical toll caused by these earthquakes is enormous, and with thousands of people remaining in government-run shelters, and others staying outside, the emotional toll is also clear. Given the state of devastation, the need for support in donations is great. Many residents of the island are still recovering from Hurricane Maria and Hurricane Irma, which struck in 2017.

Recognizing the residents of this island, Puerto Rico—an often-forgotten part of the United States—are in great need, this semester at Naugatuck Valley, the Student Government Association is focused on gathering donations to provide help to those affected in Puerto Rico. As a Hispanic-serving institution, this is a natural fit; many of our students, staff, and faculty have ties to the island. As citizens, it is our duty to help our fellow Americans. To help those affected by Puerto Rico's natural disaster, we will be collecting monetary donations as well as hygiene products. The money and items collected will be donated to an organization supporting earthquake relief projects.

Last spring, the SGA focused its fundraising efforts on donations for Waterbury's St. Vincent de Paul Shelter for those in need of a place to stay. We raised over \$2,000 with much help from students, staff, and faculty, and we're very appreciative of the generosity and consideration our efforts received. It shows when we work together to achieve a common goal the end results can be greater than anyone expected. This semester, we hope to surpass last year's results. For information, or to donate, please contact Christian Soto at nv-sga-secretary@nvcc.commnet.edu.

Two Clubs Raise Their Profiles and Service

Prof. Chris Rempfer

As faculty co-advisor to The Creative Writing Club and NVCC's LGBTQ+ club, Pride Alliance, I want to share some really cool news. These two clubs are raising their profiles around campus and making service to the NVCC community a central part of their clubs' missions.

Creative Writing Club, meeting Mondays and Thursdays, 12:45 – 2:00 PM in S517, started upping its game last fall, winning the SGA bulletin board contest. Adding \$100 to their war chest allowed the club to consider how to move beyond their very important sharing and feedback sessions on members' writing projects, to bringing the spirit of 'creative writing endeavors' to the full campus community. The result of this reflection is bringing NVCC's first "students-invite-a-faculty-member" event in recent memory.

Friday, March 27th and Friday, April 3rd, the club is co-sponsoring "Poetry as Memoir," featuring renowned Latin American poet and writer, Bessy Reyna, leading two separate workshops for students and faculty to experience how our personal stories become collective narratives connecting us to our shared humanity. The Creative Writing Club—supported by SGA—liked the idea of creating a shared college event where students invited faculty to participate in a process connecting students and faculty outside the classroom. A Student Survey conducted in 2018-19 revealed an area of most concern to NVCC students was not feeling connected to their college and faculty outside the classroom. The Creative Writing Club and SGA think this might serve that concern.

The Creative Writing Club, co-advised by Prof. Greg Harding, will also sponsor an NVCC bus trip to a New England literary destination, the Emily Dickinson Museum in Amherst, MA. Planned for early April, the trip will feature the museum of New England's most enigmatic poet, but also the hip college town of Amherst, MA, where students can kick back, drink lattes,

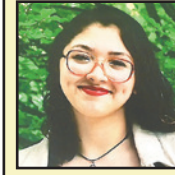
and spin frisbees on the grounds of Amherst College. Students may also visit the Beneski Museum of Natural History (free admission!) on Amherst College's campus to see a comprehensive collection of dinosaur tracks from the banks and tidal pools of the Connecticut River. Amherst boasts a variety of affordable eateries catering to the palates of discerning college students. Look for flyers advertising this event—and please, join us!

Pride Alliance will host "Gender and Sexuality Awareness Training" March 25th in L501. The Pride Alliance has co-sponsors for this event—the SGA, the Center for Teaching, The Social Justice Series, and *The Tamarack*—showing NVCC's widespread support for LGBTQ+ students and LGBTQ+ issues. With the vocabulary defining the LGBTQ+ community evolving rapidly, many faculty express their wish to communicate and support LGBTQ+ students more effectively, and Pride Alliance believes that starts with education. Hosted by Executive Director of CT's TRUE COLORS organization, Robin McHaelen, the training will serve as both introduction and refresher. Pride Alliance co-chair, Prof. Nikki McGary says, "We all have a role to play in building a safe, inclusive, and empowered community."

Pride Alliance also plans a fall 2020 Gender and Sexuality Summit (GSS) for Gay-Straight Alliances from high schools in our 22-town service region. Pride Alliance will meet with many of these GSAs in March while attending TRUE COLORS' "True Colors Conference" at UConn, the largest LGBTQ+ youth conference in the U.S.

Both Creative Writing Club and Pride Alliance are comprised of energetic, empathetic students, drawn to the limitless possibilities of 'raising up' our shared humanity. Each club is committed to celebrating diversity, creativity, and connection. They hope you'll join us this spring. All are welcome!

SGA PRESIDENT



Make March Memories

Happy March! Welcome to the halfway point of the semester. We all know what that means. It's time for midterms, but we also have spring break on the way. This is the time to buckle down and get studying, so that you can really enjoy your break. So, if you're struggling, make sure to talk to someone like an advisor or a professor for advice. And don't forget to head to the ACE for tutoring and other resources to help you succeed.

This month also brings our annual St. Patrick's Day Party. As always, there will be a free potato bar to enjoy and lots of music. So please join us on March 10th in Cafe West from 11:30 AM - 2:30 PM. If you want to join us to decorate—think lots of shamrocks!—or volunteer for the party, stop by S516 and sign up. The SGA is always looking for students to help. Volunteering is an excellent way to meet new people, and the party is sure to be a great way to kick off Spring Break a little early.

Make sure to check your campus email regularly and also visit the SGA on Instagram (@NVCCSGA) for more upcoming events—and photos of events as they happen. The SGA is constantly planning new events for students to enjoy, and we want to make sure everyone gets a chance to attend!

Another resource for staying up-to-date with SGA events is by joining the SGA. Attending student government meetings provides a chance to meet new friends, stay updated on campus happenings, and be in on the planning of parties and other activities!

If you want to learn more information about the student government then stop by our office in S516. You can also attend an SGA meeting any Wednesday from 4:00 – 5:00 PM in room L501. We hope to see you at future events and at meetings. Get involved; you'll be glad you did!

Regards,
Tabitha Cruz, SGA President

Earth Day Preparation

Shyanne Caporuscio



Courtesy: America's Charities

This semester, Art Club is planning multiple campus events in honor of Earth Day (Wednesday, April 22, 2020). We'll be collaborating with other clubs and groups, including Action for Animals, The NVCC Food Pantry, and a poetry group called Poets for the Planet. Even though April 22nd seems far off, it'll be here before we know it, and there will be opportunities to get involved ahead of time. More information regarding the workshops will be available as the semester continues, so consider this your first notice.

One event will be a Papermaking with Invasive Plants Workshop/Presentation, by Art Club President Mads Sheikh. Art Club is also collaborating with Action for Animals on Earth Day discussion topics and hopes to host a campus cleanup in advance of the April celebration.

On Earth Day, Art Club will host a bag sale. Reusable cloth bags, printed with original Art Club designs, will be available for purchase. All bag sale proceeds will be donated to NVCC's Food Pantry. It's a great chance to practice sustainability while addressing student need.

Art Club is also planning to make a sculpture from repurposed materials that will be

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The Tamarack

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

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EDITORIAL

Agent Orange

Typically, high school is where we're first taught about the principles of government, the separation of powers, and the rule of law. Naturalized citizens, high school grads, and those obtaining G.E.D.s or taking civil service exams are all expected to know, at very least, that checks and balances exist in our federal government to safeguard against the scourge of dictatorship. Certainly, lawyers, judges, and elected officials—most with degrees in history and political science—know what the Founding Fathers intended when carefully crafting interlocking branches, as well as accountability these branches have to the public.

At this time, Americans must arm ourselves with knowledge, not only of our past abuses, but of the cadre of living, breathing dictators no one in their right mind would consult, confide in, or admire. It seems we've elected what many secretly admire, and what the world has again and again admired: the lawless man who "gets the job done," when in fact, our "leaders'" major accomplishment is an erosion of policy, integrity, diplomacy and the rule of law.

Worn out by poverty, post-WWI Germans were eager for someone to make them feel great again. It mattered little the man they would hoist on their shoulders was a despotic demon who'd leave them even more subjugated, but not before deporting, detaining, and murdering more than twelve million people based on old prejudices and unfounded suspicions.

Central to their national ego was the idea that only the pure German was great, though historical greatness ran into muddy ground rather quickly. No matter, the image the hungry and depressed masses looked to was a trick-mirror, tilted carefully, to see only the light ahead, not the depravity surrounding their hero. Maybe some gulped when their Jewish neighbor disappeared, or a homosexual teacher was dragged off. Maybe some parents became concerned when their daughters were sent off to make babies for the Fatherland, but by then, it was too late. They'd let their decency slip away.

If you think the analogy too strong, be advised: this president is making lists. He punishes those who do not fawn over him, lie on his behalf, or carry out his bidding. Today, you might be on a "friend's" list, until you upset him with troubling things like the Constitution or morality, or if you report on one of the nearly fifty accusations of sexual misconduct lodged against him.

Of course, if you only watch Fox News, you might hear nothing except that he is "strong and gets things done." They won't flash pictures of him—arm curled to chest—mocking a disabled reporter, or gleefully tossing paper towels at desperate survivors of Hurricane Maria. Doubtful too, any of us will see his tax returns, or learn why his wife is in America on a Genius Visa.

Perhaps we've chosen what we deserve: a self-serving bully who's destroyed our standing in the world and sat admiringly with some of the most egregious living dictators, wishing he, too, could be respected like they are. He and his enablers are seeing to just that. Each Republican who conveniently abandoned "Character Counts" after the Bill Clinton scandal is just as guilty as he. More, perhaps, because our president very likely has a personality disorder, as well as dementia. Fox News cuts away when he forgets where he is or how to pronounce words like origins, instead saying, "Orangish, oranshish, oranzsh" before just giving up. What we know about this man is bad enough. What's hidden is plain terrifying.

Faculty Senate Remarks

Dr. Ron Picard, Senate President



At the All-College Meeting on February 7, a concerned group of faculty and staff leaders—from left, Jane Wampler, Beth-Ann Scott, Ron Picard, Cindy Meo, Kathy Taylor, and Neph Villanueva—shared the latest on Consolidation resistance efforts. Photo Courtesy of Tamarack Staff

The following remarks, originally delivered at the February 7th All-College Meeting, were edited for timeliness.

Faculty Senate looks forward to another semester of advocacy for students and our local college communities. As you may have heard from Dean Dresdner, we have begun implementation of three retention initiatives under the Doing Our PART umbrella. In addition, we are close to releasing our very well researched proposal for community time. This semester, we will also be planning our Last Lecture event and, in collaboration with Lieutenant Jeffrey D'Alusio, would like to schedule a Public Safety conversation around preparedness.

Finally, at our Tuesday, Feb. 11th meeting, we discussed how to best ensure the agency and efficacy of Naugatuck Valley Community College faculty in the face of statewide pressures to conform to a one size fits all ethos. As conversations around consolidation remain

critical, all faculty and staff were invited to come and contribute.

Our discussion represents a union supported escalation from last spring's overwhelming No Confidence vote. We are proud that it comes on the heels of the courageous February 6th CEAC vote to refuse consideration of consolidated curriculum until a legitimate statewide shared governance system is in place.

CEAC joins faculty governance bodies throughout the community college system who are also taking this stand. No one cares more about Naugatuck Valley Community College students than Naugatuck Valley Community College faculty, staff, and administrators, and no "nationally proven plan" can replace the love, compassion, and dedication we have for those who have turned to us to transform their lives, those we greet face to face in our classrooms and hallways every day.



Women's Center Celebrate!
 Nicole Hayes



11 ways to celebrate Women's History Month:

1. Register to vote honoring the 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment.
2. Watch a documentary about achievements made by women.
 - For Sama
 - Joan Didion: *The Center Will Not Hold*
 - Maya Angelou: *And Still I Rise*
 - *Mission Blue*
 - Toni Morrison: *The Pieces I Am*
3. Read memoirs or works written by women.
 - *She's Not There* by Jennifer Finney Boylan
 - *Becoming* by Michelle Obama
 - *I Am Malala* by Malala Yousafzai and Christina Lamb
 - *Redefining Realness* by Janet Mock
4. Shop/support women entrepreneurs and businesses.
5. Integrate more women's voices into classrooms.
6. Be a mentor.
7. Donate to NVCC's Women's Center Period Pad Drive (email nhayes@nv.edu or jpetitfrere@nv.edu with inquiries).
8. Stop perpetuating and/or excusing **misogyny!**
9. Expand your definition of "womanhood".
10. Donate to local women's shelters.
11. Write letters of thanks to women who inspire you.

Well-behaved women seldom make history.
 -Laurie R. King

Earth Day continued

exhibited during The International Festival of the Arts, the week before Earth Day. Member artists will create this work out of used pens and markers. You can help by donating used pens or markers to Art Club by dropping them off in the various green paper-covered boxes placed around campus. Or stop by the Art studios, 4th floor of the Student Center, to donate materials and learn more.

Another activity taking place on Earth Day is a poetry reading/workshop with a visiting group called Poets for the Planet, made up of several poets, including Professor Steve Parlato. They've been meeting regularly since summer, writing work in response to the climate crisis. So far, six members—Carol Chaput, Greg Coleman, Thomasina Levy, Lana Orphanides, Parlato, and Edwina Trentham—have confirmed they'll be joining our celebration.

More information about these events will be available as we get closer to Earth Day. If you'd like to get involved, email Professor Amanda Lebel at alebel@nv.edu or Professor Steve Parlato at sparlato@nv.edu for details. We hope you'll join in our efforts to make a difference for our little corner of Mother Earth!

Tamarack EDIT MEETINGS

Tuesdays 2:30 pm, \$519
 ALL WELCOME!!

PTK Column

Spring Visions

Steven Jones



The wisest man to ever live said, "Where there is no vision, the people perish..." At the beginning of a new decade, it's hard not to think about our vision of the future. Is it in focus, 20/20 vision, or are we having problems focusing? What has historically given people hope and direction is a leader, or group of people, who could articulate something. In this case, that something is a future which grabs the imagination of the hearer, turning their gaze from looking at their feet, to peering at the far-off horizon.

Phi Theta Kappa is a group where the sky is the limit. You're free to create a future full of opportunities to learn, serve, and grow into a person with no limits or barriers preventing you from creating a dream come true. The cool thing is you won't be alone. You'll be surrounded by others who also see far off visions and do what it takes to make those imagined outcomes reality.

For example, as a PTK member you'll have access to PTK Connect, which allows you to search for both schools of interest anywhere in the country, and the value of scholarships available to PTK members. Scholarships run the gamut from \$1,000/year up to \$50,000/year, depending on your GPA and the school you choose.

Last year, NVCC's PTK chapter went from being a one-star organization to a three-star. Here's a synopsis from the PTK website:

- One-Star — Recognizing Academic Excellence, Chapter Foundations
- Two-Star — Organized Chapter Leadership and Getting Started with Honors in Action
- Three-Star — Developing an Honors in Action Project and a College Project
- Four-Star — Increased Presence on Campus and Increased Engagement in the Region
- Five-Star — Further Involvement in the Region and in International Activities or Events

Each star earned as a chapter means learning, leadership, and service goals set by the chapter were achieved with the help of all members. The more the chapter gains, the better members look to a potential transfer school or an employer looking for talent.

We don't have all the ideas. PTK offers a framework; we must learn how to build upon that framework something which embodies what we value and what makes our lives worth living. If we want to change the world, we can't do it alone. We need YOU.

This semester, meetings started Wednesday, Feb. 19th and will continue every other Wednesday. There's a lot more we could accomplish, if more people joined. Our vision is seeing people expand into a world where nothing is impossible, where they can accomplish anything they're crazy enough to believe could be done.

Since PTK is a "by invitation only" organization, we're looking for those receiving invitations as a result of academic performance to take the next step and join us. We're saving a place aboard the PTK rocket just for you.

Join us as together we cast a vision of what our future might be. We'll be looking for you at our Wednesday meetings.



"In the long run, the sharpest weapon of all is a kind and gentle spirit."

Anne Frank

Honoring Adjuncts

Communication Is Key

Virginia Abraham



Photo Courtesy of Virginia Abraham

Communications and teaching are my two passions. As a communications instructor at NVCC, I'm able to streamline both interests into a daily conversation with students. Very important things happen in communication classrooms! Students from all ethnic and cultural backgrounds discover they have a voice—a very powerful one!

In public speaking, helping a student find his or her voice is very gratifying. I've helped students celebrate their ethnicity or cultural diversity, inform others about a problem rooted in personal trauma, develop enough confidence to do a culinary demonstration, or even speak out against injustices like animal cruelty or human trafficking.

During one lesson on topic selection for our informative speeches, I challenged students to match a skill, experience or passion with the desire to share information with others. We tapped into a variety of majors, unique cultural experiences, and travel as potential topics for a classroom audience.

The speeches they present are crafted with a rich blend of expert, peer and personal testimony. Research takes them into the library database and beyond as they interview family members, friends, faculty, and other

professionals to unearth original stories that bring a topic to life.

Group activities and team projects are particularly exciting in a communications classroom. I often use storytelling to illustrate concepts and theories. I used one anecdote describing my work on a community fashion show to illustrate moving the committee through the five stages of group development. Following that, I proposed a group project where students would be tasked with designing a new logo and slogan for a well-known food chain.

I gathered marketing paraphernalia from Subway, Starbucks, Panera, McDonald's and Froyo. The class was directed to form their own groups of four, select a leader, and assign tasks to record their progress through the five stages of group development to project completion. This activity has been consistently popular and engaging for all learning styles.

I'm also collaborating with other NVCC communications professors to develop workshops and activities connecting communications students with the entire NVCC campus and wider Waterbury community. In March, we've arranged for Brass City Toastmasters, the Waterbury Chapter of Toastmaster's International, to host a full meeting on campus. Communications students will be invited to watch how a meeting is conducted, learn about Toastmasters Pathways Education in communication skill-building, and participate in impromptu speech-making.

We are also spearheading a Film Conversation Series with guest speakers that could potentially plug into the Common Calendar, showcasing timely topics in communication and social media, targeting millennials and Generation 2 students. In April, we plan to host a Debate Challenge, inviting all communications instructors to recommend ONE student to participate in a six-person panel debating the pros and cons of a controversial issue. The debate will be publicized as a campus-wide activity for all to attend.

As an adjunct in communications, I'm excited to teach and collaborate in such a diverse and talented community here at NVCC.

NVCC's Got Talent

Christian Soto



Courtesy of Vexels

Come one, come all! NVCC will be hosting its traditional Coffeehouse, March 5th, 2020 in the Playbox Theater at 6:00 PM. This is a special event open to the public and is free of charge. However, the club hosting it, Music Society, will be accepting donations which will go into their club account and allow them to purchase more music and other things to keep the club providing fresh new music.

Music Society once used the club funds to attend a concert headlined by Pentatonix, an a cappella pop group known all over the world. It was a unique experience, allowing those who attended to see a cappella done in a concert setting, inspiring them to become better singers.

Music Society is constantly purchasing scores on the internet to consistently update their repertoire, another great reason to support the club. Some of their most popular songs performed to date are "Time After Time," "Can You Feel the Love Tonight?" "I Want It That Way," and many more. All songs are sung in four-part vocal harmony, including bass, tenor, alto, and soprano, so there's something for everyone to enjoy and participate in no matter the pitch of voice. It's interesting and entertaining to experience songs traditionally intended for instruments sung by a group of people without any accompaniment.

Past coffeehouse highlights have been the

a cappella group, Fermata the Valley, as well as the school choir giving a sneak peak of what they have to offer with a song or two from their set, which they'll be performing in full at the end of the semester at the school's musical showcase sometime in May.

At the upcoming showcase, you can expect to see not only the a cappella group and the school choir, but the school's phenomenal concert band and jazz band, including SGA President Tabitha Cruz and me performing for the first time.

One change is that if you would like to participate in the Coffeehouse or any future Music Society events, you must become a Music Society member. Music Society meets every Tuesday at 2:45 PM in A507. To become a member, just attend meetings to discuss the club's future endeavors. Joining Music Society is a great opportunity to make friends, sing songs, and become a better singer.

It also allows students to perform in the Coffeehouse where Dr. Gil Harel, Music Society advisor, gladly accepts requests of songs students would like to perform to show off their musical talents. Music Society is also a great opportunity to connect with faculty and staff who attend and perform, including Professors Jason Seabury and Chris Rempfer, who sing with the group.

Invite as many people as you like to attend the March 5th event. We'd like to see as many people as possible in attendance. We hope to see you there to listen, and maybe to become a member of Music Society and join in a future performance.

Center for Teaching

The Value of Self-Testing

Kevin Ramer

Kevin Ramer, Assistant Professor of Mathematics at NVCC since 2016, is a new member of the CFT committee.

When I was in graduate school pursuing my Ph.D., the first major hurdle I needed to clear was the passing of preliminary examinations, a series of rigorous exams covering key concepts from three major areas of mathematics. After my first year of school, I elected to take my first exam in real analysis. I spent the entire summer of 2010 studying. I read through my notes and textbook until I could recite all the important definitions and theorems from memory. I had numerous conversations with classmates and professors about how to solve problems from past exams, which were openly available to students through the math department's website, and I even memorized many of these solutions. I was ready.

Needless to say, it came as a surprise when I only managed to solve three of the eight problems on the exam.

How did I manage to perform so poorly? In their article, "Making things hard on yourself, but in a good way: Creating desirable difficulties to enhance learning," Elizabeth Ligon Bjorks and Robert A. Bjorks offer a suggestion: "Basically, any time that you, as a learner, look up an answer or have somebody tell or show you something that you could, drawing on current cues and your past knowledge, generate instead, you rob yourself of a powerful learning opportunity." Even though I spent a lot of time studying, I had chosen a comfortable path that mostly consisted of reading and recitation. This approach created the illusion of deep comprehension even though my understanding was relatively shallow.

What can you do to avoid a situation like this? The answer lies in self-testing strategies. Self-testing can take on different forms. In some courses, you can pick out problems from old assignments and attempt to solve them without consulting your notes or asking for help at the first sign of difficulty. In other courses, you might try to explain the concepts you're learning to a classmate, friend, or family member without reading from your notes or textbook (the old adage, you don't really understand something until you can teach it, applies here).

You might struggle with these tasks at first, and struggle can feel counterproductive, but research has shown repeated self-testing actually improves long-term retention. Self-testing can also help you better assess what you do and don't know, which is helpful for allocating future study time (one of many reasons why study sessions should be spaced out over time and cramming should be avoided).

During winter of 2010-11, I added some of these self-testing strategies to my study plan. I spent more time practicing old exams, including the one I'd just failed, without the help of my notes. I also taught occasional lessons to my real analysis study group. With only a fraction of the time to prepare, I passed the exam on my second attempt. It's my hope that self-testing strategies can help you achieve similar success as you prepare for midterm exams.



"If you don't like something, change it. If you can't change it, change your attitude."

Maya Angelou


**CAPSS
CORNER**
**We're on Your
Team**

When thinking of college and the month of March, what's the first thing that comes to mind? Often, it's March Madness! While many students associate March Madness with NCAA Basketball tournaments, for some there's a different connection between March and higher education: the graduation and transfer process.

For many community college students, March feels like madness as you begin working through the process of figuring out your next steps. You have or are about to apply for graduation (application deadline is March 15!); you're in the midst of submitting applications to 4-year universities and colleges; you're deep in search of scholarships to help ease the cost of your Bachelor's degree or even looking for that full time job for which your Associates degree has prepared you.

While these challenges of March Madness may not be the same as playing a high-level basketball game against strong competitors, the decisions and responsibilities students are facing can create a sense of madness if not handled properly and thoroughly. This is where the Center for Academic Planning and Student Success (CAPSS) can help!

Wherever you are in the process of meeting your educational goals, the CAPSS office is here to coach and assist you. We're able to run degree audits to confirm you're all set to graduate, provide career counseling, assist with determining transfer school options and completing transfer applications. We also offer appointments with transfer representatives from the CT State College and University (CSCU) system and UCONN.

Don't forget to check out the Spring Transfer Fair, Wednesday, March 25th, from 10:00 AM—1:00 PM in Café West. You can find out more information at our webpage, <https://www.nv.edu/Student-Resources/Academic-Support-Resources/Academic-Advising-CAPSS>.

Advisors and Counselors in the CAPSS are here to help you plan for and reach your graduation, transfer and career goals. We understand the busy schedules and many responsibilities our students often face, so we provide flexibility in meeting with you by offering in person, phone or email support. Always remember "We are here for you!" and "Student Success is our Expectation," so stop by Kinney Hall Room 520; call us at 203-575-8025, or email at CAPSS@nv.edu. Let us help ease any madness you may face and provide information, so your decisions are based on facts, not left to guesswork or chance.

Regards
Bonnie Goulet

Director of Student Development Services

On the Court

Kobe the Great

John Williams



Black mambas are fast, nervous, lethally venomous, and when threatened, highly aggressive. For these reasons, the black mamba is widely considered the world's deadliest snake, and the stuff of legends. This describes Kobe Bryant on and off the court. Kobe was not just a superstar in the NBA; he was a star at life. His unwavering commitment to succeed, and limitless talent, immortalized his name with the greatest athletes in history.

Kobe Bean Bryant was born August 23, 1978 in Philadelphia, youngest of three children and only son of former NBA player Joe Bryant and Pamela Cox Bryant. Joe "Jellybean" Bryant played eight years in the NBA and eight years in Italy, moving his family there in 1984, when Kobe was six years old.

Bryant spent some of his childhood in Italy and began learning Italian in grade school. Italy was where Bryant learned to shoot layups on child-sized basketball hoops, focusing on the fundamentals and tactics.

When the family returned to Philadelphia in 1991, Bryant joined Lower Merion High School's basketball team, leading it to the state championships four years in a row. He was the first freshman in decades to start for Lower Merion's varsity team. During junior year, he averaged 31.1 points, 10.4 rebounds, and 5.2 assists and was named Pennsylvania Player of the Year.

Though he was an honor student and received high SAT scores, Bryant went straight to the NBA from high school. He was selected by the Charlotte Hornets with the 13th overall pick of the 1996 NBA draft and later traded to the Los Angeles Lakers.

In his rookie season, Bryant was fantastic, creating a record as the youngest player ever in an NBA game. As a rookie, he won the 1997 Slam Dunk Contest during All-Star Weekend, in Cleveland, Ohio. In his second year in the league, he was voted NBA All-Star starter, the youngest player in league history to receive this honor.

Bryant started in the 1998 All-Star Game at NY's Madison Square Garden at 19 years old. He and teammate Shaquille O'Neal joined Karl Malone, Kevin Garnett, and Gary Payton on the starting five. This is the All-Star Game made famous by the duel between

Michael Jordan, with a game-high 23 points, and Bryant, who scored 18 points for the West. The East won, 135-114, but the back-and-forth between Jordan and Bryant still sticks out today.

In the following season, Bryant elevated his game, establishing himself as a premier guard in the league. In 1999, Phil Jackson was appointed Lakers' coach; this helped Bryant improve his skills. He excelled as a shooting guard in the league and played with the All-Star, All-NBA, and All-Defensive teams. As Bryant continued to grow in his game, a feud was brewing between Bryant and teammate Shaquille O'Neal.

Due to personality differences, they struggled to get along. Coach Jackson was able to get them both to play exceptionally well in the triangle offense, despite their differences. The two played under Phil Jackson until 2004, winning three consecutive NBA Championships (2000, 2001, 2002) and making an NBA Finals appearance in 2004.



Photo Courtesy facebook

Eventually Jackson, a favorite of O'Neal, was let go by the Lakers. Many sports analysts and spectators assumed this was because of Bryant, who at times voiced displeasure with Jackson's offensive scheme. Learning of Jackson's departure, and hearing then-general manager Mitch Kupchak say he'd consider trading him, O'Neal demanded to be traded. O'Neal's demand was soon indulged, and he was sent to the Miami Heat for Lamar Odom, Caron Butler, Brian Grant and a first-round draft pick.

Although the Lakers struggled after O'Neal's 2004 departure, Bryant won two championships, earning NBA Finals victories over the Orlando Magic in 2009 and Boston Celtics in 2010. Bryant retired with 15x All-NBA, 12x All-Defensive Team, 2x NBA Finals Most Valuable Player and 2x Olympic Gold Medal.

Now the world mourns the January 26th death of Kobe Bryant, his daughter, Gianna, and all aboard the ill-fated helicopter. Still, some comfort is found in the fact that Kobe will live on as the greatest of all time.

Face from the ACE

A Spirit of Love and Care

Miguel Cruz



Miguel Cruz (r) with his brother, Josue.

Hi, I'm Miguel Cruz, a coach for the Promoting Academically Successful Students (PASS) office, where I have the honor to aid and empower the students of our NVCC family. PASS works to support students with academic skills workshops, team-based activities, one-on-one guidance, and peer support to help students navigate and master the more difficult challenges of college life. I've been part of the PASS office since its inception a year-and-a-half ago, and have had the distinct pleasure of both watching it grow and seeing our students succeed in accomplishing their academic goals.

I graduated from NVCC back in 2010 and have gone on to earn my Bachelors in English with a minor in Creative Writing from CCSU. I've devoted five years of my life to supporting our NVCC students and have deeply cherished every minute of it. NVCC has been a big part of my life, and I have learned a great deal from the faculty, staff, and mentors I've known throughout the years, so the opportunity to participate and give back to this wonderful community is one I value deeply.

I've also written articles for nonprofits and magazines, focusing primarily on my greatest passions: minority and environmental issues. I hope to continue in these endeavors and develop my talents, while also honing my Puerto Rican cooking skills—and my less than stellar guitar proficiency (I only know 4 cords).

My greatest hope, though, is to continue to spread the spirit of love and commitment to the community that so embodied the life of my late brother, Josue Cruz, who sadly passed away January 12, 2020, from a sudden illness. Though his loss still weighs heavily on those who knew and loved him, the love he freely gave for all those in need continues on within me and the community he served.

Throughout his life, Josue never failed to lift up the spirit of those around him and to fill them with the courage to believe in themselves. His energy was infectious. Josue's smile was a beacon of positivity; his spirit was unbreakable, and his laughter was life-affirming. I will continue to miss my brother terribly, but I know that our family, the NVCC community, and I will continue to carry his spirit with us and to pass a little bit of it on to those in need.

Two Choices

Kathleen Chesto

In 1860, the *New York Times* first endorsed a presidential candidate: Abraham Lincoln. This January, the paper veered from this 160-year tradition and endorsed not one, but two Democrats. This says less about the *Times* or the candidates, than about the state of our nation.

According to the *Times*, our democratic system may be fundamentally broken. Gerrymandering has made elections unfair; foreign powers are flooding the nation with misinformation, and Congress and the courts are dangerously partisan. It is no longer possible to be born in a log cabin and grow up to be president. One must be rich to be powerful.

In choosing two candidates, the *Times* acknowledged two highly divergent paths the nation might take in restoring democracy. Nearly all the democratic candidates would make the most progressive president in recent history, but one endorsement would take the nation on a more radical path. In choosing both, the *Times* stated, "If there were ever a time to be open to new ideas...to seek stability, now is it," reminding us both the radical and realist models deserve careful consideration.

Senator Sanders, long viewed as the most

liberal edge of the Democrats, has continually challenged the slowness of governmental change and the catering of political parties to rich donors. He promotes universal healthcare, fought for paid family leave when it was still a radical idea, and supports raising the minimum wage. He refuses to compromise, insisting only his ideas are right, despite their being untested and divisive. The *Times* judgement: "Three years into the Trump administration, we see little advantage to exchanging one over-promising divisive figure in Washington for another." Sanders' age (he'd be 79 when assuming office) and health (one heart attack on the campaign trail) are also cause for concern.

Elizabeth Warren appears to have taken up the cause of the far left, earning the *Times*' endorsement for the radical progressive wing. A gifted storyteller whose middle-class upbringing connects well with audiences, Warren believes our economic system is rigged against all but the wealthiest. She is committed to a wealth tax to help level the playing field.

According to the *Times*, her campaign platform demonstrates a serious approach to policymaking, not evident in some other candidates. She would reduce economic control of large corporations by giving workers more collective bargaining power. Her sharp increases in clean energy investment are designed to

wean the nation off fossil fuels; her anti-corruption legislation could hold bipartisan appeal. Her social service programs, likely the hardest sell for conservative democrats, include universal Medicare, extending from universal child care, free public 4-year college, and expanding social security.

Creating laws needed to move this progressive agenda forward will be difficult with a conservative judiciary. Approving much of her proposal, the *Times* urges American voters to consider what a Democratic president might accomplish without new legislation. The presidential office has wide-ranging powers to accomplish much through creation of new regulations, and this may prove more realistic, given the present Supreme Court.

Warren's policies may be more far-reaching than voters are ready to absorb. Her own moral rigidity and unwillingness to compromise reflect Sanders' less-appealing characteristics. The *Times*' second pick, Senator Amy Klobuchar, may be more able to unite sides in the middle.

From Minnesota, Klobuchar has won, with overwhelming majorities, every office she's run for in her home state. Her tenure in Washington has been marked by persistence, courage, and the ability to unite both sides of the aisle. She is known as a Congressional deal-maker.

While her foreign affairs experience is less

vast than Biden's (the other middle-of-the-road candidate), in 13 years in the Senate, she's voted on and sponsored dozens of measures on national defense, immigration, and refugee laws. Her voting record demonstrates careful, data-driven decision-making, the type of response needed in a crisis. She is the most productive Democratic candidate according to bills passed with bipartisan support.

Klobuchar expresses similar concerns for the nation as Warren, but would address them in smaller steps. Climate control would begin with emissions reduction. She would cut childhood poverty in half—not via millionaire's tax—by expanding earned income and childhood tax credits. She favors a strong public option in healthcare, rather than universal Medicare, free community college, rather than free public 4-year college, and a \$15.00 hourly federal minimum wage.

The question remains: are Klobuchar's plans radical enough to rescue a nation in downward spiral? Are Warren's plans feasible enough to win voter trust? This is the decision the Democratic party must make in the next few months, the decision we all must make in November. Does the nation need radical surgery, or a more homeopathic cure of good food and exercise? Either is preferable to another four years of palliative care.

Talk Legend

Robert Pinto



Courtesy The Phil Donahue Show-Bettman Photo

For those unfamiliar with Phil Donahue, he hosted *The Phil Donahue Show*, broadcast from NYC, for 26 years. With over 5,000 episodes, Donahue interviewed countless celebrities, political figures, business leaders, faith leaders, and other notables. I had the pleasure of conducting a phone interview with this TV legend.

RP: Tell me about your early years.

Donahue: "I was very lucky. I had a typical childhood in Cleveland. My mother was a department store clerk, my father a furniture salesman. In 1949, I graduated from Our Lady of Angels Elementary School in the West Park neighborhood of Cleveland. In 1953, I was part of the first graduating class of St. Edward High School, an all-boys college-prep private Catholic high school run by the Congregation of Holy Cross in suburban Lakewood, OH."

RP: Who influenced you?

Donahue: "Ralph Nader. I thought Ralph was right on all the issues. I remember waiting for him at the Dayton Airport. He was impressed I was there waiting for him. I shook his hand, and we got in the 1957 Chevy I was driving that happened to have no seatbelts. This was in 1968."

RP: What was it like attending the University of Notre Dame?

Donahue: "I felt very fortunate to attend Notre Dame. I got in without having to take the SATs. Times were different. I got a job at WNBU on campus, a commercial station owned by Notre Dame. I did work that included station breaks."

RP: What was it like interviewing President Kennedy?

Donahue: "I interviewed JFK on the fly. I was the reporter on the sidewalk running up to him with my camera crew. I interviewed him at a campaign stop in coal country West Virginia."

RP: What about Noam Chomsky?

Donahue: "Very intimidating. We did a show in 1985 called the Space Bridge; had 100 Russians in one audience and 100 Americans in another audience. That was very exciting; it was [via] satellite, the first time there was simultaneous translation. We were wearing ear pieces so we could understand each other."

RP: What was it like interviewing Lucille Ball of *I Love Lucy* fame?

Donahue: "Lucille was so grateful, she presented me with an award. Lucille is from Jamestown, NY, a very pleasant community. There was a supreme court justice from Ball's hometown."

RP: Can you tell me about the time period when you started your show?

Donahue: "It was a chaotic time, the late 60s. The Vietnam War was in full swing. They shot JFK, RFK, MLK. It was just a difficult time during those years. I was getting my feet wet with two-way talk radio. I would interview members of the city commission, and I did the evening news."

RP: Tell me about interviewing Bernie Sanders. What do you think of his run for president?

Donahue: "Well, I am not at all surprised. I admired him, still do. He was not a fly-by-night guy. He was mayor of Burlington, VT in 1981 when I interviewed him. I have my eye on Bernie; I am following his campaign in 2020."

RP: Are you endorsing Bernie Sanders?

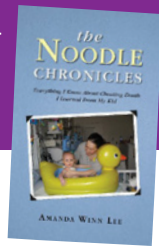
Donahue: "I did say I have my eye on him and his campaign."

RP: What were some challenges of running a daytime talk show?

Donahue: Back then the challenges were how to get an anti-war voice on the show. Being fired from my show on MSNBC was my greatest challenge. Ever since I left MSNBC, they became an anti-war figure. I want to give myself credit for their becoming an Anti-War Network.

RECENTLY READ

The Noodle Chronicles
Amanda Winn Lee



The journey of life is unpredictable, and no one is ever fully prepared for the unforeseen circumstances along the way. Accomplished actor Amanda Winn Lee, known for her work in the original ADV Films English dub of *Neon Genesis Evangelion*, as well as the long-running *Persona* anime and video-game franchise, is all too familiar with this reality.

While enjoying an admirable career in the entertainment industry, Winn-Lee and her husband decided to embark on the next chapter of their lives: starting a family. After an arduous pregnancy, their son Nicholas, lovingly nicknamed Noodle, was born. It was after only a few months of newfound parenthood that everything changed.

Noodle was home for only a brief time, when Winn Lee and her husband were faced with his diagnosis of Leukemia. Amanda Winn Lee's poignant book, *The Noodle Chronicles: Everything I Know about Cheating Death I Learned from my Kid*, provides a candidly earnest account of her experiences during her son's battle for life—and the impact it left on her family.

To my relief, it is disclosed within the first chapter that her son survives the ordeal. Still, the author conveys a palpable sense of fear throughout her narrative. Many pages are filled with feelings of despair and melancholy. However, Winn Lee expertly weaves in her own brand of humor, as she sheds light on her experiences and her psychological frame of mind through gritty descriptions of her child's treatments and the brutal truths behind hospital walls.

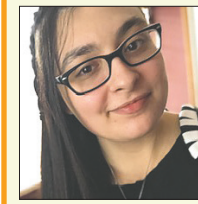
Personally, I still find myself haunted by Winn Lee's vivid recollections regarding her many sleepless nights at the hospital. Her description of Noodle's condition and the mental anguish she felt for her son often made it difficult to keep reading. However, I always found myself coming back to this touching tale, as Winn Lee interlaced her story with an element of hope, peppered with vignettes of her supportive and quirky family. I particularly enjoyed her bawdy conversations with her father and her comparisons to her polar-opposite brother.

What's laudable is how Winn-Lee's personality is present on every page as she proudly displays her sincere world views and personal beliefs. This allows for an organic connection with the subject matter that continued to resonate with me long after I put the book down. There may be moments where Winn Lee's graphic descriptions make some readers uncomfortable, but it's that sense of honesty that makes *The Noodle Chronicles* an essential memoir. Her revelations on family dynamics are ardently illustrated by bittersweet good-byes as she conveys the realities of the hard road she and her family traveled.

Amanda Winn Lee may have achieved recognition in the entertainment industry, but it is now evident that her book, *The Noodle Chronicles*, has also made an undeniable mark in the literary world. I recommend picking up a copy on Amazon.com in its digital or physical formats, especially since a portion of the proceeds go directly to the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. Also be sure to follow Amanda Winn Lee on her social media outlets.

Mitchell W. Maknis

The . . . Journey Different, Not Less



Shyanne Caporuscio

It's easy to get caught in the cycle of just going through the motions of day-to-day life. There's always something that needs to get done, and sometimes, it feels like there's not enough time for it all. It's almost like life is constantly asking for more after it has already taken everything we could give.

Everyone's been there, lost inside that cycle. Personally, I find myself consistently getting caught in those patterns, feeling like I should be able to do it all. That the more I take on, the more capable I am—or at least the more capable people will *think* I am. It's hard to admit I don't have it all together, especially when it feels like everyone around me has life somewhat figured out. It's easy to get lost in those thought patterns, because it's hard to remember we only see the parts of other people's lives they allow us to see.

Truth is, whether we admit it or not, we all have things inside we hide from the rest of the world. We all have moments when we don't know what's next, or how we're going to get there. We've all been in that place before, stuck between not wanting anyone to know we feel lost and knowing we cannot figure it all out alone. It took me a long time to figure out when to ask for help, or when to take a step back.

We're always trying to keep up with those around us. Every day, I see people take on task after task, because no one wants to let anyone down, and they feel like they "should" be able to handle it. I find myself doing the same thing. While most students take pride in all they do, it can be so difficult to balance school, family, social life, work, and extracurricular obligations. Even though we all know everyone leads different lives, we still allow the pressure of "should" to be a contributing force in the choices we make daily.

Humans are constantly changing, trying to find where we fit into the world, which is hard. This whole life thing can feel really complicated sometimes—because *it is*. Realizing "complicated" doesn't mean "impossible" took me a lot longer than I like to admit. But it was one of those moments that helped me understand I'm only going to get as far as I take myself. It was also the moment I realized it's perfectly okay to let myself be where I am. That was the beginning of this journey. I slowly learned I don't have to pretend I have everything figured out. Once I stopped pretending, I discovered no one ever expected me to have it figured out in the first place.

A lot of times, the pressure we feel is pressure we put on ourselves. As we're figuring out who we are as people, we're also figuring out what parts of us are more harmful than helpful. Everyone's journey is different, and at first, I didn't understand that different was not synonymous with less. Being committed to learning accountability, mindfulness, and awareness of self and others—on top of everything else in our lives—is never easy, and it's never all figured out, but it is worth it. We don't have to know where to start, or where we'll end up. Just know this: we will get where we're meant to be whenever we're meant to get there.

NVCC's 3rd Annual Food Pantry Fundraising 5K



When: Sunday, March 29th at 10:00 AM

Online Registration:

<https://runsignup.com/Race/CT/Waterbury/NVCCFoodPantryFundRaisingRunWalk>

In-Person Registration:

Day of Race 9:00 - 9:45 AM

Where: NVCC Founders Hall ~ 750 Chase Parkway ~ Waterbury, CT

Cost: \$25.00 per person / Age 25 and under: \$5.00

Choose to do 1.55 miles (2.5 K) or the loop twice = 5K!

All proceeds to benefit *The NVCC Food Pantry!*

Pets on leashes are more than welcome!

Monetary donations accepted via online link or in-person.
Non-perishable food items accepted day of the race

Questions? Contact Christine Cocchiola at cocchiola@nv.edu

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

Tuesdays 2:30 pm, S519
ALL WELCOME!!

Compelling Conversation

Tamarack Staff



Photo Courtesy of Tamarack Staff

February 18, 2020, the Black Student Union and the Women's Center co-sponsored a conversation with Congresswoman Jahana Hayes. The former National Teacher of the Year and proud NVCC alumna spent an hour in dialogue with students on the topic of African American voting rights and the real struggle faced by marginalized communities in exercising their right to vote. Sharing her passion for representing

all people in her constituency, Hayes called for attendees to do the same: imploring us to be allies for others, to speak out on issues that impact those outside our immediate circles.

This powerful event was one of many offered to commemorate Black History Month. The Tamarack offers thanks to the BSU members involved, as well as their co-advisors, Professors Petitfrere and Solomon; to the Women's Center, and of course, to Rep. Hayes for taking time to educate and inform those in attendance about this most important right.

Take a You Day!

Aaron Smith

Why is it that we cast aside our health and well-being, in order to get things done? I get it, we all have responsibilities. You have to go to work to get that paycheck. You have to get that 12-page paper finished and submitted on time. Well, what about your most important responsibility, yourself?

What am I talking about? Answer this, how many times during the last week have you forgotten to eat, or realized you haven't eaten anything because you were working, studying, or "too busy"? When you were last sick—with the flu, a stomach bug, or strep throat—did you take the necessary amount of time to rest and recover? When was the last time you took a day for yourself?

Seems silly, right? How can you forget to eat or not bother to take a day off when you're not feeling well? Unfortunately, this is the reality we live in today. We run ourselves into the ground and wear ourselves out, in order to please others. In the process we often neglect our own needs. This is especially true when we get sick. Getting sick is a signal from our bodies telling us we need to rest. Yet, we tend to

ignore our bodies' call for rest.

When it comes to school, it's a real dilemma. How many times have you gotten frustrated with homework or a paper? Sometimes you just need to get up and walk away. It's better to work with a tranquil mind, than a stormy mind. Deadlines and due dates are important, but at what cost? Wearing yourself out, beating yourself into the ground isn't going to help at all.

Instead of trying to do a megaton of work all at once, break your schoolwork up into pieces. Or set timeframes for how much time you want to spend on schoolwork. One thing that has taken me a long time to understand is time management. Being efficient with your time will definitely help you not only focus more on specific assignments or tasks, but it will prevent you from getting fatigued.

With everything else you need to take care of, don't forget to take care of yourself. Your health and well-being are more important than anything else. The rest of the world and its problems can wait—and you'll be better equipped to take those on if you're rested and well.

NVCC V-Day

Kathleen Chesto



Photo Courtesy of Kathleen Chesto

Nicole Hayes and Tabitha Cruz preparing for the Women's Center production, *Vagina Monologues*, an episodic play written by Eve Ensler, exploring issues of sex and body image through the eyes of women of various ages, races, and sexual differentiations. In 2018, *The New York Times* stated, "No recent hour of theater has had a greater impact worldwide"

alumni SHOWCASE



Christopher Gordon

A Steady Presence

Hi, I'm Christopher Gordon, class of 2018, proud alumnus and continuing part-time student. Many of the loyal Tam readers may still know me as a semiregular contributor as well. Currently, I'm an honors student and club president at Western Connecticut State University, where I'm scheduled to graduate this May with a B.A. in Social Psychology and a minor in Philosophy.

My plans for after that are still unclear, as I will be taking a year off from my studies before starting applications for masters or doctoral programs in Social Psychology. The tentative plan is to work in a psychological research lab as an assistant to enhance my resume and make me a better candidate for whatever program suits my educational goals. These goals include coming back to NVCC as an adjunct professor with hopes of one day becoming a full professor here.

One of my biggest worries is that my year off will hinder my prospects at achieving

my masters, but not because I fear the course load. What I fear is that I will not have enough money to pay for application fees. That's the major reason I am taking the time off, to find a job that will help me pay for my living expenses as well as provide extra for applications.

"In all the time I have known him, Chris has never been one to boast of his own achievements—which are quite admirable—but rather to use his voice to highlight the successes of others."

Steve Parlato

As you might have noticed, I am a tad awkward when writing about myself, which comes as no surprise. All of the greats I've ever known have had this same deficiency, so I would like to assume I will one day be counted as one of them.

Advisor's Note: While I wouldn't call it "awkward," I should have expected Chris's "Alumni Showcase" piece to be characterized by the same humility he's shown as an award-winning staff writer, Editor-in-Chief, SGA Secretary, President's Circle member, and Presidential Medal of Honor recipient. In all the time I have known him, Chris has never been one to boast of his own achievements—which are quite admirable—but rather to use his voice to highlight the successes of others.

*Since he is unlikely to toot his own horn, I'm happy to play a few notes in his place. During his time at NVCC, I was privileged to work with Chris on The Tamarack as well as in three academic classes, including my 200-level literature class, *Studies in Young Adult Fiction*, which he completed with an Honors-by-Contract option.*

In each role, Christopher Gordon was exceptional. I'm grateful Chris continues to carve out time from his demanding schedule to make an occasional contribution to the newspaper he led so well. I look forward to one day calling him "colleague." Bravo, Chris!

INSPIRING WOMEN

Doubly Inspired Shyanne Caporuscio

In honor of Women's History Month, and of women's influential impact on society, I can't help but recognize two women I've crossed paths with who have inspired me. Two influential women, who have encouraged me in my life, are Professors Amanda Lebel and Kate Pelletier.

Amanda Lebel has been my advisor since 2016. For most of this time, she has acted as a mentor, always pushing me to be the best version of myself. Two of the many reasons I find her inspirational are her dedication to her students, and her passion for bettering the world. She always takes time to listen and understand people, even with her busy schedule. I can honestly say, without her impact, I probably would not have found my way to the place I am today.

Another woman who has become an influential part of my journey is Kate Pelletier. I've only recently met Kate, but her ability to create an open and supportive classroom environment motivates me to create those same things within myself as a person. What I've learned so far in Kate's Philosophy and Practice of Yoga class are unique, giving students an opportunity to look inside themselves to pursue growth and expand outward to create change.

Both Amanda and Kate are women who've impacted my life. This is true not only because they've encouraged me to be the best version of myself, but because of their own display of authenticity, understanding, and drive in life as well.

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Good Place Goodbye

Gwenydd Miller



For years, when discussing TV shows, I'd had people repeatedly ask, "Have you seen *The Good Place*?" or declare, "Oh, *The Good Place* is such a great show!" Personally, I never saw the appeal—then I watched it. All four seasons in two weeks. It helped that the episodes were

short, and classes hadn't yet picked up, but by the Judge's burrito (you'll understand once you see it), that show was amazing! Not only was it hilarious, but it tackled some really heavy subjects, mainly, moral philosophy.

As anyone who's seen it knows, the show is about Eleanor Shellstrop (Kristen Bell), a woman who's died and gone to "The Good Place" by mistake. The first season is entirely about her trying to become a better person, with the help of other characters, Chidi (William Jackson Harper), Tahani (Jameela Jamil), Jason (Manny Jacinto), Janet (D'Arcy Carden), and, though unintentionally, Michael (Ted Danson).

It's not until the end of season one that we find out they've actually been in "The Bad Place" all along, and Michael, the previously

cheery "Good Place" Architect, is—something quite different. For those of you upset over that little spoiler, keep in mind there are still three seasons after that which remain unspoiled. The ruse is only part one of the story, and it's only after that hellish revelation that they can confront the larger problem: the flawed system.

After taking a philosophy class here at NVCC, I was easily able to spot the spot-on details in Chidi's lessons. Chidi Anagnonye, an ethics professor who taught in Australia at the time of his death, hesitantly agrees to help Eleanor become a better person in the first season. But as time goes on, his classes soon include all four humans (and one demon). Chidi even learns from his students as they put his philosophical theories to the test in real after-life situations.

One of my favorite parts of the show is that they did their homework. All the lessons on Chidi's magic chalkboard were detailed and

correct. Half of what I learned in class could be absorbed simply by watching the show. Obviously, the show didn't go into as much depth on the theories, but the main ideas are carried across quite nicely. If not the best place to learn philosophy, *The Good Place* still a great show to help you make the Kierkegaard leap into the subject.

Sadly, the series ended with Season 4, Episode 13 on January 30th. The series ended, not because they didn't get renewed for another season, but because the creator, Michael Schur, decided it was time for it to end. This is something rarely seen in TV today; so many shows drag out their seasons until watching feels like beating a dead horse. Even though I'll miss it, I'm glad they ended the series where they did. Or as Eleanor would say "I hate to see it go, but love to watch it leave." You'll just have to watch it to understand.

FACE IN THE CROWD Artful Accounting

Zane Silva

My name is Zane Silva, and I am an Accounting major at Naugatuck Valley Community College. I initially started my college experience as an Engineering major at UCONN, but I decided to switch majors and transfer here in fall 2018. After I complete my Associate's degree next year, I intend to transfer to a four-year university to become a Certified Public Accountant (CPA) and one day open my own accounting firm.

Currently, I work for Middlebury Pizza as a delivery driver, and have worked as a delivery driver for other restaurants in the past. I was recently hired as an accounting intern for a company, also in Middlebury, Pilot Seasoning. For this new job, I'll be working with the company's



Photo Courtesy of Zane Silva

"Although my field of study is in Accounting, I spend a fair amount of my time getting involved in the arts."

Finance Department in processing accounts receivable forms and managing the warehouse inventory.

Although my field of study is in Accounting, I spend a fair amount of my time getting involved in the arts. Last spring, I took an Intro to Theatre course at NVCC's Danbury campus, and realized I have an interest in performing arts. The class was amazing, and for our final project our class had to perform monologues to an actual audience.

When I started taking classes at the Waterbury campus, I spent more time with the Theatre Department and Stage Society, and I was even able to participate in scenes produced by some of the students in the Directing class. In addition to theatre, I enjoy expressing my creativity through Visual Art by participating in the Art Club.

Last semester, I was elected as Treasurer

of Art Club, and this year I am also part of the Student Government Association, as one of the Art Club's representatives. The piece behind me in my photo is my first project with Art Club, where we created linoleum block prints. The prints were a part of the Art Club's "Prints for the Amazon" fundraiser, which raised money for rainforest conservation efforts.

For this project, I learned how to carve and make prints using linoleum blocks. It was a fun experience where I was able to create some cool prints of tapirs while helping a good cause. This year, in Art Club, we are continuing our efforts to raise money for a good cause by creating and decorating reusable tote bags, which we will be selling during the school's Earth Day celebration on April 22nd. This time, we'll be making a positive impact closer to home, raising money for NVCC's Food Pantry. I hope to see you at the bag sale!



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The Weakest Link

Part 1 of a Cybersecurity Series

Steven Jones

Several years back, on the game show, *The Weakest Link*, a player with three strikes heard those dreaded words from the strait-laced host: "You are the weakest link...goodbye." Those strikes occurred when players voted against someone they didn't like or were jealous of, making the person vulnerable to attack, causing them to lose their place on stage and their chance for a cash prize. So, how does a game show relate to cybersecurity? The game highlights one of the primary ways a company or individual gets hacked: being vulnerable.

There are many technical ways cyber-villains exploit discovered vulnerabilities:

- Ransomware – You open an email, click on a link, and your web browser gets redirected to a hostile website which downloads a payload, a program that runs and locks up your system until you pay a ransom to the perpetrator of the attack.
- Phishing – This is also an email-delivered attack resembling a legitimate communication from a company with whom you may do business. Phishing lures you to provide personal identifying information such as bank account numbers, credit or debit card numbers, or worse, social security numbers.
- Data leakage – Many of these result from human error in keeping data or data backups safe. A missing backup tape or disc is one way this happens. Another involves an insider who opens the door for a bad actor to get access to company information.
- Hacking – Many of the most spectacular, costly attacks are by groups or individuals—talented and intelligent, for sure—who may stalk companies for months, looking for vulnerabilities to exploit.

Statistics show the average company doesn't discover they've been compromised for 14 months! Some never discover they've been compromised.

Attacks such as viruses, trojans, worms, etc. cause a computer or computer network to launch its payload or spread to other machines. With the rise of social media, a similar-sounding approach to cyber stalking, social engineering, is being used more and more. It requires nothing but a telephone or in-person visit to convince the hapless victim to divulge private details, or in some cases, open locked doors, for perpetrators to gain free-range access to company information.

Part of the difficulty eliminating cyber-attacks is that companies don't like to share that they've been broken into, unless the breach is so disruptive they must communicate what happened. So, how can we defend ourselves from such a withering array of pits and traps along the information highway? Here are some suggestions to start:

1. Make sure you have a backup of your computer. Newer Microsoft operating systems automate a cloud backup to One Drive to guard against ransomware attacks.
2. Don't click on links allegedly from companies you use. Go to the site directly to check things out.
3. Many sites, such as banks and utilities, have a spoof address where you can forward suspicious emails, for security folks to take a close look and potentially stop perpetrators from fooling more people.

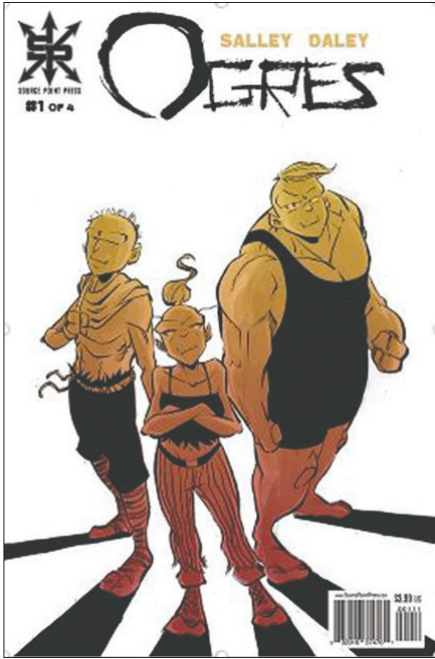
We've just grazed the surface of this huge topic, affecting so many people and companies. Remember: Be a bit more reticent about clicking a link because it piqued your fancy, or you could become...the weakest link.

Ogres Review

Written by Bob Salley

Illustrated by Shawn Daley

Mitchell Walter Maknis



Comic distributor, Source Point Press, presents the next installment in the *Ogre* universe, reuniting writer Bob Salley and illustrator Shawn Daley in this four-issue spinoff series, aptly titled, *Ogres*. This follow-up to the creative team's original hit focuses on a trio of young *Ogres* who've just survived the ruthless purging of their kinfolk.

In retribution, they set out on a quest for vengeance against the pack of Taesh'ar responsible for slaughtering their families. These retaliators are comprised of the levelheaded Cron, his ill-tempered sister Meika, and the physically imposing, yet guileless, Tugho. On their journey, they become entwined with Rhett, the Dwarven bounty hunter, and his human prisoner.

This troublesome group find themselves in constant peril from the ever-growing antagonistic factions residing in this tumultuous world. The company's constant state of acrimony is made apparent from the get-go, yet it's this tension that brings these richly dynamic characters to life. For instance, I enjoyed the gruff humored and avaricious Dwarf's interactions with Tugho.

Tugho's reliance on his native *Ogre* language added an intriguing chemistry throughout these well-executed exchanges that also provided the reader insight into this disgruntled group's conflicting motives and philosophies. This implementation compelled me to empathize with each of their viewpoints and values. Personally, I found myself growing attached to the characterization of Meika. Her insensitive attitude toward her companions, coupled with her fondness of brute force, brought an exhilarating sense of gusto to every page.

In this series, Salley and Daley prove themselves to be masters of misdirection. I liked the fact that every issue kept me guessing and often left me surprised at the tale's new developments. Salley's writing reverently intertwined the underlying theme from the original source material, while also adeptly showcasing the ripple effects that this story's actions have had in this merciless world.

These moments are impeccably illustrated with the iconic visuals of Shawn Daley. Daley expanded on his original concept by recapturing the artistic spirit of *Ogres'* predecessor, while expertly adding subtleties that enhanced his illustrations. As a fan of their previous graphic novel, I appreciated how the creators implemented clever nods to the original *Ogre* story by providing nuanced nostalgia that added depth to the world surrounding the characters.

This follow-up series has taken the *Ogre* franchise up a notch. *Ogres* distinguishes itself from its predecessor by introducing a new and unforgettable cast, while eloquently adding to the lore of this established world. It's guaranteed to appeal to fans of the original graphic novel as well as entertain first-time readers. You can purchase *Ogres* Issues 1- 4 at your local comic shop, or order online at www.SourcePointPress.com.

FACE IN THE CROWD I feel like a Helvetica but I'm really a Comic Sans.

George Ramirez

My name is George Ramirez; a lot of the time I want to feel like Helvetica, a simple, serious-feeling, professional, and modern typeface. However, a lot of the time, and more often than not, I feel like the chubby, unprofessional, childish, Comic sans.

Whether it's commuting to school, being imprisoned by a lecture, or being home on a Friday morning while everyone else is gone for the time being—Time seems to escape me.

Instead of pouring my heart out for each and every assignment, or playing as best I can at a video game, taking the time to write a good poem for once, or even finding the next big steal that I will inevitably purchase regardless—I always feel like I come up short.

Whether missing the care, missing a shot, missing a good couple of synonyms, or even missing the expendable income—I always feel inadequate and uncomfortable in my decisions. I like to think that despite this, I always manage to show my best to others.

In a way, like Helvetica, I want to feel as though I can live and inspire for years to come, like a great beautiful piece of architecture. As



Photo Courtesy of George Ramirez

“While I may not be a smooth, elegant and sophisticated typeface like Helvetica, I have a lot of room to bend around and be experimental like Comic Sans.”

though I stand above the rest so high that even the clouds are below me.

Unfortunately, it is the opposite.

I feel as though I am not even on par with my fellow students, and even far below others outside of my schooling. This feeling of lacking experience and lacking possible

opportunities is what keeps me up at night a lot of the time. Tea and bread is a good friend to me at night, however.

In this way I can relate to Comic Sans. The visualization of curves gives off a very “goofy” demeanor, and every single character all together feels like a blog of text a child wrote with their non-dominant hand. And if you're ambidextrous, I apologize.

Despite this type of view and the countless analogies, in a way, I enjoy viewing myself as a Comic Sans. While I may be struggling with internal problems such as doubt, fear of the unknown, and other insecurities. Looking from the outside in—It could be way worse.

The idea of looking up towards the future is what scares me but keeps me going. The dream of one day realizing that what I put in now will better me in the future is what keeps me going every day—Whether I am consciously aware of that or not. While I may not be a smooth, elegant and sophisticated typeface like Helvetica, I have a lot of room to bend around and be experimental like Comic Sans.

In a way, I like the idea of being all over the place.

Personally, I think the best thing that comes out of all of this is that yes, for now I may be that very definition of an afterthought to some and just viewed as another “Comic Sans,” but I'll at least have the knowledge of knowing that—to be a Helvetica, it's better to start out as a Comic Sans.

INSPIRING WOMEN

The School Nurse Kathleen Chesto

Her license plate, “WINI,” was recognizable throughout Rhode Island. A 5'2” bundle of energy, she was known to everyone as “the school nurse.” There were hundreds of school nurses in RI, but “the School Nurse” was Wini O'Connell, my mother. Her little office in Ferri Middle School housed a “silent” food pantry and clothing exchange. Whatever was needed for a child, from winter jacket to bicycle, sooner or later, everyone came to the school nurse.

She organized the first school-wide immunizations against polio, then moved to have all immunization provided on specific days within schools in the state. When allergists required all allergy shots be given by nurses

in their offices, Wini reached an agreement allowing her to administer them in school, after hours, or at home.

Wini got the community, then the state, to raise the minimum age for pee-wee football after watching more and more children sustain permanent injuries. When principals were unable to stop a platform shoe fad causing accidents in school stairwells, she got R.I. to legislate against them in schools. As a 36-story senior housing facility was being raised in downtown Providence, she discovered the fire department's largest hook and ladder truck only reached 20 stories. Wini shut down construction.

Gentle, sweet, very funny, full of stories and songs for every occasion, Wini seldom fought with anyone. She simply convinced people whatever she wanted was their idea, then happily gave them credit for it. She reared the four of us the same way. We were known anywhere we went as the school nurse's kids. No title has ever made me prouder.

When she turned 70, her state education department contract required she retire. Suing the State of Rhode Island for age discrimination, she won. The day after the legislature changed the law, she retired with one simple statement: “I didn't want to keep working. I just didn't want anyone to tell me I couldn't.”

Revolutionary Rhythms First Lady of Song

Alyssa Katz



Photo Courtesy of Flickr, any/jazz65

For more than half a century, Ella Fitzgerald was known as the most popular jazz singer of all time. Winning 13 Grammys and selling over 40 million albums, she was dubbed “First Lady of Song.”

Born in 1917, Fitzgerald had a rough start. Her teen years were especially difficult; with the loss of her mother and then stepfather, her grades dropped, she got in trouble with the police, and was sent to a strict disciplinary reform school. Escaping at 15, she found herself broke and alone during the Great Depression. She later reflected on how she appreciated such struggles, because they made her stronger.

In 1934, Fitzgerald was given an opportunity to perform at amateur night at the Apollo Theatre. Too intimidated to dance, as originally planned, she made a last-minute decision to sing. The audience loved it so much they demanded an encore. Oftentimes, offstage,

shy and reserved, even doubting her abilities, when she was onstage, those fears evaporated.

With this kick-start to her singing career, she began entering—and winning—every talent show she could find. Her first album gained moderate success; her song, “(If You Can't Sing it) You Have to Swing it,” released in 1936, gained more attention, as she started experimenting with—and became best known for—scat singing. When “A-Tisket, A-Tasket” was released in 1938, Fitzgerald was officially famous.

Through the 50s and 60s, she worked with many talented artists, appearing on several TV variety shows, including: “The Bing Crosby Show,” “The Dinah Shore Show,” “The Frank Sinatra Show,” “The Ed Sullivan Show,” “The Tonight Show,” “The Nat King Cole Show,” “The Andy Williams Show” and “The Dean Martin Show.” Other greats she worked with included Duke Ellington, Nat King Cole, Dizzy Gillespie, and Benny Goodman.

Still, in segregated America, discrimination remained a challenge for Fitzgerald and her bandmates. Her manager, Norm Granz, demanded equal treatment wherever they played. However, in 1954, after Granz's efforts to integrate one Houston show, police burst into the dressing room, arresting everyone. “[And] they had the nerve to ask for an autograph,” Fitzgerald recalled. Using her popularity to fight for racial equality, she become

a force within the Civil Rights Movement. Fitzgerald was awarded the NAACP Equal Justice Award and the American Black Achievement Award, in addition to other honors celebrating her achievements in jazz and social justice alike. Fitzgerald's fortitude advanced her career; with her talent and the support of allies, she broke racial barriers.

In the 70s, Fitzgerald's health began to fail, she continued performing across the country. In 1974, she spent two weeks in NYC with Count Basie and Frank Sinatra; five years later, she received the Kennedy Center Honors for her continuous contributions to the arts. In 1987, President Reagan awarded Ella Fitzgerald the National Medal of Arts, one of her most cherished moments. Several years later, France bestowed their equivalent, the Commander of Arts and Letters. Yale, Dartmouth, and several other universities awarded Fitzgerald honorary doctorates.

In 1986, Fitzgerald underwent quintuple coronary bypass surgery; doctors said she'd never sing again, but she proved them wrong. After a final Carnegie Hall concert in 1991, her health deteriorated. As diabetes and circulatory problems took a toll, she had both legs amputated below the knee. Never fully recovering from this surgery, she died in 1996.

In 2017, an album, *Ella 100: A Centennial Celebration*, commemorated the 100th anniversary of Fitzgerald's birth. This collection of her most popular works was a fitting salute to her long career. Perhaps the most powerful tribute to this musical icon is the breadth of her appeal—rich, poor, Black, White, young, and old alike—all share one thing: their love for the “First Lady of Music.”

Earth Matters

What Happened to

Winter?



Alyssa Katz

This winter has seen some unusually warm temperatures. In some cases, it's felt more like spring than winter. According to the Weather Channel, much warmer than average temperatures have been recorded from January 1st through February 9th. And, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), over 5,500 daily warmth records have been either tied or broken so far this year—and, as I write this, it's only February. This winter season has been the warmest on record in the U.S.

In January, the weather felt more like April, with temperatures in the 40s, 50s, and even 60s—and in some areas they reached into the 70s or 80s. It is also of note that there were many chirping birds in the area, probably confused on what month it really was. And if some animals woke up from hibernation, that wouldn't surprise me. Punxsutawney Phil has predicted an early spring, but we didn't expect it to be this early!

In regards to the polar vortex—a vast expanse of swirling frigid air that stalls in polar regions—according to meteorologists, it has been very strong. That means it's been tightly locked around the Arctic, and no pockets have opened to expel any cold air to the lower 48 states, bringing the near-zero temperatures we usually experience at this time of year. Due to this, frigid temperatures in the Arctic have been rather extreme. In Greenland, for instance, the thermometer read close to -87°F. Conversely, the Antarctic has seen record high temps—nearly 70°F on February 9th.

Climate change may be to blame, and suspicions have risen over these current warm conditions; the culprit may be something called an Arctic oscillation, which strengthens the jet stream that holds the polar vortex in place. When there is a shift in temperature, the jet stream ripples, and the polar air fills in the gaps, which bring along cold snaps. Think back to last January when we had that massive ice storm that practically froze the Midwest. The polar vortex had been weakened by shifts in temperature, expelling intensely cold air to the Northeast and Midwest.

For snow lovers, this winter has been rather disappointing. Because of above-freezing temperatures, when we received a passing breeze of polar air, it only lasted a couple of days at best; therefore, any snowfalls came with little accumulation—certainly not enough to go sledding. While commuters, I'm sure, have enjoyed the lack of snow, those who enjoy winter recreation miss it. Mid-February finally saw below-freezing temperatures, which means the polar vortex must have weakened a bit, but with spring around the corner, this is likely the only wintry weather we'll get this year.

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.

Readers Respond

Dear Editor,

This letter is in response to Kathleen Chesto's "One Small Act" which was published in the February 1st, 2020 edition of your newspaper. I would like to thank you for bringing this issue to readers' attention. It's surprising to me the number of homeless people who live in Waterbury. This article brought to the reader's attention a way for people to help the homeless without feeling guilt. I often have debated whether or not it is a good idea to give money to homeless people when they approach me when walking out of a store or when passing them at a traffic light. Not only am I concerned at times about my security, but I wonder if I give them cash, what they will do with the money. Thank you, Brian Gibbons for establishing this great organization, and Rick Povilaitis for keeping this organization going. Instead of giving cash, it is a great idea to hand someone in need a gift card or a goody bag to make sure they can use it for a good cause.

~ Sincerely, Tassimon Luken

Dear Editor,

This email is in response to the article "A Continent Ablaze," by Imani Stewart. Reading the article has opened my eyes to what has happened in Australia. I wasn't aware of all the devastation and how horrible things had gotten in Australia and I was much less aware that kangaroos and koalas were at the verge of extinction. When I read "Prime minister Scott Morrison, who rang in the New Year in Hawaii as the continent burned" it made my heart break knowing that the people and

animals in Australia are struggling. The article is pretty informative, although I think the article could've used a bit more information on the animals. such as how many have been rescued, and if they're receiving any kind of treatments. Overall, it's a very well-done article.

~ Sincerely, Natasha G.

Dear Editor,

Regarding Robert Pinto's "News Should Be Free," I totally agree that news should be free because we have the rights to be informed. Also, I have some concerns. First, gathering news is a service that costs a lot of money: to pay journalists, editors and for equipment. It costs a lot of money to investigate, write, and publish the news. Advertisements help pay the costs. Advertising dollars are a key part of keeping news accessible and alive. However, only, some businessmen are paying for all the others. We need to read high-quality content, to support journalism's role in society, and to support publication's mission. Second, if we pay for a printable book, a magazine, a newspaper, or for a service, why should we not pay to get information online? Content will be better by paying for it; journalists will be motivated and supported, and we will be informed, which is even the mission of publication. Third, nowadays, it is very easy to find information online, but it is very easy to copy and duplicate it; however this is not ethical, and people need to respect the copyright. By paying, they can be more responsible in this point.

~ Sincerely, A.H

Killing Animals Is Killing Us

Kamaree Woody

We've heard it many times in science class: Every action has a reaction. So, it wouldn't be surprising to hear the actions we make in terms of what we eat create reactions that ripple through our world in many ways. Ripples made from our food choices have swelled and crashed upon the shores of our entire planet in the form of deforestation, climate change, widespread disease, and countless animals' lives lost. These repercussions stem from what we choose to put on our plates.

Our hunger for meat, cow's milk and eggs has started blazing fires in the Amazon and Australia. These beautiful and diverse places are being slashed and burned to raise cows for consumption. An article published by Yale University stated over 70% of forest destruction is due to cattle farming. Forests are being destroyed, devastating hundreds of species' environments to support a craving for hamburgers.

Animal agriculture is a leading cause of greenhouse gas emissions, releasing more emissions than the entirety of the transportation sector! That means all the buses, trains, planes, boats, and cars combined are still releasing less greenhouse gas than the animal agriculture industry. With animal agriculture producing over 60% of the world's nitrous oxide emissions, switching to a vegan diet would drastically help in the fight against climate change.

Another aspect of animal agriculture too often overlooked is the animals' point of view. Millions of animals are slaughtered every day for food. We often hear marketing terms like "humane," "grass-fed," and "free range", but all these labels make no difference to an animal raised to be killed against its will. There is no way to humanely kill someone; the act of killing goes against the definition of humane,

"to have or show compassion or benevolence." Most people would stand up to animal cruelty if confronted by it, but we're too often complicit through our food choices.

So, how can we help the planet? We've heard advice like "Drive less, bike more," "Recycle," or "Take shorter showers," but there's something else that will make a much larger impact: eating a plant-based or vegan diet. Cutting meat, dairy, and eggs from our diet for only a year, we can save over 100 animals' lives, and save more water than if we stopped showering completely for a month (which would be pretty gross). Like any business, animal agriculture runs by supply and demand; if we lower demand for these products, fewer will be produced.

Going vegan doesn't just affect the health of animals and the world around us either. It also affects our internal health as well. Eating a plant-based diet reduces risk for chronic diseases like cancer, diabetes, and heart disease. Eating plants helps our bodies thrive. Changing a diet can be hard and stressful, but there are resources to help.

Visit challenge22.com or the PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals) website to sign up for free help finding vegan recipes, planning a plant-based budget, and ensuring you're meeting all nutritional requirements. There are also many different alternatives to animal-based foods we're used to. From Beyond Burgers to vegan scrambled eggs and sausages, we don't have to give up flavors we love. We just have to find new ways to enjoy them while helping our bodies, the planet, and the animals being used every day for our consumption. So, take a stand; vote with your forks for a healthier planet! Protest with your plate and try vegan today!

Thank You All

I'd like to thank the Foundation...

Kathleen Chesto

Many of you have been busy filling out applications for the myriad scholarships offered to NVCC students. Now you are waiting hopefully for results, but have you given any thought to where all that money comes from? Oh, the donating agency or corporation is listed at the top of the scholarship, but who originally piqued their concern, encouraging them to invest in your ongoing education? Who convinced them that Naugatuck Valley graduates are a good investment in the future of our community?

This is the work of the NVCC Foundation; as a non-profit organization, separate from the College, the Foundation allows donations to be tax deductible. The members of the board of this foundation are all volunteers, most of whom you may never meet. Some are former graduates, hoping to give back to their school; some are retired professionals and business people. All share the concern for our graduates and the future of the community.

Under the able direction of Angela Chapman, Associate Dean of the Development Office, and her assistant, Elizabeth Catuccio, the Foundation dedicates time, energy, and personal funds to seek out new donors. The Leadership Breakfast, sponsored and run by the Foundation in the spring, raises money for other needs, such as NVCC Student Jobs on Campus (SJOC), the Student Emergency Fund, and the NVCC Food Pantry. The Breakfast is a time for introducing corporations and influential members of the community to the important work of the College.

We want to thank the hardworking, generous members of the Foundation for their involvement in supporting our college and our futures. Board members are also working to stay informed about the changes facing the community college system, so they might more effectively add their voices to the discussion. To Martha Bernstein, the chairperson, and to all the Foundation members, we offer our sincere and heartfelt gratitude.

Award-worthy

Rick Bellagamba

The World War I movie, *1917*, won three awards—for Best Cinematography, Sound Mixing, and Visual Effects—at the 2020 Oscars, February 9th. As the recipients thanked this person and that person, I found myself thinking, *What about the men who fought that war?* Of the 6 million British troops mobilized, 700,000 were killed. American losses in WWI were 116,516 deaths and approximately 320,000 sick and wounded of the 4.7 million men who served. They get no credit? I'm a little outraged that not one of the winners even mentioned the brave soldiers who fought that God-awful war!

When the movie business recreates what I would call tragedies, such as the portrayal of WWII in *Saving Private Ryan*, we need to remember that's not fiction. Sure, the recreation of the Invasion of Normandy was an incredible piece of cinema; the producers, the director, the actors, the cinematographers—everyone involved—should get the credit they deserve. However, the actual warriors who sacrificed their lives are also worthy of mention.

At a memorial in Bedford, Virginia, 4,414 names are enshrined on bronze plaques. They represent every Allied soldier, sailor, airman and coast guardsman killed on D Day. That is fact, not fiction. So, when Hollywood tells one of these stories, however fictionalized, why don't the men who fought and died get credit during awards season? Would it hurt to say, "Let's have thirty seconds of silence to reflect on them?" That's my opinion.

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Rules for Survival

Cait R.

If you're going out, make sure you always have a friend with you. Make sure to keep one headphone out of your ear when walking alone. Before you get into your car, check the backseat, and when you get in, lock the door immediately. Keep your keys between your fingers to use as a weapon. Don't meet a stranger without letting someone know where you're going. If someone grabs you from behind, throw your head back with all your might. If attacked, shout "Fire!" not "Rape!"

As long as you're a good girl and follow these rules, nothing bad will ever happen. Most importantly, if you ever are attacked, remember: it's not the attacker's fault; it's yours. You obviously weren't following the rules. If you were, it had to be what were you wearing that provoked the attack.

If these rules sound familiar to you, you should consider why. Who taught you these rules? Who taught you to blame yourself for the actions of others? I know who taught me these rules; it was everyone I've ever encountered. But maybe it's you who continue to perpetuate these rules.

It was my friend who told me my shorts were too short, and that I was asking to be raped. It was my stepdad who told me that if I didn't wear shorts it would be my fault if some boy put his hand up my dress. It was the strange man on a stoop calling out to me and becoming aggressive because I wouldn't respond. Each encounter has been different from the last, but has taught me the same lesson over and over again: that society would rather create rules and victim blame than teach people not to rape and to respect boundaries. We seem much more comfortable excusing wrongdoing rather than acknowledging it.

At the end of the day, even with all these rules, I still managed to be sexually assaulted. I never wore two headphones, and I didn't go out alone at night. I was a "good girl," but that didn't stop someone from violating my boundaries. These "rules" didn't stop someone from putting me in an uncomfortable situation. And if you just ask around, you'll find a thousand stories just like mine. You'll hear stories of women and girls following rules and still being assaulted or harassed.

These rules don't work. There's a greater issue with our culture and how we treat people. We find it easier to ignore the issue than to have a real conversation about why we put these rules into place. We never question the intentions of a rapist; we find reasons to excuse the behavior. I'm aware a whole culture can't change overnight, but we can start a conversation and ask why. We can catch ourselves when we start to place these rules on women instead of acknowledging the real issue lies elsewhere.

Transfer Anxiety

Tabitha Cruz



As March approaches, I feel a new kind of anxiety I've never experienced, transfer anxiety. As someone who went from high school straight to community college, the college application process is something I've never experienced. I have so many questions about essays, and grades, and letters of recommendations, that I feel so overwhelmed.

Unlike in high school, transferring in college is much more independent. There's no school counselor breathing down my neck, asking why I haven't requested letters of recommendation yet. In college, we're sort of just expected to know how to apply to college, even if it's our first time. The whole experience can be so intimidating you might not even want to do it. And if I'm being honest, I kind of feel that way right now. I feel so overwhelmed with the process I'm beginning to question if it's worth it. Sure, if I want to get a bachelors, it's important to apply somewhere else, but maybe I want to take a break. I'm constantly making pros and cons lists, just to figure out where to apply. And what about scholarships? Those are a thing, too! Every time I complete one aspect of this process, I'm surprised with another. The whole transfer process is super scary, and I don't even know what to expect.

I've also been feeling like I'm not ready to leave NVCC just yet. I've worked so hard to get where I am, and I've made so many friends, that the thought of leaving is scary. However, I do know it's time for me to leave—even if I love this community. We all have to leave the nest eventually, no matter how terrifying that thought may be. And while that is something we have to do on our own, that doesn't mean we have to go without help and support.

If you want to know about a specific college, visit their website. Then call them, email them, and visit in person, if possible. Talk to your friends who are also transferring and get their advice. Sometimes it's just nice to know that someone else is going through what you are. You can also talk to a professor or counselor (CAPSS and the CJPCO are great resources) and have them look over your application and essay.

Though it may feel like you're completely alone, you're not. There's always someone who gets what you're going through. So, take this article as a sign that you should complete the transfer process, no matter how scary. Now go finish your essay!

the still quiet morning. Confronted on every side by people sleeping on benches, huddled in doorways of nearby brownstones, I began feeling some of her anguish. But when she shared how she often cut through this space alone, after the library closed at 2:00 AM, any concern for the city's inhabitants was overwhelmed by concern for my naive, 17-year-old.

Worrying silently as she chattered, I followed wordlessly. Stepping over a man asleep in a doorway, we entered a coffee shop. Liz informed me she always stopped here on her way to class. This was quickly confirmed by several wait staff calling, "Hi, Liz!" as they rushed by. Once seated, a waitress approached and asked, "The usual?" Liz replied, "Yes, and one for my Mom." With a quick "Hi Mom," the waitress was off.

In less time than it would take to get a menu in Southbury, the waitress returned with two hot chocolates. I sipped and stewed. My daughter had found a home in this city. I couldn't bear to disrupt her new sense of security, unrealistic as it might be.

Approaching the counter, Liz announced it was on her. Ringing the sale, the cashier

F*ck Virginity

Audrey Winters

Virginity has been a sought-after trait in women for thousands of years. Often, in noble households, it was to ensure the firstborn was a legitimate heir, and not the offspring of another man. While there have been many other justifications for it as well, that's the only one that actually makes any sense to me. Of course, it doesn't make sense in today's world, when we have paternity tests, adoption, and blended families. So, why do we still care?

Truth be told, not everyone does. But some people do still insist virginity is vital, whether it be for religious reasons, or simply because they want to save themselves for their special someone. Depending on how you view it, it could be either very liberating for a woman to choose what happens to her body and not give in to today's trends. Or, it could be considered misogynistic for a woman to be pressured to keep herself "pure" for a man, another example of treating a woman's body as an object. I understand some people want sex to be special, but with today's serial monogamy and casual sex, there really isn't much point. And what of men and women who do not have a choice in the matter?

A virgin is generally defined as someone who hasn't had sex yet; unfortunately, it gets more complicated when trying to define what is or isn't sex. Both my former friend and my current partner said for someone to "lose their virginity" there must be vaginal penetration. When I asked, "But what about homosexual couples? Does that mean same-sex intercourse doesn't count?" the counter-argument was, "Of course, it counts, but we're not homosexuals." So different rules apply depending on one's sexual orientation? That's absolutely ridiculous!

I was denied sex by my first two partners because I was a "virgin." They didn't want to "taint me." This was annoying to say the least. The problem is that my first encounter with sex was non-consensual. I was told that didn't count, but I felt like it did. At the age of seven, I was exposed to this whole new world. I hit puberty when I was nine, and I started having sexual thoughts earlier than my friends. It's kind of odd to think about now, because I act like such a prude. I suppose after years of trying to hide my thoughts, it became a habit.

I honestly didn't know what I was. Was I a virgin? Was I dirty, since that man took away my choice? Years of uncertainty and self-blame tortured me. I was in this purgatory, too dirty to be a virgin, too inexperienced to be anything else. I've had girls tell me how they were waiting, and others talked about their first time. Those were both categories I didn't fit. After my official first time, I didn't feel any different physically; I did feel relief at knowing. Still, I question the value of this label.

said, "Sorry, Liz, only enough change for one today." She replied, "Make it black." I was bewildered. We'd just had hot chocolate; Liz didn't drink coffee. But this was obviously a daily routine, well known to the staff. I said nothing, waiting for the mystery to reveal itself, as we left.

Leaving, we stepped over the same gentleman, but this time, my daughter reached down. Speaking his name gently, she said, "Here's your coffee. Just the way you like it."

They shared a warm smile before Liz began jauntily down the street. I stood slightly stunned, looking at the man. I don't know what he saw on my face: Confusion, concern, judgment, or just family resemblance? Shaking his finger, he said, "You got a good girl, Mum. We watchin' out for her on these streets."

I turned away before he could see my tears, and caught up with my daughter. "What was that about?" When she asked, "What?" I looked back at the man outside the coffee shop.

"Oh that. Remember what you said when I was so upset about the homeless when I first came to the city?" I'd said a lot. Which particular thing? "You told me I couldn't do everything. Just do one thing, and do it faithfully. I do coffee."

What is your one thing? No matter how small, do it faithfully.

That's What She Said



Jessica Ney

#EachforEqual

Women's History Month is a time for reflection, celebration and action. It is a time for women (and all people) to take a step back and recognize the great achievements women have made throughout the years and continue to make.

The theme for the International Women's Day (March 8th) campaign this year is #EachforEqual, and it focuses on how, as a collective, we all work for equality. It isn't enough to just celebrate all the things we've accomplished. What is the point of a few women getting into bigger arenas and being recognized for their work, if we can't all accomplish that?

Women running for—and serving in—office should no longer be a big deal. Women directors should be acclaimed in the same sentences as men, and women running companies should be respected in the same way as their male counterparts. The most important takeaway of this campaign is that, until all of us are equal, none of us will truly be.

Women's History Month may be a celebration of women and the hurdles we have mounted, but there is still so much work to be done. Women of color, minority groups, and LBQTQ+ people are part of our collective. Until we all can move forward, our work doesn't matter.

Women have the ability to elicit change. Our voices grow stronger each year, and if we can come together in a focused order, we can make a real impact. Equal representation is more than equal pay; it is equal opportunity. All people should have the chances to follow the dreams and aspirations they have. Because this is not yet true, we must continue to raise those voices for one another, for those too often overlooked or silenced.

This March, take time to celebrate the good that you have brought into the world, recognize the progress you've made, but remember to also uplift the people around you. Consider the #EachforEqual mantra. What are you doing to bridge the gap between men and women and to support marginalized communities including minority groups?

Some suggestions: Contact your state representatives to share your concerns around women's issues (which are really human issues). Read books with points of view different than your own. Educate yourself on topics you aren't familiar with, and be an ally to those who need it. This means really recognizing people's needs, not assuming you know.

The world can't change if we don't involve ourselves. In the words of famous feminist Gloria Steinem, "The story of women's struggle for equality belongs to no single feminist nor to any one organization, but to the collective efforts of all who care about human rights."

Everything feminists do today is because of the people who came before us. From the first meeting of the National Organization of Women, to the suffragettes, to the Black Panthers forward. Today's missions are inspired by the vitality of the women who came before us. What an honor it is to join their continuum, to take our place in history.

One Thing, Faithfully

Kathleen Chesto

When my youngest began college at New York University's Tisch School of the Fine Arts, the city—its people, noise, perpetual activity—was a thing of wonder to Liz's rural/suburban soul. But the large homeless population in and around Washington Square were a profound shock she had difficulty reconciling with her privileged state.

There were long, tearful conversations, cautions about giving away cash randomly or making herself vulnerable. I tried to impart wisdom without sounding preachy. At some point, she appeared to adjust to her new reality, and I breathed a sigh of relief.

One Sunday, she called before 6:00 AM, more distraught than I'd heard her in weeks. "Mom, I'm having a terribly lonely day." I didn't share my first thought: *How can you be having a lonely day when it is barely daylight?* I promised to hop on a bus.

We met at the subway station; Liz was delighted to show me "her city." Following her daily path to various buildings where she had classes, we crossed Washington Square in

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Queer Code LGBT+ Resources

Alexander Wilson



Over the past year-and-a-half, I've shared a lot about LGBT+ experiences, some things that are going great for the community, and some that could still use some work. Maybe this has opened your eyes to your own identity, or maybe you've realized you can be a much better ally. This may have you asking, "Now what?"

There are so many different organizations dedicated to helping the LGBT+ community. Some you may have heard of are GLAAD, the Trevor Project, and the Human Rights Campaign. These national resources can definitely be useful, but maybe you want something more local.

True Colors, an organization based in Hartford, works with social services, schools, and other community organizations to train professionals to help LGBT+ youth, ensuring they have the resources they need. They offer CT's only LGBT+ community mentoring

program and also hold the largest annual conference for LGBT youth in the country, hosting on average 3,000 attendees. Their website (ourtruecolors.org) has links to a variety of resources, from scholarships to a Bridgeport café. If you need to find anything LGBT+-related in CT, they've got it. They're also open to taking personal stories from LGBT+ people as well as suggestions for additional resources, if you know of any they may not offer.

The Triangle Community Center in Norwalk offers a range of programs for LGBT+ young adults, including peer support groups, clinical services, and LGBT+-friendly versions of Alcoholics or Narcotics Anonymous. They even offer a summer day camp in July. There are all sorts of other events, like Nerd Night, a weekly D&D session, a bimonthly coffee social, and a GAYme night. It's got a good mix of fun events and clinical help if you need it. Their website (ctpridecenter.org) has a full events calendar and links for events requiring registration. They can also connect you to outside resources.

The New Haven Pride Center offers similar programs to TCC, but is a little closer to home for those in Waterbury. It also publishes a bimonthly magazine, *Centerline*, that's featured articles about LGBT+ issues, including positive pieces like this month's article about CT now offering a non-binary gender

option on licenses and state IDs. It's available for download at newhavenpridecenter.org, or you can pick up a copy at LGBT+ community centers statewide.

If you aren't the only one in need of resources, but your family is, there's also PFLAG, the Parent and Friends of Lesbians and Gays, INC. The Hartford chapter is one of over 400 nationwide. Meetings for youth and parents to attend together in both Hartford and Manchester, often feature a speaker from the community and generally have between 50 and 70 attendees. This means parents and kids alike can find someone their own age for help and support. They also have a long list of queer literature available for electronic lending, as well as their own bimonthly newsletter.

There are so many more resources in Connecticut. As stated above, each website has a list of other resources including links and brief descriptions, as well as a wide variety of their own resources. Here at NVCC, we have Pride Alliance, offering meetings and raising funds through bake sales and other events. Just remember, you're never alone. There's always someone else out there who has similar experiences. It's always a good time to make friends who can relate.

Lovingly,

The Ever-Growing Compendium of Queer Knowledge and Resources, Alexander

Veteran's Voice Black Military History

Rick Bellagamba



As a retired Army Veteran, Black History Month got me thinking. Although February's over, I thought I'd share some facts about our proud Black military

heritage. Americans can be a racist bunch of arrogant Euro-centrics, but I'm proud to have served alongside people of all races.

African American military service spans from the arrival of the first enslaved Africans during colonial times to today. As enslaved people, and as free men, Blacks served during the Revolutionary War. Recent research concludes around 9,000 Black Patriot Soldiers served in the Continental Army and Navy, and state militias. Many more served as Army wagoners, servants to officers, and as spies.

In every war fought by or within the U.S., African Americans participated, including the War of 1812, the Mexican American War, the Civil War, the Spanish American War, the two World Wars, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, the Gulf War, and in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Black U.S. military pilots, trained at Tuskegee Army Air Field, in Tuskegee, AL, were deployed to Italy in early 1944. Before the Tuskegee Airmen, no African American was a U.S. pilot to see battle. However, the Tuskegee Airmen received a publicity boost when First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt flew with an African American. When pilots of the 332nd Fighter Group, an all-Black unit, entered battle, escorting heavy bombers, they earned an impressive combat record. Though the heroic Tuskegee Airmen are hailed as the first African American U.S. military aviators, during WWII, Black Americans in many states were still subject to Jim Crow laws. We should feel shame that these heroes, of whom we're proud, defended a nation that denied them equality.

In 1944, the Golden Thirteen became the Navy's first African American commissioned officers. Samuel Gravelly Jr. became a commissioned officer that same year; he would later be the first African American U.S. warship commander, and first admiral. Many of these contributions by Blacks in the military have been forgotten, along with the high cost paid by our Black brothers and sisters in arms. For example, in California, on July 17, 1944, an explosion of several tons of ammunition being loaded onto ships—by Black sailors, under pressure of white officers to hurry—killed 320, mostly Black military workers, unsung heroes.

In 1989, President George W. Bush appointed Army General Colin Powell as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, making him the highest-ranking U.S. military officer. The Chairman serves as chief military adviser to the President and Secretary of Defense. During his tenure, Powell oversaw the 1989 U.S. invasion of Panama to oust Gen. Manuel Noriega and the 1990-1991 Gulf War. The first African American to hold the position, Powell is a great man. The current Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps, Ronald L. Green, is also African American. His predecessor, Carlton Kent, was also African-American, as were the two men before him.

As we hail 44th U.S. President, Barack Obama, as the first African American leader of our nation, let's not forget he was also the first Black military Commander-in-Chief. Despite these recent appointments, and the high enlistment rate in the U.S. Army, African Americans historically were treated unequally. At parades, in transportation and canteens, the races were kept separate. Even as they served their country, Black troops experienced segregation.

While our past is stained by slavery and segregation, we should celebrate all who've served this country. Our flag is just three colors, but heroes come in every shade.

Rick Bellagamba (US Army, 1971 - 1974)

INSPIRING WOMEN

My Inspirations Tabitha Cruz

Karen Blake is an incredibly hardworking person, always ready for a challenge and constantly thinking on her feet. People are always wondering how she does it all, from planning parties to being Director of Student Activities. She isn't afraid to tell people what she thinks or to stand up for others. Karen is a great listener and is incredibly caring, always leaving her door open for students. As an advisor she's

always making sure we're doing okay—in life and in classes. She encourages us to talk to her when something is bothering us, but will occasionally give us that tough love when we need it.

Kathleen Chesto is one of the kindest, most understanding people I know. She constantly fights for what she believes in and is always standing up for others. When I first met Kathleen, it was my first time in a group and I

was incredibly nervous. When I walked in, she welcomed me with open arms and offered to help me get adjusted within the group. When we met again a week later, she had gone out of her way to print out material I needed for the group. And that's just who Kathleen is. She goes above and beyond for everyone in her life no matter who they are—even if she's just met them.

Ask Nicole A Little Advice

Dear Readers:

Can you believe we're already halfway through the semester? To those who are graduating this semester, you're almost there! It's about 12 weeks (give or take a few days) until we—Yes, I'm graduating, too—will be marching down to that famous graduation song. It will be a time to reflect on the moments you've had here at NVCC. To those who still have more time at NVCC, that's okay. Enjoy the journey, wherever it may take you.

College offers time to make memories, and you never know who you may meet along the way. At my first college down in Norwalk, I made many friends I kept in touch with, even when I went off to WCSU. It's always nice to keep in touch with those you meet. You never know when you may need that friend to talk to.

Sometimes, college seems like the most

challenging time of life, but it is definitely worth it.

I'd have to say, for me, this semester seems to be the most exciting of all. Just recently, I was invited to join two honors societies—Lambda Epsilon Chi (LEX, Legal Honors Society) and Alpha Beta Gamma (ABG, International Business Honors Society).

My point is this: work hard and it will pay off. You may just get that email recognizing you've done well and should be rewarded for it.

Another piece of advice: Don't forget to apply for scholarships! They offer an important educational opportunity; for some, scholarships make the biggest difference in our academic careers. There are so many to apply to, based on a range of criteria, including specific majors. Don't hesitate to apply; just try, because you never know. You may get one.

If you're a lucky scholarship recipient, NVCC hosts Honors Night when your achievement will be publicly acknowledged. How cool would it be to be called up on stage to receive your award?

I leave you with this saying from one of my favorite movies, *Legally Blonde*: "On my very first day at Harvard, a very wise professor quoted Aristotle, 'The law is reason-free from passion!' Well, no offense to Aristotle, but in my three years at Harvard, I have come to find passion is the key ingredient to the study and practice of law, and of life." I'll add this: In my three years at NVCC, I've come to agree passion is the key ingredient to the study and practice of law, and of life. I will never forget all my professors have taught me, and the professors who've challenged me in my legal courses.

One key point: When a professor challenges you, take the challenge and show them you can rise up to meet their expectations. They're doing it, because they want you to succeed, not only in their class, but also in life.

I'm here as your classmate with advice on any questions or concerns you may have, so don't forget to email me: dearnicole@comcast.net.

Nicole Zappone

Middle School Behavior

Names Withheld by Request

During fall 2019, two student organizations indulged in the very shameful practice of "shunning" a club member. In both cases, other group members publicly avoided a student, in such a manner that many outside the group became aware and questioned the behavior, but felt helpless to address it.

In both cases, members refused to greet the student in the halls or talk with them. One student's name was electronically deleted from the Yahoo chat site containing all group communications, and incoming emails were barred from being received by the group. This effectively "excommunicated" that student from all activities of the group.

Shunning can be hard to prove, but it is not hard to observe. We all know what it looks like. Many of us have probably avoided someone at some point, simply by pretending we didn't see them, looking at our phones, or turning away. However, doing this consistently to one student

over a period of time is shunning, particularly when initiated by a specific group. Many students of both organizations spoke openly about it and against the two shunned students.

This behavior is reprehensible, reminiscent of bullies in middle school and unworthiness of adults. It is also in direct violation of our student government constitution requiring all student clubs and associations be open to all students. We all pay the same student activities fee, the money that supports club activities. It belongs to us all.

We're appealing to SGA leaders to keep eyes and ears open for aberrant behavior among organizations. Our hope is that students who feel they're being abused or victimized by their clubs will appeal to the SGA. These groups should be investigated and action taken against them; we recommend club funds be frozen if anyone is being excluded. The elected officers of such clubs are failing in their responsibility to our constitution, requiring us to make

all members welcome, and we feel their leadership needs to be questioned, if not revoked.

In preparing this article, we spoke with some students from each group that had engaged in shunning. We encountered both shame and sorrow, but, greater than either, was the fear of losing one's friends, losing the favor of an advisor, or both.

One shunned student made a very public, very beautiful statement at the end of last semester against the hurtful actions of that club. One of our strongest contributors, a good, involved student, this person's experience being shunned left a mark. We suspect December graduation will be the end of this person's involvement with NVCC. We grieve this loss—but remain in awe of the courage needed for such a soul-baring disclosure.

Most of us do not have that kind of strength. But bullies maintain their power because people are afraid to speak up against them. Too many of us have been silent for too long. We encourage you to speak up. And to those among us who still find joy in uniting, like middle-schoolers, against a common victim, we say, GROW UP.