

The Tamarack

Our college. Our news. Our voice.

Naugatuck Valley Community College

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Invisible Illness

Bethany Dvilinskas

It's Diabetes Awareness Month, with November 14th designated World Diabetes Day. This is a time when diabetics are encouraged to wear blue and to be open about the struggles they face every day battling the disease. The goal is to spread awareness and educate others on the reality of living with this

Type 1 Diabetes is an autoimmune disease affecting the pancreas... living with T1D is difficult.

chronic condition. Diabetes is known as an invisible disease because no one can actually see its symptoms, unless they are taught to recognize them.

There are three different types of diabetes, Type 1, Type 2, and Gestational. The main one is Type 1 Diabetes, also known as T1D. Type 1 Diabetes is an autoimmune disease affecting the pancreas, which produces insulin, a hormone that regulates blood sugar and turns sugar into energy. Currently, Type 1 Diabetes affects 1.25 million Americans.

Living with T1D is difficult; I know because I have it. Maintaining my health means checking my blood sugar seven to ten times a day. I give myself insulin using my insulin pump, which is connected to me 24/7, and I feel the effects of highs and lows quickly.

The symptoms of low blood sugar, hypoglycemia, mimic the symptoms of alcohol intoxication. I feel dizzy and shaky; my speech gets slurred, and all I want to do is sleep—which I can't. Low blood sugar can get dangerous. I worry because of the potential of a seizure. I usually take a glucose tab, a juice box, and string cheese to help regulate my sugar level once it goes back into normal range.

From my perspective, high blood sugar, hyperglycemia, is easier to manage. I do this by giving myself insulin and drinking about a gallon of water to flush out the ketones in my system. Ketones are acids that build up when the body burns its own fat for energy. This is caused by a lack of insulin, which also causes high blood sugar. Because the body cannot get energy from glucose in the blood, it will instead burn fat. If the levels of ketones get higher and the condition is left untreated, it leads to a potentially deadly condition called diabetic ketoacidosis.

I didn't get diabetes from eating too much sugar, which is, in fact, not a main cause of the disease. Diabetes is a genetic disease which can be caused by environmental triggers. I actually got diabetes from a virus—Lyme disease to be exact—which is one of those triggers. People of any age, size, gender, or ethnicity can get diabetes. It doesn't affect just one kind of person.

I've spoken in front of Congress about diabetes to call for more extensive research. I explained how the disease impacts my life and my hope for more discussion and awareness about diabetes. Although scientists claim they may have found an alternative way to help manage the illness, there is still no cure. So the hard work of raising awareness isn't finished, at least not yet. I hope you'll join me this month.

In Memoriam

Trevor Lilly



Lost in Vegas. Pictured: 54 of the 58 Las Vegas shooting victims. Names listed alphabetically.

Hannah Ahlers, Dorene Anderson, Heather Warino Alvarado, Carrie Barnette, Jack Beaton, Steve Berger, Candice Bowers, Denise Salmon Burditus, Sandy Casey, Andrea Castilla, Denise Cohen, Austin Davis, Thomas Day Jr., Christiana Duarte, Stacey Etcheber, Brian Fraser, Keri Galvan, Dana Gardner, Angela Gomez, Rocio Guillen, Charleston Hartfield, Chris Hazencomb, Jennifer Irvine, Nicol Kimura, Jessica Klymchuk, Carly Kreibaum, Rhonda LeRocque, Victor Link, Jordan McIlldoon, Kelsey Meadows, Calla Medig, Sonny Melton, Patricia Mestas, Austin Meyer, Adrian Murfitt, Rachael Parker, Jenny Parks, Carrie Parsons, Lisa Patterson, John Phippen, Melissa Ramirez, Jordyn Rivera, Quinton Robbins, Cameron Robinson, Lisa Romero-Muniz, Christopher Roybal, Brett Schwanbeck, Bailey Schweitzer, Laura Shipp, Erick Silva, Susan Smith, Tara Smith, Brennan Stewart, Derrick Bo Taylor, Neysa Tonks, Michelle Vo, Kurt Von Tillow, Bill Wolfe.

I would like to start by extending my sincerest regards to all those lost, injured, or otherwise affected by the mass shooting in Las Vegas on October 1st. I wish everyone a speedy recovery and can only hope this is the last time I will be writing an article on this particular subject.

To recap the events of the evening, a gunman booked a room at Mandalay Bay Casino Resort overlooking a country music concert being held on the premises. He brought with him a duffle bag filled with 23 firearms, 12 of which were modified to act as assault rifles, and thousands of rounds of ammunition.

The sniper set up cameras around his room, presumably to watch for anyone approaching, and began unloading his rounds into the unsuspecting crowd below, killing 59 and injuring another 546. It is, to date, the deadliest mass shooting in modern US history.

Now, this article could make a strong case for the need for stricter gun control regulations, as the modifications he made to those 12 of his 23 firearms were legal under current law. I could also address the fact that hardly anyone is referring to this as an act of terrorism,

simply because the shooter was not Muslim, but instead a white, US-born man.

However, instead of taking a political stance, I would rather focus on the people lost, which is why I included the names and photos above. You may notice one name is missing, above and in the article: that of the shooter. This was no accident. Everyone knows his name and what he looks like, as he has been all over the news since his murder spree.

While there is no clear motive, a few things are certain. The shooter had planned meticulously. He picked that specific hotel room on that specific night because it overlooked the entire venue of the concert below. He knew there would be a large gathering of people there who would be barricaded in with no easy escape. He brought with him 23 firearms and thousands of rounds of ammunition.

While it has not been explicitly proven, all this suggests his motive was simply to become famous for this atrocity. He wouldn't be the first; there have been dozens of "copycat killers" who craved the infamy that goes along with a mass shooting. Sadly, the media gives them exactly what they want every time.

So, I have not listed his name among

the dead—nor anywhere in this article. Hopefully, more people will follow this path. Wouldn't it be nice if we could eventually rid society altogether of the temptation to achieve notoriety by carrying out a mass shooting? I believe it's possible.

While many were injured and murdered that night, it could have been far worse. Being a country concert, many ex-military fans were in attendance. While everyone naturally ran to escape the gunshots, several of these brave individuals—with war zone experience—raced toward them, to aid as many injured victims as they could.

One man found the keys inside a truck and commandeered it to transport the wounded to the hospital, making two full trips before ambulances arrived. Eventually able to return the truck to its owner, he started a GoFundMe campaign to clean the truck bed of the victims' blood.

This is just one example of the heroism, the innate goodness witnessed mid-massacre. As we mourn the loss of life, and take steps to ensure this remains the worst mass shooting in U.S. history, a focus on the uplifting aspects of human nature seems essential.

NVCC REMEMBERS

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK



Something Greater

Here at NVCC, each week may seem like a perpetual, never-ending, monotonous cycle, the same scheduled classes each of us agreed to pay for, whether with state aid (which might be going away) or from our own pockets. It was not long ago all of us came from the back end of summer's radiant, rainbow-colored sunshine with joy and tenacity to start this semester.

As we gratefully wave goodbye to mid-terms, we are halfway through the semester! You wouldn't raise an eyebrow, or perhaps you would, to hear a fellow colleague utter these words from *Game of Thrones*: "Winter is coming." Ah yes, the days draw quicker to sunless afternoons, and gloom is swift to make each of us contemplate leaving classes early, or worse, not even being present at all.

The truth is, the seasons do impact our emotions and intent, but that should not discourage any of us from finishing what we've started. Sometimes it takes a motivational speech on YouTube to get us out of bed; other times we require nourishment of our friends and professors to keep us going. These are great and extremely beneficial, but to those who are doubting their ability to perform at maximum capability and would rather choose to mosey on till the finish line, I ask, "Why did you start this?" Go back to that exact feeling of resolve in your heart. It will spur your continued progress forward.

Another important issue: the atmosphere of the cafeteria has become more hostile for many reasons. Students complain about losing belongings including books and keys. Take heed to keep things close as you roam from one spot to another. Remember, the pool and ping-pong tables are for recreational use—not lounging—and should be treated as if they were paid for from your own pocket (in fact they were).

Finally, I want to acknowledge all the professors and students who shared their work—some focused on personal trials and tribulations—at Confluencia, October 12th. No one required you to revisit those dark times, but you, with unselfish wisdom, chose to do so. For that reason, you've reminded us how much we have within ourselves to sacrifice in order to become something greater. You showed us life takes discipline, heart, bravery, and the ability to be resilient in the face of adversity.

We all hope to live up to the standard defined by the level of excellence set by academia. But we also acknowledge, because of your generosity and courage, the way personal struggle grows a beautiful character.

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

An Esteemed Visitor

Christopher Gordon



Photo Courtesy of OCM

On September 27th Diputado Nacional (National Congressman) Fidelio Despradel of Dominican Republic and his wife visited the NVCC campus. Despradel's unwavering commitment to fighting for the rights of the poor and oppressed in the Dominican have earned him a place as a senior statesman and a hero there. Beginning with the Revolution and the War of April 1965, he has fought tirelessly for the construction of a modern Dominican Republic, founded on the principles of tolerance and the belief in the basic human rights of the individual.

Despradel was presented with honors by NVCC President Daisy Cocco De Filippis and the City of Waterbury. In addition, he gave a presentation in both Spanish and English for faculty and students, focused on the importance of justice and honorable service to the community. Despradel finished with this message for the next generation of social reformers: "You should participate in the best course for humanity." Pictured with Despradel and his wife, at center, are Mitch Holmes (l), Tracy Mahar (r), and several first-year WAVE students who were in attendance.

Awesome Academics

Christopher Gordon



Hi, everybody! On behalf of Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) Honors Society, I'd like to share some information about the organization. If you work hard in classes, guess what...PTK is one of your rewards! PTK is more than a simple reward, though; it's your opportunity to honor and improve your leadership skills by organizing events on campus—and beyond. Working with fellow honorees to help students at NVCC increase their GPA while having fun is at the heart of everything we do. This is the foundation PTK was built on: Scholarship, Leadership, Fellowship, and Service.

Come check out our bulletin board in the fifth-floor walkway between the CJPCO and the ACE, or contact advisors, Prof. J. Greg Harding, jharding@nv.edu or Prof. Lisa Kaufman, EKaufman@nv.edu. PTK is also one of the best opportunities to move ahead you could find. While it's not just about money, we do acknowledge the cost of education. Many scholarships available only to PTK members are waiting, ranging from \$1,500 to \$30,000. Don't miss out on the chance to earn that knowledge that will move the world one day. Nothing is out of reach with Phi Theta Kappa; we have your back. Dr. Lynn Tincher-Ladner, President and CEO, stands behind every member, stating, "Our mission begins at Recognition, but unlike other honor societies, it does not end there."

Our current Communications Officer had this to say: "It's a great atmosphere; the events contribute to school and community in general. I think we fill a vital role in academic life. PTK really gives people a leg up while promoting intellectual goals." I've been involved in many events organized by our PTK chapter, Alpha Theta Epsilon (ATE). They're usually as fun as they are educational. When you're with good people, academics is awesome.

To Respect and Honor

Matthew Steinerman, President, NVCC Veterans' Club

"I, _____, do solemnly swear that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; and that I will obey the orders of the President of the United States and the orders of the officers appointed over me, according to regulations and the Uniform Code of Military Justice. So help me God."

America's fighting forces have formally and informally taken an oath of enlistment for over 250 years. It is equivalent to a blank check payable to the United States of America for an amount up to, and including, one's life. From the American Revolution to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, the U.S. military has been working around the clock to serve and defend this great nation.

Veterans' day is celebrated annually to unitedly respect and honor all military veterans, who have preserved all freedoms granted to this country. It is commemorated on November 11th to mark the anniversary of the official end of World War I, when the armistice with Germany was implemented on the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month. Originally labeled Armistice Day and made a legal holiday in 1938, it was meant to be "a day to be dedicated to the cause of world peace" and to honor those who lost their lives in WWI. It was soon after expanded by Congress in 1954 to honor all veterans, and since then has been known as Veterans' Day.

Though there are other U.S. military-related holidays, such as Memorial Day and Armed Forces Day, Veterans' Day is not to be confused with these. Memorial Day is a public holiday celebrated in May to commend the unfortunate men and women who died during their service, while Armed Forces Day is a minor holiday to appreciate those currently serving today. Veterans' Day is a celebration to admire America's veterans for their patriotism, loyalty to country, and willingness to serve and sacrifice for the common good.

Naugatuck Valley Community College will be hosting a Veterans' Day ceremony on campus on Thursday, November 9th at 11:00 AM at the Poets' Circle flag poles. Students are encouraged to come show support for Veterans past and present.

SGA PRESIDENT



Be Thankful

Here we are in the month of gratitude. As part of the NVCC community, I have plenty of reasons to be thankful, especially for those who help us here in the SGA. We are very grateful and fortunate to have made such amazing friends.

Speaking of thanks, Veterans Day is Saturday, November 11th. For all those who have sacrificed their lives for this country, I extend huge gratitude. I know I speak for all of us when I salute every one of them. And in the spirit of celebrating veterans, I would like to promote R.E.D, which stands for "Remember Everyone Deployed," to honor the women and men serving in all branches of the military and National Guard who have not come home yet. Please join in as we at NVCC wear red for remembrance every Friday until they come home.

Wednesdays, as always, bring SGA meetings from 4:00 – 5:00 pm in room L501. Also, this month, the SGA has a couple events that all are invited to attend. Nov 8th is our Transfer Workshop in room L501 from 12:45 pm -1:45 pm. "Fresh Check Day" will be Nov. 13th from 11:00 am – 2:00 pm in Café West. The event provides an opportunity to engage in conversations about mental health. The goal is to put students in touch with the many campus and community resources available to cope in a healthy way with the stress of college life. The event is open to all students and to the public.

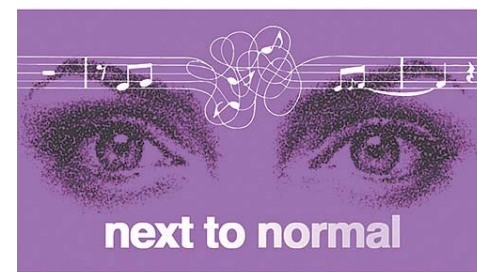
A Campus Conversation on FAFSA will take place on Nov 16th from 12:45 pm - 1:45 pm in L501. All are encouraged to attend. Also, the SGA is sponsoring a New York bus trip to Times Square on November 18th. Tickets are \$10 for students and \$15 for guests. Tickets are going fast, so come purchase yours while you still can!

Lastly, the SGA wants to promote success. We wish all the luck in the world to our student friends working hard on their studies this semester! Stay focused, stay healthy, and keep on keepin' on!

Emily Verdosci

NVCC Theatre Continues to Thrive

Anna-Nicole Doucette



The NVCC theatre department is making a mark this semester with its new department head. This is Professor Sasha Bratt's first semester, and he is already gracefully filling the shoes of his predecessor, Burton Tedesco. Last month, the department staged *The Laramie Project*, whose cast gave their all in telling this painful true story of a young man who was brutally murdered just for being gay. NVCC veteran, Tony Lacerenza, explained the cast wanted to tell a story that "resonated with the audience" and Professor Bratt guided them in doing just that.

With the success of *The Laramie Project*, Professor Bratt continues to hone NVCC's next stage triumph. This month, the theatre department stages *Next to Normal*. Set in contemporary suburbia, the musical casts a spotlight on the impact of mental illness on the family unit. As Diana struggles as a mother and wife with bipolar disorder, the aftershocks of her illness shape the lives of those around her. Set to a

rock-oriented score, this musical grapples with difficult, pertinent issues such as depression, suicide, and the ethically grey area of modern psychopharmacology.

The music from this show is so challenging one can walk by a music room or the theatre department at any given hour and catch at least one of the leads belting their hearts out to ensure every song is polished and mastered to its full extent. NVCC veteran, Teagan Gavin, reflected on her experience with this show, saying, "The rehearsal process for *Next to Normal* has been eye-opening. The music is so beautiful and moving to perform. Playing the part of the daughter, Natalie, has broadened my perspective on dealing with certain emotions and situations. I absolutely believe everyone will grow for the better after performing this show."

This musical has allowed for actors of all experience levels to work together to create a beautiful story. Whether it is their first show ever, or they're a seasoned actor, every single cast member is putting all their energies into telling this story, and everyone should take the opportunity to watch a performance unfold. *Next to Normal* will be presented in the Mainstage from November 9th - 11th at 7:30 P.M. and on November 12th at 2:00 P.M. Tickets are \$15 and can be reserved in advance by calling 203.575.8193. Don't miss out on what is certain to be another amazing NVCC production!

Committed to Wellness

The Health and Nutrition Club

Under the guidance of Professors Julia Pettifre and Lou Lombard, the Health and Nutrition Club has recently reformed. The group consists of like-minded students and faculty who recognize the value in all the factors that contribute to good health and wellbeing: proper nutrition, exercise, sufficient sleep, and relaxation techniques. These act as the springboard to a well-tuned mind and body. Club members are in the planning stages of events that will get their message across including a "Smoothies" day, guest speakers in Yoga, Reiki, and weight-training, and a Campus Walk to raise exercise awareness. They welcome you to join in their efforts to reach, inform, and inspire our community college members to optimum health.

The Tamarack

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

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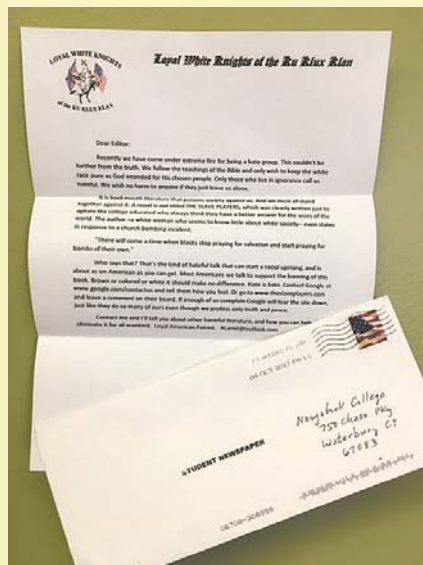
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EDITORIAL

Even Here

Steve Parlato



October 11, 2017 was like any autumn Wednesday. NVCC students and faculty focused on coursework; staff and administrators kept day-to-day operations humming. Preparations were underway for NVCC's 3-day 50th anniversary commemoration and celebration of Founders Hall Center for Health Sciences.

Into this bustling, focused atmosphere, hate crept silently—as it will—seeking to root and fester. This particular appearance came in written form, in innocuous language, on crisp stationery bearing the Confederate flag, a flag which—regardless of regional affiliation—can only stand for hate in these times. Some might call the letter “self-expression,” others “ignorance” or “intolerance”; I’ve opted to be more straightforward. I’ll call it evil.

Peering into my mail slot, expecting a stray essay or two, I discovered something else, a letter from the Loyal White Knights of the Ku Klux Klan. It read in part:

Recently we have come under extreme fire for being a hate group. This couldn't be further from the truth. We follow the teachings of the Bible and only wish to keep the white race pure as God intended for His chosen people.

Referencing a novel, *The Slave Players*, and its “white author,” Megan Allen, the letter states, “It is loud-mouth literature that poisons society against us. And we all must stand together against it.” In a review of Allen’s novel, which I haven’t read, Kirkus calls it, “A masterly indictment of America’s failed racial politics...” stating, “...the message that all must fight racism ‘as children, not of color, not of God, but of right’ rings loud and true.”

I’m not writing to promote Allen’s book (though if it offends the Klan, that’s reason enough to buy it), nor to defend literary expression (though, as an author, that is a concept I hold dear). I’m writing this editorial (and signing my name, which is atypical) to say “NO!” We must reject this blight on humanity. It is well past time to end this pervasive, disgusting attitude that whiteness is superior, and that the First Amendment somehow endorses hate.

The letter references “the college educated who always think they have a better answer for the woes of the world.” That one bit of KKK ideology makes sense, because, in fact, we do. As individuals committed to higher learning—no, as human beings—it is our duty to boldly answer hate whenever/ wherever it rears its filthy head. When evil slithers onto our campus, home of diversity and acceptance, we must stand together. We must answer loudly: “NOT HERE!”

Quite an Achievement!

Tamarack Staff



Photo Courtesy of Chris Gordon
Dignitaries including Gov. Malloy and BOR President Ojajian join President De Filippis at the Founders Hall ribbon-cutting ceremony October 13th.

In the middle of a busy semester, the NVCC community took time to celebrate. It was fitting the festivities included members of the Greater Waterbury community as well. After all, the three days of events commemorated an



Photo Courtesy of Steve Parlato
Hospitality students get ready to serve delicious paella at the October 13th donor reception.



Photo Courtesy of Chris Gordon
Staff members hula hoop at the Community Festival on October 14th.

institution dedicated to the enrichment of this very community. October 12 – 14th, the NVCC campus was alive with excitement as a series of events marked a milestone: Naugatuck Valley Community College’s 50th Anniversary.

From the sharing of original faculty writing and the release of a commemorative book at Confluencia on the 12th, to a Founders Hall ribbon-cutting, dedication ceremony, and donor appreciation event on the 13th, and a community festival on the 14th, NVCC was the place to be. Featuring music and dance, artwork, excellent food, heartfelt speeches, and hula hoops (!) the commemorative activities were a fitting acknowledgement of the countless lives transformed through the efforts of students, administrators, faculty, and staff over these many years. *The Tamarack staff joins in congratulating NVCC on a stellar first fifty years and wishes the College much success as we embark on the next half-century together!*



Photo Courtesy of Chris Gordon
Steve Parlato, Claudia Ward-de Leon, Kate Pelletier, Julia Pettifre, President De Filippis, and Chris Rempfer (l to r) at Confluencia on October 12th.



Photo Courtesy of Steve Parlato
October 14th, the Waterbury community joined in celebrating NVCC with food and fun.



Photo Courtesy of Steve Parlato
NVCC A Capella Group entertained at the October 13th Donor Appreciation Reception.

Working for Good

Tamarack Staff

NVCC faculty members Nikki McGary and Christine Cocchiola-Meyer presented their 2nd annual Healthy Relationships workshop. The event, which took place in L501 on Thursday, Oct 12th, was timely considering October’s status as Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

Participants brainstormed “red flags” of domestic violence and discussed the various types of domestic violence: verbal, emotional, financial, and physical. Additionally, the concepts of positive communication and “fair fighting” were discussed with a test for students to determine how “fairly” participants fight.

Approximately 17 participants took part in activities and discussion at the hour-long event. Johna Yashenko, NVCC’s Safe Haven Campus Advocate, was also in attendance to provide educational information about Safe Haven’s support services and her role on campus.

Congratulations to Cocchiola-Meyer and McGary for another successful event. Your shared goals of valuing each individual and spreading compassion are helping make our campus—and by extension, the larger community—a more positive, harmonious environment.

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Happenings @ Other Colleges

Alyssa Katz



Wesleyan University

On November 3rd, Wesleyan's bookstore will be hosting author Beverly Daniel Tatum, a former Wesleyan Board of Trustees member, who will speak about her book, *Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria?* A psychologist who focuses on racism, Tatum's book discusses why people of the same races tend to cluster together in what she classifies as a form of segregation—whether by choice or comfort. In 2014, Tatum received the Award for Outstanding Lifetime Contribution to Psychology, the highest honor presented by the American Psychological Association. A Q&A will follow the book seminar.

<http://eaglet.wesleyan.edu/MasterCalendar/EventDetails.aspx?EventDetailId=78282>



University of California Davis

November is filled with multiple events from learning about breastfeeding to learning the art of Chinese painting, to creative writing series. In particular, on the 11th, a one-act opera entitled "Death with Interruptions" is scheduled. In a twisted kind of love story, Death sends purple notes to warn people when they're going to die. One note, sent to a male cellist, somehow never arrives, so Death goes to investigate. Becoming intrigued by the man, Death transforms into a young woman and miraculously falls in love with the cellist. What happens next? "The following day, no one died."

<https://www.ucdavis.edu/calendar/?trumbaEmbed=view%3Devent%26eventid%3D124496411>



University of Utah

Since 1998, Veterans' Day has been a grand celebration at this university, one of the campus's biggest events. The entire day is filled with events pertaining to the gratitude for the men and women who have served our country. Each year a panel discussion is held in which a particular topic is selected. In the past, topics have ranged from "Women in Combat Arms," "Forgotten and Abandoned Vietnam Veterans," and last year's topic, "Serving Their Country: The Legacy of Native American Service in the United States Military". Selected soldiers are also honored each year during the festivities in a formal ceremony.

<http://veteransday.utah.edu/>



College of the Atlantic

Considering how the Trump Administration is posing threats to downsizing many protected federal lands, November 7th brings "America's Red Rock Wilderness Act" hosted by John Demos. Demos is a representative of the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance, which works to protect and maintain lands that are home to many endangered species and Native American sites. One of those happens to be the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument which is currently on the chopping block by the Trump Administration. Demos has been an environmental activist for over thirty years, participating in many programs and groups dedicated to preserving the environment. He will discuss these protected lands and what can be done to help save them.

http://www.coa.edu/calendar/#event_id/17787/view/event

Working for Justice

Nikki McGary and Kathy Taylor

In October, the Social Justice Series held two events. The first was an Exploring Social Justice workshop for the Center for Teaching (CFT), in which Kathy Taylor and Nikki McGary created and explored vignettes as a foundation for a faculty discussion about the challenges in teaching about and against racism, sexism, elitism and heterosexism.

Faculty also discussed the utility and significance of a "social justice framework" in education. The most widely cited definition of a social justice framework comes from an "Open Letter" to their colleagues, where Sensoy and DiAngelo (2009) explain that a social justice framework "actively address the dynamics of oppression, privilege, and isms, recognizing that society is the product of historically rooted, institutionally sanctioned stratification along socially constructed group lines that include race, class, gender, sexual orientation, and ability. Working for social justice in education means guiding students in critical self-reflection of their socialization into this matrix of unequal relationships and its implications, analysis of the mechanisms of oppression, and the ability to challenge these hierarchies" (350).

Be on the lookout for Part II of Social Justice Series CFT workshop planned for the Spring '18 semester.

The second October event was open to students, faculty and staff based on a TED Talk by J.D. Vance, author of *Hillbilly Elegy* about "America's Forgotten Working Class." The open discussion focused on the topic of the individual benefits of social capital and touched on social inequalities and institutional barriers. We also discussed the importance of education (especially college!) in building social capital and the "soft skills" necessary for gaining upward mobility.

In November, the Social Justice Series will explore the theme of "structural violence." On November 15th at 11:15 am in L501, Dr. Barbara Gurr will discuss Native Rights and the Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL). November 30th at 11:10 am in L501, we will screen *The House I Live In*, a documentary about the War on Drugs and mass incarceration.

In Spring 2018, we will be "Unpacking 'isms'" like racism, (hetero)sexism, and religious dominance through a series of conversations and events. Stay tuned for details! As always, contact faculty members, Nikki McGary or Kathy Taylor, with questions or suggestions for future topics and events.

It's NaNoWriMo Time!

Bethany Dvilinskas



NaNoWriMo is a nonprofit organization that encourages aspiring authors to write a novel in a month in any genre. During the month of November, participants can enter the online competition and

work toward a goal of writing a 50,000-word novel begun no earlier than November 1st. NaNoWriMo sets up a goal word count of about 1,700 words per day, which writers must plug in on the website. 50,000 words is the equivalent of about 200 pages.

I personally participated in this event as a high school senior. It was a struggle to keep up with at first. The novel I wrote was the last in a series I began writing two years before, and I would stay up all night to reach my goal word count. I had the idea of the novel for a couple months beforehand, but never actually started writing it until that November.

Once I started, it became easier after a week to keep up with the pace. The story was on my mind constantly, and I would even type some passages while at school. I did stop working on some of my schoolwork as the month went on, but it didn't affect my grades tremendously. Towards the end of the month, I was nervous I wouldn't make the final word count. Then, as I started work on the final chapters, I suddenly couldn't stop writing. I finished the novel on November 29th—one day before deadline—with an estimated total of 60,000 words, which was more than I expected.

NaNoWriMo also has other programs including the *Young Writers Program*, which promotes novel-writing in K-12 classrooms; *Camp NaNoWriMo*, a virtual writing retreat to provide resources and tools needed to complete any writing project, novel or not; and the *Come Write in Program*, providing free resources to libraries, community centers, and local bookstores to build writing havens in local neighborhoods.

For more info about NaNoWriMo, or to sign up and participate, visit www.nanowrimo.org and start writing that novel today!



Mentoring can be a powerful experience for students, faculty, and staff alike. At the heart of mentoring is the bond forged between a student and an individual at the College who can act as a liaison and guide on the academic path. That path can sometimes be pretty bumpy, so having a guide is essential.

The NVCC Mentoring Program matches each interested student with a faculty or staff member as a mentor. Ideally, connections are made based on similarities, which might include academic major or common interests outside the classroom. The student is able to share ideas, to ask for advice, and to build a positive relationship with a mentor who has the experience of having successfully navigated college life.

National research on mentoring has proven it has a positive impact not only on the lives of students, but on the lives of faculty and staff who step into the mentoring role as well. This positive impact has been felt on a personal, academic, and professional level and has had a lasting effect throughout the lives of our students, faculty, and staff members.

According to the National Mentoring Partnership, "Young Adults who had a mentor are 55% more likely to be in college, 78% more likely to be involved in community service, 90% more likely to become mentors, and 130% more likely to hold leadership positions."

The NVCC Mentoring program will be sponsoring several events throughout the semester for mentors and mentees to get together and share experiences meant to strengthen the bonds between mentor and mentee. If you are interested in teaming up with a mentor, or if you'd like to become a mentor to a student, please contact Yvette Tucker or Sam Johnson in the CAPSS Office at 203-575-8025, or stop into the office in Kinney Hall Room 520. Don't go it alone!

Sam Johnson and Yvette Tucker

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 email SGA@nvcc.commnet.edu.

alumni SHOWCASE

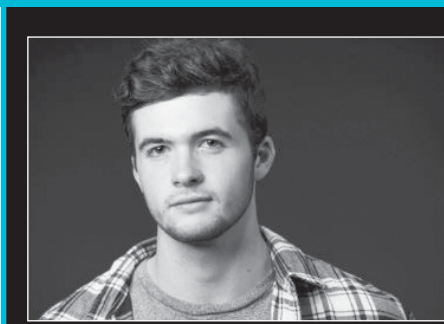


Photo Courtesy of Blaise Russo

Blaise Russo

As a high school senior, while all my friends applied to universities, I struggled figuring out where I'd end up. I didn't even bother applying to college because my grades weren't that impressive. I'd focused all my time on baseball, but I knew I wasn't nearly good enough to turn that into a career. I had no choice but to attend NVCC.

Entering my first semester, I had no clue what to major in; then my mother encouraged me to take a theatre class. It was there I found my purpose. I fell in love with theatre and performing. For the next three

Inside the Outsider

years, I grew as an actor under the direction of Burton Tedesco, performing in numerous shows, eagerly accepting any role I was given. I gained a family during my time in the little eighty-seat Playbox and met so many good-hearted people.

As my final NVCC moments wound down, I once again found myself asking, "What's next?" I'd just turned twenty-one; my parents were selling our house, where I'd spent my entire life. I was scared. I had no intentions of furthering my education just yet, so I decided to move to NYC. I struggled my first couple months adjusting to the big city. I knew I wanted to act, but wasn't sure how to get my foot in the door. Working in a warehouse, packing boxes, I was miserable every second I was there.

I'd gone to a couple Manhattan auditions but hadn't received any offers. On my lunch break one day, scrolling through emails, I learned National Theatre for Education and Arts had offered me the role of Randy the Soc in the play, *The Outsiders*, based on S.E. Hinton's young adult novel. I was so excited I quit my job right then, and I haven't stopped smiling since.

The cross-country tour would run for a couple months, performing for mostly middle school audiences. I remember how much I enjoyed reading this book in middle school, so, actually performing it for kids that age makes

it feel full circle. With about two-and-a-half weeks of rehearsal, we hit the road for our first show in Massachusetts. After two full weeks of shows and traveling, everything's been amazing. I love having the opportunity to travel, act, and get a paycheck for doing so.

A regular workday means arriving at theatre/school two hours before show. We unload the van and assemble the set at every venue before show time. When the house opens, we usher students in, perform, and have a ten-minute post-show Q&A. It's a great chance for students to break from books for an hour and enjoy a performance of a story they love—all for an educational purpose.

We've toured almost three weeks now, and this is possibly the coolest experience I've ever had. The cast has become a family as we travel state-to-state, performing in schools and theatres I've only imagined. Nothing beats spending weekends in places like Boca Raton, or looking up at the Lincoln Monument in Washington D.C.

It's exciting to be at a place where I don't dread Mondays because I'm getting paid to do what I love: perform for crowds of 1,200 students—even if it means waking up at 5:00 AM. I can never thank my mother enough for making me take a theatre class at NVCC. That experience changed my whole life.

Honoring Adjuncts

Art from the Heart

Pasquale "Joe" De Cicco



Photos Courtesy of Tamarack Staff.

Students who have been in his ENG101 class may be most familiar with longtime NVCC adjunct, Pasquale "Joe" De Cicco, as a friendly classroom presence, a stickler for grammar and structure, and a very nice dresser. He is, however, also a man of many talents. While his official role at Naugatuck Valley Community College is as Instructor of English, De Cicco is also a celebrated artist.

In fact, De Cicco's artistic talents are no secret on campus. His hand-carved wood sculptures grace many offices in Kinney Hall and elsewhere. Joe's generosity—and humility—in sharing his work makes each piece that much more special. Faculty and administrators in Kinney Hall are often greeted by Joe's friendly face and the gift of an original hand-carved wood sculpture. Whether left in their natural state or embellished with paint, these figural pieces and portrait sculptures reveal the artist's craft—as well as his spirituality and interests in history and literature.

It's as an artist that De Cicco shared some exciting news. Among fans of his artwork are two high profile individuals: the 45th President of the United States and the current Catholic Pontiff. De Cicco recently received letters, one from President Trump and one from Monsignor Paolo Borgia on behalf of Pope Francis, warmly accepting De Cicco's gifts of original artwork to the White House and the Vatican. His portrait sculpture of President Andrew Jackson has a new home in Washington D.C., and his carving of Christ's face a la the Shroud of Turin now resides in Rome.

These achievements are all the more impressive as De Cicco is a self-taught artist with no formal sculpture training. His love for creating spans several decades, as he first started creating wood carvings while a high school teacher in the 1970s. *The Tamarack* is pleased to share his exciting news, and we look forward to the next creation to spring from this talented man's briefcase.



Center For Teaching On Gratitude

Julia Petitfrere

Associate Professor of English, Julia Petitfrere, a longtime member of CFT is co-advisor to the Black Student Union and the Health and Nutrition Club, as well as a member of the FYE and One Book Committees. She actively plans and facilitates Women's Center events and is a member of the planning committee for NVCC's Center for Racial Dialogue and Communal Transformation.

"Gratitude: the quality of being thankful; readiness to show appreciation for and to return kindness."

In addition to teaching in the English department, I teach First Year Experience. Just this week as my FYE students and I were discussing the importance of emotional intelligence to college success, I told them what it was like for me as an undergraduate. One of the things I do not talk about with students (or anyone) often is the reality of my early years in America—in Bridgeport, Connecticut more precisely. When I was in my first two years of university, I lived in an area where it was not unusual for gunshots to ring out (or even pierce the living room walls), where my family and I relied on space heaters in the winter because the copper pipes for the baseboard heating system had been stolen long before we moved into the never-really-habitable apartment we were lucky to call "home."

I looked out at stunned faces while I said one my struggles was trying to be okay with being in a warm and relatively safe dormitory, knowing my mother and siblings were in the complete opposite. I told them how I relied on classmates to lend me their books because I didn't have any for the first couple of years. One day, I told one of my English professors I hadn't done my work because I couldn't borrow the book in time and she... Long story short: ultimately, she gave me the novels we were reading in the course, even the ones we had read and discussed. The next semester, she went with me to the bookstore and bought my books. Another faculty member bought my art supplies and gave me her old word processor.

I shared that to say: I will forever be grateful to those faculty (and others) who made it possible for me to complete my degree (and, honestly, sometimes simply to live). Gratitude.

When people take a chance on us (especially when by all appearances we seem to be lost causes), well, the best way to prove them right is to do well and to do good. Live a life that returns the kindness we have all been graced with at some point. No one gets anywhere worthwhile in life without help. Gratitude.

I shared that also to say this: one, what a difference faculty can make in students' lives (we ought to be conscious of that in every interaction) and two, what a difference faculty can make in students' lives, BUT only if students speak up.

After all, some of us know it is a gift to be in this thing together. Gratitude.

This year, NVCC will host its first "Fresh Check Day" on Monday, November 13th from 11:00 am to 2:00 pm in Leever Atrium. Focusing on healthy ways to cope with the challenges of life and college, the event will feature clubs, community service providers, and staff who will provide information on College and community resources, share healthy snacks, and engage attendees in interactive events. There will also be music, prizes, and giveaways.

To be eligible for the grand prize, a 32" flat screen TV, students must pick up a registration card at the event's welcome table and have it stamped at a minimum of 9 booths. Beyond potential prizes, this will be a beneficial day, especially for students who are encouraged to partake of the message of hope, help, and resilience that comes with a "Fresh Check".

Spoken Words

Mitchell W. Maknis



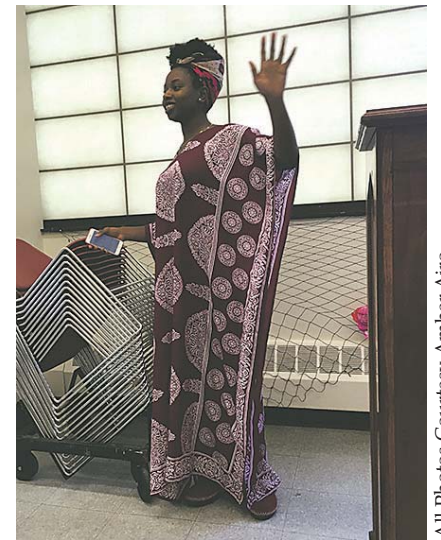
On October 10th, NVCC held an open mic event from 12:45 to 1:45 pm. Students and teachers alike convened in room S514 for "The Vent Session: Spoken Word," an event promoted for people to speak their minds. The atmosphere was as welcoming as it was informal, and participants were encouraged to share thoughts, stories and get out of their comfort zone in a stress-free, accepting environment.

To start, everyone was given a pen and paper. This was aimed at those who didn't come with a pre-planned idea of what they wanted to share. The audience was given a few minutes to write down whatever was on their mind in the hopes that, even if they hadn't planned on it, they might get up and speak. This tactic seemed to be effective, as people who wouldn't have spoken otherwise got up and expressed themselves. Speakers even felt comfortable enough to divulge personal information such as their age and educational status.

After a brief introduction, the program segued into opening remarks by Prof. William H. Foster III, whose charisma energized the room for a productive afternoon. Foster set the tone by saying "If no one hears your words, it's a shame." He then read some of his own poetry,

motivating the crowd. He said, "Words go from one person to another, and it's magic." People were ready to get to the podium, although some didn't need it; the room possessed a sense of familiarity that influenced some speakers to roam the area as they spoke.

The hour consisted of uniquely diverse statements. For instance, one person read excerpts from a journal they'd kept in middle-school. Others shared personal viewpoints on topics such as modern social issues, their definition of normal, and mental disabilities. Members of The Tamarack shared their own poems, short stories or other works that had



All Photos Courtesy Amber Ajro

impacted their lives in some form or fashion. A few people even talked about their less than perfect pasts and how they were able to overcome the obstacles they faced to get where they are now.

As an NVCC student, this struck me as further proof of what a wonderful campus environment we enjoy. "The Spoken Word" was an incredible event filled with positive energy, that allowed people to get out of their shells and express meaningful topics to an open-minded community. Hopefully, it will be one of many.



Harbor Yard Plans

Alyssa Katz

At the start of his first term, Bridgeport Mayor Joe Ganim oversaw construction of the ballpark at Harbor Yard. It became home field for the minor league baseball team, the Bridgeport Bluefish. Now, twenty years later, it was confirmed this

summer that, instead of a ballpark, Harbor Yard will be converted into an amphitheater, mainly as a site to host outdoor concerts. The original proposal came in March, and the plan is for the new structure to open in Spring 2019. The facility will also be adaptable to host events such as graduation ceremonies and festivals.

If an outdoor amphitheater comes to Harbor Yard, sporting events need to find a new home, which is why the University of Bridgeport proposed constructing a suitable field at Seaside Park. Traditionally, UB has used Harbor Yard to host various sporting events and home games. Even without the Harbor Yard field, Ganim says the proposed Seaside diamond "will be enjoyed and utilized by so many teams, community leagues and, of course, [will] support youth activities and family fun throughout the city."

Where exactly will the Bridgeport Bluefish



go? When city officials decided not to renew their contract at the end of this season, team owner, Frank Boulton, predicted his team "wouldn't be homeless for long." He was right. Drafted to North Carolina, the Bluefish will remain members of the Atlantic League. However, the new team name hasn't yet been announced, nor has it been con-

firmed whether they will play in 2018. In their final game of the 2017 season, September 17th, the Bluefish unfortunately lost 9-2 to the Somerset Patriots. Despite the loss, they had their highest record of any season, and fans were able to enjoy watching the Bluefish play one final game at Harbor Yard.

I haven't been to a Bluefish game since I was little, but I really enjoyed attending with my family. I still remember the first one I went to; it was a Friday night, so they shot off fireworks, as they did every Friday. I don't recall any players' names, but I do remember seeing some homeruns fly so far, they might've plopped into the ocean.

Though America's pastime will hopefully still have a presence in Bridgeport, with UB slated to play in a new venue, for now we bid farewell to the Bluefish. It's just another reminder that, while change is inevitable, it can be bittersweet.

NVCC Fresh Check Day, November 13

Student Services

More than 1,000 college students die by suicide yearly on U.S. campuses. In fact, suicide is a leading cause of death among American college students. The Jordan Porco Foundation was created in 2011 to help address the staggering suicide rate among college students.

Inspired by the suicide of college freshman, Jordan Porco, the Foundation's mission is to prevent suicide, promote mental health, and create a message of hope for young adults. Annually, the Foundation supports colleges and universities nationwide by helping spread the message about suicide prevention through "Fresh Check Day". This event is part of an effort to change the statistics around college suicide—and the attitudes about mental health—by providing resources for students who are struggling.

Anime Club

John McDonald



Photo Courtesy of Anime Club

If you're someone with a passion for cartoons who wants something of greater sophistication, anime may be your calling. Anime is defined as "a style of Japanese film and television animation, typically aimed at adults as well as children." How does it relate to college students? It can provide insight in regards to handling different social situations.

Ranging from anime fanatics to people who have only seen the classics, such as Yu Gi Oh, Pokémon, and Dragon Ball Z, the Otaku/Anime Club promotes a friendly atmosphere for all. When I first joined the Otaku Club, I had no idea what to expect, but after a very short time, I was able to integrate myself with a group of people who all shared a similar interest and passion for anime. The main theme of the club is to bring a slice of Japan to the campus. We do this by watching and discussing episodes, and reviewing novel manga.

You may be wondering how anime can benefit your own life? As an example, the anime "Re: Zero" comes to mind. It tells a story from the viewpoint of a teenage boy named Subaru who gets summoned to a parallel world and finds out he can reverse time by dying, but that he's also cursed with this power. Viewing the series has changed my own personal perception of life. If Subaru can die constantly, yet still maintain a positive attitude for striving to accomplish his goal, it made me wonder why I couldn't do the same—maintain positivity—in my own life. Through all of it, he still has motivation to live life to the fullest, and so should I.

Come visit us if you are interested in seeing what the Otaku Club holds in store. Please email samanthagail12@yahoo.com for more details and come to the meetings on Mondays and Wednesdays at 2:15 pm in room S502.

Thanksgiving: What it's to you?

Imani Stewart

In all the history books Thanksgiving has traditionally commemorated a peaceful feast shared by the Pilgrims and "the Indians"; until recently, little was taught about the true nature of the complex relationship between the Puritans and the native Wampanoag people. Regardless of whether you accept the standard portrayal, or view the holiday more deeply from a multifaceted perspective, times have changed.

Nowadays, you'll hear most people talk exclusively about how much they can't wait to eat (Personally, me too). But, that's not all that Thanksgiving is about. I surveyed my house, neighborhood and contact list to ask family, friends, and neighbors what Thanksgiving means to them.

From the information I collected everyone—with the exception of my brother and grandmother saying food and turkey—said "family". According to my dad, Mark Stewart Sr., "It's a time when you sit down and spend quality time with your family eating delicious food." When he mentioned food, it automatically made me think not everyone enjoys the same food on this holiday.

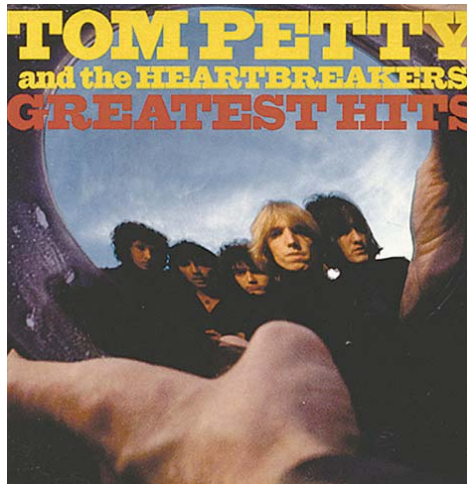
When you come from a different culture, food can vary on Thanksgiving. Surprisingly enough, all my neighbors, including my family, agreed on one food: HAM! Yes, turkey would be the thing you'd think of first, but no, everyone enjoys ham the most. All except my uncle, Brian Wells, who said, "Fried Turkey, is the only food I always look forward to on Thanksgiving."

With any holiday, soon to follow are traditions. I asked my brother, Mark Jr., his favorite tradition. He told me, "Football for sure," while my older sister, Autumn Wells-Stewart, said, "Giving thanks, for all the blessings we have."

At the end of the day, yes, Thanksgiving is a holiday where you can stuff your face without any judgment. However, it's also about good old-fashioned family bonding. So are you super excited for Thanksgiving like my family? Or are you just waiting for football? Either way, the staff of *The Tamarack* wishes you a very Happy Thanksgiving!

Revolutionary Rhythms

Tom Petty: Time to Move On



A singer/songwriter/guitarist, Tom Petty was not ashamed of his imperfect voice. In fact, he embraced it by incorporating his southern Florida roots into his music. And when things were unfair in the world, he took a stand with his songs. He said, "I turned anger into ambition... Any sort of injustice would outrage me. I couldn't contain myself." Petty wasn't about doing anything flashy; he wanted to let the songs speak for themselves.

From a young age, Petty turned to music, maybe to escape the hard times he'd experienced at home as a child. With influences like The Beatles, he wanted to be just like them. He even grew out his hair and switched from acoustic to electric guitar. Petty was so enthralled by the music scene, he'd joined his first band, *Mudcrutch*, by the age of 20, in 1970. *Mudcrutch* drew plenty of Floridian followers, which led to a California record deal, but soon the contract was dropped when the label lost confidence in the band, leaving Petty the only one remaining under contract.

After recording some solo songs, Petty felt better with a band surrounding him, so he formed *The Heartbreakers* in 1975, and sticking with them through several years and many hits. Their debut album, *Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers*, wasn't a big hit until a British tour put them on the charts, and the single, "Breakdown," reached America's ears. 1979's

release of *Damn the Torpedoes*, was a much bigger hit with singles such as "Don't Do Me Like That" and "Refugee," which reached number two on the charts.

The 80s were steady as the band recorded songs and toured. *The Heartbreakers* had joined Bob Dylan for a tour, while Petty also collaborated on a duet with Stevie Nicks, "Stop Draggin' My Heart Around". Released in 1989, *Full Moon Fever*, marked a solo for Petty, but with "Free Fallin'," it became his most popular release. In the late 80s he'd formed another band, *The Traveling Wilburys*, which included Bob Dylan, one of his closest friends. Petty

"I turned anger into ambition... Any sort of injustice would outrage me. I couldn't contain myself."

Tom Petty

never abandoned *The Traveling Wilburys* or *Mudcrutch*; in fact, he collaborated with them to incorporate songs recorded with *The Heartbreakers* multiple times.

The 90s remained slow but steady; however, after his divorce in 1996, Petty became addicted to heroin, but recovered through rehab before his second marriage in 2001. From the early 2000s to now, *The Heartbreakers* reached not only their long-time loyal fans, but also the newer generations as their more recent albums were big hits.

On October 2, Petty went into cardiac arrest and was rushed to the hospital. He died later that night, surrounded by friends, family, and his band members. In response to his death, Bob Dylan stated, "It's shocking, crushing news. I thought the world of Tom. He was a great performer, full of the light, a friend, and I'll never forget him."

Alyssa Katz



The Fresh Flash! Nov. 15, 2017!!!



Write about



Fiction/Poetry Prompt

Start to finish = 200 words or less...send to Freshink@nvcc.commnet.edu by Nov. 15.

Winning entry published in *The Tamarack*, entered for Grand Prize for Fresh Flash Fiction April 2018!

Fresh Flash Winning Submissions!

September Prompt: "What can be more exciting than working with spuds?" my father asked me after graduation. I had just finished telling him I wanted to go to college. It was obvious he was perplexed. He never went to college, his father never went to college, and his grandfather never did either. Most of the family never went to high school. I didn't know what I wanted to do with my life. All I knew was I didn't want to be a potato farmer...."

And the September Winner is:

"The Journey Together" by Kalea Walker

I wanted to do something different with my life. I wanted to be the one in my family that excelled at what they wanted to do. I love my family dearly, but I'm going to be something in this world! I turned to look at my father as he sat around the kitchen table drinking a beer and reading a newspaper. The expression on his face was blank, but I knew the wheels were turning in his head. Our eyes met as he looked up from the newspaper and got up from his seat. He gave me a smile and a pat on the shoulder as he walked by. Ok good, so he isn't mad, I think with a sigh. This isn't easy for me either! I've never really gone out much other than school and going into town for pick-ups. So going to college and living in a dorm with someone I don't know makes me nervous... But despite that nervousness, I'm ready to start this new journey in my life. I grabbed my folder with all my college information and slowly made my way towards the living room. I peeked around the corner to see my father had discarded the newspaper and was now looking at a photo album with a smile on his face. I knew the exact album he was looking at. A smile of my own broke out as I walked into the living room. We'll start this journey together.

Special thanks to September's Fresh Flash Guest Editorial Board: Advanced Composition

students Edwin Lopez, Elizabeth Chavez, Elizabeth Schultz, Benjamin Ackell, William Baermann, Marquis Harris, and Nadya Manaeva.

October Prompt: Two men stopped me on my way into our local post office. One flashed a badge at me and whispered, "We need your help for a top secret sting operation. We can't give you any of the details, only that you are to walk into the post office, go up to the counter with a gentleman named Bert working it and say to him, "My stamps are looking a bit square these days, if you know what I mean....."

And October's Fresh Flash Winner is:

"Weirdest Day Ever" by Sheena Orton

It took me a moment to comprehend what they were saying. 'Sting operation' 'square stamps' seriously? What the hell? "Why on earth are you asking me?" These two unnerved me, with their black suits and intimidating gazes. I was frozen in place, full of questions.

The one who flashed the badge put it away, simply saying, "You don't need to know. It's classified. We just need you to go in and say what we told you to Bert." From the way they towered over me, still staring, it was obvious I didn't have a choice in the matter. I was hesitant, unsure of what they would do to me if I said no, so I nod and reluctantly make my way in.

"-ome again! Hello Miss. What can I do for you today?" I smile at the woman, or I try to anyway. "Good, uh is Bert around? I need to speak to him privately." I didn't like this already. I feel like I'm in one of those spy movies where I get to be the badass hero. Minus the badassness. "Yep I'll grab him for you." Dammit, I have the worst luck ever. Why me?

Special thanks to October judge Orania Papazoglou, adjunct English Prof. at NVCC and author of *30 Gregor Demarkian Mysteries* published by St. Martin/Minotaur Press.

A Multicultural Celebration of Bread

Karlene N. Ball



NVCC's Office of Multicultural Affairs invites you to A Celebration of Bread from Cultures around the World to be held Wednesday, November 29 in Café West from 12:30 – 2:00 pm.

Bread occupies the soul of so many cultures. It symbolizes the nourishment we need to live. It represents shared values and community. Bread encourages us to engage actively with each other as we give it, share it, break it, and eat it together in religious observations, in our many cultural traditions, and in our daily lives.

At the celebration, we will learn about and enjoy different breads from cultures within our learning community. Let's come together in this season of Thanksgiving to share and eat naan, pita, tortilla, hard dough, chapati, matzo, and more. The event is supported by members of NVCC's ESL program, Hispanic Student Union, and Black Student Union.

Please enjoy excerpts from Chilean poet, Pablo Neruda's poem *Oda al pan*.

Oda al pan

Pan
con harina
agua
y fuego
te levantas,
espeso y leve
recostado y redondo...
... Pan,
qué fácil
y qué profundo eres...

...la tierra
la belleza,
el amor,
todo eso
tiene el sabor de pan

forma de pan
...todo
nació par ser
compartido
para ser entregado
para multiplicarse...

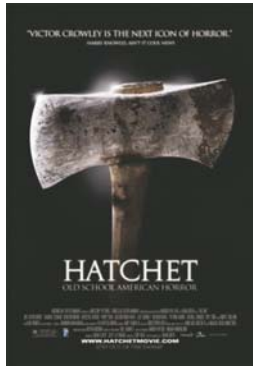
Ode to Bread

Bread
from flour
water
and fire
you rise,
thick and light
flat and round...
...Bread,
how simple
and how profound
you are!
...the earth
beauty,
love,
all of them
contain the essence
of bread
the shape of bread
...for all
came to be, to be
shared
to be given to one
another
and to multiply...

(Translation by Karlene Ball)

Hatchet Legacy

Mitchell W. Maknis



Halloween may last just one day, but that doesn't stop fans of the macabre from being enthralled by tales of terror all year. 2017 has shown a resurgence of the horror genre, most notably, the record-breaking box office success of the latest adaptation of Stephen King's *IT*. Traditionally, studios prefer psychological horror because it is better received by critics and subsequently is given wider release.

Independent filmmaker, Adam Green, is currently on tour with his fourth installment of the *Hatchet* series, fittingly entitled *Victor Crowley*. Indie films allow the creator more artistic freedom but don't enjoy the same publicity and often receive limited distribution. The fourth *Hatchet* movie suffers these limitations. For those unaware of the franchise that originated in 2006, *Hatchet* takes place in a Louisiana bayou, where the tragic history of Victor Crowley unfolds when a group of tourists get stranded in a cursed swamp.

The series' commonality is the body count; however, each individual film is unique. Although each installment shares this gory aspect, the distinctive films have lives of their own because the viewer continuously shares in the multitude of victims' fears and paranoia. Another key series element is the movies' heavy reliance on the shock of graphic violence. In all four films, the director used practical effects which, in my opinion, heighten the fright value.

Hatchet, the original, follows the typical slasher formula, utilizing setting and atmosphere to blood-curdling advantage. In the sequel, a lone survivor returns to the swamp for revenge with a well-armed hunting party. It's then the audience realizes that, no matter the fire power, they are no match for the supernatural prowess of the antagonist. In the third installment, the audience can see the protagonist's growth as the onslaught continues. The film keys in on the cause of Victor's rage, the emotional turmoil from which it sprang.

The series sports iconic horror royalty: Tony Todd (*Candyman*), Robert Englund (*A Nightmare on Elm Street*), Zach Galligan (*Gremlins*), Danielle Harris (*Halloween 4 & 5*), and Kane Hodder (*The Friday the 13th* series). The actors give engaging, incredibly dynamic performances which add a layer of complexity to their characters.

Over the past ten years, the legend of Victor Crowley has haunted horror enthusiasts. Though not as famous as Pennywise, Freddy Krueger, or Jason Voorhees, he's certainly left his hatchet-faced mark on the horror landscape. To learn about filmmaker Adam Green visit his website, ariescope.com

Art = Work

Bayley Shean

I didn't plan on curating an art show in two weeks. I actually thought I had two months to compile a show of faculty artwork. Boy, was I wrong! For those who don't know, a curator is the person in charge of an art exhibit who oversees all aspects, from advertising to collecting works, to deciding where and how each piece will be displayed. When asked to curate, I was overjoyed. Already, every semester, the art department holds an end-of-term student art show. This, however, was the faculty art show, a big deal at the College. I soon became aware of the abbreviated timeframe.

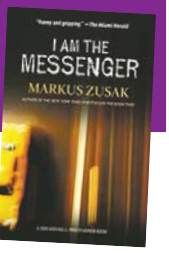
T Minus Two Weeks: I was a tad overwhelmed. No flyers had been made, and only one piece of artwork was collected. The coming weeks were filled with emails upon emails. Seriously, 17 emails in just one day! The first task was creating flyers. After connecting with the Office of College Marketing (who were beyond helpful!) I got flyers approved, placed around campus, and even scheduled for display on campus TV screens. One thing down!

T Minus 1-1/2 Weeks: Next was getting a list of participating faculty members and collecting their artwork. LABSS Associate Dean, Dr. Lisa Dresdner, sent an email inviting faculty to submit artwork. However, we weren't sure which faculty members would submit. Like I said, lots of emails. Luckily, I knew many who were invited, having been their student, so we spoke directly, and I personally collected their work. Next, we had to find someplace to store the work, which needed labels to avoid mix-ups.

T Minus Five Days: Tasks were still ongoing. At this point, we (myself, a couple fellow students, and Dr. Dresdner) hadn't discussed when and how to move about twenty pieces from the art wing to Founders Hall. On the plus side, one student completed a list of work being showcased. This list will be available for those who visit the Community Room in Founders Hall, where the art will be displayed.

T...Plus One Day (?): As I type this, it's a day after the art show was to begin. I've been informed installation materials were never ordered. Sigh. Don't get me wrong, I'm not blaming anyone for bumps we've encountered. This is just a piece detailing the complicated process of curating an art show. While the full faculty art show has been postponed until we can get the tracks to install the work, an abbreviated show is currently set up in the Founders lobby with a number of faculty pieces displayed on easels. The full show will be up in no time. I invite you all to take a look! It's free, and will be a sight to behold!

RECENTLY READ



I Am the Messenger, by Markus Zusak

I've opted to tackle a Markus Zusak novel for this month's Recently Read. While *The Book Thief* is probably his most well-known work, *I Am the Messenger*, published in 2002, is also a captivating read. In the first sentences, readers are thrust into a scenario with the protagonist and his friends being held up by a bank robber. Zusak's protagonist, Ed Kennedy, is not a typical main character. A nineteen-year-old illegal cabbie, Ed is very hard on himself and believes he's a failure because his siblings are so successful.

While Ed is still beating himself up over his "worthless" life, he mysteriously receives a random Ace of Diamonds in the mail. On this card are three addresses with specific times:

45 Edgar Street, midnight
13 Harrison Avenue, 6:00 pm
6 Macedoni Street, 5:30 am

With no explanation on the card or directions to these places, Ed feels compelled to follow the card to the first address. There he witnesses a shocking situation of sexual violence, in which a man routinely assaults his wife. At the next address, he meets an old woman who suffers from memory loss, as she mistakes Ed for a person named Jimmy. At the third address, he sees a young girl running every morning. Ed ponders why he has been sent to these three individuals.

What readers discover along with the protagonist is that, as Ed keeps receiving more cards, he is sent to people in need of support in their lives. He becomes a lifeline of some sort, someone who is willing to listen. Ed says it best to himself: "It's like I've been chosen. But chosen for what? I ask. The answer's quite simple: To care."

That is the major theme of this awesome book. It is about a young man trying to fill multiple peoples' needs, to make up for what they are missing in their lives. Ed Kennedy is not a typical protagonist, but he is a person we all should strive to be, someone trying to put his best foot forward for others.

In *I Am the Messenger*, Markus Zusak reminds us that, no matter how hard one's problems may be, there is always a light burning at the end of every dark, psychological tunnel. In fact, in each of our lives—if we pay attention—we may realize we could be that light for someone else!

Christian Cruz

Loved it? Hated it?

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That's What She Said



Jessica Ney

Faux Fems

As women, there are a number of hard truths we face: we earn a fraction of a man's dollar, and our voices are underrepresented in government and in businesses. There's another, not-so-common truth: the fake male feminist is a danger to our cause for equality.

"I don't get why men treat women any different," they coo just before asking to take us home. They get what we're going through; they have a sister. They say, "You don't need to wear makeup; you're beautiful without it." The reality of the fake male feminist is they are dangerous. They're not just hurting us; they're tarring up the meaning of feminism. We mistake them for allies, and people believe they are representative of feminism as a whole.

A fake feminist pretends to be in the know with the latest feminist trends; he recognizes some of the greats: Frida Kahlo, Gloria Steinem, and Eleanor Roosevelt. He voted for Hillary. He's read *The Bell Jar*. He'll know enough to make his point and rope us in. But beware! He doesn't really care about our agenda of equality. He's too busy riding high and mighty on a wave of ignorance and blissful disregard propagated by the media and politicians. Fake male feminists don't need our approval; they already have the world.

Meanwhile, we fight for birth control, fair wages, representation, and dismantling of sexist codes everywhere. Fake feminists don't care about sexual assault, but they'll tell you Brock Turner should have stayed in jail "longer." They don't care that Planned Parenthood is fighting the government for our reproductive rights because they promise they'll "pull out." A fake male feminist does not care about a woman's view. They aren't afraid to walk to their car at night; they don't need to censor themselves. They're used to being respected. They don't know what it's like to be treated as lesser, or inferior simply because of their biology.

That being said, I can hear you screaming "NOT ALL MEN!" and I agree with you. I'm not saying every man out there is a danger to feminism. There are plenty of men, who may never step out as "feminists" when, in fact, that is what they are. They'll listen to us vent about the patriarchy. They'll join us at marches and meetings. They'll share the article we write for our school newspaper, and they'll encourage you—and all the women they know—to do their best to push those boundaries.

There is no insecurity in equality, and if a man claims he is a feminist, hold him accountable at all times. Don't let him talk down to women who don't share his opinion. Don't shake off his "locker room talk." And definitely don't let him tell you that you can't because you're a woman.

The Other... What?

Christopher Gordon

Understanding *The Other* in Young Adult literature is simple. The Other is a person different from the "collective normal," or the Group. Young Adult novels explore this archetype (an archetypal trope) extensively to connect with the intended audience. It's easy to imagine oneself as *The Other* as biology strips away the familiarity of childhood, to replace it with an unfamiliar "adult" perspective. It's also educational for many youths, initiating deeper evaluation of the concept of Other, making it easier for young adults to expand their own Group.

Exploring YA novels can lead to looking harder at how a carefully constructed character might sometimes become too real for many readers. A character representing *The Other* draws readers in, and this well-rounded character finds a Group in the real world. It's hard to imagine an author who doesn't seek this outcome, but this can become a dual-edged sword.

One side of the argument is readers relate and empathize with powerfully created characters. Hopefully, this leads them to reconsider people in daily life who might resemble these fictional folks, inspiring them to give these people a second chance to integrate within the Group. Education can take place, resulting in real change—one hopes.

On the other hand, a character might become so representative of an issue the author seeks to address as to become the standard by which real people are then judged. The well-defined character has now set a standard only a fictional character can equal.

There are many examples of expertly crafted characters being so skillfully constructed it can be difficult to separate truth from fiction. For example, in *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time*, author Mark Haddon never explicitly states it, but the protagonist is a prime example of someone on the autism spectrum. Christopher Boone displays many traits, and *Curious Incident* shows how difficult it can be for people—myself included—with autism to navigate life. Readers can sit back, relax, and take a brief walk in shoes not made for their feet. This can be part of the problem.

As someone who lives with autism, I'm grateful to Haddon for helping friends and family start to understand challenges I face, but I'm also a bit put off when some don't understand the spectrum concept. Because I don't use similar methods of self-soothing, nor display the same level of disability, I'm sometimes treated as if I haven't worked hard to simply exist in a world filled with too much information overload. Of course, there are those who simply won't acknowledge anyone has any sort of problems ever, but those are the bad energy people I cut out of my life.

Please, read books with amazingly drawn characters who feel real, like Christopher Boone. Their plights are windows into a world hard to imagine for people not living in it. All I ask is that you measure each real person you encounter as an individual. Don't use some pop culture yardstick.

Least Wanted

Alam Khan

On the opposite side of the globe one country has been mistreating its people since the end of World War II. Myanmar, best known by its former moniker, Burma, has been in the spotlight because of its mistreatment of the Rohingya people. A simple web search for "Rohingya" will yield accounts of harassment, pillaging, rape, abuse, and death by rifle squad. This continual ethnic cleansing (which the Burmese government denies at UN meetings) by the government and military is not entirely because the people are Muslims. It is more due to the color/race of these people. The Rohingya are considered the world's most persecuted minority.

Many other indigenous groups share the same Islamic faith but suffer less just because of the pigment of their skin. This is due to migration influenced under the British Empire around the time of World War I, moving people from heavily populated India to a less densely populated location. Not long ago, Myanmar's military redacted its influence by a major degree, allowing a public election for office. Anyone who assumed this would be a turning point in the history of the troubled country would be perplexed to know it brought no change.

Current Prime Minister Aung San Suu Kyi has tried delegating to other officials in the parliament to rectify atrocities, but has been criticized for lack of greater efforts not only by officials and the military, but by her own people. Many have tried to flee to neighboring Bangladesh seeking refuge, but their rights remain limited. Because the oppressed Rohingya are not considered citizens by the government, none have the right to run for office, let alone demand other equal rights. In keeping with the "diplomacy" set by its military, Burma has denied entry of humanitarian efforts and UN inspectors. The Rohingya people have been moved into an area much like the Jews during the Holocaust and are kept under constant military oversight. This silencing tactic to diminish the outcry by its people is an attempt to focus the spotlight elsewhere.

These people are suffering. One should not care about their similarity in religion or race; they should be cared about because they are human—our brothers and sisters. We hear about sanctions in response to the escalation of North Korea and its efforts to develop its nuclear power, yet why do we hear nothing being done for this region?

People often say the U.S. became involved in World War II to save the Jews and avenge the Pearl Harbor bombing, yet do not realize it was also because the government had been giving monetary aid to the Allies, which they hoped would be paid back after the war. Is that what it takes for the leaders of the free world to get involved in saving lives? Payback? I am by no means trying to denigrate the grace and quality of these United States, but to invoke thought about the region.

The UN needs to implement a more vigorous agenda as these people continue to be dehumanized. A friend once said, "It takes true humility to apologize for the actions of those who are the aggressors and do not know their wrongdoing." So, I offer an apology to those suffering the most inconceivable oppression perpetrated against a people by its government.

Earth Matters

President or Bulldozer?



Alyssa Katz

Beginning this summer, the Trump administration called for analysis of protected federal lands previously approved and set aside by the current president's predecessors. Any land protected by the previous presidents that exceeds 100,000 acres is to be examined and reassessed. This could potentially lead to the destruction of millions of acres that would be opened to commercial uses. Trump seems to have no regard for the environment, having called climate change a myth, nor does he seem to value the beauty of nature.

Many of these lands are considered national monuments, such as the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument in Southern Oregon. With a proposal to downsize much of that land, it would upset many locals, Native American tribes, and business owners, not to mention environmentalists. Other bounties of land on the chopping block include the Bears Ears and Grand Staircase-Escalante in Utah, the Craters of the Moon in Idaho, the Giant Sequoia in California, Nevada's Gold Butte, and others.

Explaining why these lands were under protection, Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke, who's been conducting these examinations, stated, "It appears certain monuments were designated to prevent economic activity such as grazing, mining and timber production rather than to protect specific objects." What Zinke doesn't seem to realize is that natural resources present on these sites are also vital to agriculture. Using them for commercial purposes would be harmful to not only the environment, but also the people and animals living in/around them.

In addition to this proposal, several other related bills have been proposed which would cause even further environmental damage. Some include reducing land controlled by the National Park Service, eliminating the Environmental Protection Agency, and giving Congress complete control over the amount of greenhouse gases produced. The damage that would be done if any of these were passed could be catastrophic.

Though the Trump Administration makes it sound positive—a way to generate more business and create jobs—the reality is those lands are in danger of being contaminated as that larger carbon footprint burns a hole right through what once was pristine, suffocating it. Dave Willis, a member of the Oregon Soda Wilderness Council, spoke out against the proposal saying, "This monument and all of the monuments are gifts to the American people...To damage these monuments doesn't make America great again."

What's wrong with leaving protected land alone? Must everything be industrialized simply to satisfy greed? Will Trump propose shutting down national parks next? If so, what's left? Will these attacks on nature continue until every inch of attainable land is pocked with mine pits and smoke stacks? The very sound of that makes the Earth cry.

"Gratitude is the sign of noble souls."

~ Greek Storyteller, Aesop

Crowdfunding: Kickstarter Redemption

Bradley Edwards

Over the past few years, popular crowdfunding websites Kickstarter and Gofundme have been frequent sources of cynicism and critique for the gaming community. In that time there have been numerous disappointing and questionable campaign results. *Mighty No. 9*, despite excessive funding, turned out to be executed poorly and missed the core elements of the franchise that inspired it. *Yooka-Laylee* did a poor job of meeting more modern gaming standards.

While these products didn't meet the expectations of those who funded them, that is not to say anyone was scammed. While scams do take place, this isn't often true on highly socio-publicized video game campaigns.

Scams are more common on smaller teams and on more myriad products. One example is Backzip's "Kevlar Backpack" campaign, where an unidentified associate was able to take hold of the crowd funded and produced stock, and sell uninhibited through a third party retailer, forsaking the rest of the process. It's often a problem related to someone with the good end of a contract or someone with executive power who isn't the executive behind the project.

However, this dismal narrative for crowdfunding was turned right around recently. The internet was pleasantly surprised by the sudden popularity surge of a few crowd-funded games, one being *A Hat in Time*, a 3D platformer reminiscent of *Super Mario Sunshine* combined with stylistic elements similar to

The Legend of Zelda: Wind Waker. The other, a less recent title, was *Shantae: Half Genie Hero*, which turned out to get decent reception. *Shovel Knight* was another well-received crowd-funded title, one which saw console releases as well.

All of this goes to show that one should take heed when donating money to crowdfunding campaigns, donate sensibly, and when applicable, attempt to evaluate the condition and validity of the creators. Even then, it's still within the realm of possibility that the end content will turn out far better or worse than one may've anticipated. Still, there's no harm in chipping in a couple dollars toward a gaming venture, rather than buying that second candy bar.

Author, Gertrude Stein wrote, "Silent gratitude isn't very much to anyone." Tell someone you appreciate them.

"Thank you is the best prayer that anyone can say."

~ Novelist, Alice Walker



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Thank You All



Mentors

Chris Gordon

Thank You All is a simple concept. Each month I pick something or someone I feel needs to be thanked for their hard work on behalf of our community. I feel honored *The Tamarack* writers, editors, and artists have given me this space in which to do so. Recently, I've been getting a lot of appreciation myself, for my writing in our newspaper, for helping around where I can at SGA events, even for simply being part of the SGA. Honestly, the praise is a little overwhelming, I don't really do that much; I just try to make it a bit easier for everyone else to get done what they need to do. Helping someone do the hard things in their world is what I consider the first duty of psychology, which I'm studying. So, I thank all who have allowed me to offer my small assistance.

Before you start giving me strange looks, no I am not going to thank myself for anything in this column. Who I am going to offer thanks to are the people who taught me how to give in the best manner possible. All my professors are included on this list, but two stand out equally more than the rest: Dr. Kim O'Donnell and Professor Steve Parlato.

These two masters in their fields have never once let me slide in any way, by recognizing a capacity in me I sometimes don't realize I have, and never letting me back down from using it. They have also never held back from letting me know when I get *too involved* in too many things. They've encouraged me to make sure my priorities are focused where they need to be if I am to become a master in my chosen field one day as well.

Thank you to the professors on behalf of students you have inspired and mentored. NVCC is still going strong after 50 years because of the environment of success that will never be abandoned, even as a budget crisis looms. You're inspiring the generation that will lead our nation into the future, so try not to fear what will happen when you retire. Your loyal students will remember what we were taught, and we'll never abandon our dreams.

Readers Respond

Dear Editor,

After reading the article, "Faces in the Crowd: With Each Show," I wanted to respond. I am 46 years old and a fulltime business student. I came to NVCC after being laid off from a job I had for nine years at a help desk. I come to school every day and try my hardest in my courses. Just like Joe Lowndes, I thought that going back to school was out of reach, but now I see that light at the end of the tunnel. Yes, I have struggles; to be honest, I struggle daily... Sometimes it is tougher than others. It was nice to read an article in *The Tamarack* that hits close to home. Working on your dreams makes you work harder. I just wanted Joe to know he is not alone. Keep on fighting for it. You can do it!

Respectfully, Lois Barcomb

Dear Editor,

Thank you for bringing awareness to the CT state budget for community colleges. With proposals threatening to further cut education funds, you are right, it is time for students to get involved. As an NVCC student, I am able to get an amazing education at a reasonable cost. The programs provide students with the best resources. I am in the Electrical Engineering Technology program. The trade-related classes such as CAD and FAB are taught in a professional environment combining hands-on teaching and theory to ensure the most efficient learning. NVCC has good quality teachers willing to go above and beyond to make sure their students have every opportunity to be great.

Though community colleges have a high dropout rate, funds should not be cut. We need funding to help guarantee the success of students. Community college students are that community's future...If community colleges are properly funded, people stay local, find local jobs and build locally. What community doesn't want that? I, like so many other students attending community colleges, have a job. I actually have two jobs. Community

colleges make it easier to manage work and school. You can pace your own learning. I pay tuition out of pocket, and the tuition has already gone up. If the budget is cut again, I don't know if I'll be able to afford school anymore. I can barely afford it now. Don't let the community down. Please don't cut education funding in CT further.

-Thank you, Olivia Crawford

To Whom It May Concern,

It has come to my attention there is a potential budget cut to higher education...and that funding will be taken from community colleges. As a low-income student, I see community college as an opportunity to excel and fulfill a dream of educational success. For low-income families, community college is often the only option. Typically, a low-income family will depend on financial aid or loans to cover the costs of attending community college. When no financial assistance can be awarded, students may choose not to attend due to the costs.

Part of the reasoning for this budget cut to higher education [is to] allow the fulfillment of more seats in magnet and charter schools. I believe the funding should be shared equally throughout all levels of school. Now, if there is a budget cut to higher education, this will take more assistance away from the students who need it most.

If many jobs today require high school diplomas, GEDs, or at least an associate's degree, how should employers expect these requirements if they are harder to achieve due to finances? This applies to people such as myself. I rely on financial aid to assist in paying for my college education. Like many other students, my family is a low-income family, and the only college education we can afford is community college. Therefore, budget cuts will affect me and my fellow classmates. Community colleges need funding, and I do not support potential budget cuts that do otherwise.

Sincerely, Abigail Zakorchevnoy, a low-income student

Dear Connecticut Leaders,

Having affordable tuition at our community colleges is a key point in maintaining residency in our state. Students are more inclined to stay in state if there is an affordable option for higher education. The more students within our state the more tax revenue our state earns. Keeping potential graduates here paying into Connecticut taxes should help the gap in the budget cuts for education. If budget cuts are made to community colleges, tuition costs for students will rise, which may be a deal breaker... If tuition is raised too high, some may decide...to choose a school outside of our state.

Community colleges are important to Connecticut because they allow students to have affordable higher education close to home. Many students can graduate from high school and merge into a community college easily. Community colleges are also important to returning students. Some CT residents put off education to start their families first. Having local community colleges allows returning students to further their education while being able to live at home close to their families.

Connecticut leaders, there are nothing but unfavorable effects felt by community college students from higher education budget cuts. Not only would students feel the personal effects, but it would also endanger our state tax revenue and education income if students decide to attend out-of-state colleges. Having the option to choose community college with affordable tuition has been most beneficial to me. No matter what, college is not cheap, but I have been given a more affordable choice by the state having this opportunity.

Thank you for taking the time to hear me out, as I feel as though I speak for many students throughout Connecticut.

Sincerely, Nicole Pelosi, NVCC Student



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Never Alone

Jessica Ney



In mid-October, in the wake of the Harvey Weinstein scandal, social media blew up with statuses reading "me too." The campaign, originally started almost ten years ago, by a woman named Tarana Burke, has sparked new power this past month. Women everywhere are speaking up, sharing the truth that they have been the victims of sexual harassment or abuse.

This is not the only movement; there have been others, especially on twitter, including: #whatwereyouwearing #youoksis and #survivorprivilege, to name a few. These hashtags stir up conversation and a sense of community, showing women who've been victimized they're not alone. The movement also aims to show people, especially men and the close-minded, that sexual assault is real, and it is everywhere.

I personally have seen girls and women of multiple generations posting their #metoo

stories, some giving details of when and how the abuse happened. It has been incredible and heartbreaking, seeing people I know and love sharing their stories. I am proud of women, but I am ashamed our society has to come to this. Hopefully, this explosion of statements proves sexual assault happens in all communities, within all cultures, across all races and ages.

That being said, the journey cannot end here. Sexual assault is a bigger issue than social media can handle. We're still fighting to be respected in courts, and Title IX is in danger of being pushed into irrelevancy. Athletes, actors, producers, politicians, and others still get away with inappropriate, inexcusable actions. And who takes the blame? The woman and her clothes, the generation the man grew up in, the pressure of their lifestyle, the "boys will be boys" mentality.

It makes me sad to think a simple statement of solidarity can attract so much negative attention. Sexual assault is still a taboo topic; it's shameful to admit to this kind of abuse. To those out there still too crushed—or just unwilling—to speak up, it's okay. We are all on our own timelines. This movement is one of acceptance, reclaiming respect. You are valuable and important, pure and worthwhile. You have not been diminished by what you have experienced. All people and experiences are unique. A Facebook status will not change that.

To those of you who have shared, and to those who choose to remain silent, I commend you. What you're going through isn't easy, and healing takes time. Just remember, you're not alone in the struggle. #metoo.

Our Island in Need

Christian Cruz

Weeks after the catastrophe in Puerto Rico, many Americans are frustrated by the U.S. government's lack of urgency concerning our native island in need. The Trump Administration's initial response was to grudgingly suspend the Jones Act, through October 15th. This law prevented non-U.S. ships docking on Puerto Rico. While the temporary suspension allowed foreign ships to deliver some aid, the response is widely regarded as too little too late. Few ships have docked since the expiration, bringing minimal relief from FEMA.

Puerto Rican Governor Ricardo Rosselló said in a statement, "I think we should have it [a continued suspension]. I think we should have all the tools...at hand; I don't know what the results [will be] of that Jones Act, [being in place] again. We only had it for 10 days. It still needs to be analyzed. It couldn't hurt."

Puerto Rico needs more than just an extended suspension of this law. It is ridiculous that lives are in jeopardy and more has not been done. The U.S. citizens living on Puerto Rico need efforts to speed up. According to multiple sources, thousands of containers of food, water, and other essential supplies are stuck in warehouses. The death toll on Puerto Rico continues to rise, with much of the island still without electricity. Lacking access to clean water, many have resorted to drinking potentially contaminated water, which could lead to

widespread illness.

With the lack of food, water, and other essential resources, how will these Americans survive? And despite Trump grading U.S. relief efforts "a 10," many question why the official response has been so slow, when compared to efforts in Texas and Florida. Granted, according to MSN News, "The US House of Representatives approved a \$36.5 billion disaster aid package for victims in Puerto Rico as well as resources for those in Texas, Florida and the US Virgin Islands still recovering." This is good news, but the fear is it has come too late.

Many have chosen to flee to family in the States, desperate for any flight off the island. Also, according to MSN, "More than 32,000 Puerto Ricans have arrived in Florida." This will undoubtedly burden the public education system, as thousands of displaced students arrive. However, it is important to remember these children are American citizens, and our country should extend to them all the protections and support afforded to any American.

President Trump has repeatedly touted his "America First" ideology. Yet the Administration has allowed other tragedies to take precedent over Puerto Rico, part of America, causing needless deaths due to lack of urgency. Puerto Ricans are Americans, too, and should be treated with the same respect and compassion as victims residing on the mainland.

3D Animation Made Simple

Bradley Edwards



MikuMikuDance is the name of a rather neat, streamlined 3D animation software, released to the internet by Yu Higurashi way back in the day as freeware—as in, using the software itself has no copyright boundaries or use regulations, and it can be downloaded right now for free by anybody. MMD has been software prevalent on the internet for a long time, mostly only noticeable in the form of the many similarly styled, anime-centric Youtube videos that have been floating around.

The nature of these videos gives the community a laidback sort of impression from the outside, but one shouldn't be confused. Whereas the software is freeware, model creators often have their unique usage rights that must be adhered to for use. Models based off of pre-existing properties obviously cannot be used for much more than just for fun, or practice behind closed doors.

After watching many, many videos created with it, I had no idea how easy it was to fool around with this program and make things. It's really a lot easier than one may imagine. Of course, I also have a lot of experience with computer programs and creative tools, so one's mileage may vary. Along with its ease of use, a lot of possibilities for creativity are present.

At the same time, MMD has its shortcomings. Animations created with it very distinctly fall into an anime-esque art style, so if one didn't want that, this tool probably isn't for them. Character models often have physics on their hair and clothes, which can be jittery and buggy without serious tweaks. It's often something people watching and creating simply ignore, as it's a pretty intrinsic flaw of the engine, but it's something to keep in mind.

It takes intuition to set up, but resources are a few Google searches away. MMD is fun to use, and a good hobby for people who like to put things together and make films. It may've been created largely to facilitate anime-styled dance videos, but the freedom it allows makes it capable of much more.

Voice Beats Text

Alyssa Katz

Technology is good for some things, but not for all. While it has become easier to communicate with people on a global scale with the click of a mouse, it's also diminished basic personal communication skills among the younger generations.

Those of us who have grown up with computers have become more accustomed to texting, as well as connecting through all forms of social media, rather than calling. Before this digital age, and even before cell phones, people would communicate by sending letters and plenty of face-to-face human interaction. That has become lost now as faces hide behind computer screens, avatars replace real images, and people may not really be who they say they are.

While it's true many successful relationships form online, whether long distance or not, it is also true online "friends" may not be who they say they are. Maybe some computer-based relationships really do work out, but it's hard to believe considering the possibilities and scenarios. How honest are people on dating websites? How secure are chat rooms, whether it be dating, gaming, fandom, or whatever? Not to mention that there are plenty of scumbag hackers out there looking to infiltrate your computer, smartphone, and other devices just to ruin your life. But this leads into the many forms of cyber-bullying and cyber-security, other topics entirely.

When communicating through text, it's not as easy to recognize feelings as one may think. In fact, it can be even more difficult to interpret them. Emojis, punctuation marks, and all-caps only go so far to convey emotions. But the fact remains it's still monotone, and changes in pitch and tone cannot be determined. Often, conversations through text can be taken the wrong way, and fights between people break out. A simple "ok" can be taken multiple ways.

Speaking directly with someone face-to-face makes it more efficient to read emotional cues such as facial expression and vocal tones. That is not something one generally gets from text. One exception may be for people who find interpersonal communication challenging. Technology continues to expand, and yes it's very convenient, but do we run the risk of turning into zombies so dependent on these devices we're shutting out basic communication skills? Is tech-centric communication turning us into unreachable, expressionless androids?

FACES IN THE CROWD Newly Elected

Smeilyn Abreu

I'm Smeilyn Abreu, Danbury's new SGA Senator. I was born in the Dominican Republic and migrated to the United States in 2011, with my brother and mother. My father stayed in the DR because there was certain paperwork needed for his visa in order for him to come to the U.S.

Coming to the United States was certainly not easy. I was very young and I didn't know English. I've always been a very positive person, though, so I didn't let that stop me. I started school and began to learn English. At the time, I was in the ESL program. I had an excellent teacher who made my life so much easier and helped me with everything I needed. Everything was running smoothly without any problems, and I graduated middle school with honors. I was actually the first recipient to win the "Mrs. Tutiven Award," basically an award given to an outstanding student with a great academic record as well as a history of community service.

I attended Henry Abbott Technical High School, and it was a successful journey. Like I mentioned, I've always been a positive, optimistic person who likes to be involved in my school community. I started joining sports such as tennis, and I became captain of the team by junior year. I was also selected to become a Senior Ambassador, a school



Photo Courtesy of Smeilyn Abreu

translator, a school recruiter, and, last but not least, a school tour guide. High school definitely opened so many doors for me. By senior year I was already sure what school I wanted to attend and what major I wanted to pursue in the future.

Now that I'm in college, I will continue to work very hard, so one day my major goal of becoming a cardiologist comes true. So far, Naugatuck Valley Community College has been great. The environment here is very nice; everyone treats me like I've been here forever. I guess that's one of the advantages of going to a school with a small campus. I'm also very happy to serve as Danbury Senator for NVCC's Student Government Association. It's something I'm very proud of, and I hope to inspire other students to pursue their dreams through hard work and a positive attitude.

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SAFE SPACE



We are an open and affirming student club with a threefold mission:

- 1) to raise awareness about sexual and gender diversity on and beyond campus
- 2) to provide support for LGBT students and our allies
- 3) to embrace diversity in all of its forms.

Meeting Time: Mondays @2:00PM

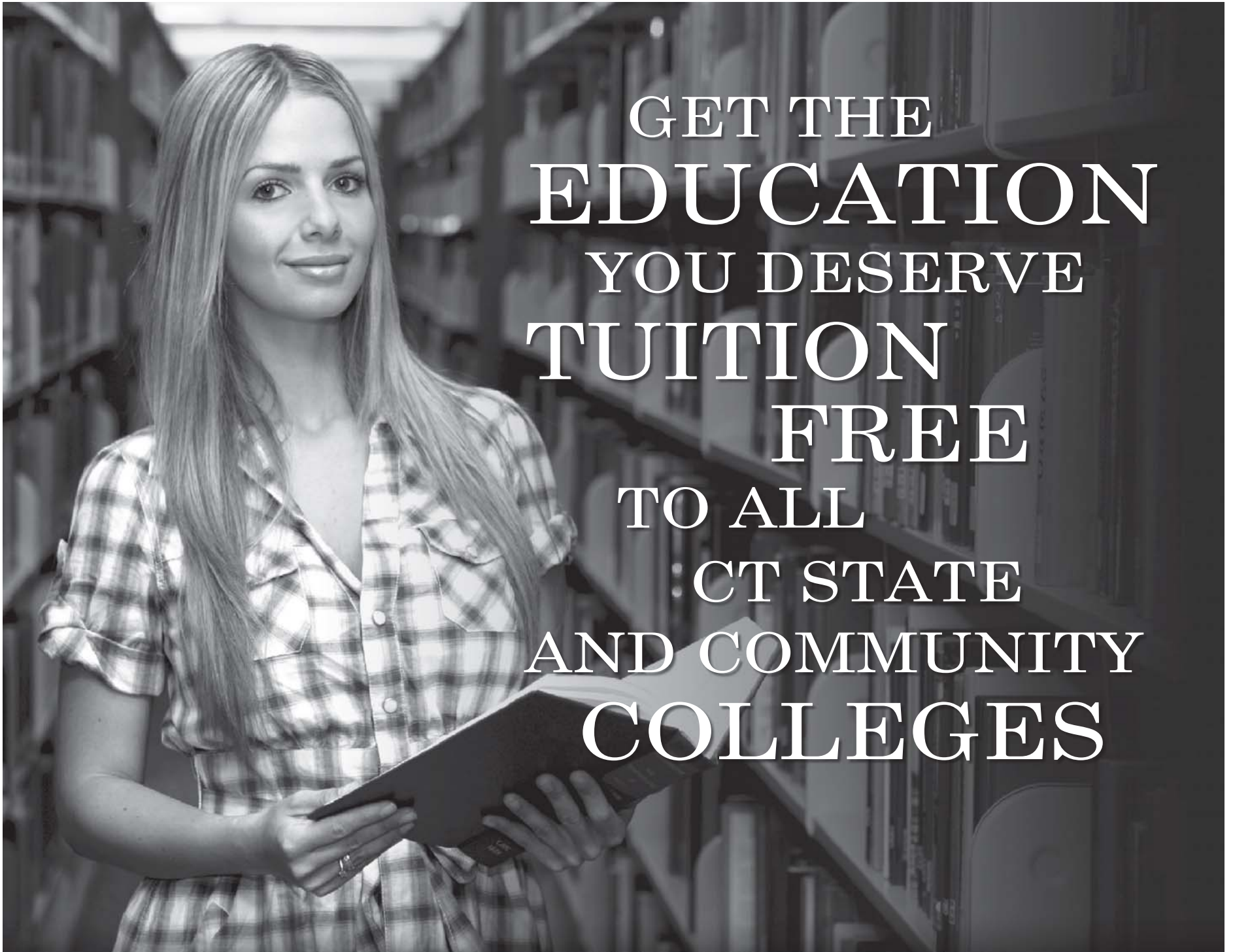
(contact Nikki for meeting location and any questions)

All Are Welcome!

Club Advisor: Nikki McGary (nmcgary@nv.edu)



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Naugatuck Valley Community College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religious creed, age, sex, national origin, marital status, ancestry, present or past history of mental disorder, learning disability or physical disability, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression or genetic information in its programs and activities. In addition, the College does not discriminate in employment on the additional basis of veteran status or criminal record. The following individual has been designated to handle nondiscrimination policies regarding disability policies: Robert Divjak, Director of Facilities/Section 504/ADA Coordinator, Room C216, Naugatuck Valley Community College, 750 Chase Parkway, Waterbury, CT 06708; 203-575-8235. The following individual has been designated to handle nondiscrimination policies regarding sex discrimination as well as other forms of prohibited discrimination: Jacque Swanson, Associate Director of Human Resources/Title IX Coordinator, Room K704, Naugatuck Valley Community College, 750 Chase Parkway, Waterbury, CT 06708; 203-575-8043. [ocm](#)



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