

# The Tamarack

Our college. Our news. Our voice.

Naugatuck Valley Community College

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## Change on the Horizon

Thomas Ackerman

Students could soon see a Common General Education structure among all CT community colleges, allowing for seamless transfer of credit to CT state universities. The proposed policy would reduce total general education courses necessary to graduate. Each community college currently has a unique structure catering to its students' needs. NVCC requires 30-31 general education credits, while some community colleges require 21. The proposal calls for a consistent 21 credits, the minimum to satisfy the New England Association of Schools and Colleges.

"The philosophy here is rather than start at thirty credits and [sometimes] remove them, we are going to start low," said Math Professor Jason Seabury, NVCC's representative on the Framework Implementation and Review Committee (FIRC), which oversees the "transfer tickets," or the Transfer and Articulation Program (TAP). Seabury is also Chair of the Curriculum and Educational Affairs Committee (CEAC), and previous Chair of the General Education Assessment and Curriculum Committee (GEACC). The former is an in-house interpreter of what general education courses should be. The latter helps anticipate how internal changes will collectively affect NVCC departments.

Seabury said NVCC programs, like Allied Health and Engineering, must adhere to outside agency requirements, not just NVCC requirements, or even those of TAP, allowing certain students exemptions from Gen-Ed requirements. Seabury explained these programs require students to take many program-specific courses, limiting room in schedules for 30 Gen-Ed credits.

One example of the many proposed changes is to no longer require a lab-based science course. The Common Gen-Ed proposal is in public comment phase. Groups at each college, including students and faculty alike, are encouraged to submit opinions. Public comments regarding the proposed policy are due Nov. 16th, for NVCC, and could dramatically shape enrollment and requirements for students.

Professor Ronald Picard is part of the group that created the proposal this summer. Serving as an NVCC representative partly because of his involvement as a founding member of FIRC, and his experience with Gen-Ed components in TAP, he has also worked on behalf of the statewide assessment coordinators. Picard said, "TAP transfer tickets are sort of common, but there are still differences among the general education and the tap transfer degrees," adding, "They're trying to create one set of requirements for every program, regardless of college." He said, while not unanimous, the vote on the proposal represented the majority.

As looming consolidation efforts force the CSCU system to interpret questions surrounding modern higher education, it's important to remember students attend community college for different reasons. Some seek manufacturing certification, some pursue specific programs at specific schools. Other students don't yet have clear goals, while some are pursuing an Associate's degree, not planning to study further. Therefore, attempts to create a universal system may yield snags.

Dean of Academic Affairs, Dr. Lisa Dresdner, informed those present at the October 17th SGA meeting about the proposal, mainly asking students what they thought the requirements should include. In an e-mail, Dresdner expressed favor for well-rounded



education. She said it can be difficult to find cohesive opinion at the community college because students have different backgrounds that influence their understanding of education and what community college should be. One student, a veteran, said financial lessons should be required. A nursing student offered another opinion. Some said the measure could enable students to aim for an easy education.

SGA Vice President Ana Cruz said the SGA opinion will largely consist of student opinions expressed at the meeting. Cruz newly serves on

GEACC. In her time with the group so far, she's seen courses are often substituted for sake of student credit, such as offering a field biology course instead of a botany course. Her concern is students may "not know the things [four-year schools] want them to know."

Regardless, TAP may hardly be affected as CT four-year schools work with and trust the community colleges on their requirements to ensure students may enter university as juniors—although the credits may not specifically align with program requirements. There

is not yet a transfer ticket for every major, but Seabury said TAP is making efforts to do just that.

Co-manager of TAP, Professor Candace Barrington, of CCSU, said whatever the consolidated Gen-Ed structure will look like, it will most likely become part of TAP. She said tickets may have to add nine credits to reach the thirty credits, so students will, in fact, enter as juniors with the necessary credit numbers.

The other TAP co-manager, Professor Kenneth Klucznik, from Manchester Community College, offered data in an email showing that of 4,407 community college graduates last spring, 24%, or 1,046 students, showed courses from more than one community college on their transcripts. He said TAP does not have simply accessible numbers on students who are currently enrolled, nor those who did not graduate, but data indicates a substantial number of students attend more than one community college. The common credit would make transferring to other community colleges convenient, though campuses could lack autonomy.

The proposed policy is an aspect of the "Students First Initiative," as CSCU institutions inch toward the 2023 consolidation goal. Seabury said he understands many faculty have the belief that Gen-Ed requirements could be better simplified, regardless of consolidation pressure. Though unclear whether individual aspects of the consolidation may come to fruition before 2023, professors involved said they've been reassured changes will not happen until then.

## Celebrating Veterans

Rick Bellagamba



Displays of generosity, kindness, and patriotism have been nothing short of astounding since 9/11, even though American patriots go back way before 1776. With devoted Americans across the country—people like you and me—opening their hearts to donate time and hard-earned money to honor our veterans, our ability to help service members in need has grown in ways we never thought possible. So, before I say anything else, thank you those wonderful people for their dedication to our country and the sincere generosity they've shown to embody it.

Now consider: out of over 360 million people Americans, only 1% are or were active military members. So why is it approximately 22 veterans, a much higher rate than

in the general population, commit suicide every day? I'd like to address that in a future Veteran's Voice column. Not all veterans have seen death or been wounded during deployments, but for those who have, it can be devastating, and a memory not easily forgotten. The term PTSD is not to be taken lightly; it's real. I'll also address it in the future.

Margaret Thatcher said, "Americans and Europeans alike sometimes forget how unique is the United States of America. No other nation has been created so swiftly and successfully. No other nation has been built upon an idea—the idea of liberty. No other nation has so successfully combined people of different races and nations within a single culture. Both the founding fathers of the United States and the successive waves of immigrants to your country

were determined to create a new identity. Whether in flight from persecution or from poverty, the huddled masses have, with few exceptions, welcomed American values, the American way of life and American opportunities. And America herself has bound them to her with powerful bonds of patriotism and pride."

What binds us together as Americans is not a common ethnicity or loyalty to a ruling family. Our common bond is allegiance to a set of founding principles based on natural rights and individual liberty. That makes our country an exception among nations. It also means those who've taken up arms in service to the United States can be assured their service and sacrifice were for a timeless cause. American veterans deserve to be proud. And those who cherish our freedoms should be grateful for them. If not for generations of patriotic, selfless Americans willing to put life on the line, the freedoms we take for granted could have long ago disappeared.

Our commitment to liberty shouldn't waiver; therefore, neither should our commitment to those who defend it. Veterans know better than anybody the cost of freedom. Veterans also tend to be the most patriotic Americans because they understand what America stands for, what they served and fought for. Their service is deserving of astronomical respect and pride. As we honor our veterans for preserving liberty at home, and where possible, restoring or expanding the blessings of liberty and freedom abroad, let's pledge that our missing POWs will not be forgotten. God bless our veterans, not just on November 11th, but every day, and God bless the U.S.A.

## EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK



## Care-full

Going into Thanksgiving and the holiday season, it is usually an opportunity for everyone to be grateful, not only for

the materialistic objects in this world, but also the company each of us keeps in our tightknit circles. With the end of the year coming into close approach, celebrations are many and all around.

As a community with the atmosphere described above, we sometimes fail to realize that not everyone looks forward to this time of year. Some of us are hurting during this period of celebration. Others may feel embarrassed to share the fact they have no one to be beside this season. This mixture can be rolled into a time of depression and anxiety. This can be especially true with so many troubling realities in our country and world today.

Opening up to others can be hard; we may feel we will risk being looked down upon when asking for some guidance or help. As I ask you to consider this issue, it may lead to you wondering, Okay, Khan, what can we do?

For starters, we can make an effort to spend more time with our friends and colleagues, the people most important to us. We can ask each other how we are really doing. And I'm not talking about school assignments or your kill/death ratio on Fortnite (although those are important as well).

Ask and keep asking because the alternative is being ignorant of each other's need and hidden desires to be heard. We owe it to each other to push ourselves towards better mental fortitude. We human beings are social creatures, and living in solitude, especially during the holidays, has its price and impact. This can be remedied by each of us showing generosity to others. It only takes a small effort to show we care.

Other efforts should be focused on staying safe. November means extra errands, as we prep for holiday celebrations, and this month can also bring about slick, rainy roads—or even snow—so, please drive carefully, as the need for caution in any endeavor is often underestimated. We all know for a fact getting on Interstate 84 from any direction welcomes the beautiful sight of backed up traffic. So take it slow; be careful and caring this month and throughout the season.

Finally, a quote for when you do get to an opportunity to surround yourselves in others' company. Remember Epictetus' advice: "We have two ears and one mouth, so that we can listen twice as much as we speak."

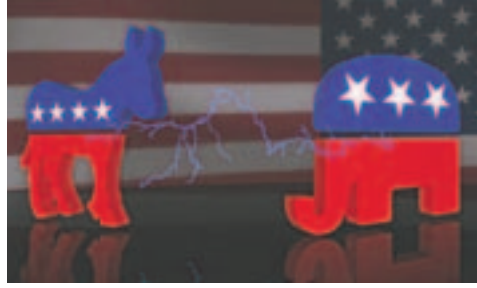
Regards,  
Alam Khan  
Editor-in-Chief  
tamarack@nv.edu

## Challenges Immense for Next Governor

Mark Kacyrat



Ned Lamont (D)



Bob Stefanowski (R)

2018 is vital in Connecticut politics. With attention diverted to congressional midterms and Trump's administration, the nation's wealthiest state (by per-capita income) is tasked with electing a governor and determining legislative control of the General Assembly. Victors will inherit a dire situation, culminating from mismanagement, myopic policy, and decades-long tectonic shifts in industry migration.

This situation includes anemic economic recovery from 2007-2009's "Great Recession" relative to neighboring states and the nation. CT's August 2018 unemployment rate was 4.3%, higher than New York's (4.2%), Massachusetts' (3.6%), and the national average (3.7%), per Bureau of Labor Statistics data. Economic malaise prolonged CT's budget crisis with massive deficits; this despite CT's high income, property, and sales taxes. Results include shrinking population, industry departure, decaying infrastructure, and unprecedented income inequality between poor, racially diverse cities and wealthy, whiter small towns.

Exiting two-term Democratic Governor Malloy inherited and has faced mounting economic and fiscal challenges. After major 2011 and 2015 tax hikes, austere budget cuts, and union concessions, Malloy's successor still faces a two-year deficit of \$4.6 billion. Malloy leaves office as least popular American governor. *The Hartford Courant* puts his most recent approval rating at 24%, lower than Trump's 36% rating, in blue CT.

Democrats' legislative grip on the General Assembly has loosened, with significant Republican House and State Senate gains. Dems hope of keeping CT blue are endangered as Republicans could flip at least one legislative chamber, and elect Bob Stefanowski Governor. Meanwhile, chaos and vitriol churning from the Trump Administration have energized Democrats and liberal activists. Predictions of a "blue wave" involve winning control of at least one chamber of Congress. Central for CT Democrats to maintain power would be electing Lamont.

With major party candidates using Malloy's and Trump's toxic liabilities to attack the opposition, voters are more entrenched than ever in hyper-partisan rhetoric on taxes and spending. Both ends of the political spectrum see CT as manifestation of their worst fears. According to *The Atlantic's* Derek Thompson, liberals consider CT a "microcosm of the national scourge of inequality...a capitalist horror show, where the rich dwell in gilded mansions...while nearby towns face rising poverty..." Conservatives see "liberal dystopia," a textbook example of "big government run amok" with heavy tax burdens destroying the economy. Regardless of politics, it's indisputable: over the past thirty years, CT fell from prosperity, becoming one of the worst performing states.

Past prosperity had several components; first, CT's rich history as manufacturing hub. According to a 2015 tax study, manufacturing accounted for half of CT jobs in the 1950's. In the late 20th century, CT benefited immensely from mass migration from NYC and Boston amidst a nationwide urban crime wave. Accompanying this shift was the surging finance sector, and companies (including General Electric) fleeing urban headquarters for nearby suburbs like Fairfield County. In the early 21st century, attention shifted back to major cities, with crime down and economic activity returning.

Meanwhile, with CT's manufacturing sector imploding, and reliance on finance and insurance unsustainable, Hartford faces bankruptcy. As educated young people increasingly move to major cities, the Manhattan Institute's Aaron Renn states, "At the end of the 20th century, NYC's pain was CT's gain. Now, NYC's (and Boston's) gain is CT's pain."

Another variable is national migration towards the South and Sunbelt. Though warm climates are attractive, lower costs-of-living, taxes, and lax regulation in these Republican strongholds (including AZ, TX, FL) have emboldened conservative arguments against progressive economic policies. State Senator Joe Markley, GOP nominee for Lt. Gov., states in *National Review*, "[CT is] what you get with big government," and the Left suggests "...a bigger dose." Such arguments are quickly dismissed by liberals given NYC and Boston (Dem strongholds with liberal politics and high-tax burdens), are significant beneficiaries of out-migration.

Major corporate entities that recently left CT—UBS and insurance giant, Aetna—relocated to NYC. Most infamously, tech-focused GE moved from Fairfield to Boston, in a state nicknamed "Taxachusetts". GE's maneuver, in the wake of Gov. Malloy and the General Assembly's 2015 tax hikes, is considered the biggest psychological blow to CT pride.

During the prosperous 1980s, CT, unlike its neighbors, had no personal income tax; sales tax and consumer spending were main revenue engines. As reported by *The NY Times* in 1984, CT's defense industry benefitted from Reagan-era defense spending, and CT experienced growth in non-defense industries, like insurance. At decade's end, and into the 1990's, economic recession, coupled with shrinking defense spending, strained state finances. According to *The Times* in 1988, lawmakers foreseeing major budget shortfalls felt enormous pressure to balance the budget within existing tax structure; suggesting an income tax was considered political suicide. With continued deficits, during the 1990 election cycle, pro-income tax voices grew persuasive. In 1991, newly-elected Independent Gov. Weicker's budget enacted CT's controversial income tax. This consequential moment proved a cornerstone to policy debate in 2018's elections.

Another factor is CT's historic failure to fund teacher and state employee retirement benefits. According to *The CT Mirror*, "CT saved nothing between 1939 and 1971, and very little until the mid-1980's—to cover pensions promised to state employees and teachers." *The Mirror* adds CT's inadequate responses to this problem arguably resulted in creation of the state income tax. Even with its implementation, politicians in both parties failed to make pension contributions. With CT basking in good economic times, savings weren't prioritized. CT ran up \$6.1 billion in surpluses between 2000 and 2014. However, only 1/3 was saved in reserve; the rest was spent. *The Mirror* reports CT "has racked up \$74 billion in unfunded retirement benefit obligations and bonded debt."

With variables and complexities, but no easy solutions, both major parties have completely opposing philosophies for rebuilding CT. November 6th, CT voters choose. Whether we wake after Election Day with Lamont or Stefanowski as governor, many unpalatable choices await.

## SGA PRESIDENT



## November to Remember

Happy November, and congrats! If you've made it this far, that means you're almost done with the first semester of the year! This month is all about being thankful, and I am thankful that I only have one more month after this. The month of November is much tamer with the events the SGA will be hosting. Don't worry, though. Although we have fewer things happening this month, we still have plenty of fun planned!

On November 1st, 15th, and 29th we will be hosting our Karaoke Power Hour! As always, it will be held in Prism Lounge from 12:30 - 2:00 PM. We will also be serving cookies and juice during the event, so even if you aren't singing, it can be a fun time to check out those who are. Come have some refreshments and support your friends!

We also have a few campus conversations that students can benefit from happening this month. Our first campus conversation for November is "Men and Masculinity" on November 13th in L501 from 12:45 - 2:00 PM. Our second campus conversation of the month will be a "Q & A with the Financial Aid Staff" on November 19th from 12:45 - 1:45 PM in L501. At both events, lunch will be provided for students who attend. Come take part in the discussions. You're sure to leave with some new perspectives and information.

Don't forget we hold SGA meetings every Wednesday in room L501 from 4:00 - 5:00 PM. All are welcome to attend these meetings which are open to the public. Sitting in on a meeting is a great way to learn what's happening on campus. You might even decide to join a club—or consider running for an SGA senator position. If you have any questions call us at 203-596-2185 or swing by the SGA office in S516.

Best Regards,  
Tabitha Cruz

## Looking Forward

### Tamarack Staff

As the retirement of longtime faculty member, Professor William H. Foster III, approaches, many have wondered aloud how this fixture of the English Department family—and former faculty advisor to *The Tamarack*—will spend his upcoming "free time." In the following poem, Prof. Foster answers the question on so many people's minds.

### Retirement: "What are you going to DO?"

What I've always done.

Find stories. Collect stories. Share stories.

Remember stories. Write stories.

Publish my work. Publish the works of others.

Smile. Laugh. Breathe. Hug. And laugh again.

Wake up refreshed. Go to sleep peacefully

Show appreciation. Be appreciated.

Enjoy the company of my fabulous and far-flung family.

Look deeply in the eyes of friends and share meaningful and nonsensical tales.

Tell the truth, and if possible, not hurtfully.

Encourage the young, and support the not-so-young.

Sing with all that is within me.

Be more tolerant of ignorance and less tolerant of cruelty.

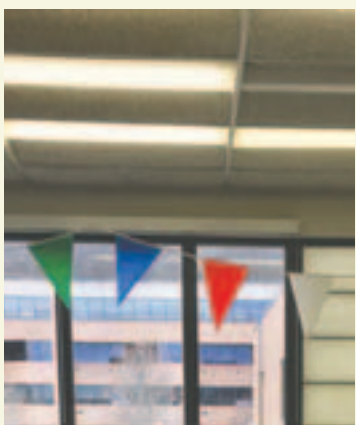
Travel. Explore. My town. My state. My country. My world.

Enjoy every birthday. Mine and others.

And some other stuff.

Because each new day is *always* a beginning....

William H. Foster III (10/2018)



### Can you find it?

This month, we've featured another picture of an area of campus you probably pass countless times each week. But can you correctly identify it? Submit your answer to tamarack@nv.edu for a chance to win a \$10 Dunkin Donuts gift card! Winner will be chosen randomly from correct entries received.

# The Tamarack

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

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## Tamarack EDIT MEETINGS

**Tuesdays 2:00 pm, S519  
ALL WELCOME!!**

## EDITORIAL

### Inequality's Effect on Mental Health

Mental health has always been something people have chosen not to look at closely. Until recent years, being admitted to a mental health ward was more like being sent to a prison than a place of recovery. But mental health issues must not be hidden away. Conditions such as depression, bipolar affective disorder (BPAD) and many others continue to grow, creating an issue for society. But have we stopped to consider maybe it's society causing issues regarding people's mental health?

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), worldwide, over 23 million people suffer from schizophrenia; 60 million suffer from BPAD, and 300 million suffer from depression. All these conditions carry a higher risk of suicide. The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention names suicide as the tenth leading cause of death in the USA. In individuals with mental illness, the likelihood of suicide is 15% higher than in the general population. For instance, it is estimated that 30-50% of those diagnosed with BPAD, will commit or attempt to commit suicide at some point.

A common reaction to mental illness is to dismiss it as a biological problem. Yes, it is true some people are genetically more susceptible; however, it's more likely this epidemic of mental health issues has a cause rooted more within society rather than within individual biology. All around the world we see issues like gender discrimination, poverty, and other forms of social inequality. Statistics show people who are in minority groups often are more at risk for mental illness. This is not to say social inequalities are the only factor involved, but WHO recognizes the environment in which a person lives has a significant influence on mental health.

Clashing of differences and misunderstandings can deepen biases and create a divide which reinforces inequalities and stereotypes. In order for things to get better concerning mental health, we must work to fix the underlying problems. Treating mental illness is good, but preventing it would be better for everyone. It's true illnesses such as depression and other disorders would still be present, even if inequalities did not exist, but working to resolve social conflict would definitely make a difference, and perhaps reduce the number of new cases diagnosed each year.

It is no secret social inequality puts a strain on individuals, and that increased stress and hardship creates a decrease in overall health. Until we can create more social equality, we'll have to resign ourselves to simply treating mental illnesses as they come—paying the price in higher rates of mental illness and suicide.

## Center for Teaching

### Resilience

Lou Lombard

*Louis Lombard, Associate Professor of English, teaches at both the Waterbury and Danbury campuses. Co-coordinator of First Year Experience, and interim Associate Dean of LABSS, he is a longtime CFT committee member.*

On my first day as a freshman business major at Fairfield University, I sat through my first class (an accounting course) and decided this field of study was not for me. Though my dad had encouraged me to take this path, my heart beat for writing and literature. I knew I had to make a difficult decision. So I sat in front of the Dean's office for over an hour weighing the pros and cons, and then I successfully changed my major to English.

I didn't know at the time how much this one decision would impact my future. Subsequently, I did not look forward to a conversation with my dad that evening when I would have to break that news to him. To my surprise, he was not disappointed in me... quite the opposite. He told me he was proud that I had made the decision to follow what I was passionate about and "resilient" in my determination and focus.

I had previously defined "resilient" in simple terms, "the ability to bounce back" from a difficult situation. However, when my dad characterized me that way, I felt more was inferred, so I researched the term. I soon discovered that one who is resilient has a "growth" mindset that embraces challenges, remains optimistic when facing roadblocks, sees effort as a path to mastery, learns from criticism, and is inspired by the success of others. A resilient student doesn't just survive in college but thrives; one is fully engaged intellectually, socially, and emotionally. Soon I experienced a sense of psychological well-being that instilled not only the persistence to graduate but achieve success in life.

When some students receive a low grade on a paper or have a bad day in class, they might tend to think they should not be in college. Resilient students, however, have the ability to look beyond such negative experiences, learn from each, and come back from failure to try again. Recently, I used the word to springboard a five-minute free-write with my 0% composition students, and their responses in our ensuing discussion were eye-opening.

They truly expressed what it was to be resilient, defining resilience as "determination and grit needed to make it through difficult circumstances," "physical and mental toughness," "trying your best, even in the worst situations," and "grasping the power of positive thinking". Consequently, they all understood an important truth: we are all endowed with the ability to be resilient, but it is up to each one of us to let it surface and embrace it.

## A Powerful Intersection

Tamarack Staff



With no end to the opioid crisis in sight, Dr. Sandra Valente, Program Coordinator of NVCC's Drug and Alcohol Rehabilitation Counselor Program, has been a tireless voice for community education around topics of addiction and recovery. In addition to speaking at conferences, securing grant money, and offering monthly trainings in the use of

**"The Intersection of Trauma and Addiction," the conference, will take place in Founders Hall Community Room on November 30th, from 8:00 AM – 4:00 PM.**

NARCAN to save a life in the case of overdose, Valente continues to offer regular events on campus to educate members of the NVCC and Greater Waterbury communities.

On November 30th, from 8:00 AM – 4:00 PM, these efforts continue with a powerful conference aligned with the mission of NVCC's DARC Program to educate and raise awareness around issues of addiction and recovery. Titled, "The Intersection of Trauma and Addiction," the conference will take place in Founders Hall Community Room.

Several speakers will be in attendance to address the ongoing opioid crisis, as well as topics including: brain-based effects of trauma and addiction, trauma associated with first responders handling overdoses in the field, and Mind/Body interventions to address trauma and addiction. There will also be the screening of a new film, *Resilience: The Biology of Stress and the Science of Hope*, during lunch. The event is free of charge, and all are welcome to attend.

According to the event flyer, the conference has several concrete objectives, and attendees will gain the following by participating:

- Recognize the widespread impact of trauma
- Describe physiological connection between trauma/addiction
- Describe the impact of opiate overdoses on first responders, family members, treatment providers and the community
- Integrate trauma-specific interventions into substance abuse treatment
- Describe body-based interventions for trauma such as yoga, art, music therapies, drumming, psychodrama
- Connect with community resources who provide trauma and addiction treatment

Participants will also receive a certificate of participation for six hours education upon completion of the daylong conference.

Those with questions are encouraged to contact Dr. Sandra Valente, Ph.D. at (203) 596-8655, or via email at svalente@nv.edu. To register, visit: Eventbrite: (<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/the-intersection-of-trauma-and-addiction-tickets-51249341159>)

While the event is appropriate for professionals within the fields of psychology and recovery, students, faculty, and staff are strongly encouraged to attend. As no one is immune to the effects of trauma, and addiction continues to impact individuals and families across all sectors of our community, it is more important than ever to recognize the link between the two. Attending the November 30th event, "The Intersection of Trauma and Addiction," could provide a step toward healing—both on a personal and community level.

## Game On (For Now)

Thomas Ackerman, Gwenydd Miller

October 18th marked the end of a week-long closure for the Café East game room. The closure followed complaints of loud music, excessive noise level in general, and vulgar language. This is not the first time the room has been temporarily closed. During the closure, a sign was posted, along with police tape, restricting use of the area for the week. The ping-pong table was removed, but the pool tables stayed.

The SGA made the choice, in response to a public safety dispatcher's comments at the October 10th SGA meeting. SGA President Tabitha Cruz and Vice President Ana Cruz said the officer expressed frustration at trying to work across the hall despite the noise. The SGA officers added, "We would see trash [in the area] every day."

Dean of Student Services, Sarah Gager, explained that student fees—ranging from \$15

to \$20 per semester, depending on number of credits—pay for repairs and maintenance of the game tables. Regarding the equipment—two pool tables and two ping-pong tables—both ping-pong tables were recently replaced. Gager said, of the old tables, one was broken and beyond repair, and the other was damaged.

The Dean also mentioned an ongoing investigation regarding a student who recently broke one table, but she was unable to provide details. She added a volleyball court was constructed last year, as well as a bocce court, outside Founders Hall, last spring. She said she understands students' need to expend energy, and she hopes the outdoor courts will gain popularity in warm weather.

First-year student, Josh Escaraman, who occasionally watches game play, said,

"Collective punishment is a little unfair." Others felt the punishment set a precedent for students. Josh Martinez, who has attended NVCC for three years, plays at the tables often. He said, "I didn't like [the closure] at first, but I came around to their reasoning."

On the day the game room reopened, SGA officers noticed less noise and mess. They hope these improvements continue. Though there is interest in moving the game room elsewhere, few feasible options exist. Dean Gager recalled the game room was once located in S502, now a meeting room, across from Student Activities. That room, however, was deemed too small, and its closable doors sent a non-welcoming message. It seems the weeklong closure made an impact, so—for now, at least—Café East remains a spot for students to decompress.

**October 18th marked the end of a week-long closure for the Café East game room.**

## Happenings @ Other Colleges

Alyssa Katz



### Minnesota State University Mankato

Food insecurities are a growing issue, as there are people who don't know where their next meal is going to come from. And, as expressed in *The Tamarack*, with the addition of opening a food pantry on campus, no one should have to go hungry. November 10–18th is National Hunger and Homeless Week, and MSU Mankato is participating in bringing more awareness. Last year, they had a chili cook-off where all proceeds went to the campus kitchen to help address food insecurities. A food drive was also held. In addition, to raise awareness on homelessness, students participated in a camp-out for one night on campus to get a sense of the hardships of being without a home.

<https://www.mnsu.edu/activities/kitchen/hungerandhomelessawareness.html>



### Oxford University

On November 21 at St. Luke's Chapel, visiting professor Supriya Chaudhuri will give a lecture titled, "The Social Life of Modernism: Conversation, Literary Community, and Espionage in 1930s Calcutta". In a time of literary radicalism, the rises of fascism and socialism in Europe, including Hitler's rise to power, India was struggling with becoming a modern nation. There were modernist groups that had shared interests and social expression, but one community in Calcutta responded to such modernist topics through their literary journal "Parichay". Its members met regularly to discuss various topics, an environment similar to salons during the Enlightenment period. It not only included artists, writers, and poets, but historians, spies, and socialists. Professor Chaudhuri will discuss the time period, sharing archives from the Parichay.

<https://torch.ox.ac.uk/social-life-modernism>



### Cypress College

In celebration of Veterans' Day, California's Cypress College takes a "different" approach, with their "A Different 1%" event. Less than 1% of the U.S. population serves in the armed forces, not including those in the Army National Reserve. The intention behind this event is for veteran-artists to share their artwork, as well as have workshops and film screenings while also speaking about the consequences of war. The event itself actually started back in September, with each veteran-artist offering a workshop. The final one is on November 8th. The eight veteran-artists include Combat Paper/Drew Cameron, Thomas Dang, Amber Hoy, Aaron Hughes, Ash Kyrie, Mark Pinto, Folleh Shar Tomba, and Ehren Tool.

<https://www.cypresscollege.edu/event/a-different-1-veterans-day-reception/>



### University of Utah

The University of Utah has been honoring U.S. veterans since 1998; every year, their U of U Veterans' Day Committee selects a number of veterans to be recognized and honored at an annual commemoration ceremony. Last year, those honored—men and women—were from all branches of the military and were active in Vietnam, Iraq, Afghanistan, and Korea. In addition to the ceremony, the college will have various events from Nov. 5th - 10th. During the whole week, people are invited to sign the "Wall of Honor," thanking veterans for their service. Nov. 7th will feature a panel discussion, "U.S. Military Impact on Cybersecurity," and the commemoration ceremony will take place on the Nov. 9th.

<https://veteransday.utah.edu/schedule-of-events/>

## Between the Bookends

### News from the NVCC Library

#### Research? We've Got Your Back!

Jaime Hammond



Photo Courtesy of Max Raul Egusquiza

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

This month's column is all about research. You're probably writing a research paper right now—and the library has many tools to help you write a great one!

**Getting Started:** If you're not sure where to start with a research assignment, meeting with a librarian is a great first step. There are a few ways you can do it: stop by the reference desk (the desk in the back of the room in L523) and ask the librarian for assistance; email us at [library@nvcc.edu](mailto:library@nvcc.edu); or use one of the pop-up chat boxes on our library webpages. But one of the best ways to start is to make an appointment with a librarian.

It's easy to do—just click "Schedule an Appointment with a Librarian" on the library's homepage, or go directly to <http://nvcc.libguides.com/appointments>. There you can choose the day, time, and librarian you want to meet with. You'll also receive an email confirmation telling you where to go. On the day of the appointment, show your assignment to the librarian, and he or she will recommend resources like books, articles, and other

materials to get you started. Trust us, it's the most productive 30 minutes you'll spend all day!

**Finding Resources:** Many students wonder what kinds of sources to use for a research paper. You may have heard the terms "peer reviewed" or "scholarly," but be unsure what they mean. And what about books? The library subscribes to many databases—collections of online articles from magazines, journals, and newspapers—you can search for articles. You can even check off a box to limit to "peer reviewed" journals, which means other experts reviewed the article before publication.

You might wonder why you need to use the library databases for these kinds of articles. Aren't they available through Google? The answer is no! Just like HBO or Netflix, many articles are only available to subscribers (that's why you might be asked to pay for a pdf you found on a publisher's website). The NVCC Library subscribes to these journals for you, so don't pay for anything! If you can't find something you need, ask a librarian. We have magical ways of getting things (actually we just borrow them from other libraries, but that's pretty magical).

**Citing Your Sources:** Sometimes the worst part of writing a research paper is creating the citations at the end. Are you using MLA or APA? What about in-text citations? Students often have many questions, and there are a lot of tools available to help you. In fact, the NVCC Librarians have put them all together for you on this handy webpage: <http://nvcc.libguides.com/CitationGuides>. Feel free to contact a librarian for help. That's what we're here for!

Good luck on your papers, and don't forget, the NVCC Library staff are here for you!

## Honoring Adjuncts

### Philosophic Detective Work

Neil Erian, M. A. Philosophy, Fordham University, 2004



Photo Courtesy of Neil Erian

I teach introduction to philosophy and ethics at NVCC. I see myself as NVCC's Willy Wonka of philosophy. My goal is to bequeath to my students the sense that ideas matter and that philosophic thinking will develop within them self-control. Ideas move the world, and to know and care about what ideas motivate you will give you the calm confidence to face a lifetime.

NVCC does not have a philosophy major, so most students take my class as a requirement or out of curiosity. For many, my philosophy class is likely to be the only one they will ever take. So I have one chance to warn them of the Hornsnozzlers, Snozzwangers, Vermicious Knids and Whangdoodles of philosophic infamy from the ancient to the modern worlds.

What is our method of navigating the ideas of these creatures? In a word, reason. In practice, reason deals with the problems of human existence by conceptual means, the distinctively human capacity to generalize from observed facts. Many of my students start college knowing the facts that give rise to fields such as criminal justice, nursing, physical therapy, business finance, engineering, social work, etc. Starting from empirical fact, reason forms basic principles in each of these fields, which then become the practical knowledge of an education sought by NVCC students.

"You must also seek practical knowledge in philosophy," I insist to them. "The Hornsnozzlers, Snozzwangers, Vermicious Knids and Whangdoodles of history have only made it seem like philosophy is impractical." Pointing out this fact often becomes an epiphany moment for my students, who get excited to begin their journey into philosophy. There are four practical problems that give rise to the field of philosophy: the problem of reality, the problem of knowledge, the problem of values and the problem of society.

In my class, we survey the major philosophers who apply reason to address each of these problems. Along the way enter the philosophic skeptics who often challenge the very identity of reality, the validity of conceptual knowledge, including moral knowledge, the possibility of a just society. "Skepticism," I explain to students, "has led to the widespread view that philosophy is impractical." Therefore, in our modern age of skepticism, the best place to start addressing the four problems is in your own life.

Be your own philosophic detective. Apply reason to the problems of the body but also recognize the needs of your intellect. Recognize that as a conceptual being you need a philosophy and, indeed, you come to the world with answers to the four problems that have motivated you since childhood. Now, as an adult seeking a formal education, wouldn't it be better to become fully aware of your own philosophy and examine it critically, rather than leave it unidentified and out of your control? By self-examination you will achieve self-control and happiness. And as a secondary consequence, your rational example might just give some skeptical Whangdoodle pause.

I hope to see you in my class.



## A Multicultural Celebration of Bread

Karlene Ball, ESL Program Coordinator

Bread occupies the soul of so many cultures. We celebrate with it, we pray with it, and we nourish our bodies with it. NVCC's Office of Multicultural Affairs invites you to join us for *A Multicultural Celebration of Bread*, to be held Monday, Nov. 12, 2018 in Café West from 12:30 - 2:00pm.

At the event, 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 naan, pita, tortilla, hard dough, chapati, matzo, roti and more. The event is supported by members of NVCC's ESL Program, Hispanic Student Union, and Black Student Union. Please enjoy this excerpt from a poem, written by a Monastic Sister.

### Poem of Bread

Bread,  
without which  
we could not survive.

All of us,  
we are hungry for bread,  
but also for more than just bread

The world  
runs wild

earning its bread

Men  
will do anything  
for a crust of bread

In certain camps,  
a single crumb of bread  
is worth its weight in gold

Sometimes thrown into garbage cans,  
it scandalizes the enormous eyes  
of starving children

Bread,  
which is useless to hoard in the attic,  
for tomorrow it will go stale or another will  
take it

Bread,  
which God made rain down from heaven,  
but which could not be preserved from one  
day to  
the next

Bread,  
braided by the hands of so many women  
throughout the centuries

Bread,  
which in the world,  
shaped humanity like an invisible chain.

**Tamarack  
Edit Meetings**

**Tuesdays  
2:00 - 3:00, \$519  
ALL WELCOME!!**



**CAPSS CORNER**

**You Want to Know What?**

Every month, a member of the CAPSS office sits down to write an article for this column, "CAPSS Corner". Our goal is always to share information with the study body and campus community regarding events or topics highlighting our expertise. We've written columns about advising, transfer, Degree Works, and mentoring, to name a few.

As I began to consider what wonderful tidbits and insights could be shared this month, I

**What is it you need to know from us to be successful in your educational endeavors?**

suddenly realized we may be approaching this all wrong. While our goal is to educate and inform, we've never considered whether what we're writing about is what you, as students, want to hear.

We never know how many people read "CAPSS Corner" (though I hope at least some of you do!). So, we decided one way to determine what you want to know would be to use this month as an opportunity to ask you, our students, to tell us. What is it you need to know from us to be successful in your educational endeavors?

Here's your challenge: Reflect on your educational journey thus far and where you want to go in the future. Consider whether there are any questions or topics you feel you need more information about. Are there educational questions you haven't been able to get answered? If there are, then ask away. Let us know what you want to know!

You can reach us in many ways. Email us at CAPSS@nv.edu, call us at (203) 575-8025, or stop by Kinney Hall, Room 520, any time Monday through Thursday 8:00 AM – 6:00 PM and Friday from 8:00 AM until 5:00 PM.

Telling us what you want to know will give us an opportunity to help you reach your educational and personal goals in an informed way. No question is too silly or insignificant. They're all important, especially if there's information you're missing that is preventing you from being successful. We look forward to hearing from you!

Regards,  
**Bonnie Goulet,**  
Director of Student Development Services

**Politically Active**

Michael Matovu and Anthony Ragaini

Our names are Michael Matovu and Anthony Ragaini, and like many of you, we're current NVCC students. What you may not know is that we are two politically active individuals in our community, whose only focus is to better everybody's lives around us by helping support politicians we believe advocate for students.

We are part of a student-run coalition called "Students for Jahana Hayes". Our purpose, during the primaries, was to back the candidate we believed would be best for students. We chose Jahana Hayes. I remember during the primaries it was us seven students, from 10:00 AM to 8:00 PM, phone banking, canvassing all over Waterbury and beyond, just to get Hayes' name out. It all worked out because we believed in her dedication towards students.

That backstory is to tell you that, as a college student—whether planning to transfer or stay at NVCC—it is important to be politically active in your community. After all, one candidate may be the politician who will positively affect your academics and your life. However, if the opponent, a politician who may be counterproductive to your life, ends up winning, part of the reason why your candidate lost is because you failed to do your duty as an American citizen.

Your chance to avoid that mistake has arrived. Anthony and I have decided to start a club called the Political Science Club. It was formerly going to be called the "Young Dems of NVCC," but the administration suggested a more bipartisan focus. First, we plan to encourage NVCC students like us to register to vote, and second, we want to teach them about ways to be politically active in their respective communities.

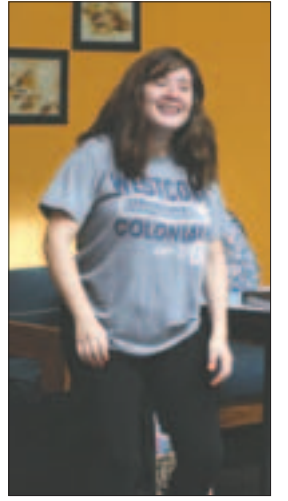
Our goal is to get people, no matter their political ideology, to come together and have civil conversation or debate. We want to try to lessen the divide between club members of different political parties and also create meaningful relationships and provide students with ways to network.

President Barack Obama once said, "A change is brought about because ordinary people do extraordinary things." This is so true. If a group of ordinary college students, like us, can band together, we are capable of accomplishing the extraordinary.

For information on the club, contact Michael at (203) 551-4444 or via email at mmatovu97@gmail.com or reach Anthony at (203) 901-0026 or via email at araga0003@mail.ct.edu.

**Karaoke Power Hour**

Christian Soto



Photos Courtesy of Tabitha Cruz

Showcase your musical talents at the Karaoke Power Hour. The event, which has become a hit in its first semester, will be held again in Prism Lounge from 12:30 p.m. to 2 p.m. on Thursday, November 1st, and Thursday, November 15th, sponsored by the SGA. The event is open to everyone, so show up and sing some songs.

Song choices range across all genres, including hip-hop, rock, R&B, pop and more from the 90s, 2000s, and 2010's. All you have to do is sign up and pick a song from the list. Participants take turns, with some singing multiple songs.

There are even two microphones set up for those who want to perform duets.

This is a great opportunity to show your talent, have fun, and meet new people. It can also help you get out of your comfort zone, express yourself, and help with any social anxiety. If you have hopes of being a performer, the supportive atmosphere is a good place to start. Refreshments and snacks are served, so stop by even if you don't want to perform. Bring your friends and come enjoy the show!

**Food Pantry Update**

Professor Kathleen Leblanc

Though the month of November brings Thanksgiving, it's important to remember this isn't a time of plenty for everyone. Along with colder temperatures, many NVCC students continue to deal with food insecurity. Fortunately, the NVCC Food Pantry is equipped to help students who are facing hunger. For the remainder of the fall semester, the official pantry hours are as follows: Monday through Thursday, the pantry is open from 9:00 AM - 5:30 PM. Friday hours are 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM.

While the pantry does provide grab-and-go snacks free of charge, it shouldn't be thought of as a cost-free option to the cafeteria. Instead, the pantry provides a service to students struggling

financially who can't cover their nutritional needs throughout the week. It's a place where a hungry student who's short on funds—one who forgot to bring a meal to campus, or may have nothing at home to bring—can come for help.

In addition to quick snacks, like granola bars, the pantry is now offering grocery service. This will help students provide healthy meals for themselves and their families when financial instability makes that a challenge. You can find the pantry, located in Ekstrom Hall, Room 308, by following the signs from ACE. If you, or a student you know, would benefit from a snack or grocery items, we're here for you.

**Fulbright + Fall = Fun**

Tamarack Staff



Photo Courtesy of Chris Rempfer

Professor Chris Rempfer spearheaded a fun fall activity celebrating our latest Fulbright Scholar, Aguibou Bougobali Sanou (Bouba). A group of LABSS faculty and staff spent Saturday, October 20th, at Cheshire's Norton Bros. Farm, with Bouba and his wife, Mariette, and young son, Nolan, enjoying a day of apple picking. The photo features (l to r) Mariette Some, Academic Dean Lisa Dresdner, Dr. Sandra Valente, Rempfer, and Bouba.

**FACE IN THE CROWD  
Passion to Perform**

Teagan Gavin

Hi, everyone! My name is Teagan Gavin and I am currently enrolled as a full time theatre major here at NVCC. One thing you should know about me is that I have always felt very connected to performing arts. I started singing from a young age and started playing instruments in high school, eventually going on to perform music shows with my performing arts club. However, I had always wanted to be a part of theatre, a program my high school didn't offer.

When I graduated and enrolled at NVCC, I realized my passion for theatre was more achievable than ever before. Since then, I have become heavily involved in both theatre and music, and collaborate with Stage Society and Music Society. These clubs have provided me with some of the most wonderful opportunities, such as being a part of productions and events.

You may have seen me in theatre shows such as *Next to Normal* (Natalie Goodman) or *Hearts Like Fists* (Jazmin) as well as being a reoccurring performer at Music Society's coffeehouses. What I love most about being in musicals is that I'm able to convey emotion through singing, as I feel as though music is something that connects everyone. As of right now, I am more than grateful to be working on another musical with the theatre department called *Little Shop of Horrors*. Our production opens November 15th and runs



Photo Courtesy of Teagan Gavin

till the 18th, so we hope to see you all there!

Aside from my passion for the arts, I still have to focus on school. The most challenging part of the week is finding a balance between school, rehearsal, and other activities. My advice to other students who are facing scheduling problems which are similar to mine is to plan ahead and focus on yourself. Planning ahead in your schedule can give you an idea of when you will have free time to sit back and breathe. As for focusing on yourself, I suggest taking at least one day out of every week to recharge. I normally do this by spending a full day out with friends or having a self-care day.

As this year brings me closer to graduating, my plans for after NVCC include getting into a musical theatre conservatory to continue my study of the arts as well as moving out of state to push myself out of my comfort zone, something I hope everyone takes a chance at doing!

## New Name, Same Noble Goal

Christopher Gordon

You might have noticed two faces in the halls these past few years; they might've even appeared in one of your classes. Those faces belong to Marines Wilson and Laura Dunlap. Wilson is head of the recently renamed Transitions Program, now called "Step to NVCC". Dunlap is her Teaching Assistant. While both work hard for students enrolled at NVCC, they aren't faculty members; instead, they're employed by Waterbury's School Board to assist at-need students in finding college success.

These carefully selected students, with great college potential, for one reason or another, haven't been encouraged to progress past high school. A few might not have had the chance to get that far. Despite some who doubt these students, Wilson and Dunlap show each day that all young people deserve a chance to grow beyond their current limits.

By focusing on aspects of school life: encouraging effective study habits, promoting self-advocacy and communication skills, and offering tools to support each other effectively as a group, Step to NVCC has shown major benefits for many students who've achieved success after leaving this needed setting.

Step to NVCC does more than just prepare

high school students for the reality of college. It also provides a safe place for them to find extra help with homework or other problems they might face. It's important to note this program does not ask professors to modify any part of their instruction. Instead, it focuses on helping students adapt to new challenges found during college, though it doesn't claim to be a permanent solution.

As someone with a diagnosed disorder (autism), which some students enrolled in this program also have, I'm happy Step to NVCC is helping those faced with problems I have to overcome daily. I've struggled for years against a tide of "help" that in reality served to hold me back. Through the same level of commitment these students have to a higher education, I also overcame some of the hardest challenges college presents. I learned to work in a group, to advocate for myself, and to deal with getting work done as expected without reminders.

Wilson states, "We expect students to do the work; we do not expect perfection." Her attitude speaks to the world of potential that exists within Step to NVCC students. Happily, Wilson and Dunlap continue striving to help those students recognize it.

## PRIDE Conference 2018

Derek Spearrin and Alexis Levesque



Members of NVCC's Safe Space Club, from left, Heath Ruszkowski, Club President Alexis Levesque, Derek Spearrin, and Andrew Robinson attend CSCU PRIDE.

On October 13, 2018 several members of Naugatuck Valley Community College's Safe Space Club attended the inaugural, one-day CSCU PRIDE Conference at Middlesex Community College. PRIDE, by the way, stands for Promoting Respect Inclusion and Diversity Everywhere. This conference is and was organized by graduates from Asnuntuck Community College's Women's Leadership Institute, Kasey Dennehy and Audrey Eckhart. This program has been expanded to Tunxis Community College as well. Efforts are being made to have the newly developed program become a systemwide program offered on all of the State Colleges' campuses.

The students had the idea of creating a one-day pride conference geared towards raising awareness, focused toward community college students, believing it to be a great way to promote open dialogue within the LGBTQ Community.

Several workshops were offered, and

vendors were on hand to help kick off the inaugural conference at MXCC. CSCU President Mark E. Ojakian delivered the opening address, followed by MXCC's Interim Dean Dr. Steve Minkler and Asnuntuck's Dean Eileen Peltier. The two workshop topics that were offered included a panel discussion with the Stonewall Speakers, and "Expressing Enthusiastic Consent" which was led by Planned Parenthood. The conference was capped off by a drag show featuring local and regional drag queens.

NVCC's Safe Space Club President Alexis Levesque said, "The conference was absolutely breathtaking, and our club has received valuable information to share. The entire team who organized this conference are very lucky to have such wonderful leaders in Kasey and Audrey." A special thanks goes out to Asnuntuck Community College for organizing such a wonderful and informative conference! We look forward to it becoming an annual event.

HAPPY  
THANKSGIVING



DON'T  
TEXT  
AND  
DRIVE

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

**23** Makes you 23 times more likely to crash

**18** Slows your brake reaction speed by 18%

**25** Causes almost 25% of ALL car accidents.

## alumni SHOWCASE



Jared Soltis

### Playing the Game of Life

Most all video games have tutorials. Without a tutorial, players would be clueless about what to do once they started playing the actual game. College is, in a sense, a tutorial for the "game" of life. This is how I feel about college. Although I picked a major that didn't work for me—I ignorantly picked Computer Information Systems despite disliking technology, and having a knack for working with my hands and people—my time at NVCC was fruitful in helping me find out what I do like to do, as well as make some wonderful friends.

Now that I've graduated, I'm trying to advance myself in my music career, as well as pursue bartending. I've gotten many gigs

playing the accordion at parties and events over the summer, some paying as well as three hundred dollars. I've noticed that with every gig I get, I'll likely get another gig from someone in the audience. It's a sort of chain reaction that will advance my music career and help me gain renown in many different locations.

My most recent big gig was at a variety show called The Showcase Tour at RVP Studios in West Haven. I didn't know it was a rap focused event until after I had signed up, so I was the only act which wasn't rap. I greatly enjoyed playing there, as well as enjoying all the great rap acts that were there. People always enjoy my playing, and after all, that's why I enjoy playing for others.

While I'm not currently a student at NVCC, I will be coming back for two days later this month for the Bartending class. I know I'll make a great bartender because I love working with the general public and doing stuff with my hands. That's my favorite part about my current job at the Sunny Ridge Supermarket in Bethlehem Connecticut, where I'm frequently the cashier or deli worker.

I've been doing great since graduation. I miss everyone at the college, though, but I'll probably stop by sometimes and shoot some pool or whatever. If the Music Society has any more music events, then mark my words I'll be back ASAP to play. There's nothing I love more than playing music for an audience.

My words of advice for any new students? Get active in student activities. I didn't do anything till my second to last semester, and I deeply regret this. Student activities will make you want to come to college rather than dread your classes. After all, we are social beings, so get out there, and do something!

# Nick Castle; Michael Myers 40 Years of Film

Mitchell W. Maknis



Photo Courtesy of Larry Maknis  
Tamarack staff member, Mitchell Maknis (r) with actor, Nick Castle, the Halloween franchise's original Michael Myers.

In 1978, writer and director John Carpenter illustrated a tale of pure terror that left a resounding impact in the cinematic world. The film *Halloween* gave life to one of the most iconic slashers to ever grace the silver screen. While the season of the witch may have come to an end, that has not stopped filmgoers and critics from embracing the much-lauded release of the latest entry in the film series: *Halloween* (2018). The current *Halloween* not only welcomes back the original scream queen, Jamie Lee Curtis, to the role of Lori Strode, but also brings back Nick Castle, the original actor who portrayed famed serial killer Michael Myers, originally billed as the Shape.

Nick Castle's depiction of the Shape/Michael Myers has terrified horror fans with his unforgettable presence, but Castle decided to take off the iconic mask and instead has led

a successful and impressive career in the film industry behind the camera and as a screenplay writer. His directorial credits include the sci-fi epic, *The Last Starfighter* (1984); the comedy film, *Major Payne* (1995) starring Damon Wayans; and the live action film adaptation of the comic book and cartoon character *Dennis The Menace* (1993).

Since Castle attended the University of Southern California film program where he became friends with fellow filmmaker John Carpenter, it's no surprise that he collaborated with Carpenter, co-writing the action film *Escape from New York* (1981). In fact, Castle's screenplays have been nominated for numerous awards. In 1986 he was nominated for a Saturn Award for "Best Writing" for *The Boy Who Could Fly*, and later, he wrote the screenplay for Academy Award-nominated film, *August Rush* (2007), starring Robin Williams and Freddie Highmore.

Over the course of the *Halloween* franchise, Michael Myers has been portrayed by many different stuntmen and actors, all of whom gave chilling and unique interpretations of the character. However, none were able to emulate Nick Castle's original eerie performance or his quirky head-tilt. So perhaps it is fitting that, after years in the film industry, Castle has returned to the role he originated in a cameo appearance, before passing the mask and the knife to James Jude Courtney, the new man behind the mask. Castle says his eclectic film career has been an enriching experience, but he is looking forward to beginning his retirement.

# The Drama Known as Fall Sports

Christian Cruz

Come one and all, as I tell you the tales of why the leaves aren't the only things falling this autumn of 2018. First things first: the football season has finally gotten its feet wet as our faithful East Coast teams have been mostly terrible except for New England Patriots. The Jets have been unexpectedly better, even though they are starting a rookie quarterback and have a suspect offensive line. The Giants, on the other hand, have been a walking mediocrity!

It's the same story each year, where the Giants cry, "Hallelujah! We're going to be better this year!" Then the rest of the league laughs as they walk into a 1-5 start. Good luck, guys. On the other hand, in Pittsburgh it just looks like they're putting self-inflicted dents into their steel curtain, as the drama known as the Steelers continues to rip this talented team apart.

Let's move onto baseball as both the Red Sox and Yankees made it to post-season, both sporting records as top teams in the AL, as they duked it out in another fascinating post-season rematch—or at least we hoped. The Yankees starting pitching has been horrendous down

the stretch and that proved to be true as the Red Sox made easy work of them, only falling in one game to win the series 3-1. At least the Mets can relish in the fact that they do not need to have their hopes crushed. After all, the Mets organization does that for their fans by not even coming close to making the post-season.

In other news, basketball season is right around the corner and pre-season is upon us. Normally, there would be no news to report, but another NBA All-Star wants out of his current situation this offseason. Jimmy Butler wants to leave Minnesota because he feels his young, talented teammates are not worth the trouble of developing. He wants to be part of a contending team that is as dedicated to winning as he is currently. Unfortunately, the Timberwolves are not backing down, and they have every right to keep him. However, is it worth holding onto someone, only to have a volatile figure in the locker room?

Only time will tell. And that, my friends, concludes the drama of the 2018 fall sports season so far. Let's see what next month holds.

# Spreading the Love

Christian Soto

NVCC's Music Society has many great offerings, one being our capella group. When its creator, Dr. Gil Harel, arrived as music professor, "There was little in the way of camaraderie and group activity outside music classes," Harel states. So he took initiative in creating the group, with hopes of bringing together people, not just from all areas of the music department, but from outside the department, including some faculty.

According to Harel, in fall 2017, only six or seven people participated, but in spring 2018, "We kind of exploded with a lot of influx of talent from the theater department. A lot of cross-over and mixing of theater and music societies." Harel believes the partnership between stage and music societies works because the theater department has been very supportive of the music society and both groups have been very collaborative.

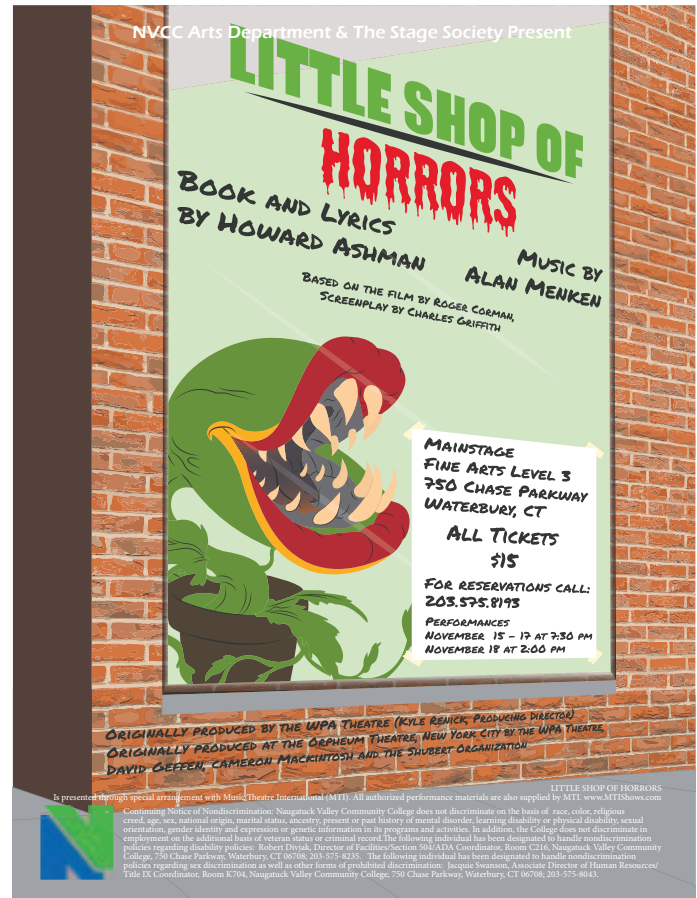
He also states, "The thing about a capella is we can be fun and spontaneous. We can learn anywhere. We can sing anywhere. And there's a tremendous sense of accomplishment when we get to do things together outside class. We're not worried about grades, we're enjoying each other's company, enjoying the simple fruit of labor, creating something with just our voices."

He believes, "It's the most organic way of making music. If you look to the Middle Ages, they referred to the voice as the instrument God gave you." Harel states, "It's camaraderie, it's a fraternal sort of thing, where we're a brotherhood and a sisterhood combined. We're friends who get to do great things together. We work on the music, which is fun and relaxed, and then we get to perform it, which is also

relaxed. Occasionally, we perform in more formal settings."

Harel continues, "We're spreading the accomplishments of the singers on campus. We don't charge admission. We sing everywhere, for free, for fun. It's a way of cementing our friendships and bonds, getting to know people in the department, outside the department, professors you may have for other classes. There's endless benefits it confers on the department and the school as a whole. We've become a big part of the campus fabric, so when people hear us, they go, 'Oh, that's that a capella group!' It's a very special bond we forge getting to sing this music, which features soloists on occasion, vocal percussion and different sections; each one doing their own thing but all of us working together. Each individual section might be great, but on their own, they're going to sound hollow and thin. What we do together is kind of a metaphor for so much of what we're striving for in the music department: community."

Some of Dr. Harel's future goals are, "[to] keep learning more repertoire, keep bringing the community together, and hopefully to perform outside campus. To do community outreach at local high schools, retirement communities, libraries, places we can spread the love and work and take it off campus to people who otherwise wouldn't have a chance to hear us and for them to see us and say, 'Wow. That NVCC Music Department is the real deal; they really know what they're doing. It's a polished performance. They're intense, they're focused, they're dedicated.'"



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## Multicultural Calendar ~ November 2018

Karlene Ball, the Office of Multicultural Affairs



Clay lamps of Diwali

### ¡Celebremos! Día de los Muertos

Día de los Muertos, Day of the Dead, is celebrated on November 1st. It is more widely celebrated in Mexico than in other parts of Latin America. On this day, individuals remember their loved ones who are deceased by preparing foods the departed enjoyed while alive. To celebrate, families put offerings (*ofrendas*) of food like *pan de muertos*, (bread baked in the shape of skulls) on altars.

The streets near cemeteries are brightly decorated with flowers, candy (*calaveras*) and dolls. Music and dance in the cemetery are part of the festivities. Mexicans celebrate death as part of the human experience. This is not a morbid or scary festival. Instead, it is a day when the dead are awakened from their slumber to share in the beautiful festivities created by their beloveds to honor them.



Illustration of Día de los Muertos

### Celebrating Diwali

Diwali is one of the most important festivals celebrated by Hindus all over the world. However, it is also celebrated by Indians of different faith, including Buddhists, Sikhs and Jains. Diwali gets its name from the row (*avali*)

of clay lamps (*deepa*) that Indians light outside their homes as a symbol of triumph over evil and spiritual darkness. This five-day festival of lights will be celebrated this year beginning on November 7th.

Day 1: People clean their homes and shop for gold and kitchen utensils.

Day 2: People decorate their homes with earthen lamps and use bright-colored powders and sand to decorate the floor.

Day 3: This is the main day of the festival. Families and friends come together for *Lakshmi puja*, in worship of the Goddess Lakshmi. This is followed by a celebration including food and fireworks.

Day 4: This is the first day of the new year, and families and friends gather to exchange gifts.

Day 5: On this last day of Diwali, brothers visit their married sisters who welcome them with a wonderful meal.

Diwali is celebrated all over the world in countries such as India, Pakistan, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, Malaysia, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, and the United States to name a few.

my bachelor's, I plan to attend law school, earn my GRE, and become a lawyer.

Now that I'm older, I know I can handle the intensity of school fulltime and really do well in this field. I already had it in mind to become a lawyer. My mother's father, an attorney, is one role models. Advocating for people is another reason; I love helping people. Lawyers can really help people. I'd be lying, if I said money isn't a factor, but my goal is definitely about more than financial stability. A lawyer must love what she does and have passion about people being treated fairly. This is also true of my role as PTK President.

On campus, PTK strives to be visible, to be a big part of the campus community, and the community as a whole. PTK members benefit from each other, sharing similar priorities; as students we aim for success not only in our studies, but in all aspects of life.

As a club, we've set several goals this fall. October 26 - 27, we attended a Regional Honors Conference at Massachusetts' Massasoit Community College, networking with other PTK members. We're also helping members apply for different PTK scholarships through the website, [ptk.org](http://ptk.org). Nov. 14th, 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM, outside Café West, we're holding "Coats for Coffee," collecting gently-used coats and other warm clothing for charities to aid the homeless.

On Dec. 5th, 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM in Kinney Hall's 5th floor walkway, we'll also host a bake sale to raise funds to attend the spring Regional Honors Conference. At our next meeting, Nov. 7th, we'll share information gained at the conference and give details on "Coats for Coffee." Those interested in becoming active PTK members should attend full of positive energy.

I leave you with a bit of advice: Investing in yourself is never enough. Surround yourself with people who want to see you succeed in every aspect of life. But remember, as a student, academic success is on top!

## Coffee and Community

Kathleen Chesto



September 27, 2018, the NVCC Music Society held its first fall coffeehouse at the Playbox Theater. Music director, Dr. Gilad Harel was MC and accompanist for the event, which included solos and duets by student and staff vocalists and instrumentalists. The debuts of the Music Theory III Jazz Ensemble, *Sol Fa So Good*, and the male vocalist trio, *Brass City Bards*, were also featured.

The cast of *Little Shop of Horrors* performed the opening chorus of the musical, scheduled to be produced in the Mainstage Theater November 9, 10, 11, 12. And the Music Society's *a cappella* group, *Fermata the Valley*, closed the show with three songs from their extensive repertoire.

The event was well attended by students, faculty, friends and family members. Free coffee and cookies added to the celebratory nature. Audience members and performers alike had high praise for the event.

Bernadette Dennis, present at several coffeehouses, was "continually amazed at the talent, but really touched by the way they all supported each other." Audience member, Becky Roberts, remarked, "I was impressed with the talent, but even more with Dr. Harel's introductions. He obviously had a personal connection with every single student."

The coffeehouse event was initiated last fall to showcase the talent and skills of students in the music program. Throughout the four coffeehouses held last year, it has grown into a well-loved social event that has fostered a strong sense of community in the music department.

Danielle Eitapence, one of last year's graduates and faithful contributor to earlier coffeehouses, had this to say about the coffeehouses generally: "All the students love getting involved and performing, but the encouragement toward new performers seems to be the main attraction. Everyone is welcomed with a roar of applause and it helps new performers overcome first-time nerves. There is an abundance of talent at every coffeehouse, but the personal touch of warmth and encouragement makes NVCC's Music Department extraordinary."

The day after the event, Dr. Gil Harel reflected, "When I came here I saw a bunch of talented students with limited opportunities to showcase their skills. Giving them a forum for doing so gives them something to look forward to and spurs them to practice and prepare repertoire. For that alone, it's a big win, but the social aspect takes it to the next level. Seeing them together, cheering each other and basking in the glow of their accomplishments, that's the real magic."

The event lasted from 6:30 to 8:30 PM, but students lingered to talk, clean up and finish the cookies. The laughter and music that continued to fill the air, was a strong commentary on the fun provided for all who shared it.

The Music Society wishes to thank theatre staff, student government, and coffeehouse committee members for helping make the event a success. A special thanks is extended to Dr. Harel for the countless hours he gave to rehearsing, accompanying vocalists, and directing the ensembles. Without his support and unwavering enthusiasm, the event would not have been possible.

Stay tuned for upcoming Music Society events. Watch for dates in campus flyers, on the NVCC website, and in the local news. If you missed this coffeehouse, you won't want to miss the next!

## Cultural Contrasts

Andre Williams



I was born in England and have lived there most of my life, though I have also lived almost half of my life in America. It's often said that we're two nations divided by a common language; however, there are many noteworthy cultural differences I've experienced. These differences can be especially seen when it comes to attitude, though it's important to note everyone is different, and these are somewhat stereotypical generalizations.

In England, some common preconceptions about Americans are that they're loud, proud, and inward-looking. This is pretty unfair, as

**It's often said that we're  
two nations divided by a  
common language**

one of the first things that struck me was how friendly, enthusiastic, and optimistic many people in the US seem to be. In England, we sometimes get a bad rep for having an attitude similar to our weather: grey and uncompromising. This is also unfair, since people are quite friendly and caring in England. We generally do care about each other as a nation, and it feels as though there is less of a divide in the country. An example of this can be seen in our nationalised health care system, to which no politician across the political spectrum in Britain is openly opposed.

These differing attitudes are reflected in our mannerisms. When I came to the US, a phrase I heard often was, "Have a nice day!" This is something rarely heard in England, and if it were to be said there, I think many would view it as insincere, because we tend to be a little more cynical as a culture. In America, people tend to be very outgoing. It's quite common for strangers to strike up a conversation, and for people to be pretty open about their lives in these conversations.

Small-talk with strangers is often avoided in the UK, though it's sometimes tolerated when talking about how miserable the weather is. This cynicism translates into our senses of humour, which is also quite different. In England, the humour tends to be ironic, sarcastic, and subtle. It's often facetious, which leads to humorous misunderstandings with others thinking things said in jest are serious.

Americans are known for their hardworking attitude, though a major difference in culture is how we balance work and life. In the US, workers don't take much time off, some out of fear of job loss—which would be more problematic in the US due to lack of social benefits. In contrast, it's considered ludicrous not to take time off in England, with 28 days off being the minimum for workers, compared with about ten days off for US workers.

Because both countries are linked through history and language, we share much in common. I miss a lot about England, including family, friends, the humour, and history. With that said, there's much I've learnt to appreciate about America, including the optimistic ethos that you can achieve anything if you put your mind to it. Even though it's been difficult to adapt to certain differences in culture, I feel as though being put out of my comfort zone has allowed me to grow and develop as a person. For that, I'm very grateful I've been fortunate enough to experience life in both countries.



## Revolutionary Rhythms

### Shock Factor



Known as the “Godfather of Shock Rock,” Alice Cooper (born Vincent Damon Furnier) has been performing for fifty years. Shock Rock is described as a mix of rock and heavy metal that includes theatrical performances meant to shock the audience. It can also include stage makeup and costumes (take Kiss, for example).

Cooper developed an interest in playing music at a young age. In high school, he formed a band known as the Earwigs, later renamed the Spiders. They moved to Los Angeles after growing tired of the local bar scene, and it was then that they developed a very dark sound, which caught the attention of guitarist Frank Zappa. It was through his direction that the group got signed to a record label. The band name got changed once again to Alice Cooper, a name Cooper claims to have heard from a witch doctor who spoke to him through a Ouija board.

After releasing their first album, *Pretties for You* in 1969, followed by *Easy Action* in 1970,

the band immediately became known for their rather shocking and disturbing performances. In one of the most famous incidents, a fan threw a live chicken on the stage. When Cooper threw it back, audience members killed it and tore it apart. Other acts have included “murdering” dolls, using fake guillotines, and even electric chairs on stage. Cooper delights in the shock factor that comes with their outrageous antics.

Cooper left the band in 1974 to go solo and adopted the band name as his own. His first solo album, *Welcome to my Nightmare*, released in 1975, gained success despite continued disapproval from critics. Cooper’s life spiraled downward personally and professionally in the ‘80s, but things picked up again in the ‘90s and 2000s with added movie and television appearances, as well as his nightly radio show, *Nights with Alice Cooper*.

In recent years, Cooper has reconnected with old band members, and, in 2011, Alice Cooper the band was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. In 2017 he released *Paranormal*, which includes old band members and other collaborators.

Additionally, Cooper just appeared at Waterbury’s Palace Theatre on October 5th as part of his current tour, performing songs off the new album and well-known hits like “School’s Out,” “No More Mr. Nice Guy,” and “Welcome to my Nightmare”. Cooper continues to do side projects, as well as tour every year and record new music. The shock factor he brings to his performances not only made a name for himself, but created a new genre.

Alyssa Katz



## They Will Rock You

Gwenydd Miller

Landmark Community Theater has done it again, delivering another great production. *We Will Rock You* was performed at the Thomaston Opera House, on Saturday September 29th. This production was a musical comprised of Queen’s best hits, including “Bohemian Rhapsody,” “Another One Bites the Dust,” “Under Pressure,” and of course, the song for which the musical is named, “We Will Rock You,” plus many more.

The story, set in a far-off future ruled by computers and conformity, follows the life of Galileo Figaro and his girlfriend Scaramouche as they break away from the system and find their place with the Bohemians, a group of rebels living at the Hard Rock Cafe who are dedicated to bringing back the golden age of music: rock music.

It was fun to watch as the story unfolded and to see how songs from one of the most beloved rock bands was incorporated into a more or less cohesive story. The jokes and drama kept the audience engaged throughout the whole production, and the characters’ mispronunciation of common words such as TV and videotape—along with constant references to other big names in rock—kept an air of laughter lingering for the entire night.

One of the most memorable parts of the performance was their constant insertions of rock lyrics and references to other rock idols spread throughout the dialogue, perhaps even every other line in some places. The delivery was amazing on so many of the punchlines. I could probably describe every single joke and it wouldn’t subtract from the performance in the least. The whole play had a cheesy self-awareness that could only have been done on purpose.

My biggest critique of this musical is probably the pacing and content of the plot. It did not seem clear through the duration of play what was actually happening. The ending felt slightly rushed, and I couldn’t see a clear resolve. The characters were not well-rounded, but rather catalysts for the punchlines. The play was focused more on the songs than the story that was being inserted around them.

It was obvious the whole play was designed to fit the songs, and therefore lacked a good story. That said, they did have a good story foundation to build off of, if they weren’t so centered around puns. But of course, a punny play is far from the worst thing to ever happen. Well thought out story or not, the production itself was a fun experience, and the quality of the music was phenomenal.

You can expect to see other productions of this musical at theaters. Look online to see an overview of the plot and to find more information on where it will be showing. Remember though, as is the nature of theater, every show is unique and every director portrays the characters differently. Hopefully, future productions will maintain the musical excellence, while offering a more coherent plot.

## Slick Rick: Rap’s Favorite Storyteller

Matthew O. Spence



As one of the most significant and iconic MCs to be on wax, the English-Born Slick Rick has cemented himself as Hip-Hop Royalty. Born in London, England, Rick moved to the Bronx

N.Y. with his family in the late 70s. There, Slick Rick would eventually meet and team up with fellow N.Y. native Doug E. Fresh.

The two would collaborate and record the tracks, “The Show,” and the famous, “La Di Da Di”. He would eventually sign to Def Jam Records in 1988 to release his classic debut LP, *The Great Adventures of Slick Rick*, featuring his most popular works: “Hey Young World,” “Mona Lisa,” and the rap favorite, “Children’s Story”.

Tragically his career seemed like it would come to a screeching halt after he was convicted of attempted murder (though he pleaded self-defense); but that didn’t stop him from recording and releasing two more albums while incarcerated, *Behind Bars* (1994) and *The Ruler’s Back* in 1995.

Even though both projects weren’t as commercially successful as his debut album, his comeback and final (as of now) album, *The Art of Storytelling* did fairly well, going gold within a month after its release in 1999. Though you may not hear from him often (besides a few features in the early to mid 2000s), his musical relevance continues to grow.

In fact, Slick Rick is one of, if not the most sampled hip-hop artist; his songs, “La Di Da Di” and “Children’s Story,” have been and still are being sampled, interpolated, and covered countless times by numerous artists. These include Jay-Z, Eminem, The Roots, De La Soul, Kanye West, Snoop Dogg, Black Star, The Notorious B.I.G., Nas, and so on. Outside of rap, Miley Cyrus, Beyonce, Ini Kamoze, Mariah Carey, and Sublime are other artists from different genres who’ve sampled Slick Rick.

As of right now, Rick has been sampled over 1,000 times. Aside from being sampled numerous—an understatement—times, he is credited as one of the pioneers of storytelling in rap and one of the most influential. His level of storytelling, whether it be the funny, tragic and overall entertaining stories from “Children’s Story,” or those on “Teenage Love,” has gone on to influence and shape many rappers’ storytelling abilities, such as Andre 3000, Nas, Jay-Z, The Notorious B.I.G. and many more.

Not only was his pen game strong, his fashion sense was mean as well. Rick was a pioneer of the big, heavy (and possibly gratuitous) jewelry in rap you’ll see from rappers like Busta Rhymes. Slick Rick will forever be rap’s favorite storyteller. If there was a Mount Rushmore of Rap Storytellers, he’d be George Washington; believe it.



## Hello to Autumn

Sarae Graham

- To warm clothing
- To rainy mornings
- To another birthday celebration
- To beautiful orange views
- To boots & sweaters
- Hello to Autumn

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## Transfer Information Session Dates

Tuesday, November 6, 8:00 AM - 2:30 PM

Sunday, December 2, 10:30 AM - 3:00 PM



## Earth Matters



### Tide Is High (And Very Red)

Alyssa Katz

Aside from the recent catastrophes caused by Hurricanes Florence and Michael, there has been another disruption along the Florida coastline. Many popular beaches, including those in Miami and Palm Beach, were closed for weeks as a result of red tide.

A red tide is caused by algae that grows out of control and produces harmful toxins. These algal blooms, also known as *Karenia brevis*, are found in the Gulf of Mexico, and, as the name suggests, they turn the water red. The recent bloom stretched for 100 miles along the Floridian coast, carried over from the Gulf of Mexico by wind and currents.

While red tide is a major problem, algae itself is, in fact, a major food source for marine animals. Not only that, there are tens of thousands of species of algae, those that are harmful and others that are beneficial. *K. brevis*, the red tide source, however, is toxic to marine life, causing intestinal and neurological problems upon ingestion. These are usually fatal. In humans, exposure to red tide algae can cause skin irritation and even respiratory problems; those with asthma are more at risk.

A massive fish kill, what some have called a “wildlife massacre,” has resulted from this most recent occurrence of red tide. Since August, over 2,000 tons of marine life have washed up on shores, killed by ingestion of *K. brevis*. Victim species have included fish, eels, turtles, dolphins, endangered manatees, and others.

Red tide is nothing new, as it appears along Florida’s coast nearly every year. This year, however, saw one of the worst instances of red tide ever. The algae are always present beneath the surface, but there are certain contributors that cause red tide flareups.

Scientists have investigated possible causes of this natural phenomena, and, though more research is needed to provide an exact answer, some believe *K. brevis* feeds on agricultural run-off, containing herbicides, pesticides, or even raw sewage. The ingestion of these toxic materials is one possible cause of increased intensity of red tide. This theory is questioned by those who debate humans’ impact on the increase in red tide severity.

It seems clear, however, that, as climate change continues to impact the Earth, all ecosystems—and their plant and animal inhabitants—are affected. As for algae, while some wither and die due to climatic change, others, like the harmful *K. brevis*, thrive and adapt. It’s a reminder that even natural specimens can be detrimental when changing environmental conditions allow them to grow unchecked.

Florida locals held out hope that the effects of Hurricane Michael might end the spread of red tide. It’s ironic when our best hope for relief from one natural disaster is the occurrence of another.

## The Importance of Networking

Christian Cruz



October 2nd, 2018, NVCC hosted the inaugural event in its “NVCC Alumni and Community Speaker Series”. Featured speakers were Charles J. Boulter, III, CEO, Ion Bank; Kathryn Luria, Senior VP, Community Affairs, Director of Philanthropy, Webster Bank; James O’Rourke, CEO, Greater Waterbury YMCA; and Geraldo Reyes, Jr., CT State Representative. As someone who attended the event, I found it inspiring and motivating to see four key NVCC alumni return to say how grateful they are for the education they received at NVCC.

However, while I don’t mean to criticize, the event name may have been a little misleading for students, who might have misunderstood the focus of the evening. While the event featured alumni doing great things in the community, this event would have been better suited for an audience with more students. Unfortunately, my class was the only one that attended the event. Luckily, our professor, Mitchell Holmes, recognized the potential value to students, and dedicated a class period to attending.

Still, more students should have taken the opportunity to hear these great figures speak. And the benefit didn’t end with the speakers’ words. In my class alone, more than a handful of students seized the opportunity to network with these individuals. It was impressive that we, as a class, were actively putting ourselves on display for these powerful personalities to see us in action. Some students made contacts we never would have thought possible.

Granted some of us were just seizing the moment, but if our professor hadn’t brought us to Founders for the event, and allowed us the opportunity to meet these people, none of that networking would have been possible. As far as I know, two people from class got interviews and made personal contacts with James O’Rourke and Geraldo Reyes Jr. Just imagine how big an opportunity it was for members of my class looking for a change in career. Boom! With four very powerful people sitting in front of them, I could just see them jumping at the opportunity.

Of course, not every class may have found their stories fascinating, and some students might have been scared to approach them. In that setting, though, they were very inviting, and their stories truly struck a chord with me personally. Their message showed that it does not matter where you start; it is where you finish. And if you’re willing to work hard, NVCC can be that launching pad to a successful future.

Offering a foot in the door—whether students are currently qualified or not—is just another way NVCC supports student success. As a community, we should figure out a way to promote events like these more successfully to students. In the end, students should take advantage of events intended to provide them with opportunities. If we do, maybe we’ll return to be featured at a future “Alumni and Community Speaker Series”.

## Veteran’s Voice Our New Voice

Rick Bellagamba



Hello, everyone. My name is Rick Bellagamba and I’m proud to have served our country and to be a Vietnam Era Veteran. I graduated from Ridgefield High School in June 1971. Two weeks

later, I was a U.S. Army private. After basic training and ten weeks of advanced training, I was deployed to Augsburg, Germany as part of President Nixon’s de-escalation of the Vietnam Conflict. At age 18, I became a tank mechanic and recovery specialist driving a 56-ton tow truck vehicle (M-88). What a rush it was driving that thing!

I became part of the 1st Infantry Division, (Big Red One) 3/63rd Armored Battalion. During all our training exercises, we mechanics kept our M-60 tanks running, pulling them out of swamps and ditches, which were not very polite to tanks. On one exercise, I received the Most Outstanding Mechanic trophy which came with a promotion.

After a 2-1/2-year deployment in Europe, I returned to the States to accept my Honorable Discharge. I raised four children who currently reside in Connecticut. Because of my physical difficulties, I can no longer work. I’m retired, but I’ve found it beneficial to attend NVCC to follow my passion for writing. My first story to be published was in 1965 when I was 12, and I received NVCC’s Roy D’Arcy Memorial Literature Award for 2018. I hope to continue improving my writing skills this semester.

I look forward to my second semester here at NVCC. I’m also excited about writing about us Veterans—the good, the bad, and the ugly. I feel welcome here on campus because of the friendliness and respect shown to me by the staff and students. Thank you all for that.

In honor of Veterans’ Day, I’d like to share a poem I wrote.

### God Bless My USA In tribute to my Dad

When I was young, I didn’t want to fight  
But then I learned it was my invariable right  
Instead of college, I chose to serve with all  
my might  
I followed my path with no return in sight  
There was a faraway place called Vietnam  
Where the people there needed a helping  
hand  
To be all I can be was my plan  
I chose to fight while others tucked and ran  
As it turned out they didn’t need me over  
there  
They sent me to another place, I didn’t know  
where  
I ended up in Germany to help keep the  
peace and to share  
Our continuous compassion for a land under  
repair  
So in closing, for this Veterans Day  
I’m a better man knowing that I did say  
I will protect our honor with any price I  
might pay  
I’m an American Soldier like many and I will  
not stray  
The only thing left is to say - God Bless our  
Vets and the USA

See you all in the halls,  
Rick

## RECENTLY READ



### Thinking Slow and Fast

Have you ever considered the way you form your thoughts based on emotions? Or how about the process that goes into forming a mindset to quite literally any scenario in life? If you find yourself having done so—or perhaps you’re taken back by the questions—then *Thinking Slow and Fast*, by Daniel Kahneman, could be a good read for you. Be warned, however, the style in which the book develops is methodical, slow-paced, and some may find it tedious. Some portions may become confusing and even require another thorough read-through for concise understanding.

What you have to understand is the author behind this book is quite talented and filled with wisdom. In fact, Daniel Kahneman is a Nobel Peace Prize winner. This lays down the gauntlet for the journey you are about to experience through each of the pages. *Thinking Slow and Fast* is divided into portions that cover the two ways each of us thinks, and also into the categories of when each type of thinking might benefit one compared to another.

Simply put, each of us, including you, have what is referred to by the author as two systems of thinking. System one is quick, unfiltered, and responsive. System two is slow and requires harnessing more resources. System two requires us to think consciously and weigh our decisions. Based on the descriptions of each of the systems, it may become apparent how each can be benefited from and also where an error of judgments may be formed.

For example, system one would be great for risky situations that require fast responses to dangerous scenarios. However, system one would be impossible to utilize in an algebraic question, or somewhere like a court hearing that requires one to be conscious of decisions that lead to ramifications.

System two is great for choosing the words to put in this article in order to make sure the reader understands the point that is trying to be delivered. It would be impractical—or even impossible—to utilize system two on the highway traveling twenty miles over the speed limit to figure out how to avoid a collision.

The important takeaway from this book is a realization as explained by Kahneman that system two is simply lazy. It doesn’t want to work unless it absolutely becomes necessary. If a stranger approaches you and asks you to solve that algebraic equation mentioned earlier, chances are you’re not going to invest.

Kahneman uses many examples in his book based on his time spent deploying analytical data at universities, business firms, and even while in Israel choosing candidates for officer training. These examples, featuring extensive description to ensure the reader understands, would put mine to shame in explaining the two systems and their qualities.

If you do pick up the book or listen to the audiobook, you will have opened yourself to the inner thinking of the mind. This will allow you to see the fallacy in people’s thinking, including your own. It may help you to make soundly reasoned judgments that can better serve you in life—and perhaps help strangers with algebraic questions.

Alam Khan

## Readers Respond

Dear Editor,

I’ve always known October to be National Breast Cancer Awareness Month as well as Domestic Violence Awareness month, but this is my first time finding out that it is also Depression Awareness Month. Alexander Wilson does a good job explaining the different ways people may experience depression in his article, “Depression Awareness Month”. As students are busy working, studying, raising children, etc. we don’t always think to take the time to make sure our mental health is in

check, and to make sure our fellow classmates are doing okay as well. Before NVCC, I had attended another community college, but during that time my depression had gotten so intense that, in order to take the time to care for myself, I had to drop out of my classes. Even though there is always this fear that I will have to drop out again because of my depression, I am finally receiving the help I needed, and I’m doing much better and now have the motivation I needed to do better in school. I hope this article helps people recognize symptoms of depression in themselves and/or others and seek out the help they need. This article serves as a reminder

we are not suffering through this alone, and while it may not seem like it at the time, life does indeed get better.

~ Sincerely, NVCC Student

Dear Editor,

I had so much fun reading Jane Courlet’s, “Good Grief! Autumn’s Sincerely Awesome Veggie.” Courlet described autumn in exactly the terms of how a teenage girl would describe it: pumpkin spice season. Personally, autumn is my favorite season of all because of the country fairs, pumpkin picking, and most

importantly, Halloween! Pumpkin picking is always something I look forward to every year because I know it calls for getting my hands dirty and carving a new creative picture in my pumpkin. Courlet explains, the nutritional value pumpkins carry such as fiber and vitamins, which I never knew. She also lets the audience know about the two Connecticut pumpkin festivals on October 20th, which I will now be attending. If you need fun activities to do, I would recommend this article to everyone. Thanks, Jane!

~ Sincerely, Abby Holton

## To Kill a Kavanaugh

David Pacheco



The recent appointment of Supreme Court Justice Brett Kavanaugh has left many people shocked and worried, although many Republicans (Conservatives) are

worried for very different reasons. This issue is, in all reality, two distinct points amalgamated together by partisan bickering.

In truth, a political party used the allegations of a sexual assault victim as a political club. Senator Diane Feinstein knew of these allegations for six weeks prior to their release to the public. Yet, she did nothing until after Kavanaugh's first hearing. This was, of course, a political move, to delay his confirmation until after the midterm elections when Democrats might have held a majority.

Does this mean that Dr. Christine Blasey Ford was lying? Not at all. It was partisan hacks who used the traumatic experiences of a victim for their own political gains. While Dr. Ford gave a compelling, authentic retelling of the events of that night, there is still little-to-no evidence to support her claims.

Two things can be true at once. One may believe that Dr. Ford was in fact sexually assaulted, while also believing that it was not Brett Kavanaugh who perpetrated that act. Or one may think that in a nation that understands Rule of Law and the importance of Innocent Until Proven Guilty, there is simply insufficient evidence to justify destroying a man's family and career.

## Thank You All

### Thank You for Paving!

Rick Bellagamba



Photo Courtesy of Rick Bellagamba

Being an ex-suspension expert, I know what potholes can do to a vehicle, causing damage that's very expensive to repair. Although my car has a "fly over big potholes" button, it's been disabled somehow, so until the recent improvements to NVCC's West Entrance, I had no choice but to swerve when coming and going. That's why I—and my Subaru, named Pookie Bear—want to thank NVCC for repaving the entrance.

The freshly laid asphalt makes for a much nicer welcome to campus. My biggest surprise was the sign painted on the driveway: SLOW. I didn't know that. I thought, as long as I'm keeping up with the car in front of me, I could go 30 mph on campus. I'm kidding, but it seems when I do drive the speed limit (15 mph), I can always see the frustration of the person behind me in my rearview mirror.

Let's allow the new pavement to be a reminder and take heed of that sign. We should all slow down until we reach the highway. The last thing in the world anyone would want is to hit a fellow student. Thank you, NVCC, for maintaining our campus roadways, and thank you *Tamarack* readers for driving on them with caution.

## Queer Code

### What Transgender Means

Alexander Wilson



Here I am for another round of education. This month, I'm defining words used frequently in the lives of trans persons. This may look like a dictionary, but I'll try to make it fun.

Let's start with the actual word "transgender," an adjective describing people who identify with a gender other than their assigned gender at birth. It's an umbrella term, not confined to the gender binary. However, individuals have the right to choose to identify with the label or not.

Though I lean towards the genderless "human," I still call myself trans, mostly because I'm medically transitioning to appear more masculine. Transgender also includes nonbinary people whose gender identity falls outside the traditional "male/female" binary. I could discuss numerous genders, but there's honestly too many for one article. I'll happily explain more, later in this series.

Another word you'll hear is dysphoria, short for the clinical term gender dysphoria. Used to describe the discomfort a person feels over their body, it's usually focused on secondary sex characteristics linked to puberty. However, dysphoria can manifest at any age. It can also vary in intensity, from none to debilitating.

The opposite of dysphoria is euphoria; to many, it's one of the best ways to combat gender dysphoria. Gender euphoria involves positive feelings when one's gender is validated. This happens through use of proper pronouns, or the capability of passing, either in one's own eyes or the eyes of others. I experience the most

gender euphoria when I make a lot of effort to pass, and strangers properly gender me.

One contributor to dysphoria is misgendering. While it takes a variety of forms, it's when someone's gender is invalidated by using one's birth name (aka "dead" name), or using incorrect pronouns. My pronouns are he/him. Referring to me as she/her is misgendering me. That's one example. Many trans people suffer misgendering if they're not out of the closet. This can be detrimental to mental health.

Now, to define passing. It's being seen as your gender of identity, not your assigned gender at birth. This means, while in public, strangers see you as your gender. This is often achieved through medical transitioning, but an individual doesn't have to transition to pass. Hell, you don't have to transition at all. Many nonbinary people don't opt for medical transitioning. It's up to each individual whether they want to, and their choice may also be determined by potential health risks. Every decision is valid.

Some pass to the point of being "stealth," meaning they can walk through life without having to tell people they're transgender. Some still mention they're trans, but that's another personal preference. I hope to get to that point. I know someone who's transitioned and doesn't have to out himself. Many coworkers presume he's cisgender, which makes him happy. Hey, gender euphoria!

I haven't defined cisgender. An adjective, like transgender, it describes people comfortable with their assigned birth gender. Like transgender's abbreviation, trans, cisgender can be shortened to cis. It was rumored cis stood for "comfortable in skin," but trans people can be just as comfortable in their skin. It may take time, effort, and medical intervention, but we, too, can be happy in our bodies.

That's the basics. There's more I could include, but I'm out of space. Next time, I'll share my personal experience, what being trans means for me. Adieu, farewell, until we meet again.

Signing off, Alexander

## Advice for Well-meaning Whites

Prof. Steve Parlato

Recently—and, okay, across the history of our nation and the world—there've been several troubling racial incidents. Seems we can't watch the news, or mindlessly consume social media, without encountering another example of "EWBB," Entitled Whites Behaving Badly.

It's exhausting being affiliated, via my relative lack of melanin, with such folks. You know the ones, "well-meaning" whites just trying to protect themselves (and society-at-large) from people of color. But this isn't about my discomfort; it's about daily trauma inflicted on an entire community by these pale ones.

Some recent examples—in no order of absurdity—are:

- the blonde woman blocking a Black man from entering his own apartment building (Hey, neighbor!);

- the NYC woman who accused a 9-year-old of sexual assault when his bag brushed against her in a store (as she occupied more than her share of retail space, sprawling across a counter);
- the homeowner who answered a teen's request for directions with a rifle because he feared a robbery (then falsely claimed his gun fired when he tripped. Riiiiight...);
- the apartment dweller who called police on a child selling bottled water...

Oh, the list goes on. At this juncture, though I'm tempted to include the current administration (their caging of youngsters, their refusal to acknowledge the humanity of families who happen to be brown), let's keep an "individuals-behaving-badly" focus.

To all "well-meaning" whites—and whites who'd never dream of acting this way, but

kinda-sorta justify such behavior—some advice. I won't use the phrase "Lighten up!" for fear of misinterpretation.

My message is more like "Get over yourselves," or really, start looking at—and beyond—yourselves. Clearly, self-examination's in order. If you're so threatened by pigmentation your first instinct when encountering a person of color in "your space" is to lock the door, call a cop, or arm yourself, *you* are the real problem.

Obviously, this isn't simply an individual problem. Sure, it's systemic, societal, but rooted in personal issues of ignorance, fear, and yes, entitlement. A white woman asking a Black man what gives him the right to enter a luxury apartment building is really questioning his right to exist in her rarified habitat—one she deserves by virtue of...her whiteness. Ugh!

You won't break from this vicious circle until you look—through whatever color irises you see the world—outside yourselves. Sure, gravitating

toward those somehow like you is natural. But if light skin's your only acceptance criterion, if you imagine people *aren't* like you based solely on skin color—if you have a visceral reaction based on hair texture—you've got major issues.

I'd like to say the answer is for EWBB to reach out, to interact, maybe even to make friends with people of color. But I worry. I mean, who's to say that neighbor woman wants to be "your Black" friend? Especially with your habit of crossing the street when you see her coming, or calling the cops when her son walks his dog in the park at night.

I guess the answer's to start slow. Practice acting as if people of color are your equals (though this risks insult to P-O-C who may, in fact, be superior to you). Maybe watch a few episodes of *black-ish*. Work on seeing *people* first, then color. And if your instinct is to confront a person of color with, "What gives you the right?" stop and ask that question of yourself.

## Brass Collar

Tom Conte

Hearing the phrase "military officer," many picture a dapper gentleman with shoulder epaulettes, medals hanging from his uniform, and a shimmering saber. In the 19th century, this image would be accurate. Today, military officers look no different than the enlisted, except for the ranks they display on their uniforms.

While enlisted wear chevrons stitched onto their sleeves, officers have their rank pinned onto their collar—ranging from a single bar to a leaf or an eagle. The highest echelons of commissioned officers are adorned with either a single or four stars, and in rare cases five.

The role of an officer, however, hasn't changed much. From the Napoleonic Wars through World War II, officers were in charge of leading soldiers into battle; many were killed in action. What's changed is the process. Prior to the Vietnam conflict, individuals either commissioned into the officer corps right out of college or came from enlisted ranks. After Vietnam, rules changed; a college degree is the only way to get brass on one's collar, replacing

the pre-requisite of military experience with a piece of paper that's virtually useless in a wartime environment.

My experience going through the process to become a commissioned officer brought this issue front and center. I remember my officer recruiter emphasizing getting a high GPA—3.2 or higher, specifically focusing on STEM majors. I inquired how a college degree would be advantageous for an officer. The answer was along the lines of "because it's required," nothing more.

I found it contrived and even pretentious that a piece of paper makes someone "better qualified" than an individual with decades of military experience who (unfortunately) enlisted instead of heading to college. I've spoken with many veterans, and many prior enlisted said the same thing.

One veteran's comment, "Enlisted are people too," resonated with me. It's important in understanding the attitude and actions of today's officers. Many look down upon the enlisted, as if they're dumb knuckle-draggers. Of course, not all commissioned officers think this, but I've met many who do.

I plan on commissioning into the Navy, competing for a contract with the SEALs. The

process for becoming an officer isn't simply handing in a diploma; it requires high grades and the proper degree to even be considered for the Navy. On top of standards for commissioning, I also have to work toward SEAL standards, but there's a catch: SEAL officers have a more intense process.

Once I get my commission, I have to attend SOAS, SEAL Officer Assessment and Selection, which determines if one possesses the skill-sets needed to be not only an officer but an officer at Special Op level. If one passes SOAS, they go to officer candidate school, then attend Basic Underwater Demolition/SEAL training (BUD/S). If an individual fails SOAS, they're given an ultimatum. They could enlist, then attend BUD/S, or they can keep their commission and attend officer candidate school, but they have to find another job within the Navy, pilot, intelligence, etc.

Physical requirements are high. BUD/S training takes roughly six months; then one has to pass SEAL Qualification Training (SQT) which takes roughly two years. The attrition rate is the highest in the armed forces. Around 90+ percent fail; class size is roughly 150-200 candidates with only 13-15 succeeding.

Academic requirements are rigorous. I'm majoring in Psychology, accepted by the Navy as a viable degree. However, GPA still holds weight; a 3.2 is competitive, increasing chances of being commissioned. There's a catch here as well; one has to take the ASTB (Aviation Selection Test Battery) to determine competence to be an officer.

Only after graduating in a STEM or other viable field with a high GPA and getting an ASTB score of 50 or better, will one be commissioned. It's a lot to prepare for, but it can be done. Personally, I am only in college because it's needed for my career. Otherwise, I'd never have attended.

One thing is sure; when I'm an officer I'll treat every individual with human dignity, whether they're an officer or enlisted. Will the rules change back to the old ways? I don't know, but if I could choose, I'd rather have someone with experience over someone fresh out of university. We shouldn't gauge someone's worth based on whether they finished college. Some of the best artists, musicians, and inventors never graduated from high school let alone college. We all have much to offer; a piece of paper alone shouldn't define one's value.

## FACE IN THE CROWD Take an Art Class!

Beth Edwards

Hi, I'm Beth Edwards, and I'm an artist. The fact that I can now comfortably, confidently claim that title, "artist," is due in no small part to my time here at NVCC. I came to Naugatuck Valley in 2015, aiming for an Associate of Liberal Arts. I took the required academic courses and then went to find my place in the Art Department. For years I'd been wanting to get involved with printmaking, and now I had the chance.

Amanda Lebel, head of the department, and professor of Drawing, 2-Dimensional Design, and Printmaking, is one of those gems who can be found at community colleges. The school is a better place because of her. As her student-worker I've left my mark at NVCC with the Tile Wall (the wall of ceramic glaze sample tiles behind me in the photo above) in the Ceramics room, and under her guidance not only have my skills grown, but my self-confidence has blossomed, leading to the reality that permits the first sentence in this piece.

I also have to give a shout-out to Professors Charlie Cunningham, and his ceramics and sculpture classes, and Liza Masalimova with 3-D Design. These two taught me so many needed basic skills, a great foundation upon which I can explore 3-D work without hesitation.

An area I'm focusing on now is children's books, done in a graphic novel style via relief printmaking. I have to thank Professor William Foster III for his Graphic Novel course (and Professor Lebel for working with me) which encouraged me to try my hand at the genre. I'm presently in my final semester here, but bookmaking is definitely an enterprise I intend to continue after graduation.

You may have seen my work in the 2016



Photo Courtesy of Beth Edwards

**“Hi, I'm Beth Edwards, and I'm an artist. The fact that I can now comfortably, confidently claim that title, "artist," is due in no small part to my time here at NVCC.”**

and 2018 editions of NVCC's literary journal, *Fresh Ink*, where I had various prints published. I just had a piece in a juried art show for the first time (and it sold!), and I will be involved with the Bridgeport Art Trail, Nov 10 - 11, as I have a studio space in the American Fabrics Building in that city. There will be many open studios (lots of art for sale!), pop-up galleries, food and music, citywide, so come on down! Here's a link for info: <http://bridgeport-art-trail.org/>

I have to say, during my time here, I've met some wonderful young people (I am, ahem, a mature student), ones who've given me hope for this country and the world at large. As someone who has been around the block a few times, I'll offer my two-cents of unsolicited advice for the present generation: travel; get out, meet the locals; open your eyes and ears, and, most important, open your mind! You will learn so much, not just about where you are, but who you are as a human being on this third rock from the sun.

## Ignoring Red Flags

Christopher Gordon

The past few months, a great debate raged over installment of Brett Kavanaugh as U.S. Supreme Court Justice, taking an even uglier turn in light of Dr. Christine Blasey Ford's allegations. Some people turned this hearing into a drama, attempting to obfuscate the nature of a man they desperately wanted to give immense power to rule as they saw fit. By vilifying Dr. Ford, they revealed something about the tactics of politics in modern America.

Let me be clear, my opinion is based on my own observations of one shameful episode in a long line of pathetic tactics in this sideshow we call "governance." I urge you to pay attention to the news as well, focusing on the facts necessary to make rational decisions.

I'll start by removing Dr. Ford from the equation. Her believability is irrelevant to Kavanaugh's fitness to sit on our highest court. To be clear, I do, in fact, believe Ford. I'm simply judging Kavanaugh on HIS OWN actions, not on others' testimony. To say Dr. Ford is "bad," so her opponent must be "good" is a fallacy. To blindly believe someone who says her testimony is an attempt by Democrats to act in bad faith is also a fallacy. By studying Ford's and Kavanaugh's actions during testimony before Congress, it is clear who acted in bad faith.

Justice Kavanaugh—I use his proper title to show respect for his position, not for the man—made a production, acting in a way that would make any trained investigator say, "This guy is hiding something." Asked by Democratic Senator Amy Klobuchar if he'd ever been drunk to the point of not remembering, rather than a straightforward answer, he challenged her, asking, "Have you?" This is just one instance of behavior that should've been a massive red flag. There's not a courtroom in the world that wouldn't smack someone down for playing games like that. What does his smarmy insolence predict about his future performance as Supreme Court Justice?

Another red flag was his refusal to cooperate and let the FBI investigate. I don't usually play the "if there's nothing to hide" card, but we're not talking about some kid at a traffic stop having his car ransacked by an armed officer. If innocent, he had nothing to fear from an investigation. Plus, his arrogance while being questioned by Congress highlighted his lack of character; his sense of being above the law is troubling in a man appointed to America's highest court.

Lastly, I bring Dr. Ford back in, not as a point against Kavanaugh, but as a point against accepting garbage arguments for the sake of convenience. Some have publicly declared it doesn't matter how Kavanaugh acts, as long as he makes decisions supporting bigotry and oppression (Plenty of YouTube videos back my claim. Watch them if you're okay polluting your soul with BS).

This is the same argument used in the last Presidential election. "Hillary's bad, so Trump must be good." That was a terrible argument then, and it still is. Discrediting Dr. Ford by calling her claim false doesn't translate to Kavanaugh being good. That's not how good and evil work. Even if Ford's allegations were untrue, it would be irrelevant. Kavanaugh revealed his real nature by showing zero respect, by treating the system of law without dignity. That makes him unfit. He proved with each smug look and non-answer he has no regard for the law he's expected to uphold.

## Loved it? Hated it?

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

## That's What She Said



Jessica Ney

### P.T.S. Don't Undermine My Trauma

In light of recent events in Washington and Hollywood, I'd like to broach the topic of surviving sexual assault. There is a lot of ignorance and hate being thrown around on the news and in the media.

Let me start with this. Sexual assault is considered a trauma. Women who have been attacked, whether repeatedly or one time, could develop symptoms of PTSD: depression, anxiety, etc. There is no one-size-fits-all treatment; there is no way to erase the pain. There are only management and growth or deterioration.

I will not take a stand on the events that have occurred this fall; politics are only a piece of what I talk about, and this is not the issue we're dealing with today. There needs to be a social movement to change the way we think about sexual violence. Every woman you know has experienced it in some way.

Maybe it was a boyfriend pushing a little farther than she wanted—Oh come on; it's not much different than what we've already been doing—or an unexpected advance on a date that before then was going well. Whether it was a random attack by a stranger or someone close to her, or all the other possibilities in between, all women have felt small under the finger of someone. We have all been deer in the headlights and we are now fighting to protect future generations from the "suck it up" culture we've lived through.

I consider myself a lucky one. I haven't been attacked, but I have been catcalled, and followed, and coerced. I have received advances I did not want. My heart breaks for anyone who has had to suffer sexual abuse, assault and violence. No one deserves to have their power stripped away like that. Sex can be an intimate, dynamic, and powerful experience. It should also be an equal, open and pleasant one.

This is why women are "taking back the night," storming Washington, and rebranding feminism. We are witnessing a renaissance. It is time for us to own our trauma. And whether it has been held down for fifty years, thirty years, five years, or for a few months, our trauma deserves to be recognized. We all deserve to have peace. Grief and trauma are individualized, so no one should ever assume to know everything about what it is like to share the truth.

I believe in all women. I believe in all victims. I believe in truth.

## Kavanaugh's Kalendar



Original Editorial Cartoon, courtesy of artist, Matthew Olivares

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