

The Tamarack

Our college. Our news. Our voice.

Naugatuck Valley Community College

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Waterbury, Connecticut

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The Small Moments

Assoc. Professor Steve Parlato

This summer's been another for the record books, and I'm not talking temperatures. It was a typical New England mix: heat, humidity, the occasional oddly fall-like day. The real scorcher was in the realm of our political and social climates, rather than the usual weather-centric one (save that "little issue" with the Paris Climate Agreement).

What I'll remember most about this summer is that the major fireworks weren't the ones lighting our July skies, but those emanating from the White House. The current resident, who, by the way, really did call the place "a dump," hasn't exactly spent a quiet summer—despite frequent golf holidays.

On the contrary, he and his cronies have been busy: pushing a backward social agenda including repeated swipes at everyone from Mexicans to journalists, from LGBTQ citizens to peaceful protestors, from Muslims to, well, gosh, women. His repeated attempts—supported by a Republican Congress—to crush the Affordable Care Act have, in effect, targeted millions of Americans, particularly those with the chronic challenges of illness and poverty. His cabinet's also been on the attack, with Education Secretary, Betsy DeVos, attempting to defund public education, and HUD Chief, Ben Carson, calling poverty a "state of mind."

Let's face it, our current "leader" has basically targeted the entire planet by pulling out of the Paris Climate Agreement. Of course, this being a man who failed to heed a basic warning on August 21st: "Don't look directly at the sun," his dismissal of science is no surprise.

So, what's a concerned citizen to do in the face of unrelenting attacks on personal freedom? At the start of this administration's reign, several otherwise intelligent—perhaps well-meaning—folks suggested a wait-and-see approach. "Give him a chance. He's finding his way," they said. "It's our duty to support the office of the president," they said. "It's not in America's best interest to see him fail."

One might've countered with something like, "Hasn't he shown his true colors repeatedly?" There was the bad hombres comment, that time he mocked a reporter with a disability, and, lest we forget, the whole p*ssy-grabbing episode (Yep, that again). Besides, wouldn't "success" in Making America Great Again really amount to a failure to live up to our best ideals?

Okay, to some, these wait-and-see suggestions may have seemed reasonable, nuggets of cautious advice, or at least compelling



In June, a diverse group of community members gathered on the Library Park lawn in peaceful protest of a rally by anti-Muslim hate group, Act for America.



Following the white supremacist hate rally in Charlottesville VA, a well-attended peace vigil took place on the Middletown Green on August 13th.

soundbites. But they basically amounted to calls for inaction. At this point, seven-plus months into his presidency, it's safe to say inaction is the last thing we need. Better cautionary advice might be: "Give them an inch, and we'll end up with Nazis marching in the streets."

A few months ago, that image may have

seemed impossible—though let's not pretend the ugly heart of racism ever stopped beating in this country—but under Trump, that frightening vision came to pass. Charlottesville is, of course, merely the latest blot on a nation that loves to celebrate its core value, equality FOR ALL, until we're expected to actually deliver on it. And while institutional racism certainly

didn't start with this president, his weak response to Charlottesville—his refusal to lay blame squarely at the feet of white supremacists, KKK members, and—for god's sake!—Nazis is telling.

In the months since he took office, instances of hate speech and (at the risk of sounding old-fashioned) evil actions have spiked. Clearly, those who are emboldened by a leader who calls for the oppression of immigrants, who denigrates transgender military members, who has repeatedly equated Muslims with terror—while refusing to condemn domestic white terrorists.

Regardless of his claim, "I have a great relationship with the Blacks," this president insists on turning a blind eye to the realities of social injustice and racial inequality plaguing our nation. Instead, he uses his #fakenews rallying cry to deflect all criticism.

Yes, these are troubling times...but one thing heartens me. In the face of bullying and hatred, people are speaking out.

Though I stated earlier I'd most remember this summer's verbal fireworks and ensuing violence, in reality, what's made a deeper impression isn't hateful rhetoric. It's the unity I've witnessed. In the face of efforts to suppress truth and to rewind the social clock to some mythical time of greatness, people have voiced a resounding NO. Across this nation, and in our own state, hate alarms have sounded—and good people have answered.

So, my most vivid summer memories may just be of peaceful gatherings. This June, in Waterbury's Library Park, in defiance of an anti-Muslim rally scheduled by Act for America, dozens of people of various ethnic and religious backgrounds stood and prayed and sang. One speaker, a Muslim convert, reminded us "It's what you do in the small moments of your life. Any time you stay quiet when someone is being treated unfairly, you have committed an injustice."

And following the Charlottesville madness, this bit of wisdom was lovingly offered at a peace vigil on the Middletown Green. "White supremacy is a problem created by white people. White people need to stop expecting non-whites to solve it." Amen.

These rallies, the hymns, the hugs, are they enough? Of course not. Therein lies one danger of the self-professed "woke": It's easy to make one Love Is Love sign, and—with a self-congratulatory fist bump—call the battle won. Let's not pull the covers of complacency back over our heads. Let's commit to the long haul of real change. Of true equality. Of justice for all.

Bright Summer Bridge

David Celotto, Bridge to College Director

For many, summer is filled with gentle strolls on the shore, campfire smells, and of course the company of family and friends. Summer's long days and warm nights also allow life to slow down, offering time to reflect on the busy academic year. For students in the Bridge to College programs, the wonderful rays of summer were coupled with opportunity: for academic growth, positive relationship building, and time to focus on next steps on the journey to college.

Each summer, the Bridge to College Division offers programs to hundreds of Waterbury students, aimed at maintaining sharp academic rigor while providing activities to help students connect with peers.

Summer 2017 was no exception. The Bridge to College grant initiatives rolled out a fantastic summer slate for students beginning in June and running through the first week of August.

The GEAR UP program, a federally funded grant initiative within the BTC division, once again offered a weeklong residential program for participants on the Wesleyan University campus. Over 100 students convened at NVCC on July 10 to depart for the weeklong excursion. Teary-eyed families gathered to send off their students for an amazing experience.

The residential program featured an innovative spin on English and Math content, academic and cultural field trips, and guest speakers tackling meaningful topics. English instructors embedded literacy concepts into lessons on argumentative writing, persuasion,

and research, culminating in student presentations on national topics of controversy. Math instructors presented numeracy skills through personal finance activities. Students examined budgeting, credit, and financial literacy through "real world" investigations.

Afternoons and evenings were filled with cultural field trips and thought-provoking conversations with GEAR UP partners. Field trips included team building and communication exercises at Adventure Rooms, marine ecology investigations at Hammonasset State Park, and a trip to Simsbury Meadows to partake in a team-oriented obstacle course. Evening activities included guest speakers addressing issues of healthy relationships, overcoming obstacles, resiliency, and grit. Students took the opportunity to engage with community partners, openly discussing issues that pressure adolescent youth.

In addition to the Wesleyan residential

program, additional Bridge to College staff were hard at work implementing two on-campus summer opportunities. The first, an Introduction to Human Services college credit course, was offered to 25 Waterbury high school students. Taught by NVCC professor, Christine Cocchiola Meyer, the course offered participants the chance to begin an early college experience. The second program, titled, Bridge to College Summer Experience, featured students from both the GEAR UP and ConnCAP programs. Funded as a joint venture between GEAR UP and Waterbury Public Schools, over fifty students were enrolled in English, Math, and Leadership coursework.

Focusing on the holistic needs of learners, this content prepared students for fall high school courses, while also introducing college and career leadership soft skills. Once again, the Bridge to College Division delivered a summer filled with excitement and opportunity.

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK



Space for Rent!

Steve Parlato

While not technically for rent, this space—generally occupied by compelling thoughts and well-chosen words from The Tamarack's student editor—is currently vacant. The reason? Your college newspaper is, for the moment, without an official student leader.

Not to worry; I'm still at the helm, and things are under control. As you can see, our September issue arrived on schedule, coming together despite several key writers graduating or moving on to other challenges in May.

Our most recent Editor-in-Chief, Christopher Gordon, is now busy as SGA Secretary (fortunately, he's still a contributing writer/editor). Chris's predecessor, Chelsea Clow, has embarked on a high-pressure, final semester internship as she prepares to graduate from the PTA Program in December. While I'm hopeful Chelsea will write an occasional piece, I must recognize her reign as Tamarack honcho is past.

This is where you may come into play. Yes, we have a talented core writing staff, folks for whom our school newspaper is a primary focus. But no one has—as yet—officially signed on as editor. So... I'm putting this open call out there.

We need to build our numbers; along with writers, we need artists, photographers, and students with an interest in marketing to help with the business end of things. We're looking for enthusiastic, engaged individuals to make a serious commitment to joining our award-winning staff.

What's in it for you? First of all, the chance to develop solid skills as a writer, to deliver product within a deadline, and to see your original writing in print are all excellent resume-building opportunities. A side benefit is working with a great group of people and the prospect of forming lasting friendships.

And who knows? Maybe after working on a couple issues with us, you'll be ready to take on this space as your own—writing a monthly column, helping shape the paper's content, acting as student leader in editorial meetings—joining me in representing The Tamarack at events on campus and beyond.

We're looking for a few good women and men to join our staff. Have you got what it takes? Drop us an email at tamarack@nv.edu or stop by S519 in Prism Lounge to say hello. Aligning yourself with journalistic excellence could be your first step toward making some indelible memories at NVCC.

All best,

Associate Professor Steve Parlato

On Community Colleges

President Daisy Cocco De Filippis

The following op-ed, "Community colleges move the people and can move the state," originally appeared in *The Connecticut Mirror* on August 1, 2017.

I am not forgetting about or unsympathetic to the state's demanding financial situation and the complex challenges of addressing the projected shortfalls in the next biennial budget. At Naugatuck Valley Community College, we know about increasing pressures to meet the needs of our constituencies while available funds keep decreasing. I say proudly that NVCC has remained in the black during each of the past nine years.

We've trimmed administrative budgets, shaved purchases to only essentials, left positions unfilled, renegotiated required contracts, deferred maintenance, and postponed some new or expanded programs. I know we mirror these interventions among other state colleges, universities, and agencies. NVCC will not place itself in the red intentionally.

Yet, if we cut deeper, we may need to cut back on programs and services for those who need them the most—the people who depend on us for improved quality of life and for job training, both which enable them to contribute to Connecticut's economy.

If you move the people, you move the state. We knew this when we were instrumental in the addition of evening bus service in Waterbury five years ago. This idea can be part of a larger address of our fiscal plight. Community colleges have moved the people and NVCC has the record to prove its value.

Recent reports from the American Association of Community Colleges found that "Higher educational attainment leads to increased earnings and lowers the likelihood of unemployment." At its May 25 commencement—and for the sixth year in a row—NVCC awarded more than 1,000 associate degrees and certificates. We've also known for years that median family income increases with more education.

AACC says, "Paying to attend college is a significant challenge for low-income families, which can cost half their annual income." Last year, the U.S. Department of Education announced that NVCC is among the top 25

community colleges nationwide that advance opportunities for low-income students, as ranked among 1,108 community colleges for our effectiveness with high outcomes in serving these students. NVCC was designated a Hispanic Serving Institution, a recognition that makes us even more eligible for grants. Last year, we disbursed over \$14 million in federal, state, and private student financial aid. We are driven toward widening educational access.

We are committed to the relationship between learning and earning. Employers count on us for education and training programs that prepare skilled workers for today's and tomorrow's jobs. Our workforce mission is grounded in quality academic programs which respond to community needs in health care, social services, criminal justice, child care, sciences, and the arts, to name a few. Our Advanced Manufacturing Technology Center places all its completers into jobs.

The results of this comprehensive approach to address community, regional, and national needs has prompted other states to support community colleges in numerous ways. They have increased scholarship aid, funded critical services, partnered on grants, and even offered free tuition to eligible families.

These states have recognized that to move the state, they have to move the people. Their progress toward workforce goals and economic development is tied to a committed, positioned, and effective community college. Connecticut's growth and future are benefiting from the same community college connections.

Our return on investment pays three beneficiaries: students, society, and taxpayers. Increased earnings and higher future wages benefit students. Society benefits from the correlation between education and improved quality of life, particularly in better health, less crime, and reduced unemployment. Taxpayers benefit from added tax revenue and savings from reduced public funding for health, crime, and unemployment. Community colleges and NVCC add value that should be sustained, not diminished.

It is clear that moving the people can move the state.

SGA PRESIDENT



Refuse to Give Up

My name is Emily Verdosci, and I'm so happy to be here! As SGA President,

let me be one of the first to welcome you to Naugatuck Valley Community College. I am so excited for this semester! You'll be amazed how quickly December and finals come along, but in the time until then, I want to do as much for the college as I can!

The student government on campus is an integral part of student activities, with our focus on you, the students. We're here to work to represent the overall voice of the college and the needs of all students. We believe every student's voice and ideas deserve a place here at Naugatuck Valley, so we're always open to chat in our office in the Student Center, S516 in the Prism Lounge.

It's also very important to us that each student feels welcome and comfortable while on campus. We thrive on academic success, and we also take pride in offering events that help students enjoy themselves as well. We have many clubs on campus, such as the Ballroom Dance Club, Gaming and Chess Clubs, Art and Music Clubs, and the Stage Society, to name a few. Our award-winning newspaper, *The Tamarack*, is also an active club, currently seeking new members.

For volunteerism opportunities, we've been active with Habitat for Humanity, and the Black and Hispanic Student Unions are devoted to public service, along with the Human Services Club. Another service group is the Newman Club, which I was honored to lead as president last year.

We also have honors societies such as Phi Theta Kappa, Phi Theta Gamma and the Presidents Circle. If we don't have a club that interests you, gather ten friends and a professor and we can make it happen. That's sort of an unofficial motto here at NVCC: "We can make it happen." And another big attitude to embrace at NVCC is this: NEVER GIVE UP! In the immortal words of Rocky Balboa, "Every champion was once a contender that refused to give up!"

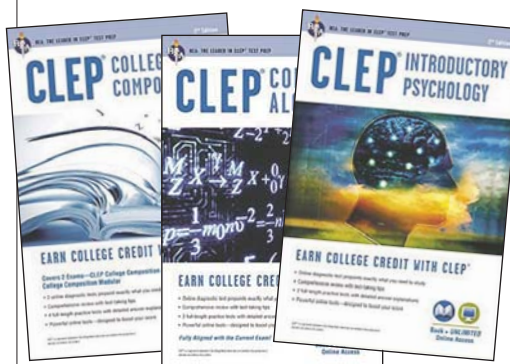
Emily Verdosci

SPEAK UP

Are you interested in where your Student Activities Fees are spent? If so, voice your opinion at NVCC's Student Government meetings held every Wednesday, 4-5 p.m. in L501, across from the Library. For more information call 203-596-2185, stop by S516, or email SGA@nvcc.commnet.edu.

Save Cash and Time on College!

Bradley Edwards



Say someone already knows a subject and is irritated over still being mandated to take the course. Well, there's a quick fix: CLEP. The College-Level Examination Program allows students to test out of a variety of lower-tier and mainstream courses and simply earn credit. As of the writing of this article, a test costs eighty-five dollars. NVCC's registration fee adds fifteen dollars, for a total cost of one-hundred dollars. Compared to a semester of coursework, tuition and fees totaling hundreds of dollars for a 3-credit course, and the potential small fortune to purchase a textbook, one-hundred dollars and a day spent testing represents a major discount.

CLEP itself offers study guides, practice test sessions, and books. If utilized properly, one could probably limp through a myriad of lower-level courses spending only about one-hundred-ten to one-hundred-fifty dollars per course, and put in only a fraction of the time typically required to complete the courses. Some who particularly dislike the idea of spending several semesters completing

college requirements might take it upon themselves to become familiar with each individual CLEP exam, so they can perform whole semesters of coursework in a few simple days of testing. Such a practice would likely take a few months of dedicated self-study, effort, and willingness to take risks, though.

Personally, I took the CLEP for Analyzing and Interpreting Literature, or in NVCC terms, ENG102. I didn't do any studying—I'm a prolific writer in my off time—and I passed with relative ease. Admittedly, I thumbed through the study guidebook for the exam—for free. A tip for financial min-maxers out there: the NVCC library offers free access to CLEP study guides. I booked my test pretty much two days before,

CLEP. The College-Level Examination Program allows students to test out of a variety of lower-tier and mainstream courses and simply earn credit.

registered my spot at NVCC the next day, and took the test on the third day. I passed the test, got my credit, and that was that. In three days, I skirted around an entire course, saving hundreds of dollars in tuition and book fees.

One caution: failing a CLEP exam mandates a three-month wait before retaking it, so don't wait too long (like I did) if it's a critical part of one's plans. If luck's not in the cards, the test might just wind up being horribly constructed or have a host of really unlucky questions due to its procedural generation. Forward planning is a must.

Solar Charm

Christopher Gordon



"Wow! It's really there!" exclaimed an excited young sky gazer during a solar eclipse viewing August 21st, on the plaza at NVCC. With clouds covering the sky, so too did the moon cover the sun. While the grey skies put a small damper on the event, they added a surprisingly ethereal charm as clouds brought the slowly disappearing sun in and out of view. Just another excitingly normal day here at NVCC.

The Tamarack

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

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EDITORIAL

One Bad Gamble

America, land of the free, home of the brave. And now, it seems, we are the country that stands alone. While I could get into the mounds of senseless, sexist, racist, and brainless comments from the resident of the White House, constantly dredging up stupidity won't do me any favors as this semester begins. Let's face it, we all need our brain cells in the best possible condition.

The point of this editorial is not to highlight the folly of politics and politicians, but the fallout all of us will now have to face. Longtime American allies, including those who showed initial solidarity with the president, have had enough. Aggressive, blunt, ignorant grandstanding from a political leader—who neither cares for nor grasps the nuances of politics—is taking its toll across the world.

South Korea is making it clear empty Twitter threats are NOT an option to avoid a war with North Korea. President Moon Jae-in took Trump to task for his ignorance of politics when he threatened Kim Jong-Un with "fire and fury" for continuing missile launch tests. Another tweet reads like the intimidation tactics of a playground bully: "Kim Jong-Un of North Korea made a very wise and well reasoned [sic] decision, the alternative would have been both catastrophic and unacceptable!" While North Korean missile testing is cause for concern, it does not give the WH resident carte blanche to threaten war without discussion with our allies, not to mention our own Senate and military. It pushes needed partners, like South Korea, away and gives other nations justification, proof of America's status as world oppressor.

Charlottesville is just another symptom of a growing epidemic of the WH resident's lack of leadership. Equating legitimate protestors with the KKK and Nazis is so wrong-headed even major political supporters advise him to change his message. British Prime Minister Theresa May took the president to task, saying, "It is important for all those in positions of responsibility to condemn far-right views." She further stated, there is "no equivalence between those who propound fascist views and those who oppose them." And yet the WH resident holds firm to his position, even as a number of his allies and staff seek to separate themselves from the madness.

Some people see all politicians as ambulance chasers, and it has left them with a sour taste in their mouths. South Park famously satirized the electoral process, comparing candidates to large feminine hygiene products and fecal matter sandwiches. Many Americans gambled on the Republican candidate because he was NOT a career politician, hoping his business experience might be a boon to our American Dream. Sometimes a dice roll pays off, sometimes not so much. People seem to have forgotten one very important detail: con artists could also be considered business people. The snake oil doesn't taste so good now, does it?

NVCC PTA Students Attend National Conference

Chelsea Clow



This summer, several NVCC Physical Therapist Assistant students attended the American Physical Therapy Association's National Conference, titled NEXT. Financial support from NVCC's Student Government Association and PTA Club fundraisers, enabled students to attend the three-day Boston conference, staying at the beautiful Westin Hotel.

Both first-year and second-year students attended NEXT, along with faculty member, Kathleen Sileo. The conference offered several lectures on various topics essential especially for students who haven't yet decided which area of the field they'd like to work in upon graduation. Among other topics, lectures covered nutrition and its effects on inflammation, and treating complex athletic injuries; in fact, Gary Calabrese, physical therapist for the Cleveland Cavaliers presented one class on athletes.

"Initially when I decided to go to NEXT, I was most interested in attending as many 'science' lectures as I could; lectures on new treatments and discoveries made in the field," said second-year NVCC PTA student, James Palmer. "I ended up really liking the lectures on 'non-science' aspects of PT more than I thought I would. Self-reflection, patient care, and stories from PTs new and old were all fascinating; they gave me a different outlook which I know will benefit me going into my career."

Meeting other PTAs and PTA students from around the country was also extremely valuable. Events like this conference provide a great networking opportunity for students and professionals alike. "One of the highlights was meeting fellow PTA students and members of the PTA Caucus," said first-year PTA student, Gaile Ivaska. "The conference felt heavily weighted toward PTs, so it was refreshing to

network with other PTAs/students and share our impressions and concerns for the PTA profession."

Second-year PTA program students will graduate this December, so conferences are well-timed to guide students in their soon-to-be careers. Second-year PTA student, Mike Montefusco, said, "I got a sense of the level, standards, and expectations PTs we'll be working for will hold us to." He appreciated the conference as an opportunity to network and represent NVCC and student PTAs, as well

as an chance to be with classmates and faculty outside the classroom.

One of my personal favorite takeaways was a class titled, "Finding Your Purpose: Across the Generations," in which three physical therapists, ranging in age, discussed their experiences entering and working in the physical therapy field. I found this lecture incredibly motivating and really enjoyed hearing about their experiences

throughout their careers.

"There were takeaways from every lecture—maybe not pertaining to PT—that could give you a different approach or perspective. As they say, learning should never end. These conferences are ways to better yourself and should be taken advantage of," said Montefusco.

Attending this conference proved an excellent opportunity and wonderful experience for both first-year and second-year students. Ivaska commented, "The conference made the difference in experiencing the APTA as a living, breathing organization, as opposed to some nebulous entity we read about in our textbooks, and I'm truly grateful to the SGA for assisting us with payment to attend the conference. It was well worth the experience, and I look forward to attending future conferences as a professional."

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First-year PTA student, Gaile Ivaska

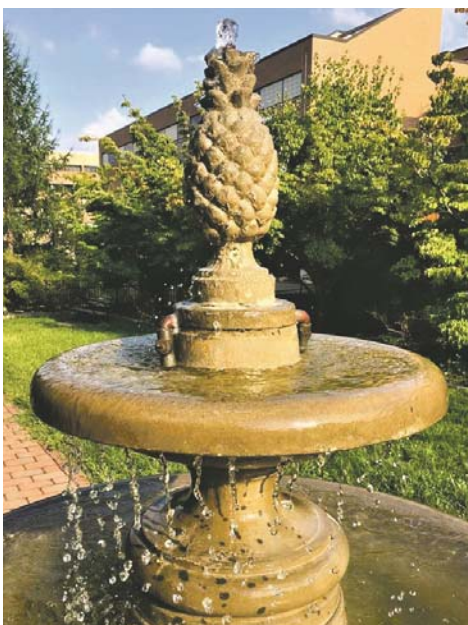


Photo Courtesy of Steve Parlato

Author Chuck Palahniuk wrote, "College is like a fountain of knowledge, and the students are there to drink." We urge you all, students, faculty, and staff alike, to drink deeply of the knowledge that comes from connecting with one another in the spirit of learning.



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Happenings @ Other Colleges

Alyssa Katz



Rider University

This New Jersey college will host a semester-long workshop series, entitled, "Strive to Thrive," to promote wellness and success, not just on campus, but in daily life. Different workshops will focus on topics from student success, to how best to handle holiday stress. In September, a presentation planned for the 12th will address how to achieve and maintain academic success. The 19th will bring a presentation for women on safe sex and healthy practices to enhance their lives. The same presentation will be offered for men, September 26th.

<https://www.rider.edu/events/strive-thrive>



Davidson College

September 25th, this North Carolina college will present "War and Peace: Trojan Narratives

on Ancient Greek Vases," a lecture by Tyler Jo Smith, Associate Professor of Mediterranean Art and Archaeology at the University of Virginia. With book publications, and one currently in the works, she has taken part in archaeological digs in Greece, Turkey, Sicily, and England. Her lecture will highlight a particular Greek vase dating back to the 6th century. Smith will also explore the relationship between texts and images, discussing symbols and meanings behind various pieces.

<https://www.davidson.edu/events?pageindex=0&pagesize=20>



Elizabethtown College

Music and thoughts of peace stream

across this Pennsylvania campus with multiple events in September. The 16th will feature a peace symposium in which selected honorees will receive the Peace Award, given to those who have devoted time for peace activism. On the 18th, in advance of an International Day of Peace on the 21st, there will be a celebration featuring music shared by music therapy students; this event is intended to promote peace through music. Finally, September 21st and 22nd will feature an exhibition of artwork with a theme of peace and harmony, as well as a text panel submitted by writers.

<http://www.etown.edu/newsandevents/>



Gettysburg College

Political scandals and corruption will be set to music, bringing theatrical entertainment to this Pennsylvania college

September 23rd in a performance by the Capitol Steps, who use "information straight from the headlines...to put the MOCK in Democracy!" Thirty-five years ago, Senate staffers planning a Christmas party ignored the potential risk in poking fun at their place of employment. With a mix of collaboration and satire, cast members—most of whom are former senate staffers—continue to offer quality amusement. The hilarious group has been featured on NBC, CBS, ABC, PBS—and, every now and then, can be heard on radio stations across the country.

<https://www.gettysburg.edu/events/>

We Represent



Photo Courtesy of Giovanni Cruz
SGA Officers Front Row, l to r: President Emily Verdosci, Treasurer Abigail Ramirez, Vice President Carlos Romero; Back Row, l to r: Secretary Christopher Gordon, former Sergeant-at-Arms Giovanni Cruz

Emily Verdosci – SGA President

Every one of us has a unique story, and I'd like to share a little bit of mine. I'm Emily Verdosci, and I'm thrilled to be your new SGA President. I was always very ambitious. I come from a big family who were always, and still are, involved in anything and everything, from community and church activities to volunteerism in Thomaston, where I'm from. Throughout all my years in grade school, it was club after club and sport after sport.

By high school, with the help of my family and teachers, I started becoming president of every club I joined. Life just couldn't be simple or quiet. My sister graduated from NVCC in 2016 with a nursing degree. Two months after graduation, she was hired to work at Yale New Haven Hospital. Through her hard work and the support of the faculty and staff of the nursing program, she was given the tools she needed to succeed and excel. So, when I came to NVCC, I had big plans and big ideas.

I'll graduate this year with an associate degree, and then I'll transfer to get my bachelors in finance. For now, though, in addition to classwork, my major focus will be serving as your SGA President. I can't wait to represent NVCC and all the College offers, and I look forward to meeting as many students as I can.

Carlos Romero – SGA Vice President

Hello, I'm an NVCC sophomore pursuing a degree in General Studies. I plan to proceed with my studies at a four-year university to become a social worker. I'm honored to be SGA Vice President once again. People would describe me as an eloquent, versatile gentleman. I wear many hats, but I firmly believe in being the change we want to see in the world. In other words, don't give to get; give to inspire others to give.

I'm a coach for Waterbury PAL, and volunteer at Safe Haven Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Outreach Program. I've also volunteered at St. Vincent De Paul Soup Kitchen, and I've mentored elementary school children. I've raised funds for Special Olympics and am a mentor for youth at Waterbury Youth Services. I've also successfully completed the Waterbury Police Citizens Academy. Many see me employed as a security officer at Brass Mill Center.

College is a place where opportunity is at every door. I will be honored to be one of the first generation in my family to graduate college at a young age. However, the SGA has made me realize there's more to college than academics. Anyone can steer a ship, but it takes a leader to chart the course. Serving others has been a foundation for growth. SGA has had a massive impact not just on my education, but my life.

Being engaged helps us grow as people. I recommend everyone get involved in a club or join in campus activities. I hope to see you at our events, and I wish everyone luck in

their studies. Remember, this semester can be life-changing!

Christopher Gordon – SGA Secretary

Being NVCC's next SGA Secretary fills me with excitement. There is a lot to do, and all of it needs to be recorded and preserved, a task for which I have trained this past year as The Tamarack's Editor-in-Chief and official minute taker during weekly editorial meetings. Being a positive influence on students, both young and old, is also a task I am ready to begin, as shown in my focus on positive articles covering our campus and representing the newspaper at SGA meetings. I look forward to meeting new students and helping them experience the positive effect that will result from their hard work.

As I sit here imagining the road ahead, I can't help but gaze backward as well, and wonder at the obstacle course I've just completed. The twists, turns, and bumps look incredibly difficult, almost impossible. How could anyone manage such a journey? The road seemed so smooth as I walked it originally. Sure I thought it was rough at times, but for the most part it wasn't that hard to navigate.

I end one part of the journey as Editor-in-Chief of The Tamarack, and begin the road as Secretary for the SGA. I will leave you with this Official Statement, "This was a lot of work simply to get my picture in the newspaper."

Abigail Ramirez – SGA Treasurer

I am currently working toward a degree in Criminal Justice - Forensics. Not only am I just the second child in my family to graduate high school, I will be the first to graduate college. Once I graduate from NVCC, I plan to attend the University of New Haven to complete my bachelors and masters degrees. At times, it was hard to believe I would ever get here, but I found the courage to push myself, and it worked, because here I am.

Now that I'm here at NVCC, I've been able to get involved with activities around campus. I'm proud to have served as the Hispanic Student Union President and as a senator in the Student Government Association. In addition to those roles, I'm employed as a student worker in the Admissions Office.

This semester, I take another big step forward as SGA Treasurer. Like my fellow officers, NVCC has become a big part of my life, and I'm grateful for the many friends I've made along the way. They are all an inspiration in helping me reach my goals. Because of the inspiring people I've met here at NVCC, I have a second important goal: to be an inspiration to everyone I meet. Stop by the SGA office, to say hello. I look forward to meeting you!

Note: Though Giovanni Cruz, former Sergeant-at-Arms, is pictured with the officers, he has stepped down from his position. We thank him for all his hard work and invite interested students to inquire about taking on that role.

Budget Holes Underscore Push for Structural Change

Mark Kacyrat

Declining state funding, along with a shrinking college-age population, as reported by *The CT Mirror*, has contributed to the CT State Colleges and Universities system's frequent budget shortfalls. CSCU includes all twelve community colleges, four regional state universities, and the online Charter Oak State College, governed by the Board of Regents (BOR), all maintaining unique identities, community connections, and individual missions. CT's budget crisis places enormous difficulty on these institutions in dealing with expenditures. Consequently, costs often get passed onto students via higher tuition and fees.

This past March, the BOR approved the latest tuition hike for students attending community colleges, estimated to cover half of CSCU's budget deficit over two years. According to current BOR President, Mark Ojakian, 80% of costs incurred by CSCU stem from employees. Operating expenses create what Ojakian refers to as a "structural deficit." This prompted the BOR in April to embrace Ojakian's highly controversial proposal known as "Students First."

The proposal's premise: reorganize and restructure the CSCU system to achieve long-term financial stability, without compromising academics and student services. As reported by *The Hartford Courant*, "Students First" involves leadership consolidation across the entire CSCU system. The plan is estimated to take two years to fully implement, with a total savings of \$41 million.

Ojakian's ideas have received significant pushback from faculty and students, exacerbated by a lack of specifics and transparency. Journalism professor Stephania Davis, of Manchester Community College, argued, "Your cuts discriminate against students of color..." along with immigrants, special needs students, and "all the disenfranchised groups who are more highly represented at community colleges."

Professor David Blitz, of CCSU, argued "although this may seem uncontroversial to those outside the university, the proposal ignores the specificity of public higher education, which is emphatically not a for-profit business." Blitz still strongly agrees that there need to be solutions to CSCU's grim finances, and proposes ideas completely outside of state government raising taxes on Connecticut's most affluent residents.

An opposing view argued in favor of "Students First," stated, "That's what businesses do when times get tight. They look for unnecessary redundancies to trim costs and realign the enterprise for adaptability in the future." *The CT Mirror* reported that some legislators in the CT General Assembly also expressed approval for Ojakian's plan and his leadership.

At NVCC, a calm, optimistic, yet somewhat somber atmosphere prevails regarding the system consolidation and restructuring. Dean of Students, Sarah Gager, has said NVCC will stay true to its mission and that "staff rises to the occasion when budgets are tight." She added jobs like hers "are about helping each other, as our students are our future."

Academic Center for Excellence Director, Robert Sheftel, asserted his staff is also rising to the occasion, even in the face of state budget woes. He did stress, though, that the funding situation is putting greater strain on tutors and forcing many students onto a waiting list before getting the attention they need.

While reiterating that the college has managed to stay in the black for the past nine years, NVCC President, Daisy Cocco De Filippis, cautioned this has not come without making difficult choices, cautioning that further cuts to NVCC's funding could inadvertently cause a decline in services. Dr. De Filippis stressed the value of investing in higher education. Pointing to the connection between education and improved quality of life, she stated, "Community colleges and NVCC add value that should be sustained, not diminished."

Tamarack Edit Meetings

**Thursdays 2:00 - 3:00, S519
ALL WELCOME!!**

Congratulations and Best Wishes!

Tamarack Staff



Photo Courtesy of Steve Parlato

On July 28, President De Filippis, along with Provost Jim Troup and Professors Julia Petitfrere and Steve Parlato, joined in

celebration of Tamarack Senior Staff Writer, Nicole Hayes. Distinguishing herself in the classroom, as President of the Black Student Union, as student representative to the One Book Committee—and as social justice voice of our newspaper—Nicole has brought further distinction to NVCC by earning a full scholarship to Wesleyan University in Middletown.

Excited to pursue a degree in psychology, Hayes was moved by the lunch in her honor at San Marino Room. Presenting Nicole with a copy of Don Quixote, President De Filippis expressed her pride—and plans to celebrate once again upon Nicole's successful completion of her first semester at Wesleyan. This slice of congratulatory cheesecake is certain to be just one of many sweet moments ahead for such an exceptional student and person. The Tamarack looks forward to updates from Nicole, and the staff wishes her great success on her journey.

Students Lead



Photo Courtesy of Noblesse Louzingou

Students, faculty, and administrators worked their way across the Hartford Capitol Building to speak with legislators and BOR President Mark Ojakian in May. In the photo, NVCC student leaders pose with Dean of Students Sarah Gager and Rita Ostrander, from the Student Activities Office, at the capitol, proud to represent and advocate for Naugatuck Valley Community College as we move forward in CT's struggling economic climate.

Freedom, But at What Cost?

Nicole Hayes

Inmates in White County, Tennessee, have been offered a chance to reduce their sentences by thirty days—if they volunteer for sterilization. With approval from Attorney General Jeff Sessions, Judge Sam Benningfield contends vasectomies and contraceptive implants will reduce the “vicious cycle” of repeat offenders entering his courtroom due to unemployment or the inability to pay child support. Benningfield stated, “I hope to encourage them to take personal responsibility and give them a chance, when they get out, to not be burdened with children. This gives a chance to jump on their feet and make something of themselves.”

Well-intentioned or not, sterilization seems a high price to pay for an extra thirty days of freedom.

According to News Channel 5, thirty-two female inmates have already received implants of the hormone, Nexplanon, and thirty-eight male inmates have signed up to receive vasectomies. Inmates are also given a two-day credit if they complete a neo-natal course on the dangers of having children while using drugs.

Benningfield's offer is not unique; other voluntary sterilization programs exist, claiming to assist individuals, such as Project Prevention, a non-profit organization that pays substance abusers \$300 to become sterilized or receive implants.

While Benningfield is confident his efforts will bring a positive outcome, the program has encountered controversy. The Health Department and American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of Tennessee are questioning Benningfield's authority. Shelley Walker,

Tennessee's Health Department spokeswoman, considers Benningfield's decision to offer health procedures without input from other departments a policy they cannot support.

Walker said, “Neither the Tennessee Department of Health nor the White County Health Department was involved in developing any policy to offer sentence reductions.” Walker further contended that inmates should not receive certain health services from the Health Department or other providers while incarcerated. The ACLU of Tennessee has stressed backlash referring to the “inappropriateness” of Benningfield playing a role in another person's ability to procreate.

In 1994, the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) Programme of Action defined reproductive rights “based on the right of couples and individuals to decide free from discrimination, coercion and violence whether to have children, how often and when to do so, having the necessary information and means to make such decisions.” Efforts to barter fertility for freedom seem to fly in the face of this international standard.

Benningfield and others promoting sterilization services may believe they are assisting repeat offenders or substance abusers in getting on their feet. However, Tennessee's Health Department and ACLU disagree, asserting Benningfield is coercing inmates and infringing on their reproductive rights. Well-intentioned or not, sterilization seems a high price to pay for an extra thirty days of freedom.



A Whole Bunch!

Steve Parlato

I'm excited to share the news that The Tamarack has continued its winning ways. Just as spring semester came to a close, we received news we'd won our

largest batch of awards yet, SEVEN, in the College Contest hosted by the CT. Chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists.

I'm especially proud that, this year, six of our seven awards are in writing categories, and we swept one category, General Column, with 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place recognition. It's also significant, I think, that NVCC and Quinnipiac University were the only two schools honored this year—and Quinnipiac is known for its

journalism program, while The Tamarack continues to earn accolades without the benefit of a journalism course

In the category of Editorial, The Tamarack took 2nd Place for Chelsea Clow's piece, “Do we say sorry?”; “Nevertheless she persisted,” by Trevor Lilly took 3rd Prize.

The powerful article, “Injustice Runs Deep,” by Nicole Hayes, took 3rd Place in the Feature category.

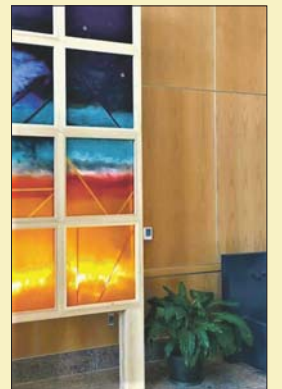
Our sweep of the General Column/Commentary category included 1st Place for Alyssa Katz's “Is it warm in here?” and Jessica Ney's “Enough!” took 2nd Place; Ney also brought home 3rd Prize for her column, “That's what she said: Together we rise”.

Our Artistic Director, Janice Bielawa, once again scored a 1st Place win for Front Page Layout for the September 2016 issue: “Another heated summer/framing a nation”.

I offer heartfelt congratulations to the entire Tamarack staff for their exceptional work. I couldn't be prouder!

Can you find it?

This month, we've featured a picture of an object on campus you may or may not have seen yet. But if you can track it down and identify it, it could earn you a prize. Submit your answer to tamarack@nv.edu for a chance to win a \$10 Dunkin Donuts gift card! One winner will be chosen randomly from correct entries received.



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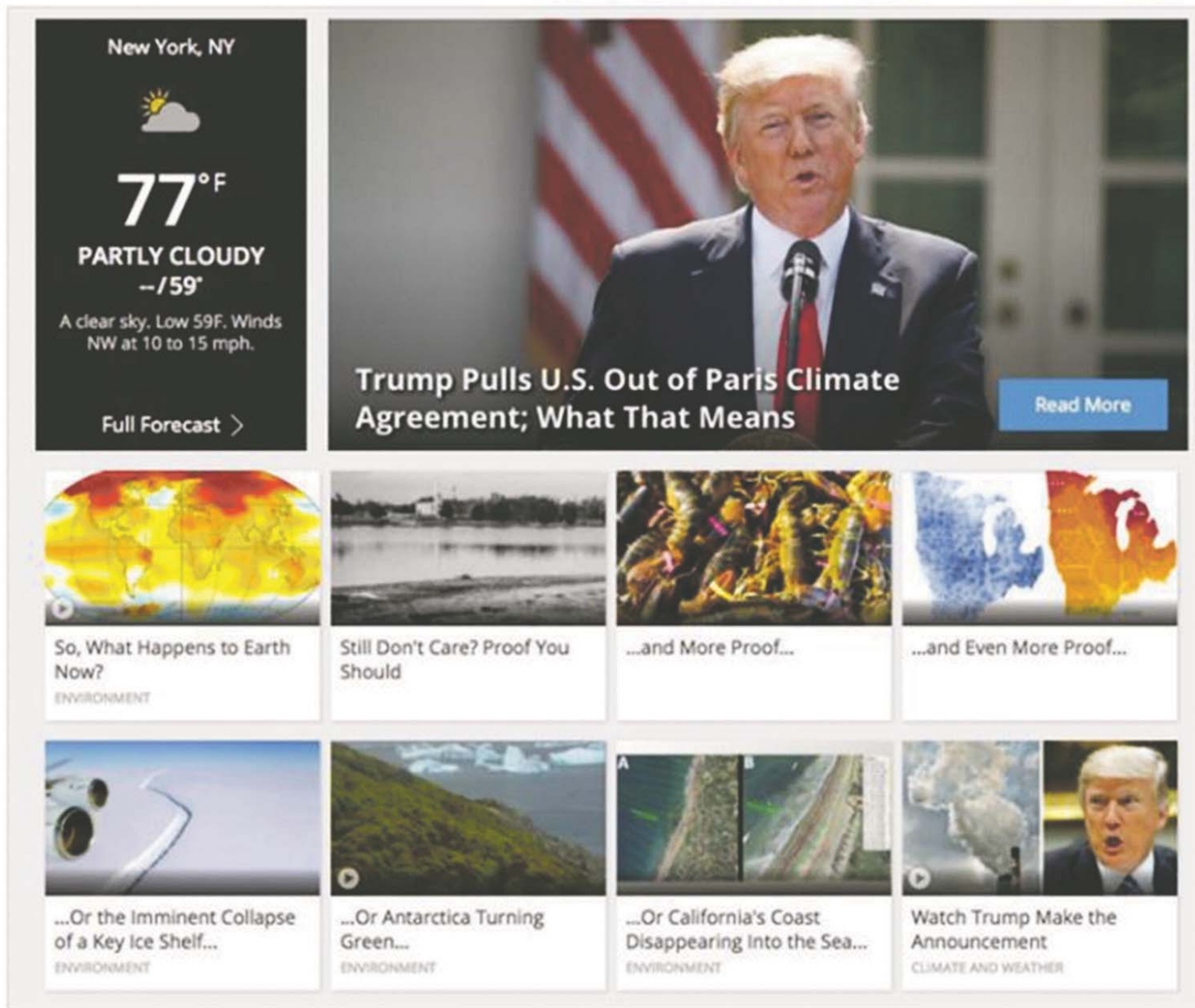
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One per person. May not be combined with any other offer, discount or coupon. Not valid with online orders. In-store only. Must present your NVCC student ID. Valid at Waterbury, CT location only. Limited Time Only.

“Climate Change Is Real.”

Alyssa Katz



Early June saw major coverage of the president's decision to withdraw from the 2015 Paris Agreement. His rationale: it will hurt the US economy and cost countless jobs if the country remains in the agreement. Other reasons Trump gave for withdrawing involve threats to American sovereignty, and the need to regulate our own domestic affairs, including our environmental laws. The decision upset many officials and citizens, considering nearly 200 nations have signed the pact to stop worsening climate change. With the US a top polluter, Trump's decision to back out of the treaty indeed poses a problem.

Business leaders, including Elon Musk, CEO of Tesla and Space X; Jeffrey R. Immelt, of General Electric; and Lloyd C. Blankfein, of Goldman Sachs, tried to convince Trump to honor the pact, saying the harm to the environment needs to be recognized in order to improve the situation. “Climate change is

real,” wrote Musk on Twitter. Many executives threatened to step down from Trump's advisory councils if the US left the agreement; some, including Musk and Disney CEO, Robert Iger, did so (Note: Trump preemptively disbanded these councils after several advisors resigned in mid-August in the wake of his troubling response to Charlottesville).

CEOs of major companies including Apple, Facebook, Google, Microsoft, HP, Intel, and others urged Trump to stick with the pact. In a letter, they asserted that staying in the Paris Agreement will create jobs while preventing business conflicts concerning environmental issues around water supply and agricultural productivity. They stated, “...concerned with the well-being of our customers, our investors, our communities, and our suppliers, we are strengthening our climate resilience, and...investing in innovative technologies that can help achieve a clean energy transition. For this transition to succeed, however,

governments must lead as well.”

Former President Obama also voiced support for the Paris Agreement—originally signed during his second term—saying the pact is important and creates plenty of needed jobs which will create more green energy while using less carbon and petroleum-based materials.

Weather.com, America's top source of weather-related information, also criticized Trump's decision. The day of his announcement their webpage included a link to his speech, which they countered with videos calling for environmental stewardship. All over social media people applauded the Weather Channel for this effort.

It would take four years for the US to fully exit the Paris Agreement. While scientists and officials continue to call for Trump to reconsider, it remains to be seen whether he is capable of being swayed by science and reason, or if he'll persist in claiming climate change is a hoax.

Mysterious Videos on Youtube

Bradley Edwards

It's not really news that weird stuff exists on Youtube; that's the gist of much user-generated content. What is news is the curious trend of children's videos popping up on Youtube. They're created in bulk by channels dedicated to their production, and somehow they experience a wild fluctuation of views—anywhere from single thousands to multimillions. Yet, despite how viral they are, they're not sorted into common algorithms, and they're not largely talked about by most public personalities, barring a select few Youtubers.

Most are monetized despite using commercial properties, primarily Disney ones, which are normally heavily enforced and policed by Disney's IP protection teams. In this case, however, these channels with millions of views, pools of ad revenue, and inappropriate representations of the characters, go completely under the radar. Why and how?

On that note, this article is also a warning. Don't throw on auto-play on kid-friendly content or in Youtube Kids, because these videos happen to be sorted into kid-friendly algorithms. Not all of them are entirely bad, but by and large, the worst content is hidden amongst the seemingly innocent. Some general searching uncovered titles like “Hitler vs Skeleton Finger Family Nursery Rhymes for Children,” and “Pregnant Elsa vs Spiderman vs Pregnant Spider Girl,” among others.

Even some higher end animations and skits feature unironic, unexplained portrayal of pregnancy, childbirth, fecal matter and delimiting. Unlike innocently raunchy flash cartoons one may find on Newgrounds or on other such popular sites, these cartoons have teams; greater effort is put into them, and they are produced routinely and regularly. Some are claymation; some use live action, and some are poorly animated sliding images. Yet they all still go to length to portray subtle but inappropriate subject matter. Effort was put into these. They get mysteriously high results, and their creators are making money.

Great speculation exists regarding how they gain enormous views and subscriber counts despite nearly zero big media attention. Some theorize it's an overseas clickfarm operation, or that the number of kids watching Youtube on auto-play would do it despite the obscene numbers and amount of videos. Due to the content of a select few videos, conspiracy theories are common. Regardless, awareness must be spread, so the public can better research this phenomenon. Children need protection from this kind of content, and parents should be aware of the dangers.

FACES IN THE CROWD A Fresh Start

Amanda Solla

I'm Amanda. I'm twenty-five years old and a new member of the student body here at Naugatuck Valley Community College. I attended Wilby High School, graduating in 2010. Throughout my time in high school I was focused on accounting. I thought about entering college to earn a degree in the business/accounting field, but instead, I put the idea of college behind me and went straight to work at a car dealership.

I forgot about school because I wanted to buy myself a car and hang out with friends; at the time, I thought that was more important. My mother was a single parent of four girls, so it wasn't easy for her to give us luxury items. My mother always said, “Go to college. You'll need it!” Looking back, I should have listened to her; she was always right. Even though I absolutely love working at the auto dealership, I don't have any background in anything else. Not having any educational background makes it harder to grow.

It wasn't until the beginning of this year that I realized I wanted to go back to school. I kept seeing different news articles about children in horrible situations. I know that's been



Photo Courtesy of Amanda Solla

going on for decades, but it seems to be happening more and more lately. I'm attending NVCC to complete my general coursework. I plan to further my education and become a social worker. I would love to work for the Department of Children and Families to support children who need help in their home environments.

NVCC interests me because attending a community college is an excellent, affordable option. My sisters attended this school, and they were treated very well by the faculty and staff. I look forward to meeting many great people here at Naugatuck Valley Community College.

Ready, Set...

Tamarack Staff



Saturday, August 26 was no ordinary day at Naugatuck Valley Community College. The entire campus was abuzz with activity as new and returning students and their families took part in an open house/student orientation event. Leever Atrium was the starting point, with information tables representing several of NVCC's administrative departments, academic divisions, and clubs. The new SGA officers, student volunteers, and faculty and staff were on hand to welcome enthusiastic crowds to the College.

Opening remarks by President De Filippis, warm welcomes by Deans Rios Knauf and Gager, and a spirited presentation by Professor William Foster III were followed by campus tours and mingling at the info tables. CAPSS, Financial Aid, and Admissions Registrar staff were particularly busy helping students with testing, advising, payment, and registration. Afterward, groups of students excitedly explored the campus from Founders to Kinney in search of classrooms and services.

Pictured are students and families assembling in Leever Atrium for the activities.

Center For Teaching

Don't Just Wish, Plan!

Dr. Kim O'Donnell

Kim O'Donnell is a professor of psychology and current chair of NVCC's Center for Teaching.

Both students and professors start each semester with high hopes (as well as some anxiety). Students hope for good grades while professors hope for engaging, effective teaching. But as the semester progresses, not everyone gets what they hoped for. During those 15 weeks, members of each group may lose their way. By December, some students will face grades lower than they wanted to earn. There will also be frustrated professors wondering about a course that didn't go as they'd hoped.

So, how can both students and professors improve the odds that this week's excitement and good intentions result in equally exciting, good outcomes by December? One way is to

How can both students and professors improve the odds that this week's excitement and good intentions result in equally exciting, good outcomes by December?

focus on the differences between wishes and goals. Wishes are just that—we hope for how things will turn out, but don't do anything to make that happen. Goals contain a wish for an outcome, but also involve specific behaviors that work toward attainment of that goal. Often, we need short-term goals that connect to and support our long-term goals. Think: What will I do this week to help achieve what I want by semester's end?

Students and professors can benefit from similar approaches to supporting goals for academic success. These are a few ideas to get started.

- Write down goals for this semester. Then, each week, review the goals and assess whether that week's behavioral choices support those goals. If your behavior didn't support your long-term goals, make clear plans for how you'll adjust next week. Students, if your long-term goal is an A in class, assess whether you've done all you can this week to earn that A. Did you attend class? Pay attention? Did you complete all assignments and review what you learned this week? Professors, if your long-term goal is to provide an engaging learning environment, evaluate what you've done this week to support that. Did you spend time planning activities? Did you take time to provide students constructive, thoughtful feedback?
- Get to know each other. Part of success in meeting goals is having a support network in place. Think of the classroom as a community. Students, be sure to get to know others in class. Also, regularly stop by your professor's office hours to discuss ideas for assignments, ask for help understanding course content, etc. Faculty, getting to class a few minutes early fosters connections with students. The more connected you are to them, the easier you'll work together to create the class you're hoping for.
- If you're unclear about something, ask! "Wishing" and hoping a miracle will happen before the exam (whether you're a student or professor) is a bad plan. Students, in class or in office hours, ask for information when you need it, whether about course content that confuses you, or how to approach an assignment. Faculty, use Classroom Assessment Techniques to understand your students' class experiences and to gauge the effectiveness of your learning activities. (CFT has lots of information on CATS if you haven't done this before).

Remember, 15 weeks will go by more quickly than we expect. Be sure to start planning for success from week one!



CAPSS CORNER

Check!

I love everything about checklists! Creating lists, contemplating what I need to accomplish, considering what should be done first, and finally marking off each item as I complete it—what joy! I also admit I'm guilty of adding items to my lists, just so I can cross them off and demonstrate how much I've accomplished. Utilizing checklists ensures I stay on task and don't forget anything important.

To help prepare for a successful semester and guarantee you don't forget anything important, the Center for Academic Planning and Student Success (CAPSS) has created an academic checklist for students.

- Set up Mycommnet and your college email: These two tools will connect you to classes, faculty, and important college info such as financial aid, registration and student activities.
- Access Blackboard: Taking an online or hybrid course? This online link provides access to content and allows you to communicate with your class. Even in on-ground classes, faculty may use this portal to supplement classroom content, so log in early and check all your classes.
- Find your advisor: Every student is assigned an academic advisor based on major. Find yours on Mycommnet's Banner Self-Serve, Student Record area. Once you identify your advisor, make an appointment to discuss your educational goals and create an academic plan.
- Access the college catalog: The catalog on the college website can be downloaded as a pdf for future reference. Once you download it, you can bookmark pages related to your degree, general education requirements, and course descriptions.
- Review the Academic Calendar: Carefully note dates, such as the last day to add/swap classes, reading days, midterm grades, the withdrawal deadline, finals week, and the college's holiday closings. The calendar is found in the catalog and on the nv.edu website.
- Plan for graduation and transfer: It's never too early start planning for the next step, whether into the workforce or another college. The CAPSS office is a hub of transfer information from transfer fairs to workshops and connections to advisors at other colleges.

If you need assistance with any of these items, stop by the CAPSS office in Kinney Hall, Room 520. We're happy to help you check off all the important to-dos on your list!

Bonnie Goulet

Ready to Go



Photo Courtesy of Christopher Gordon

Excitement was in the air as NVCC's new SGA officers joined faculty, staff, and administrators in welcoming enthusiastic students and their families to the downtown Danbury campus. Student orientation took place in Danbury on Tuesday, August 22, one week in advance of the start of the fall semester. The day featured welcoming remarks from NVCC administrators and information sessions to prepare new and continuing students for a great semester.

FACES IN THE CROWD

Searching for My Future

Christian Cruz

So far, my NVCC student experience has been rather peculiar. Graduating high school, I didn't know what to do with my life, so I joined the workforce. After working several jobs I decided to put that part of my life on hold and think about what I really wanted. Should I work in a factory for the rest of my life in a job I don't love? Or take a chance and see if I can make my wildest dreams a reality? Unfortunately, I knew the only way to make these dreams come true was through education, and that meant returning to school.

I dreaded the idea of college because I knew it would be so much harder than high school. Also, without any real direction or major in mind, I felt there wouldn't be proper motivation to strive for the best grade as I worked my way up the ladder toward that degree. It was a daunting decision, but after a lot of internal searching, I decided to take the leap toward college.

So far it has been a blast here at NVCC! I've made some really good friends, and as a student worker, I've been able to see just how community operates in the college. Turns out many within these school walls are just like me, lost souls searching for purpose and goals to achieve, trying out new classes to discover what they ultimately want to do with their future. It's been a real eye opener to see just how hard lower to middle-class students can really work, even without a proper end goal in mind.

For some, the goals are outrageous; others seek financial stability. For some, their



Photo Courtesy of Christian Cruz

I couldn't even imagine the satisfaction I feel getting things done and passing classes with high marks.

goal is to find purpose, and others are looking for a place to belong and be cared for as they struggle to discover what's next in their lives. NVCC provides this and more with its caring community, faculty, staff, and professors you'll meet along the way.

Just because it sounds good, doesn't mean it will be easy. After all, this is a college, and the work is exactly what I expected once I entered this school. However, I couldn't even imagine the satisfaction I feel getting things done and passing classes with high marks. It makes me feel like I'm slowly inching closer to an answer I've been searching for these last couple years: what do I want out of life? I still don't know, but one thing I do know is I now have the support system needed to make my dreams more realistic as I work my way up that endless ladder.

alumni SHOWCASE

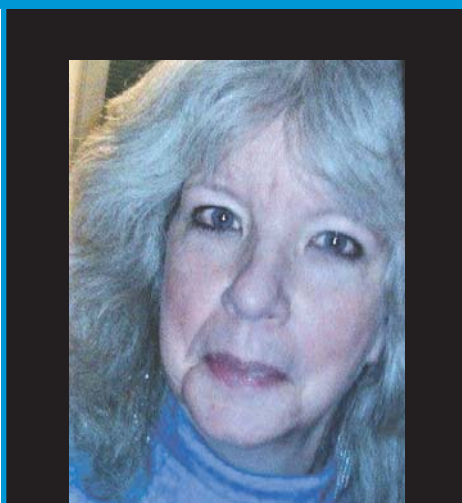


Photo Courtesy of Doreen Quigley

Doreen Quigley

Afire with Determination

A 2015 graduate of NVCC, I truly enjoyed my time as a student here. I chose NVCC at the time I enrolled because it was near to where I lived, and the tuition was very reasonable. I had always heard good things about the college and wanted to get my associate degree. Having had limited experience in the volunteer fire department and emergency medical technician area, I chose the highly recommended Fire Technology and Administration Program.

I had many professors, as well as classmates, who worked either directly in fire service or with the state fire marshal's office. The best instructor I had was Ignacy Kapalczynski. He was tough, but he was very thorough. If you didn't learn from his classes it was clearly your own fault. The other course I really enjoyed was Forensic Science, with Professor O'Brien.

My other favorite faculty member was Professor Foster. I admired the way he told everyone in his classes he was "their professor

for life," and not just for the duration of the class. He made his class interesting and informative, and his sense of humor was great. If I had the chance I would love to take another class with him. He is easily the best English teacher I have ever had.

Even before I graduated from NVCC, my application was submitted to Anna Maria College. My bachelor's degree in Fire Science will be complete soon, when I finish my last two courses. It has been a great experience taking the accelerated curriculum online at Anna Maria—it consists of one course every eight weeks.

Since NVCC, I've also taken a course to be a volunteer domestic violence counselor with Safe Haven here in Waterbury. Once I complete my bachelor's, I look forward to a short break. Then, it's on to my next goal, as I start my master's degree in Public Administration.

In Tune with New Faculty

Dr. Gil Harel



Photo Courtesy of Gil Harel

performances. While Baruch offered many advantages for music students, performance opportunities were rather limited. Professor Harel was therefore thrilled to learn he'd have the opportunity to conduct the college chorus, musically direct the show, and do much more. He sees Naugatuck Valley as a unique place where art and music flourish in a fertile environment, where the campus itself functions as a nexus for creativity and expression not only

for students, but for the greater community.

This coming semester will feature many exciting projects, including a production of the 2008 rock musical, *Next to Normal*. Professor Harel calls it a "very intelligent, very cerebral, very relevant," show, featuring "a top-notch score." As such, he anticipates the show will attract a wide pool of interested students.

Dr. Harel will also take up the conductor's baton with the college choir. A pianist and singer himself, he's particularly eager to work with other singers in the creation of great music. As a grad student, he wrote his dissertation on the choral works of Johann Sebastian Bach; as a performer, he has sung repertoire going back as far as the medieval period. Also a language enthusiast, Professor Harel emphasizes the powerful way choral singing can enhance our learning and understanding of languages.

Another project Dr. Harel has in mind is the creation of an official musical a cappella group. From barbershop quartets to renaissance madrigals, the possibilities in such an ensemble are seemingly endless. Looking forward to working with those who share enthusiasm for teamwork and artistic creativity, Harel extends a warm invitation to the entire campus: "Please consider joining the chorus as we fill the campus with resonating harmony and positivity."

Revolutionary Rhythms

Chain of Rumours



sold 40-million+ copies worldwide, ranking number one for 31 weeks, and going platinum in both the US and UK. The album's hits include "Don't Stop," "You Make Loving Fun," "Dreams," and "Go Your Own Way". *Rumours* highlights the inner drama of the bandmembers' collapsing relationships: the McVies' divorce, Buckingham and Nicks's breakup, Fleetwood's divorce, and the brief affair between Fleetwood and Nicks. Sharing their pain with the world put them on top. After that, no album or project could ever match the success of *Rumours*.

Relations began to dwindle further in the 80s as Nicks, Christine McVie, and Buckingham worked toward solo careers. However, Nicks remained the most successful. With other gigs on the side, band members continued to collaborate together and release new works. Nicks saw solo success with *Bella Donna*; released in 1981, it reached number one, including hits "Edge of Seventeen," "Leather and Lace," and "Stop Dragging My Heart Around". Unfortunately, life became a rollercoaster for both Fleetwood Mac and Nicks herself. While the band could never seem to keep its members, Nicks dealt with an alcohol and cocaine addiction. Entering rehab, she became addicted to the treatment drug, but has been fully become sober since 1993.

The 90s did see a turnaround as the band regrouped to play at President Clinton's inaugural gala, and reunited again when Fleetwood Mac was inducted in the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1998. Recently, while each member continues to perform solo, the band still regroups every now and then to collaborate or play shows.



Alyssa Katz

Mind and Body

Professor Kate Pelletier



September is National Yoga Month! Have you been interested in what yoga is actually like, aside from what you've seen on Instagram? Now is the time to check it out at NVCC. We have great yoga offerings right here such as our three-credit course, HUM 130, Philosophy and Practice of Yoga and one-credit, HPE 261, Yoga courses. We are also working to expand our programming, which will eventually include the opportunity to earn a certificate in teaching yoga. Please contact Associate Professor Kate Pelletier (kpelletier@nv.edu) if you are interested or have questions about yoga opportunities at NVCC.

Gone Too Soon

Jess Ney

This spring and summer were hard on the music world. Among new hits, album releases, and concerts, were two great tragedies. In the span of what felt like only weeks, we lost Chris Cornell of Soundgarden and Audioslave, and Chester Bennington of Linkin Park. In their lengthy, impressive careers, these two artists and friends were incredibly important to the development of rock and alternative rock.

Cornell was one of the last voices left from the grunge era, alongside greats, Nirvana, Pearl Jam, Alice in Chains, and Stone Temple Pilots. His voice had unbelievable range, and his acoustic version of "Black Hole Sun" gives me chills. Bennington had taken the new millennium by storm; the Linkin Park frontman is a staple to many young adults. His presence and voice were described by actor, Jared Leto, as "delicate and ferocious" at once. Both artists shaped generations with their honest, poetic lyrics, not to mention their extreme dedication to performance. Bennington once broke his leg on stage.

Cornell was 52 at the time of his May 18th suicide; Bennington, who performed at Cornell's funeral, was only 41 when he took his life on July 20, which would have been Cornell's 53rd birthday. Both men had wives, children, and were working on music and planning tours. It seemed their sights were set on the future, making their passing a bigger shock to fans.

Unfortunately, both Cornell and Bennington fit a sad—and growing—demographic: older men who commit suicide. Both struggled with depression/anxiety disorders as well as substance abuse. Bennington was very open in interviews about his struggle, saying he was "always uncomfortable."

Mental illness and suicidal thoughts can become fatal before the person suffering may realize. Depression and addiction can be difficult to recognize in loved ones; men are especially likely to hide pain. For these reasons, we must all be vigilant. We're all responsible for supporting our community and friends. If you, or someone you know are struggling, find help. Many avenues exist with 24-hour resources available, including via text number (741741). It's important, in these times of grieving, that we're there for each other, that we're supportive.

Remember, our heroes—musicians, actors, writers, etc.—are human, too. They're not exempt from pain or suffering. We see only a fraction of their true selves. Singers like Cornell and Bennington were honest in their songs. Even still, no one expected these untimely deaths.

I'll always be thankful for the music of these men, and I'll always mourn their senseless loss. They've left their mark, and we are grateful. We can hold vigil each day: by staying alive, by celebrating their legacy.

A Sea of Literature

Alyssa Katz



A little over 40 years ago, Newtown resident Joanne Zang decided to sell donated books to raise money for Newtown's C.H. Booth Library. Starting with a card table venue, it eventually evolved into a five-day book fair held each summer at Reed Intermediate School. This sale has increased in popularity over the years, now attracting people from across CT and New England looking for discounted books and other items, including puzzles, CDs, and even vinyl records. This year, the fair was held July 8 - 12th.

Donated books were priced based on hardcover versus paperback, with mass-market books at \$1, trade paperbacks and hardcover books at \$2. Stapled paperback kids' books were 25¢, with regular paperback children's books just 50¢. CDs and DVDs were priced at \$2; all other items were priced according to condi-

Many of the books were first editions—some even inscribed by the author. Certain items sold for hundreds of dollars; the most expensive, a copy of Frank Lloyd Wright's 1956 *The Story of the Tower*, worth \$600, included Wright's inscription.

tion and original value. Saturday and Sunday were full price days, with five-dollar admission Saturday; Monday was half-price day; Tuesday was \$5-bag day, the bag being provided. Finally, Wednesday was free day, with all items free.

Young Adult and adult books, including genre categories such as manga, classics, mystery, sci-fi, and romance, were on display in the gym. The cafeteria held children's books and various informational titles: automotive, history, health and wellness, including DVDs, CDs, audiobooks, and board games.

Perhaps the biggest attraction of any book fair are the rare collectibles. At the Newtown sale, these are typically held in one of the art rooms. Many of the books were first editions—some even inscribed by the author. Certain items sold for hundreds of dollars; the most expensive, a copy of Frank Lloyd Wright's 1956 *The Story of the Tower*, worth \$600, included Wright's inscription. Also in the mix was a pop-up picture book from the late 1800s, and even a collection of Civil War-era sheet music. Other collectibles up for grabs were an 1846 copy of Charles Dickens' *A Cricket on the Hearth: A Fairytale of Home*; a 14-volume set, *The Complete Works of Ralph Waldo Emerson*; and a 1960 edition of Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird*.

With over 120,000 items in over 90 categories for sale at the start of the sale, both gym and cafeteria were wall-to-wall books. It's no wonder this event attracts booklovers in droves each year. By closing day, both rooms were practically empty. Thanks to eager volunteers pitching in, this sale once again reigned successful—raising over \$100,000—to support the library.

Don't Miss!

September Events of Note at NVCC

SGA Meetings – Wednesdays, 4:00 - 5:00 pm – All are welcome at weekly Student Government Association meetings to discuss important topics and issues. L501

Chess Club Meetings – Mondays, 11:30 am - 1:30 pm Prism Lounge S517

National Guard Visit – Tuesday, September 12, 11:00 am - 1:00 pm. Outside Café West

DMV- Child Safety Class Saturday, September 16, 8:30 - 10:30 am Technology Hall T516

Campus Conversation: Transfer Workshop – Wednesday, September 20, 12:45- 1:45 pm L501.

Campus Conversation: Bringing in the Bystander – Tuesday, September 26, 3:30 - 5:00 pm L501.

University of Bridgeport Visit – Wednesday, September 27, 10:00 am - 1:00 pm Outside Café West.

Power to the People

Casee Marie



Legend John Prine wows the crowd and fellow musicians.

to the traditions of folk and bluegrass music, For Pete's Sake.

Rising artists and veterans alike won over new fans in an audience of 10,000 ranging from children to retirees, while food and craft artisans set up shop across festival grounds. Lesser-known artists who were especially delightful were British poet-busker L.A. Salami and the enigmatic C.W. Stoneking whose music could only be described as a Louis Prima-led Cajun carnival. In turn, Folk alum The Decemberists joined forces with songstress Olivia Chaney to perform as their new project, Offa Rex, a stunning collaboration with reaches toward ancient British folk songs.

The final day featured three ambitious collaboration sets on the main stage. Grandma's Hands Band, a Bill Withers tribute project, featured Hiss Golden Messenger, Phil Cook, and Bon Iver's Justin Vernon. Surprise guests Nathaniel Rateliff, Shakey Graves, and Deer Tick were among the artists honoring the late Chuck Berry in a set curated with the legendary artist's family. Finally, the highly anticipated Speak Out set paid tribute to the history of protest music in a timely collection of covers by Margot Price, Sharon von Etten, Preservation Hall Jazz Band, and a forceful duet between Nick Offerman and My Morning Jacket's Jim James. The artists honored legendary protest songs such as David Bowie's "Heroes," John Lennon's "Working Class Man," and Jackson Browne's "I am a Patriot" before festival favorites Lucius took the stage with the Berklee Roots and Berklee Gospel and Roots Choir to sing Beth Orton's "Ooh, Child."

It's hard to imagine anyone else closing out the festival this year than the great John Prine, whose guitar skills and songwriting acumen had everyone mesmerized – even other artists gathered to watch a legend from side-stage. In a final wonderful shocker, Prine invited Pink Floyd's Roger Waters onstage for Prine's emotional song "Hello in There." A treasure of a weekend for all involved, this was a masterful addition to the history of a timeless festival.



Charlie Gabriel, and the Preservation Jazz Hall Band play.

Last month, Rhode Island's Fort Adams State Park saw the return of the historic Newport Folk Festival, an event that's played host to the likes of Bob Dylan, Joan Baez, and Leonard Cohen since its debut in 1959. After a year of social and political tumult in the US and abroad, Newport Festival Foundation's Jay Sweet explained the folk festival is "not an

escape from the trials, tribulations, and realities we all face, but a place to realize you are not alone." Indeed, Sweet and his team created an environment that lauded the joy and solace of music in a magical way only Newport Folk Festival seems able to achieve.

Headlining the three-day event was an astonishing collection of artists including Fleet

Foxes, Wilco, and John Prine on the festival's main Fort stage. Audiences were treated to sets from Ben Gibbard, Regina Spektor, and Nikki Lane on the smaller-scale Quad stage, while the more intimate Harbor stage was home to Suzanne Vega, The Wild Reeds, John Paul White, and even Folk alum Nathaniel Rateliff and the Night Sweats in a one-of-a-kind surprise appearance. Meanwhile, inside the park's museum, The Decemberists' Chris Funk once again led the Peter Seeger-dedicated homage



Berklee Gospel and Roots Choir members perform.



Nathaniel Rateliff belts one out.



The duo, Lucius, take the stage. All Photos Courtesy of Casee Marie

In the Spotlight

Casee Marie



Photo Courtesy of Casee Marie

Janet Esposito created her *Getting over Stage Fright* workshop twenty years ago, hosting eighty such events in the time since. Based on the principles of her two bestselling books and her career in coaching, the workshop takes a mind-body-spirit approach to mastering one's public speaking and performing fears in a safe, compassionate environment. In May 2017, Janet handed over leadership of the workshop to Marla Genova, a former member and certified coach who had spent several years training with Janet. I never expected to become involved with public speaking, being in recovery from the detrimental effects of severe social anxiety. My trouble was answering the phone or the doorbell – presentations and speeches were a life for someone else entirely!

However, at the request of Marla, a friend and social anxiety advocate, I found myself helping out in January 2017. Observing the workshop, I watched members courageously address the unique way fear had manifested itself in their lives: an actor struggling to return to the stage, an at-home parent wanting to launch a new business, and a young professional on the rise. Empathy is a powerful motivator, and I found myself so enthralled with the brave work these people were doing that I begged a moment to share my personal story. I couldn't let them leave without telling them how much they had helped me purely by showing up for themselves.

"It's like we're all going down the same dark tunnel," I told them, "but you're all farther down and you're holding a light." With that, I had my first experience as a public speaker. In May, I spoke to a new group of equally inspiring members and again told them of the role they were unknowingly playing in my own journey. Doing something that challenges you while at the same time helping others is an opportunity for profound growth, and this was true for each of us.

In reality, "public speaking" is to communication what "literature" is to the written word. Small talk is a form of public speaking; eye contact plays a major part in our ability to effectively communicate, whether in school, career, or society. What I had perceived as something beyond me was instead a life's passion I had yet to unearth: the act of empathizing, sharing, connecting, and contributing to a broader healing in the process.

Contact Marla via performanceanxiety.com for more information and student discounts on future workshops.

NVCC Professor Heads Fifth-Annual Ridgefield Writers Conference



Adele Annesi

Adjunct Naugatuck Valley Community College professor of English Adele Annesi will head up the 2017 Ridgefield Writers Conference at the Ridgefield Library Fri., Sept. 22, 7 p.m.

to 9 p.m., and Sat., Sept. 23, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.

A founder of the conference, now in its fifth year and among the most instructive short conferences for writers, Annesi will coordinate the event with co-founder Rebecca Dimyan, an adjunct professor of English at Southern Connecticut State University. The conference features a Saturday keynote address by Carlos Eire, acclaimed author of *Waiting for Snow in Havana*.

The event begins Friday evening, with readings and author Q&A, featuring renowned memoirist Peter Selgin, bestselling author Jamie Cat Callan and award-winning novelist Pete Nelson. The evening readings and networking reception are open to the public.

The Saturday workshops, designed by Annesi to function based on those of the MFA in creative writing, offer instruction and inspiration in the craft and art of writing. Faculty includes author Peter Selgin (advanced non-fiction and memoir), novelist Hollis Seamon (master class in fiction, young adult and middle grade), author Chris Belden (long and short fiction), author Jamie Cat Callan (creative non-fiction) and essayist James Chesbro (nonfiction and essay). Annesi, an award-winning editor and writer, will lead the workshop on the art of revision.

This year's featured keynote speaker is the acclaimed Carlos Eire, whose *Waiting for Snow in Havana* won the National Book Award in Nonfiction in the U.S. Eire also penned *Learning to Die* in Miami. "We feel the works are especially timely at this stage in our culture," Annesi said.

Also taking place Saturday are morning and afternoon panels with top agents, editors and publishers, as well as breakout sessions for young writers and emerging and established writers of all genres seeking to thrive in the writing life. The conference closes out Saturday afternoon with readings by attendees and a networking reception.

Sponsored by the Ridgefield Library and Annesi's organization, Word for Words, LLC, the Ridgefield Writers Conference provides book and resource tables. Registration is \$195 (by Sept. 15). An education discount rate of \$150 may be available. For information, visit ridgefieldwritersconference.blogspot.com. Or contact Adele Annesi at a.annesi@sbcglobal.net or at 203.894.1908.

A Wesleyan Citizen

Nicole Hayes

This short piece is our first "Wesleyan dispatch" from recent NVCC alum, and former Tamarack Senior Staff Writer, Nicole Hayes.

Each year, Wesleyan University's "First Year Matters" program prepares students to begin their intellectual journey by introducing them to common readings. *Citizen: An American Lyric*, by MacArthur Genius Grant-winning poet, Claudia Rankine, is this year's choice. The 2014 book, described as both poetry and social criticism, is a potent exploration of racial aggression in American society.

Students were asked to read and write a response to these questions: "What was the most significant part of the book for you? How do the author's prose, poetry and images help you think about race and racism in your community? How do you anticipate the issues raised in the book will impact your experience as a member of the Wesleyan community?"

This assignment also prepares students for discussions, centered on themes in the book,

which are planned to take place throughout the academic year. More importantly, Rankine will visit Wesleyan's campus to address the university community as part of student orientation on September 1st.

For me, the most significant part of the book is the racism Serena Williams has encountered throughout her professional career. Williams, as a minority, in a predominantly white sport, was expected to ignore racial slurs aimed at her. She was frowned upon if she spoke out, being cast in the stereotypical "angry black woman role."

With her focus on Williams, Rankine humanizes tennis to show racism exists in spaces where society least expects. Furthermore, reading *Citizen* has prompted me to become more informed about the negative treatment minorities encounter throughout their professional careers. As a student at Wesleyan, one of my goals is to write informative articles for the school newspaper, *The Wesleyan Argus*, calling attention to the marginalized voices of minority athletes.

CT Wonder

Alyssa Katz

Connecticut may not measure up in size to Florida or California, but there are still some wonders around these parts accessible to all. One of those happens to be Kent Falls in Kent, CT. My best friend Michelle and I were planning a get-together, and she told me she wanted to go up to Kent. I was like, "Really? That's kinda far." Since she didn't mind the drive, I agreed, being that I'd never been there myself.

It was a hot, clear sky, June day as we hopped out of the car and walked over to the falls. Seeing water cascade down the rock structure—it had to be the best, biggest waterfall I've seen in person! Michelle told me she'd gone there in the winter. I imagine it looks pretty cool frozen. After marveling at the waterfall, Michelle and I trekked the connected trail all the way to the top of the falls. It was basically a paved staircase, with platforms at different intervals to stop and view the water. It was amazing to see the falls from different perspectives. At the top, water that would eventually fall was calm and serene, as if it didn't know it would soon hurtle lightning fast a couple hundred feet to the ground below.

There were two ways back, so I just followed Michelle's lead. We went down the opposite side of the falls, though at one point we thought we'd gotten lost. A large tree had fallen across the path, and we second-guessed if we were going the right way until Michelle spotted the marker. Aside from the ground being a little moist from the recent rain showers, navigating the trail wasn't bad.

Staring at the grand display one last time before leaving, we headed into downtown Kent. However, just a future note...don't go on a Monday. Most businesses were closed, a

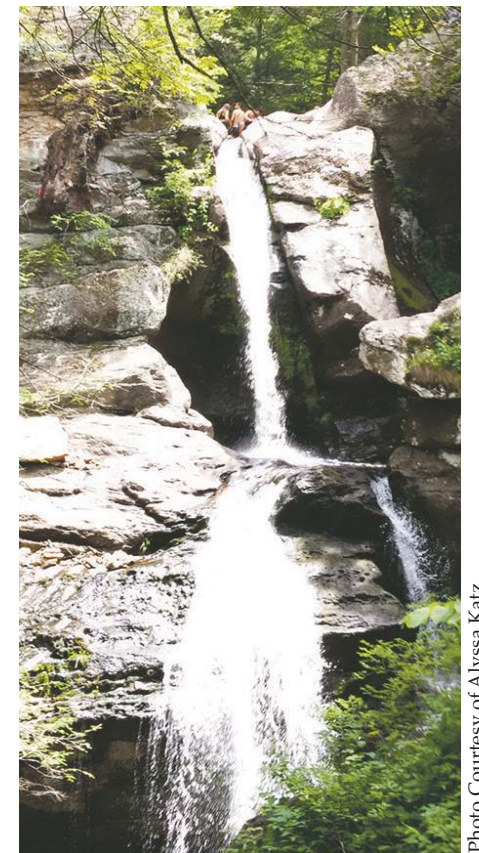


Photo Courtesy of Alyssa Katz

bummer since we were curious about a couple art galleries. Oh well, some other time. Downtown Kent was small and quiet, really nice. Even better, there were a lot of small businesses, rare nowadays. One of my favorites had to have been an indie bookstore, House of Books, with a cool knight "standing guard" out front.

While not every business was open on the day we went, the weather held up for us and we had a nice time hanging out together, going on a mini adventure. Though some seem to be down on CT, some wonderful destinations await in our tiny New England state.

New Faculty Takes the Stage

Sasha Brätt



My name is Sasha Brätt, and I am beyond excited to be the new Instructor of Theater at Naugatuck Valley Community College. For more than a decade, I have worked as a professional director and theater educator to train and support the next generation of theater artists, from Shakespeare & Company in the Berkshires to Catholic University in Washington, DC; from the Fringe Festival in Manhattan to Trinity College in Hartford.

Having met with some of the theater department students already, I know they are eager to dive deep into the performative and academic aspects of theater. This is one of the main reasons I came to NVCC: working with young, hungry, and passionate student-actors. The academic setting allows us, together, to focus on the theory and process of theater, not just the product.

What we learn in the classroom we experiment with in rehearsal, and execute in production. That is where the true work lies and where artists find their voices. Many students I've taught, in college and in high school, over the last twelve years, have gone on to become professional actors and playwrights, stage managers and producers, lighting and costume designers. The work they've done in the classroom, on the stage, and backstage has served them in other classes, but most importantly, in their own lives as individuals.

I believe theater engages, inspires, entertains and challenges audiences, artists and students.

I believe in training that serves the heart and mind of the student, through intellectual rigor and emotional vulnerability.

I believe theater as a course of study

uniquely serves student-artists in their academic, artistic, and personal lives by giving them a space to take risks.

And I believe the theater students here at NVCC are inspiring. Through the interview process and the short time I've been here, I have seen theater students almost every day. They are invested in the program. It is their program. They know where it's been and will help guide it forward. I am so happy to be working with such enthusiastic, committed, and intelligent student-artists.

I cannot wait to work with these students this fall on the Pulitzer-prize winning musical, *next to normal*, and a yet-to-be decided Shakespeare production...plus a few other surprises. I also look forward to meeting the NVCC Theater Department's next generation in the *Acting 1* and *Directing* classes this fall!

Thank You All



Good Triumphs

Writing *Thank You All* has never been particularly challenging, because finding the best in everyone and

Chris Gordon

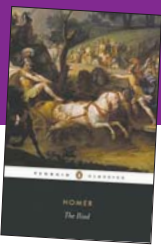
everything is an exercise worth pursuing. Sometimes, though, the world throws events at us in such a way that finding the good is not easy. This summer has been turbulent, and the response to this chaos is invariably disruptive. Sometimes it seems as if people have taken crazy pills and just choose to roll with it, no matter what good judgment and taste would dictate. Obviously, from other articles in this issue, it shouldn't be hard to infer what I'm hinting at.

I want to thank everyone who takes time to understand that those protesting wrongful treatment must never be compared to marchers who threaten equality for all. Those who march *against equality* only attempt to protect their sense of unearned superiority. I'll never condone violence, but I also do not condemn self-defense. When groups adopt ideologies and actions of heinous movements that belittle, enslave, cage, and finally murder, that societal wrong needs to be addressed. To try to justify, to protect, hate-filled rants under free speech is heartbreaking. Freedom of speech is meant to preserve our American—human—right to engage in civil discourse. It must not be perverted to *silence* opponents.

Think of it this way, one group says, "I have the right to benefit from my hard work the same as everyone else; my existence must not be used against me as proof of my unworthiness!" I stand beside these people. I agree with their message, and I will do everything in my power to promote these beliefs for all. But that second group is saying, "You're not the same as me, so the work you do will benefit me and my friends ONLY. You do not get an equal say. Because you look different (or think, love, or pray differently) you are basically subhuman. You're not the same as me—the pinnacle super-human—so you must SHUT UP AND GO AWAY!"

Recent incidents promoting hate as represented by that second example have been met with organized, impassioned backlash. So, I say again, Thank You All! Thank you for not being swayed by fallacious logic or mindless, arrogant hate. Thank you for being good people who refuse to let evil ideas again sway the powerful into rounding up others they do not like to make them disappear. Thank you for seeing what hate has wrought on our world and saying, "Not here, not now, not ever again."

RECENTLY READ



The Iliad by Homer

The *Iliad*, set in Greece in the early BCE period, is truly an epic poem full of descriptive language detailing betrayal, trickery, wrath, loss, and combat. The major conflict of this tragedy was sparked by Paris, who took Helen away with him to Troy, to be his wife. Her husband, Menelaus, was furious and wanted her back—thus a war broke out.

Taking place in the tenth and final year of the Trojan War, the Olympian gods also play a major role in *The Iliad*. Hera, Athena, and Hephaestus, along with a few others, side with the Greeks. Apollo, Ares, Aphrodite, and others, side with the Trojans. Poseidon originally aided the Trojans, but, pitying the Greeks, he switched sides about halfway through.

For the first half of the book, Achilles refuses to fight because he is angry with Agamemnon, leader of the Greek army. Without Achilles, the Greeks initially held their own with powerhouses such as Telamonian Ajax and Diomedes, but they still suffered immensely during the first part of the battles. This had a lot to do with Zeus favoring the Trojans and their leader, Hector. Originally, both sides had negotiated a truce which would ensure Helen be returned, and the war could end on a peaceful note. However, Paris refused to give Helen back, and Zeus did not approve of their agreement; therefore, the battling would be long, tiresome, and gory.

Once Achilles learned his best friend Patroclus was dead, utterly heartbroken and guilty, the wrath in his heart was finally stirred, and he was now eager to kill Hector. Homer writes, "And as when the angry gods cause toil and suffering for men by setting fire to their city, from which the smoke billows up to dim the wide sky, so now Achilles brought labor and woe on the Trojans" (375).

This book has a lot to do with fate, and how it's basically set in stone when you're born. While Zeus occasionally wanted to challenge fate, and save someone instead of letting them die, in the end, he was helpless against Fate's course. Achilles was, in fact, offered two fates: either leave Troy to live a long life with no glory, or stay and die young, but be remembered with great glory. Can you guess which path he followed?

Most people might recall *The Iliad* for its famous wooden horse. Let one question be answered, though—the wooden horse is not mentioned until *The Odyssey*. *The Iliad* is a challenging read—not only due to the language and the overwhelming number of characters, but for its content as well. If you're really into Greek mythology, epic poetry, and detailed violent combat, then this might be a book for you. It's no wonder it's known as one of the greatest works of all time. Epic indeed.

Alyssa Katz

comments about a candidate for fear my ill-formed impressions might be taken as harsh criticism, thereby costing a great candidate a chance at becoming part of NVCC. This isn't the best strategy, because when multiple candidates equal qualifications are up for the same position, our president focuses on student evaluations of each candidate to tip the scales.

Of course, it's vital to the administration that a candidate be professionally qualified, but it's equally important that he or she is also able to engage successfully with students. What good is a professor who doesn't connect with students before the semester ends? First impressions are vital to how a class will proceed throughout the semester, and they're part of the hiring process as well.

I encourage all students to attend faculty or staff hiring presentations. Not only do they allow you to preview potential teachers, they give you a chance to help determine whom those future teachers might be. You'll also gain insight into what the real world asks of applicants, giving you a firsthand example of how to present yourself to companies when it's your turn to "go through the ringer" as it were.

Inspiration

Christian Cruz

College students interact with faculty every single day—not always because we want to. To succeed as a college student, we need to develop proper skills to communicate with professors. This is one way to achieve the highest grades. It may seem scary, speaking with professors who have master's degrees or PhDs in their subject. It might even be nerve-racking at first, and sometimes overwhelming. We may feel insignificant, like our knowledge isn't up to their expected standard.

What some new students fail to realize, but two professors early in my college career taught me is: professors are people, too! Those educators were Steven Parlato and Donna Marotti-Deliato. They automatically made me feel comfortable. Professor Parlato made me see my writing wasn't as bad as I initially thought in my first English class, ENG063: Intro to the Essay. He made me feel at home with his creative teaching, and viewed us not just as writers in a class, but as people who need direction when given a task. I really appreciated how open he was to emails and meeting after class to help with concerns my classmates and I had.

Prof. Marotti-Deliato did the same for me, but a bit differently. She helped me feel more comfortable around professors because she gave me confidence to speak my mind in class. It felt really good to recognize my knowledge from an economic standpoint that I never knew I had. It was empowering in my first semester to become friends with a professor who encouraged me to share my knowledge, not only as a student, but as a leader in class discussions. It also didn't hurt that we're both New York Giants fans and definitely got along before and after class talking about sports!

For many, meeting new people can be daunting, especially those who've accomplished much more than we could hope at this stage of life. Meeting and interacting with friendly professors like Parlato and Marotti-Deliato made me unafraid to interact with professors. I now see them as human beings instead of the overlords of my fate. I've taken two classes each with these two, and they haven't disappointed me or failed to teach me new things.

My suggestion for new students is to take a professor you like at least two or three times. Even in a higher-level class, it will calm your nerves to study with professors you know you connect with already.

Suggestion Box

The Tamarack Staff

As it says in every issue, whether you "liked it" or "hated it," *The Tamarack* encourages reader input. One recent note in the suggestion box outside our office, S519, read:

MY IDEA IS FOR *THE TAMARACK* TO STOP BEING CRAMMED FULL WITH A "SOCIAL JUSTICE" ORIENTED PERVERSION OF NEWS. NOT EVERYONE THINKS SEXISM, RACISM AND LOW SELF ESTEEM IS EVEN REMOTELY AN IMPORTANT ISSUE.

In answer to the question, "What are the benefits of your idea?" the note-writer responded:

NON BIAS PROGRESSIVE IDEAL DRIVEN NEWS/INFORMATION THAT COULD BE FOUND VERBATIM ON NEWS OUTLETS LIKE CBS, MSNBC, AND THE NY TIMES.

Our initial thought was, *So you want us to steal from the networks?* But as we read on, we encountered this remark under the heading "additional comment/suggestion": DIVERSITY OF OPINION. ITS NOT GOOD WHEN ALL YOU GUYS THINK THE SAME SH*T.

We offer a standing invitation to attend our editorial meetings, where the spirited conversation will clearly show we don't "ALL...THINK THE SAME SH*T."

The note was signed, THE SILENT MAJORITY

While this message did, indeed, come in silent form, it's doubtful the writer was speaking for the majority. In fact, based on feedback we generally receive from our broad base of readers (across and beyond campus), *The Tamarack* successfully strikes a strong balance of college, community, and world news. And if our focus on issues of social injustice strikes a negative chord with some readers, so be it.

This statement: "NOT EVERYONE THINKS SEXISM, RACISM AND LOW SELF ESTEEM IS EVEN REMOTELY... IMPORTANT..." is exactly the sort of declaration that inspires us to continue the work we've committed to doing. Sure, ignorance and criticism may initially sting, but in the end, this suggestion has only cemented our resolve—in this era when truth has come under attack, and hate groups feel emboldened to commit acts of domestic terrorism—to continue delivering important content.

Clearly our work is needed if there are people among us who consider racism a non-issue, or sexism no big deal. So, we'll continue delivering a newspaper with a focus on opening minds. We realize some minds are dedicated to remaining stubbornly closed, but we take that reality as a rallying cry—and proof we have more good, hard work to do.

Where will you stand?

Jess Ney

This summer's been tumultuous, to say the least, culminating with Trump's attempt to rip away LGBTQ rights in the military and workforce, followed by the riots in Charlottesville. The season's been marked by protests, fear, petitions, arguments, speeches, and honestly, a whole lot of nothing in the House and Senate. There's been major social media outrage, especially over the current administration's choices.

Instead of feeling hopeless, or staying silent, I challenge you to become active, even in small ways.

There are many different avenues and options we can all take to play an active societal role in helping heal our country. Here are some simple steps to be an ally for groups subject to discrimination and hate right now.

- Listen! Take time to be present for your friends, whether they be POC, LGBTQ, or anyone who's troubled by current events; it's crucial to really hear them.
- Educate yourself. Watch the news, read, hear both sides. Look up terms you don't know. Understand the roots of conflict; research the legislature supporting proposals, and learn the core beliefs of parties, groups, and organizations present in society.
- Be respectful. You don't know what someone else is going through. It's unfair to assume sexual orientation, political leanings, or personal beliefs. Be open, honest, and patient.

Even if you don't share others' ideas and beliefs, try to understand. They may need your help.

- Confront bias. Don't be afraid to tell your aunt she's being racist. Don't worry what friends will think when you ask them to stop using slurs. And don't ignore your own internalized biases!
- Use your privilege. This is for us white people who aren't in personal danger of oppression. You should be upset when others are targeted. Use your privilege for good; get your hands dirty. GET INVOLVED.
- Contact your politicians. Share your concerns. It's their job to listen to us, so vent away.
- Take part! Attend a protest, educate others. Go to vigils; talk to people of color and LGBTQ individuals. They may offer access to their community and will likely appreciate your efforts to be the best ally you can. Just don't rely on them to solve problems they didn't create.

If these steps aren't enough for you, organize your own vigil. Take a stand! There's so much we can do to improve the US social climate. If we all do our part, white supremacy and hate cannot win. If we let go of racist beliefs and take responsibility for our words and actions, we can live in a better place. Remember this rallying cry: "If you're not outraged, you're not paying attention."

Student Input

Christopher Gordon

Over the summer, in an effort to understand better how our college works, I took the opportunity to attend presentations given by potential new professors and administrators. Sitting in a classroom, K715 to be precise, I nervously waited as professors, administrators, deans, and President De Filippis herself gathered to watch candidates explain why they were the perfect fit to join this community. Sometimes a second or third student showed up, but mostly I was the solitary student, wondering what possessed me to think I could insert myself into this process.

Well, the answer isn't very complicated. As it turns out, students can, should—and do—play a key role in the hiring process! After all, it's not only the candidates' futures only on the line; it's the students' as well. This person could potentially be our next professor, but is he or she someone who relates to us?

I lean toward silence until my thoughts are adequately formulated. I tend not to write

That's What She Said



Relationship Goals

Last month a social media post went viral after a husband shared he was proud to love his curvy wife. At first look, that seems romantic; at first sight, it is. But, as I read the post, something didn't sit right. The man wrote about being bullied, for his "attraction to girls on the thicker side, ones who were shorter and curvier, and girls that the average (basic) bro might refer to as chubby 'or even' fat."

Now, this man obviously loves his wife; that's not the issue in question. However, the fact that he's being celebrated for his *groundbreaking* love for a curvy woman is a problem. I've read the articles and the post and he really wants to celebrate his wife. To an untrained eye, what he is saying really is wonderful and worthwhile. He's celebrating plus-sized women and trying to spread his idea of body positivity. He even leaves a message for young men not to "buy in" to the idea of one acceptable body type, and for young women to know they're worthy of more than what society gives.

But why is this man being celebrated for loving his wife? That's not unheard of or surprising. It should be another image we blindly *like* and breeze by. To love one's spouse, to find her or him attractive, to want to lift up your soulmate isn't something worthy of special commendation. It's the bare minimum of a healthy relationship. It's one expectation a person should have going into a commitment like marriage or a long-term relationship.

And what if this man plugged in the word "skinny" or "black" or "Latina" before wife? Would it have been celebrated in the same way? No. It would've been called offensive or racist or whatever other reaction could be provoked in someone. This woman's size has nothing to do with how she shows love, how she mothers, how she cares for her husband and herself.

It's important for us to remember, as women, as men, as lovers: a true romantic partner must love us for *who we are*, not just what we look like. Your partner should love your laugh and your humor; they should be there for your ups and downs; they should want to listen to you, and spend time with you.

Men, keep loving curvy women, loud women, feminists, skinny women—or love other men, love whoever you want! But let's not reduce people to mere sizes or shapes. Women, love whoever you want, and don't be ashamed of your shape. Find someone who respects you, celebrates you, and praises you. A mate complimenting you on social media obviously isn't a bad thing—unless that's the extent of his or her focus on you. You're beautiful, and you deserve the world.



Photo Courtesy of Steve Parlato

Author and diarist, Anaïs Nin, wrote, "And the day came when the risk to remain tight in a bud was more painful than the risk it took to blossom." As you begin a new semester, consider the idea that a life without risk is a life unexplored. And risks need not be dramatic—or dangerous. A chance encounter, or a "required class," may offer you an unexpected opportunity to bloom.

No More Teachers, No More Books

[Value in Summer Courses]

Chris Gordon

When most people think of summer, the last thing on their minds is school. Summer means freedom from education; attending during the warm months seems like punishment. In college, though, summer courses aren't the punishment many dread. Are summer courses a challenge? Of course. Are they mandatory? Hardly. Are they worth the investment in time and money? Absolutely!

Beginning in June, through the first week in July, I was enrolled in Human Biology. I'd heard other students' tales of the difficulty of complex material; the normal workload of a 16-week semester would be crammed within five weeks. Initially worried I wouldn't be able to handle the pressure, I kept to my plans, and completed the course.

Ten students entered the classroom at the start of June. In the end...ten students remained. This was amazing compared to regular semester classes, when students often slowly disappear. I was surrounded by students like me: dedicated individuals, willing to invest time and hard work to accomplish what few dare to attempt. Originally, 12 registered, but two never once showed for class, so I don't count them as classmates who couldn't finish, but rather as a pair who decided against taking a summer course.

We ten pulled together as a team, not merely as lab partners. When tests rushed at us, we talked with each other, supported each other. Most importantly, we commiserated when grades weren't as high as we'd hoped. There was some grumbling from one student who almost withdrew, but in the end, she stuck it out and earned the B she desired. The summer course was one of the best experiences I could've wished for, and one I desire to experience again. It also didn't hurt that our professor loves the subject and teaching. She made time for us when we had trouble or concerns, and worked hard to see us succeed.

Education is about what you put into it and about how you feel about it. Going into the experience with a positive attitude makes all the difference. I decided from the beginning I wanted the knowledge I would acquire, and chose not to think of this class as simply another degree requirement. I hope my positive attitude encouraged others to work harder, and I'd like to urge other students to take advantage of a unique summer learning experience.

Reality Check: Hire Me! Please?

Alyssa Katz

So maybe you've just graduated college and are happy to have reached such a milestone accomplishment. Well, here comes the hard part: nailing a job. Employers are picky, it seems, when deciding on the perfect candidate to join their company. Someone could be completely qualified to do the job, but if they don't have the experience, or a fancy degree, then their resume is basically tossed aside. But...how are people supposed to get experience when no one gives them a chance?

According to common requirements listed on job descriptions, more than half of companies want someone with at least a bachelor's degree in a specific field related to the position they hope to fill; most companies also require, it appears, at least five years of related experience. Such expectations make it much more difficult for people just starting out to find a job. Even so, not just community college graduates face this issue. It's understandable companies want people who can easily transition into the job with little training. However, all sorts of untapped potential exists, but companies refuse to take advantage of it when considering a possible candidate.

Maybe you were lucky to land an interview, and the interviewer was impressed,

Not Always Golden

Christopher Gordon

Tamarack staff members take pride in the depth and quality of our content, but some pieces aren't seen with enthusiasm by those who read them. As *The Tamarack* is a resource and tool for all members of the NVCC community, it's extremely important for us (as writers, editors, designers) to remain open to both praise and concern. Our newspaper receives numerous responses monthly; while we usually have room to print only a fraction, we read them all, considering each comment for the respect and thoughtfulness it contains.

Some suggestions are a little hard to quantify. As such, we honestly don't know how to respond—not because we don't take them seriously, but because the suggestion itself is not serious. It may have been serious to the person who submitted it, but, lacking key contextual information, the idea becomes an unsolvable riddle.

As you may have read in this month's editorial, there is reason to highlight our suggestions policy. Criticism must be constructive if anything good is to be built, but what was left for us was merely destructive. It seemed yet another blatant attempt to bully into silence voices attempting to construct a strong base for our community, both the college and society as a whole. This "suggestion," and very few others that have preceded it, fail to suggest anything of value, instead questioning our topics. In asking why we focus on social justice, these writers only highlight why what we write is vital.

To the person who claimed to speak for the Silent Majority:

Unless you're an elected official (who, btw, generally don't hide their identities), you speak for no one but yourself. Topics like sexism, racism, and intolerance are important, and not just to our staff, but to many who've written to thank us for making them feel a bit more comfortable in *our* shared community. Their voices deserve to be heard as well, but many remain silent for fear of being targeted. Perhaps *they* could be considered the silent majority.

It's unfortunate *The Tamarack* has to convince an unhappy few of the need to address such topics, but unacknowledged problems cannot be fixed. The unwillingness of some to recognize the importance of these issues only motivates us to continue to listen, and to try harder, in hope of understanding and communicating truth. We stand by anyone who feels voiceless, unless they seek to spread ignorance as a self-proclaimed voice of the *Silent Majority*.

saying you "could make a good fit." It's disappointing then not to hear back from that company, and when you call them to follow up—even though they said they'd contact you first—they say they've hired someone else. But the real kicker is when, a few weeks later, the company that rejected you has the exact same ad posted again. Which leads to the question, what exactly are employers seeking?

Let's be real here. For recent college grads, you're most likely not going to get that perfect job in your field right out of college. Most of us may have to take a position we don't particularly want while looking for that ideal job in our spare time. Sucks, doesn't it? Why is it we're told to get a college education in order to get a job when no one will hire us? It's an over-educated, under-employed/not-enough-jobs-to-go-around type of situation, which adds to the struggle. Yep, the job hunting struggles are real.

But the key here, despite all the negatives, is DON'T GIVE UP! Just keep pushing through. That job will come along. There will be someone willing to give you that chance. Just give it time, and keep trying. There will be plenty of no's before hearing that one yes.

Earth Matters

Pollution x 3



Alyssa Katz

Pollution, mainly the fault of humans, results in land, sea, air, and natural resources being contaminated or unusable. The constant environmental disruption caused by pollution has resulted in climate change. It's important to consider the different types of pollution and their effects.

Land pollution is caused by humans creating garbage. The average human generates about 4.3 pounds of trash daily. While a large portion could be recycled or composted, much of it is instead disposed of by littering. Hazardous substances generated by households, including paint and motor oil, have a huge impact. About 54 percent of this waste is gathered in landfills, while about 34 percent is recycled, according to the EPA. Industrial waste, caused by mining, petroleum refining, pesticide manufacturing, and other chemical production, also contributes to devastating land pollution.

Water pollution occurs when chemicals, fertilizers, pesticides, and general waste are introduced to rivers, lakes, and oceans. Many areas both in and outside the US lack access to clean water. Oil spills are a big contaminator, seriously threatening many marine species. The EPA says bacteria, mercury, phosphorus, and nitrogen are the most common substances introduced into water through run-off or tainting of neighboring streams.

Air pollution is caused by emissions such as greenhouse gases, chiefly from fossil fuels burned by power plants and automobiles. One result of air pollution is acid rain, which picks up toxic air particles as droplets descend from the sky. Because raindrops now contain acidic particles, acid rain can damage property and even erode certain types of rock, such as limestone. In extreme cases, depending on circumstances and geographical location, air pollution has been linked to respiratory illness and various cancers, even causing death.

Noise pollution occurs when aircraft break the sound barrier, when ships use seismic blasting to map the ocean floor, and when vehicle exhaust systems are faulty—or intentionally customized to produce a loud rumble. Heavy machinery and blaring music, also classified as pollutants, can cause emotional stress and exhaustion. And the impact isn't exclusive to humans. Disruptive noise pollution causes animals to abandon their habitats.

Lastly, light pollution, the result of modern lighting, is especially prevalent in cities where we're lucky to glimpse a few stars, compared to rural areas where millions are visible. No mere nuisance, artificial light disrupts animal migration, and wreaks havoc on mating patterns of nocturnal animals. For example, fireflies are endangered due to light pollution diminishing the insects' ability to attract mates.

Serious in multiple ways, environmental pollution threatens us all: humans and animals. If we each did our part, recycling, taking care in disposing trash, and consuming less, the air, oceans, and Earth in general, would be in a better state.

Loved it? Hated it?

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