

Community & College

# CAMPUS NEWS

A Print Newspaper Distributed at Many Two-Year Colleges in the Northeast.

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February 2014

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## College and 'hooking up'

Marie Frankson  
*Campus News*

We've all heard the saying, "He won't buy the cow if he's getting the milk for free," but it seems like college-age students of both genders are more interested in getting the milk than buying the cow. Once upon a time, men went to college to become businessmen of some sort and women went to college to find a husband, but now we're living in a time where women are increasingly entering the workforce. In college, people in their late teens and early twenties are hardly interested in finding a spouse, and is that such a bad thing? I keep hearing about how the "hook-up culture" of our generation is hurting us because we don't know what dating really is or what it's like to be exclusive. However, I've also heard that we should "sow our wild oats" while we're young. Which

begs me to ask the question: does hook-up culture help or hurt us when it comes to dating?

Many people believe that casual sex is rampant on college campuses, but that is not true. According to an August 2013 article in the Pacific Standard magazine, the median number of hook-ups for a graduating senior is seven—this includes instances in which there was intercourse and times when two people made-out fully clothed. The typical college student acquires two new sexual



partners or less during college. The majority of students, around 70 to 75% in fact, prefer to have monogamous relationships and use hooking up as a means to an end, the "end" being a monogamous relationship. In this case, hooking up can be beneficial when it comes to dating. Jeff, a 24-year-old male from New York, said that he has only been

in monogamous relationships but that he can see one benefit of hooking up: "Playing the field can be a good thing because it not only lets you meet people, it can also show you what your [emotional and physical] needs are." Conversely, a benefit of the hook-up culture may be impermanence — it is, after all, easier

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Our writer explores the positives and negatives of student 'hookup culture.'

## After a crash, the Fagbug rides again

Darren Johnson  
*Campus News*

Perhaps you have heard of the Fagbug. It is the rainbow painted Volkswagen that Erin Davies, of Syracuse, has been touring with for the past seven years, usually to college campuses, with her message of challenging homophobic bullies. She is setting up her Spring college tour schedule now and may be heading to your campus soon.

You may have also seen her film, named after her car, on Netflix. Please see the story on page 14 of this newspaper for our review.

After 300,000 miles and endless small repairs, the Fagbug finally got into an accident. It happened in her hometown and was totally her fault, she said. Still, her friends on Facebook rallied to raise the \$6000 for the repair as Davies begins to do her spring college tours as well as launch the sequel to her four-star documentary. The new documentary is called "Fagbug Nation" and has already been well-received in early screenings on the West Coast.

Facebook followers know her trials and travails. She recently finished her 50-state tour, after a Kickstarter campaign, with trips to Alaska and even Hawaii. The crew on

boat that took her car over thought she was crazy. She also was married this past fall to longtime partner Sonya Parrish.

It has been a busy year for Erin. But she and her famous car, after a hiccup, are still going strong. Below are some questions we had for her with her responses.



to raise \$50,000 to premiere the film in New York City and L.A. and qualify.

**DJ:** Is it too late for people to contribute to fix up your car?

**ED:** Yes, but if they follow me online, I will be setting up a new campaign which is about my sequel coming out in a couple of months titled "Fagbug Nation." I'm launching a campaign to qualify it for the Oscars;

**DJ:** What happened in the accident? Insurance doesn't cover that? Are you OK?

**ED:** I am fine. The car isn't. The accident was my fault. After going all over the country and getting the car to Alaska and

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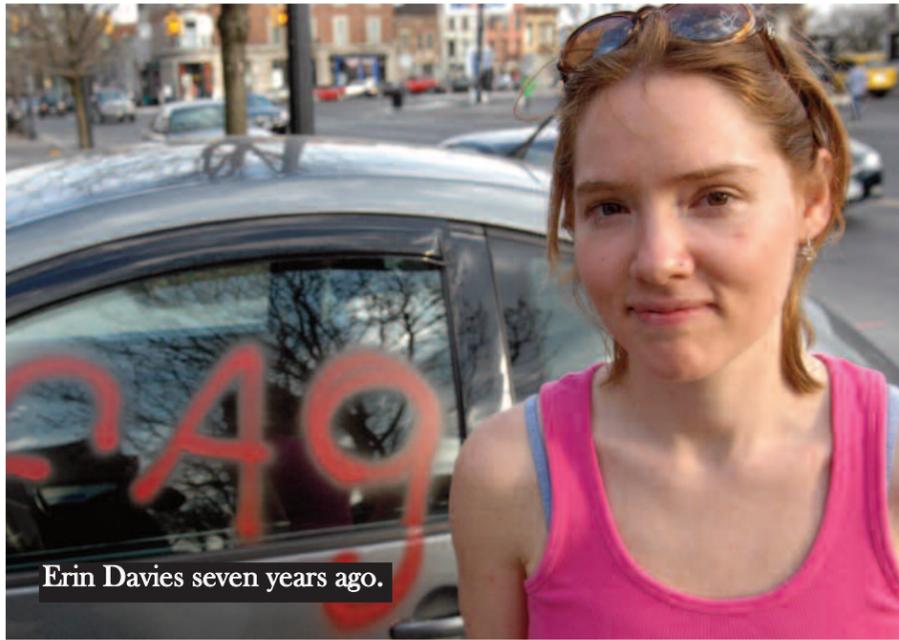
# Fagbug (cont.)

Hawaii, I would've expected this to happen another time; but never once have I been in an accident with the car, after all-nighters, back-to-back tours, endless driving, bad weather, etc. I was actually in front of the VW dealership in the parking lot heading there to get a new battery for my key because it died and my alarm kept going off on my way there. The key stopped working, and I couldn't disable it. I got turned around in a dead end of the parking lot, was trying to find a connecting road, looked left for the connection for a few seconds and BAM! I hit a huge light post, and it tore apart the entire front end of my car; hood, power steering, bumper, lights, the whole front end has to be completely replaced. It bent the frame, ruined the vinyl.

I had full collision insurance on my car when I'd first bought it, and the year I drove with the graffiti and the first year I had the rainbow on it. However, I got pulled over eight times the first month with the rainbow decals. The "rainbow cops" love to give me a hard time because of it, so after over \$2000 in tickets, literally for having "Fagbug" on my car, I ended up having to lower my insurance costs because it tripled, and I could no longer afford it.

Regardless, the \$6000 it's costing to fix it wouldn't have been covered for this accident. It far exceeds the Bluebook value of my car. The car is 12 years old with nearly 300,000 miles on it.

DJ: Will you be hitting more cam-



Erin Davies seven years ago.

puses this spring?

ED: I've been touring full time for the past seven years, and this is what I do full time; so yes more speaking engagements. I have a booking agent who handles them. Her name is Monica, her email is monica@endeavorentertainment.com.

The film, "Fagbug," has a huge audience on Netflix. People watch it and book me and email me constantly. It does VERY well on there.

The next movie is "Fagbug Nation." I did eight test screenings with audiences

last semester, colleges mostly, and it got great feedback. It will most likely be coming out in May or June, depending on what happens with the fundraising for the Oscars. If I get the funding, I will be releasing it theatrically in L.A. and New York City first and then film festivals and other outlets, colleges, etc. The campaign I am launching has info on it regarding buying screening rights for colleges. It's getting launched on my web site now.

Visit Erin on [www.fagbug.com](http://www.fagbug.com).

## CAMPUS NEWS

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# Presidential Op-Ed: What one CC contributes

Joyce Judy

President, Community College of Vermont

We greeted with enthusiasm last month's news about President Obama's latest efforts in his campaign to lead the world with the highest percentage of college graduates by 2020. The commitments the administration secured from more than one-hundred colleges and forty organizations to help all of our citizens — particularly those from low-income backgrounds — not only get to college but graduate, is a reflection of CCV's core mission.

President Obama's goal here is ultimately about strengthening the economy which is right in line with points our own Governor Peter Shumlin made last year in his 2nd inaugural address, remarking that "Our education system, from pre-kindergarten to higher education, is the state's greatest economic development tool."

If we can make higher education accessible to all and incorporate programs that ensure student success, the result will be a better-educated workforce and a stronger economy. These are indeed noble goals, and they are goals we in the community college world have been pursuing with success for decades.

For over forty years CCV has offered affordable, quality and personalized education to anyone who walks through our door. We are the second largest college in Vermont serving 7,000 students each semester at twelve academic centers all around the state and online; we are the college in Vermonters' back yards.

Our focus on affordability and on tailoring programs and services to meet the needs of all Vermonters is a formula for accessible and supportive higher

education. What does this mean for Vermont?

It means inspiring high school students and exposing them to college through initiatives such as dual enrollment and our Introduction to College Studies course.

It means connecting with communities, changing lives, and changing the way families think about college. We take pride in the fact that almost sixty percent of those attending CCV are first-generation students. That is access at scale.

It means a commitment to ensuring that those who have served our nation receive the attention and guidance they deserve when transitioning from military life to college life. When a military-connected student arrives at CCV, our veteran-specific resources guarantee processes will be understandable, and the student will have a clearly defined pathway to success.

Lastly, it means keeping college affordable so that every Vermonter can earn a degree. CCV has the lowest per-credit cost of any college in the state. Our financial aid advisors ensure students aren't taking on unnecessary debt — last year, forty percent of CCV graduates completed their degrees with no student loan debt.

These are just a few examples of the way CCV has committed to keeping college accessible. But it is only half of the equation. Making sure students persist and complete their programs is just as important because it translates into the strengthening of our communities and the strengthening of our local, state, and national economies when graduates join the workforce prepared for the jobs they've been hired to do.

CCV does its best to ensure this outcome. We keep our classes small—one faculty member to 12 students—so students are getting the most from faculty who bring real-world experience into the classroom.

We've partnered with dozens of Vermont employers to offer trainings, create custom curricula, and to seek input on crafting education that meets the demands of an ever-changing workforce.

Recently a staff member forwarded me this email from a Burundi refugee who came to Vermont at age 14. She's now 20, and will be graduating in the spring with a medical assisting degree.

"I am very thankful to the staff at CCV for the warm welcome and the encouragements they gave me, especially Tuipate Mubiay, who has always been there for me, giving me advice, pushing me and introducing me to volunteer opportunities. I was able to improve my skills and overcome many hardships with the help of CCV staff members, CCV's help resources, and myself trying and doing my best to succeed."

These words were born from an accessible and supportive education and they speak volumes about what college can do for an individual.

Last month's summit is a clear sign that positive changes are occurring, and we appreciate the administration's efforts at securing commitments from all sectors to make higher education in America more accessible and supportive. This is an admirable goal, and surely an economic investment that will pay rich dividends in the future.



## From the publisher: On grading

Darren Johnson

Campus News

While shopping, we surely have seen the parent who we assume is from a poorer background get a little too rough, either verbally or otherwise, with their young child, who may just want one of those pieces of candy that the stores purposely put near the checkout.

And we surely have seen the parent who looks to be from a wealthier background at the checkout counter, caving in, and speaking softly to their little precious and giving him the Ring Pop, little doll or whatever parting gift is on display.

And, not to push this generalization too far — while both parents are teaching a life lesson — the poor kid will still likely end up poor and the spoiled kid will be buying Ring Pops for his whiny child someday.

As far as grades go, I've read that the most common one at Harvard is an "A." The average grade is an "A-." Sarah Lawrence College, one of the most expensive liberal arts colleges in the world, doesn't even bother. They just give out "P" and "F" grades (almost wholly "P").

Meanwhile, community colleges, where the students often come from poorer backgrounds, struggle with high failure and low graduation rates.

Every student at a fancy school can't be an "A" student in every subject, but, rather than hear them whine at the checkout counter, the teaching establishment placates the students with the grades they imagine they are worthy of in their minds. And maybe that's OK.

And as I have transitioned teaching courses at four-year colleges and then two-year colleges, I often think about my grading and the harm or good it does.

Does the student need to be strictly watched, because life is hard, after all, and being kind does him no favors?

Or, for certain students, maybe they can use a break once in a while? Maybe the person who has heard "no" his whole life really needs to hear "yes."

But I can't pick and choose. My grading has to be consistent. If I am going soft, I have to go soft for every-

one. That's only fair.

As I've transitioned to teaching students who, if they get a paper back full of red with no words of encouragement, won't return — maybe ever — I have gotten kinder and gentler.

My grading has gone from the most common grade being a "C" or a "B" to an "A," and I don't apologize for that. Maybe I have gotten better as a teacher, after all, and the students genuinely are improving to that level over the 15 weeks of a semester.

I relate to community college students and their psyches because I was that child whose parents couldn't justify many extra expenditures, and somehow I found myself at a private college where most of the other students did seem to have it all; nice cars, well stocked dorm rooms, a weekly check from mom and dad.

To compensate for my lack of means, I developed an outward personality that was confident, assured. In retrospect, it was a facade. Many of the instructors were difficult — I still maintain needlessly (some only gave C's (or worse) — to everybody) — but others were forgiving. Some were very forgiving (all A's). While grades were never a carrot-on-a-stick for me to study, they did give me a confidence boost. Because, really, my ego was fragile under the facade. Perhaps I would have quit if I'd only gotten C's (or worse).

I went from being a person who was always raised with "no" to finding some people in authority positions — my instructors — who, happily, said, "Yes. Anything is possible." Their A's empowered me.

And this was enough for me to trudge on. To complete my degree in the expected time frame. To attempt graduate school after a couple of instructors told me, "Why not?" I went from believing in destiny to free will.

Were all of my C's deserved? Were all of my A's deserved? In retrospect, no. But, at that time, the mix of grades kept me grounded and hopeful. It was just enough fuel to get me to my destination.

Now, as a grader, I do realize that there are some students who need the carrot and stick. But, even if they



are worthy, I almost never score their papers above a 92%. That's the border of "A" and "A-" and usually enough to keep such students interested. In the end, they will get the grade they deserve.

Each college should look at its grading and its enrollment and decide if what the institution is doing is right. Are there more dropouts than students making the honor roll? If that's the case, maybe the tough-love approach isn't working.

Besides writing for newspapers, including this one, Darren Johnson has been an instructor of all sorts of courses since 1997, at a variety of colleges.



# Hooking up (cont. from cover)

to end a friends-with-benefits situation than a long-term relationship.

Hooking up has more benefits than just casual sex. Hooking up, as already stated, can lead to a monogamous relationship for some. However, hooking up can become an equalizer — it allows us, men and women alike, to pick and choose when we want to have relationships and when we want to focus on other things such as academics, jobs/careers, and figuring out who we are.

People are engaging in hook-up culture because they don't want a "real" relationship for one reason or another. The average age for first marriages among both men and women is 26-years-old in this country; I don't personally know too many people who are in college and planning weddings, not undergraduates anyway, but I do know plenty of people who are in friends-with-benefits relationships or long-term relationships, and I know that every individual is different as well as every couple or quasi-couple, and everyone needs different things at different points in time. As Jeff was quoted as saying, hook-up culture can help people find out what those needs are.

Nearly every article I had read about the hook-up culture tears it apart because they claim that hook-up culture strips relationships, whether they are of a sexual nature or not, of intimacy. After all, the point of dating is to get close to someone in order to form an intimate bond that may lead to marriage. Can you do that in a hook-up culture? Paula England, a sociologist at New York University, has been collecting data from an online survey about hook-ups since 2005. Out of a sample size of about 20,000, England concluded that 66% of women and about an equal amount of men said they wanted their most recent hook-up to turn into something more. So, even in the age of casual sex, intimacy is still alive and well.

Another benefit of the hook-up culture is the possibility for making communication easier. Communicating your wants in bed (or out of bed if you are your partner have not had intercourse yet) can be pretty embarrassing. However, hooking up with people and experimenting can give you the confidence to speak up about what you want. Opening the lines of communication in any kind of relationship is beneficial because communication is key — if you don't tell your partner what you want then you won't get it, and vice versa, because neither of you are mind-readers.

I have done an extensive amount of research for this article, having read pieces by Hanna Rosin, who has written articles in *The Atlantic* and *Slate*, and others trying to find out the benefits of hook-up culture, and although I was able to discover some benefits through my research, I was able to discover a lot more from people I know.

Christina, a 24-year-old woman who studied at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, had this to say about hook-up culture and its benefits: "Hook-up culture exists whether a woman chooses to partake or not. This then yields a single choice: feel used by it or use it to build your own self-confidence. In this world of hook-up culture, I make it perfectly clear to anyone who makes a pass that I don't have sex — OFF the table. I make this clear from the very beginning so that they have the bare minimum of sunk costs if they choose to turn tail and chase other fare. I am not try-

ing to catch them, but trying to ensure that the ones I catch are worthy of my time and attention, and that they acknowledge, by their choice to pursue me above others, that they would rather NOT have sex with me than have sex with someone else. For sex-crazed nerdy college guys, this is a big deal. I had no shortage of interested guys, which allowed me to believe what I always knew to be true, but was dissuaded from believing in high school: I am a catch. Men see me as smart, attractive, funny, interesting, etc., as opposed to the view I felt was had of me in high school: She's a nerdy weirdo and I don't know quite what other stereotype to put her in so I'd better just ignore her. So, once I was convinced

that men saw my value, I had the gall to push the envelope and see just HOW much more these guys wanted to be with me instead of having sex with other people. I would purposefully come up with scenarios that would push the guys out of their comfort zones. The more success I had, the farther I decided to push the next one. It got to the point where I realized that if I put my mind to it, I really could get away with absolutely anything I wanted, making them extremely and unnecessarily uncomfortable, and they would still want more. After I knew I could "win" any challenge I set for myself, I didn't need to "play" anymore, because what's the point if you know you're going to win? I felt I had mastered the game. At this point, I had the confidence needed to take charge of my love life for the rest of my life. I don't sit around and wait for a guy to make a move. If I want him, I go get him. To some men, that's a turn off because they feel that as the man they need to make all the moves and their ego can't take the hit of being hit on, although it seems as though it should be an ego boost. Oh well, men are strange. Others take this opportunity to lie about wanting a relationship when all they really want is a hook-up. If they would just tell me that in the first place, they'd probably get what they want a lot faster! When one gets tricked, it always sucks, but it sucks a lot less when one has the confidence earned from previous experiences to say, 'Oh well, on to the next one!' Pardon the mixed metaphor, but once one realizes that there are always more fish in the pond, they don't cry as much over spilt milk. In some cases, however, this ballsy approach really does work, and I've honed it to work extremely well for me. A man who is scared off or turned off by my upfront nature is not a man I want to spend time with anyway, so I waste a lot less time on them using this approach (minimize sunk costs). The men whom I DO snare with this tactic tend to be more shy and respectful of women and would not have dared to hit on me for either of those reasons, sometimes both. This was the case with my current boyfriend, with whom I just celebrated our one year anniversary. He despises how men make clearly unwanted advances on women all the time, and feels sorry for the women this happens to often. He was clearly interested in me, but would not have made a move until it was PAINFULLY

clear what my intentions were. He had ZERO interest in making an unwanted advance, so he had to have ABSOLUTELY NO DOUBT that I wanted him, and yet he 'doesn't do hook-ups' and is rather shy, so I had to employ an ever-increasing, stealthy, tactical approach to express my interest without scaring him away or pushing him too hard, but still closing the deal the second time I saw him, because I knew that if I didn't, I would probably never see him again or at least be friend-zoned, because he lives in New Jersey and is 10 years older than me. Due to my confidence gained via the hook-up culture in college, I was able to take control of the

## 'The best option would be to just tell your friend how you feel and to see how they feel.'

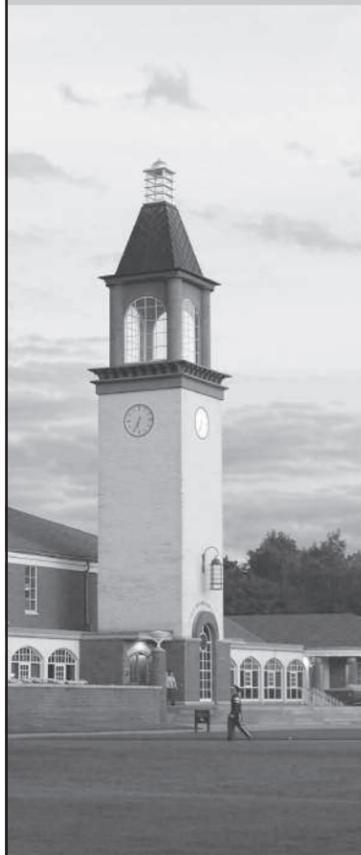
situation and not fear failure. I knew he had something special and would work well with me long-term if I could just get over this first hurdle. If this approach didn't work, it would have showed that we would have had problems down the road anyway. My point is that I gained the confidence to not just show my interest, but make my advance, step by step, over the course of 10 hours at a mutual friend's New Year's party. I saw my opportunity and I took it instead of waiting for an advance from him, which would never come. I did NOT miss out on this AMAZING man, because of the experi-

ence I earned from hooking-up in college."

When it comes to answering the question "Does hook-up culture help or hurt us when it comes to dating?"

One must look at the evidence, and to themselves. As Christina said, everyone is a part of this hook-up culture in some way, and we can either be used by it or use it to our advantage; however, we have to know what we want when entering into the situation. According to a study conducted by Michigan State University, only about 10% of hook-ups or friends-with-benefits situations culminate into a long-term romantic relationship; but on a positive note, one major worry about friends-with-benefits situations is that the friendship will end in a wrecked friendship, but only 26% of those situations end in a wrecked friendship, which means that 74% of friendships remain intact after the situation ends. For those who may, say, have romantic feelings for their friend and want to become friends-with-benefits in hopes that it may turn into a long-term relationship like romantic comedies would lead us to believe happen all the time, the best option would be to just tell your friend how you feel and to see how they feel. Communicate to let your needs be met. However, if you and your friend are just looking to get a certain need met until something better comes along, then by all means sow those wild oats. You can decide whether hook-up culture helps or hurts you when it comes to dating based on what your needs are at a given time. There is no definitive "yes, it hurts" or "yes, it helps" answer to this question. One thing is certain, though; that there are at least some benefits to what previous generations claim has been harming young adults' abilities to date.

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# I know it's art but ... what is that, though?

**Nathaniel Villano**  
*Campus News*

When we think “art,” we think shapes, colors and design but most importantly creativity and uniqueness. Art is the expression of oneself in the form of drawing, painting, literature and sculpture. Angela Newman, also known by her artistic alias, “Anjipan,” is an up-and-coming visual artist from Long Island, New York.

It was during her junior year in high school when Angela decided that art school was not for her. The main goal in her life was – and still is – to become a self-made artist, an individual who will be recognized by her own unique style.

After enrolling in one semester in the Arts program at Suffolk County Community College (SCCC), Angela decided that art school was still not for her. Throughout the semester she would take on her own projects instead of what had been assigned to the class. It got to a point where the professor called her out regarding her defiant behavior and had her assign the last two assignments to the class.

A favorable response and the increased effort in execution of these assignments shown by her fellow students set aflame a bonfire of ambition in Angela's heart. She knew without a doubt that she was ready to face all obstacles on the path to achievement of a goal sewn into her since childhood.

With SCCC behind her, Angela found herself working full-time and still maintaining the ability to create something new everyday. As time went on she found it easier to take on and maintain relationships inside Long Island's art community. “It's beneficial to seek out shows and events you enjoy and wish to be apart of,” she says.

“Do this, and without fail and opportunities will present themselves to you.

Also be patient as big goals need time to grow and should be cultivated with faith and care.”

Angela also stresses the importance of letting some ideas pass, or at least take the back seat if you feel it's not the right time to build something from them. She experienced this in trying her hand at screen-printing, tattooing and graffiti.

In 2010 Angela was given the opportunity to rent out space in a studio dedicated strictly to art. That same year, her landlord's production company was filming the Great South Bay Music Festival. This is where Anjipan made her first appearance out in the open. She sat at a table for three days drawing and selling the t-shirts she had designed.

“I couldn't put a price on my original pieces. I was just starting to make consistent themes at the time and starting to find my fingerprint,” she says. “Although I received many offers, I wasn't ready to part with my work just yet.”

Later on that year through a mutual friend on Facebook she had seen an event for an open group art show in NYC. After seeing how the young female artist who organized the show did so in such a casual and approachable way, Angela thought to herself, “Well if she can do this, then so can I.” That thought led to the birth of the first “What Is That Though? Art Show” (W.I.T.T.) in January of 2012.

Walking into the first floor hallway of the studio, it may not seem like much at all. Once you've taken the steps up to the second floor to the show, you become immersed in to a realm of imagination and creativity. The walls are covered floor to ceiling in all forms of art, from abstract to street. During the show, anybody is welcome to hang up their own works of art, whether they are works in progress or a finished masterpiece.

“I'd rather see someone put up an unfinished, even struggling piece one

month and the next month have the same work of art put up with more progress made on it,” she says.

Whether it's shots from a photography series or a handful of painted canvases, Angela encourages everyone who comes to bring something they have created. She coined the phrase “The artist's art show.”

The shows are hosted every fourth Saturday of each month. Everything is free including admission, snacks and even the live entertainment. Musicians and performers donate their time and talent to a relaxed and receptive audience. This makes it especially easy for first-timers and experimental musicians to bring their passion to the stage.

In healthy contrast the W.I.T.T. also draws many well-known local musical artists who agree with the idea of sharing and learning, as is the goal of the event. In return Angela does what she can for the bands whether it is creating album artwork, shooting a video or taking pictures for them during a set at another event.

“What Is That Though” has successfully brought together a close-knit community of artists, musicians and enthusiasts of the cause. Remembering its modest beginnings, the W.I.T.T. show looks forward with pride as it enters into its third year of running. The powerful dedication of W.I.T.T.'s host and audience is unable to be looked over; it predicts a powerful forecast in

years to come.

As the shows continue to grow, Angela is beginning to worry about space as the number of occupants gradually increases every month. On its last show of 2013 in December the studio space had become so packed it was nearly impossible to get a good view of the bands that were performing that night.

When asked if she would partner up with another venue/event planner/production company in order to meet the needs of a growing show, Angela responded:

“I'd rather it break in half and sink than to have it flourish as a foreign vision or ride on the coattails of somebody else.”

*For more information about how you can be a part of the “What Is That Though? Art Show” visit [www.anjipan.com](http://www.anjipan.com) or follow the event on Facebook [www.facebook.com/anjipan](http://www.facebook.com/anjipan).*



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# Obama meets with college leaders, urges access

Gavin Stern

*Scripps Howard Foundation Wire*

Troy Simon grew up poor in New Orleans. He couldn't read until he was 14. But with a little help, he's now a student at Bard College in New York – and got to introduce Michelle Obama at the White House in January.

The first lady praised his perseverance.

“We must remember that education is a two-way bargain. And while there is so much more we must do for our kids, at the end of the day, as Troy described, the person who has the most say over whether or not a student succeeds is the student him or herself,” she said.

Leaders of more than 100 colleges and 40 nonprofit organizations met at the Eisenhower Executive Office Building next door to the White House, where they announced commitments to improve college access for the next generation of students. Universities represented at the event included elite schools such as Yale University and those that serve primarily minority populations, such as El Paso Community College.

“We are here for one purpose: We want to make sure more young people have the chance to earn a higher education,” President Barack Obama said. “In the 21st century economy, we all understand it's never been more important.”

Americans without a college de-

gree experience one-third more unemployment – and receive half as much income – compared to those who do, Obama said.

A third of adults over the age of 25 have bachelor's degrees, according to the U.S. census.

Low-income children are much less likely to attend college than the rest of the population, often because they drop out of high school. Obama underscored efforts to help children stay in school long enough to even consider college.

“We've set a goal of training 100,000 new math and science teachers over the next 10 years, and the private sector has already committed to help train 40,000,” Obama said. “Today, the high school dropout rate is the lowest it has been in 40 years – something that's rarely advertised.”



Photo by author.

Low-income high school graduates still face disadvantages during the college application process because they lack standardized test preparation, advanced placement opportunities and counseling.

Obama cited several universities that have taken steps to help underprivileged students – including adults who missed out the first time around – pursue higher education.

The University of Minnesota is expanding financial literacy programs. Oregon Tech is strengthening commu-

nication between advisers and students who need encouragement and support. A program in the South Bronx, called iMentor, will match 20,000 students with mentors in more than 20 states over the next five years.

The Obama administration has doubled the amount of federal investments in Pell Grants and college tax credits and reformed the student loan program to lower interest rates.

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# How far you go depends on how you define \$ucce\$\$

**Prof. Jack K. Mandel, MBA**  
*Nassau Community College*

2014... and what could be the beginning of a wonderful new year with a myriad of opportunities open to you on a personal, professional, and business level. But you have to make it happen.

Did you ever stop to think why some of us are the alpha (lead) dog while others merely follow in a pack? While it may be complex in scope there is a very logical scenario. Not all of us have what it takes to be an individual and/or team leader. Let's focus on four key traits that both men and women have in common as they pursue worthy life goals. As a professor at Nassau Community College, I try to "drive home" these four points to my entrepreneurial students:

**#1 AUTONOMY:** Regardless of age or gender, the ability of an individual to plan, focus and turn ideas into action is paramount to success. Independent thinkers do not require a

"boss" or supervisor to lead them. They are self-driven and know how to innovate to achieve. That's why many pursue their own ventures.

**#2 POWER:** While earning potential is one gauge of power, so too, is the symbol of personal influence over others. Certainly political figures, members of the clergy and even college profes-

sors such as myself are seen by society as "opinion leaders." Maybe the financial opportunities

are not as significant as in the business sector, but there are different measurements that apply. In a word: priceless.

**#3 PERSONAL GROWTH:** As we age, we often recognize our abilities to "put fires out" when needed. Now we can "hold our heads high" and serve as mentors to the young. I know, as a

professor, I find the learning curve to be a 50%-50% equal proposition. Students often "walk circles" around me regarding their knowledge of social media and technology. Yes, I admit I am "old school" but can learn from those around me regardless of age or gender.

**#4 PASSION:** This trait is a "must

**'I know, as a professor, I find the learning curve to be a 50-50 equal proposition.'**

have" on my list. Achieving success in anything requires a positive outlook and inner discipline so you can finish what you start. Learn to manage time effectively and you will be more productive. No ifs, ands, or buts. Faith in oneself always trumps the challenges and obstacles we face each day.

Here's hoping 2014 is YOUR year to make a difference. Good luck!

*Professor Mandel teaches marketing at Nassau Community College in Garden City, NY. He is the recipient of the prestigious Outstanding Teacher Award conferred by the NYS Association of Two-Year Colleges. He is also a "Best of Long Island Winner" for in the Teaching category from the Long Island Press.*



## Alcohol: A college student's friend or enemy?

**Jonathan Lopes**  
*Campus News*

The most hotly contested topic I've come across as a college student and now as an employee has been the role alcohol plays on a college campus. Is alcohol that "liquid courage" that allows students to ease the transition into college or an overvalued concept that results in more harm than good? This piece is meant to shed light on the topic and not take a formal stance, but I will include experiences and insight, in order to paint a full picture.

I served as a Resident Assistant (RA) at Ramapo College and observed the negative effects of the presence of alcohol. On occasion, students would embarrass themselves with public intoxication, making a scene, vomiting, and the rare occurrence of releasing their bowels in places other than a restroom. Scary situations have also occurred with students consuming too much alcohol and then have to be transferred to a local hospital.

There are students who do not fully realize the potential cost of their actions. For instance, a standard violation can consist of a judicial hearing, fine, sanction, and/or community service. Depending on the case, students can receive as a little as a simple warning or as much as a suspension or possible expulsion. If an alcohol violation took place in everyday life, instead of those school based consequences, these students could be arrested for public intoxication, disorderly conduct, and/or underage drinking.

On the flip side, students have shared various stories about how the campus culture has enhanced their experience, made them more mature,

and welcoming to different things. The ability to unwind and consume alcohol served as that catalyst. I don't personally drink or smoke, but can and do understand the stance others have concerning these prevalent college issues.

I've interacted with mature students willing to follow policies regarding alcohol use as well as naive, combative students who consider the alcohol policies to be completely unfair. Typically, colleges allow for alcohol to be consumed, only in designated areas with students of age. However, issues quickly and often arise when dealing with parties open to all students and those who ruin it for everyone else.

It is highly important for students to feel comfortable enough to express themselves via open forums and question and answer sessions. Regardless if a higher education institution is pro or con when dealing with issues of alcohol consumption, students should not fear speaking up and expressing their thoughts. Otherwise, tension begins to increase and a disconnect between administration and the student body develops. I've witnessed both, students unsure if it is their place, due to intimidation, and those who will speak their mind at all cost.

It is equally important for stu-

dents to present their stance in a mature, educated fashion, not attributing to policies simply as "freedom restrictions" and considering their education to be a waste of "tax dollars." It is difficult for college administrators and campus security to take students seri-

**'I've interacted with mature students willing to follow policies regarding alcohol use as well as naive, combative students.'**

ously, if they are ignorant and unwilling to understand the current policies and abide by them. For instance, Ramapo College recently held a campus open forum on the topic of alcohol. Members of the Student Government Association moderated the event in which students could ask questions and give comments to administrators within the offices of public safety, residence life, student affairs, and student life. Most of the audience members were disgruntled students making empty statements and accusing the administrators of being "power hungry." One student in particular told an administrator, "I am very scared of the power you have over my freedom."

College administrators and campus security possess the primary duty to supply students with the environment to feel safe, in order to learn. Students primarily enter higher education to learn and eventually achieve a degree, not to drink. Alcohol, at times, has proven to be an obstacle in achieving that goal. These policy mak-

ers and enforcers run the risk of legal recourse and a tarnished reputation, if policies are too casual and not in the best, long-term interest of the students.

Furthermore, college administrators and campus security must make the social campus culture clear and be willing to treat students as adults and engage in a dialogue. There should not be a basic policy format that punishes all students, no matter the charge. Hearings and potential sanctions should be administered on a case by case basis, allowing students to explain their case.

As a college student and employee, I would encourage students to consider two things. First, if you are going to party, know in advance who you are doing it with and where you are doing it. Second, if you want to make a change, "research" (Google) policies and procedures neighboring colleges take part in and present it as alternatives. Use resources including the college's Student Government Association in presenting a case for reform. College administrators will be much more receptive to actual ideas and not just anecdotes. With that said, take care, be safe and enjoy the few years we get for this experience!

*Jonathan Lopes attended Raritan Valley Community College from 2009-2011. He earned an A.A. degree in Education K-12 and transferred to Ramapo College, currently completing his final undergraduate course while working at RVCC as a part-time admissions recruiter and service learning intern.*

# Has technology and social media ruined dating?

Marie Frankson  
Campus News

I have been in a relationship with the same man for five years, and four of those years have been as a long-distance relationship. How have we been able to stay together for so long? Love, trust, willingness to make it work, and communication. Throughout our relationship, I have heard from countless people that technology and social networking would ruin our relationship, as well as countless horror stories about how relationships and dating have been ruined by social networking and dating, and that social networking has made the act of dating moot. For my relationship, social networking and technology have been helpful; when we have news to share or are planning on getting together and it's an inappropriate time to call, we can text or instant message on Facebook. However, everything has pros and cons. So, has technology and social networking ruined dating?

One way that people believe that technology has ruined dating is the "fact" that dating culture has evolved to a cycle of text messages as opposed to one person asking the other out on a date, going on said date if the asker said yes, seeing if the two would want to go out on a second, third, or fourth, etc., date, and eventually becoming a couple and entering into a serious relationship.

A second way that people believe technology has ruined dating is by creating lower barriers for entry. Traditional courtship, the kind our

**'If used right, Facebook and Skype enhance the relationship.'**

grandparents tell us about where you have to actually pick up a phone and ask someone on a date, required courage and for the asker to choose the right words. Over the phone, or in person, being rejected is like taking a bullet to the ego. However, through a text message or a Facebook message, rejection doesn't hurt as much.

A third way that people believe technology is ruining dating is that people no longer have to put effort into composing a message to ask someone out. To ask someone out nowadays, all someone has to do is send a text message asking, "Is anything fun going on tonight?" with a winking emoticon at the end. There's no effort anymore. Sometimes it seems as though the advent of new technology and social networking sites have made people lazier when it comes to romance, which makes it seem like romance is dying because of this digital age.

A fourth way that people believe technology is ruining dating is because sites like Facebook and MySpace have ruined the need for the first date. The point of the first date is to talk and get to know each other, but with social net-

working sites all one has to do is type in their date's name and they can find out everything about them, so when the first date actually happens, that stimulating conversation people hope to have is non-existent. Online research of a date has created a false sense of intimacy — with all of their interests only a few mouse clicks away, it's easy to discover what you have in common and what you don't, instead of happily getting caught off-guard by finding out you and your date both love classic black-and-white movies over appetizers at that new bistro around the corner.

Despite constantly hearing about how technology and social networking sites have ruined dating, there are some benefits as well. One major benefit is that technology and social networking can keep the spark alive — William, a 19-year-old from New York, has only recently become involved with a girl, and he says that technology is helpful in his relationship. "I can see a ton of benefits to technology use in a relationship. For one, it's nice to go on Facebook and be like, "Hey, this girl right here, she's taken by me and it's Facebook official." Also, if you're on a bad date and you've got friends in the area, you can text them to crash the date and make it a hang out. One other thing, I'm joining the army and because of technology I don't have to lose communication when I leave. I'll have Skype and Facebook and a phone to my benefit to keep in touch. It's more efficient than snail mail, and Skype lets me actually see someone. Sure, there are plenty of cons to technology and dating, but if used right it can enhance the relationship. Just don't let social networking rule over your relationship."

One last benefit of technology and social networking when it comes to dating is how online dating sites are helping people find potential significant others, and significant others, and have been doing so for some time now. For example, my father and stepmother met online, as did my fiance's father and stepmother, and both couples have been together for more than ten years.

Technology certainly has changed the way we communicate, whether that communication is between platonic friends, colleagues, potential significant others, and significant others. Technology has even added new complications to dating, such as having to think about whether to untag yourself from a photo with an ex, or worrying about if it's too soon to send a friend request to a romantic interest. However, saying that technology and social networking sites



have brought, or will be bringing, an end to dating and courtship is a bit premature, especially considering people still meet and date and even get mar-

ried in the real world despite how heavily invested everyone is in technology. So, no, technology and social networking have not ruined dating.

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# It's the end of the world (and I feel fine)

**Darren Johnson**  
*Campus News*

Yes, America's favorite TV show is back this month. And if you haven't gotten into it yet, the first three seasons of "The Walking Dead" are available on Netflix.

Season 4 of "The Walking Dead" starts February 9. I've bought into it—the idea of a zombie apocalypse. I've stocked up on a few cases of Beefaroni and an ice pick in anticipation.

But lately my faith in zombies had started to waver. I can watch the genre known as "sci-fi," but tune out when it turns to "fantasy." There has to be a grain of truth to the story.

I put the question out on Profnet, a site that hooks up journalists with experts. Is there any chance that people could become zombies?

I mean, various mammals can get rabies, for example. In some mammals, they start to act like zombies: they become irrational, they bite, they foam at the mouth. And if bitten or scratched, the victim also gets rabies. This seems similar to what happens with zombies. Right?

This was my wishful thinking, so that I could enjoy my "Walking Dead" watching.

A quick response from Carnegie Mellon University professor Timothy

Verstynen flashed across my computer screen. He has lectured on "zombie brains." Perfect. I thought. This guy has the credentials to allow me to enjoy my TV show for at least one more season.

But he said: "I'd say a zombie brain is about as possible as a vampire brain (i.e. — so unlikely as to be almost impossible). But then again a scientist never says never."

Darn. Thanks, Dr. Verstynen for squashing my hopes and dreams. (Now I'll have to go back to watching "American Idol." I mean, that's scientifically possible, right?)

I didn't want to believe it, though. I mean, a dracula is totally impossible! But humans have been brain dead. And humans have been cannibalistic. Why can't the two combine like a guy with a shard of chocolate bumping into a guy with an open vat of peanut butter in the middle of the night?

I was about to join the Ryan Seacrest fan club, when, thankfully, another message popped on my screen.

It was from Professor L. Syd M. Johnson of Michigan Technological University. He'd actually helped run a zombie symposium there in November, where academics "explored the psychology, mythology and bioethics of zombies."

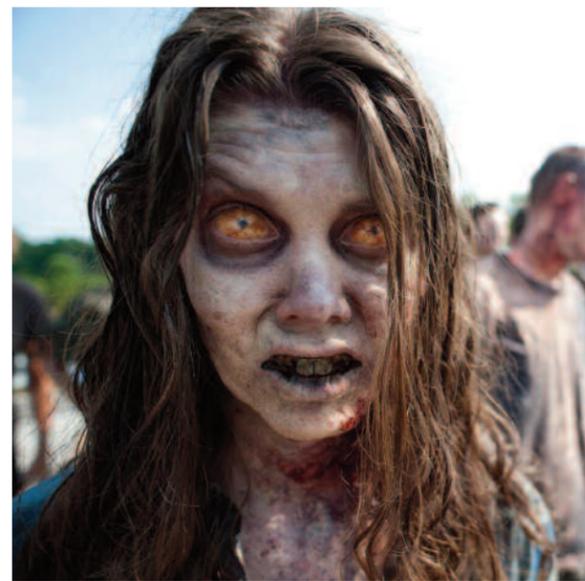
He also teaches a credit course called Zombie Ethics, where students

watch "The Walking Dead" and apply principles of philosophy to determine the correct course of action during the End of Days.

My hero!

He liked my rabies theory. While the disease in humans acts differently than in, say, dogs, maybe some strange mutation can happen?

He said: "Rabies is a possibility, as is kuru, a prion disease (like Mad Cow) resulting from cannibalism (specifically,



with much of the British beef supply in the late 1990s) may have transmitted to humans. Prions have an incredibly long incubation period (upwards to 50-60 years before manifesting symptoms), and

so the effect of prions in the British beef supply is probably only beginning to be understood despite the stop in practice of feeding cow remains to other cattle. Bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE,

a.k.a. Mad Cow Disease) is transmissible to humans as variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease, and this can produce 'zombie-like' symptoms."

Spectacular!

Now my faith in a zombie apocalypse has been restored, and I can grab a can of Beefaroni and queue up Season 4 of "The Walking Dead." I am so there!

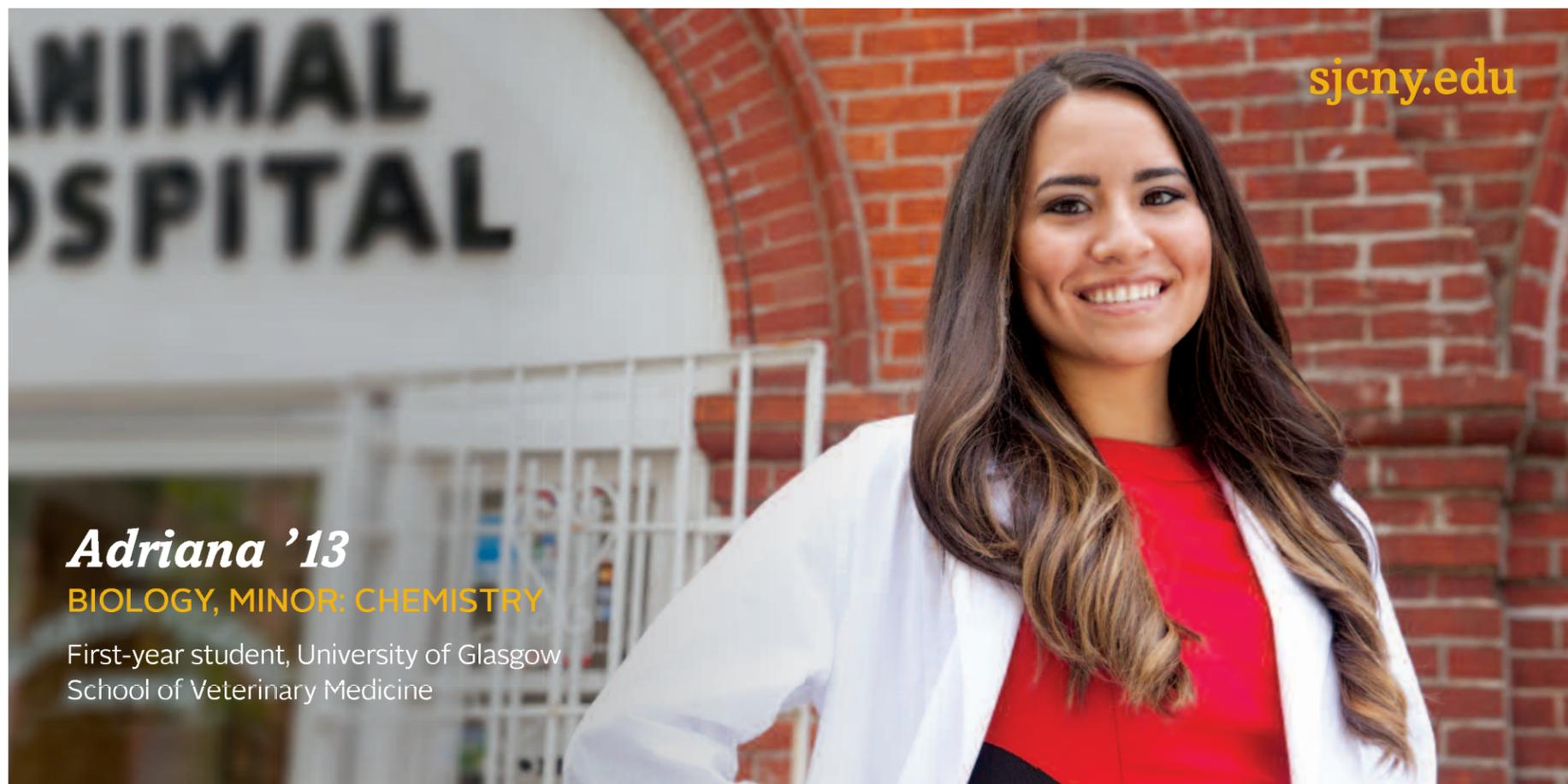


from eating brains and the central nervous system)."

Coolio!

His colleague in the zombie symposium, Biology Professor John L. Dahl of the University of Minnesota - Duluth, further elaborated:

"What is probably a plausible scenario is one in which prion-contaminated beef (of the kind that may have occurred



**Adriana '13**

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# Midseason TV shows may help the winter blah

Kristina Bostley  
Campus News

Below are previews of TV shows coming out in February and March. Hopefully, some will help you fight the winter blah!

## February

The CW's new sci-fi drama **"Star-Crossed"** premieres on February 17 at 8 p.m. The show demonstrates the classic battle for power that begins when aliens (the Atrians) reach Earth. However, a chance meeting occurs in a shed between an Atrian, Roman, and a human, Emery. Years after the Atrians settled on Earth, segregated from the human population, a select few have been allowed the chance to integrate with humans. A group of teenaged Atrians attends a human high school, and it is there that Roman and Emery reunite to form a bond threatened by those who fear the diversity of the two species.

NBC is premiering **"About a Boy"** at a special time after the Olympics on February 22 at 11 p.m. The show tells the tale of Will Freeman (played by David Walton), who has unlimited money and free time after becoming a hit songwriter. He finds himself be-friending the neighbor's young son, Marcus (played by Benjamin Stockham), originally using Marcus as a ploy to seduce a woman. When that falls through, the boys' friendship only grows stronger - much to the chagrin of Marcus' vegan hippie mother, Fiona (played by Minnie Driver). Watch the friendship blossom between

boy and man on February 22 and then in its regular time slot on February 25 at 9 p.m.

The Fisher family walks into town on Sunday, February 23 at 10:30 on NBC. Fun-loving mother Joyce (played by Jenna Elfman) is married to the blind yet kind father Mel (played by J.K. Simmons) - but not for long. Together they have two children, 80s-loving teenager Katie and 11-year-old Henry, both of whom undertake different roles within the household. Katie is very much a typical teenager who fre-

quents the mall quite often and pals around with her mother, who believes she's still a teen herself. Henry, on the other hand, took on the task of being his father's eyes and ears. Enter Elvis, Mel's new seeing-eye dog, who shakes things up quite a bit - especially when it's revealed that Joyce and Mel are getting a divorce. Tune in to see how the family dynamic changes for the family on **"Growing Up Fisher."**

The premiere of **"Mind Games"** on ABC was pushed up from its original March 11 debut to February 25 following the failure of **"Killer Women."** Two polar opposite men cut from the same mold team up in ABC's new psychological drama. Brothers Clark and Ross Edwards team up to change people's lives using an unusual technique: they manipulate the minds of others. Clark, an expert in human behavior who suffers from severe bipolar disorder, finds himself in some unusual situations because of his condition. Ross, a con man, has just been released from a minor security prison. Together, the two form a team

**Clark, an expert in human behavior, suffers from severe bipolar disorder.**

to twist and turn the minds of individuals, offering their clients an "alternative to fate."

ABC's new Manhattan-based comedy will certainly mix up the

Wednesday night lineup when it premieres on February 26 at 9:30 p.m. **"Mixology"** serves up the story of ten single people sharing a night at one of the Big Apple's trendiest bars in the meatpacking district. Tom, on the market after his engagement ended, and his two best friends, Cal and Bruce, are at the bar to reintroduce Tom to the dating scene. Also ordering drinks are the attorney Maya and her engaged friend Liv, single mom Jessica and her acquaintance Fabienne, and down-on-his-luck Ron. Stirring things up are cocktail waitress Kacey and bartender Dominic. Together, these ten search within the bar for love, lust, and everything in between.

## March

It's strange enough that an American-born child wakes up in a field in China; but things get even weirder when it's discovered that 8-year-old Jacob had gone missing over 30 years ago. The quiet boy communicates to U.S. Immigration agent J. Martin Bellamy (played

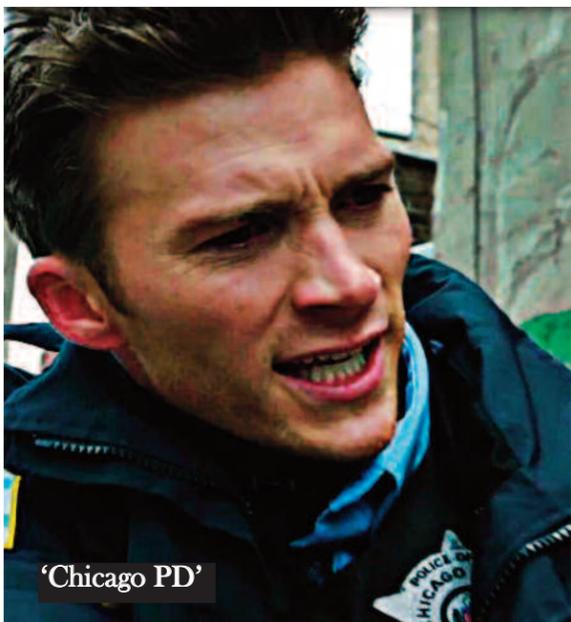


Greg Kinnear plays an unethical lawyer in 'Rake.'

by Omar Epps) that he is from a small Missouri town, and it's when they reach his home and discover his parents have aged significantly that the plot thickens. Jacob, his parents, the Immigration officer, doctors, and local authorities combine forces to figure out how this phenomenon could possibly have transpired. Tune in to **"Resurrection"** on March 9 at 9 p.m. on ABC.

Bo may be young, but she is far from powerless. In fact, the 10-year-old holds the weight of the world on her shoulders, due to the extraordinary gifts she's possessed since she was a

toddler. Her ability to levitate, read minds, control external forces in nature, and even tell the future has earned her the attention of people that want to kidnap her to use her gifts for evil. The group that cares for her, the True Believers, seek the help of Tate, a wrongfully accused inmate on death row. They help Tate escape from jail on the condition he will keep Bo safe from harm, which involves the pair moving from city to city to stay safe. **"Believe"** what you see when you tune in on March 10 after **"The Voice"** for a special premiere on NBC. Make sure to catch the show on Sunday, March



'Chicago PD'

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16 at 10 p.m. in its usual time slot.

The nation's most powerful find themselves powerless when a bus with their children aboard is seized and their children are subsequently held hostage. The new suspense drama by NBC, **"Crisis,"** is exactly that: a national scandal that affects the most influential people with the most far-reaching control in the nation. The captors turn the hostage situation into a manipulation game somewhat like that in the movie "Saw"; they test each parent to see how far he or she is willing to go to save their child. Tune in on March 16 at 10 p.m. to see the sacrifices parents will make in order to save their children.

Nearly a century has gone by since a nuclear apocalypse eradicated human life on earth. Luckily, a chosen few hundred were living on space stations at the time, and managed to live there for the next three generations. With supplies and resources running low, it's time to test out the earth to determine if it's inhabitable by humans once again. The chosen ones - **"The 100"** - venture into the earth's atmosphere and are met with harsh conditions, both due to the severe radiation and fights amongst themselves. Life on the space station isn't much better, and it's up to these 100 people to decide which life is the one worth living. Catch the show on Wednesday, March 19 at 9 p.m. on The CW.

Nate Berkus returns to reality television in a new role, this time hosting **"American Dream Builders"** on NBC. The competition is simple: 12 designers and home builders are asked to redesign a space in whatever way they see fit, bringing fresh and modern design elements to preexisting homes. Berkus, along with NFL player-turned-architect Eddie George, and interior designer Monica Pedersen, judge the contestants on their creativity and ability to transform shabby to chic in this hour-long show. A contestant is sent home each week based on their design until the finale, when the last two standing must renovate extraordinary Southern California homes. The show premieres on March 23 at 8 p.m.

Also in Southern California is Jack Dunlevy and his family in **"Surviving Jack,"** a new Fox comedy that takes place in the 1990s. Jack (played by Christopher Meloni) takes over the parenting duties for his two teenagers when his wife decides to return to law school. His son, Frankie, is a freshman in high school, and is starting to experience the woes of the teenage years. His daughter, Rachel, is a smart and beautiful 17-year-old who is learning to manipulate her father once she realizes he has no idea how to discipline a teenage girl. Can Jack hold the family together and manage the daily stresses of teenage life? Turn on your TV on March 27 at 8:30 p.m. to find out!

Rounding out the March premieres is **"Friends With Better Lives,"** a CBS romantic comedy. Six friends examine their own lives compared to those of their friends to decide who has the best life overall. Expectant married couple Andi and Bobby have a toddler and another little one on the way, but still yearn for the good ol' days. Jules and Lowell are in the honeymoon stage of a brand new relationship. Single Kate's successful career takes the backseat when she finds out

her only other friend who is single has just gotten engaged. And Will suddenly finds himself single, living the life of a bachelor, yet secretly still aching for his ex-wife. Who has it best? Watch as they decide on March 31 at 9 p.m.

#### **In Case You Missed It: January Premieres**

**"Chicago PD,"** NBC's newest drama and spin-off of "Chicago Fire," premiered on January 8 at 10 p.m. The show focuses on the Intelligence Unit within the police department in Chicago's 21st District, headed by Sergeant Hank Voight. The Intelligence Unit often bends the rules and uses unorthodox ways to solve the high-profile crimes they're charged with investigating. Expect to see a lot of crossovers between "Chicago PD" and "Chicago Fire" during the season, which airs new episodes on Tuesday nights at 10 p.m.

**"Enlisted,"** a Fox comedy originally slated to premiere in November, finally made its debut on January 10 at 9:30 p.m. The new show features three military brothers training at a base in Florida. Pete, the oldest, is put in charge of the platoon that includes his two younger brothers. Derrick suffers from a terrible case of middle child syndrome, and as a result continuously creates trouble. Randy, the youngest brother, has a yearning to prove himself to his brothers and the rest of the platoon. See Geoff Stults, Chris Lowell, and Parker Young in Fox's latest comedy act on Fridays at 9:30 p.m.

"Lost" alum Josh Holloway returns to TV in the new CBS high-tech crime



**'The 100'**

drama **"Intelligence."** The show premiered on January 7 at 10 p.m. featuring Gabriel (Holloway), an operative who has had a powerful computer chip embedded into his brain. He uses this intelligence to digitally communicate with other technological devices such as the internet, cell towers, WiFi net-

works, and databases. He reports to Director Lillian Strand ("CSI" alum Marg Helgenberger), who pairs him with Secret Service agent Riley Neal to protect the United States' greatest technological asset. Together, the team works to combat crime and terrorism in an unusual fashion. Watch it on CBS on Mondays at 10 p.m.

Greg Kinnear stars in **"Rake,"** the new comedic drama on Fox. The

show, adapted from the identically titled Australian series, premiered on January 23. It showcases the daily life of criminal defense lawyer Keegan Deane as he seemingly spirals out of control. His love for women and gambling, among other vices, combined with his lack of self-control both inside

### **Derrick suffers from a terrible case of middle-child syndrome.**

and outside the courtroom leave him battling with almost everyone in his life - including his ex-wife, various judges, the Assistant District Attorney, his bookie, and even the IRS. Between his own internal moral conflicts and conflicts within his personal relationships, Deane puts on quite the circus both inside the courtroom and out. Catch his act on Thursdays at 9 p.m. on Fox.



**'Growing Up Fisher'**

# SCCC student is a poet and mix master

Desirae Gooding  
Campus News

I considered this – the seated area directly near the theaters of Suffolk-Selden’s Islip Arts Building – the perfect spot to interview budding rap artist Kenny Brown – choosing to release his music under the moniker, Bernie Brown. The halls of the place are always littered with noise. Quotes are spilled from the lips of Acting majors. Energy is abound here. In speaking with Brown, a Liberal Arts major, in his fourth semester at Suffolk – beginning in 2012 – I began to understand that I was correct in my choice. He belonged here – there was a lot of life in him, too. “Bernie” claimed to have a love of all genres of music – everything from rock to folk – and drew much influence from them. “I use a lot of different musical styles [in my work] ...” he says, “Sometimes I sample songs.”

Brown – more often than not – invites other budding artists, who share his love of the genre, to join him on a track; this collaborative group has been dubbed, The Anthill as, according to Brown – “Anyone [with enough talent, and a love of rap] can contribute if they want to.” – I understood the metaphor, anthills are never built by a sole insect.

Throughout the course of our interview, I came to learn that Brown’s musical abilities fit the very definition of an acquired skill. “It’s funny because a lot of people think that you need to be really good at playing an instrument to make music with it, but a lot of the things that I record with, I totally suck at,” he says, while laughing. “A lot of the things that I record with, I only know enough to record a little four-measure piece that I just make up on the spot ... I couldn’t even perform it [again] if I tried, but I can record it – and mess with it, and make it sound good.”

Kenny plays – or records with – nine instruments in total. “The bass, the harmonica, [my sister’s] flute ...”

he lists off. “The guitar, trumpet, mandolin, this little whistle – kind of like a recorder – oh, the violin – I can’t play it, I really suck at the violin – but, I record with it. [And the] banjo – I suck at the banjo, too – but, I’ve recorded some stuff that sounds pretty good on it ... and, then a few random percussion instruments – but, that’s just hitting something,” he laughs. “I’m always trying to get better at those, but I don’t have too much time to put into it.”

The Newfield High School graduate states that, while having been enrolled in band for the majority of his public school career, he didn’t enjoy himself – considering involvement with his school’s music program a bit of a chore. “My mom made me and my siblings all play an instrument. ... I wanted to quit every year, and she would never let me ... she made me take private lessons, and stuff. Looking back,” he adds, “I really appreciate it, but at the time I [thought to myself] ‘Goddamn it, why do I have to do this?!’ ... I don’t even know why I didn’t like it, I had fun at times,” he admits. “I guess I

really didn’t appreciate the style of music ... looking back, I wish I took it a little more seriously.”

An apparent regret was clear in his voice – but, in speaking with him it became clear, that perhaps his disdain for the childhood lessons – both the incredibly broad structure of the teachings, and the style of music – served to spur his passion for creating music later on. “I got into poetry, and found this program called Garage Band that I started messing with. ... Ironically, one of the best things that happened to my development as an artist was ... getting into a car accident,” he laughs. “I got a pretty nice insurance check from it ... and, I used it to buy a bunch of instruments, [and] an interface to record with. Sometimes people give me [the instruments], sometimes I buy them.”

Of his writing style – the rap along with the beats – Kenny says, “I don’t like writing, as much as free-styling. When I write, I tend to get lost in my own head, and write stuff that’s really indirect. ... So, it’s hard for people to understand completely. ... If I’m writing a song that I sing ...” he explains, “I’ll make it pretty simple

... but, when I’m rapping fast, it’s just too much fun to use a lot of

metaphors and word-play, and crazy rhyme schemes – I just don’t control myself ... and, end up with some really obscure stuff that’s really hard [for the listener] to pick up.” This brought a smile to my lips, in saying it, he seemed to shine a spotlight on the pure joy he felt when performing.

Brown began scrolling through the songs he had written, picking out the “obscure” lyrics he felt no one would understand, and strived to reveal their meaning. “Like here,” he says, “It starts off pretty simple ... but then, ‘King Tut’em and bud’em, pickin’ off tree leaves ...’ I wrote this when I was on a break with my girlfriend. I was talking about something dying before it’s ready; an untimely death or end to something.” He speaks about when the song begins to “dissolve;” seemingly spiraling into the mesh of his thoughts – the meaning becoming less and less clear: “And then, I go into to saying, ‘Tree leaves burning up, sizzlin’ fizzle’ ...’ and that reminded me of Pop Rocks, and then that reminded of rock n’ roll ...” The list punctuated with his laughter, “... and then that reminded me



of rock, paper, scissors ... and, then it sorta goes on from there.”

His statement about the rift in his relationship prompting lyrics intrigued me a great deal, and I found myself asking if Kenny had incorporated a lot of “personal experiences” into his work. “Yeah, I definitely do,” he responded, “... but, sometimes it’s not that obvious ... It’s funny, because I try to make it [obvious] – but, it doesn’t really work that often ...” He continues to search through his songs as he speaks, every so often pointing to a line here-or-there, some making reference to the devoutly religious identity he once clung to, others making reference to a relationship that he’d kept alive out of guilt: “Wax and sticks are next on the list. Kiss a wrist to stop the flow.” Or to his late sister: “Rock the funeral shroud from a sister and pop blisters to expel the poison.”

We spoke about what Kenny hopes to achieve by continuing to create music, as well as his plans after Suffolk. “I don’t really know what the goal is, exactly,” he answers, honestly. “I guess just try to share things that are relatable to people, and hopefully inspire somebody – or at least entertain

them.” Although the appeal of a glamorous rock-star life may be the deciding factor in terms of after-college plans for most aspiring artists, Brown seems to be at odds with the idea. “It’s hard to say [what I’ll do],” he says, “On one side being a performing artist, and on tour, and everything, seems like a really attractive career path, but on the other hand it seems that it’s really hard to lead a normal life

like that.” He speaks about the complications that may arise from such a lifestyle, if he ever decides to start a family. “It seems like nobody who does that can have a successful marriage; it would be really hard to be a father if I had to travel the country to work.” After some thought, Kenny began to elaborate on the type of lifestyle that he considers ideal. “My ultimate goal is to be a professor of music,” he says, “... and then, to produce music on the side – have a home studio. If I could get a full-time job as a professor, and tour only during the summer. That would be pretty cool. I think I’d like that.”

In terms of goals closer to the present, the aspiring artist plans to relocate to an area where – he feels – his work will be better received. “I want to move to the City after this. I’ve been to a few open mics around here, but the scene is not that receptive to hip-hop. In places around here, it’s only people with acoustic guitars singing – so, nobody expects that. They don’t really get what I’m trying to do, and don’t necessarily appreciate it as much as a crowd who’s looking for that.”



**Find Bernie  
Brown’s  
music on:  
[soundcloud.com  
/laozy](https://soundcloud.com/laozy)**

# There is 'gay' and 'straight,' but 'B' is for confusion

Desirae Gooding  
Campus News

*How can everyone like both at the same time? It's disgusting! They're just closeted - kidding themselves! They really need to admit it. They really need to make up their minds. "Bisexual?" I don't believe in bisexuality. They're just confused.*

*Confused. Confused.*

These, among others are some of the many comments I've observed - online, in passing, in conversation, etc. - regarding the sexual preference marked with a B in the LGBT community, bisexuality. What remains truly startling is that this intolerant mentality seems to

exist not only within the minds of narrow-minded heterosexuals, but within certain members of the gay community as well, as - just last summer - the LGBT support page on the popular social-networking website, Facebook, launched a mini-campaign to end "biphobia" within its own community. As sad as it seems, many seem to lack the ability to comprehend that an individual's sexuality; and the varying ways it may develop are not - as the community; using the colors of the rainbow to represent themselves; suggests - all black-and-white.

Alex Carlino is an International Business and Marketing Major who is currently attending SUNY New Paltz. She is also a member of the bisexual community. Alex says that she first came to realize her sexual attraction to both genders at around age fifteen, in her sophomore year of high school. "When I first came out ..." she says, "I was on Varsity tennis. And, I told my friends [on the team]. Some girls would say they no longer wanted to

change in the locker room with me."

Of this clear instance of prejudice, as well as out-right ignorance, the Northport High School graduate says: "It was hilarious. The girl [who said it] was ugly anyway. I would've never even looked at her. Someone was a little conceited." This brought an immediate smile to my lips.

**'This intolerance seems to exist not only within the minds of heterosexuals, but also within certain members of the gay community, as well.'**

Dr. Loren A. Olsen, M.D., gave mention to the belief that "a shifting of sexual intimacy is more common among women than in men" in his 2011 article, "The Messy Realities of Bisexuality." Further stating, "[This belief is] consistent with my clinical experience." Olsen further claimed that the term "bisexuality" in itself "lacks clarity about the differences between attraction, behavior or self-identity." Many of those with whom he spoke initially claimed to be attracted to both sexes in equal measure. But, upon speaking with them further, it was often discovered that the levels of attraction each person experienced when beginning a relationship were determined by not only sexual attraction to these individuals, but what the relationship with either sex provided for them emotionally, and how said individuals felt the whole of society would perceive these relationships. Some formed stronger emotional bonds with the women they encountered, others with the men.

When asked how her sexuality affected her romantic life, Carlino replied: "I feel as though it affects guys more. With guys, they usually find it attractive and think it's hot, when it's never the intention. I don't want to be with more than one person at a time." Given that my intention behind writing this piece was to shed some light on the idea that bisexuality is no more a choice - or denial of oneself - than any other sexuality, I felt compelled to ask Alex about her views on those who are skeptical of the existence of bisexuality itself - those who feel one must "choose one or the other." She replied: "You can't choose who you like, whether it's a guy or a girl. Everyone's a person, and it's best to just embrace who you are instead of pretending."

Brian Mustanski, Ph.D., reaffirms the doubts in terms bisexuality's existence in his article, "What is Bisexuality?" stating that: "Skepticism about the existence of people attracted to both men and women has come from heterosexuals as well as gays and lesbians. ... Even with the scientific community, there has been debate about the meaning and existence of bisexuality." Mustanski makes reference to a 2010

article; the piece described the results of an experiment. The participants of which all identified as either heterosexual, homosexual, or bisexual - and were all of the male persuasion. Each man was shown a series of images - all of the sexual nature prompting - or not - evidence of arousal from the participants. Of the results of the experiment, Mustanski writes: "The bisexual men [tended to] show a physiological arousal that was stronger

for videos of women or men. On average, the bisexual men tended to be more aroused by male than female stimuli. But, it is very important to point out that not all bisexual men showed this pattern. Some of the sexually identified men tended to showed more arousal to female [stimuli]." Unfortunately, this study did little to end the debate about the existence of bisexuality, among men or otherwise - serving only to add further fuel to the proverbial fire as the results remained inconclusive.

As previously stated by Loren Olsen, the bisexual identity seems to be more prominent in females than in males. It continues to remain unclear as to the reasoning. Perhaps this is because of a seeming-to-unfairly-exist social stigma against males whom envision themselves romantically involved with other males. One's masculinity is called into question, and thus, the proclaimed bisexual man must merely be closeted and unwilling to surrender the heterosexual part of his lifestyle, only because he fears the judgement of others. I found myself speaking to a fellow Suffolk student; one whose view of his younger brother was slightly skewed upon said brother's

reveal of his bisexuality. "I felt awkward," said the student, "because I always saw [him] as this major player with

all the ladies." When asked if he continues to view his brother differently, now that some time has passed, the student replies earnestly: "No," he says. "At first it felt awkward and a little uncomfortable, but that ended quickly. He's still a heart-breaker [to me]." Again, I felt myself smiling.

**'Some girls would say they no longer wanted to change in the locker room with me.'**

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**LISTEN NOW!**

# The story of how 'Fagbug' came to be

**Laura Tucker**  
*Campus News*

"Fagbug" came to me via different means. Instead of coming through PR, it came from my family via the filmmaker/subject herself. Some of my family and friends had been at Gay Pride in Chicago a few weeks back. My sister bought the movie from the filmmaker at Pride, then after watching it, was telling me how good it is and what a profound effect it had on her and the others who were watching it with her.

After "Fagbug" was passed along to my niece's friends, I finally got my hands on it. I'm now compiling a list of all the people I need to pass it off to as well. I think it touches everyone in a different way. Sadly, most of us know someone who has been victimized in some way, if not having it happen to us directly. While you would think now we're long past the point of discrimination, sadly this documentary proves we're not.

Erin Davies came out to her car, a grey Volkswagen Beetle, one day and found someone had spray painted in red "Fag" on the driver's side window, and "u r gay" on the hood of the car. Since the insurance company had considered the car drivable, it took them five days to come out and see the car and take a report. In the process, Erin seemed to go through a whole range of emotions with the experience, and getting support from strangers, as well as family and friends. By the time the insurance company came out, they only attached \$350 on to the price of the claim, but Erin's deductible was \$500.

Buoyed by the support she was already feeling, Erin decided to take her car, which was now being called "Fagbug," out on the road and film the experience. I think what came out of it was learning by everyone involved, including Erin herself. The people who heard her story were touched by it, and learned some acceptance, and how they could possibly change

their own perspective. Erin asked questions from everyone she met to get the conversation going. One of the questions was how different this might have turned out if it was a man driving the "Fagbug."

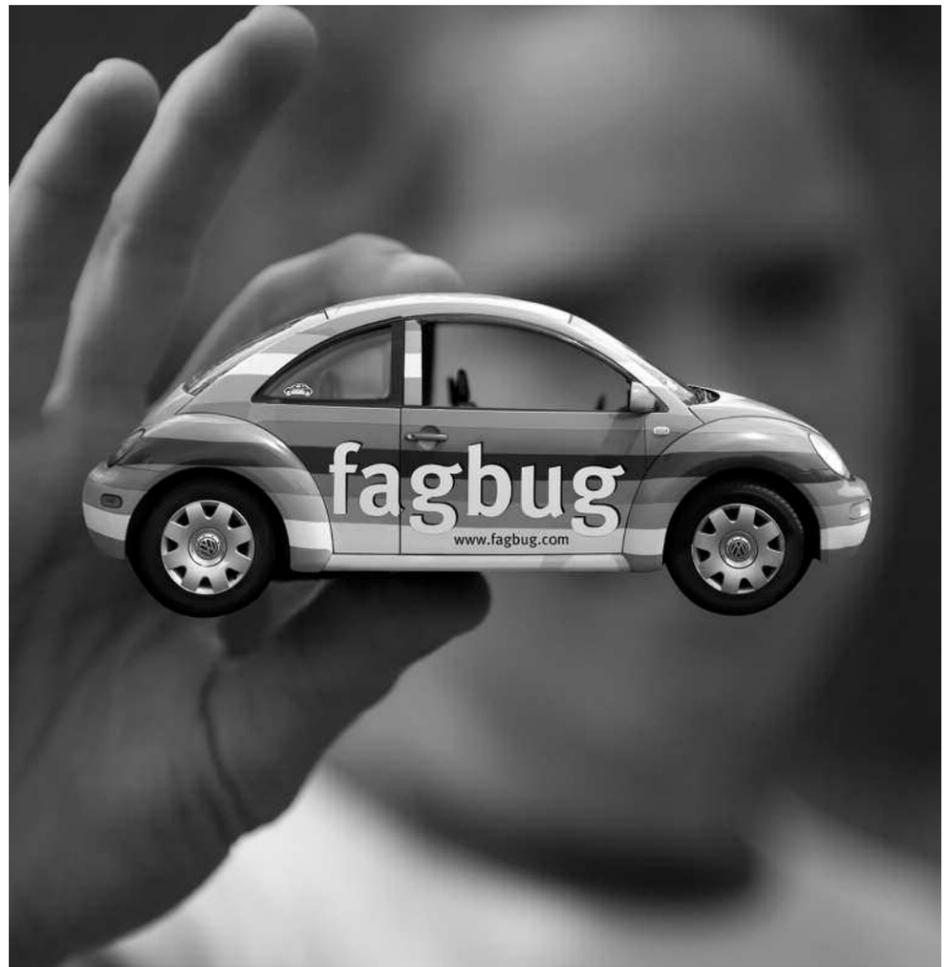
Although the police were hesitant to think of this as a hate crime, Erin was still connecting to it in that way. The police didn't want to see it like that because they think the car was vandalized because of a rainbow sticker, and that it wasn't vandalized because of Erin's lifestyle, per se. Nevertheless, on her trip across the country, she stopped and saw the family and friends of some of the victims of hate crimes that ended in murder from the time directly before and after her car was vandalized. It was a very somber reality of what the victimization of a car could lead to.

As I said, everyone is touched by "Fagbug" in a different way. For me, it reminded me of a situation with my daughter that until now I never thought of as a hate crime of sorts. She has just "graduated" middle school, and last year, back in 7th grade, a couple girls were calling her gay and saying that she had put her hand down one of the girl's shirts. My daughter vehemently denied doing this. She asked what she should do to get the taunting to stop, and I ignorantly told her to just ignore it, thinking the game these other girls were playing wouldn't keep playing out if they weren't getting a reaction of any sorts.

I was wrong. My daughter came home one day in tears telling me she was being suspended. This is a girl who has never gotten in trouble before. She also has a learning disability. She doesn't always understand every conversation that is going on around her. From her perspective, the three other girls, the same ones who had been taunting her, cornered her in the locker room and were calling her gay again. They were kicking her, and she fell down and hit her head on a locker. Coming back up, she slapped one of the

girls to defend herself and get away. She was now suspended for three days, and the other girls for less time.

Without going on a total rant, I pursued this with the school district, why the others had received less punishment when they were the aggressors, and did get the suspension taken off my daughter's record. But the other girls were never reprimanded for the bullying. And regardless of



any punishment, the damage had been done. Friends of these girls continued to taunt my daughter at school. By the time 8th grade started, I hoped it would all be forgotten, but my daughter broke down in tears a few times during the school year telling me people were constantly coming up to her and asking her if she was gay and if she was a lesbian. Again, there's a learning disability, so she asked me what a

honestly, that label still haunts me.

Yet we're never going to change the middle school girls of this world until we change the adults. With this behavior being allowed to continue, they'll grow to be the type of people who paint "fag" on someone's car. Their behavior is directly reflective of the schools that allow it and their parents who assumably do as well. It doesn't matter what I say or do to help my

## 'Someone had spray painted in red "fag" on the driver's side window, and "u r gay."'

lesbian was. I had never taught her about differences in people.

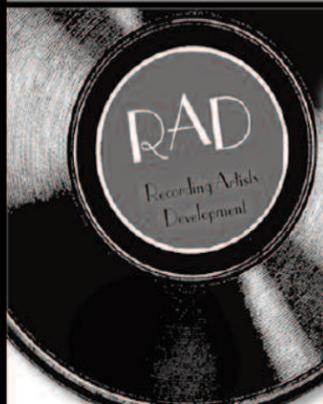
Yet that's where this all comes together for me. I didn't teach my daughter hatred or differences, but due to what happened to her at school, she now sees differences in people. She didn't see a difference in races and would call most other races "brown" people. I decided not to correct her, as it was like saying that person with the red hair. But now, she sees differences. The girls that attacked her are of a different race, and now my daughter fears all people of different races. She also doesn't want to be connected in any way with someone who is gay. She lives in fear that she'll be called that again. I understand. I was called ugly in 8th grade, and

own kids, as there is hatred being taught to others. It will take brave individuals like Erin Davies to go on personal crusades trying to change people's opinions. Perhaps with that it will change adult lives, and that will someday be brought into the schools and to more homes. Maybe someday schools will see that calling people names is sometimes just as hurtful as a slap in the face.

"Fagbug" now is available on Netflix, Barnes and Noble, Amazon, and iTunes.

*This article appeared in issue 1-7 of Campus News and is also reprinted with permission from filmmonthly.com.*

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# Getting a job after graduation ... any job

**David L. Podos**  
*Mohawk Valley CC*

The other day I read an article from the Sun Sentinel a Florida newspaper serving the greater West Palm - Delray Beach area. The article was about the difficulty that many of our college graduates are having in finding meaningful employment after graduation.

The author was Anthony Orlando, a lecturer in the College of Business and Economics at California State University (Los Angeles), and a resident of southern Florida. In his article he talks in length about the millennial generation, that demographic slice of people that fall between their 20s and early 30s. Here is a snippet of what Orlando had to say: "We are the un-hirable. We went to college. We got good grades. We stayed out of trouble. We interned. We did everything we were supposed to do, and no one hired us."

I would suggest that it would be ill-advised to argue against Mr. Orlando's statements. If you have an honest conversation with most college students today, they will tell you they are very concerned about finding gainful employment upon graduation. Of course this does not mean that all college grads are stuck in the unemployment lines, nor should Orlando's article be misconstrued in believing that no one is hiring our graduates; what it does bring up is the reality that for many college graduates the road to gainful employment can

be strewn with pot holes, detours, and delays.

During the last week of my economics fall semester class I set aside one hour of round robin discussion of what was most paramount on my students' minds. The recurring theme of discussion, not surprisingly to me, was finding work after graduation.

Looking at current statistics from the Department of Labor can make the heart skip a beat. According to their most current census more than 10 million young Americans (under 25) cannot find full employment. From the Economic Policy Institute, a PDF ab-

and under have approximately an 8% unemployment rate, those who are 25 and under without a college degree have a whopping 24% unemployment rate!

Looking at the ever-growing sources that track unemployment numbers can be a daunting and frustrating affair. From the Department of Labor Statistics to the Wall Street Journal, and a dozen economic magazines, and countless online business articles, it can be difficult to actually pinpoint who has the correct numbers and percentages, as many sources are incongruent to each other. Variances can jump all over the place like a Mexican jumping bean, so

## College graduates who are unemployed is 8.8%; college graduates who are underemployed is 18.3%.

stract titled, "The Class of 2013, Young Graduates Still Face Dim Job Prospects," authors Shienholz, Sabadish, and Fino say: College graduates who are unemployed number around 8.8%, while college graduates who are underemployed number 18.3%, (quite a sobering statistic).

An even more disturbing statistic is from Campus Explorer, an article titled: "Unemployment Rates are lower Among College Graduates." There statistics show that while college grads 25

as to not totally blow your mind with statistics from a dozen sources let me keep this simple.

Overall, once you do some of the research, it all points towards this singular conclusion: Those who have a college degree are better off in terms of employability and earning higher wages than those with no college degree, period. So it seems that college is still a good investment, and I happen to agree.

What is more troubling though is the underemployed numbers. In the

summer of 2013 the Federal Reserve Bank reported that approximately 44% of college graduates are underemployed, meaning, they are either working part-time, or employed in a field of work not related to their degree, or a combo of both. So, you may be one of the many who will need to work as a waiter or waitress once you graduate, or maybe you will be in sales or some other entry level customer service position (part-time). As frustrating as that could be, it's not the end of the world. You still can learn plenty even from a job that pays crap and from a job that you, well, just hate.

You will need to polish your communication skills, you will need to show responsibility, you will need to learn some new skills and how to perform your job with as much efficiency and accuracy as possible, and of course you will be building a resume for your future.

Yes it's tough out there, and you may have to "eat" a lot of crow before you land that dream job. So, until you do, do the best that you can, and remember the great proverb, "It's better to light a candle than sit and curse the darkness."

*David L. Podos is an adjunct instructor for the Center for Social Sciences, Business and Information Sciences at MVCC.*

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# Opinion: Who really is Uncle Sam?

Alex Voyiatzis  
Campus News

Most American citizens share different interests. Some of us want money because they think that it will bring them happiness and peace of mind. Some of us just want ends to meet. Even though everybody is different and therefore wants different things, politicians and the media like to say all Americans want the same thing no matter what class you are. These are called American interests. Not everybody gets what they want though. In fact, the interests of the individual often collide with the interests of the whole. The people who get what they want are the people with power and the ability to tell others what to do. Usually, those people are in or at least work closely with the government. Uncle Sam is the personification of American government. The idea of Uncle Sam came about in literature in the early 1800s. Since then, he has been used in propaganda, stories, and commercials. Uncle Sam is used by those with power to con people who are desperate. He is a symbol of American interests; both political and social.

When most people think of Uncle Sam, they think of the famous poster of an old man with facial hair pointing to the viewer and saying, "I want YOU for the U.S. army." He is dressed in all American garb and has a very serious countenance. He is an old man, because old men are viewed as wise and people are more likely to listen. This is one of the many ways that the U.S. government tries to get civilians to join the army, although it is not used nearly as much today. Civilians would not take well to a big government telling them to join the army, but it is less scary when it is just one patriotic man. Powerful politicians lay behind the poster. They are marketing their interests through this propaganda. While not everyone will fall for this, some people will.

Unfortunately, Uncle Sam is controlled exclusively by the upper class. While it is sometimes hard to see,

the interests of the upper class and the interests of the middle class usually collide. Middle class people usually will be happy with just making ends meet and living comfortably. Upper class people are generally greedier and are not as easily satisfied. The upper class gets what they want by exploiting the middle class. They take money from them through taxes, underpaying, and decreasing the quality of the products they sell. Since they are the ones with the power, they can decide whose interests get met and whose does not.

Uncle Sam is controlled by people with power and money while its affects are felt on those who have no power to help themselves. Usually, Uncle Sam influences people who are looking for some answers in their life. They could be in need of financial help, or they might just not be sure what they are doing with their lives. The government feeds off their insecurities for their own interests. Vulnerable people are fooled into doing the government's bidding because listening to Uncle Sam was easy. Doing what he wanted was a way out of a bad situation. Little do they know, it is usually just a transition from one bad situation into another.

When the government uses Uncle Sam, it is not always to get people to join the army. He is often used as encouragement for sales, patriotism, and support of one's government. His true intentions are masked by "Love for one's country." In society, if you are against Uncle Sam, you are considered unpatriotic and in some extreme cases, a traitor. It can be a case of "If you can't beat them, join them." Once Uncle Sam is out there, there is no getting rid of him. The media are controlled largely by the government, so if they want their message to be spread, it will be. The icon known as Uncle Sam is just a way for a government to control its people.

Freedom is a term that has been used very loosely by the American Government. With all the controversy about the NSA recently, it is no wonder that more and more people are starting to catch on to the government's schemes. They have

been trying and succeeding to take away small freedoms of ours without us noticing. Uncle Sam is portrayed to very strongly support freedom. Because of that, it looks like the government strongly supports our freedom and would do anything to maintain it. Actions speak louder than words. The government's actions have been almost the opposite of their words in the past few decades. President Obama has outright lied about the actions of the NSA. President Bush outright lied

they would not get the support of those super rich CEO's. The government is responsible for a lot of the government's money. Powerful business men have access to the government's resources, therefore, they have access to use Uncle Sam any way they want. We saw first hand in 2008 when the stock market crashed what the government is willing to do to help their friends. They bailed out dozens of super-rich CEO's who could have easily supported themselves.

**'Uncle Sam is portrayed to be on America's side, and he is. The problem with that is he is controlled by the greedy side of America.'**

about the reasons for going to war with Iraq and Afghanistan.

In politics, it almost always comes down to money. Money has done terrible and wonderful things to this country. It has turned good men greedy and most of our money funds wars that we do not need to be fighting. However, the small portion of our funds that go to medical, scientific, and technological research has been money well spent. Uncle Sam has earned the U.S. billions of dollars throughout the centuries, maybe more. The reason he can bring in so much money is because he poses as the good guy. The U.S. government likes to pose as the good guys when in reality that is hardly the case. They need our money to pay for their wars and overpaid politicians and CEO's.

It is not only the government who controls Uncle Sam; he is controlled by the friends of the government as well. Big corporations make a lot more money than some people realize. They make so much money that they can tell the government what to do in some situations. When they make money, so does the government. Nobody in those corporations makes more money than the CEO. Billions of dollars

Uncle Sam is not only used for evil endeavors by the government. He is used in dialogue and can be thrown around casually. When someone goes against Uncle Sam, they are viewed as being anti-American. Very few people in this country want to be viewed that way. So, instead of saying what they think is right, they will say what is best for their country. They will support the wars and spending just so they can be on their country's side.

Uncle Sam is portrayed to be on America's side, and he is. The problem with that is he is controlled by the greedy side of America. He points his finger at middle and lower class people and tells them what they should do to be better people. The fact is, the people who control Uncle Sam only want what is best for themselves. They want their interests to be fulfilled and do not care about the millions of other people are not getting their fair share. Less than 1% of people in this country are getting exactly what they want. That is because they hold the power. Uncle Sam is an icon in this country and looked up to by millions. He is viewed as wanting what is best for the country as a whole. Unfortunately, Uncle Sam is a great liar.

can move through their bank accounts with a simple phone call. Most CEO's could take a large pay cut and then pay their workers more money. The problem with that is that nobody is going to make the CEO do that. He has all the power and gets to make all the decisions. Their interests go before everyone and everything. The U.S. government and CEO's need each other. The government could easily pass a law saying that a CEO is only allowed to make a certain amount of money. If the government did that though,



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# This is an Olympic month, but will it be safe in Sochi?

Cathryn Walker

*Scripps Howard Foundation Wire*

With the Sochi Olympics set to run Feb. 6 to 23, security analysts still aren't convinced that American athletes will be safe.

"This is a real terrorist threat that exposes athletes, sponsors and U.S. citizens that are going to attend the event," Juan Zarate, senior adviser of the Center for Strategic and International Studies' homeland security and counterterrorism program, said. "There's a growing sense of lack of confidence in the security, even despite Russian assurances."

He and other security analysts spoke in January about the implications that recent terrorist attacks and threats will have on the games.

Approximately 235 U.S. athletes will be attending the Olympic games this year.

Former Olympian Tom Fitzgerald competed on the U.S. handball team in the 1996 Atlanta Olympics when a bomb exploded in Centennial Park, killing three people and injuring more than 100 tourists and family members. No athletes were harmed. Fitzgerald said he trusts the Olympic security process because it's proven effective in the past.

"We have to trust Russia," Fitzgerald said. "If I had planned on going, I don't think what's happened would cause me not to go."

Now an accountant in New York, Fitzgerald said that, after the attack, security inside the Olympic Village heightened. Security officials checked

identification more thoroughly at the entrance, cafeteria and athletes' training sites. Helicopters followed teams to practice sites, and officials routinely checked for bombs. He said he felt safe.

"There's not much thought about terrorism or safety among athletes because they're really interested in their competition," he said.

The U.S. handball team finished ninth in a field of 12 teams.

In the months leading up to the Olympics, a number of terrorist attacks have taken place in towns near Sochi. On Sunday an Islamist group threatened to attack the Winter Olympic Games and took responsibility for the two suicide bombings that killed more than 34 people last month in Volgograd. The two men who made the threat said they have prepared a "present" for President Vladimir Putin and tourists as revenge for "all the Muslim blood that is shed around the world."

Last month, Russian security officials began hunting for three Muslim women suspected of being part of the terrorist organization, Black Widows. Russian officials believe they are planning an attack at the Olympic torch relay. The U.S. issued a travel advisory for Russia on Jan. 10. It urges U.S. citizens traveling to the Olympics to enroll in the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program, which will dispense alerts to travelers and allow embassy officials to assist travelers if necessary.

"The system can be set up in a way that's designed to focus on these kinds of threats. But it only takes one person, one



Tom Fitzgerald, far left. SHFS photo courtesy of Tom Fitzgerald.

corrupt guard who's willing to look the other way ... to have the entire thing come apart and for a successful attack to be pulled off," Jeffrey Markoff, deputy director of the CSIS Russia and Eurasia program, said.

The Pentagon on Monday offered its support to Russia. American aircraft and two ships in the Black Sea will be available to evacuate American athletes if necessary.

Zarate said Olympic host countries usually accept security assistance from outside countries, but Putin has yet to accept.

"They are more concerned over the perception of insecurity and therefore not

wanting to allow the U.S. and other security systems in on the ground to assist," Zarate said about the Russian government.

In an interview with ABC News on Friday, Putin said he will do "whatever it takes" to keep the Olympics safe.

Russia will deploy more than 30,000 police and soldiers in Sochi, making it the biggest security operation in Olympic history.

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The Sage Colleges

# For the unemployed, benefits continue to be perilous

Griffin Moores

*Scripps Howard Foundation Wire*

Forty-nine year old Wessita McKinley is convinced she's done everything possible to try to live the American dream: She graduated from high school and served as a staff sergeant in the U.S. Air Force, paid taxes, saved money and strived to give back to her community.

Nonetheless, the Southeast D.C. native was one of 1.3 million people who watched their long-term unemployment insurance come to an abrupt halt Dec. 28.

"It was like shock, you have to be kidding ... you have to be kidding," McKinley said, remembering the surprise she felt that day. "It's not like we had two weeks' notice and a severance pay."

McKinley had been on unemployment insurance once before. In 2008 after losing a nearly six-figure government contractor position as a senior research analyst, she received benefits before finding sporadic temporary positions distributing diapers, selling cleaning supplies, filing documents all day and doing secretarial work. Before losing her most recent job in 2012 working in human resources for a local school district, her pay had dropped to about \$15,000 a year. Since then she hasn't been able to find anything to fill the gap.

However, this time the struggle has grown. McKinley is trying to get her daughter, Brandi Sartor, 19, through college on little more than a prayer and \$350 a month in food stamps.

Sharing McKinley's concern about the desperate endeavor of trying to find work, President Barack Obama set forth a plan in January to reduce barriers between the long-term unemployed and stable jobs during his first Cabinet meeting of 2014.

"We need all hands on deck to build on the recovery that we're already seeing," Obama said in a transcript provided by the White House, describing how he would sign executive orders and take administrative action to get the ball rolling if need be.

The most recent jobs data show that even amid the heightened attention on getting Americans back to work nearly a million discouraged workers have exhausted all their opportunities for employment and have given up looking.

Congress is working on a bill that would restore emergency jobless benefits to the long-term unemployed. After voting last week to continue debate, the Senate is now stalled over what amendments will be added to the bill.

However, for Elnora Banks, 68, who was laid off from her job as an accountant in July, the idea that Republicans and Democrats are trying to forge a deal is of little consolation.

Banks, who lives in Washington, received her last unemployment insurance payment Wednesday and is uncertain about what her future holds.

"It was impossible to prepare for the loss of benefits," she said.

She spent the retirement money she had saved to cover the difference between her unemployment benefits and the cost of living.

"I'm fortunate. I don't have anyone else but me," Banks said, thankful that no one depends on her for support. Widowed, and without any family living in the area, she also has a smaller support network.

"I would work!" she said, preferring to

find a way to maintain her self-reliance instead of opting to ask others for help.

Although people all over the U.S. experience joblessness, the burden is spread unequally through different communities.

"Low-income families and families of color are disproportionately likely to be unemployed and experience long-term unemployment," Erin Currier, director of economic mobility research at the Pew Charitable Trusts, said.

For those without savings, little family support and few accessible resources, the chances of downward economic mobility are greater, pushing poor people and minorities further from the American dream.

Steve Richardson, 45, of Arlington, Va., out of work for more than a year, considers himself among the more fortunate unemployed. He had to give up his unemployment benefits in May when he moved to Michigan temporarily to care for his ailing parents and could no longer look for work.

In a previous job as a hiring manager, he remembered reviewing resumes with gaps in employment and asking himself, "What's wrong with this person?" Now he's the one sending out resumes, hoping that potential employers will understand his circumstances.

"There's less stigma now, but I think it's still a red flag," he said, citing the greater awareness of increases in long-term unemployment, which grew dramatically after the Great Recession.

Richardson - who estimates he's hired hundreds of employees - also has insight into how recruiters may see him as an older applicant. "The younger you are, the more slack you can be given in an interview," he said, adding that older candidates need to put forth extra energy to connect with recruiters.

Unemployed Americans older than 55 are more likely to be out of work for a longer duration, taking an average of 45.8 weeks to find a job in December when across age groups the average was 36.2 weeks. Richardson is happy that he doesn't have to make drastic life changes.

Banks, the former accountant, is not so lucky. "At a certain age, you can't go back and rebuild for retirement at 90," she said, frustrated by the fact that she hadn't planned to work all her life, but now sees few ways around it.

The first step in her new path may be the most difficult, finding work.

"We know there is outright discrimination," said Deborah Weinstein, executive director of the Coalition on Human Needs, describing the challenges for the long-term unemployed compared to those who have just been laid off.

"With every day that goes by, it's going to be harder and harder for them to get back into jobs," she said.

Yet somehow Banks has been able to keep a shield of faith and optimism around her.

"I still have hope," she said, that each day will get better.

At the Brookings Institution's Social Mobility Summit on Tuesday, Sens. Paul Ryan, R-Wis., and Kirsten Gillibrand, D-N.Y., addressed the country's high rate of income inequality.

Ryan accused the federal government of "deepening the divide" by creating de-



Wessita McKinley Photo by Author

pendent, low-income citizens with a "hodgepodge" of disorganized assistance programs that failed to replace the missing links of family, education and work.

"To me, when it comes to judging a particular policy reform, I've got a really simple test. Does it bring people together or does it pull them apart?" he said, describing his goal of reintegrating poor people into more economically diverse communities.

But growing up on the frontlines of America's War on Poverty in Southeast D.C. during the 1960s, low-socioeconomic status brought McKinley's neighborhood together.

"Although society considered us poor, we didn't know we were poor because everybody was on the same economic level," McKinley said. "We may have had just a little, but trust me we had a lot, and it was love in that community and we looked out for one another."

The struggle she shared with her neighbors motivated McKinley to give back. Now she helps serve the D.C. area through a social-services nonprofit she founded in 1997, Sistas United, Inc. She earns a little money by giving people rides, helping to write resumes, raking yards, babysitting and doing data entry.

"When you have nothing, nothing is beneath you. You do whatever it takes that is legal to make it happen," McKinley said. "You can't eat pride. Pride isn't served in a restaurant. Pride isn't on the shelves of grocery store, so you push pride aside and use common sense and hard work."

At the Social Mobility Summit, Gillibrand laid out her plans to increase opportunities for women.

"Without a doubt, if given a fair shot, women will be the ones who will ignite this economy and lead America to a revival of its middle class," she said.

This message included expanding access to affordable child care, which Gillibrand described as a difficult expense for low-income parents, threatening to take away "every bit of economic potential and economic opportunity."

College degrees play a large part in upward mobility. However, Americans hoping to invest in their education are faced with constantly increasing tuition costs and the risk of going into debt.

McKinley was aware of this hardship as a girl. By the age of 8, she had been taught to cook, wash clothes and clean the house to help her family. By 12 she was babysitting her neighbor's three children, barely younger than she was, allowing the single mother to attend night school.

When she graduated from high school without any money, McKinley knew she had to equip herself with skills to find work, so she joined the Air Force. Now, with her daughter a sophomore business student at Allegany College in Maryland, McKinley is trying to give her every opportunity possible.

Growing up, Sartor was introduced early to hard work, mirroring her mother's upbringing. Starting off with a job at Six Flags when she was 14, Sartor has been working since - mostly at fast food restaurants - to earn her own money. What started out as an exercise in independence eventually become one of necessity after her mother was laid off and they needed to cut costs.

"In order for her to be competitive in this world she must be educated," McKinley said. Even though she's determined to provide for her daughter, the price is a burden. "I have no clue how I'm going to pay for books this semester, how she's going to eat, all this is on me right now, with no income," she said. "I sacrifice to make sure she has everything she needs."

After McKinley lost her job in 2008, the mother and daughter moved from their large home to a one-bedroom apartment, gave up a 2000 C5 Corvette for a used Ford Windstar van and have been constantly trying to keep expenses down. Eventually, they moved into a friend's basement.

Even with the added stress of meticulous financial management, the shared struggle brought McKinley and Sartor closer together. Now, when Sartor returns home from school on breaks to work and visit family, she shares a king-sized bed with her mom in the rented basement.

Learning how to navigate the unemployment system has been extremely complex for McKinley. She spends dozens of hours each week reaching out to employers she's unlikely to even get a response from. That is similar to Richardson and Banks' experiences. They have all responded to postings for jobs outside their fields and watched countless applications disappear into a veritable employment black hole.

Although McKinley has been able to adapt to her new life, a painful question continues to elude her: "How do you dig yourself out of something that you did not create?"

As a young girl, she didn't grasp its full meaning, but now at 49 and struggling to support herself and her daughter, McKinley has full comprehension of the phrase repeated to her by elders in the community: Only the strong survive.

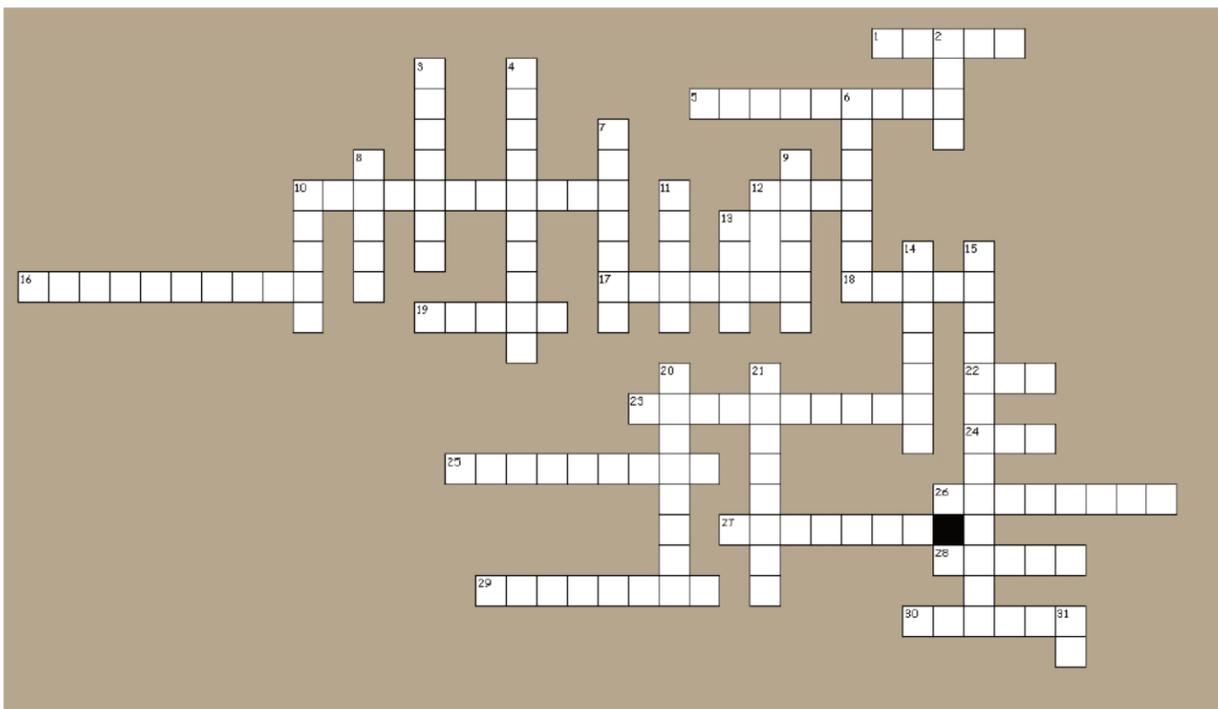
# The Campus Crosswords

## Across

1. The post office sells these forever.
5. For example, JFK.
10. English bard.
12. Genre played at CBGBs.
16. Example, Americans fought Brits.
17. "Coming to \_\_\_\_\_."
18. The Final Frontier.
19. He's a fake!
22. Bug.
23. A capital city.
24. Cap.
25. Where a college student signs up for classes.
26. Protects Tom Brady's good looks.
27. Abby's sister.
28. Say that again?
29. Decade of Clinton.
30. Childhood's Mr. \_\_\_\_\_ on PBS.

## Down

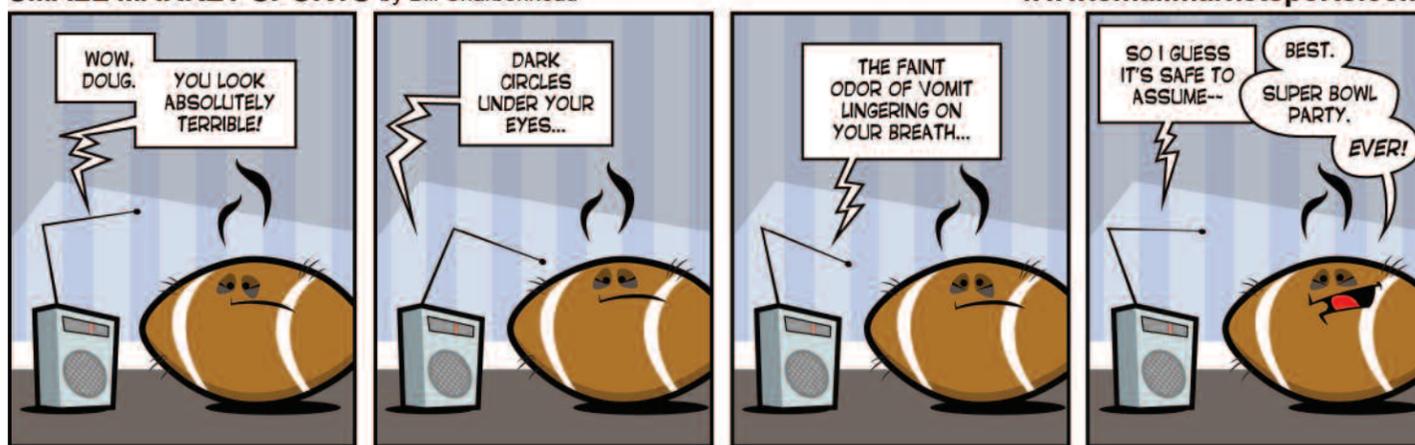
2. Car.
3. Fodder for the Cat Lady.
4. Along the Rio Grande.
6. Wrote of the Ghosts of Christmas.
7. Fast mammal.
8. Not clear.
9. Money person on campus.
10. If a tree falls in the forest...
11. Would you like \_\_\_\_\_ with that?
13. Follows the rat.
14. Zombie TV, "The \_\_\_\_\_ Dead."
15. Marvin Gaye song (2 words, no space).
20. Glossy periodical.
21. Army, Navy, etc.
31. \_\_\_\_\_ what?



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