Our photo contest returns!
Prizes for readers!

After a year of darkness due to the pandemic, our contest returns! You can nab two tickets to “Voyeur: The Windows of Toulouse-Lautrec,” which is currently running in Greenwich Village. It is the longest running pandemic-friendly theatre experience.

Please read more on page 4
CUNY students may get up to $1100 or more

The City University of New York this week will begin distributing $118 million in federal emergency grants to about 150,000 community college and senior college students, part of the pandemic relief package passed by Congress last December and disbursed to the nation’s educational institutions in recent weeks.

The second round of federal relief funds, called the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSAA), provides grants averaging about $750 to help students meet educational and living expenses during the pandemic.

“As we approach the end of this very challenging academic year, I am pleased that so many CUNY students will be getting a second round of much-needed financial help from the federal government,” said Chancellor Félix V. Matos Rodríguez. “Our students have shown tremendous resilience since the start of the pandemic but they continue to face economic hardships that can hinder their academic progress. The federal relief is vital to our continuing efforts to help them stay on track.”

More than half of CUNY’s 270,000 degree-seeking students qualify for the CRRSAA emergency grants, with the average amounts ranging from $600 to $1,100, depending on students’ financial need and factors including full-time or part-time enrollment status and whether they support dependent children. Thousands of additional undergraduates and graduate and professional school students could be deemed eligible to receive a relief grant, pending additional eligibility verification.

The federal government modified eligibility criteria to allow more students to qualify for emergency grants in this stimulus allocation. Eligible students were notified this week of their allocation. Direct deposits will start appearing on their bank accounts on May 7 and checks will be issued the same day and sent via mail. Students can use the money for any needs related to attending college or to the effects of the pandemic.

Additionally, CUNY colleges are holding 5 percent of the funds for future discretionary awards to students, including the possibility that the federal government may allow them to be disbursed to international students, and Dreamers and other undocumented students for the first time.

Building on Cares Act Grants

CUNY promptly distributed $118 million in CARES Act funds to 160,977 students in the early months of the pandemic, with an average award last year of $736. Students instantly erupted on Twitter last May celebrating the arrival of the needed funds. As they did this week upon learning of the second grants on TikTok.

In addition, the University and its campuses raised $17 million for the Chancellor’s Emergency Relief Fund and relief funds launched by individual colleges. Those funds were distributed in the form of grants to thousands of students, including undocumented and international students who were ineligible for CARES Act relief grants.

The CARES Act also provided the University with $118 million for institutional needs, including the purchase of computers, tablets and internet hotspots for students who needed them to fully participate in remote education; an expansion of mental health and wellness services; and tuition and fee refunds.

Similarly, CRRSAA also provides the University with $337 million to support the institutional needs of the University and its 25 campuses as they move toward recovery in the coming academic year. A portion of those funds will be used in the current fiscal year to help offset campuses’ unplanned costs and lost revenues resulting from the pandemic. The University is developing a plan based on the federal guidelines for the remaining CRRSAA funds, which will be included in the Fiscal Year 2022 budget proposal that will be presented to the Board of Trustees at their June meeting.

A third stimulus bill, the American Rescue Plan, which was signed into law by President Biden in March, will provide universities across the country with an additional $35 billion in aid — roughly the equivalent of the CARES Act and CRRSAA combined. Half of the allotment to each institution is earmarked for a third round of student emergency grants, though the government has not yet informed institutions how much they will be receiving or when the money will be distributed.

In-person fall for HCCC

Herkimer County Community College is planning to return to in-person instruction for the 2021-22 academic year. Students can expect to receive a more traditional college experience, with the majority of classes being held face-to-face at the start of the Fall 2021 semester.

“While we are optimistic about the fall, we will of course continue to monitor the situation, as the health and safety of students, staff, and faculty are and will remain our priority,” said Cathleen McCollin, president of Herkimer College. “Our plans to return to in-person class delivery will be contingent on positivity rates and guidance from SUNY, the CDC, and local and state public health agencies.”

All necessary steps for getting classrooms, laboratory spaces, and other facilities ready for the fall semester will be taken in accordance with guidance from SUNY and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. At this time, the College plans to return to normal on-campus housing procedures and occupancies within its three apartment-style residence halls for the Fall 2021 semester.

Students preferring virtual learning can do so through the College’s existing Internet Academy, which recently earned Herkimer College the No. 2 ranking for top online community colleges in New York State.

Changes to the instructional plan or other related safety updates will continue to be posted at Herkimer.edu/restart.
It’s been a bit of a miracle we’ve been able to keep the presses rolling, even despite the devastating effects of the pandemic on small businesses like ours.

I have this paper, which hits colleges — mostly community colleges that don’t have their own papers — and you know what happened with such campuses (shuttered!) — and just before the pandemic bought a weekly paper in Upstate New York that was going out of business, figuring with two papers I could create synergies with staffing. Ha! Yeah, right.

Then the pandemic hit. The two business models relied heavily on advertising, and that disappeared. Rumors were even flying around early on that the Covid virus could be transmitted via newsprint — later proven to be untrue, but the PR damage was done.

And content was affected. We couldn’t publish a calendar — usually a popular feature in a newspaper — because there were no events. Not to mention, events organizers otherwise would have paid us to advertise in the paper.

We also lost a lot of mojo. Covering meetings and doing interviews via Zoom just doesn’t inspire a writer as much as attending something live.

But we retreated to our living rooms and got it done somehow — some advertisers did stay with us and they report that their ads work wonderfully on our pages, so we were able to pay our print and postage costs.

I kept the paper at 32 pages because I feel once you start cutting, a downward spiral begins. But with less ads, that means we needed to do more writing to fill those pages. And more writing helps us earn reader loyalty. Our circulation and pickup rate remained excellent during these uncertain times.

And while the spring has been mostly chilly, we’re heartened that most events are coming back this summer and fall. Classes — real, in-person classes — will be back in session at the colleges Campus News goes to. Fairs and carnivals will advertise in our local paper.

Yes, we have a hole to dig out of — over a year of lost revenues would kill weaker businesses — but here we are, still making deadlines.

In the coming year, as the pandemic wanes, I promise we’ll do even more. We won’t slow down the presses. Thank you for staying with us. We look forward to informing and entertaining you as the weather warms and the flowers come into bloom.

Follow us @campus_news to stay updated.

Win tickets to see ‘Voyeur’ – here’s how

Enter Campus News’ contest and potentially win two tickets to the provocative and exciting street show “Voyeur: The Windows of Toulouse-Lautrec,” which is currently running in Greenwich Village now through June. Ticket prices normally vary from $69 to $99 each with a drink option.

To enter our contest, take a photo of yourself (or have someone else take it) with a copy of this newspaper (front page banner visible) and send it to pics@cccn.us or text to 518-879-0965. The clearer and more entertaining the photo, the greater your odds of winning!

“Voyeur” is NYC’s longest running, pandemic-friendly theatre presentation.

In this open air, intimate theatrical experience, you and seven other masked audience members will be guided through the dreams of iconic artist Toulouse-Lautrec as he recalls his final absinthe-laced years living and working in Montmartre.

The sidewalks, doorways and windows of Greenwich Village become the setting as live accompaniment collides with the city’s soundscape, transporting you into the bohemian world of 1899 Paris.

This show is produced by Bated Breath Theatre Company, a non-profit organization using a combination of rigorous research, docudrama, physical theatre, and daring theatricality to ignite audience’s imagination. The show is about one hour. Learn more at unmakinglautrecplay.com.

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A year after Covid: Somber and too casual

Kaylee Johnson  
Campus News

Recently, I spent time with a small group of friends after not seeing each other for nearly a year. There was a noticeable difference in the way we interacted and a strong scent of awkwardness clouded the air around us. It was not a drift in friendship, rather a lapse in the retrieval of how to socialize face to face. It has been easy to send instant messages on social media apps, but the art of maintaining conversation and reading social cues has not been practiced readily for most people during the pandemic. This major isolation has resulted in social and emotional abnormalities in all demographics, but one of the most concerning groups are the younger people still attending classes.

From a K-6 educator’s standpoint, I see the delays in students and the hesitation to forge new friendships and engage in typical age appropriate activities during unstructured playtime. Many children are asking to work alone when given the option to partner up for projects. Perhaps the adversity of this year has brought on positive nuances such as flexibility and independence, but it has also made students reclusive and shy.

From a college student’s perspective, I think back on how energetic my campus was pre-pandemic. I was a member of multiple arts troupes and regularly performed in packed rooms of people, unmasked and belly laughing. A lot of those activities are still being held, virtually. The issue with hosting virtual poetry jams, musicals, comedy open mic nights and improv is that there is a distinct disconnect between the audience and the performers. Sure, we are making do with the situation – obviously some socialization is better than none, but it must also be understood that the camera off and mute button offer students a lot of freedom and comfort that they would not have in face to face situations. When I was in an improv comedy troupe, we would often choose a few people in the audience to really pick on and involve in skit work. Trying to do shows like that virtually will never have the same lasting flavor as they do in person.

Social norms have been shifted entirely in both professional and personal settings. Students are completing their coursework in bed, in pajamas, and their instructors are sitting at their kitchen tables with a single laptop, trying to deliver instruction that meets the mark. Many workers have been working from home this year and have missed out on the superficial workplace friendships that may seem unimportant and generic, but teach a lot about rapport and the art of small talk. Other small, but essential social interactions, like banter with waiters at restaurants and the pretentious, soothing conversations I used to have with the new mothers in my yoga class about breastfeeding and postpartum baby weight, even though I am not a mother, or a yogi.

A friend candidly pointed out that she has to get more comfortable with silence in a room. Nerves are heightened now, as people emerge back into their social circles, attempting to do it all organically. Zoom and social media have given society a security blanket from the natural weirdness that comes along with trying to read social cues and facial expressions.

Managing a large gathering is a lot like driving – you have to be awake and aware of the different things going on around you. There may be bitterness toward two people in a group, a hot discussion about differing political beliefs, or an obvious look of boredom on a person’s face as you discuss your favorite band that you would not see over text or on a phone call. Now more than ever, people are able to avoid uncomfortable social situations, either with the excuse of the pandemic or just meeting virtually and using the camera off feature by default. Navigating atypical social situations is such an important piece of developmental growth, and like any skill, a lack of practice will have consequences.

As you emerge back into your ecosystems and out of your warm cocoon, I encourage you to be kind to yourself. You may not be as polished socially as you once were, but embrace the oddness with your peers and co-workers with a bright sense of humor and try to gain your footing again gradually. Besides, all of the most memorable people in society are a little socially inept!

Asian-American Wellness
Join LaGuardia Community College’s Asian-American Wellness Group: A weekly support group and a safe space where Asian-American students can share how they’re doing amid the pandemic and connect with supportive others. Topics will be guided by student interest and may include emotional coping, mental health, family dynamics, impact on communities and healing/empowerment as it relates to responding to racism and racial identity. Every Wednesday, through June 2, 2:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. For information and to join the event, contact Stacey Chen, stchen@lagcc.cuny.edu.

Kaylee Johnson is a 2020 graduate of the College of Saint Rose in Albany, N.Y.
Poetry prize winner, student Marissa Perez

Diamond Smith
Campus News

Forthcoming Writer Marissa Perez experienced childhood in New England and was brought up in Northampton, Massachusetts. Perez was named the 97th beneficiary of the Glascock Poetry Prize, whose original publication involved an astonishing arrangement of 10 works. The victors of the honor comprise scholars like Sylvia Plath, Anna Ziegler, and James Merrill. Coming into her second junior semester at Hampshire College, Perez is seeking a degree in creative writing. Perez is a pupil of observation and deep-rooted lifelong lessons she extracts through the act of literature. Her influences combine the novelists Hanya Yanagihara and Joan Didion. My interview with the poet:

Do you believe that growing up around Northampton has influenced you to be a poet and creative writer?

The most significant part of living in Western Massachusetts is the variety of community activities and events. In Northampton, for example, there is theBroadside Bookshop and the Academy of Music. Since there was such an abundance of possibilities and an emphasis on the arts, it fueled my desire to do more. I wanted to be further involved in the arts and the writing culture. When I was younger, there would always be some sort of new and upcoming author who would come to the Broadside Bookshop and have a performance at the academy of music. It was just a giant playground for me because it is an environment that is being fostered that promotes creating your work and being as creative as you can.

Do you have any advice you would want to impart to students who are thinking about going to HCC?

Do everything that you want to do. HCC is a place that emphasizes direction over the final product until you reach that final product. It is the absolute best place to do what you want to do and try everything that you want to try. Without any pressures (besides classes), but it is a place that has legroom. Enter the community college with your heart on yourself, and knowing that you want to figure out what you want to do. Trust yourself through the growth.

‘Winning the prize humbled me; it was the indication I needed.’

In 2020 you became the 97th recipient of the Glascock Poetry Prize with one manuscript comprising ten works. You are also the first community college student to win it in 75 years or more. It’s a prestigious honor. How has that positively impacted your career path as a writer?

It humbled me. To know that I won the prize, was the indication that I needed. People cared about what I was writing and took an interest. I had the ability to reach a wider audience. It motivated me to refine everything I had written even more. I was facing some judges whose work I was so enamored with, knowing they believed in me, drove me to work on continuing to reach those audiences.

I read one of the pieces you have written, called “Pacific Coast Highway.” I would welcome you to elaborate on the intensity of emotions within your poem and what was happening specifically in your life at that time.

I remember a time in my life; I had a vicious wake-up call that required me to sit there and think, “What could I have done. How did I not see this coming? How did anyone not see this coming? What would I have done differently if I had to go back in time?” In the last couple of years, I reflect on almost every aspect of my life. Just for the sake of processing and understanding myself further. The poem “Pacific Coast Highway” talks a lot about foresight and knowing what comes before. It also deals with the dilemma of, what if you don’t know, and what if there’s no way to tell what’s happening. How do you deal with that? Do you place guilt on yourself? Or do you place blame on the fact that we

continued on next page
as humans are not built to see into the future? That was a very difficult time in my life, with a lot of loss. There were a lot of questions I had if I could have prevented certain events. It just a reflection on unforgiveness for myself and everyone who knew me at the time; going forward, how we can check in on things. How to maintain things for what they are and focus less on taking people for granted.

The Academy of Music Theatre had presented a feature performance with award-winning poet Denise Frohman, a poet, performer, and educator from New York City who has received awards for her literature and stage experience. This program has included you as a rising poet. How would you describe that experience?

It was also a very humbling experience. Everything that happened, is a very humbling experience. I knew of Denise Frohman, and she is such a powerful poet and writer. I remember sitting down and getting an email that was inviting me to read alongside her in an event (which happened to be on my birthday). I almost didn’t do it at first because of the fact it was my birthday, and I had thought it wouldn’t have been safe to go out by then, or maybe I was going to plan something else that day. The reason I chose to do the event was that I felt that I was being asked to say something and I also had things to say. I had things to say in terms of what Denise talks about in her poetry, belonging, and action. I realized, I was being asked to read this stuff alongside a woman of color, who wrote so poignantly on the relations between the power of the United States and, and the rest of the world as it exists for people of color.

To know, I was the person who was in the thoughts of those who organized the event felt so special because I knew somewhere between the works that have been going around, I had been speaking to people who were reading them. I have been speaking to the readers in some subtle way about that same power dynamic. It was special in multiple ways because it really set the stage for me to join someone who has something to say and had something important to question. And that it was OK for someone like me who writes, to not know all the answers. I think that is the same with Frohman’s poetry, sometimes there’s no feasible end in sight, and a part of the reason why I like to write is that I don’t know the answers. I think writing is an ongoing act that can help me see a clearer picture of the world, myself, and others.

I understand your influences for poets include Joan Didion and Hanya Yanagihara. How did both writers influence your own poetry?

Didion is an American writer and essayist known for her concise literary style and eloquent depictions of social conflict and interpersonal separation. Yanagihara, raised in Hawaii, is best referred to as a novelist, and travel writer. She can be read as an existentialist. Yanagihara’s words capture emotions and encapsulate us to reflect on ourselves.

Both Didion and Yanagihara are known for their fiction work. It’s so funny because reading both of their pieces read so much like poetry, just in a different format. I felt so strongly about those pieces that I had to write traditional poems in order to distill those feelings and string them out. My favorite work by Yanagihara is called “A Little Life,” which is about a group of best friends living in New York City-post-grad. The language that is used in Yanagihara’s work, as well as Didion’s, is so electric and often about specificity. Almost what I call, chewable, like you can swash what they’ve written in your mouth and taste it. It is very tangible. Those are two authors who, I feel, are masters of specificity.

I understand you are in the second semester of your junior year at Hampshire College; how are your studies going now? What are you interested in for the future?

I’ve been plagued for the past several years with the idea that I don’t know what I want to do, and that’s a scary question. But I think, in that worry and anxiousness, I figured that the ideal path for me would be not to shoehorn myself into one profession but, if I can focus my core path on writing, then I have the ability to stretch myself and especially writing, not just fiction, but to follow someone halfway around the world for a day and to learn this task for the sake of writing about it. Writing for me is multiple different careers, and it would not just be the idea of just being a “writer,” but the idea of being a participant of the world and writing about it. Even tiny little blurry experiences that just don’t see the light of day, in any sort of book. For example, how do people come up with new shades of color? That is a very specific and blurry concept, so to be in very enriching identities and writing about them is the absolute life worth living for me. Hampshire also manages to foster that kind of thinking; I’m having a very exciting time here so far. I think I am allowed to be in utmost control of my own curriculum. At the same time one of the keystones of a Hampshire education is for student bodies to educate their educators, and always ask why. Hampshire is really focused on never being satisfied with what you know, and that’s me at my core. I don’t feel that there is an end to education.

Anything you’d like to add?

I think my decision to leave Manhattan and complete a couple of years at HCC may have saved my life. It was that middle ground, the liminal space, that I needed to mold myself into. I really believe the stigma against community colleges is a disease — because it bridged such a large gap. But it is also a stand-alone institution that is also the basis for other educations — other discoveries. So I believe if I had never gone to HCC, I surely wouldn’t have met the professors who worked together to bring me such emotional success. It was Professor Dave Champoux who submitted my manuscript for the Glascock Prize. So without that, I would not have had that connection there. It really was the place where the magic happened. I really think this was the place where I first had a support network, and I will always be grateful and humbled for that.
Leeanna Rutigliano, a Suffolk County Community College Child Study Education major from Medi-ford, is among fifteen national scholars selected from more than 4,000 nationally to be awarded Phi Theta Kappa’s (PTK) second highest scholarship that includes $5,000 for future studies.

Rutigliano was named a PTK 2021 Guistwhite Scholar based upon academic excellence, leadership accomplishments, and engagement in Phi Theta Kappa programs. In addition to the scholarship, she will also be presented with a commemorative medallion. The scholarship is named in honor of the late Margaret and Dr. Jack Guistwhite, who established the first transfer scholarship designated exclusively for Phi Theta Kappa members to Florida Atlantic University in 1975.

Leeanna has a 4.0 grade point average and has earned Dean’s List recognition every semester for the last two years; serves as President of Phi Theta Kappa’s Alpha Zeta Nu Chapter; is a Division 1 Finalist Oberndorf Scholar, and member of Suffolk’s College Choir.

“Leeanna’s academic excellence and community commitment makes her a role model for other students and everyone at Suffolk County Community College,” said interim College President Louis Petrizzo. “All of us at the college are extremely proud of her.”

“Suffolk County Community College honors students each semester with Phi Theta Kappa recognition. Our participation in this national organization not only celebrates student scholarship, but assists them in taking their next steps in college transfer and career readiness. Leeanna is a wonderful example of how that comes to fruition here and I am confident that she will be a model for the elementary school children who she will eventually teach,” concluded Dr. Paul Beaudin, vice president for academic and student affairs.

Earlier this year Rutigliano was named a 2021 Coca-Cola Academic Team Scholar based upon scores she earned in the All-USA Academic Team competition. More than 2,000 students competed for the coveted title and award. The Coca-Cola Academic Team recognizes high achieving college students who demonstrate academic excellence.

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Publisher’s Note: Nassau Community College marketing professor Jack Mandel, a frequent contributor to these pages, recently and unexpectedly passed away. Mandel was with Campus News since its beginnings in early 2010 and really believed in the paper, regularly having us visit his classes at NCC, where he was a larger-than-life presence in the department. His decade of contributions to Campus News contained his thoughts on student trends, highlighted the prestigious visitors to his classes, gave sage advice, offered a personal glimpse at his love and admiration for his children and were often humorously written. In this issue and in issues ahead, we’ll reprise some of his Campus News pieces. See you in the next life, Jack!

Prof. Jack Mandel
Campus News

In 1965 I was accepted as an undergraduate student at CCNY’s Bernard M. Baruch School of Business (now Baruch College). The campus consisted of a single 16-story building on 23rd St. and Lexington Ave., and I have fond memories of my undergraduate business education.

Ultimately, my career path led me to pursue an MBA (also from Baruch) and to teach advertising and marketing at Nassau Community College in Garden City, NY.

Competition among students was keen in order to secure an entry-level position with any Fortune 500 company. Every marketing course was a stepping stone in preparation for that dream job. Then, as now, the emphasis and responsibility for achieving career success rested solely on the personal initiative of each student.

Now that I am a college educator, I have more objective insight into the business preparation process. Despite our highly technological advances, not much has changed for college students. They still harbor the same fears and frustrations, as we did, as they prepare to embark on their entry-level paths. And it’s up to the business community to help them!

I’m not talking about tutoring students in reading and math skills. I’m not talking about donating equipment or “naming rights” on new campus buildings. What I am talking about is the business community taking on a meaningful role as a mentor to college students. The more globalized and employee-centric a company positions itself (for example, Google), the greater mystique it offers to college students seeking employment. So, to encourage students and provide them with much-needed support, I propose a five-point program for businesses to consider:

- **Organize a Comprehensive Speakers Bureau.** Rather than assign someone from the public relations department to handle speaking engagements, make it a company-wide program. Encourage both staff and line employees to develop a 30 to 60 minute talk on their areas of responsibility and expertise. Use social media such as LinkedIn to reach this market.

- **Establish a Visitation Program.** What better opportunity can a student have than to visit a prospective employer for a day? Enlist staff members willing to be shadowed for a few hours. This field experience can be a motivator for both parties.

- **Develop a Mentor/Guest-Professor-for-a-Day Opportunity.** The goodwill and public relations value of such a gesture cannot be overemphasized. College professors welcome the opportunity to have businesses involved with their students. It enables students to observe role models first-hand and can be particularly beneficial to culturally disadvantaged and other underserved student populations.

- **Institute a Year-Round Intern Program.** Cooperative Domestic and International Job Placement Programs, such as what Nassau Community College offers, have become vital in the marketplace. It’s obvious that colleges and universities throughout the United States have come to realize the importance of experience in a real workplace.

- **Offer Scholarships to Promising Students.** With the increased costs of education at both public and private colleges, businesses would be doing a valuable service for students if they worked with business departments at area colleges to develop scholarship programs. In my classes, I refer to this as “financial corporate social responsibility” (and then some!).

Remember, in the word “business” the letter “u” comes before the letter “i.” When businesses give to others, they can receive much more in return.

Jack K. Mandel passed away on February 24, 2021. He had celebrated his 40th year as a professor of marketing at Nassau Community College in Garden City, NY, before retiring last year. He was a recipient of the prestigious Outstanding Teacher Award conferred by the NYS Association of Two-Year Colleges.
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An amazing eight LaGuardia JKC winners

Eight LaGuardia Community College students have been selected as semifinalists for the Jack Kent Cooke Undergraduate Transfer Scholarship [jkcf.org]—the nation’s largest transfer scholarship for community college students.

This highly competitive program provides stand-out community college students with up to $40,000 per year toward the completion of a bachelor’s degree. This year, 406 national semifinalists [jkcf.org] were selected from about 1,500 applicants from 398 community colleges across the US. Winners will be announced later next month.

“We are incredibly proud of our eight Jack Kent Cooke Undergraduate Transfer Scholarship semifinalists,” said LaGuardia Community College President Kenneth Adams. “To be selected as a semifinalist is a mark of a student’s exceptional academic ability and achievement, as well as their persistence, service and leadership. To have so many students selected as semifinalists is a credit to the hard work of these students and their faculty and staff mentors.”

The eight LaGuardia students selected as semifinalists include:

**Sara El Houzaly, Biology Major** — Born and raised in Morocco, Sara El Houzaly moved to New York after completing high school in 2019. Her passion for human anatomy and physiology has led her to pursue a career as a medical physicist. She is a member of Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) Honor Society, the Honors Student Advisory Committee (HSAC), and a Dean’s List Scholar and a trainee in the NIH Bridges research program. She is also a member of the President’s Society, LaGuardia’s professional development program for high-achieving students.

**Josephine Elumeze, Electrical Engineering Major** — Josephine Elumeze is Nigerian-American and aspires to earn an electrical engineering degree to work on renewable energy in Africa. She is vice president of the PTK Honor Society, an Accelerated Studies in Associate Programs (ASAP) student and a student recruiter in LaGuardia’s Admissions office. She was a fall 2020 President’s Society Ambassador. Josephine is passionate about STEM and educational equity; she conducts research on the effects of aerosols in society and creates YouTube videos for African students who intend to enroll in US colleges.

**Carmen Escudero, Biology Major** — Born in Colombia and raised in NYC, Carmen Escudero is majoring in biology. She is treasurer of the LaGuardia Student Government Association and a member of HSAC, PTK Honor Society, and CUNY Research Scholars Program. She is also a President’s Society Environment Ambassador and has made the Dean’s List. Carmen aspires to enroll in medical school and specialize in dermatology after earning a bachelor’s degree.

**David Fuentes, Earth System Science & Environmental Engineering Major** — David Fuentes was born and raised in Peru, where he studied civil engineering and worked at a soil mechanics laboratory, which led him to study renewable energy systems. At LaGuardia, he is majoring in mechanical engineering with a concentration in earth system science and environmental engineering. He is a member of HSAC and the CREAR Futuros Mentorship Program. He has participated in a solar panel research program and is a President’s Society Environment Ambassador. David aspires to obtain a bachelor’s degree in environmental engineering in order to create more sustainable environmental systems.

**Valeries Pires, Liberal Arts: Journalism Major** — Valerie Pires is a New Yorker who describes herself as, “a nontraditional student who is pursuing a decades-old dream of higher education.” Before coming to LaGuardia, she worked in journalism and documentary film making in the US and abroad. She also taught ESL in Europe and South America. At LaGuardia, she has been involved with HSAC, is an assistant researcher on the LGBTQ Collection of the LaGuardia and Wagner Archives. Valerie also volunteers as an ESL instructor for City Hall’s English Language program, We Speak NYC.

**Pema Tamang, Liberal Arts: International Studies Major** — Pema Dolkar Tamang is a Tibetan refugee who arrived in the US two years ago. She is interested in gender studies, anthropology, and migration literature, and hopes to pursue a research career in any of these areas in the future. Her dream job would be as a policy analyst with the UN Women or UNHCR. She has interned with the New York Unified Court System as an interpreter.

**Zilla Tofte, Engineering Major** — Born in South Africa, Zilla moved to New York to pursue an education. She is a member of PTK, is on the Dean’s List, and is a recent recipient of the English Department’s Critical Writing Award. She was a President’s Society Ambassador and participated in a research program under the Gardiner-Shenker Foundation and LaGuardia and Wagner Archives. Zilla plans to transfer to a four-year university to study environmental engineering and computer science.

**Alejandro Toro Monrroy, Liberal Arts: International Studies Major** — Born and raised in Caracas, Venezuela, Alejandro Toro Monrroy moved to the US in 2016. After traveling and working across different states, he decided to pursue his studies in international relations in NYC. Driven by multiculturalism, diplomacy, social sciences and traveling, Alejandro would like to become a human rights researcher. While at LAGCC, he made the Dean’s List, he is a member of PTK Honors Society and the CREAR Futuros Mentorship Program, a Student Success Mentor, and was nominated for the Transfer Scholars Network program. He is a President’s Society Ambassador.

The Undergraduate Transfer Scholarship seeks to increase the number of community college students completing their education at top four-year institutions. Community colleges are full of aspiring individuals with larger-than-life goals but have limited financial resources. The Jack Kent Cooke scholarship provides transfer students with the necessary resources to further their education goals.
Ulster’s drive-in art show

SUNY Ulster held a Drive In Arts Exhibition on April 30. On exhibit was art from SUNY Ulster’s first and second year arts program students including Fashion Design, Fine Art/Visual Art, and Music. When visitors drove onto the SUNY Ulster campus, they were guided through the outdoor exhibits by directional signage, a printed program, and by dialing into a specifically designated radio station to learn more about the works, educational programs, and to hear the performing ensembles.

The Fine Art/Visual Art program is a foundation-based program preparing students for transfer to four-year institutions or career entry. On view were first-year student paintings, drawings, photography, design, and printmaking. Second year students displayed their transfer/career portfolio projects. Second-year students are finishing their Bachelor degrees at the School of Visual Arts, SUNY New Paltz, and SUNY Fredonia, among other colleges.

The Fashion Design program showed pencil skirts and button down shirts that highlight the pattern-making, sewing, and construction skills by first-year students. Second-year graduating students showed their final collections: a coordinated group of garments with tops, pants, dresses, and coats that include a focus on surface decorations including embroidery, applique, and patchwork. Graduating students will be transferring to the Fashion Institute of Technology, Savannah College of Art and Design or SUNY Oneonta to complete their four-year degrees.

The Music program featured several of their performing ensembles available to students and community members including the SUNY Ulster Community Band, Jazz Ensemble, College Chorus, and Guitar Ensemble. Some of the four-year institutions music program students are transferring to include SUNY Fredonia, SUNY Potsdam, Ithaca, and Bard.

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Abraham Maslow, the American psychologist, showed that there are five levels of needs which can vary from time to time. He showed that these needs can serve as motivating factors. While teaching Introduction to Business and Principles of Management, I hope to give my students skills that they can use long after they have received their grades.

One of these skills is the practice of staying motivated. However, I have realized that technology may have made it difficult for us to stay motivated for long periods of time.

I was an undergraduate myself not that long ago. I began college during a time period where phones were just not that “smart” and my aunts and uncles were not on Facebook. Technology has revolutionized the way we do things. Shopping has become as easy as clicking a link and opening your front door. All types of music and video files can be sent wirelessly from person to person. Thirty years ago I may have had a very difficult time selling this concept to you! One thing that may never change is the importance of adapting a healthy mindset. A positive outlook may at times be what is needed to solve a seemingly complex issue.

We are currently in a unique time of year. The hectic spring semester is over and things may seem bland. This past year we were greeted by a pandemic, Zoom semesters and there is no doubt that the upcoming year will have its fair share of challenges and puzzles. As daunting, or dreary, as anything may appear, adapting a positive mindset is the first step in the right direction. On the first day of class I attempt to set a positive tone for the semester. The thought of over 12 weeks of instruction is definitely intimidating but the thought of it becomes more manageable when focusing on one small task at a time.

The old saying “mind over matter” is relevant now more than ever before. Technology has made society accustomed to automation and instant results. Often working towards a future goal can be difficult when one has become used to instant gratification. We must remind ourselves of the bigger picture. Minor setbacks are inevitable but they must not be allowed to become our defining moments. Many good things are a work in progress. Results will not come overnight let alone at the click of a button. Surround yourself with positive minded individuals and remember; mind over matter. You have the power to make this summer and fall the best that they can be! Good things take time. Good luck!

Matthew Khan is an Adjunct Professor in the Accounting and Business Administration Department at Nassau Community College in Garden City, N.Y.

Self-defense, taught online

Mohawk Valley Community College’s Center for Corporate and Community Education is offering two virtual self-defense classes—Weapons Protection Clinic and Senior Self-Defense.

Weapons Protection Clinic will take place from 6 to 8 p.m. May 14 via Zoom, and will cover avoiding, managing, and surviving armed assailant scenarios involving edged weapons, bludgeons, and firearms. Participants will develop a greater understanding and awareness of these weapons and also will learn decision-making skills for active shooter, mugging, and intimidation scenarios. This course is designed for those 12 years or older; no experience is necessary.

Senior Self-Defense will take place from 2 to 4 p.m. June 16 via Zoom, and will cover the most common scenarios senior citizens may face in their everyday lives. The class will focus on methods the average senior can use to avoid, manage, and survive potentially violent encounters. This course is designed for those 55 years and older; no experience is necessary. For more information and to register for classes, visit mvcc.edu/cced.
The headline caught my eye as I scrolled the morning newsfeed following a getaway weekend in Phoenix:

“If You Invested your Three Stimulus Checks in Bitcoin, Dogecoin or Ethereum, Here’s How Much You’d Have Now.”

It is nearly impossible to have a conversation with anyone with even limited investment knowledge without the subject eventually turning to cryptocurrency. It came up while several of my traveling companions and I trudged up a mountain in the early morning desert heat. I would have preferred discussing more relevant topics such as the embarrassment I felt when four 70-ish women blew past me, none of them perspiring or even suffering from labored breathing.

Thankfully, the subject was limited to Bitcoin, a topic I at least know something about. What I know is that apparently everybody except me has added some to their cryptocurrency portfolios. Retirees own crypto; millennials own it; teenaged babysitters are rushing home at 2 a.m. with their nightly earnings and creating blockchain wallets. Did I even say that right?

Following passage of the $1.9 trillion rescue bill on March 11, I did indeed receive a $1,400 stimulus check. Thank you, President Biden, it was most helpful as I, like millions of Americans, have found my yearly income adversely affected by the pandemic. The money went to pay a few bills. Others have benefited from earlier stimulus checks of $1,200 and $600, for a total payout of $3,200 from the federal government.

Anybody who took those three stimulus checks, and invested them in Bitcoin on the days those checks began rolling off the presses, would have $12,127 as of April 18, according to the financial website benzinga.com.

Or I could have invested in Dogecoin, billed as a “fun and friendly internet currency” on the website of the same name. I have never associated ANY currency with those words; paying my monthly mortgage or writing a college tuition check is neither fun nor friendly. But I have to admit, turning $3,200 into $251,187 sounds like a lot of fun. That amount, benzinga.com states, is what I would have now. No wonder Tesla founder Elon Musk sings its praises.

Finally, there is Ethereum, a cryptocurrency that sounds like it relieves constipation. If you can spell it, you can invest in it and a $3,200 investment would now be worth approximately $19,458. It’s a lot of money but I’m still not convinced I will be able to spend it. Imagine the look on the waiter’s face when the bill arrives and I say, “Do you accept Ethereum?”

What I do know is that if I want to have something to add to conversations with my friends, I had better jump on the cryptocurrency bandwagon now. Or I could remain on the sidelines, wait until this futuristic currency implodes, as some financial experts predict it will, and tell these same friends they should have listened to me and invested their money in Costco stock. I mean, America has proven that, even during the pandemic, it cannot live without industrial sized drums of pistachio nuts. My nest egg will continue to grow.

But I, like many novice investors, am intrigued. So intrigued that my mouse finger is navigating over to sites telling me to set up an account with a crypto broker, create a crypto wallet and dive right in. Meanwhile, there is the allure of a fourth stimulus check that may be headed my way so, if I can resist cravings for pistachio nuts, maybe I’ll have some spare money to invest.

I wonder how those 70-year-old ladies will feel when I yell, “What’s your hurry? Slow down and smell the Dogecoin!”

**Greg Schwem is a corporate stand-up comedian and author of “Text Me If You’re Breathing: Observations, Frustrations and Life Lessons From a Low-Tech Dad” and “The Road To Success Goes Through the Salad Bar: A Pile of BS From a Corporate Comedian,” available at Amazon.com.**
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Sure, the Oscars weren’t great, but...

By Owen Gleiberman
Variety
Special to Campus News

There are two ways to view this year’s Academy Awards telecast. One of them isn’t pretty. The other is strangely... hopeful. But both speak to the powerful transitional moment in which the movie industry is now caught.

**Version #1:** This year’s Oscar night, by bending over backwards to “reinvent” itself, wound up as a weird kind of dull fizzle. There was no snarky, let’s-bait-the-stars opening monologue -- which seemed, in theory, an enlightened way to go following a year of unending casualty and turmoil. But after not too long, you began to crave the oxygen of a few jokes, anything to lighten the same-mood of social-political reverence and speeches that droned on without end. The decision to introduce a lot of the nominees with spoken thumbnail biographies threatened to turn the night into the Wikipedia Oscars. And though Union Station, an art deco landmark dotted with sunlit windows and abstract art, proved to be a gorgeous setting, watching the talent sit there in all those velvet banquetttes just made the ceremony feel glazed, hermetic, like an elite cabaret cut off from a mass audience that was already scratching its head over too many of the nominated films. Steven Soderbergh, the telecast’s co-producer, promised to play around with the Oscars but wound up deconstructing them, turning the awards into a high-minded British garden party. At a certain point I realized I was actually missing the Zoom acceptance speeches from home we saw during the Golden Globes. At least they had a rude spontaneity.

**Version #2:** This year’s Oscars added up to a canny balancing act, dancing between the restrictions required by COVID-19 (no oversize auditorium) and the promise of a post-lockdown world (in-person ceremony with no masks!). The camera bobbed and flowed like a voyeur on a movie set, and Questlove laid down a groove that tantalized our sonic cinematic memory banks. And by cutting down on the snark, the ceremony showcased the nominated films with an enraptured pride, presenting Hollywood’s image-making mythology as the vanguard of a moral revolution (which, in fact, it often has been). It’s true that the movies being honored weren’t popcorn hits, yet most of them were passionate and potent dramas that touched a nerve in those who saw them. In honoring “Nomadland” and “The Father,” “Promising Young Woman” and “Judas and the Black Messiah,” the Academy demonstrated that even in this pandemic year, with just about all the sexiest, high-profile movies cruelly put on hold and cut out of the picture, the industry could offer up a vibrant roster of films it believed in.

Given the historically low ratings for this year’s Golden Globes and Grammy Awards shows, it was all but preordained that the Oscar telecast would, of course, follow suit and generate in-the-basement viewer numbers. Yet too many have been eager to pounce on those cliff-drop ratings as evidence that the Oscars – and, just maybe, the movies – are dying on the vine. For this was a very special year. In the same spirit, too many are now eager to declare, amid the anomaly of a pandemic, that going to a movie theater is becoming the horse-and-buggy experience of our time, just waiting to be put out to pasture by the cathartic convenience of the streaming revolution.

Sorry, but there’s more to life than convenience. There is also excitement, the thrill of collective experience (i.e., being part of an audience), and the grand intoxication of art. It’s trendy to see the future of movies as a matter of inevitable “market forces,” but it’s not like some preordained algorithm will determine whether or not people continue to seek out movies in theaters, and what those movies will be. To quote a corny old song: It’s a choice we’re making. Despite wins in seven categories, Netflix, at the Oscars, went another year without taking home the headline prizes they seek, and maybe that should tell us something. Maybe Netflix should stop working so hard to triumph in the movie...
RCC to have in-person commencement

Following the recommendations from health officials, Rockland Community College will host a modified in-person celebration prior to the virtual 61st Commencement ceremony at 3 pm on May 20, 2021.

Students and family may attend the “drive-in-movie style” commemoration during one of two time slots – 9 am and 12 pm – to limit capacity for the outdoor event. Each school will be represented by the Dean of their school and at least one faculty member. Graduates must complete the RSVP form to attend the in-person celebration portion of RCC’s 2021 Commencement.

To gain admission on the day of the celebration, graduates will be required to show proof of either a complete vaccination or a negative COVID test that was taken within 72 hours of the event. RCC will host three days for COVID testing prior to commencement.

A link to the streaming event will be available on the College website the morning of graduation. They can also visit sunyrockland.edu/commencement2021 on the date of the event to be linked to the livestreams on YouTube and Facebook. During the livestream, students can comment, in real time, about the event. Afterwards, students can share the video and the Commencement site with friends and family. For more information, visit https://sunyrockland.edu/about/commencement/

“I am delighted to invite our graduates and their families and friends along with RCC faculty and staff to share in this happy occasion as these students embark on the next chapters in their lives, whether it is entering the workforce immediately or continuing their studies elsewhere,” says RCC President Dr. Michael Anthony Baston. “I also want to commend this year’s SUNY Excellence Award Winner Emanuel Pompeu Bastos, an international student from Brazil, who is graduating with a dual degree in Math and Automotive Technology and plans to transfer to a four-year university to obtain a BA in Engineering.” Bastos is a member of the RCC President Society, the student representative on the Board of Trustees, a member of Phi Theta Kappa, and a Peer Mentor. He chose RCC because of its affordability and his interest in the Automotive Technology program. “RCC received me with its arms open,” Bastos says. “They believed in me, gave me opportunities and introduced me to an amazing network. They prepared me like no other place and provided me with the best experience I could have.”

I have a lot of people to be grateful for, but Dr. Katherine Lynch stands out. With her thoughtfulness, kindness, and her genuine desire for helping people, she is my hero at RCC. Even though she was not my professor, she made the biggest effort to support me through several hard moments through my journey here. Today, I am a stronger person thanks to her and RCC.”

(Cont.)

awards and kill movies as we know them at the same time.

Should the movies now just become spectacle: the equivalent of a gladiatorial contest or a trip to the CGI planetarium? Many say so. But if you eat nothing but popcorn, you should probably see a doctor, and Hollywood, by serving nothing but popcorn, could wind up starving itself. If what we now call movies for adults (what we used to just call, you know, movies) becomes the sole province of Netflix and other streaming services, those movies will be seen (sorry, but there’s no other phrase for it) as TV-movies, and they will become trivial, shoddier in quality (since they don’t have to come close to being great to fulfill a streaming service’s metric priorities), and the magic of movies will wither.

The movies that won Oscars this year were not “great escapes.” Not the way the films of old Hollywood were; not the way a terrific James Bond movie is. Yet I would gladly take “Nomadland,” with its finely cut empathy and ravaged spirit of survivalist adventure, over such venerable and stodgy past Oscar winners as “Out of Africa” or “The English Patient.” The film confirmed Chloe Zhao as a major voice (and Frances McDormand as the flinty voice of our underlying desperation), and it spoke to a year when people couldn’t escape, when just hanging on was as dramatic as it got.

That said, there’s never been a year quite like this year. And one of the key messages – of the Oscars, and of the streaming revolution – is that it’s time for Hollywood to take the high and the low and put them back together, to enlighten audiences while entertaining them, to provide an experience you want to escape your home to seek out. In that sense, this year’s Oscars, full of reverence but purged of show business, elegant and lofty but missing that crucial spark of vulgarity, were not just a stopgap but a lesson, a warning, almost a vaccination. The ceremony said: Yes, this is what the Oscars look like after a year of lockdown. And no, we can’t do this again. Instead, it’s time to do what the movie industry has done so many times before, usually better than anyone. It’s time to go back to the drawing board.
When we blame others, we slow down our ability to take back our power to change our experience with a novel approach.

As we realize we have met the enemy and the enemy indeed may be our lack of skillful responses, we start down a new powerful path. We find we had vastly more control over our well-being at work. Personal responsibility can be the beginning of a whole new chapter to grow up as we grow beyond our old limiting and painful habits.

**The last word(s)**

**Q:** My kids have grown up, and I’m trying to figure out how to do something both meaningful and fun for work. Is this unrealistic?

**A:** No, the best careers are built on finding the most fun sandbox for you to play in as an adult, and then get to be paid to learn and play with other people that also like that sandbox!

Daneen Skube, Ph.D., is an executive coach and appears on FOX’s “Workplace Guru” each Monday morning. You can contact Dr. Skube at www.interpersonaledge.com or 1420 NW Gilman Blvd., #2845, Issaquah, WA 98027. Sorry, no personal replies.

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**Online Minecraft, Harry Potter, Robotics for kids/teens**

SUNY Adirondack Continuing Education will hold its annual Summer Enrichment program online again this year, with a selection of live, interactive classes through Zoom and Google Classroom. This year’s program brings back popular classes centered on Minecraft, Harry Potter and VEX IQ Robotics programming, in addition to courses presented by Saratoga Children’s Museum. Students can enjoy morning and/or afternoon courses in the areas of STEM, arts and crafts, cooking and more. Classes will take place Monday through Thursday, July 12 to 29.

Summer Enrichment courses are open to students entering grades 4 through 10 in the fall. Course details are available in the catalog, which can be viewed at https://www.sunyacc.edu/summer-enrichment-2021. These online courses are broadly accessible, and limited need-based scholarship funds will be available for eligible students to attend. Classes will be interactive and engaging, while introducing students to new topics to expand their horizons and skill sets.

From 6 to 7 p.m. Monday, June 21, community members are invited to attend a live virtual Summer Enrichment Open House online through Zoom, to meet instructors and learn more about this year’s classes. To preregister and receive the Zoom link by email, please sign up at https://bit.ly/SummerEnrichmentOpenHouse2021 before the open house.

Questions about the Summer Enrichment program may be directed to SUNY Adirondack Continuing Education by email at conted@sunyacc.edu or phone at 518-743-2238.

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**Do the customers always come first?**

Daneen Skube
Special to Campus News

**Q:** During the pandemic, I have been acutely aware of how hard certain customers and co-workers make it for me to do my job. As if death or disability wasn’t enough, people have been just cranky, impatient and demanding. How can I manage to be productive when people are being worse jerks than usual?

**A:** You can manage to be productive if you change your expectations of people around you. Most people around us will not make it easy for us to do our jobs. Most people will act badly at least some of the time. Some people will make it hard for us and act badly nearly all the time. Our power resides in our capacity to learn advanced interpersonal skills that allow us to have a good day no matter how badly others are acting.

If our well-being is dependent on the behavior of those around us, then we are constantly vulnerable. High-level interpersonal skills work like a COVID vaccine, immunizing us against the emotional viruses around us that can make us emotionally unwell.

The truth is our mental health and physical health have a ton to do not just with our circumstances but also with our power to make choices that help us act skillfully, regardless of our challenges.

When all around you are acting poorly, your capacity to feel bad and act effectively will improve your career a million times over. Others will also notice that you seem to be able to ride out the stressful storms that cause others to fall apart.

Our workplaces pay and promote us because of our skills as problem-solvers. Our ability to solve problems at work starts with the complicated interpersonal problems we face every day. When people ask about my corporate work, I say that my work involves the most difficult part of the workplace ... which is other people!

However, the most difficult part of our workplace isn’t actually other people. The hardest task is to control our reactions to the behavior of other people and to let interpersonal challenges inspire us to mature. If we collapse into being victims, our circumstances never improve because we never improve. Impulsive reactions to upsetting situations can make us our own worst enemies.

If we get tired of feeling run over by people acting badly, then we can channel our frustration into learning every clever communication skill we can discover. We practice, make mistakes and become smarter and more skillful. Our impulse control, tools and strategies all become part of our interpersonal immunity on the job.

Some of my clients tease me that they miss the days when their suffering was everyone else’s fault. With many sessions of executive coaching and therapy under their belts, they now know that most of their suffering is their reactions to other people.

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**Q:** If our well-being is dependent on the behavior of those around us, then we are constantly vulnerable. The hardest task is to control our reactions to the behavior of other people and to let interpersonal challenges inspire us to mature. If we collapse into being victims, our circumstances never improve because we never improve. Impulsive reactions to upsetting situations can make us our own worst enemies.

If we get tired of feeling run over by people acting badly, then we can channel our frustration into learning every clever communication skill we can discover. We practice, make mistakes and become smarter and more skillful. Our impulse control, tools and strategies all become part of our interpersonal immunity on the job.

Some of my clients tease me that they miss the days when their suffering was everyone else’s fault. With many sessions of executive coaching and therapy under their belts, they now know that most of their suffering is their reactions to other people.
United University Professions President Frederick E. Kowal said he supports Gov. Andrew Cuomo’s decision on May 10 to mandate that SUNY and CUNY students get vaccinated for COVID-19 before being allowed to return in person to classes in the fall. The UUP is the union that has most SUNY employees in its membership.

But Kowal, a staunch vaccine supporter and early proponent of mandatory coronavirus testing and safety precautions for on-campus SUNY students and faculty, said that students with religious objections or health problems that prohibit them from getting the vaccine should be exempt from the mandate.

“The governor’s decision to mandate that students be inoculated against COVID-19 before returning to campus in the fall is a sound one and one that UUP, the nation’s largest higher education union, approves of,” said Kowal. “The safety of our members, our students, our patients at SUNY’s public teaching hospitals and our communities has been paramount for UUP since the start of the pandemic,” he continued. “I believe that everyone who can, including SUNY students and faculty, should get vaccinated. It is an issue of public safety.”

Kowal said that SUNY already requires students to receive vaccinations before attending classes on campus. State Public Health Law requires students born on or after Jan. 1, 1957, and taking six or more credit hours to show proof of immunity against measles, mumps and rubella, and immunization against meningococcal meningitis.

During his press conference, Cuomo said that vaccination percentages for college-aged students is the lowest of any age group in the state. Just 24.7 percent of New Yorkers ages 16 to 25 are vaccinated, Cuomo said. Vaccines for people ages 16 and older began in early April.

Cuomo said that coronavirus vaccinations would become mandatory once the Food and Drug Administration removes the current emergency authorization and permanently approves their use. Kowal said he agreed with the stipulation.

But Kowal said the announcement to mandate student vaccinations might have been more appropriate coming from SUNY.

“I would have preferred that this decision was made by SUNY, with input from UUP,” he said. “It is an academic decision in many respects, and it is a student quality-of-life decision.”

UUP was an early outspoken advocate for coronavirus safety measures on SUNY campuses. The union negotiated a telecommuting agreement with SUNY—that’s still in place—which allows non-essential workers to work remotely. UUP called for mandatory baseline and recurrent coronavirus testing of students and faculty, the wearing of face masks, and social distancing standards, and worked with SUNY to put the measures in place.

Kowal also said it’s imperative that the state send more operating aid to SUNY to ensure that campuses are safe once classes resume. Direct state aid funding to SUNY was flat in the 2021-2022 state budget, but it restored all proposed cuts to SUNY in the Executive Budget.

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Puzzle Answers

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Columbia-Greene’s new auto tech program

Columbia-Greene Community College has announced the launch of the Toyota Technician Education College Support (TECS) Elite program, a highly focused automotive technology option that will prepare students for in-demand careers in the automotive industry.

Edward Smith, Jr., assistant professor of Automotive Technology at C-GCC, explained that the new program, open for registration now, will prepare students to be certified technicians at Toyota and Lexus dealerships and carry an emphasis on maintenance-level services designed to enable students to work immediately after certification.

“The sophistication of today’s automobiles requires highly skilled and well trained technicians,” said Smith, noting that hands-on classes will teach skills in electricity and electronics, automatic and manual transmissions; heating, ventilation, and air-conditioning systems; steering and suspension; engine performance; and more.

C-GCC is now one of just 44 TECS Elite program providers in the U.S., providing the first step in a longer career path that qualifies students as entry-level technicians for Toyota and Lexus vehicles. Through this program, students learn from Automotive Service Excellence (ASE)-certified Master Technicians and earn an Associate’s Degree in Occupational Studies (AOS) or an Associate’s in Applied Science (AAS).

For more information and a list of program and tool requirements, contact director Edward Smith, Jr., at (518) 828-4181, extension 3422, or edward.smith@sunycgcc.edu.
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Michael Alert '19
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Let's Go, #CoGreene!
Maya Rudolph talks about burnout, Beyoncé

Caroline Framke
Variety
Special to Campus News

Maya Rudolph is one of six creative leaders in comedy honored for Variety’s 2021 Power of Women. For more, click here.

When Maya Rudolph was a kid, she’d stage one-girl musicals in her living room and play make believe in empty corners of her mother’s recording studios, creating makeshift stages anywhere she could to satisfy her performing itch. Some 40 years later, though, she has so many platforms to choose from that it’s become genuinely overwhelming.

“Before any thoughts of quarantine, I was feeling very burned out,” she admits. “I was weirdly well on my way to retooling, and I think I’m still there. I feel less ashamed to admit that I would like to go a bit slower.”

Before the pandemic hit, Rudolph was booked solid. She had once again become an “SNL” mainstay to play then-Senator Kamala Harris, while her portrayal of a goofy, almighty judge on “The Good Place” made her one of the show’s most memorable guest stars. Her malleable voice had become ubiquitous across the wide world of animation, especially with her portrayal of a gleefully filthy “hormone monstress” on Netflix’s “Big Mouth,” a brilliant showcase for her ability to turn any single phrase (e.g. “bubble bath”) into a luscious dessert (e.g. “bwu-uu-bb-ble bayaaah!”).

All three of those roles landed Rudolph Emmy nominations and then her first two wins in 2020. (The only reason she lost the third was because she had been nominated twice in the same category.) But the constant stream of obligations left her exhausted, burned out by her own enthusiasm for being a part of as much as possible, as often as possible. “I was just saying ‘yes’ to everything,” she sighs. “It took a toll, and I was tired.” So when the opportunity came for her to pump the brakes, she gratefully did.

Speaking from her home in Los Angeles a week after hosting “SNL” for the second time, Rudolph is contemplative about this potential turning point in her life and career. “Something that I feel has been a big awakening for me as I look at work is what makes me happy, what makes me unhappy, and how do I establish those boundaries?” she explains. On a macro level, that might mean taking on fewer projects even if she loves everyone involved in them. On a smaller, more immediate level, that just might mean wearing whatever the hell she wants.

“Heels and I were already on the outs, but now we’ve gone our separate ways, which is fine by me,” Rudolph laughs. “And I no longer have a waist, so there’s that. My thighs haven’t seen pant legs in a year. I’m just going to become Elaine Stritch and wear a shirt.”

Even over Zoom, Rudolph already seems perfectly content with this ethos. Her distinctive voice turned down from 11, she blinks into the Zoom camera through clear-rimmed glasses, her dog Daisy curled in her lap. And while her flowered smock isn’t exactly the crisp white button-down for which Stritch became famous, Rudolph draws inspiration from brassy broads like her who insisted on being themselves, expectations be damned.

Take Rudolph’s comedic idol Madeleine Kahn, a forcefully funny woman whose impeccable glamor came arm-in-arm with her ability to make every line a standout. Growing up with Mel Brooks films as a household staple, Rudolph would watch in awe as Kahn outshone everyone else as an impetuous empress, a jaded madam, a film noir heroine climbing out of a pristine Cadillac in a matching jumpsuit. Rudolph didn’t have to know exactly what Kahn was mimicking to know that she was always, as Rudolph puts it, “the beautiful woman doing something hilarious.” Later, as she became more aware of comedians like Catherine O’Hara, Gilda Radner and Jan Hooks, she realized this niche of comedian was her ideal. “Whether I realized it or not, I was watching these women that I wanted to be, who were gorgeous and funny -- which to me is the ultimate combination of perfection,” she says. “They could just do anything.”

Then again, Rudolph’s also partial to less glamorous comedic turns, like so many of the scenes in “Bridesmaids” that made the movie such a standout 10(!) years ago. While her infamous “shitting in the street” moment was mostly just stressful -- you try sliding to your knees in a wedding gown across a full lane of traffic -- she fondly remembers the setup of everyone Sweating through food poisoning before all hell breaks loose. “Knowing what was coming and everyone having to hide it, constantly being sprayed down with everyone in different stages of duress...it was just a really fun slow burn,” she recalls with a laugh. (More

Maya Rudolph

Interns wanted

Campus News needs help! Work via Zoom and email. Get great experience and a useful resume credit. Visit cccnews.info/intern or email intern@cccnews.us to learn more.
than anything else with “Bridesmaids,” Rudolph remembers laughing.

She grew up with a keen eye for what makes performers great, not least because she spent her early childhood watching her mother, the singer Minnie Riperton, dazzle crowds on tour. As she watched musicians crush their sets with wit and flair, she’d long to do the same. “And then I’d see something funny, too,” she adds. “It wasn’t tangible but somehow magical. She’d long to do the same.” She quickly came to revere this indescribable connection between music and comedy, the two defining creative forces of her life. “They’re kind of the same language, weirdly,” she explains. “They’re both things that, when they’re done well, they can’t really speak for themselves.”

Because as anyone who’s seen even a minute of her performing will know, so much of Rudolph’s comedy is intrinsically musical. Every one of her characters, whether Beyoncé or a Bronx mom or a dizzy game show host, speaks with an infectious, uniquely bizarre liveliness that Rudolph’s wraps her voice around their lines. Her about-face impression in particular came almost as second nature. As a fervent fan, Rudolph says, she’d already been paying such close attention to how Beyoncé composes herself that when it came time to imitate her, it felt like “when you’re telling a story about a friend, and when you say what they said, you say it in their voice.”

Rudolph’s skill at twisting a single word into a wonderfully weird waterfall of sounds is unparalleled; she doesn’t have to be telling a joke to be hilarious. So it’s unsurprising to learn that Rudolph might feel most at ease in the voiceover booth, where she’s been able to experiment since her “SNL” days of volunteering for whatever narration might be needed that week. “It’s probably where I feel the most myself: not on camera, and not a musician, but sort of a blending of the two,” she muses. It’s also thrilling for her to step outside her own body to be anything at all without limitation. On “Big Mouth,” for example, she portrays everything from the Hormone Monstress to a school principal to a dirty pillow. “It really feels like a place of freedom,” she says of her prolific voiceover work. “You’re not limited to male, female, human, animal, monster, whatever you’re made up of. That’s a place where I feel very comfortable.”

It doesn’t escape Rudolph that she’s spent a lifetime defying categorization both through her comedy and as a person. “As somebody who’s not white, not Black, not just mixed, but my own particular mixture of mixed: Jewish, and speckled, with a big nose...I always identified as being very singularly myself, and not really belonging to any club,” she says. The scrutiny crept its way under her skin, but now, she reminds herself that other people’s attempts to label her says more about them than her. “People really try to figure out who or what you are because it makes them comfortable,” she insists, as forceful as she’ll ever get throughout their conversation. “It doesn’t have anything to do with me.”

And that, ultimately, is where she also lands on the age-old question of what it’s like to be A Woman in Comedy, which plagued her at “SNL” and reemerged when “Bridesmaids” dared to spotlight funny women with no qualifiers (and very few men). When asked if the conversation has changed at all since, she’s wary in a way that makes it clear just how many times she’s had to go down a road she finds truly frustrating. “I feel like it’s my obligation to continue doing what I do best as opposed to, like, methodically thinking about my gender in order to be funny or not,” Rudolph shrugs. “I don’t give a fuck about that stuff.”

As Daisy clambers off her lap, Rudolph sighs and adjusts her glasses, as if making sure she can see her next point clearly enough to make it. “It’s a funny one,” she says, “because the minute I stick my toe into the conversation, I feel like it allows the conversation to exist...this leftover conversation that won’t die.” She rolls her eyes, cocks an eyebrow, lets loose the ghost of a grin. “In reality, it’s like we threw a great party, and then somebody walked in and was like, ‘wait, this is a girls’ party!’ And it’s like, ‘uh, what are you talking about? It’s just a party.’”

RCC student wins business plan contest

On April 16, the School of Computer Science and Mathematics at Marist College hosted its 9th annual Mid-Hudson Regional Business Plan Competition. Sponsored by Marist College and TD Bank, the “Shark Tank” style competition judged 38 potential business plans presented by 120 students across the region. Participating schools included Rockland, Orange, Dutchess and Westchester Community Colleges; SUNY New Paltz; Iona and Marist Colleges; the United States Military Academy at West Point and others.

Emily Berry, a student at the RCC Hospitality and Culinary Arts Center, won the competition with her proposal for a Commercial Kitchen Facility. As winner of the Agriculture, Technology and Food Track, Berry will go on to compete in Albany in the New York State Business Plan Competition in May, where she will go up against contestants from more than 60 schools across the state.

“I was thrilled that my Commercial Kitchen Facility project won and excited at the prospect of moving on to the state competition.” Berry says. “I was inspired by my experiences in the teaching kitchen we have at the RCC Hospitality and Culinary Arts Center in Nyack and would like to one day replicate something like it as my own business.”
Campus Crossword
(solution page 24)

Across
1 Egyptian god with an ibis head
6 One who crosses the line
10 Blight-stricken tree
13 “Donnie Brasco” actress Anne
14 Flap
15 Corp. leaders
17 Lay to rest
18 With 42-Across, part of a psychologist’s battery
20 Seven-time Wimbledon winner
21 Wisconsin city on the Mississippi
22 HDTV part, for short
24 They may be civil
25 Singing stars
27 “60 Minutes” regular
31 Strong brew
34 Deadly
37 West Point team
38 Prom adornment
40 Hear about
42 See 18-Across
43 Stella __: Belgian beer
45 Düsseldorf direction
46 Hard work
48 Bridge seats
50 ___ Zee: Hudson River area
53 Divine fluid
57 Laszlo Kreizler, in a Caleb Carr novel
60 Nypons
61 Scream-evoking horror film technique ... and a hint to what’s hiding in five puzzle rows
63 Broadway orphan
64 US Open stadium namesake
65 Surrealist Paul
66 Paragon
67 It may be gross
68 Barrie pirate
69 Leaders of industry

Down
1 Fried chicken choice
2 Painter __ de
Toulouse-Lautrec
3 Two quartets
4 Jay Powell chairs it
5 That girl
6 Orchestra sect.
7 Not very friendly
8 “What ___”; “Ho-hum”
9 Amazon crime series based on Michael Connelly novels
10 Satellite communications giant
11 Grazing sites
12 Soft shoes
16 That girl
19 Old PC monitors
23 Adidas rival
24 Yelp user, say
25 Brightest star in Lyra
26 River of Pisa
29 Gps. with copays
30 Ride-sharing option
31 Ballet divisions
32 Early movie mogul
33 Gaelic language
35 Take out ___
36 Island rings
39 Fox River, in TV’s “Prison Break”
41 Spot of wine?
44 Source of a homeopathic oil
47 They may be fake
49 Slangy nose
51 Chooses
52 Church song
54 Passport producer
55 Willow twig
56 Lively dances
57 “The Birth of a Nation” actress ___ Naomi King
58 A deadly sin
59 “If u ask me”
62 Shoebox letters
63 “Breaking Bad” network

Fast Facts

Staying in unwanted job for benefits

Are you currently in a job that you want to leave but don’t because you are afraid of losing your health insurance benefits? (% Yes)

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<th>Population</th>
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“Without college I decided to major in stock daytrading — to pay off my student loans.”
How Biden’s bailout will affect you

Jill Schlesinger
Special to Campus News

If you didn’t have the time or the energy to dive into the Biden Administration’s $2.3 trillion American Jobs Plan (AJP), fear not – I have you covered.

The plan seeks “to reimagine and rebuild a new economy” by deploying government money in four areas:

1. Classic Infrastructure: Roads, rails, bridges and transit systems ($621B)
2. Home Economy: Water ($111B), child care facilities ($25B), schools ($100B), federal buildings ($10B), broadband ($100B), affordable housing ($213B)
3. Caregiving Economy: To help the nation’s elderly and disabled ($400B)
4. Workplace Economy: R&D ($180B), manufacturing and small businesses ($300B) and workforce development ($100B)

The rationale for infrastructure spending is that the country needs an upgrade to many of its systems. The White House notes that “public domestic investment as a share of the economy has fallen by more than 40% since the 1960s,” which is why the wealthiest country in the world ranks 13th when it comes to the overall quality of our infrastructure.

The AJP makes the leap from physical infrastructure to “human infrastructure” when it adds in money allocated to the caregiving economy.

Human infrastructure is a term that has been coined to cover government spending on health, education, and nutrition. The best example of it was the postwar GI Bill, which helped millions of WWII veterans access college or trade schools, provided low-interest mortgages, and established medical care and hospitals for veterans.

Spending on infrastructure would be spread out over eight years, but it would be paid for over 15 years, through higher taxes on corporations. The plan would increase the corporate tax rate to 28%, a walk back of the previous 2017 tax law that slashed corporate rates from 35% to 21%. Additional changes include imposing a 15% minimum tax on large companies (those with income above $2 billion), doubling the tax rate on companies’ foreign earnings from 10.5% to 21%, and the establishment of a global minimum tax to stop companies from taking advantage of lower tax rates abroad.

In addition to making up for the lack of investment over the past decades, the other promise of the AJP is that “it will create millions of good jobs.” While the plan may add a bunch of jobs, the U.S. labor market is already on track to recover its former glory. According to Moody’s Analytics, the AJP would help the labor market return to its pre-pandemic level by early 2023, “not much different than without the plan.” The reason is that it would likely take a couple of years for government spending to boost growth and lead to more jobs.

The government’s investments in infrastructure will add more juice to the economy over the next few years, but estimates are all over the place for just how much of a boost the plan would provide. In fact, the economy was set to explode higher this year, before the AJP. In its most recent outlook, the IMF made “a sizeable upgrade for the United States (1.3 percentage points),” predicting growth to come in at 6.4% this year. That comes after a 3.5% contraction in 2020. The IMF also upgraded its view on global growth, which is expected to be 6% in 2021 after the historic contraction of -3.3% in 2020. Global growth has accelerated due to the massive $16 trillion in government spending worldwide, which “prevented far worse outcomes.” The IMF’s estimates suggest “last year’s severe collapse could have been three times worse had it not been for such support.”

The IMF has not yet weighed in on the AJP, but the most immediate impact of the legislation is that it could supersize growth both in the US and around the globe.

Jill Schlesinger, CFP, is a CBS News business analyst. She welcomes comments at askjill@jillonmoney.com.

SUNY campuses distributed 1.5M doses

State University of New York Chancellor Jim Malatras announced recently that SUNY vaccinations centers have administered more than 1.5 million vaccines, averaging nearly 15,000 vaccines a day, for New Yorkers from SUNY, state- and county-run locations on 35 campuses. SUNY continues to expand its #KnowYourVax campaign through “Don’t Stop with One Shot messaging, stressing the critical importance of getting the second dose of the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines. To urge individuals to get their second shot, these educational messages are continually being distributed to campuses and on social media.

“With 1.5 million vaccines now administered since mid-December, SUNY is marking yet another major milestone in our effort to protect the communities in which we live, work, study, and serve,” said Chancellor Malatras. “We take immense pride in knowing that our campuses’ hard work, flexibility, and ceaseless commitment to safety and community stewardship is moving the needle forward and playing a pivotal role in defeating COVID-19—once and for all. For those who have yet to get vaccinated—we encourage you to take advantage of the quick and efficient clinics on our SUNY campuses. The faster we get vaccinated, the sooner our normalcy can be restored.”

Amongst SUNY’s system of 64 campuses, 35 are currently serving as vaccination sites, some with multiple locations to provide safe spaces for more New Yorkers to be vaccinated.

SUNY community colleges have banded together with their State and County officials, administering over 500,000 vaccines. The schools serving as state or county vaccination sites include: Adirondack, Broome, Clinton, Columbia-Greene, Corning, Erie, Fulton-Montgomery, Genesee, Herkimer, Hudson Valley, Jamestown, Jefferson, Mohawk Valley, Nassau, North Country, Orange, Rockland, Schenectady, Suffolk, Sullivan, Ulster, and Westchester.

Most recently, Stony Brook University celebrated administering its 200,000th shot on campus, while also administering 350,000 vaccines in total at PODs all throughout Long Island.
is an independent college newspaper distributed at dozens of colleges.

Regular Writers: Writers are usually college students, very recent grads or staff/faculty, including Prof. John DeSpagna, the late Prof. Jack Mandel, Laura LaVacca, Kaylee Johnson, Matthew Khan, Cody Fitzgerald, Annabel Gregg, Natalie Jew and Dave Paone.

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It’s true, Lightning McQueen and Hansel have made their way to Upstate New York. Owen Wilson has been spotted numerous times around Saratoga, filming a new movie about a beloved Bob Ross-esque painter that gets booted off his network in favor of a younger new guy. It’s great to see celebrities and film crews flocking to upstate and truly appreciating the area for what it is, stimulating the economy and bringing new life to the area, too. All this being said, for the love of God, leave the poor man alone.

It’s easy to find yourself involuntarily running towards a celebrity and asking them to sign your tongue, much to the likes of a toddler running towards something fragile and shiny. It’s important to remember that you don’t want to end up being a crazy fan encounter story on Jimmy Fallon one day, so let’s go over some basic human decency in the event you run into him.

Use Your Words. It’s important to enunciate what you’re saying – remember to breathe and get a “hello” or a “I’m a huge fan of your work” out.

Social Distance. I feel like this may be one rule we keep after COVID, don’t maul whoever you’re meeting.

Act Cool. So, not yourself.

Preserve the NDA. It’s likely he cannot give you any details about the movie he is working on, so don’t fish for information. While we’re at it, don’t try for his address or Social Security either.

Savor Your Moment. Don’t attach a dollar value to people, and don’t try and get a photo to boast on your Instagram and bury your friend’s post about their new child in the stream of posts.

He’s a Busy Guy. Under NO circumstances is Owen Wilson going to want to check out your YouTube channel or listen to your podcast. He’s probably a nice guy, he might say he’ll check it out. I’ll speak for him, he does not.

I’ll keep it brief, but please remember that celebrities are people and not toys. Treat them with respect, don’t be obnoxious, don’t be dumb, and don’t use them for likes on social media.

Join Business department faculty on May 20 or June 9, from 5:00 to 6:00 p.m., for a virtual info session to discuss the many business degrees, certificates, and micro-credentials offered at SUNY Ulster, and how they can boost career opportunities.

SUNY Ulster’s Business Department offers Associate Degrees in Accounting, Business Administration, and Business & Entrepreneurial Studies. These are two-year degrees appropriate for those looking to transfer to a four-year college to complete a Bachelor degree or for entry into the workforce.

For those looking for short-term opportunities to build skills, SUNY Ulster offers certificates and micro-credentials that boost your value to an employer. Certificates are offered in General Management, Entrepreneurship, Bookkeeping, and Administrative Office Skills. Micro-credentials are offered in Accounting Computer Skills, Customer Service, Leadership, and Small Business Management. Upon completion of a micro-credential, students are awarded a digital badge that can be added to a resume or LinkedIn page.

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics cites that a business degree provides versatility – “no matter your interest, there’s likely a business angle to it.” A business degree or credential will provide a competitive edge when applying for jobs or a promotion compared to those who do not have a degree or who have a less marketable degree. The reason for this is that business degrees provide a variety of useful skills that can be used in any type of profession. In addition, wages for many occupations that require business degrees are higher than those for all workers.

Registration is required for this event, http://www.sunyulster.edu/businesscareers. For more information, contact Mindy Kole at kolem@sunyulster.edu.
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