

LGBTQ+ safe space training educates audience on gender identity, expression, sexual orientation, trans folk

BY DANIELLE PECCI
Editor-in-Chief

A safe space training Zoom was held Friday, March 4 to inform faculty and students about creating a safe environment for LGBTQ+ individuals, as well as education about this community. Vivyen Ray, vice president of human resources and labor relations at County College of Morris, co-hosted the event along with the primary host Bekki Davis, who Ray worked with during her time at Hudson Community College.

LGBTQIA+ represents lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, intersex, asexual, and agender individuals. There are also multiple variations where it can be written or said as LGBT, LGBT+, LGBTQ+, and more. The plus is an umbrella for additional identities.

A new term that has come to light within academia is SGM or GSM, meaning sexual and gender minorities, which is a broad term.

Cis gender means that someone matches both their socially expected characteristics and how they identify themselves and act. When it doesn't match what is socially expected, meaning what they are assigned at birth and how they feel about themselves differ,



PHOTO BY DANIELLE PECCI

A slide from Bekki Davis's PowerPoint presentation about inclusive and safe spaces for LGBTQIA+ individuals.

this is when they may identify as transgender or genderqueer.

The Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network, an organization that works to create safe schools for all students, conducted a National School Cli-

mate Survey in 2019 and found that 59.1% of LGBTQ students didn't feel safe at school because of their sexual orientation. An astonishing 95.2% of LGBTQ students have heard homophobic remarks at school, not only from

students, but some have even heard remarks from school staff. And 45.2% of LGBTQ students avoided bathrooms because of not feeling comfortable or safe in gender-segregated spaces.

"So, where do I go to the

bathroom?" Davis said. "Where will I be respected? Where can I get care, mental health care, medical care?" LGBTQ+ individuals still face discriminations

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CCM students affected by Ukraine

BY ECE BUYUKERKAN
Contributor

County College of Morris students are worried about Russia's recent attack of Ukraine.

Laura San Roman, a communication major at CCM, has been keeping in touch with the news of Russia's invasion. "Every day I see something about it," San Roman said. "I know Russia

and Ukraine had . . . fights before, but I didn't know it was this bad." She said she always knew Russia invading Ukraine was a possibility but was surprised at how fast the conflict is escalating and how intense it has become.

Victoria Hendricks, a liberal arts student at CCM, has ties to Ukraine and is worried about the future. "My dad's side is . . . a small percentage Ukrainian,"

Hendricks said. Russia invading Ukraine has struck a nerve for her. The invasion of Ukraine has left her wondering what the world will be like, and she is wondering what is going to happen next.

If this invasion happened a few years ago, Hendricks said she would not have been as worried as she is today. She knows Ukraine used to be a part of Russia and broke off from Russia

August 24, 1991, to be their own separate colony, and now Russia wants that land back.

"I don't know if we're allies with them or not," Hendricks said. "But I feel like as a country we definitely could offer support to Ukraine with everything that's happening right now." She also said the country can get together and unite to support Ukraine's independence.

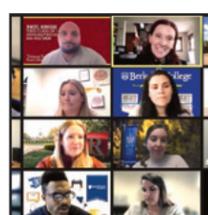
Kate Demaio, an early childhood education student at CCM, is worried for her friends and family during this time in history. Many students studying at CCM have ties to or even are in the Army. Demaio is concerned about soldiers getting deployed.

Russia invading Ukraine is an abiding worry for students at CCM and for the future of the world.

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PHOTO BY RAIZZI STEIN

Faculty members from various New Jersey universities gather via Zoom to welcome prospective community college students, share about their universities, and answer questions.

NJTCA hosts virtual transfer fair for New Jersey community college students

BY RAIZZI STEIN
Contributor

NJ Transfer Counselors Association hosted a virtual transfer fair via Zoom Feb. 16, to assist New Jersey community college students interested in transferring to either a New Jersey public college or private university.

The New Jersey state colleges that attended were Kean University, Montclair State University, New Jersey City University, New Jersey Institute of Technology, Ramapo College of New Jersey, Rowan University, Rutgers University (including the Camden, Newark, and New Brunswick locations), Stockton University, The College of New Jersey, Thomas Edison State University and William Paterson University.

The New Jersey private universities that attended were Berkeley College, Bloomfield College, Caldwell University, DeVry University, Drew University, Fairleigh Dickinson University, Felician University, Georgian Court University, Monmouth University, Rider University, Saint Elizabeth University, Saint Peter's University and Seton Hall University.

The fair began with a brief presentation hosted by Marcie Rosas, the assistant director of transfer community outreach at Rutgers University, New Brunswick. The main purpose of the presentation was to share general information about the transfer process in New Jersey by talking about the New Jersey Statewide

Transfer Agreement, also known as the Lampitt Law; introducing an online resource called NJ Transfer and explaining different ways to pay for college, including financial aid, various scholarship opportunities and the Garden State Guarantee.

The Lampitt Law is an agreement that aims to provide a student a seamless transition from one of the 18 New Jersey community colleges where one has earned an associate degree in either art or science to a New Jersey four-year college or university to earn a baccalaureate degree. If a student has fulfilled the transfer requirements, these participating colleges will waive the gen-ed courses needed, and that student will be enrolled as a junior.

To support this law, the state of New Jersey maintains a website called NJ Transfer, which provides a resource for students attending any of the New Jersey community colleges looking to transfer into a New Jersey four-year institution. Two helpful resources on the site include the Transfer Program Tool and the Transcript Evaluation Tool.

The Transfer Program Tool allows a student to view the recommended coursework to take before transferring at their community college for any major offered at a New Jersey four-year institution. The Transfer Evaluation Tool provides a student with an unofficial yet accurate course-by-course evaluation of one's transfer credits and the requirements needed to complete a

transfer program.

Regarding paying for college, if necessary, a student should file a form through FAFSA or NJFAAA, two of the largest financial aid providers, to develop an aid package based on the information provided. However, a student will need to check with each individual school to confirm the exact process. Other financial resources include scholarships offered to those in Phi Theta Kappa, Fastweb, Chegg, Cappex and a university's official website.

During the summer of 2021, Gov. Phil Murphy signed into law the Garden State Guarantee, which allows students who have a family with an adjusted gross income of \$65,000 or less to not have to pay tuition or fees for their third and fourth year of college. Those who have an adjusted gross income of \$65,001 to \$85,000 will pay no more than \$7,500 per year. This exemption does not include room and board expenses and a student should also check with the university they are interested in because some colleges have added their own funds to supplement the Garden State Guarantee.

After the presentation, the universities were split into six breakout rooms that contained three to four colleges per room. Students could then move between rooms in a sort of "choose your own adventure" style where they were able to learn some general information about each college, and they were encouraged to ask questions.

Topics discussed in the rooms included each college's application process, required GPA, academic programs, available programs to help acclimate new transfer students, tuition costs, scholarships, internships, career opportunities, programs for high-achieving honors students, class sizes, research programs, transportation, dorming, dining options, athletics, clubs, organizations, and COVID-19 regulations.

Enrico DeRooy, the assistant director of admissions & transfer coordinator at Stockton University said that if a student doesn't know where to begin in the transfer process, to keep in mind the "big three" reasons one would attend a university, which includes the academic program one is interested in, the required transfer credits and the total cost.

"After you've completed the big three, I highly recommend that you go and visit each college that you're interested in," DeRooy said. "This is very important because you are going to spend two years at the institution and if you haven't visited, how could you correctly decide? It's like buying a house online, but you haven't even visited the house. You must go and visit the campus so you can see and feel it for yourself because you're going to be there for the majority of your time."

Once a student has completed the research process and visited all their potential choices, Michelle Gomez, the senior director of undergraduate admissions at

Berkeley College, was adamant on another crucial aspect of the transfer process.

"Always take advantage of the contacts that you're meeting because you have this one-on-one experience when we break out the rooms and you really get to meet the different admission and transfer counselors," Gomez said. "They will get to know you, so always feel free to use those contacts and follow up if you have additional questions or concerns that may need to be addressed privately."

Nearing the end of the fair, Sarah McElroy, the executive director of Career and Transfer Pathways at Brookdale Community College, had some parting advice that may seem obvious, but she stressed is often overlooked.

"Definitely check your email because a lot of information goes through your email, even through your community college, including transferring and deadline dates. Just make sure that you're always on top of that," McElroy said. "Applying to your transfer schools is like applying to a job in a way because it's a long process, and you want to get started early and get everything in on time. So please pay careful attention to it."

After the breakout rooms, the students and college administrators met up for a final debrief in the main room. A final contact sheet with the colleges was provided in case there were students who didn't have the time to talk to a school or wanted to ask further questions.

Varying views on reducing cost of community college

BY ZACHARY DEVIVO
Contributor

Community college possesses several significant benefits for those who attend their own county's public means of achieving a higher education. Cheaper expenses, an easy commute and time to plan for potential careers are a community college's main attractions. However, some students have argued that community college should be entirely free.

Students have believed a free alternative to achieving a vocational education after secondary school would motivate people to pursue college. "I think community college being free would encourage a lot more people who are afraid of debt try to get further education after high school," said computer science major Johnny Lisella. "I also think it would allow students

to start their lives on a better financial platform when they first graduate and get their first job."

Student loans and debt have been major deterrents from choosing to attend a college or university. Lisella described how free community college could be the catalyst for potential college attendees to have a better foundation. This platform would allow students the best chance to create a career for themselves.

"Prospective students may also face both financial constraints, which prohibit them from taking advantage of more education, and information problems and behavioral idiosyncrasies, such as reluctance to take on debt, which keep them from making optimal decisions about attending college", said Phillip Oreopoulos and Uros Petronijevic in their article entitled "Making College Worth It: A Re-

view of the Returns to Higher Education."

Oreopoulos and Petronijevic discussed how students would either borrow too little and under invest in themselves, causing problems later down the line. A cheaper or free tuition for colleges would negate the chances of students undermining themselves greatly.

Alternatively, students who view community college as more of a service or resource disagreed with this.

"Honestly, I think college should not be free, but personally I think it should be offered at a lower price," said nursing major Ryan Coyle. "I feel it is a personal choice that someone makes to go, and it is almost like a service."

Lisella and Coyle found common ground: both thought college should be cheaper for students, but Coyle's viewpoint differs regard-

ing how much cheaper. He said college is a personal decision, and since colleges are a part of the service industry, people should pay for such a service.

There has been one glaring counterargument for free college. The argument is the question of who will pay for schooling if not the students themselves. "I don't think free college is the best idea," said communication major Nancy Togna. "College should be paid for because we don't want higher taxes for workers in America." Free forms of higher education would almost certainly mean a higher amount of money paid in taxes for all citizens. A massive influx in taxes could have adverse effects on the economy.

College has a stigma surrounding its efficacy and cost-effectiveness. Gauging whether the education is worthwhile is a mas-

sive aspect of the decision-making process when deciding to pursue a higher education. Cheaper or free college meant the difference for most students' final decision in the matter.

"Community colleges may become more attractive as four-year college costs continue to rise faster than community college costs," wrote associate professor of economics at Brigham Young University Jeffrey T. Denning in his paper "College on the Cheap: Consequences of Community College Tuition Reductions." Denning stated, "In fact, the net price of community college actually decreased from 2000 to 2009."

Denning and other experts in the field prophesize cheaper community college through their writing. Students who desire a free higher education may get their wish in the coming years.

CCM students react to end of statewide school mask mandate

BY JULIA NATOLI
Contributor

New Jersey students will now get to see some of their classmates' familiar faces.

Gov. Phil Murphy announced an end to the statewide school mask mandate, effective March 7, but CCM students have mixed feelings about the mandate lift. COVID-19 cases in New Jersey have declined in recent weeks since the Omicron variant spike in early January, but new variants and high transmission rates prove this pandemic is a lasting and alarming public health issue, so Murphy's mask mandate lift has

come as a surprise to many.

Over two years have passed since wearing masks in public places—such as schools, grocery stores, and gyms—has become routine for most people. Grabbing a mask before leaving the house has become second nature, like grabbing one's phone or wallet. During the school week at County College of Morris, every hallway, classroom, and building is filled with students and faculty members.

So how do CCM students feel about Murphy's end to the school mask mandate? Will CCM students continue to wear masks in class and on campus, or will

they go maskless? Some people support an end to the mandate, including Sara Rios, a business administration major from Boonton. "If the college lifts the mask mandate, I will go maskless," Rios said. "I am fully vaccinated, and I know a majority of students and staff are, too."

She said that she is ready to return to a maskless life, but she also said that "if people want to wear one, they should be able to without judgment." Rios said she knows how people feel these days. This pandemic has drastically changed everyone's lives, but the masking and social distancing protocols seemed never-

ending.

On the other side of this debate, some students, including Juliana Shay, a communication major from Boonton, are opposed to going maskless. "Yes, I am going to keep wearing my mask because Covid isn't ending with the mask mandate," Shay said. "I wish CCM would have kept the mandate." While Shay is correct that this pandemic is not ending March 7 with the mask mandate, it is reassuring to learn that 74.3% of New Jersey residents are fully vaccinated against COVID-19, according to Our World in Data.

Many students likely fall in the middle of the mask mandate

controversy. "I believe in masks," said Gaby Martinez, a business administration major from Madison. "I believe they're effective, and I think you should wear one if you're not vaccinated." She said she plans to wear a mask after the mandate ends at CCM until she feels comfortable without one.

Students, like Martinez, neither support nor oppose an end to the mask mandate, and they simply plan to play it by ear. Regardless of one's choice either to wear a mask or go maskless, it is important to respect everyone's personal decision and do what is best for oneself.

The CCM Peace Prize contest — a \$1,000 award that recognizes student creativity

BY PROFESSOR
KENNETH SHOULER
Adviser for the Youngtown Edition

The CCM Peace Prize is an annual contest held at the college which intends to foster the goals of peace. The Peace Prize was founded to commemorate the losses of Sept. 11, 2001. Originally chaired by Peter Maguire, associate professor of English, now retired, assistant chairperson and assistant professor Laura Driver has chaired the prize these last four years. "In my time overseeing the prize com-

petition, we have seen varied and intriguing applicants," Driver said. "I am pleased that the three winners in the years I have worked with the prize have been from diverse modalities and disciplines."

What submissions won the last three contests? In 2021, the winning student composed an



PROFESSOR
KENNETH
SHOULER

original musical score and recorded himself performing his piece. In 2020, a student documentary received the prize, and in 2019, the winning project was a large tile mosaic symbolizing rebuilding from fractured parts. These examples represent the diverse breadth of the projects that the Peace Prize considers and celebrates.

The contest is open to all current CCM students. Both individual and group submissions are welcome, and these projects can take any form of visual, written, and auditory creativity as long as the

concepts promoted by the work celebrate and advance ideals related to peace. Students interested in participating should email Professor Driver at ldriver@ccm.edu by April 1, to indicate their intent to submit a project. Final projects are due by Friday, April 8.

The winning project receives a gift of \$1,000 and recognition on the permanent Peace Prize plaque in the student center. The gift and award are presented at commencement in May.

"The Peace Prize is important for its continuing relevance and

its inclusiveness in terms of the student work it gets to celebrate," Driver said. "Moreover, I love that the prize competition fosters creativity, ingenuity, and original student work. There are no limitations on what students can contribute, and I believe that there are very few opportunities with such broad and inclusive parameters for students."

The college website will be updated to reflect the 2022 competition, but the parameters remain the same: <https://www.ccm.edu/peace-prize/>

REVIEW: Sweet, comedic moments don't save cliché premise, 'overall average viewing experience' of 'Dog'

BY LAURA
SAN ROMAN
Entertainment Editor

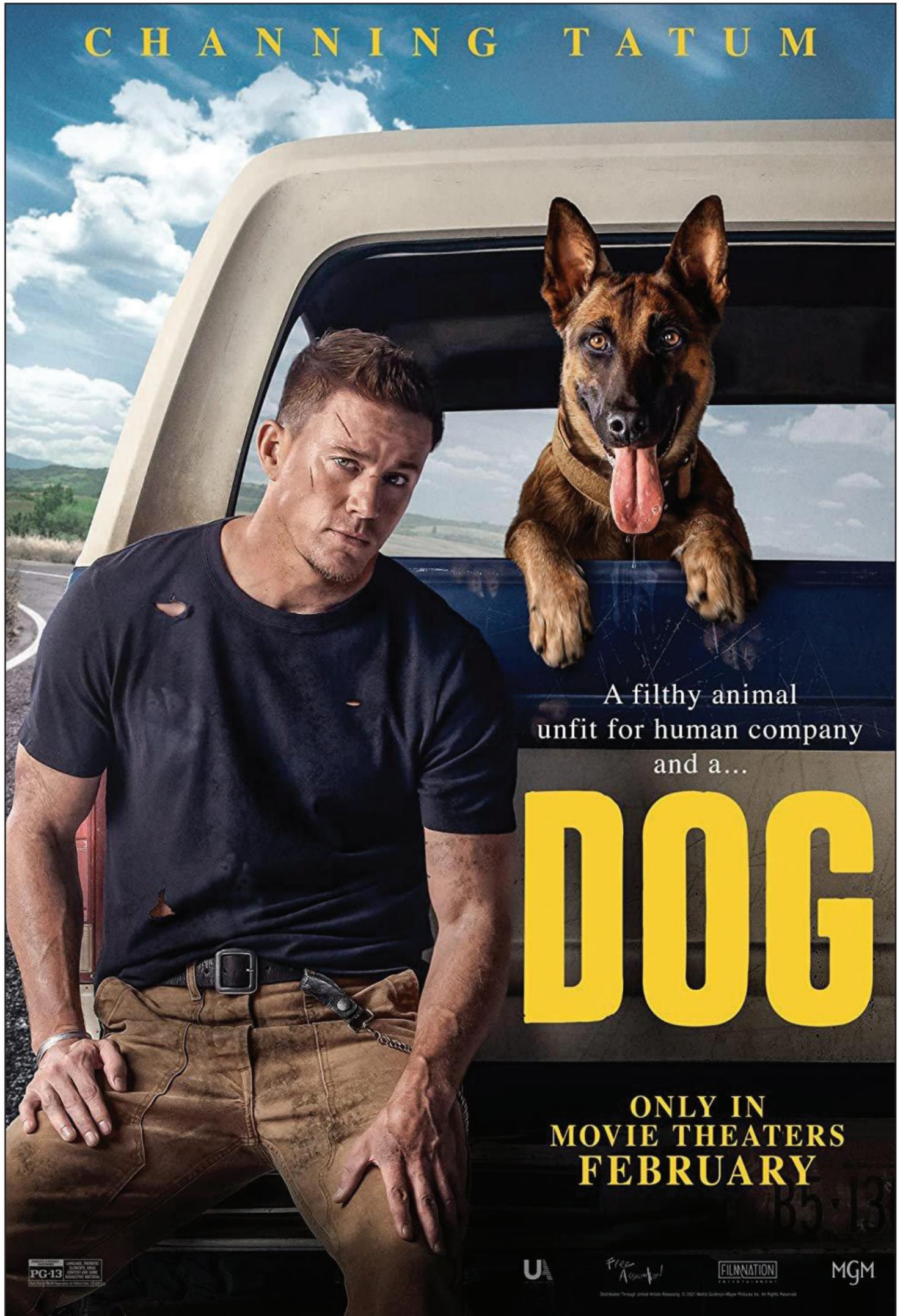
For dog-lovers out there, *Dog* is just another canine movie to see. *Dog*, released Feb. 18, stars Channing Tatum, who is also making his directorial debut. The film is about Jackson Briggs, a U.S. Army Ranger who is assigned to bring a Belgian Malinois military dog named Lulu to her handler's funeral. Lulu has been traumatized from being in war and is hard to deal with. The two embark on a road trip where Briggs must face the symptoms of his post-traumatic stress disorder. He learns to love Lulu and comes to care for her. Three different Belgian Malinois played the dog Lulu.

Tatum shows the real symptoms of post-traumatic disorder and does an excellent job directing and acting. His connection with the dog is obvious and gives the film a special sweetness.

Even with Tatum's acting, however, the film still ends up feeling lackluster. There is little substance. There are some funny moments, but also serious underpinnings. There are also weird events that occur in the movie that Tatum hardly reacts to, such as his getting kidnapped by a random farmer. There are many missed chances for comedy in these scenes. While the film does a decent job of showing what people with post-traumatic stress disorder go through, especially those who served in the military, it doesn't redeem the film's cliché premise and overall average viewing experience.

There were some problematic parts of the film that could be offensive. In one scene, Tatum pretends to be blind, and that Lulu is his service dog in order to score a free hotel room. While this scene was played up as comedic, many could see it as ableist. Another problematic part was when Lulu attacks a Middle Eastern man because it is what she is programmed to do from her experiences in the war. Even though the police say Tatum might be charged for a hate crime, his reaction is minimal, making the movie strange and confusing to watch.

What *Dog* really needed to make it a better film were more scenes showing Lulu and Briggs bonding. He hardly has to train her to be better behaved, and most of the time, he leaves the dog behind in his truck while he goes off to bars or trying to score a three-



some. This is disheartening for viewers to watch, as she is obviously in need of care and attention. There could have been more scenes showing them working together, trying to get

along. Instead, it seems rushed, as if the director wanted us to believe Lulu and Tatum's character immediately bonded with one another, which is obviously not the case, as she is shown

to be violent and hard to train.

While the film was sweet and comedic at some points and covered many important topics, there isn't much that saved this movie. It is unclear who the

target audience is, whether it's for veterans or children who want to see a cute dog movie, the film ends up feeling average. It could have been much more.

COURTESY OF TWITTER

The Legacy Project: Ten Years of Outstanding Programs at CCM

BY PROFESSOR KENNETH SHOULER
Adviser for the Youngtown Edition

The Legacy Project is in its tenth year now, going back to “Civil Rights: a 50-Year Retrospective,” when an activist, an assembly member, a journalist and CCM professor J. Ayettu Apwah sat on a panel together in the fall of 2013. The co-chairs of that event (and a decade of stimulating lectures and programs since) were John Soltes, Assistant Professor, Communication; Dee McAree, assistant professor, English and Philosophy; Michelle Altieri, assistant professor, Communication, and Dr. Jill Schennum, professor of Sociology, Economics, and Anthropology.

Looking at the recent offerings reveals that the Project hasn’t lost a step. Earlier this month Alex Torrez, a touring drummer with heavy-hitting musicians such as Tracy Lawrence, Leon Russell, and Edgar Winter, appeared with Nashville’s Torrez Music Group, playing songs from his latest album *Honky Tonk Hell* and recalling his musical journey in a Q & A format.

Last Tuesday, Dr. Nancy Unger, a professor from Santa Clara University, took part in a lively discussion based on her new book *Beyond Nature’s Housekeepers: American Women in Environmental History* (Oxford University Press). Professor Unger detailed the role women have played in America’s environmental movement.

Monday, April 4 at 7 p.m., Derick Lugo will explain his improbable journey hiking the 2,192 miles of the Appalachian Trail. The journey began when Lugo, born in Brooklyn, found himself without a job and time to fill. The result was a new and inspirational book detailing his adventures: *The Unlikely Thru-Hiker*.

RSVP for Zoom link: legacy@ccm.edu placing Derick Lugo in the subject line



Alex Torrez of Nashville’s Torrez Music Group



Dr. Nancy Unger, Santa Clara University



Derick Lugo, hiker of the Appalachian Trail and author of the “Unlikely Thru-Hiker”

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For more information contact Newspaper Advisor Professor Shouler or Editor-in-Chief Danielle Pecci

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Why We Celebrate International Mother Language Day on Feb.21st?

The History of International Mother Language Day!

5 likes

Add comment

Gabriel García Marquez. El olor de la guayaba, 1982

"El diálogo en lengua castellana resulta falso. Siempre he dicho que en este idioma ha habido una gran distancia entre el diálogo hablado y el diálogo escrito. Un diálogo en castellano que es bueno en la vida real no es necesariamente bueno en las novelas."

"The dialogue in Spanish is false. I have always said that in this language there has been a great distance between the spoken dialogue and the written dialogue. A dialogue in Spanish that is good in real life is not necessarily good in novels."

2 likes

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To speak a second language is to have a second soul. Charles Magne, Roman Emperor.

Hablar una segunda lengua es tener una segunda alma.

Carlo Magno, Emperador Romano

4 likes

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An Arbëresh Rhyme

Rrushes rrushes
Dremis rrushes
Bithë tagon e
Bithë mamuthes

2 likes

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African Proverb

"A child that is not embraced by the village will burn it down to feel its warmth"

2 likes

Add comment

Urdu

Translation: Elevate yourself so high that even God, before issuing every decree of destiny, should ask you: **Tell me, what is your intent?"**

1 like

Add comment

Translation of the Turkish Poem, "On Living" by Nazim Hikmet (Turkish Poet)

Nâzım Hikmet - On Living (read by Chris Hedges)

Yaşamak şakaya gelmez, büyük bir ciddiyetle yaşayacaksınız bir sincap gibi mesela, yani, yaşamının dışında ve ötesinde hiçbir şey beklemeden, yani bütün işin gücün yaşamak olacak. Yaşamayı ciddiye alacaksınız, yani o derecede, öylesine ki, mesela, kolların bağlı arkadan, cırtıp

Creole Saying on the power of Determiation

Piti, piti, wazo fe nich li.

To Be or Not to Be...

To be or not to be, that is the question;

To finish what you started, that is the answer.

French Romantic Expression

Je t'aime pour toujours

PHOTO BY DANIELLE PECCI

County College of Morris celebrates diverse languages for Mother Languages Day

BY PROFESSOR KENNETH SHOULER
Adviser for the Youngtown Edition

CCM's Commemoration Committee celebrated International Mother Language Day Feb.

21. Dr Maryam Alikhani, assistant professor of English and chair of the Diversity Committee, helped create a Padlet page (see link below). The page includes a link to a video on the history of IMLD and its recognition by the United Na-

tions. CCM students, faculty, and employees have made posts in their mother languages on the Padlet page. The posts are poems, songs, proverbs, or sayings in an array of languages. The page represents the linguistic diversity at CCM which includes but is not limited to Bangla, Gujarati, Hindi, Sanskrit, Punjabi, Malayalam, Tagalog, Thai, Turkish, Arabic, Persian or Farsi, Italian, English, Spanish, Greek, Czech, Chinese,

Ghanaian, Wolof, Arbëresh, Latin, and ASL. The page is still open for submission for anyone interested in posting a message in their mother language.

<https://padlet.com/msa2149/w0pdt95ti6bgbrd>

Baseball will return, but forever changed

BY TYLER KARPMAN
Sports Editor

After 99 days of negotiating, re-negotiating, and negotiating some more, the Major League Baseball lockout has ended with team owners reaching an agreement with the MLB Players Association on a new Collective Bargaining Agreement between the players and owners that will bring several changes to the league. The previous CBA's expiration following the 2021 MLB season mandated a new deal, and until said deal was reached, players would be quite literally locked out from all team facilities.

Eventually, a deal was reached, but not before the dragged-out negotiations resulted in teams missing the start of Spring Training, as well as pushing back Opening Day a full week. The MLBPA was able to secure several advantages for the players, including a higher minimum salary for players and an expanded pre-arbitration (salary negotiation for players with under three years of MLB service time) bonus pool for young

and talented players. However, those advancements came with agreeing to numerous changes to MLB's rules and structure, which will cause a vastly different experience for fans this year, and in years to come.

Perhaps the biggest change will be the implementation of a league-wide designated hitter, or DH, to bat for the pitcher. Previously, the DH had only been used in games played in American League stadiums, but now every team will play using the DH.

The DH has been a bone of contention among baseball fans for years, with its opponents claiming having pitchers, typically very weak hitters, in the lineup

adds an extra degree of strategy to managing a lineup, while those in favor of the DH pointing out that in most cases, a pitcher would be an easy out for the defense, unless they were able to drop a sacrifice bunt. Regardless, the universal DH rule will force National League teams to adjust their lineups and rosters; now needing a player who can provide a consistent and strong offensive output from the DH spot.

The other major change for the upcoming season will be the expanded postseason format, with 12 teams qualifying from now on, up from the previous 10. This will allow for three wild card teams per league, in addition

to the three division winners. The two division winners with the best records will earn a first-round bye, while the remaining four teams will be paired according to record, playing in a best-of-three series to move on to the divisional round, from which the postseason will continue as it has previously.

While this change eliminates the highly controversial wild card game, the new wild card series will have all three of its games played in the higher seed's ballpark, which will lead to many postseason teams never getting the chance to play a game in front of their home crowd. This format also forces wild card teams to

play at least two extra games, potentially forcing them to overuse key pitchers to move on, which could lead to a less competitive divisional round.

Another criticism of the expanded postseason is that it will allow for teams with poorer regular season performances to make it in, despite many fans feeling as if that team did not "deserve" to make it to the postseason. However, even with the expansion to 12 teams, the MLB still has the lowest percentage of their teams (40%) make it to the postseason out of the four major North American professional sports leagues.

The new CBA came with other changes, such as an expansive draft lottery to discourage "tanking," or teams deliberately trying to lose games to secure better draft picks. However, the focus for many fans will be on the two big on-field changes: the universal DH and the expanded postseason. While debate will undoubtedly rage over these topics for months to come, many fans may simply be happy to know one simple truth: baseball will be back.

SAFE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

in terms of housing, employment, and healthcare. They can experience high rates of homelessness, depression, and substance use.

Building inclusive spaces on campus for LGBTQIA+ students is imperative for their success and well-being in an academic setting and life. Davis mentioned the reality of our world is that not all identities are welcome everywhere. In a school setting, students may experience harassment, they may feel out of place, have lower GPAs, and might even miss school because of not feeling comfortable in this environment. Which means, “they may have less opportunities for scholarships or may be less prepared than their peers going to school,” Davis said. “So, this impacts people academically. And when we impact them academically, it impacts us lifelong wise.”

Davis educated the Zoom audience regarding what certain terms mean. “Sexual orientation is who you are romantically, emotionally, and are sexually attracted to,” she said. “Your sexual orientation is very personal to you.”

Some examples are aromantic or asexual, which according to Davis, “are people who do not experience romantic or sexual attraction to anybody or may experience it very rarely.” Homoromantic or homosexual means the person feels attraction to the same gender as their own.

Biromantic or bisexual means people are attracted to their own gender and other genders. While panromantic or pansexual individuals experience attraction toward all people regardless of their gender.

However, Davis explained this can be quite nuanced because even though someone may identify as bisexual, they may still have a different definition for themselves regarding this part of their identity than another person who identifies as bisexual.

Davis also noted that how one feels, and their sexual behavior may not always match each other. “Let’s say I’m a lesbian woman. That’s my orientation,” Davis said. “But I date men. I might be dating men because I’m not out or I’m still trying to understand my identity or it’s not safe for me to date women.”

Discussion about gender orientation and gender identity occurred as well. “Gender orientation is our personal understanding of ourselves in relation to how male or female or a blend of both or androgynous or neither; how we feel in terms of those binaries . . . that society has given us,” Davis said.

She further stated that at birth, doctors look at our genitalia to determine our sex. However, someone’s sex can be female, male, or intersex, but their gender could be the opposite of their assigned sex at birth.

There can be women who identify as women and who also present themselves in a feminine manner. While there could be a woman who identifies as a woman, but dresses in a more mas-

“Humans have created gender and what that means and how we express it. So, do I wear blue because I’m a boy, or am I a boy because I wear blue?”

Bekki Davis

Academic Advisor, Hudson County Community College

culine way and perhaps wears a short haircut.

Davis noted that someone can be straight and transgender, gay and cisgender, or gay and transgender. “So, your gender and your sexual orientation can interact in different combinations,” she said. “You can be cisgender and not necessarily do every single aspect of the gender expectations. So, if you don’t wear lipstick or you don’t have a beard, you can still be a man or woman, or masculine or feminine social class.”

Davis presented an example regarding how society implements gender since birth. A boy may be dressed in a blue shirt with a picture of a teddy bear holding a football on it, reinforcing gender ideas. “Gender as we know it is a social construct,” Davis said. “Humans have created gender and what that means and how we express it. So, do I wear blue because I’m a boy, or am I a boy because I wear blue?”

Stating further, that society has gendered colors and may judge others based on how far one strays from following what society deems ‘normal’ for a certain gender to express.

“Just because something is socially gendered doesn’t mean that you can’t enjoy it for yourself personally,” she said. “The challenge becomes when you do personally enjoy something, but society says you’re not supposed to because it doesn’t fit what we expect, whether that’s done through explicit conversation or implicit conversation.”

One slide on the PowerPoint presentation Davis had gone through stated, “What it means to be a ‘man,’ or a ‘woman’ is bound to: culture of origin, social class, time period in history, and social expectations of society.”

There is also a spectrum that people rest on regarding gender identity (female/woman/girl, male/man/boy, other gender (s)), which can be expressed in different ways depending on the day and how the person feels. “You may identify as very feminine,” Davis said. “But maybe there are days where you don’t wear make-up, you don’t wear a dress,” and you may just hang out in sweatpants. Someone’s expression of their identity may be in the middle of the spectrum, but just because how someone expresses their identity may change from time to time, it does not mean their identity has changed.

Davis also educated her audience on transgender identities and experiences. “Your personal gender identity does not always match your assigned sex at birth,” she said. “The sex that they were born and assigned at birth is not the gender or sex that they identify with. So, you often have heard

male to female transgender, female to male transgender, [and] intersex persons can also fall under transgender.”

If someone feels more like a man than a woman, they may take testosterone or wear masculine clothing according to what society deems masculine. Someone may take vocal lessons because how one speaks can be gendered. A person may change their name or pronouns. There’s also hair removal or hair growth, and gender confirming surgeries (that was previously referred to as ‘sex reassignment,’ which is language not used anymore). These surgeries could mean removal or addition of breasts, and the creation of a vagina or penis to match the gender of how the person wants to represent themselves.

“Transition is rarely linear,” Davis said. “People don’t wake up and go, okay, I’m going to start doing this . . . I’m going to get all my documents updated. Because you may have a person who starts exploring; maybe I’m trans. Maybe I’m a trans man. I don’t know. This never has felt right. I’m going to dip my toe in the water. I’m going to chop my hair off, go really short, see how that feels.”

Depending on the response of others, if the trans person receives positive responses, they may continue their process in transitioning. If the person receives a negative response, they may hold off coming out, or not come out at all. However, not everyone who wishes to transition will have proper access to receive surgery, get testosterone, or medical care because of financial reasons or ‘gatekeeping’ that providers might exhibit.

If someone has proper access for transitioning, they may not want to go through surgery. “What transition looks like varies, how transition flows varies,” Davis said.

“Maybe you want to transition, but your body can’t undergo surgery. Or maybe for people who come out later in life and realize their identity or express later in life,” if they are in their 50s, 60s, or 70s, they may not want to put their body through that. Although, “just because they don’t choose to do that doesn’t mean their identity is any less valid with this group,” she said.

Challenges faced by the trans community are that their transition is often public. “It’s very difficult to explore your identities on your own without eventually coming out and expressing them in public places,” Davis said. Trans folk may also get complaints about unprofessionalism if they are transitioning while holding a job, which can affect their ability to have a job, as well as “loss of access to health care.”

body and assume they’re supportive or an allyship.”

County College of Morris has an LGBTQ+ resource page that lists mental health providers, peer support hotlines, websites, books, and articles to refer to, among other resources. This information is located under student support services, then campus services, counseling and wellness center, diversity resources.

<https://www.ccm.edu/student-support-services/campus-services/counseling-and-wellness-center/diversity-resources/lgbtq-resources/>

There is also a chosen name option under admissions, then records and registration, on the left-hand side of links to click, where students can submit a chosen name request form or email the registrar with the required information, and the ability to change personal pronouns and gender identities through Titans Direct.

Gender neutral, single stall bathrooms are located throughout campus: The Music Technology Center (first floor and second floor), the Learning Resource Center, the Health and Physical Education Building, the New Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering Building, and one located between the Health Services Suite and the Planetarium in Cohen Hall. CCM’s website states, “The college is looking to add additional gender-neutral restrooms in the Academic Complex by including them as part of future renovations in the buildings.”

A CCM equity statement created by the CCM ATD Equity Team in December 2020, which Ray shared at the beginning of the Zoom presentation notes that, “equity means the intentional design of the College experience, including the promotion of diversity and inclusion, as well as the elimination of discrimination, to ensure that all members of the CCM community receive what they need to succeed.” Further stating that CCM “has an obligation to be aware of and to address issues of inequity, particularly for underserved and underrepresented populations.”

THE YOUNGTOWN EDITION

The Student Newspaper of the County College of Morris

County College of Morris • SCC 129

214 Center Grove Rd., Randolph, NJ 07869-2086

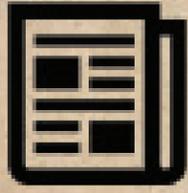
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All students are welcome to contribute articles to The Youngtown Edition either in person or via e-mail. However, students cannot receive a byline if they belong to the organization on which they are reporting. The deadline for articles is the Monday prior to a production.

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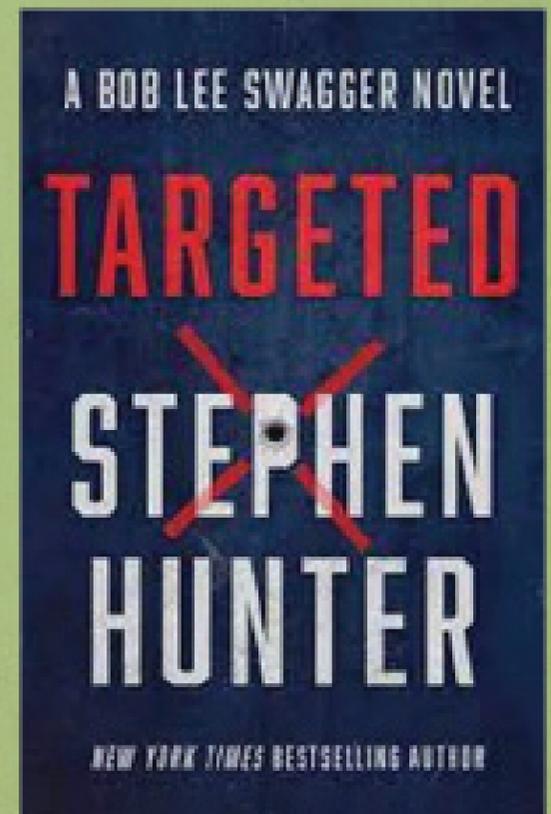
*Date/Time: March 24 from 12:30 to
1:45 p.m.*

*Attend in person in the Student
Community Center Davidson Rooms or
on Zoom.*

*Email campuslife@ccm.edu for the
Zoom link.*

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Stephen Hunter's novel *Targeted*, just released, is his 30th book and is already a *New York Times* bestseller.

Among other topics, Mr. Hunter will discuss:

- Assorted tips for journalists.
- How he made the transition from nonfiction to fiction writing.
- Writing historical fiction.
- And more!