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# THE KNIGHT NEWS



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Breaking News & Video

Journalism in the Interest of the Queens College Community

## ENJOYING QUEENS COLLEGE AS A TRANSFER STUDENT



**Queens College students accepts more transfer  
students than first-year students**

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**Queens College renovates  
TV studio and science labs**

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Photo by Amanda Goldstein

**Half of college grads don't  
think college was worth it**

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## EDITORIALS

### Say yes to participatory budgeting

In our previous issue, we highlighted different activist groups throughout Queens College. Considering the college's rich history with activism, it showed a bright candle of energy can still exist in a dark room of apathy.

Students Organization for Democratic Alternatives is an excellent example of this with their idea of participatory budgeting.

Participatory budgeting allows for students to choose what ideas they want to proposal, similar to the Your Priorities model created by Icelandic activists, which even the American-led media outlet The District Sentinel Co-op adopted.

Much praise must be given to SODA for pitching this idea during election season as students are not hounded by parties pressuring them to vote. Rather, students can list their grievances on campus and potentially participate in a highly democratic process.

It is also politically smart to do it in front of the parties as students would prefer learning participatory budget instead of whether they voted for X or Y. Unexpected tactics, like at Occupy Wall Street, work incredibly well in pressuring structures of authority.

In spite of the cuts QC and other CUNY schools suffered over the past two

decades, it is a perfect opportunity for students to choose projects necessary to carry out.

Moreover, this idea is still new even at colleges. Brooklyn College adopted it in 2012 and was the first university across the nation to do so. Perhaps it is time CUNY leads the way with a new democratic initiative.

CUNY is viewed as a place where its students come from mostly working-class households. It is a reason why tuition is unpopular among the student body, it's a tax on the working class. This tax, notably, by a state government and a governor who never attended a CUNY school before.

It may feel hopeless in front of a bureaucratic machine struggling because of a larger, inept one at Albany. But what better way to bolster confidence in students than participatory budgeting? The wonders beyond such an idea are incredible.

We invite readers to support such an initiative and talk to their student government representatives and college administrators about it.

Additionally, we invite readers to send their suggestions on ideas they would like to see happen. Democracy, after all, is the rule of the people.

### New York Mets look to prevent the prophecy

Thirty years ago, Marty McFly rode in Doc Brown's DeLorean and began his adventure in "Back to the Future." In the movie's sequel, McFly travels back to this exact date, Oct. 21, to save his son. When he makes this trip, a giant screen reads "Cubs Win World Series."

For those unaware, the Cubs have not won a World Series since 1908. This season, with a young and exciting team, the Cubs can fulfill the prophecy. They can end their 107-year drought. There is just one obstacle standing in their way—the Mets.

The city of New York is rejoicing with pitchers Noah Syndergaard and Matt Harvey along with third basemen David Wright, whose nicknames are Thor, The Dark Knight and Capitan America, respectively. Flushing, itself, is rocking with the first two wins in which they defeated both Cubs aces Jon Jester and Jake Arrieta.

At Queens College, Mets fans

make up a mix of the student body, along with Yankees fans as seen with our sports editor. They are overwhelmed with joy as this season has been a success thus far.

Still, after suffering for eight seasons without making the playoffs, the Mets finished their year with 90 victories and won the National League East Division. They followed by beating the Los Angeles Dodgers in a five-game series.

The Cubs have not won in over 100 years, but the Mets themselves seek to end a World Series drought. In fact, they won in 1986, a year after the first "Back to the Future." Coincidence? We think not.

If the Cubs were to win the World Series, then Back to the Future II is the first to predict it over 20 years ago. However, the Mets are well on their way to preventing this prophecy.

Sorry Marty.

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**"We aim to serve the Queens College community through a tireless pursuit for truths that may be hidden, obstructed or otherwise unknown, to empower our readers with the information they need to inspire change."**

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## More transfer students attend Queens College than first-year

**CANDICE SAMUELS**

*News Reporter*

Queens College surpasses other CUNY colleges with the highest number of transfer students, according to CUNY's Office of Institutional Research.

In fact, there are twice as many incoming transfer students than first-year freshman based on the office's data.

Yet students, not just transfers, come to QC for a multitude of reasons, including the college's rich scenery.

"Out of the four CUNY senior colleges and one non-CUNY college I visited, I fell in love with Queens College right away," Chu Paing, a transfer student at QC, said. "Open air, the beautiful Quad and the breeze that carries the smell of fresh cut grass made me feel as if I could be out of town within the city; that feeling was exactly what I was

looking for."

The 2014 Princeton Review's Guide to 334 Green Colleges referred to QC as the 'jewel of the CUNY system' with a beautiful campus filled with 80 acres of trees surrounding the grassy open spaces and the Quad.

QC was also the first-ranked public college in the nation as the 'Best Bang for Your Buck,' according to Washington Monthly. QC's generous financial aid packages as well as its relatively low costs with more than 60 percent of students receiving such aid play a role in such a recognition.

The affordable college allows talented people of all backgrounds and financial means to get a first-rate education.

Paing said there were two reasons why transfer students did not adjust well when heading to their second school.

"First, they transfer as either upper sophomore or junior

students, so they do not have much time to mingle with the college and feel the sense of belonging just as the other students would have already instilled. Second, there are not many programs that exclusively provide transfer students with financial assistance and academic help such as Macaulay Honors Program does for freshman. During my research, I learned about QC's Transfer Honors Program," Paing said.

The Transfer Honors Program, meanwhile, began with its first cohort in spring 2014. It offers scholarships and academic support for high achieving students who transferred from community colleges.

"[It] began as an effort to complement the honors communities transfer students enjoyed at their community colleges and a way to attract and support high-achieving transfer students," Barbara Simerka,

director of The Transfer Honors Program, said.

Students in the program participate in various honors minors on campus including Honors in Social Sciences, Humanities and the Business and Liberal Arts program.

"The program identifies areas where transfer students encounter difficulties and shares that information with campus administration in order to create new policies that will improve the transfer experience for all students," Simerka said.

Additionally, there are various programs and resources at QC helping incoming transfers transition smoothly from community colleges.

"I'm very proud that, over two years, we have provided funding for nearly 70 students. In many cases, the scholarship funding allows students to enroll full time rather than part time and

enables them to graduate within four or five semesters, instead of needing several years," Simerka said.

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## Author Meg Wolitzer discusses her novel at Evening Readings

**CHRISTINA CARDONA**

*News Reporter*

Meg Wolitzer read from "The Interestings," her New York Times best-selling novel, on Oct. 6 at the LeFrak Concert Hall as part of the Evening Readings series.

"The Interestings" is about a girl named Jules and a group of teenagers that become best friends at a summer camp for the arts in 1974. Aside from Jules, who aspires to be an actor, there is Jonah, a musician; Ethan, an animator; Cathy, a dancer; Goodman, a boy Jules likes and goes down the wrong path with; and Ash, Goodman's sister.

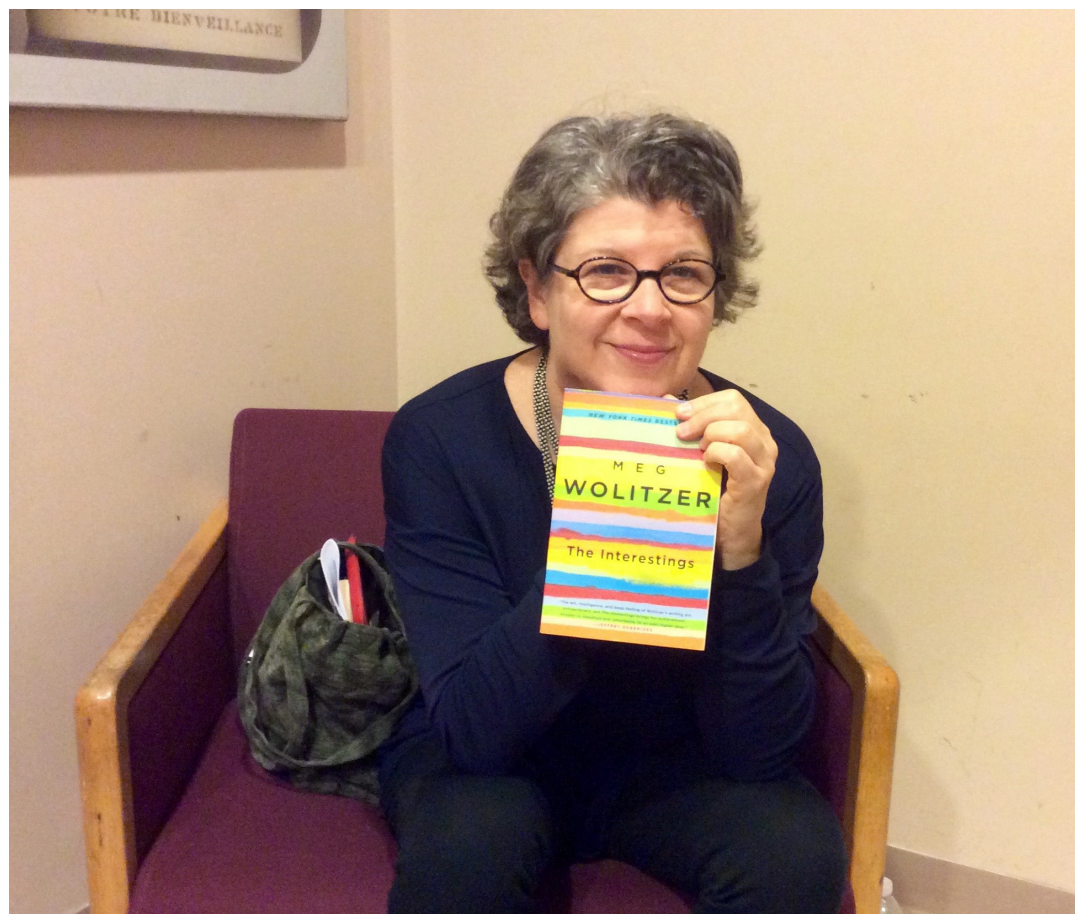
It follows these friends for the next four decades as their bonds stay the same, but everything else in their lives change. Most of them change professions, like Jonah who becomes an engineer. Ethan and Ash become successful later in their lives with art.

Wolitzer's best-selling novel focuses on the fact that not everyone can sustain what made him or her so special in adolescence throughout their adult life. It is about how art, power, money, friendship and success can change over the course of a lifetime.

Wolitzer is also the author of other novels such as "The Uncoupling," "The Ten-Year Nap," "The Position," and "The Wife."

The evening commenced with Joseph Cuomo, the founding director of the Evening Readings, sharing a synopsis of the novel at the podium and praising Wolitzer's writing.

"My favorite thing about



**PHOTO BY CHRISTINA CARDONA**  
Meg Wolitzer holding a copy of her latest book titled "The Interestings"

Wolitzer's writing is its great warmth, heart, humor and deep understanding of its characters," Cuomo said.

Afterward, the witty and entertaining Wolitzer was introduced and read a concentrated version of chapter one of "The Interestings." She also sang a little song written in chapter one.

Wolitzer said the title of her book dealt with adolescence angst.

"The title is definitely ironic, I was trying to find the kind of thing teenagers, when they're at their most pretentious state, say even though they are being jokey," Wolitzer said. "There's some part of them that think they're the most interesting people who lived."

Leonard Lopate, the host, and Wolitzer then discussed the length of this novel, almost 500 pages, and the significance of it.

"I wanted to write a long novel that you want to come back to at the end of every day. For me, that's my favorite thing. Could that be something people would still want to read even now? I refuse to live in a world in which that can't be true," Wolitzer said.

Lopate asked Wolitzer if she is surprised how life changes over time as seen in "The Interestings" with Jules and her friends over four decades. She agreed and referred

to British filmmaker Michael Apted and his "Up Series," which documents the life of 14 children from age seven in the United Kingdom.

"I was very struck by Apted's 'Up' films," Wolitzer said. "I was struck by what happens to people and talent over time."

Lopate then explained how the "Up" films are about going back to people every seven years and that turn out very different than initially imagined.

Furthermore, Lopate asked if the novel was about class and how class differences play out when people grow up.

"The American novel is often a novel about class. I think for me, I became more aware of class but I didn't set out to write about it. I'll say this: the successful Ethan and Ash become gazillionaires and Jules and her husband are a social worker and an ultrasound technician. The two couples are at different levels and it was a good way for me to explore class," Wolitzer said.

The next QC Evening Reading will be on Oct. 27 with Mary Gaitskill. Admission to the event is \$20, but free for those with a CUNY student ID.

For more information on the Evening Readings series, visit [www.qcreadings.org](http://www.qcreadings.org).

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# More universities going “test-optional”

**DARIA KACZOROWSKA**  
News Reporter

George Washington University no longer requires students to submit Scholastic Admissions Test or American College Test scores as part of its admissions process starting this semester.

Instead, students applying for admissions can choose to submit test scores or opt out in having their scores considered if they feel the scores do not accurately reflect their ability to do college work.

Therefore, admissions decisions are based on the student's high school grades and essays. The move, which was announced by university officials over the summer after a task force studied the issue, comes at a time when many other colleges and universities are leaning towards “test-optional” as well.

Hampshire College's

President Jonathan Lash, wrote for the “The Huffington Post” about his college's move to reject using these test scores altogether.

“Last year Hampshire College decided not to accept SAT/ACT scores from high school applicants seeking admission. That got us kicked off the rankings, disqualified us, per U.S. News rankings criteria. That's OK with us,” Lash wrote. “If we reduce education to the outcomes of a test, the only incentive for schools and students to innovate is in the form of improving test-taking and scores.”

After the change, diversity of Hampshire College's incoming class increased and minority enrollment went up to 31 percent from just 21 percent last semester.

But can the same happen at CUNY?

Chelsea Lavington, associate director of Admissions at Queens College, is not so sure it would

adopt this precedent.

“Entrance exams are just one component of the admissions process. We look at all of the candidate's qualities. And decisions for admissions come from a higher power. Graduate testing is a little trickier too because those are more subject-based, like the subject-tests [for undergraduates] and decisions for testing requirements come from a higher power in CUNY,” Lavington said.

Gabriela Kobylska, a junior, is not enthusiastic about the movement to eliminate the tests.

“SAT [exams] and graduate exams should not be optional. I think they are a pivotal factor in evaluating the credentials of a student during the application process,” Kobylska said, “Queens College is rated among the best colleges in the northern region. That being said, Queens College should maintain certain standards so that they can determine who is

qualified to be admitted into the school.”

However, Magda Jablonowska, a senior at John Jay College, thinks the SAT is incompatible with students' records.

“I believe that the SAT should be eliminated. One score alone should not dictate your abilities in subjects such as math and English. Each person has different test-taking skills and difficulties,” Jablonowska said. “Let's say that you had a bad day and you did poorly on the exam; you probably won't be eager to take it again. It is simply not fair for students.”

Krysta Tewksbury, a senior at Lindenhurst High School, believed there should be an alternative to subject-based testing in college admissions.

“I believe that the SAT tests are, overall, pointless. I feel that your score on one test shouldn't

determine your future and whether or not you should be allowed into a school. Rather, schools should test your personality and how much drive and passion you have for the chosen career path as opposed to how well you do on tests.” Tewksbury said.

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## Participatory budgeting may come to Queens College

**BRANDON JORDAN**  
News Reporter

Queens College students may soon decide how to spend part of student government's budget through participatory budgeting.

But what is participatory budgeting?

“Basically, it's a direct democratic process with assemblies that diagnose problems, identify problems [and] come up with proposals that address them,” Alexander Kolokotronis, a senior and member of Students Organization for Democratic Alternatives, said. “Eventually, they decide which of the proposals they want to move forward with; so you implement and monitor them.”

Participatory budgeting began in 1989 in Porto Alegre, Brazil, where citizens voted on projects proposed by other residents. Since then, it expanded

to other cities throughout the world.

SODA, founded in April 2014, brought up the issue of participatory budgeting to students during the student body elections last semester.

“It really engaged a lot of people. At least 95 percent of people stopped, listened to what we had to say and talked for 40 seconds to a minute about what their concerns were,” Kolokotronis said.

Brooklyn College, a CUNY school, is familiar with the process as it was the nation's first college to use participatory budgeting in 2012. The college's student government allocated at least \$20,000 for students to decide what projects to enact and vote on the best one.

Despite delays and implementation issues, the college repeated the process in 2014 with a larger budget for students.

QC President Felix Matos

Rodriguez said he was not aware of such efforts at QC, but familiar with the concept of participatory budgeting. Moreover, Rodriguez believed the college could not allocate a sufficient amount of funds for such a project.

“While we do not have a formal participatory policy in place, given our budget process is different than that of the City Council, we do engage the campus community in terms of decisions of how funds are allocated, like the students voting on a transportation fee to support the shuttle buses which began operation in fall of 2014. Had the majority of students not voted to support this initiative, we would not have been able to provide this service,” Rodriguez said.

Kolokotronis said SODA is currently working with not only student government, but also other clubs on campus as well to implement participatory budgeting.

“We already have a tentative design for the process and we're looking for clubs to get involved. We've been reaching out to clubs that already exist on campus,” Kolokotronis said.

Kolokotronis added, in spite of students only voting in the process, faculty can help implement the straightforward model at the college.

“[I]t can transform the bureaucracy in a way that opens it up and makes it transparent,” Kolokotronis said.

Isabel Pulgarin, a senior majoring in political science, said the process was both creative and positive for building relationships among students.

“I think that if activists want to offer students a way to further express themselves, unveil creativity and foster applied thinking in the form of projects, then I'm all for it,” Pulgarin said. “The voting aspect is a plus as well, allowing for the most

popular projects to be picked and, thus, in theory generating the most support and hopefully involvement in said project.”

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## Success comes to event highlighting breast cancer awareness

**YARAH SHABANA**

*News Reporter*

Queens College students and clubs helped organize an event to raise awareness on breast cancer during Breast Cancer Awareness Week.

Students gathered in front of the Student Union on Oct. 15 surrounded by a pink storm of t-shirts, ribbons, turbans, pins and more to support Breast Cancer with all profits to the American Cancer Society. Signature goods were sold along with cookies and henna art. This multi-cultural event raised over \$1,500 and lasted for two consecutive Wednesdays.

"It was pretty amazing to see how everyone came together," Jap Singh, the event's main organizer, said. "It allowed everyone to look past the differences we have such as race and religion and unite under a common goal, which was bigger than our differences."

Events on campus, organized by clubs on campus, previously dealt with important issues in society. For example, donations were raised for refugees escaping from Syria or raising awareness on torture at Guantanamo Bay.

For this event, organizations and clubs from Student Association to the Sikh Club, contributed to this event, which ended with great results.

"Last year, we raised about \$900 and this year [it was] \$1,500 with the second part of the fundraiser to come," Singh said.

The idea of the event began when the Sikh Club intended on doing a turban and henna event, where the latter refers to dye used for body art. Singh decided to combine both into one for a bigger cause.

"I was given a platform to actually make a difference. We were brainstorming on potential events we can do, and, since it was October, I thought 'Why not something for breast cancer?' Everyone on the team was on board and we continued to list different fundraising methods to raise the most amount of money for the cause," Singh said.

Students, meanwhile, enjoyed the entire event outside the Student Union and gave donations as well.

"There was a lot of energy," Rezwana Khan, a senior, said. "People were participating in dances, were very friendly, energetic and I had a great time. There were many people who came and bought things. We definitely got awareness out."

George Titomihelakis, president of Project Sunshine, agreed the turnout for the event was large.

"There was a lot of people



**PHOTO BY CHRISTINA CARDONA**  
Students, as seen above, partook in an event seeking to raise awareness on breast cancer.

who came out to support and a lot of people got involved. [It was] definitely very multi-cultural, very supportive of the cause and spreading awareness

for breast cancer. It was [also] run very efficiently, the bake sale went well and had a few speakers from the American Cancer Society. Overall, it was a great event and

we definitely made an impact at Queens College," Titomihelakis said.

Singh highlighted how this would not be the last time such an event will take place on campus.

"Seeing last year's results really blew me away and I knew we had to do it again, but bigger," Singh said. "I hope this is continues to be an annual event for years to come."

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## NYPIRG seeks to end dependence on fossil fuels

**PHIL VALLONE**

*News Reporter*

NYPIRG's Queens College chapter rallied against fossil fuel dependence during a fundraiser held by New York State Governor Andrew Cuomo at the Richard Rodgers Theatre.

Ali Kirkpatrick, a project coordinator for NYPIRG, serves as a campaign leader for Reforming Energy Vision on campus, which raises awareness on alternative energy and fossil fuel divestment.

"It is an initiative that is being overseen by the Public Service Commission to completely rethink the way that energy is used and distributed here in the state," Kirkpatrick said. "With this campaign we have a chance of changing [our dependency on fossil fuels] and basically innovating infrastructure in a way that will provide huge boosts while using renewable energy, making energy more efficient and cost effective for everybody."

One project proposed is, if approved, to build a liquefied natural gas facility on the coast of Long Beach.

The Port Ambrose Project, another proposal, is the offshore energy infrastructure project designed to deliver natural gas to New York and New Jersey, primarily during the winter season.

According to Cuomo's proposal, the project will provide enough gas to meet the energy needs of more than a million homes. It would also create more than 800 construction jobs as well as dozens of permanent and contracted operations jobs.

However, the Democratic governor said earlier this week that he is doubtful of the proposed project.

"There are obvious questions that would have to be answered before I know that New York would approve it," Cuomo said.

NYPIRG, meanwhile, urged Cuomo to veto the project, claiming it will endanger public health, safety and the environment.

The last LNG facility was located in Bloomfield, Staten Island. The facility exploded on Feb. 10, 1973, killing 40 workers.

At the same time, efforts are underway to build a wind farm, potentially the country's largest offshore wind project, in the same area off the Long Island coastline.

REV believes 350MW, of which the project could produce, would provide enough energy for 112,000 homes, while operating at 40 percent of its capacity.

The collaborative is still working out the exact location of the wind farm, pending results of environmental and wind-strength studies; however, the proposed location does conflict with the Port Ambrose Project.

Only four percent of the 127 square miles of the proposed wind farm's area of interest would be required for the operation of the LNG facility, based on information from Port Ambrose Project's site.

While critics may cite the shared location of both proposals, NYPIRG focused on the volatility of natural gas in comparison to wind energy as well as reducing reliance on fossil fuels.

"We've been totally gridlocked into depending on fossil fuels and kept at the mercy of these huge corporations in the utility industry that have had way too much control over far too much for far too long. With this campaign, we have a chance at changing that," Kirkpatrick said.

NYPIRG is working with local businesses in the Long Beach area to raise awareness on how local residents are most affected by the LNG pipeline.

"We are also doing business outreach in Long Beach, going to local businesses, talking to the owners and making sure they're aware of the proposed LNG facility," Kirkpatrick said.

NYPIRG drafted a letter for local business owners to sign and send to Cuomo and oppose the Port Ambrose Project as well as support the proposed wind farm. A press conference is scheduled at Long Beach City Hall on Oct. 27.

Kirkpatrick encouraged students to get involved in efforts to oppose the project. She also

emphasized the importance of students being heard as they are an important demographic.

"Submitting public comments, engaging with local politicians and letting their voice be heard [all help]," Kirkpatrick said.

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## “Mosque Alert” focuses on Islamophobia in society

**YARAH SHABANA**

*News Reporter*

Students joined actors on Oct. 16, for a participatory play called “Mosque Alert” at the Kupferberg Center.

“Mosque Alert” is about the construction of a new mosque in Naperville, Ill, which led to conflicts between two families of different religions. The two families learn more about each other and eventually put their differences aside.

The cast consisted of actors such as Noam Ash, star of YouTube’s “My Gay Roommate.”

“The creation of these characters really grew out of a development process,” Jamil Khoury, the play writer, said. “We started looking into this broader issue of the resistance of building mosques across the US.”

The play began with each character’s backgrounds and belief systems. Mostafa Khalil, along with his wife Aisha Khalil and their children, advocates for the construction of the mosque. In contrast, Daniel Baker, the antagonist, rejects it and creates a website called Mosque Alert in response. His niece and nephew, already friends with the Khalil family, disagree with the creation of the site.

The climax of the story



**PHOTO BY YARAH SHABANA**  
Jamil Khoury, seen at the right, speaks to students during “Mosque Alert,” a play that took place at the Kupferberg Center on Oct. 16.

occurs at a town hall meeting where both families figure out what is the best decision for the city. Ultimately, Baker resolves his differences and the mosque is built.

“They touched on a lot of topics about discrimination and obviously I’ve experienced all those things. Whenever anything like that happens, I wonder is it

whether I’m Muslim, a woman [or] black? What is it? What are you going to choose?” Yasmin Mohammed, a freshman, said.

Khoury noted the difficulty in creating the play and the time dedicated to create the story.

“I started creating six characters that grew into 11 through an online process where we would tape video logs. Direct

talk to the camera, learning about characters, conflict scenes, dynamics, relational backstories. We asked people for feedback, input, asking about connection what to add and so on to build. It’s been a somewhat a non-traditional process,” Khoury said.

Additionally, Khoury liked the “civic engagement component” to the play. He wanted to create

conversations about the issues portrayed in the play and how it ties to other problems related to discrimination.

“It was a beautiful experience. I was sitting here in the corner, my script in my lap, doing more cuts and changes and I can feel you guys in such a wonderful way. For a playwright, it’s an exhilarating feeling. A lot of people are leaning forward, they’re very attentive and just engaged. You guys are like a dream,” Khoury said.

Khoury and the cast ensured the audience understood Islamophobia and the importance of keeping an open mind on similar issues.

“To have a high school class making the connections that they made and analogies to their own lives is very exciting and very encouraging,” Khoury said. “Islamophobia is so salient, so in trend and so deep in this culture.”

The final edition of the play will be performed at Silk Road Rising in Chicago next April. The cast will feature QC students performing alongside professional actors.

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## Renovations at Queens College benefit media studies and science students

**MICHAEL TRINIDAD**

*News Reporter*

Renovations at King Hall and Remsen Hall should give students an improved TV studio and modernized science labs.

QC decided to renovate the TV studio at King Hall and the labs at Remsen Hall using a \$2 million grant allocated for such projects.

The improvements will include an improved green room, modernized electrical equipment and a makeover of the entire TV Studio at King Hall. There will also be more spacious laboratories and modern lab equipment at Remsen Hall.

While some students may view this as a distraction, media studies and science majors are now able to get better hands-on experience with more modernized technology.

“Maybe this could help us learn how to produce shows or even be on TV,” Jordan O’Brian, a sophomore majoring in media studies, said.

While these new renovations will benefit students, it will also help out the teachers as they can



**PHOTO BY BRANDON JORDAN**  
Remsen Hall (above) is in the process of renovating its labs for students to use.

teach in a spacious area with better technology.

“[Students in Remsen Hall] are making due with setups that aren’t designed for research,” Robert Engel, interim dean of Math and Natural Science, said.

Over the past 50 years, both halls looked the same and required much-needed renovations.

“I’ll probably enjoy class more with newer equipment after the renovations are done,” Miguel Rodriguez, media studies major,

said.

While most of these renovations modernize the technology in King Hall, the college is committed to use less energy and be more resourceful. The school added LCD lighting

and efficient air conditioning systems because of this.

“The real purpose of this project is to position our students to walk out of here and be marketable from day one,” Dave Gosine, director of Campus Facilities, Construction & Design, said.

Many of these renovations, while viewed in a positive light, may distract students whether they are going to class or relaxing on the Quad. Yet some students around campus are not aware of renovations at all.

“I hadn’t honestly noticed, but there seems to be good coming out of these renovations than anything else,” Robin Verma, a sophomore, said.

The renovations in King Hall is expected to be completed at the end of the fall semester; however, there is no due date for the completion of the renovations in Remsen Hall.

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# FILM REVIEW

## “Bridge of Spies” challenges patriotism amid hysteria

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News Reporter

“Bridge of Spies,” a film directed by Steven Spielberg, stays away from the darkness of the Cold War era and shows stooping to an enemy’s level betrays what it means to be American.

Though this film is slightly weighed down with nostalgia, it still is entertaining. The film, based on a true story, begins in 1955, the height of Cold War hysteria between the United States and the Soviet Union.

It starts off in the apartment of Rudolf Abel, played by Mark Rylance, a balding 50-year-old man with a permanent frown on his face. Abel lives alone, is a skilled painter and a Soviet spy.

Abel receives a covert message left under a park bench, but does not know CIA operatives are following him. They follow him home, break down his door and arrest him.

After the CIA fails to get him to talk, he is sent to trial and potentially faces the death penalty if found guilty.

James Donovan, played by Tom Hanks, is selected to be his defense attorney. A clever insurance lawyer, Donovan seeks to give Abel a dignified trial



PHOTO COURTESY OF MOVIEWEB.COM  
“Bridge of Spies” is a film taking place during the Cold War that deals with issues like patriotism during that era.

despite pressure from his peers and the public to do otherwise.

He is able to spare Abel from the electric chair, but garners the hatred of Americans, which results in a drive-by shooting at his house.

After the trial, an American pilot and a Yale student are captured by Soviet officials.

Donovan is sent to East Berlin where he negotiates a prisoner exchange between Abel and these

Americans.

The set design is what makes this film remarkable. The meticulous detail of every scene, from the dilapidated East Berlin to the old style flash light bulbs that scatter the ground, adds a wonderful sense of realism to the film.

Tom Hanks and Mark Rylance do wonderful jobs playing the extraordinary characters.

Hanks does his best in playing a character so lovable, yet able to rise above using his only weapon of morality and willpower.

Rylance plays his character with barely any facial expressions, besides the movement of his eyebrows and a constant frown. His character is familiar, yet enigmatic.

The relationship these characters form resonates well as

both are men of integrity. The difference is their willingness to concede to hope.

The directing and writing in this film is cheesy, but the right kind of cheese. The shots are all perfectly crafted. The writing at times is overly sentimental, which affects the film from adding levels of complexity.

All in all, the film is still able to evoke a real emotion, excite with dramatic chases and provoke thought with clever dialogue.

This film, though not a complex masterpiece, uses its heart to cut through the emotion. For Americans, “Bridge of Spies” teaches them not to lose their code of morals amid hysteria, which Donovan points out in the film.

“We are defined by the rulebook based on civil liberties; though this is our weakness, it is also our greatest strength.” Donovan said.

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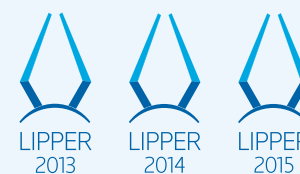
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# The Moynihan Report still controversial 50 years later

PHIL VALLONE

News Reporter

The Department of Labor published a report in 1965 titled "The Negro Family: The Case for National Action," commonly known as the Moynihan Report, named after Daniel Patrick Moynihan, the author.

The report condemned the disintegration of the family structure within the poor, black community. It was criticized for "blaming the victim" instead of targeting systematic racism and other societal factors.

However, the report became controversial within the black community who, at the time, fought for equal treatment under the law. Still, its legacy remains as supporters refer to it even 50 years after its publication.

Stephen Steinberg, a Queens College professor,

examined the report's legacy 50 years after its publication at Powdermaker 351 on Oct. 7.

Steinberg discussed how the Moynihan Report is still cited to explain racial inequality. He advised to "follow the footnotes," suggesting that a number of the sources that made their way into the report were racially biased.

"Today, in the wake of Ferguson and Baltimore, the weak black family is again cited by politicians, pundits and scholars as the root of the problem," Steinberg said. "Once again, instead of confronting the deep equalities between blacks and whites, public discourse again lapses into a blaming of the victim."

Additionally, Steinberg wrote a piece for Boston Review titled "The Moynihan Report at Fifty: The Long

Reach of Intellectual Racism," where he examined racism and the use of the report in intellectual circles.

Pamela Bennett, also a QC professor, felt the Moynihan report significantly ignored the greater societal problems experienced by blacks during the civil rights movement.

"Although it was offered as a 'case for national action,' it provided an inaccurate assessment of what lays at the heart of the challenges black people face in America," Bennett said.

Bennett warned of the consequences of making wrong or inaccurate assessments as it would likely lead to wrong solutions for resolving overall issues.

"Wrong assessments of the sources of social problems inevitably lead to

inadequate and wrong-headed prescriptions for solving them. Therefore, turning to the Moynihan Report today for insight into what America needs to do to alleviate racial inequality and the social consequences of historical and present-day racial injustices is even more problematic today than it was fifty years ago when the report was published," Bennett said.

The report is still used and cited across the U.S., including in New York City politics.

William Bratton, the police commissioner at the New York Police Department, came under fire last month for praising the Moynihan Report.

During an interview on MSNBC's "Morning Joe," Bratton referred to the "disintegration" of the family,

a term used in the Moynihan Report, and how Moynihan was right.

"It's gone beyond just the black community, although so much of what you are reading in The New York Times today is centered largely in communities of color in our major cities. We really need to find ways to deal with this," Bratton said.

New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio, who appointed Bratton as police chief, later disagreed with Bratton's comments on the report.

"That report is literally half a century old and I think society has changed a lot," De Blasio said. "I think there are some assumptions in that report that just don't hold today."

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I am also in the process of starting a new club in Queens College called Martial Arts Therapy which is old/new techniques for pain management and rehab. I am seeking student interns to work for me on this project and another with film and media.

[www.garymoskowitzfilms.com](http://www.garymoskowitzfilms.com)

# Half of college graduates say college was worth it

IRVING CRUZ

News Reporter

A recent survey conducted by Gallup-Purdue University found only half of recent graduates strongly agree with their college education "was worth the cost."

Gallup-Purdue University, as part of a national survey, selected 30,000 students from both public and private colleges. The goal is to help college professors observe and understand their overall teaching ability by tracking student experiences, areas where the college can improve and well-being after graduation.

Interestingly, the statement about the worth of a college degree was added for the 2015 edition of the survey.

The percentage of college graduates who disagreed with the statement surprised Brandon

Busteed, executive director of Gallup Education and Workforce Development.

"Given the value we as a country place on education, you would expect that we would have a much higher percentage who say they definitely agree with that statement," Busteed said. "That was a real shocker to me."

Student who graduated between the years 2006 to 2015 are less likely to find value in their college education. Only 38 percent of graduates from this time period strongly agree their education was worth the cost.

Busteed believed the low percentage is because of the financial crisis and unstable job market since these graduates were less likely to find jobs in their field immediately after college.

In fact, based on an

Economic Policy Institute report titled "The Class of 2015," unemployment among college graduates, which they estimated as 21.3 percent, remains high because "the Great Recession and its aftermath is the longest, most severe period of economic weakness in more than seven decades." The authors estimated the unemployment rate for those under 25 to be 21.3 percent.

Nonetheless, the survey found an inverse correlation between the growth of a graduate's student debt and their personal value of education. Only 33 percent of graduates with debt strongly agreed college was worth it.

The percentage was even lower for graduates with \$50,000 or more in student loans. Only 18 percent believed their education

was worth anything.

In contrast, a graduate's chance of answering strongly agree almost doubled in colleges where students are well connected to the school's faculty.

Graduates involved in extracurricular activities or internships were likely to say they found value in their education. Moreover, alumni with a strong connection to faculty and those participated in mentorship programs were more likely to worth in their college career.

Eugene Alamag, a senior, agreed college is not always worth it. Furthermore, he advocated students consider other career and education options.

"In a trade job, you can learn a trade through apprenticeship and enter the workforce in a short period. The cost of education and

time invested adds up, and you're not guaranteed a job. I don't think it's worth the effort," Alamag said.

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# OP-EDS

## Are stricter gun laws really the answer?

BY BRITTANY BURKE

Are promoting stricter gun laws really the answer? Is this where the journey to saving lives truly begins? Or does it begin way before one steps into a store in a state that does not require you to hand over any information besides a “hey how ya doin’? I’d like to buy this gun” greeting?

States with tighter gun control laws have fewer gun deaths, hence the title of the article. I am proposing that the issue of gun control in our country falls way deeper than merely altering its laws in our governmental policies.

The 26-year-old who shot and killed at least nine people while injuring many others at Umpqua Community College in Oregon on October 1st wasn’t at all the first time we experienced a tragedy alike; I say this with a heavy heart.

I’m disgusted to report that we have had over thirty-six

mass shootings since Columbine, according to The Telegraph. According to my own calculations, on average, this means there have been at least three shootings a year; progressively, beginning in 2007, mass shootings increased a great deal in number each year.

Although prior to the mass killing at Sandy Hook elementary school in Newtown, Connecticut there were many other shootings, this was the first eye-opener to us as a nation at how various teens and young adults rebel against an internal, unstructured world.

This IT revolution has its positive effects on business growth as well as staying interconnected, yet the emotional and social health of human beings seems to be at stake. If it weren’t already obvious, I’m suggesting that technology today, as it continuously advances, impacts the focus of each and every one of us.

Furthermore, it deters you

from focusing on the reality of your own well-being as opposed to the virtual reality one has created for themselves through social-media of any kind. What does this have to do with gun abuse and the mass killings I’m writing about? Well, it has to do with everything.

According to Harvard Magazine, Generation X, also known now as the App mindset, “motivates the youth to seek direct, quick and easy solutions- the kind of answers an app would provide.” Within this abuse of technology today comes the question of the kind of morale and structure that happens within the homes of these young adults.

Personally, I am scared to bring children into this world, although I am confident I will do my best to provide a structured environment in which my children would not at all be afraid to live in a healthy way and rebel productively.

I’m suggesting two issues here: the first is the abuse of technology, and two, putting down your phones to better involve yourself in the lives of your loved ones; it is evident we are not involved, psychologically, in the minds of the young generation and what we can do to provide a better quality of life for our neighbors, and future generations to come.

If we take a second and internalize the density of these tragedies, we would understand just how each and every one of us are neglecting to proactively and productively take control over an issue that is snowballing into an every-year-occurrence.

Furthermore, this every-year-occurrence means losing more innocent lives. In turn, we are selfishly making sure our own lives are comfortable, instead of realizing that safety is only a privilege that we will soon lose if we neglect to pay attention to the

safety of not only ourselves and our loved ones, but to everyone around us.

If we wait any longer to give 100 percent of our effort to these issues, and continue to brush them under the rug, we will have no hope for our future.

*Brittany Burke is a senior and an English major. She can be emailed at [brittany@theknightnews.com](mailto:brittany@theknightnews.com).*

**Have something to say?**

**Disagree with what was written?**

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## Empower young people to talk about mental health

BY RAQUEL GOODRICH

The campus tragedies that have occurred over the past few weeks at Northern Arizona University, Texas Southern University and Umpqua Community College in Oregon have, once again, brought mental health issues to the forefront of the nation’s consciousness. These large-scale, horrific incidents – while still rare, receive a lot of media attention. Unfortunately, they only tell part of the story.

The reality is that there are many mental health stories, in every community, sometimes very close to home. The majority of people struggling with mental health issues do not resort to violence, and instead are more likely to have acts of violence happen against them.

Mental health can be one of the most difficult topics to bring up, but it’s also one of the most important. Given that one in four Americans struggles with mental health issues, and three-fourths of all such problems arise between

the ages of 14 and 24, it’s crucial that young people know they’re not alone, learn to talk openly about mental health and seek help as early as possible.

Some warning signs that may indicate a young person needs help include frequent sadness; changes in mood, behavior and eating and sleeping patterns; not wanting to go to school or work; fighting with family and friends; drug and alcohol abuse; and feelings of hopelessness, anger or confusion.

When teens and young adults learn to recognize these signs and have the tools to address mental health challenges, they can step up, contribute to the conversation and, ultimately, help formulate community solutions to issues of mental health diagnosis and treatment.

With this in mind, the National Institute for Civil Discourse is launching the national Text, Talk, Act mental health awareness campaign, with text-message enabled community

events going on throughout the months of October and November.

These events are designed to reach young people right where they live, through the use of mobile technology and social media. The events, which will be occurring across the country, encourage candid, face-to-face discussions on mental health to reduce isolation and misunderstanding and teach teens and young adults how to get and give help, when necessary.

Here’s how Text, Talk, Act works: Participants gather at any time throughout the months of October or November, in small groups (3-4 people), with one cell phone per group. They text the word “START” to the number 89800 and receive a series of text messages that guide the group through a 45-minute conversation on mental health. The text messages provide prompts about topics such as why talking about mental health is important and how to help a friend in need.

The messages include videos, social media interactions

and a series of questions, some of which invite participants to text in ideas on how individuals and communities can improve mental health. Participants’ submitted ideas are visible in real time to all other participants around the country. As the conversation comes to a close, participants receive links to resources to continue the conversation and/or seek help.

Previous participants have said Text, Talk, Act events helped them better understand mental health and left them feeling more comfortable talking about mental health. We learned that when given a safe forum, young people are eager to join the conversation and become committed to being part of the solution.

So, let’s make a resolution to talk to each other. Let’s commit to learning the warning signs and starting the conversation when a young person needs help. As a community, let’s learn our needs, find out about recovery resources, and explore ways to improve and

augment our resources.

Come to one of our events or organize your own. Organizers of Text, Talk, Act events can win \$1,000 prizes for their schools or community organizations, and the campaign provides all the materials needed to organize an event.

To find an event in your area, sign up for the contest, get materials for your own event, or learn more about mental health, visit <http://creatingcommunitysolutions.org/texttalkact>.

*Raquel Goodrich is the Text, Talk, Act Director & Director of Digital Communications at the National Institute for Civil Discourse.*



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## SPORTS

## Queens College's baseball stadium named after alum

BRANDON HERNANDEZ

Sports Reporter

Charles Hennekens, a Queens College alum, was honored by the college at a ceremony on Oct. 17 with the baseball field named after him.

After the unveiling of the new stadium sign, Hennekens threw the opening pitch for a baseball scrimmage.

In the scientific community, Hennekens is known for saving more than 1.1 million lives by discovering aspirin can prevent heart attacks.

Hennekens is both the first Sir Richard Doll Professor and an adviser at Florida Atlantic

University. In addition, he received the Ochsner Award Relating Smoking and Health by the Ochsner Clinic Foundation last year for finding the risks of smoking tied to heart attacks.

A Phi Beta Kappa graduate, Hennekens furthered his education with a stint at Harvard University where he designed The Physicians Health Study. Moreover, he is the first and only graduate in both the Achievement and Athletic Halls of Fame.

During his time at QC, however, he served as captain of the basketball team and co-captain of the baseball team. Nicknamed

"Flash," Hennekens won awards like the Regan-Stein Award and Long Island Press Athlete-Scholar Award.

Gerard Solomon, chairperson of the journalism department at QC, grew up knowing Hennekens since childhood.

"We both went to elementary and middle school together. We've known each other for more than half a century. When we started college, we went our separate ways, but I saw that he was becoming active as a donor to the college and, soon, we had a warm and friendly reconnection at

a gala last year," Solomon said.

"I remember him as a very competitive person at the elementary school playground. I thought he was the smartest person and he thought I was the smartest person; we were both flattered by our references. He and I both feel it's important to give back to a place that meant a lot to us."

Solomon views Hennekens as a highly intellectual and competitive person as well as a great friend deserving the nomination. In fact, he owns a copy of The Phoenix from 1962 that includes an image and sports

article about Hennekens.

In a press release from QC, Hennekens was delighted in having the stadium named after him. "My amazing, fabulous, uneducated, working-class parents instilled in me the values of getting an excellent education which Queens College provided to me as well as to give something back so I am thrilled, honored and humbled on this occasion," Hennekens said.

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## Victory and breaking records on minds of QC swimmers

HANS THEMISTODE

Sports Reporter

The season for both the men's and women's swimming season is rapidly approaching and expectations for success are high.

Specifically, winning the conference and breaking records are the goals of both teams this season.

While these expectations may be a bit lofty, the teams believe they could accomplish such feats. Moreover, the teams plan on building off last year's season where they won several events.

The men's swimming team placed second at the Ranger

Invitational on Dec. 8 and captured an astounding eight first place finishes at SUNY maritime earlier this year. Not only did they have great team success but they also gathered individual success as well.

For example, last season, Brandon Sweetman set a new record for the 100 breaststroke with a record time of 59.79.

Head coach Alicia Lampasso-Dillon and her women's team are young; however, Lampasso-Dillon sees potential in each player.

"We're a young team and a bit inexperienced, but I'm looking forward to watching them grow all

season long. We're pushing for it all right now and I'm expecting a lot of them this year," Lampasso-Dillon said.

Meanwhile, Yohancey Kingston, head coach of the men's swimming team, lost a few older players from last season. Still, Kingston is preparing the new batch of recruits for the upcoming season and setting high expectations.

"I have a few seniors on my team, but this is only about their second year being on the team so inexperience factors in as well. Even though our teams maybe young and a bit inexperienced, I

believe our talent is undeniable," Kingston said.

The first meet of the season starts on Nov. 2 and, although both coaches understand the need to keep the team motivated, an important part of keeping morale high is having fun.

"Sometimes I jump in the pool and challenge them to races. I haven't done it this season, but I know I'll do it soon," Kingston said.

Both Lampasso-Dillon and Kingston compliment each other well as head coaches. Lampasso-Dillon and Kingston both graduated from college two

years ago. While Kingston joined the men's team in late 2014, she became a part of the women's team staff in 1988. Overall, the bond they share allows them to bring the best out of their swimmers.

"We just bounce ideas off each other and I love her. I'm new here so she helps show me the ropes. It's like an old school, new school thing so we just blend our ideas and it becomes something beautiful as well as beneficial for the both of us," Kingston said.

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## Men's tennis reflects college's vast diversity of students

HANS THEMISTODE

Sports Reporter

Queens College is known for its diverse culture on campus along with students from different nationalities and ethnicities.

In fact, according to data analyst Randy Olson, Queens County, where QC is located in, is the third most diverse county in the U.S. and the most diverse if Alaska and Hawaii are not counted.

Thus, it should come as no surprise the college's sports teams reflect this diversity as they include a mix of individuals coming from a variety of cultural backgrounds. The men's tennis team is one example of this with a diverse set of players.

Four players on team hail from different places around the globe. Sophomores Federico Toscano and Lucas Martinez are from Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Meanwhile, sophomore Sharvill Nawghre and junior Ryan Frankel come from Nagpur, India, and Bournemouth, England, respectively.

It is not unusual for a team to include teams from around the world, but no player in the tennis team comes from the state of New York or even the U.S.

Sports like basketball, baseball and volleyball recruit differently than tennis. Recruiting local players and open tryouts usually are the methods used to fill the roster; however, tennis works differently with agents acting as representatives for players.

"Most players are transfers. They hear about the school and they email us but a lot is done through agents. Usually players hire agents who, at times, know

the coaches and will contact us regarding a player they believe we will be interested in," Somadi Druker, head coach of the men's tennis team, said. "We work with so many agents that usually those agents have a good feeling about the type of players we would be interested in."

Druker herself taught tennis professional at Norman McCarthy Tennis Group at Cape Town, South Africa. It is known as one of the top academies in South Africa.

Regardless, meeting with agents is only half of the process in recruiting such players.

"From there we watch videos. There aren't really interviews so much because they live so far so it's mostly word of mouth," Druker said.

From there, the videos of these players are observed closely

by the staff, although more is done afterward.

"It's not just the video, we also check to see how they've done in school and if there are any red flags. From there, we check whom they've played with and practiced with and the type of competition they've played against," Fabio Minami, volunteer assistant coach for the men's team, said. "We also try to reach out to other coaches that are able to give us a good breakdown of that player."

Playing tennis in a whole new environment is something the players must learn. The difficult part, however, comes from adjusting to life in the U.S. and feeling comfortable.

Both Somadi and Minami understand the struggles that come with this new adjustment so their

reach goes far beyond the tennis court.

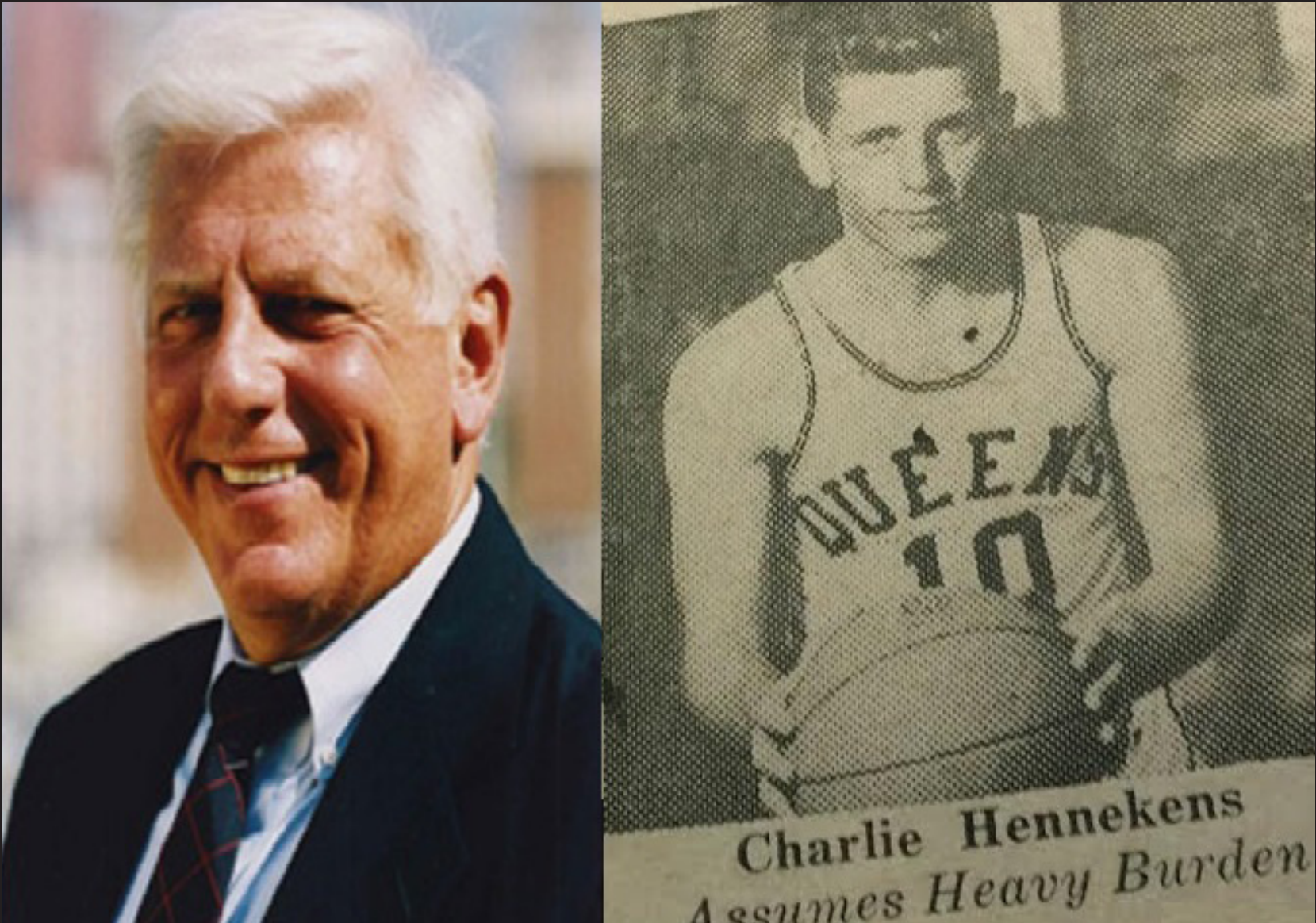
"We're like mom and dad because we're the closest they have from home. We all try to be very close because we are their second family," Somadi said.

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# KNIGHT NEWS SPORTS

## THE FLASH RETURNS



Dr. Charles Hennekens received honor of having baseball stadium named after him

**SEE PAGE 11**

Photo courtesy of Gerry Solomon

**Queens College and their international players**

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