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THE KNIGHT NEWS



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Breaking News & Video

Journalism in the Interest of the Queens College Community

A NIGHT TO REMEMBER

**Gladys Knight
plays one-
woman concert
at Kupferberg
Center for
the Arts**

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Photo Courtesy of Erick Urglies

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

A Warning on Printing Using Economics 101

There's a tragedy of the commons at the second floor library printing station. It won't be long before free printing disappears.

I'd like to suggest a simple solution that will keep printing free, make Mr. Espinoza's job easier and reduce waste.

Instead of the current scheme, charge for printing everywhere. Give students a nontransferable printing credit on their Q-Cards every semester. The amount can be based on how many courses they take or some other reasonable measure.

This way, students will print only what they must and Mr. Espinoza won't run around all day refilling paper trays.

- Devin Hobbes, QC Alum

We are always interested in receiving letters from our readers to further discuss the stories presented in our issues.

If you have a comment, please email us at info@theknightnews.com

MISSION STATEMENT:

"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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“The Empress of Soul” performs at Colden Auditorium

CANDICE SAMUELS

News Reporter

Gladys Knight performed in front of a packed audience on Nov. 7 at Colden Auditorium.

A seven-time Grammy winner with over 40 years in the music industry, Knight played her hits ranging from genres including pop, gospel and adult contemporary.

Born in Atlanta, Knight began performing gospel music at age four in the Mount Mariah Baptist Church and sang as a guest soloist with the Morris Brown College Choir. Years later, she won the grand prize on “Ted Mack’s Amateur Hour,” a television show.

The crowd of diverse concertgoers waited patiently to see the legendary “Empress of Soul.” She opened the show with a powerful performance of “Love Overboard,” a 1987 hit single from the Gladys Knight and the Pips catalog.

The group was created by her mother Elizabeth and consisted of Knight, her brother Bubba, her sister Brenda and her cousins William and Eleanor Guest. Knight is best known for the many hits she recorded during the 1960s and 1970s with them.

Gladys Knight and the Pips first recorded for the Brunswick



PHOTO COURTESY OF ERICK URGLIES

Audiences were treated with the incredible music of Gladys Knight on Nov. 7 at Colden Auditorium.

label in 1958 and dented the charts with “Every Beat of My Heart” and “Letter Full of Tears,” both released in 1961 on Fury Records. After a few more singles, the group signed with Motown’s Soul label in 1966.

The group moved to Buddah Records in 1973, where they had their biggest hit, “Midnight Train to Georgia.” They then signed

with CBS Records until their break up in 1989. In 1996, they were inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.

Knight brought the crowd to their feet with some of her classics including the popular “Midnight Train to Georgia” and “Neither One of Us,” the latter being the last song the group recorded on Motown Records. She covered

songs from her fellow Motown Records counterparts including the romantic “Oohh Baby Baby” by Smokey Robinson and the Miracles as well as “Just My Imagination” by The Temptations.

Knight never missed a beat with her energetic renditions of songs from various musical eras. She covered songs by soul and R&B artists such as Teddy

Pendergrass, The Spinners and Boyz II Men.

Knight has recorded more than 38 albums over the years including four solo albums. She also guest-starred on several television series throughout the 1980s and 1990s, with roles on “The Jeffersons”, “A Different World”, “Living Single” and “The Jamie Foxx Show”. Most recently in 2012, Knight competed on the 14th season of ABC’s “Dancing with the Stars”, where she partnered with dancer Tristan MacManus.

Knight closed the show by going back to her gospel roots with a powerful rendition of “Let the Church Say Amen.”

The Kupferberg Center will continue their concert series with the Vienna Boys Choir on Dec. 7.

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Leonard Bernstein’s “Mass” brought to life at Queens College

MICHAEL MONTERO

News Reporter

“MASS: A Theatre Piece For Singers, Players and Dancers” proved to be an unconventional mass for the audience at Colden Auditorium on Nov. 2

“Mass” was brought to life with the help of a street chorus, a children’s choir, dancers, an orchestra and a blues and rock band. A conductor replaced the role of a priest while the theatrical piece put a different spin on religion.

The show was conducted by Maurice Peress and directed by Lorca Peress. Maurice Peress was the original conductor when “Mass”

premiered in 1971 at the John F. Kennedy Center for Performing Arts.

The piece is considered to be one of Leonard Bernstein’s most influential works. Bernstein, one of the most successful American composers of all-time, is known for scoring classic Broadway musicals such as “West Side Story”. He also conducted all over the world and was, at one time, the musical director of the New York Philharmonic.

The piece was based on the traditional mass of the Roman Catholic Church and tells a very unique and honest story.

It contained a powerful clash of classical music and contemporary music, a theme in many of Bernstein’s works.

The set featured an appropriate backdrop of various important figures throughout history such as Anne Frank, Rosa Parks, John Lennon and Martin Luther King Jr. They all represented symbols of social change, being monumental leaders in history.

The show began with “Kyrie,” which began the theme of tradition. This was cut short by a folk singer playing a guitar. This folk singer was the celebrant, played by the powerful tenor

Victor Starsky. The charismatic leader led the mass and gained the admiration of the street chorus. The street chorus involved various talented performers and vocalists. Throughout the performance, each voice was brought to the forefront, able to shift with the various styles.

As the story progressed, the street chorus began to express their frustrations with their leader.

“Give us peace,” the singers sang in retaliation.

“I believe in God, but does God believe in me?” sang another voice in Credo in unum Deum.

The inclusion of rock and blues music beautifully captured

the pain and discord within the street chorus. Eventually there is a breakdown of both the celebrant and the street chorus.

The ending showed the emergence of leader in a young girl, played by Cordelia Calberson. However, in the end, it was clear this story was a celebration of music, performance, life, honesty and most importantly, change.

The mass concluded with the traditional saying, “this Mass has ended, go in peace.”

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Brooklyn Museum explores the art of high-heeled shoes

CANDICE SAMUELS

News Reporter

A shoe lover's dream is brought to life at The Brooklyn Museum's "Killer Heels" exhibition.

From the high platform Chopines of 16th century Italy to the glamorous stilettos on today's runways, the exhibition looks at the high-heeled shoe's diverse history and its lasting place in popular culture. "Killer Heels" explores fashion's most alluring accessory.

Loved by some and despised by others, high heels are perhaps one of the most intriguing articles of fashion. However, women were not the first to wear them. High heels were first worn in the West by aristocratic men at the end of the sixteenth century. Women quickly adapted the style and heels became essential to communicating power and prestige through dress.

By the 18th century, the high heel shifted from a symbol of class to a representation of gender. Heels were increasingly thought to embody female vanity and disappeared from mainstream men's fashion.

The first room in the exhibition sheds light on the history of the high-heeled shoe. Chopines, the first elevated platform shoes, were made of decorated cork and wood that were fashionable in 15th and 16th century Italy. With some Chopines being as high as 20 inches, they were worn to keep women's garments from touching the dirty streets.

Shoes with pointed toes and curved heels were fashionable for women in the 17th and 18th centuries. These shoes were up to five inches high and were made with brocaded or embroidered silks, wools, velvets and often embellished with jeweled buckles. This style, later referred to as the pump, was closely associated with luxury and aristocracy. They also made a woman's foot appear tiny and slender under the voluminous skirts popular during this era.

The next room in the exhibit plays with the concepts of glamour and fetish, focusing on the seductive power of the high heel. Many designers and manufacturers worked on developing high, thin heels which were in demand as early as the 1930s and 1940s. After World War II, protruding steel rod technology enabled high heels to reach new stable heights.

The stiletto is highlighted in this section as an iconic shoe symbolizing fantasy and eroticism. Designer houses such as Manolo Blahnik, Christian Louboutin and Alexander McQueen have played with the intrinsic silhouette of the stiletto by stripping the heel to showcase the internal weapon like steel rods or spikes. These are considered fetish style heels, which are extremely high, pointy, and often decorated with buttons, buckles and straps.

The relationship between the high heel and architecture is



PHOTO BY CANDICE SAMUELS

Mother of Pearl (2013), designed by Matilda Maroti and Petra Hogstrom from Swedish brand Shoise, is one of the many unique heels on display at the Brooklyn Museum.

also showcased in the exhibition. Cantilever construction allows one side and therefore appear to float above the ground. Similarly, buildings to incorporate projecting elements that are anchored on only

configuration by shifting the heel and making it an extension of the sole, giving the illusion that the heel of the foot is unsupported.

The last room of the exhibition is appropriately titled "The Space Walk." Rows of glass encased, futuristic inspired shoes neatly displayed as if too exclusive to touch. These high heel designs feature aerodynamic lines, transparent, metallic and reflective surfaces. Other retro-futuristic designs appear to invoke machine parts and the mechanisms associated with robots and aliens.

The exit leading out of the exhibition really gets the viewer involved by inviting them to take a picture of their "killer heels" and to fill out a post it describing them. Some of the posts read "glamorous" "badass" and "so freaking cool."

The Killer Heels exhibition is open to the public until February 2015.

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Christopher Nolan's "Interstellar" contemplates bleak future for Earth

JOHANNA CADET

News Reporter

Christopher Nolan, director and producer of The Dark Knight trilogy, added another notch to his blockbuster belt with the thought provoking film "Interstellar" this month.

Written by Nolan and his brother Johnathan Nolan, "Interstellar" presents Earth in its final stages of complete disintegration.

In the film, the planet lost the majority of its resources due to a progressive disease. NASA believes Earth will no longer be able to maintain mankind. The film centers on Cooper, Matthew McConaughey's character, and his fellow astronauts who set out to find another habitable planet suitable for continuing human life.

Interstellar is nearly three hours of adventure and science fiction in a rural stretch of farmland plagued with dust storms. The film

exhibited both familiar and new aspects of Nolan's ability to convey a story. However, at times it felt rushed and choppy.

Nolan avoided providing a backstory for the desolate present-day Earth and how it came to be that way. Despite this, there is a great amount of suspense, which makes up for humanistic shortcomings.

Cooper comes across as the accidental all-American hero. He's almost always willing to take huge risks for the love of his children and has a slight disinterest in mankind as a whole, a clear difference from most films.

Ann Hathaway plays the role of Brand, a beautiful and brilliant woman with a touch of hope. She portrays a subtle character that was rarely driven by emotions and always kept the mission in mind of finding a suitable place for mankind, avoiding Hollywood



PHOTO COURTESY OF PARAMOUNT/MELINA SUE GORDON

Despite the major flaws with "Interstellar," it provided much to think about in terms of the future.

clichés.

There were moments in the film that struck the same chord as Inception, another Nolan film.

Inception confused many viewers who were lost if they missed a minor detail. The same applies to Interstellar.

The film's sound was a reoccurring distraction. There were several times where the sound was not consistent and it cannot be determined whether it was a minor mistake or done on purpose. Either way, it took away from the film because in this genre these elements must fuse perfectly.

Overall, "Interstellar" provoked many thoughts on the current state of the Earth, and far more extravagant thoughts on "sister-like" planets.

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Author attends dramatic reading of his anthology recounting survival during the Holocaust

JORDI SEVILLA

News Reporter

The Center for Jewish Studies and the Queens College Department of Drama, Theatre and Dance presented a dramatic reading of "Inmate #1818" on Nov. 6 at the Rosenthal Library with Bernard Otterman, the author, in attendance to discuss the stories.

Otterman and his family moved to the U.S. from Germany after living through the horrific experience of being imprisoned in Nazi labor camps. A doctor in the natural sciences, he recently released a collection of stories exploring the experiences of Jewish prisoners in the ghettos and labor camps called "Inmate #1818." It tells the story of a young Jewish boy moving away from the ghetto and being smuggled into a labor camp.

Claudia Feldstein, a drama professor, played a significant role in bringing Otterman's work to life and making this event happen.

"I'm sure some of you notice that it's difficult for me to hear this story. It's one of the few semibiographical stories in the book because 20 percent is true, but the rest is fictional," Otterman said.

Stephen Singer Singer, the actor who read the anthology, has worked on the stage and screen for 40 years. He worked on Broadway in shows such as "Gemini" and "The Ice Man Cometh." On television he starred in shows such as "The Good Wife" and "The Sopranos."

The weekend that followed the reading was the 76th anniversary of the Kristallnacht, or Night of the Broken Glass, when Nazis burned synagogues and shops. German Jews were killed during the pogrom.

"The Kristallnacht, in so many ways, was the threshold toward genocide," Diane Spielmann, associate director of the Center for Jewish Studies, said. Most children perished during this genocide, so it is a "rare phenomenon," said to Spielmann.

"Bernard Otterman's 'Inmate #1818' is an anthology relating to the experiences of the survivors, based on his own personal history as a child in various labor camps during World War II," Spielmann said.

The reading also recounted the actions of the boy's cunning and loving mother, his experience

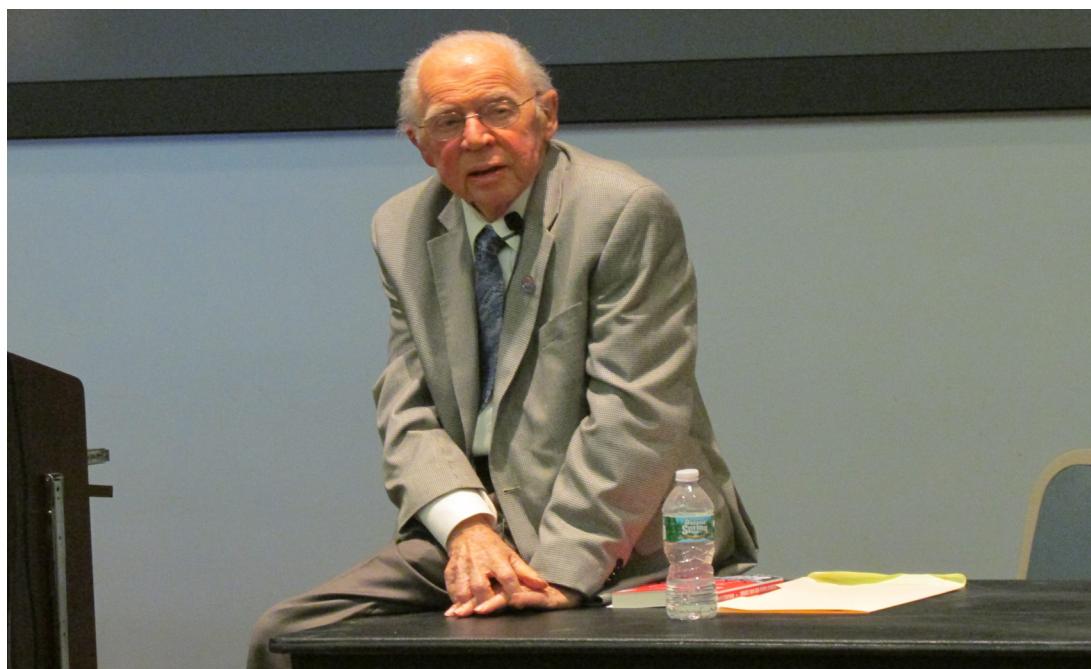


PHOTO BY JORDI SEVILLA

Bernard Otterman spoke on Nov. in the Rosenthal Library to discuss "Inmate #1818," which he noted as a "semibiographical" reading

of befriending an educated Jewish teenager who had accompanied and educated him on Jewish practices and the great dangers he and his mother faced in the camp.

"It's true that my father, my mother and I were in the Radom ghetto, and not by the means described in the story, but some other means were able to get into the labor camp. We stayed in that

labor camp for two years until almost the end," Otterman said.

Otterman and his mother reunited later with his father, who had survived Auschwitz.

Although the boy in the story was unaware of the situation, the audience, through Singer's reading, could understand the circumstances at the time.

"I use this story to explain, to

talk about what happened to the 30,000 Jews of Radom, who were exterminated by Treblinka, and the few thousand, including me, my father and my mother, who survived," Otterman said.

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Queens College student climbs to new heights in Israel

JAIME ZAHL

News Reporter

Studying abroad has become a rite of passage for many college students in recent years. Between discovering historical cities and tasting exotic cuisine, it can become an adventure of a lifetime.

QC student Lisa Darrigo is currently studying abroad in Israel for the entirety of the fall semester.

On Sept. 11 she hopped on a plane headed to Tel Aviv to begin a semester abroad. However, this would not be the first time. The junior environmental science major traveled to Israel for the first time in January on a Birthright trip.

"I don't know why, but Israel rubbed me in all the right ways," Darrigo said. "It became my mission to go back. I just didn't think it'd happen so soon!"

Darrigo's latest trip was part of the Ginsburg-Ingerman Overseas Program. Through the program, Darrigo and other students study at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev in southern Israel.

The international program allows her to take English-speaking classes on campus.

"The professors are awesome because they teach and share their

own opinions a lot, so it's cool to hear what they have to think about a lot of the politics over here and such," Darrigo said.

Her studies also include a 3-hour, 4 days a week Hebrew class. This helps with the language barrier, which Darrigo said can be "quite a problem". While native students seem friendly, she said she doesn't always know what they are saying.

"Hebrew is so hard and communicating with people who work in public places can be quite the adventure," Darrigo said.

However, her favorite part of the program so far is the multitude of people she gets to meet. Students come from Germany, Jamaica, Canada, Belgium, Austria, Spain, Italy, Romania, Czech Republic and Denmark, Darrigo said.

"I've been learning a lot of different languages... and not the good parts of them," she said, referring to the naughtier words she's come across in her travels.

Adjusting to Israeli culture was a challenge for Darrigo at first. One of the biggest culture shocks came from shopping in an Israeli supermarket, Darrigo said.

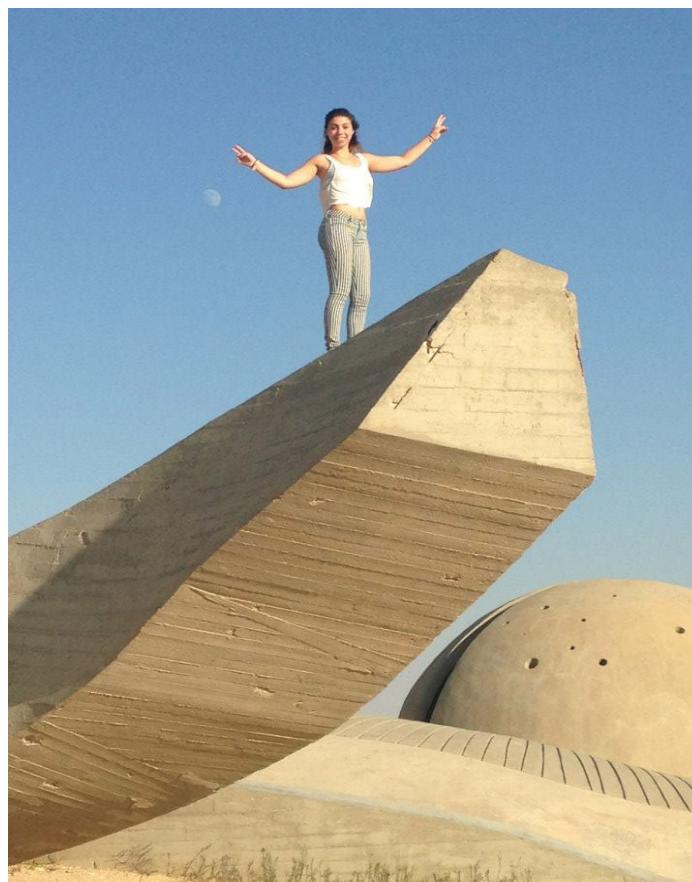


PHOTO COURTESY OF LISA DARRIGO

The Negev Desert is right in Darrigo's backyard on her study abroad in Israel.

"All the prepared food and the price," Darrigo said. "Food brands I know from America in general here has been quite a just don't exist, or they're double shock for me. I was never the best

cook, but now I've been making shakshuka and cooking with more spices. I can't wait to come home and cook!"

Darrigo has also delegated time for more adventurous activities. She hiked the Negev desert last month for two days and two nights. It was the coolest and craziest thing she's done so far, Darrigo said.

"I walked 40 kilometers, 22 miles, with 50 pounds on my back. I slept under the stars in the middle of nowhere. It was an experience I will absolutely never forget. The pain, the elation, the laughs, the sights, the thoughts, the feelings... [it was] quite the plethora of emotions," said Darrigo.

Like her fellow QC students, Darrigo recently finished her midterms, which proved to be just as stressful overseas.

Despite the semester coming to an end, she doesn't want to focus on her return home just yet. There are still many adventures to be had.

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Witnessing the end of apartheid through a former diplomat's eyes

BRANDON JORDAN

News Reporter

Former Greek ambassador Loucas Tsilas spoke at Godwin-Ternbach Museum in Klapper Hall on Nov. 12 to reflect on his time in South Africa during the end of apartheid.

The lecture was a part of the Short Course on South Africa series, which coincides with the Year of South Africa at Queens College. Tsilas' talk highlighted the historical lessons from the dark period in the country's history.

"It is so refreshing and thought-provoking to discuss these issues," Tsilas said.

In South Africa, apartheid, which divided society by race, was implemented in 1948 and dismantled in the beginning of the 1990s after pressure from international countries and resistance from inside the country.

Tsilas, who currently teaches in the history department, was a diplomat for Greece with more than 35 years of experience. He was an ambassador not only to South Africa, but to the U.S. and the European Union. Since retiring from his position, he focused primarily on educational work.

From 1987 to 1990, Tsilas became the Greek ambassador to South Africa after presented with a choice to either go there or Poland. While Tsilas did not believe Poland would be a similar experience to South Africa, he noted that major historical changes occurred

in the country after the fall of communism.

"At that time, I never thought Poland was going to be one of the countries [to undergo changes]," Tsilas said.

After Tsilas decided to go to South Africa, he was "fascinated" by what he initially saw in the environment. However, he realized there were serious issues hidden beneath the surface of society. Despite the difficulties of his new governmental role, he was confident he had a clear view of what to do.

"What do you do as an ambassador? You try to position yourself to speak for everyone," Tsilas said.

While in South Africa, Tsilas met Nelson Mandela, a revered figure in the country's history who passed away late last year.

At the time, Mandela was serving life imprisonment after being charged in the 1960s for attempting to overthrow the government. He was released in 1990 after negotiations with then-President Frederik Willem de Klerk.

Tsilas shared numerous stories about Mandela, whom he considered a friend, during his time there. Furthermore, he noted how meeting him was a unique experience that could not be described.

"Anything you have read,



PHOTO BY BRANDON JORDAN

Loucas Tsilas, a former Greek ambassador and history professor at Queens College, reflects on his time in South Africa and what he saw as apartheid ended.

anything you have heard about Mandela is less than what you [really know]," Tsilas said.

Mandela served as president from 1994 to 1999.

Overall, Tsilas felt what happened in South Africa "transcended" the country as he admired the efforts of citizens to resist an oppressive system.

"The example of South Africa was the example of a country where people were able to

defeat racism and discrimination," Tsilas said.

Steven Renteria, a junior and history major, felt the event was great and informative. Furthermore, he hoped more QC students would enjoy talks such as Tsilas as it provides a unique perspective on historical issues.

"More QC students should involve themselves, especially if they are history majors, in these kinds of talks as they can really

inspire your mind to do great things. You might read so much, but actually hearing a person and their experiences can navigate your mind to something else," Renteria said.

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Queens College joins CUNY 2020 program's investment plans

FERNANDO ECHEVERRI

News Reporter

An economy bouncing back is ripe for investments; the CUNY 2020 program incentivizes the colleges to create economically stimulating ideas and compete with other CUNY schools.

CUNY 2020 is a "Challenge Grant Program" that pushes CUNY schools to come up with long term economic development plans that create jobs, help communities and ensure quality investments.

"One of the goals of CUNY 2020 is to support long term economic development, so the three projects will contribute to job growth in the NYC area, including jobs for QC students and alumni," said Acting Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs Elizabeth Hendrey.

The grant provided \$55 million in capital funding for eight projects last year, including three different projects that QC took part in. The New York State 2014-2015 includes \$110 million for the

second round of CUNY 2020 and SUNY 2020 programs, according to the CUNY Newswire.

"We are part of a project with Queensborough Community College to develop an Advanced Manufacturing Center focused on 3D Printing. Our Computer Science Department will provide 3D printing programming support," William Keller, vice president of Finance and Administration, said.

The project received \$1.5 million from the CUNY 2020 Program. By investing into 3D printing, the cost of manufacturing can significantly decrease and reduce dependency on imports, according to the CUNY Newswire.

The second project is The Science and Resilience Center at Jamaica Bay, which will total \$7.7 million. It is the construction of a new center to research environmental issues like climate change and environmental resilience, which means "the

capacity of a system to absorb disturbance and reorganize while undergoing change," according to Ecology and Society, a peer-reviewed, multidisciplinary online journal.

The Science and Resilience Institute is believed to have created 784 jobs in research and construction, as well as providing revitalization and more access to Jamaica Bay.

The college's own Dr. John Waldman, professor of biology, wrote up the proposal for the Jamaica Bay Center, with colleagues Dr. William Solecki from Hunter College, Dr. John Marra and Dr. Brett Branco from Brooklyn College.

"My personal estimation is construction might begin in 2015. Ultimately, there will be opportunities for students to participate in research. The Institute is about to hire its permanent director, which should help

crystalize its near-term progress," Waldman said.

QC is collaborating with a number of organizations and CUNY colleges including Brooklyn College, Hunter College, the NASA Goddard Institute and the National Park Service on the Jamaica Bay Project, according to the CUNY Newswire.

The third project is the Center for Allied Healthcare Education and Workforce Development, given \$10 million. It will start a health care clinic that would educate students as well as help under privileged members of the Northern Queens community.

Allied healthcare positions are careers that are different from nursing, medicine or pharmaceuticals, such as phlebotomists, medical assistants and various technicians. It is expected to add 791 jobs over the next three years.

Although QC is involved

with the projects, the college does not take the lead. Instead the school only becomes involved when the administration of Queensborough or Brooklyn College asks, Keller noted.

Currently the projects are in their initial stages and costs of construction are being calculated, Deputy Director of Public Private Partnerships for CUNY Dana Sunshine said.

"A certain amount of design and different processes are needed to figure out, physically, what each project needs. Each of these projects are completely in the hands of the college campuses, with either consultation or direct investment with other public and private companies," Sunshine said.

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QC alum self-publishes science fiction novel on dangers of technology

ZEVI CHABUS

News Reporter

Personal Disaster Assistant, or PDA, by Queens College alum Chris Ferraro, is a story about a man named Doug Macklin who has to deal with futuristic contact lenses, talking chairs, alien-worshipping terrorists and camels.

After being ejected from an airplane, Doug is forced to journey through the desert where he has several misadventures and is almost killed a few times before being told that he is a contestant on a reality show. The book is a combination of dark comedy and science fiction, and examines how people's reliance on technology does not answer their questions about life.

Ferraro used to write sports and entertainment articles, but always enjoyed writing stories like PDA. He wanted to prove to himself that he could do science fiction and dark comedy at the same time. Ferraro was inspired by the writers Douglas Adams and William Gibson and wanted to write a story that would pay homage to them both.

After writing for many sports and entertainment magazines, Ferraro eventually decided to teach history and satisfied his craving to write by submitting articles to history and education journals. He felt that now was finally the time to get his science fiction down on paper as, he noted, "it's really the only type of writing that I enjoy but have not been able to publish."

"The story does contain a message. It is one novella-sized social commentary. I feel that if we can't laugh at our current trends, like constantly being attached to our smart phones or having to update our status, then we are really in



PHOTO COURTESY OF CHRIS FERRARO
Author Chris Ferraro decided to self-publish his novella instead of working with a publishing company to have full creative control.

trouble. I hope the story gives people something to think about in that way," said Ferraro.

Ferraro chose to self-publish PDA "for the same reason that many bands choose to put their music straight to YouTube," he said.

"I really didn't want some massive corporation deciding the fate of my story," he said.

Instead, he decided to put it out there and let the public decide.

While PDA can be read simply as a story, the novella raises important questions concerning whether people can succeed as human beings if constantly attached to technology, even if not to the extent as described in the book. PDA makes it very clear that constant attachment to technology can change the very essence as human beings.

Additionally, PDA paints a very vivid picture of what the world can become if unaware of how technology can affect civilization.

PDA is currently available on Amazon.com and will be available at Barnes & Noble for the nook and on Google Play Books in December.

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A marvelous time to be a comic book fan

ALBERT ROMAN

News Reporter

Comic books have been around since the 1920s when many iconic characters were created such as Batman, Captain America and Spiderman. Hollywood continues to have a unique relationship with these characters through film and television.

The two biggest comic book publishers, Marvel and DC, have been splitting fans for years. When live-action movies based on characters from each company started to be released, fans became even more divided on a never-ending battle of which one is superior.

DC produced two Superman movies in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Batman had two successful outings with "Batman" and "Batman Returns" only to be followed by the panned "Batman and Robin." It was then questioned if the comic book genre could work on the big screen.

Then, in the year 2000, director Bryan Singer's "X-Men" was released. Its success inspired confidence for more superhero films to be released.

After the commercial success of "X-Men," the floodgates opened. Three very successful "Spiderman" movies were made, two X-Men sequels were released and Hollywood created a multitude of films featuring popular Marvel characters such as The Hulk, Daredevil, The Punisher and The



PHOTO BY ALBERT ROMAN
Since 2000, superhero films became more popular with mainstream audiences with it eventually culminating into a very lucrative genre for Hollywood studios.

Fantastic Four.

While all of these films were based on comic book properties, there was something missing. In 2008, Marvel Studios released "Iron Man" characters and as a result, created the Marvel cinematic universe.

One small after-credit scene would later create The Avengers, which became wildly popular. It surpassed the \$1 billion mark, which made it the third-highest grossing film of all-time.

DC rebooted Batman through director Christopher Nolan's trilogy, which was

financially successful. The company is trying its cinematic universe with plans for "Batman vs. Superman: Dawn of Justice" in 2016.

Both Marvel and DC saw the potential of this genre to the extent that both studios planned their films into 2020. There are more than 40 DC and Marvel-based movies being released in the next six years.

Queens College freshman Jorge Vaelasquez believes that one of the most important things about these films is making them real.

"Marvel had an up period and then a down period but now they're

coming back up with their movies because they are making it seem as if these things can actually exist in this world," Vaelasquez said.

There is much excitement surrounding Marvel and DC films such as "Avengers: Age of Ultron" and "Justice League Part I and II." Having those planned years in advance is both good and bad. The positive side is the announcements build momentum years in advance. On the other hand, audiences may experience comic book movie fatigue.

Sophomore Claude Noriega believes this is a problem and

should be avoided.

"After a while, [the movies] all start to look the same with the same story structure and style, which is not a bad style but it starts to feel a little overdone," Noriega said.

There is one way of avoiding this problem. It starts with deciding who is in charge of the project.

"I think they really just need to focus on making sure the best filmmakers possible are brought in to really keep the momentum going," Noriega said.

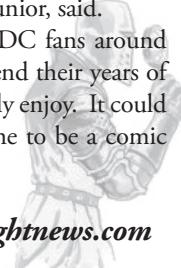
Marvel recently hired many directors who are familiar with the source material. They have directors such as James Gunn and Joss Whedon. DC did the same by hiring Zack Snyder to direct "Justice League."

The sudden explosion of comic book films to the mainstream audiences has brought nerd culture into the public eye.

"I like that nerd culture and comic book culture is seeing a rise from stuff that no one wanted to talk about and was supposed to just stay among its basements," Francisco Lakoz, junior, said.

Marvel and DC fans around the world should end their years of debating and simply enjoy. It could not be a better time to be a comic book fan.

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Queens College grad receives two scholarships to study music

DEBORAH WATMAN
News Reporter

Raised in Japan, educated at Queens College and now singing at the Yale School of Music, Jin-Xiang Yu is one of just eight singers granted with a full-scholarship.

Yu was also awarded with the most prestigious graduate scholarship in visual and performing arts as well as creative writing—the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation 2014 Graduate Arts Award.

Yu grew up in Japan with her father playing the two-stringed

Chinese violin called the erh and her mother playing piano as well as the Chinese dulcimer, trapezoidal shaped string instruments played by handheld hammers.

When Jin-Xiang, commonly called JX by her friends, came to America, she played volleyball. While a freshman at Mercy College, QC representatives spotted her playing volleyball and recruited her for the QC Knights.

Jin-Xiang agreed, but played volleyball only for a short while before sustaining an injury that

thwarted her volleyball career. As a result, she auditioned twice until she was accepted as a vocal major into the Aaron Copland School of Music.

Jin-Xiang says she “fell in love” with classical music. The music she “hated” in the past and did not consider studying soon became her passion.

Jin-Xiang gives credit to QC for allowing her to find her talent. She says QC “is the kind of place where if you don’t come in with all the tools, professors see your

potential and give you a chance.”

Yu was also awarded a \$7,000 a year grant from the William Orr Dingwal Foundation, which is presented to students of Asian descent.

In addition to studying music, Yu studied European languages at QC and earned a bachelor’s degree in linguistics. She speaks Mandarin along with Japanese fluently and learned Spanish at the English-speaking international schools she went to in Japan. She brought her love for languages to the stage as

she sang in French, German, Italian and Russian at her senior recital.

Yu’s passion, abilities and education surely helped her get into Yale. But most of all her talent, hard work and exceptional opera voice landed her in a prestigious program and to a promising career.

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QC professor's novel sheds light on the slave narrative

RANDI GUTBROD

News Reporter

Following the success of recent movies such as "12 Years a Slave" and "Django Unchained," critics asked whether another story about slaves was really necessary. After reading "Song of the Shank" by Jeffrey Renard Allen, New York Times book reviewer Mitchell S. Jackson felt compelled to answer with a resounding "yes."

On Nov. 11, Allen discussed his latest work as part of Queens College's 39th Anniversary Evening Reading Series. "Song of the Shank" is the reimagined and fictional biography of "Blind Tom," one of the 19th centuries most prominent performers and the first black person to play at the White House at the age of 10.

Blind Tom, born as the slave Thomas Wiggins in 1849 Georgia, rose to fame at the age of 6 as a blind piano prodigy. Despite his

fame and celebrity, both historians and musicians alike seem to have largely forgotten him.

Allen, an English professor at QC, pieces together the life of the historical figure through the nonlinear narratives of others. The novel is fiction, however, and Allen boldly and fearlessly creates a 19th century setting from his own imagination.

The narratives follow Tom from his childhood as a slave to his years under different managers trying to exploit him, and finally as he reconnects with his mother on the fictional island of Edgemere during the period of Reconstruction. Allen's focus is less on the historical facts surrounding Wiggins and more on Blind Tom's cultural significance.

"The most important thing is that this is a person who was a celeb of his own time-- [he] might have

been the most famous pianist of the 19th century-- and he essentially disappeared from history... I think the most important thing is to be aware that he existed and his impact on the time," said Allen.

Allen also stressed during his interview that the story is not as much about historical slavery in America as it is about Reconstruction and the theoretical concept of being free. Allen referred to Reconstruction as a time reflecting "failure of American democracy."

While slavery is an often explored theme in the entertainment and art industries, Reconstruction is not often discussed. Allen's island of Edgemere portrays the plight of newly freed slaves and Southern refugees with blistering honesty.

At first glance, the achievements of Blind Tom as a pianist and celebrity appear to be an

impressive feat, breaking through boundaries created for him by his race and disability. Being blind, Tom is the only one unaware that his skin color creates constraints and this is perhaps what allows him to achieve success. However, Allen does not let the reader forget that even as a performer at the White House, Tom was still a slave.

African Americans in the novel question whether or not Blind Tom was "aiding the race or harming it." At one of his first performances in pre-Civil War south, an audience member remarked not on his musical genius but rather on how he was the ideal slave who would "do what you tell him with his eyes closed." His owner even uses the proceeds from Tom's performances to fund the secessionist cause leading to the Civil War. It can be argued that Tom is the "last legal slave in

America," even once emancipated.

"Song of the Shank" ties together the broken narratives of characters and historical figures that mainstream media has largely ignored, if not forgotten. As he details Tom's life and his exploitation, however, Allen leaves readers with many unanswered, but hardly unwelcomed questions about morals, race, class, and history.

To the critics who say that there is more than enough material on slavery, the premise of "Song of the Shank" responds that that is not the case by posing the question: why has history forgotten about Blind Tom?

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CLUB SPOTLIGHT ON...

I AM THAT GIRL starts a new chapter at QC

CANDICE SAMUELS

News Reporter

IAMTHATGIRL, a national non-profit organization, was founded in 2008 by Alexis Jones and co-founder Emily Greener to address the growing need for community amongst girls and young women by helping to build self-esteem and realize their full potential.

This semester Queens College students started their own chapter of IATG.

President Monica Roman, a junior studying English and political science in addition to being a Student Fellow at the Center for Ethnic, Racial, and Religious Understanding, explained how she got involved with establishing IATG at QC.

"Late last year, I began to notice that there was a real lack of women's oriented groups on campus. Considering how Queens College is always hailed as one of the 'most diverse campuses' in the country, one of the most unifying things is gender and we felt IATG could really highlight that. So I worked with Yael, Megan, and our other eboard members over the summer to really get IATG off the ground," Roman said.

Vice President Megan Casey, a junior studying history with a concentration in human rights provided her thoughts on what she



PHOTO COURTESY OF I AM THAT GIRL

The national organization recently opened a chapter at Queens College after students believed there was a lack of groups on campus focusing on women's issues.

felt IATG's mission was.

"IATG is a club that provides a safe space for women on campus. It's a club for which we can raise awareness in regards to issues concerning women," she said. "When you come to club meetings, what is said is confidential and that's what creating a safe space is about. We must empower each other, support one another and feel comfortable sharing our opinions and stories."

The national chapters' sign

up page includes taking a pledge, which reads "I am perfectly flawed and sublimely beautyFULL. I am a constant work in progress. I recognize that what I admire in others also exists within myself. As a member of this community, I promise to collaborate instead of compete and remind other girls of their worth when they've forgotten. I'm on a mission to turn self-doubt in to self-love, to use my voice, to share my truth, to love others, and to leave this world better than I

found it."

"When I first heard about IATG, I immediately felt the need to become involved. This club is a safe space for all women to come together, regardless of ethnicity, religion, what have you and find an empowering safe space within one another," Nicole Caparelli, club secretary, said.

"I believe it is essential for all college campuses to have a place where woman can come together to support one another, and I am

lucky enough to be a part of a team of talented women creating such a space here at Queens College."

Yael Rosenstock, program coordinator for CERRU and an avid supporter of IATG discussed the role she has played in getting IATG started at QC.

"I read an article about IATG and noted that it sounded like a great organization. At my old school there were a lot of women's groups and at Queens College I noticed there wasn't many. It is important to have a club like this because it provides a unified community despite being a commuter campus. Some commuter campuses can lack somewhere for you to go to feel comfortable," Rosenstock said.

Club meetings are designated for women identified persons but the events that IATG organizes are co-ed and open to anyone on campus.

"Question, Persuade, Refer", a suicide prevention training, will take place during free hour in Powdermaker Hall 154 on Dec. 8.

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OP-EDS/EDITORIALS

CUNY Board of Trustees set to eliminate your right

BY LUCAS ALMONTE

The Board of Trustees of the City University of New York, despite continuous opposition from elected student leaders, is set to strip students of a fundamental right: the right to remain silent without the assumption of guilt during a campus disciplinary hearing. Article 15, also known as the “student due process” section of the CUNY Board of Trustees Bylaws, guarantees students this fundamental right and it is currently in the process of being revised. The proposed amendments are scheduled to be voted on at the December 1, 2014 Board meeting.

The leadership of the University Student Senate, the official representative body of all CUNY students, firmly supports preserving an accused student’s right to remain silent without assumption of guilt. Eliminating this right will negatively impact the due process protections afforded to students and could erode the balance and integrity of our disciplinary process.

There are two main reasons why an accused student would want to exercise their current right to remain silent during a disciplinary hearing. First, the accused student might be intimidated by the complexity of the disciplinary process and, as a result, feel uncomfortable providing testimony, regardless of whether the person is responsible for the alleged misconduct. The second reason, which could also

substantiate the first reason, is that any statements provided by an accused student during a disciplinary hearing could be used in a non-campus hearing like a criminal trial.

Suppose a student is simultaneously facing disciplinary charges at their CUNY campus and criminal charges. On the one hand, the criminal court ensures a fair proceeding by preventing improper and unreliable evidence—like hearsay information—from being used against the student, requiring all statements to be given under oath and granting the student her or his or its Fifth Amendment right to remain silent without the assumption of guilt.

On the other hand, campus disciplinary procedures do not offer the first two protections and now the Board of Trustees is proposing to get rid of the other remaining protection and give the disciplinary committee the right to draw a negative inference from the silence of the accused. Because the academic career and reputation of the accused student could be determined by a disciplinary decision, accused students will be compelled to speak at these hearings. If they do speak, their testimony could then be used against them in a criminal trial. The university would thus be indirectly coercing students to undermine their Fifth Amendment right against self-incrimination.

In addition to the low protections, the burden of proof used during a disciplinary hearing is the lowest possible standard. Disciplinary committees are guided by standards that only require the committee to be at least 51 percent certain that an accused student is responsible for the alleged misconduct. The proposed Board amendment will tip the balance of fairness and compromise the already low burden of proof. The disciplinary committee will have the right to use the silence of the accused to further support the notion that they are guilty.

Therefore, an accused student facing serious charges and a possible suspension would have to decide whether to remain silent in order to protect themselves from possible criminal prosecution or choose to testify at the campus hearing in the interest of defending one’s self from suspension or expulsion.

Accused students facing this predicament will solely, and reasonably, focus on the potential threat of criminal prosecution and choose to remain silent. Students, however, may not realize the harsh implications a suspension on their academic and disciplinary records can have on their academic and career prospects. Students who are suspended from a college following a disciplinary hearing, but found not guilty by a criminal court, could still

be precluded from continuing their education because many universities automatically bar applicants with a suspension on their records from being admitted.

In an age when a college degree is essential, wrongly suspended students could be deprived of a formal education and have their entire career jeopardized because of the faulty and unjust disciplinary system that would be created if the amendment is adopted. These consequences are quite troubling given the fact that CUNY has, and continues to serve, a majority student population with limited resources and access to higher education. For most students, CUNY remains the only hope for professional and economic advancement.

The current justifications provided by the Board of Trustees for the removal of the right are that the clause is an “incorrect statement of the law,” and that faculty and staff are not granted this right in their disciplinary process so neither should students. We, the students of CUNY, respectfully remind the University and Board of Trustees that the United States Constitution and laws of our state represent a floor and not a ceiling for individual rights. The Board of Trustees has the authority and discretion to afford students heightened and substantive due process.

We would also remind the Board of Trustees that the disciplinary process for

accused faculty includes alternate methods of resolution such as arbitration and settlement, both of which are not available to accused students; furthermore, unlike students, faculty members are represented by a union and have greater access to legal resources.

The right to remain silent clause was first included in the CUNY Board of Trustees Bylaws in 1970. Removing the provision 44 years later will bring our disciplinary process to a perilous state. The University Student Senate, therefore, respectfully requests that the Board of Trustees effectuate fair and just disciplinary proceedings by scrupulously observing students’ due process rights and preserving a cornerstone of our disciplinary process—the right to remain silent without assumption of guilt.

Lucas Almonte currently serves as president of City Tech’s Student Government Association, vice chair for Legislative Affairs for the University Student Senate and led the student committee charged with providing feedback on the proposed amendments to the bylaws. He is also the only voting student member in the Board of Trustees Committee on Student Affairs and Special Programs. To view and sign the petition to keep due process rights visit <http://is.gd/article15>

Letters to the Editor and op-eds can be submitted to info@theknightnews.com

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SPORTS

QC alumni create new course on sports broadcasting

YONGMIN CHO

Sports Reporter

Michael Cohen and Michael Weisman, alumni of Queens College, are collaborating to provide opportunities for students entering into the sports broadcasting field.

After speaking at QC as a guest in October, Cohen thought it would be a great idea to bring back his experiences working in the sports broadcast field to the classroom.

Cohen and Weisman will instruct the Media Studies 281 class titled Sports Broadcasting for the upcoming spring semester on Thursdays from 10 a.m. - 12:50 p.m. in Campbell Dome 134.

"Queens College is finally getting in the growing, emerging and existing business of sports broadcasting. This is the first time they have done anything in the field," Weisman said.

Cohen highlighted several topics the course will entail including the history of sports broadcasting, discussion of current events, how to produce live and studio events, women in broadcasting and various roles in the business.

"The purpose of the class is to give an introduction of the sports broadcasting world. We want to give the students an education on the field and expose them to as many people and topics as possible," Cohen said.

The course will also consist of various guest speakers including,



PHOTO BY AMANDA GOLDSTEIN

The Media Studies department will not only gain the addition of two alumni as professors, but also a course devoted to sports broadcasting.

as Cohen noted, "some of the top people working in the television sports business today."

The decision to teach the course is a result of Cohen and Weisman's desire to give back to the college despite their busy schedules.

"We feel that we are really lucky to do some of the biggest shows on television and work with some of the most interesting people," Cohen said. "We just wanted bring back to the college that we attended our experiences and educate the students about a fascinating field."

Besides his role as president of Bizzy Signal Entertainment, Cohen works for multiple networks, and works on creating new sports shows.

"Michael is still very active in business, but he's very modest. He is giving up a lot to do this teaching because he's still has many active projects going on," Weisman said.

Weisman, who won 22 Emmy awards, was excited to make the class as he is less active in business.

"Although I'm 'living the dream' as they like to say, traveling and enjoying my wife, kids and grandkids, I have the time and, frankly, the energy now to be able to do something like this that I may not had in the past," Weisman said.

Although Cohen and Weisman are not professional teachers, their

experiences and skills as producers may transfer well into the course.

"One of the things you have to do when you're producing is take on a leadership role and be able to communicate and inspire. That's part of what we think teaching is about," Weisman said.

The course is just the beginning in the Media Studies program as it expands to the sports broadcasting field.

"It is great and it is time Queens College got into this. We are thrilled to be the pioneers in college's entry into the field," Cohen said.

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Closing the gap between students and athletes

TORI BOWSER

Sports Reporter

Queens College offers more than 100 clubs as well as a full athletics program with 19 varsity teams. The fact that QC is a busy place with more than 19,000 students reveals there is a major disconnect between students and student-athletes.

When students outside of athletics are asked why they did not attend a game or fundraising event, the most common response is they didn't know about it.

Kevin Williams, the new assistant athletics director of External Relations, plans to fill the gaps and mend the bond between athletics and the student body.

Williams comes from being a collegiate student-athlete, playing football at SUNY Morrisville as well as Iona College and understands the importance of sports in addition to the need to get students involved.

"I played football my whole life. [Sports] is how I learned to make friends, bond with colleagues, and helped me in my career," Williams said.

After finishing college with a degree in business administration, Williams worked for Taylor & Francis, a publishing company, for 10 years. With a desire to work in sports marketing, Williams came to QC with the hope of



PHOTO COURTESY BY MICHAEL D. BALESTRAP

Assistant Athletics Director of External Relations Kevin Williams, recently hired, hopes to provide incentives for students to go to sporting events.

athletic program in the right direction.

"When I first walked onto campus, I knew there was a game going on, but I was unable to tell. That needs to be fixed," Williams said.

The external relations team is working on several projects in order to highlight the teams on campus and make game day more exciting.

With basketball season about to begin, they are looking to have cheerleaders greet fans, add more snacks to the concession stands and have more performances at half time.

"We want people to be engaged and we want to open the doors to kids and parents," Williams said.

The external relations team and Williams created a system called Retain, which gives students the ability to subscribe to emails about collegiate events. The first test email was sent out for the men's basketball game against Hunter College. Students who choose to receive these emails will get notifications on all home games and meets.

Not only will they be emailing students, but they will be advertising on the kiosk computers in the buildings on campus. A flash message will appear on the computer after a student logs in with any game, meet or event on

campus that week.

"We want to get the word out about games beyond athletes and students with everyone on campus," Williams said.

The biggest project in the works is the women's basketball game against Immaculata University's at Madison Square Garden to honor the 40th anniversary of the first women's basketball game on Jan. 4, 2015.

Williams and his team created a "Number One Fan" competition where the winner of the raffle will get to lead the team out of the tunnel and sit on the bench at the MSG.

Williams and his team are continuing to make changes in athletics, around campus and, overall, being a QC Knight.

"Queens has such a homey feeling to it. I feel like this is just the place to be," Williams said.

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TWO ALUMS COME BACK TO GIVE BACK

Michael Cohen (left) and Michael Weisman will be teaching a course on sports broadcasting next semester



Photo by Bridget Gleason

New assistant athletics director motivated to increase student participation