

April 22, 2015

Volume 21

Issue 10



THE KNIGHT NEWS



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Breaking News & Video

Journalism in the Interest of the Queens College Community

A TALE OF TWO PARTIES

Christopher Labial (SFC) and Mohammed Hassan
(IA) discuss their campaigns for SA presidency



A spotlight on
CERRU
SEE PAGE 5



Metrocard fare increases
from \$2.50 to \$2.75
SEE PAGE 9

EDITORIAL

CUNY and SUNY students are not customers

Earlier this month, New York Governor Andrew Cuomo, a Democrat, proposed withholding 10 percent of funding for CUNY and SUNY should they fail to provide “performance improvement plans.”

Essentially, CUNY and SUNY colleges must work through the Start-Up NY program, which, as noted by the Albany Business Review, provides “tax-free benefits to lure private-sector businesses to empty offices and land on or near campuses.”

Last May Governor Cuomo told New Yorkers the program would create “a relationship to the academic mission of the university and companies creating new jobs.” Moreover, Cuomo himself emphasized the tax-free program in the initiative.

“What do we mean by ‘tax-free?’” Cuomo said. “We mean tax-free.”

Governor Cuomo is wrong to decide this is in the interest of students and companies. In fact, funding should not be held hostage in order to force universities into joining the program. This is coercion by a desperate governor attempting to re-establish himself after failing to comfortably gain the Democratic nomination last year, all thanks to Zephyr Teachout’s challenge in the Democratic Party.

Tuition, meanwhile, will increase once again for the following academic year. CUNY faculty and staff are still without a contract for five years. Spending for full-time students is lower than it was 30 years ago.

Yet Starbucks can come on our campuses to give us over-priced coffee and solve racial problems through their Race Together initiative.

We are unsure as to what the Cuomo administration’s motives are when it comes to CUNY and SUNY. Perhaps they genuinely believe this is for the good of the CUNY and SUNY systems. Perhaps they want to attack it just like Maine Governor Paul LePage, a Tea Party Republican, did last year when he went after the University of Southern Maine.

What we are sure is that students are already suffering from a very weak recovery where low-pay jobs are being created despite high-pay jobs being eliminated from the Great Recession.

Henry A. Giroux, famous cultural critic and professor, wrote a piece last year titled “Beyond Neoliberal Miseducation” and is relevant in understanding why Cuomo, or any other politician, would decide to enact such a useless policy. Essentially, higher education is slowly becoming another commercialized aspect of our society.

“The democratic imagination has been transformed into a data machine that marshals its inhabitants into the neoliberal dream world of babbling consumers and armies of exploitative labor whose ultimate goal is to accumulate capital and initiate faculty and students into the brave new surveillance/punishing state that merges Orwell’s Big Brother with Huxley’s mind-altering soma,” Giroux wrote.

The motto for Queens College is “we learn so that we may serve.” From what we understand, we do not serve the interests of private businesses. We serve society.

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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Corrections: In Issue 7, our editorial said Brian Williams was suspended with pay. He was suspended without pay. Williams was said to be host of NBC Nightly News. He was the host of NBC Nightly News with Brian Williams. Bill O'Reilly was said to be on the CBS Nightly News. It is the CBS Evening News. In our eight issue, Aileen Sheil was identified as University Student Senate Chairperson for “NYPIRG rallies in Albany on Higher Education Day.” Sheil is the chairperson for NYPIRG. For “ESPN legend Bob Ley and executive VP Norby Williamson visit Queens College,” Michael Balestra was given courtesy for the photo. It was Bridget Gleason. We apologize for the errors.

SFC candidate hopes to give back to QC community

BRANDON JORDAN

News Reporter

Christopher Labial describes his youthful self as a “military brat.”

Growing up in a military family, he went to international school and first studied in the U.S. in 2008 at Benjamin Cardozo High School.

Now he is the President of F.L.I.G.H.T., which stands for Filipinos Living to Instill Growth, Honor and Tradition, and is also a member of different clubs on campus, including the Queens College Dream Team and the iTones, an acapella group. In general, Labial feels at home at QC.

“I’ve come to appreciate everyone on this campus,” Labial said.

Labial, a junior and an English major, is running on the Students For Change ticket as the successor to current Student Association President and SFC colleague Raj Maheshwari.

Labial is running against Independent Alliance Presidential candidate Mohammed Hassan and independent candidates Andrew Millan and Luis Cuadro.

He emphasized how student life, specifically clubs, helped shape his identity on campus.

“I wouldn’t be here without my experiences with clubs,” Labial said.

SFC is undefeated since first running in spring 2012 against United



Christopher Labial will be running as the president-elect on the Students for Change ticket in the upcoming April elections.

PHOTO BY BRANDON JORDAN

People, which controlled Student Association for more than 40 years.

“To my understanding of the history of student government at Queens College, SFC has had a lot of groundbreaking administrations,” Labial said.

He noted a recent change created by the Academic Senate to give representation to adjunct professors.

In addition, every club requesting space were given a room, which he noted as unprecedented. SFC also spent a record-breaking \$27,000 last

semester during finals week.

In response to criticism from IA presidential candidate Mohammed Hassan and other IA members, Labial said he doesn’t believe funds were spent inappropriately.

“I can understand how this is a concern from him, but I disagree [on] any misconduct [that] has been going on,” Labial said. “Though I can’t speak for [former SA President] Matthew Louie himself, this is not a business I’m partaking in.”

Matthew Louie was SA

President and SFC party member in the 2013-2014 school year. It was Louie’s spending that received the brunt of criticisms.

Labial said the controversial documents, and other relating to the student government’s spending, were available for all students upon request.

“These are all public records. That’s been our argument ever since [Hassan] broke away from SFC,” Labial said.

Labial believed student outreach was an essential factor for

student government officials. He said there are plans for a potential policy where SA members would provide students with information on events happening on campus.

“There’s a lot of preparation involved if you reach out to all those people and that’s one of my big things,” Labial said.

Labial stressed how essential it was to focus on the overall CUNY system as well in order to work with other colleges in providing benefits to students.

“We have to stray away as thinking QC as its own entity,” Labial said. “I’ve been to University Student Senate meetings and we all have the same initiatives. We want our commuter schools to thrive with spirit.”

Labial, handpicked by SFC officials, said he was honored to run as a candidate and hoped to use it as an opportunity to give back to QC.

“I’m just so excited because finally, since my party nominated me as president-elect, I get a chance [to give back]. I never got a huge chance to give back to my community. This experience has been very special to me,” Labial said.

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IA candidate challenges incumbent party over policies and transparency

BRANDON JORDAN

News Reporter

Junior Mohammed Hassan is the presidential nominee of Independent Alliance, which was formed last April by students and former members and officials of Students for Change and United People, to create major changes on campus.

“We want students to feel comfortable to be involved with student government,” Hassan said.

Hassan will be running against Students For Change’s nominee Christopher Labial and independent candidates Andrew Millan and Luis Cuadros.

IA, Hassan said, is not a centralized party, but one where many people can work with one another with no “low or high members.”

“The party stands for an independent group of people. Each group of leaders thinks for themselves and we sit as a board of group leaders. Everyone is being encompassed in the decision-making process,” Hassan said.

Hassan said, should he be elected as president, he would focus on numerous issues, improving Wi-Fi in the Student Union basement and election reform.

“The election process, as we see it now, must be changed,” Hassan said.

One big factor for the party is their campaign strategy. Their



Mohammed Hassan will be running as a president candidate on the Independent Alliance ticket in the upcoming April elections.

PHOTO BY BRANDON JORDAN

opponent SFC, the incumbent party, is “very confident of winning.”

“They don’t take any other party or any candidate seriously. That may also may be a bad thing for them because if you underestimate candidates or the power of students, then it may not work in your favor,” Hassan said.

While IA is running without a vice president, Hassan said this is not a setback. Rather, it provides an opportunity to work with SFC, he

said.

“I see it as a peace process with the other party. If the election goes the way we think it’s going to go, then it’ll be a mixed government,” Hassan said.

In addition, Hassan addressed the documents posted on Queens College Secrets last spring, which highlighted questionable purchases by SFC.

In a discussion with The Knight News last November, SA President Raj Maheshwari said the money needed

to be spent and there was no real controversy over the matter.

However, Hassan did not believe it was an appropriate response to the spending issue.

“‘The money has to be spent’ is such a vague answer. Yes, the money has to be spent properly and that’s the key here,” Hassan said.

The documents released last April revealed spending on a large quantity of goods for both the Glow Party and the Persian Formal,

which some students believed to be unnecessary.

Moreover, Hassan stressed spending is part of the job, but it’s important to do so properly.

“It’s really grey when you look at the constitution and see the senators are supposed to vote and approve the budget. I wasn’t a part of that meeting and I asked fellow senators, who said they weren’t a part of that meeting,” Hassan said.

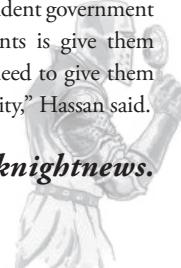
Hassan said it was important to create a system where there cannot be too power for the presidency. By doing so, it would eventually create issues and downplay the roles of other student government members.

“There’s a process to everything,” Hassan said. “What the president says shouldn’t go. There needs to be checks and balances.”

Hassan said IA would implement grassroots efforts such as getting thousands of student signatures demanding an end to harassment during election season.

“We have an ideal of what can we do for the students that will last after we graduate,” Hassan said. “The number one thing student government should do for students is give them accountability. You need to give them power of accountability,” Hassan said.

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Documentary reveals political turmoil in post-apartheid South Africa

ARIEL BAGLEY

News Reporter

The Godwin-Ternbach Museum at Queens College hosted a screening of the documentary "Behind the Rainbow" on March 16 as part of the Year of South Africa.

Jihan El-Tahri directed the documentary, which was released in 2009. El-Tahri, who is Lebanese, is a producer and news correspondent for Reuters.

"Behind the Rainbow" shows the reality of life in South Africa after apartheid. The film chronicles the political history of the African National Congress party that rose to power after apartheid.

In 1994, after South Africa's first democratic elections, ANC came to power.

The first challenge for the party arose when they debated how to properly purge the governmental ranks of the ruling oppressors. Some, like Thebo Mkaki, sought to offer whites a "Sunset Clause" of five years to continue ruling so as not to ruin the governing structure of the country and to build trust between the blacks and whites.

"Because they are fearful of ANC taking over, the sunset clause was to cement [the ruling



PHOTO COURTESY OF JIHAN EL-TAHRI
Thabo Mbeki and Jacob Zuma built the ANC party to banish racism from South Africa's government.

whites] governing structure and build trust," Mbeki said.

Others sought to set up a ruling government of ANC members so they can get started on state building.

"It was a tactical argument whether to implement the sunset clause. But if we do the clause, it would seriously limit our ability to transform South Africa," Sue Rabkin, of the ANC Reorganization Committee, said.

After eventually gaining full control of government, the ANC

began to transform the economy to adapt to the influx of blacks into the workforce. As a result, gross domestic product and per capita income doubled between 1995 and 2005.

However, the film's focus is the interplay between the two main leaders of the party, Thabo Mbeki and Jacob Zuma. Set in the 2009 elections that brought Jacob Zuma to power, the film shows how this feud came about and its consequences for the country.

Mbeki and Zuma became

the two original leaders in the party after Mandela stepped down. But ideological differences, specifically on different domestic and foreign policies, led to a growing rift between them.

In 2005, after months of mudslinging between them, Mbeki relieved Zuma of his then-current post of Deputy President. This angered the civilians, who saw the fighting as a waste of time distracting from the real problem of poverty.

"We didn't fight apartheid

in order to have apartheid-like behavior of smearing people," Blade Nzimande, General Secretary of the Communist Party, said.

At the 2007 party convention, both Zuma and Mbeki were nominated for the presidency. After much wrangling threatening to engulf the party in a civil war, Jacob Zuma emerged as the party's sole nominee.

Bitter feelings still remained, however, and prevented the ANC from continuing to implement desperately needed social welfare reforms. This is especially important for residents of the outlying townships, where violent protests erupted over this very issue.

"Why are people nostalgic about the struggle days when freedom is so good? Because they cannot eat freedom," Victor Moche, a member of the South African Secret Service, said.

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Spotlight on CERRU: The Center for Ethnic, Racial and Religious Understanding

NINA BAKOYIANNIS

News Reporter

CERRU is a non-partisan organization that facilitates cross-cultural events to enhance understanding across the Queens College community.

“Queens College is an incredibly diverse campus, often cited as the most diverse campus in the country. Unfortunately that doesn’t mean everyone comes together and engages with each other naturally, often times people stay in their own groups,” Associate Director Sophia McGee said. “CERRU is supposed to provide a space to bring people together, to engage with each other and also to discuss difficult issues that are affecting us on campus and in the community.”

CERRU’s events create a safe outlet for students to voice their opinions and hear the voices of others. They discuss topics such as issues of faith, race, gender, domestic violence and more.

“There have been many times where a student has said ‘this is the first time I’ve talked to someone who was that different from me and I actually have a sense that there are some similarities about what we believe and what we value.’ It opens the door for folks to pursue finding out about people who are assumed different, and making some connection,” Associate Director John Vogelsang said.



A student model walks in CERRU’s third annual fashion show, which explores identity versus perception.

A popular event among students is the annual Interracial Fashion Show. The event addresses the issue of social identity and focuses on two different looks: what people expect the models to look like based on their background and the way they really view themselves.

“It’s not the idea to change anyone’s mind about their beliefs, but to consider the possibility of what other people are considering themselves so it’s more understanding and less antagonizing,” Director of Programming Yael Rosenstock said.

When it comes to planning new events, many ideas are based on issues that are difficult to talk about in other environments.

“Instead of Google searching questions about unfamiliar cultures and topics or reading a book about it, I’ve learned how to ask someone about something if it’s unfamiliar to me and I want to understand it further. You learn a lot more from talking to someone about something as oppose to reading the words on a page. CERRU has really enhanced my perception of the world we live in,” Monica Roman, a student intern and fellow, said.

The Ambassador and Fellowship programs are two student programs offered by CERRU.

After an application and interview process, CERRU Fellows enter a two-year program where, through various projects and training, they learn how to embrace diversity and impact social change.

The Ambassador program is designed for students who are leaders of clubs on campus. To help them lead in their organizations, they go through training in cross-cultural engagement and learn how to create a safe-space for

PHOTO COURTESY OF CERRU

dialogue. Fellows and Ambassadors are students who are curious to engage with all kinds of individuals, and are ready to deepen their way of interacting with people from different lifestyles.

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Panel stresses need and support of women in STEM fields

CANDICE SAMUELS

News Reporter

The Center for Ethnic, Racial and Religious Understanding hosted an event titled Women and the Sciences March 11. A panel of women including CUNY students and professors discussed the challenges women face in STEM, an acronym for science, technology, engineering and mathematics, career fields.

“The biggest challenge, in my opinion, is not only the competitive nature of the field, but the societal pressures women face,” Shoshana Wodinsky, Queens College neuroscience major, said. Wodinsky said she came from a very religious family that stressed a traditional life for her and noted the same ideals can be found in society.

“You’ll more likely see an actress on television playing a mother than playing a scientist. When’s the last time you’ve seen

women being portrayed doing something STEM related during a commercial? Think about it.

On the other side, I can think of at least five commercials where women are at a party or portrayed as a homemaker,” Wodinsky said. According to a report by the Department of Commerce, women hold less than 25 percent of STEM jobs although they fill close to half of all jobs in the U.S. economy.

“As a woman [studying] physics, I always felt like I was looked down upon, both by fellow students and by faculty,” Sara Camnasio, Hunter College physics and astronomy major, said.

Camnasio said she was disregarded in her studies because of her gender.

“I’ve always felt like I was treated like I was not competent enough to be [in the] major. Even though I made it through, many people still have very sexist

attitudes towards me and make offensive comments here and there.”

Women majoring in STEM are less likely than their male counterparts to work in a STEM occupation; however, they are more likely to work in education or health care.

“It’s hard, but it’s worth it,” Nathalia Holtzman, associate professor of biology at QC, said. “You have to be committed and really want it for yourself. There are always going to be phases of enthusiasm and difficulties. Finding a support group or a mentor in STEM is really important.”

The possible factors contributing to the discrepancy of women and men in STEM jobs include a lack of female role models, gender stereotyping and less family-friendly flexibility in the STEM fields.

“As for what we can do,

persuading women to enter the STEM workforce is a great tactic, but it may be just as pertinent to get women to enter media jobs, such as advertising or television writing,” Wodinsky said. “The sooner that we have women portrayed as intelligent and formidable scientists on television, the sooner young girls will realize that it is a viable career choice.”

The relatively few women who receive STEM degrees are concentrated in physical and life sciences, in contrast to men, who are concentrated primarily in engineering.

“I think in order for the situation to improve, there needs to be an effort into involving men into spreading awareness,” Camnasio said.

“There have been a lot of workshops and talks about the problem of the lack of women in STEM, but they were always targeted or mostly attended by

women. Closing the gender gap needs to be a collaborative effort between both men and women. Especially because mostly men are still at the top, are still the ones running committees, running departments, so they need to be informed to break the cycle of poisonous sexist beliefs,” Camnasio said.

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Mock Trial team sets the bar high in court competitions

PHILIPP REGALA

News Reporter

The Queens College Mock Trial, formed in 2013, enables students to learn how to argue cases, examine and cross-examine witnesses and be comfortable in the courtroom setting.

Although the trial is simulated, the knowledge gained from these exercises is invaluable.

“We are given a fictitious case by the American Mock Trial Association and the goal is to work with the case material given to construct an argument for the case and compete against other colleges and universities with that argument,” member Victoria Tan said.

In their last case - Lee Park vs. Duran, a case of intentional shooting versus parental negligence

Tan won the Outstanding Attorney Award. In addition, the team’s witnesses were nominated for the Outstanding Witness Award and the entire team of attorneys received nominations from the judges.

The team operates under the supervision of the Pre-Law Association at QC, which provides advisement that includes helping students determine if a career in law is right for them, teaching how to successfully manage the



PHOTO COURTESY OF VICTORIA TAN
The mock trial team at Queens College is both a competitive, yet fun activity to do, according to the team members

application process to law schools and advising how to prepare for issues they will face in law school. In addition to participating in faux trials, the team also competed in moot court. Moot court is a simulated oral argument, similar to one made before an appellate court.

The oral argument lasts nearly 15 minutes, during which

the attorney presents an argument and answers questions posed by the panel of judges. It is not a trial and there are no witnesses or evidence.

Participating in events such as moot court and mock trials allows participants to capture the atmosphere of working as a lawyer. Despite the fake trials, the members of the team feel it is a portrayal

of real courtroom situations as opposed popular television dramas like “Law and Order.”

“Honestly those shows aren’t realistic in how you portray yourself to the judge and the jury. In those shows you will see the characters approaching the jury in a cocky manner, keeping their hands in their pockets or shouting at the opposition. In trial, if you

did things like that, they would score you down,” Jamie Andrade, a member of the team, said.

Moreover, Andrade noted how rare it is for cases to actually go to trial, which is another exaggeration on courtroom television dramas.

“It is also a little inaccurate since realistically only about five percent of cases go to trial, while in these shows it seems like all the cases they take go to trial. So all in all it is definitely more dramatized than real life,” Andrade said.

Lionel Yu, the captain of the team, felt their experiences were both educational and entertaining.

“Since this is college, it is a more relaxed setting. It is work and fun with your friends, but it definitely gives you experiences that can help anyone going into the legal field,” Yu said. “Mock trial helps you with your work ethic, how to read a case and your public speaking skills.” was a “good turnout, especially for students.

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Tuition reimbursed for undocumented CUNY students

YONGMIN CHO

News Reporter

CUNY gave thousands of dollars back to undocumented students who have been overpaying their tuition.

Upon admission to the school, many undocumented students were uninformed they should have been charged in-state tuition, Lorena Carino, president of Queens College Dream Team, said.

"It's good they're doing that, they should have never taken that money from us," Carino, a junior, said.

For some time, the Dream Team campaigned for the approval of the New York State Dream Act, which allows undocumented youth to gain access to financial aid. However, opposing sides believed the tax money should

only benefit the documented students.

"It's not like they're giving us this money and that's it. No, we're giving back," Carino said. "There are a lot of undocumented people that [pay] taxes. People don't know this."

In Governor Cuomo's Education Tax Credit budget plan, which focuses on K-12, the New York State Dream Act and TAP are bundled together. Cuomo proposed that unless both acts pass, no one would be eligible for TAP, Tiffany Brown, a QC alum and project coordinator for NYPIRG, said.

"For some people, they look at that as a power move," Brown said. "That this is just a way to put both sides together because people who have been advocating the New York State Dream Act have

been against the Educational Tax Credit and vice versa."

However, the Dream Team, along with the teacher's union and students, held rallies to make a stand against Cuomo's proposal.

"We're trying to [plan] rallies where we tell Cuomo, 'you put them together, that's messed up, but we're still fighting together,'" Carino said. "We're not going to go play political games."

"We're just saying, you can't play politics just like that," Brown said. "You can't put college students at risk. They're not political pawns."

The Dream Team hosted their annual Undocumented Open Mic on March 18. Undocumented students shared their testimonies on the hardships they faced through storytelling, poetry or performance, on March 18.

The purpose of the event was to empower the students to overcome their fear by speaking out as they received support from the audience, Carino said.

A speaker at the event, Priscilla Lee-Chung, a senior, decided to attend QC over a private college because of her status.

Before Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, a policy that allows certain undocumented immigrants to receive work permits and social security, Lee worked several off-the-book jobs to pay for school. Some of these jobs were very uncomfortable, she said.

"I had to massage an old man and it wasn't as legit as I thought it to be. It was a bit creepy," Lee said. Unable to afford the tuition, Lee took two semesters off, including

the current semester, to work and save up.

Lee joined the Dream Team after hearing about it from her best friend. Despite her initial fears and discomfort, Lee found refuge in the group.

"The Dream Team was everything I wanted it to be. Everything that we say that we are, we are a resource, we are a safe space, we are a family," Lee said.

The group continues to be a resource and a safe space for undocumented students by raising awareness.

"There shouldn't be a fear [about] their status, because that's just a status. That doesn't define them," Carino said.

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South African art exhibit displays the rich history of country

CANDICE SAMUELS

News Reporter

In celebration of QC's Year of South Africa, paintings collected by Pulitzer Prize winning journalist Les Payne are on display in the main gallery at Godwin-Ternbach Museum.

The collection captures the everyday life of artists in Soweto during the tumultuous student uprisings in the 1970s and 80s.

David Mbele used pastel and charcoal in red, orange, brown and black to create simple compositions of people engaged in work or leisure. His work includes people playing cards, checkers, musical instruments and even someone roasting corn.

A distinctive element of Mbele's figures is their eyes, which look almost completely closed even as they go about their tasks. According to the artist's biography, the closed eyes can be interpreted as a representation of Mbele's view of contemporary South African society. Mbele's "people" did what was necessary to get by and keep their eyes closed to the socio-political reality.

Benjamin Macala, a sculptor and a draftsman, who primarily made his work on paper using pastel and crayon, focused on depicting mother and child with limited use of color. In his work, Two Girls, the subjects have large black eyes that are downcast and heavy-lidded.

Artist Hargreaves Ntukwana used the most color in his work. The subject matter of his paintings ranges from daily life to family relationships to township scenes.



PHOTO BY AMANDA GOLDSTEIN
The Godwin-Ternbach Museum is currently hosting an exhibit on art from South Africa during the 1970s and 1980s until March 26

In his painting, Herding a Goat, a township landscape is visible along the horizon. To produce the desired background and shapes, Ntukwana spread diluted paints by blowing the liquid on the surface of the paper, picking up the excess with cloth and cotton swabs. Once the paint dried, he

would then draw over the color with ink and charcoal to create his final image.

"These are very powerful paintings and one thing that I think is remarkable about them is that the way in which despite all the terror, repression and inequalities that these people were suffering

they were able to transcend this to create something," Amy Winter, Godwin-Ternbach director, said in an interview with NBC.

The terror Winter mentions started on the morning of June 16, 1976, when thousands of students from the African township of Soweto gathered at their schools to

participate in a student-organized protest demonstration.

At first, the security forces tried unsuccessfully to disperse the students with tear gas and warning shots.

Then policemen fired directly into the crowd of demonstrators. Many students responded by running for shelter, while others retaliated by pelting the police with stones.

That day, two students, Hastings Ndlovu and Hector Pieterse, died in the midst of police gunfire.

The shootings in Soweto sparked a massive uprising that soon spread to more than 100 urban and rural areas throughout South Africa.

The artists in Soweto overcame struggles by devoting their time to creating optimistic art despite political conflicts in their country.

The exhibit runs until March 26 at the Godwin-Ternbach Museum in Klapper Hall.

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MTA increases fare despite public outcry

YARAH SHABANA

News Reporter

The MTA increased subway and bus fares by a quarter on March 22, making the per-ride cost rise to \$2.75.

The Queens College campus, located in one of the most diverse boroughs of New York, is a well-known commuter school where thousands of students rely on the MTA for transportation.

Students, in general, were unhappy about the fare increase.

"I'm mad about it. I don't have enough money to pay that much for a MetroCard. I barely make \$300 in two weeks and I have so many other expenses." Malala Khan, a sophomore, said.

QC student Krislee Acevedo was also frustrated by the increase.

"I hate it and I buy weekly tickets because that's what I could afford," Acevedo says. "Now I have to work extra hours to even afford it because the new weekly tickets are \$82.24. Extra hours means less studying time. It's also annoying how CUNY doesn't have discounts for these tickets."

The MTA's budget plan of 2013 said their annual revenue is more than five billion dollars, leaving many to wonder why there haven't been significant improvements despite the increases.

In 2015 alone, incidents and delays have already piled up.



PHOTO BY AMANDA GOLDSTEIN

On March 22, the Metropolitan Transit Authority increased the fare for Metrocards from \$2.50 to \$2.75.

On their Alert Archive website, the MTA lists circumstances where trains and buses were delayed. Some reasons listed were "equipment trouble," "police activity" and "track work."

For decades, the MTA service has been beneficial to many students, but a pattern has emerged with fares increasing while the quality of service is decreasing.

"I think it's ridiculous that it's so expensive. Especially for the

quality of the bus rides, the buses never come on time," Michal Katz, junior said

QC students are not the only ones curious about where the MTA inputs its revenue.

Rick Davis is one of many dispatchers of the Q88 bus. He worked for transit for more than 17 years and said the MTA needs the money to improve infrastructure.

"Potholes are visible and the fuel is up along with the cost of living," Davis said. "The money

goes to infrastructure of the upkeep of the buses and trains."

Davis said he, as a dispatcher, does not receive the money, but the MTA does.

"All I know about is as bus drivers, what we get paid and what we deal with. We only see what we see when our contracts come up. We even have to negotiate those, we don't even know what MTA may have or may not have. We need better buses in order for the drivers to continue to work in

greater conditions," said Davis.

In 1904, a single ride cost five cents. However, in the past 111 years, the MTA increased over the fare 15 times and may continue to do so in future years.

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The Three Penny Opera explores on the ills of capitalism

JORDI SEVILLA

News Reporter

The Queens College Department of Drama, Theatre and Dance – along with the Aaron Copland School of Music – debuted their production of Bertolt Brecht's "The Three Penny Opera" on March 13 at The Kupferberg Center for the Arts.

As the audience filled in, the stage was already set with very industrial with rusty stairs looking like fire escapes, rusty platforms and dirty walls. A sign seen held the phrase "shut not your ears to the needy," which foreshadowed the issue of poverty.

This reimaged production focused on New York City's underworld of the 1980s, where dirty brothels, gangs and corrupted police ran rampant. From songs about the advantages of being in a position of wealth to the many corporate names above the stage, advantage is the center of the life of the underprivileged protagonist,

Mack the Knife.

Brecht's original German production took place in Victorian London, another era of inequality and corruption.

"Brecht and Weill always want to keep the audience on their toes so they are examining the greed in capitalist society but they don't let anyone off the hook. Beggars are both users and the used," director Kay Matschullat said.

The production points its finger at champions of capitalism who go at any lengths to get ahead. The act of robbing a bank, according to Mack, is no different to a bank being constructed. In this world of bloodshed and profit, inquiries are made on the humanity of both the underworld and the upper class.

"With my character, I still had to be that really embrace person, but at the same time, it

just gets the message across that you can get away everything. What Brecht was trying to say was don't let injustice take over the world." Andrés Caamal said, who played a police officer.

The stairs and platforms turned to different positions throughout the show, showing off different parts of this world, such as brothels, police stations, factories and businesses.

"The influence of those who took control of our city's streets in the 1980s trickles down and defines our times" Matschullat says.

"Our production is more about the balance of power, and in 1980s is when there's big changes in that. For example, in Manhattan, the whores owned the streets," Michelle Shine, who plays a Madam, said.

The costumes were typical peasant attire, but rather, quasi-

punk clothes. With his long red leather jacket, Mack stands out like a pseudo-king of the underprivileged. A henchman also made a statement with a gelled up Mohawk and tight, black leather clothes.

Overall, Matschullat succeeds in getting a reaction from the crowd. The production is humorous and colorful, but not quite what someone might expect in a show from a show that is, according to the cast, by and for the poor.

"Brecht's work might make us all hesitate - and a bit uncomfortable - as we whistle one of Weill's tunes, forcing us to recognize the hidden costs of comfort and reminding us we are always on a moral precipice" Matschullat said.

In the end, the actors learned to appreciate not only the play, but also its dire message.

"As an actor, I've learn to appreciate Brecht more, the whole thing was a discovery for the entire cast, none of us ever did a piece like this before," Shine said.

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SPORTS

Nothing but net for the women's basketball team

PHILIPP REGALA

Sports Reporter

The Queens College Women's Basketball Team clinched a post-season victory on March 8 by winning the Eastern Coast Conference Championship, beating out NYIT 65-63 in the last minutes of the game.

This is the Lady Knight's first ECC Championship since 2009. The momentum from this win, however, could not be carried over to Stone Hill in the NCAA division II tournament where they lost 80-66.

"In terms of the conference, for the four years that I have been here, this has been the most competitive the conference has ever been. This year there wasn't much separation between the teams. There were about four or five teams that could have won the championship title this year and the difficulty of both the semifinal and final games is a testament to that fact," head coach Elizabeth Namoki said. "Despite all of that the fact that we won, I could not be any more proud of the team."

The stellar performance of the Lady Knights this season was due to an entire team effort led by the talents of Madison Rowland, Mackenzie Rowland and Kristen Korzvenski, who averaged 20.5 points, 12.4 points, and 10.2 points per game respectively.

During the ECC Championship game, the trio of girls kept up the pace they had set for themselves this season by scoring a combined 58 points.



PHOTO COURTESY OF MICHAEL BALESTRA

The Lady Knights concluded their season with a 22-8 record and won the ECC Championship

Madison Rowland had a double-double with 38 points and 15 rebounds. Rowland averaged 9.9 rebounds during the regular season and 10.2 rebounds during Conference games.

Despite the effort of the team and the talent of the Rowland sisters, the team was unable to overcome Stone Hill. coach Namoki thought the team was ready for the task at hand.

"We had three or four days to prepare for our game against Stone Hill and we prepared like we would for any other team, so

that we could execute and play our basketball. However, we are a young team, we don't have any seniors and none of the members have ever been to the NCAA tournament before," Namoki said.

"Our loss had nothing to do with talent or our game plan the difference in that game was experience. We were just mentally unprepared," the coach said.

The Lady Knights started the game against Stone Hill off in their usual fashion - conceding a few points but playing a mostly defense oriented game. They were

trailing 37-28 in the first half.

The second half was fairly well contested, but the Lady Knights couldn't close the gap. Experience, not effort was a factor in this game. Achieving this feat may give the Lady Knights some degree of experience that they can use for next season.

The team ends their season with a 22-8 record and coach Namoki is optimistic about the future.

"My philosophy has always been on defense we have always been a defense oriented program

and I hope to continue that next year. This year we had some weaknesses in our three point shooting ability so we need to find one or two more players that will strengthen us in that department," coach Namoki said.

"Our offense and defense in the post could also improve and with the new recruits coming in next season we are hoping that will be the case."

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SPORTS

Women's tennis team swings for another strong season

PALA ALI

Sports Reporter

The Queens College women's tennis Team ended their fall season with a record of 10-2 and a loss in the East Coast Conference Championship to NYIT.

The team ranked 37th nationally and third in the East. The women's tennis Team has been ranked nationally for the past seven years in a row.

For the past 15 years, the team has ranked regionally in the East. They have made it to 14 straight NCAA Championships. In four of the last five years, the team has made it to the NCAA final round of 16, twice in Orlando, once in Louisville, Ky., and another in Surprise, Ariz.

Alan Nagel, the coach for the team, finished his 35th season as head coach and understands the team possesses a lot of strengths. Many of the scholarship players were either offered full Division 1 scholarships but chose to come to QC or transferred from D1 schools giving up their full scholarships.

"We have three solid doubles teams and six strong singles players, fourth ranked doubles team in the East with Yevgeniya Plevako and Andrea Samson and the sixth ranked doubles team in the East with Angelika Sobiecka and Camilla Abdallah," coach Nagel said.

In spite of this, coach Nagel pointed out some weaknesses the team possesses.

"We have one long term injured player. Two walk on players. Not a great deal of depth,"



PHOTO COURTESY OF MICHAEL BALESTRA

The women's tennis team will not be looking for any faults this season as they aim to continue their strong showings in previous seasons.

Nagel said.

The team hopes to bounce back from their loss to NYIT in the ECC Championship last season. The tennis season is divided into fall and spring semesters. The Lady Knights are motivated for this semester.

"We lost 5-4 and 5-3 to NYIT, the 11th ranked team in the country. The motivation for this semester is easy; we want to make it into the NCAA Championship for a 15th year. There are three open spots out of six and we will play all of the top teams in the East to achieve that goal," Nagel said.

Sophomore Sumeera Kamil was with the team since

last semester. She played second singles and third doubles. She sees the team's success not only on the court but off it as well.

"Our team is not only good at tennis but also very good academically. Our biggest strength is our unity as a team. Our other strength is its diversity," Kamil said.

Sumeera also sees how coach Nagel prepares them for the upcoming semester.

"This semester we are working twice as hard to get to the NCAA Championship. We are paying a lot of attention to our doubles as it could give us a lead in the game. We had a great season

last semester and the credit goes to our coach for recruiting such talented girls," Kamil said.

Moreover, Sumeera praised the ability of coach Nagel to motivate the players.

"Our coach is one amazing person. He is very caring and has great knowledge about the sport."

The teams face a tough schedule as they face a number of nationally ranked teams.

"We have the hardest schedule of any team at Queens College. This season we will play four nationally ranked teams in [Division 2] this semester all also ranked in the East and the seventh and eighth ranked teams

in the East. We will also play two big D1 teams and the National Champions of junior college," Nagel said.

The Lady Knights next match is scheduled for March 25 against St. Peter's.

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KNIGHT NEWS SPORTS

LADY KNIGHTS

MARCH INTO MADNESS

Women's basketball ends their season on a high note



SEE PAGE 10

Photo Courtesy of Michael Balestra

Women's tennis focuses on unity and diversity

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