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THE
KNIGHT
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Breaking News & Video

Journalism in the Interest of the Queens College Community

CUNY IN CRISIS

Students and faculty bring the fight to the capitol



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Photo courtesy of NYPIRG

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Students recall trip on
civil rights to Atlanta
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EDITORIAL

Lights, camera, action at Queens College

What do “The Confines,” “Person of Interest,” “The Lennon Report” and “Inside Amy Schumer” have in common? They all filmed at Queens College.

Queens College is becoming popular among movies and TV shows. It isn't unusual to see trucks filled with cameras and gear near the campus. Students may have a hard time going into certain areas while something is filmed.

A student walking in Remsen Hall, specifically the area with the red lockers, may find a scene in “Still Alice,” the 2014 film about Alzheimer's disease and starring Julianna Moore and Alec Baldwin, familiar.

Students find the idea of famous actors on campus appealing. “Saturday Night Live” filmed a skit involving comedian Larry David as Democratic president candidate Bernie Sanders outside the Student Union building.

Other movies filmed on campus include “The Runner” and “Naomi & Ely's No Kiss List,” both released last year. As for television shows, they are “Elementary,” “Girls,” “Royal Pains,” “The Blacklist” and others.

Students also get to see what happens behind the scenes. There are camera crews, sound equipment and other fascinating things, especially for anyone majoring in film or media studies.

Even this publication worked with “The Good Wife,” the hit TV show on

ABC that will conclude later this year. We submitted copies of back issues for them to use.

But why is QC such a popular setting for so many TV shows and movies over the years? That's easy—it's one of a kind.

It's difficult to find another campus in CUNY that is large and diverse. There are many areas to choose from that are unique. There's the modern Benjamin S. Rosenthal Library and the vibrant Dining Hall too.

The Quad is also a vital part of QC. This is a place to walk, to sit and to relax. It is 130,000 square feet of grass, walkways and trees. For actors, producers and directors, it's a place with many stories to tell.

Washington Monthly, three years ago, said Queens College was the the “[second]-best bang for your buck.” This meant it was a good college for potential undergraduates to attend. But, it is possible to say the same for anyone interested in filming on campus.

Queens College is no stranger to being represented in Hollywood. Famous alumni include “Seinfeld” comedian Jerry Seinfeld, “The Nanny” actor Fran Drescher and “Iron Man” director Jon Favreau.

Just goes to show that Queens College not only has a lot to offer academics wise, being that it is the “best bang for your buck,” but it's beautiful campus attracts big production companies to want to come and film here.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor:

I write in response to the February 17 Knight News article, “Shuttle Bus Not for All Students”.

I would first like to highlight Queens College's strong commitment to serving the needs of its disabled students. The QC Office of Student Affairs works closely with the College's Office of Special Services and the Committee for Disabled Students to provide support services to students with disabilities. The College has in place numerous procedures to assist with specific challenges faced by our disabled students. For example, we will move classes to more accessible spaces on campus where appropriate and retrofit older buildings and spaces where physically possible and when resources are available.

When we worked to provide shuttle bus service to address transportation difficulties in getting to campus, we recognized that the majority of our mobility and visually-impaired students rely on Access-A-Ride, the NYC MTA paratransit system that provides door-to-door transportation for those who cannot access MTA public transportation. To supplement the available transportation options, I am working closely with the College Office of Special Services and

Dr. Christopher Rosa, Associate Dean for Special Programs in the CUNY Central Office of Student Affairs, to provide accessible transportation to and from the Main Street, Flushing and Jamaica stations, the two stops currently made by the QC shuttle bus. Monies have already been set aside to serve this need, and we are actively working to find a service provider. We will notify all students who are registered with the Office for Special Services as soon as this service is available.

Again, we are committed to serving our disabled students. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Office of Special Services, Dr Mirian Detres-Hickey at (718) 997-5870 in Frese Hall, Room 111A or me at (718) 997-3960.

- John Andrejack, Ed.D., Dean of Students, Student Union Room 300

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 back cover spelled senior Kristin Korzevinski's last name as “Korzevisnki.” Our sports story on Elisabeth Gully misspelled forward as “foward.” The story written by Yarah Shabana on Students for Justice for Palestine did not label MSAs as Muslim Student Associations. We regret the errors.

CUNY takes a backseat to city and state power struggle

PHIL VALLONE

News Reporter

Earlier this year, New York Governor Andrew Cuomo's proposed executive budget included shifting nearly \$500 million for CUNY from the state to the city.

While the lawmakers in Albany must decide on a new budget later this year, New York City did not account for the change in the proposed budget. In fact, New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio was informed about the change the night before Governor Cuomo unveiled his budget.

Cuomo and de Blasio are often seen as rivals despite being Democrats. The two disagree about issues like housing, funding for city programs and other policies.

CUNY is now a major issue between the city and state with the cut in funding denounced by those in and outside of CUNY.

The Democratic mayor held a press conference Jan. 14 denouncing not only the cuts in CUNY, but also cuts to Medicaid.

"There are two things in the budget that are not fair to New York City. That will be harmful to New York City, that will set us back and will particularly set back our students at CUNY," de Blasio said.

The state first assumed control CUNY during the 1970s amid a severe fiscal crisis. However, since the 1980s, funding for CUNY has declined. For Queens College, funding declined by at least 28 percent, according to a 2014 report by the Chronicle of Higher Education.

The Cuomo administration does not think the state should continue to give more to CUNY. It also believes the state and city government should reassess their relationship with CUNY.

One issue the Governor focuses on is funding for administrators. Jim Malatras, director of State Operations under Andrew Cuomo, wrote a letter to Chancellors James Milliken and Nancy Zimpher of CUNY and SUNY, respectively. He cited their six-figure salaries as excessive and

unsustainable.

"As we are once again entering state budget season our administrations wants to be on record that both systems must reduce and justify administrative costs because every dollar of administrative overhead comes from the pocket of a struggling student or taxpayers," Malatras wrote.

But continued disinvestment in CUNY caused issues for students too. The Professional Staff Congress, the union representing more than 25,000 professors and staff, found Cuomo cut per-student funding by 3 percent since taking office. The union does not believe Cuomo can enact changes with such a drop.

"With the decline in per-student state funding at the senior colleges, such improvements have simply not been possible," Michael Fabricant, vice president of the PSC, said.

Furthermore, Milliken testified last month about the impact of cuts or "shifts" as he called it. He vowed not to see

more cuts to CUNY, but offered two scenarios if it did happen.

"Numerous colleges, depending on how you did this, would have to be closed or you'd take a 30 percent decrease across the entire system," Milliken said.

The University Student Senate, where student officials from across CUNY meet, is urging the state to "fully fund CUNY by increasing public investment and also modernize the state's tuition assistance program to meet the needs of the 21st century student."

Even the board of trustees is frustrated with Cuomo. Peter Pantaleo, a trustee, resigned last month because there was no replacement for his seat.

Barbara Bowen, PSC president, defended the students and faculty of CUNY and criticized Cuomo's problems.

"PSC members are proud to stand together with students, faculty and staff from public colleges and universities across the state in defense of educational justice," Bowen said.

Bowen criticized Cuomo

and his policies in regards to CUNY funding. She took the time to thank the state legislatures that are supportive of investing state funds in CUNY programs.

"Academic quality at CUNY has been put at risk by years of declining per-student funding under Governor Cuomo and now by a proposed cut of nearly half a billion dollars," Bowen said, "We thank the legislature for the support they have shown and their efforts to increase investment in CUNY."

Bowen appealed to Albany to do the right thing and support investment in CUNY.

"We call on Albany to make the moral choice: don't deny thousands of New Yorkers their one shot at a better life. Restore CUNY funding, and invest in CUNY students, faculty and staff," Bowen said.

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Students lobby for affordable education

SERGIO ALBARRACIN

News Reporter

On Feb. 26, a score of college students from all over New York gathered in Albany to fight for affordable higher education on Higher Education Action Day.

Higher Education Action Day is an event going on in New York for years. The New York Public Interest Research Group, the largest student-directed research and advocacy organization in the state, and the University Student Senate, which includes students from all CUNY governments, among other organizations sponsored the event.

During Higher Education Action Day, students come from all over the state to Albany and present their cases for affordable education. The lobbying takes place at a crucial time, only days before the State's executive budget is finalized in March.

The event allowed for students to lobby their local legislators at the state capitol, to support higher education by increasing investment in CUNY and SUNY institutions.

This year, their stated goals are an increase in funding, a complete freeze in tuition and a reform of the Tuition Assistance Program. TAP is a grant that helps eligible New York residents pay tuition at approved schools in the state.

The students, who come



Students prepare for meetings with lawmakers in Albany on Higher Education Action Day.

from different schools and class standings, but the one characteristic they hold in common is their commitment to their education.

Christopher Espinoza, a senior at John Jay College of Criminal Justice, pays for tuition out of pocket without financial aid. He is currently working toward his bachelor's in Public Administration and hopes to work in higher education.

One major issue that affects students like Espinoza directly is the proposed extension of the

"rational tuition" law. Governor Andrew Cuomo enacted the legislation in 2011 as part of the NYSUNY 2020 bill that looks to avoid sudden, unpredictable tuition hikes.

It essentially increases tuition for CUNY and SUNY students by \$300 every year for a five-year period. It is set to finish this year, however, the proposed executive budget seeks to extend the plan for another five years. The rejection of the rational tuition extension was a hot button issue for students lobbying that day.

Faculty members of CUNY and SUNY, along with staff of NYPIRG and USS, pledged their support toward organizing with legislators and guiding students in how to speak at meetings.

Grace Magee, a project coordinator with NYPIRG at Queens College, led a team of students at the event as they went around to speak to different lawmakers.

Magee, a graduate of QC, interned with NYPIRG on various lobbying efforts during her undergraduate years.

Prior to going to Albany, Magee instructed students in lobbying strategies and provided knowledge of understanding the roles they would fill by having the students attend mandatory training sessions.

During the meetings, students voiced their concerns to policymakers and retold how lack of funding personally affected them or will affect them in the future. Higher Education Action Day relied on students to persuade the policymakers to support their demands.

Influenced by activism, NYPIRG and the USS seek to make changes for students and faculty of CUNY and SUNY by working to affect legislation. Magee emphasized the greatest resource for change is students.

"Understanding that there is a way to work on issues, it's important that students recognize that," Magee said.

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The journey continues through discovery and art

CHEYNA MULLIGAN

News Reporter

The exhibit “Journey, Continued” is a reflection of the different stages of artist Jian Guo Zhang’s life and his personal matter of feeling displaced and insecure during his transition.

Located at Klapper Hall’s art gallery on the fourth floor, his journey is composed of three stages: 1979 to 1997, 18 years ago before he came to the United States, 1997 to 2015, his time in America, and 2016 to his future endeavors.

The opening reception took place Feb. 25, where Zhang went in depth on his artwork. The exhibition will be on display until March 4.

Having spent years of experimentation and dedication, Zhang’s exploration of the realm of realism takes spectators into his life journey as a Chinese immigrant adapting to living in America.

The gallery gives students, as well as professional artists, opportunities to grow and share their creativity with the community.

Zhang’s paintings hang throughout the walls. Depending from where one stands, some paintings are predominantly in black and white. The opposite includes paintings of color, emotion and positivity.

Museum goers may interpret his work depending where they stand. The black and white wall show his insecurities, doubt, loneliness and anxiety. The colorful wall represents his adjustment and learning experience of coming to his new home.

“ My artwork represents who I am and who I am still becoming,” Zhang said. “My favorite painting that I’ve done is the ‘Leaf’ painting. It expresses how I think and feel being a Chinese immigrant and not settling down. Leaves float away from the tree and are separated from their roots. My tree is China, and I am the leaf.”

There are two leaf paintings. One explains the contrast between China and America in a collage form. The other is an oil painting with blue and gold tones that does not contain a collage.

Sponsor of the exhibit, Professor Sin-Ying Ho, said she was very impressed with the exhibit and experienced numerous emotions throughout Zhang’s showcase.

“ As a Chinese immigrant and artist myself, the power of his paintings speak for themselves. The color and passion shown in his leaves gave me such an extraordinary feeling. I was able



to appreciate his work in so many ways, not only as an artist but as an immigrant coming to a new home,” Ho said.

Brittany Nieves, a sophomore, admired Zhang’s courage and expression in art.

“His style is unique, profound and inspiring. I commend him for sharing his experiences with us, as well as, expressing it through art,” Nieves said. “It is not easy to change and make sacrifices, nonetheless, share it with strangers.”

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PHOTOS BY CHEYNA MULLIGAN

An art gallery at Klapper Hall showed the artwork of Jian Guo Zhang seen in the bottom photo.

Participatory budgeting begins at Queens College

MAHNOOR MIRZA

News Reporter

Participatory budgeting first began in 1989 in Porto Alegre, Brazil. Citizens voted on projects proposed by other residents. Projects with the most votes received funding.

Since then, the practice was exported across the world from Spain to the United States.

Starting this semester, participatory budgeting will begin at Queens College after students requested it.

Participatory budgeting is democratic as a community creates ideas as projects. It chooses popular ideas and enacts it with available resources.

Melissa Appleton, project manager at the Participatory Budgeting Project, said the organization she is with would help the process if any questions come up.

“Participatory Budgeting Process is pleased to provide technical assistance to Participatory Budgeting in Queens College, and we’re excited about the opportunities for it throughout the CUNY system,” she said. “Participatory budgeting gives community members real decision-making power over real money.”

The students who pushed for the process came from Students Organization for Democratic Alternatives. SODA works not only for participatory budgeting,



PHOTO BY ALEXANDER KOLOKOTRONIS

Participatory budgeting assemblies feature groups of students planning the next steps of the process.

but also worker cooperatives as an alternative business model. Its overall goal is promoting democracy for all.

Alexander Kolokotronis, a senior and member of SODA, is a coordinator of participatory budgeting at QC. He felt inspired to work on it because he wanted to see students get involved with school.

“At a commuter school, we have to be creative about how we go about encouraging students to participate on campus activities. What better way than to give students substantive decision-

making power over how a portion of our budget is spent?” Kolokotronis said.

Kolokotronis highlighted the benefits of starting participatory budgeting like improved student life.

“Furthermore, we are a public institution, and, as such, we should give students, faculty and non-instructional staff an opportunity to engage in what can be called public life. There is a huge carryover effect in terms of people simply getting to know each other, different departments operating more efficiently and

more involvement in campus life and groups,” he said.

At the assemblies so far, ideas included are microwaves on campus, better Wi-Fi, more phone-charging stations and lockers.

An assembly Feb. 18 at The Agora Cafe included around 30 people from at least six different campuses. It went over the basics of participatory budgeting, like voting to implement ideas with support.

Adam Rockman, vice president for Student Affairs, liked the new initiative and said

it could help with involvement on campus.

“I think that any way in which students can become more involved with the governance of the college is a good thing. Participatory budgeting seems like a means to make that happen,” Rockman said.

Chandni Tarek, a junior, attended the meetings so far and liked the changes because of the initiative.

“Here at QC, we have \$5,000 [to spend]. It’s not a lot, but PB-QC is at an experimental phase since this is the first time we are doing it here at QC. PB is just trying to push the principle that people in a community have the right to control the budget that directly affects them. It’s about empowerment,” Tarek said.

A goal of the program is to involve more students on campus, while acting as an example to colleges across CUNY. QC is not the first to offer participatory budgeting, but, organizers hope it provides more resources and power for students.

The next assembly for PB is March 7 at free hour in Student Union 304. The email for the steering committee is pbqcsteering@gmail.com.

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Adjuncts struggle without guarantees

BRANDON JORDAN

News Reporter

Jesse Rappaport is an adjunct professor at Brooklyn College and Baruch College. He teaches philosophy, a subject also he studies.

“I didn’t have the passion for teaching, but it was something I pursued,” he said.

However, Rappaport faced a major problem last year—going broke.

Rappaport is one of many adjuncts in CUNY who are unable to make a living teaching because of low pay, excessive work and lack of support.

In 1975, 11,300 full-time professors taught CUNY students. Now, less than 8,000 are employed, according to the CUNY Adjunct Project. The roles are now filled by adjuncts.

An adjunct often works part-time. At CUNY, they cannot teach more than three courses at a college, and the starting salary for a three-credit course is \$2,700.

But living well in New York City, for one adult, requires a wage of \$14.30 per hour, according to MIT’s Living Wage Calculator.

Rappaport entered academia six years ago and was part of a fellowship at CUNY as a professor. But the lack of a stable income, along with his workload, made him question whether to continue teaching.

“The pay is really abysmal. My fellowship money ran out last year. Since then, I had to support myself with whatever work I could find,” he said. “[Being an] adjunct is not adequate to paying the bills.” Rappaport is considering leaving academia. He is interested in getting a technology-related job because he doubts teaching will offer better benefits.

“It feels like I’m being pushed out,” Rappaport said. Rappaport said students should understand what adjuncts do. For example, questions on the

availability of professors relate to the status of adjuncts.

“They deserve to know their professors are being overworked and underpaid,” he said.

Queens College commissioned a task force in 2011 to study the experiences of adjuncts at the college. They found many problems for part-time professors like low pay and isolation.

“Adjuncts are not only isolated from the college as a whole, they are also isolated from each other,” it reads.

Furthermore, the report compared adjuncts to serfs during the medieval times. If they displease someone, then they may “lose a course or lose their jobs.”

“On the Queens College campus, adjuncts are made to feel like second-class citizens. Some critics and sympathetic commentators even call adjuncts the ‘invisible faculty’ or ‘shadow university.’ They may look like

professors and work like professors but lack the authority and respect given to full-time faculty,” it read. But no major changes were created to accommodate adjuncts since the report.

Rappaport said he did not speak about pay with other professors, but felt that needed to change. He was worried about other professors who could not talk about problems with their status.

“I think it’s very hard for people to fight for this,” Rappaport said.

Sometimes, adjuncts cannot reveal their identities. One professor signed a petition made by CUNY Adjuncts for a Fair Contract demanding better benefits and salaries increases. The person left a comment on struggling as an adjunct.

“I work really hard and always have exceptional ratings by the students and faculty members.

I’m the first to arrive and the last to leave. I always do what is asked of me, often without compensation,” the person wrote. “I need to make a living too.”

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Author talks about stories and religion

CHRISTINA CARDONA

News Reporter

Geraldine Brooks read from “The Secret Chord,” her latest novel, and answered questions about it at the last Evening Readings series.

The event was held at LeFrak Concert Hall on Feb. 16. It was heavily attended with people like Queens College President Felix Matos Rodriguez in the audience.

Brooks is the author of four novels including the Pulitzer Prize-winning “March” and “Caleb’s Crossing.” She’s also written non-fiction books like “Foreign Correspondence” and “Nine Parts of Desire.”

But Brooks is not just an award-winning author, she is also a journalist. She worked for The Wall Street Journal covering the Middle East, including the 1990-91 Gulf War.

“The Secret Chord,” released in 2015, is about David, the famous figure and second king of Israel found in the Old Testament of the Bible. Nathan, David’s prophet, is the narrator of the novel.

The book focuses less on the myth of David and his journey, and more on his forgotten or neglected experiences. This includes meetings with family members like Nizevet, his mother, and Solomon, his son. His wives—Mikal, Avigail and Batsheva—are also highlighted in the book.

Joseph Cuomo, founding director of the Evening Readings, began the event by talking Brooks’ writing style.

“One of the things that I find most remarkable about the work of Geraldine Brooks is how

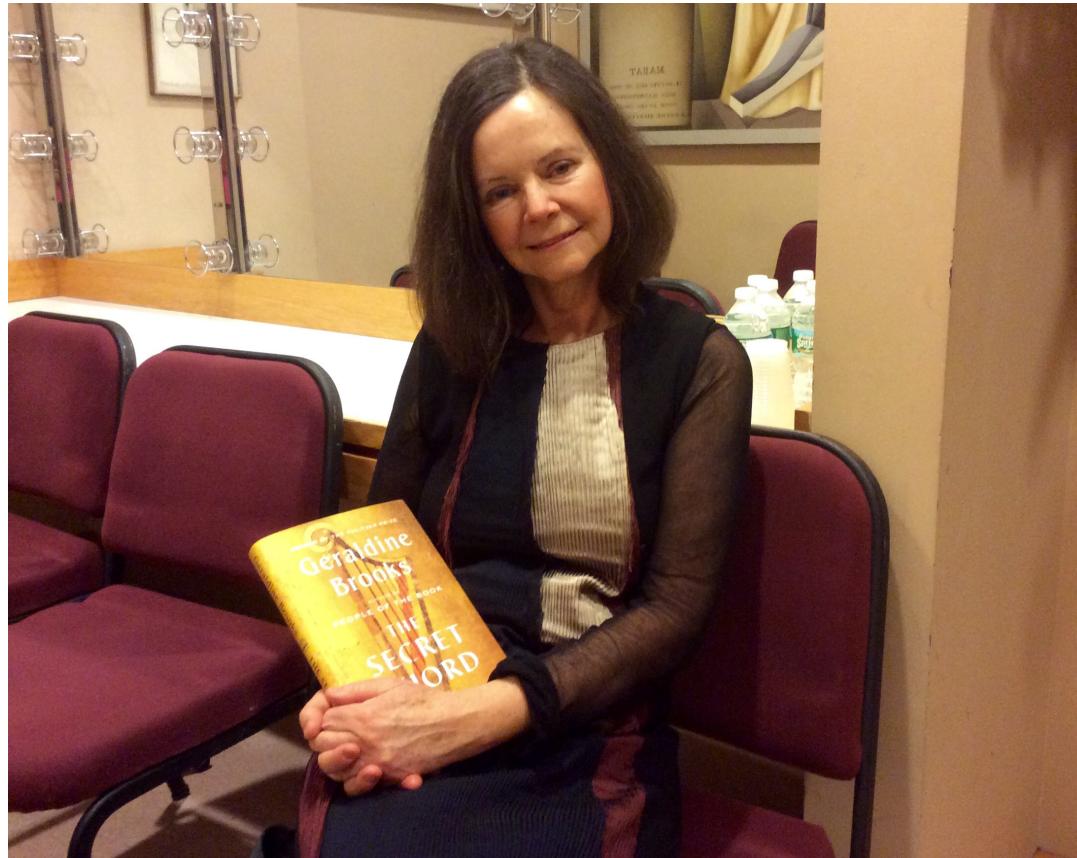


PHOTO BY CHRISTINA CARDONA
Geraldine Brooks attended the last Evening Readings on Feb. 16. Her latest book, “The Secret Chord,” focuses on David, a Biblical figure.

completely different each of her novels is in comparison to all the others,” he said. “[There are] stories that take place in different countries, different cultures and different centuries.”

Cuomo introduced Brooks to the podium, whom read a segment of “The Secret Chord” to the audience.

Leonard Lopate, host of WNYC’s “The Leonard Lopate Show,” interviewed Brooks for the event. The two spoke about the book’s inspiration that comes from Brooks’ son, Nathaniel, whom

wanted to play the harp. The Australian author thought about a boy harpist in the Bible and decided to read the story of David.

“I never read it. I only knew the engraved, cliché version, or the story most of us know,” she said. “But there’s so much more as everything happens to this guy. This is a man whose life is filled with every possible human experience, the best and the worst of them.”

Lopate elaborated on how the story of David is similar to writings of English playwright

William Shakespeare and Italian writer Niccolo Machiavelli. Brooks said there stories that can influence others too.

“I actually got a note from a friend, who is a Shakespeare scholar, and she [couldn’t believe I] stole Shakespeare’s ‘tying the bed sheets together’ when David is trying to escape from the King,” she said. “But, I told her that Shakespeare stole it from the bible.”

Brooks explained how she went to Abraham Joshua Heschel, a famous Hebrew historian, to

learn more about the roll the prophets played in ancient Israel.

“I’ve always had a soft spot for prophets in the Bible. They are so annoying. They’re the people who tell you what you don’t want to hear and do it so poetically. I think we need those people badly,” she said.

Audience members were able to ask questions to Brooks. Afterward, the author signed books for people interested.

For more information on the next Evening Readings series, visit www.qcreadings.org.

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Midtown Men bring the 1960s back

BRANDONHERNANDEZ

News Reporter

The Midtown Men returned to Queens College on Feb. 21 to perform songs from the 1960s at Colden Auditorium.

The Kupferberg Center for the Arts created the event with the original cast of Tony Award-winning musical “Jersey Boys.” The Broadway play first began in 2005 and about a band called The Four Seasons.

In 2010, Christian Hoff, Michael Longoria, Daniel Reichard and J. Robert Spencer formed the group. Despite rebranding as The Midtown Men for legal reasons, they played about 2,000 shows and recorded an album.

The quartet began the show

with The Four Seasons hit “Big Girls Don’t Cry.” After that, they played “Can’t Buy Me Love,” the 1964 song by The Beatles. Each member also sang songs found in the original music, like “Cry For Me” and “Walk Like A Man.”

During the show, The Midtown Men shared their backgrounds and stories, including first performing for “Jersey Boys.”

The show was not the first one at QC for The Midtown Men. Their last performance was on April 9, 2011.

“We’re thrilled to be back at Queens College. We performed here a little over 5 years ago and it was such an experience,” Reichard said.

Longoria found the

experience both enjoyable and convenient.

“It’s always a pleasure performing in Queens. I lived so close to here,” Longoria commented.

Pat Cesarky, one audience member, loved hearing the cover songs by the quartet.

“It’s a nostalgic feeling listening to music I grew up to hear live. These four gentlemen, and the band, really know how to cover the greatest hits. It brings back too many memories,” Cesarky said.

Tracy Contante saw the artists before at another show. But she liked Colden Auditorium and found it a suitable site for concerts compared to the city.

“I saw the ‘Jersey Boys’ a couple years back when the four of them performed. I always wanted to see the show a second time. But, it’s a hassle for me to get to the city, especially with the weather. I knew of [The Midtown Men] but didn’t know they were of the original cast,” Constante said.

However, when she heard about the concert, she made the decision to go.

“When I found more about them, and saw that they were only a cab ride away, my husband and I knew we had to get tickets. Plus, the price is well worth it,” Contante said.

Tickets were \$35, but students received a discount after showing their ID.

The Kupferberg Center will hold other events later this year, including the popular TV show “Wild ‘N Out” on March 13 and comedian Kathy Griffin on April 9.

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Videos highlight student trip to Atlanta

ERICAMARIEFINOCCHIO

News Reporter

Most Queens College students were not in class from Jan. 17 to 21. Moreover, some were on vacation, working or, in the case of some, in Atlanta, Georgia.

A documentary, titled "In the Footsteps of Dr. King," highlighted the five-day trip, at Campbell Dome on Feb. 24.

The annual trip, now in its second year, sends students to the city to learn more about civil rights, activism and the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Moshe Shur, senior associate

at the Center for Jewish Studies and director of the film, is familiar with King's work. He worked with King in the Southern Christian Leadership Conference during the 1960s.

The trip, said Shur, provided lessons for students about justice and fairness.

"This is an experimental education program," Shur said. "It's like planting the seeds of social justice in the hearts of the students with hope they will come to bear fruit in their future lives."

The documentary included videos from the trip. Moreover,

students who were on the trip spoke about their experiences and opinions about the civil rights movement.

Christopher Labial, a senior and president of Student Association, attended the trip. SA sponsored a majority of the program, while Councilmember Rory Lancman, a Democrat, funded part of it too.

"I thought the trip would be beneficial to my knowledge of social movements," Labial said. "I met a lot of people with first-hand experiences of the civil rights movement, and unity among

people is possible."

The history of King at QC goes back many years. On May 13, 1965, he spoke at QC as part of the John F. Kennedy Lecture Series and focused on non-violence, poverty and discrimination.

Nigel Barker, a junior and president of the National Association of Black Accountants, attended as well. He recommended students join it next year as it was educational.

"I learned a lot about the civil rights movement, and I encourage people to go next year," Barker said. "I learned it's

important to take risks, people put their family's lives at risk to do what they believed in."

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Remembering a cherished figure at SEEK

JORDI SEVILLA

News Reporter

Frank Franklin, director of the SEEK program at Queens College, passed away at 71 on Feb. 7, 2016. His achievements were hailed by peers thankful for the help given to SEEK.

The SEEK program—which stands for Search for Education, Elevation and Knowledge—began in 1966 to help high school students qualified for college, but unable to attend for financial or educational reasons. The program consists of workshops and programs for the benefits of entrants.

Franklin worked as a social worker for at-risk children and youth. In 1971, he joined QC and assumed several roles, including Financial Aid Counselor, SEEK

Financial Aid Director and Assistant to the vice President of Graduate Studies.

In 2001, Franklin became the director of the SEEK program. During his tenure, many students and staff members were inspired by his words, including "Agitate, Agitate, Agitate."

On Feb. 9, Richard Alvarez, vice president for Enrollment & Student Retention and June Bobb, Assistant vice president of Enrollment & Student Retention, sent a joint email to the student body on Franklin's passing. They highlighted his achievements on and off campus.

"He was known around campus as a gentle man with a ready smile for everyone he encountered," they wrote.

On Feb. 22, SEEK came together at the Benjamin Rosenthal Library to honor Franklin's life. This included a video of SEEK staff and students showing appreciations for his 45 years of service.

Ashraf Shahriar, a coordinator at the Writing Center, felt inspired by Franklin's attitude, especially in tough situations.

"He taught me the importance of patience and knowing how to keep your cool when there's a tremendous weight of responsibility on you, and how to manage so many people, but still do it with a smile," Shahriar said.

No matter the challenges in SEEK offices, members could not believe Franklin's ability to smile

often.

"He's not human, there's no way he can smile that much," Michael Robinson, a computer lab specialist, said.

In 2007, the United Negro College Fund honored Franklin with the "Distinguished Alumnus of the Year Award." The award is given for fundraising and participation efforts, and other recipients include former Presidents Bill Clinton and George H.W. Bush.

At the celebration, Political Science Professor Omayemi Agbeyegbe read the last letter Franklin wrote for the SEEK program.

"All through my time as Director of SEEK, I have never doubted for one moment the

final triumph of the sacred cause to which you all, my comrades in the struggle, and I have devoted all our talents, indeed our lives: the right to educational opportunity, to an honorable life, to unstained dignity and the enlightenment of the mind that brooks no restrictions" Franklin wrote.

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QC's Hillel given top campus award

SHIRA ROSNER

News Reporter

The Philip H. and Susan Rudd Outstanding Campus Award is given out each year at the Hillel International Global Assembly for a chapter that engages students.

Hillel International, the largest Jewish organization connecting Jewish students, gives just one of over 500 worldwide chapters the award. This makes competition stiff.

On Dec. 16, the recipient of the award was the Queens College chapter of Hillel.

QC Hillel's accomplishments included increased involvement from students and community members. The student-run organization worked with more than one in four, or 1,271 out of over 4,000, Jewish students on campus from 2014 to 2015.

Uri Cohen, executive director of QC Hillel, said the

award recognized not only his work, but also of other members like student leaders and staff.

"It's a tremendous confident boost," Cohen said. "We know what we're doing here, and we have a lot to offer that other places can learn from."

Located at Student Union 206, Hillel includes ethnically and religiously diverse students and staff. Students often speak with staff members about programs and initiatives that interest them.

In addition, Ruben Shimonov, cross-community engagement coordinator for QC Hillel, supervised interactions with different groups on campus like Bukharian, Persian and Moroccan. Currently, there is a Bukharian cultural club and monthly Persian luncheons at QC Hillel.

Cohen explained there is a large Jewish community at QC not found at other campuses. He said

the definition of Judaism at QC Hillel is broader than elsewhere.

"We've developed micro-communities, and we work with each community as well as gather them as a collective whole," he said.

Events created through Hillel often are run by students. Yael Kaplan and Eitan Shapiro, both seniors and members of the Hillel student board, agreed that Hillel is great.

"I've been here since day one of college," Shapiro said, "Hillel has events that people come out to and attend."

Kaplan believed Hillel is important and is comfortable for Jewish students.

"I want people to enjoy Hillel and take advantage of it. I joined Hillel to give my voice so others could give their voices and see what is on campus," Kaplan said.

Another achievement by QC Hillel is working with other religious groups on the second floor of the Student Union. This includes the Muslim Student Association, located right across the hall from Hillel's room.

Cohen expressed pride and gratitude for his excellent relationship with MSA.

"It takes two to create a relationship," Cohen said.

Moreover, Muslim students are seen at Hillel playing ping pong or video games, holding meetings or even attending events. There are also interfaith events and celebrations held between Hillel and MSA.

Cohen believed the organizations contributes to the college's culture.

"The students involved in Hillel are also involved elsewhere on campus," Cohen said.

While the award may seem

like a victory for Hillel, Cohen said it is a victory for QC as a whole.

"The award is another outstanding achievement for Queens College," Cohen said.

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REVIEWS

Illusions and glamour in “Hail Caesar!”

DAVID RAFAILOVICH

News Reporter

Hollywood in the 1950s was the dream factory that provided the American public with entertainment, escape and hope.

This is found in “Hail, Caesar!” as it features a colorful cast of Hollywood character and funny parodies of 1950s movies that contrast with the stars behind the camera.

The film, directed by the famous Coen Brothers, contains the snappy comedic dialogue, quirky characters and philosophical messages that make the duo’s movies lovable.

Eddie Mannix, played by Josh Brolin, is a Hollywood executive and spin doctor for actors. He helps any actor with personal problems that may hurt their career.

Mannix works on this because of the environment at the time. Any link with communism or homosexuality means public rejection or worse—blacklisted from films.

The way Mannix organizes the lives of actors’ public lives



PHOTO COURTESY OF UNIVERSAL PICTURES

“Hail, Caesar!” is mixed with the dream-like movies of the 1950s and the problems with stars in Hollywood at the time.

is amusing. He controls every aspect of a star’s life, from dating to marriage. For example, when an actor gets pregnant from an extramarital affair, Mannix makes her adopt the child. His actions behind the scenes make Hollywood seem magical.

The film’s main problem happens with famous actor Baird Whitlock, played by George

Clooney, starring in an expensive film about a Roman general enlightened after meeting Jesus.

Whitlock is kidnapped by a group of communists calling themselves The Future. The group do not hold Whitlock against his will, but convince him about the evils of capitalism.

Though the plot is straightforward, there are movies

happening in the movie. These cutaways of genres show Roman epics, synchronized swim ballets, low-budget westerns and other manufactured realities by Hollywood. Intended as parodies, they offer an interesting perspective of Hollywood.

But the fantasy of the films end when the director calls cut. “Hail, Caesar!” even shows how

pitiful humans can create movies that are sometimes corrupt and not real.

For instance, Whitlock, in character as the Roman general, delivers a monologue that brings everyone on the set to tears. But Whitlock forgets his lines, and all of his other Roman soldiers break character.

Even for an audience member, Whitlock’s speech feels believable and all his character flaws are forgotten.

However, despite what the film does right, there are scenes that aren’t as entertaining as others. This might affect viewers not familiar with Joel and Ethan Coen’s previous films and ambiguous, yet deliberate style found in works like “The Big Lebowski.”

But “Hail, Caesar!” is a film that is both comical and thoughtful. The Coen Brothers’ mastery is obvious, and the scenes that work well are entertaining and detailed.

The duo’s new film have felt dull at some parts, but it is a funny movie carrying commentary on the belief of believing.

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Queens College Dream Team's:

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ALAS ~ Sci-fi & Anime Club ~ La Tertulia Cultural Club ~ Project Sunshine

REVIEWS

Eating Peking duck at a Flushing gem

JAKE COHEN
News Reporter

There are a lot of places to eat outside of Queens College. But to find the best Chinese food in New York City, go to Happy Food.

But what and where is it?

This eatery with large, red Chinese letters is found at the corner of 40th Road and Main Street, right near the Long Island Rail Road station.

But, unlike the LIRR, this place is not expensive. Moreover, it sells Peking ducks that look great, but taste even better.

Happy Food offers Peking duck buns served in the traditional method. This means the meaty duck breast and crispy duck skin is served inside delicious steamed buns. Of course, it includes sweet bean sauce and crisp greens.

The buns are made to order and are always hot and fresh. The duck is not the former, but the constant flow of customers at the food joint ensures the latter.

There is breast meat in each bun and crunchy duck skin rivaling any other combination with the same ingredients. For those who eat duck, they will enjoy the oily, expertly-cooked Peking duck with the traditional Chinese ingredients of steamed buns and sweet bean sauce.

These buns cost \$1.25 each, which is cheaper than any LIRR ticket or MetroCard fare.

The corner eatery is usually



PHOTO BY JAKE COHEN
The bright, red letters makes it easy for anyone to find Happy Food. If not, the smell of the food inside does too.

full of customers from day until night. Brian Grodofsky is one of these people. He takes the 7 train from the east side of Manhattan to the last stop for Peking duck.

"I tried the duck here a few years ago due to the urging of friends, and I was hooked. I got to have it," Grodofsky said.

His enthusiasm is typical of diners at Happy Food. Plus, despite the busy atmosphere,

anyone can eat the Peking duck buns while standing up.

Happy Food also includes stalls inside that specialize in different foods. Across from the duck stall is a one with roast pork.

Just like the Peking duck, the volume of roast pork sold each day means there is always hot, fresh roast pork for customers.

But that's not all. The spicy beef and tripe, or the edible part

of an animal's stomach, is another staple of the place. With a texture similar to calamari, it is topped with chili peppers, oil and fresh cilantro. The real joy is its rich, spicy flavor.

Dan Herman, a customer from Forest Hills, comes to the place undecided with what to get. He talked about one easy method for selecting either roast pork or duck for dinner—a coin.

"It's a coin flip. Heads is duck, and tails is pork," Herman said.

But Herman decided not to flip a coin. He bought both roast pork and Peking duck puns with a portion of lo mein, or stirred noodles.

For QC students wondering how to get to Happy Food, there are a few options. The shuttle bus heading to Flushing ends a few blocks away from the place. Alternatively, there is the Q25, Q34 and Q17.

Whatever the method, Happy Food is one of the jewels in Flushing. You don't even need a coin to know.

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Queens College bookstore is going digital

ERICA MARIE FINOCCHIO
News Reporter

Queens College's 20-year contract with Follett, the current bookstore provider, ended in December.

Beginning in 1997, Follett was able to sell books and supplies until 2006. But the contract was extended for another 10 years.

This left other companies to control the familiar spot in the Student Union. Akademos won out of all the bids for the bookstore, but there's a catch—it will all go online.

"There was no option to simply extend the contract with Follett," Adam Rockman, vice president for Student Affairs, said. "Transition planning has been going on for several months, and we are looking forward to

providing our students with the best and least-expensive options for buying their textbooks and course materials."

The process for a new vendor involved students, faculty and administrators. After reviewing the different proposals, they decided Akademos. This makes QC the fourth CUNY college to have an online-only bookstore with the others being John Jay College, Medgar Evers College and the CUNY School of Law.

However, because of the change, employees at the bookstore will lose their jobs. The bookstore usually employs QC students or alums.

Joey Hernandez, 35, is assistant manager at the bookstore and worked there for 17 years. He

is one person losing his job because of the change.

"I'm in charge of the course materials [and] now I won't have a job," Hernandez said. "Personally, I would have asked the students what they think about a digital bookstore before closing."

Maria Cruz, 20 and a sales associate, said the bookstore did not just sell books. It sold items for to benefit students that they would need to get somewhere else.

"We sell a lot of Metrocards, and students pay with debit or credit cards," Cruz said. "Now, students are pushed to go to the school's ATMs to get cash out for Metrocards at the gas station."

Cecilia Ramos, 24 and a Team Leader at Follett, felt QC needs to focus more on students' essentials.

"They need to know some students have vision problems and need actual textbooks, and I don't think they thought of that when they changed the bookstore digitally," Ramos said.

Joseph Tse, 24 and a QC alum, believed physical textbooks would help students more than any digital copy.

"Physical copies of books are better because it helps students study," Tse said. "Buying the books at the store and reselling them back gives us a few dollars back in our pockets too."

The plan is to convert the bookstore into another One Stop. The store does not sell rentals to students, and apparel is 50 percent off. In addition, no more shipments will come to the store.

Akademos will take over starting April 1. For now, students can access the new vendor at www.qcbookstore.com. In addition, students can sign into their CUNYFirst account. There, they can find the textbooks needed for classes and can order books online

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The glimmer of hope with Syrian prison literature

YARAH SHABANA

News Reporter

Shareah Taleghani, director of Middle Eastern Studies at Queens College, first became interested in prison literature after taking a class. She even met those detained to learn more about them.

Taleghani read their books and letters, but the prisoners did not find it easy to document or even remember their work. But she studied them more, usually focusing on Muslims who memorized the Quran to recall their pieces.

Taleghani discussed this and more at Benjamin S. Rosenthal Library on Feb. 24. The event, organized by the Women and Gender Studies program, invited her to talk about prison literature by Syrian women.

Taleghani defined prison literature as any text—fictional or non-fictional—written about the experience of political detention. During the 1970s, this type of work became popular among imprisoned authors.

“As a term, it gained literary critical recognition as a distinct genre in the 1970s beginning when the Syrian writer and critic, Nadine Soliman, published an essay titled ‘Prison Literature’ in



Heba Al-Dabbagh was jailed by the Syrian government when she was 21. She wrote literature in prison about her experiences.

1973,” Taleghani said.

Taleghani explained that prison literature is found outside the Middle East. The genre appeared in Syria’s literary and cultural circles many years before the 2011 uprising in the country. Some writers feared naming their work as prison literature would affect their creativity.

Even called a former detainee worried authors.

But in Syria, it was the only treatment in prison. She became committed to human rights and women’s rights activism. “There were guards threatening to break both your pen and your dreams,” Abdelrahman wrote.

Taleghani referred to two Syrian women who became prisoners—Hasiba Abdelrahman and Heba Al-Dabbagh.

Abdelrahman suffered from harsh

But in Syria, it was the only treatment in prison. She became committed to human rights and women’s rights activism.

“There were guards threatening to break both your pen and your dreams,” Abdelrahman wrote.

Heba Al-Dabbagh, also a Syrian writer, went to prison at 21. Her brothers worked in the Muslim Brotherhood, an organization founded in 1928

combining Islamic teachings with political work. However, in the 1970s and 1980s, joining this group in Syria would lead to execution.

Before going to prison, Al-Dabbagh met an intelligence agent, whom said the two would speak for five minutes. She was sent to prison for nine years.

Naima Akesbi, a QC alum, attended the event and enjoyed learning more about the author’s contributions in prison literature.

“[Taleghani’s] focus on Syrian women writers is not very much a known subject in the West. These Middle Eastern women break all the stereotypes related to their female countrywomen,” Akesbi said. “My personal heroines have the courage to write about their horrific experience, even though they still face threats from the tyrannical regimes in their countries.”

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Sunny times ahead for Queens College

MAHNOOR MIRZA

News Reporter

Queens College announced it would build a solar-storage system near the Fitzgerald Gym later this year.

The Department of Energy's Sustainable and Holistic Integration of Energy Storage and Solar PV program awarded half of the funds for the \$6.3 million project. Its goal is to create technologies that are both affordable and accessible for users.

But the college is not working on the project alone. Sustainable CUNY, the New York Power Authority and the Electric Power Research Institute will help too. In fact, EPRI will provide \$3.2 million to building solar panels that are a part of the project.

Adam Rockman, vice

president for Student Affairs, said the solar panels continue the college's commitment to alternative energy.

"This is a good thing for the college," Rockman said. "QC is a leader in sustainability efforts, and the solar panels are a natural progression in these efforts."

While QC is not the only CUNY college turning to green energy, it is the only one to receive the SHINES program's grant. The new solar panels will allow QC to have backup power after outages and even lower electricity costs.

A study is underway to determine how many watts each solar panel will generate. The final calculations will vary on the design.

Sophomore Ellen Huynh

felt unsure about the installation of the solar panels, especially during times there was no light.

"Solar panels are a great idea, especially for our environment. However, when there isn't any sunlight, how will the solar panels work? The buildings might not have enough power when it is not sunny. I believe that solar panels are not enough to power buildings," Huynh said.

The college is no stranger to green energy. The Summit received a LEED Gold certification by the U.S. Green Building Council in 2009 because of the building's sustainability. There is also a table near the Dining Hall with plugs powered by small solar panels.

CUNY, meanwhile, worked on problems brought on by climate

change and formed Sustainable CUNY in 2007. The group aims to work with policymakers to create solutions for urban areas.

Tria Case, the university director of Sustainability at CUNY, praised the effort of Sustainable CUNY for pushing for this project.

"Sustainable CUNY's work over the last decade to reduce solar market barriers has made it easier for New Yorkers to 'go solar,' and we are proud to work with the EPRI Team and Queens College to host a solar plus storage system," Case said.

Shahrin Azim, a freshman and member of the Environmental Club, said she was not aware about the project. Yet she agreed that it continued the alternative energy

commitments of the college.

"I knew nothing about the solar panels. But I am very excited about the solar panels because this will make our school greener, and it will help to save energy," Azim said.

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The Department of English: preparing students for the real world

BIANCA HE

News Reporter

In a way, every Queens College student is linked to the English Department.

Students are required to take a writing-intensive class. Others, including non-English majors, participate in QC Voices, a website featuring student perspectives, or Utopia Parkway Journal, a student-run literary journal.

For students majoring in English, the reasons behind their decision may vary. But one thing is certain—they want to increase their language skills.

Jose Fana, whose native language is Spanish, is a 28-year-old senior majoring in English and psychology. Spending four years as an English major sharpened his English.

"I have been getting better at my writing, and I feel that I am a more professional student. In other words, it has raised my self-esteem," Fana said.

Fana also praised the department's ability to help students with important writing skills.

"I think that the English Department has helped many students with a strong academic skill. I know some classmates that use those tools and are very successful in school," he said. (what tools?)

The English Department offers more to students than just classes. It includes an Honors Program for undergraduates. Moreover, it offers over 20 scholarships and contests for students.

Christopher Labial, Student Association president and a senior also majoring in English, spoke about his experience for applying for the Charles G. Weekes Endowment Fund.

"I enjoyed writing a fiction piece for the committee comprising of the best professors

in the department. It's an opportunity that helps a student get their name out," Labial said.

Labial also recognized the department's effort to prepare its students for their future career by innovating its curriculum. In one class he took, students were allowed to live tweet their thoughts and insights on class materials using their phones. The incorporation of blogging and media outlets helped connect students to the real world.

"The department really stepped up in making their courses relevant to the job market," Labial said. "They want their students to be prepared for their futures. This is no longer an easy major that you take for a walk in the park. The curriculum is flexible and, chances are, you will enjoy the texts you read."

Despite the department's efforts, sometimes it's hard to get the most desirable result.

Xi Yao, an exchange student

from China and also an English major, said that she was not familiar with programs provided by the department.

"I've never heard of any," she said.

Adrianna Sirinian, a political science major and a blogger for 2015 QC Voices, also said the atmosphere of Queens College affects the department's outreach.

"Unless you're taking a class or really interested in reading and writing, I think it's difficult for the department to influence students, as the school is a commuter school that struggles to have a full encompassing community," Sirinian said.

Still, in the 2014-15 English Department Handbook, the department focuses on helping students first and foremost.

"We serve a culturally and socioeconomically diverse population at a commuter campus, offering a rigorous education

within an intellectual community of mutual respect," it said.

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SPORTS

Knights continue to run toward success

HANS THEMISTODE

Sports Reporter

Queens College men's track and field team look to build momentum heading into the National Collegiate Athletic Association Division II Indoor National Championship.

On Feb. 12, seniors Angel Alers-Rosario and Liam O'Conner came in second and fifth, respectively, in the men's weight throw.

Two days at the CTC Indoor Championship, freshman John Martinez won the 400-meter dash with a time of 49.67 seconds. Alers-Rosario continued his strong season coming in first place with a toss of 15.50 meters. Senior

runner Michael Camacho placed in fifth in the 60-meter and third in the 200-meter events, while junior runner Skandal Delince placed in fourth at the 400 meter. The Knights combined for 63 total points for a fifth place finish.

On Feb. 26, at the East Coast Conference Championship, at Ocean Breeze Park, Staten Island, the team posted a solid performance with nine all-conference spots. Alers-Rosario won a silver medal with a toss of 15.89 meters. O'Conner took bronze after a personal best 14.15 meters in the shot-put competition. Martinez finished third at both the

200 and 400-meter events.

This season, the team is under the leadership of head coach Nicole Vann, promoted in June 2014. Joining Vann is new assistant coach George Erazo, who replaced Kurt Samuels this season.

I think having coach Erazo is a plus/ He's a good runner and has a history with the ECC. I think it took the team off guard [as] we all really liked former coach Samuels. But it was something out of our control," junior Dillion Scibelli said.

In Erazo's senior year in 2014, he competed in the 400-meter race at the NCAA

Division II Outdoor Track & Field Nationals. He is an All-Region and All-Conference athlete and a list of his accomplishments include Athlete of the Meet at the ECC Championships and ECC Track Athlete of the Year.

Scibelli highlighted that success is the key mentality for the remainder of the season.

"The goals are just, I'd say, to do well at conference championships as individuals and a team, earn the team title or top three and to move forward to outdoor," Scibelli said.

The Knights prepare for their NCAA Division II Indoor

National Championship at Pittsburgh, KS on March 11 and 12.

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Knights basketball standings and conference leaders

Men's Basketball Final Standings

	ECC	All
St. Thomas Aquinas	18-2	24-4
Daemen	14-6	18-9
Dist. Columbia	13-7	15-13
LIU Post	12-8	17-11
Bridgeport	12-8	15-13
Dowling	9-11	13-14
Mercy	9-11	12-14
Queens (N.Y)	9-11	11-14
Molloy	7-13	9-19
Roberts Wesleyan	5-15	8-18
NYIT	2-18	3-24

Women's Basketball Final Standings

	ECC	All
NYIT	18-2	24-7
Dist. Columbia	15-5	20-8
Queens (N.Y)	15-5	18-8
Roberts Wesleyan	14-6	22-6
St. Thomas Aquinas	11-9	18-10
Molloy	11-9	12-16
Bridgeport	8-12	10-18
Daemen	7-13	9-17
LIU Post	5-15	5-23
Mercy	3-17	6-22
Dowling	3-17	3-23

ECC Men's Basketball Points Per Game Leaders

Name	School	PPG
T. Dyck	Daemen	21.8
C. Millender	Dowling	21.7
K. Chaplin	NYIT	21.2
K. Chandler	Dist. Columbia	19.1
J. Hall	LIU Post	18.6
J. Reyes	St. Thomas Aquinas	17.3
E. Maxwell	Dowling	17.1
C. Marquardt	Molloy	16.9
T. White	Queens (N.Y)	16.2
J. Morris	Molloy	16.0

ECC Women's Basketball Points Per Game Leaders

Name	School	PPG
Mad. Rowland	Queens (N.Y)	20.2
K. Surlan	Dowling	18.2
T Baldwin-Kollore	Dist. Columbia	16.8
D. Ragab	NYIT	16.6
S. Saba	Daemen	16.6
B. Fields	Roberts Wesleyan	15.8
S. Courtney	Roberts Wesleyan	15.5
A. Leftridge	Molloy	14.4
Mac. Rowland	Queens (N.Y)	14.2
J. Erickson	St. Thomas Aquinas	13.9



KNIGHT NEWS SPORTS

THE TRACK TOWARDS THE TOP



**Dillon Scibelli looks to lead the Knights
to a strong indoor finish**

SEE PAGE 15

Photos courtesy of John Higgins

**Men's and women's final standings
and points-per-game leaders
PAGE 15**