

The Recorder

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Faculty and staff have the opportunity to gain proper safety training during the semester

STOCK

Keeping CCSU Community Safe With Training

BY KELLY LANGEVIN
 SOCIAL MEDIA EDITOR

Keeping CCSU Community Safe - Basic Training for Faculty and Staff is a program offered at various times throughout the school year to prepare those inside and outside of the classroom for potentially dangerous situations and how to handle them.

The program has run for two semesters and is in collaboration with the Central Police Department, Environmental Health and Safety, Fire Lieutenant Terry Ferrarotti and faculty senate of Student Affairs.

"This training is in response to a [Student Government Association]

rep who had come to one of the committees that I sit on [faculty senate of student affairs], and this person felt that some professors were not prepared. This student witnessed a classmate have a seizure during class [and] the professor did not know how to respond, and not everyone does," Cassandra York, professor of physical education and human performance, said.

"That student's concerns were valid. We, as professors, should be doing regular training to make sure we know how to handle certain situations, because there are many of them," York continued.

The program sessions are offered in one hour increments and go over various situations, such as

what to do if there is a fire, what to do until first responders arrive in cases involving seizures, allergic reactions, significant bleeding and other harmful possibilities.

The Central Police Department provides a video made by the FBI called "Run, Hide, Fight," which demonstrates what to do when there is an active shooter situation and how to respond. The police then go over the role they have when an active shooter is present and also emphasized the importance of having the Safe App on your phone, which can track your location.

"When faced with an active shooter, immediately we experience a fight-or-flight response. Many of us have had active shooter

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Civil Rights Speaker Encourages Small Acts of Kindness

BY MEGAN BRAWNER
 COPY EDITOR

Human rights activist Breanne Zolfo delivered this year's Civil Rights Lecture, which focused on encouraging attendees to spread kindness, a theme she promotes through her own coffee shop.

This year's speech highlighted Zolfo's mission of spreading and promoting community love. In 2013, she opened Cafe Fresco, located in Crown Point, Ind., with the goal to lift up those who are struggling and spread small acts of kindness to customers.

"Through my cafe business I was able to create a mission I always wished to be a part of," Zolfo said. "One that fostered a community of people that saw everyone for who they were and for



Breanne Zolfo is welcomed to the university by President Zulma Toro and guest.

ISABELLA CHAN

who they would become and for what we could become together."

Before becoming a business owner, Zolfo said she saw her realization begin to materialize after working as an intake coordinator at a battered women shelter haven house on the crisis hotline.

"It was there that solidified the need for people to be seen,

appreciated and loved," she said. "Every woman who lived there had a story. To hear these stories was a privilege and the best response is to listen and be capable of understanding."

Zolfo also spent time volunteering at an English as a Second Language (ESL) school in her hometown. It was there that she discovered others, like herself, who

wanted to be a part of something bigger than themselves. Two years later, she opened her own ESL school, in hopes that her graduating class would later work at the cafe and help spread her mission to other cities.

"It started with the belief that we have the power to brighten someone's day," Zolfo said. "To be that positive

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Men's Basketball Split Two Games At Home

BY ANDREW DECAPUA
 REPORTER

The Central Connecticut State University men's basketball team returned home after a three-game road trip and split two games in Detrick Gymnasium to Long Island University on Thursday night and Bryant University on Saturday. The Blue Devils defeated Bryant to secure their third win of the season, all of which so far have come at home.

Coming into the game against LIU, the Blue Devils had lost three in a row and were trying to grab a win against the Sharks after losing to them last month.

Sophomore guard Ian Krishnan and freshman guard Jamir Reed led the way in scoring for the Blue Devils on Thursday. Despite coming off the bench, Reed led Central with 17 minutes in the first half and hit 5/5 threes in the first 20 minutes of play and finished the game with a career-high 21 points. All of his points came from deep. He made seven out of eight of his shots from behind the arc and added eight rebounds and two assists. Krishnan finished the game as the team's second-leading scorer with 17 points on 7/15 shooting.

Freshman guard Trey Tennyson also scored in double-figures with 10 on 3/6 shooting and went 2/4 from three-point land. He also had three rebounds and three assists.

Tennyson made a driving lay-up to bring Central within one point with 20 seconds left in the first half. In the final 20 seconds of the first half, Reed fouled LIU's Tyrn Flowers, who then knocked down both free throws to give the Sharks a 45-42 lead at the half.

LIU started the second half with a 7-0 run that the Blue Devils were never able to recover from, ultimately losing the game with a final score of 90-74.

The one thing that plagued the Blue Devils the most against the Sharks was turnovers. Central lost the turnover battle 20-10.

Head coach Donyell Marshall said that the sloppy

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Press Release: Legnani Announces 2020 Candidacy For 6th District State Senate

Andrew Legnani announced on Feb. 11 that he will be running in 2020 for the 6th District State Senate Seat to serve New Britain, Berlin and Farmington.

Legnani has worked as an emergency medical technician (EMT), an insurance salesperson and as the commissioner in the Parks and Recreation Departments in Berlin. Through his professional experiences, Legnani has been able to understand where the towns stand and what they lack on.

One of the key issues that inspired him to run for the district was the lack of healthcare coverage for the citizens. As an EMT, he saw, firsthand, horrible things that impact and compromise the community, such as neglecting medical visits and people rationing their insulin.

"We need people who understand the industry; working with it instead of combating it to ensure coverage for our citizens should be a priority for anyone who wishes to serve the 6th district," Legnani stated in the press release.

During his time as a commissioner, he saw the issues related to the towns' financial affairs.

"I have the life experience, motivation and perspective to lead the charge on protecting our valued taxpayer dollars," Legnani said. "I understand the value of a full day of hard work, we need to have representatives that actually understand the struggles each of us faces and are willing to make the decisions needed to safeguard our districts interest."

For more information to discuss the plans or join his team, you can contact his campaign at (860) 599-7256 or email them at 2020legnani@gmail.com.

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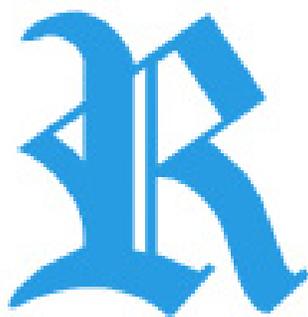
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Keeping CCSU Community Safe With Training

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training and hopefully, will remember those trainings if ever in that situation," psychology professor Carolyn Fallahi stated.

Elementary school children in our state practice what to do in the event of an active shooter. By being prepared, hopefully, that will save lives. It is unfortunate in this day and age that we need to prepare for such situations. In my opinion, it is better to be prepared," Fallahi continued.

Keeping CCSU Community Safe is not mandatory, however, that is York's goal for the future. As there are many steps in the process, such as voting and approval of various levels, it is easier to highly encourage the program for faculty and staff to attend.

Information regarding the training is sent out regularly through the faculty senate and President Dr. Zulma

Toro endorses the program in order for faculty to receive certificates after training.

"160 people came to the program the very first semester and that was when nobody really knew about it. There are 440 full-time faculty and 551 part-time and it is mostly full-time that has come but we are going to continue to grow. Central is really trying to make sure that students feel safe. I myself care," York said.

"Knowing at the beginning of each semester that faculty had this type of training on classroom safety, I would feel safer and have more trust in them if it ever came to an emergency situation," Alana Beckert, senior criminology major, added.

For more information visit www.ccsu.edu/safetytraining or contact Cassandra York or Karen Misbach.

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SGA Briefs

- The Student Government Association meets every Wednesday at 3:05 p.m. in Bellin A and B in the Student Center. These briefs are from the SGA's meeting on Feb. 12.
- President Roshanay Tahir announced Senator Talarski won the position of Vice Chair of External Affairs.
- Three newly elected senators were motioned into office.
- A motion to allocate \$790 to Social Work club was passed.
- Open nominations for the External Affairs committee was held. Senator Choudhery and Senator Olamuyiwa were nominated.
- A motion to ratify Spring 2020 Special Elections Results was passed unanimously.

What's New, CCSU?

- Engineering alumni panel will be hosted in the Connecticut Room of Memorial Hall on February 20th at 12pm
- The Women's Center will host their annual ElectHer event, a non partisan training event for women running for student government and political offices, on February 21st from 9am to 3pm
- Torp theater will host a presentation of "Gina's Journey: The Search for William Grimes" on February 21st 12pm-2:30

CCSU Spring Career & Internship Fair

BY SAMANTHA BENDER
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

Central Connecticut students dressed to impress as they brought along their resumes to the CCSU Career Success Center's Spring 2020 Career and Internship Fair.

In the span of three hours, over 80 employers gathered in Alumni Hall to offer students a number of job opportunities: from internships to part-time and full-time positions. Despite being only one day, weeks of planning took place prior to the event.

According to Montez Johnson, associate director of the Career Success Center and Explore Central, it can take up to one to two years to ensure access to the facility, as well as to gather enough employers willing to participate. At the conclusion of each career and internship fair, the Career Success Center begins working on its next one.

"We hope that [students] get connected, that they recognize that they have a resource. Its always been important to us as a career office to make sure that students know about this," Johnson said. "Each year we get bigger and bigger."

The annual event serves as CCSU's general career fair and is catered to all students. For this reason, the Career Success Center makes sure to accommodate all majors, from engineering to philosophy and anything in between.

Senior Tyler Heaven appreciated both the array of diverse employers and the opportunity to put himself out there to potential employers while at the event.

"It's the best way to get a job. It makes the whole process of finding a job a lot easier," Heaven said.

Regardless of whether students in attendance were offered an internship or a part-time or full-time position, they were given a chance to practice presenting themselves to employers, dress professionally and network with others.

Upon entering the fair, students were given a floor plan of the event setup to help them best navigate their way through the different tables and employers. On top of being able to network



Employers set up tables for their companies in the CCSU Student Center Alumni Hall. SAMANTHA BENDER

with others and share their resumes with employers, students had the opportunity to get free professional headshots taken.

For sophomore Janelle Taylor, this was her first time working at the fair.

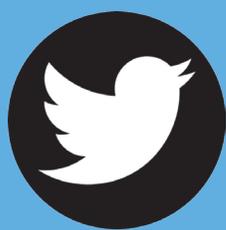
"I'm big on human interaction. I love being able to see the students and see them getting involved in the job process," Taylor stated. "It's awesome. I love it."

Most of all, Johnson said he hopes that students know they have a place to go in order to find jobs that are relevant to their specific degree program. Throughout the year, the Career Success Center even hosts specific events to assist students pursuing specific careers including a manufacturing fair, an engineering fair and an education fair.

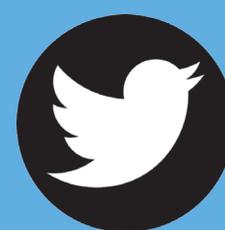
"We try to make sure that we have those pockets of fairs for students to go to find a relevant career because there's a difference between a job and a career. A job is what all students do," Johnson said. "But we want to make sure that we get [students] away from the job mentality, take those transferred skills that [they] have from those jobs and make sure that it's following a relevant career after [they] graduate."

For assistance with career plans or goals, students can visit the CCSU Career Success Center located in the Atrium of Willard-DiLoreto Hall. The office is open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. each weekday.

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Healthy Relationships Are Possible: You Have Options

BY BRUNA VILA ARTIGUES
NEWS EDITOR

The Office of Victim Advocacy at Central Connecticut wants to remind people that in an environment where sexual assault and violence occurs, they are not alone and there are options.

“We believe that everyone has the right to an environment free of violence and fear,” the office’s pamphlet stated. “Our goal is to strengthen and improve the delivery of services, encourage the reporting of offenses and to hold responsible persons accountable while protecting the rights of all involved parties.”

The Office of Victim Advocacy recently hosted the spring semester’s first event on sexual assault. With the celebration of Valentine’s Day — a day focused on intimate relationships — and Sexual Assault Awareness Month approaching in April, the office believes it was the best time to remind people of what a healthy relationship looks like and the options available for those experiencing any interpersonal violence.

“There’s a lot of things that people haven’t been informed about,” Nick Stafko, an intern at the Office of Victim Advocacy, said. “We are trying to prevent sexual violence by informing people of how a healthy relationship should be,

explaining the red flags and making sure people have affirmative consent.”

The program was also a way to spread the word about the role of the office and the resources and services they offer. Volunteer Jhanelle Bailey explained that not a lot of students are aware of the office’s role and its location, as it is important for people to know they are not alone in these situations.

“The primary goal of victim advocacy is not to tell people what to do, it’s about empowering the victim, providing all the options and giving them the resources to make the decision that they feel is best,” Stafko said.

As Bailey further explained, the event was a reminder that if someone is experiencing anything outside of the “healthy relationship spectrum,” they should seek support.

“The Office is a way to give people different support systems that they could turn to in dealing with whatever trauma they or their loved ones may have faced,” Bailey stated.

During the event, pamphlets were passed out and workers responded to any doubts and concerns about the issue. They also provided people with the correct information and differences between sexual assault, stalking, consent, intimate dating and domestic violence. They also presented people with the rights and options victims and survivors have, as



The Office of Victim Advocacy provided useful information to students about healthy relationships.

BRUNA VILA ARTIGUES

well as the ways of stopping violence.

In an interactive activity to gain people’s attention and still inform them, participants were asked to spin a wheel with numbers that were paired with different questions. Some of them read: “As a victim of sexual assault, is it your fault? Is it not your fault? Is it an accident?” “Is obsession true love?” “If someone is impaired, can they give consent?” and “If you decide halfway through that you want to stop something, can you?”

Whoever got the question right would receive a Valentine’s Day card with words like “honesty” and “fun,” and other signs of healthy relationships.

This was the first of several events the

office will conduct related to sexual assault and victim advocacy. During Sexual Assault Awareness Month, the office is putting together the StandUp CCSU and the Denim Day Event which will provide additional information about these topics.

Meanwhile, Joanna K. Flanagan is the professional advocate dedicated to assisting survivors and victims of interpersonal violence. She can be located in the Office of Victim Advocacy in Willard DiLoreto in room D305.

“Remember, no matter what, this was not your fault,” one of the informational pamphlet stated. “We will support you in determining what is best for you.”

@BRUNAVILA

Civil Rights Speaker Encourages Small Acts of Kindness

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Guests included local high school students and members of the CCSU community

STEPHEN BALKARAN

in their life and essentially change the world, one random act of kindness at a time.”

Each month, Cafe Fresco employees surprise customers by paying for their groceries and select an individual to donate their tip jar to each week. Customers also receive uplifting notes on their coffee cup sleeves.

Stephen Balkaran, an African American studies professor at Central Connecticut, began the Civil Rights Lecture Series 10 years ago with the goal to expose students to one of the greatest movements in America.

“I hope student[s] that can take away from the lecture series [see] the need to be more socially aware of issues of ignorance, bigotry, racism and hatred that continue to plague our country and to be more sensitive regarding issues of

injustices that continue to exist,” Balkaran said.

Balkaran also notes that Zolfo’s remarks reminded attendees of the legacy that Dr. Martin L. King Jr. left behind, which is to give back to others.

“Mrs. Zolfo reminded us that a society free of hatred and one full of love, will always win,” Balkaran said. “She has been promoting ‘community love’ throughout the country by advocating ‘giving back.’ She reminded us that civil and human rights are about doing good to others and passing it on.”

Students who attended the event said they were inspired by Zolfo’s message.

“When I heard she was coming to speak, I was really intrigued by the fact, because I am all about kindness,” Julie Gifford, junior psychology major, said. “I don’t care who

you are and what you do with your life, however you want to live it, that’s how you should live it. She enforced that.”

Freshman Jani Schofield added she attended the lecture because of her own interest in human rights.

“I am very interested in human rights, civil rights and LGBTQ+ rights, so I thought it would be interesting to come,” Schofield stated. “Showing compassion is so important.”

Zolfo’s final remarks emphasized that we all have a story to tell and that it can take one person to make a difference.

“We believe that these small acts of kindness can ripple throughout the community and beyond,” Zolfo added. “Life is about people and experiences, not materials. Materials come and go, but stories remain forever and everyone has a story.”

News In Brief

BY SARAH WILLSON
REPORTER

Local Nightclub Shooting Kills One, Injures Four:

One person is dead and four others are injured after a shooting took place inside Hartford’s Majestic Lounge early Sunday morning.

Shots rang out around 1:30 a.m. after an argument broke out between a group of people.

Hartford Police identified the man killed in the shooting as 28-year-old Marquis Treadwell. The four other injured victims, two males and two females, have not yet been identified.

All four who were wounded are in stable condition, police said.

As of Monday, police had not identified a suspect but said they are working to.

Americans Infected With Coronavirus Evacuated to US:

Fourteen Americans have evacuated from a coronavirus-stricken cruise ship in Japan and have been taken to the United States, according to the Washington Post.

An additional 44 Americans who tested positive for the virus will stay in Japan and recover.

According to the Post, the U.S. State Department is still in the process of transporting over 300 Americans who had been quarantined on the Japanese cruise liner after learning some tested positive for the disease now known as COVID-19.

All passengers will remain under a mandatory two-week quarantine, the Post said.

Syrian Aid Operation ‘Overwhelmed’ By Displacement:

The aid operation in north-eastern Syria is being “overwhelmed” as the number of displaced people by the government continues to grow, BBC News reported.

Roughly 900,000 people have been forced to flee since December, with the majority of evacuees being women and children.

The United Nations said health facilities and schools are also being targeted.

Syrian President Bashar al-Assad said the army operations in the northern part of the country will carry on as his country continues to “battle for liberation” against outside forces like Jihadi terrorists.

The Right To Feel Comfortable

BY ISABELLA CHAN
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Who are you? A question people often stumble over when asked to respond, resulting in maybe one answer. But for Tenaya Taylor, their answer is a no-brainer.

“I am an activist —I guess that’s what people call me— an organizer, a rapper, an artist, a model, I write grants, I work with kids, I cook a lot, I’m an entrepreneur, I have a business,” Taylor listed on. “I definitely do it all and the reason I do it all is because I really hate capitalism.”

Taylor, a guest for Central Connecticut’s LGBT Center, discussed the various injustices of racial identities, disabilities and queer identity and how these struggles shaped them into the person they are.

“I’d rather be poor for a little bit, figure it out and try to prevent the things that happened to me from happening to other people cause it was harmful,” Taylor stated further. “The racism and homophobia and just all the violence that I experienced while trying to have some upward mobility, because I grew up poor and black and it took a lot of learning and trying to fit into this mold that whiteness and capitalism tries to make you fit into.”

They recalled moments of feeling “attacked” and uncomfortable in their work environment for their hair and identity. Taylor noted “black and brown people shouldn’t have to face that when we’re just trying to do what we love to do and be in these institutions.”

During their presentation, Taylor recognized several influencers, like music artists Frank Ocean and Lil Das X and transgender disabled model Aaron Phillips, for their bravery and ability to embrace both their black and LGBTQ identities. Deciding to the same, Taylor began to use social media as their platform in order to advocate for social justice within the Hartford area while also embracing the

various parts of their identity.

“I just decided to use social media as a tool, I find a lot of opportunity through Instagram and Twitter for my music, my

art and model, so I also use it as a platform to spread messages so it can go out there further,” Taylor said. “I also take social media with a grain salt because

people are mean but it’s a great way for movements, like Me Too, Black Lives Matter, just to start. The reason why I’m involved is because my identity kind of just

intersected.”

Throughout the lecture, Taylor incorporated ways for not only themselves but for others to feel comfortable. For instance, she added introductions of every guest in attendance, rearranged the furniture to allow everyone to have visible access to the presentations and asked if anyone in the audience needed them to speak up in order to properly hear.

“I talk about disability a lot and accessibility. There’s ablism that runs rampant in institutions and that prevents a lot of people from getting to the work that they need to go to, even stairs, a lot of things that people don’t think about,” Taylor said. “I definitely advocate for disabled people and differently-abled people because, you know, we all are going through it in some way and there’s no disability hierarchy.”

Those in attendance participated in a few interactive activities in which they described their own version of a safe space, whether that meant having proper resources for clean water and food, or clearer distinctions of what a safe space for people of color and members of the LGBTQ+ community should offer. Overall, many were looking for improvement on ways to make safe spaces more accessible to all identities.

CCSU offers a safe space for all. For those looking for more LGBT information please visit the LGBT Center located on the third floor of the Student Center, PRIDE Club also holds meetings at 6 p.m. on Tuesdays in Phillbrick room. Students are also welcome to visit the Africana Student Organization in the Africana Center, room 008, of Marcus White. CCSU’s Black Student Union meets at 7:20 p.m. every Wednesdays in Sprague Carlton room while the United Caribbean Club convene at 7:30 on Tuesdays in Phillbrick Room.

For more information on clubs and organizations on campus that support various identities, please visit the link. ccsu.edu.

Black History Spotlight: Felton Best

BY BRUNA VILA ARIGUES
NEWS EDITOR

30 years ago Central Connecticut received one of the best gifts a university could ask for. With an incomparable passion to challenge the facts and restructure the education system, the wise mind of Dr. Felton Best stepped foot on the campus ready to take the university to a whole different level.

Best determined early in his career that he wanted to be a scholar. He recognized that lessons throughout textbooks were not researched or explained in-depth, particularly those regarding Africans and African-Americans. Therefore, he embarked on his own research when he realized he could conduct more thorough explanations of issues and events, such as the civil rights movement, if primary sources were used more effectively.

At that time, the conclusion of scholars was that the civil rights movement was exclusively a southern phenomenon and that it did not have national or regional implications. However, Best’s research found letters of correspondence proving that the civil rights campaigns were happening in the north as well.

“It was in this context that I recognized that, as a scholar, I could impact the scholarship or define the scholarship and not just be basically impacted by it,” Best explained. “It is important for scholars to create knowledge and not only be absorbed by the existing knowledge.”

Best recognized that the way to build scholarship in the field was by creating an impact on original research, which is what he continues to do today.

CCSU was lucky when Best took their offer to be a scholar at the university in 1991. He gave conference papers around the country and had multiple research papers and books published. Finally, a group of scholars and him proposed an alternative thesis and argument about the civil rights campaign: it was not only southern, but national pride

It was in that same context that Best began to recognize the great opportunities that CCSU had to offer.

When he arrived, there was no African-American studies program. However, Best applied for a Minorities Education Improvement grant and worked hard to put together a curriculum and embark upon the African-American lecture series. He also took the time to accompany students to enroll in doctorate programs and to visit graduate and professional schools. Best later successfully added the recognition of the contributions of African-Americans in Connecticut to CCSU’s curriculum.

“If the students don’t have the economics to go to the scholars, we can certainly bring the scholars to the students,” he said. “My payment would be to see students from central go on to become great scholars and excel in their professions,” he said.

Along the way, Best became the chairperson in the history department, the first African-American to be named as distinguished professor in the whole Connecticut State University system, the president of the faculty Senate, the assistant dean in the College of Arts and Sciences and a brilliant professor, among other titles.

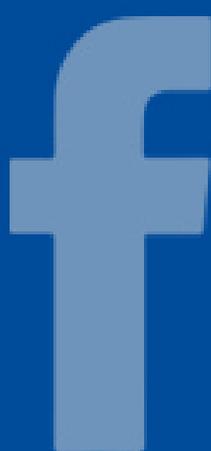
His list of accomplishments, recognitions, publications and titles is never ending due to his real passion and love for what he does. He is a scholar, he is a thinker and he trains his students to be original thinkers.

“There is a calling,” he said. “I love being a professor. I love not only learning about knowledge but creating knowledge. And I have determined that if you end up to be so lucky or blessed to do what you love, it never seems like a day of work in your life.”

“And we’re not done,” Best added. “I’ll be around for a long time.”

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Do the Benefits of College Outweigh the Costs?

BY SAMANTHA BENDER
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

For as long as I can remember, it has been drilled into my head that in order to have a successful career and financially support myself and my future family, I must attend college.

But why is it that, from such a young age, parents and teachers alike put so much pressure on college and preparing for it? Especially in a time where tuition is increasing and wages are falling, is it even worth it?

According to a study conducted by the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, data consistently shows that, in terms of dollars, attending college is the practical decision.

The study found that, in 2017, median weekly earnings for those with the highest levels of educational attainment —doctoral and professional degrees— were more than triple those with the lowest level —less than a high school diploma. Along with this, workers with at least a bachelor's degree earned more than the \$907 median weekly earnings for all workers.

I am not sure I have met a student, yet, who hasn't felt the stress of student loans and expenses at some point. For me, this study has helped to slightly put my mind at ease and has confirmed that all of my hard work and money should eventually pay off.

But money and expenses aside, what is college doing for us besides giving us a piece of paper as proof of our four years beyond high school?

As a junior with three years of college under my belt, I could not be more grateful for the sense of independence and the communication skills college has taught me and allowed me to acquire along the way.

We go about our whole lives having little to no say in the schools we attend. Most of us are thrown into the elementary school, middle school and high school that is closest to where we live or to schools of our parents choosing.

So I know that, in my case, I had a huge invigorating feeling when it came time to pick a college to attend. Having the ability to choose the setting, size and location of where I wanted to spend my next four years of school was extremely exciting. It was the first time I had felt a true sense of independence and responsibility for the direction in which I wanted my life to go. I remember stepping foot onto Central Connecticut's campus for the first time and feeling an overwhelming sense of possibility.

My freshman year of college was the first time I had lived away from my parents. It was the first time I was completely on my own and had the freedom to make my own choices. This also meant I had to grow up and figure things out for myself, because I did not have my parents right there to help me solve my problems.

I am certain that had I not lived on campus with people I hadn't known prior to college, I would not be as mature as I am today. It pushed me out of my comfort zone and taught me how to communicate my feelings in order to address any problems that came my way.

At the end of the day, there is only so much that high school can teach us. College is really where students are given the opportunity to express themselves fully, make their own decisions and find their own footing in this world. For me, the benefits of at least my personal college experience outweigh the costs of it. There is no way I would be as well-rounded, mature and independent had I not made the decision to attend a university.

@SBENDER99

Editor's Column: The Choice To Be Kind Isn't Up For Debate

BY ISABELLA CHAN
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

On my 17th birthday, I completed 17 acts of kindness. While some of them were grand gestures of buying my favorite teacher flowers and donating clothes to a shelter, others were smaller like holding the door open for a stranger and giving someone a compliment.

The simple acts weren't exhausting or tedious, in fact it felt like a breath of fresh air to give to others and help someone without hesitation. So why is it so difficult for society to make kindness a priority rather than a privilege?

As Feb. 17 was Random Act of Kindness Day, I thought of the current state of our country and the compassion people have for one another, or lack thereof. We live in a time in which kindness is in short supply because people make it into something that must be earned not given. But that's not how kindness works — it should be given to anyone without hesitation.

Why is it so hard for people to hold the elevator door for someone or simply say bless you as a person sneezes? Just because there isn't a clear or immediate benefit from being kind doesn't mean people shouldn't do it. Kindness will make you a better person, literally.

Those who partake or simply witness such acts will begin to feel an increase in love hormones, self-esteem and optimism due to the release of oxytocin and serotonin, based on a study from Dartmouth College. It is also claimed that feelings of stress, depression and anxiety also decrease, as "perpetually kind people" have 23 percent less cortisol than the average population.

Despite these benefits, it seems kindness is almost nonexistent in our country, potentially because of our leaders inability to lead by example.

Politicians and representatives



of our country should be better with their treatment of one other. Donald Trump snubbing Speaker of the House of Representatives Nancy Pelosi by not giving her a handshake is just unnecessary. And for Pelosi to rip apart Trump's speech is blatantly rude.

Despite having differences amongst them, there is a level of professionalism that needs to persist and simple acts of kindness that should remain on said level. These professionals set a standard on how American citizens treat each other therefore their actions of disrespect permit others to do the same.

If people were willing to give a minute of kindness to each person they meet then our society would be substantially better in terms of human interaction. Kindness does not debilitate a person but it can lessen the strength of a nation.

In the words of President Franklin D. Roosevelt, "human kindness has never weakened the stamina or softened the figure of a free people. A nation does not have to be cruel to be tough."

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EDITORIAL

Leaving The Mess of Climate Change For Our Generation To Clean Up

Sea levels are rising, temperatures are fluctuating and ice caps are melting. These changes are not just starting, on the contrary some have been happening for so long they are virtually irreversible.

Despite years of research done by scientists proving human's negligence causing these effects on the planet, little action has taken place to combat them.

Only recently have people begun seriously trying to better our planet. While this is in some parts due to more knowledge about our decisions impacting the environment, our past generations were still aware of these dangers yet not concerned with their future generation's ability to live on Earth.

Instead of working to reverse climate change, some of humankind's actions in the past in the past 100 years have ramped it up at a near unprecedented rate. The burning of fossil fuels, an increase in factories and oil fracking have sped up the destruction of our ecosystem.

Those behind the decision making for our planet have routinely been complicit in furthering the destruction of our environment or altogether ignored the problems facing it. This precedent does not exclude

our own country's leaders.

President Donald Trump has routinely dismissed climate change as being "fake news." Before him, President George W. Bush cut the Kyoto Protocol as one of his first actions in office. Though Bush put forth other strategies to cut back on the United States greenhouse gases, backing out of the Kyoto Protocol because of it having setbacks to the United States economy was not a power move.

But this problem began long before Bush, it started with our societal ancestors that created the world we live in today — who may have believed they were making change in the most 'humane' and profitable way to their knowledge but in the end it is the cause of the current destruction of our home.

In 2018, the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change said that policymakers have just 12 years to avert the detrimental consequences of global warming, leaving us with only 10 more years to save our world from the chaos that was bestowed upon it.

The conversation that isn't being had is the lack of change willing to be accepted in the generation before us that introduced the beginning of this new decaying earth that their grandchildren are trying maintain in order to survive for the hope of their potential offspring.

It's understandable that the way to maintain the consistent survivable funds in the world of business is to continue the cycle that has created the foundation, but what's a business without a literal foundation to build on?

In order for growth to happen there needs to be change in our everyday lives and business, this generation can't be the only saviors. Invest in renewable energies, buy energy-efficient appliances, use smart cars, recycle — just start caring about our planet and the future of the children that hope to take footsteps on our land that we have taken for granted for too long.

We have reaped enough of our generational curses.

Love In The Air At ‘Love Jones’



The audience was captivated as students performed their talents of choice.

NDENGO MWILELO



Justin Melville played the saxophone during his performance at Love Jones.

NDENGO MWILELO

BY SHWAR ZAIDI
REPORTER

Central students celebrated Valentine’s week by partaking in a night full of singing, dancing and poetry.

The Ruth Boyea Women’s Center held their annual open mic event called “Love Jones” last Wednesday in Semesters. “Love Jones” is based on the movie of the same title where two African Americans met at a club and fell in love. This event was for people to showcase their talents, whether it be through rap, dance or another medium. Students interested in performing were encouraged to register.

And register they did. Students came on stage with different performances of various topics such as romance, toxic relationships and finding love for themselves. Some people sang original songs, others wrote poems. There was a comedian, people dancing and

others playing music. One student even showed off their saxophone skills.

Many people came out to support and enjoy the event. They cheered on their friends, or just watched and laughed while listening to great music.

Central student Haberdale Smith raved about the performances.

“I loved all the songs,” she said. “My favorite performance was the jazz player. It was a wonderful event.”

Another student, Dais Hernandez, loved the event as they thought it brought people closer together in preparation for the special day of love that is not only for couples and romance, but also for people to have fun and hang out instead of having a lonely night.

“I loved the event,” Hernandez said. “Having the CCSU family come out and support all the performers. Everyone’s energy was great. Love was definitely in the air.”

According to one student, who was debating on whether it was worth going up on stage until finally,

they decided to do so at the very end. It was quite nerve-racking but worth it.

One of the performers, Widemise Joseph, sang “Someone Like You” by Adele.

Joseph shared how they felt singing in front of their peers.

“I grew up performing such as singing, acting and dancing, so the stage is when I’m at my most comfortable since I’m pretty used to it,” Joseph said. “There is nothing about this event that couldn’t have been more perfect. I enjoyed the whole atmosphere where you can express yourself in a creative matter, even though I was ready to call it quits but I’m glad I didn’t.”

The Women’s Center, who hosted the event, is a safe, welcoming place for students to talk about sensitive topics such as sexuality, dating, women’s lives and culture. If you ever want to talk to someone, need a resource or just need a friend, the center is open for everyone, regardless of gender. They also have job opportunities and upcoming events. More information can be found on CCSU The Link.

Women’s Happy Hour

The Ruth Boyea Women’s Center has been having a busy month full of events, one of which being Women’s Happy Hour. Women’s Happy Hour was a networking event for women faculty, staff and students, which was held in the Connecticut Room of Memorial Hall. Several topics were discussed at the event, one of which being jobs and sizes of companies that students would want to work for. Women’s Center Director Jacqueline Cobbi-na-Boivin believes she can advise young women to consider starting their careers in small companies first rather than big companies.



Several different sandwiches were offered for to attendees.

NDENGO MWILELO



Women of CCSU gathered to socialize and network themselves.

NDENGO MWILELO



Women’s Happy Hour was open to women who are senior students, faculty or staff.

NDENGO MWILELO



Sides were also available such as cookies, chips and pretzels.

NDENGO MWILELO

Central Authors Presents Pampuro's 'Harlot's Grace'



LM Pampuro shared excerpts from her newest novel "Harlot's Grace" at Central Authors.

JULIA CONANT

BY JULIA CONANT
ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT EDITOR

Central English professor Lynn Patarini took to the CCSU Bookstore to read two chapters of her newest novel and discuss the writing process.

The spring semester's first taping of Central Authors took place last Wednesday with Patarini (who writes under the name LM Pampuro) sharing "Harlot's Grace," the story of an undercover woman attempting to put a stop to a new deadly drug.

"Alia Price isn't who she pretends to be... Only her close family and employer know the truth, at least that's what she believes," the preview on the back cover of the book says. "In the news, there is a new high on the streets... Alia and her team must find and destroy the lab to stop the death and insanity. The source is closer than she thinks."

Pampuro originally began writing as a romance novelist, but later realized she liked to write suspenseful and thrilling stories, which is what "Harlot's Grace" is.

"I had a hard time sticking to romance," Pampuro explained, saying that when she reread her romance stories, she found them boring. "I started getting a little bit darker and a little bit darker."

"Harlot's Grace" pays homage to several places around Connecticut, mentioning cities such as New Britain and Lyme and places such as Nehantic State Forest and Mozzicato.

"I used to spend a lot of time at Mozzicato's, I've hiked in Nehantic State Forest. I like using local places," Pampuro explained. "I was always told to write about what you know."

When one person asked what inspires Pampuro to write, she responded, "This is gonna sound crazy, and I apologize if I sound like a wackadoodle, but the stories just come to me."

She then went on to share the story of how the idea for the upcoming sequel to "Harlot's Grace" came to her.

"Harlot's Fall" started at a music festival," Pampuro recalled. "I had had writer's block for maybe a month or so, and we were in the middle of Rich Robinson's set. I can't forget it because he was up on stage playing guitar, and I turned to my husband and said, 'I gotta go back to the hotel.' And he's like, 'You're writing now?' And I go, 'I have to write now.'"

Since Pampuro is a professor as well as a fiction writer, an audience member asked if she had ever left a concert to write an academic paper, causing the crowd to laugh.

"Yeah, no, that hasn't happened," Pampuro said. "I have read academic articles though that I've printed out at concerts if the concert has been boring."

Pampuro started writing when she was younger and even submitted lyrics to a band when she was in high school.

"One of my great aunts passed away recently and they were cleaning out her house and they found my reject letter from the band Foghat from Warner Brothers back in the late 70's," Pampuro shared. "I sent them lyrics and they sent back a nice reject letter. So that was pretty funny."

Pampuro now aims to release one full length novel per year, but cited that the littlest distractions will take her away from her concentration.

"If my husband breathes on the other side of the house, I can't write," Pampuro said. "But I can go to a Starbucks, I can go to Sweet Harmony Cafe in Middletown, and be amongst people and noises and stuff and I don't hear a thing. And I don't know why."

Despite the distractions, Pampuro expressed that writing the first draft of a story is the most enjoyable part.

"Writing the initial story is wicked fun to me. I totally enjoy that, I'm totally into the process and everything," she disclosed. "Editing is sheer hell."

Pampuro is currently in the process of writing the sequel to "Harlot's Grace" which is expected to be released in May 2020. However, the first book in the series is available now. Visit pampuro.com to figure out where to buy the book or to learn more about Pampuro's writing.

JULIA CONANT

Spread Kindness Without A Hesitation

BY ISABELLA CHAN
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

It takes only a moment to make a person's day. With Random Acts of Kindness Day being honored on Feb. 17, it is important to be mindful that kindness can be spread everyday. Although being kind requires one to go out of their way, it can become so easy that it can be a part of a person's every day life.

1. Hold the elevator door for someone — I see it happen all the time: you're on the elevator and notice a person rushing to make it to the elevator as its doors are closing in. You make eye contact with them and debate whether or not to hold the door for them. Well let me make that decision for you easy and say just hold the door. The extra 30 seconds could make their day significantly better, offering them that chance to make it to their destination just in time.

2. Give someone a compliment — Have you ever looked at a person's outfit and thought "I want those jeans," or maybe "where did they get their hair done?" I definitely have and often kick myself for not mentioning it to the person when I notice them. Giving a compliment makes people feel special and actually acknowledges them for their efforts. Words as simple as "you look nice" can boost a person's confidence in mere seconds.

3. Say "bless you" when a person sneezes — Sneezing in a quiet classroom is so awkward sometimes; it's loud, kind of gross and generally a very unattractive look on a person. But that small moment of disgust can be erased by a person offering a simple "bless you!" That small phrase translates into a "I've been there, I get it," which is honestly great.

4. Allow someone to merge into traffic — Sitting in traffic is dreadful. Horns honking and bumper-to-bumper vehicles, it's an absolute nightmare. The only thing worse than getting through traffic is getting into it! Squeezing into a lane can be dangerous but if someone is willing to allow a person to move in then all would be solved. The small gesture will likely add a bit of relief to that person's drive.

The Abstract Quest for Visibility

BY AMINA FERATOVIC
CONTRIBUTOR

In a time where many artists are struggling to shine light on intersectional queer visibility, Kevin Abstract (a.k.a. Ian Simpson) of BROCKHAMPTON uses his music to express the struggle of being a person of color and part of the LGBTQIA+ community.

Abstract is one of the many artists of modern day hip-hop who has opened the sound waves for discussion of what it means to be black and gay.

Since the release of his sophomore album in 2016 "American Boyfriend," Abstract paints the image of what it feels like to be a gay black man in suburban America through strong lyricism and beats. The track "MISERABLE AMERICA" talks about how his mother is homophobic, his best friend is racist and how he is essentially stuck in the closet about his true identity, something many people can relate to even in 2020.

In addition, the song, "Empty" shows the longing to be with someone. The simple piano chords mixed with

lyrics such as "I think about you all the time / I waited for you all my life" make it a relatable song for any person, conveying a tone of melancholic and forbidden teenage love. Abstract's album highlights realness and dives straight into bringing awareness, which sets him apart from many in the industry.

Abstract's discography does not end there. In his time with BROCKHAMPTON, he has become the forefront of the group and has released many other songs about various topics such as drug addiction, family matters and his life.

The song "JUNKY" off the "Saturation II" album contains a verse where he acknowledges people asking, "Why you always rap about bein' gay?" to which he responds that not enough people do, especially in a genre where historically the majority of listeners are straight men. This makes him stand out and shows that he will stand up against the taboo of talking about this topic.

By having artists such as Abstract expose what it means to be gay and a person of color in America while using a platform that has been filled with heteronormative and misogynistic lyrics in the past, it fuels the opportunity for discussion. In turn, these discussions can lead to

solving the issues that many have faced in the past and continue to face today.



Abstract uses his platform to discuss the hardships of being gay and black.

ULTRAVIOLENCES

OPINION

‘Sonic The Hedgehog:’ A Modern Horror Classic

BY SAMUEL PAPPAS
REPORTER

ALERT: SPOILERS AHEAD

“Sonic: The Hedgehog” is a 2020 children’s film about a blue eldritch horror that commits theft, vandalism and manslaughter while moving at a relatively high velocity.

While some critics have been quick to label this film as a marketing gimmick for an intellectual property that is almost universally hated, I have seen through the mirage of pandering for easy cash.

This film is not a light show for children with a mascot’s face plastered onto it. It is a deep exploration of the human mind as it descends further into the madness that is working with Jim Carrey.

Back when the film was announced in 2019, the original design for Sonic caught a lot of flack on the internet. The chief complaint was that Sonic was supposed to be cute and friendly, but instead he looked like my sleep paralysis demon had come to attack me in the waking world.

The thing casual movie-goers forget is the intent. Without the context of the film itself, you wouldn’t realize from your first or second viewing that the original design is actually a homage. Sonic is the modern day representation of Marlin Brando’s character Colonel Kurtz, in the 1979 film “Apocalypse Now.”

In this new take on John Conrad’s classic novel, “Heart of Darkness,” we watch a man named Tom continually throw his life away to assist a demonic beast named “Sonic” in recovering his bag of universe-warping rings. Sonic manipulates Tom into harboring him in his home and attacking officials of the United States Homeland Security.

Tom starts the film as a bored police officer in Montana who is idling his days away with aspirations of living in a city and assisting people in life threatening situations when Sonic breaks into his house to hide from the authorities.

Tom understandably shoots Sonic with a tranquilizer dart (personally, I would have used something more lethal on my sleep paralysis demon) and Sonic drops his rings into a portal which leaves them on a rooftop in San Francisco. Sonic convinces Tom that it is his fault that he’s stranded in his world, so they embark on a journey of destruction to recover them.

The viewer and Tom are coaxed further into despair by Sonic’s silver tongue and running prowess. Tom finds himself in a bar fight, being beaten senseless while



Sonic The Hedgehog is not your average children’s film.

VOX

Sonic eats hot dogs and critically injures every innocent person in the room in the span of one second. Along the way, Tom convinces his wife to help him commit more crimes and they both tie up an innocent woman and steal her car, leaving her in her home presumably for days.

Sonic leaves a path of destruction and corpses behind him wherever he goes, and Tom trails right behind him unable to resist these destructive tendencies, despite swearing upon an oath to protect the innocent.

Sonic and Tom are being trailed by the eccentric and arrogant Dr. Robotnik, a man who places more faith in his machines than the human beings around him. Most of his creations end up destroyed by the end of the film and one can only shiver at the horror that would unfold if human beings were sent to apprehend Sonic instead of robots.

The loss of life would be catastrophic.

Robotnik and Sonic share the same relationship as that of Willard and Kurtz in “Apocalypse Now.” Robotnik is Hell-bent on bringing Sonic to justice and dissecting him to discover his power, but whereas Willard was given the smallest victory of killing Kurtz and ending the horror, Robotnik is condemned to a fate worse than death.

Robotnik is trapped in another world that Sonic banished him to. Left alone to rot in a hostile wilderness

of mushrooms, isolated to the point where his only companion is a rock, loosely shaped like the face of his only friend, Agent Stone.

Tom is repeatedly called a terrorist, but just as Kurtz was killed for the U.S. Government to save face, Tom and his wife are left alive and paid off with Olive Garden gift cards to keep their silence. Tom is left completely ignorant of the collateral damage he has caused, but the nightmare continues, as Sonic stays with his new followers, prepared to rope them into a fresh batch of chaos when the sequel rolls around.

The film ends on a teaser of Robotnik hatching a plan to return home and Sonic’s friend Tails opening a portal to find Sonic. Presumably to convince him to destroy this world and move onto the next, bringing the terror with them.

“Sonic The Hedgehog” is widely believed to be a film for kids, but do not be mistaken; there is fury in the eyes of this monster. There is no escape from the chaos that hides its malicious intentions with product placement and a wink at the camera.

Even if you see the horror of this truth, it will consume you. You can cry, you can hide, you may choose to run but the only thing you will have is a blue abomination tearing it’s claws into your spine and shouting: “You’re too slow!”

Word List

1. kindness
2. rights
3. queer
4. emergency
5. safety
6. sonic
7. jones
8. women
9. abstract
10. pampuro
11. bagley
12. extreme
13. forker
14. reed
15. bowens

S B U G S W Y F O W W F C F H
R K C O A U E X T R E M E F P
S U Q R D R S E N O J V U C P
W T R U G R I G H T S W G E D
I S E P P E M E R G E N C Y U
D E E M E P R E K R O F I V C
W P U A L A B R E E D C C M G
Y W Q P C Q T U Y A X Y L S W
Q P M T C A R T S B A Y L P G
X F I S V E I L Y T E F A S V
M O A X I N G R C I N O S T J
I R M L E Y E L G A B C M A K
E I E M D H U V B O W E N S R
V J O T S N W S S E N D N I K
O W V R J K Y O C K F L H G I

Tajik Bagley Draft Profile: “All I Need Is An Opportunity”

BY TREVI ALICKOLLI
SPORTS EDITOR

Central Connecticut State star defensive back captain Tajik Bagley has been preparing for this moment his entire life. No matter how cloudy this dream appeared originating out of Ansonia, Connecticut, it is getting progressively clearer and he has a chance to defy the odds once again and make it into the Nation Football League.

“People are surprised,” Bagley said. “But this is what I’ve been working for my entire life.”

This journey has been a long one for Bagley and his family. He said that he didn’t have it the worst but it was definitely not ideal.

“I haven’t always had it the easiest, but I think that’s what makes me who I am today,” Bagley said. “I didn’t have the worst upbringing, don’t get me wrong. It just wasn’t an ideal situation but I’m making it work.”

Growing up, Bagley’s mother raised him and his sister as a single mother who was also getting her education at the same time. Making it work has been Bagley’s life motto on and off the field.

On the field, he makes it work wherever he is asked to line up. Whether that’s outside cornerback, nickel or safety, he has done it all.

“You have to differentiate yourself and I feel like I can do that,” Bagley said. “I’m very versatile, I’ve excelled in all defensive back positions and I intend to do that as well in the NFL.”

Bagley finished his career at Central with 151 total tackles, one forced fumble, six interceptions and 35 pass breakups.

As a returner, he had 1,204 kick return yards (1 TD) and 161 punt return yards (1 TD).

Throughout his collegiate career, Bagley earned multiple conference awards such as All-NEC Defensive First Team for his play on the field and NEC Academic Honor Roll for his work in the classroom in 2017.

To add to his versatility, he also brings the presence and leadership of a captain as well as special teams value.

This whole process has been a challenge for Bagley, however. He said that patience is key during this time.

“It’s had its ups and downs,” Bagley said. “This is a process where you don’t see the results right away so you have to work hard and be consistent.”

One reason why this has been a challenge for him is due to the fact that he still has to attend classes and



Tajik Bagley finished his career at Central with 151 total tackles, six interceptions and 35 passes defended.

JULIA JADE MORAN

earn his degree on top of training every day at Break Out Athlete training facility in North Branford, Connecticut. Getting his Marketing Degree is important to Bagley, no matter how challenging it may be at the moment.

“Bigger schools have enough money to work it out where you don’t have to take classes while training,” Bagley said. “That’s the disadvantage I have right now, I know a lot of people who are just focused on football right now. It’s definitely a challenge but I feel like it’ll make it all worth it in the long run, being the underdog.”

Coming from a Division I, Football Championship Subdivision school in Central Connecticut, Bagley is already an underdog. However, he is confident and knows he just needs a chance.

“All I need is an opportunity and I’ll do the rest after that,” Bagley said. “Realistically, I have a lot to improve on just like anyone else going into the NFL. Initially, I’d definitely like to be behind someone I can learn from but I don’t plan on staying behind anybody. I’m big on trial and error, I’d rather learn myself on the field.”

Bagley’s confidence comes from the fact that he practiced against an NFL quarterback, Jake Dolegala,

for three years and a potential pro quarterback this year against Aaron Winchester.

“He was a 6 foot 7 inch, 240-pound kid who had a cannon and was very smart,” Bagley said about Dolegala. “Practicing against him was the easy part so it made my life easier in games. He gave me a lot of confidence.”

“[Tajik] is very, very tough and very versatile,” Winchester said. “I think his versatility and his willingness to do all that stuff is going to separate him.”

If the NFL does not pan out for Bagley, he still has his goals set for what he wants to accomplish in his life, NFL or not. One day, he could become an agent for guys similar to himself. He also wants to open a training facility for troubled youth where he grew up. Bagley described that as his “number one plan.”

“I would love to mentor kids who come from the same background [as me],” Bagley said.

Whether it’s on an NFL field or not, Bagley is determined to make a difference one way or another through his toughness, leadership and determination. Everyone should be excited for what comes next with Bagley.

@ATREVI013

Why The XFL Is Here To Stay

BY GEORGE ATTWOOD
ASSISTANT SPORTS EDITOR

Human beings love new things. A new coat, a new pair of shoes or in the case of the Extreme Football League, a successor to the original Extreme Football League that ran for a single season in 2001. For the first time in a long time, it appears that it is now a league that has a longevity, meaning sports fans will have football between the Super Bowl and the start of pre-season.

In previous years there have been attempts to have an additional football league in the United States. There was the XFL in 2001 that lasted just one season and then the Alliance of American Football that lasted just 10 games and left its players stranded all across the country.

The big reason that these leagues were not sustainable was due to a lack of money. The new and improved XFL doesn’t appear to have that issue, since it is owned by Vince McMahon and his company Alpha Entertainment. McMahon sold \$100 million worth of World Wrestling Federation stock to fund Alpha Entertainment which in turn used as the money to fund the league for at least three seasons. Before the season even started, the XFL had already sold more tickets than the AAF had during its 10 week season. This is already a good indication that for now, teams won’t struggle due to a lack of money.

One way that the XFL is trying to be different from the National Football League is by having different and exciting rules. They have scrapped extra points and instead are giving teams a chance to score up to three points after a touchdown. They have the option to go for

a one-point try from the two-yard line, a two-point try from the five-yard line or a three-point try from the 10-yard line. This encourages teams to be more aggressive on offense and it also means that a team is never really out of the game until the timer shows three zeros.

One of the big complaints that fans have with NFL games is that the games last too long. The XFL is built so the games run quicker and have a much better pace. They are able to do this by having a 25-second play clock and an official whose job it is to place the ball at the line of scrimmage. These little details should mean that games are more exciting and don’t drag as much.

In addition to the different rules, another way the XFL can stay competitive and relevant longer is if they are able to pay their players more money. This maybe isn’t a viable option right now but in years to come, if they can start to pay the players a wage that would be competitive with the NFL, then they could attract more high profile players. As a league, if the XFL could get one or two stars, it would really help them develop and grow their brand and stay relevant. Stars run entertainment, and if they want eyes on their league, they are going to have to pay to get their stars on their fields.

Unlike the AAF, the XFL has placed some of the inaugural franchises in big NFL markets such as New York (Guardians), Los Angeles (Wildcats) and Seattle (Dragons). The benefit of this is that you know that there are big-time football fans who would potentially want to go watch more football. This was seen in the Seattle Dragons inaugural home game where the fans were vocal and passionate about their team. Just under 30,000 fans were in attendance. Considering the league is only in its second week, these numbers are a good sign of a fanbase

developing. In addition to this, the XFL is going to be embracing gambling. With gambling almost encouraged and with different rules and new ways to score, it means that there are more ways for people to make money betting on the games which means more people could potentially watch the games. This, in turn, could lead to an increase in ticket sales.

For the fans not buying tickets for the game, the XFL is trying to make the games fun for those watching on their couch. One way they are trying to do this is by having sideline reporters. One of whom is Pat MacAfee. MacAfee is known for being one of the best NFL punters in recent memory and for being a funny man with his podcast. The inclusion of reporters like him makes the XFL stand out as something different. Some people may watch the games just to see his side-line interviews or him aggressively celebrating a punt, all of which we saw in the opening weekend of the XFL.

For the first time in a long time, players who never made it to the NFL have a league in which they can showcase their talent and ability. At the end of the day, it is never going to be the NFL, the XFL will always be the secondary league. For the next few years, the majority of collegiate players will want to play in the NFL. However, the XFL has a chance to be a solid alternative for players who would have only ever made the practice squad on an NFL team. With tickets sales going strong and fan bases starting to grow, the XFL has a legitimate chance to succeed.

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PREVIEWS

Batting Strength Looks To Cover Pitching Need For Baseball

BY RYAN JONES
MANAGING EDITOR

After winning their first ever NCAA Tournament game last season, Central Connecticut baseball is heading into their ___ season as preseason favorites to repeat as Northeast Conference Champions.

Last season's NEC Championship was the second in three year's for the Blue Devils. On their road to the postseason, Central Connecticut finished second in the NEC standings at 31-23 and a 16-8 in-conference record.

CCSU defeated top seeded Bryant (40-20) 3-2 in the Championship before taking on Arkansas in the first round of the NCAA Tournament. The team fell to the Razorbacks 11-5 before defeating the 24th seeded California team 7-4.

CCSU's entire batting lineup will be returning this season, highlighted by a strong core of upperclassmen, nine of which were on last year's team as well as the 2017 NEC Championship team (per CCSU Athletics).

When looking at the numbers, senior infielder Dave Matthews looks to be one of the biggest sparks in the lineup this season. After transferring from Johnson and Wales, Matthews led the Blue Devils last year with seven home runs, 40 runs scored and 43 runs batted in (RBIs). In the team's NCAA Tournament win, Matthews drove in four runs on a three-for-four day at the plate.

Classmate Buddy Dewaine was right behind Matthews in his production at the



Baseball kicks off their season this Friday against Bethune-Cookman.

CCSU

plate, collecting 58 hits and 29 RBIs.

Junior TT Bowens returned from his second ACL tear last season and had an instant impact on both ends. Bowens batted .376, good for third best in the NEC (minimum seven games played) while slugging a team best .640. Bowens' defense was an added bonus to a squad that had the best fielding percentage in the conference (.968 percent).

While hitting will not be a problem for the Blue Devils this year, there are some concerns regarding the starting pitching staff heading into the year.

Two of Central's three most used

starters graduated this past year, including the team's top three pitchers in earned run average. Last season, the Blue Devils were second in the NEC as a team with a 4.51 ERA.

The lone returning starter for the Blue Devils will be senior Brandon Fox. In his 15 starting appearances on the mound, Fox punched out 44 batters, tied for second among the Blue Devils' rotation.

Tim Buchek and Matt Shane are the only other returning pitchers on staff to start more than one game.

Apart from Jared Gallagher, the Blue Devils will be returning most of

their relievers, including senior Andrew Braun, who had 23 strikeouts in his 17 appearances in relief.

Similar to last year's team, much of Central Connecticut's team will be "home grown," with 29 of the team's 35 coming out of New England.

Central Connecticut will start their season off with a three game weekend on the road, traveling to Bethune-Cookman from March 21-23. The Blue Devils will be playing in their first home game on March 3, taking on in-state opponent Hartford at 3 p.m.

@RYANJONES385

Softball Relying On Second Year Jumps To Be Competitive



Softball is projected to finish seventh in the NEC according to the Preseason Coaches Poll.

CCSU

BY TREVI ALICKOLLI
SPORTS EDITOR

After winning just 17 games a year ago, Central Connecticut State softball is hoping that a year of experience will prove valuable and that their young guns can take a step in the right direction and improve as a team, despite losing their second-best hitter via transfer this offseason.

Last season, the Blue Devils finished last in the Northeast Conference with a 4-12 record and a 17-24 overall record. However, they did so by being led by freshmen players who were getting their first taste of the collegiate level.

Three of the top four hitters were freshmen a year ago for the Blue Devils. Rian Eigenmann, Alexa Milius and Carli Backlund were first, third and fourth respectively.

Eigenmann led the team with 48 total hits a year ago

which includes three home runs and 22 runs batted in (RBI).

Millius was third on the team with a total of 40 hits, one home run and 18 RBI's. She also led the team with a .374 batting average (minimum 10 at-bats) and was near the top in slug percentage with .505.

Backlund rounded out the dynamic freshmen trio with 33 total hits, four home runs and 18 RBI's.

Eigenmann and Milius both made the NEC All-Rookie Team last season.

While Central is moving forward hoping that those three take the next step in the right direction, they will be moving forward as a team without their best hitter from a season ago, Sydney Bolan.

Bolan finished her sophomore season with 44 total hits, a team-leading 10 home runs, team-high 39 RBI's and a slugging percentage of .623, also best on the team. She earned NEC All-First Team honors after her spectacular season.

Bolan turned her Central Connecticut State Blue

Devil horns into Duke University Blue Devil horns this offseason when she transferred after a career year with the Blue Devils.

"We're also thrilled to welcome Sydney to the Duke softball family. She comes to us after two good years of offense production and we look for her to add some power to our lineup. Sydney brings a hunger to compete at a high level and we excited to make her a Blue Devil," Duke's head coach Marissa Young said to Duke Athletics.

In addition to being young in the hitting department, the Blue Devils are also young at the pitcher position.

Ashley Antonazzo is the veteran in the room while Carley Stoker and Kari Marks head into their sophomore seasons.

Last season, Stoker led the team with 111.1 innings pitched, followed by Antonazzo (90.1) then Marks (77.2). As a collective, the Blue Devils pitchers allowed 327 hits, 17 home runs and finished with an earned run average of 4.49.

Heading into the season, the Blue Devils are projected to finish better than last season. The only way to go is up when you finish last in the conference.

Central is projected to finish in seventh place out of ten teams in the NEC this season according to the preseason poll, beating out Fairleigh Dickinson, Wagner and Merrimack.

The Long Island University Sharks are projected to finish first, followed by Saint Francis and Sacred Heart.

Central will kick off their season this Friday, Feb. 21-23 in the Tennessee State Tiger Classic Tournament where they will face four different opponents in Bowling Green, Rider, Tennessee St. and Craighton.

Their first home game is a double-header on March 11, against Manhattan College.

With a year under their belts, the Blue Devils' young core has an opportunity to shine and improve this season, while trying to finish higher in the standings than projected and potentially compete for a conference championship.

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Schedule

Men's Basketball
2/18 | 7pm
vs. Fairleigh Dickinson
2/21 | 7:30pm
@ Wagner

Swimming & Diving
2/19-2/22 | 10am-6pm
NEC Championships

Women's Lacrosse
2/20 | 4pm
@ Holy Cross
2/23 | 2pm
vs. Monmouth

Softball
2/21 | 12:30pm
vs. Bowling Green
2/21 | 3pm
vs. Rider
@Tenn Tiger Classic

2/22 | 11:30am
vs. Bowling Green
2/22 | 7pm
vs. Tennessee State
2/23 | 10am
vs. Creighton
@Tennessee Tiger Classic

Baseball
2/21 | 7pm
2/22 | 6pm
2/23 | 1pm
@Bethune-Cookman

Women's Basketball
2/21 | 4:30pm
@ Wagner

Track & Field
2/21-22 | All Day
@ NEC Championship
Ocean Breeze Athletic
Complex
Staten Island, NY

Women's Lacrosse Drops Two To Start Season

BY TREVI ALICKOLLI
SPORTS EDITOR

Central Connecticut's Women's Lacrosse began their season losing on the road against the University of Massachusetts Lowell and at home versus St. Bonaventure University after some shaky defensive performances.

In the first game of the season, CCSU allowed the River Hawks to shoot 44 shots compared to their 22. Junior Cooper Cowdin saved a career-high 15 of those shots, however, that was not enough as they lost 14-7.

Despite the lopsided shots, the game was competitive for the most part. In the second half, the Blue Devils were tired at 7 with the River Hawks before UMass scored the next seven goals.

Central was led by senior Morgan Sinton who had three goals and two assists on the day. Emma Sullivan, Molly Coogan, Kaitlyn Rapp and freshman Katelyn Parker each scored a goal each for Central. Parker scored her first collegiate goal in her first game with the Blue Devils.

CCSU lost the turnover and the draw battle 26-18 and 16-7 respectively.

Heading into their home opener, it appeared that the Blue Devils started the game with high intensity. They led 5-3 at halftime. However, their intensity seemed to dwindle as the Bonnies outscored them 7-4 in the second half as Central lost 10-9.

St. Bonaventure is not 2-0 on the season after their victory in New Britain.

Defensively, the Blue Devils were



Lacrosse stats their 2020 campaign with two losses, one home and one away.

CCSU

much more active, only allowing the Bonnies to shoot 26 shots. A step in the right direction from the 44 allowed a few days prior.

After going down 1-0, Central scored the next three to take a 3-1 advantage. The teams both exchanged goals before half to take it to 5-3.

Just 13 seconds into the second half, Raphaela DaSilva scored one of her goals giving her team a 6-3 lead and it would continue to grow to 7-5 before the Bonnies respond in a dominant way.

With 15 minutes remaining in the game, St. Bonaventure scored the next five goals to earn their victory.

Destinee Johnson led the Bonnies with six goals against the Blue Devils.

As the score would indicate this game was a close one. Every major category only differed by a few.

CCSU had two more ground balls than St. Bonaventure (17-15), one more save (9-8) while committing just two more turnovers (18-16). The Blue Devils also won the draw battle 12-9 against the Bonnies. Nina Sutton led the team with six draw controls.

Offensively, Morgan Sinton, Molly Coogan and DaSilva each scored two goals for the Blue Devils while Jessica Denike, Katelyn Parker and Kaitlyn Rapp each scored one.

Sinton now leads the team with five goals after scoring three in the season opener.

Central will head back on the road to face Holy Cross College this Thursday at 4:00 p.m. before returning home to face Monmouth University this Sunday at 2:00 p.m.

@ATREVI013

Second Half Collapses Continue To Hurt Women's Basketball

BY TREVI ALICKOLLI
SPORTS EDITOR

After closing their three-game road trip with a loss at Bryant University last Saturday, the Blue Devils got a week off before getting the chance to face the Bulldogs again, but this time at home. Despite the time off, Central Connecticut State could not register a win, falling 62-51.

Despite losing by double-digits, CCSU was only down by one point heading into the locker rooms at halftime. Coming out of the locker rooms, the Bulldogs were much sharper than the Blue Devils, outscoring them 19-4 in the third quarter.

"They were really physical with us," interim head coach Kerri Reaves said. "It kind of took us out of our rhythm. We struggled to score in the third but picked it up in the fourth."

Forward Ashley Forker was one of the few bright spots for Central as she was the only Blue Devils to score in double-figures. Forker finished with 13 points in 35 minutes on 60 percent shooting from the field. She added six rebounds, two assists and two steals.

Guards Emma McCamus and Forever Toppin each scored nine points each and were tied for second-most on the team against Bryant.

McCamus added a rebound and a steal while Toppin contributed two

steals and one block but five turnovers.

The Blue Devils committed 21 turnovers as a team, but forced 27 against the Bulldogs. Central scored 30 points off of turnovers compared to Bryant's 14 but ultimately, it was not enough for them.

Personal fouls plagued the Blue Devils against the Bulldogs, four of five

starters

committed three or more fouls. This may have contributed to inconsistent playing time, off the entire

offensive scheme and rhythm.

Ashley Chin only played 15 minutes, committed three fouls and only attempted two shots the entire game.

Bruna Vila Artigues played only 16 minutes, committed four fouls and only attempted one shot.

Starting center Ashley Berube, who has led the Blue Devils in scoring recently, played 23 minutes, committed four fouls and shot 1/11 from the field against the Bulldogs.

"It was just something that happened," Reaves said. "But we have confidence in our whole roster one through 15. Of course, you'd like to see your veteran players play the majority of the game, but we have other players that can come in and contribute."

While the starters struggled, Central's bench played well, they contributed 23 points. Matching Bryant's bench productivity.

Toppin led the bench charge, followed by Danielle Delano who scored seven points in 17 minutes.

The Blue Devils are playing better and better each time they step onto the hardwood floor but they have to figure out how to finish and maintain their usual first-half momentum.

Central has one more home game against Fairleigh Dickinson University on Monday before heading back on the road for a two-game stretch against Wagner College and Merrimack University.

Tip-off is scheduled for 7:00 p.m. against the Knights and 4:30 p.m. against the Seahawks.

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Central Connecticut won their third game of the season against Bryant University.

CCSU

Men's Basketball Split Two Games At Home

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

ball security was an anomaly and that the team usually has better ball security in NEC play.

"This game was one of the rare ones we've had in the NEC for a while, we've actually been averaging only like eleven or twelve turnovers," Marshall said.

The Blue Devils played much better on Saturday against Bryant and were boosted by the return of freshman guard Myles Baker, who did not play in the loss to LIU. Baker came off the bench in the first half against Bryant and hit 4/6 shots from the field with 3/5 coming from three-point range.

Baker finished the game with a

career-high of 24 points on 9/13 shooting while going 5/7 from the three-point line and was the only Blue Devil to put up double-digit points

Baker said he takes pride in his ability to be able to come off the bench and provide a spark for his team.

"That's what the team needs, so I would do anything that the team needs in order to get the win," Baker said. "I've been struggling, but the team is more important, so today I just tried to go out and play my best with the time that I had."

The game was tied 33-33 at halftime. In the second half, the Blue Devils shot 53.3 percent from the field and were

once again led by Myles Baker. Baker quickly hit back-to-back threes to regain the lead for the Blue Devils. Down the stretch, in the final minute of the game, the Blue Devils played stifling defense as they were able to come away with three takeaways that led to foul shots that they sank to ice the game with a final score of 75-70

When asked about the team's ability to close the game out in crunch time coach Marshall said that it shows signs of the team maturing.

"I think it shows we're growing, I think that if you look at the last three weeks since the Wagner game, the team

has been growing," Marshall said. "I know a lot of people look at the wins and losses, but I think if you look at the way we've been playing, even in games we've been down, we've been fighting until the end and coming back. It was good to come back and get a quality win."

Up next for the Blue Devils is a matchup against Fairleigh Dickinson at home on Tuesday, Feb. 18. Tipoff is scheduled for 7:00 pm inside Detrick Gymnasium. The Blue Devils lost to the Knights earlier this season with a score of 83-60 and will look to get a win this time around.

@ANDREWDECAPUA

Personal Bests Headline The David Hemery Valentine Invitational

BY ANDREW DECAPUA
REPORTER

The Central Connecticut State University men's and women's track and field teams posted several personal bests at the David Hemery Valentine Invitational this past weekend at the Boston University Track and Tennis Center in Boston, Massachusetts.

In what was their last competition before the indoor track and field Northeast Conference Championships, the men's and women's track and field teams competed in the David Hemery Valentine Invitational on Friday, Feb. 14 and Saturday, Feb. 15

The women got things started on Friday with five personal bests. Freshman Kamilah Diaz and sophomore Briyanna Labbie both put up personal bests in the 400-meter dash with times of 1:01.77 and 1:01.98 respectively. Senior Megan Brawner was able to post a personal best in the one mile run with a time of 4:55.15. Freshman Ashley Dana ran a collegiate-best 2:15.85 in the 800-meter run. Freshman Magnalen Camara finished the 200-meter dash with a personal best time of 26.21 seconds.

The men, not to be outdone, followed and competed on Saturday and were able to post seven personal bests of their own.

Freshman Ryan McCauley posted a personal best of 1:56.07 in the 800-meter run. Junior Miles Fye-Moore and freshman Carlos Villarini both crossed the finish line in the 200-meter dash with personal bests of 21.83 seconds and 23.77 seconds respectively. Sophomore Cam Whalen was able to post a personal best in the 60-meter dash with a time of 7.26 seconds. Senior Tyrik Henry also ran a personal best in the 60-meter dash with



Men and Women track and field combined for 12 personal best records at the David Hemery Valentine Invitational. CCSU

a time of 7.36 seconds. Freshman Eddie Nicholas ran a personal best in the one mile run with a time of 4:25.76. Freshman Robert Moore was able to post a collegiate-best time of 4:28.51 in the one-mile run.

Other standout performances for the men included a tenth-place finish from Whalen in the 60-meter hurdles with a time of 8.66 seconds and a twelfth-place finish from freshman Jovan Dixon in the 60-meter dash with a time of 7.13 seconds.

It has been a successful regular season for the CCSU men's and women's indoor track and field teams. Coming into the season, the men were predicted to finish third in the NEC and the women were predicted to finish fourth by the Preseason Coaches' Poll. After posting several personal bests this past weekend the CCSU track

and field teams will look to carry that momentum into the postseason starting next weekend.

Head coach Eric Blake said that the personal bests set this weekend helps in boosting the teams' confidence going into the NEC Championships.

"Personal bests are a nice confidence boost, but it always comes down to the performances on NEC weekend," Blake said.

Up next for the CCSU track and field teams are the 2020 Northeast Conference Championships at the Ocean Breeze Athletic Complex in Staten Island, New York on Feb. 21-22. Last season the Blue Devils placed second overall in both the men's and women's indoor track and field NEC Championships and will look to top that with a first-place finish this year.

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