

QUOVO VADIS

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Contract Impasse Enters Third Year Sister College Signs New Agreement

By Trevor Clarke, Core Staff

While full-time faculty at Middlesex College have been without a contract since July 1, 2020, Brookdale Community College, among the top-ranked community colleges in New Jersey, recently settled a five-year contract with its full-time faculty.

The Brookdale contract, which is binding from July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2027, was signed by representatives of both the college and its full-time faculty on Sept. 21, according to a copy of the contract obtained by Quo Vadis.

The agreement will see salaries for Brookdale's full-time faculty increase by 3% in its first year, by 3.25% in its second and third years and by 3.5% in its fourth and fifth years, according to the contract.

Patricia Payne, president of Local 1940 American Federation of Teachers (AFT) — the union representing full-time faculty at Middlesex College — said Middlesex's administration should follow Brookdale's lead and pay its full-time faculty a fair wage increase.

"This is clear evidence that other [community] colleges are not settling for the same terms being offered by the Middlesex administration, as [the] college president ... has incorrectly stated on several occasions," said Payne.

Mark McCormick, president of Middlesex College, said he was not

comfortable responding to the settlement details reported in this article because Quo Vadis did not indicate how it had verified the Brookdale contract to be the official and final version.

According to an expired contract between Middlesex College's Board of Trustees and Local 1940 AFT, faculty at Middlesex received a raise of 2.5% on their base salaries for each year covered by the agreement, which spanned July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2020.

Minimum salaries at Middlesex, according to the terms of the contract when it expired, are as follows: \$55,853 for assistant instructors, \$61,970 for instructors, \$73,618 for assistant professors, \$87,258 for associate professors and \$102,969 for professors.

Effective Sept. 1, 2022, minimum salaries at Brookdale are as follows: \$65,246 for instructors, \$75,306 for assistant professors, \$83,937 for associate professors and \$92,935 for professors, according to the college's new contract.

This year, Brookdale is ranked first in the state by Niche and third by both BestColleges and Academic Influence, according to their respective websites.

For its part, Middlesex College is ranked number 10 by BestColleges and number 20 by Academic Influ-

ence.

Middlesex does not appear in Niche's ranking this year.

Payne said, "Perhaps this is why Brookdale is rated the number-one [community] college in the state — because they invest in and value their faculty and students."

On entering negotiations for a new four-year contract in February 2020, Local AFT 1940 asked Middlesex College for an annual increase of 3.5% on all base salaries, according to a PowerPoint published by the union.

The college countered with an offer to raise salaries by 0% in year one, by 2.5% in year two and by 2.25% in years three and four, according to the PowerPoint and a document provided by McCormick.

However, to faculty who elected not to switch to the Chapter 44 healthcare plan, according to the document, the college offered an on-base raise of 1% in years two through four.

"Chapter 44 ... saves enrolled employees thousands of dollars in reduced employee contributions and costs the college more than \$500,000 each year," according to the document.

The college also offered all full-time faculty a one-time payment of \$2,500 in year one, irrespective of their choice of healthcare plan, according to the document.

The negotiations between the college and Local 1940 AFT have since stalled, as previously reported by Quo Vadis, with neither party willing to accept the other's terms.

McCormick said, "The college's offer to (Local 1940 AFT) is fair, respects the accomplishments and efforts of our faculty and is consistent with union settlements at other public employers in New Jersey, including other community colleges and Middlesex County."

In terms of the average nine-month equivalent salary paid to full-time faculty in 2020-21, Middlesex College ranked first among two-year colleges in New Jersey at \$85,240, according to an article published by

The Chronicle of Higher Education on Jan. 3, titled "How Much Has Faculty Pay Changed Over Time?"

At \$75,423, Brookdale Community College ranked fourth, according to the article.

The total amount each college paid its full-time faculty in salaries in 2020-21 can be found by multiplying the number of faculty at each institution by their average salary.

That year, Middlesex employed 141 full-time faculty, according to the article, while Brookdale employed 192.

It follows that, in 2020-21, Middlesex paid its full-time faculty a total of \$12,018,840, while Brookdale paid its full-time faculty a total of \$14,481,216.



College contract representing the faculties contract yet to be signed

Photo by Jared Almanzor

Student Government Association Looks for More Student Involvement

By Nicol Maciejewska Copy Editor

The Student Government Association held its first meeting of the semester on Nov. 4 and discussed many ways in which they can get the student body more involved.

The SGA discussed the Student Advisory Committee. They plan on expanding the student body in the SGA to reach various departments of the college. To create a well-in-

formed and functioning campus community, they want students to serve as liaisons between their respective academic and non-academic departments. The Student Advisory Committee will provide leadership opportunities to students. The appointment process requires a minimum of a 3.0 GPA, a recommendation from their respective depart-

ment chairs (which could be waived) and a qualifying interview. The applications open in December and the selected candidates will serve on the committee from December to May of the current academic year.

In other business, SGA President Connor Cheung went over the semester highlights including the Stay Connected Fair and HarvestFest. The president then made a motion to vote on whether the SGA could spend \$500 on a photo booth for the HarvestFest since the event was funded by other departments on campus and the SGA decided it wanted to make a contribution as well. The current budget contains \$5,000. Vice President Srjia Chatterjee seconded the motion and it passed.

"We want to involve as many students as possible because right now (we are) running a pretty bare bones shift. So if we could involve more students it would be to our benefit," said Chatterjee.

The vice president gave her report. Chatterjee discussed The New Jersey Student Government Conference which occurred on Oct. 22 at Drew

University. This event was dedicated to colleges discussing student governments. Chatterjee went on to discuss how she was the only community college representative and the only attendee from Middlesex College. The SGA is hoping to have more students join so others can receive the benefits of attending an event of this nature.

"Throughout the entire event, we had sessions pertaining to different aspects of leadership. For example, we had an organizational round table where different universities like Stevens talked about how they were able to organize larger student governments," said Chatterjee. "We also had a committee and working group panel in the Founders Room and we had a constituency engagement and communication round table where we basically talked about how to negotiate with other people in a leadership position, how to talk to the faculty[and] how to present yourself to the administration."

Secretary Habeeba J Elwalily did not have a report to present.

Special elections will be held at the beginning of the next semester to fill

available seats on the SGA. More information will be posted shortly.

Student Life briefly discussed the Transfer Symposium Seminar that happened on Monday, Nov. 7. A number of colleges came to Middlesex to discuss transfer options for current Middlesex students.

Lastly, the SGA opened the meeting up to the public. Vice President Maria Kocha of the Social Club spoke about the winter event coming up and how they are considering doing Karaoke, movies and games. Kocha encouraged anyone interested in getting involved to reach out to the Social Club. President Katherine Rodriguez of the Organization of Student Unity spoke about a food pantry, a raffle and an open mic that will take place on Nov. 29. The New Brunswick Center Club advisor Joan O'Brien spoke as well. The New Brunswick Center Club wants to combine efforts with other clubs on campus so they can bring each other new people and get involved with new activities. Student Life will be reaching out to all clubs with information about a Student Life development workshop.



Illustration by Estejani Calderon

A group meeting where important information is being discussed

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Corrections

Quo Vadis promptly addresses any and all errors submitted to the faculty adviser. If you have comments or concerns on the accuracy of our reporting, send Melissa Edwards an email at medwards@middlesexcc.edu

This semester Quo Vadis will release three print issues themed: Diversity, Seasonal And End of Year/Next Steps.

Visit quovadisnewspaper.com to sign up

Students interested in reading our weekly newspaper can sign up for weekly emails to receive a copy of our newspaper and other online content.

Campus Hours:

West Hall: 9 a.m. - 9 p.m.
 Library: 9 a.m - 9 p.m.
 Computer Center: 9 a.m. - 9 p.m.
 Testing Center: 9 a.m. - 9 p.m.
 Cafeteria: 9 a.m. - 9 a.m.
 Counseling Services: 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
 Food Pantry: <https://www.middlesexcc.edu/student-life/food-pantry/>

Emergency Phone:
732.906.2500

Non-Emergency Phone:
732.548.6000 x3500

School Info Line:
732.906.2555

Police/Fire:
911

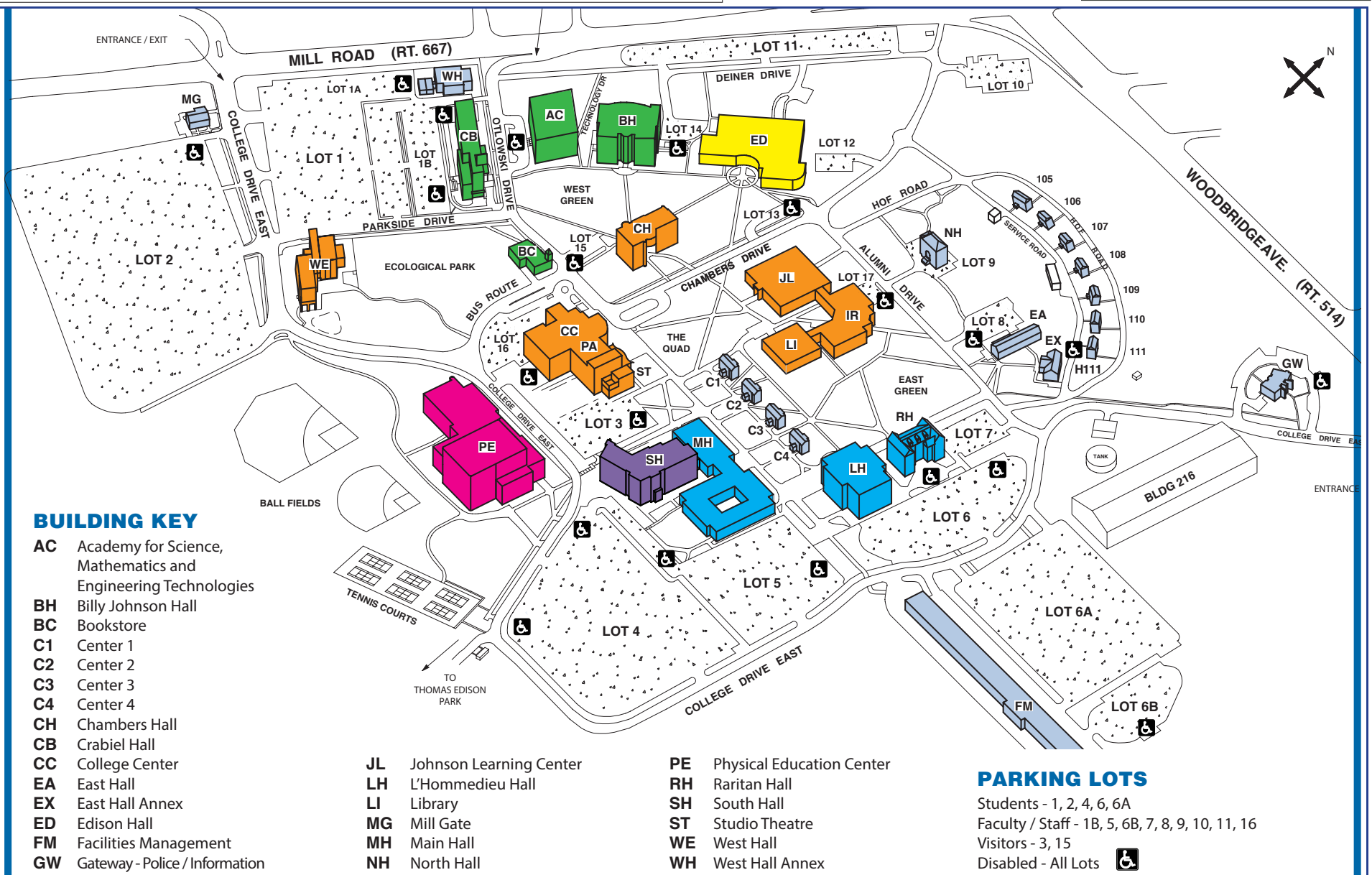
Suicide Prevention:
800-273-8255

Edison Campus:
732-548-6000

New Brunswick:
732-745-8866

Perth Amboy:
732-906-7755

Click Map to view in web browser



Bookstore Helps Give Students Necessities

By Vivian Huynh, Core Staff

Sales are up for the Middlesex College bookstore.

Josie Tavaréz, bookstore manager, has noticed an increase in sales for the Fall 2022 semester. "That's definitely been a nice change. Now that there is more life on campus, we've seen more students coming to the bookstore to get what they need for classes," said Tavaréz. "Despite some classes offering their textbooks online, we still found students purchasing certain textbooks, planners, apparel and other necessities here."

Rebecca Baczyk, assistant store manager since June 2019, said, "I think students have also been attracted to some of our new displays and fixtures, which could also be a big contributor to our sales increase."

Baczyk said since last year, the bookstore has added a new fixture of manga and graphic novels, which she has found to be popular with students. She also added that changing out the displays according to seasonal events and holidays helps keep the bookstore interesting to attract sales.

Isaiah Figueroa, third-year Middlesex College student, and exercise science major, has been an employee at the bookstore since August 2022 and said, "[Working here] is great because all the customers are college students, which makes it very easy to talk to them. It's also been helpful to receive an

employee discount here. I've also found the new resource Bartleby really helpful with schoolwork."

According to bartleby.com, it is a website that students can utilize for help with homework. It's similar to programs like Chegg and Grammarly. For Middlesex College students, it can be purchased with financial aid for those eligible. On the Middlesex College bookstore website, you can get Bartle-

by for \$14.99 and get the first month free. This is cheaper than programs like Chegg and Grammarly, which cost more if you want access to different tiers of the information offered.

Figueroa said, "Bartleby has actually been a big help [with homework]. I personally think it's more helpful than Chegg."

For more information about the bookstore, visit <https://middlesexcollege.bncollege.com/>.



Photo by Vivian Huynh

The Bookstore offers products for all student necessities

Calendar of Events

To be able to click the links, please download the PDF file. To do so, click menu icon on the top left, click on Downloads and then click Full edition. After the document opens click the download icon on the top right.

Nov. 14-18

Weekly Featured Best Read
8 a.m.

Middlesex College Field
Visit the Middlesex College Library online and in person to view the latest Best Reads book recommendation.
Contact: library@middlesexcc.edu

Nov. 16

New Jersey City University Transfer Admissions Representative
10 a.m. - 2 p.m.
Middlesex College Field
Repeats weekly (to Dec. 14)
Meet with a Transfer Admissions Representative from New Jersey City University in the College Center.
Contact: rgaviria@middlesexcc.edu

Felician University Transfer Admissions Appointment
9 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.
Virtual
<https://graussob-mcc.youcanbook.me/>

Schedule a one-on-one virtual appointment with the Felician-Middlesex College counselor to learn more about Felician University and our programs. Felician University offers three bachelor's programs in partnership with Middlesex College:
Business Administration
Psychology
RN-BSN
We also offer 60+ traditional undergraduate majors to choose from!

Coffee & Conversation with Dr. Cakmak
1 - 2 p.m. monthly
Repeats monthly (to Dec. 8)

Business & Computer Science Chairperson Dr. Cakmak will be available to answer students' questions regarding majors, classes, careers and more.
Contact: acakmak@middlesexcc.edu

Person-on-the-Street:

What do you know about the Student Government Association?

By Vivian Huynh, Core Staff



Shawn Mendez
Health + exercise science
1st year
South River

"This is my first time hearing about [the Student Government Association]. I'm unclear about what they could do more, or what they do right now."



Jay Singh Saini
Science engineering
1st year
Woodbridge

"I don't know anything about [the Student Government Association]."



Joseph Cooley
Health + exercise science
1st year
Woodbridge

"I'll be honest, I don't know anything about [the Student Government Association]. I had no idea we had that here [at Middlesex College]."



Isabelle Diaz
no major, still in high school, taking courses here part-time
Sayreville

"I don't know anything about [the Student Government Association]. I've seen some flyers around, but that's it."



Angel Quindés
Journalism
1st year
Sayreville

"I wanted to learn more about [the Student Government Association]. I haven't seen them active on campus. I've seen the flyers and even emailed them about it because I was interested in joining, but I didn't really get a response."

Photos by Vivian Huynh

Library Boasts Thanksgiving With Art Activities

By Estejani Calderon, *Managing Editor*

The library is holding a Thankfulness Tree event at the Middlesex College library throughout November so that students can express their gratitude and creativity on a leaf that will be stuck on a tree at the library.

Joseph Pascale, the learning center coordinator at the library, said, “[The] community and focus involves activities and events like this to engage in the college.”

“I can’t remember exactly [when] the first time we did this was. [It] was a few years back before the pandemic,” Pascale said. “It was a thing we discussed as a group and we liked it. This first [time] in person since COVID hit.”

This will be the library’s fourth time holding the Thankfulness Tree ongoing event.

“It seems like it’s good to have it

throughout November because of Thanksgiving. Now, as people are in the library, they can see it and participate,” Pascale said.

Michael Ajilowura, a Middlesex student, said, “I sometimes get creative with my siblings and do arts and crafts, but I don’t think I have done that at school now that I am in college.”

Ajilowura said, “I’ve never really heard about an activity like this be-

fore other than [pin the] tail on the donkey. It is pretty cool that the library thought of a different version of that.”

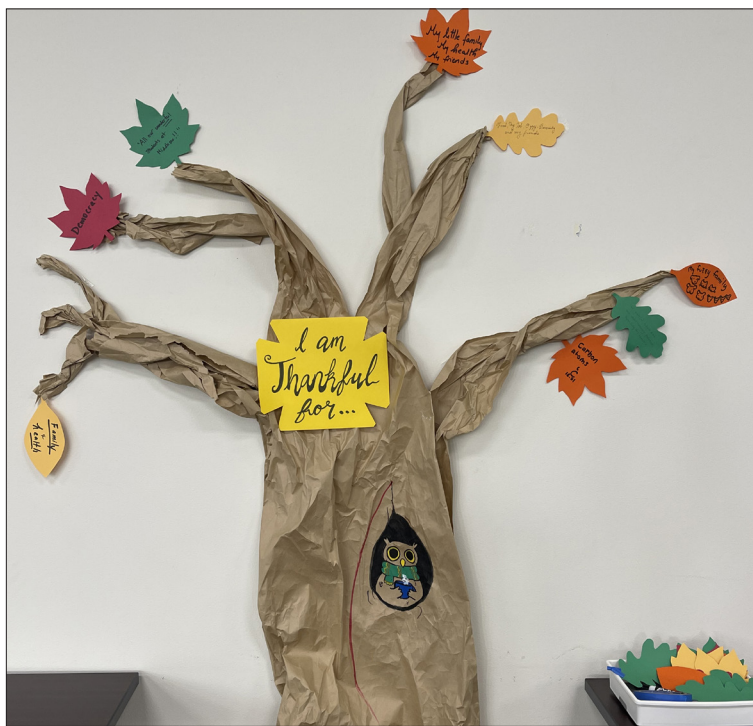
Pascale said the leaves “are made out of different color construction paper and they’re different ... Students are able to draw on it. The idea is that they can stop, pause and reflect and write what they are grateful [for] in their life.”

“My family and friends are a big set

of people I am grateful for. Without them life would become very difficult,” Pascale said.

Pascale also said that the tree is open to the whole community and whoever is in the library.

Pascale said, “Something I liked about it is it makes a beautiful representation of the community. The more of us who participate and add a leaf the more nicer and colorful the tree will be.”



The tree made of paper at the library for students and faculty to put up their leaves



Welcoming sign at the library that pairs up with the tree

Photos by Estejani Calderon

Professor Chalcraft Balances Teaching and Acting



Elena Chalcraft acting as Ida Straus on the set of the musical Titanic

By Estejani Calderon, *Managing Editor*

Elena Chalcraft has been teaching Fundamentals of Public Speaking at Middlesex College for the last five years. As a freshman in high school in 1973, Elena had her first-ever acting performance. Although initially her family was not supportive of her acting, they eventually came around. When asked who her biggest supporter was, Elena said, “Surprisingly enough, my mother, although she doesn’t agree that I spend so much time doing it [acting] while I’m not getting paid. When she was well she would come to see.” Elena started showing interest in acting when she was eight years old after she saw her first show. Elena would watch as many musicals as she could and view plays when they were aired

on the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS).

Although she did not attend any performing arts schools, Elena still made sure that acting was something she kept pursuing into her adulthood. She averaged over three plays a year, close to over 100 total, since she started acting.

“[There’s] different kinds of favorites. [Some] were fun and [some] were such a challenge that when I met my goal, they stayed with me. My favorites right now are the musical ‘Titanic’ (performed in 2013) and the play ‘Who is Afraid of Virginia Woolf’, ‘Putting it Together’ (2014). Just this summer I was in ‘Pride and Prejudice’ (2022), and that was so much fun.”

As we took a trip down memory lane, Elena recalled feelings when performing the musical Titanic. “We took a unique approach and found the audience didn’t need all the special effects. So it was staged as if the audience was on the ship. All the women in the cast wore long dresses.”

“First class were more elegant, third class [was] more peasant style, and all appropriate to 1912 ... the audience was very moved,” said Elena.

A picture provided by Elena shows her on the stage in the musical “Titanic” with her fellow stage partner. The picture demonstrates Elena acting as Ida Straus. She is wearing an all-white gown with silver jewelry. Her hair is gray as well as pulled back. She is looking into the eyes of a man who appears very comfortable

to be around.

“Fulfilled, free and terrified” is what Elena used to describe the feeling she gets every time she goes on stage for a performance.

As Elena and I kept talking about her experiences with certain plays, she mentioned ones she would do over if she had the chance. Those plays are “Who is Afraid of Virginia Woolf” and “Into the Woods.” With such little time to prepare and a natural world disaster interfering with the play, she felt there could have been a better performance. Regarding “Who is Afraid of Virginia Woolf,” Elena said, “We only had two weekends [to prepare]. It was such a deep play that I was still finding this in the performance ... Although I had done [‘Into the Woods’] twice, I had a big role ... it was during Hurricane

Sandy.” In the play “Into the Woods,” Elena played Jack’s mother.

I asked Elena how she balanced her teaching with her acting, and she said, “In a way they are the same thing. It has got to do with compartmentalizing; when I am on stage, I am playing another character; when I am teaching, I am me. You learn to immerse yourself in who you are at the moment.”

Although it might be hard to balance the two, Elena manages to do so. She said, “Never stop learning ... ‘to thy own self be true’ [Hamlet, Shakespeare].” That is an encouraging message that she has for anyone who wants to pursue acting.

This December, Elena will appear in the play “A Christmas Carol.” The play will show at PlayHouse 22 in East Brunswick.



Elena Chalcraft (right) on the set of the play Putting It Together

Photos Courtesy of Elena Chalcraft

Diverse North Brunswick Features Food, Fun

By Adonis Jones, *Managing Editor*

Every town is unique for having different features that distinguish itself from others. Some towns offer diversity, while others offer shopping centers and food catering that neighboring towns may not have. It is rare to be able to live in a town that offers all three of these things; however, North Brunswick is an anomaly to that conception.

From streets dedicated to Indian cuisines and culture, to Chinese and

American food establishments, diversity is crystal clear. Throughout the town, one can spot Indian corner stores and markets that are owned and catered by Indians. Personally, I am a Chinese connoisseur. Being from Brooklyn, New York, no restaurant compares to Brooklyn's Chinese food; however, China Garden is not a bad substitute. If you prefer American food, you can find multiple fast food establishments such as Chick-

Fil-A, McDonald's, Panera and many more. Any workout enthusiasts? If so, you can find a Crunch Fitness right along Route 1 with a Moe's directly adjacent to the gym.

The township North Brunswick is located in the heart of New Jersey, or what some call "Central Jersey." The town borders both New Brunswick and South Brunswick, and is 10 minutes from the biggest college in New Jersey: Rutgers. It has a population of 43,905 people. According to the Neighbourhood Scout website, "60% of the community has stated that there is a good sense of unity within the community." The median household income is \$98,072, which is glaringly higher than the U.S. median income of \$64,994. When driving around town, it is rare to see homeless people in the area. Also, you can find people of different backgrounds everywhere, including Black, White, Asian and Hispanic. With that being said, the demographic of North Brunswick as a whole is very diverse.

Additionally, if you are looking to shop, eat and exercise all in one location, The Shoppes in North Brunswick is the perfect place for you. The Shoppes is home to over 45 upscale retail stores, specialty shops, diverse restaurant options, fitness centers and offices. The center offers a unique shopping experience that can be enjoyed any time of the year. Apparel stores include Men's Warehouse and Roadrunner Runner Sports. Food stores include Chipotle, Five Guys, Subway and many more.

If you are looking to spend a night out with friends, look no further than North Brunswick. The township offers fun activities to indulge in, such as Bowlero Alley Bowling and Break Stuff NJ. North Brunswick does not discriminate against people looking to find the perfect place to take a friend or significant other on a date. Regal Commerce Center Stadium 18 is a prime destination to watch movies and enjoy a romantic date.

Like many other towns in New Jersey, having a car is the most cost-efficient way to navigate through the town. Unlike New York City, there are no subways to take you from place to place but, in the near future, the New Jersey Transit railroad will be running through North Brunswick. The plan is already in the works and has been approved by the Mayor James Cahill and NJ Transit. Until then, if you don't own a car, you can still find your way around. NJ Transit buses are available 24/7 and can take you all across town. Transportation services such as Uber and Lyft are also available if you are willing to pay a little extra to get to your destination faster.

After moving to North Brunswick in 2019, I would say the overall experience has been to my liking. To anyone visiting or looking to live here permanently, expect to be in for a diverse cultural setting, many food options and easily accessible places for leisure.



Photo by Adonis Jones

A seating area in front of Häagen-Dazs

While Philly Sports Complex Appeals, Some Blight Repels

By Nathaniel Thompson, *Managing Editor*

It was around 6 a.m. when the instant ringing of my alarm went off. It did not matter at all; I had baggy eyes for the entire night. I was in my bed, already dressed, waiting to leave. Suddenly, echoes bounced off the walls. My family was ready to leave. I stepped outside to the clear skies and approached my dad's car. With Thanksgiving being the next day, the family and I had a quick prayer to be sure we made it to our destination safely. After we finished, the engine started rumbling, and we were on the road.

We cruised down I-95 for about an hour. There was plenty of eye candy during the drive. I glanced out the window, and my eyes were stuck for the next 20 seconds: we saw the heart of Philadelphia sports. The South Philadelphia Sports Complex is a sight you cannot miss. I saw the field where the Eagles play, the field where the Phillies play and the arena where both the 76ers and the Flyers play. However, the moment was short lived. The further we drove away, the more the complex began to look like ants. My family members in Philadelphia were 15 minutes away from the complex, so I knew we were

close.

The wheels finally stopped, and the car rested in the driveway. I got out of the car, and I sniffed the polluted air. It was not a great scent at all. I could tell this area was different from Piscataway in many ways. My cousins and I went for a walk, which was not the brightest idea, but I was not scared. We were in the "hood," so I was on guard. The neighborhood was just depressing. There were so many vehicles that it was like a warehouse full of rusty cars. All of them could be used to scrap metal. The graffiti looked like something my friends and I would draw in our notebook when we were younger. We kept walking and came across a bridge with tents under it, but the people in them were not camping. Coincidentally, the area also reeked of sewage smell. There were carcasses scattered all over the rough roads. I told my cousins, with a look of disgust, that we should "be out." There are bad areas in every city, but Philadelphia has some of the worst you will ever see. We walked back into the house, and my body was no longer in fight or flight mode. I was a happy camper once again.

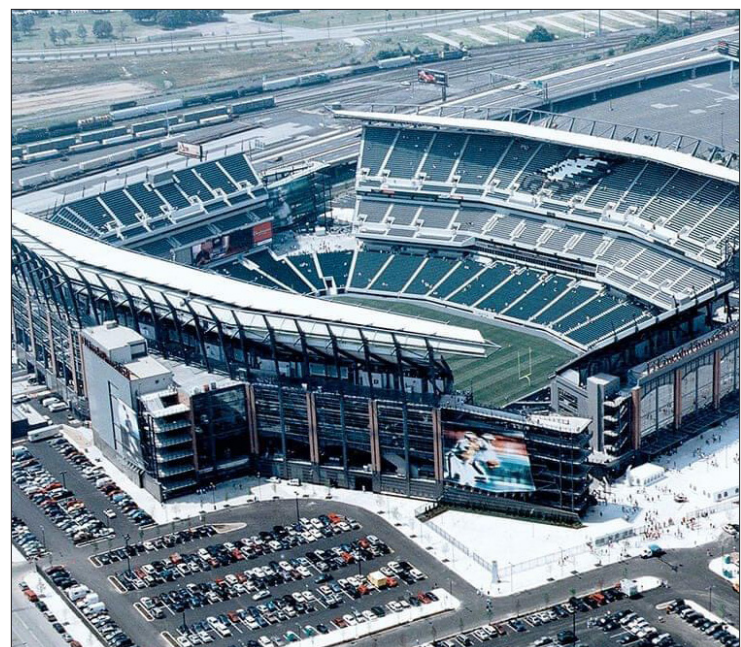


Photo Courtesy of Facebook

Lincoln Financial Field, home of the Philadelphia Eagles

A Peruvian Son Visits Home

By Ryan Cardenas, *Core Staff*

As I got older, I wanted to learn more about the country my parents are from. My dad was born in Lima, which is the capital of Peru, and my mom was born in Chiclayo, which is in north Peru. They both met when my mom moved to Lima for a job opportunity. Later on, they migrated to the United States for a better life not just for them, but for my sister and me. My parents would tell us stories about what it was like living over there, and how different everything in Peru was compared to the United States. This inspired me to spend a month in Peru to see what life is like over there.

In July 2018, I ended up traveling by myself to Peru. It was my first time traveling out of the county, and I was pretty nervous. As the plane was landing at the Jorge Chavez International Airport, I looked through the window, and the city was busy. There was bumper to bumper traffic on the highways and people walking everywhere. As soon as I claimed my bags and passed through security, I went to look for my uncle. This was my first time seeing him in person, so I did not know what to expect. I saw him waving his hands and my cousins holding a sign not too far from security. I went up to them, and they all just came up to me and gave me a big hug. As soon as we all greeted each other, we went outside to look for a cab to take us back to my uncle's house.

The traffic slowed down a bit, so it didn't take long to get to the house. During every red light, people came up to us to sell drinks and snacks. My uncle ended up getting me a churro with a bottle of water. My uncle was telling me that this is one of the ways people make a living in Peru. Poverty is very prevalent in Peru. I saw many homeless people on the way to the house. We also passed an alleyway where homeless people were sleeping by the dumpsters. As soon as we got to the house, there were a few people waiting for us. I was confused at first because I wasn't expecting anyone to be waiting for us. My uncle and cousins were confused as well.

We got my stuff from the cab as fast as we could and went into the house. My aunt came down and gave me a big hug, along with my other cousins that were waiting for me at the house. After we greeted each other, I asked her about the people that were waiting outside. She said that they wanted to see if the rumors were true about my dad having a son, which was me. She ended up telling me that my dad — when he was my age — was very well-known in the town. He was friends with everyone and helped others in any way possible. On top of that, he was known as one of the best soccer players in town. I just stood there in shock because I didn't know he was known like that in Peru.

My aunt showed me the room where I would be staying. It was pretty big compared to the other rooms

me what my name was, and I gave her my full name. She stopped for a second and said, "You're Alonso's son?"

I responded, "Yes, I am. I didn't know it was that big of a deal until my aunt explained everything to me." She walked around her stand and gave me a hug and told me that my dad helped her a lot when they went to school together.

"He would walk me to and from school, and when I didn't eat, he would buy me food and make sure I ate," she said. As soon as the food was ready, the lady told us that we didn't have to pay for the food. It was a way for her to say thank you for what my dad did for her.

I also attended soccer trials for a club team called Sporting Cristal. It was one of the biggest soccer teams in the country. The first day I



Photo by Ryan Cardenas

The flag of Peru

in the house. While I was putting my clothes away, my cousin Alondra walked into the room and asked me if I was hungry. She knew a good spot to get food, so I couldn't say no to that. It was around the block, so it wasn't too far. The lady making the food knew my cousin since she gets food from there every weekend. She asked who I was since she didn't recognize me. I told the lady I was from the United States, and that I was here for soccer tryouts and vacation. She was very friendly. She asked if I liked it over here and if it's different from the United States. She asked

went for trials, they took all the trialists into an office for ID check and to claim our training gear. When I walked out of the office and to the training facility, all I saw was bright green soccer fields all around. The men's team was training on one field and the women's team was training on another field. There were a total of 100 players trialing for the club. They were only taking 15 out of the 100 players trying out. After 2 weeks of trials, I was selected with 14 others. We were able to train with the men's first team and reserves team, and that was one of the best experiences in my life.

Democracy Implores You to Read, Read, Read the News

By Trevor Clarke, Core Staff

Look around, and you'll doubtless see both democracy and journalism under fire. This is no coincidence. The plight of the one is intimately bound up with that of the other: democracy's survival depends fundamentally on the existence of a free, robust and independent press — what I'd like to think we at Quo Vadis represent in our own small way.

The Founding Fathers recognized this, thinking it important enough to make it the meat of the First Amendment: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances."

Notice how "the right ... to petition the government for a redress of grievances" follows hard on the heels of "the freedom of speech." In one elegant sentence, it makes plain the essential link between open,

unfettered discourse and the democratic right of citizens to hold the power of government accountable to those in whose name it purports to act — namely, the mass of the people themselves.

This principle applies equally well to other forms of concentrated authority. In fact, it applies doubly where that authority is not subject to democratic control, but sidesteps popular consultation entirely to as-

sume its power by way of appointment or self-appointment. In these cases, sometimes it is the watch of a vigilant press alone that impels any restraint whatsoever on the part of the powerful.

In other cases, admittedly, it is the press itself that is the problem. A corrupt or beholden press can easily turn into an organ for propaganda, as was (and is) the case with Fox News. In the documentary "Outfoxed: Rupert Murdoch's War on Journalism," released all the way back in 2004, a crowd of disillusioned ex-employees of the supposedly "Fair and Balanced" network relate the stifling limitations imposed on their speech by the higher-ups at Fox.

"We weren't necessarily ... a news-gathering organization so much as we were a proponent of a point of view," says onetime Fox anchor Jon Du Pre. Former contributor Larry Johnson goes so far as to compare the network to "a Stalinist system" of top-down ideological control. Every day, according to interviewees, a message would come from Fox's executives stipulating the contours of the day's coverage. Often, it flew in the face of what was actually newsworthy, cherry-picking only convenient facts or eluding the truth entirely in the service of upholding a partisan, not to say deceitful, perspective of the country and of the wider world. Those who deviated from the party line were fired, and their careers ruined.

"They were just actually issuing edicts to the reporters to control

what they could say and how they could say it," says Johnson. The effect on Fox's audience, according to a study cited in the film, was that it knew only what flattered the right-wings of the Republican party, and not even the real truth of it at that. And yet one can plainly see what stooping to this mode of propaganda can achieve. Witness the vast and terrifying political power that Fox's leadership has managed to capture — which, as we know, goes all the way to the White House.

"What Fox News channel has done is, it's stripped out any notion of journalism as we've traditionally understood it," says Bob McChesney, founder of Free Press, in the film. "There is no journalism at the Fox News channel."

The point is this: the erosion of the integrity of journalism and the erosion of democracy go hand in hand. If journalists cannot do their job, which is to report newsworthy facts without fear of censorship or reprisal, then the truth cannot reach the public. An ignorant public is an easily manipulated public, prone to fearmongering and scapegoating and all manner of pernicious lies. It therefore behooves everyone to be an active, attentive observer of the journalistic profession. Journalists are canaries in the national coal mine: if their freedom goes, the rest is soon to follow. So, pick up a paper, pay attention and practice your democratic rights. Whatever your affiliation, this journalist will thank you for it.



Person reading the Quo Vadis newspaper

Photo by Trevor Clarke

Affirmative Action Hangs in the Balance

By Nicol Maciejewska, Copy Editor

The Supreme Court recently heard two affirmative action cases from Harvard and the University of North Carolina. These cases concern the admissions process, which are currently in place to help create a diverse student population. In light of the conservative supermajority taking over the nation's highest court, years of precedent are at risk of being ignored, and The Supreme Court could rule that it is unlawful to consider race during the admissions process.

According to the Cornell Law website, "Affirmative action is defined as a set of procedures designed to: eliminate unlawful discrimination among applicants, remedy the results of such prior discrimination and prevent such discrimination in the future." Therefore, universities will experience a decrease in the representation of Black, Latino and Native American students, and this will be especially true for elite universities. The decision will likely be made in June.

By ruling against precedent, affirmative action in other areas, such as employment and race-awareness in voting rights, may be reconsidered. This could promote a color-blind ideology that would consider restitutions to populations that have been discriminated against in the past as discriminatory itself. According to The New Yorker, it appears that Conservative Justices believe that discrimination on the basis of race means that taking race into consideration in any way, even in cases to rectify previous discrimination, is unconstitutional.

Therefore, if colleges would like to keep their diverse student bodies, they'll have to figure out other ways to do so. A method most often discussed is making standardized testing optional as students from

low-income families don't have the same opportunities and educational support as affluent students.

White students statistically grow up in better education systems and have more familial financial resources compared to minority counterparts. According to the Washington Post, "Asian Americans, too, benefit from privileges previously associated with Whites. The two largest subgroups of Asian Americans — Indian Americans and Chinese Americans — have incomes and levels of education that, on average, surpass those of Whites, due in part to U.S. immigration policy since the 1960s, which has made it much easier for highly educated Asians to move to the United States compared with low-skilled Asians." Getting rid of affirmative action would prevent those students that come from disproportionate upbringings from reaching the same academic success.

If affirmative action is deemed unconstitutional, it could be detrimental to our society as it will become even more difficult for minorities to break the glass ceiling. A functioning, healthy society should have an equal balance of academic achievers who will eventually become a part of a diverse workforce. Having diversity ensures that everyone's voices can be heard and that everyone will have representation.

The state of the Supreme Court is indecorous as this could be the second time it will ignore decades of precedent — this past June, the Supreme Court eliminated the constitutional right to abortion. These threats to precedent are causing our laws to be unstable. It is making the courts appear unreliable and illegitimate. This leaves us questioning what precedents will they overrule next, and how much will the United States change because of it.



United States Supreme Court Building

Photo by Nicol Maciejewska

Holiday Causes Reminiscing

By Ryan Cardenas, Core Staff

Thanksgiving has to be one of my favorite holidays to celebrate. Besides eating all the food my parents make every year, I get to spend it with my whole family. I come from a Latino household, so we always go all out. Every year, we either add a new dish or rotate something that we haven't made past Thanksgivings.

This past Thanksgiving was definitely one of my favorite ones. We recently just moved to our new home in South Amboy, so we thought why don't we go all out with the food. More food meant more blessings for the house and the family. I joined my parents early in the morning to get last minute essentials. As I assumed, the grocery store was crowded. There were people getting last minute groceries. Every checkout register had long lines because the store was closing early. We went to the self-checkout since we had less than 10 items. There was a decent line, but we got out of the store pretty quickly.

As soon as we got home, we saw my sister in the living room watching the Thanksgiving parade. I helped my parents bring in the groceries and joined my sister on the couch. She recently woke up and asked where we were. I told her that we went to the grocery store to get a few things for dinner tonight. We talked for a bit to catch up on what's going on with each other's lives since we're both occupied with school. She

asked me if my girlfriend was going to come over for dinner, and I wasn't sure if I should invite her because she was with her family. My parents overheard and told me to ask her if she wanted to come.

I called her to see if she wanted to come over. She said yes without hesitation. We were three months into dating at the time and I wanted to involve her around my family little by little. I was pretty nervous because it would be the first time my family and my girlfriend would meet. I told my parents about her, and they said she seemed like a good person. As the hours went by, dinner was almost ready. My sister and I dressed up to take pictures. My uncles were the first people to come over. I hadn't seen them since August because of my school and soccer schedule. A few minutes later, I got a text from my girlfriend saying that she was there. I went outside and talked to her for a bit to calm her down because she was nervous about meeting my parents. I told her to not worry about anything and that my family will love her. We walked together into the house, and I presented her to my parents and uncles. It worked out pretty well. She even helped my mom put the food on the table. Once the food was ready, we gathered around the table and gave thanks for all the food and blessings that we received throughout the year.

'Bad Sisters' Kill in the Name of Kindness



Photo Courtesy of Trevor Clarke

A shadow of a woman holding a knife entering a kitchen

By Trevor Clarke, Core Staff

A man should know better than to mess with his wife's family. Unhappily for him, sociopathic bully John Paul Williams (played by Claes Bang) flies in the face of good sense and does just that in the Irish black-comedy series "Bad Sisters," in which the coercive cruelty he piles on his wife Grace, née Garvey (Anne-Marie Duff), proves so unbearable to watch that her four sisters are driven to murder him.

In the series' first scene, we see John Paul (otherwise known as J.P. or, to the Garvey sisters minus Grace, "the Prick") in his pyjamas, laid out in a casket in his living room. It is

minutes before guests are due to arrive for his funeral, and a distraught Grace is attempting to cover up his post-mortem hard-on with a bit of

"It's a romping whodunnit — or rather, a howdunnit."

embroidery. Ding, dong! The Prick, and his dignity, are dead. The question is, how exactly did matriarchal Eva (Sharon Horgan), fiery, one-eyed Bibi (Sarah Greene), all-too-poised Ursula (Eva Birthistle) and free-wheeling Becka (Eve Hewson) pull it off — if, indeed, they had a hand in his demise at all?

Over the course of 10 neat episodes, the plot follows the Garveys across two interweaving timelines. In one, the Prick's numerous, gratuitous evils are chronicled as, meanwhile, the sisters conspire (and the audience looks on) with growing eagerness to see the end of his loathsome life. In the other, J.P. has already met his maker (or the other guy — much is made of his self-righteous Catholicism), but the trouble has only begun. The insurance men who brokered J.P.'s life policy are

rather, a howdunnit. The show approaches the mystery of the fatal moment from both sides: past and present, before and after the extinction of the hated John Paul. A delicious tension sets in as the sisters' murderous designs ratchet up along with the lurid gravity of their deeds, both planned and executed; all the while, the means of J.P.'s dispatching remains all but unguessable. Though the Prick's priggish personality and his sadistic exploits tend to veer into the cartoonish, the chilling effect

episode at a time. (They are not too squeamish, however, to censor the Prick's framing a kindly bachelor as a pedophile or his tricking Ursula into taking explicit pictures of herself.) On this account, the show's otherwise rollicking blend of pop psychology and pop entertainment gives way, betraying the limits of life-like malice as a subject for pleasurable viewing.

At a time when the line between justice and reprisal is being debated anew, how far should we want to go?

"At a time when the line between justice and reprisal is being debated anew, how far should we want to go?"

on to the sisters Garvey, whom the lads suspect of foul play. Not that the suits don't have any skin in the game: half-brothers Thomas (Brain Gleeson) and Matthew Claffin (Daryl McCormack) of Claffin and Sons can't afford the payout, which would bankrupt their shoddy, apparently shady family business. If they can

of the sisters' bloodthirst on their conscience is anything but overkill. All the same, it's impossible to want them to stop: their very guilt comes to seem merely another monstrous injustice brought upon them by Williams. Cheering on the homicidal siblings, the viewer comes to feel complicit — or contaminated.

The show's weakest point concerns John Paul's and Grace's preteen daughter Blánaid (Saise Quinn), who seems to show no signs of lasting damage despite her father's incessant abuse. Her unscathed psyche stands in stark contrast to that of her mother's, which shrinks and winces under J.P.'s hand. To the show's creators, it may simply have seemed beyond the realm of entertainment to show a child's mind unravel one

It's the question the show asks of its audience even as the Garvey sisters find out what it means to go all the way. In J.P. one finds the modern male villain taken to the extreme: childish, petty, smirking as he terrorizes and oppresses. No operatic dictator, he is a small, pathetic man, lashing out with prep-school callousness. He is wealthy and looks down on the Irish Garvey women with a patriarchal, conspicuously English condescension. In a word, he is eminently hateable. Who would object to his slaying — an act, as the sisters would have it, of mercy? Of course, there's no chance such a humane deed should go unpunished. For all its morbid silliness, "Bad Sisters" is serious about giving not just the Prick but all the Garveys their due.

Russ and Daughters Smacks of Briny Old World Charm

By Trevor Clarke, Core Staff

What to some is foreplay, others might call forshpayzn — I'm talking, of course, about appetizers. Whatever the word, whether one arrives between mealtimes or during the lunch-hour rush, there's a hardy nosh to be had from Russ and Daughters Appetizers, a Lower East Side institution and a bastion of New York City's historic Jewish foodways.

First, a word of clarification. "Appetizing," according to the Russ and Daughters website, is a culinary tradition particular to American Jews, especially to New Yorkers. It concerns the kind of food eaten on or with a bagel, which is to say schmear (cream cheese), salad and cured fish. As eating establishments, appetizers are distinct from more familiar delicatessens. Because kosher dietary laws forbid the mixing of milk and flesh, shops such as delis must serve their meats in facilities separate from appetizers, which sell dairy products (namely fluffy, spreadable schmear). The ubiquitous yet decidedly non-kosher Reuben sandwich is one by-product of a post-immigrant laxity in the observance of this rule.

My latest visit to the flagship storefront on East Houston Street (which locals pronounce "house-ton," not "hew-stun") was a dependably transporting experience. Here, all the fish on offer is prepared in the old manner: brined, pickled, smoked, kippered and cured. Schmaltz herring, marinating rollmops and filets of fatty salmon glistened seductively behind the counter lining one side of the narrow, bright, nostalgic interior. Rows of cans and jars, stacks

of colorful tins, and baskets heaping with bagels spanned the wall behind it; below, troughs of all kinds of schmear (plain, scallion, goat, caviar-infused, even vegan) like virgin snow lay waiting to be spread.

While the front row of customers drooled over the offerings, the late-comers waited anxiously behind them. In the cramped space, I found it essential to have my elbows out and my ears pricked for the digits printed on my take-a-number tab. The whitecoated staff, wearing expressions of grave absorption, expertly carved glassy-thin slices of translucent fish, all while doling out admonishments to the distracted crowd: shouldering his way to the front of the shop, one staff member amiably told the throng to "make like the Red Sea." The product was as much the food as the performance.

Coming to the counter where I was called, I ordered a Pastrami Russ — pastrami-cured salmon with sauerkraut and mustard — on an everything bagel (\$17). I could hardly bear the brief wait to receive my double fistful of piquant goodness. Russ and Daughters is an exclusively to-go establishment; so, sandwich in hand at last, I squeezed my way to the door and left the crush to find a bench. I was just as glad to be outdoors: the sun was shining, the streets were humming. The city was on full display.

With an eye on the curbside entertainment, I unwrapped the wax-paper parcel I had taken away with me, raised half of its contents to my lips and savored a salty, oily, pungent bite. My bagel may as well have been

plain; owing to the powerfully flavored fixings, I could hardly taste the everything seasoning atop it. In this I found no grounds for complaint, however, only for compliments: I took it as a tribute to the zippiness of the sauerkraut and the ample smearing of mustard, and to the delightful novelty of the pastramied salmon. The fishy, sea-briny note only added to the arrangement, making me question whether it wasn't an even better variation on the original beefy theme.

In this strident contest for the attention of my senses, however, I found myself yearning for a good-old lox bagel and its simple showcasing of what is, at least to me, the main attraction: the fish. On prior visits I had savored the straightforward, unmixed pleasure of Nova salmon — delicate, buttery, and generously applied — with plain schmear on a plain bagel. With optional onion and capers and a slice of tomato (50 cents each), this delectably clean classic (appropriately dubbed The Classic) ran me half a dollar more than its pastramied cousin but left me twice as satisfied. In the end, I decided the Pastrami Russ was a worthwhile, but not a repeatable, experiment; at the same cost as the Classic, the Yum Kipper, which substitutes baked for smoked salmon, was a worthier peer.

Texturally and geometrically speaking, the bagel, by

the way, was top-notch (to my gentle's palate): fluffy yet with a satisfying resistance, neither too spare nor grotesquely large. Coffee and cold drinks, as well as baked goods such as babka and rugelachs, are available for purchase at a counter separate from where the fishy business is transacted. I contented myself with water. The variety of pickles — cucumber, tomato, onion — on display in the back-of-the-shop refrigerator looked enticing to this brine-lover, but with my hands full and a train to catch, I left them for another day's gourmandizing.

Once upon a time, according to the owners, there used to be an appetizing shop on every corner in every neighborhood of Manhattan.

Today, Russ and Daughters is among the last specimens of a species threatened with extinction. In a way, it's a scarcity that the Russ family has learned to play to its advantage, filling the vacuum left by its late fellow appetizers. A century after shtetl-born Joel Russ traded his pushcart for a brick-and-mortar storefront in 1914, the fourth generation opened a second location — then, in 2019, a third. Trendier than the days of yore (with premium prices to match), the business has learned to cope deftly with one hundred years' worth of shifting demographics and inclinations in the Lower East Side. Though times and tastes may have changed, at Russ and Daughters the past is not merely alive: it's lively.



Photo by Trevor Clarke

Lox, plain schmear and all the fixings on an everything bagel

Attend the Quo Vadis General Virtual Meeting every Friday at 11 a.m.

QV is hosting a fun, campus-wide meeting for students, administrators, faculty and staff to learn about how we can best serve our readership!

Come and have a great time with us!

Review the paper and play games!

**We want to learn more
about what you want to read!**

**Click the
Zoom Link:**

<https://middlesexcc-edu.zoom.us/j/93232297786?pwd=UkZzY3R6OGNoVWx0RisraFdiUDJZZz09>
Passcode: Newspaper

**Attend the SGA Meeting
on Nov. 18 at noon
via Zoom**

Meeting ID: 941 0281 8690

Meeting Passcode: 4565

<https://bit.ly/virtualcollegecenter>

Pets of Quo Vadis



Photo by Trevor Clarke

Doodle; Likes: Paper bags, being swaddled, kibble (despite having only four teeth!), Dislikes: Vacuums



Photo by Christopher Lee

Bea; Likes: Mealworms, fruit, yogurt
Dislikes: Green vegetables



Photo by Vivian Hymh

Cinnamon; Likes: Sleeping on top of clothes, the sound of ice in a cup, being held like a baby, Dislikes: Men



Photo by Jazmine Brown

Romeo; Likes: Snuggling up in covers and blankets

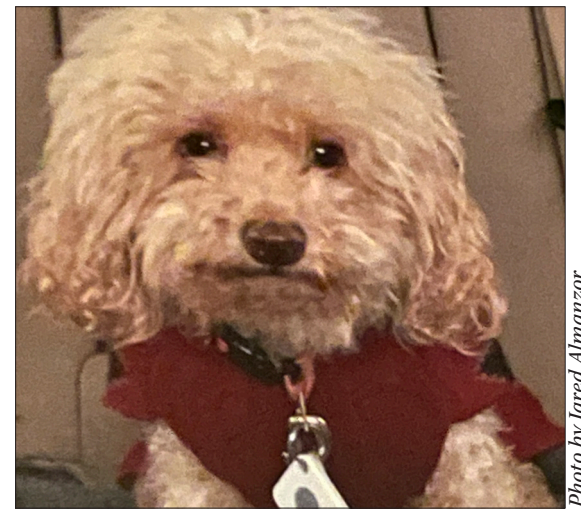


Photo by Jared Almanzor

Haggy Poo; Likes: Socks, people, balls, sleep
Dislikes: Loud noises, being picked up



Photo by Estejani Calderon

Coco; Likes: Playing with her bouncy ball
Dislikes: Loud yelling



Photo by Tiffany Pham

Alice; Likes: Ham, pork, fish, icing, grass, watching birds
Dislikes: Belly rubs, being picked up, aluminum foil

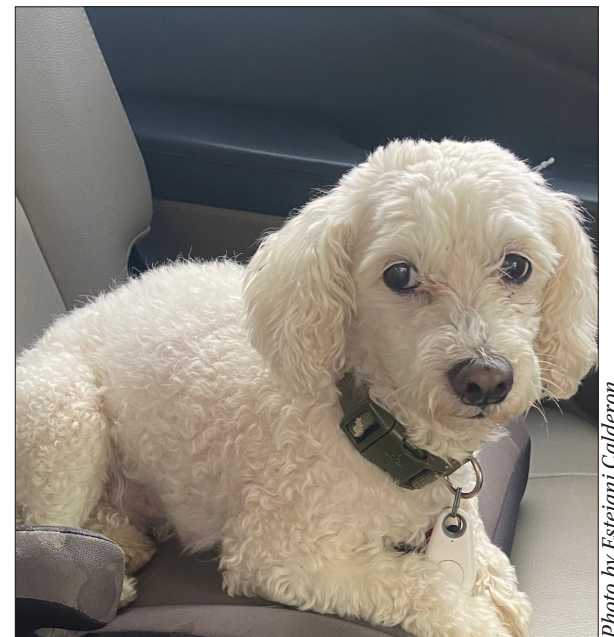


Photo by Estejani Calderon

Rocky; Likes: Sleep
Dislikes: People running



Photo by Vivian Hymh

Angel; Likes: Playing tug, unsalted popcorn, posing for pictures, Dislikes: The sound of hairdryers



Photo by Jazmine Brown

King; Likes: Playing with anything and anybody

Region XIX Names Jamie Madrid Soccer Player of the Year

Courtesy of Middlesex Athletics Website

Middlesex College sophomore Jamie Madrid was named the Region XIX Player of the Year and freshman David Pereira was voted the region's top defender by the region's Head Coaches.

Madrid, a forward from Perth Amboy, was third in the region in goals (11) and points (29) while leading Javier Velasco's Middlesex to an 11-4-1 record.

Pereira (Freshman/Woodbridge, NJ) anchored a defense that posted seven shutouts while registering a Region XIX-low 1.12 Goals Against Average.

Defender Edwin Veliz (Freshman/South Plainfield, NJ) was voted Third Team All-Region as well.

Madrid registered four two-goal games this season including a streak where the striker was blistering hot.

In a span of four games over nine days, Madrid scored six goals and had three assists as the Colts went 3-0-1 over those games.

Madrid registered six points in a 6-2 win over Bucks CC with two goals and two assists. He had two four-point games as well.

Pereira and Veliz were leaders of a defense that was quite simply one of the best in the country on the NJCAA Division III level.

The Colts allowed just 17 goals on the season, the lowest total of any NJCAA Division III team in the country that played at least 16 games. The Colts seven shutouts led Region XIX and only five teams in the country on the Division III level had more.

Middlesex allowed two goals or fewer in 15 of the 16 games they played this season.



Photo Courtesy of Middlesex Athletics Website

Region XIX player of the year Jamie Madrid

Person-on-the-Street:

With both basketball and football continuously contending for the most viewer rating in America, which sport do you enjoy watching more and why?

By Adonis Jones, Managing Editor



Trevor Haskins
Communications
2nd year
Piscataway

"Football is my favorite sport to watch between the two because I like the physicality of the game more."



Joshua Torres
Liberal Arts
1st year
Metuchen

"Basketball is my favorite between the two because I grew up watching the sport at a very young age"



Kenny Montero
Business Administration
1st year
New Brunswick

"I'd rather watch basketball because I grew up playing it so I naturally gravitated towards the sport more"

Photos by Adonis Jones



Xavier Suero
Business Information
1st year
New Brunswick

"I rather watch basketball because I grew up playing the sport. Since I grew up playing, basketball is easier for me to understand."



Alicia Schau
Psychology
1st year
Edison

"I enjoy watching football more because everyone in my family enjoys the sport, so it creates good family time."

Fitness Center Opens to all Students and Faculty

By Adonis Jones, Managing Editor

Middlesex College Fitness Center is open to all students and faculty, and staff during hours of operation. The Fitness Center is located down stairs in the Physical Education Center.

In order to obtain access into the center, you must need a valid Middlesex College Identification Card. If you are a student that does not have a Student ID card, you can obtain one at West Hall. Faculty and staff Identification cards can be obtained at the Human Resources Office located in Chambers Hall.

The fitness center is free for all students, faculty, and staff - making the center a convenient and affordable spot for students, faculty, and staff to work out.

First year student Nasir Figueroa

did not know that Middlesex had a fitness center available for students to use. After learning that it was, he was very pleased. "The fitness center is a good opportunity for students who do not have time to leave campus in between classes and work out for free," Figueroa said.

Middlesex second year basketball player, Malachi Treadwell said, "Having a fitness center on campus is convenient for me because it allows me to attend classes, and work out all in the same setting."

For more information on the Fitness Center hours of operation, contact the Athletics and Recreation Department via email athletics@middlesexcc.edu or call 732.906.2558.



Students working out in the fitness center

Photo by Adonis Jones