

# Students ride tuition roller coaster

## From 3% to 5% back to 3% - tuition hike faced major pushback

By Ashley Jackson and Bruna Camara  
Senior Reporters

Each year MCCC increases tuition incrementally, but the circumstances surrounding this year's increase have been unusual and contentious.

The Board of Trustees originally proposed a 3% tuition increase in February, and there was an open forum for students to weigh in, but a 5% increase was proposed unexpectedly in mid-March, just two days before the budget was to be voted. A required Town Hall meeting for open discussion was hastily scheduled for March 15, when students were on spring break and no students were notified that it was happening.

The 5% proposal and the lack of notification sparked a strong reaction from students and staff alike.

Christian Perez, President of the Student Government Association said during the Town Hall, "We received no email blasts or text messages regarding the meeting. Yet I still received [college] notice

of gas line maintenance and messages from Transfer Services...Both of which I hope we could mostly agree are a little less important than a proposed 5% tuition increase."

Perez said he had only learned of the meeting through a professor and then he "spread the word in every way that I could."

During the Town Hall meeting, Professor of Communication and President of the Faculty Association Alvyn Haywood called the act of scheduling the meeting over break and with such short notice "sneaky," a term that was reiterated by several other participants.

Beth Knight, Executive

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## Board Chair and exiting president clash

### Feud includes \$200,000 bill for internal investigation

By Madhavi Steinert  
Senior Reporter

Out-going Mercer President Dr. Jianping Wang is retiring in June following a breakdown in her contract negotiation allegedly related to disagreements with Board of Trustees Chairman Mark Matzen.

The depth of animosity was revealed in a Trentonian article that cited a letter Dr. Wang sent to the Board members on October 21, 2021, listing numerous complaints regarding her treatment by Matzen.

The Trentonian article came out on March 17, the same day a Board meeting was held to address both an unexpected 5% tuition hike and the payment of \$200,000 for an internal investigation of Chair Matzen. Matzen

announced at the outset of the meeting that both matters would be taken up at a later date.

The clash between Wang and Matzen appears to center around allegations of racism by both parties and includes other financial factors.

In broad terms, the Board is responsible for the college's fiscal stability, approving policies and policy changes, overseeing the President and administration, and serving as the liaison between the college and the community. The President answers to the Board, carrying out their goals and overseeing the day-to-day operations of the college.

Dr. Wang was widely supported by the Board for much of her tenure, but her presidency has been controversial with the faculty making a vote of no confidence in her in 2019, provid-

ing the board with a lengthy list of complaints and citing racial bias among them.

After rapid turnover in the position of Vice President for Academic Affairs, Black VPAA Dr. J. Brandon Shaw alleged that he was fired by Dr. Wang based on racial discrimination.

Faculty also alleged Dr. Wang had made racist remarks. According to the list of faculty grievances, Dr. Wang "Conflated students' low economic status with their race in a public meeting."

Communication Professor Alvyn Haywood, who is also the President of the Faculty Association, told the Board in an open meeting at the time, "Our President has turned herself into a permanent liability for the college—a liability that will hang like a millstone around the neck of the Board and the college until the day the president resigns or is fired."

Now, he says, "We did not use [the vote of no confidence] to tear her down. We wanted to see if there would be a change."

Chairman Matzen stood by Dr. Wang after the vote of no confidence, saying, "We have, as a board, confidence in the president. She has done some amazing things, moved us in a strong direction, financially and academically, both on the budget side and on the Foundation side."

Board member David Fried says that Matzen's view was shared by the rest of the Board at the time. However, an external firm was hired to investigate the allegations in the list of faculty grievances against Dr. Wang. In addition, Matzen conducted his own

See WANG/MATZEN page 2



# Resentment between Matzen and Wang continues

Continued from page 1

independent internal evaluation, which Dr. Wang alleged was discriminatory.

One question in the evaluation asked what animal Dr. Wang, a Chinese American, reminded them of, with answer options including tiger, lion, and dragon, Asian stereotypes.

Mayor Fried says, "Our Chair used the unfortunate language of asking people to refer to her as an animal."

Dr. Wang says now, "Throughout my career, I have been subtly or directly discriminated [against]," adding, "I always wondered if I were a white male would I be treated like that? Would somebody compare a white male to a dragon?"

The ongoing investigation into the allegations of misconduct headed by external firm Lead Good was launched in December 2021 and resulted in the \$200,000 bill.

Matzen said of the money, "It's important to take these [allegations] seriously, and it's the reason we have a policy to do that. I think it's difficult to put a dollar amount on that. I also know we use that firm for other investigations, so I don't know what the breakdown of that 200,000 is."

The Trentonian article



Left: MCCC Board of Trustees Chairman Mark Matzen. COLLEGE VOICE | FILE PHOTOS  
Right: Outgoing MCCC President Dr. Jianping Wang

quoted an anonymous Board member who called for Matzen to step down, and Mayor Fried says he agrees that it is time for new leadership.

"I think that the money should have been spent on students. Before I would allow \$200,000 to be spent on me as a volunteer, I would resign," Fried says.

The calls for Matzen's resignation come against the backdrop of rumors regarding a fac-

ulty vote of no confidence against Matzen, as confirmed by multiple anonymous faculty members.

In response, Matzen says, "I've not considered [stepping down]. Staff and faculty, anyone in the college, can talk however they want. Obviously, they did a vote of no confidence against the president."

As the animosity between Wang and Matzen continues, Professor Haywood says morale has

never been lower in his 30 years at the college.

"The impact that it's having on the college, faculty, staff? It's not good. We're one. The whole notion of shared governance is shared responsibility," he says, but continues, "Now, this stuff is in the public, and you got my student folk in a situation where they're going, 'What's going on?' Why should they have to be engaged in all that stuff?"

Student Government As-

**NEXT OFFICIAL  
BOARD MEETING  
IS APRIL 21**

sociation President Christian Perez says the ongoing fight between Dr. Wang and Matzen is unfortunate.

"I think it's demoralizing, disappointing, and disreputable for the college to be going through this, and for students to be looking at this from the outside," Perez said.

The disagreement comes against the backdrop of negotiations to approve Dr. Wang's successor. The Board has yet to officially vote on the appointment, but quickly organized a closed session on April 6 to discuss "personnel matters."

Neither Mayor Fried nor Board member Anthony Inverso attended. Inverno tendered his resignation on March 18 citing lack of communication within the Board according to his resignation letter.

"My advice to the next president," Dr. Wang says, "you are not going to be very popular all the time, even most of the time, but you need to make sure you do things for the good of the people you serve."

## Board gives up on sudden shift to 5% tuition hike

Continued from page 1

Assistant in the office of Enrollment Management and Student Experience, said, "It's not just about communication. What about transparency? Trying to push this agenda item during spring break...is not a good look. Once we lose students, we may not see them back."

Despite the lack of communication, the meeting had a higher than usual turnout for a Town Hall.

College President Dr. Jianping Wang said in a later interview, "There were a lot of people speaking at the hearing, and I saw that was the largest turnout in my recollection, in my seven years. A lot of people told me they never have seen so many people at the hearing."

In an interview with The VOICE, MCCC Board of Trustees Chair Mark Matzen said of the scheduling decision, "The one thing I will apologize for is not understanding it was spring break. I think I would have done things differently had I known."

During the Town Hall Laura Schepps, Vice President of Finance and Administration, presented several slides that included data she indicated put the 5% increase in line with the typical in-county increase of around 3-4% following the notably low 2% increase during the 2020 COVID crisis.

Schepps said, "The potential for going higher on the tuition side, is because of two things: the inflation and our actual, you know, tuition fee number."

*"If I lose the opportunity I've been given because of a tuition hike, I'll be at total loss for what to do. This is my chance at this. [I'm] not trying to appeal to emotion, but MCCC is my chance. Its affordability and faculty gave me the chance, and yes, they're great."*

Andy Douglas, MCCC Student

Several students pushed back against the notion that inflation would have come as a surprise and said a 5% increase would potentially prevent them from coming to MCCC

Student Andy Douglas said, "If I lose the opportunity I've been given because of a tuition hike, I'll be at a total loss for what to do. This is my chance. [I'm] not trying to appeal to emotion, but MCCC is my chance."

Several students questioned whether the Board was proposing the 5% increase due to Governor Murphy's March 10 budget speech in which he said he supported expanding the Community College Opportunity Grant (CCOG) funding that makes it possible for certain low-income students to attend community college for free after all other aid is exhausted.

In response to the CCOG question, Schepps said, "One of the things I mentioned earlier, is that [CCOG] is going to mitigate some of this. So if they increase the eligibility, the income threshold for the Community College Opportunity Grant, that allows people who may

need the most help to get that help through that program...I would suggest to any student, that everybody should fill out a FAFSA form, and get as much aid as they could potentially get and work with our financial aid area to mitigate a lot of this stuff"

Perez said, "It's a dangerous proposal, especially when we can't be sure that CCOG which is something many students, including myself, rely on, won't be more seriously affected by a more dramatic increase of 5%."

Two days after the Town Hall, the Board of Trustees held their monthly meeting via Zoom. The vote to approve the 5% increase was on the agenda. Students, faculty, and staff members showed up to share their objections to the tuition increase and to the way it was proposed.

Chairman Matzen began the session by notifying participants that the vote on the tuition increase had been pulled from the agenda, but many students and staff members used the open public comment period to register their complaints.

Trisha Muka, Associate Director of Financial Aid, said, "I'm extremely concerned that Mercer seems to think of CCOG as a cure or a Band-Aid for raising tuition or for any other concerns related to paying for college. Since its inception, less than 10% of our students have received CCOG each year."

Board member and Mayor of Robbinsville David Fried said in an interview with The VOICE, "From my perspective, we're in a place right now where I thought even a 3% percent increase was high."

He added, "Given the fact we had a decrease in enrollment, we got an opportunity, I believe, to potentially even stay flat [in terms of tuition] this year, and I thought that was the right thing to do because I thought it was a good way to give back to the students and also the faculty that stuck with us for the last two years, while we've been virtual."

In his interview with The VOICE Matzen reflected on the proceedings saying, "We heard the feedback from the Town Hall. We decided to go back and take a look

and see what we can do. And so we pulled the budget from the agenda. So to me, as I was sitting there, and from the Board, I was just thinking like 'so the system worked.' We heard everyone's concerns. I think what I learned out of this is to start the process earlier."

The community was notified of the decision to revert back to the originally proposed 3% increase in a broadcast email sent out by Schepps on March 29.

The email said, in part, "On Wednesday, March 23, 2022, at a special meeting of the Finance and Facilities committee of the Board of Trustees, the Board Chair and the committee Chair authorized the College administration to publish the Academic Year 22/23 tuition increase at 3% effective March 24, 2022. The Board of Trustees will retroactively approve the increase at the April BOT meeting."

Dr. Wang said "I am so very proud of who spoke up at the last board meeting, faculty students, and staff, in support of 3% rather than 5% and I think it played a very big role to make the rest of the board members think, and they voiced their opinions afterward as well. So I think that played a critical role in reversing the decision."

Perez says he wants students to know that "They made a difference, the people that were there, the people that relayed the message to their friends, the people that voiced concern or outrage over [the increase], whatever they did, even just being there, even if you didn't talk, it helped."

## APRIL CALENDAR

### CAMPUS

**WED April 13**, Rutgers University @ Mercer University Center Transfer workshop

**WED April 20** Spring Day on the West Windsor quad - Food, dancing, airbrush tattoos, Giant Jenga, photo station

**MON April 25** - Spring Day JKC Campus - Food truck, DJ, cotton candy

### LOCAL

**April 16 - Hen House Visits** - Howell Farm - 70 Woodens Ln, Lambertville, NJ

**April 22 - Poetry Celebration with HomeFront** - Princeton Arts Council. Paul Robeson Center. 7:15 PM - 8:15 PM. Free and open to the public!

**April 23** - South Brunswick Hindu American Society - Holi

Festival of Colors at Woodlot Park - 2-6:30 PM

**April 23** - Kingston Greenways Earth Day Clean up - 9-4pm.

**April 30** - Tickle My Funny Bone Comedy Show - Elks Lodge, Trenton, NJ

**April 30** - Kite Day - Terhune Orchards 330 Cold Soil Road, Princeton, NJ



# Sleep deprivation's impact on students

By **Sierra Azara**  
Reporter

Nursing major Amber Hernandez is a current Mercer student and a mother.

"What is sleep?!" she exclaimed while laughing in the hallway.

With a teenager at home and a full load of classes she says, "I'm lucky to get 6 hours of sleep a night."

Even with a strong drive to succeed, it can be hard to pencil in the 8 hours necessary for top cognitive performance, and to most students it can seem like a better idea to stay up late to study versus go to bed early and sacrifice the extra study time.

Asked about attempting to stay up all night to prepare for an exam Hernandez says, "Either way I ended up failing...Regardless of if sleep was a factor in me getting the failing grade or not, I don't really know."

Situations like Hernandez's are incredibly common on college campuses. Which in short means, students aren't getting enough sleep.

This is a problem because of the effects that sleep deprivation has on us cognitively. Sleep deprivation is a ruling factor in failing classes, having a low G.P.A, feeling tired throughout the day, and even an increased risk of motor vehicle accidents.

If students decide to try and run off less sleep than their bodies need, they are not only putting themselves at risk but are risking the lives of those



COLLEGE VOICE | FILE PHOTO

around them.

In a *Sleep Foundations* article on circadian rhythms—the patterns that regulate human sleep—the authors write, "When properly aligned, a circadian rhythm can promote consistent and restorative sleep. But when this circadian rhythm is thrown off, it can create significant sleeping problems, including insomnia. Research is also revealing that circadian rhythms play an integral role in diverse aspects of physical and mental health."

Science shows that some of the cognitive effects of sleep deprivation are comparable to being drunk. This includes, decreased reaction time, memory problems, daytime drowsiness, decreased alertness, and concentration.

Sleep deprivation impacts those factors that are critical for the making of a good student.

"Catching up" on sleep is also not possible as many people think it is.

In New Jersey in 1997, Maggie McDonald's car was struck by a driver who hadn't slept in over 24 hours. Due to this accident, the young girl died, and lawmakers started putting things into action to create, "Maggie's Law."

This law states that anyone who knowingly drives after being awake for more than 24 hours and gets into an accident they may be charged with vehicular manslaughter.

In an *Observer* article titled *Sweeney: Morgan crash underscores importance of Maggie's Law*, Senate President Steve

Sweeney was quoted saying, "The effects of sleep deprivation can be just as hazardous as those of drugs and alcohol. When people go without sleep and get behind the wheel, they are putting their lives and the lives of everyone they encounter on the road in danger."

Scientists recommended people set a normal sleep schedule and stick to it. Go to bed and rise at consistent hours. For students, this means ensuring time management matches course load.

Staying up late to study will not help you pass the test; in fact, it can make your odds of retaining the information you studied worse, and the benefits of having a healthy sleep schedule are significant.

## Overcoming a F or W on your transcript

By **Aniela Krzeminska**  
Reporter

Vitoria Segnini, a Business Administration major, says, "In Pre-calculus I got an A, I got maybe two or three exercises wrong, but I failed in the class that is before precalculus."

The way in which a class is delivered for some can be the difference in failing or passing a class.

"It was an online class. I did have a professor, but the whole class was taught through a software teaching us and giving us exercises," she says.

The software, Aleks, provides students with Math exercises to complete and will not allow students to progress unless they can answer every question correctly.

Segnini says, "I really had a hard time, I failed not because I got a bad grade, but because I didn't finish it because I was really, really frustrated."

Segnini isn't alone in failing a class and many can become discouraged when they see the impact it can have on their GPA. While professors and

advisors both agree that repairing transcripts is possible, there is a distinction between an F on a student's transcript which determines how they should go about it.

English Professor Dr. Edward Carmien explains, "To fail a class is to have attempted the work of the class, but fall short of accomplishing success. To withdraw from a class is to administratively pull out of a class."

Students who are looking to improve their GPA after failing a class should consider re-taking it.

Honors Advisor Eugene Mok says that "When re-taking a class, only the most recent attempt counts towards GPA calculation."

While graduating with an Associate's Degree from Mercer requires a 2.0 GPA, for those who are aiming to transfer into a four-year college a higher GPA may be required depending on the school they wish to transfer into.

Mok adds, "Students do not have to retake a class after a failed attempt, but choosing not to retake the class se-

verely depresses their overall GPA and can affect their progress towards degree completion."

In some instances students may have the option to withdraw from a class to prevent bringing down their GPAs. Appearing as a 'W' on a student's transcript, when done before the withdrawal deadline, withdrawing from a class can allow students who may be struggling with extenuating circumstances to take a step back and come back to the course at a later date without their GPA taking a hit.

English Professor Dr. Bettina Calouri shares, "I think that not keeping pace with a course leads to withdrawals" adding, "Students may think they will be able to catch up, but everything quickly becomes overwhelming, especially when the homework assignments prepare students for the bigger graded assignments". With the withdrawal deadline approaching on Wednesday, April 20, students should first discuss their options with their professors before making a decision.

**COURSE  
WITHDRAWAL  
DEADLINE IS  
APRIL 20**

Dr. Calouri says, "If students are wondering whether to withdraw, the first thing they need is a realistic sense about their standing in a course. For this, they need to talk to their professors."

If students do not withdraw by the deadline it will result in a grade other than a W on their transcript (usually an F).

Business and STEM Professor Dr. Andrea Lynch shares that when it comes to bouncing back after failing a class persistence is key.

Dr. Lynch says, "I did see a student once take a course three times; first time they got an F; next time a D (which does not transfer); and the final time they passed with a C." She adds, "I respect that type of diligence and persistence. Students with that type of determination do not fail – they sharpen their skills as they grow."

### LAURIE'S CORNER



By **Laurie Gallagher**  
With support from  
the Staff of The College VOICE

## We can't skimp on our nutrition

We college students really need to eat more nutritious food to keep up our strength and energy.

As college students, we are very busy doing our assignments for our classes, doing extracurricular activities. Some of us have full or part time jobs, and some of us are living on our own or even living with busy families too.

No wonder we tend to forget to eat right. It's easier to save time and grab fast food from places like Wawa, Burger King, and McDonald's. Or on campus we use the vending machines and we tend to forget to read the labels.

I wrote an article about how great WaWa is, and they definitely have everything you could want, but eating out can cause problems if we're not careful.

According to a Journal of the American Medical Association article referenced in an NYU (New York University) webpage on nutrition, "For students in particular, factors influencing dietary habits include time, availability of healthy options, friends' eating habits, and nutritional knowledge." It also said "During the first 3-4 months of college students gain an average 1.5-6.8 lbs, with the proportion of overweight or obese students as much doubling by the end of the first semester."

The website adds that "On average college students eat at fast-food restaurants 1 to 3 times per week." It says that "A major contributor to the obesity epidemic is the sugar consumed in sweetened beverages."

When it comes to healthy eating and having a balanced diet we have to focus on what we put in our mouths.

We have to avoid skipping meals and eat the healthy stuff like fruits and veggies, a good variety of healthy dairy, nuts, and meat. We can do it.



# Local Ukrainian community steps up

## Network of volunteers help coordinate donations to send to Ukrainians in need

By Ken Fantry  
Senior Reporter

When MCCC Student Oleksii Myhalchuk came to the United States from Ukraine in August of last year to study and play soccer, his homeland was not at war. However, growing up in Ukraine, Myhalchuk was no stranger to the tensions between his nation and Russia.

“For the whole world the war started on the 24th of February, but for Ukraine, it started like in 2014, when Russia occupied Crimea. Like, I was scared Ukraine will force my father to join the army.” Myhalchuk says.

On February 24 of this year, as Russia once again invaded Ukraine, those familiar fears became realities.

Oleksii says his community is torn. “It’s hard to combine, because you are living in two completely different worlds at the same time. Here everything is fine, everything works. Peace. School. But in Ukraine it’s war.”

This is reflected by comments from Oleksii’s English as a Second Language Professor at MCCC Allyson Carrozza, known to many of her students as Professor Ally.

Professor Carrozza says, “I think it’s extremely courageous for these students, in the midst of everything that’s going on, to still come to class, do the assignments, sit for exams and perform the way they are.”

The local community, Ukrainian and non-Ukrainian, have networked together to deliver sustained support to Ukraine and the broader Ukrainian community in Mercer County.

For Myhalchuk, each day begins not knowing what has happened to his loved ones as he slept.

He says, “When I wake up, [the] first thing I’m doing, I’m going to [the] internet, and I’m just scrolling the news. I’m calling my father like, “How are you doing guys?”

While his family is in Kyiv, Oleksii considers them relatively safe. Still, the danger is such that Oleksii’s father has made arrangements for Oleksii’s 14-year-old brother to soon leave and stay with a family near London whom the Myhalchuks have never met. Oleksii talks to his brother frequently, offering advice on adapting to a new country. He tries not to touch on the war, sticking to other topics.

“Usually food. I am asking like, ‘what are you eating?’ because there are issues with fresh food.” says Myhalchuk.

The constant fear and uncertainty are shared by the Ukrainian community of Mercer County as they coordinate to aid their fellow Ukrainians like the Myhalchuks.

Ukrainian American CEO of local business United Support Solutions and founder of Autism charity WeMake Tony Lesenskyj can often be found working to sort aid supplies at St. George Ukrainian Orthodox Church in Yardville, NJ. Dozens of volunteers of all ages, sorting donations and loading them onto a truck create a constant murmur.

Lesenskyj says, “Being part of a Ukrainian family, you’re prepared from birth about what the Russian government is capable of doing. There were periods of time where everything seemed like it was good but it was only...they were just waiting, and our parents reminded us every day, never trust that government, and through history, we’ve always found that to be true.”

The Ukrainian preparedness Lesenskyj describes has contributed to a multi-community effort, which has been not only impressive, according to those co-ordinating it, but sustained.



PHOTO | KEN FANTRY  
St. George Ukrainian Church in Yardville, NJ.



PHOTO | KEN FANTRY

Volunteers at St. George Ukrainian Church in Yardville, NJ work to gather and ship donations for citizens in Ukraine.



PHOTO | KEN FANTRY

Ukrainian MCCC student Oleksii Myhalchuk worries every day about his father and brother back home.

“Goods are coming in every day. People just want to help, whether it’s monetarily, or donate something, or volunteer their time to sort through these things. The community’s been fantastic,” Lesenskyj says

Still, there are hurdles and complications, including the cost of shipping, and restrictions on many of the most needed supplies.

“Our biggest challenge right now is, even though we’re shipping a lot of this off to Ukraine and to Poland where the refugees are, the cost of shipping right now its about 50 cents a pound. But that will change, that’s what we’re worried about right now,” Lesenskyj says.

This does not mean an end to the effort, rather it requires a change in strategy, he says, adding, “At the end of the day it becomes a business decision. You’re better off using that money for them in Europe to buy it there.”

Shipping the donated goods is also complicated by the International Traffic in Arms Regulations, or ITAR, which limits the export of military equipment to non-US citizens. Not limited to weaponry, the restrictions complicate the shipping of items like body armor and walkie-talkies.

For this reason, St. George’s Ukrainian Orthodox Church sends these items to the Falls Township Police Department,



PHOTO | KEN FANTRY

Sign outside St. George Ukrainian Church in Yardville, NJ.

which sorts the donations of restricted items before they are collected by the Ukrainian Educational and Cultural Center to be flown to Ukraine.

When the effort was announced on March 4 Falls Township Police Chief Nelson Whitney and his department initially expected to do a single night of collections, but have found the outpouring of support from the community so significant that it remains ongoing.

“The outpouring of support from the Ukrainian community was tremendous,” Chief Whitney says, “We call it here ‘Operation Urgent Aid.’

Tony Lesenskyj’s experience at St. George Ukrainian Orthodox Church has been similar.

“Quite frankly,” he says, “the Ukrainians can be a pain in the ass because when they set their tables for dinner, there’s enough to feed a hundred families at that dinner... But, again they’ve gotten to the point where they’re not gonna live under a Putin regime. Never! And that’s why they’ll fight to the death.”

For his part, Myhalchuk has seen a strange sense of normalcy develop among his family in Ukraine, even as they experience multiple daily alerts of incoming munitions.

“My brother is even playing soccer with his friends in a small field near our house...People just get used to it,” he says. The uncertainty remains, however.

“You’re living and you don’t know what will happen tomorrow. For example, if my visa will expire, I don’t even have a place to be deported to,” Myhalchuk says.

Explaining what he hopes to return home after the war, Oleksii describes a scene readily familiar to many New Jersey residents.

He says, “We have tradition that on Sundays we have a family dinner, and we are eating pasta. So this is what I miss, you know, just bring[ing] all your family member’s together, just [to] sit talk, without the bombs outside, and just continue living your normal life.”



ABOVE: A broad variety of useful donations for those in war-torn Ukraine are sorted, packed and shipped at St. George Ukrainian Church in Yardville, NJ

PLACES TO DONATE GOODS

St. George Ukrainian Orthodox Church  
1200 Klockner Rd, Trenton, NJ Accepting Drop Offs.  
Hours: Weds and Fri 5pm-8pm. Sat. and Sun. 10am-4pm.

Abington Township Police, 1166 Old York Road, Abington, PA  
Nether Providence Police, 214 Sykes Lane, Wallinford, PA  
Falls Township Police, 188 Lincoln Highway, Fairless Hills PA

ITEMS NEEDED

Baby Items - Bottles, diapers, medicines, food dry or in pouches  
Clothing - Gloves, hats, socks, thermal wear  
Equipment - Flashlights,chargers, dark blankets, sleeping bags  
Medicine - Aspirin, gauze bandages, first aid kits, wound care  
Electronics - Chargers, power banks, SD cards  
Toiletries - Soap, feminine products, hair care

OTHER WAYS TO DONATE

The Ukrainian National Home-NJ has set up an Amazon Wish list which updates daily based on the changing needs in Ukraine. These most vital items can be purchased directly from the list for your convenience.

[amazon.com/registriescustom/22F8QZEFAQECZ/guest-view](https://amazon.com/registriescustom/22F8QZEFAQECZ/guest-view)



# Florida Governor Ron DeSantis signs “Don’t Say Gay” Bill

By Madhavi Steinert  
Senior Reporter

Florida’s “Don’t Say Gay” bill prevents teachers in grades K-8 from teaching anything related to gender and sexual orientation saying such lessons are, “not age-appropriate or developmentally appropriate for students in accordance with state standards.”

The “Parental Rights in Education” bill has been passed by the state Senate and House and is expected to be signed into law by Governor Ron DeSantis who has intimated his support without making a formal declaration.

Republican Florida State Representative Joe Harding said in an ABC news podcast, “What we’re preventing is a school district deciding they’re going to create a curriculum to insert themselves.” The central argument of those supporting the bill is that children are being subjected to a liberal political agenda.

Ginny Gentles, a political pundit and former state and federal education policy leader, told Real Clear Education, “... children are vulnerable to classroom materials created to fulfill a political agenda, rather than provide academically useful and age-appropriate instruction.”

President Joe Biden tweeted a denouncement of the bill saying he wanted those impacted by it, “to know that you are loved and accepted just as you are.”

Though New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy hasn’t directly denounced the bill, he has continued to show his commitment to LGBTQ rights as he codified gay marriage into state law earlier this year.

Mercer County Community College’s LGBTQ+ group, Rainbow Alliance, has held discussions about the bill being passed.

President Christian Perez weighed both sides of the bill, saying, “I can understand in part why it would be passed, but I can’t overlook that it would be a foundation used for something bigger and more impactful and more dangerous.”

Vice President Will Zottman agreed, saying, “I see the gray area when it comes to Kindergarten, but I remember having health classes in second and third grade where kids would have questions. It should be up to educators to answer them and not shun them.”

# Social justice center gets a new home

## Bayard Rustin Center for Social Justice supports everyone



PHOTO | ASHLEY PENG

Presenters were able to connect remotely at the Bayard Rustin Center for Social Justice Coming Out Party & Open House on March 17.

By Ashley Peng  
Senior Reporter

Gabriella Biello was a freshman at Allentown High School when she was facing bullying after coming out as gay. Despite contacting the administration, the school did nothing to help.

Biello says, “I was so ashamed of who I was. I was determined to hide. I tried becoming as small as possible until I could graduate.”

That’s when she found the Bayard Rustin Center for Social Justice (BRCSJ), a non-profit organization that provides, “Advocacy in all arenas for those who are marginalized, forgotten, bullied or otherwise underserved by the present systems in place,” according to their website.

The center was founded in 2018 by Robt Seda-Schrieber, who began his career as a middle school art teacher. Following many achievements, like establishing one of the first Gay-Straight Alliances in middle school, he was named National Education Association Social Activist of the Year in 2017.

Seda-Schreiber’s next step was to create the BRCSJ. Not only is he the founder, he is also the Chief Activist of the organization.

The BRCSJ is named after civil rights activist Bayard Rustin, an openly gay, Black man who died in 1987. He worked behind the scenes to organize the March on Washington during the Civil Rights movement in the 60s.

Seda-Schreiber says, “Bayard Rustin has always been a hero of mine...Because of who he was and who he loved, he was never really acknowledged for all the incredible, great and good work he did.”

Seda-Schreiber contacted Rustin’s partner Walter Naegle to ask for permission to use Rustin’s name for the organization, and he approved.

On March 19, 2022, the BRCSJ opened their new home at 12 Stockton Street in Princeton following the loss of their



PHOTO | ASHLEY PENG

ABOVE: Rustin Center for Social Justice Open House attendees Frank Mahood and Chet Kabara.

“We are on a path of growth to try and connect with more centers around the country, and with any luck we will have Bayard Rustin Centers in all states, and saying ‘Hey, you’re always welcome here. You always have a family and a community here.’”  
-Erin Worrell, BRCSJ Board President

original space during the pandemic. They called it the: *Coming Out Party & Open House to Welcome (Back) our Community!*

The new space allows for hybrid events, marrying their online viewership with their local community.

Erin Worrell, BRCSJ Board President said, “Being able to do our events hybrid that way lets us not lose the audience and the community we’ve built.”

During the pandemic, BRCSJ created their online show the “Social Justice Power Hour.” It live-streamed on Facebook every weeknight. Their viewership came from all over the U.S. and internationally as well.

By accommodating more people, the BRCSJ is able to not only host larger events but also provide services to more people. For Biello, the center helped her find a lawyer who took on her case pro bono and won it.

“I was a broken child when I met Robt, but now I am strong, confident and a proud young woman,” said Biello at



PHOTO | ASHLEY PENG

ABOVE: Robt Seda-Schrieber, founder of the Bayard Rustin Center for Social Justice hosts the Coming Out Party & Open House to Welcome (Back) our Community! on March 17 in Princeton.

house event, said, “The more safe spaces we have here in Princeton, the better we are as a community, the better it is for everybody”

Since its founding, the BRCSJ, which has received recognition from former President Obama and Seda-Schrieber has been recognized for his efforts, including receiving a PROUD Human Rights Advocacy Award from Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital in 2021.

The center has hosted and supported numerous LG-BTQ+ pride events, vigils for Black Lives Matter, story hours for children, and built connections and alliances with schools and other organizations and community groups around the state. The BRCSJ has also helped organize the Families Belong Together rally in support of immigrant families.

“Some people are like ‘You spend weeks helping one kid,’ but you see the results of it. You see that it’s life-altering. What people may not realize is it may be one life, but that ripples out over and over, and again and again, and makes an exponential difference,” Seda-Schreiber says.

In the future, the BRCSJ hopes to expand, opening more centers. They have already partnered with the Akron AIDS Collaborative in Akron, Ohio.

Board President of the BRCSJ Erin Worrell says, “We are on a path of growth to try and connect with more centers around the country, and with any luck, we will have Bayard Rustin Centers in all states, and saying ‘Hey, you’re always welcome here. You always have a family and a community here.’”

the open house event.

Biello is now a high school junior, an executive member of her school’s student government, a student journalist, president of her school’s robotics club and the Youth Outreach Liaison at the BRCSJ. Her mother, Natalie Biello, is the Birth Justice Coordinator and Community Organizer at BRCSJ. She is also a doula, a person trained to give guidance and support to pregnant women. She helps mothers, especially mothers of color, to ensure they are being supported and treated fairly by medical professionals during and after their pregnancy.

Natalie Biello says, “It’s really just about education and support. Making sure that they’re being heard by their doctors and midwives.”

Along with advocacy, the BRCSJ works with various businesses and schools to educate everyone on inclusivity and diversity. Their physical space provides a shelter for those who need a place to go to. Mark Freda, Mayor of Princeton, who attended the open





PHOTO | BRUNA CAMARA

*"The way my hair grows out of my head is who I am, and reflects who I am. So when we talk about standards of professionalism, I ask 'whose standards are they?'"*

- Dr. Yannick Ladson - Director of the Counseling Center

By McKenna Miller  
Senior Reporter

# The

# C.R.O.W.N. Act

## Federal law aims to

First-year Digital Film student, Nairobi Williams, wears her hair in a natural Black style without extension hair or chemical relaxers to change its texture.

"Growing up, my grandma [put a chemical relaxer] into my sister's hair and her hair suffered really badly. And I have a sensitive scalp so my mom, she was never the type of person to put anything bad in my hair. But, when I started going to the hair salons and stuff like that, that's when they started putting relaxers in my hair secretly and that's when my hair fell out and stuff like that," says Williams.

Williams who attended Lord Stirling Elementary School in New Brunswick, says, "I went to a predominantly white elementary school. So it's like I don't know, I would always have my hair flat ironed."

The pressure on Black people, especially women, to adopt unnatural hairstyles is because of the called "eurocentric beauty standard," and the pressure goes back to the pre-colonial times of this country. Black people who didn't conform to racist hair standards often found themselves discriminated against.

The C.R.O.W.N

ACT, a bill to protect against textured hair discrimination at the federal level, was reintroduced by New Jersey Representative Bonnie Watson Coleman but was initially blocked by two republicans in the House of Representatives despite passing unanimously through a voice vote in 2020.

The hair discrimination bill was passed in the House and currently waits to see it's fate in the Senate. New Jersey is one of the many states who have passed variations of the bill but the goal in Congress is to make nationwide protection for every black individual.

The bill stands for, "Creating A Respectful Open World for Natural Hair" and was created to protect black individuals from being discriminated against based on hair texture and protective hairstyles in any environment.

Protective hairstyles are ones that protect Black hair in its natural state from breaking off. These styles can include box braids, twists, locs, dreads, cornrows, wigs and weaves.

Representative Coleman said in an interview, "The C.R.O.W.N act expands the definition of unlawful discrimination to

include prohibition against denying a person access to a job, or the public accommodations, or the federally funded programs because your hair is either styled in a certain way or is just worn in a certain way or representative of a certain way that is closely associated with being Black."

The New Jersey version of the bill was passed after an outcry following a 2018 incident, where high school wrestler, Andrew Johnson, was forced to cut his dreadlocks to participate in a wrestling match. Johnson was told he had 90 seconds to decide and if he refused to cut his dreads, he would have to forfeit the match, so they were cut off by a trainer as he stood at the side of the gymnasium.

Two 15-year old sisters, Deanne and Mya Cook, from a charter school in Massachusetts, originally inspired the push for a C.R.O.W.N act. The girls wore their hair in braids with extensions and were threatened with suspension, faced hours of detention, and were banned from participating in track and softball and even the prom if they did not remove their hair. The school told them that their hair violated their "Hair-Make Up Policy."



PHOTO | BRUNA CAMARA

*"I used to straighten my hair for all of seventh grade to the point where I actually ended up damaging it. It was burnt and the hair ties I used caused it to break and along with the stress it ended up falling out a lot."*

- Benny Tirado, Theater major



PHOTO | ELIJAH PARKMAN-WILLIAMS

*"My parents had a big part in making me feel not ashamed for my hair because my mom would tell me how beautiful she thought it was. But, I would still be wanting to have my hair straightened, just to match with my friends not ever being ashamed of it but you want to relate to the people you are around."*

Jay Bolling, Education major



PHOTO | ELIJAH PARKMAN-WILLIAMS

*"Growing up, my grandma [put a chemical relaxer] into my sister's hair and her hair suffered really bad. And I have a sensitive scalp so my mom, she was never the type of person to put anything bad in my hair. But, when I started going to the hair salons and stuff like that, that's when they started putting relaxers in my hair secretly and that's when my hair fell out and stuff like that."*

-Nairobi Williams, Digital Film major



# goes to the Senate

## end hair discrimination

The young sisters pushed back against the school's discrimination and the Massachusetts attorney general eventually stepped in and ordered school officials to abandon the rule. The girls became activists supporting C.R.O.W.N bills in many states.

In addition to schools, the C.R.O.W.N Act will protect people against hair discrimination in the workforce.

According to the American Bar Association, research surrounding black hair discrimination found that "80 percent of African American women felt they needed to switch their hairstyle to align with more conservative standards to fit in at work."

According to a study conducted about the natural hair bias in employment by Christy Zhou Koval and Ashleigh Shelby Rosette, "We found that Black women with natural hairstyles were perceived to be less professional, less competent, and less likely to be recommended for a job interview than Black women with straightened hairstyles and White women with either curly or straight hairstyles."

In a famous 1981 workplace suit Renee Rogers, a Black flight attendant

for American Airlines sued her employers for discrimination against her based on her cornrows, a traditional style where hair is braided close to the scalp.

Rogers lost her case when the judge dismissed it saying her braids were not a reflection of her Black African heritage and her race but simply a style she adopted by watching white actor, Bo Derek, who had worn the appropriated hairstyle in a movie from the time.

The federal C.R.O.W.N Act, if passed, would work together with other employment discrimination laws that are now in place to protect Black people across the country.

Beyond employment and schooling, discrimination based on hair has an impact on the mental health of minorities.

Linda Terry, a licensed clinical psychologist says "Throughout our lives, we have received messages in the media, society, and from our own families about our hair texture. In short, the message warns us that if we want to be taken seriously in professional and educational spaces, we must subscribe to an ideal of beauty that centers on Whiteness and minimize qualities that are uniquely Black."

Briana Rouzard, a liberal arts student says that as a child "I would feel uncomfortable because I was having trouble with my hair for a very long time. Because my family did not accept the concept of natural hair, because that is not what they like. So I didn't have the freedom to do what I wanted."

If the C.R.O.W.N Act is passed in the Senate, where the lead sponsor is New Jersey senator Cory Booker, the bill will protect young and older black adults throughout the school as well as the work environment.

Jay Bolling, a second-year Mercer student and education major, at MCCC says " My parents had a big part in making me feel not ashamed of my hair because my mom would tell me how beautiful she thought it was. But, I would still be wanting to have my hair straightened, just to match with my friends not ever being ashamed of it but you want to relate to the people you are around."

Representative Coleman says "I can't predict what the Senate will do. I just pray that they find it within their heart and soul to do the right thing."



PHOTO | BRUNA CAMARA

Example of natural hair style.

- Majorie Lourenco - MCCC Campus visitor



PHOTO | BRUNA CAMARA

"For Black women, people are learning to break down another barrier. And it's just like now I don't have to worry about being told that a huge part of my identity that's determined by genetics and that I don't have control over is going to get in the way of my going on to pursue anything."

- Briana Rouzard, Liberal Arts major



PHOTO | BRUNA CAMARA

"I think my overall opinion is that it is unfortunate that there has to be a law made to protect something that we can't control. But I think that it is still good efforts being made."

- Angel Agyeman, Business Admin major



PHOTO | BRUNA CAMARA

Example of protective braided hair style.

- Doshia Brown - CEAS Case Manager at Anchor House





The sign at Howell Living History Farm on 70 Woodens Lane in Hopewell Township, New Jersey.



Assistant Farm Director Kevin Watson prepares to head out to the fields with Howell Farm

# Howell Living History Farm takes visitors back in time while teaching life-long skills

By Christopher Patti  
Reporter

In March of 1974, Mrs. Inez Howell wrote to Mercer County, donating her 126 acre farm in memory of her husband and requesting it be used to educate future generations.

Mrs. Howell wrote, “I am offering the farm as a gift to Mercer County in memory of Charley. To be used as a Living History Farm, where the way of living in its early days could not only be seen but actually tried by the public, especially children...A farm has always been a great place for exploring.”

Open every Saturday from 10am-4pm, the public can visit The Howell Living History Farm in Hopewell Township free of charge and experience a typical day on the farm in the time period of 1890-1910. A facility of the Mercer County Parks Commission, the farm is now 289 years old and has been active since 1733. Mrs. Howell’s letter would become a mission statement for its staff and volunteers.

Director of Howell Farm Peter Watson said, “She just thought that growing up on a farm gave her things, insights, and tools that made her life all the better and made her a better member of the community. She was very committed to the idea of

sharing our county’s rural history with people in the present and future and she just wanted a place where anybody could go and learn about the crops and the livestock and the life ways that were part of our county’s past.”

This vision of experiential learning called staff and volunteers to specialize in third person interpretation, dressing in historically accurate clothing and using period tools for tasks like spinning wool, maple sugaring, crop harvesting, saw milling and tree planting.

Assistant Director of Howell Living History Farm Kevin Watson said, “Some people would use the term reenactment to describe what they would do at say Colonial Williamsburg or a place that gets in character as historical figures. But what we’re doing is bringing that period to life but inviting members of the public to come and experience it rather than just watch it.”

Visitors can tour the area and take in the scenery or participate in events like getting behind a horse drawn plowshare or harvesting oats and learning how to make oatmeal.

Crop and Livestock Specialist Katelyn Pogue said, “Historically you would have been kind of a master of all trades. You would have known everything about any animal and you would have known how to make anything from scratch. That’s



Staff Member Johanna Swartzentruber explains the difference between dark and light honeycomb.



Crop and Livestock Specialist Katelyn Pogue leads horses back to the barn after plowing t





Farm horses.

one thing I really love about historic farming specifically and also being able to teach the public all those skills.”

Longtime volunteer and historian Larry Kidder said, “You can kind of make your own program based on a number of things the farm has put in place for you to choose from. You can get involved in some activity that’s going to teach you a skill that’s going to allow you to practice a skill, that’s going to allow introduce something to you you never heard of or thought of before and it’s going to be done in a way that is extremely friendly and relaxed...it’s more like visiting a family farm than visiting an institution.”

The family aspect is heavily present in the farm’s active community. Volunteer groups, like The Friends of Howell Farm, provide nearly 15,000 hours annually of donated volunteer time, including fundraisers for acquiring antique tools, buying a new cow or providing trade skills that repair and preserve equipment and structures.

Director of Howell Farm Peter Watson said, “It’s community spirit that leads members of the community to get involved...the expertise that they bring is spread out over many different areas that are all important to our operation. It just enables us to do a much better job of farming and research into the history and then presenting educa-

tion and experiential programs to visitors.”

During COVID, the Howell Living History Farm received the Excellence in Educational and Interpretive Programming award for their 2020 Share the Harvest Program, which provided food and produce to county shelters.

County Executive Brian Hughes said via email, “Howell Farm also produces crops to help feed Mercer County residents in need through local food banks and pantries, and the coronavirus pandemic made that role even more vital. The farm also provides eggs, whole wheat flour, cornmeal and oatmeal to food banks and pantries. I applaud the farm’s staff and volunteers for the tremendous work they’ve done and continue to do to support our community.”

This April, visitors can help plant potatoes, learn about plowing and harrowing and make feed for chickens and maybe even meet their baby chicks. Take part in any of these moments and you’ll get an idea of what Mrs. Howell meant.

Peter Watson adds, “Here’s a generous woman who wanted to give this farm so that people could experience things that would be important to them. And I feel like all of us who work here have that responsibility. And it’s a nice responsibility to have.”

—  
You can find more information about The Howell Living History Farm and its events at [howellfarm.org](http://howellfarm.org).

PHOTOGRAPHY | CHRISTOPHER PATTI



g the fields.



Program Specialist Margaret Quinn demonstrates how to load a spinning wheel.



Volunteer and historian Larry Kidder walks with his friend, retired Belgian breed horse, Chester.



A chicken keeps her egg warm in the Howell Farm coop.



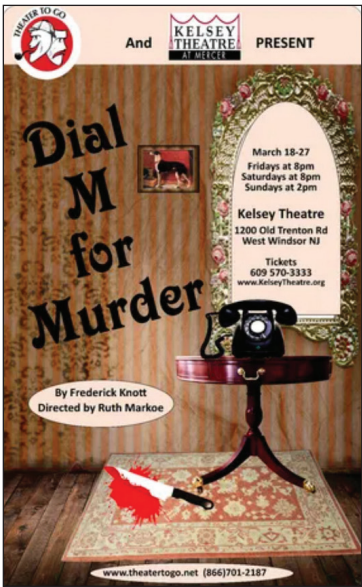
Staff Member Johanna Swartzentruber demonstrates how to milk a cow.



Lumberjack Elijah Rivers uses a crosscut saw with the help of visitors.



# “Dial M for Murder” at Kelsey served up a killer thriller



Poster for “Dial M for Murder”

By Willena Mah and  
Elijah Parkman-Williams  
Reporters

The psychological thriller “Dial M for Murder” was performed by the Theater To Go production company at MCCC’s Kelsey Theatre from March 18-27. The play, written by Frederick Knott, is based on the Alfred Hitchcock movie of the same name and offers a suspense-filled story about a jealous husband who plots the murder of his heiress wife after he finds out she has been having an affair. Overall it was a mysterious play that held many similarities to its movie counterpart.

The Kelsey production was directed by Ruth Markoe, who has been working in theater since 1992, and included key performers Sean Buckley as the husband Tony Wendice, Rachel Green as his wife Margot.

“Dial M for Murder” is a play that had everything from love, betrayal, drama, and even murder. The Theater to Go version featured a multitude of great talent.

Markoe said, “To make a good production you need



PHOTO | WILLENA MAH

Theater To Go cast of “Dial M for Murder,” March 27 at Kelsey Theatre at MCCC. From left: David Patterson, Paul Mansfield, Rachel Green, Pat Rounds and Sean Buckley.

good scripts, good directors and actors.”

The play follows Tony Wendice, a former tennis professional, who after discovering his wife’s affair plans her murder. Margot Wendice, Tony’s wife, lives as a wealthy social butterfly who has been secretly having an affair with crime writer Mark Halliday.

For the next year, Tony forms his master plan by blackmailing his former college friend Swann into committing the murder for her fortune. While undertaking this mission, the two men assume aliases: Captain Fisher and Captain Lesgate.

Soon after setting their scheme in motion, the plan goes awry. Margot instead kills Lesgate and she ends up charged with murder and placed on death row.

In a last-ditch effort to save his lover, Mark reaches out to Tony only to find the truth.

In the closing acts Mark and Chief Inspector Hubbard, the officer on the case, set up a trap to lure the true culprit. In the end, Tony was caught and sat down with Hubbard to enjoy one last drink.

Sean Buckley, who played Tony, said, “I feel like plays so often are either super serious.”



PHOTO | WILLENA MAH

Set of “Dial M for Murder,” March 27 at Kelsey Theatre at MCCC.

“It was a great cast. Easy to work with. They know how to take directions and they are just a truly outstanding cast.”

- Ruth Markoe, Theater to Go Director

He added, “I think it gives it a unique spirit that really doesn’t exist in most mysteries. Mysteries don’t always feel this cozy.”

Rachel Green, who played Margot, said, “It’s interesting just developing relationships with the other characters.”

The set itself was reminiscent of its cinematic counterpart. The center featured old furniture as if it was directly pulled out of the 1950s itself. In the background were shelves filled with vintage picture frames and silverware. Despite the attention to detail, the most notable of anything on set was the blazing fireplace that illuminated the set with contrasting visuals.

The audience was sure to never miss out as well. The auditorium was brimming with eyes fixed on the stage, hanging on every word of the talented actors.

When asked what her favorite scene was, a local named Christine said she liked “The scene they did when Lasget tried to kill Margo and he ended up getting killed.”

“Dial M for Murder” was an intense ride with fascinating mystery and even better actors.

Ruth Markoe said, “It was a great cast. Easy to work with. They know how to take directions and they are just a truly outstanding cast.”



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#DiagnosisFat: When doctors ignore real problems

By Kyle Goldware  
Senior Reporter

Melanie Avila, a first-year Criminal Justice Law Enforcement major, recalls an experience of being fat-shamed by her doctor when she was younger.

“When I was about 10 years old my doctor would call me overweight based on the BMI scale which is known to be flawed. He’d make very rude and smart comments about my weight every time I came in for a doctor’s visit,” Avila says.

This impacted her negatively and changed her view of going to the doctor.

Avila says, “Being exposed to those negative comments as a kid really harmed my perception of doctors. I hate going to get checkups and I absolutely hate the scale. It gives me really bad anxiety, I start sweating really hard and I get uncomfortable to the point of wanting to cry.”

Avila continues, “I would tweet about how bad my anxiety really gets when I’m told to go on the scale to really show people how bad the BMI scale can affect your life and the way you perceive yourself.”

This unfortunate reality is what many people around

the world have gone through similar experiences of mistreatment from doctors like Avila.

Daisy Fung, a Family Physician and Assistant Clinical Professor, brought the hashtag #DiagnosisFat back from 2014 in November 2021, showing a screenshot of an original Reddit post from someone who was fat shamed by a doctor.

The hashtag refers to the experiences of mostly women, whose health concerns weren’t taken seriously by doctors because they were overweight.

@MarisaKabas who tweeted under the #DiagnosisFat thread wrote, “I’m having surgery next week to remove a massive uterine fibroid that I self-diagnosed (from reading another woman’s missed fibroid story) after many, many years of doctors thinking my distended lower abdomen was just fat. Hard to explain the fury.”

@iainpaisley, another person who tweeted under the hashtag, wrote, “So many times I would be at the ER with my wife and I’d be jumping up and down waving my arms (metaphorically) saying ‘this isn’t right, this isn’t normal’ and because of my weight they would just be like, ‘yep that’s a bleeding belly button and oozing

pus what do you want me to do about it?’”

The testimonies of those from #DiagnosisFat show the lack of sensitivity and the dismissal of pain from doctors toward obese patients who seek medical help. Being harassed to lose weight can be mentally scarring or even offensive, as Avila experienced.

Dr. Noah Schmuckler, Chief Physician, is a doctor from Riverside Urgent Care in Hamilton who shared the situations he’s seen frequently regarding weight bias.

“Patients will come to me and will say ‘I’ve had this pain for a long time and every time I see a doctor they say it’s just because you’re too fat,’” he explained.

According to NBC-News, a 2012 survey of almost 2,500 U.S. women found that 69% reported feeling stigmatized by their doctors and 52% endured recurring fat bias.

In surveys of primary care doctors, more than 50% report viewing patients who are obese as “awkward, unattractive, ugly and noncompliant.” Because of this, doctors tend to spend less time on obese patients.

Dr. Schmuckler says of weight bias, “The sad thing is that because there’s a grain of

truth to that in that being overweight does make you more likely to have chronic pain for a variety of reasons, you’re missing an opportunity to find out what’s going on and really helping the patient get a better understanding of what’s causing their symptoms.”

Other Mercer students shared their similar experiences about going to the doctor’s office.

Brandon Rodriguez, a first-year Gaming Design major, says, “It wasn’t in a mean way, I was just constantly told to be aware of my weight because I reached certain stages of diabetes at a young age.”

Frances Kumagutu, a second-year Nursing major, says, “I was told by my doctor I should lose some weight due to my height and I thought I didn’t gain that much for her to tell me this. I was a little bit shocked about that, but I guess I have to be a certain weight that the doctor considers ok for me”

As weight bias continues to shadow doctor’s visits, patients become more reluctant to treat legitimate health concerns in fear they would be told they are just fat. Mercer’s Nursing Department staff shared their perspective on the situation.

Radhika Jaisihma, a

Nursing Specialist at MCCC, says, “Weight is one of the big things because being obese can cause a lot of problems, but there are ways you can express it to a patient. Like, you can be in a positive way, like tell them these are the risk factors.”

Elizabeth Mizerek, Director of Nursing and Diversity Equity and Inclusion Committee member says, “I think it’s very important when dealing with anyone to ensure that we’re reviewing them as a whole person and not focusing on just one element of their experience.”

She adds, “There’s a lot of assumptions that tend to be made by all healthcare providers that the person who is morbidly obese is lazy.”

#DiagnosisFat revived the conversation surrounding weight bias and doctors’ assumptions about their patients based on their appearance, an experience many Mercer students and others around the world face.

Dr. Schmuckler says, “There’s an old saying: Honesty without compassion is brutality. A person who is overweight probably knows that they’re overweight, so you’re not really helping them by pointing it out.”

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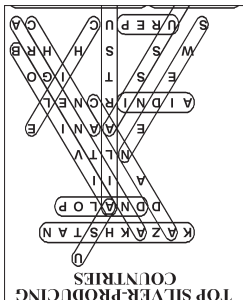
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Q P N X E L S K T I H I G O F  
E C E W B S Z Y S W H V H R B  
U M S S U R E P U C R Q P C A  
Y E K R U T A L A M E T A U G

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions forward, backward, up, down and diagonally

Argentina	Chile	Kazakhstan	Sweden
Australia	China	Peru	Turkey
Bolivia	Guatemala	Poland	U.S.A.
Canada	India	Russia	

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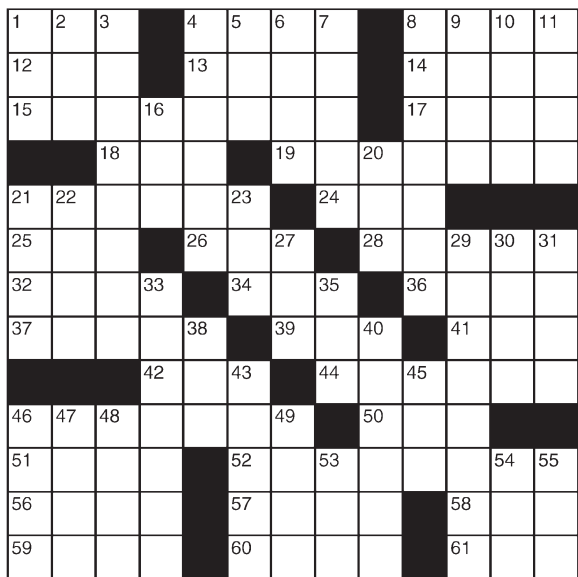


King Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Light touch  
4 Ducks' home  
8 Creche trio  
12 Swelled head  
13 Acknowledge  
14 Touch  
15 Its capital is Gaborone  
17 Give a darn  
18 Massive weight  
19 Mistake in print  
21 Bouquet component  
24 Online help page  
25 CD- —  
26 Badly lit  
28 Ancient African kingdom

- 32 Help surreptitiously  
34 "— Town"  
36 Billions of years  
37 Now  
39 Oft-tattooed word  
41 Placekicker's pride  
42 Dylan or Dole  
44 Potassium source  
46 Set free  
50 Can material  
51 Off base  
52 Form of food poisoning



- 6 Zilch  
7 Happy, for one  
8 Rhesus monkey  
9 Blind as —  
10 Mentor  
11 Thing  
16 Boar's mate  
20 Skedaddled  
21 "Animal House" group  
22 See 23-Down  
23 With 2-Down, John Wayne movie  
27 Silent  
29 Gregor Mendel, e.g.  
30 Part of the loop  
31 Cruising  
33 Arranged in rows and columns  
35 Plagiarize  
38 — Kippur  
40 Ripe  
43 Sacred text  
45 Zero  
46 Put together  
47 Vacationing  
48 Protuberance  
49 Labor  
53 Bill  
54 Seek damages  
55 Biz deg.

DOWN

- 1 Newcomer to society  
2 Past  
3 Reached the nadir, with "out"  
4 Hocked  
5 Eggs

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GO FIGURE! by Linda Thistle

The idea of Go Figure is to arrive at the figures given at the bottom and right-hand columns of the diagram by following the arithmetic signs in the order they are given (that is, from left to right and top to bottom). Use only the numbers below the diagram to complete its blank squares and use each of the nine numbers only once.

DIFFICULTY: ★★

★ Moderate ★★ Difficult  
★★★ GO FIGURE!

	x		+		22			
x		x		÷				
	x		+		33			
+		-		+				
	x		+		17			
28		18		16				
1	2	3	4	4	5	7	8	9

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GO FIGURE! by Linda Thistle

The idea of Go Figure is to arrive at the figures given at the bottom and right-hand columns of the diagram by following the arithmetic signs in the order they are given (that is, from left to right and top to bottom). Use only the numbers below the diagram to complete its blank squares and use each of the nine numbers only once.

DIFFICULTY: ★★★

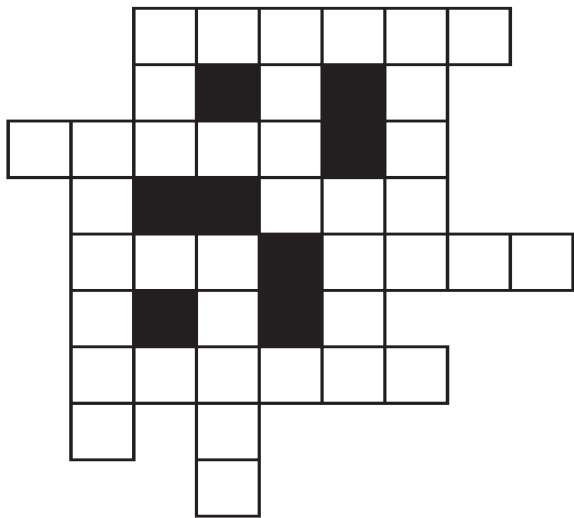
★ Moderate ★★ Difficult  
★★★ GO FIGURE!

	÷		+		11			
-		×		-				
	-		×		5			
×		-		÷				
	-		×		4			
6		3		2				
1	2	4	4	5	6	7	8	9

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- ♥ TPA  
♥ NOPGLI  
ENLEW  
♥ RAWP  
WISPRA  
♥ EAL  
♥ OLPO  
WARLB  
♥ EOW  
TUBPAR  
♥ TREOT  
♥ LAAG



Unscramble these twelve letter strings to form each into an ordinary word (ex. HAGNEC becomes CHANGE ). Prepare to use only ONE word from any marked ( ♥ ) letter string as each unscrambles into more than one word (ex. ♥ RATHE becomes HATER or EARTH or HEART ). Fit each string's word either across or down to knot all twelve strings together.

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## Giving students a VOICE

Liam Simonelli  
THE COLLEGE VOICE



"WHAT ELEPHANT IN THE ROOM?"

### MAIL CALL

What do you think? Do you agree with the opinions you see here? Do you like our coverage of College and local issues? Is there a topic you really want us to cover? DROP US A LINE AND LET US KNOW!



Do you see a  
**typo?**  
Join the staff and  
help us fix it!  
Meetings Mon + Thur  
12-1 on Zoom or in person!

NOTICE

MCCC LIBRARY

Need help with research papers? Check out Reference Chat online M-F 9-5.  
mccc.edu/student\_library.shtml

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The College VOICE is written and edited by students of Mercer County Community College and published every 3-4 weeks under the guidance of faculty advisers. The material printed in The College VOICE, be it articles, advertisements or opinion pieces, does not necessarily represent the views of the editors, the faculty, staff, administration or the Board of Trustees of Mercer County Community College.

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The College VOICE accepts letters to the editor. Submissions should be no more than 400 words. Send materials in electronic format to an editor or a media advisor, and include your name and status at Mercer (major and year, faculty or staff position or alumnx). Letters to the editor are posted online and run in print. For more information see our policy manual at: [www.mcccvoice.org/tools/policy-manual/](http://www.mcccvoice.org/tools/policy-manual/)

How to contact us:

e-mail: [johnsonh@mccc.edu](mailto:johnsonh@mccc.edu)  
phone: (609) 586-4800 ext. 3594  
write to: **The College VOICE**  
c/o Prof. Holly Johnson  
Mercer County College  
1200 Old Trenton Rd.  
West Windsor, NJ 08690





## VOICE STAFF

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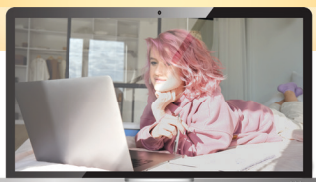
If you have a GPA of 3.5 or higher and have completed 12 credits or more of classes at the 100+ level you may be qualified for the Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society.

Members have access to lots of benefits including potential scholarships! Find out more by stopping by the PTK Student Club office in SC. Or contact Professor Huang at [huangj@mccc.edu](mailto:huangj@mccc.edu)

## CORRECTION

In the March 3 online edition of The VOICE, in the article, "MCCC lifts mask requirement starting Monday, March 7" Professor Holly Kaiser was quoted regarding masking obligations. This quote was taken out of context and the VOICE apologizes for the error.

Visit us online!



[mcccvoice.org](http://mcccvoice.org)

# Why don't young people want to work? Mistreatment from employers is the answer

## VIEWPOINTS



Maya Chell

You always hear the old people say it: "Young people simply don't want to work these days, they're lazy, and their parents hand everything to them."

First of all, we do work. Second of all, the reason we don't want to is because of mistreatment from employers.

In a survey of 30 MCCC students, 70% of these students replied that they have a part-time job while attending MCCC. 41% responded that they feel stressed working while attending college.

I am among these 70%, and also among the 41%.

According to the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development, over 90% of minimum wage jobs are struggling to find the staff to keep their businesses running. In most minimum wage paying places you can find a "help wanted" or "now hiring" sign on the front. Since so many people lost their jobs during the Covid-19 pandemic, why aren't people running to get new

ones?

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor and Statistics, "In 2020, 73.3 million workers aged 16 and older in the United States were paid at hourly rates, representing 55.5 percent of all wage and salary workers."

So, yeah, we're facing all the stress of being working adults even though we're barely of age ourselves.

When I was 17, my manager told me that I wasn't allowed to call out for family functions. Since I did call out for a family function, she decided to take my shifts away.

Katie Carter, a full-time Mercer student currently works 25 hours a week and is a former employee of Panera.

"I work because I need to pay for my car as well as school. I work for most of what I have, so working is important," Carter says.

For most students like Katie, they don't have a choice of whether or not they would like to work. With classes, homework and working enough hours for a decent paycheck, students also must deal with mistreatment in the workplace.

Carter says of her time at Panera, "After a while they started treating me pretty poorly. Their starting wage went up to \$13 an hour and I was at \$12.75. But, I was a trainer and I had the experience so I knew this was not okay, or respectful. I asked them countless times about it, and they told me within a month I would get a raise. Three months later, nothing. I

*"Their starting wage went up to \$13 an hour and I was at \$12.75...I asked them countless times about it, and they told me within a month I would get a raise. Three months later, nothing. I was still training kids that got paid more than me."*

**-Katie Carter, MCCC Student**

was still training kids that got paid more than me."

Carter is not alone in her frustrations.

Gia Angelo described the struggle of working and keeping her grades up by saying, "There's times where I don't get home until 10 o'clock, and then I have homework to finish. I had started before work and then I had to finish it late, and then I didn't get enough sleep."

She added, "While I'm at work all I'm thinking about is what I have to do at home. It makes me feel like shit."

On top of this, Angelo also faced mistreatment at her former job at Brothers Pizza as a waitress.

She says, "I made a small mistake one time and [the manager] pulled me aside but continued to yell at me in front of everybody, saying 'What the fuck is wrong with you?!' in front of my coworkers and tables."

There is no reason why grown adults should be treating people years and years younger than them this way. Shouldn't they know better?

According to rand.org, nearly 1 in 5 American workers face some type of harassment

at their place of work. This includes verbal abuse, sexual assault, threats and behavior from the employer to humiliate the employee. It is undoubtedly worse for younger workers who are treated as the lowest of the low.

Harrison Johnson, who was a part-time Mercer student says, "[The manager at my job] told me I wasn't doing my job while four other bussers were in the back smoking, and if I don't pick up the pace I [couldn't] move up to serving."

Mistreatment at low-wage jobs can affect a student's mental health, along with their ability to succeed in school. Fortunately, MCCC offers a few resources.

If a student is struggling, they can access counseling through MCCC by going to [mccc.edu](http://mccc.edu), clicking on "students," then "student services" and then "counseling."

When the mistreatment from employers ends, they will begin to see more applications coming in.

Students don't get paid enough to compromise their mental health and overall well-being.

# Top 5 Grammy awards performances of 2022

By Madhavi Steinert  
Senior Reporter

This year's Grammys came with the usual glitz and glamor, Jack Antonoff in Chanel, Doja Cat in Versace. The highlights were the musical performances.

Olivia Rodrigo is an incredible songwriter; the lead single 'Driver's License' took the world by storm in January 2021. However, her vocals during the Grammys fell flat during the verses, and her stage presence was too calm for such a powerhouse of a story.

In fourth place is BTS. Their performance was smooth like butter indeed. The only thing keeping them there is how absolutely sick I am of their song. That being said, I loved

the flirty moment shared between member V and Rodrigo. Do I smell a future duet? Some fans hope so, but I don't know if I do.

Brothers Osborne take third on my list, they closed out the ceremony with their fast-paced, hard-hitting, 'Dead Man's Curve.' The energy between brothers John and TJ vamped up not only the live audience but the Grammy viewership as well.

I found myself rocking out with H.E.R. and Lady Gaga. John Osborne opened absolutely shredding on the guitar, maintaining the bad-assery throughout. Though I'm not an avid country fan, I love this duo's discography, and I was ecstatic to see their live rendition of the song.

Lil Nas X's medley of hits takes the second place crown of 2022 Grammys performances. Watching him dance and sing through his greatest songs felt like the arc of his career thus far, and the performance felt all-encompassing, not to mention his incredible backup dancers.

Jack Harlow's cameo had to be my favorite part of the performance, omitting the dirtier lyrics of the song while still keeping the sex appeal of his verse. Do I have a crush on him? Maybe. Does that affect the placement of this performance on my list? Also maybe. However, objectively, their collaboration was over-the-top in the best way. They earned my silver medal.

Coming in first place

is Billie Eilish's title track of her second album, 'Happier Than Ever.' Eilish might've been snubbed by the Recording Academy, but she certainly brought her A-game for her performance.

The set was incredible, reflecting the imagery seen in her music video, even following the transition from cute lullaby to hard-core punk in the song's composition. Watching her rock out with her brother, Finneas, is always a pleasure. The best part, though? Her vocals. Stronger than ever, she did her title track justice, and with a smile on her face.

Each year's Grammy performances are inspiring and make every musician want to improve at their craft.

## FAST JLAW FACT

To be ethical, newspapers run corrections when they get something wrong. If they get a whole lot of things wrong they may retract a story entirely.

## STRANGE BUT TRUE

The VOICE has had a hard time finding good sports reporters over the years, despite winning many awards for sports writing and photography.

## JOURNO LINGO

Sometimes you see boxes with larger text (like the blue one on of this page) embedded in an article. These are called "pull outs" or "pull quotes."

## GREAT NEWS

On April 9, The College VOICE attended the New Jersey Press Foundation annual conference and received 18 NJPF awards for their work.



ADVICE - ASK THE VOICE



Dear VOICE,  
I hear the college president is leaving. If even the captain is jumping ship, should I be worried?  
-Not Sure about Next Year

Dear Not Sure,  
This is Mercer. You should always be worried.  
-The VOICE

Dear VOICE,  
I hear tuition is going up but I can barely afford gas. Is there some other way to get to school?  
-Breakdown Lane

Dear Breakdown,  
I hear the folks in the

aviation club are nice. We suggest asking one out on a date and going from there.  
-The VOICE

Dear VOICE,  
I keep running into students who look like they haven't slept in three months. They are freaking me out with their dead eyes and trembling hands. Are they zombies? What gives?  
-Creeped Out

Dear Creeped Out,  
Those are just VOICE staff members and you are correct, the have not slept in three months. Do not be afraid. Just move slowly away.  
-The VOICE.

Dear VOICE,  
I'm signing up for summer classes. How many can I take to get ahead without failing the all?  
-Accelerated

Dear Accelerated,  
You are playing a dangerous game. Summer classes are the same number of hours as regular ones so you have to sit through lectures that are three hours long. Save your strength for fall.  
-The VOICE

Dear VOICE,  
There is a nervous laughter in one of my classes. I've been putting up with his nonsense for eight weeks. How do I get him to stop.  
-Ears Dying

Dear Ears,  
These are among the most challenging classmates. Tell them very boring stories. It may buy you some peace and quiet.  
- The VOICE

NOTE: THIS FEATURE IS FOR ENTERTAINMENT ONLY. ANY RESEMBLANCE TO ACTUAL ADVICE IS ACCIDENTAL.

HOROSCOPES



Capricorn  
Dec. 22 - Jan. 19

This month will be a steady flow of work to get you through the month. Make sure to plan accordingly to incorporate self-care into your busy schedule to avoid burnout. You'll thank yourself later!



Aquarius  
Jan. 20 - Feb. 18

Aquarius now is the time for you to buckle down and make those deadlines. A stroke of genius could hit you this month, keep your mind open for it.



Pisces  
Feb. 19 - Mar. 20

You have Jupiter on your side all year! Keep your eyes on the prize Pisces, because it's finally time to cash in on the good karma you've had coming to you.



Aries  
Mar. 21 - Apr. 19

This month will start out exactly as you hoped it would! You will feel energized and ready to put action behind your words. Keep it up Aries!



Taurus  
Apr. 20 - May 20

Taurus, any obstacles you may encounter in the early parts of this month will lead to you speaking up about your needs. Now is the time to speak up and make the changes necessary.



Gemini  
May 21 - Jun. 20

Gemini this month is going to feel like a roller-coaster ride for you! Take some time for yourself, after all you deserve it.



Cancer  
Jun. 21 - Jul. 22

You have been amid a transformation Cancer! Make sure to enjoy yourself this month, but more importantly be sure to be true to yourself. Change is only desirable if it's positive. Think long-term.



Leo  
Jul. 23 - Aug. 22

This month is a make or break for you Leo. You've always been a leader; this month will make you prove it. Be ready.



Virgo  
Aug. 23 - Sept. 22

Virgo this month is going to start out feeling overwhelming. By the 3rd week in April, you will get a slight boost in confidence. Don't fear Virgo, the best is yet to come.



Libra  
Sept. 23 - Oct. 22

This month is going to be an emotional one. Stay positive and expect the unexpected this month, Libra.



Scorpio  
Oct. 23 - Nov. 21

Scorpio this month you may find yourself keeping your progress on the low. This is exactly what you should be doing right now. Keep up the good work, you're inspiring the people around you.



Sagittarius  
Nov. 22 - Dec. 21

You've been busy Sagittarius! Whatever projects you started in March will likely end before the month of April is over. Once you finish this project, get out and spend some time with friends. They miss you!

Just Like Cats & Dogs

by Dave T. Phipps



SUDOKU

6				2		7		
		5	3		1		2	
	8		5					4
1				3			5	8
		9	6			2		
	5				7			9
		1	8					3
8		4			5		7	
	2			4		8		

Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each small 9-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.

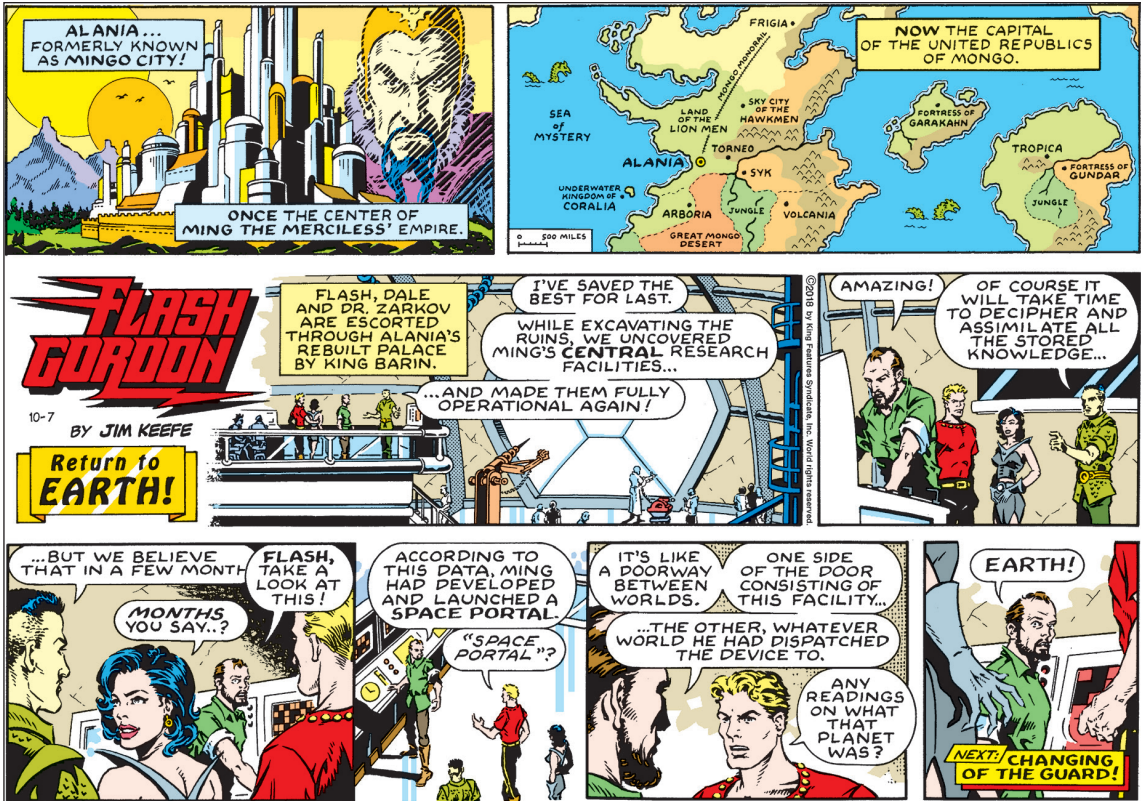
DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦

♦ Moderate ♦♦ Challenging  
♦♦♦ HOO BOY!

1	6	8	3	4	7	9	2	5
2	7	9	5	6	1	4	3	8
3	4	5	2	9	8	1	6	7
6	9	3	7	1	4	8	5	2
7	1	2	8	5	9	6	4	3
8	5	4	6	3	2	7	9	1
4	3	1	9	7	5	2	8	6
9	2	6	1	8	3	5	7	4
5	8	7	2	4	6	3	1	9

Answer

FLASH GORDON



GET FUZZY

