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Janean L Watkins

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Independent

NORTHEASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

Tuesday, September 27, 2011

www.neiuindependent.com

Vol. 29 Issue 3

Albany Park Community Center

By Lluvia Carrisoza - Visual Media Editor

The Albany Park Community Center (APCC) is a nonprofit organization that serves Albany Park residents. With its three locations, APCC is able to serve about 9,000 residents per year. The programs provided are separated into three categories: children and youth development, adult education programs and community development programs.

The APCC was incorporated on Sept. 24, 1975 to serve the diverse population of the Albany Park neighborhood. APCC receives oversight from a volunteer board of directors. The center opened as a response to the growing cultural changes of the neighborhood in the seventies. In the sixties Albany Park was a predominantly working to upper class Jewish neighborhood but now Albany Park is one of the most culturally diverse neighborhoods in the United States. The center's mission is to "educate and support members of the community as they determine their own path of growth and development, by providing diverse programs and services for individuals, families, groups and businesses." ... APCC's main location at 5121 N. Kimball Ave. offers community

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Photo by Lluvia Carrisoza

Meet Our New VP of Student Life

By R. Emilio Rivera - Senior Staff Writer

On Tuesday, Sept. 13, a group of student leaders met with Dr. Frank E. Ross, the new Vice President of Student Life, during a meet and greet held in the Golden Eagles. The meet and greet was organized in order to have an open dialogue between Ross and student leaders of various school organizations. It also served as an opportunity for Ross to listen to the concerns of NEIU students, as well as introduce his own ideas for the Division of Student Life.

Ross' experience boasts major involvement in student affairs. He comes to us from the University of North Texas at Dallas where he served as Associate Provost for Student Success

and Dean of Students, prior to that he served as Assistant Vice Chancellor for the Division of Student Life at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis for 11 years.

The meeting at Golden Eagle was only the first of many ways Ross plans to open the lines of communication with students. He also sat down with us at the Independent and shared some of his ideas and addressed some of the issues that arose at the Golden Eagle meet and greet.

He stressed that his main efforts at NEIU will be dedicated to enriching the lives of NEIU students in order to, "enhance student life and the quality of student life." One ...

Continued in News, page 2

What's Online

BOLD conference photos & video

What do YOU want in the new Independent?

<http://www.neiuindependent.com>

CPS Tax Hike –Smarter kids, sadder teachers?

By E. N. Haddad - Copy Editor

Hey, good news! Mayor Rahm Emanuel and the Chicago Public School (CPS) board are working hard to make Chicago kids smarter. They're starting by pushing hard for an extended school day that's 90 minutes longer and two extra weeks of school per year. This was not the first call for an extended school day, the most recent of which was a largely ignored health initiative calling for schools to extend their day by a half an hour to restore much-needed recess breaks. Chicago area schools have one of the shortest school days in the nation and both CPS and Mayor Emanuel seem to believe that having students' butts in chairs longer is the most important contributing factor toward educational excellence.

The standard of measurable education in Chicago public schools is continually falling behind that of other similarly-sized cities. Giving students an extra 90 minutes of education a day seems like a great way to close the gap. However, what will those students be doing with those extra 90 minutes? Learning how to take standardized tests more effectively? Generating a slightly higher testing average so that their school can earn more money toward someday reinstating the painfully absent art, music and physical education classes? Simply keep from

closing down and having to fire all of the teachers?

With the focus of CPS schools today being heavily skewed toward test-taking skills, piling more mind-numbingly inactive time onto young students may not result in any actual increase in learning. Which may further frustrate already over-stressed, under-exercised students. Learning by rote to regurgitate specific facts on demand does not increase overall comprehension. Unless the infrastructure is changed from one where standardized-testing is paramount to one where the actual content comprehension and utilization is assessed, those extra 90 minutes a day may not be such good news for Chicago area students. And when students are upset, parents will be too.

To pay for that extra 90 minutes of work the teachers will be doing, Chicago property taxes are increasing by 2.4 percent. While the CPS board was voting to increase property taxes, they were also voting to cancel the four percent annual raises teachers get to cover the rise in cost of living, reflect their hard work and dedication to education. Instead, the teachers' unions are being offered a two percent salary increase incentive if the teachers agree to work those 90 extra minutes. That's a net loss of two percent.

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The Independent is a public forum for the university and community around Northeastern Illinois University. The Independent is completely student run and receives no prior review of its content by anyone other than its student editors.

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The Editor-in-Chief is responsible for the content of the Independent, and views presented do not necessarily represent those of the administration, faculty or students.

The Independent is a member of the Illinois College Press Association and Associated Collegiate Press.

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“Meet our new VP”

Photo courtesy of Division of Student Life



...concept that he put into use before the meet and greet was the “good idea icon,” which is on the NEIU Division of Student Life website. The good idea icon is a way for all students, as well as faculty, staff and community members, to share their ideas and thoughts directly with Ross. The relationship between the everyday student and administration members is usually minimal and Ross wants to assure that there is no uneasiness on the part of any student who wants to express their concerns. So far, the icon has already received two dozen emails, which is a positive sign that the NEIU community wants to be heard. Most of all Ross said, “I want people to know that I don’t just sit up in the administration building and go to meetings all day. I want to actively work to enhance the quality of student life.” In the same realm the Division of Student Life has a Twitter and Facebook account that students and faculty are encouraged to use. Students will be informed as to what functions will be attended by the Division of Student Life.

One suggestion that came about at the meet and greet was the use of a face to face forum between Ross’ office and students, which he hopes to implement. The division still needs feedback from students as to when to hold the forums, yet Ross said he will be available for students whenever he is needed. The Division of Student Life

plans to see these forums held at least once a semester and will announce in a timely manner in order to draw a significant amount of attendees.

It is not easy to get everyone to share their thoughts and concerns. For this reason Ross has a few plans he hopes to put into place to aid students. Ross will be putting together an advisory board of students that will help answer questions and advise him as to what student’s need. Ross will be using what he calls a student pulse survey every few months to find out student concerns. He stressed that it is important for him to know what the student body is doing. “I want to find out from students what’s important to them. What programs and services on this campus and activities will help them be successful,” Ross said. Surveys usually seem to be something students fill out and never hear back on what purpose they served. Ross, however, is planning to make use of those surveys and ensure that students see an immediate response.

Another of Ross’ goals for this semester is a space audit for department offices. “It’s important to maximize the space to support students,” he said. This will be a way to ensure that the division of student life is organized in the most efficient way. There are offices dedicated to student life throughout the school, the space audit

will ensure that offices are put where they would be more effective and not secluded in basements.

One issue of interest that was brought up at the meet and greet was the idea of a “residential component” to the campus. NEIU is known as a commuter campus and to transition to offering a residential facility is significant. According to Ross, in order to have any kind of residential facility constructed or implemented there must be research conducted first. Any kind of residential facility will have to be in accordance to what is needed by students. A few aspects would have to be analyzed, including where students live, distance traveled to the campus, amount of time spent at the campus and how a residential component would enhance the quality of student life.

“The research is really clear that the more students are involved in their college experience the more they’re successful,” Ross said. In order to DO that, Ross believes it’s necessary to get students involved right from the beginning. The Division of Student Life will look into what all other departments do in order to fulfill the needs of new students, not only freshmen but transfer students as well. “You need to hit students right when they come to campus,” said Ross. Students will need to become aware of what activities are available to them.

In keeping with the NEIU motto “Learn in the city, lead in the world,” Ross plans to make sure that involvement is not only within the university but in enhancing civic engagement. One thing that attracted him to NEIU is the university’s commitment to issues of social justice and making a difference in the community. To encourage students, Ross plans to an acknowledgement of students from NEIU who are leading in their community, coming up in 2012. There are already students doing great things in the community, students he called our “best kept secrets,” who he believes should be acknowledged and celebrated.

Ross had a choice to make when joining the NEIU community and he said that the people at NEIU made his decision easy. “The people are absolutely amazing here,” and he wanted to become part of a faculty and staff that was committed to the success of their students, which NEIU exemplified.

For more information on the Division of Student Life visit <http://www.neiu.edu/~stulife/>. Students are ALSO encouraged to visit his Facebook page VP for Student Life Ross and follow him on Twitter @VP_Ross.

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Continued from front page “Albany Park”

...development programs such as business planning and development, CeaseFire, food pantry, parent education and workforce development. This location also offers adult education programs, among which are classes for English as a second language, GED courses, citizenship classes and adult literacy tutoring.

Under their children and youth development programs APCC has a child care facility located on the southwest corner of Kimball and Ainslie. Among the programs offered in this location is the Head Start full-day preschool, which provides a federally and state funded program accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children that runs on a full-year schedule. For a child to be eligible for this program his or her parents have to be either working full-time or be full-time students.

Right now there are job openings for development associate, educational coordinator and mental health/disabilities coordinator. If you are a student looking to get involved in the surrounding neighborhood, APCC also appreciates volunteers to help out with their many programs. This is a great opportunity to give back to the community around NEIU, as well as a chance to build your resume. For more information about job openings and volunteer opportunities visit <http://www.apcc-chgo.org/get-involved>.



Photo by Luvia Carrisoza

Albany Park Community Center - 5121 N. Kimball Ave.

The President's Pen NEIU Hip-Hop Organization

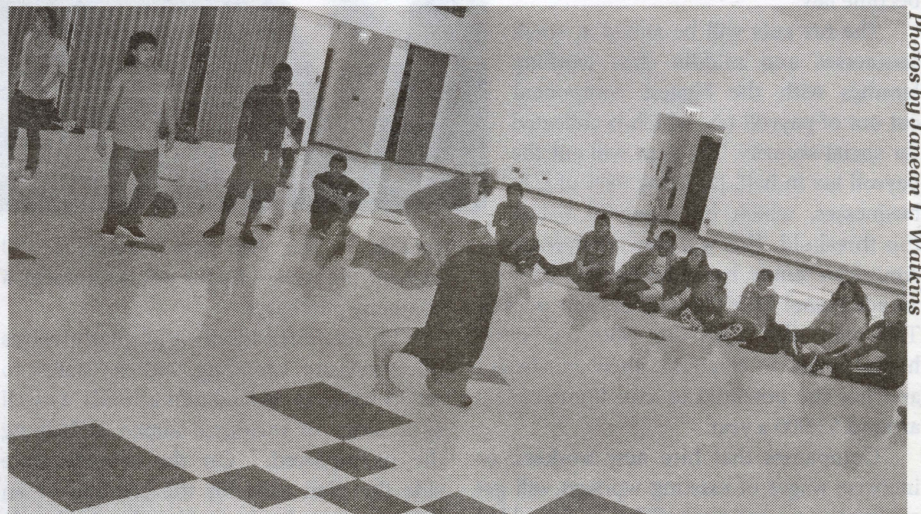
The NEIU Hip Hop Organization seeks to unify the Hip Hop community, on and off the NEIU campus, in order to experience and learn the proper application of Hip Hop's elements. We focus on Hip Hop as a culture that is experienced through its core elements of breaking, emceeing, graffiti art, deejaying and knowledge. In a society where Hip Hop is associated with excessive consumption and criminality, we are attempting to decriminalize Hip Hop's public image. Hip Hop is NOT rap music. Rap music is simply a product of the greater Hip Hop culture. As cultural pioneer KRS-ONE has stated, "Rap is something we do, Hip Hop is something we live."

We know firsthand that Hip Hop has ability to improve one's life situation and has remained an alternative to gang life here in Chicago and throughout the world. We continue in the tradition of our founders and pioneers, by working to preserve the cultural movement that is Hip Hop. We can be seen on campus conducting open mic for emcees and poets, open floors for breakers, concerts and Hip Hop conferences. This year we also helped sponsor a permission wall

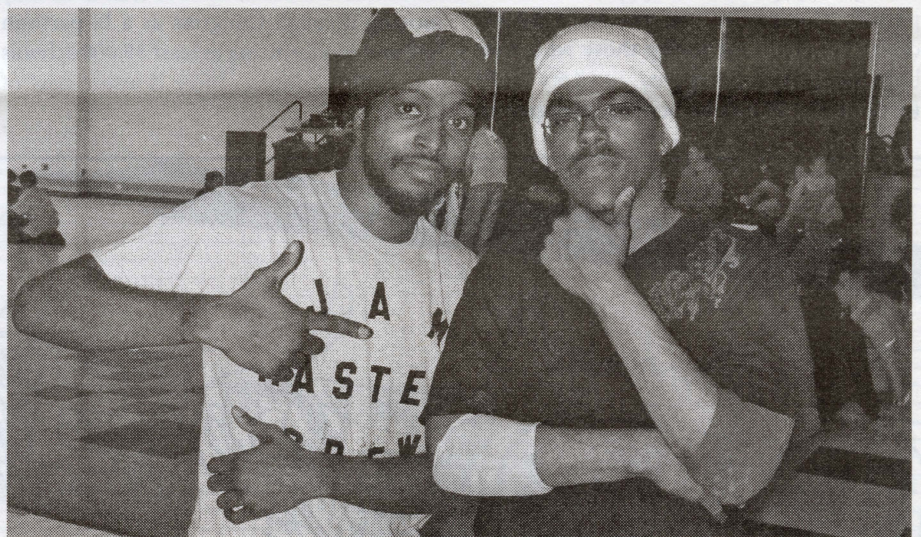
in Logan Square dedicated to the memory of young Chicago artists that have passed away in attempts to create their art. The wall is a safe place for artists to express themselves without the possibility of injury or arrest. If you attended U.N.I.T.Y. Culture Sept. 21-23, then you know how we get down. The conference featured dance and poetry workshops, presentations, film screenings and performances from artists, pioneers and activists from Chicago, New York, Atlanta and San Jose.

We are calling on all emcees, graffiti artists, breakers, deejays, and those interested in the proper application of these elements to join our organization. We need your input to insure we are creating programs and events that best serve the Hip Hop community on the NEIU campus. Let's build this organization into a force for the preservation of Hip Hop!

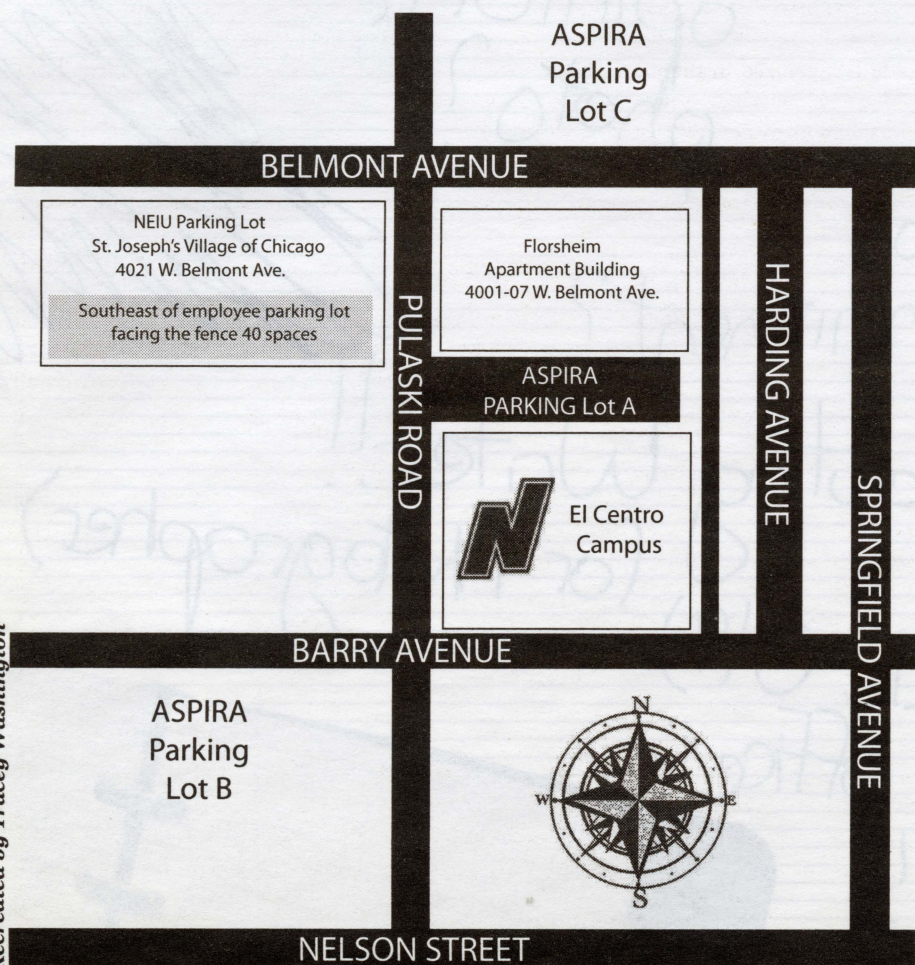
Peace and Respect,
Kris Mika AKA B-Leaver
President of NEIU Hip-Hop Organization
k-mika@neiu.edu
facebook: NEIU Hip-Hop Organization



Photos by Jamean L. Watkins



Winners of Round 1 B-Boy Contest, JamMaster Crew



Parking Near El Centro?

By Abimael Castro - Staff Writer

Do you hate it when you have to step out of a class at El Centro to check on the meter? What about when you are already late for class and have to drive around the block to find a parking space? It gets worse once the snow starts piling up. Students, and even faculty, can now forget the woes of the parking meter. There are reserved parking spaces for NEIU faculty, staff and students in three separate parking lots near El Centro campus. All you need to park in any of these lots is a NEIU Level II Parking Permit or a NEIU parking sticker, which are distributed in El Centro.

The ASPIRA Inc. of Illinois parking lots are located behind a BP gas station (located on Belmont and Pulaski) and a Citgo gas station (located on Pulaski and Barry). Students, faculty and staff can use these lots on Mon-Fri from 4pm-10pm and on Saturdays from 8am-5pm. These lots

are at a first come - first serve basis and any vehicles without valid NEIU permits will be ticketed or towed at the owner's expense.

There are also an additional 40 parking spaces in the St. Josephs Village parking lot on Mon- Fri from 5pm-10pm (faculty and staff starting at 3pm) and 20 spaces on Saturday's from 8am-5pm. Like the two parking lots behind the gas stations, you will need a NEIU Level II parking permit or a NEIU parking sticker. However, you can only park on the south end of the employee parking area facing the fence. If you park in any other parking space not facing the fence, you won't be able to find your car for it will be towed, and just like the two parking lots, it's a first come-first serve basis. So start using these parking lots if you are currently attending El Centro, because you are paying for them.

President Unveils Jobs Plan

By Jeff Dutton - News Editor

In a time where college graduates are struggling to find jobs, often times accepting employment that does not even require a college degree. In an unusual move by the Obama administration, President Obama presented a fully drafted copy of the Jobs Plan legislation to Congress to be voted upon. The plan utilizes a combination of tax cuts and spending in an effort to boost short-term employment, while jump-starting the economy towards long-term growth. In light of past debates regarding spending, Republicans and Democrats appeared unsupportive of the bill, which would be accompanied with a \$447 billion dollar price tag. So far no congressional action has been taken on the plan and it is yet to be seen if the plan or any part of it will become law.

The tax cuts will be aimed at small businesses and middle class working families with the biggest component cut out of payroll tax, which is collected for social security. The plan will cut the payroll tax in half, targeting 98% of U.S. businesses, which have payroll below this threshold. This will give the average American family, based on median income, an additional \$1,500 a year in their pocket. The plan also calls for allowing more homeowners to refinance their mortgages and has the potential to save homeowners around \$2,000 a year.

Companies that hire new workers, or increase wages of existing workers will get a complete payroll tax holiday on the added payroll. Companies can receive a \$4,000 dollar tax credit for hiring those who have been long term unemployed, and a tax credit for \$5,600 to \$9,600 for hiring unemployed

veterans. The plan also extends a 100 percent tax write-offs for any equipment a company purchases.

The spending side of the job plan involves infrastructure spending, aid to states to retain teachers and rebuild schools, as well as a series of measures aimed at helping the unemployed. On the infrastructure side the plan calls for the creation of an infrastructure bank, an idea that is already moving through Congress as a bi-partisan bill, and modernizing at least 35,000 schools across the country. There is also a part of

the plan title "Project Rebuild," which seeks to put people to work rehabilitating homes, businesses, and communities utilizing private capital, scaling land banks, and other public-private collaborations. The school revitalizations planned for in the bill would see new science labs, internet-ready classrooms, and other renovations at schools in both rural and urban areas across the country. Beyond supporting just capital projects at public schools the plan also includes funds to prevent the laying off of 280,000 teachers, as well as helping

to keep cops and firefighters on the street. The Jobs Plan proposes to aid displaced, temporary, and voluntary workers with on the job training, building on innovative state programs already in place from around the country. It also promotes state programs to aid the unemployed in starting their own businesses, and seeks to bar discrimination against unemployed workers and also to expand job opportunities for low-income youth and adults through a fund for subsidized employment, innovative training programs for seasonal and year round jobs.



Image courtesy of Google Images

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Around Campus

By Jeff Dutton - News Editor

Writing Workshops Scheduled for Fall Semester

The newly formed Learning Support Center, in tandem with TRIO Student Support Services, will be hosting five writing workshops during the fall semester. The workshops will cover a range of topics essential to good writing, a crucial skill regardless of your major and will run from the end of September through the month of October. The topics and meeting times of the workshops are:

- Getting Started/ Generating Ideas
 - o Date: Tuesday, Sept. 27 Time: 3:00 p.m.—3:50 p.m.
 Location: SU 103
- Drafting: Introduction, Body, Conclusion
 - o Date: Wednesday, Oct. 5 Time: 11:00 a.m.-11:50 a.m.
 Location: SU 103
- Revising Your Paper
 - o Date: Thursday, Oct. 13 Time: 3:00 p.m.-3:50 p.m.
 Location: LWH 2056
- Editing and Proofreading Techniques
 - o Date: Tuesday, Oct. 18 Time: 3:00 p.m.-3:50 p.m.
 Location: LWH 2056

- APA Style of Citation
 - o Date: Monday, Oct. 24 Time: 5:00 p.m.-5:50 p.m.
 Location: LWH 3046

For more information and registration call 773-442-4568 or 773-442-4971.

Math Department to Hold Advising Event

The Math Department, the Student Center for Scientific Engagement (SCSE) and the Department of Educational Inquiry and Curriculum Studies will be hosting an advising event for mathematics majors and those interested in becoming math majors on Thursday, Sept. 29 from 3:05 p.m. to 4:05 p.m. The event will take place in LWH 1001 and feature discussions with representatives of each of the hosting departments. Nancy Wrinkle, math advisor, will be on hand to discuss coursework requirements of the mathematics department for math majors, including requirements for both the applied science and secondary education tracks. Joe Hibdon of the SCSE will talk about the services SCSE can provide math majors in helping them prepare for a career in applied mathematics. Mike Bochnewych, secondary education advisor, and Tim Duggan, secondary education coordinator, will also be on hand to discuss the requirements of the College of Education for math majors.

Diversity Job Fair Coming to Alumni Hall

NEIU students, alumni and community members are invited to the Fall 2011 Diversity Community Job Fair being held Tuesday, Oct. 4 in Alumni Hall from 12:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. Attendees should dress professionally and bring their up-to-date resume. Employers will be hiring for full-time, part-time and internship positions. A list of participating employers can be found online at <http://www.collegecentral.com/neiu>.

Volunteer Fair in Village Square

Robert E. Bedford, Assistant Dean of Students, is hosting a Student Volunteer Fair on Thursday, Sept. 29 from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. in Village Square. According to a statement put out by the dean, the reasons students should consider volunteering can be "ranging from a desire to learn new skills, have fun or make a difference." For more information e-mail Assistant Dean of Students Bedford at R-Bedford@neiu.edu.

Department of Geography & Environmental Studies Announces Two New Courses for the Spring

Two new courses will be offered in the 2012 spring semester by the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies but they will not appear in the printed spring schedule released later this fall. The courses will be taught by the department's new faculty member, Dr. Melinda Merrick. The courses are:

- Conservation Psychology
 - Tuesdays and Thursdays, 4:15 p.m.-5:30 p.m.
 Students will explore the field of conservation psychology with an emphasis on the psychological characteristics of the relationship between humans and nature, such as environmental values, attitudes and behavior. Human cognition regarding

nature and human interaction with nature will be investigated in the context of promoting environmental responsibility. Open to all majors This course can be used as an elective in Environmental Studies and Psychology. Prerequisites: GES 150 or PSYC 100 or PSYC 200 (or instructor permission)

- Applied Resource Management
 - Mondays and Wednesdays, 4:15p.m.-5:30 p.m.
 Several social science dimensions of the practice of resource management will be covered, including basic concepts in environmental management, human-nature interactions, stakeholder interactions, restoration management issues, the resilience approach, public participation, community engagement, natural resource decision-making and conflict management. Open to all majors This course can be used as an elective in Environmental Studies. Prerequisites: GES 150 (or instructor permission)

For further information contact Dr. Merrick at m-merrick1@neiu.edu.

Students, Alumni, and Community Members, you are invited to the... Fall 2011 Diversity Community Job Fair

Date: Tuesday, October 4, 2011
Location: Alumni Hall, Student Union
Northeastern Illinois University
5500 N. St. Louis Avenue
Chicago, IL 60625
Time: 12:00 pm—3:00 pm

Be sure to dress professionally and bring resumes!

Check out more details, including parking information at:
<http://www.collegecentral.com/neiu-diversity>
(Employer search available online on Tuesday, September 20, 2011)

Employers will be hiring for full-time, part-time and internship positions.

Confirmed Organizations (as of 9/20/2011):

Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Chicago
Cogent Data Solutions
College of DuPage
Federal Aviation Administration
Girl Scouts of Greater Chicago and Northwest Indiana
Great Lakes Regional Small Business Transportation Resource Center
Intercall
J.B. Hunt Transport, Inc.
Jewel-Osco
Little City Foundation
L.S.L. Industries

Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago
Mutual of Omaha Financial Services
National Park Service—Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore
New England Financial—A MetLife Company
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Editorial

NEIU is the last stop on my decade's long journey towards an undergraduate degree. Like many of the NEIU students, I have had the pleasure of getting to know I am not your traditional fresh out high school 18 to 22 year old. There were stops at two universities, a community college and a listless period of working various jobs, prior to my arrival here. While my situation may not be that uncommon amongst the student population at NEIU, as it would be at a great number of other universities, one thing that is uncommon is this university. This is a special place. I can't help but feel it as I park my car in lot H and walk past the library and onto the quad. This is a special place.

Sure, it doesn't offer the traditional live-on-campus college experience that one would find at most other state universities. It may at times appear to some as a glorified community college and, let's be honest when one thinks of outstanding education and exceptional institutions of higher education NEIU doesn't immediately pop up as first on anyone's list. So, what? The specialness of a place is not created, nor destroyed, by some magazine's ranking, the perception of outsiders or the similarity to other places.

What makes NEIU special is the people. The diverse student body, despite differences of culture, race, class and seem to understand each other as student's who, through various life journeys, found their way to this place, our place. As someone fortunate enough to grow up in a diverse working class suburb, I have always been grateful for the richness of experience, the difference of view and the greater understanding that diversity has afforded me in my almost 30 years on this earth. In my old neighborhood, diversity was a matter of different races but we were all working class. At NEIU, that has expanded greatly. The upper-middle class suburban mom, the young individual paving their way out of a rough neighborhood, a member of the LGBT community, children of immigrants from around the globe, veterans of war, retirees, all sharing this one space, this special place. This is Northeastern Illinois University!

Beyond those who attend here seeking the knowledge and skills to reach their full potential in life, there is another element that adds to this place: the classroom here is limited to one department, I have had the chance to meet professors from others. We are fortunate not to be put upon with a faculty more concerned with their own research, writing and acclaim than our education. Our teachers are here to teach and they get it. They seem to empathize with where their students come from and what they are going through doing everything they can to promote our level of accomplishment and success.

Last year, during the fall semester, I found myself walking to the Student Union when some kid from behind a table I hadn't previously notice jumped up and asked, "Are you interested in writing for the school paper?" I thought to myself, I like to write, so I looked at him and replied, "Yeah, why not? Where do I go?" Now, here I am a year older, hopefully a little wiser and my hair a little thinner, and I find myself in the position of News Editor for YOUR NEIU Independent Newspaper.

As the News Editor my goal is simple: keep you informed. I have to be honest, all of the cool stuff like what concerts, presentations and theater performances are happening on or around campus, or what clubs' are hosting special events is reported on by my colleague the editor of Arts and Life. However, I get to keep you up to date on the slightly less glamorous stuff. I seek to keep you informed about what is going on with administrative plans, starting with a review and explanation of the university's Strategic Plan. I intend to inform you of the myriad of services and programs available to you to help you succeed in your college education, from the Student Computing Services to the Honors Program. My writers and I will keep you informed on what is happening in the realm of politics as it pertains to you the student, from changes in Pell Grants to cuts in higher education state funding. This year the news section will also make an effort to introduce you to the neighborhood that surrounds our campus, since you may find yourself commuting to this area for more than just class. It is my goal that readers of the Independent will constitute an informed student body in the know about what is happening on their campus, in the local neighborhood and the larger world beyond these university walls. My name is Jeff Dutton by the way, feel free to look me up, ask questions, debate philosophy or talk sports. I would say I am fairly approachable. I definitely don't bite.

Letters to the editor policy

Letters to the Editor must be signed with an address and telephone number for verification. Submissions must not exceed 250 words. Letters are subject to editing for space and style at editor's discretion. The editor reserves the right to omit any work submitted. Letters are on a first-come first-served basis.

Send letters to: Independent, E-049, 5500 N. St. Louis Ave., Chicago, IL. 60625 or to: theneiundependent@gmail.com

Opinions expressed by contributors are solely the views of the individual writer, not the NEIU Independent Production staff.

Book Price Hikes

By Mahmoud Aldugom - Contributor

As the prices of everyday items continue to rise, students are finding it harder to purchase the essentials they need before the school semester begins. The recent spike in book prices has not made this task any easier. This has left many students wondering why the book prices keep going up. More importantly it has also raised the question as to what can be done to stop the increase of prices.

Prices of new and used books have been steadily increasing through the years. With the economy getting rougher it is becoming difficult for students to purchase their books. Samir Mahtani, a business major who has been studying at NEIU for four years, expressed his disappointment in the book prices. "I paid 100 dollars less last year than I did for my books this year. On top of that, they are also not giving us enough book wavier money, so most of it is coming out of my pocket," he said. He also had questions about what can be done and where the prices come from. "I want to know how the prices are even decided. I mean, you would think it was the same as last year if it is the same book."

When asked where the prices of books come from, Patrick Olsen, head of marketing and development, said, "Books are based off the publisher prices. The publisher of the book decides what the price is and that is how we come up with the price to sell it." When asked about what the solution is

for keeping the prices down he said, "We are doing everything in our power to keep the prices as low as we can keep them."

There was not much clear information on any steps taken to keep the prices down and students are not happy about it at all. "I can't believe no one is doing anything about this. I know some of my friends who have not even gotten their books yet and are falling behind in school because of it," Mahtani said. The economy's getting tougher on consumer pockets and tempers are flaring from students who want to know the answer to why their books are more expensive this year.

Beronica Avila, psychology major, expressed her beliefs in the matter. Avila said, "Personally, I believe that the book store is putting up prices because they are losing business to the online community but it still doesn't make sense because the spike in prices only makes people want to go buy the books somewhere else."

There is no clear reason as to why the book prices keep on rising but it is not doing so well with the students. Many of them have had to use most of their savings to purchase the books they need for their classes. "I used all my money on these expensive books," Avila said. In the end, students just want to be able to purchase their books without the worry of having enough money.



Photo by Lucia Carrisoza

Continued from front page

CPS Tax Hike

By E. N. Haddad - Copy Editor

...pay for agreeing to work an extra 7.5 hours a week on top of their regular work day and the countless extra hours teachers put in before and after school tutoring and lesson-planning.

Plus, the CPS board still has a \$716 million budget deficit to close the gap on for 2012, so that means more teachers will lose their jobs, more schools will have to close or consolidate and class sizes will increase. The budget cuts and property value based tax inevitably hit the low-income aldermanic wards in Chicago the hardest, which means

fewer resources for those who need them most. So, those extra 90 minutes a day are still good news as long as you are not poor, a student, teacher, parent, homeowner or plan to be one of the aforementioned someday.

But look on the bright side. Kids will be in school an extra 90 minutes a day, allowing parents to work that much longer to pay off the extra \$84 average property tax increase per household on top of everything else they pay for.



President Obama's American Jobs Act – A Savior in the Making

By Sean E. Dotson - Staff Writer

President Barack Obama laid out his proposal to combat rising unemployment and a slowing economy in an address to both houses of Congress in Washington on Sept. 8. The American Jobs Act proposal calls for a mix of tax cuts and spending designed to jumpstart a stagnant job market, while providing opportunities for long-term infrastructure and education investment.

The American Jobs Act, if voted for by Congress, will focus on three key areas: tax cuts for businesses and workers, investment and aid to states and continued assistance for the unemployed. The Act, at an estimated cost of \$447 billion, will be paid for by closing certain tax loopholes and, in time, raising tax rates on the wealthiest Americans.

The plan offers several solutions: payroll tax cuts of up to \$1500 a year for workers as well as for employers, coupled with a tax holiday which temporarily reduces or eliminates a tax on wage increases and new hires. It also allows 100 percent deductions for businesses on new equipment and facilities for one year. Tax credits would go to businesses that hire people who have been unemployed six months or longer, with a larger credit for hiring a veteran.

The nation's schools, roads and bridges would also receive attention, channeling billions of dollars to modernize public schools, prevent lay-offs in education, as well as repair highways, airports and urban transportation systems. To help the unemployed, the act would extend unemployment benefits while providing funds for worker training programs and ex-

tra money to provide students and young people with summer and year-round job options. These recommendations are reasonable and necessary to increase employment, encourage investments in business operations and prepare this country for the challenges it will face.

Republicans are against it. They argue that extra spending will increase the deficit. Leaving aside President Obama's pledge to "completely pay for" the act, it is important to realize why spending during an economic downturn can be beneficial in the long-term. Since interest rates are set low during times of economic struggle, improvements to roads, bridges and schools, (which create more employment opportunities) can be made at much lower costs than in times of prosperity. Although these projects may be difficult to pay for in the short-term, in the long-term more money can be saved.

Look at it this way: we as students borrow at a low interest rate and spend the money on tuition, computers, supplies and living expenses. We spend now because the investment is worth it in the long run. The spending provisions in the American Jobs Act work on the same principle.

The resistance from Republicans is not one based on facts but on ideology and self-interest. They refuse to acknowledge any solution outside of deregulation and tax cuts.

Regulation and taxes do, of course, cut into company profits but it does not follow that freeing corporations from these restrictions will translate to better jobs and living conditions for workers. If, for instance, you live in Texas, you are statisti-

cally about 0.5percentage point more likely to have a job than those in the rest of the country. Gov. Rick Perry attributes those jobs to lower taxes and less environmental regulation.

There is a price to be paid for those extra jobs: Texas ranks first in the nation for total toxic pollutants released into the air and 46th for water quality. As a Texan, you are more likely to live in poverty, as Texas and the southern states nearest it lead the nation in poverty rates, 18.4 percent in 2010, compared to a national average of 15.1 percent. You may also have to do without health insurance, as Texas has the most uninsured workers, at 27.4 percent. If you have children, you should know that Gov. Perry has slashed 4 billion dollars from school funding, or about six percent of school district budgets.

The kind of low taxation and deregulation Gov. Perry and members of Congress demand is akin to what President Obama in his speech called a "race to the bottom for the cheapest labor and the worst environmental protections."

So, the American Jobs Act should be passed as is, without the compromises that defined the health care and debt ceiling debates. We can be sure a version of this bill will pass Congress and be signed into law but in our haste to help people find work we must not allow "a version" to become "any version." Supporters of a bi-partisan recovery must echo President Obama's call to Congress: "You should pass this bill right away." I only hope it is "this bill" that gets passed.

The Perils of Peaceful Revolutions – Why Winning Isn't Always Enough

By Igor Studenkov - Staff Writer

Over the last few weeks, several Middle Eastern and North African countries have had peaceful revolutions. Widespread protests forced the leaders of Tunisia and Egypt out of power and as a result, civil war broke out in Libya. As of this writing, protests have been slowly gaining traction in Yemen, Bahrain, Morocco and Lebanon. Much has been said about this upwelling of popular discontent and what it means for the spread of freedom and democracy. However, few commentators have asked a fairly important question – what happens once the oppressive ruler is forced out of power? Once in power, a new government faces a whole host of challenges. Unless they are addressed, the promise of the revolution could easily be squandered, leaving the people not much better off than they were before.

A revolution is a great unifying force. It gives the various opposition groups a reason to put aside their differences and unite under a common cause. However, once the enemy is defeated, the factional differences tend to re-emerge. It happened in Ukraine, after the 2004 Orange Revolution. The revolution came about because the authoritarian Ukrainian president Viktor Yanukovich rigged the elections in his favor. The public outcry turned into massive protests, which led to a more transparent run-off that saw Yanukovich lose to his closest rival, Viktor Yushchenko. While Yushchenko's term started out hopefully, his government soon collapsed into fac-

tional infighting as Yushchenko and his prime minister, Yulia Tymoshenko, jockeyed for control. By 2010, the popularity of Yushchenko's government fell to the point where Yanukovich was able to legitimately win the election. Upon assuming power, he reversed many reforms placed during Yushchenko's term. The once-promising Orange Revolution ended not in a bang, but a whimper.

Even if the new government manages to avoid infighting, it still has to improve the conditions in their country. The notions of freedom and democratic progress ring hollow if the country still faces food shortages, high unemployment, poor living conditions, ethnic and religious discrimination and other problems that helped to inspire the popular discontent in the first place. They will have to address the decades-long legacy of corruption and political repression and find a way to punish those responsible without being overly punitive. This issue is particularly relevant in Egypt's case. As of this writing, we have already seen vandalism and sectarian clashes between Muslim and Christian Egyptians. Just as importantly, they would need to be able to ensure order and stability without being overly repressive. These challenges are formidable and not something the new government can afford to put off. Unless the new Egyptian government can deliver some measure of progress within the next few months, they risk finding themselves on the receiving end of popular discontent.

As the new government sets out to improve its country, it must try its best to ensure that it does not repeat the mistakes of its predecessor. It goes without saying that maintaining law and order is important but if it resorts to heavy-handed tactics to enforce it, the populace will quickly turn against them. Even if that does not happen right away, their popular support could erode. The government officials must also ensure that corruption is not tolerated on any level. During Hosni Mubarak's reign, the Egyptian government cracked down on any sign of corruption from the opposition, while tolerating corruption among Mubarak's supporters. Since the corruption went unchecked for decades, the new Egyptian government will be held to a higher standard, so it must be especially careful to avoid any appearance of impropriety. This may be difficult to pull off, as many of the officials involved are used to working in a corruption-driven environment and do not have much experience in facilitating transparency.

A popular, peaceful revolution offers a wealth of opportunities. However, overthrowing a tyrant is not enough. All of the challenges outlined above are formidable but they must be addressed and resolved. Otherwise, whatever potential the revolution may have had will be squandered. After all the lives lost and everything the people sacrificed to bring it about, that is not something the country can afford.

ManOnTheStreet



By Lluvia Carrisoza
Visual Media Editor

*What do you think of U-Pass? Do you use it?
What do you think about having to pay for it?*



"The U-Pass is great, I was so excited when I found out that NEIU would be issuing it for this fall. I live closer to the southside and work downtown, so I've already put it to good use and have saved a lot of money with gas and parking. The fact that there is not an opt out option has no negative effect on me but I could see how it would be frustrating for some people who don't live in Chicago nor use public transportation. If there were an option to opt out, it'd be the best of both worlds. However, I still think it's a great economic and environmental investment."

-Jaimie O'Leary, Senior



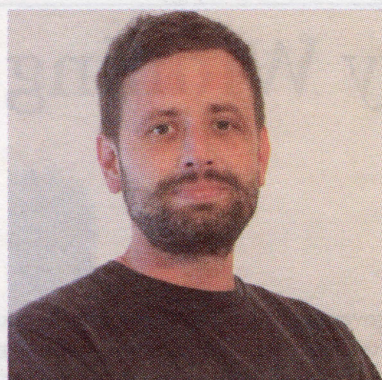
"I don't use it because I work before class and taking public transportation would take too long to get from my job to school but if I didn't work I would use it. I wish we could opt-out but I guess people still [need] it if they live in the city."

-Maria de Jesus Muñoz, Junior



"It's worth it if you use it a lot. If you have a car, it isn't. I don't have one but if I did I would use it. It saves time from having to put money in a transfer before getting on the train."

-Miguel Villarreal, Senior



"I like it, I'm happy we have it. I was surprised we didn't have it when I first started going to NEIU. I use it and I think the no opt-out option is fine because it'll get people to take public transportation."

-Mike Kauth, Senior



"I think the U-Pass is awesome! I use mine multiple times a day. The no opt-out option doesn't affect me, because I use it every day but I guess I understand why people complain about it. But I don't pity them because they have cars."

-Simone Bruch, Junior

Watch for Independent staff out & about. You could see yourself in the next "Man on the Street"!

Arts & Life

Arts & Entertainment

Unveiling of Pedroso Center Mural "Corazón Sin Fronteras" an Empowering, Revolutionary Endeavor

By Dulce Arroyo - Arts & Life Editor

NEIU's newly opened Angelina Pedroso Center for Diversity and Intercultural Affairs was a buzz on Sept. 16 as students, faculty, and family members gradually crowded the room for the unveiling of the mural "Corazón Sin Fronteras" ("Heart Without Borders"), by artist Victor M. Montañez.

Food and live music were provided as Rooftop, a band from the community, played in the Pedroso Center while spectators gathered and waited for the event to begin. Miguel Cambray, Director of the Latino Resource Center, welcomed everyone and introduced the event's speakers, including Dean Murrell Duster and Dr. Angelina Pedroso. Cambray also presented Dr. Daniel Lopez and Xavier Burgos with special editions of the mural to thank them for their work in helping the Pedroso Center become a reality.

A self-proclaimed "anti-establishment" artist, Montañez took the floor and explained why the mural was essential due to the unyielding efforts of the students who fought for the Pedroso Center.

"Art is an intelligence. No education is complete without an artistic component," said Montañez. "I'm an artist because it is one of the most revolutionary acts to carry out. We need to shake up the system and transform it." This revolutionary ideal of Montañez was the basis for the message of the mural. "The painting gives credit to all revolutions that have taken place in the years before us," he said. "There's a sun and a moon because it's natural to be a revolutionary, just like it's natural for there to be night and day or to be young and old. We need to rethink everything, to find alternatives to things like guns because any thug can pick one up—and that's not revolutionary."

Montañez then passed around a series of 20 interactive works that he also created for the Pedroso Center. Some of the students who contributed in designing the mural by pitching ideas to Montañez, along with professor Jaime Mendoza, helped him remove the blue sheet as cameras flashed and applause rang throughout the room. Among those that unveiled the mural were Stephanie Gomez, of Latinas in Power, Nito Morales, of Que Ondee Sola (QOS) and Jessie Fuentes, of Union for Puerto Rican Students (UPRS).

After the unveiling, the students who had a part in the Pedroso Center's development sat by the mural and reflected on the work they put in just months before.

"To know that I can come here and be a part of history makes me feel complete," said Fuentes. "I can go through my day feeling like I've done something right, like I'm a revolutionary."

Burgos, editor-in-chief of QOS and president of UPRS, felt just as accomplished. "It was a continuous struggle to get a Latino cultural center at NEIU but with community involvement of influential leaders from different organizations, elected officials and alumni, we were able to organize and mobilize stakeholders," said Burgos. "We were told that there was no room for a center but we knew it was possible. Even when

faced with cynicism, the act of struggle can still give you a sense of beauty and imagination."

Like his fellow comrades, Morales has high hopes for what the Pedroso Center could be for students.

"Students are able to come to a home away from home where they can study, learn from each other, engage themselves and build a better world for other Latino students in this Hispanic-serving institution," said Morales.

For Gomez, being a part of the physical process of designing the mural stood out the most.

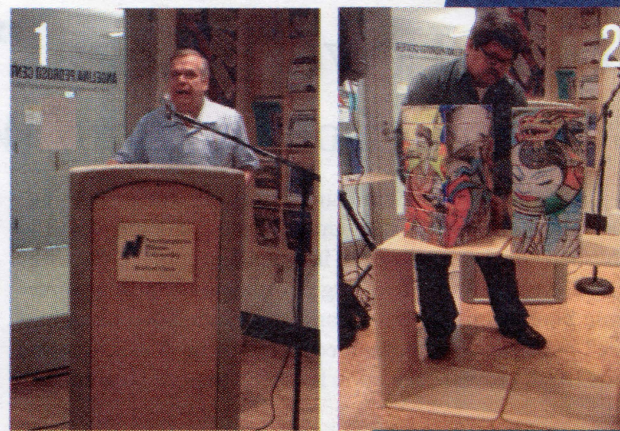
"I thought Victor was going to draw it out first, and then we would paint it," said Gomez, "but when he said, 'Grab this primer and throw it on the board,' I was taken aback—I was not expecting that! But painting and pulling apart canvases can make you get in touch with your senses."

After her experience in fighting for the Pedroso Center, Gomez has a piece of advice for any student who has a similar dream in mind, but might be daunted by the idea of rejection.

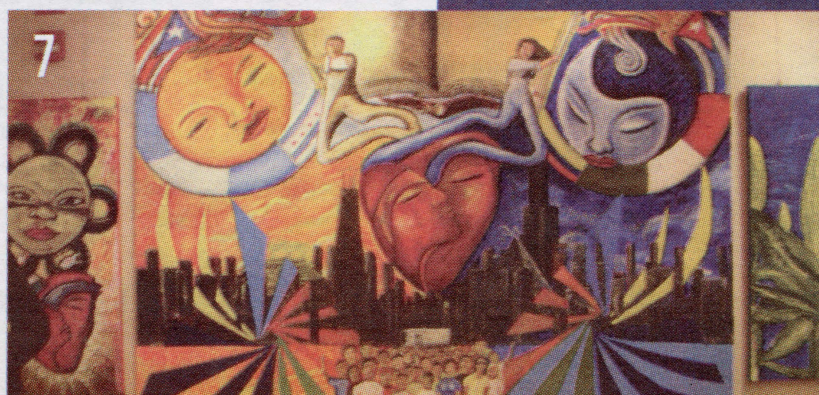
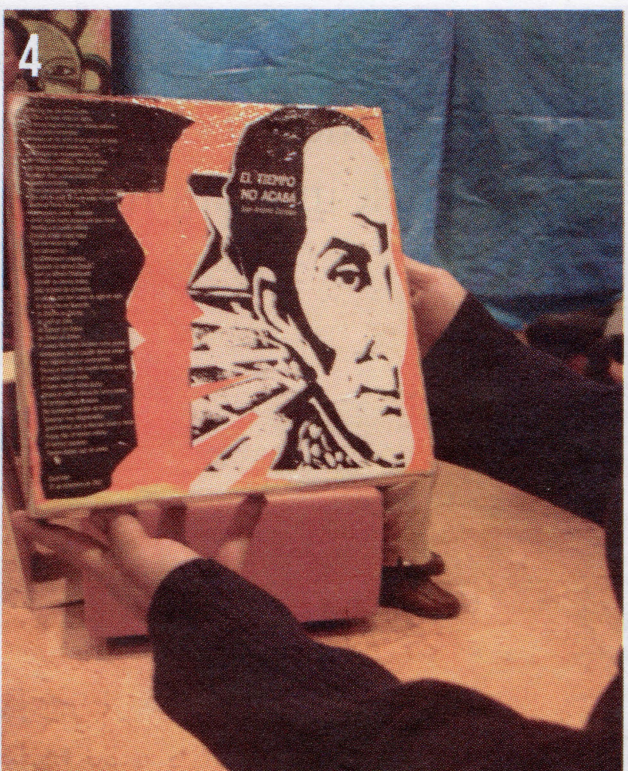
"People are always going to say no but that just gives you the opportunity to come up with different strategies," she said. "Organize with people who have collective ideas because, in the end, we as students have the power—we run this university. This is here for us but many times we forget that."

The mural now hangs on the wall of the Pedroso Center for all to see as a beacon of hope and inspiration.

"Looking around the room now and seeing familiar faces helps me solidify the belief that I can transform the world," said Burgos.



Photos by Dulce Arroyo



1. Dr. Daniel Lopez speaks just minutes before the unveiling of the mural. 2. Victor Montañez sets up his portable series of artwork he created in addition to the mural. 3. Miguel Cambray and Dean Duster present Xavier Burgos with a special edition of the mural. 4. A student holds up a piece of the portable artwork series by Victor Montañez. 5. The band Rooftop starts off the event by playing for guests. 6. Artist Victor Montañez stands by his mural. 7. The Pedroso Center's newest mural. 8. Jessie Fuentes, Victor Montañez, Stephanie Gomez, Jaime Mendoza and Nito Morales begin to unveil the mural.

Grazyna Auguscik's Performance a Full On Jazz Fusion

By Abimael Castro - *Staff Writer*

Named as the Best Jazz Vocalist by the Jazz Forum Magazine for her melodic voice, Grazyna Auguscik put on a quite a show on Sept. 16 in the NEIU Recital Hall. With numerous nominations by the Chicago Music Awards and Fujitsu Concord Jazz Festival, it was clear on Friday as to why she is a renowned artist.

Auguscik was accompanied by fellow jazz artists John McLean, who had some impressive guitar riffs that the audience love and Matt Ulery, who showed off his talents not just by playing the bass but also with his creativity. The group played two songs that Ulery wrote, which he will feature on his upcoming album.

Pianist Rob Clearfield stirred the audience by his outstanding performance of classic jazz songs, including Billie Holliday's "Don't Explain." The group also had a guest star,

Northeastern Illinois University's own Travis Heath, who left an impression with his trumpet playing in the group's fourth and tenth numbers and made the university shine. Although the group jammed out as a whole, Auguscik still brilliantly stood out and demonstrated why she is one of the best singers in the jazz world today.

The group played 11 songs, all of which highlighted every member's talents. Auguscik undoubtedly showed her singing prowess from the get-go. Her first two songs were full of soulful lyrics that made you feel as if your ears' sole purpose were to listen to her sing.

Besides showing her spectacular voice, Auguscik also showed her innovative work in pieces commemorating folk legend Nick Drake. Since Auguscik is planning on releasing an album dedicated to Drake, she gave the audience a little

preview with "River Man." Auguscik was able to transform folk music into jazz, which is no easy task.

As for the rest of the group's members, McLean put his own personal touches on an amazing Hendrix-like guitar riff, giving it a bluesy touch in the last piece of the concert, "Magic Drums," written by jazz legend Duke Ellington. Ulery played a solid bass throughout the performance on his own two songs, while drummer Jon Deitemyer and Clearfield were stunning on the stage, making it feel like a no barred jazz session.

If you have a chance to see Grazyna Auguscik and the Magnificent Four, do not pass it up. Even if you're not into the jazz scene, you won't forget this group because they have what it takes to pull off such amazing jazz numbers—so much so that they'll make you feel like dancing.

"Our Love Is Real" an Entertaining, Absurd Read

By Sean E. Dotson - *Staff Writer*

Comic book writer Sam Humphries pulled off something of a miracle. In today's stagnant publishing climate, he self-published *Our Love is Real*, an independent comic book with artist Steven Sanders, releasing it online and in only three comic book shops in the nation, while somehow managing to sell out a several thousand copy print run in exactly nine hours. And, oh yeah, the book is a light-hearted look at bestiality.

The cover of *Our Love is Real* is the first sign that the reader is in for something disconcerting. Two people are standing on opposite sides of the page, seemingly upset at each other. One looks like a thin, blonde hippie with long hair and a flowing robe and the other is a square-jawed, tough-guy type who is wearing what appears to be riot gear and carrying a cudgel. In the middle of the two is one of the creepiest images I have ever seen: a man hugging a dog from behind, much too closely, with what must be the most blissfully idiotic smile on his face.

The tough guy is Officer Jok, a riot cop in a futuristic city who, shall we say, highly values the company of his French Poodle, Chyna. The other person on the cover is Brin, a self-described "mineralsexual." In this imaginary world, sexuality

between humans is an anachronism and rival factions come into conflict over the best objects of affection: animal, vegetable or mineral.

When we first meet Jok, he proclaims his dog to be a warm-blooded animal with feelings and how, as the title says, his love is real. Brin, a witness to the riot, tries to convince Jok that physical sex of any sort is disgusting and that true love is found by "merging auras" with crystals using a form of meditation. The two are drawn to one another and, in the course of time, find themselves confronting feelings for each other society no longer accepts.

Sanders' art perfectly complements the story. It is realistic enough to allow the reader to accept this world but exaggerated in a way that emphasizes character and physicality, reminding me of some of the great European comic artists like Enki Bilal, Moebius and Baranko.

Our Love Is Real is what I call social science fiction. Whereas traditional sci-fi introduces a new technology to a recognizable society and then confronts the changes that take place, social sci-fi examines how our interactions are affected when social norms shift in radical ways (think Ray Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451* or Ursula K. LeGuin's *The Dispossessed*).

When I first heard of *Our Love Is Real*, I was afraid it was an intolerant look at what conservative preachers and politicians have been saying for years about how society's acceptance of homosexuality will lead to an acceptance of bestiality, incest and the like.

Humphries' book, however, never lowers itself to that level.

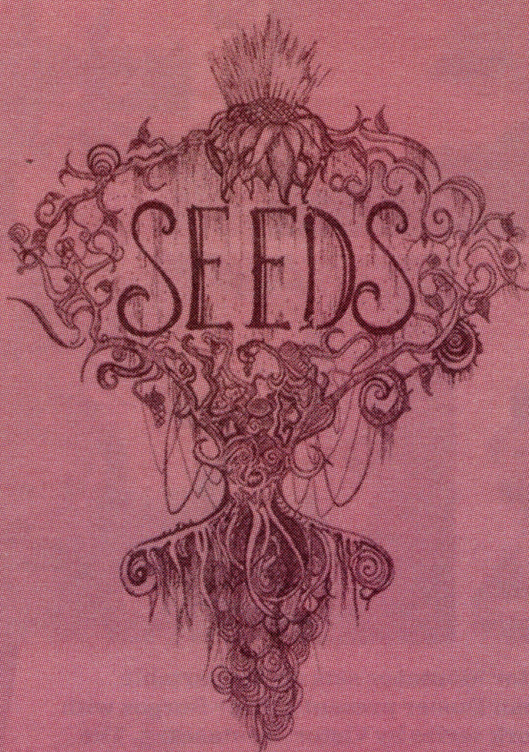
Instead, it is a critique of a culture that seems to value sex more as a passive, individual act than as a shared experience between two human beings.

Films and music constantly reinforce ideas of casual hook-ups and friends with benefits, offering instant gratification without the frightening responsibility of actual intimacy. The accessibility of internet pornography means that people need not even leave the bedroom to witness sloppy, mechanical sex.

Humphries and Sanders confront us with the admittedly extreme extent of what that type of thinking breeds: that if we are really more willing to open our legs to one another than our hearts, we remove what is wonderful and human about love—and we might as well start taking a closer look at the houseplants.

Seeds presents an open mic fundraiser for students to present their original work in a public format.

..:Seeds:..
ON THE SOAP BOX



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Righteous Ones' Flow Will Have Your Heart and Head Bumpin' to the Beat

By Jacklyn Nowotnik - Staff Writer

Imagine that you can take the flow of a rapper such as Bizzy Bone, fueled by the heartfelt passion of spoken word, set to fervent drum patterns—beautifully intertwined with the musical colors of both a guitar and bass—and combined them with an angelic voice, echoing sagacious lyrics. All of this would give you a musical epiphany, otherwise known as Righteous Ones.

Righteous Ones are a prime example of a harmonious mix of genres that take music to a whole new level. With an impeccable flow of rhyme schemes and rhythm, the burning passion of a guitar and bass, the thumping heart beat of the drums and smooth melodic vocals, Righteous Ones will have your head and heart bumping to a musical experience unlike any other.

I had the opportunity to talk one on one with this inspiring new band and get the lowdown before their next performance at NEIU.

Jacklyn Nowotnik: Who are the members of Righteous Ones and what is it about each of them that adds to the swag and sound of the band?

Righteous: Tomek is the guitarist and he adds a really cool, heavy, yet soulful element while always pushing the bounds; Tim is the drummer and he adds this energy that will blow your mind, especially when he solos. Eddie is the bass player and he comes up with these very articulate bass lines, [while] Jessie is the expert spoken word artist that will move you emotionally with her stories and great delivery. Gianna is the singer that can actually hit notes correctly. I go by the stage name of Righteous. I'm the one that writes the lyrics and creates a foundation for the songs [to which] everyone adds their talents to.

JN: How did you all come together to become Righteous Ones?

Righteous: After going to a few concerts, I couldn't get enough of that 'live' sound—it was so much better than a CD playing the beat in the background and someone rapping [because] there's just so much more energy and no limits to what you can do. Lucky for me, I knew a few musicians all in different bands. I like to think that I put together an all-star team.

JN: The word "righteous" has a very strong connotation, so why the name Righteous Ones?

Righteous: I believe it takes a very strong, righteous individual to decide to be a non-conformist and go against the grain. But it also has a very religious connotation and this has been one of the greatest obstacles I've faced when promoting the name. People either gravitate towards it or reject it, simply because when they hear "Righteous" they think we make religious music. But I'm speaking about those who do good in a society that teaches them to do wrong for the right price.

JN: What makes the sound of Righteous Ones unique?

Righteous: Righteous Ones is a great blend of different musical styles, with hip hop being the overall umbrella of all our crazy ideas. I have so many musical influences and everyone in the band brings their own creative perspective. The

artistic growth is exponential—our next album will push the envelope.

JN: Righteous Ones currently has an album and digital download. How long have they been out for?

Righteous: I like to call the Inferno project a demo and it was released in 2009, which was before I formed the band and my identity as an artist. I put a whole bunch of different song types and I learned what worked and what didn't.

JN: Your flow is amazing! It reminds me of Bone Thugs-n-Harmony. What influences it?

Righteous: Thanks! I have so many influences that I learned a lot from, including: Eminem, Bone Thugs-n-Harmony, NaS—the list goes on forever. I'm really into complex rhymes and strange rhyme patterns.

JN: In the song "Why Do I," you explain the many 'whys' of what you do and where they come from. If you had to sum up that song, why do you do what you do?

Righteous: If I try to please everyone, I minimize the possibility of growth and lose my identity in the process. It's one of those things that are easier said than done, [but] just follow your own path, especially if it's positive.

JN: Out of all the songs that are on "Inferno: Self-Immolation," are there any songs that you feel really stand out on the album?

Righteous: When I get that question, I think of a parent being asked if they have a favorite kid. I love all my songs for different reasons, but yes, I do like some more than others (laughs). I think "Why Do I" would be my favorite, especially when we perform it live with the band. We will actually be releasing a band remix of some of the songs on Inferno after we release our upcoming project first.

JN: While "Inferno: Self-Immolation" was in the making, what did you want to accomplish through its completion?

Righteous: Since Inferno was made before I had the idea of forming a band, I wanted to put together this demo to see if I could be successful. I love music and it was always a dream of mine to have my music available to share.

JN: Now that "Inferno: Self-Immolation" is complete, did the album live up to the aspirations of you and the band?

Righteous: Inferno surpassed my aspirations—I never thought that I would perform for a live audience filled with people I didn't know. With this album, I was able to form a band of the greatest musicians and I've established connections in the industry that will make our next project a great success. [Although] the quality isn't the best (and certainly not the worst), I believe my lyrics will always be recognized with respect.

JN: Righteous Ones has a history of memorable performances and even a radio appearance with University of Illinois at Chicago's Blue Line Radio. What is your most memorable performance with Righteous Ones?

Righteous: The most memorable performance was at the Que La Que Hay event at NEIU. It was the first time I per-

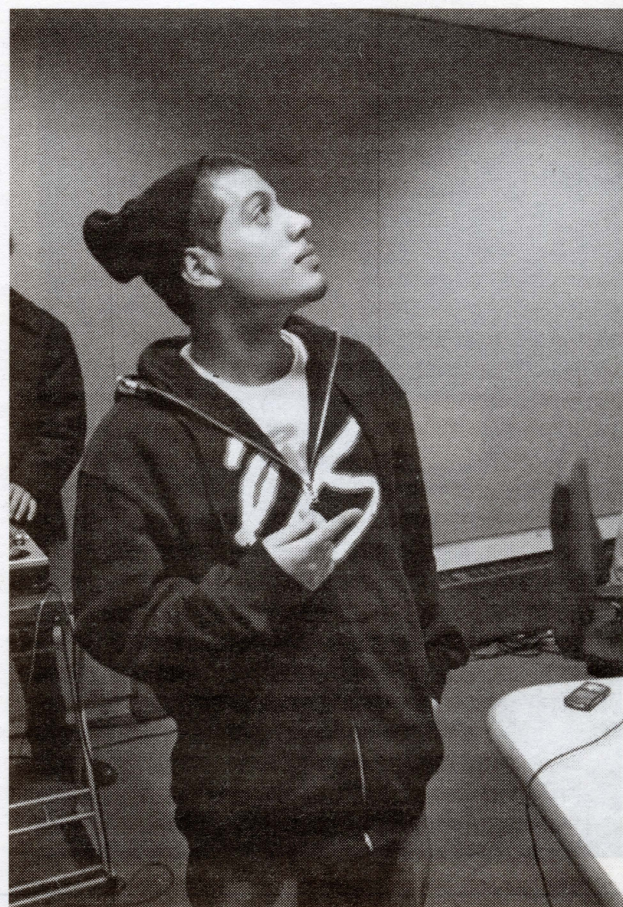


Photo by Dulce Arroyo

formed with the band and I didn't have much performing experience. The stage and sound were perfect, the crowd was amazing and we got a standing ovation! I watch the video now and still get goose bumps when I hear the crowd's response after the performance.

JN: Speaking of memorable performances, what can one expect from a Righteous Ones performance?

Righteous: If you see Righteous Ones (the band), expect great musicianship and emotional energy in every piece. You'll experience some solos, spoken word and maybe a few jokes. The crowd is the number one factor when it comes to live shows, so always remember to give the artists energy and they will return it twice as much. It's all about having fun!

Righteous would like to give a big thanks to Oso (producer), Stephanie, Gilbert, the organizations on campus that continue positive movements (Latinas In Power, Hip Hop Organization and UPRS), everyone involved with their success and of course, everyone in the band! Look out for their album, coming out towards the end of the year. Check out the website at www.DeafEQ.com, for all updates, music, videos and merchandise.

"The Help" Becomes a Target for Academic Criticism

By Shantez Tolbert - Staff Writer

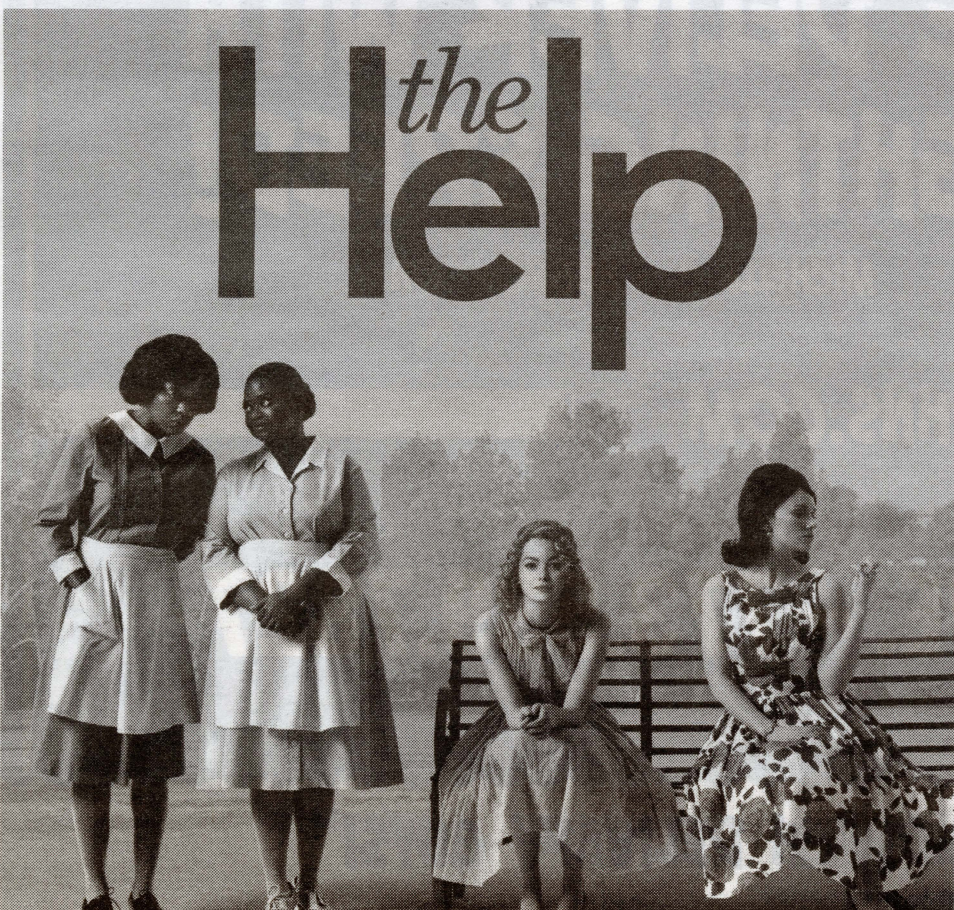


image courtesy of moviecarpet.com

In recent months, the movie *The Help* made over \$148.7 million in Box Office sales since it hit theatres mid-August. With a star-studded cast and a bright light on an otherwise dreary and misinterpreted story, *The Help* is without a doubt on its way to the Golden Globes.

The Help's story is about a young southern white woman named Skeeter (Emma Stone) who comes home from college with dreams of becoming a writer. To her dismay, she discovers that her beloved maid and nanny, Clementine (Cicely Tyson), is gone, while also seeing increasingly difficult positions that black maids were forced into involving their white counterparts.

With hopes of becoming a writer and missing Clementine, she sets out to write a book about the experiences of black maids in the south. With the help of black maids Aibileen (Viola Davis) and Minnie (Octavia Spencer), who risk their lives in assisting her write a book on their experiences, Skeeter gets a first-hand perspective on the black maids' hardships.

Colleges, universities and women-led groups around the country have gotten together to discuss and criticize the main ideas and viewpoint of the book-turned-movie. The movie was originally a book (with the same title) by Kathryn Stockett that became a bestseller in 2009.

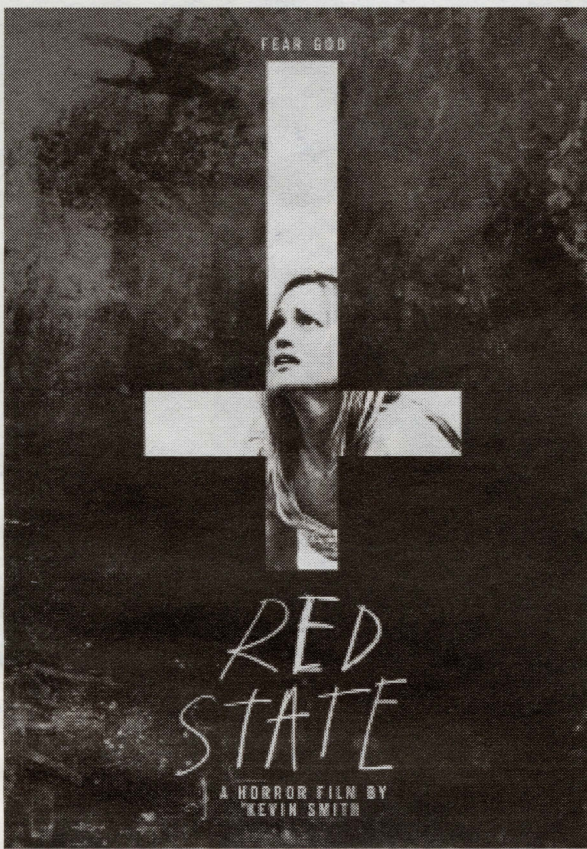
The Feminist Collective at NEIU collaborated with professors Sharon Gore and Kate Kane from the communication, media and theatre department for a "right-on" discussion about the film. The president of the Feminist Collective, Brenda Rodriguez and professor Laurie Fuller led the round table discussion.

Of the many topics discussed, male bashing, male absence, sisterhood versus racism and white/black feminism were brought to light. One issue pointed out was that the movie ultimately became one in which the audience watched mostly about white women's experiences and how it did not give enough information on the experiences of the black maids.

Red State Movie Review

By Syed Ahad Hussain - *Opinions Editor*

Photo courtesy of google images



Although the tagline of the movie Red State describes it as an “unlikely film from that Kevin Smith,” it should perhaps say, “a likeable but disgusting film from that unpredictable Kevin Smith” for so many obvious (and not so obvious) reasons. It’s not the first time Smith has poked at religion; “Dogma,” his 1999 film, humorously dramatized the very concept of a God, his angels, his followers, his religion, humanity and sinners. While Red State did the same, it takes a dark comic route and slowly ascends into a slasher film, taking another U-turn to become a thriller and ending up being funny—making it actually worth watching.

3 teenage boys straight out of South Park, Travis (played by Michael Angarano, a Mark Wahlberg in the making), Jared (Kyle Gallner, the next Tim Roth) and Billy Ray (Nicholas Braun, the next Ed Helms) have seemingly learned a lot from American Pie and arrange a one night stand with a ‘MILF’ online.

Yet, the woman they lust after turns out to be Sarah Cooper (played by a horrifying Melissa Leo), daughter of preacher Abin Cooper (exceptional performance by John Goodman) who hates homosexuals, misogynists, sadists and infidels. The boys are held captive by Cooper inside the Five Points Church to be brutally murdered. What ensues next involves blood, gore, guns, murders, rapture and more—but I’m not going to spoil the entire movie.

The bloody gunshot sequences in which most of the merciless gore takes place ends so painfully humorous that you

won’t believe your eyes. If you are a devout Christian, these may hurt you a lot and if you’re a sensible heterosexual they may hurt you even more.

Homophobia has been mocked in many movies by heterosexual filmmakers. In Red State, Smith shows it as a victimized cultural norm, making us sympathize with the victims of recent hate crimes in the U.S. on the basis of sexuality at the hands of heterosexual extremists.

We’ve also seen movies condemning terrorism before, but most of them—the well known ones—centered only on one specific religion. Red State takes a shockingly different approach, just to prove one point: extremism is the terrorist’s sole religion. Red State made religious extremism its antagonist and sexuality its protagonist because sexuality is the one that suffers most in this film.

Red State may make a strong and serious statement about religious extremism and infidelity, but for the sake of laughs, you’ll stay through the whole thing. You’ll listen to it while sitting on the edge of your seat and waiting impatiently for the surprisingly lame punch line. It will take at least five days for you to digest, understand and finally laugh at it and that laughter will bring some tears, too.

Abin Cooper said he fears God. I, myself, also fear God. But if there’s anyone in this world I fear most after him, it’s Kevin Smith, simply because you never know what to expect next from that weirdo.

We at the Independent are in mourning for the loss of the husband of Dr. Susan G. Benson. Our wishes for peace are with you and your family.

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On Friday night, our editor in chief and her partner witnessed a horrific accident and were there on the scene before emergency personnel. The victim was a young man, probably in his early thirties – and they watched as life left his body. This, and Dr. Benson’s loss brings to mind the frailties of life. And we hope that you appreciate every moment that you have. Take advantage of this opportunity to learn from this wonderful roster of faculty. And take every moment to LIVE your LIFE.

Sincerely,

Janean L. Watkins, Editor in Chief



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Photos by Lluvia Carrisoza



Around the P.E. Complex

By Tracey Washington - *Production Manager*

Somewhat separated from the main campus, NEIU's P.E. Complex provides plenty of personal fitness and recreation activities for students. The building contains multiple gyms, racquetball courts, swimming pools, fitness areas and even a rock-climbing wall.

Students even have access to a personal fitness trainer and can learn various forms of recreational arts. The P.E. Complex is open at various times of the day at six days a week. See the physical education staff for more details on various programs and classes offered throughout the semester.

Building Hours

Monday/Wednesday
8:00am-10:00pm
Tuesday/Thursday
7:00am-10:00pm
Friday
8:00am-7:00pm
Saturday
9:00am-3:00pm
Sunday
CLOSED

Pool Hours

** not all lanes available for lap swimming **

Monday
8:00am-10:00am
12:00pm-2:00pm
4:00pm-9:30pm
Tuesday
8:00am-10:30am
12:15pm-9:30pm
Wednesday
8:00am-9:30pm
Thursday
8:00am-10:30am
12:15pm-9:30pm
Friday
8:00am-6:30pm
Saturday
9:00am-2:30pm

Climbing Wall

Tuesday & Wednesday
3:00pm-5:00pm

PE Complex is CLOSED

- SEPTEMBER 5
- NOVEMBER 24-26

Fitness Center Hours

** fitness center is closed academic days **

Monday/Wednesday
8:00am-8:50am
11:00am-9:45pm
Tuesday/Thursday
7:00am-9:15am
10:30am-9:45pm
Friday
8:00am-6:45pm
Saturday
9:00am-2:45pm

Main Gym Hours

** some courts may not be available **

Monday/Wednesday
9:00am-10:15am
11:45am-9:45pm
Tuesday
1:45pm-8:00pm
Thursday
1:45pm-9:45pm
Friday
8:00am-6:45pm
Saturday
9:00am-2:45pm



“The Interrupters” a Nuanced, Compelling Treatment of Urban Violence

By Igor Studenkov - *Senior Staff Writer*

In 2004, Tio Hardiman, head of the Illinois chapter of CeaseFire, a Chicago-based anti-violence initiative, developed the Violence Interrupters Program. The CeaseFire initiative treats violence as a disease and in order to stop the violence it tries to address the factors that cause it.

The Interrupters, a new documentary directed by Steve James and Alex Kotlowitz, uses reformed criminals from some of Chicago's most violence-plagued communities to try to resolve conflicts before they escalate into full-blown violence. The documentary follows three such individuals (Cole Williams, Eddie Bocanegra and Ameena Matthews) for an entire year.

Williams spent much of his adult life in prison. His family helped him find stability and move past the trauma that he suffered at a young age when his father was murdered. Throughout the film, Williams uses a combination of humor and tough love to keep his charges on a peaceful path. He was also so dedicated to the program that he continued to work even when Cease Fire funding cuts temporarily cost him his salary.

Bocanegra is haunted by a murder he committed when he was 17. He spends much of the documentary working with children from the Little Village neighborhood, trying to help

them cope with violence and avoid his mistakes.

But the most memorable Interrupter in the documentary is Ameena Matthews, daughter of Jeff Fort, one of the most notorious gangsters in Chicago history. After spending her younger years as a ranking member of her father's gang, Matthews broke away and found solace in her family and the Muslim faith. Her friends and co-workers describe her as fearless and the documentary shows exactly what they mean.

Some of the tensest moments in *The Interrupters* are when Matthews inserts herself in between two groups that are about to come to blows and manages to get them to back down through persistence and the sheer force of her personality. It is all but impossible to watch the documentary and not come away awed.

But more than merely following the work of the Interrupters, the film analyzes the causes of the violence, touching on poverty, unemployment, substance abuse and general scarcity of opportunities. The Interrupters shows how violence is created when every wrong becomes self-perpetuating—every grievance leads to retaliation and every retaliation leads to even more grievances. It shows how every act of violence causes long-lasting trauma for everyone involved, sometimes in ways one would never expect. Above all, the documentary

puts the Interrupters' work in context, showing the difficulties they have to face and why they approach conflict the way they do.

The Interrupters keeps the focus squarely on its subjects, avoiding voiceovers and visual tricks, letting the footage speak for itself. It depicts the Interrupters as complex, flawed individuals who make mistakes and suffer setbacks. The people that they help are also shown to be just as complex—sometimes they get better and sometimes they fall back to their old ways. The documentary ultimately shows that breaking free of the legacy of violence takes time and effort and, for most of the subjects, doing the right thing remains a struggle.

The Interrupters does not claim to have all the answers, nor does it try to tie up everything in a nice little bow. The complexity of the film makes every triumph much more meaningful and makes even the smallest accomplishments seem worthwhile. This documentary will humble you, depress you and give you renewed hope for humanity. And that in itself is no small feat.

The Interrupters will be playing at NEIU's Alumni Hall on Sept. 30 at 3:00 p.m. and at Gene Siskel Film Center from Oct. 7 to 20. For more information visit <http://www.siskelfilmcenter.org/interrupters>.

Vassar Hosts First Intercontinental Quidditch Match

By Andy Marmer

The Miscellany News, Vassar College via UWIRE

Quidditch has existed as an intercollegiate sport since Fall 2007 when Vassar College lost the premier Quidditch World Cup to Middlebury College. Now, Vassar is once again making its way into the annals of quidditch history. Yesterday, the Butterbeer Broooers hosted Finland's only quidditch team, the University of Vaasa Centaurs, in the first-ever intercontinental quidditch match, in Kenyon Hall.

The Centaurs' roster actually consists of members of three schools—The University of Vaasa, Åbo Akademi Vaasa and Hanken School of Economics—and while the team masquerades as a quidditch squad, they actually have another identity. Vassar quidditch Captain Sandy Wood '13 explained, “I believe it's the Model [United Nations (UN)] team.” Wood continued, noting that the Butterbeer Broooers received an e-mail in late 2010 stating, “[Vaasa was] planning on coming to the United States in February and they [wanted] to arrange to play us.”

The Vaasa roster consists of 11 players from five different countries: Finland, France, Italy, Portugal and Mexico. The team was initially introduced to the sport just months ago, when as Wood explained, a member of the team happened to discover online videos showcasing the sport. The game quickly spread in Finland, and just a few months later the country's first quidditch team is already facing international competition.

International director of the International Quidditch Association (IQA) Andrea Hill confirmed in an e-mailed statement, “The Centaurs are playing in the United States because most players are on a National Model [United Nations (NMUN)] team traveling to Boston for the NMUN at Harvard [University] in February. Individuals from the team traveling to the States for this event decided to get some game time in while they were in America.”

Vassar will not be the only team facing Vaasa when the Finnish squad visits the United States; they will also face a number of Boston-area teams, including 2010 runner-up Tufts University and Stony Brook University. However, Vassar will be both their first American opponent, as well as their first intercollegiate opponent. Hill writes: “The Vaasa Centaurs team formed in December 2010 so the team is quite young. However, team members have been practicing diligently in the past months in between studying and preparing for the NMUN. The games in the United States will be the first they play against other teams.”

Although the Centaurs will be spending the lionshare of their time in Boston, they decided to go out of their way to face the Broooers. Wood claimed Vaasa's decision to visit Vassar is one inspired by the similarities in their names.

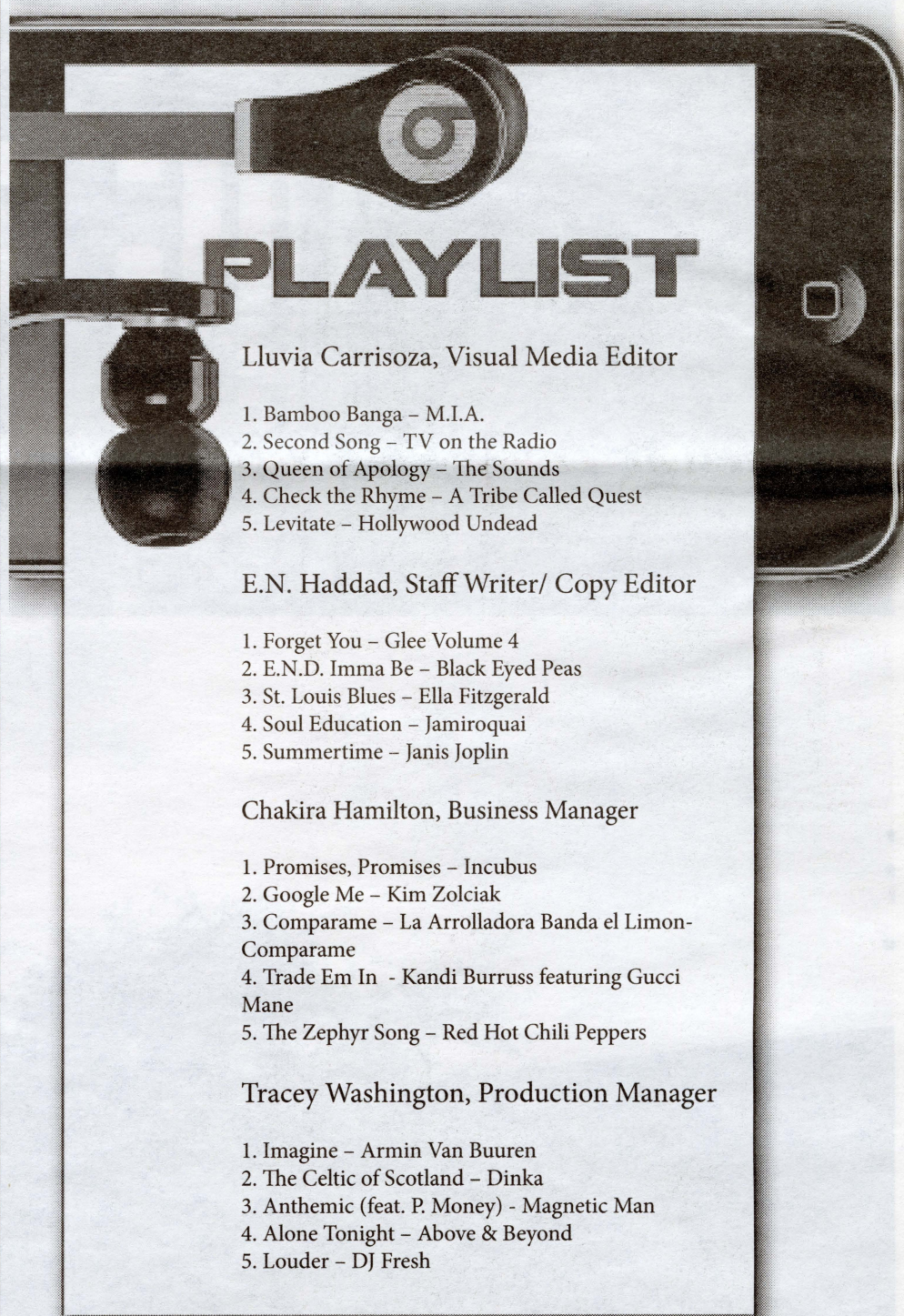
When prodded to elaborate by fellow Captain Nathan Hoston '13, she continued, “Well, I think that must have been part of what makes it fun.”

Hoston offered a different explanation: “I would like to think it was because of our reputation.” The reputation, Hoston added, is one of skill, sportsmanship and friendliness. He did, however, relent that the similarities in the names might have also been a factor.

Hill, though, offered another explanation. “Teams were chosen on a first-come basis. Vassar volunteered first and offered to host players,” she wrote in an e-mailed statement.

Those within the IQA are hopeful that this international expansion is a lasting trend. Hill writes, “We have a number of teams across the world, including teams in Australia, New Zealand, India, Russia, South Africa, Mexico, France, Germany and the United Kingdom and we hope to encourage some of these teams to travel to the United States.”

Commissioner of the International Quidditch Association Alex Benepe is hopeful



PLAYLIST

Lluvia Carrisoza, Visual Media Editor

1. Bamboo Banga – M.I.A.
2. Second Song – TV on the Radio
3. Queen of Apology – The Sounds
4. Check the Rhyme – A Tribe Called Quest
5. Levitate – Hollywood Undead

E.N. Haddad, Staff Writer/ Copy Editor

1. Forget You – Glee Volume 4
2. E.N.D. Imma Be – Black Eyed Peas
3. St. Louis Blues – Ella Fitzgerald
4. Soul Education – Jamiroquai
5. Summertime – Janis Joplin

Chakira Hamilton, Business Manager

1. Promises, Promises – Incubus
2. Google Me – Kim Zolciak
3. Compareme – La Arrolladora Banda el Limon- Compareme
4. Trade Em In – Kandi Burruss featuring Gucci Mane
5. The Zephyr Song – Red Hot Chili Peppers

Tracey Washington, Production Manager

1. Imagine – Armin Van Buuren
2. The Celtic of Scotland – Dinka
3. Anthem (feat. P. Money) – Magnetic Man
4. Alone Tonight – Above & Beyond
5. Louder – DJ Fresh

that this international presence might manifest itself at the 2011 World Cup, the IQA's next signature event. He wrote in an e-mailed statement, “Both Vaasa and a team [from] Auckland, New Zealand hope to attend the 2011 World Cup.”

Although in the Harry Potter books it is easy for wizards and witches to assemble from across the planet for a quidditch match, in the muggle world the same feat is challenging. Still, with Vaasa's visit to Poughkeepsie and the United States, perhaps a trend is beginning, just as a trend began three-and-a-half years ago on a field at Middlebury College.

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DID YOU KNOW?

RIGOBERTA MENCHÚ

COURTESY OF NOBELPRIZE.ORG



Rigoberta Menchú was born on January 9, 1959 to a poor Indian peasant family and raised in the Quiche branch of the Mayan culture. In her early years she helped with the family farm work, either in the northern highlands where her family lived, or on the Pacific coast, where both adults and children went to pick coffee on the big plantations.

Rigoberta Menchú soon became involved in social reform activities through the Catholic Church, and became prominent in the women's rights movement when still only a teenager.

Such reform work aroused considerable opposition in influential circles, especially after a guerilla organization established itself in the area. The Menchú family was accused of taking part in guerrilla activities and Rigoberta's father, Vicente, was imprisoned and tortured for allegedly having participated in the execution of a local plantation owner. After his release, he joined the recently founded Committee of the Peasant Union (CUC).

In 1979, Rigoberta, too, joined the CUC. That year her brother was arrested, tortured and killed by the army. The following year, her father was killed when security forces in the capital stormed the Spanish Embassy where he and some other peasants were staying. Shortly afterwards, her mother also died after having been arrested, tortured and raped. Rigoberta became increasingly active in the CUC, and taught herself Spanish as well as other Mayan languages than her native Quiche. In 1980, she figured prominently in

a strike the CUC organized for better conditions for farm workers on the Pacific coast, and on May 1, 1981, she was active in large demonstrations in the capital. She joined the radical 31st of January Popular Front, in which her contribution chiefly consisted of educating the Indian peasant population in resistance to massive military oppression.

In 1981, Rigoberta Menchú had to go into hiding in Guatemala, and then flee to Mexico. That marked the beginning of a new phase in her life: as the organizer abroad of resistance to oppression in Guatemala and the struggle for Indian peasant peoples' rights. In 1982, she took part in the founding of the joint opposition body, The United Representation of the Guatemalan Opposition (RUOG). In 1983, she told her life story to Elisabeth Burgos Debray. The resulting book, called in English, *I, Rigoberta Menchú*, is a gripping human document which attracted considerable international attention. In 1986, Rigoberta Menchú became a member of the National Coordinating Committee of the CUC, and the following year she performed as the narrator in a powerful film called *When the Mountains Tremble*, about the struggles and sufferings of the Maya people. On at least three occasions, Rigoberta Menchú has returned to Guatemala to plead the cause of the Indian peasants, but death threats have forced her to return into exile.

Over the years, Rigoberta Menchú has become widely known as a leading advocate of Indian rights and ethno-cultural reconciliation, not only in Guatemala but in the Western Hemisphere generally, and her work has earned her several international awards.



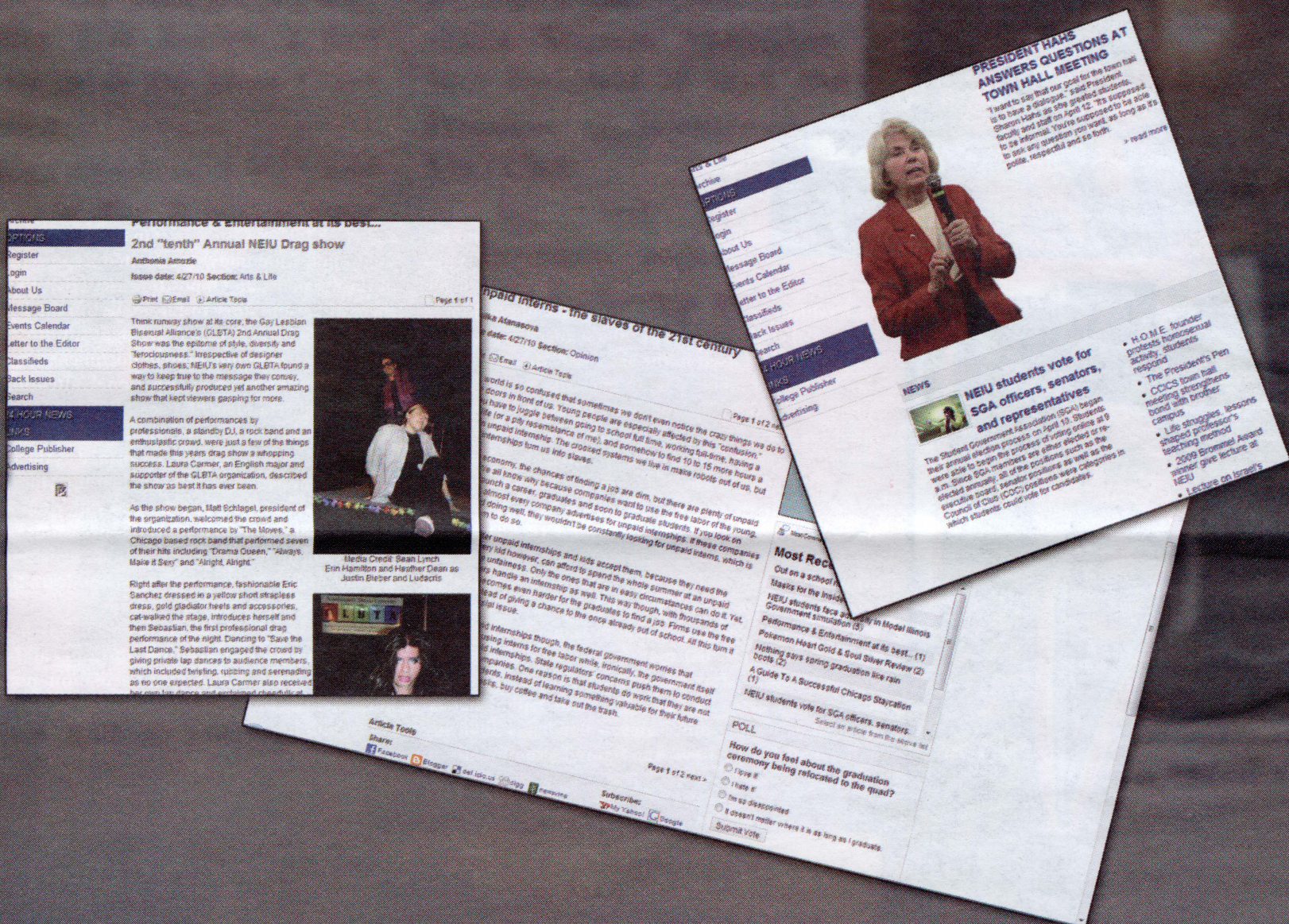
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