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Independent - Feb. 24, 2015

Luis Badillo

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EL CENTRO HOSTS INTER-INSTITUTIONAL IDEAS

Emmanuel Gonzalez

Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs) are hosts to a population of students that have been historically marginalized and have suffered low socio-economic status in the United States. To ensure the success of these students, various instructors, faculty and staff from across Chicagoland came together at NEIU's El Centro campus to discuss their unique HSI experience.

At this discussion were representatives from the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC), Lake County College, St. Xavier University, Wabunsee Community College, and National Council of La Raza (NCLR), along with NEIU's own faculty.

Until last year, NEIU was the only public four year institution of higher learning designated with an HSI status, but UIC has now also been designated as an HSI through Latino/a student population exceeding 25 percent.

Though a high Latino population is not all it takes. The electronic code of Federal Regulations (Title 34, Subtitle B, Chapter VI) states an institution must also prove at least half of their Latino population are low-income individuals, and have an "enrollment of needy students" which outlines that more than half of the student population is receiving federal aid for their education.

What began as a large group

discussion detailing the different experiences each person has had at their respective HSI soon broke out into four different groups. The groups continued with a narrow focus on the topics of research, teaching, students support services and administration. These groups then later met to discuss their findings with each other.

Teaching

Recalling a conversation with his friend Gabriel Cortez, assistant professor of Educational Leadership and Development at NEIU was asked if he would teach Latinos differently. He told his friend, "I'm not really insisting that, but just understanding this population. How are instructors - being culturally competent."

"Right. Being nice versus being understanding," added Ann De Aviles Bradley, assistant professor in NEIU's College of Education.

"Students will feel connection to their heritage and identity if they see themselves in the faculty and if they see themselves in the curriculum. We have to include them," said Xavier Perez from St. Xavier University after telling of his positive experience with Latino instructors.

"But you can't exclude everyone else and go looking for Latinos," Perez continued. "I think institutions need to think outside of the box and go looking for specific, maybe Latino caucuses."

Included in the group's sum-



Photos by Emmanuel Gonzalez

Collective minds from different Hispanic Serving Institutions gather in the new El Centro building.

mary report was a step in the direction of looking into institutional incentives for students who don't always seek the extra support that they need.

Research

The group's findings being announced from Isaura Pulido, presidential fellow at NEIU, talked about the need to do qualitative research. "One of the things we're seeing are approaches that are very reductive," said Pulido.

"We want to look at college grads, who beat the odds per say, because that reductive research would not include them."

Some of the factors that would include would be looking at a student's determination, climate and classroom pedagogy.

"One of my grand ideas is that we do research across our institutions and we can find out what's happening at all of our institutions and that we can bring that all together," continued Pulido.

From UIC LARES program, Hugo Teruel spoke on the importance of bringing this type of inter-institutional research into practice

because often anecdotal evidence is scarce and insufficient in proving what Latino support programs are effective in at institutions.

Student Services

The group of student services spoke about how sometimes there is mobility and lack of mobility because of the language inside of grants which can designate where in the institution the grant money is being used. Specifically, title V grants which schools submit to the federal government when seeking funds for HSI designation.

"A lot of times we have one underrepresented group against another underrepresented group to see who's more oppressed, to see who's more underprivileged, and fighting over the funding. Maybe that could be a paradigm shift, what are some commonalities that will benefit both of these groups," said Celia Chavez from Wabunsee Community College.

On speaking on some of the underrepresented groups that are seldom reflected in a school's faculty and staff, John DeConstanza from Dominican University spoke

of a toolkit used by his university that trains search committee on implicit bias with structures outlined by each respective department of the school that helps avoid the lack of employees of underrepresented groups.

Administration

"How do we increase representation in administrative roles?" was the question posed by the group discussing administration in HSIs.

They stressed that administrators and representatives must have a stronger connection with Latino faculty and staff.

Improving communication is only part of it, however, to truly give Latinos a voice at HSI's, the group also noted that schools must develop HSI committee that decide how title V aid is used.

Most importantly, they stated, was that students needed to use their voice and make their needs known.

This event was the first step into what hopes to be an ongoing project into identifying the best practices within HSIs across the state.



While Hispanic Serving Institutions share many common struggles, many speakers spoke about the unique experience at their university and what they have encountered.

NEWS

Muslim Lives Matter: A Tribute and Memorial

Steven Villa

On Feb. 10, three American Muslims, Yusor Mohammad Abu-Salha, 21; Razan Mohammad Abu-Salha, 23; and Deah Shaddy Barakat, 19, were gunned down in their Chapel Hill residence in North Carolina by their neighbor, Craig Stephen Hicks.

The shooting sent shockwaves through NEIU's diverse, multicultural community.

Described as a tribute and memorial, "Muslim Lives Matter" was organized almost overnight by Yasmin Ranney, Director of the Asian and Global Resource Center at NEIU's Pedrosa Center for Diversity and Intercultural Affairs.

"Right after [the shooting] happened, students were calling me and texting me and coming here and saying how horrible this was," said Ranney. "The sense I got from many of the students at the event [was] that 'this might be me...' At first I thought we'd do a roundtable dialogue, but the more I thought about it – this event was larger than that...On Friday I sent out some emails and the response was unbelievable."

In Alumni Hall on Feb. 17, "Muslim Lives Matter" was organized in response to the shooting, a gathering against ignorance and violence.

Alumni Hall was mostly filled by 3:05 p.m., when the speeches officially began. The atmosphere was appropriately solemn — talk in the crowd was muted, downcast and soft. A slideshow of the victims was projected on three large screens hanging against the walls of the room. It was composed of wedding and graduation photos and pictures with family and friends.

Ranney opened the event, thanking the students in attendance and introducing the first speaker, Dr. Frank E. Ross, Vice President of Student Affairs.

"Today we stand in solidarity," he said, "and mourn the senseless killings of three Muslim-Americans in Chapel Hill, NC. It is imperative that we confront Islamophobia and anti-Arab bigotry in whatever form it takes. As members of the university community, I challenge us all to put an end to the bias, hatred, discrimination, [aggression] and violence against all people."

The following speakers were: Meriem Benrahmani, club officer of the Muslim Student Association; Amani Abu Tareb, student; Alfonso Trevino, President of the Alliance for Student Social Workers; Abba Alqaissi, President of the Middle East Culture Club; Brenda Bedolla, President of the

Student Government Association; Ebba Wahdan, Vice President of the Middle East Culture Club; and Dr. Mateo Farzaneh, professor of history.

President Sharon Hahs was present for the event, but was not among the speakers.

"Their lives were taken due to their differences," Benrahmani said. "But these Muslims saw themselves no differently than any other citizen of their nation." She spoke of several attacks on Muslims living in North America, mentioning the Feb. 9. killing of Mustafa Matan in Alberta, Canada.

Deah Shaddy Barakat and Yusor Mohammad Abu-Salha were recent graduates of North Carolina State University and had been married less than two months before their murder. Razan Mohammed Abu-Salha, sister of Yusor, had been a student at the same university. Barakat, who had graduated with a degree in business administration in 2013, was continuing his education as a second-year student of dentistry. Razan was a sophomore studying architecture and environmental design, and Yusor, who graduated in 2014 with a bachelor's degree in biological sciences, was also pursuing a degree in dentistry.

When asked on the subject of



Photo by Davor Pulis

Dr. Mateo Farzaneh speaks against ignorance and intolerance at Muslim Lives Matter.

the American public's perception of Islam, Ranney said, "I think it's changing for the worse. I think our Republicans in politics...you hear some of the hateful stuff our governors and elected officials are saying about Muslims."

This was in part a reference to one John Bennett, Oklahoma state Rep. who said on the topic of Islam, "Their goal is the destruction of Western Civilization from within. This is a cancer in our nation that needs to be cut out."

Ranney said, "I think people view Muslims and Islam with a phobia."

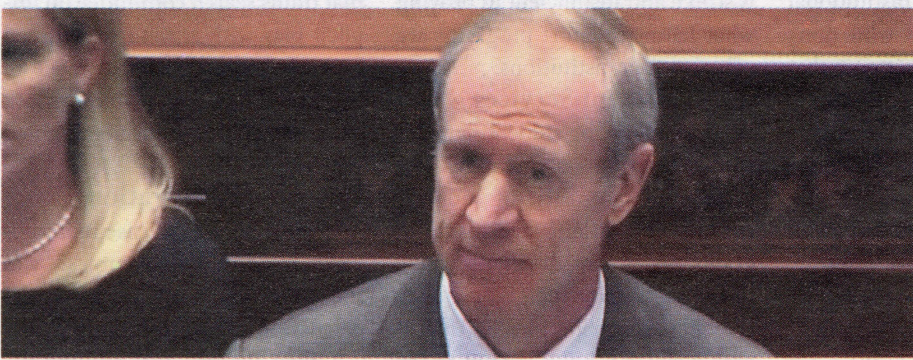
Dr. Mateo Farzaneh closed with the speech, "Muslim Lives Matter."

"Let us not forget that since the murder of Deah, Yusor and Razan in their apartment in Chapel Hill, [the] 21 Egyptians were slaughtered like sheep in Libya, two humans were killed for gathering at a debate in Denmark and

Özgecan Aslan, a 21-year-old psychology student, was burned after being raped in Turkey; all due to ignorance and hate...

"Let us be reminded that if individual ignorance and hatred for others is not treated, it can lead to collective ignorance and hate and the consequences of that would be a million times more disastrous, since it will take precious life out of millions of fragile bodies of humans and it will change the course of history."

"But we have to be hopeful, despite the realities we're facing today. Why? Because there is no better option. Hope comes when we are all educated more about the people we don't know. I must learn about the peoples I might fear and treat my ignorance. I invite you, I challenge you, to do the same. This is the time and place for it. Learn and let ignorance be a part of the past for a brighter future."



The state's new governor as he presents the Illinois FY2016 Budget.

NEIU Prepares for Potential Cuts in State Budget

Luis Badillo

In anticipation of oncoming shortfalls in the Illinois budget, Governor Bruce Rauner proposed a series of cuts which would reduce appropriations for all state universities by almost a third.

The governor's proposed budget seeks to cut \$6 billion in state programs and services including Medicaid, pensions, public transportation, among other services.

In a targeted email, NEIU president Dr. Sharon Hahs has said there were plans for a phone meeting with other public university presidents and chancellors to talk to the Illinois Board of Higher Education. She also said that the Vice Presidents of the school would meet to discuss the potential cuts further.

"Be assured that this is early in the bud-

get process and not likely to hold," Hahs said in the email. The statement agrees with numerous other political analysts, who say that this version of the budget may face heavy opposition in the Democratic led state legislature.

In a follow-up email to NEIU staff, faculty and students, Chief Communication Office Mike Dizon announced an open forum to further detail how the university will respond to proposed cuts. The forum will be held on March 2, at 3:05 p.m.

In the 2015 fiscal year the state accounted for 41 percent the school's unrestricted operating budget, or \$33.7 million. With the proposed reductions, NEIU and seven other state universities would receive 31.5 percent less in 2016. The new state funding would potentially cut \$11.7 million dollars from the school budget.



Map provided by NEIU, edited by Emmanuel Gonzalez

Police Blotter

The following offenses occurred on NEIU's campuses from Feb. 3 to Feb. 16, 2015.

F Building, Feb. 3, an unknown offender stole a victim's cellphone after it was left unattended on a countertop.

Parking Lot-F, Feb. 4, a driver was issued two citations and an I-bond for failing to wear a seatbelt and driving with a suspended driver's license.

Parking Garage, Feb. 4, an unknown of-

fender struck and damaged a victim's vehicle.

Building F, Feb. 5, an unknown offender wrote graffiti on a bathroom stall. Facilities were notified and graffiti was removed.

LWH, Feb. 13, students verbally assaulted one another during a group discussion in class. The students were referred to Behavioral Concerns Team.

P.E. Building, Feb. 16, an unknown offender stole a victim's wallet from an unattended cubicle.

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Photo by Maya Wagner



Dr. Kaplan-Weinger amidst the daily grind of being a professor at her office.

Culture of the Tongue

Maya Wagner

Exploring humanity under a lens of language, linguistics professor Judith Kaplan-Weinger and NEIU alumna Char Ullman recently co-wrote a textbook titled "Methods for the Ethnography of Communication: Language in Use

in Schools and Communities."

Dr. Kaplan-Weinger explained, "Ethnography from an anthropological standpoint looks at anything and everything about behaviors and cultures. Ethnography of communication is just looking at the language aspect of culture."

"Ethnography of communica-

tion is a way of finding out how members of different communities use language. The idea is we accept that diversity in language use exists in the world. This is a way to gather information about that diversity in language use and analyze it," elaborated Kaplan-Weinger.

The main goal of the textbook is to serve as a resource for students across various disciplines such as anthropology, education, linguistics and sociology. "The point is it takes you through the steps of the research process, the ethnographic research process, from deciding what community to study through gathering data, talking to people in the community, writing up your data, analyzing your data and presenting your data," Kaplan-Weinger said.

The book is more than just an instructional guide however, it incorporates aspects of social theory that Kaplan-Weinger has a personal connection to. "I feel like I was born an ethnographer in a sense that I always observed and took in the world and tried to figure out what was going on and learn by observing. And that to me is what ethnography's about. When you're doing it in school there's some theory behind it. For example one of the focuses on our book is the idea

of...social theory."

Kaplan-Weinger added, "It's the idea of what we call the subaltern. The people who are not given a voice by the rest of us...therefore may feel that they don't have a voice. So if ethnographers who choose to can go into those communities and share with the rest of the world that these people have a voice...and get that information out on a social justice side, we're helping give a voice too."

It's important to note that this social theory is a relatively recent development in the social sciences. Kaplan-Weinger continued, "Scientists, theorists, we used to really keep a line and we'd say 'we don't go over the line,' so we stay descriptive and objective and that's it. But with social theory people have begun in a sense crossing the line and being able to, when asked, make recommendations."

Kaplan-Weinger advocates for the idea of using ethnography to achieve social progress. "Again... it's best when a member of that neighborhood, that community, finds out about ethnography or sociology or social justice or anthro or something and says 'Wow, I can use these tools to study my community and to share my community and the truth about my commu-

nity from the inside out,' that's so valuable because we all close our eyes to somebody, to something."

Ethnographic studies also have practical applications in the business world. "Ethnography itself is used in not only anthropology, it's used in medicine, it's used in corporations. For example, corporations will bring ethnographers in to... find out how things are working," says Kaplan-Weinger.

Individuals who aren't academics, businesspeople or social justice crusaders can also benefit from learning about ethnography. As Kaplan-Weinger explained it, ethnographic studies opened her mind. "Ethnography has taught me over the years - and it's been 30 years - to value each and every person and therefore each and every community for who they are and what they are. Because what ethnography does is get you to understand people from their point of view and even if I don't know every person in this universe, what that teaches me is everybody does have a point of view and if everybody has a point of view, I have no business saying what's better or worse. It's a funny thing but I would call ethnography like my perspective or my vision of life. It's how I live my life."

NEIU To Offer New Master's Program in Social Work

Grace Yu

NEIU will begin offering the Master of Social Work (MSW) program in the Fall 2016, according to a university press release. Becoming NEIU's 36th master's program, the MSW will be accredited like its Bachelor of Arts counterpart (BASW), and promises advanced study and a competitive training credential at NEIU's affordable tuition rate.

"75 percent of our students have gone on to graduate school in the Chicago area as well as across the country...with the addition of the MSW at NEIU we can offer a more affordable choice for our students," stated Dr. Jade Stanley, Chair of the Social Work Program, in an email.

The new program will benefit current NEIU students who are already familiar with the learning community, allowing BASW graduates to complete a one-year MSW starting in Fall 2017. Other students without a social work background can complete the degree in two years.

Michelle Klus, a junior at NEIU, considered attending another university closer to her job to enroll in a master's program for behavioral sciences after completing her bachelor's degree. However, that program did not have a focus on professional social work.

"Now, you can already plan out what you're going take. You're al-

Photo courtesy of NEIU's Social Work Department



Historically, the Social Work Department at NEIU has always been very active, in 2012, they organized a 3rd annual bridge to SSA event.

ready going be familiar with a lot of teachers," said Kuls. "You're already creating a home and a family here" She later added, "Plus, the master's degree is specific in social work, strictly social work...other programs they don't have all that."

Broadening students' array of options, a choice of campuses in the Chicago area will be offered for both the BASW and MSW at the NEIU Main Campus and NEIU's campuses at El Centro and CCICS.

NEIU's social work programs are also unique in that they prepare students to return to offer services to their communities or to fight for social justice for the marginalized.

Especially noteworthy is the NEIU programs' ability to prepare bilingual social workers as a Hispanic-Serving Institution.

The initiation of the new MSW aims "to meet the growing demand of our students for professions that lead to lifelong learning, and a profession that gives back to the community in various ways," said Stanley.

Stanley continued, "This has been a dream of mine since coming to NEIU in 1993, and this dream has been shared by many social work educators and practitioners who have worked with our students."



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MONDAY, MARCH 2, 2015

9:00 - 9:50 am **Keynote Speaker**

Is the Asia Pacific Becoming the Indo Pacific? The Emerging China – India – U.S. Trade Triangle: Will Trade Mitigate Area Conflict and Tension?

Mike Sacharski
Managing Director
Pacific Enterprise Capital International
Chair, Hawaii Export Council
Honolulu HI

10:00 - 10:50 am

ACCO in Asia: Why and Why Not

Neal Fenwick
Executive Vice President
Chief Financial Officer
ACCO Brands Corporation
Lake Zurich IL

11:00 - 11:50am

From Start-up to a Real Company: A Case of Student Entrepreneurship at Kookmin University in Korea

Jay Kim
(Main presenter)
Sophomore
KIS International Business

Dr. Seung Ryul Jeong
Vice President
International Affairs and Public Relations
Kookmin University
Seoul, South Korea

Noon - 12:50pm

Intellectual Property Based Collaborations, Partnerships, and Deals Between Pan Asia and the Midwest

Gary Keller, Ms.B.
Chief Executive Officer
Xomix Ltd.
Chicago IL

1:00 - 1:50pm

Forum Selection in International Transportation Contracts: Choosing Jurisdiction Before Legal Disputes Arise

Richard L. Kilpatrick, Jr.
Assistant Professor of Business Law
Department of Accounting, Business Law and Finance
Northeastern Illinois University

2:00 - 2:45pm

OPEN HOUSE Q&A WITH MIKE SACHARSKI
Visit and talk with the Conference Thematic Keynote Speaker

5:40 - 6:55pm

Shifting Global Demographics: The Implications for North America & Asia, and How American Companies Can Profit

Doris Nagel
Chief Executive Officer
Blue Sky Consulting Services
Vernon Hills IL

7:05 - 8:20pm **Keynote Speaker**

Managing the Growth of Global China: Implications for U.S. Business and American Policy-Makers

Mike Sacharski
Managing Director
Pacific Enterprise Capital International
Chair, Hawaii Export Council
Honolulu HI

TUESDAY, MARCH 3, 2015

9:25 - 10:40am

East Meets West and the Impact on Architecture

Juan Gabriel Moreno
JGMA
Architect for NEIU El Centro
Chicago IL

10:50 - 12:05pm **Keynote Speaker**

The Jams and Jellies Paradigm: The Convergence of America's National Security Interests and American Overseas Trade

Mike Sacharski
Managing Director
Pacific Enterprise Capital International
Chair, Hawaii Export Council
Honolulu HI

12:15 - 1:30pm

Macroeconomic and Financial Integration in Asia: A Sneak Peek at the Indian Experience

Dr. Hardik Marfatia
Assistant Professor
Economics Department
Northeastern Illinois University

1:40 - 2:55pm

Australia – A Hidden Gem in Asia-Pacific?

Mona Pearl
Founder and COO
BeyondAStrategy
Chicago IL

4:15 - 5:30pm

Going Global – 5 Secrets of Success for a US Foreign Owned Subsidiary

Koh Fujimoto
CPA CFE CIA JD MBA
Principal
Corbett, Duncan & Hubby
CPAs & Consultants
Itaska IL

5:40 - 6:55pm

Leveragable Experience: Getting The Most From Living Or Working Abroad

Bill Stranberg
Principal
Stranberg Resource Group
Libertyville IL

7:05 - 8:20pm **Keynote Speaker**

*Where Have We Been?
What Did We Find?
Now What?*

Mike Sacharski
Managing Director
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A New Age in Chicago politics

Robin Bridges

In the election on Feb. 24, there are some new folks on the ballot – at least seven of this year's aldermanic candidates are under 30. Why is this a big deal?

The youngest sitting alderman in today's Chicago legislature is 34 years old. The 47th ward alderman, Ameya Pawar, has held this position since 2011. (Pawar is also the first Asian-American alderman.) However, the main requirement to run for alderman is that you must be a registered voter. In other words, you have to be 18. Yet, the youngest member of this council is almost twice that age. Does age really equal experience – or wisdom, or legislative and community know-how?

These questions are better answered with another question. What does an alderman do?

Alderman James Cappleman in an interview with WBEZ summed up his position saying, "I am so focused on pot holes and sidewalks, and I just didn't think that would be the case." Aldermen handle what's referred to as "ward business," which, in most cases, is anything the people bring them. Things like neighbor disputes, garbage dispos-

al, pot holes and even sidewalk issues. They handle any issue deemed too small or localized for city government.

Age is nothing but a number. Ask any homeless teen or domestic violence survivor if their age made them more experienced or wiser. Experience makes you more experienced. With the aging baby boomer population settling down to do baby boomer things, it's time for a younger leadership generation to take its place.

These young candidates are community leaders, ambitious students and graduates and former "Chicago Machine" political aides. They all seem to be running on the platform of change in the way local government is run. But will they be taken seriously by a city that doesn't question why 14 percent of the candidates for alderman are running unopposed – some running after their opposition was eliminated by committee objection?

This recently updated process by which candidates are added to the ballot has for many previous elections ensured that current elected officials run unopposed. Just getting on to the ballot is sometimes enough to keep the status quo.



Photo by Sergio Almodovar

This is how you know its election season.

The new candidates can't gain the experience without "getting hired," but they're not getting hired without experience. This sounds familiar to anyone applying for a job. How can young candidates prove themselves without the experience, especially if voters are focused on age, not issues?

This inexperience also has the potential to spring unaligned politicians into places where they can enact the changes they propose. Former Chicago alderman turned university political scientist, Dick Simpson put it best saying, "A big problem with aldermen in the city of Chicago is they don't legislate very well." He added, "They'll look at what comes across their desk, ask what the mayor wants and vote 'yes.'" The current system of go-with-the-flow politics isn't working, as judged by last year's never-fixed potholes and the child care subsidy

program shut down this year. If day care centers aren't being paid and potholes aren't being fixed, it begs the question, where's the money going?

A 20-something professional or community advocate, as most of these young candidates are, could easily handle the run-off administrative responsibilities of an aldermanic position. The aldermen of Chicago and their "ward business" are not the in-depth policy making of Capitol Hill or even Springfield. It seems to be more neighborhood babysitting gig meets secretarial scheduling.

Young aldermanic candidates are looking for changes to the way local government handles itself. Illinois is best known for its corruption and quid pro quo politics. It is time to stop complaining about the need for change, and just make the change already!



Photo by Jamelle Bouie

End police Brutality.

Ferguson Six Months Later

Maya Wagner

Six months ago, a small town in Missouri faced an unspeakable tragedy. A white police officer by the name of Darren Wilson shot an unarmed black teenager. The victim, Michael Brown, was allegedly a suspect in a local store robbery.

The events that occurred in Ferguson between Brown and Wilson on Aug. 9, 2014 are highly disputed. Witnesses at the scene say Brown charged at Wilson while others say Brown was running away when Wilson fired. Regardless of who initiated the struggle, the fact remains that Brown is dead while Wilson is alive.

When looked at on an individual basis, it seems like this is

just a simple case of an officer defending himself. However, when placed within the social context of a country that has a long, complex history of racial violence – and features many more actors than just the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) – Michael Brown's case becomes a lens for looking at contemporary relations between white and black Americans.

Evidence of racial prejudice is hard to prove in an era when people believe that all racists are KKK members who wear their beliefs on their sleeve. The truth is that racism is a complicated thought process that is so pervasive and insidious that most racists are average individuals who can work jobs such as doctors, teachers and even police

officers.

There are critics who have been misusing the words and philosophy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. to shame the residents of Ferguson after the protests took a violent turn in November when a grand jury decided not to indict Wilson. To say that Dr. King would be ashamed of the whole black community in Ferguson is not just wrong, but shows a gross lack of understanding King's legacy.

It was Dr. King himself who said, "a riot is the language of the unheard" in a CBS interview in 1966. Although that quote was said within a larger context that did not condone violence, it showed that as an African-American, Dr. King understood well the suffering that

black Americans faced not even a half-century ago. Even though great strides have been made towards equality since Dr. King's time, unarmed black individuals are still being shot to death every year by police officers.

The real question isn't if Dr. King would condone the actions of the Ferguson protestors, but if he would approve of the social conditions that allowed for Brown's body to be left in the street for four hours as if Brown was another pile of road kill.

The question of whether Ferguson, Missouri was the site of a protest or a riot is debatable depending on who is spoken to. What some saw as senseless violence with no goal in sight, others saw as a fight for justice. To this day there are still protesters in Ferguson, albeit a small number. In addition, more African-American residents of Ferguson have begun to initiate political change by running in elections for local office. It is also worth noting that U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder is pursuing a lawsuit against the Ferguson Police Department over charges of racial discrimination.

Racial bias within police departments is a widespread problem that is reflected in various statistics of police initiatives such as the New York Police Department's "Stop and Frisk". The policy allows NYPD to stop any individuals they deem suspicious and do a body search for any contraband. In fact, multiple studies have shown that Latinos and African-American are disproportionately targeted by police officers and that white individuals actually tend to carry more weapons and illicit substances.

Would Dr. King approve of a society where the quality of black lives is less important than damaged property? I doubt it.

I Dig Therefore I Dib

Rafael Villa Jr.

"Dibbing" has been accepted as Chicago tradition since blizzards were introduced by nature – well, at least since people have had to dig out spots to park their cars in.

The term "dibs" was coined this year, and the controversial tradition has broken up neighborhoods via useless furniture.

"What?" You must be asking yourself, how can furniture destroy relationships between neighbors? First of all, there has to be a massive snowstorm or a blizzard. It usually leaves more than a foot of snow, give or take.

Now in order to call "dibs" on a spot, you must sacrifice time and possibly your health while enduring the savage elements to shovel. The final step to completing your "dibs" ceremony will require you to place unwanted furniture, preferably a chair, to protect your newly

acquired territory. Oh, and by the way, the "dib" claim is only legitimate for 48 hours after the snowstorm. Leave your furniture out for longer and the city may hastily dispose of your work.

Now there are unspoken laws that should never be broken during dibs season. You should never take another person's "dibbed" spot within the 48-hour period after the storm. If you do, you could risk retaliation ranging from slashed tires to broken windows, but if you are lucky, you might get a rude note on your car.

To be fair, there is a law that prohibits citizens from using dibs to claim public property, viewing the items placed to hold the spot as litter. Unfortunately, the city does not enforce this law thoroughly enough for it make a difference. I would bet that the city trying to save some money could have something to do with it.



Photo by Rafael Villa Jr.

Can you dib it?



Photo by Luke Ma

The Paris Skyline

A Call to Arms for France

Harry G. Karadimos

Last month, two Muslim extremists, Chérif Kouachi and his brother Saïd Kouachi, reportedly ran into the headquarters of the satirical magazine Charlie Hebdo in Paris and systematically executed 12 unarmed employees of the magazine in cold blood with AK-47's and critically injured others.

Also in Paris, their fellow jihadist, Amedy Coulibaly, shot and killed four unarmed Jews at a Hyper Cacher supermarket, according to police. Police shot and killed all Jihad suspects except a female

named Hayat Boumeddiene who is still unaccounted for.

It is believed the cowardly attack was initiated because Charlie Hebdo has a history of ridiculing the Muslim Prophet Muhammad. This was the shooters way of retaliating rather than using a more educated response by creating commentaries of their own, challenging Charlie Hebdo. The Hyper Cacher supermarket motive appears to have spawned from a deep hatred of Jewish people.

An unarmed police officer named Ahmed Merabet was executed outside of the Charlie Hebdo

office by the shooters. As Officer Merabet lay wounded after being shot initially, the two gunmen ran over to his location and executed Merabet while he lay wounded on the ground.

How rational is the French government for expecting unarmed police and private citizens to operate in a world where so many illegal weapons make their way across the globe and into the hands of criminals that terrorize unarmed people?

According to a report published by the Associated Press, French authorities have known

for some time that 1,200 citizens in France are linked to terrorism. Many have gone to Iraq or Syria to join Middle Eastern Jihads. Yet the wisdom of the French government is to keep its private citizens and a portion of the police unarmed and helpless.

Charlie Hebdo was bombed back in Nov. 2011 after publishing an edition called "Charia Hebdo" with a picture of Muhammad on the cover saying, "100 lashes if you don't die laughing." Clearly terrorists were living in France at this time. Keeping French police officers and civilians unarmed in the face of such danger shows a remarkable amount of stupidity on the behalf of the French leadership.

Since as far back as 1939, France has placed many restrictions on the ownership of weapons, and currently employs many police that respond to serious crimes without the ability to protect themselves.

Clearly, the firearm culture in France is much different than in the United States, where the average citizen can apply for a concealed carry permit and carry a loaded firearm for their protection.

Unfortunately for 27-year-old rookie French police officer Clarissa Jean-Philippe, she was not armed on the day she was allegedly murdered by Amedy Coulibaly and Hayat Boumeddiene during a traffic stop in Montrouge less than 24 hours after the Charlie Hebdo murders. She became victim of France's absurd gun laws.

According to The Telegraph in the UK, when Amedy Coulibaly took many hostages at the Hyper Cacher supermarket, he laid a dysfunctional weapon on a counter in the store. One of the hostages grabbed the gun and aimed it at the Jihadist whose back was turned. The firearm did not discharge. Coulibaly reportedly killed the hostage when he realized what he was doing.

What if the hostage had his own weapon? Instead of grabbing a useless weapon, he could have drawn a weapon fully capable of disabling the terrorist. An armed hostage could have brought this criminal's reign of terror to an end and saved a few lives in the process.

The attack on Charlie Hebdo has caused the French government led by President Francois Hollande to step up a counter-terrorism effort. The French plan on spending 425 million euros for better guns, 2,600 counter terrorism officers and the retaining of 7,500 military personnel to better fight terrorism, according to the Associated Press.

Although this sounds good, it would be better if France would arm all of its police officers instead of leaving many unarmed and defenseless. France should also allow for its population to join a concealed carry program that could help prevent the next massacre waged by imbecile religious zealots against an intelligent people expressing their satire via the freedom of the press.

Je suis Charlie!

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SPORTS

Pitchers, Catchers Report. Cubs, Sox Hopeful

Andrew Pappas

Baseball is back in Chicago.

Not literally, yet, as pitchers and catchers just reported to their spring training camps in Arizona last week, but figuratively, as expectations are elevated on both sides of town following a successful offseason.

The Cubs front office seemingly expedited their rebuilding plan this offseason, which has fans as excited for Cubs baseball as they have been since the arrival of team president Theo Epstein and general manager Jed Hoyer in 2011.

Epstein and Hoyer quickly reloaded their farm system upon their arrival, but expectations were limited for the major league team. After last season when big name prospects like Javier Baez and Jorge Soler made their way to the big league team, the rebuilding plan quickly progressed from laying the foundation to putting supplies

together, ready to construct a contender.

The Cubs brass put together one of the most impressive offseasons in the league headlined by manager Joe Maddon and ace pitcher Jon Lester.

Coming off one of the best seasons of his career, the 31-year-old Lester will be the Cubs' anchor in a generally underrated starting rotation. Lester's FIP, or Fielder Independent Pitching (a measurement of a pitcher's performance that strips out the role of defense, luck and sequencing, making it a more stable indicator of how a pitcher actually performed over a given period of time), was an impressive 2.80 last season. For context, anything below 2.90 is considered excellent.

Lester was just one of the big free agents signed by the Cubs. They also acquired two-time All-Star catcher Miguel Montero, centerfielder Dexter Fowler, infielder Tommy La Stella and pitchers Jason

Hammels and Jason Motte.

Those free agents will join cornerstones Anthony Rizzo and Starlin Castro in hopes of a playoff berth for the Cubs, the first since 2008.

Rizzo finished tenth in MVP voting last season with 32 home runs. He has improved in each of his three seasons with the Cubs. If that trajectory continues, Rizzo will quickly become one of the most feared hitters in baseball. Castro's bat has been pretty consistent in his young career, but his focus and fielding both showed improvement last season. He should be set to enjoy a fourth All-Star season in 2015.

There is a possibility that we will see a few more of the Cubs' highly touted prospects this season too, namely Kris Bryant who has dominated both Triple-A and Double-A and is widely thought of as the top prospect in baseball. If the young Cubs can continue to grow as Rizzo and Castro have, this team really is a contender.

They are not the only team in town with championship aspirations, however.

The White Sox also enjoyed one of the best offseasons in baseball.

The biggest move for the Sox was the addition of former Cub starting pitcher Jeff Samardzija. The 30-year-old righty should be a rock solid No. 2 pitcher behind perennial Cy Young candidate Chris Sale. Jose Quintana, John Danks and Hector Noesi fill out the Sox rotation. Quintana was a quality No. 2, so he should be one of the best No. 3 pitchers in baseball; Danks and Noesi both showed flashes last season of being great back-end of the rotation pitchers.

They also added reliable bullpen arms with David Robertson and Zach Duke, as well as veteran bats in Adam LaRoche and Melky



Photo by Ben Grey

First baseman Anthony Rizzo led the Cubs in home runs, RBI and OPS (on-base + slugging percentages) last season.

Cabrera to bat both in front of and behind superstar Jose Abreu.

If the White Sox position players stay healthy, they boast one of the deepest lineups in the American League Central division. Outfielders Adam Eaton and Avisail Garcia both missed significant time last season due to injury, and both are key parts of the Sox lineup. Eaton was not only the spark plug of a revamped offense last season, but he also finished the year as a Gold Glove finalist for his determined outfield play. His fearlessness in the outfield resembles that of former Sox fan-favorite Aaron Rowand.

While the outfield is set with Cabrera, Eaton and Garcia, the infield still has some positional battles that need to play out. Abreu and seven-year veteran Alexei Ramirez solidify first base and shortstop, but questions still remain at second and

third base. Former starting second baseman Gordon Beckham was re-acquired, but is expected to play a more utility role while youngsters Carlos Sanchez and Micah Johnson battle it out at second. Sanchez probably has the upper hand as he played almost 30 games with the big league team last season, but Johnson's upside may be enough to earn him the starting position. Last season's starting third baseman Connor Gillaspie returns, but still leaves much to be desired. Playing a traditionally powerful position, Gillaspie had just seven home runs last season. He has put on 15 pounds of muscle in the offseason, but as a line drive hitter, it's hard to see him ever putting up big power numbers. If the Sox can get quality play out of those two positions in question, they should be contending for the A.L. Central come August.

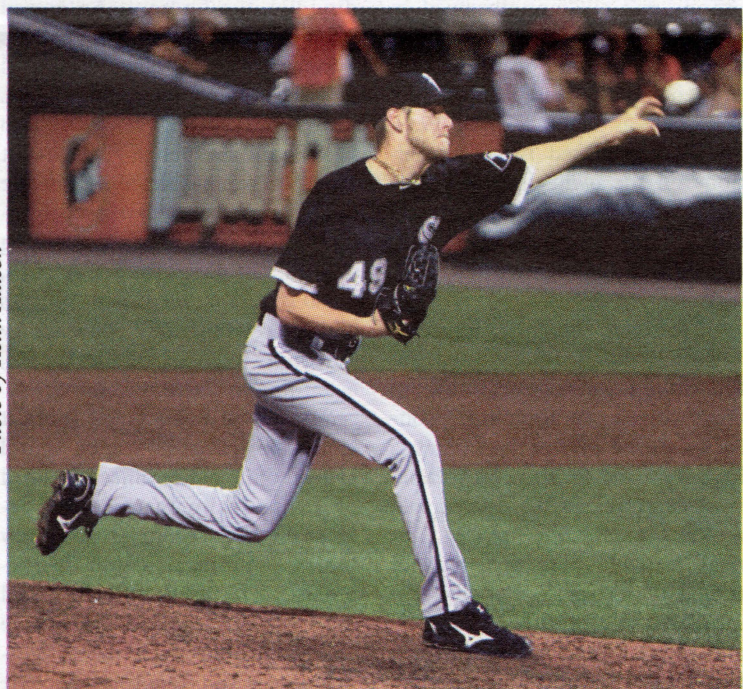


Photo by Keith Allison

Chris Sale has finished in the top six of Cy Young voting in each of the last three seasons.

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Restraining Order Dismissed, Cubs Continue Construction

Alejandra Franco

The Chicago Cubs are at their spring training home in Mesa, AZ, but meanwhile at their summer home, Wrigley Field, renovations are still underway.

The renovation of Wrigley Field is coming down to even the smallest of details. In 2004, a contract was established between the Cubs and the rooftop owners of the buildings the line the stadium's outfield. The rooftop owners agreed to pay the team 17 percent of income from their total business profits and in exchange, these rooftop owners had unblocked views into Wrigley Field from their businesses.

There is one line from the con-

tract that both sides cannot come to agreement over, however, and that is the legal definition of "expansion" of Wrigley Field. The Cubs argue that the expansion of the bleachers and the addition of the signs (which would ultimately end up blocking the view of these rooftop businesses) are part of the expansion and renovation of the ballpark. The rooftop owners counter that these signs are not part of such renovation and should be banned from being installed.

In the latest development, two rooftop owners filed a temporary restraining order in an attempt to prevent the renovation of the ballpark from continuing. This restraining order can be filed if a business is in immediate threat of

being harmed. The Cubs, however, argued that the rooftop owners knew about the signs for months already, and since the season is not underway yet, their businesses are not being affected immediately. The ruling from a U.S. District Court Judge dismissed the restraining order from the rooftop owners and the Cubs were granted permission to continue the renovation project.

The rooftop owners are not making this expansion an easy one for the team, but they are not the only factors affecting the changes being made to the 101-year-old stadium. Despite all their efforts in preparing for the challenges the renovation could bring, the Cubs confirmed that the new bleacher section, which is the first part of a



Photo courtesy of flicker user "Unique View"

The clear view most Wrigley rooftops had of the playing field will soon be blocked by signage.

four year plan, will not be ready in time for Opening Day in April.

Looking past the situation with the stadium, the Chicago Cubs in Mesa are preparing for what is surely going to be an interesting season at the renovated Friendly Confines.

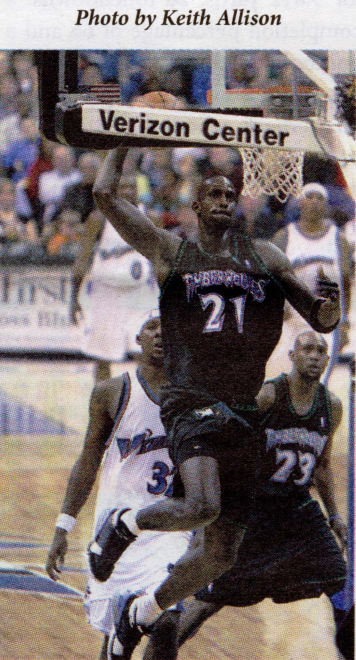
Who Won Chaotic NBA Trading Deadline?

Andrew Pappas

It was an active trade deadline in the NBA last week. A record amount of players, 39 in total, changed teams in an explosion of transactions that left fans and media in a frenzy in the waning hours before the deadline struck.

The biggest winner of the trade deadline was the Oklahoma City Thunder. Kevin Durant and company are fighting for a playoff spot after a slow and injury-ridden start to the season, but their recent acquisitions should help secure them one of the eight playoff spots in the Western Conference. OKC acquired point guard D.J. Augustin, center Enes Kanter and wing players Kyle Singler and Steve Novak. They did lose explosive backup point guard Reggie Jackson, but Jackson was likely to leave in free agency at the end of the season and Augustin probably fits better leading the Thunder's second unit. Kanter provides them with front-court depth that is necessary come playoff time, especially in the West. Novak has barely played in Utah this season, but Singler has been solid in Detroit while starting for most of the season. The Thunder is a team that no one in the West will want to play come April.

The biggest losers of last week were the Miami Heat, even though they pulled off the most impressive trade. The Heat traded point guard Goran Dragic, who was averaging 16 points per game in Phoenix, for point guard Norris Cole, washed-up swingman Danny Granger, a few no name players and a few draft picks. Acquiring Dragic instantly made the Heat a dangerous team in the East. That was true up until the news of Chris Bosh's hospitalization. Doctors are concerned that Bosh may have developed a blood clot in his lung and may be out for the season. If that's the case, any playoff success is out the window for the Heat. It's fair to question whether they would have even



After eight seasons with the Celtics and Nets, Kevin Garnett is returning to Minnesota where he played the first twelve seasons of his career.

made the move for Dragic if they could have known about the subsequent news.

Other interesting moves include Kevin Garnett's return to Minnesota, Tayshaun Prince's homecoming to Detroit, the Bucks swapping point guard Brandon Knight to Philadelphia for last year's rookie of the year Michael Carter-Williams, the Celtics trading for dynamic point guard Isaiah Thomas and Western Conference contending Portland Trailblazers picking up some offensive depth by acquiring Aaron Afflalo from the Nuggets.

While only a few 2015 title contending teams made moves of consequence, many franchises altered their future with trading of young players, future draft picks and expiring contracts. A few of those contracts may be bought out by the new organizations, which will lead to a bidding war between contenders for veteran talent.

Vegas On Ice: NHL Explores Option for a New Franchise

Nick Bianchi

Construction is already under way on the Las Vegas Ice Arena, but is creating a Las Vegas pro hockey team really a good idea?

Adding a new team to the NHL would be a game changer. It would bring about a new roster for players who might otherwise be stuck in the minors, a new potential threat to teams accustomed to regularly making it into the playoffs, a change to the in-season matchups -- the list goes on. However, Las Vegas is known as Sin City for a reason. Most of the people who stay long enough to call it home work for the

established entertainment industries.

The novelty of combining Vegas style with the thrill of hockey (and potentially basketball, too) is interesting, but professional sports teams rely on season ticket holders to survive, which would mean about ten thousand people committing to 40 tickets per season as the minimum for this plan to work in the long run. With almost the entire population of the city working for the casinos and restaurants and half of them working during game times, there doesn't seem to be anyone left to work in the arena, much less buy tickets.

What's more, while athletes might end up spending some of their salaries in casino and restaurant industries, it's hard to imagine a sports arena competing with an industry focused on keeping its visitors inside their casinos, hotels and restaurants as long as they are in town (all day, every day, if possible).

Adding these to all of the normal obstacles involved in creating a new franchise make Seattle and Wisconsin look like much better options for the NHL. Maybe Vegas could try the NFL -- it is currently the nation's most popular sport, and they would only have to secure season tickets for eight home games.

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Photo by Mike Morbeck



Quarterback Jay Cutler is entering his seventh season as Bears quarterback with his third head coach and fifth offensive coordinator.

Last Dance With Jay Cutler

Larry Thigpen

There was a ton of blame to go around at the Chicago Bears headquarters, Halas Hall, after last season's embarrassing 5-11 season. Regarding front-office staff, a number of names could have been thrown into the mix (and were, as many front office executives were fired).

However, it was what transpired on the field that had fans pulling their hair out.

Other than the newly added coaching staff, the biggest topic of discussion in the offseason has been the status of mercurial quarterback Jay Cutler. There is significance behind the scrutiny of the quarterback position because NFL teams

revolve around it. Almost all the great teams with historically winning cultures that go deep into the playoffs and ultimately win Super Bowls have had great quarterbacks to lead them.

With six seasons in Chicago under his belt, Cutler has yet to display the level of greatness his physical talent would have you believe he is

capable of. The 31-year-old will be entering his seventh season as Bears starting quarterback, and with him at the helm, the team has been to the playoffs just once in 2010, when they lost in the NFC Championship against their hated rival, the Green Bay Packers. Also, with Cutler as a starter, the Bears have had an overall record of 49-47.

Sure, the quarterback's often-dismissive attitude may be part of the negative energy surrounding the franchise. However, giving up on him at this point may lead the franchise to a much darker place than where it currently stands.

During Cutler's tenure, one topic of discussion has been his nonchalant demeanor and seemingly uninterested personality. He is often criticized for not being an off-the-field leader, and he is especially scrutinized when the team is not winning. But, when the team is winning and Cutler is on his game, he can be one of the best players in the league at his position. During the two seasons under the Phil Emery/Marc Trestman regime, the Vanderbilt product put together two decent statistical years. In Trestman's West Coast styled offense, Cutler threw for 2,621 passing yards, 19 touchdowns, a completion percentage of 63 and a quarterback rating of 89.2 in 2013. In 2014, he threw for 3,812 yards, 28 touchdowns, a completion percentage of 66 and a quarterback rating of 88.6. Clearly, he can be a statistically productive quarterback when surrounded by

the star talent the Bears offense possesses. That fact alone makes any fan or analyst believe that his apathetic attitude and inability to read defenses in clutch situations is what is truly holding the Bears back.

Cutler has an arm like a rocket, and when he's into the game both physically and mentally, the Bears offense is noticeably much more dynamic. Unfortunately, the biggest downfall in his game always seems to be the unnecessary game changing interception that comes at the most important moments of the game. That can't happen if you want to contend for the playoffs.

There are a number of future picks to be selected in this year's draft. However, bringing in a rookie quarterback may be more of a risk than just keeping Cutler for the time being. Over the past fifteen years, the Bears have had seven different starting quarterbacks and none of them were able to sustain success during or after their tenure in the orange and blue. That, in and of itself speaks volumes. This vital piece to an NFL organization has been an issue for Chicago in recent history.

So, should Cutler be the Bears starting quarterback? No, probably not. Will he be? Yes, because even with all of the baggage that comes with him, he is still the best option heading into the 2015 season. Ultimately, will Cutler be a long-term option? That should finally be decided after the upcoming season.

Paxson-Thibodeau Rift Could Prove Disastrous

Andrew Pappas

The Chicago Bulls and head coach Tom Thibodeau may be parting ways at the end of the season. The well-documented power struggle between Thibodeau and front office duo John Paxson and Gar Forman may have finally reached its breaking point.

Thibodeau came to the Bulls in 2010, when the team finished with a league best 62-20 record but eventually lost to the Miami Heat in the Eastern Conference Finals. The Bulls' dominance in the regular season earned him the Coach of the Year award.

The following three seasons were all injury-riddled, and each ended earlier than Thibodeau's inaugural season in Chicago. During those three years, the 57-year-old coach helped a team of average players maintain respectability through hard work and defensive intensity — perhaps too much intensity at times, depending who you ask.

Two of the people you could ask would be Paxson and Forman, who would probably both agree that Thibodeau pushes his guys too hard. They've both stated on numerous occasions that the ultimate goal is to be healthy in April, May and June, something Thibodeau has not been able to achieve with his pedal-to-the-metal style.

This fundamental difference may be the reason that one of the best coaches in basketball will no longer be in Chicago next season.

"The only way you get repetition is you have to practice," Thibodeau said in a post-game press conference following a win against the Warriors earlier in the season. "The more you practice, the better you practice, the better you're going to play. That's time tested, age old, however else you want to de-

scribe it. That's what you gotta do if you want to win."

While that may be true, it has also been proven that a more modern approach can work. The San Antonio Spurs have made back-to-back Finals appearances with a more easygoing style in the regular season. Stars like LeBron James and Dwayne Wade often take games off in the middle of the season to preserve themselves. This new train of thought is completely foreign to Thibodeau, so much so that he almost seems incapable of grasping the concept.

But his results really cannot be argued with. Thibodeau won a playoff series as an underdog with Nate Robinson as the team's starting point guard and leading scorer. He has elevated the games of Luol Deng, Joakim Noah and Jimmy Butler to an All-Star level. His 238-127 record with the Bulls should speak for itself, and yet, this rift still exists.

It isn't the first time Paxson has had trouble getting along with his head coach, either. He got in multiple physical altercations with former coach Vinny Del Negro over a minutes restriction on Joakim Noah in 2010.

It would truly be a shame if the stubbornness of a few men drove a huge asset away from Chicago. Coaches like Thibodeau don't come around often, and losing him would no doubt be a huge setback for the organization.

The Bulls have been streaky throughout the first 50-plus games of the season. They've shown the ability to compete with the best, but also look apathetic at times. As with any other organization, success helps everyone be a little more content, so if Thibodeau is to keep his job in Chicago, a deep playoff run may be the only option.

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN MARCH?



Bulls vs. San Antonio Spurs



Bulls vs. Memphis Grizzlies



NFL Free Agency begins



Blackhawks vs. San Jose Sharks



NCAA Men's Basketball Tournament Selection Sunday



NCAA Men's Basketball Tournament Round 1



NCAA Men's Basketball Tournament Round 2



Bulls vs. Toronto Raptors



NCAA Men's Basketball Tournament Elite 8

Diversity Week at NEIU

America the Great Melting Pot: NEIU Celebrates Diversity Week 2015

Nick Bianchi

Too often, we allow our differences to create rifts between each other. We lose out on the chance to grow closer by avoiding people we don't understand.

By taking Diversity Week seriously, NEIU has gone to great lengths to change this. The old cliché is true: college is the time to get outside of your bubble and explore new things, because you might never have the time or op-

portunities available when you get into the "real world." Learning about each other doesn't have to be a painful though; in fact, there were some really fun events this past Feb 16-20

The week kicked off with a glimpse into other students' cultures through music, crafts and food from around the world. Ensemble Español and Aloha Chicago provided entertainment on Monday, Second City held an Improv show Tuesday and the Lunar New Year Celebration ran all day

Thursday - all of which were free to attend. However, the highlights of the week included Leadership Pathways, a SpeakOut GLBTQA panel, an Interfaith panel and the Deaf Culture talk, events held to learn about and discuss our differences openly in a safe environment, something you probably won't find outside of a university setting.

It was both an enjoyable and informative week. Hopefully, you didn't miss out.



Photos by Rafa Villa and Joshua Lustig



Members of Anime Chicago during the Lunar New Year.



Two performers demonstrate their skills on International Day.



Photo by Josh Lustig



Pandora's Box creates an environment for safe and open discussion.

Striving for Tolerance and Diversity: Feminist Read-Out at Pandora's Box

Steven Villa

Pandora's Box, a monthly event hosted in the Angelina Pedrosa Center, is one of Northeastern's most vital and most valuable forums for discussion of controversial social issues.

Founded and organized by Anett Zlotorycki and Belkisa Aslani, both event coordinators for the Women's Resource Center (WRC),

Pandora's Box discussions cover topics as diverse as urban farming, women's rights and the Black Lives Matter movement.

At the Feminist Read-Out on Jan. 27, students and faculty were invited to read and discuss excerpts of women's literature. Some members of the discussion brought their own books, while others picked one from the Pedrosa Center's generous collection.

"You could bring your own work, you could bring the work of an author you admire [or] you could choose from the book cart," said Joanna Snawder, Director and Deputy Title IX Coordinator for the WRC and the sponsor of Pandora's Box.

Some 16 or so students, faculty and staff gathered for the Feminist Read-out, and the group was arranged in a circle around a

small table in the Pedrosa Center Lounge. The Read-Out began when members of the circle were asked introduce themselves with their names and gender pronouns.

Snawder explained gender pronouns to the group. "[It's] how you want to be referred to: she, her, hers; he, him, his; they, them, theirs. There are lots of different ways to think about the way that a person might interpret their gender pronouns, and we just don't want to make any assumptions about how people identify."

The readings chosen by attendees for the reading were far-reaching and diverse. Excerpts from the works of Audre Lorde, an analysis of La Malinche and her tarnished reputation and an article on the harmful and sexist nature of certain explicit words, among other things, were all featured at the read-out.

The discussions ignited by the readings were as important as the readings themselves. One attendee, Robert Hall, spoke on the importance of rooting out logical fallacies in racist or misogynist arguments. If you can identify the fallacy, Hall explained, the rest of their argument will fall apart. "There's always one common thread and one common fallacy that the person who holds onto it believes in," he said. "If someone holds onto that belief, they build their entire prejudice around that, then basically no-one is safe. Someone who says black issues aren't a problem until black people

bring it up, they can probably say the same thing about women."

Later in the event, an excerpt from the book, "The Will To Change: Men, Masculinity, and Love," read by Zlotorycki, prompted a thorough discussion the use of sexually charged obscenities — all words that are banned, for good or ill, from this fine publication. Some attendees argued in favor of these words and some against. One attendee argued the words could be re-oriented and directed against those who denigrate women.

After the event, Snawder related the event's name, "Pandora's Box," to the Greek myth inspiring it, the idea being that by releasing through discussion what she called the "Proverbial Evils" of social issues, peace and tolerance could be better promoted. "What people don't remember about the myth," Snawder said, "was at the bottom of the box was hope."

On the full purpose of Pandora's Box, Zlotorycki said, "[It's about] finding what effects us through what we eat and body image and some more complex happening [that's] not in our backyard. [We want to explore] how this [ties] into the global scale of womanhood and manhood and anyone who doesn't identify with those genders."

Pandora's Box recurs monthly, and the next segment, "Grassroots Leadership in the #Blacklivesmatter Movement," will be occurring today, from 12:15-1:30 in the Angelina Pedrosa Center.

Ruth Page Dance Series Presents "Giordano Dance Chicago" at NEIU

Kristen Reyes

For all of you who claim you "can't dance," I challenge you to do it anyway.

This year's annual Ruth Page Dance Series presented longtime friends of NEIU, the Giordano Dance Chicago Company (GDC), to the stage of our auditorium on Feb. 17.

This was the first time I had been in the auditorium since I was a freshman in my Spanish dance class. I was right in the middle of the nearly full upper row of seats. Coincidentally, I ended up sitting directly behind the Artistic Director Nan Giordano, her assistant and the executive director Michael McStraw who were all very charming, as well as passionate about their work. In the audience were many dance students of NEIU, and to my left, a young man who I watched perform with his dance club the day before during International Day. Before the show began, Giordano was ready with a pen and paper in hand to take notes on the show.

As Artistic Director of this dance company, one of Giordano's jobs is programming. She selects choreographers to create pieces (their dances), and provides concepts and structures to their collaborative final products into a journey for the audience.

"We always want people to

leave wanting more, being energized with what we do," McStraw said about the company's objective. The programs are strategically created to take the audience through a roller coaster of emotions, and I feel that was done extremely well during this show.

For over fifty years, Giordano Dance Chicago has received rank and praise for their new ways of incorporating different styles into their jazz dance.

The company originated in Evanston when Giordano's father Gus Giordano and his wife opened up their first dance studio. As of today, they are officially dancing in downtown Chicago in their Michigan Avenue studio location. After so many years of touring and performing all over the world, GDC has kept jazz dance very much alive. To Giordano, jazz is special because it has "energy, passion, power and soul," and its purpose is to make people feel good energy and display beauty and emotions with different (dance) styles.

GDC is more than just dance. It is visual art.

Everything from the costumes, the interesting sounds and music and the use of colors in the lighting and shadows all contributed to each piece with great impact. My favorite dance of the night was called 'the only way around is through' (choreographed by Joshua Blake Carter with concept and structure by Giordano) which was



Performer's from Giordano Dance Chicago take the stage in the auditorium.

a very touching piece about a victim of some sort. The dancer who played this victim was constantly tumbling to the ground, over and over again until the end when she finally rose and exposed her ripped costume. Giordano described this piece to be one of the few that actually had a theme, which was about "people living with the HCV (Hepatitis C Virus) and the journey they go through the struggle, the stigma, the burden and then the hope."

Alongside with creating hope

in their performances on stage, GDC has a program called "Jazz Dance Science and Health" which holds over 300 classes each year teaching 4th, 5th and 7th grade students in the Edgewater, Logan Square and Englewood communities in Chicago. The program teaches about bones, muscles and proper nutrition with dancer reinforcement. What kinds of reinforcement, you may be asking yourself? According to Michael McStraw, "If your teacher is telling you about the major muscle

groups and you're doing a grand plié, feeling your quadriceps and your glutes," you're putting your mind and body to work.

A special message from Giordano and McStraw to the rhythmically challenged: "You're probably not going to be a professional, but anybody can dance!" said Giordano.

Do it in private, do it when you're alone, do it around and with your loved ones. The point is, if it makes you happy, be like Nike and "just do it."

Photo by Steven Villa

The Second City Comes to NEIU

Maya Wagner

A western style opera about a love triangle with Kim Kardashian and Kanye West was just one of the outrageous scenes that NEIU students helped create when The Second City performed last Tuesday.

The show was a part of the new Diversity Week initiative that Student Leadership and Development (SLD) coordinator Elvis Guzman spearheaded.

"I had this idea back in December where I wanted to recognize the diversity of NEIU students, so I decided to do this Diversity Week event where every day of the week I would have programs that would not only capture the interest of students and create awareness, but to really just showcase...the diversity of Northeastern."

A colleague told Guzman about The Second City's Outreach and Diversity program since Guzman was looking for a "fun" component for Diversity Week.

"I did some research, and the outreach and diversity from The Second City recognizes that the field is predominately white men,

and so they created this program where they started taking more diverse comedians and more diverse performers to do their [sketches] and when I saw that I thought, 'That's amazing.'"

Guzman coordinated the event with The Second City's Director of Outreach and Diversity, Dionna Griffin-Irons.

"Our work that we do at Second City Outreach and Diversity is about being more inclusive and exposing this art form to more people of color," she said, also explaining that The Second City's Outreach and Diversity Program is a great way to infuse comedy and humor into NEIU's Diversity Week.

The format of the show was a mixture of previously written sketches and live improv using audience suggestions to create comedic scenes.

"We hope that people take away that improv is definitely a tool, an art form, that should be experienced and shared by all," said Griffin-Irons.

One of the highlights of the night included a sketch about an energy supplement. The crowd erupted in laughter as the actors

explained their various reasons for needing extra energy, which ranged from "my roommate stole my Ad-derall" to "I work all the time."

The true test of The Second City's talent came when the cast had to work with random audience suggestions of "dating," "graduation" and "pancakes." From those three words, the actors generated hilarious scenes that included a valedictorian with an ego, Bill Gates's wife and a gay couple on their first date.

The show ended with a Q&A where the audience asked the performers different questions. A particularly revealing moment occurred when one of the actors, John Thibodeaux, revealed that he used to be an engineer in Silicon Valley. Thibodeaux changed careers because he did not love what he was doing with his life, and this was spun into a teaching moment for the audience.

Sarah Peace, a junior music education major, was inspired by Thibodeaux's admission. Peace took away from the show "that you can pursue great, funny things." Peace also said that she was possibly interested in exploring opportunities in improv after watching The



Photo by Maya Wagner

Second City performers capture the stage at "The Second City: Outreach & Diversity Improv Show."

Second City.

"Improv is a life skill that many people can use," Griffin-Irons said. She continued, "Improv is a great art form to find your voice, to learn about trusting your instincts, to build interpersonal skills, to be an effective team member and most important, one of my mantras is to give yourself permission to play and to stay out of your head and be in the moment."

Griffin-Irons wants people to

know the value of improv. "It's a great way to tell stories, it's a great way for people to laugh at a little bit of everything that's going on, whether it's personal — or at things in the world — but just to have a good time and understand that everybody has a story and everybody has a perspective and we can always use that in humor as part of this art form, and that's something that everyone should be exposed to."

The Ice Ribbon at Maggie Daley Park



Photo by Laura Rojas

Maggie Daley Park's unusually shaped Ice Rink is good fun for people of all ages.

Laura Rojas

Even though it was at least 10 degrees below freezing and the wind numbed my lips, my discomfort was replaced by wonder as I watched patrons glide over the

icy, curved paths of what is known as the ice ribbon at Maggie Daley Park.

It isn't the predictable oval ice rink we are so accustomed to. Instead, it's a winding, loopy trail with two sharp turns at its farthest points

and wider curves in the middle.

The new recreational center opened Dec. 16, 2014. You can rent a pair of skates for only \$12 and skate as long as you desire — or at least before you begin to lose feeling in your fingers and toes. It's

open Monday through Thursday from noon to 8:00 p.m., Fridays from noon until 10:00 p.m., and on the weekends from 10:00 a.m. until 9:00 p.m., excluding the few hours each day it's closed for ice resurfacing.

There is also an elaborate children's play center on the park grounds. It isn't being used as regularly during these winter months as it will be used in the summer. When I was there, the children's park was nearly void of children, and who I saw going by were couples and families, people who had just gone ice skating. One particular family enthusiastically relayed their visit. A young patron, Josh F., had never visited Chicago before and he described his first encounter as, "Colder than I thought, but it's really cool because the buildings are really big."

Wes and Josh, both of whom are first time patrons of the park, enjoyed their time snaking across the twisting track as they tried to race each other. Wes, a citizen of Chicago from Logan Square in his 40's, explains that he hasn't gone ice skating in nearly 30 years, since he was a teenager.

He had hurt his arm this evening falling on the ice and even that hadn't soured his experience. His brother-in-law Josh, who is 14 years old and lives in Louisiana, had just tried ice skating for his first time and said, "I think I got better faster than I thought I would."

Wes, assuming the big brother role, quickly retorted, "I don't think he was good at all." They laughed at each other and both expressed their eagerness for their next visit to Maggie Daley Park.

Hearing their excitement and sharing in their enjoyment made me feel like my commute from the northwest suburbs was truly worth my time. The skyline is breathtaking in the dim evening light and the unique form of the skating path urges you to step foot on the ice and give it a try. You may also be excited to know that there should be a rock climbing wall ready for use when the weather permits. With this harsh winter season Chicago has been going through, Maggie Daley Park gives us something to look forward to when our city will finally be able to shake away its frost and show off its blossoms.

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El Centro Hosts First Ever Spanish Film Festival

Kristen Reyes

NEIU was selected out of 100 participating schools to receive a grant to screen some of the best contemporary Spanish and Latin American films of the last few years.

For the first time, the Spanish Film Club (SFC), an initiative by PRAGDA (a film distribution company), will be airing five films from Central America, Latin America and Spain at the El Centro campus every Wednesday for the next month. The goal is to encourage universities to "provide professors and educators from every department access to materials rarely or never seen within North America and other territories, [because] knowledge and cultural exchange are keys in a country where Hispanics are the largest minority," according to PRAGDA's website.

NEIU students, faculty and the public were invited on Feb. 11 to the first Spanish Film Festival screening sponsored by the Department of World Languages and Cultures, the Office of Cultural Events and the Latino Resource Center.

I went in alone and ended up sitting next to a young man in the process of applying to NEIU who found out about the event while

filling out applications on NEIU's website. There were around 15 to 20 people filling the lecture styled classroom to see the Venezuelan film "Pelo Malo," in English, "Bad Hair".

People of all ages and diverse backgrounds, provided with free popcorn, were first introduced to Paul Schroeder-Rodriguez, head of the Department of World Languages and Cultures at NEIU, who said: "The films are all very recent, five from Latin America and one from Spain, and all speak to contemporary issues ranging from sexual and ethnic identity ("Bad Hair"), to transnational migration ("Here and There" and "Who is Dayani Cristal?"), adult education ("Illiterate") and aging ("Wrinkles"), through thoughtful and oftentimes suspenseful dramas."

Once the room was silent, the lights were turned off and the film began.

Anyone who knows me will tell you that I am a huge movie fan. My family and I have a collection with all types of genres from sci-fi to romance, but lately I have been really into documentaries. "Pelo Malo" in some aspects it reminded me of a documentary.

The director, Mariana Rondón, brilliantly used the storyline of a fictional young boy to project the



Photo courtesy of Cinema Tropical/FTGa Film

Junior, played by Samuel Lange Zambrano, on a bus in "Pelo Malo."

various aspects of human life that can be found in a Latin American city like Caracas, Venezuela. On the surface, the story was about a young boy who grew up hating his hair because it was very unmanageable. He hated his hair so much that he did everything in his power to tame his curls. He used oil and mayonnaise and even asked his grandmother to blow-dry it behind his mother's back. This boy lived in a subsidized housing unit with his mother and baby brother and was constantly taking care of his mother who could not seem to keep a job.

Through political chaos arising,

and gangs and sex offenders walking the same streets as the boy, the director subtly dropped images into the life of a person living in Caracas. However, no matter what he experienced in the day, when he returned home and looked in the mirror, all he worried about was his hair, which I believe is why this very emotional story kept its viewers from crying.

This film focused mainly on two very "taboo" topics in many Latin American countries, racism and sexuality. The boy's mother could never understand why her son was so obsessed with having straight hair that it would drive her

crazy with rage. The movie also constantly questions gender roles and the difficulty of accepting Afrocentrism in Latin America.

If you can handle a kind of dense and heart-cutting type of film, I wholly recommend going to the next screening! Screenings will be held every Wednesday at the El Centro Campus in Room 201 from Feb. 11. to March 11. Tell your friends and family, pack some snacks and be prepared to get a glimpse at another part of our world from a different and fresh perspective.

Chicago: Cool Places on a Budget



Photo courtesy of Wikimedia Commons

Museums like the Art Institute of Chicago and The International Museum of Surgical Science, among others, have free days available.

Robin Bridges

It's not cheap being a student, and it's not cheap living in Chicago either. Here are a couple things you

can do, when you're low on cash, or you're trying to save, that can make a day in the city a little more eventful.

Food To Eat

At O'Donovan's Pub, on 2100 West Irving Park, Monday burger and Wednesday taco specials will keep dinner under \$10 a person — including beer for those over 21.

\$2 burgers are available on Monday and \$2 tacos on Wednesday. The average beer is about \$6.50. You could easily get away with a \$5-\$8 dinner if everyone sticks to soft drinks. The specials only come with soft drink or alcohol purchase, between 4-11 p.m.

On Fridays at the Lion's Head Pub, on 2251 North Lincoln, it's great to wash down the 25 cent wings available from 4-7 p.m. with a \$4 draft. They have a decent selection of on-tap and bottle beer. It's a good way to end the week. Eight wings and a beer will keep the bill under \$10 and give you the wiggle room to tip well.

Shows to See

Whip out that student ID and head on down to the theatre. The theatres that I've experienced these discounts best at are the Goodman Theatre and the Lifeline Theatre in Rogers Park. At the Goodman, on 170 North Dearborn, you can order your ticket online beginning at 10am the day of the show with Promo code "10TIX." You can call at anytime to pick it up with your student ID.

At the Lifeline Theatre, show up before any KidSeries show and tickets will be available at any price you're willing to pay. The way to ensure your seat is to go to a matinee show — that is, any show before 5 p.m.

For those who like to plan ahead, check out hottix.org and goldstar.com for anything from "free" to half price tickets at just about any venue or event in the city. There is a service charge anywhere from \$3.50-\$5, but the ticket price is 100 percent free. Filter your search for comp tickets and your world of "free tickets" awaits.

Things To Do.

All the Chicago Museums have free days; all you need is a state ID. The problem with these free days is that everyone and their mother go to them and the lines can get a bit outrageous. Instead, I like to pick the "other" free days. The Museum of Contemporary Art is free throughout the day on Tuesdays, as is the Museum of Surgical Science. It sounds gross, but it's totally nifty if you're into that kind of thing. Loyola University Museum of Art is free on Tuesdays as well.

The Art Institute of Chicago is free Thursday night from 5-8pm. The Chicago Children's Museum at Navy Pier is free from 5-8 p.m. on Thursdays as well. It is also free for adults on the first Sunday of every month — which will save you about \$15 bucks per adult.

The Museum of Contemporary Photography at Columbia College is free everyday, for those who need a daily dose of art in their lives.

NightCrawler: Crime Culture is the New Pop Culture

Joseph Birko

Dan Gilroy's film, "Nightcrawler," expands on this meaning in such a dark and exciting way that as a viewer, you don't know whether you're in the right or wrong. Louis Bloom, played by Jake Gyllenhaal, is an idealistic yet cruel individual who said the quote below - and wholly believes in the message behind it.

"Last year, I took an online business course, for example, and I learned that you have to have a business plan before starting a business - and why you pursue something is equally as important as what you pursue."

Bloom wants to be the best freelance film-man and is willing to do what is necessary to make it to the top. Gilroy's interpretation of moving up in the world involves doing questionable things, risking the lives of others and saying one thing,

but then doing something else.

When I see Gyllenhaal's performance as Louis Bloom, I see a dark personification of the American Dream. He does such a good job displaying this childlike innocence, when being confronted to new ideas and worlds, but is able to transition easily into a cruel and determined perfectionist when aiming for his best. Louis Bloom isn't a character that's easy to identify with. I would understand if the audience finds his character repulsive and yet interesting at the same time. In one minute, one can be captivated by his willingness to go far ahead in his field, and in the next, one finds him a monster for the way he treats the people around him.

Not only does Gilroy display to the audience characters with moral ambiguity like Nina Romina (Rene Russo), who is willing to do anything to get more viewers, but he also displays the dark side of the

city of Los Angeles. Throughout the course of the film, I felt that there were two sides of this city: the city during the day and the city during the night.

I know it's obvious that many major cities have this characteristic of duality, but what makes this so interesting is that while many people would shy away from the dark parts of any city, characters like Bloom and others like him are actually attracted to this underground world of crime and horrific accidents because they view it as a way to move up in the world.

What this film does is show that while these characters make horrible choices in relation to how they manipulate the media, it is the viewers that allow this behavior to persist. As I was watching this film, I came to the realization that the motivations behind their choices stem from what the audience wants and what they are attracted to. This

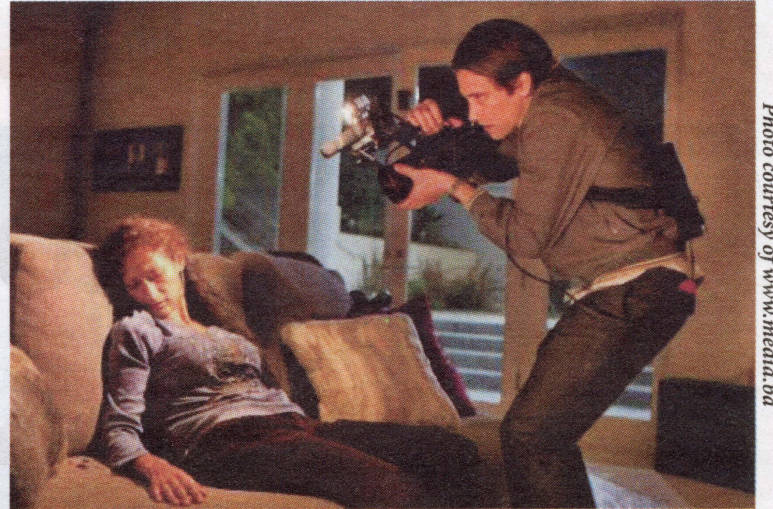


Photo courtesy of www.media.ba

Jake Gyllenhaal in his chilling performance as Louis Bloom, petty criminal and ruthless freelance cameraman.

is interesting because it gave me the feeling that we, as an audience, were responsible for the actions that happen, not only in the film, but also in the real world.

Overall, I highly suggest that

people see this film, not only because of the characters, the writing, cinematography or direction, but also because it gives us a good look at why our media runs in this particular way.

StartUp: A Podcast About Starting A Podcast



The process of starting a podcast has never been as well documented, or as entertaining, as it is in Alex Blumberg's StartUp podcast.

Andrew Pappas

The former producer of "This American Life" and co-founder of NPR's "Planet Money," Alex Blumberg, has started his own podcast. About what, you ask?

It's about starting his own podcast.

The weekly show "StartUp" began last fall, but it's ongoing and releases bi-weekly episodes, each of which is about 20-30 minutes long.

The basic premise of the show is the journey of starting a for-profit podcast or podcasting company. Blumberg takes you on an all-inclusive ride through the few ups and many downs of being an entrepreneur, especially in such a young industry. He uses real time audio footage from conversations he had with his wife, potential investors, business partners and himself - the latter mainly happening in the wee hours of the morning when this pretty crazy venture keeps him from sleeping. At one point, he talks to himself, psycho-analyzing the children's book "The Giving Tree" at about 4:00 a.m.

From the get-go, Blumberg reels you in with a humorous yet heartbreaking narrative about his meeting with potential investor Chris Sacca.

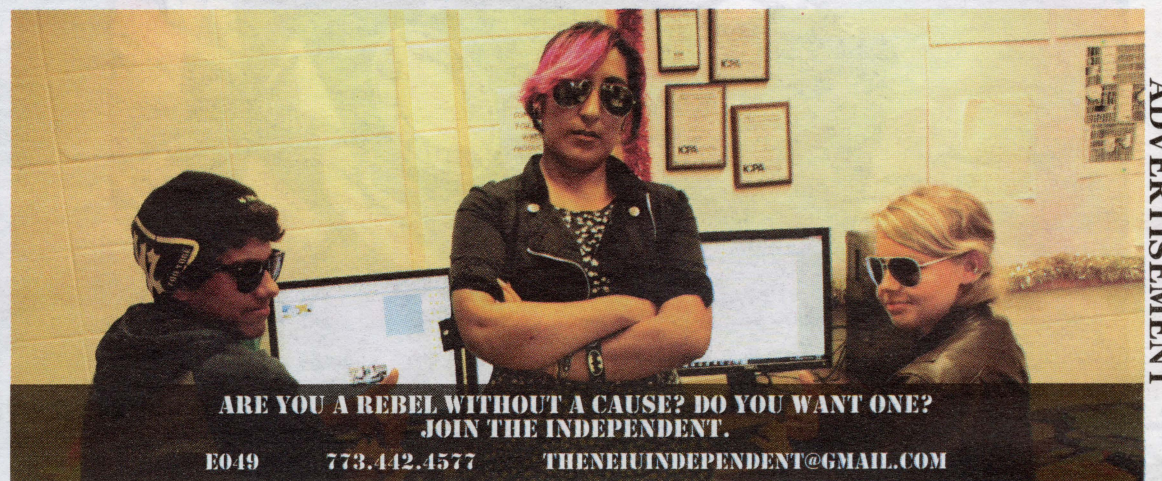
Sacca is a billionaire angel investor who probably hears something close to 100 pitches a week - and probably denies 99 of them. Blumberg's podcast company fell into that category in the first episode. He uses real footage of their conversation, but shapes it with rock solid narration. At the end of the pitch (and episode), Sacca gives Blumberg a tough love lesson on how to improve his pitch. Those lessons pay off in future episodes. Blumberg now runs Gimlet Media (a name that was created in his fifth episode) out of a Brooklyn office with co-founder Matt Lieber.

I expected some awesome story telling with a résumé like Blumberg's, and I received just that. StartUp differs from most other podcasts I've listened to in the fact that it's a narrative shaped by quality writing and even better dialogue. Many podcasts are simply stories being read or round table discussions on one or more topics.

Blumberg's openness and transparency is clear in each story. He even uses that strategy when it comes to his advertisers, using real conversations about the deal making process instead of a boring, scripted, general radio spot.

This approach is unique, and vital to the success of both Blumberg and StartUp. There are thousands of podcasts out there; he had to do something to make himself different - and he did. Blumberg has a family, and left a full time job to create something out of nothing. He expresses the risk involved, but he doesn't generate a "poor Alex" reaction of sadness, but rather a "go Alex!" type of fandom.

I was hooked after the first episode. You don't have to be interested in entrepreneurialism or media to enjoy StartUp. You just have to enjoy a good story told by a good storyteller.



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