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NECC Observer

The award-winning student newspaper of Northern Essex Community College • Haverhill and Lawrence, Mass.

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Next stop: Housing



Photo by Editor-in-Chief Lidia Ramirez

Merrimack College Crest apartment building in North Andover.

BY LIDIA RAMIREZ
Editor-in-Chief

Tomorrow is here and NECC's new housing contract with Merrimack College is signed and ready! After the college has investigated into housing, the last minute prepa-

rations and action finally took place in late August .

The first set of students moved in the last week of August and the first week of September to start the fall semester, almost a week before classes started.

"It models a traditional housing contract for a school. It's a 10 month contract typically September 1 to June 1," said Executive Director of Student Life Jessica Eckstrom.

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What's Happening?

Women's Volleyball White Out: Come out and support our Knights as they take the court against the Community College of Rhode Island! Oct. 13 Arrive early to grab free White Out t-shirts, mini volleyballs, and free food @ 6:00 p.m. Game @ 6:30 p.m. Gym building, Haverhill Campus.

NECC Theater presents 'Steel Magnolias' Thursday, Oct. 15 at 4 p.m. Friday, Oct. 16 at 7 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 17 at 7 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 18 at 2 p.m. Location: Chester H. Hawryliw Theater, Spurk Building, NECC Haverhill Campus, 100 Elliott St, Haverhill, MA. Guests are encouraged to arrive 15 minutes before curtain. Tickets: General admission is \$25; students and seniors are \$10. Tickets are available at the door or in advance via Ticket Leap.

Editorial

Stay prepared for advising appointments

By **ZAK NIGOHOSIAN**
Correspondent

The majority of full-time community college students aim to get an associate's degree in two years, but if you're

not properly prepared for your advising appointments, your adviser might not be able to help you register for all the classes you need.

Northern Essex Community College recommends that all first-year students book a scheduling appointment with an adviser to help them register for classes. In my case, I was able to successfully register for five classes per semester with the help of an adviser; however, when it came to the fall semester of my second-year, I was unfortunately told that NECC wasn't offering any of the classes I needed to be able to graduate by the following spring. This was obviously upsetting to me, as myself and my family had major life plans that were dependent on me graduating by the spring, but the most upsetting part was finding out that there were in fact classes for me to take — my adviser just couldn't find them for me. So, in hopes of preventing other stu-

dents from having to take six or more classes in one semester at any point during their college education, I went searching for the answer as to why registering for classes was so difficult.

It's good to keep in mind that there are certain classes Northern Essex only offers every couple of years. If you aren't informed about these types of classes by the time you're registering for classes, or the roster is full by the time you register, you may be faced with waiting two years or longer before fulfilling that program requirement.

On the topic of classes only offered every few years, I spoke with Northern Essex's Writing Program Director, Professor Patrick Lochelt.

"Unfortunately, the college doesn't have enough of a student base/interest to run those more niche classes more frequently," he told me, and by niche classes, he meant, "Fiction, CNF, Screenwriting, even Poetry" for Writing majors. "I wish we could run them all every semester, but the classes simply wouldn't fill. On top of that, the college just set in place a general standard of courses needing at least 15 students to stay on the schedule during registration ... I know some students who needed some Literature courses for their degree plans this semester, but the in person class that was offered was canceled due to low enrollment, and they weren't able to get the class they needed."

In other words, if your major isn't of great interest to enough students on campus, you're unlikely to find availability for the classes you need to graduate; it makes one wonder why Northern Essex offers degrees for majors that they don't regularly offer classes for. A full-time student should be able to obtain their associate's degree within

the two years it should reasonably take, without waiting for enough students to apply in hopes of obtaining that degree as well.

Northern Essex has also previously offered a solution called a "directed study," where professors can modify the syllabus/class setup to accommodate one student, and will work one-on-one on a specific schedule with the student to get them the exact course credit they need. This seems to be a very helpful solution, and not only for the individual student; it also creates a set-up that can work for a possible online class, which caters to student availability even more. However, from what Lochelt can tell, Northern Essex wants, "to limit the directed study opportunities to students who need classes that run VERY rarely."

So, not a very accessible alternative, unless you're in dire need of a course requirement that's basically nonexistent; a situation that, again, might make one wonder why a student would be in that position to begin with, and why a college would let a student apply for a degree that doesn't generate enough interest to allow them to finish within two years.

Additionally, it's also best to know what credit requirements you need to fulfill in order to graduate before booking your advising appointment. When the college recommends you get assistance with scheduling from an adviser, you might automatically assume that the adviser you're meeting with will be able to tell you what classes you need based on your DegreeWorks information. This was true in my case for my first two semesters — my advisers looked at my degree requirements, found out which classes aligned with

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NECC Observer

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Room C-318, Spurr Building,
100 Elliott St. Haverhill, MA 01830

Newsroom 978.556.3027
Adviser 978.556.3397

Advertising 978.556.3397
observer@necc.mass.edu

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Spring 2025 Observer Staff

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF : Lidia Ramirez

OPINION EDITOR : Tristan Taylor

FEATURES EDITOR : Stacy Zappala

A&E EDITOR : Omayda Massa Torres

A&E EDITOR : J.T. Melanson

CHIEF SPORTS EDITOR : John Mulcahy

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CAMPUS LIFE EDITOR : Nasrin Musa

FOOD EDITOR: Sharon Donovan

FACULTY ADVISER : Mary Jo Shafer

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We welcome letters and articles from our readers. You can submit via email, and must include your name and phone number for verification. Write "Letter" or "Article to Editor" in the subject line so we notice it right away.

Send your letters to observer@necc.mass.edu

We try to publish all letters we receive, but we reserve the right to edit or reject those we receive.

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Opinion

Five ways to boost your job search beyond online applications

BY KATIE YEATON-HROMADA

Coordinator for Career Services and Internship Programs

Change direction or career path for best opportunity, turn or transform to different direction, choice or alternative way to progress concept, businessman draw new arrow metaphor of change direction.

You've probably heard the term doom scrolling: endlessly swiping through social media and losing track of time. Job searching can feel much the same way. You scroll through page after page of postings, looking for a role that matches your skills, interests, and goals. Before you know it, two hours have passed.

Reading description after description, decision fatigue sets in. You've saved four jobs you want to apply to, but you start to feel disappointed that it took two hours to identify these jobs. You may feel tempted to apply to anything that seems remotely relevant. A few quick-click applications later, you cross your fingers and hope for the best. A few weeks go by and you haven't heard any updates on your applications. Frustrated and overwhelmed, you begin doom scrolling again.

While the convenience of one-click applications on sites like Indeed, LinkedIn, and ZipRecruiter is appealing, those applications often don't produce the results candidates wish for. In

today's competitive market, job seekers must spend extra time researching employers, verifying opportunities, tailoring application materials, and protecting themselves from scams. The job search can feel like a job in itself.

That's why it's important to balance online applications with opportunities to connect directly with employers.

This semester, take the opportunity to connect with employers through on-campus and virtual career events. Whether this is your first semester or you're about to graduate, there's something in it for you. Explore your career options, search for an internship, or prepare for a full-time role; these events offer a chance to meet employers, learn about organizations, and hear about opportunities firsthand. Online job boards remain an important part of any job search, but they are often most effective when combined with direct employer engagement.

Here are five ways in-person and virtual career resources can help boost your search. The theme is simple: they help you connect with real people.

Use your resources before you need them

Many students wait until they're actively job searching to seek help, but the best time to prepare is before the need arises. Connect with Career Services. We can help you develop your resume, practice interviewing, strengthen your LinkedIn profile, build networking

skills, and create a professional brand. The more prepared you are, the more confident you'll feel attending events and engaging with employers.

Attend a Career Services event on campus

Make a memorable first impression! Career Services hosts employer information sessions, recruiting visits, career fairs, and networking events throughout the fall and spring semesters. These events give you the chance to introduce yourself, ask questions, and learn more about potential employers before submitting an application. Even a brief conversation with an employer can help you stand out from the dozens—or hundreds—of applicants using quick apply.

Log into an employer-hosted event

Did you know Handshake hosts dozens of virtual employer events every semester? Many of these sessions focus on job search advice, hiring timelines, internship opportunities, and company culture. Attending a virtual event is a convenient way to meet recruiters, learn what employers are looking for, and ask questions from wherever you are. Best of all, these events are free to attend. Explore upcoming opportunities through Handshake at necc.join-handshake.com.

Meet for an informational interview

Informational interviewing is one of the most effective networking strategies you can do. Think of it as a coffee

chat or a 15-minute conversation with someone working in a field that interests you. You're not asking for a job; instead, you're asking for advice, insights, and perspective. These conversations can help you learn about career paths, expand your network, and uncover opportunities that may never be posted online.

Visit your professor's office hours

Professors are more than instructors; they're professionals with industry experience and a professional network of their own. During office hours, ask about career path related to your major, internship recommendations, professional associations, or alumni working in the field. A quick conversation could lead to valuable advice, a referral, or a connection that helps you take the next step in your career.

Online job boards will continue to play an important role in the job search process, but they shouldn't be the only tool in your toolbox. Connecting with real people can make all the difference. A series of conversations, experiences, and connections, they add up and help you grow as a professional. Challenge yourself to attend at least one event this semester—you never know where it may lead!

Looking for career support? We're here to help!

Connect with Career Services for help in your job search and get personalized career guidance.

This paper is your voice, too!
We want to see what you have to say.

You can reach us at:

observer@necc.mass.edu

Opinion

The need for ranked choice voting

By **TRISTAN TAYLOR**
Opinion Editor

While controversial in nature, ranked choice voting has recently seen a surge in popularity, and the state of Massachusetts should adopt it, but only if done right.

Using the states of Alaska and Maine as examples, in elections, they have an open primary, where everybody runs against each other. The top candidates, regardless of partisan affiliations, advance to the general election and the general public ranks them from first to last, depending on how many are allowed to advance to the general election. This means the will of the people is often shown, compared to states with partisan primaries. In those states, candidates will often have landslide victories when many are choosing the candidate that they believe is “the lesser of two evils.” In a state that has this system, a winning candidate may only receive a narrow majority over the other three, but this allows people to make their voices heard instead of voting for someone they don’t agree with just because they disagree with the other candidate more.

In many elections, candidates also like to create nasty and vicious campaign advertisements attacking their opponents. Americans born in the 21st Century have become familiar with these brutal tactics, and for some, it’s all they’ve ever known. Ranked choice

voting encourages civil campaigning. In 2025, New York City’s mayoral election was very civil, with mayoral candidates Zohran Mamdani and Curtis Sliwa often engaging in light-hearted banter. One could compare this to the 2024 presidential election, where both candidates threw jabs at each other in almost every ad they made. In addition, in 2022, Mary Peltola’s winning senate campaign in Alaska was able to focus on issues representing those who would become her constituents, rather than national issues taking the spotlight, as they do in any other election.

Ranked choice voting also reduces the need for voters to choose the candidate that could beat the other. Instead of simply voting for one person, voters rank the candidates. If the first choice candidate isn’t viable, the vote moves to the second choice, and then further down if necessary, eliminating the need for voters to play the role of “poll watcher.”

This system also eliminates the need for runoff elections, which are uncommon in Massachusetts, but are common in other parts of the country.

One might say this system is too complicated or that it delays the votes, or that it benefits only one party. These concerns are absolutely valid. We as humans are naturally afraid of change. However, not all change is bad, and these changes are an example of that.

To break it down, yes, a new voting system in the state of Massachu-

setts would absolutely create a learning curve. However, many voters in Maine found it easy to figure out once it was implemented. The same thing happened in Alaska. Ranked choice voting was also implemented for local elections in New York City. The combined population of those regions is over 10.7 million. If 10.7 million people can figure it out, what’s to say the 7 million people of Massachusetts can’t? Additionally, studies have shown that ranked choice voting has led to higher voter turnout in these regions.

Would it delay the results? Well, think about the past three presidential elections. The United States had presumptive winners, but the voting count went on for weeks, leading Election Day to become “Election Season”. With mail-in voting becoming popular during and after the pandemic, most votes are now cast before Election Day. Another key aspect is the count. Georgia’s senate runoff in 2022 occurred 28 days after the general election, had a lower turnout, and cost the state more in taxpayer dollars. Compare this to Alaska’s 2022 election, where the winner was proclaimed after the 15-day period required to receive absentee ballots. This proves the method is faster and more representative.

But does the system favor one party over the other? Diving into the system, it does put pressure on the status quo. This doesn’t necessarily mean it favors one party or another, it just means mod-

erates on either side of the aisle would have an easier time winning. That’s why politicians resisting the status quo, or with beliefs farther to the left or right of center, tend to resist and criticize the system. However, this did not stop DSA-backed Zohran Mamdani, a candidate with progressive views further left than most Democrats, from winning the 2025 mayoral election in New York City. If anything, ranked choice voting favors one group over any other: the voters.

Many believe that Question 3 on Massachusetts’ midterm ballots this year revolves around ranked choice voting. However, this would not be ranked choice voting. It would be an open primary, but voters would have to pick between the top two candidates in the general election. This goes back to the “lesser of two evils” comment made earlier. So, what does Massachusetts need to do? Well, I believe that the state needs to implement open primaries with the top four candidates advancing to the general election. This allows for a more representative election, and should be a ballot question in 2028.

For now, Massachusetts will stick to the traditional voting system, but in the future, ranked choice voting could be a way to fix the election system in the state and allow for more representation, which is what this country was built upon.

This paper is your voice, too!
We want to see what you have to say.

You can reach us at:
978-556-3633
observer@necc.mass.edu

Opinion

Is social media ruining DWTS?

By TRISTAN TAYLOR

Opinion Editor

Last year, *Dancing with the Stars* celebrated its 20th year on the air. The reality dance show, having aired on ABC, aired its 34th season, with notable celebrity contestants including actress Danielle Fishel, Pentatonix singer Scott Hoying, comedian Andy Richter, conservationist Robert Irwin, and influencers Alix Earle, Whitney Leavitt, and Jen Affleck all vying for the coveted Len Goodman Mirrorball Trophy, named after former head judge Len Goodman, who passed away on April 22, 2023, just months after the conclusion of Season 31 in 2022.

However, last season introduced one of the most brutal fan wars seen in American television history. There were three sides to this digital conflict: fans of Alix Earle, fans of Whitney Leavitt, and fans of Robert Irwin. One could argue a fourth side, fans of Andy Richter (nicknamed “the Fandys”), also participated. However, for the most part, the Fandys remained positive and only focused on getting Richter and his professional dance partner, Emma Slater, through every elimination despite consistently placing at the bottom of the leaderboard, until the quarterfinals, when they were eliminated.

It all culminated in a shocking semi-final elimination when Leavitt and her partner, Mark Ballas, were eliminated after a week during which Earle’s fans (as well as some fans of Earle’s partner, Val Chmerkovskiy), started hate campaigns against Leavitt, who routinely earned high scores and

placed at the top of the leaderboard. During the finale, Irwin and his partner, Witney Carson, were crowned the champions of Season 34. This led to many of Earle’s fans actively claiming the show was “rigged” in Irwin’s favor, and that the win was stolen, despite the fact that Irwin did indeed have more votes than her.

Fast forward to this year, where another brutal fan war is in the process of occurring. With sixteen couples this season, the competition is fierce. Notable contestants this year include *Jimmy Kimmel Live!* sidekick Guillermo Rodriguez, Olympic figure skater Amber Glenn, Paralympic track and field athlete Ezra Frech, Hanson frontman Taylor Hanson, comedian Connor Wood, actress Tatyana Ali, actor Harry Shum Jr., Savannah Bananas player and entertainer Jackson Olson, and actress Jenna Dewan.

Early criticism of Rodriguez, who is partnered with Witney Carson, started during the first live show, where they earned one of the lowest scores in the show’s history, 10 out of 30 total points. For context, rapper Master P and his partner, Ashly DelGrosso-Costa, competed in Season 2, where they earned the lowest score in franchise history, with 8 out of 30 points.

Meanwhile, fans were divided on Jackson Olson, who is partnered with Emma Slater, as he received scores in the middle of the pack. Taylor Hanson, partnered with Britt Stewart, received higher scores than Olson and Slater during the first week, in which influ-

encer Conner Leavitt and his partner, Adele Zaikman, as well as model Sarah Jane Nader and her partner, Hailey Bills, were eliminated.

During the third week of competition, Olson, Rodriguez, and Hanson all ended up in the Bottom 3 in one of the most shocking combinations in recent years. Hanson and Stewart were eliminated, and Stewart’s emotional reaction to the elimination went viral, with many criticizing her despite the fact that it was well warranted, as she has only made it past Week 4 twice since her first year as a professional dancer on the show.

Things came to a head on October 3, 2026, when Loco Beach Coconuts baseball player Erik Ostberg posted a video on TikTok, recreating Rodriguez and Carson’s foxtrot from the third week. Olson commented “But seriously how did you do this better than him with 2 hours of rehearsal” with a laughing emoji, which I find unprofessional, as, regardless of intention, it came off as disrespectful towards a fellow contestant. Olson deleted the comment a short while later, by which point it had been screenshotted and shared on social media. This led Rodriguez’s fans (nicknamed the “Guillermigos”) to respond by pointing out that, despite low scores, he is improving, and tensions have been running high between Olson’s fans and the “Guillermigos” on social media since, with fans of the show saying that internet conflicts such as this one have made the show hard to watch.

These examples of toxic behavior from fans have even made it hard for me to watch, and I’ve been an avid viewer of the show since Season 11’s semifinals. While I genuinely enjoy every dance and find even the lowest scoring contestants fun to watch, I have found the social media aspect has only gotten worse since it’s become a core element of the show.

Furthermore, the show is almost guaranteed to get renewed for a 36th season next year, and I would like to see social media play less of a role than it has this year. Before the days of TikTok, the show was messy, but contestants rarely disrespected one another (although there were many feuds between professional dancers during that time). I understand that bringing in professional dancers who are popular on TikTok (such as Rylee Arnold, Ezra Sosa, and Hailey Bills) is vital to the show and brings in a lot of new fans and a new core element of the show, and I quite like seeing these new professional dancers join the show. However, many fans, myself included, fail to see the appeal in engaging in these digital conflicts. If anything, it ruins the show’s fun and light-hearted competitive atmosphere.

I am looking forward to the rest of this season, but I seriously hope there are no more fan wars for the rest of the season. As a reminder, the show airs every Tuesday night (although one episode will air on Monday due coverage of the midterm elections this year) at 8 PM on ABC.

Opinion

Constitution Day celebrates founding principles

By MELISSA FERRIS

Correspondent

On September 17, 2006, Northern Essex Community College celebrated the 239th anniversary of the signing of the United States Constitution. Held outside in the quad of the Haverhill campus, the event hosted by Political Science professor, Seth Ridinger, in collaboration with the Liberal Arts Division, brought together students, faculty, and staff for a commemoration of the historical event that ultimately led to the formal union of the colony states and eventually the United States of America that we know today. Prof. Ridinger's opening remarks invited

us all to contemplate the power of the Constitution and its guarantee of protection of rights to all citizens. This year's Constitution Day celebration was punctuated with a dramatic reading of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights by NECC business major, Benjamin Swanney, who breathed into life a document most of us have only ever read on paper. He read for over half an hour and kept us all in rapt attention.

Booklet copies of the Constitution were available for all attendees and any passersby to take, and there was a brief quiz for students to take for a chance to win a \$25 Amazon gift card. Student Life provided pizza, popcorn, and snacks, which was a welcome addition

to the day's event.

Events like these enhance our college experience and allow us to connect with one another outside of the classroom. This event also provided opportunity to reflect on the Constitution and why it was written as it was -- as well as what it might mean to us today. The goals to form a more perfect union, to establish justice, to ensure tranquility, and to promote the general welfare remain valued pillars of our democracy, and ones each of us can embody or uphold in some way. The Constitution Day event was a great way to be reminded of the importance of coming together and for aspiring to make something better.



Photo by Melissa Ferris

Benjamin Swanney reads the Constitution during the Constitution Day event on Sept. 17.

Advising appointments, continued from Page 2

the credits I needed, and scheduled me for classes that would keep me on track to graduate within two years.

However, when it came to my first second-year advising appointment, I was told that there were no classes being offered that fulfilled my degree requirements (when, in fact, there absolutely were.)

To better understand why this happened and how other students can avoid a similar situation, I spoke directly with Academic Counselor Maria Medina, the adviser who unfortunately couldn't find any classes to register me for.

"Depending on the program's recommendations, they may want you to take something particular," said Medina, on the topic of free elective requirements, which in my case could have been fulfilled this semester.

"For Nursing students, they have free electives, but it has to be of global awareness, which is why so many

nursing students take World Religions. For other programs, they're required to take an elective with humanities awareness ... You can choose anything, but we encourage recommendations for better preparation."

In my case, the elective recommendations that came up on my DegreeWorks weren't being offered at all. She noted that there were alternative free electives that I could have been registered for, but because they weren't the ones specifically recommended by the Writing program, they didn't come up in conversation, which led me to believe that registering for them simply wasn't an option.

As of now, she confirmed that there is no way for students or advisers to stay informed on program availability.

"Advisers don't have information from the academic calendar until November 2, when registration opens, so it's true that there's no way for students to prepare. The Dean or the Department

Chair might have information that isn't accessible to us, which prevents us from making proper academic plans for students. Students can be as proactive as they can, but if we don't have all the information, we can't properly help them find the classes they need."

Despite this, Medina remains hopeful about recent changes regarding a new Vice President that has arrived at Northern Essex. "Changes take time. I think they are working on having the calendar out sooner."

This leaves room for optimism, but ultimately, it's up to the college to keep students and advisers as informed as possible, so that degree requirements can be fulfilled successfully; something that is not being done properly as of now.

"It's not always a clear path when it comes to advising, but please know that all advisers are doing their best to help students navigate their degrees and career goals," Medina concluded.

"Seeing students succeed is very rewarding."

Getting an associate's degree within two years should be achievable for any full-time student who dedicates the proper time and effort, but as of now, it's unfairly not up to the student's preparation or the advisers who are there to help them register for classes.

There is no way to know what classes are being offered until registration day, and if a student misses an opportunity or a class fills up too soon, there's also no way to confirm if/when those classes will be available again any time soon.

In order to stay proactive and successful when obtaining a degree, program availability and academic calendars need to become more accessible to students and advisers long before registration opens; and as of now, that ball is in Northern Essex's court.

Arts & Entertainment

Tarot Talk Part 1 — Settling in and finding your footing

By J.T. MELANSON

Arts & Entertainment Editor

As September transitions into October, the initial rush of the new academic year has officially settled. The crisp scent of fresh notebooks has faded into routine, syllabus week is but a distant memory, and Northern Essex Community College students are now facing the first real test of the term: maintaining steady momentum.

By early October, that early-semester excitement often collides with a quiet wall of reality. Assignments are beginning to pile up, group projects are officially assigned, and the first major grades are appearing on Brightspace. That delicate balance between academic life, work shifts, and personal well-being is put to the test. For this opening edition of Tarot Talk Fall 2026, we look to three classic archetypes to help us build focus, maintain curiosity, and protect our mental bandwidth before the mid-term fog sets in.

Archetypes for the Autumn Shift



1. The High Priestess (II) — Trusting Your Instincts Through Ambiguity

The High Priestess sits silently between two pillars—one dark, one light—representing intuition, deep knowledge, and the wisdom that resides beneath the chaotic surface of daily life. In these early,

adjustment-heavy weeks of the semester, it is easy to panic when facing unfamiliar subjects or vague essay prompts.

The lesson of The High Priestess is to trust your internal compass. Learning is rarely instantaneous; it requires sitting quietly with new ideas until they click. Rather than rushing to force immediate answers when a concept feels alien, give yourself the grace to process. Your cognitive instincts and problem-solving abilities are far sharper than you give them credit for.

2. The Page of Wands — Reigniting the Initial Spark



Depicting an eager young traveler gazing up at a single sprouting staff, the Page of Wands embodies raw enthusiasm, creative curiosity, and potential. When October deadlines begin to feel like an endless checklist of chores, this archetype arrives to ask a simple question: *Why did you step through NECC's doors in the first place?*

Whether it was a specific debate that sparked your interest in class or a core prerequisite that connects to your ultimate career dream, the Page of Wands urges you to lean into that spark. Finding a personal hook in your coursework transforms routine assignments from passive obligations into genuine exploration.

3. The Four of Pentacles — Guarding Your Time and Energy

The Four of Pentacles depicts a seated figure holding tightly to four coins, guarding them against the outside world. While often interpreted as a warning against stinginess, in an academic context, it serves as a vital blueprint for emotional and temporal boundaries.



Your energy, time, and focus are finite resources. Early October is the precise moment when burnout quietly creeps in—usually targeted at students who overcommit to extra work shifts, late-night cram sessions, or unnecessary distractions. Learning to say “no” and budgeting your time early protects your reserve for the long haul. As the Japanese scholar Kakuzo Okakura (1863 – 1913) once wrote in *The Book of Tea*, “The art of life lies in a constant readjustment to our surroundings.”

Just as we used the haunting imagery of *Fatal Frame II: Crimson Butterfly* to chart our journey through the spring semester, the start of the fall term carries its own distinct narrative rhythm—a journey through the fog of new beginnings. Step one of any quest is rarely about sprinting toward the finish line; it is about establishing your orientation

The Autumn Awakening: Navigating the Fog

Just as we used the haunting imagery of *Fatal Frame II: Crimson Butterfly* to chart our journey through the spring semester, the start of the fall term carries its own distinct narrative rhythm—a journey through the fog of new beginnings. Step one of any quest is rarely about sprinting toward the finish line; it is about establishing your orientation

inside an unfamiliar landscape.

Entering a new semester can feel like walking into a shadowed forest where every assignment looks like an insurmountable obstacle. But just like the glowing embers of the Page of Wands or the quiet light of The High Priestess, the tools to navigate this terrain are already in your hands. You do not need to see the entire path down to December to take the next clear step. By establishing strong boundaries now, you ensure that when the mid-term fog inevitably rolls in, your footing remains sure and steady.

Institutional Resources for a Strong Start

To ensure your foundation remains solid throughout the semester, NECC's core support networks are open and ready to assist:

- Academic Advising: Whether you need to adjust your current schedule or begin mapping out degree pathways for upcoming semesters, advisors are available to keep you on track.

- o Contact: 978-556-3700 | advising@necc.mass.edu

- Tutoring & Writing Centers: Stay ahead of the curve before mid-terms arrive by connecting early with peer and professional tutors.

- o Contact: 978-556-3411 | tutoringcenter@necc.mass.edu

- Counseling Services: If the shift into the fall routine begins to feel heavy or overwhelming, free and confidential mental health support is available on campus.

- o Contact: 978-556-3730 | counseling@necc.mass.edu

Arts and Entertainment

Connecting the community through salsa

By Omayda Massa Torres

Arts and Entertainment Editor

The rhythm of salsa filled the air at the Northern Essex Community College Lawrence campus on Friday, Sept. 25, where beginners and advanced dancers alike came together to learn new steps, share cultural traditions, and dance the night away.

The organizer for this amazing event was Maria Hernandez, Director of International Student Support and Special Populations who has taken part in creating different events as part of the Hispanic Heritage Month to bring cultural traditions, and awareness to everyone within the NECC community.

“As Latinos we grew up going to parties, going to weddings and there is always music; music and food so that was a way of me trying to bring the NECC community and the Lawrence community together to celebrate us” Hernandez said.

The evening began with a salsa history lesson while enjoying food from Coco Rays, a local restaurant, followed by a step-by-step lesson with instructor and NECC alum Mary De Jesus. De Jesus graduated from nursing here at NECC 25 years ago and has been a salsa instructor for 10 years.

“I started in 2010 as a student, in 2014 I started as an assistant, and in 2015 I started a salsa mingle group and that’s when I got interested in teaching myself” De Jesus said. Her years of experience as a salsa instructor combined with the quick and easy steps provided by De Je-



Photo by Arts and Entertainment Editor Omayda Massa Torres

Salsa instructor Mary De Jesus leads participants in a step by step dance lesson at the Dimitry building on the NECC Lawrence campus on Sept. 25.

sus made everyone feel that learning salsa was much easier than they ever thought possible.

De Jesus explains how her flexibility helps her adapt to every student’s needs on the dance floor “That’s how I advertise my class and I set myself apart from the other classes because I kind of shred it into little pieces and I start that way. I also pay a lot of attention in how the person individually gets the very first instructions because if they are

not getting it, I change my ways” De Jesus said.

By the end of the night, everyone was enjoying the music and putting their new dancing skills to work. Assistant Coordinator of Student Life Brianna Sorensen was one of the staff members that shared the night with students, and the Lawrence community “I was nervous to try salsa dancing because the steps always look so fast and beautiful, but I was surprised to learn how easily you can

take a simple rhythm and apply it to different steps to pick it up quickly and try new, harder steps. I even was able to try spins and dancing with a partner by the end of the night” Brianna said.

Ultimately, salsa night at NECC was a success. Students, staff, and community shared food along with a night where they learned the history of salsa, learned new moves, and got to put those moves to the test on the dance floor.

Salsa night is one of many events facilitated or hosted by NECC in honor of Hispanic Heritage month in an effort to show their commitment to inclusivity and representation.

VP of Students Services Joanne Landers expresses what their thoughts are on the process of organizing events such as salsa night “I see it as a celebration of culture I think every day is a day to celebrate someone’s culture whatever that culture is specially that this is Hispanic Heritage Month we’re in Lawrence. Lawrence is such a heavily Hispanic neighborhood why not do something? To celebrate our students, celebrate the community and just allow people to have fun”.

If you missed this event, don’t worry you will have another chance to experience a night of cultural enrichment at the closing event for Hispanic Heritage Month. ¡La Fiesta! – Hispanic Heritage Month Celebration is happening on Oct. 15 from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m at Dimitry (L Building) – 1st Floor Atrium NECC Lawrence Campus.

Culinary Arts

Northern Essex Culinary students gain more than just credits at The Taste of the Merrimack Valley

By SHARON DONOVAN
Food Editor

The Taste of the Merrimack Valley is one of the three off-campus events Chef Colby Bergeron heads up for the benefit of his second-year culinary students. “They truly enjoy these experiential learning opportunities,” he says. “Coming to the event is just the icing on the cake, so to speak. The planning and the execution of the dishes provide invaluable experience.”

Chef-in-training Dino Stamoulis couldn’t agree more. Just two years out of Whittier Tech and coming straight into the Associate’s Program for his culinary degree, Stamoulis was drawn to Northern Essex by this kind of learning. “I was at the River Ruckus with my uncle (who is the owner of Pizza di Forno on Merrimack St) and loved the whole event. Lots of people having fun and lots of food. I knew then that I wanted to have those opportunities too.” With a generational pull toward the restaurant profession, Stamoulis feels he made the right choice in earning his degree. “I wanted to get a degree to improve my skills in a kitchen and then apply those skills to my own



Photo by Food Editor Sharon Donovan

Dino Stravoulis photographs his Autumnal Tartlets

business or continue with my family’s.” Just out of his teen years, Stamoulis added that the skills he learned at the college give him a head start over more experienced professionals, and that the program is giving him more than he expected. “This project for the Taste of Merrimack Valley brought us through the entire process - from brainstorming the dish to testing and writing the recipes, to finishing and serving the product. On top of all that, I got to try Indian food for the first time at the event. It was so fantastic that I took their business card so I can remember to find them again. Shout out to Raagini Indian Bistro; they were so good. There were

so many great restaurants and businesses there. The whole thing was a really fun experience. I can’t wait to do the next one.”

“That is the goal,” said the program’s director, Bryan Philbrick. “We have a program which can take a student through the basics, and bring them to a place where they feel confident in their skills.” Second-year students go through both practical programs such as Garde Manger and Charcuterie and International Cuisine, as well as theoretical programs such as Food & Beverage Cost Control. “These courses are designed to give the student a well-rounded education, and we are proud of the work that our

graduates are doing in the field,” said Philbrick.

The Taste of the Merrimack Valley is an annual food festival and networking event hosted by the Merrimack Valley Chamber of Commerce and Merrimack Valley Eats. This one-night event was held on Monday evening, September 28th at the Double Tree Hotel in Andover. Attendees sampled a variety of foods from local restaurants including Harrow’s Chicken Pie, The Smoke Shop BBQ, Crave Creations, and Northern Essex Community College. With approximately 25 vendors to choose from, it was a very tasty evening.



Photo by Sharon Donovan

NECC’s Plated Offering for the Taste of the Merrimack Valley

Autumnal Tart

Pate Foncer

To a basic pie dough recipe for a 9” pie tin, add 1 teaspoon of each black pepper, fresh thyme, and finely ground cloves. Roll thin, dock, and par-bake.

Roasted Kabocha Filling

Prepare squash by cutting lengthwise and hollowing. Roast in a moderately hot oven until fragrant and soft. When cool, process in a food processor and pass through a tamis. To 24 ounces of puree, add 3 yolks, 2 whole eggs, and 6 ounces of cream. Blend until smooth. Portion into pie crust, lowing oven to moderate until filling is just set. Cool completely.

Caramelized Spiced Pepita

Cook sugar syrup to caramel stage, stir in warmed pepitas which have been seasoned with the seasoning blend of the pate foncer. Turn out onto a silpat. When cool, process to desired texture.

Garnish with Delice de Bourgogne, Balsamic Gastrique, and Fresh Sage

News

NECC signs historic housing contract, continued from Page 1

Eckstrom recently shared a lot of information about the housing plan during a recent conversation with the Observer.

“What’s nice about that is you’re not paying for summer housing cause you’re going home for the summer. It’s very traditionally built on a campus calendar,” she said.

Will the units be furnished?

“The apartments come furnished, they come with all of your traditional furniture, a bed, desk, dresser, a fully furnished kitchen, couches, a dining room table, etc. There’s no in unit laundry but there is free laundry within the complex,” said Eckstrom. “You could bring in your TV, a gaming system, you know a bean bag chair, like decorations that sort of stuff.

“All of the units are two bed, two bath, so they’re four person apartments with two double occupancy bedrooms that would have direct roommates. The units have a living room, a dining area, and a full kitchen,” she said.

Do the apartments have access to the Merrimack College housing services?

“The Crest is a huge apartment complex that has access to the Merrimack resident advisors, the professional staff in housing, and they’re supported by campus police and campus facilities, etc. ... So like, your lightbulb goes out, you put in a work order and they come and replace it for you.”

The Crest apartment development is directly across the street from Merrimack College in North Andover.

How much does it cost for students?

“With the fully furnished units, the price that students pay includes heat, air conditioning, cable, WiFi, laundry. The pricing is set by Merrimack College, it

is a pricing structure that will shift year after year,” Eckstrom said.

“Campus housing gets billed by semester and it’s roughly \$9,000 per person rate for a 10 month contract that’s inclusive of everything I just shared but it doesn’t include a meal plan but you have a full kitchen you can cook for yourself in or you can purchase an optional meal plan through Merrimack that is only for housing students,” said Eckstrom.

Does it include parking too?

“It doesn’t include parking but you can purchase a parking permit from Merrimack. Both meal plans and parking permits are sold per semester,” said Eckstrom. “Those are optional not required costs that students can add on.”

Do you have to be a full time student to qualify?

“You have to be a full time student in good academic standing to qualify for the housing plan,” said Eckstrom.

Is this a pilot program?

“There was not a ton of marketing, there was not a ton of outreach, we only have a limited amount of beds, so it was intentional to pilot with a small group to make sure that their having a good experience and that you know we help problem solve anything that might be going on in the space,” Eckstrom said.

“Our goal for next year is to really grow our partnership and have a lot more students living there.”

“We are in communication with Merrimack to grow our number of units for next year. Right now the students are in the apartments in the Crest, we will continue to look at is that the best model or would we want to put students if space is available like into a traditional first year residence hall or second year residence hall,” she said.

The department of student engage-

ment will soon create a website for NECC housing with Merrimack where students can visit and apply.

For now, students who wish to participate in the new housing contract can contact Eckstrom directly at her email, jeckstrom@necc.mass.edu.

Students can make a one time request for a pick up/drop off time and location (within 3 miles radius from Merrimack College) for the Merrimack College shuttle, and set it up for the whole semester.

It is better to do this if students need it for a specific place and time. Otherwise, every other request has to be made 70 hours prior to the date and time of pick/drop off by the Merrimack College shuttle.

Other NECC news

The shuttle expands

There is great news! New stops have been added to the NECC shuttle, Haverhill Heights and Merrimack College Crest apartments. Students who need to travel to Haverhill Heights for culinary classes and baking classes can now use the NECC shuttle and they can use it to get to Haverhill campus too. Pickup times from Merrimack College Crest apartments to Haverhill campus are 7:30am, 8:30am, and 11:30am. The shuttle only operates Monday through Thursday.

To check the full Fall 2026 NECC shuttle schedule, students can visit the NECC website at <https://necc.edu/contact-us/directions-maps/inter-campus-public-transportation/>

Food resources

NECC no longer has a food pantry located on the Lawrence Campus in the lower level of the Dimitry Building

(L020) but in the same location they now have a grab and go food resource called the Knights Market.

It provides food, other essentials like hygiene products, toiletries, and soon will have school supplies too for any student in need or facing food and financial insecurity.

Each student can visit daily from Monday through Thursday, from 11am to 1pm and build their own lunch to-go with one entrée, a couple of snacks, and a drink.

If students are unable to make it during those business hours, they can contact community resources directly at communityresources@necc.mass.edu, to set up an order for delivery to Haverhill campus.

Donations are requested and appreciated and can be dropped off in the student engagement office, SC103 or the Student Life office in Lawrence Dimitry building L026 or L028. and here are a list of items the Knights Market request!

Shelf stable meal options
Breakfast foods (oatmeal, cereal bars, etc.)
Individually packaged snacks
School supplies
Toiletries

Students can now use the food vouchers with a new vendor the school has made a 1 year contract with. Michael’s Bristol, a new restaurant located behind the El Helfni building on Essex Street in Lawrence.

It is open from 11am up to late hours at night. With the vouchers, students can purchase 10 dollar meals.

The restaurant will have to-go 10 dollar meals ready for students to buy with the vouchers.

Features

The results are in!

Student Government elections have concluded

By STACY ZAPPALA
Features Editor

Well, NECC community, it is my pleasure to tell you about the election results for the Student Government Association. I want to thank everyone who participated in voting. As a member of SGA I think it's important to have a voice and to be able to help not only by voting for what you believe are the correct people but to advocate for your interests. Invisible drumroll please.

I'm pleased to announce that we have our own, Melissa Horne, as student trustee. I was elected President of Student government. We have Jonas Tejada Helbich as our vice-president,

Kisleiny Abreu is our community impact chair, and Chelsey Dume filled the student advocacy chair.

I also want to congratulate our Student Engagement Chair winners. Andrea Wall-Sanchez is Haverhill's winner and for Lawrence we have Kiandra Peralta. Congratulations everyone and feel free to congratulate your classmates on their victories. I want to state that there are still some open positions in Student Government.

Student Government meets every other Tuesday from 4:00-5:00 pm and we do a lot of amazing things for the college.

Being in Student Government shows a lot of leadership and looks good on a resume so if you decide to transfer or go straight to the workforce, you'll thank yourselves, should you choose to join. If you cannot join or just want to feel it out, we also have a title called Member at Large. You can be a mem-

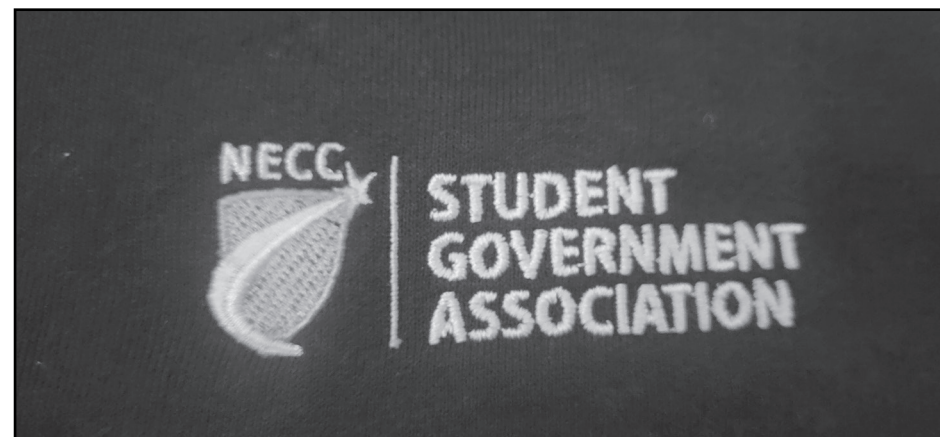


Photo by Features Editor Stacy Zappala

The logo of the Student Government Association at NECC.

ber of SGA without holding a position and you still can vote for things you think would be great to see at the college. Being in SGA, you really make a difference.

Let's hear from a few people who hold a position in Student Government, shall we?

Wall- Sanchez said, "I wasn't sure what position I'd get but I wanted to win on at one position." I also asked her, "What do you like about SGA? She replied, "I like to help NECC students in the community." I'm always here to listen to what students have to say."

I also asked our Vice President of the Haverhill and Lawrence Campus, Jonas L. Tejada Helbich why he ran for student government. Tejada Helbich is quoted saying in an email,

"I ran for student government because I wanted to change the graduation honors system to Latin honors system to support transfer students and enable better recognition for their efforts, that's my long-term goal."

Additionally, in an email I asked why he joined.

"I joined because I'm connected with so many different programs, work environments, and faculty across NECC. Being that connected has shown me that students still have needs that aren't being met. I want to use those relationships to help bring those needs to the people who can act on them, so students feel supported and heard."

My last question via email to Tejada Helbich, was if there was anything he wanted to add. He said, "Let's not be afraid of failing; Be afraid of not achieving everything we wanted because we were too scared to take the steps."

Brianna DiPalermo is the assistant coordinator of student life and has worked on both the Haverhill and Lawrence campus. She continues to do so based on the times and dates of activities on both campuses.

On email she is quoted saying, "The Student Government Association

(SGA) is the primary student advocacy channel at Northern Essex. Different from a high school student council, SGA is structured around three primary goals: Student Engagement, Student Advocacy, and Community Impact."

"SGA leaders are encouraged to explore change-making and leadership development opportunities to push for changes in student services, organize awareness initiatives, and develop programs and events to best support students' general well-being.

SGA also coordinates with the All-College Assembly (ACA) staff/faculty governing board and NECC's Board of Trustees to report on the state of student welfare."

When I talked to her in person, DiPalermo stated, "I was an SGA student when I was in college." "I went to UMass Lowell and graduated in 2020." "I also worked in student activities and student engagement."

"A lot of times student government activities and engagement live together in a full-time roll."

"What do you like best about working in SGA? I asked her in person. "I think it's really rewarding to see students that don't always first think of themselves as leaders become like critical agents of change," she said.

"SGA has town halls planned for October 20 (Lawrence) and November 3 (Haverhill) both at 4 p.m for student to share questions and concerns."

As president of Student Government, I want to mention we are also having a holiday food drive beginning Nov. 2, until Nov. 20.

Please help your NECC Community.

Campus Life

Social Circles bring students together

BY NASRIN MUSA
Campus Life Editor

Many students decide to come to Northern Essex Community College for great programs, and affordable tuition. What they might not realize is that NECC is also a great place to form connections and bonds that can last a lifetime. NECC has a wide variety of extracurricular clubs and interest groups that are available for all students to join. Students are also able to start their own group very easily with the help of the Student Life department.

There are two categories of interest groups students can start -- one is an official NECC club, and the other is a Social Circle. Clubs require a little more paperwork, with students having to fill out a constitution, elect board members, and consistently work with Student Life and the Student Government Association. But it's all worth it if starting a club is what you're passionate about. NECC clubs come with a set budget, which allows them to plan events on campus. This also gives them the flexibility to plan events off campus as well, that can help represent their club and Northern Essex. They also require roles that help students develop their leadership skills, and give them something extra to put on their resumes.

Club leaders are recognized at events such as Awards Convocation to celebrate what they add to campus life.

Clubs are a great formal way to contribute to NECC and create spaces for students to come together under similar interests. But sometimes the process is too rigorous for what students are looking to accomplish.

Sometimes people just want to get together and talk about something

“It adds a lot of fun to my life. To me, joining a club is synonymous with going to school. Joining clubs is absolutely a part of college -- I would say it's a reason to go to college. You go to classes, you join clubs.

- NECC student Anthony Rota

they're all passionate about. This is where Social Circles come in.

Brianna DiPalermo, Assistant Coordinator of Student Life, saw that some students don't want to go through all the paperwork to make an official club.

Sometimes it's too much for the groups they're trying to put together. So, Sorensen, along with Jessica Eckstrom, the Director of Student Engagement, created Social Circles.

“Last year at NECC, we had six new student groups apply to start clubs, seeking connection and a place to share their passions. But as I walked them through the process, momentum kept stalling.” Sorensen writes in an email.

In helping students try and start their clubs, she realized that not everyone wants to create a formal group. Some people just want a casual way to get together and make connections. Social Circles offers a way to do this, while still giving students access to funding, and ways to advertise their groups to the whole school.

The process is much easier than starting a club. There's no formal paperwork or constitution needed. Students just need to send in a short application explaining what their group is focusing on and have a meeting with Student Life to go over campus policies and regulations. There also needs to be a point person, someone who can

communicate with Student Life to explain the group's plans and anything they might need. Social Circles are not meant to be exclusive however, they're not NECC funded cliques, they're ways to reach out and include all students.

To anyone interested in starting a club or group, but is nervous or not sure how to get started Brianna says, “I can promise you that I'm here to help you...College is such a unique and special time to challenge yourself to step outside of your comfort zone and create the spaces where you wish to belong. Chances are, someone else in your class or in the hallways is waiting for someone else to make the first move. Your people are out there; let me help you find them!”

Already this early into the semester, Social Circles have helped several groups get off the ground. The NECC Bible Fellowship is one of them. Started by John Mulcahy, the group meets every Friday in Spurk C108 from 3:30-

5 p.m. Mulcahy wanted to start a Bible study group at NECC for a while, but being a new student, he wanted to get familiar with the campus and student life first. Originally, he tried to start the Bible study as an official club, but the process to sign up was very strenuous. After he sent in his constitution and was waiting for approval, student life emailed him with the option to

start a Social Circle instead. Mulcahy said that this way of creating a group fits better with what he was trying to accomplish with the Bible study anyway; just a casual hang out with fellow students that have a shared interest.

“I was very fortunate that I was able to be a part of it.” he says, explaining how Social Circles streamlined the whole process to get the Bible study up and running. “Student life makes the process super easy.”

He describes the Bible study group as a place everyone is welcome to come to gather and read and learn more, regardless of backgrounds or religious opinions.

Another group that Social Circle helped get started quickly is the Creative Writing Group. They meet every Tuesday in Spurk C113 from 12-2pm.

This is another interest group that originally started out trying to become an official club, but decided that a more casual way to get together fit their needs better. Anthony Rota, member of the Creative Writing Group, gave his opinion on what having extracurricular activities like this at NECC meant to him.

“It adds a lot of fun to my life.” he says. “To me joining a club is synonymous with going to school. Joining clubs is absolutely a part of college -- I would say it's a reason to go to college. You go to classes, you join clubs.”

When asked if he had anything else to add, Rota said: “Join writing club! And you can quote me on that.”

Information is available about clubs and Social Circles on the NECC website at necc.be/clubs or at necc.be/events. Students can also check the bulletin boards across campus, or reach out to the Student Life department at studentlife@necc.mass.edu.

News

Students struggle with high cost of textbooks

BY MADDY O'DONNELL
Correspondent

As the fall semester begins at Northern Essex Community College, students are dealing with the rising costs of textbooks.

Textbooks are one of the expenses students face when starting a new semester. Students at NECC have found different ways to find/buy/rent their required course materials. The students I interviewed found that buying off Amazon and renting helped them save money. One person also said she had to pick up extra shifts at work to pay for her textbooks.

Cali Moore, a second-year Art and Design student at NECC spent about \$125 on textbooks this semester. Moore got her textbook used off Amazon.

"I just googled the textbook that I needed and was looking for the most affordable one that would come in quick enough because I needed it for the following week," she said. Moore said she was surprised about the price for textbooks since it's "something that is required for me to do my school work."

Moore said one way students can save money is by buying used textbooks and finding ways to return or resell them so they can be used again. For future NECC students, she recommends looking for cheaper options. "Textbooks are expensive, and try to find used and cheaper options," Moore said.

Ava Thornton, a second-year exercise science student at NECC, spent about \$170 on four textbooks this semester. Thornton purchased a combina-

tion of new, used and digital textbooks for her classes.

"I was pissed," Thornton said about the cost of her books.

The cost of the textbooks also affected how Thornton managed her money. She said she had to pick up extra shifts at work to help pay for the books. "I ask other people in class for copies of their textbook or they send pictures of the reading or questions," Thornton said.

Ashlyn Sullivan, a second-year liberal arts and general studies student at NECC, did not spend any money on textbooks this semester, but in previous semesters she has spent \$200 to \$300 on textbooks.

"This semester, I got OER digital PDFs that I downloaded to my device," Sullivan said. Sullivan said she was not surprised about the cost but it was "still

a little painful" to see the actual price.

"My ways to save money are to see if there are free PDFs online or if I can get a used version on the library website," Sullivan said.

Sullivan said students should know that "textbooks are needlessly expensive" and that they do not need the newest or most expensive books. She also suggested renting textbooks so students do not have to keep them after the semester ends.

NECC student Mae Heisler also found ways to keep her textbook costs low. She needed three books this semester but only spent \$15, buying one book from Amazon and finding free online copies of the other two. She said she was surprised and happy that she would not have to spend hundreds of dollars on textbooks.

Comic by Narjis Musa



Comic by
Narjis Musa

Sports

Knights in midst of a hot streak

By **MICHAEL SICARD**
Sports Editor

Knights soccer has been fun this year, going 8-2 in their first ten games this season. The team's offense has been led by midfielder Gabriel Garcia who has 12 goals this season, Cristian Lopez who has 10 goals, and Thomas Kotas who has 9 goals.

However, they didn't have a strong start at first, the team ended up losing their first two games against Suffolk who is a top ten team in Region II and Kingsborough. But since then, the team has been on fire, winning their last 8 games and have outscored their opponents by 57 goals.

"We took that first win" Coach Esuebio Marote who has been the coach



Photo by Chief Sports Editor John Mulcahy

Knights Soccer Team after a 8-1 victory against NHTI at Whittier Tech Athletic Field

for the your belt, you get a lot more confidence." Marote added. He also emphasized that training and hard work were part of the reason they were able to turn it around early on into the



Photo by Chief Sports Editor John Mulcahy

Thomas Kotas after scoring 4 goals on Sept. 8 against NHTI at Whittier Tech Athletic Field

season. "We train every single day, and we have very minimal days off," he said. Captain Samuel DeAmorim who was injured for the beginning of the season said "We push each other everyday at practice." He added "We're staying focused, we have a lot of talent and experience, so it helps a lot."

The Knights captain made his return to the lineup on Sept. 3 at Southern Maine Community College after missing the first two games with his injury.

The fans have been really excited and proud of the Knights this season too. With the attendance of home games peaking at 83 on Sep. 12th against Quincy. "It's been exciting to watch," John Mulcahy, who is also a writer on the Observer, said. "Offense has been clicking, Defense has been clicking, They've looked confident and determined this season".

This season the Knights are scoring 6.40 Goals/G which is their highest mark since the 2021-22 season. Their defense has been playing lights out as well with the Knights allowing just 1.17 GAA, their lowest mark since the 2024-25 season.

The Knights go back on the road on Friday Oct. 9 against Central Maine Community College.

CommonWealth
BEACON

ELECTION
2026

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH:
Northern Essex
Community College

Ballot Question 3 Debate

Should Massachusetts adopt all-party primary elections?

Supporting Question 3:
Danielle Allen
Coalition for Healthy Democracy

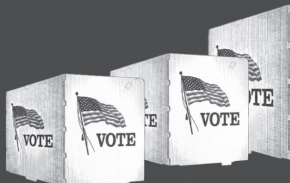
Opposing Question 3:
Jordan Berg Powers
Voting Rights MA

Moderators:
CommonWealth Beacon senior reporters
Chris Lisinski and Jennifer Smith

Tuesday, October 13 | 7:00 - 8:30 pm
Northern Essex Community College
Hartleb Technology Center, Room TC 103AB, Haverhill

Free and open to the public. Food provided.

Register:



Dear Knights!

Your feedback is important and helps us improve the quality of our courses and services.
please take a few minutes to complete your course evaluation.

If you are enrolled in

Session I classes that began between September 2nd and October 20th,

Evaluation Period: October 2nd through October 14th

Session II classes that began between October 26th through December 20th

Evaluation Period: November 20th through December 2nd.

Full Session classes that began between September 2nd through December 20th,

Evaluation Period: December 1st through December 13th.

Your responses are confidential and provide valuable insight that helps instructors and the college enhance the learning experience for future students.

Please complete your evaluation using this link; <https://my-necce.bluer.com/>.

or



Thank you for taking the time to share your feedback. We appreciate your participation and support.

Office of Academic Affairs.

Sports

Knights' volleyball winners in five straight

By JOHN MULCAHY
Chief Sports Editor

Northern Essex volleyball has won five games in a row. Going 15-2 in sets over those matchups.

In the Knights game Tuesday Sept. 29, it defeated Quinsigamond Community College in a 3-0 set sweep. Sophomore and Knights captain Rachelle Torres collected 26 assists along with a season best 11 service aces. This game saw Torres pass the 500-assist mark for her career at Northern Essex. Torres has a total of 265 assists this season,

to go along with a .901 serve percentage.

Sophomore and fellow Knights captain Faith Martin added six kills as the Knights hit a season high .415 kill percentage in the match.

"We just decided to lock-in, have a talk, and I feel like our team has really come together by just working



Photo by Patrick Osgood

Santa DeLeon in the Knights home opener against Bunker Hill Community College.



Photo by Patrick Osgood

Rachelle Torres (left) setting up Leah Terroux (right) for a spike.

together and really bonding. I really think it was our energy tonight. I think that we had really high energy and kept it up the whole time," Martin said in a postgame in-

terview with the Observer. "I think that being positive all the time is a key component to winning," she added.

Freshman Maria Rosario led the Knights with seven kills while hitting a perfect 1.000 kill percentage in the match. Freshman Noella Santos added seven service aces.

Head coach Yemayma Molina has coached the team to a 7-5 record.

"She talks to each individual player in private," said sophomore Santa DeLeon. "She really motivates us and tells

us what to do, and she really puts you in the mind set that you're a good player, and that's what we put on the court today." DeLeon is leading the Knights in kills with 72 on the year.

The Knights next game is Thursday, Oct. 8, playing Massasoit Community College at the Sport and Fitness Center. Northern Essex last played the Warriors Thursday, Sept. 17, at Massasoit. The Knights won that game in a 3-0 set sweep.



Directed by
Brianne Beatrice

General Admission – \$25.00
Seniors & Students – \$10.00

Oct 15 – 4:00 PM
Oct 16 – 7:00 PM
Oct 17 – 7:00 PM
Oct 18 – 2:00 PM

Steel Magnolias

by Robert Harling



NECC THEATER

WARNING: Adult Content. Show not recommended for young audiences. 18+



For more information, tickets, sign language, allergies, etc.
please contact Theater Coordinator Brianne Beatrice
at Bbeatrice@necc.mass.edu

CHESTER H. HAWRYLCIW THEATER
THIRD FLOOR OF SPURK BUILDING C



Follow Us
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Poster by
Nicole Dean