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Online NECC classes for high school students Should dual enrollment students be allowed to take classes online, or only designated early college classes? Page 6

framing Media and bandwidth overload

The access to information is greater than its acquisition. It's like going to the "un-enlightment" path. Page 7

Hope and help for the holidays

Feeling overwhelmed? You're not alone. Find more info about NECC's mental health resources and next workshop. Page 9

Before the 2024 credits roll

Don't miss the review of 'Heretic,' a horror movie starring Hugh Grant, and other upcoming mustwatch movies. Page 11

Striving for successs



Photo by PACE Transfer Advisor Jessica Rocker PACE students visit Suffolk University on Nov. 8. for a tour and to join the

First-gen students share insights

Editor-in-Chief Being a first-generation student is not an easy path. "It's very nerve wracking. [It] makes you nervous because vou don't know if vou're going to be able to succeed because you don't really have much of a role model ... Even though your parents try their best and they might not have had the opportunities that you have now, you still don't have something to go off of. So, you have to learn everything by yourself," said Asialis Torres, an NECC student who is

first-generation student celebration.

BY DANIELA VALDIVIA-TERRES majoring in education with a helped me the most emotionconcentration in elementary ally ... They want to make sure that I finish college because school. they want me to get better," Sometimes the support Oscar Mejia, a computer scicomes from only one member of the family. ence student, said with a se-"Just my mom" answered rious expression like he was nervously Lemuel Del Valle, carefully choosing his words. However, there are situaa computer science student, when I asked if he had family tions where the person who inor friends who supported him spires to pursue a professional as a first-gen student. career is not a family member. "I first started at 18, right Emotional support is absolutely important when making after high school. I didn't what can be a life changing know what I was doing in coldecision. "My mom and my lege. I had no help. I had no grandma, especially my mom Continued on Page 8

Upcoming events:

Salem State University visits Haverhill campus Explore transfer connection partnership with NECC. 🖸 Nov. 18, 9 a.m. to noon. Spurk C building.

Nursing Information Session in Lawrence campus Q & A about this program. 🖸 Nov. 18, 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.

• El-Hefni LC building.

Around the World via Show and Tell. Share what brings you memories from your last trip or back home.

☑ Nov. 19, noon to 2:00 p.m.

• Haverhill campus, B218

Bach's Lunch Concert Music faculty and guests perform repertoire from the 1600's to present day. 🖸 Nov. 21, Noon to 1 p.m. ♥ Haverhill campus, TC 103

What is a heart?

A figurative painting & sculpture show exhibited by NECC Art & Design. Monday to Thursday 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Knights soccer competes at Nationals

NECC men's soccer team, ranked sixth in the latest captured national poll, the program's first-ever Region 21 and Northeast District Championship. Page 14

R.I.P. beloved artists Liam Payne, former One Direction and actor Anthony Tiran Todd departed. Page 13

who lives in the area. She

Fridays 8 a.m. to 4 p.m • Art gallery at the Haver hill library

How to find security around each campus:

Haverhill Campus 100 Elliott St., Spurk Building, Room 110C

Lawrence Campus 45 Franklin St. main lobby

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Editorial

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No more wondering, just let's work together

By Daniela VALDIVIA-TERRES Editor-in-Chief

In the aftermath of the presidential election, most newspapers, Youtubers, podcasts or wherever you listen to the media, the trend topic is why, we the people, made Mr. Donald Trump go back to the White House.

Statistics and possible explanations are served for every political party the same for the non-party. However, coming from a developing country where the political chaos reigns, I'm still impressed that it seems that people, the majority, were able to forgive all the accusations and proved charges against the returning president.

On top of that, the two attempts of assassinations which fortunately did not work -- I may not agree with most of his rhetoric, but nobody deserves that -played on his favor, making him a "hero" as he stated "I'd like to

think that God thinks that I'm going to straighten out our country."

Being a Latina voter, I'm amazed for the increase of the Latino supporters to the Republican party considering his warhorse is his immigration plan, and the countless times the MAGA leader has openly poured detrimental comments against Latinos. Those comments have encouraged his supporters -- mostly white men -- to be widely loud against Latinos, sparking racism and division in our country.

In their defense, Latinos tend to value faith, family and traditions. The Republican party campaign included talking to Judeo-Christian leaders, and its leader stating "We are one movement, one people, one family, and one glorious nation under God."

This moving, spiritual and patriotic statement could have moved even to the most agnostic undecisive voter, not only to ex-Democrat Latinos.

Most of them, as many as his

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Have you taken Journalism I? Are you taking it now? Would you like to be on the Observer staff? Then submit Knowing the U.S. Senate is now 53 red vs. 46 blue seats, and the red hat leader being a strong persona, as he tends to impose his will, let's all, we the people, regardless of if we support him or not, be the watchdogs on his second term.

faithful followers, coincide with the main reason is the economy. Harris did not make any effort to differentiate herself from Biden, but his political partner did not play very well in the economy, international politics among other relevant topics. The result shows most people are screaming for a change. Period.

Whatever the reason is, no

vested in deciphering the results of the election. Let's look at the future and envision what we want for ourselves, our family, our community and our nation.

Knowing the U.S. Senate is now 53 red vs. 46 blue seats, and the red hat leader being a strong persona, as he tends to impose his will, let's all, we the people, regardless of if we support him more ink nor time should be in- or not, be the watchdogs on his

second term.

Like in the airport saying, "if you see something, say something.'

"No one is above the law" and that is what I personally love and admire about this great nation. The political apparatus is stronger than anything or anyone.

Let's be alert, stop hating, and let's work together.

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he Observer



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- Let your voice be heard as you become part of the free press.
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- If you have taken or will be taking Journalism I in the fall, we encourage you to join us. We will have staff openings in the fall as several of our current amazing staff are graduating. Join us and help continue the Observer's legacy at NECC!

Interested? Contact us!!!

NECC Observer Newsroom

your resume to observer@necc.mass.edu.

Publication Schedule

Issue	Publication Date	Ad/Copy Deadline
#1	Oct. 11	Oct. 4
#2	Nov. 1	Oct. 25
#3	Nov. 15	Nov. 8
#4	Dec. 6	Nov. 29

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Election Insights

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Nation on edge

Fears and uncertainty as Trump returns to the White House

By BAILEY ORIO *Features Editor*

Millions of Americans were left in shock and disbelief as news spread of Donald Trump's re-election to the presidency, despite facing over 34 criminal charges. The former 45th president, now set to return as the 47th, brings with him a history and agenda that has stirred fear, uncertainty, and deep division across the nation.

Many citizens now feel a sense of helplessness, with emotions ranging from trepidation to outright dread as they contemplate what the next four years might hold.

One of the most pressing concerns among Americans is the potential impact of Trump's policies on fundamental freedoms and personal security.

For journalists and members of the press, the fear is particularly acute.

Trump has historically taken a hard stance against journalists who challenge his views, often labeling them as "fake news" and publicly targeting individuals and outlets he deems unfavorable.

Many journalists now worry that press freedoms may be further eroded, with critical voices facing increasing risks of suppression or reprisal.

Women, LGBTQIA+ individuals, and minority groups are among those most fearful of what Trump's policies could mean for their rights and protections.

Jasmine Dionne, a student at Northern Essex Community degree might be the highest level of education I achieve. After four years, I may not have the free time to pursue a master's degree. It appears that the (incoming) administration prioritizes the wealthy and shows little regard for the public school system or the needs of the poor and middle class."

Tessa Christina Fiszer, another student, voiced her concerns: "We'll face a nationwide ban on life-saving medical procedures, a huge loss of public welfare programs resulting in everything from minor inconveniences to deaths of innocents, and relentless bullying from those for whom these policies are impersonal. As a student of the social and political sciences, I'm frustrated and disheartened to my core that this is the world I live in. I wonder what I'm even doing here. The majority of this nation put their implicit sexism ahead of my personhood."

Trump's plans for mass deportations have particularly unsettled immigrant communities and their allies, who worry about the prospect of families being separated and individuals facing uncertain futures. Trump has promised to enforce stricter immigration laws, pledging to "restore law and order" through heightened enforcement measures. However, critics argue that these actions could lead to widespread disruptions in immigrant communities, economic instability, and increased hostility against minorities.

For many, these concerns out. extend beyond policy specifics II to personal fears. PLF

truly seems like this election brought out the worst in people."

Although Trump has made pledges to address economic issues, such as lowering inflation and reducing gas prices, many of his proposals appear at odds with these goals.

Economic experts have questioned the feasibility of some of his plans, pointing out that his administration's proposed budget cuts and trade policies could have unintended consequences on the working and middle classes.

Additionally, his proposed cuts to federal programs could further strain public resources and reduce support for families struggling to make ends meet.

Despite promises of economic recovery and a return to "American greatness," Trump's re-election has brought a wave of anxiety and introspection to the country. Many wonder whether their voices will be heard, whether their rights will be safeguarded, and whether their children will inherit a nation built on tolerance and freedom.

As the nation braces for another term under Trump's leadership, Americans are left questioning the future of democracy, civil liberties, and the values they hold dear.

This new chapter in American history begins under a cloud of uncertainty, as a divided nation looks to the years ahead with cautious hope and a great deal of trepidation.

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Photo by Fulton County Sheriff's Office

President-elect Donald Trump, seen here after he was charged with election interference in the 2020 election in Georgia.



One of the most pressing concerns among Americans is the potential impact of Trump's policies on fundamental freedoms and personal security.

College, shared her own anxieties, saying, "I am deeply concerned that once he is in office, our rights to access birth control, Plan B, condoms, and other contraceptives may be restricted.

The removal of birth control, in particular, could severely impact our physical and mental health, exacerbating issues such as mood swings, menstrual pain, and emotional regulation."

Dionne also expressed fears about the future of her educa-

"It's devastating. I fear for my friends and family," said Tristan Taylor, another student at Northern Essex Community College. "As someone

with asthma, the very thought that my health insurance could either be stripped or go up in price because of a condition I was born with is terrifying." Taylor also highlighted the shift in public sentiment, saying, "The amount of hate I've seen has skyrocketed. It
hill – SC212 and I L115.
Additional Reso
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• United Way Emergency Community Social Services 877-211-6277

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• Samaritans – 877-870- 7386

• Trevor Project Website:

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Election Insights

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Ballot-less blues

By QUINLAN COOKE *Opinion Editor*

Voting is a large part of be-

ing an American citizen, but what about the millions of people who are too young to cast their votes?

The election still affects them, but they do not have a direct effect on the outcome.

As the presidential election came to its peak last week, and the country came to a verdict, there were millions of voices who were not heard because they were too young to fill in a deciding bubble.

This election has a special effect on young people, as there are many interests in question.

One unique one is college and the ability to receive fi-

nancial aid.

"I will be heading into college and the results directly impact me, financially and emotionally." says NECC and Sanborn Regional High School Student, Nina Pelosi, who recently started applying to colleges.

Pelosi was just weeks shy of being able to vote but was ultimately too young.

The outcome of this election will effect everyone in the U.S., but many people had a part in deciding the outcome. As someone who was too young to vote in this election, I have a lot of feelings about the outcome. I have to live with the decisions of others, that I have no real say in.

"I felt scared of the outcome but at the same time, angry seeing a lot of uneducated voters voting on a whim while I had educated myself and I didn't have the ability to act on that education to make a difference." says another dual enrollment student, Joe Borgesi.

The sentiment of education seems to be shared among other teenagers in school who are not yet able to vote.

"I feel like as a kid in school I am more well informed on the election than most." said Jake Pitre, another NECC and high school student. Pitre is in the pursuit of higher education, as he, among my other two interviewees, are in the process of applying to colleges.

As someone who is too young to vote myself, I was fearful for the outcome of

gry seeing a lot of uneducated election night. Both parties voters voting on a whim while I had educated myself and I agree with, but one side threatdidn't have the ability to act ens my daily life and freedom.

> "The worst part about not being able to vote in this election is that I knew the outcome...could directly affect (in a negative manner) my day to day life as well as the people I love," said Borgesi.

It seems unfair to think about the negative consequences so many will have to life with, when they did not have the opportunity to voice their thoughts.

The fact that people under 18 cannot vote does not mean that we do not try to voice our opinions.

There are still other ways to make sure your voice is heard, but these ways are not nearly

as accessible as casting a ballot. "

Young adults aren't really taught to do that (how to talk to others about voting)," said Pelosi.

As a young person, you can always discuss your views with others, and even phone bank and canvas locally.

Just because you cannot vote, does not mean you do not have a voice.

As someone who was too young to vote, but not too young to be able to ignore the consequences of this election, the only thing to do now is focus on what can be done in the future.

Always make your voice heard, no matter your age or voting status.



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Reflections from Nov. 5

Student correspondent visited with voters at polling locations in Haverhill

BY HARRY WAKEFIELD

Correspondent

With the election behind us and the aftershock of a historical victory in full swing, some look back and wonder: could we have seen this coming?

On the evening of November 5th, I stepped into my car and began my drive around Haverhill, Massachusetts with the goal of visiting a handful of polling stations across the city. I only made it to two.

The first station I visited was located in the Haverhill High School gymnasium, and while I was not allowed inside with my camera and notebook, I was still given plenty of opportunity to interact with those exiting the polls.

My first interviewee I noticed standing across the walkway from me, and I made my way over.

Brandon, aged 22, who declined to provide a last name and lives in Dracut, Massachusetts had come with their partner Gianna, aged 23. Gianna lives in Haverhill and also declined to provide a last name.

The couple told me that they were worried about the safety of their relationship if former (and now upcoming) president Donald Trump were to snatch the victory.

"We're an obviously queer couple, and I want to ensure that queer rights remain upheld." Brandon said when asked about their primary reason for voting. "Another is Question Five on the ballot, I have friends in the service industry and I'm always like 'dude, come on, you deserve at least minimum wage for all you put up with.""

Brandon had voted early this election cycle, and said they had come to Haverhill to provide support for Gianna.

Once I decided on where to go next – our own NECC campus polling location – I started my car and left the high school behind.

Like lots of people, I tend to sometimes tune out outside distractions as I am driving. As I turned onto Kenoza Avenue en route to campus, I found myself somehow stationary in a line of cars, not knowing why or for what purpose they were there. I had never seen something like this before. Not wanting to delay further, I figured the cars belonged to members of the VFW across the street and that I had somehow missed an announcement of sorts. It was when I sped past the front of the line that I realized what the line was for: a gas station. A gas station I had never seen busy before with a line of cars down to the beginning of



If there were signs, maybe we ignored them.

the street. At the time, I thought nothing of it.

Pulling into the TC parking lot on campus, I noticed a group of pro-Trump sign holders standing on a small median. I grabbed honk in support or drop in for a quick debate or conversation." Philip told me, while pointing out another student in the middle of a debate with another sign holder.

That other sign holder, Paul, took an interest in my presence and turned his attention almost immediately to me after hearing about my reasons for being there. Now, Paul is more of what one considers a 'stereotypical' Trump supporter. A small business owner who has done well for himself, and is willing to buy into anything Donald Trump feeds him. "It's good to have this new generation of journalists coming in. It gives me hope that the legacy media won't be sticking around much longer," Paul told me, after I made him aware of my studies.

However, when I attempted to explain his misconceptions surrounding the field of journalism and the importance of objectivity over neutrality, I was brushed off. "Yeah, but you have to understand that what they're doing is -- it's intellectually dishonest. Actually, it's worse than that," Paul rebutted. Having had my fill of regurgitated propaganda, I decided to cut my losses and head back home for the night, though I unfortunately did not get to visit as many polling locations as I intended. I sat at my desk, turned on my computer, and spent the rest of the night watching MSNBC's live election coverage.

Perhaps we as a nation were ignorant, perhaps naive.

pass.

If there were signs, maybe we ignored them. Maybe I should have given more thought to the

my camera, pen, and notebook, stepped out of my car, and approached.

I was greeted by the face of Philip, a local architect who declined to provide a last name or age. He reached for a handshake and asked me what brought me over. During my conversation with Philip, I was surprised to learn that he had been in the same spot helping the group since 7:30 that morning, our conversation marking the near 12-hour inter-

"It's been a great day so far for us, we've had a surprising amount of people come by and

val

Now, as I sit here at my desk typing away, I wonder. I wonder if there was a way to see even a sliver of what would come to scene at the gas station, or the hopeful words of Philip the architect, standing on that mulch curb in our own parking lot.

There were a lot of maybes that night, and there exist quite a handful more coming down the road. Many are nervous, even scared about what might come next and I do not blame them. It is rational to fear the unknown.

However we, the press, will always have our place to inform and assuage that fear, no matter what the future of this country might look like. After all, in the words of Bob Woodward: "Democracy dies in darkness."

Opinion

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Online NECC classes for high school students?

By QUINLAN COOKE *Opinion Editor*

Should students who are dual-enrolled at NECC be allowed to take online classes or should they be restricted to only early college classes?

NECC offers dual enrollment with many high schools in the Merrimack Valley area. This program allows high school students to take college classes and earn college credits while still going to high school.

There are designated early college times, which are generally 12:30-1:45, but this time does not work for everyone.

As a dual enrollment myself, I have a lot of thoughts on the program, and how much it has done for me. However, the classes I choose to take have become a recent topic of conversation. In the process of choosing what classes I am

Spring semester, I was met with opposition.

going to take in the upcoming

I was told by several people at both my high school and NECC that I am not supposed to be taking online classes, and that those were only a temporary option because of Covid.

This was news to me, as there were no COVID restrictions at either school when I started the dual enrollment program over a year and a half ago, and this restriction was not brought up before I went to register for classes. No clear "no online classes for dual enrollment students" is mentioned on the NECC website.

So, what is the difference between a high schooler taking a college class online and taking a college class with other high schoolers at a set time (besides the obvious)?

The early college classes offer a safe space with other high schoolers looking for a different environment, and updates are given to the high schools that the students attend about their academic standing and attendance. However, are there no updates for online classes?

Even if there are not updates, to me, this does not mean that we should be discouraged from taking them.

Online college classes as a high schooler are a great challenge and a great introduction to actually going to college. You can interact with people you would not normally interact with, but from a distance (like on a discussion board). There is also a much wider range of classes to cater to many interests that might be too niche for a high school.

Students can get a head start on careers they are interested in, all while getting credit for it.

There is also the time aspect of online classes, high school-

ers are notoriously busy. They have to balance sports, college applications, clubs, homework, studying, and getting a good amount of rest.

For busy high school students who want to be able to take classes that interest them, taking them online might be the only way they can get everything done.

I choose online classes because they align with my interests and time management, and I hope my school understands that.

I know it might be difficult for my school because they may not get updates, but I have a great track record, and I talk to my counselor at least once every two weeks.

Online classes are a great option for students who have completed the classes that interest them in person and are good communicators. This has to be done to make up for the lack of updates. However, there are no objections when a student chooses an in-person class not during their designated time.

I am also struggling to find a difference between a high schooler taking an online NECC class versus a student taking an online AP or honors class. In either situation, the high school does not get updates, and the student is left to learn independently.

So, should dual enrollment students be allowed to take classes online here at NECC, or only designated early college classes?

Should it be up to the high school or student?

I see it on a case-by-case basis, and it is dependant on the student, there can be a case made for every student and every class; everybody has a different schedule and different learning styles and interests.

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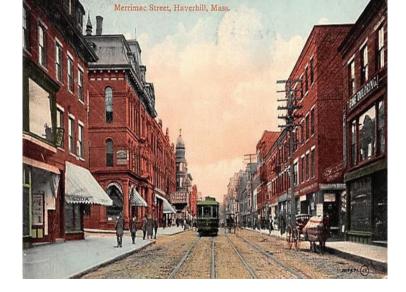


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Opinion

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Media framing and bandwidth overload

BY ROWAN ROCKWELL Correspondent

"Life moves pretty fast" says Ferris Bueller, and it is moving faster and faster with each day. In the modern world the children and young adults of this era increasingly feel the wrenching collapse of space time bearing down upon us.

As we age, our perceptions of reality narrow into a turbulent acceleration defined less and less by why and more and more by how.

As the fresh empty canvas of the information hungry infant brain oxidizes in the marrow of time and experience our inner quest for 'why' is replaced by doctrines of 'how' and the intime that once shone with exciting possibility, is kneaded unlovingly back down into our increasingly stimulated and insufficient minds.

This fearsome deviation is marked by a bandwidth overload.

As more information floods our inherently curious but incapable minds our neurology attempts to weave an explanatory tapestry of understanding but at the advent of bandwidth capacity we are simply left in states of freewheeling neuroticism or quiet fragmentation.

The power of the mind to choose and select information of use can only remain tenable

formation we compile over at a slow drip but the acceleration of technology has suddenly squeezed the bag at the other end of the needle in our arm making us too woozy to press the button for help on our bedside table.

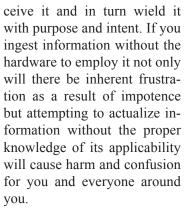
> Age used to be the main factor in how much one could know. Like the innumerable rings on an old redwood, wrinkles across the brow of a wise elder once represented a lifetime spent amassing information. Only with the passage of time could we steep ourselves long enough in information to be able to express and reflect on what we'd learned with true preponderance.

gy produces media capable of rapid system overload we have artificially circumnavigated the aged face and been inflicted a far more grievous psychic trauma.

No longer capable of storing vital information in our own brains we have outsourced our most prized intellectual possessions to an artificial entity we may one day meet a fate of becomingly only host to as our reliance on these tools develop.

Today we have started to make the mistake that the access to information is greater than its acquisition.

To acquire information re-But now as our technolo- quires you to be ready to re-



As a metaphor, imagine having the blueprint to build a house without knowing how to drive a nail with a hammer (frustration). Or on the other hand imagine a child watching their parents be brutally executed by a psychopath (confusion).

Learning of how things are without a developed understanding of why things are will result in trauma and psychic disturbance.

Of course these metaphorical examples I have given have occurred to people in one way or the other the other and houses still get built and children still live happy lives but turning that type of metaphor over onto the vast majority of human beings results in a mass state of irreparable harm as the majority of people alive today exponentially consume information beyond our understanding at a rapidly unhealthy rate.

With the increase of psychic trauma caused by overexposure to information both irreconcilable to our understanding and complicated in our ability to integrate it we have started down a dark path.

This is the path to 'un-enlightenment'. The enlightenment era was a time where information illuminated our understanding so we could grow and exceed but it has become such a commodity in our world that it now either numbs us from experiencing our core values and realities or it unrealistically inflates our understandings and drives us mad. The only thing that can save us is delineating the value of knowledge and information if there is ever a hope of turning around and walking back into the light. Note: Rowan Rockwell wrote this for an assignment about the media framing communitcation theory in the Intro to Mass Communication course.



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- Prepare for a career in fields such as education, law, business, human and social services, and more.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Contact Professor Kim Lyng, Program Coordinator and Faculty Lead, Center for Liberal Arts at klyng@necc.mass.edu.



News

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First-gen students continued from Page 1

navigation," said Yulissa Diaz Arias, a business transfer major.

Diaz Arias dropped out afback. Life seems to call for a second chance and she is determined this time. It took her five years, working in various better now," he said. jobs, and the voice of a teacher who worked in the same company. "She was the one who encouraged me to go back to school," Diaz Arias said.

Diaz Arias has two jobs, as cashier in a drugstore, and as assistant in a community organization that helps kids.

These interviewees were part of a cohort of PACE students visiting Suffolk University on Friday Nov. 8, the National First-Generation College Student Day.

Bostonian buildings of different schools of Suffolk University, the group was invited to join the First-Gen celebration. the Dean's List. Food, music and bits of history about the TRIO program were served. NECC students and Suffolk's undergrads enjoyed the camaraderie and good vibes, and some, including this reporter, joined the dance floor.

TRIO gets its name from three programs: Upward Bound, Talent Search and Student Support Services. "Today, there are eight TRIO programs, all focused on supporting students who are first-generation, low-income, or have disabilities," stated one of the fact cards placed on the nicely decorated tables around the dim light room.

In NECC, PACE which stands for Pathways to Aca-

Mejia share a similar start. "It was hard. I didn't know I could withdraw from a class," he said. He was having a ter two semesters, but she is hard time keeping up with one course. "But then asking people and getting into PACE, they helped me out and I feel

> Mejia added, "Actually I like PACE, it helps in different ways transferring. Especially now I have a complicated situation to transfer. Also, with going on field trips to realize which college I want to go."

> Del Valle relaxed through the conversation and confessed with a smile "I go everyday (to PACE office) 'Pa'comer' ('to eat' in Spanish) on my lunchtime ... and my favorite is Esther."

With "just her mom" as the After the tour around the one and only supporter and cheerleader, Del Valle is on a good track. He is a highly competitive athlete and is on

> Last September Del Valle's participation in a competition held at Gordon College for the NECC men's cross-country team was mentioned, text and photo, on the Eagle Tribune newspaper.

> Del Valle also is on the Trace Track team for long distance. He aims to transfer with a full scholarship as an athlete.

> Looking for less commute, Torres is considering transferring to UMass Lowell, "probably it's the most convenient, it would be only 20 minutes from home," she says.

> In contrast, Diaz Arias considers Suffolk University a great option to transfer, and she'd love to have the city living/studying experience.

demic & Career Excellence, "I just started, and I feel it's is a Student Support Services better now than it was back program funded by a TRiO then because I know what I grant from the U.S. Departwant to do. I am more mature, ment of Education. said Diaz Arias confidently. Esther Peralta, Dominican In essence, PACE honors born same as Del Valle, toits initials by assisting firstgen students to achieve their gether with Jessica Rocker and career goals. Christine Carbone led by Kris-After Torres reflected on tin Arnold, the PACE team is her challenging beginning, she ready to help you. If you are said, "Being in NECC helps a first-gen student, you are not me to have the support that I alone, visit PACE for a snack or career advice or both at Stuneed. Especially with PACE you feel supported by people dent Center building SC213 in that know what they're doing. Haverhill campus. For Law-They know how to help you rence campus, please make an succeed and make sure you appointment at pace@necc. get there." mass.edu.



Photos by Editor-in-Chief Daniela Valdivia-Terres

PACE Transfer Advisor Jessica Rocker and PACE Data Specialist Christine Carbone in the First-generation student celebration at Suffolk University.



Criminal justice student Maria "Ampa" Cubias, NECC alum and Suffolk University marketing student Rosa Garza, and journalism & communication student, Daniela Valdivia-Terres reunited in the lobby of Suffolk University.



Editor-in-Chief Daniela Valdivia-Terres showing a cupcake with a TRIO topper next to the buffet on Nov. 8 in the Bostonian building.

News

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Hope and help for the holidays

NECC's mental health resources for students in need

By Jessia Cabrera

Correspondent

With the holiday season approaching, many college students are feeling the weight of added stress, juggling end-of-semester exams, family responsibilities, and financial concerns.

For students dealing with anxiety and depression, this time of year can be particularly challenging. Northern Essex Community College (NECC) offers a range of mental health resources aimed at supporting students through these pressures, providing a foundation for those who may feel overwhelmed during this season.

Across the United States, college students are grappling with an unprecedented mental health crisis.

According to the Healthy Minds Study, 37% of college students report symptoms of anxiety, and 44% report symptoms of depression. Additionally, 15% of students have seriously considered suicide within the past year.

These numbers highlight a growing need for mental health support, intensified by academic pressures, financial responsibilities, and social demands.

With the added stress of the holiday season, many students face unique challenges balancing family expectations and academic obligations.

At NECC, these challenges resonate with a diverse student population, many of whom balance their studies with work and family responsibilities. According to the Healthy Minds study, 37% of college students report symptoms of anxiety, and 44% report symptoms of depression. Additionally 15% of students have seriously considered suicide within the past year.

students on both the Haverhill

and Lawrence campuses. NECC's mental health services extend beyond counseling.

The college provides proactive support through workshops and group sessions designed to help students develop essential coping skills and build resilience.

Topics include stress management, relationship skills, and managing anxiety relevant tools for students facing the demands of college life.

"Workshops cover topics such as stress management and relationship-building, equipping students with practical strategies for day-to-day tiative, over 130 faculty and staff members at NECC have become certified in MHFA, strengthening the college's support network.

Through MHFA, NECC is empowering its community to assist students in need, aligning with a broader trend in higher education where colleges are training faculty and staff as "first responders" for mental health.

The college's workshops and events address a variety of stressors. Programs such as National Depression Screening Day, sleep clinics, and anxiety awareness sessions offer students tools to manage mental health concerns, espe-

tal health involves faculty, staff, and peer mentors, who play a key role in supporting students.

Faculty members and peer mentors are encouraged to recognize signs of distress, such as changes in attendance or academic performance, and to guide students toward available resources. With MHFA-certified faculty and staff, NECC fosters a community where more individuals are prepared to assist students in distress.

This collaborative approach reflects a growing trend among colleges to address mental health collective-ly, with community members

College is Possible."

This free workshop invites students, families, educators, and anyone interested to hear stories of hope and resilience. A panel of staff, faculty, and students will share insights on navigating educational challenges, accessing accommodations, planning for the future, and knowing when to seek additional support.

Local mental health organizations will also be present with information on available services, making this an opportunity for attendees to connect with resources beyond the campus.

The event is open to evervone, including high school and college students, veterans, individuals with lived experience, and mental health providers. For more information, contact jfortna@necc.mass. edu Through partnerships like this, NECC reinforces its commitment to creating a supportive and informed community, empowering students to pursue their educational goals regardless of mental health challenges.

"

The college's Counseling and Psychological Services offers a range of resources to support students' personal, social, and academic well-being. These services include short-term individual counseling, crisis intervention, and referrals to community resources for extended care.

All services are confidential, free, and accessible to challenges," according to the
NECC Counseling Servicescially during high-stress times
like finals and the holiday sea-
son.trained to act as the first line
of support.and
indi
indiwebsite.son.As NECC continues to ex-
encenc

As part of its commitment to creating a supportive environment, NECC also offers Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) training to faculty, staff, and students.

This program equips participants with the skills to identify, understand, and respond to signs of mental health challenges and substance use disorders.

Since launching the ini-

These workshops provide practical strategies for handling everyday challenges and create opportunities for students to connect with others facing similar issues.

NECC's Counseling Services highlights these sessions as a way to "help students learn coping mechanisms and build a network of peer support."

NECC's approach to men-

As NECC continues to expand its support for student mental health, the college is a also cosponsoring a valuable event for the community. On November 19, from 7:00 fp.m. to 8:30 p.m., at Haverhill campus, TC103, NECC, in partnership with NAMI Northeast Essex and the Essex North DMH site board, will host a panel discussion titled "Mental Health Through the Lens of Education: Success at **Campus Life**

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Deep dive into the classroom

Early College students get a head start on their academic success

By EMMA RUGGIERO Campus Life Editor

Early College students from Lawrence High School set themselves up for success by planning ahead their academic futures.

At around 9:30 a.m. on Oct. 31, 2024, 26 students from Lawrence High School filled the seats in Room L014 in the Dimitry building on the Northern Essex Community College Lawrence campus to explore the Liberal Arts and Humanities.

A substantial value of taking "Intro to Liberal Arts (are the) suggestions (it gives to) students who really don't know what they want to major in" said the professor of the class Maurisa Charest.

"Taking this course in one semester" offers students a variety of options and "a glimpse of what they want to study (because they) learn a little bit of everything" continued Charest.

One of the biggest lessons Charest has learned through her years of academia is that students "learn by doing and learn by watching," said Charest.

So, in celebration of Halloween, which is the day the class session met on, Charest presented a YouTube video titled "History of Horror."

The significance of the students studying this video is to help them understand horror themes, film techniques and storytelling.

Within the studies of Liberal Arts and Humanities, studying T.V. shows, films and music videos are important because it strengthens the students' "critical thinking" skills, which is an "important (aspect) of Liberal Arts" said Charest.

To improve their comprehension about horror themes, film techniques and storytelling the Lawrence High School students analyzed the one billion viewed music video Thriller starring historical pop sensation Michael Jackson and directed by John Landis.

Before the professor played the video she distributed a work-

sheet with a list of questions that were organized into 5 parts: General understanding, horror themes, music and dance, film techniques and storytelling and a reflection piece.

The purpose of the worksheet is to keep the students "involved (by) answering questions to connect with different art forms" found in the music video, which "allows them to (use their) critical thinking (skills) to answer the questions," said Charest.

After the music video finished playing and the students completed their worksheets, the class used "the art of conversation" to review each question, said Charest.

By analyzing the music video, the students were able to identify horror creatures and tropes like zombies and werewolves. In addition, many of the students categorized the choreography as both fun and fearful.

The students collaboratively agreed that with the music videos use of different camera angles, lighting and sound effect it was suspenseful to watch.

As a result of the meaningful class discussions, this group of early college students not only benefit from "getting college credit (in high school, but) this (course) exposes them to art, music, nature (and) philosophy" said Charest.

To showcase the skills the students have obtained throughout this course, they are required to complete a final project presentation.

The project entails each student to create their own "Liberal Arts or Humanities course" and present it to the class as if they were the professor for the day, said Charest.

The goal of the final presentation is for the students to pick a topic that peaks "their interest" that will reflect their understanding of the "Liberal Arts and Humanities" and help build their confidence towards utilizing their critical thinking skills, said Charest.



Photo by Campus Life Editor Emma Ruggiero

Professor of Introduction to Liberal Arts Maurisa Charest

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Before the 2024 credits roll *'Heretic' review and upcoming must-watch movies*

By ANTHONY SOUSA Arts and Entertainment Editor

"Heretic" (2024) is a fresh addition to the horror genre that cleverly combines psychological horror with religious and philosophical debate.

Directed by Bryan Woods and Scott Beck, the film centers on two young Mormon missionaries, Sister Barnes and Sister Paxton (played by Sophie Thatcher and Chloe East), who find themselves trapped in a sinister, intellectually charged encounter with Mr. Reed, played masterfully by Hugh Grant. Reed's charming facade quickly gives way to a more menacing persona as he challenges the missionaries' beliefs.

This movie is simply fantastic. From the amazing performances to the compelling story to the terror you feel all throughout, this movie has something for all horror fans. It is a relief that this movie doesn't rely solely on jumpscares and really challenges viewers from beginning to end with its ideas and existential questions.

The cinematography by Chung-hoon Chung heightens the claustrophobic atmosphere, trapping viewers in the protagonists' tense predicament.

This release, just after Halloween, has garnered attention as one of the year's standout horror films, with the highlight of it being Hugh Grant's performance. It is being widely praised for its chilling transformation of his familiar charm into something sinister and unsettling. Sophie Thatcher and Chloe East caught me by surprise as well as I have never seen them in anything else before this but will certainly be on the lookout for their upcoming projects as they gave it their all in this film. Upcoming films to watch As the year wraps up, a selection of highly anticipated films is set to offer moviegoers a range of experiences, from musical magic to epic historical drama and gothic horror. First up is "Wicked", a long-awaited adaptation of the



Movie poster for "Heretic" courtesy of A24.

The movie is simply fantastic. From the amazing performances to the compelling story to the terror you feel all throughout, this movie has something for all horror fans.

beloved Broadway musical, which reimagines the story of the Wicked Witch of the West and promises enchanting visuals and music to delight fans both new and old. "Wicked' comes out November 22. In "Gladiator 2", Ridley Scott returns to ancient Rome to continue the legacy of the iconic original, bringing audiences another intense tale of valor, vengeance, and power. This is so exciting as the original

"Gladiator" is one of the best experiences I've had watching a movie. Early screenings are raving about potentially Oscar worthy performances by Denzel Washington and Paul Mescal's and audiences can't wait to see what the hype is all about. "Gladiator 2" comes out November 22. For horror enthusiasts, Robert Eggers' "Nosferatu" offers a haunting retelling of the

vampire legend, with a unique

style that honors the silent-era classic while adding Eggers' signature dark atmosphere. This is my most anticipated movie left this year.

Robert Eggers has been on a roll in recent years with "The Northman" and "The Lighthouse" and it's exciting that he gets to put a spin on this classic story. Early reviews have already started talking about how if the Oscars didn't have (what seems like) such a bias towards horror movies, this movie would be in contention for many awards.

All we can do is look forward to it and see if these early reviews are really on point. "Nosferatu" comes out December 25.

Together, these films present a captivating blend of genres and storytelling, making this year's final releases ones to look out for.

Arts & Entertainment

A field trip to meet epic story of 'Aida'

SOAR students went to the opera in Boston

By DANIELA VALDIVIA-TERRES Editor-in-Chief

and SOAR students enjoyed for the first time an opera performance, "Aida," at the Emerson Colonial Theater in Boston under the direction of Boston Lyric Opera Company.

Composed by Giuseppe Verdi in 1871, "Aida" is an epic story set in ancient Egypt, centering on themes of love, loyalty, and sacrifice.

The opera follows Aida, an Ethiopian princess enslaved in Egypt, who is caught in a love triangle with Radamès, an Egyptian military commander, and Amneris, the Egyptian princess.

Famous and known for its triumphal marches, and arias (solo or group opera singing) that made immortals to the famous singers of the "bel ness, Jr. canto" like the Greek soprano Maria Callas for "O Patria chestra conductor and BLO Mia" or "Ritorna Vincitor" and the Italian tenor Luciano Pavarotti for "Celeste Aida," this is a masterpiece of the classical music.

The fortunate students who enjoyed preferred balcony seats were Angely Gabriel, Hina Atwell, Alex Revi, Cheryl Lopez, Kayla Clegg, Narjis and the school vans and the Musa, Ibrahim Musa, Jennette Perez, Oliver Looker, Mimi Sky, Theresa Cordova-Lemus, Angelica Cordova, Andrea Wall-Sanchez, Andrea Van- sicThrives. nett, Brynn Steeves, Patrick Sainato, Rick Roche, Lidia feeling writing this article Ramirez, Paulitte Nganga,

On Nov. 8, NECC Music size, and there were main characters who sang in front of the orchestra on stage.

> "They sung the opera in Italian, and had large TV's near the stage that had the English translations, as the opera happened."

"The opera cast was as diverse as the NECC students which I was so glad to see!" she emphasized.

The cast featured: Aida - Michelle Johnson Amneris - Alice Chung Radames - Diego Torre Amonasro - Brian Major

Ramfis - Morris Robinson High Priestess - Chelsea Basler

King of Egypt - Stefan Egerstrom

Messenger - Fred C. Van-

Bucchiere added, "The or-Music director was David Angus. We were able to see about 40 minutes of the rehearsal with the chorus and orchestra and trumpeters in the balconies! And he was quite lovely, and he sounded like he was from England!"

"It was a fantastic event bus drivers that SOAR was able to provide were amazing!" concluded Bucchiere.

Definitely #NECCMu-

This reporter has mixed because I do love opera. I



Photos by Music Professor Alisa Bucchiere

NECC Music and SOAR students attend the opera "Aida" performed by the Boston Lyric Opera Company on Nov. 8.



Music Professor Alisa Bucchiere happy to take students to the opera for their first time at Emerson Colonial Theatre.



Ben Swanney and Sara Ablisten to it in memory of my dalla. dad; besides it helps me to

Students were accompanied by Music Chair and Professor Alisa Bucchiere, Chair of Global Studies Philosophy Professor Meredith Gunning, and Assistant Director of SOAR for Academic Support, Dermot Luddy.

According to professor Bucchiere, "The opera chorus had their music memorized, and there were upwards of sixty in the chorus. The orchestra was about the same

center down when in despair or confusion or writing under deadline. He taught me to appreciate classical music, opera and zarzuela, and his favorite, therefore mine as well, was "Aida."

However, no problem, I will wait for next time. As Radames says "If I have to search for a hundred lifetimes, I will find you again, Aida."

The orchestra of the Boston Lyric Opera Company ready to start Verdi's most famous opera, "Aida."

Arts & Entertainment

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Fans mourn One Direction member

'The last reunion will be at Liam's funeral'

By Olivia Karvielis

Correspondent

Pop boy band One Direction formed in 2010, and quickly became popular after an X-factor audition. The group contains members Harry Styles, Niall Horan, Zayn Malik, Louis Tomlinson, and Liam Payne. One of the best selling boy bands of all time, with multiple hit albums. You may remember going to a concert when you were little, maybe meeting your favorite member.

who died Oct. 16.

I talked to NECC student, Emma Coco, asking if she knew of this band and or if she was a fan. Here is what she had to say, "Oh, I loved them when I was a pre-teen, loved their music and of course they were all so cute."

Coco continued on about her love for the band and how it was a nostalgic time in life.

Payne plummeted to his death from

Fans are now mourning Liam Payne, a balcony in Argentina. Only 31 years old, he died from the impact of a fall from the third-floor balcony of a hotel in Buenos Aires.

> Payne, having a background with substance abuse, was assumed to be sober and doing well. However, he was recently called out by ex-girlfriend, Maya Henry, for "abuse" and overall a bad relationship. Also stating he was only going to other former band members concerts, to get "recognition

again," imposing he fell out of fame.

When asked, do you think it was something else involved or it was self inflicted? Coco shared her thoughts. She said, "I am not really sure, either way it's so sad to know that he is gone now. With all the hate that was going on, it's sad to think he left the world thinking people hated him."

Authories in Argentina are investigatin his death.

Remembering actor Tony Todd

By JUSTIN OLIVENCE Correspondent

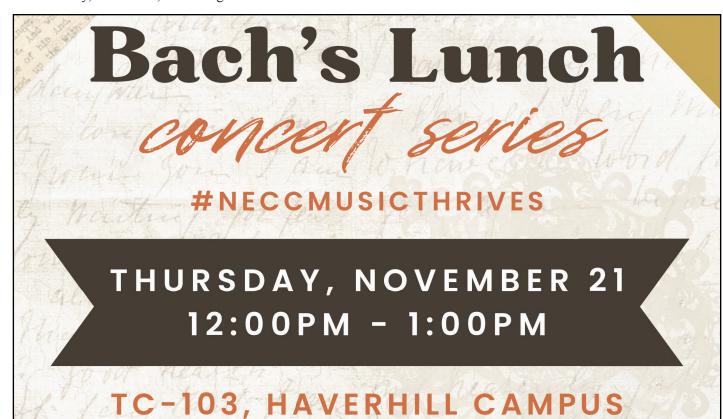
The actor Anthony Tiran Todd, 69, better known as Tony Todd, passed away at 11:50 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 6, 2024, peacefully at his home in Marina Del Rey, California, according to

was not disclosed.

The actor better known as Tony Todd by his friends and fans, was born on Dec. 4, 1954 in Washington, District of Columbia, USA. He was an actor and producer, known for the pro- rifying voice to some video game char-

news reports. Todd's cause of death ductions of The Rock (1996), The Man acters. For example, he voiced the wild from Earth (2007) and Candyman, (1992). The last one made him an icon that everyone remembers, like "The Legend of Candyman."

The actor lent his imposing and ter-



The Bach's Lunch Concert Series has returned again this year!

Venom in Insomniac's popular game, Marvel's Spider-Man 2.

"He brought so much joy to our studio and to many fans around the world with his inimitable voice and presence," wrote developer Insomniac Games. "We are Venom forever."

To his co-workers and family, Todd was a great man and an incredible actor.

"My beloved. May you rest in power sweet to the sweet in heaven," said Virginia Madsen, Todd's Candyman co-star in a tearful post on Instagram. "The great actor Tony Todd has left us and now is an angel. As he was in life."

New Line Cinema, which produced the "Final Destination" franchise, also posted on Instagram about Todd's death. "The industry has lost a legend. We have lost a cherished friend. Rest in peace, Tony," read the post.

All fans are grateful for the great performances that Todd gave to us, the public, giving us icons like Candyman, who even today remains as a great classic horror movie character, such as Jason Voorhees or Michael Myers. His charismatic and great acting will keep this actor alive forever, in his movies, performances and in our hearts.

This is the third year of this series of faculty concerts as the NECC Music Faculty and guests perform in music concerts for our NECC Community. Prof. Alisa Bucchiere, piano, Dr. Eileen Yarrison, flute, and Prof. Abe Finch, percussion will present the first concert this fall with repertoire spanning from the 1600's to present day. All are invited.

Bring your box lunch and sit and enjoy this concert. Coffee, sodas, and donuts will be provided.

Free admission

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Sports

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Knights soccer competes at Nationals

By MELISSA BOUSE NECC News and NECCKNIGHTS.COM

The Northern Essex Community College men's soccer team, ranked sixth in the latest national poll, captured the program's first-ever Region 21 and Northeast District Championship on Nov. 3, with a 5-3 win over Quinsigamond Community College. In the process, the team won its 14th straight game and punched its ticket to the program's first-ever national tournament, scheduled to begin on Tuesday, November 12th in Batavia, N.Y., on the campus of Genesee Community College.

The Knights jumped out to a 3-0 lead in the Nov. 3 game's opening 30 minutes before the Wyverns scored a quick pair of goals, while NECC would get one back and take 4-2 into the halftime break.

Jadiel Bomfim (Nashua) got the scoring started in the 11th minute when he beat the keeper to his left with an assist credited to Sam Lucena (Tyngsborough). Lucas Cantelli (Lowell) added a goal in the 29th as he snuck one just inside the left post on a pass from Bomfim.

Edwin SamMbaka (Paris, France) put the Knights up 3-0 when he blasted a rocket past the goalie from 25 yards out.

The Wyverns would net a pair of quick goals just 90 seconds apart before Jonathan Lopes (Nashua, NH) added a cushion in the 36th minute when he took a cross in the box from Bomfim who picked up his second assist of the game.

Following the break, the game was scoreless until the 75th minute when Lucena added an insurance goal as the Wyverns would score a third goal with two minutes remaining in the contest.

NECC was named the sixth seed in national tournament. The Knights who enter the tournament with a 14-2 overall record and winners of 14 straight, were scheduled to take on third seeded Mohawk Valley Community College on Tuesday, Nov. 12, in Batavia, N.Y. This was after the Observer's press deadline for this edi-



The NECC Knights men's soccer team.

Photo courtesy NECC News

tion. Check neccknights.com for game results.

The Knights are making their first national tournament appearance in school history as the program was reestablished in 2019 following more than a 20-year hiatus.

The tournament field also includes the six-time defending national champion Dallas College Richland who earned the top seed, followed by Nassau Community College earning the second seed. The fourth and fifth seeds went to Camden County College and Finger Lakes Community College. The eight-team field was rounded out by Joliet Junior College and Raritan Valley Community College.

The opening round winners will advance to the national semi-finals on Nov. 15, while the non-advancing team was scheduled to play in the consolation round on Nov. 14. The national championship and third place games are set for Sunday, Nov. 17.

NECC will enter the national tournament leading the nation in shots per game with 24.4, while their 65 goals scored and 174 points on the season both rank fifth among teams in the tournament field.

All games of the tournament are available live on the NJCAA Network.

All-Region honors for volleyball and soccer teams

By DAN BLAIR NECC Director of Athletics

Six members of the Region 21 and Northeast District champion Northern Essex Community College men's soccer team were named to the All-Region teams as announcedNov. 7. Highlighting the selections were Jadiel Bomfim (Nashua, NH) who was named Co-Regional Player of the Year, and Eusebio Marote who was 20-plus year hiatus has led the Knights to their best season in school history. He picked up his 40th career win in last week's championship game.

Bomfim, who repeated as player of the year led the region in scoring for the second consecutive year as he recorded 15 goals and seven assists for 37 points on the season. He was also named the NJ-CAA Player of the Week back in mid-September when he recorded a five-goal week in a pair of wins against CCRI and NHTI. Heading into the national tournament he has 42 career goals in his two seasons with the Knights. Paganini, a two-year starter in goal for the Knights lands on the All-Region first team for a second consecutive year as he has played all but two minutes of the season in goal for the Knights and recorded an .857 save percentage to go along with a .75 goals against average. He's recorded nine

shutouts on the season and from September 24 through October 22 recorded a shutout streak that spanned 571 game minutes. He was named the NJCAA Goalie of the Week the week ending October 20th.

Lucena has made an immediate impact on the field for the Knights in his first season. He finished second on the team in scoring, which was also good for second in the region with 11 goals and four assists for 26 points. He recorded a hat trick back on September 10th in the Knights 8-0 win over NHTI. Kakavitsas finds himself on the all-region team for a second consecutive year as he earned second team honors in 2023. A stronghold in the defensive midfield he's recorded two goals and two assists on the season. In his rookie campaign, Lopes has been a stronghold on the backline for Knights which held the opponent to just 12 goals in 16 games.

Offensively he's contributed three goals and assists on the season while causing problems for the opposition's attack on the offensive end.

Colem, playing primarily on the outside backline, has generated plenty of offense as he leads the region with 11 assists and has seven goals of his own for 25 points.

Women's Volleyball Three members of the

This is the second career All-Region recognition for NivarMartinez as she led the Knights attack and finished second in the region with 171 kills which amounted to 2.67 kills per set. Defensively she added 165 digs which led the team and ranked fifth in the region.

BritoRosario ranked among the top setters in the region as she dished out 304 assists on the season for an average of 4.28 assists per set, both of which ranked fourth in the region. From the service line, she also served up a region-best 85 service aces. Defensively she picked up 186 digs which also ranked fourth in the region. Rigual played a key part in the Knights' attack and ranked fourth in the region and second on the team behind NivarMartinez in kills with 134. She also added 139 digs and 56 service aces in her rookie campaign.

named Region 21 Coach of the Year.

The Player of Year Bomfim was joined on the first team with three of his teammates in goalie Will Paganini (Derry, NH), forward Sam Lucena (Tyngsborough) and midfielder Nikos Kakavitsas (Athens, Greece). Second team honors went to center-back Jonathan Lopes (Nashua, NH) and midfielder Christian Colem.

Marote, who was hired to restart the program prior to the 2019 season following a k Northern Essex Community
k College women's volleyball team earned All-Region honors as announced by the region
k Nov. 7. The Knights finished
k the season with a 13-8 overall
k record and finished as Region
k 21 semi-finalist.

Ashley NivarMartinez (Lawrence) was named to the All-Region First Team, while Cherly BritoRosario (Lawrence) picked up second team honors, and Nileyshka Rigual (Lawrence) was named honorable mention.

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