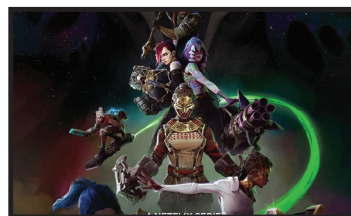




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# Observer

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

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## Music thrives Christmas

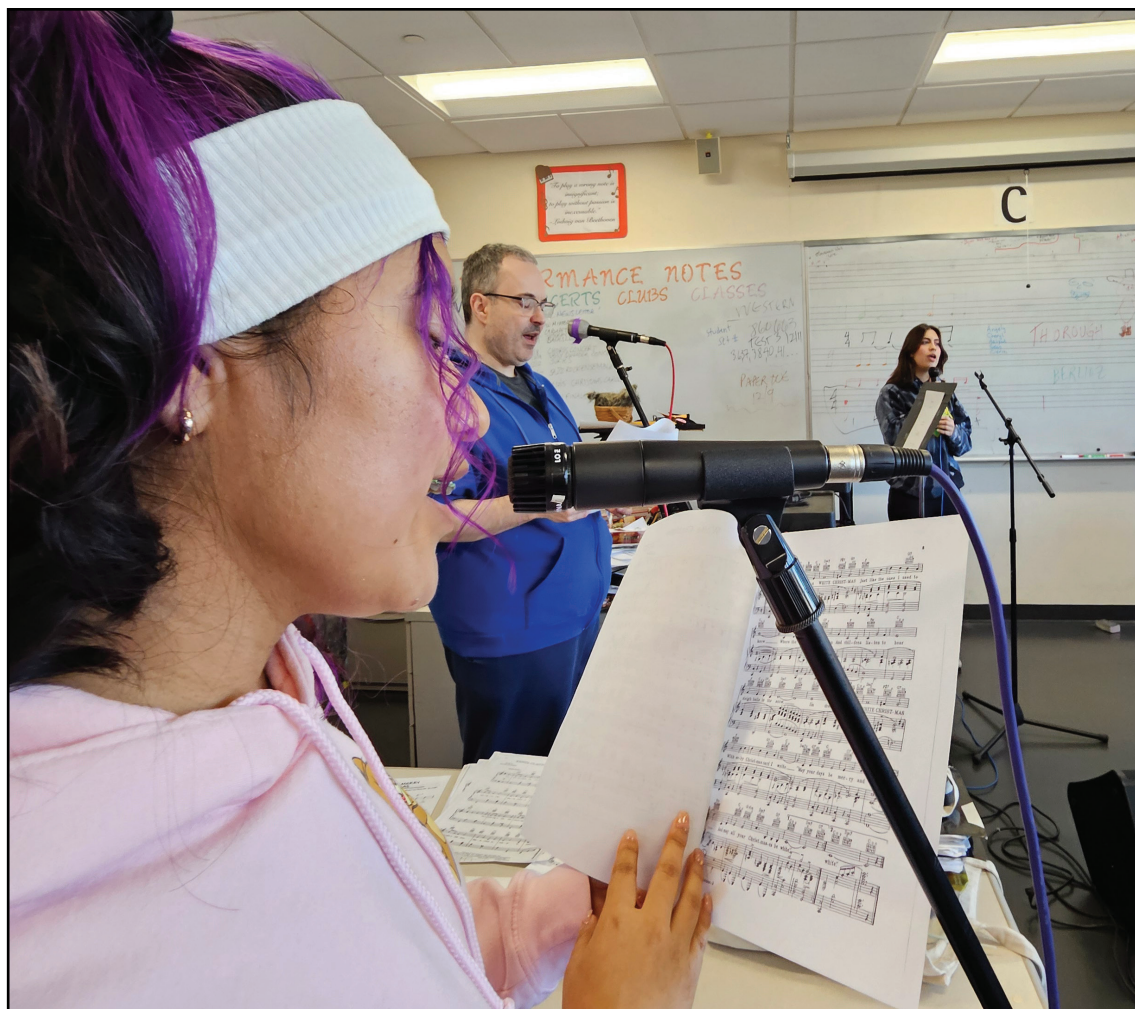


Photo by Editor-in-Chief Daniela Valdivia-Terres

Music students Cheryl Lopez, Sean Gaff and Cierra Townshend rehearse for the Ugly Christmas Sweater concert.

## Students show off their talents

By DANIELA VALDIVIA-TERRES  
Editor-in-Chief

With a full lineup of events, the Music Department is showcasing the talents of its students and their efforts in and out of classrooms, rehearsing for the end of the semester. Students, faculty, staff and the public are welcome to participate and encouraged to support the art performances.

Christmas is the special frame of their endeavors; music students who will perform in the "Ugly Christmas Sweater Concert" were focused on rehearsing the final tunes to

display at their best on Dec. 9 at the lobby of the Spurr C building, Haverhill campus. With passing-by students or standing up attendees, these aspiring performers will fill us with the Christmas spirit with songs like *White Christmas*, *Feliz Navidad*, *Jingle Bells*, and more.

The cast is formed by students Aaliyah Campusano, Angely Gabriel, Sean Gaff, Cheryl Lopez and Cierra Townshend as singers, Dave Coppola in guitar, Sara Curtin as baritone saxophone, Professor Jared Holaday as tenor

saxophone and Professor Alisa Bucchiere on piano.

That is not all; here is the list of music events you should not miss:

Sunday, Dec. 8, 2 to 4 p.m.: The "Winter Choir Concert" will indulge you with their voices attuned to the spirit of the season. Directed by Choral Director professor Alisa Bucchiere.

Location: Haverhill campus, TC building. \$5 Admission.

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## Upcoming events:

Ugly Christmas Sweater Concert

Join Music faculty and students for a holiday concert  
📅 Dec. 9, 12:30 p.m. to 1:30 p.m.

📍 Spurr C building.

Dental Assisting Information Session – Online

Q & A about this program.  
📅 Dec. 6, 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.

📍 Register: [dchem@necc.mass.edu](mailto:dchem@necc.mass.edu)

Need assistance with your resume?

Career Services offers tips and guidance – Online  
📅 Dec. 10, 12:30 p.m. to 1:30 p.m.

📍 Register: [kyeatonhromada@necc.mass.edu](mailto:kyeatonhromada@necc.mass.edu)

Wellness Wednesdays

Take a break with free hot cocoa, tea, coffee, snacks  
📅 Dec. 11, Noon to 5:00 p.m.

📍 Haverhill library

American Sign Language Studies: Information Session – Online

Q & A about this program  
📅 Dec. 11, 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

📍 Register: [deafstudies@necc.mass.edu](mailto:deafstudies@necc.mass.edu)

### How to find security around each campus:

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100 Elliott St., Spurr Building, Room 110C

**Lawrence Campus**  
45 Franklin St. main lobby

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# Editorial

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## Diner beware

By DANIELA

VALDIVIA-TERRES

Editor-in-Chief

Shops and malls playing Christmas carols from open to close remind us of the list of presents we may try to purchase. Also, it's the season to go out and chat in real time, face-to-face, having a special meal with those special ones.

Whether you want to pamper yourself for being good during the year, or you want to celebrate the advent of the new year with your peers or coworkers, going out to eat is the premise for this season.

If you are the one inviting, or you and your party will split the cost of the bill, here is my cautionary tale for you to avoid surprises when the check arrives.

I recently went out with my family to the Seaport area to a Christmas fair called the "Snowport."

Looking for Betty the Yeti,

trying different bites in the food area and visiting the little stands full of all sorts of crafts, we spent close to three hours.

We tried food and beverages from four different stands and all of them, except for the small stand selling hot cocoa and hot apple cider, were using Clover point-of-sale (POS) machines. Those POS have a noticeable 8-inch screen for the client to tap the card, select the tip and chose how we want the receipt –or not- to be sent.

Wait, what?

I understand a tip for service in a restaurant but why do I have to tip if there is no service given by the provider besides handling the food I'm already paying for? Which most of the time, is more expensive than going to a standard restaurant.

The venue has a limited area to sit down, one with beach chairs and a reduced area with benches covered

with a tent. With a captive audience of thousands of people visiting on a bright but windy Sunday afternoon, there was not enough space to sit down. Eating -- standing up -- waffles dripping with chocolate can be very messy, especially for kids. So, what is the service tip for?

Tips suggestions on those screens can vary from 15% up to 25%. There is the option of "No Tip" but as the person behind in the line can easily see the client tapping the screen, there is a kind of pressure to add a tip just "not to look bad."

We continued our visit, and my kid was chanting "I want this...I want that," incessantly.

Wait, what? (Part II)

Money does not grow in the trees. So, I took advantage of my kid learning math, and before getting too far, I said, "This is your total amount to purchase whatever you want, take note of the things you like (luckily, she carried a tiny notebook and a pencil), and then do the math to make the right choices. No extra penny will be given."

Assigning yourself a general budget for Christmas or if you are a parent, giving a limit on your child's shopping could be helpful.

When the cold was getting intense, we went for dinner. We drove 20 minutes from Boston Seaport to Somerville.

Nothing luxurious nor too fancy, but cozy and with a promising delicious culinary experience is what I chose to close the field trip welcoming the Christmas season.

We were the first ones to arrive at the tiny casual restaurant. The staff were chatting

placidly. The music was a little loud and repetitive and slightly annoying. However, we were laughing and talking about various things, and when we were hesitant to go for or skip the dessert, the bill arrived.

I almost fainted. The receipt had a list of tips percentages to choose: 20%, 22% and 25%, the equivalent value in money and the total including the tip. As a rule for a non-royal service, I add, without thinking, a standard 20%, which turned the check into close to \$200.

Wait, what? (Part III)

We were three adults and one kid. We ordered three entrees and four beverages. I shared my meal with my fussy eating kid. How did it turn out to be that expensive?

It was not an everyday meal, but it was neither "Fugu," a poisonous blowfish considered as a Japanese delicacy, nor even a filet mignon. It was basically a stew of chicken, stew of lamb, a vegan choice, and non-high-end drinks.

My husband and I scanned with our eight eyes the bill again. We realized the "tip" equivalent of 20% was already added to the bill. As we were not told about it, we mechanically were adding the standard tip in Massachusetts of 20%, exacerbating the total cost of our one-course dinner.

Under state law, section 152A, "service charge" is defined as fee or charge in lieu of a tip that the customer would expect to go to wait staff, and it is treated as tips because it belongs to the employees who provided service to the customer.

Also, the legislation says

that employers can impose "on a patron any house or administrative fee in addition to or instead of a service charge or tip" but employers need to "inform" their patrons that fee is not assigned to staff employees.

This is the case for banquets like a wedding reception or a large party of guests, where the quote has an item that says, "service charge" and specifies that is not a tip.

Nonetheless, it did not say "service charge," it did say "Gratuity 20%."

We should have been informed the tip was already included before ordering!

Ultimately, we left the 20-seat restaurant without adding extra tip and agreed to "no need to come back."

So, if you are going out for dinner, remember to double-check if the chosen eatery includes the tip. If you are going with relatives or friends, ask after how many seats they consider a group and how much the service fee is.

Lastly, make sure to express among your party that the check will be split evenly including taxes, fees and tips, and please be mindful with what you order. Don't go for the most expensive item on the menu! Also, beware of those pals that prefer to pay what they order based on the itemized cost in the menu. That price does not include taxes, neither service fee (if it's charged) nor tips.

Remember the idea of the season is to have fun and enjoy each other's company wherever you go without breaking into your savings.

## NECC Observer

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### Publication Schedule

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#4	Dec. 6	Nov. 29

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## Opinion

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# Arcane season 2 (a review)

*A review of Arcane season 2; focused on the strength of female characters (Vi, Caitlyn, and Jinx). Contains spoilers.*

BY QUINLAN COOKE  
Opinions Editor

Arcane is an animated show that was released in 2021 and concluded just a few weeks ago in 2024. It is aimed at adult audiences and is based on the game League of Legends. The show is available on Netflix in its entirety. The show has been praised for the quality of animation, which was done by the French studio Fortiche.

The story follows the tragic stories of Vi and her younger sister. It is set in a steampunk-type universe, filled with magic and non-human characters. The overarching conflicts of the show are between the posh city of Piltover, and the underdeveloped bottom of the city, Zaun; and the usage of 'Hextech' (the utilization of in-universe magic for personal gain).

In season one, it is revealed that after Vi had been sent to prison as a teen, Powder was taken under the wing of Silco, the kingpin of Zaun. Silco raised Powder to be more ruthless than he was and changed her name to Jinx. Caitlyn Kirramann, daughter of a wealthy Piltover family, became a police officer and made it her mission to find Jinx. Jinx and Silco had been terrorizing Piltover and by this point, they had caused casualties. Caitlyn tracks down someone related to a Jinx incident and finds Vi in prison. Caitlyn uses her position and power to free Vi, and they agree to work together to hunt down Silco and Jinx.

Season one ends with Jinx killing Silco, and Jinx blowing up a building with the most important people in Piltover. One of those people was Caitlyn's mother. Season two begins right after this scene, showing the funeral for Caitlyn's mother. There is also a memorial for the other lives lost, and 'Silco's' people attack it. Caitlyn convinces Vi to become an officer, despite her unpleasant past with them, in order to bring justice to everything that had gone wrong and to put an end to her sister's

antics.

Vi's character goes through so much this season, she has previously lost everyone important to her, and she fears that the same fate will be met with Caitlyn, someone she has grown to trust. While on the search for Jinx, Vi and Caitlyn share a kiss. Soon after the two face Jinx, they get into a disagreement and Caitlyn abandons Vi. This sends Vi spiraling and she is driven back to fighting and alcohol. She is entirely alone and blames herself for what happened between her and Caitlyn, and what happened to her sister.

When she eventually has to face Caitlyn again, Caitlyn is on a rampage, the commander of the Piltover army, fighting against those who put them in danger to try to further Hextech. She has been blinded by her own loss and throws herself into her work. When the two meet again, Vi convinces Caitlyn she has been wrong, and the two decide to work against the general.

Seeing these two strong female characters work together without a male character being involved in any way was invigorating. The two were also in a romantic relationship, which was so refreshing to see. It was great that their relationship was just something that happened, it did not have to be a major plot point. While the relationship was major in both of their character arcs, it was not the driving force, there was no tense coming-out or secretive scene, they were just two strong women who fell for each other in the toughest of times.

Even though Jinx was intended to be morally ambiguous, one cannot help but feel for her. Viewers see her struggle from a young age, and how it devolves into delusions and mental instability. She mentors a young girl throughout the second season, making her all the more likable. Eventually, she is captured, and the child

she mentored passes away in the war. Jinx comes to terms with everything she has done and all the pain she has caused to the people of both Zaun and Piltover.

Jinx decides that she has to end the cycle of violence. Vi discovers where Jinx was being held, and frees her, but does not follow. Jinx wants to die, she feels that the only way she can end the cycle of violence and let her sister be happy is if she is no longer alive. Jinx is wonderfully complicated, which is proven when she is convinced to help her sister and her girlfriend win the war she has been fighting on the wrong side of for so long.

After Jinx leaves, Vi is trapped in her cell and starts wallowing. She sits there and blames herself for everything, she feels she does not deserve to be happy, and that she has made every decision in her life wrong. Caitlyn comes down to the cell and says that she knew Vi would be there. Caitlyn allowed Vi to decide to free her sister, she did not make Vi choose sides. Caitlyn decides to let her own guard down, and the two women share a steamy scene.

Vi was finally able to make a decision she felt good about, she was able to choose to be happy with Caitlyn, even just for a moment.

Caitlyn decides to take a break, she knows what is coming but still decides to take a moment just for the two of them. While this is happening, Jinx is crafting tools for good, she is using her talents in a way that will not destroy, but help. She knows this will not redeem her, but she is making the effort anyway.

I recommend Arcane to anyone who can appreciate a strong female character, and to anyone interested in a deep plot with many parts to focus on. There are so many things that were not touched on here, for the sake of simplicity, but there are so many more com-



Photo by @arcaneshow on Instagram

Arcane poster post-release

“

I recommend Arcane to anyone who can appreciate a strong female character, and to anyone interested in a deep plot with many parts to focus on.

”

plicated characters and plot points, I wanted to specifically call out the three main female characters, as they all have inspiring and very different/un-

conventional stories.

Overall, Arcane season two was a delight to watch and was amazingly intricate.

## Opinion

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# Cabinet controversy

## *Trump's junk drawer of Cabinet picks*

By BAILEY ORIO  
Features Editor

Donald Trump's recent cabinet picks have sparked significant controversy and debate. Among the most contentious choices was Matt Gaetz, who was nominated for the position of Attorney General. Gaetz, a former congressman from Florida, withdrew his nomination amid allegations of sexual misconduct, including accu-

sations of paying for sex and involvement with a minor.

This withdrawal came after Gaetz faced intense scrutiny and opposition from both Democrats and Republicans.

Trump's other Cabinet selections have also raised eyebrows. For instance, Marco Rubio, a Florida senator and former presidential candidate, was nominated as Secretary of State. Rubio, known for

his strong stance against authoritarian regimes, presents a stark contrast to Trump's often favorable comments about leaders like Vladimir Putin.

Another controversial pick was Pete Hegseth, a Fox News host, nominated for Secretary of Defense. Hegseth's nomination has been marred by past allegations of sexual assault, which he has denied. Despite these allegations, Trump has

praised Hegseth's military service and loyalty.

Scott Bessent, a billionaire hedge-fund manager, was nominated for Treasury Secretary. Bessent's nomination has been criticized due to his lack of experience in public service and his previous support for Trump's import tariffs. Critics argue that his background in finance does not necessarily qualify him to oversee the na-

tion's economy.

These nominations reflect Trump's preference for loyalists and unconventional choices, often prioritizing personal loyalty over traditional qualifications. This approach has led to a cabinet filled with individuals who have faced significant controversy and opposition, raising questions about the effectiveness and stability of Trump's administration.

## Trump lied about his involvement with Project 2025

By KIM ZAPPALA  
Correspondent

Donald Trump's presidential campaign was defined, in part, by his vehement disavowal of Project 2025, a conservative governance blueprint crafted by the Heritage Foundation. Publicly, Trump criticized the project, labeling its proposals as "ridiculous and abysmal." Yet, post-election, his administration's transition team has taken a starkly different approach, actively incorporating key figures and recommendations from the very plan he sought to distance himself from. This apparent contradiction underscores Trump's strategic navigation of public opinion and political pragmatism, highlighting the controversial path his presidency may take.

Project 2025 is a sweeping conservative agenda designed to reshape the federal government by enhancing executive power, dismantling the administrative state, and aligning governance with Christian nationalist ideals. Central to the plan are proposals like "Schedule F," a mechanism for firing thousands of career civil servants to replace them with political loyalists. Critics argue this would undermine the expertise and independence of federal agencies, effectively converting them into extensions of the presidency. While Trump initially sought to disassociate himself from the plan during his campaign, his post-election appointments signal a quiet embrace of its core principles.

One of the most telling ex-

amples of this shift is the nomination of Russell Vought to lead the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). Vought, a chief architect of Project 2025, authored its chapter on executive power, advocating for the dismantling of regulatory agencies and slashing federal budgets. During Trump's first term, Vought held the same role and earned a reputation as a staunch advocate for deregulation and cost-cutting.

Vought's influence extends beyond his nomination. In a leaked conversation, he reportedly revealed his involvement in preparing a detailed playbook for Trump's first 180 days in office, filled with executive orders designed for immediate implementation. This aligns with Project 2025's vision of consolidating presidential authority and enacting sweeping changes without the delays of legislative approval. Vought's deep ties to the plan underscore Trump's reliance on its architects to shape his governance strategy, even as he continues to distance himself from the project publicly.

Another significant figure is Stephen Miller, a long-time Trump ally and a supporter of Project 2025. Miller has been appointed as deputy chief of staff for policy and Homeland Security adviser, key roles that give him significant influence over immigration and national security policies. Miller, who founded the group America First Legal, was previously on Project 2025's advisory board before distancing his organization amid growing scrutiny. Nonetheless, his endorsement

of the plan's priorities — particularly its hardline immigration policies — suggests a continued commitment to its principles within Trump's inner circle.

Brendan Carr, another Project 2025 contributor, has been tapped to lead the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). Carr's contributions to the project's vision for the FCC emphasize deregulation and curtailing the independence of regulatory agencies, aligning with Trump's broader goals of reducing federal oversight. Similarly, Tom Homan, a contributor to the project's immigration policies, has been appointed as the administration's "border czar." Homan, who previously served as acting director of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) during Trump's first term, was instrumental in implementing controversial policies like family separation. His new role is expected to focus on mass deportations, reflecting the hardline stance advocated by Project 2025.

During the election, Trump's team went to great lengths to distance him from Project 2025, with Trump himself claiming to know "nothing" about the plan. The project's unpopularity among voters, particularly its Christian nationalist elements and calls for sweeping changes to the federal workforce, made it a liability during the campaign. Democrats capitalized on this, linking Trump to the plan in campaign ads and debates. Even Trump's allies attempted to downplay the as-

sociation, with his super PAC creating a counter-campaign branding Project 2025 as a "hoax."

Despite these denials, the appointments of Project 2025 contributors suggest that Trump never entirely severed ties with the plan. Instead, he appears to have waited until after the election to integrate its authors into his administration. Critics argue this strategy reflects a pattern of political expediency: publicly distancing from controversial ideas to win elections, only to embrace them once in power.

Implications of Trump's embrace of Project 2025 extend far beyond personnel choices. By aligning his administration with the plan's architects, Trump is signaling a commitment to its broader vision of governance. This includes a significant centralization of presidential authority, a rollback of regulatory oversight, and policies that critics argue undermine democratic institutions. For instance, the implementation of "Schedule F" would enable Trump to overhaul the federal workforce, replacing experienced civil servants with political appointees. Proponents argue this would streamline governance and ensure alignment with the president's agenda, while opponents warn it risks turning federal agencies into partisan tools.

Moreover, the plan's alignment with Christian nationalism raises concerns about the erosion of the separation between church and state. Vought and other Project 2025

contributors have openly advocated for governance rooted in Christian teachings, a vision that could marginalize non-Christian communities and challenge the pluralistic principles of American democracy. Critics warn that such policies could exacerbate social divisions and undermine constitutional protections for religious freedom.

The extensive personnel database created by Project 2025, described as a "conservative LinkedIn," has reportedly been used by Trump's transition team to identify candidates for lower-level positions, further embedding the project's influence within the administration.

Trump's post-election appointments reveal a calculated embrace of Project 2025, despite his earlier disavowal of the plan. By placing its architects in key positions, Trump is laying the groundwork for a presidency defined by centralized authority, regulatory rollbacks, and hardline conservative policies. While this strategy may resonate with his supporters, it has raised alarm among critics who fear its implications for democratic governance, civil rights, and the independence of federal institutions. As Trump's second term begins to take shape, the influence of Project 2025 will likely remain a central—and contentious—aspect of his administration.

*Note: Kim Zappala is a former editor-in-chief and opinion editor of the NECC Observer.*

## Opinion

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# Is in-person Black Friday fading away?

By QUINLAN COOKE

Opinion editor

Has Black Friday lost its magic? Is there any point in going in-store for good deals when they are also online? The prevalence of online shopping has drastically changed the look and feel of Black Friday.

Black Friday was once a momentous event, where after a long day on Thanksgiving, people would line up in the early hours of the morning in a line to make sure they were able to secure the doorbuster deals they wanted. There would be fights over TVs and gaming systems, and now there are deals weeks ahead of the actual day online.

With “Cyber Monday” deals on the rise, what is the point of Black Friday? Today,

on Black Friday (November 29), I went into a store that was advertising 20% off all merchandise, but on the small print of the sign, it said the deal was available online only. With online shopping gaining popularity by the day, shouldn't stores do their best to encourage in-person shopping?

There have been online deals ready to shop for weeks online, all under the guise of a “Black Friday” sale, so why take the trip to the store when you have all the shopping you need at your fingertips? Perhaps some go in store for a nostalgic feeling, or as a getaway from family after a long Thanksgiving week.

This year, the place that

drummed up the most in-person business was Target, for a Taylor Swift promotional book with limited quantities. The lines outside the red and white stores were reminiscent of former Black Fridays. The reason for these lines was that the book did not drop online until Saturday (November 30). Fans wanted to make sure that they were able to secure their copies (which were limited to four per person).

This release differs from the way that many stores are releasing promotional products, generally, they are released online at a set time and it is a total free-for-all. However, at Target, whoever lines up the earliest has the best chance of securing the product

they want.

At the mall on Black Friday, I observed many people with full shopping bags, but all of the bags were on the smaller side. I left empty-handed. I compared every deal I saw in-store to the deals online. Online, I got a better price and more selection in the products, colors, and sizes.

As much fun as I had, the trip to the mall was wasted. I fought for a parking spot and was in large crowds for lackluster deals. To me, it seems that companies have given up on their storefronts for their online counterparts. More effort is put in for online shoppers, and there is less of a satisfying feeling when shopping in-store nowadays.

Companies should prioritize the in-store experience, and ensure the same deals can be found inside a store that can be found on a website. Simply put, Black Friday feels different because it is different.

Online shopping has completely changed the game, but should it be allowed to take over? There is a lot to be gained from going into a store to shop, but the experience has slowly been taken away as companies feel that malls are dying. To bring back Black Friday, stores have to be at the forefront, not online fronts. Black Friday was once not just about the deals, but about the thrill of being able to secure them, among many other excited shoppers.

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# News

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## Parnassus wins national award

BY NECC NEWS

The Associated Collegiate Press (ACP) is recognizing Northern Essex Community College's student literary magazine, Parnassus, with a national Pacemaker Award. This makes Parnassus one of the top student collegiate magazines in the country, as this marks the fifth time the ACP has recognized the magazine with the distinction.

"I'm so proud to be able to offer a national platform of recognition for the amazing work that our NECC community creates," said NECC Writing Program Coordinator/Faculty Adviser for Parnassus Patrick Lochelt. "It's a huge benefit for students to help bolster their experience and resumes/portfolios for those wishing to go onto careers in creative fields and to add 'feathers to their caps' in ways they might not be able to otherwise." cover of latest edition of magazine, black lettering on hot pink background

The Pacemaker is a significant award as only six colle-

giate literary arts magazines from across the country were recognized in the two-year college category. Parnassus was the only magazine selected from Massachusetts.

"The verbal and visual storytelling in the winning magazines is incredible and robust long-form stories combined with shorter quick-reads to pace the reader through the pages of the feature magazines," Gary Lundgren, ACP associate director and coordinator of the Pacemaker competition noted.

Other winners of the Pacemaker Award this year include Auburn University, George Mason University, Oregon State University, and the University of Miami.

"There aren't many opportunities for creative students to get their work out on such a major level at a community college, so Parnassus is a key to the world for our local students to elevate their abilities to get their work out to wider audiences," remarked Lochelt. "A community college literary magazine in Sacramento

changed my life when I was a student, both from being published but also by joining the staff and realizing that writing instruction is something I could do with my life. I am a firm believer in the power of publications like Parnassus, and I know it can be a stepping stone for anyone at the college to bigger and greater things."

Past issues of Parnassus have also been awarded and recognized by other national associations like the Columbia Scholastic Press Association, the Community College Humanities Association, and more. It was first produced at Northern Essex in 1965 making it one of the oldest institutions at the college.

The staff creates new and fresh looks to present each year, with submissions from the NECC community in the areas of fiction, poetry, creative nonfiction, art, and photography. To learn more about Parnassus, click here or contact Patrick Lochelt at plochelt@necc.mass.edu.

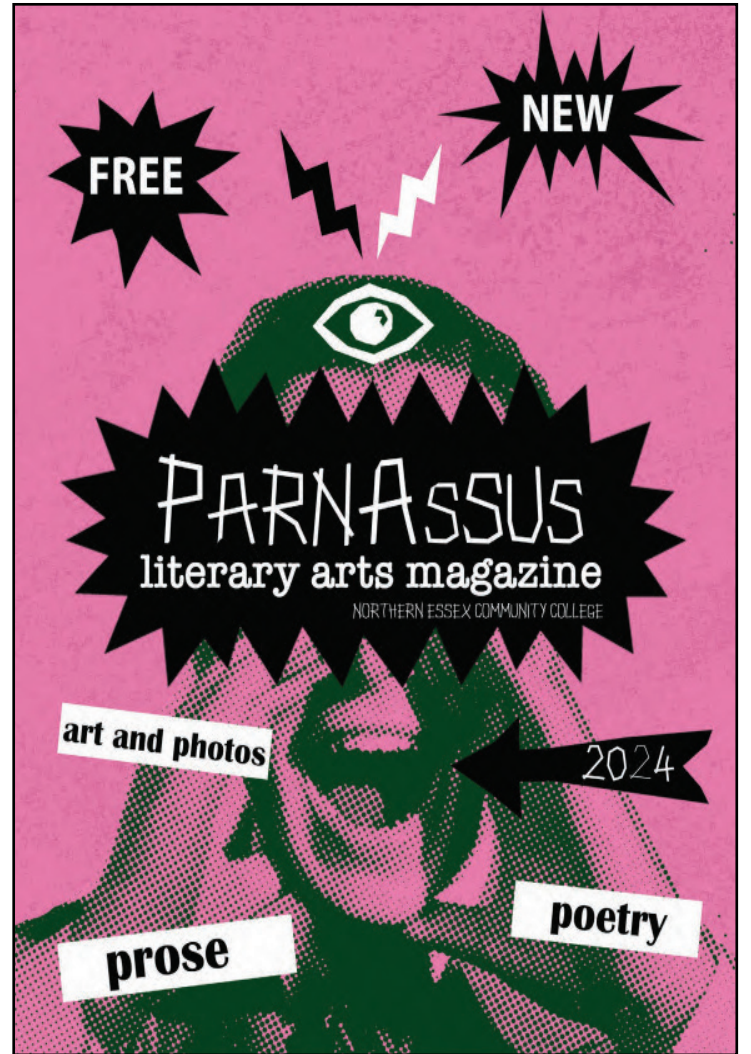


Photo Courtesy NECC News

Parnassus literary arts magazine.

NECC Music Presents

FALL 2024

**JAZZ ROCK CONCERT**

MUSIC DIRECTOR: PROF. JAKE SMITH

**Dec. 12th at 6:00 PM**

NECC Haverhill Campus, TC - 103  
100 Elliott St. Haverhill, MA

**#NECCMusicThrives**

Northern Essex Community College

We welcome requests for ASL sign language interpreting & other ADA access requests. Please contact the host of this event: Prof. Alisa Bucchiere phone: (978) 556-3779 email: abucchiere@necc.mass.edu for requests, questions or event information.

## News

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## SGA president hopes to inspire Dominican students

By MELISSA BOUSE

NECC News

With 126,000 followers on TikTok and multiple press and media appearances sharing his experience with the MassReconnect program, Business Transfer student Pedro Rentas is a familiar face. Now, he plans to use that recognition to advocate for his fellow students as the new president of the Northern Essex Community College Student Government Association (SGA).

"I'm going to meet with all of the clubs on campus and go into some classrooms. I want people to know who I am and what I can do for them," says Rentas.

Rentas is well-versed in mass communication. Born in San Pedro De Macoris, Dominican Republic, and raised in the city of Higüey, he worked his way up through the broadcasting industry there, eventually landing a role as a reporter for a nationally televised, weekly magazine-style show. Then, in 2015, he had the opportunity to move to the United States with his siblings. Though it meant giving up a career he'd worked hard for, Rentas says it was worth the sacrifice. He eventually settled in Haverhill, married his husband Jesse, and found steady work in banking while his TikTok channel slowly started to accumulate followers.

As his personal brand grew, he thought he could benefit from some business know-how. Rentas first came to Northern Essex in the fall of 2023 for a training program. That's when he learned about MassReconnect. It was, at the time, a brand new program making community college free for Massachusetts residents over the age of 25 who did not already have an associate degree.

"I think many people who come here from my country think that college here [in the United States] means taking out loans. I'm old, I'm afraid of loans," jokes Rentas who is now 39. "I heard about the MassReconnect Program and I said, 'Sign me up! Right away!'"

Rentas immersed himself

in classes immediately, taking a full course load. In early 2024, he became involved in SGA. He first served as marketing chair and then became the vice president of the Lawrence Campus. Inspired by his positive attitude and resourcefulness, SGA members then asked him if he'd be the next president.

"I believe that is not enough to just want change," reflects Rentas. "You must go and make that change happen; I am so proud to be a Dominican who is doing good things for his community."

Outgoing SGA president Elijah Antunes swore Rentas in as the new president in late November. Rentas says, according to his research, he is the first person from the Dominican Republic to lead the group.

"More than 47% in our community college are Hispanic students, the majority are from Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic, and now the president is also Dominican. This is a door that now is open for more people like me to continue an inclusive and diverse environment."

Rentas says top issues he plans to address as president include:

Addressing student mental health

Ensuring students have access to food resources

Increasing collaboration with other community college student government leaders

Increasing access to English for Speakers of Other Languages classes

"There are so many people that I want to thank for their support during my journey in the United States and Northern Essex Community College. I don't want to miss anyone, so to all of you: thank you from the bottom of my heart," Rentas said.

The SGA meets twice a month on both the Haverhill and Lawrence Campuses and via Zoom. To learn more about the SGA and how to get involved, visit the <https://www.necc.mass.edu/student-life/student-government-association/>



Photo by NECC News

Outgoing SGA President Elijah Antunes (left) swears in Pedro Rentas.



Photo by NECC News

Rentas working as a journalist in the Dominican Republic.

This paper is your voice, too!  
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# News

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## Music thrives Christmas continued from Page 1

Monday, Dec. 9 at 12:30 p.m.: “Ugly Christmas Sweater Concert” encourages wearing their most garish Christmas sweaters and sing along. Carols and classic Christmas songs will highlight the “Holy Jolly” season. Directed by Music Professor Alisa Bucchiere.

Location: Haverhill campus, Spurr C building, Lobby. Free admission.

Thursday, Dec. 12, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. “Juries” is the end-of-semester performance exam. Music major students participate as part of their Applied Music core training assessment. They will present all sorts of genres starting from old music, foreign language, contemporary, jazz to Broadway songs.

Location: TC building. Free admission.

Thursday, Dec. 12 at 6 p.m.: “Jazz Rock Concert” directed by Music Professor Jake Smith. He together with 15 music students will present a delightful repertoire including pieces from Bernstein.

Location: Haverhill campus, TC-103 building. Free admission.

Tuesday, Dec. 17, 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.: Final Performance Exam featuring duets, trios, quartets, and quintets performances. Music students will showcase skills as soloists or musical ensemble members.

Location: Haverhill campus, TC-103 building. Free admission.

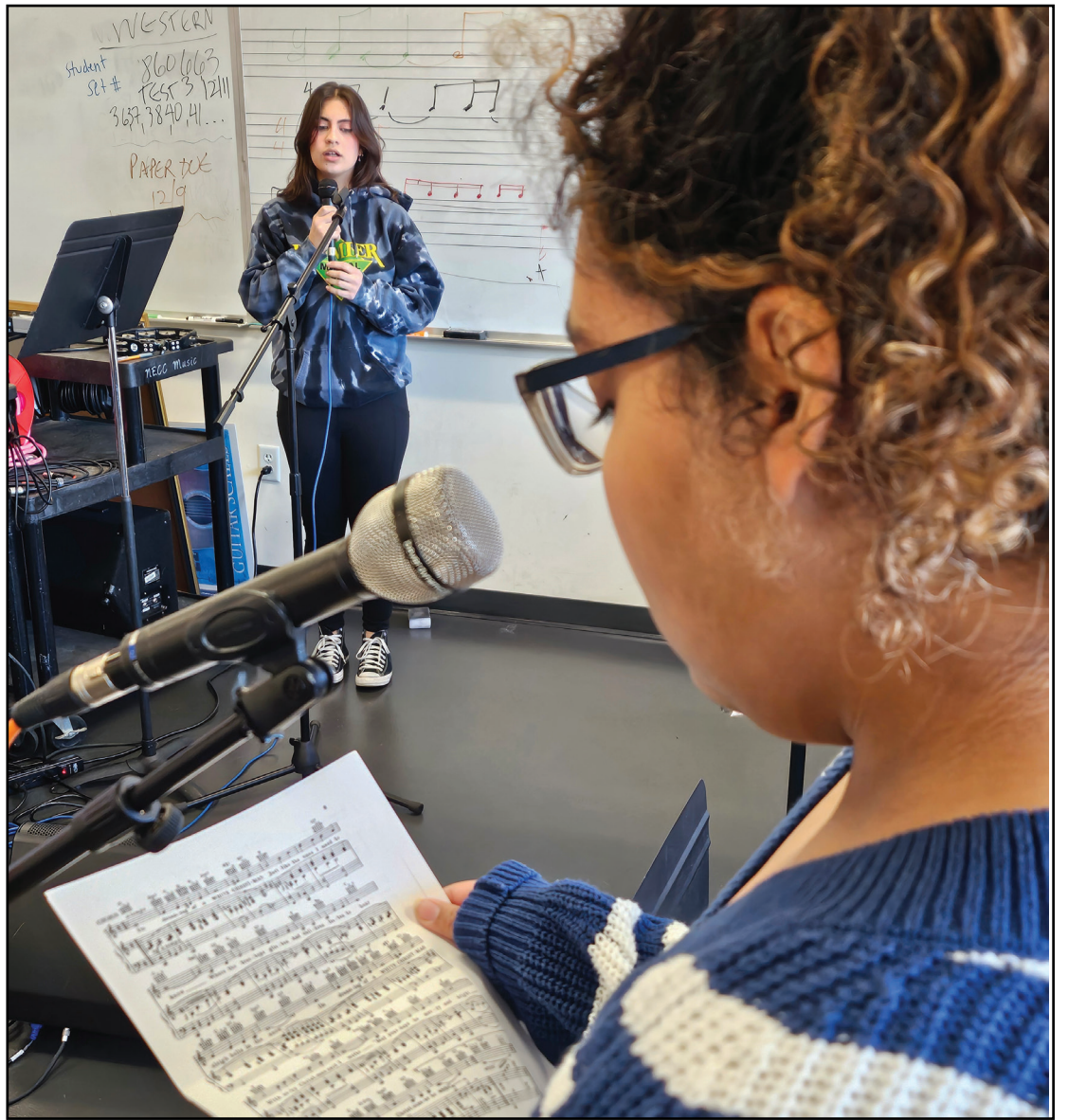
Friday Dec. 13 at 7:00 p.m.; Saturday Dec. 14 at 3 and at 7 p.m.; and Sunday Dec. 15 at 3 p.m.: “A Christmas Carol” is the crown of the season. Directed by John Budzyna, this classical musical brings on stage a mixed cast of faculty, relatives, alumni and current students.

Location: Haverhill campus, C building, third floor. Chester W. Hawrylcw Theater.

Tickets: \$20 general admission, \$10 for students and seniors, free for children 5 and under.

Purchase online at <https://www.ticketleap.events/events/neccchristmascarol> and tickets at the door (cash only).

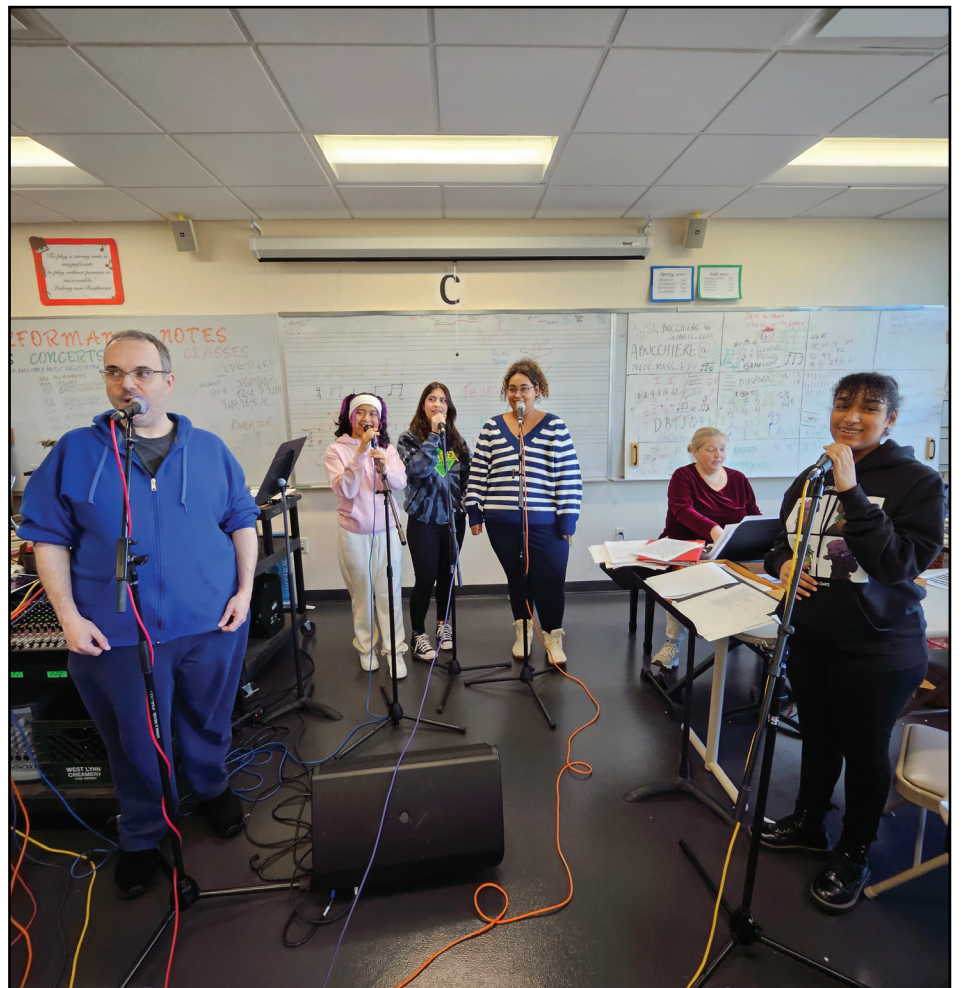
If you participate as performer or guest and share it on social media, please add #NECCMusicThrives and share the joy of music.



Photos by Editor-in-Chief Daniela Valdivia-Terres  
Students and aspiring singers Aaliyah Campusano (front) holds the notes and lyrics of White Christmas while Cierra Townshend (in the back) warm up her voice.



White Christmas lyrics and music notes on front, it is the first song to be rehearsed by students in the Music Department.



From left to right, music students Sean Gaff, Cheryl Lopez, Cierra Townshend and Angely Gabriel as singers and Music Professor Alisa Bucchiere on piano get ready for the Ugly Christmas Sweater concert.



# Features

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## Evolution of a Thanksgiving staple

### *Pumpkin pie is a holiday favorite*

BY QUINLAN COOKE  
Correspondent

From the Milk Bar pumpkin pie, to the most simple of pumpkin pies, this seasonal treat is found in many spreads of last courses. Pumpkin was a staple to early settlers of New England, and was at first used in many other ways.

Pumpkin was treated and cooked like a vegetable, and then mulled into a beverage similar to apple cider. Pumpkin pie looked very different at the time of its invention compared to its modern look.

Think of an apple pie; it is filled with thin slices and has crusts on the top and bottom, covering the contents. Pumpkin pie started out the same way. Originally, pumpkin pie was inspired by apple pie, there were pieces of sliced pumpkin (along with apples) in between two crusts with sugar and spices filling the empty space.

Pumpkin pie has since evolved from its original form in the 1600s, in fact by 1796, a recipe was found where pumpkin pie filling looked very different. In a cookbook written by Amelia Simmons the very year, there was a recipe listed for pumpkin pie. This recipe featured a pudding-like filling. The pumpkin custard was still covered by a second crust.

In 1824, Mary Rudolph's cookbook featured a very similar recipe to Amelia Simmons, but with the subtraction of a top crust. Rudolph instead opted for decorative pieces of crust placed on the top of the pie. Throughout the coming decades, more and more pumpkin pie recipes were published in cookbooks, and the pie exploded in popularity.

By 1850, pumpkin pie was an icon and found on almost every Thanksgiving table across New England. In the 1900s, pumpkins began being primarily used just for pies, and that is what they were advertised for. It was now rare to see pumpkins used like a vegetable or for a savory dish, it was especially rare and potentially unheard of for a pumpkin to be used for a drink like they were in the 1600s.

Pumpkin pie was not made with canned pumpkin for many years, until about 1920, pumpkin pie was almost exclusively made with fresh, whole pumpkins that people roasted and peeled themselves. The popularity of canned pumpkin brought pumpkin pie to more tables than ever before.

Along with the widespread availability of canned pumpkin across the US, restaurants and bakeries started offering whole pumpkin pies seasonally to take the stress off of

home bakers for the holidays. By the 1960s, among store bought pumpkin pies and canned pumpkin, frozen pumpkin pies were also beginning to pop up around stores.

Nowadays, pumpkin pie is one of the most accessible and popular holiday desserts, for good reason. Pumpkin pie has had hundreds of years of evolution to reflect the people baking it. Pumpkin pie can now be found on any table, from anywhere. Pumpkin pie is a sign of the holiday season, and can be appreciated by anyone. You can walk into any grocery store and see the ingredients to make a pumpkin pie, right next to pre-made, ready to eat pumpkin pies.



Photo by Opinion Editor Quinlan Cooke

Observer Opinion Editor Quinlan Cooke recently made this pumpkin pie.



NECC Music

# JURIES

## MUSIC PERFORMANCE FINAL EXAM

Thursday

December 12, 2024

9:00AM - 4:00PM

Haverhill Campus TC-103

Juries are end-of-semester performance exams that occur at important junctures in a student's degree program. Music major students are periodically required to participate in Juries, in order to assess progress in the Applied Music portion of their core music training.

**#NECCMusicThrives**

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We want to see what you have to say.

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FALL  
2024



## Campus Life

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# Deep dive into the classroom

*An online course explores the importance of American Literature*

By **EMMA RUGGIERO**  
*Campus Life Editor*

An online American Literature II course explores “a wide range of American literature from the Civil War to the present,” and studies a variety of themes, such as social justice, identity, and what it means to be an American, which are told “by a diverse group of writers (who present) social/historical events (to the reader) that contribute to the evolving American experience and character,” according to the course description.

Furthermore, “By reading works from different places, different times, written by people with very different life experiences, (students) get to look at the world through a different lens,” said Department of English Professor Barbara Stachniewicz.

One piece of literature this course is studying is from their Norton Anthology Shorter Tenth Edition textbook is Black American writer Toni Morrison’s short story Recitatif. According to The New Yorker, the story is “an experiment in the removal of all racial codes from a narrative about two characters of different races for whom racial identity is crucial.”

Professor Stachniewicz says “it is easy to believe that because we live in the United States, we understand the country and the people in it. Literature shows us that the situation is more complex,” so the significance of studying Morrison’s work is to teach “us empathy, which seems very important today (because it broadens societies’) point of view of many different people” continued Stachniewicz

Although this is an online course, it does not halt the students from engaging in thorough, lengthy and meaningful conversations.

In addition to reading the story, students are required to take a one question open response quiz and respond to the discussion board posting related to the assigned readings, and interact with fellow classmates online.

As a result of the students responding to each other’s discussion board posts, new ideas and concepts related to the stories are developed, and it “fills (the professor) with absolute joy! It means students are sharing a part of themselves, their interpretations, and are learning from each other,” said Stachniewicz.

Another element that students participate in are response essays.

Every few weeks students are assigned to write a one-page paper that answers three questions related to the story they are currently reading.

According to the response essay instructions, the students must write a “brief overview” of the reading, address their opinion about the reading, what they found interesting and confusing, what information about the reading they still want to know, and to conclude their response essay, the students are asked “if (they) were going to lead a class discussion, what is the first question (they) would ask?”

By participating in this course, students possess an understanding that “American Literature is a complex and wonderful subject and that it teaches us about the historical moment in which the text was written and also teaches us something about the way we live now,” said Stachniewicz

Professor Stachniewicz loves teaching, whether it is an online or face-to-face course, because “All readers bring who they are to the text they are reading and that means we all bring our own experiences, our own lenses to the work of interpreting a text,” said Stachniewicz.

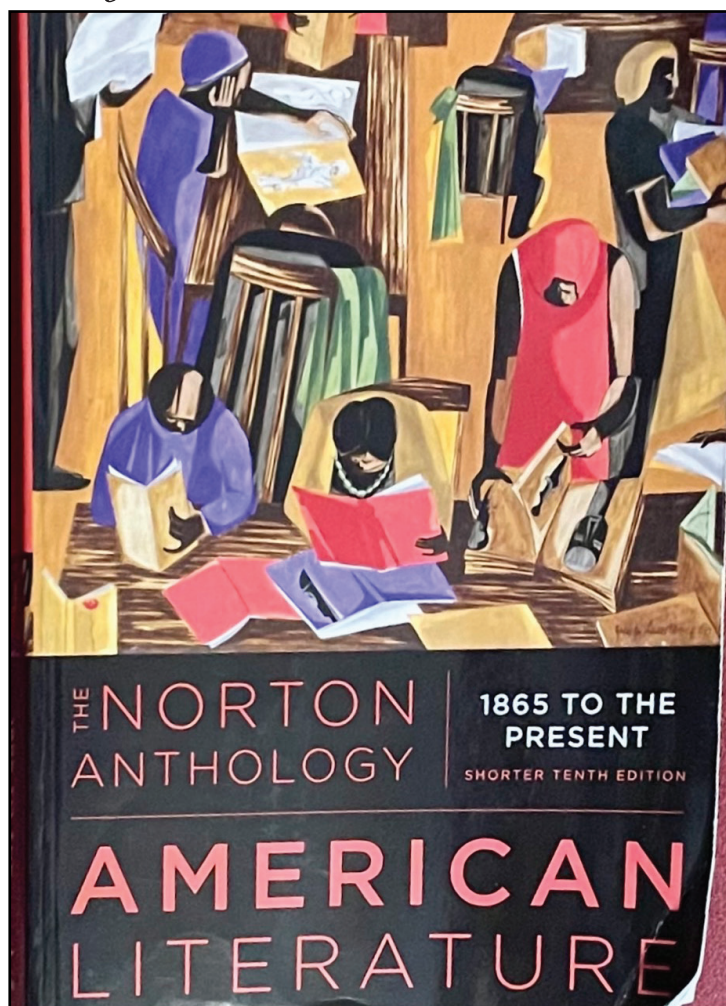


Photo by Emma Ruggiero

American Lit. II online course textbook

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# Campus Life

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## NECC student featured in Boston Globe Magazine *Monica Richard gives voice to brother's story*

By EMMA RUGGIERO  
Campus Life Editor

It began with the consumption of pork from a food vendor that gave Lenine Sequeira a terrible headache that ultimately sent him to visit three different hospitals with health concerns.

According to Globe Magazine, Sequeira lived in Cape Verde “where he worked as a driver for the Ministry of Health.” Sequeira was constantly “on the go (and) eating on the road” while he traveled and consumed a lot of pork, said Sequeira’s sister Monica Richard.

In the spring of 2016 when Sequeira moved to New Bedford, MA, he began to experience terrible headaches that interrupted his sleep. Days later he felt “nauseous (and) numbness in his limbs, (experienced) blurry vision, (trouble) speaking properly and (waves of) confusion,” said Richard.

One day Sequeira was home with his mother when he experienced a whirlwind of these symptoms and his mother thought “he was having a stroke because he could not talk” correctly and “his body was shaking,” said Richard. The paramedics were called to bring him to New Bedford hospital.

According to Sequeira’s sister, St. Luke’s Hospital in New Bedford was “not sure” what illness or disease Sequeira had or why he was experiencing specific symptoms. From there, Sequeira was sent to a hospital in Rhode Island. There, Sequeira was diagnosed with tapeworm.

Tapeworm can exist in pork. Another interchangeable term is known as “Taenia solium,” which translates to pork tapeworm, according to Globe Magazine.

Pork tapeworm is common in “South and Southeast Asia, South and Central America, and sub-Saharan Africa, including Cape Verde,” where Sequeira lived before he moved to the United States, according to Globe Magazine.

Tapeworm is “a chain of organisms, connected, one to the next, by ropy lateral nerves” and obtains “no brains, no hearts, no mouths, and no guts,” said Globe Magazine. In order for a tapeworm chain to affect a person, the chain grows “suckers and hook (that) anchor (themselves within) a person, or in this case Sequeira, said Globe Magazine.

The next step involved with being infected by tapeworm is a bank of egg sacs detach themselves from the chain and burst, causing the eggs to spill out in a person’s body.

According to Globe Magazine, in order for the eggs to hatch they “must be swallowed (either by) a person” or a pig. From there, the eggs that lay in the human “bore through the intestinal wall and go into the bloodstream” and eventually spread throughout the body.

Once Sequeira became informed with his diagnosis, his family connected the dots starting with the food, specifically the pork, he ate in Cape Verde, which turned out to be the root problem. The family was in a state of “shock (and) denial,” and questioned how the food is treated in Cape Verde, said Richard.

The family knew that tapeworm existed and thought it could be treated quickly and easily, but they were not aware of “how long (the tapeworm) lived in (Sequeira’s brain,) or how serious the illness was and the consequences or damage” it would cause Sequeira, said Richard.

The hospital in Rhode Island prescribed Sequeira with medication, but because the prescriptions were extremely expensive Sequeira’s family could not afford them. Without the proper medication to help treat Sequeira’s tapeworm he experienced a “seizure less than 24 hours” later, said Richard.

When Sequeira’s symptoms worsened, his family took him to Mass General Hospital where he was admitted and underwent tests to “figure out what (the doctors could) do (to help) my brother,” said



Photo by Emma Ruggiero

Richard.

The medical staff at Mass General “immediately took the burden on themselves (to) provide everything (Sequeira) needed to get through the treatment,” and luckily a “few weeks later (he) was allowed to leave the hospital, but he did not leave empty handed. (The hospital made sure he) left with the proper medication,” continued Richard.

Sequeira and his family are “forever grateful” for the “the care (and) the love” Mass General provided,” said Richard.

Since 2016 when Sequeira was diagnosed with tapeworm, “it has been challenging. In the beginning it was tough. He experienced depression when he realized it was a long term condition and he was not able to live a typical lifestyle of driving, going to work and (engaging in) social interaction. He isolated himself. (He) wanted to give up, but (Sequeira’s) family talked to him” and motivated him to keep fighting, said Richard.

As a result of experiencing confusion, his “brain (could not) focus” and Sequeira had a difficult time taking his medication, so his sister Monica used “sources, such as friends and family to help (her) organize the medication” and make sure Sequeira was taking it, said Richard.

As of recently, Sequeira “is not 100 percent healthy, but the treatment is so good because it is sufficient enough to (give him) a little bit a (of his life back). He can work, he can drive (and that) takes off burdens of other family (members). He is more cautious of what he eats, drinks and (pri-



Photo by Emma Ruggiero

Photo of Monica Richard



Photo by Name Name

Photo of Lenine Sequeira

oritizes) his medication” said Richard.

For an extremely long time, Sequeira’s sister Monica lived “with (her) brother’s disease more than anybody because (she) was there the most (to support him). (She) was his voice when he could not advocate for himself until the treatments started to go into effect,” so when she found out Globe Magazine was covering Sequeira’s experience with tape-

worm “it was like (she) won the lottery,” said Richard.

Sequeira “is living proof of how (tapeworm) can impact people” and by spreading awareness about tapeworm Monica hopes it will make people “more aware of their health (in order) to prevent the illness” or seek help quickly if symptoms become apparent, said Richard.

## Arts & Entertainment

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# Early Oscar predictions

*Dune: Part Two and Wicked poised for major wins*

By ANTHONY SOUSA

Arts and Entertainment Editor

The 2024 film slate boasts a lineup of cinematic heavyweights, with “Dune: Part Two”, “Wicked”, and “Anora” standing out as potential frontrunners for the 97th Academy Awards. Each film offers something unique: an epic sci-fi spectacle, a beloved musical adaptation, and an emotionally resonant drama. Among these other movies like “Challengers”, and “Gladiator 2” have a good chance to win some categories.

Denis Villeneuve’s “Dune: Part Two” was one of the most anticipated films of 2024, building upon the success of its predecessor, “Dune: Part One”, which swept the 2022 Oscars with six wins across technical categories. This time, the stakes are higher, with Villeneuve poised to deliver a grander narrative, deeper emotional arcs, and unparalleled technical mastery.

Villeneuve’s direction has been hailed for transforming Frank Herbert’s complex sci-fi saga into a cinematic masterpiece. While “Dune: Part One” introduced audiences to the vast universe of Arrakis, “Part Two” showed an even more ambitious exploration of political intrigue, war, and destiny. The Academy has historically rewarded epic films with intricate storytelling (“The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King”, “Titanic”), positioning “Dune: Part Two” as a strong contender for Best Picture and Best Director.

Other possible nominations that should be kept in mind is Timothée Chalamet for Best actor for his performance as his character evolves into a charismatic and complex leader. Rebecca Ferguson could also build on her critically acclaimed performance for a potential Best Supporting Actress nod. Greig Fraser’s work on “Part One” was groundbreaking, and his return to capture the sweeping deserts of Arrakis and epic battle scenes will likely secure another nomination for Best Cinematography.

Jon M. Chu’s “Wicked” brings the beloved Broadway musical to the big screen, reimagining the untold story of Elphaba and Glinda in the land of Oz. With its mix of heart, humor, and unforgettable songs, “Wicked” is a major contender across categories. Cynthia Erivo as Elphaba and Ariana Grande as Glinda deliver powerhouse performances, combining vocal talent with emotional depth. Erivo, already an Oscar nominee, is a frontrunner for Best Actress. The Academy has a



Oscars statuettes.

Credit: Getty Images

“

The Academy has historically rewarded epic films with intricate storytelling (“The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King”, “Titanic”), positioning “Dune: Part Two” as a strong contender for Best Picture and Best Director.

”

history of rewarding musicals that transcend the stage, such as “Chicago” and “Les Misérables”. “Wicked” has the same potential. From costume design to production design, “Wicked” offers a feast for the eyes, and its soundtrack is likely to be a key player in Original Song categories. The popularity and quality of this musical could also help get a nod for Best Picture too.

Sean Baker’s “Anora” is generating significant buzz. As the lead, Madison delivered a standout performance that could propel her into awards-season contention, particularly with her ability to convey nuanced emotional depth. Madison’s ability to portray complex, layered characters with authenticity and emotional resonance positions her as a strong contender for an Oscar nomination for Best Actress. Her unique blend of intensity, vulnerability, and range makes her a rising star to

watch in the coming years.

Directed by Luca Guadagnino, “Challengers” explores the intense dynamics of love and rivalry in the high-stakes world of professional tennis. With Zendaya leading the cast, the film combines Guadagnino’s trademark emotional depth with a fresh, sports-centered story. Zendaya’s performance as Tashi, a tennis star turned coach caught in a love triangle, is already generating buzz. With her charisma and layered portrayal, she’s a strong contender for Best Actress. Blending romance, sports drama, and psychological tension, “Challengers” brings something fresh to the awards race, appealing to Academy voters who appreciate innovative narratives and could land itself an Oscar for Best Original Screenplay.

Ridley Scott’s “Gladiator 2” explores the legacy of Maximus through

the eyes of Lucius, now grown into a conflicted man. Denzel Washington’s is one that could earn him significant attention come award season. Washington plays a pivotal role, as an influential character in the gladiatorial world. The franchise’s history of being recognized by the Academy, combined with Washington’s gravitas, suggests that his performance will be closely scrutinized by voters and we can see him win another Oscar for Best Supporting Actor.

The nominations voting period is set for Jan. 8-12, and the official nominations will be revealed on Friday, Jan. 17. With the date set for March 2 the excitement continues to build for the grand ceremony, where Hollywood’s finest will gather to celebrate cinematic excellence.

## Arts & Entertainment

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# Art is in the air

By ROWAN ROCKWELL

Correspondent

In the back of the library there is a quaint and modest room that some may never have stepped foot in. Its clean white walls and large glass windows perfectly allow for the minimalistic kind of backdrop needed for an NECC student art show. Two weeks ago on a raw, rainy Thursday afternoon that's exactly what happened.

Here in the campus showroom the students of Art 108 WIP (Work In Progress) laid out their labors, be it experimental and exploratory or driven and purposeful.

The class had spent much of the semester creating in response to prompts and getting a feel for the artistic process.

The prompts, from art faculty Dianne Pappas, ranged from making creative sense out of plastic red solo cups and coat hangers to abstract chess prompts and geometric forms.

An intimate group of 40 or so people, artists and otherwise milled about the gallery exploring the art, reading artists statements and perusing the provided snack table.

The self-guided walkthrough portion of gallery engagement came to a close when Pappas gathered the room and delivered a final prompt to her students; to speak about their work. There was a mixture of shyness and exuberance from the artists but those who opted for silence still spoke loudly through their work.

Some of the great art on display included abstract vinyl art, inventive wire and aluminum foil combos, plaster and clay pieces, a unique interactive piece of bamboo and concrete and an art/fashion piece: a top composed of plastic insects. Those were just a few of the examples of innovation and artistic exploration on display.

"I used my body," said liberal arts major Emily Lewis, 20, referring to an intriguing plaster mold of a human torso peeling back part of itself to expose pink ribs. "It's about body issues and

feeling uncomfortable in your own skin. I used to struggle with that and that's why I made it."

Upon arriving at NECC Emily was studying environmental science but as she got involved with the arts program it allowed her to engage in making art and explore her creative talents like never before.

Maggie Arnold, 22, of Andover, was the artist behind the bug shirt. After dipping her toe in at Plymouth State University for environmental science in 2020 she subsequently took a few gap years and got involved in art therapy.

"I've always been a creative person my whole life but to me it was always just gonna be a hobby. My parents said you need to go to school and you need to do something serious, something that's going to make you money," Arnold said.

But after trying her hand in something more 'typical' to a monetarily incentivized career at Plymouth State she seized the opportunity of engrossing herself in her creative passions at NECC with the hailing of the Mass Reconnect bill.

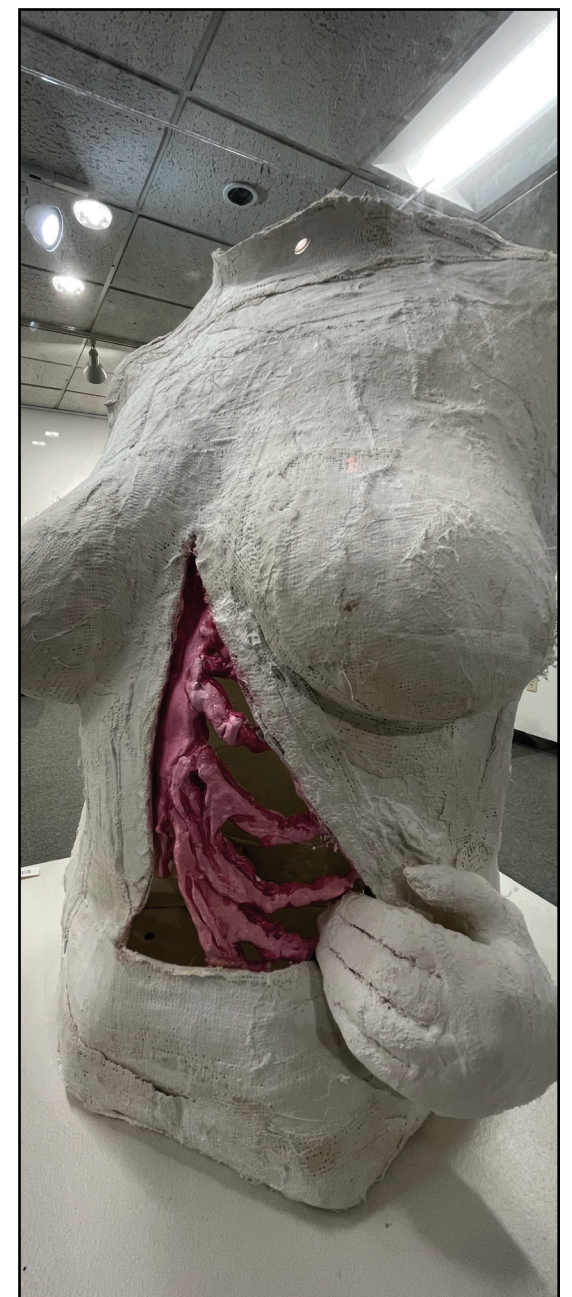
"I wanna see what I can do, I wanna challenge myself. I'm really grateful that we're given these types of opportunities to display our work, get real feedback from people, learn how to speak about our work. I want to learn the discipline and this is what I wanna do full time in life so I really appreciate NECC for giving me and everyone else here an opportunity," Arnold said.

One of the most ambitious and provoking pieces on display was by Lacey 'Rozie' Cominsky of Gloucester. She initially conceived the idea while contemplating the need for public art on campus. As she looked down on a drain and thought about where it led, she imagined being underneath it and looking up from the swamp it led to. Through both tumult and result of this contentious election cycle she channeled her energy into the creation of this reflective piece and decided to name it 'Swamp The Drain.'



Photos by Rowan Rockwell

Art created by NECC students on display in the art gallery in the library on the Haverhill campus.



# Sports

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## Knights soccer team shines

*Historic run to Nationals ends in heartbreak, but achievements still stand out*

By KATHRYN PELCZAR  
Correspondent

The Northern Essex Community College (NECC) men's soccer team made history this season by earning a spot in the National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) Division III National Championships for the first time.

While their journey ended in a 4-1 loss in the tournament's opening round, their historic achievement has captured the hearts of the campus and the community, leaving a legacy of pride and perseverance.

"It was a special, you know it was a special run," said NECC Head Coach Eusebio Marote, whose team made an extraordinary run through the regional tournament to secure a spot at nationals.

"Going to Nationals as a coach — doing this in a new Journey of mine is a dream — I've wanted to win the league very badly and I'm a competitive guy and I really don't like losing, so regardless of what it is I always strive to be the best and be competitive," said Marote.

The Knights capped their 14-3-1 season with a Northeast District Championship, defeating Quinsigamond Community College 5-3. Their success featured standout performances from key players, including sophomore Jadiel Bomfim named Co-Regional Player of the Year, who led scoring efforts, and goalkeeper Will Paganini, who delivered critical saves throughout the season.

The team's first nationals game was held in Batavia, New York, against a higher-seeded Midwest team.

Despite a spirited effort that included a goal by Bomfim in the second half, the Knights fell short but left the field with heads held high.

The national tournament may have been a setback, but it doesn't overshadow what the Knights accomplished this season.

Earning a berth to the NJCAA National Championships is a monumental achievement



Photo courtesy NECC News

The NECC Knights men's soccer team.

“

... We want to reach the top and then succeed even more and the only way to do that is to just keep working hard...

- Coach Eusebio Marote

”

for a program that had never reached such heights before.

The team's run was a testament to the hard work, dedication, and unity that Coach Marote has instilled in his players since taking over the program five years ago.

"Coach Eusebio works extremely hard to have built the program," said NECC Athletic Director Dan Blair. "The program has been built up and improved each season over the last 5 years which led to the success they achieved this season."

The Knights' success sto-

ry was one of grit and resilience, and it wasn't just about winning games. It was about a team of players, many of whom come from diverse backgrounds, coming together to represent their school and community with pride.

The impact of the team's success has been felt across the NECC campus, with students, faculty, and alumni rallying behind the team every step of the way.

Pep rallies, social media campaigns, and a wave of school spirit marked the Knights' playoff run, and their

achievement has become a source of immense pride for the entire Northern Essex community.

"At the games we had faculty, staff and administrators in attendance throughout the season..." said Blair. "The crowd for the championship game was one of the largest we've had in my time at the college for any sporting event, and we've had some great crowds."

As the season concludes, Coach Eusebio is already focused on the future. While the loss at nationals stings, he sees

this as a stepping stone toward even greater success in years to come.

With a strong group of players returning and a growing pipeline of talent coming into the program, the foundation is set for continued success.

"I'm never satisfied with just reaching the top and then going down," Marote said. "We want to reach the top and then succeed even more and the only way to do that is to just keep working hard — it doesn't happen overnight"

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NECC MUSIC

IN COLLABORATION WITH NECC THEATER IN THE LIBERAL ARTS DIVISION PRESENTS



# CHRISTMAS & CAROL

BY CHARLES DICKENS

DIRECTOR  
JOHN BUDZYNA

PRODUCER/MUSIC DIRECTOR  
ALISA BUCCHIERE

DEC. 13  
AT 7:00PM

DEC. 14  
AT 3:00PM & 7:00 PM

DEC. 15  
AT 3:00PM

CHESTER W. HAWRYLCIW THEATER, SPURK BUILDING 3RD FLOOR  
NECC HAVERHILL CAMPUS - 100 ELLIOTT STREET, HAVERHILL, MA

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for requests, questions for event information.



A dear note from Mr. Charles Dickens himself: "Scrooge accepts only cash at the door, as does our concessions and raffles, so prithee, bring your jingling coins and crinkled notes."

NB: If you prefer using credit card for tickets, please purchase them online. There is no ATM in campus. If you prefer buying tickets at the door, please consider bringing cash.