

The Centurion



“The Voice of the Students”



Volume 60 Issue 07

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Addressing the Dear Colleague Letter Regarding DEI

Juliana Zuccarello

Centurion Staff

“Our mission has not changed; our values have not changed,” said CEO & Bucks President Patrick M. Jones in an interview on the topic of the dear colleague letter.

On Feb. 14, 2025, a letter from the United States Department of Education Office for Civil Rights sent out a letter to all colleges. In the letter it was stated that schools have approximately two weeks to get rid of all of their programs involving DEI.

This comes after the Dear Colleague letter written by Craig Trainor was sent out to all colleges across the United States. The article described that colleges had two weeks to get rid of all their DEI related programs.

President Donald Trump signed this executive order on Valentine’s Day, and then the dear colleague letter came out shortly after. The Dear Colleague letter was a way of guidance on how to comply with the executive order. Trump said he would cut the federal funding of colleges if they proceeded to use DEI initiatives.

Which brings about the question of what the difference between the executive order and what the dear colleague letter is describing. The letter was guidance sent to colleges to implement the executive order. Neither

the letter nor the executive order is the law.

In addition, the letter reminds us that the “Discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin is illegal and morally reprehensible,” it reiterates Title VI and the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

An example of a similar situation with a college relating to DEI is the Students for Fair Admissions, Inc v. President and Fellows of Harvard College. The case had argued that the use of race within college admissions was unconstitutional. In accordance it had described that with the use of race in admissions was diminishing to disclose that in the college application.

In addition to the letter, it reminds us of what DEI means. DEI stands for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, it was introduced during the Civil Rights Act in 1964 and was signed by Lyndon B. Johnson. It was to make sure there would be no discrimination against anyone’s race, sex, religion, national origin, or economic status during the hiring process.

DEI is important for many reasons, as it is meant to give everyone an equal opportunity at succeeding. DEI does not diminish any groups and the reason it exists is to make sure no one is being discriminated against. DEI is meant to ensure



Photo courtesy of unsplash

that everyone has an equal opportunity of success, and it is to make sure no one is excluded from anywhere or deterred.

In addition, something to note is that along with the potential threat of federal funding being cut within the letter, just note that this does not affect student organizations, as student organizations are run by the students.

Regarding funding, the federal funding involves student aid which will not be cut.

“In terms of compliance, we are reviewing language, the way we might describe something or might call something if that needs to be changed so that we don’t appear to be discriminating because we are not discriminating,” said Jones.

“Bucks since 1964 has been here for students from all walks of life,” said President Jones.

“We have the most diverse student body in terms of every category in terms of race, ethnicity, gender identity, but also in terms of where people are in life. Young kids in our summer camp programs, we have

high school students doing dual enrollment, we have students right out of college doing the first two years of transfer or occupational degree, we have adults returning later in life, we have retiree programs, it means we are available to all of these people wherever they are in life. But we do not discriminate, we do not discriminate based on race, we have not discriminated based on race, and we are not going to discriminate based on race,” said President Jones.

“We have not been doing anything that is discriminatory,” said President Jones. This adds onto the fact that Bucks CCC has been and will continue to be a welcoming college for everyone and will continue to make sure students and faculty feel welcomed here.

Here at Bucks, the mission hasn’t changed, and the value hasn’t changed, and it will continue to be a welcoming college for everyone. As well as to make sure that students feel a sense of belonging here.

For those interested, you can locate the Dear Colleague letter on www.ed.gov

Introducing Workday Student

Gary Griggs

Centurion Staff

Michael Harris, Chief Operating Officer at Bucks Community College, says the new Workday Student system releasing on March 17, that is replacing the Student Planning (Self-Service) the system used for course enrollment and management, will provide a streamlined and more convenient experience for students compared to the current system.

“We’re hoping that stu-

dents will have a good user experience, and that we can make the processes more seamless than what they currently are”, says Harris when asked about what the goals are with the new Workday Student system.

The Workday Student project has been in development for over 4 years, as phase one of the project plan was launch in January of 2021, and we are now in the midst of the second phase of this plan.

Harris made it a point

to note that this project is still ongoing, so not everything may be implemented when Workday Student first releases, but the system will receive updates and changes in the future.

It is important to note that for the 2025 Spring and Summer semester will still be employ the current Student Planning (Self-Service) system, and the switch to Workday Student system will go into full effect during the fall semester and onwards.

Harris stated that a main goal with switching to Workday student was to streamline the currents systems and make everything more user friendly and convenient for both students and staff.

The current system, Student Planning (Self-Service), is 30 years out of date and give faculty members problems when operating, such as all student data being stored in multiple physical servers at school, and

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workday®

St. Patrick's Day Crossword

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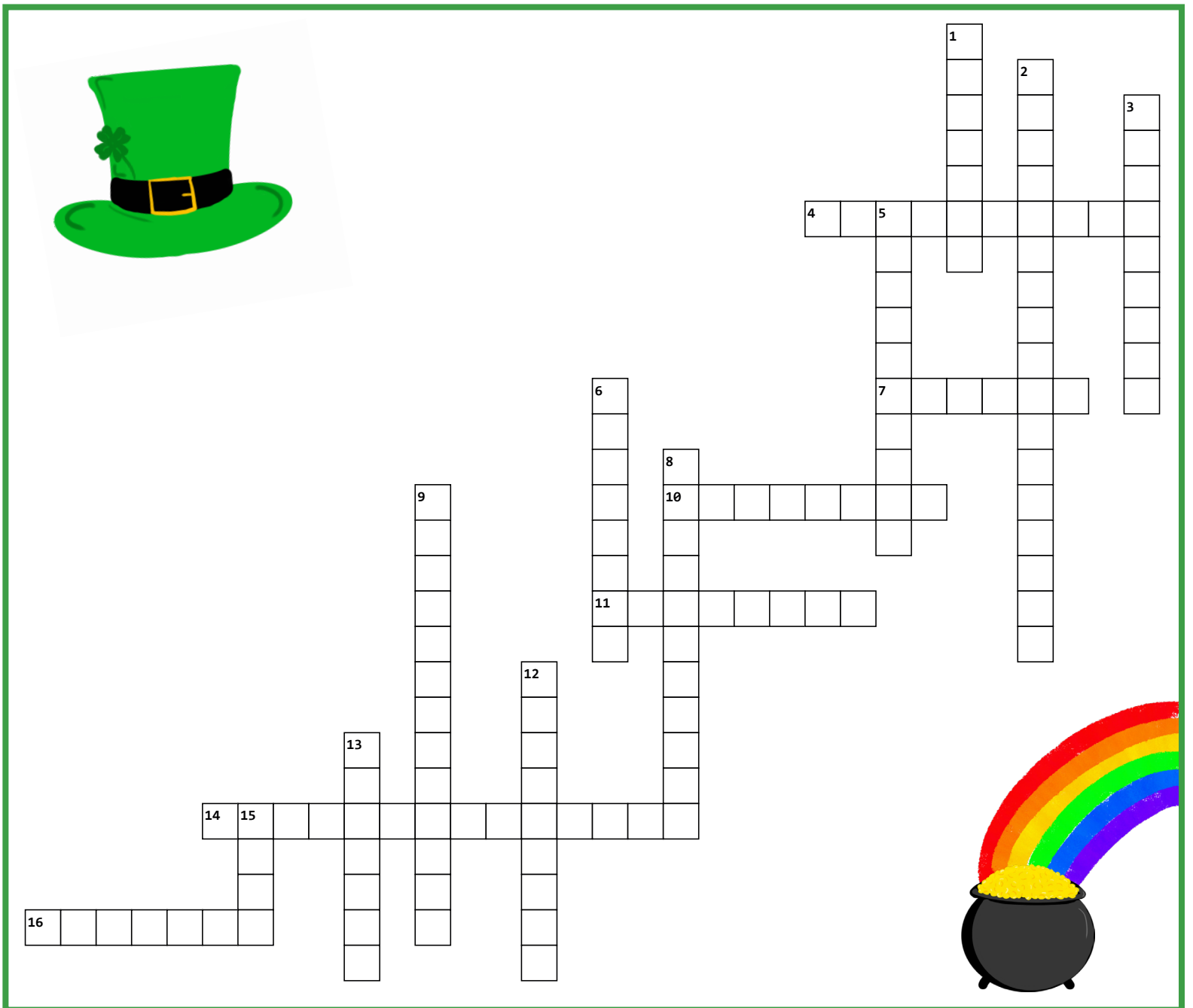
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ACROSS

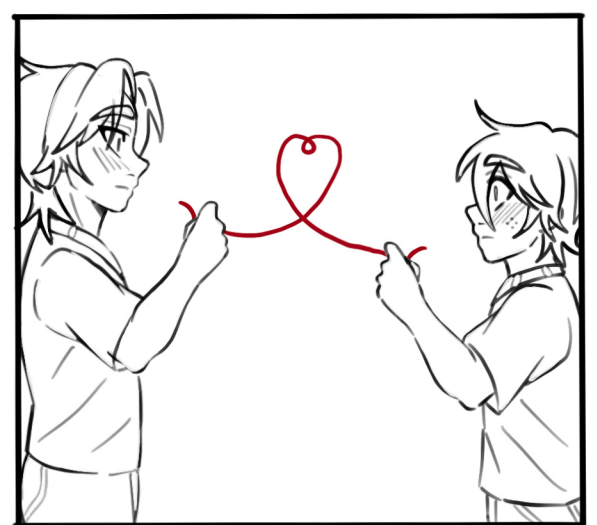
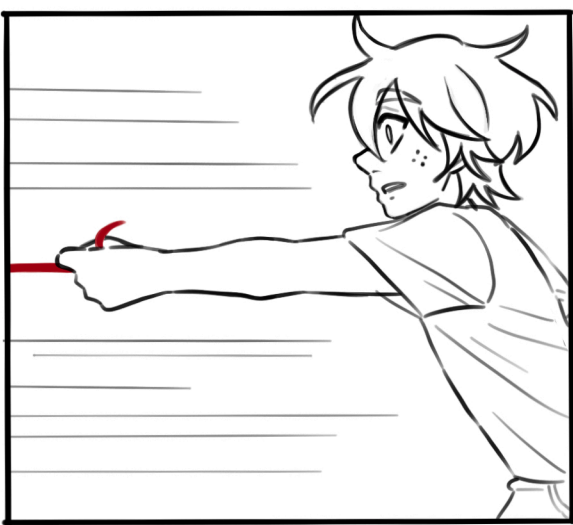
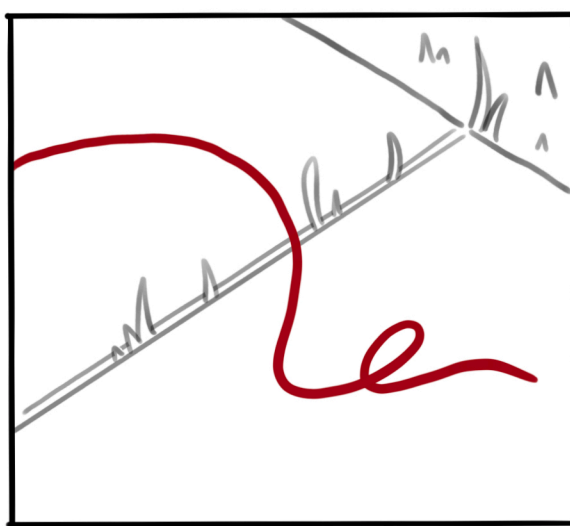
- 4. a small, mischievous, and supernatural being with Irish folklore
- 7. color associated St. Patrick's day
- 10. first country to legalize same-sex marriage
- 11. NBA team with Irish mascot
- 14. Notre Dame slogan
- 16. traditional Irish language

DOWN

- 1. green, white, and _____ make up the flag of Ireland
- 2. day on which St. Patrick's Day occurs
- 3. traditional Irish beer
- 5. treasure found at end of rainbow
- 6. _____ shake, McDonald's March dessert offering
- 8. Irish member of One Direction
- 9. famous Irish actress featured in Little Women
- 12. lucky four leaf clover
- 13. _____ famine, a famous disaster in Ireland
- 15. group that fought for Irish independence from the UK

Answers will be posted on our instagram @centurion_bucks Follow us while you're there!

Thanks for participating in this issue's crossword! Keep an eye out for an upcoming event from us with a bigger and better crossword where you can earn Bucks+ points and even gift cards! Get excited and tell your friends!



@ree_art7

Around Bucks

Bucks Spring Play: Making It! By Hindi Brooks

Samantha Davidson
Centurion Staff

This spring, members of the Bucks County Community are welcomed to our Zlock pavilion to attend the Drama club's performance of Making It! By Hindi Brooks. The play will run sometime in late April so keep your eyes posted on the TBD dates.

The playwright Hindi Brooks, is a little bit undercover. According to Dramaticpublishig.com, Brooks is a lecturer at UCLA, and a teacher of Playwriting. Brooks is also credited as a writer on the script Voices From Ariel: Ten-Minute Plays Reflecting the Jewish Experience.

Set in a high school for the performing Arts, Making it! Is a short comedy play that tells the story of a talented group of stu-

dents auditioning for their high school's production of Romeo and Juliet. Part of what makes Making It! So interesting is that it functions effectively as a "play within a play"- audience members will see bits and pieces of Romeo and Juliet as the main play unfolds on the stage.

This "play-within-a-play" concept is a deviation from the norm- but not new. This concept has been featured in other plays and pieces of media, such as "High School Musical the musical the series", "A Midsummer Nights Dream", and "Hamlet". Fitting with the theme of a "play-within-a play", (also sometimes referred to as a metadrama) the play contains three acts titled "Auditions" "Rehearsals" and "The Show".

Tommy Davidson, appearing this spring as

"Chuck" emphasized that the play is a must see, saying "The play is free- and it's a great chance to come support your fellow Bucks students. The play is directed by students, for students. For the past few months, the drama club has been rehearsing 3 times a week, trying to revitalize the drama club" Thomas's character, Chuck could be described as a talented, but slightly self-absorbed senior with a personal agenda.

Chuck hopes to make it big on Broadway, and is using Romeo and Juliet as a way to get his name out. Other notable characters include Buddy- a talented student whose parents are unsupportive of his theater dreams. Cindy and Lisa, sisters who share two common interests: Acting, and Lisa's boyfriend, Alex.

While rich in talent, the



Image of the Bucks Drama Club, courtesy of Zacchary Crain

club operates on a tight budget. This means that the club generally has a limited selection of plays to choose from- creating the opportunity for the club to put on a diamond in the rough. So, while the play might be unfamiliar to many, Thomas Davidson promises that the play will be "a fun night out, and the perfect excuse to gather a group of friends and support a part of our community"

Whether you have an interest in theater, in a free activity, or in the opportunity to support the community, the Drama Club is excited and honored to host the Spring production- and they hope to see you there.

workday student continued from page 1...

the current system having an excessive number of manual processes that faculty have to input themselves.

Workday Student would solve these issues as it would limit the number of manual systems which would reduce any risk of human error. Not only that but the data will be stored

in the cloud automatically allowing data to be more secure than it was previously.

Harris mentioned that if you are not sure how to operate the new system, there will be training videos on the Bucks' website teaching you how to operate Workday Student, which you can find at Bucks.edu/workday-student.com, and this webpage should have

been released by Thursday March 6.

Harris stated that non-credit students will not be affect by the switch to Workday Student, but instead there will be a separate system implemented for them come January 2026 called *Campus Market Place*.

Workplace Student will have launched for staff on

March 10, but it will launch for all students come March 17, and students would use Workday Student to register for their fall course, which registration open for all students on March 31.

Workplace Student will essentially serve as a streamlined version of Student Planning (Self-Service), as on Workplace Student it will be easier

to register for your courses, view any financial aid awards you earn, update any personal information, check your final course grades, manage your tuition payments, and you will be able to access your student account through the mobile app that is expected to be launched alongside the work place student.

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Around Bucks

Bucks First Philadelphia Flower Show Display

Samantha Davidson
Centurion Staff

The Philadelphia Flower show has long been a staple in Philadelphia. The flower show, which functions as both showcase and fundraiser, has been an annual event since 1829- making it the largest and longest running Horticultural event in the world. This year, the flower show took place from March first through March ninth, and featured some of our very own.

Nestled among the hundreds of booths at the flower show laid a display created by some of our Bucks Community. Lisa Walton, a recent graduate of Bucks County Community College, was invited to showcase her work- the first year that the Bucks County Community College's Floral Design Program was offered this opportunity.

The Floral Design Program was given an area of nine displays across the Flower show. The students and graduates of the Design Program working on the show were given artistic freedom to arrange the space based on their prompt: What will the floral world look like in 1000 years, and how will the florists of the future change their tech-

niques and materials.

The end result was nothing like a bouquet of roses, or other typical floral arrangements one might see in a flower shop. Students and staff spent countless hours sketching, assembling, and constructing. The end result was a wonderland- full of towering sculptures, glass, picture frames, metalwork, and, of course, flowers.

In one particular section of the showcase, produced by Karen Kuyper, a full headdress, top, and a pair of shoes had been crafted entirely from metal. The metal was bent and manipulated to give the appearance of folded, textured fabric- including in the floral motifs scattered across the metal. On a plaque read the description "Step into the empress' closet, where galactic glamour reigns. Dried botanicals, seed pods, and hand painted aspidistra leaves are paired with radiant metallics, creating a cosmic collection of wearable art".

In another section, metal sculptures were topped with blooming, live plants- bringing to mind an image not unlike a sensational chia pet, for those familiar.

For those who missed the Philadelphia Flower Show, or who want to see more of the Floral Design

Programs work, Lisa Walton recommended the Arts in Bloom Program, saying "It's a show like this [the Philadelphia Flower Show] we put on, and a way to give our students and our recent graduate designers a chance to do something creative like this with the floral arts". Like the Philadelphia Flower show, showcases at the Arts in Bloom show will be themed and judged.

While Lisa Walton stressed what an honor it was for the Floral Design Program to be invited to showcase their work, the real honor was having our school be represented so well by the talented artists who call Bucks County Community college their home.

"Bucks County Community College is a proud Educational Partner with the American Institute of Floral Designers (AIFD). Through this program, floral design students have a chance to become a Certified Floral Designer (CFD) by completing BCCC's comprehensive curriculum" according to the Bucks website. All Floral design classes are taken at the Bucks Newtown Campus with various instructors on hand willing to help expand your knowledge in all things flowers.

all images courtesy of Kassandra Castillo



Around Bucks

All You Need to Know About Bucks+

Emelia Yotko
Centurion Staff

Do you need extra-curricular activities for your resume or college application? Try Bucks+, an online outlet where you can see what's happening on campus and earn points by participating in events.

At least one of the many campus activities organized by Student Life and various clubs has likely been seen. So, if you're already planning on stopping in the halls to pet the comfort dogs or filling out your student survey, you might as well earn points for doing so.

"Bucks+ is a co-curricular engagement program designed to provide students with one spot to see everything going on at Bucks but also to track their participation," said Administrative Assistant Maria Ender. You can earn points by attending and scanning the QR code provided at each event. Points lead you to earning badges which can be used on resumes and college

applications to show your involvement.

The point system makes it possible for you to track your participation and "document your extracurricular involvement to share with prospective employers, on their transfer applications, or when applying for scholarships" says Ender.

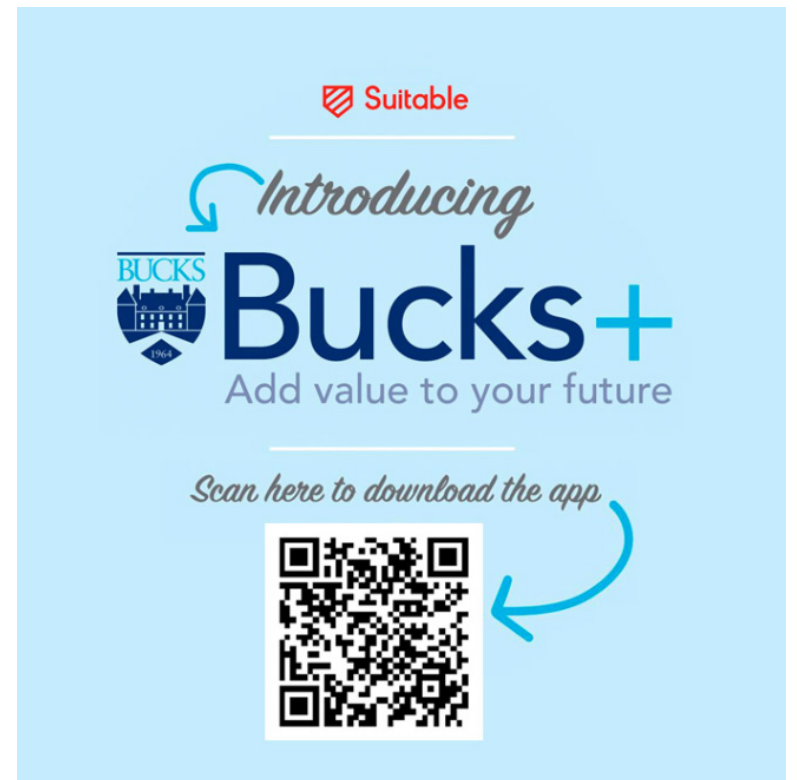
As stated in an article by the university of Edinburgh titled "Twelve tips for developing equitable academic activities". Getting involved has shown benefits that "include the development of social and leadership skills; higher retention rates; heightened self-confidence; peer bonding; improved satisfaction; and greater postgraduate success."

Universities as well employers aren't just interested in your grades. They want people who have pride in what they do and where they do it. And Bucks+ is a great tool you can use to showcase your non-academic achievements and participation.

"The program focuses on competency areas employers are looking for: Community Engagement, Financial Literacy, Global Awareness, Personal/Professional Development and Bucks Pride," said Ender.

Bucks+ was originally designed as a tool for our business and innovation department but has since become a campus wide engagement program. With its main purpose to "provide students with a structured and engaging way to maximize their college experience, fostering personal and professional development along the way," said Ender.

Suitable is "an impact measurement tool for academic institutions" and there are over 200 universities that use it. We currently have an agreement with Temple's Fox School of Business. This agreement allows the suitable app to transfer points you earned on Bucks+ to Temple's Fox Leadership Development Program. Business students at Temple are encouraged to



earn 500 points each academic year so if you want to get a head start you can here with Bucks+.

The badges you earn through Bucks+ can also be shared to LinkedIn and displayed on your profile. These "badges are a way to visually communicate professional value and make your profile more compelling. In a competitive job market, highlighting skills

to employers and enhancing your personal brand are essential," said Ender.

Download the suitable app, set up your account with your "live.bucks.edu" email and scan the provided QR code to become a part of Bucks+ and start earning points today!



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News

Remembering Dr. Christopher Bursk

Shane Swan

Centurion Staff

Jeff Baumeister, music professor at Bucks County Community College, will be hosting and orchestrating Chris Bursk's Works, a Concert & Readings Celebration Event to celebrate the life and works of Dr. Christopher Bursk on April 25 at the Zlock Performing Arts Center.

The concert will include a variety of musicians including three horn players, one drum, one piano, one bass, and four vocalists. These artists are coming together to honor Dr. Bursk, a beloved professor at Bucks for nearly 50 years; a mentor and poet who unfortunately passed in 2021.

Baumeister wrote all of

this music through playing his piano and used his computer to orchestrate how the other instruments would be incorporated. He was able to glean ten songs for this concert to show off Bursk's poems.

He said "Composing music is a funny thing; you can't escape what's trapped in your self-conscious mind."

Baumeister's music is inspired by listening to some of the best bands and artists of the early 1970's such as Steely Dan, Sly and the Family Stone, and Little Feat. Baumeister's band name Edith Peach was a joke on the Allman Brothers album Eat a Peach.

Baumeister expects a big turn out to this concert as Bursk had a large following

throughout the community.

This was actually Baumeister's Sabbatical and in this concert he and his band will be orchestrating a mix of rock, jazz, funk, blues, country, and gospel to display Bursk's work in the way he sees best fit.

The project was what led Baumeister to read Bursk's poems. He said "The day I heard that my sabbatical proposal to write tunes based on his poems was approved, I went to the library and picked up a few of his books. Thumbing through them, I thought, oh boy, what did I get myself into."

Baumeister also went on to say that Bursk's poems would take odd and unexpected turns with its wordplay, rhythm, and content. He found that these oddities

were quite enjoyable to work through and turn into songs.

Baumeister saw the opportunity to write music with interesting length and, through the challenge the line count presented, found a greater appreciation for Bursk's work. This happened organically as he went line by line instead of looking at the whole poem.

Baumeister found this project to be a rewarding and exciting learning experience, looking into Bursk's work and turning them into music. The experience forced him to "look into himself and become the best composer and arranger he can be."

Baumeister studied at Bucks County Community College and got his degree

in music at William Paterson University and the University of the Arts. Some of Baumeister's music has received praise from the Philadelphia Inquirer and many different jazz websites and many different magazines.

His composition 'Ok, Now What?' was a part of the Philadelphia real book which was publicized by the Temple University Press. He hopes to put his skill on full display at this concert.

The concert will be held at the Zlock Performing Arts Center on April 25 at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$12, including fees, and can be purchased at the link below. (All ticket proceeds benefit the Kerry Barber Scholarship Fund)

<https://ci.ovationtix.com/>

"The Revolution Will be Televised" in the Shape of Memes

Alex Bersenev

Centurion Staff

"The Revolution will be televised" is a phrase that was originated in 1970 by influential American poet, musician, and author Gil Scott-Heron. The phrase became an anthem for the movement called the "Black Liberation". A phrase that would critique the consumer culture and emphasizes

that change can only begin within communities and individuals. The phrase had its resurgence as of recently although it may not come in the way we anticipate - in the form of political memes.

Memes are often a form of a digital culture that reflects and shares social or cultural experiences or simply humor with the use of text, videos, gifs, photos, and content from specific sources

to reinterpret context in the way the meme is trying to convey.

With recent events, memes have practically surged in popularity. Most memes targeted as satire towards the Trump Administration, either a video of a character from any movie or show stating something that can be deemed controversial.

There is a selection of memes that were used and

shown to a set of interviewed individuals, who expressed what they thought of the internet memes, and which they consider was the best that conveys its satirical nature.

A meme of an AI-generated video, that contains Donald Trump running away from a chasing polar bear. With text in the meme consisting of, "Greenland's polar Bears are ready to defend Greenland against any threat from the US." This text is of course pointing out the - not so long ago - nature of Donald Trump's attempt at acquiring Greenland with military or economic measures.

A meme containing a background with a clear green screened edit of Lord Farquaad, an evil character in the popular film, "Shrek" - giving out his famous speech.

The speech is by Farquaad telling his loyalists and followers, "Some of you may die, but it's a sacrifice I am willing to make." Taking honor in his oration, but with the added context that it is Trump and implying that every speech from Trump so far can be summarized to just this one meme.

A meme of George H.W. Bush the 41st President of

the United States standing awkwardly alone while edited into a background of a park. Smiling slowly over time as the meme video keeps playing, the added text's context implies the meme creator as being H.W. Bush in the video, "Me watching Trump supporters lose their jobs, health insurance, and EBT thinking they were exempt from his BS."

Ryen Alpert, a student at Bucks, displayed a clear opinion on Trump and his followers, "As much as I don't like Republicans, I hate Trump." disdain for the President, though their choice of best meme was "I think the Farquaad one was better." Cole Montgomery is another student who expressed their thoughts and summarized them as understandable, "The memes are funny, they were easy and understandable for me to laugh at."

Bucks Journalism Professor, Tony Rogers, was also interviewed about what they thought of the memes, "I just think the clever ones are great at creativity and can be quite well done and are the perfect way to convey how satirical Trump's administration is." They picked the polar bear as the best meme.

Graphic Design Professor, Michael Kabbash, was asked their views on the memes, "It's a mixed bag, memes like George H.W. Bush seems out of context. The meme may include George H.W. Bush, but the context of the joke is lacking if the viewer has no clue who the person is. The Farquaad one works the best though, because it takes its context and applies it into a political one. The easier ones, with less text, are just better to digest." Memes with a clear and small text, with certain context in the meme that is widely known, can weld a perfect meme and deliver its joke or point.



Virtual Transfer Information Session (5-6 p.m.):

March 26

Provides an overview of the process and timeline for transfer students.

On-campus Transfer Friday (11:30 a.m.-3 p.m.):

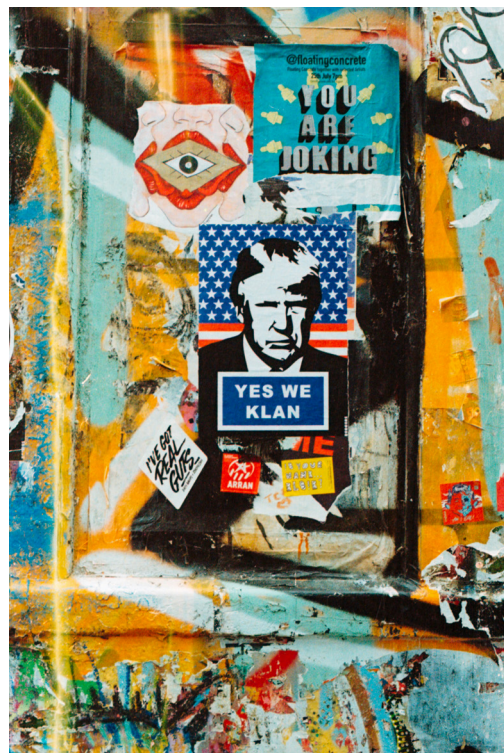
April 11

Learn about the transfer admission process, programs of study, credit evaluation, financial aid, campus housing, dining, student life, and more. Includes a campus tour.

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www.kutztown.edu/transfer

Photo courtesy of unsplash



Around Bucks

Emily Gilmore: A Student of Many Talents

Zacchary Crain
Centurion Staff

Emily Gilmore is a student of many talents ranging from swimming, soft ball, basketball, all while trying to manage her studies in the engineering field.

From a young age, Emily has always enjoyed exploring her creativity through STEM and Girl Scouts. Pursuing that passion of creativity morphed into taking engineering courses at Pennsbury High School, and later at Bucks, working closer towards her degree.

Initially using sports as a way to relieve stress and clear her mind, Emily found out at an early age that her true passion was swimming. "I've always been good at swimming since I was a young kid, and have done swimming all year round as a kid", Gilmore said. Growing up, she entered into multiple swimming competitions, improving her skills and falling more in love with the sport.

While swimming was her primary sport, her secondary growing up was softball. She played the sport up until ninth grade, where she focused on swimming throughout all four years

of high school. Finishing high school, she decided on Bucks County Community College to continue her studies in engineering.

With Bucks no longer having a swimming pool or swim team, she had to find a different way to occupy her time. As a way to keep herself busy and to meet new people, Emily picked right back up where she left off. Emily went back to playing on a soccer field for the first time since elementary school. Initially starting in defense in her first year at Bucks, she later discovered she was also good at blocking the goal.

She found this out during practice when she had to fill in for the other goalie and learned she had natural abilities, allowing her to play more games as goalie. Soccer season was coming to an end and as indoor practice happened more often, she was offered the opportunity to join the basketball team.

With prior experience from playing at home and teaching kids as volunteer work, she was able to play as a guard. She improved on her skills as more and more practices went on, getting more points for her team in each game. With Basketball

season ending and spring season was starting; this was where Emily returned to her secondary sport. With prior knowledge and experience playing, she easily picked up her catcher's mitt and began playing in the outfield.

To some, this would be a moment to take a break from playing, but Emily used it to take time to continue another passion in photography. Now taking photos for all three teams, she became one of the main photographers for the sports teams at Bucks. Editing and posting the pictures she took for the team on Instagram, enhancing her skills in the process.

Emily, now in her second year at Bucks, will continue to keep herself busy as she continues her studies in engineering and improving her skills in all of her sports.



Photos courtesy of Zacchary Crain



EVERY DAY IS TRANSFER DAY

Holy Family University welcomes Bucks County Community College students as part of a long-standing partnership that recognizes the value of transfers.

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holyfamily.edu

Sports

Bucks Baseball's Big Bounce Back

Milo Condran
Centurion Staff

What a difference a week makes. The Bucks County Baseball team started the season 0-3 with a pair of heartbreaking losses to Middlesex College. However, the Centurions had one of the biggest bounce backs in school history. Bucks swept a doubleheader against Manor College winning 29-3 and 35-0.

The latter game, which would make for a football blowout, was an obliteration that set a school record for most runs.

Everyone in the lineup hit. Some of the highlights included a three-run homer by designated hitter Evan Ugrlavitch and a five-hit performance by shortstop Ty Pan. The Centurions had eight extra base hits. Starting pitcher Lucas Kimbrough struck out three in two innings. Kimbrough believes energy was the big difference between the

first three games and the big weekend the Centurions had with the doubleheader sweep of Manor.

"The first three games we were just completely dead," Kimbrough said. "We didn't start out well and we were quiet. But last weekend guys were hype after every hit. We cheered for each other and that made a big difference. I think certain guys stepped up and we locked in. We're not going to be able to win without locking in like that. We just have to be able to build on what we did in the two wins."

Kimbrough believes what will propel the Centurions forward is the strong arms of its pitching staff.

"I really like our pitching and what was great to see were guys like Shawn Esler and Milo Condran throw so well," Kimbrough said. "They haven't had a lot of opportunities and they looked really, really solid."

Esler struck out the side in his one inning of work



Photo courtesy of @bucks.baseball on Instagram

in game one and Condran breezed through six batters in two innings while striking out a pair in game two. Condran and Isaac Galarza combined for a perfect game over four innings during the Centurions signature win of the season."

"It was cool breaking a record on Saturday," catcher Jaden Taylor said. "But we still have a lot to prove as a team. We had nice hitting and nice pitching. We have great chemistry. We did a good job picking our heads up after

an 0-3 start. Now we need to keep our energy going and get on a roll."

Bucks Women's Basketball Team is the Real Deal

Shane Swan
Centurion Staff

With a 2-17 record last season to a 6-13 record this season, things are turning around for the Bucks County Community College women's basketball pro-

gram. So, what changed? The switch-up with the new head coach this season, Ebony Johnson.

The women's basketball team have a new fire with them this season and by looking at the schedule from this year, it was also

much more competitive this season. With more points scored this year and nail-biting finishes, this team is now the real deal.

Matt Cipriano, the Director of Athletics and Student Affairs Division at Bucks County Community College

said that "mistakes last year were cleaned up this year." He also was not concerned with the four non-returning players as he believes Coach Ebony Johnson can coach this team to success.

Coach Johnson believes that the success from this season was sparked by boosting chemistry and more opportunities for the girls to improve and play together as a complete unit. The chance to get more reps in when playing also proved crucial for this team's development as a program.

The main struggle was having students transfer after a year or two. Coach Johnson's solution was not having this burden on the team and instead working with the player to their strengths and help them become the best versions of themselves.

It also was not just about their performance on the court but rather their performance in the classroom. Coach Johnson said "you can't be the athlete without the student... make sure they were on top of their books, make sure that their mental stability was good as best as I could."

Coach Johnson's coaching style seems to be a very inclusive one where everybody on the roster can prove themselves on and off the court and fight for their minutes.

Looking into next season, Coach Johnson sees more wins off the scoreboard and the players personal goals and growth as basketball players. The small victories as a team can lead to more and more victories, and lead into big wins against the big teams.

Recruiting has also been a topic of discussion with this program to see what this program can build up to and become, Coach Johnson said, "I'm more about taking it one day at a time, brick by brick, yes we are still building but even with what we have going forward, I am looking to seek out and maybe recruit just to see what this program can really become."

The biggest improvement from the team from last season to this season was keeping the girls on the team, with different players lifestyle's it can prove difficult because you may have girls that are working the 9-5 job and still come in and compete.

The goal for the program was to build a family and a space where they are comfortable and confident and reminding them that the court is a space of support and a place where the girls can be who they want to be and they can play how they play.

The players that decided to stay with the program can really say a lot about what Coach Johnson has contributed, but also the girl's dedication and loyalty to the program. Congratulations to the women's basketball team and Coach Ebony Johnson on a great season and the future they have ahead of them.

Photo courtesy of @ladybucksbbb on Instagram

