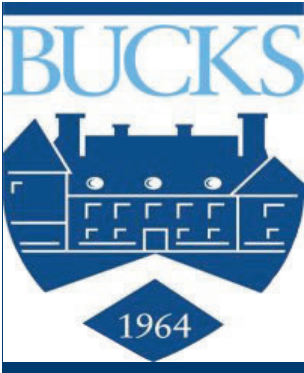


The Centurion



The Award-Winning, Student-Run Newspaper of Bucks County Community College

Volume 58 Issue 10

Week of April 27, 2023

Bucks-News.com

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Bucks Opens Center For Advanced Technologies In Bristol Township

CHASE ZEMITIS
Centurion staff

Bucks County Community College opened up a new center for advanced technologies in Bristol Township which aims to train workers and prepare them for a future with well-paying jobs in the trades.

The \$9.9 million 28,000 square-foot building, which sits right off Veterans Highway (Route 413) and I-95, is built with an eye to training locals for the workforce of

today and the years to come. The new facility is home to the community college’s manufacturing pre-apprenticeship programs, welding program, CDL training and, soon to come, pre-apprenticeship and HVAC programs.

The new center also offers online workforce training in Microsoft Office technology bookkeeping with Quickbooks and ESL (English as a second language).

Instead of the traditional ribbon cutting, Bucks County Community College Presi-

dent Felicia Ganther wielded a hand grinder and cut through a metal pipe to open the new center.

Bucks County Commissioner Chairman Bob Harvie called the new center “a bridge to the future” as well as a step toward increasing the workforce.

Congressman Brian Fitzpatrick told the crowd, “The center will help Bucks County Community College define itself and standout from other community colleges in the nation.”



Photos courtesy of Bucks Director of Digital Marketing Samantha Walter

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Email your letters to :
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Letters should be limited to 500 words. They will be edited for spelling, space and malicious or libelous statements. Letters must be the original work of the writer and must be signed. For identification purposes, letters must include the writer’s full name and telephone number.

BRIAN KARTMAN
Centurion staff

Gun control is an inherently divisive and political topic due to the almost-mythical status that the Second Amendment has achieved.

The right to bear arms shall not be infringed upon, according to the Founding Fathers, as an armed civilian population is paramount to making sure the government keeps the will

Does The U.S. Need Stricter Gun Laws?

Opinion Piece

of the people at the forefront of policy-making and foreign relations.

However, in recent years, the topic of stricter gun control laws has become more prevalent in response to the increase in mass shooting situations.

I believe that this is just one component of the issue at hand, as the largest number of gun-related deaths are not murders, but rather suicides.

According to Pew Research, there were 6.2 gun murders per 100,000 people in the United States in 2020, compared to 7 gun suicides per 100,000 people.

This is not to say that one issue is more important than the other, but rather that if this problem is to be solved, everything must be considered before a solution can be devised.

One potential factor in alleviating some of the suicides and mass murders is creating more robust mental health support systems in the states that lack such programs, such as Texas.

We already know that at-risk people can get past background checks with little trouble, as even though the rates of background checks are 48 percent higher than they were in 2014 (as of 2022), the rate of mass shootings has gone up over the last 10 years and the rate of suicides has largely remained



Photo courtesy of Unsplash

the same.

Another factor to consider is the type of firearm used in each situation.

The media loves to tout the term “assault weapon” in reference to military-style firearms that fire a mid-size rifle cartridge, such as the AR-15 or AKM, being the main perpetrators.

In 2020, these types of guns accounted for only 3 percent of firearm murders, while handguns accounted for the overwhelming majority at 59 percent, according to FBI data.

So then, would stricter gun control laws be worth it?

It is hard to say for sure. On the one hand, fewer

people dying needlessly is very hard to construe as a bad thing, and most well-adjusted people would agree that no one absolutely NEEDS an AR-15 for any legitimate reason.

However, on the other hand, the Second Amendment is a fundamental, inalienable right that many see as a core part of this nation’s identity, and trying to take that away is seen as the highest form of betrayal to many patriotic Americans. The fact that suicides account for over half of the total gun deaths in America is also a reason to look at other problems with our country’s medical support systems.

Personally, I am of the mindset that this is both a legality issue and mental health issue.

Making laws that decide what guns people can and cannot own legally makes no difference to someone who wants to commit murder, as all guns do the same thing: shoot bullets.

I think in addition to a background check, potential gun owners must undergo a full psychiatric evaluation before they are allowed to purchase a firearm.

Newspapers Are Old News ... Or Are They?



Photo courtesy of Unsplash

BRIAN KARTMAN
Centurion staff

Physical newspapers are often said to be going out of style and that no one wants them anymore, and yet, news organizations continue to print daily, weekly and

monthly papers in spite of rising print costs and the dawn of the digital age. As everyone who has been on campus this semester knows, this is the first time in three years that the student newspaper,

The Centurion, has resumed printing physical copies.

Tony Rogers, Journalism Professor here at Bucks County Community College and the one behind the printing operation and budgeting

of The Centurion explains the problems he faced getting the paper back into print, “Printing prices have shot up since the pandemic and I had to find one that was reasonably priced.”

“I spent about six months getting bids from different places. For the editors, of course, resuming printing means getting back into the rhythm of producing the paper according to the printshop’s deadline, which can’t be missed.”

Across every single industry that uses paper, consumers and businesses alike have noticed the rising costs alongside everything else. The publisher of USA Today and other local British newspapers, Gannett, estimated a year-on-year hit to the tune of around \$23 million from inflation relating to printing costs and fuel prices alone.

Of course, with all these issues, there is a legitimate kernel of logic to the attitude espoused at the beginning of this article: print is dying, and the numbers are showing the general trend of physical newspapers in circulation declining. Total estimated weekday circulation of U.S. daily newspapers was 55.8 million in 2000 but dropped to 24.2 million by 2020, according to the Pew Research Center.

Yet, despite the ever-rising costs of printing and scarcity of sponsors, Rogers is enthusiastic about the positive reception of the printed

papers. “A number of people have told me how much they missed the paper when we stopped printing and how glad they are to see it again. Seeing the paper come out is another step back to normalcy after the dark days of the pandemic.”

Indeed, it does feel like the world is slowly beginning to return to the pre-pandemic days in many ways, and the return of the Centurion is analogous to the easing of physical lockdown restrictions in the last year and a half. The world will never quite be the same, but at least we can hope that the hardest days of COVID are behind us.

Rogers brings us full circle with his closing words: “I hope students read the paper. There’s a perception among many that print is dead, but the reason so many papers continue to print is because it still makes money for them. We will continue printing the Centurion for as long as printed papers are being produced, as long as there are jobs out there for people who can do layout and the other jobs associated with making a newspaper.”

In our previous issue, the story “Women’s Power Panel Celebrates Telling Our Stories” was incorrectly attributed to Raeanne Raccagno. The correct author is Megan Pizarro. This has been rectified on our website and we apologize to the authors for this mistake.

- E.I.C., Max Mower

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Sports

Take Me Out To The Ball Game



DAULTON PARRY
Centurion Staff

The Philadelphia Phillies shocked the world by being a wildcard team making the World Series last year, and even though they fell short of a championship, they are looking like a strong contender to make another push for the World Series this season with acquisitions and experience.

The Phillies making the playoffs last season for the first time since 2011 was finally a step in the right direction, but the season started with the firing of former manager Joe Girardi after an abysmal start. Rob Thomson

took over, helping the team gain confidence, but the fans expected another season of no playoffs for the Phillies.

However, the team snuck into the playoffs, being a wildcard team, and stayed hot beating the Cardinals in the first round - likely the only team not better than the Phillies roster. They moved on to the Braves, who had much more talent than the Phillies and better pitching - they beat them in four games 3-1 series win.

The last series they won was against the Padres in a 4-1 National League Championship Series series win. The Padres top to bottom was loaded with stars.

They moved on to the

World Series and lost to the Astros 4-2, losing all their momentum as well as being outmatched in practically every spot. This season they made moves to fix the holes in the bullpen and added a star shortstop, Trea Turner.

The front office saw the weakness in the bullpen during the playoffs and added a proven veteran, Craig Kimbrel, who had a 3.75 earned run average and 22 saves last year according to baseball-reference.com. The Phillies also added Gregory Soto, who made back-to-back all-star games in 2021 and 2022. Last year he posted a 3.28 ERA and 30 saves according to baseball-reference.com.

com.

They also added Trea Turner, who can do everything asked of him. He is a special talent, toting a .298 batting average, 21 home runs, 39 doubles and 27 stolen bases. He also was an all-star last year and finished 11th in the MVP voting.

Harold Landman, a Bucks County Community College student from Levittown had this to say about Trea Turner: “We finally have a leadoff hitter, and the middle infield has severely improved from last year.”

The team is missing one of the biggest stars in baseball, Bryce Harper. He won the Most Valuable Player in 2021, and last year, won the National League Championship Series MVP, proving he is the most important part of the Phillies.

Brandon Morgan, a Bucks County Community College student said this about Harper, “His return after the injury is exciting news for the team and will hopefully help increase the odds of making the playoffs again.”

The start of the season has been slightly shaky, but fans are not worried about the start mainly due to the fact they made the world series.

Morgan added, “Although I believe it’s too early in the season to honestly tell, they do stand a chance considering the 2022 season...they need to use last year’s playoff loss as a motivator.”

Morgan is not the only student who isn’t worried. Harlandman also had this to say about the slow start: “I think the world series hangover is hitting hard combined with the two best hitters being sidelined. Plus, the guys were in the World Series Classic, so they joined the squad late. We’ll get rolling once everyone gets their rhythm.”

Although everyone seems to be relaxed with the current performance of the Phillies, the expectations are very high. Luke Landman, an electrician had this to say: “My instincts lead me to believe they are going to have a roller coaster of a year but think they will squeak out in first in the division.” He also said, “Anything but a sweep in the World Series is a disgrace to every Philly fan.”

Luke Landman also said this about what would be considered a successful season: “With how high the payroll is, a World Series win.”



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Bucks News

You Are Not Alone With Bucks’ Open Door Club



ALLISON BRIDGWATER
Centurion Staff

Come one, come all, because the Open-Door Club is a safe and open space for the LGBTQ+ community and allies that want to hang out together and be reminded how they are not alone in college or in this world. Want to hang out with your friends or even make new

ones? The Open-Door Club is the perfect opportunity to find people like you! Representation matters, and when students have a safe space filled with people like them, it supports those going through tough times, especially if you just need a friend. The ODC meets at the Newtown campus in the Rollins Center’s Solarium. The

next meeting, a Queer Lunch, will be on April 18 from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. Currently, the ODC has a lot of faculty and staff helping the club out, but members are needed, and so are student leaders like the club president. The president would guide other students, handle club organization and give ideas for the future. ODC has been a club for a long time here at Bucks, but

each year there are changes in leadership due to students graduating or transferring to a four-year university. The staff wants more consistent meetings and is planning on having a club meeting on the third Tuesday of every month. It would be entirely up to the students what the club could do, from hanging out to activities to any events planned. Two of the staff members who are Academic Advisors, Tara Cutler and Debbie Zeigler, believe that a club like this “becomes more important and gives support to students in hard times.” There are more staff members involved in the club, and they will always be there to help students feel safe and to have a nice conversation. Zeigler also says that “the club can open future meetings with topics of students’ choice, and we could advocate for the community.” If you have any fun ideas for the club, be sure to attend and discuss them.

legislation and attacks on LGBTQ+ rights, the Open-Door Club is more important now than ever and would provide students a place to feel like themselves, be comfortable, and have fun. Everyone in the LGBTQ+ community is accepted, and so are allies. Safe spaces are important because it helps students feel connected, taking a break from judgment and others’ opinions and beliefs. It’s also just a time for you to escape and feel understood by your peers. The ODC’s goal is to have a dance or a prom eventually; another possibility is a drag show for the next school year. The club also wants to have guest speakers talk to the students. Although the semester is ending, a new one will soon begin and the ODC remains. Interested in joining the club? You can attend the next meeting or contact ODC@bucks.edu if you have any questions.

Photo courtesy of Unsplash

Clubs Promote Student Success



Photo courtesy of Unsplash

MEGAN PIZARRO
Centurion Staff

Being an active student and participating in Bucks clubs can help lead to a successful college experience. While not completely necessary to your success as a student, statistics have shown that students involved in any extracurricular activities had a higher success rate than uninvolved students. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, “Recent research suggests that participation in extracurricular activities may increase students’ sense of engagement or attachment to their school”. The NCES continues, “Thereby decreasing the likelihood of school failure and dropping out.” Chris Seifert, director of Student Engagement and

Leadership Development in the Student Affairs Division at Bucks County Community College was also able to provide some insight into the importance and ease that comes from joining clubs at Bucks. “Statistics show that student involvement improves academic performance, and student organizations are a great way to get involved!” “It’s a perfect way to make friends, boost self-confidence, improve leadership skills and have fun,” stated Seifert. As a student at Bucks, there are so many opportunities to join clubs based on your particular interests. Seifert explains “There is a wide variety of student organizations to join. Some can be related to a major, like the Bucks Business Association or Psychol-

ogy Club and others can be recreational like the Cosplay Club and the Gaming Club. We also have faith-based student organizations, service-focused ones and honor societies. There’s something for everyone!” Remaining academically active can not only contribute to the success of students it can also help contribute to the success of the college. Which can then be returned to all Bucks students! Seifert shares his insight by adding “It’s a great way to make friends and widen one’s network, gain valuable experiences and get more connected to the college.” “Our students in organizations also plan and run activities and events to benefit the entire student body and staff, so it’s a perfect way to make a positive impact and leave your mark here at Bucks!”



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To anyone interested in joining a Bucks club it is extremely accessible and easy! Students can go right into the Bucks+ app and click on the organizations they are interested in joining. Students can also always check out when the meetings are and show up! Everyone is always welcome to join at any time. They are very excited to celebrate and honor the student organizations aiding students’ success by having

a Student Awards Dinner and Celebration taking place on May 8! A huge thank you to Chris Seifert for helping provide students with more information on how clubs and student organizations can help lead to successful student life at Bucks!

Media News

Bucks County DA Sues Social Media Firms

RAEANNE RACCAGNO
Centurion Staff

The Bucks County Commissioners and District Attorney are jointly suing big social media platforms such as Snapchat, Instagram, Twitter, Youtube and TikTok for “worsening” anxiety and depression in younger people.

Bucks County is joining the growing number of schools and families that are taking legal action against social media platforms and is believed to be the first county in America to file a lawsuit against social media. Matthew Weintraub, the District Attorney for Bucks County, has brought this case to act in the name of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania claiming the platforms have violated the Pennsylvania Unfair Trade Practices and Consumer Protection Law.

According to the lawsuit, “All are addictive because of the neurological chemical dopamine, which is released with the pulsing colorful notification sounds and vibrations associated with a ‘reward.’” These rewards are things such as getting a like, snapping your friend, liking a post or scrolling to the next one.

Elena Solovyeva, a 19-year-old English major from Warick shares, “I kid you not,

sometimes I am so bored that I will scroll through Office or Parks and Recreation show clips that they have on Snapchat. Even though I have watched both shows and I don’t even care to see some parts of it again.”

These apps benefit the most when a large number of people use their platforms for an extended amount of time in order to maximize their advertising revenue.

Bobbilyn Davis, a Bucks Neuroscience Major from Morrisville tells us how “This mechanism lights up your dopamine pathway the same way gambling or even illicit drugs does. But the difference between drugs, gambling and this social media mechanism, is that this is widely available, to almost all ages.”

When these dopamine “hits” start to fade, users may feel compelled to spend another hour or so on their devices, despite whether the app truly makes them happy.

“I can’t imagine the damage being done to developing brains that can’t but help to incessantly scroll and scroll looking for just the right spark to get the firing of dopamine feel-good across the brain,” Davis confines.

Thomas Burke, an 18-year-old Computer Science major from Morrisville says, “I will

admit that I use social media way too often than I should. I started using social media in elementary school, but only watched things like youtube where I was watching other people’s content and posts, but I never really liked the idea of posting myself online.”

Humans are social creatures by habitat who thrive off of communicating and connecting with others. Connecting with others allows those to feel a sense of security and belonging and overall help one’s mental health.

But we have faced a world where most of our connections are done behind closed doors.

Dr.Shawn Queeney, a Communications professor at Bucks, states, “This has been a problem humans have always faced, how do I connect, will people like me and how do I work well with others? You have people who want to connect with others but then they’re doing it on a private browser that’s controlled by advertisements.”

Burke also shared, “I don’t necessarily like using social media for communication but most people my age will mainly use it to communicate



Photo Courtesy Of Unsplash

so I am kinda forced to use it as well.”

This basic human need is even larger in adolescents, whose minds are still developing. The lawsuit claims, “Social apps hijack a tween and teen compulsion – to connect – that can be even more powerful than hunger or greed.”

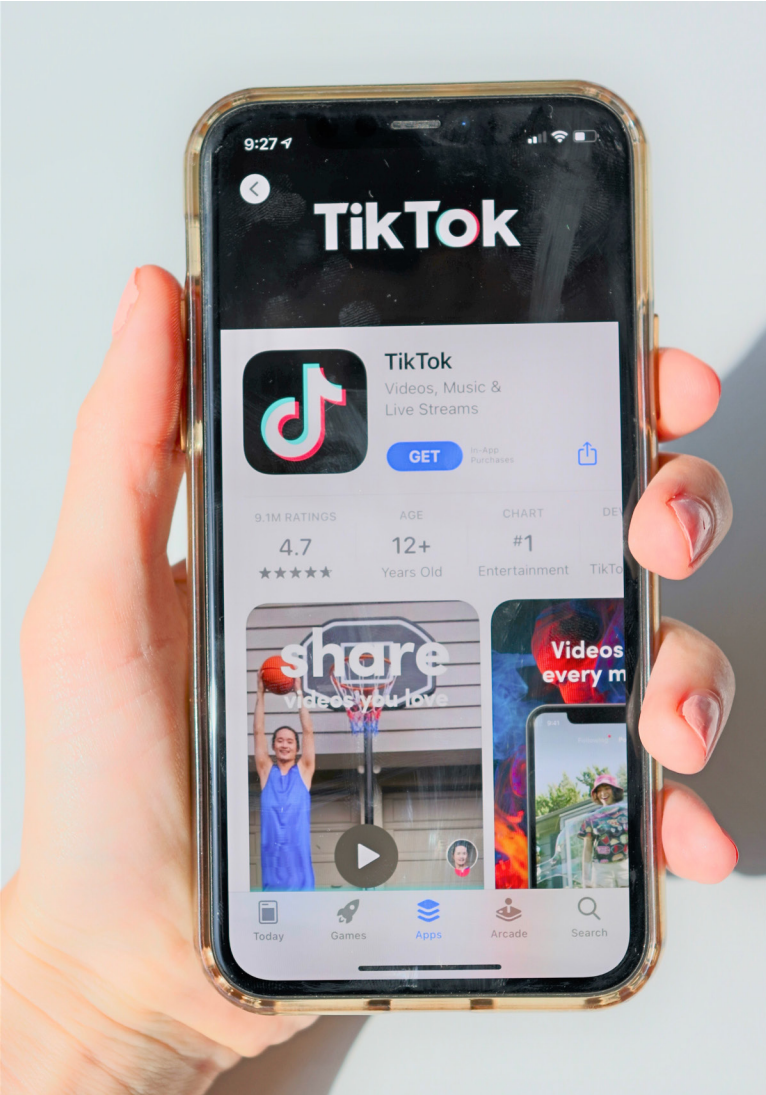
Another huge concern is the algorithm on these social media apps and how they displayed content to children. Depending on the type of content a user views, likes, comments or even simply views others’ comments allows the platform that gathers enough information to alter one’s feed.

“I have used Tiktok since it was called Musical.ly and the change is flabbergasting. People’s mental health were less

in danger when the app was used just for lip syncing,” Solovyeva also adds. “Now the algorithm learns what the user likes and dislikes. There is now content on the app that ranges from sports to politics to eating disorders. For young, impressionable minds, this can be viewed as dangerous since they are learning certain beliefs and are only being immersed by information from that one side.”

Bucks County offers and funds many mental health resources, but service providers have been struggling to keep up with the increased number of youth who need these services. The lawsuit is looking for compensation from these companies for these effects on the younger generation and for them to change their methods.

Bucks Students React To TikTok Ban



ALLISON BRIDGWATER
Centurion Staff

Considering the recent push to ban TikTok in the U.S., Bucks students share their opinion on whether or not TikTok should be banned.

TikTok first came out in 2016, growing in popularity worldwide, reaching over 1 billion users, where 150 million users alone are in the U.S.

The Trump administration tried to ban TikTok, but now, the Biden administration has given ByteDance, TikTok’s

parent company, an ultimatum, to sell the app or face a nationwide ban.

Congress believes TikTok is too addictive, spreads violence and misinformation and suspects that China’s Communist Party has unlimited access to sensitive U.S. data.

A complete ban on TikTok has been approved in Montana, and Government officials cannot use TikTok on their devices.

There is a mix of students’ opinions on banning TikTok.

Carlos Garcia, 19, a psy-

chology major, believes that “TikTok is spyware that uses and sells your data. It should not be banned, but regulated through a filtration system for children and other users because some inappropriate videos are making it through the system.”

Maddie Clemens, 18, an event party planning major, thought TikTok should not be banned and that “the U.S. government is trying to make it look like TikTok is tracking us, but they’re not. We get our news from TikTok, and the government does not want us to know the truth because it makes them look bad.”

Dylan Derstine, 17, is a high school student who simultaneously attends Bucks and majors in Computer Science. He believes that “TikTok is very addicting, but I do not believe it is tracking us. It would be a violation of the Constitution to ban it.”

Several of the proposed bills to ban TikTok violate the U.S. First Amendment. TikTok is an information source that around 150 million Americans use to share their thoughts and opinions online. People should be allowed to post or watch videos on TikTok since free speech protects it.

Madina Waziri, 19, a cybersecurity major at Bucks, says “TikTok should be banned because the app is tracking Americans, and there are better things to do with your time than be on TikTok.”

Waziri adds, “China has

more educational videos than the U.S., taking us away from education and leaving us addicted.”

Every social media app gathers user information and sells it for profit. YouTube, Facebook and Instagram do the same thing TikTok does.

The United States Government claims they are concerned about TikTok because ByteDance is a Chinese company that is required to turn data over to the Chinese Government.

TikTok has suggested a

change in how they manage data, though, Project Texas would leave all American TikTok data in America, not China.

Would banning TikTok do much to stop China from getting our data or the younger generation from becoming addicted to social media? Likely not.

However, if the U.S. managed to pass a ban on TikTok nationwide, it is not clear how officials would enforce the ban.

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