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The Mental Health Issue

Page 6

Stony Brook opens Wi-Fi network for gamers

By Samantha Robinson
Contributing Writer

Stony Brook has created a new Wi-Fi network designed specifically for gamers. WolfieNet-IoT, which was released at the start of the semester, has officially replaced the old WolfieNet-Open network.

As explained on the Division of Information Technology website, the new network was installed specifically to help students who could not authorize their devices with the school's regular Wi-Fi network, WolfieNet-Secure, because they could not authenticate using WPA2 Enterprise, a common security protocol program.

"Even though wireless access authentication using NetID is the accepted standard for providing secure access to Wi-Fi, DoIT recognizes that there is still a need to provide wireless access to devices that do not support NetID authentication in residential areas," Manager of Network Services, Kenneth Myung, wrote in an email.

Students must register their devices beforehand in order to connect to IoT. Attempting to connect to WolfieNet-IoT brings up a web browser, where students can then fill out a device registration form. However, they are not allowed to use the network for their mobile devices. WolfieNet-IoT



GARY GHAYRAT / THE STATESMAN

Students march during the first annual Walk of Hope for Suicide Prevention and Awareness on Wednesday, Sept. 26. CPO, CAPS and multiple on-campus clubs hosted an event afterwards at the Students Activities Center.

is designed specifically for game consoles and devices that cannot authenticate using the WPA2 Enterprise protocol.

"This allows us to comply with copyright regulations and reasonable security standards, while still providing the service that a subset of our residents make use of," Myung said via email. "This change is in the best interest of our customers and the University as a whole. It reduces risk without sacrificing functionality."

Some gamers on campus said they were unaware of this new network.

"I haven't used [IoT]. I've only used WolfieNet-Secure," senior coastal environmental studies major and member of the Stony Brook League of Legends club, Brian Belilovsky, said. "I'm not exactly sure what's different about it or what it's tailored towards."

Senior computer science major, David Shank, said he used IoT to set up his new Amazon Fire TV Stick.

"I'm not having any problems with it," he said. Despite this, Shank said he preferred using WolfieNet-Secure for

gaming. "That was easier to set up," he said. "All you had to do was use your NetID and password. Setting up IoT is a process."

Once the device registration form is filled out, students are registered but not connected. Connection requires turning off Wi-Fi for five minutes, or switching to a different connection for the same amount of time, before WolfieNet-IoT is ready to be used.

Anna Rooks, a junior computer science major and member of the SBU Gamers Guild,

agreed the IoT set up process was troublesome.

"It took a few minutes for the device to register," she said, though she ultimately thought the network was "useful for devices that can't connect with a password."

In her free time, Rooks enjoys playing cooperative games, a form of competitive gaming that involves teamwork. She doesn't have a preference for the new IoT network or the old WolfieNet-Open.

"I could go either way," she said. "They don't seem to have a great difference."

Stony Brook researchers find that illegal shark trade is thriving

By Sara Ruberg
Contributing Writer

A team of researchers from the School of Marine and Atmospheric Sciences (SoMAS) concluded that many endangered species of sharks are still commonly found in the shark fin trade despite international protection.

In 2014, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora included scalloped hammerheads, smooth hammerheads, great hammerheads, oceanic whitetips and porbeagle sharks as endangered species that needed stricter international trade protections.

CITES is an agreement signed by 183 governments and organizations from around the world

that promotes the protection of endangered wildlife, including sharks. Each appendix within CITES represents a higher level of threat to a species, with Appendix I being the most threatened.

Many countries in CITES have passed laws mandating permits to trade certain shark species and banning finning — the act of removing a shark's fin and not keeping the rest of its body.

Carl Safina, endowed research chair for nature and humanity at SoMAS, has studied ocean wildlife for decades and pushed for legislation in the mid-90s to protect sharks in New York and the United States.

"Sharks were much, much more abundant here before that fin trade hit our coast and we saw the sharks just like basically disappear

within a few years in the mid-80s," Safina said. "They can't withstand that kind of mortality rate."

An estimated 73 million sharks are killed, annually, for their fins. The types of shark species that are targeted tend to reproduce at slower rates, increasing the rate of the population's decline.

In an attempt to protect sharks off the New York coast, Governor Andrew M. Cuomo signed a law in 2013 banning the sale of shark fins. Since then, there have been three major discoveries of illegal shark fin trading in New York. Most recently, in April, New Kam Man Supermarket in Manhattan's Chinatown was caught storing shark fins in its basement, according to a press release from the New York Department of Environmental Conservation.

New York State Assemblyman, Steve Englebright, has been an ardent supporter of legislative protections for the dwindling shark population off the coast of New York.

"They're easy to deplete but hard to replace," Englebright said. "All of the people on the water, we hope, are becoming advocates for these beautiful and magnificent creatures that are otherwise going to be pushed to local extinction."

The international shark trade is split into two commodities, explained Diego Cardeñosa, a SoMAS Ph.D. student and research assistant. The first is shark fins, which are mostly consumed and are seen as a high economic status symbol in Asia. The second is shark meat, which is

mostly exported to South American countries like Brazil, which is the continent's largest shark meat consumer.

Recently, Cardeñosa and the team found that countries trading with Hong Kong were underreporting their shark exports listed on CITES, mostly due to inefficient processing and difficulties in quickly identifying shark species.

Since more endangered shark species were listed in 2014, Cardeñosa has been researching ways to improve enforcement of these international regulations in Hong Kong.

"There's not one single bullet, you have to tackle the problem in all different angles from public awareness, science, law enforcement and fisheries," he said.

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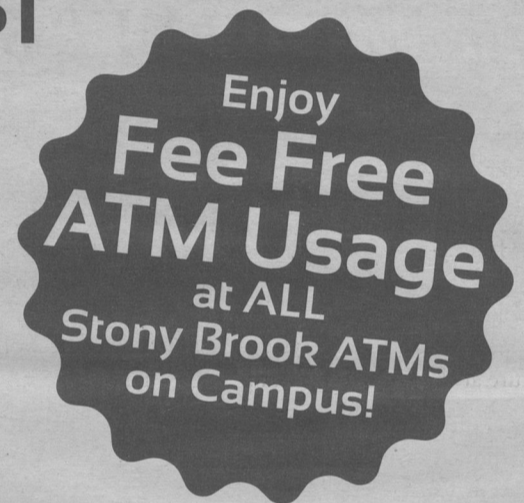


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NEWS

CEAS dean disproves fears about using tidal power from rivers

By Abhishek Cherath
Contributing Writer

Dean of the College of Engineering and Applied Sciences, Fotis Sotiropoulos, has spent the last 10 years on a mission to expand the use of hydropower in the United States.

Sotiropoulos' goal is to serve up to 10 percent of the nation's energy needs in a renewable and sustainable manner, using tidal power from rivers. Most of his work has been in the field of fluid dynamics, the study of how liquids and gases move and interact with static objects.

"I have been looking for problems," Sotiropoulos said of his research. "Problems that are important for society, and how this type of research can help solve those problems."

Results from the professor's theoretical work have been put to use in Verdant Power's Roosevelt Island Tidal Energy (RITE) pilot

project, at the East River in New York City. The project will deliver power to 9,500 NYC residents.

Sandy rivers have long posed a predicament for those who wish to harvest energy using hydropower, which is electricity generated by the motion of a body of water. Scientists feared that shifting sand dunes on the riverbed could cover the turbines used to collect the energy. They also believed that the presence of the turbines could compromise the stability of the riverbed.

Sotiropoulos disproved these fears with his paper, published in Nature Energy this July. The paper demonstrates that the turbines modify the flow to prevent any sand accumulation. His experimental work at the Saint Anthony Falls Laboratory in Minnesota also showed the turbines do not impact the structural integrity of the riverbed.

A large factor that prevents sandy rivers from being used to

harvest energy is the underdevelopment of viable computational models that could help design the most optimal configurations of turbines.

Optimizing the configuration of the turbines is the subject of the professor's current work at Stony Brook. Sotiropoulos and his team have already developed a model that works for sedimentary rivers with one turbine, and are in the process of making one that works with multiple turbines.

Sotiropoulos' research involves making models that include multiple turbines in a sandy river, at which point a pilot model can be planted in some sandy rivers. Sotiropoulos also said that the Long Island Sound is a particularly fertile energy source that he is looking at.

"It is important to do research that has an applied focus to solve a problem, and to do it well one needs to do fundamental research," he said.



PHOTO COURTESY OF STONY BROOK UNIVERSITY

Dean of the College of Engineering and Applied Sciences, Fotis Sotiropoulos, at Stony Brook University.

Northwell Health V.P. comments on America's "two-tiered" health care system

By Vincent Sparagna
Contributing Writer

Senior Vice President and Community Health Investment Officer for Northwell Health, Dr. Ram Raju, spoke about the flaws in the United States' health care system in a lecture at the Charles B. Wang Center Theater on Wednesday, Sept. 26.

Raju's speech focused on the "two-tiered" nature of health whereby the nation provides care for the socioeconomically privileged and neglects the poor.

"After coming [to the United States] and performing surgery here for 30 years, I had a skewed view of health care," Raju said. "I took care of every patient irrespective of their ability to pay but eventually I realized in this country, the richest country in the world the most powerful country in the world, there are people living in the outskirts of society. These people do not have health care access, and even when they have access, they cannot pay."

He went on to tell the story of an illegal immigrant who was forced to choose between treating her cancer and maintaining her housing because she could not afford both. The woman's fear of being evicted

and potentially deported prevented her from getting the medical care she needed.

Raju told another anecdote about a cab driver who had access to the "world's best health care," but could not seek treatment for his hypertension because he works from 6 a.m. to 11 p.m.

The cab driver's high blood pressure and paycheck-to-paycheck lifestyle both increased his risk of stroke, yet he could not abandon his job if he intended to maintain housing. In justifying his decision, he said, "My chances of getting stroke are much smaller than my chances of getting shot tonight."

This example served to demonstrate how outside socioeconomic factors can impact your wellbeing even if you have access to a premium health care. "If you have to take two buses to see your doctor instead of working that day, you aren't going to see your doctor... when the doctor tells you that you're diabetic and need to eat well... and the nearest grocery store is 4 miles away from you, you aren't going to walk there every week... when at McDonald's you can get burgers, french fries, and a drink: cheaper, tastier, across the street. Your diet will never get

better, but the health care industry never understood that."

Raju argued that many doctors try to compensate for flaws in the system by prescribing more medication.

He proceeded to share research which found that only 20 percent of health outcomes are dependent upon the critical care that a patient receives. That is, the entire medical industry — doctors, pharmaceuticals, etc. — only controls roughly 20 percent of health outcomes. Another 40 percent is dependent on an individual's healthy behaviors (or lack thereof) and the final 40 percent is attributable to socioeconomic factors.

"There is no doubt that we have the most expensive health care in the world, spending close to \$3 trillion, and our outcomes are not as good as they could be because we are barking up the wrong tree," Raju said. "We are constantly spending on this 20 percent, while the 80 percent goes unaddressed."

Hospital readmissions are not usually due to medical malpractice, but due to the lingering social issues that patients face after treatment, Raju explained. As such, the United States health care system fails to address the root cause of its medical issues.

"We know how to rescue people from their deathbeds. We know how to pull people out of the river and we do it faster, better, with more technology," Raju said. "But if you walk 15 feet upstream and stop people from falling into the river in the first place, then you'd have a much better system."

"We shouldn't even be calling it a health care system, we should actually call it a sick-care system."

-Ram Raju
Senior Vice President
Northwell Health

Making a pun out of the situation, he proposes, "The health care system requires you to fall into the river first. So, we shouldn't even be calling it a health care system, we should actually call it a sick-care system."

Raju closed his talk with a call to action.

"The two-tier system has got to be taken down," he said. "We have to create a holistic patient care that treats everyone equally." He encouraged the audience to join him in noting, "You are defined by your principles: what you are fighting for, what is most important to you. If you have that, then you could be the change-agent I'm talking about. If you have the passion for it, you will change the world."

A.J. Nagaraj, assistant vice president for Campaign Operations and Fundraising Strategy at Stony Brook University, noted that he, "really appreciated Raju's emphasis on ameliorating the disparities in health care." Nagaraj said that the parallels between education and health care struck him. "Oftentimes, educational outcomes don't have all that much to do with academic aptitude necessarily, but rather it's these socioeconomic factors that ultimately have a disproportionate impact on life," he said.

Sophomore biology major, Justin Goodridge, mentioned that he liked Raju's "different perspective on who the health care system is tailored to," adding that "the students in medical school here need to realize this."

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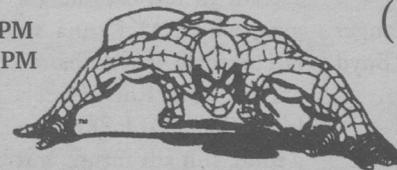
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ARTS & CULTURE

San Gennaro Feast brings Italy to the East End

By Melissa Azofeifa
Assistant Arts & Culture Editor

When the many tourists that flood the luxurious Hamptons area in the spring and summer months are gone, Hamptons locals search for ways to keep the flow of income as heavy as possible to make it through the slow fall and winter months. The San Gennaro Feast of the Hamptons was brought to Hampton Bays for the eighth time to promote local vendors and bring more attention to small local businesses.

The celebration of San Gennaro first began in the United States 92 years ago, in Little Italy in New York City. At first it was just a religious event, but eventually, it became an 11-day street fair, drawing more than one million people annually to New York City.

Sicanni Purizaca, a vendor based in Greenport, sells music, handmade flutes and jewelry influenced by Native American culture to cope with the drastic change in income flow.

"Winter is slow and after Christmas, the income dives down to about 90 percent here, so in November I leave to Florida and I come back in March," Purizaca said.

San Gennaro, or Saint Januarius, was the Bishop of Benevento and patron saint of Naples, Italy and died circa the year 305. The legend says that San Gennaro helped many Christians during their persecution under Emperor Diocletian, until one day he got caught and arrested. He was tortured, but he avoided death

twice. The saint was first thrown into a furnace but he walked out, alive and untouched by the flames. He also cheated death when he emerged unharmed after having been thrown in the amphitheater with bears. The following day, Sept. 19, he was ordered to be beheaded and martyred. On the day of San Gennaro's beheading, it is believed a woman collected two vials of his blood.

This relic is now in one glass vial in the Naples Cathedral. His blood liquefies three times a year, on Sept. 19, Dec. 16 and the Saturday before the first Sunday of May. It is believed that when his blood liquefies on these days, it is good luck. If it doesn't, it's a warning that tough times will be ahead.

The San Gennaro Feast of the Hamptons has much to enjoy for all who attend, including live music from bands like Penny Lane, a Beatles tribute band, eating contests, a Fiat raffle and tons of vendors. The festival kicked off on Saturday, Sept. 29 at noon and continued through Sunday, Sept. 30 at 8 p.m. This is the last festival of the year in the area before the cold winter months sweep in.

The smell of Nutella crepes, zepoles and steak-onion sandwiches drifted between the booths, beckoning for people to take a bite, but the next day the streets will be barren and there will be no street vendors, local eateries or tourists walking around.

Su Gilmore, a Hampton Bays-based vendor, said she's glad the



JAZY GUY/Flickr

The Feast of San Gennaro is the longest-running outdoor festival in New York City. The festival is going into its 92nd year in New York City and it's eighth in the East End.

festival is out in the East End. "It's good name recognition," Gilmore said. Despite the attention that this festival may bring to the Hamptons, the Hamptons-themed decorative products and jewelry she sells still doesn't help her cash flow during the slower winter months.

"It is not unusual that migrant cultures modify traditions that come from the places of departures of migrants," Simone Brioni, a professor in the department of cultural studies and comparative literature, said. Despite San

Gennaro representing general Italian culture here in the United States, in Italy, it's not as widespread. "I can say that this saint is not celebrated in Northern Italy," Professor Brioni said. "It seems to me this celebration involves mostly the city of Naples."

Chris and Nicole Stroud of Nikki's Candle Shop in New City drove all the way from Rockland County, a three-hour drive away, to sell their handcrafted 3D refillable candle art. The fragrant candles hit you with a whiff of sweetness with rich, velvety and spicy fragrant notes.

"We do very well, the drive is definitely worth it for us. We spend a lot of time out in the island," Nicole Stroud said. "This is our busy time, from now through Christmas."

Despite how hard it can be to brave the slow, cold fall and winter months in the area, monetarily or otherwise, some people can't resist its charm, especially when festivals and feasts such as San Gennaro come to town. However, after the festival ends, it will be just another town on Long Island waiting for spring and summer to come and the tourists to come back.

"The Predator:" Just another mediocre movie reboot

By Matthew Rainis
Contributing Writer

The movie industry is slowly being ruined by a complete lack of original ideas and this reboot of the 80s science fiction horror franchise would just be a soulless nostalgia party.

"The Predator" was mostly devoid of substance — any attempts at having a message were awkward and misplaced. At times, it seemed that the screenwriters, including Shane Black, who directed the modern rendition and played a minor role in the 1987 original "Predator," were making up the story as they went along. Thanks to a charming cast, some fun dialogue and action, however, the movie is saved from being unbearable to watch.

The film follows Army Ranger sniper Quinn McKenna (Boyd

Holbrook), whose team is attacked by a crash-landed predator while on a mission. McKenna is the only one from his team to escape alive, managing to grab some of the Predator's gear. He mails the Predator's mask and some armor off to a P.O. Box before being tracked back down by the government, who brings him in for questioning about what he saw.

McKenna ends up on a bus with Therapy Group 2, a colorful band of self-described "loonies," all former soldiers who are mostly suffering from some form of PTSD. The loonies make their escape on the bus when a Predator attacks the military base they are on. They must work as a team to retrieve the Predator's gear, which McKenna stole and is currently in the hands of his autistic son, Rory (Jacob Tremblay). The first half of the film is a solid, fun adventure, but by the second half not only did things become confusing and hard to keep track of, but the CGI had become noticeably worse.

The cast is a charming group for the most part, and their banter is mostly humorous. McKenna is a solid and relatable leading man, Keegan-Michael Key provides ample comic relief as the motor-mouthed Coyle and Trevante Rhodes (of Moonlight fame) is excellent as ex-Marine Nebraska Jones. Jacob Tremblay



PUBLIC DOMAIN

The official "The Predator" poster. It is a reboot of the original "Predator" series, premiering on Sept. 14.

continues to prove himself to be the best child actor around with his nuanced performance as Rory.

Despite some characters' strengths, others appear to have nothing at all going for them. Alfie Allen's Lynch is the most glaring example, being a member of the team for the entire movie

and exhibiting maybe one distinct personality trait during that time. The movie's women are a bit undeserved as well; Olivia Munn, who plays a scientist, is an interesting addition to the group at first but is ultimately reduced to just another person with a gun by the end of the film, and Yvonne

Strahovski as McKenna's estranged wife shows some signs of strength, but ultimately isn't given the time or circumstances to prove herself as a character.

Another issue with the film as a whole is the figurative and literal monster, the Predator itself. They build up the main Predator to be stronger than ever before, using other species' DNA to genetically engineer itself to be as strong as possible, but it's ultimately no different than Predators from any of the previous films, besides its increased height. Don't get me wrong — the creature is still a cool monster, but I'd like to see something new from it.

The movie is at its best when it's not trying too hard to be smart. Its attempts at exposition and explanation are vague and confusing, with global warming, evolution and genetic engineering all being terms thrown about without much clarity. It's at its most enjoyable when it's not trying to say anything, not trying to be anything more than what it is: a movie about a bunch of guys killing aliens and making quips at each other. If the filmmakers had been willing to stay in their lane on this one, this would have been a solidly entertaining action flick. But, due to them trying a bit too hard to be fancy and the sloppy second half, this film is just another reboot that doesn't understand why people enjoyed the original.

"Any attempts at having a message were devoid of substance...the screenwriters.... were making up the story as they went along."

-Matthew Rainis

The *Mental* Health Issue



Suffolk County Mental Health Project identifies factors behind mental illness

By Alexandra Grace Gaspar

The Suffolk County Mental Health Project — led by the director of the Epidemiology Research Group in the Stony Brook School of Medicine and Neurosciences Institute, Dr. Evelyn Bromet — focuses on the challenges individuals with mental illnesses battle with over a long span of time.

Suffolk County Mental Health Project — led by the director of the Epidemiology Research Group in the Stony Brook School of Medicine and Neurosciences Institute, Dr. Evelyn Bromet — focuses on the challenges individuals with mental illnesses battle with over a long span of time.

What once began as an observational study on patients with schizophrenia in 1989, has now branched out into two decades worth of an in-depth look in psychiatric epidemiology, the study of what societal factors cause mental illness.

The study was originally designed under the assumption that people with schizophrenia end up in the hospital. However, as the study reached its six-month mark, Bromet and her team found that not all of the participants had schizophrenia, but rather a collection of varying psychotic symptoms. The participants were then properly diagnosed with bipolar disorder, depression and other psychotic disorders.

This discovery led to two distinguished papers published last year in the November issue of the American Journal of Psychiatry as the study reached its 20-year mark: “The 20-Year Longitudinal Trajectories of Social Functioning in Individuals with Psychotic Disorders” (Eva Velthorst, PhD, et al.) and “Declining Clinical Course of Psychotic Disorders Over the Two Decades Following First Hospitalization: Evidence from the Suffolk County Mental Health Project” (Roman Kotov, PhD, et al.).

According to a press release from the Stony Brook Neurosciences Institute, the first paper focused on social functioning over time and found that “origins of these differences could be traced to childhood, when some warning signs, although subtle,

could be observed.” The second paper concluded that it is “not just social functioning that is affected when one is living with a psychosis. Although some participants do very well, others continued to carry a heavy burden of symptoms.” The research project will continue to study the participants at the 25-year mark from when the paper was originally published and beyond.

The team of researchers from Stony Brook Medicine sought out participants between the ages of 15 and 60 that resided

ed up relying on Medicaid and living in poverty, not receiving the resources they need. Sixty-three percent of the participants required some form of public assistance at the 20-year follow-up in comparison with 54 percent overall during the first four years of the study.

Associate Professor in the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Health at Stony Brook Medicine, Dr. Roman Kotov, who joined the study in 2006, was the primary investigator of the 20-year follow-up. He was tasked with overseeing data collection and analysis.

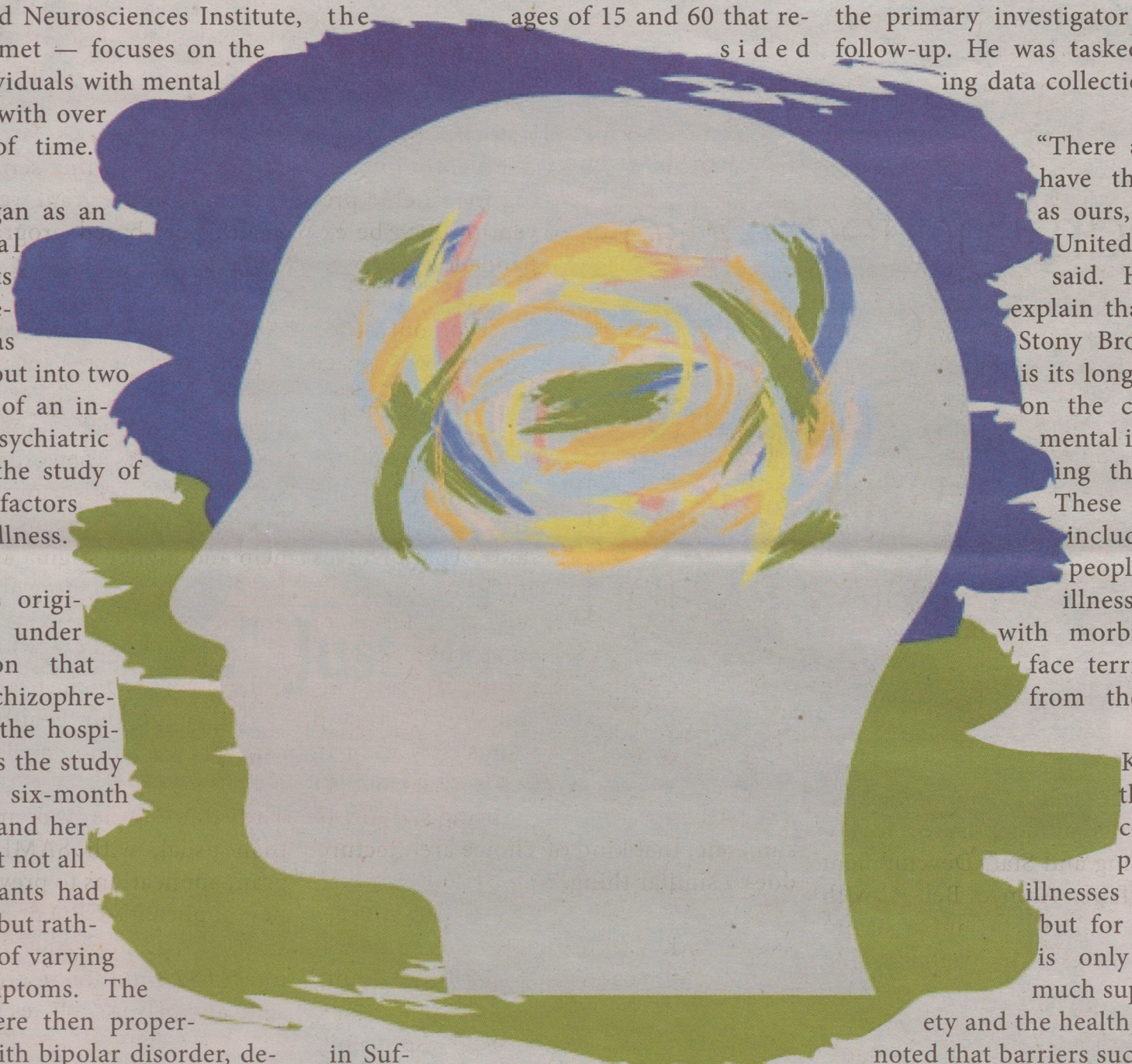
“There are studies that have the same points as ours, but not in the United States,” Kotov said. He went on to explain that what sets the Stony Brook study apart is its long span and focus on the consequences of mental illnesses, excluding the illness itself. These consequences include how many people with mental illnesses also struggle with morbid obesity and face terrible side effects from their medication.

Kotov explained that good outcomes for people with mental illnesses are possible, but for the majority, it is only possible with much support from society and the health care system. He noted that barriers such as paperwork, bills and limited hours for doctor appointments often prevent good outcomes.

In Kotov’s eyes, the American healthcare system is so focused on short-term solutions that it often does not end up benefiting patients with mental illnesses.

“We need to have more resources and need to provide easier access”

—Dr. Roman Kotov
Associate Professor



Stony Brook Center for Prevention and Outreach wins suicide prevention grant

By Erika Peters

Stony Brook's Center for Prevention and Outreach (CPO) was one of the 20 schools in the nation to secure the 2018 Garrett Lee Smith Campus Suicide Prevention Grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), an agency within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services that leads public health efforts.

The \$300,000 grant, which went into effect on Sept. 30, will be used to advance mental health awareness and suicide prevention initiatives at Stony Brook over the course of three years.

“A big part of this grant is integrating technology, providing students with different modalities to engage with mental health, wellness, and prevention.”

The grant was authored by Director of the CPO, Dr. Smita Majumdar Das, and Director of Planning and Staff Development for Student Affairs, Ahmed Belazi, with support from Dr. Marisa Bisiani, assistant vice president for Health, Wellness, and Prevention Services.

“Our grant is going ‘beyond the couch,’” Majumdar Das said. “We were thinking about if mental treatments have to be face to face, and individually, or can we start looking at prevention much earlier on?”

CPO is working with Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) to take this “beyond the couch” approach to prevention and treatment, implementing web-based services such as telecounseling and early screenings as a way for students to assess if they are experiencing symptoms of a mental health condition.

The web-based services will also utilize behavioral science to try and present options for students that may help them engage in help-seeking behaviors. This includes giving students the option to have a counseling session over the phone or computer instead

of in an office.

“A big part of this grant is integrating technology, providing students with different modalities to engage with mental health, wellness, and prevention,” Majumdar Das said.

Community coordination will be a focus as well, with new Suicide Prevention Bystander training programs for students and added online training and resource guides for staff and faculty on how to recognize and refer students in a mental health crisis. Majumdar Das said that Question, Persuade and Refer (QPR), a bystander intervention training for suicide prevention, will be expanded.

—Dr. Smita Majumdar Das,
Director of the CPO

take advantage of. Just like telecounseling might bring support to someone, that kind of ‘choice architecture’ does a similar thing.”

Coordination with the Stony Brook community will be another focus of the grant.

“Prevention cannot be the sole responsibility of a small office,” Majumdar Das said. “It’s something that is very wide, across the campus, and everyone has a role to play.”

Majumdar Das said they plan to form a Behavior Health Advisory Task Force to formalize the many connections CAPS has, including with different hospital partners. The task force will bring them together to discuss how to create a more seamless experience for students seeking care, as well as to form new partnerships.

A Campus Prevention and Promotion Advisory Task Force, an advisory committee made of several campus partners critical in

implementing various aspects of the prevention programming on campus, is also in the works. Both task forces are planned in coordination with several members of the Student Health Wellness and Prevention Services lead by Bisiani and will be comprised of both on and off campus stakeholders.

Senior psychology major and president and founder of the Peer Mental Health Alliance, Allilsa Fernandez, said although she is happy to see that there are many more Suicide Prevention Bystander training programs, as well as more open discussion and events surrounding mental health available this semester, she wishes that more of the grant went toward mental health peer-based programs and cultural diversity.

“I think that cultural diversity shouldn’t be forgotten when creating and executing any of these programs,” Fernandez said. “We cannot forget that minorities face barriers and challenges that others may not face, such as racism, discrimination of services, low economical means to obtain mental help and higher stigma as the culture may teach strongly to ‘pray about it’ or ‘toughen up.’”

“The diversity plan, I feel, should be carried through our health care system on campus,” Fernandez said.

The grant cycle was more competitive than usual, with SAMHSA opening up grant applications to previous winners and new applicants. CPO previously received a SAMHSA grant in 2009 and has garnered a total of \$2.1 million in grants from federal, state and private entities since its creation.

“The SAMHSA grant affords us the opportunity to more proactively outreach to our student community at Stony Brook, enhancing our mental health support and suicide prevention efforts,” Dr. Rick Gatteau, interim vice president for Student Affairs and dean of students, wrote in a press release. “Our goal is to help Seawolves lead healthy, productive lives and eliminate any stigmas related to seeking out counseling and support services.”

“I think it’s really important for students and everyone to engage in their own mental health,” Majumdar Das said. “We go to the gym because we understand the importance of exercise in our life. Mental health is also part of our daily living, and we need to engage in healthy mental practices, just as we would go to the gym.”

Center for Prevention and Outreach (631) 632-2748

PMHA works on new program for students struggling with mental illness

By Maya Brown

The Peer Mental Health Alliance (PMHA) wants to bring a program to campus to fill certain gaps in mental health coverage that they say are not being addressed by Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS).

The prospective program, conceived by senior psychology major, PMHA's founder and president, Allilsa Fernandez, would focus on providing students with peer-based mental health support.

Although Fernandez said the alliance does not yet have an exact model for how the program would work, she stressed that the resource was not meant to be a replacement for professional therapy, but rather an additional place to turn to for those who want peers to confide in.

Fernandez said the program is in the process of verification by mental health professionals within Stony Brook and from outside practices to make sure it is safe and effective for everyone.

As public universities like Stony Brook continue to increase enrollment, they are faced with mounting pressure to add enough mental health services to accommodate the entire student population.

According to the National Alliance on Mental Illness, "The increase in enrollment alone is justification for expanding and enhancing mental health services and supports available on college campuses and communities."

Some schools have responded by connecting students with outside resources. For example, Gregg Henriques, American psychologist and professor at James Madison University, said at his school, 40 to 50 percent of students are referred to mental health practitioners in the area.

"Growing up from freshman to senior year comes with a lot of stress and I want to make sure the stigma against mental health is broken,"

- Thanusha Thambithurai
Junior Biochemistry Major

Henriques said the PMHA's idea could be a good alternative to directing students to off-campus resources.

"I believe [PMHA's prospective] program is a good idea and it should

educate students on mental health and how to talk with people who are struggling, in a way that's effective," Henriques wrote in an email. "Since the size of need for

support is large, one counselor at a time is not sufficient enough, so this group will definitely create more opportunity and could be really helpful," he added.

Students struggling with mental health issues at Stony Brook already have access to multiple on-campus resources including individual therapy, group therapy and mindfulness meditation.

According to a poll posted on the Stony Brook University Class of 2022 Facebook page on Sept. 19, 37 students said they felt there were already enough resources for students dealing with mental illness and only two students said there weren't enough resources.

"There are great resources available, but some seem to go underutilized due to general stigma around mental health issues," Jeremy Nielson, a junior mechanical engineering major, wrote in a comment.

According to the National Alliance on Mental Illness, "Overall, 40 percent of students with diagnosable mental health conditions did not seek help and a concern stigma is the number one reason students do not seek help."

Members of the PMHA say they hope to change this with their new program.

"Growing up from freshman to senior year comes with a lot of stress and I want to make sure the stigma against mental health is broken," Thanusha Thambithurai, a junior biochemistry major and new member of PMHA, said.

Director of CAPS at Stony Brook, Julian Pessier, threw his full support behind PMHA's mission.

"My opinion of past work by the Peer Mental Health Alliance is that they are an incredible asset to Stony Brook's community of care," Pessier said.

Fernandez said she believes her group will be successful moving forward with its new program because it's had a great track record so far.

"We have testimonies from students stating that if it weren't for peer mental health alliance they might have fallen through the cracks, and I truly believe it," she said. "We are the bridge between the students and professionals."

Behind the Curtain: Performing with depression and anxiety

By Rachel Parker

Theater performance is a work-intensive art that can leave the actor feeling vulnerable. While it supplies an evening of entertainment and escapism to those in the audience, for the actors on stage it can be a two and a half hour whirlwind of panic and energy depletion.

Thirty years worth of studies by the U.S. National Library of Medicine show a prevalence in depressive disorders in “creative” people. The objective of the study was to examine the psychiatric morbidity stress profile, coping skills and personality profile in creative versus non-creative populations.

For some, the material itself can be triggering, requiring a great deal of emotional labor to work with. Leigh Riley, a junior English major, has been performing since they were nine years old. “I have sometimes had to miss rehearsals because I simply don’t have the energy for them,” Riley said. They recall an instance in their freshman year where the production’s themes of suicide, abuse and sexual assault made it difficult to perform.

Brian Bernhard, a senior theatre arts major, credits his anxiety and depression for his love/hate relationship with theater. “While this work is always extremely rewarding, the logistics and planning it entails can be extremely overwhelming,” Bernhard said.

Both Riley and Bernhard summarized their theater backgrounds as intense, but Riley has found value in the community that theater cultivates, providing a platform to talk about topics that we don’t get to talk about in our everyday lives, which can help heal. When Riley was in high school, the school’s production of “Footloose” helped them to cope with the loss of a friend in a car accident earlier that year.

“I was playing a character who had lost her son the same way, and it was actually really helpful,” Riley said.

Perhaps it is the vulnerability itself that, frightening as it may be, attracts people to theater and performance. While people may suffer from social anxiety or depressive episodes in their day-to-day life that limit them, theater can be an outlet to let go of one’s fear. Bernhard tackles his anxiety and depression through acting.

“It lets me be someone else, or at the very least, dive into the world of someone else,” Bernhard said. “Every now and then I get the opportunity to play someone I’ll learn a great deal from.”

Alice MacBain, an international exchange student from Hampshire, England, finds that theater is as much an escape for her as it is for the audience. “I have generalized anxiety, so it tends to keep me away from experiences — keep me away from people. It’s debilitating,” MacBain said.

Back at Leeds University, MacBain wasn’t finding a lot of opportunities to perform, but coming to the United States gave her new motivation. “It’s weird because back at home I was the most unhappy I’d ever been,” MacBain said. “I’ve never been this far away from my family before for this long, I needed to get involved.” Since she got cast in Stony Brook’s Pocket Theatre production of the musical, [title of show], her anxiety has dissipated altogether.

“I went into it with a relaxed mindset, with no anxiety, and I’ve now come out happy and it’s made me feel more settled and safe here than I did before,” MacBain said.

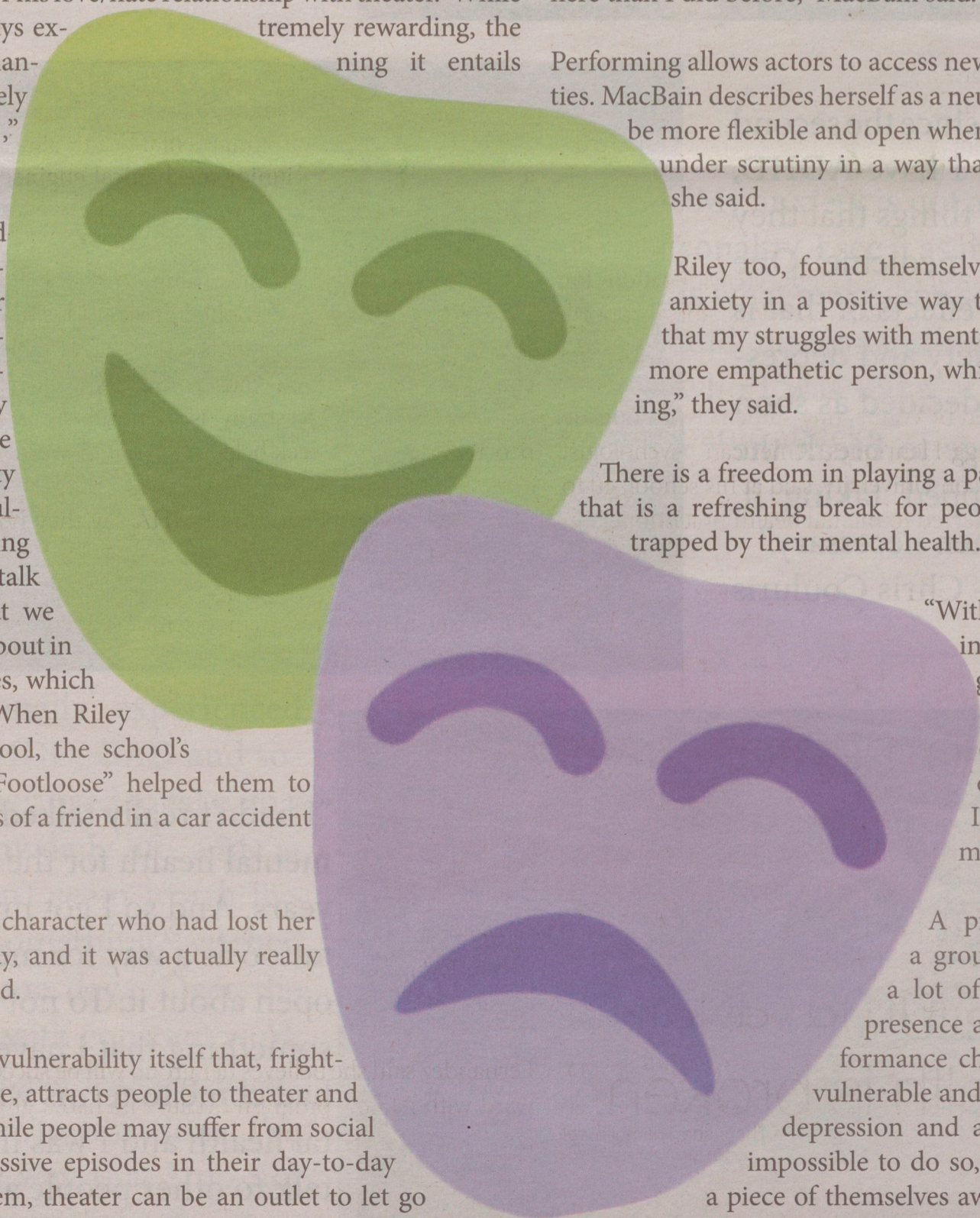
Performing allows actors to access new parts of their personalities. MacBain describes herself as a neurotic person, but she can be more flexible and open when performing. “It puts me under scrutiny in a way that I avoid in general life,” she said.

Riley too, found themselves able to channel their anxiety in a positive way through theater. “I think that my struggles with mental illness have made me a more empathetic person, which is very helpful in acting,” they said.

There is a freedom in playing a part, or performing a role, that is a refreshing break for people who sometimes feel trapped by their mental health.

“With theater, there’s no hiding,” MacBain said. “It’s a good thing for me because it makes me come out of my shell and show exactly who I am. Who I am at rehearsals, that’s me.”

A piece of theater requires a group of individuals to give a lot of themselves: their time, presence and commitment. A performance challenges its actors to be vulnerable and open, so that even when depression and anxiety can make it feel impossible to do so, the actor must still give a piece of themselves away to the audience. And at the end of the night, when those efforts are met with applause, they know that being themselves was enough.



Putting a face on mental health

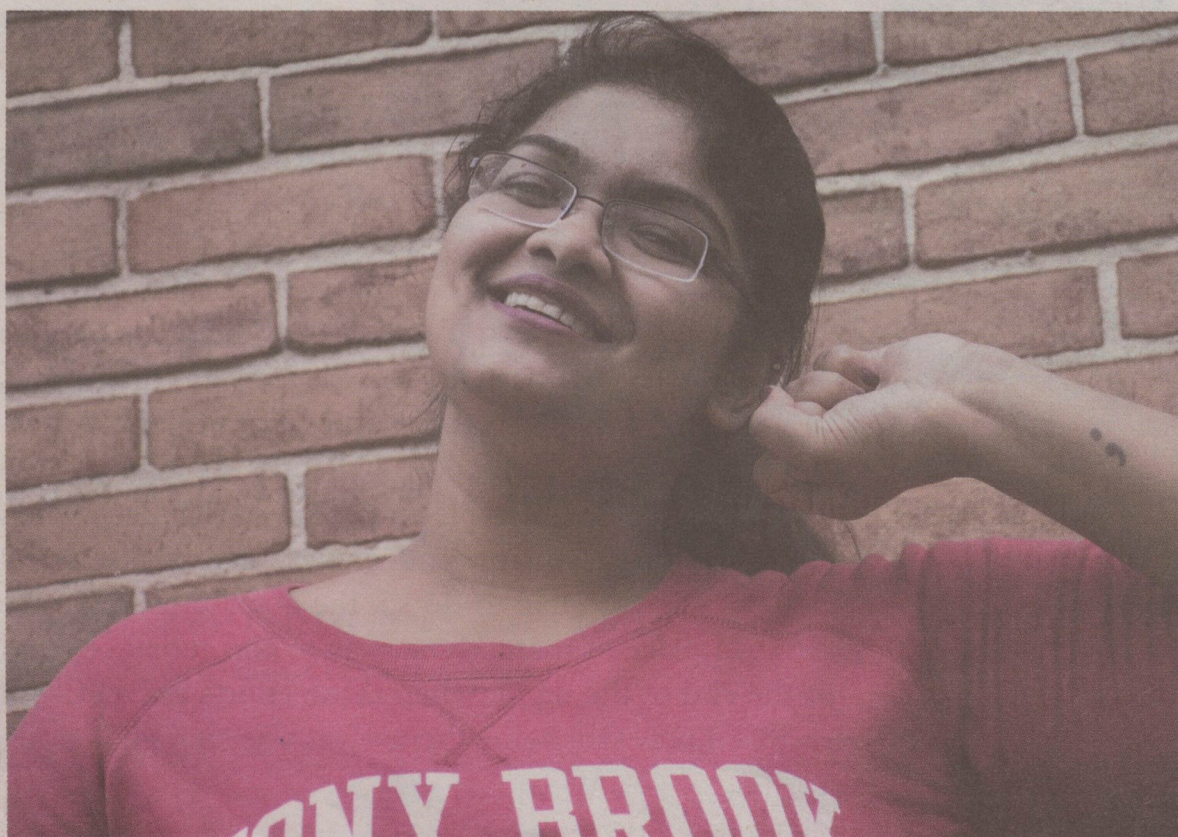


“After I started taking accutane, all my acne under my skin started pushing itself to the surface. But I also felt all the mental issues I repressed started coming to the surface as well. It was hard at first but after I was honest with the people closest to me about what was going on, I had more strength to deal with having this pill in my system for four months.”

- Tommy James

“I’ve had anxiety since the second grade, and since I have ADHD, one of the major things that they give us are our medicine. One of the main side effects of that is heightening anxiety and depression... So then I decided as soon as I got to college to break the medicine. I stopped taking it, only taking it when necessary.”

- Chris Couluris



“I hadn’t really talked about my mental health for the first few years. And so I got my semicolon tattoo as a way for me to be more open about it. To not have it be something that I have to hide. I had come to terms with my mental health and I was finally able to talk to other people about it.”

-Meenakshi Janardhanan

*Photos by Sara Ruberg, Rebecca Leggio,
Justin Goodridge and Aleeza Kazmi*

“When people first meet me, they think I am very confident and outgoing. No one ever thinks that I am the one in the corner crying ever. They always think that because I am not just quiet and sad all the times, it means I don’t have any problems.”

-Jennifer Kustanovich



“My anxiety is not a flaw in my personality. I see it as my strength. That is what makes me so compassionate and understanding. I wouldn’t be who I was today if was not for my panic attacks.”

-Jennifer Kustanovich

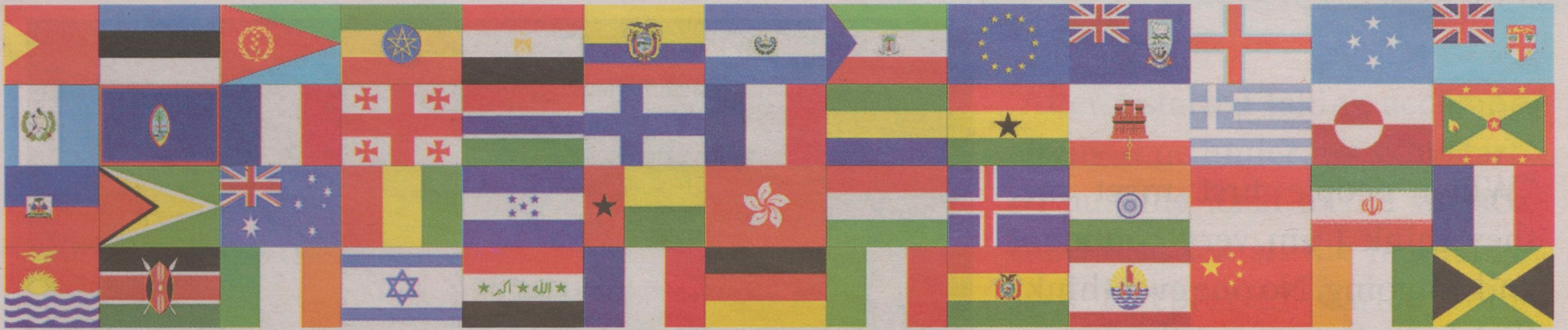
“I have personally experienced (and still do) MDD, GAD and social anxiety. They used to take up a big chunk of my daily life, a life at times that didn’t seem worth living. But then something switched inside of me one day... Over the last two years, with constant work and efforts, I have learned to alter my response to situations. I’ve done this in a way that I do not have to stress myself out about everything.”

-Tulsi Khar



Mental health is not culture blind

By Karina Gerry



Attitudes toward mental health often vary between people of different cultures. Their teachings and religious beliefs often affect the way they view the mentally ill, and the nature of mental health itself.

Mental health does not discriminate; people of all cultures are affected. In 2017, the World Health Organization reported that one in four people in the world will be affected by mental or neurological disorders in their lifetime, but because of the negative stigma and discrimination surrounding mental health, nearly two-thirds of people with a known mental disorder never seek help from a health professional.

For many cultures, mental illness is a taboo subject — something that doesn't require medical assistance. Some believe it doesn't exist at all. The topic of mental health makes people uncomfortable and, because of this, stigmas and discrimination can develop.

Amath Thiam, a senior computer engineering major, who moved to America from Senegal, Africa in 2010, notes how mental health is not discussed in his culture.

"People keep that type of stuff to themselves, most of the time it's kept secret because you don't want them to see you in a certain way," Thiam said. "My parents never had a conversation about mental health, it's not discussed they will never talk about it because of pride and culture."

According to a 2007 study published by the Journal of the National Medicine Association, approximately 63 percent of African Americans viewed depression as a "personal weakness," 30

"My parents never had a conversation about mental health, it's not discussed they will never talk about it because of pride and culture."

percent reported that they would deal with depression themselves and only one-third reported that they would accept medication for depression if prescribed by a medical professional.

Dr. Zebulon Vance Miletsky, an assistant professor of Africana studies, believes that years of adversity have caused African Americans to seek an inner strength.

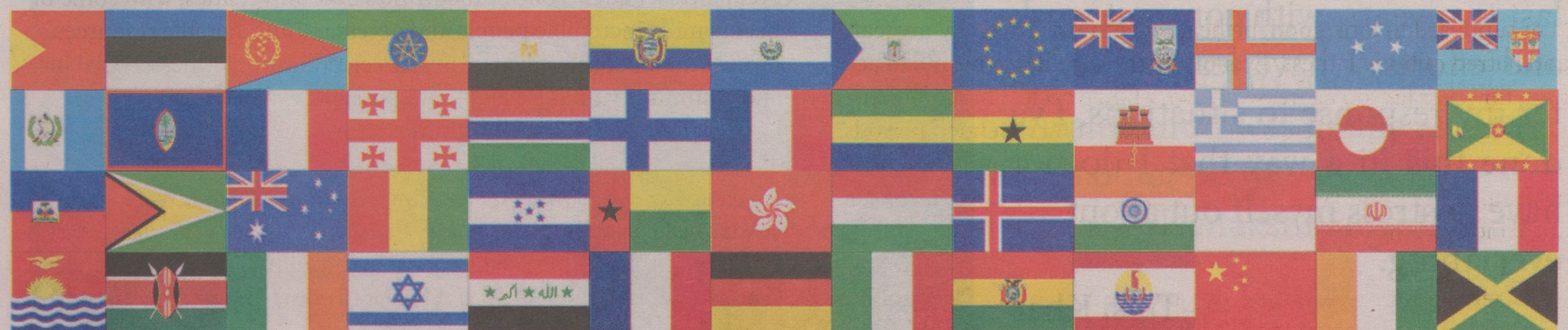
"I think part of it is a function of being a very strong people," Miletsky said. "In the face of all these adversities, out of the reality of our oppression and our struggles in various ways, you would be hard pressed to think of a group that's struggled more in the United States. And because of those things, it has created an independence — an ability to deal with things internally. Now is that always a good

thing? I don't know. That's the question."

Mental health does not discriminate based on age either. The Child Mind Institute reported in 2015 that of the 74.5 million children in the United States, an estimated 17.1 million have or had a psychiatric disorder. This number eclipses that of children with cancer, diabetes and AIDS combined.

Despite these statistics, people like Rohani Sharma, a senior computer science major, still have to deal with cultures that don't believe young people can suffer from mental health problems.

"I grew up in traditional Indian House," Sharma said. "If you're depressed during your younger years, they say there's no way your depressed, they won't believe it they won't acknowledge it, this is every Indian family, they don't acknowledge that you can have mental problems at a young age."



Inside my mind behind my eating disorder

By Vincent Sparagna

I wax and wane between despair and optimism throughout my life, remaining fairly melancholy even when optimistic. I face a fundamental dilemma that's disturbed me for nearly three years now: a constant struggle with disordered eating, particularly cycles of bingeing and purging. These waves culminate in weeks of overeating, followed by weeks of dieting and exercising to compensate.

Day after day, I fight temptations to seek refuge from life's hardships in the comfort of food. Ashamed thereafter, I am compelled to undo any self-inflicted damage, often resorting to extended fasting or extreme dieting.

Despite any influence as a fitness persona, and even running an educational fitness website, I'm living anything but a "healthy" lifestyle. Each day I personify Einstein's definition of insanity: doing the same things over and over again but expecting different results. Month after month, I act in a manner that degrades both my psychological and physiological health, creating a devastating feedback loop of either bingeing or dieting.

Recurrent binge eating, followed by purging or other efforts to avoid weight gain, typically constitutes bulimia. Bingeing is typically accompanied by guilt, self-disgust or depression. While body dysmorphic disorder (BDD) differs from disordered eating, distorted body image partially constitutes an eating disorder; so the two usually relate.

Each binge promotes more bingeing by increasing my cravings, decreasing my self-esteem, diminishing my desire to exercise, compromising my metabolic/dental health, inhibiting my productivity and reducing my willingness to socialize, thus degrading physiological, psychological and social health.

What's more, bingeing betrays all of my values. When speaking to others, I often claim to value fitness, nutrition, altruism and people. Yet, many nights I binge alone, making poor food choices, degrading my health and eating the food that on a better day I would rather donate. It's as if I'm a completely different person. I lose control of myself, abandon my values and act against my best interests — all for the love of ice cream.

Tragically, research shows a huge percentage of those suffering from BDD also suffer from depression. As such, it seems that failing to meet others' perceived standards culminates in depressive symptoms and feelings of inadequacy.

I've deliberately avoided contact with friends that asked to hang out, those I most enjoy spending time with, because of these worries. In such dark times, it's not uncommon to ponder the "relief" that might accompany a bullet to the head. The combination of these negative emotions makes it especially difficult to be happy, as I'm both ashamed and saddened by my behaviors. When blinded by self-hatred, I'm a less appealing person, and it's tangible.

"I'm supposed to look good, be healthy," I think, driven by my fear and hatred of body fatness. Eventually, these values drive me to action, however far too aggressively. Post-binge cycle, I'm tempted to be skinny again as soon as possible. I'll often fast for extended periods, eat little to nothing but protein sources and continue this for as long as I can. These periods generally rejuvenate my self-esteem, appearance, motivation to exercise, desire to socialize and mood.

However, dieting yields many cons as well. As soon as a wave of stress hits, especially when paired with food, I'm again extremely susceptible

to bingeing, and the cycle continues.

The primary biological influence on eating disorders is hunger/starvation, thus anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa, or binge-eating disorder may develop after periods of food restriction/dieting. Psychological factors that cause eating disorders include phobic responses to food or weight gain, conflicted feelings over adolescent development or sexual maturity and compensation for perceived ineffectiveness by "controlling" hunger and the body.

This matches my experience, as I dieted restrictively for over two years during adolescence, thinking fat loss could fill the void in my life. Toward the end of eighth grade, I fell out with my friends and lost my identity. After months of depressive symptoms, I rediscovered passion in fitness. I thought that if I looked better my friends might come back to me, new friends may approach me or for once, a girl might like me. These hopes later proved misguided.

Differences in body image and personality traits may alter what disordered eating behaviors manifest. For example, those with BDD exhibit exaggerated concern over perceived bodily defects. Stress over these perceived flaws often interferes with social or occupational functioning. As such, one's susceptibility to worry over appearance influences their susceptibility to BDD.

Like those with BDD, people with bulimia nervosa strongly emphasize appearance, and their mood or self-esteem depends greatly on their weight and figure. Bulimia often results from restrictive dieting, which induces behavioral changes similar to those observed with anorexia. However, while anorexics may be introverted, bulimics worry more about socializing and how others perceive them.

Relatedly, BDD and eating disorders each correlate with physical activity. For example, research documents greater susceptibility to BDD or eating disorders among athletes. Social influence and one's own negative self-image may prompt physique competition among those susceptible to extreme dieting and disordered eating behaviors.

While an outside observer may be sympathetic, I don't want to make my disorder seem justified in explaining it. While I can't alter my brain's chemistry I am ultimately (though, not entirely) responsible for acting upon my intentions or impulses, whether or not I control them. This may seem pitiful, since I live and suffer all because of my own faults, bad decisions and lack of self-control. However, I think it warrants optimism.

For all readers suffering with similar, self-induced struggles, I implore you to own it and commit to changing. Allowing yourself to suffer in silence does nothing. If you're reading this, you're living through history's richest, liveliest and most consequential period. You are one of Earth's luckiest residents. With this in mind, ponder how much power you bear.

Picture this: I attend one of the world's best universities, with some of Earth's most incredible people and access to innumerable resources. I can simultaneously advance my career, education, fitness, social life and community unlike ever before possible, even if I can't keep my hands out of a cookie jar from time to time.

If you are at all like me, experiencing self-induced suffering that only you can alleviate, then please seek help. Take advantage of psychological services, peers, technology, nature, the gym, music or anything else that improves your life. You owe it to yourself; fight for a life worth living. I'm fighting too.

CAPS is failing its international students

By Mike Adams

This school wouldn't be the same without its international students.

Stony Brook's 4,685 international students are a crucial nutrient in the university's lifeblood. The diversity of backgrounds and opinions they bring to campus are invaluable for everybody. They also pay more to come here than most of their classmates, bolstering the school's finances without federal or state aid to water down the impact.

As of Fall 2017, more students come here from China than Brooklyn and Manhattan combined. We have a full-blown satellite campus in South Korea.

So why does Stony Brook, a university with 3,117 students from China, South Korea and Taiwan alone, have zero mental health counselors on site that speak Mandarin or Korean?

That admission comes directly from Julian Pressier, the director of Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at Stony Brook University, who said counselors rely on the translation service CyraCom to communicate in the presence of a language barrier. For hundreds of students from India, there's only one CAPS staffer who speaks Hindi, Smita Majumdar Das, and she's a consult for trauma counseling rather than a counselor herself. The rest of CAPS' staff list reads like a trip through some near-homogenous Midwest town.

We don't even have any counselors that speak Spanish.

In all fairness, the international students I spoke to reported largely pleasant experiences with CAPS. They found counselors that were able to set aside their biases, do their best to learn about cultural incongruities between them and their patients and, most importantly, listen.

"The professionals are culturally competent and willing to understand if there's a prominent cultural difference," Azaina Muzavar, a former biochemistry major from India who graduated in 2017, said. "They will respectfully ask you to explain the cultural disparity. I grew up in Saudi Arabia and went to an all-girls school. Talking to boys and working on group projects was new to me in college. My therapist and I would talk a lot about my cultural background and make comparisons between American Culture and the culture I came from. It was a growing experience for the both of us."

But despite experiences like Muzavar's, who speaks English and Urdu and said she's more comfortable with the former, the linguistic and cultural barrier for international students seeking mental health care is still a very real problem. The best efforts of counselors to understand their patients can't possibly beat the implicit cultural

competency that comes with growing up in the same environment.

"We don't have enough representation, languages and services for minorities nor international students," Peer Mental Health Alliance (PMHA) Director and senior psychology major Allilsa Fernandez said. "The diversity plan, I feel, should be carried through our health care system on campus. It shouldn't stop at providing diverse food such as the Halal place, Asian cuisine or the Caribbean dining. We should also provide diverse health care to meet the needs of different cultures and international students."

That lack of understanding can have a horrific impact. The university makes huge strides to market itself in South Korea, a country with an infamously stressful school system and an astonishingly high student suicide rate. Suicide is the leading cause of death for South Koreans age 9 to 24, but the mental health problems in the country are still incredibly stigmatized.

Stony Brook could make itself a haven for mental health awareness and aid for its South Korean students. All it would take is a couple of counselors familiar with the Korean language and culture. Surely that's not too much to ask.

For international students like Muzavar, cultural differences are much easier to communicate when both parties share language fluency.

I'm more worried about the students who can't speak English well — those who might get along just fine with a research paper or 99 percent of conversations, but fall short of perfect when it comes to discussing their problems. It's one thing to participate in class discussions. It's another thing entirely to let somebody understand the innermost workings of your mind.

Maybe I'm not the most qualified person to talk about how an international student deals with counseling. But as a mentally ill person, I think I'm qualified to say comfort is paramount in the relationship between patient and therapist. A half-understood disclosure won't cut it. A translator would violate the privacy that makes therapy effective. I know I wouldn't feel comfortable talking openly about my depression issues with a third person in the room.

Fernandez put it beautifully at a PMHA event about mental health for minorities: "If you can't be fully understood at all levels, then how can you be healed?"

This shouldn't be a difficult problem to solve. Mental health counselors in New York make an average of \$42,070 a year. It's no secret that Stony Brook is having money problems right now, but even a handful of counselors who can speak Mandarin, Hindi or Korean would make a sizeable dent in the issue. A student's life and well-being are too important. There has to be a way.



Free your mind with yoga and meditation

By Gabby Pardo

I walk into the Campus Recreation Center to attend one of the many free fitness classes offered. As I'm walking in, I'm worried about my article that's due in a few days, my midterm for a class I'm struggling in, a class debate the next day that I feel poorly prepared for all while I'm asking myself how the heck I'm going to make time to eat and breathe this week. An hour later, I walk out with a clear head, my inner gym junkie is pleased and a huge brick of stress is lifted off my chest.

The next day, my stress is back as I walk into another fitness class. My mind is all over the place because I'm thinking about assignments, that same test from the day before and I also start classes at 8:30 a.m. and don't end until 8:50 p.m. I walk out an hour later with the stress melted away, able to sense my body in one present moment and a huge smile on my face.

What's the magic coping mechanism hidden in the recreation center? Free yoga and meditation classes.

According to the Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine, there is a lack of research on yoga, but the information gathered indicates that yoga can have multiple health benefits.

One of the top three disorders addressed at yoga interventions is mental health. Everyone's idea of mental health is different, whether it means feeling stress once in a while or having a mental health disorder such as an eating disorder or schizophrenia. The World Health Organization defines mental health as, "... a state of well-being

in which every individual realizes his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community."

Instead of thinking of mental health as just a list of disorders and negativity, we need to find a way to cope and, most importantly, take care of ourselves.

Instead of thinking of mental health as just a list of disorders and negativity, we need to find a way to cope and, most importantly, take care of ourselves.

Senior linguistics major Jimmy Friedman has been teaching yoga at the Campus Rec Center for two years and uses his practices in his daily routine. "Yoga is integral to basically all of my life. Since yoga isn't just a physical practice, but a lifestyle, I can incorporate the principles of discipline, restraint, compassion, and openness in all activities and relationships," he said. "I often do a bit of yoga/meditation before bed to fall asleep quicker and sleep better."

Some of the benefits of adding yoga to your daily life include, of course, improving mental health and relieving stress, as well as physical benefits such as strengthening balance and flexibility.

A big aspect of yoga is being mindful to your body and yourself. If

you can't do a difficult pose or stretch as far as the person next to you, you shouldn't push yourself. It is recommended you do the instructions to the best of your ability and make sure your mind and body are comfortable.

Don't get me wrong, yoga can be strenuous. For example, when you're struggling to balance in poses such as Lord of the Dance. This serves as a workout — but also allows your mind to concentrate on other things besides stress, worries and anxiety.

The mind needs to stay positive even if you're wobbling through a pose. In addition, it needs to be aware of your physical and mental limitations. For me, the part of my yoga routine that makes me the most mindful to my body is concluding my routine with Savasana. Savasana translates to "corpse pose" which is when you lay down on your back with your hands open like a corpse. Here, you meditate and relax the mind. Ending my routine with this helps me relax my body from all the stretching I have done and clear my mind of any forms of negative energy attacking it.

If you can't make it to the classes, there are short breathing videos on YouTube where you can get your daily dose of kindness for your body. Even just meditating a few minutes per day can make a big difference in the way you take care of yourself.

Yoga and meditation are beautiful ways of exercising the mind and body. Be kind to your mind and health. Just breathe.



You
are
NOT
alone.

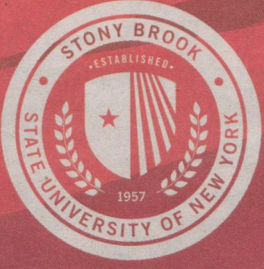
Suicide Prevention Hotline: 1-800-273-8255

National Drug Help Line 1-866-236-1651

National Eating Disorder Association Helpline 1-800-2237

Crisis Textline: Text CONNECT to 741-741

Counseling and Psychological Services 631-632-6740



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The Statesman and its editors have won several awards for student journalism and several past editors have gone on to enjoy distinguished careers in the field of journalism.

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Two girls of the Hindu religion light candles during the festival Diwali. The festival of lights is usually celebrated in the fall, when Stony Brook University students are in classes.

Stony Brook should be more tolerant of religious holidays

By Kraig Klein
Contributing Writer

Stony Brook University loves to boast about how diverse it is.

Wherever I turn, I am constantly reminded about the campus' goal to fight discrimination. We have a "Plan for Equity, Inclusion, and Diversity" that is responsible for creating a physical LGBTQ* Center on campus and inundates the campus with seminars and workshops about how diverse we are. Many of our educational programs focus directly on reversing histories of (mostly male) oppression, such as the Women in Science and Engineering program. My orientation was basically a social justice seminar, complete with lengthy speeches about microaggressions and gender identities. My first semester seminar likewise heavily focused on implicit bias and trying to create a "safe space" for all students.

But Stony Brook isn't as tolerant as it depicts itself to be. How else can you explain the fact that we have no days off for important religious holidays?

This became apparent to me last Wednesday, Sept. 19, when the Jewish holiday of Yom Kippur was acknowledged. For those who are unfamiliar with the holiday, Yom Kippur is a day on which all members of the religion are expected to atone for their sins. This is accomplished through a day-long fast and attending services in the middle of the fast where we confess our sins, either privately or publicly, in temple. The fact that we don't have a day off for such an important holiday is indicative of the flaws in Stony Brook's plans for tolerance.

But something occurred this year that truly exposed the extent of the

problem to me. According to the Office of the Provost, students can take off for religious holidays and will not be penalized for being absent, with the further instruction that teachers make sure "no examinations, papers, presentations, or other assignments [are due on] any of the major holidays."

Despite these clear instructions, one of my teachers assigned homework Tuesday that was due Wednesday, the night of Yom Kippur, and another teacher announced that there would be a quiz the day after. Instead of reflecting on my sins and atoning for them, I was preoccupied with finishing the homework and studying for the quiz. I am certain my teachers were not being deliberately discriminatory; I think they were just unaware of the significance of the day and what it entails for one who observes.

I shouldn't have been surprised that Yom Kippur wasn't promoted on campus. Last year, Students for Justice in Palestine called Hillel, a prominent Jewish collegiate organization, a terrorist group and asked for it to be banned. Aside from an angry letter from The Interfaith Center, the university took no action. There was also no email about Yom Kippur sent to all faculty and students on campus, which probably left many people ignorant of such an important day. Out of curiosity, I went online and researched important religious holidays in other religions to see if they received any more attention than Yom Kippur. What I found was extremely disheartening.

Do we receive a day off for Diwali and Maha Shivaratri, important Hindu holidays? No.

Do we receive a day off for Eid al-Adha and the beginning of Ra-

madan, two of the holiest Muslim days? No.

As a matter of fact, the only religious holiday school is closed for is Christmas, solely because it occurs during Winter Break.

I understand that the school can't afford to shut down for the duration of every religious holiday, as that would be detrimental to students' education. Nevertheless, it is extremely disrespectful not to take even a day off for students to observe their religions on the holiest days of their respective calendars.

The school could take one day off for each of the six holidays mentioned above and deduct the six days from our summer vacation, which stretches from the end of May to the end of August. Instead, the school suggests teachers not to assign anything on those days and remain ignorant of the fact that the teachers themselves may unintentionally disrespect those holidays by assigning work. After all, there is no ban on having homework due on those holidays, so there's no incentive for teachers to actually acknowledge them.

Stony Brook cannot continue calling itself "tolerant" and "diverse" if it can't support students in participating in their own religion. Stony Brook heavily promotes gender equality and racial equality, but when it comes to religion it turns a blind eye. Many religions have faced centuries of discrimination; the Jewish people were targeted and slaughtered by Tsarist Russia and Nazi Germany, and Muslims constantly have to withstand being called terrorists. Shouldn't religions receive the same amount of respect and attention that Stony Brook pays to other discriminated groups?

Poole Party: Maria Poole steps up for defending champions

By Dylan Ramsay
Contributing Writer

Junior outside hitter Maria Poole is not your ordinary volleyball player. She earned conference honors this week after leading the Seawolves to a 3-0 victory against Hartford on Friday, Sept. 21. Poole notched 10 kills in the game while marking a league-best .625 hitting percentage. This isn't new for her.

In her native country, Norway, playing for ToppVolley in Mizuno Ligaen, Poole was named "Best Opposite" at the Norwegian Championships three years in a row from 2014 to 2016 before taking her talents to Stony Brook University.

"She scores important points on the court, and that will help when she is a veteran leader."

-Emily Costello
Graduate Outside Hitter

Poole's transition from Norway to Stony Brook was a natural one. Aside from earning an America East all-rookie selection in 2016, she tied for second

on the team in aces (23), third in blocks per set (0.34) and points per set (2.54). She was also named to the America East All-Conference team in 2017.

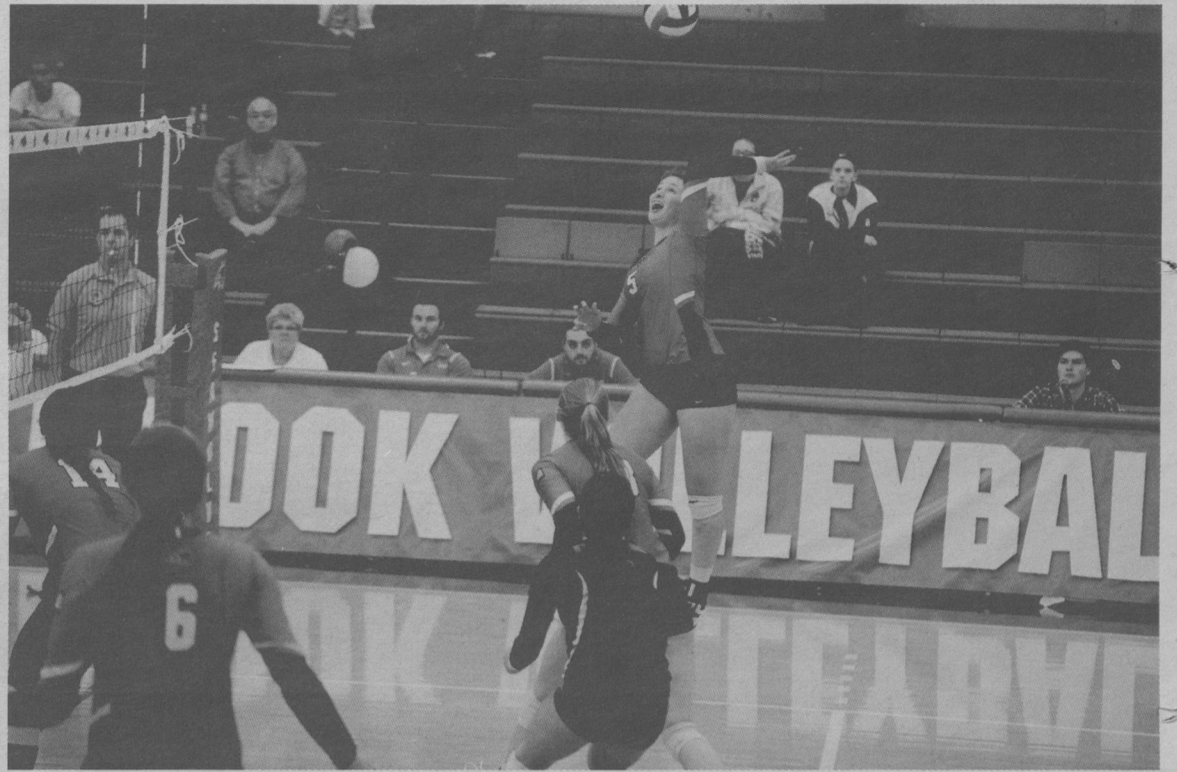
Poole shows determination and passion to be better in every game. Each time she is on the court, Poole finds ways to contribute to the overall success of the team.

"She was definitely frustrated at the beginning of the season because she wasn't producing," graduate outside hitter Emily Costello said about her teammate. "She figured out how to change that, and her mentality going into games. She thinks about killing the ball and making every ball better. She's focused on doing shots rather than kills, for her it's not just about swinging hard but where the defensive players are not on the court. She's been doing a lot better."

At the Stony Brook Invite this year, Poole notched 33 kills, with a season-high 14 kills against Bryant. Her performance earned her All-Tournament honors.

Head coach Kristin Belzung has been a key factor in Poole's continued growth since joining the program, and she has taken advantage of Poole's 6'2" size as well as her skill set.

"We are fortunate to have someone like Maria on the right side that has such a big arm," Belzung said. "The way our system is, our middles get the attention because they are both very good. Because the middles get so much attention, it opens



SAMANTHA MONTES / STATESMAN FILE

Junior outside hitter Maria Poole in a match against UMBC last season. Poole earned conference honors after leading the Seawolves to a 3-0 victory against Hartford last week.

up a seam for Maria to score through. We're finally getting her in a position where she is in the same rhythm during games, and she has taken advantage of that against opponents."

Poole currently has 123 kills and a 0.44 blocks per set percentage. She is on track to break her collegiate career high for kills this year which stands at 262 from 2017. But for Poole, it isn't just about the stats.

"Keeping the energy high, and having fun on the court, it's really important to have both," Poole said about what she focuses on.

"Whether it be practice or game you want to enjoy what you do but at the same time you want to better yourself, not just for you, but for your team."

Poole has benefited from Costello's veteran leadership on the court, and Costello believes that Poole is ready to take on a leadership role within the team.



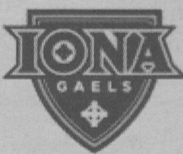


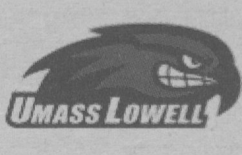


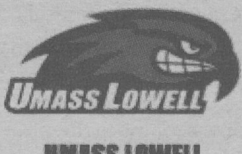




"Maria is the type of player who can be mad and produce on the court," Costello said. "Certain players you have to calm them down, whereas Maria, you let her go, let her get mad, then tell her to relax for the next ball,

and then she kills the next ball. She scores important points on the court, and that will help when she is a veteran leader."

Poole is looking to continue her hot streak as conference play rolls on. If she maintains her dominance on the court, there will likely be more accolades coming her way and potentially a chance to help lead the Seawolves to an America East Championship for the second year in a row.

The Seawolves' next game will be on Friday, Oct. 5 against the Albany Great Danes at 6:30 p.m. in Pritchard Gymnasium.

SEAWOLVES SCOREBOARD

 WOMEN'S SOCCER THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 27 3 - 3  ALBANY	 MEN'S RUGBY FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 28 65 - 5 IONA	 STONY BROOK
 WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 28 3-0  UMASS LOWELL	 FOOTBALL SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 29 27 - 29 VILLANOVA	 STONY BROOK
 MEN'S SOCCER FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 28 0 - 4 UMASS LOWELL	 STONY BROOK	 WOMEN'S SOCCER SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 30 0 - 4 VERMONT
 WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 30 3 - 1 STONY BROOK	 NEW HAMPSHIRE	

SPORTS

Men's Soccer earns 4-0 win over UMass Lowell

By Ryan Pavich
Staff Writer

The enthusiastic celebration from the team was audible from well beyond the locker room. From the moment they walked off the field to the first roar of triumphant cheering, the players' faces held wide grins and bright expressions.

The celebration followed a dominant 4-0 victory for Stony Brook Men's Soccer on Friday, Sept. 28, against the 16th-ranked team in the country, UMass Lowell.

"We had a plan coming into the game," head coach Ryan Anatol said. "We wanted to be really aggressive defensively and put them under pressure, make it difficult for them to play. We wanted to be proactive and play as much as we could in their half, and I think we did a really good job of that."

Stony Brook found itself trading possessions with UMass Lowell throughout the first 15 minutes of the match, with neither team able to find any stretch of time threatening the other's goal. Things changed in the 17th minute when freshman defender Rondell Payne found a deflected cross in front of the goal and launched a shot into the upper left corner of the net.

"To be honest with you, I wasn't looking for the ball," Payne said in a post-game interview. "The ball just, y'know, popped up on me. I

took a touch, and I realized I had space to shoot, so I took the shot and the ball just got in the goal."

The River Hawks recovered quickly from the score and pressed the Seawolves for seven consecutive minutes, generating five shots in the process. Freshman goalkeeper Christian Miesch saved the first attempt, and the Seawolves defense managed to block the next four that came their way to preserve the Seawolves' lead.

The game turned on UMass Lowell in the 41st minute. Their redshirt-junior defender Chase Reichenberg committed a hard foul in front of the River Hawks goal and received a red card. A penalty kick was awarded to Stony Brook, but senior midfielder Serge Gamwanya's shot was denied by freshman goalkeeper Patrik Gujic.

The red card ejected Reichenberg from the match, restricting the River Hawks to 10 men, resulting in them struggling to hold back the Seawolves in the second half. Junior defender Gustavo Fernandes found a redirected ball in front of the net in the 65th minute and chest bumped the ball in for a 2-0 lead. Not even two minutes later, junior striker Jarred Dass slipped past the defense to knock a shot in and give the Seawolves a 3-0 lead. Senior midfielder Martieon Watson completed the offensive explosion in

the 77th minute by drilling a shot from 15 yards out. The Seawolves' outburst of goals is especially impressive considering that the River Hawks had only given up five goals all season prior to Friday.

"We got the penalty, and a little bit of disappointment to not go up 2-0 at that point," Anatol said. "We had the momentum, we had the red card, but really happy the guys didn't

hang their heads and continued to push on. They turned around really quickly and continued to go after it."

"Once we went up a goal, the message at halftime was 'Look, continue to be aggressive defensively but know as they push on, as they push numbers up to try and get one, the spaces will open up,'" Anatol continued. "And when that does happen, then we have to be ruthless,

and clinical.' And they were able to do that tonight."

Stony Brook improves to 5-3-1 overall on the season after dismantling UMass Lowell, earning a 2-0 start to America East conference play. The Seawolves will head back onto the road for a three-game trip, beginning on Tuesday, Oct. 2 at 7 p.m. against the 25th-ranked Fordham Rams.



Freshman defender Rondell Payne during a game against St. Joseph's on Sept. 5. Stony Brook won 4-0 against UMass Lowell on Friday, Sept. 28.

Football overcomes 21-0 deficit to beat Villanova

By Kenneth Fermin
Staff Writer

Trailing No. 13 Villanova 21-0 with five and a half minutes remaining in the first half, Stony Brook Football was in dire need of a successful scoring drive.

The Wildcats defense held the Seawolves "Long Island Express" tandem of senior running backs Donald Liotone and Jordan Gowins to less than five yards per carry up to this point. Stony Brook senior quarterback Joe Carbone was determined to dig his team out of its hole despite facing an aggressive Villanova defense and starting at their own 20-yard line.

"We've been in this position before against Air Force," Carbone said in a post-game interview. "And we all agreed, together as a team, that's never going to happen again and they are never going to break us. And we didn't break, we just regrouped, got back out there and kept playing football. It's a four quarter game and as we were saying all week, it came down to the fourth quarter."

Carbone led the Seawolves down the field and found redshirt-senior wide receiver Julius Wingate inside the right edge of the end zone to cut the Wildcats' lead to 21-6 before the end of the half. The touchdown was

part of a 29-0 Stony Brook scoring streak en route to a thrilling 29-27 comeback victory at Kenneth P. LaValle Stadium on Sept. 29.

"I am really proud of this team," head coach Chuck Priore said following the victory. "When I reflect back to last weekend, I told my coaches Richmond didn't want to play in the second half and I really believe that because their heads were down. Sure we scored that last drive late in the first half but when I walked in that locker room, you would have thought we were up 21-0."

Carbone was 20 for 35 with 270 yards and three touchdowns. The completions, yards and touchdowns were all season highs. His third touchdown was indicative of the excellent composure that he maintained in the pocket throughout the game, fooling the Wildcats defense with a play-action pass and finding senior tight end Cal Daniels wide open in the end zone for a nine-yard touchdown to give the Seawolves a 29-21 lead with a little over four minutes left in the fourth quarter.

"We knew they were going to load the box," Carbone said. "They were going to try and make us throw to the team because we got Donnie and Jordan. The offensive line did a great

job today protecting really well and the receivers made great plays."

Villanova was down but not out despite losing the lead and senior quarterback Zach Bednarczyk following a third-quarter sack in the end zone. Sophomore quarterback Jack Schetelich shook off a cold start and drove the Wildcats to the end zone, cutting the Seawolves' lead to two points with under a minute remaining in regulation.

Stony Brook burned two of its three timeouts as it attempted to counter a unique offensive formation from Villanova which saw only the center and right guard on the offensive line and set eight men as eligible receivers. Priore told his team to remain composed and get the job done, something redshirt-sophomore linebacker EJ Fineran took to task as he swatted away the potential tying points to preserve the victory.

"I was reading my key," Fineran said after the game. "It ended up being the tight end and I just followed him and knew that I had to make the play. I knew that was the play we needed to stop the run and after that, it was over."

The score was not the only thing Stony Brook had to overcome. Injuries affected several



Senior quarterback Joe Carbone against Towson in 2017. Stony Brook beat Villanova in a game this past Saturday.

of the Seawolves' offensive players. Senior wide receiver Nick Anderson missed his first game of the season while Gowins and Liotone participated in limited practice throughout the week. The dynamic duo of Wingate and junior wide receiver Andrew Trent stepped up, combining for 12 receptions which went for 205 yards and two touchdowns.

"In our receiving core everyone is expected to step up," Wingate said. "Whether it's due to injury,

it's always about the next man up and produces as best as he can. We don't look at our opponents as being too great and we step up to the best of our ability."

Stony Brook will now head on the road for a two-game road stretch against the Towson Tigers and the New Hampshire Wildcats. The Seawolves will face off against the 0-4 Tigers on Saturday, Oct. 6 at 4 p.m. in a Colonial Athletic Association conference matchup.

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