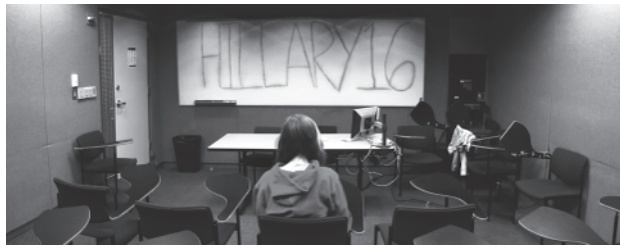


College begins new green efforts



Being conservative at Emerson



Youth fills women's volleyball roster



The Berkeley Beacon

Emerson College's student newspaper since 1947 • berkeleybeacon.com

Thursday, September 19, 2013 • Volume 67, Issue 3

Students and administrators say ARAMARK wasn't composting

Laura Gomez, *Beacon Staff*

ARAMARK, the previous food service provider at Emerson, failed to compost its food waste during the last months of its contract, according to a former ARAMARK employee. The alleged failure would indicate the company deceived administrators and students, who said they thought ARAMARK was managing its food waste in a sustainable way.

While disposing of food waste in an ecologically-friendly manner was not part of ARAMARK's contract with Emerson, the college had made an agreement with that

company in an effort to advance its institutional commitment to creating a sustainable campus, according to Jay Phillips, associate vice president for facilities and campus services.

"I spoke to them about the importance of composting and they did it at their own expense with [Environmental Operations Management Services] with the understanding that we would discuss adding it to the contract in following years," wrote Phillips in an email to the Beacon. EOMS is a recycling and food waste removal company that provides composting services, which transforms organic waste into a nutrient-rich soil supplement.

The former ARAMARK employee, who insisted on anonymity because of confidential ongoing negotiations that could be compromised, said he worked at the dining hall for three years as a server in the home cooking station, where he said most of the food waste came from. To compost the food in his station, all leftovers had to be placed in small plastic bins that were later taken to a dumpster, which EOMS would haul to a composting facility.

"[Composting] was a thing that people did for a little bit, and then everyone just got lax on it because it was a pain," said the former employee.

See *Compost* Page 2



Melissa Amaral, Sodexo's director of sustainability and marketing at the college, said the composting company hadn't been coming to campus for months. • *Evan Walsh/Beacon Staff*



Janae Johnson, advisor of the slam team at Simmons College, performs a poem at the event. • *Evan Walsh/Beacon Staff*

Slam poetry comes to dining hall

Kavita Shah, *Beacon Correspondent*

On Monday Sept. 16, just 30 minutes after the dining hall shut down for the evening, Emerson Poetry Project occupied the space for its first open mic night and featured performance poet of the school year. The usual sounds of clinking silverware and the chatter of hungry students were replaced with those of starving artists and listeners alike, eager to hear the performance poems of the night.

Bobby Crawford, a senior writing, literature, and publishing major and self-described slam master of EPP, opened by inducing both laughs and snaps from the audience.

"We like to objectify for talent and looks," he said. "Every time someone comes up to read, we all say: 'You are pretty and smart!'"

EPP hosts events such as this one in an effort to create a safe environment for students to share their art, said Crawford. Along with weekly open mics, they host poetry slams, featured poets, and workshops for both writing and performance. Additionally, Crawford said he prides

"I started writing a poem already that I'm saving for the slam." — Aria Ellett, a freshman writing, literature, and publishing major

himself in the fact that last year, EPP won 'Organization of the Year' at Emerson for the 2012-2013 school year. EPP continually pushes its poets to excel in regional and national competitions like CUPSI, the College Union Poetry Slam Invitational.

"I started writing a poem already that I'm saving for the slam," said freshman Aria Ellett, a writing, literature, and publishing major. "I want to make the CUPSI team." Each time EPP hosts a slam, the declared winner of the night earns a spot in a final round of competition, which takes place at the end of the fall semester. Here, 13 to 15 poets compete for five spots on the team. In the meantime, open mic nights allow students to practice and share.

For many freshmen, getting involved with EPP encourages them to expand their skills in performance poetry, according to Ellett.

"Last week at the meet up was the first time that I had performed poetry," said Ellett. "The audience snapped for everything. I hadn't done spoken word before, but after that I started to."

Ellett said she appreciates the opportunity to listen to others perform

See *Slam Poetry* page 6

Changes at WERS leave some student staff disappointed and displaced

Jackie Tempera, *Beacon Staff*

In an attempt to become financially independent, WERS, Emerson's student-run public radio station, made unprecedented changes to the 68-year-old organization, said Jack Casey, the general manager. Channel representatives hired a new professional host and cancelled two popular late-night urban music programs.

Students have since expressed their disappointment with the station's focus on monetary goals instead of student growth.

The station held focus groups with listeners in April and, overall, the participants said they wanted more consistency on-air. The listeners asked for the same disc jockeys and

on-air hosts daily, and the same type of music throughout the day, Casey said.

The meetings came after the college urged the station—which operates with a \$1 million annual budget, over half of which is provided by Emerson—to become more financially stable, according to Casey.

In an initial interview, Casey said the college asked the station to begin working on raising all of its funds in light of the school's upcoming projects. He also said this was the reason behind the recent changes at WERS. But in a follow up interview, Casey said that the college never specifically asked the station to stop using Emerson's money.

"It's a conversation we've been having for years," said Casey. "Nobody has told us we have to do this now."

"This is supposed to be a radio station for Emerson College students." — Kelshe Woodard, former DJ

The college has not yet cut any money from the station's budget, said Casey. Representatives from the college's financial department could not be reached for comment.

To satisfy the financial request, Casey said WERS needed to adjust. With more consistent programming will come more donations, higher ratings, and more advertising opportunities, he said. In short—more money.

Kelshe Woodard, a junior who said she used to be a DJ for 889@Night, one of the two shows cancelled during the station's transition, said student employees felt the station's faculty was too consumed by WERS' finances.

"This is supposed to be a radio station for Emerson College students; students are sup-

posed to be the main priority," the visual and media arts major said. "Yes, we do want to be professional and strive to be that station that is real and professional. In a real professional radio station and environment that choice was legit, but not here on college radio."

Casey said the adjustments will only help the station continue to grow.

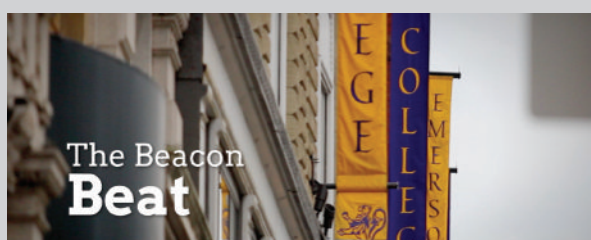
"Everything Emerson impacts needs to be excellent," he said.

Before the recent changes, students on staff would rotate hosting the morning drive shift, which ran from 6 to 10 a.m. on weekdays.

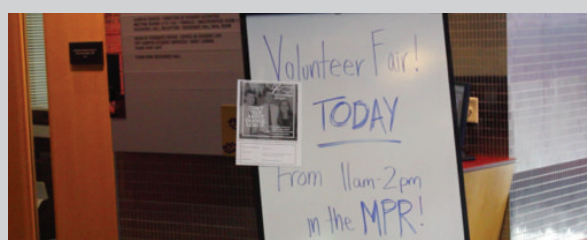
Now, news director Victoria Bedford hosts the only morning talk-show, "George & Tori," with George Knight, WERS's first

See *WERS* page 2

Online extras More at berkeleybeacon.com/videos



The Beacon Beat: our weekly news recap
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news

SGA has lowest appeal budget in years, says treasurer

Kathryn Bennett, *Beacon Staff*

Group will host speech night to fill senator and commissioner positions

The Student Government Association's budget for appeals is the lowest the group has seen in recent years, according to SGA Treasurer John Dentinger.

Organizations already recognized by the SGA can request money from a \$91,655.22 budget if they need more funding than what SGA had already allotted them. Last year, the budget was around \$120,000, and the year before that, \$160,000, according to Dentinger.

At the end of every school year, the college's SGA-recognized organizations can request a budget. The money organizations don't spend each year is pooled together to create SGA's appeals fund for the following year, which it disburses to organizations that need additional funding through appeals.

Dentinger said he has been working to find ways to maximize the number of appeals that can be funded with this year's budget, and to keep the budget from dropping so low again. A constitutional amendment he proposed last spring abolished a requirement for organizations that wanted to appeal to the SGA, which required them

to raise at least 10 percent of their desired amounts through independent fundraising before the SGA would consider their appeals.

Dentinger emphasized that fundraising should be an organization's first choice, not appealing to the SGA. He said the idea behind the change was to encourage organizations to raise more than just 10 percent of their desired appeals. The more independent fundraising an organization does, the less money it has to appeal for from the SGA.

"I'm willing to work with organizations on fundraising," said Dentinger during Tuesday's SGA meeting. "I know it's not easy, but it's something that has to be done."

Dentinger has been holding workshops for presidents and treasurers of organizations on campus. Student leaders are required to attend one if they wish to have their organizations recognized by the SGA, or have their recognitions renewed, and be eligible for appeals.

In these workshops, officers learn how to apply for an appeal and what their organizations need to do in order to get theirs passed. The last three will be held next week. Dentinger said at the Sept. 17 SGA meeting that he would also be available for sessions with those who could not attend the workshops.

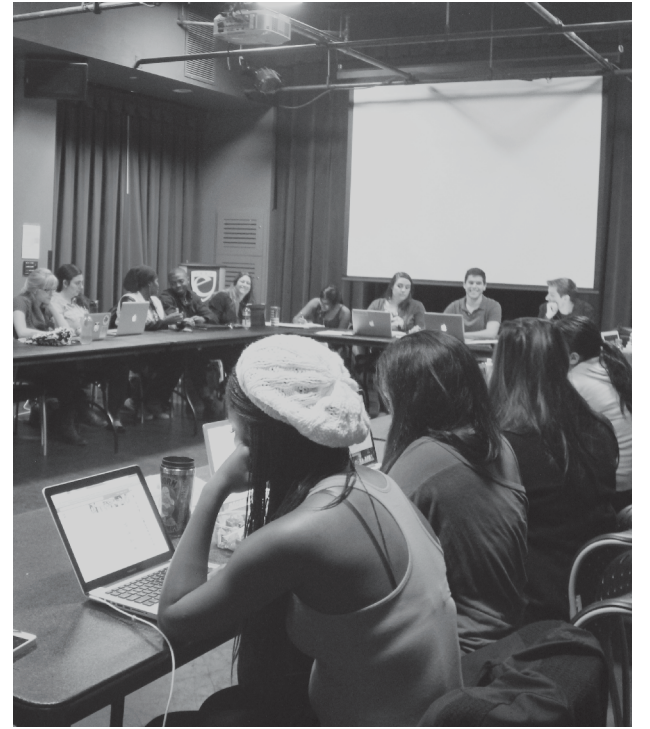
SGA to fill positions

Three Student Government Association positions were appointed during its meeting on Sept. 17. Freshman Hillary Fan will serve as vice treasurer, sophomore Ernest Lesmana will be the multicultural commissioner, and junior Lindsay Geller was reinstated as the sustainability commissioner.

Other vacant positions will be filled after the Sept. 30 special elections. Election packets for those wishing to run were due this week. Candidates approved to run have 12 days to campaign, and will be participating in a speech night Wednesday, Sept. 25 from 7 to 9 p.m. in the conversation-friendly section of the library. All members of the Emerson community are invited to attend.

Senator positions are open for the journalism, visual and media arts, performing arts, and communication science and disorders departments: A treasurer and secretary for the class of 2014 will also be chosen in the special election.

Polls open at midnight Sept. 30 and close at 11:59 p.m. on Oct. 1. They can be accessed at vote.emerson.edu.



At the SGA's most recent meetings, members discussed the low appeal fund. • *Maya Rafie/Beacon Correspondent*

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WERS faculty focuses on finances at the college's urging

Continued from WERS page 1

full-time, non-student on-air host. Hired over the summer, Knight previously worked at WBOS-FM, a Boston-area station. Students previously on the morning shift were reassigned, said Casey.

At the onset of the search for a professional on-air host, Casey said the new hire would serve as a mentor to the students and help them improve in talk radio. But as of now, Bedford, a junior journalism major, said she is the only student Knight works with. Casey, however, said Knight works with a few students who help with the morning shifts. Knight said he mostly works with Bedford, but occasionally answers questions from other students on the shift.

In an interview with the Beacon in March, Casey said the host would not replace any student on-air. Bedford said this is not necessarily the case because she had to relocate students previously on morning shifts to later ones, making getting an anchor

position more competitive.

Knight's pay comes from the same college-subsidized budget the station hopes to diminish, said Casey.

Casey declined to provide details about Knight's salary.

"He's not costing us that much," he said.

Knight declined to comment.

Another part of the transition geared toward increasing the station's revenue was ending Rockers and 889@Night, which played reggae and hip-hop, respectively, and had each been running for 35 years.

"[Listeners] have told us, 'Gee, we wish we could listen beyond seven in the evening to [daytime music];' so now we've made it available," said Casey.

Former Urban Department student staffers voiced many complaints about the changes, and especially about how the announcement was made.

The Rockers and 889@Night staff was invited to a meeting at the station Aug. 19, said Woodard, when many staff members

were away for summer break, including Woodard.

The cancellation was announced at this meeting and was effective immediately, said Woodard, who said she spoke to attendees at the meeting. Attendees could not be reached for comment.

Later that day, all former Rockers and 889@Night student workers received an email from Bond Collard, the station's student program director, just two hours before the shows were scheduled to air.

"We've made some major changes to our station's programming," read the email. "WERS needs to keep being a viable, vibrant part of the community, which means we need to pay attention to listener feedback and ratings."

Ashley Bailey, a senior marketing communication major who said she formerly hosted Rockers, said she was scheduled for a shift the next day and received no notice other than the email.

Casey said having a student send the

email, and not a staff manager, was the way the station prefers to do things.

According to Casey, Rockers and 889@Night staffers were given a few days notice, not a few hours. He said the cancellation was talked about among higher-ranking student staffers at the station.

When the shows were cancelled, about 10 student staffers were forced to move to different departments, where they weren't granted their previous management positions, Bailey said. With their positions on Rockers and 889@Night gone, limited spaces on the Secret Spot, the R&B show to replace the two urban music shows, and already occupied daytime slots, the students don't know how to continue with the station, she said.

"I was so surprised," she said. "But there was nothing I could do about it. I don't understand why it was cancelled in that manner."

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"He's not costing us that much."
—Jack Casey, general manager of WERS

Sodexo commits to sustainability

Continued from Compost page 1

Phillips said he was under the impression that ARAMARK was composting until the very end of its contract, which expired July 31.

Melissa Amaral, director of sustainability and marketing at Sodexo, said she found out in early August that EOMS had not been picking up waste at the college.

"When I contacted the composting company to set up our composting, they said they haven't been picking up at the school," she said. "I'm not sure for how long, but they said, 'for a while.'"

The former ARAMARK server said there

were nights when he would throw away several hundred pounds of food, but could not attest to how much waste other stations disposed of. He said he doesn't believe that composting was ever effectively implemented in the dining hall.

"I know after a little while the compost bins were phased out, I think partially because they smelled," he said of those in the home cooking station. "After that, there was just nothing happening related to composting. There wasn't even an attempt to make it seem like we were."

Some students were under the impression that ARAMARK was fulfilling its commitment to sustainability, which it promoted on its website.

"I don't like the fact that it was incredibly dishonest."
Lindsay Geller, SGA sustainability commissioner

"We expected something from them," said Kaela Holmes, president of Earth Emerson. "It is very upsetting, but I hope things are going to be different under Sodexo."

Earth Emerson, a student organization of eco-activists, began pushing for composting initiatives on campus two years ago, according to Holmes, a senior journalism major.

Lindsay Geller, a junior writing, literature, and publishing and marketing communication double major, said she also hopes that Sodexo will do a better job.

"I don't like the fact that it was incredibly dishonest," said Geller, the sustainability commissioner for the Student Government Association. "It just really shows the character of that company. Sustainability-wise, I'm glad that ARAMARK didn't get rehired."

According to Phillips, composting is required under Sodexo's contract.

This summer, Emerson hired Eric Van

Vlandren as its first-ever campus sustainability coordinator, who will collect and report on energy sustainability data among other duties. Although the alleged ARAMARK composting failure happened before Van Vlandren was hired, he said he will make sure this doesn't happen in the future by building a close relationship with Sodexo.

"I need to constantly be working with them in a way where we can always be constantly improving," he said. "If we can develop a culture where we both have the same goals, and we are both committed to cost and improvement, then it helps us both out."

ARAMARK could not be reached for comment.

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Public Safety Log

Sunday, September 15

A bag containing personal items was stolen from Boston Common at 2:15 p.m. The investigation is being handled by an outside agency, not the ECPD.

Marijuana was found in a Piano Row dorm room. Those involved are facing administrative sanctions.

Monday, September 16

A wallet was stolen from a handbag in Emerson Cafe. The ECPD investigation is ongoing.

Corrections & Clarifications

Nina Corcoran, the Beacon's music columnist, was mislabeled as a junior in last week's issue. She is a senior.

In last week's feature "With a Lion's heart, Keeling sought challenges," it was stated that Keeling graduated 100 percent of the student-athletes during his tenure according to a April 2011 report by the Beacon. It was an April 2007 report.

In last week's story "College receives \$2million donation for financial aid, largest in history," the donation was said to be the largest in the college's history. It was the largest in the financial aid department's history.

Djamilson Daviega was labeled as a freshman at the Community Academy of Science in a photo cutline for the "Community members, students gather for annual 9/11 vigil," photo essay. He is a freshman at the Community Academy of Science and Health.

Emerson Engagement Lab creates games for social change



The EGL meets at 2 Boylston St. • Chelsea Roden / Beacon Staff

Kaylee Anzick, *Beacon Correspondent*

Although social media, video games, and the internet are often blamed for deteriorating relationships, Emerson's Engagement Game Lab is determined to use these resources to inspire social change and civic involvement.

EGL strives to use digital tools to bridge the gap between individual citizens and their communities, creating simple computer games that foster civic unity and encourage community action, according to the group's leaders.

One of the games, Community PlanIt, is, according to Jesse Baldwin-Philippi, researcher and visiting professor a "platform for deliberation and debate."

In Community PlanIt, one of the group's largest projects, cities pay for and implement interactive debate games in which local citizens can hash out civic problems, she explained. As players participate, they earn digital coins, which they can later use as money to pledge towards real world organizations, she added.

This project has been used in Philadelphia, Detroit, Cape Cod, and Sweden, said Baldwin-Philippi. In response to certain city issues, participants in the game can post opinions, explore those of others, and choose the solutions that they most agree with.

In 2010, a game called Participatory Chinatown was launched. The program allowed residents of the Chinatown neighborhood of Boston to enter a virtual world in which they played as one of 15 characters and had the task of finding a job, housing, or a place to socialize in the area, according to the EGL's website.

Participatory Chinatown reflects the broader mission of the EGL—to use technology in innovative ways to get people involved in their communities.

The EGL is also developing a project called Habit@ to help revitalize Dudley Square, working to bring commercial life back to this Boston neighborhood. A series of technology will be implemented in Dudley Square, and these tools, including Community PlanIt, will be used to explore the effectiveness of having multiple digital resources in an area, said Baldwin-Philippi.

Aside from these examples, the EGL has many other games, both finished and in progress. All the games are designed, coded, and written by staff, according to the EGL's website.

Fundamentally, EGL's games are about individuals and they work on a personal level, said Baldwin-Philippi. By improving and informing citizens on an individual basis, she said, the games can help empower citizens and create a functioning community.

The EGL is currently funded through

grants from various organizations, most notably from the MacArthur Foundation and the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, according to Baldwin-Philippi and the EGL's website.

To create the best interpersonal interactive experience possible, the EGL said it relies on volunteers. Every year, about six Emerson students work on staff, but Managing Director Stephen Walter said other students are welcome to visit or help with projects.

Junior and senior undergraduate students can enroll in two Emerson classes related to the work done at the EGL: Games and Social Change, taught by Gordon, and Civic Media, taught by Baldwin-Philippi. According to Walter, both these classes help students learn more about the EGL's mission and also how to apply that mission to their own studies and careers.

A third related class called Cyberactivism: Crashing the System investigates how the internet can be used to create societal change. The classes help students become involved with the EGL as lab assistants, said Baldwin-Philippi.

Baldwin-Philippi said the EGL will move to a new location. At this new space, the EGL staff said it hopes to host different events such as game nights in order to encourage even more student participation.

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Diversity office moves to Walker building, hosts new programs

Stephanie Michaud, *Beacon Correspondent*

Following its move to the Walker Building earlier this month, the Office of Diversity and Inclusion will begin a series of new activities and initiatives for students and staff.

Sylvia Spears, vice president of diversity and inclusion, said she believes that the new location allows the office to work closely with what she calls the heart of Emerson's intellectual community. The office was previously in the State Transportation Building located at 10 Park Plz.

"We were very fortunate [President M. Lee Pelton] and the Emerson institution was cooperative with the move," said Spears. "This allows professors, students, and staff to grow together in the civic engagement of diversity and inclusion."

The cost for the office to move onto campus was very low, both financially and environmentally, according to Spears.

"In keeping with Emerson's sustainability goals, instead of purchasing new office furniture, we were able to repurpose unused office furnishings from other areas of the college," said Spears.

Changes to course syllabi have also been made this semester. A new diversity portion was added to many of the documents.

"I encourage faculty to think about ways in which they can enhance the learning en-

vironment for students through the implementation of inclusive instructional practices," said Spears.

This is one of many steps Spears said she hopes faculty will take to communicate diversity and inclusion values to students.

"I imagine that there are also some faculty who have set aside time in their courses to talk about how they can develop an inclusive classroom environment," she said.

Claire Kerr, a junior journalism major, said she noticed the update to her syllabi.

"I am definitely in favor of the change," said Kerr. "Diversity is something that people sometimes take for granted and it is important to be aware that it is present on our campus and in Boston."

Students and staff can also attend the Lunch and Learn series, a program funded by the Office of Diversity and Inclusion, according to Spears.

Lunch and Learn will invite faculty and students to enjoy a free light lunch together and discuss diversity and inclusion topics, said Spears. Topics will range from an introduction to inclusion at earlier meetings, to bias incidents about culture later in the series, according to Spears.

Dates for the series will be released next month, said Spears.

A library focused on diversity and inclusion topics, located in the new office, will

open on campus soon, said Spears.

"We bought all these wonderful books," said Spears. "We are just waiting for all the shelves to come in so we get the library up and running."

Andy Pham, a freshman journalism major, said he thinks the library seems like a good idea.

"I don't know how often I will go to the library, but I'd definitely be willing to check it out when it opens up," said Pham. "I would probably go straight there for resources if I needed something on diversity for a class."

Students will be able to check out books, including "The N Word: Who Can Say It, Who Shouldn't, and Why" by Jabari Asim, an Emerson professor, and "The Disability Rights Movement: From Charity to Confrontation" by Doris Fleischer and Frieda Zames. An online catalog of the books will also be available to the students and faculty.

The office facility is available for students to work in, and Spears said she encourages students to stop by to just talk or seek assistance with civic engagement projects.

"Emerson is far ahead of many other colleges," said Spears. "The college is warm welcoming and an accepting community of difference. We are very fortunate to be working with such talented students and staff."

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Sylvia Spears, vice president of diversity and inclusion, sits in her new Walker building office. •Portrait by Mia Zhao/Beacon Correspondent

Communication professor takes students on trips across the globe

Agatha Kereere, *Beacon Correspondent*

Before her visit over the summer, senior political communication major Siobhan Robinson said she didn't know much about South Africa. But she said she did know that she didn't want to miss a thing—including the airport runway.

"The students [in South Africa] would tell us that, in the past, when students from America would arrive they would run off of the runway, thinking they were going to get chased by a lion," she said, "but really your time is spent working and bonding with the people around you."

Robinson's grasp of what her trip abroad was about was exactly what Dr. Gregory Payne, associate professor in the communication studies department, was after when he started taking students on self-funded trips in and outside the country in 1986.

"Students should not only have theoretical perspectives of the classroom but also have a sense of what's happening in the world," he said. "It's an opportunity for them to put the skills

they've acquired to use in projects that are related to marketing and public diplomacy in different cultures."

In June, Payne brought nine students with him on a two-week trip to Barcelona, Spain, and brought eight students to Stellenbosch, South Africa.

Tami Lawless, a graduate communication studies major, and juniors Donovan Birch Jr., a political communication major, Taylor Smith, a journalism and political communication double major, and Patrick Reed, a political communication major, all went to Spain. All students except Reed also went to South Africa.

In Barcelona, students roamed the city and Ramon Llull University to learn more about public diplomacy, said Payne.

In Stellenbosch, South Africa Globe Communication Project, or GlobCom, had students work together on a project that aimed to boost tourism in the city, according to Birch. Students from South Africa acted as hosts to the Emerson students as they worked together on marketing presentations and went on sightseeing excursions, he said.

"I found the people in South Africa

"It's so important to study other cultures, learn from different people, and step outside the United States." — Donovan Birch Jr.

to be the most welcoming people I'd ever met," Robinson said.

Payne said he told his students about the annual trip and put the information on Emerson's website as soon as the countries' sponsors notified him. Interested students were then required to set up a meeting with Payne stating which program they wanted to be a part of and why. The trips cost between \$1,000 and \$2,000. Students paid their own way, they said.

Payne said the trips generally have a positive effect on the students.

"The world is the classroom today," he said, "We can no longer just stay in classrooms."

Robinson emphasized the importance of global civic engagement.

"You should just do it because these opportunities and connections don't present themselves every day," she said. "There's no real reason not to do it."

Though Birch said it was his biggest challenge, he advised future participants to examine what they previously took for granted, like the cost of food.

"It's so easy to look at the price of something [in South Africa] and say, 'That's so cheap,' whereas the person

next to you might ask, 'Why does it have to be so expensive?' which is what happened to me when I went to buy food with a few people," said Birch.

Between work and cultural adjustments, the students made time to have fun and explore the new surroundings, said Lawless.

"We went sightseeing, had meals together—where you eat around 9 p.m. or 10 p.m. and stay for a few hours—went clubbing, and just got to know each other," she said.

Getting to make connections away from presentations was important to Reed as well.

"The relationships I formed, as well as the knowledge I gained and the experiences I had, were all superb," he said.

Birch said that for him, the trip was a learning experience that other students should take advantage of.

"It's so important to study other cultures, learn from different people, and step outside of the United States," he said. "You learn a lot and you grow as a result."

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editorial

Path unclear for WERS' future

At issue:

WERS makes unprecedented changes over the summer.

Our take:

A student-run radio station shouldn't take away opportunities from students.

From the first day potential applicants step foot on Emerson, they learn that WERS is one of the best student-run radio stations in the nation—with an emphasis on “student-run,” giving those aspiring high schoolers the hope to one day hear their voices on air, and maybe even win a prestigious Associated Press award. Its influence throughout campus is inescapable, from the WERS-emblazoned windows along Tremont Street to the station's continuous broadcast in Emerson's Café.

But this year, changes to the station added a caveat to the “student-run” label. After the college encouraged the station to strive for more financial independence, WERS installed George Knight as its first-ever full-time professional host. The station also cancelled two programs, reggae hub Rockers and the hip-hop-focused 889@Night, to expand its regular daytime programming.

The station's management maintains that student opportunities were not diminished by the changes. It's true that no students were forced off the WERS staff, but some were relocated from their preferred positions and now find their roles unclear. And by consolidating the morn-

ing programs and adding George Knight as the co-host for the station's 6 to 10 a.m. block, fewer students will have the opportunity to broadcast during the station's peak hours, when they would be able to get the most exposure for their efforts.

A professional presence in the studio stirs up the dynamic of a self-directed learning environment. The intention may be to send in a “mentor,” as WERS general mentor Jack Casey told a Beacon reporter. But George Knight is a talent, not a manager. He is operating at the same level as the students and has the potential to either intimidate or inspire. It brings to question how Knight will be received in the studio—as a co-worker, a higher-up, or a humble brush with professionalism. We can't predict what WERS will ask him to contribute beyond his radio personality.

More fundamentally, based on the reasoning provided by the administration, future plans for WERS are unclear. The ramifications of the professional hire and show cancellations muddle the station's previously touted status as a primarily student-run radio station. For a station that receives much of its funding from Emerson, this identity crisis is one that must be

immediately clarified.

Although WERS can't ignore its financial obligations, ultimately it is part of an institution of higher education whose priority is to teach. If WERS places a higher value on revenue than on teaching its students, it would be undermining the premise of a student-run organization.

These changes may not be bad for the station—but if those benefits aren't shared by the students, the station would be losing sight of its original mission.

The editorial is written solely by the Editor-in-Chief Evan Sporer, Managing Editors Ryan Catalani, Andrew Doerfler and Trelawny Vermont-Davis, Opinion Editor Hunter Harris, and Assistant Opinion Editor Liana Genito without consultation from other staff members, and does not influence any other stories. Op-Eds reflect the view of only their authors, not the Berkeley Beacon.

A professional presence in the studio stirs up the dynamic of a self-directed learning environment.

Letters

If you want to respond to, or share an opinion about, an article in the Beacon, you can write a short letter to the editor. Email it to letters@berkeleybeacon.com. Please note that letters may be edited. Submissions for print must be shorter than 250 words.

The Berkeley Beacon

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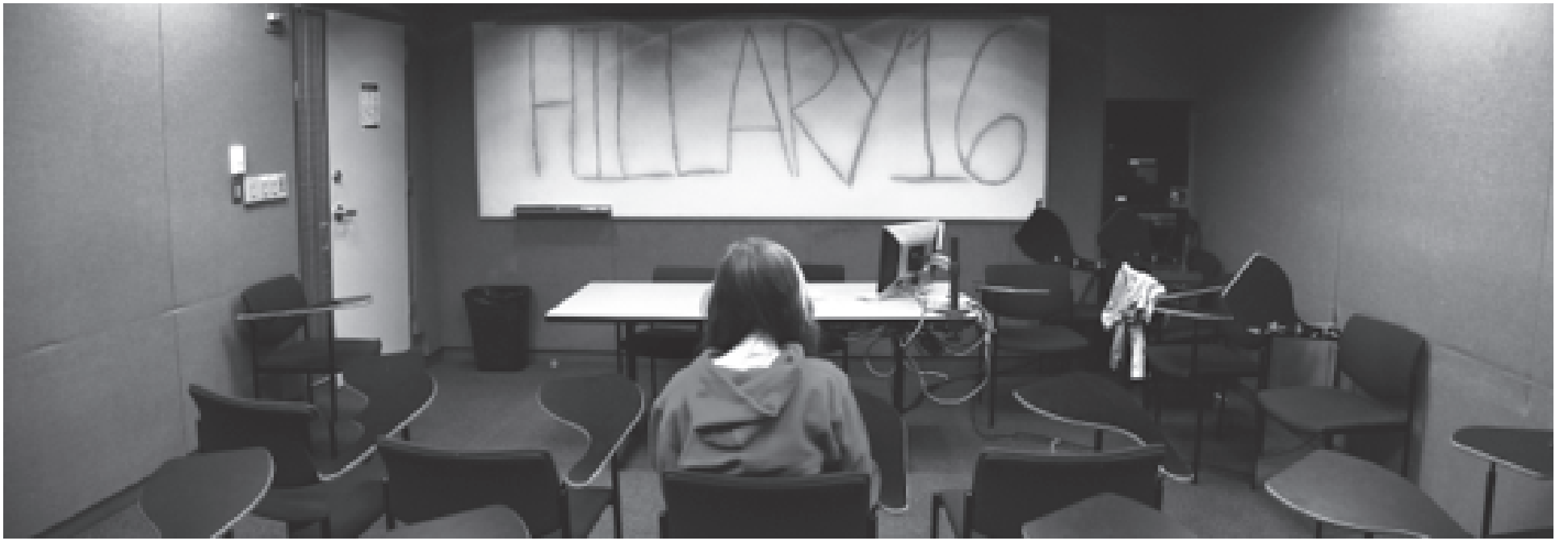
Editorial Cartoon

by Holly Kirman



opinion

Elephant in the classroom



For conservative students at Emerson, personal politics must often be brushed aside in favor of a professor's liberalism. • Andrew Harwood/Beacon Staff

Caroline Pallotta
Pallotta is a sophomore writing, literature, and publishing major & Beacon contributor.

I'm a rare breed of Emerson student. The mythical kind that you only hear whispers about. I'm the embodiment of the elephant in the room—the Emerson Republican.

I'd say that a portion, albeit the minority, of Emerson students are conservative. But it's hard to figure out if you have any right-wing connections because conservative students are still looking for a way to tactfully inquire into your political orientation. How do you have “the talk” while making new friends: “Hey, I like you, but I voted for Romney—does that change your opinion of me?”

One of my close friends at Emerson, who also happens to be a Republican, recently told me: “I like to give off the vibe that I'm not conservative sometimes because social interaction is hard enough as it is.” This is not the mentality to carry around on a college campus. We

shouldn't have to apologize or feel the need to defend ourselves and our beliefs on a regular basis.

For such an open and tolerant school, I find it ironic that some conservatives on campus, including me, feel ashamed or scared to proudly claim their political identities. On Emerson's campus, the stigma of “coming out” as a conservative seems to mimic “coming out” as gay on a less progressive campus.

Not only do I fear the judgment from my fellow students, but I have the same

fear of being judged by my professors. I have hesitated to speak up in class, feeling trapped into representing views that I simply did not share.

I don't have a problem with people sharing different opinions from me. In fact, I think your beliefs are strengthened when they are challenged. When you face a room of dissent, it is your responsibility to check your facts and do your research. Living in such a liberal atmosphere has me learning more about

my own beliefs and gaining the knowledge to engage in honest, effective, and productive conversations.

How do you have “the talk” while making new friends: “Hey, I like you, but I voted for Romney — does that change your opinion of me?”

I'm not out to convert everyone on campus to conservatism. I merely want to make it a more comfortable place so current conservative students don't feel silenced.

In our Emerson microcosm, I encourage more political tolerance and open-mindedness on everyone's part, students and faculty included. I encourage any student, regardless of political affiliation, to stop by an Emerson College Republicans meeting. If we rashly judge and stereotype each other, we're contributing to an atmosphere of discontent and hostility. We can only successfully work together if we learn to listen to one another, and that can start with you and me.

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Twerk Miley, Miley, twerk

Hunter Harris
Harris is a sophomore VMA major & opinion editor for the Beacon.

Cyrus' "progressiveness" (if you can call it that) only happens at the expense of the hypersexualization and/or objectification of other women, usually of color.

It was less than a minute into Nelly's 2002 classic “Hot in Herre” that I began to realize what was happening. With a sustained look and playful smirk, the Boston University frat guy dancing with the gaggle of drunken girls standing across from me, sweating through his madras button-down, was challenging me to a dance battle. I coolly accepted.

Channeling my inner Sasha Fierce, I easily put his tired Jonas Brothers moves to shame. After my swift victory, an onlooker slurred her congratulations. “You're so good at twerking!” she said. “I wish I could twerk like you but I'm so white!”

It didn't matter that I wasn't twerking, that I was wearing a pair of pants too tight to twerk in, or that (despite tutorials from friends I met through my summer job) I can't even do something a seasoned twerker would recognize as twerking. In the Miley Cyrus/“We Can't Stop” culture that many of us occupy, I'm black and I was dancing, therefore I was twerking. The crux of Cyrus' new “edgy” image is her appropriation of what she perceives as Blackness, which she wrongly equates with unbridled sexuality. She's not the first celebrity to do this, but with a mantra of “can't stop, won't stop” put to a catchy Mike Will beat, her influence perseveres despite its racial bias.

For students of a school with a prestigious film department, it should be clear

why watching Miley Cyrus' “We Can't Stop” music video is an exercise in aesthetic tackiness. The racial undertones are more sinister. Sure, Cyrus can splash around in the pool with her favorite galpals and break open a piñata filled with hotdog sized-blunts, all with a crew that is overwhelmingly white, and there's no problem with that. The qualms arrive when it's clear that whenever Cyrus is twerking or being overtly sexual, her cohorts are exclusively black. Though Ms. Cyrus wakes up in the morning watching the sunrise surrounded by what could conceivably be her “real” friends—the white, tattooed, Los Angeles hipsters that she shares most of her screen time with—the black women she twerks with are nowhere to be found.

As the nameless, faceless, gyrating big girls with even bigger behinds, these African-American women are the distinguishing factor upon which Cyrus has staked her new image. There is a clear power dynamic upon that infamous Video Music Awards stage in which they are not the beneficiaries. Amazon Ashley, the nearly seven-foot-tall, black burlesque dancer, wasn't so much a back-up dancer as she was a prop, an object used to earn a few gasps as Cyrus feigned analingus on her thick frame. Amazon Ashley was then replaced with Robin Thicke and his “Blurred Lines” so Cyrus could twerk on his Hamburglar pants, inviting eye rolls from those who are truly pro-

body and pro-sexuality, not just when it sells records.

This is the true crime of Miley Cyrus, and other musicians that appropriate race in a similar way. When Gwen Stefani dons Native American-style dress in a No Doubt music video, or Katy Perry affixes golden “grillz,” they are committing the same sort of silent misconduct that will outlast their respective albums' radio viability. Cyrus' “progressiveness” (if you can call it that) only happens at the expense of the hyper-sexualization and/or objectification of other women, usually of color. Her recent racial appropriation is yet another entry into a history of what one American Prospect writer quantified as a tendency to “foreground [one's] own whiteness and the implied coolness that comes from dabbling in the ways of exotic others.”

Please don't misunderstand me: I'm not calling the drunken sorority girl that assumed I was twerking (despite all evidence to the contrary) racist. Maybe it was an honest mistake; maybe she just thought whatever I was doing is what twerking is. Still, it prompted an internalized conundrum that is worth opening a dialogue about. Twerking, a dance Cyrus presents as the wild, raunchy pastime of the improper and carefree, is one that she specifically associates with Blackness, so much so that it's largely inaccessible for someone of any other race.

Cyrus is allowed to popularize her idea of what it means to be a racial minority (and objectify minority women in the process), all with the insurance of that promised dawn, in which she can leave behind those gyrating black women in multi-colored spandex. The racial connotations Cyrus establishes in her documented desire to craft a sound who “just feels Black” are just as temporary for those who share her race as they are permanent for those that share mine. Whether I'm dropping it like it's hot or goofily raising the roof, the assumption is that I'm black so I must be twerking, or, more abstractly, accessing some deeper, more animalistic sexuality that's just begging to be adopted and exploited, as per the larger racial falsehoods that “We Can't Stop” instructs.

With an insurance policy as enduring as her skin color, Miley Cyrus can afford to take a walk on what she considers the “wild side.” She gambles, after all, with cultures, perceptions, and sexualities with which she shares no investment and therefore no risk.

Faced with a bargain as sweet as that, Jay Z said it best: “Twerk Miley, Miley, twerk.”

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arts

'Poetry Project' serves fresh performances in DH



Charlotte Slota, a freshman writing, literature, and publishing major, performs. • Evan Walsh / Beacon Staff



Anna Sullivan, a junior writing, literature, and publishing major, reads her piece. • Evan Walsh / Beacon Staff

continued from page 1

because it allows the audience to learn more about the writer.

"It basically lets you into a stranger's life," she said. "They're all very personal."

Ali Reitzel, a freshman writing, literature, and publishing major, also attended the meet-up last week, and was inspired to come back and perform for the open mic night.

"I was struck by the talent and the passion. It was a religious experience," she said.

Reitzel regarded her performance as both exhilarating and scary.

"When you get up there, it feels like you're falling into your niche," she said. "The crowd was awesome. They just get it. Poets get it."

Ellett and Reitzel performed original pieces alongside returning sophomores, juniors, seniors, and the featured poet of the night, Janae Johnson.

Johnson is a two-time member of the Lizard Lounge slam team and an advisor

of the slam team at Simmons College. She performed a series of pieces, captivating the audience with her delivery and animation. She made use of the entire space, ducking suddenly during certain poems as well as widening her eyes, using hand gestures, and pantomiming to emphasize her message.

"The best part of performing is interacting with the audience and seeing the words hit home," said Johnson. Her poems touched on a range of topics, including love, violence, and equality. One piece, which depicted a woman who struck her as entitled, read 'She walks as if she's looking for the door, because she's always got somewhere else to be.' This line was followed by a smug look from Johnson and a chorus of snaps from the audience. According to several of Emerson's performers, Johnson had a slew of similarly striking lines that resonated with them after the performance was over.

Johnson originally started slamming due to boredom, but after her performances were received well, she expanded her repertoire to include competing and

"The best part of performing is interacting with the audience and seeing the words hit home."

—Janae Johnson

teaching, she said. After listening to Emerson's student poets on Tuesday night, she offered one piece of advice: "Never stop trying to improve. It doesn't matter where you're from, just have awareness of the community around you and know you can always improve."

Amanda Canny, a sophomore writing, literature, and publishing major, said she appreciated Johnson's ability to refrain from the "spoken word cliché" of growing progressively louder and then dropping to a subdued, meaningful line.

"She broke the usual pattern of tone that I'm always afraid of falling into," said Canny. "I try to break that mold as well."

Canny performed a piece about abusive relationships, using a male spectator to stand and act according to verbal cues throughout. She also implemented repetition into her poem, continually using the phrase "I asked again if he could touch me, and he said 'Okay,'" physically and verbally demonstrating the dangers of such relationships.

"The audience's energy becomes your

energy. You can perform the same poem every night, but it can be different every time," she said. "You change your tone and volume and, even if it's repetitive, it relates differently to different people."

She cringed with difficulty in trying to pick one line that struck her most throughout the night, finally deciding on one of Johnson's: "When Janae said, 'My ignorance is the most scary,' I was like, yes! I sometimes feel like I'm really sheltered and I just remember thinking 'Yes, I am ignorant!'"

In this respect, Reitzel described open mic nights as a revolution, describing her personal takeaway as coming from being not only a poet, but an audience member.

"You watch people go from artists to performers. These things travel from their head and heart and into the world," said Reitzel. "No filter. I just want to soak it all up."

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In defense of first-year writing classes

Blake Campbell is a junior writing, literature, and publishing major & a Beacon arts columnist.

General education classes often get a bad rap from college students. At Emerson, this is particularly true of the two required writing courses for first-year undergraduates. Ask any upperclassman at Emerson about Introduction to College Writing or Research Writing, and you will probably be met with a groan, or, at best, flippant laughter. These two required freshman classes aren't exactly held in high esteem by the majority of the student body, and it's quite common for writing, literature, and publishing majors in particular to feel a little indignant about having to take them.

But these classes can be immensely helpful—often more so than the average student realizes. [Even as a junior, I frequently hear my classmates talking about an author's "call to write" when discussing a text, thanks to a little book by Emerson's own John Trimbur, the professor who put together *The Call to Write*, a textbook requirement for most Emerson freshmen.] I continue to feel the impact of the classes on my writing and that of my fellow students. And these classes aren't just helpful to aspiring writers. They provide lessons applicable to every major Emerson offers, and are one of the best means for the school to acclimate new students into college and into their professional lives.

Freshmen, your writing classes are fantastic opportunities not only to grow as a writer, but also to grow as a thinker, and they can help to shape your identity as you adjust to a new academic environment. Here are some tips for getting the most out of them:

Keep an open mind. You may have taken some pretty rigorous classes in high school that required high-level writing; you might have even taken a few courses through a local college. But don't breeze through your writing classes thinking the curriculum is just a rehash. There may be a little overlap, but you will also acquire skills in your freshman writing class that will build positively on what you already know. Each individual professor offers unique insights and advice that can help you both academically and creatively. I came to college fairly confident in my writing abilities, with a few AP and dual enrollment courses under my belt. But by the time I finished Intro to College Writing, my papers were more structured, and I could develop significantly clearer and more convincing arguments through my prose.

Mingle. This is a rare opportunity to converse with classmates of different majors in a classroom setting. The gen eds that Emerson requires are largely lecture

classes; they may offer chances for class discussion, but usually don't provide opportunities for open dialogue like first-year writing classes do. Most sections of these courses have strong workshop and class discussion components—valuable opportunities to learn from your classmates and hear different perspectives on various issues. Emerson is a small school with specialized majors, and as you continue with your education, the pool of people with whom you share your core classes will gradually shrink. This is a great chance to make new friends across academic disciplines.

Challenge yourself. This is a foolproof means of avoiding boredom in your classes. Most sections have some degree of openness in your choice of subject matter and approaches to the assignments. Pick a topic to write about that you find meaningful. For my Research Writing class, I chose to explore the controversies of the Lacey Act, a conservation law that had recently been amended to restrict the interstate trade of several exotic snake species. One weekend, I hopped on a bus to interview a reptile breeder in the suburbs to gain some perspective on the new regulations, a trip that turned into an exciting misadventure. I got hopelessly lost in the Medford/Somerville area, had a

surprisingly uplifting conversation with a drunken Philip K. Dick fan who was sitting next to me on the bus, and eventually found my way to the breeder's shop. The breeder spent the better part of an hour showing me his extensive collection of tarantulas, geckos, poison dart frogs, and snakes. The entire ordeal was a bit uncomfortable at first, but it ultimately improved my communication skills, my understanding of the exotic pet trade, and my ability to navigate the city's bus system. Other students in my class chose topics as varied as prostitution and the ethics of Disney films—important issues that encouraged the class to think and write on a higher level.

Above all, remember that every course you take is only worth the effort you put into it. It's cliché, but it's true. You're attending a world-class college in one of the most culturally rich American cities. There are fascinating things happening all around you, and you'll get the most out of your undergraduate years if you learn to recognize and act on these opportunities.

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arts

columbinus: heartbreak worth reliving



Matthew Bausone (left) and Eric Folks (right) as the two students who committed the Columbine High School massacre. • Courtesy of ArtsEmerson

Jason Madanjian, Beacon Staff

To say seeing *columbinus* is to live a nightmare is not a criticism of the show, but rather a testament to its ruthless brilliance.

The 140-minute play unfolds in three acts: before the Columbine shooting, the shooting itself, and the aftermath. Each act is more mesmerizing and heartbreaking than the one before. There is a raw power theater possesses that is unique to its medium: intimacy and immediacy. *columbinus* is a master-class example for why that is.

The Columbine High School massacre occurred on April 20, 1999, carried out by seniors Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold. They killed 12 students and one teacher, as well as themselves. The event sparked debates about gun control laws in our country. And although the massacre occurred 14 years ago, its horror still pervades society, making the play as potent today as it would have been in the immediate aftermath of that shooting.

Not too long ago, shootings occurred in both Aurora, Col. and Newtown, Conn., dev-

This makes the play a perfect *Breakfast Club* for a post-Columbine, and even post-9/11, generation of teenagers.

astating the communities and sparking further debate about gun violence in our country. And just one day before its ArtsEmerson opening on Sept. 17, 12 people were killed at the Washington Navy Yard.

The characters in the first act, including the two gunmen, are each boiled down to typical high school stereotypes: the jock, the nerd, the loner, the sexually active girl, and so on. But quickly, these characters prove they are more than just a defining trait. And this is where *columbinus* succeeds: it's both a breakdown of and an insight into high school and the dynamics that exist within it. This makes the play a perfect *Breakfast Club* for a post-Columbine, and even post-9/11, generation of teenagers.

The prep is a closeted homosexual. The loner is a great creative writer. The religious girl wants to break out of her awkward phase. The play isn't making a statement on how easy it is for kids to get their hands on guns, but rather on the culture they grow up in that might make them want to actually go through with murdering their classmates. It's scary stuff, and this play isn't afraid to ask the tough questions about the world we live in.

Take, for example, the seemingly obvious villains of the piece: Harris and Klebold, played brilliantly by Matthew Bausone and Eric Folks, respectively. Yes, these characters are sadistic pricks. But how did they get this way? They are bullied and called "faggots" for how they dress and what kind of music they listen to. They have talent, but no one cares. One is on anti-depressant meds, the other is awkward around girls. And both are plagued by incompetent guidance counselors and pushover parents. All this is not to say that we as a society should have seen this coming. Rather, the play makes you think: Even if we didn't commit these murders, we all played a part in it somehow.

columbinus is both ambitious in the amount of material and time it covers, and simplistic in its stripped down nature. There weren't a lot of fancy, innovative theater techniques. However, a projector does effectively make use of real photos and footage from that day, and also displaying transcripts of a now infamous 911 phone call made by a teacher, Patti Nielson, during the attack.

But for the most part, credit must be given

to director PJ Paparelli and his amazing cast of actors. Paparelli is also the conceiver and co-writer of the play, going all the way back to its 2005 premiere in Maryland. And the actors, who, although clearly past the age of high school, so effectively convey the angst of those years to an audience mostly comprised of people who aren't too much older than these characters. It takes a certain kind of endurance to relive Columbine every night, but the actors give a spontaneous approach to the entire show.

The performance ends with the actors writing the names of the victims on a chalkboard. The cast didn't take a curtain call, but that didn't stop the audience from clapping as the lights went back on.

The decision not to have a curtain call in the first place feels appropriate. This isn't a vanity project for these actors. This is a harrowing, raw play about a massacre that should have never happened. And thankfully, with beautiful art like this, it will never be forgotten.

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Udderly intriguing: Doc highlights cow dung as renewable energy

Dillon Riley, Beacon Staff

Picture a barn filled with over 1,300 cows. Now, picture all the dung generated from said cows; pretty gross, right? As 2012 Emerson graduate Allison Gillette proved with her latest film, *Cow Power: The Movie*, some farmers are putting that poop to good use. Set in her native Vermont, *Cow Power* takes an extended look at the power of cow manure as a renewable energy source for local area farmers.

As told by farmers using the technology—called Cow Power—as well as other area businesses benefitting from the clean energy source, the film made a compelling argument for its usage. Cow Power, the film says, saves farmers an average of upwards of \$150,000 a year, while reducing the carbon footprint of said farms by 20 percent. While other renewable energy sources like wind and solar power clock in at 30 and 20 percent respectively, the Cow Power process is highly potent at 75 percent efficiency. Also, if used on a large scale, Cow Power could support up to 10 percent of the country's energy needs,

according to the film.

In between financial figures and scientific examinations on the process lies the real story of Cow Power: the farms using it. The Audet family of Blue Spruce farm in Britport, Vt. was central to the story in particular, as shots of their farm going through the Cow Power process served as the film's backdrop. Giant machines called digesters were shown collecting the cow poop as members of the family stressed the capabilities of Cow Power.

Before *Cow Power* was screened, a short cinéma vérité piece by Kori Feener, a 2013 Emerson graduate, also aired. Centered around the work done on a small vegetable farm by an elderly woman in her 90s, Feener's film was set a little closer to home by way of Haverhill, Mass.

After both films wrapped, a short Q&A was held, and Gillette spoke further on what went into making *Cow Power*, and her plans for distributing it.

"I have two plans really," said Gillette in response to a question. "I want to set up screenings for people already pro-Cow Power and have them bring in politicians and friends, and I want to set up a condensed version of the film to show

at New England area schools as a sort of education tool."

Because the film had a relatively low budget of under \$50,000, \$3,000 of which was won from a pitch contest, Gillette encouraged those in the audience to support both the initiative and her work through promotion of her film. She said her plan is to help set up screenings by sending out DVD copies of the documentary on the promise that the copies will be returned.

Cow Power aside, at the heart of the film, said Gillette, was a desire to expose the sorts of projects that are synonymous with Vermont.

"I'm a long time Vermont resident, and the reason I got into media was to help document what goes on in my state. Cow Power seemed like a perfect example of those types of grassroots companies."

After finishing the film, her target audience became pretty clear.

"It's for the farmers really," said Gillette in response to another question. "It's a way to promote the innovative work they're doing."

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2012 Emerson grad Allison Gillette screened her doc at her alma mater Tuesday night. • Portrait by Evan Walsh / Beacon Staff

lifestyle

College creates a more sustainable community

Emerson implements new EcoRep program



Piano Row, Colonial, and Paramount are LEED certified, eco-friendly residence halls.

Chelsea Roden / Beacon Staff

Demi Vitkute, Beacon Correspondent

While Emerson prides itself on being a campus of innovation, it only recently took the next step towards becoming a more sustainable community. With the new school year in full swing, Eric Van Vlandren, the campus sustainability coordinator, has implemented some new ideas to make the college more environmentally friendly.

For the first time in Emerson's history, Van Vlandren said he launched an EcoRep program, a paid position where students are hired to act as peer educators for sustainability. According to Van Vlandren, the program will help make students more aware of green practices, such as recycling, by giving them a reliable and relatable resource.

"Emerson was a little bit late to the game, certainly in creating a position like [this]," said Van Vlandren, an Emerson alumnus who formerly studied political communications.

According to Lindsay Geller, a junior writing, literature, and publishing major and the Student Government Association's sustainability commissioner, Emerson began its environmental cam-

paign in 1996. Back then, Earth Emerson founded the on-campus recycling program, which she said has expanded significantly over the past few years.

Within the past two years, Geller said, Emerson began composting in the dining facilities, although elements of the program have been called into question. It also began eliminating trays and introducing reusable to-go containers, switching to cage-free eggs, and phasing out bottled water. The campus was also named the 2010-2011 Champion of the Great Northeast Athletic Conference in the Environmental Protection Agency's College & University Green Power Challenge.

Emerson began actively changing in Oct. 2010 when former college president Jacqueline Liebergott founded the President's Committee on Sustainability, according to member and Emerson Peace and Social Justice president Dylan Manderlink. The group, she said, meets once a month to share ideas on how to make the campus more environmentally friendly and aware. Manderlink, a senior IDIP major, said the committee helps vocalize the students' opinions and concerns about sustainability on

campus.

Van Vlandren said he has many programs in mind, though his focus will be on establishing the EcoRep program and its goals. There are eight EcoReps for the residence halls, one off-campus and commuter representative, and one assistant manager, a position which will be filled by a graduate student, he said.

EcoReps, according to Van Vlandren, will be working with resident assistants and resident directors to promote environmental awareness. He says they plan to organize both formal and informal floor meetings regarding sustainability issues.

"These conversations and peer education are crucial to learning about what sustainability means," he said.

Kaela Holmes, president of Earth Emerson, said she sees the program as a critical step toward helping students understand how to make greener decisions.

"EcoReps is going to be effective as long as they have the motivation and drive really needed to educate all the students," said the senior journalism major.

Van Vlandren also said he has collaborated and will continue to work with on-campus organizations such as Emerson Peace and Social Justice, Earth Emerson, and SGA. The leaders are already brainstorming, according to Geller, who said the SGA wants to bring local farm products and a rooftop garden to campus.

The main goal this semester will be to focus on the different ways students can reduce energy usage within the residence halls, Van Vlandren said.

"All of the electricity at Emerson is purchased from renewable sources," said Van Vlandren. "We are about to sign a contract to continue that for another three years."

By next semester, Van Vlandren said he hopes the EcoRep program will have helped students reduce their carbon footprints, and created new educational resources about composting and single stream recycling.

Single stream recycling, he said, will also be in place within the residence

halls, hopefully by next year. Unlike the current method of sorting recyclable materials into separate bins, this program, he said, would allow all recyclable materials to be placed in the same container, which would make it easier for students to reduce and reuse.

Currently, he said composting in the dining hall and cafés has progressed. However, he said he hopes to bring the composting program into the residence halls, which he said generate a decent amount of food waste.

"Every floor should have a compost bin," said Van Vlandren. "EcoReps will be instrumental in making that happen."

Van Vlandren said his job, alongside the EcoReps, will be making sustainability an easy and fun process for students. For example, the campus will once again participate in Recyclemania, the largest recycling competition for colleges and universities. Emerson, he said, has participated for the last two years, but has not been as successful as other institutions. This year, Van Vlandren said he hopes the campus will have better results.

Students, Van Vlandren said, also need to be aware of locations to bring e-waste, a term for broken electronic devices. He said few students know this, but e-waste can be recycled at the IT Help Desk, and batteries can be brought to the Equipment Distribution Center.

The central part of Emerson's new sustainability program, he said, will be student participation and cooperation. Van Vlandren said he encourages students to find out who their EcoReps are, whether they live on or off campus. He also said he hopes other green-minded students will get involved to help turn the campus' environmental programs around.

"I am a shameless adopter of other people's good ideas," he said. "I encourage students to bring me their ideas so we can make Emerson a more sustainable place."

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Health Matters: Live well on the go

Stephanie d'Orsay

D'Orsay is an assistant athletic director at Emerson & the Beacon health columnist

Everyone dreads the "freshman 15." But the truth is that legendary weight gain isn't just limited to freshmen, and it's certainly not limited to 15 pounds. With endless portions at your fingertips in the dining hall, fast food on every corner, and pretty much anything you could need within a five-block radius, it's very easy to eat a little more and move a little less than you probably should. Not to mention the fact that college students, especially Emerson students, are an extremely busy group of people. Between group projects, four hour classes, and dream internships, fitting health and fitness into your schedule can seem like a daunting task. There are a few ways that you can make your busy life a little healthier, however, even when you don't have time for daily gym sessions and home-cooked meals.

Take the stairs. Emerson is filled with stairs. It's also filled with slow, tiny elevators. Give your legs a chance to move by committing to take the stairs everywhere for a week. You'll get used to it quicker than you think and, at some point, you'll even prefer the stairs to a stuffy elevator or crowded escalator.

Pack portable, healthy snacks. Bringing snacks with you to class will help deter you from that bagel sandwich at Emerson Café, or that extra order of fries in the DH. Eating snacks that contain carbs, protein, and fat will help keep you satisfied throughout the day and can help you avoid overeating at meal times. Investing in some small reusable plastic containers is also a good idea when you're on the go all day. That way you're free to bring whatever you want for a snack, not just what comes in individual packaging. Ideas for satisfying snacks can include string cheese, dry roasted almonds, an apple with peanut butter, a banana, or bell pepper slices with hummus.

Take the long way. You don't always have time to take the long way when you're in a hurry, but taking the time to

walk places, even just walking to Arlington T stop instead of hopping right on at the Boylston stop, will add some more movement to your day. The bottom line is that even when we are busy, we all need to move more. Make a concerted effort to move a little bit further each day, and you'll be burning more calories without even thinking about it. If you have a car, park a little bit away from your destination, saving the close parking spots for those who truly need them.

Scope out menus ahead of time. When you are out to dinner with your friends, it can be easy to order what everyone else is or to let your growling stomach choose your entrée. By checking out the menu before you hit up your favorite restaurant, you'll give yourself a fighting chance of choosing a healthier option. Also, keep

"When everything in life is busy, food choices shouldn't just be another stressor on your plate."

-Stephanie d'Orsay

in mind that restaurant entrees are generally at least two and sometimes three servings. Set aside a portion of your food to take home for leftovers. After all, having a "free" meal the next day, and having a good excuse to avoid the DH, is always a bonus. Additionally, use meals out with friends as an excuse to try new places. There are plenty of healthy eateries in the city. You may just have to look a little harder, and walk a little longer than the food truck parked down the street.

Beyond these tips and tricks, it's also important to remember to relax a little. Staying healthy in college is important. But so is your schoolwork, your internship, and, yes, your social life. When everything in life is busy, food choices shouldn't just be another stressor on your plate. It's perfectly OK if you're not making a completely healthy choice at all times. But striving for mostly healthy choices on most days will put you way ahead of the pack when it comes to college students and healthy living.

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Event entertains with comedy and cacti

Emerson Mane Events hosts EME-Palooza

Carl Lavigne, *Beacon Correspondent*

Guy Branum said he has some secrets he likes to share. Like how Ashton Kutcher had no idea what a factory farm was, but thought they'd be great job creators, or where Natalie Portman lost her virginity: Pratt University, he said.

Branum, the California-born comedian, was the star of the inaugural Emerson Mane Events Palooza on Thursday, Sept. 12. Branum asked audience members about their political views and sexual orientations, and joked about how progressive Emerson College is.

"[The event was] really up-close and personal," said Sam Crichton, a freshman visual and media arts major in attendance.

The doors to the Multipurpose Room opened a little before eight, and Branum drew an audience that almost filled the space.

"Guy is barely a name. The only way my parents could've been lazier is if they named me 'hey, dude,'" was Branum's opening line.

Branum, who writes for TV and is openly gay, had the audience laughing right away. He invited one spectator to tell him whether or not he crossed the line at any point during the show. He was more than explicit all night, and no one once called foul.

"It was very personal comedy," said Liz Peterson, a freshman visual and media arts major. Branum heckled her on several occasions for texting.

Branum fielded questions at the end of the show. People asked Branum, who wrote for the shows "X-Play" and "Unscrewed with Martin Sargent," about his experience in the television industry and as a comedian.

"No one can take this from me," he said about his career in stand-up.

He applauded the performers and artists in the audience for their decision to pursue their dreams. Branum, who said he graduated from UC Berkeley with a degree in English and History, and from the University of Minnesota Law School with a JD, said that he wished he'd been at an inspirational place like Emerson to

learn and grow up. He encouraged students to apply for internship positions with the show he's currently working on "Totally Biased" on FXX.

Branum's visit, and all of EME-Palooza, was the product of two Emerson Mane Event staff: juniors Gina Palmeri, a visual and media arts major, and Jamie Alberici, an IDIP major.

Palmeri said that watching people unite after the Boston Marathon bombings inspired her and Alberici to create an event where the Emerson community could come together. She said they wanted to see people bond over something other than tragedy.

Palmeri and Alberici said they pitched their idea to Jason Meier, EME's primary advisor, and spent the summer planning the event over Facebook and email. They wanted to bring people together before the semester got too busy. They also said that EME-Palooza was an opportunity for EME to showcase what it does and attract new members.

Students milled around Piano Row's first floor, sampling smoothies and eat-

ing pizza, while they waited in line for full-color caricatures and a cactus decorating room. Fun Enterprises provided the caricature artists and cacti.

"This is great. I now have a cactus friend I can talk to instead of my roommate," said David Carliner, a freshman writing, literature, and publishing major.

A stream of Instagram photos featured students' new cacti friends. Branum called out a couple of people in the audience for using their phones during his performance, but it turned out many of them were tweeting about him.

Alberici said EME hopes to have a similar event at the end of the spring semester to relieve some of the stress of finals week and bring people together one last time before summer break.

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"I now have a cactus friend I can talk to instead of my roommate." —David Carliner, freshman writing, literature, and publishing major

Fair connects students to service



Off campus student services helped sponsor the event to connect individuals with opportunities throughout Boston. • Andrew Harwood / Beacon Staff

Madeline Bilis, *Beacon Correspondent*

Many students are known to give countless hours to clubs and organizations, and to give back to the on-campus community. Now, Emerson students were given a chance to serve the off-campus community with an event geared towards connecting individuals to the city of Boston.

Over a dozen local charities and groups lined up tables along the walls of the Multipurpose Room for the Volunteer Fair on Sept. 12. Opportunities ranged from causes geared toward homelessness, health, hunger, and vio-

lence prevention.

Organized and sponsored by sorority Kappa Gamma Chi, the Office of Service Learning and Community Action, and the Office of Off-Campus Student Services, the Volunteer Fair attracted a decent amount of civically engaged Emerson students. A few trickled into the event at a time, dropping in between 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. and perusing the different community service organizations. The fair also allowed students to participate in Jumpstart's Read for the Record activity.

Steven Martin, assistant director of off-campus student services, said that the fair was a way for students to see

the volunteer opportunities Boston has to offer, and then enable them to find a way to help the city. He also said the individuals at the fair were able to connect with one another and find fellow students who shared an interest in volunteer work.

Monica de Pinto Ribeiro Hancke, vice president of Kappa Gamma Chi, said the fair was meant to be a place for civically engaged people to get involved, specifically for new students looking to expand their horizons. Hancke said part of the reason the event was created was to have a resource for students who were involved in volunteer work throughout high school or during time at previous colleges. She explained that she, as a freshman, struggled to find places to continue her volunteer work.

Hancke also noted the importance of integrating the Emerson community with the local community, explaining that President M. Lee Pelton's initiative for civic engagement on campus sparked the idea for the fair.

"This fair will hopefully grow over time and demonstrate that Emerson isn't just talk, we actually walk our talk; we do what we say we're committed to," she said.

The event gave students the chance to meet with representatives from the non-profits. Marin Carroll, a sophomore IDIP major, said interacting with the faces behind the groups made it easier to get excited about working for the organizations.

"I absorbed more information speaking to people face-to-face and it clarified a lot of information about exactly what the organization was about," said Carroll. "It wouldn't be as memorable if I just took the flyers home with me."

Several students signed up to work with child-focused organizations, including Carroll, who said she signed up for Horizons for Homeless Children. The group promoted its Playspace program during the fair.

Emily Moore, a representative from the HHC program, said it creates spaces for play in 50 shelters throughout the Greater Boston area. Each is complete

with toys, books, and art supplies.

Volunteers for HHC are asked to spend two hours per week at one of the locations, playing and interacting with groups of children, said Moore. To be placed at a shelter, volunteers must complete a five-hour training session three weeks before receiving an assignment.

"We do have a lot of college student volunteers, but it ranges," said Moore. "I think our oldest volunteer is 80."

826 Boston, a non-profit based in Roxbury, also offered students the opportunity to work with children. Volunteers are able to tutor students ages six to 18 in one-on-one writing sessions after school and on Saturdays, according to representative Guillermo Suárez Ara. 826 Boston, he said, specifically strives to teach creative and expository writing skills.

The table featured books published by the students. Suárez Ara said many of Emerson's writing, literature, and publishing majors volunteer with them.

Community service proved to be valuable to some of the students who attended the fair, according to Carroll, who said it is a big part of her life.

"It's so easy to get caught up in your own issues when you're in college, especially when you're young and stressed out," said Carroll. "It is really important to get out there and get through to other people's lives, not just for them but for yourself—to get out of the self-centered mindset."

Beatrice Cerezo, a freshman visual and media arts major, said she became interested in civic engagement in high school, and hopes to stay philanthropically active in college.

"I actually had to do a lot of it to pass requirements for high school and I started to love it," said Cerezo. "It's important for people to be involved and not necessarily make money from it."

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"Emerson isn't just talk, we actually walk our talk; we do what we say we're committed to." —Monica de Pinto Ribeiro Hancke

sports

A day in the life of an athlete

Students search for balance between sports and school

Kyle Brasseur, Beacon Staff

Wake up, eat, go to class, see friends, go to work, do homework (maybe), and go back to sleep.

These are just a few of the things students at every college are forced to fit into a 24-hour day, which makes time management the only way to turn a maddening marathon of events into smooth sailing before it starts all over again the next day.

For the student-athlete, however, the checklist of things to do doesn't end there.

With travel through city traffic, limited healthy eating options, and the security threat that accompanies a late-night walk back to campus, the college has prioritized improving the working conditions of its student-athletes this year after receiving a boost in funding from President M. Lee Pelton's Athletics Working Group.

The group, formed in April 2012, was convened, in part, to help ease athletes' transition into the New England Men's and Women's Athletic Conference.

Of course, there's still the struggle of planning around game days.

"Once you get out of class, you try to get as much homework done as you can before you have to leave for the game," said sophomore Tayllar Righini, a women's lacrosse and soccer midfielder. "By the time you get back and you shower, you kind of want to go to bed, but at the same time you have to be able to get your work done because there's not a lot of time in the day."

Righini, like every other student-athlete at Emerson College, is forced to balance the schedule of the everyday student while also being prepared for up to three games a week in each of the sports she plays.

Whether it's a game day or just a practice, Righini said there is always an adjustment she needs to make that differs from what a normal student would deal with.

"Away games are a little tougher because it takes more time depending on where the game is," Righini said. "With practices, it's easier to come home and get work done."

In an August interview with the Beacon, Interim Athletic Director Stanford Nance emphasized the importance of making travel for away games easier on student-athletes.

Some of the first improvements the Athletics Working Group made this summer were ordering more buses to ensure a form of safe travel to each game and setting a more consistent schedule for meal stipends issued to students while on the road.

Righini said she expects the "meal

money" to serve as a vast improvement in terms of scheduling.

"Once I finish a game, I'm starving, so it's good to be able to eat and it helps me focus more, too, once I'm not hungry," Righini said. "I wouldn't want to waste [dining hall] swipes or Board Bucks."

As for the travel improvements, senior tennis player Lacey Russell said she feels time will tell how big an impact the change will have on scheduling.

"I think it's too early [to form a final opinion] right now," Russell said. "We've only had two matches so I'm not sure yet. I liked what we had."

Looking ahead, the need for more buses could be dire in some situations.

For example, Righini faces a women's soccer schedule that will take her to Wheaton College for a 3:30 p.m. match, 40 miles away from the Emerson campus, interrupting a crucial school day on Tuesday, Oct. 15, the week before midterms are scheduled.

That Saturday, when many of her classmates will be putting their noses to the grindstone in Iwasaki Library, Righini is scheduled to be 90 miles away, playing an away game against Springfield College.

However, far from resenting her crammed schedule, Righini said she believes being an athlete has made her a better student.

"I feel like it's a good use of my time, and I know that I get a lot of future work done because I know that I don't want to do it later," said the communication disorders major. "I don't want to save it for the last minute because something might come up like an extra practice or a charity event."

Righini added that she has no complaints when it comes to balancing classes with her athletic commitments.

Russell said that planning her fall semester around tennis has had no negative effective on her academic experience.

"No regrets," Russell said when asked about any limitations that came as a result of playing tennis. "I did everything I wanted to do. I can still have the classes I want and also be on the team, so it's fun."

Russell's teammate, fellow senior stand-out Savannah Mosser, was even able to go abroad. Mosser took part in Emerson's Prague Summer Film Program at the Film Academy of Performing Arts.

Russell, a marketing communication major, has a schedule similar to Righini's. The senior from Roswell, Ga., takes on classes and homework in addition to matches and practices during the tennis season, which began in August and ends in October.

"I did everything I wanted to do. I can still have the classes I want and also be on the team."

- Lacey Russell

Russell attributed her busy schedule as a way for her to organize her time.

"I kind of like having things to do so I can plan my day out," Russell said. "It makes me actually get things done."

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Tayllar Righini cradles the ball • Andrew Harwood / Beacon Archive
Lacey Russell gets ready to hit a serve • Andrew Harwood / Beacon Archive



Next Match

Men

Soccer • MIT vs. EC at Rotch Field 9/21 4 p.m.

Cross-Country • Pop Crowell Invitational at Gordon College Wenham, Mass. 9/21

Women

Soccer • MIT vs. EC at Rotch Field 9/21 1 p.m.

Volleyball • Simmons vs. EC at Brown & Plofker Gym 9/19 7 p.m.

Tennis • Simmons vs. EC at Harvard University 9/19 3 p.m.

Cross-Country • Pop Crowell Invitational at Gordon College 9/21

Emerson sports this week

Women's Soccer

9/17 at Simmons

Emerson	0
Simmons	3

Men's Soccer

9/18 at Home Charles River Cup

Emerson	3
Lesley	1

Women's Volleyball

9/17 at Wellesley

Emerson	0
Wellesley	3

9/14 at Home

Emerson	3
Wentworth	0

9/14 at Home

Emerson	3
Lesley	0

Women's Tennis

9/17 at Rhode Island College

Emerson	3
Rhode Island College	6

9/14 at Home

Emerson	3
Mount Holyoke	6

Women's volleyball coming of age

Lions freshman class makes immediate impact

Carl Setterlund, *Beacon Staff*

With seven freshmen and six sophomores, youth has taken over women's volleyball coach Ben Read's 18-player roster.

The infusion of talent over Read's first two recruiting classes has helped the third-year coach continue a winning tradition in one of Emerson's most competitive sports.

As the women's volleyball team makes a challenging switch from the Great Northeast Athletic Conference to the New England Women's and Men's Athletic Conference this fall, Read and his young Lions have given themselves the lofty goal of reaching—and making some noise—in the NEWMAC postseason tournament.

"Our expectations are high; we want to aim high," said Read, whose team won the 2012 GNAC title and made the Division 3 NCAA Tournament with a similarly young roster, headlined by now-sophomore setter Juliana Tucker, the 2012 GNAC Rookie of the Year. "We want to get back into the [NCAA Tournament]. Is that going to be realistic? We're going to know pretty quickly here when we play a few of the NEWMAC teams."

This year, Emerson added four 6-footers, led by middle blocker Julianna Augustine of Skaneateles, N.Y., a suburb of Syracuse. The

other three are Annie Hall, Amanda Linzmeyer and Elizabeth Reid.

Augustine leads the team with 87 kills and has made the most of her chances with a team-best .299 hitting percentage. In comparison, senior Alyssa Thorne is second on the team with 82 kills, but has 44 more hitting attempts than Augustine for a .218 hitting percentage.

Augustine has reached double-digit kills five times already, also tops on the team, including 11 in a Sept. 10 win for the Lions (7-4) over Amherst College, which Read said he believes to be their first ever against the school.

"Our main goal [as freshmen] is just to help wherever we can," Augustine said.

Read called Augustine just as skilled as the Lions' top hitter last year, junior Kat Rice, who won the GNAC Rookie of the Year award in 2011.

But how hard was the transition to college volleyball for Read's freshmen?

Marketing major Jessica Hamilton, a 5-foot-8 outside hitter, has been limited to just seven matches so far due to injuries, but ranks third on the team in kills per set at 2.20.

"For me it was pretty easy," said Hamilton, an Altadena, Calif., native who joined Emerson from Alverno High School where, as a senior, she was the top player for the reigning

"I think we will do some great things this season."
- Ben Read, women's volleyball coach

Southern Calif. Division 5AA champions. "In Southern California, volleyball is life."

Read said he remembered a recruiting trip to the American Athletic Union National Championships where he scouted Linzmeyer, who hails from Huntington Beach, an hour away from Altadena.

"The team she was playing had three [Division 2] players on it and the rest were all seniors that were going Division 1," Read said.

Meanwhile, Tucker played in high school at the Campbell Hall School in Los Angeles alongside Wellesley College's top player, Sydney Carfagno. Read said Carfagno is "one of the best players in New England." She was already named NEWMAC Volleyball Player of the Week for the period ending Sept. 9.

Emerson played at Wellesley in its NEWMAC opener on Tuesday night. The Lions limited Carfagno, but fell 3-0 to the Blue.

Five of Read's freshmen were recruited—Augustine, Hall, Hamilton, Linzmeyer and Reid—and they all decided to live together in the Little Building residence hall.

"Once they all got in their deposits and were enrolled here we put everyone in touch and just said 'Hey, if you happen to hit it off with someone and you want to room with them, great,'" Read said. "One day, one of them just sent me a text like 'Hey coach, just wanted to let you know that we're all going to be living together.'"

There's no need to worry about any cliques developing, though.

Read's three seniors—Thorne, Jamie Morgan, and Brandy Eggermann—have played in all 37 sets and, welcomed the freshmen into the fold, according to Augustine.

"The older girls definitely made the transition easy for us," Hamilton said. "We realized we were really part of the team at that moment."

Tucker has been out with an injury since the Amherst match, while Linzmeyer hasn't played since Aug. 31 against Salve Regina.

Read declined to comment about injuries, but said he is looking forward to seeing what the Lions will look like when they're able to reach full strength and gel as a team.

"I think we will do some great things this season," Read said. "Next year is going to be really exciting to see, and by the time the first recruiting class are seniors, and we've got this year's freshmen as juniors, hopefully we can really make a name for ourselves in the NEWMAC, and hopefully at the national level."

Connor Burton, assistant sports editor and member of the men's volleyball team, did not edit this story.

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Women's volleyball				Women's soccer			
Freshmen	Sophomores	Juniors	Seniors	Freshmen	Sophomores	Juniors	Seniors

Freshmen: Julianna Augustine, Rose Bennett, Kate Gibson, Annie Hall, Jessica Hamilton, Amanda Linzmeyer, Elizabeth Reid. Sophomores: Giulio Frendak, Heather Park, Katie Towey, Juliana Tucker, Bri Velez, Kat Westbrook. Juniors: Alex Lynn, Kat Rice. Seniors: Brandy Eggermann, Jamie Morgan, Alyssa Thorne.

Freshmen: Vanessa Baird, Natalie Benjamin, Molly Caron, Anne Carroll, Katherine Dobson, Melanie Escobar, Sarah Glassberg, Courtney Major, Megan Nash, Amy Smith, Savannah Strange. Sophomores: Mollie Coyne, Katelyn Gearan, Alyssa Giannone, Marissa Iamartino, Haley Moser, Madeleine Mulderry, Riana Odin, Tayllar Righini, Maggie Sheetz, Christine White. Juniors: Allie Altman, Naomi Kramer, Jaime Toscano. Seniors: Casey Jablonski, Marissa MacDonald, Samantha O'Donovan.

Youth boosts women's soccer team

21 underclassmen lead Lions into NEWMAC

Connor Burton, *Beacon Staff*

Like many other teams this year, the Emerson women's soccer team boasts a trove of young talent with 11 freshmen.

Coach David Suvak, who was recently promoted to full-time status, said his team will be challenged year, but is happy with the way his young team has progressed.

"From very early in the preseason this team has competed very hard against each other," Suvak said. "They have adopted my coaching philosophy of passing, possession and playmaking. They are playing a very good style of soccer."

One freshman, Natalie Benjamin, a marketing and communications major from Shrewsbury, Mass., has already established herself in the starting 11.

Benjamin said she was a four-year letter winner on her high school team, playing in the Massachusetts Division 1 state final in 2010.

She has already scored two goals as an offense-minded midfielder.

"The players are more aggressive than [they] were in high school," Benjamin said. "The expectation is to go out and play our style and stick to what we do best. It's been a lot of fun so far."

Benjamin said the number of freshmen on the team has made her transition from high school to college go smoother.

"It's like we are our own little team," Benjamin said. "We can all hang out with each other. At first it was kind of crazy, but now we're all used to it."

Another freshman making an impact is center defender Sarah Glassberg, a visual and media arts major from Poughkeepsie, N.Y.

"[Sarah] is so calm and composed out there," said Suvak of his freshman starter.

Glassberg, who also said she played four years of varsity soccer in high school and 10 years of club soccer, knew she would be able to adapt to a new, higher level of play.

"The girls and coach Suvak have gotten us really prepared for the level of play," Glassberg said.

Despite their youth, Suvak said he is confident his squad will mesh quickly.

"There are going to be new challenges because we don't know much about certain teams, but I feel good about where this team is," said Suvak. "We are going to compete with many of those teams."

And even though the Lions were ranked ninth out of 11 teams in the New England Women and Men's Athletic Conference preseason coaches' poll, Glassberg isn't deterred.

"Our level of play is going to keep going up," said Glassberg. "We have a lot more wins in us."

The Lions (3-2) will face their first NEWMAC opponent on Sept. 21, hosting Wellesley College in a 1 p.m. game.

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Women's soccer celebrates last year. • Ally Chapman/ Beacon Archives



Interim Athletic Director Stanford Nance hugs Griff the Lion, who began appearing at Emerson games last November. President M. Lee Pelton, left, enjoys the sight. • Ryan Catalani / Beacon Archive

Just can't wait to be mascot

Rogue lion has an Emerson approach to school spirit

Kelsey Drain, *Beacon Staff*

"He would literally be there from start to finish before anyone else showed up and leave after everyone else left." -Former basketball player Sharon Norton

Last November, Emerson's women's basketball team found itself with a reliable and passionate new fan: A lion mascot, going by the name Griff, had consistently begun appearing in the Bobbi Brown and Steven Plofker Gym.

"He would literally be at our game while we were warming up and stretching when no one else was there," said Sharon Norton, a former Emerson basketball player who graduated last spring.

"I remember one time on the court we were just shooting around he kind of jumped on the court and I let him play defense on me. It was pretty funny," she said. "He would literally be there from start to finish before anyone else showed up and leave after everyone else left."

When he originally starting prowling around the lower levels of Piano Row, the man in the Griff the Lion suit was not an official Emerson College agent. A student had purchased the costume with his personal funds, donning the name Griff after the Griffin stance of the lion in the logos around campus. He first showed up at women's volleyball games, and his frequent appearances at Emerson games quickly inspired curiosity from athletes.

"When I started it everyone was like, 'Hey, there's a mascot. Like, when did that happen?'" said the man behind the mane. He prefers to remain anonymous because, he says, mascots *have* to remain anonymous to keep the sanctity of mascots alive — no one should know who's inside the suit.

He was inspired to buy the suit after visiting his twin brother, who performed as the buffalo mascot at University of Colorado, Boulder. After seeing the enthusiasm that his brother's antics inspired, he decided Emerson needed something similar. A student-athlete, he used his new suit to correct the lack of spirit he sometimes found at Emerson games.

Describing Emerson as an abnormal college experience, Griff's alter-ego said athletics is not at the forefront at Emerson, despite promotion from some administrators, a sentiment also expressed by Norton.

"With sports there wasn't much [school spirit] because a lot of the kids don't even

know what sports are," said Norton.

So the student took it upon himself to get an actual, physical costume to legitimize Emerson's court sports. Without any kind of request from the college, Griff the Lion attended games from the first whistle to the final play.

He maintained his anonymity by going into the gym early, getting into costume, staying there for the whole game, and then changing back and leaving quickly.

The creature's paw print reached beyond the court, too: He created his own account on Facebook, which was used to share photos and inspirational messages — though the account has been inactive since April 19, five days before the last Emerson varsity competition of the spring.

Emerson College began paying him to appear at games in the fall, he said. The school bought the suit from him after the school year ended for the same price that he had paid, a cost he preferred not to share. Since then, the suit has taken on new duties.

"And I know now, I saw a picture of them using it during orientation," said the suit's original owner. "This girl I know asked me how she could get the suit for a sorority event. I've seen it being used in other things besides sports."

Griff's story fits Emerson students' oft-unconventional way of expressing their compassion for the school and support for the community. The largest signs of school spirit at Emerson tend to stray a bit from the usual college experience, with Orientation Leaders, the EVVYs, and lip dubs often generating more excitement than the college's 14 varsity sports.

Andrew Tiedemann, Emerson's vice president of public affairs, said that Emerson's spirit is hard to pin down.

"I think of it more as expressing the Emerson community personality than I think of it as 'spirit' in a sense," said Tiedemann. He said he first noticed Emerson's unorthodox approach before he even began working here. "It's hard to put in words exactly but I came to an open house and the students were incredibly outgoing and friendly and the staff was the same. There's just this Emerson kind of personality, it's hard for me to exactly put my finger on it. And then when I started working here it's the same thing."

With visual and media arts professor Tom Cooper, Tiedemann is heading an initiative called "Spirit of Emerson" to promote that undefinable character. The effort is now supported by campus organizations like academic affairs, alumni relations, athletics, student government, Greek council, the President's office, and



student life.

Cooper and Tiedemann approached President M. Lee Pelton this summer about creating a project to portray what Emerson is to people who haven't experienced it. In a related project with similar goals, the college is also considering re-branding its website.

Cooper, the architect of the Spirit of Emerson initiative, has worked at Emerson for over 30 years, and said he has always been impressed with the quality of the faculty and student body. Cooper and Tiedemann said they hope to inspire and support the community by creating a list of ways to encourage Emersonian culture.

These could include activities like attending an Emerson theater production, going to a sporting event you've never been to before, or maybe even becoming an anonymous mascot for basketball games — the man who bought the suit encourages it.

"It should be allowed," he said, "so that anyone can hop in the suit and don this character and bring this character to life."

Griff the Lion at the Presidential Wiffle Ball Game in February, when students played against faculty. Ryan Catalani / Beacon Archive

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