

## For alums, bond transcends rivalry



## Keeping convictions, past Bolyston



## Redefining literary expectations



# The Berkeley Beacon

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From left to right, students Logan Reever, Christian Bergren-Aragon, and Brendan Scully ran as bandits April 21 and held hands as they neared the finish line at mile 26.2. This was Bergren-Aragon's third Boston Marathon, Scully's second, and Reever's first. • Ryan Catalani / Beacon Staff

## THE FEATURE

## Medical marijuana users face strain on campus

Christina Bartson, *Beacon Staff*  
Nate Leese, *Beacon Staff*

Before Nov. 11, 2013, Jeffrey McHale, president of Emerson Reform, said he couldn't sleep full nights or stomach more than an appetizer at dinner. His lack of appetite made his weight fluctuate severely—during a three-month time frame, he said he lost more than 45 pounds.

These are long-term side effects of Adderall, a drug prescribed for attention deficit hyperactivity disorder that the sophomore visual and media arts major said he has been taking since he was 12 years old. In fall 2013, McHale ended his sleepless nights and weight instability when he went to his doctor and got a medical marijuana license in Massachusetts. He said by adding marijuana to his medical regimen, he can sleep full nights and eat full meals again.

"Once I started using, it made me feel normal again," said McHale, the president of Emerson Reform, a campus organization founded in 2009 focused on drug education and policy. "I could fit in again in a way that was taken away from me."

The only problem is McHale can't use his medicine on campus. Currently, the college doesn't distinguish between recreational marijuana and medical marijuana use, according to the school's drug policy. In Emerson's eyes, McHale isn't treating a medical problem when he lights up a joint; he's just getting high.

McHale said he moved off-campus in April to live with a friend in Jamaica Plain so he could use his marijuana in a private residence. But McHale said he is still paying for the required on-campus housing, plus his apartment's rent.

Medical marijuana was legalized Nov. 6, 2012 in Massachusetts, but the college prohibits being under the influence of any illegal drug, including marijuana, according to Emerson's drug policy.

This leaves students with doctor-issued licenses in a bind, because there's no convenient place for them to use the drug even if they have a card to wave. Medical marijuana students can't use anywhere on campus, or in public spaces like the Common, without risking repercussions from the college or state law.

McHale and fellow Emerson Reform members have started an initiative to help students use their medical marijuana in a way that doesn't violate Emerson or state regulations.

The group is proposing a change in the college's policy that would allow students with medical marijuana to break the housing contract and move off-campus so they can self-medicate on their own grounds.

Emerson Reform member Jonathan Gutierrez, who also has a medical marijuana license, said that in November he applied for

See *Medical Marijuana* page 6

## Students, faculty support Sodexo workers' unionization

Laura Gomez, *Beacon Staff*

Over a dozen Sodexo employees and nearly 70 students rallied on Tuesday afternoon in the lobby of the Little Building to present a petition to unionize to Steve Canario, general manager of dining services at the college.

The food workers are asking for a fair process to allow them to organize, and over 75 percent of them have agreed to join Unite Here Local 26, a Boston union that represents workers in the hotel, restaurant, and the food service industries, according to Emma MacDonald, a senior marketing communication major who is involved in the campaign.

Teresa Ascencio, who said she has worked at the dining hall's salad bar since 2001, was the first employee to speak to Canario.

"We are here because we don't want any more discrimination," Ascencio said in Spanish, her voice quivering and eyes tearing up. Claudia Castañeda, a liberal arts professor, stood beside her and translated. "We have dignity as people. We want you to value the work that we do. We have rights as people."

Ascencio said she approached Local 26 last year because she felt there was too much discrimination in her workplace.

Students cheered for her and other

workers who spoke up at the rally, waving posters proclaiming "We Love Our Workers," "We Stand Together," and "#EChearusroar."

Luis Santa, who stood a few feet away from in front of Canario, also addressed the general manager and said he and other workers feel unappreciated.

"We work hard to build relationships with the students," he said, handing Canario a petition with 71 photos of the workers who are asking Sodexo to agree and enable them to organize and form a union "without threats and intimidation."

MacDonald is the co-founder of the student social justice advocacy group Progressives and Radicals In Defense

of Employees, or P.R.I.D.E., which is among the 15 campus student groups supporting the food workers. These organizations are grouped under the Coalition of Lions in Action with Workers, or CLAW.

"Emerson prides itself on diversity and inclusion," MacDonald said in an interview, "and those progressive values need to be distributed to every part of Emerson. They are asking for dignity more than anything else."

Other workers spoke about low and unequal pay, irregular scheduling that doesn't allow them to hold other jobs, and a lack of respect from managers.

"I'm a single mom, I come home late,"



said Valery Alcios, wearing her Sodexo uniform. "Right now I have no one to talk to, and when I have to say something I just keep it to myself."

In an email to the Beacon, Canario said Sodexo has working relationships with more than 30 labor unions that represent over 15 percent of its employees.

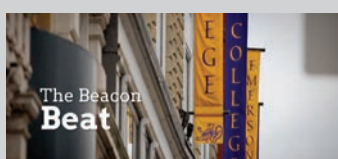
"Sodexo respects the rights of our employees to unionize or not to unionize, as they choose," wrote Canario. "Whenever a union has been recognized, we have

See *Sodexo*, page 2

Luis Santa, right, hands over the worker's petition to organize to Steve Canario, left, general manager of Sodexo at Emerson.

Nydia Hartono / *Beacon Staff*

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# news



Lauren Cortizo, left, and Shanae Burch, right, both 2013 alumni, ran and finished this year's marathon together. • *Evan Walsh / Beacon Staff*



A runner is embraced by two women at the Boston Marathon finish line April 21. *Ryan Catalani / Beacon Staff*

## Sodexo workers demand support to form union

*Continued from Sodexo, page 1*

bargained in good faith with the purpose of reaching an agreement in a timely manner."

Emerson's union for full-time faculty, a chapter of the American Association of University Professors, issued a statement of support, which Castañeda presented to Canario at the rally.

"We believe that all workers at Emerson, whether subcontracted or hired by the College, are part of our community," reads the statement. "We support the food service workers and their right to a fair process as they move to unionize."

The Faculty Assembly also unanimously passed a resolution April 22 supporting Sodexo's employees' choice to unionize, according to a copy of the document MacDonald provided to the Beacon.

An online petition asking students to support the demands of Sodexo workers, created by freshman visual and media arts major James O'Connell, has gathered 350 signatures as of Wednesday night. O'Connell, a member of P.R.I.D.E., said



Teresa Ascencio has worked in the dining hall's salad bar since 2001. *Ryan Catalani / Beacon Staff*

he created the petition at 4:30 p.m. on Tuesday.

CLAW will host an event for food service workers to share their reasons for wanting a fair process to unionize April 28 in the Multipurpose Room.

"I'm not leaving," said performing arts major senior Suzi Pietroluongo, facing Canario, "until the people that fed me when my mother couldn't are safe."

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## The Commencement Show with Jay Leno

*Laura Gomez, Beacon Staff*

The graduating class of 2014 will have Jay Leno, a 1972 Emerson graduate and accomplished TV personality, as its commencement speaker during the undergraduate ceremony May 11.

Sana Bakshi, a senior marketing communications major, said her parents, who are flying in from California, "are really stoked" about seeing Leno.

"I'm super excited," said Bakshi. "I watch commencement speeches for fun."

The college will also grant Leno an honorary degree of Doctor of Humane Letters. CNN anchor Don Lemon, NPR host Scott Simon, and Catherine D'Amato, president and CEO of The Greater Boston Food Bank, will also receive honorary degrees during the 134th undergraduate graduation held at the Agganis Arena, a Boston University venue with over 8,000 seats.

Steve Burns, a senior journalism major, said he is a big fan of Lemon and Simon, and thinks D'Amato is deserving of the honorary recognition, but is not happy about the college's choice of Leno.

"I think it's Emerson making a PR splash, as usual," said Burns, adding that

he dislikes Leno for "backstabbing his coworkers" Johnny Carson and Conan O'Brien. "He is not really viewed as someone who pushed the envelope, as far as I'm concerned."

Najah Muhammad, a senior performing arts major and vice president of the Senior Class Council, said she was surprised and excited when she learned about the announcement.

"Some people are upset," she said, "but that's because you can't please everybody."

*Deputy arts editor Erica Mixon contributed to this report.*

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## Alcohol-infused ice cream venture wins E3

*Hunter Harris, Beacon Staff*

Senior Elizabeth Nash notices something when she shares her product idea for Crème de Liqueur, which she calls a "decadent line of alcohol-infused ice cream."

"People's eyes light up, because they're just so excited about it," said the writing, literature, and publishing major, in an interview after winning first place at Emerson's ninth annual Emerson Experience in Entrepreneurship, or E3, Conference.

At this year's event, held April 19 in the Bill Bordy Theater, nine students of the year-long E3 program competed for three prizes, with cash awards and pro bono PR services up for grabs. Nash received a \$5,000 check, and the second and third place winners, Sam Fishman and Nisreen Galloway, received \$3,000 and \$2,000, respectively.

"I wanted to tell a story. I wanted to make people hungry as they were listening to me," said Nash. "I wanted to show that there was a serious business side to this, but in the end, we're talking about a fantastic product that everybody can get behind."

Before this year, the springtime E3 event was held as an exposition, where student-entrepreneurs would set up booths showcasing business cards, videos, interactive media, and other promotional materials, and gave five-minute pitches to audience members and judges.

Ja-Nae Duane, who took over E3 after its founder, Karl Baehr, died in November 2013, decided to make the expo into an all-day conference. Saturday's event still featured student pitches, but added interviews with former E3 students and lectures from business owners outside the Emerson community.

"One of the things I was looking to do was bridge that [entrepreneurial] gap with other universities, and bringing in and working with local entrepreneurs," said Duane. "[It's about] giving the students the idea that they are not alone, that there are other entrepreneurs surrounding them everywhere, and that this is a very vibrant, economically sound town."

Senior marketing communications major Jon Allen, who won last year's E3 Expo for his organic cherry soda drink Temple Twist, saw the new format as a positive change.

"The fact that they brought in past winners to hear their stories and see their journeys and how they've progressed as entrepreneurs is really cool," said Allen. "It's a great way to make the program fresh, and to make the competition more interesting for people to come



Elizabeth Nash received a \$5,000 check for winning first place at the E3 conference. • *Evan Walsh / Beacon Staff*

and experience it."

Duane said the three-person judging process was divided into three parts, including one-on-one interviews and business plan submissions before the day's pitch presentations. The judges described Nash as a candidate they were confident would devote her life to the success of her company, a value Nash identified with.

"I'm a food writer here at Emerson," Nash said. "I want to make food a part of my life, and when I graduate from Emerson, I can't wait to start down the ice cream path."

Fishman, a senior marketing communications major, came in second place, receiving \$3,000 for Stede Threads, his line of skateboarding hats featuring wooden three-dimensional labels, made using recycled wood skate decks.

Galloway, a senior writing, literature, and publishing major, came in third place for Simmer, an online magazine for college foodies. According to Duane, all three winners will receive pro-bono consultations from Leary & Company, a full-service public relations firm, and New Leaf Legal, a law firm catering to entrepreneurs.

Still beaming from the judges' announcement, Nash said she was elated to have won, excited to continue working on Crème de Liqueur, and lucky to have competed against the other E3 students.

"I'm proud of myself for all the hard work I've put in, I'm so proud of the third and second place winners, I know that they deserve it fully. ... Every pitch was amazing," she said. "I think this is the best group of pitches, honestly. I'm so proud of everybody and this day was just phenomenal."

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## Corrections & Clarifications

In the April 17 issue, the article "Students will run Boston Marathon as bandits, again" stated that Emily Engelhardt was injured by the first bomb blast. Engelhardt was injured by the second explosion. In that same article, the pull quote identified Brendan Scully as a sophomore. Scully is a junior.

# editorial

## Serious initiatives don't go on vacation

**At issue:**  
Commendable initiative launched this year

**Our take:**  
Summer vacation doesn't mean taking a break from what matters

In October, after three students filed a federal complaint accusing Emerson of mishandling their reports of sexual assault, 275 members of the college community gathered in a town hall meeting to discuss school policies on sexual assault. The college proudly distributed purple bracelets reading "Emerson Stands" for supporters to show solidarity.

Yet just four months later, when Emerson brought in four candidates to interview to be our new sexual assault response and prevention advocate—a position created in response to the complaint—zero students showed up to two of the meetings. Emerson eventually hired Melanie Matson to fill the position, but there were far fewer social media posts about it. Emerson's website had no story about it. And the Emerson Stands bracelets are nowhere to be seen.

It's a common theme among social or political issues on campus: A rallying cry can be heard when the story is in the eye of the mainstream media (remember KONY?), but once the stories fade, so does student interest. It was easy when Huffington Post stories were popping up for students to show—or feign—interest in an admirable cause.

But sans the headlines—without a common public item to stand behind—the passion and effort is gone.

It seems that every time the summer months roll around, students separate themselves from the initiatives they were actively engaged in during the school year and instead plan to pick up where they left off come fall. But social justice campaigns and other big plans can't sustain impact if abandoned. In the four months when students get summer jobs or internships, legislation that was close to being passed, unions that were close to formation, and policies that were nearing implementation wind up losing steam and falling short of success. If the student body cares about the issues they sacrifice so much time over during the school year, they need to understand that the passion cannot wane. Hunger, segregation, discrimination, sexism, and other problems do not stop just because it's summer. Neither should we.

Students and administrators have launched other admirable measures this school year, like spreading planters across Emerson's buildings and, just days ago, helping food service workers unionize. But it's precisely because

Every time the summer months roll around, students separate themselves from the initiatives they were once actively engaged in.

these initiatives are so important that the stakes for following through are so high. The real work comes not with the launch of a good idea, but in the weeks and months after. For potted plants, the costs of failing may only be wilted leaves, but for sexual assault policy reform and a nascent labor union, fondering can have serious consequences.

So whether you are completing your freshman year or just picked up your cap and gown, remember that the issues you once felt so passionately about still exist and deserve to be championed outside of the Emerson's walls.

*Editorials are written solely by Editor-in-Chief Evan Sporer, Managing Editors Ryan Catalani and Andrew Doerfler, Opinion Editor Trelawny Vermont-Davis, and Assistant Opinion Editor Jackie Roman, without consultation from other staff members, and do not influence other stories. Op-Eds reflect the views of only their authors, and not The Berkeley Beacon.*

### 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](mailto:letters@berkeleybeacon.com). Please note that letters may be edited. Submissions for print must be shorter than 250 words.

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### Editorial Cartoon

by the Editorial Board  
illustration by Holly Kirkman

"Not this time, Jimmy."



# opinion

## Political convictions, not correctness



Following convictions are important, even beyond the Boylston T stop • Photo illustration by Evan Walsh

**Trelawny Vermont-Davis** is a senior political communication major and opinion editor of the *Beacon*.

A certain reaction comes to all of us each April—successive disbelief at having finished your freshman year of college, suddenly being halfway done and then, astonishingly, being on the cusp of graduation.

When I first took to these pages, I was nervous to publicize my views on such a widely accessible platform. I was worried as to how my professors and peers would react to my thoughts on sensitive and personal subjects. Two years ago, I wrote about the politics behind the *Dark Knight Rises*, then Affirmative Action, and a controversial defense of Emerson in light of a few less-than-flattering scandals. I had written because I cared about the issues—I cared as a minority student and as an Emerson Lion worried for her college.

As Emerson students, we possess a unique opportunity: For four years, we have the luxury to engage in a continual conversation. For me, the *Beacon* was the home for that conversation. But classrooms, dining halls, Facebook—these are just some of the many other mediums for our discourse. It is our privilege to debate with one another and to champion the causes we genuinely believe are important.

At the core of this privilege lies an argu-

ment: that ideas matter—that the conversation at Emerson can have a ripple effect beyond the corner of Boylston and Tremont. And it's an expensive proposition; society spends a lot to send us here.

On occasion, it can seem our community falls short of its price tag. And at a school so concerned with political correctness, sometimes, we are afraid of offending each other and so we self-censor. In my two years as an editor and writer, I quickly realized that there are some topics that as a society, we are simply not ready to discuss. And, conversely, issues I did care about and wrote about landed me in uncomfortable positions, sometimes even with my closest friends. It is no secret that it is easier to play it safe by staying within boundaries.

At other times, we are simply apathetic. I say “we” because I know I have never engaged in a protest at Emerson. And from what it seems, most of my peers haven't either. Sure, some student groups attempt

to “raise awareness” by creating Facebook groups and starting Twitter hashtags. But when was the last time you participated in a raucous rally for something you really cared about?

By and large, though, despite these occasional uninterested lulls, Emerson works. We buy into the proposal that what we study, what we write, and what we say can influence society. And—perhaps most crucially—we usually, in one way or another, end up standing for something.

As I prepare to leave Emerson, I have been asking myself: What did I stand for? In these pages, I have challenged the economic status quo—from Walmart's static business model to Occupy Wall Street's misguided movement. I have advocated for intellectual diversity—the notion that all ideas, especially dissenting ones, contain value. I have consistently argued that our culture impacts our academics, and that we must critically re-evaluate both.

As I prepare to leave Emerson,  
I have been asking myself:  
What did I stand for?

There are many moments when it is appropriate to critique our time at Emerson. But, at the end of the day, we still love it. It becomes as much a part of us as anything we will be a part of.

It is easier to take stances at Emerson, in part because our community is one endless conversation. And it is also our responsibility, precisely because it is easier, to take these stances. As my peers and I graduate, we will enter a world where standing up for our values becomes increasingly difficult—who talks politics at the workplace? So to those who will remain in the windiest pocket of Boston: Make use of your privilege and make your convictions known.

But our obligation to ideas and to our values does not simply end when we leave Emerson. It may get harder to write an op-ed or speak out about our beliefs, but the issues are no less important. Our job is to take the Emerson we love, that constant conversation, and resettle it into wherever we live. I hope that I will, and I hope that you will.

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## The privilege pill

**Christina Bartson** is a freshman journalism major and assistant news editor of the *Beacon*.

The light from a lamp glints off the aluminum surface of the Red Bull cans lined up along the back of the desk. Fingers are poised over the keyboard, tense and unmoving. A hand reaches into a backpack and pulls out a little baggy, shaking it until a small round pill falls into the palm. The substance is swallowed. Its consumer turns back to the laptop and waits for the drug to kick-in.

The pill goes by the names Vitamin-A, kiddy cocaine, and the smart drug. It's reliable, it works fast, and it's easy to find, especially at colleges in the Northeast. It's Adderall, an amphetamine prescribed for attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. But students without the disorder are doping to get a superhuman effect. Pop an Addie and you become highly focused and industrious for hours, completing work in a fraction of the time it would usually take. The pill isn't making you smarter, per se, but it increases your productivity. Despite its tempting benefits, taking Adderall non-medically is not only dangerous to one's health, but an abuse of privilege.

Dr. Anjan Chatterjee, a professor of neurology at the University of Pennsylvania, coined the term “cosmetic neurology” to describe enhanced abilities in healthy people due to non-medical use of drugs like Adderall, and the ethical issues that ensue. We're living in the age of “cosmetic neurology,” but it's a practice exclusive only to those with a disposable income to afford the pills or who have access to health insurance to cover expensive prescriptions. These little pills

are just one more rung in the economic disparities we see in higher education, and with every purchase and swallow, the wide gaps between students' socioeconomic classes expand a little more.

Adderall isn't cheap. On most campus black markets, one pill, which is good for an evening of work, ranges from \$5 to \$11, according to StreetRx. A one-time purchase isn't going to break the bank, but if you become a regular user, it gets expensive. Who can afford this financial venture? According to a study conducted by the University of Michigan, certain demographic factors are more common among nonprescription users. Consumers are more often white, male, members of fraternities or sororities, and have lower grade point averages. Students with a history of drug and alcohol use are also more likely to take stimulants for nonmedical reasons. The drug seems to help these students play catch-up. We've all felt the pressure of a ticking clock in the wee hours of the morning, but Adderall's most common abusers have an unfair advantage in their education—they shake a little bottle and get a big boost.

It's easy to understand the temptation of a pill that can help you focus and

complete your work more quickly, but this quick-and-easy remedy hurts users. There's an American tendency to seek shortcuts. From dropping pounds to improving our sex lives, a pill will do the job. But taking Adderall shortchanges users because they aren't learning critical work skills at a crucial point in their lives. School provides a safety net to learn to manage time and build a work ethic. Self-motivation and self-discipline are skills that will serve students for the rest of their lives.

Recreational users also forget that for many prescribed users, Adderall is necessary, and abusing the drug trivializes attention deficit disorder. Reducing ADHD to a list of symptoms to get a supply to use non-medically is not okay, but the practice is widespread for those who can pocket it. An experiment at the University of Kentucky found that students could successfully get a false positive diagnosis after just five minutes of Googling ADHD symptoms. Someone without this condition shouldn't get to play dress-up and try on the disorder to ease his/her academic woes.

Besides, Adderall abuse is accompanied by a Paula Deen-sized grocery list of self-inflicted side effects. College students have a very casual attitude toward

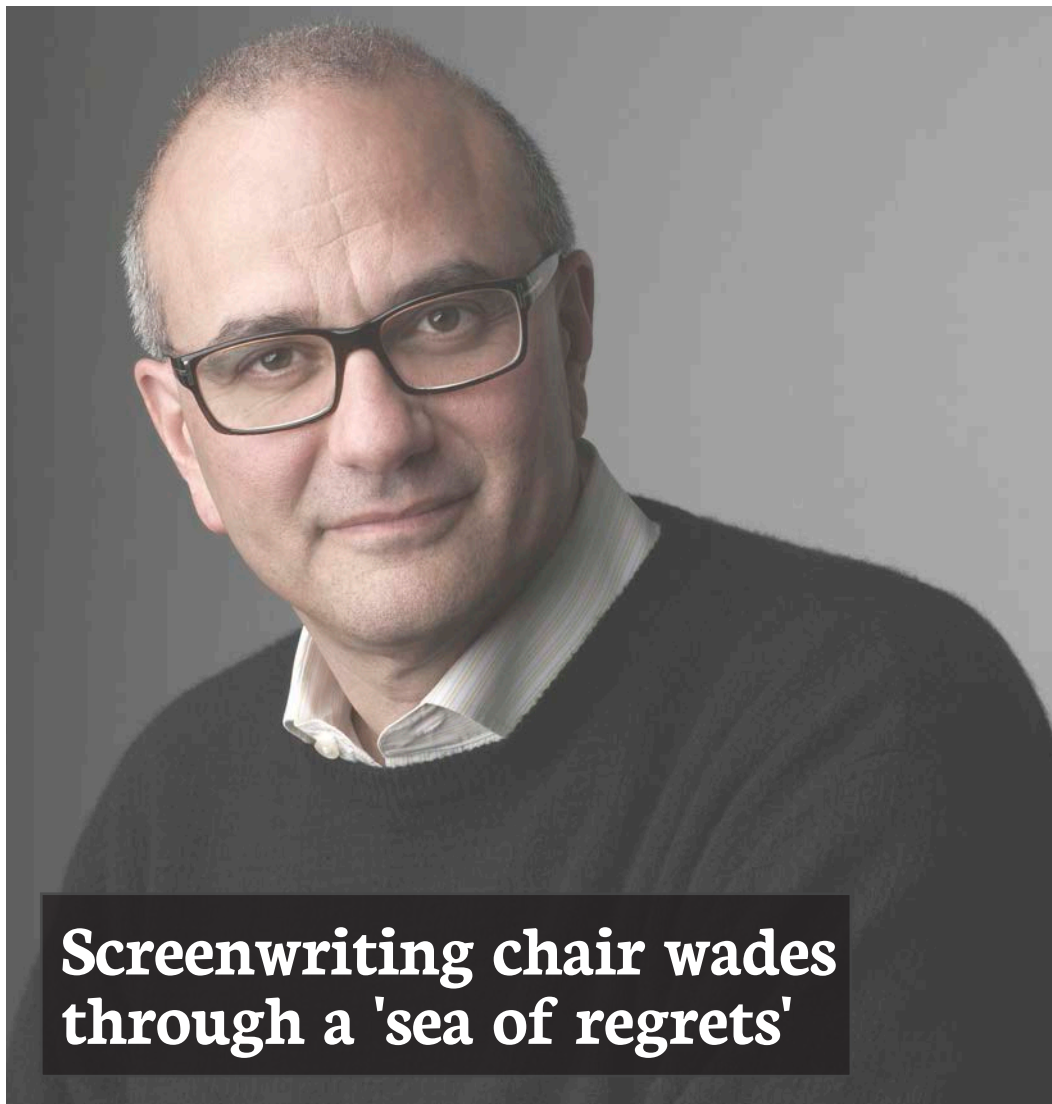
Adderall, but it's not equivalent to coffee or energy drinks. Adderall is a DEA Schedule II substance, as are morphine, oxycodone, meth, and cocaine. It has a high potential for abuse and can lead to severe psychological or physical dependence. Despite these warnings and strict regulations by the DEA, only 2 percent of students nationwide said that its use is “very dangerous.” This shrug-and-swallow practice has led to a 276 percent increase in emergency room visits involving Adderall misuse from 2004 to 2009. When you make the choice to take a drug to get good grades, you are injuring your body to get ahead temporarily. Is it worth it?

I have a friend back home who takes Adderall for her ADHD, except sometimes she skips doses. She wants to be a comedian and is part of an improv group, and feels that when she's on Adderall, she's not as funny. She feels the drug hinders her creativity. She is someone who needs the drug, but doesn't want to take it because she doesn't feel like her authentic self. She wishes she didn't have to be on Adderall. I'm not encouraging people to skip taking their medicine, but if you don't need it, don't take it. You can be the best version of yourself sans drugs. I'm advocating authenticity. I'm advocating enduring the work and the grime because you'll come out honest and stronger.

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# arts



## Screenwriting chair wades through a 'sea of regrets'

2014 Semel Chair in Screenwriting Rafael Yglesias. • Courtesy of James Salzano

Erica Mixon, *Beacon Staff*

At 47, Rafael Yglesias had written 10 novels, adapted four screenplays into movies, and worked with famous directors such as Peter Weir and Roman Polanski, but still didn't feel as though he had achieved his dreams. Yglesias decided to initiate his own rebirth as a writer. The first step was to kill his parents — figuratively, of course.

According to Yglesias, his parents believed that they had failed because none of their books had been bestsellers or won literary prizes, and because “at their deaths, essentially all of their work was out of print and unavailable to readers.”

Yglesias had the same feelings of doubt, humiliation, and emptiness. While reevaluating his life and career choice, Yglesias recalled that he had no choice but to kill the impossibly high expectations of his parents.

Rafael's father, Jose Yglesias, had 14 books published by the time he died at age 77, and his mother Helen had seven published books, with her work featured in *The New Yorker*.

“My parents died believing they had failed,” Yglesias said in a speech during an event hosted by the Bright Lights series last Thursday night. Yglesias was awarded the 2014 Semel Chair in Screenwriting and is a temporary professor of an advanced screenwriting workshop at Emerson.

“They should have taken pleasure in their achievements,” Yglesias said. “And so I strangled and burned the defeated, embittered writers who gave themselves no credit for two lifetimes of courage and accomplishment...and embraced what they should have: the pleasure, the hard work, the achievement of writing.”

Yglesias began his long road to personal success at age 15, when he began writing

his first novel, *Hide Fox, and All After*, which focused on the frustrations of adolescence. After he finished the first half of the novel, Yglesias stole \$200 from his mother's purse, ran away, and refused to return home unless his parents allowed him to drop out of high school so he could focus on the completion of his novel.

“I'm just a sea of regrets,” Yglesias said in an interview with the Beacon after his speech. “I had no chance to experiment. There were things that I had to learn later in life, like psychology and philosophy. It would've been better to do that in college rather than laboriously study them in my 20s.”

In his speech, he focused on the regrets of his career, including his time working as hack writer, his decision not to attend college, and breaking the contract of a publisher.

“Your story was both inspiring and terrifying,” Eric Koenig, a senior visual media arts major, said to Yglesias during a Q-and-A that followed the speech.

Koenig, who is graduating at the end of the semester, gleaned important information about writing from listening to Yglesias's journey.

“Like the best things in life, it's not easy,” Koenig told the Beacon. “But on some level, it's worth it, even if you consider yourself a total failure at times.”

In both his speech and the Q-and-A, Yglesias offered valuable advice to aspiring writers: write what you know.

“Write about what you're obsessed with,” Yglesias clarified, in his interview with the Beacon. “It may be a small audience, but people go to writers to experience a world that they can't have themselves. Trying to give them what they want is a mistake.”

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🐦 @ericamix

## Mixtapes: The best 'thank you'

In eighth grade, my class was asked to write about a recent experience that meant a lot to us. I decided to write about my first concert -- Fall Out Boy's *From Under The Cork Tree* tour -- because it seemed easy. But when my pen hit the paper, every line that came out was a cliché. How do you describe something that you had been anticipating, that made you feel both overwhelmed and empowered, where you could physically feel music despite it being invisible? I wanted to relive the first of many evenings spent being taken over by music, but its importance to me at the time made it impossible to capture.

Thankfully the next best thing to experiencing music is sharing it. Mixtapes are the best way to invite someone to experience a part of your life. It shows them your gratitude by offering up something that's more than just an item. Regrettably, it seems we, as a whole, have started to forget that's an option.

When mixtapes went from 80s cassettes that took several hours to record onto 90s CDs, the effort that went into creating them changed. Then, of course, came the 00s and the shift to online streaming and creating playlists through the internet. Sharing music became less about the experience and more about the content. Drag and drop your favorite songs into a Spotify playlist and message your friend the link.

That carelessness is what detracts from it all. Sure, the song names are there and the album art for each song will pop up, but where's the fun in having your friends do the research themselves? What happened to song order? Careful planning can make it so one song blends into the next with ease, allowing for a more enjoyable listening experience. Plus choosing that perfect closer is what can get your friend to immediately start the whole CD over again, eager to keep the moment alive.

We have to keep it going. Nothing compares to holding a mix in your hand and looking at the cover art encasing it, even if it's a simple doodle and the track names written in faded chicken scratch.

In an effort to recapture that first concert feeling, I went home and put together a mixtape for my teacher. Only one song on it was actually by the band;

**Nina Corcoran**  
*Corcoran is a senior writing, literature, and publishing major & Beacon music columnist.*

the rest were songs that embodied the spirit of the concert and the technicalities that stuck with me, like the bass's ability to vibrate your foot when lifted from the ground or the weird resemblance all those flashing cameras have to nature when the house lights are cut before a band walks onstage. It didn't count towards my grade, my teacher didn't say much other than an extended thank you, and I may not have been able to recount that experience in words, but I could sure give that moment justice when shared with someone through a pool of songs.

The most overlooked part of it all is that mixtapes aren't just for summer roadtrips with your best friends or heart-doodled gifts for your boyfriend or girlfriend. Mixtapes are for introducing yourself, for getting to know one another better, for helping someone out. They're a birthday gift that show you've given your time and thoughts to a friend, an explanation of culture from your point of view for a pen pal in another country, a soft fist to the chin when you try to cheer someone up with the sounds that pick you up on the worst of days.

For those who can't peel themselves away from the ease of online mixtapes, don't feel like this is an attack. Instead, head to music blog Tiny Mix Tapes. One of their features, aptly titled “Mixtapes,” encourages collaborative mixtape creations. Viewers send in a thought, phrase, or question to be the theme and title of the mix; another will then get to help compile its contents based off the name. Nothing gets you thinking like “I Just Quit My Job. That Felt Awesome” and “Dance Songs For People Who Claim They 'Don't Dance'”.

If anything, mixtapes should be our reminder that giving is the most important, and one of the frequently overlooked, ways to live. They allow us to share what we believe is the best of what we've found so that way others can experience it. Why hoard that to yourself? The world is a hell of a lot better when everyone gets to hear its greatest sounds.

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🐦 @Nina\_Corcoran

### Nina's Mixtape

1. tUnE-yArDs  
"News"
2. Joanna Gruesome  
"Secret Surprise"
3. Heatmiser  
"Christian Brothers"
4. Badbadnotgood  
"Earl (feat. Leland Whitty)"
5. Local Natives  
"World News"
6. Lilys  
"Radiotricity"
7. Stereolab & Nurse  
With Wound  
"Simple Headphone Mind"
8. Jaco Pastorius  
"A Portrait of Tracy"
9. Thee Oh Sees  
"If I Had a Reason"
10. Cannon Mockasin  
"Forever Dolphin Love (Erol Alkan Remix)"
11. Angel Olsen  
"Tota"
12. The Books  
"Motherless Bastard"

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# lifestyle

## For those treated with marijuana, no clear place on campus

Continued from Medical Marijuana, Page 1

a release from his housing contract to use medical marijuana in a private residence. Gutierrez's petition was determined to "not warrant release from the housing contract," according to a letter from the Office of Housing and Resident Life.

"I want to be in a place where I can take the medication that allows me to live my life in a productive, non-debilitating way," said the sophomore performing arts major, who declined to share the details of the health condition requiring treatment from marijuana because he said he is uncomfortable publishing his medical history.

Students who request a release from housing must complete a packet from the Disability Services Office, which requires documentation from a professional giving a clear diagnostic statement of the student's disability or illness, and schedule an interview before a decision is relayed to the Office of Housing and Residence Life and the student.

Gutierrez provided the disabilities office with a formal recommendation from a general care physician in Massachusetts to use medical marijuana, but was unable provide documentation from his primary care physician of a formal diagnosis of his medical condition, or a recommendation to use medical marijuana to treat the condition, according to emails between Gutierrez and Matt Fisher, assistant director of disability services.

Students have the right to appeal through the standard grievance process if they are unsatisfied with the board's decision on their request, according to the disability services office's statement of policies and procedures.

Gutierrez said he spoke with Fisher after the decision and chose not to appeal because his impression was that it would not be successful.

Emerson Reform hopes to present its proposal to the administration by the end of spring semester, McHale said.

"We're not going for a radical change," said McHale. "We're not saying, 'Let us use a bong in our common rooms.' We're just saying, 'Let kids leave.'"

Students entering Emerson as freshmen are usually required to live on campus for their first four semesters, with one exception being a proven disability that would preclude the student from living in the college's dormitories, according to the school's housing policy.

David Haden, associate dean and former director of housing and residence life, wrote in an email to the Beacon that



Jonathan Gutierrez (far left), who takes medical marijuana, was denied in his petition to break his on-campus housing contract. Jeff McHale (second from left), Emerson Reform president, is leading an initiative to change Emerson's policy and prevent situations like Gutierrez's. • Nate Leese / Beacon Staff

each student housing release request is reviewed critically and thoroughly in accordance with applicable federal and state laws. He said he could not discuss any specific student cases.

Under federal law, marijuana is still a Schedule II drug, regardless of state rulings of medical marijuana legalization. Emerson, like most higher education institutions, is in an awkward position because the college is federally funded through student financial aid and research grants, and therefore is subject to federal regulations such as the Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act and the Drug-Free Workplace Act, according to the college's policy on alcohol and other drugs.

Tufts University's on-campus marijuana policy stands with federal regulation, but also allows for students with Massachusetts medical marijuana licenses to apply for a release from their housing contracts, according to the university's medical marijuana policy. This is the policy that Emerson Reform is trying to institute.

Emerson Reform hopes to team up with Emerson Polling Society to find out how many people would support a

**"We're not saying, 'Let us use a bong in our common rooms.' We're just saying, 'Let kids leave.'"**  
-Jeff McHale, Emerson Reform president

change in housing policy and the prevalence of students with a medical marijuana license on campus.

"Obviously the student body will support us," said McHale. "We're taking our time, getting this poll done and getting our research done. If we frame it in this way, it will be hard to say no."

Emily Abi-Kheirs, a junior visual and media arts major, and Emerson Reform member, said this initiative, like many of the projects the organization takes up, is about breaking the drug taboo and starting a dialogue on campus. She said she believes the school is hesitant to make the change because administrators are concerned about its reputation.

"I honestly think the school is worried about its image," said Abi-Kheirs. "It shouldn't have to be something we are skirting around. In an ideal world, taking your edibles should be the same as taking your insulin or taking your pills. It's just the same as other medicines."

Richard West, Emerson Reform faculty advisor and professor in the communication studies department, declined to comment.

Gutierrez said he believes his choice of medicine is not yet taken seriously at

Emerson.

"I feel that any medical need or recommendation should be looked at with an equal lens," he said. "Especially when the law in the state allows me to."

Abi-Kheirs said Emerson Reform's initiative aims to break down the cloudy stigma surrounding medical marijuana patients and this change in the school's housing policy is the first step for the community.

Twenty-one states have legalized medical marijuana, and Abi-Kheirs said more colleges will be encountering this friction between school policy and state law, so Emerson should lead the pack.

"Laws are changing all across the country," said Abi-Kheirs. "We just need to be the progressive school Emerson claims to be."

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## Dating tips: Summer lovin' or summertime sadness?

Leah Casselman

Casselman is a junior marketing communication major & the Beacon dating columnist.

Alas, the summer is almost here. It's great to be free of school for a couple of months, but it's hard to accept we won't be able to see some of the people that matter to us as often as we are used to. The month of April has all the young couples hoping and dreaming to have their romance last through the long separation, which is often crushed mid-May when they realize just how lonely they are apart. You might make it through, but you might not. Here are some thoughts on how to handle your situation.

If you need a lot of physical contact, you might want to give up on the relationship before summer starts. No one wants to hear that his or her relationship is doomed, but there is a good chance yours is. I am the type of person who needs hugs and physical contact with someone, so a long distance relationship puts a real strain on me. It can feel like you're not really with the person you're dating when you haven't seen them in over a month. Instead of being a person that brings joy to your life, they feel like

a chore out to ruin your good time and make you feel guilty for going out with your friends on the weekends to places with attractive members of your preferred gender.

If you're like this, just let it go. Let summer be your time to hump and dump all over your location of choice or take some time to be single. If you really regret ending things you can always pick it back up once school starts again.

If you really want to go the distance, you need to be aware of some very real changes that will be happening in your relationship, the biggest being the silence after the first few weeks when you run out of things to talk about. You are no longer sharing experiences and spending time with your mutual friends. There are only so many times you can talk about your never-changing day before it becomes completely boring.

I like to do little stupid things to spice up the routine. Once, I got a postcard from every place I visited and sent them to my boyfriend with a bad doodle of him and a wish-you-were-here message.

It helped keep things more entertaining and made our relationship fun again.

Consider texting and calling each other less. I've seen couples communicate more when they are apart than they ever did when they were together and it really speeds up that lack-of-things-to-talk-about phenomenon. Call each other often, but not so often that you struggle to keep the conversation going.

The awkward need to keep talking after you've run out of things to say can sometimes lead to fights you weren't ready to have or arguments about things that really don't matter. Keep them wanting more, not wishing they had a break from your voice.

Always remember to avoid temptation. Your cute friend who just happens to like you wants you to come over and watch a movie? You don't have to say no, but bring some buffer friends. Putting

yourself in a situation that makes it hard to stay faithful to your partner will just make you feel uncomfortable and question your relationship.

Don't forget to say what you're really feeling. Communicating your feelings

**"No one wants to hear that his or her relationship is doomed, but there is a good chance yours is."**

can sometimes be uncomfortable, but if you're having problems and you let them bottle up until they explode in a late-night break up phone call, you're

not going to be happy. Talk about the things that are really bothering you and get them addressed so you can fix them.

No matter what you decide to do with your relationship, remember to live, love, and have a great time. This is my last column and it was great spending the past year giving you silly advice.

Happy dating!

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# sports

## From roommates to rivals, alumni follow hockey dreams

Samuel Evers, *Beacon Staff*

The first person Ian Tasso met on Emerson's move-in day in September 2007 was fellow freshman Jesse Liebman.

"He walked into my room with his hockey bag and goes 'Hi, I'm Jesse, I play hockey,'" said Tasso with a grin, "and that's how the legend was born."

For Tasso, from Topsfield, Mass., and Liebman, from Croton, N.Y., who both graduated in September 2011 with degrees in print and multimedia journalism, that out-of-the-blue statement foreshadowed a close friendship rich in hockey that is still alive today.

Jump forward seven years and the two Emerson grads are both living on the other side of the country, working and broadcasting for rival teams in the NHL's second-tier minor league, the ECHL.

Tasso, who lives in Las Vegas, Nev. and works for the Las Vegas Wranglers, and Liebman, who lives in Eastvale, Calif. and works for the Ontario Reign, have remained best friends, visiting and speaking to each other frequently despite the rivalry, which Liebman jokingly admitted was "only jersey deep."

For the two print majors, who were roommates as freshmen and roommates throughout the rest of their time at Emerson, their transition from writing to broadcasting started during their sophomore year after getting involved in ETIN, Emerson's Talk and Information Network.

"I never even thought of radio or TV as a viable career; I liked to write," said Tasso, who was the sports editor of the Beacon his senior year. "But sophomore year we randomly decided to put together a show and fell in love with it."

That show was called *Last Call*.

"At first it was just a bunch of guys talking about sports," said Liebman. "But over time it got more serious. We had [Bruins Player] Brad Marchand on, we had Red Sox owner Larry Lucchino on, we had John Havlicek on, we started getting some real recognition around campus."

By their senior year, *Last Call* was running advertisements from Boloco and Dick's Sporting Goods and had won two EVVY Awards.

As the success at ETIN grew, so did Tasso and Liebman's friendship.

"We were pretty much inseparable at Emerson," said Liebman. "If you saw one of us, you were probably going to see the other."

The two also partnered in jobs at WEEL, Boston's marquee sports radio station, and at The Boston Globe, on top of the usual workload of classes and extracurriculars.

"Both of them were excellent students," said journalism professor Mark Leccese, who Tasso and Liebman both credited as an influence. "They both worked hard and paid their dues."

When their Emerson careers were over and the lease was up on their North End apartment, the two returned to their respective homes to regroup and search for new paths.

That new path came first for Tasso, who, after being informed of an ECHL career fair, traveled to Las Vegas and met with the Wranglers, who were in search of both sales and marketing help and a broadcaster.

Tasso was hired by the Wranglers in June 2011. Along with calling their games for the radio, he has done everything from writing press releases to dressing up as the team's mascot, the green radioactive bull named "The Duke."

"The toughest year was definitely the first year," said Tasso. "But I knew it would help



Ian Tasso (left) and Jesse Liebman (right) working at their ECHL gigs. • *Courtesy of Ian Tasso*

when Jesse got here. Having a friend made me feel more at home."

The following summer, when a broadcaster for the ECHL's Ontario Reign approached Tasso looking for an intern, Tasso immediately referred him to Liebman, who was at home in New York doing odd jobs in search of a career.

Liebman subsequently dropped what he was doing, went to Ontario, interned for the team, and was officially hired in May 2013 as an Inside Sales Representative, also doing the play-by-play for the Reign for every home game and most away games.

Now, both settled into their jobs in 2014, the two best friends working for ECHL rivals Ontario and Las Vegas said this outcome is as improbable as it could have gotten.

"I can't stress the craziness enough," said Tasso. "We used to be rivals because he was a New York Rangers fan and I was a Bruins fan. Now fast-forwarding four years and we are both doing radio for rival professional hockey teams."

As far the rivalry between the Reign and the Wranglers, who play each other regularly based on their close proximity, Liebman said the two have gotten on board, often trash-

talking each other on Twitter.

"It's kinda funny when he's at our arena," said Liebman. "Because our broadcast booths are elevated [to the same height], we are always messing around and trying to throw each other off."

Both broadcasters said their current jobs would be different had they not been so close. Tasso credits Liebman for getting him so intensely into hockey, and Liebman credits Tasso for referring him to the opportunity with the Reign.

While working for rival ECHL teams may be unlikely, Leccese said their early accomplishments were no coincidence.

"I'm not surprised both of them have careers in sports broadcasting, because even as students, both of the them had big personalities," said Leccese. "I hope they both make it to the NHL. That wouldn't surprise me a bit."

*Editor-in-chief Evan Sporer did not edit this story because he is a friend of Tasso and Liebman.*

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**"I never even thought of radio or TV as a viable career; I liked to write."  
— Ian Tasso, Emerson alumnus**

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THURSDAY

## Bananas in pajamas



A scene from last semester's Late Night Buffet.  
Courtesy of Emerson Media Relations

Over the past two decades, the Emerson community has gathered around the kitchen to indulge and refuel before final exams.

"It has been going on for so many years, that we have difficulty trying to pinpoint the exact year the event began," Dave Haden, associate dean, said in an email.

The Late Night Buffet traditionally serves breakfast in December, prepared and served by college faculty, staff, and administrators. For the spring, students can look forward to an ice cream sundae bar, sausage and pepper subs, grilled bratwurst subs, a chicken wing bar, a french fries and nachos bar, peppermint stick milkshakes, popcorn, and soft pretzels.

—Kelsey Drain / Beacon Staff

**Late Night Buffet**  
 Dining Hall  
 April 24, 9 p.m. to 11 p.m.

SATURDAY

## Out of the box



It's a hit.  
Courtesy of Leah Schrager.

Let out your inner LuPone meet your inner LaMotta for a class that combines theatrical choreography and aerobic boxing. The course is presented in concurrence with the ArtsEmerson production *The Wholehearted*, a solo performance about boxing that runs through April 27 in Paramount Center's Jackie Liebergott Black Box. You'll learn moves directly from performer Suli Hulom and The Ring Boxing Club trainer Andrew Medina.

As a bonus, it's a chance to let out some pre-finals stress. Just pretend you're hitting your way through your final Fundamentals of Speech Communication project.

The event is part of Artweek Boston, a series of creative and cultural events held throughout the city.

—Andrew Doerfler / Beacon Staff

**Wholehearted Boxing: A Demonstration**

The Ring Boxing Club, 971 Commonwealth Ave.  
 April 26, 10 a.m. to 11 a.m.  
 Free. Reserve at ArtsEmerson.org

## Even more events

View this calendar and submit your events at [berkeleybeacon.com/events](http://berkeleybeacon.com/events).

THURSDAY, APRIL 24

**Nowhere Near Respectable**  
*Piano Row Multipurpose Room, 9:30 p.m.*  
 Make Me a Sandwich, a collective of funny females, returns this semester with an improv show.

FRIDAY, APRIL 25

**Cereal Break**  
*Multipurpose Room, 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.*  
 Don't snap, crackle, or pop under the pressure of finals.

**VMA Student Exhibition Opening**  
*Huret & Spector Gallery, 5 p.m. to 7 p.m.*  
 Departing grad students and undergrads fill the gallery that nobody knows about.

SATURDAY, APRIL 26

**Flapjack**  
*Little Building Cabaret, 8 p.m. April 27 at 4 p.m. and 8 p.m.*  
 Summer romance, accompanied by a live rock band.

**Seeing Red**  
*Greene Theatre, 7 p.m.*  
 Redux Riding Hood.

**What Ships are For**  
*Bill Bordy Theater, 8 p.m., April 27 at 8 p.m.*  
 Family matters, courtesy of Mercutio Troupe.

**Flawless Brown**  
*Piano Row Multicultural Center, 5 p.m. and April 27 at 3 p.m. and 8 p.m.*  
 The school's first street theater troupe for women of color.



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