

Freshman celebrates survivorship**Separating self-worth from others' success****Freshman setter impresses early**

The Berkeley Beacon

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Women's basketball secures NEWMAC playoff spot



This will be Emerson's first playoff appearance since the 2014-15 season • Kyle Bray / Beacon Staff

Matt Couture, *Beacon Staff*

Emerson's women's basketball team celebrated Valentine's Day with a playoff-clinching win over Wheaton College.

The 75-50 victory secured the women's basketball team's first playoff berth since 2015, when the Lions lost to Wheaton in the quarterfinals. The team is the first to clinch a playoff spot in the 2017-2018 season for Emerson athletics.

Head coach Bill Gould said he's focused on his team's play and not worried about which opponent the Lions draw.

"If we play well then we'll give ourselves a chance to win."

"It's more about how we play and what we're doing," Gould said. "Obviously there's some matchups that maybe we would prefer over another, but overall it doesn't matter who we play...if we play well then we'll give ourselves a chance to win."

Emerson occupies the sixth seed in the NEWMAC standings, and would play third-seeded Worcester Polytechnic Institute if the standings hold. The Lions are set to meet the Engineers in their regular season finale on Saturday.

See playoffs, page 8

Latinx playwright documents heritage from Boston to LA

Annika Hom, *Beacon Staff*

Andrew Sianez-De La O '17 saw patriotism and Hispanic culture blend growing up next to an immigration fort. His experiences in El Paso, Texas, inspired two of his plays that are developing on opposite coasts.

Sianez-De La O finished *Sangre Mía* through a fellowship with Boston's Company One Theatre and now works at Northeastern University. He is also working on *Rain On Mars (Hecho a Mano)* through a remote fellowship with Echo Theater Company in Los Angeles.

Determined to diversify the types of characters and narratives represented in theater, Sianez-De La O drew on his own experiences as a Latino-American from El Paso, Texas for his plays. His first play, *Sangre Mía*, is based on his memories of growing up along the Texas-Mexico border. *Rain On Mars (Hecho a Mano)*, a work-in-progress, is a science-fiction play about two siblings traveling to Mars.

"Spanish finds its way [into] everything I write," he said.

Sangre Mía tells the story of a soldier who returns from the Iraq War and becomes an immigration officer in El Paso, Texas. The main character, influenced by the career path of Sianez-De La O's stepfather, wrestles with the political and racial implications of his new job.

See fellowships, page 7



3-D scan restores Little Building's century-old history

By Stefania Lugli • p. 2

The Little Building facade has been stripped and will be replicated in the reconstruction.
Hardik Pahwa / Beacon Correspondent

Noise rattles Colonial residents

Gabriella Mrozowski, *Beacon Correspondent*

Jackhammers and construction noise wake up students living in Colonial Residence Hall instead of their alarm clocks. Residents said they are struggling with the commotion from Little Building and Colonial Theater despite the college's attempts to find a solution.

"It's so loud and it feels like the windows don't do anything to keep the noise out," freshman and Colonial resident Gabrielle Dudley said.

On Feb. 9, Colonial Residence Director Michael Barcelo sent out a following entry in a series of emails. In it, he specified construction hours—7 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. with the exception of 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. on extended days—asking for student voices, and providing suggestions for noise. Barcelo declined to comment.

Between the hours of 11 p.m. to 7 a.m., Boston does not permit any noise louder than 50 decibels, according to the city's website.

"While there may be work crews and individuals around prior to these times and after on site, work should be not conducted outside of these hours," Barcelo wrote in his email.

Barcelo recognized that despite Boston's permitted hours of noise and the given hours of construction, there is a possibility of after-hour and weekend work. He also announced an open meeting for residents in the email, with a date confirmed for Feb. 15 on fliers around the residence building.

On Jan. 31, Barcelo sent an email offering Colonial residents earplugs as a non-permanent solution to complaints made to the college.

Dudley said measures like earplugs are not a viable solution.

"If you wear earplugs, then you don't hear your alarm. It doesn't really help," she said.

See construction, page 3

news

Renovation gives old Little Building exterior new life

Stefania Lugli, *Beacon Correspondent*

The college commissioned highly detailed, three-dimensional scans of Little Building as part of a measure to fully restore the building's original exterior and commemorate a lively past.

The college hired Canadian company Béton Préfabriqué du Lac Inc. to scan the building.

Each scan analyzes the curves of the exterior, feeds information to a computer, then produces replications in a stronger, lighter concrete. The fresh pieces of the exterior—also known as the facade—are then arranged in their original place on the building's exterior to replicate its initial appearance and size.

The college began preparation for reconstruction in 2012, when structural engineering company McNamara Salvia investigated and identified hazardous conditions requiring stabilization.

Parts of the 101-year-old building would hail onto the sidewalk. The falling debris prompted the installation of a protective scaffolding and a decision to begin the \$140 million repair in May 2017, Michael Faia, director of construction management, said.

Scanning the facade affirms dedication towards maintaining Little Building's integrity, Margaret Ings, vice president for government and community relations, said.

Neither administrators nor contractors specified how much of the project's budget went to restoring the original exterior.

"Every square inch of [Little Building] was laser-scanned," Arthur Mombourquette, senior associate vice president for real estate, said. "The scans were built into a computer for the goal of faithful replication of the building in electronic form."

Béton's process includes scanning over 2,000 individual elements from a rubber model after completing the scans. Then, the company sculpts models from ultra-high density concrete.

"[The Little Building renovation project] is one of the reasons I came here in the first place. I was so enthralled by a really honest, historic, renovation of that scale," Mombourquette, who came to Emerson in December 2015, said.

While students resided in the building, exterior materials and steel frames were noticeably

aging, which led to the deterioration of the facade in various locations. Water seeped behind the steel, rusted it, and pushed surrounding cast stone out.

"The stone was cracking," Faia said. "That's why we would check it twice a year and had overhead protection. There was never any chance for catastrophic failure."

Little Building's Historical Significance

Little Building emerged as the college's primary residence hall in 1994, as the college started to move from the Back Bay neighborhood to the Theater District.

After its grand opening in 1917, Little Building earned features in several prominent architectural magazines, such as the *American Architect and Building News*. The building was celebrated for its exterior as a prime example of a modern Gothic style skyscraper. It held over 600 offices and 30 shops, earning its nickname, "City Under One Roof."

The building even had its own newspaper called *Little Building News*. It covered news from the outside world and discussed interactions between staff, including tea gatherings and speed-typing contests.

"I didn't appreciate how much history was in the building when I was living there," sophomore Thomas Flynn said. "It was like a unifying place. It almost doesn't feel like Emerson without it."

When shown a rendering of Little Building's finished renovation, Flynn's mouth dropped.

"It's definitely not little," he said. "It looked grand."

Plans for the building include new common rooms and a thirteenth floor hidden behind the original 14'4" wall along the top of the building, according to an Institutional Master Plan Amendment submitted to the Boston Redevelopment Authority in 2015.

The replicated facade will serve as the finishing touch. The college plans to complete work on Little Building by August 2019.

"Bringing a building like this back ... it would be a revitalization of the corner. It would certainly be a dramatic and transformative cor-

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The college hired contractors to scan and replicate the Little Building exterior. *Hardik Pahwa / Beacon Correspondent*

New course prepares sophomores for internships



Career Services office created a Canvas internship course which is intended to prepare underclassman before Internship Fair. • *Brooke Northrup / Beacon Correspondent*

Annika Hom, *Beacon Staff*

Career Services rolled out a new Canvas course called Internship Ready, designed to prepare underclassmen for applying to internships.

The six-week pilot program launched on Feb. 5. It includes six modules and features tutorials on skills like interviewing, writing cover letters, and building resumes. The program is designed specifically for sophomores, since students become eligible for internship credit in their second year.

Emily Smedick, assistant director for experiential learning at Career Services, was surprised at the number of students who signed up. She only expected around 20 students to sign up, but more than double that did.

"We have a waitlist at this point," Smedick said.

Smedick built the course modules based on the center's most asked questions. She decided on an online format and weekly deadline to allow for more flexibility around students schedules.

Internship Ready was partly inspired by the

Emerson Los Angeles Prep Workshop, which prepares students for applying to internships in LA.

The end of the course will coincide with the Internship Fair on March 29. Director of Career Services Carol Spector said she hopes to see students enrolled excel with the skills they learn from the course.

After the program finishes, Smedick said Career Services will gauge student feedback about the current format and decide if they will continue the program moving forward.

"We're really viewing it as a learning experience for us as well [as it is for students]," Smedick said.

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SGA grants two appeals to EIV, Sigma

Chris Van Buskirk, *Beacon Staff*

The Student Government Association granted appeal requests to Emerson Independent Video and Sigma Phi Theta on Feb. 13.

EIV approached the Financial Advisory Board with an original appeal of \$11,825 to fund the purchase of new technical equipment, including a Sony A7S camera, and a reporting

trip to the Oscars in early March.

After deciding they did not have enough information about the equipment, SGA moved to consider the appeal in two parts.

SGA only granted \$3,100 to purchase flights, lodging, transportation, and food on the Oscars trip—with a vote of seven yes, three no, and two abstentions. SGA postponed conversations on the technical equipment.

The EIV reporting team is scheduled to leave

on March 2 and return March 6, with the Oscars taking place on March 4. As of Feb. 13, EIV has yet to receive their press passes guaranteeing them access to the Oscars, Executive Treasurer Ian Mandt said.

SGA granted Sigma Pi Theta \$2,045 to fund a month-long series of events called Herstory in March with a vote of seven yes and five abstentions.

The month is focused on the empowerment

of any who identifies as a woman. Events will include workshops on safe sex and consent, a donation drive for the homeless via St. Francis House, and a formal for the benefit of Planned Parenthood.

\$173,728 remains in the appeals account as of Feb. 13.

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College expands overnight multicultural program

Noel Gasca, *Beacon Correspondent*

The Office of Admissions is expanding its effort to attract more students from different cultures to campus through the Multicultural Perspective Overnight Program, now in its second year.

M-POP is an opportunity for accepted early action and regular decision multicultural students to visit and become better acquainted with Emerson. Last year, 30 students participated in the weekend-long program—and more than half committed to the college, according to Admissions Director Michael Lynch.

This year, admissions doubled the program's budget to \$100,000. The extra funds allow the office to increase the number of invited students and lengthen the program to two weekends spread across February and April.

All travel, meal, and lodging costs for M-POP participants are covered by the college. The program will coincide with Picture Yourself at Emerson, an open house event for accepted students.

Applicants for the Class of 2022 will also stay in hotels off-campus instead of residence halls.

This switch simplifies the planning process, giving program mentors and students time to get to know each other in another setting, Lynch said.

Lynch said versions of programs similar to M-POP have existed for years, but this grew out of conversations within the admissions staff.

Diversity Outreach Interns and other student volunteers act as mentors during the program and show M-POP participants around the school and city.

Junior Elmer Martinez is a Diversity Outreach Intern and mentor for M-POP. As a mentor, Martinez focuses on emphasizing strength within the community of students of color, while also acknowledging the state of diversity at Emerson.

The Class of 2021 is primarily white. 67 percent of students are Caucasian, followed by 11 percent Hispanic, five percent Asian/Pacific Islander, four percent African American, and only one Native American student, according to the

Emerson Facts and Figures page on the college's website.

"We [mentors] were adamant about the facts that come along with coming to Emerson as a multicultural student. We were very much genuine with that," Martinez said. "We were like 'Listen, this is what it is. This is who we are. We find empowerment via these different avenues.'"

"We [mentors] were adamant about the facts that come along with coming to Emerson as a multicultural student."

We reinforced what has been true with our experiences."

Students interested in M-POP are required to fill out a separate application following notification of acceptance to the college.

From there, Associate Admissions Director Camille Bouknight and Senior Assistant Director of Multicultural Recruitment Quontay Turner read through the applications. Lynch said they decide which accepted students to invite to M-POP based on a variety of factors—including the applicant's academic profile, whether the student qualifies for

scholarships, their geographic background, and their racial or ethnic background. The program is only open to domestic students.

Lia Kim, freshman from Queens, New York with a Korean background, visited Emerson through the M-POP program last year. Kim said while she originally didn't consider diversity an important factor in her college decision, it's something she thinks about now.

"I knew a big population of the school was white, but I didn't think that would make me so ... I don't want to say uncomfortable, because it's not a bad thing," Kim said. "But it was a bit jarring to go from a diverse New York city school to here."

Kim said she found solace in Asian Students for Intercultural Awareness.

"The feeling I have walking into an ASIA meeting is so much more different than walking into my [all-white] suite," she said.

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Colonial residents hear construction even with earplugs



Construction on the Colonial Theatre for its reopening disrupts Colonial residents. *Hardik Pahwa / Beacon Correspondent*

Continued from page 1

In an email sent out last September, Barcelo said construction noise "is very much a part of urban living that we will continue to adjust to." Colonial residents were made aware of the construction start time by resident assistants during orientation, Dudley said.

However, she took a video of the construction noise occurring before the 7 a.m. start time, contradictory to what RAs told her and her suitemates.

Barcelo encouraged students to continue sending feedback so he can send it to senior administrators, according to his Jan. 31 email. He also mentioned conversations between himself and other staff to fix the construction-noise problem the Colonial community faces.

Mullins said she sent complaints to Barcelo about the noise.

"[On Jan. 22, the noise started] at 6:40 a.m., and I don't think it was drilling. It was jackhammering, and all my suitemates woke up," Mullins said.

She did not experience this level of noise last semester, she said—and napping during the day seems impossible.

Senior Associate Vice President for Real Es-

tate Arthur Mombourquette said construction on the Colonial Theater started last May and is expected to wrap up in April of this year. Little Building construction will end fall of 2019.

President M. Lee Pelton said the Colonial Theater strengthens the college's sense of place in the city, according to a news memo on the college's website. But the construction attributed to Colonial Theater and Little Building comes at a cost for students.

Mullins and Dudley both said they understand the need for construction and the possible consequences of it.

For next year, Dudley said the issue of construction plays a factor in her dorm choice as a rising sophomore.

"It's just nice being [in Colonial]," she said. "But it would be nice getting sleep, too."

News Editor Shafaq Patel did not edit this article due to a conflict of interest.

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Cuba Global Pathway canceled for summer 2018

Riane Roldan, *Beacon Staff*

The Education Abroad and Domestic Programs office canceled the Cuba Global Pathway study abroad program for the summer of 2018.

Visualizing Cuba is a three-week immersive course exploring the influence of the island-country's politics on Cuban art. Previous programs have focused on topics like politics, identity, and cultural production.

Associate Vice President of International and Global Engagement, Anthony Pinder, said the cancellation comes after a new travel requirement enforced by the Cuban government requiring the college to report student travel details to the government by early February.

In past years, the Education Abroad and

Domestic Programs office didn't report that information until mid-April, Pinder said. Reporting the names in early February goes against the office's recruitment cycle because the deadline for all Global Pathways programs is not until Feb. 15.

By early February, only five to six students applied to the program, which did not meet the minimum requirement of around seven to eight students, Pinder said.

"[The requirement] made it impossible for us

to meet that deadline," Pinder said.

The college plans to continue the program next year.

"We're definitely doing Cuba again and it's high on our priorities in terms of countries."

"We were disappointed ... but ... this has not stopped our momentum and interest in Cuba as a program site," Pinder said. "We're definitely doing Cuba again and it's high on our priorities in terms of countries."

Emerson is not the first school to pull its study abroad program to Cuba, although Pinder said the cancellation was unrelated to re-

cent travel restrictions imposed by the Trump administration. In October, the University of Illinois pulled its program after a series of attacks on U.S. Embassy Havana employees, according to The Daily Illini.

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Incident Journal

The Incident Journal is provided to the Beacon weekly by the Emerson College Police Department. Beacon staff edit the Incident Journal for style and clarity, but not for content.

Monday, Feb. 5

A student reported receiving packages from Amazon they did not order. Emerson College Police Department advised the student to contact the company, return the packages, and report any further unordered items.

Tuesday, Feb. 6

A security guard at the Union Savings Bank Building reported

a group of staff members who bypassed the security desk with outdated ID cards. They were advised to update their ID cards.

Wednesday, Feb. 7

A person reported being trapped in a Tufte Building elevator. Facilities Management notified the elevator service provider, who then opened the door.

Thursday, Feb. 8

A person reported being trapped a Paramount Center elevator. The Boston Fire Department was notified to open the door.

A student reported being approached aggressively off-campus. The Boston Police Department is investigating the incident.

Friday, Feb. 10

The front doors of Walker Building were found open before the building's scheduled opening time. A search of the building located a few students who were asked to leave.

Saturday, Feb. 11

A lost wallet containing a fraudulent identification card was turned into ECPD.

editorial

Our housing options are not up to par

At issue:
Construction noise continues to interrupt student life

Our take:
Emerson owes students an explanation

Editorials are written solely by Editor-in-Chief Allison Hagan, Managing Editor Laura King, Opinion Editor Abigail Hadfield, Deputy Opinion Editor Hannah Ebanks, and Assistant Opinion Editor Brittany Adames without consultation from other staff members, and does not influence any stories. Op-Eds reflect the views of only their authors, not The Berkeley Beacon.

Remember when the Paramount Center, with its five-minute walk to the center of campus, was considered the worst residence hall? Or when we would jokingly mock the mysterious Paramount Cafe, hidden far away in a foreign land? These days, it could be the best option for housing at the college. The nostalgia-inducing Little Building is gone, the new 2 Boylston Place dorm is falling apart, Piano Row is packed to the brim and now the reputation of the quiet utopia that was the Colonial Building has been tarnished by seemingly unrelenting construction noise. From early morning to late afternoon, workers jackhammer away at the renovations of Little Building and Emerson's Colonial Theatre.

Students once regarded Piano Row as the coveted residence hall, but this year some in-suite common rooms were converted into extra rooms to house more students, unbeknownst to those who applied to live there. Colonial served as a strong second choice because of its large rooms and many singles. But Colonial's noise issue put the building in the same spot as Piano Row, with a glaring problem for residents that they were not warned about before ranking their preferred dormitories on the housing application. Emerson is so focused on the future, the institution often neglects those currently walking its halls—and paying its bills.

The college budgeted about \$70 million for the 2 Boylston Place residence hall, but the building is pervaded with interior issues. These problems include chipping paint and lighting issues, which residents reported upon moving in, mere weeks after the building's completion.

Some students live about a mile from campus at the temporary 12 Hemenway residence hall, which experienced heating problems and issues with the shuttle to main campus last semester. With a \$16,922 per year housing bill, students deserve more than one desirable housing option. The now three-year mandatory on-campus housing commitment forces students to pick their position, and the college raises tuition each

Students deserve a fair choice for housing, and that means receiving all information about potential living spaces, the good and the bad.

year despite students' consistent dissatisfaction.

We experience this disruption on a personal level. A few members of our staff are residents of Colonial. They come into the newsroom and say the noise levels are still obnoxious—preventing them from fully enjoying their living spaces. It makes these

long Wednesday nights a lot harder knowing you are going to be woken up at 7:30 a.m., or before, by construction, and then have to go to class. And we know we aren't the only organization that experiences this problem.

We understand that as a campus in an urban setting construction comes with the territory. We don't expect Emerson to stop building or renovating, but we do expect better communication about these issues ahead of time. Freshmen applying for housing were not notified of the constant noise starting at the break of dawn. Returning students, though aware that construction would occur, did not know the extent to which it would interrupt their daily lives. Students deserve a fair choice for housing, and that means receiving all information about potential living spaces, the good and the bad. Not to mention the financial component—why are students living in Colonial, whose rooms literally shake, paying the same as residents living in peace and quiet in Paramount?

The college needs to offer some reparations to students, such as a discount on housing for students living next to construction. There also needs to be a level of accountability from the college for failing to notify students about the extremity of the construction noise levels. The noise levels warrant a means of compensation for students who cannot study, sleep, or relax in the comfort of their own dorm. And a couple free tickets to see Moulin Rouge! when it premieres at the Colonial Theatre later this year won't cut it.

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.

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by the Editorial Board
illustration by Enne Goldstein

Practicing at Emerson College was the first time in his life LeBron James ever felt irrelevant.



opinion

Just keep swimming: coping with others' success



I began measuring my accomplishments and successes against those around me and associating my intelligence, my creativity, and even my appearance with my ability to immediately perfect every skill. • Photo Illustration by Cassandra Martinez / Beacon Staff

Abigail Hadfield

Hadfield is a freshman writing, literature and publishing major and the Opinion editor for the Beacon.

Growing up, everyone told me I was a “gifted” child. My GPA and standardized test scores deemed me capable of changing the world. I could write novels, run for office, or find the cure for cancer if I wanted to. For years, I heard teachers, parents, and advisors tell me that I could accomplish anything.

When I reached college, I don't know if I still pictured myself as that “gifted” kid. Starting at Emerson this past fall, I felt woefully average. I saw this school as a place for exploration and refining my writing in a supportive and inspirational environment—and I found that here in Boston. However, I did not anticipate the level of competition I encounter, and the way challenges would change how I defined my self-worth. It's taken me some time, but I've realized that as students, we must stop comparing ourselves to one another and basing our self-esteem on our peers' success.

I showed up at this school proudly wearing ‘high school newspaper Editor-in-Chief’ and

‘president of every club’ badges before realizing that everyone around me was just as decorated. I was surrounded by creators, valedictorians, actors, producers, and writers—people who are already published or produced and seemingly had everything worked out. How could I ever hope to compare?

I am overwhelmed by the talent surrounding me.

I lived my whole life thinking I was alone at the top, then realized that while I thought I was standing on a mountain, it was nothing more than an anthill. I began measuring my accomplishments and successes against those around me and associating my intelligence, my creativity, and even my appearance with my ability to immediately perfect every skill. Consequently, I felt more inadequate each day.

Learning environments need healthy competition and intellectual stimulation, but I

wasn't prepared for a mad scramble for who can build the biggest resume and land that coveted internship. I guess in my mind a school marketed as a hub for creative minds would somehow work differently than other colleges, more about collaboration and community building than racing one another until graduation.

I am overwhelmed by the talent surrounding me. I try emulating my positive friends, who are consistently inspired and delighted by the fact that everyone around them is so successful. Yet, I can't help but see people who are more qualified for my dream job. Still, I'm making progress by changing my outlook. When I see a friend post about getting published or landing a big role, I congratulate them and lift them up. Chances are, they've been in the same mindset I am right now. No one is immune to feeling inadequate or hopeless.

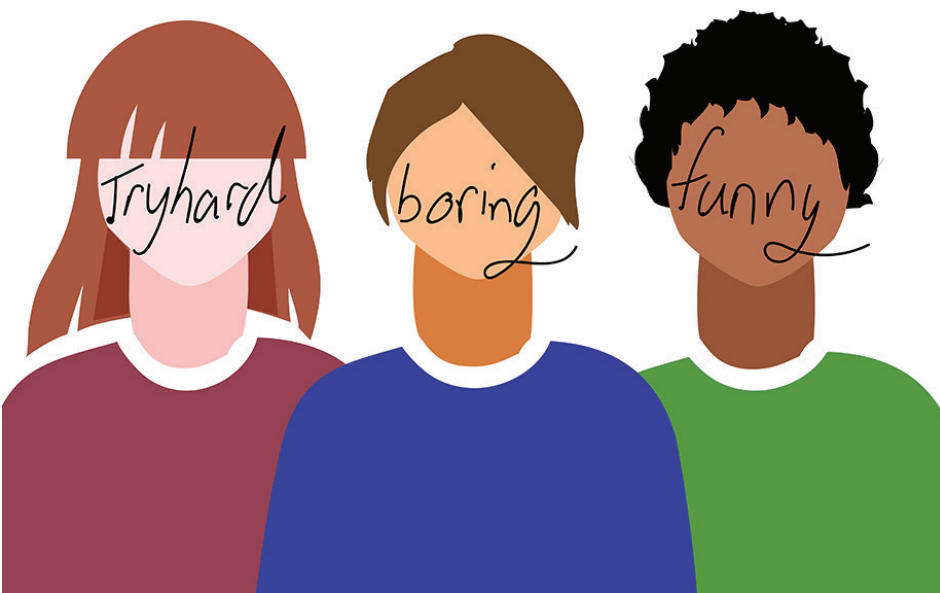
I am still figuring out where I belong at this school and in this city, but wallowing in self-pity will get me nowhere. I want to give others what my friends gave me—a voice of reason saying that academic performance or accolades do not determine self-worth. After all, I'm only 19. I can't expect wild successes when I'm not even old enough to drink.

As long as we define our self-worth by how we measure up against others, we won't find the feeling of accomplishment we desperately seek. When you see someone else succeeding and feel like you aren't doing enough, take a moment and remember that they were you. Successful people fail over and over again before they make it to the Forbes 30 Under 30. While it will take some mental retraining, we must try to recognize that climbing the ladder is a part of life, and no one starts at the top.

Undoing 19 years of hearing I could achieve anything seems incredibly difficult. I must remember that though my poetry remains unpublished and I'm not yet a Pulitzer prize-winning journalist or writer for the Globe, this says nothing about my value as a person. I can't feel intimidated by my seemingly unattainable goals, or the fear that everyone else has already beat me there—all I can do is remember that I am young, I am still growing, and my imagined “competitors” can provide my greatest inspiration.

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Take a second to look beyond first impressions



Appraising someone's appearance, experiences, and diction without getting to truly know a person only establishes barriers and enforces ignorance. • Illustration by Ally Rzesza / Beacon Staff

Ally Rzesza

Rzesza is a freshman journalism major and deputy arts editor for the Beacon.

The concept of a first impression boggles me. A smidgen of evidence establishes relatively long-lasting appraisal. A quick Google search yields millions of articles stating how crucial it is to portray a prim and polished version of

yourself within 30 seconds. These critical first impressions often lead to misunderstandings.

I tasted a metallic disgust after meeting my now best friend and said, “I'm not sure I vibe with her.” Now, I love her more than Dining Hall breadsticks. Yeah, I vibe with her that much.

Appraising someone's appearance, experiences, and diction without getting to truly know them only establishes barriers

and enforces ignorance. Having someone else decide what you think is a terrible feeling, especially if their impression refuses to change over time.

Having someone else decide what you think is a terrible feeling, especially if their impression refuses to change over time.

According to the Kirwan Institute at Ohio State University, everyone possesses implicit biases and attitudes that affect their understanding of the world around them, regardless of their personal beliefs. These biases are malleable and can change gradually through persistence.

A study performed by the University of

Toronto suggested people possess racial bias from infancy. Examiners showed infants a series of videos with adult women of different races looking into four different corners, occasionally showing animals as a control group. The results showed six to eight-month-old toddlers followed the gaze of women their own-race more than any other group.

This represents intragroup bias rather than racism, but shows how early prejudice develops. An instinct found in infants should cease when people are old enough to differentiate between bias and beliefs.

As someone biracial with pale, olive skin and dark, curly hair, I've faced this my whole life. I've never minded when someone asked me, “What are you?” I understand that they're curious. The issue occurs when I respond, “I'm half Puerto Rican,” and they walk away. My ethnicity should not constitute an entire first impression. So please, grab some Windex and wipe away your first impressions. Emerson's diverse student body—from professional magicians to nomadic campers—makes it impossible to accurately judge one another at a glance. If you assume what someone has to offer, you risk burying who they actually are.

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living arts

Freshman Albany Alexander models for *Vogue Italia*

Melissa Rosales, *Beacon Correspondent*

Posed like a dancer, Albany Alexander thought her photo shoot was nothing more than fun with her friend and professional photographer, Jeannie Albers. The freshman journalism student didn't know Albers planned to submit the photos anywhere. It shocked her a month later when Alexander sat in class and received a text from Albers saying their photo was published on the *Vogue Italia* website.

"I felt like butterflies came up in my stomach, but not the kind of butterflies that kind of hurt when you're nervous," Alexander said. "The ones that make you feel like you're floating."

Her face on *Vogue Italia* was the break in her modeling career that Alexander never saw coming.

"She [Albers] never told me she was submitting it for anything. I thought we were just doing that for fun and to get some more images for each other's portfolio," Alexander said.

Albers said Alexander reached out over winter break and asked if they could collaborate for a shoot.

"I said, 'Of course,' because [Alexander is] still my favorite model to photograph," Albers said.

Leaning on an old-fashioned wooden chair and draped in a pink bodysuit, Alexander stands with one foot pointed in the photo on the *Vogue Italia* website.

"Conveniently, I ended up pulling all these looks that kind of had a little bit of a ballerina feel to them," Albers said. "They were all body suits that were layered."

Albers said the photos turned out strong, beautiful, and different—so she decided to submit the images to *Vogue Italia*. The magazine's open publication platform "PhotoVogue" allows photographers to submit work to be reviewed

and curated by *Vogue Italia* editors.

"I didn't have high expectations. I was just like, 'You know what? These are good photos, Albany looks amazing, and they would probably love her,'" Albers said.

Both Albers and Alexander had never before been published in *Vogue Italia*.

Last week, Alexander went to New York Fashion Week casting. She tried on over 50 outfits for fashion designer Bibhu Mohapatra in a process called "Looks," an exercise designers use to determine their runway catalog.

"I got to put on the most beautiful gowns. Some of the gowns I was trying on at Looks were like ten, twenty-thousand [dollar] dresses, and that's nothing I would ever wear otherwise, obviously," Alexander said.

After trying on dresses and walking for Mohapatra, Alexander said the designer offered her first option to walk in his show last Friday. The position meant she's expected to save the date and not book with other designers because the designer will probably sign her, but doesn't guarantee she'll walk. Alexander did not book the show.

"[Alexander] has the ability to take direction that you give her, and she just interprets it and gives a lot of opportunities for beautiful angles and, in the end, beautiful photographs," Albers said.

Alexander said she knows that there are negatives to the job. She said the industry can be a lot of fun, but demands hard work and can make her feel lonely.

"I have friends in the industry, but it's not like this community of people who [are] going to help you out all the time," she said. "It's like, 'You're on your own, kid,' and I don't want that to be my whole life."

Alexander had to choose between living life as a full-time model or becoming a regular college student. She decided to focus on her journalism education.

Alexander's father, Paul Alexander, said she always put her education first. Although he said she chose to focus on school, he and his wife believe their advice to always consider the future swayed her to choose a college career.

"I played baseball in high school, my wife played softball and soccer, and you know those things aren't a part of our life anymore," he said. "So helping our kids understand that although



Jeannie Albers's photoshoot of freshman Albany Alexander can be found on the *Vogue Italia* website. • Courtesy of Albany Alexander

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"I played baseball in high school, my wife played softball and soccer, and you know those things aren't a part of our life anymore," he said. "So helping our kids understand that although

sports and modeling are fun, you've got to decide what you really want your career to be."

Although Alexander juggles both volleyball and modeling, she tries not to overcommit and continues to study hard. Alexander said she's aware she may have left some big opportunities on the table in the modeling industry, but she is happy to pursue a path of which she is more passionate.

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Music Column: Warming up from winter blues

Joseph Green

Green is a junior visual and media arts major and the Beacon's music columnist.



Winter is not a good time of year for my mental health. It happens like clockwork every February—the rejuvenation I get from seeing my family and friends over the holiday fades, and soon depression and anxiety burrow into my brain for the rest of the winter.

In the past, I have jumped at the opportunity to turn into a regular Scrooge and treat the season as a reminder of my own unhappiness. This year though, with the help of a little musical therapy, I decided to adopt a different approach.

I cannot magically vanquish my depressive episodes. However, when I allow myself to practice small acts of self-care, I can attempt to keep anxiety and depression from overwhelming me completely. With that goal in mind, here are three love songs I plan to listen to this time of year—songs full of warmth to lift me out of the winter blues, and to remind me that spring isn't as far away as it seems.

Last February, the song "Uuu" by Field Medic helped keep me from despairing completely when my family's beloved dog, Linus, passed away. Field Medic, whose real name is Kevin Sullivan, creates folk-punk music that is low in production value but overflowing with tenderness—the perfect combination to rescue me from my February depression.

"Uuu" is deceptively simple in its construction, featuring nothing more than Sullivan plucking an acoustic guitar and singing into a tape recorder. The lo-fi nature of this track, along with its soft, heartfelt vocals removes some of the distance I normally feel from a studio recording. I find myself swept away by the tune's charming, romantic lyrics.

The chorus is almost childlike in its straightforward sincerity. "I want you, you, you," sings Sullivan, "to love me 'til daylight." In the verses, he spins gorgeous, synesthetic metaphors. "All I ever needed was your red-wine voice," stands out as a particular favorite. The sensuous beauty of these lyrics remind me of how much more vividly I can experience the world when I am happy—or in love.

Worlds away from Field Medic's unassuming folk punk is "Anita" by St. Louis rapper Smino, but I find this song just as effective a winter blues antidote. Visionary Chicago beat-maker Monte Booker handles the majority of Smino's instrumentals, and on "Anita" he layers an infectious keyboard line over bouncy, crackling drums. The result is

smooth, energetic, and sexy—the perfect beat for Smino to show off his distinctive voice, which blurs the line between singing and rapping to create a melodic style all his own.

At its core, the song is about Smino yearning for the eponymous Anita. He bellows her name in the song's chorus, stretching his vocal chords to grandiose heights to express the magnitude of his infatuation. The way Smino pronounces the name makes it sound like he is saying "I need her," a lovesick plea that comes across as sincere, not desperate.

"You make December feel like summer," Smino says at the end of the second verse. In a song full of intricate wordplay, this declaration of warmth amidst frost stands out the most to me. The line also effectively describes the way "Anita" makes me feel. The song is a shot of springtime in the dead of winter, and its upbeat rhythms and joyful lyrics are impossible not to sing along to. Like "Uuu," I relied on these words last winter as I struggled with loss and depres-

"When I allow myself to practice small acts of self-care, I can attempt to keep anxiety and depression from overwhelming me."

ion. On my worst days, Smino was still able to bring a smile to my face.

I only discovered "Uuu" and "Anita" a year ago, but they quickly became go-to songs for when I need to brighten my spirits. But 2018 is a new year, and I wanted to find another song to combat the demons I am fighting this winter. "Love Without Reason" by British/Icelandic female punk trio Dream Wife fit the bill.

In contrast to Field Medic's folksy poetry and Smino's tightly packed wordplay, Dream Wife's lead singer Raket Mjöll Leifsdóttir performs stark and to-the-point lyrics. Over a simple drum beat and thrashing guitars, she sings, "I feel like I love you without reason." As she repeats this line with increasing intensity, I become entranced by the almost elemental feeling she evokes through such a simple phrase. Leifsdóttir is uncertain why she feels the way she does, but she doesn't let that stop her from shouting it at the top of her lungs.

This kind of raw emotional honesty is something I struggle with, especially when the winter months numb my feelings into anxiety and malaise. That's why "Love Without Reason," in all of its life-affirming glory, is such an important song for me right now, perhaps even more so than the other two. Dream Wife's anthem of unapologetic devotion isn't just a hint of warmth on a cold day—it's a blazing fire, jolting me out of my winter ennui and reminding me, even if just for the length of the song, that the cold won't last forever.

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Alum develops plays through coastal fellowships

Continued from page 1

Growing up near Mexico, Siañez-De La O remembers the military presence nearby in Fort Bliss, and the prevalence of American flags and immigration officers.

“El Paso, even though it’s a very Hispanic, Latinx city, is also a very patriotic city,” he said. “Something that had always been on my mind is this intersection of patriotism and Hispanic culture and the military.”

To document other Latinx narratives, Siañez-De La O said he extended beyond his personal story.

“A big part of the Latinx narrative is immigration, but there’s so much more to it,” he said. “The closer I can get to representing that entire spectrum—that’s my goal.”

Siañez-De La O said he developed his playwriting skills with the help of his Emerson playwriting professor Andrew Clarke.

Clarke workshopped *Sangre Mía* and nominated the play for the Betsy Carpenter Playwriting Award, which Siañez-De La O won. He said Siañez-De La O possesses a work ethic that enables him to understand theater in all its aspects, leading to his success in playwriting.

“Universality is, I think, his greatest strength,” Clarke said. “He draws you into his world and makes you see the connection between his world and yours.”

Even at Emerson, Siañez-De La O’s hometown influenced his work. He published a collection of short stories titled *Lo Siento, Miguel*

through Emerson’s Wilde Press that centered around life in his neighborhood of El Paso, El Sala.

“I remember hearing back from so many people about how proud they are,” he said. “Just hearing people who don’t often get to say ‘I saw myself in something’ say that to me is really the drive for what I’m trying to do.”

Rain on Mars (Hecho a Mano) features two siblings that travel to Mars in order to escape the burdens of Earth. Siañez-De La O set the story in outer space because it allows his characters to exist outside of the racial and political struggles associated with their Latinx heritage.

“In science fiction, you’re able to explore a character for who they are without the constant veil of their identity,” Siañez-De La O said.

As Siañez-De La O eagerly awaits for theaters to pick up *Sangre Mía*, he also has plans for the future. He hopes to create a sitcom-like series depicting a Latinx family for theater.

“Not George Lopez specifically,” he said. “But that’s what I’m interested in, that sort of Hispanic-family sitcom.”

No matter what he produces, he said he will always remember his roots.

“The audience that I always try to keep in mind is the neighborhood,” he said. “The barrio I grew up in in El Paso, El Sala.”

"A big part of the Latinx narrative is immigration, but there's so much more to it. The closer I can get to representing that entire spectrum—that's my goal."

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Two of Andrew Siañez-De La O's plays are being workshopped through fellowships on each coast. Zivah Solomon / Beacon Correspondent

Freshman brings social media campaign to campus

Grace Griffin, Beacon Staff

Propelled by the #MeToo movement, Lydia Albonesi brought Survivor Love Letter—a social media campaign where participants write love letters to survivors of sexual assault—to Emerson.

Using the hashtag #SurvivorLoveLetter, participants read their letters in videos or post photos of them to social media on or after Valentine’s Day. Writers address their letters to themselves, loved ones, or entire communities.

Albonesi, a freshman writing, literature and publishing major, said the campaign aims to begin a conversation about defining survivorship and providing an inclusive space for anyone to support survivors. She hopes the campaign will eventually grow at Emerson and expand to other universities.

“[Sexual assault is] such a prevalent issue on college campuses,” she said. “I think this movement is a unique way to open up a conversation about it and unite a community in trying to heal and recover from something like this.”

The movement’s founder, Tani Ikeda, started the campaign on Valentine’s Day in 2014, the

anniversary of her sexual assault. The Tumblr movement expanded to other social media such as Instagram and Facebook.

Lydia’s sister, Sarah Albonesi, had a connection with the founder of the movement. Sarah Albonesi said her business partner, Ugenia Spokes, also had friends who participated in the campaign in earlier years. Ikeda gave Albonesi and Spokes permission to revitalize and promote Survivor Love Letter, Albonesi said.

“We thought this was very timely because #MeToo got a lot of awareness out about sexual assault, which is a very important step,” Sarah Albonesi said. “I also feel like it raised a lot of anger, which is rightly so, but a lot of people don’t know how to harness that anger and really heal from events like this. It’s really a movement about love and healing from sexual assault as an individual and as a community.”

Both Albonesi sisters said they hoped to expand the movement from Tumblr to other social media platforms, namely Instagram. Lydia Albonesi said she wants to spread awareness at Emerson, and Sarah Albonesi said she reached



Lydia Albonesi is bringing Survivor Love Letter, a campaign inspired by the #MeToo movement, to Emerson. • Brooke Northrup / Beacon Correspondent

out to social media influencers, including Internet personality KingBach and model Lala Kent, asking them to post about the campaign.

Sarah Albonesi founded a female-run production company called FWIN Productions, which she said created two promotional videos for the movement to post on their website on Valentine’s Day. The first video features people reading the letters they wrote. The other video portrays a fictional narrative about a boyfriend reading a love letter to his girlfriend.

“We wanted this to be a very inclusive movement where everyone can tell their story, not just someone who’s been sexually assaulted, but

a guy whose girlfriend may have been sexually assaulted or a woman whose friend has been,” Sarah Albonesi said.

Both sisters said they hope to create a campaign that stretches beyond Valentine’s Day and reaches a wider audience.

“The hope is to kickstart it on Valentine’s Day, but we hope people will keep posting letters of self-love or to a loved one who’s been impacted by this,” Sarah Albonesi said.

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sports

Freshman setter earns consecutive GNAC honors

Joseph Davidi, *Beacon Correspondent*

Emerson freshman setter Marcus Cepeda is leading the team in assists and learning how to be a leader in the middle of the court.

"It's really weird because the setter position is supposed to be this leader role, and I'm supposed to be telling these seniors and these six-foot-nine juniors and these adults what they're supposed to be doing," Cepeda said.

Cepeda won the Great Northeast Atlantic Conference Rookie of the Week award for the second consecutive week after performing well early in the season.

Cepeda averaged 5.5 assists per set in the three games against Dean College, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and Southern Vermont College. He leads the team with 106 assists so far this season. Emerson athletics named Cepeda Lion of the Week.

Head coach Ben Read said Cepeda's presence as a setter on the team gives the Lions more flexibility.

"Having [Cepeda] with Nick [Rusk] returning gives us a little more freedom with what we can do with our offense this year," Read said.

Team captain and last year's setter Nick Rusk said he appreciates the flexibility in the lineup that Cepeda brings as setter.

"We're able to do different lineups and rotations because of [Cepeda]," Rusk said. "It's nice to have someone to alleviate some of the pressure that comes with being a sole setter on a team."

The Sacramento native said he's used to competing for playing time on high-level

teams. Before coming to Emerson, he played for Christian Brothers High School along with two competitive club teams, Legends Volleyball Club and Northern California Volleyball Club.

Cepeda is still adjusting, but he is playing well, Rusk said.

"There's a learning curve that comes with college, and it's kind of funny to watch him play and slowly figure things out," Rusk said. "I'll tell him things, and coach will tell him things, but ultimately it's hard to take that into account when you're on the court and playing, especially during a rally."

The GNAC coaches poll, released before the season began, ranked the Lions seventh out of eight teams. Cepeda said that the low ranking added extra motivation ahead of conference play.

"We take that as an insult, and we're going to come out and do our best to shatter that number," Cepeda said.

Cepeda did not originally plan on applying to Emerson. He had only applied to schools on the West Coast until Read recruited him.

After receiving an email from Read, Cepeda said he saw that Emerson had one of the top journalism programs in the country, which was the major he wanted to pursue.

Cepeda is open to learning, Read said. "He's very responsive and receptive and tries to get better at every chance he can, which is awesome to see," Read said.

The men's volleyball team's next game is Tuesday at home against Endicott College at 7 p.m.

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Cepeda collected 19 assists in a loss to Endicott Tuesday. • Daniel Peden / *Beacon Staff*

Women's basketball clinches first playoff berth since 2015

Continued from page 1

There is room for movement in the standings, with Babson College (13-3), Smith College (12-3), WPI (12-3), and Springfield College (11-4) competing for the top slots in the bracket.

Emerson beat Smith 83-76 on Jan. 6 at home before losing 65-50 to the Pioneers on the road earlier this month. Babson beat the Lions 78-48 in Boston in January, and Springfield is 2-0 against Emerson on the season.

The NEWMAC quarterfinal games are scheduled for next Wednesday, Feb. 21.



Emerson lost to Wheaton in the quarterfinals in its last playoff appearance in 2015. • Kyle Bray / *Beacon Staff*

POTENTIAL PLAYOFF OPPONENTS



TEAM RECORD: 11-4
FINAL GAME: SATURDAY, FEB. 17
@ WHEATON COLLEGE
CURRENT SEED: 4TH



TEAM RECORD: 12-3
FINAL GAME: SATURDAY, FEB. 17
VS. EMERSON COLLEGE
CURRENT SEED: 3RD



TEAM RECORD: 12-3
FINAL GAME: SATURDAY, FEB. 17
VS. CLARK UNIVERSITY
CURRENT SEED: 2ND



TEAM RECORD: 13-3
FINAL GAME: LAST NIGHT, 56-53
WIN AGAINST MIT
CURRENT SEED: 1ST

Upcoming games:

Men's Volleyball

John Jay @ Emerson
Brown/Plofker Gym
Saturday, Feb. 17 at 11 a.m.

Men's Volleyball

Newbury @Emerson
Brown/Plofker Gym
Saturday, Feb. 17 at 3 p.m.

Women's Basketball

Emerson @ WPI
Harrington Auditorium
Saturday, Feb. 17 at 2 p.m.

Men's Basketball

Emerson @ Coast Guard
Roland Hall
Saturday, Feb. 17 at 1 p.m.