

Valentini appeals to seniors with ‘3, 2, 1’ plan

BY BIANCA DENNIS
Spectator Staff Writer

Columbia College Interim Dean James Valentini issued seniors a challenge to fulfill his “3, 2, 1” fundraising plan at the Senior Fund Kick-Off on Wednesday.

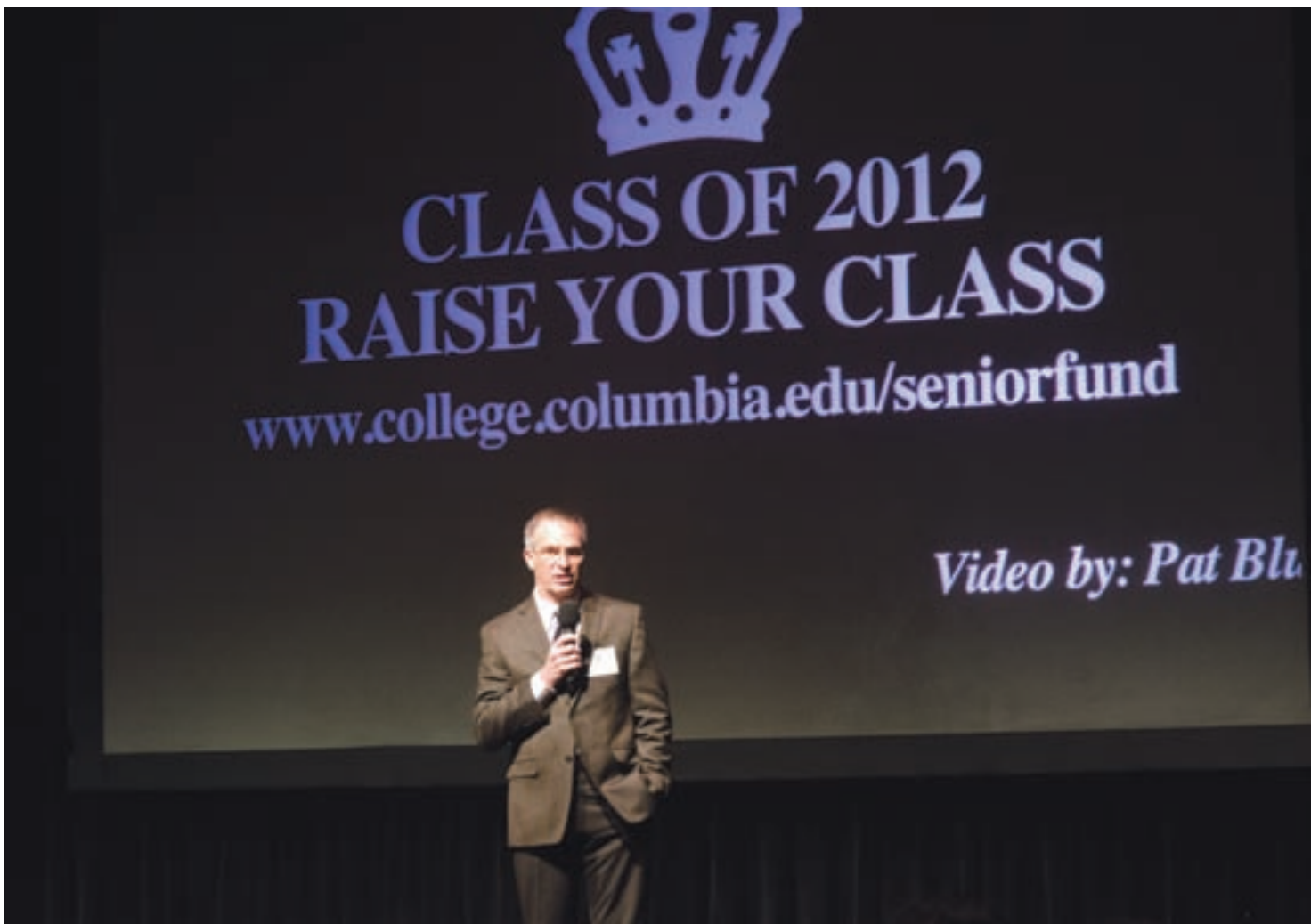
The event marked the beginning of the campaign to encourage the Columbia College class of 2012 to make donations to the Senior Fund throughout the spring semester.

A short video produced by student filmmaker Pat Blute, CC ’12, featured current students and alumni talking about their “Columbia moment”—the first time they were faced with the surreal awareness that they were part of the school’s community.

Valentini cited his appointment as dean in September 2011 and meeting his future wife at an executive committee meeting in 1994 as two powerful moments in his Columbia career—and encouraged seniors in the audience who had their own “Columbia moments” to give back as well.

The “3, 2, 1” challenge asks seniors to donate every year for the three years subsequent to graduation and to tell two friends about the challenge. The meaning of the “1,” according to Valentini, has recently changed—though he said at a town hall in September the “1” represented the 1 percent of their income he wanted seniors to donate, it now refers to the fact that older alumni will match

SEE SENIORS, page 2



DAVID BRANN / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

IT’S A MATCH | Columbia College Interim Dean James Valentini urged seniors to give back to their school through his “3, 2, 1” fundraising program. He personally matched all donations made at Wednesday night’s Senior Fund Kick-Off.

Group handling M’ville money builds website, sets up office

BY JILLIAN KUMAGAI
Spectator Senior Staff Writer

The organization responsible for distributing \$76 million of Columbia’s money in Manhattanville has, after prolonged criticism from locals, established an office and created a website with their by-laws, members, and funding activities.

The West Harlem Development Corporation,

which has already received at least \$3.55 million from Columbia, has been criticized by local politicians and community leaders for delaying the distribution of funds and lacking a permanent office or phone number nearly three years after its creation.

The website, which went live on Dec. 25, includes a mission statement, a list of board members, and a progress report of the organization’s recent

activities. According to the list, these activities include sponsoring 200 West Harlem youth in a city employment program, co-sponsoring policy forums between community leaders and Columbia academic departments, and approving \$3 million for programs at Grant and Manhattanville houses.

The WHDC’s website also lists an address for their office at 560 W. 133rd Street, which is part of the Nash Building,

owned by Columbia.

The WHDC is charged with ensuring that West Harlemites receive the benefits promised in the Community Benefits Agreement, which the University established in the wake of its campus expansion into Manhattanville.

The president of the WHDC, Donald Notice, did not respond to multiple requests for comment.

SEE LDC, page 2

Class of ’16 apps down 8.9 percent

After record year, over 30,000 apply

BY SAMMY ROTH
Spectator Senior Staff Writer

Overall applications to CC and SEAS decreased by 8.9 percent this year, following last year’s record-setting 33.4 percent increase.

Columbia College and the School of Engineering and Applied Science received 31,818 applications for the class of 2016, Dean of Undergraduate Admissions Jessica Marinaccio said in a statement. If Columbia were to accept the same number of students this year as it did last year, the admit rate would increase from 6.9 percent to about 7.5 percent.

“Columbia has seen increases in application volume in past years and has become increasingly selective as a result. This, however, has never been our primary goal,” Marinaccio said in the statement.

Last year’s record increase was widely attributed to Columbia’s move to the Common Application. Marinaccio noted that in the two years since switching to the Common App, applications increased by 21.5 percent overall, which she said is consistent with the 10 to 25 percent two-year

SEE APPS, page 2

Alumni push Capital Campaign near \$5 billion goal

BY JEREMY BUDD
Spectator Senior Staff Writer

The Columbia Capital Campaign is significantly ahead of schedule, having reached over 93 percent of its goal as of Tuesday.

Created in 2006, the Capital Campaign started with a goal to raise \$4 billion by the end of December 2011, only to increase that goal to \$5 billion after nearly reaching \$4 billion a year ahead of schedule. To date, the campaign has raised \$4.68 billion dollars.

“We are encouraged by the strong alumni response to the chance to connect with Columbia in such a meaningful way,” Fred Van Sickle, executive vice president for university development and alumni relations, said in a statement.

Van Sickle noted that over 93,000 Columbia alumni have donated to the campaign—roughly one-third of all alumni worldwide.

The campaign funds new initiatives around Columbia and continues to support financial aid

for students and faculty salaries.

Jerry Kisslinger, CC ’79 and chief creative officer for the Office of Alumni and Development, said that the campaign will continue to support tangible results on campus for current students, including renovations to athletic facilities and academic centers.

“The Campaign has always been about the cornerstones of Columbia education—financial aid, faculty, program and other operating costs,” Kisslinger said. “Growth in annual giving to the

schools ... remains a goal.”

Since the campaign’s inception in 2006, annual giving to the College has increased 34 percent, which Van Sickle attributes in part to the involvement of graduating Columbia seniors.

“The record-setting participation of the College and SEAS senior classes is very heartening,” Van Sickle said. “We are eager to build on momentum among recent graduates.”

While the majority of money

SEE CAMPAIGN, page 2

Proposal to protect mom-and-pop storefronts gains support

BY AVANTIKA KUMAR
Spectator Staff Writer

A new proposal by the Department of City Planning aims to keep pedestrians from feeling like Broadway, Amsterdam and Columbus avenues have turned into strip malls.

The rezoning proposal attempts to address concerns that large chain stores and banks occupy too much storefront space, especially on Amsterdam and Columbus avenues—two streets that traditionally have housed a mix of small-scale stores and mom-and-pop retailers.

On Broadway, the department proposed more relaxed restrictions to accommodate Broadway’s wider layout and traditionally larger-scale retail atmosphere.

Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer supported the proposal, which CB7 members will vote on in February.

“We have a real obligation and opportunity to really look at our street space in a different way,” Stringer said.

According to Peter Arndtsen, district manager of the Columbus/Amsterdam Business Improvement District, the rezoning would prevent larger banks and chain stores—which could occupy multiple storefronts and edge out smaller local businesses—from further changing the neighborhood’s diverse, pedestrian-friendly atmosphere.

He said that the Columbus/Amsterdam BID—which covers those two avenues north of 96th Street—has several bakeries and restaurants, including Ethiopian, Caribbean, and

Bangladeshi cuisines, and small boutiques that offer locals and Columbia students something unique.

“Having stores that you can find in a strip mall would make the area lose its character and attractiveness to people that are looking for something special in New York,” Arndtsen said.

The amendment, which city planner Laura Smith presented at a Community Board 7 land use and transportation meeting, labels Amsterdam and Columbus a special mixed-use district, separate from Broadway.

This designation restricts width of the ground-floor area an establishment can occupy to 40 feet, banks’ storefront space to 25 feet, and residential buildings’ lobbies to 15 feet on Amsterdam between 72nd and 110th streets and Columbus between 72nd and 87th streets.

Broadway will not have restrictions on retail storefronts, but a 25-foot bank restriction will still apply between 72nd and 110th streets. To live up the storefronts and allow pedestrians to look into stores, the department will also require all new buildings in both the special districts to make at least half of its storefront space transparent.

According to City Council member Gale Brewer, who represents the Upper West Side, a strong presence of small-scale stores and mom-and-pop retailers ultimately makes both the avenues and side streets more attractive places to live.

Brewer said she came to the meeting “because I have 65

SEE REZONING, page 2

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN: BY THE NUMBERS

4.68 BILLION

GOAL: 5 BILLION

WHERE ARE THE DONATIONS GOING?

Faculty
15%

Research
36%

Facilities
20%

Student Financial Aid
29%

93,000

Columbia alumni have given so far to the campaign.

Donations will provide for over

\$36.5 MILLION

of financial aid each year.



ONE IN THREE

of all alumni, university-wide, have given to the campaign.

So far, donors have made commitments to endow

134

new faculty positions.

GRAPHIC BY YUMA SHINOHARA / DATA COURTESY OF COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

A&E, PAGE 3

Conrad Tao balances music and the core

Tao scores a spot on Forbes’ top “30 under 30” musicians alongside Justin Bieber and Nicki Minaj while studying at the Columbia-Juilliard exchange program.



OPINION, PAGE 4

Common insecurities

Sam Roth reassures us none of us are alone with our doubts.

Effortless perfection

Noel Duan assures Columbia students that we all have it together.

SPORTS, PAGE 6

Turnovers key in Light Blue victories

Turnovers could turn out to be a lifesaver for the Columbia women’s basketball team.

EVENTS

Chemistry Colloquium

UC Davis Professor Philip Power discusses his research on the reactions of small molecules.

Havemeyer 209, 4:30 p.m.

WEATHER

Today



36°/29°

Tomorrow



36°/25°

Locals say new website, office for M’ville benefits group not enough

LDC from front page

According to the website, the West Harlem Local Development Corporation—the WHDC’s predecessor, known as the LDC—was dissolved by a board vote on Feb. 17. Documents on the website show that the organization, under its new name, was approved for status as a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt non-profit on July 6.

But parts of the site appear to be outdated—the name of the organization is frequently referred to by its former name, and, until Jan. 17, the site said

that an announcement in regards to the hiring of an executive director would be made by the end of 2011.

Juanita Scarlett, a spokesperson for the WHDC, said that an announcement was expected soon, but declined to discuss how far the organization had progressed in the hiring process.

“When we announce those plans we will make them public,” Scarlett said.

Congressional candidate Vince Morgan, an outspoken critic of the WHDC, said that he remains unsatisfied with the organization’s lack of transparency. Morgan referred to

the WHDC’s most recent sign of progress as “just a shell of a website.”

“There needs to be more transparency as to the qualifications of the board members and how they were selected,” Morgan said. “I’m happy that they put up a website and I hope they populate it with some relevant information.”

Last month, Community Board 9, which represents West Harlem, passed a December resolution proposed by member Walter South that set a three month deadline for the group to devise a plan to distribute the money and adopt bylaws.

South said that he was dismayed that the WHDC still did not appear accountable to the residents of Manhattanville. “They need a very clear program as to where this money will go to going forth and what the goals of the organization are. Where is the professionalism here?”

CB9 members Anthony Fletcher and Ivonne Stennett plan to replace Ted Kovaleff and former CB9 chair Pat Jones as the community board’s representatives, a move that current CB9 chair Georgiette Morgan-Thomas said was the result of lack of communication

between the board and the WHDC last year.

“It is the desire of CB9 to see the LDC represent the community as originally desired,” Morgan-Thomas said. “At this point the LDC is made up of volunteers and those individuals have the desire to put the CBA into action but not always the time. We are very excited now that they will have an executive, an office, and a website to communicate with the community and allow the community to communicate with them.”

jillian.kumagai@columbiaspectator.com

Over 90 percent of campaign goal raised

CAMPAIGN from front page

raised from the campaign funds research initiatives, support for student financial aid accounts for the second largest portion of the pie. In addition, donors have committed to endow 134 new faculty positions.

And although the campaign has reached 93 percent of its goal, University President Lee Bollinger left open the possibility of upping the goal again.

“Six billion sounds better and better,” he said in a December interview. “Fundraising is going extremely well—last year was the second highest year in our history.”

Bollinger noted that during the recession, Columbia was still raising at least \$400 million annually, significantly more than other peer institutions.

“I am really happy with that,” he said. “In terms of actual dollars, I think we will come out third or fourth in the country, which is where we want to be. But we still have quite a ways to go.”

Even if the official target does not increase, Bollinger said that the campaign would continue until December 2013 in order to surpass the \$5 billion mark.

“My personal feeling would be that we will probably go through that—there’s no reason to stop,” he said. “We’ll continue on and really exceed that significantly. You never stop.”

Kisslinger echoed similar sentiments when asked what was in the future for the campaign.

“Looking beyond 2013, we will keep raising funds after the campaign to keep Columbia moving forward in doing more for students—and for the world,” he said.

jeremy.budd@columbiaspectator.com



NEW BEGINNINGS | The West Harlem Development Corporation has established an office here, in Columbia’s Nash Building at 133rd Street and Broadway, and formed a website. But some locals say that’s not enough for the organization giving out \$76 million.

Valentini matches gifts at Senior Fund Kick-Off

SENIORS from front page

donations one-to-one.

At the event in Roone Arledge Auditorium, students were encouraged to give money on the spot. Valentini himself personally matched donations made during the kick-off—upping the returns on seniors’ gifts to two-to-one.

Recent alumni were on hand to support the cause. “I’ve already seen the effects of having a Columbia education. If I’ve already seen the benefits in one year, I can only imagine how it will affect me over a lifetime. I can’t imagine not keeping a link and giving back,” Mary Martha Douglas, CC ’11 and GSAS ’12, said.

Jake Goren and Stephanie Foster, both CC ’12 and co-chairs of the Senior Fund, hope to instill exactly this type of thinking in the senior class.

Goren said he hopes that students understand how they have personally benefitted from past donations, stressing that donations from alumni decrease tuition costs and provide funds for campus improvements, such as

the new advising center.

“The hope is that people will donate while they’re here. ... We don’t want to bug people until they give, we want them to want to give,” Goren said.

They may face an uphill battle, as some seniors have mixed feelings when it comes to making donations to the “3, 2, 1” plan.

“I understand the cause and getting large donations,” Katie Brinn, CC ’12 said, “but there’s a lot of conflict between wanting to support the school and contributing over the four years we’re here. It’s potentially a good strategy but I would want to think about whether I would want to contribute.”

Mpho Brown, CC ’11, had a more positive outlook on the “3, 2, 1” plan and donating to the University. “I feel like I’ve gained a lot from Columbia so before leaving it would be good to feel like I left something. If it wasn’t for other people giving back to the school, I wouldn’t be able to be here.”

bianca.dennis@columbiaspectator.com

Rezoning plan would limit big-business storefronts

REZONING from front page

banks in my district.”

“We need to do something to preserve the mom-and-pops and to have a balance in the neighborhood.”

Others agreed that the rezoning amendment would maintain the long-term diversity and character that ultimately makes these neighborhoods attractive. According to former CB7 chair Mel Wymore, the level of detail in the amendment reflects a real intention to balance “market forces and community needs.”

Arndtsen agreed that the proposal would develop both the neighborhood’s character and its property value. He said he supported the amendment because he believes it will prevent landlords from leasing their buildings to chain stores—who can provide money up front to

cash-strapped landlords but become an eyesore and an economic threat to local businesses.

“There’s some landlords that have really worked hard to create an attractive ... strip,” Arndtsen said. “What’s being sold there is very unique,” he said, unlike what’s offered at chains.

Although many Upper West Siders supported the plan’s intention to preserve the small-scale, diverse storefront experience, some felt that the amendment did not do enough.

Representatives expressed concerns about the lack of specific regulation of chain retailers, the exemption of designated landmarks from the restriction, and the fact that the amendment does not require existing noncompliant businesses to change. Richard Asche, CB7 land use committee co-chair, said these concerns would be

revisited at the full board meeting in February.

Others feared that the plan would have unintended consequences.

“It is soulful. It is personal. It is what our neighborhood is all about.”

— Gale Brewer, City Council member

“I hope it ends up doing what we hope it will do,” CB7 member Andrew Albert said. “If we have a small mom-and-pop store and it’s really successful, will they be able to expand?”

Despite its shortcomings, many Upper West Siders see this amendment as a first step toward maintaining the historical character and diversity of the neighborhood. According to Wymore, the amendment is not so much a complete solution to the challenges smaller businesses face, but rather a concrete attempt to “activate street life.”

“It’s really about street life and maintaining an active street life and combatting the uses that deaden street life,” he said.

Brewer agreed that the amendment would maintain the relationship between the neighborhood and an active streetscape that have traditionally characterized these districts.

“It is soulful. It is personal. It is what our neighborhood is all about,” she said.

avantika.kumar@columbiaspectator.com



IN THE ZONE | Community Board 7 members discussed a proposal to limit the number of chain stores on the Upper West Side.

Applications decrease after record-setting year

APPS from front page

increases seen by other colleges that made the switch.

“Our application numbers this year appear to be normalizing to a size consistent with this trend and at a level that continues to indicate strong student interest,” Marinaccio said.

She added that Harvard University’s and Princeton University’s adoption of early admission programs this year likely contributed to the decrease in applications to Columbia. Early decision applications to CC decreased by seven percent this year, although SEAS saw a 12 percent increase in early applications.

Ethan Edwards, CC ’15, agreed that Harvard and Princeton’s early application programs were likely partially responsible for Columbia’s application decrease. Edwards also

speculated that the economy could be a factor, considering Columbia’s high price tag.

“I would guess the decline would be due to the economy, and I think that, as it shows that effect, it’s kind of tragic,” Edwards said.

The only other Ivy League school that has released overall applications numbers this year is the University of Pennsylvania, where applications fell by 1.7 percent, according to The Daily Pennsylvanian.

Several students, though, said that the drop in applications does not say much about Columbia, either positive or negative.

“I don’t care at all about it,” Elias Dagher, CC ’15, said. “Whatever school you go to, if you learn something, it’s good.”

Jeremy Budd and Ben Gittelson contributed reporting.

sammy.roth@columbiaspectator.com

Hoot Magazine takes on new goals and high fashion in style

BY JULIA AN
Columbia Daily Spectator

New York City may be Columbia and Barnard’s playground, but to some, it may seem like high fashion is only accessible for the enlightened trendsetter. Luckily, Hoot, Columbia’s on-campus fashion magazine, has brought the fashion world through the Broadway gates with its latest Fall/Winter 2011 issue.

“We want to expand Hoot’s reach and influence on the Columbia community, and the vision is really about establishing an outlet both for Columbia students to express their creativity and interest in fashion,” Michele Levbarg-Klein, CC ’12 and Hoot Creative Director, said.

While the past three issues have featured Columbia alumni, Hoot has changed pace with their current cover star, Kelsey Chow, CC ’14. According to the Hoot staff, Chow’s balance of academics and a role on the Disney TV show “Pair of Kings” tells a story that more Columbia students can relate to: a student who strives to excel in a variety of fields.

Hoot eases the pain of dreaming of Marchesa gowns by avoiding haute couture in its bi-annual issues, which are available online or in print, rather emphasizing quality designer pieces that are still affordable. A feature in the current issue on fashion labels urges Columbia students to steer away from luxury designers and instead to go for brands that exhibit quality, such as Longchamp’s sturdy bags, and positive values, like the charitable shoe line TOMS.

The Hoot team is taking their low cost mission to fashionably challenged Columbia males, asking them to dress stylishly without sacrificing their Book Culture budget by highlighting what to buy

at Uniqlo, Urban Outfitters, and H&M.

“Hoot is making fashion more appealing to men by making fashion more applicable in everyday settings,” Shelby Maniccia, BC ’14 and managing editor, said. “Sometimes the industry has a habit of creating lavish, extravagant styles that may be a little scary for someone who’s not a fashion slave.”

This mission represents a new phase for Hoot, which, according to editor in chief Anna Cooperberg, CC’12, is working to better balance student relevance with trends in the wider fashion world.

“In my first semester as EIC, I’ve made an effort to change both the aesthetic of the magazine as well as the club’s infrastructure and management with the help of my executive team,” Cooperberg said. “I plan to make it a more robust and powerful magazine for readers.”

Hoot tries to emulate any other fashion magazine—but its members go to class at the end of the day too.

For Hoot co-founder Noel Duan, CC ’13 and Spectator columnist, who recently interned at Vogue, her position at Hoot gave her an edge in the competitive process of attaining internships.

“I always bring a copy of Hoot to my interviews, and my interviewers have always been very impressed by it,” Duan said.

Anyone from fashionistas to students with the slightest curiosity about fashion can join the Hoot team. Today, many leading staff members at Hoot are fashion interns at national publications.

“We work with PR companies, photographers, models, showrooms, makeup artists, etc., just like any other magazine would,” Duan said. “Hoot operates like a mini fashion magazine—which it is.”

arts@columbiaspectator.com



THEY'RE A 'HOOT' | Hoot managing editor Shelby Maniccia, BC '14, and copy chief Katie Lee, BC '15, above, strut around College Walk with fellow Hoot staffers Olivia Aylmer, a Spectator staff writer, and Esther Jung, both BC '15.



HARD AT WORK | Conrad Tao has played piano since age four and performs across the country.

Conrad Tao: between music and academics

BY EMILY OSTERTAG
Spectator Staff Writer

Conrad Tao, CC’15 is a pianist, composer, and violinist who has been performing since the age of four. Now, as a 17-year-old Columbia-Juilliard exchange student, he is tied with Justin Bieber as the youngest person on Forbes Magazine’s top “30 Under 30” music list—alongside Lady Gaga and Lil Wayne.

It isn’t hard to see why. Tao has performed as a soloist with the Philadelphia Orchestra and the Russian National Orchestra, and the first piano concerto he wrote premiered in 2007. Earlier this month, he performed with the Utah Symphony and the White House Commission named him a U.S. Presidential Scholar in the Arts.

Tao will be on tour this entire semester, beginning this week, when he will be performing Rachmaninoff’s Second Piano Concerto with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, Saint-Saëns’ Second Piano Concerto with the Symphony of the Americas, and Beethoven’s Waldstein Sonata in California.

Needless to say, Tao does not have an average college student’s life. Often, he said, juggling his schoolwork and performing career can be “incredibly frustrating,” especially since he does most of his schoolwork on the road. Having completed his high school studies entirely through independent study without tutors or teachers, Tao said that he is quite used to getting by on his own.

But Tao maintains that getting a well-rounded

education is incredibly important for him as a musician.

“I do see myself continuing to have a career as a performer after college,” he said. “However, the people I have met at Columbia and the intellectual stimulation I have found in the conversations I have had with people have made me a much better musician.”

Rather than take the typical route of most aspiring classical performers, who often attend a conservatory for their undergraduate education in order to focus solely on music, Tao said that he wanted to do more. “I had already been at Juilliard for nine years [when I was applying to college], so staying there without doing something else would have felt limiting to me,” he said. “However, I also didn’t want to leave. The Columbia-Juilliard program is basically unrivaled as joint programs go, so it seemed like the perfect fit”

“Ultimately, it’s been a great experience,” he added.

Though Tao is still hasn’t chosen a major, he is leaning towards one in humanities, perhaps sociology, he said.

For Tao, being a part of the Columbia community has become an important part of his life, even when he’s across the country in a packed concert hall.

“I don’t feel so much like I’m leaving all the time, although it is sometimes difficult to be constantly away,” Tao said. “I’ve made wonderful friends here.”

arts@columbiaspectator.com

CUPAL lends a hand in theater casting

BY ABBY MITCHELL AND LESLEY THULIN
Spectator Senior Staff Writers

With the whirlwind audition processes about to start for theater groups across campus, the Columbia University Performing Arts League announced a new program they think will make things a little bit easier.

CUPAL’s Production Agreement serves as a guide for actors planning to audition for several productions, letting them see when rehearsals or tech weeks conflict and what is feasible timewise, as well as helping the creative teams coordinate among themselves to minimize overlap.

“People didn’t know that they were trying out for shows that had performances on the same day, at the same time,” said Will Hughes, CC ’13 and CUPAL vice president. “Because the creative teams weren’t talking to each other, people found out weeks later.”

Jessica Chi, CC ’15, who attended CUPAL’s kick-off Monday night, said, “All my callbacks [last semester] were in one week. I was literally running back and forth between buildings.” She said that the new production agreement “will make the process smoother.”

In the words of CUPAL co-president Victoria Pollack, BC ’12, they developed the agreement over break to deal with “a lot of nitty gritty things that are really frustrating,” such as actors being cast in leading roles in more than one show and having too much overlap between them, or actors dropping out because of conflicts.

“I’ve witnessed a lot of frustration as directors try to work out rehearsal schedules only to find that it’s impossible to get a whole cast—or even just the leads—into the same room at the same time,” said Diana Levy, CC ’12, CUPAL representative for the King’s Crown Shakespeare Troupe.

One way that CUPAL hopes to fix that problem is by having actors notify CUPAL with their top choices for roles. A CUPAL member will sit in

on the casting meetings and speak on the actor’s behalf as decisions are made.

“For those lucky actors who get called back for several things where we can see that the directors are really in a gridlock, that’s when we would step in and voice the actor’s preference,” said Pollack.

Pollack and Hughes emphasized that they would only intervene if there were a major, unavoidable conflict, saving actors from the uncomfortable conversation with the creative team outlining their preferences.

“It’s so awkward. It’s good to know, but it’s uncomfortable all around,” Hughes said. “We really feel that the three of us [presidents and co-presidents of CUPAL] can really be impartial because we don’t have a vested interest in any of the shows. We have a vested interest in all of the shows.”

For Pollack, it is just a question of honesty. “The more ... straightforward you are about conflicts and what you’re interested in being involved in, the better prepared the C-teams are to schedule around your schedule,” she said.

CUPAL hopes that the agreement will build more camaraderie among the different theater groups, which sometimes have been rivals in the past. The kick-off meeting discussing the agreement was the first time all of the creative teams had ever come together collectively, according to Pollack and Hughes.

And although Pollack concedes that there may be “some bumps and bruises” on the way, other members of the community said that they are excited to see a more unified theater community.

“We all rely on the same resources—space and actors, to name just a few—and I think this is a step in the right direction in terms of cooperating together for the benefit of the theater season as a whole, rather than for our individual groups,” Emily Nagel, CC ’12 and CUPAL’s representative for XMAS!, said.

arts@columbiaspectator.com



NEW RULES | CUPAL members presented the new production agreement in Wien Monday night.



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CONTACT US

2875 Broadway, 3rd Floor

New York, NY 10025

info@columbiaspectator.com

Twitter: @CU_Spectator

PHONE & FAX

Daily Spectator (212) 854-9549

Business (212) 854-9550

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Yes, we are

“Wait ... Is that all you’re eating for lunch?” my friend asked me as we stood in line at Milano. I had picked up a diet ginger ale, a cup of soup, and an overpriced container of sliced watermelon.

“I had two cookies an hour ago,” I replied curtly. She shot me another judging look—the sort that girls do so well, and the sort that only friends could forgive and understand.

Columbia girls—and boys—are expected to have our cake, eat it, and look like we didn’t in the first place. We try to attain perfection, but we have to look like we’re not even trying.

And we inscribe it onto each other’s bodies in the most blatant of ways—by judging each other’s eating habits. Just as we are expected to party hard on the weekends and get top grades and prestigious internships, we hold ourselves—and our peers—up to the standards of eating with indulgence and still looking like Karlie Kloss in Vogue Italia. (But seriously, damn girl.)

Earlier this year, I had brunch with two other svelte friends on two separate occasions. “I hate when girls don’t eat,” both girls had independently remarked in passing, as we moved onto conversation about the best designer thrift shops in Brooklyn. On both occasions, I ordered a veggie burger with sweet potato fries, not because I was particularly hungry—or hungover—but because I didn’t want to be the girl dismissed around the booth at Tom’s a month later: “Oh, her? She’s nice but ... She doesn’t really eat.”

Another scenario from this past semester: I was



NOEL DUAN

You Write Like a Girl

All is not lost for SEAS

BY ANDREW GONZALEZ

Although the winner of Mayor Michael Bloomberg’s contest to win an engineering campus in New York City was just selected in December of last year, we will see the consequences of this decision sooner than you think. With the most distinguished engineering college in Manhattan, Columbia had Mayor Bloomberg’s contest in the bag, right? Definitely not, but Columbia engineers still have something to look forward to.

Put yourself in Bloomberg’s shoes. There’s a school with faculty questioning the engineering dean’s leadership, displaying bureaucratic instability. Then there’s a school receiving a \$350 million gift for its bid in the contest, showing support for the school’s engineering endeavors. So you ask: reward a new engineering campus to an institution with trust issues or one with a trust fund?

While the School of Engineering and Applied Science was struggling with Dean Peña-Mora’s capabilities and interactions with faculty, Cornell Engineering was coming off of a pivotal donation. To make matters worse for Columbia, NYU and Carnegie Mellon submitted their own respective bids. With competitors in the ring, it comes as no surprise that Columbia’s proposal has so far been overlooked. But surprisingly, the instability in our engineering administration wasn’t the deal breaker. We overlooked something even more obvious than leadership troubles—we already have an engineering campus.

An engineering school nearby can make SEAS improve through competition.

Intuitively, Mayor Bloomberg wouldn’t award the first-place prize, a new engineering campus, to a school that already has one nearby—and a well-established one at that. Broadening Columbia’s engineering campus without giving a campus to another school could create an engineering monopoly in Manhattan with President Bollinger sitting at the top. Understandably, the bid for the new campus in Manhattan became more of an unspoken anyone-but-Columbia contest to give other schools the opportunity to compete with our brand of engineering. Though SEAS fell short of its goal, it could benefit more from coming in second than originally thought.

Despite the obvious and immediate bitterness some SEAS students feel, we’re actually benefitting from not getting an entirely new campus in two ways. First of all, there’s an opportunity for collaboration, competition, and rivalry between Cornell’s new engineering school and our own. In fact, Cornell Engineering’s presence in Manhattan could be an agent of change and growth for SEAS. With a credible engineering rival competing to win over prospective students and engineering faculty, SEAS can be driven to raise its standards—improving faculty, facilities, and CULPA reviews. Competition can lead to improvement. Second, not all is lost. Columbia is still in the running to receive funding to build new applied sciences buildings in Manhattanville. So we get some much-needed engineering competition that could force us to improve and we can get new buildings for the often-overlooked applied science programs? Sounds like a win-win to me.

Although I am a SEAS sophomore, I will still experience the effects of the new engineering campus’ opening in 2017. For starters, the value of my SEAS degree could decrease in the eyes of future employers if Columbia doesn’t compete and collaborate effectively with Cornell. “Oh, you graduated from the other engineering college in Manhattan,” could become commonplace. On the other hand, having an engineering school nearby, like stated before, can make SEAS improve through competition.

At face value, Columbia isn’t getting a new campus because we had problems at the top with questions surrounding Dean Peña-Mora’s job certainty, and because we already have a strong presence in Manhattan with a well-established engineering school. Despite that, the future is looking good for SEAS with applied sciences buildings queuing up to be built and new competition on the horizon, even if it is Cornell.

The author is a School of Engineering and Applied Science sophomore majoring in operations research.

making dinner with a guy friend when he said, “It’s a good thing you eat. Guys like girls who eat.”

“You mean, guys like skinny girls who eat, right?” I teased back. He looked at me dumbfounded and I went back to silently chopping potatoes and lamenting how I had already chipped my new Deborah Lippmann glitter nail polish.

“She doesn’t really eat.” “Why aren’t you eating more?” “Guys like (thin) girls who eat.” Such short, innocuously-sounding statements that are actually loaded with judgment not just about one’s lifestyle, personality, and appearance, but also about one’s ability to be a successful Columbia student. These statements are embedded within the idea that one should indulge—live life to the fullest and perhaps even excess—with the appearance of complete self-control. They’re embedded within the idea of showing up to class with a hangover and still getting an A in the class. It is the idea of being a “hot mess” on weekends and the quintessential Blue Album student during the school week, and it is made blatantly visible by the stares we give one another, judging each other’s appearances across College Walk, by the water fountain, or at Mel’s. You don’t need to say, “lose the muffin top” or “are you sure you should be getting fries?” when you can just stare at the “offender” a second too long for comfort.

And frankly, none of these things should come as a surprise, as Columbia students are experts when it comes to maintaining an air of nonchalance on College Walk, while furiously (mis)counting the number of Red Bulls they’ve had that day in their head.

Consequently, Columbia students strive to attain excellence in every possible way imaginable. We want to be the best—but what happens when our best is still far from perfection?

It doesn’t take a college degree to know that words do hurt and that looking good is harder than it appears.

Through the night

It was already dark and chilly that Sunday evening when campus media, student body leaders, and student affairs staff crowded into Dean Shollenberger’s office in Lerner to talk about how to deal with the sad events. Earlier that day, Tina Bu had taken her life on the third floor of River Hall, and by evening, everyone seemed a little lost. An expert from health services talked about the importance of shaping coverage to ensure that students didn’t react to the news with attempts of their own. Hanging in the air was a much more difficult question: How, exactly, should we react?

The most prominent student response has been a new focus on day-to-day well-being. As Wilfred Chan movingly documented in the first part of “How we’re doing,” a feature in the Dec. 1 edition of The Eye, Tina’s suicide prompted many students to acknowledge that they felt stress and unhappiness on a regular basis.

It looks like they’re not alone. The Wellness Project that emerged from student discussions with administrators about undergraduate stress has attracted numerous supporters. A bulletin board in East Campus asking students to leave a sign if they were stressed was quickly wallpapered with responses. I didn’t know Tina, and it would be deeply disrespectful to guess at the nature of her illness. But when an entire campus, it seems, cries out for help, it demands our attention. What is it that has gotten so many of us so deep in the hole?

The Friday of my orientation week was open-mic night. There were so many eager participants that they had to turn some away. And every performer was exceptional. I remember thinking, there’s nothing I can do as well as they can do that. When they kicked us out of Roone Arledge hours later, a crowd formed around the basement piano, where my classmates happily jammed into the night. I went back to my room.

Most of us got here by being that kid in high school—the one whose talent was so exceptional that it shined like the sun. I remember what it was like to slip into the hot seat at 4 a.m. and pound out a paper, start to finish, and never look back. I can’t do that anymore. I start from somewhere in the middle, I wander off in an uncertain direction, I



SAMUEL E. ROTH

We Are Not Alone

And we’re not claiming full acceptance of each other’s bodies when we judge each other’s body “deficiencies” and still expect indulgence from each other. Magazines tell us that the moment you “fix” something about yourself, something else needs to be “fixed”: Hide your curves! Or ... flaunt your curves! Dress for your body type! Or ... dare to wear whatever you want! If there is no universal standard for anything, what are we all striving for?

We try to attain perfection, but we have to look like we’re not even trying.

Girls, you shouldn’t have to impress a date by eating a burger if you don’t want to, and your itty-bitty-teeny-weeny-yellow-polka-dot-bikini girlfriends shouldn’t judge you for passing up the second helping of Häagen-Dazs. Boys, if your girlfriend wants a salad with Diet Coke for dinner, don’t push her to eat your steak. It’s hard enough to be a 20-something-year-old at an Ivy League school in New York City, constantly bombarded by airbrushed images of celebrities and models with personal trainers and nutritionists. We don’t need to place additional—and oftentimes contradictory—pressure on our peers and ourselves. Society already tells us we’re not good enough.

But guess what? We are. We just need to start treating each other like we know and believe it.

Noel Duan is a Columbia College junior majoring in anthropology and concentrating in art history. She is currently studying abroad in Paris and is the co-founder of Hoot magazine. You Write Like a Girl runs alternate Thursdays.

throw most of it out, and I tell myself, “If I can get a page and a half done by dawn, I’ll be fine.” My consummate skill, that old sunshine confidence, is gone. And that, I think, is what troubles us in the dark of the night. Not that college is harder than high school—because of course college is harder than high school—but the sense that we are somehow worse, less able. Whatever it was that was in us, that we think made us who we are, isn’t there anymore.

When you think you shine like the sun, it’s hard to realize you’re a small dot in a big sky. Put that together with the deep-seated irony and sarcasm that permeate our campus culture, and it can feel like this is a bitter, vituperative place where everyone else will pounce when they realize you haven’t figured it out. But it isn’t. In nearly four years here, especially in two years at Spectator, I have gotten to know writers, artists, activists, designers, athletes, and many others who have skills I’ll never attain. Yet I can’t begrudge them their abilities, because they’re my friends.

And that’s just it. Everyone I know is more talented than I am, and I imagine you could say the same thing about your friends. We support each other through the dark nights, in part because we are all somewhere behind the game, we all feel the same doubts. Neither you nor I will be the best at Columbia. That liberates us to be extraordinarily decent to one another.

And while we’re doing that, we might just discover that we’re not as far behind as we think. Even if my all-nighters are more panicked now than they were four years ago, or even two years ago, they produce work that’s profoundly better than it once was. The doubts and uncertainties drive me to reach for stronger arguments and more sophisticated conclusions. The consummate skill wasn’t as good as what’s coming in its place.

If you feel the water rising above your head, I urge you to seek out help. And there’s much to be gained from thinking about how to make life happier for everyone here, as the Wellness Project seeks to do. But let’s not turn our doubts themselves into the problem. Let’s bid farewell to that old sunshine confidence. A talented generation should be brought together by its doubts. Because we, all of us, are bound up in the life of this extraordinary campus together, whether we like it or not. Even in our darkest nights, we are not alone.

Samuel E. Roth is a Columbia College senior majoring in history and political science. He is a former Spectator editor in chief. We Are Not Alone runs alternate Thursdays.



HEIDI KELLER

The Columbia Daily Spectator accepts op-eds on any topic relevant to the Columbia University and Morningside Heights community. Op-eds should be roughly 650 words in length. We require that op-eds be sent exclusively to Spectator and will not consider articles that have already been published elsewhere. Letters to the Editor should be no longer than 350 words and must refer to an article from Spectator or The Eye, or a Spectrum post. Submissions should be sent to opinion@columbiaspectator.com. Please paste all submissions into the body of the email. Should we decide to publish your submission we will contact you via email.

Levien hype: trivia, kiss-cams, T-shirt guns, oh my!

“Hey, how was your break?” It’s the conversation you’re going to have countless times over the next two weeks, and I can’t stand it. For the past four years, this has routinely been the worst time to run into people you vaguely know. “Hey, good to see you. Yeah, my break was good. How was yours?” The conversation rarely goes beyond that. Some do choose to go over exactly what they did, which is always something like this: First, they were with their family during the holidays, then they went to some sick party on New Year’s. A few people went somewhere after that—either to the beach or to ski slopes—and the end of their break became a bit boring, and now they are excited to be back at school. If you did something exciting enough that you would’ve told me about it—regardless of whether it was during the break—then fine, I would like to hear it. For the record, my break was good, but I was eager enough to get back that I returned in time for the men’s basketball team’s Ivy League openers.



With increased enjoyment comes more sell-out crowds, which in turn help spur the basketball teams to better results.

Unfortunately, Columbia lost two close games after looking the better side in each of them. But there was something else going on at that game that was out of the ordinary. The Saturday night game was declared trivia night, and it ended up being a lot of fun. Similar to trivia night at any bar, fans signed up in groups and the quickest to answer, via text message, won a prize. There was also a grand prize for the group with the most correct answers—shout-out to the women’s basketball team! I was a bit skeptical about how it would work, but after seeing it, I was very impressed. There was an announcer with a microphone in hand—accompanied by Roar-ee, of course—locating each winning group and asking the next trivia question. That got me thinking: What other stadium gimmicks is Columbia Athletics capable of pulling off during these basketball games? The first one that came to my mind is the kiss-cam. It’s fairly simple to pull off—all you need is a camera on each of the stands, which is hooked up to the high-tech scoreboard that’s already there. Most people will admit that the student population is a bit socially inept. So what better solution than a public setting where two people are obligated to smooch? It would definitely drive up student attendance and double as a place for dating because hopeful, shy guys would take advantage of the opportunity and sit next to a girl they like. Another version of the stadium-cam that I love is the dance-cam. Simply enough, during a break, fans caught dancing earn some time on the big screen. This will be even easier to accomplish because such dancing already occurs. Trust me, next time you’re at a Columbia basketball game and Montell Jordan comes on singing “This Is How We Do It,” you’ll see the entire crowd start grooving. It’s fantastic to watch. For last Friday’s game against Penn, the visitors brought their band along, which played pretty much whenever they felt like it. I thought it was a bit presumptuous, but it did spark some healthy back-and-forth between fans in the crowd. I think a competition between the mascots of the visiting and home teams would be better. Columnists at Spectator have written before that a lion is the best mascot in the Ivy League, and this would give Roar-ee a chance to prove it. Whether it’s a sack race or mascot wrestling, playful competition between giant stuffed characters would bring unbounded delight. Another thing that can be improved is the way T-shirts are given to the

SEE SHABAN, page 7



FELIX SCHADECK FOR SPECTATOR

50-50 BALL | The Light Blue has fought for every ball, coming up with more turnovers on average than its nonconference opponoents so far this season.

Women’s basketball creates turnovers, yet looks for more points

BY HAHN CHANG
Spectator Staff Writer

For 40 minutes every game, each dribble or pass is a chance for a turnover. The Columbia women’s basketball team ended nonconference play struggling with a 2-12 record before suffering a blowout at the hands of Princeton. However, though their opponents sported a higher shooting percentage, number of rebounds, and, ultimately, points, one category the Light Blue led its opponents in was turnover margin.

The Light Blue, having lost its three top scorers from last season—including

star sophomore guard Brianna Orlich to injury—has found it a struggle to keep up with its high-scoring opponents. However, the Lions’ head coach Paul Nixon has set out to make the team competitive by improving how the players interact with each other on the court. “I do think right now the team chemistry is as good as it has been. I think the number of injuries we’ve sustained, while unfortunate at the time, did give a number of our other players an opportunity to step in and get real game experience. So they will be ready to step up if needed in the Ivy League games,” Nixon said.

The Lions have found success in keeping possession of the ball, averaging 18.6 turnovers per game in nonconference play, while forcing 25.8 turnovers from nonconference opponents. Even though it would seem that the Lions’ positive turnover margin would complement the type of high-intensity, fast paced basketball that they feel most comfortable with, many of the turnovers have actually interrupted play. “Live turnovers (or steals) are more easily converted into points, and dead-ball turnovers, which require the team that forced the turnover to take it out of bounds before they have a chance to

convert. I would account for the difference being our committing more live turnovers than we have forced,” Nixon said. The difference has been noticeable on the court—the Lions have struggled to translate turnovers into scoring opportunities, having been outscored 228-196 on points of turnovers in non-conference play. However, in the five games where the Lions have scored more points off turnovers than their opponents, they have emerged victorious in two of them and lost two other games by only four points.

SEE IN FOCUS, page 7

Princeton dominates league, Dartmouth struggles

BY CAROLINE BOWMAN
Columbia Daily Spectator

As the Ivy League’s women’s basketball season begins conference play, four teams maintain season records above .500. The two-time defending Ivy League champion Princeton (13-4, 3-0 Ivy) has taken the top spot thus far in the conference standings. The Lions witnessed Princeton’s dominating success last week after suffering a one-sided 94-35 loss to the Tigers, leaving the Light Blue at the bottom of the Ancient Eight. With seven out of the eight league teams only having played one conference match-up thus far, the Ivy League title is certainly still up for grabs.

PRINCETON Princeton has steamrolled so far in the Ivy League. The Tigers defeated Penn, Cornell, and Columbia by an average margin of 41 points and held all three teams to below 50. Princeton’s success has received national attention, as the Tigers earned a vote towards a national ranking in the AP Top 25 Poll twice this season. Averaging 17 points per game, the Tigers’ junior forward Niveen Rasheed has helped lead the team to its current six-game win streak and was named Ivy League Player of the Week for her standout performance.



FILE PHOTO

PRINCETON DOMINATION | The Tigers proved their strength with their winning streak against struggling teams like Cornell, Columbia and Penn.

SEE ATL, page 7

RK (IVY)	TEAM
1 13-4 (3-0)	PRINCETON TIGERS Led by Niveen Rasheed, Princeton continued to dominate the Ivy League, after destroying Cornell 64-35 and Columbia 94-35.
2 9-6 (1-0)	YALE BULLDOGS Yale overcame Brown 75-65, with freshman guard Sarah Halejian earning Ivy League Rookie of the Week honors.
3 8-7 (1-0)	HARVARD CRIMSON After a narrow loss to North Dakota, Harvard looks to regroup with a win over Yale to preserve its undefeated Ivy League record.
4 9-6 (0-1)	BROWN BEARS Brown has a chance to take revenge on the Bulldogs for its Ivy League-opening defeat last weekend as Yale visits on Friday.
5 6-9 (0-1)	CORNELL BIG RED Cornell gained some confidence heading into its next game against Columbia this weekend after picking up a win against Ithaca.
6 2-12 (0-1)	DARTMOUTH BIG GREEN Dartmouth rides a ten-game losing streak, but the gap in the score differentials has been decreasing with every game.
7 7-7 (0-1)	PENN QUAKERS Penn finishes non-conference play at Temple looking for its first win of 2012 after having lost the last five contests.
8 2-12 (0-1)	COLUMBIA LIONS Columbia had no answer for Princeton’s firepower, losing 94-35. It will try its luck against Cornell on Saturday at Levien Gymnasium.

More excitement leads to bigger crowds

SHABAN from page 6

crowd. As of now, it goes like this: Our team drains a three, a cheerleader starts waving a T-shirts at a section of the crowd. Whoever is paying attention waves their hands at that cheerleader, who then attempts to throw the shirt in their direction. The system effectively distributes T-shirts, but it could be revised to bring far more fan excitement. This problem can be answered in the same way that most of America's problems are answered: with a gun. But

only a T-shirt gun, or cannon, this time. A T-shirt gun used during timeouts engages the whole crowd as sections cheer in unison to get the shooter to point their way.

Along with the dance team, band, and cheerleaders doing their traditional duties to pump up crowds, gimmicks and promotional events make the Columbia basketball experience more enjoyable for fans. With increased enjoyment comes more sell-out crowds, which in turn help spur the basketball teams to better results. This Saturday

the AD is doing it again with the old-fashioned men's and women's double-header. But that's not all—this double-header is presented by Bed, Bath, & Beyond. I'm not exactly sure what that entails, but everybody loves that store. Personally, I'm hoping for a new pillow-top to come flying my way.

Ronnie Shaban is a senior in the School of Engineering and Applied Science majoring in mechanical engineering. He is a member of the men's varsity soccer team.

Harvard, Yale find success in Ivy openers

ATL from page 6

YALE

Yale (9-6, 1-0 Ivy) came off a disappointing five-game losing streak during last season's Ancient Eight play to defeat Brown 75-65 this past Friday in its league opener. Freshman guard Sarah Halejian scored a career-high 18 points, earning her Ivy League Rookie of the Week honors. With a total of four players scoring in double digits, Yale showed both depth and formidable young talent in its league opener.

HARVARD

Led by senior guard Brogan Berry, who is on pace to break into the Ivy League's top 30 all-time scorers, Harvard (8-6, 1-0 Ivy) began league play last Saturday with a 71-63 victory at Dartmouth. Berry dished out eight assists and scored 17 points in the Crimson victory. Along with Berry's offensive prowess, Harvard's tenacious defense has undoubtedly contributed to its success. Harvard

recently held both UMass and TCU below the 50-point mark in back-to-back games, a feat that was last accomplished by the Crimson in March 2008.

BROWN

Despite Brown's (9-6, 0-1 Ivy) loss to Yale this past week, the Bears should not be counted out of the hunt for the Ivy League title. Although losing by 10 points, Brown held the lead for a significant portion of the game by a margin as large as five points. Brown junior guard Sheila Dixon scored 20 points and shot 60 percent from the floor in the loss to Yale. With a shooter like Dixon, look for Brown to make a big impact in the conference.

PENN

Penn (7-7, 0-1 Ivy) suffered a lopsided 83-48 loss to the Tigers on Jan. 7. The Quakers, who began the season with a 7-2 record, are currently on a five-game losing streak. With four consecutive Ivy League games still to come at the end of January, Penn must

regroup if it hopes to challenge for an Ivy League title.

CORNELL

Cornell (6-9, 0-1 Ivy) also suffered its first Ivy League defeat this season at the hands of Princeton by a final score of 64-35 last Friday. Although the Big Red scored 40 or more points in its other 13 games this season, Cornell only managed a season-low 35 against the Ivy powerhouse. With a season record of 4-22 in the 2010-2011 season (3-11 in the league), Cornell most likely will not raise its winning percentage out of the red.

DARTMOUTH

Since winning two of its first three contests this season, Dartmouth (2-12, 0-1 Ivy) has dropped 10 straight and most recently lost its first Ivy matchup against Harvard. With a 3-11 league record last year and an early loss in the conference, Dartmouth may remain at the bottom of the rankings again this year.

Lions consistently win turnover battles

IN FOCUS from 6

“The thing I think we have done well is consistently force turnovers, except for the Princeton game, and the things we need to improve on are converting our steals more consistently into points and getting better half-court offensive execution to cut down on our own turnovers,” Nixon said.

In the first Ivy League game of the season against Princeton, the Light Blue reversed this trend, giving up 30 turnovers and only forcing the Tigers to relinquish the ball only 10 times. While the Tigers led the Lions in shooting, rebounding, possessions, and steals, the Tigers managed to run away from the game due to 43 points

scored off turnovers, compared to just two points scored by Columbia.

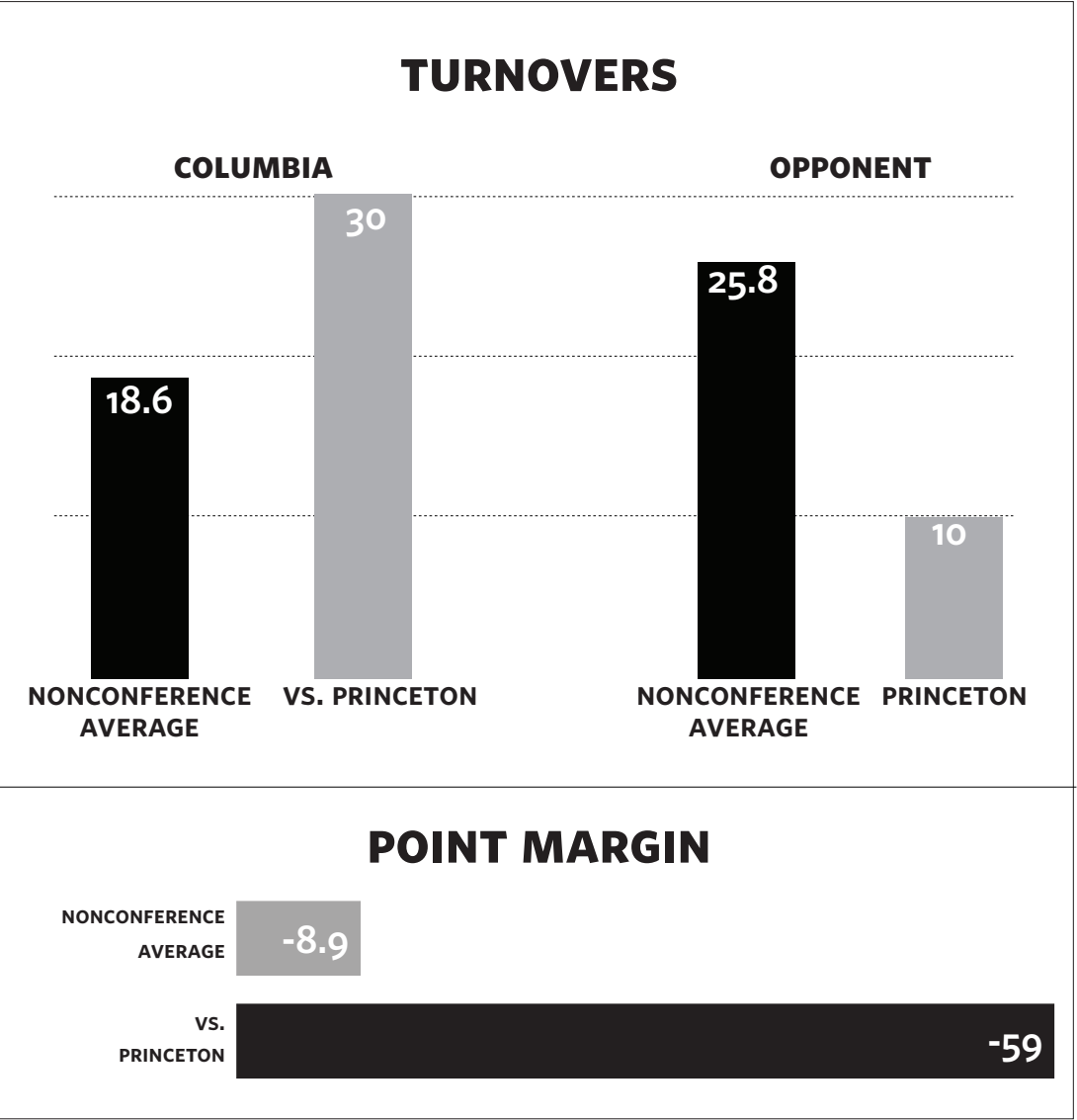
“Princeton's overall team size played a large role in the turnover disparity. They were able to easily throw over our presses while we had a hard time seeing over their bigger defenders. You cannot compare Princeton to any other Ivy League opponent due to that overwhelming height differential,” Nixon said.

“The Princeton game showed us we're going to have to ramp that up even more if we are going to be competitive with the best team in the league.”

As the season continues, the Lions will not only need to continue to strive for a positive turnover margin, but also look

to create opportunities to run away with games themselves off of their opponent's mistakes.

“We have been working in practice ever since we came back from Christmas break to really push each other harder defensively, working to pressure the ball and play more physical against one another,” Nixon said. “We will have to focus on the opponent or opponents we face each week and look to counter their strengths with our defensive strategy so they do not have a high number of assists, and exploit their weaknesses so we can force an increased number of turnovers. Our defensive intensity, our focus on each game plan, and our effort on the defensive boards will be the keys to our success.”



ATHLETE OF THE WEEK



LUKE HENDERSON / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

BRIAN BARBOUR | Men's basketball junior guard Barbour posted two consecutive 25-point games, but despite his standout efforts the team narrowly lost to Princeton on Saturday, 62-58.

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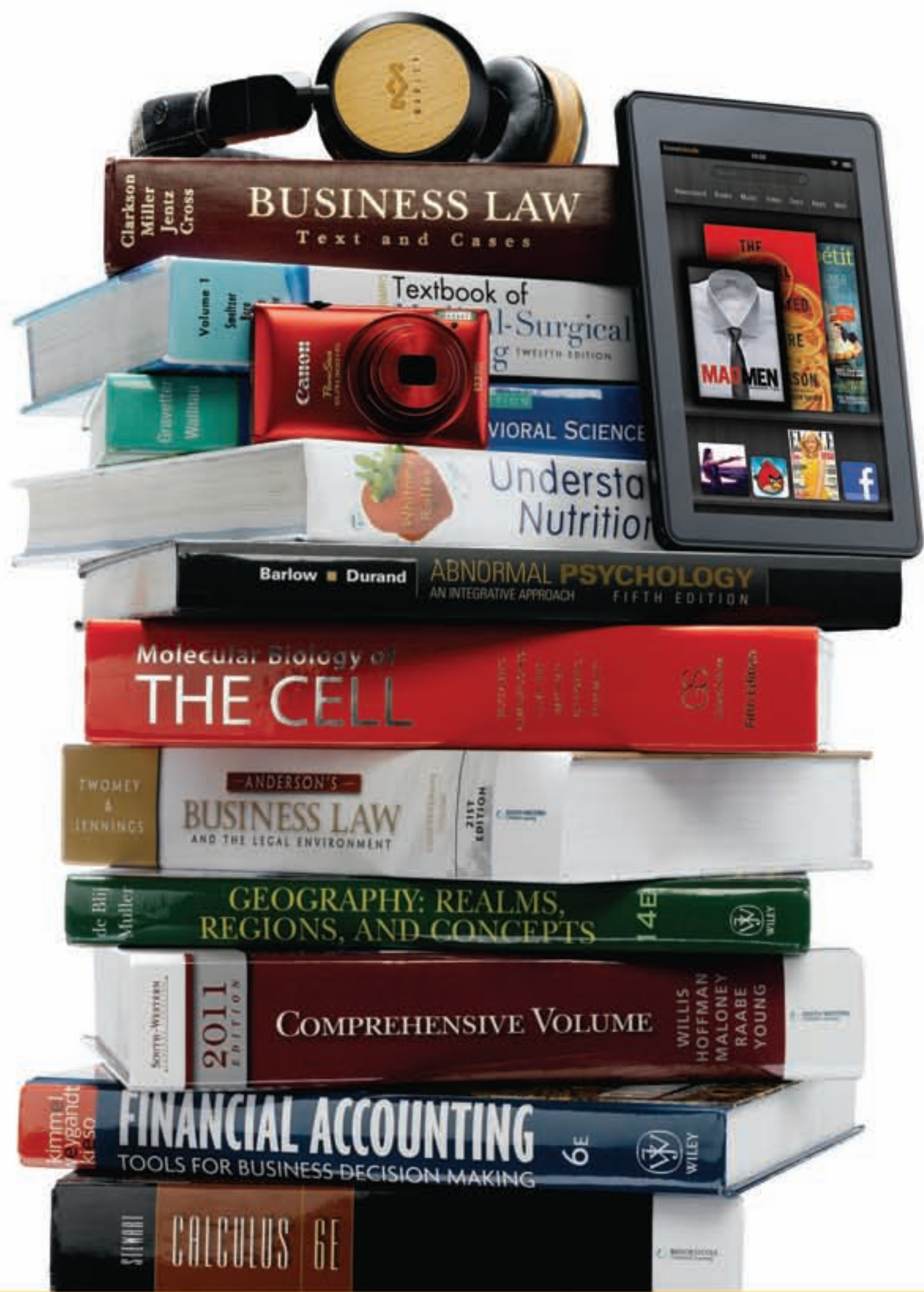
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