



TERESA SHEN FOR SPECTATOR

COMMUNITY CONCERN | Itzhak Epstein and a few dozen other Upper West Siders voiced their displeasure about a former hotel on 94th Street becoming a homeless shelter at a Tuesday night meeting of Community Board 7's health and human services committee.

Locals protest concentration of homeless shelters on UWS

BY GINA LEE
Spectator Staff Writer

Upper West Side residents say the city is not playing fair with its homeless shelters.

A community meeting focused on the conversion of a former hotel and apartment building on 94th Street into a homeless shelter became a condemnation of the city's homelessness policy, after officials from the Department of Homeless Services did not attend.

Madge Rosenberg and Barbara Van Buren, co-chairs of Community Board 7's health and human services committee, said that DHS representatives called and canceled their presentation an hour before the start of the evening meeting.

"We are angry by the way this community had been

dismissed," CB7 member Miki Fiegel said.

The room was crowded with locals eager to voice their opinions on local shelters, specifically the single-room-occupancy building on 94th Street, whose tenants are going to be paid by the DHS to move out so that the city can use the building as a temporary shelter.

Some said they opposed the shelter because of the potential danger that homeless people in such transitional facilities pose to the neighborhood, claiming that the residents will be largely unsupervised.

Ben Wolinsky, an Upper West Side resident who tutors local children, said he was worried about the proximity of the building to schools.

"There's a reason why all the gates at Teachers College are

locked," local resident Robert Josman said.

"We are angry by the way this community had been dismissed."

—Miki Fiegel, Community Board 7 member

More broadly, residents said that their neighborhood is already bearing more than its share of the burden of the city's homeless population. Many protested the lack of a "fair share" survey to show the

uneven distribution of supported housing communities throughout the city.

"We seem to be a repository for DHS," Rosenberg said.

Locals were incensed by the statistics presented by Aaron Biller, president of the block association Neighborhood in the Nineties. He said that 21 percent of supportive housing communities in the city are located on the Upper West Side, where there are 1,078, compared to the Upper East Side's 93.

"There is a socioeconomic pattern of classism, racism, whatever you want to call it. Some areas are getting a free ride," Biller said. "Every time the city gets into a crisis, they come here."

Van Buren suggested a community advising board for DHS,

SEE HOMELESS, page 2

Campbell Sports Ctr. plans face key vote

City Planning to decide on zoning waiver for Baker Field

BY CHELSEA LO
Spectator Senior Staff Writer

designed the High Line Park in Chelsea.

Columbia's plans for a new five-story athletic center at Baker Field depend on a vote from New York's City Planning Commission today.

The commission will vote on whether to allow Columbia to partially waive the waterfront zoning laws that apply to the Baker Athletics Complex, located at the northern tip of Manhattan.

Current law requires owners who build on waterfront property to devote 15 percent of their land for public waterfront access, something the University has maintained it cannot do at Baker because too much of the site—located at 218th Street in Inwood—was built before the law was passed.

Columbia has proposed instead to provide about 1.5 percent of its land for a waterfront park.

At stake is the construction of the 48,000-square-foot Campbell Sports Center, which would include new weight rooms, coaches' offices, and study space for athletes. The planned park space, known as the Boathouse Marsh, is designed by James Corner Field Operations, the landscape architecture company that

"Once all of the necessary approvals ... are obtained, we will be looking at the schedule to deliver both the new Campbell Sports Center and the Boathouse Marsh."

—Dan Held, University Facilities spokesperson

Columbia is asking the city to excuse quite a bit of the legal requirements, said Susan Russell, chief of operations for City Council member Robert Jackson.

"It's 90-plus percent of the requirements," Russell said.

SEE CAMPBELL, page 2



FILE PHOTO

ON THE WATER | Plans for the Baker Athletics Complex include a new athletics center and a restored waterfront and park.

JJ's Place opens no-swipe Dutch Door

BY RAKHI AGRAWAL
Spectator Staff Writer

Students who avoided JJ's Place last semester to save a meal swipe now have another late-night option—JJ's Dutch Door.

In efforts to cater to upperclassmen, JJ's—the fast food-serving hangout—has introduced à la carte options for students who want to purchase individual items and leave.

"It's like how it used to be," Shawn Broukhim, CC '12, said.

This past fall, JJ's Place switched from an entirely à la carte system, where they sold menu items individually, to a

meal-swipe system, which allowed students to eat as much as they like once they swiped in for \$12.50.

Director of Dining Operations Victoria Dunn defended the decision to turn JJ's into a meal plan dining hall, but said that feedback from upperclassmen led them to Dutch Door.

"I think some of the upperclass folks were nostalgic for the old JJ's," Dunn said. "The best way we could make that happen was through our Dutch Door concept."

The take-out window had been recommended by Columbia College Student Council last October. CCSC

has been pushing for a variety of dining changes this year, including opening John Jay Dining Hall on weekends, that have not yet been implemented.

At the door, located to the right of the JJ's entrance, students can now purchase single menu items such as cheeseburgers, vegan burgers, buffalo chicken wraps, and chicken tenders.

Although targeted at upperclassmen, first-years expressed enthusiasm for the Dutch Door as well.

"I'm going to use the à la carte option a lot more,"

SEE JJ's, page 2



HENRY WILLSON / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

GOING DUTCH | Rob Bell, general manager of JJ's Place, works from the new à la carte window.

Multicultural frats, sororities growing as Greek life expands role on campus

BY KARLA JIMENEZ AND JACKIE CARRERO
Columbia Daily Spectator

Involvement in multicultural fraternities and sororities has doubled in the last four years, reflecting greater interest in Greek life at Columbia.

150 students now participate in one of Columbia's 14 minority-affiliated Greek communities, which do not have brownstones and have long received less attention than their counterparts organized under the Interfraternity and Panhellenic Councils.

Jason Tejada, president of the Multicultural Greek Council, said that since the spring of 2007, three new organizations have joined MGC and five chapters have been resurrected because of growing interest in multicultural Greek life.

Those include Omega Phi Beta, a Latina sorority, which was first recognized by the MGC last fall.

"We currently accepted ... one sorority this past semester, so they are currently recruiting," MGC secretary Cindy Hernandez, BC '12 and a member of the Latina-based Sigma Lambda Gamma sorority, said in an email.

Last Thursday, January 20, members of 12 organizations

recognized under the MGC gathered in Lerner Party Space for a recruiting event, the first time the multicultural Greek organizations had a formal, unified event.

According to Jadira Mora, BC '11 and a member of Sigma Lambda Gamma, it was an important moment.

"This is the first time that there has been an organized event like this on campus, aside from the NSOP barbecue and the ABC student activities fair, both hosted at the beginning of the year in September," Mora said.

The MGC event was one example of the multicultural Greek organizations' growing presence on campus.

Last semester, the African-American Kappa Alpha Psi fraternity hosted a sold-out stroll competition in Lerner. Strolling, a synchronized dance routine done in single file to music, is a venue for self-expression among many multicultural fraternities and sororities.

Miles attributed the increase in members to the broader rise in Greek involvement.

"I think the growth is due to the increasing Greek culture on campus. A large percentage of students who join MGC orgs [organizations] are already heavily

involved on campus. This level of cross participation has increased the attention these orgs [organizations] receive in a positive way," she wrote in an email.

Jaymon Ballew, MGC vice president and member of Kappa Alpha Psi, said that the growing multicultural Greek organizations and the "Meet the Greek" event mirrored the changing demographics of Columbia students.

"This event was necessary with the growing minority pool of students," Ballew said.

Members of the 14 multicultural fraternities and sororities agreed that the MGC was making a stronger effort than in the past crossing the ethnic lines that sometimes separated those organizations.

"MGC has never really come together as a whole, but now they're working towards it," said Lesley Loor, BC '11 and member of Latina sorority Lambda Pi Chi.

Tiara Miles, BC '11 and president of Delta Sigma Theta, also emphasized cross-cultural relations. "Meet the Greeks" is definitely helping with the increase of multicultural Greek life and especially the divide between Latino, black, and Asian groups," Miles said.

SEE GREEKS, page 2

OPINION, PAGE 4

The evils of Wal-Mart

Wal-Mart's move into New York threatens student interests.

Breaking down Frontiers

Frontiers of Science has potential, but lacks proper application.



SPORTS, PAGE 6

CU basketball coach stars for Jamaica

Not only does women's basketball assistant coach Nicole Loudon use her experience to teach and prepare the Lions, but she is also a member of the Jamaican National Team.

EVENTS

Selected Shorts: Haiti Noir

"Dreamgirls" star Anika Noni Rose performs short stories. *Symphony Space, 2537 Broadway, 7 p.m.*

"The Broken Promises of U.S.-Arab Relations"

Rice Arab studies chair Ussama Makdisi gives lecture called "Faith Misplaced." *IAB 1512, 6-8 p.m.*

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TERESA SHEN FOR SPECTATOR

LOCAL DISSENT | Anderson Fils'aime, a tenant organizer with the Goddard Riverside SRO Law Project, was upset that Department of Homeless Services officials canceled their scheduled appearance at a Community Board 7 meeting about a new homeless shelter on 94th Street that will take the place of the Alexander Hotel building.

Multicultural frats, sororities grow in number

GREEKS from front page

Still, for some students the events are simply a way to be social, not a gateway to membership. “I do not believe in Greek life, and I highly doubt I will ever be interested,” said Tabia Santos, BC ’13, who attended the “Meet the Greeks” event. “I’m not interested in being in a sisterhood.”

Regardless, multicultural Greek life’s presence at Columbia continues to grow.

“Greek life has definitely grown exponentially,” said Vikki Campos, BC ’11 and a member of Hermandad de Sigma Iota Alpha, a Latina sorority. “It wasn’t as big as it is now when I first came here.”

“It is safe to say that, yes, there definitely will be more people in Greek life, and the numbers just keep increasing,” Hernandez said.

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JJ’s Place opens new window to appeal to upperclassmen

JJ’s from front page

Lauretta Ambe, CC ’14, said.

Fellow first-year Miriam Kwarteng-Siaw, CC ’14, on the other hand, said the new option wasn’t that enticing.

“Right now I just prefer meal swipes,” she said.

Some students anticipate complaints about the cost of the à la carte items. According to JJ’s general manager Robert Bell, the door price is \$12.50, and the à la carte items cost \$6.25 or \$6.50.

“I think there’s a discrepancy between the price of the à la carte items and price per meal swipe,” Broukhim said.

But Bell disagreed, saying the Dutch Door prices are reasonable.

“The prices are the same or lower than they were last year for a similar meal item,” Bell said. “But granted, a \$6.50 price for a particular meal item versus

a \$12.50 door price—if you are going to eat four or five hamburgers, this is not difficult math.”

And although student feedback prompted the introduction of the à la carte door, Dunn doesn’t see it becoming profitable just yet.

“It’s on a trial basis, we’ll see what happens. Right now we only have two or three customers visiting a night,” Dunn said. “We really need to get at least 50 customers visiting a night to make it viable because we did bring in extra help to be able to service our customers.”

Dunn anticipates trying out the door until at least spring break. Spokespeople for Columbia Dining have said they can’t make major changes to dining halls or meal plans until March, when workers’ labor contracts expire.

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City commission to vote on Baker Field plans

CAMPBELL from front page

“This is a fairly large waiver.”

Even so, the Boathouse Marsh project may actually provide access to property previously closed off to the public, said New York City Parks spokesperson Phil Abramson.

“While most of the Boathouse Marsh is located on CU property, a portion of it crosses the border into a previously inaccessible portion of the neighboring Inwood Hill Park,” Abramson wrote in an email. “We feel that the proposed design would provide valuable open space improvements to the area.”

If the City Planning Commission grants Columbia the authorization it needs, the University will have a green light to begin construction unless the City Council elects to review the application as well—a step Russell said was likely.

“I expect it will be called up by a council member,” Russell said, though she noted that Council member Jackson has not made any decisions yet.

The University has remained quiet about the timeline for the two projects’ eventual completion.

According to the project website, construction on the

Campbell Sports Center was expected to begin in summer 2010, but University Facilities spokesperson Dan Held said that a timeline is not yet available.

“The University continues to work with the Department of City Planning and the Department of Parks and Recreation on the new application,” Held wrote in an email statement. “Once all of the necessary approvals by public agencies are obtained, we will be looking at the schedule to deliver both the new Campbell Sports Center and the Boathouse Marsh.”

Held said Columbia has reached out to Inwood locals with a series of meetings. According to the project website, Columbia has held 18 meetings with local community boards and politicians since fall 2009, with the most recent one held last October.

But Inwood resident David Brodherson, who formed the Inwood Mobilization Committee to advocate for resident concerns about the construction, said Columbia has a history of being disconnected from the concerns of local residents. He cited the current hours of the running track, which,

Brodherson said, provide public access only during business hours and prohibit access during holiday breaks.

“Ninety percent of the world is not going to be able to use that track,” Brodherson said. “There’s been a huge communication gap—we don’t really know which agency knows what.”

Russell said Jackson’s office is working to close that gap.

“I’ve had the opportunity to hear concerns from residents, you hear a lot of frustrating stuff,” she said, noting that many residents do not think Columbia has provided open communication throughout the process.

Brodherson said he thinks the prospects look dim for residents who oppose the current Baker Field plans, adding that he anticipates that City Planning will grant the waiver.

Community Board 12 chair Pamela Palanque-North said Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer had already submitted a recommendation to approve the waiver, with reservations, after a meeting with her and elected officials in November.

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BASKETBALL LIFER | After playing college basketball at Auburn, and professional basketball in Israel, the Czech Republic, Spain, and now for Jamaica's national team, assistant basketball coach Nicole Loudén is mentoring Columbia's trio of young point guards.

Coach's experience great asset in teaching Lions

LOUDEN from back page

played in every game this year—and sophomore Taylor Ball, who didn't get much playing experience as a freshman and has now taken on an important role with the team.

"She [Louden] has given me a lot of pointers on how to be a better point guard," said Ward, who has started 14 of the Lions' 16 games thus far.

Louden has also used her wealth of experiential knowledge to help the team's veterans.

"It's really helpful to have her around, because she's played so much ... so recently," senior guard Kathleen Barry said. "Lots of times she notices little things that the other coaches might forget to tell you or assume you already know."

“Also, it’s nice to have someone who can jump into a drill in practice if we need a little extra competitiveness,” she added.

Louden has seen those young players grow and develop since she and the rest of the staff began working with them in August, noting the toughness that they've begun to display.

"At this point, they're diving on loose balls, they're snatching rebounds," she said. "They're doing all the intangibles that will certainly help the program be successful this year on."

After working with younger players in “a ton” of basketball camps since high school, this

assistant coaching position with Columbia is Louden's first real role within a basketball program. Even with all her experience playing the game, seeing it from another perspective has still been eye-opening, she said.

"As a player, you show up, you take instruction, you try to execute, and you go home. The players really don't know what goes on behind the scenes ... to try to put the team in a position to win," Loudon said. "I'm learning that it isn't just about the X's and O's of the game, and you really do have to care about these players as people."

With a long and successful playing career under her belt and a new role in basketball just beginning to develop, Loudon looks back on her experiences with appreciation and toward the future with new ambitions for herself.

“Experience is the best teacher, as cliché as that may sound. I think all the things I’ve gone through since I was a little girl have gotten me to this point, and the point where I am now is then going to propel me to do other great things,” said Loudén. “I’m very, very thankful ... for all the experiences I’ve had.

She also has not entirely given up on her childhood dream—after going back to school to get her MBA, she hopes to one day become the general manager of a WNBA team.

Comparing Cleveland and Columbia sports

SIMMONS from back page

last year Columbia had four of its women's archers achieve All-American status. Sure, that's probably not going to receive the type of publicity and notoriety that the basketball team is going to get, but to me that's an extremely significant accomplishment for the recently

graduated Sara Goshorn, senior Lauren Marion, and juniors Sarah Chai and Sydney Shaefer. They represent just a microcosm of all the great but less-publicized athletic talent that Columbia has to offer.

I know we all have a lot of academic work to do every day, and I'm sure that, on some level, we like it. Otherwise, we wouldn't

be here, right? Still, I think it's worthwhile to sometimes take a step back and just look at everything and everyone who is successful here for us athletically.

Remember, at least it's not the '80s.

*Myles Simmons is a Columbia College freshman.
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CU more comfortable playing together

LINEUP from back page

But Bradford proved her value as a starter. Against Cal State-Bakersfield, she scored 10 points and grabbed a Lomax-like 14 rebounds to record her first double-double. Since then, she has continued to be a solid post presence. Though Bradford did not play in the second half at Cornell on Saturday due to illness, she likely will start this coming weekend.

Not only does Columbia now have a stable starting lineup, but the players who take the court—both starters and substitutes—are now comfortable playing together. That was not always the case.

"As our record indicates, we really struggled early in the season to try and find that on-court chemistry and having players be used to playing with each other," Nixon said.

The Lions began the year with 13 straight defeats. Nixon cited Columbia's seventh and eighth games—against Monmouth and Fairfield, respectively—as ones in which the team “started playing close to our capabilities.” The Lions suffered a 67-64 loss at Monmouth and a 50-46 loss against Fairfield.

After those contests, Columbia played four games against incredibly tough opponents. The Lions faced Iowa State on the road before their three in Hawaii. Then, one

game after its one-point loss to Lafayette, Columbia earned its first win—a 61-54 victory over Cornell on Jan. 15. The Lions followed that performance with a 75-65 win against St. Francis (N.Y.). Though Columbia did not win its second game against Cornell—the Big Red came away with a 53-50 victory—the Lions certainly are not looking the way they did at the start of the season.

"Since we've come back from Hawaii, the team has, even with some key players missing—Kathleen missing for the Lafayette game and, obviously, Courtney missing the second half of the [second] Cornell game—I think we've still been able to play at a very competitive level," Nixon said.

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Barry	Dwyer	Ward	Orlich	Shafer		
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Barry	Dwyer	Ball	Orlich	Bradford		
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Barry	Dwyer	Ward	Simpson	Ball		
					1	↓ ₋₃
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The failure of Frontiers

BY ANDREW WRIGHT

Sitting around the dinner table on Christmas Day, my grandmother asked me the infamous question—what’s so great about Columbia? I gave her the answer most of us give. The city is amazing and the Core Curriculum allows all students to be holistic. This made me think—does the Core really do this? Columbia claims that one of its biggest assets is the Core. In place for almost 100 years, the Core attempts to make Columbia students well-rounded individuals so that they may be able to acquire the intellectual capacity to live a meaningful existence. However, upon taking four classes to fulfill core requirements, my one concern with this goal is how they are teaching us to use this knowledge. We read works by Aristotle and Homer, but without applying our new knowledge, we fail to grasp the value of their works. The prime example of Columbia’s failure to teach application is Frontiers of Science.

As soon as I stepped out of the first Frontiers of Science lecture, I knew the class had a great deal of potential. However, as soon as I stepped out of my first Frontiers of Science seminar, I realized that the course was doomed. Frontiers of Science, the required first-year course, is designed, per the course description, to “change the way students think about questions of science and about the world around them.” It is split into two

portions—a large lecture, in which the entire Frontiers community meets to learn the material from an expert lecturer, and a seminar, an intimate class with fewer students in which the material from the lecture is discussed. Despite having an intelligent discussion leader, the seminar was structured not to induce but in fact to inhibit student learning. With a quick 30-minute review and an hour-and-a-half application format, the course was structured around the idealistic notion that all students review the lecture material before going to seminar. In spite of that hope, no one did.

Instead, we were forced to use the 30 minutes of review to display our mastery of the subject matter. By the third week, I was completely disenchanted with not only the course, but the Core as a whole. Yes, I had become a true Columbia first-year.

I decided that I had to do something. My class was visibly disinterested, as I occasionally caught the girl next to me falling asleep. My section leader introduced the concept of a “class liaison,” one student who would confidentially tell the professor if there were any concerns about the course. I volunteered to be the class liaison. This was my calling. This would be my triumph over the Hungarian Horntail that is FroSci.

I wrote a polite yet firm email to my section leader. I explained that ultimately the course was structured in a way that forced us to apply knowledge that we did not have and asked her to spend more time on reviewing the lecture. In the end, I was pleased with my email. About two hours later, I received a reply. Her response summarized exactly what I wrote and promised to devote “more time” to

Strengthening the core

BY KEVIN ZHAI

Columbia athletics provokes different reactions and attitudes. As a student-athlete, I’ve always wondered about how to deal with fellow students’ feelings of general antagonism toward athletes. What then, is—or ought to be—the purpose of an athletics program in an undergraduate liberal arts education?

In a way, the athletics department has answered the question for me, with its various media campaigns to legitimize itself in the face of all the anti-intellectual athletic stereotypes in a sometimes hostile intellectual community. Being on a sports team is like being on a business or corporate team. This is what Columbia athletics has tried to teach me.

Athletics is inexorably interlinked with Columbia’s cherished Core Curriculum.

Though I am immensely appreciative of my coaches, I cannot say the same of the educational programming scheduled by the athletics department. Hordes of emails about banking and consulting internship applications, a first-year seminar on “dining etiquette,” and countless meet-and-greet opportunities with successful finance alumni tell me that my experience with Columbia athletics has been worthwhile because the skills I’ve learned on the swim team would somehow translate into the business world. While I have no doubt that this is true, how does this justification address the liberal aspect of our education?

Part of the department’s official mission statement is to foster the “development of the mind, body and spirit,” a set of pursuits that is inexorably interlinked and closely tied with Columbia’s cherished Core Curriculum. There are practical

concerns surrounding the necessity of a sound body—we are a nation plagued by obesity, and we run to the easy solutions of Western medicine that belie the fact that physical health requires constant self-awareness. How can one be successful in any endeavor without the basic presumption of health? But aren’t there reasons that focus on athletics as an end in itself, and not merely means to a socially beneficial end?

Sure, the Core can give us the distinguished air of the cultured elite to impress important people at dinner parties, but that is certainly not the reason why we consider it as the cornerstone of our education. Similarly, my experiences on the swim team cannot be summarized in a business class, or a monthly YMCA-sponsored lecture on “wellness.” A deep, profound appreciation for and intimate knowledge of the human body and its physical capabilities is not attained overnight. Though I may not remember all the sets that Coaches Jim or Gustavo ever sent my way (though I will definitely remember a few particularly painful ones) or all of Coach Cat’s inexhaustible tips about lifting form, I have begun to learn what it means to live a healthy life.

Is this type of learning not analogous to the learning in Core classes? Even though reading books and swimming laps may not be one and the same, both serve the lifelong goal of shaping the holistic individual. Not only is athletics compatible with the Columbia undergraduate liberal arts tradition, it is in fact motivated by the exact values which the Core represents.

To all the skeptics, I challenge you to attend an athletics event. My coach Gustavo always criticizes me for my complete lack of interest in any other athletic activities going on at Columbia, and I think he is right in his occasional joking jabs. Swim meets have become so mundanely familiar to me that it took the novelty of a recent track meet I attended to remind me of the immense ability of the human body. The whole track meet ran like a well-oiled machine, a dizzying array of athletes performing incredible feats in parallel and perfect harmony. I left no less inspired than after the most passionate and persuasive of lectures.

The author is a Columbia College junior majoring in Philosophy. He is a member of the varsity swim team.



AMALIA RINHEHART

STAFF EDITORIAL

Lerner’s next-door neighbor

While you eat breakfast in John Jay, pick up your mail at Alfred Lerner Hall, and relax around the first-year quad, a graduate student on the same campus can feel leagues away. Though undergraduate and graduate hubs are separate at many universities, Columbia has faced a unique obstacle to cultivating a sense of community among graduate students: the lack of a shared student space for students in the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences.

Though we wish we could have more interactions with graduate students, the greater issue is that graduate students themselves don’t interact enough.

In a survey conducted by the Graduate School Advisory Council in April 2010, 77 percent of polled students believed that the GSAS community was not cohesive across departmental lines. Less than year after these results were made public, the university re-allocated \$4.6 million to an enhancement plan for graduate students that includes funding a new center.

Though the University should be commended for its speedy attempts to alleviate the problem of graduate student alienation, the move to fund a new student center raises larger questions about community building.

How can a university, or any school for that matter, attempt to forge a better sense of community?

Columbia’s hope that a new student center can create meaningful connections rests on the belief that space is key to community-building. Though a student center will

not solve the university’s “community problem,” shared spaces can help provide a forum for dialogue. If designed properly, the student center can be a place where these conversations occur. Location, spatial layout, and decoration will determine whether the new student center will foster communication among graduate students or be overlooked as an expensive play-space.

How can a university, or any school, for that matter, attempt to forge a better sense of community?

As much as the enhancement plan demonstrates the university’s desire to forge a happier, more cohesive graduate student body, it also marks the start of a larger strategic undertaking. Graduate schools are often criticized for hosting highly-specialized departments that are small, selective, and distinct from other departments. GSAS is no exception. If the university can create, or at least give the illusion of, an interdisciplinary academic atmosphere, Columbia will have a leg up over peer institutions. However, it is not clear how a new student center will lead to a more interdisciplinary graduate school—relaxed conversations among students do not necessarily make a more cohesive community.

We hope that the student center can create a comfortable, central location for graduate students to mingle and relax. We doubt that one space can create a better sense of community among graduate students—but it’s a start.

reviewing the lecture material. I emailed the students who voiced their concerns and told them that their concerns were heard and fixed. Unfortunately, this was not true. We ended up spending only 10 more minutes on the material. The seminar was still a failure to us—we had not been able to learn the foundations so that application was possible.

I was completely disenchanted with not only Frontiers, but the Core as a whole.

After evaluating why we all failed to learn, I concluded that it was the structure of the seminar. The purpose of Frontiers of Science is to introduce students to cutting-edge aspects of established scientific fields. Yet as of now, the course does not do that. It is the equivalent of a seventh-grade science class, with more complex information. This is the issue with the Core—the information we learn is not reinforced properly and thus does not serve as an effective means for enriching our lives.

The author is a Columbia College first-year.

New kid to own the block

While you were away on the holiday break and possibly not checking the news, the Wal-Mart Corporation descended on New York City. From a recent Times article, I learned that Wal-Mart plans to open locations in all five boroughs of the city. When I realized that Wal-Mart is determined to move into our backyard, I did the only natural thing—I went online and registered for a job application. As it seemed on the Wal-Mart website, the corporate conglomerate advertises extravagant healthcare plans with full dental and 401(k) matching, so why the heck not?

After the retailer’s plan went public, it met immediate opposition from the New York City Council, which, of course, includes Columbia University’s District 9 representative, Councilwoman Inez E. Dickens. Dickens campaigned in 2009 on the platform of helping out small businesses and keeping them from getting swallowed up by larger chains—to “revitalize the small business community.” She wrote that the road to economic recovery is “jobs, jobs, and more jobs.” Lately, city politicians from Dickens to newly elected Governor Andrew Cuomo have been repeating the word so frequently that you would think they believed it was an incantation to make actual jobs appear.

The Council summoned representatives to a hearing.

Unfortunately, Wal-Mart’s people failed to show up.

Unlike frighteningly pro-business, anti-tax “Democrats” such as Cuomo and Public Advocate Bill de Blasio, the members of the City Council are well aware that the Wal-Mart takeover will have none of the positive effects that it promises. This is why the Council summoned representatives of the chain to a hearing where they planned to discuss the impact of the proposition. Unfortunately, Wal-Mart’s people failed to show up. Apparently these elected city officials are peons who are not worth their corporate time or, more terrifyingly, low-level employees powerless to enact real change to defend their city. Instead of meeting with the City Council, Wal-Mart fabricated a pandering, sanctimonious website that bristles with ridiculous testimonials.

The imperative to defend New York against Wal-Mart is real. To start, the chain’s abuse of taxpayer dollars is nothing short of scandalous. According to a public advocate’s report, Wal-Mart depends on hiring employees who qualify for Medicaid and subsidized care to avoid paying healthcare costs. In 2009, it robbed the public of \$2.95 billion in tax revenue—and, at long last, was forced to admit it. Far from enriching the cities that it infects like a virus, median household incomes tend to drop, even plummet, after Wal-Mart moves into the neighborhood. But what about those jobs, jobs, jobs?

First and foremost, the claim that Wal-Mart creates jobs is a shocking lie. In the cities that Wal-Mart has infiltrated, from Chicago to Cleveland to Miami, other retailers lose 10 to 40 percent of their business, and many are forced into bankruptcy. The results are widespread and calamitous: Wal-Mart kills three jobs for every two it creates. Wal-Mart, with its public representation specialists and advertising campaigns, has fairly successfully masked the fact that it has a damaging net effect on local employment.

What is the nature of these new jobs anyway? From the website and the instructions on my new registration form, it would seem that Wal-Mart is making a special appeal to college students and recent graduates. The popular wisdom is that a tough world awaits even graduates of the best universities. Wal-Mart could serve as a bridge between academic life and “real” jobs. Not to mention how many of the listed qualifications remind me of Columbia students: eager, enthusiastic, hardworking, and listens well to others. It is not so crazy to wonder if Wal-Mart, newly arrived in the Big Apple, will seek to employ some Columbia students. But in terms of jobs at Wal-Mart, the average annual pay is around \$20,000—a figure well below the federal poverty level—so that 1.3 million Americans who work there stay poor.

The promise of “jobs, jobs, jobs” has been overused and abused across the nation to defend projects that are harmful and arguably unconstitutional, like the new Creationist theme park in Kentucky. Such a justification is equally invalid—and factually absurd—as it is when applied to Wal-Mart. People should shop at Wal-Mart or apply to work there only when there is no alternative for them financially. Furthermore, Columbia students should support the city in any way possible to prevent big business from winning another round against our best interests.

Amanda Gutterman is a Columbia College sophomore majoring in English with a French concentration. The Far Side of the Familiar runs alternate Wednesdays.



AMANDA GUTTERMAN
The Far Side of the Familiar

CU through the eyes of a Clevelander

So I'm the new guy around these parts—not only with this column, but in the entirety of Columbia. I'm the second-semester freshman who proudly hails from Cleveland, Ohio, America's most tortured sports city, and because of that, I'm predisposed to thinking that every team I root for is going to lose. Just take a look at where my teams in Cleveland are right now: the Indians are coming off a 93-loss season, the Browns just hired their fifth head coach since 1999 and the Cavs are the worst team in the league since LeBron James (in)famously, "took his talents to South Beach."

Good thing I've got Columbia sports to distract me, right?

Well, absolutely, yes. I admittedly don't know much about our athletic department, because in my first semester the only event I attended was the football game on family weekend, but, of course, I'm willing to learn—especially considering that our sports teams are a lot better than the masses may believe. I mean, at least I didn't show up when the football team was in the middle of a 44-game losing streak.

Imagine coming here in the middle of the 1980s and you're someone like me—someone who loves both football and academics and just wants the two to go hand in hand. Maybe you got here when the streak was just at 10, you know, just getting started. You can't imagine it's going to keep going the rest of your time at this place. Even if you're just a casual fan, nobody imagines that a losing streak can go on for that many games. It just doesn't happen.

I'm predisposed to thinking that every team I root for will lose. Good thing I've got Columbia sports to distract me, right?

Now, since this is about me, it's true my beloved city of Cleveland hasn't won a major title since the Browns won the NFL Championship (yes, before it was called the Super Bowl) in 1964. But at least they've won games. They were, in fact, the polar opposite of Columbia football in the notorious '80s. As the Lions were losing, the Browns were going to AFC Championship Games—never mind that they continually lost to Hall of Fame quarterback John Elway and his Denver Broncos.

But, thinking about that horrid losing streak again, imagine the sheer joy of finally seeing that kind of thing end. We've all heard about how 5,000 people stormed the field and how campus was sent into a two-day partying frenzy. Just stop for a second and think, how great would that be?

Well, after the second day where we all realized how much work we'd put off, it actually might be awful. However, I came from a high school where there was never much school spirit for anything. Granted, we weren't particularly great at sports, which didn't help, but it was never much fun to hear how much the basketball team stunk and how the football games weren't fun anyway. I remember games from my first few years where we played football in front of our parents and the other team's fans.

I'm not saying that to indict the fan base of Columbia at all, it's just where I'm coming from. All I'm trying to say is that we have a lot to appreciate here.

Take this men's basketball team, for instance. We've got a great new coach in Kyle Smith, and game after game the team is getting great performances from junior guard Noruwa Agho, and sophomore guard Brian Barbour. I'm also not trying to tell you that the basketball team isn't supported enough, because it was a packed house when we beat Cornell on our floor Jan. 15. I know it's a really big deal when we beat a team that went to the Sweet 16 of the NCAA Tournament last year, and it just so happens we hadn't won a game against them since 2006.

But you probably already knew that. What you might not know is that



MYLES SIMMONS

A Second Opinion



JOSÉ GIRALT / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

CELEBRATED COACH | Assistant coach Nicole Loudon's college and professional basketball experience has given her great knowledge to impart to the Lions.

Coach brings plethora of experience to Lions' staff

BY TREVOR COHEN
Columbia Daily Spectator

Growing up in Paterson, N.J., basketball was everything to Nicole Loudon. More than her greatest passion, she saw it as her ticket out of the inner city and let nothing come in the way of realizing her goals.

"If a good friend was having some sort of party and I felt I needed to wake up the next day and go work out, I would apologize and completely skip the party," Loudon said. "Basketball ... was my life. It reigned supreme."

Loudon, currently a volunteer assistant coach for the women's basketball team, began her career with great success at John F. Kennedy High School in Paterson. By the time she graduated in 2001, she had led her team to county and state sectional titles, become the all-time leading scorer in Passaic County history, and attracted enough buzz to have a

book written about her—"She's Got Handle" by Adam Zagoria. With her eyes on the WNBA, Loudon went on to play Division I ball at Auburn University in Alabama.

Playing in the WNBA, which was created in 1997, was Loudon's childhood dream. While she fell short of her goal, she went on to play professionally in Israel, the Czech Republic, and Spain. She is currently a member of the Jamaican national team, which she helped to a second-place finish in the Centrobasket tournament last summer in Puerto Rico. That performance secured Jamaica a spot in the FIBA Americas Championship, where it will compete later this year to qualify for the 2012 Summer Olympics in London.

"For women's basketball in Jamaica, this is huge," Loudon said. "We—my teammates and I—are accomplishing things that have never been accomplished for this country."

Loudon immersed herself in basketball at a young age, and, about to celebrate her 28th birthday this Friday, has no plans of resurfacing.

"Since about the age of 17, I already knew I was so in love with the game," she said. "I was like, 'this is what I want to do until I can no longer play.'"

While Loudon may be approaching the end of her playing days, she sees no end in sight for her involvement in the game. She's now begun to embrace a new phase in her basketball career: coaching.

Her relationship with Columbia basketball started in the summer of '09, when she worked at the team's basketball camp. She stayed in touch with women's head coach Paul Nixon over the next year, communicating via email while Loudon played in Spain. Unable to work camp again last summer because it conflicted with her play in Puerto Rico, she met with Nixon and his staff when she

returned to New York and, after going through the interview process, was offered the volunteer assistant coaching position.

"From a basketball knowledge standpoint, I knew that she was bringing a lot to the table," Nixon said.

From working with her in camp, Nixon also knew that Loudon had the coaching skills necessary to help his players develop.

"It's one thing to have knowledge. It's something else to be able to impart that," Nixon said. "Our point guard core group was still relatively young and somewhat inexperienced at the end of the season, so we were really looking for her to be able to come in and help mold our young group."

The Lions' group of guards, which is Loudon's primary focus, includes two freshmen, Brianna Orlich and Taylor Ward—each of whom has

SEE LOUDEN, page 3

After many variations, Lions' starting lineup finds stability

BY SARAH SOMMER
Spectator Senior Staff Writer

In the Columbia women's basketball team's first two games this season, its starting lineup consisted entirely of returning players. Sophomore guard Taylor Ball, sophomore forward Tyler Simpson, junior guard Melissa Shafer, senior guard Kathleen Barry, and senior center Lauren Dwyer comprised the starting five. Even that lineup, however, radically differed from the one that the Lions used one year earlier.

Columbia's starting lineup in the 2009-10 season, the season in which the Lions went 18-10 overall and 9-5 in the Ivy League, included Barry and Dwyer. It also included guard Sara Yee, guard Danielle Browne, and forward Judie Lomax, all of whom graduated this past spring. Columbia entered the 2010-11 season, therefore, with major holes to fill.

Forming a new starting lineup was no easy task for head coach Paul Nixon and his staff. They experimented with five different starting lineups in Columbia's first nine games.

"I never anticipated that we would have to go through this many changes," Nixon said.

The sixth starting lineup, which the Lions first used at Hawaii on Dec. 28, is the one that has stuck. That lineup—consisting of Barry, Dwyer, freshman guard Taylor Ward, freshman guard Brianna Orlich, and freshman forward Courtney Bradford—has now started six of Columbia's past seven games. The lineup changed only against Lafayette on Jan. 5, when Barry did not play due to injury. Shafer took her place.

Dwyer has started all of Columbia's

games this year, while Barry has started all but the one against Lafayette. Orlich has started since the Lions' third contest, and Ward has started since their fifth game. That means that four-fifths of Columbia's current starting lineup was decided by the team's fifth contest.

The final piece of the Lions' first string took more time to determine. Sophomore guard Diana Lee started in Columbia's fifth game, while Simpson held the final starting spot in the Lions' sixth and seventh matchups. Shafer returned to the starting lineup for Columbia's eighth and ninth games before being replaced by Bradford in the 10th game, the one against Hawaii.

"I never anticipated that we would have to go through this many changes."

—Paul Nixon,

women's basketball coach

Bradford was actually an experiment, too. She had started in the Lions' third and fourth games—against St. John's and Manhattan, respectively—when Nixon wanted to use a bigger lineup. Against Hawaii, UNLV, and Cal State-Bakersfield—the three teams that Columbia faced in Hawaii in late December—Bradford once again started due to her size. There was no guarantee that she would remain a starter after those games.

SEE LINEUP, page 3



ALYSON GOULDEN / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

RISING FRESHMAN | Forward Courtney Bradford seems to be the final piece in Columbia's starting lineup, having started the last seven games in a row.

SEE SIMMONS, page 3