

Mailman prof. is disaster adviser to Cuomo

BY SAMANTHA COONEY
Spectator Senior Staff Writer

After Hurricane Sandy devastated parts of New York last October, Governor Andrew Cuomo knew just who to call to help the state prepare for future disasters.

Irwin Redlener, the director and founder of the National Center for Disaster Preparedness at the Mailman School of Public Health, was appointed to co-chair the New York Ready Commission, which Mayor Bloomberg formed in response to the devastation that Hurricane Sandy wrought on the city.

“We are bringing the lens down on the long-term impact of disasters on populations.”

—Karen Levin, associate director of planning and response of National Center for Disaster Preparedness

The commission presented its recommendations on how to make the state more prepared for weather disasters earlier this month after evaluating the state’s current preparedness policies.

“I was initially very concerned that, because the timeline was so

SEE REDLENER, page 2



DAVID BRANN / SENIOR STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

STORM TROOPER | Irwin Redlener from the School of Public Health was appointed co-chair of the New York Readiness Commission to help New York prepare for natural disasters.

Housing installs window stops in all first-year dorms

BY SHAYNA ORENS
Spectator Staff Writer

When Sophie Park, CC ’16, first arrived on campus in the fall, she and her roommate were taken aback to find a bed placed adjacent to a window on an upper floor.

“My bed is right there and somebody could easily fall out,” she said. “It’s dangerous.”

Now, Park and her roommate can rest easy. University Housing has begun installing window stops in residence halls, following concerns voiced by parents and students about the safety of residence-hall windows.

The issue came to the fore after Columbia first-year student

Martha Corey-Ochoa fell to her death from a 14th-floor window in John Jay Hall during New Student Orientation Program, when many first-years had just arrived on campus. Corey-Ochoa’s death was ruled a suicide two days later.

One parent, who asked not to be named because her daughter did not know that she had been communicating with administrators, reached out to Dean of Student Affairs Kevin Shollenberger following Corey-Ochoa’s death.

The configuration in her daughter’s single in John Jay required the bed to be placed against the window, and she worried for her safety.

“As a safety-conscious parent, it immediately appeared to me that these windows were hazardous to the room occupants and passersby outside,” she said in an email. “Sadly, my initial fears were confirmed when I learned of Martha’s death from a similar window in the same dorm.”

In December, Housing sent an email to students explaining that window stops would be installed “in an effort to continuously improve safety measures.”

Over the break, stops were installed in John Jay, Carman, Furnald, Hartley, Schapiro, and Broadway residence halls. Wallach Hall is scheduled to be

completed next, and all windows in University residence halls will have window stops by Aug. 15, 2013.

Kristina Hernandez, director of marketing and communications for Student and Administrative Services, said “there was much discussion between the student and parent community highlighting the need” for the window stops.

According to Hernandez, the stops were installed using permanent screws that allow the windows to open about 20 inches in total between the upper and lower panes. It would effectively prevent a person from

SEE WINDOW, page 3



ORTAL ISAAC FOR SPECTATOR

WINDOW STOPS | Sophie Park, CC ’16, looks out her window that recently received a window stop to enhance safety for upper-level floors in residence halls. After concerned parents and students reached out to administrators, University housing took action.

CC Senior Fund launch raises \$7K

Dean Valentini pledges to match \$5,440, up \$1,372 from 2012

BY JILLIAN KUMAGAI
Spectator Senior Staff Writer

Students, alumni, and administrators gathered in Lerner Hall on Monday evening to launch the Senior Fund amid an arrangement of cupcakes and cookies in Columbia blue and white.

The kick-off continued Columbia College Dean James Valentini’s “3, 2, 1” fundraising challenge in which seniors pledge to donate \$20.13—their class year—during each of the three years after they graduate and encourage two friends to donate. One alumnus then matches the donation.

“In the Deantini world, there are only three stages of life: future students, current students, former students, and people who are related to them,” Valentini said to around 150 seniors mingling with flutes of wine and glasses of champagne. “Making financial contributions is part of it, but not all of it.”

At the end of the night, the group raised \$7,430. Valentini pledged to match \$5,440 in a contribution that will go toward Columbia College. Last year, Valentini matched \$4,068 in contributions.

Two alumni, Gene Davis, CC ’75, and Charles Santoro, CC ’82, have also agreed to match donations to the Senior Fund.

According to Valentini, the executive committee of the Senior Fund decided to keep the “3, 2, 1” tactic because it was an effective way to appeal

to seniors immediately before they graduate.

“If they don’t get involved immediately, they’re less likely to get involved at all,” Valentini said. “Three years seemed like a good period to ask for a commitment.”

Maria Suliminski, CC ’13 and the executive chair of the Senior Fund, said that the kick-off expresses to seniors and alumni that “We are part of a culture where everyone understands the importance of perpetuating what this place meant to us.”

“Drinks have a tendency to get people out,” she added. “And I think seniors like the exclusivity.”

Nirmal Ilyas, CC ’13, said that even though she is “kind of nervous” to leave, she also looks forward to reaching the “point where you can give your own hard-earned money to Columbia.”

“I plan on donating once I graduate and start on my career,” Ilyas said. “I’m the kind who wants to be involved, I want to be an alumnus. I love Columbia, so I’m going to stick around for a while.”

The Senior Fund also allows students to pick a specific program for their contribution, including financial aid, the Core Curriculum, the Student Internship Fund, and Student Affairs.

Fiona Georgakis, CC ’13, noted that she personally benefitted from direct funding

SEE FUND, page 2



FILE PHOTO

A LEGACY | The Frederick Douglass housing project has become a cultural staple for the Manhattan Valley neighborhood.

History group considers legacy of Frederick Douglass projects

BY EVA KALIKOFF
Spectator Staff Writer

More than half a century after the Frederick Douglass Houses opened in Manhattan Valley, former and current residents considered the housing project’s legacy and called on the New York City Housing Authority to restore the houses to the days of old.

The Park West Neighborhood History Group hosted an event at the Children’s Aid Society’s Frederick Douglass Center Monday evening to discuss the significance of the Frederick Douglass Houses, a low-to-middle-income housing complex.

Built in the 1950s, the Frederick Douglass Houses were funded by an urban renewal program. Today, this public housing complex includes

18 buildings, stretching from 100th to 104th streets between Amsterdam and Manhattan avenues.

“Living in Douglass was like living in a large community, but with a family,” said Tina Darden, one of the long-term residents of the houses, recalling her first impressions upon moving in as a little girl over 50 years ago.

“I could see Central Park. We could see planes,” she said as she remembered what it was like to live on the 19th floor of the building. She said that she particularly appreciated these views, having lived in a fifth-floor walk-up before moving to Douglass.

In the gymnasium at the Children’s Aid Society,

SEE HOUSING, page 2

OPINION, PAGE 4

Late registration

The problems with Columbia’s registration stem from a lack of organization.

Absurdity in culture

The best way to find perspective is to study abroad.



SPORTS, BACK PAGE

Lions struggle to make outside shots

The men’s basketball team needs to make more three-pointer shots, which was an issue as they were defeated by Cornell over the weekend.

EVENTS

Information Session: Global Scholars Program

An international summer research workshop for undergraduate students.
403 Kent Hall, 4 p.m.

Young Feminism Activism Today

A panel considers the tradition of young feminists in the last several decades.
Diana Center Event Oval, 6:30 p.m.

WEATHER

Today



55°/43°

Tomorrow



46°/28°



PETER BOHNHOF / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

SPEAKING OUT | During the Global Day of Action, students and faculty protested a Canadian bill that threatens indigenous peoples’ land reserves, forming a flash mob and teach-in to draw awareness to the issue. The events attracted Native Americans and allies alike.

Students, faculty from Columbia, Yale, protest Native land legislation

BY TRACEY WANG
Spectator Senior Staff Writer

Since the Canadian government passed a bill last November that changes land management on indigenous peoples’ reserves, thousands of Native Americans and opponents of the bill have protested it, calling it abusive. And now, Columbia students are joining the movement.

As part of the Global Day of Action for Idle No More, a grassroots movement formed in response to the legislation, students and faculty members from both Columbia and Yale organized a flash mob and a teach-in on Monday.

Student organizers from Columbia coordinated with Native American student leaders from Yale to schedule a teach-in, which featured a Google video chat session with faculty from both schools. The event drew about 60 attendees.

Tristin Moore, SEAS ’14 and one of the program organizers, said she supports Idle No More because “a lot of the laws they’re talking about have happened already to us here, so that’s why it hits close to home—that is why

we support them.”

At the teach-in, Theodore Van Alst, assistant dean of Yale College and director of Yale’s Native American Cultural Center, said that Americans constantly forget their own country’s history when it comes to Native Americans.

He recounted going to the inauguration in Washington, D.C. last week with students from Yale and listening to Inaugural Poet Richard Blanco’s poem “One Day.”

“The poem talked about recent immigrants and those who fought in the American Revolution, thus narrowing America to a very small window of about 200 years,” he said. “I never heard about us—this eraser happens a lot.”

Van Alst added that he sees the Idle No More movement as the chance for the “red nation to rise.”

Audra Simpson, an anthropology professor at Columbia, discussed the importance of the movement as part of a larger need to address the indigenous population here in the United States.

“This day is evidence of the movement continuing,” she said.

“This movement is significant because of its manifesting critique of settler colonialism, of settler governance.”

She added that the movement urges people to honor and uphold indigenous sovereignty and to stop governments and corporations from “treating the land like a dead body to be extracted from.”

Margaret Moss, an associate professor at Yale’s School of Nursing, spoke during the video conference about the health implications of policies from Canada and the U.S. that directly impact the indigenous community.

“A male born on a reservation has an average life span of 40 years, the shortest of any group in America and Canada,” she said. “That’s largely a result of the policies that govern indigenous people.”

Earlier in the day, battling freezing temperatures and rain, about 20 students gathered on College Walk and held signs that had slogans expressing support for indigenous rights.

Participants performed a round dance while Julian NoiseCat, CC ’15 and treasurer

of the Native American Council, sang and played the hand drum.

Doug Parsons, a Brooklyn resident, said that the teach-in was informative and educational.

“As a non-Native, I’m acting as an ally,” he said. “My goal is just continuing on and supporting the movement as an outsider being educated.”

Mari Huobutta, CC ’14 and a member of the NAC, said that she was proud to be a part of the movement that has its origins in Canada.

“I think it shows progress that the Natives from the U.S. and the Natives from Canada are building an alliance. The movement shows that we’re allied with them.”

James Sinclair, an assistant professor in the department of Native studies at the University of Manitoba, said that while movements like Idle No More have come and gone in the past, he sees this as a pivotal moment in Native history.

“This history will change now,” he said. “We have experienced this change in beautiful ways all around the world.”

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Redlener served as disaster adviser to President Clinton

REDLENER from front page

short, it would be impossible to do,” Redlener said. “It turns out that I was wrong.”

The final recommendations, which will be provided to Cuomo in a full report in the coming weeks, included improving the infrastructure of health care facilities and hardening the city’s subway system so that it wouldn’t have to shut down entirely during a storm.

The topics that the commission focused on are similar to what Redlener and researchers at the National Center for Disaster Preparedness address on a daily basis.

“What the center does is help examine the level of readiness or preparedness for all kinds of disasters,” Redlener said. “We try to use research to figure out the best solutions for some of the challenges that come with preparing ourselves for the disasters.”

Redlener started his career as a pediatrician, founding the Children’s Health Fund with musician Paul Simon to provide health care to underserved children. He has also served as an adviser to policymakers, including former President Bill Clinton.

Allan Rosenfield, then dean of the Mailman School, asked Redlener to join Columbia’s faculty in 2003.

“There had been some work being done on disaster readiness prior to my getting to Columbia,” Redlener said. “But the dean had asked me to really expand our work and elevate what we were doing to become a national leader in this field.”

The center, funded by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, focuses on post-disaster climates, system readiness, disaster recovery, vulnerable populations, and citizen engagement.

“When we speak of recovery, we are not just discussing the rebuilding of infrastructure,” Karen Levin, the center’s associate director of planning and response and the director of the Columbia Regional Learning Center, said. “We are bringing the lens down on the long-term impact of disasters on populations.”

The center continues to conduct research years after disasters occur in the hope of better understanding how communities respond to them. The center is still conducting research on

the impacts of Hurricane Katrina and on the flaws that remain in the Department of Homeland Security nearly 12 years after the 9/11 attacks.

The center’s ultimate hope is that its research will help change policies to make the nation more prepared for any disaster that it may encounter.

“Our aim is to take our research findings to the practice side of preparedness response to influence policy, which allows us to contribute directly to the overarching goals of our nation’s national health security goals,” Levin said.

“I think we’re spending an increasing amount of time trying to figure out how we transfer the research into public policy.”

—Irwin Redlener, New York Ready Commission, co-chairman

“A lot of reports and those recommendations go on to be the policymakers directly,” Michael Reilly, the director of the center’s Division of Planning and Response, said.

Still, Redlener—despite spending his career influencing policy—acknowledged that getting policymakers to take notice of the research isn’t always easy.

“It doesn’t happen naturally or automatically,” he said. “I think we’re spending an increasing amount of time trying to figure out how we transfer the research into public policy.”

Redlener said that, especially in times of economic stress, the research has to almost be marketed to politicians—something he is more than willing to do.

“I think it’s part of the responsibility of academics doing research in any field that’s important to society to try to understand the dynamics so we can be part of the conversation when it comes to making policy decisions,” he said.

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Residents call on NYCHA to maintain housing complex

HOUSING from front page

photographs of the community that the construction of the Frederick Douglass Houses displaced were on display in a collection titled “The Old Community.”

“Public housing was not built for the sake of public housing itself,” Victor Bach, senior housing policy analyst at the Community Service Society, told the audience of about 50 people, comprised of members of the History Group and current or former residents of the Douglass housing project. Public housing projects were first funded and built by the federal government during the Great Depression, when low-wage workers were employed in construction as an important stimulus for the economy.

“I don’t have any kids, but every kid in this complex is my child.”

—Madelyn Innocent, long-time resident

The event’s tone was nostalgic, as many longtime residents issued a plea to make public housing the safe and supportive place they recall.

“This place was a palace,” Madelyn Innocent, another long-term resident of the Douglass houses, said about her impression of the community as a child, focusing mostly on the sense of connection and friendliness she felt growing up there. “This was a place that

cared about what the children were doing,” she recounted. Nowadays, “we are in the press as a community that is crime-ridden.”

Bach and many others at the event voiced their frustration with the NYCHA and its failure to maintain the buildings.

“NYCHA has been tenacious in keeping public housing going,” Bach said. But, he added later, “NYCHA has got to start improving its internal operations.”

Darden also said that she remembers a much more hopeful environment, attributing her life’s inspiration to her early childhood in the Douglass community. She enjoyed helping the nurse in the houses so much as a child that she was motivated to become first a licensed practical nurse, then a registered nurse, and finally a nurse practitioner.

“It was interesting tonight to hear the pleas for connection in the community,” Winifred Armstrong, a volunteer from the History Group, said after the event. She mentioned Darden’s story as one of the important success stories of someone living in Douglass public housing.

Thomas Lopez-Pierre, a fringe candidate for City Council in District 7, called for protests against the use of public land for expensive private projects that drive out low-income residents. He encouraged residents to protest, but he also warned them to “be prepared to be arrested” for defending their neighborhoods.

Like many of her fellow Douglass residents, Innocent takes a more emotional stance. “I don’t have any kids,” she said, “but every kid in this complex is my child.”

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OLACHI OLERU / SENIOR STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

FUN WITH FUNDS | Columbia College Dean James Valentini discussed his “3, 2, 1” plan to encourage donations from current seniors at the launch of the CC Senior Fund Monday night.

Launch event designed to keep seniors involved

FUND from front page

and extracurricular support. Georgakis said she thought it was important to contribute something that will benefit a future student “the way someone 20 years ago definitely did for us.”

“I think the size of the donation will increase after being in the workplace,” Georgakis said. “Donating \$20.13 now is definitely manageable.”

Kristina Lee, CC ’13, wasn’t sure if she would donate, but said that she appreciated the event despite financial concerns.

“I don’t have a lot of money right now,” Lee said. “I know a lot of people are uncertain about what they’re going to do, so that’s an issue. I’d be more likely to donate if I had a job.”

Justin Hines, CC ’13, said that donating “isn’t all that important, but it’s a respectable thing to do. I like the idea of coming back and seeing what the class gave.”

Hires said that he recently felt “a little bit nostalgic” after beginning work at a part-time job.

“As I was leaving, I thought, ‘This is what my day is going to be like,’” he said. “I won’t be in a

society full of intelligent peers.”

Valentini said that the division between life at Columbia and postgrad life is something that the Senior Fund is designed to address by getting students involved in the school.

“It’s a way of us being able to connect with you and you with us,” Valentini said. “You’ll say, ‘I’m physically leaving Morningside, but I’m not leaving college.’ We want to diminish the sense that Class Day is a transition to something entirely different.”

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Secondary scorers will have to aid the strong nucleus

ALAM from back page

hot the night of a game, head coach Paul Nixon can merely sub in one of the unknown quantities who ordinarily would be the fourth most dangerous Light Blue threat on the floor, but for a night could catch the opponent off-guard by being the most dangerous Lion on the court.

From here on out, they and the rest of the secondary scoring threats need to make sure they’re in top form. Even in basketball, a strong nucleus can’t win a title without a solid supporting cast that will step up when called upon. It’s doubly important to have lineup depth considering other teams—especially the drastically changed Harvard men’s team, led by freshman and Ivy assist leader Siyani Chambers is the best example—could gain an advantage as well, thanks to the league’s youth.

The “big guns” will step up most of the time, but realistically can’t carry the team on their backs in each and every matchup. Fortunately, the Lions have the talent for that extra unexpected contribution. If they can get one or two depth scorers every night, they should be in good shape.

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RESIDENCE HALL WINDOW STOP INSTALLATION



SOURCE: COLUMBIA RESIDENCE LIFE / GRAPHIC BY BENJAMIN BROMBERG GABER

Students say CPS ‘must play a part’ in dialogue

WINDOW from front page

falling out of the window. But some students raised doubts about the installation’s effectiveness. “Facilities put in a considerable effort just to get the window stops installed, but students began taking them out as soon as break was over,” Aiden Mehigan, CC ’16, said. “Over the summer, Facilities will presumably have to go back through the rooms to reinstall missing stops.” While Mehigan felt that stops would be comforting to people on upper floors who are afraid of heights, he said that he is concerned about how the window

stops would prevent the air from circulating in the warmer months. “Since installation, a couple students have complained about the limitation,” Hernandez said. “But overall the student response to Housing thus far has been understanding and supportive of the measure.” While Housing maintained that the installation was an independent safety initiative, students said that actions to ensure their physical safety are a small part of the larger issues of suicide prevention and mental health. “It was nice to see they were making some kind of gesture,

but if suicide prevention is what they’re trying to get at, there are probably better, more direct ways to target the heart of the problem,” Park said. Mehigan agreed and said that the effort should be expanded to include Counseling and Psychological Services, which was not directly involved in the installation of the window stops. “A society-wide shift in perception of mental health has to start somewhere,” Mehigan said, “and it will need many organizations to drive it along—CPS must play a part.”

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Lions struggle to make key shots at home

MEN’S BASKETBALL from back page

Lions head coach Kyle Smith said. “They played us more inside-out. ... They went under on the on-ball [screens] with Brian, daring him to make shots, and it worked for them.” While the Lions’ shooting picked up in the second half, propelling them to within one point of the tie, they came up short in the final seconds, losing 66-63. Along with the ice-cold start the Lions had in their December game against American—in which they missed their first 15 shot attempts—Saturday’s first half was one of the worst shooting slumps the Light Blue have faced this season. Going into Saturday’s contest, Smith had expressed concern about the Light Blue’s performance on its home court—which hasn’t matched up to its performance on the road—and Saturday’s result did nothing to soothe his concerns. “We haven’t shot the ball well at home, and I’m at a loss of words in that regard,” he said following the loss.

So far this season, the Lions are 3-4 at home and 6-3 on the road, though their shooting averages this year don’t vary greatly based on the game venue. And while the Lions have seemed to make big plays down the stretch when on the road, they have consistently seemed to come up short in Leven. For instance, when Columbia played away against Villanova in November, the Lions hit 11 of their 31 shots from beyond the arc, as sophomore guard Steve Frankoski drained five and freshman guard Grant Mullins sunk four more. Those three-pointers came at key points in the second half and were largely responsible for staving off the Wildcats’ multiple attempts at a comeback. On the other hand, at home against Bucknell in December, the Light Blue only went 4-16 from downtown. Two key misses with about two minutes remaining in the game allowed the Bison to retake the lead on their way to a 65-57 victory. Two weeks ago in Ithaca, Columbia had a hot hand from beyond the arc, shooting 6-13. Again, Frankoski and Mullins led

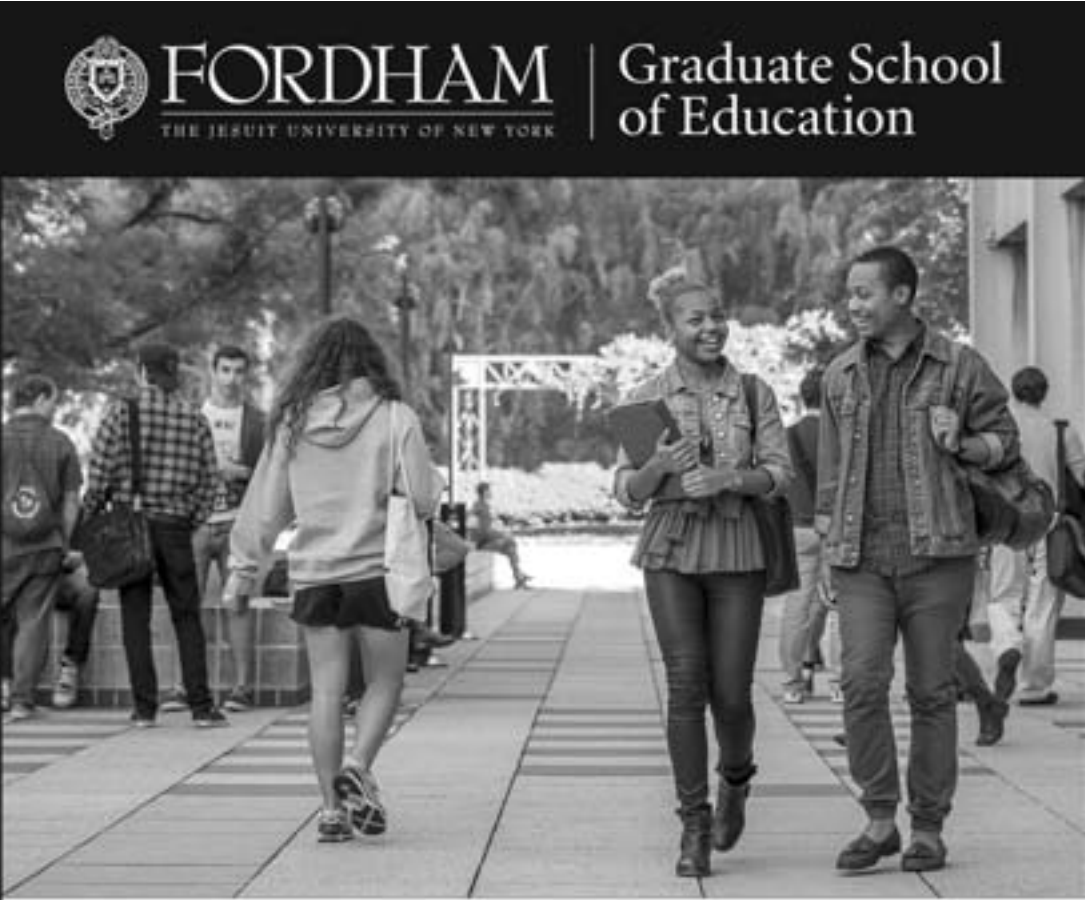
the team in three-point shooting and buoyed the team after an initially slow start. But last Saturday at home, the Lions struggled to hit outside shots in the first half, and finished the game with only 30 percent shooting from three-point range. While freshman guard Maodo Lo had a breakout performance with three big shots from the outside, Barbour, Mullins, and Frankoski combined for only 4-16. In a game in which the Lions needed to play catch-up for the entirety of the second half, three-point misses took the wind out of Columbia’s comeback momentum. This weekend against Penn and Princeton, both on the road, Columbia’s three-point shooting will likely play a large role again, especially against the Tigers’ larger and slower lineup. While they have the offensive tools to make up for some falters from beyond the arc, namely senior center Mark Cisco and other big men, the Lions’ outside shooting, especially from Frankoski and Mullins, will play a large part in their success.

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COURTESY OF THE HARVARD CRIMSON / SHUNELLA G. LUMAS

FRONT AND CENTER | Senior center Mark Cisco will have to help make up for offensive falters.





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Tobacco Creek,
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Become a teaching assistant—you won’t regret it

BY ABDUL RAFAY HANIF

From debating with my peers about the true state of nature to asking world-renowned economists what they think about the European debt crisis, this school has more than enough to offer. However, there has been one specific experience that I ultimately have to credit as a standout educational milestone. It has contributed to arguably more than half of the learning I have undergone since first stepping foot on this campus. Interestingly enough, that experience has been serving as a teaching assistant.

When I first found out that I had been chosen to serve as a TA for my favorite class at Columbia—Intermediate Macroeconomics with Professor Sala-i-Martin—I was surprised. I quickly replied to the email I received from the economic department’s undergraduate advisor Susan Elmes that afternoon and proceeded to go about the rest of the day as one of the happiest 19-year-olds in the city. I had just signed myself up for an amazing experience.

I usually don’t try to sell things to people, but I feel as if it would be unfair for me not to tell you about what I learned through teaching.

First and foremost, it feels good to give to others. For me, at least as an undergraduate, I feel as if this is one of the better ways that I can give back to the Columbia student body, which has already played such a huge role in my self-development and in my increased understanding of different points of view.

The feeling of opening CourseWorks after a midterm and seeing that the students who used to come to my recitation did better than most of the other people in the class is amazing. You feel as if you made an impact. That same student might use the information that you taught them in a higher-level class, which might lead to another higher-level class, which then might lead to some ground-breaking research.

Through teaching others, I not only had to present the material in an easy-to-understand manner, but I also had to thoroughly understand its every nuance.

My next point is probably the one most closely related to the academic definition of learning. Sure, I got the TA position because I did well in the class. But one thing that I didn’t realize as a student was that I had only done well because I had learned how to properly study for the class. It wasn’t that I was suddenly the smartest student in the course—that was not the case at all. It was simply the fact that I had developed smart studying habits that allowed me to do well. It had never hit me that I knew so little about the intricacies of the subject itself. I felt as if I should’ve spent more time delving into the course material and learning about it on my own. However, the fact that I was taking other courses and doing other things at the same time didn’t enable me to do so.

Through teaching others, I not only had to present the material in an easy-to-understand manner, but I also had to thoroughly understand its every nuance. Rather than looking at and understanding the front face of the cube, I learned to see and understand each of the six sides and, in doing so, developed a new and unparalleled appreciation for the same course material.

You might never get a better chance to navigate the ways in which different people approach problem-solving. With the talent that a place like Columbia attracts, the potential to do exactly that is phenomenal. And most of the other TAs that I’ve spoken to have had a similar experience.

If you ever get a chance to teach, whether here at Columbia as an undergradate, or anywhere else in the world, take it with both hands. There simply aren’t too many other experiences that can help you learn so much about both others and yourself.

The author is a Columbia College junior studying economics-statistics. He was a teaching assistant for professor Xavier Sala-i-Martin’s Intermediate Macroeconomics class in the fall.

Absurdity in culture

Spending the past week packing for my study abroad program in the Netherlands and watching my friends endure the stress of the return to school really felt great. Schadenfreude, I guess. And while everyone has been busy being busy, I have had the luxury of pondering why some choose to go abroad and some choose to stay.

The percent of Columbia students who study abroad is unnecessarily low. Studying abroad should be the default track, and it should be worked into the Core Curriculum if it claims to provide a diverse experience for undergraduates. I would strongly argue that there is no substitute for lived experience.

Most people who choose not to study abroad have a stock excuse that’s some permutation of “it won’t fit into my life.” Some common examples are “I have too many Core classes left” or “I’m quadruple majoring” or “I have a Barclay’s interview in March that I really can’t miss.”

These reasons are usually genuine. People want to study abroad but feel unable to. For some students it seems impossible to vanish for a semester. There are two major ironies about this situation: the first is that the Core, which is supposed to broaden our horizons, actually hinders students from the broadening experience of living in another country. This is an easy fix—eliminate the various unnecessary prerequisites for study abroad and offer it as an alternative to Global Core.

The second is more difficult. All of these trivial things (clubs, majors, internships, interviews) are facets of our very specific culture. If we took the time to study other cultures, we could free ourselves from Columbia’s oppressive collective anxiety. But we are so wrapped up in the communal delusion that these commitments are all-important that we don’t even have time to look at other cultures. Thus the cycle is perpetuated. So it turns out that without exposure to other cultures, people drown in their own. Lived experience is the only way out of this loop.

In other words, I don’t want to become cultured, I want to become cultureless. And it just so happens that the way to become so is by immersing yourself in other cultures until you reach the point where your own seems as absurd as the rest. The content of the culture you immerse yourself in is trivial—you can poke around the world’s wells of wisdom and take a few ideas that you like. But the ultimate benefit is to gain a basis for comparison and, hopefully, perspective. I don’t have a particular vendetta against the highly-productive, Ivy League-educated, American way of life—I like it a lot, but there are still some things we could learn from the more relaxed corners of the world, just like they can learn from us.



JAKE GOLD-WASSER

Thinking Twice

When I see my friends obsessing about internships or grades, I find it funny that they can be so invested in a culture without recognizing it as such. They are just as immoderate as the people in Papua New Guinea who munch on the brains of their dead pals. Binging on career fairs and self-medicating with Everclear and Five-Hour Energy is no more normal than the customs and lifestyles around the world that we consider bizarre.

The beauty of studying culture is that it has a geometric quality to it. We start off only at a point, just knowing one culture. Learning about how other people live doesn’t only give us another point, but it also creates a line of perspective. And a third creates a plane, and so on, so that our understanding increases exponentially when we learn about culture linearly. It’s so hard to break the shell of that first culture, though. Plato had it right when he said we want to kill whoever informs us of our own delusion: Nobody wants to find out that they have been living in a world of absurdity, but each culture is just another absurd way to live.

If we took the time to study other cultures, we could free ourselves from Columbia’s oppressive collective anxiety.

Culture routinely convinces its subjects to do things that are objectively terrible, like fight in a war or work eighty-hour weeks as an investment banker or go to law school. What a perfectly evolved way for a society to get what it wants: cultural stigmas and merits convince individuals to suffer for everyone’s sake merely with the promise of status and honor and other things that cost nothing to manufacture but cost your precious time to earn. Your time is worth more to yourself than to anyone else, and without cultural perspective, it is easy to simply become part of someone else’s plan, in which you are sure to be undervalued.

I don’t know what I’ll learn in the Netherlands, but that’s precisely the point. If I knew what I would learn, I wouldn’t have to learn it. I have to take a leap of faith and recognize that there are some things that can only be known through experience. I am trying to heed what the Core has to say: “Man is born free, and everywhere he is in chains.” The shackles are self-imposed, and the key to unlock them lies in the knowledge that there are things worth knowing I cannot yet predict; I can only push myself in the direction of stumbling upon them.

Jake Goldwasser is a Columbia College junior majoring in Middle Eastern studies and linguistics. He is studying in Leiden, the Netherlands. Thinking Twice runs alternate Wednesdays.



ILLUSTRATION BY ILANA SCHULDER

STAFF EDITORIAL

Course selection is unnecessarily complicated

The administration undermines our ability to maximize our learning experience at the beginning of every semester, when many students arrive on campus knowing little about their class schedules because of difficulties during the course selection process. Rather than enabling responsible, advanced planning, the many glitches of registration—including nondisclosure of Core instructors, unannounced discussion section scheduling, and discordant seminar sign-ups from department to department—impose undue stress upon students. More often than not, students sign up for courses during their initial registration periods only to find later that a required course has recitation on a day they’re off campus at a job or internship, or that CULPA reviews warn them to stay far away from that Music Hum professor. These glitches can be easily solved with greater cooperation between the administration, the Registrar’s offices, and academic departments.

The names of instructors for Core classes become public only weeks before the semester commences, meaning students must blindly select sections of Core courses without having adequate information on the professor’s grading standards and the workload for the course. Whether the inefficiency stems from delays in departments finalizing teaching assignments or from the Registrar’s office not publishing this information

quickly, the impact on students is detrimental. Students should have the opportunity to select instructors carefully based upon their merits rather than being held at the mercy of random assignments, or scrambling to find an open section at the last minute—especially for classes that are the defining feature of our Columbia education. The search for Core professors and teaching assistants should begin earlier and be completed by the first day of registration.

Other critical information about courses is also too frequently unavailable. Mandatory discussion section times, for example, are often excluded, and sometimes, even the short course description is missing on Courseworks and/or the bulletins. This information can help students organize their academic schedules more efficiently and might help them avoid the difficulties of last-minute changes during the shopping period. To make matters worse, the information available online is often contradictory. The bulletins are out of date regarding prerequisites, class times, and even the classes being offered in each department. The information also often differs from that available on departmental websites. We recognize the complex web of information that needs to be processed by the Registrar’s office. However, there is room to streamline all the information into a single up-to-date and easy-to-use resource for students.

Seminar sign-ups present another set of problems. Registration rules vary among departments, and even among professors, but none of these methods is perfectly equitable. Signing up in-person before the semester begins is unfair to visiting and transfer students, as well as to those who study abroad. And enforcing a strict registration deadline before the beginning of the semester, as Columbia’s history department (among others) does, unfairly penalizes those who have to reorganize their schedule at the last minute. The economics department’s survival-of-the-fittest method, which encourages students to camp out in the International Affairs Building overnight, is largely hated by students and professors alike. These inconsistencies only create confusion. Perhaps the Registrar’s offices should standardize a system across the various departments. At the very least, all students who are registered online and have demonstrated commitment to the course by advanced planning should be guaranteed registration.

The result of registration should be excitement for the upcoming semester rather than stress before the first reading has even been assigned. That way, students can set their schedules in advance in order to plan their internships, apply for outside tuition funding, secure off-campus housing, order course books in advance, and generally focus on more important issues. It would make all of us a little saner.

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.

Lions need supporting players to win

After men's basketball came up short against Cornell, Spectator's beat writers—Steven Lau, Eli Schultz, and I—highlighted how poorly the Lions shot the ball in the first half. We agreed that while the Big Red defended Columbia's guards differently, the hosts also missed plenty of easy shots around the basket.

Senior center Mark Cisco was one victim of poor shooting. He missed an easy shot early in the game and wasn't really a huge factor on the scoreboard. He picked up more fouls than rebounds in the first half and finished with only six points and two rebounds, which are well below his season averages.

This isn't to say that Cisco played poorly, necessarily. But over the course of time, teams make adjustments. And when you play an opponent twice and they have video on you, you can be sure they'll be watching closely. Given that Cisco put up an Ivy Player of the Week-worthy performance in Ithaca, it's natural to expect Cornell to key in on Cisco a little more. Combine that with a shooting night that was off, and you have an unimpressive shooting performance.

A strong nucleus can't win a title without a solid supporting cast.

Cisco established himself as a big threat in the paint last season. He scored on 59 percent of his shot attempts, ranking 29th in the country (minimum 200 attempts). This year, he's down to just 46 percent. Part of that is likely missing some shots he normally makes, an issue he's cited earlier this season. Part of it is defensive adjustment.

It extends to the women's side as well. Senior Tyler Simpson hasn't been quite as efficient from the floor this season as she was last year. In 2012, she scored in double figures in every Ivy game save the opener, which was against (dominant) Princeton. She ranked third in the Ivies in field goal percentage, at 46 percent, and drew more free throw attempts than anybody else. So far this year, though, she's shooting just 37 percent from the floor. (It's worth mentioning that she may have been playing through an injury earlier this season.)

When Ivy teams get burned by a Lions player, they're going to make changes to try to do better the next time around—that seems to have happened with Simpson and Cisco against Cornell. As Ivy season moves along, it wouldn't be surprising to see teams try more new strategies to stop Barbour as well. Last year, this trio played really well in Ivy season. Other Ivy coaches will be better prepared to stop them this time around.

With the extra focus on the stars, it's important that the unknown quantities on the teams step up. It's especially important on the women's side. Simpson is a known quantity. The other leading scorers on the women's team, Courtney Bradford and Brittany Simmons, are also players the rest of the league is familiar with. (Contrast with the men, who have freshman Grant Mullins and sophomore Steve Frankoski. The latter was injured all of last year but now helps lead the charge offensively.) It took good performances from all three for Columbia to hang in against Cornell, forcing the game to overtime and then a second overtime after trailing at the half.

Unfortunately, not even the best professional players can bring their A game every night. Moving forward, the women's team will need its depth to step up. While the team does not have another dominant player at the moment, it does have a few players that can shoot the ball. Sophomores Caitlyn Unsworth and Miwa Tachibana, for example, both play about ten minutes a night and willingly shoot from long range. If they get hot in a close game, they could easily push Columbia over the top. Similarly, rookie Bailey Ott already has a dominant game under her belt, and fellow freshman Sara Mead plays over 20 minutes a night as a starter. If one of them is able to get



MUNEEB ALAM
Picked Apart



JASPER L. CLYATT / SENIOR STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

FROM THE OUTSIDE | Guard Steve Frankoski and the rest of the Lions need more three-pointers at home to win games.

Outside shots key to success at home

BY STEVEN LAU
Spectator Senior Staff Writer

In the week between the men's basketball team's win at Cornell (9-10, 1-1 Ivy) and its losing rematch at home, both teams made notable changes to their game plans.

While Columbia (9-7, 1-1 Ivy) succeeded in giving up fewer three-point shots and limiting Cornell's points in transition on Saturday, the Light Blue offense struggled to adjust to the Big Red defense.

"We really concentrated on limiting their dribble penetration—that was a big thing for us," Cornell head coach Bill Courtney said. "We wanted to make sure, in particular at the end of the shot clock, that we were not allowing them to beat us off the dribble, especially [senior guard] Brian Barbour."

In cutting off the Lions' lanes to the basket and closing out space quickly, the Big Red challenged the Light Blue to take contested outside shots.

And for almost the entire first half, Columbia struggled to rise to that challenge, as the Lions hit only two of their 10 three-pointers and shot 27.6 percent from the field.

"They totally altered their defense,"



SEE MEN'S BASKETBALL, page 3

Harvard and Yale both win in overtime matches

BY MOLLIE GALCHUS
Spectator Staff Writer

This week in Ivy League men's basketball, two conference games went into overtime, with Harvard and Yale ultimately getting the wins. On Jan. 23, Penn was defeated by Temple, 76-69. Although the Quakers (3-15, Ivy 0-1) led by nine at one point in the second half, Temple was able to regain the lead. Princeton (8-7, Ivy 1-0) broke the .500 mark when it crushed the College of New Jersey with a final score of 71-33. The Tigers, who had not played a game in 15 days, used their size to their advantage and saw their lead increase to as much as 42 points toward the end of the game.



DARTMOUTH	77
HARVARD	82



COURTESY OF THE HARVARD CRIMSON / SHUNELLA G. LUMAS

THE ROOKIE | Freshman guard Siyani Chambers, named co-Rookie of the Week, helped force the game into overtime on the way to defeating Dartmouth

BROWN	64
YALE	76

Yale (7-12, Ivy 1-1) defeated Brown (7-9, Ivy 1-1) in overtime, winning 76-64. While Yale made all 10 of its foul shots, the Bears struggled to make field goals or three-pointer shots. The Bulldogs did not send their players into the game for more than 35 minutes,

with the exception of Austin Morgan, who proved to be a key in their victory with 38 minutes on the hardwood. Morgan scored seven points in overtime and was named co-Ivy League Player of the Week. Justin Sears, who was named co-Rookie of the Week, earned 18 points for Yale and had eight rebounds.

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Ivy	Team
1 2-0	HARVARD CRIMSON The Crimson defeated Dartmouth in overtime, remaining undefeated in Ivy League play.
2 1-0	PRINCETON TIGERS The Tigers crushed TCNJ this week, winning 71-33.
3 1-1	COLUMBIA LIONS Despite a large turnout at home for the basketball team, the Lions were unable to get a win, losing to Cornell 66-63.
4 1-1	CORNELL BIG RED The Big Red bounced back from a loss against Columbia last week to beat the Lions over the weekend.
5 1-1	BROWN BEARS The Bears lost in overtime to Yale, after defeating the Bulldogs last week.
6 1-1	YALE BULLDOGS The Bulldogs defeated the Bears in overtime, bouncing back from a loss against the Bears.
7 0-1	PENN QUAKERS The Quakers were defeated by Temple, still leaving them in the search for their first Ivy win.
8 0-2	DARTMOUTH BIG GREEN The Big Green continue to struggle, falling to Harvard and still looking for their first Ivy win.

ATHLETE OF THE WEEK
ALEN HADZIC

The Light Blue fencing team went 5-0 at Coles Gymnasium for the NYU Invitational on Sunday. Junior epeeist Alen Hadzic defeated James Kaull, 5-1, of No. 3 Notre Dame, securing the Lion's narrow 14-13 team victory over the Fighting Irish. The men's fencing team also defeated, University of North Carolina, No. 1 Ohio State, Wayne State, and No. 5 St. John's on its way to the sweep. Columbia returns to Coles Gymnasium on Feb. 7 for the Historical Meet Plus.

—Alison Macke
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KIERA WOOD / SENIOR STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

SEE ALAM, page 2