

The Berkeley Beacon

Emerson College's student newspaper since 1947 • berkeleybeacon.com

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NCAA TOURNAMENT BOUND

Men's basketball to face Rowan University in first round after NEWMAC title win

Domenic Conte, Andrew Lin, Aaron J. Miller, and Tripp Rams, *Beacon Staff*

Fans cheered on the men's basketball team as the Lions departed for New Jersey en route to their first National Collegiate Athletic Association Division III tournament appearance.

Head coach Bill Curley said the team is fortunate to have the opportunity to keep playing.

"The thing that's tough is that we're playing so well and we want to keep playing, so that's probably the best part," Curley said. "We're so happy that our season has been extended and that we get to continue to play."

The Lions entered the season ranked sixth out of eight on the New England Women's and Men's Athletic Conference preseason coaches' poll, but finished as the conference champions.

The Lions began conference play on Jan. 2 with an 84-76 victory over United States Coast Guard Academy. Their most impressive win of the regular season was a decisive 84-65 victory over first-seeded Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Other significant victories include a 95-93 double-overtime win over Springfield College and a 73-70 win against Worcester Polytechnic Institute late in the season off a game winning buzzer-beater by freshman guard Nate Martin.

The team closed out the regular season with a 97-83 win against Coast Guard on the Lions' senior day on Feb. 16. In the semifinals of the NEWMAC playoffs, the Lions defeated Springfield College 80-69 in their first ever postseason home game. With the win, the team advanced to the conference championship game for the first time in team history and beat Worcester Polytechnic Institute 93-75 to become NEWMAC champions.

See NCAA, page 8



Junior Jack O'Connor (left, No. 4) scored a career-high 33 points in the NEWMAC championship game and earned tournament MVP. Alexa Schapiro / *Beacon Staff*

NBA players stuck in campus elevator for 30 minutes

Anissa Gardizy, *Beacon Staff*

An elevator near the gym in the Piano Row residence hall trapped seven players from the NBA Portland Trail Blazers for approximately 30 minutes on Tuesday, according to a team official.

Players involved in the incident include Damian Lillard, Evan Turner, Enes Kanter, Rodney Hood, Meyers Leonard, Gary Trent, and Zach Collins. Kanter posted a video on Twitter that showed the players waiting in the elevator and eventually climbing out—the video had over 481,000 views as of Feb. 27.

The team was practicing in the Steven Plofker and Bobbi Brown Gym in preparation for their game against the Boston Celtics at TD Garden on Wednesday night. No one was injured, and the incident did not affect the team's schedule.

Last semester the Beacon reported that on-campus elevator entrapments doubled from spring to fall 2018. One student compared an incident they experienced in October 2018 to Disney World's Tower of Terror ride.

See Trail Blazers, page 2



Alumnus' Boston Rise program celebrates local youth

By Dana Gerber • p. 6

DJ Jared Price, who goes by JPRiZM, works on Boston Rise with alum Juma Inniss '13. Greyson Acquaviva / *Beacon Correspondent*

Honors faculty change senior thesis requirements

Diana Bravo and Anissa Gardizy, *Beacon Staff*

The college removed the option to submit a creative project as part of the honors program senior thesis for the class of 2022 and onward.

All honors students must complete a thesis project to graduate and, before the program announced the change, students could take one of two available tracks. Students could either write a 50-60 page essay on a topic of their choice or a 30-40 page essay in tandem with a creative project such as a short film, book of poetry, or performance.

Honors students can choose to pursue a Bachelor of Fine Arts within the college, which includes different graduation requirements depending on the major. In the past, some students chose to use pieces of their BFA work—such as a film or a work of literature—as the project component of their honors thesis, Honors Program Director Wendy Walters said.

Walters said the senior faculty members in the program collectively reached the decision to remove the creative project option to stop students from using the same piece of work for two separate graduation requirements.

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OPINION

Don't skim candidates' profiles



SPORTS

NEWMAC honors basketball teams



LIVING ARTS

Urban Arts Gallery presents AI art



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news

School of Communication to debut new minors in fall 2019

Anissa Gardizy, Beacon Staff

The School of Communication will debut two minors in fall 2019—one in pre-law and one in public diplomacy—and a new minor in polling is under review, according to a college official.

Student Government Association Communication Studies Commissioner Annie Noel said the minors can benefit students who want to make their major more unique.

“It’s great to have options—especially for communication studies students—to narrow down their focus,” Noel said. “The more minors, the better.”

The curriculum committee—a group that reviews new courses for the college—is reviewing a new polling minor for the second time after the committee raised questions about courses offered during its first review in December 2018. FiveThirtyEight ranked the college’s Polling Society as the second-most accurate college pollster to trust in the nation in 2018.

Department of Communication Studies Chair Gregory Payne said the college is known for its polls—he remembers sitting on an airplane and hearing someone quote an Emerson poll.

“It was crazy. I was on [an] airplane and heard, ‘Well, Emerson College said this...,’” Payne said. “Polling is arguably Emerson’s brightest light at the moment. You turn on Fox or MSNBC, you will see the Emerson Polling group.”

Communication Studies Assistant Professor Spencer Kimball said polling already attracts many students to the college.

“We do our polls on Saturday mornings—any given Saturday morning we have 15 to 18 students [in the Walker building] doing analysis,” Kimball said in an interview. “They are genuinely interested, they are self motivated.”

Kimball said the proposal for the minor will most likely include courses in political polling, statistics, government and politics classes, and presidential politics.

“Polling is slightly different than survey research,” Payne said. “Polling is specifically for politics, more specifically electoral politics—so if a student is to get a minor in polling, they have to understand the political system.”

The polling minor would require math classes, and Payne said students are interested in math despite the college’s anti-math stereotype.

“When I first came to Emerson, the joke was that you come to Emerson if you don’t like to do math,” Payne said. “I think we have proven that people come to Emerson and want to do math very well.”

Payne said growing student interest in different political fields led the college to establish a public diplomacy minor.

“We found a lot of students who are turned off to the political system and want to effect change in their own way,” Payne said. “Emerson has a long history of public diplomacy—we probably have eight to ten diplomats working at embassies around the world.”

Payne said the public diplomacy program could distinguish itself from other college programs because of the school’s niche in communications since 1880.

“Our focus is not on crunching data, our focus is on communicating that data,” Payne said. “Do we use social media, radio, or corporate leaders? We focus on the aspect of storytelling and getting the message out.”

Noel said she also sees a relationship between communication and public diplomacy at the college.

“I think diplomacy is an important skill,” Noel said. “It’s another option for students to apply their communication skills in a more direct way. They can feel like they come out of Emerson with something unique, something more than a communication studies degree.”

The department also approved the new pre-law minor to address the trend of college alumni going into law fields after they graduate, Payne said.

“What we found was that more and more of



FiveThirtyEight ranked Emerson’s Polling Society as the second-most accurate pollster in the nation in 2018. • Beacon Archives

our students were getting into pre-law, so that [minor] will begin in the fall,” Payne said. “They say, ‘Forget politics—I’ll go into law.’”

Freshman Grace Koh said she mom recently suggested she should attend law school after graduation.

“[My mom] said that since I’m a journalism major and don’t know what will happen [with the industry], I should have a backup plan and go to law school,” Koh said. “I thought, ‘I haven’t done any pre-law, so how will I get into law school?’ But if the college has a pre-law minor, that might be possible.”

In addition to the two new minors, the School of Communication will rename and restructure the radio minor for fall 2019. It will now act as a podcasting, radio, and streaming media minor.

“There is growing interest in podcasting and streaming, so we redid the radio minor,” Payne said. “It is of interest to sports communication, Esports, and public diplomacy students because many countries just use radio. I think it will eventually evolve into a major.”

Kimball said he would be interested in collaborating with other departments like Market-

ing or Journalism to expand the kinds of classes students can take. There are prerequisites to take data visualization classes in the Journalism Department, but Kimball hopes to create a subsection of that course so students in other majors could enroll.

“It is not going to be for everyone at the college, but there are students interested in political marketing, business marketing, and market research,” Payne said. “Even journalism students can better understand how political polls work because they will be reporting on them. To me, this is all very valuable, not just for the practitioner, but also the journalist or consumer.”

Payne said he predicts the polling minor could potentially become a major at the college.

He also said data from a recent study shows the department should expand its faculty.

“Our self-study shows that we have to hire new professors,” Payne said. “We have had an increase in numbers [since 2013]. We are adding affiliated faculty. We like to have people connected to the industry.”

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Honors program removes creative project from senior thesis

Continued from page 1

“Faculty very strongly feel that the honors program should lead up to a [50-60 page] honors thesis,” Walters said. “That is what the whole curriculum is designed toward.”

She said students often overcome their fear of writing 50-60 pages as they go through the process.

“Many of the top honors theses have been written by folks who did get a BFA,” Walters said. “[They] said that it’s not difficult to write 60 pages once you get into the topic. In fact, people often want to write more than 60 pages.”

Freshman Andie Wong, a visual media arts major in the honors program, said she might have chosen the creative project if it had been offered to her.

“I didn’t know about it until it was mentioned in a class and it was only ever mentioned once so I never really saw it as an option,” she said. “I just assumed we would have to write a really long paper.”

Sophomore honors student Lily Doolin does not see a problem with senior honors students submitting their BFA work for the thesis.

“I don’t think it’s a way to cheat the system,” Doolin said. “Senior year is especially stressful, and if you want to graduate early, that must be so much work.”

Dean of Liberal Arts Amy Ansell said that honors students are accepted into the program with the expectation of being challenged academically at the same level or higher as other college honors programs nationwide. Ansell said first-year students submit 20-30 page research papers to a National Collegiate Honors Council—this year eight students were accepted to present their papers.

Doolin plans to pursue the 30-40 page thesis with a creative project when she is a senior but does not plan to graduate with a BFA. She said she benefited from writing her 30-page freshman honors paper, but is unsure of how prepared she would feel for writing a 50-60 page senior thesis—students only write a thesis in their first and last year of the program.

“I struggled getting to 30 [pages],” Doolin said. “I don’t know if they expect the gap of time



Honors Program Director Wendy Walters said students overcome their fear of a long senior thesis paper throughout the writing process. • Alexa Schapiro / Beacon Staff

to develop us into 60-page thesis writers. I hope so. I think with the creative option, I am prepared.”

Sophomore Student Government Association Honors Commissioner Daniella Baltazar is a visual and media arts major in the honors program. She hopes to earn a BFA.

“We go to school to create content and create media,” Baltazar said. “By eliminating the creative option, it’s kind of pushing us more toward academics, which isn’t very useful for our career paths.”

As the SGA honors commissioner, Baltazar sent an anonymous survey to students in the program in December 2018 about the recent changes to the thesis requirements and overall satisfaction with the program. Baltazar said some students who responded to the survey felt the honors program considers artistic work less valuable than academic work.

“[Students] feel like the honors program is extremely isolated and does not necessarily work in tandem with the arts curriculum,” Baltazar said.

Doolin said she heard a negative response about the change in the thesis requirement that mainly stemmed from the lack of dialogue between students and faculty.

“It’s a shame that they took the creative element away for freshmen, and I think there has

been a large outcry about it,” Doolin said. “If we could sit down and find a compromise, that would have been a whole lot more productive.”

Writing, literature and publishing senior Maya Kaczor is working on a 50-60 page thesis, but she is worried for future honors students who hope to pursue a BFA while in the honors program under the new guidelines.

“For some kids it’s going to be harder, because a BFA takes so long to work on and so much time goes into it—I just hope it’s not overwhelming for people,” Kaczor said.

Doolin said she couldn’t think of a different solution to students using their BFA work as part of their thesis.

“I think the reason I don’t have an answer is because there was never an open discussion about this,” Doolin said.

Walters said she did not know how much discussion the change created among students.

“Students often get freaked out by a change, but then realize it is not the end of the world,” Walters said. “I don’t think it is that big of a change, to be honest.”

Deputy Enterprise Editor Abigail Hadfield did not edit this article due to a conflict of interest.

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Trail Blazers' Twitter video in Emerson elevator goes viral

Continued from page 1

Incident journals provided by the Emerson College Police Department do not detail any elevator entrapments so far in the spring 2019 semester.

The college released a statement on Emerson Today that said the elevator stopped between two floors and the players stayed in the elevator for about 15 minutes. In an email to the Beacon, Portland Trail Blazers Spokesman Jim Taylor said the team remained in the elevator for approximately 30 minutes.

After the Emerson College Police Department reviewed the security footage the next day, Michelle Gaseau, the college’s director of media relations, said in an email to Beacon that the players were stuck for closer to 30 minutes.

“We’re in survival mode now,” Kanter said in the video while Collins pretended to ration a power bar.

Some college students clapped and cheered as the team climbed out of the elevator on the second floor and walked down the steps to the first floor.

Freshman Michael Logerwell watched his favorite basketball team’s practice and then went upstairs to wait for a picture. While he was waiting, he noticed a rookie on the team and an equipment manager laughing.

“They were laughing and trying to yell through the elevator door—it was really funny,” Logerwell said.

Both an elevator technician from Delta Beckwith Elevator and the college facilities staff helped retrieve players out of the elevator, according to an email from Assistant Vice President for Facilities and Campus Services Duncan Pollock.

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SGA Elections Chair Henderson-West becomes LGBTQIA+ commissioner

Diana Bravo, *Beacon Staff*

Senior Christopher Henderson-West stepped down as the Student Government Association elections chair to assume the role of LGBTQIA+ commissioner at a Feb. 26 meeting.

Executive President Jessica Guida said in the meeting that Henderson-West stepped down from the elections chair position, which he served throughout the fall 2018 and the start of the spring 2019 semesters, earlier that morning.

Henderson-West said he took the LGBTQIA+ commissioner position to help strengthen the bond between SGA and Emerson's Advancement Group for Love and Expression, or EAGLE, where he serves as president.

"I know the importance of both, and I know how well they work together and how much could be accomplished."
- Chris Henderson-West

"We wanted to make sure that we integrated SGA with EAGLE with me serving as both," Henderson-West said in an interview. "I know the importance of both, and I know how well they work together and how much could be accomplished."



Christopher Henderson-West plans to create a press week and debate event for SGA elections as the new LGBTQIA+ commissioner. • *Beacon Archives*

In the event of an election without a chair, the executive president can designate election chair responsibilities to a member of SGA, according to the SGA bylaws. Henderson-West plans to assume his former duties as election chair after Guida designates them to him at a later SGA meeting.

Henderson-West said he plans to turn the traditionally low-turnout SGA elections press

night, when candidates make their statements to the student body, into a press week. If there is a race with more than one candidate, he hopes to host a debate. Henderson-West said he also plans to run a meet-the-candidates event. The SGA elections take place in mid-March

Henderson-West said he wants to focus on making all on-campus bathrooms more inclu-

sive as LGBTQIA+ commissioner. He said he plans to do this by changing bathroom signage and making menstruation products and disposal bins available inside every bathroom.

"We wanted to make sure that we integrated SGA with EAGLE with me serving as both."
- Chris Henderson-West

At the same meeting, Sustainability Commissioner Gianna Girona said the college found a new sustainability coordinator. This will leave the college with eight director-level vacancies, instead of nine.

SGA approved \$37,319 for the Emerson Recognition and Achievement Awards to pay for the technical and production portions of their award show in April. The Financial Advisory Board recommended the appeal to SGA on Feb. 21. FAB did not have the power to approve it alone because the request was for more than \$5,000, but they did have the power to recommend SGA to approve it.

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Emerson to work with MBTA for a cheaper semester pass

Tomas Gonzalez, *Beacon Staff*

The college plans to work with the MBTA to create an exclusive, discounted semester pass for fall 2019 following a proposed fare increase on Jan. 21 for public transportation in Massachusetts Bay, according to a college official.

Assistant Director for Off-Campus Student Services Jeff Morris said the proposed pass would only cover the 110 days included in Emerson's academic year. If the MBTA raises prices, current semester passes would increase by \$20—from \$300 to \$320. The MBTA also plans to raise one-way bus fares by 10 cents, from \$1.70 to \$1.80, and one-way subway fares by 15 cents, from \$2.25 to \$2.40.

The college—like most universities—offers students semester passes with an 11 percent discount.

"You look at high school students and they get 50 percent off [MBTA] passes," Morris said. "That's why we're working with the MBTA to try and lower [the cost] and make the pass even more intentional for what the Emerson student [needs] and what their schedules will be like through the year."

The MBTA held a public meeting on Feb. 27 at the State Transportation Building where elected officials and citizens expressed their opinions about the proposed fare changes. Boston City Council President Michelle Wu said she opposed the changes and advocated for the MBTA to be free.

"The total [fare] increase will be over 40 percent since 2012 and that's not only unaffordable, but it's unwise if we're trying to reduce [road] traffic and fight climate change," Wu said. "So we need to be having this conversation to get closer to fare-free transit."

Morris said students will be the most affected

"What's concerning is that, for your average person, \$20 is just \$5 a month, but for a student that can mean four or five meals."
- Jeff Morris

by the proposed fare increase because some already pay \$300 for a semester pass.

"In my opinion, this is still really high," Morris said. "What's concerning is that, for your average person, \$20 is just \$5 a month, but for a student that can mean four or five meals."

In a Boston Globe op-ed, MBTA General Manager Steve Poflak said the MBTA plans to use the revenue from fare raises to make improvements to the public transportation system, such as longer hours and upgraded train cars. He wrote that the MBTA cut back expenses and found other revenue sources, such as selling advertising space, to eliminate their 2016 deficit of \$170 million.

"Modestly raising fares is part of the T's strategy to invest in our workforce and our assets, and to improve service, with the goal of accelerating the pace of change to finally produce the system that T riders—and the taxpayers of the Commonwealth—need and deserve," Poflak wrote in the op-ed.

Junior Elvis Chen said he rides the T every day and uses the semester pass to cover the cost of riding from his apartment in Roxbury.

"I always get the semester pass because I know I will be taking the T every single day throughout the semester—it makes sense for me to plan ahead and pay more money at once rather than to pay as I go," Chen said.

Student Government Association Class of 2022 Senator Brady Baca attended the meeting and said he thinks the increase in fares would hurt lower-income students.

"I think it's just a slap in the face to members of the Emerson community who don't happen to come from wealthy backgrounds," he said.

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Both Rep. Mike Connolly (bottom), D-Middlesex, and Boston City Council President Michelle Wu (top) opposed the MBTA fare hikes at the Feb. 27 meeting.
William Bloxham / Beacon Correspondent

Incident Journal

The Emerson College Police Department provides the Incident Journal to the Beacon every week. Beacon staff edit the Incident Journal for style and clarity but not for content.

Monday, Feb. 18
A student reported money stolen from their wallet.

Thursday, Feb. 21
An Emerson College Police Department officer on patrol discovered that workers from the neighboring condo had piled snow in front of an emergency exit door of the Paramount Center. The condo association removed the snow.

A student reported leaving personal property inside a conference room in the Walker Building. The student could not find the item when they went back to retrieve it.

Saturday, Feb. 23
An ECPD officer found graffiti of the word "Kesto" on the side of the 172 Tremont St. building. ECPD notified Facilities Management to remove the vandalism.

Changes for Most Common MBTA Fares

Transit	Existing	Proposed	Change
Local Bus, One-Way	\$1.70	\$1.80	\$0.10
Subway, One-Way	\$2.25	\$2.40	\$0.15
Monthly LinkPass	\$84.50	\$90.00	\$5.50
Seven-Day LinkPass	\$21.25	\$22.50	\$1.25

editorial

Black History Month deserves more attention at Emerson

At issue: Black History Month on campus

Our take: the college needs to formally recognize the celebration

Editorials are written solely by Editor-in-Chief Maya Gacina, Managing Editor Monika Davis, Opinion Editor Katie Schmidt, Deputy Opinion Editor Diti Kohli, and Assistant Opinion Editor Ziqi Wang without consultation from other staff members, and does not influence any stories. Op-Eds reflect the views of only their authors, not The Berkeley Beacon.

Emerson College lacks its own formal commemoration to honor Black History Month. At the moment, there is little indication of the school's attention to this month-long celebration that observes black individuals and their history in all countries that recognize it. Parades, celebrations, and memorials commemorate black individuals who contribute to the advancement of our country. Yet at Emerson, an institution that prides itself on diversity, there is a shocking lack of campus-wide acknowledgment for Black History Month, and we can't find a difference between our campus in February than in any other month.

While the school has a black president, M. Lee Pelton made little effort to highlight Black History Month and failed to even send a campus-wide email to acknowledge an important time for a student population that is 3 percent black. Instead, celebrating the black community is left to student organizations. Two weeks ago, Emerson's Black Organization with Natural Interest, or EBONI, held their second annual BLK Out Fashion Show to honor Black History Month. The organization also hosted an open mic night and a gala to recognize its 50th anniversary.

The lack of a campus-wide celebration can leave minority students feeling unheard and unrecognized. This week's POC columnist, sophomore Melanie Curry, said, "... it seemed as if Black History Month became overshadowed."

The college's website states the school's belief

that "inclusive and academic excellence are not possible without full engagement with diversity across all areas of the college." The college devoted the same web page that states this belief to diversity and inclusion updates, starting from 2011. Yet Emerson still enrolls few students of color. Even though we have an overall diversity rank of 237 out of 2,475 universities and colleges in the U.S., according to the 2018-19 college

"At the moment, there is little indication of the school's attention to this month-long celebration that observes black individuals and their history in all countries that recognize it."

Factbook, only 36 percent of our undergraduate student population consists of people of color, including the 11 percent of international students.

The Beacon is not spared from the lack of diversity that plagues our entire campus. Coming into the spring semester, the majority of our applicants for staff positions were white, and as a result, our current staff operates with few people of color. Our five-person editorial

board includes two people of color. Even as we are writing this editorial at the tail end of Black History Month, we recognize that we only have one black reporter on our reporting staff.

We are taking steps to ensure the voices of people of color on campus are being heard. We want to be mindful of the number of minority voices published in our paper and continue to offer our publication as a space for them.

Last semester we asked international students to write op-eds about their experiences at the college and the shortcomings they faced, and this year one of our regular opinion columnists is an international student. This semester, the Living Arts section started a POC column that highlights a different minority writer on campus each week.

The reality is that the newsroom and the college will not instantly become more diverse. Acquiring a more diverse pool of applicants to enroll in the college and to join the Beacon will inevitably take time. Nonetheless, our efforts to include more minority voices should start immediately. The college should take the time and effort to recognize the celebrations of people of color, especially like Black History Month, and continually provide a platform for their voices.

Letters

If you want to respond to, or share an opinion about, an article in the Beacon, you can write a short letter to the editor. Email it to letters@berkeleybeacon.com. Please note that letters may be edited. Submissions for print must be shorter than 250 words.

The Berkeley Beacon

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Editorial Cartoon

by the Editorial Board
illustration by Ally Rzes

“NBA players see what it’s like to be an Emerson student for the day.”



opinion

Speaking up in class improves learning experiences

Xinyan Fu

Fu is a freshman journalism major & opinion columnist for the Beacon.

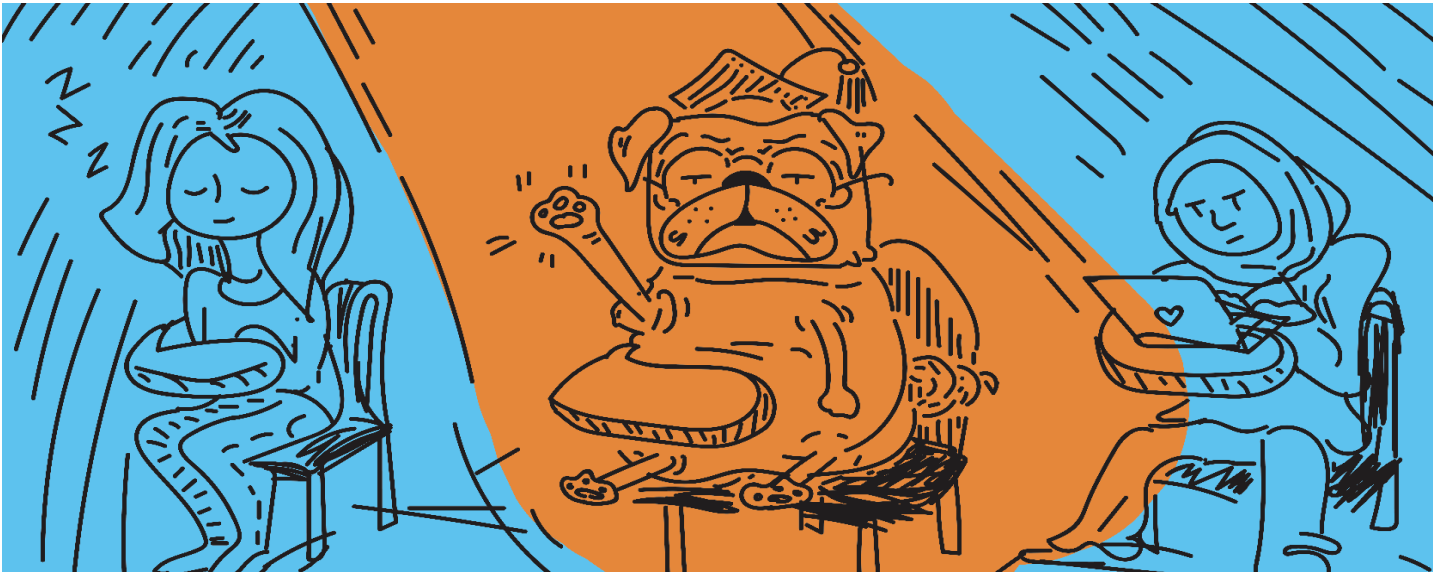
I always raised my hand in middle school with the hope of answering every question the teacher asked, but my classmates rolled their eyes when I spoke because my passion for participation was jarring. Both my classmates and teachers called me “perky” and “bubbly.” Because of this, I wondered if my enthusiasm for active participation in class was a bad thing.

I started to participate less when I entered high school. I looked around the classroom before raising my hand to make sure other students also had their hands raised. I chose to stay silent even if I knew the answer to the teacher’s question simply because no one else tried to answer that question. I essentially became invisible in class.

The fear of speaking up in class scarred me, and to my surprise, I’m not the only one who feels barred from active class engagement. Last semester, one of my friends in my journalism class told me she used to count the number of times she raised her hand, trying to limit it within 10.

In college classes I wonder if active participation should be considered negative for students. Typically, people dislike things they find unfamiliar, and students confidently speaking up in classrooms is one of them. Since most of the classes at Emerson are seminar-styled, participation in class constitutes as a large portion of their grade. Therefore, some students see those who always participate in class as “suck-ups” who try to impress their professors for a better grade. Some even think of them as “know-it-alls” who are self-centered and love to hear themselves talk, instead of allowing them to voice their opinion.

Labeling is dangerous—people stay silent even when they have something to say because



The fear of speaking up in class scarred me, and to my surprise, I’m not the only one who feels barred from active class engagement.. • Illustration by Ally Rzesza / Beacon Staff

they are afraid of a dissenter or of ridicule from their peers. Such fear prevents students from sharing their own points of view and encourages people to not contribute on important issues in class discussions. Nearly one in six college students have some form of anxiety, according to an article in The New York Times. This common presence of anxiety can exacerbate students’ fear to speak in front of peers in class.

The fear of disapproval should not validate silence, because talking to someone who doesn’t necessarily agree with you can actually have

"Engaging actively and asking questions is something that should be respected, not despised."

benefits. Vulnerability, the acknowledgment of others’ perspectives, and constructive criticism polish one’s thoughts and make our arguments stronger. I love debating with my friends, even though we sometimes end up angry at each other. Small, friendly arguments allow me to rethink my opinions and improve them.

To stop participating in class would limit the learning experiences for everyone. Engaging actively and asking questions is something that should be respected, not despised. The purpose of a seminar-style class should be to think about new ideas,

to debate, and to discuss. An enthusiastic classmate who asks questions and provides answers can help everyone learn more and create an improved class dynamic.

In a world where people constantly hide their thoughts, voicing comments becomes even more critical—especially in class. Sometimes students hide their thoughts about the class and don’t ask questions when they are confused, which leads to an increased misunderstanding.

Instead of judging someone for raising their hand, people should respect those who are active in the classrooms, not only for their bravery, but also for their passion toward what they are learning.

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Stop pigeonholing presidential candidates

Diti Kohli

Kohli is a freshman journalism major & the deputy opinion editor.

As a woman of color, I’m an advocate for an American political landscape with more females and more color. The influx of minorities into higher offices after the 2018 midterm elections shows this shift is already happening. The presidential election in November 2020 lingers on the horizon, and minority voices plan to solidify their position in the race.

As presidential candidates announce campaigns, I see college students already aligning themselves with potential figureheads because of a quality they possess—their gender, their skin color, or their advocacy for a particular issue. This narrow-minded thinking limits people from seeing the extent of a candidate’s platform.

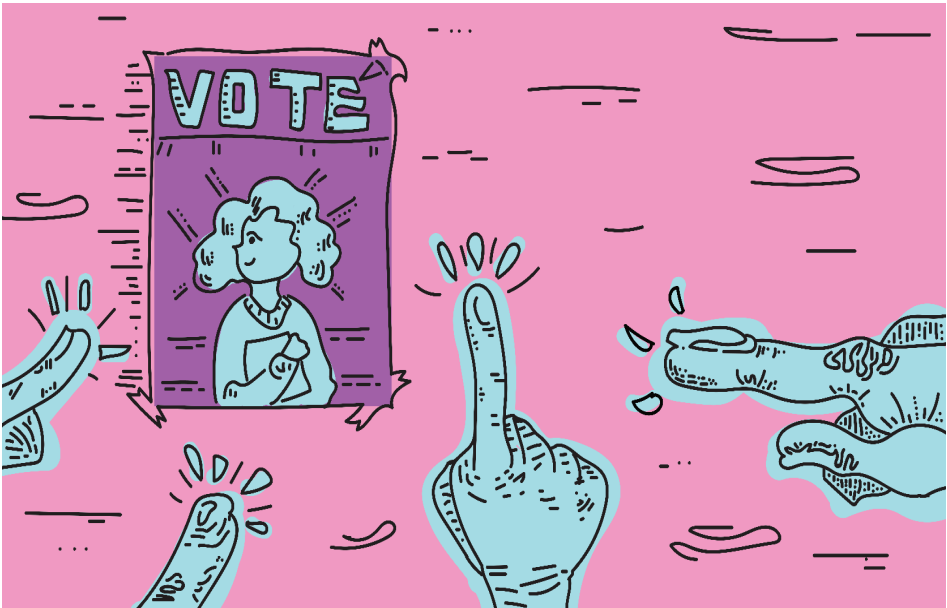
From what I’ve observed, Emerson students are incredibly political—Niche even ranked the college as the third-most liberal institution in Massachusetts.

So it’s not rare for me to see a rousing endorsement for a candidate at school or on social media because they are brown or because they’re pushing universal health care. A minority in office and getting Americans the resources they need is obviously important, but the reasoning behind supporting a presidential candidate should have more depth than these superficial and often minimal backings. The position of president is comprehensive, as should be the logic behind a presidential election vote.

Freshman Abigail Michaud said college students default to supporting emblematic candidates because it’s easy for them to connect to individual qualities and characters.

“We are finding our identities and it’s easier to connect to personal policies and identities than it is economics and big business and what not,” Michaud said in an interview.

I understand this urge to rely on singular reasoning. For one of the most seemingly forward-thinking countries in the world, we have yet to have a female president. With a population that is 13 percent black and 18 percent Hispanic, America has had only one non-white president.



The position of president is comprehensive, as should be the logic behind a presidential election vote. • Illustration by Ally Rzesza / Beacon Staff

And issues like mass incarceration, climate change, and income inequality do not receive nearly as much national attention they deserve. And I, too, am angry.

But students have to remember that there is no perfect candidate. Voting for Kamala Harris, Elizabeth Warren, or any one of the parade of women running for office will not solve all of the nation’s gender discrimination and harassment issues. And electing a person of color like Cory Booker will not automatically appease the white supremacy and racism laced into the fabric of our society. It is arguable that Barack Obama’s election was a symbolic win for African-Americans and, indirectly, all oppressed individuals, but it did not end racism or abolish the hurdles minorities still face in the U.S.

Students are more likely to default to candidates today because of a growing partisan divide. A 2017 article in The Atlantic, “The Most Polarized Freshman Class In History,” showed that fewer students identify as non-partisan

today than ever before. The Atlantic attributed this phenomenon to the divide within the legislative branch. A strong rivalry in Congress forces students to pick sides, so they are—and they’re sticking to them.

In 2016, Hillary Clinton became the first female presidential candidate nominated by a major party. This milestone mobilized female college students, with 41 percent of them identifying as liberal or far left during the 2016 election—an increase from earlier years. The breadth of minority ambition in this upcoming election cycle possesses the power to motivate people in the same way—women voting for women, people of color voting for people of color. But voters should not pigeon-hole themselves into voting for the candidate only because they align with their identity.

Aside from that, students have also attached themselves to important issues. An Inside Higher Ed article, “Activism, not Political Parties,” said over 13,700 issue-oriented organizations exist on college campuses

nationwide, a figure that is four times greater than the number of college party-based organizations. Emerson shines as a beaming example of this growth. Emerson students organized the Kavanaugh protest, joined the Marriott workers’ strike late last year, and a few even participated in a protest against President Trump’s national emergency declaration just last week.

I am not one to argue against students who have enough faith in their views to identify with a political party. And I am not denouncing the exceedingly important issues in our country that students are fighting for today. But a candidate’s advocacy for one issue does not ensure he or she will make a good president. One external quality and the experience a candidate gained because of this label do not automatically validate all of their other proposed policies and views.

Although Michaud said she would love to see a minority in office, she knows there is more to a candidate than where they come from.

“If we don’t have certain voices in big positions, then we don’t get to hear those voices and we don’t get to address those problems,” said Michaud. “But I look at what [candidates] want to do once they get elected and I vote based on that.”

I do not aim to discredit minority candidates who use their identity to benefit their position in the race. Kamala Harris’ experiences as a black woman are a tool she can use to gain the black public’s trust. And I do not want to devalue the legitimacy of candidates that put a handful of issues at the forefront of their mission, like Bernie Sanders, who prioritizes free college tuition, universal health care, and immigration reform.

I’m simply saying the options for America’s 46th president are as expansive as ever, and we should take advantage of them the right way. Walk into the voting booth on November 3, 2020 as an educated voter, and eventually come to support a candidate for more reasons than their profile and their policies that make the headlines.

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living arts

Alumnus raises Boston voices with new diversity initiative

Dana Gerber, *Beacon Correspondent*

A red carpet lined the hallway leading to Center Stage this past Oscars weekend and coincided with the arrival of the performers from one of Boston's newest diversity collectives—the youth members of Boston Rise.

Alumnus Juma Inniss '13 started the collective in 2018. Boston Rise grants Boston youth the opportunity to perform original songs, rap, and slam poetry under the guidance of professional musicians, who help them hone and produce their work.

Their showcase at Emerson on Feb. 21 was the collective's first public event. The group also created an eponymous album, which is set to drop in mid-to-late March.

"Boston Rise is an initiative to lift art, community, and culture in the city of Boston," Inniss said at the event. "It is all about creating a platform that unites, promotes, and empowers Boston creatives."

Before creating Boston Rise, Inniss founded a media literacy education program called The Message in 2015. Musician Jared Price, who is known by the stage name JPRiZM, works with Inniss as a DJ for The Message events and curates the music. Inniss said The Message reflected the entrepreneurial and creative skills he learned as a marketing communication major at Emerson.

"We go throughout schools and we offer concerts, we have a semester-long residency, and we also do talks," Inniss said about The Message program. "They're all geared around helping teenagers think critically and make positive life choices."

Inniss and Price provided The Message to high school classes in the Greater Boston area—Brooke High School, Match Charter Public High School, and Weymouth High School.

Inniss said The Message classroom programs end with students presenting a creative performance or media project, and this aspect of the program led to the creation of Boston Rise. Most Boston Rise performers come from these schools, though some have graduated or discovered Boston Rise from outside of The Message program.

Inniss said both programs aim to help youth make positive choices surrounding their consumption and creation of media.

"Being able to assert your own destiny by gaining more control over how media messages influence you gives you more agency over your own decision-making and your own personal pathway," Inniss said.

The Live Arts Boston grant, created by The Boston Foundation, funded Boston Rise in



Weston High School senior Echezona Onwuama raps at Boston Rise's first event on Feb. 21 in Center Stage. • Xinyi Tu / Beacon Correspondent

2018. The grant can provide up to \$15,000 for projects that create, produce, or present art for Boston audiences, according to their website.

Price helps record the students' original songs at his studio in Allston, where he also works on his own material. Price DJed for the Emerson event but said the educational aspect was the most valuable part of the program for him.

"It's just about being creative and having a platform to do that," Price said. "Being able to pass on the knowledge is something that I've always wanted to do."

The students in the program expressed enthusiasm and excitement for their newfound exposure to these skills and opportunities. Echezona Onwuama, a Boston rapper in his senior year at Weston High School, found Boston Rise through his friendship with Price. Onwuama said the original song he performed, "Go Hard," expresses his unyielding drive to be part of the music scene.

"It's just art at its best," Onwuama said in an interview. "Even if I've got the whole world against me, no matter what, I've got to perse-

vere, and show that I'm moving without any obstacles in my way to keep me from where I want to be."

Onwuama said he hopes to continue his work in music, which was fostered by his involvement with Boston Rise.

"I'm looking for the next place to advance my passion, advance my career, and basically get to network and brand, get one step closer to achieving my dream," Onwuama said.

D'Ana Levy, a sophomore at Brooke High School, sang her original song "Break Your Heart" at the event. Levy said she records all of her songs on her iPhone, and said that Inniss and Price helped her expand her craft through Boston Rise.

"It felt like a second home," Levy said. "It felt like I was actually doing something with my life."

Last Thursday's performance was the inaugural event for Emerson's School of Communication's new Diverse Voices initiative, according to the school.

Lu Ann Reeb, assistant dean of the School

of Communications and the director of entrepreneurial and business studies, said this initiative aims to expose new voices to the Emerson community. She said Inniss' message of positive creativity and expression was exactly the sort of program her team wanted to offer in this new initiative.

Reeb commended Inniss' creative approach to Boston Rise and noted that it was an amalgamation of his wide range of passions and skills.

"It's really cool to see the connection between ... him as an Emerson alum, music, and culture, and literacy, and the arts, and how he has brought that all together within the city of Boston in various different neighborhoods," Reeb said. "It's a great message, and it's clearly part of what Emerson is all about too."

Inniss said that he brought Boston Rise to Emerson because of the unique openness he remembered from his time here.

"In thinking about opportunities to present the work that we're doing, Emerson came to mind as being a space where diverse voices and stories were always valued," Inniss said. "So I reached out and it just so happened that the School [of Communication] was doing this new Diverse Voices initiative. The alignment was there, and we made it happen."

Maximilien Collins, a freshman who attended the event, said he appreciated the collective's optimistic approach to musical expression.

"Nowadays in this trap music world, it's very hard to find the message, and so I definitely think it's really cool that they're emphasizing the message part of the music so much," Collins said.

On the Diversity Initiative, Collins admired the work of Emerson and Boston Rise to amplify diverse voices but emphasized that there is still work to be done before there is true equality.

"I think it's cool that they're doing more initiatives to expose us to a diverse culture and diverse events," Collins said. "But at the same time, I do feel like it's just a start."

During the event, both Inniss and Price sang and danced along with their students' performances. Price joined in with a microphone on the final song, a rap duet between Onwuama and rapper Clark D, a student at the University of Massachusetts Lowell.

"That was probably my favorite part—mentoring and making songs with them and teaching them to write and the format and things like that," Price said. "You know, it can't get much better than that."

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Person of Color Column: Black History Month deserves a celebration



Melanie Curry
Curry is a sophomore journalism major, a Beacon staff writer, and this week's POC columnist.

I was sitting in an Uber with my friend Sydney when my driver started telling us about his childhood in Roxbury, Massachusetts. His story didn't particularly interest me until he began to question us about Martin Luther King Jr.

"Yes, we know who MLK is," I said, confused why he brought it up.

He continued to ask us more questions about MLK, such as his time preaching at the 12th street Baptist Church or his degree at Boston University. As he listed off more facts and questions about the history of Massachusetts, my friend and I sat stunned in the backseat. I didn't know any Massachusetts black history facts. More importantly, I never encountered someone who wanted to discuss Boston's black history until I met my passionate Uber driver.

While growing up outside of Atlanta, Georgia, I faced remembrances of black history every day. I attended middle school in Stone Mountain, Georgia. According to the Smithsonian's website, Stone Mountain was a hub for the re-birth of the Ku Klux Klan in 1915. The owner of Stone Mountain, Samuel Venable, was an active

member of the KKK and allowed a cross to be burned on a mountain in the city. A year later, Venable began the construction of one of the biggest Confederate memorials in America—the carved faces of General Robert E. Lee, General Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson, and President of the Confederacy Jefferson Davis.

The Confederate memorials never bothered me until I got older. In middle school, I associated Stone Mountain with tourist attractions like the Summit Skyride or the annual Fourth of July fireworks—not the Confederacy. However, when I entered high school, I learned the history of Stone Mountain through discussions with my friends. I wasn't upset or angry about the memorial. While the memorial served as a horrible reminder of the hatred and bigotry toward African-Americans, it also represented the importance of African-American history.

In Atlanta, Black History Month is a sacred time when my family and I visit the Center for Civil and Human Rights, participate in our town's annual Black History Month parade, learn about our history, and own our blackness. At my high school, we celebrated it through a pep rally with trivia on black history facts, speeches, poems on black culture, and African dance performances from our school's dance and step team.

I didn't expect my celebration of Black History Month to change as much as it did when I arrived at Emerson.

I knew celebrating Black History Month at home and at Emerson was going to be different

because of the drastic racial demographic disparity between African-Americans and whites in both places. African-Americans make up 91 percent of the student population at my high school, compared to Emerson's 3 percent.

On Feb. 1, I eagerly waited, refreshing my email all day for President M. Lee Pelton to send out an email acknowledging and celebrating Black History Month. When the email never came, I was confused. At a school that strives for diversity and inclusion, I thought there had to be an email, flyer, or something that acknowledged the start of Black History Month. Additionally, Pelton is a black man, and I knew for sure he would acknowledge a month that celebrated his history and culture. With the arrival of Chinese New Year, Valentine's Day, and the Venezuelan crisis in February, it seemed as if Black History Month became overshadowed.

At first, I was angry. How could Emerson, a school that puts an emphasis on students' comfortability, not celebrate the biggest "holiday" for African-Americans? My anger began to fade when Emerson's Black Organization for Natural Interests handed out a calendar with planned Black History Month events at our meeting. On the flyer, EBONI advertised a fashion show, an open mic night, a gala celebrating Black History Month and the student organization's 50th anniversary, and a keynote speaker event with April Reign, the creator of the #OscarsSoWhite hashtag.

Throughout February, I modeled for the fashion show, watched my friends perform at the

open mic night, and celebrated EBONI's 50th anniversary at the Revere Hotel. I also learned more about my history by reading an article from Info Please titled "The History of Black History Month" and honored my culture by reading and listening to only black authors and artists. Even though Emerson didn't formally acknowledge Black History Month, I didn't let this inhibit the celebration of my history and identity as a black woman.

Black History Month represents a pivotal piece of my identity as an African-American woman. It is a time where I pride myself on my brownness and naturally curly hair and on being black in America. Black History Month should represent a time for everyone, including white people and people of color, to learn about the importance of black culture, the oppression African-Americans face, and the contributions we make in America.

Next year, I hope Emerson will do more to celebrate Black History Month. I want to see a celebration for our black professors and students, traditional black dishes in the dining hall, and flyers celebrating Black History Month on bulletin boards. Without EBONI, I am not sure Black History Month would have been celebrated at Emerson College, which is a thought that saddens me. However, after this year, I have hope that Emerson will do more to make their African-American students feel welcome.

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Artificial Intelligence takes over Urban Arts Gallery

Cassandra Coyer, Beacon Staff

Nonsensical sounds, intriguing oil paintings, and ambiguous misfortunes such as, “Your dreams are worth your best pants when you wish you’d given love a chance,” filled the Emerson Urban Arts Gallery on Feb. 14.

But what surprised visitors entering the gallery is the artist—or artists—behind the pieces.

The new exhibit, “Creative Work as Adversary: The AI and Machine Art,” was created by roboticist and artist Alexander Reben and an artificial intelligence computer. This collaboration between human and machine showcases the connections between the world of artificial intelligence, robotics, and art, according to an exhibit placard.

AI generated the title of the exhibition after memorizing the titles of all the exhibitions at the Museum of Modern Art in New York City. It then output new titles, and the one for this exhibition was chosen by Reben and George Fifield, curator and director of Boston Cyberarts, a nonprofit arts organization which showcases the spectrum of media arts including electronic and digital experimental arts programming.

“A lot of the artists that Boston Cyberarts shows regard code as a creative medium as opposed to paint, or sculpture, or 3D,” Fifield said. “Their art medium is code, and [Reben] is one of those.”

According to The Economist, code is a way of writing instructions for computers that bridges the gap between how humans express themselves and how computers work.

Visitors can quickly see what the collaboration between an artist and AI looks like with the projection of a TED Talk on the wall next to the gallery’s entrance. “Five Dollars Can Save Planet Earth” is presented by a cyborg using a robotic face mask worn by Reben. The computer then speaks through the mask.

This is the world’s first TED Talk written and presented by artificial intelligence.

Reben programmed an AI system to watch every TED Talk and write its own based on what it learned. The computer then created several versions, and Reben chose the one he liked the best. After three minutes of nonsense, the talk



Artist Alexander Reben worked with artificial intelligence to create “Creative Work as Adversary: The AI and Machine Art,” on display in the Urban Arts Gallery until April 14. • Courtesy of the Urban Arts Gallery

ends with, “Sometimes, I think we need to take a seat. Thank you.”

Freshman Cameron Carleton, one of the gallery guides, explained that the exhibit’s artwork sparked confusion and curiosity from visitors.

“It’s funny how conversations go the same way,” Carleton said. “It starts base-low like, ‘How was it made?’ ‘What is it about?’ And then they just start asking about how artificial intelligence is going to take over the world or something. It kind of somehow leads to that conversation no matter who you’re talking to. It’s really a thought-provoking exhibit.”

Associate Faculty Professor Stephanie Orme teaches studies in digital media and culture at Emerson. Her courses cover how consumers and communities interact with digital media and technology. She said AI has become a huge part of digital culture and technology without people realizing it.

“I think it’s really interesting because so much of a lot of people’s exposure to AI was through science fiction films in the [1970s] and [1980s] where it is portrayed as being this really scary thing,” Orme said. “So people are afraid of it.”

Fifield is currently acting as a replacement for Joseph D. Ketner II—the founder of the gallery

who died last spring—until the college finds an official replacement. Fifield said he chose to curate the exhibit after following Reben’s work for years.

He said AI, and its use of the arts, greatly interests him. In Jan. 2018, he had a show called Artificial Creativity displayed at Cyberarts.

“So I have been studying it, for now, a number of years. [Reben] brings to it a certain, very charming sense of humor and a little bit of creepiness,” Fifield said.

The mysterious and almost surrealist paintings on the walls are called amalGAN oil paintings. They were initially created after an AI program combined different words together to generate a digital image of what it thought these words would look like. The AI then produced variants of these images.

The computer then determined which image Reben liked best by measuring his brain waves and body signals when looking at the images. The artist then sent the chosen image to anonymous painters in China who turned it into the oil painting. Finally, the AI picked a title based on what it saw on the canvas.

“I really like the amalGAN paintings,” Fifield said. “I like the whole concept of them. But on

the other hand, the thought-renders are very gorgeous—they are really beautiful works on paper. But the amalGAN paintings are the other ones that sort of intrigued me the most. Some of them you really don’t want to see.”

The exhibit will run until April 14 in the Urban Arts Gallery, which is open Wednesday through Saturday from 2 to 7 p.m. The next exhibit will be a traditional Master of Fine Arts show displaying the thesis exhibition of graduate Emerson students.

Reben will host a gallery walkthrough on March 3 at 4 p.m. and will give a public lecture, “Human-Machine Collaboration in Art Making,” at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, where he studied, on March 4 at 5 p.m.

“I find it very funny that we’re terrified of what artificial intelligence is going to do in the future, but once it exists in the present we don’t even think about it,” Fifield said. “So I think [Reben] is sort of playing on that.”

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Alumni go back to middle school in "Life Sucks" web series

Juliet Norman, Beacon Correspondent

When several alumni failed to make the cut after trying out for Emerson comedy troupes their freshman year, they teamed together to form their own comedy sketch group, Dinner For One, in 2009.

Nine members—eight of them Emerson alumni who graduated in 2011 and 2012—officially formed the group and decided on the name during their junior year. The name, Dinner for One, encapsulates the feeling of loneliness that comes along with being an awkward preteen, troupe member Ian Wexler ‘11 said.

“It just summed up that feeling of being an outcast,” Wexler said in a phone interview from New York City. “Nobody wants to make a din-

ner reservation for one person.”

Dinner for One headlined for numerous sketch festivals, such as the Chicago and New York City Sketchfests, and had members’ sketches appear on Funny or Die and HuffPost Comedy.

Since their time at Emerson, the now New York City-based comedy group wrote, produced, and filmed their own series, *Life Sucks* which was released in November 2018. The series has almost 10,000 views combined on YouTube.

The series explores the lives of three outcast preteens as they deal with the embarrassing aspects of puberty. The characters are exaggerated versions of the actors themselves who share the same first name with the main characters,

troupe member and *Life Sucks* star Ally Condrath ‘11 said.

The group’s own adolescent experiences largely inspired many of the storylines in *Life Sucks*, which is set in 2001, Condrath said.

Dinner For One created the series without any help from a production company. The six-episode series directed by Wexler was collectively written by the troupe and produced by Kyle Miller ‘11 in 2013.

The group initially auditioned with companies such as Comedy Central and TBS in hopes of professionally producing *Life Sucks*, troupe member Jake Mann ‘11 said. Condrath said that, after five years of meeting with various production companies, they decided to release the series themselves on YouTube.

The group initially raised \$30,000 through the fundraising website Indiegogo for production expenses. On the last day of fundraising, they were still \$50,000 short of their \$85,000 goal. Together, they raised \$10,000 within the last two hours of the fundraiser.

“So, in the last 20 minutes of the fundraising, we were scrambling,” Condrath said. “We reached out to Emerson alumni, our friends, anyone we could and, in the end, we had raised \$85,000.”

The money raised went mostly towards purchasing set equipment and reserving filming locations, Mann said.

The Dinner for One members wrote all six episodes within the span of a month in the summer of 2013, immediately before filming began. Mann said the members filmed the school scenes at a middle school later that summer and shot residential scenes in fall 2013—both in Brooklyn.

Mann said the filming process ended up being the most difficult part because they wanted to finish all the shooting before students went back to the middle school.

“We had to work around summer classes and were constantly asked to move spaces. If there was only one reason why someone would hesitate to make their own show, this is it,” Mann said. “Shooting is probably the hardest part about producing a show.”

The series was finally released on their You-

Tube channel in November 2018, five years after the filming ended.

Due to the limited budget that went toward the production, all actors worked voluntarily. Many of the characters on the show were played by teen and child actors. Throughout the shooting process, younger actors had the opportunity to participate in an acting summer camp program. Dinner for One provided the program by using 10 percent of the money they raised online.

“Something really cool about our set was that everyone who worked with us wanted to be there. People showed up every day because they wanted to be a part of it,” Mann said. “Because modern television is being overshadowed by streaming services like Netflix and Amazon Prime, getting a production company to pick up a television show has become increasingly more difficult.”

The group has no plans to continue with a new season of *Life Sucks* because of the difficulties that come with producing a series without the help of a producing network.

“These companies want to be sure that a show is going to be successful because of the way that television has changed,” Condrath said. “It has to be a sure thing. Obviously, I would have loved to have been picked up by a company like Netflix, but we’re all still happy with how our show turned out.”

Condrath said the members are focusing on their upcoming live comedy shows instead of continuing *Life Sucks*. Members from Dinner For One have performed at a New York City comedy club, People’s Improv Theater, for six years.

“Something I realized when I came to Emerson was that I’m not special,” Mann said. “There were so many other students who could do what I was doing.”

Members of the group have fostered lifelong relationships together since they met at Emerson. Condrath and Miller married in 2017, and all of the members live in Brooklyn.

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Alumnus’ comedy group, Dinner for One, created the web series “Life Sucks” about middle school struggles • Courtesy of Dinner for One

sports

RECENT RESULTS

MEN’S LACROSSE: Wentworth 16 — Emerson 4, Feb. 27

MEN’S VOLLEYBALL: Emerson 3 — Dean College 0, Feb. 26

MEN’S TENNIS: Emerson 6 — Endicott 3, Feb. 24

WOMEN’S TENNIS: Emerson 5 — Franklin Pierce 4, Feb. 23

Men’s basketball’s Curley named NEWMAC Coach of the Year

Andrew Lin, Beacon Staff

Men’s basketball head coach Bill Curley won the 2018-19 New England Women’s and Men’s Athletic Conference Coach of the Year award after leading the Lions to its first conference title and NCAA tournament appearance.

Curley led the Lions to a 16-11 record as they qualified as the second seed in the NEWMAC playoffs. The team finished with a 9-5 conference record, including an impressive 84-65 win against the Massachusetts Institute of Technology on Jan. 9 and a double-overtime 95-93 victory over Springfield College on Feb. 2.

In the playoffs, the Lions defeated Springfield College and Worcester Polytechnic Institute en route to its first ever NEWMAC title. With the win, the Lions also qualified for the Division III NCAA tournament for the first time in the program’s history.

Curley said the hard work of the basketball team and Emerson Athletics enabled him to win Coach of the Year.

“It’s great for our program and for the hard work our kids, Coach Barrett, and Coach Halpin have put in. Everybody in the [athletics department]—it’s a real team effort,” Curley said. “All our coaches here, we all lean on each other so we’re learning. It’s not really about me, it’s about the hard work everyone has put into this, and I’ve benefited from it.”



Men’s basketball head coach Bill Curley led the Lions to their first NEWMAC championship.
Anissa Gardizy / Beacon Staff

Four players from the men’s basketball team also received honors in the 2018-19 NEWMAC postseason awards. Senior guard Geoff Gray and junior guard Jack O’Connor made the First and Second All-Conference Team respectively. Freshman guard Zach Waterhouse won Rookie of the Year, and fellow freshman guard Trevor McLean made the All-Sportsmanship Team.

Curley praised his players for putting in the time and effort to have a successful season.

“I’m so happy for them,” Curley said. “Jack O’Connor has taken time out of his day to work on some extra shooting. You can’t say enough about Geoff Gray for all the hard work he’s put in—the dedication, the commitment, the sacrifice—and he’s taken his classroom work ethic and put it to basketball.”

Curley said Gray’s work ethic on and off the court motivates the younger players.

“[Gray is] showing our team that you can get a great education, you can be involved in all the different things academically and still carve out time to work on your game,” Curley said. “To see that happening is tremendous, and it’s a direct reflection—especially off of [Zach] Waterhouse—and showing the young guys like Trevor [McLean] what it takes to be a successful college player.”

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Gould wins Coach of the Year award for women's basketball

Aaron J. Miller, Beacon Staff

Women’s basketball head coach Bill Gould received the conference Coach of the Year award this season for his accomplishments in leading the Lions to an undefeated home record.

In his eleventh season as head coach, Gould led the team to its best record since the 2008-09 season when he was named the 2009 Greater Northeast Athletic Conference Coach of the Year. The women’s basketball team left the GNAC and joined the New England Women’s and Men’s Athletic Conference in the 2013-14 season.

The Lions lost to fourth-seeded Massachusetts Institute of Technology in the quarterfinals of the NEWMAC playoffs.

Gould became the coach of the women’s basketball team in 2007 following two seasons on Bentley University’s athletics staff, four seasons as an assistant for Boston College, and four seasons at Stonehill College as an assistant.

Gould said everyone who helped with this year’s success deserves credit for the award.

“I’ve been talking to a few of the players and the other coaches and administrators, and they’re all congratulatory,” Gould said. “I’ve said this to them, and I genuinely mean it, this should be the ‘team of the year award.’ I’m the same person, good or bad, that I was last year. What’s different is that these kids really just played phenomenally.”

Senior center Charlie Boyle earned First-Team All-Conference honors and finished her career with an average of 12.1 points and 4.9

rebounds per game. Junior guard Kate Foulz made the NEWMAC All-Sportsmanship Team.

The nine head coaches in the conference voted on the awards. Boyle also became the fifth woman in Emerson basketball history to join the 1,000 point club this year.

Gould said the team’s wins over key opponents in this season were the primary reason the NEWMAC awarded him and two players with honors.

“Any credit really does go to [the players]—we had a phenomenal year, and they played huge in some really big games,” Gould said. “We beat Babson [College] for the first time ever, we beat Springfield [College] for the first time ever, we had a phenomenal year, and they played huge in some really big games.”

“Any credit really does go to [the players]—we had a phenomenal year, and they played huge in some really big games.”

–Bill Gould

field [College] for the first time ever, we had a great game against Smith [College]. I got the Coach of the Year award because the kids played great in those games—that is really what it boils down to.”

The Lions defeated Springfield 89-84 on Feb. 6 in triple-overtime—their highest scoring game of the season.

Emerson Athletics Director Patricia Nicol said the awards finally prove that the Lions are a top NEWMAC competitor.

“It’s very exciting. It really solidifies our place in the conference,” Nicol said. “I think that we have arrived, and it’s been a process and it’s been an interesting journey. I’m just so proud of the coaches and the athletes. We have progressed every year, and it’s just such a good feeling and it’s something that’s just so deserved.”

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Lions cap off season with first NCAA tournament appearance

Continued from page 1

Curley said the team’s leadership kicked in the moment the players arrived on campus.

“It started way back in September when they came to the campus,” Curley said. “We have a great leader in Geoff Gray, and he was getting the guys in the gym and, honestly, that’s where it started. Even though we are playing a bunch of freshmen, it’s the stuff that they do after our play dates—with the leadership there, with Geoff [Gray] and Jack [O’Connor] getting in the gym.”

Gray and junior guard Jack O’Connor each scored 20.3 points per game to lead the team. Gray also averaged 9.2 rebounds and 4.3 assists per game.

The Lions had large contributions from freshmen this season. Freshman guard Zach Waterhouse scored 16.4 points per game—the third-highest on the team and eighth- highest in the NEWMAC—and started 19 of 27 games.

Freshman center Jarred Houston started in 26 out of 27 games, averaging 7.7 rebounds and a team-high of 1.6 blocks per game. Freshmen guards Trevor McLean and Nate Martin both averaged over 21 minutes per game. McLean started all 27 games, and Martin started 10. McLean shot 51.4 percent from the three-point line—the highest on the team.

Curley said the team’s success relies on the players’ energy. He said they hope to keep the same mentality going into the tournament.

“We’re still a young team, and we’re not a

perfect team yet. We’re just going to keep doing what we’ve been doing—bringing the energy, trying to get out and go, and then just trying to make some defensive stops and make more baskets,” Curley said.

The Lions ranked second in the NEWMAC in scoring with 81 points per game and second in rebounds per game with 37.1 and a 46.6 percent field goal percentage.

Curley said the team needs to remember to keep fighting and keep working during the tournament.

“Rowan [University] made the tournament and they’re hosting, so they’re a pretty high seed. So it’s going to be a dogfight, and we just have to remember why we’re there,” Curley said. “We’re there because we’ve earned this spot. It’s going to be a great challenge, it’s going to be a great learning experience, and it’s going to be a great environment to be in.”

The Lions will play Rowan University in Glassboro, New Jersey in the first round of the NCAA tournament on Friday, March 1 at 7:30 p.m.

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Senior Geoff Gray (left, No. 3) scored a total of 1640 points in his career as a Lion.
Alexa Schapiro / Beacon Staff