

THE CATALYST

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“IGNITING THE MIND”

OldWestburyCatalyst.org

A Nation Divided: Students and Faculty Speak on the 2024 Election



Photo by Vincent Arroyo

By Olivia Ambery

Over the last four years, America has been holding its breath in anticipation of the 2024 presidential election. In a time where election results can be doubted, facts are easily confused with misinformation, and even news sources are hard to believe, politics have become a loaded discussion. Depending on your circumstances, your perspective regarding the 2024 Presidential election might look a lot different than your family, friends, coworkers, or peers. One thing all can agree on is that the election between Donald J. Trump and Kamala Harris is one that this country will discuss for years to come.

We have all watched this country split in half in terms of ethical and economic values after America flipped red on November 6th, 2024. While many threw parties in celebration others wept in fear of what was to come. But overall, the country was much more silent this year than in 2020, where refusal to accept election results from the Republican party caused events like the insurrection of the Capitol on Jan. 6th, 2021.

Instead, after this election, we were left with a sea of dull faces in New York. Those who voted red carried out their days in regular fashion, perhaps with a bit more pep in their step, while those who voted blue seem defeated. There

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**SPORTS
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The State of Old Westbury



Photo credit: https://www.oldwestbury.edu/about-us/history

Horseback rider surveying construction of Academic Village

By Vincent Arroyo

SUNY O.W. has had an incredibly remarkable year. The relatively young administration of President Timothy Sams has already borne fruit. The Fall 2024 incoming class, as reported on the school's website and in the previous print edition of the Catalyst, has been the largest in O.W. history. The Amelie A. Wallace Gallery and Dr. Hyewon Yi consistently brings exciting artists and speakers to campus, imploring the student body to not only get an education in their major, but in the fine arts as well. A recent visit by Sultan Njoya from Cameroon promises an incredible opportunity for students to study abroad.

But even with all this, something still feels off on campus. Over the course of the last few months I've started to firmly engrain myself in the other student media outlets, and student leaders from these areas seem to be disenfranchised with the school.

"When it comes to how I look at the University supporting their student media, I have mixed feelings," said Patrec Alexander Jones-Brown, the program director at Old Westbury Web Radio [OWWR]. "This year OWWR was able to execute a 24-hour live stream for Vinylthon, and as it stands now there is still no promotion for the hard work we did," he continued.

The students even received an award

for the 24-hour broadcast. "Where are our flowers, as some would say?" Jones-Brown said. "There are other things that the University has been on top of like Student News Live and College Radio day," he continued. "However, I believe there can be more support when it comes to OWWR...especially since we are 24 hours a day 7 days a week, with new content daily."

The recent creation of the Media Innovation Center in the Campus Center leads me to believe that University is very interested in student media, so here's hoping the problems can be fixed.

Another massive problem facing O.W. is the Information Technology Services [ITS] department. As I'm sure anyone who has a college email can tell you, it feels like every week there's some issue with the wi-fi. Outages are expected, considering how much power this place needs to function. An anonymous student, a freshman history major, told me that in one of their classes a projector isn't working. The professor and the student tried to solve the issue with the classic 'turn it on and off again' technique, and hooking up another laptop to the projector. None of these worked. When ITS was summoned, they sent up an intern who did the same thing they did to no effect. The student claims that the projector still doesn't work.

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How to Close Down a Landfill: A Discussion

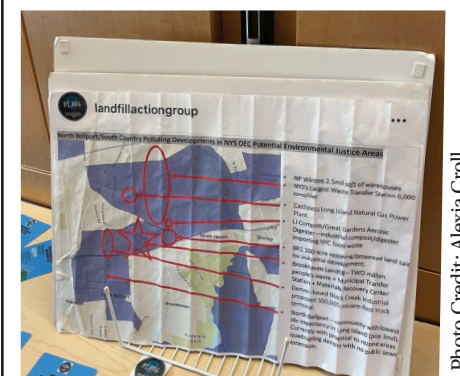


Photo Credit: Alexia Croll

By: Alexia Croll

Landfills significantly contribute to climate change, as they generate and release methane gas and carbon dioxide. The American Studies Department, co-sponsored by the Social & Environmental Justice Institute, the Campus Environmental Education, and the Sojourner Truth Black Studies Center, hosted a discussion led by Monique Fitzgerald, a justice seeker, community advocate and organizer.

Her work spans over the course of two decades, with a focus on mutual aid efforts, community resource distribution, and climate & environmental justice. Her lived experience as a Black and Indigenous person of the Setalcott Nation, now known as occupied Long Island, has propelled her to the creation of grassroots environmental organizations such as The Brookhaven Landfill Action and Remediation Group.

Fitzgerald opened up the discussion by making a land acknowledgement to the Matinecock people. She expressed that acknowledging the Native people that originally occupied this land before colonization, puts us on the "right path" towards obtaining environmental justice.

As a member of the Setalcott Nation, she is still in community with the Matinecock people, who help organize her yearly powwow, and reminds everyone

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**REVIEWS
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Letter from the Editor: Farewell *Catalyst*, Farewell Old Westbury

By Vincent Arroyo

With the publication of this paper, my short time as an Executive Editor is over, as I finish my last semester in these next few weeks. I learned a hell of a lot about things like responsibility, and responding to emails in a timely fashion. I made many mistakes and won't be around here long enough to try again next time. I'm incredibly grateful for my editorial team, Alexia Croll and Olivia Ambery, and the writers for this semester. I'm also grateful for the tutelage of both past and present faculty advisors John Friedman and Andrew Mattson. *The Catalyst* took me in like a sick puppy all those semesters ago, and I'm beyond thankful for the opportunity I was given.

I spent a lot of my time in the Catalyst office in the Student Union, either looking at old print editions, or perusing the drawers of a desk. Stowed away in the top drawer is an old photo of another past group of, presumably, student journalists. They're all well dressed, in slick suits and beautiful dresses, all smiling. Except for one, who's wearing a suit vest and fedora; he's trying to give off the impression that he's too cool for school. I think about these people, what're they doing now? Are they still journalists? Did they make it? Or was this just a pit stop for them, just a "road less traveled" that took them a place every college student will end up: in a data entry job.

Whenever I'm in the office desperately searching for inspiration or a distraction from some responsibility, I look at that picture and plant my feet on the ground. "This too will pass" so I think the photo tells me. "Get out and do it, because who knows if you'll ever have the chance again."

Thank you to everyone for reading this edition, and the editions before this, and the editions that are surely to come. Be sure to check out the *Catalyst* website, oldwestburycatalyst.org, for more articles.

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How to Close Down a Landfill: A Discussion

By: Alexia Croll

that the Indigenous people and practices are still alive and well on Long Island. Throughout her presentation, she refers to environmental justice and racial justice as being “one in the same.”

In 2020, Fitzgerald protested, like many others, for the Black Lives Matter movement. In light of this, she began protesting the Brookhaven Landfill with her aunt and neighbors.

“Why is the landfill near our community... a black and brown community?” She questioned. “It is a place where we have the least political capital. It is easier to site a landfill in that area.”

The landfill’s capacity holds an estimated 1.2 million tons of material per year, and has stopped accepting solid waste since 1989. Covanta (now Reworld) which is a 382-foot smokestack in the Town of Hempstead primarily incinerates C&D waste, ash, and debris from large storms. The landfill primarily accepts debris and waste from the smokestack.

She discussed Frank P. Long Intermediate School, what is now known as the “sick school,” located in the shadow of the 270-foot Brookhaven Landfill, where Fitzgerald and her son both attended.

“I remember all the reports of folks having asthma and not really being able to go outside and play,” she stated. Reports have stated that over 35 staff members of the school have gotten cancer since 1998, and 14 of them have passed away. Children and adults alike have fallen ill due to the environmental toxins surrounding the area, and have been petitioning for the closure of the school.

Residents in nearby communities, including Bellport, Medford, and Patchogue, reported an increase in respiratory problems, headaches, and nausea, which they attributed to the landfill’s emissions, as well as pollutants in the air and groundwater. Her community was told that the landfill would eventually become a park for skating or recreation in 1978, the year Fitzgerald was born. This has yet to come into effect.

She references individuals that hold the most power in closing the landfill. Will Flower, the Senior Vice President of Corporate and Public Affairs for Winters Bros. Waste Systems, Dan Panico, who currently serves as Supervisor for the Town of Brookhaven, and Sean Mahar, the Interim Commissioner for the Department of Environmental Conservation.

She says that on behalf of her team, they’ve done “as much as we could do to reach out to corporations, to municipalities, and to regulatory agencies.” In addition, Fitzgerald has also been in touch with Governor Kathy Hochul and Attorney General Leticia James. She says that

governor Hochul has aided in an investigation of Covanta, where they uncovered hundreds of violations with the help of whistleblower Patrick Fahey.

Though the pursuit to close the landfill has been difficult, Fitzgerald has cited the policies that have given her support.

“In 2019 we had the climate leadership and protection community Protection Act. Then we have, in 2021, the Green Amendment that was to amend the New York State Constitution to ensure that we have clean air, clean water. And then in 2023 we see the cumulative impacts law passed.” She says that in addition to these laws, the press has aided in shedding light on the issue, with a number of newspaper ads and articles.

Although the landfill still operates, there are plans to close the landfill before the end of 2024. However, this feat is raising a number of challenges. Fitzgerald noted that the Brookhaven Council is attempting to get another permit for the facility before it is reviewed under Cumulative Impacts Law. She is trying to get this permit denied with the Department of Environmental Conservation, with assistance from Earthjustice, an environmental justice legal firm.

There are also concerns surrounding increased costs of waste transportation and removal, as well as finding new disposal capacity. This could pose new issues regarding carbon emissions and land protection. Local municipalities, accustomed to relatively low garbage collection costs, may face budget strains, with limited room to raise taxes due to New York’s 2% property tax cap.

In a quote from Waste Dive, spokesperson Nicolle Robles said via email, “We have not finalized any plans for ash after the closure of the Brookhaven landfill. We are currently exploring all the options that present sustainable opportunities for Long Island including the potential of ash reuse.” Suffolk County Supervisor Ed Romaine has also called for greater state involvement, urging innovation and collaboration among local, state, and private entities.

The work that Fitzgerald has done to spread awareness, challenge the system, and make lasting change on Long Island, does not go unnoticed. Her strides toward environmental justice for the marginalized communities affected by decades of pollution are commendable, as she has been an advocate for not only herself but for others.

“You have a duty to win” she began, “it would be unacceptable to continue to live in a society that doesn’t protect all of its people. No matter how long that takes for us to achieve it, we have to do what we have to do.”

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A Nation Divided: Students and Faculty Speak on the 2024 Election

By Olivia Ambery

was no denial of results nor parading through the streets of Washington D.C. anymore. The Democratic party had simply turned to what we might compare to an ‘autopsy,’ where they decided to look through their campaign to understand where they went wrong.

The day after the election, faculty, students, and staff of SUNY Old Westbury seemed as though they were moving through a fog. It was almost clear who voted which way as a few walked through the hallways smiling, wearing MAGA hats on their way to class, while others could barely speak to their friends. The attendance was very slim, as some were so upset that they could not even come to campus. The divide in attitudes and beliefs was starkly visible.

However, no matter how happy, sad, or neutral the members of SUNY Old Westbury were, every single one of the people who chose to speak on this topic decided to stay anonymous due to the delicate nature of this discussion. The extreme political controversy that began in 2016 has heightened to the point that people do not feel safe sharing their opinions publicly.

This is why we hear of popular phrases like ‘the silent majority’ that many Trump supporters used to define their party. They’ll post the words on their cars with bumper stickers or ride around Long Island in trucks with the words on colorful flags. Silence has become normal and speaking makes you an extremist.

“The whole day before I was anxious and I could hardly sleep,” said one of the anonymous students, a transgender male, a sophomore and English major. “I had a little bit of hope but it’s hard to stay hopeful in this country because every time I am let down, and let down, and let down. It was just dread and devastation, and I could feel that in my friends and everyone in school the next day.”

When asked if he voted, he said, “I did vote. Of course I did. It’s my duty as an American citizen to vote. It’s my right to have my voice heard, and I’m going to exercise it... Human rights was the most important thing I was considering, my right to my own adult brain and adult body, to make decisions about myself without any outside input.”

Another student, a female senior at Old Westbury hoping to pursue a career in teaching stated, “I feel distraught and disappointed. This election will affect my Hispanic community, LGBTQ communi-

ty and my fellow women in so many ways...It feels like all the progress that we have made in society isn’t being seen at all.”

When asked if she voted, she stated, “Unfortunately I did not vote [because I could not] register on time, but even though I didn’t it doesn’t mean that this election has not caused me mental and emotional distress.”

Two faculty members also chose to speak about their experience.

One professor, a male from the History and Philosophy department, stated, “I did vote, for Harris. I think the election illustrates the difficult situation democrats are in since the repudiation of government solutions embodied in the rhetoric and policies of, first, Jimmy Carter, and then, in a more pronounced way, Bill Clinton.”

He continued, saying “Both of these presidents took the Democratic Party in a different direction from the inspirational social democratic programs of Roosevelt’s New Deal and Johnson’s Great Society. They embraced the privatization of what used to be widely accepted public responsibilities like welfare.”

One faculty member, a female working in administration, stated, “I did vote in this election. It is and was important for me to have a candidate that has a track record of supporting the wellbeing of families and communities at risk, who knows what it means to be held accountable and be responsible for supporting the human rights of all the people living in this country and other nations...”

The professor further stated, “[I wanted someone in office] who has a strong moral compass and sound judgment, knows how to pick advisors and leaders that will be able to continue to navigate our country through this current political landscape [and] global economy and [would] steer us through the climate crisis in a manner where we are repairing and healing the environment and creating a sustainable future.”

It has been just over 3 weeks since the election results have been announced and many of us have gone home to our families for Thanksgiving, the discussions becoming uncomfortable and tense in either direction. We are living through historical events and witnessing the divide of a country firsthand. We can only sit here and anticipate these next four years and see where it takes us as it all unfolds.

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The State of Old Westbury

By Vincent Arroyo

Even the faculty have problems with ITS. According to a Faculty Senate [FS] resolution from November 1, ITS experiences “low morale and organizational stress,” from severe understaffing. This and all other resolutions, meeting minutes, and FS Chair reports can be found on their website.

Things have gotten so dire, according to a file titled “Appendix II” on the FS website, that not only did the FS consider a vote of no-confidence, but also the Chief Financial Officer [CFO] Martha Santana has tasked HR to launch an investigation into Michael Pastine, the Chief Information Officer and head honcho of ITS.

I interviewed Faculty Senate Chair Kyle Anderson, via email, about the big issues facing O.W. and he said the chief concern is budgetary. After COVID, Anderson says “When I came into my role as FS Chair, we were just coming out of this period, a hiring freeze, and the administration of President Sams was just filling out some of its final positions,” he continued. “We lost many talented young faculty members during the freeze, which is to some extent expected as a result of natural attrition, but without replacing them many staff feel their departments are understaffed.” Anderson goes on to say that the administrative departments “like registrar, bursar, advising, and ITS” are reeling from understaffing, too, “likely even more so than faculty.”

There’s also something fishy about the Athletic Center. Earlier this semester, there was a new post added to the official campus website, saying that an investigation had been launched into the women’s basketball program after reports of NCAA violations. In the post there is no indication of what these violations were. I’ve heard a rumor about what this violation could have been, but I lack the evidence to back up this claim so it shall not be repeated here. Suffice to say, it’s not all squeaky clean over there on those waxed basketball courts.

O.W.’s recent investment into STEM, in the form of a new science building and the STEAM initiative, is certainly something to be lauded. However, as a history major, it makes me uneasy thinking about what this could mean for liberal arts initiatives. While the WGSS and El Conuco are growing at an ever-increasing rate, and student journals like Harmonia are given new life from an active student body, I can’t help but wonder why what is given to STEM can’t also be given to the humanities. But maybe I’m jumping the gun, wanting too much too fast. After all, the schools only got a certain amount of money.

“The administration is operating under a series of important constraints,” Anderson said. These constraints are budgetary, a “changing legal landscape,” and evolving relationships with those in power, like SUNY Chancellor John King Jr. and Governor Kathy Hochul.

“One important thing to note is that our budget allocations from New York state have increased significantly over

the past two years,” Anderson said. “I think [the administration] are making some progress in raising the profile of Old Westbury relative to the other SUNY institutions. We are no longer the red-headed stepchild of the SUNY system.”

And the whole ‘dwindling liberal arts’ thing isn’t something specific to O.W. or even the SUNY system, it’s a national trend. For a good, well-paying job it is not uncommon for a bachelor’s degree requirement. This has led to colleges becoming glorified trade schools, often losing what once made these schools great. O.W.’s history is brimming with music and theatrical arts. In fact, Craig S. Harris, a jazz trombonist who’s worked with greats like Sun Ra, Abdullah Ibrahim and Lester Bowie, is an O.W. alum.

As mentioned before, this isn’t an O.W. problem but a nationwide one. The job market has railroaded the youth, an anxious and depressive bunch, into years of study they may not have wanted in the first place. There’s what we used to be, what we are, and there’s what we could be.

“On the one hand, [Sams] has brought attention to how Farmingdale State College, which is our most immediate competitor in the SUNY system, was founded as a technical and vocational school, but has in recent years undertaken a kind of ‘mission creep’ into the liberal arts that the previous administration did little to push back against,” Anderson said. “On the other hand, he seems to be pushing us to expand our own mission outside of the liberal arts into more pre-professional paths that can be evaluated in terms of their ability to lead directly into gainful employment.”

There were some great programs back in the day that clearly worked, so where have they gone? Having said this, these arts seem to be making a comeback. In the Campus Center one can see fliers for a new dance class and new music programs. I wholeheartedly thank the Panther Art Collective for sponsoring fine art events and leading to this development.

No institution can stay the same forever, and when a new administration comes in there is undoubtedly going to be a shift in perspective. But if the students want to make change, we must be aware that it’s likely not going to be for us, but for the next generation of students. “Nothing in academia is timely, it is not an efficient industry, but it is democratic, and democracy takes time and work.” Anderson said. “If anything, the President has perhaps moved too quickly to try to implement his vision at times, but to his credit, he often recognizes this and is willing to change course to accommodate dissenting opinions and try to build consensus.”

The future of Old Westbury is in the hands of students, but the administration needs to lock down on the pressing issues of the campus, some of which I didn’t have the space for in this article.

STUDENT MEDIA’S 2024

By Vincent Arroyo, Patrec Alexander Jones-Brown, and Derell Smith



Media Innovation Center (MIC)

The MIC is and always has been a place for the creative community on this campus to collaborate. With so much competition from other colleges in the area, SUNY Old Westbury gives students the opportunity to do what so few others can: getting their hands on professional-level equipment from day one. The MIC’s goal has always been to give the students of Old Westbury the tools and hands-on experience necessary for them to succeed in their careers years after they have departed these halls. It’s a center where students can be themselves and embrace their passions while learning more at the same time.

Achievements from this year include the MIC open house, Student Media Day, Sultan Njoya’s Arrival video package, Tomorrow Girl’s Group and Trimming Bangs video, and the African Art collection video package. All of these videos can be found on the MIC YouTube Channel, as well as other student media content.



Old Westbury Web Radio (OWWR)

OWWR is a place for students interested in radio production and on-air broadcasting to learn and hone their skills. These skills aren’t just for radio, they can apply to music production and podcasting. OWWR’s broadcasts all day, everyday. Their broadcasting schedule can be found by visiting owwrny.org and clicking the ‘schedule’ button.

Achievements from this year include Vinylthon, an award-winning 24-hour broadcast spinning vinyl. College Radio Day, a worldwide broadcast with over 700 other college radio stations. Student News Live, a live 24-hour simulcast of election coverage. OWWR had two spots in this program. OWWR Collaboration with Old Westbury Sports in Toys for Tots with a doubleheader. OWWR has 20 plus shows live everywhere, everyday.

SUNY Old Westbury’s Season of Giving: A Time to Make a Difference

By Kaylee Molinari

As the holidays get closer, SUNY Old Westbury is embracing the true spirit of the season with its Season of Giving, a series of opportunities to uplift and support our campus community. The main event was the college’s participation in Giving Tuesday, a global movement encouraging acts of generosity.

Angela Wambugu Cobb, Vice President for Institutional Advancement, shared how Giving Tuesday aligns with the college’s core mission of fostering academic excellence and community engagement. “This effort not only reflects our values but strengthens our campus as a whole,” she said.

This year’s campaign focused on three key areas. Finish Line scholarships which provide vital support for students close to graduating, The OW Endowment that ensures long-term funding for strategic goals, and The Greatest Needs Fund, a fund tackling urgent challenges as they arise.

These highlight SUNY Old Westbury’s commitment to helping students succeed both academically and personally.

The Season of Giving goes beyond just fundraising. It offers an opportunity

for the OW community to come together and care for one another. Programs like the Panther Food Pantry and Career Closet impact students, faculty, and staff by addressing essential needs.

“Supporting these programs strengthens our culture of philanthropy,” Wambugu Cobb said. “It’s about fostering a community where everyone has the resources they need to thrive.”

The Season of Giving culminated on December 5th with the Donor & Scholar Reception, an event recognizing the partnerships and generosity that help support student scholarships and campus initiatives.

“Together, we can ensure SUNY Old Westbury continues to lead with heart and make a difference for everyone in our community,” said Wambugu Cobb.

Wondering how you can get involved? Here are some ways to make a difference. Donate: Contributions to the Food Pantry, Career Closet, or the Toys for Tots campaign directly impact the lives of your peers and those less fortunate. Be a Social Media Ambassador: Help spread the word by sharing charity messages online.

Meet Betty Berbari, Assistant Dean of Arts & Sciences

By Mary Jane Hernandez

Assistant Dean Betty Berbari has been at SUNY Old Westbury since 2015 with a full time position as Director of the Math Design Lab. In 2022, she was asked to take on the Assistant Dean role for the School Of Arts and Sciences and has been in that position ever since.

"I've been at SUNY Old Westbury since 2015 in a full time position as a director of the math design lab" she said. Math being her field of study, it makes sense that she's both in and out of the office and classroom. Dean Berbari makes a difference in the classroom by helping students make real connections with mathematics with her "Math in..." campus events showcasing how much mathematics is involved in our everyday lives, events include; *Math in Baking, Crocheting, CPR, etc.*

Professor Berbari states that although the roles are vastly different there is some overlap with the way she teaches her lecture, and is able to connect with both faculty and the student body. "I think the roles overlap because my position as Assistant Dean is student facing, and I help a lot of students with issues and with their success," Berbari continues. "As a professor for my quantitative decision making class, that's the same thing. I try to help my students be successful and make a connection between math and everyday life."

Dean Berbari has real world prob-

lems within every lesson; utilizing interest and insurance rates help students manage their adult lives. This helps them make real connections with the curriculum and apply it to their day-to-day lives. She not only wants to teach lectures but make sure that her students are getting something out of it that they can take with them out into the real world.

Berbari has changed the lives of several students. One moment that stands out to her in the almost 10 years she's been at the university is "when a student that had come to me with multiple challenges, that did not think they would be able to finish college and then they did," she continues. "To see them at commencement and to come to me and hug me and thank me. I was so proud, so proud of them. So I think it's those moments that really stand out for me the most, when you see a student come full



Berbari sitting in her office

Photo Credit: Mary Jane Hernandez

circle and is able to enter the next chapter of their life in a good place is very very meaningful."

Seeing her students succeed is her driving force in being a professor. Her connection to her students is what makes her a good professor and dean to her students and faculty.

O.W. Water Station Filters in the Red

By Olivia Ambery

Last year many of us were excited when SUNY Old Westbury installed water bottle filling stations all around campus. With two on the first floor of the New Academic building and one on each floor above, many were happy to stop paying for water out of school. They popped up in the Campus Center and Student Union buildings as if overnight, and we watched as the numbers on the little 'how many bottles has this station saved' counter climbed from zero to over four thousand on all the stations in a matter of months.

Lately, however, the filtration status lights on these stations have turned from an inviting green to a stationary red. As the weeks have gone by there has been no talk about changing these filters or checking that there is clean, drinkable water coming out of these machines.

New York may have the best drinking water, but seeing the quality of the filter status of these machines continue to drop is disheartening. Even though the water is likely still very safe, many may opt to buy water.

Hopefully Old Westbury replaces these filters before we return for the Spring Semester in January 2025.

I am a 10, maybe

By Liselle Powder

Because I feel like a 10, it's a make-up number.
A number that can change to one single digit.
That is stagnant for a while.
It can change to my lowness of my inner being,
as I grappled at life, to try and stand above the noise.
The noise that looks for company.
The noise that says you are not good enough.
I clasp my hands to pray, but my words don't leave me.
My knees are tired of being in the same place.
They are tired of bending and taking up space.
It's a rat race, hungry for that cheese.
If I say I am a 4 or 5 the world claps,
maybe a standing ovation.
They love me for that, with a pat
on my shoulder, "Well done," they say.
As they fixed their eyes on me with questions.
"What next?"
The negativity follows me like black smoke,
because my fears and intimidation are burnt
and stamped in my soul.
If I choose to climb, they will try to pull me down.
Maybe stamp on my head or drag me to the ground.
They move their lips as it twitches, hungry for gossip.
Their eyes open wide as the sweet juice flows.
Lapping up everything that pours out
from the bellies of unwanted souls.
Anything below 5 they will raise their glass and cheer.
That's the atmosphere, as the 10 just stand there and look on.
Waiting for me to reach it.

One More?



By Hana Rehmatullah

Trimming Bangs at the Art Lab

By Jackie Martinez

Trimming Bangs showcases the work of Sammy Seung-min Lee and Joo Woo, two Korean immigrants whose artwork highlights their origins. The exhibit is available for viewing in the Art Lab, Room 106 in Woodlands Hall 1 until December 12, 2024. The room features red acrylic artwork portraying onomatopoeic words and includes drawings done by Woo's children. According to Woo, this choice was made because although these words seem very straightforward, they may be confusing to non-native English speakers who don't know the context behind them. Also, according to Woo, red was chosen as the primary color for this artwork because of its connection to Korean history and

communism. In Woo's artist statement, she states that as a child in South Korea, she and other children were heavily discouraged to use red, and that she won propaganda poster competitions by drawing red monsters to represent North Koreans.

"This is a new project for me," Lee said at the opening reception. "What if I'm cutting, self-reflecting, seeing from an outside view, and also seeing the hair on the floor, whether that could be a possible drawing."

The main attraction of this exhibit is the trimming of the bangs (pictured above). In her performance, Sammy Seung-min Lee, along with volunteers from the audience, took scissors and cut pieces of string hanging from a

rod, clearly representing the cutting of hair. She described this performance as a testament to her identity issues, and how trimming bangs is connected to Asian women as a whole. She stated that bangs are usually pushed on Asian women, and that many Asian women come to the United States and take on cosmetology jobs. She also said that it reminded her of her mother braiding her hair as a child, and how those memories connect her to her motherland.

I thought that the relationship between the art and the artists' lore was interesting, and I appreciated how personal it was. I don't think this was necessarily revolutionary, as I've heard a lot of sentiments similar to the ones from this exhibit from other immigrants, but perhaps that just emphasizes how common the feeling of "otherness" is among immigrants.



Student trimming bangs

Photo Credit: Media Innovation Center



The titular bangs post-trim

Photo by Jackie Martinez



Woo's red onomatopoeia

Photo Credit: Media Innovation Center



Sammy Seung-min Lee (left) and Joo Woo (right)

Photo Credit: Media Innovation Center

EDITOR'S PICKS FOR 2024

Compiled by Olivia Ambery, Vincent Arroyo, and Alexia Croll

Alexia: GNX by Kendrick Lamar

Kendrick Lamar recently shocked fans with a surprise release of his sixth studio album "GNX". This comes during the height of his publicized feud with rapper Drake, and his impending Super Bowl performance. The title refers to the limited edition 1987 Buick Grand National that appears on the album's cover, which is also the car that Lamar's father had driven him in following his

birth in the hospital. This could also be perceived as homage to one of his previous album covers, "good kid, m.A.A.d city", which features his mothers' Chrysler Town & Country minivan. Lamar has been one of the most talked about rappers of 2024, and his latest release has led to a wide array of opinions and commentary. The album contains a host of features from lesser known rap-

pers, as Lamar has returned back to his roots with heavy West Coast influences. Breakout songs like "tv off", are reminiscent of his chart-topping diss track "Not Like Us". They're emotionally charged, with funky beats and production that encourage movement and attitude from both new listeners and die hard fans.



Photo Credit: The Hollywood Reporter

Vincent: Bright Future by Adrienne Lenker

Adrienne Lenker has been something of an indie darling the last couple years. Songs like "not a lot just forever" and "anything" have millions of plays on Spotify, and have attracted worldwide attention. Her newest album, a sad country record in the crooning cowboy tradition of Hank Williams, was practically the soundtrack of my year. "Sadness as a Gift," my favorite song from this album, is one of those rare tunes, like "Funny How Time Slips Away" by Willie Nelson and "Tangled Up In Blue" by Bob Dylan, that manages to obscure heartbreak through the passing of time and naive nostalgia. "Vampire Empire" is a new version of a hit song she had with her other band, Big Thief. I'm eagerly awaiting Lenker's new release, whatever and whenever that may be.



Photo credit: <https://adrianelenker.bandcamp.com/album/bright-future>

Vincent: Songs for Emotion by Pop Music Fever Dream

Pop Music Fever Dream is a small no-wave outfit from Brooklyn. Their EP, Songs for Emotion, from September is, for me, one of the great surprises from this year. Clocking in at 15 minutes the EP is a great 'get in, get out' record; for a sliver of your time you're left with something you can listen to over, and over again. "Elegy for Memory" is a song that rattles your bones and makes you want to push people around. The drums, performed by Domenico Bancroft, are like lightning bolts through your system, permanently corkscrewing you into a tornado of terrifying passion. I implore everyone who listens and likes the music to support them on their bandcamp page.



Photo credit: <https://pmit.bandcamp.com/album/songs-for-emotion>

Olivia: The Rise and Fall of a Midwest Princess by Chappell Roan

Coming from small beginnings making music out of rural Missouri, opening for Olivia Rodrigo's GUTS tour grew Chappell Roan's audience exponentially. With 1 million monthly Spotify listeners last September, her release of the album The Rise and Fall of a Midwest Princess raised her audience to over 41.2 million listeners a month, with her most popular song, the single Good Luck Babe! totalling at over a billion streams since just April 5th, 2024. Chappell's

sudden rise to stardom over the last few months has brought her into contact with big names in the music industry like Elton John, Sabrina Carpenter, and Lady Gaga, not to mention her song HOT TO GO creating a trend that rivals the popularity of the YMCA. She's become pop music's overnight star, selling out shows and culminating huge audiences at festivals like the Governor's Ball and Coachella. Her hyper pink pop brand and drag-influenced aesthetic have earned

her the label of our latest queer pop icon. While I love this artist and her music, I still have a bone to pick with her for cancelling her appearance at the All Things Go festival in September the day before she was set to perform, making me and thousands of others lose out on hundreds of dollars. While her music is great and I see a bright future ahead, I only hope she learns to treat her fans with more respect than the equivalent of calling out to work.



Photo credit: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Rise_and_Fall_of_a_Midwest_Princess#/media/File:Chappell_Roan_-_The_Rise_and_Fall_of_a_Midwest_Princess.png

Slowdive in Brooklyn

By Jackie Martinez

On November 19th, 2024, I had the pleasure of seeing Slowdive at the Brooklyn Paramount. Seeing this band has been a long-awaited endeavor; the last time they toured, tickets sold out in minutes, and the resale prices were ridiculous.

This is a band I have enjoyed for years, and associate many positive teenage memories with. Their latest album release in 2023, "everything is alive," takes on a different sound than their iconic release "Souvlaki," from 1994, but it is still a very good album. I am not an expert on music theory, so I don't know how exactly to compare the two besides saying that their new music just sounds new. "Souvlaki" is renowned for being a staple shoegaze album, and it was lovely to hear it performed live by the band, which

remains with all of its original members, which is certainly a rarity for bands that have been around this long.

The opening song at this show was "shanty" from "everything is alive," which I thought was a perfect song to start off with. This song sounds quite electronic, and I usually hate it when old bands modernize their music, but I am a big fan of this one.

The song was performed with psychedelic lighting and visuals in the background, which continued throughout the entire show.

My friend and I managed to secure a spot 3 rows away from the barricade, which someone actually tried to shove me out of, unsuccessfully. Unfortunately, this band and its songs have made it big on

TikTok, attracting a lot of kids who are not well-versed in concert etiquette.

I'm not a snob, and it's not that I think music should be gatekept, but as a very frequent concertgoer, I have noticed such a stark difference in behavior between crowds for bands whose music has become "TikTokified" and normal ones.

Nonetheless, it was a good concert, and the music was just as beautiful performed live as it is in the studio recordings. Some of the notable songs they performed were "kisses," "Sugar for the Pill," "Alison," "40 Days," and their most popular



Photo by Jackie Martinez

Slowdive performing

song, "When the Sun Hits." They also played my personal favorite, "Souvlaki Space Station," which is absolutely worth listening to if you haven't already.

Alligator Bites Never Heal: A Mixtape Review

By: Alexia Croll

Rapper DoeChii has recently released her third mixtape *Alligator Bites Never Heal*. She chose to release it as a mixtape instead of an album because she wanted as much creative freedom as possible. In an interview with Rolling Stone she says, "When you use words like "album" there are certain politics and things that come with that, whereas with a mixtape it is historically known for you to have no limitations. And so, that's what this project is all about."

Her latest project reinforces her visions of nonconformity, forging your own path, and rejecting the status quo. The mixtape is both lyrically raw and sonically experimental, solidifying her as one of the most dynamic voices in contemporary hip-hop and R&B. On the breakout, Grammy nominated single "NISSAN ALTIMA", she proclaims, "I'm the new hip-hop Madonna, I'm the trap Grace Jones." This statement reinforces her bold, confrontational, and avant-garde style, as she toys around with a variety of animated flows that makes her both radical and unpredictable. Her artistry is both provocative and campy, as she isn't afraid of pushing boundaries with not only her music, but her individual look as well.

The lyricism is poetic yet direct, oscillating between moments of anger, intro-

spection, and empowerment. On "BLOOM" she expresses her frustration with fame and self-negligent tendencies in a voice recording over a lo-fi beat, where she ends the song saying "You have to maintain things, and that's just the way of life."

Alligator Bites Never Heal is an exploration of personal pain, healing, and the complexities of identity. DoeChii does not shy away from hard truths on this project. She embraces all aspects of her personal and musical journey. On "BOILED PEANUTS" she alternates between melodic choruses with old-school hip-hop influence, showcasing her ability to shift seamlessly between different styles and moods. In reference to her mixtape title, she says, "So many things changed. I literally changed in this studio. So there's just shedded skin all over the place."

In *Alligator Bites Never Heal*, DoeChii explores not only her individual struggles but also broader themes of self-reclamation. Her lyrics are relatable, and her willingness to be raw and experimental places her in the lineage of artists like Missy Elliott and Azealia Banks, while carving out a distinct identity of her own. The project is currently nominated for a Grammy in the Best Rap Album category.



Image Credit: Spotify

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How to Lose an Election

By Quinn Dobson

In the wake of the Democrat's devastating loss in the 2024 election at the hands of Donald Trump's Republican Party, there has been much introspection from the Kamala Harris bloc. What could have gone wrong? Where did we err? Were we too "Woke?" To answer these questions, I have prepared a comprehensive step by step instructional manual. Here are my 11 steps on how to completely lose an election.

Step one is to run a successful candidate around 16 years before the election you plan to lose. Have him run on change, hope, and whatever other relevant buzzwords you can think of. Promise things, but make sure not to deliver. It is imperative that you raise as much excitement about your candidate, and then have him completely dissipate it. Additionally, make sure your candidate gestures towards ending foreign intervention, but in office starts as many wars as possible. The most important part of this step is your Vice Presidential pick: make him a bumbling, barely competent, joke senator. This is essential as it will raise an unlikeable figure to unearned stature, making later tenure as president incredibly unpopular.

Step two is to run support for a long shot joke candidate in your rival party around eight years later. He should be a complete fool, yet completely convinced of his own brilliance. Make sure he is a racist and misogynist. Give him completely unwarranted and unpaid media attention; make him seem funny. Tell everyone that he is an outsider who is against the establishment you have built. While you should present this as a dreadful thing, if the recipe works out, people will like this.

Step three is to nominate a highly unpopular war hawk who is married to a serial adulterer and former President. There will be a candidate with genuine support from the working class base. It is imperative that you run an obvious collusion campaign against him with the higher-ups in your party to ensure your candidate's path to victory. Your candidate must abandon the base in favor of white middle class voters who typically support your rival party. Do not, under any circumstance, promise anything of substance. Your campaign must be focused on race and gender politics, and not mention class.

Step four is to lose this election and be a sore loser. Under any circumstance, do not visit Wisconsin. When you lose, immediately claim that there was a mass conspiracy supported by foreign adversaries that hacked into

voting systems. Never acknowledge that you were wrong about this and take on a rapture-esque disposition to an F.B.I. investigation. At the same time, blame your loss on the F.B.I. for probing into your candidate's shady business dealings. Be as annoying as possible, the goal is to make everyone in the country mad at you. For the next four years claim to be equivalent to the Yugoslav partisans, running a resistance against a fascist dictator. Be melodramatic and irritating.

Step five requires a bit of

promises your party made during the campaign and blame the Supreme Court. Do not take any responsibility. Send your Vice President to handle contentious matters, have her flounder every single one. Actively sabotage and run interference against working class politics. Proclaim loyalty to unions while siding against them. Mishandle as many public health matters as possible.

Step eight is to wildly botch withdrawal from a 20-year war, while also sabotaging attempts to end a new war.

the next public appearance. Make sure the genocide gets as much media attention as possible. Repeat obvious lies about the victims, and do not allow them to be corrected. During this step you want as many people as possible to think your candidate a) loves murder, or b) is completely ineffective.

Step ten is for your president to have a horrible debate against the joke candidate, drop out, and nominate his incredibly unpopular vice president. Make sure he looks as malnourished and confused as possible. My recommendation to ensure this is to hop him up on a daily cocktail of amphetamines and cut him off that day. You want the vice president to give constant mixed messaging and seem drunk.

Step eleven is to abandon your base again. Insist that the strategy that lost the election eight years ago was the best course of action. Go far right on as many policies as possible, including policies that actively harm people that support you. Take a lighter tone on the genocide but do not take any hard stance on stopping it. Get your president from 8 years ago to condescend to minority voters, your primary promise to these voters should be supporting their cryptocurrency ventures. Send the rapist president from step three to yell at the families of people killed in the genocide you support. Run a highly elitist campaign that actively ignores the concerns of the less privileged, and publicly fellate war criminals. Do not visit major battleground states, remember, the goal is to lose. Your candidate should be unlikeable and drunk in public appearances. Do not endorse any policies until two months before the election; when your candidate does, have them mirror the policies of the current unpopular president. Tell people who are concerned about the genocide to shut up publicly, this will make your candidate extremely unpopular among young voters.

When done right, this recipe should culminate in an utter loss in an important election. While it does require another lost election, this one should be a complete blow out. It is imperative that your party does not take any responsibility for losing, you should blame minority groups and the country at large. Insist that your candidate ran a perfect campaign, and call everyone a racist, yet also blame left wingers for being "woke." With this perfect formula you can ensure successive losses, which is the ultimate goal. If your party is not in power, there is far less responsibility and scrutiny. So, get out there, and get losing.



Photo edited by Vincent Arroyo
Original credit: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hillary_Clinton#/media/File:Hillary_Clinton_official_Secretary_of_State_portrait_crop.jpg

chance, so it may take a few tries to get right. You must coincide the next election with a global pandemic that causes mass economic decline. This is incredibly important: your candidate may not win against the incumbent from step two without it.

Step six is to nominate the dunce Vice President from step one for President. What is most important here is to have his VP pick be a highly unpopular long shot from the primaries: justify it through vague identity politics. The campaign must focus on the global pandemic and the cost of living. Allude to class politics as well, the aim is to win this election.

Step seven is to win and then have your president be incredibly unlikeable and clearly demented. Have him make confusing public statements, contradict himself, and shake hands with invisible people. Abandon most

Try to get a foreign adversary to invade one of your allies. Do so by supporting the ally militarily and implying that they will be joining your version of the Warsaw pact. If things line up right, your ally will have been embroiled in a civil war. You must support the Nazis in the region. When peace talks get suggested following the invasion, actively undermine these efforts. Around the same time, withdraw from a middle eastern country very poorly, make sure that the press gets as many photos of people clinging onto airplanes as possible. This will create confusion among even your supporters: this is the goal.

Step nine is to fanatically support a genocide. One of your allies will hopefully begin an ethnic cleansing, you should give them a blank check. If your president speaks against their actions publicly, say the opposite in

In Memoriam: Alonzo L. McCollum, E.O.P. Director

By Mary Jane Hernandez

The passing of Mr. Alonzo L. McCollum, the former Director of the Educational Opportunity Program (E.O.P) at SUNY Old Westbury, marks the end of an era of transformative leadership. Mr. McCollum touched the lives of over 2,100 students during his tenure, guiding them through their academic journeys and helping them navigate challenges. His dedication and selflessness empowered many students to achieve success in diverse fields, including entrepreneurship, law, medicine, politics, education, science, and community leadership, enriching society as a whole.

On the Robertaccio Funeral Home website, people have left comments on McCollum's page reminiscing on the role he played in their lives. "Back in 1980 I transferred to Old Westbury from Plattsburgh," said Larry Lombardo on the site. "I didn't know what to expect, then I met Alonzo. We became quick friends and every time I heard of a person going to Old Westbury, I would tell them to look up Alonzo. Lombardo continues, "When I left Old Westbury I would stop by to visit him, we talked as if we see each other everyday...I will miss him and I know he touched all who knew him."

In tribute to his impactful life and legacy, the Alonzo L. McCollum Memorial Endowment Fund has been created by alumnus and former E.O.P. student Nathan Green, through the Old Westbury College Foundation. The fund is designed to support the evolving needs of current E.O.P. students, ensuring that Alonzo's influence continues to benefit future generations, although he has passed.

The Alonzo L. McCollum Memorial Endowment Fund is dedicated to advancing the educational dreams of students within the Educational Opportunity Program at SUNY Old Westbury. It honors the legacy of Mr. McCollum, whose leadership and "tough love" approach guided over 2,100 students from disadvantaged backgrounds to academic success from 1981 to 2019. His care went far beyond academics, providing essential personal support like food, clothing, and transportation to students in need. Through this fund, his commitment to improving the lives of others will live on.

The fund will help address critical needs for E.O.P. students, including assistance with housing, transportation, emergency grants, support ser-

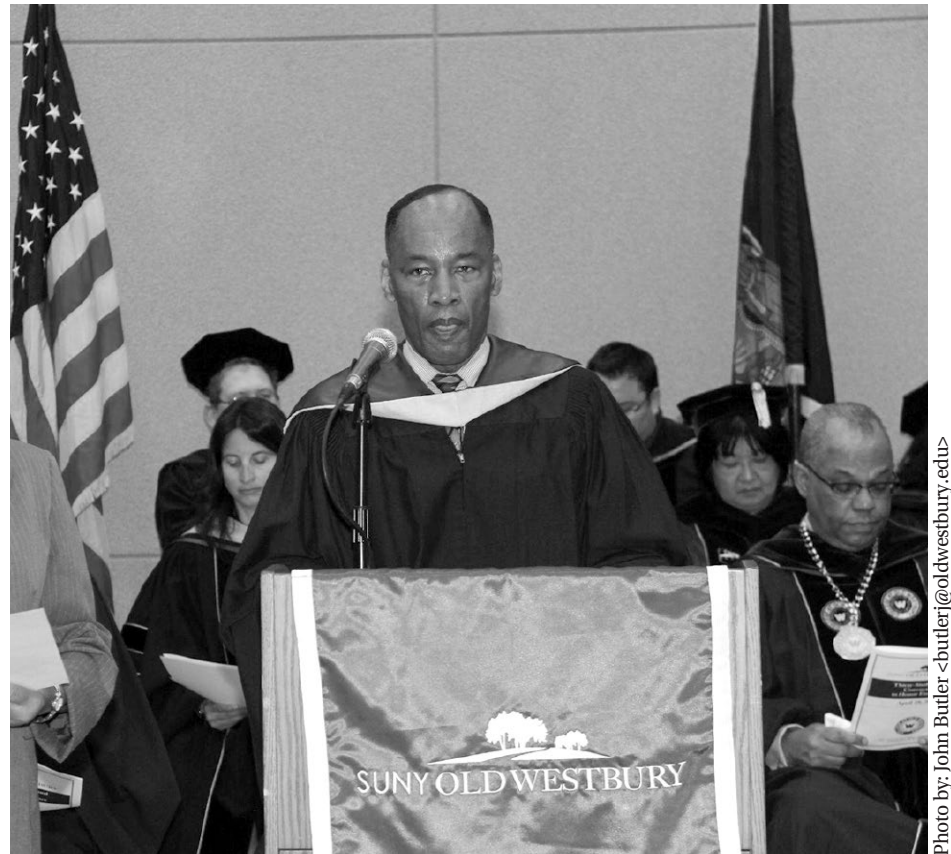


Photo by: John Butler <butlerj@oldwestbury.edu>

vices, and enrichment programs. This initiative will ease the burdens many students face, enabling them to focus

on their studies and achieve success, just as Mr. McCollum helped so many do during his lifetime.

SPORTS

Running Through Growth: My Experience on O.W.'s Cross Country Team

By Juliana Vasquez

As someone who has played softball my entire life, the idea of running long distances never crossed my mind—except as something to avoid at all costs. I didn't just dislike running; I hated it. Or at least, that's what I told myself. Deep down, I think I was scared of it. Running felt like a different world, far removed from the sport I had known and loved for so long.

That all changed when Coach Chris McCoy convinced me to join Old Westbury's Cross Country team. His encouragement, mixed with a sense of curiosity to try something completely different, pushed me to say yes. Little did I know, this decision would teach me more about myself than I ever expected.

Cross country is so much more than running. Yes, the miles are long, and the effort is grueling, but it's also a mental battle. Each race became an opportunity to grow, not just as an athlete but as a person. I started to see improvement with every run. My times got better, my endurance increased, and I began to

understand myself better as a runner. It was a new kind of accomplishment.

What made the experience even more incredible was the team. Cross country is often seen as an individual sport, but my teammates proved otherwise. We encouraged each other through every meet, celebrated small victories, and bonded over the shared challenge of competing. Their energy and support turned something I once dreaded into something I looked forward to. Running became less about the fear of failing and more about the joy of achieving alongside such an amazing group.

Looking back on this season, I'm so grateful for the chance to try something completely out of my comfort zone. Joining the Cross Country team proved to me that I'm capable of so much more than I give myself credit for. Running may have started as something I feared, but it's become a symbol of growth and resilience for me. Sometimes, all it takes is a little nudge and maybe a convincing coach to remind you



Credit: OW Athletic Communications

that you're capable of anything.

If you're looking for a truly rewarding experience, consider joining the Cross Country team at Old Westbury. It's more

than just running; it's about pushing your boundaries, uncovering hidden strengths, and becoming part of a supportive team that feels like family every step of the way.

Fall Sports Recap

By Juliana Vasquez

Women's Soccer

The SUNY Old Westbury Women's Soccer team has made significant strides this season, even though their 6-11-2 record doesn't entirely capture the progress they've made. As a young and determined group, they've laid the groundwork for a promising future.

Starting the season on a challenging note, the Panthers bounced back with two wins against York & Lehman College. They followed those victories with an impressive 12-0 triumph over Yeshiva University, showcasing their offensive potential. However, as October rolled in, the team struggled to find

consistency, managing to secure only two additional wins during the remainder of the season.

Despite the hurdles, a few key players shined this season. Freshmen Jocelyn Forseth earned a well-deserved spot on the Skyline Conference's 2024 Women's Soccer All-Conference Second Team, while Freshmen Eleni Petri was selected for her leadership & integrity with a place on the Skyline Conference All-Sportsmanship Team. With their continued growth and drive, the future looks bright for the Panthers, and they are poised for even more success in the coming seasons.



Credit: OW Athletic Communications

Men & Women Cross Country

Men & Women Cross Country wrapped up their 2024 season with strong performances at the Skyline Conference Championship. The season was highlighted by the impressive contributions of new recruits, setting a new basis for future successes.

The women's team delivered a solid performance at the championship, finishing ahead of Yeshiva & Mount Saint Vincent with a combined time of 2:46:15.9. Freshman Emily Ganz led the charge for the Panthers, earning a top-25 finish. On the men's side, the Panthers

narrowly outpaced St. Joseph's-Brooklyn. Sophomore Andy Lema emerged as the team's top finisher, completing the course in 31:58.2.

Adding to a successful season, Andy Lema finished the year with remarkable consistency, leading the men's team in every race & exceeding his own expectations. "My personal achievement is that I managed to get faster in each race and set a new PR in my last race," says Lema. "I hope to do better and continue being persistent." His dedication and growth throughout the



Credit: OW Athletic Communications



Credit: OW Athletic Communications

season have set a high standard for the Panthers future.

OW proudly hosted its annual Halloween meet. Both the men and women's team delivered solid performances, with the men finishing second overall & women securing third place. Sophomore Evelyn Avila led the women's team, completing the course in an impressive 19:59. An outstanding newcomer, she has quickly established herself as a key contributor to the team's success, not just through her performances but also her leadership and mindset. Avila reflected on the

team's mindset throughout the season. "A goal we set was to beat our own times each race, basically competing against yourself. With this kind of mentality, all of us became better runners with every race we had" said Avila.

The 2024 season for the Men's and Women's Cross Country teams at Old Westbury has been a rewarding and transformative journey. With the strong performances at the Skyline Conference Championship and incredible individual achievements, the season marked notable progress for both teams.

(Cont. on next page.)

(Cont. from previous page.)

Fall Sports Recap

By Juliana Vasquez

Women's Volleyball

Women's Volleyball encountered a tough season, concluding with a 5-15 record, which fell short of their season's aspirations.

They secured their first win to York College early in the season. However, they faced setbacks after dropping both matches in the John Jay Tri-Match. The team bounced back with victories over Lehman College & Yeshiva University but struggled to maintain momentum, enduring a losing streak before clinching a home win against Medgar Evers College on October 10th.

Adding to their achievements, Junior Stephanie Maser was named to the All-Conference Second Team, while Amy Sanchez earned recognition on the Skyline Conference All-Sportmanship Team, highlighting individual successes.

Although the season didn't go as expected, Senior Geanelle Sam reflects on the incredible growth she and her teammates experi-

enced. "A lot of players made significant developments, not just in their skills but in building strong bonds as well," says Sam, who is finishing her career with over 500 assists and 217 kills. She adds, "This season taught me how to be a leader and how to work with people who may not always agree with me. It also showed me the importance of mental toughness—not just in sports, but in life. To succeed, you have to stay strong mentally and keep working hard toward your goals." As the team moves forward, these lessons will serve as the foundation for future success and continued growth.

The Panthers ended their season on a high note with an inspiring victory over Mount Saint Vincent on senior night. Even though they fell short of their goals for the 2024 season, the squad is motivated to learn from their mistakes and continue to progress.



Credit: OW Athletic Communications

Men's Soccer

Men's Soccer showed significant improvement this year, finishing the season with a 6-10-1 record, a step forward from last year's performance.

The Panthers kicked off the season with a tough loss to Yeshiva University but quickly found their rhythm, securing back-to-back victories against John Jay and Brooklyn College. However, as the season progressed, they faced tough competition, including hard-fought matches against Manhattanville and St. Joseph's-Brooklyn. Despite their strong efforts, the outcomes typically didn't fall in their favor.

Regardless of the challenges, the season had its share of highlights. To finish off his impressive career at Old Westbury, senior Randy Parada was named to the Skyline Conference All-Sportsman-

ship Team. Additionally, standout freshman Henrik Ropstad made an impressive debut, finishing ninth overall in total shots. He capped off his season with an outstanding performance on senior day, helping the Panthers secure a tie and securing a hard-earned spot to the Skyline Conference All-Conference Second Team.

The SUNY Old Westbury Men's Soccer team demonstrated resilience and growth throughout the season, overcoming obstacles and celebrating key achievements along the way. The Panthers have laid a strong foundation for future success. This season's progress reflects the team's dedication and potential, leaving fans eager to see what they'll accomplish next!



Freshmen Henrik Ropstad

Credit: OW Athletic Communications