



The College Reporter

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Professor Brewer earns prestigious award for research, teaching in chemistry

BY RENEE XIAOYU WANG
Contributing Writer

Scott Brewer, Associate Professor of Chemistry, was recently named a Henry Dreyfus Scholar-Teacher for his research project, “Exploring Protein Structure and Hydration with Spectroscopic Reporter Unnatural Amino Acids and Modified Nucleosides,” with a research grant of \$60,000.

The award is provided by the Camille & Henry Dreyfus Foundation, which encourages young faculty to further their researching career in chemistry science at undergraduate institutions.

“This award not only recognizes my previous accomplishments, but also provides funds to support the research moving forward,” said Professor Brewer. He continues to regard this honor as an encouragement to enhance his career.

Brewer’s research project aims to develop a new tool to study protein structure and dynamics. Through organic synthesis, small, non-intrusive probes are used to modify amino acids. Using molecular biology and biochemistry



photo by Emma Brown

Scott Brewer, professor of chemistry, received a prestigious award with a grant for student salaries, improved equipment, and future use in research.

techniques, those modified amino acids are incorporated into the protein system. With vibrational spectroscopy, local environment of

the probes in the protein system, as well as their dynamics, can be determined. Professor Brewer is able to predict the unknown pro-

tein system based on calibrated models.

The greatest challenge of this project is that there is no one probe that is ideal for all proteins. Brewer explained, “If you have a toolbox with all kinds of different tools, and you might have three screwdrivers in three different sizes, then depending on different jobs, you will need different tools.”

“The challenge is to determine the advantages and disadvantages for each probe, and with that knowledge, then we have to figure which probe is best for which application,” he continued.

The project has a promising future in understanding pathological changes due to abnormal protein dynamics. A normal protein is made of a chain of amino acids that fold into a globular shape in three-dimension. However, sometimes some proteins self-associate with other protein molecules to form long oligomers. Depending on the protein, those oligomers may lead to many pro-

see **AWARD**, page 2

Martin Library of Sciences undergoes new renovation for upcoming anniversary

BY LIN PHYU SIN
Contributing Writer

The numerous renovation projects conducted at F&M over this past summer can be found all over campus. There are many new and remodeled areas in the residence halls, libraries, and other buildings across campus.

Those projects included the renovation taken place in the Martin Library of Sciences, specifically intended for the upcoming 25th anniversary of its construction. The work was envisioned and designed during the Spring semester of 2015 and implemented during the summer.

The renovation was mainly

conducted in the first floor and the third floor mezzanine. Physical layouts were changed on the first floor; old carpets were replaced with new ones and the inner walls were re-decorated. The old carpet from the stairs and the floor of the third floor was also replaced. New furniture was further moved to the third floor, providing for a space more amenable to comfortable individual and group study.

Campus Facilities and Operations (F&O) is trying to utilize Summer months as the time for renovation and renewal of the campus buildings. Associate Vice

see **LIBRARY**, page 2

North China suffers chain of chemical explosions, leaving dead, many wounded

BY XINYU ZONG
Contributing Writer

On Wednesday, August 12, two massive explosions occurred just seconds apart from each other at a container storage station in Tianjin, North China. The chemical explosions in Tianjin, North China, took 159 lives, including those of 95 firefighters.

The container station was located at the Port of Tianjin in the Binhai New Area, less than one mile away from several neighborhoods and a light rail terminal, *Yahoo!* news reported. Initial explosions continued to burn despite the effort of more than a thousand firefighters, with repeated secondary

explosions throughout the weekend, which began to naturally die down after Saturday, August 15.

The cause of this tragic incident is still under investigation, but the initial reports indicated it to be an industrial accident, according to *BBC*. Fire broke out at 10:50 p.m. (GMT). The first responders were unaware of the danger of chemical storage on site, and thus used water to douse the fire without any inspection beforehand. This set off a chain of violent chemical reactions as the initial fire and water and caused two sequential blasts at 11:30 p.m.

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Crime Watch

At the time of printing, *The College Reporter* was unable to retrieve the crime logs for the previous week from the Department of Public Safety. We apologize for the inconvenience, and we will make every effort to publish that information as soon as possible. Thank you!

The College Reporter Corrections Policy

The College Reporter welcomes comments and suggestions, as well as information about substantive errors of fact that call for correction. Contact us via email at reporter@fandm.edu or at (717) 291-4095.

The College Reporter Story Idea Submission Policy

The College Reporter welcomes story ideas from the college community. If you have or your organization has an idea for a Reporter story, email it to us at reporter@fandm.edu with the subject heading "Campus Story Idea" by Monday at noon the week before publication. Story ideas will be accepted at the discretion of the Editorial Board.

Trump signs pledge to Republican Party

BY CATALINA SALAZAR
Contributing Writer

Last week, Donald Trump signed a loyalty pledge to the Republican Party that will effectively rule out the possibility of him running as a third party candidate during the presidential primary elections. This decision could secure him the support of strict party voters who previously may have questioned his loyalty to the Republican Party. Since announcing his entry into the 2016 presidential race in June, Trump has come under fire from fellow Republicans who question his allegiance to the Party.

In the first GOP debate on Aug. 6, he refrained from making the pledge to support the Republican candidate that receives the nomination during the primaries, as well as promising not to run as an independent or write-in candidate. Of the 10 candidates on stage at the *Fox News* debate, Trump, the GOP presidential frontrunner, was the only one who failed to declare his loyalty to the Party.

According to a *Washington Post* article, Trump stated at an event in New York, "I will be totally pledging my allegiance to the Republican Party and the conservative principles for which it stands." On Sep. 3, Trump tweeted a photo of the signed pledge from his official Twitter account. Former Florida Governor Jeb

Bush reacted to Trump's signing of the pledge with a tweet directed at Trump's official twitter account. Bush tweeted a photo of a piece of paper stating "voted republican since 1972" followed by his signature. In a phone interview with *CNN*, Trump explained that he had once considered himself a Democrat; however, similar to popular Republican president Ronald Reagan, his ideology evolved over time into what he says are his current conservative beliefs.

Trump remains at the very top of the GOP presidential polls into the month of September, as former front-runner Jeb Bush falls to third and neurosurgeon Ben Carson takes his place in second. Despite their very public rivalry, Bush has reaffirmed his loyalty to the Party, affirming that he would indeed vote for Trump if he were to become the Republican nominee. According to a *CNN* article, the former Florida governor claimed, "We need to be unified. We need to win." After the Republican debate back in August, Bush stated that any candidate on that debate stage would serve to be a better president than Democratic presidential frontrunner Hillary Clinton.

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photo courtesy of cbnews.ca

Donald Trump signed a loyalty pledge to support the eventual Republican presidential candidate for the 2016 election, in contrast to an earlier stance.

TIANJIN: Chemical explosion results in deadliest incident in China in decades

continued from page 1

An official told *CCTV* the storage contained approximately 3,000 tons of 40 kinds of hazardous chemicals, including 800 tons of ammonium nitrate and 500 tons of potassium nitrate.

The second explosion caused most of the damages and injuries, with shockwaves reaching several miles away. The second explosion has been estimated to be equivalent to 21 tons of TNT, resulting in fireballs and mushroom clouds reaching as high as hundreds of meters, according to *CCTV America*.

Many media outlets including *Xinhua News* raised the question of the rationality of Tianjin's urban planning. According to the regulations set up by the State Administration of Work Safety, medium- to large-sized hazardous chemical storage stations should be at least one kilometer (0.6 miles) away from surrounding public buildings, roads, railways, and ports.

However, around 5,600 residents were known to be living within one km of the plant, the nearest neighborhood being only 600 meter away. Damages outside of the one kilometer perimeter are

AWARD: Grant reward used for paying student salaries, advancing research

continued from page 1

tein-folding diseases, such as Alzheimer's Disease, which is the accumulation of plaques of insoluble b-amyloid in the brain.

Brewer emphasized the role of teamwork in this research project by bringing students from different disciplines of chemistry to help advance the process. He enjoyed involving students and hoped to give them the academic experience that may assist them in their future education. Accord-

LIBRARY: New study, social spaces in Martin added as part of renovations

continued from page 1

President of Facilities Management and Campus Planning, Mike Wetzal, mentioned F&O's potential plan to re-decorate, paint, and supply new carpet also to the second floor in 2016. In addition, new printer systems were implemented for the community's use for the academic year.

"In order for a student to be creative and innovative, social and study spaces need to help foster that cause," Wetzal said. "Our building renovation and renewal projects contribute to that end result."

He concluded by praising F&O's constant upkeep and im-

provement of campus buildings. "Facilities & Operations is committed to be good stewards to our buildings," Wetzal said. He went on to say, "Our F&O Team has done a great job managing projects from planning to completion during these Summer months."

Martin Library of the Sciences is just one area in which F&O undertook renovation projects on campus over the Summer; work was also done in Shadck-Fackenthal Library and in Bonchek College House.

Lin Phyu Sim is a contributing writer. Her email is xwang2@fandm.edu.

ing to Brewer, the grant has been used to help fund the lab, buy necessary equipment, and pay student salaries.

He encourages the students to take advantage of the great opportunities at F&M, and maximize your academic experience, and most of all, to take ownership of their education.

Renee Xiaoyu Wang is a contributing writer. Her email is xwang2@fandm.edu.

provement of campus buildings. "Facilities & Operations is committed to be good stewards to our buildings," Wetzal said. He went on to say, "Our F&O Team has done a great job managing projects from planning to completion during these Summer months."

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Trump's campaign continues to spin out of control

BY ANJELI CHAPMAN
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Watching Donald Trump's presidential campaign feels a little bit like watching a carnival carousel malfunction. At first, it looks harmless enough. It's entertaining, and everyone seems to be having a good time. But then, suddenly, it starts spinning out of control and all at once it isn't entertaining anymore. It's dangerous. Donald Trump is, to put it bluntly, deluded in countless ways. His political agenda sometimes seems completely devoid of any logic whatsoever. His very persona feels as though it's been cobbled together out of counterintuitive political views and rudeness.

For a sampling of both those counterintuitive views and that trademark rudeness, here's a roundup of Trump's Summer antics: He has essentially portrayed the people of Mexico as sub-humans who need to be contained south of the border, like cattle behind a fence. He flip-flops his stance on abortion, having recently declared himself pro-life after being openly pro-choice for decades. For the majority of the last 20 years, Trump wasn't even a Republican, but actually a registered Democrat who contributed to the campaign of Hillary Clinton. He's openly disdainful of women and of any reporters who dare to ask serious, hard-hitting questions about his policies or the methods he plans to use to enact them. He believes that China has created global warming in an effort to sabotage the success of American manufacturers. He seems convinced that he has a fool-proof way of defusing the threat of Iranian nuclear terror, but refuses to even offer the most general outline of what his plan entails.

Even Trump's very decision to run for political office seems bizarrely random, given his lack of experience and the fact that only a few years ago he actually said, "One of the

key problems today is that politics is such a disgrace. Good people don't go into government." This quote, coupled with Trump's general attitude, appallingly poor campaign management, and the deficiency of his political knowledge make it seem as though Trump just woke up one morning and decided to run for president on a whim because the golf course was closed that day.

But as Trump spews more and more of his opinions, it becomes increasingly clear that he's not just an amusing sideshow. The thoughts that he attempts to pass off as fact (that, for example, a high percentage of Mexicans are rapists) are dangerous and, what's worse, they're gaining traction.

It's one thing for a ridiculous candidate to get his or her 15 minutes of fame and then slowly vanish from the limelight. It's quite another to watch as Trump survives the 24-hour news cycle and refuses to go away. For such an absurdly racist, chauvinist, and completely unqualified man to be getting this much media coverage and to actually be a front-runner of the GOP pack is, in this day and age, unprecedented. So it's not just surprising but physically nauseating to watch Donald Trump's meteoric rise to fame. Because frankly, what does it tell us about our country that Trump, a bigot with minimal political experience and a penchant for belittling women and immigrants, is leading the GOP polls nationwide?

But at this point, you have to remember to step back for a moment and remind yourself of one simple, unwavering truth: Donald Trump will not, under any circumstances, become our next president. Treating him as a serious candidate only contributes to his power and more power is the very last thing he needs. And even if Trump somehow manages to secure the Republican nomination, the thought of pitting him against a truly qualified, competent Democratic

candidate like Bernie Sanders or Hillary Clinton is laughable.

Watching this all unfold, it's easy to lose faith in our political system, especially as a young voter. But it's important to remember not to feel so disgusted that you back out of the democratic scheme all together. Like it or not, the political climate is clearly changing. Perhaps Trump's surge in popularity isn't indicative of a seismic shift in the ideals of the American voter.

The truth is, many of those who support Donald Trump would actually be negatively affected if the legislation that he proposes is passed. Cuts to Medicare funding and a zero percent corporate tax (both of which Trump proposes) would hurt lower and middle-class Americans while lining the pockets of the wealthiest

one percent. Those who think they're taking their country back may be ironically, inadvertently, voting their country away from them.

So the best advice that I can give you is this: before you vote, research every aspect of the candidate you're voting for. Before you blindly attend all of their rallies or donate to their campaigns or stick their signs in your front lawn, consider their stances on the issues that matter most to you, such as abortion, immigration, and health care.

Above all, participate. It's one thing to be informed, but it's quite another to harness your newfound knowledge and take action. Don't be a passive observer. Ignorance and apathy can only help sideshow candidates like Trump careen further and further out of control.

Full Staff Opinion

Staff says "thank you"

The College Reporter would like to thank everyone who made our Crowdfunding campaign a success

They say no man is an island, and The College Reporter sure proves it. This newspaper essentially hinges on the kindness of others, and Franklin & Marshall would literally not have a newspaper without you, our incredibly loyal campus and community.

But last semester, this newspaper got something else to be thankful for: We launched a Crowdfunding campaign, and it was an absolute success. We set out to raise \$10,000 to purchase new computers and software for our office. We thought we might be able to come close to our goal. We thought we might at least have some luck. We made a Crowdfunding page, a brief promotional video, sent some emails, and crossed our fingers.

So it is with tremendous joy, pride, and a bit of shock that we are announcing again the good news: not only did we meet our \$10,000 goal, we surpassed it. Our outstanding community came through and raised not just \$10,000, not just \$11,000, but \$12,322. You may have already heard that news, but we would just really like to say it again. Believe us, we were surprised, too. 73 people — alumni, patrons, former newspaper editors and writers, students, family, friends, and everyone in between — were kind and generous enough to pull together \$12,322 to our organization. We were absolutely overwhelmed with the generosity of this community, and would like to thank you all. We would especially like to single out Meaghan Kauffman and Dean Ralph Taber for organizing the purchase of our office's new furniture, Ramy Rahal for setting up the Crowdfunding page, and Abby Quint '15 for organizing the campaign. No one accomplishes anything alone, and we could not be moving forward without you all.



The College Reporter

Transparency. Accuracy. Credibility.

THE INDEPENDENT STUDENT NEWSPAPER OF
FRANKLIN & MARSHALL COLLEGE



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The College Reporter was formed in 1964, as a successor to *The Student Weekly*, which was formed in 1915 by the union of *The F&M Weekly*, founded 1891, and *The College Student*, founded 1881. The crest of *The College Reporter* was designed in 2004 by Kim Cortes '05.

Copies of *The College Reporter* on campus are free at a rate of one issue per reader. People found in violation of this policy may be subject to prosecution.

After uncertainty about pre-orientation program, student finds meaning, appreciation in experience

BY EMILIA DONNELLY
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PIT convocation began at precisely 3:00 p.m. on Aug. 22, 2015. Us Pitters, as we fondly call ourselves, and our parents hurried in the Roschel Performing Arts Center, which swelled with nervous energy. I was hunched over in my seat, wedged between my mother, who was prepared to listen with undivided attention to the words of the great Dr. Porterfield and Dean Hazlett, and my father, who was trying to get the WiFi to work. I was dreading saying goodbye to them; the feeling of regret that I had continuously blocked out since mid-July had made one final effort to be acknowledged, bursting through my barriers like soldiers on horseback. I was faced with one overwhelming question: what did I get myself into? I feigned disinterest, staying perfectly still as doubt after doubt bubbled to the surface. I wanted nothing more than to return home

and give myself five more days to prepare for the beginning of my college career. Unfortunately, my enrollment was final, and as I wiped away my tears after being separated from my parents, I decided to just let PIT happen, letting myself decide whether or not to be an active participant later on.

A little sooner than I would have liked, I found myself sitting on Hartman Green with the rest of my PIT group, sunglasses on, mouth clamped shut. In retrospect, my friends told me that I gave the impression of wanting to keep to myself and they thought I wouldn't make an effort to mix with the rest of the group. Fortunately, I surprised all of us early on by eventually taking off my sunglasses and participating wholeheartedly in the icebreakers, and they surprised me by making it very easy for me to do so. Five days later, I was sitting on the grass again, but this time I was in a circle with all of the students involved in PIT, and

I was settled next to two of my friends. We were about to start the String Ceremony, a PIT tradition, where each participant is given the chance to pass string to another participant who impacted them in some way during the program. At the end, everyone is both symbolically and physically connected by wearing these string bracelets. I was quiet this time too, but not because I was nervous; if I had to open my mouth, I knew I would cry. When it came time for me to receive my piece of string, I was having a hard time keeping it together. Who was I supposed to choose? I had grown fond of each and every one of them—I wanted to lump them all together, tie them all up in red string and keep us all in that moment forever. Eventually I picked one of my two PAs (PIT assistants) whose genuine love for the program and our projects were key in helping us all become comfortable so quickly. For me, PIT ended the same way it had begun: with a lot of hugging and crying. But now

there was one key difference: this time I didn't feel overwhelmed by anxiety, but rather by a love and appreciation for the people I had met and the experiences we had shared together.

The days I spent doing PIT stretched indefinitely; the five days we were given became suspended, unraveling slowly and steadily. As we ate together, worked together, and debriefed together, it became clearer that deciding to do PIT was one of the best decisions I have made. It gave me the opportunity to start college with a genuine support system of fellow freshman and upperclassmen who I'm always happy to see. PIT reaffirmed my belief that F&M is a community comprised of kind, selfless people who are never hesitant to offer help to someone that needs it. My PIT experience was unique, I believe, because I was lucky enough to come across some remarkable people who I hope to remain in contact with for the rest of my college career.

A senior looks back on freshman year, gives advice to new students

BY ANAM BIBI
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Benjamin Franklin once said: "without continual growth and progress, such words as improvement, achievement, and success have no meaning."

As freshmen, all we can think about is how much we want to escape orientation. All we want is to do something on our own. There are multiple meetings where upperclassmen tell us what we can and cannot do. Ice breakers become boring and repetitive. We have to be uncomfortably close to strangers in team building activities and try to make new friends. We have to learn to live with our new roommate. We don't really think about all of the clubs that are offered on campus, or very much about the campus itself. But from freshman year to senior year, the majority of people change and gain a better understanding of

who they are and what they enjoy. About a week ago, I actually got to find that advice out for myself. I went through orientation once more, but it could not have been more different. I was not just a senior, but a House Advisor. As a senior HA, you learn to enjoy almost every little ceremony and game night that you have to attend during orientation. The House Dinner becomes another opportunity to learn about the history of the place you call your home away from home. You remember your freshman year dorm as the place where you met your best friend, found your favorite study spot, got your first credit card, had your first argument over laundry, had to use flip-flops in the shower, and had to try new things outside of your comfort zone.

As a senior, you're finally able to relate to the advice you got in freshman year. You learn to laugh and connect with others during team

building activities. You wish to be a freshman again as the thought of going out into the "real world" can instill fear in anyone.

Like most freshmen, many seniors still don't completely know what they want to do in their life or their career. To create a good life for oneself is a lifelong process. You never stop growing because you never stop learning. To be a freshman means that there are endless possibilities for growth and change. From freshman year to senior year, the student changes both physically and emotionally. In college, most students experience some drastic, often difficult, life changes: homesickness, loss of a loved one, sadness of living away from family and pets, all nighters, academic failure, stress, anxiety, sleeplessness, registration chaos, loneliness, new friendships, loss of old friendships, parties, caffeine

jitters, and discovering one's passion. Although these lessons may be difficult, this is where the majority of growth occurs. In difficult times, it's important to remember that we are not alone, and that others have gone through tough times, too.

By senior year, many students learn to find humor in some of these challenging moments. An exam or paper will be stressful, but not to such an extent that your mental and physical health will be compromised. To be successful, one must learn and grow from one's failures rather than stay paralyzed in fear or regret. Use the past to learn from your mistakes and prepare yourself for the future, but remember to stay grounded in the present moment. Make the most out of clubs, sororities, fraternities, sports teams, study abroad programs, and meet new people. College is what you make of it, so make it memorable.

Do you want to have your voice heard? Do you have an opinion you think people should hear? Write for the Opinion and Editorial section. Email aschulma@fandm.edu.

Campus Life

Porterfield talks education, value of liberal arts, at Common Hour



photo by Emma Brown '17

President Dan Porterfield kicked off the first Common Hour of the school year with a talk on the benefits of a liberal arts education in today's fast-paced world.

BY IZZY SCHELLENGER
Contributing Writer

This Thursday, F&M President Dan Porterfield kicked off this year's first Common Hour with a talk on the value of a liberal arts education.

President Porterfield received his undergraduate degree in English at Georgetown University, where he later served as the Senior Vice President of for Strategic Development. He also acquired his Ph.D. in English at The City University of New York Graduate Center.

Since becoming F&M's 15th president, Porterfield has strived to expand the college's financial aid program and enhance students' opportunities for success during and after college. His focus on the value of a liberal arts education is one of his main principles as a leader and educator.

President Porterfield began his lecture by highlighting the

recent achievements within the F&M community, including recent alumni donations, F&M student Becca Myers receiving the ESPYs award for Best Female Athlete with a Disability, and that 120 F&M students participated in funded research on campus during the Summer.

According to Porterfield, all these achievements occurred because of the "definitional choice" that these students made in their academic careers to further their educational and intellectual growth.

Porterfield discussed that liberal arts education is at a crossroads as the nation tries to maintain a shared vision of education. According to Porterfield, the idea of a liberal arts education has been a "tradition that values breadth and depth of learning, creating knowledge, and responding to the fullness of our education." It leads students toward finding a greater

sense of self-awareness, as they gain insight into their responsibilities to themselves, others, and the world.

Some argue, however, that instead of coming to a crossroads, the liberal arts education system has come to a dead-end.

Those who argue against the liberal arts insist that the U.S. cannot afford it and that it does not help people find jobs after graduation. These arguments against the tradition of a liberal arts education date back to the 19th century, with opponents like business tycoon Andrew Carnegie. Carnegie describes a liberal arts education as "adopted for life on another planet," according to Porterfield.

Porterfield, however, could not disagree more. During his lecture, he stated that 94 percent of 2014 graduates were working full-time or going to graduate school within six months after graduating from F&M.

In addition, out of 976 top institutions, the college was ranked 40th in a study that focused on schools with the highest median for mid-career earnings.

Even though these statistics are impressive, Porterfield believes that they do not fully describe the importance and value of a liberal arts education. Porterfield supplemented this evidence with information on the different opportunities and possibilities that a holistic approach to education can offer.

F&M and the world must ask what direction they would like their education to travel in. Stu-

dents at F&M and other liberal arts colleges need to ask themselves, "What kind of education will I pursue?" Because of the countless opportunities that a liberal arts education offers, students are able to make numerous definitional choices that will define who they become in the future. The achievements that Porterfield highlighted celebrate some of the choices that students and faculty made that have led to their success.

At the end of his lecture, Porterfield discussed the importance of a liberal arts education on the world as a whole. With the rising amount of conflicts occurring internationally, the need for educated leaders becomes more necessary to solve these problems.

Stressing that a liberal arts education helps to create problem solvers, President Porterfield asked the audience, "What would be our significant gesture" towards helping to create a better world?

Throughout his presidency at F&M, Porterfield has focused on attracting talent from all walks of life, strengthening the academic excellence of the college, fulfilling the emotional and future needs of the student, and responding to the national need for a higher quality education. Because of the high value of a liberal arts education, Porterfield described all of his endeavors as "work worth doing."

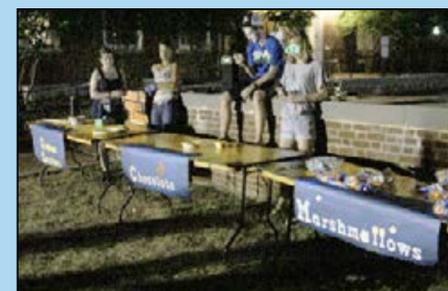
Sophomore Izzy Schellenger is a contributing writer. Her email is ischellenger@fandm.edu.

F&M Options presents "Summer to Fummer" Festival



This past week, F&M Options: The Other Night Life welcomed students back to school with their annual "Summer to Fummer" festival. The festival included a night of Laser tag and smore making, a fun medieval-themed movie night, a spotlight performance of many of F&M's music groups, and a day of field day games.

The fun kicked off on Thursday with a spotlight performance of many of F&M's performing arts groups, including the all-female accapella group Sweet Opheilia, The Chessman, and F&M's improve and comedy group, The Rumspringas.



photos by Emma Brown '17

Arts & Entertainment

My Anaconda Don't Want None Unless You Learn to Listen, Hon: Nicki, Taylor, Miley, the VMAs, and How You Can Be a More Supportive Ally

Commentary Assorted Artists

by Erin Moyer

Celebrities: they're just like us. In that they don't really seem to know how to handle this whole "race" thing. This Summer, we dwellers of this decidedly less-than-post-racial American hellscape we call home were blessed with two terrific "teachable moments" (liberal arts, am I right, guys?) in how to, or rather, how not to, be a good ally. And those two teachable moments were brought to us by three unlikely sources: Mistresses of Music Nicki Minaj, Taylor Swift, and Miley Cyrus.

You may know (or you may live under a rock) that this Summer, three very different female musicians—Nicki Minaj, Taylor Swift, and Miley Cyrus—had, in rotating combinations, what many entertainment news outlets described as "feuds": Twitter back-and-forths, shade allegedly slung in interviews, a surprise awards show performance, and finally, one spectacular, completely real call-out during the very same awards show. It's been legitimately exciting to watch, enough for any E! News anchor who already "could not even" to get "all of the feels," as those forty-year-old reporters so naturally say.

I, too, followed these exchanges breathlessly. I brought up Taylor Swift and Nicki Minaj's exchange in seminar discussions. I forced the more polite of my friends to listen to me read Tweets out loud. I invested myself in the MTV Video Music Awards, for God's sake. And I really wasn't in that deep out of love for celeb culture, my fixation on Kanye West notwithstanding. I devoted so much energy to following these exchanges because each moment—Minaj's and Swift's Twitter interplay, Cyrus' subsequent comments on their Twitter exchange—encapsulate so much about the way we do, and do not, talk about gender and race in America.

Time to break this down. This all began on July 21, the day MTV announced this year's Video Music Awards nominations. I know I need hardly remind you of that date, because how could anyone ever forget such an important day for us as Americans? Anyway, Nicki Minaj's music video for her single "Anaconda," a booty-centric masterpiece that broke the Internet months before Kim Kardashian ever did, did not receive a nomination for Video of the Year. Taylor Swift's glam-squad starring "Bad Blood" video,

however, did. Minaj seems to feel herself snubbed, and Tweeted several Tweets (is that really a proper sentence? Is it really?) implying that the music industry, and this award show in particular, is slanted to favor and "[celebrate] women with very slim bodies." Taylor Swift sees this Tweet, and, it would seem, feels herself called out. She in turn Tweets Minaj to say that she, Swift, has "done nothing but love & support [Minaj]". In her mind, Minaj was singling her out, and even blaming her, Swift, for taking her nomination. Minaj soon replied that, no, she actually was not addressing you, Ms. Swift, but instead, an imbalance in the music industry and really, all of America.

The world holds its breath for 48 hours of turgid Tweets and think-pieces. Soon, Swift Tweets that she misunderstood, and the two titans of the industry make up. The world can sleep soundly again.

Flash-forward several months. Miley Cyrus is in the midst of a publicity blitz leading up to her hosting of the Video Music Awards. She is giving an interview with The New York Times, and the writer, Joe Coscarelli, asks her what she "makes" of the "Nicki Minaj controversy" surrounding her Video of the Year nomination snub. Cyrus responds that, though she did not "follow" it, she did not "respect" Minaj's remarks because of its accompanying "anger: "If you do things with an open heart and you come at things with love, you would be heard and I would respect your statement," Cyrus said. "But I don't respect your statement because of the anger that came with it."

In Cyrus' estimation, Minaj's reaction made the VMA's lack of Video of the Year nomination "about [her]," as opposed to the larger issue of racism in the music industry, and was not "very polite." If Nicki had conducted herself with a more "open heart," as per Cyrus' view, perhaps the discussion would have stayed on the larger issue, where it belonged. (Hopefully it goes without saying that to imply someone of minority status needs to restrain their anger for more progress brings up troubling echoes of the Civil Rights movement. It doesn't? No?)

And it was those remarks that moved Minaj to an absolutely magnificent outburst at the VMAs, which, if you have not yet made time to see it, is truly a mistake on your part. After "Anaconda" won one VMA, Minaj gave shout-outs to her fans, encouraged them to stay in school, as she is wont to do, and then yelled: "And now, back to this bitch that had a lot to say about me the other day in the press. Miley, what's good?"

Now, the learning part of these learning moments. What did Taylor Swift and Miley Cyrus overlook, or forget about, in how they responded to Nicki Minaj's anger at being denied the VMA nomination? Here's the truth: they didn't listen. They fell down on the job of being critically-thinking, self-examining allies. They forgot to put themselves in Nicki Minaj's shoes.

When someone with a different perspective, a different experience, an entirely different world than yours speaks up, you should listen to them. You should try to learn from them, and understand where they might be coming from. And let's try to learn from these two interactions. Let's learn from these exchanges how we can be more supportive, all-around more helpful people.

Just as an aside: an ally is someone who tries to help a group who is discriminated against, but is not themselves a member of that group. So an ally would be, for instance, a straight man who supports LGBTQ+-geared causes. Or an ally might be, perhaps, a Christian who stands up for the rights of all other religions to worship freely. You may see something key in both of these examples: an ally may not necessarily have more privilege than the group they're working to help, but they normally do. So this article, written by a white, middle class girl with most of a liberal arts college degree and a fair amount of privilege, is really mostly addressed at well-intentioned people like me, like Swift and Cyrus, who are not hateful so much as they are human, and could use some pointers in how to be more helpful.

If a person like Nicki Minaj, a empowered Black woman with pronounced curves and an articulated sex drive, is speaking about a system that prefers people who look like you and not her, please don't let that remark hit you personally. It's easy to feel called out, as Swift did, and leap to defend yourself. You may want to inform the speaker, as, again, Swift did, of how perfectly nice you've been to them. You have done nothing but love and support them, after all. And perhaps you have been very nice to the person speaking, and you are hurt they seem to be insinuating you are less than loving or supportive. But that really isn't the point, because they really are not talking about what you, as a person, have or have not done.

Rather, they are trying to speak to a system that, like it or not, we are all a part of and may actually favor you. You never did anything to ask for your position in the system, I know, but you have it all the same. So don't

feel guilty, and don't feel attacked, either. Just take a moment to understand what the speaker is really telling you.

And if a person like Nicki Minaj, a Black American who has spent her whole life being both overtly and subtly shut down, is speaking angrily about a subject, listen to them. Let them speak their mind. Let them be angry. They probably have plenty of reasons to be angry, and you might not know what all of those reasons are. And you might never learn what all of those reasons are, moreover, if you tell them they're coming from a place of "anger" and should try to moderate themselves more in the future.

It might be easy to feel that said speaker is speaking rashly, and their anger may make you uncomfortable because it can be difficult to confront that you're a part of, and often beneficiary of, a system that oppresses very many people. That said, though, we need to value candid conversation. Because people who are speaking honestly are people who are ready to engage with the world, and have a meaningful discussion. If we focus on telling others, especially those whose voices have been historically silenced, to "tone it down" in as many words, we miss a chance to actually have a productive dialogue.

So when someone different than you speaks up, listen. Be open-minded and patient. Try to understand their perspective. Even this, the act of trying to understand, is valuable. You might never be able to truly grasp another person's entire lifetime of experience, of course, but you're at least trying to listen, and that's a really big start. Because in just making an effort to even sort of understand, we start to learn to listen. And in listening, we learn something new. We learn to examine ourselves differently. We learn to examine the world differently. We look at our neighbors, and can suddenly understand how their perspective is so different than our own. We build empathy. We begin to talk. How can we expect to have discussions, to have legitimate progress, when those who engage candidly with the world are met only with rebuffs and dismissals?

So tweet on, Nicki Minaj. We should all try to listen to a voice like yours: fresh, bold, unapologetic, and unwavering. America needs more of you right now. Keep challenging us to examine ourselves, and keep asking Miley what's good.

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Yo La Tengo creates unique, captivating new album Indie group continues to experiment, but lacks original shock value

Album Review Stuff Like That There Yo La Tengo

by Kimberly Givant

On August 28, Hoboken-based indie-rock band Yo La Tengo released their 14th studio album *Stuff Like That There*. Active since 1984, Yo La Tengo has attracted a sizable and loyal audience based on their ability to create a wide range of individually unique, yet all successfully experimental, series of albums. Their original style of husband-and-wife mumbled harmonies by married original band members Ira Kaplan and Georgia Hubley and experimental roots is still felt in this album. But while that well-worn, beloved style is present, *Stuff Like That There* lacks the envelope-pushing that YLT usually brings to their artistry.

Earlier this year, James McNew, who was formerly a member of YLT in the '80s, rejoined the group. This semi-reunion made it appear likely that their new album would include a wider range of instrumentals, similar to their 11th studio album *I Am Not Afraid of You And I Will Beat Your Ass*. But *Stuff Like That There* is surprisingly simple for Yo La Tengo, and the track of shocking originality that YLT usually sneaks into their albums is absent.

Many songs on the album even bear



photo courtesy of Wikimedia Commons

Indie group Yo La Tengo has been active since 1984, and is known for their repertoire of cover songs as well as their original work.

resemblance to some of YLT's most popular compositions. The tracks "I'm So Lonesome I Could Cry" and "Deeper Into Movies" have comparable arrangements to "Tears Are In Your Eyes," and other dream-pop and dream-rock tracks on their ninth studio album *And Then Nothing Turned Itself Inside-Out*. Yo La Tengo prove they are still the masters of the deep-dark indie genre with their aptitude to create an entire album of distinct, yet all relaxingly melancholic, tracks. "The Ballad of Red Buckets" fully embodies their hauntingly lackadaisical forte with an off-putting, but expertly crafted, instrumental and vocal arrangement. This song fits very well

into the traditional Yo La Tengo style, similar to their hits "Green Arrow," "Autumn Sweater," and "Everyday."

Though this album is not quite as experimentally indie as some others in YLT's discography, the group did put a new spin on their style. Tracks "All Your Secrets" and "Butchie's Tune" both have a touch of what I can only describe as lethargic Appalachian-indie-surf rock. The beachy, slothful guitar paired with off-beat vocal harmonies adds an interesting spin to their distinct music. YLT also brings their indie tranquility to the most conventionally popular track on *Stuff Like That There*, a rendition of British rock band The Cure's 1992 hit "Friday I'm

In Love."

Unfortunately, the album does not include a beautifully tender and vocally-driven track by band member Dave Schramm like "Stockholm Syndrome" from *I Can Hear The Heart Beating As One* and "Black Flowers" from *I Am Not Afraid of You And I Will Beat Your Ass*.

Stuff Like That There also does not contain the noise-pop and experimental-rock that many fell in love with in songs like "Sugarcube" from *I Can Hear The Heart Beating As One*. Though *Stuff Like That There* still contains their original style and undisputed YLT creativity, the experimentation that made Yo La Tengo such an interesting and exciting indie band to follow is dialed back on their newest album. While none of the tracks on this album are so shocking and strange that they make you keep going back for another listen, Yo La Tengo has created another brilliantly-structured, and completely serene, indie album.

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Review Rating:

B

Yo La Tengo's newest album experiments successfully, but fails to wow.

Mr. Holmes features strong acting, but is marred by a weak plot Ian McKellan gives a powerful performance, is met with mediocre support

Film Review Mr. Holmes

by Preman Koshar

Mr. Holmes, directed by Bill Condon, is the film industry's latest take on Sherlock Holmes. Ian McKellan stars as the elderly and dementia-stricken detective, who has comfortably retired to his home in the English countryside. However, his final case's solution still eludes him, and, through numerous flashbacks and stories told to his caretaker's son (Milo Parker), he pursues it, even though he knows that its conclusion affected him so much that it caused him to decide to retire in the first place. While Holmes attempts to piece together his memories, he must deal with his constantly sensible but perpetually disagreeable caretaker, Mrs. Munro (Laura Linney).

The acting in *Mr. Holmes* is generally well done. Most of the film is focused on Sherlock himself and McKellan does a great job of conveying a lot of strong emotions. However, the grouchy old man routine that he pulls for most of the movie, while skillful, is repetitive. It is an overdone archetype that added little to the overall quality of the film. Linney and Parker make good scene partners, but ultimate-



photo courtesy of Wikimedia Commons

Ian McKellan has won a Tony Award, a Golden Globe, and a Screen Actor's Guild Award, among many other honors.

ly don't stand out in any particular way. They are simply decent-quality background noise. The cinematography is above average, with several nice panoramic shots of the English countryside and coast. Holmes' country house is situated very closely to England's famous white cliffs, and there are several gorgeous shots of them and the surrounding fields. The more casual cinematography, during dialogue, for instance, was not nearly as impressive, but did not disappoint, either. The music was not very noticeable as a whole, but that wasn't really a problem—it had a more moderate,

pleasant presence in the background. The dialogue was very appropriate for the time period and characters: Holmes generally spoke as you would imagine a gentleman from the turn-of-the-century would, and the other characters' dialogue followed suit, matching their respective time periods and locations. This made for a more engrossing movie experience as a whole. The plot was actually one of the most lackluster parts of the movie. Holmes uncovered his past case at an excruciatingly slow pace, and his dementia became less and less interesting and more and more inevitable

and depressing as the film went on. And—not to reveal any spoilers—but the big reveal about Holmes' last case is truly underwhelming. It's emotional, but not exciting or hard to guess in the least. The bonds that develop between characters feel a little false and never really get the chance to fully develop. It's unfortunate that this part of the film was neglected this much, as the actors' performances and the general premise are quite intriguing.

Overall, *Mr. Holmes* is a well-acted, well-shot film that lacks a strong plotline to hook viewers in. Mr. Holmes would have greatly benefited from a big re-write of the script, among other tweaks. If Ian McKellan and Laura Linney had been paired with a competent script and some stronger supporting actors, this would have been a very different, very noteworthy film. But, sadly, that is not the case, and this film is solidly mediocre as a result.

Preman Koshar is the Arts & Entertainment Editor. His email is pkoshar@fandm.edu.

Review Rating:

C+

Mr. Holmes features strong performances, but suffers from a weak plot.



photo courtesy of ncaa.org

Franklin & Marshall Sports

New random drug testing policy shakes up F&M athletics

BY JOSEPH YAMULLA

Sports Editor

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The 2015-2016 academic year is finally underway. The start of every year comes with policy changes that are made in a constant attempt to improve the College in every way. One of the most controversial changes has been made to F&M's athletic drug testing policy. Starting this year, F&M will be randomly drug testing their athletes throughout the course of their respective seasons. The new drug testing policy is expensive and contentious, however its driving force and absolute goal is to protect the one aspect of character that F&M believes all of its athletes should embody: integrity.

An athlete is always wearing his or her team colors, even when off the field. Over the years at F&M and other colleges nationwide, and even in professional sports, athletes seem to have forgotten this. Illegal substance and drug use has not only

become popular, but mainstream in Division III collegiate athletics. Prior to this school year, F&M followed the traditional Division III drug testing policy, which only enforced screenings if and when a team makes the playoffs. This lenient method of testing led to an unfortunate amount of illegal drug use.

When first glancing at the issues regarding athletes exposing their bodies to substances, many people assume that they're taking illegal performance enhancing drugs (PEDs). In reality, the issue lies in drugs like marijuana, unprescribed pills, and cocaine. F&M and other colleges have seen their athletes mistreat their bodies and disrespect their teams and the sport they play with such behaviors.

After speaking with several athletes on campus regarding the new drug testing policy, many have the same simple question: Why? Many wonder why F&M is implementing a system that is only expected of

Division I programs, and they are absolutely right to raise these questions.

These drugs and paraphernalia do not do a single thing to benefit an athlete's performance. No athlete is cheating by doing this. Instead, the drugs harm their bodies and cause the athletes to perform at a lower standard than they would without them. Illegal substances harm every aspect of an athlete, and represent an image that is harmful to him or her, and of course an image that is malicious to the college itself.

Whether you love them or not, sports are a huge component of not only American culture, but also culture around the world. Athletes are constantly placed in the spotlight, and have the ability to be the face of a city, country, and of course, a school. F&M has been and will always be an institution that takes great pride in its reputation of being a hard working environment where students respect themselves and those around them.

The Diplomats may not have as big of a name as the massive state programs, but their actions still go a long way. If F&M athletes are partaking in activities that are harmful to themselves, they're indirectly harming the school. In addition, if F&M allows its athletes to continue these behaviors without finding a constructive and fair way to end them, it would inevitably lose its reputation as a highly-regarded institution.

Regardless how you view these changes, it is undeniable that athlete performance and school respectability will improve. Sports and education are a full-time commitment. In order to achieve and be respected at the highest level, the commitment requires sacrifice.

Whether he or she likes it or not, every student-athlete on campus who previously experimented with drug use at F&M will have to sacrifice it or risk losing their dreams of being a collegiate athlete.

The sanctions for one-time drug use include a 180 day suspension and a difficult process of reclaiming eligibility. Second instances lead to a permanent team suspension. F&M is not going lightly on this policy, and whether you love it or hate it, it's here to stay in order to maintain the integrity of its athletes and the entire student body.

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photo courtesy of godiplomats.com

Tom Brady no longer serving suspension after legal victory

BY JOSEPH GIORDANO

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On Thursday afternoon after much fanfare and media coverage, a federal judge finally decided to remove Tom Brady's four game suspension for the upcoming NFL season. After a long trial and much testimony, the judge decided that the punishment levied upon Brady was too severe and that the NFL had overstepped its boundaries in suspending the star quarterback. While it is up for debate whether this statement is true, one thing is certain: The whole situation took up an overwhelming amount of media coverage.

The whole controversy began back in January in a playoff game between the New England Patriots and the Indianapolis Colts. After the 45-7 New England victory, it was found that several of the Patri-

ots game balls were under-inflated. This led to the firing of two Patriots employees who supposedly were behind the deflating of the footballs. The NFL then went on to conduct a thorough investigation into the matter. Commissioner Roger Goodell eventually decided that Brady colluded with the employees to ensure the footballs were under-inflated to his specifications. As a result, Goodell found it necessary to suspend the quarterback. Brady denied any knowledge of the deflating occurring and maintained his innocence throughout the whole ordeal. While the NFL may have gone overboard in suspending Brady without any hard evidence, Brady certainly does not seem as innocent as he wants to portray.

During the investigation, Brady destroyed his cellphone, which contained multiple messages and other possible evidence related to the case. If the quarterback had nothing

to hide and had no prior knowledge of the incident, it seems unlikely that he would take such controversial action. Had he fully cooperated with the NFL and no foul play was found, everyone would be more inclined to believe his side of the story. However, despite Brady's questionable behavior, it is hard to justify giving him an equal suspension to a PED user or convicted criminals.

The NFL has a long track record for mishandling player cases, such as the Adrian Peterson case, in which many felt the NFL acted too leniently. Peterson was convicted of assaulting his child and was only suspended after infractions were found under their specific policy. In addition, many other cases in which the NFL seemed to treat many players unfairly and inconsistently, including the imposing of many unnecessary fines and suspensions for minor offenses.

While it is nice to see a player finally succeed against the NFL and their sometimes overzealous punishments, some people wish that it would have happened for a player that deserved to be exonerated, not Tom Brady. Brady's actions lead many to believe he was guilty. The entire "deflate-gate" scandal took over many news sources for months leading up to the judge's decision and will continue to do so for many weeks. The controversy surrounding a few deflated footballs and whether or not a Patriots quarterback had knowledge of the whole thing taking place was not worth this excessive media coverage. In a few years, we will very likely sit around and wonder why the air pressure of a few footballs took up months of our news coverage and was such a big deal.

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