

THE STATESMAN

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Volume LXII, Issue 20

Monday, February 25, 2019

sbstatesman.com

No plans to rename stadium, president says

By Rebecca Liebson
News Editor

Stony Brook University President Samuel L. Stanley Jr. said the school is not considering any plans to rename Kenneth P. LaValle Stadium. The name became a point of contention last month after the state senator, whom the stadium is named after, voted against a ban on gay conversion therapy.

"At this point in time, I think we have no intention of doing that," Stanley said at a press conference with student media on Friday, Feb. 22. "But again, we are always listening to students and we want to know what students have to say and so on. But I think the senator's explanation, for me, was satisfactory."

In a letter to Stanley, LaValle explained that although he is opposed to gay conversion therapy, he voted against the bill because he



ANNA CORREA / THE STATESMAN

New Yorkers protest in front of Trump Tower on Wall Street. Over 19 socio-political and ethnic organizations marched for Venezuela's sovereignty.

feared it would jeopardize the current legal precedent for banning a medical practice.

"His vote was based on the fact that he felt there should be a standard protocol which had been followed in the past that if you're going to ban a medical procedure, that there should be input from physicians into that decision to ban a medical procedure

by the legislature," Stanley said, later adding, "I hope people will recognize that while we may not agree with this, it wasn't a vote in favor of conversion therapy."

Stanley's comments came in response to a petition posted two weeks ago which called on SBU to rename the stadium as a show of support for LGBTQ* students. Co-sponsored by

the Stony Brook College Democrats, House of SHADE, LGBTQA and the Feminist Majority Leadership Alliance (FMLA), the petition currently has over 800 signatures.

"For us, the explanation provided by Sen. LaValle was not enough, and that is why we're going to continue

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Students develop app for people with ALS

By Maya Brown
Contributing Writer

A team of Stony Brook students designed an app that can help improve quality of life for people with ALS and other neuromuscular diseases. Their app, "EyeCanDo," was one of the winning projects at the third annual Mount Sinai Health Hackathon in October 2018.

The team consists of Furqan Baig, Hongyi Daunmu and Sina Rashidian, graduate students in computer science and Xia Zhao, a graduate student in applied health informatics. The team also worked closely with Dr. Karl Bezak, hospice & palliative medicine doctor at Mount Sinai Icahn School of Medicine and Andrew Wang, a Three Village School District student.

Together, they worked toward the hackathon's ultimate goal — creating novel solutions for problems in healthcare, focusing around the theme of rare diseases. "EyeCanDo," the app the team created, is a low-cost application that helps people with physical disabilities.

"We believe that the impact of this technology will increase patient quality of life, family quality of life, as well as satisfaction," Dr. Bezak said while pitching the app, referring to individuals with ALS.

According to the ALS Association, ALS, or amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, is a progressive neurodegenerative disease that affects nerve cells in the brain and the spinal cord. The app the team created gives patients with ALS or paralysis the ability to interact and control features in their home.

The app allows patients to control their device and smart-home features with their eyes alone, by using the front-facing camera of a device to track their eye movements. If a patient stares at a certain button for longer than two seconds, it turns on or off.

"I am super excited to see someday this application makes tangible differences in quality of life among people with disabling diseases," Rashidian said.

According to the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai's website, the hackathon was a 60-

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Fulbright Scholar professor reflects on life and career

By Mike Adams
Opinions Editor

Associate history professor Eric Zolov will spend the next academic year teaching a seminar at the Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile as a recipient of a Fulbright Scholarship for professionals who already have their PhDs or equivalent degrees.

Zolov will teach a course called "The Global 60s," that analyzes the impact of America's mid-century counterculture movement on Latin America. Much of the professor's work over his 30-year career, including several books he authored, has focused on the cues Mexican counterculture, in particular, taken from U.S. music and art. While his upcoming seminar focuses on a similar subject, Zolov said he is looking forward to familiarizing himself with another country.

"It's exciting because it's the first time I'm really living and teaching not in Mexico," he said. "Going to Chile is a bit out of my comfort zone to some degree. I know Chile's local history but I don't know it as well as I know Mexico. I'm really looking forward to just learning from the students there."

This scholarship is actually the third that the 53-year-old director of

the university's Latin American and Caribbean Studies (LACS) program has received from the Fulbright program. The first two, awarded to him in 1992 and 2002, respectively, were geared toward research in Mexico. Nearly two decades later, the family man's preparations for his teaching fellowship are quite different than they were for his earlier journeys as a young academic.

"Now I have three children that are all kind of elementary, middle school age," Zolov said. "None of them speak Spanish so they're trying to learn Spanish now. The idea is to just throw them in there and see what comes out at the end; they're kicking and screaming, they're not really happy about going."

Zolov said he hopes he can share his passion for Latin American culture with his children since the White Plains, NY native had a similarly influential experience traveling to Mexico as a child.

"I had been to Mexico when I was probably eight or nine for about a week," Zolov said with a nostalgic smile. "It was transformative for me, that just left a very lasting impact. Whenever you're exposed to any other kind of culture everything's new, so that exposure to the everyday context that was so radically different forces you to look at everything in a radical-

ly different way."

That time absorbing a culture different from his own would later alter the course of his studies, prompting him to return to Mexico for a semester as an undergraduate at Colby College in the mid-1980s. It was this experience soaking in a strangely recognizable culture that influenced his future research.

"I saw graffiti on the walls and music on the radio that was referencing rock music," Zolov said. "And I said 'what's my counterculture doing in Mexico?' It didn't make sense, why are they listening to the Beatles? I met friends that were asking me to translate 'Stairway to Heaven.' To me, that basic question led to this deeper project about the emergence of the Mexican counterculture, which was a new idea academically."

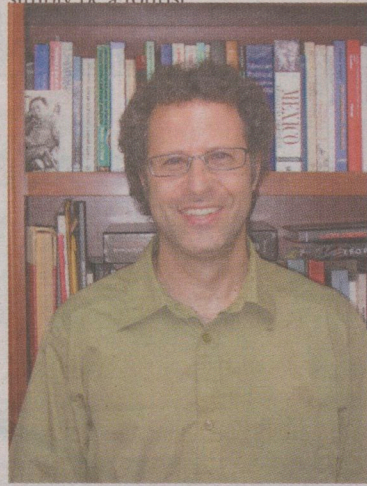
Decades later, Zolov is hoping to use the seminar in Chile as an opportunity to flesh out the latest angle of his life's research, an exploration into what he calls "Icons of Protest."

"The idea is to take different icons of protest, the peace sign or the dove or sandals, that kind of thing, and look at the ways in which those icons were appropriated and used in a different context internationally," Zolov said. "Partly I'll do a little bit of what you might call research, or really fun-search,

while I'm there and get reacquainted with that part of the hemisphere I haven't seen in a long time."

Apart from his own academic goals, the professor hopes his still-reluctant children might get a similarly eye-opening experience as he did when he was exposed to Latin America as a child.

"We live in Queens so it's super diverse, we've taken them at a very young age to France and Mexico," Zolov said. "They have a sense of what it means to be in a different culture, I think, but I am hopeful that at this age they're old enough to remember it and own the experience and not simply be a tourist."



COURTESY OF SBU

A photo of Associate Professor Eric Zolov.



News "EyeCanDo" app wins award.

Stony Brook team wins \$2,500 during showcase.
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Arts & Culture Protesters support Venezuela in NYC.

Wall Street fills with protests in support of Venezuela.
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Opinions Reasons to sign stadium petition.

Student clubs advocate to rename LaValle Stadium.
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Sports Women's Lacrosse opens up season.

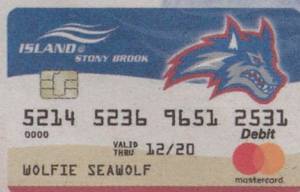
Seawolves take on Colorado and Denver on the road.
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Students not satisfied with stadium decision

Continued from page 1

with the petition," Vice President of FMLA and senior political science and psychology double major Annalisa Myer said. She noted that the groups behind the petition are looking into holding some sort of march or demonstration to keep the momentum going.

President of the Stony Brook College Democrats and junior political science and English double major, Cecilia Masselli, said that she feels Stanley has failed to grasp the gravity of the situation.

"[LaValle] voted to hurt the Stony Brook community — that's the bottom line," she told *The Statesman*. "His actions as a legislator got his name of the stadium so they should be able to get his name off as well. For a vote that hurts as much as this one, it makes sense to request his name be removed."

Although Stanley acknowledged that LaValle's response might have been hurtful to some, he held his ground in defense of the senator. "I understand how hurtful it must be for people to even consider the possibility of conversion therapy and that sexual orientation is a choice or a disease that needed to be cured and how hurtful that must be and

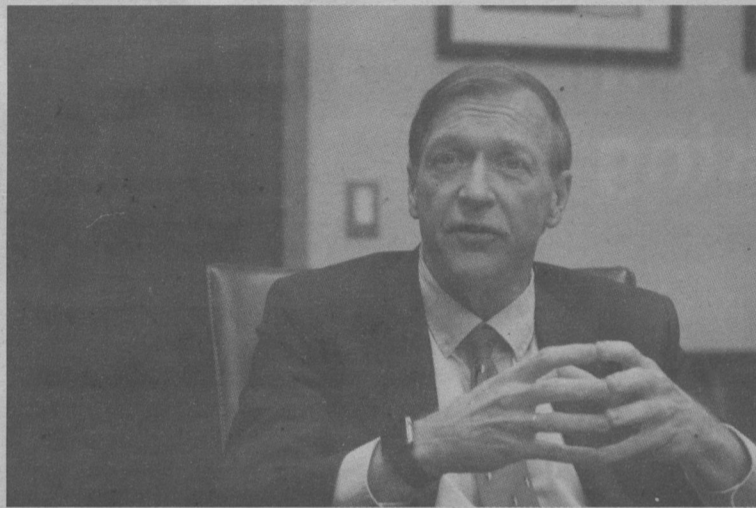
why it's such an important issue to them," he said. "But at the same time, I do think that Sen. LaValle gave an explanation I think is appropriate for why he did what he did."

Stanley pushed back against the notion that Stony Brook doesn't care about its LGBTQ* students and said he would be open to meeting with the coalition behind the petition.

"I'm always interested in meeting with groups that have concerns about Stony Brook and whether or not we're a diverse and welcoming community," he said.

Charlie Scott, president of LGBTQA and sophomore journalism major, said that while he understands Stanley's point of view, he also wishes the president would consider the "weak logic" behind LaValle's explanation.

"I'd really like for him to hear our side directly from us, and it would be great to speak with him about this issue," Scott wrote in a statement. "At the end of the day, it's good that we're talking about this. It's good that we're talking about queer bodies, queer lives, and lost queer generations. I want justice, but queer folk rarely get that."



ALEEZA KAZMI / THE STATESMAN

President Samuel L. Stanley Jr. during a media briefing with student journalists on Friday, Feb. 22.

"EyeCanDo" app wins award

Continued from page 1

hour weekend event designed to bring together people who share complementary expertise in clinical & translational medicine, basic research, digital technology, engineering, computation and applied science.

After Zhao saw the flyer for the hackathon, she immediately contacted her labmates and told them they should create something. Rashidian explained that he always thought about the idea of having a "Siri" for patients who have severe medical conditions or for those who can't talk.

"No one has actually done this, so we immediately started brainstorming," he said.

The main challenge of creating the app was making sure the team could execute a proper demonstration of the app. Even one week before the hackathon, the team was unsure if the app would work.

After the team arrived at the hackathon, Bezak approached them for the first time and realized that they were ahead of everybody else in terms of the development of their idea. He immediately became interested in helping them further

develop the app. "It was like a perfect match," Baig said.

Bezak has a background in rare diseases, and realized the app would be useful if put into action. "I have learned so much through collaborating on this project with such a dedicated team of computer scientists," he said.

The team explained that they were up against tough competition at the hackathon. There were around 17 teams with different backgrounds, consisting of undergraduate students, graduate students and doctors.

The competition judges were impressed with the Stony Brook team's strong collaborative skills and professionalism. They won first place, and were awarded \$2,500. The team is scheduled to present its work at the Mount Sinai Innovation Showcase this month.

"We created this app for interaction with the environment, instead of communication," Rashidian said.

In the future, the team wants to expand the app to Android devices and iPads. Currently, they are awaiting feedback and looking for investors.

"The app has such a great potential to become something big," Baig said.

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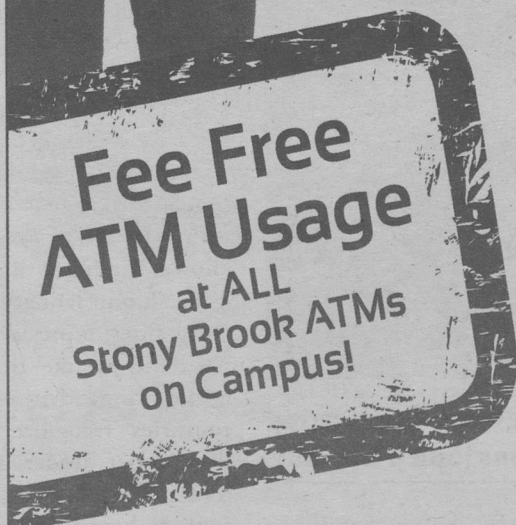
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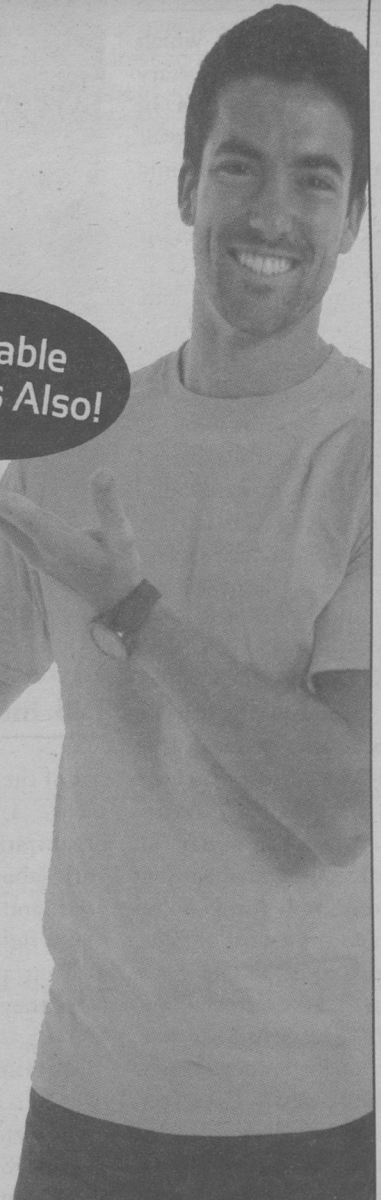
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ARTS & CULTURE

Artists at Zuccaire Gallery discuss "ICONICITY"

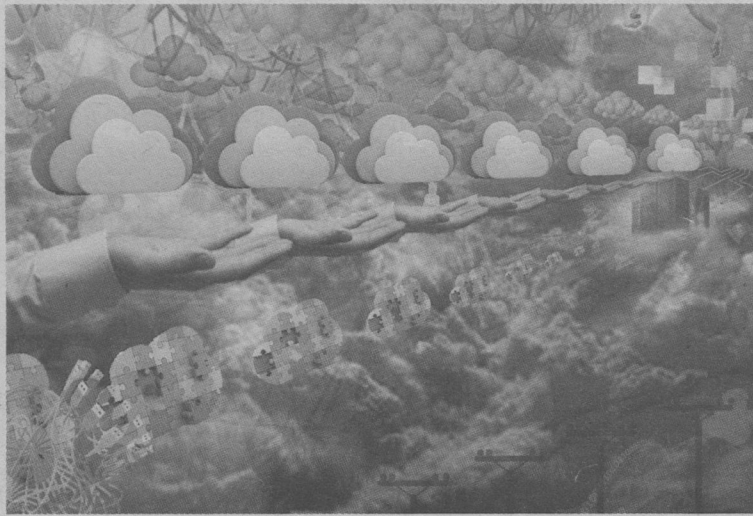
By Kimberly Brown
Contributing Writer

Several artists spoke about their work in a panel about "ICONICITY," a contemporary art exhibition featuring nine international artists and groups such as American Artist, Dread Scott and Jenny Polak, at the Paul W. Zuccaire Gallery at the Staller Center for the Arts on Tuesday, Feb. 20.

Their work ranges from historical and religious iconography to present day digital mainstream and internet vernacular. The gallery, curated by Munich-based curator and artist Gretta Louw, shows art in different mediums such as video, software art, textile art, net art and digital prints.

American Artist, an interdisciplinary artist who had a legal name change, has artworks on topics ranging from black radicalism to network virtual life and the historical dynamics of contemporary culture.

"American Artist's legal name change serves as the basis of an ambivalent practice — one of declaration: by insisting on the visibility of blackness as descriptive of an American artist, and erasure: anonymity in virtual spaces where 'American Artist' is an anonymous name, unable to be googled or validated by a computer as



COURTESY OF THE ZUCCAIRE GALLERY

The "Iconicity Cloud Collage" from the Paul W. Zuccaire Gallery. Technology is the focal point of the gallery.

a person's name," according to American Artist's website.

The focal point of the gallery revolves around the current trends of digital technology. "No State," a photograph depicting an abundance of broken iPhones lined up in rows, highlights this theme. All of the iPhones are black and the backdrop they lie on is grey, showing the contrast between the two.

"I tried to think about things that are slow, broken and not

meant to be used and the value of that in our society," American Artist said.

Dread Scott, is an American artist whose work depicts the many experiences of African-Americans living in the contemporary United States. His work has even been included in exhibitions at New York's Museum of Modern Art. Scott showcased one of his most famous and controversial photomontages called, "What is the Proper Way to Display a U.S. Flag?" The montage includes pictures

of Korean students burning U.S. flags, holding signs reading, "Yankee go home son of a bitch," as well as coffins draped with flags in a troop transport. It is an interactive piece where the audience had to stand on the flag and write their thoughts on how to properly display the flag. It became quite a controversy, in fact, big enough to get President George H.W. Bush's attention, as he declared it to be "disgraceful" and the entire U.S. Congress denounced Scott's work.

"When I found out the U.S. President didn't like my work, I was like, okay, I'm going to do this for the rest of my life," Scott said.

Originally from England, Polak's art draws on her background in architecture and includes public and socially engaged projects. An example of one of her interactive pieces is her most acclaimed, "Mobile Speakers' Podium." Only 8 feet by 4 feet by 2 feet, this small podium is half suburban house and half prison fence. The two sides rely on one another — one side calls upon the needed voices and the continual presence of the incarcerated. The other side represents people who aren't incarcerated in the United States, which locks up almost two million people.

"It was a way of opening up walls for people who were hidden away and places that were hidden away," Polak said. "I thought a lot about how we find these boundaries and borders in our everyday life."

Transdisciplinary artist Stephanie Dinkins creates platforms for dialogue about artificial intelligence (AI) as it converges race, gender and future histories. During her discussion with the audience, Dinkins mainly discussed her work with AI technology. The piece, "Not the Only One," takes multigenerational stories of a black American family and transforms them into an AI voice that recites the story back.

"It's goofy and weird," Dinkins said. "One thing I'm trying to do is not compete with big tech companies."

With a great turnout, this presentation truly exemplified creativity beyond the norms. There are also other artists featured in the exhibition "ICONICITY" but the exhibition wrapped on Feb. 23.

"It was nice to see their creative concepts," Jessica O'Neil, a senior sociology major, said. "I think they had a strong message to send."

New Yorkers march for Venezuela's national sovereignty

By Anna Correa
Arts & Culture Editor

On Saturday, Feb. 23, which is the one-month anniversary of U.S.-backed intervention in Venezuela, New Yorkers in over 19 socio-political and economic organizations rallied in front of Trump Tower on Wall Street in New York City to protest U.S. intervention in Venezuela and demand for national sovereignty.

The organizations include anti-war and peace organizations, democratic and socialist groups, pro-immigrant groups, veterans, anarchists and ethnic based groups — African-American, Cuban, Iranian, Serbian, Ecuadorians, Filipino, Honduran, Puerto Rican, Haitian and other Latin American based organizations.

Across the country and around the globe, protestors in about 120 organizations at over 130 marches in 33 countries including Russia, Iran, Korea, Mexico and India, called for a day of international action, demanding hostile actions from the U.S. to be stopped and the return of Venezuelan wealth to its people.

The march protested how businesses in Wall Street see war as a way to make money. Venezuela has the largest oil reserve, even surpassing Saudi Arabia, yet people in the crowd say war is promoted for the United States to take over the oil reserves.

"These kids operate the same way all the time. They don't change. They come into your country and they try to kill off the people who will not go along because of dominating terroristic tactics," Kamau Brown, a mem-



ANNA CORREA / THE STATESMAN

Activists at a rally on Feb. 23, 2019 in front of Trump Tower in New York protesting U.S. intervention in Venezuela. Over 19 socio-political organizations joined the rally.

ber of the December 12th Movement, a black human rights organization, said. "They steal your labor and your wealth and your land. Then when you organize a fight back and a take-back of your people and your territory, they say you're a terrorist. You're anti-democratic."

Protesters shouted phrases like "Vive Chavez," "USA out of Venezuela" and "USA out of Puerto Rico," "Maduro, amigo, el pueblo está contigo" (Maduro, friend, the country is with you) and "Black Power," to show the support for former President Nicolás Maduro as speakers said that the sanctions on Venezuela are what's pushing the country to be in this humanitarian crisis and Maduro did what he could under

crippling circumstances. They also said that because Maduro is a socialist, he's not liked in other countries like the U.S. and that people of color and the indigenous populations have been given more rights under the socialist regimes, including Maduro.

"Puerto Rico should no longer be used as a pawn of the U.S. for intervention in Venezuela. As one of the oldest U.S. colonies, we understand perfectly well the consequences of U.S. intervention, as well as feeble promises of humanitarian aid," Raphael Agosto-Miranda, a representative for New York Boricua (Puerto Rican) Resistance, said. "These promises of humanitarian aid are nothing more than a trojan horse to access our land and our

resources. We know that if the U.S. really cared about humanity, nearly 4,000 Puerto Ricans wouldn't have died in the aftermath of hurricane Maria. The U.S. only cares about using Puerto Rico to continue to destabilize parts of Latin America."

For over a decade, under U.S. Presidents George W. Bush, Barack Obama and Donald Trump, sanctions have been used to enforce policy and order on the Venezuelan government and individuals, according to a 2019 report by the Congressional Research Service. Because of the political and humanitarian crisis occurring in Venezuela, the Trump administration implemented sanctions such as embargos on U.S. exports and imports

of oil from Venezuela under the Maduro administration.

The lack of trade, food and medical supplies has put further stress on the country who in 2016 the Independent reported had the world's worst inflation rate and economic growth, ninth worst unemployment rate and a fairly high infant mortality rate that got 100 times worse in a four-year period.

Maduro, who was also the de-facto dictator of Venezuela, was replaced by a new opposition lawmaker Juan Guaidó, who many claim was virtually an unknown candidate until he took leadership in January of this year as the interim president.

Countries like the U.S. and neighboring Latin American countries recognize Guaidó as the proper leader since many leaders thought Maduro was corrupt, with rigged elections, living lavishly during a food crisis in the country and over 1,000 pieces of evidence showing crimes against humanity.

"What the people of Venezuela have been doing for 20 years now is rebelling against the dictatorship of the rich. They have been telling us around the world that 'We don't care. We will not be dictated to by Wall Street. Wall Street will not determine our future. We will do it,'" Larry Holmes, first secretary of the Workers World Party, said. "They are part of the global struggle. We're here for Venezuela, but it's about all poor, working and oppressed people. No matter where they are. No matter what language they speak."

Netflix's "Russian Doll" is a hypnotizing must-watch

By Alexander Bakirdan
Contributing Writer

Natasha Lyonne flexes her creative muscles in the new Netflix show "Russian Doll" as humor and wit abound in a fresh new take on a common premise. The show follows 36-year-old Nadia Vulvokov (Lyonne) who dies in a freak accident on her birthday only to wake up in her friend's bizarre bathroom and live the day over again. And again. And again.

Nadia's first repeat leaves her thinking she's experiencing déjà vu, perhaps brought on by a hit from a mysterious joint, but things quickly go off the rails as she continues to die and relive her birthday in different ways, and somehow as the story goes on it never feels repetitive even for a moment.

"Russian Doll" is a beautiful story about loss, coping with the past and letting people into your life. Nadia's struggles feel real and relatable and her vices and flaws only serve to make her a better character whose compelling story is impossible to ignore.

Nadia, desperate to prove to herself she is not crazy, fixates on a birthday joint, hoping that its mysterious contents are the cause of her experience. This desperation and hope that she isn't crazy is one of the show's most compelling moments.

Who wouldn't be terrified in her shoes? Who wouldn't look for



"Russian Doll," a Netflix original show stars Nadia Vulvokov as Natasha Lyonne, who dies in a freak accident on her birthday only to wake up repeatedly on her birthday in her friend's bathroom.

"Russian Doll" is a beautiful story about loss, coping with the past and letting people into your life."

-Alexander Bakirdan

anything, any possible reason that would mean they weren't actually going insane? Nadia's desperation is captured perfectly in incredible acting by Lyonne and excellent framing and shots that make the scene feel rushed and stressed.

The show shines in its ability to keep the audience just confused enough to keep them on the edge of their seats without losing them as they follow Nadia down a proverbial rabbit hole of questions and mystery.

When we meet Alan at the end of episode three, Nadia discovers she isn't alone in her struggle.

Just before they die in an elevator both Nadia and the audience realize that somehow, Alan has been trapped in the same cycle of death and life.

The audience is left wondering, asking questions and wanting more. As Nadia and Alan struggle to find each other again, we aren't spoon-fed answers. The story takes its time, letting the audience speculate and wonder what could be happening and even when we do get answers, the characters themselves aren't fully sure the conclusions they've drawn are right.

"Russian Doll" is refreshing in that it isn't afraid not to answer all of the audience's questions. Nadia and Alan are in no way experts on what is happening to them so it would feel unnatural if they suddenly had all of the answers. The show chooses instead to let the audience's imagination fill in the gaps.

The show imparts its message of helping others and living a full life beautifully, and the finale ends on a high if somewhat confusing note. Overall this show is an intriguing must watch that demands your full attention.



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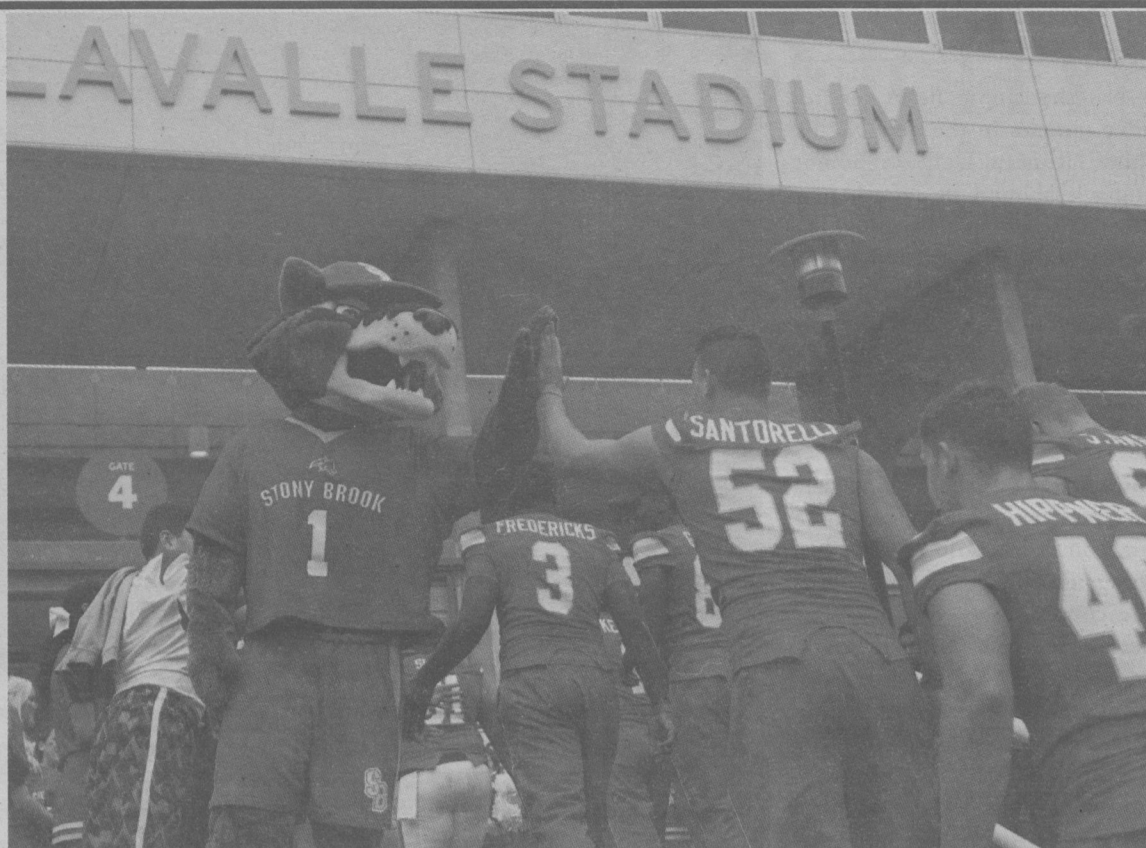
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GISELLE MIRANDA/STATESMAN FILE

Wolfie high-fiving athletes as they enter Kenneth P. LaValle Stadium for a game. Various student groups on campus are calling to remove Sen. LaValle's name from the stadium.

SBU LGBTQ students are not bargaining chips

By Cecelia Masselli and Peter Henninger
Contributing Writers

Stony Brook University prides itself on its diversity and receptiveness to all students. The school has a “plan for equality, inclusion and diversity” in which it claims that “The aim of this plan is to build on successes and address opportunities to take Stony Brook University to the next level in its efforts to enhance student, faculty and staff diversity and to build an inclusive community. Doing so will require an assessment of historical practices, a review of policies and processes and a connection to University-wide priorities and mission.”

The Stony Brook College Democrats, alongside Stony Brook LGBTQA, House of SHADE and the Feminist Majority Leadership Alliance (FMLA) are calling for Stony Brook University to remove State Sen. Kenneth P. LaValle's name from the school's stadium immediately. If the university fails to remove LaValle's name from our stadium, they are failing to practice what they preach.

On Jan. 15, 2019, Sen. LaValle became one of only four state senators to vote against NY State Assembly bill A576, which banned the use of conversion therapy specifically for minors in New York. His refusal to legislatively condemn this inhumane and barbaric form of torture is extremely troubling. Gay conversion therapy is a horrible practice that has no scientific standing and no place in our society.

In his statement, LaValle said: “I voted no on this bill because I strongly believe that trained medical professionals, who across the board have stated that the practice of conversion therapy is archaic and inhumane, should be determining misconduct, not elected officials.”

LaValle's defense exposes the flaw in his argument. He himself ac-

knowledges that medical professionals have deemed conversion therapy “archaic and inhumane.” How is it then justified to treat gay conversion therapy the same as legitimate medical practices that have scientific backing? Giving the torture of children the same weight as legitimate medical procedures is as offensive as it is illogical. Gay conversion therapy is a sick, twisted ritual that is

“When it comes to communities that are too oppressed to fight for themselves, complacency is an affirmation of their oppression.”

-Cecelia Masselli & Peter Henninger

Contributing Writers

a product of the bigotry — not a legitimate medical procedure. LaValle's excuse for his vote is weak at best. Through this vote, he has again shown Stony Brook students that he is no friend of the LGBTQ community.

This is not the first effort to have the senator's name removed from our stadium. In 2009, Stony Brook students requested his name be removed from the stadium after he voted against marriage equality. His record on LGBTQ rights is nothing to tout in his defense.

Having one's name on a stadium is an incredible privilege, not a right. Although the senator

claims to be personally opposed to gay conversion therapy, we refuse to waste time speculating what he might be saying at his dinner table. We care about how he uses his power. LaValle is not a benevolent donor; he sat on a committee responsible for allocating taxpayer money to public universities. Now, he has used his power to hurt the Stony Brook community. If his actions as a legislator got his name on the stadium, his actions as a legislator can get his name removed. One vote defending gay conversion therapy is enough to justify our request.

As students of a public university, we do not feel we should be obligated to turn our heads to such an offensive vote in fear of financial backlash. We have no plans to abandon our peers and our principles. We have no plans to abandon the LGBTQ community because it is inconvenient for us. Public officials are supposed to answer to the people, not vice versa. The students living on campus cannot vote LaValle out of office, but they can demand his name be removed from their home.

We do not equivocate on the issue of gay conversion therapy. We do not believe LaValle was justified in voting the way he did; his logic is insulting and fundamentally flawed. When it comes to the torture of children, complacency is inexcusable. When it comes to communities that are too oppressed to fight for themselves, complacency is an affirmation of their oppression. When LaValle voted against A576, he voted against Stony Brook University. The most important part of any university is its students. If you earn the privilege to have a building named after you, you have a responsibility to protect all of us.

This is our school, our community, our home and our family. Please join us and sign our petition here.

The younger generation needs more exposure to nature

By Gabby Pardo
Assistant Opinions Editor

I have a confession to make. I am addicted to my phone.

Everyone says it and now I'm finally admitting it. It's bitter-sweet because my phone is always with me. It's sometimes so bad that I have the urge to graze my hand along the back pouch or along the smooth screen protector. I do heavily depend on my phone and my laptop for my major. I record interviews and write down story ideas on my phone, and use my laptop to type out the millions of thoughts in my mind and saved quotes. But despite the many advancements it's provided the world, technology has also presented us with addiction in children and a loss of connectivity among children within nature. The technology-driven world and the natural world need to coexist, otherwise, addiction will continue to fester and consume us and the future generations to come.

As it is, 73 percent of people claim they feel a small amount of anxiety when they lose their phone. One reason we can be so obsessed is because of the four major dopamine pathways in the brain. Dopamine is released, motivating behavior and playing a central role in nervous system functions. The mesocortical, mesolimbic and nigrostriatal pathways become dysfunctional because of addiction, whether it's to drugs or devices. Dopamine also releases with "positive social stimuli," like getting a like on an Instagram post or seeing a new friend request on Facebook.

Kids, from toddlers to kindergarteners, should not know how to work an iPad. When my 2-year-old cousin couldn't figure out how to use one of its functions, he ended up throwing it at me. Waiting in the doctor's office for an hour over winter break, I watched a girl that was about 4 years old play with her mother's phone for 45 minutes straight.

Are kids just not getting enough outdoor time anymore in pre-K? Have parents given up on entertaining them by going to the park or taking walks? The younger generations need more time outdoors to develop an appreciation for nature.

Theodora "Doree" Cohen engages kids at the Bright and Early Discovery School in Riverhead to explore nature and science. "If we get to them [the next generation] and teach them, get them sparked for an interest and enthusiasm for the natural environment ... that's going in their unconscious mind. That's going to be building blocks for them," Cohen said.

Cohen took class trips with the students and got offered to teach them about nature by relating to her enthusiasm for science as a young girl. Her information comes from "a wave of schools" that focuses on this topic. The Eastern Region Association of Forest and Nature Schools is a

non-profit that provides training for early-childhood educators to make the curriculum more "nature-based."

"When we teach the young children, they are going to become aware of the fact that our environment needs help," Cohen said. "We teach them to be kind and not to hurt animals, we teach them recycling and the older children about the endangered species."

Besides the Eastern Region Association, there are other early learning schools that incorporate nature education heavily into their curriculum. Rye Nature Center is a non-profit in Rye, New York that encourages conservation and provides environmental education.

The Green Meadow Waldorf School, a private school in Rockland County, has a new Forest Preschool that launched this school year. Here, kids spend a great amount of time outdoors and even have a shelter for the classroom during days with bad weather.

The positive results from these schools are supported by studies as well. A study conducted by the University of Illinois observed that children are more creative in

"When we teach the young children, they are going to become aware of the fact that our environment needs help."

-Theodora Cohen
Bright and Early Discovery School
Educator



STEPHANIE YUVIENCO/STATESMAN FILE

Michael Schrimpf leads a nature walk through the Ashley Schiff Preserve. The Eastern Region Association of Forest and Nature Schools provides training for early-childhood educators to make curriculums more "nature-based."

an outdoor space. Cornell University also reported that children who reside within areas that provide more space for outdoor play experience increased cognitive functioning compared to those otherwise.

I do miss the times in elementary school when we got to go outside to play on the playground and get a breath of fresh air. Even in middle school, we were allowed to go outside during lunch time as long as it was above 40 degrees out. I didn't get my first cellphone until fifth grade. Before that, I always used to go outside.

The Forest Preschool wave should inspire other schools to follow the same path, whether it's switching to a heavily nature-based curriculum where students are outside and gain more knowledge about nature and the environment or just having more class activities held outside.

We need a little bit of technology because we do have to keep up with the evolving world, but we also need a balance of connecting with nature and appreciating what was given to us without any cost.

Put kids' phones and other devices in a box for the day. Don't let the next generation turn out like me. We can make a change now: in regulating technology, we can restore and solidify kids' love for nature again.

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Women's Lacrosse opens season with split in Rocky Mountain matchups



ARACELY JIMENEZ/STATESMAN FILE

Senior goalkeeper Anna Tesoriero saved 14 shots and allowed five goals against the University of Colorado.

By Chris Parkinson & Kenneth Fermin
Sports Editor & Assistant Sports Editor

Stony Brook Women's Lacrosse suffered its first defeat in a regular season matchup since March 11, 2017, falling 11-7 to the No.13-ranked University of Denver Pioneers on Sunday, Feb. 24.

The loss snapped the Seawolves' 29 regular season win streak that dated back to March 2017.

It marks the first time the team was held to single digits in a loss since the 7-6 heartbreaker to Northwestern on March 12, 2016. It also marks the first time

they have faced an upset since the 14-10 loss to No.12-ranked USC the following game in 2016 when they were ranked 11th in the nation.

Denver started off the contest hot with a five-point run in the first 15 minutes of the game.

Five different Pioneers scored during the run, which was capped off by sophomore attacker Bea Behrns. Sophomore midfielder Rayna Sabella broke the scoreless drought for Stony Brook, as it later responded with a three-point run midway through the first half and cut the score to 5-3 with 10 minutes remaining.

Denver, however, had a response for every Stony Brook push.

The Pioneers scored two more goals, both by senior midfielder Elizabeth Behrns, which gave her the hat trick on the day and extended her team's lead to 7-3. The Seawolves were outshot 14-13 with 13 Pioneers' shots landing on net at the end of the first half.

Stony Brook senior goalkeeper Anna Tesoriero finished the first 30 minutes with six saves but surrendered seven goals, the most she has allowed in the first half since the loss to Florida in 2017.

The Seawolves did their best offensively to match the deficit opening the second half. Junior attacker Taryn Ohlmiller maximized the scoring opportunity off the assist from sophomore midfielder Siobhan Rafferty, sparking a three-goal run with 22 minutes remaining. The drive was capped off by Sabella finding the back of the net, closing the gap to 8-6.

However, Denver shut down further comeback attempts with a strong defensive showing for the rest of the quarter.

The Pioneers outscored the Seawolves three-to-one, with junior midfielder Molly Little's last-minute goal icing

the game.

Head Coach Joe Spallina considers this matchup to be a positive experience for his squad.

"I thought that for 60 minutes they were by far the better team," Spallina said. "This is a better learning experience for our kids. It is all about finding our identity. I think it is something that will come in time and we will get better from this."

Senior midfielder Mackenzie Burns finished the game with two ground balls and a goal, which Spallina later praised in a postgame interview.

"I thought Mackenzie Burns did everything in her power physically," Spallina said. "She was definitely the better of our players, but offensive I thought we were out of sync."

The team's opening matchup of the season had a positive result, running out the gate with a 15-5 victory at the University of Colorado on Friday, Feb. 22.

Rafferty, Ohlmiller and junior midfielder Ally Kennedy all recorded hat tricks in the game. Ohlmiller also scored five assists in the game including two to Rafferty.

Stony Brook scored eight goals in the first half and held Colorado to a single goal while

outshooting the team 19-9, with 15 on goal.

The team continued applying pressure to the Buffaloes in the second half of play, scoring the ninth goal just a minute into the half.

The game's final score came from the stick of senior midfielder Keri McCarthy with 1:14 left in the matchup, icing the team's season-opener with a victory. Tesoriero saved a total of 14 shots and allowed five in the game.

Spallina was proud of his team's resilient effort in their first game of the year.

"I'm really happy for our team," Spallina said in a press release. "This group has worked hard through the preseason and understands that they have something to prove. With this being our first game, we needed to get off to a quick start and we did that which set the tone for the game. Defensively, we were locked in. Our goalie was world-class and I thought offensively we did some great things."

Stony Brook travels to Maryland to take on Towson on Friday, March 1.

The team looks to steer away from a sub .500 winning percentage since 2016 when it began the year at a record of 2-3.

SPORTS

Otchere's swift rise to Men's Basketball defensive dominance

By Ethan Tam
Staff Writer

Stony Brook Men's Basketball sophomore center Jeff Otchere had no experience playing organized basketball before entering high school.

Today, he ranks seventh amongst all Division I players in the nation in total blocks with 67 and ninth in the nation with over two and a half blocks per game.

Otchere has made a huge impact in his first season wearing the Seawolves uniform. Entering the year, he was expected to play a large role in defense and has since exceeded all expectations.

"He's an anchor in the middle," head coach Jeff Boals said. "It's not only his ability to block shots, but to change and alter shots, which can even change the mindset of [opposing players] thinking about driving in there."

His offense has gotten better throughout the course of the year. He's gotten stronger from summertime to now, and we're really pleased with where he's at."

Otchere's defensive skills gained his America East rivals' attention after he set a new career-high seven blocks on Jan. 9 against Binghamton. Since then, commentators have often referred to that statistic when citing his prowess.

While not a large scoring threat, Otchere dropped a career-high 12 points in a game against Norfolk State on Nov. 27 and has also recorded 10 rebounds twice, against

Quinnipiac and Delaware in December.

Otchere, who towers over others at 6-foot-11-inch with a mesmerizing 7-foot-6-inch wingspan, was born and raised in the Bronx. He attended Christopher Columbus High School, where he first picked up the sport of basketball his freshman year.

"It started in high school in gym class, and people would recommend that I played basketball," Otchere said. "I got a little better in gym class, and one of my close friends took me to the varsity tryouts."

While learning the game at an older age came with its challenges, Otchere refused to let the difficulties stop him.

"I didn't have basketball IQ back then," Otchere said. "Remembering plays [was a challenge]. I didn't realize how many plays basketball had, and I was just an effort guy from the beginning. The more experience you have in basketball, the more comfortable you get playing it."

Otchere spent a post-graduate year at Bull City Prep Academy, a program in Durham, North Carolina that focuses on helping prospective student-athletes earn a college scholarship.

Out of Bull City Prep, Otchere received recognition from numerous schools and settled on Delaware State.

However, after a summer of workouts at Texas' Ranger College, he transferred to Garden City Community College

in Garden City, Kansas for the 2017-18 season.

At Garden City, he led the National Junior College Athletic Association by averaging nearly four blocks per game and broke the school's all-time record with 124 blocks in the 2017-18 season. Otchere earned the Kansas Jayhawk Community College Conference and Region VI De-

what we saw just based on his lack of playing. Once we got him on campus, he loved everything about it."

Ultimately, he chose to come to Stony Brook because of its proximity to his hometown and Boals' reputation as a head coach.

"People would tell me that Coach Boals has a different way

Otchere's biggest struggle this season has been staying out of foul trouble.

He has fouled out of four games and has recorded four fouls in eight others.

Foul troubles have kept his minutes limited, in turn taking away the Seawolves' greatest defensive asset when he is on the bench.

"[I need to] try not to go for every block and limit the dumb fouls as much as I can," Otchere said.

The coaching staff is working hard with Otchere to improve the glaring weakness in his game and has high expectations for the center.

"I think he's gonna be a pro someday," Boals said. "He's going to continue to get better, he's going to continue to work hard. He's just scratching the surface of where he's going to be. I think he should [win America East Defensive Player of the Year]. He alters as many, if not more, [shots] than he blocks, so he's been a big reason in why our defense is number-one in the league."

Otchere's emergence as one of the best shot-blockers in the nation has helped carry an incredibly young Stony Brook University basketball team to success.

While the giant six foot, eleven inch center makes swatting away basketballs look easy to onlookers, his dedication to improvement makes him all the more dangerous.



EMMA HARRIS/THE STATESMAN

Sophomore center Jeff Otchere ranks seventh among Division I players in the nation in total blocks.

fensive Player of the Year for his efforts.

Otchere was heavily recruited coming out of junior college and drew interest from over 20 schools including New Mexico State and Washington State. Stony Brook head coach Jeff Boals saw the potential in his shot-blocking ability and large athletic frame.

"Looking at his raw ability," Boals said, "We thought he was going to be a lot better than

of coaching," Otchere said. "He lets his players play through their mistakes, and for a late bloomer like me, that was good."

The investment has paid off well. Otchere was perceived as a very raw player due to his lack of basketball experience prior to this season.

In order to help refine his game, he has taken to watching a lot of films to see different situations and learn more about the sport.

Men's Basketball victorious against Maine on Senior Night

By Jason Brancato
Staff Writer

Stony Brook Men's Basketball Senior Night Saturday was highlighted by a dominating Stony Brook victory over Maine, led by Akwasi Yeboah and the lone senior Jaron Cornish. The stifling defense and raining threes propelled the Seawolves to a 81-53 victory on their last Saturday night regular season game this season.

Stony Brook clinched an America East Conference home game playoff berth with the win. The Seawolves currently have the second best record in the conference due to UMBC's 84-75 defeat to UAlbany. Having the home court advantage for quarterfinals has been crucial in the past, as conference teams have gone 23-5 at home with the new format.

"Really proud of our guys. I think we did a great job sharing the basketball," head coach Jeff Boals said. "Their zone bothered us in the first game, but we made a concerted effort of getting the ball inside then out and we had



EMMA HARRIS/THE STATESMAN

Senior guard Jaron Cornish was honored at Stony Brook Men's Basketball Senior Night on Saturday, Feb. 23.

21 assists. When the ball goes in from three, it makes the job a little easier."

Yeboah scored a season high 27 points and knocked down five 3-pointers. He also racked up six rebounds and two steals. Olaniyi went on an eight point scoring run in the first quarter and finished

with 16 points, two threes, and eight rebounds.

Senior Jaron Cornish was honored as the team's only senior on Saturday night and will also etch himself into the Stony Brook record books when takes his jersey off for the final time. Cornish is currently tied for fifth in Stony Brook's Division

I era, dishing over three assists per game over his 54-game career. Cornish walked onto the court with his family, who came all the way from the Bahamas, and witnessed him perform in collegiate basketball for the first time.

"For them to see him perform like he did on senior night, I think it was special night for everybody," Boals said.

Stony Brook was able to score 23 bench points tonight. With the team grabbing a 20 point lead at the half, there was great opportunities for the bench to come in and play some valuable minutes.

"We use up our bench a lot," Yeboah said. "We had a good first and second half, and we were able to extend the lead and that opened up spots for guys who don't play as much to come in and have fun and enjoy the night."

The 28-point win is the largest for the Seawolves this season against any Division I opponent. Stony Brook has now won each of the last 18 meetings against Maine including

the 64-61 win earlier this year. Stony Brook's final home regular

"To see him perform like he did on senior night, I think it was a special night for everybody."

-Jeff Boals
Men's Basketball Head Coach

season contest is a big one, as the Seawolves host defending conference champion UMBC with pivotal playoff positioning on the line. Tip-off at Island Federal Arena is slated for 7 p.m. on Wednesday night.

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