



# THE GOTHIC TIMES

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## Five NJCU Students Receive Fulbright Awards

IRMA MAINI

Courtesy of Irma Maini



From Left to Right: Fabiana Rebollo (English and Special Education, ETA, Uruguay), Nicole Colon (Graduated in May 2016, English, ETA, Malaysia), Professor Irma Maini (Fulbright Program Advisor), Ana Acosta (English, ETA, Peru), Igra Choudry (English and Secondary Education, ETA, Indonesia), Rubi Ceden (Women and Gender Studies, ETA, South Africa)

NJCU set a new record with five students and alumni receiving the prestigious and highly competitive Fulbright U.S. Student Awards for 2017-2018. These students are part of an elite group of only 2000 students who were selected for this award from over 10,000 applicants from various institutions of higher learning in the United States, including ivy-league, private, and state universities as well as liberal arts colleges and research institutions.

All five students received the English Teaching Assistantship Fulbright grant (ETA). They will be teaching English in Uruguay, Peru, South Africa, Malaysia, and Indonesia in 2017-2018.

Established by the United States Congress in 1946, the Fulbright Program is the largest

international exchange program in the country, offering opportunities for students, teachers, scholars, and professionals to study, teach, lecture, and conduct research in more than 155 countries worldwide. Sponsored by the United States Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, the Fulbright program selects participants on the basis of academic merit and leadership potential.

*Irma Maini, an NJCU professor of English, is the Fulbright Program advisor at the University. For more information on the Fulbright program, contact her at: [imaini@njcu.edu](mailto:imaini@njcu.edu)*

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# NEWS

## NJCU's IMAP Celebrates First Graduating Class

MONICA SARMIENTO

This May, NJCU's MFA in Integrated Media Arts Production (IMAP) will be celebrating its first graduating class. IMAP is a two-year graduate program intended for independent media artists and creators to develop and expand their technical and intellectual skills. It's the first and only media production MFA program in New Jersey.

IMAP didn't just come together overnight, but developed over the last fifteen years. Plans for the program started in 2000 and its structure is based on the faculty's own graduate school curricula. Over time, IMAP grew into the unique program for artists and filmmakers it is today.

Students admitted into IMAP have a variety of creative and filmmaking

videos can exist in such a space." Garcia works primarily in experimental film.

Rolando Nieves, after facing a creative block at work at a production company, enrolled in IMAP with an initial focus on narrative film. "The program really opened me up to media production in a way I didn't even know was possible. I learned about experimental... the avant-garde. I learned about media installations in art galleries and museums. It changed the way I thought about film and media."

Nieves went on to say that he and his peers received a lot of support

from the faculty (Jane Steuerwald, Marcin Ramocki, Joel Katz, and

From Left to Right: Rolando Nieves, Jane Steuerwald, Raul Garcia, Jerry Aquino — on roof of Whitney Museum



Courtesy of Jane Steuerwald

backgrounds ranging from experimental, narrative, and animation among others. They've found that the program has given them the chance to learn about and work in other genres and mediums

Raul Garcia, one of the four graduates, said that after seeing what IMAP offered, he believed, "that expanding my knowledge of postmodern art and immersing myself in academic discourse about media would help me grow as an artist."

Garcia felt that his time in IMAP has allowed him to get a better understanding of himself and his work, and to bridge a connection between film and art. Gallery exhibitions, he said "were valuable learning experiences in knowing the process of curating and exhibition. That's something I haven't thought of, but now I think about how my short

Roddy Bogawa). As the only IMAP student that was not a NJCU alumni, he still felt he was able to bond quickly with everyone due to the program's small size. This was a sentiment echoed by his fellow graduate, Ciara Broadway.

Broadway chose IMAP for the opportunity to gain knowledge, experience and to make connections but feels she got much more than that, "I gained another family... people that I can count on to help me and to push me to be the best that I can be in all that I aim to do... I gained everlasting friendships, bonds, and life lessons."

Aside from working with a faculty of active filmmakers and creators, IMAP students are given access to professional production facilities and

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# NEWS

Courtesy of Patrick Sammon



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work spaces. They follow a five course curriculum throughout their four semesters. These courses include a Visiting Artist Studio in which they're able to receive critiques and participate in discussions with visiting filmmakers and artists, or Intermedia Research, a course that takes advantage of NJCU's close proximity to New York City through visits to museums, galleries, and exhibitions.

Despite these resources, IMAP is still a fresh new program looking to gain its footing within the university. "I want the program to be successful. I want it to thrive when we're gone," Nieves said, "But I don't know how it's going to be able to do that when so few people know about it."

IMAP took years to develop, and will take a few more years to get the traction it needs in order to remain active. Marcin Ramocki, the coordinator in charge of the program, was "very happy that it finally happened," but expressed that support from the university and administration is vital to keep IMAP going. He hopes to have a twenty student program sometime in the future.

Nonetheless, this first graduating class is a testament to the care and dedication that went into creating an environment and resource for passionate media artists. IMAP celebrates the versatility of media and encourages collaboration across different mediums and platforms.

"Although we occupy the basement of Fries Hall, there's so much artistic energy flowing in that space," Garcia said, "Our faculty bring their various disciplines to make the program very diverse in thinking about art, and our own practice as artists."

The four graduates, Raul Garcia, Rolando Nieves, Ciara Broadway and Jerry Aquino will be screening their thesis projects on May 22, 2017 at Anthology Film Archives from 7-8 PM.

You can learn more about IMAP on <http://njcu.cc/imap/>



Courtesy of Patrick Sammon

## Employment Opportunities for International Students

BHAVYA PATEL

A seminar regarding visa options for international students who wish to work in the United States was held in March at the NJCU School of Business and was led by Ludka Zimovcak, a managing attorney at Visaserve NPZ Law Group – a well-known immigration firm. The discussion began with a presentation about differences between immigrant and non-immigrant visas. Zimovcak explained that some people enter the country because they are visitors, students or have a performance, concert or tournament to attend. Other applicants from all over the world apply as immigrants who wish to move here. With U.S. immigration law currently fluctuating as it is, Zimovcak stressed that visa applicants must be diligent with their applications. The intent of the visa should be clear from the outset. The students attending the event asked various questions regarding the available visa options. Zimovcak also mentioned the study requirements for work permits in the U.S., the timeline to apply for an H-1B visa and other necessary documents. "To gain the immigration status without any problems it is necessary to follow an order consulting an immigration attorney," she said.

## FEATURES

# Remembering the Triangle Fire

NATALIE MENDEZ

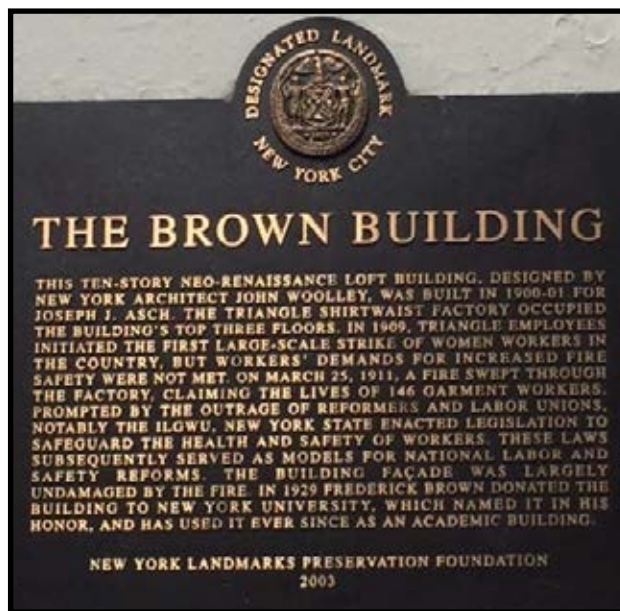
On March 25th, 1911, 20 miles from Jersey City, in New York City's West Village, 146 workers died in what has become known as the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory fire, the subject of a General Education capstone course taught for the first time at NJCU this semester by Professor Edvige Giunta.

The factory was housed on the 8th, 9th, and 10th floors of the Asch Building, which today is part of New York University (NYU) and renamed the Brown Building.

It was a beautiful Saturday afternoon when a "small fire" broke out on the 8th floor, most likely caused by a discarded cigarette. Within minutes, the floor was engulfed in flames. The fire quickly spread to the upper floors. It lasted only 18 minutes.

What made it so deadly was the lack of safety precautions, inadequate tools to fight the fire, lack of communication and greed.

Building regulations required three stairwells due to the square footage of the building, but there were only two, leading respectively to Washington Place and Greene Street. That day, the doors to the Washington Place stairs were locked. There were also two passenger elevators and two freight elevators. The passenger elevators could carry 12 people at a time. The fire escape ended 20 feet above the ground. Many jumped, crashing through a skylight into the basement. Others fell from the collapsing fire



All Photos Courtesy of Edvige Giunta

escape in the courtyard, some landing on spikes that lined the gate. The 9th floor was not warned. By the time they realized what was happening, the fire was coming up the stairs. For many, the blown-out windows were the last resort. Rather than burning to death, they chose to jump.

In Triangle Fire – English 319 students study the fire in a variety of social, political, economic, cultural and literary contexts. Each student gives a presentation on topics such as fire safety, immigration, and representations of the fire in documentary film, art, and literature. Students have the opportunity to participate in the Triangle

Fire Commemoration and chalk the names of victims on the sidewalks. Participating in these activities where they meet activists and descendants of the victims enables students to experience a deep connection to the Triangle Fire and its victims.

Early in the semester each student chooses a person to remember. Mine is Sarah Cooper, age 16. I know her memory will stay with me long after the class ends.

The experience and knowledge I've acquired through this class has inspired my activist spirit. As Ruth Sergel, author of *See You in the Streets*, puts it, "to be a moral citizen, we [have] an obligation to speak out, stand up, and be counted" (12). Find your passion. Speak up. Your voice can make all the difference.



## FEATURES

# Hollywood's Slow Crawl Towards Diversity

MONICA SARMIENTO

When you're seated comfortably in a dark theater with a large popcorn in your lap, chances are diversity might not be something on your mind. You might not even think about it long after the credits have rolled and you've made your way home.

For many people, on-screen representation and diversity might not matter much at all. Unfortunately for many women, people of color, the LGBTQA community and pretty much anyone that isn't a straight, white male, it matters a lot.

You may remember hearing about the #OscarsSoWhite controversy, which arose after the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences failed to nominate any black, Asian and Latinx\* actors in 2015 and 2016. This year, it appeared that the Academy had finally learned from their mistakes and the 89th Academy Awards ended up being a huge night for many actors and filmmakers of color.

Finally giving people of color their rightfully deserved awards doesn't change the fact there's still a major problem with Hollywood's lack of diversity, however.

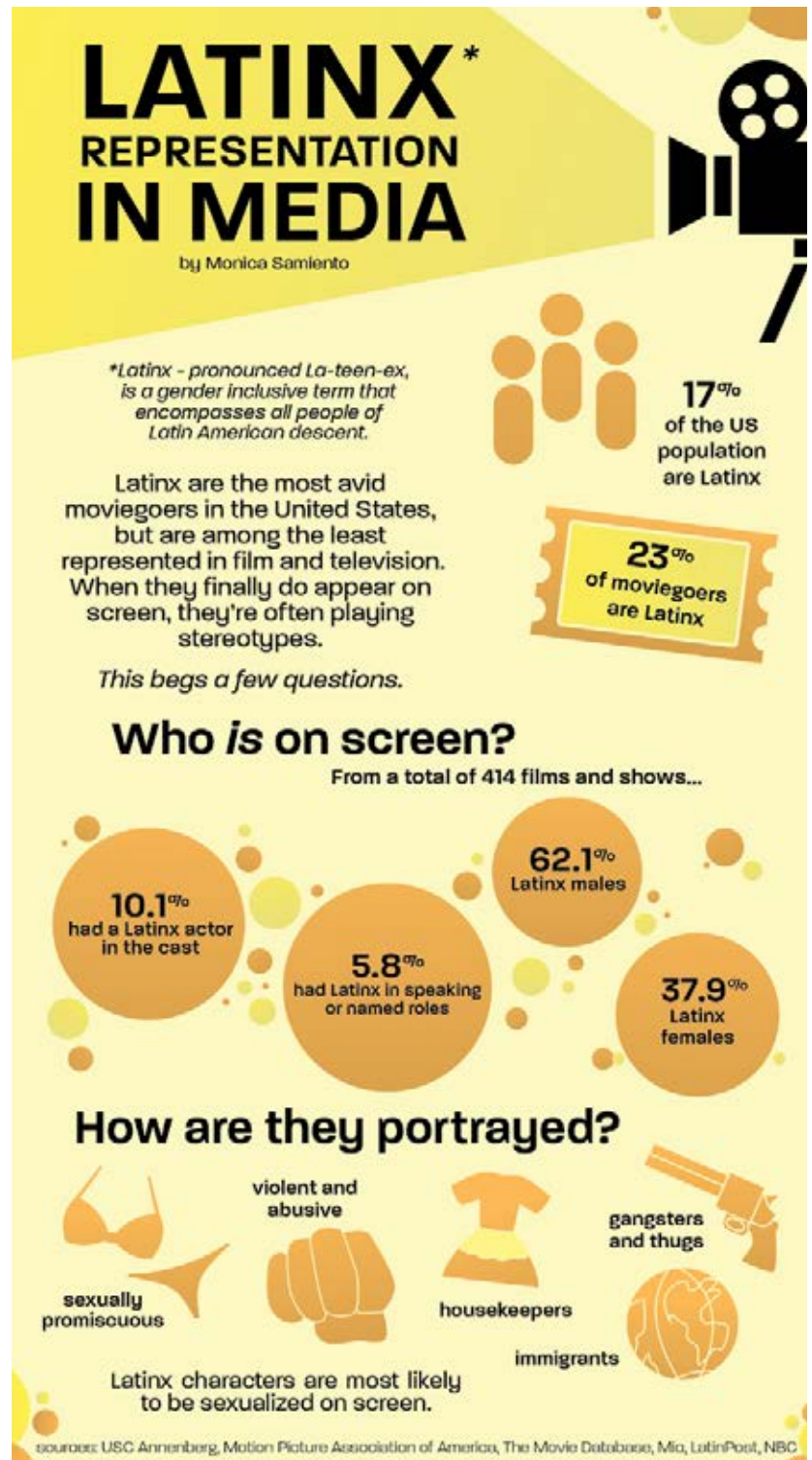
The University of Southern California (USC) Annenberg did a study last year that looked at 414 stories—109 films and 305 broadcast, cable, and digital series—and gathered information in regards to role, demographics, hyper-sexualization, and gender.

At the end of their comprehensive research, USC came up with a very simple conclusion: there's (still) a huge lack of representation in Hollywood.

This issue with diversity affects many people, but especially minorities that are already underrepresented. Of the 414 stories, only 28.3% of the speaking or named characters were from an underrepresented ethnic/racial group. Black, Latinx, Asian, Middle Eastern and other people of color just aren't seeing their faces and stories properly represented on screen. People of color see even less of their own getting the chance to present these stories in the first place.

For any person of color in America, instances where they were able to see characters that looked like them were few and far between. Sure, some progress is being made towards more diversity and representation in Hollywood, but when you look at the numbers it's obvious that there's still more work to be done.

*\*Latinx, pronounced La-teen-ex, is the gender inclusive term that encompasses all people of Latin American descent.*



Courtesy of Monica Sarmiento

OP/ED

# Facebook

## It's Not Fun Anymore

DAVID MOSCA

I remember the first time I heard about Facebook. I was a junior in high school and it was in the heyday of Myspace. I had an unhealthy obsession with Myspace, at least according to some people. I was constantly checking my page to see who left me a little something or I was reading up on the blogs my friends would post on their respective pages. It was either that or I was checking page updates for my crappy high school band. It was a time when everyone and everything was cool. Then the day came when a friend of mine said "you should make a Facebook page. It's like the college version of Myspace." I have to admit I wasn't so hot on it at first. The idea of switching teams was not something I was comfortable with. Time passed and more and more people began noticing Facebook. Then everyone began asking the big question: What do you like better? Myspace or Facebook? We went from PC vs Mac, DC vs Marvel, Xbox vs PlayStation to Myspace vs Facebook. It was only a matter of time and as quickly as it became known to others, Facebook was the new hot thing. Like everyone else, I hopped on the wagon and joined the fun.

Facebook was a fun experience at first. You got to reconnect with old friends you haven't seen or talked to for some time. Someone would poke you and you would poke them back. You could play games and try to beat your friend's high scores. You could post a photo and your friends would like it. It was fun and everyone was having a good time but somewhere down the line, it started to change. Eventually television networks, TV shows, corporations, and even your parents started making Facebook pages. As more time passed people were judged by others for who they had on their friends list, as if it actually applied to the real world. You also got to see just how self-centered some people could be. It became a competition where we needed to brag about our success and have 900 friends. Then the algorithm came into place. If you liked one page on Facebook, more pages were recommended to you. Everything just built up until the unthinkable finally happened. Facebook wasn't fun anymore.

Corey Frost, an English professor at NJCU said "I can connect with people I haven't seen in a long time or who are in other cities, which I appreciate. But it's negative on several levels. One's identity is exploited for commercial purposes. It becomes an echo box of political sentiment. And third, there's an intensification of social competition: on Facebook people often present themselves in a carefully contrived way, so you don't get a real sense of what's going on with their lives; you get highlights and humblebrags."

After being on Facebook for a good amount of time, at least eight or nine years, I decided to finally get off of social media altogether. I didn't say a word about it to anyone. None of my friends even realized it until they tried to tag me in posts. I've been off of Facebook for a year now and it's been one of the most liberating experiences of my life. For too long going on Facebook became a chore to me. I got tired of logging in everyday to check my page updates, which became too much that I didn't even bother to check all of them anymore. Then I would check the wall feed to see who decided to put their dirty laundry up for the public to see or who got into an argument with someone else over political issues or who took something someone else said out of context. Even Myspace didn't have this kind of drama. It became nothing but an endless feed of negativity and I had enough.

I have friends that ask me to come back on and I have friends that have also decided to get off for reasons much similar to my own. When I get asked why I won't come back to Facebook, I always have the same answer: I have no drive to go on it and I don't want to see all of the nonsense. Everyone's got their own reasons to use it and there's nothing wrong with that. I had my reasons too, but eventually I just didn't care anymore.

Giovanni Garcia, a psychology major at NJCU said "when Facebook was created I thought it was a great idea in regards to having the ability to get in contact with friends, family associates, but as the years went on I felt that it started steering more towards the negative. From my experience I've only had Facebook for two years and that was the first two years it was actually invented. I have a Facebook account but I don't post anything on it because I don't feel comfortable using it. The only legitimate reason why I haven't deactivated my account is so that my family from across country can contact me through Facebook messenger. Everything on Facebook is just brainwashing and distracting. You either reading negative information, people blabbing about nothing, cyber-bullying, and the worst thing of it all is the lack of privacy. I feel that you're obligated to post information on your personal life and that right there makes me feel uncomfortable. I tend to keep my personal life and business to myself, so for people to willingly post their lives on Facebook to me sounds more like attention seeking."

OP/ED

# Five Things I Wish I Would Have Known Before Graduation

ELENA E. ZEMAN



Courtesy of freeimages

After four long years, graduation is upon many of us. Some persevered straight through the four years, while others, like me, took a year off in between. Whatever your case is, the nostalgia is surely hitting hard.

As I look back at my time in NJCU, there are five things I wish I would have known earlier in my college career.

1) **I wish I would have known that there was a library inside of the Dunkin Donuts.**

Many of you are reading this and thinking, the library was there before the Dunkin Donuts. Yes, that is correct. However, I barely ever took advantage of the Guarini Library. In the beginning, the only interaction I had with the library was walking past it on my way to class. After the Dunkin Donuts opened, I ventured in there for a coffee and eventually, took some time to look around. Spring 2017 was the only semester that I took a book out of the library and I wholeheartedly regret not making friends with the library earlier.

2) **Ever wanted to study abroad for a semester? Well you can do that at NJCU.**

I wish I would have known that these opportunities existed before my last semester in college. Please, talk to your advisors and inquire about the chances for travel that this university has to offer. I was so busy taking 18 credits the whole time in college to even realize that I could have done that in Italy.

3) **Clubs, Organizations, Sororities!!!**

Personally, I only began taking advantage of these essential parts of college in my last two years. Now, as I prepare to exit, I wish that I would have joined more and done more. I am glad that I joined The Gothic Times, National Society of Leadership and

Success (NSLS), and Sigma Tau Delta. All of these organizations helped me become the person that I am today and provided the opportunity to make many lifelong friends. Yes, your education is important but it is also essential to branch out and become a part of something on campus that you really believe in.

4) **I wish I would have known that your GPA is much harder to raise than it is to drop.**

Many of you are reading this and thinking, well duh, I could have told you that. However, I am talking about that one class that you think will not matter in the long run. Unfortunately, at the end it could all depend on that one class that you barely passed your freshman year in college and then told yourself that you have three years to raise your GPA. All of your grades, no matter how early in the game, count toward your final GPA. So take classes that you like and try your best at all of them. You could end up graduating with honors, and no amount of slacking off will feel better than that.

5) **I wish that I would have known that changing your major would not be an absolute disaster.**

I was so afraid of changing my major and losing all of the credits that I had worked for that I ended up taking a year off because I thought that college was not for me. After a few months, I realized that it wasn't college itself, but what I was studying that made me want to give up. I changed my major and still ended up graduating in four years. Therefore, pursue what you are passionate about and don't be afraid to change your mind once or twice. At the end of the day you will end up doing what you love.

OP/ED / AGE

# The Evil of Memes

IMANI RIVERS

It's no question that memes have become a part of our culture. Some memes are funny but many others are questionable.

I understand that memes are a source of entertainment and laughter but sometimes their content is too inappropriate to joke about.

The most recent example can be of Danielle Bregoli, the young teen who said, "Cash Me Ousside How Bout Dhat". Youth culture, specifically memes, have made her into who she is today. We made her popular because she said a phrase that sounded funny but we failed to remember that she is extremely disrespectful to her mother and those around her. Instead of changing, which was the purpose of her coming on Dr. Phil in the first place, she might now get a TV show and be allowed to act the same way.

With sharing these memes and making her behavior into a joke we are encouraging her to stay as she is. Also, we are showing the youth that if you do something dumb, then you'll be popular and get rewarded.

As I said, I fully understand that memes are intended as a joke and I won't deny that sometimes I laughed at the memes too, but there must be a line drawn as to what we make into a joke.

We took the unfortunate death of a gorilla and turned it into a meme, as if that's funny.

Many people would argue that this is all for a good laugh and shouldn't be taken so seriously. I on the other hand think that we should consider the situations we are making into memes before we allow them to become as popular as they turn out to be.

# Becoming Iranian

BIJAN K ROGHANCHI



On June 10, 2011 I landed at Tehran's Imam Khomeini Airport. I had come to spend one year living in the place my father was born and raised and to which I had never been. I was born in Pittsburgh and grew up in a New Jersey suburb. I had never been to Iran, I'd only met my grandmother once as a young boy, never met my aunts, uncles and cousins. I couldn't

speak, read or write in Farsi, but I was determined to explore the meaning of the place that had such an outsize impact on my life up until then.

My intention was to produce a photo-documentary exploring identity

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# ART / SPORTS

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and cultural in contemporary Iran through my own lens as an Iranian and American. To that end I would spend four months in Tehran learning language and meeting family, four months in the north of the country - the lush Caspian sea region where my family originates and four months traveling the country, having developed by then a perspective to take it all in.

Within several weeks of arriving I was informed that I did not have a medical exemption from the mandatory military service and that as a dual national I would be required to serve in the Iranian army for 21 months. I could have gone back to the U.S. before 90 days in Iran without consequence, but I was young enough, determined enough and lost enough to persevere.

It took over a year to get out of the army, during which time I lived; I studied Farsi, worked a regular job, made friends and photographed. And when I had finally paid off the military and secured my release from the country, I photographed more, another year and a half. I fell in and out of love, swam in the Caspian Sea and the Persian Gulf, climbed the tall peaks of the Alborz mountains and drank tea in the squatter villages of

Baluchistan. The further I went into the complexities of Iranian life, the deeper I fell into the intricacies of self; Who am I? What am I doing here?

After nearly two and a half years I felt I was ready to come home, knowing full well that the project was only halfway complete. At my studio in midtown Manhattan it took another full calendar year to sift through 30,000 photographs, reams of journals and hours of ambient audio. The same questions drove me. Who am I? What am I doing here?

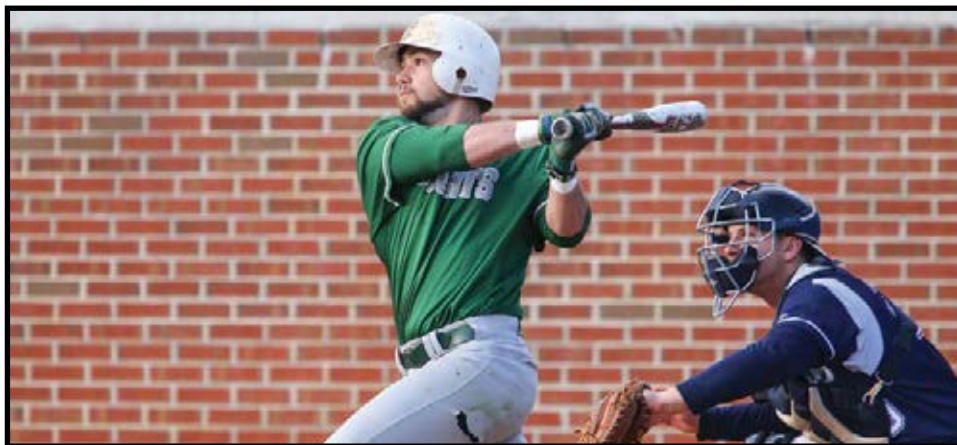
Becoming Iranian, the book and concurrent exhibition are the distillation of my process of understanding myself and the world I occupy. It is a series of 81 photographs, narrated by captions and my notes. They are my memories, my experiences. A herculean effort just to say 'this is who I am.'

Bijan K Roghanchi is an alumnus of NJCU's Art Department. There will be an opening reception for his show "Becoming Iranian: Bijan Roganchi" on Thursday, May 4, 4:30 – 7:30 p.m. in the Harold B. Lemmerman Gallery in Hepburn Hall. The show will be ongoing from May 1 – 12.

[www.bijanroghanchi.com](http://www.bijanroghanchi.com) | (631) 402-6077

## INSIDE THE GOTHIC KNIGHTS BASEBALL

ERIK S. ORDYKE



Courtesy of Ira Thor

We all watch their games and read the headlines about how the Gothic Knights do in their season. We look at scores, player's stats, and schedules, but there's much more going on within the team than that. Within the baseball team is a group of players and coaches that, this season, have had to redefine the way they play baseball due to missing games in the beginning of the season from weather conditions. After speaking to both a coach and a player, there was a common theme: controlling what you can control.

From the view of Nick Cesare, an Assistant Coach for the NJCU Baseball

team, the weather being uncooperative was frustrating. By missing games due to weather and practicing inside for the same reason, the players are out of their element – playing on the baseball field. Despite this, he said "we can only control what we can control." Because of the weather, the players are adjusting to stay positive and competitive during practices in the gym, then transfer that positivity and hard work back onto the field. From Cesare's view, this was all fueled by the player's hunger to get back to the diamond, to get back to where they want to be – that is

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## SPORTS

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their purpose. By practicing with that purpose in mind, the coach knows that they continue to be prepared for each game ahead, regardless of any obstacles in the way.

Senior Nick Ruscingno, a centerfielder for the Gothic Knights' view on missing games through the season aligned with those of Assistant Coach Cesare: control what can be controlled and stay focused. Nick admitted that it's tough to stay focused when you're missing games and practicing in the gym – not many players like practicing inside the gym. He echoed the words of Cesare by saying “working hard inside will translate to the games outside.” The message was: by constantly working hard with your team and with what you're given, you can translate that to the games, no matter what situation you may be in.

Ruscingno discussed how he balances academics and sports. One of the most difficult things for players is not baseball alone, but being

a student athlete and keeping up with both your sport and your grades. Nick responded by saying that he participates in a weekly study hall and he always does more than the required amount of studying and work in that study hall. That was essential to stay above and excel in his grades, despite devoting much of his time to baseball. The last question asked was: what does baseball mean to you, as a player? Often for players, a sport is much more than just that. It becomes a part of you, it teaches you things that end up defining who you are. Nick confirmed this by saying “baseball has brought me into the whole character, team perspective...it made me become a better leader. The leadership role on the field taught me to value hard work in anything that I do...anything I do now, is through hard work.”

## A Closer Look at Gothic Knights Softball

ERIK S. ORDYKE



Courtesy of freeimages

What happens behind the games for the softball players and coaches? The sport for them is much more than what is seen on the field, especially considering what had happened earlier this season, missing multiple games because of weather conditions throughout March and early April. Missing games through a season can become an extra task for players and coaches to adjust to, on top of their normal tasks. This creates a situation where tasks can become trickier. However, trickier does not mean it becomes harder.

This is something left fielder Julie Squeo, a junior, stressed after I asked being asked if it was harder to transition back onto the field after missing those consecutive games. “Missing games can be disheartening, but you need to find motivation...it's not harder to transition back onto the field because the whole team knows that we need to keep trying hard to be ready for each game.” Kayla Clarke, a freshman who plays both first base and catcher agreed with this when talking about playing inside due to the weather. She commented that “For catchers and pitchers its tough, you can't do much...but you have to find that motivation to stay in

shape.” The two players were at an agreement here, normal tasks do get trickier, but they stressed that finding motivation was the key to staying on track.

Head Coach of the softball team, Veronica Grant, also echoed this same message. From a coach's perspective, she said that it was an adjustment the players were making successfully. This adjustment was staying focused and finding that motivation after missing successive games. I also asked her about the adjustment of the freshmen to college softball, coming out of high school. She replied “The freshmen are doing well, some of our bigger contributions are coming from our freshmen. Some struggle when they get here, but they all find their way into the team.”

Remaining on the topic of freshman adjustment to college softball, in my talk with Clarke and Squeo, they both seemed to deliver the same message as their head coach. Clarke answered that “It's a different world and it's a different atmosphere...it is different, but it's a great experience.”

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## SPORTS

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Squeo gave some insight into the adjustment, she was a freshman once and is now a junior, so she sees everything from both perspectives. She revealed “When you first get here, you are obviously really scared and nervous because you’re just a freshman coming into this whole new thing...as a junior now, I’m not saying that I do feel a bit like I should be helping freshmen...but the freshmen really seem to have it already.” This shows that, in hindsight, the feeling as a freshman of coming into college sports is definitely a challenge and her statement showed that she already has confidence in the freshmen on her team, they adjusted as they needed to.

I also asked the two players what softball as a sport meant to them. This is something often overlooked in sports, players are much more than stats and scores, they all have a story and life lessons behind them. Squeo responded “Absolutely, softball has definitely taught me teamwork because people can try all they want to do everything by themselves, but you need some help sometimes. Softball to me truly is just a stress reliever...yesterday I tried to dive and get the ball, and even though I didn’t catch it, I’ve never gotten a rush like that from anything else.” For Clarke, softball gave her “The mentality that you always got someone that has your back...everything is always backed up, you’ll always have someone to help you up.”

## NJCU Men's Basketball: A Year in Review

JEFFREY VILLAPIANO



Courtesy of freeimages

Championship on the line. Game tied at 64. Overtime seems imminent, as the ball is inbounded with only three seconds left in regulation following a made free throw to even the score. It looks like the Gothic Knights have snatched a chance at victory from the jaws of certain defeat.

A high-arched lob is sent from beneath the basket into play. An opposing player catches, dribbles twice in towards the half-court insignia. A quick chest pass rifled to his teammate. A desperation shot, heaved up just before the backboard bordering lights up in red.

67-64, in favor of the Ramapo Roadrunners, the final score of the 2017 New Jersey Athletic Conference title game. The midcourt prayer lofted up by Ramapo College’s Thomas Bonacum positioned the ball perfectly in the middle of the backboard’s inner square, banking the shot in as time expired.

Pouring in as suddenly as the shock and disappointment for the NJCU Men’s Basketball team, the home fans at Ramapo’s Bill Bradley Sports and Recreation Center leaped from their seats and amassed around a layer of Bonacum’s teammates, inspired by the miracle of the moment.

Despite a stunning blow in virtually inconceivable fashion, along with an eventual loss a week later to Skidmore College in the first round of the NCAA Division III Tournament to end the season, The New Jersey

City University Basketball squad was all-in-all one of success.

Other than advancing to its conference’s final contest, the Gothic Knights sported an overall 21-8 record, with 12 of those victories making up an undefeated home stand throughout the season. Individual awards also became a highlight of the season, as Freshman forward Sam Toney earned NJAC Rookie of the Week honors for five weeks out of the season—including three weeks in a row— while Senior guard Jalen Harris was named Most Valuable Player of the Crowne Plaza Holiday Tournament in late December whose title the Knights had captured.

Off-the-court presence is just as significant for the NJCU team as on-court, for the university’s Department of Intercollegiate Athletics engaged in its sixth annual Division III Week from April 3rd to the 9th.

This week-long event consisted of a students-vs.-staff soccer game that took place inside the campus’s John J. Moore Athletics and Fitness Center on the 4th and three days later a clinic teaching the finer points of many sports including basketball, soccer, track, volleyball, and golf— both of which the men’s basketball head coach Marc Brown hosted.

Moving forward, the New Jersey City University Men’s Basketball team plans to continue both the success in game-play and involvement with its school’s faculty and student bodies into next year as well as for years to come.

*Continued on page 12*

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