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## **Tuition Has Increased**

#### by Sally Deering & Kenise Brown

aving trouble paying for that Dunkin' Latte? Don't have enough money for books? If your bank account keeps shrinking, it could be the annual tuition hikes you are paying.

According to NJCUs Bursar's Office, tuition costs are consistently rising. For example, freshmen enrolled in NJCU beginning Fall 2016 paid incremental tuition increases of approximately 3 percent every year. Which means, these Freshmen saw an increase of \$491.50 over the past four years.

Tuition increases and fee rates are approved by NJCUs Board of

Trustees, which typically meets in June or July to approve tuition costs for the upcoming academic year. In June 2019, the Board approved a 3 percent tuition hike for the 2019-2020 academic year, but it seems no announcement of the increase was made to students.

Board of Trustees Chairman Rafael Perez says the 2019-2020 tuition hike was small but necessary. The board approved the increase to address budget needs like salaries and operating expenses.

"The board has consistently tried to keep tuition as low as possible in light of reductions in state aid and rising salaries and costs," Perez said. "Tuition is a function of enrollment, state aid, salaries, and other operational expenses of the University. NJCU tuition has the lowest tuition of all the state colleges and universities in New Jersey."

Student Government Association (SGA) President Ricky Cruz says it's important for students to be notified when tuition goes up.

"Students pay money to go here and have the right to know they are going to be paying more," Perez says. "[The administration] has to be more transparent with the students."

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# Gender Neutral Bathrooms: Optional or Human Rights?

#### by Monica Ortiz

t seems that more and more schools, universities and other buildings are implementing gender-neutral bathrooms. Despite Transgender folx existing for centuries, the debate on whatbathroom they can use has only been a hot topic for a few years now. Due to legislation such as bill HB2 in North Carolina making it so transgender people have to use the bathroom of their biological sex rather than their gender, people have been trying to find a compromise of sorts.

The law not only puts many Trans folx in uncomfortable positions but it also negates the fact that Trans

men and women have been using the bathroom of their gender identity for years now with no problem. All gender or gender-neutral can alleviate this issue. It stops any awkward situation or confrontation happening.

People who are against gender-neutral bathrooms state that people should only use the bathrooms that align with their genitalia. A common myth spread amongst conservative circles is that Transgender women who use female restrooms are looking to be predators. This is simply not true. It fear-mongering propaganda that makes it harder for transgender people to exist in public space.

Gender-neutral bathrooms were introduced to Secaucus High School in 2018. The bathroom was a result of the school's Gay Straight Alliance Club (GSA). It took the club five years of relentless petitioning until the bathrooms were approved due to a new law stating that all public schools are required to accommodate students of the Transgender and Gender-Nonconforming Community. After the bathroom was announced and it was mentioned in the school newspaper, people misrepresented the purpose of the bathroom and spread rumors of it being an exclusionary bathroom only.

This caused a great danger for anyone who chose to use the bathroom. The Trans and Gender Non-conforming students were under constant threat

of being ridiculed. At some point, the bathroom was locked and only certain students could use it. It's sad how misinformation and stigma can spread so quickly. Everyone has a right to be comfortable using the bathroom.

Gender-neutral bathrooms should not only be a necessity for any building, but they should be a requirement. They are not only beneficial for transgender people who don't yet feel comfortable using the bathroom of the gender they identify as, but they are also helpful for non-binary people, people with young kids or people who simply want more privacy when using the bathrooms.



#### **Continued from page 1**

#### **Undergraduate Tuition Per Semester**

**2016-2017 In State** \$5,715.05 **Out-of-State** \$10,228.95

2017-2018
In State
\$5,880.80
2.9 percent (\$165.75) increase
Out-of-State from 2016-2017 school year
\$10,525.60

2018-2019 In-State \$6,025.80 Out-of-State \$10,786.75

2.46 percent (\$145) increase from 2017-2018 school year

2019-2020
In-State
\$6,206.55
Out-of-State
\$11,110.35
3 percent (\$180.75) increase from 2018-2019 school year



The LGBTQ Alliance helped celebrate Coming Out Day on campus.

# Christopher Wessman was Everything a Student Could Ask For

#### by Sean Quinn

r. Christopher Wessman passed away last month after a lengthy battle with lung cancer, and it's painful for family, colleagues, and students. Former students (myself included) of Wessman can vouch that he was one of the greatest professors.

He was a man who loved teaching literature as much as he did reading it, and he showed us that his classroom was not going to be by the books. His adoration of the works of Chaucer, Shakespeare, and the Arthurian Tales we read aloud instilled a greater connection to the stories.

As a student of Wessman's I was amazed by his enthusiasm. As much as I love books and stories, he made me feel as if I needed to love it more. I remember being in his "Medieval and Renaissance English" class and he was discussing the book Blood Meridian Cormac McCarthy. by McCarthy's elegant, complex, and violent story was bolstered and enhanced by Wessman's amazement for it all. I

raised my hand and told him I just read the same book over the summer. His eyes burst with excitement and he uttered "Did you?" as if I told him I'd found the same treasure he had.

Soon, Dr. Wessman was making fewer appearances in class. We assumed it was a bad cold or flu bug. I remember laying in my bed and saw I had an email on my phone. I opened it and saw it was from Wessman. He explained that he was diagnosed with Stage Four Lung Cancer, and it was devastating to read. It was so unfair that such a loving, compassionate man was stricken with something life ending. He told us he

would undergo a unique operation, and we all hoped for a quick recovery...

After that message, I didn't see Wessman in person until the first Margaux Fragoso Literary Courage Award Ceremony. He was the Honored Guest Speaker for NJCU graduate Rosa Garcia's piece about the search for her missing brother. I was afraid at seeing

how he'd look. Cancer can change the most vibrant people, so I hoped for the best. To my relief, he looked mostly the same, with some minor changes. When he stood up, he needed a cane, hunched over, and had a cough, but otherwise he was the same Wessman. After the

ceremony concluded we embraced and caught up. It was wonderful to see him.

The last time Wessman and I crossed paths was at the Karnoutsos Building Lounge. He told me it was good to see me again and asked how I was doing. He said he was going to teach Shakespeare's early works at a lighter schedule. He said he was still dealing with illness but he was going to keep fighting. As if there wasn't enough to love about him, he showed a heart mightier than Beowulf or Sir Gawain. He wasn't going to quit.

It always hurts to say goodbye to those we love. The rational part of us knows that it will happen eventually,

but we're never prepared. Sometimes it comes so fast that simply processing the event is difficult. Christopher Wessman was a great man. He loved his family, great works of literature, and teaching students above all else. Everyone should strive to love as strongly as him. Our

#### **Continued on page 5**

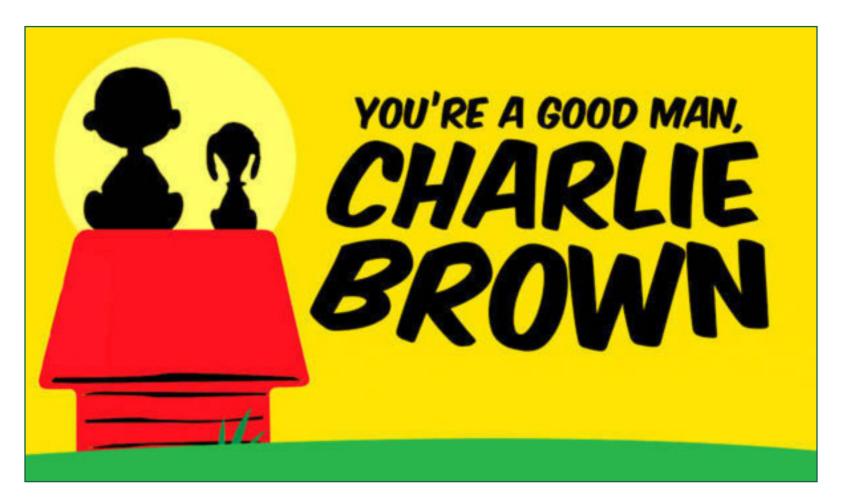
#### **Continued from page 4**

condolences go to the Wessman family from NJCU, he will be greatly missed. Please take some time if possible to thank the teachers who inspire you the most. Thank those who made you want to learn and not just pass. Thank those that made you look forward to class rather than dread it. Thank you Christopher Wessman for everything you've given to your family, colleagues, and your students.

We will miss you.

Prof. Wessman's family has announced a memorial service.

It will be held on Saturday, November 30, at 1 p.m. at Huguenot Memorial Church in Pelham, NY, with a reception immediately following at the same location. The address is 901 Pelhamdale Avenue, Pelham, NY 10803.



#### NJCU Musical Theatre presents:

#### You're a Good Man Charlie Brown

Fri. October 25 - Sat. October 26 @ 7:30 p.m. Sun. October 27 @ 3:00pm Fri. November 1 - Sat. November 2 @ 7:30 p.m. Sun. November 3 @ 3:00 p.m.

## **An Unknown Gem on Campus**

#### by David Wilson

eaturing more than 10,000 books donated by publishers, the Jerry M. Weiss Center allows people at NJCU to borrow books for free.

Located in Grossnickle, room 103, the center currently offers 3000 recently published books. While there is a large selection in the main office, more materials can be found at the other locations in Grossnickle: Room 124 has professional resources and audio/video collections, 126 has picture books and elementary literature, 127 has middle school and young adult literature, and 128 has select sets and series.

With this variety of material, the center sees many education majors, professors, and students with children. Also, art students often stop in when given assignments on illustrations and illustrators. "Students are encouraged

to come in and read. We have over 10,000 books in our collection." said Dr. Lace S. Cassidy, Co-Director of the Center. While books can be borrowed for 28 days, you can renew a book in person or by phone if you would like to keep it longer.

Recent additions include a mystery novel entitled "I Know You Remember" by Jennifer Donaldson, "Pumpkin Heads" by Rainbow Rowell and "A Stone Sat Still" by Brendan Wenzel. The centers selection spans from children's books to young adults. New books are added frequently.

Classes from the nearby University Academy Charter High School visit the center. In their recent visit UACHS students "were interested in reading realistic fiction, fantasy and graphic texts" said Cassidy. Cassidy and Lynn Zisa (Co-Director) work with classes from schools in the area and nearby communities as well. "We are open to the community, not just NJCU students" says Zisa.

The center was established in honor of Dr. Jerry M Weiss. Weiss was a professor of Communications at NJCU. Weiss was also a nationally recognized expert in the field of children's and young adult literature. While supporting Weiss' vision the center offers workshops, conferences and classroom activities.

#### The hours of operation are

Monday - Friday 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Phone: 201-200-3548

Email: weisscenter@njcu.edu

Web: njcu.edu/mjwc



# Gaming Lounge, eSports Club to launch in October

#### by Marco Rezk & Tyler Brown Jr

JCU is set to relaunch the GSUB 203 TV room, now called the gaming lounge, October 22nd. The room has been almost entirely redesigned, with new furniture, a total of five televisions over the previous one, and a newly painted wall, almost entirely redoing the look of the room.

The grand opening of the lounge is also a launch point for the upcoming university eSports program. Jason Kroll, the Vice President of University Advancement, says that an eSports club program is planned to open this fall, and the opening day of the gaming lounge will be used to promote the club and identify those interested in joining.

The university is also exploring a more competitive eSports program alongside the club. "We eventually expect to both field a competitive team and a club team," says Kroll. "We are in the process of identifying an e-Sports Program Coordinator/Director who will use student input and interest to guide decisions on key elements of the program over the fall semester."

Infrastructure for a university eSports team is already in place. Highspec computers and peripherals from Alienware now reside in GSUB 217, featuring enthusiast-tier parts such as the NVidia RTX 2080, one of the best consumer graphics cards on the market, in use with 240Hz G-Sync computer monitors. The room features 12 identical setups, with each setup having a market value of over \$2,000.

More specific details of the program have yet to be finalized, such as who would be allowed to play on the team, what games would be played, and what tournaments they would participate in, but Kroll says that "academic requirements should certainly be expected."

The lounge and launch of the

eSports program was initially planned to be finished in mid-September, but the university had faced delays in the delivery of the new equipment which prevented it from being completed on schedule.

Other universities and institutions in New Jersey and across the country have also been developing eSports programs. Saint Peter's University has teams and players for League of Legends, Overwatch, Super Smash Brothers Ultimate, Fortnite, Rainbow Six: Siege, and Counter Strike: Global Offensive.

Esports is one of the biggest growing industries globally, expected to generate over \$1 billion in revenue in 2019, and is estimated to almost double that by 2022, with most money being gained from sponsorships and advertising. It has a viewer base of almost half a billion people worldwide.



### Hardware Specifications of the GSUB 217 Computers

CPU – Intel Core i7 9700K
RAM – 16GB Kingston HyperX
GPU – NVIDIA GeForce RTX 2080
OC 8GB GDDR6
Storage - 512GB M.2 PCIe
Solid State Drive
PSU - 850W EPA Bronze
PSU Liquid Cooled Chassis

#### **Peripherals:**

Alienware Pro Gaming Keyboard Alienware Elite Gaming Mouse Alienware AW2518H: 25" GSync Gaming Monitor 1080p 240Hz 1ms response

## The Joker: An Exhibition of Madness

by Angel Madera

In the time of spectacular Marvel movies, DC Comics hits home with the gritty, psychological thriller, Joker. The film depicts the rise and fall of Arthur Fleck's life, initially preparing the audience with a happy-go-lucky statement, "My mother always tells me to smile and put on a happy face. She told me I had a purpose: to bring laughter and joy to the world." In both official trailers, you may observe Arthur's struggle with his mental health and the deteriorating society of Gotham City. Having no success in improving his outlook on life, Arthur uses standup comedy as a coping mechanism. Right off the bat, Joaquin Phoenix's maniacal laugh captures your attention as his laughter is not spurned from good humor, Arthur's laugh derives from a barely-perceived, unseen disturbance.

Arthur lives on the not-sobeautiful part of Gotham City, taking care of his mother, who is also mentallyill. Taking place in the in 1980s, Gotham has not yet seen the rise of Batman, fighting for justice against criminals. A storm was brewing in Gotham as people are living in poverty and no one is listening to them. Gotham was waiting for someone to release the rallying call to fight against the very people that have wronged the people of the city. Meanwhile, Fleck is dealing with his mental illness by means of therapy, Fleck only has negative thoughts and is tired of being asked the same, redundant questions by his psychologist.

In the words of James Baldwin in his work of nonfiction, The Fire Next Time (1963), "The most dangerous creation of any society is the man who has nothing to lose." Suffice to say, Arthur Fleck has nothing to lose, beginning his transformation into the Joker. There is nothing better to



describe the process of metamorphosis our protagonist undergoes as Fleck is a mentally disturbed person, who is grasping onto a thread of reality. As Arthur struggles with his job as a clown, enduring the callous treatment of his coworkers, Fleck is pushed to the very edge. Society has, by no means, been cruel to this man and the society of Gotham deserves whatever is going to rain upon it.

Of course, this is the way Todd Phillips, the director, wants the audience to feel. An emotional connection. They want you to sympathize and feel pity for Arthur Fleck. We are invited into the film through the trailers to experience Fleck's view on society. By no means, our protagonist is not the "hero" as the title might suggest. Nevertheless, Todd Phillips wants us to see how society has molded the iconic jester of crime, The

Joker. In a similar manner, Joker does what Avenger's Infinity War did with Thanos, the audience saw the supposed "antagonist" side of the argument. The cinematography of the film is gritty and graphic, at some aspects. A dimlylit production, focusing on Arthur's impoverished lifestyle, even the dreams he may've wanted to pursue – aspiring for love, a future in comedy – which did not come to fruition. Joaquin Phoenix, Robert de Niro, and Zazie Beetz's performances are unexpectedly grand, marking the film as a Shakespearean tragedy. Arthur's life was ridden in trauma, leaving him with an unresolved mental state, an essential standstill, which Joaquin Phoenix and Todd Phillips mastered.

# Are Television Shows and Films Detrimental or Beneficial to Our Mental Health?

#### by Rain Cedeño-Garcia

In 2017, Netflix released the controversial series 13 Reasons Why, which sparked much debate about its discussion of mental health issues. Many mental health experts and parents across the nation felt the show causes more harm than good to impressionable youth. In support of their beliefs, mental health experts conducted studies on the show and found that there was a "28.9% increase of suicides of youth between the ages of 10-17" (National Institute of Health) following the show's release in April 2017. Although the study provides evidence that the show may have played a role in rising suicide rates, is it fair to blame media because it can affect our mental health?

Weighing in on the topic, NJCU Graduate student Rubi Cedeño, who is completing a Master's degree in Clinical Mental Health and Counseling, said, "No, I don't believe that the media has sole culpability in this issue. There are a multitude of things that have led to the rise of suicide rates, such as environmental factors, genetic

predispositions, and political systems".

Mental health is a complex topic to discuss in the media, let alone in reallife. Many young children are struggling to cope with changes in both their body and environment. As children reach adolescence, the growing issues in their environment and influences from media will play into how they feel, perceive the world around them, and how they perceive themselves. If children receive counseling earlier, they can navigate their feelings and build skills to help cope with their emotions. However, not everyone is privileged to receive counseling services and may not have been allowed to discuss mental health issues with their families.

Television shows and films try to target youth audiences and discuss the struggles of growing up, but they often do not portray a realistic perspective for our generation. Our generation is consumed by technology, which has been linked to increasing forms of mental illnesses such as social anxiety and depression. Additionally, our generation is being exposed to a lot

more events such as mass shootings. Aside from the influences we are facing online and in the news, we are also dealing with issues in our home life and within our personal relationships.

There is no form of media that will perfectly capture mental health or the struggles faced by youth. Based on the study of 13 Reasons Why, it is difficult to comprehend why some people committed suicide, and others did not. However, mental health experts cannot place blame on the show or Netflix for releasing the show. There are many factors that have to be taken into account for one's mental health.



## **Save the Date!**

A special event honoring the writer Toni Morrison with book raffles.

Nov. 13, in the GSUB gallery, 12 -2.

# Place: The Locus of Memory, A Neo-Latino Exhibition

#### by Michi Suazo | Features Editor

n the floor of the Visual Arts gallery, a red-stained sack covers the silhouette of a body. The skeleton of a boat held taut by twine cocoons it on top of wood chips and moss.

"In art, communication is the main engine that moves the mind through creative language," said Luis Alers. "To develop a language you need materials that are important. I work with materials that relate to my memories which are attached to my ancestors." Professor David Blackmore's Latinos and Language in the US class applauded when Alers finished presenting on his pieces.

In an Artist Gallery Talk cohosted by the Center for Latin American, Carribean and Latinx Studies, three artists--Luis Alers, Hugo Bastidas, and Ricardo Fonsecapresented their work for the exhibition Place: The Locus of Memory. This exhibit features seventeen artists who are part of the group, Neo-Latino.

"When people hear the term 'Latino' they usually only think about South America and Central America. The term 'Latino' is only 50 to 60 years old." said Fonseca who is of Portuguese descent, "We are trying to be more inclusive. It all comes down to Latin languages like Spanish, Italian, French, Romanian, and Portuguese. Hence, the name 'Neo-Latino'." Along with these three artists, the pieces of Olga Mercedes Bautista, Alexis Mendoza, and Lisette Morel added zest to the exhibit.

Bautista's "Bonding with Plastic" made of silicone, leaves, and plastic

debris imitates tree bark suspended in mid-air; "Time and Place" by Mendoza made of wood, steel nails, and clay plates resembles an iron maiden in the form of a chair; and Morel's "Morir Soñando" composed of acrylic, house paint, nails, and fabric paper spurs viewers to think about watercolor and Pollock.

This exhibit also commemorates an NJCU alumnus and accomplished artist Raul Villareal who passed away in July. He graduated from NJCU with a bachelor's and master's in Fine Arts. Villeareal had his paintings exhibited or are in private collections in California, Colorado, Spain, China, Italy and New York to name a few places.





## **Goldfinch Review**

#### by Stephanie Bock

aks Fegley manages to capture both the trauma of grief and loss of Theo Decker while also being incredibly charming and humorous in the Donna Tarrt adaptation of Goldfinch.

Goldfinch is a star-driven, turbulent, emotional drama with some moments of great humor and bonding about a young boy's (Oaks Fegley) journey coping with losing his mother to a terrorist bombing and subsequently being taken in by a wealthy loving matriarch, Mrs. Barbour, portrayed by Nicole Kidman. A role that she fit into very naturally and played excellently, as we have seen her in similar roles like Big Little Lies and Eyes Wide Shut.

Once Theo thinks he finally found a place in the Barbour household.

he is ripped from them and taken to Las Vegas by his absentee father, Larry Decker, played by Luke Wilson. The times that Luke Wilson is on screen, he steals the scenes with his volatile, disturbing performance as he plays an abusive, exploitive, alcoholic father. Simultaneously, we are introduced to Sarah Paulson's character, Xander, who plays Larry Decker's trashy, druggie girlfriend. From the get go, it is made clear that neither of these characters care for young Theo, as one of their first interactions with him are giving the nervous 13-year-old Valium on a plane to calm him. Luke Wilson's performance stands out most when he is violent and angry with his son, as he tries to get him to transfer money to him for a supposed business venture, however when the young Theo questions his motives or actions, we see a terrifyingly stellar performance by Wilson as he intimidates him into his demands.

Finn Wolfhard, who played the younger version of Boris, is my favorite part of the film. Young Theo had to deal with not only the trauma of his mother, but also the abusive and neglectful parents. The only real happy, genuine moments we see in this film are between Boris and Theo. Boris, who is a very well travelled Russian boy, same age as Theo, we find relates a lot to him. They both lost their mothers, have neglectful fathers, and carry a desire to be free. However, they are trapped here. Boris is the most comedic character in the film, which happily disrupted from the grim seriousness. Seeing Theo and Boris on

drug trips together is something I will never get tired of.

Now, we get to adult Theo, played by Ansel Elort, which by we cut back and forth between via flashbacks and nightmares. Ansel Elgort put on a very stiff, robotic performance. We really did not see much emotion out of him at all, even when he sees his fiance cheating on him with a man he has hated all his life. Ansel has a calm, collected conversation and decides "maybe we work past this?". Then, after years of separation, he runs into Boris at a bar, and again, no emotional reunion or reaction. You'd expect this was your best friend for years that you'd be a little more excited? Surprised?

The invitation for Theo to join the mafia to get the painting back was a

bit jarring, as nothing prefaced this are built up to it. Adult Boris was just introduced not long before, and we just learned he was in the mafia, and nothing in Theo's character suggests he would join Boris on this crazy mission. Theo's life was normal just 20 minutes prior, and then Boris show's up and convinces him to go on a mafia mission. If it had more buildup or pretense, maybe it would sit better with me.

Overall, Goldfinch is a pretty good attempt at an adaption of a nearly 800 page drama. It skims the surface, but it does the job. It is well worth watching for the outstanding performances by Oaks Fegley and Finn Wolfhard and some beautiful cinematography.

Warner Bros



# NJCU Soccer Player Makes ESPN Play of Day

by Zoe Viant

t was the middle of September and Edric DePaula (National Security), of NJCU soccer teams' main strikers, had spent most of the game sidelined with a sprained knee. With only a few minutes left in overtime and NJCU tied with College of Mount St. Vincent, DePaula's head coach, Joe Cullen, suddenly put him in. DePaula received a pass from his teammate Joe Burgos (Global Business), then caught the ball in his chest and scored with an incredible bicycle kick no one saw coming. "I was like you know what, I came in extra time. I gotta try something. I didn't even know if it was gonna go in or not," he said.

In the moment, DePaula was not thinking about anything else other than

just scoring with this sick move and winning the game. He was not aware how this would impact him or his team for the next couple of days.

When he woke up the next day to get ready for his hour long commute to school, he realized his phone was full of messages. "I was scared. I was like what happened? And then the coach text me, and then Ira (Thor) texted me like 'I have a video for you.' And I was like no way."

DePaula learned that ESPN had chosen the bicycle kick as their number two play of the day. He was in the company professional teams; the number one play was made by Odell Beckham in the Giants vs. Bengals game that happened the same day.

DePaula says because of the kick he gained followers on social media from students and athletes. The day he received the video, he was in class when he saw another student watching the video in class.

DePaula says his coaches and teammates would joke around with him about the play. He says, this year, the team has gotten even closer as a family and because of this he feels this has benefited the way they play on the field.

"The season is going really well. I am excited for what's to come," DePaula says. He is hoping to achieve his personal goal of exceeding the amount of points he made in previous games.

# MEETINGS

The Gothic Times NJCU's student newspaper

If you're interested in becoming a writer or illustrator, join us!

**Every Wednesday** at 2 p.m.

Room 301, GSUB



#### Can't make that day?

Email the adviser at: tpavisweil@njcu.edu





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## Vinyl comes back in Jersey City

#### Photos by David Wilson & Sandra Mendez

Iris Records is located in downtown Jersey City. They used to have a shop which recently closed, but are now back two days a week, with a smaller store, located at 109 Brunswick Street. Our photographer, David Wilson, and our Arts & Entertainment Editor, Sandra Mendez, recently visited the store. As reported in Pitchfork, "In 2017, vinyl sales in the U.S. rose for the 12th straight year, according to Nielsen Music."

They are open from 2-7 P.M. on Friday, and 2-6 P.M. on Saturday. You can follow them on instagram @irisrecords.











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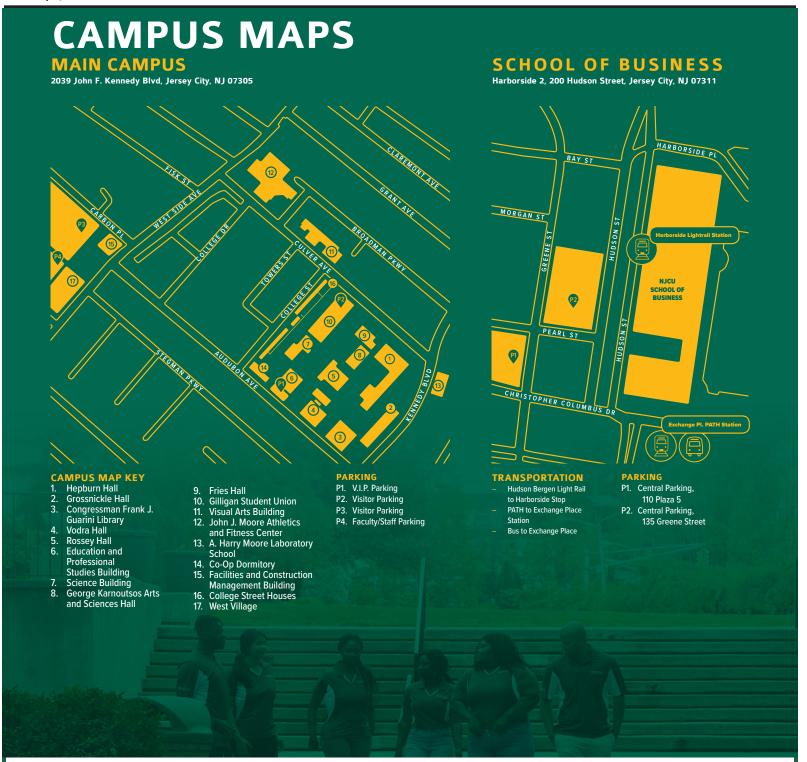






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