

WE DEMAND DIVERSITY ON CAMPUS

by The Editorial Board



Illustration by Migdalia Valdes

Some of us have never had a professor of color at NJCU. The university claims to be a diverse institution but data shows the unequal ratio of white professors to professors of color.

In October 2020, we reported that there are 139 full-time faculty members who are white compared to 44 faculty who are Asian, 29 are Black, and 23 Latinx. About 62 percent of the part-time faculty are white, while 11 percent are Black, 9 percent are Asian, and another 9 percent are Latinx.

As students who represent various communities, we are disappointed that there aren't enough professors of color in the classrooms. This brings into question: how does the university advertise their available positions, and who does the hiring?

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NJCU'S NEW CAMPUS: FORT MONMOUTH

by Kenise Brown- Editor-in-Chief



Construction at Fort Monmouth. Courtesy of Michael Edmundson

The university is expanding in south Jersey with plans for a new campus at Fort Monmouth. Located in Oceanport, the Fort Monmouth campus will include a renovated building called Squier Hall. Both are set to open in Summer 2021.

The campus and hall stems from NJCU continuing their 2004 partnership with Brookdale Community College as it offers students to obtain a bachelor or master degree without traveling to the main campus. Students were learning at Brookdale's Wall Township, New Jersey location. Now students are relocating 11 miles north to Monmouth as the school plans to enroll more students in the area.

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WE DEMAND DIVERSITY ON CAMPUS

On campus, we notice that most people who work in maintenance and food positions are from minority communities. In what areas has the university searched for these positions compared to faculty and administrative positions? It's appalling that we see the people we want more in faculty and administrative positions are the only race that cleans and feeds the entire NJCU population. This is what we call systemic classism and racism. The diversity that is seen in students should be displayed in our faculty, staff, and administration.

Having a professor of color creates a comfortable and relatable experience for students from the same race. Without one, we can't have straight-forward conversations with professors regarding racism without them shying away from acknowledging the issue.

Some of us would not have known a professor of color if it wasn't for departments such as the African-American studies, the Center for Latin-American, Caribbean, and Latinx studies, and the Business department that has a high percentage of Asian faculty to name a few. With studying outside of these departments, a professor is rare in this scenario. This is a harsh ongoing reality that needs to not just be reduced but solved.

Increasing the number of minorities in faculty and higher-up positions should be a prime concern as well as listening to the grand voices of the community that calls for a better, transparent, and fair institution.

Ways to implement this, we suggest the university;

1. Complete a comprehensive report of the faculty at NJCU to determine which academic departments have the least diverse full-time faculty and target

those specific departments when publishing job opportunities on a wide variety of websites.

2. Increase NJCU's competitiveness for diverse job candidates in fields that have a smaller percentage of minority applicants (such as STEM-related fields) by increasing salaries and benefits.

3. Maintain a committee that ensures the university is striving towards a greater diverse institution.

4. Publicize the committee that decides who gets hired at the university. We demand a diverse committee.

5. Create an accessible system where the NJCU community can see where the university is lacking regarding diversity and highlight tasks that need to be completed or have been completed.

6. Everyone is required to take diversity training.

7. Complete BAAFSSO's 10 demands:

- A designated BAAFSSO representative on each Reopening Task Force meeting and on all critical task forces, and search committees.

- The immediate hiring of a Chief Diversity Officer to ensure BAAFSSO demands are prioritized, and to position NJCU for the current and future national radical changes.

- The immediate hiring of a Dual Tenure-Track Appointment in African and African American Studies and Director of the Lee Hagan Africana Studies Center

- The immediate hiring of a Program Coordinator position for the Lee Hagan Africana Studies Center.

- Mandatory and immediate anti-racist training through the New Jersey An-

ti-Racist Alliance for all Administrators, Managers and Supervisors

- A concentrated and strategic plan for admitting and retaining Black students (e.g. Black Male Initiative; Women in STEM.)

- A concentrated and strategic plan for recruiting and retaining more tenure-track Black faculty, staff, and administrators.

- Support for African and African American Studies to become a major.

- Juneteenth becomes a university-wide, Observed Holiday, with the university being closed.

- The renaming of an NJCU building in honor of Dr. Betty Shabazz, NJCU alumna.

MEETINGS
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MEETINGS

Wednesdays at 2:15pm. Contact our Editor-in-Chief Kenise Brown, Kbrown8@njcu.edu

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NJCU'S NEW CAMPUS: FORT MONMOUTH



Fort Monmouth Arch. Photo by VisitMonmouth.com

Background History of Fort Monmouth

Fort Monmouth was a U.S. Army base covering areas from Eatontown to Oceanport, NJ. In 1917, soldiers were located at what was known as Camp Little Silver as it had transportation and a river nearby. In 1925, that same place was renamed Fort Monmouth. It got its name in honor of the American Revolutionary soldiers who died in action in the Battle of Monmouth.

Since then, soldiers developed equipment such as a radio radar, and backpacks with cameras to detect incoming activity from the enemy. These were used during Pearl Harbor, World War II, and the Cold War.

In 1935, Squier Hall was built and used as a military research laboratory and training facility. It was also the first Signal Corps laboratory in Fort Monmouth.

By Sept. 2011, Fort Monmouth was no longer an Army base. Michael Edmondson, dean of Professional Educational and Lifelong Learning, and who oversees the production of the campus explains what will happen to Fort Mon-

mouth, "The Fort Monmouth Economic Revitalization Authority (FMERA) was created to guide the investment, growth, and integration of Fort Monmouth. FMERA was created by the Governor's office when the Army gave all of Fort Monmouth to the State of New Jersey several years ago. The state will use the Fort Monmouth land to create new businesses and drive economic development in Monmouth County."

NJCU will be acquiring the land where Squier Hall is located.



Construction Site at Fort Monmouth. Photo by Michael Edmondson

As Squier Hall is a two floor building, NJCU will only have access to the first floor. Edmondson said they immediately wanted to give students a better education, and by doing that they began with the first floor, "Once we are up and running we will assess our needs and determine how best to utilize the second floor. This flexibility allows us to respond to the changing demands of the workforce, launch critical academic programming, and create appropriate classroom space to best serve our students in the future."

Fort Monmouth is surrounded by other public and private universities such as Rider, The College of New Jersey, Rowan, and Stockton.

While continuing their long partnerships with Brookdale, NJCU looks forward to forming partnerships with Mercer, Ocean, and Middlesex community colleges, "Students from all four of those community colleges will be able to enroll in more robust graduate programs at our state-of-the-art facility," Edmondson said.

December 2020 Senate Meeting

In an early December 2020 Senate meeting, there were concerns regarding Fort Monmouth as some faculty argued there are more important things to pay attention to.

Thyquell Halley, a student representative for the Board of Trustees said it's more important to focus on student needs than expanding.

"I think first and foremost it's great that we are talking about expansion.... we are also in Jersey City first. There's a need for several things on the main campus. There's things that lack from career services and life activities to other places that we could use helpful resources financially...Let's not neglect the residence halls we have on this campus from suffering from heating issues when it's 30 degrees outside and students are cold at night. Let's talk about renovating what needs to be taken care of on this campus first before we move on and build up new areas and spaces."

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COUNSELING CENTER: NEW DIRECTOR AND THE WAIT LIST CONTINUES

by Kenise Brown- Editor-in-Chief



Illustration by Migdalia Valdes

NJCU's Counseling Center has big changes this semester as the former director, Abisola Gallagher-Hobson has retired. An interim consultant is appointed while the waitlist is ongoing.

There are four students currently on the waitlist. In December 2020, Hobson said it was 13, "...Instead of our usual 50-60+. This reduction is consistent with what is being experienced in university and college counseling centers around the country, due to the pandemic," Hobson said.

When asked if there are concerns about the center, Hobson said. "The major concerns that are ongoing: not enough staff to serve students and what will happen with the center because of the dire financial situation of the university."

In addition, Dr. Jennifer Mullan has departed to pursue a different career path and the center remains understaffed.

As Hobson and Mullan are no longer apart of the center, there will be only two full-time counselors and one part-time counselor including the director assisting students.

Since 2018, Hobson has said that the center is supposed to have five and a half

counselors for a public university like NJCU.

Dr. John Sherry will now oversee the center as a supervisory Clinical Consultant until May. Sherry has worked at the center from 1996 to 2008. In 2000, he served as the Associate Director and developed the Peers Education Peers Program.

Sherry shares how he plans to handle the waitlist at the center, "Currently there are very few students on the waitlist, but as the semester picks up and students are dealing with all the stressors of life, including COVID-19, we expect our waitlist to increase. As things develop, we will come together as a group and creatively think of ways to meet the needs of our students. We will be continuing to operate the Let's Talk program that we started a couple of semesters ago to provide opportunities for students to meet with a counselor for a brief informal consultation regardless of the waitlist.

Sherry continues, "My plan is to provide as much support as possible to the counselors that are currently there while discussing options for the future. They have experienced an immense amount of change and loss recently---two long term, beloved colleagues have moved on with Dr. Gallagher retiring and Dr. Mullan resigning. In addition, overnight they went from seeing clients face-to-face to seeing all their clients virtually by phone or video. They are also experiencing the personal impact that COVID-19 and the national climate and painful impact of racism on them and their families. The counselors are extremely skilled and have been front line mental health

workers, it is important as the clinical consultant to the center that I listen to their needs and meet them in the best way possible with the resources that are available to us."

Before his return to NJCU, Sherry has held an academic position and is among others who developed a clinical training center at another institution, "I am in a unique position to bridge the academic side of the university with Student Affairs to better meet the psychological, academic, social, and emotional needs of students as well as support the highly skilled counselors at the center."

Sherry concludes, "My work at NJCU was one of my most rewarding accomplishments to date. I just loved the connections here, we worked as a team and people's heart and souls were into the work. Although physically away, I never forgot those that supported me, mentored me, challenged me and stayed with me during the low and high times of life. It is nice to leave a place feeling loved."

For more information about the Counseling Center during COVID-19 click the following link: <https://bit.ly/3o5Fflz>



Dr. Abisola Gallagher-Hobson.
Photo Courtesy of Hobson.

WIFI ON CAMPUS: IT'S ALL ABOUT CONNECTION

by Joy Akeju - Contributing Writer

Students have been raising concerns about the quality of internet connection at NJCU throughout all three dorms and main campus buildings. This interferes with their educational and recreational online activity.

The Wi-Fi connection has been an ongoing issue since West Campus Village opened in 2016. Wi-Fi is vital as many students have enrolled in online learning due to COVID-19. Vice President of Public Relations and Marketing of the Student Government Association (SGA) Alan Cruz said in a Zoom interview, “I believe that people notice it a little more now because of how in-demand the Wi-Fi is... students need it more so obviously they are going to notice issues more often now, but I think it has been an ongoing issue, in my experience.”

In early October, the department of Information Technology (IT) met with SGA to discuss disproportionate laptop distribution among students, and the Wi-Fi issue was brought up. IT said that they were filing a comprehensive report including the strength of the Wi-Fi throughout campus buildings, records of issues that were reported, and other information.

The Student Perspective

NJCU students' experience with the Wi-Fi on campus varies widely. Some students have briefly discussed having connectivity issues on the Student Feed of the NJCUMobile app. Other students have experienced little to no issues and use laptops, phones, and gaming devices stress-free.

Synchronous classes on Zoom tend to be a different story, as some students experience Wi-Fi interruptions that interfere with their participation. Cruz said



Photo by Joy Akeju.

he has experienced this firsthand: “I’ve dealt with professors who get frustrated at students over Wi-Fi issues.”

Kathiana Dambreville, junior and Finance major, said in an email interview that while the internet connection at West Campus Village is generally sufficient, there is a lot of room for improvement, “The Wi-Fi is definitely not the best quality, it has a lot of restrictions, such as doing Whatsapp video call. I have not reported any issues concerning the Wi-Fi, but I did ask a few students on the mobile app if I was the only one having problems with it. Overall, I will give it a 6 out of 10, because I can get most of my work done. It might not be at the speed that I wanted and not as consistent as it should have been, but still helpful.”

The IT Department Perspective

According to IT, the main problem with addressing the situation is that most students who have issues with Wi-

Fi have not been directly communicating with the department to report these problems. “If the students are concerned about the Wi-Fi, so are we. I’m concerned that they’re concerned,” said Robert Scire, director of Networking and Information Security.

Scire continues: “We continuously monitor the Wi-Fi system on campus. We have a state-of-the-art system from Aruba Networks that’s basically been installed for a long time, so it kind of concerns me when there’s issues. If there were issues, we’re not aware of them, because we proactively monitor the network; we monitor the wireless to ensure that all devices are up and running.” After concerns regarding Wi-Fi quality were brought up in administrative meetings, IT hired a company to run a health-check.

On the university’s wireless network, Scire said, “The dorms at West Campus have the latest and greatest access points. That’s a new generation, they’re still supported, and they said that those are the access points that should suffice to support that building”.

The department also mentioned plans to install upgrades to the network systems in the Co-Op and Vodra Hall dorms.

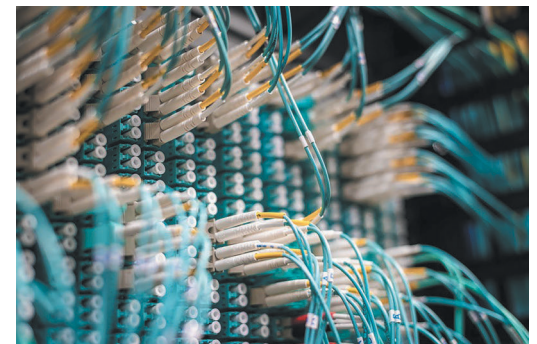


Photo by Brett Sayles/Pixabay.

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KEEP YOUR EYES PEELED FOR “THE SIGHT”

by Ariana Perez - Contributing Writer

It was a mid-summer and I was on vacation with my parents in West Virginia. On our way to lunch, we found a small bookstore filled floor to ceiling with books of all kinds. We spent quite a while in there and just when we were walking by a pile of books on the floor, I looked down and saw a photo of haunting yellow eyes staring at me on the cover of a book called “The Sight.” You know how they say “don’t judge a book by its cover?” Well, that’s pretty much the only thing I did. I read the back of it when we got to our hotel room, but once we made it home I never picked it up.

When I picked it up again to read one day, I still didn’t really think much of it. When I think of a tale of wolves and mystical abilities like visions, or “the sight” as it’s called in the book, I immediately think of a “Twilight” type of setting. Boy was I never more happy to be wrong. Instead of what I was expecting, I was thrown into a cold winter forest in Transylvania.

From there it only got better and when I realized what I was reading, I was shocked. I wasn’t reading a story of “werewolves,” I was reading a story about wolves. When I was reading how the character was running, the movements and noises it made, the descriptions led me to realize the characters themselves are wolves. The descriptions the author used made it creep up on me that I was reading about actual wolves were so good. I have always loved wolves and the different lore about them in different cultures. This book took that love and put it into a world I enjoyed.

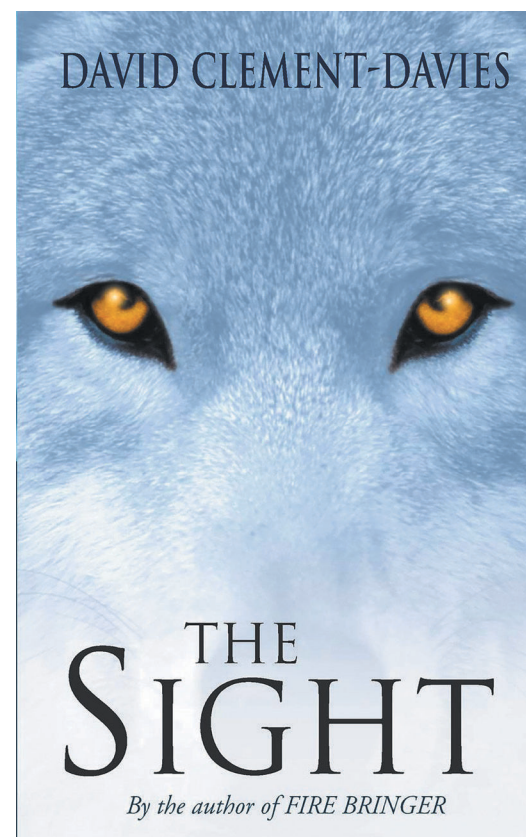
After reading the book and experiencing everything it had to offer, I wanted to see what other people thought of the book. Some liked it and “enjoyed it for what it was,” others had a lot of criticism

for it, and the majority shared the same love of wolves I have. Now, I understand where some of the criticism starts. The beginning is a bit slow and dragging, but when reading over it again I noticed that the bulk of the “teaching phase” is in the beginning. The book is trying to teach you a little about where the characters are and what is going on, but also teach some of the “wolf-language” they use in the story, and some of the lore, or types of gods they follow. If you’re patient with it and get to understand a little more it’s worth it later in the book.

This book surprised me in the best and worst possible way - such is the beauty of books. It made my heart yearn and break all throughout the story and fueled my mystical fantasies. It’s a truly mysterious and haunting story that I was not expecting to like as much as I did, especially since I didn’t think much of it when I first bought it almost four years ago.

Some people were a little let down by the plot of the book. I personally think the story, while slow, was also heart racing and heartbreaking at so many points, but overall told a story full of emotion that I honestly appreciate. Like I mentioned before, it’s not a “Twilight” type of book, so the descriptions the author uses to show lore, magic, pain, and cold are meant to bring us into a completely different world.

It was also mentioned at the end of the book that the author traveled to Romania for research and what he experienced there - the “darkness of their recent history,” the many tales and superstitions - was what helped bring this book to life. He took inspiration from different eastern European places further beyond Transylvania to make up his story, which I thought was very interesting and add-



Cover of the novel “The Sight”.

Photo courtesy of Wikimedia Commons.





ed to my love for this book. I recently discovered there is a second book titled “Fell,” which follows the story of one of the pups from this book. I have yet to read that, but hoping it’s not going to take four years to do so. Overall, I thought this book was really good and worth a read for those who like wolves and folklore and all things mystical, but who also like a little bit of a challenge.

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Fri. 29 Community Hour I'm Still Here Book Discussion 12 PM - 1 PM	Wed. 17 Hair We Are Again 2 PM - 3:30 PM	Thurs. 11 Community Hour 2 - 3 PM	Thurs. 15 Take Back The (K)Night 6 PM
Fri. 26 Community Hour I'm Still Here Book Discussion 12 PM - 1 PM	Fri. 26 Community Hour I'm Still Here Book Discussion 1 PM - 2 PM	Thurs. 18 & Fri. 19 Gothic Knight Ally Safe Zone Training 10 AM - 12 PM	Thurs. 22 Community Hour 2 PM - 3 PM
Fri. 23 Lavender Graduation 4 PM - 5:30 PM	Fri. 30 Community Hour I'm Still Here Book Discussion 1 PM - 2 PM	Tues. 23 Her Role in Black Student Activism Yesterday and Today with Special Guest Dr. Marilyn Maye 12 PM - 1 PM	Fri. 26 Community Hour I'm Still Here Book Discussion 12 PM - 1 PM

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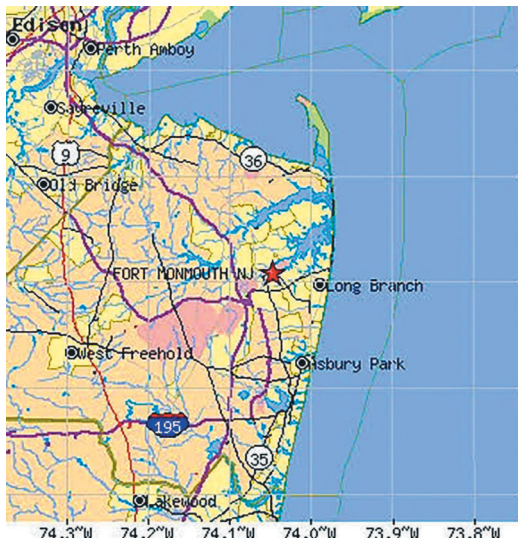
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NJCU'S NEW CAMPUS: FORT MONMOUTH

Halley continues, “I think it’s awesome that we want to move forward and we are thinking ahead and talking about money that could come in but...my question would be is where is the money going because we are not seeing it being instituted here. Let’s take care of home first.”



Location of Fort Monmouth. Photo by U.S. Beacon

Edmundson has said that in the first couple of years, the new campus will lose money due to enrollment, “By year four we are hoping to be positive...now we are going to elevate our work here and reach out to those four community colleges and increase our partnership communities so that we can stabilize our enrollment and revenue situation.”

How It’s Being Funded?

Edmundson gives a breakdown on how the finances are going into place for Fort Monmouth,

“FMERA asked the developer, KKF, to purchase the 22 acres for \$2 million with the express purpose of providing a facility that would offer educational

programming. NJCU was selected as [the] only institution of higher education at Fort Monmouth. The State of New Jersey has provided NJCU \$1 million to help offset rent costs. NJCU is seeking another \$3 million [from the state] to help offset other costs. NJCU did not borrow any money for Fort Monmouth. Since we already have over 350 students at our current Wall Township location, NJCU will use the tuition revenue generated from both the undergraduate and graduate students enrolled at NJCU @ Fort Monmouth.”

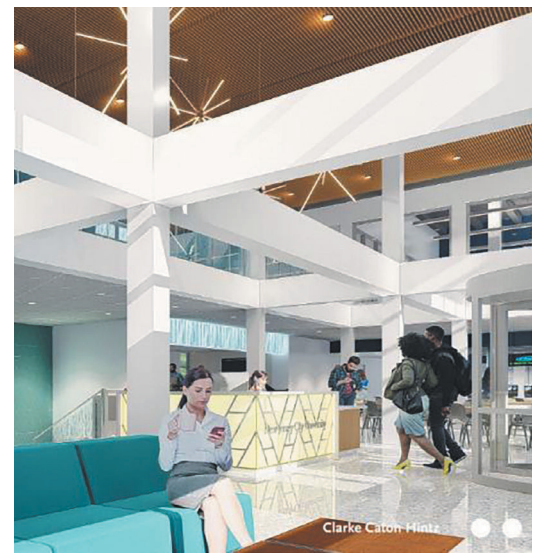
Edmundson continues, “The State sees Monmouth as a place that needs a public institution and wanted to assist.”

However, the millions of dollars that NJCU seeks will not pay for all the costs of Fort Monmouth. “We will have yearly rent to pay. Since the rent comes from the costs of construction and maintenance, these monies will decrease the cost of the rent for NJCU and provide the developer funds to remediate some of the building for us. We have other state equipment funds that will outfit the building.

Edmundson said NJCU is leasing the building for multiple reasons due to construction costs, “We estimate it to be \$1.6M a year. Additional state funding of \$1M for Fort Monmouth has helped to defray some of the additional costs incurred in construction due to asbestos removal. The revenues from new undergraduate and graduate academic programs designed for the Fort Monmouth area, new community college partnerships that grow enrollment, and possible additional state funding for Fort Monmouth will provide the resources for the lease and the operations

at Fort Monmouth.”

For more information about Fort Monmouth, you can check updates on the university’s website or contact a representative at Fortmonmouth@njcu.edu



3D model of Squier Hall. Photo courtesy of NJCU.edu



3D model of Squier Hall. Photo courtesy of NJCU.edu

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WIFI ON CAMPUS: IT'S ALL ABOUT CONNECTION



West Campus Village. Photo by Brianna Evans

What Causes Wi-Fi Issues?

Scire and Network and System Administrator James Musante identified various possible causes of internet connectivity issues in an interview.

One of these potential causes is the type of device being used. Most of the Help Desk request tickets received by the IT department are of this nature. “Usually at the beginning of the semester, there’s a trove of calls that generally point to device connectivity, getting Amazon Fire Sticks and PlayStations and gaming systems and devices that require specific algorithms to connect security-wise,” Musante said.

Students with Chromebooks experiencing Wi-Fi trouble are instructed to contact the Help Desk in particular. Although NJCU’s network does support Chromebooks and they definitely should work on campus, there are cases of internet quality issues since Chromebooks have a single Wi-Fi antenna whereas standard laptops usually have two. This feature contributes to the relatively low cost of the device, but it can result in a weaker signal. IT stresses that this is not an attempt to make excuses for unsatisfactory Wi-Fi service.

IT suggests that some students may not have read the device registration instructions provided on NJCU’s website as some of the calls made to the Help Desk turn out to be an easily fixable issue. One example is an incorrect MAC address (the address that identifies the device to the network). However, IT claims that very few students reach out when they experience problems with the actual network that do not involve getting connected for the first time.

Another possible origin of the Wi-Fi issue is the location of access points in dorms. There is a wireless access point located in the common room of each West Campus Village dorm. Scire reflects that there is a possibility that access points were not placed in the optimal position in some dorm rooms if students are experiencing problems with the network.

Both Scire and Musante emphasize that the source of a student’s difficulties cannot be determined unless that student calls in to report them.

Resolving the Issue

Reported issues with Wi-Fi in the dorms are generally addressed by the IT Department on a case-by-case basis by

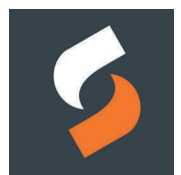
either speaking with the student or visiting the student’s dorm to check if access points are functioning properly.

Representatives of the department strongly suggest that students call their Help Desk about Wi-Fi problems instead of waiting for them to subside. Any student experiencing internet-related issues should seek assistance in one of the following ways:

- Call 4357 when on campus, or 201-253-4357 when off campus
- Send an email to helpdesk@njcu.edu
- Visit the IT Help Desk which is located in the Professional Studies Building, room P-103 (Hours 8:30am to 6:00pm Monday to Friday)
- View Wireless Device Registration Instructions at <https://guestaccess.njcu.edu/guest/public/default.html>

When asked in an interview if Wi-Fi quality would be prioritized going forward, Cruz said, “I think it is a priority for the university, especially after it’s been mentioned. I can say that a lot of the meetings we’ve held this semester with administration have gone very well, and the issues that we’ve brought up have been fixed, or a plan has been brought up”.

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