

THE COUNTY COLLEGE OF MORRIS' AWARD-WINNING STUDENT NEWSPAPER

# YOUNGTOWN EDITION

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# YOUNGTOWN IN TURMOIL

## Administrative actions raise serious legal concerns

BY THE YOUNGTOWN EDITION STAFF

The fall of 2019 saw the Youngtown Edition operating without the support of a faculty advisor, while facing increasing challenges by an administration determined to interfere with the newspaper, according to the Youngtown staff. The fall semester was the culmination of two-and-a-half years of tension between the newspaper and CCM administration.

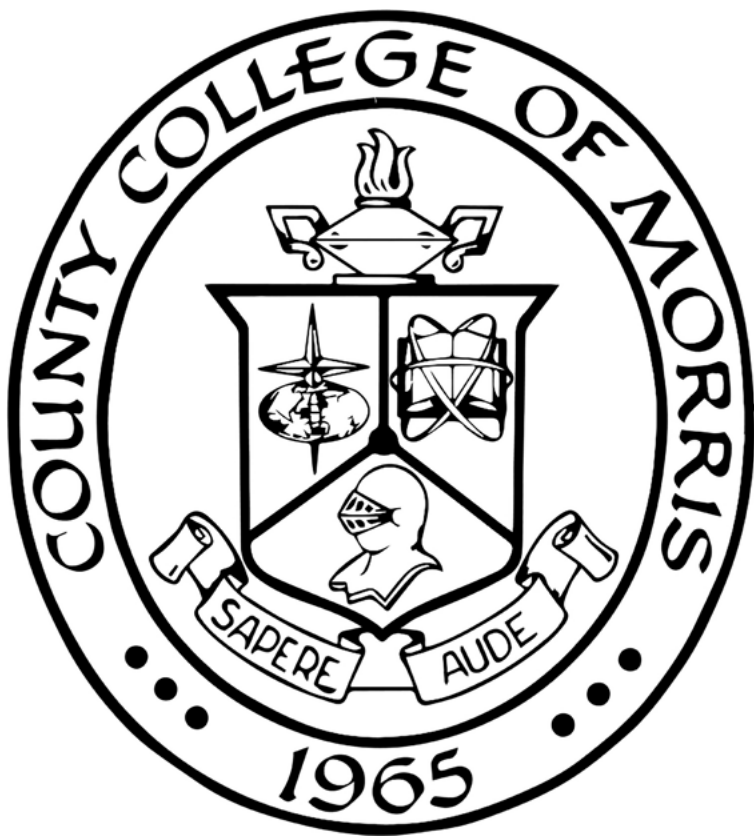
"In the fall of 2019, the situation escalated as the administration took away our faculty advisor, at first expected us to train and write the job description of the new unqualified faculty advisor, cut the number of papers being printed in half, threatened to cut more of the printing budget, and continued to try to get the Youngtown to write stories that would show the administration's work in a positive light," Alexa Wyszowski, Editor-in-Chief, said.

The situation brought the Youngtown staff to the Board of Trustees for help.

"We explained what happened, and what the administration has been doing violates students' rights and even the First Amendment," Adam Gentile, Managing Editor, said. "Since then, the Youngtown staff has not heard from any members of the board or the administration on how this will be fixed and ensured to never happen again to any future Youngtown students."

### IT STARTED WITH FIRE CERTIFICATES

In the fall of 2017, the Youngtown published a few accurate and award-winning follow-up articles to the November 2016 news story about the outdated fire certificates posted around campus. The Editor-in-Chief at the time, Brett Friedensohn, and Managing Editor at the time, Jannat Sheikh, found that campus officials had provided incorrect information, and that the college was not fol-



lowing the proper procedures to posting the updated fire certificates.

The first follow-up article published on Oct. 11, 2017, noted that certificates were issued under the New Jersey State Uniform Fire Safety Act of 1983, which requires many areas of public service to be inspected by the municipal fire official, who needs to certify that the area is up to code. However, certificates posted in eight areas on campus were expired; the oldest certificate expired in 2008.

In that article, CCM Compliance Officer Dawn Latinsics said that updated certificates had been issued, but not displayed; she also said, erroneously, that they didn't need to be displayed. The article noted that the Uniform Fire Safety Act, as well as the certificates themselves, explicitly said otherwise. Randolph Fire Official Richard Briant also confirmed with the Youngtown staff that the certificates needed to be displayed in a prominent location.

The Youngtown advisor at the time, Russ Crespolini, said after this story was published that

Dr. Bette Simmons, Vice President of Student Development and Enrollment Management, had a meeting with him about her concerns related to the fire safety certificates story.

"That was a head-scratcher for me. Rather than getting a thank you for solid journalism that pointed out something that needed to be corrected, I was called into a meeting with Dr. Simmons and told she was tasked with 'getting the Youngtown under control,'" Crespolini said.

Crespolini said the meeting was not a pleasant one, and Simmons, at one point, discussed removing funding from the paper, and requested reading all stories before publication.

"I just politely, but firmly explained that isn't something she should do. It would open up the school to action by the Student Press Law Center as it violates the rights of the student journalists," Crespolini said.

Simmons also shared her concerns with the Youngtown

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## Youngtown advisor removed by CCM administration

### Students left without support

BY THE YOUNGTOWN EDITION STAFF

He is an award-winning journalist, a highly rated professor, and had advised the Youngtown Edition to numerous awards year after year. However, in July of 2019, Professor Russ Crespolini was suddenly removed from CCM.

Russ Crespolini, a former adjunct speech professor and former faculty advisor to the Youngtown Edition, has been a full-time working journalist since 2002. He started teaching at CCM in 2014 and became the faculty advisor of the Youngtown in January of 2015, after the previous faculty advisor, John Soltes, had left the position.

The president of CCM at the time was Edward Yaw. According to Crespolini, Yaw was respectful to student journalists, made time to answer questions for stories, and when the newspaper wrote critical stories, Yaw never took any action against them. Then, in the fall of 2016, Anthony Iacono became the new president of CCM.

"Dr. Iacono was great when he arrived here. He was very nice to me, giving me his cell phone number, asking us to participate in a CCM television show, but more im-

portantly he was very good to the students," Crespolini said. "He responded well when they asked him to submit a column for publication, and it was a nice continuation of what had historically been a strong relationship between the administration and the student journalists."

In the 2017 fall semester, the Youngtown ran a story that criticized the college for not having updated fire safety certificates, and also caught members of the administration providing incorrect information. When the story was published, Dr. Bette Simmons, vice president of Student Development and Enrollment Management, contacted Crespolini with concerns.

"That was a head-scratcher for me. Rather than getting a thank you for solid journalism that pointed out something that needed to be corrected, I was called into a meeting with Dr. Simmons and told she was tasked with 'getting the Youngtown under control,'" Crespolini said.

Crespolini said the meeting was not a pleasant one, and that at one point, Simmons discussed removing funding from the paper and requested reading all stories before publication.

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# TURMOIL

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staff at a production meeting. Friedensohn said that in front of the Youngtown staff, Simmons flipped through the pages of the Oct. 11 edition and pointed out all the stories she thought were negatively reflective of the college. According to Friedensohn, Simmons had said that he and Sheikh apparently didn't talk to enough of the "right people" and should instead speak to Karen VanDerhoof, Vice President of Business and Finance, for the next follow-up story.

"When Brett asked me to look into the outdated fire safety certificates, I assumed that there might be one or two that were outdated, but it turned out that there was a whole lot more," said Sheikh. "I figured that the administration would appreciate what we found, [but] instead they took it as some sort of strange journalistic threat. As a student jour-

nalist, I felt that the Youngtown Edition was being attacked by the administration."

"I thought it was important to let people know what was going on, but I didn't expect it to be received with so much controversy," Friedensohn said. "The common sense thing to do, from a public relations perspective, would've been to have Latinsics or VanDerhoof or whoever say from the beginning, 'We're working on it, and we'll keep you updated.' Instead, the administration pointed the blame at Jannat and me for it. And unfortunately, our advisor had to fight our battles for us."

## MEETINGS THAT NEVER SEEMED TO END

Throughout the next year, Simmons would continue to call the Youngtown staff into meetings and at some of these meetings, even the President of CCM, Dr. Anthony Iacono, would be present. Simmons and Iacono would question the Youngtown staff on where they got their ideas

for stories, as well as their sense of integrity and judgment of what was important news for the college. Simmons and Iacono would also recommend story ideas for the Youngtown to cover, which all were stories that would put the college and its administrative work in a positive light.

Crespolini said he was also called into other meetings by the administration where the "direction and tone" of the paper were discussed, as well as "restoring confidence in the newspaper" and "correcting numerous errors." Other complaints from the administration that were specifically related to the stories included an editorial about the cafeteria food and the satire series.

"I remember that I met with the administration one time just on my own. It was awkward. I felt as if I was in the wrong to ask questions," Sheikh said.

"It was awkward for me because the administration always came at me trying to appear helpful, but would sprinkle a little passive-aggression on it," Frie-

densohn said. "Sure, it was intimidating, but Russ [Crespolini] was there to take the worst of it for us. With that being said though, as an administrator, you don't sit a bunch of student journalists down multiple times to express 'concerns' about investigative pieces without trying to push them into self-censorship."

## COLLEGE VICE PRESIDENT ATTEMPTED TO REMOVE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

In the summer of 2018, Friedensohn received an email from Simmons the day after he interviewed Thomas Burk, former vice president of Human Resources and Labor Relations, about the faculty union and college being unable to negotiate a new contract. Simmons wanted to meet with Friedensohn as she was "surprised" that he would be returning in fall 2018 for a third semester as the editor-in-chief. Friedensohn had previously informed Simmons verbally at the spring Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) induction that he would be return-

ing as the editor-in-chief.

According to Friedensohn, Simmons thought that he had told her that he was stepping back from his position completely, and that someone else would take it for the fall 2018 semester. Friedensohn told Simmons that he wasn't sure what he would have said to make her believe that he was stepping down, and that the plan had been, since February, that he would return as editor-in-chief in fall, and that someone else would take over in spring.

"It certainly felt like she was trying to remove me without really saying that I had to go," Friedensohn said. "I think it's pretty obvious that she was trying to intimidate me. She didn't quite say, 'You have to leave,' but there was certainly an imbalance of power between me, a student, and her, a high-ranking vice president."

Crespolini said that during the summer of 2018 he was also called into another meeting, where Simmons tried to convince Crespolini to remove Friedensohn



PHOTO BY RUSS CRESPOLINI

From left to right: Alexa Wyszkowski, editor-in-chief; Marco Mirlas, former contributor; Adam Gentile, managing editor; Anthony Ingham, news editor; Russ Crespolini, former faculty advisor at the May 2019 Campus Life Appreciation Dinner Dance.

## THE YOUNGTOWN EDITION

# letters to the editor

Letters must include the writer's full name to be considered for publication. All letters may be edited. Not all letters may be published.

Submit your letter by emailing [youngtownedition@gmail.com](mailto:youngtownedition@gmail.com)

## THE YOUNGTOWN EDITION

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Masthead illustration by Sarah Gallagher

All students are welcome to contribute articles to The Youngtown Edition either in person or via e-mail. However, students cannot receive a byline if they belong to the organization on which they are reporting. The deadline for articles is the Monday prior to a production.

as the editor-in-chief. Crespolini informed Simmons that he would not participate in removing a student from a leadership position, and that if she chose to do so, she would do it without his support.

**COLLEGE PRESIDENT WAS “PERSONALLY OFFENDED” BY CLUB ROOM STORY**

In the fall of 2018, Wyszowski and Gentile were called into an urgent meeting by Simmons and Iacono. This meeting was about the Nov. 21, 2018 news article, which was about students getting evicted from the club room with little warning in order for renovations to be made for the Student Success Center. The editor-in-chief at the time, Friedensohn, was not invited to or included in this meeting. The meeting was recorded following the NJ one-party consent law, in which a person has the right to record as long as they are a participant in the conversation.

Iacono began the meeting by asking Wyszowski and Gentile how the club room situation was explained to them because he felt

like “something was missing,” and that when he read it, the story came off as “us [the college] doing bad things to students, but they were doing it in order to expand student support.” After a 20-minute conversation in which both Simmons and Iacono expressed how they felt about the story and how incomplete it was, along with suggesting how improvements could be made Iacono asked the question of how “can we get the message out there.”

“When I read it I was like, oh my god, these students feel like they were evicted, they had to store stuff in their cars, and we spent a year in conversation, writing grants, and restructuring to bring more support to the college,” said Iacono. “How can we get that message out that, that [the Student Success Center] is why we had to do that.”

Gentile then offered the suggestion that he and Wyszowski could write a follow-up story based around the Student Success Center. Gentile mentioned that although he was not forced to offer



PHOTO BY LUNA WROBLEWSKI

The Youngtown editorial team speaking at the Nov. 19, 2019 Board of Trustees meeting.

that suggestion he felt as though he was led to offer it.

“When you close a conversation based around incomplete information and how everyone could do better and how can we get the message out there, it seems pretty obvious that you want a follow-up story to be done,” Gentile said. “Looking back, I hate that I suggested it, because unless the cause for haphazardly moving students out of the club room was because of asbestos or something physically harmful, the reason as to why does not matter. At the end of the day, students were only given a warning in September of that semester. The fact that there was no follow-up message from the school was absolutely shameful, and the consequence of that action was shock, uncertainty, and discontent from a lot of the students that were involved.”

**CALM BEFORE THE STORM**

In the first year and a half, the news cycle consisted of a lot of hard news, stories which were critical of the college. In the spring of 2019 the cycle changed, as there wasn’t much news to write about on campus. The Youngtown staff also had a new leadership editorial team for the first time in three semesters. In the spring of 2019, the student staff members, who had been there during the previous semesters, said that the tension between the administration and the Youngtown seemed to have calmed down and, perhaps, even dissolve.

The administration seemed to be supportive of the Youngtown, and Simmons and Iacono even latched onto the award the Youngtown received from the Morris County Freeholders by attending the event and posing in photos. However, neither Iacono or Simmons informed or even invited Crespolini to the Freeholders event, as the members of the Youngtown had told and invited him. Crespolini attended the event but was not included in the photos. The Morris County Freeholders control a portion of CCM’s budget. The Youngtown staff also won multiple awards through the NJ Press Foundation College Newspaper Contest, but the administration ignored these.

**“SAVE THE COLLEGE SOME MONEY”**

In the summer of 2019, both Wyszowski and Gentile worked at the New Student Orientations at school. During this time, Wyszowski got called into the office of Don Phelps, Director of Campus Life, for multiple meetings about the Youngtown printing budget. Gentile said he was never included in any of these meetings.

Wyszowski said that Phelps wanted to help “save the college some money,” and to do so he wanted to change the printing method of the Youngtown by cutting the costs down to what Phelps claimed in an email was “80% savings.”

“I told him [Phelps] that I was open to helping the school out, but once I saw the proofs of how he wanted to print it, I knew there was no way I would be able to sacrifice the quality of the paper,” said Wyszowski.

The options Phelps gave her, which she rejected, included the newspaper printed on copy paper stapled together and slightly larger paper that fell apart when it was picked up. Wyszowski said Phelps had her strike an “under the table” deal with him to raise \$6,000 in ad revenue instead of \$1,900 in order to keep the newspaper printed on newsprint.

“I felt like I didn’t have a choice but to make this deal with him [Phelps], because I didn’t want to be the student who ruined the quality of the newspaper or the student that ‘wasted’ the school’s money,” said Wyszowski.

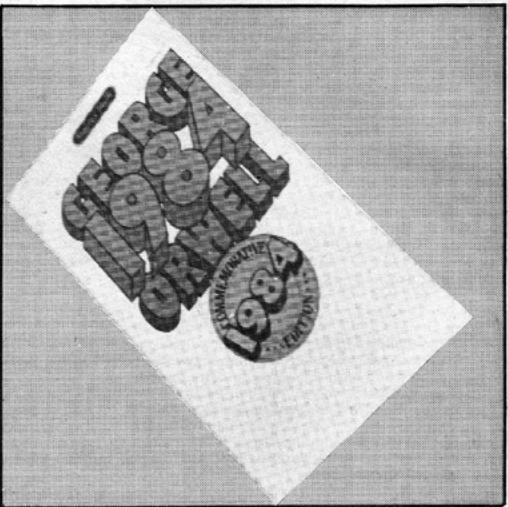
**BY THE WAY, THE FACULTY ADVISOR IS GONE**

The day after the Youngtown staff put together their first newspaper of the fall 2019 semester was when Phelps told Wyszowski that Crespolini was no longer the Youngtown faculty advisor or an adjunct professor at the college.

“I happened to be working a table for PTK when he [Phelps] came up to me and asked me to meet with him in office, and then told me that Russ [Crespolini] was gone, and I couldn’t stop cry-

December 14, 1983 YOUNGTOWN EDITION Page 7

# Countdown to 1984



## Is All Well, Orwell?

PHOTO COURTESY OF CCM ARCHIVES

A full page ad in a December 1983 issue of the Youngtown Edition.

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PHOTO BY LUNA WROBLEWSKI

The Youngtown Edition staff at the Nov. 2019 Board of Trustees meeting.

### CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

ing,” said Wyszowski. “But I now wonder if I wasn’t working the PTK table at that time, if and when we would ever been told that we didn’t have an advisor.”

Simmons came into Phelps’ office later, as Wyszowski had a lot of questions that Phelps wasn’t able to answer, but that Simmons would be able to provide more information. Simmons claimed that Crespolini was gone because of a personnel issue and was let go at the end of July, and that the Youngtown staff would only be without an advisor for a “short amount of time.” Simmons said there was a new advisor in mind that would be a full-time faculty member with more experience and time. Wyszowski said this meeting was an hour and 45 minutes long, and that Simmons, when referring to Crespolini, said that “we got rid of him” and then after said “forget I said that.”

The Youngtown staff expressed that the shock of losing their advisor was not only upsetting, but also devastating as well.

For more about Russ Crespolini and his removal, see the sidebar: “Youngtown advisor removed by CCM administration.”

### STUDENTS TOLD TO TRAIN FACULTY ADVISOR

A week after the Youngtown staff found out that Crespolini was gone, Phelps called Wyszowski to say that a new advisor was found, but that they would have to wait to meet him until Phelps and Simmons introduced him. Wyszowski said she had sent a few emails to this advisor before the initial in-person meeting, and that he seemed to know nothing about the Youngtown.

Before meeting this new advisor, Wyszowski explained that she was sitting in the hallway when Simmons found her and said that the new advisor would work out well, and that Wyszowski and the Youngtown staff would be helping train the new advisor.

When the Youngtown staff finally met their new advisor, they said it was surprising to learn what Simmons had told them about this person wasn’t accurate at all.

“We were given a professor who told us he had no journalistic experience and was set to teach seven classes that semester,” said Anthony Ingham, News Editor. “Of course we were confused.”

Wyszowski said that the entire Youngtown staff had concerns about the new faculty advisor, and that she went to Simmons a few days later to ask for help.

“When we were told we were expected to teach our brand new advisor how to run a newspaper and how being an advisor works, to us fledgling journalists, who were there to learn how to put together a newspaper, I don’t think any of us knew what to say,” said Ingham.

In this meeting, Simmons stated that Wyszowski was the only person on campus that knew what the responsibilities of the editor-in-chief and faculty advisor were. Simmons also said that the Youngtown staff would have to be patient and wait for the new advisor to “learn journalism.” After this meeting concluded, Simmons sent an email clarifying that Wyszowski and the Youngtown staff would not have to train the new advisor, and that Simmons would be willing to read and review stories to “help out.”

But before this meeting

could finish, Kathleen Brunet interrupted explaining that she was sent down from Iacono to inform Wyszowski about the steelworkers protesting. Simmons and Brunet also asked if Wyszowski knew of any students that were interested, and if any were, that they should contact Simmons and Brunet immediately. A few days later, Wyszowski would receive an email from Simmons asking for a confirmation if it was true that the Youngtown was going to cover the steelworker’s protest story.

The next day, Wyszowski spoke with the new advisor and learned that the administration had never even provided him with a job description, and that he thought that he would just be checking for spelling and grammar. The new advisor also expressed concern about the time commitment. In response to this information, Wyszowski went to the chair of the English department, Dr. Janet Eber, and told her what was going on. With this, Eber scheduled a meeting for the Youngtown staff to meet with James Hart, the dean of liberal arts at the time, where the Youngtown staff explained to Hart what they thought the newspaper faculty advisor should do. As of this time, there was no job description provided by the CCM administration.

### EXPECTED TO FAIL

During another budget meeting, Phelps told Wyszowski that the new faculty advisor was stepping down and was officially no longer the advisor. Wyszowski said that Phelps blamed her and the Youngtown staff for having “unrealistic expectations,” and that it was the staff’s own fault that the Youngtown was without

an advisor again. Phelps said that Wyszowski should have told Simmons and him about the concerns with the advisor, but she explained that she had. Phelps also said that the Youngtown staff would still have a big part in training the next new advisor they would find.

“Just like the prior meeting with him, I got really upset again,” said Wyszowski. “This was the last meeting I had with an administrator by myself, as I realized that meeting with the administration alone wasn’t something I felt comfortable doing anymore.”

When getting to the budget part of the meeting, Phelps stated that the Youngtown budget did not have enough money to print eight pages every time, and that he expected the Youngtown, without an advisor, to only put out four-page editions and even skip editions entirely.

“I couldn’t believe that suddenly eight pages for each edition wouldn’t apparently work in the budget anymore. In past semesters, we had even done some twelve-page editions, and the number of pages never seemed to be a problem. It felt like the Youngtown was expected to fail,” said Wyszowski.

A few days after this meeting, Phelps sent the job description from over ten years ago and asked for recommendations and suggestions to update it, in which none of the students from the Youngtown staff did.

### ONE LAST EMAIL, THEN NONE; COMMUNICATION STOPPED FOR WEEKS

In the middle of October 2019, Wyszowski received an email from Simmons asking her to meet with Simmons and

Iacono. Wyszowski said that the email was so vague that she had to ask for clarification, and that once she realized that the meeting would be about a story idea that Simmons and Iacono wanted to suggest, she turned down the meeting. The email Wyszowski got in response from Simmons would be one that Wyszowski would never reply to. The email from Simmons was also sent to Janet Akeson, executive administrative assistant; Denise Bell, executive administrative assistant to the president and recording secretary to the BOT; and Joanne Hugues, executive administrative assistant to the president, and stated the following: “Alexa, I will let Dr. Iacono know that you are ‘too busy’ to meet with him. Additionally, for the remainder of the semester I will not rely on the Youngtown Edition to serve as an information resource for the student body. We will use another medium to share critical information to students. Bette M. Simmons, Ed. D.”

“When I got that email from her [Simmons] I was shocked. I couldn’t believe that an administrator would send something like that to a student,” said Wyszowski.

The Youngtown staff didn’t hear from Simmons or Phelps for over two weeks after the email Simmons sent to Wyszowski. When Wyszowski finally got another email from Simmons, it was about a new potential advisor, and then that week Simmons unexpectedly showed up at the Youngtown production meeting.

“Out of the blue, Simmons came into production and just stood there watching,” Gentile said. “While she was there, the

room felt heavy; I think I felt this way because her actions have been causing us a lot of issues this semester. Then, after about three long minutes, she finally spoke up and said how proud she was that we were able to be so productive and on top of everything, this honestly felt like an arsonist congratulating a group of firefighters.”

As Simmons left the meeting, she pulled Wyszowski out in the hallway away from the Youngtown staff for a private conversation.

“All I wanted was her [Simmons] to apologize for her email. I was so hurt by what she had said and done, but I never got an apology,” said Wyszowski.

**COLLEGE PRESIDENT KNEW NOTHING**

Many members of the Youngtown staff said on the second Monday in November that they got a very long email from the Youngtown Gmail account early in the morning. Wyszowski explained that sending this email was essential to obtaining enough content for the sixth edition.

“I had to take a bit of a risk in order to get enough content, and that involved sending a super long email around 4 a.m. in the morning, which was the first written thing that detailed out what the Youngtown and I were going through,” said Wyszowski.

This email went out to three faculty members and about 60 students. The email encouraged the students to send their stories and help contribute to the edition.

Coincidentally, later that very same day, Wyszowski got a phone call from Denise Bell, where she was asked to either talk to Iacono over the phone or get in his office as soon as possible. Wyszowski took a friend with her so she wouldn’t be alone, and they quickly learned that, apparently, Iacono was unaware of the Youngtown situation and what his administrative team was doing. Iacono wanted to know what was happening with the Youngtown, and Wyszowski said that she basically told him everything that they were going through.

“Honestly, I find it hard to believe that he had no idea what was going on,” Wyszowski said.

**ADMINISTRATION TRIED TO RIGHT THEIR WRONGS**

Two days after the initial meeting with Iacono, the Youngtown staff had a meeting in which Simmons and Phelps presented a new potential faculty advisor. There were about ten members of the Youngtown present at this meeting, and multiple members recorded this meeting, as NJ is a one-party consent state. During this meeting, the new potential advisor stated that he would have “too much to lose if the Youngtown put out something the administration doesn’t like.” The Youngtown staff never formally agreed to accept this new potential advisor.

Also on this day, Bell called Wyszowski to schedule a follow-up meeting, which would take place the next day, Nov. 14, whenever the PTK President’s Coffee event ended.

“I wasn’t sure how long the

PTK event was going to take, so I ended up inviting like the entire Youngtown staff to it, so this way as soon as the event was over, everyone was already there,” said Wyszowski.

There was little turnout at the PTK President’s Coffee, so there were more Youngtown students there than other students. When the event was over, Iacono came up to Wyszowski, and as she followed him into the next room, the Youngtown staff went with her. There were about 10 members of the Youngtown at these meetings, and multiple members also recorded these meetings, as again, NJ is a one-party consent state.

The first meeting was about 40 minutes long and was the Youngtown staff with Iacono and Bell, while Phelps, Simmons, and Vanderhoof waited outside the door. The meeting with Iacono was about how the college was planning to address the concerns the Youngtown had about administrative interference, the printing budget, the new potential advisor and anything else the Youngtown might need. In this meeting, the Youngtown staff asked Iacono many questions, and the questions he wasn’t unable to answer he said Simmons and Iacono should be able to answer. Iacono clarified that the newspaper would continue to be printed on newsprint, the amount of pages would be up to the students on staff to decide and that the Youngtown staff would not have to sell \$6,000 in ads.

The second meeting started when Iacono left the room after waving in the other administrators, and it lasted for about an hour. Vanderhoof first explained that the budgets are built a year in advance, and that the Office of Campus Life budget is made from college fees, and the Youngtown is a part of that.

“These allocations are based upon how many newspapers you’re going to print, the number of pages you’re going to print for each edition, and then we can move money around if we need to add pages, take away pages,” said Vanderhoof.

This made it clear that the money seemed to be flexible, but when asked why the college wanted to cut from the Youngtown budget to “save some money,” it was explained that there are less students attending CCM, so there is less money from student fees available.

Wyszowski mentioned that the Youngtown distribution team noticed that there seemed to be less newspapers during the semester. Phelps responded that the number of newspapers was cut from 1,200 to 600. The Youngtown staff did not know that the number of printed newspapers was cut in half, and said they were shocked to find this out.

Matthew Bristol, the Distribution Manager, said that this decrease in newspapers explained why all semester he had to search for and rearrange the newspapers constantly, as the print editions kept running out.

“This decision was made a year and a half ago,” said Phelps. “There was talk of changing the way the paper was distributed. All these conversations were a year and a half ago.”

“I’m assuming there were conversations two years ago that newspapers weren’t being picked up, perhaps, and that’s why it was reduced,” said Vanderhoof.

If these “conversations” were a year ago, a year and a half ago or two years ago, the Youngtown staff isn’t sure as the time frame seemed to change as the reasoning was explained. When asked who these conversations were with about cutting the number of printed newspapers in half, Phelps explained.

“This was a conversation between the past advisor [Russ Crespolini] and myself,” said Phelps.

When asked at a later date, Crespolini said he never had a conversation with Phelps about cutting amount of the printed newspapers, and even when he asked, Phelps never provided him with a copy of the Youngtown budget.

Then in the meeting, the “under the table” deal between Phelps and Wyszowski was brought up.

“When we were talking about doing the, going, keeping with the newsprint, that was \$8,000 more, if we could bring in another \$3,000 that makes that very easy to absorb,” said Phelps.

“I feel like if I didn’t agree to that we wouldn’t have had the newsprint,” said Wyszowski.

“Well, that was an agreement between you and I, and I said that’s just between you and I,” said Phelps.

After Phelps made that statement, the administration then determined that this “under the table deal” was just a “miscommunication.”

The meeting concluded with the following statements from Simmons.

“If you are all struggling, I’m concerned if there are any other clubs and organizations out there whose leadership feels they can’t talk to the Office of Campus Life,” said Simmons. “Our job is to advocate for you, [and] if you can’t trust your advocates, I’m very concerned as well. Let us

know if we are missing the mark somewhere, please.”

Many members of the Youngtown staff who attended these meetings said they were long, overwhelming, mostly unproductive and emotionally draining.

One of the only things these two meetings accomplished was that the Office of Campus Life would receive a key to the Youngtown production room, so that the staff wouldn’t have to contact and then wait for Public Safety to arrive to unlock the door each time. The other thing these meetings accomplished was that the number of printed newspapers would change from 600 to 900, but this change would not be officially confirmed until Jan. 17.

The Youngtown would like to apologize to all those who purchased ads in the fall 2019 semester, as the rate card stated that the print run was 1500, and in fall 2019, it was only 600. The Youngtown rate card will be updated to reflect 900, now that this new number has been told to the Youngtown staff and confirmed as the new print run. The Youngtown staff would like to give each of the four advertising companies who purchased ads during the fall 2019 semester a free ad during the spring 2020 semester.

**YOUNGTOWN CONTACTED STUDENT PRESS LAW CENTER**

When the Youngtown staff went to the Board of Trustees meeting on Nov. 19, 2019, as Wyszowski, Gentile, and Ingham informed the board everything that happened, they also told the board that they contacted the Student Press Law Center (SPLC). The SPLC is a non-profit organization that supports and helps student newspapers across the country. The Youngtown staff provided the SPLC with a 17-page document that had detailed over two years’ worth of evidence. In response, the Senior Legal Counsel of SPLC, Mike Hiestand, wrote a letter to the staff, in which he stated that “the

recent acts by CCM officials that you describe are extremely distributing and raise serious legal concerns.”

“We structured our speeches into three parts,” Gentile said. “Alexa’s part was a narrative since, unfortunately, the administration seemed to focus exclusively on her. My part took a closer look at actions taken against Alexa and, by extension, the Youngtown. This included the secret deal between Alexa and Phelps, and us being blamed for our ‘unrealistic expectations.’ Finally, Anthony closed our speech by reading a letter from the SPLC that talked about how the administration’s actions raised ‘serious concerns’ in regard to press freedom.”

About a month after the board meeting, the SPLC published a story about the Youngtown, including a full version of the speeches Wyszowski, Gentile, and Ingham read at the board meeting, as well as the complete letter that Hiestand wrote to the Youngtown staff.

**NEWSPAPERS STOLEN NIGHT AFTER BOARD MEETING**

On Wednesday, Nov. 20, the night after the Youngtown staff spoke at the Board of Trustees meeting, 350 newspapers were stolen from campus, only hours after the sixth edition had been distributed. In response to this theft, the Youngtown staff, on Thursday, Nov. 21 filed a report about the stolen newspapers with John Fichter, the Assistant Director of Public Safety. They also filed a report with the Randolph Police on Monday, Nov. 25.

The Youngtown staff emailed Fichter on Monday, Dec. 2 asking if Public Safety had any updates. The next day, instead of receiving an email back from him, Jan Caffie, Dean of Student Development and Enrollment Management, responded. Her email had Simmons, Fichter, VanDerhoof

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 6**



PHOTO BY LUNA WROBLEWSKI

From left to right: Christian Ingham, contributor; Anthony Ingham, news editor; Alexa Wyszowski, editor-in-chief; Adam Gentile, managing editor at the Nov. 2019 Board of Trustees meeting.

## CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

and Steven Ackerman, Director of Public Safety, copied on it. Her email explained that Public Safety identified a student, interviewed them, and completed their part of the investigation, and that "Public Safety's investigation did not warrant any further review by an off-campus agency." Caffie also explained that the student's name and video footage would not be released to the Youngtown because of CCM's Code of Conduct for disciplinary actions and FERPA, which are both not related to the law enforcement case documents and video footage that Public Safety created for this theft.

The Youngtown sent a letter to both CCM's Department of Public Safety and the Randolph Police requesting access to and a copy of the CCM Public Safety documents and video footage, and explains the open records law in NJ. Both responded within the seven-day time limit, but as Public Safety never gave anything to the Randolph Police, the police did not have anything from public safety. The college sent the Youngtown a redacted Public Safety report, as well as an explanation of why they would not send the complete documents or any of the video footage.

The explanation from the school that went with the redacted reports explained that certain sections of FERPA and OPRA were the reason why the complete reports and video footage could not be given. In response, the Youngtown sent a letter of appeal as the sections of FERPA and OPRA that were cited were not valid in this case.

The letter of appeal explains that the specific section of OPRA referring to student records, grievance, or disciplinary proceedings does not apply in this situation. The records, created by the Department of Public Safety, were not for disciplinary action



PHOTO BY MATTHEW BRISTOL

On Nov. 20, 2019, the night after the board of trustees meeting about 350 newspapers were stolen.

or proceeding, as the Office of Student Development and Enrollment Management would create records for disciplinary action or proceeding. Under the Office of Student Development and Enrollment section of the CCM website states "instances of misconduct based on the Student Code of Conduct will be brought to the attention of this office, and in conjunction with the Student Judicial Board, disciplinary actions are decided." Students involved in disciplinary proceedings would go through the Office of Student Development and Enrollment Management, not the Department of Public Safety.

The letter of appeal also explained that the specific section of FERPA does not apply to this

situation, and FERPA does not say that disclosure of law enforcement unit records is required or prohibited. Law enforcement records are not education records protected under FERPA. The records that the Department of Public Safety has are not education records nor are disciplinary records, and therefore FERPA does not apply, nor does neither does the section of OPRA that were cited.

However, the college denied the appeal letter as the information the Youngtown requested, according to CCM, "relates to and triggered a disciplinary proceeding against a student." The only new information the Youngtown got from these redacted documents was confirmation that

the newspapers were being taken and thrown out. The Youngtown still does not know who stole the newspapers.

#### LET'S NOT REPEAT HISTORY

All that the Youngtown Edition has been through is something that no student newspaper or publication at a public college should ever have to go through. Unfortunately, based on previous editions of the Youngtown Edition throughout the history of the college, the Youngtown and administration have had problems before. When the administration has been in the wrong, instead of taking responsibility, they have blamed the Youngtown and even used them as the "scapegoat." See the image from CCM

archives from Nov. 1981, titled "Youngtown used as scapegoat."

Problems between the Youngtown and administration even go back as far as 1970, where the Youngtown was suspended by the administration, as "various circumstances such as misunderstandings, lack of communication, and petty power struggles exist in CCM as they do in most institutions. Unfortunately, we [the Youngtown Edition] have been caught in the midst of such a dilemma." See the image from CCM archives from Mar. 1970, titled "Dear Readers".

Since the November 2019 Board of Trustees meeting, the only administrator who has reached out to the Youngtown staff was Phelps, who emailed the Youngtown confirming the new number of newspapers to be printed. The rest of the administration and the Board of Trustees have been silent.

Until Monday, Jan. 20, two days before the start of the semester, and the day of the first Youngtown deadline of the semester, the Youngtown received an email from Simmons explaining that the new potential advisor has been "appointed," and that the Youngtown staff should plan to meet with him within the first few weeks of the semester. The email did not include anything else related to the Youngtown.

Crespolini said he hopes that the Youngtown students sharing what happened to them will have two effects. The first would be getting them a faculty advisor, administrative support and the autonomy they deserve to pursue good journalism. The second, is to galvanize a move in Trenton.

"There is a bill that made it out of committee and stalled in the State House, which would provide student journalists and advisors with more protections," Crespolini said. "I would like to help get that bill passed to make sure something like this doesn't happen again. I know a lot of

## Youngtown used as scapegoat

**JOSEPH FORLENZA**  
Editor In Chief

Bette Simmons from Counseling Services says that the Marketing One course will not transfer easily and that it is a "horrendous situation." Dr. Terrence West, Business division chairperson says that the situation is "manageable" and explained that the course will transfer upon the student's completing an examination.

Who do you believe?

Well, Simmons and West conferred and both now agree that the transferability of business courses is not a horrendous situation.

In the meantime, guess who is in the middle of all this? The good ole YE.

Bette Simmons addressed the

Student Government at the Oct. 26 meeting and what she said was reported by our writer. For clarification, our reporter was covering the SGA meeting and what was happening at that meeting, not that the Marketing One courses were not transferring.

According to West and other faculty members, all hell broke loose and students were dropping Marketing like flies. West then wrote a letter to the editor explaining why transferring the courses is not as difficult as it sounds.

To top it off, West spoke in front of the Student Affairs Committee meeting, which I attended, and proceeded to blame bad reporting techniques" for the mix-up. Others there felt

that the future credibility of the whole school would be jeopardized by our report.

I almost melted the desk I was sitting at. It is not easy to sit through a meeting where your paper and one of your best reporters are being accused of poor reporting techniques.

Obviously, at the time Bette Simmons must have felt that the situation was important or she would not have gone in front of the SGA. It seems to me that Simmons and West should have conferred before making an issue out of the whole thing.

I do not believe the Youngtown should have been used as a scapegoat in this situation when it was actually a case of lack of communication between the two offices.

PHOTO COURTESY OF CCM ARCHIVES

people down there, so I am hopeful we can use this to get this done."

The Youngtown staff said their first edition of spring was the best time to share in the newspaper what had happened to them, as Jan. 29 happens to be Student Press Freedom Day across the country. In this edition, they hope will be the one that helps change history at CCM for good.

According to the U.S. Supreme Court, public college student newspapers and media are protected by the First Amendment.

"The law is clear: at a public college or university, the student editor is responsible for making all decisions regarding the editorial content in his or her student publication. School of-

ficials, while they may act in an advisory role, are required to exercise a strictly "hands-off" approach. For example, those acting on the school's behalf, may not withdraw, withhold or limit funding, fire editors, fire student media advisers, censor articles or issues, "stack" a publications board, limit access to facilities or equipment or take any other action whose effect or intent is to mold, manipulate, punish or otherwise inhibit constitutionally protected expression," said Hiestand from SPLC. "Moreover, courts have been steadfast in holding that administrators cannot censor or otherwise take action against a student publication merely because they are unhappy with its content, be it for reasons of political views, physical appearance, or a fear of 'inferior

quality."

Hiestand also gave an opinion about the suggestion from Phelps for the newspaper to be printed on different materials other than newsprint.

"I have worked with the Student Press Law Center for about 30 years," said Hiestand. "Were the Youngtown Edition to follow Mr. Phelps directive to print on copy paper stapled together it would, as far as I know, have the inglorious distinction of being the only college student newspaper in the country to do so."

The 2020 theme for Student Press Freedom Day is "this is what student press freedom looks like," and even though the Youngtown staff recently has not been able to fully know what that would look like, they said they have hopes that the college of-

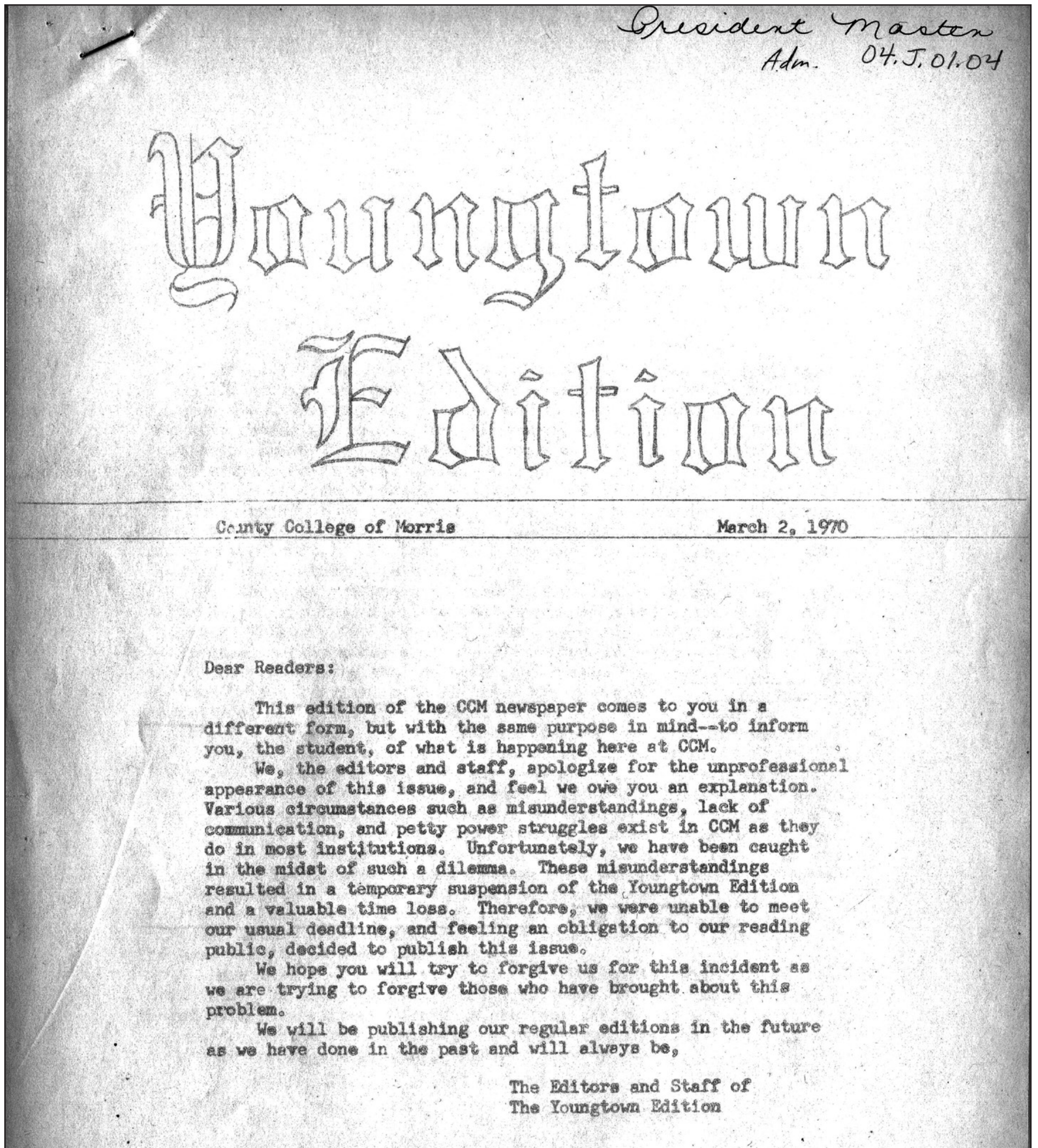
ficials will take the time to learn about student press freedom rights.

"It is clear that CCM officials are in desperate need of a First Amendment refresher course," said Hiestand. "They have taken and threatened multiple actions that raise serious legal concerns, including their removal of your advisor and cuts to your budget for reasons that seem very clearly tied to their unhappiness with the journalism you are practicing. I urge you to share this information with CCM officials and ask that they reconsider their actions and work with you to amicably resolve your concerns. I cannot imagine that they want to find themselves the defendants in a First Amendment legal battle."

As of press time, the Youngtown staff said they are still wait-

ing for the administration and board of trustees to contact them in hopes that this can all be resolved. The Youngtown staff said they are still operating without a faculty advisor, and are still afraid that the administration may try to do something similar to this again in the future, as history at CCM seems only to continue to repeat itself. However, according to the Youngtown staff, there is still hope that this can change, and that the Youngtown Edition will become free of administrative inference.

*All members of the college administration, the board of trustees and the CCM community are welcome to write a response for the next edition. Send responses to youngtownedition@gmail.com by Monday, February 3.*



# ADVISOR

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

ly explained that isn't something she should do," Crespolini said. "It would open up the school to action by the Student Press Law Center as it violates the rights of the student journalists."

The relationship between the Youngtown and the administration would change from this point forward. Simmons and Iacono would call meetings with the Youngtown staff regularly to question the staff on their choices and actions related to stories. During these meetings, Simmons and Iacono would also suggest positive public relations stories to be written about the college. Then, Iacono stopped sending in his column to the newspaper. The NJ Press Foundation College Newspaper Contest awards earned by the newspaper staff that used to be celebrated were now being completely ignored by the administration.

Crespolini said there were further meetings he was called into by the administration where the "direction and tone" of the paper were discussed, as well as "restoring confidence" and "correcting numerous errors."

"This was all very odd because during this time, the paper was winning awards for its work and being praised by outside agencies for the quality and professionalism of the staff," Crespolini said.

During the same time, Crespolini applied to become a full-time faculty member, but his application, as he was told, was stopped by Simmons. He was also told his application was the unanimous choice of the steering committee, department chair and dean.

"I can only say what I was told. And the person who told me had no reason to lie and is now no longer with the school," Crespolini said. "Ultimately, considering what the full-time faculty have gone through in terms of trying to get raises and the toxic culture on campus, it most likely was a blessing."

In January 2018, Crespolini spoke at the Board of Trustees meeting to share his experience with the application process, and also to ask that they make sure this retaliatory behavior does not happen to anyone else.

"They looked into it and things were changed procedurally. Both the vice president of Academic Affairs and dean of Liberal Arts were gone shortly thereafter and things settled. A few moments here and there when Dr. Simmons tried to get me to remove an editor or took issue with a story," Crespolini said. "But having been a journalist for a couple decades, this is sort of what happens with entrenched authority. You never take it personally. My focus was always on the student experience."

Students have testified to the incredibly positive experiences Crespolini enabled them to have.

"Being a professor and hav-



PHOTO BY RUSS CRESPOLINI

From left to right: Russ Crespolini, former faculty advisor; Adam Gentile, managing editor; Alexa Wyszowski, editor-in-chief; Anthony Ingham, news editor; Marco Mirlas, former contributor at the May 2019 Campus Life Appreciation Dinner Dance.

ing a full-time journalism career of his own, Russ always made time for us. He understood that as advisor, the Youngtown was the students paper first and foremost," said Marisa Goglia, former Copy Editor. "Russ helped guide us to help make the Youngtown the best it can be. And through his guidance we learned and became better journalists because of it."

"Russ is the type of professor who doesn't just teach his courses, but instead he cares and enriches each and every life of his students in some way," said Sophie Connell, former advice columnist.

As time went on, the Youngtown staff noted an emerging pattern. Positive stories about the school were met with high praise, but anything remotely critical was met with requests for more meetings or impromptu stops on campus for criticism. An example of criticism was when students on the Youngtown staff were called into an urgent meeting with Simmons and Iacono in the fall of 2018 about a story that covered students getting evicted from the club room. Iacono stated he was personally offended by the story. Simmons and Iacono explained that the whole reason for taking away the club room was for a new student success center.

In the spring 2019 semester, the Youngtown was recognized by the Morris County Freeholders for their work with Morris County Stigma-Free. Simmons and Iacono did not tell Crespolini about this and did not invite him to the event, even though he was the faculty advisor. Both Simmons and Iacono attended this event and even posed for photos. Crespolini was informed and invited to the event by the members of the Youngtown staff, in which he attended, but was not included in the photos.

During the summer of 2019, Don Phelps, Director of Campus Life, contacted the Youngtown staff asking for photos of the students on staff without their advisor in the photos. The only

photos they had were ones with Crespolini in them, so they sent them. Later in the fall 2019 semester, CCM would put a video on YouTube that included a photo sent by the Youngtown staff that originally had Crespolini in it, but which had him cropped out.

On July 22, 2019, Crespolini was removed as an advisor and as an adjunct by Dr. Bette Simmons. Crespolini said he was asked to meet with Simmons before one of the night classes he was teaching, and that scheduling this meeting took some time, as Simmons was then Vice President of Student Development and Enrollment Management and Vice President of Academic Affairs.

"She told me that I would no longer be advisor of the Youngtown Edition effective immediately," Crespolini said.

Simmons told Crespolini that the decision was not merit-based. He was also told that the paper was award-winning under his tenure, but that she wanted a full-time faculty member as an advisor as well as someone who was more of a "journalism guy" than he was.

"I have no qualms with wanting a full-time faculty member in charge. I get it. I actually agree with it for a lot of reasons. But I have been a working journalist for nearly two decades," Crespolini said. "So I was confused as to who she found that was going to have more experience than me. While my master's degree is in Speech, I've been a working journalist for almost 20 years and I've taught a wide variety of courses in the discipline."

Simmons told Crespolini that, as Vice President of Academic Affairs, she was "uniquely positioned" to interview a new advisor, and in January she hired a new professor from the English Department for the role.

This professor had no experience as a journalist nor in publication, but Crespolini did not know that at the time.

Simmons wasn't finished. She then told Crespolini that

her "last act" as vice president of Academic Affairs, was to recommend that the fall Speech Fundamentals classes that Crespolini had been assigned to, and begun preparations for be taken from him.

"I can say without exaggeration [that] I have some of the highest, if not the highest, student opinion reports on campus. My outcome assessment tests for the course are always a cut above everyone else. And, my chairperson has always been positive about my work when he has observed my classes," Crespolini said. "So this surprised me, especially since the decision was being made by someone and rubber-stamped by someone else who never saw my work in a classroom."

He told Simmons this, where she replied that the decision was not merit-based, and that the school was "going in a different direction" with the speech course.

"I can explain to you how this isn't the case," Crespolini said. But I would suggest you talk to the communications chair, Matthew Jones."

Dr. Matthew Jones, chair of the Department of Communication, said that the speech course goes through usual changes often in order to stay current, and that Crespolini's performance in the classroom would not be any sort of problem related to these regular updates to the speech course.

"The Department of Communication is always seeking ways to innovate content and format to improve student learning and make courses more enjoyable," Jones said. "So it is true that Speech Fundamentals is a dynamic course where changes often occur. This is necessary for the subject to remain engaging and relevant. However, I did not see Professor Crespolini's performance or employment as contrary to these aims."

Jones said Crespolini was an asset to the communication department, and that Crespolini's sudden removal was a loss for both the department and the

students.

"In my own judgment, and based on classroom observations as well as Student Opinion Reports and other testimonials, Mr. Crespolini was among our best performing adjuncts," Jones said. "The fact that he had a background in journalism that filled our need for a newspaper advisor, and that he offered students exposure to the profession and even in several cases job placement, was just additional good fortune."

Crespolini said that the most ironic part of the situation was that he had already made plans to leave CCM.

"I had told Dr. Jones over the summer that the fall would be my last semester teaching at CCM, and the spring would be my last semester advising the Youngtown," Crespolini said. "My full-time job and the classes I teach elsewhere, plus having a young child, were all requiring more of my time. I just wanted to give CCM advance notice so I could help with training and ease the transition. I didn't want to hurt the students or leave my colleagues in a lurch."

Crespolini said he emailed Simmons in September, concerned that weeks after his exodus, the Youngtown staff seemed unaware of the new status quo and had no advisor in place.

"I asked her to please make sure they had the support that they needed, basically," Crespolini said. "And, she assured me via email that they would. From there it was all out of my hands."

However, the students of the Youngtown Edition did not feel that they had the support they needed. For more information about what happened to the Youngtown staff, see the article "Youngtown in Turmoil."

All members of the college administration, the board of trustees and the CCM community are welcome to write a response for the next edition. Send responses to [youngtownedition@gmail.com](mailto:youngtownedition@gmail.com) by Monday, February 3.



# Advice before starting college

**BY RAVEN O'HERN**  
Contributor

In high school, teachers say college professors will not be lenient and will not tolerate “this or that.” Students approach college with fear and excitement, not knowing what to expect from college overall. Some County College of Morris students have input on advice that would have helped them if it were told to them a few years ago.

If only students were given the opportunity to hear advice that actually helps them survive or cope better with college as a whole. High school teachers like to approach the idea of students going to college with strictness and make it appear to be tougher than it is in an attempt to make students shape up.

Dillon Imes, a CCM design major, opens up on advice he wishes he had received in previous years.

“Make money and be smart on how you spend it,” Imes said. “Save as much as you can while you’re young. You will think back to that money when you truly need it.”

Money plays a factor in almost every college student’s life. Sometimes it is the decision between buying a meal, buying a textbook, or access code for a class. Being money-conscious at any age is important, but seems to be more important at an age where it can be turned around if something unfortunate happens.

Alyssa Grieco, a CCM nursing major, also would have liked to receive advice of this sort in her past.

“You don’t have to buy books on campus,” Grieco said. “You can rent books or buy them cheaper online.”

Nothing about college is cheap, as students actively enrolled in classes already know. From the books to the gas we spend in order to travel to our classes, college is no hefty feat that many people can accomplish or balance along with their work and social lives. There is a lot to balance as a college student, including work, classes, homework, and having a social life.

Along with being smart with money and being able to cut corners with textbooks and class supplies, time management is also crucial for college students. Kyara Mann, a CCM psychology major, utilizes time management in order to get by.

“Time management is key,” Mann said. “Don’t put too much on your plate.”

Time management is a skill that is easily acquired by some, but for others, it can be difficult to attain. If a student is finding it difficult to practice time management, the student can find a free app to help them stay organized and even purchase a paper planner to stay on top of their schedule.

A thing to think about as a college student is that if there was any piece of advice that you wish you could receive as a student about to enter college, what would it be?

# Tips for getting back into a new semester at college

**BY KATRINA IRHIN**  
Acting Copy Editor

Whether you are going into your first semester at college or your eighth one at the same institute you have been going to for years, trying to adjust to a new college semester can be a challenge. However, by devoting some time and energy to different techniques that are designed to make college easier to handle, the workload and stresses that come with it can become easier to deal with. Here are several tips on how to make not only this semester easier for you, but also every future one you are going to have.

To begin, the first tip is to wake up at the same time every day. This rule applies to everyone, whether you have to get up at 9:00 in the morning every single day of the week, or if you have to get up early some days while other days you can sleep in as late as you wish. Some of the benefits of waking up at the same time everyday, according to [verywellhealth.com](http://verywellhealth.com), are that it is easier to wake up, sleep deprivation is decreased, immune system function is improved, and the ability to drive more safely and attentively is increased -- all of which are vital to making (commuting to) college easier to handle. It does not matter what time you choose to wake up or what time you go to sleep

the night before, just as long as you wake up at the same time everyday.

The second tip is to get started with studying in the semester as soon as possible. Though holding off on school work for a few days does not seem like a big deal, nor does it assume an automatic failure for the course, considering all of the reading and work that classes demand, it is very easy to get left behind and not be able to complete all of the work and reading needed to be as prepared as can be. For classes where readings are assigned on a weekly basis, chances are, at least one chapter is expected to be read within the first week of school. Getting started with textbook reading (as well as other assignments) as soon as possible can help you be able to study throughout the semester at a comfortable pace and reduce the chances of getting left behind.

A third tip is to take advantage of extra credit opportunities whenever possible. Some professors offer extra credit to add points to tests and quizzes, your final grade, and so on. Taking advantage of different extra credit opportunities throughout the semester will make the extra credit accumulate, and therefore can have a larger impact on your final grade than you might have thought. Though it might be difficult to see so far away, tak-

ing advantage of as many extra credit opportunities as possible can mean the difference between a B+ and an A-, or even a failing grade versus a passing one. Taking some time out of your night to go to that one extra credit lecture or travelling out of town can mean a sizeable difference to your grades.

The final piece of advice is to seek help if you are dealing with stress from college, any sort of problem in life, or are struggling with issues with mental health. There is no shame in seeking help; however, if you still feel reluctant about reaching out for help, you can talk to someone at the Office of Counseling Services & Student Success, located in the Student Community Center, Room 118. Visiting the office is a largely anonymous process, as you can do it in private without telling anyone. In addition, seeking out a therapist is confidential (with very few exceptions). Seeking professional help can assist in not only managing issues with mental health and the stresses that college brings, but also helps in managing work-related stress, relationship-related stress, or any stress that life might throw at you. Some additional information about the Office of Counseling Services & Student Success:  
Phone: (973) 328-5140  
Fax: (973) 328-5141  
Email: [counseling@ccm.edu](mailto:counseling@ccm.edu)

## Roving Reporter: *What are your plans for a successful semester?*



Jesse Cole, Mechanical Engineering Technology major

*“To focus on my work and do the best I can.”*

Matthew Becker, Liberal Arts major

*“Make sure to balance homework and a healthy sleep schedule.”*



Nia Collazo (left), Psychology major

Devin Sambogna (right), Psychology major

*“Better time management, healthy lifestyle.”*

*“Time management and stop procrastinating and stay focused on what matters.”*



Ananya Mahalingak, no major

*“Better time management.”*

Evan Szkarlatiuk, Business Management major

*“Make time to do all school work.”*



# Opinion: Public Transit and CCM

BY LUNA WROBLEWSKI  
Photo Editor / Photographer

How do you get to campus everyday? I'm sure you have a driver's license and a vehicle that you use.

But, what if you're like me? I have an incredibly huge fear of driving a car, and I long for the day I can live in the city and pay \$2.75 (NYC) or \$2.00 (Philadelphia) for a ride across town. For the time being, however, I'm stuck with asking friends and family for 45 minute rides everyday. There has to be a better way, right?

Well, if you live in Morristown, Morris Plains, Parsippany-Troy Hills, Dover, or Roxbury, you're in luck. The NJ Transit 875 Bus will drop you off right outside of the Student Center. If you don't live near the before-mentioned

towns, it's a bit more complicated than that.

I live in Kinnelon, which is a part of Morris County; however, I feel like this place, along with much more of the county, is forgotten about when we talk about commuting to the county's school.

I called NJ Transit and spoke with a customer service representative who works specifically in the Schedule and Route Department. I told her where I live and the location of the bus stop closest to me, as well as the fact that my earliest classes begin at 9:30 a.m. three days a week this upcoming semester. I was told that if I wanted to be on time to class, I would need to take a bus to Port Authority, walk to Penn Station, take a train to Morristown, and take the 875 bus to CCM.

She didn't mention what time

I had to catch all these rides, just that it would cost me \$27.90 for a one-way trip to school. If I took later classes, I would be lucky enough to take the bus to Willowbrook, transfer to Morristown, and take 875 to CCM. That would cost me \$9.25, which isn't terrible and I would probably be willing to spend it -- if it didn't take 3 hours to get to a school in the same county that I live in.

Now I get it, I'm the minority here. I don't drive. Why should the school, or NJ Transit, care about making sure I can get to school? Because CCM is a community college. It should be accessible to the community. Everyone in the community should have access to this school, whether they drive to it or not. Having one bus route to the school is unacceptable and we, the students, deserve better than that.



PHOTO BY LUNA WROBLEWSKI

A map for bus 875 that stops at CCM.



ILLUSTRATION BY SAMANTHA SHIMABUKUKURO

## Opinion: C's don't get degrees

BY MICHELLE WALSH  
Features Editor

At the beginning of the fall semester, I felt hopeful that my passion for learning would be resuscitated. It was only my first day of the new semester when I heard the phrase "C's get degrees."

According to CCM's webpage, "a student will be placed on academic probation on the basis of an unsatisfactory Cumulative Point Average (CPA)... If the CPA falls below the probation level, the student will be placed on probation." (<https://www.ccm.edu/academics/academic-policies/>) The probation level varies through 1.4-2.0, depending on the number of credits attempted.

So though C's won't get you degrees, they will place you on academic suspension.

Coming from Sussex county, I wanted the best education

I could get with my less-than-desirable GPA. My options were limited only to community colleges, and I didn't want to attend Sussex County Community College. CCM offered me a chance to leave my county and to obtain the quality education I craved.

A rough semester, extenuating circumstances or laziness are all reasons your GPA may sink below a 3.0. Though a GPA below 3.0 isn't irretrievable, it may attest to your commitment to your degree.

College isn't for everybody, and not every college class is for everybody. There is no shame in withdrawing from classes to rediscover why you're here in the first place: your passion.

For students are seeking a second chance, CCM offers it through an exception called academic bankruptcy.

"Students who attended

County College of Morris in the past with poor academic records and who wish to return to the college without being penalized for a long-standing poor record may declare academic bankruptcy for all courses taken during their initial attendance at the college." This is only one of many options available for students seeking another chance.

Another possibility is to appeal the decision through the Academic Review Committee. The decision rendered by the committee is final, but students can also apply for readmission after dismissal.

Though your success at CCM is ultimately in your hands, you aren't stuck if you find yourself in an unsavory position. As the insanity of the first semester dies down, I implore you to consider your options before deciding to settle for C's.

## Opinion: Why You Should Study Philosophy at CCM

BY JARED BRODSKY  
Contributor

With the multitude of distractions attached to our fast-paced modern lifestyle, it is becoming increasingly difficult to take a step back and contemplate the basic principles upon which all of our more complex ideas rely. Philosophy, from the Greek philosophia, meaning "love of wisdom," has been defined in many ways, but I have always thought of it simply as an inquiry into the most fundamental nature of the universe and its constituents, the study of these basic principles.

"But why is it important to study philosophy?" you may ask. My answer is as follows: Whether or not the presence of philosophical thought is something of which we are always cognizant, we are indeed always with its company. Rather than coming into being ex nihilo, every idea we have, every decision we make, is begotten of our assumptions about the world and how it works. Without a comprehensive understanding of these assumptions, we cannot hope to draw from them any meaningful conclusions, or base upon them any educated decisions.

Because we stand to benefit so greatly from the ability to draw these meaningful conclusions and make these educated decisions, I strongly suggest that every individual devote at least a small portion of his or her time to the study of philosophy. With a plethora of resources available to us, there is no excuse to ignore philosophical study. Even students who are unable to take courses

in philosophy may turn their attention to publications such as the Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy at <http://www.iep.utm.edu/>, or the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy at <http://plato.stanford.edu/>.

The fast-paced nature of modern life is not only something imposed upon us, but also something we crave. We often convince ourselves that we don't have time for the detailed study of any one thing, because the very moment an idea enters our minds, we are already off to the next idea in an effort to move with blistering speed through life's intellectual offerings. Philosophy differs in this respect from any other area of study. For philosophy is not the study of any one thing, but the study of everything. With philosophy, we are able to set our teeth into every conceivable area of inquiry, and without it, we are condemned to grasp foolishly toward truths shrouded in stygian darkness. Where one seeks rapid movement of ideas, philosophy does not drag—One need not slow oneself to a sluggish pace in order to study this mistakenly so-called 'niche' area of thought.

I challenge you to commit yourselves to just one course in philosophy, to hone your talent in the art of questioning your assumptions and whence they emerge. Within a semester you will come to understand how a brief philosophical thought quickly spawns an exponentially increasing multitude of entailments, questions, and problems, how entire universes of possibility can arise from a single idea—How's that for fast paced?

# California law takes a shot at NCAA

**BY MICHAEL ROVETTO**  
Contributor

Some student-athletes at County College of Morris support the idea of college athletes getting paid because they understand the hard work that goes into playing a college sport. They believe it is foolish to allow the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) to profit off their own athletes without them earning a single penny in return.

California Gov. Gavin Newsome has already signed a bill to allow college athletes to hire their own agents and make money off endorsements. The bill is set to take effect in 2023, and the reality is that college athletes throughout the nation could be paid in the future.

Others believe this bill threatens the business model of college sports. The NCAA has had a notion that athletes should earn a degree, not money, for playing sports. This bill contradicts everything the NCAA believes in.

CCM athletic director Jack Sullivan has first-hand experience when it comes to managing an athletic program. He provided an expert opinion on the California bill that will be put into place.

"I commend California for being proactive and starting the ball rolling while the rest of the country continues to just talk about making changes," Sullivan said. "While I commend California for taking action, I am not sure what the impact will be.

The competitive balance is now clearly leaning towards the West Coast. I'm not sure how it is fair for the rest of the country. This, coupled with the BCS [Bowl Championship Series], has in my opinion severely diminished the power of the NCAA. We will not know the total impact of this new opportunity for DI [Division I] student-athletes for some time, but it will surely be interesting as it unfolds."

CCM student Nolan Leger, a communication major, knows what it is like to be a student-athlete as he plays baseball for the community college. Leger, who is from Bridgewater, New Jersey, is a left-handed pitcher and occasionally plays in the outfield. He shared what a typical day is like during the baseball season.

"Next semester I have an 8 a.m. class and then an 11 a.m. class," Leger said. "School is always first. School comes before baseball, so if I have to take a test on game day, I'm going to take the test. I can't go to the game. I also have to let the coach know. Baseball's practices usually start around 2 [p.m.], and we go until 5 [p.m.], maybe 6 [p.m.]. We go over plays for defense and stuff like that. The pitchers have a lot of signs we have to go through, bunt plays, etc., so it's a very long day. Every day is a long day, and I live 45 minutes away. So I get here at 8 [a.m.], leave my house at 6:30 [a.m.], go to class, and I don't get home until 7 [p.m.] or 8 [p.m.]. So it's a very long day. I go to bed early and try to get my homework done as fast as I can."

A student-athlete has little time to do anything, let alone homework. This is not to mention what playing a sport is like at a powerhouse four-year university. One could only imagine how much time and hard work goes into the preparation and practice on a daily basis.

"I do support student-athletes getting paid, as a lot of us don't have time for a job," said Gabriella Maffei, a member of the CCM volleyball team and human services major. "I think it's wrong how the NCAA is able to make money off their own players' names at big division one schools, but the athletes themselves can't."

Student-athletes are not permitted to make money off their own name, according to the NCAA rules and regulations. There have been numerous instances in which college athletes have been suspended and, in some cases, kicked out of college for receiving money from friends, family members, and coaches.

The most recent case involves Ohio State star defensive lineman Chase Young, who has suspended two games for accepting a loan last year from a family friend, which he fully repaid.

Although CCM is a small school for sports, students attending still understand what student-athletes experience at major Division I programs. They believe there is a problem with athletes being mistreated, and that they should be able to make money off their popularity.

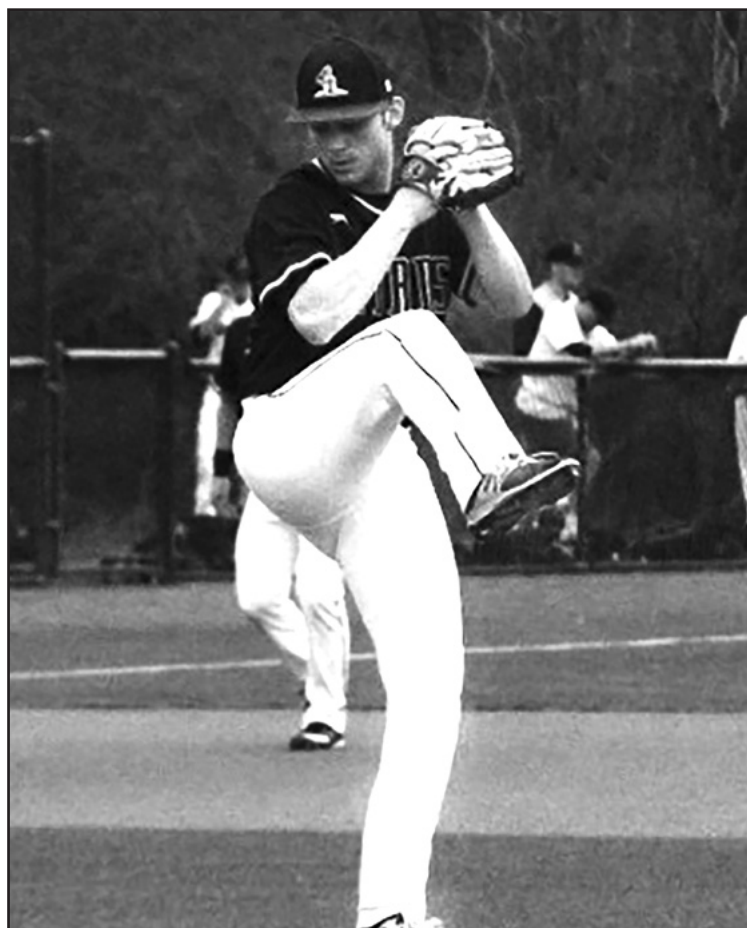


PHOTO BY NOLAN LEGER

Nolan Leger, of Bridgewater, New Jersey, is the starting pitcher for the CCM baseball team.



PHOTO BY GABRIELLA MAFFEI

Gabriella Maffei, of Jefferson, New Jersey, plays outside hitter for the CCM volleyball team.



PHOTO BY MICHAEL ROVETTO

Money piles up as the NCAA could be paying their athletes in the future.

### Attention Psychology Majors (or students interested in Psychology) PSI BETA WANTS YOU!

We are inviting students to join our CCM chapter of Psi Beta, the National Honor Society in Psychology for community colleges. Psi Beta membership is a nationally recognized honor, an excellent addition to any college application or job resume, and a great way to meet peers and faculty with similar interests. You may mark your membership with special regalia at Commencement.

- Requirements:
- Overall GPA of at least 3.25
  - 12 units or more college credit completed
  - B or higher in at least one college psychology course
  - A one-time lifetime \$50 membership fee

Interested? Contact Dr. Alison Levitch, [alevitch@ccm.edu](mailto:alevitch@ccm.edu) or Dr. Kristin Nelson, [knelson@ccm.edu](mailto:knelson@ccm.edu) or call the Psychology Dept. office 973-328-5631

Visit [www.psi-beta.org](http://www.psi-beta.org) for more information and to view or order graduation regalia

### PUBLIC NOTICE OF UPCOMING ACCREDITATION REVIEW VISIT BY THE ACEN

County College of Morris wishes to announce that it will host a site visit for continuing accreditation of its Associate Degree nursing program by the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN).

You are invited to meet with the site visit team and share your comments about the program in person at a meeting scheduled at 4:00pm on Wednesday, March 4 in Room EH119 of Emeriti Hall located at 214 Center Grove Rd., Randolph, NJ 07869.

Written comments are also welcome and should be submitted directly to:  
Dr. Marsal Stoll, Chief Executive Officer  
Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing  
3343 Peachtree Road Northeast, Suite 850  
Atlanta, GA 30326

Or email: [mstoll@acenursing.org](mailto:mstoll@acenursing.org)  
All written comments should be received by the ACEN by February 17, 2020.

# CCM professor attempting second candidacy for Congress

BY NICK DUVA

Staff Writer

County College of Morris history professor Mark Washburne announced his candidacy as a Democrat for the U.S. House of Representatives in 2020 for New Jersey's 11th Congressional District on Sept. 17, 2019. The district covers parts of Essex, Sussex, Passaic, and Morris counties. The district also encompasses CCM.

The seat is currently held by Congresswoman Mikie Sherrill (Dem.- Montclair), who swung the district from red to blue in the 2018 midterm election in a district that has been long-held by Republicans for over 30 years.

He formally announced his candidacy Sept. 17. The significance of his announcement is that Sept. 17 is Constitution Day, which is the anniversary of the signing of the Constitution in 1787.

Washburne said that he was sick and tired of watching President Donald Trump's administration breaking the law continuously and violating the oath of office. According to Washburne's campaign website, he is dismayed by Trump's actions and supports the impeachment inquiry stating:

"We are now faced with a new challenge, however, on whether we can 'keep it' – this Republic – due to the unethical and illegal actions of the current Chief Executive. As detailed by the Mueller Report and the prosecution of Michael Cohen and others, Donald John Trump

has acted in a reckless manner that includes possible criminal activity, obstruction of justice, and lying to the American public."

Washburne was influenced to run for the 2020 election because Sherrill initially opposed the impeachment of President Donald Trump and also was not happy with his administration. Since then, Sherrill has reversed her position in an op-ed article for The Washington Post along with six other first-term Democrats, who initially opposed the impeachment proceeding.

In that same op-ed, the women stated: "We have devoted our lives to the service and security of our country, and throughout our careers, we have sworn oaths to defend the Constitution of the United States many times over. Now, we join as a unified group to uphold that oath as we enter uncharted waters and face unprecedented allegations against President Trump."

The shown evidence convinced the women that the evidence is clear, and they feel that Trump should be held accountable for his actions.

Washburne was born in Chicago. When he was around 2 years old his family settled in New Jersey but then relocated to Deerfield, Illinois where he would spend the next 11 years. Washburne and his family then settled in Chatham, New Jersey. In 1974, Washburne graduated from the now-defunct Bayley Ellard Catholic High School in Madison, New Jersey.

He attended Marquette University in Milwaukee for his bachelor's and master's degrees in political science in 1978 and 1979. Washburne also earned an MBA in marketing from Fairleigh Dickinson University in Madison, New Jersey in 1986.

After receiving his first master's degree in 1979, Washburne set off for Jeddah, Saudi Arabia for seven months to assist in a project to construct an airport for the city. After he returned from Saudi Arabia, Washburne went on to become a stockbroker, and later on an adjunct professor, teaching numerous history and business courses at a number of schools.

In 1995, Washburne joined CCM as an adjunct, then later was appointed to full-time in 2001, according to the college website's biography on Washburne. At CCM, Washburne is a member of the college's history and political science department, and he loves teaching the subject because he loves storytelling.

Washburne is well respected around campus. Students like Nayelli Alvarado, a liberal arts major at CCM, shared her thoughts on his teaching and sees first hand his passion for the subject.

"He's very clear, knows what he's talking about and keeps us awake," Alvarado said.

"I think that he is genuine, and running for office on certain issues that he thinks are critical to American democracy," said Dr. Candace Halo, a CCM political science pro-

fessor, and member of the history and political science department. "As a colleague, I think that he is very bright. I think that he is very genuine in his position on issues. I don't believe that he panders. I think he really is very honest about his political position."

Halo also commented on her personal interactions with Washburne.

"Oh, he's very pleasant," Halo said. "I'll tell you a nice thing that I like about Professor Washburne is when I come in I don't really need to read a newspaper that day because he's already read it, and he's informed me about the current events."

Washburne is a distant cousin to a Civil War-era congressman and diplomat named Elihu B. Washburne. Elihu Washburne was a congressman from Illinois, U.S. secretary of state, and was the U.S. minister and ambassador to France. Washburne also said that his cousin was a staunch ally of President Abraham Lincoln.

Along with being related to Elihu, he is also related to other major global figures, including former Presidents Ulysses S. Grant, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, George H.W. Bush, George W. Bush, and Princess Diana, to name a few.

Outside of CCM, Washburne is an enthusiastic runner, having run for almost 30 years and over 10,000 days consecutively since 1989. In addition, Washburne is the president of the United States

Running Streak Association/Streak Runners International (SRI/USR-SA), which is a global organization that celebrates running streaks. He has been president since 2011.

The organization has a list of runners from at least 44 different countries. Washburne has also participated in the Boston Marathon for at least 15 years and qualified again for 2020 and 2021.

This is not the first time Washburne has run for Congress. He first ran back in 2018 during the midterm elections but lost the Democratic primary to then-candidate Sherrill. After he lost the primary, his name was put on the ballot for mayor of Mendham, New Jersey, where Washburne currently is a resident, and a Democrat has not been seen on the ballot in decades. Washburne conceded.

In regard to future plans, Washburne said that he's looking forward to retiring and potentially making a move to Washington, D.C.

"Hopefully people learn something, and my history classes, that they found them enjoyable," Washburne said about his legacy. "For a lot of students, U.S. I and U.S. II will be their last time they ever take history class. A lot of them had negative attitudes towards history, so my goal is to try to make it an enjoyable experience. So when they're in their 40s and someone says 'let's go to Gettysburg,' and they'll say, 'yeah, I always wanted to learn more about that.'"



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