

THE COUNTY COLLEGE OF MORRIS' AWARD-WINNING STUDENT NEWSPAPER YOUNGTOWN EDITION

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MIT - Koch Institute Image Awards 2025



Professor Keith Smith of CCM's Art and Humanities Department attends the MIT Koch Institute Image Award Ceremony for his achievement on imaging via electron microscope.

Prof. Keith Smith from the CCM Art and Humanities Department is part of a four-person team that produced an image that has won the 2025 MIT Koch Institute Image Award. The photograph shows Prof. Smith at the MIT - Koch Institute Image Awards Ceremony on March 11, 2025 in Cambridge Massachusetts. The Electron Microscope Image of Gourami (a kind of sucker-fish) Adhesion Scales might provide a chemotherapy delivery system to patients with colon cancer. Electron Microscope images are black and white, and Professor Smith, an artist, joined the image team to add authentic Gourami Fish coloring to the mega-image. The award-winning image will be on display at the Koch Institute in Cambridge Massachusetts for one year.

When asked, "How were you selected to work on this project?", Professor Smith said, "My son in law, Ben Muller, CCM Graduate with a Bachelor and Masters of Science from the University of Oregon and PhD Candidate at Northeastern University, is an electron microscope expert at the MIT's Koch Institute. He was struggling with the colorization of the image and asked if I would join the team to help with that endeavor."

MIT Koch Institute Image Awards

Scientific data comes in many varieties and formats, but a special place is reserved for images. Microscopy and other biomedical imaging techniques provide new windows through which experts and non-scientists alike can glimpse otherwise invisible biological worlds.

The Koch Institute Image Awards were established to recognize and publicly celebrate these extraordinary visuals. They exemplify the exchange of ideas between science, engineering, and art, illuminating the biological insights and technological innovation coming out of MIT's laboratories. Simply put, these visuals are beautiful and thought-provoking.

Every year life scientists and engineers from the MIT community submit their entries for our annual competition. A panel of judges, with wide-ranging expertise in science, art, and media, chooses ten winning images to appear in the annual Image Awards exhibition organized by MIT's Koch Institute for Integrative Cancer Research.

Winning images are exhibited in 8-foot tall backlit square and circular displays in the Koch Institute Public Galleries. Visible from Main Street, the exhibition represents the Koch Institute's commitment to make biomedical research accessible to all.



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American Government as Viewed through Four Quotes and a Song.

BY KENNETH A. SHOULER
Professor of Philosophy and Contributor to the Youngtown Edition

Plato understood democracy well. In a famous analogy he argued that having knowledge is every bit as important in steering the ship of state as it is in steering a ship at sea. When people lack knowledge, they are likely in the grip of mythos, not logos. They vote accordingly. Democracy bothered Plato because we find people voting based on a candidate's popularity, image, opinions. None of these things are related to the candidate's fitness to rule. For knowledge of statecraft and a concern for the public good qualifies one to be leader of the free world. Trump lacks both. The 49.8 percent of the population that voted for Trump lacked knowledge.

As we pass the 100-day mark of Trump's astonishingly ignorant second term, it is evident—at least to those not caught in some interminable spiral of otherworldly denial—that those who cast their vote ignorantly prove Plato's argument. Democracy depends on an informed electorate as water depends on hydrogen.

Let us examine the current situation as viewed through the lens of four wise quotes and a memorable song.

Quote One

"It is wrong always, everywhere, and for anyone to believe anything on insufficient evidence."

That gem, which adorns the inside cover of my logic text, came to us courtesy of British philosopher and scientist W. K. Clifford, (1845-1879). If you reply, "I never heard of him," please know that were he still alive he wouldn't have heard of you either. Know also that you would have committed what logic calls the genetic fallacy; that is, judging an idea by where it came from. The truth of a statement doesn't depend on who said it. If something is true, it's true, whether it is said by the town landscaper, the best bowler on your team, or even an imbecile like Tommy Tuberville.



William Kingdon Clifford
 British philosopher (1845-1879)

People voted for this failed president based on impressions and hunches and feelings. They lacked knowledge. Repeat: lacked knowledge. Knowledge of what? That he was an abject failure with respect to COVID-19. That he is science averse—indeed expertise averse—since he refers to climate change as "a hoax." Since he lacked that knowledge and you voted for him, then you lacked that knowledge too. The mania, the narcissism, and the denial of reality that comprise this man are traits that his voters approved of.

You are therefore, as captured by that pre-election euphemism, a "low information voter." If the euphemism makes you feel a little better, better hold tight to that straw. Kamala Harris beat the living daylight out of him in a debate. I'm sure you ignored that, too. What else? Everything else: his 34 felonies, his leading of an insurrection on January 6, 2021. Want to play semantics? Then call it a "seditious conspiracy" and look that up. You cast a vote for a man who scoffed at the rule of law. He ran for office to stay out of jail.

W.K. Clifford was right. When you voted you lacked sufficient evidence. Awe, I know. He felt your "white grievance," he amused you with catchy phrases such as "drain the swamp" and "make America great again." Those impressed the easily impressionable. You aren't supposed to root for a president.

That's immoral. You can root for the Jets and the Giants—that's your prerogative. That's what fans do. But your job here was to choose the best person for the job. That involves thinking—defined as drawing conclusions on the basis of evidence—not rooting.

Quote Two

"When all think alike, no one thinks very much." Walter Lippman, writer and political commentator.

Mr. Lippman also sees us, doesn't he? You need to identify with a group? FOX Entertainment viewers? The Rotary Club? The Knights of Columbus? The guy or gal next to you with the red dunce cap at a MAGA rally? Too bad that you require such identification. Some of us have the courage to think for ourselves. But if you need to identify with a party or your family or the website devourers now sitting to your left and right, then you are likely lacking in spine. What Walter Lippman was getting at was

the need to be accepted by a group to such an extent that you surrender your power of critical thinking. You are not alone. The entire Republican party who dare not to disagree with Trump would benefit from a backbone transplant.

Quote Three

"The whole problem with the world is that fools and fanatics are always so certain of themselves, and wiser people so full of doubts." Bertrand Russell (1872-1970)

This isn't true just because British philosopher Bertrand Russell (1872-1970) said it. Trump inhabits the category of fool, and the fanatics are those who hang on his every word in cultish obedience. We've seen cults before. More than 900 people who put their faith in Jim Jones died in the foul air of Jonestown, Guyana in 1978. Trump drew crowds with his own brand of lethal populism. In 2021 there was the unevicenced wail "Stop the steal." Ten years before that,

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County College of Morris • SCC 129
 214 Center Grove Rd., Randolph, NJ 07869-2086
 E-mail: youngtownmedia@student.ccm.edu

Editor-in-Chief	Ruth Adams
Managing Editor	Sara Lim
News Editor	Open
Copy Editors	Ruth Adams, Sara Lim
Features Editor	Open
Opinion Editor	Open
Entertainment Editor	Open
Sports Editor	Open
Staff Writer	Open
Layout Editor	Open
Photo Editor / Photographer	Open
Staff Illustrator / Cartoonist	Open
Social Media Manager	Open
Distribution Manager	Andres Montesdeoca
Circulation	Open
Technical Advisor	Luis Carrasquillo
Faculty Advisor	Don Phelps

Staff: Ruth Adams, Sara Lim, Jake Petrovcik, Grace Scanlon

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starting in 2011, he bellowed the “birther conspiracy”—the absurd idea that Obama wasn’t born here, even though Obama had produced a Hawaii birth certificate. Thus, he built up his Twitter base with that lie, and paid no price for it, since his followers winked and nodded and shared his retrograde view of race. They also share his authoritarian view of governing. That is not our system of government since our first election in 1789.

Quote Four

“The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing.” --Edmund Burke (1729-1797)

Here the British writer and philosopher stated a truth that is ever relevant. Consider the war in Ukraine. “We are a de facto ally of Russia,” writes Tom Nichols of The Atlantic. When has that ever been true before? In May 2023, while he was campaigning, Trump promised peace in Ukraine on Day One. But his first 100 days are approaching

with no peace in sight. It was noted that Trump’s social media reprimand of Vladimir Putin last week totaled 30 words. By comparison, his harangue directed at Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky, whose country was attacked, was 259 words. Amazingly, he accused Zelensky of prolonging the war in his own country by not agreeing to a United States peace plan that would grant Russia most of the territory it has seized.

“He’s an excellent television entertainer,” Timothy Snyder said of Trump. The author of *Tyranny* and a Professor of History at Yale University, Snyder said “The moral sadness and geopolitical idiocy of this is that Ukraine isn’t being offered anything. Trump pressures Ukraine to accept a peace plan that favors Russia.” Yet who in the Republican party opposes Trump’s alliance with a Russian dictator? Who stands up to him? The daily lack of courage is startling.

The Song

Idiot Wind, by Bob Dylan

Bob Dylan used the chorus in his “Idiot Wind” (from the “Blood on the Tracks” album) six times. This is the stanza that caught my attention most:

Idiot wind
Blowing every time you move
your mouth
Blowing down the back roads
headin’ south
Idiot wind
Blowing every time you move
your teeth
You’re an idiot, babe
It’s a wonder that you still know
how to breathe

The Idiot Wind still blows, daily. It was blowing last Friday, when Trump claimed he had spoken with Chinese President Xi Jinping amid tariff tensions with China. But China denied any such talks between Beijing and Washington. In a *Time* magazine interview published on April 25, Trump said Xi called him, although he didn’t say when the two spoke or what Xi said. The United States has imposed tariff rates as high as 145 percent on imports from

China, and China has retaliated with 125 percent tariffs on United States exports. “At present, there are absolutely no negotiations on the economy and trade between China and the U.S.,” Chinese Ministry of Commerce spokesperson He Yadong told reporters Thursday April 24 in Mandarin, as translated by CNBC.

So yet another of Trump’s bald-faced lies. The beat goes on. A beat of lies that numbered 30,573 by the end of Trump’s first term in January 2021. Four years and three months have passed since then and the tally may have doubled.

Pray tell, what does it say about you if you still take the word of a pathological liar?

Bring it home, Bob:

Idiot wind
Blowing like a circle around my
skull
From the Grand Coulee Dam to
the Capitol
Idiot wind
Blowing every time you move
your teeth
You’re an idiot, babe
It’s a wonder that you still know
how to breathe

ENTERTAINMENT: Punk’s not dead in New Jersey

BY LOGAN CONNOLLY

Punk’s not dead – at least, not in New Jersey. From house shows in New Brunswick to punk shows at Montclair’s Meatlocker, the punk scene in New Jersey is thriving. Cynics say the punk scene is dead, but ask a punk, and they’ll surely set the record straight.

Billy Kasper, a dance major and business minor at Montclair State University, frequents local punk shows in northern New Jersey.

“You have to support your community when art is being created,” said Kasper. “Supporting your friends is important, even if you don’t necessarily enjoy the genre.” Community support is a foundation of the flourishing underground scene.

Informal gathering spaces allow communities to flourish. A big one for New Jersey punks is the Meatlocker, a venue that provides punks a place to collect and connect with like-minded individuals.

The atmosphere is comparable to that of CBGB’s, sans the bar. It’s gritty, loud, and communal. Stickers and graffiti cover the walls, and the smell of sweat hangs in the air. Jumping off stages, moshing, and screaming lyrics are a couple of ways Kasper actively participates in his scene. “It’s a rush,” he said.

“I’ve never been religious. I never followed God. I did not like Catholic school. But when an artist I admire gets on stage, I feel like I’m at church. It’s as if they’re a preacher. It totally feels religious” said Kasper.

The religious feeling Kasper describes is not a unique one. When in a collection of people, united by common beliefs and interests, it’s impossible to deny the religious parallels. A well-attended show, led by an impassioned front-person, is sermonlike.

In many religious settings, it is encouraged for one to love thy neighbor; the punk scene is no different. Lifelong friendships are

made at these underground shows. Lydia Hyde, 20, of High Bridge, New Jersey is a loyal supporter of her friend’s bands. She shows up to every show and always cheers her heart out.

“It makes me feel good showing up to support my friends,” said Hyde. “It’s like — wow! Someone came to support me! It makes me happy to be there to comfort my friends when they perform.”

Hyde expanded upon this, saying her own experiences of performing have made her realize the value of seeing a familiar face in the crowd. Even if only five people show up to a house show, one’s friend being one of those faces is an instant confidence booster.

“A lot of the people I see look and dress like me,” said Hyde, “They share the same values and political opinions, which is refreshing. It’s cool to be in a place where I fit in.” Even in alternative scenes, the human desire to find community is universal.

Jesse Sayner, 20, a psychology major at Montclair State University frequents local and touring shows in the tri-state area. “It’s important to attend local shows because that’s where every band starts out,” Sayner said. “Without that, those bands would just stop playing and never get big.”

Sayner elaborated, explaining how every band starts somewhere. Nirvana, The Smashing Pumpkins, Pavement - they all started by playing small shows.

Sayner is sure he has found the community where he belongs. “Seeing my friend Jack’s band, Rotoscope, grow, get bigger, and better over time” has been formative for Sayner.

Ask a punk, any punk, and hear the same answer: Punk’s not dead. And for those who claim otherwise, the roar of the next New Brunswick basement show might just prove them wrong.

A Letter From the Editor

RUTH ADAMS

Editor-In-Chief of The Youngtown Edition

During my two years attending CCM, I learned many valuable lessons. Straight out of high school, I came into a new world with no expectations except that I wanted to use this fresh start as an opportunity to reevaluate myself and my future.

After my first semester in the fall of 2023, I was determined to be the best possible student. My mind was strictly focused on academics, something I had never seemed to be in my previous years of schooling. The newfound independence and reliance I had to have on myself seemed to motivate me, unlike my experiences during K-12. It was a breath of fresh air to be able to push myself and see the results I was working for. On the downside, it seemed as if I had completely lost touch with my friends, hobbies, and the other activities that made me—me. In an attempt to not burn myself out, I reached out to new horizons to align myself again, in tangent with my schoolwork.

What I always knew about myself was how much I liked to write. In high school, I frequently wrote poetry but kept my hobby personal. I found myself restricting my writ-

ing to a box of only writing poetry or an occasional song, along with my assigned school work. I didn't limit myself to these writings for any particular reason, except that I didn't find an outlet that inspired me to expand my creativity. That was until the beginning of the 2024-2025 school year. By being in the right place at the right time, just three days before fall classes began, I signed up to work the writers club booth at CCM's new student orientation. At this event, my advisor Professor Maryam Alikhani introduced me to Professor Kenneth Shouler who happened to be sitting at the booth next to ours. With his booth stacked with previous editions of The Youngtown Edition, he showed me what previous editors could achieve and the types of writings they got published. I hadn't realized until then that news and journalistic writing was something I would become fascinated with. Suddenly, every current event became a news story, and I knew I was going to write for The Youngtown Edition during the school year. What I didn't know was Professor Shouler would ask me to be the editor-in-chief for the fall 2024 semester, and then continually for the spring 2025 semester.

When I was offered the position of editor-in-chief, I saw a whirlwind of opportunities arise. Originally, I wasn't sure if I had what it took to take on such a demanding role. In all honesty, I had no idea what I was getting myself into or what was to be expected of me as editor-in-chief. With the help of Professor Shouler, we were able to put out the first edition, where I saw my name printed and published for the first time. It was a surreal sight to see, something that even 15+ editions later, never gets old. Of course, my first article was about studying habits and schoolwork. I give credit to The Youngtown Edition for helping me find new creative ways to express my love of writing. I am glad I pushed myself to new limits and have written many more types of articles including opinion pieces, news stories, and even got a couple of my previous poems.

I want to thank all of those who helped me during my time at CCM as a student and as editor-in-chief. I have become someone who I never would have expected to be. I am hoping to take the lessons I have learned during my time here into my future at Rutgers University and I am excited for another new chapter. However, I will never forget the

overwhelming support I received from CCM staff. Professor Alikhani helped me become a better writer and leader in her English Composition class and writer's club. Professor Shouler showed me what it takes to be a news writer and editor and provided me with prodigious advice and support throughout my Youngtown Edition and transfer journey. Drew Notaricola did an impressive job with the layout design this year and Luis Carrasquillo helped us out greatly with the last two editions.

As sad as I am that my time here is done, I know The Youngtown Edition will be in safe hands with the fantastic and consistent writers we have. Sara Lim, our managing editor, has shown continuous and exemplary work this year, and I am confident she will continue to show off her talents in writing next fall. Thank you again to all YE staff for an incredible school year. All of our work has exponentially paid off, and I am so proud that we were able to clutch eight awards for the New Jersey Press Awards this past year. I wish you all the best going forward and that the future editors of The Youngtown Edition will be able to have such a broadening and enriching experience as I did.

Shoppers fight back against inflation

BY JAKE PETROVCIK

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, the cost of living has risen significantly. Families across the United States have felt the effects of this, regardless of their economic status. Whether it's buying fewer eggs, or having to sell their homes, everyone has been impacted by the recent economic changes.

Sarah Mott, 22, is an esthetician in High Bridge, New Jersey, who comes from a six-person household. "My family has had to cut back on grocery costs," she said. "We try to shop in bulk, and economize where we can."

Warehouse stores, such as Costco and Sam's Club, have become reliable and consistent options for large families who need to stock up on necessities. The Motts buy their

chicken in bulk at Restaurant Depot rather than at ShopRite, which saves them more than \$1 per pound.

"We go for the generic brand items now – for dish soap and cereal specifically," Mott said. Name-brand items have become an unnecessary expense for many Americans. One item that is a popular talking point regarding inflation is eggs. The relative cost of eggs has increased by 60.4 percent from April 2024 to April 2025, according to the Consumer Price Index Summary.

Aidan Smith, 22, is an English major at Montclair State University. "I haven't bought eggs in two months; they're just too expensive," he said. What was once a regular staple in the American diet has now become a secondary priority to consumers.

"I'd rather spend my money else-

where," Smith said. "I switched to oatmeal in the mornings." Raising the question – are price increases affecting the nutritional value of the average consumer's diet?

Eggs are one of the most nutritionally dense foods in the grocery store. They're simple, easy, and deliver vital nutrients that are lacking in other areas of the typical American's diet. The hike in the price of eggs can be attributed to the bird flu outbreak. Many poultry farmers have been forced to cull their flock due to possible exposure to the virus. Smaller flocks mean fewer eggs and fewer eggs mean the prices are increasing.

Dennis Plewa, 19, is an earth studies major at Montclair State University. Since moving out and beginning grocery shopping for himself, he said "I try to stop myself

from grabbing the name brand at ShopRite." Name brands are always more expensive than their generic counterparts; oftentimes it is the same exact product.

"I ask myself – do I really need Oreos? Or are the Bowl and Basket cookies a more reasonable alternative?" Plewa said. "I almost always end up putting the name brand back." Recent tariffs are projected to raise the costs of grocery items even more. The average American, who is already struggling to economize, will surely feel the hit of the tariffs in one way or another.

From eggs to Oreos, inflation has made every consumer more intentional. As grocery bills climb higher, American's are shopping smarter – even if it means saying goodbye to brand loyalty.

I-80 closure affects students' commutes

BY JAKE PETROVCIK

The interstate 80 closure has affected everyone in the local area, from people commuting to work to students commuting to school. Even if people don't need to take I-80 to work or school, a large number of back and side roads have also had significant increases in traffic. Due to County College of Morris' position right before the closure and next to 80, the closure affects CCM students heavily.

Melanie Fredes, a liberal arts major at CCM, said she has 8 a.m. labs that she now struggles not to be late for even after leaving well in advance. Fredes commutes from Andover and said she encounters a significant amount of traffic driving through Ledgewood specifically.

"You have to find parking. You have to do red lights or find different routes and even those are longer and farther," Fredes said. "Four years, 40 max are you kidding? Like probably when I graduate to another college it's probably gonna finish, or

even my kids graduate college that's when it's actually gonna finish"

Fredes leaves early for her 8 a.m. labs and still struggles with getting there on time. Her commute has gone from 25 minutes to a significantly longer commute of 35 to 40 minutes. She thinks the timeline that was put out for repair is far from accurate.

"People don't know how to drive. Even students that are driving here know how to drive," Fredes said on what made her commute worse. "You have moms in their minivans. You have vans carrying important equipment or police cars that are at every stop light."

NJ Transit has announced that it will offer a discount to anyone whose commute is affected by the Route 80 closure. Commuters boarding at Hackettstown, Mount Olive, Netcong, Lake Hopatcong and Mount Arlington do not need to purchase a ticket going toward Newark Broad Street Station or Summit Station, only needing a one way



ticket back. According to an article by CBS News the construction on I-80 is costing more than \$150,000 per day.

Liam Shanaphy is a criminal justice major who splits his time between Morristown with his mom and Mount Olive with his dad. His earliest class is 8 a.m.

"Well, when I'm coming from my mom's house it's minimal," Shanaphy said. "I don't really have anything on that side or way, but if I'm going from my dad's, I gotta take back roads and stuff. It's a little bit of a hassle," Shanaphy said on how the closure affected his commute. "I mean it's all dependent on

how expediently they're working, I guess so I don't feel like I have any way to judge or figure it out, but I think it would be around that ballpark maybe a little more"

Tiana Mendoza is a liberal arts major who lives in Dover and whose earliest class is 12:30 p.m. Her commute has gone from approximately five minutes to 10 to 12 minutes.

"Years, years," Mendoza said on how long she expects the repairs to take. "I will say because people are deciding to take back roads instead, it's causing traffic jams, but other than that, it doesn't really cause that much of an issue".

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