PRESIDENT JACKSON SPEAKS to the Class of 2020 about this year’s theme of unity from diversity.

The President spoke about the opportunities created through Summer Arch, which will be in an optional pilot available for students in each of Rensselaer’s schools for the Class of 2020. She stressed that Summer Arch would be a time for students to explore and to take hold of opportunities outside the classroom. Research, co-ops, inventing, service, travel, and launching a business were all suggestions in her speech. Her final remark was open invitation to the freshman, saying “don’t be afraid to call me—I will try to meet with you.”

Vo appointed Secretary Elections Handbook also approved

Jack Wellhofer, Senior Reporter

GRAND MARSHAL PAUL ILORI ’17 welcomed the Student Senate back from summer and immediately jumped into business with committee reports. While committees have not yet met, the chairmen of each committee outlined their plans for the year.

The first item of business was appointment of secretary. Ilori nominated Sylvia Vo ’17 for the position, but Vo was on co-op for last semester and was not able to make any Senate meetings to be appointed. Vo is a member of the Society of Asian Scientists and Engineers and has been a secretary for them in the past. The Senate approved the GM’s appointment 17-0-0.

During GM Week last spring, the Faculty Senate met to have the student body vote on a faculty member to appoint to the Faculty Progressive and Tenure Committee. Instead, the Senate took on the responsibility, nominating Professor Langdon Winner. Winner is the Thomas Phelan Chair of Humanities and Social Sciences and a political theorist for the Department of Science and Technological Studies. His appointment was approved 17-0-0.

The biggest item on the Senate’s agenda was approving the Class of 2020 Freshman Elections Handbook. The Handbook resembles last year’s iteration of the Freshman Elections Handbook, “but better, and we made it for the Class of 2020,” said Hannah Rabinowitz ’18.

RPI Ambulance introduces new students to emergency training

MMA club exhibits three different cultures at NRB event

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Connecting the Rensselaer community since 1885

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See TRADITIONS, Page 2

NRB Event

Freshmen get a glimpse into Troy’s illustrious past

Jacob Kaplan

Staff Reporter

In the basement of Davenport Hall sits an expansive reconstruction of Troy and its neighboring towns. Portraying Troy at its industrial height in the 1950s, this facsimile focuses around the Capital Region’s then-vital railroad system. However, the model also gives a detailed representation of life in old Troy, complete with houses, stores, fake trees, and miniature people.

“Troy is really where the iron and steel industry started in America,” says a volunteer model railroad curator to a group of incoming freshmen. "For years, Troy was the fourth richest city in New York and the 16th richest in the country," the volunteer continues. When asked what his favorite part of the model is, Benedict replies that he has no one favorite part, but rather enjoys how much it reminds him of his days at RPI back in the early 1960s.

The history of the model is almost as interesting as the history it represents. Construction of the railroad began in 1972 and has continued for more than 40 years. The model railroad began with a reconstruction of old Troy, but over the years it grew to include Saratoga, Bennington, Lake George, Green Island, and even expands as far north as Fort Henry. Although the railroad now fills the entire length of RPI's main campus, it represents just a fraction of the area that was once industrialized. The model continues to grow, with new pieces being added every year. Today, it is considered one of the most comprehensive model railroad systems in the United States.
Convocation: Ilori, Kirchner present Class of 2020 banner

From Page 1

you spell it this way: R… PI,” he said. He then encouraged students to show up to class even if it’s in pajamas with a cup of coffee. He also emboiled them to experience the non-classroom side of Rensselaer.

“Finding all the Pokémon non-classroom side of Rensselaer. “And finding all the Pokémon doesn’t count.”

RPI has opportunities for all interests—from service and outreach, to travel, to the Rensselaer Union’s many clubs. Ledet closed with a statement that resonated with many in the room: “There is a lot to learn and a lot you can do. Four years might seem very quick.”

Grand Marshal Paul Ilori ’17 and President of the Union Chip Kirchner ’17 presented the Class of 2020 banner. In his comments to the freshmen, Ilori gave advice from his own personal experience as a freshman. To the nervous and intimidated he said, “you belong here as much as anyone else has since 1825,” and that Rensselaer would become another home to them.

A video compilation of events that occurred during Navigating Rensselaer & Beyond was shown at the front of the room, after which Rensselaer would become another home to them.

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To conclude the ceremony, the Reverend Edward S. Kacerguis of the Chapel and Cultural Center read the benediction, officially welcoming the Class of 2020.

Traditions: Participants learn history of railroad

From Page 1

the entirety of the basement, work on it is constant as parts get worn out and historical inaccuracies are corrected.

“RPI students are always welcome to help build and maintain the railroad,” says William Gill, a curator of the railroad. “It attracts all kinds of students. Some who like to build. Some who like to help the train run. We even had one student who just liked to clean,” he continues.

Gill himself worked on the railroad back in the late 1990s when it was already 20 years underway and came back after being employed by RPI. Although Troy declined after the steel and textile industries left, the model railroad remains as a testament to its former greatness. RPI students, now and for generations to come, will be able to look at this lively and comprehensive reconstruction and connect to not only their school’s fascinating history, but also Troy’s.

Attend our next Co-Term Info Session

Thursday, Sept. 29th: 4:00-5:00pm Union 3202

Two degrees. Five years. Six programs to choose from:

- M.S. in Business Analytics
- M.S. in Quantitative Finance & Risk Analytics
- M.S. in Management
- M.S. in Supply Chain Management
- M.S. in Technology Commercialization & Entrepreneurship
- MBA

The Polytechnic

THE 47TH STUDENT SENATE MEETS for the first time this semester to discuss Freshman Elections.

Senate: Postering rules discussed

From Page 2

footbridge sign holders. Posters may be attached to the footbridge fencing.7 His reasoning was that removing the item would reduce confusion in the complicated postering rules.

Ilori stated that if the rule changes, it should only change for freshman elections. He worried about the overabundance of postering during GM Week elections.

CJ Markum ’17 argued for keeping the sign holders free of election posters and available to clubs. He wanted to ensure a space where clubs could advertise events and a location where students could find such events without the clutter of campaign posters.

When the motion to change the rule went to vote, it failed 4-9-4.

Thomas Alappat ’17 asked about section five, item two, which stated, “Only passive campaigning is permitted in dining halls during dining hours.” Alappat felt this rule was ambiguous, wondering if active campaigning was allowed in the dining halls after class hours.

Rabinowitz said that this was not the intention of the rule, but that it could be misinterpreted. Alappat motioned to change the wording to say, “Only passive campaigning is permitted in dining halls during dining hours and in classrooms during class hours.”

After some discussion, the Senate determined that the rule should be split into two portions, with part A stating, “only passive campaigning is permitted in dining halls during dining hours,” and part B stating, “only passive campaigning is permitted in classrooms during class hours.”

The motion to split the rule was approved 16–0–0 and the motions to approve the individual parts were both approved 16–0–0. No more changes were motioned, so the Handbook went to vote and was unanimously approved.

With nothing left to discuss for the first meeting of the semester, the Senate concluded its meeting.
## Events

### WEDNESDAY
August 31

**MANE Colloquium**
DCC 330; 10:30–11:30 am
Marisol Martin-Gonzalez's lecture is titled "Nano-engineering Thermoelectric and the latest developments in Nanoporous Alumina Templates: From Swords to Butterflies."

**Red Cross Blood Drive**
Mueller Center; 11:30 am–5:30 pm
Requirements are to weigh at least 110 pounds and have a donor card, driver’s license, or two other forms of ID.

### SATURDAY
September 3

**In Bruges**
DCC 308; 7, 9:30 pm, and midnight
Guilt-stricken after a job gone wrong, hitman Ray and his partner await orders from their ruthless boss in Bruges, Belgium, the last place in the world Ray wants to be. The cost of attendance is $2.50.

### MONDAY
September 5

**Labor Day; No Classes**

### TUESDAY
September 6

**Free Drop-In Meditation**
Mueller Center; 6–7 pm
Michael Fuselli, with over 30 years experience practicing and teaching meditation, will show how to reduce your stress levels, get recharged, and experience improved overall physical health, all while sitting comfortably in a chair. No experience necessary.

**Chemical and Biological Engineering Seminar**
Ricketts 211; 9:30–10:30 am
The Isermann Department of Chemical and Biological Engineering presents Dr. Yuri Gorby, Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute.

**Materials Science & Engineering Fall Seminar**
DCC 308; 11 am–noon
Javier Bareño of Argonne National Laboratory, will present "Atomic Environments and Energy Density in Lithium- and Manganese-Rich Nickel-Manganese-Cobalt Oxide (LMR-NMC) Cathodes for Lithium-Ion Batteries". There will be light refreshments.

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### YOU CAN LAND A GIG IN SILICON VALLEY

**OR YOU CAN APPLY EVERYTHING YOU KNOW TO PROTECT OUR NATION.**

Sure, you could work for a buzzworthy tech company that has a playground in the lunchroom. Or you could come to the CIA – where you’ll embark on a mission to keep Americans safe. With your STEM background, critical thinking skills and intellectual curiosity, you’ll crack some of the toughest challenges imaginable – from developing the world’s most advanced technology to seeing the complex narrative in big data.

This is your opportunity to have a career that’s as meaningful as it is challenging. Apply today.

Applicants must have US citizenship and the ability to successfully complete medical examinations and security procedures, including a polygraph interview. An equal opportunity employer and a drug-free workforce.

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Moving on with resilience
A breakthrough of the 2015–2016 community theme

In a previous notebook, I mentioned that the 2015–2016 community theme, resilience, wasn’t so bad. After reading what I wrote, Jack Wellhofer ’18 told me he’d never heard anyone support it. Additionally, he told me to be biased toward it—for obvious reasons—and students tend to be biased against it. I believe that there’s more to it than a pay-off. I believe that resilience is the future.

Before I dive in, let me clarify what resilience is. On the Rensselaer webpage, Professor Holly Administration tend to be biased toward it—for obvious reasons—and students tend to be biased against it. I believe that there’s more to it than a pay-off. I believe that resilience is the future.

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Ross: Campus alterations

As a residentially based university, where our students live on or in proximity to the campus, our living and learning environment is fundamental to our mission: to prepare our students for lives of continued success. For Rensselaer students who live off-campus, the Off Campus Commons is expected to open during the fall semester, and more details are forthcoming.

We know that holistic student wellness is critical to student success. As such, we are making a number of enhancements to our Student Health Center to support Rensselaer students through health management and health education programs on a variety of important topics for students to support the wellbeing of the Rensselaer community.

Additional staff: Student Life is adding two additional staff, one in counseling and one in health care, that will increase access to services for students through the Student Health Center.

Health promotion and outreach: We are expanding and refining health education programs on a variety of important topics for students to support the wellbeing of the Rensselaer community.

E-Complex and North Hall: We have providing two additional staff, one in counseling and one in health care, that will increase access to services for students through the Student Health Center.

These are a few of the developments occurring in Student Life. I look forward to sharing more updates with students through The Poly in future issues.

Assistant to the president: I’m an officer of the Student Senate and an officer of the Rensselaer Union, one of few truly student-run student unions in the United States. Our Union gives us the opportunity to explore ourselves outside the classroom and allows students to explore a wide range of interests, along with providing us with a direct voice in decisions made at RPI as a whole. Our school holds a unique place in history as the oldest technical university in the English-speaking world. But with all the information you’re having thrown at you right now, that’s enough history.

You can stop reading here if you promise to keep an open mind and stay true to yourself. You’re already being given a lot of information, some of it useful and some not. With your first priority should always be keeping on top of your classes. I’d advise you to check out different things and see what you like and don’t like for yourself. Meet the Greeks, the Activities Fair, hockey games, and other events throughout the year will allow you not only to get to know your new classmates better, but also give you an opportunity to explore yourself. Some of my favorite memories on campus have come from my decision to check out something I thought sounded kind of interesting, or a text from some of my friends asking if I was free to go check out some event. Clearly, every club, elective class, or opportunity won’t be for everyone, but you’ll never know if you don’t at least check it out. So grab a few friends and go! Sign up for that email list for a club you’re kind of interested in (yes, you actually can unsubscribe from all of them), check out BBQ/steak/insert random food rash event here, and stick with what you like. You never really know where you might find a passion that you stick with for the rest of your life. Feel free to say hi to me if you see me around campus, or contact me at gm@rpi.edu if there’s anything you think I can help with. 

While you’re enjoying the last few weeks of warm weather, consider joining The Poly. Special Elections are Sunday, September 18.

TOP HAT

Many opportunities upcoming

Paul Ilori
Grand Marshal

I’ll begin with the same phrase you’ll probably hear 200 times over the next few weeks: Welcome to Rensselaer! I am Paul Ilori ’17, the 151st Grand Marshal and wearer of that headwear that was more fashionable when the Class of 1917 were seniors. The position was created in 1866 to honor Robert Harper, a student from Pittsburgh, PA who returned to graduate after fighting in the Civil War. Over the past century and a half, the role has transformed and has undertaken different roles and responsibilities.

Currently, as GM, I serve as the president of the Student Senate and an officer of the Rensselaer Union, one of few truly student-run student unions in the United States. Our Union gives us the opportunity to explore ourselves outside the classroom and allows students to explore a wide range of interests, along with providing us with a direct voice in decisions made at RPI as a whole. Our school holds a unique place in history as the oldest technical university in the English-speaking world. But with all the information you’re having thrown at you right now, that’s enough history.

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DERBY

While you’re enjoying the last few weeks of warm weather, consider joining The Poly. Special Elections are Sunday, September 18.

STAFF EDITORIAL

Freshmen get taste of RP extracurriculars

Note from the Editorial Board: Staff EDITORIALS are the weekly opinion of the Editorial staff. For this Poly Press Pass issue, we decided to let the Press Pass members put their thoughts together into a special piece on Student Orientation and NRB. Beyond.

Every person who has been a college freshman in their life knows the feeling—quip conversation, nervously waiting to meet your future classmates, wondering who you’ll end up being friends with. Upon arrival to the RPI campus, students were greeted by upperclassmen, including fraternity and sorority members, summer staff, and their soon-to-be-joining Residence Assistants and Learning Assistants, helping them with unpacking, getting situated, and feeling welcome. The residence halls were busy and friendly, the bustling students taking the time to wander from room to room to greet their floormates. On the RPI campus, students are a string of awkward ice breakers, waiting in line at Commons Dining Hall, and being shouted at.

Navigating Rensselaer & Beyond was slightly less conventional than we anticipated. Although there was still the same amount of forced interaction as our Student Orientation sessions, we also had the opportunity to explore organizations and clubs on campus while meeting new people. Without classes beginning until the six days before classes held up in our rooms watching Netflix. Instead, we were strongly encouraged to communicate with a wider scope of people than just our residence halls. It is definitely worthwhile to participate in as many events on campus as possible to make the best of your time here. NRB activities gave us the opportunity to learn more about the Rensselaer Union and other features of student life that we otherwise would have had to figure out by ourselves along the way.

There were, however, some improvements that could have been made. Confusion stemmed from inconsistent timing, schedules, and instructions from our NRB advisors. As Poly Press Pass members, we had difficulty locating NRB events at their designated locations. The long lines at Commons and the packed union during the orientation schedule meant that students had to fight for ourselves along the way.

NRB is just the beginning of a long journey. More is to come when the RPI week of 2020 rolls around. This year, we want an experience for the incoming freshman this year. Overall, we found the experience to be enjoyable, informative, and, in the case of our Dining Dark. Could you find for your source!
NRB EVENT

Rensselyrics host a cappella enrichment

Serge Piskun
Priyanka Vijay
Staff Reviewers

Navigating Rensselaer & Beyond week showcases many of the clubs and traditions of RPI, including the highly celebrated activity a cappella. Incoming freshmen were able to meet other students with a shared interest in singing. No prior experience was required for the event, making it the optimal time for new students to learn more about the singing style. The oldest coed RPI a cappella group, Rensselyrics, served as mentors to students, teaching them the art of a cappella.

The NRB event took place in West Hall Auditorium, where students were broken up into four separate groups based on vocal range. One group of singers was hosted on the main stage, while the rest were scattered around the various staircases of the building. They practiced within their individual “pitch groups” for some time, and then came together to perform as a full group. Freshmen stood in a circle on stage, with NRB leaders in the center facing the new students. This was the first time the group sang together in harmony. To begin, the group chose “I Want You Back” by The Jackson 5, which included both sung lyrics and harmonized tenor, alto, soprano, and bass voices. A small group of students participated in beatboxing, which added a percussion element to the performance. While the song was going on, students stomped their feet and swung from side to side as NRB leaders used hand motions to help students keep in beat. As a result, the assembly process was a constant flow of questions and answers. Their questions touched on a range of information, from the proper placement of a switch to the complexities of electricity. The event allowed students to leave with not only a finished product, but a better understanding of the engineering and thought behind a Formula Hybrid vehicle.

“The extent of my knowledge is that I remember some electrical stuff from physics in high school,” said Karan Sarkar ’20, who, like most of the others, was fascinated by the idea of creating a go-kart from scratch. While students had varying levels of experience, enthusiasm more than compensated for any lack of expertise. Evan Engisch ’17, president of Rensselaer Formula Hybrid, noted that this group worked quickly and that assembly took roughly seven hours of work time. The go-kart was tested on a makeshift autocross course near Anderson Field. “In just over a day, they went from staring at a table of mismatched parts to racing and drifting around the parking lot course on something they had built,” said Engisch. The results were riveting, even for senior team members who were surprised by the kart’s speed.

This year the team added a second battery module, which doubled the power output available to the kart. The 40-volt battery in the past allowed the motor to attain 30 percent efficiency. The new 80-volt battery paired with a recent, specially designed motor greatly increased the efficiency, speed, and excitement for the NRB group. For their karts, the team uses both a gas engine and an electric motor to power the two rear wheels. The electric engine has all of its torque available as soon as the pedal is pressed, giving it an advantage over gas engines off the starting line. Once the car is moving, the team can switch to using the gas engine, which has an easier and more reliable power source. By combining the two engine types, the team is able to cover the weaknesses of the other engine.

For those interested in design, building, and competing with Rensselaer Formula Hybrid, their meetings are held in Ricketts 211 on Mondays from 8–9 pm.


NRB EVENT

Hybrid vehicle segments assembled

Max Gillespie
Brookelyn Parslow
Adam Rabinowitz
Staff Reviewers

During their NAVIGATING RENSSELAER & Beyond event, the Rensselaer Formula Hybrid gave freshmen a taste of what it does year-round deep in the labs of the Ricketts Building. Two groups of incoming freshmen were set on the daunting tasks of building a car frame and battery case. They were given no instructions, just the necessary parts and tools to build the car. As a result, the assembly process was a constant flow of questions and answers. Their questions touched on a range of information, from the proper placement of a switch to the complexities of electricity. The event allowed students to leave with not only a finished product, but a better understanding of the engineering and thought behind a Formula Hybrid vehicle.

NRB ATTENDEES INVESTIGATE the varied components of the W2SZ broadcast station.

Serving the Rensselaer community since 1885

NRB EVENT

Broadcasting school at W2SZ

Jay Franklin
Xander Pacheco
Staff Reviewers

After a grueling hike up to the far reaches of campus, we arrived at a rather unassuming shack. Positioned in the hills on the edge of campus so as to get the greatest reception, the tiny building seemed distant and isolated. For all its isolation and lack of external decoration, the activity and equipment within were nothing short of amazing.

Here, the W2SZ team showed the fascinated freshmen the basics of amateur radio. Using an oscilloscope—a machine used to measure the signals carried by a wire—one instructor demonstrated how radio waves bridged the gap between two unconnected wires, so that the signal in one wire was detectable on another. Another enthusiastic club member wove a tale of radio in espionage, describing how spies transmitted brief tunes to one another to identify each other and make contact. Meanwhile, more freshmen learned about the concept of reflecting radio waves off of the moon to achieve a greater range.

The real task of the event, however, was the “foxhunt”—a search for hidden transmitters concealed across the RPI campus. Freshmen used PVC pipes and measuring tapes to construct an antenna that allowed them to hunt for and zero in on these hidden objects. The roving band was visible throughout the campus on Wednesday, searching for the elusive devices.
Ambulance: Educates participating freshmen

Volunteer EMT and graduate student John Jacangelo stressed that the services they provide are entirely free of charge, stating a desire for students to be more proactive in recognizing possible personal emergencies. Most places on campus can be reached by their ambulance within five minutes, though RPI Ambulance’s “Fly Car” can be sent ahead for even quicker response.

“If it’s a cardiac issue, we can drive ‘lights and sirens,’” Jacangelo said, explaining that some emergencies are responded to more quickly than others, taking advantage of the emergency vehicle’s special traffic-bypassing privileges.

After being picked up, some patients are taken to Samaritan Hospital, though those whose injuries are more severe are taken to the Albany Medical Center.

Self-defense: Practice and focus sharpen discipline

TAEKWONDO and kendo, and kung fu, all great sources of exercise here on campus. Taekwondo is a Korean martial art form focusing on high kicks, spinning kicks, and combining kicks. Several instructors oversaw the class, all students from RPI’s Taekwondo Club. The coach of the club had recently left, prompting many students to attempt to fill the role; one was Alan Meyhew ’17, the vice president of the club. He joined the club after his own NRB experience as a freshman along with fellow instructors Matt Dobkins ’18 and Joshua Aronis ’19. All three started because either they, or a friend, did martial arts during NRB, according to Aronis. Jacob Fucci ’18 views the club in a different manner, saying it has “a strong focus on personal improvement,” but that it does not stop them from competing in tournaments at other schools. He says it is a great way to see schools other than RPI.

Kendo is a form of “Japanese fencing,” according to Songhan Zhang ’17. He wore protective gear, a mask, padding, and a traditional robe-like garb. Zhang said the armor used for kendo is unique to it. The kendo stick at his side, reminiscent of a sword, is called a shinai. In one exercise, the students held out their shinai as one of the instructors ran down the line, hitting each shinai and screaming as they did so. The screams were piercing, turning heads from the stark contrast to the yelling of kendo, which costs $12,000. According to Mateusz Sluszkiewicz ’20, a first-time rugby player, the event was “a good eye opener” and a good introduction to the sport. According to Katy Peoples ’17, the president of RPI’s Rugby Club. Peoples added that her goal was to “give [the students] a chance to just play” and she hopes that they will come back and join the team.

RPI Rugby teaches basic drills and patterns

INCOMING RPI FRESHMEN INTERESTED IN LEARNING MORE ABOUT THE NUANCES OF RUGBY, ONE OF THE world’s most preeminent international sports, had the opportunity during Narsing Rensselaer & Beyond week to learn more about the sport at Anderson Field early Wednesday morning. For those unfamiliar with the sport, players attempt to reach one end of a field without losing the ball, which is slightly large, but lighter, than a football.

A major rule is that players aren’t allowed to pass the ball forward; the only way that the ball can be moved forward is by running with it or kicking it up the field. Play doesn’t end when the ball hits the ground—when in trouble, players may pass the ball backwards on the field to teammates. Barnabe Boucheron ’19, one of the program’s instructors, said that his goal for the NRBC activity was for students “to know the basics of the sport.” Through a series of drills, instructors taught students how to pass, kick, defend, and play a full game of rugby. The day’s activities were all about “going through basic drills and teaching them the skills they need,” according to Katy Peoples ’17, the president of RPI’s Rugby Club. Peoples added that her goal was to “[teach] them the fundamentals and [keep] contact out.” According to Mateusz Sluszkiewicz ’20, a first-time rugby player, the event was “a good eye opener” and a good introduction to the sport.

For those interested in joining the team, practices are held at Anderson Field Monday from 8–10 pm, Tuesday 6–8 pm, and Thursday 8–10 pm.

NRB students ruck into action on Anderson field
Features

NRB EVENT

Freshmen give their first college live performances in NRB

Kirsten Pilla
Molly Wolford
Staff Reviewers

Along 15th Street sits the RPI Playhouse, where Players perform several productions a year. This year, the Players welcomed the new freshmen by allowing them to participate in one of three shows: Bad Auditions, SUPERHEROES, and Meet the Roomates. Under the guidance of current Players, the freshmen had 48 hours to prepare for a live performance in front of their peers. Students were evenly split between working on the set and acting on stage. Enthusiasm for this Navigating Rensselaer & Beyond experience was overwhelming. Out of the 50 students who have signed up for this event, 47 showed up for the Pancake Breakfast hosted at the Playhouse on Wednesday morning. Not all of their day was fun and games however, as the group had to work hard.

“One of the most difficult parts of putting on a play in two days was memorizing the lines before the performance,” said Jack Scurrier ’19, who is still involved with the group. But that’s not all they had to do before their performance. The group produce a show involving every aspect of theater performance from lights to lines. During the day, they had to prepare the sets and install the lights both over the audience and over the stage.

Even though it’s hard work, the experiences of the freshmen at the playhouse will be very beneficial to the future members of the group. “We’re a very friendly and welcoming bunch,” says Talina Bastille ’17. “We do theater, and it’s fun.”

NRB PARTICIPANTS CONTRIBUTED to RPI Players shows by not only performing, but also setting up the stage.

NRB EVENT

Martial arts clubs introduce styles

Culture and spirit imbued via drill and simulated combat

NRB EVENT

Exercises help to foster improv skills

Xander Pacheco
Andrew Son
Staff Reviewers

At Rensselaer’s improv comedy group, “Sheer Idiocy,” there is no business but funny business. Freshmen participating in the related Navigating Rensselaer & Beyond day trip were given the stage for a variety of comical games and skill-building exercises. They worked all day in the Darrin Communications Center on Wednesday, August 24th building their improv skills, building complexity in their performance, and practicing scene-setting. The exercises included “Gibberish,” “Party Quirks,” and “One-Word Story.”

In the game “Gibberish,” the comedians must hold a conversation until one participant gives a signal to start speaking nonsense, after which the whole conversation must be carried out with random mouth-flapping. The tone of the conversation switches from serious to ridiculous in an instant. This particular act was a hit with the crowd, producing applause and rippling laughter throughout the McNeil Room.

“Party Quirks” is an improv exercise where one participant acts as a party host who must guess the quirk of each of their three party guests while simultaneously hosting the party. Members of the audience assign quirks to the three “party guests” while the fourth member of the routine, the host, stood out of earshot of the audience. The audience assign quirks to the three “party guests” while the fourth member of the routine, the host, stood out of earshot of the audience. One “guest” has a physical quirk, another has a mental quirk, and the last has a reactionary quirk. The party guests and host then haphazardly interact for a couple minutes, expressing their assigned quirks to a comically excessive degree. The host must maintain character while investigating the guests’ odd character traits, then guess what those quirks are. This was an especially entertaining bit, with the entire audience participating.

“Party Quirks” was a hit with the crowd, producing applause and rippling laughter throughout the McNeil Room.

First-year students practice comedy techniques.